HOWDEN
Assessment of Landscape Sensitivity

Introduction

This report, which updates the Settlement Studies undertaken as part of the East Riding Landscape Character Assessment (2005), describes the character and sensitivity of the landscape around the edge of Howden to inform land use allocations and to provide evidence for the emerging East Riding of Yorkshire Local Plan 2013-2029.

The assessment of landscape sensitivity has been undertaken in accordance with the attached methodology (Appendix A).

Settlement Profile

Howden is a small market town towards the western edge of the East Riding that lies about three miles north of Gooele and 17 miles southwest of York. It sits to the north of the M62, on the A614 road, and is served by the Hull to York railway.

The town is dominated by its Minster, which leads to a preserved Georgian town centre with narrow cobbled streets and restored buildings. The large Conservation Area at the heart of the village also incorporates the Ashes playing fields, which are bounded by the Old Derwent Drain.

The A614 forms a strong southern and eastern boundary, with only sporadic farmsteads and individual properties on the eastern flank. The town has seen a fair amount of residential pressure and development in recent years, in the main, to its attractive nature and excellent transport links. The last ten years have also seen a high rate of investment in commercial and industrial activity, including the main offices of the Press Association, the online retailer E-buyer, as well as development at Ozone on the south-western edge of the town.

Re-development of the former United Carriers yard in the centre of the town will see a new supermarket and sheltered housing scheme. Further residential development is planned for the adjacent land in addition to a large site at the northern end of Howden.

Key landscape features of Howden include:

- The conservation in the centre of Howden;
- Howden Minster, a landmark feature that dominates the town centre and visible from much of the surrounding area;
- The M62 motorway to the south of the town and the elevated bridge over the River Ouse; and
- Attractive ‘parkland’ type landscapes to the west of the town (towards Knodlington).

Landscape Sensitivity

The following sections describe the landscape around the periphery of Howden in a clockwise direction. The landscape has been divided into a number of discrete landscape areas (numbered 1-6) each displaying a specific set of unique characteristics that have been assessed collectively to determine the areas overall sensitivity to new development. The areas are located on the accompanying settlement plan (Drawing 9).

Landscape Setting

Howden is located within the Humberhead Levels (NCA 39) National Character Area identified by Natural England. The landscape surrounding Howden lies within two landscape character types identified in the East Riding Landscape Character Assessment (2005):

- Landscape Character Type 5 – Open Farmland; and
- Landscape Character Type 0 – M62 Corridor Farmland.
1.0 AREA 1 - THORPE COMMON TO STATION ROAD

1.1 Introduction

The southern boundary of Area 1 is bounded by the route of the former railway line, which has formed a strong tree-lined landscape feature identified as an area of 'Important Vegetation' and defines the settlement edge. To the south of this is the Derwent Crescent and Hall Spinney residential developments, between which lies Howden School and Technology College campus. The eastern boundary of the area abuts the rear of a number of industrial developments, including the Howden site and its yard areas, a haulage/storage area and a commercial grower/nursery, all of which involve large structures that, along with their operational curtilages and illumination, have a dominating effect on the local area. The western boundary of the area is delineated by Station Road, an important approach to the town from the north.

The area lies within Landscape Character Type 5: Open Farmland, Landscape Character Area 5A - Howden to Bubwith Farmland (ERYC LCA 2005).

1.2 Landscape Character Sensitivity

The landform is generally flat and predominantly arable farmland devoid of tree cover other than in sporadic hedgerows, which are poor quality and fragmented. The area is bounded by a large landscape detractor (Howden Kitchens and Plant Raisers) and an overhead electricity transmission line which detract from the rural qualities of the landscape.

The tree line along the route of the former railway is an important feature and provides a substantial visual boundary between the town and the farmland to the north, masking the urban edge. This is countered to some extent by the visual impact of the large industrial buildings on the west side of Thorpe Road, which feature in, and detract from, views of the town on the northern approaches to Howden and from Station Road.

