

Yorkshire Wolds AONB Designation Project Natural Beauty Assessment



Final Report
May 2024

Yorkshire Wolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Designation Project

Natural Beauty Assessment

Prepared for Natural England

By

Alison Farmer Associates

In association with Resources for Change
and South Coast GIS

Final Report

May 2024

Contents

1.0	Introduction	4
1.1	The Yorkshire Wolds	4
1.2	Scope of Work	4
1.3	Natural England Guidance on Assessing Landscapes for Designation	5
1.4	Broader Context and Current Legislation	6
1.5	Format of the Report	6
2.0	Evidence Gathering	8
2.1	Engagement	8
2.2	Data Sources	9
2.3	Mapping and Field Work	12
3.0	Approach to Evaluation	13
3.1	Area of Search	13
3.2	Characterisation and Evaluation	13
3.3	Refining the Area of Search and Evaluation Areas	14
4.0	Designation History and Policy Background	16
4.1	Background	16
4.2	Early Considerations of the Yorkshire Wolds	18
4.3	Yorkshire Wolds in the Context of Other National Landscape Designations	18
4.4	Local Landscape Designations	20
4.5	Conclusions	25
5.0	Detailed Evaluation of Natural Beauty	26
5.1	Rationale	26
5.2	Specific Issues	27

6.0	Detailed Evaluation Tables	30
	Evaluation Area 1: Derwent Tributaries Farmland	31
	Evaluation Area 2: Wharram Percy Wolds	38
	Evaluation Area 3: Northern Scarp Slopes	43
	Evaluation Area 4: Central Dissected Plateau	51
	Evaluation Area 5: Great Wold Valley	58
	Evaluation Area 6: Flamborough to Hunmanby Coastal Landscapes	64
	Evaluation Area 7: Rudston and Boynton Valley	72
	Evaluation Area 8: Southern and Eastern Wold Fringes	76
	Evaluation Area 9: Thixendale Valleys and Sledmere	84
	Evaluation Area 10: Western Wolds and Valleys	90
	Evaluation Area 11: Western Wolds Scarp and Foothills	95
	Evaluation Area 12: Southern Wolds	101
7.0	Conclusion	107
7.1	Summary of Evaluation Results	107
7.2	Satisfying the Legislative Test	108

Figures

Figure 1: Landscape Designations and Local Authority Boundaries

Figure 2: Initial Area of Search and Evaluation Areas

Figure 3: Provisional Candidate Area for Engagement

Figure 4: Refined Evaluation Areas

Figure 5: Landscape Character Types

Figure 6: Natural Heritage Designations

Figure 7: Ancient Woodland and Priority Habitats

Figure 8: Cultural Heritage Designations

Figure 9: Stewardship Schemes

Figure 10: Proposed Candidate Area

Appendices

Appendix 1: Management Advisory Group -Terms of Reference

Appendix 2: Technical Advisory Group - Terms of Reference

Appendix 3: Area of Search

Appendix 4: Summary Landscape Description of Evaluation Areas

Appendix 5: Evaluation Framework for Natural Beauty Criterion, Appendix 1 taken from Guidance for Assessing Landscapes for designation as National Park or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Natural England, June 2021.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The Yorkshire Wolds

- 1.1.1 The Yorkshire Wolds has long been held as an exceptional landscape with value at both local and national levels. It sits as a broad area of chalk landscape distinguished from the lower-lying plains which surround it, including the Vale of York, Vale of Pickering and Holderness Plain. National Character Area 27 – Yorkshire Wolds - which broadly defines this landscape covers 1114 square kilometres. It stretches from Malton/Norton in the northwest to Flamborough Head in the northeast, Driffield in the southeast and Beverley and Hull in the south. It forms the most northerly outcrop of chalk in Britain.
- 1.1.2 Although located on the doorstep of conurbations including Malton, Norton, Bridlington, Hull, Market Weighton and Pocklington, it is nonetheless an area which is generally lightly settled. Its tranquillity, emptiness, large skies and dramatic dry valleys are some of its renowned qualities.
- 1.1.3 The Yorkshire Wolds extends across North Yorkshire Council (formerly Scarborough Borough and Ryedale District Councils), and the East Riding of Yorkshire Council, as shown on Figure 1.

1.2 Scope of Work

- 1.2.1 The possibility of designating the Yorkshire Wolds as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) was first considered by the National Parks Commission in 1967 and subsequently in 1990 when proposals were put forward by CPRE. A formal proposal for the designation of the Yorkshire Wolds was submitted to Natural England by East Riding Council in 2013.
- 1.2.2 In July 2020, Natural England's Board committed to testing and trialing a new approach to designation work with a strong emphasis on collaboration and engagement. The Natural England Board also approved a new evidence-based method for prioritising the known proposals for new or varied landscape designations using a range of policy steers approved by Defra. The proposed Yorkshire Wolds designation scored very highly against the new policy steers.
- 1.2.3 In June 2021, a written ministerial statement¹ by Secretary of State George Eustace (Defra) announced that Natural England '*will be taking forward the Government's commitment to designate additional protected landscapes and is currently considering the designation of four new areas*'. This included the possible designation of the Yorkshire Wolds as an AONB.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/natural-england-announces-landmark-new-programme-for-protected-landscapes>

- 1.2.4 In September 2021, Natural England commissioned a consortium of specialist consultants to undertake an assessment to determine if the landscape of the Yorkshire Wolds qualified for designation in terms of its natural beauty. The approach adopted included a detailed technical assessment of natural beauty and extensive early engagement on initial findings. This resulting report sets out the natural beauty evaluation of the Yorkshire Wolds. It has involved the collation, updating and review of natural beauty evidence to determine whether land has sufficient natural beauty to be considered worthy of designation as an AONB. Qualifying land has been defined as a Candidate Area for designation (refer to Figure 10).
- 1.2.5 The Candidate Area will form the basis for considering the desirability of designation and ultimately an area within which a detailed boundary can be drawn, in accordance with the sequential approach to designation as set out in the Natural England Guidance². These latter stages of assessment will follow on from the natural beauty evaluation and will be set out in separate reports.

1.3 Natural England Guidance on Assessing Landscapes for Designation

- 1.3.1 The statutory framework for the protection of land in England as AONB is set out in the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CRoW Act)³. Natural England has a power under the Act to designate areas which it considers to be of such outstanding natural beauty that it is desirable that they should be designated for the purpose of conserving and enhancing their natural beauty. Natural England also has a power under the CRoW Act⁴ to vary an Order designating an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- 1.3.2 Natural England has developed an approved and well tested approach to assessing landscapes for designation as either National Park or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. This is set out in Guidance for Assessing Landscapes for designation as National Park or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in England, (Natural England Guidance)⁵. The Natural England Guidance seeks to ensure a consistent approach to the delivery of landscape designation projects which draws on best practice and takes account of both changes in the legislative framework relating to landscape designations and the outcome of relevant Public Inquiries and court cases. After extensive external consultation the Guidance was approved by Natural England and published in March 2011. This Guidance was subsequently used to guide work to develop extensions to the Lake District and Yorkshire Dales National Parks and was successfully tested and found sound during the subsequent Public Inquiry and Confirmation of the Orders by the Secretary of State in October 2015. It was also used as the basis for the work to extend the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB and found

² Guidance for Assessing Landscapes for designation as National Park or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in England, Natural England, Updated June 2021

³ Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, Section 82

⁴ Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, Section 83, (7)

⁵ Guidance for Assessing Landscapes for designation as National Park or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in England", Natural England, Updated June 2021

sound during confirmation of the Order by the Secretary of State in July 2020. It was updated in 2021 to improve clarity.

- 1.3.3 The Guidance is intended for use by Natural England specialist staff and qualified consultants to help to identify whether land is likely to meet the statutory criteria for AONB or National Park designation. It has been used as the basis for this assessment of whether there is land worthy of designation as AONB in the Yorkshire Wolds.

1.4 Broader Context and Current Legislation

- 1.4.1 As part of the Government's 25-year Plan for the Environment, an independent review of designated landscapes in England (National Parks and AONBs) was led by Julian Glover and published in 2019. The Review praised the current work of AONBs in England and recognised their huge potential to deliver more for nature, climate and people.
- 1.4.2 In January 2022, the Government published its response to this independent Landscape Review, highlighting the issues of nature loss, climate change adaptation, the need to increase people's connection with nature, and the role of protected landscapes in addressing these issues. In its response the Government cited its commitment to protecting 30% of land by 2030 for nature⁶. Natural England has also set out an ambitious new landscape designation programme to take forward the recommendations set out in the Glover Review. These include the creation of new or extended AONBs (of which the Yorkshire Wolds AONB designation project is one), and also an All-England Assessment which explores new approaches to improve landscapes for people and nature, particularly in and around towns and cities.
- 1.4.3 Nationally valued landscapes will play a key role in implementing these initiatives and targets and the developments described in 1.4.2 above form an important backdrop to this consideration of the Yorkshire Wolds. Ultimately however, the assessment of land for designation as AONB, and any decision to proceed with designation, must be undertaken in accordance with current legislation and Natural England Guidance.

1.5 Format of the Report

- 1.5.1 The remainder of the report is laid out as follows:
- **Section Two** outlines the method of gathering evidence.
 - **Section Three** sets out the specific approach to defining the Area of Search and Evaluation Areas.
 - **Section Four** considers the Designation History of the area and relevant policy background.
 - **Section Five** sets out the approach to assessing natural beauty.
 - **Section Six** contains the detailed evaluation tables for each of the Evaluation Areas.

⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/pm-commits-to-protect-30-of-uk-land-in-boost-for-biodiversity>

- **Section Seven** sets out the conclusions of the study and identifies the extent to which the Candidate Area meets the criteria for outstanding natural beauty and thus the broad area within which a detailed boundary can be defined.

2.0 Evidence Gathering

2.1 Engagement

- 2.1.1 As noted in paragraph 1.2.2 above Natural England's new approach to designation work requires increased collaboration and early engagement. Natural England therefore established a Management Advisory Group and a Technical Advisory Group in order to improve project governance and engagement. The Terms of Reference for each of these groups and their membership is set out in Appendices 1 and 2 of this report. These groups were later merged to form a single Management Advisory Group, with membership changing as required to reflect the different stages of the project.
- 2.1.2 Natural England also required the current project to test opportunities for early engagement of stakeholders, including participatory evidence-gathering and clear messaging to communities to support greater understanding and transparency.
- 2.1.3 In response to Natural England's commitment to a more collaborative approach, the natural beauty evaluation included two phases of early engagement. The first was a 'call for evidence' from Local Authorities and key stakeholder organisations at the start of the natural beauty assessment. Only a couple of responses were received and this information was fed into the evaluation process.
- 2.1.4 The second period of engagement was a 'call for response' to a Provisional Candidate Area for Designation (Figure 3), defined as a result of desk study and initial field evaluation. This second period of engagement ran from June to July 2022 and was open to the general public. It included a series of webinars and drop-in events/workshops across the area. Stakeholders were asked to provide their views on the Provisional Candidate Area, and AONB designation more broadly, via a Citizen Science approach⁷ using an online form made accessible through the project website⁸. Stakeholders were able to comment and upload additional evidence to support their views. They were also able to mark specific areas of interest on an interactive map.
- 2.1.5 239 submissions were received between June and August 2022. Many submissions involved identifying a potential designated area on the map with evidence on why the area should or should not be designated. The majority of submissions received supported designation, although a small number were against for reasons such as existing development, character and concerns regarding tourism and increased bureaucracy.
- 2.1.6 A review of all submissions was undertaken as part of the evaluation. Relevant evidence provided by stakeholders was incorporated and recorded in evaluation tables and in some instances also prompted further research. In particular, East Riding of Yorkshire commissioned an independent assessment of natural beauty by consultants

⁷ Citizen science is the collection and analysis of data relating to the natural world by stakeholder organisations and members of the general public, typically as part of a collaborative project with professional scientists.

⁸ <https://www.yorkshire-wolds-designation-project.org/>

AECOM. Those areas which were identified as having the greatest weight of evidence were reviewed. And along with other stakeholder responses, were checked in the field during a period of further detailed assessment.

2.2 Data Sources

- 2.2.1 In addition to information provided during the engagement phases of the project, data was also collated from a wide range of other primary sources. These included solid and drift geology, landform, soils, agricultural land classification, national and local natural heritage designations and reserves, priority habitats, ancient woodland, national and local cultural heritage designations, landscape character assessments (LCAs), historic landscape characterisations (HLCs), agri-environment schemes and administrative boundaries.
- 2.2.2 Reference was also made to a range of published books about the area and web-based information sources such as Google Earth, National Library of Scotland website, the National Biodiversity Network, CPRE tranquillity and dark-skies mapping and Local Authority allocations and development information. Specific documents which were reviewed included:

Landscape Character Assessment

- National Character Area 27: Yorkshire Wolds, Natural England
- National Character Area 28: Vale of York, Natural England
- National Character Area 29: Howardian Hills, Natural England
- Our Landscapes Today for Tomorrow, 1995, Gillespies
- Landscape of Northern Ryedale, 1999, Gillespies
- East Riding of Yorkshire Landscape Character Assessment: Detailed Assessment of Selected Settlements in the East Riding of Yorkshire, November 2013, Golder Associates
- East Riding of Yorkshire Important Landscape Areas Boundary Refinement, 2014, Golder Associates.
- East Riding Landscape Character Assessment Update, Sept 2018, AECOM
- East Riding of Yorkshire Wind Turbine Sensitivity and Capacity Study, 2018, AECOM
- Planning for Renewable Energy Developments, interim planning document, April 2009
- North Yorkshire and York Landscape Character Project, May 2011, Chris Blandford Associates
- Scarborough Borough Landscape Study: Volume 1 – Borough wide Landscape Character Assessment, 2013, LUC
- Scarborough Borough Landscape Assessment: Volume 2: Landscape Sensitivity Study of potential housing allocations, Feb 2013, LUC

Historic Landscape Characterisation

- Historic Landscape Character North Yorkshire, York and the Lower Tees Valley, 2010, North Yorkshire County Council and English Heritage

- Historic Landscape Characterisation of the East Riding of Yorkshire and Kingston-Upon-Hull (Vol 1 and 2), 2018, Historic England
- Yorkshire Wolds – Farmstead and Landscape Statement, Feb 2020, Historic England
- ‘Chalkshire’ – Britain’s Most Northerly Chalk Outcrop, Yorkshire’s Hidden Landscape, Oct 2020-March 2021, Hull and East Riding Catchment Partnership
- Vale of Pickering Statement of Significance, English Heritage

Landscape Value and Evaluation

- Report of the National Parks Committee, 1947, (Hobhouse Report)
- North Riding County Development Plan, 1952
- East Riding County Development Plan, 1960
- Core Proof of Evidence No. 7 – Justification for the Wolds and the Fringe of the Moors Areas of High Landscape Value and their proposed boundaries, June 1999, Ryedale District Council
- The Need for a Yorkshire Wolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, CPRE
- North Yorkshire Conservation Strategy, 1991
- Lincolnshire Wolds AONB, Designation History Series, Ray Woolmore, August 2006
- Cranborne Chase and West Wilshire Downs AONB, Designation History Series, Ray Woolmore, July 2012
- East Riding of Yorkshire Landscape Areas Boundary Refinement, 2013, Golder Associates
- Examining opportunities for the designation of the Yorkshire Wolds as an AONB – an expression of interest, June 2013, East Riding of Yorkshire Council
- Proposed AONB. Review of Candidate Area, AECOM, June 2023

Local Authority Plan Documents

Adopted Plans

- Local Development Scheme 2021-2023 – A timetable for the review of Ryedale District’s planning policy
- The Ryedale Local Plan Strategy, Development Plan, September 2013
- Scarborough Borough Local Plan July 2017
- East Riding of Yorkshire and Kingston upon Hull Joint Minerals Plan 2016-2033 (Nov 2019)
- East Riding Local Plan 2012-2029 Allocations Document (July 2016)
- East Riding Local Plan 2012-2029 Strategy Document Adopted April 2016

Emerging Local Plan Docs

- Distribution of Development Consultation, Ryedale Plan Review, November 2021

- Scarborough Borough Local Plan Review, Issues and Options Consultation, August 2020
- East Riding Local Plan Strategy Documents Update 2020-2039 (Draft May 2021)
- East Riding Local Plan Update Draft Allocations Document Update 2020-2039 (May 2021)

North Yorkshire Minerals and Waste Plans

- Joint Minerals Local Plan East Riding of Yorkshire and Kingston upon Hull, Adopted Nov 2019

Land Management

- Howardian Hills AONB Management Plan 2019-2024
- Howardian Hills AONB Landscape Management and Priority Sites 2019-2024
- State of the AONB Report, Howardian Hills AONB, March 2019
- Flamborough Head to Gibraltar Point Shoreline Management Plans, 2010, Scott Wilson
- Site Improvement Plan Flamborough and Filey Coast, 2015, Natural England
- River Tyne to Flamborough Head Shoreline Management Plan, Feb 2007, Royal Haskoning

Additional Documents

- Listed Building Descriptions
- Natural Heritage Designation Citations
- Scheduled Site Citations
- Registered Park and Garden Citations
- Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans

2.2.3 In addition to technical documents, a number of published books which celebrate the Yorkshire Wolds landscapes, have been purchased and studied as part of the desk study. These include:

- Vale of York and Yorkshire Wolds, 2019, Ordnance Survey
- In Search of the Unusual in East Yorkshire and the Yorkshire Coast, 1997, Eileen Rennison
- The Yorkshire Wolds in Old Photographs, 1994, Ian and Margaret Summer
- Yorkshire: York and The East Riding, 1972, Nikolaus Pevsner
- The Wolds Way, 1979, David Rubinstein
- The East Riding of Yorkshire Landscape, 1998, K. J. Allison
- The Forgotten Landscape of the Yorkshire Wolds, 2005, Chris Penton-Thomas
- The Yorkshire Wolds – a journey of discovery, 2017, Fleur & Colin Speakman

- The High Wolds – A Photo Essay, 2018, Simon Palmour

2.2.4 The extent of information gathered was constrained by available data and resources at the time of the study. Data was periodically reviewed and updated during the course of the evaluation.

2.3 Mapping and Field Work

2.3.1 The digital mapping and spatial data obtained was combined and interrogated in a Geographical Information System (GIS). A series of working maps was produced to aid the evaluation of natural beauty, to enable comparison between different datasets and the identification of any patterns or distribution of features of interest. The distribution of evidence can be found on the Figures included in this report and listed in the contents page.

2.3.2 Numerous periods of field work were undertaken during May and August to test the information gained from the different sources and where necessary to update this information. Field work also enabled evidence to be gathered on landscape condition, scenic quality, relative wildness and tranquillity and contributions of natural and cultural heritage to natural beauty.

2.3.3 As part of the iterative assessment process, judgments on natural beauty were revisited as the designation project has progressed and where new information has come to light. This in accordance with Natural England Guidance (page 8).

3.0 Approach to Evaluation

3.1 Area of Search

- 3.1.1 The term Area of Search is applied to the area which is identified for detailed assessment at the start of a designation project. The initial Area of Search for the Yorkshire Wolds Designation Project was defined by Natural England in collaboration with relevant Local Authorities and formed part of the project brief. It was based on the proposal submitted to Natural England by the local authority proponents of the designation. It corresponded with the National Character Area for the Yorkshire Wolds landscape. This is illustrated in Appendix 3 of this report.
- 3.1.2 This initial Area of Search was reviewed by the Management Advisory Group (MAG), along with any areas of landscape on its outer edge which were considered likely to have features of interest. A slightly larger Area of Search was subsequently drawn with an outward 'fuzzy edge'; this included all areas which had previously been considered as 'valued landscapes' in the Yorkshire Wolds (refer to section 4.0 below). This process provided the starting point for assessment; however, it did not preclude inclusion of any areas which might subsequently emerge for consideration through the actual assessment process.

3.2 Characterisation and Evaluation

- 3.2.1 The Natural England Guidance differentiates between characterisation and evaluation.
- 3.2.2 Landscape characterisation identifies and describes areas in terms of their landscape features and characteristics and is a relatively objective, value-free process. It can define landscape character areas which are geographically specific and unique in their character and/or landscape character types which have shared landscape characteristics and repeat across an area. Character areas and types can be mapped, and descriptions developed for each.
- 3.2.3 Landscape evaluation for designation as AONB considers land specifically in relation to the technical criterion of outstanding natural beauty rather than landscape character. Natural beauty is not exhaustively defined in legislation and is, in part, a subjective concept. Its assessment involves making value judgements and in order to make such judgements in a transparent and consistent manner, the Natural England Guidance sets out a framework of factors and sub-factors generally accepted as contributing to natural beauty. These factors and sub-factors have been tested through previous designation projects, public inquiries and court cases. The relevant natural beauty factors and indicators are set out in Appendix 5 and have been used as the basis for the detailed evaluation. Evaluation can use landscape character assessments to help define the spatial framework for assessment (see section 3.2.8 below) as well as providing descriptive information to inform judgements on landscape qualities.
- 3.2.4 The National Character Area Profiles, which cover the whole of the Area of Search, have also been used in gathering evidence. These provide a high-level, broad-brush description and assessment of the character of the area and contain valuable background information.

- 3.2.5 Existing landscape character assessments (LCAs) have also been extensively used during this project to inform judgements on natural beauty. The North Yorkshire and York LCA (May 2011), Scarborough District LCA (2013) and East Riding LCA (2018) have all been referred to as the most recent assessments of landscape character relevant to the Area of Search. There is reasonable correlation between them across administrative boundaries.
- 3.2.6 The Natural England Guidance suggests that the Area of Search should be divided into units of an appropriate scale. This is in order to aid the practical evaluation of a potentially large sweep of land and to make evaluation a more manageable process. These units are termed 'Evaluation Areas' and each is then subjected to the evaluation process.
- 3.2.7 Natural England Guidance states in paragraph 4.4 that *"The use of Evaluation Areas is intended merely to make the practical work of detailed evaluation of landscapes more manageable. It is not intended to lead to the designation or exclusion from designation of any land merely because of the way in which Evaluation Areas have been defined. That is why the process is intended to be flexible and iterative in its application."*
- 3.2.8 It was clear from the review of LCAs for the Area of Search that the landscape was divided into a broad typology and then smaller areas of distinct character. In contrast the Historic Landscape Characterisation for The East Riding of Yorkshire and Kingston-Upon-Hull⁹ divided the landscape into broader areas. Consideration of these completed assessments and various classifications led initially to the subdivision of the Area of Search into eleven broad Evaluation Areas. These covered the different landscapes of the Yorkshire Wolds at a scale which is suitable for evaluation. The initial Evaluation Areas (EAs) are illustrated on Figure 2. Large settlements on the edge of the Area of Search, such as Malton, Pocklington, Market Weighton, Bridlington, Driffield, Beverley and Hull were excluded from the Provisional Evaluation Areas.
- 3.2.9 The Evaluation Areas were used to gather evidence and undertake an initial evaluation of the Yorkshire Wolds which led to the definition of a Provisional Candidate Area which was then used in early stakeholder engagement.

3.3 Refining the Area of Search and Evaluation Areas

- 3.3.1 Following initial evaluation and stakeholder engagement, the Evaluation Areas were refined in extent (refer Figure 4). One Evaluation Area was also subdivided bringing the total number of Evaluation Areas to twelve. A character description of each Evaluation Area can be found in Appendix 4 of this report.
- 3.3.2 The key refinements to the Evaluation Areas are summarised as follows:

⁹ Historic Landscape Characterisation of the East Riding of Yorkshire and Kingston-Upon-Hull (Vol 1 and 2), 2018, Historic England

- a) The exclusion of areas where desk study, initial site assessment and evidence from engagement revealed a clear lack of qualities and features which would contribute to outstanding natural beauty. Examples included those landscapes which lack topographic variation and are dominated by intensively farmed land and where infrastructure and urban development exerts a strong influence. This resulted in the exclusion of the southern part of EA8 between Cherry Burton and the Humber¹⁰.
- b) Refinement to Evaluation Area boundaries; ensuring they more accurately reflect changes in the landscape. For example, the boundary between EA4 and EA5, refined to reflect the extent of the Great Wold Valley to the north and also the boundary between EA5 and EA7, refined to reflect the association of the Gypsy Race and Argam Dykes which centre on Rudstone.
- c) The subdivision of EA10, separating the areas of incised valleys within the western high wolds from the scarp and foothills which interface with the Vale of York. As a result of this change, some Evaluation Areas were renumbered bringing the total number of EAs to twelve.

3.3.3 These refinements are illustrated on Figure 4 and were taken forward in the further detailed site assessment which followed the engagement phase; they form the basis for the analysis of natural beauty assessment set out in section 5.0 of this report.

¹⁰ It is acknowledged that some stakeholders provided comment and evidence on this area during the engagement process. This was reviewed however it was not considered sufficient to justify the detailed assessment of this area and that this land more broadly was still unlikely to qualify for AONB designation.

4.0 Designation History and Policy Background

4.1 Background

4.1.1 This section deals with earlier consideration of the Yorkshire Wolds as a potential landscape of exceptional value at a national and local level. This has informed the extent of the Area of Search and has been considered during evaluation.

4.1.2 The designation history of the Yorkshire Wolds and adjoining landscapes can be considered under three main headings:

1. Early consideration by the National Parks Commission (NPC) between 1945-1960s
2. Designation of adjoining and related landscapes 1960-1980s
3. Development of local landscape designations in local plans 1990-present day

4.1.3 These are summarised in the table below and described in more detail in subsequent paragraphs.

Table 1: Timeline of Consideration and Recognition of the Yorkshire Wolds

Date	Event	Comment
Early Consideration		
1945	Publication of Dower report	Yorkshire Wolds was not put forward as an area for potential designation.
1947	Publication of Hobhouse Report	Yorkshire Wolds was not put forward as an area for potential designation, but Flamborough Coast was included as a proposed Conservation Area.
1949	National Parks and Access to Countryside Act	This legislation introduced mechanisms for the preparation of development plans and designating National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
1960's	Yorkshire County Development Plan	Defined areas of Great Landscape, Scientific and Historic Interest. Relatively small discrete areas within the Yorkshire Wolds were identified as of local value.
1967	National Parks Commission (NPC) considered additional areas not previously put forward by Dower and Hobhouse	Yorkshire Wolds was considered for designation but was rejected based on ' <i>not being of sufficient landscape quality to warrant AONB status.</i> '
1973	NPC considered designation of Flamborough Coast.	Flamborough Coast was rejected for AONB designation as the area was too small and its interest was restricted to the cliffs and shoreline only, due to the hinterland being much affected by development. The area was considered worthy of Heritage Coast definition instead.

Date	Event	Comment
National Designations		
1973	Lincolnshire Wolds	Lincolnshire Wolds designated as AONB.
1979	Heritage Coast	Flamborough Headland defined as Heritage Coast.
1987	Howardian Hills	Howardian Hills designated as AONB.
More Recent Consideration		
1990	CPRE	Requested the Countryside Commission consider the designation of the Yorkshire Wolds as AONB. Identified an area which did not extend east of Saxton to Langtoft Road or south of Goodmanham.
Local Landscape Designations		
1991	North Yorkshire Conservation Strategy	Defined Special Landscape Areas – broad zones which were to be defined in more detail by local planning authorities.
1990's	Local Plan Inquiries for Beverley, Boothferry and East Yorkshire Preparation of landscape character assessments for Ryedale	Development of landscape policies relating to quality and character, mapping of Important Landscape Areas. These areas were previously noted by planning inspectors as 'broad-brush', 'setting' and 'including the wider Wolds area.' Assessments by Gillespies 1995 and 1999.
1997	Ryedale Local Plan	Defined Areas of High Landscape Value using same approach as other local authorities and other Important Landscape Areas defined to the south.
2005	Preparation of landscape character assessments for East Riding	Assessment by Carl Brothers/Golder Associates.
2012	Adoption of East Riding Local Plan Strategy Document	Reference at para 8.33 that not all of Yorkshire Wolds is of the same quality. Mapping of Important Landscape Areas and recording of ' Areas of highest quality ' (in Figure 11 of the Local Plan Strategy).
2013	Review of Special Landscape Area boundary for East Riding	Golder Associates. Reinforcement of value of the distinctive character of the Yorkshire Wolds – however, conflated character and value.
2013	Adoption of Ryedale Local Plan Strategy Document	Areas of High Landscape Value mapped in detail and policy SP13 on landscapes was established. Areas of High Landscape Value were noted as a broad area of landscape which is locally valued.
2013	Local Authorities	Submitted formal proposals to Natural England requesting designation of Yorkshire Wolds as an AONB, based on National Character Area.

Date	Event	Comment
2013	Preparation of landscape character assessment for Scarborough	Assessment by LUC.
2017	Adoption of Scarborough Local Plan	No local landscape designations defined.
2018	Update of LCA for East Riding	Assessment by AECOM.

4.2 Early consideration of the Yorkshire Wolds

- 4.2.1 John Dower prepared an official report on National Parks in England and Wales which was published in 1945¹¹. In it he included most areas of distinctive English chalklands in his *“Division C list: Other Amenity Areas not suggested as National Parks”*. The Yorkshire Wolds was not included in his Division C list.
- 4.2.2 In the Hobhouse Report¹² of 1947, a total of 52 areas were put forward as conservation areas of high landscape quality, scientific interest and recreational value, largely based on Dower’s *“Other Amenity Areas”*. Following Dower’s opinion, Hobhouse excluded the Yorkshire Wolds from this list, although he did include the Howardian Hills which lie adjacent to the north-west, and also Flamborough Coast in the north-east.
- 4.2.3 It was not until the 1960s, in response to pressure from local authorities and other bodies and organisations, that the National Parks Commission (NPC) included areas other than Hobhouse’s conservation areas in their consideration of a future AONB programme¹³. By October 1967 sixteen new areas were on the list for possible designation, including the Yorkshire Wolds. However, all but three areas on the list were rejected for not being of sufficient landscape quality to warrant AONB status; the Yorkshire Wolds was one of those rejected.

4.3 Yorkshire Wolds in the Context of Other National Landscape Designations

- 4.3.1 A number of chalk landscapes in England have been designated as National Park or AONB, or defined as Heritage Coast. Of particular relevance to the Yorkshire Wolds are the landscapes of the Lincolnshire Wolds (which is located south of the Humber), and Flamborough Head (which forms part of the Area of Search). Furthermore, the Howardian Hills AONB, although not chalk, is contiguous with the Yorkshire Wolds Area of Search to the northwest and is also of relevance. A review of documentary evidence associated with these landscapes, including designation histories and National Park Commission (NPC) reports was undertaken. These explained the

¹¹ John Dower, “National Parks in England and Wales”, Cmd 6628, HMSO, May 1945.

¹² The National Parks Committee (Chairman – Sir Arthur Hobhouse), “Report of the National Parks Committee – England and Wales”, Cmd, 7121, HMSO, London, July 1947

¹³ National Parks Commission, Paper A830 “Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty Future Programme”. NPC, 24.10.67

reasons for their designation and also concerns which were previously raised. Some of the issues remain pertinent to the consideration of the Yorkshire Wolds today and are summarised below.

Lincolnshire Wolds AONB

- 4.3.2 A summary of the designation of the Lincolnshire Wolds is set out the designation history prepared by Ray Woolmore in 2006. This account records the positive qualities of the area, for example:

'its charm relates to 'undulating terrain, sparse settlement pattern and excellent views, from the escarpment in particular'¹⁴.

- 4.3.3 But it also records some of the difficulties encountered in determining whether it was worthy of national designation and also its extent. The Designation History records the views of L.J. Watson, the NPC Senior Field Officer, who considered:

'There are some pockets of quite pleasant country, as indeed, there are in most counties, but there does not seem to me to be any continuous sizable tract of sufficient high-quality landscape to justify AONB status. One travels through mile and mile of comparatively dull, quite ordinary farming country of no particular scenic attraction; much of it is not better country than can be seen almost anywhere throughout rural Britain'.¹⁵

- 4.3.4 Furthermore, when the NPC eventually agreed to proceed with consideration of the Lincolnshire Wolds for designation as an AONB, it asked the Council to:

'exclude the outlying areas shown on the draft maps previously submitted, and to limit the proposed AONB to a compact area of higher land comprising the Wolds'¹⁶

- 4.3.5 The Lincolnshire Wolds was designated in 1973 as a single tract of landscape measuring 558 sq km and comprising rolling hills and hidden valleys, gentle streams and nestling villages. The area designated and the evidence supporting designation was not considered at public inquiry.

Flamborough Head

- 4.3.6 The NPC referred to the Flamborough Coast in its Future Programme in 1967¹⁷ noting that: *'The claims of Flamborough have still to be re-examined with a view to determining whether the area should be treated as one of outstanding natural beauty or as a country park'.*

¹⁴ Folio 7 of Lincolnshire Wolds Designation History, Ray Woolmore, 2006

¹⁵ Para 9 and Folio 14, Lincolnshire Wolds Designation History, Ray Woolmore, 2006

¹⁶ Para 15, Lincolnshire Wolds Designation History, Ray Woolmore, 2006

¹⁷ Folio 5, Lincolnshire Wolds Designation History, Ray Woolmore, 2006

- 4.3.7 In the NPC committee meeting minutes from November 1967 it was recorded that Flamborough Head was removed from the list¹⁸. However, in the Countryside Commission meeting minutes from 6 April 1971, it was noted that Heritage Coasts merited special consideration, possibly on a par with the treatment given to National Parks¹⁹, and then in extracts from the Countryside Commission Minutes dated 6 Feb 1973²⁰, Flamborough Head was given special consideration as a Heritage Coast rather than AONB, due to it being too small and its attraction focusing solely on the cliff scenery. In the associated tables to the minutes Flamborough Head was described as:

'impressive chalk cliffs. Hinterland much affected by development e.g. caravan sites' and assessed as 'spectacular cliffs but standard of coastal landscape generally adversely affected by intensive development'.

- 4.3.8 Flamborough Head was defined laterally as a Heritage Coast in 1979. Like other peninsular Heritage Coasts, it included the cliffs, wider hinterland and extended out to sea, with an open undefined coastal boundary. The onshore part of the Heritage Coast measures 34.4 sq km.

Howardian Hills AONB

- 4.3.9 The assessment tables from the Countryside Commission review of proposed Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty²¹, described the Howardian Hills as an:

'area of higher land between vales of York and Pickering, extending south eastwards from Hambleton Hills. Undulating, agricultural land, woodland (much of it conifer now), and parkland.'

- 4.3.10 It was assessed as having a *'pleasant and unspoilt, unspectacular but distinctive character'* and was recommended for consideration as an AONB, but as a borderline case.

