Final Report to Tynedale District Council and Northumberland National Park Authority

A Landscape Character Assessment of Tynedale District and Northumberland National Park

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A Landscape Character Assessment of Tynedale District and Northumberland National Park

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1:100,000 map of Landscape Character Types and Landscape Character Areas
1 INTRODUCTION

In December 2006, Julie Martin Associates, with Alison Farmer Associates and Countryscape, were commissioned by Tynedale District Council and Northumberland National Park Authority to prepare a comprehensive landscape character assessment of the combined area of the two authorities. The study area, which covers some 221,000 hectares, represents one of the finest landscapes in the United Kingdom, including not only the National Park but also the northern part of the North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The assessment was commissioned in recognition of the importance of these landscapes and of the need for a detailed assessment of their character that would provide a basis for informed landscape-related decisions.

1.1 Landscape Character Assessment

Landscape character is the distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements that makes one landscape different from another. Variations in geology, soils, landform, land use, vegetation, field boundaries, settlement patterns and building styles all help give rise to different landscapes, each with its own distinctive character and sense of place.

These differences are the product of both natural and human influences. Within the study area there is enormous landscape diversity, including (from north to south) the smooth, rounded uplands of the Cheviots; the wild Border moors and forests; the craggy sandstone hills around Simonside; the distinctive linear landscapes of the Tyne Gap and Hadrian’s Wall; and the contrasting pastoral dales and moorlands of the North Pennines. The varied rocks, landforms and climatic differences have influenced both the natural flora and fauna and the way the landscape has been populated, managed and used by people over the centuries.

Landscape character assessment involves mapping, classifying and describing these variations in landscape character. It also involves making judgements about the character and condition of the landscape, and analysing forces for change, to help us make informed decisions about how we should manage change in the future. In classifying the landscape two types of unit may be identified:

Landscape character types are landscapes with broadly similar combinations of geology, landform, vegetation, land use, field and settlement patterns. Landscapes belonging to a particular type – for example ‘Sandstone Upland Vales’ – may be found in many different places.

Landscape character areas are unique areas that are geographically discrete examples of a particular landscape character type. For example, the ‘Grasslees Valley’ is a landscape character area belonging to the ‘Sandstone Upland Valleys’ landscape character type. Landscape character areas share the same elements as the landscape character type, but also have their own individual character and identity.

The assessment adopts a holistic approach that considers the landscapes of Tynedale District and Northumberland National Park as a mosaic of different landscapes character types and landscape character areas, each with particular characteristics and subject to particular forces for change. It is intended to provide an understanding of the area’s landscape, through characterisation, together with advice on landscape change, through the preparation of strategy and guidelines material.
1.2 The Study Area

The landscape character assessment takes as its starting point the Character Map of England prepared in the mid 1990s by the then Countryside Commission (Countryside Commission, 1998). This maps and describes variations in the character of the English countryside, defining broad regional landscape character areas known as Countryside Character Areas.

The study area (Figure 1) includes all or part of eight Countryside Character Areas, and these provide the overarching framework for the assessment, which analyses the landscape at a more detailed level, delineating and describing the landscape character types and landscape character areas that occur within each of the Countryside Character Areas.

Administratively, the study area comprises Tynedale District plus all of Northumberland National Park, which in the north and east includes parts of Berwick-upon-Tweed District and Alnwick District. The area is bounded elsewhere by the Scottish unitary authority of Borders to the north-west, Cumbria to the west, Durham to the south, and Gateshead Borough and Castle Morpeth District to the east. Existing landscape character assessments for these areas (where available) and for the North Pennines AONB were consulted when preparing this assessment.

In practice the assessment extends a little beyond the study area boundary, to cover immediately adjoining landscapes (those within around 3 km of the study area boundary). It draws upon existing assessments for the neighbouring administrative areas, in an effort to ensure consistency of landscape classification where possible, and in order to provide an understanding of wider setting for the landscapes of the study area.

1.3 Purpose of the Landscape Character Assessment

The study area has a rich natural and built heritage that is recognised as a key economic and social as well as environmental asset. It includes many features of national and international importance, notably a section of the North Pennines UNESCO Geopark, the majority of the World Heritage Site of Hadrian’s Wall, and the exceptional upland and forest landscapes of the National Park. Much of the rest of the area has also been identified as being of high landscape importance at district level. However, up until now, there has been little or no landscape character assessment coverage for either the District or the National Park. The study responds to that need.

Both Tynedale District and Northumberland National Park are currently in the process of preparing their Local Development Frameworks (which will replace existing Local Plans) and have noted that Planning Policy Statement 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas (ODPM, 2002) and strategic policy in the North East region advocate the definition of landscape character areas and the use of landscape character assessments as a key tool for management, protection and enhancement of the area’s landscapes.

Hence the Local Development Framework Core Strategies for both authorities refer to the need for landscape character assessment. The assessment is intended to inform future planning decisions and will also provide the basis for a Landscape Strategy Supplementary Planning Document to be prepared by the National Park Authority. In addition it is envisaged that the landscape character assessment will be a reference source for future 1

1 Further details of existing assessments can be found in the Bibliography at the end of the report.
Figure 1: The Study Area

- Study Area
- Tynedale District
- Northumberland National Park
- England - Scotland Border
- Countryside Character Area

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revisions of the Northumberland National Park Management Plan and the North Pennines AONB Management Plan. Importantly, it should also help fulfil the landscape information requirements of a much wider range of user groups, including, for example, key landowners and managers such as the Forestry Commission and Defence Estates; those managing and promoting tourism within the District and the National Park; and developers such as housing and wind farm developers.

Specific objectives identified in the brief are:

- To provide an assessment and description of the character, distinctiveness and qualities of the landscape of Tynedale District and Northumberland National Park, identifying their component landscape character types and character areas;

- To identify factors of change that have influenced the landscape in the past, factors currently at play, and those which will influence change in the future, including outside factors which impact locally;

- To identify landscape character types and character areas which have the potential to be a strong attraction to tourists;

- To promote awareness of the landscape character and its social significance, particularly the importance of conservation, enhancement and restoration;

- To establish a knowledge base upon which informed and justified landscape-related decisions can be made.

1.4 Benefits of Landscape Character Assessment

Landscape character assessment can help us protect the environment while accommodating and influencing change. The English landscape has evolved over centuries, created as much by the activities of farmers and foresters, builders and miners as by the underlying physical forces of geology, soils and climate. It is not only a natural resource, on which we depend for our food and water, but also a cultural resource that evokes feelings, memories, associations and attachments, and a place we continue to live in, change and adapt to our needs.

Landscape character assessment can tell us what the landscape is like today, how it came to be the way it is now, and how it may change in future. It can help us to understand the sensitivity of different landscapes to development or to changes in the way they are managed, and so can inform the decisions that we make about change. It can enable us to identify priority areas for conservation, enhancement, restoration or renewal of the landscape and of specific landscape features. There are strong connections to the management of natural and cultural heritage features of geodiversity, biodiversity and historical importance. Landscape character assessment can help us to understand and see these features in their wider, landscape-scale context.

An awareness and understanding of landscape character can inform the way land management schemes and initiatives, such as the Environmental Stewardship Scheme and strategies for woodland expansion, are targeted and implemented, helping to optimise the landscape benefits of public expenditure. In addition, an understanding of the landscape can assist individual land managers, farmers and foresters in making day-to-day decisions that take account of landscape interests.
Landscape character assessment can also contribute to the sustainability of new development by assisting in the preparation of planning policies for developments such as housing, wind energy or minerals. It can inform decisions on where new development should go; and it can help developers assess the landscape impacts of their proposals and how they can be designed to be in keeping with the locality.

1.5 Methodology

The landscape character assessment has been prepared in accordance with accepted, systematic methods, and uses an evidence-based approach as outlined in the Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland (Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage, 2002). The first part of the study focused on landscape characterisation and culminated in the production of this Interim Report. The second part of the study addressed issues of landscape change, and included the production of landscape strategy and guidelines material and the preparation of a Final Report.

The main tasks at Interim Report stage were:

- Compilation of a wide range of mapped information about the study area into a geographical information systems (GIS) database for the project, including data on geology, landform, land cover, habitats, historic landscape character, natural and built heritage designations and tranquillity;
- Familiarisation with the study area through initial field visits, overlay mapping of GIS datasets, and desk study, including preparation of a draft landscape classification and compilation of background information onto field survey forms;
- Background research and reading on the natural and human influences that shaped the landscape, and ongoing changes due to development and changes in land use and land management;
- Field survey, including completion of field survey forms for each landscape character type and landscape character area, mapping of landscape character areas and landscape character types at 1:25,000 scale, and preparation of a photographic record;
- Discussions with key individuals and organisations to assist the team in understanding local landscape character and forces for change (see Annex 1 for a list of those who provided input);
- Preparation of descriptions of landscape character types and landscape character areas and the physical and human influences that have shaped their character.

At Final Report stage, further tasks undertaken were:

- Evaluation of the key features and qualities of each landscape character type, encompassing not just visual and aesthetic features but also physical, habitat, historic, built environment and recreational features, and cultural and perceptual qualities such as wildness and tranquillity;
- Study of the changes in the landscape that have taken place in the recent past and that may be expected to occur in the foreseeable future, through a combination of field observation and analysis of documentary sources of information on landscape change;
- Consideration, for each landscape character type, of the implications for landscape character and condition of different forms of land management, land use and development;
- Development of strategies and guidelines (both area-wide, and specific to particular landscape character types) for avoiding or minimising adverse landscape change and optimising beneficial landscape change.
1.6 Content and Structure of the Report

As indicated above, the landscape character assessment includes both a landscape characterisation (that is a classification and description of the landscape character types and landscape character areas) and landscape strategy and guidelines material (highlighting the key issues of change that affect each landscape, the appropriate landscape strategy e.g. conserve/ enhance/ restore, and the main actions that need to be taken to address the key issues).

The characterisation element of the landscape character assessment is relatively factual and value-free. However the strategy and guidelines material moves beyond characterisation to make judgements about the landscape and about landscape change that can be used to inform decisions on the landscape. This material is based largely on the professional views of the study team, informed by our analysis of landscape character, key environmental features, and the historical context for landscape change – but there is no assumption that maintenance (conservation) of existing landscape character is the best option.

Instead (and in accordance with the Landscape Character Assessment Guidance) the focus is on ensuring that development proposals or land use changes are planned and designed to achieve an appropriate relationship and ‘fit’ with their surroundings, contributing where possible to enhancement of the landscape, in some cases by creating a new character.

The remainder of this report is structured as follows:

**Section 2**, on the evolution of the landscape, provides an overview of the physical and human influences that have shaped the landscape. Distinctive geological, landform, historic, cultural, land use, habitat and built features are highlighted and their broad patterns are described.

**Section 3**, on the landscapes of Tynedale District and Northumberland National Park, describes the study area’s Countryside Character Areas and their component landscape character types and landscape character areas. For each landscape character type, key characteristics and a written description of the landscape, including physical and human influences, is provided. Information on forces for change and their potential impacts on the landscape, together with advice on how best to accommodate change in each landscape character type, is also included, to assist in land management and planning decisions that affect the landscape.

**Section 4** gives an overview of the key features and qualities of the landscapes of Tynedale District and Northumberland National Park. It discusses the principal changes affecting the area’s landscapes and where they occur. It explores their implications for landscape character, condition and values and indicates how they can be tackled, through discussion of strategic priorities and actions, and by making links to ongoing land management and planning initiatives and responsibilities.

The bibliography at the end of the report shows the sources that have been used in preparing the landscape character assessment, and indicates where additional information and guidance for landscape management and planning can be found.

The GIS database compiled during the study has been handed over to Tynedale District Council and Northumberland National Park Authority and forms a further reference source that can be used by the two authorities in conjunction with this landscape character assessment report.
2 THE EVOLUTION OF THE LANDSCAPE

The landscape of Tynedale District and Northumberland National Park has been shaped by the intricate interplay of physical influences (including geology, glaciation, landform, drainage and climate), with a range of human influences across the ages. This section examines the effects of these different factors on the evolution of the landscape that we see today and also gives an overview of the land cover, habitats, fields, settlements and buildings that characterise the modern landscape.

2.1 Physical Influences

2.1.1 Geology

The underlying solid geology of Tynedale District and Northumberland National Park (Figure 2) is comparatively simple. The northern third of the area is underlain largely by igneous rocks; the central band by sedimentary limestones and sandstones; and the southern third by gritstones and coal measures. The oldest rocks occur in the north; to the south and east progressively younger rocks are exposed at the surface. These rocks tilt to the south and east away from the Cheviots and form a series of alternating scarp and dip slopes, the more resistant strata tending to form higher ground or ‘cuestas’, particularly in the central part of the study area.

The oldest rocks in the area date from the Silurian period, 400 million years ago; they were formed from thick ocean sediments that today can be seen as outcrops in the stepped valley sides of the Rede and Coquet valleys on the edge of the Cheviots. The Cheviots themselves consist of igneous rocks derived from magma from the earth’s interior in the Devonian period, 380 million years ago, when the area was a centre of volcanic activity. At that time great drifts and layers of extruded lava, andesite, were spread over a wider area, while the massive molten core of the volcanoes was pushed up or intruded, cooled and solidified into granite.

Subsequent erosion of the overlying andesite has revealed the roof of this granite mass, which today forms the rounded tops of the Cheviot Hills. The andesite remains in the wider area around the hill tops, forming the rounded, pink-grey boulders that line the streams or burns and are used in dry stone walls within the Cheviots. Where molten magma came into contact with the overlying andesite, it baked it, forming a hardened metamorphic lava. Today the hardened rocks at this junction stand out as a ring or ‘aureole’ around the granite core. They give rise to an arc of prominent granite and metamorphosed rock bosses similar to the tors of Dartmoor, for example at Housy Craggs south of Harthope Burn. By contrast, the igneous rocks of the western Cheviots are more rounded and weathered. Minor intrusions of magma into fissures in the andesite and granite later formed dykes of felsite and porphyrite.

Around 350 million years ago, the Devonian period gave way to the Carboniferous. At this time the Cheviot massif became an island within a shallow tropical sea and layers of sedimentary limestones, sandstones, siltstones and mudstones were deposited in stratified form on river beds or in the sea. Over time, compaction of these sediments with pebbles formed the conglomerates and cementstones of the Cementstone group that can be seen at the foot of the Cheviots, for example in the Coquet gorge near Alwinton, and on the eastern edge of the Cheviots south of Wooler. South and east of these outliers, successively younger sedimentary strata crop out. One of the most prominent is the thick bed of Fell
Figure 2: Solid Geology

- ANDESITE
- TUFF
- BASALT
- BASALTIC LAVA
- BASALTIC PYROCLASTIC-ROCK
- DACITE
- BASALT, MARBLE TYPE
- DOLERITE
- Porphry
- QUARTZ-FELDSPAR Porphry
- Rhyolite
- Gneiss
- LIMESTONE
- LIMESTONE, ARGILLACEOUS ROCKS AND SUBORDINATE SANDSTONE, INTERBEDDED
- LIMESTONE, SANDSTONE, SILTSTONE AND MUDSTONE
- MUDSTONE, SANDSTONE AND LIMESTONE
- MUDSTONE, SILTSTONE AND SANDSTONE
- MUDSTONE, SILTSTONE, LIMESTONE AND SANDSTONE
- CONGLOMERATE
- SANDSTONE
- SANDSTONE & SUBORDINATE ARGILLACEOUS ROCKS, INTERBEDDED
- SANDSTONE, SILTSTONE AND DOLOMITIC LIMESTONE
- SANDSTONE AND CORNSTONE
- SANDSTONE AND MUDSTONE
- SANDSTONE AND SILTSTONE, INTERBEDDED
- SANDSTONE, SILTSTONE AND MUDSTONE
- UNDIVIDED CYCLIC SEDIMENTARY ROCKS

Geology data is derived from paper maps and shows discontinuities between map sheets.
Source:
British Geological Survey 2007

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Sandstone, laid down within the delta of a huge river system. This rock forms the sharp north- and east-facing scarps and cliffs, often with scree, that overlook the Coquet valley on the edge of the Simonside Hills and at Harbottle. The flatter tops of the Fell Sandstone form open plateaux, characterised by heather moorland, reflecting the strongly acidic character of the underlying rock.

South and east of the Fell Sandstone ridges, the landscape becomes less dramatic, although still underlain by layers of Carboniferous rock (including rocks of the Lower and Middle Limestone and Scremerston Coal groups). The rocks all across this central part of the study area comprise layers of limestone, shale, sandstone and coal, the latter formed from fossilised wetland vegetation. However, the surface limestone is limited and has little impact on the landscape. The coal seams too are modest and localised, although they did at one time support a number of drift mines in Redesdale and the upper North Tyne valley.

Towards the end of the Carboniferous period, around 300 million years ago, important changes took place. In the Cheviots the whole massif was pushed up by further volcanic activity. Radial faults appeared, creating channels along which rivers would later run and forming the region’s distinctive radial drainage pattern. At the same time, molten magma was pushed up into fissures in the surrounding sedimentary rocks south of the Cheviots, and a thick new ridge of igneous material was laid underground. This material – dolerite – was exposed by erosion of the overlying rocks to create one of the area’s most important landscape features, the Great Whin Sill. The sill, upon which Hadrian’s Wall was built, is more resistant than the surrounding Carboniferous rocks, and runs as a narrow, rolling east-west ridge north of the Tyne valley before turning north-eastwards (and away from the Wall) in the area west of the North Tyne valley. The dolerite cooled quickly and, like the Giant’s Causeway in Northern Ireland, formed hexagonal columns, which can be seen in exposures such as those at Cawfields quarry near Haltwhistle.

South of the Tyne corridor, rocks of Carboniferous age again underlie most of the landscape, but in this area sit more horizontally. The Stublick fault marks the northern edge of the North Pennines, where resistant Millstone Grit sandstones form wide flat plateaux broken by deep river dales, whose sides are benched and stepped, as weak and resistant mudstones, sandstones and limestones crop out successively. There are also Middle Coal Measures lying at or close to the surface along a line south of the Tyne valley between the River South Tyne and Hexham and around Prudhoe in the extreme south-east of the study area. These strata have supported coal mining in the past.

2.1.2 Glaciation

During the Quaternary period, from around 2.6 million years ago, the underlying rocks of the study area were heavily modified by the effects of glaciation. During this period the climate fluctuated markedly, the ice reaching its maximum extent only 20,000 years ago, when a vast ice sheet covered much of northern Britain. At this time, all of the study area with the exception of some parts of the Cheviots and North Pennines was covered by ice moving in an easterly or south-easterly direction. On the northern flanks of the Cheviots there may also have been small corrie and valley glaciers, and erosion by these glaciers probably created the trough shape of the College valley for example. Boulders and in some cases extensive rafts of rock were detached from their beds and dragged forward by the ice sheet, then deposited some distance away as erratics – the Kielder Stone, a huge sandstone erratic on the Kielderhead Moors, is an example. Over much of the area the bedrock was covered with glacial till, generally thin and sandy on the upland plateaux, but thicker and heavier on lower ground and in the dales.
The ice streams were particularly strong through the Tyne Gap, from which ice escaped eastwards, carving a glacial trough. This erosional deepening subsequently encouraged tributary rivers such as the River Allen to cut down and form deeply incised river courses. Between the Tyne corridor and the southern margin of the Cheviot Hills, the ice also flowed eastwards, more or less parallel with the east-west strike of the rocks. Here the ice sheet erosion streamlined and accentuated the cuesta landforms, particularly in the vicinity of Hadrian’s Wall. The ice also scoured and lowered the weaker rocks, notably next to the Whin Sill, where it formed basins that were later infilled by loughs, meres and peat bogs. In the North Pennines the western sides of the dales (for example South Tynedale and Allendale), which were in the lee of the ice, received the thickest deposits of till, while the eastern sides of the dales, facing the ice, were often steepened and benched by erosion, giving the dales as a whole asymmetric profiles. A similar but less pronounced effect can be seen in parts of the Cheviots, for example in upper Coquetdale.

Later, as the ice retreated, there was extensive deposition by glacial meltwaters. On the eastern edge of the Cheviots, near Whooperton, the meltwaters deposited irregular sand and gravel deposits and left behind kettle holes; while north of Wooler, a delta flowing into a vast meltwater lake formed a wide, level terrace of sand and gravel within the River Glen valley on the edge of the Milfield Plain. In the Tyne valley, sands and gravels deposited by the decaying ice formed a moundsy topography of kames, eskers and intervening hollows, for example in the floor of the South Tyne valley west of Hexham.

Escaping meltwaters sometimes created new side valleys or cut through solid rock, creating the meltwater channels that can be seen in parts of the study area. Examples are at Humbleton and Yeavering in the Cheviots, where the ends of spurs have been severed from the main mass of the hills; and at Sycamore Gap, where meltwaters cut through the Whin Sill. The freeze-thaw effects associated with the glacial period probably also contributed to the formation of the conspicuous rock bosses or tors that ring the Cheviot Hills.

2.1.3 Landform, drainage and climate

Tynedale District and Northumberland National Park include three separate sets of uplands (Figure 3): the Cheviot Hills in the north, rising to 815m above sea level and made of granite and volcanic rocks; the mainly sandstone hills and ridges in the middle, reaching their highest point at Simonside, 430m high; and the plateau and dale country of the North Pennines in the south, which generally reaches around 600m along the south-western boundary of Tynedale District, which follows the watershed between the Rivers Tyne and Wear. Between these upland areas there are wide intermediate zones of lower land, concentrated within the principal river valleys, notably that of the River Tyne.

Reflecting both their volcanic origins and later glacial influences, the Cheviots have at their heart a smooth, sinuous cluster of hills, surrounded by a wild, open, windswept landscape with broad moorland plateaux. The hills are visible from modest elevations over much of the study area. They are dissected by deep ravines or cleughs, radiating out from the centre, and on the northern hill flanks there are rocky outcrops with dramatic steep slopes that contrast strongly with the agricultural valley and plain landscapes around the eastern fringes of the hills. The rivers include College Burn, Harthope Burn and the River Breamish, which drain northwards to the Tweed; and further south the Aln and Coquet, which breach the Fell Sandstone ridge and flow eastwards to the North Sea. To the west, around Redesdale Forest, Kielderhead Moor and Kielder Forest, are extensive areas of large-scale, high, rolling or undulating plateau, with expanses of sweeping moorland. These areas are drained by the Rivers Rede and the North Tyne, which form broad valleys enclosed by low moorland hills and drain southwards to the Tyne.
The Simonside and Harbottle Hills, comprising Fell Sandstones, form distinctive, angular skyline features with generally level tops, north-west facing scarps, and craggy outcrops with exceptional views. The scarps fringe the southern and western sides of the Coquet valley. Southwards, around Kirkwhelpington, this range of hills continues but becomes a lower, more rolling, upland fringe plateau. Its east-west ridges and valleys (which sometimes have a wetland character), open out to the south and east, merging gradually with the broader, flatter landscapes of mid Northumberland.

Just north of the Tyne corridor, the sandstone and dolerite crags (the latter associated with the Whin Sill) form notable landscape features. There are also a number of small reservoirs in this area, and a network of small rivers and streams in narrow gorges with crags, loughs and mires.

South again, the Tyne valley forms a narrow east-west lowland corridor that runs through a gap in the Pennines. It is visually contained by the parallel scarps of the Whin Sill to the north and the North Pennines to the south. This latter area is characterised by high north-south moorland ridges divided by the broad, pastoral upper dales of the Rivers South Tyne, Allen and Devil’s Water. The corridors of these rivers are incised in their lower, northern reaches, where they join the glacial trough of the Tyne Gap. The alternating mudstones, sandstones and limestones give a stepped profile to the hills and dalesides, while the Millstone Grits capping the higher fells form distinctive flat-topped summits. Further the east the landscape once again assumes an east-west grain as it descends to the Derwent Reservoir and river valley, then rises again where there the soft and thinly bedded sandstones, shales and coals, overlain by boulder clay on the lower valley slopes of the Tyne, give rise to gently rounded ridges with occasional steeper bluffs.

In climatic terms, Northumberland is the coldest part of England, the upland areas being particularly cool and exposed. Although by British standards most of lowland Northumberland is rather dry owing to the rain shadow effect of the Pennines, the tops of the Pennines and the Cheviot are significantly wetter, and also receive the heaviest falls of snow. The relatively high rainfall in these upland areas, combined with low temperatures, is sufficient to promote extensive peat and blanket bog accumulation on the higher Pennine plateaux and the main Cheviot summit ridges. On the steep slopes around the edges of the Cheviot light, acid, podzolic soils have developed. Much of the rest of the study area is characterised by seasonally waterlogged gley soils on the widespread glacial tills, with better drained brown soils generally occurring in lower rainfall areas and on the lighter glacial and alluvial drifts within the main river valleys. Both soil types are suitable for cultivation, but the gleys require drainage if cultivation is to be maintained.

2.2 Human Influences

2.2.1 Prehistoric

Following the end of the Ice Age, Northumberland was colonised by trees which eventually formed a dense cover of deciduous woodland, dominated by oak and hazel. Gradually, in prehistoric times, humans undertook clearance of the woodland and engaged in increasingly intensive land use.

During the Mesolithic period (c 8000-4000 BC), the tree cover remained largely intact, although locally interrupted by the use of fire to drive game and enlarge the forest glades. The Mesolithic peoples, who were hunter-gatherers, may have had base camps in the river valleys, moving inland and into the uplands in a seasonal cycle to follow wild cattle and fisheries. It is possible that the tree-line on the Cheviots and Pennines was lowered in this
way and permanent moorland initiated. There is some evidence within the study area of Mesolithic activity, for example at Yeavering Bell and on the edge of Milfield Plain in the Cheviots, as well as in the North Pennines, although in general there are few visible traces of Mesolithic activity in the landscape.

In the Neolithic period that followed (c 4000-2000 BC), reliance on hunting began to be replaced by domestication of animals and cropping. Settlers extended the processes of tree clearance and seasonal exploitation of the uplands; these influences, combined with climate change, led to the development of moors and peat bogs on the Cheviots and in the North Pennines. At this time there appear to have been many small scale settlements at the edge of the Milfield Plain and also in Tynedale. The earliest visible monuments dating from this period are the long cairns, which are communal linear burial monuments, examples of which can be seen at Bellsheil Law in Redesdale and at the Devil’s Lapful at Kielder.

Later monuments from the Neolithic period include standing stones and henges. Remnants of substantial stone circles can still be seen in the Cheviots at Hethpool and Threestoneburn. However, not all standing stones were in circle form: some were in rows (the Five Kings in upper Coquetdale) or in pairs (the Mare and Foal near Cawfields). Henges, that is circular banks with internal ditches enclosing a central ‘sacred’ space, were particularly common on the north-eastern edge of the Cheviots, for example at Yeavering and Coupland. These ceremonial monuments were linked with the wider landscape, for example framing views. Other ritual sites worthy of mention are the mysterious panels of rock art, or cup and ring marks, which occur at many places on the Fell Sandstones and elsewhere, notably at Lordenshaws, south of Rothbury, where there is an outstanding complex of rock carvings.

The study area includes some of the most important Bronze Age (c 2000-800 BC) sites in Britain. Around a hundred settlements of one or more unenclosed roundhouses have been recorded in Northumberland, the vast majority in the Cheviots, for instance at Standrop Rig and Houseleidge. In places, such as in the north-east Cheviots around Humbleton Hill and Fredden Hill, extensive Bronze Age field systems, representing the first large-scale agricultural exploitation of the uplands, can still be explored today. Dating from this period also are many massive hilltop round cairns, notably at Simonside (very close to the Lordenshaws rock art); Thirlmoor in upper Coquetdale; Callerhues Crag above Bellingham; and Sewingshields, just north of Hadrian’s Wall. All of these are dramatically located to be visible from afar, and remain prominent landscape features to this day. The hill top of Simonside, which is very distinctive and widely visible, probably formed a sacred site in prehistory. There have also been some important bog finds of bronze objects, for example from the wet mosses near Wallington and Whittingham on the south eastern edge of the study area; these may be associated with burials.

In the Iron Age (c 800 BC-79 AD), more efficient agricultural implements and weapons of war, as well as a deteriorating climate, appear to have brought major changes in social organisation. Upland settlements of undefended timber roundhouses were abandoned and gradually replaced first by timber-framed ramparts of earth and stone, and later by substantial dry stone walls or concentric banks. Well-known examples of such Iron Age hillforts within the study area include Yeavering Bell and Humbleton Hill, both in the Cheviots, Harehaugh Camp in Coquetdale, and forts at Warden Hill and Wall in North Tynedale. There is a particular concentration of such forts – which are believed to have been both defensive refuges and statements of prestige by native clans – in the northern half of the study area; they are much less common further south. This may reflect tribal groupings at the time.

Many Iron Age hillfort sites have associated earthwork remains of timber roundhouses and agricultural terraces, lynches and ridges. The evidence for Iron Age agriculture comes largely in the form of ‘cord rig’, that is very narrow, spade-dug cultivation ridges, usually no
more than 1.4 m apart and easily distinguished from medieval rig (or ridge) and furrow. These can be seen, for example, in upper Coquetdale, where they were positioned to take advantage of the relatively fertile soils overlying the Cheviot andesites; and south of Hadrian’s Wall. Iron Age field systems can also be seen in the Tyne valley east of Corbridge.

2.2.2 Roman

The Roman period (79-410 AD) began in this area when the Romans moved north to Scotland under the command of Agricola. By this time the lowlands were probably open, farmed and divided into small fields divided by hedgerows; in the uplands the boundaries consisted of stone walls. Plenty of woodland remained, particularly on steep slopes.

Dere Street, which can still be seen today running along the line of the A68 and then across the hills through what is now the Otterburn military training area, was constructed to facilitate the advance to Scotland. This most northerly stretch of Dere Street contains one of the most extraordinary concentrations of Roman marching camps to be seen anywhere in the Roman Empire. The remote site at Chew Green – a large and highly visible group of Roman earthworks on an exposed hillside – is especially remarkable for its complexity, its remote location, and the fact that it is overlain by medieval enclosures. At this time also much of the other Roman infrastructure of the region was also established, notably the Stanegate, the Roman road from Corbridge to Carlisle; and the Roman fort of Vindolanda, on the Stanegate, which remained in commission throughout the Roman period.

Agricola’s initiative to conquer Scotland was a failure, and in the period 100-120 AD a new frontier emerged just north of the Stanegate, the Roman road from Corbridge to Carlisle. Following his accession as emperor in 117 AD, Hadrian took the decision to build a wall in this area to consolidate the frontier. The initial phase of wall building from coast to coast took place in the period 122-138 AD and dramatically changed the landscape over a wide area.

The Hadrianic frontier consisted of a number of elements, of which the wall itself was just one. Immediately to the north of the wall, except where it followed the precipitous crags of the Whin Sill in its spectacular central section, there was a substantial ditch and mound. In the Northumberland, the wall itself was built in sandstone, stood about 4m high and was possibly surmounted by a wall-walk and parapet (further west, in Cumbria, it was initially built in turf and later rebuilt in stone). Every Roman mile there were small fortlets known as milecastles, which provided access through the wall. Forts were added to the line of the wall at about 10km intervals. Some of the most impressive and best preserved of these lie within the study area, for example at Housesteads, which has substantial visible remains and a rugged landscape setting. To the south of the wall lay the vallum, a massive ditch with banks to north and south, intended to demarcate the military zone and possibly provide some protection from the south.

The impact of the frontier on the landscape must have been exacerbated by the construction works themselves, and in particular by the vast demand for timber and building stone. There appears to have been rapid forest clearance in some areas (for example east of Housesteads) and quarrying of sandstone all along the route. Remains of Roman quarrying can still be seen today in some areas, such as on Thorngrafton Common.

The wider influence of the wall on the landscape of the area surrounding it is also evident across much of the study area. To the north of the wall, the wild hills of north Northumberland at this time had clusters of Romano-British settlement, for example in North Tynedale and Redesdale, often associated with large tracts of cord rig fields that can be
seen to this day. Given that up to around 30,000 troops manned the wall at any one time, these fields may well have been used, at least in part, for the cultivation of grain for the Roman forces. It appears that there was also a symbiotic relationship between the Britons and the Romans in the area just south of the wall, where extensive civilian settlements or vici grew up, dependent on the army for their livelihoods.

From the middle of the fourth century, however, the Roman world in Britain was in decline as the Roman Empire’s capacity to manage its northern frontier diminished. By the fifth century, the Roman army and the way of life associated with it had disappeared from Northumberland. Production fell back to pre-Roman levels; secondary woodland regenerated over Romano-British fields, and many centuries were to elapse before these early fields were cleared and cultivated again in medieval times.

### 2.2.3 Medieval

The early medieval period (410-1066 AD) saw relatively little change in the way people lived their lives, although there were major shifts in settlement pattern. In the earliest post-Roman phase, sometimes called the Dark Age, the Anglian kingdom of Northumbria, established after invasion by the Angles and other Germanic raiders, covered the whole of the study area and was ruled from Bamburgh. This period witnessed a change from a settlement pattern based largely on Roman forts, vici and Romano-British farmsteads with roundhouses, to a system of lowland hamlets and villages, many of which still survive today. By the seventh century, these would have consisted of clusters of timber houses, sometimes around timber churches, as this period also saw the rise of Christianity. It is generally thought that the land at this time was divided into townships (parishes after Christianity was adopted), which in turn were grouped into shires.

The kingdom of Northumbria was converted initially to the Celtic and then to the Roman Church in the mid seventh century. At this time, a magnificent monastery was built at Hexham, parts of which survive beneath the present-day abbey. Church influence was also evident further north, where the Lindisfarne monastery is believed to have owned land in the Cheviots at the Breamish valley. Although stone crosses from this period can still be seen in parts of the study area, very little of the early fabric of the monasteries at Hexham or Lindisfarne survived the catastrophic destruction caused by Viking raids and invasions in the ninth century. The religious community that had been based at Lindisfarne relocated southwards, eventually settling at Durham towards the end of the tenth century, where it amassed great wealth and land holdings.

In the ninth and tenth centuries, much of Northumbria fell to the Danes and the Norse. It appears that there was relatively little Viking settlement in the areas north of the Tyne Gap, although further south, in the North Pennines, place name and other evidence suggests more widespread Viking settlement, particularly in moorland areas, where transhumance was practised. By the early eleventh century, the kingdom of Northumbria had been reduced in status to an earldom, part of the new kingdom of England, and southward expansion of the kingdom of Scotland to the River Tweed had divided Northumbria in two. This new Anglo-Scottish Border would dominate life in the region for centuries to come.

The late medieval period (1066-1603 AD) saw a series of great changes in people’s lives and in the landscape. These were associated with the consolidation of Norman control after the Conquest, which was followed by a century of relative peace and prosperity and then by three centuries of Anglo-Scottish and internal conflict. Effectively, this meant that much of Northumberland was a lawless waste at what was a very formative time for most English landscapes.
Under William the Conqueror, a feudal system was established whereby land was granted to a small number of loyal barons, who built substantial castles, originally in timber but soon in stone, and established hunting forests in the Cheviots, Coquetdale, Redesdale and North Tynedale. This land holding system of ‘baronies’ and ‘liberties’ affected the land north of the Tyne more radically than land to the south, where religious control as part of the Bishopric of Wilfred (covering Allendale, Mid Tynedale, Devil’s Water and north-west Hexhamshire) was allowed to remain. In this part of the study area the church, and particularly the monastic orders, were very influential, notably at Blanchland in the North Pennines, where the Premonstratensian order founded a monastery. This area was also characterised by vaccaries (cattle ranches) and medieval parks.

The agricultural landscape in the thirteenth century would have been one of villages, largely with timber buildings, surrounded by rig and furrow open field systems. Beyond the fields around each village were areas of common pasture, woodland and waste. While the medieval population was concentrated in villages and hamlets, the hills, which contained the remains of so many late prehistoric hillforts and settlements, were occupied seasonally, the summer ‘sheilings’ or pastures having associated temporary dwellings. A system of drove roads, focused on Roman Dere Street, and connecting southwards to Elsdon, provided important links to Scotland and a route for driving Highland cattle to market.

In 1296, however, Edward I attacked Scotland, initiating a period of fighting between the two counties that lasted until the Union of the two Crowns in 1603. As well as major battles such as Otterburn in 1388 and Flodden in 1513, there was constant raiding or ‘reiving’ across the border; and policies encouraging people to defend themselves encouraged local feuding between powerful families. The result was great suffering and poverty. The area’s medieval villages were blighted by Scottish raids, a deteriorating climate (a ‘little Ice Age’ that lasted for five or six centuries) and the Black Death. These and later other factors (see below) led to the abandonment and shrinkage of many villages. At the same time, however, wealthier families built defensible hall houses and towers or peles of distinctive style (such as the bleak, solid structures of Thirlwall and Aydon Castles, both in the Tyne valley), and major defensive structures such as the Norman castle at Prudhoe were strengthened. Later, towards the end of the sixteenth century, hundreds of bastle houses (fortified farmhouses) were built, all to the same blueprint and usually within 30km of the border; many of these survive today.

Although the feuding and reiving diminished after the Union, it is fair to say that it took centuries for the Border hills to recover their peace and prosperity. Border ballads, passed down by word of mouth through the generations, still recall the harsh times of the Border reivers.

### 2.2.4 Post-medieval

The post-medieval period, from the seventeenth century until the end of the nineteenth century, initially saw the reoccupation of old Border sheiling grounds, such as those in upper Coquetdale, and resumption of the cross-border cattle trade, as law enforcement strengthened. Elsewhere, landowners gradually set about improving large areas which had previously been subject to raids by the reivers. The Jacobite uprising of 1745, while having little direct impact on the study area, had unfortunate consequences for Hadrian’s Wall. The uprising revealed difficulty in moving troops through the Tyne corridor, and to overcome this problem, General Wade’s military road was built, using (and hence obliterating) the remains of Hadrian’s Wall for much of its route between Newcastle and Sewingshields, where the wall rises onto the crags of the Whin Sill.
As noted earlier, shrinking and desertion of villages was apparent from the late medieval period onward, accompanied by consolidation and enclosure of open field strip holdings. However, most of the desertion occurred in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, as a by-product of the wider agrarian improvements. Enclosure, either by private agreement or manorial decree, was well underway for the more fertile landscapes of the study area before the parliamentary enclosures of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries which were the main force for change further south in England. Deserted medieval villages and associated rig and furrow are, to this day, prominent landscape features in many parts of the study area, widely seen for example along the A68 between Otterburn and Corbridge. Northumberland is recognised to have one of the most marked concentrations of such features in the country.

By the end of the eighteenth century, large areas of common land within the hills were also being enclosed, this time by Act of Parliament. Vast expanses of moor in Hadrian’s Wall country, North Tynedale, Redesdale, Coquetdale and Hexham and Allendale Commons were enclosed in this way in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the commoners being awarded parcels of land in exchange, hence encouraging the expansion of permanent settlement into the traditional shieling grounds. The end result is that, unlike most other upland areas of England, the Cheviot uplands contain virtually no common land. This is in strong contrast to the North Pennines part of the study area, where areas of common land remain as remnants of the medieval manorial system, embracing substantial tracts of high moorland.

Lowland enclosures were generally hedges and upland enclosures stone, walls, the nature of the walls varying according to the available local stone. The process of enclosure enabled the improvement of individual fields by draining, burning, ploughing and liming. Extensive clay tile drainage occurred in the wet uplands; while lime kilns produced quicklime that was used to improve the quality of both pasture and arable land.

The wealth generated by agricultural improvements and enclosures was used to build or enlarge existing country houses, and bastle houses were adapted for more peaceful conditions. Some of the finest houses and parks from this period are concentrated in North Tynedale. Hesleyside Hall, Chipchase Castle and Kielder Castle, the latter built as a hunting lodge by the Duke of Northumberland, are examples. More settled conditions and growing industrial wealth also promoted the development of country house estates in the Tyne valley, particularly in the area east of Hexham. The parkland, avenues, plantations, shelterbelts and shooting coverts associated with these estates had – and continue to have – a strong influence on the landscape.

At this time, the rural housing stock of the study area was extremely poor, most buildings being built of timber and mud, with roofs of ‘black’ heather thatch or turf. Gradually throughout the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, these houses were replaced by stone cottages, sometimes within planned estate villages, and by sturdy farmhouses whose roofs initially were local stone flags, or pantiles in the north Cheviots. However, with the coming of the railways Welsh roof slates became more common.

The area was well served by railways. The Newcastle to Carlisle line, running east-west, offered connections southwards to Allendale and Alston; the Border Counties Railway ran up North Tynedale to Scotland; and there was a further connection from the coast at Blyth via Morpeth, to Woodburn, Bellingham and the Border Counties Railway.

The railways supported the area’s emerging industrial activity. North of the Tyne corridor, the industry was relatively localised in areas such as Ridsdale (West Woodburn) and Hareshaw (on the moorlands above Bellingham), which had substantial nineteenth century iron works. Commercial coal mining also took place from the seventeenth century onwards at Haltwhistle, Elsdon and in the North Tyne valley. South of the Tyne corridor industrial
activity was much more widespread. Extensive lead (and silver) mines had opened from the medieval period onwards, drawing settlement from the valley floors to the higher orefields, and reaching a peak in the mid-nineteenth century. Areas particularly affected were Langley, Allendale, Allenheads, West Allen and the Derwent valley near Blanchland, where in the late eighteenth century the trustees of the estates of the Bishop of Durham built a planned village for lead miners around the monastic remains.

The remains of lead mining and processing are extensive, reflecting centuries of activity, and including spoil heaps, shafts, adits, mine buildings of various kinds and, most dramatically, the scars left by hushing, where streams have been dammed and water released to expose the underlying mineral deposits. The lead mining companies gave their employees smallholdings, and in extensive areas there developed patchworks of small geometric walled enclosures, improved by liming, and attendant cottages or farmsteads. These distinctive, patterned ‘miner-farmer’ enclosures are most frequently found at the heads of the dales, in areas that would otherwise be inhospitable to farming. As the mining industry declined, from the late nineteenth century, the mines and smelt mills were closed and the many mining features fell into decay, while the smallholdings and high field enclosures were abandoned or absorbed into larger farms or estates.

Further east, near Prudhoe, the landscape of the Tyne corridor was also heavily influenced by coal mining, including opencast coal mining, on the edge of the Durham coalfield, although much of its legacy has been removed by land reclamation in recent years.

2.2.5 Twentieth century

Compared to many parts of England, the twentieth century brought modest landscape changes to the study area. Agriculture – mainly sheep and suckler cows – continued to be the mainstay of the economy, as they had been in previous centuries, and farming centred on isolated farming communities in the uplands and more prosperous estates in the lowland areas. The overall appearance of the landscape was one of enclosed pasture and in-bye land clustered around sparse farm and village settlement, with vast swathes of open moorland beyond, often used for sporting purposes. In the 1970s, when grants were available for ‘improvement’ of agricultural land, some areas on the upland fringe were enclosed, drained and ploughed, but by the end of the twentieth century these changes had largely ceased, with a new emphasis on environmental measures and on reinstatement of heather moorland.

Major road construction, with the exception of the A69 through the Tyne Gap, was very limited, a factor that brought an unusual degree of tranquillity to the area. While the Newcastle-Carlisle Railway remained, the Border Counties Railway closed in the 1950s. The area experienced remarkably little industrialisation, with the exception of the prominent papermill at Prudhoe and chipboard factory on the outskirts of Hexham. Quarrying affected a few areas, notably near Biddleston on the southern outskirts of the Cheviot Hills, where red whinstone (a mica-porphyrite with a distinctive red colour) is extracted; and land around Barrasford, Swinburne and Bavington in the east of the study area, where hard rock quarries exploit the whinstone of the Great Whin Sill.

However, three new activities markedly changed the appearance and character of the landscape during the twentieth century. These were forestry, water supply and military use.

In 1919, the Forestry Commission was set up to ensure that the nation was never short of timber, and planting of Kielder Forest commenced near Falstone in the North Tyne valley in 1926. By the 1980s, when the planting reached its full extent, the new forest, largely of Sitka spruce, extended from Redesdale in the north to Wark, just north of Hadrian’s Wall, in the
south. It covered an area of over 50,000 hectares and formed one of the largest man-made forests in Europe. Other parts of the study area, notably at Harwood, Simonside, Harbottle and Kidland, also saw the creation of large new forestry plantations. A number of new settlements of terraced houses, at Byrness, Kielder, Falstone and Stonehaugh, were constructed in the 1950s to house forest workers. These remain today, and have a very distinctive character.

The construction of reservoirs during the twentieth century also had a huge landscape impact. In 1905 the area’s first major water supply reservoir was completed at Catcleugh in Redesdale. This, together with Kielder reservoir which opened in 1982 in upper Tynedale, and Derwent reservoir on the southern edge of Tynedale District, are the most prominent water supply features in the study area, although there are also a number of smaller reservoirs in the hills to the east of the North Tyne valley. Most of these reservoirs are now managed at least partly for recreation.

Military training within the area began in 1912 at Redesdale Camp and expanded during the Second World War at Otterburn Camp to the south, on land that had earlier seen extensive Roman military use. After the war Otterburn was developed as a permanent site for military training. Covering the whole area between Redesdale and Coquetdale, the estate extends to some 23,000 hectares, including accommodation, workshops and other buildings as well as firing ranges and artillery training grounds. There are, inevitably, planning and access issues, but great care has been taken to manage the estate’s important habitats and extensive archaeological landscapes in a sensitive manner.

Last but not least, the national landscape and recreational importance of much of the study area was formally recognised in 1956 when Northumberland National Park was designated, extending from Hadrian’s Wall in the south to the Cheviot in the north and including much of North Tynedale, Redesdale and Coquetdale, as well as the Otterburn military training area, but excluding most of Kielder Forest. This was followed by the designation of the North Pennines as an AONB (and hence of national landscape importance) in 1978. Together these landscapes cover more than half of the study area and are managed with conservation interests to the fore.

2.3 The Modern Landscape

2.3.1 Land cover

Today the landscape of Tynedale District and Northumberland National Park is predominantly rural. In terms of land cover (see Figure 4), the upland north, west and south of the area are mainly forest, moor, heath and rough grassland; while the lowland centre and east are dominated by improved pasture and arable land.

There is a strong contrast between the moorland and hill areas, where the isolated farms and hamlets have little or no arable land, and the more favoured valleys, plains and scarplands, where there are larger areas of arable land associated with larger nucleated villages. The poorer quality hill and plateau land supports sheep and cattle rearing; in areas such as the Tyne valley, where the land is of better quality, some mixed farming occurs; but overall the landscape is mainly a pastoral one. Urban development is focused on the Tyne corridor, particularly in the east, and there is little or no industrial land use except in the Tyne valley near Prudhoe, on the eastern edge of the study area.

The highest tops of the moors and fells are covered with peat bog, which is particularly extensive on the high plateau tops of the North Pennines. Elsewhere there is a mix of rough
Corine Land Cover

- Discontinuous urban fabric
- Industrial or commercial units
- Mineral extraction sites
- Dump sites
- Sport and leisure facilities
- Non-irrigated arable land
- Pastures
- Complex cultivation patterns
- Land principally occupied by agriculture, with significant areas of natural vegetation
- Broad-leaved forest
- Coniferous forest
- Mixed forest
- Natural grasslands
- Moors and heathland
- Transitional woodland-shrub
- Bare rocks
- Inland marshes
- Peat bogs
- Water bodies

Ancient Woodland Inventory

- Ancient & Semi-Natural Woodland
- Ancient Replanted Woodland

Corine Land Cover 2000 data is derived from satellite data rather than field survey information. For further information visit: http://www.eea.europa.eu

Source:
Corine land cover, United Kingdom, NERC, 2004
EEA, Copenhagen, 2007

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grassland (or white moor) and heather (or black moor) on the hill sides and slopes. White moor tends to dominate on the Cheviots, and black moor on the Fell Sandstone Hills and in the Pennines. Hence to local people these two types of landscape are known respectively as ‘the white country’ and ‘the black country’. Many of the moors today – particularly the black moors – support grouse shooting.

Woodland cover, which is mainly coniferous or mixed, is strongly concentrated in the Kielder area and in parts of the Cheviots and Simonside Hills; there is a further concentration of forests on the moorlands north of Derwent Water. Otherwise woodland cover over most of the study area is relatively low – around 5% – with very few broadleaved or semi-natural woodland in most areas except the North Pennine valleys. Throughout the area, but especially in the Tyne valley, there are many small estate and shelterbelt plantings on the valley sides.

2.3.2 Habitats

The northern part of the study area forms part of Natural England’s Border Uplands Natural Area; while the southern part belongs to the North Pennines Natural area (English Nature, undated).

In the Border Uplands, much of the bedrock is covered by layers of peat and glacial drift which give rise to the extensive open landscape of moorland and blanket bog seen on the Cheviot Hills and outlying moors. Farming is dominated by sheep and cattle, with game management becoming increasingly important at higher altitudes. Agricultural improvement, heavy grazing and drainage locally give rise to acidic grasslands and extensive areas of purple moor grass-dominated moors. The remaining heather moors are of high ecological value. The Border mires, centred around Kielder Forest, occur where lenses of peat have formed in hollows in the undulating topography.

The North Pennines, with their distinctive block of high, exposed moorland and sheltered lowland dales, have a particular combination of rocks, soils, rainfall and altitude and human influences that has created expansive moorlands, grasslands and flower-rich meadows. Here upland bogs blanket the open moorland and mosaics of heather, cotton-grass, bilberry, bracken and acid grassland cover the hill slopes, attracting large numbers of insects together with waders and birds of prey. In contrast to the upland moorland, the semi-improved pastures and hay meadows of the dales contain flower-rich meadows. Alder, ash and oak woodland are found in sheltered areas, gorges and valley sides.

Key habitats of the study area as a whole include blanket bog or mire, often of international importance, and characteristic of the high undulating plateaux. Bogs and mires also occur at lower levels, as in the Border mires. These lower mires tend to be wetter, and their character and plant communities vary according to the underlying rock type. Heather and grass moorlands occur in combination with the blanket bog and mire, and cover large areas, particularly on the lower hills and more free-draining substrates in the Cheviots, Fell Sandstone hills and on the slopes of the North Pennines. Where heather is dominant the moors are usually managed for grouse shooting by rotational burning. Where grazing (usually sheep) is heavier, the heather gives way to a range of acid grasslands and bracken.

On the Whin Sill, the thin soils support an unusual and specialised flora of acid grassland species in close association with species more characteristic of calcareous grassland. Rushy pasture, an important habitat for breeding birds, occurs as a mosaic of acid and neutral, wet and dry semi-improved grassland within enclosed, marginal farmland that is grazed by cattle and sheep at varying densities throughout the year. The area’s northern hay meadows, found in valleys throughout the study area, are recognised as a rare and
extremely localized habitat of international importance, linked with traditional low intensity pastoral agriculture in upland and upland fringe areas. Most of such meadows are annually cut for hay and some may be grazed lightly as pasture. They characteristically contain a wide range of grasses and herbs, and can also be attractive to bird life, including yellow wagtail, skylark, grey partridge, redshank, curlew, snipe and in the past corncrake.

Broadleaved woodland habitats are often confined to river valleys and stream sides within the incised cleughs and denes that occur in many parts of the area. Most of the woods are mixed oak woods, sessile and pedunculate oak occurring together. Associated species in the more upland areas include birch, hazel, mountain ash, bird cherry. In the lower reaches ash is more common and sycamore is a frequent coloniser or has been planted. Alder is also typical of the upland woods on the stream sides. In places juniper scrub can still be found associated with upland woodland communities.

The study area includes several rivers, such as the Coquet, that are of high nature conservation interest, supporting otters, water voles, freshwater pearl mussels, lampreys, water crowfoot beds and metalliferous vegetation. They are generally of high water quality. In the vicinity of the Roman wall is a series of natural water bodies of some wetland conservation interest, with a range of associated habitats including reed swamp, fen and basin mires. Further to the east, in drier conditions and at lower altitudes, are rain-fed mires and mosses where the build up of vegetation gives the mires a raised profile; here heathers and cotton grasses are the dominant plant species, together with sphagnum mosses.

2.3.3 Field patterns and boundaries

The historic landscape character map for the study area (see Figure 5) indicates, among other things, the broad differences in field patterns and types that occur across the study area. The map, prepared as part of a historic landscape characterisation project undertaken by Northumberland County Council, Northumberland National Park Authority and English Heritage in parallel with this landscape character assessment, classifies the landscapes that we see today in terms of their predominant historic character and origins. The field patterns and boundaries in the study area date from many periods and include both ancient and modern features. Many survive from the medieval landscape, and even from earlier periods, but the landscape is dominated by hedgerows and walls established in successive periods of enclosure between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Ancient hedges may be found along old parish and township boundaries and along old roads and lanes. Early townfield enclosures – often irregular in pattern or following the curved alignment of arable strips – are a feature of the lowlands and land close to upland villages. Within the study area, they are concentrated around the fringes of the Cheviots and in the river valleys, where they are shown in orange. Later enclosures, shown in blue, are found in the former wastes of the upland fringes, particularly in the southern part of the study area, where enclosure of land on the moorland fringe continued into the twentieth century. The map also reveals concentrations of parklands (moss green) within the river valleys, particularly those of the River Tyne and its tributaries.

Hedgerows are generally characteristic of the lowlands, while walls are characteristic of the uplands and upland fringes. Parts of the study area, such as in Redesdale and around Elsdon, have large sod cast dykes or banks probably post-medieval in age. Hedgerow tree cover varies considerably, with abundant hedgerow trees in the older field systems of the dales, notably those in the southern half of the study area. In the more intensively farmed landscapes of the eastern part of the Tyne valley, field and hedgerow trees are relatively scarce, except within the estate parklands.
Figure 5: Historic Landscape Character Types

- Pre-1860s settlement
- Late 19th century settlement
- 20th century settlement
- Surveyed fields
- Piecemeal enclosure
- Other irregular fields
- Late 19th century fields
- 20th century restored fields
- Other 20th century fields
- Other small fields
- Military base
- Military airfield
- Medieval fortification
- Roman fortification
- Mineral extraction (disused)
- Mineral extraction (active)
- Industry (disused)
- Industry (active)
- Communications
- Ancient woodland
- Pre-1860 woodland
- Late C19 and C20 woodland
- Coastal
- Moorland
- Rough grassland
- Moss
- Horticulture and other farming
- Schools and civic areas
- Parkland
- Golf course
- Recreation
- Water

Based on final draft as at June 2007
Particular types of field pattern are distinctive to different parts of the study area. In the Cheviots, villages and hamlets often retain in-field patterns of great antiquity, used for the more intensive cropping; distinctive patterns of intake from the surrounding moorland can also be seen. The uplands, enclosed in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, have large rectangular, fields generally enclosed by stone walls or dykes; and ancient tracks give access to the higher ground for summer grazing. A similar pattern prevails on the Fell Sandstone hills. On the Border Moors, cross-ridge dykes, sheep stells and other scattered enclosures are seen within a largely open landscape.