Overall, the area is typical of the agricultural farmland in the area. It has a disjointed field pattern with little enclosure. There are features that make a positive contribution such as the areas of 'Important Vegetation', and detractors such as the development on Thorpe Road. The farmland is, in general, well maintained and is reasonably attractive.

The landscape character sensitivity for this area is assessed as: Medium

1.3 Visual Sensitivity

The tree line along the southern boundary of the site provides an effective visual barrier between the edge of settlement and the high density residential development on Derwent Crescent, the school campus, and Holm Spinney. There are long views over much of the area from the D1220 towards Thorpe Road.

1.4 Landscape Value

The playing fields to the north of the former railway line provide a recreation facility for the school, and although the area includes areas of Important Vegetation that form a landscape edge to the north of the town, the landscape is considered to be dominated by its association with the industrial buildings on Thorpe Road frontage. The area lacks any special protection. Recreation access is limited to the use of the playing fields.

Landscape value for this area is assessed as: Low

1.5 Overall Landscape Sensitivity

The area is important in the context of screening the northern edge of the settlement and the development on Thorpe Road. The landscape marks the transition between the town and the open countryside to the north, and would be sensitive to development that encroaches on the playing fields or threatens the retention of the heavily wooded dismantled railway line, which creates an attractive setting and gateway to Howden from the north and northeast. A car park to the north of the playing field also reinforces the separation between rural and urban land uses, as does the car park to the north of the playing field. It is considered, therefore, that the area has comparatively few opportunities to accommodate new development and would be sensitive to the cumulative impacts of development with the industrial scale structures on Thorpe Road, which is already visually disruptive in views of the area.

The overall landscape sensitivity is assessed as: Medium

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<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Landscape Character Sensitivity</th>
<th>Visual Sensitivity</th>
<th>Landscape Value</th>
<th>Overall Landscape Sensitivity</th>
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2.0 AREA 2 – NORTH HOWDEN/ SHELFORD AVENUE

2.1 Introduction

Area 2 is a linear shaped area of land running in an east-west direction along the northern edge of the town, parallel to the Shelford Avenue housing development. The B1228 Bubwith Road lies to the east and the A63 Selby Road to the southwest. The area forms a visual transition between the urban area to the south and the traditional farmland to the north.

The area lies within Landscape Character Type 5; Open Farmland, Landscape Character Area 5A – Howden to Bubwith Farmland (ERYC LCA 2005).

2.2 Landscape Character Sensitivity

The area is predominantly flat with very few positive characteristics. It consists in the main, of rough grassland on what appears to be previously disturbed ground. There is comparatively little boundary definition with few trees or hedgerows. The area, with the exception of a sporadic group of buildings to the western end, is devoid of built development. The edge of the residential development on Shelford Avenue is typically urban in character. There is very little screening along the ‘prominent urban edge’, consequently the houses on the edge of the settlement detract from the overall setting of the landscape.

The landscape character sensitivity is assessed as: Low

2.3 Visual Sensitivity

The landscape in this area is open and has little enclosure; it is overlooked from a large number of residential receptors on the Shelford Avenue Development and residential development to the south of the A63. The visual sensitivity of the area is diminished by the prominence of the urban fringe in this part of the town; the Minster is an important feature in inward views of the town. The layout of the Shelford Avenue development has a number of highway ‘stubs’ abutting the boundary allowing frequent open views into the area from the residential estate roads.

Views from the houses across Area 2 to the farmland to the north do, however, increase its sensitivity to new development.

The visual sensitivity is assessed as: Medium

2.4 Landscape Value

The landscape exhibits traits of its urban fringe location and its condition is considered to be indicative of past use and lack of intensive agricultural use. The area does not have any landscape designation or special protection. There are no identified recreational uses of the area, although it does appear to be used informally.