- 4.3.11 The Howardian Hills was designated as AONB in 1987 as a single tract of landscape measuring 204.2 sq km.

4.4 Local Landscape Designations

- 4.4.1 Although the Yorkshire Wolds was not considered for Designation as AONB by the NPC or Countryside Commission, it nonetheless had qualities which were subsequently recognised in the emergence of local landscape designations. A review of Local Plan Inquiry documents, Local Plans and Strategy documents from the 1960s onwards, along with landscape character assessments from the 1990s, provides a valuable insight into the evolution of understanding and recognition of the area.

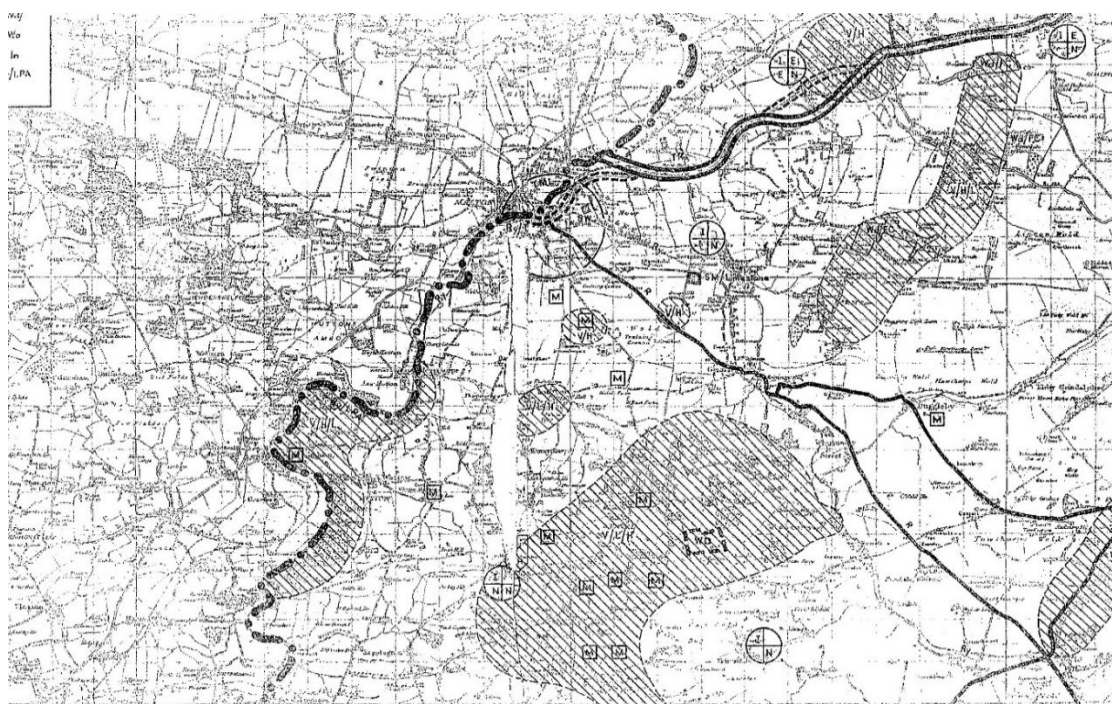
¹⁸ Folio 9, Lincolnshire Wolds Designation History, Ray Woolmore, 2006

¹⁹ Para 833, Folio 12, Cranbourne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB Designation History, Ray Woolmore, 2012

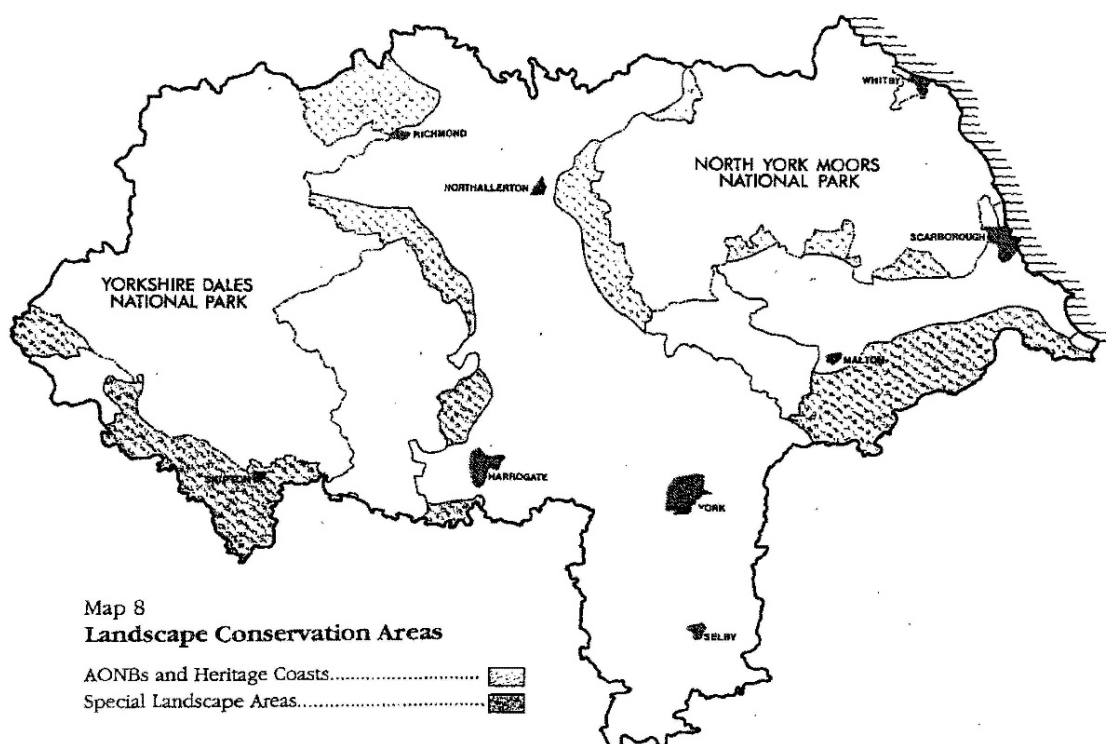
²⁰ Folio 13, Cranbourne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB Designation History, Ray Woolmore, 2012

²¹ Folio 13, Cranbourne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB Designation History, Ray Woolmore, 2012

- 4.4.2 Local landscape designations were first defined in the 1960s in the East Riding of Yorkshire County Development Plan which, at the time, included the whole of the Yorkshire Wolds. This development plan defined Areas of Great Landscape, Scientific or Historic Interest. An extract for the area to the south and east of Malton illustrates that the mapping of these areas was relatively precise, picking out small areas of landscapes such as designed parkland around Birdsall, as shown on the plan below.
- 4.4.3 In 1974 there was a significant Local Government reorganisation which resulted in the creation of North Yorkshire (including the Districts/Boroughs of Ryedale and Scarborough) and Humberside (including the Districts/Boroughs of Beverley, Boothferry and East Yorkshire). The North Yorkshire County Structure Plan (1980) did not define local landscape designations and it was not until 1995 that the third iteration of the plan contained a Countryside Policy.
- 4.4.4 In 1990 CPRE presented a case to the then Countryside Commission for the designation of a Yorkshire Wolds AONB, although its proposals did not include a map or boundary. The supporting justification noted that the western and northern limits were relatively easy to define, but the southern and eastern extents were less clear. The area east of Staxton to Langtoft and south of Goodmanham were excluded from the proposed AONB (although no specific reason was given). Furthermore, the CPRE did not support the inclusion of land towards Kirkham Gorge (otherwise known as Derwent Gorge), on the basis this area was of a different character to the Wolds.
- 4.4.5 The North Yorkshire Conservation Strategy 1991 defined broad zones as Special Landscape Areas (SLA) but asked the District Councils to carry out their own detailed work at a local level. In 1992 the local authorities for North Yorkshire agreed to prepare their own Areas of High Landscape Value (AHLV).



Extract from County Development Plan showing Areas of Great Landscape, Scientific or Historic Interest to the south and east of Malton.



Extract from North Yorkshire Conservation Strategy 1991 defining SLA

- 4.4.6 During the 1990s there was increased interest in the emerging process of landscape character assessment to help policymakers to understand landscapes at the broader scale. Many local authorities undertook their own character assessments to inform Local Plan policies and designations, and these were tested at public inquiries. It was during this period that local plan policies started to emerge specifically referring to the character of the Yorkshire Wolds as a distinct tract of landscape. Policies also began to reference the concepts of landscape value and quality.
- 4.4.7 The Inspector's Report for the Beverley Local Plan (1995) noted the need to include *'outer areas of the wolds which form part of its setting'*.
- 4.4.8 Subsequently, the Inspector for the Boothferry Local Plan (1996), did not challenge why the landscape was considered to be of local importance and the Inspector for the East Yorkshire Borough Local Plan noted that the area of landscape protection should be a *'broad geographical area – extended to include the wider Wolds area'*.
- 4.4.9 This broad-brush approach led to the identification of large areas as locally valued, the extent of which was strongly influenced by 'Wolds' character rather than quality.
- 4.4.10 During the preparation of the Ryedale Local Plan (1999), local landscape designations had therefore already been defined in a broad way for the southern parts of the Yorkshire Wolds. It is not surprising, therefore, that to be consistent, Ryedale also

defined an area which broadly corresponded with the character of the Yorkshire Wolds landscape. Paragraph 4.2.6.5 of the *Core Proof of Evidence No. 7 Justification for the Wolds.....Areas of High Landscape Value and their proposed boundaries* stated that:

‘the largest remaining sector to be completed in this jigsaw approach towards recognising the special landscape character of the full extent of the Yorkshire Wolds Character Area... (continues)’

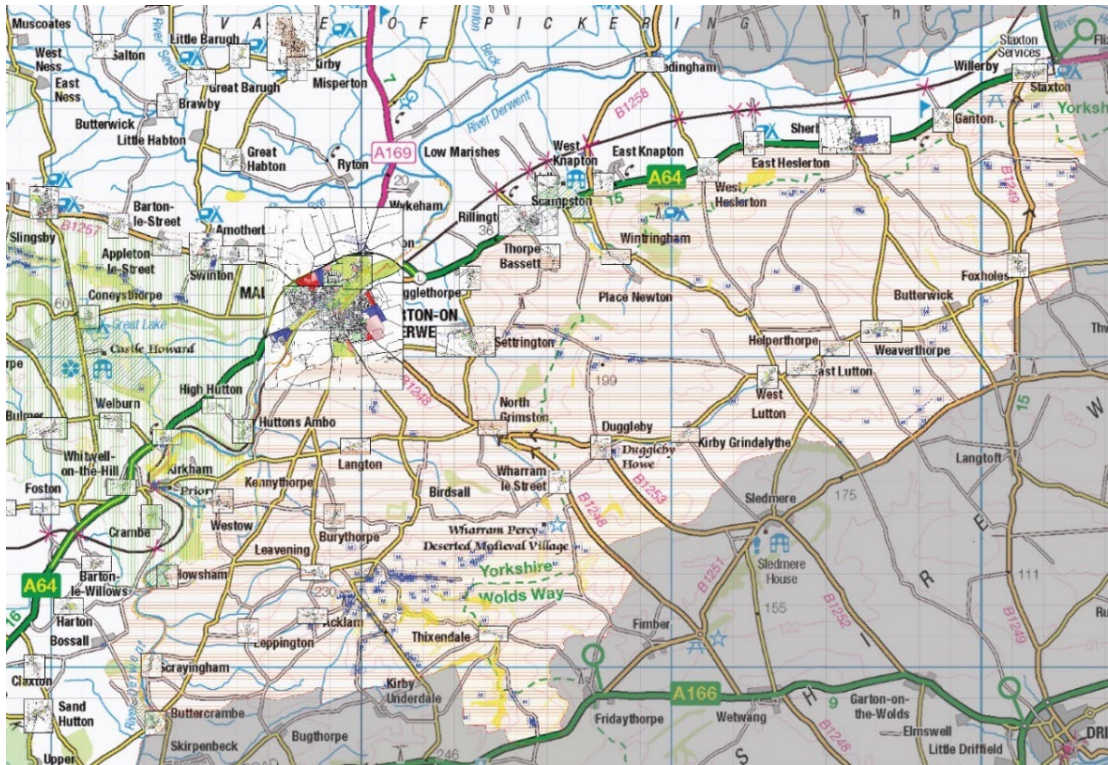
- 4.4.11 It is clear from these accounts that there was a convergence of the ideas of distinctive character and landscape value in the local plans.
- 4.4.12 Subsequent landscape character assessments carried out for the relevant authorities are summarised in the table below and again show how character and value have become locally conflated.

Table 2: Landscape Character Assessments which have informed policy

Local Authority	Assessment
Ryedale	Gillespies 1995 and 1999 CBA May 2011
Scarborough	LUC 2013
East Riding	2005 Carl Brothers/Golder Associates 2013 Golder Associates SLA boundary review 2018 AECOM LCA update

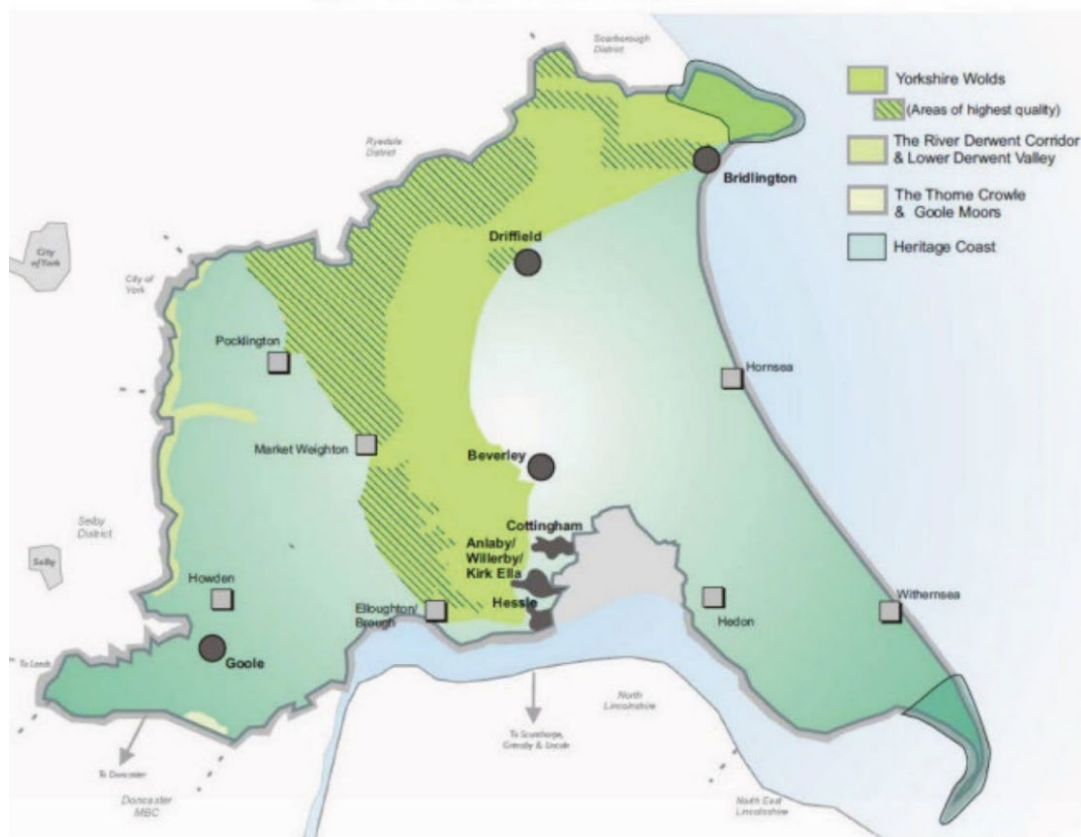
- 4.4.13 Current planning policy for each of the Local Plan areas make reference to character and locally valued landscapes defining Areas of High Landscape Value (AHLV) in Ryedale and Important Landscape Areas in East Riding. No locally valued landscape has been defined in Scarborough District.
- 4.4.14 The Ryedale Local Plan (now the Strategy Document, adopted 2013), illustrates the Area of High Landscape Value as shown on the plan extract below.
- 4.4.15 Policy SP13 in the Ryedale Local Plan Strategy notes that the **AHLV** comprises broad areas of landscape which are locally valued.
- 4.4.16 In East Riding, it is notable that the 2013 Golder assessment reviewed and refined the boundary of the **SLA**, mapping it at 1:25,000 and ensuring better correlation with landscape character as defined in earlier assessments.
- 4.4.17 Significantly, the East Riding Local Plan Strategy Document (adopted 2012) defines **Important Landscape Areas**, which includes the Yorkshire Wolds (which is drawn broadly similar in extent to the NCA). Additionally, it defines an **Area of Highest Quality** within the wider Yorkshire Wolds, shown by hatching on the plan below; the supporting text within the Strategy Document at Paragraph 8.33 stated that:

‘not all of the Yorkshire Wolds is of the same quality.’



Extract from Ryedale Local Plan Strategy Document (adopted 2013) showing AHLV (pink) covering the whole of the Yorkshire Wolds Character Area within the District.

Figure 11 - Important Landscape Areas



Extract from the East Riding Local Plan Strategy Document Adopted April 2012

4.5 Conclusions

4.5.1 The following conclusions can be reached from the above analysis:

- In their 1990s proposal for an AONB in the Yorkshire Wolds, CPRE recognised declining landscape quality to the east and south. This is also reflected in the East Riding Local Plan Strategy which defines areas of Highest Landscape Quality extending from the western side of the area, round to the north, and including a number of disconnected areas. Both indicate a more recent consensus that not all of the Yorkshire Landscape character area has the same quality.
- Through the 1990s landscape character assessment was becoming more common place, and local authorities were also establishing landscape policies to protect areas from inappropriate development. The extent of Special Landscape Areas, Area of High Landscape Value and Important Landscape Areas was significantly influenced by the perceived value of the character of the Yorkshire Wolds landscape compared with the character of the landscapes which surround it.
- Whilst the Yorkshire Wolds have been afforded a value at the local level this does not necessarily equate to levels of natural beauty of national significance.

5.0 Detailed Evaluation of Natural Beauty

5.1 Rationale

5.1.1 The approach to the evaluation of landscapes for designation as AONB derives directly from the legislation and as such requires an assessment of whether an area has outstanding natural beauty. Natural beauty is not exhaustively defined in the legislation, but Natural England Guidance provides considerable detail which has been drawn on during this project, along with the methods and experience from past designation projects and precedent.

5.1.2 It is worth noting that the definition of natural beauty was partially clarified in the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006²² as follows:

“The fact that an area in England consists of or includes -

- a) land used for agriculture or woodlands,
- b) land used as a park, or
- c) any other area whose flora, fauna and geological or physiographic features are partly the product of human intervention in the landscape,

does not prevent it being treated as being an area of natural beauty (or outstanding natural beauty)”.

5.1.3 Cultural heritage (eg archaeological, architectural and vernacular features and cultural associations) can also contribute to perceptions of natural beauty and any assessment of natural beauty can take these factors into consideration in accordance with the Natural England Guidance and precedent.

5.1.4 Natural beauty has been evaluated using the suite of factors and sub-factors identified as contributing to natural beauty within the Evaluation Framework for Natural Beauty (Appendix 1 of the Natural England Guidance). This is provided at Appendix 5 of this report. At a broad level, these factors include landscape quality, scenic quality, relative wildness, relative tranquillity, natural heritage features and cultural heritage features.

5.1.5 Each Evaluation Area was subjected to detailed evaluation. Evidence was gathered during desk study and subsequently initial site assessment and organised into these Evaluation Areas. Evidence was collected in relation to the factors which contribute to natural beauty drawing on a raft of geographically based information such as that shown in the examples on Figures 5-9. This initial assessment led to the definition of a provisional Candidate Area (Figure 3).

5.1.6 The range of evidence collated for each of these factors was considered in detail and conclusions recorded in the evaluation tables set out in section 6 below. Extensive sources of information were referred to, along with evidence submitted during the early engagement with key stakeholder and later engagement on the Provisional Candidate Area. Two concentrated phases of field assessment were undertaken, the first to define

²² Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, section 99

the provisional candidate area and a second to review evidence submitted as part of engagement and to undertake more detailed assessment in finely balanced areas. It is important to note that aspects of the evaluation exercise were dependent on the quality and extent of the information available at the time. The overall weight of evidence and spatial distribution of natural beauty for each Evaluation Area was considered in turn.

- 5.1.7 For each Evaluation Area, a summary conclusion was then provided as to whether part, or all, of each Evaluation Area should be taken forward for further consideration and any issues requiring further scrutiny were recorded. The qualifying areas together form a single Candidate Area for designation to be taken forward to the next stage of assessment. It should be noted that the Candidate Area defines an area that appears likely to be able to meet the technical criterion and does not have a hard boundary to its extent. For this reason, the mapping of the Candidate Area is shown as a hatched line and has no solid outward edge and does not attempt to carefully include or exclude land at the edges (this will be for consideration during the boundary setting stage of assessment). Where there are incongruous features, fragmentation, features of interest or transitional landscapes these are noted within the evaluation tables and in many cases are noted for particular scrutiny at later stages of assessment, namely desirability and boundary setting. The Natural England Guidance makes clear that the process of evaluation is iterative as illustrated on Page 8 of the Guidance. It is likely therefore that the extent of land qualifying for designation, as defined in the Proposed Candidate Area, may change as a result of further assessment and refinement as the designation process proceeds.

5.2 Specific Issues

- 5.2.1 Where land is included in the Candidate Area, additional issues of relevance to the subsequent boundary setting process or which might affect the final extent of a qualifying area have been recorded in the evaluation tables (section 6 below). These include areas where the landscape is in transition, areas of fragmentation, the influence of incongruous features, the influence of any settlements on natural beauty as well as their geographical extent and location. These are considered in more detail below.
- 5.2.2 ***Landscapes with the same geology or character*** do not automatically qualify in terms of their natural beauty. Land does not need to have particular characteristics in order to qualify for designation (designated landscapes may contain more than one type of landscape provided the areas qualify in terms of the levels of natural beauty in each) and it is not a 'tick-box' process. Equally, landscapes of a particular type may not express the same level of natural beauty across an area, eg it may be in transition. The assessment of land for designation must therefore focus on natural beauty and the factors which contribute to this and not be determined based on character. Although the starting point of the Yorkshire Wolds designation project was to define an Area of Search based on the Yorkshire Wolds National Character Area, this should not be taken to mean that the whole of the Yorkshire Wolds character area will have the same level of natural beauty or indeed sufficient natural beauty to qualify for national

landscape designation. This is reiterated in the Natural England Guidance which states:

'there is no need for a National Park or AONB to display a distinctive or coherent identity. A designation can contain different landscapes so long as the designation as a whole satisfies the natural beauty criterion' (paragraph 6.10, first bullet).

- 5.2.3 **Areas of transition** occur where the landscape is changing either in terms of its character or qualities. Such changes may be sudden or gradual, simple or complex. The boundaries of designated landscapes often do not follow marked changes in the level of natural beauty because of these transitions. The Natural England boundary setting considerations²³ state that the boundary should be drawn conservatively, towards the high-quality end of areas of transition, excluding land of lesser quality. On this basis it is acceptable that transitional areas are included within a Candidate Area for further consideration at the boundary setting stage.
- 5.2.4 Visual associations (such as views back to distinctive landforms within the proposed AONB), may also be used to help define the extent of land for inclusion in transitional areas. The extent to which land which clearly meets AONB status influences scenic quality of land beyond depends upon distance, elevation or drama and the distinctiveness of the landform, plus the nature of other views in the round.
- 5.2.5 **Fragmentation** may occur, for example where a landscape is physically separated by major infrastructure or development, or where land use changes have occurred such that landscape patterns and features have lost integrity. Where fragmentation is present, the degree to which it affects natural beauty depends on the fragmenting features, their visibility and the types of connections which remain between fragmented areas. Where fragmentation occurs but does not significantly affect natural beauty overall, such areas may be included within the Candidate Area and may require particular scrutiny if taken forward. Conversely, relatively small discrete areas may be regarded at first sight as meeting natural beauty criteria but, when considered in the context of a wider area, are seen to be isolated pockets unconnected to the core tract of land which meets the designation criteria (see extent below). A judgment must be reached as to the extent of the fragmentation of the landscape and whether the lesser quality areas prevent qualifying pockets from being included.
- 5.2.6 **Incongruous features** of many kinds can have an effect on natural beauty, particularly factors such as scenic or landscape quality, tranquillity and relative wildness. The extent to which any incongruous feature affects an area will be dependent on, for example, its scale, height, distance, surrounding topography, vegetation and movement. Where incongruous features are present this is noted within the evaluation and a judgement reached as to their effect on surrounding land. Often these issues will require further scrutiny at the boundary setting stage to ensure that only land which meets the natural beauty criterion is included within a designation.

²³ Guidance for Assessing Landscapes for Designation as National Park or AONB in England, June 2021, Appendix 4.

- 5.2.7 **Settlements** can also have a significant effect on the surrounding area and their influence is thus recorded. Paragraph 6.11 of the Natural England Guidance states that settlements should be considered on their merits. This includes consideration of historic interest; whether there is extensive new development; whether there is a strong sense of place and whether the settlement lies within an area of qualifying land or is at the edge. Natural England Guidance also states that settlements should only be included if they lie within a wider tract of qualifying land and that settlements should not be split by a designation.
- 5.2.8 **Extent** is also a consideration. Section 82(1) of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CRoW) defines an AONB in England as 'an area that is not in a National park but which appears to Natural England to be of such outstanding natural beauty.....' This is different from National Parks which are required to be an 'extensive tract' but none the less indicates that the scale of the area for designation is a consideration.
- 5.2.9 Extracts from the NPC minutes dated 6 February 1973²⁴ considering the future designation programme highlight at Paragraph 9 the need to take account of:
- 'extent in terms of both total area and continuity, a smaller area being acceptable for extensions than a new designation'.*
- 5.2.10 In addition, the designation history for the Lincolnshire Wolds detailed in paragraph 4.3.4 above highlights that, in defining the area for designation as AONB, smaller outliers were excluded from the final boundary. The scale of an area was also reflected in the decision not to designate Flamborough Head as an AONB (paragraph 4.3.8 above) due to its small extent (around 32 square kms).
- 5.2.11 More broadly, this approach is also borne out in current AONB designations in England where there are only three inland AONBs with outliers (namely Kent Downs, Chilterns and Forest of Bowland). Their outliers are a reasonable size (16.49, 51.2 sq km and 57.9 sq km respectively).

²⁴ Folio 12, Cranbourne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB Designation History, Ray Woolmore, 2012

6.0 Detailed Evaluation Tables

Yorkshire Wolds AONB Designation Project

Evaluation Area 1 – Derwent Tributaries Farmland

Landscape Context	
Location/Context	This Evaluation Area includes an area of Jurassic limestone and the complex chalk escarpment and foothills which mark the edge of the Yorkshire Wolds. The limestone forms a series of subtle ridges which extend westward into the Howardian Hills, while the rising chalk escarpment to the east and south, visually defines the area. To the north is the town of Malton and to the west is the incised course of the Derwent Gorge. In the north-east and south-west of the area the landscape is in transition, dropping gradually into the Vale of Pickering and Vale of York respectively.
Landscape Character	This area mainly comprises the Limestone Ridge and Chalk Foothills landscape types as defined in the North Yorkshire and York County Landscape Characterisation Project (May 2011), with smaller areas of Sand and Gravel Vale Fringe to the south-east of Malton and Chalk Wolds along the southern and eastern fringes of the area, where the steep escarpment rises to visually define the area.
Designation History	The majority of the area, with the exception of the lower lying fringes of Malton and Norton, are designated an Area of High Landscape Value in the Ryedale Local Plan (Policy SP13).

Natural Beauty Factors and Evidence	
Landscape quality	<p>Most of this landscape is in good condition. Historic Landscape Characterisation demonstrates that the most intact areas of small piecemeal enclosure are associated with the scarp and its immediate foothills (especially the area around Burythorpe). It also reveals that there is evidence of strip field enclosures associated with settlements, eg Langton. However, further to the north towards Malton and to the south-west, the landscape has been subject to field boundary loss, horse-racing training grounds at Norton High Field and golf course development at the former Welham Park.</p> <p>The landscape is dominated by estates associated with Birdsall, Langton, Burythorpe and Westow, including notable areas of wood pasture and parkland, where the landscape remains intact. Elsewhere the landscape supports mixed farming within a high incidence of pasture. There is some evidence of modern improved fields and a higher incidence of arable farming which becomes most evident where the topography is gentle, and the landscape appears more open eg north of Menethorpe. In these locations incongruous features can assume a greater visual influence eg pylons to the south of Howsham. There is also evidence of the loss of some areas of parkland landscape, an example being found at Burythorpe, where the church now sits amongst arable farmland; historic maps indicate that it previously sat within parkland.</p> <p>The area is generally under mixed farming with a relatively high incidence of pasture in areas of parkland and on steep slopes and along river courses. Nevertheless, only around 40% of the area is in Higher tier and Mid-tier Countryside Stewardship</p>

	<p>Schemes with some notable gaps around Langton, Burythorpe and Leaverling. In places arable farming has extended up to the edge of minor watercourses and some watercourses lack management and are overgrown and choked.</p> <p>This is generally a well wooded landscape with mature hedgerow trees, veteran trees in parkland and deciduous broadleaved copses on hillsides (many are ancient semi-natural woodlands) and along stream courses. There is also evidence of some tree planting along lanes in the last 50 years including oak, sycamore and horse chestnut and this type of planting contrasts with the linear willow vegetation along the becks. However, in the north of the area at Langton Wold and towards Malton and the Vale of Pickering the land is more open and farmed for arable or is influenced by equestrian and recreational use. On some of the steeper scarp slopes there are areas of mixed conifer plantation which have created a more enclosed character.</p> <p>The woods, trees and hedges create an intact network of habitats across mixed farmland and the difference in species within hedgerows and along water course such as Mill Beck and Langton Beck ensure that this is a strongly legible landscape.</p> <p>Particular sites of nature conservation interest include Three Dykes SSSI, comprising lowland calcareous grassland in favourable condition. Other sites include Jeffry Bog and Beckdale Meadow SSSIs which are areas of neutral grassland; these are in unfavourable condition due to under-grazing but are recovering.</p> <p>The section of the River Derwent SSSI and SPA within EA1 is valued for its river course and neutral grassland along the valley floor; however, this is in unfavourable, but recovering condition. It also includes an area of old river course (ox-bow lake) close to Welham Park which is in favourable condition.</p> <p>The settlement and lane patterns are intact, consisting of small-scale villages located on spring lines or minor watercourses and a dispersed pattern of farms. The villages are mainly linear in form with wider grass verges at their centre. In places there is evidence of more modern built-form, including some large-scale farm buildings associated with expanding farmsteads and some small-scale residential estates on the outskirts of villages; these can be visually intrusive or unsympathetic to the traditional siting of settlements in the landscape, eg Westow. Nevertheless, these examples are relatively incidental.</p> <p>Active quarry sites at Kennythorpe Moor Sandpit (west of Burythorpe) and Limestone Quarry (Whitewall Quarry) south of Norton have a localised impact on landscape condition. The latter is particularly visible to the north from Malton and Norton, while the former is concealed by woodland planting and has minimal impact on the surrounding landscape.</p> <p>The 132kV transmission line that runs across the western part of EA1 is a significant detractor. Generally, the pylons are seen against the land backdrop of the scarp but, occasionally, they break the skyline, or are visible from some locations along their length where the pylons can have a cumulative and more significant effect on landscape condition, especially where the landscape is more open and less topographically distinct, as noted above.</p>
--	---

Scenic quality	<p>The scenic qualities of EA1 are strongly related to the dramatic and complex chalk scarp, which defines the area to the south and east, forming unfettered skylines and giving a sense of scale to the landscape. Good examples are seen at Brownmoor Dale and Birdsall Dale. The gentle undulations of the underlying limestone ridges, and pattern of small stream valleys which drain westwards into the steep gorge of the Derwent, also contribute significantly to scenic quality. From some of the ridges there are views northwards with the North Yorks Moors visible in the far distance but no sense of Malton. Distinctive foothills, such as Mount Ferrant, Fox Covert Hill and Doodale Hill, form visually important knolls below the scarp; these hills are often emphasised by woodland clumps. Distinctive woodland copses, such as Jubilee Plantation above Birdsall, also enrich the landscape of the generally open scarp slopes.</p> <p>Overlying the topographic variations is mixed farmland with small hedgerow enclosures, areas of parkland with mature veteran trees and riparian meadows and trees, such as found at Menethorpe. These features together create rich and textured patterns and, coupled with a high incidence of woodland, impart a verdant quality to the landscape.</p> <p>The small rural lane network winds its way through this landscape and affords a sequence of unfolding framed views to the scarp and foothills which delight the senses while, on the upper scarp slopes, there are uplifting, long distance and uninterrupted views across the area and into the wider Howardian Hills to the north-west. However, the scenic qualities of EA1 are reduced in the north due to the influence of Malton, land uses including a golf course and quarry activity and less distinctive landscape patterns; the increased distance from the scarp slopes also has an influence.</p> <p>Small rural villages, where dwellings and stone walls built of the local limestone have much in common with the villages of the Howardian Hills AONB, generally strengthen unity of character and cohesiveness, contributing positively to scenic beauty within EA1. Whilst much of the River Derwent falls within the Howardian Hills AONB, memorable views into the its wooded valley from the western rim make a further contribution to scenic quality. Furthermore, this landscape contains several low key but nonetheless local landmark buildings including the churches at Burythorpe and Westow and the estate buildings and mansion house at Birdsall.</p> <p>Overall, this landscape has many visual delights and variety including sequential views along rural lanes lined with trees and froths of cow parsley in early summer and glimpsed views across a patchwork of fields and trees, to the rising wooded slopes of the scarp. North of Sutton and Langton Wolds the landscape slopes towards Malton and Norton and whilst still forming attractive landscape, it is slightly removed from the scarp being visually and physically separated by the east west ridges. Here equestrian and recreational land uses and views to the Whitewall quarry and golf course at Welham Park mean that the area is transitional and lacks the qualities found further to the south.</p>
Relative wildness	<p>This area has a settled character and does not exhibit a strong sense of relative wildness. However, on the higher scarp slopes, where there is exposure to the elements, a sense of remoteness and proximity to nature is more keenly felt.</p>