The lower parts of Redesdale and North Tynedale are marked by large regular eighteenth and nineteenth century fields divided by walls and fences, with earlier, hedged enclosures near settlements. In the Tyne valley itself, the pastures and arable fields of the valley floor are regular, broad and divided by hedgerows; while the valley sides have pastures divided by stone walls. In the North Pennines, the early, irregular, hedged enclosures of the valley bottoms (in-bye) are complemented by walled hay meadows at higher levels (out-bye), with extensive open commons above. Overlaid on these patterns, at the dale heads, are the small patterned enclosures of the miner-farmer smallholdings.

2.3.4 Settlement and buildings

In the western and southern parts of the area, on the edges of the Cheviots and Pennines, settlement has always been sparse and has tended to consist of isolated farmsteads and small hamlets; larger nucleated settlements are generally absent except where railways, mining and quarrying have encouraged the development of larger settlements. The character of these larger settlements varies but many, like Allendale, have features from the industrial period such as miners’ cottages and chapels clustered around a core of older buildings. The later forestry settlements such as Stonehaugh are also very distinctive.

In the valley and lowland areas to the east, nucleated villages of medieval origins, formerly surrounded by open fields, are the main element of the settlement pattern, although within the study area, the villages are relatively small and often show signs of shrinkage since medieval times. Many of these villages, such as Elsdon, have a strong historic character and are centred on a village green. In some areas, such as upper Coquetdale, there are villages that may have later, planned origins associated with the post-medieval period of agricultural improvement. These planned settlements often have two regular rows of house plots (tofts or garths) facing each other across roads or greens.

Larger towns, notably Hexham, Corbridge and Prudhoe can be found in the Tyne valley, near the most fertile agricultural land and river crossing points, and generally have ancient origins. These tend to have a greater diversity of building ages, styles and materials than the rest of the study area, reflecting proximity to the main transport corridor and the availability of a wider range of materials by rail.

Nonetheless, the vast majority of buildings of all kinds within the study area are made of sandstone, and this has a strong unifying landscape influence. The only areas that differ are the Wooler district and the valleys that cut deep into the Cheviots, where local granite is used; and the south eastern edge of the area, around Prudhoe, where Victorian brick and render can be seen. The sandstone varies in colour from pink and red (in the north east) to buff (over most of the area), and weathers well. It was usually laid as random rubble, although the more prosperous farmhouses, particularly in the east, are of dressed stone.

Much of the building stock dates from the extensive rebuilding of rural housing stock that took place from the late eighteenth century onwards. The most common form of construction is sandstone with slate roofs, replacing earlier buildings of timber, mud and
heather thatch. Heather thatch is now extremely rare, although it can still be seen in a few buildings in the Bardon Mill area. Roofs of sandstone flags are still common in parts and were formerly more widespread, particularly in the North Pennines and as far north as Bellingham. In the north east, in the Cheviots and other areas near the coastal plain, pantile can be found. Elsewhere roofs are generally of Welsh slate or, in the north, rougher Scottish slate.

Farmsteads in the region display massive differences in terms of scale, with a number of very distinctive building types. These include, near the Scottish border, defensive bastle and byre houses, where cattle were housed on the ground floor with domestic living space above; longhouses of linear plan, dating from the eighteenth and nineteenth century and occurring north of the Tyne valley as well as in the North Pennines; and later, nineteenth century, courtyard plans in the more prosperous lowland areas, where the house was separated from the farmyard by a wall and roadway and separate cottages were sometimes provided for farm workers.
3 UNDERSTANDING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AND GUIDING CHANGE

3.1 The Landscape Classification

Variations in the character of the landscape can be mapped and described at a range of scales from the national to the very local. A hierarchical approach was taken to the classification of the landscape, with landscape character types and landscape character areas being identified at three different scales.

First, at regional level, are the Countryside Character Areas (Countryside Commission, 1998), whose broad-brush boundaries have been refined and more precisely drawn as part of this study, given its more detailed level of assessment. Nonetheless, at this broad scale the boundaries between different landscapes tend to be somewhat blurred – they are zones of transition, rather than firm lines on the ground.

Next, at local authority level, are the landscape character types. Each has broadly similar patterns of geology, landform, soils, vegetation, land use, settlement and field patterns. Landscapes belonging to a particular type may be found in different parts of a Countryside Character Area, and share the overarching character and identity of the Countryside Character Area.

Finally, at a more local level, the landscape character areas are unique, geographically specific, units of a particular landscape character type, which share the same elements as the landscape character type, but at the same time have their own individual character and identity.

The boundaries of the landscape character types and landscape character areas, while more finely drawn than those of the Countryside Character Areas, may also in some cases represent transitions rather than clear and visible lines on the ground.

Figure 6 and Table 1 below show the assessment hierarchy and the location and distribution of the landscape character types and landscape character areas that have been defined. For ease of reference by the two client authorities, the locations of the landscape character types by administrative area are indicated in Table 2.

Care has been taken to consider landscapes beyond the study area (i.e. beyond the boundary of Tynedale District and Northumberland National Park) to ensure compatibility with existing character assessments and provide an understanding of those landscapes that form the setting to the study area. However, peripheral landscapes have not been considered in the same level of detail as those wholly or substantially within the study area.

The remainder of this section of the report characterises and describes each of the Countryside Character Areas and their component landscape character types and landscape character areas. For each landscape character type – the principal unit within the classification for management and planning purposes – we also present strategy and guidelines material, including an appraisal of the landscape’s key features and qualities, information on forces for change and their potential impacts on the landscape, and advice on how best to accommodate change in that landscape character type.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Countryside Character Area</th>
<th>Landscape Character Type</th>
<th>Landscape Character Area</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cheviots</td>
<td>1. Upland Burn Valleys</td>
<td>C1a. College Valley</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C1b. Harthope Valley</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>C1c. Breamish Valley</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C1d. Upper Coquet Valley</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Rounded Hills</td>
<td>C2a. Cheviot Rounded Hills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheviot Fringe</td>
<td>3. Foothills and Fringe Valleys</td>
<td>CF3a. Northern Hills, Bowmont Water and Glendale</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>CF3b. River Glen and Till Plain</td>
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<td>CF3c. Wooler Hills and Happy Valley</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>CF3d. Ingram Hills and Breamish Valley</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>CF3e. Upper Coquetdale (Alwinton)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>4. Estate Farmland</td>
<td>CF4a. Whittingham Valley</td>
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<tr>
<td>Border Moors and Forests</td>
<td>5. Rolling Uplands</td>
<td>BMF5a. Otterburn Plateau</td>
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<td>BMF5b. Cottonshope Valley</td>
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<td>BMF5c. Kelly’s Pike to Callerhues Crag</td>
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<td>BMF5d. Shillington and Ealinghamrigg Commons</td>
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<td>BMF6b. Kielder Reservoir</td>
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<td></td>
<td>7. Rolling Upland Valleys</td>
<td>BMF7a. Redesdale</td>
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<td>BMF7b. Otterburn and Elsdon Valley</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>BMF7c. Bellingham and Woodburn Valleys</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>BMF7d. Upper North Tyne Valley</td>
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<tr>
<td>Northumberland Sandstone Hills</td>
<td>8. Outcrop Hills and Escarpment</td>
<td>NSH8a. Harbottle Hills</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>NSH8b. Cartington Hills</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>NSH8c. Simonside Hills</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>NSH8d. Sweethope and Blackdown</td>
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<td>NSH9b. Grasslees Valley</td>
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<td>NSH9c. Coquet Valley (Rothbury)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>10. Upland Fringe Farmland</td>
<td>NSH10a. Longwithton Ridge</td>
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<td></td>
<td>NSH10b. Buteland and Colt Crag</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mid Northumberland</td>
<td>11. Intermediate Rolling Farmland</td>
<td>MN11a. Font and Wansbeck Valleys</td>
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<td>MN11b. Inghoe Moor Estates</td>
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<td>13. Tributary Valley</td>
<td>TGHW13a. Erring Burn Tributary</td>
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<td></td>
<td>14. Parallel Ridges and Commons</td>
<td>TGHW14a. Thirlwall Common</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>TGHW14b. Haltwhistle, Melkridge and Ridley Commons</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>TGHW14c. Haughton and Simonburn Commons</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Region/Feature</td>
<td>Notes</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| 15. | Upland Commons and Farmland | TGHW15a. Eastern North Tyne Slopes  
TGHW 15b. Grindon Common  
TGHW15c. Featherstone Common  
TGHW 15d. Lowes and Nobback Fells  
TGHW15e. Acomb Ridge |
TGHW 16b. Newborough to Corbridge  
TGHW 16c. Corbridge to Wylam |
| 17. | Glacial Trough - valley sides | TGHW 17a. Tipalt Burn  
TGHW 17b. Haltwistle to Bridge End  
TGHW 17c. Acomb to Ovington  
TGHW 17d. Ovington to Wylam  
TGHW 17e. North Plenmeller Common  
TGHW 17f. Langley to Stocksfield  
TGHW 17g. Stocksfield to Prudhoe |
| **North Pennines** | | |
| 19. | Lower Dale | NP19a. Lower South Tyne  
NP19b. Lower Allenheads  
NP19c. Lower Derwent |
| 20. | Middle Dale | NP20a. Middle South Tyne  
NP20b. Middle East Allen  
NP20c. Middle West Allen  
NP20d. Middle Devil's Water  
NP20e. Middle Derwent |
NP21b. Upper West Allen  
NP21c. Upper Derwent |
| 22. | Moorland Ridges and Summits | NP22a. Hartleyburn Common  
NP22b. Whitefield Moor  
NP22c. Allen Common and Mohope/Acton Moors  
NP22d. Hexhamshire and Bulbeck Commons |
| 23. | Farmed River Valleys | NP23a. Devil's Water and Hinterland  
NP23b. Dipton Wood and Slaley |
| **Durham Coalfield Pennine Fringe** | | |
| 25. | Coalfield Upland Fringe | DCPF25a. Prudhoe Hinterland  
DCPF25b. Kiln Pit Hill Hinterland |
Table 2: Landscape Character Types by Administrative Area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Landscape character types occurring in the part of Tynedale District that lies outside Northumberland National Park:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7. Rolling Upland Valleys</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Outcrop Hills and Escarpment</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. Upland Fringe Farmland</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. Intermediate Rolling Farmland</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. Broad Wooded Valley</td>
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<tr>
<td>13. Tributary Valley</td>
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<tr>
<td>14. Parallel Ridges and Commons</td>
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<tr>
<td>15. Upland Commons and Farmland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Glacial Trough - valley floor</td>
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<td>17. Glacial Trough - valley sides</td>
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<tr>
<td>18. Basin Valley and Fringes</td>
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<tr>
<td>19. Lower Dale</td>
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<tr>
<td>20. Middle Dale</td>
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<tr>
<td>21. Upper Dale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Moorland Ridges and Summits</td>
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<tr>
<td>23. Farmed River Valleys</td>
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<tr>
<td>24. Upland Farmland and Plantations</td>
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<tr>
<td>25. Coalfield Upland Fringe</td>
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<td>26. Coalfield Valley</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Landscape character types occurring in the area of overlap between Tynedale District and Northumberland National Park:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5. Rolling Uplands</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Moorland Forestry Mosaic</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Rolling Upland Valleys</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. Broad Wooded Valley</td>
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<td>14. Parallel Ridges and Commons</td>
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<tr>
<td>15. Upland Commons and Farmland</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Landscape character types occurring in the part of Northumberland National Park that lies outside Tynedale District:</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Upland Burn Valleys</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Rounded Hills</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Foothills and Fringe Valleys</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Moorland Forestry Mosaic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Rolling Upland Valleys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Outcrop Hills and Escarpment</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Sandstone Upland Valleys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Parallel Ridges and Commons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Upland Commons and Farmland</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Landscape character types that are mainly or wholly peripheral to the study area:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4. Estate Farmland</td>
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</table>

Detailed 1:100,000 scale mapping of the landscape character types and landscape character areas and the administrative boundaries of Tynedale District and Northumberland National Park can be found on the map in the back pocket of this report.
3.2 Cheviots

The Cheviot Hills are part of the wild upland plateaux of the Northumberland moors on the Scottish border which extend across the English/Scottish boarder. They form distinctive, smooth, rounded hills rising to the west of the lowland belt of the Cheviot Fringe. The Character Area lies almost wholly within Northumberland National Park but outside Tynedale District.

- This smooth, sinuous cluster of hills of volcanic origin rises to over 800m AOD and forms a wild, open, windswept landscape with broad moorland horizons.
- There are extensive rolling plateaux of semi-natural grass moor and heather moorland.
- On the northern flanks of the hills are deep ravines and rocky outcrops with dramatic scree slopes, glacial meltwater channels and ice-gouged hollows.
- Coniferous woodland plantations occur on some upper valley slopes where they tend to interrupt the smooth lines of an otherwise open, rounded landscape.
- Steep-sided valleys with fast-flowing burns radiate outwards and have relict semi-natural broadleaved woodland (oak, birch, alder and hazel) and gorse scrub.
- The summit is characterised by mixed areas of blanket bog and heather and by the sculpted forms of granitic ‘tors’; the treeless upper hillsides have coarse ‘white’ grassland and dwarf shrub heath moorland.
- The lower, steeper slopes have a greener appearance indicative of more productive grassland, but show signs of bracken invasion.
- The hills are largely open although the lower slopes have large regular fields defined by dry stone walls or ‘dykes’ dating from parliamentary enclosures.
- The open moorland plateaux are managed as grouse moors and for grazing by distinctive white-faced Cheviot and black-faced Border sheep; there are also elusive wild goats.
- Better quality grassland on the lower slopes is grazed by both beef cattle and sheep.
- There are rare arctic-alpine flora on the scree slopes and species-rich semi-natural grasslands and wet flushes in the valleys e.g. the Coquet valley.
- The valleys also provide sheltered sites for dispersed farmsteads and small hamlets on strategic sites, sometimes with medieval fortified buildings.
- Traditional buildings are commonly of sandstone and slate; but clay pantile roofs are a distinctive feature of the northern valleys.
- The well-preserved remains of extensive tracts of prehistoric landscape (hillforts, settlements and prehistoric field systems) can be clearly seen; the hills are also criss-crossed by ancient Roman tracks and border drove roads.
- There are no modern-day cross-border roads through the Cheviots, however, and this helps maintain a sense of isolation and wilderness.
- Perceptions of remoteness and solitude are affected by military training, as the southwestern part of the Character Area lies within the Otterburn Training Area.
Landscape character type 1: Upland Burn Valleys

Characterisation

Key characteristics

- Steeply-incised valleys radiating outwards though rounded hills.
- Fast flowing burns over rock-strewn beds of pink-grey andesite boulders.
- Narrow floodplain or haugh in lower reaches and alder trees typically lining watercourse.
- Scree slopes, rocky outcrops and patches of gorse scrub and bracken on valley sides.
- Areas of in-byre pasture defined by stone walls in places, with open grass moorland on steeper slopes above.
- Isolated farmsteads accessed by unenclosed roads or tracks.
- Significant Bronze Age, Iron Age and medieval archaeology including terraces, cairns, hut circles, field boundaries and deserted villages.
- Sense of enclosure derived from steep valley topography.
- Tranquil valleys with a strong upland, remote character.

Description

This character type is located within the rounded hills of the Cheviots which form the northern part of Northumberland National Park. The type comprises steep-sided burn valleys which have cut into the underlying igneous rocks along fault lines. The edges of the type are defined by the break of slope above the valley sides which visually contain the valley landscape.

The underlying geology is evident both on the scree slopes of the steep valley sides and on the valley floor where the pink-grey colour of the andesite boulders is characteristic. On the valley sides it is possible to discern former raised river terraces which illustrate glacial meltwater erosion. Up above, on the upper smooth grassland slopes, there is evidence of natural springs, which in places have caused localised landslips. Overall the valley profiles are often complex, with overlapping spurs of land within the valley bottoms.

Land cover is mainly open matt-grass moorland, with some patches of heather and bilberry principally on the steep and upper slopes which extend beyond the valley into the Rounded Hills landscape character type. The smooth grassland cover is complemented by areas of in-byre pasture on the lower slopes and species-rich meadow in places on the valley floors. Pastures are small in scale, comprising improved or semi-improved grassland and defined by stone walls, with occasional post and wire fencing. Added to this general pattern are
mosaics of gorse and bracken (reflecting the acidic soils) and patches of broadleaved and coniferous woodland (age and extent varying between valleys) on the valley sides. Less frequently, there are patches of downy birch and juniper woodland on the upper slopes and in the hope (tributary) valleys. On the valley floor and along the burns there are typically lines of alder trees. Collectively the land cover and vegetation patterns give rise to a richly coloured and textured landscape.

This is a pastoral landscape grazed by sheep and feral goats, the latter having been introduced to the Cheviots in the Victorian period. The grazing tradition is reflected in the dispersed pattern of farmsteads within the valley and the numerous circular sheep enclosures or stells which are characteristic features. Historically these valleys have been occupied since prehistoric times. Evidence of continuity of settlement and farming is found in the earthwork patterns and traces of prehistoric hut circles, field boundaries, terraces and cairns (often on upper slopes and surrounding higher ground) as well as later deserted medieval sites on lower slopes and valley floor. Medieval sites reflect the growth of settlement in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries and subsequent depopulation as a result of reiving and Scottish raids. There is a concentration not just of archaeological sites but also of associated historic relict landscape features within this landscape character type.

The water quality of the burns is high and they are important for salmon, sea trout, otter and mink. The valleys are also important for Curlew, whose haunting call can be heard across the hills, Sparrowhawk and Merlin. In spring Dotterel and Snow Bunting are some of the special visitors migrating through the hills.

Today each valley can be accessed to some extent by a single unenclosed metalled road or track, but significant parts of the College and Breamish valleys are accessible only on foot. This inaccessibility and the surrounding high, rounded, open moorland hills give rise to a strong sense of relative wildness and remoteness. Views out of the valleys are limited, reinforcing their enclosed and sheltered nature, but in places there are memorable views to the Cheviot and from the upper slopes there are extensive panoramas across the surrounding hills.

**Landscape character areas**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C1a</th>
<th>College Valley</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This valley is orientated north-south, extending some 8km from the hamlet of Westnewton to the foot of the Cheviot. Side valleys or hopes run off at right angles to the main valley. This is a relatively well-wooded burn valley, reflecting its history and management as part of the College Valley Estate. There are prominent coniferous plantations on the valley sides (extending into the Rolling Hills landscape character type) as well as areas of semi-natural woodland (e.g. Harrowbog Wood). A management plan for the estate reflects the desire to gradually replace extensive coniferous plantations with a mix of broadleaved species and heather moorland. Access to the valley is via a metalled road as far as Hethpool. Beyond this point, access is possible on foot or with a vehicle permit. This valley has a rich cultural heritage with many archaeological features and earthworks dating to the prehistoric period that are revealed in certain light conditions and under snow cover.</td>
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<tr>
<th>C1b</th>
<th>Harthope Valley</th>
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<tr>
<td>This is a narrow, secretive valley accessed via the village of Middleton Mill. Like College Valley, it extends into the hills as far as the foot of the Cheviot. The orientation and relatively simple form of this valley mean that it has some of the most memorable views to the Cheviot. Native alder and birch woodland in the valley floor and along the burn is a notable characteristic of this valley. Bracken and gorse can be found to flank the valley sides, giving rise to attractive russet and gold colouration in winter. There are only a few small coniferous plantations within this valley, and little native woodland beyond that on the valley floor. In its lower reaches, the valley has a relatively wide haugh, supporting improved pastures and areas of alder carr woodland, through which the burn meanders. This valley is popular with walkers, cyclists and bird watchers.</td>
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<th>C1c</th>
<th>Breamish Valley</th>
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<tr>
<td>The Breamish Valley extends into the Cheviots from the village of Ingram, taking a sinuous course that weaves between hills such as Hartside Hill and Meggrims Knowe. In its lower reaches the floodplain or haugh is well</td>
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</table>
defined and open, with gorse and bracken on the valley sides. South of Hartside Hill the valley becomes more enclosed by steeper topography. Blocks of coniferous woodland (often with abrupt straight edges) extend down the valley sides from the hills above. With the exception of the coniferous woodlands the valley generally lacks any significant tree cover. The Breamish Valley has an exceptional concentration of archaeological remains that illustrate a high level of prehistoric activity in this, the most studied of all of the Cheviot burn valleys. In the upper reaches of the valley there are a number of dispersed farmsteads with in-bye pastures. These contrast with the simple, rounded, grass moorland hills beyond.

C1d. Upper Coquet Valley
The Coquet Valley is the longest of the Cheviot valleys, extending from near Alwinton to Barrowburn. The character of this valley is distinguished from others in the Cheviots by the influence of the Otterburn Training Area, of which it forms a part, and by the use of the valley for military training over the years. The effects include the introduction of white metal bridges across the burn, the construction of a number of 1960s houses adjacent to older farm steadings, and the regular use of the access road for military vehicles. Nevertheless, the remote, upland character of the burn valley remains strong and is particularly important for its species rich hay meadows. The steep valley sides are clothed in matt-grass with occasional areas of in-bye improved pasture; and overall the valley has a simple and empty character. Woodland is limited although recent planting of deciduous species along tributary burns and valleys is will bring change in time. The one extensive area of coniferous woodland – Carshope Plantation – gives blanket cover to a significant valley flank and will present a felling challenge in future. At Barrow Scar and Coquet Scar near Alwinton the exposure and banding of sedimentary rocks can clearly be seen, contrasting with the smoother rounded hills of the Cheviots to the north. There are interesting archaeological sites from the medieval period, including the deserted medieval village of Limbrigg.

Strategy and Guidelines

Key features and qualities

- **Distinctive patterns of land use**, including species-rich valley floor hay meadows on haughs, areas of in-bye on valley sides and open grass moorland above. These patterns, along with patches of gorse, bracken and alder-lined burns, gives rise to a high scenic quality.
- **Geological and geomorphological features** such as rock outcrops and scree slopes that form local visual focal points and are important as habitat for rare arctic and alpine flora. For example Harthope Burn SSSI is designated for its geomorphological features, as are Barrow Scar and Coquet Scar in Coquet Valley.
- **Semi-natural broadleaved woodlands**, including areas of oak/ash wood pasture. These woodlands make a significant visual contribution to the valley sides together with native alder and birch within the valley floor and along tributary valleys. Many of these woodlands are designated for their nature conservation value as SSSIs, for example woodland in the College valley comprising mixed broadleaved woodland and alder along the river; and woodland in the Coquet valley which is associated with lush marginal river vegetation and has a diverse canopy and understorey.
- **Local vernacular farm buildings, stone walls and stells** that are built of local stone, reflect the underlying geology and act as important visual focal points.
- **A wealth of historic structures and features** scattered throughout area, many being scheduled monuments, such as the stone circles and homesteads in the College valley and hut circles and relic settlement patterns in the Breamish Valley.
- **Important access routes into remote areas** of the Northumberland National Park. The burns act as corridors to the upland areas and the Cheviot, often offering unique and outstanding views of the highest peaks.
- **Tranquillity**, derived from the predominantly rural character of the landscape, lack of obvious man-made structures, presence of adjacent open moorland and limited vehicular access.

Local forces for change and their landscape implications

- **Conifer plantations on valley sides and upper slopes** may locally affect this landscape character type, creating dark heavy skyline features or abrupt straight edges running across the contours that may disguise topography.
- **Lack of semi-natural woodland management and renewal** may result in the decline and loss of areas of ancient semi-natural woodland and wood pasture, particularly where woodland trees are of even age.
- **Warmer wetter climatic conditions and insufficient management/clearance** may cause an increase in areas of bracken.
- **Lack of stone wall and stell management and inappropriate hedgerow planting** may lead to a weakening of the enclosure pattern and local features.
• **Introduction of new farm buildings** may affect the unity of traditional vernacular and buildings styles which are a cohesive element of this landscape.

• **Growth of tourism** to the valleys may increase pressure for car parks, signage, vehicular access and erosion of footpaths and result in gradual suburbanisation and loss of tranquillity.

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**Strategy**

These valleys have a tranquil and sheltered character providing access to the upland areas beyond. Their relative inaccessibility and remote character require conservation and enhancement through appropriate management and limited development.

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**Guidelines for land management**

**Forestry and woodland**

Future felling of coniferous plantations should seek to reduce their visual dominance on the valley slopes, either through removal or through restructuring with broadleaved planting. New planting of coniferous woodland should be avoided.

Encourage the regeneration of semi-natural woodland and wood pasture on valley slopes and tributary valleys, in order to diversify the age structure of the woodlands and retain characteristic patterns of woodland in the landscape. Appropriate protection from overgrazing is paramount.

Ensure that new deciduous woodland (oak/ash) planting focuses on tributary valleys and along burns (alder) and follows the natural flow of contours. Protect new planting without creating significant visual intrusion through use of rabbit guards or extensive areas of fencing. Planting should avoid masking areas of downy birch and juniper scrub or rocky outcrops and scree slopes which are local focal points and important for nature conservation.

**Farming**

Encourage the retention of hay meadows on the valley haughs through appropriate management agreements involving the avoidance of herbicides and fertilisers to retain visual diversity of valleys.

Encourage appropriate management of bracken and gorse to ensure it does not become overly invasive and dominant on valley sides.

**Field boundaries**

Hedgerow planting is not characteristic of this landscape type and should be avoided.

**Rivers and wetland**

Manage alder woodland and wet woodland/scrub adjacent to and along watercourses through rotational coppice, select felling and replanting where necessary.

**Historic sites**

Conservation of historic sites and structures, which act as local focal points and reinforce local distinctiveness in each of the valleys, is important. Further survey work to record the diversity and distribution of buried archaeology, earthworks and structures should be encouraged and further information made available to land managers and visitors alike.

New rural development should reflect the local farmstead vernacular in terms of building materials, scale and location. Where inappropriate development has occurred in the past, measures should be taken to ameliorate visual impact or the removal of structures altogether.

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**Guidelines for development**

**Tourism and recreation**

Avoid the proliferation of recreation and tourism infrastructure (e.g. improved road access, passing places, car parks, signage, litter bins and interpretation) and ensure it is sensitively designed, low key and does not exert a semi-urbanising influence on this landscape type.

**Military training**

Encourage the removal of infrastructure (including 1960s houses) that are no longer in use or signage which is no longer required in order to reduce the visual impact of human activity in these remote upland valleys.
Energy and telecommunications
Man-made vertical structures which detract from the valley landform, create visual clutter or adversely affect the unfettered rounded skylines which form the distinctive setting to these valleys should be avoided.
Landscape character type 2: Rounded Hills

Characterisation

Key characteristics

- Cluster of smooth, domed hills forming a distinctive horizon.
- Underlying geology comprising layers of extruded lavas and a central massif of granite.
- Extensive rolling plateau of heather and matt-grass moorland creating ‘black moors’ and ‘white moors’.
- Visually simple landscape due to topography and uniform vegetation.
- Little or no tree cover except along shallow burn heads, and in areas where there are blocks of coniferous plantation.
- Numerous relict prehistoric landscapes, Roman roads and forts, medieval field systems, and drove routes important during the period of border conflict.
- Strong sense of wilderness derived from simplicity, openness, little to no settlement and little access except on foot.

Description

Located in the north of the Northumberland National Park, this landscape character type stretches from the Coquet Valley in the south to Kilham Hill in the north and continues seamlessly across the border into Scotland. These hills vary in height from approximately 300m AOD to the Cheviot peak at 815m AOD.

The volcanic origins of the hills give rise to distinctive geology and topography. They comprise layer upon layer of extruded lava (mainly andesite) and a later central lens-shaped dome or laccolith of granite. Although rocky outcrops are rare, where the granite and andesite meet there is an ‘aureole’ of hardened meta-lava. This baked andesite is more resistant to erosion and is evident in the landscape today as a ring of distinctive rocky tors such as those found at Schil and Housey Crags, which mark the edge of the granite core. Other laccoliths or intrusions of magma are also evident such as Harden Quarry where the Harden red or red whinstone is quarried for road stone.

In addition to these solid geological characteristics, the landscape has been altered by glacial and post-glacial activity creating features such ice-gouged hollows or corries, evident at Bizzle and Hen Hole for example.

The gradual weathering of the andesite rock gives rise to relatively nutrient-rich soils. However the leaching of nutrients and high levels of sheep grazing have in many places
resulted in impoverished soils that support extensive areas of matt-grass and other coarse
grass moorland; these are the characteristic ‘white moors’. In other places, such as on the
crests of hills and plateaux, where drainage is poor, peat bog has developed, and cotton
grass, sedges, sphagnum moss and dwarf shrubs flourish. Areas of heather moorland and
cloudberry, known as the ‘black moors’ on account of their colour, occur where ground
conditions are drier and sheep grazing has been less intense. Collectively these land cover
types form extensive areas of semi-natural habitat that is often of high nature conservation
value.

Woodland cover is scarce, occurring as scattered oak/alder woodland on hill slopes, or birch
and rowan trees clinging to craggy outcrops. Nevertheless there are some extensive
coniferous plantation (such as Kidland Forest and Threestoneburn) which sit in stark
contrast with the surrounding open moorland.

The rounded hills are a largely unenclosed landscape that has traditionally been managed
for sheep grazing and more recently has become important for grouse. Feral goats also
graze the hills. Enclosures, where they occur, date to the seventeenth and eighteenth
century and take the form of andesite stone walls or dykes; but other evidence of past
human activity dates back as far as the Neolithic period. The relatively inaccessibility of this
area and lack of major change means that much of its archaeology is extremely well
preserved as relict landscapes, comprising settlements, funerary monuments, hillforts,
Roman forts (notably Chew Green) and roads, droveways and field systems. In certain light
conditions the ghostly shapes of these intact patterns are revealed.

The southern part of this landscape character type falls within the Otterburn Training Area, to
which access is restricted. Nevertheless, much of the area is important for walking and
recreation, the Pennine Way National Trail forming the most regularly-used route across the
area. This is a remote, wild, inhospitable upland landscape, within which weather conditions
can change rapidly. Its open simplicity offers extensive views but few distinctive landmarks.

Landscape character areas

C2a Cheviot Rounded Hills

Strategy and Guidelines

Key features and qualities

- **Distinctive white and black moors** reflecting the differences between the grass and heather moorland
  areas.
- **Open rounded topography** which has a visual simplicity and flowing form and offers panoramic unbroken
  views.
- **Unique tors** and geological features which stand out as key landmark features in an otherwise simple
  topography and which graphically reflect the underlying geological history of the area and some of which are
  designated as SSSIs e.g. Humbleton Hill and The Trows.
- **Extensive semi-natural habitats** including heather and grass moorland and blanket bog e.g. The Cheviot
  SSSI which covers an area of just under 3500 hectares.
- **A wealth of archaeology** in the form of buried remains and surface earthworks/features e.g. the Roman
  Fort of Chew Green and Romano-British settlement of Yeavering Bell.
- **Wildness and remoteness** derived from the area’s upland character, limited accessibility and lack of overt
  man-made features.

Local forces for change and their landscape implications

- **Extensive conifer plantations** may cover areas of upland landscape and extend into upper reaches of
  valleys and valley sides, creating dark features in an otherwise open expansive landscape.
- **Drainage of upland areas** for farming and forestry may result in a loss of peat bogs and wet flushes and a reduction in biodiversity.
- **Intensification of game management** may encourage increased moorland burning, higher game stocking levels and farming of introduced species such as red-legged partridge in wire pens.
- **Overgrazing of moorland and large scale burning** in some areas has caused loss of natural habitat (particularly blanket bog) and an increase in rough grass moorland although management of heather moorland for grouse has improved the upland heath habitats in some areas.
- **Drainage of moorland and planting of conifer plantations** has led in some areas to the loss of archaeological features.
- **Quarrying of natural stone resources** has caused localised scarring of the landscape.
- **Erosion of footpaths and summits** may affect areas of peat bog, necessitating remedial works along the Pennine Way and Cheviot summit.
- **Increasing off-road use of motorbikes and 4x4s** may cause erosion, noise and visual intrusion particularly on cross border routes.
- **Loss of tranquillity** may be caused by military training activity and increased visitor pressure.
- **Development of wind farms**, particularly in the Scottish Cheviots, may have visual impacts on this landscape, affecting its wilderness qualities and the setting of the Northumberland National Park.

### Strategy

This landscape is an open, remote and wild one, where the influences of man are generally not prominent, and where topography and vegetation create a visual simplicity. The rarity of these characteristics and their sensitivity to even very small changes suggest that the overall strategy for this area should be one of conservation and sensitive management.

### Guidelines for land management

**Forestry and woodland**

Future felling of coniferous plantations should seek to reduce their visual dominance on open moorland areas and upper reaches of valleys, by removal or replacement with broadleaved planting. New planting should reflect landform and contours.

Removal of uncharacteristic woodland planting, particularly coniferous shelterbelts on the valley floor and lower valley slopes, is also desirable in the long term. Where removal is not possible, opportunities should be sought to soften the impact of these woodlands by replanting with native species or by linking the woodlands to those within the tributary valleys.

Encourage the growth of birch and rowan regeneration particularly where it accentuates craggy outcrops. Protect from overgrazing where necessary.

**Farming and moorlands**

Encourage the management of heather moorland through maintenance of appropriate grazing levels and controlled burning. Seek opportunities to extend areas of heather moorland. Discourage the extensive use of wire pens for game stocking which may have significant cumulative visual impacts.

Avoid drainage of upland areas and where feasible encourage the blocking of drains and grips to help conserve upland bog habitats which are nationally rare.

**Historic sites**

Conservation of historic sites and structures, which act as local focal points and reinforce local distinctiveness in each of the valleys, is important. Further survey work to record the diversity and distribution of buried archaeology, earthworks and structures should be encouraged and further information made available to land managers and visitors alike.

**Recreation and access**

Manage access through this landscape, particularly at viewpoints and summits, to decrease pressure on fragile substrates and habitats.

Manage use of motorbikes and 4x4s through repair, restraint and regulation. Where off-road vehicular use conflicts with other recreational use and National Park purposes undertake impact assessments and monitoring to assist in overall management decisions.
Guidelines for development

Tourism and recreation
Ensure that tourism development is sustainable, sensitively utilises the landscape resource and brings socio-economic benefits to local communities.

Energy and telecommunications
Man-made vertical structures which detract from the open and rounded landform, or adversely affect uninterrupted skylines and unbroken panoramic views, should be avoided.

Care should be taken to prevent landscape and visual impacts associated with wind farm development, whether in Scotland and England, where it may adversely affect the special qualities and setting of the Park.
3.3 Cheviot Fringe

The Cheviot Fringe is a broad valley and plain landscape, which forms a belt of lowland wrapping round the Cheviots and separating them from the Northumberland Sandstone Hills to the east. A very small part of the area lies in Northumberland National Park, outside Tynedale District. Most of this Character Area is peripheral to the study area, but it forms an important part of the landscape setting of the National Park. Only those key characteristics that are relevant to the study area or its setting are listed below.

- This tranquil, agricultural, valley and plain landscape drains northwards to the Tweed and eastwards to the North Sea.
- It has many features shaped by glaciation, including drumlin fields within the valley lowlands, extensive clay and sand deposits in the Till plain and moraines, eskers and kames within the undulating valley of Whittingham.
- Rivers and streams are often tree-lined and meander between raised terraces and flat gravel benches.
- There is a rectilinear pattern of small coniferous woodland blocks and shelterbelts.
- The flatter, more open arable farmland to the north contrasts with the strong patchwork of mixed farmland, hedgerows and hedgerow trees within the valleys.
- Traditional buildings are generally of sandstone or sandstone rubble with clay tile or stone slate roofs.
- Fortified castles, ‘bastle houses’, ‘tower houses’ and other defensive structures are common.
- Small traditional villages are strategically sited at river bridging points and on the break of slope at the edge of the valley floor.
Landscape character type 3: Foothills and Fringe Valleys

Characterisation

Key characteristics

- Lower slopes and rounded outlier foothills of the Cheviot Hills and associated river valleys.
- Physical characteristics that reflect the junction between the andesite and the softer Carboniferous rocks.
- Evidence of glacial erosion and deposition.
- Lowland pastures divided by hawthorn hedges.
- Small Scots pine plantations, beech woodland, and occasional more extensive conifer shelterbelts on slopes of foothills.
- Clearly-defined valley floors, comprising open floodplain with wet pastures, meadows and meandering river courses.
- Settlements (villages and farmsteads) that tend to be sited at the gentle break in slope between the foothills and the valley floor.

Description

This landscape character type occurs around the outer edge of the Cheviot Hills, forming the immediate setting to the Rounded Hills landscape character type and the National Park. It includes the lower slopes of the Cheviot Hills, rounded outlier hills such as Moneylaws and Housedon Hills, and parts of the valleys of the Glen, Till, Harthope, Breamish and Coquet, which flow between them.

Geologically this type forms the interface between the edge of the volcanic andesite, which characterises the Cheviot Hills, and the Cementstone Group of Lower Carboniferous age comprising limestones, mudstones and sandstones. Glacial activity has had a significant influence on the visual character of the landscape. Fluvial and fluvio-glacial action deposited an extensive mantle of glacial drift across the valleys and lower slopes, forming steep bluffs (now often cloaked in broadleaved woodland) and meltwater channels such as those which can be seen below Yeavering Bell.

Gentle undulations at the edge of the valley floor reflect the presence of glacial deposits such as raised terraces and gravel benches. The substantial flow of meltwater also caused water to build up and become trapped in low lying areas, forming extensive inland lakes. The flat valley floor of the Glen and Till Plain was formed in this way and contains valuable sand and gravel deposits as a consequence.
Over these glacial deposits, the rivers meander between shingle and gravel bars, their courses often lined with alder or willow. In some places there are also patches of gorse and bracken, both within the valley floors and on the slopes. Although the slopes and valley floors are mainly used for grazing, in areas where there are more fertile and lighter soils on the valley floors there is also some arable use. Fields are enclosed by hedgerows, creating field patterns of medium size, particularly on the valley sides. Many of the hedges are gappy, and there are occasional hedgerow trees. More substantial tree cover occurs in the form of shelterbelts of Scots pine, beech woodlands on slopes, and lining the river bluffs. There are also some coniferous shelterbelts that provide cover for game. Many of the pastures are poorly drained and rushy; this adds texture to the landscape. Visible earthworks such as ridge and furrow also add texture and interest in places.

Much of the present-day settlement pattern dates back to the Anglo-Saxon period, comprising small nucleated villages and farmsteads. Many are located in strategic places such as river crossing points or confluences (e.g. Wooler, Kirknewton, Alwinton) or at the break in slope between the foothills and valley floors. The vernacular character of the area is strong, with the majority of buildings being of sandstone with a distinctive pink hue, with blue slate roofs. There are notable examples of fortified dwellings or bastles, reflecting the turmoil of the eighteenth century border raids. A number of villages also have rows or terraces of single storey estate cottages, revealing the estate influence on this landscape.

This is a settled lowland landscape with a high degree of tranquillity due to the fact that it lies away from major settlements and roads. The proximity of the adjacent uplands lends a feeling of being on the edge of a wilder, more inhospitable, border landscape.

### Landscape character areas

**CF3a Northern Hills, Bowmont Water and Glendale**
This area includes the lower reaches of the Bowmont Water valley, Glendale, and associated outlier hills such as Pawstone, Kilham, Watch, and Moneylaws. These distinctively rounded hills form the setting for the river valley which has a clearly defined valley floor but also pronounced raised terraces. The area is relatively well-wooded, with both coniferous plantations and broadleaved woodland on the surrounding hills, and areas of alder woodland and distinctive pollarded willow along the valley floors. The estate management of the area gives it a unified character that is reinforced by the presence of estate cottages. The area’s long settlement history is reflected in the numerous hillforts and hilltop settlements and in early medieval settlements such as Kirknewton and Westnewton within the valleys.

**CF3b River Glen and Till Plain**
This character area comprises open and flat floodplain through which the Rivers Glen and Till meander. The expanse of flat topography and areas of gentle undulation reflect the origins of this landscape character area as a former glacial lake bed and repository for glacial material. Land use is pasture and arable within medium-sized fields enclosed by gappy hedgerows with few trees. Some blocks of deciduous and coniferous planting occur on the western edge of the area, reflecting estate management. On the river terraces or haughs are patches of gorse scrub and occasional lines of alder trees. This landscape contains important buried archaeology dating to the Neolithic and Anglo-Saxon periods and although the enclosure pattern is eighteenth century, it is thought to fossilise an earlier Anglo-Saxon pattern.

**CF3c Wooler Hills and Happy Valley**
This character area includes the market town of Wooler, the Happy Valley containing the River Harthope, and outlier hills such as Kenterdale, Watch Hills and Westwood Moor. South of Wooler, and along the A608, the
landscape has been affected by linear development (e.g. petrol station and caravan park), reflecting the area’s importance as a gateway to the National Park. Within the valley there is a patchwork of arable land, pasture and meadows cut for silage. Fields are defined by gappy hedges and hedgerow trees. Deciduous woodland occurs on the valley sides, particularly on the steep-sided river bluffs, which also have patches of gorse and bracken. The southern part of Happy Valley is deeply rural and scenic.

CF3d Ingram Hills and Breamish Valley
In this character area the River Breamish emerges from the Cheviot Hills and broadens out into a wider floodplain. The valleys sides comprise outlier hills such as Hoddon and East Hill which are low and receding. On the valley sides and outlier hills evidence of rig and furrow is clearly discernible. On the valley floor there is little woodland cover, most of the area being as open grassland with gorse scrub along river banks.

CF3e Upper Coquetdale (Alwinton)
Here the River Coquet flows from the Cheviot Hills to meet the River Alwin and broaden out into a wider floodplain. The valley sides are defined by the junction of three different landscape character types, namely the Rounded Hills of the Cheviots to the west, Estate Farmland to the north, and Outcrop Hills and Escarpment (sandstone hills) to the south. The valley floor is broad and open, comprising rushy pastures which are divided by post and wire fencing or the occasional line of trees. This character area forms an important setting for the medieval village of Alwinton which was an important staging post in the movement of livestock across the Cheviots.

Strategy and Guidelines

Key features and qualities

- Distinctive rounded outlier hills which enclose, define and contrast with the fringe valley floors.
- Important glacial history which gives rise to unique flat topography within the Till valley.
- Important water courses and margins which are designated SSSIs.
- Clumps and linear shelterbelts of Scots pine that make a significant visual contribution to the valley sides, and when combined with hedges create lines of overlapping vegetation.
- Natural burn watercourses with associated riparian trees.
- Traditional local vernacular and small nucleated villages along the valley sides that contribute to local distinctiveness.
- A wealth of historic structures and features scattered throughout area, including Roman camps and extensive areas of rig and furrow evident on valley sides.
- Important landscape setting to the Northumberland National Park. The valleys and outlier hills form the immediate fringe landscape to the higher land within the National Park, bolstering the park’s sense of place.

Local forces for change and their landscape implications

- Lack of woodland management of shelterbelt planting and semi-natural woodland particularly on valley bluffs may result in scrub invasion and poor age diversity.
- Lack of hedgerow and hedgerow tree management has led to gappy hedges, hedgerow tree loss and an erosion of the historic enclosure pattern.
- Intensification of arable cropping on valley floors may result in loss of field margins and encroachment on watercourses.
- Modern development which does not reflect the local vernacular on the outskirts of settlements may weaken local distinctiveness.
- Development of masts and other vertical structures within the valley floors and on outlier hills may be visually prominent.
- Sand and gravel extraction on the valley floor may threaten archaeology, landscape and geological features.

Strategy

The pattern of this landscape has been eroded to some degree by development and intensive land management practices. The strategy for this landscape is to conserve and restore.

Guidelines for land management

Forestry and woodland
There is a need for management to encourage regeneration of semi-natural woodland on the wooded bluffs and
Similarly management of Scots pine and mixed shelterbelts should be encouraged to ensure longevity and any new shelterbelt planting should be carefully designed to ensure it fits with the landscape and reinforces the existing enclosure pattern to form overlapping lines of vegetation. Where existing coniferous shelterbelts detract from the landscape due to their location, scale or edge treatment, restructuring or removal should be encouraged.

**Farming**
Retention of wet pastures and hay meadows on the valley floors and protection of buried archaeology and earthworks should be encouraged in order to retain the visual diversity and time-depth of this landscape.

Encourage the development of field margins and buffer strips adjacent to watercourses in areas of intensive arable cultivation.

**Field boundaries**
Encourage the planting of new hedges and hedgerow trees where they have been lost and the ‘gapping-up’ of existing hedges with native species such as hawthorn and blackthorn. Encourage less close trimming of hedges and retention of hedgerow trees in order to retain and strengthen the historic field enclosure pattern.

**Rivers and wetland**
Creation of landscape margins and buffers adjacent to watercourses would be beneficial where arable land or intensive grazing impinge on the water’s edge. Where erosion has occurred, consider planting of waterside vegetation such as willow, coppicing of existing willow or encouragement of gorse scrub to reduce bank erosion.

**Historic sites**
Protect historic sites and geological features from loss as a result of intensive arable cultivation through increased survey, awareness and management agreements.

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**Guidelines for development**

**Housing and economic development**
New built development should reflect local buildings styles and materials i.e. should be constructed in sandstone and slate or pantiles or in other materials of similar colour. Linear development along roads, which extends urban development into the wider rural countryside and disrupts the nucleated settlement pattern found in this landscape, should be avoided.

**Tourism and recreation**
Tourism-related development (such as caravan parks and recreational grounds) should avoid locations which are visually prominent particularly when viewed from surrounding higher land and where they extend an urbanising influence into open countryside.

**Energy and telecommunications**
Man-made vertical structures which detract from the rounded landform of the outlying hills that define the fringe valleys should be avoided, particularly where they would adversely affect views from within the National Park.
Landscape character type 4: Estate Farmland

Characterisation

Key characteristics

- Gently undulating land between the Cheviot Hills and the sandstone hills to the east.
- Distinctive 'rippled' topography of gently stepped and rounded folds.
- Lower-lying areas and river valleys heavily influenced by glacial meltwater and deposition.
- Dissected by a number of broad undulating river valleys including the Aln valley and Whittingham Valley.
- Blocks of coniferous shelterbelt common on more elevated land to south.
- Mixed lowland farming dominates with some areas of estate farmland and parkland.
- Pattern of medium scaled enclosure is strong across the area defined by hedgerows with hedgerow trees.

Description

This landscape character type comprises lower-lying farmland between the Cheviot Hills to the west and sandstone hills to the east and is contiguous with the National Park boundary. From this landscape there are significant views to these more elevated landscapes which provide context and orientation.

The area comprises gently undulating landform which rises to the south and is dissected by the shallow but broad valley of the River Aln which takes a meandering course through the northern part of this area. The underlying geology is Cementstones – largely mudstones and sandstones – that are covered with a mantle of glacial deposits. The distinctive topography of these glacial deposits is most evident within the shallow valleys where features such as moraines, kames and eskers can be readily identified.

The glacial deposits give rise to relatively rich soils supporting a mixed farming economy. In places the pattern of arable and pasture is interrupted by localised parkland influences such as at Hedgeley and Shawdon Halls. Across the area there is a strong medium- to large-scale pattern of hedged enclosure. A sheltered character is created by the number of mature hedgerow trees and small copses (including some ancient semi-natural woodland). To the south, where the land is more elevated, the soils are less fertile and the landscape larger-scale and more exposed. Here the hedgerow pattern weakens and is replaced by prominent coniferous shelterbelt planting. To the east, where this character type rises onto the lower slopes of the Cheviot Hills, there are also patches of heather and bracken. In
these more elevated locations there is evidence of prehistoric farming activity including enclosures, burial mounds and cup and ring marked stones.

Minor roads provide access to scattered farmsteads and small nucleated villages comprising traditional stone buildings. The villages are often located at fording points across the rivers, for example at Whittingham. Associated with these settlements there is evidence of medieval open-field systems which have been fossilised within the present day enclosure pattern.

This is an attractive and interesting agricultural landscape, with frequent features of geomorphological and cultural interest. It has a visual unity and consistency of land use and settlement pattern.

**Landscape character areas**

CF4a Whittingham Valley

**Strategy and Guidelines**

**Key features and qualities**

- **Memorable views and important setting** to the distinctive rounded hills of the Cheviots to the west, the indented skyline of the sandstone outcrops to the east and the Sandstone Upland Valleys landscape to the south.
- **Important rivers** and nature conservation interest associated with Netherton Burn, which forms part of the River Coquet Valley and Woodlands SSSI.
- **Coniferous shelterbelts** make a significant visual contribution to this landscape, particularly in the south giving rise to a blocky and estate character.
- **Notable historic features** such as cup and ring stones, marked stones and cairns as well as scheduled monuments such as Alham medieval settlement. The designed landscapes and country houses are also a special feature of this landscape although none is on the English Heritage register.

**Local forces for change and their landscape implications**

- **Large coniferous shelterbelts** of little nature conservation value sit uncomfortably with natural topography and give rise to a visually 'blocky' pattern.
- **Lack of hedgerow and hedgerow tree management** may exacerbate gappy hedges and hedgerow and tree loss. Replacement by post and wire fencing causes erosion of the historic enclosure pattern.
- **High levels of grazing pressure by sheep** may result in overgrazing and are associated with improvement of semi-natural pastures.
- **Intensification of arable cropping** which may cause the further loss of field margins and buried archaeology, soil erosion on steeper slopes, and loss of water quality in rivers.
- **Development of large scale farm buildings** that are out of scale with adjacent vernacular buildings and farmsteads affects some areas.
- **Pressure for the development of wind turbines and other vertical structures** which are visually prominent is likely in this landscape.

**Strategy**

Shelterbelt planting and estate management have shaped this landscape in a way that has not always been sympathetic to its natural topography or historic landscape patterns and features. The overall strategy should be to restore and enhance the character of this landscape.

**Guidelines for land management**

**Forestry and woodland**

Future felling of coniferous shelterbelts should seek to reduce their visual dominance, either through removal or through restructuring with broadleaved planting to reflect local topography and soften woodland edges. New
planting should seek to link existing areas of broadleaved woodland and break down the current blocky character that prevails.

**Farming**
Encourage the replanting of hedgerows where they have been lost and the 'gapping up' of existing hedgerows with native hedgerow species including hawthorn and ash. Encourage less close trimming of hedgerows and the retention of hedgerow trees to reinforce the enclosure pattern.

Arable cropping on steep slopes should be avoided due to the risks of soil erosion and diffuse pollution in rivers.

**Rivers and wetland**
Creation of field margins along hedgerows and buffers along river margins would be beneficial in areas of arable land.

**Historic sites**
Conservation of historic sites and structures is important. Increased survey, awareness and management agreements should prevent loss of these features due to intensive arable cultivation.

**Guidelines for development**

**Housing and economic development**
Care should be taken to ensure new farm buildings are of an appropriate scale, relate well to existing farmsteads in terms of form and building materials and sit comfortably within the landscape.

**Energy and telecommunications**
Developments that would adversely affect Northumberland National Park, or its landscape setting or the adjacent Sandstone Upland Valley landscape character type should be avoided. Any new man-made vertical structures should be located away from settlements and key views.
3.4 Border Moors and Forests

This extensive upland plateau, dominated by coniferous woodland, is located in the English-Scottish border country and is centred on Kielder Water. To the south-west it drops down to the Solway Basin and to the south it is defined by the Whin Sill scarps running along the Tyne Gap. To the east are the Northumberland Sandstone Hills. The eastern part of the Character Area lies in Northumberland National Park and Tynedale District; much of the western part lies in Tynedale District but outside the National Park; and the remainder extends westwards into Cumbria.

- This is a large-scale dissected landscape of high, rolling or undulating plateau with expanses of sweeping moorland, extensive coniferous woodlands, large reservoirs, and wide, long distance views.
- The treeless moorlands contrast with the vast areas of coniferous forest that dominate large parts of the area.
- In places these woodlands are broken up by isolated and enclosed valleys with pastures and settlements.
- There is a network of small rivers and streams in narrow gorges with sandstone crags, loughs and mires.
- The extensive conifer plantations mainly consist of a patchwork of felled areas and different age-classes of non-native conifers.
- There are few broadleaved trees, largely restricted to small woodland blocks, hedgerows and remnant semi-natural woodland in the more sheltered valleys.
- The exposed moorland areas are heavily grazed by sheep and are characterised by both heather and improved grassland.
- Fields are large, open, rectangular, windswept, often poorly drained and subdivided by dry stone walls or wire fences.
- The main agricultural land use is rough or semi-improved pasture for cattle and sheep rearing, with semi-improved or improved in-bye land in sheltered valleys.
- There are numerous peaty mires and mosses.
- Traditional buildings comprise scattered farmhouses and cottages of Fell sandstone with slate roofs on the upper slopes, with a few hamlets in the valleys.
- The area is very sparsely populated overall.
- There are important archaeological landscapes with evidence of settlements, tracks, field systems, sheilings, burial areas and Roman forts and camps.
- Military training area at Otterburn affect perceptions of remoteness and solitude.
Landscape character type 5: Rolling Uplands

Characterisation

Key characteristics

- Broad, open, large-scale, rolling moorland plateau.
- Simple, smooth flowing landform, often featureless with high degree of uniformity.
- Extensive areas of semi-natural vegetation including matrix of heather, matt-grass moorland, raised bogs or mires and patches of bracken.
- Sparse settlement including isolated farmsteads and Victorian hunting lodges.
- Drained by a network of burns that have eroded deep but not visually prominent ravines.
- Sparse tree cover – occasional coniferous shelterbelts and clumps, with limited areas of semi-natural woodland along burns.
- Uniformity of land cover broken in places by In-bye pastures associated with farmsteads.
- Military training use over a significant part of the area.

Description

This landscape character type comprises elevated land that extends on either side of the Upper North Tyne valley and northwards to Redesdale and Otterburn Training Area. It comprises an extensive area of open upland averaging about 300m AOD, from which there are wide views westward into Kielder and Redesdale Forests and north into the rounded hills of the Cheviots. This landscape also forms an important backdrop to a number of the valleys within the Rolling Upland Valleys landscape character type.

Geologically the landscape character type comprises a succession of sandstones and limestones which have been overlain with a thick glacial deposit of boulder clay. This often gives a smooth, simple appearance to the topography. Where the underlying sandstone breaks the surface, contrasting craggy outcrops add visual interest and focus, for example at Callerhues and Wanney Crags. The underlying geology also has a profound influence on the vegetation cover. In areas where the glacial deposits are deep, drainage is often poor and land cover is dominated by matt grass moorland, peat bog and mosses. This is particularly evident in the west of the area. Further east, where the sandstone outcrops occur, the soils are better-drained and heather moorland is more widespread. The relative simplicity and uniformity of land cover tend to highlight the gently rolling character of the area’s landform. The moorland is drained by a network of burns which carve deep ravines but are not a major feature of the landscape as a whole.
The unenclosed moorland provides grazing for sheep, although significant areas are also managed as grouse moor. Where post and wire fencing divides areas, the effects of differential grazing regimes are sometimes evident – heather moorland ending abruptly along fence lines, beyond which matt grass dominates as a result of more intensive grazing.