Landscape value for this area is assessed as: Low

2.5 Overall Landscape Sensitivity

The area along the northern edge of the settlement is not particularly attractive and has a slightly degraded appearance. It does however form a transitional zone between the urban area and the open countryside. It is considered that the landscape has capacity to accommodate low rise development that reflects the landscape and visual sensitivities of the area and that is adequately screened from the existing residential development and the wider landscape. Screening planting would soften the ‘prominent urban edge’ and would aid the integration of new development with the countryside to the north.

The overall landscape sensitivity is assessed as: Low

| Area 2 – North Howden/Shelford Avenue |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Area            | Landscape       | Visual          | Landscape       | Overall         |
|                 | Character       | Sensitivity     | Value           | Landscape       |
|                 | Sensitivity     |                  |                 | Sensitivity     |
| 2               | Low             | Medium          | Low             | Low             |
3.0 AREA 3 – NORTHWEST HOWDEN; STATION ROAD TO SELBY ROAD

3.1 Introduction

Area 3 is a large area of predominantly flat, agricultural land bounded to the east by the B1228 Station Road (to Bubwith) and the A63 Selby Road to the southwest, the southern boundary of which encloses the rough grassland of Area 2.

The area lies within Landscape Character Type 5; Open Farmland, Landscape Character Area 5A – Howden to Bubwith Farmland (ERYC LCA 2005).

3.2 Landscape Character Sensitivity

The farmland comprises arable fields and rough grazing land. Development in the area is limited to sporadic farmsteads. Field boundaries are intermittent, and a woodland belt down the western boundary is important as an enclosing feature.

The landscape is well maintained, but is ordinary quality with fragmented hedgerows and few hedgerow trees. There are linear areas of woodland that provide some visual separation and enclosure to the area. There are both positive and negative landscape features. Overall, the area neither detracts from nor enhances the setting of Howden, but contributes to the rural approach to the town from the west.

The landscape character sensitivity for this area is assessed as: Medium

3.3 Visual Sensitivity

The area is generally open, lacking boundary enclosure and as a result, it is overlooked along with Area 2 from a range of residential and transient receptors. The boundary with Station Road and Selby Road (A63) are open other than from sporadic hedges. The visual sensitivity is considered to be reduced by its relationship to Area 2.

The visual sensitivity of the area is also considered to be reduced by the prominence of the sporadic, mainly agricultural development in the southwest of the area, which, because of its lack of screening and visual prominence, dominates the landscape.

Development could be mitigated from key views by comprehensive landscaping, which could make a positive contribution to the landscape.

The visual sensitivity for this area is assessed as: Medium

3.4 Landscape Value

The landscape is typical of the urban fringe farmland in this area. It is not subject to any special designations and has limited recreational value. The farmland is mainly separated from the edge of the town by Area 2, but has frontages to both Selby Road and Station Road.

Landscape value for this area is assessed as: Low

3.5 Overall Landscape Sensitivity

The farmland is typical of the area. Its topography is predominantly flat, giving rise to long distance views from the main roads into and out of the town and from the adjacent residential frontages. There may be some capacity for low rise development in the south of Area 3 that does not intrude significantly into the open countryside.

The characteristics of the area could be reinforced and enhanced by infilling and reinstatement of hedgerows, particularly to the highway boundaries and to add definition to field boundaries. The screening of the agricultural developments would also reinforce the rural characteristics of the area.

The overall landscape character sensitivity is considered to be: Medium

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<th>Area 3 – Northwest Howden Station Road to Selby Road</th>
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4.0 AREA 4 NORTHWEST HOWDEN/SELY ROAD TO KNEDLINGTON ROAD AND WEST BOOTHFERRY ROAD

4.1 Introduction

Area 4 is located to the west of Howden and comprises the farmland to the south of the A63, Selby Road. It is dissected in a north-south direction by Boothferry Road and Barnhill Lane.

The area lies within Landscape Character Type 5; Open Farmland, Landscape Character Area 5A – Howden to Bubwith Farmland (ERYC LCA 2005).