Relative tranquillity	<p>CPRE Dark Skies mapping indicates the majority of this area benefits from high levels of dark night skies, reflecting the rural settlement pattern and absence of major roads. However, the dark skies are locally compromised in closer proximity to Malton and Norton to the north of Langton Wold.</p> <p>Tranquillity is high across the majority of the area, with its secluded, rural character with quiet lanes, small villages and areas of semi-natural grassland habitat associated with scarp slopes, parkland and areas of mature trees and woodlands. Nevertheless, the road between Malton and Stamford Bridge is busy and tranquillity is reduced along the corridor and along the B1248 on the north-eastern fringes of this area.</p> <p>Tranquillity is also reduced where the 132kV line is more visually obvious in areas of open arable farmland and north towards Malton where views of the town, land uses such as quarrying, golf course and equestrian activities have a cumulative effect.</p> <p>Tranquillity is especially high along the Derwent and on the open steep scarp slopes, where there is a sense of solitude and peace.</p>
Natural heritage features	<p>The rich natural heritage of EA1 is reflected in the high number of SSSI and County Wildlife Sites. This includes areas of neutral grassland, wetland, and calcareous grassland as well as areas of calcareous woodland and ancient woodland. In particular they include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • River Derwent SSSI and SPA, valued for its classic river profile and aquatic life including river lamprey populations. • Jeffry Bog, valued for its marsh and neutral grassland • Beck Dale Meadow, valued for its lowland neutral grassland • Three Dykes, which supports species rich lowland calcareous grassland • Low Hutton Meadows SNCI (ancient semi-natural neutral and calcareous woodland) • Church Farm SNCI, Westow (old, established semi-natural neutral grassland) • Beck Dale SNCI, Westow (ancient or long-standing neutral to calcareous woodland and grassland) • Boon Wood, valued for its woodland and wet flushes <p>There are also other areas of habitat which form an important network across the area, including important areas of wet springs or flushes eg east of Birdsall (Rowmire Spring), east of Mount Ferrant and small streams and watercourses which feed into the River Derwent, including Clombe Beck, Langton Beck, Thornthorpe Beck, Menethorpe Beck, Mill Beck, Howl Beck, Gilder Beck and Rowmire Beck. These stream courses create narrow, incised corridors of wet flushes, small pastures and woodland and add a richness to the landscape in terms of colour and texture.</p> <p>Important areas of ancient, replanted woodland include Oxpasture Wood, Earthquake Plantation, Crow Wood, Clombe Wood and Car Nab Woodland. Ancient semi-natural woodland is also found at Bathingwell Wood and is concentrated in the foothills around Birdsall. These established woods and mature hedgerow trees more widely contribute to a well-established character, adding to the natural beauty of the area.</p>

	<p>The underlying geology of oolitic limestone and chalk is a strong influence in this landscape, giving rise to legible topographic variations including the east-west ridges of limestone, eg Langton and Sutton Wold, outlier hills such as Fox Covert Hill and Doodle Hill as well as spring lines at the junction of chalk and clays and a scattering of former chalk pits on the upper slopes of the scarp. In places such as along Penhowe Lane, ericaceous plants such bracken line the lane reflecting sandy soils and adding visual variety and seasonal interest.</p> <p>The deep gorge of River Derwent and Ox Bow Lake in the north of the area are key physiographic features, as are the distinctive 'slumps' on the chalk scarp which create interesting undulations along its face. All of these features and habitats make a significant contribution to the richness of this landscape and directly contribute individually and collectively to the natural beauty of the area.</p>
Cultural heritage	<p>EA1 benefits from its rich cultural heritage, which remains legible and contributes to the area's natural beauty, increasing perceptions of time depth and long-established character.</p> <p>This heritage is most readily appreciated in the small historic villages, with their small-scale enclosure patterns and traditional orchards. Langton, Westow and Howsham include numerous listed buildings and retain an intact character reflected in their designation as conservation areas. The settlement of Burythorpe, whilst not designated a conservation area, also imparts a strong vernacular and sense of historic unity. These characteristics are complemented by the estate landscapes and parkland, in particular at Birdsall, with its Georgian-style country house situated on an earlier monastic estate. There are also a number of isolated churches which contribute to local sense of place eg Westow (Grade II*) and Burythorpe (Grade II).</p> <p>Scheduled monuments also make an important contribution to natural beauty, either because they are visible as above-ground remains or because the historic sites relate strongly to the topography of the landscape and therefore add meaning to the physical landform of the area. Significant sites include Mount Ferrant, a motte and bailey castle south-west of Birdsall (taking advantage of the naturally defensive position on a steep-sided spur of higher land) and a section of the Aldro earthworks – a linear boundary with two cross-dykes and nine round barrows on Birsall Wold. Aldro earthworks comprises an exceptional concentration of earthwork features, including ditches and banks (which are discernible in the landscape) and also several Bronze Age round barrows (only some of which remain above ground). The linear earthworks are one of the few monument types that illustrate how land was divided up in the prehistoric period and are of considerable importance and of national significance. These earthworks, which extend into adjoining evaluation areas EA9 and EA10, have been excavated and are associated with the eminent archaeologist J R Mortimer.</p>
Candidate Area	
Overall weight and spatial distribution of natural beauty evidence and recommendation as to	<p>There is significant evidence of natural beauty relating to the majority of the Derwent Tributaries Farmland.</p> <p>Detailed consideration has been given to the settlements of Langton, Westow, Menethorpe, Howsham and Burythorpe. These are small in scale and rural in character, and relate well to their surrounding landscape context, which is of high quality. Their historic buildings and traditional form and layout contribute to natural beauty of the landscape as a whole. All these settlements</p>

land that should be considered a Candidate Area	<p>have therefore been included within the Candidate Area. The villages along the River Derwent adjacent to the Howardian Hills AONB will however require particular scrutiny given their location and separation from the wider Candidate Area as a result of transitional landscape quality and the influence of road corridor and 132kV line (see below).</p> <p>To the north of EA1 the landscape is transitional where it slopes down towards Malton and Norton; landscape patterns and land uses are less intact and the greater distance from the scarp face, which defines this landscape to the east and south, means that the natural beauty is less strongly expressed. On balance the extent of the Candidate Area has been drawn southwards to coincide with the marked east-west limestone ridge of Sutton and Langton Wolds. Particularly scrutiny will need to be given to the effect of the quarry at Whitewall at the boundary setting stage.</p> <p>Those parts of the Derwent Tributaries Farmland which are considered suitable for inclusion within a Candidate Area include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land south of Sutton and Langton Wold extending westwards to be contiguous with the Howardian Hills AONB.
Need for further scrutiny	Based on the analysis above, particular scrutiny will be required when defining the boundary to the north and north-east, as well as to the west due to the transitional nature of landscape quality and scenic qualities and influence of incongruous features as detailed above.
Issues to be Addressed in Defining Extent	
Transition	<p>There is a transition in landscape and scenic quality to the north beyond the Sutton and Langton east-west ridge. North of here, the influences of equestrian uses and views to Malton, as well as some fragmentation of the landscape due to quarrying and golf course development, all have an influence on landscape and scenic qualities. The greater distance from the scarp also means that its contribution to scenic quality is less strong.</p> <p>Similarly, in the southern and western fringes, topography becomes less varied as the landscape transitions into the Vale of York, and it becomes more open. This, coupled with the receding scarp as it turns southwards, means that this transition zone increasingly lacks the defining scenic qualities found further to the north and east.</p> <p>In both these areas care will be required at the boundary setting stage to draw a boundary conservatively at the higher end of the transition whilst also finding clear boundary features on the ground, in accordance with Natural England Guidance.</p>
Fragmentation	The landscape to the north of Sutton and Langton Wolds has experienced some fragmentation due to land use as noted above. Particular care will be required when defining a boundary around the equestrian training ground at Langton Wold and Gallows Hill and close to Whitewall quarry.
Incongruous features	Particular consideration should be given to the influence of the 132kV overhead transmission line both at the desirability stage (in terms of opportunities for undergrounding) and at the boundary setting stage in association with the road corridor, less distinct

	topography and more intensively farmed arable land where there is evidence of field boundary loss. Furthermore, care will also be required where large modern farm buildings are located close to the edge and where they have a negative impact on scenic qualities.
Settlements	The settlements of Howsham, Westow and Menethorpe all lie close to the Howardian Hills AONB boundary and contain buildings of local limestone and vernacular character which sit within a high-quality landscape. These settlements make a positive contribution to the natural beauty of the area. However, the land to the east is transitional and impacted by the 132kV line, busy road and areas which are less topographically distinct and subject to intensive arable farming, where there has been field amalgamation. Particularly scrutiny will therefore be required when defining a boundary to determine if it is possible to extend the boundary to include these settlements and for a new Yorkshire Wolds AONB boundary to be contiguous with the Howardian Hills AONB or if the boundary needs to be drawn further to the east, excluding lesser quality land. This latter outcome would leave the settlements of Howsham, Westow and Menethorpe undesignated unless they are considered for inclusion in a Howardian Hills AONB boundary review at some future stage, and this implication should be carefully considered.

Yorkshire Wolds AONB Designation Project

Evaluation Area 2 – Wharram Percy Wolds

Landscape Context	
Location/Context	This Evaluation Area lies to the southeast of Malton and is strongly rural. It comprises a series of distinct valleys which cut into the edge of the wolds scarp within which are spring lines that feed the Whitestone and Settrington Becks. This area has a strong topography and is well wooded, giving rise to a landscape which is predominately inward looking. To the north is the Northern Scarp (EA3) and to the west lower lying farmland associated with the Derwent tributaries (EA1). To the south and east this landscape abuts the incised valleys of Thixendale (EA9) and the Great Wold Valley (EA5) respectively.
Landscape Character	This landscape comprises the Chalk Wolds and Chalk Foothills Landscape Types along within a small area of Sand and Gravel Fringe Landscape Type and Limestone Ridge Landscape Type in the northwest, as defined in the North Yorkshire and York Landscape Character Assessment (May 2011).
Designation History	The whole of this area is designated an Area of High Landscape Value (Policy SP13 of Ryedale Local Plan). EA2 was included within the broad area put forward for AONB designation by CPRE in 1991.

Natural Beauty Factors and Evidence	
Landscape quality	<p>Much of the enclosure pattern remains intact. Overall, the area comprises Planned Large Scale Parliamentary Enclosure on higher, more level land with Piecemeal Enclosure on steeper slopes and valleys. Historic Landscape Characterisation indicates only small areas of Modern Improved Fields. The steepest slopes are pasture with areas cloaked in woodland or hawthorn scrub, the latter displaying large areas of white in early summer.</p> <p>Almost all of this area is included in Higher or Mid Tier Countryside Stewardship or Entry Level and Higher Level Environmental Stewardship Schemes indicating substantial areas of farming landscapes are benefitting from positive land management measures.</p> <p>Nature conservation sites valued for their calcareous grassland (eg Nine Spring Dale SSSI and Cow Cliff Pasture and Quarry SSSI) are in favourable condition following scrub clearance and appropriate grazing. Other sites such as former Wharram Quarry are under active management by Yorkshire Wildlife Trust, while the historic site of Wharram Percy is actively managed by English Heritage.</p>
Scenic quality	This is an intact, deeply rural, unspoiled landscape with many classic chalk landscape elements and a powerful sense of place. With the southern part of the area rising to around 200m, long views are possible over long, sweeping slopes to distant horizons,

which are often studded with tree clumps and woodland. Deeply incised valleys enhance the classic chalkland character and the visual imagery of the landform, the steep valley sides varying from grazed grassland to scrub and woodland. Most of the upper reaches of the valleys are dry, enhancing the chalkland character.

The Churches at Wharram Percy, Wharram le Street and North Grimston are local landmarks which add to scenic composition. Deep Dale is one of the most 'picturesque spots of the Wolds Way' (The Wolds Way, David Rubinstein, 1979). The smoothly curving Wold valley draws the eye, leading to the poignant ruin of Wharram Percy church, with wider views beyond to the Vale of Pickering and the North York Moors. There are also fine views into the central Wolds around Fimber to the south.

Smooth rounded lines of the Wolds and areas of woodland contrast with the more rectilinear patterns on the surrounding higher land, including the straight shelterbelt planting associated with Wharram Percy Farm and Settrington Grange.

The sinuous valleys and high elevation of surrounding ridges funnel views towards landmarks including the view west, down Whitestone Beck towards North Grimston and the red bricked viaduct.

The northern part of the area also rises to a height of nearly 200m above Ordnance Datum (AOD) to the north-east, but is generally lower and more wooded, with hedgerows and woods and, to the south of Settrington, a strong sense of a managed estate landscape. However, the northern part of the area also exhibits many classic chalk landscape features, in particular deep, steep-sided dry valleys.

From some high points, for example, from the B1253 east of North Grimston, long views can be enjoyed to the Howardian Hills far to the west and over the Wolds outside EA2. Showery weather, pushed along by westerly winds, can enrich the landscape experience, towering cumulus clouds in a vast dome of sky combining with the vast sweep of landform to create a visceral landscape experience. The sounds of the skylark and, in season, the distinctive ripples spreading across the cereal crops, add to variety and interest to the scene. Nothing else intrudes. Despite the intensive arable farming, natural forces dominate and inspire - the sky, the weather, the landform and the influence on the landscape and heritage of the chalk geology.

The valleys - secretive, enclosed and intimate - weave their way within the sweeping, open, higher land, exemplifying the contrast lying at the heart of the character of the Wolds landscape. This contrast is a notable feature which can be experienced when walking the two long-distance paths which run through the area: The Centenary Way and the Yorkshire Wolds Way.

The area as a whole is unmistakably a chalk landscape, and this is reflected in its vegetation and soil, and in the white chalk exposure in any cuttings into the bedrock and in the limey colour of water runoff from the fields after heavy rain.

North Grimston is the only settlement of any size, although it is little more than a hamlet, buried deep in a wooded valley setting, its character enriched by the ancient St. Nicolas Church which is approached by an avenue of lime trees. The church appears to have been built on a 12th century foundation, although its main features are Norman. The village as a whole is largely unspoiled and conveys a deep sense of history; it feels naturally embedded into the valley setting. Elsewhere, there is a scatter of farm buildings and occasional cottages.

	<p>Wharram Percy medieval settlement is wonderfully situated in a deep and peaceful chalk valley and combines with steep chalk grassland, woods and scrub to create a place of powerful time-depth and diverse natural heritage. It is the best known deserted medieval village in England, its sense of isolation and its powerful landscape setting combining with its historic importance to create the jewel in the sweeping beauty of this assessment area at the heart of the Yorkshire Wolds.</p>
Relative wildness	<p>The deserted medieval village of Wharram Percy and church ruin and earthworks have a significant influence on the area and impart a strong sense of the passing of time and a return of nature. This is reinforced by the remains of the former quarry and former Malton to Driffield Railway line which extends up the dale, passing into a tunnel (Burdale Tunnel) to the south-east of the deserted village.</p> <p>The highest ridges which define the southern part of this area are some of the most isolated parts of the Wolds.</p>
Relative tranquillity	<p>This evaluation area exhibits very strong levels of relative tranquillity - it contains no major roads, sources of intense noise, overhead electricity lines or pylons. There are no unsettling visual intrusions and no large-scale new development. This is a tranquil rural landscape of great richness and natural beauty where painterly vistas and layers of nature and history open up throughout as one passes through it.</p> <p>The CPRE Dark Skies mapping shows that EA2 largely lies within the highest level of dark skies. Areas of steep, well-wooded slopes and the relatively large area in the north with no roads, are notably tranquil.</p> <p>There is some noise impact from the B1248, which is a key road route over the Wolds, and also the B1253. These roads converge at North Grimston, although their impact on tranquillity is nevertheless relatively minor and localised.</p>
Natural heritage features	<p>There are SSSIs at Nine Spring Dale (valued for its species-rich chalk grassland and entomological interest), Cow Cliff Pasture and Quarry (valued for its unimproved chalk grassland and butterfly population, which is also a Nature Reserve) and Wharram Quarry (valued for its representative flora and fauna of a chalk quarry which is managed to continually express the stages of succession from bare chalk to closed vegetation).</p> <p>There are a number of natural springs in the area and these have influenced settlement pattern and land uses. These springs have given rise to a series of Ings (an old Norse word referring to water meadows or marshes) along some valley sides.</p> <p>Large blocks of ancient, replanted woodland are found at Settrington Wood and Lund Wood and some areas of wood pasture are associated with the parkland landscape at Settrington. This woodland provides visual structure to the landscape reinforcing the steep slopes and folds of the scarp.</p>
Cultural heritage	<p>Scheduled Monuments which form above ground features are found throughout EA2 and contribute time-depth and enhanced understanding of the area. They include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wharram Percy deserted medieval village.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A large number of barrows and various earthworks west of Wharram Percy Plantation. These extend west to join with the Aldro Earthworks. • Fizzgig Hole Plantation: an entrenchment which extends north into EA3. • Round barrows near Settrington High Barn. • The route of the Malton to Driffield railway and associated structures eg viaduct at North Grimston. <p>There is also evidence of cultivation terraces south of North Grimston, although these are not designated.</p> <p>Wharram Percy is regarded as one of the most studied and influential deserted mediaeval village in England, significantly improving our understanding of this period in history. It began to decline as a result of the Black Death and was also impacted by early 16th century enclosure for sheep farming. Its church is associated with Thixendale, which served the village population until 1939 and is the only standing medieval building around which there are grassed-over foundations of two manor houses and about 40 peasant houses and their outbuildings. Since 1948 the settlement has been the focus of intensive research, which has made it one of the best understood and well known deserted medieval villages (English Heritage). The scheduled monument is not accessible by car, being located in an isolated, steep sided and unspoiled chalk valley, enhancing the deep sense of history which the site conveys.</p> <p>The area around Wharram Percy is associated with the writings of A. J. Brown, who described the higher land in the south of the area: <i>'The earth is so full of chalky flint hereabouts that a new ploughed field looks as if it has been sprinkled with cherry blossom or snowflakes. The land falls away to left and right, but the track clings to the ridge and rewards one with glorious views. They talk about walking on top of the world: but walking on top of the Wold is good enough for me....'</i></p> <p>It is also associated with a poem by Peter Didsbury (2005) called Words at Wharram Percy who captured the tranquillity of the area: <i>'No silence here. The place is loud with peace. Blackcap and robin give voice in the soft June rain, conspire in their different octaves with leaf and lawn and stone. The air retains millennia of sound. Listen.'</i>.....</p>
Evaluation	
Overall weight and spatial distribution of natural beauty evidence	<p>There is a considerable weight of evidence in relation to landscape quality, scenic quality, tranquillity and evidence of relative wildness, natural heritage and cultural heritage, particularly in areas associated with the dramatic dry valleys and parkland landscapes. This part of the Yorkshire Wolds contains some of the most outstanding chalk karst landforms in England.</p> <p>Whilst the elevated Wold tops are intensively farmed, they provide a foil to the valleys and often allow far-reaching panoramic views.</p>
Candidate Area	
Overall Recommendation as to land that should be	The whole of EA2 should be taken forward to form part of the Candidate Area for AONB designation.

considered a Candidate Area	
Need for Particular Scrutiny	Based on the analysis above, there is a need for further scrutiny to identify a suitable boundary in the northwest of the area where the landscape is in transition towards Malton.
Issues to be Addressed in Defining Extent	
Transition	<p>There is a transition in landscape and scenic quality to the west of Grimston Lane and along the Beverley Road. East of Grimston Lane the land rises to the chalk scarp face while to the west the landscape becomes more open, and intensively farmed although nonetheless influenced by views to the scarp and gentle undulations in landform extending into EA1.</p> <p>Care will need to be taken when considering this transitional area (in association to the findings of EA1), to define a conservative boundary within the transition whilst also balancing the need for a clearly identifiable boundary line on the ground, as set out within the Natural England Guidance approach to boundary setting.</p>
Fragmentation	N/A
Incongruous features	N/A
Settlements	The hamlet of North Grimston lies within this area and on the eastern fringes of the area is the hamlet of Wharram le Street. As noted above, both lie within landscape which is of high quality. The rural character of the settlements and their location close to springs and watercourses ensure that they retain a close relationship to their wider setting and contribute positively to the natural beauty of the surrounding area. Both settlements have therefore been included in the Candidate Area. Depending on the extent of qualifying land in adjoining Evaluation Areas, a boundary should be drawn which seeks to include these settlements within a proposed designated area.

Yorkshire Wolds AONB Designation Project Evaluation Area 3 – Northern Scarp Slopes

Landscape Context	
Location/Context	This Evaluation Area comprises the northern scarp of the Yorkshire Wolds and its interface with the Vale of Pickering to the north. Although a relatively narrow evaluation area the landscape is very distinctive and becomes increasingly complex and indented in the west. It forms an elevated and steeply sloping landscape stretching between Hunmanby in the east to Settrington in the west. It is contiguous with EA2, EA5 and EA4, which lie immediately to the south.
Landscape Character	<p>In the North Yorkshire and York Landscape Character Assessment (May 2011) the highest part of the ridge is defined as Chalk Wolds and its more complex slopes in the west as Chalk Foothills. Where the land extends into the Vale of Pickering it is defined as Sand and Gravel Fringe.</p> <p>In the east the land falls within the area covered by the Scarborough District Landscape Character Assessment (2013), which defines it as Flixton Brow to Muston.</p> <p>The key rural settlements include Settrington, Scagglethorpe, Rillington, Thorpe Bassett, Wintringham, Scampston, West and East Knapton, East and West Heslerton, Sherburn, Ganton, Staxton, Flixton, and Folkton.</p>
Designation History	<p>The scarp slopes down to the A64 and as far east as the boundary with Scarborough District. It is designated as an area of High Landscape Value (Policy SP13 in the Ryedale Local Plan).</p> <p>Land within Scarborough District (east of Staxton) has not previously been recognised as having special landscape value.</p> <p>Much of EA3 was included within the broad area put forward for AONB designation by CPRE in 1991.</p> <p>The qualities of the Vale of Pickering, which lies adjacent to the north, are noted in the <i>Vale of Pickering Statement of Significance</i> by English Heritage.</p>

Natural Beauty Factors and Evidence	
Landscape quality	The general condition of this landscape is good but shows some signs of fragmentation in places. Land use reflects the geology and topography of the area, with the steeper slopes of the scarp supporting pasture and woodland (comprising mixed conifer plantations and broadleaved plantations such as Knapton Plantation and Deep Dale Plantation). On the gentler lower slopes there is arable farmland, parkland and conifer plantations (e.g. Sands Wood), reflecting the transition to sandy soils. However,

this pattern has become eroded in places where pasture has been converted to arable and mixed plantations have cloaked some of the chalk grassland slopes, creating a more wooded character to the scarp face. There is also some evidence of ash dieback in the deciduous plantations. Southeast of Sherburn there is an area of pig farming associated with Gladvic Farm which causes visual clutter.

Historic Landscape Characterisation confirms these trends, showing some loss of field boundaries (although it is patchy), for example south of Wintringham and Thorpe Bassett, and most extensively in the eastern end of the scarp. Despite this, other patterns of planned and piecemeal enclosure, strip fields and crofts associated with settlement, as well as notable areas of parkland at Settrington, Wintringham, Scampston and Knapton, remain dominant and provide structure to the landscape. This is despite some evidence of some former parkland landscapes becoming ploughed eg Settrington and Scampston Park south of the A64.

EA3 contains significant areas of uncultivated land. However, nature conservation interest is limited to a few SSSI sites and a small number of Local Wildlife Sites. SSSIs include Wintringham Marsh and Ladyhills, which are both in good condition, although the former has been affected by adjacent agricultural improvements along the Wintringham Beck and the latter by scrub invasion. Other SSSIs include Sked Dale, which is a calcareous grassland site and is currently in unfavourable condition due to encroachment by scrub and coarse grasses following the cessation of grazing, and Spell Howe Plantation, which is a broadleaved mixed and yew woodland in unfavourable condition but recovering.

A significant proportion of EA3 is in Entry Level Stewardship, with the areas west of East Knapton and around Settrington managed under Mid Tier Countryside Stewardship. The area south and west of Thorpe Bassett, which comprises the most significant areas of piecemeal enclosure pattern, does not fall under any agreements. This indicates that only parts of this landscape are benefitting from positive land management measures.

The pattern of spring-line villages remains strongly legible, although their character has been altered by more modern residential expansion (eg Rillington), ad hoc development along the A64 and caravan development especially in the east at Flixton Ings. In the east of the area the pattern of separate villages has become blurred along the western part of the A1039, at the foot of the scarp, and the introduction of leylandii and laurel hedging to curtilages can appear incongruous.

This landscape includes the former Knapton Gravel Pit which is now utilised as a waste management site and has a significant planning history with multiple applications, approvals and amendments. Development within the site is visible from some locations to the north and forms an incongruous element on the open slopes and is associated with c 50 vehicle movements a day. Planning was approved in 2017 for a Green Energy Facility on part of the site, although this is yet to be implemented.

Along the A64 corridor, there are some incongruous developments, for example the Power Station at Knapton Carr, and commercial development at Sherburn. These latter developments primarily affect the lower slopes and can sever the scarp from the wider landscape to the north. Elsewhere, telecommunication masts, which sit on the higher land, break the otherwise

	uncluttered skylines eg Muston Wold and Westerfield Wold, although given their singularity and the scale of the scarp slopes, their effect is slight.
Scenic quality	<p>The scenic qualities of this landscape are linked to the drama and scale of the chalk escarpment, which from higher land affords panoramic views northwards across the Vale of Pickering to the rising slope of the North York Moors National Park. At its highest in the west, the scarp rises to c. 200m AOD at Settrington Beacon. On descending the scarp along minor lanes, these views are framed by woodland, creating a sense of exhilaration and memorable vistas, unique to the study area.</p> <p>From the lower slopes, at the junction with the Vale of Pickering, there are views along the scarp; it is from here its indented and smooth flowing lines can be best appreciated. Along the slopes, the patterns of woodland and open grassland or lower arable enclosures create a geometric, blocky character. In morning and evening light, more subtle indentations and undulations on the surface of the open slopes are accentuated, adding interest and texture eg Castle Hill and Flotmanby Brow. The combination of open and wooded slopes, light and shade and the sheer scale of the scarp, all contribute to the scenic compositions which unfold along its length.</p> <p>In the west of the area, the scarp cuts in around Wintringham and Settrington to form a series of broad amphitheatres which frame the lower lying land. However, from the lower lying land closer to the A64, the scarp's presence diminishes, and scenic quality is lower. This is particularly the case for the transitional landscapes around Settrington towards Malton and to the south of Scampston. The parkland around Scampston has its own scenic qualities associated with the distinctive sandy soils, areas of open parkland, conifer plantations, the estate village and the house and its gardens; it is, however, separated from the wider areas of qualifying land by the busy A64 with only limited glimpsed and distant views back to the scarp. Furthermore, the condition of the parkland south of the A64 is severed by this busy route and has lost its integrity due to arable landuse in areas of former parkland.</p> <p>At the eastern end of the area, the scarp reduces in overall scale and height, becoming more open as it extends towards the coast. These slopes still afford elevated and panoramic views to the Vale of Pickering and North York Moors but development within the lower-lying landscape around Eastfield and Cayton is also apparent (albeit some distance away). Nevertheless, here the low-lying land surrounding Folkton and also to the east, is traditionally grazed forming areas of textured wetland eg Flotmanby Carr and Folkton Carr. Here the lowlands retain their physical and visual connection to the scarp which is rare in the context of the northern scarp as a whole.</p>
Relative wildness	Relative wildness is most keenly felt on the elevated and steep slopes of the scarp and in some of the larger deciduous woodlands (e.g. Potter Brompton Brow), where the drama of the landscape and semi-natural vegetation imparts a sense of remoteness and proximity to nature. On the lower farmed slopes and closer to settlements and the A64/ A1039, any sense of relative wildness fades away.

Relative tranquillity	<p>The upper slopes of the scarp and away from settlements and the A64 corridor have generally high levels of dark skies, whereas the fringes of the area to the west and east are affected by night light-spill from Malton and Scarborough respectively.</p> <p>Noise levels and general transport and development activity is evident along the A64 corridor, which is the main road route between York, Malton and Scarborough. Nevertheless, higher levels of tranquillity are quickly restored on the steeper scarp slopes above the settled fringe and in those rural estate villages which are set back from the road corridor, eg Settrington and Wintringham, both of which are located on small becks where the sight of water and associated riparian vegetation adds to perceptions of tranquillity.</p>
Natural heritage features	<p>Natural habitats tend to be concentrated along the narrow margins of the small becks (Settrington Beck, Rillington Beck and Wintringham Beck) which drain the scarp in the west of the Evaluation Area; in areas of grassland and scrub on the steep slopes of the chalk scarp; and in the parkland landscapes which support important areas of wood-pasture eg Scampston Hall/Park and Settrington House. Woodland plantations on the scarp slopes contain a mixture of beech, sycamore and ash, with some areas of conifer. These habitats reinforce topography and drainage patterns and contribute to the visual interest in this landscape, providing structure and variety in colour and texture.</p> <p>These habitats are reflected in the SSSI designations in this area including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wintringham Marsh, which is valued for its dry and damp grassland. • Ladyhills, which is valued for its unimproved chalk grassland and is one of the most important and best remaining examples of chalk grassland in North Yorkshire. • East Heslerton Brow, which comprises a complex of spurs and small valley slopes supporting a rich variety of chalkland grasses, herbs and wildflowers, including orchids. • Sked Dale and Spell Howe Plantation, which are valued for their large colony of baneberry (Herb Christopher, which is nationally rare) established within ash and elm woodland as well as areas of chalk grassland. <p>Other areas of significant natural heritage include Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation, supporting acid grassland and rich fen areas on the fringes of Scampston Park and small areas of established calcareous and neutral grassland, especially in the east of the area.</p> <p>The underlying chalk geology is clearly evident in thin soils forming the steep scarp and numerous small disused chalk pits which mark the edge of the chalk block that defines the Yorkshire Wolds character area, as well as the distinctive 'slumps' on the chalk scarp which create interesting undulations along its face eg south of Thorpe Bassett. At the interface with the Vale of Pickering there are sand and gravel deposits and this change in geology is reflected in more acidic soils which support Scot's pine and conifer plantations seen in the area around Scampston, as well as areas of gravel extraction eg Knapton Gravel Pit.</p>

	<p>Natural springs, which issue from the mid slopes of the chalk escarpment, are a feature which reflects the underlying geology where the porous chalk meets the less permeable clay eg St Helen's Spring south of Sherburn (one of Yorkshire's Holy Wells) and Shepherd's Spring south of Ganton.</p>
Cultural heritage	<p>The historical development of this landscape is strongly reflected in its present-day character and patterns of landuse and development. Natural springs have influenced the location of historic villages and also the development of designed parklands (eg at Ganton Hall and West Heslerton Hall), which utilise the ready availability of water to create waterbodies. Similarly, the importance of the communication route at the foot of the scarp has shaped settlement pattern. Historic villages along the A64 contain listed buildings reflecting local vernacular styles, including use of chalk as a building material and whitewashed buildings, as well as building styles that reflect estate cottages with shallow dormer windows being a local feature. Four of the settlements within this Evaluation Area are conservation areas – Settrington, Wintringham, Flixton and Folkton.</p> <p>North of the scarp in the area of Scampston and East Knapton there are parkland landscapes and estate villages. These landscapes sit on sandy soils which is reflected in their pine plantations and are predominantly located north of the A64. The villages have an intact estate vernacular and the parkland of Scampston is a Registered Park and Garden. This park landscape exhibits scenic qualities although it is inward looking and does not borrow views from the chalk scarp which is located some distance to the south.</p> <p>The steep slopes of the chalk scarp also express a much earlier history in the form of subtle earthworks which date to the prehistoric period. These include numerous scheduled monuments including round barrows and linear earthworks that run along the ridge eg Cross Dyke on Knapton Wold east of Scampston (in association with EA2 and EA5 to the south) and Staple Howe, a palisade hilltop enclosure in Knapton Plantation which took advantage of the natural elevated promontory. These features, where they survive as low earthworks, make a localised contribution to the natural beauty of the area. In the lower lying areas associated with settlements there is evidence of a deserted medieval settlement at Settrington, which is evident in the earthworks seen in a small field known as Town Green on the edge of the village. These earthworks are discernible and add positively to the setting of the village. Adjacent to Rillington village there is a site of an Iron Age barrow cemetery (a scheduled monument) and, in the east of the area adjacent to the village of Staxton, there is the site of the hospital of St Mary; however, there are no above-ground remains in these two sites and although they are of reasonable extent, they do not contribute to the natural beauty of the area.</p> <p>More recent earthworks seen along the scarp faces include former chalk, clay and gravel pits reflecting the underlying geology and deposits. These past extractions were small scale and pepper the scarp face, creating undulations and interest in landform. Similarly, in the east at Spell Howe Plantation and Flotmanby Brow, there is evidence of strip lynchets (earth terrace on the side of a hill due to medieval cultivation) which are clearly visible especially in certain light conditions.</p> <p>The elevated views from this landscape have inspired artist Jony Easterby, who created the "Enclosure Rights" sculpture which draws on the archaeological importance of the area and from which there are views out across the Vale of Pickering.</p>

Candidate Area	
Overall weight and spatial distribution of natural beauty evidence and recommendation as to land that should be considered a Candidate Area	<p>Overall, the natural beauty criterion is met over most of the Northern Scarp Slopes (EA3). There is a considerable weight of evidence to support designation in relation to landscape quality, scenic quality and tranquillity, and additional evidence of relative wildness, natural heritage and cultural heritage, particularly on the steeper and complex scarp slopes and at the foot of the scarp where the landscape retains a rural character and is associated with picturesque spring-line estate villages.</p> <p>There are some spatial variations in the weight of evidence of natural beauty. The lower slopes of the scarp, where they lie close to the A64 corridor, are adversely affected by relatively recent development and expansion of some of the spring-line villages, as well as the increased activity and noise intrusion associated with the road corridor. To the west of Settrington, natural beauty is declining across an open, low-lying and intensively farmed landscape and this has been excluded from the Candidate Area. In contrast the lower lying land which is more contained by the indentation of the scarp, south of Thorpe Bassett and Wintringham, is included in the Candidate Area. The area between Rillington and East Knapton present a more complex picture where land north of Thorpe Bassett is regarded as not meeting the natural beauty criterion in part due to its lower lying nature, land use and the influence of the settlement of Rillington and A64 corridor. Furthermore, to the east, the scarp slopes are becoming more gradual and are affected by arable farming, conifer planting and Knapton Waste Management site. There are features of interest to the north of the A64 including Scampston Park and East Knapton park, but these areas are fragmented from the wider qualifying land by the A64 and non-qualifying land. The Candidate Area has been defined conservatively through this area, excluding some small areas of higher natural beauty along the A64 corridor and to the north.</p> <p>Where there is a transition in the scarp landscape in the east of the Evaluation Area, the drama of the scarp face is noted as diminishing in elevation towards Muston. Nevertheless, it is also more connected to adjacent areas of lowland carr. On this basis this eastern area has been included in the Candidate Area, but will require particular scrutiny at the boundary setting stage.</p> <p>Overall, those parts of the Northern Scarp Slopes (EA3) which are considered suitable for inclusion within a Candidate Area include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land between Settrington in the west to Staxton in the east south of the A64. • Land between Saxton and Muston which forms the scarp and lower lying land north of the A1039
Need for Particular Scrutiny	Based on the analysis above, particular scrutiny will be required at the boundary setting stages to determine which if any of the spring line villages along the A64/B1039 should be included. Many of these settlements have been impacted by infill development. Nevertheless, these villages also retain many positive qualities and are historically and physically closely associated with the chalk scarp. The A64 could be used as a boundary to any future AONB but this would result in the splitting of the settlements. Each settlement therefore needs to be considered on its merits.