Tree cover is sparse although there are notable areas of shelterbelt planting. The geometric form and dark colour of the shelterbelts, which are concentrated around Tarret Burn and Leighton Hill, tend to stand out in stark contrast to the surrounding open moorland. The extent of semi-natural woodland, as found at North Yardhope, is relatively small.

This is an empty landscape; the absence of settlement or development of any sort is striking in some areas. There are however occasional farmsteads and Victorian hunting lodges on higher ground, their presence highlighted by associated shelter woodlands. These properties are generally accessed via minor unenclosed roads, although the B6320 to Lanehead has been upgraded as part of access to Kielder Forest and Reservoir. Small areas of in-bye pasture surround the farmsteads. Their medium-sized pastures, enclosed by dry stone walls, break the uniformity of land cover, their brighter colour standing out against the duller tones of the semi-natural moorland beyond.

At a local level, evidence of past human activity in this landscape adds interest in the form of Roman roads (notably Dere Street) and military forts, signs of prehistoric and later medieval cultivation (sod-cast dykes and rig and furrow), lime kilns associated with agricultural improvement, ground disturbance due to former mining activity, and disused railway routes. These historic features combine with occasional modern man-made features, such as telephone masts, telegraph poles connecting isolated properties, metal sheep pens (particularly along roads), and features associated with present-day military use. Despite the range of man-made features the landscape remains highly natural in its character. It offers both breadth and space in its loneliness, openness and simplicity of composition.

Landscape character areas

**BMF5a Otterburn Plateau**

This area falls fully within the Otterburn Training Area and associated infrastructure and activity is characteristic. Some of the roads through the area have been widened to allow easy access to army training vehicles. Dispersed farmsteads are occupied by tenant farmers and may have in-bye pastures and floristically rich hay meadows enclosed by dry stone walls. In places there is some small-scale arable cultivation that supports stock rearing and provides habitat for overwintering birds. The coniferous plantations on the southern slopes of this area, and the larger plantation of Stewartshields, are all used for military training, the latter currently undergoing gradual restocking with mixed species including native broadleaves. This area also contains a rich collection of archaeological features including prehistoric, Roman-British and post-medieval settlement and land management. Field systems with sod-cast banks and rig and furrow are the most visually dominant features; while the remains of bastles are also evident on the eastern edge of the area where it abuts the Grasslees Valley.

**BMF5b Cottonshope Valley**

This is a wide and deep valley within the Otterburn Training Area, mainly comprising acid grassland. It adjoins Redesdale Forest to the west, the dark colour abrupt edges of the plantations imposing a sudden change in landscape character. There is little evidence of human activity other than a few isolated farmsteads and associated in-bye enclosures of improved pasture. Minor military infrastructure occurs adjacent to the valley road. Medieval and post-medieval remains alongside the burn reflect centuries of land management activity and include rig and furrow, sod-cast dykes, linear banks, turf drying platforms, ruined buildings and farmsteads, and stockpens. The southern and northern slopes that enclose the valley reveal the underlying sandstone geology, in the form of distinctive rocky outcrops and stepped skylines. These add interest, for example at Great Dour and Harden Edge.

**BMF 5c Kelly’s Pike to Callerhues Crag**

This character area forms an extensive upland plateau between Redesdale and the North Tyne Upland Valley. It is used for rough grazing but also managed for grouse, large areas of heather moorland being particularly common on the eastern edge of the area. Some of the higher ridges have a distinctive stepped profile and rocky
outcrops, reflecting the underlying sandstone geology, whilst other areas have smoother and more rounded shape. Around Tarret Burn and on the north-eastern slopes there are concentrations of coniferous shelterbelts and small scale plantations.

**BMF 5d Shitlington and Ealinghamrigg Commons**

This area forms a relatively narrow ridge between Kielder Forest and the upper North Tyne valley. It offers extensive views northwards across the valley and eastwards towards the Simonside Hills. Rocky crags are characteristic where the underlying sandstone outcrops, for example at Shitlington Craggs. There are few farmsteads in this area and little road access. The most obvious man-made feature is the telephone mast on Ealingham Rigg. Otherwise this is empty moorland that is used for rough grazing.

**Strategy and Guidelines**

**Key features and qualities**

- **Open smooth rolling landform** with expansive and panoramic views which are memorable and often exhilarating.
- **High scenic quality, outstanding views**, and an important setting to the Rolling Upland Valleys landscape character type.
- **Extensive areas of semi-natural habitat** including ancient woodland along burns, heather and grass moorland, peat bog and mosses. The upland bogs found within the OTA are of particularly valuable for nature conservation and designated as the Otterburn Mires SSSI.
- **Distinctive craggy sandstone outcrops** which act as visual landmarks in an otherwise largely uniform and simple landscape composition e.g. Great Dour and Harden Edge.
- **A wealth of archaeology** in the form of buried remains, surface earthworks and other features e.g. Roman roads (notably Dere Street) and military forts, signs of prehistoric and later medieval cultivation (sod-cast dykes and rig and furrow), lime kilns associated with agricultural improvement, ground disturbance due to former mining activity, and disused railway routes.
- **Wildness and remoteness** derived from the landscape’s upland character, limited accessibility and relative lack of overt manmade features.

**Local forces for change and their landscape implications**

- **Areas of conifer plantation** in places create dark geometric features in an otherwise open expansive rolling landscape – in some cases these are overmature and show signs of wind throw damage.
- **Drainage of upland areas** for farming and forestry may result in a loss of peat bogs and wet flushes and a reduction in biodiversity as well as damage to archaeological sites.
- **Overgrazing of heather moorland** in some areas may cause an abrupt change in vegetation along fence lines and a loss of habitat value.
- **Improvements to in-bye pastures**, where they occur, may affect floristically rich pastures and hay meadows, resulting in a reduction in colour and texture in the landscape.
- **Upgrading of road infrastructure** in response to the construction of Kielder Reservoir and felling from the forests as well as military training on the OTA may alter the pattern and character of the tracks and drove roads found in this landscape.
- **Any development of communications masts or other tall structures** on the open exposed ridgelines of this landscape could lead to visual clutter and further loss of tranquillity which is already undermined by military training activity on the OTA.

**Strategy**

The condition of this landscape, including its semi-natural habitats and historic features and patterns, remains good despite some changes associated with coniferous planting and military training activity. The strategy for this landscape is therefore one of conservation.

**Guidelines for land management**

**Forestry and woodland**

Future felling of coniferous plantations should seek to reduce their visual dominance in open moorland locations either through removal or through restructuring with broadleaved planting. Existing coniferous plantations should be felled before wind throw damage occurs and be replanted with mixed native species to soften their outlines.
Planting of new native woodland should focus on natural depressions in the landform and along burns, and should avoid masking rocky outcrops which act as local landmarks and a valuable habitat. Natural regeneration of semi-natural woodland along burn valleys (particularly semi-natural birch and oak-birch and hazel woodland) should be encouraged through the protection of these areas from stock grazing.

**Farming**
Where small-scale arable cropping occurs, ensure it relates closely to existing farmsteads and avoids areas important for archaeology or of nature conservation. Encourage the appropriate management of floristically rich hay meadows in in-bye pastures and discourage the use of fertilisers and herbicides on pastures.

**Moorlands**
Manage heather moorland and sustain and enhance biodiversity through appropriate stocking densities and burning regimes. Monitor trials for predation control in areas managed for grouse.

Encourage reduction in stocking levels where there is scope to regenerate heather moorland and to help prevent abrupt changes between heather and grass moorland along fence lines.

Conserve areas of blanket bog through the avoidance of gripping and physical damage. Restore damaged bogs and flushes by blocking grips and drains.

**Historic sites**
Protect areas of archaeological value or sensitivity from inappropriate land management including drainage, woodland planting and arable cropping.

### Guidelines for development

**Military training**
Encourage the sensitive management of areas used for military training and avoid or minimise any widening of existing tracks and roads or erection of new buildings and signage.

Ensure that any new development of the Otterburn camp accommodation and facilities is focused within or immediately adjacent to the existing camp area and ensure development is not visually prominent over significant distances.

**Energy and telecommunications**
Telecommunications development would be out of place in this landscape which is highly sensitive visually due to its open character; any domestic scale wind turbines should be closely related to existing farmsteads and should not be out of scale or detract from adjacent built structures, landscape features or skylines.
Landscape character type 6: Moorland Forestry Mosaic

Characterisation

Key characteristics

- Simple, expansive upland landscape, generally over 250m AOD.
- Gently rolling topography incised by burns that are often concealed by plantations.
- Mosaic of large-scale coniferous plantations, open grass and heather moorlands and mires, with limited areas of in-bye pasture.
- Enclosed landscape with limited outward views.
- A dynamic landscape with significant areas of ongoing felling and restocking.
- Some broadleaved woodlands and woodland edges that soften the plantation character.
- A generally uninhabited landscape, with only occasional farmsteads and forestry settlements.
- Reservoirs that create expansive views across open water, in contrast to the enclosed character of surrounding woodlands.

Description

This landscape character type covers a significant portion of Northumberland National Park and extends beyond the border into Scotland, forming one of the largest areas of forest in Britain. It includes Kielder, Wark and Redesdale Forests, and runs from Hadrian's Wall in the south to the edge of Otterburn Training Area in the north. The expanses of forestry that cover most of this landscape appear dark and imposing when viewed from adjacent landscape character types; and in some areas the straight forest edges contrast with the curving, more natural lines of the surrounding hills, grassland and moorland.

Geologically this landscape consists of sandstones and shales, with occasional limestones and coal seams. Horizontal layering, uplift and glacial erosion have created a characteristic undulating topography, the harder sandstones forming ridges separated by softer eroded shales. In post-glacial times, meltwater accumulated in the upland troughs, initiating the development of peat and creating the areas of raised and blanket bog that can be seen today, for example at Kielder Moor where heather, cotton grass, deer grass and sphagnum moss occur on blanket peat. In the north of the area, the undulating ridges are less common. Here flat tabular hills such as at Peel Fell and Carter Fell are more common.

This is a large scale landscape of high rolling or undulating plateau. The extensive forest cover is largely Sitka spruce with a proportion of pine, larch and broadleaf species, confined mainly to the lower hill slopes, river courses and forest edges. Sitka was chosen as a
suitable species to cope with the poor soil and climatic conditions of the area, and planting of Kielder Forest started in 1926. Over half of the coniferous woodlands were planted between 1945 and 1960, with a second wave of planting during the 1960s and 70s. As a result, many of the plantations are of even age and a number are now second rotation. Since the introduction of the Forest Design Plans in the 1990s felling to restructure and diversify the woodland in terms of age, species composition and physical form is ongoing, creating a patchwork of felling coupes, replanted and regenerating areas, and where recent felling has taken place, a temporarily disturbed character. Restructuring is occurring in Kielder, Wark and Redesdale Forests although in Redesdale and around Kielder Reservoir more forest is managed as 'long term retention' because of its visual prominence and sensitivity. In some areas geometric lines and edges of plantations are still apparent although much less obvious than in the past and in Wark Forest the planting of broadleaved woodland along burns is becoming commonplace.

Although the higher sandstone tops occasionally protrude above the trees, and some steeper burn courses or cleughs are unplanted, the hills and valleys are generally covered by forest, and this tends to mask the landform. Views are often contained by trees, although the high open moorland tops and the reservoirs of Kielder Water and Catcleugh allow some extensive views. Within the forest, short range views to features such as narrow burn valleys, gorges, mires and sandstone crags are characteristic.

The unforested parts of this landscape character type are typically covered by coarse grass and heather moorland, grazed by sheep and roe deer. The grassland is mainly rough grazing with rush pasture in areas of poor drainage.

This is a sparsely populated landscape with a dispersed pattern of farmsteads and a number of characteristic settlements built for forest workers, including Stonehaugh, Kielder, Byrness, Sleetbeck and Kershopefoot. Associated with the farmsteads are small areas of in-bye pasture enclosed by stone walls and post and wire fencing. Some pastures show signs of improvement or drainage through gripping, their green fields contrasting with surrounding rough moorland pastures. Damp pastures along burns support diverse meadow grasslands. Roads through the area are few, although forest tracks (comprising loose rough stone) and rides are numerous.

The landscape comprises a limited range of elements. It often feels remote, but seldom tranquil because it is a working forest, and planting and felling operations give it a dynamic character. Where the roads pass through plantations, the landscape has a confined feel that at times can be disorientating and even claustrophobic. This sense of confinement is relieved in the open areas, where the character is more exposed and views are possible. Although forest walks and drives allow access within the forest, their extent is fairly limited, and large areas of forest remain relatively little visited.

Landscapes character areas

**BMF6a Kielder, Wark and Redesdale Forests**

This character area comprises the large expanses of plantation that stretch from north of Hadrian’s Wall to Otterburn Training Camp. Much of Wark Forest was planted in the in the 1970s prior to the new ‘restructuring’ approach. As a result many of the woodlands in Wark Forest are still dense Sitka blanket plantations and showing limited sensitivity to topography, burns and edges. In contrast, the Kielder and Redesdale Forests have benefited from the new approach whereby diversity of age, species and is a priority. In these latter areas new broadleaved trees have been planted along burns, mixed planting has replaced dense Sitka woodland, and some groups of trees such as Scots pine have been retained or selectively thinned. The edges of woodland have been adjusted to reflect local topography. The Kielder Forest Drive runs through Kielder and Redesdale Forests and provides vehicular access to areas of remote upland in the summer months. In the north of this area is the Catcleugh Reservoir. This is much smaller than Kielder and is not utilised for recreation in the same way; it is therefore considered part of the wider surrounding character area.
BMF6b Kielder Reservoir
This character area comprises the open expansive water of Kielder Reservoir and the surrounding valley sides which are cloaked in mixed woodland plantations. The reservoir was completed in the early 1980s and flooded the upper valley of the River North Tyne. It is now a popular tourist destination. The area (particularly the southern edge and shores) has a strong focus on recreation, reflected in signage, car parks, viewpoints, visitor centres, watersports (including boating, sailing, fishing and jet skiing), and chalets. Although man-made the reservoir has naturalistic edges, narrow inlets of water, and peninsulas of land. Some waterside areas are left as open moorland and tree felling and selective thinning have been undertaken to open up views across the water. These management approaches, along with the planting of native species such as birch along the woodland edges and the burns that feed the reservoir, create a varied woodland character. This is a colourful landscape due to the combination of dark coniferous woodland with native woodland, reflective water, white grass moorland, patches of heather moor, bracken and gorse.

Strategy and Guidelines

Key features and qualities
- Extensive areas of semi-natural habitat including raised and blanket bog, heather and grass moorland, and diverse meadow grasslands along burns, many of which are designated SSSIs e.g. Kielderhead and Emblehope Moors and Kielder Mires.
- Distinctive flat-topped sandstone ridgelines and outcrops which act as visual landmarks in an otherwise largely uniform and inward-looking landscape e.g. Peel Fell and Carter Fell.
- A wealth of archaeology in the form of buried remains and surface earthworks/features including defended settlements such a Gibbe's Knowe and round and long cairns such as Devil's Lapful.
- Remoteness and isolation derived from its upland character, limited accessibility, sparse population and inward looking character.
- Areas of scenic interest and importance for recreation in and around Kielder Reservoir and including the Forest Drive which provides access to a unique and remote area of upland.
- Historically significant forestry settlements reflecting an important period in England's forestry strategy of the 1960s e.g. Stonehaugh and Byrness.

Local forces for change and their landscape implications
- Ongoing felling and restocking of coniferous plantations as part of the Forestry Commission policy to restructure and diversify early plantations brings temporary disturbance to the landscape.
- Past farming and forestry activity have resulted in the drainage of upland areas causing a loss of peat bogs and wet flushes and damage to or loss of archaeological features.
- Lack of upland bog and heather moorland management including overgrazing, drainage and regeneration of Sitka has in some areas led to a decline of important moorland habitats.
- Upgrading of road infrastructure and creation of new access tracks in response to the construction of Kielder Reservoir and need to access areas for felling has altered the communications pattern in this landscape.
- Redevelopment of historic forestry villages may affect the distinctiveness and integrity of these settlements.
- Increased tourism and associated infrastructure such as signage, car parks, visitor centres focused on Kielder Reservoir potentially may create visual clutter or intrude locally on landscape character.
- Increased use of motorbikes and 4x4s particularly on cross border routes may cause erosion, noise and visual intrusion.
- Major wind energy development in this area in the future is a possibility and may have a visual impact on this landscape, affecting wildness qualities and the setting of the National Park.

Strategy
This is a dynamic landscape and one which serves a number of important functions from timber production to recreation and tourism. It has undergone considerable change over the last 50 years and but continues to provide a range of landscape benefits. The strategy for this area is one of continued enhancement.

Guidelines for land management

Forestry and woodland
Encourage the ongoing restructuring of existing coniferous woodlands in order to diversify their structure, soften
their outlines and enhance nature conservation value through the retention of stands of Scots pine where appropriate and the planting of new semi-natural woodland which relates to local topography. Restructuring may also present opportunities for the removal of woodland where it impinges on adjacent landscapes such the setting of Hadrian's Wall. Consideration should also be given to the removal of woodland that impinges on and has an adverse effect upon adjacent landscape character types.

New woodland planting should avoid areas of nature conservation value such as meadow grassland and should not mask landmark features such as distinctive skyline ridges.

Encourage new native planting (oak, ash and alder) along burn valleys and plantation margins.

**Moorlands**

Encourage the appropriate management of meadow grasslands particularly along burn valleys. Discourage the drainage of moorland areas through gripping and the improvement of in-bye pastures through high use of fertilisers and herbicides. Restore bogs and heather moorland by blocking grips and drains and reducing grazing and stocking levels.

**Historic sites**

Conservation of historic sites and structures, which act as local focal points and reinforce local distinctiveness, is important. Care should be taken to avoid planting on or in close proximity to archaeological sites.

**Recreation and access**

Manage the off-road use of motorbikes and 4x4s in this landscape through repair, restraint and regulation. Where the use of recreational motor vehicles conflicts with other recreational use or National Park purposes, seek opportunities to undertake impact assessments and monitoring to assist in management.

**Guidelines for development**

**Housing and economic development**

The historic forestry settlements have a distinctive urban form and character. New built development within or adjacent to these settlements should be carefully designed to avoid loss of settlement integrity and local distinctiveness.

**Tourism and recreation**

Where tourism and recreational development is required care should be taken to avoid exerting a suburbanising influence on the landscape and development should generally remain low-key. New buildings should respect local building materials and styles. Care should be taken to avoid development which is visually prominent or which detracts from the setting of Kielder Water.

**Energy and telecommunications**

Any future wind energy development should avoid areas of importance for recreation and take advantage of the screening provided by the Forest. Areas of broad, rounded landform are most likely to be able to accommodate wind farm development. It is essential to avoid or minimise any impacts on the National Park or on the setting of Hadrian's Wall.

Wind farm development proposals (either in Scotland or England) should avoid adverse impact on the special qualities of the National Park or its setting.
**Landscape character type 7: Rolling Upland Valleys**

**Characterisation**

**Key characteristics**

- Broad valleys with gently convex valley sides.
- Tributary burns, often well-wooded, carving incised valleys into the hillsides.
- Clearly defined floodplain and mixed farmland on valley floors.
- Consistent pattern of textured rough pastures divided by stone walls on valley sides, with open moorland above.
- Meandering rivers, sometimes marked by alders, but not generally prominent landscape feature.
- Steep, wooded bluffs flanking edges of the floodplain.
- Shelterbelts and clumps of pine or mixed woodland on lower slopes and occasionally on valley floors.
- Historic sandstone villages and dispersed farmsteads on lower slopes.
- Rich archaeology including Roman forts, rig and furrow and fortified bastle houses – heart of reiving country.

**Description**

The Rolling Upland Valleys landscape character type comprises broad valleys which carve through larger blocks of upland landscape. It includes the valleys of the Rivers Rede and North Tyne and their tributaries Elsdon, Lisles, Tarset and Hareshaw Burns. The open moorland of the adjacent Rolling Uplands and Outcrop Hills and Escarpment landscape character types has a significant influence on the character of these upland valleys and provides a strong visual contrast to the valley landscapes. Occasionally extensive coniferous woodland in adjacent landscapes impinges on this type, where seen on the skyline or the upper valley sides.

The underlying solid geology dates from the Carboniferous period, and is overlain with glacial drift and alluvial deposits. Glacial influences are apparent in the profile of the valleys which, although narrower in their upper reaches, have been broadened and deepened by glacial meltwater. Meltwater activity has also left tell-tale signs such as the steep-sided bluffs characteristically found on the edges of the floodplain. The glacial drift of boulder clay, sand and shingle along with river alluvium, supports floodplain meadows and pastures and in some places patches of arable. On the upper valley sides the shallower drift deposits quickly give way to outcrops of sandstone and shale, bringing a change in vegetation to rough grazing and open moorland with gorse, bracken and rushes. Tributary valleys flow...
over horizontal banding in the Carboniferous rocks and give rise to waterfalls, for example along Hareshaw Burn, which flows over exposed rock through a woods of oak and ash.

The unifying characteristics of these valleys are their gentle convex sides, upland context, and repeating pattern of valley floor pastures, valley side rough pastures, and open moorland above. Valley floor pastures and meadows are generally divided by post and wire fencing and in places by hedgerows (often of grown-out hawthorn); while pastures on the valleys sides are defined by stone walls, creating a medium sized enclosure pattern.

The location and extent of woodland varies between valleys. Generally semi-natural woodland occurs most frequently along the river courses (where alder and birch are common) and on the steep bluffs on the lower valleys sides (where oak, birch, ash and beech can be found). In places mixed woodland also occurs, often containing Scots pine (as in the North Tyne valley) or other conifers in the form of shelterbelts (the latter found particularly around Otterburn and south of West Woodburn). A sense of enclosure is felt most keenly in the smaller, narrower tributary valleys, where linear semi-natural broadleaved woodlands flank the watercourses, for example along Tarset, Hareshaw and Lisles Burns. By contrast, the valleys around Otterburn, Elsdon and north of Bellingham are shallow, medium- to large-scale valleys with relatively little woodland on valley floors or sides.

The Rolling Upland Valleys has been a well-settled landscape character type since prehistoric times. Within the valley floor there is evidence of prehistoric and medieval settlement. On the valley sides are extensive patterns of rig and furrow (seen particularly in the fertile Lisles valley). The current settlement pattern is one of small historic villages (such as Elson, Falstone and East Woodburn) located on the lower valley slopes at primary river crossing points and confluences. Many of the settlements have a strong vernacular tradition of sandstone cottages with slate roofs; they are connected via narrow rural lanes lined by hedges or stone walls. There are also remains of medieval castles and bastles (fortified farmhouses) across the landscape, a legacy of the Border reivers. In addition there is evidence of past industrial activity including coal mining and iron smelting, not to mention the railways that now lie disused.

In some place more recent landscape elements are noticeable, for example the telegraph poles which criss-cross the valleys in places; recreational developments such as caravan parks and golf courses; and settlement expansion at Bellingham and elsewhere.

This landscape character type shows a high degree of unity as a result of its simple and consistent pattern of landscape elements. Woodland cover adds complexity and variety of visual composition. Although the valleys are not remote and are clearly settled, they have a very distinctive, unspoilt and historic character and are strongly influenced by the wider upland setting.

Landscape character areas

**BNF7a Redesdale**
The Redesdale character area extends from the edge of the Redesdale Forest as far as Bennetsfield. In the west it is a relatively narrow valley influenced by the close proximity of the forest. This area includes the former Redesdale Camp military training area (now disused) and the more ancient Roman camps and fort at Bremenivm north of Rochester, along Sills Burn. Further east the valley broadens out and its course is clearly marked by dense alder and other deciduous woods (e.g. Tod Law and Evistones Wood) and by mixed woodlands flanking the gentle valley sides, giving an enclosed character. Rough pastures and rocky outcrops on the valley sides highlight the proximity of major upland areas. The valley carries the A689, which is one of the busiest cross-border roads.

**BMF7b Otterburn and Elson Valley**
In this character area the River Rede flows through a broad basin which is gently undulating in the west and where landform sweeps gradually up to smooth rounded slopes. This gives rise to an expansive open generous
scale, with a strong horizontal emphasis and often an empty feel. The river itself is insignificant within this expansive valley context and meanders freely, its course only occasionally marked by alder trees. Within the valley there is a predominance of, improved but often wet, rushy, pastures divided by post and wire fencing. There are also occasional coniferous and deciduous shelter belts with Scots pine being a feature giving a linear and blocky character. Elsewhere there has been a significant amount of new woodland planting which will in time alter the sense of openness found in this valley. In places telegraph poles cross the valley floor introducing vertical elements which create visual clutter. The historic settlements of Otterburn and Elsdon are located in this character area. At Elson there is a notable motte and bailey which reflects the private liberty of Redesdale – a feudal stronghold and also Elsdon Tower - an important Pele tower.

**BMF7c Bellingham and Woodburn Valleys**
In this character area the River Rede merges first with Lisles Burn and then with the North Tyne near Bellingham. The incised watercourses (seen for example along the Rede north of East Woodburn and at Hareshaw Burn); the contrasting broad open hillsides; and the strong evidence of past industrial activity all distinguish this area from the other Rolling Upland Valleys. The valley floor pastures are lined by mature oak and ash trees and post and wire fencing, but the area is generally open and untreed, particularly between Bellingham and West Woodburn. The proximity of the Rolling Uplands landscape character type lends an empty, upland feel to the landscape. In the Lisles Valley the burn is lined with alder trees, coppiced in the past, and on the valley sides there are mature trees and patches of mixed woodland, often following shallow tributary valleys. Pastures are unimproved and wet, and combined with extensive rig and furrow earthworks, this gives a textured feel to the valley sides, where fields are enclosed by stone walls forming a strong visual pattern, particularly around West Woodburn. Mining of coal seams and iron ore smelting in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries has left disturbed ground and earthworks, for example at the former Hareshaw iron works above Bellingham; and the line of the Border Counties Railway (disused) can be picked out from time to time. Bastle houses, such as Black Middens, are also features within the valley. The character area includes Bellingham, West and East Woodburn. Bellingham is the largest of the three and sits within a shallow valley with the uplands forming a backdrop and skyline to the north and south. The River North Tyne is a central focus to the settlement and was influential in its siting and development. The town also has a strong association with the disused railways and quarries of the surrounding area. Today it has an important tourist role.

**BMF7d Upper North Tyne Valley**
This character area extends from the Kielder Reservoir in the west to the edge of Bellingham in the east, including the upper reaches of the North Tyne Valley and Tarset Burn tributary valley. The valley has a cohesive character with a clearly defined floodplain within which the meandering river is often lined with alder trees. On the valley floor and lower valley sides there is a mixture of arable and species rich hay meadows in medium sized fields defined by post and wire fencing and some hedgerows. In the east, around the parkland of Hesleyside, avenues of mature oak and lime extend onto the valley floor and there is a greater concentration of broadleaved and mixed planting, for example at Riding Wood and Closehill Wood, sometimes extending onto the valley floor. This area has seen one of the largest new native woodland planting schemes in the National Park at Donkleywood. In the middle section of the valley, Scots pine is characteristic of the valley slopes. Further west there is less improved pasture, many pastures being wet or rough (for example north of Carritheth Moor). In this area birch woodland and rocky crags with bracken and gorse are also evident.

### Strategy and Guidelines

#### Key features and qualities

- **Consistent patterns of land use** including valley floor mixed farming and hedgerows, rushy valley-side pastures enclosed by stone walls, and open moorland above, giving rise to high scenic quality, particularly in the North Tyne Valley.
- **Wooded bluffs** along the edge of the valley floors and tributary burns, creating visual enclosure and comprise significant areas of ancient semi-natural broadleaved woodland and important habitats for lichen. Some, such as Hareshaw Burn and Hesleyside Park are SSSIs, while many others are of local nature conservation importance.
- **The registered historic park and garden** at Hesleyside. This exerts a strong influence on the valley sides and floor west of Bellingham and reflects more settled time in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The ornate parks and avenues remain and are clearly visible.
- **Historic sandstone villages**. These occur repeatedly along the lower valley sides and act as important visual focal points. Some are Conservation Areas and there are also numerous listed buildings.
- **A wealth of historic structures** scattered throughout area, many of which are scheduled monuments. There are important remains from the Roman period (e.g. Bremenivm Fort), medieval period (e.g. Elsdon Tower - an important Pele tower).
motte and bailey castle and rig and furrow earthworks in the Lisles valley) and the Border conflicts (e.g. bastle houses such as Three Middens) as well as mining and industrial relics (e.g. Hareshaw ironworks).

- **An important part of the setting to Northumberland National Park.** The valleys act as corridors and gateways to the National Park and to the recreational landscapes of Kielder Water.

- **Tranquillity** derived from the predominantly rural character of the landscape, lack of obvious man-made structures and presence of adjacent open moorland. This is most keenly felt away from major trunk roads such as the A68.

### Local forces for change and their landscape implications

- **Conifer plantations on the upper slopes** may locally affect this landscape character type, creating dark heavy skyline features or altering the consistent patterns and simplicity of land cover that are so distinctive of this type.

- **Lack of woodland management** and replanting programmes may result in the decline and loss of important landscape features such as ancient semi-natural woodland and parkland avenues, particularly where woodland and trees and woodland are of even age.

- **Improvement of pasture and expansion of arable cultivation** on the valley sides may lead to a loss of the characteristic colours and textures of the pastures and damage to their buried archaeology. It may also lead to erosion, habitat and water quality issues.

- **Lack of field boundaries** through lack of management may weaken the characteristic patterns of enclosure. Many hedgerows on the valley floor are overgrown or have been replaced by fencing and some stone walls on the valleys sides are tumbled down.

- **Introduction of new vertical elements** may adversely affect this landscape, which is sensitive to new structures such as telegraph poles crossing the open, horizontal valley floor, and to masts or turbines on the distinctive moorland skylines above. Such structures may disrupt the flow of the landform, create visual clutter and reduce tranquillity.

- **Development pressures** are evident in Bellingham and other valley settlements, where new housing and tourism developments show signs in some areas of expanding onto the valley sides and altering the historic form and approach routes to settlements.

- **Traffic flows** associated with tourism, timber extraction and Scottish border travel may undermine tranquillity in adjacent areas.

### Strategy

The defining element of this landscape character type is the pattern of land use and enclosure which progresses from mixed farming on the valley floor where fields are enclosed by hedges, to pastures on the valley sides defined by stone walls, to open moorland above. This is overlain with a varied pattern of woodland and a wealth of historic features, giving each valley a unique character. The overall strategy should be to conserve and restore this land use and enclosure pattern and the unique character of each of the valleys.

### Guidelines for land management

#### Forestry and woodland

Future felling of coniferous plantations should seek to reduce their visual dominance on the upper valley slopes, either through removal or through restructuring with broadleaved planting. New planting should not extend over the skyline.

There is a need for management to encourage regeneration of semi-natural woodland in wooded bluffs and along burns, in order to diversify the age structure of the woodlands and retain characteristic patterns of woodland in the landscape. Appropriate protection from overgrazing is paramount.

Removal of uncharacteristic woodland planting, particularly coniferous shelterbelts on the valley floor and lower valley slopes, is desirable in the long term. Where removal is not possible, opportunities should be sought to soften the impact of these woodlands by replanting with native species or by linking the woodlands to those within the tributary valleys.

Encourage the planting of new woodland on the valley floor where it adds visual interest, enhances landscape structure and complements existing woods on steep side bluffs.

#### Farming

Retention of unimproved pastures on the valley sides and some areas of valley floor and protection of buried archaeology and earthworks (including mining heritage) should be encouraged in order to retain the visual diversity and time-depth of this landscape.
### Rivers and wetland
Creation of landscape margins and buffers adjacent to watercourses would be beneficial where arable land or intensive grazing impinges on the water's edge. Similarly the replanting of hawthorn hedges on the valley floor, where field amalgamation or hedgerow loss has occurred, is desirable.

### Historic sites
Conservation of historic sites and structures, which act as local focal points and reinforce local distinctiveness in each of the valleys, is important. Access and retention of views to these key features should also be retained.

### Guidelines for development

#### Housing and economic development
New built development should avoid creeping up the valley sides and should not form abrupt edges. It should be constructed in sandstone and slate or in other materials of similar colour (particularly roofs). The approach routes, key views and gateways to settlements should be protected from inappropriate development.

#### Tourism and recreation
Recreational development (such as golf course, caravan parks and playing fields) on the edges of settlements should not extend urbanising influences or uncharacteristic vegetation patterns into open countryside.

#### Energy and telecommunications
Man-made vertical structures which detract from the valley landform, create visual clutter or adversely affect the unfettered skylines which form the distinctive setting to these valleys should be avoided and any such existing structures removed where possible.
3.5 Northumberland Sandstone Hills

The Northumberland Sandstone Hills extend in a wide north-south arc across Northumberland, separating the valleys of the Cheviot Fringe from the agricultural lowlands to the east. This is a plateau landscape, covered mainly by moorland and improved pasture. A small part of the Character Area (the Simonside and Harbottle Hills) lies within Northumberland National Park; a separate small area, at the southern end of the sandstone hills, lies within Tynedale District. The elevated nature of this Character Area means that it forms an important setting to the study area. Only those key characteristics that are relevant to the study area or its setting are listed below.

- These sandstone hills form distinctive skyline features with generally level tops, north-west facing scarps, and craggy outcrops with exceptional views.
- They are highest in the south, where they reach over 400m AOD.
- There is a transition from heather and grass moor on the higher ground, through scrub and woodland, to improved farmland and parkland on the lower slopes.
- Extensive plantations of coniferous woodland occur in some areas.
- Broadleaved woodland is associated with rivers and scarp slopes.
- Farmland comprises rectangular patterns of large open fields, bounded by dry stone walls, dating from the time of the parliamentary enclosures.
- However, blocks and belts of coniferous woodland often break up the patterns.
- Varied moorland communities, dominated by heather and rough acid grassland mosaics, are found on the thin, sandy soils of the higher and steeper slopes.
- Wet peaty flushes, mires, loughs and small reservoirs occur throughout the area.
- Traditional buildings were of sandstone and thatch, later replaced by stone slates and Welsh slates.
- There are scattered farmsteads and small hamlets, served by the market town of Rothbury.
- This is an important prehistoric archaeological landscape, with ‘cup and ring’ marked rocks, Bronze Age burial cists, earthwork remains of Iron Age hillfort systems, standing stones, enclosures and cairns.
- Remains of deserted medieval villages and rig and furrow cultivation are common, especially on land to the east and south of the main plateau area.
Landscape character type 8: Outcrop Hills and Escarpment

Characterisation

Key characteristics

- Flat-topped elongated ridges and rounded sandstone hills.
- Distinctive steep scarp faces forming notable stepped, often dark, skyline silhouettes.
- Open plateau and gentle dip slopes clothed in heather moorland, acidic grassland mosaic, coniferous forestry and peat bog/mires.
- Steeper slopes clothed in bracken, heather and broadleaved woodland with craggy outcrops.
- Wet pastures and semi-improved pastures on lower slopes.
- Rich muted colours and textures.
- Little or no habitation but significant archaeological remains.
- Waterbodies including natural loughs and reservoirs.

Description

This landscape character type forms a rhythm of repeating hills and uplands stretching from outside of the study area north of Rothbury to Sweethope Lough in the south. These hills include four distinct upland areas namely the Harbottle Hills, Cartington Hills, Simonside Hills and Sweethope and Blackdown. Due to their height above surrounding farmland, these hills form important backdrops to landscapes such as the Coquet valley as well as offering long distant views to other hills such as the Cheviots. Their distinctive form and rich semi-natural vegetation patterns contrast with the surrounding more intensively-farmed landscape.

The underlying geology of the area is sandstone which forms a sharp north- and east-facing scarp with craggy cliffs, scree slopes and upstanding rocky outcrops. The scarp face creates an indented stepped skyline which is distinctive in views over great distances. Beyond the scarp, the flat tops of the ridges form a broad plateau above the gentler, rounded dip slope to the south. In these latter areas there are fewer distinctive rocky outcrop features although the vegetation continues to reflect the acidic nature of the underlying geology. The highest outcrop is Simonside Hill at 430m AOD.

Much of this area is covered by extensive semi-natural vegetation reflecting the underlying acidic soil conditions and including heather and grass moorland, and, in areas of poorer drainage, peat bog. Rocky outcrops set within the heather moors, together with patches of bracken and gorse, add visual diversity. These areas of moorland are enclosed by stone walls and provide rough sheep grazing; they are managed for grouse. On lower slopes
there is a medium-sized enclosure pattern of improved pastures within stone walls. These fringe areas have an intimate character due to their topography, stone walls and woodlands.

There are some notable areas of ancient semi-natural woodland, particularly on steeper slopes below the scarp face, along incised burns and on the dip slopes where woodland often reflects the rounded topography of the area. Some of these woodlands are grazed and form important and distinctive areas of wood pasture. These contrast with the geometric shapes of the coniferous woodland (comprising pine, spruce and some larch) that have been planted on the open plateau and dip slopes such as Raylees Common, Harwood Forest and Aid Moss. In places the conifer plantations are edged with broadleaved species such as birch, giving a softer appearance; and elsewhere open glades have been created within plantations.

The area is drained by a series of burns which cut incised courses though the moorland and are often clothed in bracken, heather and broadleaved trees and flanked by wet pastures. Elsewhere in this character type there are natural loughs and mires (e.g. Darden Lough and Little Lough respectively) in areas of poor drainage where peat has built up, as well as man-made reservoirs such as Sweethope Lough and Fontburn Reservoir.

Although there is little or no settlement in this landscape character type, the hills have a cultural importance, reflected in the high concentration of prehistoric sites such as burial cairns, standing stones, cup and ring marks and hill forts and in folklore, where the Simonside Hills in particular are thought to represent a 'ritual landscape'. In addition there are few roads accessing this landscape, although ancient hollow ways cross the area providing access by foot.

While not remote, the semi-natural vegetation and rocky outcrops, which are features of the hills, give a ruggedness and natural character to much of the area. The simple landform and complex semi-natural vegetation patterns provide a rich visual diversity of colours and textures.

**Landscape character areas**

**NSH8a Harbottle Hills**
This character area runs east-west and lies between the Coquet Valley to the north and Rolling Uplands of the Otterburn Training Area to the south. It comprises an area of extensive heather cover and mixed conifer plantations. Farm steadings occur on lower ground and the area is incised by minor burns such as Holystone Burn. On the north-east facing slope of the Coquet valley above Harbottle, there is a large coniferous plantation which lies contiguous with fragments of ancient semi-natural habitat, including multi-stemmed, formerly coppiced sessile oak woodland, juniper scrub and upland heather heath. A large part of this landscape is an artillery range used for military training. In places the underlying Fell Sandstone is revealed in craggy outcrops.

**NSH8b Cartington Hills**
This character area forms a broad upland ridge north of Rothbury and the Coquet valley and extends beyond the study area. Like other areas within this type, craggy cliffs (e.g. Corby’s Crag and crags on Callaly Moor) form occasional prominent landmarks and the land cover is extensive grass and heather moorland with substantial conifer plantations, the largest being Thrunton Forest. The moorland is extensively grazed, with infrequent wire fences providing enclosure, and the landscape scale is large, with long distance views. There is a wealth of prehistoric remains including cairnfields, cup and ring marks and remains of settlements. Later historic interest includes evidence of small-scale coal mining at Alnwick Moor and large country estates at Callaly Castle and parkland and at Cragside, now managed by the National Trust.

**NSH8c Simonside Hills**
This character area forms an expansive upland with some distinctive rock outcrops dominated on its south side by the large scale, geometrically laid out, coniferous plantation of Harwood Forest. To the north and west of the plantation, broad plateau summits undulate in a series of ridges with north-west facing scarp slopes, the thin sandy soils supporting semi-natural heather moorland and acid grassland with some areas of wet mire. The upper hill slopes provide semi-improved grazing, which in places has reverted to rough pasture. The lower slopes provide improved grazing with some broadleaf cover, particularly along minor stream courses. In damper areas
there are mires supporting purple moor grass, bog myrtle and sphagnum moss. Dry stone walls are frequent enclosure elements, although many are no longer stockproof and are supplemented with wire fences, which predominate elsewhere.

**NSH8d Sweethope and Blackdown**

This character area forms the southern extremity of the sandstone hills and comprises the gentle dip slope which has less dramatic topographic features than areas further north, although there are still notable craggy outcrops such as Great Wanney and Little Wanney Crags. It comprises extensive open areas of heather and grass moorland, and small blocky plantations. In places where heather moorland survives, the distinctive patterns resulting from controlled burning are evident. The area also includes Sweethope Lough which is important for fishing.

**Strategy and Guidelines**

**Key features and qualities**

- **Distinctive flat topped sandstone ridgelines and outcrops** e.g. Raven Heugh and Leech-hope Crag which act as visual landmarks and are distinctive beyond this character type. The elevation of this landscape also affords long distance views to the Cheviot Hills.
- **Extensive areas of semi-natural habitat** including wet peaty flushes, heather and grass moorland, mires and ancient semi-natural woodland along burns and steep slopes. Many sites are SSSIs and contribute a rich tapestry of colours and textures e.g. Harbottle Moors valued for upland heath and fen, marsh and swamp lowland and Simonside Hills valued for its upland heath, bogs and semi-natural woodland.
- **Remoteness and tranquillity** as a result of upland character, limited accessibility, and sparse population.
- **High scenic quality** derived from distinctive geology, topography and acidic vegetation and reflected in the inclusion of much of this landscape in the Northumberland National Park.
- **An important landscape for recreation and tourism** on account of its scenic quality (including rich colours and textures) and range of habitats and important archaeological sites.
- **A prehistoric archaeological landscape** with a wealth of archaeological features such as 'cup and ring' marked stones, Bronze Age burial cists, Iron Age hillfort systems, standing stones, enclosures and cairns many of which are designated as scheduled ancient monuments.

**Local forces for change and their landscape implications**

- **Ongoing felling and restocking of coniferous plantations** may influence the shape of plantations and cause local visual and physical disturbance.
- **Farming and forestry activity** may result in the drainage of upland areas resulting in damage to peat bogs, wet flushes and wet pastures and potential loss of buried and upstanding archaeological features.
- **Change in patterns of heather moorland** is occurring, including some ongoing loss of heather though overstocking, drainage and over-burning.
- **Lack of stone wall management and proliferation of post and wire fencing** may lead to a loss of enclosure pattern and visual clutter.
- **Development pressure for radio masts and large scale wind farm developments** potentially could bring loss of tranquillity, cumulative impacts and visual fragmentation and cluttering of the distinctive indented skyline which forms the backdrop to many views across this landscape character type and beyond.
- **Tourism and recreation pressure** could result in an increase in roadside development, car parks, interpretation and areas of footpath erosion, particularly around archaeological sites, and subsequent loss of tranquillity.

**Strategy**

This landscape has a strong identity and many valuable landscape features which remain in good condition. Although there has been some adverse changes such the planting of extensive areas of coniferous plantation and development of radio masts, the overall strategy for this area is to conserve and sensitively manage.

**Guidelines for land management**

**Forestry and woodland**

In areas of visually important forest, such as at Holystone, Harbottle and Simonside, encourage continuous cover management or long term retention.

Where plantation restructuring takes place encourage softer plantation outlines with shapes designed to
integrate with local topography and with a relatively high proportion of broadleaves suited to the acid ground conditions found here. Ensure that craggy outcrops and visually significant archaeological sites are avoided and are not visually masked by woodland where feasible. Educate landowners and visitors so that the risk of accidental fires is reduced. Encourage the removal of coniferous woodland where it impinges on adjacent landscapes such as river valleys.

Encourage a greater uptake of woodland grants to bring semi-natural woodlands back into active management where they have suffered from neglect.

**Farming**

Retention of unimproved wet pastures on lower slopes and the protection of buried archaeology and earthworks should be encouraged in order to retain the visual diversity and time-depth of this landscape.

**Field Boundaries**

The rebuilding and restoration of stone walls should be encouraged through provision of appropriate grants and development of locally-based skills to ensure walls are stockproof and reflect the distinctive enclosure pattern found in parts of this landscape, particularly where it is associated with historic sites.

**Moorland**

Manage heather moorland and sustain and enhance biodiversity through appropriate stocking densities and burning regimes. Encourage the regeneration and expansion of areas of heather moorland in order to reinforce the distinctive rich colours and textures found in this landscape.

Conserve areas of peat bog and wet flushes through the avoidance of gripping. Restore damaged bogs and flushes by blocking grips and drains.

**Historic sites**

Conservation of historic sites and their settings should be encouraged particularly where they act as local focal points and reinforce local distinctiveness. Access to key features should be sensitively managed to avoid erosion of the landscape and archaeology.

**Guidelines for development**

**Tourism and recreation**

Development associated with recreation provision should be sensitively designed and located to avoid the suburbanisation of the locality and should respect the surrounding landscape context.

**Energy and telecommunications**

Man-made vertical structures should be avoided in this landscape where they would markedly detract from the distinctive notched skyline of the sandstone outcrops should be avoided. This ridge is particularly sensitive to any skyline structures because of its importance in views, especially those from National Park land to the north and east.
Landscape character type 9: Sandstone Upland Valleys

Characterisation

Key characteristics

- Sinuous shallow valleys and narrower, incised tributaries set within the sandstone uplands.
- Valleys enclosed by distinctive, gently convex sandstone hills with acidic vegetation.
- Smooth floodplain meadows and pastures grazed by cattle, sheep and horses and occasional areas of arable.
- Strong topographic, vegetation and land use patterns.
- Meandering rivers that are inconspicuous within the landscape, but lined with alders.
- Steep bluffs clothed in pine and other conifers flanking the valley floor.
- Shelterbelts and clumps of Scots pine and mixed woodland on lower slopes and valley floor.
- Sandstone-built historic villages on lower slopes.
- Rich archaeology including rig and furrow, motte and bailey and fortified bastle houses – heart of reiving country.

Description

This landscape character type comprises the river valleys which flow through or adjacent to the Outcrop Hills and Escarpment landscape character type. These valleys are similar in character to the Rolling Upland Valleys landscape character type; however they are strongly influenced by their sandstone context to the south and south-east and by the lower-lying land of the Estate Farmland landscape character type to the north and north-west. The Sandstone Upland Valleys type includes the middle reaches of the Coquet Valley from Harbottle in the west to Rothbury in the east, as well as the tributary valley of Grasslees.

As for the Rolling Upland Valleys, these valleys have been heavily influenced by glaciation which has left substantial glacial drift deposits resulting in some areas of undulating terrain e.g. around Hepple and extensive sand and gravel deposits as found at Caistron. Consequently these valleys have fertile soils supporting a mix of pasture and arable cultivation. On the valley sides there is evidence of glacial meltwater erosion in the form of steep bluffs, which are often wooded with Scots pine and conifer or covered in gorse scrub. The profile of the valleys is asymmetrical due to the fact that the valleys are underlain by sandstone to the south and south-east and by glacial deposits over Cementstones to the north and north-west. On the sandstone valley sides the topography rises sharply and the acidic soils support distinctive vegetation, including heather moorland, birch and alder woodland, and patches of gorse and bracken. In contrast the valley sides with glacial...
deposits rise more gently, forming a rounded profile and supporting large-scale improved pastures and blocks of conifer shelterbelts which rest heavily on the skyline.

The floodplain or haugh within the Sandstone Upland Valleys is well defined and of varying width. The meandering course of the river flows between shingle banks. In places oxbow lakes and former river channels can be picked out as wet patches and undulations within the valley floor pastures.

The valley floor pastures are semi-improved with patches of wet flush vegetation. They are most frequently divided by post and wire fencing; although in places outgrown hawthorn hedges extend up the valley sides. The enclosure pattern is generally small-scale and the fields are grazed by cattle, sheep and horses. The surrounding woodlands give the valleys a sense of enclosure. This is most strongly felt in the tributary valleys where the watercourses are lined with alder trees and broadleaved woodland; and in the Upper Coquet valley where pine and conifer plantations extend onto the floodplain. Elsewhere, as at Warton and Rothbury, the valley floor is more open, although mature oak and ash trees are characteristic within the hedgerows on the lower valley sides.

The river valleys have a settled and sheltered character with a regular pattern of small historic villages occurring at the break in slope between the valley sides and floodplain. Settlements include Harbottle, Holystone, Sharperton, Hepple, Thropton and Rothbury. There are occasional framed glimpses down the sinuous valley to settlements beyond. These villages are of considerable antiquity, dating from the medieval period or possibly earlier, have a strong local vernacular character and are predominantly built of sandstone. At Harbottle there are the remains of a distinctive motte and bailey castle, signifying a feudal stronghold similar to that found at Elsdon in the Rolling Upland Valleys landscape character type; while at Holystone the presence of a natural spring attracted attention in the Roman period and was thought to be instrumental in the establishment of an Augustinian Priory in the twelfth century. Throughout this landscape, the presence of bastle houses reflects the conflicts of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and adds interest and further time-depth.

The rich natural resources found in this landscape character type have also led created interesting industrial archaeology. This is particularly seen in the Grasslees valley, where iron smelting and charcoal burning were common in the medieval period. The valley’s alder trees were used in the smelting process and often show signs of past coppicing. Today industrial activity focuses more on the extraction of sands and gravels from the valley floor around Caistron, where gravel lakes and wetland carr are being created post-excavation. In the eastern part of this landscape character type there are signs of urban fringe development including golf course, caravan park and housing development along the valleys sides.

Landscape character areas

**NSH9a Coquet Valley (Harbottle-Harehaugh)**

This character area extends from Alwinton Bridge to Harehaugh and comprises a relatively narrow, sinuous and contained part of the Coquet Valley within which sit the historic villages of Harbottle, Holystone ad Sharperton. The valley sides are relatively well-wooded and steep, giving an enclosed character which broadens out between Holystone and Harbottle as the valley sides temporary recede and woodland becomes less dense. The rocky course of the River Coquet meanders across the well defined haugh and is often lined by a visually-prominent fringe of alder trees. Semi-improved pastures and meadows occur on the valley floor, with improved pastures and shelterbelts on the valley sides to the north; while to the south there is a patchwork of broadleaved woodland (e.g. Dueshill Wood) and rough grazing. A strong estate and parkland influence is prevalent around Holystone Grange. Here greater concentrations of Scots pine and rhododendron can be found on the river bluffs and valley floor. This landscape character area has a secretive, deeply rural character and a strong time-depth.

**NSH9b Grasslees Valley**

This character area comprises the Grasslees and Penchford Burn valleys and their minor tributaries. These
burns form narrow, wooded valleys which carve through the sandstone hills and are well lined with alder and birch trees. Throughout this area there are scattered farmsteads and a mix of improved farmland and rough pasture grazed by sheep and in places horses. The haughs are narrow – often only one field deep – and the valley sides are steep, comprising rough pastures and areas of bracken. The archaeology of the area is characterised by extensive medieval and post-medieval remains, dense concentrations of which occur along the Penchford and Grasslees Burns. These remains demonstrate that there was a thriving medieval economy linked to quarries, iron working, coal pits and watermills. Evidence of the use of alder and hazel for smelting is visible in the numerous coppice stools which are characteristic of the area. There are also notable concentrations of bastles (Ironhouse, High Shaw, The Raw, Craig and Headshope) dating from late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Post-medieval settlement, stack stands, sheep folds, sod-cast dykes and rig and furrow are all evident, along with tileeries and limekilns used in attempts to improve the land. Although seemingly wild and natural, the landscape of this area has been significantly utilised and manipulated in the past.

**NSH9c  Coquet Valley (Rothbury)**

This character area comprises the River Coquet valley between Harehaugh and Rothbury and is distinguished from other Sandstone Upland Valleys by its open and broad floodplain. It includes the settlements of Hepple, Thropton and Rothbury and has a settled and managed character. At the eastern end of the area the river valley is ‘squeezed’ and overlooked by the sandstone hills which close in on the north and south. The river meanders though the floodplain, and has cut an incised channel through the deep layers of alluvium. Around Caistron, sand and gravel extraction has created wetland habitats for birds and carr woodland, altering the character of the valley floor. Land use alongside the river is mainly sheep and cattle grazing on meadows enclosed by wire fences; some of the meadows are traditionally managed. On the south-facing slopes of the valley to the west of Thropton, there is an area of arable cultivation bounded by somewhat degraded hedgerows. Numerous mature trees and small woodlands occur both near to the river and further up the valley sides. Although there is some coniferous plantation, many woodlands are semi-natural or on ancient woodland sites.

**Strategy and Guidelines**

**Key features and qualities**

- **Exceptional areas of semi-natural woodland** including oak and alder and birch woods along river courses and on steep slopes (inc bluffs) and tributary valleys which add colour and texture. The majority of this landscape types is included in the River Coquet and Coquet Valley Woodlands SSSI.
- **Areas of natural fluvial activity** where rivers meander unrestricted across flat flood plains associated with shingle banks, ox-bow lakes and wet pastures.
- **Distinctive sandstone built historic villages** forming a repeating pattern along the lower valley slopes and add visual interest and act as local foci.
- **High scenic quality** derived from topography, semi-natural habitats, the colour and textures of vegetation and the variety of enclosed and open stretches of river valley. This scenic quality has led to the inclusion of much of the area within the Northumberland National Park.
- **Rich archaeology** including many standing features dating from the medieval period, including a motte and bailey at Harbottle and fortified bastles as at Woodhouses, as well as landscape features associated with the smelting and charcoal industries. Many of the historic structures are listed and or scheduled.
- **High degree of tranquillity and intimacy** away from major roads and settlements and in tributary valleys.

**Local forces for change and their landscape implications**

- **The decline in important semi-natural woodland habitats** due to a combination of neglect and grazing by stock has resulted in little regeneration and the invasion of non-native species such as rhododendron in some areas. There may be long term implications for the visual character of the landscape as a result and a loss of historic management practices associated with smelting and charcoal industries.
- **Conifer plantations on upper valley sides** impinge on this landscape and may relate poorly to the pattern of semi-natural woodlands on valley sides.
- **Loss of field boundaries** through lack of management is tending to weaken the characteristic patterns of enclosure. Many hedgerows on the valley floor are gappy or have been replaced by fencing and some stone walls on the valleys sides are tumbled down.
- **Loss of hedgerow trees** through lack of management is occurring, particularly along rural lanes and upper valley slopes where they merge into the Outcrop Hills and Escarpments landscape character type, resulting in a loss of landscape pattern and a more open character.
- **Development pressures** are evident in Rothbury (just outside the study area) and other valley settlements, where new housing, tourism developments and inappropriate planting (conifers) show signs in some areas of expanding onto the valley sides and altering the character of the valley landscape as well as the historic form and approach routes to the settlements.
• **Active sand and gravel extraction** on the valley floor presents an opportunity to create new wet woodlands and areas of open water by their restoration but may also alter the character of the valley.

**Strategy**

The defining elements of this landscape character type are the variety of intimate and more open areas along the valley, vegetation associated with the underlying sandstone geology of the valley sides, and the pattern of historic villages. These elements give the landscape a secretive unspoilt quality and time-depth. Disturbance to this pattern has occurred in places through loss of field boundaries, sand and gravel extraction and built development. The overall strategy should be to conserve and restore the landscape.