4.2 Landscape Character Sensitivity

Area 4 is delineated by strong field patterns, particularly within the northern part of the area and there are a number of woodland blocks that are identified as areas of ‘Important Vegetation’.

The area has well defined characteristics and is an agricultural landscape much of which has a ‘parkland character’. Many of the fields are small to medium sized, delineated by hedgerows and hedgerow trees. There are strong woodland blocks that provide a sense of enclosure and characterise views in the area. The northeast boundary, which abuts the settlement edge, includes the Howden Marsh - a local amenity area that is heavily wooded and provides a green link nearly into the town centre.

The area is devoid of built development but adjoins the rear curtilages of the development to Knedlington Road, which splits the area in an east-west direction.

The relationship to the urban edge of the settlement from Area 4 is softened considerably by the existing landscape (vegetation) features and the boundary is not overly intrusive, with few views in or out of the settlement due to the layout and orientation of the development.

Overall, the condition of the landscape is very good. The fields are a mixture of arable and grazing and there are very few, if any, substantial detracting features. The landscape is attractive and enhances the setting of the town and also the road approach from the west on the A63 and Knedlington Road.

The landscape character sensitivity for this area is assessed as: High

4.3 Visual Sensitivity

The area is visible from both residential and travelling receptors. It is an attractive landscape acknowledged by the areas of ‘Important Vegetation’ and the parkland perception of its layout. It is, as a result, considered to be an important component of the local landscape. It is considered that the area would be sensitive to development which would be visible from receptors and which could not be mitigated without detriment to the overall character of the area.

The tower of Howden Minster, is visible from much of Area 2.

The visual sensitivity for this area is assessed as: High

4.4 Landscape Value

Howden Marsh is a strategic ‘green link’ into the town and a protected wildlife site. It is an important open space and recreational area on the west of the town.

The well vegetated landscape is ‘different’ to the landscape elsewhere around Howden and to the east of Boothferry Road. The area has a distinctive ‘parkland’ character which contrasts with the ‘ordinary’ rural landscape to the west towards the villages of Barmby-on-the-Marsh and Asseby.

Landscape value for this area is assessed as: Medium

4.5 Overall Landscape Sensitivity

The area is considered to be an important landscape to the west of Howden. It is an attractive area with individual qualities. Howden Marsh is an important open space and regionally important recreational/wildlife area.

The area is attractive with few detracting features, and potentially very sensitive to new development. The area has very little capacity to accommodate new development without adversely affecting the positive characteristics of the Landscape.

The overall landscape sensitivity is assessed as: High

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<th>Area</th>
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<th>Landscape Value</th>
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5.0 AREA 5 - BOOTHFERRY ROAD EAST/A614

5.1 Introduction

Area 5 is enclosed on three sides by important roads in the local highway network. To the north is the Knaflington Road approach to the town, which links the residential western areas of the town with the central Market Place area. The western boundary fronts onto Boothferry Road and the eastern boundary to the residential southwest edge of the settlement and the A614. The southern boundary of the area has strong visual associations with the industrial developments fronting the A614, including the partly developed Ozone Park, the Vencel Resil plant, and Wardle's garage and adjacent business uses.

The area lies within Landscape Character Type 5; Open Farmland, Landscape Character Area 5A – Howden to Bubwith Farmland (ERYC LCA 2005).

5.2 Landscape Character Sensitivity

The area consists, in the main, of agricultural land with an ‘open’ field pattern running up to the residential development on Boothgate, which has an open frontage to the area. There is little definition to the field pattern, with gapped roadside hedges and few boundary features such as hedges and trees within the farmed area.

Much of the value of Area 5 is as a transitional landscape between the existing settlement boundary and the open countryside. It forms a functional and physical link to Area 4 to the west.

The topography and lack of landscape features are considered to render the landscape as ordinary; it has little structure and is not considered to make a positive contribution to the setting of the settlement other than its physical status as enclosing the built edge of this part of town.

On balance, the area is assessed as neither contributing to, nor detracting from, the settlement and its setting.