	<p>The potential inclusion of the parkland of Scampston and also that associated with East Knapton is considered borderline and will require further work at the boundary setting stage with reference to the Natural England Guidance on matters relating to the inclusion of features on the edge and application of wash-over where there is non-qualifying land.</p> <p>The extent to which the eastern scarp should be included along with adjacent lowland carr landscape should also be given particular scrutiny at the boundary setting stage.</p>
Issues to be Addressed in Defining Extent	
Transition	Areas of transition which will need to be reviewed include the fringes of the scarp towards Malton, south of East Knapton and in the east of the area towards Muston.
Fragmentation	The A64 forms a significant fragmenting feature within this landscape which is further reinforced by development along the corridor. The boundary is likely to either follow the A64 carriageway or to adopt the property boundaries around settlements. Care will be needed to exclude land that has become fragmented whilst recognising the need to avoid an overly convoluted boundary.
Incongruous features	Along the A64 corridor there are developments which are incongruous – care will be required during the boundary setting stage to exclude these developments. Particular care will be required in relation to Knapton Waste Treatment Site and areas of pig farming and where a number of detracting elements may be perceived together. Where incongruous features form isolated elements south of the A64, a balance will need to be reached between excluding them and the creation of an overly complex boundary or including them if they reasonably form part of a sweep of qualifying land.
Settlements	<p>The settlements of Settrington and Wintringham are high quality estate villages which have a unity of character in their built form and vernacular styles and make a positive contribution to the high-quality landscape which surrounds them. These settlements are therefore proposed for inclusion within the Candidate Area.</p> <p>Settlements closer to or on the A64 or A1039 are mixed in terms of their character and intactness. Those that have experienced significant growth (including residential and commercial development), are split by the A64 corridor or associated with linear development along the road corridors, and/or lie on the fringes of the proposed Candidate Area or beyond it, are not considered to qualify for designation. They have therefore been excluded from the proposed Candidate Area eg Scagglethorpe, Rillington, Sherburn, and Staxton. The village of Flixton will require particular scrutiny due to its location north of the A1039 and extent of more modern development south of the village and along Filey Road.</p> <p>Other settlements which sit at the edge of qualifying land along the A64/A1039, retain an intact character with notable features of interest. These include Thorpe Bassett, West Heslerton, East Heslerton and Manor, Potter Brompton, Ganton and Folkton. Natural England Guidance is clear that settlements should not normally be split by a boundary and should lie within a tract of qualifying land. The use of the A64 or A1039 as a boundary to the proposed AONB will therefore require particular scrutiny at the</p>

	<p>boundary setting stage to ensure only those settlements which are of merit are included and that the boundary follows clear features on the ground and avoids splitting settlements. Reference should be made to 'building extent' of settlements, as defined in relevant Local Plans.</p> <p>Particularly care will be required for those settlements which lie north of the A64 including Scampston, West and East Knapton and also particular care will be required with Folkton which lies north of the A1039.</p>
--	---

Yorkshire Wolds AONB Designation Project

Evaluation Area 4 – Central Dissected Plateau

Landscape Context	
Location/Context	This Evaluation Area comprises land between the north-facing chalk escarpment to the north and the inward-looking Great Wold Valley to the south. It forms a band of elevated land which is incised by occasional steep-sided dry valleys (especially around Fordon) and has a gently sloping south-facing aspect.
Landscape Character	<p>EA4 comprises the Chalk Wolds landscape type as defined in the North Yorkshire and York County Landscape Characterisation Project (May 2011).</p> <p>In the east, where it extends into Scarborough District, it is classified as Lang Dale to South Dale character area and Folkton to Hunmanby Chalk Wold character area in the District LCA (2013).</p> <p>The Fordon area falls within East Riding and is classified as Central Dissected Plateau landscape type and Wold Newton Farmland 14E landscape character area, as set out in the East Riding LCA (September 2018).</p>
Designation History	<p>The majority of this area is designated as an area of High Landscape Value (Policy SP13) in the Ryedale Local Plan.</p> <p>The area around Fordon (which falls within East Riding) is designated as an Important Landscape Area of highest quality (Fig 11 of Local Plan Strategy).</p> <p>Land within Scarborough District (east of RAF Staxton) has not previously been recognised as having special landscape value.</p> <p>The majority of this landscape (west of the B1249) was also included within the area put forward for AONB designation by CPRE in 1991.</p>

Natural Beauty Factors and Evidence	
Landscape quality	<p>EA4 is a rural, elevated, gently-sloping landscape which has an exposed, large-scale and simple character. With its general feeling of homogeneity and regularity, it is characterised by large-scale arable land on the free-draining chalk soils. The pattern of rectilinear fields dating to late parliamentary enclosure is defined by well clipped hawthorn hedges, mostly with no trees.</p> <p>Historic Landscape Characterisation indicates that there has been some field boundary loss in areas such as Sherburn Wold and East Heslerton Wold in the west and at Folkton Wold and west of Hunmanby in the east, where field sizes have become even</p>

larger. Given the intensity of arable farmland activity and large-scale hedgerow patterns, the ecological networks across the area are generally weak. Nevertheless, much of the area is in some level of stewardship with a concentration of land managed under Higher Tier Countryside Stewardship around Fordon as well as Mid-Tier around Sherburn Wold. Land around East Wold, High Fordon and west of Hunmanby are not managed under any stewardship. Where the land is managed under stewardship there is some evidence of new hedgerow planting.

A series of dry valleys cut into this large-scale, elevated landscape. These dramatic valleys form a relatively narrow, sinuous system around Fordon and shorter individual valleys in the west eg at Warren Slack and Cooper's Bottom. Within these valleys, land use varies from open downland and blocks of deciduous broadleaved woodland plantation through to areas of scrub encroachment or thicket, conifer plantation and shelterbelts.

In places where the valley slopes are less steep or the valley floor is broad enough, there is evidence of some arable encroachment and equestrian uses. As a result, landscape quality in the valleys is varied. The finest valleys are those that retain native vegetation patterns which enhance legibility, including open grassland habitats on the steepest slopes and woodlands which emphasise contours and break in slope, and/or where the scale of the valley is significant both in depth and width. The lower quality valley landscapes are generally those which have been altered by unsympathetic land-use changes. An example of this can be found at Raven Dale and Camp Dale, where there are clear differences in management; these include an under-grazed area of scrub in the upper valley and over-grazed pasture to the south. Similarly, in Lang Dale the pastures are used for horse grazing and show signs of significant soil improvement with the introduction of horse jumps and various equestrian paraphernalia.

Collectively, the sinuous dry valleys form important havens for wildlife. In the complex dry valley system around Fordon (the most extensive valley system in this area) many of the grassland slopes form part of the Fordon SSSI. The condition of these sites is recorded as unfavourable but recovering, except for one site at Cotton Dale Slack, which is continuing to decline and is at high risk. Active management of these grasslands, especially scrub removal, is ongoing through organisations such as Butterfly Conservation Trust.

Settlement comprises a dispersed pattern of large farmsteads established in the 18th and 19th centuries associated with the period of parliamentary enclosure. These farmsteads typically consist of substantial farm buildings that, to some extent, are absorbed into this large-scale landscape. Elsewhere, older farms are found, such as those at Fordon where farm buildings include older, small-scale traditional barns built of chalk stone and brick with pantile roofs. These older farm buildings are often in a poor state of repair and contrast with larger, modern farm buildings which are more functional, but which result in a loss of landscape quality.

This landscape contains a number of man-made features which disrupt the flowing skylines typical of the chalk landscape. These include telecommunication masts, wind turbines and the RAF radar station with its associated masts located north-west of Fordon. Individually, these structures are incongruous features which may draw the eye and where they have cumulative impacts, such as to the west of Hunmanby, they undermine the landscape quality of the area.

	<p>This landscape contains a number of cultural heritage features (see below). However, many have been ploughed out and no longer remain as above-ground features or are in a poor state of repair.</p>
Scenic quality	<p>Scenic quality varies across the area, encompassing panoramic views, dramatic valley systems, enclosure farmland and a variety of farm clusters.</p> <p>The higher land, with large, rectilinear fields and treeless hawthorn hedges from the Parliamentary enclosure period, feels empty but enables extensive and sweeping views over the Great Wold Valley and out beyond the Vale of Holderness. Elevated views before descending into Raven Dale and Camp Dale give variety and a connection to the coast. Views from Flixton Wold also feature the coast and sea beyond, as well as green fields. Large farmsteads are set within rectilinear shelter belts, punctuating the rolling landscape.</p> <p>Within the higher land are found distinct topographic folds and undulations eg around East and West Heslerton Wold and also at Old Dale and Sunning Dale, giving rise to a more varied landscape. Bold woodland blocks combine with the topographic undulations to create a great variety of colour and texture through the seasons, creating fine scenic compositions. Networks of valleys are cut into the higher land, but they vary in scale and drama. Around Fordon, the valleys are deep (over 50m) and spectacular, but elsewhere, smaller valleys make much less of a contribution to scenic quality. Many of these valleys, set within the high land and high intensity arable farming, have an austere quality and emptiness which contrasts with the more intensively managed character of the higher land. At Fordon, the topography steepens, and the wooded dales come together while the red roofed vernacular chalk and brick barns add to scenic quality and the small church nestles into the hillside - picturesque and unassuming.</p> <p>Although a largely open landscape, woodlands are important features of EA4. The longer more extensive valley systems in the east of the area, where they are steep, deep and broad, contain a relatively high concentration of deciduous woodland on steep slopes, often in the smaller side valleys and on lower slopes. As such they are often not visible within the wider landscape. However, where there are glimpsed views into the valleys, they add variety and interest and they contribute significantly to scenic quality.</p> <p>Some woodlands, however, conceal the topographic variation within the valleys, so their simple, dramatic form can be compromised. Where woodland has been planted to create shelter belts and/or cover for shooting, it can often cut across contours and reduce the legibility of the valleys and variations in topography.</p> <p>Those areas with the greatest scenic quality are where the valley slopes are steep and incised and where vegetation patterns including open downland and deciduous woodland or areas of hawthorn scrub, emphasise rather than conceal or disrupt the topography. This is evident in the valleys around Fordon where the steep slopes can be awash with white flowering hawthorn in early summer and areas of yellow buttercup meadow. This is less apparent however in the lower reaches of valleys such as</p>

	<p>Warren Slack, which has been subject to extensive woodland planting as well as large scale farm development, wind turbines and arable.</p> <p>However, elsewhere, the open arable character becomes monotonous and lacks interest. This is interrupted in places by vertical development such as wind turbines or radar. These features detract from natural beauty introducing artificial vertical structures in an otherwise undeveloped landscape and uninterrupted skylines.</p>
Relative wildness	<p>On the open tops away from the valleys and smaller undulations in the topography, the landscape can feel wind-swept, bleak and featureless, creating in places a feeling of being high up and away from it all. However, the intense farming reduces the perception of relative wildness. By contrast, within the deeper, narrow and sinuous valleys, the lack of roads and settlement can increase the sense of exclusion from the outside world. This, coupled with the disorientating effect of the valleys and side valleys, as well as the higher levels of semi-natural habitat, can significantly increase perceptions of remoteness and relative wildness.</p>
Relative tranquillity	<p>Across the majority of this area tranquillity levels are high as a result of the limited settlement and a widely spread rural lane network. Tranquillity levels are affected intermittently and at different times of the year by farm machinery and the occasional car along the rural lane network. There are some detractors, including wind farms and masts but, on the whole, this area is remote and rural. There are high levels of Dark Skies over most of the area, which decrease towards the east due to settlement along the coast which results in some night light-spill. The sinuous valleys around Fordon and the broad arable undulating farmland in the west have the greatest tranquillity.</p>
Natural heritage features	<p>The Fordon SSSI consists of 8 separate sites along steep valley-side slopes in Cotton Dale, North Dale and East Dale. It is valued for calcareous grasslands which have notable botanical diversity including the presence of purple milk vetch. This SSSI is regarded as one of the most varied grassland systems in terms of its floristic richness, aspect and management regimes remaining in the Wolds. The south-facing grass slopes in East Dale are managed by Butterfly Conservation Yorkshire and the grassland here supports important populations of butterfly including Dingy Skipper, Wall and Marbled White, as well as Brown Angus.</p> <p>There are no ancient semi-natural or ancient replanted woodlands in EA4.</p> <p>The dry valley systems around Fordon contain the highest concentration of deciduous woodland in the area, being concentrated on the steep slopes in the smaller side valleys and on lower slopes in the larger valleys. These woods are interspersed with other conifer plantations and shelterbelts.</p> <p>Elsewhere, and especially in the west, natural heritage interest is less evident, with woodland comprising mixed conifer shelterbelts around farms and along roads in an otherwise intensively farmed landscape.</p>

	There are a couple of small Local Wildlife Sites in Warren Slack and Owlet Dale (Warren and Dencil Slacks) which appear to relate to areas of scrub and grassland.
Cultural heritage	<p>EA4 contains notable clusters of prehistoric sites, mainly associated with the higher ridgeline and interface with the northern scarp (EA3) in the west of the evaluation area and along the ridge of higher land at Saxton and Flotmanby Wolds, which forms an interfluve (an area between adjacent valleys in a dissected upland area) with some of the dry valley systems around Fordon. Many of these sites are designated as Scheduled Monuments and comprise prehistoric tumuli including Bowl Barrows, Round Barrows and two Long Barrows. Other scheduled sites include a round barrow and ringwork at New Bield and The Camps within Camp Dale and a group of circular and rectangular enclosures near Cansdale Whin. However, the vast majority of these sites have been ploughed-out and are no longer extant as above-ground earthworks, or marked by changes in land-use, such as tree clumps. As such these cultural heritage features do not make a strong contribution to the natural beauty of the landscape.</p> <p>Other cultural heritage features in EA4 include traditional brick-built barns such as at Ganton Wold Farm and the historic hamlet of Fordon. This small, secluded settlement, hidden away in its deep valley setting, originally consisted of a farmhouse and church, but is today dominated by large-scale modern farm buildings. The farmhouse was demolished in 1928, but the associated small-scale barns built of chalk stone and brick and pantile roofs are still evident, as is St James's Church. The church is Grade II listed and sits on slightly higher land to the south of the settlement, surrounded by trees and is full of rustic charm. It is the smallest active church in Yorkshire and one of the smallest in Britain. The oldest parts of the Church are Norman and it contributes strongly to the natural beauty of the area. Historically, the hamlet was associated with a smithy and old gravel pits and to the west of the original farmhouse was a Mere (pond), which has since dried up and forms an area of grass and trees, screening views to the original farmhouse and barns. Fordon has featured in literature on the area and was described by the writer A.J Brown as 'set in one of the most charming corners of the Wold country'.</p> <p>The RAF radar station at Staxton has been in existence since 1939 and is allegedly the oldest working radar station in the world. It sits in a prominent location on the skyline on Staxton Wold, the round dome of the radar head and associated masts breaking the skyline. Close up it is surrounded by security fencing and CCTV and is lit at night and, as a result, it is seen over a considerable distance. Despite its historic interest, it is thus not considered to contribute positively to the natural beauty of the area.</p> <p>This landscape has inspired artists. The deep incised valleys around Fordon have been captured in the artwork of Peter Watson such as Ness Slack, Willerby Wold which portrays the overlapping slopes within the sinuous valley, encroachment of gorse and woodland plantations. Peter Watson also captures the geometric patterns of the open farmed plateau in his painting Towards Willerby Wold and geometric woodland plantations at West Heslerton Wold.</p>
Candidate Area	
Overall weight and spatial distribution of	There is a mixed weight of evidence of natural beauty within this Evaluation Area (EA). Areas of higher natural beauty occur in the west on the highest land where it is contiguous with the Northern Wold Scarp and Foothills (EA3) and is dissected by broad

natural beauty evidence and recommendation as to land that should be considered a Candidate Area	<p>valleys which create topographic variation and drama, and where the scale and simplicity of the landscape is uninterrupted by man-made vertical structures.</p> <p>To the east a higher level of natural beauty is found associated with the dry sinuous valley network around Fordon. However, here the landscape is in transition to the east, where some of the sinuous valleys have been affected by unsympathetic land uses which have caused fragmentation; additionally, they typically lack the drama of chalk valley systems at Fordon and in other EAs, such as EA2, EA9 and EA11. This area is also separated from the wider area of qualifying land by elevated intensive arable farmland on parts of Staxton and Flotmanby Wolds.</p> <p>Those individual sinuous valleys in the central part of the area sit within a wider area of non-qualifying land and extend southwards often into the Great Wold Valley to the south. These valleys, whilst exhibiting many classic dry valley characteristics, have not been included in the Candidate Area as they are not surrounded by qualifying land.</p> <p>The parts of the Central Dissected Plateau which are suitable for inclusion within a Candidate Area include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land in the west of north of the area where it forms the dip slopes of the Northern Wold Scarp • Dry valley system around Fordon
Need for further scrutiny	<p>There is a need for further scrutiny to identify a suitable boundary within a transitional landscape to the east (towards the coast) and to the south (towards the Great Wold Valley). Particularly scrutiny should be given to the quality of the peripheral valleys east of Fordon and also Warren Slack and Helperthorpe Slack to the south.</p> <p>Particular scrutiny is also required in relation to the elevated land of Saxton Wold and Flotmanby Wold where this elevated open arable farmland forms a narrow interfluvium between two areas of qualifying land.</p>
Issues to be Addressed in Defining Extent	
Transition	The definition of a boundary in the east of this Evaluation Area should be given particular scrutiny as a result of lower landscape and scenic quality of the open arable farmland above and west of Hunmanby and also the varied condition and quality of dales east of Fordon.
Fragmentation	The intensity of arable farmland on the upper slopes, along with man-made vertical structures which draw the eye and interrupt the flowing, open horizons, cause visual fragmentation in some areas. Particular scrutiny should be given to these issues when defining the extent of land to be included in the boundary, especially between qualifying land of the northern scarp and dry valleys associated with Fordon.
Incongruous features	In the east of the area there are a number of incongruous features including wind turbines at Scramble Bank and Hunmanby Grange, large farm buildings and the RAF radar station at Staxton Wold, all of which detract from the natural beauty of the area.

	In the west these influences are less prolific but there are nonetheless wind turbines at Ganton Dale which will also require review. Care will be needed at the boundary setting stage to define a boundary which excludes incongruous features where they are on the edge and judgement made as to whether they are incidental in a wider tract of qualifying land.
Settlements	This landscape contains a dispersed pattern of farmsteads associated with large modern barns and defined by rectilinear shelter belt planting. At Fordon there is a longer history of settlement comprising a much older farmstead and associated church. From within the hamlet there are views to the wider valley sides such that the settlement is strongly connected to its landscape setting. It has therefore been included within the Candidate Area.

Yorkshire Wolds AONB Designation Project

Evaluation Area 5 – Great Wold Valley

Landscape Context	
Location/Context	This Evaluation Area stretches east-west through the middle of the study area forming a broad vale associated with the Gypsey Race – a intermittent chalk steam which rises in the west and flows east. To the north of the area is the higher land and valleys of EA4 and part of EA3. To the south are the south-facing dip slopes of EA8. In the west the land abuts EA9 and EA2 and in the east EA6 and EA7.
Landscape Character	<p>This area comprises:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Chalk Wolds and Broad Chalk Valley Landscape Types as defined in the North Yorkshire and York Landscape Character Assessment (May 2011); and the Open Rolling Farmland Landscape Type 13 (North Wolds Plateau Farmland 13D and Bempton, Grindale and Wold Newton Farmland) and Wolds Valley Farmland Landscape Type 15 (Gypsey Race Corridor Wold Newton to Rudston 15B), as defined in the East Riding Landscape Character Assessment (September 2018). <p>This area is defined as Character Area 7 The High Wolds Plateau in the HLC for East Riding (2018).</p>
Designation History	All of the land which falls within Ryedale District is designated as an area of High Landscape Value (Policy SP13 of Ryedale Local Plan) and all of the land within East Riding is designated an Important Landscape Area, although only the Gypsey Race and its immediately hinterland is considered to be a landscape of 'highest quality' as defined in Policy ENV2 and Figure 11 of the East Riding Local Plan Strategy.

Natural Beauty Factors and Evidence	
Landscape quality	<p>This is a broad open shallow valley or trough with gently inclined, undulating valley slopes, some of which contain occasional, more defined incised dry valleys, which add topographic variation. EA5 is an intensively farmed landscape used mainly for arable cropping, set within a strong parliamentary rectilinear enclosure pattern defined by closely flailed hedgerows in poor condition, with few hedgerow trees. In addition to parliamentary enclosure, Historic Landscape Characterisation reveals that significant parts of this landscape comprise modern improved fields where there is evidence of field boundary loss and thus enlargement of the enclosure pattern.</p> <p>Woodland is sparsely scattered across the area, comprising linear shelterbelts, shelterbelts around farmsteads and small areas of deciduous or mixed conifer plantations. The general lack of woodland and hedgerow trees in this landscape, together with the</p>

	<p>extent of broad, cross-valley views, means that the landscape is perceived as large scale, often appearing to lack definition – the north and south ridgelines to the valley being relatively low and receding.</p> <p>The extent of land under environmental stewardship is relatively low but does include some areas of Mid-Tier Stewardship and Entry Level plus Higher-Level Stewardship. Nevertheless, most of the area remains outside of these environmental grant schemes and overall appears intensively farmed with limited semi-natural vegetation or diversity.</p> <p>This is reinforced by the limited extent and isolated distribution of designated nature conservation sites. An SSSI is designated at Stonepit and Nova Slacks in the south-west of the area, comprising a small area of chalk grassland which is in Favourable condition. A few Local Wildlife Sites are designated for their calcareous grassland interest, having survived on steeper valley slopes eg Butterwick Whins, Old Dale and Wilson's Wold Bank. The sparsity of such sites indicates the intensity of farming activity within this landscape and the general lack of habitat corridors and networks.</p> <p>The pattern of settlement along the valley floor shows continuity over the centuries. Nevertheless, the character of the present-day built development is varied and lacks a strong vernacular; comprising occasional brick built cottages and some chalk traditional barns associated with farmsteads but also areas of modern infill development and large-scale modern farm buildings. Overall, the villages have a modern working agrarian character which is simple in form and make a limited contribution to natural beauty.</p> <p>Incongruous features include individual wind turbines which, due to the open character of the landscape and the vast, bowl-like form of the valley, are highly visible and have started to have a cumulative impact on the landscape quality in some areas. In addition, there are a number of masts which occur on the open valley skylines eg at Octon Lodge, again reducing landscape quality where they occur.</p>
Scenic quality	<p>EA5 provides open views across a patchwork of large-scale, arable fields which extend across the broad topography of the Great Wold Valley under expansive skies. A sea of arable crops, which change with the seasons to create a kaleidoscope of colour and texture, is punctuated in places by isolated farmsteads located on the mid and upper slopes, often surrounded by shelterbelt planting (eg High Mowthorpe and Dotterel Cottage Farm).</p> <p>In the valley bottom, along the valley floor road and related to the course of the Gypsy Race, a string of small rural villages creates a more settled character. A number of these villages include churches - eg Kirby Grindalythe, West Lutton, Helperthorpe, Weaverthorpe, Butterwick and Foxholes - often their towers and spires acting to create local landmarks and contributing to scenic quality. However, individual wind turbines detract from the setting of the churches in places, diminishing their landmark qualities and undermining scenic compositions eg at Helperthorpe and Weaverthorpe.</p> <p>Within the villages, where lanes may follow the course of the Gypsy Race, the creation of small bridges adds scenic interest and sometimes link to wet meadows on the edge of the settlement. These features, together with the presence of older vernacular buildings, can create places of high scenic quality eg Kirby Grindalythe. However, in many other settlements there is little especially strong local vernacular, and the built form and street patterns lack notable scenic qualities.</p>

	<p>Other landmark features in this landscape include Duggleby Howe, which forms a striking man-made feature due to its scale comprising a 7m high Neolithic burial mound at the head of the valley adjacent to the village of Duggleby.</p> <p>The valley landscape is more tightly defined by rising land at the head of the valley and by woodland on the fringes of the Sledmere Estate which define the upper slopes and skyline. The lack of wind turbines or other man-made features in this part of the valley ensures it expresses simple blocky patterns and compositions, comprising arable cropping, simple hedgerow enclosures and dispersed farmsteads. Furthermore, at the head of the valley there is intervisibility and connection with adjacent Evaluation Areas, which contributes to the scenic quality of the area through the borrowed views which are revealed.</p> <p>Within the central and eastern part of the valley, the definition of the valley slopes is less strong as elevation drops, the valley broadens, and the proliferation of wind turbine development starts to have a cumulative effect, creating visual clutter and reducing scenic quality. From elevated locations north of Wold Newton it is possible to perceive the bend in the valley around Burton Fleming.</p> <p>Overall, the broad Great Wold Valley comprises a broad sweep of countryside which exhibits simple patterns and lacks the topographic interest found within the High Wolds and incised valleys to the north and west.</p>
Relative wildness	<p>There is some sense of relative wildness in this landscape derived from the open, empty quality of the landscape and its vast scale, creating a sense of remoteness. This is most strongly felt at the head of the valley where there are few detractors and where settlement is all but absent. Within the middle and eastern reaches of the valley, however, the valley floor villages, wind turbines and higher concentration of farmsteads, coupled with farming activity, mean that relative wildness is low. Little in the way of semi-natural habitat or natural regeneration throughout the valley further reinforces these perceptions.</p>
Relative tranquillity	<p>There is a relatively tranquil, rural feel across much of the area except along the valley road and more significant road routes such as the B1253 and B1249, where traffic volumes are greatest. Elsewhere, the rural lane network carries only occasional cars and farm vehicles and more often than not it is the sound of the wind, skylarks overhead and the occasional bleat of sheep which can be heard. The area as a whole has relatively high levels of dark skies with only minor night light-spill from the rural villages. Relative tranquillity is however greatest in the western part of the valley where the landscape feels empty and devoid of activity.</p>
Natural heritage features	<p>The Gypsy Race – the watercourse through the Great Wold Valley - is the key natural heritage feature of this landscape. This watercourse is the only surface stream in the High Wolds and is the northernmost chalk stream in the UK. As a winterbourne stream, its flow is erratic, often disappearing underground as a result of the chalk geology and reappearing further downstream, and historically led to it being called the Gypsy Race. Within this intensively farmed landscape the watercourse adds visual interest, especially where it flows through the string of settlements.</p> <p>Nature conservation sites of note include the SSSI of Stonepit and Nova Slacks, lying in the western part of the area, and a number of small Local Wildlife Sites throughout the area. These sites are designated for their species-rich calcareous grassland</p>

	<p>but are relatively small in extent, forming small islands within a sea of arable farmland – consequently they make only a limited contribution to natural beauty. More broadly the wide verges along the rural road network frequently contain froths of cow parsley and buttercups as well as occasional drifts of red campion in summer.</p> <p>There are no areas of ancient or semi-natural woodland or ancient replanted woodland in this Evaluation Area. Generally, the pattern of woodland is very limited, comprising linear plantations, such as High Mowthorpe Plantation. Elsewhere the plantations are smaller, with a higher concentration of small woods on the valley slopes at Foxholes. Mature trees associated with the villages, domestic plots and close to the Gypsy Race, provide further localised tree cover.</p> <p>Also of note is the monument to the site where a meteorite was found near Wold Cottage in 1795, now housed in the Natural History Museum, London.</p>
Cultural heritage	<p>The presence of the Gypsy Race and associated natural springs along the lower valley slopes have significantly influenced the settlement pattern in this landscape, such that it is now one of the most populated areas within the Yorkshire Wolds. Place name evidence indicates that the settlements arrived at different periods: Anglian settlements include Wold Newton and Luttons with later Danish villages including Duggleby and Weaverthorpe. These settlements are also associated with an historic landscape of field enclosures dating to the 19th century but also thought to be a much earlier pattern.</p> <p>Deserted medieval settlement sites tend to occur adjacent to existing villages and reflect the evolution of settlement pattern in the valley. They are found at Kirby Grindalythe (adjacent to the church), Thirkilby (between Kirby Grindalythe and West Lutton), Weaverthorpe (a medieval manor site) and at Octon. In each of these cases the former site of settlement is evident in earthworks within pasture fields close to the present-day settlement.</p> <p>This evaluation area contains a significant number of important archaeological sites. Although some earthworks are visible on the surface, most are not and therefore features such as barrows, the remains of medieval settlements and some of the dykes, although of archaeological interest and contributing to a sense of time-depth, make only a localised or minimal contribution to natural beauty.</p> <p>Scheduled Monuments which have a particular visual presence in the landscape include three of the largest prehistoric monuments in the Wolds and medieval settlement. The former include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Duggleby Howe (Neolithic round barrow), which is clearly visible above ground and makes a strong contribution to sense of place at the head of the Great Wold Valley. • Wold Newton Mound (Neolithic bowl barrow), which is up to 2.75m high. • Willy Howe, west of Burton Fleming (Neolithic round barrow), which is located at a bend in the course of the Gypsy Race and marked by a clump of trees.

	<p>These monuments are complemented by other features such as a pair of Bronze Age bowl barrows close to Wold Newton village at Butt Hills, which are also associated with later medieval strip fields in the village. There are a number of entrenchments and linear earthworks on the upper valleyside slopes at High Mowthorpe Plantations and Pasture Plantation, which are associated with a scattering of round barrows overlooking the valley. However, these features are not readily apparent in the landscape and are mainly ploughed out.</p> <p>All of these historic monuments make a localised contribution to the natural beauty of this landscape, emphasising its importance as a prehistoric ritual landscape closely tied to the Gypsy Race and the role of the valley water source in supporting settlement.</p> <p>Today, the current settlement pattern is a defining feature of the Great Wold valley. As noted above, it comprises a string of nucleated villages along the Gypsy Race as well as the settlements of Octon and Thwing on the upper southern slopes, the latter possibly reflecting a much earlier defensive settlement overlooking the bend in the Gypsy Race. The majority of the settlements contain a number of farmsteads as part of their form and structure, with a range of different dwellings including farmhouses and cottages of various ages.</p> <p>Brick is the most common building material although there are some older farm buildings which are built of chalk stone with brick gables and pantile roofs. Overall, there is no strong local vernacular style and the villages have a mixed character in terms of building style, age and layout, with the main street being loosely defined. The villages have a strong working, agricultural character and are generally not noted for their 'picturesque' qualities.</p> <p>The intermittent flow of the Gypsy Race is fixed in local folklore and, when the watercourse is in flood, it is believed to predict disasters or difficult times. This landscape has also inspired artists such as Peter Watson who captured the regimented arable landscape in his work titled Weaverthorpe Slack and the artist Glen Marshall who painted countryside scenes at Duggleby, Woldgate and Twing Road.</p>
Candidate Area	
Overall weight and spatial distribution of natural beauty evidence and recommendation as to land that should be considered a Candidate Area	<p>There is a mixed weight of evidence of natural beauty within this Evaluation Area. The area with the highest levels of natural beauty occur in the west around the head of the Great Wold valley. Here the landscape is most strongly defined by broad and flowing landforms across which arable land use creates distinctive abstract patterns, uninterrupted by incongruous features and benefitting from broad, expansive skies. This part of the valley is especially elevated, located close to some of the highest parts of the High Wolds, and is intervisible with adjoining areas of EA2, EA3 including Wharram Percy and EA9 including the fringes of Sledmere. The settlements in this part of the valley are associated with historic sites which make an overt contribution to natural beauty and are surrounded by qualifying land. Towards the central and eastern parts of the valley, the slopes recede and are less steep, becoming less distinctive. Although the villages retain their nucleated, working agricultural character and continue to be associated with historic features, and in particular with historic enclosure patterns which are thought to be of considerable antiquity, their broader landscape setting lacks the landscape quality and scenic qualities of a nationally outstanding landscape. Furthermore, church landmarks are sometimes compromised by the proliferation of individual wind turbines which draw the eye.</p>

	On this basis, the middle and eastern extent of the Great Wold valley are not considered suitable for inclusion within the Candidate Area for designation.
Need for further scrutiny	There is a need for further scrutiny to identify a suitable boundary which includes the most distinctive and unspoilt parts of the Great Wold valley. The transitional nature of this landscape means that a boundary should be drawn at the higher end of the transition whilst also taking into account the need to define a boundary which follows clear features on the ground. Care should be taken to consider any judgments in the context of the dry valleys of EA4, which extend southwards into EA5 and judgements relating to the dry valleys in the Cottam area (EA8) which lie to the south.
Issues to be Addressed in Defining Extent	
Transition	There is a gradual transition in landscape quality and condition and scenic composition as one moves east and the valley sides recede, creating a vast shallow valley and sea of arable farmland. Care should be taken to exclude intensive arable farmland on open slopes which are affected by incongruous features and where there are few or no features of interest, as these areas do not meet the natural beauty test.
Fragmentation	Both large areas of intense arable farmland and incongruous vertical structures can cause visual fragmentation. Particular scrutiny should be given to these issues when defining the extent of land to be included within the boundary.
Incongruous features	Care will be required at the boundary setting stage where there are incongruous features such as modern farm buildings, turbines and masts on the margins of qualifying areas.
Settlements	The quality of the settlements within the Great Wold Valley is mixed. The settlements of Duggleby and Kirby Grindalythe have both been included in the Candidate Area. The settlement of West Lutton lies on the fringes of the Candidate Area and will require particular scrutiny at the boundary setting stage when defining a clear and robust boundary within the area of transition.