**Guidelines for land management**

**Forestry and woodland**

Encourage the re-coppicing of areas of alder woodland particularly in the Grassless Valley where this management regime was historically significant to encourage longevity of the woodland and increase age structure. In general, there is a need for management to encourage regeneration of semi-natural woodland on wooded bluffs and along burns, in order to diversify the age structure of the woodlands and retain characteristic patterns of woodland in the landscape. Appropriate protection from overgrazing is paramount.

Removal of uncharacteristic woodland planting, particularly coniferous shelterbelts on the upper valley slopes, is desirable in the long term. Where removal is not possible, opportunities should be sought to soften the impact of these woodlands by replanting with native species or by linking the woodlands to those within the tributary valleys or shallow hollows.

**Farming**

Retention of unimproved and wet pastures on the valley sides and some areas of valley floor and protection of buried archaeology and earthworks should be encouraged in order to retain the visual diversity and time-depth of this landscape.

**Rivers and wetland**

Creation of margins and buffers adjacent to watercourses would be beneficial where arable land or intensive grazing impinges on the water’s edge. Similarly the replanting of hawthorn hedges on the valley floor, where field amalgamation or hedgerow loss has occurred, is desirable.

**Historic sites**

Conservation of historic sites and structures, which act as local focal points and reinforce local distinctiveness in each of the valleys, is important. Access and retention of views to these key features should also be retained. Where collections of associated archaeological features occur care should be taken to consider the management and conservation of the group value.

**Guidelines for development**

**Housing and economic development**

The valley sides and open valley floor are visually sensitive to new development and care should be taken to ensure new development does not extend into these areas in a way which is visual intrusive, resulting in abrupt urban edges or altering the character of existing settlements. Where feasible new development should be constructed in sandstone and slate or in other materials of similar colour (particularly roofs). The approach routes, key views and gateways to settlements should be protected from inappropriate development.

**Tourism and recreation**

Recreational development (such as golf courses, caravan parks and playing fields) on the edges of settlements should not extend urbanising influences or uncharacteristic vegetation patterns into open countryside.

**Energy and telecommunications**

Man-made vertical structures which detract from the valley landform, create visual clutter or adversely affect the unfettered skylines which form the distinctive setting to these valleys should be resisted and any such existing structures removed where possible.

**Minerals and waste**

Further extensive extraction of sand and gravel from the valley floor should be restricted to avoid a significant change in valley floor character. Restoration of extraction areas should seek to introduce characteristic alder woodland and care should be taken to avoid extensive areas of open water which would be visually prominent from surrounding higher land.
Landscape character type 10: Upland Fringe Farmland

Characterisation

Key characteristics

- Open, remote, marginal upland fringe farmland.
- Gently undulating topography drained by minor burns, with wet pastures in shallow hollows.
- Occasional Whin Sill and sandstone outcrops and crags with associated active and disused quarries.
- Mainly rough and semi-improved pastures, with patches of open grass moorland on highest ground.
- Varied pattern of enclosure – medium- to large-scale and defined by a mixture of stone walls and wire fencing.
- Areas of geometric coniferous and mixed woodland planting.
- Sparsely populated landscape – occasional steadings and farm complexes connected by narrow lanes.
- Evidence of past mining, coal shafts and rig and furrow.

Description

This landscape character type is located to the east of the North Tyne Valley and forms the southern fringe to the Outcrop Hills and Escarpment landscape character type. The relatively high elevation of this landscape means that there are often open views to the west and north across the river valleys to the higher ground of the Rolling Uplands and Outcrop Hills. This is a transitional landscape between the high sandstone moorlands and the more intensively farmed and settled lowland areas, and is a marginal area for farmland both economically and geographically.

Geologically this landscape character type comprises sandstone, shale, limestone and mudstone which are overlain with glacial drift, giving rise to a subtly undulating topography. Intruding into these strata is the harder igneous rock of the Whin Sill, which cuts across the area from Barrasford Quarry to north of Kirkwhelpington. As a more resistant rock it forms prominent outcrops of high commercial values that have been, and continue to be quarried, for example at Divethill and Swinburne. Sandstone outcrops also occur and are quarried for building stone, for instance at Kirkwhelpington; these outcrops are marked by associated acid-loving vegetation such as patches of bracken and gorse. Generally, however, this landscape has relatively limited topographic and vegetation variation; it has a visual simplicity and uniformity.
The scale of the landscape is medium to large, and land use is dominated by rough and semi-improved pastures (many of which are rushy), with patches of open grass moorland on the highest ground, for example around Coween along the A68 at about 240m AOD. The enclosure pattern, where defined by stone walls, is visually strong, creating a rectilinear and regular pattern. This pattern is reinforced by regimented, angular blocks of coniferous and mixed woodland, notably around Gallows Hall in the north-east but which also elsewhere in the landscape character type. These woodlands and shelterbelts provide a degree of containment in an otherwise open landscape. In some places broadleaved woodland occurs in the shallow depressions and incised ravines created by burns, notably on the western flank of this area where it dips into the North Tyne Valley. There are occasional mature oak trees within fields or along stone walls or fences and these add visual interest.

In the north of this area there is extensive evidence of past mining and iron-smelting activity, as disused quarries and former spoil heaps pepper the landscape. In the south there are a number of man-made features such as masts and small reservoirs for example at Colt Crag. Throughout this area the simplicity of the landform and the uniformity of land use mean that archaeological earthworks such as rig and furrow are visually prominent. These create a rich pattern and add a sense of time-depth.

The landscape has a degree of remoteness and few built features. Where man-made structures are apparent or coniferous woodland blocks dominate the landscape, the naturalness of the area is eroded.

Landscape character areas

NSH10a Longwitten Ridge
This character area consists of an undulating east-west ridge that separates the valleys of the Font and Wansbeck rivers. Generally open and windswept, much of the area has an expansive landscape with treeless pasture bounded by dry stone walls. In places this is relieved by scrub or hedgerow remnants and broken up by plantations. Locally, there are areas where hedgerows and mature trees are more frequent, particularly along roadsides where there are some distinctive ‘tunnels’ of vegetation and also where there are fragments of parkland landscape and mature trees associated with country estates. Woodland cover includes numerous mainly coniferous farm woods and shelterbelts.

NSH10b Buteland and Colt Crag
This area fringes the Outcrop Hills and Escarpment and the North Tyne Valley and extends from Risdale in the north to Barraford Quarry in the south. The A68 passes through this landscape, the ‘hidden dips’ and ‘blind summits’ on the road highlighting the undulating topography. Throughout this area there are remnant signs of past quarrying such as the disused workings at Broomehope in the north and working whinstone quarries such as Divethill. Outcrops of the Whin Sill are most visible in the east, around Great Bavington while outcrops of sandstone appear around Buteland Fell in the north. Although the landscape is mainly open, there are scattered coniferous plantations and shelterbelts are across the area and around Colt Crag Reservoir; these features as well as the area’s stone wall patterns often have a rectilinear character. The semi-improved pastures are generally wet and rushy, particularly to the west and in shallow hollows such as at Black Bog west of Lowshield Green. Patches of broadleaved woodland occur along minor burns and ravines, adding local interest and a more intimate character. This landscape has an expansive, empty and marginal feel, reinforced by the dispersed pattern of farmsteads and the presence, poor wet pastures and rough grazing.

Strategy and Guidelines

Key features and qualities

- **Distinctive stone wall enclosure pattern** which creates a repetitive and medium scaled strong visual pattern.
- **Elevated exposed rolling upland** resulting in smooth rounded skylines and extensive views and a sense of remoteness.
- **Wet/rushy pasture and areas of grass and heather moorland** providing important habitats for breeding birds.
- **Reservoirs** providing water and recreational resources as well as supporting wildfowl.
- **Notable areas of rocky outcrops of geological and visual interest** associated with the Whin Sill and areas of exposed sandstone.
- **Isolated vernacular farmsteads and important areas of archaeological earthworks** including Romano-British farmsteads, prehistoric settlement and henges and deserted medieval villages e.g. the sunken medieval village at Swinburne and stone hut circles at Low Cowden.

**Local forces for change and their landscape implications**

- **Poorly located coniferous shelterbelts and plantations** may interrupt the natural flow of landform, create incongruous geometric blocks on the skyline and impinge of burn valleys.
- **Increasing age of coniferous plantations** may make some vulnerable to wind throw damage and raise issues regarding appropriate felling regimes which will impact on the visual character of the landscape.
- **Improvements to pastures** including drainage and use of fertiliser and lime may reduce species diversity and alter the muted hues and textures found in this landscape.
- **Conservation and management of stone walls** may be lacking, resulting in a neglected character, proliferation of post and wire fencing to ensure stockproofing, and the eventual loss of stone walls and the distinctive enclosure pattern.
- **Conversion of pasture to arable** may lead to a change in land use pattern, fragmentation of grassland habitats and loss of buried archaeology.
- **Pressure for development of prominent vertical elements** particularly on prominent ridgelines may result in visual impacts over considerable distances including beyond this landscape type. Development may also interrupt the natural flow of landform and undermine tranquillity.
- **Continued quarrying activity** may cause further scarring of the landscape and loss of landscape features.

**Strategy**

This landscape has a strong identity and many valuable landscape features which remain in good condition. Although there has been some adverse change such the planting of coniferous plantation and the decline in pastures, the overall strategy for this area is to conserve, restore and sensitively manage the landscape of the area.

**Guidelines for land management**

**Forestry and woodland**

Encourage the use of Forest Design Plans to minimise the impact of plantation and shelterbelt re-structuring. Encourage the felling and restocking of coniferous plantations with an increase in native species. Seek softer plantation outlines with shapes designed to integrate with local topography. Ensure that craggy outcrops and visually significant archaeological sites are avoided and are not visually masked by woodland. Protect gills and ravines from stock to encourage regeneration of semi-natural vegetation including gorse scrub and woodland and manage areas of bracken invasion.

**Farming**

Retention of unimproved wet and acidic grasslands and protection of buried archaeology and earthworks should be encouraged in order to retain the visual diversity and time-depth of this landscape. Use of fertilisers and lime on pastures should be discouraged and stocking levels reduced where overgrazing is reducing the diversity of grassland species. Seek opportunities to revert arable back to pasture where soil conditions are poor and restore wet pastures through blocking of grips and drains.

**Field Boundaries**

The rebuilding and restoration of stone walls should be encouraged through provision of appropriate grants and development of locally-based skills to ensure walls are stockproof and reflect the distinctive enclosure pattern found in parts of this landscape particularly areas associated with historic sites.

**Moorland**

Manage heather and grass moorland and sustain and enhance biodiversity through appropriate stocking densities and burning regimes. Encourage the regeneration and expansion of heather moorland in order to reinforce the distinctive rich colours and textures found in this landscape.

**Historic sites**

Conservation of historic sites and their settings and areas of earthworks should be encouraged particularly where they act as local focal points and create strong landscape patterns and textures.
Guidelines for development

Energy and telecommunications
Care should be taken to avoid cumulative impacts and widespread cluttering of the skyline with vertical structures. The effects on views from other landscape character types, especially those within the National Park and the setting of Hadrian’s Wall, should be carefully considered.

Minerals and waste
This landscape contains a number of active and abandoned quarry sites associated with Whin Sill and sandstone outcrops. Consideration should be given to the development of an action plan to mitigate the visual impacts of these developments on the surrounding landscape, for example including offsite hedgerow planting. Quarry sites should be restored through the development of naturalistic profiles using restoration blasting. Opportunities should be considered for improving access to some rock exposures which are of geological or visual interest.
3.6 Mid Northumberland

This area, which lies inland of the Northumberland coast between Ponteland and Alnwick, is an upland fringe transitional landscape between the coastal plain to the east and the hills, moors and forests to the west. The south-west corner of the area, around Hallington Reservoir, lies within the Tynedale District section of the study area but outside Northumberland National Park. Only those key characteristics that are relevant to the study area or its setting are listed below.

- This intermediate upland fringe plateau comprises a series of ridges and upper reaches of intimate river valleys in the north, opening out to a broader, flatter landscape in the south.
- Sandstone and dolerite crags (the latter associated with the Whin Sill) form local landscape features.
- The valleys of the rivers Font and Wansbeck are well-wooded.
- In addition, there are mixed and ornamental woodlands and parklands within the country estates.
- Small coniferous blocks and belts of trees occur on the more open farmland to the south.
- Most of the area has large rectilinear fields enclosed by stone walls or hedgerows.
- Arable and cattle farming on the lower land merge into sheep farming on higher ground and moorland to the west.
- Large reservoirs and ornamental lakes provide distinctive areas of open water.
- Traditional buildings are generally of sandstone, with gritstone at higher altitudes.
- There are frequent country houses and fortified defensive structures, typically set in landscaped parklands.
- Villages are often centred on greens and surrounded by extensive medieval rig and furrow and earthworks.
Landscape character type 11: Intermediate Rolling Farmland

Characterisation

Key characteristics

- Gently rolling landform which is open and expansive.
- Rich soils – predominance of arable cultivation and improved pasture.
- Medium sized rectilinear fields defined by closely trimmed hedgerows, stone walls and post and wire fences.
- Mature hedgerow trees that appear as overlapping lines of vegetation.
- V-shaped valleys in the north; wet pasture in shallow basins in south.
- Blocks of mature broadleaved woodland and plantations associated with estates.
- Settled landscape with villages and large historic houses and estates.
- Strong sense of antiquity, evident in medieval settlement pattern and earthworks.

Description

This landscape character type forms an area of intermediate rolling farmland north of the River Tyne and south of the Outcrop Hills and Escarpment. The landscape slopes gently in a south-easterly direction, with limited intervisibility to adjacent landscape character types.

Geologically, this landscape mainly comprises sandstones and limestones with a notable west-facing scarp occurring between Bingfield and Kirkheaton. In this area there are occasional craggy outcrops and remnant moorland, bracken and gorse, as well as a history of quarrying for road stone – Mootlaw quarry is still operational. Glacial drift deposits overlay the solid geology creating a gentle topography of small hills and ridges. This is drained in the north by v-shaped valleys (Rivers Font and Wansbeck), in the south becoming flatter with a less clear-cut drainage pattern and areas of poor drainage and wet pastures in shallow hollows.

This is an intensively farmed landscape, although it is well-wooded character and the presence of stone-built farms, villages and estates gives an impression of traditional management. There is a strong enclosure pattern with fields of arable and pasture enclosed by hedgerows (often closely trimmed), with some stone walls and wire fencing. The medium scale rectilinear pattern is reinforced by overlapping lines of mature hedgerow trees (predominantly beech, oak and ash).

This is a relatively well settled landscape with small historic towns, villages and many traditional stone farmhouses, often with large modern barns, dispersed throughout the area. Large historic houses and estates are also distinctive features. Concentrations of mature
trees are found around some settlements and farmsteads, the hedgerow trees increasing in frequency and stature on the deeper soils. Where there are estates and country houses there is often a higher concentration of woodland, comprising mixed and broad-leaved shelterbelts and copses, for example around Wallington. The settlements are linked by a regimented road network, often with characteristic right angle bends.

This is not a remote landscape. Although it is quite empty in parts, it is intensively farmed. The many minor roads, and the large woodlands that enclose the landscape in some areas, at times cause a sense of disorientation. The diverse vegetation and land use patterns – with interlocking lines of trees, trimmed hedgerows, shelterbelts, and mixed farming practices – create a range of colours and textures that is interesting but at the same time lacks much cohesion.

**Landscape character areas**

**MN11a Font and Wansbeck Valleys**

This character area consists of the valleys of the Font and the Wansbeck downstream of Fontburn reservoir and the Wallington estate respectively, and lies mostly outside of Tynedale District. It is a medium- to small-scale mixed farming landscape with enclosure provided principally by hedgerows. The watercourses form gentle v-shaped valleys within the rolling farmland and are lined by riparian woodlands. There are several large country estates within the character area and these exert a significant influence on landscape character through their use of specific and consistent traditional materials and styles of construction. Examples are the use of stone in construction of cottages, farms, bridges and walls; and elements such as metal parkland railings and mature trees. As is frequently the case along rivers, there is much evidence of early settlement including a deserted medieval village, Roman camps and an early Norman castle at Mitford.

**MN11b Inghoe Moor Estates**

The character area occupies high ground between the valleys of the Pont and Wansbeck rivers and comprises relatively exposed, open rolling farmland, with fragments of remnant moorland and occasional craggy outcrops, rectilinear parliamentary enclosure fields bounded by stone walls, gappy hedgerows and wire fences. The majority of the land is improved pasture, although there are significant areas of arable cultivation. There is a distinctive regularity in the pattern of field boundaries and minor roads. Concentrations of mature trees are found around some settlements and farmsteads, and hedgerow trees increase in frequency and stature on the deeper soils. There is a history of quarrying in the area and a large active roadstone quarry is still operational at Mootlaw. Signs of early settlements, tumuli, standing stones and rock carvings can be seen at a number of locations. There is a small commercial wind farm close to the village of Kirkheaton. This landscape also contains large farmsteads and estates where there is often an associated concentration of woodland.

**Strategy and Guidelines**

**Key features and qualities**

- **Species-rich pastures and meadows** particularly along the course of Hadrian’s Wall.
- **Outstanding buried and upstanding archaeological remains and landscapes** associated with Hadrian’s Wall, reflected in the area’s recognition as a World Heritage Site; also exceptional remains from the Medieval period including dispersed medieval villages and ridge and furrow as well as earlier features such as standing stones and tumuli. These features and earthworks create distinctive patterns add visual variety.
- **High concentration of maturing hedgerow trees and field trees** create overlapping lines of vegetation and a wooded character.
- **Notable sandstone scarp between Bingfield and Kirkheaton** which adds topographic interest and acts as local landmark.
- **Significant areas of wet pasture** as a result of shallow depressions creating variety in colour and texture, for example along the River Blyth near Kirkheaton.
- **Designed parkland and associated woodlands**, many of which are noted as Registered Parks and Gardens e.g. Wallington, Kirkharle Hall and Capheaton in the area just outside the study area.
- **Riparian woodlands** of value for nature conservation. Many are ancient semi-natural woods.
- **Vernacular stone built farmsteads, villages and estate houses** of historic importance which contribute to the sense of a traditionally managed landscape.
Local forces for change and their landscape implications

- **Lack of existing hedgerow tree management and encouragement of new hedgerow trees** may result in a gradual decline in the wooded character of this landscape.
- **Intensive arable cultivation and** may cause a loss of field margins, closely trimmed gappy hedgerows, proliferation of post and wire fencing and potential loss of archaeology.
- **Development of large scale farm buildings** may dwarf existing farmsteads and appear out of scale and visually dominant and undermine the sense of traditional management.
- **Pressure for development of large scale vertical features** such as masts and wind turbines may have significant landscape character and visual impacts across this landscape and may present issues with regard to cumulative impacts.
- **Continued quarrying activity** may cause the further loss of local landscape features, visual impacts and the erosion of rural lanes due to associated traffic.

**Strategy**

This landscape is one which is intensively used for agriculture. Although many landscape features and the overall pattern of the landscape are in good condition, there are some features which have suffered from lack of management or development. The overall strategy should be to restore and enhance the character and structure of this landscape.

**Guidelines for land management**

**Forestry and woodland**
Encourage the management of riparian woodlands through coppicing, selective felling and restocking and natural regeneration. The planting of new hedgerow trees of oak, ash and beech and the encouragement of tree development as part of hedgerow management are desirable.

**Field boundaries**
Encourage the replanting of hedgerows where they have been lost and the 'gapping up' of existing hedgerows with native hedgerow species including hawthorn and ash. Encourage less close trimming of hedgerows and the retention of hedgerow trees to reinforce the enclosure pattern.

**Farming**
Retention of unimproved wet pastures and the protection of buried archaeology and earthworks should be encouraged in order to retain the visual diversity and time-depth of this landscape. Use of fertilisers and lime on pastures should be discouraged.

Arable cropping on slopes should be avoided due to the risks of soil erosion, and where feasible the reversion of arable back to pasture particular in areas of value for archaeology should be encouraged.

**Rivers and wetland**
Creation of field margins along watercourses in areas of arable cultivation and the retention of wet pastures in shallow hollows through avoidance of drainage would be beneficial.

**Historic sites**
Conservation of historic sites and structures is important. Increased survey, awareness and management agreements should prevent loss to intensive arable cultivation. New farm buildings should be of an appropriate scale and relate well to existing farmsteads in terms of form and building materials and should visually sit comfortably within the landscape.

**Guidelines for development**

**Energy and telecommunications**
Man-made vertical structures such as wind farms development should be located away from settlement, in areas where landscape sensitivity is relatively low, for example where the field pattern is relatively large. Sensitive skylines, key views and impacts on the setting of Hadrian’s Wall should also be avoided.

**Minerals and waste**
Future mineral extraction should avoid visually prominent slopes or rock outcrops. Existing quarry sites should be restored through the development of naturalistic profiles using restoration blasting and natural regeneration of vegetation, for example at Mootlaw.
3.7 Tyne Gap and Hadrian’s Wall

This narrow but distinctive lowland corridor, centred on the river Tyne, separates the North Pennines from the Border country. To the west lie the pastoral landscapes of the Solway Basin; to the east are the more densely populated Tyne and Wear Lowlands. Most of the Character Area lies within Tynedale District. A small area on the northern edge of the Character Area around Hadrian’s Wall is also part of Northumberland National Park.

- This is a narrow east-west lowland corridor that runs through a gap in the Pennine uplands, which are visible to the north and south.
- It is visually contained to the north by the parallel scarps of the Whin Sill.
- Broadleaved woodland and conifer plantations occur on the side slopes and in the intimate wooded valley of the North Tyne.
- Farmland is pastoral in the west, merging to mixed and arable in the east.
- There is a variety of enclosure patterns, with large, walled enclosures predominant in the west and hedged enclosures in the east.
- North of the Whin Sill there is open, windswept semi-improved and rough grazing on elevated land, with loughs and rushy pastures.
- This contrasts with the more fertile floodplain land along the South Tyne.
- Vernacular buildings are generally of Millstone Grit and include scattered large farmsteads, sometimes with bastle and pele tower fortifications.
- Bronze Age stone circles and cairns and Iron Age hillforts are common.
- Very evident remains of the Roman wall, forts and associated features occur on the Whin Sill scarp.
- There are many large country houses, often incorporating earlier medieval fortified structures and set in designed parklands.
- Settlements are located strategically along the valley, which is a significant transport route through the Pennines.
Landscape character type 12: Broad Wooded Valley

Characterisation

Key characteristics

- Broad valley with central meandering river and floodplain of varying width.
- Gently sloping and undulating valley sides dissected by a repeating pattern of tributary streams.
- High concentration of woodland – including native cotes, mixed and coniferous woodlands, and hedgerow, avenue and parkland trees.
- Semi-natural woodland (including hazel, wych elm and ash) along river’s edge and in tributary valleys.
- Mixture of arable, pasture and valley floor meadows.
- Field pattern of medium scale defined by hawthorn hedges.
- Small stone bridges across tributary streams and disused railway; stone walls surrounding parkland estates.
- Villages located on lower valley sides, lending a settled character.
- Managed landscape with large country houses and associated parklands.

Description

This landscape character type comprises the broad wooded valley that contains the River North Tyne in its middle reaches and main tributary valleys. It is flanked by Upland Fringe Farmland to the east and Upland Commons and Farmland to the west, the rounded upper valley slopes showing a gradual transition into these landscape character types. It stretches from Redesmouth in the north to the confluence with the River South Tyne east of Bridge End.

Geologically this landscape is underpinned by sandstone, siltstone, mudstones and shales and overlain by glacial drift and alluvium. Below Redesmouth, the River North Tyne drops into a marked trough, in places a gorge, deeply cut into the floor of the valley. Cut-off meanders, terraces and other features are evidence of the changing course of the river within the often broad haughs. Tributary valleys cut down into the valley sides to join the main river and indicate that glacial overdeepening of the valley may have occurred.

The North Tyne valley has a complex topography due to the incised nature of the river, the variable width of the floodplain, the gentle, undulating character of the valley side drift deposits, and dissection of the valley sides by tributary watercourses. On the western flanks of the valley, the tributary valleys of Houxty, Wark, Gofton and Crook Burns show a distinct, repeating pattern of ridges and wooded valleys. A similar but less distinct pattern also
occurs to the north of the valley between Wark and Gunnerton. Elsewhere there are pronounced terraces on the lower valley slopes, affording views across the valley within which the main river and floodplain are hidden, for example around Chipchase Castle and south of Birtley.

Land use within the valley comprises a mixture of pasture and arable land, enclosed by a strong pattern of hedgerows, and in the north-west by post and wire fencing. In some places pastures are grazed by horses and ponies, particularly around Gunnerton and on the valley floor where there are managed hay meadows.

Woodland cover comprises dense ancient and semi-natural broadleaved woodland within the tributary valleys and along the main valley sides. Species such as alder, ash, oak, wych elm and hazel are typical – the latter often showing signs of coppicing. Many of the trees are covered in mosses. Elsewhere mixed woodland plantations and copses are associated with the numerous parkland and estate landscapes found on the lower valley sides, including Chester, Brunton House, Haughton Castle, Nunwick, and Chipchase Castle. Mature avenues of oak, ash, beech and lime along lanes in the vicinity of these estates are characteristic of this landscape character type, as are parkland trees.

This is a well-settled landscape with small historic villages on the valley sides, located at key crossing points, for example. Wark and Humshaugh. The settlement pattern in the wider area is characterised by dispersed farmsteads and large estate houses. Small stone bridges cross the main valley, tributary streams and the disused railway which runs along the eastern flanks of the valley. Stone walls marking the outer limits of estate parkland are also characteristic. Despite the relatively high density of settlement, the valley retains a distinctly rural, sheltered and tranquil character. Narrow, winding roads and lanes and lined with hedgerows and small woodlands reinforce this natural but managed character. The consistent topographic, land cover, field and settlement patterns create a complex yet unified visual composition.

**Landscape character areas**

TGHW12a North Tyne Valley

**Strategy and Guidelines**

**Key features and qualities**

- Mature thick hedgerows and trees which create a lush, sheltered and established character
- Ancient and semi-natural riparian woodlands that are of value for nature conservation. Many show signs of past coppicing management.
- Repeating pattern of small settlements along the North Tyne lower valley slopes that are of historical importance such as Wark.
- Historic parklands and estates that enhance the wooded and well-cared for character of this landscape, e.g. Chester, Brunton House, Haughton Castle, Nunwick and Chipchase Castle, some of which are registered as Historic Parks and Gardens.
- Remnants of past mining activity include disused railways, stone bridges and old quarries which add local visual and historical interest.
- Avenues of mature trees along rural lanes that reinforce the parkland and estate character.
- Rural, sheltered and tranquil character with few incongruous features and a mature established feel. High scenic quality is reflected in the area’s inclusion with the Northumberland National Park.
- Important hay meadows and calcareous grassland along the valley floor and in areas of limestone geology. Some of the calcareous grasslands are designated SSSIs e.g. Gunnerton Nick.
- Notable geological and geomorphological features such as deeply incised gorges, cut-off meanders and river terraces.
- Roman archaeology associated with the course of Hadrian's Wall WHS.
Local forces for change and their landscape implications

- **Lack of management of woodlands** as a result of a cessation of coppicing and overgrazing may in time change the pattern of woodland cover and reduce woodland diversity.
- **Lack of management of veteran trees, avenues and hedgerow trees** may affect the wooded, sheltered and parkland character of this landscape.
- **Improvements to meadows** through drainage and high use of herbicides and fertilisers may lead to a decrease in the number and diversity of species-rich hay meadows and a loss of texture and colour in the landscape.
- **Stock grazing regimes** may reduce the diversity of calcareous grasslands through erosion, poaching and nutrient enrichment.
- **Intensive arable cultivation** may give rise to a loss of field margins, closely trimmed gappy hedgerows, proliferation of post and wire fencing and potential loss of archaeology.
- **Continued quarrying activity** may lead to the loss of local landscape features including calcareous grassland, and to visual impacts and erosion of rural lanes.
- **Increasing equestrian use of the landscape** in some areas is causing proliferation of post and wire or post and rail fencing, clutter from associated jumps and stables and poaching of pastures.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The defining characteristics of this landscape character type are its pattern of land use and well-wooded character. This is overlain with a wealth of historic features. The overall strategy should be to conserve and restore.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Guidelines for land management</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Forestry and woodland</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future felling of coniferous plantations and shelterbelts (particularly those on the western side of the valley around Walwick and Uppertown) should seek to reduce their visual dominance on the upper valley slopes, either through removal or through restructuring with broadleaved planting. New planting should not extend over the skyline. Seek opportunities to soften the impact of existing shelterbelts by new planting which links them to riparian woodland in the tributary valleys.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is a need for management to encourage regeneration of semi-natural woodland in wooded bluffs and along burns, in order to diversify the age structure of the woodlands and retain characteristic patterns of woodland in the landscape. New planting or regeneration of hazel, wych elm and ash should be encouraged. Protection from grazing is important.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The planting of new hedgerow trees and avenues of trees along lanes of oak, ash, beech and lime and the encouragement of tree development as part of hedgerow management is desirable. Encourage the planting of new field trees of ash, oak, sycamore, beech and lime in areas where existing field trees occur, to replace maturing trees and retain the wooded and parkland character of these areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Farming</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retention of unimproved pastures and hay meadows on the valley sides and valley floor and protection of buried archaeology and earthworks (including mining heritage) should be encouraged in order to retain the biodiversity, visual diversity and time-depth of this landscape. The reversion of arable back to pasture particular in areas adjacent to Hadrian's Wall should be encouraged. Protect areas of calcareous grassland from overgrazing and erosion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase awareness of the landscape implications of equestrian use. Encourage the retention and management of existing hedgerow boundaries and discourage the unnecessary subdivision of enclosures with post and rail/wire fencing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rivers and wetland</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creation of landscape margins and buffers adjacent to watercourses would be beneficial where arable land or intensive grazing impinges on the water's edge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Historic sites</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservation of historic sites, parklands and structures, which act as local focal points and reinforce local distinctiveness is important. Access and retention of views to these key features should also be retained.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guidelines for development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Housing and economic development</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Care should be taken to avoid new built development extending up the valley sides or forming hard abrupt edges. New development should be in keeping with local building materials (sandstone and slate), and roofs in particular should be in an appropriate colour. Settlement approach routes, key views and gateways to settlements are important for local distinctiveness and should be protected from inappropriate development. Construction of any new crossing points over the North Tyne river should be resisted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Energy and telecommunications</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Man-made vertical structures which detract from the valley landform, create visual clutter or adversely affect the unfettered skylines which form the distinctive setting to these valleys should be avoided and any such existing structures removed where possible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minerals and waste</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future mineral extraction should avoid visually prominent slopes or rock outcrops. Existing quarry sites should be restored through the development of naturalistic profiles using restoration blasting and natural regeneration of vegetation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Landscape character type 13: Tributary Valley

Characterisation

Key characteristics

- Shallow valley between ridges of higher land.
- Clear drainage pattern, as burn flows through centre of shallow valley.
- Geometric, medium-sized field pattern defined by hawthorn hedgerows and overlapping lines of hedgerow trees.
- Mixture of arable and improved pastures with wet flushes along burn.
- Inaccessible and unpopulated landscape apart from a few lanes and tracks accessing isolated farmsteads.
- Generally unwooded except for small copses, some recently planted.
- Historic landscape with rig and furrow and pele tower.

Description

This landscape character type occurs to the east of the North Tyne Valley and is defined by the higher land of Upland Fringe Farmland to the north and Upland Commons and Farmland to the south. The coniferous woodland to the north of this area forms a dominant feature on the skyline.

This type forms a shallow valley or bowl drained by Erring Burn, which feeds into the North Tyne Valley to the west. Geologically the area is underlain by bands of sandstone, limestone, siltstones and mudstones but covered with a thick layer of glacial deposits which give rise to a gently undulating topography. These undulations are readily perceived within the valley, but from surrounding higher land the simple topographic form of the valley as a shallow bowl or depression is more noticeable.

This landscape character type is heavily managed, comprising a mixed agricultural landscape within which both arable land and improved pastures are divided by hawthorn hedges that are often well trimmed and have a high number of hedgerow trees. In places the hedgerows have been lost and only the lines of trees remain. The hedgerow trees, mainly of oak and ash, create overlapping lines of vegetation suggest a more wooded character than actually exists. There is some evidence of recent tree planting in the form small copses in the corners of fields.

As for topography, the rectilinear and ordered pattern of fields is most easily discerned when viewed from surrounding higher land; when in the valley the landscape has a more complex, loose, visually permeable pattern. Local topographic variation, historic buildings such as
pele towers, rig and furrow on the valley sides, and patches of gorse and bracken scrub on eroded bluffs along the burn are points of difference and interest.

A few farmsteads, comprising historic buildings and modern barns, occupy the valley but otherwise there is no settlement. A number of the farms are accessed by the narrow lane which passes through the area, while others in the north are accessed by private track. The A68 cuts across the eastern half of this area. The general inaccessibility and lack of settlement mean that this landscape has a strongly rural and tranquil character. Although its landscape pattern and characteristics are unified and intact, it generally lacks distinction.

*Landscape character areas*

TGHW13a Erring Burn Tributary

**Strategy and Guidelines**

**Key features and qualities**

- Overlapping lines of vegetation are a defining characteristic of this landscape.
- Important setting to Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site which lies along the southern skyline of this shallow valley.
- Open and uncluttered skyline which defines the outer edge of this landscape type.
- Notable upstanding historic structures which are listed e.g. Pele tower at Cocklaw.
- Areas of earthworks such as rig and furrow, which add texture and visual interest.

**Local forces for change and their landscape implications**

- Lack of management and renewal of hedges and hedgerow trees: even age-structure means that the landscape is vulnerable to fragmentation of the pattern of overlapping lines as trees die in future.
- Improvements to pastures through drainage and herbicides and fertiliser use may result in a decrease in the number and diversity of species-rich hay meadows along the Erring Burn and a loss of the texture and colour in the landscape.
- Intensive arable cultivation may lead to a loss of field margins, closely trimmed gappy hedgerows, proliferation of post and wire fencing and potential loss of archaeology.
- Felling and restocking of coniferous plantations and shelterbelts which occur on the upper slopes may result in temporary visual scarring and physical disturbance.
- Development of new farm buildings and structures may have an adverse effect on adjacent listed farmsteads or be out of scale with traditional vernacular styles.
- Development of large scale vertical structures beyond the boundary of this landscape type may lead to visual intrusion due to the open nature of the ridgelines which define this type.

**Strategy**

The majority of landscape elements and the landscape pattern in this landscape are in fair condition overall. The overall strategy should be to conserve and enhance the character of this landscape.

**Guidelines for land management**

**Forestry and woodland**

Future felling of coniferous shelterbelts should seek to reduce their visual dominance particularly where they occur on the skyline and prominent ridges, through restructuring which seeks to soften their profiles and geometric shapes and reflect local topography and through replanting with broadleaved species. Planting of new hedgerow trees of oak and ash and encouragement of new tree development within hedgerows are desirable in order to retain the characteristic overlapping pattern of vegetation.

**Field boundaries**

Encourage the replanting of hedgerows where they have been lost and the ‘gapping up’ of existing hedgerows with native hedgerow species including hawthorn and ash. Encourage taller hedgerows and the retention of hedgerow trees to reinforce the enclosure pattern.
### Farming
Retention of unimproved wet pastures and the protection of buried archaeology and earthworks should be encouraged in order to retain the visual diversity and time-depth of this landscape. Use of fertilisers and lime on pastures should be discouraged. Arable cropping on steep slopes should be avoided due to the risks of soil erosion.

### Rivers and wetland
Creation of field margins along hedgerows and the course of the burn would be beneficial in areas of arable land.

### Historic sites
Conservation of historic sites and structures is important. Increased survey, awareness and management agreements should prevent loss form intensive arable cultivation.

### Guidelines for development

**Housing and economic development**
Care should be taken to ensure new farm buildings are of an appropriate scale, relate well to existing farmsteads in terms of form and building materials, and visually sit comfortably within the landscape. Their scale and siting should avoid adverse affects on adjacent listed buildings.

**Energy and telecommunications**
Man-made vertical structures such as wind farm development would be inappropriate within this landscape which is exposed in character and closely overlooked by Hadrian’s Wall and National Park landscapes.
Landscape character type 14: Parallel Ridges and Commons

Characterisation

Key characteristics

- Repeating pattern of elevated ridges and shallow troughs with strong east-west alignment: cuesta landscape
- Dramatic outcrops of igneous rock forming pronounced north-facing scarps and south-facing dip slopes.
- Open moorland with mat- and purple moor grass, peat bog, improved pastures and commons and loughs
- Medium- to large-scale enclosure pattern defined by stone walls and post and wire fencing.
- Extensive Roman archaeology associated with Hadrian’s Wall (including wall, forts, vallum and vici) but also earlier archaeology.
- Limited habitation of dispersed farmsteads nestling into landform and surrounded by shelter planting.
- Limited tree cover of small broadleaved copses and blocks of coniferous plantation.
- Significant area for outdoor recreation.

Description

This landscape character type shows a marked pattern of elevated ridges and shallow troughs with a strong east-west alignment. Its gently rolling, open moorland extends from Greenhead in the west to Wall in the east and offers are views to the edge of Wark Forest in the north and across the Tyne Gap to the Pennines in the south.

Geologically this type comprises sequences of limestones, sandstones, siltstones and shales, into which the band of younger igneous rock known as Whin Sill has intruded. Glacial erosion of this geology by an extensive ice sheet scoured out weaker rocks to form basins or troughs which were covered by glacial deposits, while more resistant rocks such as those of the Whin Sill were left protruding. The result is a landscape with a strong east-west axis, the harder igneous rocks forming a series of dramatic and rugged north-facing parallel scarps and a long line of crags otherwise know as a cuesta landscape. Either side of the outcrops there are expanses of moorland with shallow depressions containing loughs, mires and peat bogs. The outcrops of Whin Sill are seen rising often abruptly from the gently undulating moorland, creating a sense of drama and ruggedness. In places the craggy outcrop ridge is broken by glacial meltwater channels, for example at Whinstone Ridge and Sycamore Gap.
The dramatic geology has been instrumental in the land use and historical development of this area. There are extensive areas of open mat-grass moorland and patches of carr woodland, reed bed and bog habitats associated with lower lying areas and glacial loughs; within these areas the landscape has a large-scale and exposed character.

Elsewhere, the land has been enclosed by sandstone walls or fencing (particularly to the south of Whin Sill and around isolated farmsteads) to create a medium-scale pattern of semi-improved pastures used for sheep and cattle grazing. Many of the pastures are wet, the rushes creating visual texture. Tree cover is limited to small copses of ash and thorn and blocks of coniferous plantation, including Victorian Scots pine plantations set within the pastures, around the traditional sandstone farmsteads or on rocky outcrops. Many of the farmsteads date to the nineteenth century and are located in a dispersed pattern, nestled into the landform or among rocky outcrops, and connected by minor lanes.

Historically the most significant features relate to the Roman period and are associated with Hadrian's Wall which utilised the Whin Sill outcrop as the foundation for the defensive monument. Only small upstanding sections of the Wall are visible; however the associated ditch and vallum, as well as numerous forts and vici can all be seen to varying degrees. In addition to the Roman remains, this landscape contains historically important earthwork evidence of pre-Roman landscape cultivation in the form of cord rig near Haltwhistle and elsewhere.

Eighteenth century additions to this landscape include the construction of Wade's military road (B6318) which runs in places along Hadrian's Wall, and small quarries, such as Walltown Crags, along the Whin Sill where the stone was extracted in the twentieth century. More recent man-made features in this landscape relate to the area's importance for recreation and tourism. Signage, car parks, footpaths and interpretation are frequent and characteristic and are particularly concentrated along the military road and Whin Sill.

This landscape character type feels remote because of its narrow roads, sparse settlement, extensive agriculture management, and exposure to the elements. The landscape seems timeless and unmodified since Roman times. The complex, enduring form of the Whin Sill, set within a simple and uniform landscape of gently rolling moorland and enclosed pastures, remains it defining feature.

**Landscape character areas**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TGHW14a</td>
<td><strong>Thirlwall Common</strong>&lt;br&gt;This area comprises an open moorland plateau that slopes southwards in a series of subtle terraces. The edge of Wark Forest forms an abrupt and heavy skyline to the north; while to the south there are views to the dramatic Whin Sill escarpment. This landscape is generally unenclosed with the exception of small in-bye pastures around Whiteside and Greengate Well, and there is virtually no woodland or tree cover. The area is drained by small burns which form incised ravines but are not noticeable from any distance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TGHW14b</td>
<td><strong>Haltwhistle, Melkridge and Ridley Commons</strong>&lt;br&gt;This character area is defined by the dramatic escarpment and associated outcrops of the Whin Sill, which give a strong east-west axis to the landscape. To the north of the escarpment, the landscape comprises open moorland and loughs as well as areas of medium- to large-scale unimproved and semi-improved pastures enclosed by stone walls. Scattered farmsteads are often located in small depressions in the landform or sheltered by rocky outcrops and surrounded by small copses of trees. To the south of Whin Sill a series of stepped terraces supports small pastures divided by stone walls. Throughout this area there are overt signs of Roman occupation associated with Hadrian's Wall including remnants of the wall, forts, vallum and vici. Visitor signage is also prominent in parts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TGHW14c</td>
<td><strong>Haughton and Simonburn Commons</strong>&lt;br&gt;This area forms an open moorland plateau which undulates gently, reflecting the underlying geological banding. Locally the sandstone outcrops to form notable features such as Ravensheugh Crags. In places there are small in-bye pastures, but the majority of this area comprises open mat-grass moorland with the occasional stone wall.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
To the south the area extends across Hadrian's Wall, forming a simple and yet bleak setting for this important monument. There are occasional isolated conifer plantations, which form focal points in the expansive simplicity of this landscape.

**Strategy and Guidelines**

**Key features and qualities**

- **Unique and defining cuesta landscape and geological features** including the Whin Sill, and clear evidence of glacial activity such as meltwater channels (e.g. the iconic Sycamore Gap). Many of the rock outcrops are included in the Roman Wall Escarpments SSSI designated for its earth heritage.
- **Extensive areas of semi-natural vegetation** including grass moorland, wet pastures, loughs and mires, many of which are designated as SSSI for their nature conservation value e.g. Roman Wall Loughs.
- **Internationally significant archaeological remains** related to the Roman period and in particular Hadrian's Wall which is has World Heritage Site status and is a scheduled monument.
- **Open, exposed and elevated landscape** with extensive views across the Tyne Gap south towards the North Pennines.
- **Outstanding long distance views northwards over areas of wild moorland** character – a key part of the setting of the Wall.
- **Exceptional recreational opportunities** with good footpath access and associated infrastructure.

**Local forces for change and their landscape implications**

- **Maturing of shelterbelts** may be affected by wind throw and the need for felling, which may alter the character of parts of this landscape and the setting to the WHS.
- **Restructuring of coniferous plantations of Wark Forest** may bring temporary disruption to the landscape.
- **Pressures from increased tourism** may result in footpath erosion and damage to archaeological features as well as proliferation of tourism infrastructure such as signage and car parking.
- **Increased high speed traffic using the Military Road** may affect the tranquility of the surrounding landscape and present safety issues in relation to slow moving tourist traffic and junctions to historic sites.
- **Pressure for the development of vertical structures** such as wind turbines and masts in the surrounding area may lead to a loss of tranquillity and wildness.

**Strategy**

This landscape has a strong identity and many valuable landscape features which remain in good condition. The overall strategy for this area is to conserve and sensitively manage.

**Guidelines for land management**

**Forestry and woodland**

Encourage the felling and restocking of coniferous plantations, or their removal altogether where they occur on prominent ridgelines or impinge on the skyline and setting of the WHS. Restock shelterbelts with an increase in native species. Seek softer plantation outlines with shapes designed to integrate with local topography.

Maintain the pattern of clumps of mixed woodland species on rocky knolls where they accentuate topography, and in association with dispersed farmsteads where they provide shelter and reinforce the settlement pattern. Discourage any large scale planting of new woodland and ensure that any new planting avoids damage or masking of significant archaeological sites.

**Farming**

Retention of unimproved wet pastures and the protection of buried archaeology and earthworks should be encouraged in order to retain the visual diversity and time-depth of this landscape. Use of fertilisers and lime on pastures should be discouraged.

**Field boundaries**

The rebuilding and restoration of stone walls should be encouraged through appropriate grants and development of locally-based skills to ensure walls are stockproof.

**Moorland**

Manage grass moorland and sustain and enhance biodiversity through appropriate stocking densities.
**Conserve and manage wetlands and mires.**

**Historic sites**
Conservation of historic sites and their settings and areas of earthworks should be encouraged particularly where they act as local focal points and create strong landscape patterns and textures.

**Guidelines for development**

**Tourism and recreation**
Any development should be as low-key as possible, conserving the wild character of the Wall’s setting; care should be taken to avoid development that may alter or suburbanise landscape character. New buildings should respect the local surroundings in terms of choice of building material and scale of development. New development should not be visually prominent and should not detract from the scenic quality of the area.

Manage access through this landscape and particularly to points of interest (viewpoints and sites along Hadrian’s Wall), by encouraging the use of structured and seasonal paths to decrease pressure on fragile archaeology, substrates, and avoid disturbance to breeding birds.

**Transport**
Any improvements made to the Military Road to address safety of junctions and reduce speeding must have minimum visual impact on the open moorland character of the surrounding landscape and the WHS. Night lighting should be resisted and signage kept to a minimum.

**Energy and telecommunications**
Man-made vertical structures which detract from the open expansive character of this landscape and the setting of the WHS would be inappropriate and damaging. Care should be taken to avoid cumulative influences and the cluttering of the skyline particularly in the long distance views that are so characteristic in the vicinity of the Wall.
Landscape character type 15: Upland Commons and Farmland

Characterisation

Key characteristics

- Broad open ridges and plateau areas.
- Intermediate, transitional area between open moorland and forestry and adjoining valley landscapes.
- Dissected by series of burns often in incised cleughs.
- Strong medium- to large-scale geometric pattern created by stone wall and hedgerow enclosures.
- Some improved pastures on lower slopes, giving way to unimproved rougher pastures on higher land; all pastures mainly wet.
- Broadleaved trees on lower slopes and in burn ravines.
- Small- to medium-sized coniferous plantations creating 'blocky' character in places.
- Sparsely settled, with isolated farms marked by shelter woodland and connected by straight enclosure roads.

Description

This landscape character type is located above the slopes of the River South Tyne valley and North Tyne valley, forming an intermediate and transitional landscape to the upland moorland and forestry landscapes beyond. Generally it comprises open, elevated land between 200m and 250m AOD, the elevation affording views across the adjacent valleys and to the edge of the Kielder and Wark Forests. This landscape therefore acts as an important visual setting to adjacent valleys.

Geologically the landscape comprises thinly bedded limestones, sandstones and mudstones overlain with glacial till. Parts of the area form a relatively flat plateau, while others undulate gently as a result of drift deposits. In places the banding of the sandstone rock is evident in the undulating topography, in the drainage pattern or in patches of acidic vegetation such as gorse and bracken. The area is drained by a series of minor burns which have cut ravines that in places give a strong grain in the landscape. These burns have birch trees and occasional woodlands along their routes.

Due to its transitional character, this type has a variety of field boundary types, including stone walls on elevated moorland areas, and grown-out, gappy hedgerows with post and wire fencing at lower elevations. In both cases the pattern of enclosure is medium- to large-scale and rectangular or planned in character, reflecting its origins: the eighteenth century enclosure of 'waste' or 'common land'. Similarly the nature of the pastures varies, those on
high ground comprising rough pastures and moorland (including areas of bracken), while those on lower slopes tend to be improved. Nevertheless pastures across the whole area have relatively poor drainage, many containing patches of rushes that add visual texture.

Evidence of past arable cropping in this landscape can be seen in the subtle pattern of rig and furrow which can be found on some of the more elevated areas of rough grassland. In addition, the remains of Hadrian's Wall, comprising remnant sections of the wall and the vallum or ditch, can be seen in parts.

This is a predominantly open landscape, although occasional ash or oak trees in hedgerows or along roadsides, and more extensive areas of geometric coniferous shelter planting (mixed species but commonly Scots pine and larch), can be found in some areas. Where these woodlands occur they create a 'blocky' character and provide a sense of enclosure.

There is a dispersed pattern of farmsteads across the area, farms generally being located in shallow dips in the landform and often having and associated plantings of ash and Scots pine for shelter. Buildings are of local stone with roofs of Welsh slate.

This is a textured landscape of muted colours. It is not a heavily populated area and retains a high degree of tranquillity with few overt man made structures. Patches of open moorland and bracken scrub reinforce a sense of relative wildness despite the obvious farming activity and enclosure of this landscape. It is a simple landscape with few components but has a strong repetitive pattern of field enclosure and plantations.

**Landscape character areas**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TGHW 15a</th>
<th>Eastern North Tyne Slopes</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This character area forms the intermediate land between the North Tyne valley and Kielder and Wark Forests. It slopes gently in an easterly direction and is characterised by a strong pattern of deeply incised burns running west-east. These burns sit within open rough pastures on the upper slopes, and become increasingly wooded with birch trees towards the east.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TGHW 15b</th>
<th>Grindon Common</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This character area forms an important setting for the North Tyne valley and for the north side of the South Tyne valley and Hadrian's Wall, which runs through the eastern half of the area. It is an upland relatively flat landscape with a strong geometric pattern of stone walls and notable blocks and belts of mixed woodland plantation. The scale is large and beyond the immediate influence of the plantations it is open and bleak. The drainage pattern in this area is weaker than elsewhere, and there are occasional loughs or dams set within shallow hollows.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TGHW 15c</th>
<th>Featherstone Common</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This is a small area of upland landscape on the northern edge of the North Pennine moorland above the South Tyne valley. It is characterised by a strong geometric pattern of hawthorn hedges (many of which have grown out), and post and wire fencing. The pastures are unimproved and wet, creating a textured landscape. There are small copses of mixed woodland and patches of gorse scrub but the area has a generally open appearance. This is a marginal landscape and one which shows considerable evidence of past human activity in the form of rig and furrow and linear earthworks.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TGHW 15d</th>
<th>Lowes and Nobback Fells</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This area extends from just west of Hexham to the River Allen valley and forms an elevated plateau of simple landform but with a strong geometric field pattern defined by a mixture of blackthorn hedges and stone walls. Holly occurs within the hedges along with occasional oak and ash trees. In the north-east of this area the field pattern is predominantly hedgerows, with overlapping lines of hedgerow trees. Scots pine shelterbelts are a feature throughout this area, along with small coniferous plantations fringed by birch, hazel and bracken. Some of these woodlands show signs of management and felting activity; others have been affected by windthrow. Farmhouses throughout the areas are set within small groups of shelter trees. This a pastoral landscape, parts of which have been improved, parts remaining drained and rushy. The scale of the enclosures increases as one moves southwards towards the moorland tops.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TGHW 15e</th>
<th>Acomb Ridge</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The area lies east of the North Tyne valley and comprises an upland ridge of rough, poorly drained pastures,</td>
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</table>
improved pastures, coniferous and deciduous woodlands and occasional arable fields on south-facing slopes. Field boundaries are marked typically by outgrown hedges and stone walls. Along the top of the ridge runs the military road which follows the line of Hadrian's Wall. Although no sections of the wall itself survive the vallum on the south side of the road and the forward ditch on the north side are significant earthworks. The vallum runs through pasture fields and some areas of woodland; while the forward ditch is often vegetated with patches of gorse and bracken and the occasional birch or hawthorn tree. Long distance views particularly to the north are afforded from this area.

Strategy and Guidelines

Key features and qualities

- **Strong geometric enclosure pattern** defined by stone walls and hedgerows is a defining element over large parts of this landscape.
- **Remote, marginal and transitional** landscape between open moorland and more productive areas of agriculture.
- **Extensive areas of unimproved or semi-improved wet pastures** which create characteristic muted hues and texture.
- **Ancient semi-natural birch woodland** line incised burns which drain the moorland above and create a strong landscape pattern.
- **Expansive long distance views** within this landscape type and to other valley and moorland landscape types beyond.
- **Internationally important archaeology** associated with Hadrian's Wall and reflected in the areas status as a WHS.

Local forces for change and their landscape implications

- **Lack of regeneration of burn woodlands** as a result of lack of management and damage by livestock may weaken the visual drainage pattern and woodland biodiversity.
- **Decline in condition of stone walls and hedgerows** may lead to a fragmentation and weakening of the enclosure pattern in some areas.
- **Improvements to wet pastures** through drainage and use of fertilisers may result in the loss of biodiversity and characteristic muted hues and textures.
- **Erosion to archaeological sites** as a result of vegetation growth may damage built structures or stratigraphy.
- **Felling and restocking of shelterbelts and plantations** are aging and need renewal. This may change their character but also offers opportunities to increase native species and restore softer outlines, and to pull them back from sensitive areas.
- **Pressure for the development of vertical structures** such as wind turbines and masts in the surrounding area may lead to a loss of tranquillity and remoteness.

Strategy

This landscape has a sense of remoteness and comprises extensively managed farmland. It is a transitional area and can appear to be on the ‘fringe’ of farmland. Land uses and the condition of features can give rise to the impression of neglect in places. The overall strategy for this area is to restore and enhance.

Guidelines for land management

**Forestry and woodland**

Minimise the impact of plantation and shelterbelt re-structuring. Encourage the felling and restocking of coniferous plantations with an increase in native species, ensuring that species such as Scots pine and larch – typical of the older shelter plantings – are included. Seek softer plantation outlines with shapes designed to integrate with local topography. Ensure that craggy outcrops and visually significant archaeological sites are avoided and are not visually masked by woodland where feasible. Consider the removal of some plantations altogether where they are poorly located either visually or in relation to adversely affecting landscape features.

**Farming**

Limit the further improvement of upland pasture through reduced use of fertiliser and the re-establishment of moorland and heath. Retention of unimproved wet pastures and the protection of buried archaeology and earthworks should be encouraged in order to retain the visual diversity and time-depth of this landscape.
Drainage and the use of fertilisers/lime on pastures should be discouraged.

Field boundaries
The rebuilding and restoration of stone walls should be encouraged through provision of appropriate grants and development of local skills to ensure walls are stockproof and reflect the distinctive enclosure pattern found in parts of this landscape. Where wet pastures occur on the edge of this character type and hedgerows have become gappy or overgrown consider the removal of post and wire fencing and the restoration of areas of open grazing.

Moorland
Manage grass moorland and sustain and enhance biodiversity through appropriate stocking densities.

Rivers and wetlands
Protect incised burns and ravines from stock to encourage regeneration of semi-natural vegetation.

Historic sites
Conservation of historic sites and their settings and areas of earthworks should be encouraged particularly where they act as local focal points and create strong landscape patterns and textures. Where necessary remove vegetation which is likely to damage upstanding and buried remains.