The landscape character sensitivity is assessed as: Medium

5.3 Visual Sensitivity

There are long distance views across Area 5 towards the settlement which is dominated by houses industrial uses to the south and southeast (Defined as a ‘prominent urban edge’). Southeast views are also dominated by the elevated sections of the M62 motorway.

Howden Minster is a prominent focal point in Northeasterly views.

The area is prominent and visually exposed to a range of receptors including the residential developments on and around Boothgate, and other receptors in the area including the transitional receptors on the highway network.

As a result of the open views and topography of the area, together with a lack of screening, development is likely to be highly visible and there would be little opportunity to mitigate its early effects. The visual sensitivity of the area is, however, reduced by the prominence of the existing urban edge and sporadic development, including the industrial developments to the southwest, particularly Ozone Park and Vencel Resil, which are outside the study area but are dominant features.

Visual sensitivity of the area is assessed as: High

5.4 Landscape Value

The landscape lacks any particular character or structure. It is not a protected landscape or a recreational resource. It serves as a transitional zone between open countryside and the settlement boundary.

The landscape value is assessed as: Low

5.5 Overall Landscape Sensitivity

Area 5 forms the transition between the urban area and the start of the open countryside. The landscape is considered to be very ordinary and does not contribute greatly to nor enhance the natural landscape. It is enclosed on two sides by residential and industrial development. It has some capacity to accommodate development that does not adversely affect the setting of the high quality landscape to the north and west (Area 4). Screen planting along the ‘prominent urban edge’ would ‘soften’ the appearance of the existing development and would assist with the integration of new buildings.

The overall landscape sensitivity is assessed as: Medium

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<th>Area 5 – Boothferry Road East/A614</th>
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6.0 AREA 6 - EAST HOWDEN/M62 CORRIDOR

6.1 Introduction

Area 6 is linear in shape and runs along the eastern side of the A614, enclosing the town. It comprises mainly flat, open farmland around Groves Farm and is bounded on the east side by the M62 motorway. The main body of the settlement is located to the west of the A614, which creates severance between the main body of the town and the areas to the east. Much of the M62 route is elevated and forms a visual barrier in the area. Sporadic ribbon development runs down the east side of the A614 and along the Howdendyke Road, which, along with the M62 spur, severs the area in an east-west direction.

There are a number of sporadic outcrops of development in the area, particularly on the Howdendyke Road.

The area predominantly lies within Landscape Character Type 8; M62 Corridor Farmland, Landscape Character Area 8A; M62 Corridor Howden to Gilberdyke. Two small sections of the assessed area to the north and south west lies within Landscape Character Type 5; Open Farmland; Landscape Character Area 5A; Howden to Bubwith Farmland.

6.2 Landscape Character Sensitivity

The landform of this area is flat and is generally below 5 m AOD. The field pattern both sides of the M62 is very similar, consisting of medium to large fields although the field pattern is more defined at the northern end of the area. There are very few hedgerows or hedgerow trees, and hedges are sporadic and of poor condition. There is very little woodland cover and few individual trees. This results in an open landscape that has extensive views towards the north, east and south. Screen planting on the embankments and junctions to the M62 are elevated and form landscape features that are identified as ‘Important Vegetation Areas’.

The industrialisation at Howdendyke is an important visual element of the landscape and the large ‘sheds’ are dominant features that have an impact on the town when viewed from the open landscape.

The landscape is ordinary with features that neither contribute to nor detract from the setting of the settlement.

The landscape character sensitivity is assessed as: Medium

6.3 Visual Sensitivity

The area is visible from residential receptors and development within the area is likely to be visually prominent; screening could mitigate new development over time.

The areas to the north and south are more visible than the area around California Gardene Garden Centre, which is screened in views from the west by the frontage development. The area is highly visible from the M62 and A614.