Yorkshire Wolds AONB Designation Project

Evaluation Area 6 – Flamborough to Hunmanby Coastal Landscapes

Landscape Context	
Location/Context	This Evaluation Area is located in the northeast of the Study Area forming the coastal fringes of the Wolds landscape and includes the chalk cliffs at Flamborough Head and Bempton. It stretches from Filey in the north to the town of Bridlington in the south and abuts the eastern fringes of the northern chalk scarp (EA3), and the Great Wold Valley (EA5 and EA7). It includes the coastal fringe settlements of Hunmanby, Reighton, Speeton, Bempton and Flamborough, as well as areas of coastal development at Flamborough Head and North Landing and Thornwick Holiday Park.
Landscape Character	<p>EA6 comprises a number of landscapes of differing character as defined in the respective landscape character assessments.</p> <p>In simple terms it comprises Soft Coastal Cliffs Chalk Wolds Landscape Type J, Coastal Hinterland Landscape Type D, Chalk Wolds Landscape Type C, Vale Fringe Landscape Type K as defined in the Scarborough Landscape Character Assessment (2013).</p> <p>In the south of the area the landscape comprises Open High Rolling Farmland Landscape Type 13E and 13F, and Open Farmland Landscape Type 19C, as defined in the East Riding Landscape Character Assessment (September 2018).</p> <p>This area is defined as Character Area 7 The High Wolds Plateau in the HLC for East Riding (2018).</p>
Designation History	<p>The southern part of this landscape where it falls in East Riding is designated as an Important Landscape Area in the East Riding Local Plan.</p> <p>Land within Scarborough District has not previously been recognised as having special landscape value.</p> <p>The cliffs, open sea and hinterland between Reighton and Sewerby are defined as a Heritage Coast, established to conserve the natural beauty of the coastline. The Heritage Coast covers the headland and an area approximately 2km inland and has an open seaward boundary.</p>

Natural Beauty Factors and Evidence	
Landscape quality	This landscape is predominantly open, arable farmland, with some areas of grassland, especially along the coastal fringes and Hunmanby Dale, south of the village of Hunmanby. Fields are large scale, defined by well-trimmed hedgerows or post and wire fencing, such that the enclosure pattern is not strong. Only relatively small parcels of land fall within stewardship agreements including Mid-Tier Countryside Stewardship in areas east of Hunmanby and between Speeton and Buckton. This indicates that

only some discrete areas of farming landscape are benefitting from positive land management measures. Elsewhere there are pockets of Entry Level and Higher-Level Stewardship along the hinterland farmland adjacent to the chalk cliffs and inland areas such as East Leys and Newsham Field. Here, evidence of active management includes sowing of crops which provide valuable food to overwintering birds, creation of new ponds and the planting of new hedgerows. Areas of maritime coastal grassland are also traditionally managed as meadows.

Semi-natural habitats are restricted to the coastal fringes, but where they occur they add geological and biodiversity interest to the patterns and texture of the landscape. These include intertidal rough ground, exposed and dramatic chalk cliffs, areas of slumping cliffs and wave cut platform, and small areas of woodland and scrub in sheltered folds in landform and steep valleys on the coastal edge. There are also areas of calcareous grassland associated with the railway and lane verges which provide important linear corridors and connectivity within this agricultural landscape.

Flamborough Head SSSI extends along the cliff line and wave cut platform and is valued for its earth heritage which is in good condition and sea bird colonies which are considered to be in unfavourable and declining condition. Flamborough Railway Cutting SSSI is also unfavourable but recovering and at medium risk and Hoddys Cows Spring is unfavourable due to under grazing and inappropriate water levels.

In terms of landscape patterns, Historic Landscape Characterisation classifies most of this area as comprising planned parliamentary enclosure and areas where there is evidence of field boundary loss. It also identifies areas of small-scale piecemeal enclosure (especially associated with Reighton) and post war development and recreation, including settlement growth, holiday/caravan parks (eg Reighton Sands Holiday Village), and golf courses (Bridlington Links within the former parkland of Sewerby Hall and Flamborough Head golf course on former agricultural land). This latter golf course, although busy with players in good weather, nevertheless retains the open exposed character of the coastal fringes. Similarly, adjacent to the Thornwick Holiday Village, land has been managed to create a small Country Park and nature reserve including small waterbodies and wetland areas. Whilst this contributes to the biodiversity of the area, associated ancillary structures including signage, fitness trail, bins and seating create a more peri-urban landscape reducing natural beauty.

Vertical structures such as wind turbines (eg Harbour Hill east of Hunmanby and at Southfield Farm) and masts (e.g. at Buckton Barn) stand out in this open and exposed landscape and can draw the eye, however it is the holiday parks which are more visually intrusive across considerable distances, in part due to their extent and stark white colour and lack of mitigating screening. At Flamborough Head, masts detract from the lighthouses (historic and modern) which are local landmarks. Along many of the roads and through the settlements, telegraph poles create visual clutter, and tourism signage and street furniture has a cumulative effect on landscape quality, giving rise to a more municipal character especially between Flamborough village, Thornwick Holiday Park, North Landing, and Flamborough Head. Outside of the area, the tall silos associated with the Flamborough Maltings, on the edge of Bridlington, are highly visible especially from Flamborough Road and draw the eye, adding further signs of development in this open landscape.

	Two areas are of high scenic quality including the less developed coast north of Thornwick Holiday Park as far as Reighton and an area between Flamborough Head and South Landing. In these locations the landscape retains an undeveloped and unspoilt character where farmed landscape advances, uninterrupted towards the coast and abruptly ends in white cliffs.
Scenic quality	<p>This landscape includes spectacular and dramatic chalk cliffs which rise to a height of 130m above Ordnance Datum (AOD) at Bempton and extend south, dropping in elevation but increasing in complexity, and are capped by contrasting sandy deposits. To the north of Speeton the chalk gives way to sedimentary rocks and the cliffs/wave cut platform transitions into the sandy beach of Speeton Sands and gentle curve of Filey Bay.</p> <p>In the area of the white chalk cliffs and associated coastal geomorphology the scale/drama of the landscape, complexity of the coastal features, exposure to natural process, and changeable light, gives rise to a landscape of exceptional scenic quality. This reduces to the north where the coastline is less dramatic and is influenced by development at Filey and Reighton Sands Holiday Park, and similarly in the south along North Sands at Sewerby and Bridlington.</p> <p>This is a colourful landscape with strong contrasts between white cliffs and dark sea as well as distinctive coastal vegetation including gorse which adds scent, colour and texture. The geometry of the coastline along the cliffs is complex, giving rise to small horseshoe bays as well as steep ravines such as South Landing and North Landing. These small clefts in the chalk cliffs emphasise the scale of the geomorphology. The shelter they create has enabled pockets of woodland to establish eg Danes Dyke Local Nature Reserve, where there are carpets of snowdrops and yellow winter aconites followed by bluebells in Spring. Both North and South Landing have supported a long history of maritime use - fishing boats (known locally as cobbles) and lifeboats add interest and contribute to the overall high scenic quality. Immediately above the ravines on the open cliff tops there are areas of meadow and arable farmland with exhilarating, panoramic seaward views.</p> <p>Inland however, scenic quality quickly declines due to the gently rolling topography and the open exposed character of the area, with few trees, gives rise to relatively uniform and sometime vast arable landscape and simple patterns which lack the drama of the coast. Here, 20th and 21st century development associated with Flamborough (which includes linear development along North Marine Road and Lighthouse Road), and recreation and holiday parks can be especially visible and significantly reduce scenic quality. Similarly, in the north of the area between Hunmanby and Primrose Valley Holiday Village the scenic quality of the landscape is undermined by areas of modern development. Small pockets of higher quality farmland exist along the railway to the south of Hunmanby, where the slopes of Hunmanby Dale and increased woodland cover, create greater visual variety and scenic compositions.</p> <p>Small-scale wooded gills also occur inland from Reighton Sands along Reighton Gill and create visual interest and complexity associated with the topographic undulations and lower cliffs at Reighton and Speeton Hills. These hills mark the junction between the underlying chalk and mudstone geology. Similarly, at Sewerby Park and to the west of Hunmanby the higher incidence of mature trees associated with former parkland lifts scenic quality. Nevertheless, these patches of higher quality are separated by a wider landscape which does not express strong scenic quality, and which has been affected by intensive agriculture, recreational land uses and development.</p>

	Overall, the scenic qualities of this landscape are highest and most extensive in the area immediately adjacent to the chalk cliffs where the focus is seaward and the drama of the geology, geomorphology, fauna and flora can be readily appreciated.
Relative wildness	This is a landscape exposed to the coastal elements where the windswept qualities can be exhilarating but depending on the weather can also be bleak. On the seaward side of the landmass, where there are dramatic cliffs, and coastal erosion processes as well as patches of seminatural vegetation including woodland, scrub and coastal rough ground, there is a sense of being close to nature. Here relative wildness is high and changing light conditions and weather heightens a sense of exposure to the elements. Inland, although the landscape remains elevated and exposed to maritime influences, the recreation and agriculture land uses, coupled with the high quantity of dispersed development, materially reduces perceptions of remoteness or wildness.
Relative tranquillity	<p>CPRE Dark Skies mapping indicates that this area has some significant areas of light pollution, with higher readings at Muston, Hunmanby, the Primrose Valley Holiday Village, Reighton, Reighton Sands Holiday Park, Bempton and Flamborough; with edge effects from Bridlington and Filey.</p> <p>Where the area is more settled it can have a busier feel and where traversed by the A165, and B12229, tranquillity is reduced. Similarly, where there is vehicular access to the coast, especially Flamborough Head, North Landing and the RSPB Reserve at Bempton Cliffs, it can be busy with visitors at certain times of the year, significantly reducing tranquillity.</p> <p>Over the majority of this landscape, relative tranquillity is considered to be moderate to low. However, on the cliff margins where there is a strong association with seaward views (such as along the coastal path), the sounds and cries of vast numbers of sea birds such as kittiwakes and gannets, crashing waves and the wind, ensure tranquillity is exceptionally high.</p>
Natural heritage features	<p>It is the natural heritage interest along the coastline (including cliffs, fringing farmland, shoreline and sea offshore) which is exceptionally high and makes a fundamental contribution to the natural beauty of this landscape, particularly when viewed from the sea. These areas are designated SSSI (Flamborough Head SSSI), SPA (Flamborough and Filey Coast SPA) and SAC (Flamborough Head SAC). Collectively the coastal grasslands add colour and texture (dotted with red campion in early May) and the exposed white chalk cliffs provide drama, supporting significant populations of seabirds whose cries and presence overhead, enhance the wild coastal experience.</p> <p>Flamborough Head SSSI is an internationally important geological site which has numerous features of interest and is valued for its coastal geomorphology including caves, stacks and arches. The dramatic scale of the rugged white chalk cliffs and stark white colour contribute significantly to scenic quality and enhances understanding of the depth of the chalk geology. This area of chalk is extensively overlain with glacial deposits and their red colour contrasts with the chalk creating further visual interest. The chalk cliffs are the most northerly outcrop of chalk in Europe and the high, peninsular geology is a significant feature in the landscape on an otherwise relatively straight, lowland section of coastline.</p> <p>Flamborough and Filey Coast SPA is the UK's largest mainland breeding seabird colony. Over 250,000 birds nest here include the only mainland colony of gannets and one of the largest populations of kittiwakes. The cliffs are also home to puffins,</p>

	<p>guillemots and razorbills. The SPA forms part of the Flamborough Head European Marine Site. The cries of these bird populations and their presence overhead enhances the wild coastal experience and stimulates the senses.</p> <p>Flamborough Head SAC includes reefs, vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic Coasts, and submerged or partially submerged sea caves. These features are best seen from boats, but can also be appreciated from the coastal cliff top paths which snake along the indented coastline and also from access points to the foreshore such as North Landing, providing drama and interest.</p> <p>Furthermore, there is an RSPB Reserve at Bempton Cliffs and three Local Nature Reserves – Flamborough Outer Headland and South Landing (both managed by East Riding Countryside Access Team) and Danes Dyke (managed by Woodland Trust), providing access to this dramatic and ecologically rich coastal scenery and ensuring active management of coastal meadows, hedgerows and woodland. Woodlands in the steep cleft valleys, such as South Landing, support areas of ferns and carpets of wild garlic which gives them a lush and temperate quality.</p> <p>On the open tops of the cliffs the sights and sounds of the skylark and coastal birds including the charismatic puffin, add to an appreciation of the area's natural beauty. The coastal hay meadows are a carpet of delicate flowers including harebells, bird's-foot trefoil, creeping cinquefoil, common knapweed, yellow rattle and common dog violets, though some areas are suffering from under-grazing, resulting in reduced species diversity of the historically well-grazed swards and development of rough grassland of lower natural beauty. Small waterbodies and areas of wetland just inland from the cliffs provide further habitat for birds and add texture to the landscape eg Thornwick Nature Reserve and Northcliff Marsh Local Wildlife Site.</p> <p>The softer rock of mudstone, siltstones and sandstone further north towards Filey contrast with the chalk cliffs forming a lower lying coastline and wide sweeping sandy beach which sweeps round to Brigg End. Lowland dry acid grassland occurs along the fringes of Filey Bay (including Speeton Hills to Daleside) which contains a mosaic of grassland habitat and rich fen. Other County Wildlife Sites occur along the back of Reighton Sands and sit adjacent to and amongst coastal development including caravan parks and the settlement of Filey.</p> <p>These coastal designations contribute to the scenic qualities, adding texture and seasonal colour and provide a haven for a number of wildflowers which are now rare in the wider agricultural landscape but evident along the coastal path eg lady's bedstraw and kidney vetch.</p> <p>Inland there are two isolated SSSIs including Flamborough Railway Cuttings and Hoddys Cows Spring. Both are valued for their mosaic of rich chalk flora. Towards Hunmanby there are also County Wildlife Sites valued for their grassland habitat including Sands Lane Meadow, Hunmanby Dale, Hunmanby Pit, Northgate Lane Pasture and Hunmanby Meadows. However, these sites are isolated and make only a localised contribution to the interest or scenic qualities of the wider agricultural landscape.</p>
Cultural heritage	<p>This area contains notable features of heritage interest focused on defence or associated with the sea and early settlement. Where these features are legible in the landscape, they make a contribution to natural beauty and sense of place. Of particular note is Danes' Dyke (scheduled monument) which is an earthwork running north-south to the west of Flamborough, and which</p>

cuts off the whole of Flamborough Head from land to the west. The Danes' Dyke is extremely well preserved and a recognisable feature especially at the coast where it forms a sizable bank and ditch. Further inland it is flanked by trees and remains a significant visual boundary in the modern landscape. The Danes' Dyke is thought to have been constructed in the Bronze Age along with other linear earthworks within the Yorkshire Wolds, and may have had a defence function.

Other features of note are the two castles – one at Hunmanby and the other at Flamborough, both of which are also Scheduled Monuments. Hunmanby motte and bailey castle sits within the built area of the village on a natural hill which now forms a wooded knoll but adjoins countryside to the west. It lies within the grounds of the former Hunmanby Hall, a 17th century house later converted into a school for girls and subsequently extended by major new building in the early 1900s, the grounds of which are now a golf course. Flamborough Castle comprised a fortified manor house which survives as a ruin at the centre of the village, and forms a local feature which, coupled with the narrow street and vernacular buildings in the old town to the south, contributes the village's sense of place.

Other defence features date to the Second World War. The Operation Driver heavy anti-aircraft gun site on Flamborough Head (south of the car park) is remarkably complete and is the only site known to survive. Although a scheduled monument the features are not readily visible and much of the site comprises rough ground and gorse scrub. Further north at Bempton there are the remains of the RAF Station comprising derelict concrete buildings on slightly raised land. These buildings are not listed but catch the eye in this open landscape, adding a sense of intrigue and mystery.

Other built heritage features which act as local landmarks include the Old Lighthouse, Flamborough (an octagonal tower constructed of coursed chalk rubble with stone dressings) which is in good condition and represents a unique survival of a 17th century monument lighthouse in England in an unaltered state. There is good historical data on its conception and construction, giving insights into the maritime economy of the period. This lighthouse is a significant landmark across the open Flamborough Headland. Another notable landmark is the church at Speeton which sits slightly separate from the village and within the coastal farmland, acting as a focal point and contributing to the natural beauty of the area.

The settlements in this Evaluation Area have historic cores and many are designated conservation areas including Flamborough, Sewerby, Reighton, Hunmanby and Muston. However, they each also show evidence of modern expansion and this influences perceptions of their character and historic form, reducing natural beauty even though in places there is some remaining evidence of the use of chalk as a traditional building material. Similarly, earthworks associated with the villages eg Buckton earthworks, and Bempton medieval village, form subtle features, and do not make a significant contribution to the natural beauty of the area. Away from the coast the settlement pattern is more dispersed comprising isolated farms or former medieval villages which remain only as earthworks and a number of which are Scheduled Monuments eg Bartindale, Agram, Grindale and Newsham. All of these sites have above ground earthworks, but given their relatively low profile, they make only a localised contribution to natural beauty.

The village of Reighton is associated with the novelist Joy Stonehouse who has written three books set in the coastal landscapes surrounding the village, and the drama of the coast has inspired past and present artists including Edwin Ellis, Jane Clabour and Ian Mitchell.

Candidate Area	
Overall weight and spatial distribution of natural beauty evidence and recommendation as to land that should be considered a Candidate Area	<p>The exceptional cliff landscape, and immediate landward hinterland, clearly meets the natural beauty criterion where the combination of scenic quality, coastal drama, intactness and natural and cultural heritage is outstanding. The topography of the fringing farmland to the cliffs is gently undulating and rises slightly before dropping inland. This gentle rise in landform allows the coastal fringes to feel connected to the coast and separate from the wider inland plateau. These topographic variations may inform the definition of a detailed boundary and should be given particular scrutiny at the boundary setting stage.</p> <p>Elsewhere, the weight of natural beauty evidence is mixed and, in many places, not sufficient for the area to be considered of national significance. At Filey Bay/Filey Brigg and Bridlington Bay the coastal scenery is less dramatic, reflecting the underlying geology, and although these coastal areas have scenic qualities derived from their sweeping beaches backed by soft cliffs, they are nonetheless influenced by extensive adjoining development at Filey and Bridlington and associated recreational infrastructure. This reduces their natural beauty and they have therefore, not been included within the Candidate Area.</p> <p>Inland there are a number of sites of cultural heritage interest but overall, these sites, along with local wildlife sites, form isolated pockets of interest and are surrounded by land which is not considered to be outstanding in its scenic qualities or in good condition due to fragmentation from built development and recreational use, and intensive agriculture. On balance therefore, and notwithstanding the inclusion of parts of the inland area around Flamborough in the Heritage Coast, only the coastal stretches of this landscape are considered to qualify for inclusion within the Candidate Area for an AONB. The included area comprises coastal ravines, and open unfragmented farmland where it extends inland and forms an unspoilt context to the coastal landscape.</p>
Need for further scrutiny	<p>The inclusion of the coastal landscape as part of the Candidate Area results in a separate outlier to qualifying land further west. This will require particular scrutiny at the desirability stage of assessment given the relatively small size of this area, its distance from other qualifying land, and potential for the boundary to define a very narrow area.</p> <p>Particular scrutiny will also be required at the boundary setting stage to determine the extent to which features of interest on the edge of the Candidate Area may be included in the designation, including the splitting of nature conservation designations/sites and the inclusion or exclusion of settlements.</p>
Issues to be Addressed in Defining Extent	
Transition	<p>There is a transition away from the coast where scenic qualities decline. The farmland along the coast forms an important setting and context to the cliffs and coastal scenery and care will be required at the boundary setting stage to draw a boundary which includes the most intact coastal farmland. Where the coastal landscape is used for golf, care should be taken to assess if the open characteristics of the landscape are sufficiently retained for the area to be included.</p> <p>Care will also be required to the south of the area where there is a transition from coastal farmland to recreation land uses on the fringes of Bridlington which are becoming more overt eg golf course, Sewerby Hall gardens and zoo, and caravan development.</p>

	<p>Care will also be required to the north as the landscape transitions from the chalk cliffs to the sandy beach of Filey Bay backed by caravan park development.</p> <p>In defining the landward extend of any land suitable for designating as AONB consideration should be given to the subtle changes in topography along the coast. Vegetation and enclosure boundaries as well as roads and tracks may form suitable boundaries to include land that strongly relates to the coast.</p>
Fragmentation	<p>Care should be taken to exclude landscape which has become fragmented as a result of development or land use change. In particular the development at Flamborough Head and North Landing will require particular scrutiny. This development includes facilities for tourism as well as small-scale prefabricated single storey housing and development along the access roads which is only one plot deep. This development forms part of the coastal area and is a key focus for recreational enjoyment, requiring active management. Whilst this development does not contribute to the natural beauty of the landscape and in some places detracts, where it sits within a wider sweep of qualifying land, care will be needed to define a clear boundary and one which is not overly complex.</p>
Incongruous features	<p>The white caravans associated with holiday parks have a significant and extensive impact on the qualities of this landscape, as do recreational land use and facilities along the coast. Care should be taken to assess the extent to which the coastal landscape has been influenced by adjacent incongruous features including settlement, wind turbines and recreational development when drawing a boundary and areas of incongruous development should be excluded.</p>
Settlements	<p>The settlements of Reighton and Speeton both closely relate to their landscape context on the fringes of the Speeton Hills and form historic villages which are conservation areas. Furthermore, Buckton and Bempton lie within the transitional landscape as it extends inland and also include historic vernacular buildings. Nevertheless, all four rural settlements are located on the margins of the Candidate Area and will require particular scrutiny at the boundary setting stage.</p> <p>The settlements of Flamborough and Hunmanby have not been included in the Candidate Area as they do not sit within an area of qualifying land and/or have been substantially altered by modern residential development which does not reflect the local vernacular and which significantly limits their contribution to natural beauty, despite exhibiting some historic interest.</p>

Yorkshire Wolds AONB Designation Project

Evaluation Area 7 – Rudston and Boynton Valley

Landscape Context	
Location/Context	This Evaluation Area forms a relatively small area comprising a shallow valley through which the lower reaches of the Gypsy Race flow, before entering the town of Bridlington in the east. Settlement in this area includes the villages of Rudston and Boynton.
Landscape Character	<p>EA7 comprises the Wolds Valley Farmland Landscape Type 15 (15A Gypsy Race Corridor Rudston to Bridlington and 15B Gypsy Race Corridor Wold Newton to Rudston) as well as the Open High Rolling Farmland Landscape Type 13 (13D North Wolds Plateau Farmlands and 13E Bempton, Grindale and Wold Newton Farmland) as defined by the East Riding Landscape Character Assessment (September 2018).</p> <p>It is also defined in the North Yorkshire and York Landscape Characterisation Project (May 2011) as Broad Chalk Valley.</p> <p>This area is defined as Character Area 8 The Great Wolds Valley in the HLC for East Riding (2018).</p>
Designation History	The whole of this area is recognised as an Important Landscape Area within the East Riding Local Plan (Adopted April 2016) and is, in part, highlighted as an area of 'highest quality', as set out in Policy ENV2 and Figure 11 of the Local Plan Strategy.

Natural Beauty Factors and Evidence	
Landscape quality	<p>This evaluation area is generally in good condition and reflects a history of estate management associated with the villages of Rudston and Boynton. Parkland and designed landscape associated with Thorpe Hall and Boyton Hall is still apparent today as well as smaller areas of piecemeal enclosure of open strip fields on the valley sides, reflecting a much earlier enclosure pattern. On the upper valley slopes and to the north of Rudston, enclosure patterns are broader scale, dating to the 18th to 21st century as well as modern fields which reflect a degree of boundary loss. Land immediately associated with the villages of Rudston and Boynton have been managed under environmental stewardship schemes (Entry Level and Higher Level Stewardship and Mid-Tier Countryside Stewardship) although the majority of the area is not managed under any schemes. Intensive arable farming in large open fields is particularly evident north and west of Rudston.</p> <p>Of particular note in this Evaluation Area is the distinct valley floor between Rudston and Bridlington. The condition of riparian habitats, which comprise pastures, carr woodland, fen and marsh, is reflected in the number of nature conservation designations. These include Boynton Willow Garth SSSI - an area of fen, marsh, swamp and woodland which is considered to be in good condition. Only a small area of the woodland within the SSSI in unfavourable but recovering condition, reflecting active management including coppicing. Other habitats include established mixed grassland and areas of wood pasture in the</p>

	<p>parklands, as well as areas of standing water (e.g Fish Ponds Wood) which are designated as Local Wildlife Sites. Nevertheless, this area of interest is relatively small and quality declines to the west where the landscape opens out into a wider intensively farmed landscape and to the east where the fringes of Bridlington affect the valley landscape, with the introduction of commercial development such as a garden centre, large scale farm barns and wind turbines, as well as two 132kV overhead electricity lines which extend across Bessingby High Field. Here the condition of the valley floor landscape is significantly reduced.</p> <p>Incongruous features in this landscape include a couple of masts on the Roman Road to the south, although they are set amongst trees and do not exert an influence on the wider landscape.</p>
Scenic quality	<p>In this landscape the Great Wold Valley turns south and east forming a dog-leg through the wider Wolds landscape. In the north west of the Evaluation Area, the landscape has much in common with the wider Great Wold Valley to the northwest, comprising a shallow valley and vast fields of arable, forming an intensively farmed landscape which can appear simple in pattern and monotonous. Here there are few landmarks and features to draw the eye and the area lacks scenic quality.</p> <p>At Rudston, as the Gypsey Race turns east, the valley landscape narrows and land uses changes. Here, scenic qualities increase because the valley becomes more visually constrained, combined with the historical parkland on the distinct valley floor and sides. Estate management has resulted in a distinctively higher concentration of woodland in the form of mixed woodland including conifer plantations and deciduous trees which adds to visual variety. This higher concentration of woodland, coupled with the narrowing of the valley, creates a smaller scale landscape where views and vistas across and along the valley are framed. This area is set apart from the surrounding open and expansive arable Wolds landscape. Within this high-quality landscape are the historic villages of Rudston and Boynton, with their associated halls and parkland marked by park railing and parkland trees.</p> <p>There are elevated views from the edge of the valley across its attractive pattern of woodland and pastures as well as some arable, creating verdant patterns of scenic quality. The Gypsey Race watercourse meanders through the valley floor flanked by areas of bur-reed and willow and overall the valley between Rudston and Boynton has a maturity and lushness. This is a fertile valley benefiting from the waterlogged meadow, pasture, woodland and landscape parkland which contrasts with the open arable farmland in which it sits. These qualities lessen to the east where the valley landscape patterns are fragmented by urbanising influences, as noted above, and to the west and north of Rudston where the valley landscape is significantly broader, open and intensively farmed. Here scenic quality is notably reduced.</p> <p>The buildings in the village of Rudston are mostly of red brick and have either pantile or grey slate roofs. Boynton also contains a few chalk-built structures with brick details and a number of brick buildings are whitewashed. These vernacular styles add positively to sense of place.</p>
Relative wildness	<p>The semi-natural riparian habitats which run along the valley floor and areas of native woodland on the valley sides provide some sense of relative wildness, however this is negated by the otherwise settled character of the valley. To the west and north of Rudston, relative wildness comes from the open, empty quality of the landscape and its vast scale, however, this is undermined by intensive farming activity with little in the way of semi-natural habitat. Overall relative wildness in EA7 is considered to be low.</p>

Relative tranquillity	<p>The CPRE Dark Skies mapping indicates high levels of dark skies in this area with some night light intrusion in the east from Bridlington.</p> <p>Overall tranquillity is relatively high although reduced along the busy B1253 which passes through the centre of the valley. West of Easton this landscape contains no major infrastructure or large-scale development but has a gentle rural ambience. The presence of the Gypsy Race watercourse and associated valley floor meadows and establishment of larger water bodies associated with designed parklands all add to perceptions of tranquillity.</p>
Natural heritage features	<p>The natural heritage interest of this landscape focuses along the valley floor. The SSSI of Boyton Willow Garth is valued for its fen carr which is regarded as the best example in North Humberside. The site contains a diverse mosaic of contrasting habitats including woodland, scrub, fen and running water which all contribute to perceptions of natural beauty. The tree canopy consists of mixed age stands of elm and alder, willow and ash and some black poplar and within the chalk stream there are stands of bur-reed. This site is also valued for its late glacial and Flandrian pollen record which is a rare occurrence on chalk and is potentially of national importance geologically.</p> <p>To the east of Rudston (Thorpe Estate) and East of Boyton (Fish Ponds Wood) are Local Wildlife Sites valued for their mosaic of semi-natural habitat of woodland, fen and nutrient rich standing water. The former is also adjacent to a site of old established mixed grassland associated with Thorpe Hall. These habitats make an important contribution to the natural beauty of the valley, although their extent is limited to the central part of the valley.</p> <p>In the wider agricultural landscape to the west and north of Rudston, natural heritage features are limited to the Shoulder of Mutton Plantation and the Gypsy Race itself. Both features are incidental in the wider expanse of intensive farmland and do not make a significant contribution to natural beauty.</p>
Cultural heritage	<p>The cultural heritage of this landscape is overtly expressed in the parkland and estate landscape associated with Boynton Hall and Thorpe Park, Rudston. Both landscapes contain areas of wood pasture and a high incidence of veteran trees including horse chestnut and lime, which is rare in the eastern part of the Wolds landscape and makes a positive contribution, albeit localised contribution to natural beauty.</p> <p>The cultural significance of EA7 is also expressed in its role as a prehistoric ceremonial landscape which focused on the Rudston Monolith (7.5m high stone located in the churchyard at Rudston) and the bend in the course of the Gypsy Race. Both these features are readily appreciable and contribute to sense of place. Aligned with the monolith are a series of other scheduled prehistoric earthwork features which collectively make up a ceremonial landscape, including Argram dykes to the north (comprising linear earthworks of three banks and two ditches), a further linear earthwork to the south, a henge site south of Maiden's Grave Farm and a concentration of round barrows on the southern valley slopes especially at Rudston Beacon. These features sit within a wider expanse of farmed landscape and are not readily legible, however where they are perceived they add to meaning and understanding of the area and make a contribution to natural beauty.</p>

	<p>Other more tangible historic elements include the straight alignment of the Roman Road of Woldgate, which runs along the upper southern ridge of the valley between Rudston and Bridlington, and the site of the deserted medieval village and manorial complex and fishponds associated with Low Claythorpe. The medieval remains at Low Caythorpe survive in excellent condition and include a considerable proportion of the original features of the settlement, including crofts and house platforms along street lines, a moated manor house and its fishponds. These features add to the scenic quality and sense of time depth within the valley.</p> <p>The combination of heritage features in this landscape including the prehistoric ritual landscape, medieval settlement and later parkland and estates combine to give this landscape a strong and tangible time depth.</p> <p>This landscape is also associated with David Hockney who painted the Woldgate Roman Road which traverses the southern ridge, defining the valley.</p>
Evaluation	
Overall weight and spatial distribution of natural beauty evidence and recommendation as to land that should be considered a Candidate Area	<p>Based on the analysis above, land in the east of the valley, closer to Bridlington, is not considered to meet the natural beauty criterion and the valley to the north and west of Rudston is broader and less defined, forming intensive arable farmland which lacks sufficient natural beauty, despite its cultural heritage significance.</p> <p>Within the central part of the valley between Rudston and Boynton there is a greater weight of evidence in relation to natural beauty as a result of the clearly defined pastoral valley character, higher concentration of features of interest and scenic quality, when compared with surrounding areas. These qualities are acknowledged, however this area is limited in extent and isolated, being surrounded by extensive tracts of non-qualifying land. On this basis, it has not been proposed for inclusion within the Candidate Area and the whole of EA7 is excluded. This decision is consistent with similar decisions made elsewhere e.g. EA8 and EA12</p>
Need for further scrutiny	N/A
Issues to be Addressed in Defining Extent	
Transition	N/A
Fragmentation	N/A
Incongruous features	N/A
Settlements	N/A

Yorkshire Wolds AONB Designation Project

Evaluation Area 8 – Southern and Eastern Wold Fringes

Landscape Context	
Location/Context	This area comprises the High Wolds landscape as they start to dip eastwards forming a gradual dip slope. It runs from the north bank of the Humber estuary west of Hull northwards, touching the western side of Beverley and swinging around Driffield before extending eastwards as far as the western edge of Bridlington. It includes the incised valleys around Huggate and Langtoft as well as Middlethorpe Dale and Goodmanham Dale in the south.
Landscape Character	<p>The majority of EA8 comprises the Open High Rolling Farmland Landscape Type 13 (13A South Dalton Estate Farmland and 13D North Wolds Plateau Farmlands) as defined in the East Riding Landscape Character Assessment (September 2018).</p> <p>In the northwest of the area, where there is a greater concentration of dry valleys, it is classified as the Central Dissected Plateau Landscape Type 14 (14A Fridaythorpe and Huggate Rolling Farmland, 14C Cottam Dale and Wold Farmland, and 14D Langtoft Dale and Wold Farmland).</p> <p>This area is defined as CA5 Western Wolds Dry Valleys, CA7 The High Wolds Plateau and CA9 Eastern Wolds Dip Slope in the HLC for East Riding.</p>
Designation History	This area falls within the Yorkshire Wolds Important Landscape Area as designated within the East Riding Local Plan (Adopted April 2016). However only the northwest part of the area and a small area west of Driffield (Elmswell Beck Valley) is considered an area of 'highest quality' as defined in Policy ENV2 and Figure 11 of Local Plan Strategy.