Guidelines for development

Housing and economic development
Farm building conversions and diversification may offer opportunities to restore the vernacular built fabric of the area, particularly farm buildings. Discourage any development of new farm buildings which would compromise the pattern and scale of farmsteads across this landscape.

Energy and telecommunications
Care should be taken to avoid cumulative influences and the cluttering of the skyline, although carefully-sited domestic scale wind energy development may be accommodated where the landscape offers a degree of containment.
Landscape character type 16: Glacial Trough – valley floor

Characterisation

Key characteristics

- Valley floor and shallow lower slopes of glacial trough between North Pennines and Northumberland uplands.
- Flat, well defined, and sheltered valley floor containing meandering river.
- Medium- to large-scale fields of mixed farming defined by hedgerows and post and wire fencing.
- Generally open character – tree cover concentrated along river or steep bluffs.
- Nucleated settlements of early date on lower slopes, often bridging river.
- Major transport communication route – A69 and Carlisle to Newcastle railway.
- Gravel extraction on the valley floor in some places.
- Some areas of industry and settlement expansion.

Description

This landscape character type comprises the flat floodplain and lower valley slopes above the River Tyne. For the most part the lower valley slopes blend gently into the extensive floodplain; they are distinguished from the middle and upper slopes by changes in topography, land use and settlement. In places the meandering course of the river has cut into the valley sides creating steep sided bluffs and narrow gorges.

This area comprises a glacial trough created by an ice stream that moved eastwards, carving though the bedrock which consists of mudstone, sandstone and limestone, with coal seams also occurring to the east between Stocksbridge and Wylam. These underlying rocks have been covered by meltwater deposits of sand and gravels, creating in some areas a moundy topography of kames, eskers and intervening hollows, notably west of Hexham. The valley floor is also covered by rich alluvial deposits that are highly fertile and well drained, supporting a mix of arable land use and riverside pastures that are used for cattle grazing. In places the gravel deposits have been exploited.

The floodplain and lower slopes have a medium- to large-scale rectilinear field pattern. Fields are enclosed by well-trimmed, sometimes gappy, hawthorn hedges with occasional hedgerow trees. Woodland and tree cover is not extensive and is confined to alder trees along the edge of the river and woodlands along the lower slopes particularly where the land is steep (oak, ash, hazel and some Scots pine). There are more extensive areas of woodland within estate landscapes such as those of Ridley Hall, Bellister Castle and Bywell and Stocksfield Halls, woodland commonly occurring where the steep-sided tributary valleys
join the main valley. These estate landscapes developed in the eighteenth century when there were more settled conditions and growing industrial wealth within the Tyne valley. They are particularly common east of Hexham, where their parkland, avenues and woodland plantations have a strong influence on the character of the valley.

Historically the lower slopes have been important for settlement since Roman times and the towns and villages of Haltwhistle, Bardon Mill, Newbrough, Haydon Bridge, Hexham, Corbridge, Riding Mill, Wylam reflect this repetitive pattern along the valley corridor. Many of the settlements have located at important river crossings and the historic stone bridges of Haydon Bridge and Corbridge along with their place names reinforce this landscape association. Relatively recent growth of settlements has resulted in the extension of built development onto the floodplain in places, particularly industry at Haydon Bridge, Hexham and Prudhoe and a number of the settlements have seen residential growth as a result of an increase in residents who choose to commute to Newcastle.

The river valley is also an important corridor for communication, housing the Newcastle to Carlisle railway, which was built in the nineteenth century, and the A69. The railway and surrounding mining activity had a significant influence on the vernacular architecture of a number of the valley settlements resulting in characteristic Victorian terrace cottages particularly in Haltwhistle and Haydon Bridge. The railway transported raw materials, such as coal which was mined particularly in the area around Prudhoe, and also brought in materials such as Welsh slate which can be seen on the roofs of many buildings in the area. Despite the use of slate becoming common, there are a few examples of the use of the more transitional heather thatch in buildings at Bardon Mill.

The river valley takes a sinuous course and hence is mainly seen in glimpsed views along the valley floor, and across to the river to the valley sides, and at junctions with tributary valleys. These changing views can be disorientating. This is a sheltered and inhabited landscape whose qualities contrast with the wilder qualities of adjacent higher land. Despite its role as a transport corridor, it retains a strongly rural and unspoilt character through much of its length.

Landscape character areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HWTG16a</th>
<th>Haltwhistle to Newborough</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This part of the valley is predominantly pastoral, with a relatively narrow and yet well-defined valley floor. Between Haltwhistle and Haydon Bridge the valley floor narrows further, cutting into the bedrock to form a wooded gorge. The settlement of Haltwhistle was strongly influenced in the eighteenth to early twentieth centuries by local industries including mining, farming, woollen mills, breweries, brickworks and limekilns, and typically has streets comprising Victorian terraced houses.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>HWTG16b</th>
<th>Newborough to Corbridge</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In this section of the river valley the valley floor or haugh widens and the river assumes larger meanders. The valley floor and sides also support a mix of farming of arable and dairy farming. Areas of built development and industry are prominent at Bridge End and Hexham; and the Egger chipboard factory is a local landmark, the smoke plume from the chimney being visible for considerable distances up and down the valley. Both Corbridge and Hexham retain their historic cores. Corbridge originally grew from the Roman town of Corstopitum, a supply town for the troops on Hadrian's Wall. Corstopitum provided much of the building stone used in the construction of many of the town's buildings, including the church, Vicar's Pele and nearby castles.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HWTG16c</th>
<th>Corbridge to Wylam</th>
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<tr>
<td>East of Corbridge the river broadens and becomes shallower, flowing over a rocky course with notable shingle bars. The valley floor also becomes more wooded, with patches of willow scrub and birch regeneration on areas of former mining spoil. This increased woodland cover makes the valley feel more enclosed. Like areas further upstream, the valley floor and lower valley sides support mixed farming and industry, and there is subtle evidence of former industrial activity. For example, a coke works existed at Silver Lonnen and coal was supplied from Mickley Colliery to the south. At Stocksfield, iron ore smelting occurred utilising the local resources of ironstone, limestone and birch charcoal. At Prudhoe, the steep banks along the River Tyne known as 'The Sretchells' are made up of chalk waste from industrial activity, which was formerly dumped along the river and...</td>
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</table>
now supports a unique calcareous habitat as well as screening the sizable industrial development to the south.

Strategy and Guidelines

Key features and qualities

- **Ancient semi-natural woodland** in steep valley side bluffs e.g. Lees Heugh which visually define the edge of the valley floor and are important for nature conservation.
- **Meandering watercourse of the River Tyne** with associated geological and geomorphological features of earth heritage value including Bellingham River Shingle, Wharmley Riverside and the river bank at Ovingham, all of which are designated SSSIs.
- **Significant eighteenth century estate landscapes and castles** such as Ridley Hall, Bellister Castle and Bywell and Stocksfield Halls. A number of the castles are scheduled monuments and some estates are in the ownership of the National Trust and contain notable mature veteran trees and avenues.
- **Broad relatively flat valley floor** which contrasts with the valley sides.
- **Remnant areas of traditional floodplain meadows** which are floristically diverse.
- **Historic settlement and traditional stone built bridges** marking early crossing points and many of which are scheduled monuments.
- **Notable areas of archaeology** including Corbridge Roman Station and temporary camps at Farnley Grange.
- **Calcareous grassland habitats** associated with mining spoil at Prudhoe.

Local forces for change and their landscape implications

- **Lack of hedgerow and tree management** may cause a loss of enclosure pattern, parkland character and may give rise to a sense of neglect.
- **Lack of river bank management** may result in a decline in earth heritage value through erosion and scrub/weed invasion.
- **Intensive arable cultivation** may lead to the loss of field margins, close trimming of hedgerows and loss of waterside vegetation and water quality.
- **Noise and visual impact of road and rail infrastructure** may result in a loss of tranquillity locally.
- **Expansion of development (particularly employment) onto the floodplain** may undermine the traditional settlement pattern of the Tyne Valley and increase flood risk.
- **Improvements to valley floor pastures and meadows** may exacerbate the loss of biodiversity.
- **Pressure to develop new roads which by-pass valley floor settlements and increase the number of river crossings** which may alter the accessibility of some parts of the valley floor and affect the traditional settlement pattern.
- **Continuing exploitation of valley floor gravel reserves** may cause further loss of landscape features and alteration to the natural character of the valley floor and watercourse.
- **Wetland and washland creation** as part of flood relief schemes may alter the character of the valley floor.

Strategy

This is a landscape which retains a high degree of naturalness despite its relatively high population and human activity. Its value as a transport corridor and its existing settlement pattern mean that it is under pressure for further development. The overall strategy should be to conserve and locally enhance character, taking advantage of any enhancement opportunities that may be offered by new development.

Guidelines for land management

**Forestry and woodland**
Encourage the selective felling and coppicing of existing woods and the regeneration of semi-natural woodland in wooded bluffs and as willow/alder scrub along the River South Tyne and River Tyne, in order to diversify the age structure of the woodlands and retain the characteristic patterns of woodland along the valley floor and lower slopes.

**Farming**
Retention of meadows on the valley floor and protection of glacial features should be encouraged in order to enhance the visual diversity and subtle topography of this landscape.

**Field boundaries**
The replanting of hawthorn hedges on the valley floor, where field amalgamation or hedgerow loss has
Rivers and wetland
Creation of landscape margins and buffers adjacent to watercourses would be beneficial where arable land or intensive grazing impinges on the water’s edge.

Encourage the management of river banks particularly those areas of value for earth heritage. Ensure protection against erosion and appropriate clearance of scrub and control of weeds such as Himalayan Balsam.

Wetland and washland creation in response to the need for flood alleviation schemes presents opportunities to create a more visually varied and biologically rich valley floor landscape with the reversion of arable to wet pastures and shallow wetlands.

Historic sites
Conservation of historic parks and gardens which contribute to local distinctiveness is important. Access and retention of views to these key features should also be encouraged.

Guidelines for development

Housing and economic development
New built development should not be allowed to extend onto the valley floor and should integrate into the landscape – abrupt edges should be avoided wherever possible. Where employment development already exists on the valley floor and new development is proposed, consideration should be given to structure planning to improve integration with the surrounding landscape and develop a stronger landscape framework. Highly reflective building materials should be avoided. The approach routes, key views and gateways to settlements should be protected from inappropriate development.

Tourism and recreation
Creation of open space for recreational use adjacent to existing settlements presents opportunities to enhance the setting of towns, strengthen settlement distinctiveness and reinstate landscape patterns where they have been lost. Recreational land uses on the valley floor should seek to reinforce valley floor landscape characteristics including meadows, field trees, hedgerows and hedgerow trees and alder woodland along the river banks.

Transport
New road building and river crossings could adversely affect the landscape. Where these are essential, they should be carefully integrated into the valley landscape by careful siting, ground modelling and planting of characteristic and sensitively located woodland that does not emphasise the line of the road. Ensure that new bridge crossings do not adversely affect the setting of existing historic bridges and consider the implications or perceptions of urban form, approach routes and sense of arrival at adjacent settlements.

Minerals and waste
Further extensive extraction of sand and gravel from the valley floor should be limited if a significant change in valley floor character is to be avoided. Restoration of extraction areas should seek to introduce characteristic alder woodland and care should be taken not to create extensive areas of open water which would be visually prominent from surrounding higher land.
Landscape character type 17: Glacial Trough – valley slopes

Characterisation

Key characteristics

- Valley sides of glacial trough between North Pennines and Northumberland uplands.
- Mixed scale field pattern defined by hedges, post and wire fencing and stone walls on upper slopes.
- Mainly pasture land to west, with increasing arable component in east on shallower slopes.
- Ancient semi-natural woodland associated with natural springs and incised tributary valleys.
- Characteristic waterfalls along tributary burns, particularly on north-facing slopes.
- Areas of coniferous plantation and shelterbelts in places.
- Historic houses, estates and castles, and significant areas of rig and furrow.
- Nucleated settlement and areas of urban expansion.
- Narrow lanes running up and down valley sides.
- Well-settled and sheltered enclosed landscape.

Description

This landscape character type comprises the valley sides of the glacial trough which carries the Rivers South Tyne and Tyne. These valley sides have been identified as distinct from the valley floor both in terms of topography and land use patterns. In places the upland landscape above the valley may descend onto the upper valley sides and where this occurs it may influence the character of the valley slopes below.

This landscape is a glacial trough created by an ice stream which moved eastwards carving though the bedrock. This erosional deepening subsequently encouraged tributary burns to cut down and form deeply incised gullies in the valley sides. Geologically the valley sides consist of mudstones, sandstones and limestones, with coal seams occurring to the east between Stocksbridge and Wylam. As a result of the geology and glacial erosion the valleys sides are generally steep and show a strongly stepped profile in places, becoming gentler to the east. Where tributary valleys cut into bedrock on the valley sides, waterfalls are characteristic.

Some of the tributary valleys are fed by many further smaller tributaries. Locally this creates a complex topography of incised wooded valleys separated by rounded knolls of land. These minor valleys form quiet backwaters off the main valley; they are small scale landscapes with a secretive quality.
The hill slopes are reasonably well wooded with small- to medium-sized broadleaf and coniferous woods joining to provide a network of tree cover, surrounding pastures and on the gentler slopes arable fields. Many of the woods on the northern slopes are associated with large houses and estates, and their parkland trees and shelter belts extend into the surrounding farmland. On the more shaded southern valley slopes large coniferous woodlands (such as High Wood and Cock Wood near Hexham) are more common. The deep tributary valleys add a further element of woodland, mainly comprising semi-natural and ancient woodland.

Enclosures on the middle and upper hill slopes tend to be medium sized, though field amalgamation has created some prominent, larger fields. Steeper slopes tend to be given over to improved pasture; while on shallower slopes arable land is more prevalent, and it is here that most where field enlargement has occurred. Former field boundaries are sometimes visible in the lines of relict infield trees. Enclosure is mainly by hawthorn hedges but on the many country estates, shelterbelt plantings are also an important form of enclosure. On the upper slopes hedges give way to stone walls.

As elsewhere in the Tyne corridor, the landscape supports considerable settlement, comprising small nucleated settlements such as Haltwhistle, Acomb and Corbridge as well as more sizeable towns such as Prudhoe. In some places, for example Riding Mill, the valley floor settlements have expanded up the valleys sides; while in other areas there is evidence of settlement growth or the conversion of farm buildings to office use, for example at Horsley. Settlement on the northern valley side is characterised by a number of castles, halls and other large estates. These reflect both the history of the Border wars and the wealth brought by industrial development in the nineteenth century. Narrow rural lanes run up and down valley sides connecting main communications corridor and settlements with land to the north and south. Other development includes the power lines which cross the northern valley slopes between Haltwhistle and Haydon Bridge.

**Landscape character areas**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character Area</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>HWTG17a Tipalt Burn</strong></td>
<td>This is a shallow pastoral valley containing the Tipalt burn which is a tributary of the River South Tyne. In this character area the valley sides are relatively shallow and the moorland from surrounding upland areas encroached from above. The Tipalt Burn shares the valley floor with the A69 and mainline railway and is constrained in its course. On the valley sides semi-natural woodland and mixed conifer plantations are confined to narrow tributary valleys or focused on the estate and grounds of Blenkinsopp Hall, which occupies the south-facing slopes. Past mining activity in the valley has resulted in areas of disturbed ground and pylons are evidence on the northern valleys sides.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>HWTG17b Haltwhistle to Bridge End</strong></td>
<td>In this area the valley sides are characterised by a strong pattern of hawthorn hedges with hedgerow trees and areas of ancient semi-natural woodland in deep gullies which drain the upland to the north. In places the hedgerows are well trimmed and they are sometimes gappy. The land use is pastoral, and valley floor settlements have expanded into this area around Haltwhistle and Haydon Bridge. Pylons cross the landscape and are visually significant.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>HWTG17c Acomb to Ovington</strong></td>
<td>This character area is defined by a concentration of estates and parkland, associated woodland, historic buildings and mixed farmland on valley slopes which are gentler than those further west. The landscape pattern comprises a strong network of woodland ceps (both broadleaved and coniferous) associated with the estates and parkland, for example around Beaufort Castle and Aydon Castle. There are also many semi-natural woodlands in steep burn gullies, creating a landscape that is well-wooded overall. The wooded areas are separated by medium- to large-scale fields supporting mixed farming.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>HMTG17d Ovington to Wylam</strong></td>
<td>In this character area the valley sides become still less steep and are divided into small to medium sized irregular fields. Field boundaries are thin, well trimmed hedgerows and there is little woodland or tree cover.</td>
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</table>
Where it occurs it is concentrated in the tributary valleys and comprises ancient woodland and more recent planting of coniferous species. This landscape contains the historic settlements of Ovington and Hornsley, and its general open character affording wide views to the south. There are signs in this area of new housing and development pressure.

**HWTG17e North Plenmeller Common**
This character area forms a narrow band of land between the upland Plenmeller Common and the lower valley slopes which are characterised by a strong pattern of coniferous shelterbelts extending from the upper slopes into the valley. Land use is mainly pastures, some of which are poorly drained, and there is significant evidence of rig and furrow, both these factors adding visual texture to the medium- to large-scale pastures. Within the tributary valleys there is broadleaved woodland, which combines with the shelterbelts to create an overlapping woodland pattern. Field boundaries are a mixture of hedgerows and stone walls.

**HMTG17f Langley to Stocksfield**
This area has significant mixed woodlands including High Wood and Park Wood, as well as broadleaved woodlands associated with Langley Hall and Burn, Crossley Burn, and the lower reaches of Devil's Water and March Burn. Waterfalls along the burns as they drop down the stepped geology of the valley sides are characteristic features. The valley slopes are relatively steep and form the setting to Hexham and Riding Mill, both of which have extended onto the middle slopes of the valley. In places patches of gorse and bracken occur, reflecting the underlying acidic soils; and lines or clumps of Scots pine on the skyline form distinctive landmarks. Land use is mixed arable and pasture in medium sized fields defined by hedgerows with hedgerow trees and occasionally by stone walls.

**HMTG17g Stocksfield to Prudhoe**
This character area is defined by its past mining history and by the influence of urban development. It contains the colliery settlements of Mickley and Prudhoe, which have grown significantly in recent years. The urbanising influences of development are felt along the A695, although to the north, on the narrow lanes, it is possible to reach a more rural landscape quickly. Here the field pattern is medium sized and irregular. Fields are enclosed by well-trimmed hawthorn and blackthorn hedges. There is little woodland in this landscape and, the overall impression is one of openness.

**Strategy and Guidelines**

**Key features and qualities**

- **Semi-natural woodland** along incised tributary burn valleys including Whittle Dene near Prudhoe, Dinnetley and Elrington Woods near Haydon Bridge and Painsdale Wood near Blenkinsopp.
- **Wealth of archaeological earthworks** evident in areas of pasture including extensive areas of rig and furrow particularly visible on the southern valley sides near Haltwhistle.
- **Strong enclosure pattern** comprising hedgerows on lower slopes and stone walls on upper slopes which varies in scale along the valley influencing local distinctiveness.
- **Narrow rural lanes** connecting valley settlements and the valley floor with moorland above
- **Distinctive stepped profile to valleys sides** reflecting the underlying banding of millstone grits and coal seams and former glacial activity which created the valley trough.
- **Estate landscapes and large houses** which make a significant contribution to woodland cover and contain notable mature veteran trees and avenues.
- **Historic valley side settlements** many of which have intact historic cores recognised for their architectural value in listed buildings and conservation areas e.g. Hexham and Corbridge.
- **Important setting to Hadrian's Wall WHS.**

**Local forces for change and their landscape implications**

- **Felling and restocking of shelterbelts** may be visually sensitive on valley sides resulting in visual and physical disturbance.
- **Lack of management of semi-natural woodland** as a result of overgrazing or public access may cause decline in woodland structure or species diversity and an increase in fly-tipping.
- **Loss of field boundaries and field amalgamation** in areas of arable farming could in time cause a larger scale enclosure pattern, loss of local distinctiveness and fragmentation of the setting of settlements.
- **Development of equestrian uses** of the landscape particularly in urban fringe areas may result in the proliferation of post and wire or rail fencing and associated features.
- **Conversion of farm buildings for office and residential use** may lead to subtle changes in character and an increase in traffic movement on narrow rural lanes.
- **Growth of existing settlements** may result in raw urban edges, urbanisation of the surrounding landscape setting and loss of settlement distinctiveness.
- **Development of new road infrastructure** could alter the accessibility of some parts of the valley floor and affect the traditional settlement pattern.

**Strategy**

This landscape retains a remarkably rural character and notable visual diversity through the course of the valley, despite its high population and importance as a communications corridor. It is also a landscape which is under pressure from further development and therefore the strategy for this landscape is to strengthen existing characteristics and conserve.

**Guidelines for land management**

**Forestry and woodland**

Manage existing semi-natural woodland through selective felling (to create clearings and encourage under-storey and ground floor vegetation), natural regeneration, coppicing and replanting in order to retain a diversity of woodland character. Appropriate protection from livestock is important particularly in the western part of this type where grazing is more prevalent.

Encourage the extension of tributary valley woods through new planting focusing on the steepest slopes and bluffs and expansion of existing woodland areas. This will help reinforce the distinctive pattern of tributary valleys and their intimate and secluded character. Appropriate protection from livestock during establishment and careful grazing management generally will be necessary.

Removal of uncharacteristic woodland planting, particularly coniferous shelterbelts, is desirable in the long term. Where removal is not possible, opportunities should be sought to soften the impact of these woodlands by replanting with native species or by linking the woodlands to those within the tributary valleys.

The planting of new hedgerow trees of oak and ash and the encouragement of tree development as part of hedgerow management is desirable. Action should also be taken to encourage the planting of new field trees of ash, oak and sycamore in areas where existing field trees occur, in order to replace maturing trees and retain the wooded and parkland character of these areas. This is particularly desirable in areas adjacent to settlements.

**Farming**

Maintain and enhance unimproved and wet pastures on the valley sides through limited use of herbicides and fertilisers and retain the biodiversity as well as visual diversity and texture of pastures.

**Field boundaries**

Encourage the regular management of stone wall and hedgerow enclosures particularly where they are highly visible from lanes and higher land and form a significant pattern in the landscape through appropriate trimming and hedge laying and rebuilding of stone walls where necessary. Where hedges have become gappy ensure replanting and ‘gapping-up’ with species typical of surrounding hedges. Ensure all new planting is suitably protected from grazing stock during establishment.

Increase awareness of the landscape implications of equestrian use and encourage the retention and management of existing hedgerow boundaries. Discourage the unnecessary subdivision of enclosures with post and rail or wire fencing.

**Historic sites**

Conservation of historic sites and structures, which add to the time-depth of this landscape are important – particularly rig and furrow and avoid damage or loss from ploughing or settlement/road development.

**Guidelines for development**

**Housing and economic development**

New built development which extends onto upper valley sides may be visually prominent. Care should be taken to avoid significant alteration to the settlement form or setting through urban expansion. New development should not form abrupt hard edges.

The approach routes, key views and gateways to settlements should be protected from inappropriate development that would alter the settlement form or local distinctiveness.

New built development should not substantially alter the character, scale or form of existing settlements. All
development should respect local vernacular styles and materials; consideration should be given to the preparation of design guidance to achieve this.

The conversion of barns for employment or residential use should pay particular attention to curtilages and signage, which can alter the character of rural buildings. Care should be taken not to suburbanise rural lanes through inappropriate boundary treatment, use of hard kerbing or removal of traditional boundary features.

**Tourism and recreation**
Creation of open space for recreational use adjacent to existing settlements presents opportunities to enhance the setting of towns, strengthen settlement distinctiveness and reinstate landscape patterns where they have been lost. Recreational land uses on the valley sides should seek to reinforce and strengthen local landscape features and in particular valley side pastures, enclosure patterns and wooded burn valleys.

Access to existing wooded tributary valleys, where they lie adjacent to urban areas, should be managed to avoid footpath erosion and to discourage fly-tipping.

**Transport**
Care should be taken to avoid the gradual suburbanisation of lanes which lead into settlements by minimising use of concrete kerbs, lighting and signage.

Resist pressure for new road buildings on the valley sides and where it is unavoidable ensure appropriate mitigation planting which integrates with the existing field boundary pattern and native woodland in tributary valleys and hollows.

**Energy and telecommunications**
The unfettered skylines which form the distinctive setting to these valleys are sensitive to the introduction of man-made vertical structures which might detract from the valley landform and create visual clutter. Where such structures currently exist, opportunities for their removal should be sought.
Landscape character type 18: Basin Valley and Fringes

Characterisation

Key characteristics

- Transitional landscape on the watershed between North Tyne valley to the east and Carlisle Basin to the west.
- Narrow, deep valley and gorge carved by the River Irthing.
- Predominance of pasture, scrub and rough grazing.
- Well wooded character – semi-natural woodland along river and tributary burns, and mature trees associated with settlement.
- Field pattern defined by stone walls and hedgerows.
- Significant historic sites reflecting area’s importance as a defensive frontier over the centuries.

Description

This landscape character type lies to the west of the study area and includes the upper reaches of the Irthing valley and the watershed landscape between this river and Tipalt Burn to the east. The river flows southwards out of the Moorland Forestry Mosaic landscape character type and then westwards into the Carlisle Basin beyond the study area boundary.

The sinuous course of the river has cut a steep-sided valley or gorge, the northern slopes being steepest and historically providing a naturally defensive location for Hadrian’s Wall which runs along their crest. The land to the east, and the southern slopes of the valley, are gentler extending onto Denton Fell and Blenkinsopp Common, which form part of the Pennine Moorland Ridges and Summits landscape character type.

The valley is heavily wooded both within the valley floor and extending onto the valley sides in the form of hedgerows with hedgerow trees and woodland copses and scrub or ‘hanging’ woods on steeper bluff slopes. Elsewhere on the valley floor are wet pastures and patches of gorse along the course of the rocky burn. The combination of woodland, trees and valley floor pastures gives rise to a mature and sheltered character. Further east the land has a transitional character and rises to form the watershed between the two valley systems, where it becomes less wooded and more open, with areas of in-bye pastures and rough grazing defined by a mixture of stone walls and hedges.

Settlement consists of dispersed farmsteads located on the middle slopes, with easy access to the upland areas and nucleated villages of Longbyre and Gilslard, both of which have grown since the construction of the railway in the nineteenth century. Gilslard Spa to the
north is situated on the site of a sulphurous spring and has been a popular resort since the eighteenth century.

This landscape has an upland rugged character despite the relatively high concentration of woodland associated with the river valley and settlements. The strong visual presence of the wall and castle at Thirlwall are a reminder of the valley’s importance as a defensible frontier over the centuries.

Landscape character areas

TGHW18a  Irthing Valley

Strategy and Guidelines

Key features and qualities

- **Exceptional archaeological and upstanding historic remains** - this whole area forms part of Hadrian’s Wall World Heritage Site and many individual features are scheduled monuments e.g. Willowford Camp.
- **Ancient semi-natural woodland**, particularly in the distinctive ‘hanging’ woods on the steep bluffs.
- **River system** valued for its nature conservation as part of the River Eden and Tributaries SSSI.
- **Exceptional valley floor meadows and pastures**, the majority of which are unimproved and have a rich floristic diversity.
- **Small historic settlements** reflecting the growth of the area as a result of the mining industry and development of the railway.
- **Thick mature hedgerows and hedgerow oaks** that combine to create a settled and sheltered character with a high degree of tranquillity when away from the A69.

Local forces for change and their landscape implications

- **Lack of woodland management** may lead to loss of structural diversity and biological richness and the eventual loss of areas of woodland.
- **Lack of management of coniferous shelterbelts** could lead to visually intrusive wind throw damage and create a neglected character.
- **Improvements to valley floor meadows** may cause a change to biodiversity interest and may also affect river bank erosion.
- **Development of signage, road junctions and lighting associated with the A69** may have a continuing urban influence on the surrounding landscape.
- **Nearby wind farm development** could bring a loss of tranquillity and intimacy in parts of this landscape.
- **Inappropriate urban growth** might result in intrusive linear development of properties along rural roads.
- **Loss of tranquillity** may continue as a result of traffic on the A69, the railway and military operations within Spadeadam Forest.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This is an intimate and well wooded rural landscape which retains many of its key characteristics in good condition. Although there are some issues relating to land management the overall strategy should be to conserve and restore.</td>
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<th>Guidelines for land management</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Forestry and woodland</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>There is a need to manage existing semi-natural woodland through selective felling, natural regeneration, coppicing and replanting. Appropriate protection from livestock is important.</td>
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Encourage the extension of valley woods through new planting on the steepest slopes, bluffs and through the extension of existing woodland areas. Appropriate protection from livestock during establishment and careful grazing management generally will be necessary.

The planting of new hedgerow trees of oak and ash and the encouragement of tree development as part of |
hedgerow management is desirable.

**Farming**
Maintain and enhance unimproved pastures on the valley sides and valley floor through limited use of herbicides and fertilisers and cutting and grazing regimes which promote flowering and seed setting in order to retain the biodiversity as well as visual diversity and texture of hay meadows and wet rushy pastures.

The restoration of hay meadows should be encouraged through stewardship schemes which seek to promote appropriate stocking levels, remove drainage and reseeding using local seed sources if feasible.

**Field boundaries**
Encourage the regular management of hedged enclosures, particularly where they are highly visible from lanes and on higher land and form a significant pattern in the landscape, through appropriate trimming and hedge laying.

Where hedges have become gappy, ensure replanting and 'gapping-up' with species typical of surrounding hedges. Ensure all new planting is suitably protected from grazing stock during establishment.

**Rivers and wetland**
Creation of landscape margins and buffers adjacent to watercourses would be beneficial where intensive grazing impinges on the water’s edge and causes erosion. Similarly the replanting of hawthorn hedges on the valley floor, where field amalgamation or hedgerow loss has occurred, is desirable.

Encourage the management of river banks and ensure protection against erosion and appropriate clearance of scrub and control of weeds such as Himalayan Balsam.

**Historic sites**
Conservation of historic sites and structures, which add to the time-depth of this landscape, is important. Care should be taken to avoid erosion of structures and features as a result of access, grazing or vegetation growth.

**Guidelines for development**

**Housing and economic development**
New built development should avoid substantially altering the character, scale and form of existing settlements. All development should reflect local vernacular styles and materials. Care should be taken not to suburbanise rural lanes through inappropriate boundary treatment, use of hard kerbing or removal of traditional boundary features.

**Tourism and recreation**
Encourage the recreational development of the former mining heritage in this landscape. Care should be taken to ensure new infrastructure such as signage, interpretation and access does not detract from the character of the mining heritage resource or introduce overt urban influences into the wider landscape.

**Transport**
Seek to rationalise signage particularly in relation to the A69 and associated road junctions.

**Energy and telecommunications**
Open, unfettered skylines form the distinctive setting to this incised valley. Care should be taken to avoid the development of man-made vertical structures which detract from the valley landform or create visual clutter.
3.8 North Pennines

The North Pennines Character Area is located towards the northern end of the Pennine chain and forms a separate and distinct area of upland moor and dale south of the Tyne Gap, characterised by some of the highest and wildest moorland summits in England and dissected by dales radiating north and east. Around one-fifth of this Character Area lies within Tynedale District, nearly all of which is part of the North Pennines AONB. Only those key characteristics that are relevant to the study area or its setting are listed below.

- This is an upland landscape of high moorland ridges divided by broad pastoral dales; it shows slow change and cultural continuity.
- Alternating limestones, sandstones and shales give a stepped profile to hills and dalesides.
- Millstone Grits cap the higher fells and form distinctive flat-topped summits.
- Igneous intrusions of the Great Whin Sill form dramatic outcrops and waterfalls.
- The area is of international importance for its geological sites and features, including the Whin Sill, and has been identified as a European Geopark.
- Tree cover is sparse with woodlands being restricted to river gorges, gills, streamsides and larger coniferous plantations on the moorland ridges.
- The remote moorland summits and high plateau of blanket bog that occur to the east of the summit ridge have a unique wilderness quality.
- The broad ridges of heather moorland and acid grassland that separate the principal dales in the north and east are managed for sheep and grouse.
- The dales themselves provide sheltered pastures and hay meadows bounded by dry stone walls and hedgerows.
- Within the dales there are small villages and scattered farmsteads, mainly of local sandstone with stone slate or slate roofs, giving a strong vernacular character.
- In places the landscape is heavily scarred by mineral extraction, with many active and abandoned quarries and relics of widespread lead workings.
Landscape character type 19: Lower Dale

Characterisation

Key characteristics

- Broad valleys with narrow floodplains or gorges on valley floor.
- Winding, rocky fast-flowing rivers.
- Limestones, sandstones and shales that outcrop occasionally in gorges and daleside quarries.
- Tree-lined watercourses, with ancient ash and oak woods in gorges and denes.
- Frequent hedgerow oak, ash, sycamore and wych elm and overgrown hedgerows.
- Pastoral landscape comprising improved and semi-improved pastures and hay meadows.
- Old field systems with sub-regular or linear patterns of hedges and walls.
- Relicts of rig and furrow and cultivation terraces.
- Old villages of vernacular sandstone buildings on the dale floor.
- Scattered stone farmsteads and field barns.
- Intimate and visually enclosed character contrasting with high moorland ridgelines.

Description

This landscape comprises broad upland valleys with fairly shallow and even sloping landform. It is dissected by small tributary valleys running into the main river of the dale. Alternating strata of Carboniferous limestones, sandstones and softer shales and mudstones give a gently stepped profile to the dale side in places, and outcrop occasionally in gorges and daleside quarries. On lower slopes these strata are masked by glacial boulder clays or sands and gravels, and these deposits are marked by undulating terrain. Rivers and becks are fast-flowing over rocky beds through steep-sided gorges, or meander across floodplains of river terrace gravels and alluvium. Soils are heavy, often waterlogged clays, with more fertile brown earths and alluvial soils on the dale floor.

The lower dales are pastoral landscapes with mosaics of improved and semi-improved pasture and occasional flower-rich hay meadows. The more intensively managed grasslands tend to be found on the flatter, low-lying land of the valley floor. The upper, more undulating slopes are traditionally less improved, with pasture and rushy grazing on the rougher and wetter land. This creates a logical pattern of land use and vegetation cover related to landform, drainage and exposure. Field systems are sub-regular or linear in pattern and have their origins in the enclosure of common town fields surrounding the dales villages that took place mostly in the seventeenth century. Relicts of ancient agriculture – rig and furrow, lynchets and cultivation terraces – are widespread. Field boundaries are a mixture of
hedgerows and stone walls. Walls are made of locally quarried stone or rounder boulders from river beds and field clearances. Hedgerows are often tall and overgrown and rich in trees, with frequent ash, oak, sycamore and wych elm. Regular parliamentary enclosures are found on more recently enclosed land on the higher dale sides.

Ancient ash and oak woodlands flank rivers and streams in gills and gorges. Plantations of pine and larch are scattered across the dale side. Woodland cover is not high, but the frequency of small woodlands, hedgerow and field trees, tree-lined watercourses and overgrown hedgerows gives the landscape a well-wooded feel.

Small- and medium-sized villages lie on the valley floor, connected by winding roads. Most villages are of medieval origins and some still retain a central village green. Others were enlarged in the eighteenth and nineteenth century with housing for workers in the quarrying, lead mining and steel working industries. Farms and field barns are scattered across the dale side or strung out along minor roads. Buildings are of local stone with roofs of stone flag or slate and have a strong vernacular character and are often associated with small groups of shelter trees of ash and sycamore. Active and abandoned quarries are prominent on the dale side in places, following outcrops of limestone.

The landscape is relatively broad in scale, defined by encircling moorland ridgelines, but locally it is visually enclosed by woodlands, trees and hedgerows giving it a more intimate scale. This is a settled and largely tranquil upland fringe landscape that, with its vernacular buildings, old villages and pastoral land use, has a strong sense of both visual unity and cultural continuity.

**Landscape character areas**

**NP19a Lower South Tyne**
The River South Tyne and its tributaries – Harley Burn and Park Burn – dissect this character area, flowing through steep, incised gills. Rocky outcrops and waterfalls are characteristic, for example Bishop's Linn. Semi-natural woodland hugs the course of the burns and river, beyond which is a more open pastoral dale. Small hamlets dot the landscape including Coanwood, Kellah and Halton-le-Gate. There is strong evidence of past mining activity here in the form of disused shafts and quarries, but the most visible remnant is the disused railway which now forms an important recreational route.

**NP19b Lower Allenheads**
This character area contains the River Allen which in its lower reaches flow though a relatively narrowly dale and is deeply incised. Here the dale is richly wooded, semi-natural vegetation extending from the main river up the valley sides along tributary burns. Further south the dale broadens at the confluence of the two main tributaries, the Rivers East and West Allen. Here the landscape becomes more open, although the watercourses remain well-wooded and the pattern of stone wall field enclosure and open pastures becomes dominant and defining.

**NP19c Lower Derwent**
The River Derwent lies in a deep, winding, gorge fed by tributaries in steep-sided denes. The gorge and denes are heavily wooded, containing ancient oak and ash woodlands and conifer plantations. The surrounding valley sides are pastoral with improved or rushy pastures, irregular patterns of old hedges and walls, and frequent hedgerow and field trees. The valley is sparsely settled with scattered farms in its lower reaches. The village of Edmundbyers and the hamlet of Muggleswick lie on gentle valley slopes in the west.

**Strategy and Guidelines**

**Key features and qualities**

- **High concentration of ancient semi-natural woodland** which contributes to this type’s overall sheltered and intimate character e.g. Throstle Hall Wood and Stawardpell Wood.
- **Mature field and hedgerow trees** giving rise to an established character and sense of longevity.
Significant areas of species-rich hay meadows, verges and woodland understorey giving rise to a richness in colour and texture e.g. along the River North Tyne at Featherstone Castle.

Wealth of historic landscape features including parkland and rig and furrow as well as features relating to past mining activity.

High scenic quality reflected in much of the area’s inclusion within the North Pennines AONB.

Local forces for change and their landscape implications

- Lack of management of woodlands due to overgrazing may result in a changing pattern of woodland cover, a decrease in woodland diversity, and a decline in bluebell woods.
- Lack of management of veteran trees and hedgerow trees could lead to a decrease in the overall wooded, sheltered and lush character of this landscape.
- Improvements to pastures through drainage and high use of herbicides and fertilisers may bring a decrease in the number and diversity of species-rich hay meadows and a loss of the texture and colour in the landscape.
- Overstocking of pastures may create areas of poached ground.
- The declining ability of hedgerows and stone walls to act as stockproof barriers through lack of management had led to an increase in the use of post and wire fencing and loss of traditional boundaries which may alter the enclosure pattern.
- Growth in tourism activity associated with the mining heritage could result in changes to the character of archaeological sites and the wider landscape.

Strategy

This is an intimate and well-wooded rural landscape which retains many of its key characteristics in good condition. Although there are some changes relating to land management the overall strategy should be to conserve and locally to restore or enhance.

Guidelines for land management

Forestry and woodland

Manage existing semi-natural woodland through selective felling (to create clearings and encourage understorey and ground floor vegetation), natural regeneration, coppicing and replanting and protect from overgrazing by livestock.

Encourage the extension of gill, ravine and riverside woods through new planting of oak-ash on sandstone and ash on limestone, focusing on the steepest slopes, bluffs and former quarry sites and the extension of existing woodland areas. Avoiding planting within the valley floor in order to emphasise the incised character of this valley. Appropriate protection from livestock during establishment and careful grazing management generally will be necessary.

The planting of new hedgerow trees of oak and ash and the encouragement of tree development as part of hedgerow management is desirable in sheltered areas particularly east of Gilsland.

Encourage the planting of new field trees of ash, oak and sycamore in areas where existing field trees occur to replace maturing trees and retain the wooded and parkland character of these areas.

Farming

Maintain and enhance unimproved pastures on the valley sides and valley floor by cutting and grazing regimes which promote flowering and seed setting in order to retain the biodiversity as well as visual diversity and texture of hay meadows and pastures. The restoration of hay meadows should be encouraged through stewardship schemes which seek to promote appropriate stocking levels, remove drainage and reseeding using local seed sources if feasible.

Field boundaries

Encourage regular management of stone wall and hedgerow enclosures particularly where they are highly visible from lanes and higher land and form a significant pattern in the landscape, through appropriate trimming and hedge laying and rebuilding of stone walls where necessary. Where hedges have become gappy ensure replanting and ‘gapping-up’ with species typical of surrounding hedges. Ensure all new planting is suitably protected from grazing stock during establishment.

Rivers and wetland

Creation of landscape margins and buffers adjacent to watercourses would be beneficial where arable land or intensive grazing impinges on the water’s edge. Similarly replanting of hawthorn hedges on the valley floor,
where field amalgamation or hedgerow loss has occurred, is desirable.

**Historic sites**
Conservation of historic sites and structures, which add to the time-depth of this landscape is important. Access to former quarry sites which are of significance for their rock exposures should be encouraged.

**Guidelines for development**

**Housing and economic development**
Retain and actively manage areas of open space, village greens, orchards, tofts and garths which are defining characteristics of settlement in this landscape type.

New built development should seek to retain and reinforce local settlement character in terms of scale, form and local vernacular styles and materials. Care should be taken not to suburbanise rural lanes through inappropriate boundary treatment, use of hard kerbing or removal of traditional boundary features.

**Tourism and recreation**
Appropriate tourism and recreation development of the former mining heritage in this landscape should be encouraged. The often remote and rural character of these sites should be retained and new infrastructure such as signage, interpretation and access should not be allowed to detract from the character of the mining heritage resource or introduce overt urban influences into the wider landscape.

**Minerals and waste**
Former quarry sites should be restored, where appropriate, through the development of naturalistic profiles using restoration blasting and natural regeneration of vegetation. The management and utilisation of mining sites for tourism should seek to retain their individual character and role within the landscape.
**Landscape character type 20: Middle Dale**

**Characterisation**

**Key characteristics**

- Broad upland valleys with moderately sloping, often gently stepped, valley sides, incised by narrow steep-sided gills.
- Rocky rivers and becks flowing fast within narrow floodplains.
- Improved and semi-improved pastures and flower-rich upland hay meadows.
- Strong regular or sub-regular patterns of dry stone walls with occasional ash, oak and sycamore field trees.
- Woodland occurs in narrow ash and oak-birch woodlands along rivers, streams and daleside gills and scattered plantations of pine, larch or spruce.
- Small villages, hamlets and farm clusters following valley floor roads, with scattered farms and field barns on dale sides.
- Active and abandoned limestone and whinstone quarries and relicts of the lead mining industry.
- Visually open but enclosed by encircling moorland ridgelines.
- Settled tranquil upland landscape with a strong sense of cultural continuity.

**Description**

This landscape character type comprises broad upland valleys with moderately sloping valley sides, incised by narrow steep-sided gills.

The underlying geology of alternating Carboniferous limestones, sandstones and softer shales and mudstone strata gives rise to a gently stepped profile on the upper dale side. On lower slopes these strata are overlain by boulder clays. Rocky, fast-flowing rivers and streams with braided boulder-strewn channels run through narrow floodplains of alluvium or glacial sands and gravels. Hard igneous dolerites with a vertical columnar grain outcrop locally in prominent scars and within the gills can give rise to spectacular waterfalls. Soils are heavy, often waterlogged clays with more fertile brown earths on the valley floors.

Improved and semi-improved pastures, occasionally rush-infested, and flower-rich upland hay meadows cover the valley floor and dale sides. Field systems are regular or sub-regular in pattern and date largely from eighteenth and nineteenth century enclosures. Strong patterns of dry stone walls are prominent features of the dale side. Walls are of locally quarried sandstones, limestones and whinstone, or rounder boulders from river beds and field clearances. Tree cover is generally sparse with scattered field and shelter trees of ash, oak and sycamore.
The middle dale is generally sparsely wooded, with narrow ash, alder or oak-birch woodlands along rivers and streams, in daleside gills or on steeper dale sides. Plantations of pine, larch or spruce are scattered across the dale side, with localised concentrations creating heavily wooded landscapes in parts.

Small villages, hamlets and farm clusters follow valley floor roads. Many of these have their origins in the lead mining industry, as do many of the small farms that line the dale sides, often close to the moor wall, at the limits of agriculture. Buildings are of local stone with roofs of stone flag or slate and have a strong vernacular character.

Other legacies of the lead mining industry include mine buildings, waste heaps, smelter flues, reservoirs and deep pools which scar the dale side. Active and abandoned quarries are prominent on the dale side, following outcrops of the Great Limestone and the Great Whin Sill.

The landscape is visually open but enclosed by encircling moorland ridgelines. It is a settled and largely tranquil upland landscape that, with its vernacular buildings, field boundaries and traditionally managed meadows and pastures, has a strong sense of both visual unity and cultural continuity.

**Landscape character areas**

**NP20a Mid South Tyne**
This character area comprises a relatively narrow and incised section of the South Tyne Valley which contains a complex mix of woodland and in-bye pastures with a dispersed pattern of hamlets and farms. Small V-shaped gills such as Knar Burn extend off the surrounding open moorland tops and are wooded and secluded in character. The South Tyne railway winds and cuts its way through the lower slopes of the dale.

**NP20b Mid East Allen**
This area forms a broad shallow valley, steepening and becoming more defined further to the south. It is an open pastoral landscape with a strong enclosure pattern of stone walls and hedges and has a domesticated character derived from the relatively high population particularly around Allendale Town but also from the dispersed pattern of barns and farmsteads on the dale sides. In places there are mixed shelter belts on the middle slopes, and within the valley floor the main river is flanked by broadleaved woodland. Upper slopes have a rougher, wilder and textured appearance. Here the enclosure pattern remains strong but the pastures becomes less improved and are often rushy.

**NP20c Mid West Allen**
In this area the River West Allen has narrow river banks with only a scattering of broadleaved trees and woodland and relatively steep valley sides, on which there is a strong pattern of stone walled enclosures containing improved pastures. Trees along stone walls, in conjunction with areas of broadleaved and mixed woodland flanking tributary burns such as Dryburn Cleugh, give rise to a treed appearance overall. Settlement consists of farmsteads and barns but overall the area feels remote and unpopulated.

**NP20d Mid Devil's Water**
This is a shallow valley containing the upper reaches of Devil's Water, which takes an incised course through this landscape and is cloaked in mixed broadleaved and coniferous woodland in the southern part of this dale. The dale sides are enclosed by a strong pattern of stone walls, interspersed with occasional blocks of coniferous (generally Scots pine) woods, some of which show signs of over maturity and wind throw. Tributary burns are also incised lined with gorse and bracken.

**NP20e Mid Derwent**
This is a broad, shallow, and heavily wooded dale which straddles the Tynedale District boundary. In the east the large Derwent Reservoir occupies much of the dale floor. Parkland and estate landscapes around Ruffside Hall are heavily wooded with large blocky conifer plantations, separated by large enclosures of improved pasture. Estate buildings have steeply pitched roofs and gabled upper storeys. The settlement of Blanchland indicates the significance of the church in this landscape in the medieval period and is the site of a former monastery. In the west the Derwent lies in a steep-sided wooded ravine with a narrow, flat floor between regular walled enclosures of improved pasture on the gently sloping dale sides above. Isolated farms are scattered along the valley roads.
**Strategy and Guidelines**

**Key features and qualities**

- **Strong visual unity** derived from the gentle dale topography, land use (pastures which extend into rough grazing and moorland beyond) and stone wall enclosure pattern and reflected in the areas designation within the North Pennines AONB.
- **Areas of ancient semi-natural woodland** which visually reinforce the course of gills and becks in incised ravines.
- **Distinctive pattern of dry stone walls** which traverse the dale sides and form a visually pleasing pattern, reinforcing topographic variations.
- **Significant area of species-rich hay meadows and wet rushy pastures** giving rise to a richness in colour and texture.
- **Notable estate landscapes and designed villages** e.g. Blanchard and Hunstanworth
- **Wealth of historic landscape features** associated with the mining industry e.g. Derwent mining area.
- **Geological value** reflected in European Geopark status.

**Local forces for change and their landscape implications**

- **Lack of management of woodlands** as a result of overgrazing may result in a changing pattern of woodland cover, a decrease in woodland diversity, and decline in bluebell woods.
- **Planting and development of coniferous plantations** may create blanket woodland cover, mask underlying topography and alter the pattern of semi-natural woodland.
- **Improvements to pastures** through drainage and high use of herbicides and fertilisers may lead to a decline in the number and diversity of species-rich hay meadows and rushy pastures and a loss of texture and colour in the landscape.
- **Declining ability of stone walls to act as stockproof barriers** through lack of management may lead to an increase in the use of post and wire fencing and loss of traditional boundaries which may alter the enclosure pattern.
- **Growth in tourism activity associated with the mining heritage** may cause changes to the character of archaeological sites and the wider landscape.

**Strategy**

This is an intimate and well wooded rural landscape which retains many of its key characteristics in good condition. Although there are some changes relating to land management the overall strategy should be to conserve and locally to restore or enhance.

**Guidelines for land management**

**Forestry and woodland**

Encourage the felling and restocking of coniferous plantations with an increase in native species. Focus replanting on steepest slopes, extending areas of existing semi-natural woodland and sensitivity to local topography variations and edge treatment.

Encourage the management of existing semi-natural woodland through selective felling, natural regeneration, coppicing and replanting. Appropriate protection from livestock is paramount.

Encourage the extension of existing woodland particularly woods which occur along gills, ravines and along watercourses. New planting should include oak-ash on sandstone and ash on limestone focusing on the steepest slopes, bluffs and former quarry sites. Ensure appropriate protection from livestock during establishment and careful grazing management.

**Farming**

Maintain and enhance unimproved pastures on the valley sides and valley floor. This should be encouraged through limited use of herbicides and fertilisers and cutting and grazing regimes which promote flowering and seed setting in order to retain the biodiversity as well as visual diversity and texture of hay meadows and wet rushy pastures. The restoration of hay meadows should be encouraged through stewardship schemes which seek to promote appropriate stocking levels, remove drainage and reseeding using local seed sources if feasible.
**Field boundaries**
Encourage the regular management of stone wall and hedgerow enclosures particularly where they are highly visible from lanes and higher land and form a significant pattern in the landscape through appropriate trimming and hedge laying and rebuilding of stone walls where necessary.

Where hedges have become gappy ensure replanting and ‘gapping-up’ with species typical of surrounding hedges. Ensure all new planting is suitably protected from grazing stock during establishment.

**Historic sites**
Conservation of historic sites and structures, which add to the time-depth of this landscape is important. Access to former quarry sites which are of significance for their rock exposures and mining features which reflect the rich history of this area should be encouraged.

**Guidelines for development**

**Housing and economic development**
Retain and actively manage areas of open space, village greens, orchards, tofts and garths which are defining characteristics of settlement in this landscape type.

New built development should be avoided where it substantially alters the character, scale and form of existing settlement. All development should reflect local vernacular styles and materials. Care should be taken not to suburbanise rural lanes through inappropriate boundary treatment, use of hard kerbing or removal of traditional boundary features.

**Tourism and recreation**
Recreational development of the former mining heritage in this landscape should be encouraged. New infrastructure such as signage, interpretation and access should not detract from the character of the mining heritage resource or introduce overt urban influences into the wider landscape.

**Energy and telecommunications**
Any man-made vertical structures that detract from the valley landform, create visual clutter or adversely affect the unfettered skylines which form the distinctive setting to these valleys would be inappropriate and any such existing structures should be removed where possible.

**Minerals and waste**
The management and utilisation of mining sites and infrastructure for tourism should seek to retain individual character and consider the significance of individual sites and features in the context of the wider landscape and overall group value.
Landscape character type 21: Upper Dale

Characterisation

Key characteristics

- Upper reaches of the North Pennine dales comprising varied valley topography and fast flowing rocky streams.
- Wet rushy pastures, upland hay meadows and rough grazing in moorland fringes.
- Regular field patterns of dry stone walls and scattered field barns.
- Few trees or woodlands except for occasional concentrations of conifer plantations.
- Scattered small farms with occasional farm clusters and hamlets.
- Relicts of the lead mining industry – mine buildings, waste heaps, smelter flues, reservoirs and hushes.
- Visually open but enclosed by encircling moorland ridgelines.
- Remote and tranquil landscapes on margins of settlement and agriculture.

Description

This landscape character type comprises a pastoral landscape at the limits of agriculture, high in the upper reaches of the North Pennine dales.

The topography of the dale floor in the upper dales is varied. Most upper dales are relatively shallow and broad but incised by narrow gullies – gills or sikes – cut by rocky, fast flowing streams. The underlying Carboniferous sandstones, shales and limestones are generally masked by glacial boulder clay and morainic drift. Soils are heavy waterlogged or peaty gleys.

This is a pastoral landscape of wet, rush-infested pastures, upland hay meadows and rough grazing enclosed from the moor. Field patterns tend to be regular and date from enclosure and agricultural improvements from the late eighteenth century onwards. Fields are generally large and bounded by low dry stone walls or wire fences, often in a poor state of repair. The diversity of grasslands, grazed by hardy upland sheep and beef cattle, creates a patchwork of muted and brighter greens reflecting varying degrees of improvement by drainage, liming, and fertilising. There are scattered stone field barns and sheepfolds.

Most upper dales are open or sparsely wooded with occasional small streamside woods, sparse lines of alder trees and willow scrub following watercourses, or isolated conifer plantations or shelterbelts. In places land in the dale head has been afforested with large regular blocks of pine and spruce.
Small farms and farm clusters are scattered across the dale floor and onto the dale sides, occasionally marked by wind-blown groups of sycamore or pine shelter trees. Many farms date from the expansion of the lead mining industry which brought miner-small holders to the limits of agriculture. Relicts of the lead mining industry include derelict mine buildings, waste heaps, smelter flues, reservoirs and hushes.

The landscape is visually open and exposed and defined by the encircling moorland skyline. It is a remote and tranquil landscape on the margins of settlement and agriculture, often with a rather bleak and neglected quality.

**Landscape character areas**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NP21a Upper East Allen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Here the dale has a distinctive v-shaped profile, the river being defined by its incised and rocky course lined by occasional trees. This area has enclosed pastures, many of which are rough and unimproved, and the open moorland tops extend down into the dale. The settlement of Allenhead Town is located at the head of the dale and is enclosed by steeper landform and a mix of in-bye and coniferous plantations. The tributary becks form deep gullies on the valley sides. Dispersed farmsteads and barns give rise to a relatively populated character, and evidence of past mining activity is widespread including disused quarries, mine shafts and lime kilns. Small reservoirs are also characteristic of this area.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NP21b Upper West Allen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This character area comprises the upper reaches of the River West Allen and its main tributary the Mohope Burn. The dale in this section is asymmetrical; the eastern slopes are much steeper and imposing than those on the west. Rough pastures on the valley sides and the extension of open moorland into the dale give this area a remote and wild character. This is enhanced by the general lack of woodland and settlement, with the exception of Carrshield, and the strong remnants of past mining and industrial activity, which can be seen dotted throughout the area.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NP21c Upper Derwent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This is a shallow branching dalehead divided by the Nookton and Boltshope Burns. The burns are incised in steep-sided gills clothed in heathland, birch woodland or conifer plantations. Walled pastures on lower ground give way to a patchwork of rougher grassland, moorland intakes and conifer plantations. The dalehead contains many lead mining remains, including the prominent smelter flue and landmark chimneys above Ramshaw. There are scattered farms and building clusters including miners’ smallholdings on the moorland edge at Boltshope Park.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Strategy and Guidelines**

**Key features and qualities**

- **Distinctive pattern of stone walls and field barns** which gives rise to a strong local identity and one which is iconic within the North Pennines AONB.
- **A wealth of historic features** associated with the mining industry many of which are listed or scheduled and often from relic landscapes such as at Allenhead e.g. miner-farmer landscape and the cluster of mining-related buildings, as seen at Carrshield.
- **Remote and tranquil landscape** on the edge of farming communities and open moorland beyond.
- **Notable species rich-hay meadows and wet rushy pastures** which contribute significantly to the area’s biodiversity and visual landscape texture and colour.
- **Isolated farmsteads associated with clumps of shelter trees** form local foci.
- **High scenic quality** reflected in much of the area’s inclusion within the North Pennines AONB.