The visual sensitivity of the area is assessed as: Medium

6.4 Landscape Value

The landscape is considered to be ordinary with no features or areas subject to specific designation. The severance from the town by the A614 limits its recreation value. The visual domination of parts of the area by the M62 corridor and the industrial development at Howdendyke form ‘detractors’ in the landscape. The role of the A614 as a constraint on development in an eastwards direction is important to the form the town now takes and its layout is constrained by this feature. It is not a visually attractive route, being dominated by rear curtilage of residential properties and sporadic industrial/commercial development.

The landscape value is assessed as: Low

6.5 Overall Landscape Sensitivity

The landscape is considered to be ordinary and typical of the flat topography and field patterns in the region.

The area is important in defining the eastern/southeastern edge of the town and the transition to the rural landscape to the east. It also provides a buffer between the M62 Motorway and Howden.

The area has some capacity to accommodate further development adjacent to the existing commercial development and the wharf at Howdendyke. It is important that the rural setting of the main approaches to Howden, particularly from the M62, and A614 are not compromised by future development and that adequate screening is provided to (especially around large scale industrial areas) to improve the integration with the open countryside.

The overall landscape sensitivity is assessed as: Medium

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SUMMARY

The sensitivity of the landscape around Howden is summarised below:

<table>
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<th>Landscape Character Sensitivity</th>
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The landscape setting of Howden is generally flat and featureless with limited vegetation except along the urban edge.

The M62 impacts upon the rural character of the setting of Howden to the south. This area is accessible from the M62 and existing road network, and commercial development dominates the A614 frontages to the town. Despite the predominantly ordinary quality of the surrounding landscape (the exception to this is area 1) the areas around the town are important to its setting and any future development should respect this.

The landscape to the west, and in part to the north of Howden shares many of the characteristics of the landscape to the south and east but is more varied due to greater vegetation cover and the smaller scale fields towards the urban edge. As a result of this diversity, the landscape to the west and north has been assessed as high and medium quality respectively.

The areas surrounding Howden generally have high sensitivity to development, particularly for large scale industrial buildings that, because of the flat topography of the area, would significantly affect the character and setting of the town and also the important views of the Minster.

The main areas that have capacity for development are considered to be along the northern edge of Howden (Area 2) and around the existing commercial areas to the northeast and southwest of the town.

General Guidelines

Where development is proposed, it is essential that the height, scale and form of the buildings and the integration of these buildings into the surrounding landscape context is fully considered, as is the need to retain ‘green corridors’ along the approach roads and the need to screen new development from the open countryside and protect the setting of the Minster and adjacent conservation area.

New buildings should reflect those in the locality and follow local building styles. Abrupt edges with little or no vegetation should be discouraged and schemes should aim to mitigate the ‘hard edge’ of some of the existing developments. Where existing vegetation occurs, it should generally be retained and enhanced to create natural, ‘softer’ boundaries that integrate the development into the surrounding landscape.

Development should retain and enhance existing landscape features that contribute to the character and quality of the landscape such as hedgerows, trees, landmarks and views.

There is a need to consider the cumulative effects of industrial development within and surrounding areas, and the impact that this would have on the character and setting of Howden and the rural landscape in general.

There are few distinctive landscape features that are recognisable as landmarks with exception of Howden Minster, which towers above the town and contributes to identity and recognition. Wind turbines form an increasing feature of the Howden skyline and opportunities to mitigate these through built design should be explored.

The qualities of the surrounding landscape also play a significant part in the perception of Howden, particularly along the western and northern approaches to the town. The approaches from other directions are lower quality as a result of the impact of large scale developments and human influence; these approaches should be targeted as priority areas for any potential enhancement schemes to create a sense of arrival and to reflect the historic core of this attractive market town.

Views of the surrounding landscape from the urban edge are restricted in some areas due to screening vegetation. Generally however, views that do occur are channelled over the flat landscape surrounding Howden. Where there are views of the landscape they are important to retain, where possible, as they contribute to the character of the town.

The physical links between the town centre and the surrounding countryside are important to the character of the town and should be maintained and enhanced.