Natural Beauty Factors and Evidence	
Landscape quality	<p>Much of this landscape is intensively farmed and its condition in terms of its visual, functional and ecological interest is in the main relatively poor. Only about 30% has been managed under environmental stewardship, especially around North and South Dalton, Kirkburn and in various locations in the north. This indicates some areas of farming landscapes are benefitting from positive land management measures.</p> <p>Nature conservation interest is limited to steeper slopes associated with incised valleys which concentrate in the northwest and southern part of the area, or areas of wetter ground around springs and watercourses close to Driffield. The upper slopes of the dry valleys are often ploughed and steeper slopes sometimes planted with conifers, while at the heads of the valleys where they become shallow, such as around Wetwang, they are entirely ploughed. This has the effect of masking the topographic interest of the landscape and results in a loss of characteristic landscape patterns. There is evidence of over-management of hedgerows, producing low, flailed, intermittent hedges of limited value ecologically, visually or functionally.</p>

	<p>Where calcareous grassland on the steep slopes within the incised valleys remains, it is designated as SSSI. However, the condition of these sites such as at Cottam Well Dale, Cinquefoil Brow and Wood Dale or Horse Dale and Holm Dale is unfavourable but recovering due to grazing management and there is evidence of scrub encroachment or spread of Tor grass which affects the diversity of the grass swards. In contrast the Kiplingcotes Chalk Pit in the south is in favourable condition and under active management. Wetland sites along watercourses in the east of the area such as the River Hull Headwaters along Elmswell Beck and also Lowthorpe Beck, are limited in their extent due to agriculture and urban development.</p> <p>Historic landscape characterisation indicates that the majority of the enclosure pattern dates to the period of parliamentary enclosure with areas of 20th century agricultural intensification and evidence of boundary loss. This has resulted in a dominance of large-scale fields defined by low hawthorn hedges and limited hedgerow trees across much of the area. Numerous conifer and mixed planting shelterbelts and estate woods scatter the area, associated with shooting and countryside sports, or providing shelter around farmsteads.</p> <p>The settlement pattern across this area comprises small, nucleated villages which often have an intact and rural character and a dispersed pattern of isolated farmsteads some of which form significant clusters of large-scale barns and buildings which can appear incongruous and draw the eye. There are some small-scale housing developments on the fringes of settlements such as Wetwang and Kilham, although generally there are limited signs of urbanisation with the exception of the outskirts of Driffield. There are occasional isolated built structures such as the undesignated brick-built church at the head of Cottam Dale which is in a poor state of repair and part collapsed, giving rise to sense of abandonment and unkemptness.</p> <p>Incongruous features in this landscape include individual and pairs of domestic wind turbines especially on the higher land east of Langtoft, electricity overhead lines (especially between Middleton-on-the-Wold and North Dalton) and telegraph poles, as well as visible commercial development on the western outskirts of Driffield. In places, large scale farm buildings can appear particularly prominent eg east of Cottam House and in the south of the area the landscape is visually affected by the presence of the Sancton Wold wind farm which is prominent on the skyline from some elevated views north of Goodmanham Dale, or where two turbines sit above Goodmanham Dale at its western fringes.</p> <p>Overall, the landscape quality and condition of this landscape is mixed, with the most intact areas occurring where there are greater changes in topography associated with incised valleys such as around Cottam and Langtoft or west of Wetwang. However, even here there is evidence of the condition of the landscape having been affected by land use management.</p>
Scenic quality	<p>The most elevated part of this landscape lies in the northwest, the land sloping gradually to the south and east and affording elevated expansive and long-distance views south and east, out across the unremitting rolling, intensively farmed agricultural landscape of the High Wolds Plateau and gradual dip slope. This landscape has a simplicity, created by the sea of arable land set within a rectilinear pattern of very large-scale hedgerow enclosures with few woodlands. This gives rise to a degree of homogeneity – the scenic quality of this landscape is not in its drama but rather its scale and emptiness. The network of often straight rural lanes is flanked by wide grass verges and hedgerows which can often limit views out, resulting in a general lack of visual interest for considerable distances.</p>

	<p>The broad swathe of agricultural land is broken where there are incised valleys around Langtoft, Cottam, west of Wetwang in the highest part of the plateau and also Goodmanham in the south. Here scenic qualities increase, as the secretive and intimate qualities of the valleys contrasts with sweeping landform of the interfluvies, although in some cases the valleys are relatively narrow and shallow and influenced by the encroachment of arable land use, scrub or conifer plantation. The interfluvies between the valleys are also broader than those found in the western scarp and therefore the contribution these valleys make to the wider landscape is more limited. Nevertheless, when set down within the valleys the classic qualities of the sinuous curves and flowing lines as well as areas of calcareous grassland, all combine to lift scenic quality and where these landscapes are associated with natural or upstanding cultural features of particular value, this can add to compositions, colour and texture.</p> <p>Similarly, the gentle agricultural dip slopes are broken on occasion by areas of parkland such as Burton Agnes and South Dalton where there is extensive wood pasture and veteran trees. At South Dalton the landscape is associated with an estate village and has an outstanding richness and quality. However, these parkland landscapes form isolated and contrasting landscape within a wider sea of intensive arable farmland which lacks interest and scenic qualities.</p> <p>There are few landmarks in this landscape but one which is of particular note is Sykes Monument. Whilst associated with the Sledmere Estate to the north, this monument sits on elevated land clearly chosen to be visible for miles around. It forms an important gateway to the Sledmere Estate and more varied landscapes further north and west.</p>
Relative wildness	<p>The intensive farming and settled character of this landscape, coupled with limited areas of semi-natural vegetation, means that the majority of the area has little to no sense of relative wildness. Nevertheless, in some of the incised sinuous valleys it is possible to feel a sense of remoteness, and lack of settlement eg Greenland Slack, Cowlam Well Dale, Cottam Well Dale, Horse Dale, Oxlands Dale and in the dales surrounding Langtoft, away from the main road.</p>
Relative tranquillity	<p>This is a predominately rural tranquil landscape with little traffic on the rural lane network and with the main sources of noise coming from farming activity and machinery. In the area around Goodmanham there is occasional overhead aircraft noise.</p> <p>Along the main road network including the B1253, B1252, A166, B1249 and A614 tranquillity is noticeably reduced. Furthermore, CPRE Dark Skies mapping indicates this Evaluation Area is adversely affected over a large area by the major towns of Driffield and Bridlington which have significant night light spill. The smaller settlements such as Goodmanham, Kilham, Langtoft and Garnton on the Wolds have a more localised effect.</p> <p>This landscape can often feel empty and devoid of activity. The visual effects of overt manmade development such as wind turbines and the industrial development on the fringes of Driffield, or the overhead electricity lines between Middleton-on-the-Wolds and North Dalton, reduce perceptions of tranquillity at a local level.</p> <p>Overall, those areas with the greatest tranquillity are in open farmland away from main roads and settlements and in the incised intimate valleys or along ancient routes which have become rural tracks and paths such as York Road, Green Lane and Garton Balk. Here, birdsong and nature can be more readily appreciated.</p>

Natural heritage features	<p>The natural heritage interest of this landscape is very limited but includes patches of calcareous grassland, wetland sites and geological sites.</p> <p>Calcareous grassland sites are limited to the steepest valleys and are recognised both as SSSI designation and Local Wildlife Sites which are concentrated in the northwest of the evaluation area and around Goodmanham, but the majority of the area is intensive arable with little evidence of natural heritage visible apart from scattered arable species and richer grass verges along the lanes. Sites of greater natural heritage interest which contribute to the natural beauty of the area include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cinquefoil Brow and Wood Dale SSSI (comprising two separate areas) valued for their chalk grassland - one of the best remaining examples of species rich chalk grassland of a type which is particularly scarce on the northern Chalk of North Humberside. • Cottam Well Dale SSSI - valued for its chalk grassland including grazed and un-grazed sections. • Horse Dale and Holm Dale SSSI comprise two areas of unimproved chalk grassland within adjacent dry valleys which exhibit two different plant communities. • Kiplingcotes Chalk Pit SSSI - valued for its chalk grassland and vertical quarry face. The site is managed as a Nature Reserve by Yorkshire Naturalist Trust. • Along the former Beverley to Market Weighton railway line there is a Local Nature Reserve along Hudson's Way comprising areas of hawthorn scrub and grassland which displays a profusion of orchids in summer. • Various Local Wildlife Sites occur at Well Dale, Meg Dale, Warren Dale and Crake Dale all designated for their old, established semi natural, neutral calcareous and acid grassland. • A number of the straight and wide lane verges in the area, including those converging on Kilham, are Local Wildlife Sites for their good quality semi-natural verge. <p>Of these sites, the most extensive and concentrated areas occur south of Goodmanham and around Cottam and Langtoft, where they make a notable contribution to natural beauty given their extent and concentration within distinctive valleys.</p> <p>Wetland sites are associated with the River Hull Headwaters on the eastern side of this Evaluation Area along the Lowthorpe and Elmswell Becks. These sites are nationally important as the most northerly chalk stream system in Britain and include interest such as riparian grassland, woodland and fen. However, they are limited in extent, are surrounded by intensively farmed land or urban development, and are separate from wider areas of qualifying land within adjoining Evaluation Areas.</p> <p>Local Geological Sites are often coupled with areas of nature conservation interest and chalk grassland, adding to perceptions of natural beauty. They include Langtoft disused pit, Nafferton Wold quarry, Lowthorpe quarry at Rudston Parva and Bainton Chalk Pit as well as an extensive area at Goodmanham Wold and Goodmanham Dale. To the north Goodmanham Dale is the site of Enthorpe Railway Cutting which is of national significance as the best exposure of the stratigraphically important lower Burnham Chalk and is designated SSSI.</p> <p>Woodland habitats are relatively limited in extent and frequently comprise mixed plantations or areas of natural regeneration woodland on steep slopes. Where new block planting has occurred on steep slopes within the valleys it can appear abrupt,</p>
----------------------------------	--

	<p>running against contours, or damaging areas of calcareous grassland. There are no areas of ancient semi-natural or ancient replanted woodland in this landscape.</p> <p>These designations illustrate that the nature conservation interest in this landscape is concentrated in areas where farming has been less intense and where quarrying and former railway cuttings have exposed the underlying geology. As a result, natural heritage makes a greater contribution to natural beauty where a number of sites cluster together, such as in the northwest and around Goodmanham.</p>
Cultural heritage	<p>The pattern of small rural villages on the eastern fringes of this landscape has a particular charm. Located on natural springs which flow eastwards they comprise small, nucleated settlements built primarily of red brick and many of them are conservation areas eg Tibthorpe, North Dalton, Bainton, Middleton-on-the-Wold, Lund and Etton and Kilham and Burton Agnes in the north. Whilst some of these settlements have experienced small urban extensions, many remain small in scale and intact in their form and layout. Where they are associated with a watercourse, meadows or church landmark, these features add to their scenic qualities and the contribution they make to their surroundings. However, these settlements are not considered to sit within a wider area of qualifying land and lie some distance from qualifying land in adjoining Evaluation Areas.</p> <p>In contrast, the settlements of Langtoft and Goodmanham (both conservation areas) have a small-scale rural charm and sit within a wider high-quality landscape. Langtoft nestles within a network of incised valleys, its form and scale dictated by the steep topography. Buildings are primarily brick but there are also chalk built and colour washed buildings which add to its charm. The Conservation Area appraisal for Langtoft identified its topography and context as the most significant contributory factor to its character and appearance.</p> <p>Sites of cultural heritage interest can be found scattered across this Evaluation Area. Some features and sites make a limited contribution to perceptions of natural beauty as they reflect very subtle features or comprise below ground archaeology eg scheduled deserted medieval village sites such as Pockthorpe Swathorpe and Harpham. Other features make a limited contribution because their settings have changed, such as the church at Cowlam or Georgian farmhouse at Cottam both of which sit amongst more modern farm buildings. The Grade II* Registered Park and Garden at South Dalton (18th century Rococo gardens, wood pasture and veteran trees) or that at Burton Agnes Hall (12th century Manor House including church set within designed gardens), have a greater influence on natural beauty given their extent, however they form limited pockets within a wider intensively farmed landscape.</p> <p>There are however some locations where a number of features of cultural heritage interest come together within relatively close proximity to each other and/or are strongly associated with a wider landscape setting to which they add meaning. In these situations, cultural heritage features play a more significant role in contributing to natural beauty.</p> <p>Within EA8 there are three locations where cultural heritage makes a more significant contribution to natural beauty, albeit localised, as follows:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The area around Cottam where the scheduled deserted medieval village comprises building platforms, tracks, hollow way and cultivation terraces which are readily appreciated. This site sits at the head of Cottam Well Dale which forms an evocative setting, (albeit partly altered by plantation woodland and telegraph poles), as well as the church ruin of Trinity Chapel. The church is seen in silhouette from the dale and has inspired artists such as the photographer Simon Parlor and painter Glen Marshall who captured the church against moody skies and amongst telegraph poles. • The area west of Wetwang, which is associated with prehistoric earthworks. Here the single and double linear boundary dykes extending along Harper Dale, Cow Dale, Holm Dale and Horse Dale and also that north of Wetwang, form part of a very extensive and important system of linear boundary dykes dating back to the Bronze Age. These features survive well for most of their length although they are ploughed out or planted with conifers in places. The complexity and scale of these features is visible as is their relationship and manipulation of the natural topography of the landscape. These qualities add to perceptions of time depth and cultural associations with the landscape. Furthermore, these features are of increased value due to their association with other linear earthworks further west and a significant group of prehistoric round barrows on Huggate Hill, as well as their connection with early antiquarians such as J R Mortimer in the 19th Century. The deep incised valleys at Huggate Horse Dale are portrayed by the artist John Geekie who captures the deep clefts formed by the valleys and the positioning of trees which emphasise slopes. • The area around Goodmanham including the village, which is a conservation area. The church in the centre of the village is a local landmark and in the surrounding landscape there is a high concentration of natural springs which hold a cultural and spiritual significance eg Lady's Well and Beggar's Bush Well. To the north of the village is the site of the Kiplingcotes Derby – the oldest annual horse race in England which takes place across an arduous farm track and field. The area also contains the most significant cluster of visible burial mounds at Goodmanham Wold Farm. Many remain visible above ground with some over 1m in height and are clearly visible. <p>This landscape has inspired artists such as Peter Park who has captured the simple flowing lines of the landscape and patchwork of land uses around Huggate but also Hockney who captured the landscape in and around the village of Kilham including 'Puddle Near Kilham, Kilham Village and The Tunnel).</p>
Evaluation	
Overall weight and spatial distribution of natural beauty evidence and recommendation as to land that should be considered a Candidate Area	<p>The majority of this landscape is not considered to have a sufficient weight of evidence in relation to natural beauty to warrant inclusion within the Candidate Area.</p> <p>However, the weight of evidence is most strong in areas where there remains significant topographic variation associated with dry valleys and where there are associated concentrations of legible natural and cultural heritage interest which contributes to scenic quality, adding drama, interest and scenic compositions. The analysis above indicates that a number of these areas are however borderline, in part due to landscape condition within the valleys, or because the landscape which forms their immediate context does not meet the natural beauty criterion. These areas will therefore need particular scrutiny at the desirability and boundary setting stages as set out below.</p>

	<p>It is acknowledged that there are a few locations which express higher levels of natural beauty, but which have not been included within the Candidate Area eg South Dalton Parkland. This is because these areas are limited in extent and isolated - fragmented from land that meets the natural beauty criterion by a wider tract of landscape which does not. Given the transitional nature of the landscape as it moves east, this should be reviewed at the boundary setting stage of assessment.</p> <p>Overall, areas which have been included within the Candidate Area are outlined in the section below entitled 'need for further scrutiny'. These areas have a greater weight of evidence supporting natural beauty and lie closest to the core area of qualifying land.</p>
Need for further scrutiny	<p>Greenland Slack, Cottom Well Dale, Cowlam Well Dale and Phillips Slack east of Sledmere and valleys surrounding Langtoft</p> <p>The natural beauty of this area derives from the combination of narrow dry sinuous valleys associated with Greensand Slack, Cowlam Well Dale, Philips Slack and Cottam Well Dale and the valleys surrounding Langtoft. These valleys are narrowly defined and shallower than those to the west with the intensive arable land use on the interfluves extending onto upper slopes such that open chalk slopes are confined to a relatively narrow steep corridor. These valleys are associated with cultural and natural heritage features, but their condition is mixed with some loss of intactness and scenic quality. Given this, and their peripheral location, particular care will be needed at the desirability and boundary setting stages.</p> <p>Harper Dale, Cow Dale, Holm Dale and Horse Dale northeast of Huggate</p> <p>The natural beauty of this area derives from its system of sinuous, dry incised valleys. These are most pronounced in the area of Holm Dale, Horse Dale, Oxlands Dale and Rabbit Dale where the slopes are steep and the dales deep and the valley sides remain as open slopes and in parts designated as SSSI in recognition of their unimproved calcareous grassland. These valleys sit close to the hilltop settlement of Huggate forming its immediate setting and are associated with the nationally significant linear prehistoric enclosures and cluster of burial mounds on Huggate Wold. The complexity and close proximity of the dales coupled with elevated interfluves creates topographic and scenic variation ranging from wide open vistas, views into the edges of the steep sided wolds and intimate experiences within the valleys themselves. Scenic quality and natural heritage is undermined where the valleys have become cloaked in conifer plantations eg Oaklands Dale and Harper Dale which obscure land form and also earthworks. Furthermore, to the north and east the landscape is in transition becoming progressively less incised at Cinquefoil Hill and Benidale Holes. Particular scrutiny will be needed at the boundary setting stage to define a boundary within the area of transition.</p> <p>Middlethorpe Dale and Goodmanham Dale north and east of Goodmanham</p> <p>The natural beauty of this area derives from the varied rolling and sometimes incised topography and significant cluster of natural and cultural features of interest including the historic village of Goodmanham, concentration of natural springs, historic lanes and routes, calcareous grasslands, woodlands (eg Ashlack Wood), geology and cultural traditions and associations including the Kiplingcotes Derby. The dry valley of Goodmanham Dale to the south and east of the village comprises a distinct enclosed linear valley along which the disused railway forms a recreational trail and the whole area is valued for its geological interest. The area also includes a rare site of long standing neutral and calcareous woodland at Ashlack Wood adjacent to which is the geological site of Enthorpe Railway Cutting. The qualities of this landscape are transitional to the east where the landscape becomes less</p>

	distinct topographically and more open, with fewer features of interest. Similarly, the landscape to the south is also transitional rising onto Sancton Wold where it is influenced by intensive arable farming, the busy A1079 and visual influence of the Sancton Wold windfarm. Particularly scrutiny will need to be given to these areas of transition at the boundary setting stage.
Issues to be Addressed in Defining Extent	
Transition	All three of the areas discussed above express areas of transition in landscape and scenic quality and will require particular care when defining a boundary to ensure it is drawn conservatively within the transition in accordance with Natural England Guidance. Furthermore, the dip slope between Huggate and Goodmanham Dale is also transitional as it moves eastwards and again particular care will be required at the boundary setting stage, defining a boundary towards the high-quality end of the transition in a manner that includes areas of high-quality and excludes areas of lesser quality, ie it should be drawn conservatively. Visual associations back into the qualifying area of land to the east may be useful when defining the boundary in this area.
Fragmentation	The extent to which the incised valleys are fragmented from the wider areas of qualifying land due to broad interfluvies which are intensively farmed, will need to be given particular scrutiny. This is particularly the case where it occurs between incised valleys which are on the periphery of the wider extent of qualifying land.
Incongruous features	The extent of the influence of wind turbines at Sancton Wold on the Candidate Area to the north will need to be carefully considered at the boundary setting stage, along with the effect of two turbines at Weighton Wold above Goodmanham Dale. Similarly particular care will be required around Cottam, where existing turbines (currently 34m in height) at Low Colwam Farm may be repowered with larger turbines, and also wind turbines east of Langtoft.
Settlements	<p>The majority of settlements within this landscape lie within areas which are not considered to qualify in terms of natural beauty. Whilst the villages themselves are often Conservation Areas and have attractive qualities they do not sit within a wider area of qualifying land. The exception is that of Goodmanham. This was given particular consideration during the natural beauty assessment. The village has experienced some more recent linear development along the road towards Market Weighton but there remains a clear gap between the two, demarcated by the former railway line. Furthermore, the settlement retains a close association with the wider landscape including cultural heritage and natural interest in the form of multiple natural springs, a listed church which sits on a natural knoll and is visible from the surrounding landscape and a network of rural lanes and tracks which radiate out from the village and have a strong time depth. On this basis the village and its surrounding landscape are included within the Candidate Area.</p> <p>The settlement of Fridaythorpe was also given careful consideration. This village is located on an area of open elevated land with wider views in all directions. The village is not a conservation area although it retains some elements of interest including a mere and listed church. However, it also contains areas of more recent infill development, farms with associated large-scale barns, a mast on the northern outskirts and a prominent cluster of large industrial units which are highly visible from the surrounding landscape. Whilst dry valleys radiate out to the north, west and south of the village, the land in the immediate context of the village lacks the same drama, as do the gradual slopes to the east. On this basis this village sits on the edge of qualifying land in terms of natural beauty. For these reasons it has been excluded from the Candidate Area. However, this should be reviewed during the boundary setting stages of assessment to determine the most appropriate legible boundary.</p>

Yorkshire Wolds AONB Designation Project

Evaluation Area 9 – Thixendale Valleys and Sledmere

Landscape Context	
Location/Context	This evaluation area lies at the heart of the Yorkshire Wolds National Character Area and comprises high wolds and classic chalk valleys in the west, centred on the village of Thixendale, with the Sledmere estate in the east.
Landscape Character	<p>This is a deeply rural area with dry valleys, steep hillsides and the park and gardens of the Sledmere estate in the east.</p> <p>It lies within the northern part of Landscape Type 10 (Complex Incised Sloping Wooded Farmland) as defined by the East Riding Landscape Character Assessment (September 2018).</p> <p>It is also defined in the North Yorkshire and York Landscape Characterisation Project (May 2011) as Narrow Chalk Valley Landscape Type 21 and the Chalk Wolds Landscape Type 18.</p> <p>There are four small settlements in EA9: Thixendale and the hilltop settlements of Towthorpe and Fimber, as well as the estate village of Sledmere.</p> <p>This area is defined as Character Area 5 Western Wolds Dry Valley in the HLC for East Riding (2018).</p>
Designation History	The whole of this area is recognised as an Area of High Landscape Value within the Ryedale Local Plan (Adopted September 2013 Policy SP13) and an Important Landscape Area of 'highest quality' within the East Riding Local Plan (Figure 11 of Local Plan Strategy).

Natural Beauty Factors and Evidence	
Landscape quality	<p>This evaluation area is generally in good condition, notably with the geomorphology of the chalk valley systems still close to their natural qualities and characteristics and many retaining chalk grassland land cover on their steepest slopes. Arable farmland dominates the higher land, and localised areas of woodland and scrub, as well as shelter belts and parkland trees, make up much of the remainder of the area, which is more heavily wooded than other parts of the Wolds. This adds significantly to the natural beauty of the area through variations in seasonal colour and texture.</p> <p>Approximately half the area is within Countryside Stewardship or Environmental Stewardship Scheme Agreements, with several large areas within Higher Tier CSS, notably around Burdale House Farm. This indicates substantial areas of farming landscapes are benefitting from positive land management measures. There is a notable gap in agri-environmental agreements southeast of Thixendale and the northern fringes around Sledmere.</p>

	<p>There are three SSSIs in the western part of the area, all closely related to the deeply-incised valley landscapes and all designated for their calcareous grassland interest. Coupled with steep valley topography the grassland areas add to the legibility of the landscape. The condition of the SSSIs is varied:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waterdale SSSI includes areas in favourable to unfavourable or recovering condition. • Vessey Pasture Dale and Back Dale SSSI: contains a smaller area in favourable condition but a larger area is unfavourable and recovering due to insufficient grazing and borderline scrub cover. • Thixen Dale and Long Dale SSSI: recorded as mostly unfavourable recovering, with only one site of c.6 ha. being favourable. <p>This indicates that the majority of the SSSI sites are suffering from some degree of scrub encroachment due to lack of adequate grazing, which could be leading to a decline in the floristic interest of the SSSIs. There are also areas of calcareous grassland outside designated SSSIs, which may also be suffering due to scrub encroachment and loss of biodiversity interest.</p> <p>There is evidence of over-management of hedgerows, producing low, flailed, intermittent hedges of limited value ecologically, visually or functionally. There is also evidence of erosion of footpaths and bridleways due to over-use or misuse by off-road vehicles, motorcycles or mountain bikes. Nevertheless, these effects are localised.</p> <p>The incised chalk valleys of EA9 are generally too steep to have been ploughed, but in one or two locations, the slopes flatten out towards the heads of the valleys and are shallow enough to have attracted the plough and a conversion to arable. This change gives rise to a localised loss of landscape quality.</p> <p>There are no significant detractors, with the exception of occasional large agricultural sheds and buildings or structures associated with shooting activity. Overall, the condition of the landscape is good and in places excellent, and there are large areas where it is positively managed.</p>
Scenic quality	<p>This evaluation area is an intact, deeply rural and scenic Yorkshire Wolds landscape packed with many dramatic and visually arresting contrasts between the high chalk wolds and deep valleys as well as wonderful, historic designed landscapes in the east associated with the Sledmere estate.</p> <p>A particular feature of this area is the interconnectedness over such a large area of rolling higher land with a network of deep and dramatic valleys. The sloping arable tops typically fall away into the valleys forming their immediate setting. Traversing the area, the long views and sense of space, and the great dome of the sky on the higher land, gives way with dramatic effect into the enclosed and intimate character of the valleys.</p>

	<p>EA9 exhibits a powerful sense of place and strong visual unity forming part of the core of the Yorkshire Wolds landscape. The interplay of secretive chalk valleys and the rolling higher land with sweeping views combines with an unspoiled character, a powerful sense of the raw forces of nature and many wonderful scenic compositions to create a landscape of extraordinary scenic beauty. EA9 represents an intense expression of the Yorkshire Wolds landscape, the network of winding rural lanes and footpaths providing elevated views into deep set valleys and contrasting experiences of elevation, followed quickly by the enclosure of the sinuous dales.</p> <p>Most of the upper reaches of the valleys are dry or intermittently wet, enhancing the chalkland character. The steep valley sides vary from grazed grassland with areas of scrub encroachment to denser areas of scrub and occasional woodland. Some, such as Water Dale and its tributaries, such as Birdsall Dale, are more enclosed and secretive in character; others, typically in the upper tributaries, such as the western branch of Mowthorpe Dale north of Towthorpe, are more open and merge gradually into the higher land. A few of the valleys retain an open grassland character on the lower parts of their valley sides, but are enclosed by woodland on the upper slopes, enriching their secretive character; School House Dale is a dramatic example. On other occasions, woodland may occupy just one side of the valley, such as at Ings Plantation in Brubber Dale north-west of Fridaythorpe, creating a different character.</p> <p>The high land between the valleys is largely under arable farming and there are just scattered farms, often comprising a courtyard of farm buildings and surrounded by shelter planting of sycamore woodland. This brings its own special landscape experience where the vast dome of sky combines with the sweeping landforms to create a visceral landscape experience of long views, proximity to the sky and connection to the weather. The agricultural landscape adds its own special imagery of rural life enriched by the sweeping landforms, superb views and painterly landscape compositions which contrasts with the secretive, enclosed and intimate scale of the valleys.</p> <p>The eastern part of EA9 is occupied by the classically English Sledmere estate, an area of high scenic quality, its historic designed and pastoral landscape a rich variety of parkland, woodland, agricultural land and historic buildings and features. The landform is gently rolling and includes some shallow chalk valleys as well as the steep-sided and dramatic School House Dale referred to above. The wonderful landscape setting is enriched by a variety of listed buildings as well as Sledmere House itself and the gardens which surround it. Many fine, mature trees reinforce the parkland character and provide contrast with the far more open landscapes to the west.</p> <p>Settlements are few and far between, and they are all small in scale: Fimber and Towthorpe are both located on higher ground; Thixendale is strung out in a deep, narrow chalk valley; and Sledmere is positioned in a bowl in the topography, the sense of enclosure enhanced by extensive woodland and parkland trees. These settlements retain a small-scale rural character comprising brick build rural cottages and farm buildings while the Sledmere estate exhibits distinctive estate buildings and features with a strong visual unity and style. Each of these settlements contribute to the richness and quality of this rural landscape.</p>
Relative wildness	<p>This is a managed landscape, mostly farmed, with a network of hedgerows, woodlands and lanes plus a few small settlements, and does not express strong relative wildness. However, the deep, winding chalk valleys of the western and central parts of the</p>

	<p>Evaluation Area feel especially remote and undeveloped. The lack of human influence creates a raw sense of isolation from the modern world, and the sinuous and interlocking character of the dales increases disorientation and enhances perceptions of remoteness.</p> <p>Furthermore, the powerful landforms and steep slopes of the valleys resulting from natural erosion, similarly enhance the feeling of relative wildness.</p>
Relative tranquillity	<p>This evaluation area is very tranquil except for localised vehicular impacts associated with some of the roads, most especially the A166 (which cuts through the south-western part of the area) and Sledmere House and garden with its tourist bustle. These impacts do little to detract from an overall sense of tranquillity and feeling of being 'away from it all'. There are no major roads with a constant traffic noise, nor other sources of intense noise, and no overhead electricity lines or pylons; there are no unsettling visual intrusions and no large-scale new development of any sort. In the western and central parts of the evaluation area, there are a number of rural roads, but their impact, and the impact of traffic on these routes, is minor and localised, and they barely detract from the peacefulness of the landscape and its sense of timelessness.</p> <p>The settlements of Fimber and Thixendale are small in scale and have no significant adverse impact on the general sense of tranquillity; the tiny settlement of Towthorpe is located on a dead-end lane and traffic here barely registers.</p> <p>Almost all of EA9 is within the darkest category in CPRE's Dark Skies mapping, confirming that the sense of tranquillity extends into the night-time experience, with only localised effects of lighting associated with the four small settlements.</p> <p>This is a tranquil and undeveloped rural landscape which feels wonderfully peaceful throughout the area.</p>
Natural heritage features	<p>The evaluation area is predominantly an agricultural landscape with localised areas of calcareous grassland in the chalk valleys and designed parkland landscapes in the east at Sledmere. Woodlands and mature parkland trees enrich the natural heritage of the Sledmere estate and other parts of this EA.</p> <p>The calcareous grasslands of greatest value are designated SSSI and lie in the west, in chalk valleys: Thixen Dale, Water Dale and their tributaries: Long Dale, Worm Dale, Bradeham Dale and Pluckham Dale in the south and Vessey Pasture Dale, Back Dale, Honey Dale and Court Dale in the north. The steep, valley-side slopes provide characteristic examples of chalk grassland types found in the Yorkshire Wolds. In recent years there is evidence that lack of appropriate grazing is leading to increased spread of scrub and a decline in calcareous grassland species diversity, although both the grassland and scrub (especially when in flower) add to the visual diversity and natural beauty of the dales.</p> <p>The singular ownership of the Sledmere estate has contributed significantly to the richness of wildlife in the area. This is mainly due to the abundance of trees planted by the estate over hundreds of years. There is no other conservation area within the East Riding of Yorkshire that has such a density of trees. The majority of the plantations and some of the park grassland south of Sledmere House, including Sylvia Grove and Avenue Wood, are designated as a non-statutory Site of Importance to Nature Conservation (SINC). These SINC designations cover nearly 50 ha in total. There are many other habitats of value within the</p>

	<p>park, including a small section of dry dale known as School House Dale, which supports butterflies and moths such as the marbled white, Brown Argus and Cistus Forester (Sledmere conservation area Appraisal, 2009).</p> <p>The hedgerows which are found throughout EA9 are of more limited value, being typically closely flailed and sometimes 'gappy'. They will have some wildlife value and contribute in a small way to natural beauty.</p>
Cultural heritage	<p>The evaluation area is rich in cultural heritage, with a number of Scheduled Monuments, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • earthworks, boundaries, dykes and barrows west of Wharram Percy Farm and Plantation. Roman road and large numbers of barrows along SW boundary of EA9; • scattered barrows etc throughout the area, mostly on high land; • Towthorpe medieval settlement which is of particular note for the survival of the earthworks of 16th Century style courtyard farms, buried and earthwork remains of the medieval settlement of Towthorpe, along with the surviving earthworks of part of the settlement's open field system. • Croome Medieval settlement and cultivation terraces which includes buried and earthwork remains of the medieval settlement of Croom, together with a set of terraces originally used by its inhabitants for arable cultivation. The lynchets, (steps between terraces), are typically around 1m high. <p>Where these historic sites comprise earthworks which are legible above ground, they contribute to a sense of time-depth, and make a localised contribution to natural beauty.</p> <p>A variety of listed buildings enrich the area and are concentrated in Thixendale and the designed settlement of Sledmere, with a few scattered buildings such as the Grade II Church of St. Mary in Fimber making an important local contribution to natural beauty.</p> <p>Sledmere House and Park is a 300 ha Grade 1 listed Registered Park and Garden, one of the finest in the north of England, which makes a significant and positive contribution to natural beauty through its historic landscapes and built structures. The village is also a conservation area and is one of the few remaining estate villages in East Riding. Visually, the village has a planned layout and there is a strong unity of character. The listing of a relatively high proportion of the building stock reflects the special historic and architectural interest of the village. The impressive quality of the monuments that have been erected by the Sykes family contribute to an enhanced sense of heritage and status. The village also benefits from the local topography, allowing it to nestle within a south-facing slope of the Wolds, so giving cohesion to this well-spaced settlement.</p> <p>The chalk landscapes of this area, and the succession of chalk valleys in particular, provides a richness of landscape imagery which stirs the imagination and lifts the spirits. It is no surprise that the artist, David Hockney, should be so attracted to the landscapes in this area. His painting of Sledmere village for example beautifully captures its sense of place. Other artists include John Geckie who painted Bradeham Dale near Fridaythorpe. This landscape has also inspired the artist Chris Drury who created the Time and Waves subtle spiral mound in the base of the valley slopes to the village of Thixendale.</p>

Candidate Area	
Overall weight and spatial distribution of natural beauty evidence and recommendation as to land that should be considered a Candidate Area	The Natural Beauty criterion is met over the whole of this Evaluation Area. Landscape and scenic quality, as well as tranquillity, are especially strong and are experienced over a sweep of landscape encompassing the densely packed chalk valleys in the west and centre of the Evaluation Area, much of the high, open land and the settled landscapes of the Sledmere estate. Natural heritage in the form of powerful landforms and calcareous grasslands contribute greatly to natural beauty in the deeply incised chalk valleys. Equally, the rich cultural heritage of the designed landscapes and structures at Sledmere makes a powerful contribution to natural beauty.
Need for further scrutiny	N/A
Issues to be Addressed in Defining Extent	
Transition	N/A
Fragmentation	N/A
Incongruous features	N/A
Settlements	N/A

Yorkshire Wolds AONB Designation Project

Evaluation Area 10 – Western Wolds and Valleys

Landscape Context	
Location/Context	This Evaluation Area comprises the deeply incised western Wolds between Garrowby and Londesborough. This landscape lies between the A166 in the north and A614 in the south and abuts EA8 to the east and EA11 to the west.
Landscape Character	<p>EA10 comprises the western fringes of the High Wolds which are deeply incised by dry sinuous valleys. It is classified in the East Riding Landscape Character Assessment (September 2018) as comprising West Wolds Edge Elevated Farmland Landscape Type on the upland ridges and Complex Incised Sloping Wooded Farmland Landscape Type in the valley systems (including Deep Dale, Millington Pasture, Warter Parkland and Estate Farmland, and Londesborough Parkland and Estate Farmland).</p> <p>This area is defined as CA5 Western Wolds Dry Valleys in the HLC for East Riding.</p>
Designation History	All of the land within this Evaluation Area is designated as an Important Landscape Area and recognised as having the 'highest quality' within the East Riding Local Plan (Figure 11 of Local Plan Strategy).