**Local forces for change and their landscape implications**

- **Lack of management of woodlands** as a result of overgrazing may result in a changing pattern of woodland cover, a decrease in woodland diversity, and decline in bluebell woods.
- **Planting and development of coniferous plantations** sometimes relate poorly to local topography and may impose stark geometric shapes on this landscape particularly when seen on or near the skyline.
• **Improvements to pastures** through drainage and high use of herbicides and fertilisers may lead to a decrease in the number and diversity of species-rich hay meadows and rushy pastures and a loss of texture and colour in the landscape.

• **Declining ability of stone walls to act as stockproof barriers** through lack of management, resulting in an increase in the use of post and wire fencing and loss of traditional boundaries, may alter the enclosure pattern.

• **Damage to some archaeological sites** may occur through regeneration of woodland and erosion by stock.

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**Strategy**

The condition of this landscape including its semi-natural habitats and historic features and patterns remains in a good state of repair. The strategy for this landscape is therefore to conserve.

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**Guidelines for land management**

**Forestry and woodland**

Encourage the natural regeneration of semi-natural birch, oak-birch and juniper woodlands along gills and ravines, in valley bottoms and the moorland fringe through the fencing of areas to prevent damage from livestock and planting of new woodland using juniper grown from local seed.

New planting should focus on ravines and along gills and should avoid masking areas of rocky outcrops which act as local landmarks and are a valuable habitat.

Seek opportunities to restructure plantations or consider their removal altogether where they currently form heavy skyline features, mask the characteristics pattern of land uses, have abrupt geometric edges or have caused damage to historic sites or geological features. However, older, traditional shelterbelts still have an important part to play and should be managed and renewed. Conserve and reinforce stands of shelter trees around isolated farmsteads.

**Farming**

The maintenance and enhancement of in-bye pastures and allotment grazing should be encouraged through limited use of herbicides, fertilisers and liming and by ensuring appropriate stocking levels and avoiding drainage, ploughing or reseeding. The restoration of hay meadows should also be encouraged through stewardship schemes which seek to promote appropriate stocking levels, remove drainage and reseeding using local seed sources if feasible. Ensure timing of cuts promotes flowering and seed setting.

**Field boundaries**

Encourage the regular management of stone walls particularly where they are highly visible and form a significant pattern.

**Rivers and wetland**

Protect gills and ravines from stock to encourage regeneration of semi-natural vegetation including open scrub and woodland and manage areas of bracken and gorse invasion.

**Historic sites and built development**

Protect areas of archaeological value or sensitivity from damage by livestock through restricting access to animals and avoidance of supplementary feeding on sensitive sites. Encourage the restoration and continued management of built structures such as field barns, farm buildings and lime kilns which add to local distinctiveness.

Improve understanding of the mining archaeology through research and survey and seek to balance the conservation and protection of the most significant historic mining features with the gradual decay and dereliction of others, both of which make a valuable contribution to the visual interest and historic legacy of this landscape.

Any new farm buildings should be sited close to existing buildings where possible reflecting their scale and design and using traditional materials.

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**Guidelines for development**

**Tourism and recreation**

Seek opportunities to improve access (physical and intellectual) to the historic lead mining industry (sites and landscapes) which have left their imprint on this landscape (particularly in Allenheads).
**Energy and telecommunications**  
The Upper Dales landscape character type is highly sensitive to the siting of tall structures such as masts, pylons and wind turbines due to its generally open character and views to encircling ridge lines.

**Minerals and waste**  
Restore quarry faces to naturalistic profiles using restoration blasting and encourage the regeneration of semi-natural woodland and scrub.
Landscape character type 22: Moorland Ridges and Summits

Characterisation

Key characteristics

- Broad ridges and flat-topped summits.
- High moorland with sparse tree cover.
- Dissected by rocky, quick flowing becks and burns in steep-sided gullies.
- Extensive tracts of blanket bog of heather, cotton grass and sphagnum moss.
- Extensive grazing by hill-hardy sheep.
- Few man-made features apart from occasional fences, grouse butts, cairns and sheepfolds.
- Unfenced roads marked by snow poles with gates or cattle grids.
- Evidence of past mining activity.
- Remote and elemental landscape with a high degree of relative wilderness.

Description

This landscape character type is found within the North Pennine uplands south of the Tyne Gap and forms an important visual backdrop to the lower lying dales which dissect it. This upland landscape, ranging from around 450 to 600m AOD, is culturally linked to the dales below, their interface marked by narrow bands of transitional landscape where semi-improved pasture, coniferous shelterbelts and the broad enclosure pattern of fences and stone walls start.

This landscape character type is heavily influenced the underlying geology which comprises alternating strata of Carboniferous limestones, sandstones (with thin coal seams) and softer shales which give a stepped profile to slopes, a strong horizontal grain to the topography and smooth flow of landform. Gritstones and limestones outcrop locally in low grey crags and bands, while elsewhere hard igneous dolerites (such as the Whin Sill) outcrop in larger crags and scree slopes, forming notable features in an otherwise uniform and simple landscape. This geology is strongly reflected in the topography, which comprises broad gently undulating ridges or elongated flat-topped summits. These upland areas are drained by rocky, quick flowing becks which form steep gullies or gills.

Thick layers of peat cover much of the terrain, with dark eroding edges or hags visible in places. The highest ground is occupied by extensive tracts of blanket bog of heather, cotton grass and sphagnum moss, which on drier ground progresses to heather and bilberry or acid grassland on peaty gley or podzolic soils. The heather moors are managed for grouse
shooting – the burning of heather creating seasonal patterns in a patchwork of older and younger heather. The moorland is also used for extensive grazing by sheep (species such as Swaledales are common), and where heavy grazing occurs land cover is often dominated by mat-grass moorland. Semi-natural grass and heather moorland give uniform land cover to hills, so landform tends to dominate character.

This landscape is sparsely populated (settlement concentrating in the dales below, which dissect the area). Nevertheless there are occasional man-made features in this landscape, including scattered industrial features, quarries, masts, grouse butts or sheepfolds and some areas of scarring or isolated spoil heaps or evidence of past peat cutting. Although rich in archaeology, much is buried or comprises subtle features which are masked by vegetation, for example stone circles, cairn fields or burial mounds. Although generally unenclosed, this landscape does contain occasional stone walls which increase in number at its edges and reflect late eighteenth century enclosure of common ground.

There is a visual simplicity and uniformity to this landscape and an open, exposed character with a strong sense of wildness or solitude. This weakens towards the edges, which gradually descend into adjoining dales offering panoramic views across the more settled lowland areas and unbroken moorland.

**Landscape character areas**

**NP22a Hartleyburn Common**
This area comprises a broad upland ridge to the west of the South Tyne Valley which extends into Cumbria. It is heavily dissected by small burns which feed the South Tyne, leaving elevated hills and ridges between. There is evidence of past mining activity on Knarsdale Common and some coniferous plantations on the fringes of the area. This landscape forms an important backdrop to the South Tyne Valley and Tyne Gap.

**NP22b Whitefield Moor**
This area forms a broad plateau between West Allendale and the South Tyne valley. In the northern part of this area there is evidence of past mining activity, and dispersed farmsteads are accessed by narrow lanes and tracks. To the south, the landscape is less accessible, comprising extensive areas of heather moorland and peat with a strong sense of remoteness and solitude. Wallace Crags to the west and Whitefield Lough which is centrally located form notable features in an otherwise uniform area.

**NP22c Allen Common and Mohope/Acton Moors**
This area forms a relatively narrow ridge between the Allendales and dales to the south and forms an important upland context. The mining chimney at Dryburn Moor is a local landmark while disused mines on Hesleywell Moor are notable features. This area also includes the upland settlement of Allendale Town with its associated heritage centre. Footpaths and lanes cross this ridge of higher land connecting the dales. The crags at Brownley Hill are a notable landscape feature.

**NP22d Hexhamshire and Bulbeck Commons**
This area forms a broad plateau between East Allendale and Derwentdale and is dissected by the headwaters of Devil's Water. This area connects to Lune Forest and Mickles Fell character areas within County Durham. There are numerous footpaths and tracks crossing this area although some are boggy. On the fringes of the area are rectilinear coniferous shelterbelts, and Slaley Wood which masks the transition from open moorland to enclosed farmland. The majority of the area comprises heather moorland managed for grouse and common for sheep. Ancient farming and mining routes cross the area, while in the narrow gullies that drain the commons there are patches of bracken and occasional waterfalls.

**Strategy and Guidelines**

**Key features and qualities**

- **Natural rock outcrops and other geological features** such as shake holes and stone bands within an otherwise simple landscape. The geological value of the area is reflected in its European Geopark status.
- **Extensive areas of semi-natural vegetation** including blanket bog and heather moorland which is designated as SSSI e.g. Hexhamshire Moors and Allendale Moors.
- **Important stands of juniper woods which flank gills and steep ravines** and visually reinforce the drainage pattern.
- **Wealth of mining heritage features** including disused mines and shafts.
- **Open expansive and elemental character** offering exceptional recreation experiences and a high degree of relative wildness.
- **A simplicity of landform and landcover** which contrasts with individual man made features such as mining chimneys, shafts and field barns and gives rise to a high landscape value reflected in much of the areas designation within the North Pennines AONB.

**Local forces for change and their landscape implications**

- **Decline in the number and distribution of juniper woods** along ravines and gills as a result of damage by grazing livestock which may result in a less visually apparent drainage pattern.
- **Drainage of moorland areas for agricultural improvement** may result in damage to blanket bog habitats, flushes and pools.
- **Overgrazing of heather moorland** may lead to the loss and fragmentation of heather communities.
- **Growth and expansion of bracken encroachment** as a result of lack of management and climate change may alter the character of the landscape and conceal local features such as rock exposures and mining heritage.
- **Loss of stone wall enclosures and other stone built features** such as sheepfolds, bields, bothies and mining heritage may undermine local distinctiveness.
- **Development of coniferous plantations and shelterbelts on the moorland fringes** may mask the transition from open moorland to dale and alter the characteristic land use patterns.
- **Wind energy development** is proposed in parts of this landscape character type and could bring significant issues for its relatively wild character and wider views.

**Strategy**

The condition of this landscape including its semi-natural habitats and historic features and patterns remains good despite some issues relating to the management of open moorland. The strategy for this landscape is therefore to restore condition and conserve character.

**Guidelines for land management**

**Forestry and woodland**

Encourage natural regeneration of semi-natural birch, oak-birch and juniper woodlands along gills and ravines, in valley bottoms and the moorland fringe. Supplement with areas of new planting focusing on ravines and along gills. Avoid masking rocky outcrops which act as local landmarks and are a valuable habitat and prevent damage from livestock. Where feasible the planting of new juniper woodland should use local seed.

Seek opportunities to restructure plantations and shelterbelts where they currently form heavy skyline features, mask the characteristics pattern of land uses, have abrupt geometric edges or have caused damage to historic sites or geological features. Consider removal of visually intrusive isolated plantations.

**Field boundaries**

Encourage the regular management of stone wall particularly where they are highly visible and form a significant pattern in the landscape on the moorland fringe.

**Moorlands**

Conserve areas of blanket bog through the avoidance of gripping and physical damage. Restore damaged bogs and flushes by blocking grips and drains, and avoiding supplementary feeding where it can cause poaching by stock.

Encourage appropriate long term management of existing heather moorland through a review of stocking levels and burning practices and implementation of new regimes if necessary. Encourage reduction in stocking levels where there is scope to regenerate heather moorland and to help alleviate abrupt changes between heather and grass moorland along fence lines.

**Rivers and wetland**

Protect gills and ravines from stock to encourage regeneration of semi-natural vegetation including juniper scrub and rowan and manage areas of bracken and gorse invasion.

**Historic sites and built development**

Protect areas of archaeological value or sensitivity from damage by livestock. Encourage the restoration and
continued management of moorland structures such as sheepfolds, bields and bothies which add to local distinctiveness.

Improve understanding of the mining archaeology through research and survey and seek to balance the conservation and protection of the most significant historic mining features with the gradual decay and dereliction of others, both of which make a valuable contribution to the visual interest and historic legacy of this landscape.

New buildings in this landscape should only be developed in exceptional circumstances - they should be sited to minimise visibility, be built of natural materials, and where possible designed to look like traditional moorland features – bields, bothies or sheepfolds.

### Guidelines for development

**Tourism and recreation**
Manage access through this landscape and particularly to points of interest (viewpoints, historic sites), by encouraging the use of structured and seasonal paths to decrease pressure on fragile substrates and avoid disturbance to breeding birds.

**Energy and telecommunications**
Avoid the siting of tall structures such as masts, pylons and wind turbines in this landscape generally and particularly on prominent skylines.
Landscape character type 23: Farmed River Valleys

Characterisation

Key characteristics

- East-west ridges supporting upland fringe mixed farmland.
- Dissected and drained by incised burns running along deep clefts or denes.
- Rocky ledges, waterfalls and narrow haughs within denes mark proximity of bedrock to surface.
- Semi-natural ancient woodland within denes and coniferous plantations in wider hinterland.
- Varied field patterns – irregular and sinuous close to settlements, rectilinear and planned on upper slopes.
- Mixed farming – arable and sheep or horse pasture (improved and some wet).
- Mixture of field boundaries, including hedges with hedgerow trees, post and wire fencing, and stone walls particularly around settlements.
- Settlement comprises small villages and dispersed farmsteads, country houses and halls, and mill villages.

Description

This landscape character type forms an upland fringe farmland landscape between the North Tyne and Derwentdale which has been dissected by deeply incised burn valleys. The drainage pattern created by the burns reflects the banding and faulting within the underlying east-west axis of sandstone rock strata. This is reinforced topographically by the series of east-west rounded stepped terraces which descends gradually into the Tyne valley to the north. Although relatively elevated and close to the Tyne valley, views from this landscape mainly look southward to the fringes of the moorland.

This landscape is very varied, although unified by its strong topographic and drainage patterns. The soils are a mosaic of heavy, seasonally waterlogged clays and more fertile and free-draining brown earths. Agricultural land use reflects the underlying variety of soils, with a mixture of improved pasture and arable cropping. There is a strong pastoral emphasis on the higher ground that borders moorland landscapes. Field boundaries are largely hedgerows, with occasional dry stone walls particularly close to settlements. Hedges tend to be dominated by hawthorn, with some blackthorn and holly – trimmed in arable areas but often leggy and overgrown in pastoral areas. Field enclosure patterns are also varied, ranging from relics of medieval cultivation in the form of rig and furrow and lynchets (common in areas of older, less improved, pastures); to semi-regular sixteenth and seventeenth century enclosures of common fields around villages (as seen at Juniper); to
small areas of more regular ‘surveyor enclosed’ field systems on upper slopes, dating from
the enclosure of manorial wastes in the eighteenth century. The visual prominence of the
field enclosure pattern varies, although hedgerow trees (typically ash, oak and sycamore),
avenue and policy plantings reinforce the pattern in some areas.

Within the deep clefts of the burn valleys, ancient semi-natural woodland is concentrated,
creating secretive and intimate landscapes. On the valley sides rock is often exposed as
horizontal ledges of sandstone over which the burns flow and waterfalls are characteristic at
these points. The incised nature of the valleys means that there is sometimes no floodplain;
where haughs occur they are often narrow. The woodland in the valleys comprises mostly
oak, ash and hazel, and in places has been inter-planted with coniferous species such as
Scots pine or larch. It creates a strong visual pattern.

The landscape has a rural character and is populated by a dispersed pattern of small Saxon
and medieval villages, namely Juniper, Whitley Chapel and Slaley, and small farms, often
hidden in woodland. Buildings are generally small-scale and of traditional stone
construction. An intricate network of minor roads relates to the rolling landform and crosses
the incised burns via narrow bridges or fords. There are few large-scale modern built or
industrial features.

This is not a remote landscape although it has a strong visual relationship with the more
remote uplands to the north and west. The landscape is modified by farming and commercial
forestry, but the presence of extensive native woodlands, policy plantings and stone
buildings, gives the type a rural, naturalistic, and traditionally managed character.

**Landscape character areas**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>23a</th>
<th>Devil's Water and Hinterland</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This area includes the wooded dene of Devil's Water and its tributaries (West Dipton Burn, Ham Burn and Rowley Burn) which flow in an east-west direction along the grain of the underlying geology. In the areas between the wooded incised denes, the landscape is characterised by mixed farming with a medium scale field pattern. There are views to the higher moorland to the south and west which lends context.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>23b</th>
<th>Dipton Wood and Slaley</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This area is located between the upper slopes of the Tyne valley and Slaley Forest and has a simpler pattern than that of the Devil's Water and Hinterland character area. It comprises a number of contrasting landscapes including the commercial forestry of Dipton Wood, more open mixed farmland to the south around Slaley, and characteristic incised and wooded denes carrying Dipton Burn and March Burn. The commercial forestry of Dipton Wood disguises the incised course of Dipton Burn which runs along its northern edge. Around Slaley the landscape is open comprising mixed farming within well-trimmed hedgerows and overlapping lines of hedgerow trees. The village of Slaley stands out along a local ridgeline.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Strategy and Guidelines**

**Key features and qualities**

- Deeply incised clefts or ravines with rocky outcrops and waterfalls give this landscape local distinctiveness and create intimate and secretive landscapes.
- Ancient semi-natural woodland along denes e.g. Long Bank and Letah Woods.
- Intact small Saxon and medieval villages many of which have conservation areas and numerous listed buildings e.g. Juniper and Whitley Chapel.
- Historic stone bridges or fords across burns.

**Local forces for change and their landscape implications**

- Lack of native woodland management may cause the decline of the diversity and nature conservation value of ancient semi-natural woodland in the dene valleys.
- **Planting of coniferous woodland** within and adjacent to dene valleys may result in a changing pattern of woodland in this landscape and masking of the distinctive drainage pattern or deep valley clefts.
- **Lack of field boundary management (stone wall and hedgerows)** may lead to the use of post and wire to ensure stockproof function and lead to the erosion of the visually varied pattern of enclosures across this landscape.
- **Development of equestrian uses on pastures** particularly adjacent to settlements or within dene haughs may bring with it the addition of post and wire or post and rail fencing, new enclosure patterns and associated equestrian features such as stables etc.
- **Pressure for development of tall vertical features** may result in the loss of tranquillity and unfettered Skylines in this landscape.

**Strategy**

The defining element of this landscape character type is the distinctive network of wooded incised denes and variety of field enclosure pattern and scale. Both these aspects of the landscape have been altered in the past by coniferous planting and land management to some degree. The overall strategy for this landscape should be to conserve and restore.

**Guidelines for land management**

**Forestry and woodland**

Future felling of coniferous plantations and shelterbelts should seek to reduce their visual dominance within dene valleys, either through removal or through restructuring with broadleaved planting. New planting should not extend over the edge of the dene into the wider landscape and should have soft edges comprising broadleaved species. Priority should be given to woodland plantations which currently poorly reflect topography or conceal deep clefts or rock exposures.

Restore replanted ancient woodlands by felling and natural regeneration, or restocking with native species of local origins and manage semi-natural woodlands to encourage regeneration in the denes, ravines and along watercourse in order to diversify the age structure of the woodlands and retain characteristic patterns of woodland. Appropriate protection from overgrazing is important.

The planting of new hedgerow trees and hedgerow trees of oak and ash and the encouragement of tree development as part of hedgerow management is desirable and should help maintain the landscape enclosure pattern particularly in lower lying or sheltered locations.

**Farming**

Retention of unimproved pastures and hay meadows on dene haughs should be encouraged.

**Field boundaries**

Increase awareness of the landscape implications of equestrian use, encourage the retention and management of existing hedgerow boundaries and discourage the unnecessary subdivision of enclosures with post and rail or wire fencing.

Encourage the management of hedgerows and stone walls to conserve enclosure patterns and avoid the need for replacement by post and wire fencing. Replant hedgerows where they have been lost and where hedgerows are well trimmed (particularly in areas of arable cultivation) encourage less frequent cutting and the development of field margins. Renovate overgrown gappy hedges by laying or coppicing and gapping up particularly in the area around Slaley.

**Rivers and wetland**

Protect water quality and ensure that felling activity with denes does not resulting in soil erosion or silting.

**Guidelines for development**

**Housing and economic development**

New built development should be focused in and adjacent to existing settlements. Care should be taken to retain the traditional historic nucleated form of the villages and to ensure a soft built edge. New buildings should reflect local building material and styles. New crossing points over the dene watercourses should be resisted.

**Energy and telecommunications**

Any developments of this nature should particularly avoid areas close to settlements and locations where new structures would adversely affect the unbroken skyline of open moorland beyond.
Landscape character type 24: Upland Farmland and Plantations

Characterisation

Key characteristics

- Transitional landscape between North Pennine dales and Tyne Gap.
- Series of south-west and north-east rounded terraces descending northwards into Tyne valley.
- Well-wooded landscape with medium to large rectilinear blocks of coniferous plantation.
- Regular medium to large scale field pattern defined by hedges with hedgerow trees and areas of stone walls.
- Mixture of arable and pasture (sheep grazing).
- Drainage pattern is not strong, consisting of minor shallow burns.
- Sparse settlement confined to former country houses now used for various purposes.

Description

This landscape forms a transitional area between the North Pennine dales and the Tyne Gap. Its geology comprises bands of sandstone interspersed with mudstones and siltstones. The sandstone banding is reflected in the rounded terraces which descend northwards into the Tyne valley and are readily discernable when travelling across the grain of the landscape. The soils comprise a mosaic of heavy, seasonally waterlogged clays and more fertile and free-draining brown earths on the sandstone.

Land use reflects the underlying variety of soils and particularly the acidic nature of the sandy soils, with coniferous plantations and patches of gorse and bracken in verges and hedgerows. The larger coniferous plantations such as Broomleyfell Plantation and Low and High Kellas Plantations date to pre 1860, comprising a mixture of species including Scots pine and larch, whereas other smaller blocks of woodland are more recent twentieth century additions. These more recent additions often form shelterbelt plantings along roads. Some plantations are fringed with broadleaved species such as beech and birch. The relatively extensive areas of woodland combined with the predominance of surveyed enclosure (dating from the enclosure of manorial wastes in the eighteenth century) which typically has straight boundaries and a medium scaled geometric pattern, give this landscape a well-ordered and 'blocky' character. Field boundaries comprise a mix of hedgerows (predominantly blackthorn with some holly with occasional hedgerow trees) and stone walls. They enclose a mixture of arable and improved pasture, although to the south this gives way to a more pastoral landscape, some areas of which are rushy and show signs of poor drainage.
Overall this landscape does not have a strong drainage pattern. Land is drained by shallow burns that are generally not visually significant. The settlement pattern comprises dispersed farmsteads, but there are also county houses with associated parkland and estate landscape features. Many of these estates are now used for different purposes. For example, Slaley Hall is a hotel and golf course; while Ministeracres is a monastery.

Although this landscape shares similar geology and topography to land to the west its land use pattern and lack of a strong drainage network distinguish it from the Farmed River Valleys landscape character type. The relatively high woodland cover and gentle topography mean that this is an inward looking landscape with few long distant views.

**Landscape character areas**

24a Healey Farmland and Plantation

**Strategy and Guidelines**

**Key features and qualities**

- **Gorse scrub lane verges** along with bracken, birch and Scots pine reflecting the underlying bands of sandstone geology.
- **Interlocking pattern of native woodland and coniferous plantations** typically seen around large houses and parkland estates.
- **Mature beech and Scots pine shelterbelts** along rural roads that act as strong skyline features.
- **Strong geometric enclosure patterns** defined by hedgerows and stone walls, many of which date to the period of parliamentary enclosure.

**Local forces for change and their landscape implications**

- **Development of estates and country houses** for recreational or other uses may lead to a change in character and loss of parkland landscape features.
- **Lack of stone wall and hedgerow management** may result in a loss of the distinctive enclosure pattern and creation of a neglected feel.
- **Drainage of pastures** may cause a loss/decline in wet pastures and biodiversity leading to a change in landscape colours and textures.
- **Pressure for the development of wind turbines and telecommunications masts** may result in a cluttering of the skyline and loss of tranquillity.

**Strategy**

This landscape has a mixed character and lacks cohesiveness. Although the geology of this area has given it a distinctive stepped topography and areas of acidic vegetation, the planting of coniferous woodland planting has obscured these patterns to some degree. The overall strategy for this landscape is to enhance the landscape through the restructuring of woodland and reinforcement of the wider enclosure pattern.

**Guidelines for land management**

**Forestry and woodland**

Encourage the felling and restocking of the most extensive coniferous plantations with an increase in native species. Seek to establish softer plantation outlines with shapes designed to integrate with local topography. Retain areas of Scots pine and beech shelterbelt where they form visually significant skyline features.

**Farming**

Retain unimproved wet rushy pastures to optimise the visual diversity of this landscape. Use of fertilisers and lime on pastures should be discouraged.

Seek opportunities to revert arable back to pasture where soil conditions are poor, and restore wet pastures through blocking grips and drains.
### Field boundaries

The rebuilding and restoration of stone walls should be encouraged through provision of appropriate grants and development of local skills. Ensure walls are stockproof and reflect the distinctive enclosure pattern found in parts of this landscape.

Renovate overgrown gappy hedges by laying or coppicing and gapping up and where hedgerows are well trimmed (particularly in areas of arable cultivation) encourage less frequent cutting and the development of field margins.

### Guidelines for development

#### Tourism and recreation

Where former parkland estates are developed for recreational uses, ensure that landscape features such as field trees and woodland planting are retained and actively managed. Golf course development should seek to reinforce parkland character through appropriate planting (such as avenues and filed trees) and where new features are added to the landscape they should avoid locations that are visually sensitive when viewed from the wider landscape.

#### Energy and telecommunications

Care should be taken to avoid cumulative impacts and the cluttering of the skyline with vertical structures, particularly in longer distance views from other landscape character types.
3.9 Durham Coalfield Pennine Fringe

This relatively high, rolling, large-scale transitional landscape lies to the east of the North Pennines, dipping down gently eastwards to the heavily settled lowlands of the Tyne and Wear valleys. A mainly rural landscape, it is heavily influenced in places by urban and industrial development and mineral working. Only a small part of this Character Area lies within Tynedale District and hence in Northumberland. None of the land is within Northumberland National Park or the North Pennines AONB.

- This rolling low upland landscape of ridges and valleys has a strong east-west grain with panoramic views from higher ground.
- Soft and thinly bedded sandstones, shales and coals give rise to gently rounded ridges with occasional steeper bluffs; boulder clay on lower valley slopes.
- The valleys are broad with moderate slopes and occasional narrow flood plains.
- Coniferous plantations are found on the higher valley sides and ridges.
- Ancient oak woods are found in narrow steep-sided denes and along the banks of rivers and streams.
- Occasional parklands and wooded estates surround small country houses.
- The ridges are characterised by large, regular grids of dry stone walls and gappy thorn hedges, crossed by straight enclosure roads and lanes.
- Fields in the valleys are generally smaller and bounded by hawthorn hedges with scattered hedgerow oak and ash.
- On the ridges, most farmland is used for sheep and cattle grazing; in the valleys there is a mixture of arable fields and improved pastures.
- Fragments of heathland and scrub occur on infertile acidic soils on higher ground.
- Old agricultural villages lie on the ridge tops or valley floors and have buildings of local sandstone with roofs of stone or slate.
- Mining villages with Victorian terraced housing of brick or stone and slate and later estate housing are scattered across the landscape, contributing an urban fringe character, particularly in the north-eastern part of the Character.
- There are numerous relicts of the mining industry.
- Recently reclaimed land and ongoing opencast coal mining are locally prominent in the landscape.
Landscape character type 25: Coalfield Upland Fringe

Characterisation

Key characteristics

- Broad ridges of gently rounded topography.
- Heavy, seasonally waterlogged clay soils with pockets of peaty soils supporting heathland vegetation.
- Pastoral land use of improved or semi-improved pasture with some arable cropping on drier ridges.
- Regular grids of parliamentary enclosures bounded by dry stone walls or overgrown hawthorn hedges; occasional older field systems.
- Sparsely wooded – scattered conifer plantations, shelterbelts, occasional hedgerow oak, ash, rowan or birch.
- Isolated farms connected by straight enclosure roads and occasional old ‘green’ villages of local stone on ridge top sites.
- Scattered mining villages of stone and brick and some larger towns.
- Relicts of the mining industry including small spoil heaps, coke ovens and waggonways, restored opencast mining land.
- A visually open landscape with commanding views across adjacent valleys to distant ridges.

Description

This is an upland fringe landscape made up of the broad ridges and shallow tributary valleys of the Durham coalfield. The soft and thinly bedded sandstones, shales and coals of the coal measures are generally free of drift or masked by boulder clays, giving rise to gently rounded convex slopes. Occasional thicker sandstone beds are marked by steeper bluffs. Small becks and burns drain the upper valleys, sometimes incised in narrow denes. Soils are heavy and seasonally waterlogged. On poorly drained ridges and plateaux, peaty gleys and deeper peats have formed.

This is a predominantly pastoral landscape of improved and semi-improved pastures with occasional rougher grazing and wet rushy pasture. There is some limited arable cropping on drier ridge tops. Field boundaries are a mixture of dry stone walls and hedgerows. Walls are made of thinly bedded, locally quarried sandstones. Hedges are dominated by hawthorn and can be tall and leggy, or well trimmed and gappy and are often supplemented by wire fences. Field systems are regular in pattern, dating mainly from the enclosure of moorland wastes in the eighteenth century under private Acts of Parliament. Some areas of unfenced
common land survive on the poorest soils. Earlier hedges and walls are occasionally found around older farms and villages.

Tree and woodland cover is low. The higher ridges are generally open, with sparsely scattered hedgerow oak and ash. Thin tree lines follow watercourses. Road verges are often colonised by rowan, birch and gorse scrub. Small plantations and shelterbelts of pine and larch are scattered across the ridges, with local concentrations creating a more heavily wooded and blocky character.

Historically this was a sparsely settled landscape of isolated livestock farms and large tracts of open fell associated with small agricultural villages in the adjacent valleys. Some older villages lie on ridge top sites. Buildings are of local sandstone with roofs of sandstone or Welsh slate, and are typically set around a central village green. Scattered farms, most dating from the period of enclosure, are connected by straight and uniform enclosure roads. Mining settlements, ranging from small hamlets and isolated terraces to large towns, are scattered across the ridge tops. Most contain areas of nineteenth century terraced housing of stone or brick and slate together with estates of post-war public housing and later commercial development, as at Prudhoe. Settlement edges are often abrupt, or fringed by allotments, pony paddocks or industrial estates.

Coal mining and the production of coke and steel have influenced the landscape, although much of the industrial legacy has been removed by land reclamation in recent years. Some relicts survive; including small spoil heaps, coke ovens, lime kilns, waggonways, bridges and mine buildings. Large tracts of land have been open-cast for shallow coal on the exposed drift-free ridges and restored to agriculture or forestry. Older sites in particular were restored with little regard to the character of the landscape, and remain open and relatively featureless. Telecommunications masts are prominent features on some ridge tops.

The landscape is visually open and broad in scale with commanding views across the adjacent ridges and valleys. In places it has a remote and strongly rural character, but elsewhere its frequent mining towns and villages, industrial estates, busy roads, communications masts and overhead services give it a semi-rural or urban fringe character.

**Landscape character areas**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DCPF25a</th>
<th>Prudhoe Hinterland</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This area forms upland to the south of Prudhoe and comprises regular, medium-sized fields, defined by well-trimmed thorn hedges and gorse. Shallow depressions in the rolling topography where there is poor drainage have given rise to areas of semi-natural oak-birch woodland at Hoynes West and East Wood. On steeper slopes are rough grazing, areas of bracken and gorse scrub, and wide views northwards across the River Tyne valley.</td>
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<tr>
<th>DCPF25b</th>
<th>Kiln Pit Hill Hinterland</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This area comprises an elevated open ridge between Derwent Reservoir to the southwest and the Derwent valley to the east. Here there is little tree cover and the field systems are regular and uniform, many dating to the parliamentary enclosures of the eighteenth century while others date from the twentieth century opencast mining and land reclamation. Field boundaries are a mixture of dry stone walls and overgrown hedges and wire fences. There are patches of wet pasture and gorse and small coniferous plantations which give a ‘blocky’ character to this area and reflect the acidic soils. Elevated open areas have wide views into Derwentdale.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Strategy and Guidelines**

**Key features and qualities**

- **Wide long distance views into adjacent valleys** including the Derwent valley and the Tyne Gap.
- **Strong enclosure pattern** of stone walls and hedges, often dating to the eighteenth century and associated with enclosure roads. This creates a unifying and distinctive pattern across this landscape.
- **Narrow rural lanes flanked by gorse scrub and grass verges** that give this landscape a rural and often remote character despite the close proximity of major settlements.
- **Patches of semi-natural vegetation**, significant for their general isolation and small number e.g. ancient and semi-natural woodland at Hyons Wood.
- **Elevated and strongly horizontal character**, making this landscape an important skyline and backdrop to hilltop settlements as well as settlements within the Tyne and Derwent Valleys.
- **Isolated farmsteads associated with clumps of shelter trees** that form local skyline features.

### Local forces for change and their landscape implications

- **Planting of coniferous woodland and shelterbelts** may create a more enclosed and 'blocky' character concealing the flow of topography, overlapping skylines and may diminish the pattern of farmstead shelter trees on skylines.
- **Wind throw damage to conifer shelterbelts** may result in an uncared-for appearance and a loss of the visual structure in some areas.
- **Loss of hedgerows and stone walls** through lack of management and replacement by post and wire may degrade the character of some areas and fragment the distinctive enclosure pattern.
- **Development of post and rail fencing** associated with equestrian usage, particularly close to settlements may alter the character of the landscape and local enclosure patterns.
- **Development of large scale farm buildings** may lead to the erosion of the historic pattern of farmsteads and adversely affect the setting of some listed farm buildings.
- **Growth of settlements into the rural countryside** may undermine the sense of separation between settlements, create abrupt urban edges and have an urbanising influence on surrounding rural areas.
- **Close proximity of large urban areas** may result in an increase in fly tipping, motorcycle scrambling and illegal grazing.
- **Development of large vertical structures** such as masts and wind turbines may interrupt important skylines and adversely affect adjacent valley landscapes.

### Strategy

Elements of the original structure of this landscape have been lost and there is a need to conserve those areas where the character and pattern remains and to restore areas where it has been weakened. The overall strategy for this area is therefore conserve and restore.

### Guidelines for land management

#### Forestry and woodland

- Encourage the felling and restocking of coniferous plantations and shelterbelts with an increase in native species. Focus replanting on steepest slopes, extending areas of existing semi-natural woodland in a way that is sensitive to local topographic variations and edge treatments.
- Protect and maintain existing hedgerow trees and plant new field boundary trees using ash, oak and rowan.
- Conserve roadside trees and gorse scrub along rural lanes, particularly those associated with enclosure.
- Manage and replant clumps of shelter planting associated with farmsteads. Where new large scale farm buildings have developed and are out of scale, seek opportunities to plant new shelter woodlands and copses to soften development and break up building scale and mass.

#### Farming

- Maintain and enhance semi-improved pastures and meadows, wet pastures and rough grazing areas by adopting appropriate stocking levels or cutting regimes and avoiding improvements such as drainage, ploughing and reseeding. Limit the use of fertiliser and herbicides in order to enhance the biodiversity, visual diversity and texture of the landscape.
- Maintain a balance between pasture and arable land uses and encourage to reversion of arable back to pasture where soil conditions are poor.

#### Field boundaries

- Encourage the regular management of stone wall and hedgerow enclosures through appropriate trimming and hedge laying or coppicing and rebuilding of stone walls where necessary.

Where hedges have become gappy ensure replanting and 'gapping-up' with species typical of surrounding hedges and in particular the use of hawthorn. Ensure all new planting is suitably protected from grazing stock.
Reinstate hedges and walls where they have been replaced by fences - particularly in areas of older enclosure, along enclosure roads and lanes and on reclaimed or restored opencast land.

**Rivers and wetland**
Fence minor streams against livestock to prevent erosion and allow natural regeneration of bankside vegetation and semi-natural woodland.

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### Guidelines for development

#### Housing and economic development
Maintain the separation of villages and towns and the rural character of the countryside between them when planning new development.

Urban extensions to existing settlements should not be allowed to creep onto open or exposed ridgelines which form a setting or backdrop to a settlement. New developments should be associated with appropriate native structure planting to soften urban form and edges.

#### Energy and telecommunications
Where new communications masts are necessary ensure siting close to existing buildings, tree groups or woodland edges rather than open countryside or on prominent exposed ridgelines.

Give careful consideration or the siting, layout and design of any new wind farm developments, having particular regards to cumulative impacts and the indirect impacts on adjacent valley landscapes and important skylines. Avoid locating commercial turbines in the same view as existing rural landscape features such as farmsteads that may highlight the scale of the turbines.
Landscape character type 26: Coalfield Valley

Characterisation

Key characteristics

- Broad, well-defined valleys with occasional narrow floodplains and incised denes.
- Open landscape, relatively broad in scale but enclosed by rounded ridgelines.
- Mixed farmland of improved pasture and arable cropping.
- Sub-regular field patterns of old enclosures bounded by thorn hedges; occasional regular parliamentary enclosures.
- Scattered hedgerow trees – oak, ash, sycamore and beech.
- Well wooded with ancient oak-birch woods in narrow denes and along watercourses, and mixed plantations on valley sides.
- Scattered mining towns and villages connected by busy roads.
- Extensive areas of restored opencast land and reclaimed colliery land – often open and relatively featureless.
- Strongly rural landscape in places but with a ‘semi-rural’ or urban fringe quality in more settled areas.

Description

This character type straddles the south-eastern Tynedale District boundary and includes the Derwent valley through which the River Derwent and its tributaries flow. The valley is broad and well-defined with moderately sloping sides and occasional areas of narrow floodplain. Soft and thinly bedded sandstones, coal and shales of the coal measures are covered by glacial drift of boulder clay with pockets of sands and gravels, giving rise to gently rounded topography. Small rivers, becks and burns cut down into the valley floor drift, in places creating narrow, steep-sided denes.

Heavy, seasonally waterlogged, clay soils support a predominantly pastoral land use with limited arable cropping on lower flatter areas. Field boundaries are mostly hedges – cut low in arable areas, but often tall and overgrown in pastoral areas. Field systems are generally ‘sub-regular’ in pattern, dating from the enclosure of arable town fields around older villages or intakes from the open fells. More regular grids of parliamentary enclosures are found on higher valley sides.

This is a well-wooded valley with ancient oak woods lying in branching denes and large coniferous or mixed plantations (of pine and larch) on the valley sides. Younger broadleaved woodlands of pioneer species like birch, alder and willow follow old railway lines.
and colliery land. The sub-regular networks of old hedges are scattered with locally-abundant oak, ash, beech and sycamore trees.

Mining towns and villages occur throughout the main valley, connected by a well-developed road network. Most of these settlements have a core of nineteenth century terraced housing of brick or stone and Welsh slate, surrounded by estates of post-war public housing, for example at Consett. Settlement edges are often abrupt or fringed by allotment gardens, pony paddocks and industrial land. This settlement pattern overlies and largely obscures an older network of small agricultural villages and farms which still survives in the tributary Pont valley.

The valley landscape has been heavily influenced by coal mining, although much of its legacy has been removed by land reclamation in recent years. The disused railway line, which has several landmark viaducts over wooded denes, offers commanding views across the valley is now used for recreation, including the Derwent Valley walk. Other elements of the industrial landscape remain, notably small waste heaps and old coke ovens. Land reclamation and opencast coal mining have had a substantial impact on the more settled parts of the landscape, where extensive tracts of land have been worked and restored to agriculture or forestry. Reclaimed or restored land is often relatively featureless or lacking in maturity.

The landscape is broad in scale, defined within the valley by the enclosing ridgelines, with panoramic views from higher ridges across adjacent valleys. Locally, within the more wooded sections of the valley, the scale is more intimate and enclosed. The landscape of the coalfield has been heavily influenced by urban and industrial development and its scattered mining towns and villages and busy roads give it a semi-rural or urban fringe character in places. In the less developed areas it retains a strongly rural quality.

Landscape character areas

DCPF 26a Derwent Valley

Strategy and Guidelines

Key features and qualities

- Ancient semi-natural oak wooded denes along tributary becks forming an important and valued habitat network e.g. Park and Meirs Woods and Brownsbog Wood.
- Distinctive sub-regular pattern and regular grids of historic enclosures comprising hedgerows with mature hedgerow trees that exert a strong visual pattern on this landscape.
- High degree of tranquillity and intimacy in some areas on account of the unspoilt and mature character of the landscape and wooded denes and lack of man made features.
- Relic mining features such as disused railway routes and Derwentcote Steel Furnace and Iron Forge which is a scheduled monument.
- Unspoilt unfettered skyline which forms the setting for the valley landscape.

Local forces for change and their landscape implications

- Decline in oak woodland management may result in the loss of some woodlands and a reduction of species age and diversity.
- Erosion of stream banks by livestock may lead to a loss of riverside vegetation and fragmentation of these important linear habitats.
- Infilling and drainage of ponds may cause loss of wetland habitats and landscape features.
- Improvement of pastures and meadows may lead to loss of species diversity and subsequent changes in landscape colours and textures.
- **Intensification of arable cropping** may exacerbate the loss of hedgerows and field margins with implications for water quality and soil erosion.
- **Close trimming of hedgerows, loss of hedgerow trees and an increase in post and wire fencing** may visually fragment the landscape and erode the historic field pattern.
- **Growth of valley settlements and development of large buildings** may result in the gradual suburbanisation of adjacent areas through boundary treatment, concrete road kerbs, lighting, raw urban edges or the development of hobby farming and pony paddocks.
- **Continued mining activity** may bring scarring of the landscape, loss of tranquillity and disturbance to lane verges.

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<th>Guidelines for land management</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Forestry and woodland</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Encourage the felling and restocking of coniferous plantations (particularly those within and adjacent to denes) with an increase in native species. Focus replanting on steepest slopes associated with the denes, extending areas of existing semi-natural woodland with sensitivity to local topographic variations and edge treatment.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Encourage the planting of new native oak-birch woodlands along denes, valley floors and steep valley side bluffs and alder woods along streamsides.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Protect and maintain existing hedgerow trees and plant new field boundary trees using ash, oak, beech and sycamore.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Farming</th>
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<tr>
<td>Maintain and enhance semi-improved pastures and meadows and wet pastures by adopting appropriate stocking levels or cutting regimes and avoiding improvements such as drainage, ploughing and reseeding. Limited the use of fertilised and herbicides in order to enhance the biodiversity, visual diversity and texture of the landscape. Maintain a balance between pasture and arable land uses and encourage to reversion of arable back to pasture in areas adjacent to watercourses and where soil conditions are poor.</td>
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<th>Field boundaries</th>
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<tr>
<td>Encourage the regular management of hedgerows through appropriate trimming and hedge laying or coppicing where necessary. Where hedges have become gappy ensure replanting and ‘gapping-up’ with species typical of surrounding hedges. Ensure all new planting is suitably protected from grazing stock during establishment. Reinstate hedges where they have been replaced by fences – particularly in areas of older enclosure and on reclaimed or restored opencast land.</td>
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<th>Rivers and wetland</th>
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<tr>
<td>Fence minor streams against livestock to prevent erosion and allow natural regeneration of bankside vegetation and semi-natural woodland. Discourage the loss of ponds from drainage or infilling and restore and create new ponds where appropriate in order to increase the number of these important and valued habitats. Creation of landscape margins and buffers adjacent to watercourses would be beneficial where arable land or intensive grazing impinges on the water’s edge.</td>
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<th>Guidelines for development</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Housing and economic development</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintain the separation of villages and towns and the rural character of the countryside between them when planning new development. New development should be associated with appropriate native structure planting to soften urban form and edges and should avoid exposed or visually prominent valley sides. Urban detailing on country roads, inappropriate boundary planting/treatment to properties and lighting should be discouraged.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Minerals and waste</th>
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<tr>
<td>Restoration of past mining sites should include the reinstatement of species rich pasture, meadow and semi-natural woodland. Any further mining activity should avoid the destruction of mature landscape features and semi-natural habitats and should where feasible result in new characteristic features such as the planting of semi-natural woodland, hedgerows and hedgerow trees and the creation of ponds.</td>
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4 A STRATEGY FOR THE LANDSCAPE

This section gives an overview of the key features and qualities of the landscapes of Tynedale District and Northumberland National Park. It discusses the principal changes affecting the area’s landscapes and where they occur. It explores their implications for landscape character, condition and values and indicates how they can be tackled, through discussion of strategic priorities and actions, and by making links to ongoing land management and planning initiatives and responsibilities.

4.1 Key Features and Qualities

The diverse landscapes of Tynedale District and Northumberland National Park contain a wealth of landscape interest. There are substantial areas that are designated for their landscape value at national level, notably Northumberland National Park and the North Pennines AONB (Figure 7); while much of the rest of the study area forms part of the landscape setting for these two nationally important landscapes. Both National Parks and AONBs are designated for their natural beauty; in National Parks the opportunities that the area affords for open-air recreation form a further designation criterion.

As indicated in the last section, a range of key, valued landscape features and qualities is associated with each of the individual landscape character types. It is also possible, however, to identify a shortlist of features and qualities that are particularly distinctive and characteristic of the study area as a whole. These are often highly valued for the scenic, natural, historic, cultural and recreational benefits that they provide. The key features and qualities that particularly distinguish the study area and contribute to its character are described briefly below. Further details of the study area’s geological, natural, cultural, built and recreational assets and their specific management requirements can be found in sources listed in the bibliography.

4.1.1 A distinctive geology

Section 2.1 summarised the fascinating geological history that underpins the physical landscapes of the study area. The importance of geology in the North Pennines AONB was formally recognised with the award in 2003 of the UNESCO-endorsed European Geopark status, the first such award in Britain. The rest of the study area shares many of the geological features of the North Pennines and at the same time includes a wider range of features that are of importance in their own right, for example because they have contributed to geological knowledge and understanding.

The area’s key geological assets in landscape terms include the iconic, rounded, faulted hills of the Cheviot granite massif, the Whin Sill, in geological terms the ‘classic’ sill, responsible for some of Northumberland’s finest scenery and a natural defensive site for Hadrian’s Wall; the Fell Sandstone outcrops, forming bold tiers of crags and escarpments and strongly associated with prehistoric sites; the Millstone Grits and coal seams of the Yoredale group, which created the distinctive terraced landform and waterfalls along the Tyne Gap and supported early industry; Quaternary features including the Cheviot tors, cuesta landscapes created by glacial streamlining, overflow features, moraines, kettleholes, fan and lake deposits on the eastern edges of the Cheviots, and widespread blanket peats and mires; and the metalliferous mineral veins, particularly south of Hadrian’s Wall and in the North Pennines, that gave rise to lead and silver mining.
Figure 7: Landscape Designations
- Pennine Dales Environmentally Sensitive Area
- North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Northumberland National Park

Figure 8: Natural Heritage Designations
- Ramsar Site
- Special Area of Conservation
- Special Protection Area
- National Nature Reserve
- Site of Special Scientific Interest
- Local Nature Reserve
- Site of Nature Conservation Interest

Figure 9: Cultural Heritage Designations
- Hadrian’s Wall World Heritage Site
- Scheduled Monuments
- Conservation Areas
- Registered Parks and Gardens

Figure 10: Tranquillity
- Most Tranquil
- Least Tranquil
Many of these features are geological resources of scientific importance, carrying SSSI or other designations (see Figure 8). They may also form the basis for distinctive habitats (such as the Fell Sandstone heaths), cultural landscape features (such as the miner-farmer landscapes of the North Pennines); built heritage (such as the granite buildings of the Cheviots); and economic activity (such as the coal-based industrial activity along the Tyne Gap). Hence the area’s distinctive geology is a vital contributor to many aspects of its landscape character. It also provides many opportunities to attract visitors to the study area, and to explain and interpret to them the area’s physical landscape origins.

4.1.2 A rich natural heritage

As described in Section 2.3, Tynedale District and Northumberland National Park have a diverse range of flora and fauna. Many areas are of international, national, regional, and local importance, as can be seen from Figure 8, which shows the study area’s principal natural heritage designations.

The most important habitats – of European importance – are blanket bog (including raised bog and mire), upland heath and species-rich upland hay meadows. The study area contains around 8%, 11% and 20% respectively of the total English resource of these three habitats (according to the Biodiversity Audit of the North East (Brodin, 2001)). All three occur throughout the study area, but particularly in its western half. As well as being of biodiversity importance, they make a valuable contribution to landscape character. The wide expanses of blanket bog (for example in the Kielder Mires) and upland heath (for example on the North Pennine moors) are key elements of all the open moorland and upland landscapes, providing habitats for grouse, waders and invertebrates and a purple haze of heather in late summer; while on the fringes of these areas (for instance in the Allen and North Tyne valleys) hay meadows lend visual interest to the more intimate in-bye land.

Other habitats of note include rivers and burns, ancient semi-natural woodland and naturally-occurring mesotrophic lakes in the Hadrian’s Wall area, all of national importance. Although less extensive within the study area, these habitats are fundamental to the area’s landscape and biodiversity interest. The area’s rivers and burns are among the cleanest in the UK and are home to salmon, sea trout, otters, water voles and rare plants. Its ancient woodlands, although mainly confined to fragments in upland cleughs and gills, with some more extensive woodlands in the Allen and South Tyne valleys, are a vital part of the landscape structure; they also contain rare juniper scrub and stands of aspen and provide important lichen, bird, badger and squirrel habitat. Elsewhere in the study area, the heath and grass mosaic, rock exposures and scree are of regional biodiversity importance. There are also extensive areas of farmland, coniferous plantation woodland and reservoirs which – although generally of lesser habitat importance – nonetheless provide hedgerows, field and woodland margins and freshwater habitats that are key elements of local landscapes and contribute to people’s enjoyment of the natural environment.

4.1.3 A wealth of historic monuments and landscapes

There is a special wealth of historic monuments and landscapes within the study area, some of them almost unique to – or at least highly distinctive of – this part of England. Many of these features are remarkably well-preserved, and their significance and richness are only gradually being recognised. The principal cultural heritage designations are shown on Figure 9, which reveals a wide scatter but also several marked concentrations of features designated for their historic importance.

First and foremost, of international importance, is the Hadrian’s Wall World Heritage Site, which, as explained earlier, is part of a much wider complex of Roman features, set within a
multi-layered historic landscape. However, there are also many earlier historic landscape features, including outstanding multi-period prehistoric landscapes within the Cheviots (for example at Yeavering Bell and Humbleton Hill) and Simonside Hills (for example at Lordenshaws and Simonside) that are among the most important in Britain. Also notable is the industrial archaeological heritage of lead mining in the North Pennines. These historic landscapes often shed important light on man’s relationship with the land. For example, the Hadrian’s Wall was sited on the Whin Sill because of its strategic location and outlook; Simonside was sacred to early peoples due to its distinctive profile and wide views; and – unusually – industry and settlement developed high up in remote Pennine dales due to the presence of mineral deposits and an ample water supply. By appreciating these relationships, our understanding both of the area’s history and of the landscape we see today is subtly enriched.

As we saw in Section 2.2, there is a wide range of specific historic features, many of which are accessible and highly visible within the landscape, giving a remarkably strong sense of history to much of the area. These include Neolithic long cairns, standing stones, henges and rock art; massive Bronze Age hilltop round cairns; Iron Age hillforts, lynchets and ridges; Roman roads and forts; evidence of Romano-British settlement in the form of large tracts of cord-rig fields; a marked concentration of deserted medieval villages, visible as earthworks and rig and furrow; defensible medieval hall houses and towers or peles; hundreds of bastles or fortified farmhouses; and spoil heaps, shafts, mine buildings, hushes and miner-farmer enclosures associated with former lead mining. There are few other parts of England where the palimpsest – or layers of human influence – on the landscape can be so clearly seen, and this is one of the area’s strongest attractions in landscape terms. These distinctive features are a key part of the area’s identity, and also have considerable visitor appeal and potential to attract tourists.

4.1.4 Strong farming and vernacular building traditions

The landscapes of Tynedale District and Northumberland National Park are living, working landscapes, with strong farming and vernacular building traditions that can be seen in the area’s field boundaries, settlement patterns, traditional farm and estate buildings, and other farmed landscape features. Although often given little formal designation or protection, these patterns and features underpin landscape character.

As noted in Section 2.3, particular types of field pattern and boundary are distinctive to different parts of the area and are often a key determinant of landscape character. In lower-lying settled parts, the areas around settlements often retain irregular in-by field patterns of great antiquity, for example in the Cheviots and in the North Pennine dales. Upland areas tend to be characterised by larger, more regular, eighteenth and nineteenth century enclosures by stone walls or dykes. However, some areas still have relatively little enclosure, notably the North Pennine moors, where much of the land is open, unenclosed common land. On the Border Moors, ancient tracks and drove roads that gave access to summer pastures and were used in the cross-border cattle trade can still be seen, and although the landscape is largely open, features such as cross ridge dykes, circular sheep stells and other scattered enclosures are very distinctive. Locally, the patterned miner-farmer enclosures of the Pennine dale heads are key landscape features.

Many parts of the study area, but particularly the Tyne corridor, are characterised by estate landscapes, with extensive policy and shelterbelt woodland plantings, which are prominent in views across this whole area, especially from the south. Although relatively few of these designed landscapes have been recognised by inclusion on the national Register of Historic Parks and Gardens (see Figure 8), many more are probably of regional or local importance.
These farmed landscape features are complemented by ancient market towns such as Hexham, Corbridge and Prudhoe, all at river crossing points. Although much of the area is sparsely settled, there are also historic villages, some centred on village greens (as at Elsdon) and some more planned in character. These are increasingly recognised, for instance by Northumberland National Park Authority in its Historic Village Atlas, as a fascinating historic and landscape resource; many settlements are also Conservation Areas (Figure 9). In addition, there are many traditional buildings and farmsteads, including early bastle, byre and longhouses, and later farmsteads of courtyard plan in the more prosperous lowland areas, that provide focal points in the landscape and reinforce its rural, vernacular character.