Natural Beauty Factors and Evidence	
Landscape quality	<p>Most of this landscape is managed under environmental stewardship within a significant percentage under Higher Tier agreements reflecting a landscape which is in reasonably good condition and under active management.</p> <p>The close-knit pattern of sinuous complex dry valley systems which cut into the High Wolds is strongly legible, with a clear interrelationship and juxtaposition between the valleys and farmed interfluvies. The deeply cut, branching, undisturbed and complete dry valley of Millington is a fine example of a karstic landform feature.</p> <p>On the interfluvies between the valleys, land use is predominantly arable. Here the enclosure pattern is relatively intact dating from the later 18th to early 19th century and gives rise to large scale fields. In places hedgerows are discontinuous and show some signs of being over-cut – a pattern confirmed in the Historical Landscape characterisation for the area which identifies upland farmed areas as suffering some field boundary loss. Nevertheless, land use within the dry valleys which dissect the wold tops, is in sharp contrast. Here, the valley sides are so steep that they remain uncultivated and grazed as species-rich grassland. Valued habitats tend to focus within these valley systems and the Millington Wood and Pastures SSSI forms the largest SSSI within the Yorkshire Wolds. The Bishop Wilton Dale SSSI is in favourable condition, while other SSSIs are in unfavourable but recovering condition eg Beckhead Plantation SSSI on the western fringes of this area. The varied condition of these SSSIs reflects the ongoing issues associated with lack of appropriate cattle grazing of calcareous grassland within the valleys to help restore species diversity and the control of scrub encroachment, along with the loss of chalk grassland to conifer plantations.</p>

	<p>Nevertheless, the extent of grassland slopes and their legibility in the landscape remains strong, even where there are patches of hawthorn scrub and gorse.</p> <p>Within the folds of the landform, and in the lower sections of the valleys, where there is greater shelter, there are small, nucleated villages such as Millington and Nunburnholme which have taken advantage of the ready water supply from natural springs in the valley sides. These villages contain an eclectic mix of property styles which are frequently built of red brick. Village buildings form a distinctive, loose, linear arrangement along a wider grass verge which flanks the main street and there are regular views to the surrounding hills between buildings. It is these open spaces and views which give the settlements their distinctive charm. Other estate villages have established in association with parkland such as Londesborough and Warter – here the vernacular styles of buildings reflect the estate influences and exhibit a greater degree of visual unity eg brick built semi-detached cottages with distinctive brick and bargeboard detailing. Furthermore, these latter settlements retain a high degree of integrity with modern housing development almost completely absent.</p> <p>Incongruous features in this landscape include small quarry sites which have a localised impact on landscape quality including the Breedon Fridaythorpe Asphalt Plant in the north of the area, Greenwick Quarry west of Huggate (including chimney and plume) and Partridge Hall Chalk Quarry south of Nunburnholme. These quarry sites have a localised effect on natural beauty and are perceived as relatively small discreet areas within a much wider area of qualifying land.</p> <p>There are also two 33kV transmission lines which cross this landscape between Londesborough and Nunburnholme and a telecommunication mast on Nunburnholme Wold. Where these transmission lines are seen in the context of strong topography and woodland their influence on landscape quality is lessened.</p>
Scenic quality	<p>The Scenic qualities of EA10 derive from the interlocking nature and juxtaposition of High Wold interfluvies and dramatic arresting chalk valleys which are broad, deep and long. These valleys are regarded as the finest examples of incised dry valleys in England (East Riding Minerals and Waste Plan 2019) due to their deeply cut profiles, branching structure, undisturbed complexity and concentration in a small area. This is a landscape with a powerful sense of place and strong visual unity where the interplay of complex, secretive, winding sinuous valleys contrasts with the open expansiveness of the higher arable wolds.</p> <p>The strong and simple lines of the incised valleys is exciting, mysterious and dramatic. Accessed via rural lanes or footpaths, these valleys draw you in, the drama of their steep topography, muted colour of the uncultivated rough pastures, scrub and woodlands combining to create ever changing and inspiring compositions of extraordinary scenic beauty. Where springs emerge, there are areas of wet flushes which add colour and texture. On the higher land between the valleys the simple rolling arable farmland and large skies provide relief to the enclosing nature of the dales. From here there are frequent elevated views into and across the valleys, the land falling away steeply as if being sucked down into the earth.</p> <p>Villages add to scenic quality, nestled in the sides of the valleys along water courses, such as Millington, or near the heads of the valleys as at Warter. These settlements have a secluded and isolated feel, nestled down in the folds of the landscape, their churches providing focal points and interest eg Warter, Millington and Nunburnholme.</p>

	<p>Deciduous and plantation woodland is common within the shelter of the dales giving rise to a verdant character and especially so within the designed parkland of Londesborough which has utilised the drama of the landform to great scenic effect. Here, as at The Park north of Nunburnholme, extensive areas of wood pasture create a long-established pastoral scene which is quintessentially English - majestic veteran trees making a particular contribution to scenic quality.</p> <p>To the east of the area, scenic quality is in transition as the land extends onto the intensively farmed arable High Wolds east of Warter and interfaces with EA8 and the chalk dip slope. Here the landscape patterns gradually become more homogenous and lack the visual interest which is so striking to the west.</p>
Relative wildness	The deep-set nature of the dry valleys, their scale, extent and complex branching structure, coupled with extensive areas of semi-natural habitat, including unimproved calcareous grassland and deciduous woodlands give rise to a strong sense of relative wildness and remoteness from modern day living. The sinuous course of the valleys is remarkably restrictive and enclosed with limited views heightening perceptions of isolation and disorientation.
Relative tranquillity	This area has exceptional dark night skies as indicated by CPRE mapping, reflecting the general low levels of settlement and its position away from major centres of population. Tranquillity levels are also very high as a result of the small rural lane network which is infrequently used, semi natural habitat and also the sense of isolation created by the deep-set valleys. Even on the wold tops and ridges between the valleys there is a sense the landscape is deeply rural with the only noise intrusion coming from the operation of occasional farm machinery. This tranquillity is reduced slightly in close proximity to the A614 and A166 on the northern and southern margins of this landscape where traffic noise is greater.
Natural heritage features	<p>The natural heritage interest of EA10 relates strongly to its exceptional karst landform and also its calcareous grassland habitats and areas of ancient ash woodland on chalk. Unimproved pasture on steep valley slopes coupled with the complexity of this landscape means that a much higher proportion of the land is permanent pasture than in other parts of the Wolds. Where there are areas of unimproved grassland, the colours of the landscape are often muted and textured and studded with wildflowers in season.</p> <p>A significant proportion of the valley landscapes are designated as SSSIs and include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bishop Wilton Deep Dale valued for its chalk grassland in a dry valley complex; • Beckhead Plantation valued for its northern ash woodland on chalk which has a rich ground flora and display of wildflowers in spring; • Millington Wood and Pastures is the largest SSSI in the Yorkshire Wolds and is valued for its geological interest (karstic landform features) and biological interest (unimproved chalk grassland including calcareous marsh communities associated with natural springs in the valley sides) and an area of ancient ash woodland in Millington Wood, and; • Keasey Dale is valued for its unimproved chalk grassland which is one of the best remaining examples of species-rich northern chalk grassland and is particularly valued for its orchids.

	<p>The springlines in the valley bottoms produce small areas of damp marshy grassland known as ‘flushes’ which are rich in plant life and sometimes develop into larger spring fed ponds such as those at Millington Pastures. The variations in vegetation associated with these areas and open water features add interest and colour to the landscape.</p>
Cultural heritage	<p>The cultural heritage patterns in this landscape make a strong contribution to the natural beauty of EA10. These include the pattern of medieval settlement located on minor roads and close to springs which exhibit a strong vernacular of red brick cottages with slate roofs which add to scenic qualities. Some villages are associated with churches built of Jurassic Limestone and form local landmarks eg Nunburnholme. At Millington, the strip field enclosures and small crofts radiating out from the settlement form strong patterns on the rising hillsides, as do areas of remnant ridge and furrow. In the area around Millington Lings and Callis Wold there is a concentration of archaeological sites including extensive systems of linear boundary dykes and barrows dating to the Neolithic and Bronze Age. These are subtle features in the landscape having been affected by ploughing and their contribution to natural beauty of the landscape is more limited.</p> <p>This landscape expresses important ecclesiastical links including a 12th Century Priory at Warter (north of St James’ Church at Warter village) and a Benedictine Nunnery at Nunburnholme, both of which survive as extensive earthworks. The earthworks associated with Nunburnholme also include evidence of ridge and furrow which is still visible in the surrounding small-scale fields.</p> <p>Also of note are the extensive areas of extant parkland – the first is associated with Londesborough Hall and estate village which developed from a late medieval or early post-medieval deer park and was extended in the 18th century. This parkland landscape is a Grade II* Registered Park and Garden and contains an extensive area of woodpasture. The second parkland (which is not registered) is associated with a 17th century mansion located to the north of Nunburnholme which was demolished in 1972. Despite this, the wider estate retains much of its parkland character in the form of shelter belts, fishponds, pasture and veteran trees set amongst the folds of the dry valleys. The wider estate has been managed for bird shoots. In 2018 plans were approved to build a new stately home within the grounds of the former mansion house.</p> <p>Both Londesborough parkland, and that to the north of Nunburnholme, contribute significantly to the natural beauty of the wider landscape. The area more broadly has inspired artists such as John Geekie who has captured the grandeur of the Warter Prior Estate and its use for shoots, and Well Dale illustrating the patchwork of scrub on slopes, plantations and wooded skylines.</p> <p>The artist Glen Marshall has captured the tranquil rural character of Millington Dale and drama of the topography, while the flatter landscapes and mature beech clumps and sycamores found at the margins of this area have also been captured by David Hockney in his work Bigger Trees near Warter.</p>
Candidate Area	
Overall weight and spatial distribution of natural beauty	<p>The Natural Beauty criterion is met over the whole of this evaluation area. Landscape and scenic quality, as well as tranquillity, are especially strong and evidence of a range of features of natural and cultural heritage adds further interest. The outstanding karst geomorphology coupled with its semi-natural vegetation and its historical time depth is readily apparent in land use and</p>

evidence and recommendation as to land that should be considered a Candidate Area	<p>scenic patterns which have inspired artists. The densely-packed chalk valleys are exceptional, along with the designed parkland landscapes and small rural villages adding to the natural beauty of the area.</p> <p>The whole of this area should be taken forward to form part of the Candidate Area for AONB designation.</p>
Need for further scrutiny	There is a need for further scrutiny to identify a suitable boundary in the east of the area where the landscape becomes transitional and merges gradually into the High Wolds and dip slope to the east of Warter (EA8). Care will also be required where the landscape is transitional to the west as it extends into the Vale of York (EA11).
Issues to be Addressed in Defining Extent	
Transition	There is a transition in landscape character, quality and condition on the eastern slopes as the landscape extends onto the High Wolds and dip slope to the east of Huggate and Warter (EA8) and also to the southwest as the rolling landform of Londesborough parkland gives way to gentle slopes which extend into the Vale of York (EA11). Particular care will be required at the boundary setting stage, defining a boundary towards the high-quality end of the transition in a manner that includes areas of high-quality and excludes areas of lesser quality, ie it should be drawn conservatively. Visual associations back into the qualifying area of land may be useful when defining the boundary in this area.
Fragmentation	N/A
Incongruous features	<p>The wind turbines at Sancton Wold, within EA12 to the south of this area, have a limited effect on the western fringes of this area. Although they are sufficiently far away to not appear dominant in views – their influence should be taken into account when defining a detailed boundary.</p> <p>The Partridge Hall Chalk Quarry site, south of Nunburnholme, will require particularly scrutiny at the boundary setting stage as a result of its peripheral location and the cumulative effects which arise in association with the double line of 33kV lines which are located to the north.</p>
Settlements	There are no large settlements within this area and only the historic villages of Londesborough, Warter, Millington, and Nunburnholme. All four of these villages are regarded as intact historic settlements and sit within a wider setting of qualifying land. All four settlements make a positive contribution to the natural beauty of the area and are proposed for inclusion within the Candidate Area.

Yorkshire Wolds AONB Designation Project

Evaluation Area 11 – Western Wolds Scarp and Foothills

Landscape Context	
Location/Context	This Evaluation Area comprises the Wolds western escarpment between Leavening and Market Weighton rising to a height of 246m AOD at Garrowby Wold. This scarp sits between the lower lying Vale of York to the west and the deeply incised valleys at the heart of the Yorkshire Wolds to the east.
Landscape Character	<p>EA11 forms part of the Complex Incised Sloping Wooded Farmland Landscape Type 10 (including 10C Garrowby Parkland and Estate Farmland, 10F Kirby Underdale and 10H West Facing Scarp Slope) and Open Farmland Landscape Type 2 (2C Bugthorpe and Bishop Wilton Wooded Rising Farmland) as defined in the East Riding Landscape Character Assessment (September 2018).</p> <p>It also includes the Chalk Wolds, Chalk Foothills and Vale Farmland with Plantation Woodland and Heaths Landscape Types as defined in the North Yorkshire and York LCA (May 2011).</p> <p>This area is defined as CA5 Western Wolds Dry Valleys in the HLC for East Riding.</p>
Designation History	The land in the north of this Evaluation Area (within Ryedale District) is designated as an Area of High Landscape Value as defined in Policy SP13 of the Ryedale Local Plan. Within East Riding District all of the land within this Evaluation Area is designated as an Important Landscape Area although only the more distinct slopes of the scarp in the eastern part of this Evaluation Area are recognised as having the 'highest quality' (Figure 11 of Local Plan Strategy).

Natural Beauty Factors and Evidence	
Landscape quality	<p>About half of this area is managed under environmental stewardship schemes with Higher Tier stewardship occurring in the east on steeper slopes where there is evidence of traditional grazing and hedgerow management and a significant area of Mid Tier stewardship in the west around the River Derwent.</p> <p>Historic Landscape Characterisation indicates that the enclosure pattern on the foot slopes reflects early planned enclosure from the 16th to the 18th Centuries and is piecemeal in character, resulting in a predominance of smaller scale irregular fields defined by mature hedgerows with hedgerow trees. On the lower slopes and western fringes these organic patterns transition into a later parliamentary and post war enclosure pattern which is more regular and associated with areas of small plantation. In this area there is a particular concentration of enclosures relating to open strip fields adjacent to settlement including Leavening, Leppington, Scrayingham, Kirby Underdale, Bugthorpe and Bishop Wilton. Collectively, these patterns give a sense of antiquity, longevity and intactness.</p>

	<p>The historic patterns are further reinforced by the distribution of medieval nucleated settlements which are small in scale and intact - modern development comprising just small-scale discrete infill. These settlements retain a certain charm and timelessness and a unity of vernacular styles including the predominate use of soft coloured red brick and red pantile roofs. Similarly, the dispersed pattern of farmsteads which are tucked into the folds of the landscape include vernacular farm buildings, their soft red pantile roofs standing out on the hillsides.</p> <p>Parklands in this landscape include that at Garrowby and the western fringes of Londesborough. There is some evidence of the loss of woodpasture to arable land use, and in the case of the latter, the western avenue has all but gone.</p> <p>The high incidence of woodland, including ancient semi-natural woodland, coupled with a high number of nature conservation sites associated with woodland, grassland and wetland, creates an intact pattern of habitat networks. The condition of SSSIs is favourable, with the exception of Beckhead Plantation which is unfavourable as a result of ash dieback – a condition affecting a number of woods in the area, and which can give an air of decay and loss. In the south of the area, a lack of hedgerow and verge management gives rise to scrub invasion and localised areas of unkempt character.</p> <p>There are few incongruous features in this landscape with the exception of telecommunication masts on prominent hills such as Garrowby Wold, as well as a quarry site and overhead lines south of Nunburnholme. Development beyond the area within the Vale of York is however visible from some locations including HM Prison at Full Sutton and development at Pocklington. Nevertheless, this development lies some distance away, and the elevation of views give a sense of separation, such that its influence is not considered significant.</p>
Scenic quality	<p>The scenic qualities of EA11 stem from its complex and dramatic topography, elevated views and established verdant character. Elevated views from the top of the scarp are stunning, affording expansive panoramas across the Vale of York and to the Howardian Hills, but also north and south along the undulating scarp face and foothills. In these views the scale of the landform, rich patchwork of small-scale pastoral fields and woods and glimpses of small hamlets and farmsteads, combine to create uplifting compositions of outstanding scenic quality. There are particularly high quality views of Garrowby Hill from south of Acklam and views of Bugthorpe from Barf Lane and Kirby Underdale from Painsthorpe Lane.</p> <p>Along the scarp face are numerous natural springs which feed small streams, flowing west into the River Derwent. These watercourses have eroded the scarp creating indented and undulating landform. Narrow sinuous rural lanes flanked by hedges and overhanging trees, descend steeply from the scarp, and then weave through the undulations providing unfolding sequential views with new visual delights around each corner. Villages and established farms have a secluded and isolated feel, nestled down in the folds of the landscape, their red pantile roofs and church towers adding to scenic compositions.</p> <p>As the land drops in elevation and moves westward, it becomes gently undulating, the tree lined stream courses creating an east west grain to the landscape which becomes increasingly farmed for arable crops. This foothill landscape forms an area of attractive countryside, but its scenic qualities are in transition. In the area around Bugthorpe this transitional landscape contains</p>

	<p>some areas of mixed woodland plantation which adds visual structure despite lower elevation, whereas further north around Leppington the landscape is more open.</p> <p>Further east the landscape contains small villages which have established along the streams such as Skirpenbeck, Youlthorpe and Fangfoss. These settlements express an attractive rural vernacular but sit within countryside some distance from the scarp slopes. This landscape lacks the outstanding qualities and drama of land further east, and in places shows signs of fragmentation as a result of commercial development, HM Prison at Full Sutton and modern development around the town of Pocklington.</p> <p>Scattered parklands include Kilnwick Percy Hall (now used as a meditation centre), Garrowby Hall and Alby Park at Buttercrambe on the Derwent, which were established in the early 18th and early 19th centuries and add diversity to this landscape, enhancing scenic quality locally. These parklands were imposed on earlier enclosure and as such retain the pattern of the open field system in ridge and furrow within the parkland pastures eg Garrowby. At Kilnwick Percy the ancient woodland is carpeted with wildflowers in spring, and this adds colour, scent and interest through the seasons.</p> <p>This long history of settlement and land tenure is strongly legible - the patterns of ridge and furrow, small scale organic enclosures, veteran trees and nestled villages/hamlets contribute strongly to the scenic quality of this area.</p>
Relative wildness	<p>The historic time-depth of this landscape and pattern of semi-natural vegetation, including woods, pastures and wetland sites, as well as the slightly overgrown character of hedges and verges, increases perceptions of relative wildness and being close to nature. The elevated tops of the scarp also express a more exposed character and the elevated views impart a sense of being away from it all. These wilderness qualities reduce significantly to the west as the landscape drops in elevation and gives way to more intensive arable farming and a higher degree of settlement.</p>
Relative tranquillity	<p>EA11 has a high level of tranquillity despite its settled character. The small sinuous lanes which connect the settlements are quiet and the area has a sleepy backwater character. This is interrupted locally where the busy (A614 and A166) cut through from west to east and climb the scarp face.</p> <p>CPRE Dark Skies mapping indicates that this area generally has dark skies with light pollution sources along the A1079 to the west of the area (Shiptonthorpe, Hayton, Pocklington and Full Sutton with its HM Prison and Industrial Estate) all of which lie just outside of the area but provide a source of night light pollution.</p>
Natural heritage features	<p>There is a close relationship between the natural springs and associated watercourses which dissect this landscape and the pattern of nature conservation sites. Spring lines in the foothills have produced small areas of damp marshy grassland known as 'flushes' which are rich in plant life and sometimes develop into larger spring fed ponds eg Fogglesike Spring and south of Swineridge Bridge.</p> <p>This Evaluation Area has a large number of nature conservation sites relating to a range of habitat types. SSSIs include:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bishop Wilton Poor Land comprising a small low-lying hayfield and one of the best examples of unimproved species rich damp neutral grassland in North Humberside; • Beckhead Plantation valued as an ash woodland on chalk with rich ground flora; • River Derwent which is valued for its classic river profile and diverse aquatic flora and fauna and is a Special Area of Conservation (SAC). <p>A number of these semi-natural habitats lie beyond areas of higher quality landscape and their contribution to natural beauty is considered localised, whereas open grassland sites on the steep scarp slopes contribute to landscape patterns and legibility and make a more material contribution.</p> <p>Local Wildlife Sites include those valued for their semi-natural neutral and calcareous grassland (including Cleaver Combe, South Wold Brow and Uncleby Brow, North Head Dale, Deep Dale Acklam and Wooing Nab); rich fen and acid mire (Nunburnholme Meadow, Flat Top and The Rush north of Scrayingham) as well as sites valued for their ancient or long-standing woodland (including Derison's Wood and Bratt Wood, Kilnwick Priory Wood, Grimthorpe Wood, Hodgson Wood, and Rush Plantation). This mix of nature conservation sites gives rise to a richness in landscape patterns, colours and textures and contributes significantly to the natural beauty of this landscape.</p> <p>This landscape has a relatively high concentration of areas of ancient/semi ancient ash woodland compared to other parts of the Yorkshire Wolds and this is especially apparent between Bishop Wilton, Millington, and Pocklington. These woodlands add to the diversity and established character of the landscape.</p>
Cultural heritage	<p>EA11 exudes a strong sense of history and is rich in evidence from the medieval period. This is particularly seen in the dispersed pattern of intact medieval settlement located on minor roads and close to springs and reflecting a strong vernacular of red brick and orange pantile roofs nestling in the folds of the landscape. These settlements, especially in the north of the area, are associated with a smaller scale enclosure pattern demonstrating earlier piecemeal enclosure and this contributes to the time depth and scenic qualities of this landscape. For example, Kilnwick Percy and Kirby Underdale were already enclosed by 1574 and 1665 respectively.</p> <p>Many of the hamlets and villages are conservation areas including Leavening, Acklam, Scrayingham, Buttercrambe, Bugthorpe, Kirby Underdale, and Bishop Wilton. Acklam in particular contains a high concentration of limestone buildings, while many of the other village contain predominantly brick built buildings. However, those on the lower slopes including Burnby, Yapham, Gawthorpe, Youlthorpe and Skirpenbeck are not conservation areas. Settlements express a strong vernacular and have little modern development and retain their medieval form. The enclosure patterns surrounding the settlements are small scale reflecting early piecemeal enclosure and the pastoral land use means former land use patterns and built structures remain as earthworks in the fields.</p> <p>Scheduled sites predominately date from the medieval period and include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the site of moated manor house and medieval field system on the fringes of Leppington;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the site of a motte and bailey castle located on a natural promontory at Acklam; the site of the deserted medieval village of Hanging Grimston north of Kirby Underdale which is evident as earthworks and an associated open fields system reflected in the pattern of ridge and furrow; the site of Hall Garth where there are the remains of a moated palace and fishponds which took advantage of the water supply from nearby springs, and; the site of the medieval village of Ousethorpe (North of Pocklington), including a moated site and watermill on Ridings Beck. <p>These features, both overt and subtle, collectively give rise to perceptions of a settled landscape with strong continuity and a tangible time depth which strongly contributes to natural beauty.</p> <p>The qualities of EA11 have inspired artists such as David Hockney who painted Garrowby Hill capturing the sinuous road which descends the scarp slopes, patchwork of fields and expansive views out across the Vale of York.</p>
Candidate Area	
Overall weight and spatial distribution of natural beauty evidence and recommendation as to land that should be considered a Candidate Area	<p>The natural beauty of this landscape is most clearly met in the eastern fringes where the topography of the chalk scarp is pronounced and where there are complex undulations within the foothills, as a result of many spring fed streams and becks. The scenic qualities of this landscape are outstanding in terms of long-distance elevated views from the scarp tops, through to more enclosed and framed views across an undulating pastoral and deeply historic landscape. The pattern of small-scale villages, each with their own character, and the network of small woods, hedgerows with hedgerow trees, treelined stream courses and wet pastures, gives rise to a rich tapestry of colour and interest.</p> <p>As the landscape starts to reduce in elevation and becomes less complex, it opens out onto the fringes of the Vale of York. Here, the landscape is in transition. Close to the foothills there is still visual interest in views back towards the scarp, but this quickly decreases. As a result, the western fringes of this landscape are not considered to meet the natural beauty criterion and lack the interest and richness of the foothills further west.</p> <p>The majority of this landscape where it relates to the scarp and foothills should be included within the Candidate Area for AONB designation. The transition in landscape quality and scenic quality to the west should be given particular scrutiny at the boundary setting stage.</p>
Need for further scrutiny	<p>Particular scrutiny will be required in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> edge of Pocklington as topography lessens and land uses reflects the proximity of settlement inc. pony paddocks and a golf course, and; transitional landscape on lower slopes to the west where landform becomes less distinctive and dramatic and there is fragmentation such that landscape condition and scenic quality lessens.

Issues to be Addressed in Defining Extent	
Transition	Particular care will be required at the boundary setting stage to ensure the boundary is drawn conservatively within the transition in landscape quality and scenic quality, along the lower foothills. Consideration may need to be given to visual associations in transitional areas, especially where there are views to key landmarks and settlements on the fringes of the scarp foothills.
Fragmentation	Particular care will be needed at the edge of Pocklington as topography reduces in elevation and urban fringe land uses are apparent including equestrian uses and golf course. Care will also be required in the area of Partridge Hall Chalk Quarry where activity at the quarry, two parallel 33kV overhead lines and large farm buildings at Partridge Hall causes fragmentation and a decline in landscape quality at the margins of the Candidate Area.
Incongruous features	Care should be taken to exclude incongruous features where they occur on the edges of the Candidate Area and have a material influence on landscape condition and scenic quality eg in the vicinity of Partridge Hall Chalk Quarry.
Settlements	<p>The proposed Candidate Area includes the villages of Great Givendale and Kirby Underdale which sit within a wider area of qualifying landscape and have qualities which add to the natural beauty of the area.</p> <p>Particular scrutiny will be required in terms of the villages of Leppington, Bugthorpe, and Bishop Wilton which lie on the fringes of the Candidate Area where the landscape is in transition.</p> <p>The larger settlement of Pocklington is not included within the Candidate Area but will require particularly scrutiny at the boundary setting stage where the boundary may come close to the urban edge. Local Plan allocations and planning permissions will need to be reviewed at this stage.</p>

Yorkshire Wolds AONB Designation Project

Evaluation Area 12 – Southern Wolds

Landscape Context	
Location/Context	This Evaluation Area forms the southernmost tip of the Wolds landscape extending from Market Weighton south to the urban fringes of North Ferriby and Elloughton. The chalk is incised by dry valleys while the western undulating foothills which extend onto lower lying land includes a band of Jurassic limestone known locally as 'Cave Oolite'.
Landscape Character	EA12 comprises the Sloping Wooded Farmland Landscape Type 12 which is fringed to the east by the Open High Rolling Farmland Landscape Type 13 and to the west by the Jurassic Hills Farmland Landscape Type 11 as defined in the East Riding Landscape Character Assessment (September 2018). This area is defined as Character Area 6 Western Wolds Limestone Escarpment in the HLC for East Riding (2018).
Designation History	The whole of this area is designated an Important Landscape Area in the East Riding Local Plan, but only the western slopes and foothills either side of the A1034 from Sancton in the north to South Cave (and including the villages of North Cave and Hotham and Houghton Moor) is an area of 'highest quality'. This higher quality landscape tapers in the southeast of South Cave and includes the incised wooded valleys associated with the villages of Brantham, Welton and Melton.

Natural Beauty Factors and Evidence	
Landscape quality	<p>The underlying chalk and limestone geology remains legible in this landscape with typical dry chalk valleys dissecting the High Wold and lower foothills and secondary limestone scarps at South Cliff clearly evident as topographic features. There are a number of SSSI designations associated with geological interest including Drewton Lane Pits and Everthorpe Quarry which are in favourable condition.</p> <p>Nevertheless, the landscape quality of this area is mixed, having been subject to a number of pressures and changes over the last century. This is manifest in the pattern of 18th and 19th Century regular enclosures on the wold tops which show evidence of boundary loss, reflecting intensive arable farming in these locations. On the lower slopes hedgerow boundaries are generally well maintained with hedgerow trees more common. Areas of unimproved grassland are restricted to the steep slopes in the dry valleys and are limited in extent, in part due to the higher incidence of mixed woodland plantation (including ash stands now showing signs of ash dieback), as well as arable encroachment on gentler slopes and within the valley bottoms eg Swin Dale.</p> <p>Incised valleys which retain steep pasture slopes are most evident and intact between the B1230 and east of South Cave. Much of this landscape is associated with the Drewton Estate and a significant portion of the estate has been managed under Mid-Tier Stewardship Agreements. Between North Cave and the A1034 the landscape has been managed under Entry level plus Higher</p>

	<p>Level Environmental Stewardship, while in the north, on land associated with the Sober Hill Wind Farm, the land has been managed under Mid-Tier Stewardship. Despite this, much of the area has not been managed under any stewardship schemes.</p> <p>Where chalk grassland survives on the steepest valley slopes, SSSI designations at Branthingham Dale and Wyedale show evidence of land being under-grazed with scrub invasion. The citations for both indicate unfavourable condition but recovering. Similarly, on the lower slopes and foothills, the condition of neutral grassland SSSIs is mixed ie Hotham Meadow is actively grazed and in favourable condition while the mosaic of rich ground flora associated with a spring line at Newbald Becksies is in unfavourable condition as a result of abstraction and pollution/agricultural runoff.</p> <p>There are small areas of parkland in this landscape although there is evidence that wood pasture has been converted to arable, or in the case of land at South Cave, conversion to a golf course. Other settlement fringe land uses include equestrian uses with the addition of fencing and shelters which create visual clutter and alter field patterns, as well as the establishment of a vineyard northeast of South Cave. Overall, there is a general sense of increased use of the landscape for recreation including increased signage and infrastructure.</p> <p>The pattern of spring line villages remains relatively intact especially in the north of the area where there are few modern housing infill sites. However, in the south (where the villages are closer to the A63 - the main artery into Hull), settlements show signs of expansion, with new housing and employment development highly visible from elevated slopes e.g. Welton, Elloughton and South Cave. In the case of the latter there are housing allocations extending westward towards the scarp slopes.</p> <p>In addition to these land use changes there are also a number of incongruous features which affect landscape condition. They include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telecommunication masts on high tops occur near Branthingham, Weedley and High Hunsley which have a significant visual impact both on the tops and from the wider landscape. • Active large-scale chalk/limestone quarries north of Riplingham, at Swinescaif Quarry and Everthorpe Quarry near South Cave and Melton Bottom Quarry near Welton, which create white scars in the landscape and have a localised impact on rural lanes, due to verge erosion from HGVs. • Wind farm development at Sober Hill (10 turbines) which have introduced tall vertical features which disrupt the typical flowing skylines of the Wolds and create visual clutter with pylon lines and a degree of urbanisation. • Two major power lines/pylons between Market Weighton and Walkington and a further overhead line between Ellerker to Riplingham. Pylons are highly visible on open land at the foot of the scarp and on the wold tops and more contained within Branthingham Dale and woodland on the scarp face. However, where they skirt the edge of Branthingham Dale, they tower over the wooded dale.
Scenic quality	<p>The scenic qualities of this landscape stem from its elevation and the drama of the dry chalk valleys which penetrate the High Wold. From elevated slopes there are open sweeping views over the lower lying foothills and out across the Vale of York, with particularly valued and unique views across the Humber. However, many of these views also include areas of industry, distant wind farms and more recent housing associated with some of the spring line villages eg South Cave and Elloughton. Similarly,</p>

	<p>from the High Wold fringes there are expansive elevated views across areas of open arable farmland, although frequently they are interrupted by masts, pylons or wind farm development, which break the skyline and introduce urbanising influences.</p> <p>Within the folds of the landscape, scenic qualities are evident in the sinuous lines of the dry valleys, especially where the steep slopes remain as open grassland. Scenic quality is most strongly expressed around Drewton Dale. However, where woodland planting has occurred, the scale of the topography is often concealed and coupled with arable land uses which extend onto the valley slopes or occupy the valley floor, typical landscape patterns appear disrupted. At the junction of the chalk and limestone, the steep sided valleys become broader, and streams from spring lines flow onto the flatter land to the west. Here, the gentler topography and high incidence of woodland gives rise to attractive countryside, but these areas often lack drama and a strong sense of place.</p> <p>Whether on the edge of the chalk or on lower lying areas, the villages make a particular contribution to the scenic qualities of this landscape often exhibiting a unity of character as a result of the honey-coloured local Jurassic Limestone used in their construction and their arrangement around small village greens. Stands of mature trees within the centre of the villages, along with market crosses and churches are also features which add interest. Villages such as Welton, Brantingham and North Newbald have a particularly picturesque character and are set within the folds of the surrounding wolds which provide a visual backdrop to dwellings.</p> <p>There are a number of locations in this landscape, especially between the B1230 and Brantingham where high scenic quality can be appreciated. However, these locations are relatively small, interrupted by areas and features which lack these qualities, such as land use changes which disrupt patterns and the addition of features which form detractors. Overall, the scenic quality of this landscape is regarded as significantly fragmented.</p>
Relative wildness	<p>This Evaluation Area does not exhibit a strong relatively wild character or a sense of remoteness. The area has a settled and agricultural character where semi-natural habitats are relatively restricted, and even in the more secluded valleys or woodland areas there are elements or features such as signage and fencing, as well as higher numbers of people engaging in outdoor recreation, which reduce perceptions of remoteness. The area with the greatest sense of relative wildness is in the less frequented wooded valleys, away from roads and noise intrusion eg Hunsley Dale and Austin's Dale, but these experiences are relatively short lived.</p>
Relative tranquillity	<p>This area is affected by night light spill from settlements within the area and adjacent, including Market Weighton to the north and Hull to the southeast. This is confirmed by the CPRE Dark Skies mapping showing that dark sky levels are lower along the A63/A1064 corridor which is affected by development and traffic.</p> <p>Tranquillity is also significantly affected by traffic noise from the A64 corridor which extends into the incised valleys due to prevailing winds and is particularly the case for the west facing slopes between North Cave and Melton. This coupled with the generally high number of people and activity and frequency of incongruous features such as power lines and masts, impacts on perceptions of tranquillity which are noticeably lower than elsewhere within the Yorkshire Wolds.</p>