4.1.5 Cultural associations

In understanding the key features and qualities of a landscape it is useful to explore the ways in which that landscape has been perceived by writers, artists and in the cultural traditions, dialect and folk music of local people. An ongoing cultural landscape mapping project by Northumberland National Park Authority is identifying and documenting these associations.

Early perceptions of the Northumberland landscape, for example those of the early eighteenth century travellers Daniel Defoe and Celia Fiennes and also later travellers such as William Hutton, who visited Hadrian’s Wall in 1801, unsurprisingly regarded the landscape of this area as fearsome, dreary and inaccessible waste, reflecting the difficulties of travel, the poverty of the area, and the recent history of feuding and reiving.

Towards the end of the eighteenth century, the picturesque movement, led by Capability Brown, born within the study area at Kirkharle, shaped the emergence of the landscape garden, and although Brown probably did not work within the study area itself, he laid out the gardens at Alnwick Castle and is known to have influenced other gardens in the area. The turn of the nineteenth century then saw the rise of the romantic era, in which northern landscapes generally rose in popularity, not least due to the northern tours of JMW Turner. Turner painted many views of the North Pennines and Tyne valley, including his 1825 watercolour masterpiece, Prudhoe Castle. Other notable local artists who worked locally include Thomas Miles Richardson (1794-1848) who painted the area’s sweeps of meadow, moor and its wide skyscapes; John Martin (1789-1854) of Haydon Bridge, whose paintings feature cliffs and cataracts drawn from childhood memories of the Tyne valley, and Thomas Bewick (1753-1848) of Cherryburn near Ovingham, who produced engravings of local rustic scenes. There are also many talented modern artists working in the area.

Among the writers and musicians who have been inspired by the landscapes of the study area are the local ballad writers, whose ‘Border Ballads’, often focusing on medieval battles and feuds, were popularised in the gothic style by Sir Walter Scott in the eighteenth century and were favourites with the Victorians. Later, twentieth century poets, including Wilson Gibson and Basil Bunting, penned locally-based tales, often based on the life in the area’s farming communities; but perhaps the most important modern writer associated with the areas is WH Auden, for whom the lead mining landscapes of the North Pennines provided a strong source of reference and inspiration; Philip Larkin is also known to have been a regular visitor to Allendale and Blanchland. Northumbrian folk music and traditions, originally developed within local homes and communities, feature the smallpipes and fiddle, and have survived to this day, perpetuated for example by Kathryn Tickell, who has commented that her work is inspired by the area’s landscapes – particularly their sense of space, wide skies and connection with the past.
4.1.6 Tranquillity and wildness

One of the key qualities of the landscapes of Tynedale District and Northumberland National Park is their high degree of *relative tranquillity* (Figure 10) and *relative wildness*.

In recent research by the Campaign for the Protection of Rural England (2006), relative tranquillity has been mapped using many layers of information, and has been based on what people say adds to and detracts from tranquillity. Factors taken into account have included perceived naturalness, birdsong, wildlife, rivers; and freedom from noise, urban development, light pollution and people. The study indicated that a high proportion of the study area (Figure 9) is in the ‘most tranquil’ category (dark green on the map) and also that, at a national level, the study area includes what is probably the greatest concentration of ‘most tranquil’ landscapes in England.

This is undoubtedly one of the key reasons why the study area is highly valued by many people. It is characterised by open landscapes and wide horizons, free from significant human intrusion. As can be seen from the map, the most tranquil areas generally lie away from major communication routes and built up areas; and the fact that the area is generally very sparsely populated and isolated – in turn a function of its upland character, its border location and its feuding and reiving history – is a key contributor.

Relative wildness, a related concept meaning the presence of a wild or relatively wild character in the landscape due to remoteness, lack of human influence, or evidence of the passing of time and a return to nature, is also a key quality of much of the study area landscape, particularly characterising the open moorland landscapes of the Cheviots, the Border moors and the North Pennine moors, where there are wide, open, empty, windswept spaces with little evidence of modern human activity, and an abundance of semi-natural heath and blanket bog habitats. Such places are increasingly rare in England today.

4.1.7 Outstanding recreational landscapes

Finally, the landscape of the study area is highly valued for recreation. Many of its finest recreational opportunities are closely based upon the dramatic, memorable and outstanding landscape experiences that the area affords. Hadrian’s Wall is undoubtedly the key attraction – reinforced by the fact that there are many different opportunities to access the wall and many different Roman remains and features to visit, allowing visitors to build a picture of Roman lives and landscapes. Increasingly, though, other aspects of the area’s archaeology and historic landscapes are also valued, thanks in part to the National Park Authority’s efforts to promote and interpret less dramatic but equally interesting sites such as the Breamish valley, Simonside and the area’s many castles, peles and bastles; and the North Pennines AONB’s work to conserve and promote understanding of the lead mining heritage. Equally, the habitats, wildlife, cultural interest and wildness of the area contribute to providing a very high quality recreational experience.

The walking opportunities offered by the area are also very special and have been further enhanced with the passing of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. As well as the Hadrian’s Wall and Pennine Way National Trails, which are of national importance, there are very fine walks into the Cheviots from Coquetdale and the Harthope valley, often along ancient drove roads, and along the Fell Sandstone ridges that arc round and to the south of the Cheviots. These walks allow visitors to experience in full the tranquillity and wildness that are special qualities of many parts of the study area. In the North Pennines, the South Tyne Trail offers opportunities to walk and cycle down the valley to Haltwhistle.
**Kielder Forest and Reservoir**, providing easy access to forest walks and a range of other active outdoor sports, complement the area’s wilder walking opportunities; while the Kielder Forest Drive, the highest road in England, provides an almost unique opportunity for the less mobile to reach areas of upland landscape. The Catcleugh and Derwent reservoirs are also very popular recreational attractions. Locally, birdwatching, cycling, riding, fishing and grouse shooting are important activities that also contribute to the local economy.

### 4.2 Overview of Changes and Issues Affecting the Landscape

The landscape assets of the study area are constantly changing in response to natural processes and human activity. Throughout the area’s long history, changes in agriculture, industry, society and the environment have had a profound and lasting influence over the landscape. Change is driven by a diverse range of forces ranging from the policies of government departments and agencies and the European Union (EU) to built and economic development pressures. The implications of change are often difficult to assess and vary according to the specific characteristics, features, qualities and sensitivities of the different landscapes within the area.

Here we briefly examine the principal issues affecting landscape character, and their spatial patterns, before setting out a broad strategy for the area’s landscapes and providing further details of the key issues and guidelines for change in specific land management and development sectors. The analysis is based on research, field survey and on information and views on key landscape issues supplied by those listed in *Annex 1*.

#### 4.2.1 Landscape changes within the Countryside Character Areas

The best and most up-to-date source of information on landscape change at national level is the Countryside Quality Counts project (Haines-Young et al, 2007). An assessment of landscape change in the period 1999-2003, based on national datasets, has recently been completed. The results for the ‘core’ Countryside Character Areas (here termed JCAs) that have substantial areas of land within our study area are given in the table below and provide a factual starting point for the assessment of change. The assessment covered change under themes of woodlands and trees, boundary features, agricultural land cover, semi-natural habitats, historic features, river and coastal features and settlement and development patterns. However for some of the Countryside Character Areas, limited historic data was available so no change assessment was provided on this theme.

**Table 3: Landscape Change by Countryside Character Area, 1999-2003**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cheviots</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Woodland area has increased and there has been some expansion of upland oak and ash. The uptake of Woodland Grant Scheme agreements for maintaining woodland outside the Forestry Commission estate has increased significantly.</td>
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<tr>
<td>There is limited uptake of Countryside Stewardship agreements for boundary features. The estimated boundary length for the JCA is 1227km. Total length of agreements between 1999 and 2003 is equivalent to about 2% of this total. The resource has probably been neglected.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Although the uptake of Countryside Stewardship agreements for hay meadows has been limited there has been extensive uptake for management of rough grazing and heather moorland (area equivalent to ~30% of non urban JCA area).</td>
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<tr>
<td>The area of SSSIs is significant and 40% are in favourable condition or recovering. Countryside Stewardship agreements appear to be enhancing status of upland habitats further.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The biological river water quality in 1995 was predominantly very good, and it has been enhanced. The chemical water quality in 1995 was predominantly very good, and it has been maintained.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The JCA shows low rates of development.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Border Moors and Forests

- Most of the woodlands in this area are within the Forestry Commission estate, and so Woodland Grant Scheme uptake is a limited guide to current management status. There have been some grants to promote expansion of upland oak and ash woodlands, and to restock woodlands existing woodlands. Local evidence suggests that significant opportunities for further expansion of native semi-natural woodlands remain, especially in river valleys. The overall character of the area has probably been maintained.
- There is limited uptake of appropriate Countryside Stewardship agreements for boundary features. The estimated boundary length for the JCA is 5954km. Total length of agreements between 1999 and 2003 is equivalent to about 3% of this total. The resource has probably been neglected.
- Although June Census returns may be distorted by split of holdings and land across Scottish border, grazing pressure appears to have declined since 1999 by about 15%.
- SSSIs cover a significant proportion of the JCA, and about 50% of their area is classified as in favourable condition or recovering. The main reason for loss of status has been overgrazing. Grazing levels have reduced and Countryside Stewardship agreements have been directed at the better management of upland rough grazing and heather moorland. Status of semi-natural habitats in wider countryside is uncertain.
- The biological river water quality in 1995 was predominantly very good, and it has been maintained.
- The chemical water quality in 1995 was predominantly very good, and it has also been maintained. However, limited evidence of Countryside Stewardship agreements for the management of riparian habitats suggests resource remains neglected.
- Development has been limited.

Northumberland Sandstone Hills

- Woodland cover is already significant and management rather than expansion is the priority. A large proportion of the woodland is within the Forestry Commission estate. Since 1999, there is evidence of Woodland Grant Scheme agreements for restocking on the eligible land and some agreements have focused on expansion of mainly upland oak and some ash woodlands. Overall the character appears to have been maintained or strengthening. About 5% of the woodland cover is on an ancient woodland site. The proportion of these sites covered by a Woodland Grant Scheme has changed since 1999 from 6% to 8%.
- Uptake of Countryside Stewardship agreements for wall features has been limited. The estimated boundary length for the JCA is 5817km. Total length of agreements between 1999 and 2003 is equivalent to about 2% of this total. The resource has probably been neglected.
- Uptake of Countryside Stewardship agreements for heather moorland and in-bye pasture has been relatively high (equivalent to ~7% of farmed area).
- Countryside Stewardship agreements have been appropriate in terms of restoring the character of semi-natural habitats, but their extent is limited.
- Although most historic farm buildings at risk are unconverted and are mostly structurally intact, there is only a limited area of the JCA covered by a Countryside Stewardship agreement for management and restoration of historic landscape.
- The biological river water quality in 1995 was predominantly excellent, and it has been maintained. The chemical water quality in 1995 was predominantly very good, and it has also been maintained.
- Development does not appear to have impacted significantly on existing character.

Tyne Gap and Hadrian’s Wall

- The area covered by Woodland Grant Scheme management agreements has increased to 20%, with significant uptake of the livestock exclusion premium and agreements for restocking. About 49% of the woodland cover is on an ancient woodland site. The proportion of these sites covered by a Woodland Grant Scheme agreement has changed since 1999 from 14% to 26%. Thus the character is probably enhancing.
- The estimated boundary length for the JCA is 3345km. Total length of agreements between 1999 and 2003 is equivalent to about 6% of this total. The resource has probably been more or less maintained.
- No evidence of agricultural intensification. The pastoral character of the area has largely been maintained.
- There is limited evidence of enhancement of character of semi-natural habitats, which suggests that their character remains weakened.
- Given the loss of historic farm buildings and the limited extent of agri-environmental agreements covering historic parkland, the character of the resource probably remains weakened.
- There is limited evidence of measures to improve the character of riparian landscapes. The biological river water quality in 1995 was predominantly very good, and it has been enhanced. The chemical water quality in 1995 was predominantly excellent, and it has been maintained. Given the lack of management of riparian features, the character probably remains weakened.
- Development continues to be concentrated in the major settlements along A69 such as Hexham and Prudhoe, so that the overall patterns of settlement appear to be maintained.

North Pennines

- Woodland cover has largely been maintained. However, there is limited uptake of agreements to expand cover or to extend the area of established stock covered by a management agreement. About 19% of the woodland cover is on an ancient woodland site. The proportion of these sites covered by a WGS
agreement has not changed since 1999. Thus opportunities to strengthen character remain.

- There has been significant uptake of Countryside Stewardship agreements for the management of boundary features. The estimated boundary length for the JCA is 6703km. Total length of agreements between 1999 and 2003 is equivalent to about 7% of this total. The resource has probably been maintained.
- The stable mix of agricultural cover types and the significant decline in grazing pressure resulting from a reduction in sheep numbers, suggests that the character of the agricultural landscape has been maintained or is strengthening slowly.
- Although a significant proportion of the SSSIs are in unfavourable condition due to overgrazing and burning, Countryside Stewardship agreements for these habitats cover a significant proportion of the JCA area and so evidence suggests that the character is possibly enhancing slowly. Local evidence suggests that these trends are also supported by other targeted enhancement schemes.
- The biological river water quality in 1995 was predominantly excellent, and it has been maintained. The chemical water quality in 1995 was predominantly excellent, and it has also been maintained.
- Low rates of development. Change is mostly concentrated along major roads.

### 4.2.2 Principal issues affecting the landscape character types

From this and other sources of information on landscape change we have identified some of the principal issues – both existing and potential – that may affect landscape character in each of the individual landscape character types described in Section 3. The list of issues, and their spatial distribution across the study area, is presented in Table 4. This is not an exhaustive list but one that identifies the main areas of interaction between landscape character and land management and development – and hence the main areas in which positive action to conserve, restore or enhance landscape character is required.

### 4.3 Broad Strategy

#### 4.3.1 Aims

Change in the landscape is inevitable and, indeed, necessary as we continue to adapt in response to new technologies and new economic, environmental and cultural forces. In the decades ahead the changing European and global economy will pose new challenges for agriculture and the rural economy. Changing patterns of work, transport, housing and recreation will bring pressures for new development in the countryside. However, many of the changes we have seen over the last fifty years have been at the expense of local character and distinctiveness. We have choices as to how we accommodate change in the future - allowing us to maintain or increase what we value most in the landscape while adapting it to our changing needs. The landscape strategy seeks to inform these choices, identifying priorities for conservation, restoration and enhancement, and establishing principles for land management and development that will be in keeping with landscape character.

We have highlighted above the wide range of issues affecting the varied landscapes of Tynedale District and Northumberland National Park. Clearly many of these issues are already dealt with, at least in part, in other existing plans and strategies, including geodiversity and biodiversity action plans, historic environment management plans, environmental strategies, National Park and AONB management plans and development plans and guidance documents of various kinds. The broad strategy and guidelines set out below are intended to complement these other documents – which are referred to where appropriate in the sections that follow – but to focus strongly on landscape character and distinctiveness. The aims are to:
Table 4: Principal Issues Affecting the Landscape Character Types

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Landscape type / management need</th>
<th>Forestry siting, character, form and condition</th>
<th>Native woodland planting and management</th>
<th>Shrubbelt planting and management</th>
<th>Hedgerow tree management</th>
<th>Upland farming futures</th>
<th>Management of hay meadows and pastures</th>
<th>Field boundary character, condition and patterns</th>
<th>Moorland management</th>
<th>Rivers and upland management</th>
<th>Farm buildings - scale, construction, conversion, equine uses</th>
<th>Management of historic sites and built environment</th>
<th>Housing and economic development pressures (settlement, suburbanisation)</th>
<th>Recreation and tourism pressures, path erosion and off road vehicles</th>
<th>Impacts of traffic, road development, signage, new tracks</th>
<th>Military training (visual and noise intrusion)</th>
<th>Energy and renewable energies (scale, viability, skyline and cumulative effects)</th>
<th>Minerals and waste (visual impacts and restoration)</th>
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<td>1. Upland Burn Valleys</td>
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<td>2. Rounded Hills</td>
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<td>3. Foothills and Fringe Valleys</td>
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<td>5. Rolling Uplands</td>
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<td>6. Moorland Forestry Mosaic</td>
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<td>7. Rolling Upland Valleys</td>
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<td>8. Outcrop Hills and Escarpment</td>
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<td>9. Sandstone Upland Valleys</td>
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<td>10. Upland Fringe Farmland</td>
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<td>Landscape type / management need</td>
<td>Forestry siting, character, form and condition</td>
<td>Native woodland planting and management</td>
<td>Shelterbelt planting and management</td>
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<td>Upland farming futures</td>
<td>Field boundary character, condition and patterns</td>
<td>Moorland management</td>
<td>River and wetland management</td>
<td>Farm buildings - scale, conversion, operation, uses</td>
<td>Management of historic sites and built environment</td>
<td>Management of agri-environmental schemes</td>
<td>Recreation and tourism pressures (traffic, path erosion and off road vehicular use)</td>
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• **Encourage conservation, restoration and enhancement of the landscape character, features and qualities** of local landscapes, by highlighting the factors that needed to be considered in making judgements about landscape issues;

• **Ensure that land management and development decisions are sustainable in the sense that they respect the character of the landscape** as well as contributing to wider environmental objectives;

• **Help promote coordinated action on landscape issues** by informing the work of a wide range of government bodies, agencies, non-governmental organisations, land managers, farmers, foresters, planners and developers.

A particular role of the landscape characterisation, strategy and guidelines will be to inform the work of Tynedale District Council, Northumberland National Park and the North Pennines AONB Partnership, including review of the Northumberland National Park Management Plan and the North Pennines AONB Management Plan, further development and implementation of Local Development Documents for Tynedale District and Northumberland National Park, and preparation of a Landscape Strategy Supplementary Planning Document by the National Park Authority.

### 4.3.2 Strategic priorities

Notwithstanding the long list of issues presented in Table 4, many of the changes currently affecting the landscape of the study area are relatively small-scale, subtle, and piecemeal compared to ongoing changes in many other parts of the country. Nonetheless their cumulative effects – combined with other, underlying, potential effects associated with wider changes in the economy, human lifestyles and our changing climate – may be considerable. The rich and diverse natural and cultural landscape heritage of the area is of national and international importance and is a major contributor to the quality of life of local residents, tourism and the rural economy – hence, at a strategic level, it is very sensitive to even modest changes, which, in time, could undermine the landscape’s key features and qualities.

Grouping the key landscape issues into a number of broad priority areas, we would highlight the need for:

• **Continuing action to address issues of woodland siting, design and management.** Great strides have been made by the Forestry Commission in recent years to address the difficult issues of large-scale forest design and rotational cropping. It will be some years before the full benefits of current work are seen, but a continued emphasis on felling and restocking that is sensitive to landscape character is required. At the same time, it is widely recognised that at least parts of the study area have potential to accommodate significant areas of new native woodland planting, provided that its siting is in keeping with landscape character. Shelterbelt planting – although a widespread and distinctive part of the many of the exposed agricultural landscapes of the study area, including parts of the setting to Hadrian’s Wall – is sometimes inappropriate in shape or species composition, and action is needed on this issue too. Finally, the relatively rare and valuable semi-natural woodlands of the area – often in riparian locations – continue to need management; while many of the hedgerow trees and designed landscape features associated with the area’s numerous eighteenth and nineteenth century estates are in urgent need of renewal.

• **Action to address adverse landscape impacts associated with changing farming practices.** Intensive arable cropping in some parts of the study area – particularly in the east – is associated with loss and degradation of hedgerows and field margins, soil
erosion, loss of riverside vegetation, and threats to historic sites and archaeological landscapes, including those that form part of the wider setting of Hadrian’s Wall. The introduction of new large-scale or unsympathetic farm buildings and other structures such as polytunnels can also bring adverse visual impacts. In upland fringe areas, improvement, reseeding and drainage of in-bye pasture land, although less common than in the past, can damage distinctive habitats such as hay meadows, and can bring marked changes in the colour and texture of the landscape. Longer term, the future of upland and upland fringe farming is difficult to foresee: on the one hand, climate change may encourage the expansion of arable cultivation; on the other, declining levels of agricultural support may adversely affect hill farming and may result in the abandonment of farmland or its conversion to other uses.

- **A renewed emphasis on conserving and restoring the area’s stock of dry stone walls and hedgerows**, an important element of landscape character. Around half of the dry stone walls across the area are derelict or in need of restoration to make them stockproof. A similar or even higher proportion of hedges appear to be in poor repair. In the dales and upland fringes, ancient mixed hedges often require renewal by laying or coppicing, but little action is being taken. In lowland and more intensive agricultural areas many later, enclosure hedgerows are neglected and gappy or have been replaced by either by post and wire fencing or by post and rail fencing, common where there is equestrian use. All these changes have an incremental effect on landscape structure and patterns; the introduction of inappropriate fencing also has an adverse impact on character. Urgent action is needed, particularly in areas north of the Tyne, where boundary neglect, decline and removal is particularly obvious. Key constraints to action are a lack of government incentives for capital works to restore boundary features; and a shortage of traditional walling and hedge-laying skills.

- **Further work on habitat restoration and creation and on conservation and interpretation of the historic environment.** Moorland management – including reductions in stocking levels, measures to encourage heather regeneration, control of bracken encroachment, and blocking of drains and grips to help restore blanket bogs and mires – remains very important for the landscapes of the study area. Although grass moor has long been characteristic of parts of the Cheviots and Border moors, the loss of heather, wetlands and mires has been very significant in recent decades and restoration needs to continue in the areas where it yields the greatest landscape and habitat benefits. Continued action on the conservation and restoration of hay meadows is also a landscape priority. In other parts of the study area, riparian management and the creation of new floodplain meadows and wetlands (particularly in the Tyne valley, where there is a need for increased flood storage) are to be encouraged. The many positive historic environment initiatives of the National Park Authority and AONB Partnership should be continued, not least because they bring benefits to the whole area in terms of landscape understanding and awareness as well as income from tourism. Ideally, positive action on habitats and historic environment be extended to the whole study area, including land in Tynedale that lies outside the National Park and AONB.

- **Management of tourism, recreation, access and associated pressures**, particularly those associated with Hadrian’s Wall. Parts of the study area are already affected by development associated with tourism and recreation, notably signage, car parking, camping, caravan and chalet sites and golf courses. The principal areas affected are those close to Hadrian’s Wall – at times subject to considerable visitor pressures – and Kielder Forest, an area to which much tourism and recreation provision has deliberately been directed. In landscape terms there is a need to ensure that tourism development and activity continue to be concentrated in those key areas (such as National Park gateway settlements) where its effects can be managed, and will not significantly alter
the area's wilder landscapes, whose tranquillity could be undermined. This includes the wider setting of Hadrian's Wall, whose empty border character and outlook need to be conserved. In more remote moorland areas continued action is needed to restore erosion (already significant in the case of the Pennine Way) and to manage off-road vehicle use which may bring noise, erosion and loss of amenity. The impact of new access tracks across moorland, often to provide access to shoots, can be detrimental, and careful siting and design are essential.

- **Strict controls over new development, with particular attention to siting and design issues in the Tyne Gap.** Although much of the study area experiences only limited development pressures at present, the exception is the Tyne Gap, whose landscape, increasingly, is affected by new housing, industrial developments such as ongoing expansion of the Egger chipboard factory at Hexham, and new road infrastructure such as the Haydon Bridge bypass. Other changes particularly prevalent close to the Tyne corridor are farm building conversions, farm diversification and equestrian uses, which may bring subtle, cumulative changes in character and suburbanisation of the landscape, for example due to small-scale road improvements and new boundary treatments. This area lies outside the National Park and AONB, but is part of the setting of both these nationally designated landscapes; it is also part of the wider setting of Hadrian's Wall. Hence there is a particular need for attention to siting and design issues. Development of guidance on these issues, perhaps in the form of a Countryside Design Summary, should be a priority for this area.

- **A precautionary approach in relation to any major development with landscape impacts.** A key current threat to the landscapes of the study area is from the development of major wind farms, which are proposed in several parts of the study area, around the periphery of the National Park and the AONB. While regional planning policy is supportive of wind energy development in these broad areas, there are, nonetheless, valid concerns over the potential cumulative impacts of wind energy development on the wider landscape setting of the national landscape designations and the World Heritage Site. Further work to assess the cumulative impacts of wind farm development in these locations – and their overall wind farm capacity – may be beneficial. Similarly any major new quarrying or opencasting proposals, even if outside the national landscape designations, could bring major impacts, and a precautionary approach is recommended to prevent significant effects on landscape character, appearance or the setting of nationally and internationally designated areas. Any significant further development of the Otterburn Training Area would also be a key concern. All these issues are important because of their potential to impact on one of the study area's key landscape assets – its tranquillity.

An overarching issue, potentially affecting all landscapes, is that of **climate change**, which is likely to bring milder, wetter winters with fewer frosts and little snow; hotter, drier summers; and an increase in extreme events like flooding. The changing climate is likely to affect the flora and fauna of semi-natural habitats that are characteristic of individual landscapes. Agriculture is likely to be affected by increases in the length of the growing season and changing patterns of rainfall. There may be an increase in soil erosion from extremes of winter flooding and summer drought and from changing patterns of cultivation. Where appropriate, the specific implications of climate change for different aspects of land management and development are covered in the next sections.

The next sections examine the effects of change in different land management and development sectors, briefly describing the background and main trends for change, key issues and guidelines for action, and relevant existing initiatives and advice. Inevitably there is some overlap between sectors but we have tried to minimise this or to cross-refer where necessary. Reference details for specific sources of advice can be found in the bibliography.
4.4 Sustainable Land Management Guidelines

4.4.1 Forestry and woodland

Background and trends for change

Woodland cover, overall, within the study area ranges from around 5% in the North Pennines and the Tyne Gap and Hadrian’s Wall to more than 40% in the Border Moors and Forests where Kielder Forest is the dominant landscape element. Over the rest of the study area woodland cover of around 14% is more typical.

The development and expansion of commercial forests in the study area is probably the single most significant change in the landscape over the last fifty years. The total area of Forestry Commission woodland – managed by Forest Enterprise – is around 58,000 ha. Kielder, at 51,000 ha, is the largest single forest and as noted earlier is one of the largest man-made forests in Europe. However there are also other forests of considerable size, notably Kidland, Harbottle, Simonside, Harwood and Four Laws – all in the north-eastern part of the study area – and Slaley, south of Hexham.

These woodlands are all mainly conifers, predominantly Sitka spruce, which is well-suited to local growing conditions, and are relatively even-aged, over half of their area having been planted between 1945 and 1960. With large areas now reaching felling age and becoming vulnerable to wind throw, Forest Enterprise has instigated a major programme of phased felling and restocking. Using Forest Design Plans as a key planning tool, the aim is to fell in small coupes and in the long term create a patchwork of woodlands of varying ages. At replanting, the opportunity is taken to improve the shape and edges of the woodlands, diversify the woodland structure and species composition with an increased broadleaved component (around 8%), create riparian zones and other open habitat areas, and highlight landform variations. Over the next few decades all the forests will be reworked and improved in this way, and the benefits of redesign are already visible, for example along the shores of Kielder Water where the landscape has been greatly diversified and many new views opened up.

The Forestry Authority, also part of the Forestry Commission, oversees the private forestry sector, administering the Woodland Grant Scheme (WGS) and dealing with felling licence applications. Private forestry operations within the study area are generally much smaller in scale, but nonetheless within the part of Tynedale District outside the National Park around 100 ha of new WGS funded woodland is typically planted each year, around 80% of which is broadleaves. At the same time in this area, around 100 ha per annum of existing woodland is felled and replanted. Most of this is small conifer plantations which are mainly replanted with broadleaves (for example the College Valley Estate in the north Cheviots has a long term programme to convert all of its conifer forests to new native woodland). A modest amount of clear-felling is also occurring in the study area, notably at Threestoneburn near Wooler, a former Forest Enterprise holding that has recently been sold, and on some parts of the Ministry of Defence (MoD) estate.

Ancient semi-natural woodland, although a small component of the area’s overall woodland cover (around 700ha in Northumberland National Park, for example) is very highly valued and important in landscape terms. Such woodlands typically include upland oak and upland ash woodlands, often on steep valley sides, and wet woodlands close to river courses. The narrowest gill woodlands tend to comprise smaller species such as rowan, hawthorn and willow. Grazing is the main cause for concern in relation to native woodlands, as stock using woodlands for shelter in the long term prevent regeneration. In the past native woodlands
have also been lost to conifer planting and, in the case of wet woodlands, to changes in drainage regime.

Also of considerable landscape importance are the study area’s shelterbelt woodlands, which date back to the enclosure period, that is from the early eighteenth century onwards. These typically comprise introduced species such as Scots pine, sycamore and beech and are characteristic of many parts of northern England. They are especially characteristic of the enclosure landscapes of the Tyne and Coquet valleys, where they provided farm shelter, but they are also a component of traditional lead mining landscapes such as that of Allendale, where they also met local demands for mine timbering. These woodlands are now frequently over-mature and in need of renewal. Later shelterbelts – often larger, more geometric in character and dominated by Sitka spruce and Lodgepole pine – tend to make a less positive contribution to landscape character.

Key issues and guidelines for action

**Commercial woodlands**
The ongoing, sensitive restructuring and design of existing Forestry Commission woodlands using Forest Design Plans is to be welcomed and should continue. In addition, selective removal of small- to medium-size conifer plantations, mainly in private ownership, would be beneficial, for example where these intrude on sensitive skylines or open floodplain landscapes. New small- to medium-size plantations, with an increased broadleaved component, may however be appropriate in other parts of the landscape (see guidelines for specific landscape character types).

**Semi-natural woodlands**
Lack of management and natural regeneration in many small semi-natural woodlands due to grazing by livestock and deer is a key issue. Fencing around small woodlands, particularly along rivers and burnsides, which are also vulnerable to erosion by stock, can help to protect existing woodland and allow regeneration.

**New native woodlands**
There is also considerable scope for creation of new native woodlands, both through planting and natural regeneration, particularly in sheltered valleys and on lower hill slopes. Ideally new native woodlands should lie close to, or extend, existing areas of ancient and semi-natural woodland and should have a similar site, shape and species composition. Conversion of conifer forests to new native woodland should also be encouraged on former ancient woodland sites and in other areas where the location is appropriate in landscape terms (see guidelines for specific landscape character types).

**Shelterbelt woodlands**
The landscape importance of shelterbelt woodlands, particularly older mixed shelterbelts, should be recognised and their management and renewal should be promoted. These woodlands often provide an effective landscape transition between the wild, open moorland and the domestic, agricultural scenery of the dales; they tend to link closely to small farmsteads, and their siting may also reflect changes in landform and geology.

**Veteran trees**
Trees and woodland may be vulnerable to the effects of climate change, mature trees in particular being vulnerable to drought, as well as to more frequent winter gales and waterlogged ground arising from increasing rainfall levels. Improved management – and where necessary renewal – of veteran trees may make them more robust and more able to cope with extreme events.
Existing initiatives and advice

The Forestry Commission has published *Forest Landscape Design Guidelines*, which are intended to provide applicants for the Woodland Grant Scheme and applicants for felling licences with an outline of the principles and practical applications of forest design. They represent the basic standard which will be expected in any application for grant aid in the generally more upland areas of Britain.

Northumberland National Park has produced a *Habitat Action Plan for Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodland*. This describes the current status of the woodland, factors causing loss or decline, and current action and targets within the National Park.

The North Pennines AONB Partnership has commissioned *Opportunity Mapping for New Wildwoods*. This maps and explores a variety of wildland factors and identifies sites that may be suitable for new native woodlands topographically and in terms of proximity to existing ancient and semi-natural woodland.

The North Pennines AONB has produced guidance for *Shelter Woodland in the North Pennines AONB*. The guidance is, however, suitable for use across the whole study area. It explains the historical background and value of shelter woodland and its contribution to landscape character. It includes very useful landscape design and management principles.

4.4.2 Farming

Background and trends for change

Over most of the study area – with the exception of Kielder Forest – farming is the dominant land use and the principal influence on landscape character. The rich wealth of traditional farmed landscape patterns and features that we see today has developed over the course of centuries and is constantly changing in response to changes in farming practice. Trends in recent years have generally been for the number of farm units to decrease and for larger farms to increase in size and in intensity of production. At the same time the number of people employed in farming in the study area has steadily decreased – for example in the thirty years up to 2003 Northumberland National Park saw a decline of 30% in those directly employed in agriculture; while in the North Pennines AONB (as a whole) the numbers employed in farming fell by 60% in the period 1990 to 2002. In the last few decades farms have tended to carry a higher density of sheep and cattle than in the past, as production became more intensive, although this trend has been reversed since around 2000, partly as a result of foot and mouth disease, with hill sheep numbers in particular seeing a noticeable decline. Inevitably there has also been a decline in hill farming incomes and farm viability.

The principal changes that have affected the farmed landscape are moves from livestock farming to arable and improved grassland, particularly in the eastern parts of the study area, with associated nutrient enrichment, soil erosion and disturbance to archaeological remains by farm machinery. Parkland landscapes, particularly characteristic of the middle reaches of the Tyne valley, have also suffered. In pastoral areas, increased stocking levels, agricultural improvement, drainage and a shift from hay- to silage-making have led to changes in the colour and texture of in-bye land, loss of hay meadows, loss of riverside vegetation and river bank erosion.

Up until 2005, two agri-environment schemes operated in the study area – the Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESA) Scheme in the Pennine Dales ESA in the North
Pennines; and the Countryside Stewardship (CS) Scheme, which potentially offered high levels of conservation support in target areas of high conservation interest across the study area. The uptake of CSS was especially high, with at least a third of holdings or land in both Northumberland National Park and the North Pennines AONB being managed under CS. In addition, both of these authorities have consistently provided grant aid to farmers to help secure specific features of the farmed landscape.

The ESA and CS Schemes have now been replaced by a new Environmental Stewardship Scheme with two main tiers. The Entry Level Stewardship (ELS) Scheme allows farmers to choose from a range of management options suitable to their farm and is open to all farmers. It rewards continuation of good basic environmental management. The Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) Scheme is competitive and replaces the existing ESA and CS Schemes (although existing agreements will run their course). It is intended to fund new conservation measures, including capital works, beyond the scope of ELS. It is too early to tell how effective these schemes will be in conserving, restoring and enhancing key landscape features in the study area, but there are already concerns that levels of funding and uptake for HLS may be lower than those for CS, and hence that the benefits, particularly for designated landscapes, may be less.

In the longer term, with climate change, agriculture is likely to be affected by increases in the length of the growing season and changing patterns of rainfall. This may lead to an increase in arable cultivation in the uplands and upland fringes as they become warmer, and a decrease in cultivation, or increased use of irrigation, in the lowlands as they become drier. It may also lead to the introduction of new crops or crop varieties, changes in sowing and harvesting times, changes in the management of livestock and the arrival of new pests and diseases. There may be further increases in soil erosion from extremes of winter flooding and summer drought and from changing patterns of cultivation.

**Key issues and guidelines for action**

**Arable cropping**
In arable areas is it particularly important to retain and manage hedgerows, hedgerow trees and infield or parkland trees, which are key elements of landscape structure but have been degraded by intensification. Field margins and buffer strips also have a part of play in reinforcing landscape structure. Particular care should be taken to protect the area’s wealth of rig and furrow landscapes and archaeological remains from damage by ploughing, and to prevent soil erosion. Maintain and where possible restore to grassland the area’s abandoned settlement sites and field systems.

**Pastures and hay meadows**
Maintain semi-natural grassland character wherever possible. Avoid ploughing and reseeding of flower-rich pastures and meadows, particularly in upland fringe and riverside locations. Conserve and enhance remaining herb rich hay meadows and restore through low input management. Cut hay meadows at appropriate times, normally July, to allow flowers to seed and to protect nesting birds. Re-create wet grassland by raising water levels or creating shallow pools.

**Grazing regimes**
Reduce grazing levels and inputs on in-bye land, rough grazing allotments and grass moor. Manage riparian margins carefully to prevent poaching. Maintain environmentally sustainable grazing levels and use both cattle and sheep where possible. There is a particular role for native cattle breeds, a traditional feature of these landscapes.

**Diversification**
Encourage farm diversification initiatives provided they do not involve intrusive
development or generate significant traffic that might erode the area’s sense of openness and tranquillity. Diversification proposals that are land based or linked to landscape character – for example rearing of traditional beef breeds or local cheese production – should be particularly encouraged.

**Impacts of economic and climate change**

The principal implication of climate change for farmed landscape character is that strategies and guidelines must remain flexible to allow for changing physical and economic conditions. New options – for example ‘rewilding’ of some areas where hill farming is no longer viable – should be considered, and could bring new landscape benefits.

**Existing initiatives and advice**

Defra has produced a range of advice for farmers in support of the new Environmental Stewardship Schemes. The *Entry Level Stewardship Handbook* describes how to apply for the scheme but also presents full, illustrated advice on all the scheme options and management measures. This is complemented by the Environmental Stewardship Guidance Notes, which outline, for each Countryside Character Area (or JCA) the particular issues of change that apply to that area and the management options that are likely to be most appropriate. The *Higher Level Stewardship Handbook* again describes how to apply for the scheme (entry into ELS is a prerequisite) and sets out all the land management options and how to choose them. It also gives details of the wide range of capital works that may receive funding under HLS. Importantly, this allows for the restoration and re-creation of traditional landscape features. Targeting statements are provided for each JCA to indicate the key management opportunities and targets that are most likely to receive HLS funding.

While there is no specific advice on landscape issues to accompany the schemes, there is advice on historic landscape issues, produced by English Heritage in conjunction with Defra and others and entitled *Farming the Historic Landscape*. This introduction for farm advisers contains valuable information on the different types of historic landscapes, sites and structures that may be encountered, and how they can be protected and managed.

The Northumberland National Park Authority and North Pennines AONB Partnership also provide support to farmers for the conservation and restoration of a range of specific landscape features. In relation to hay meadows, Northumberland National Park’s *Habitat Action Plan for Upland Hay Meadows* contains useful information on factors causing loss or decline, and current action and targets within the National Park.

**4.4.3 Field boundaries**

**Background and trends for change**

As described in *Section 2.3.3* and in the landscape character type descriptions, there is considerable variation in field boundary types across the study area. Dry stone walls are the dominant boundary feature in upland and upland fringe areas and particularly in the North Pennines, where they form strong and distinctive landscape patterns. Hedgerows are somewhat less common but in the lower and eastern parts of the study area – including its arable landscapes – make a vital landscape contribution, linking other areas of semi-natural habitat. Other boundary features such as sod cast dykes are localised but nonetheless valuable and distinctive elements of the landscape.
There are many early walled enclosures in the study area, notably around villages and hamlets in areas such as parts of the Cheviots and North Pennines. Perhaps the most typical, prominent and characteristic type of walled enclosures, however, are the larger and often more regular enclosures dating from the eighteenth century and early nineteenth centuries. Unsurprisingly given their age, many of these are now deteriorating and vulnerable; indeed research in both Northumberland National Park and the North Pennines AONB suggests that approximately half of dry stone walls are derelict and no longer stockproof. In the case of hedgerows, an even higher proportion – up to 90% in some areas – appears to be in poor repair. In the dales and upland fringes, ancient mixed hedges often require renewal by laying or coppicing to make them stockproof once again; while in lowland and arable area, where the need for stockproofing is less and intensification has occurred, hedgerows are often overtrimmed and gappy or have been removed altogether.

Given the widespread lack of specialist walling and hedgelaying skills, the high capital cost of these operations, and the very limited government funding for such works (available only under the CS scheme, which has now closed to new applicants, and HLS), neglect and decline of these important landscape resources, and their widespread replacement by fencing, is understandable but remains a landscape issue of great concern.

**Key issues and guidelines for action**

**Dry stone walls**

Restore drystone walls wherever possible, especially where they are long-established or form key landscape features (for example headwalls separating in-bye and out-bye land). Walls which are upstanding but with gaps should be considered for restoration where they are substantially complete and where the bulk of the fallen stone is present. Less complete walls may have a lower priority. Repairs should be undertaken using traditional techniques and should be in keeping with the structure and form of original or adjoining lengths. Stone should not be robbed from redundant walls that contribute to the general enclosure pattern.

**Hedgerows**

Priority should be given to the maintenance of existing hedges and to the relaying of old hedges or the planting of new ones where they form an important element of local landscape character or provide connections between other existing semi-natural features such as small woodlands. Wherever possible a locally characteristic mix of native trees and shrub species (see guidelines for landscape character types) should be used. Hedgerow management should observe local management traditions, but overtrimming should be avoided. ‘Singling’ to create new hedgerow trees can be beneficial, particularly in areas of more intensive farming and more limited tree cover.

**Fencing**

Where boundary-top wiring is required for dry stone walls to protect them from disturbance by stock, this should be accepted as preferable to increasing the wall’s height. Newly planted or laid hedgerows should be protected by stockproof fencing. New fencing should not replace walls, hedgerows or sections of walls or hedgerows, which can be restored as described above. Post and wire fencing is generally preferable in landscape terms to post and rail fencing, which is uncharacteristic of this area and can be visually intrusive.

**Traditional skills**

There is a strong shortage of the traditional walling and hedge-laying skills required to implement the above guidelines. Training and support for the development of such skills locally would have benefits for the landscape.
Existing initiatives and advice

General advice can again be found in Defra’s *Environmental Stewardship Handbooks*, guidance notes and targeting statements as described under the heading of ‘Farming’ above.

In addition, Northumberland National Park Authority has produced a *Conservation Management Plan for Traditional Boundaries*. This contains useful advice on assessing boundary importance, good management practice, guidelines for restoration and management, and information on further sources of advice. Although developed specifically for the National Park, the principles are relevant to the whole study area.

4.4.4 Moorlands

Background and trends for change

The extensive moorlands within Tynedale District and Northumberland National Park are a key landscape resource. They make a particular contribution to the area’s wild, remote character – a character that is increasingly rare in England today. Both upland heath and blanket bog have been significantly depleted and degraded in recent decades, while grass moor and bracken have expanded and erosion has become an issue in some areas. These changes have tended not only to damage important habitats but also to diminish the area’s wild character – which is particularly associated with the ‘black moor’ of the heaths and bogs – and to put at risk its wealth of archaeological interest. Although these trends have now largely been reversed, continued management and improvement of moorlands must be a central component of any landscape strategy for this area.

Upland heath was in decline over extensive areas between the 1950s and 1980s, principally due to afforestation, increased grazing pressures, inappropriate (large-scale, frequent) burning and the decline of grouse moor management. Since the 1990s, with the introduction of agri-environment measures for moorland management, the status of upland heath has significantly improved. Objectives are to maintain and increase the current extent of heather moorland by managing degraded heathland, ensuring that there are no burn areas on sensitive habitats or steep slopes that would be damaged, and re-creating heathland by re-seeding, controlled grazing and forest removal. In the case of blanket bogs, which were similarly lost and degraded in the post-war period, the main causes were drainage, grazing pressure, inappropriate burning and severe but localised pressures from military training and from recreational use in areas such as the Cheviot summit. The widespread blanket bogs and peatlands of the North Pennine moors were also badly affected by moorland gripping and by the formation of peat hags and other erosion features.

Key support to tackle these issues has come from the CS Scheme and from European-funded projects such as the Hadrian’s Wall Northern Upland Regeneration Project and Border Mires Project; and the new ELS Scheme includes measures to manage and protect moorland and rough grazing; while the HLS scheme supports moorland restoration and re-wetting.

Although these measures have been effective in many areas, continued care is needed to ensure that new problems do not emerge. For example in parts of the Cheviots, more intensive game management over the last ten years has encouraged more intensive burning, increased game stocking levels, and game farming of introduced species such as...
red-legged partridge in wire pens – and if such trends continue, there may be significant effects on the landscape.

In future, the effects of climate change may include the shrinking or drying of wetlands like blanket bog and lowland raised mire, and there may be damage to, or changes in the species composition of heathlands and fragile habitats such as relict artic-alpine heaths. There may also be an increase in the incidence of accidental moor and heathland fires.

**Key issues and guidelines for action**

**Heather moorland**
Overgrazing has resulted in a decline in heather moorland and an extension of areas dominated by rough grassland, affecting the area’s wild, remote character. Moorlands should be managed through reduced grazing levels and carefully controlled burning, so as to maintain and expand heather cover and create mixed aged stands. In the Cheviots, the survival of the distinctive herds of wild goats is also important.

**Blanket bogs and mires**
Drainage of wetlands for agriculture, forestry and military operations has led to a reduction in the visual interest and diversity of vegetation on the peat uplands and flush communities as well as increasing the rate of water run off and peat erosion. Control or reverse drainage operations to encourage a diverse mosaic of moorland and wetland habitats and maintain landscape interest. Continue to restore the area’s important peaty mire and moss habitats, including those within woodlands.

**Grass moorland**
Reduce grazing levels and inputs on rough grazing allotments and grass moor. Encourage the development of more diverse, species-rich grassland habitats and associated landscape interest. Manage riparian margins and wet areas carefully to prevent poaching.

**Historic features on moorland**
Protect the area’s important historic landscape features, many of which are sited on moorland, from damage by burning, drainage and other potentially damaging activities and from scrub and bracken encroachment. Key features requiring such protection include evidence of settlements, tracks, field systems, sheilings, burial areas, Roman forts and camps and lead mining remains.

**Existing initiatives and advice**

Northumberland National Park has produced a *Habitat Action Plan for Upland Heath* and a *Habitat Action Plan for Blanket Bog*. These describe the current status of the habitats, factors causing loss or decline, and current action and targets within the National Park. Further advice can also be found in the *Northumberland Biodiversity Action Plan*.

The North Pennines AONB Partnership has commissioned a *Peatscapes Project* to record peatland resources within the AONB, including peat soils, grips, areas of high erosion potential, potential upland catchment areas for flood amelioration, and areas of known nature conservation, archaeological, pollen record or geomorphological interest.
4.4.5 Rivers and wetlands

Background and trends for change

The study area includes some of the purest rivers and burns in England, with parts of two river systems – the Coquet and the Till – being designated as SSSIs, and most of the area’s rivers including important angling grounds as well as nursery and spawning areas for fish. More importantly for our purposes, the rivers and their associated woodlands and haughs are key landscape features throughout the study area, and are frequently a defining influence on landscape character. Also notable in landscape terms are the area’s wide range of water bodies, including the important and rare group of mesotrophic loughs close to Hadrian’s Wall, as well as Kielder Water and numerous smaller reservoirs, valued for recreation and public access.

Significant changes that have affected the area’s rivers, lakes and wetlands in recent decades include nutrient enrichment from agricultural drainage; degradation of bankside vegetation through overgrazing, increased rates of erosion due to the loss of this vegetation; water abstraction and river regulation; acidification effects from felling where coniferous plantations have been planted right up to the edge of water courses; and engineering and drainage operations. Measures to tackle these various issue are already in place through agri-environment and other schemes such as the Northumbrian Rivers Project which offers grant aid and advice to farmers and land owners regarding fencing of riverbanks, improvements to bankside and spawning habitat, and creation of new wetlands.

As winters get wetter and a greater proportion of precipitation occurs in intense events, river flows could become more variable, leading to further increases in erosion and flooding. The risk of flooding in some areas is already exacerbated by the presence of development on floodplains or the way watercourses are engineered to prevent flooding of agricultural land. There could also be drought events, resulting in greater shrinking or drying of ponds, seasonal watercourses, wet woodlands and wet grasslands in summer.

The Tyne Catchment Flood Management Plan, which covers the whole of the study area, addresses these issues, seeking to increase natural flood storage and water retention. It identifies a need for small-scale wetland and washland creation along the main River Tyne and its tributaries; highlights the possible benefits of changes in land use and management along tributaries to reduce runoff; and points to the potential to increase flood storage by reconnecting the main river channel to the floodplain at former gravel extraction sites. All these measures could bring landscape changes and benefits in future.

Key issues and guidelines for action

Riparian landscapes
Grazing pressure over the years has meant that many river banks and burnsides are grazed out with no prospect of tall herb communities, reedbed or scrub developing. It has also led to bankside erosion and sedimentation. These problems can be countered by fencing out livestock and reducing grazing pressure and by restoring bankside vegetation, particularly riverside woodland. There may be additional benefits from such measures in terms of increasing their resilience in the face of the pressures of climate change through improved management and the restoration of greater connectivity.

Forests and the water’s edge
The restructuring of coniferous forests, introducing broadleaved edges and standoffs from river courses, and opening up new views to reservoirs, is to be welcomed as it will counter the risk of acidification as well as diversifying and improving the recreational potential of
these riparian landscapes.

**Water resources and flood risk**
The impacts of extreme drought and flood events can be reduced by restoring more natural hydrological conditions to river and wetland systems, and particularly by increasing natural flood storage on flood plains and water retention in the extensive blanket bogs of the uplands. This may be achieved, for example, by the creation of new small scale wetlands and washlands which – in the right location (see guidelines for the landscape character types) – have the potential to become interesting new landscape features.

**Existing initiatives and advice**

Northumberland National Park has produced a *Habitat Action Plan for Rivers and Burns*. This describes the current status of the habitats, factors causing loss or decline, and current action and targets within the National Park. Further advice can also be found in the *Northumberland Biodiversity Action Plan*.

The Forestry Commission’s *Forest Landscape Design Guidelines* include advice on the design and re-design of forestry close to streamside and lakesides.

The Environment Agency’s *Tyne Catchment Flood Management Plan* looks at ways of managing future flood risk within the Tyne catchment, taking account of the effects of climate change, urban development and changes in land management. It identifies the broad areas in which wetland and washland creation and other measures may be needed.

### 4.4.6 Historic sites and built environment

**Background and trends for change**

One of the study area’s special qualities is its historic legacy. The landscape we see today is the result of generations of human activity, historic sites often making an important contribution to landscape character and understanding.

The historic sites and built environment of Tynedale District and Northumberland National Park are extremely rich and varied and include earthworks, buildings and structures and buried deposits. Many of these features – notably Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Listed Buildings, Registered Parks and Gardens, Conservation Areas and of course Hadrian’s Wall World Heritage Site – have statutory protection, and further details of them can be found on the County Sites and Monuments Record. Although no systematic record has yet been made of all the more commonplace historic features of the wider landscape, such as its historic hedges, walls, woods and meadows, this is being addressed at least in part through the Historic Landscape Characterisation for Northumberland (see Section 2.3.3).

Some aspects of change in the historic environment are monitored by English Heritage. The Buildings at Risk Register, which covers Grade I and II* buildings and structural scheduled monuments, is published annually and indicates those buildings and structures at risk through neglect and decay. The Monuments at Risk Survey, undertaken in 1995, provides a general picture of the condition of the archaeological resource and a baseline against which to monitor future change. These sources show that in 2006 the percentage of buildings at risk in the North East, at almost 8%, was the highest in England; while in the fifty years to
1995 15% of monuments in the North East were wholly destroyed. Approximately 27% of monuments at that time were in arable cultivation and hence vulnerable to further change.

In addition, the many minor but nonetheless locally important and distinctive historic landscape features remain very vulnerable and continue to be damaged by land use change, development, decline or neglect. This is particularly true for widespread features such as old hedges, walls and sheepfolds; old lanes and tracks; earthworks like lynchets and rig and furrow; relic features like lead mining remains and designed parklands; and traditional buildings and farmsteads.

There are a number of existing initiatives aimed at conserving, restoring or interpreting to the public historic landscapes and landscape features. Perhaps the most prominent is the Management Plan for the Hadrian’s Wall World Heritage Site (WHS). This covers not only the World Heritage Site itself but also its wider landscape setting, which includes the visual envelope of the wall and associated historic landscape features within 1-6 km of the WHS, in recognition of the important physical and cultural connections that the Wall has with this wider area. Within this area, which has been agreed with the local authorities, there is added protection from development (in that the setting of the WHS is a key material consideration in determining planning applications) and a strong focus on landscape enhancement measures. The Management Plan highlights a number existing or potential landscape issues, notably the impact of forestry on the predominantly open character of the setting, for example on the edge of Wark Forest; the continuing detrimental impact of damage to buried remains by ploughing or stock poaching; and the potentially significant impacts of wind farms in the surrounding area.

Elsewhere in the study area both Northumberland National Park Authority and the North Pennines AONB Partnership have been very active in researching, recording and involving local people in historic environment conservation and interpretation. The rich local heritage engenders great pride locally and provides a key tool for educating, informing and inspiring people to take action on landscape issues. Examples of work undertaken by Northumberland National Park Authority include Discovering Our Hillfort Heritage, the Historic Village Atlas and the Drovers Project; while the North Pennines AONB Partnership has undertaken a major project on the North Pennines Lead Industry. Brief details of these and other relevant initiatives are given in the box on existing initiative and advice below and further information can be found on the two bodies’ websites.

The historic landscape resources of areas outside the National Park and AONB tend to receive less attention. For example the many historic estates, parklands and designed landscapes of regional and local importance that occur along the Tyne Gap and in the eastern part of the study area particularly, make a very important landscape contribution but do not appear to be listed or recorded at present.

Key issues and guidelines for action

**The setting of Hadrian’s Wall**
Continued protection of the landscape setting of Hadrian’s Wall is critical. The central portion of the Wall, which falls within the study area, is the best preserved section and is visible over a wide area both north and south of the River Tyne. Priorities are to ensure that tree planting is appropriate to the generally open character of the Wall’s landscape setting; to protect archaeological remains from ploughing, drainage and poaching; and to assess and respond appropriately to the potential cumulative impact of wind farm development in the wider area on the WHS and its setting (see Section 4.4.5).

**Locally distinctive historic landscape features**
There is a strong need across the area to conserve and enhance locally distinctive historic
landscape features. Key tools in this process are agri-environment scheme funding, particularly HLS, which can contribute for example to arable reversion to pasture to protect archaeological remains, hedgerow and wall restoration, and conservation and restoration of historic parkland. The involvement of communities and the maintenance of a healthy and viable farming economy are also essential if these features are to survive. Improved recording of some aspects of the resource – particularly the designed landscape resource of the historic parks and gardens of regional and local importance within Tynedale District – would also be beneficial.

**Historic farmsteads and vernacular building traditions**
These are a very important part of the area’s historic landscape character and have recently been described and documented at regional level by English Heritage (see below). There is a need to find new uses for redundant buildings and enhanced uses for underused ones; and to conserve and restore historic building materials and traditions (see also Section 4.5.1 which gives details of available design guidance).

**Existing initiatives and advice**

**Hadrian’s Wall World Heritage Site Management Plan**
This plan, which is currently under review, sets out in more detail the issues and actions required to manage the WHS. These include actions to conserve the special landscape character of the WHS and its setting, while managing the processes of change. The new Management Plan is being developed by a Management Plan Committee coordinated by Hadrian’s Wall Heritage Ltd, which will also take the lead on implementation of the plan.

**Discovering Our Hillfort Heritage**
Recognition of the large number of hillforts inside the National Park, along with their fantastic preservation, led Northumberland National Park Authority to set up this project, designed to address key issues relating to conservation, research, public access, public interpretation, and education. The project secured public access to 10 hillforts and adjacent archaeologically sensitive areas previously not open to the public.

**Drovers’ Project**
The Drovers Project was a two year project aiming to highlight the local use of native breeds of cattle in the management of conservation sites and also to research and promote the importance of traditional cattle in Northumberland’s cultural history, particularly the historic practice of driving cattle herds long distances on foot to markets – the practice of droving.

**Historic Village Atlas**
The Historic Village Atlas reveals how seventeen historic village settlements in Northumberland National Park have evolved over the centuries. Aims are to further the study, understanding and enjoyment of the historic villages; reinforce and develop the existing sense of place and belonging of individuals within the communities; provide a springboard for future community-led initiatives; and facilitate the management of the cultural heritage by the Northumberland National Park Authority. The reports describe each village's historical development and inform judgements on levels of archaeological sensitivity in different parts of the settlement.

**The North Pennines Lead Industry**
In this policy document, based on earlier research into the North Pennines lead industry by the ASH Consulting Group, describes the key lead industry landscape and settlements and makes proposals for their management and for conservation, access and interpretive work.
Allenheads, which lies within the study area, is identified as one of the three most important sites for such work.

**English Heritage Historic Farmsteads**

English Heritage has recently completed a preliminary character statement for historic farmsteads in the North East Region. The report provided excellent background information on building materials, the historic farmed landscape, farmstead plans and key building types in the region. It is an essential reference for those wishing to understand historic farmstead character.

### 4.4.7 Tourism, recreation and access

#### Background and trends for change

The most visited parts of the study area are undoubtedly the Hadrian’s Wall corridor and Kielder Forest, where many of the visitors are holiday makers. The northern and southern parts of the area receive fewer visitors and most use is by day visitors from urban Northumberland and Tyneside. Overall, though, the area is one of the least visited in England and there are aspirations to increase visitor numbers in both Tynedale District and in Northumberland National Park because tourism is seen as a vital component of a diverse rural economy. The effects of tourism development (as opposed to management) are considered further in Section 4.5.1.

The National Park has had a strong focus on increasing access opportunities, improving the rights of way network, developing car parks where appropriate, providing visitor centres, developing a programme of events and activities and working closely with others including recreation and tourism providers and landowners and farmers in managing recreational use. A key management principle in National Parks is that in case of conflict between conservation and recreation, conservation should take precedence. In the North Pennines AONB, where recreation is not a purpose of designation, there is less emphasis on recreation but a keen interest nonetheless in encouraging understanding and enjoyment of the landscape and its special qualities. Other organisations that are actively involved in the management of tourism, recreation and access are the Forestry Commission, English Heritage, the National Trust, and the Defence Estates in relation to the Otterburn Training Area.

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 with its provision for access to open country, has greatly increased the upland areas available to walkers, particularly north of the Tyne where there is no tradition of common land. The Act places new duties and powers on local authorities in relation to the management of rights of way and access land; and highways authorities are required to prepare Rights of Way Improvement Plans to address issues such as path condition and conflicts between recreational users. As well as significant issues related to footpath condition, particularly along the Pennine Way and Hadrian’s Wall, activities such as the use of recreational motor vehicles (mainly motorbikes, but also 4x4s) on unsealed routes with public access have begun to cause concern in some areas because of the erosion, noise and visual intrusion that they may cause. These issues may become more widespread in future.

#### Key issues and guidelines for action

**Recreational landscape character**

The relationship between landscape character and recreational activity is an important one.
Within the study area the character and special qualities of the landscape itself, notably its wildness and tranquillity, top many visitors' list of reasons for coming. These qualities are very fragile but of central importance to recreational activities such as walking, bird watching and appreciation of the historic landscape features of the wild moorland and border landscapes. Other forms of recreation, however, do not rely on these qualities to the same extent. For example rallies and events of various kinds may be accommodated more easily in less sensitive forested landscapes such as Kielder. Further advice on landscape sensitivity to different forms of recreation may be found in the guidelines for specific landscape character types.

**Erosion**
Erosion can be a serious issue in landscape terms, with habitats such as blanket bog being especially vulnerable to landscape as well as habitat damage as a result of intensive use, sometimes leading to extensive and visible scarring. Areas particularly affected are the Pennine Way near the Cheviot summit and parts of the Hadrian’s Wall Path National Trail where erosion has been difficult to manage because of slopes, pinch points and problems associated with stock management and other activities. Continued input of management expertise and resources is required in these areas to achieve visually sensitive solutions to erosion issues.

**Off-road vehicle use**
Although most recreational motor vehicle use by motorbikes and 4x4s on footpaths and bridleways is now illegal, it continues (legally and illegally) on some unsealed routes, for example on former cross-border drove roads. As well as causing erosion, the noise, visual intrusion and consequent loss of tranquillity brought by motorbikes especially, can adversely affect quiet recreation and conflict with National Park purposes. This problem is relatively new in Northumberland, but other areas such as the Yorkshire Dales have considerable experience in managing such issues through repair, restraint and regulation. These options may need to be considered in future. The assessment of landscape sensitivity to off-road vehicle use can be a useful management tool.

**Access tracks**
New access tracks, often to provide access for grouse shooting, require planning permission and can be detrimental to the landscape. Care needs to be taken on the location, visual impacts, scale and choice of materials for any such tracks.

**Sustainable transport**
Sustainable transport solutions will be increasingly important in future, particularly in the vicinity of Hadrian’s Wall. They offer the opportunity to control and prevent future landscape impacts from congestion and parking associated with increased visitor numbers.

**Otterburn Training Area**
The National Park Authority has worked closely with the Defence Estates over many years to safeguard and improve access to the Otterburn Training Area, which has much to offer in terms of special landscape experiences and opportunities for open-air recreation. These efforts should continue.

Existing initiatives and advice

**The Northumberland National Park Joint Local Access Forum**
The Joint Local Access Forum, established in May 2002 under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 advises Northumberland National Park Authority, Northumberland County Council (the highways authority) and Natural England on how to make the countryside
more accessible and enjoyable for open air recreation in ways that address social, economic and environmental interests. It covers all of Northumberland. Its objectives include encouraging wider public access and recreation, advising on access and recreation policy, advising on measures to minimise the impact of recreational off-road driving and motorcycling on the landscape and enjoyment, and engaging with a wide range of parties on access issues.

4.5 Sustainable Development Guidelines

4.5.1 Housing and economic development

Background and trends for change

Tynedale District and Northumberland National Park are largely rural in character, much of the area being upland countryside that is very sparsely populated with isolated farms and small groups of houses. The A69 trunk road and the Newcastle to Carlisle railway run east-west along the Tyne Gap corridor while the A68 provides the principal north-south road link. Hexham, Prudhoe and Haltwhistle are the three main towns although they are small compared with larger urban areas in the region. The local centres of Bellingham, Corbridge, Haydon Bridge and Allendale also act as key service centres for the rural areas, and there are numerous smaller villages and hamlets. In general terms there is a need to protect and enhance the built environment rather than undertake significant regeneration although there are pockets of land in towns and villages where renewal or restoration could help to enhance the appearance of the area. Population growth has been a long term trend, due to net in-migration, with an increase of 7% in the population of Tynedale District having occurred between 1981 and 2001. However, this growth has now largely ceased and the population has stabilised.

Rates of development within the study area are low by national standards. In the period 1991 to 2006 the total number of dwellings built in Tynedale District was around 2600, that is an average of around 170 per annum. In the period from 2006 the planned rate is an average of 100 dwellings, the aim being to bring the rate of house building down to that needed for a stable population rather than continued growth. In Northumberland National Park just 16 new houses have been built in the last ten years, on infill sites, and there is no specific housing allocation.

In terms of the economy, a high proportion of people – almost half – travel to work outside the District, although this is offset in part by a smaller inflow of workers from surrounding areas. Tourism accounts for almost 16% of employment compared with only 8% for the North East generally, reflecting the importance of tourism (and the natural and cultural heritage on which it largely relies) to the local economy. By contrast only 3% are employed in agriculture, despite the benefits that agriculture brings to the area’s landscape and environmental character. Employment land requirements are established through the County Structure Plan and the emerging Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS), and accordingly there is a proposed allocation of 35 ha in Tynedale District in the period to 2021. However, since 1991 the annual average rate of development of employment land has been just over 1 ha, and allocated and existing employment land is under pressure for other forms of development, particularly in Hexham for retail and housing.

Types and patterns of development can be subdivided into development within and around existing towns and key service centres and development in the wider countryside, mainly comprising farm building conversions, diversification and small-scale tourism developments.
Other forms of development associated with military training, transport, renewable energy and minerals are discussed separately in later sections.

Development around the main towns and local centres is predominantly housing development on infill sites around the settlement edges. Much of this housing has been sensitively sited and fits well with the landscape; however, there are also some notable instances of new housing that adversely affects existing settlement character because its built form and/or materials are not in keeping with local vernacular building traditions. Examples include three-story brick-built town houses near the historic centre of Corbridge; and new, prominently-sited red brick housing estates on sites at Bellingham and Otterburn, where the traditional building material is sandstone. There are also existing landscape impacts associated with industrial and retail development in the Tyne valley, particularly at Prudhoe where there is extensive industrial land in the valley bottom; and at Hexham, where the northern and eastern approaches are strongly influenced visually by the Egger chipboard plant (under redevelopment) and by extensive supermarket and other retail development.

Geographically, the main areas that may be affected by further housing and economic development in coming years are expected to include the eastern outskirts of Hexham south of the A695; the site of the former hospital on the south western edge of Prudhoe; and land on the eastern and western edges of Haltwhistle. In the smaller settlements, further development is likely on the northern edge of Corbridge and on the southern and western edges of Haydon Bridge. Hence the main changes are likely to continue to focus on the Tyne corridor. Key issues, common to many of these sites, include potential impacts on the approaches to the settlements, on the open character of nearby floodplain landscapes, on views into the river valley from higher ground above, and on views from the river and transport corridors towards the valley sides, where any new housing development on the open hill slopes would be very prominent.

In the wider countryside the principal changes occurring are occasional large-scale, unsympathetic farm buildings (particularly in arable areas), farm building conversions, and farm diversification, including farm tourism and equestrian uses. All of these may bring subtle, cumulative changes to landscape character, for example suburbanisation due to small-scale road improvements, lighting, signage and new ranch fencing. Other developments, notably tourism and recreation developments including camping, caravan and chalet parks, car parks and golf courses, can bring larger scale landscape impacts if not very carefully sited and designed. Current planning policy generally directs such developments – except where very small in scale – to Kielder, which is identified as a tourism priority area and is also the preferred area for outdoor recreational pursuits that are not considered appropriate within the National Park.

There are special landscape issues associated with any further development of visitor facilities within the Hadrian’s Wall WHS. It is likely in coming years that there will be significant development of visitor facilities along the Wall, in keeping with the management plan vision to create a string of improved major attractions across the WHS, providing different and complementary visitor experiences. At the same time, however, there is a risk that the visitor experience – especially the landscape experience – may be diminished through overcrowding, visitor pressures and impacts on the landscape setting. An understanding of the specific sensitivities of the surrounding landscape to change, and siting and design of the very highest standard, will be essential.

Key issues and guidelines for action

**Siting of new development**

Housing and economic development can bring changes – positive and negative – to the
landscape in a number of ways. The character of the wider landscape may be affected by visual intrusion where a prominent site with little topographic or vegetational screening is chosen, or where a development is sited or laid out in a way that conflicts with landform or with existing landscape patterns and characteristics. Careful siting of new development is the single most effective way of reducing landscape and visual impacts. The guidelines for individual landscape character types provide baseline information on landscape character and sensitivity that can be used to inform siting of new development within the landscapes of the study area.

Landscape settings to settlements
New development in and around existing settlements may affect their distinctive landscape settings, including key approaches to the settlement, inward and outward views, woodland, trees, river corridors and open spaces. It may, in some cases unnecessarily, erode rural character and tranquillity or result in the removal of key, mature landscape features like hedgerows and hedgerow trees. The landscape settings to settlements should be understood and respected. *Annex 2* presents brief landscape guidelines for each of the seven main settlements within Tynedale District, highlighting the key landscape elements, opportunities and constraints associated with each settlement.

Design issues
New built development can result in weakening of local distinctiveness by the introduction of alien building styles or materials and damage to the physical form and open spaces within settlements. These issues are addressed to some degree in existing design guidance for Northumberland National Park and the North Pennine AONB (see below). However, there would be considerable merit in the further development of tools such as Countryside Design Summaries and Town Village and Design Statements (as recommended in the RSS). The benefit of such tools is that they link character with design, promote high quality development that respects character, and offer positive opportunities for community engagement in design issues. The parts of Tynedale District experiencing the greatest pressures for housing and economic development lie in the Tyne corridor, outside the National Park and AONB and hence not covered by any existing design guidance. The preparation of a Countryside Design Summary for this area should be a priority.

Existing housing, employment, retail and tourism sites
Some existing housing, employment, retail and tourism sites such as caravan parks have a high standard of external screening and landscaping. Others – particularly those that have developed in a piecemeal fashion – have a poor appearance in views from surrounding areas and lack an integrated approach to the design and management of elements like structure planting. Existing sites can often be made more attractive by further on- and off-site landscape works and by appropriate landscape management.

Existing initiatives and advice
Northumberland National Park Authority has prepared and adopted a *Building Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document* that is part of its suite of Local Development Framework documents. This provides a wealth of information on the character of buildings in the National Park, as well as advice on maintenance, alteration and conversion. It also gives advice on new build, including very helpful pointers on the form, siting and scale of farm buildings. Landscaping and external details such as how to deal with issues of land form, site boundaries, surfaces and planting are covered too, towards the end of the document – although arguably these issues need to be addressed at the very outset of any building project. The North Pennines AONB Partnership is shortly to launch a similar
building design guide.

Northumberland National Park Authority has prepared a draft *Historic Village Atlas Supplementary Planning Document* for consultation. When finalised, this will not only facilitate cultural heritage management but also help in assessing the impact of new development on the cultural heritage – including the landscape settings – of National Park villages.

### 4.5.2 Military training

**Background and trends for change**

The Ministry of Defence Otterburn Training Area covers 23,000 ha of upland Northumberland, almost all within Northumberland National Park. It comprises 23% of the land area of the National Park and some 30,000 soldiers train there each year undertaking infantry manoeuvres, artillery firing and air force ground-to-air attack training.

Otterburn is a working estate, managed by the Defence Estates, with 31 tenanted farms mainly engaged in extensive livestock farming. Much of the land is managed through agri-environment schemes. A high priority has been given to the conservation and management of the natural and historic features of the Training Area and as such there are benefits to conservation in that the land is not farmed or managed as intensively as it would otherwise be. There are approximately 1900 ha of woodland on the estate; most of the remainder is wild moorland and meadows. The area supports ancient woodland and extensive heather moorland habitats, including many areas designated as SSSIs; and the estate is also rich in archaeological remains ranging from prehistoric settlements to Roman roads and marching camps and defensive bastles. The Training Area has outstanding views over the Border hills and the landscape provides dramatic contrasts. There are 102 miles of public road, bridleway and footpath, of which 44 miles are open to the public at all times. The aim is to provide for safe public enjoyment of the estate whenever this is compatible with operational and military training uses, public safety, security, conservation and the interests of tenants.

The Defence Estates has prepared an Integrated Land Management Plan (ILMP) for the Otterburn Training Area (see box on existing initiatives and advice, below) and this addresses a wide range of landscape issues. It makes commitments to manage the moorland, enclosed farmland, woodland and watercourses to high environmental standards taking account of landscape considerations. In relation to military training there are commitments to minimise the impact of military infrastructure and training activities on landscape values.

Aside from roads, vehicle parking and other operational areas, the built estate of the Training Area comprises Otterburn Camp, former farmhouses and agricultural buildings used as troop shelters, an ammunition compound, a maintenance facility and agricultural and residential properties. To meet the needs of the military, there has had to be development on the ranges to support operational training requirements, and in the past this has included improvements to Otterburn Camp; ammunition compound development, construction of moving target railways, new roads, and infrastructure to enable training of new weapons systems, most recently the Artillery System 90 (AS90) and Multi-Launch Rocket System (MLRS).

Developments to improve training facilities at Otterburn are submitted to the National Park Authority as Notices of Proposed Development, which are non-statutory planning
applications. It has been agreed between the Ministry of Defence and the National Park Authority that decision-making on such developments would be improved if a five year plan of development aspirations were prepared and this is now in place and included in the ILMP. It currently includes proposals for ranges, troop shelters, refuges, latrines, new tracks, control points and road resurfacing.

Such developments can bring cumulative impacts to the landscape of the National Park, affecting both its landscape character and its quality or condition. In addition, of course, training activity significantly affects the tranquility of the landscape and constrains public access and enjoyment of at least parts of the National Park. There is general agreement that there will continue to be a need for large expanses of land to be used for military training grounds and that the Otterburn Training Area is suited to this purpose; but at the same time it is recognised that there can be conflict between landscape conservation, access and enjoyment and the accommodation of further major military training activities.

Hence the Northumberland National Park Local Development Framework Core Strategy indicates that proposals for significant extension of the boundary of the Training Area and the development of major new facilities such as the construction or widening of substantial lengths of road will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances and must be in the public interest. Assessment of impacts is to include the impacts of any proposals on the special qualities and recreational opportunities of the National Park. The development of any additional camp accommodation and facilities is to be focused within or immediately adjacent to the existing camp area.

Key land management issues and guidelines for the Otterburn Training Area have been covered in general terms in the appropriate subsections of Section 4.4, but additional issues and guidelines relating to the impact of development and built structures within the landscape are set out below. Further advice can also be found in the guidelines for the relevant landscape character types.

Key issues and guidelines for action

**Infrastructure development principles**

The Otterburn ILMP (see below) lists a hierarchy of principles for infrastructure development in the landscape. These are that development should be kept to the minimum to meet the training requirement; there should be no net increase in the footprint of development; development should be accommodated within the built area of the Camp where possible; development in the sensitive and remote moorland landscapes such as the northern ranges should be avoided; infrastructure should be located where possible in woodland areas, which can better absorb development; careful attention should be given to design of structures; reversibility should be incorporated into infrastructure design; and long term strategic design plans should be prepared to address camp setting, layout and appearance. The continued and rigorous application of these principles is important.

**Road construction and widening**

This remains one of the key issues within the Training Area. There has been significant widening and surfacing of roads within the Training Area in the past and further road development or improvement has potential to adversely affect the wild and remote character of the Training Area. It should be avoided except in exceptional circumstances. The width of all roads and tracks should be minimised and except on public roads, surfacing with gravel is preferable to metalling.

**Obsolete and intrusive structures**

As can be seen from the description above, training activity involves the placement of a
very wide range of structures within the landscape and it is critical that these are kept in place only while they are in active use. In addition, in some areas there are existing buildings or structures that are particularly intrusive and out of keeping with the landscape (for example buildings in the Coquet valley) and efforts should be made to relocate and/or redesign these structures to alleviate their impacts.

**Design, siting and landscaping of Otterburn Camp**

Although not widely visible from many directions, there are direct views into the built up area of Otterburn Camp from parts of the A68 to the west. It is important that any upgrading and redevelopment (for example of residential accommodation) should be carefully sited within the landscape. Opportunities to mitigate existing landscape and visual impacts and undertake further planting to better integrate the Camp with its landscape setting should also be sought.

**Existing initiatives and advice**

Northumberland National Park Authority has prepared a draft *Otterburn Camp Supplementary Planning Document*. This provides a long term planning and development framework for Otterburn Camp which supplements policies within the adopted Structure Plan and Local Plan and emerging Local Development Framework. It sets out a future land use strategy and development principles for the Camp.

The Defence Estates has produced an *Integrated Land Management Plan (ILMP)* for the Otterburn Training Area, with close involvement from a wide range of stakeholders. To inform the preparation of the landscape component of the ILMP, they commissioned a detailed landscape character assessment of the Training Area. The landscape chapter of the ILMP sets out principles for infrastructure development (see above), and objectives and management prescriptions for a range of landscape elements. In relation to military training infrastructure, prescriptions include preparation of a five year plan; establishment of training thresholds for different parts of the landscape; appropriate surface dressing of roads; removal of redundant structures and facilities; concentration of new and replacement facilities at Otterburn Camp; and noise monitoring to minimise detrimental effects on tranquillity.

### 4.5.3 Transport

**Background and trends for change**

An important landscape asset of the study area is the generally quiet character of its rural roads and the relative lack of major road infrastructure, which adversely affects tranquillity, bringing visual and noise intrusion as well as light pollution. With the exception of the A69, the area has seen relatively little major road building or upgrading.

Such upgrading, when it occurs, can bring benefits to local communities, for instance where settlements are bypassed, but can also have significant landscape and visual impacts. For example, the A69 Haydon Bridge Bypass, currently under construction, will relieve the town centre of traffic and improve the setting of the Conservation Area. However, the new road, passing to the south of the town, will introduce to the landscape a new viaduct spanning both the railway and the river; and will be widely visible as it crosses farmland on embankment. On this southern edge the settlement will effectively be severed from its landscape setting and there may be associated pressures for development on the land within the bypass.
In other parts of the study area the chief landscape and visual issues are those associated with minor road improvements and management of boundaries and verges. Minor road works can erode the distinctive character and rural quality of minor roads and impair the use and enjoyment of those roads by walkers, cyclists and horse riders. The character of the landscape may be affected by new landforms, bridges, surfacing, kerbs, lighting and signage. Landscape features like natural landforms, hedgerows and mature trees may be damaged or lost and roadside vegetation can be affected by pollution, salt spray, mud and physical damage. Roadside walls, gates and other structures may be altered or inappropriately upgraded.

**Key issues and guidelines for action**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>New transport infrastructure</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Great care and attention to avoiding and minimising the adverse landscape and visual impacts of new road schemes through careful route selection and engineering design, retention of mature landscape features, on- and off-site planting and lighting design to limit light pollution and retain dark skies, is of the utmost importance. The guidelines for specific landscape character types highlight the key features and qualities of different landscapes that should be respected in the planning and design of new transport infrastructure.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Minor road works</th>
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<tr>
<td>The character of rural roads and lanes, from sunken holloways and narrow winding lanes in the lowlands to straight enclosure roads in the upland fringes, is often an important component of local distinctiveness. Minor engineering improvements like junction improvements, traffic calming, road widening, easing of bends, kerbing, lighting and signage can have an urbanising effect. Any improvements should respect existing landscape character and features and should avoid introducing new features such as boundary treatments that are alien to the area’s character.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Road verges</th>
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<tr>
<td>Road verges can be an attractive part of the rural landscape and an important wildlife habitat. They often contain remnants of species-rich grasslands and wild flowers that are declining in the wider countryside; and may also have important historic associations, for example where roads represent former drove roads. Roadside hedges, trees, woodlands and scrub may make an important contribution to landscape character and scenic quality but are very vulnerable to physical damage by vehicles and inappropriate maintenance.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Traffic management</th>
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<tr>
<td>Road networks can be designated as quiet lanes or as access only routes where motorised traffic is discouraged. Weight restrictions can reduce through traffic, and the removal of road markings can reduce traffic speed. Under the Transport Act 2000 local authorities were given powers to designate Quiet Lanes and their development is being promoted through the Quiet Lanes initiative (see below). The provision and appropriate management of cycleways, bridleways and sustainable transport options also helps reduce motorised traffic and its impacts on the landscape.</td>
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**Existing initiatives and advice**

A new publication from the Highways Agency and English Heritage, the *Effect of Road Schemes on Historic Landscape Character*, provides advice on assessing the impact of roads on historic landscapes, addressing issues of impact on character and exploring the potential to minimise land take, visual intrusion, noise, vibration and other impacts on the
historic environment through good design.

The North Pennines AONB Partnership has provided excellent Guidance on the Management and Maintenance of Roads that could usefully be applied throughout the study area. With a strong emphasis on conservation and enhancement of landscape character and distinctiveness, the guidance covers boundaries, verges, hedges, trees and woodlands, signage, other roadside structures, utilities, bridges, drainage, lighting, laybys, footways and cycleways, surfaces and markings, kerbing, visibility splays and traffic calming.

The former Countryside Agency, now Natural England, has promoted Greenways and Quiet Lanes. A greenway is a network of largely off-highway routes connecting people to facilities and open spaces in and around towns, cities; while quiet lanes are minor rural roads. Both are appropriate for shared use by walkers, cyclists, horse riders and for commuting, play or leisure, as well as by motorists in the case of quiet lanes. A greenways handbook and advice on quiet lanes aim to help practitioners to plan, design and create such routes.

4.5.4 Energy and telecommunications

Background and trends for change

The development of renewable energy resources is central to government policy on issues of climate change. It requires a radical change in the way energy is generated, and will bring new forms of development and new crops to the rural landscape. Renewable energy development can affect the landscape in a number of ways. Large scale wind farms with an essentially industrial character may be visually intrusive and may affect wildness and tranquility; they may dominate the local landscape and hence detract from its character. Associated infrastructure, including monitoring masts, access tracks, substations and grid connections may damage the landscape fabric and may also be visually intrusive, adding to the ‘visual clutter’ created on many hill tops in recent years by the growth in telecommunications development. New energy crops such as short rotation coppice may introduce novel features, textures or colours to farmland landscapes. At a smaller scale, solar panels, micro-hydro, and domestic wind turbines, typically 9-12 metres in height, may become much more common and may affect both the built environment but also the landscapes of isolated rural areas.

Commercial scale wind energy is likely to bring the greatest changes for the landscape. Due to the upland nature of the study area, its wind resource is regionally important and offers considerable potential for energy generation. At the same time this brings concern as to the landscape and visual impacts of wind farms – indeed wind farms were the single key landscape concern voiced by those listed in Annex 1.

There has been no significant commercial scale wind energy development within the study area as yet, although there is one small existing site of three turbines at Kirkheaton just to the east of the Tynedale District boundary. However, planning for wind energy at regional level is well advanced and the RSS, as well as the emerging Local Development Framework for Tynedale District, have provided a positive policy context for wind energy development in parts of the study area, including Knowesgate in the east, Kiln Pit Hill in the south-east, and Kielder, to the west of the National Park boundary.
A considerable number of applications for commercial wind farms are now in the pipeline; several of these are substantial in size. For example in the Knowesgate area, just south of the Simonside Hills, there are currently three live applications (plus others at scoping stage), each for 18-22 turbines of 110-125 metres in height. At Kiln Pit Hill, around 6 km south of Stocksfield, there is a single application for 6 turbines of 120 metres in height. At Kielder, if potential conflicts with Ministry of Defence training and low flying requirements can be resolved, major wind farm development is likely, probably in the eastern part of the Forest, and this might require a new, lengthy grid connection, possibly running through the National Park. In addition to these three key development areas, there are another two proposals at scoping stage at Plenmeller and Gapshield just south and west of Haltwhistle, and a further seven or eight within around 10 km of the study area on the Northumberland plain to the east. North of the border at least two wind farm proposals in the Scottish Cheviots also have the potential to affect the landscapes of the study area, and cross-border consultation arrangements for wind energy development would be beneficial.

Despite the generally positive policy context and the considerable work that has been undertaken to identify areas of least constraint to wind farm development (see bibliography), significant issues and concerns remain. There are difficult judgements to be made on which wind farms will generate least impact in landscape and visual terms; how the proposed wind farms will relate to the landscape and to each another visually; and what the overall capacity of the landscape for wind energy is. There is also the wider question of their impacts on the character and setting of the National Park, AONB and World Heritage Site. Although this is a material consideration in determining planning applications (PPS22 para 14) and is included in the tests of acceptability that must be met in the emerging RSS (Policy 41) and Tynedale District Local Development Framework (Core Strategy Policy EN2) there is little guidance available on exactly how these impacts can be assessed.

This landscape character assessment should go part way towards meeting these needs. The guidelines for the landscape character types (Section 3) have identified some of the key characteristics and sensitivities of individual landscapes that will influence their capacity to accommodate wind farms, and hence should assist planning officers in arriving at judgements on landscape impact. More general advice on assessing landscape sensitivity to wind farm development is presented in the ‘key issues and guidelines’ box below and in Annex 3. In addition, we give details in the box on ‘existing initiatives and advice’ of useful good practice guides on assessing the landscape, visual and cumulative impacts of wind energy development. These are drawn from Scotland, where there is longer experience of assessing the impacts of major wind farm development.

The most difficult – and at the same time possibly the most important – issue for the study area’s landscapes is that of cumulative impact on the settings of the World Heritage Site, the National Park and the AONB. This is a topic on which English Heritage, the National Park Authority, Tynedale District and the North Pennines AONB Partnership may wish to consider further work, with a view to defining thresholds (in terms of number, size and distance) beyond which impacts on the character and setting of these designated landscapes may become unacceptable. Cross-border impacts of wind energy development on the Cheviots should also be taken into account in any such work.

**Key issues and guidelines for action**

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<tr>
<th><strong>Commercial scale wind energy</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>It is important to ensure that wind energy development does not detract from the special qualities of designated landscapes, particularly those of the Hadrian’s Wall World Heritage Site, Northumberland National Park and the North Pennines AONB. The scale and form of wind farms should be compatible with the character of the local landscape and that of the</td>
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wider area in which they are visible, and steps should be taken to ensure that the cumulative impact of wind farms in any one locality is not excessive. In assessing whether or not a landscape can accommodate wind farm development, its character, key features and qualities will all be of relevance.

The sensitivity of a particular landscape to wind energy development can be judged using the following criteria: scale, enclosure, landform, complexity of landcover and landscape features, man-made influence, skylines and settings, visibility and views, landscape condition (quality), scenic quality, wilderness and tranquillity, natural and cultural heritage features, cultural associations and amenity and recreation. Further details of these sensitivity criteria – which are based on current good practice in assessment of landscape sensitivity to wind energy – and their interpretation can be found in Annex 3.

Other renewable energy technologies
Other renewable energy technologies – principally biomass, solar, hydro-electric and domestic scale wind energy – are likely to be smaller-scale and to have more limited impacts. They may be acceptable throughout the area provided they are planned with care, avoid sensitive locations and do not detract from the surrounding landscape or cause visual intrusion. For example, sensitive site selection and design in the planting of energy crops is important; while domestic wind energy installations, like commercial ones, should be in scale with the landscape and should avoid sensitive skylines and important views.

Overhead transmission lines and communications masts
Overhead power lines and other wires can have an intrusive impact on the landscape. Wherever possible, providers should be encouraged to place transmission lines underground, particularly within nationally designated landscapes; and the presence of existing lines should not be seen as a precedent that reduces landscape sensitivity to overhead transmission lines. Any further proliferation of telecommunications masts should be avoided, and companies should be encouraged to share masts to help minimise new mast construction. Sensitive skylines should be avoided in all cases.

Existing initiatives and advice

The document Planning for Renewable Energy: A Companion Guide to PPS22 sets out the government’s advice on how to implement policies for renewable energy. It includes general advice on how landscape issues should be dealt with and explains the particular role of landscape character assessment in informing judgements on the acceptability of wind energy development.

The North East Regional Assembly has undertaken or commissioned considerable work on renewable energy in the landscape. Its North East Renewable Energy Strategy, published in 2005, includes broad assessments of the sensitivity to wind energy development of different landscapes right across the North East Region and informed the identification of areas of least constraint to wind energy development in the emerging RSS. More recent Windfarm Development and Landscape Capacity Studies for Knowesgate and Harwood Forest and for Kiln Pit Hill are much more detailed. They explore and examine the impacts of different wind farm development scenarios within the areas of least constraint.

Scottish Natural Heritage has published Guidelines on the Environmental Impacts of Windfarms and Small Scale Hydroelectric Schemes. This document contains much useful advice on the landscape and visual impacts associated with wind farm and hydro development, including a full examination of issues of site selection, layout and design and
checklists of landscape and visual information that should be provided as part of any assessment.

**Guidance on the Cumulative Effect of Windfarms**, also from Scottish Natural Heritage, considers the types of cumulative effects that may occur, and provides advice on when and how they should be considered in development control and strategic planning. There is a strong focus on cumulative impacts on landscape and visual amenity, and discussion of the circumstances in which cumulative impacts should be judged to be unacceptable. Technical advice on cumulative landscape and visual impact assessment is also provided.

### 4.5.5 Minerals and waste

**Background and trends for change**

The extraction of minerals, for example whinstones from the Whin Sill outcrops and lead in the former lead mining areas of the North Pennines, is part of the cultural landscape of the area, and has had a considerable impact on the evolution of landscape character.

However, mineral extraction can bring changes to the landscape in a number of ways. Natural topography may be damaged temporarily or permanently; mature landscape features like hedgerows and hedgerow trees may be lost; the rural character of the landscape may be eroded by the presence of industrial features such as extraction faces, stockpiles, screening mounds, and processing plant; and the tranquillity of the surrounding countryside may be weakened by noise, light pollution and heavy traffic bringing dust and damage to local lanes and roads. Local distinctiveness may be weakened by insensitive restoration, but conversely there may also be opportunities to create new positive landscape features such as ponds, wetlands and native woodlands – provided that these are appropriate to local landscape character.

Within Northumberland National Park, the principal existing aggregate extraction areas are the hard rock quarry at Harden and the sand and gravel quarry at Roddam, on the southern and eastern edges of the Cheviots respectively. In addition, sandstone for building stone is quarried at Cop Crag and Saffron, close to the edge of Kielder Forest. All these sites have longstanding consents. In the past there has also been coal mining in the southern part of the National Park, with drift mining in Wark Forest and opencast near Bellingham lasting up until the late 1980s. Peat extraction also took place at Bell Flow Crag in the Border mires north of Haltwhistle until 1991; restoration of this site remains an issue. Outside the National Park there is continued quarrying of whinstone and limestone, for example at Barrasford, Swinburne and Divet Hill, all close to the A68 north of Hexham; and sand and gravel extraction takes place in parts of the Tyne and Coquet valleys.

Mineral extraction, quarrying and waste disposal are controlled by Northumberland County Council and Northumberland National Park and there is a strong presumption against any new quarrying or other mineral extraction on a commercial scale either in the National Park or in the AONB, any such proposals being treated as major development. In the short term the Northumberland Minerals and Waste Development Framework suggests that there are likely to be few significant new minerals developments, although some extension of existing operations at Divethill Quarry is likely. Any expansion of waste management facilities is also expected to be small-scale.

In the longer term, further expansion of sand and gravel extraction is possible in the Tyne valley where there are significant sand and gravel resources, sometimes in sensitive, open,
valley bottom locations. Locally there are also concerns that opencast coal extraction could occur in the areas around Prudhoe, Stocksfield and Riding Mill, where there are substantial reserves. These areas currently lie within an opencast coal constraint area, but if that constraint were to be removed, development of the resource could have major landscape and visual impacts on the open valley sides which – because they overlook and are visible from the Tyne valley and Hadrian’s Wall – are of great landscape and visual sensitivity.

**Key issues and guidelines for action**

**Guiding new development**
The impacts of mineral working on the landscape depend heavily on how sites are selected and designed, and on the character and quality of their restoration. This landscape character assessment provides baseline information on landscape character, key features and qualities, and this can be used to inform site selection and design. Any new mineral development should be in keeping with landscape character and following restoration should contribute positively to the landscape strategy for that area.

**Existing mineral sites**
Mineral sites can be long-lived and many existing permissions were granted many years ago when standards were lower; the operation and restoration of these early sites is now subject to review but there are often residual impacts – particularly visual impacts – that are difficult to control or mitigate. In some areas, especially on the Whin Sill, the cumulative impact of existing sites is significant, and action plans for areas such as these which provide for off-site structure and hedgerow planting could address some of these issues.

**Restoration**
The restoration of mineral workings can offer opportunities for enhancing landscapes and habitats. The creative restoration of mineral workings to restore or enhance landscape character should be encouraged. Particular care should be taken to restore landscapes that are in keeping with their setting. For example, restoration to farmland should include the restoration of landform, field patterns and hedgerows that blend with surrounding countryside; while new wetlands should be located in those parts of the landscape where they might naturally occur.

**Mining and quarrying heritage**
At the same time it should be recognised that some features such as lead mining remains or old quarries may have become important components of landscape character or may offer opportunities to understand and enjoy aspects of the area’s rich geodiversity. The North Pennines AONB includes a particular wealth of lead mining features; while former quarries across the rest of Tynedale District and Northumberland National Park provide insights into the area’s geology, history and building materials.

**Existing initiatives and advice**

**Minerals Local Plans** and emerging the emerging Local Development Framework for Northumberland National Park and **Minerals and Waste Development Framework for Northumberland** describe the area’s mineral resources and give details of existing areas of extraction. In Northumberland National Park no specific provision is made for further mineral extraction within the Park. Elsewhere preferred areas for future extraction are indicated; these have been identified through assessment against a range of criteria including landscape (a process that could in future be informed by the landscape character assessment).
In relation to mining and quarrying heritage, the *Geodiversity Audit and Action Plans* for Northumberland National Park and the North Pennines AONB are of interest, as they include details of mining and quarrying features that are of geodiversity interest or that offer potential for tourism or natural heritage interpretation.
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Landscape Character Assessment


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### Annex 1: Organisations That Provided Information

The study team would like to express its sincere thanks to the following organisations and individuals that provided us with a wealth of background information for use in the landscape character assessment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Name(s)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Campaign to Protect Rural England</td>
<td>Les Ashworth</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tynedale Branch</td>
<td>Rosemary Rayfield</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bridget Smith</td>
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<tr>
<td>Council for National Parks</td>
<td>Ruth Chambers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Defence Estates</td>
<td>Mike Bell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Durham County Council</td>
<td>Ged Lawson</td>
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<tr>
<td>English Heritage</td>
<td>Mike Collins</td>
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<td>Alan Hunter</td>
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<td>Martin Roberts</td>
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<td>Kate Wilson</td>
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<td>Environment Agency</td>
<td>Mary Taylor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Forestry Commission</td>
<td>Brendan Callaghan</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Richard Pow</td>
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<td>Forest Enterprise</td>
<td>Graham Gill</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Neville Geddes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hadrian’s Wall Heritage Limited</td>
<td>Paul Austen</td>
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<tr>
<td>National Trust</td>
<td>Jenny Ludman</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Denis Fleming</td>
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<td>Natural England</td>
<td>Bob Chambers</td>
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<td>Claire Furness</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Tom Gledhill</td>
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<tr>
<td>North Pennines AONB Partnership</td>
<td>Chris Woodley-Stewart</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Peter Samson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northumberland County Council</td>
<td>Liz Williams</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition, the team would like to thank officers within the two client authorities, Tynedale District Council and Northumberland National Park Authority, for their invaluable support and input to the study.
Annex 2: Landscape Guidelines for Key Settlements

Hexham

Hexham is situated on the southern banks of the River Tyne between the upland areas of Acomb Fell and Hadrian’s Wall WHS to the north and Benson’s Fell to the south with the North Pennines AONB located on higher land above the town to the south west. Hexham is a major market town for the surrounding rural areas of the Tyne Gap. It comprises a strong and intact historic core with notable listed buildings and scheduled monuments and a wider expanse of more recent housing development which extends onto the upper valley sides to the south. To the north of the town is the river itself and the Tyne Green Country Park; while on the flood plain to the north-east is the Egger chipboard plant. In this area of the Tyne Gap the valley sides are pronounced and rise relatively steeply. To the north the Hermitage Estate and associated vegetation gives a well wooded setting; and to the south the plantations of High Wood and Cock Wood form important skyline features into which development has been set. The result is that Hexham sits comfortably within the landscape with relatively few abrupt development edges.

Guidelines for Siting and Design of New Development

- The river is not a strong defining element in the character of the town although the bridge crossing marks a significant gateway when approaching from the north, and gives a strong sense of arrival, with memorable views to the town and its key landmark buildings. Care should be taken to retain this sense of arrival and to avoid development that would screen views or compete visually with existing landmark buildings in terms of scale, building material/colour or finish.

- New river crossings which would adversely affect the sense of arrival or setting to the existing bridge should be resisted.

- Linear development along the approach roads to the town, particularly from the east should be avoided where it would significantly alter the sense of arrival and perceived nucleated character of the settlement. Where development is proposed it should be set back from the existing road and measures taken to retain a green and rural character to the road itself, thus creating a green corridor into the settlement.

- The growth of suburban development has meant that some areas of the town lack a strong sense of place due to the creation of similar street scenes, the use of bland or inappropriate building materials, and cul-de-sac development. There is potential to improve local neighbourhoods through street scene enhancement and to reinforce local distinctiveness within the town.

- From the north east there are elevated views from the A69 across the valley floor, to the Egger plant and to the town centre. Proposals for further development in the vicinity of the plant should seek to mitigate the massing of existing buildings. Further mitigation of the impacts of the plant through structural planting, particularly along the A69 and from key viewpoints within the town, would be beneficial.

- The valley floor pastures to the east of the Egger plant form an important setting to Hexham and reinforce its sense of place on the River Tyne. There is scope to enhance this landscape through hedgerow and tree management and wetland creation as part of any future flood alleviation measures.
**Prudhoe**

Prudhoe is situated on the southern valley slopes of the River Tyne. Its close proximity to Newcastle means that it is an important commuter town although historically its growth has been associated with mining activity in the surrounding landscape. Although located adjacent to the River Tyne its relationship with the river is poor. Industrial and employment-related development dominates the lower slopes adjacent to the river and is separated from the river by a large embankment of spoil which supports important calcareous grassland communities. The historic centre of the town is located on the middle slopes and between there and the river there has been considerable recent housing development. To the west of the town linear development along the A695 has caused the built area of Prudhoe almost to merge with that of Mickley Square; while to the east the landscape is shaped by the parkland estate of Bradley Hall. To the south the landscape opens out into rural countryside comprising pasture defined by well-trimmed hedges. To the south east, however, the landscape is more wooded and comprises Priestclose Wood local nature reserve, the narrow wooded valley of Stanley Burn and the former parkland estate of Prudhoe Hall (developed as a hospital and now derelict). Collectively these areas give rise to a well-wooded, mature and enclosed character.

**Guidelines for Siting and Design of New Development**

- The well wooded landscape of the Prudhoe Hall former hospital site offers potential for sensitive redevelopment. Care should be taken to avoid tall buildings which would be visible above the existing vegetation framework and might affect views from the north. Care should also be taken to protect the sensitive Stanley Burn and ensure provision for the appropriate long term management of the valley and its ancient semi-natural woodland.

- Recent development between the river and main high street has given rise to housing estates that often lack a strong sense of place or architectural distinction and that can be disorientating. Opportunities exist to enhance the street scenes in these areas and to reinforce local distinctiveness.

- Care should be taken to restore a sense of separation between Prudhoe and Mickley Square, and development along the A695 west of the town should be avoided.

- To the south of the town the land rises to form a marked intermediate ridge. Beyond this ridge land continues to rise to form a more distant skyline of open pasture and woodland blocks. Future growth of the town to the south should not extend beyond or break the line of this intermediate ridge, particularly when viewed from the valley sides to the north.
**Haltwhistle**

Haltwhistle is situated on the lower slopes of the northern banks of the River South Tyne between the upland areas of Haltwhistle Common to the north and Plenmeller Common to the south. It lies just outside Northumberland National Park and Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site. It is a small market town historically linked to the mining industry of the area and the development of the railway. The setting of the town comprises the valley sides of the River South Tyne and the floodplain of the river to the south. Immediately to the east of the town is the incised wooded tributary valley of Haltwhistle Burn while to the west is the parkland landscape of Blenkinsopp Hall. Immediately to the south of the town is the river itself and beyond that open valley floor pastures which form part of the Bellister Castle estate and are crossed by the A69. The impact of the road embankment has been mitigated to some degree by screen planting.

**Guidelines for Siting and Design of New Development**

- Although the majority of the settlement is located on the lower valley slopes some employment development has extended onto the flood plain in the south east, which has altered the character and form of the settlement. Further development on the valley floor should be avoided and measures to mitigate the scale and colour of the existing development should be encouraged.

- The wooded tributary valley of Haltwhistle Burn forms an important wooded edge to the east of the town and helps to integrate built form into the wider landscape particularly when viewed from the south. Development beyond this edge should be resisted.

- There are open views of the settlement from the southern valley sides and as such further outward expansion of the town onto open higher slopes would have a significant visual impact and would alter the traditional historic form of the town. Development onto the open higher valley sides should therefore be resisted.

- South of Woodhead there is an area of lower-lying valley slopes comprising rough pastures. This area has scope for development as an extension of the urban edge due to its lower elevation and reasonable hedgerow and hedgerow tree network. Any development here would need to provide a strong landscape framework, building on the existing field pattern and avoiding adverse impact on the parkland landscape of Blenkinsopp Hall to the west. Care should be taken to use building materials and colours that are in keeping with the local vernacular stone and brick. The scale and form of building should reflect existing building styles within the settlement i.e. terraces or town houses; development of apartments or flats should be avoided, particularly on the outskirts of the town.

- There are opportunities to improve the setting of the settlement building on existing assets and character. In particular, there is potential to create areas of open space for recreational purposes adjacent to the town, especially just to the west. This land has been identified as a provisional area for development; however opportunities to extend the parkland character of Blenkinsopp Hall should also be considered as part of any proposal. Similarly the open meadows on the floodplain to the south of the town form part of the National Trust Bellister Castle estate and the river valley corridor is known locally as the 'hidden valley'. This area is well connected with the town via a number of river crossings and the possibility of improved recreational access and use should be explored.
Bellingham

Bellingham is situated on the northern banks of the River North Tyne between the upland areas of Hareshaw Common to the north and Ealingham Rigg to the south, and on the edge of Northumberland National Park. It is a small market town which retains a strongly nucleated character and association with the disused Border Counties Railway, the route of which runs through the northern part of the settlement. To the west, the North Tyne valley is defined by a characteristic pattern of vegetation – meadows and arable on the valley floor, pastures on the valley sides, and open unenclosed rough grazing and moorland beyond. To the east, the valley broadens out as the River North Tyne meets the River Rede. Here the valley floodplain is more expansive.

Guidelines for Siting and Design of New Development

- The northern skyline, comprising Callerhues Crag and the vegetated spoil heaps associated with Hareshaw ironworks, is a key landmark within the setting to the town. Any development, particularly to the north of the town, should not visually compete with or detract from these distinctive landscape features.

- The open, rural valley sides, which are prominent in views when travelling north and approaching the town across the bridge over the North Tyne, also form an important part of the setting to the town. Development should not extend westwards into this area, and existing new development should be screened where possible.

- The disused railway and associated railway buildings within the town present an opportunity to improve access between the town and wider valley landscape and offer a redevelopment opportunity which could strengthen the sense of arrival when approaching from the north.

- Care should be taken to prevent recreational land uses on the edge of the town (such as the golf course, caravan park or playing fields) extending their urbanising influence into the wider countryside through lighting, visually prominent structures or non-native planting. Such changes may undermine the characteristic vegetation and land use patterns of the valley sides and floodplain.

- Linear development along the approach roads to the town, particularly the B6320 south of the river, should be avoided as it would significantly alter the sense of arrival and perceived nucleated character of the settlement.

- To the north and east of the settlement, on the valley slopes between Hareshaw Burn and the minor road to Redesmouth, there is some potential for sympathetic infill development and urban expansion. However, development on the valley floor or along the approach roads to the town should be avoided.

- Any new development should, where possible, seek to enhance the approaches to and sense of arrival in the town, and should be integrated with the landscape through appropriate planting and boundary treatments. Building materials should match those found in the existing settlement (sandstone and brick) or at least be similar in colour.
**Corbridge**

Corbridge is situated on the northern banks of the River Tyne. Land to the north of the town rises gently to the A69 and beyond to Hadrian's Wall. To the south the valley sides rise more steeply to form Prospect Hill and are well wooded. The valley floor is open and pronounced immediately to the south of the town; and the settlement itself sits on cliffs above the river course. The bridge crossing forms a key landmark, is a scheduled monument and provides a memorable gateway to the town when approaching from the south. To the east of the town is an area of parkland landscape while to the west is the Corbridge Roman scheduled monument. The historic core of the town remains intact and is a conservation area. More recent development has occurred between here and the A69 along the main road routes. Land immediately north of the town comprises small pastures defined by hedgerows in various states of management. South of the river is the railway station and a small associated cluster of development.

**Guidelines for Siting and Design of New Development**

- The positive relationship between the town and the river is expressed in the position of the town above the river and the historic bridge crossing. Care should be taken to retain these special qualities and to avoid development (including any new river crossing) which may compromise the relationship of built form and the river setting.

- Corbridge is clearly visible from the southern slopes of the valley and is seen as a small nucleated settlement with a church landmark. Any future development of the town whether as infill development or as an extension of the urban edge to the north should avoid development that competes with the spire of the church or that will be visually prominent on the valley sides.

- To the north of the settlement, on the slopes between the existing urban edge and the A69, there is some potential for sympathetic development and urban expansion. Care should be taken to use building materials in keeping with the local vernacular (sandstone and slate roofs), and to ensure a soft urban edge when viewed from the west. Narrow rural lanes connect this area with the existing town and care should be taken to retain the rural character of these lanes as 'green routes', perhaps for pedestrian/cycle use only, as part of any development.

- The Roman scheduled monument and parkland landscape to the west of the town should be protected and development which impinges on the setting of these areas resisted.

- Any further development associated with the railway to the south of the river should be avoided as it would significantly alter the sense of arrival and the perceived nucleated character of the settlement.
Haydon Bridge

Haydon Bridge straddles the River South Tyne and is situated on the lower slopes of the river at a natural crossing point where there is only a narrow flood plain. To the north the land rises onto Haydon Fell and Hadrian's Wall WHS, while to the south it rises to Stublick Moor and the North Pennines AONB. The town grew with the development of the railway, its centre being located on the northern side of the river, but it has also seen recent growth, including development which relates poorly to the A69 as it passes through the town, and the gradual merging of the town with linear development along roads to the north. The setting of the town is defined by the open valley side to the north and more wooded valley sides associated with the Langley Castle Estate to the south. The town is not bypassed at present. The planned construction of the Haydon Bridge by-pass to the south will reduce the volume of traffic through the town, but will also significantly alter the setting of the town on its southern side.

Guidelines for Siting and Design of New Development

- The by-pass to the south provides opportunities to enhance the relationship between existing residential development within and along the current line of the A69 and also to improve the general street scene through street planting and improved boundary treatments.

- The open, rural valley sides and valley floor are prominent in views when approaching the town from the west form an important part of the town’s setting. Development should not be allowed to extend westwards into these areas, and existing new development should be screened where possible to avoid abrupt development edges. There are opportunities to create a stronger gateway and sense of arrival at this western edge of the town.

- Opportunities also exist to improve the management of hedgerows surrounding the settlement, which are often over-trimmed and gappy; this would create a stronger landscape framework to the town as a whole.

- The new by-pass may bring increased pressure for development on the southern side of the town between the river and road. Any new development should be set within a strong wooded framework reflecting the wooded character found to the south, and should avoid the steepest slopes which share the characteristic 'stepped' profile of the valley sides. New development should not extend above the line of the existing by-pass and should be constructed of appropriate building materials that reflect the local vernacular.

- Any new development should be consistent with local building materials and styles, which include red brick Victorian terraces and stone-built town houses. Taller buildings such as apartment or flat developments should be avoided, as they would be uncharacteristic and could significantly alter the character of the settlement, particularly if located on the outskirts of the town.

- Linear development along the approach roads to the town, particularly from the north, should be resisted as this would further undermine the nucleated form of the settlement, with the risk of extending development into open areas that are highly visible.
Allendale Town

Allendale Town is situated in Allendale, within the North Pennines AONB and above the incised course of the River East Allen. It is a small market town but also formed an important centre to the lead mining industry which was prevalent in this area. Evidence of this association is reflected in miners’ cottages and former blacksmiths’ shops. The small size of the town, which is located on higher ground above the river, and its distinctive form, which includes a historic market place and triangular greens, are its defining qualities. The church tower at the centre of the village is a key landmark and the well-wooded character of the valley and tributary valley to the northeast screens the town from many views in the surrounding landscape. More recently linear housing development has occurred between Allendale Town and Catton at The Haining.

Guidelines for Siting and Design of New Development

- Linear development along the approach roads to the town, particularly between Catton and Allendale Town should be avoided as it would further undermine the nucleated character of the town and significantly alter the sense of arrival.

- Care should be taken to strengthen the landscape gap between the town and development at The Haining to reinforce separation and retain the historic gateway to the town.

- Any new development within the town should avoid extension onto open valley sides where it will be highly visible from the surrounding dale landscape. Care should also be taken to avoid development which visually competes with the landmark feature of the church.

- There may be opportunities for small scale infill development within the town, but care should be taken to retain open greens and to retain views through to these open areas from within the urban fabric.
## Annex 3: Wind Farm Landscape Sensitivity Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scale</strong></td>
<td>A large scale landscape is more likely to be able to accommodate wind farm development than a small scale landscape within which the size of the turbines will tend to be highlighted and may appear to dominate the landscape.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Enclosure</strong></td>
<td>Open, exposed landscapes may suggest lower sensitivity to wind energy development, as the presence of field enclosures and vertical elements such as buildings, trees or pylons may indicate the relative height of the turbines.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Landform</strong></td>
<td>A smooth, regular, flowing, convex landform is more likely to be able to accommodate wind energy development than a dramatic or rugged landform.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Complexity of landcover and features</strong></td>
<td>Simple, uncluttered landscapes with sweeping lines and extensive areas of consistent ground cover are likely to offer greater potential for wind energy development than areas with more complex, irregular or intimate landscape patterns.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Man-made influence</strong></td>
<td>A high degree of man-made influence on the landscape may increase its ability to accommodate wind farms. Turbines are likely to be less conspicuous in industrial landscapes already affected by built structures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Skylines and settings</strong></td>
<td>Landscapes that do not form a distinctive backdrop or context are likely to be less sensitive than those with strong visual features and focal points that form distinctive skylines or settings for settlements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Visibility and views</strong></td>
<td>Landscapes that are visually contained or have limited inward and outward views may provide greater opportunity to accommodate wind energy than areas with extensive inward and outward views.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Landscape quality (condition)</strong></td>
<td>Areas where the condition and integrity of landscape patterns, elements and features is relatively good may be more sensitive to wind energy development than areas where condition is poor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scenic quality</strong></td>
<td>Scenic quality, that is visual appeal due to important views, visual interest and variety, contrasting landscape patterns or dramatic topography, may increase sensitivity to wind farm development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wildness and tranquility</strong></td>
<td>The presence of a relatively wild and/or tranquil character, due to remoteness, freedom from disturbance and factors such as openness and perceived naturalness, tends to make the landscape more sensitive to wind farm development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Natural and cultural heritage features</strong></td>
<td>The presence of natural and cultural heritage features such as interesting habitats, wildlife, archaeological, historical or built features that enhance the landscape experience may increase sensitivity to wind farms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cultural associations</strong></td>
<td>Specific cultural (ie historical, literary or artistic) associations relating to the landscape may result in increased sensitivity to wind energy development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Amenity and recreation</strong></td>
<td>Areas with access to high quality landscapes, memorable places and special experiences and to a range of opportunities for open-air recreation may be more sensitive to wind energy development.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>