Natural heritage features	<p>The natural heritage of this landscape is associated with its geology and areas of species-rich calcareous and neutral grassland. Geological SSSIs include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everthorpe Quarry, which has the best exposure of Cave Oolite in Britain. • Melton Bottom Chalk Pit, which is valued for its extensive exposure of Chalk. • Drewton Lane Pits, which is valued for its geological interest including ammonites and rock exposures. <p>Other geological sites and features of interest include St Austin's Stone (a large chalky outcrop of conglomerate at the head of Austin's Dale) which is a Regionally Important Geological Site (RIG) and a secondary minor scarp west of Hotham at South Cliff and North Cliff which reflects the underlying band of Jurassic Limestone.</p> <p>The incised valleys in EA12 are frequently wooded such that areas of species rich grassland are more limited and often isolated. SSSIs associated with species rich grassland include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newbald Becksies, valued for mosaic of rich ground flora associated with a spring line at the base of the chalk slope. • Hotham Meadow, valued for its herb-rich neutral grassland which has established on windblown glacial sands. • Wyedale, valued for its rich calcareous grassland flora. • Brantingham Dale, valued for its species-rich chalk grassland amid extensive areas of scrub invasion is one of the most floristically diverse areas in the Yorkshire Wolds. <p>The greater concentration of woodland within the valleys are generally Local Wildlife Sites such as Elloughton Lings Plantation, Brantingham Dale, Woodale, Cliffs Plantation, Sweatty Hill Plantation, Little Wold Plantation, Weedley Dale, Austin's Dale, Drewton. Within these plantations the uniformity of tree species and structure reduces the contribution they make to natural beauty. Ash dieback is also particularly noticeable within EA12.</p> <p>On the lower lying land west of the scarp, Local Wildlife Sites include Cliffe Hill Wood and North Cave Wetlands (Local Geological Site), Ellerker Scrub and Brantingham Common. Houghton Moor is the largest local wildlife site comprising a mosaic of semi-natural habitats including woodland, and although visible from the elevated slopes to the east, it is an enclosed and inward-looking landscape due to high tree cover making only a localised contribution to natural beauty.</p> <p>These various sites show a diversity and range of interest, however they are relatively small sites/areas which form isolated pockets of interest. Their contribution to natural beauty is therefore localised.</p>
Cultural heritage	<p>Cultural heritage features which make the greatest contribution to the natural beauty and perceptions of time depth include remnant areas of parkland and the pattern of spring line villages.</p> <p>Parkland landscapes which were established in the 18th century and remain evident in the landscape to varying degrees include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Houghton Hall (Grade II) Registered Park and Garden. Here the parkland landscape is evident within the village but does not contribute significantly to the scenic qualities of the wider landscape. In part due to boundary planting and relatively flat topography.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hotham Hall parkland to the south of the village of Hotham. • South Cave Castle (now used as a golf course and hotel). • Brantingham Thorpe associated with Brantingham Hall, which is a Georgian house built on the site of a former Elizabethan manor. This parkland has associations with the Sledmere Estate. • The Lawn at Welton. <p>The pattern of settlement continues to reflect the medieval pattern of villages located at the foot of sheltered valleys close to the spring line. Nearly all of the villages are conservation areas including North and South Newbald, Hotham, North and South Cave, Ellerker, Brantingham, Elloughton and Welton. However, all of the villages, and especially those closest to Hull, have experienced growth such that their character and form has altered, with new areas of housing development which does not reflect the local vernacular often visible from the open slopes of the scarp e.g South Cave. Brantingham village church is located in an isolated position to the north of the village at the bottom of the steep sided Brantingham Dale and is a distinctive landmark.</p> <p>More subtle historic features include the concentration of bowl barrows at Weighton Wold and also in the east at Littlewood Lodge, a number of which remain visible above ground, but contribute only locally to natural beauty.</p> <p>Other historical features in this landscape include St Austin's Stone which is a stone monolith on the Drewton's Estate thought to have religious and historical association with St Augustine and druidical worship. Its uniqueness, coupled with its location within the wooded slopes of the dale, give it a mysterious quality which contributes to sense of place.</p> <p>The landscape around Welton is associated with the legend of Dick Turpin and the poetry written by John Wedgwood Clark on the view bench above South Cave captures the elements and history of this landscape. It reads, <i>'We shed them one by one, by shattered field and barley seas, until the way is open for echoes of us made strange by wind, deserted barn, the shifting trade of shadows on the Humbri, Humbre, Humber, our mouths to springs that speak in tongues of thirst'</i></p>
Candidate Area	
Overall weight and spatial distribution of natural beauty evidence and recommendation as to land that should be considered a Candidate Area	<p>The area with the greatest weight of evidence for natural beauty lies between the B1230 and Cave Wold including the Drewton's Estate. This section of the western scarp and incised valleys is the most intact, remaining relatively unaffected by pylons, masts and wind turbines and is relatively unsettled, associated only with the Drewton Manor and farm buildings/cottages. Access into this landscape is primarily on foot/horseback and there is little intrusion from traffic noise. Here, the strong folds in the landscape created by the incised valleys contribute to sense of place. Land use patterns such as blanket plantation woodland or arable land uses extending into the valleys, and urban fringe influences, have however disrupted landscape patterns, reducing scenic quality. Whilst more intact than other parts of EA12, overall this part of the area is judged not to have sufficient natural beauty to justify recognition at a national level.</p> <p>To the north of this area, the landscape is fragmented as a result of the cumulative effect of vertical structures (pylons, masts and turbines) and due to intensive farming. Dry valleys are narrow and interspersed by more extensive areas of intensively farmed arable land which has also encroached into the valleys and along valley floors. To the south, the steep valleys are closer</p>

	<p>together but are relatively short in length as the scarp narrows. Their substantially wooded character results in a more enclosed character where scenic qualities are diminished and where increasing influence of urban fringe land uses and infrastructure (such as bins, parking bays, road markings and speed signage as well as 'keep out' signs), and evidence of littering and fly tipping, all have a degrading influence. Whilst these latter landscapes include small areas of higher quality, such as the grassland slopes of Wye Dale and the church of Brantingham set within the wooded valley, they are not sufficient to lift the area as a whole. On balance, even the areas that do qualify are not extensive, forming a relatively narrow landscape which sits within a wider landscape that has become fragmented, primarily by infrastructure and settlement development.</p> <p>West of the A1034 the landscape is lower lying and less fragmented, its rural villages and natural and cultural heritage contributing to attractive countryside. However, this area lacks qualities which elevate it to a nationally significant landscape.</p> <p>EA12 undoubtedly contains sites which are valued locally for cultural or natural heritage, but it is also impacted by the cumulative effects of incongruous features and varied condition. This has resulted in the fragmentation of the landscape including a reduction in perceptions of relative wildness and tranquillity. Areas which have a higher weight of natural beauty are small in extent and do not have sufficient weight of evidence of natural beauty to justify recognition at a national level. Overall, the natural beauty of EA12 is not considered sufficiently high or sufficiently intact to justify including the area (or parts thereof) within the Candidate Area.</p> <p>None of this area should be taken forward for inclusion within the Proposed Candidate Area.</p>
Need for further scrutiny	N/A
Issues to be Addressed in Defining Extent	
Transition	N/A
Fragmentation	N/A
Incongruous features	N/A
Settlements	N/A

7.0 Conclusion

7.1 Summary of Evaluation Results

- 7.1.1 The evaluation process described above, and detailed in the tables, has identified significant areas of land which have a sufficiently strong weight of evidence of natural beauty to warrant designation as AONB. The extent to which each Evaluation Area meets the natural beauty criterion and together forms the Proposed Candidate Area is summarised in the table below.

Table 3: Summary of Evaluation

Evaluation Area	Extent of Qualifying Land
EA1	Majority of the area with the exception of northern fringes and land to the south-west.
EA2	All of the area.
EA3	Majority of area with the exception of small parts of the eastern and western fringes.
EA4	Majority of area with the exception of eastern and southern fringes.
EA5	Part of the area comprising the western head of the valley only.
EA6	Part of the area comprising the coastal cliffs and immediate farmland fringe and Reighton Hills only.
EA7	None of this area qualifies for designation.
EA8	Part of the area comprising the western fringes around Cottam/Langtoft, Huggate and Godmanham only.
EA9	All of the area.
EA10	All of the area.
EA11	Part of the area comprising the eastern fringes only.
EA12	None of this area qualifies for designation.

- 7.1.2 This table illustrates that EA2, EA9 and EA10 form the core of land which qualifies for designation as AONB. Qualifying land within fringing Evaluation Areas, namely EA1, EA3, EA4, EA5, EA8 and EA11, also forms a continuous landscape with the core, and the coastal area EA6 in part forms a separate outlier of qualifying land. Collectively these areas make up a proposed Candidate Area which is illustrated on Figure 10. However, the assessment notes that at the margins of these areas, especially to the east and south-east, the landscape is transitional with a gradual decline in scenic qualities, natural and cultural heritage interest and overall condition. These transitional areas may continue to exhibit key characteristics of the Yorkshire Wolds landscape but lack the cohesion and special qualities evident in the core of the area; typically, there

are more extensive areas of intensive farmland on the higher land and valleys which are increasingly less dramatic and more widely dispersed.

- 7.1.3 The areas of Fordon, the Great Wold Valley and Cottam/Langtoft in particular, will require careful scrutiny at the desirability stage and when defining a detailed boundary. Particular attention during the desirability assessment should be given to the issues which affect transitional landscapes. Decisions made at the boundary setting stage will require a balance between the need to draw a boundary conservatively within transitional landscapes and the need to follow clear features on the ground, as well as circumstances where it may be appropriate to apply washover²⁵.
- 7.1.4 The natural beauty evaluation identified an outlying area of outstanding natural beauty within EA6. This area forms the dramatic coastal cliffs between Reighton and Sewerby Cliffs. However, it is separated from the wider proposed Candidate Area by a significant area of non-qualifying land. Given the scale of the non-qualifying land and the location of qualifying land relative to the wider proposed Candidate Area, the application of wash-over would be inappropriate. The inclusion of this area within the proposed Candidate Area is therefore likely to be as a separate outlier.
- 7.1.5 There are existing examples of AONB designations with outliers. At the desirability stage of assessment, particular scrutiny will need to be given to issues which might arise in terms of practical management of the Flamborough Coast as a separate outlier, and the extent to which AONB designation will address issues affecting this landscape over and above its existing management and recognition as Heritage Coast.
- 7.1.6 The proposed Candidate Area as shown on Figure 10 is depicted as a hatched area without a defined boundary. This is because a boundary has not been defined at this stage. The Candidate Area as mapped does not attempt to carefully include or exclude land at the edges (this will be for the boundary stage of assessment). Where there are incongruous features, fragmentation, features of interest or transitional landscapes, these are noted within the evaluation tables and in many cases are noted for particular scrutiny at later stages of assessment, namely desirability and boundary setting.
- 7.1.7 The Candidate Area includes a number of small rural settlements which have individual merit and sit within a qualifying tract of land, but it does not include any major conurbations.

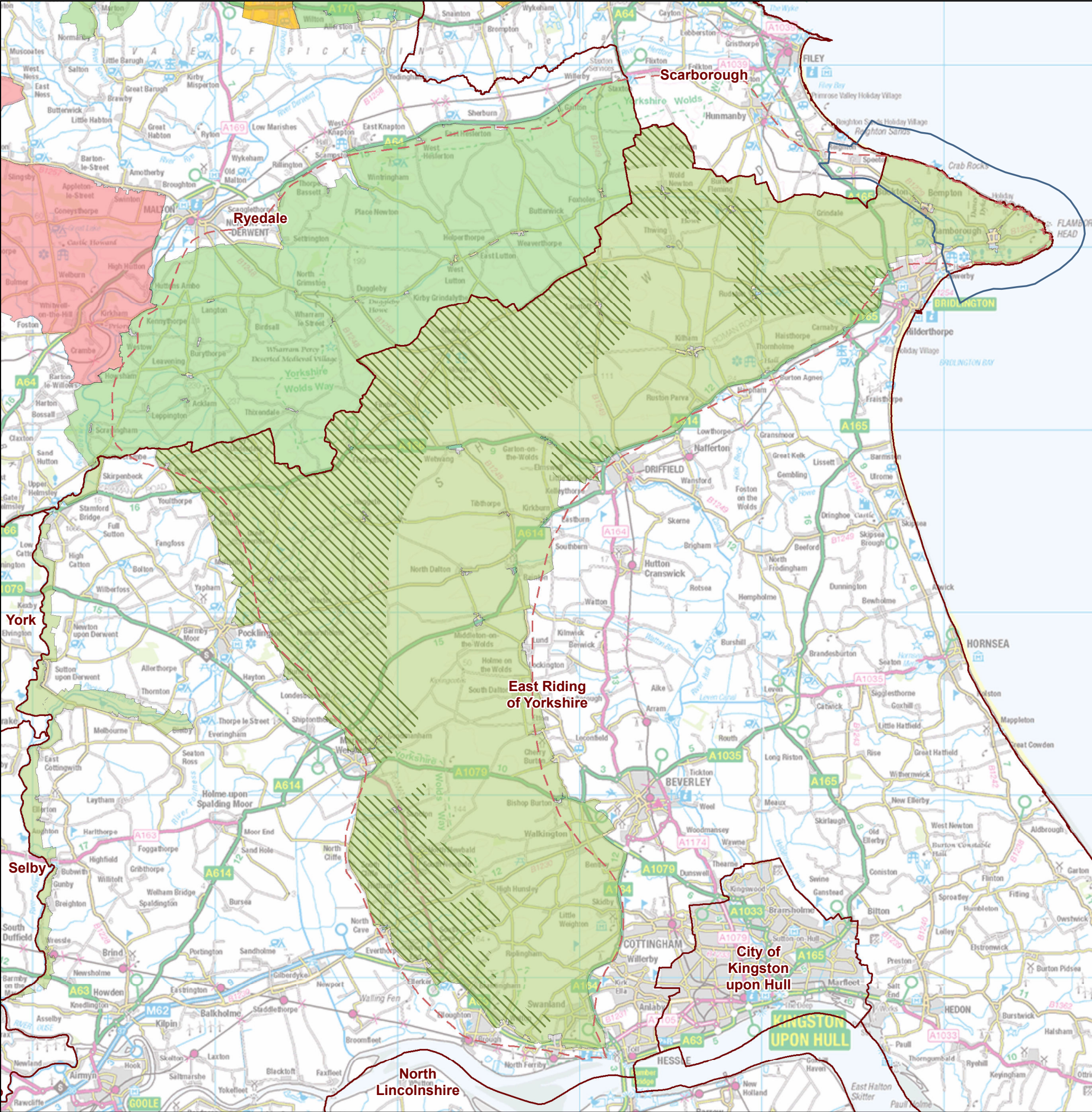
7.2 Satisfying the legislative test

- 7.2.1 The detailed evaluation process set out in this report, has led to the conclusion that there is a clear weight of evidence of outstanding natural beauty in the areas included within the Candidate Area, which may be considered further in relation to the desirability of AONB designation and within which a detailed boundary may be drawn.

²⁵

A designation can 'wash over' (i.e. include) a tract of land even though that land does not itself meet the designation criteria, even close to the boundary of a designated area, provided it sits within a sweep of qualifying land (para 5.3 Natural England Guidance).

Figures



Yorkshire Wolds Designation Project

Natural Beauty Assessment

Fig.1 - Landscape Designations and Local Authority Boundaries

N

Scale at A3: 1:220,000

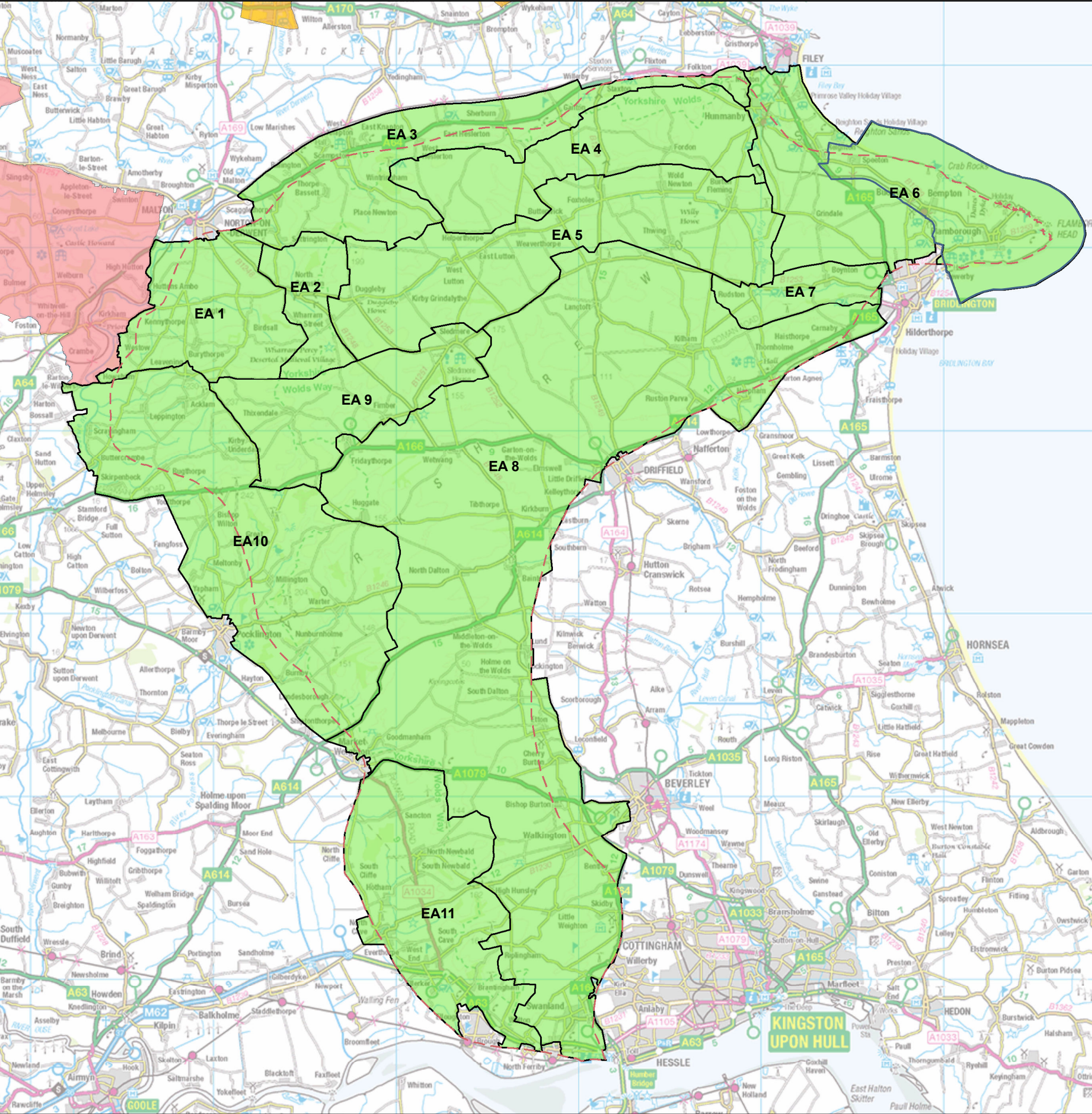
Coordinate System: British National Grid

0 5 10 15 20 25 km

© Natural England copyright.
© Crown copyright and database right 2024 Ordnance Survey Licence No. 100022021

- Areas of Highest Quality (East Riding)
 - Important Landscape Areas (East Riding)
 - Area of High Landscape Value (Ryedale)
 - Local Authority Boundaries
 - National Character Area 27 - Yorkshire Wolds
- National Designated/Defined Landscapes**
- Howardian Hills AONB
 - North York Moors National Park
 - Heritage Coast

NOTE: Ryedale District Council and Scarborough Borough Council now form part of North Yorkshire Council following reorganisation.



Yorkshire Wolds Designation Project Natural Beauty Assessment

Fig.2 - Initial Area of Search
and Evaluation Areas

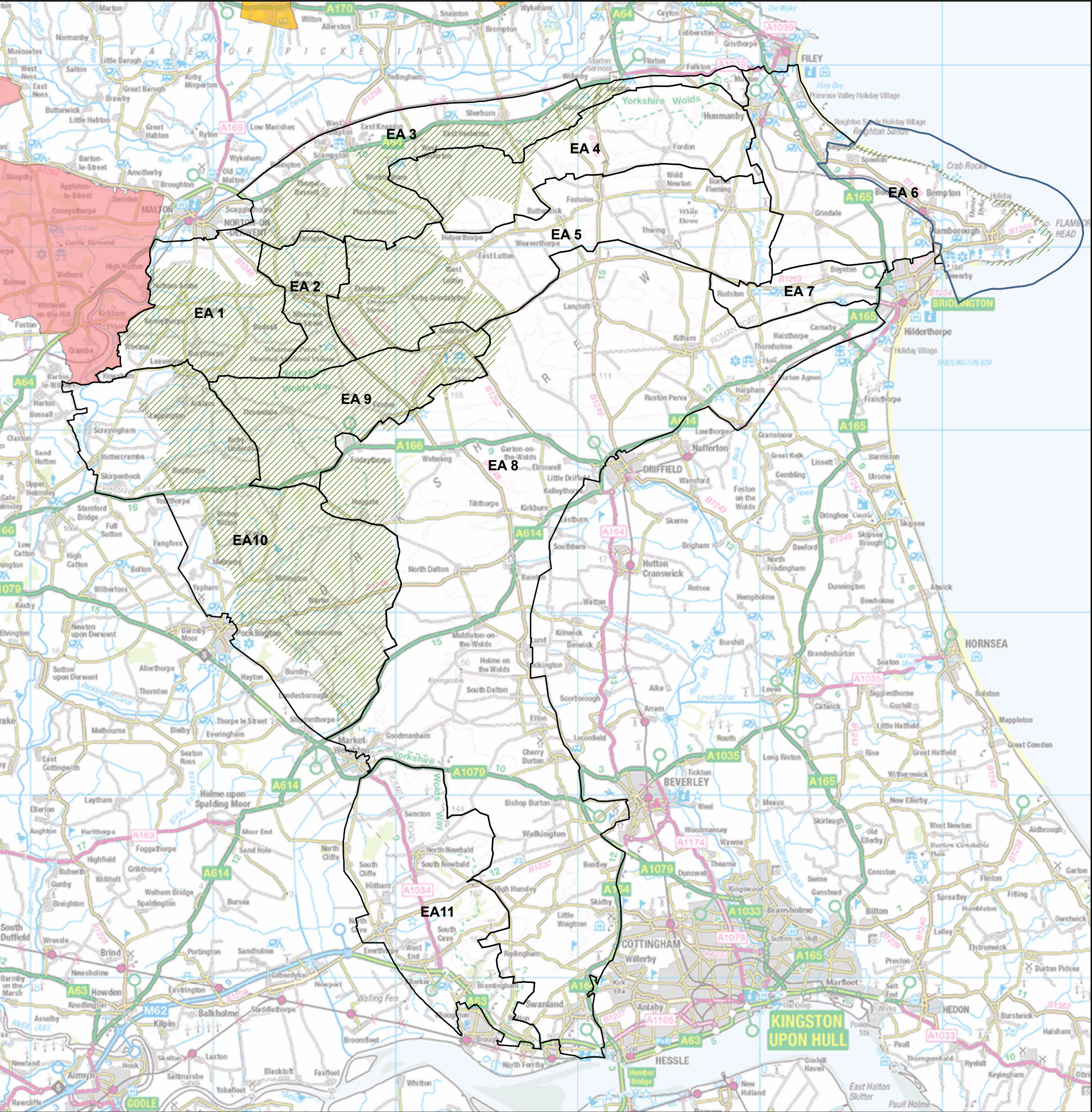


Scale at A3: 1:220,000
0 5 10 15 20 25 km

Coordinate System: British National Grid

© Natural England copyright.
© Crown copyright and database right 2024 Ordnance Survey Licence No. 100022021

- Initial Area of Search
- Initial Evaluation Areas
- National Character Area 27 - Yorkshire Wolds
- National Designated/Defined Landscapes**
 - Howardian Hills AONB
 - North York Moors National Park
 - Heritage Coast



Yorkshire Wolds Designation Project

Natural Beauty Assessment

Fig.3 - Provisional Candidate Area for Engagement

N

Scale at A3: 1:220,000

Coordinate System: British National Grid

0 5 10 15 20 25 km

© Natural England copyright.
© Crown copyright and database right 2024 Ordnance Survey Licence No. 100022021

Initial Evaluation Areas

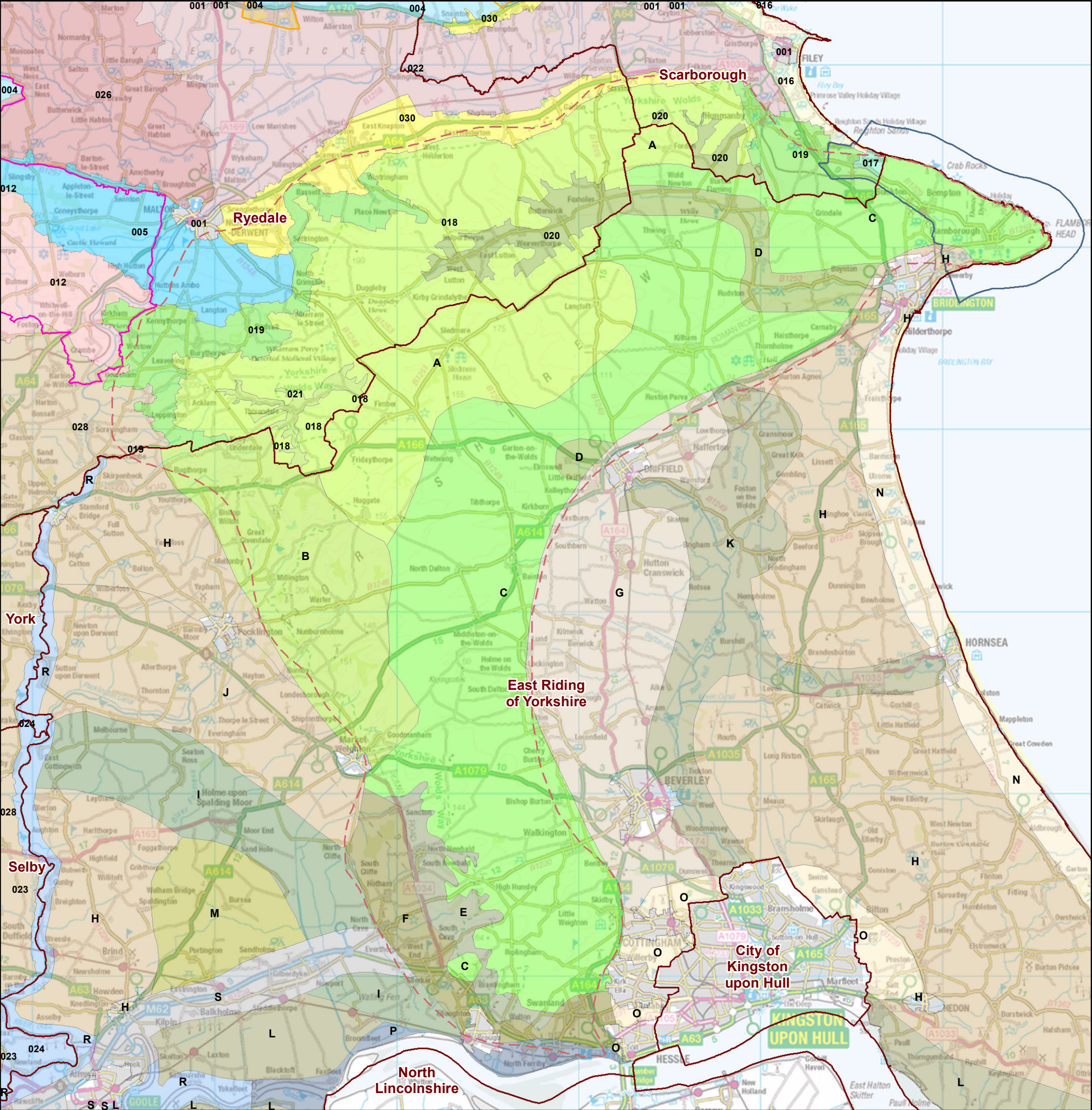
Provisional Candidate Area for Engagement

National Designated/Defined Landscapes

Howardian Hills AONB

North York Moors National Park

Heritage Coast



**Yorkshire Wolds Designation Project
Natural Beauty Assessment**

Fig.5 - Landscape Character Types



Scale at A3: 1:220,000
0 5 10 15 20 25 km

© Natural England copyright.
© Crown copyright and database right 2024 Ordnance Survey Licence No. 100022021

- National Character Area 27 - Yorkshire Wolds
- Local Authority Boundaries

East Riding Landscape Character Type

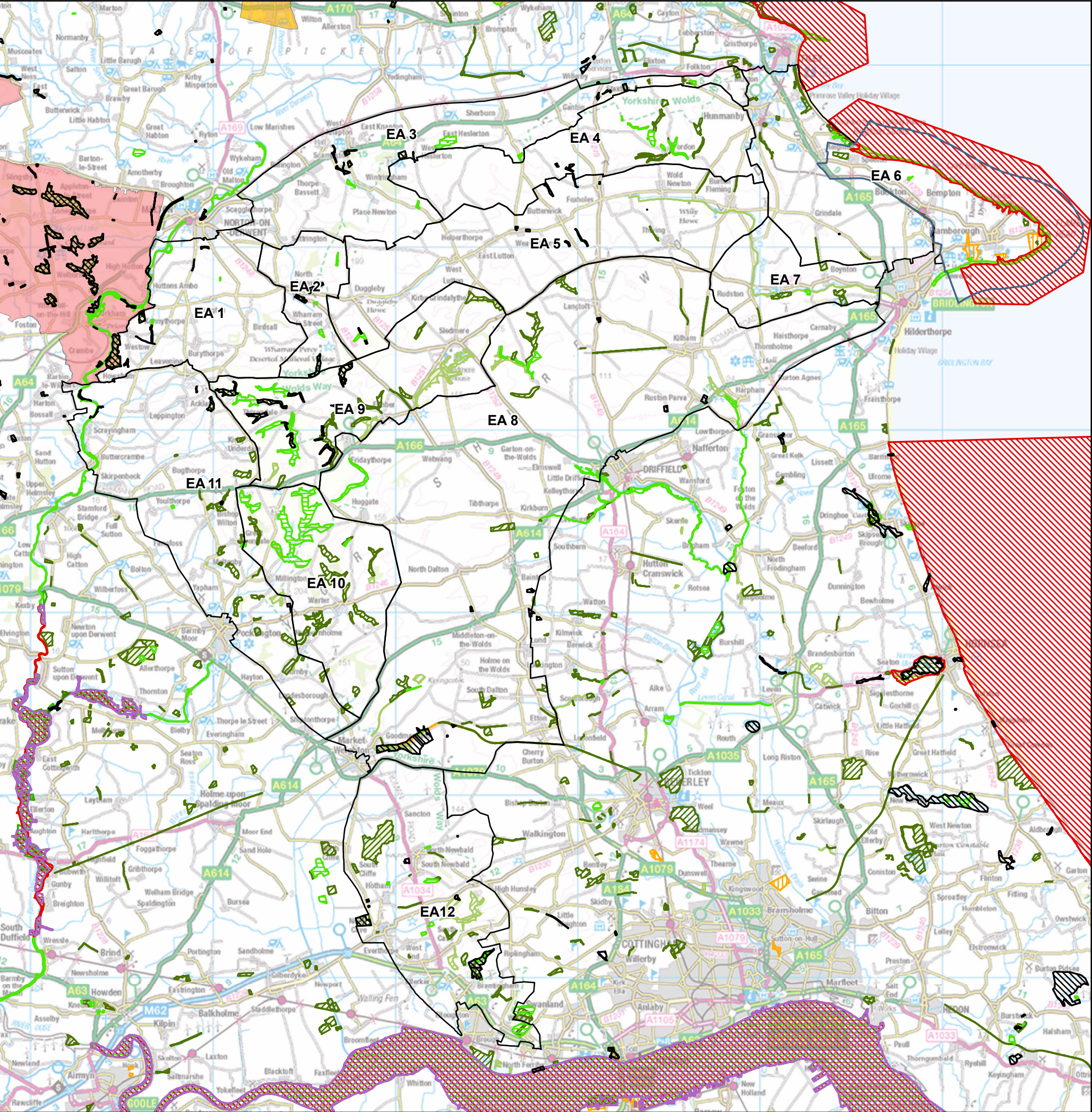
- A - Central Dissected Plateau
- B - Complex Incised Sloping Wooded Farmland
- C - Open High Rolling Farmland
- D - Wolds Valley Farmland
- E - Sloping Wooded Farmland
- F - Jurassic Hills Farmland
- G - Sloping Farmland (Edge of Wolds)
- H - Open Farmland
- I - Wooded Open Farmland
- J - Flat Open Farmland
- K - Low Lying Drained Farmland
- L - Drained Farmland
- M - Foulness Open Farmland
- N - Coastal Farmland
- O - Farmed Urban Fringe
- P - Humber Banks
- R - River / Canal Corridors
- S - M62 Corridor

North Yorks County Landscape Character No - Type

- 004 - Limestone Foothills and Valleys
- 005 - Limestone Ridge
- 012 - Wooded Hills and Valleys
- 016 - Soft Coastal Cliffs and Bays
- 017 - Chalk Headland
- 018 - Chalk Wolds
- 019 - Chalk Foothills
- 020 - Broad Chalk Valley
- 021 - Narrow Chalk Valley
- 022 - Open Carr Vale Farmland
- 023 - Levels Farmland
- 024 - River Floodplain
- 026 - Enclosed Vale Farmland
- 028 - Vale Farmland with Plantation Woodland and Heathland
- 030 - Sand and Gravel Vale Fringe

National Designated/Defined Landscapes

- Howardian Hills AONB
- North York Moors National Park
- Heritage Coast



Yorkshire Wolds Designation Project

Natural Beauty Assessment

Fig.6 - Natural Heritage Designations

N

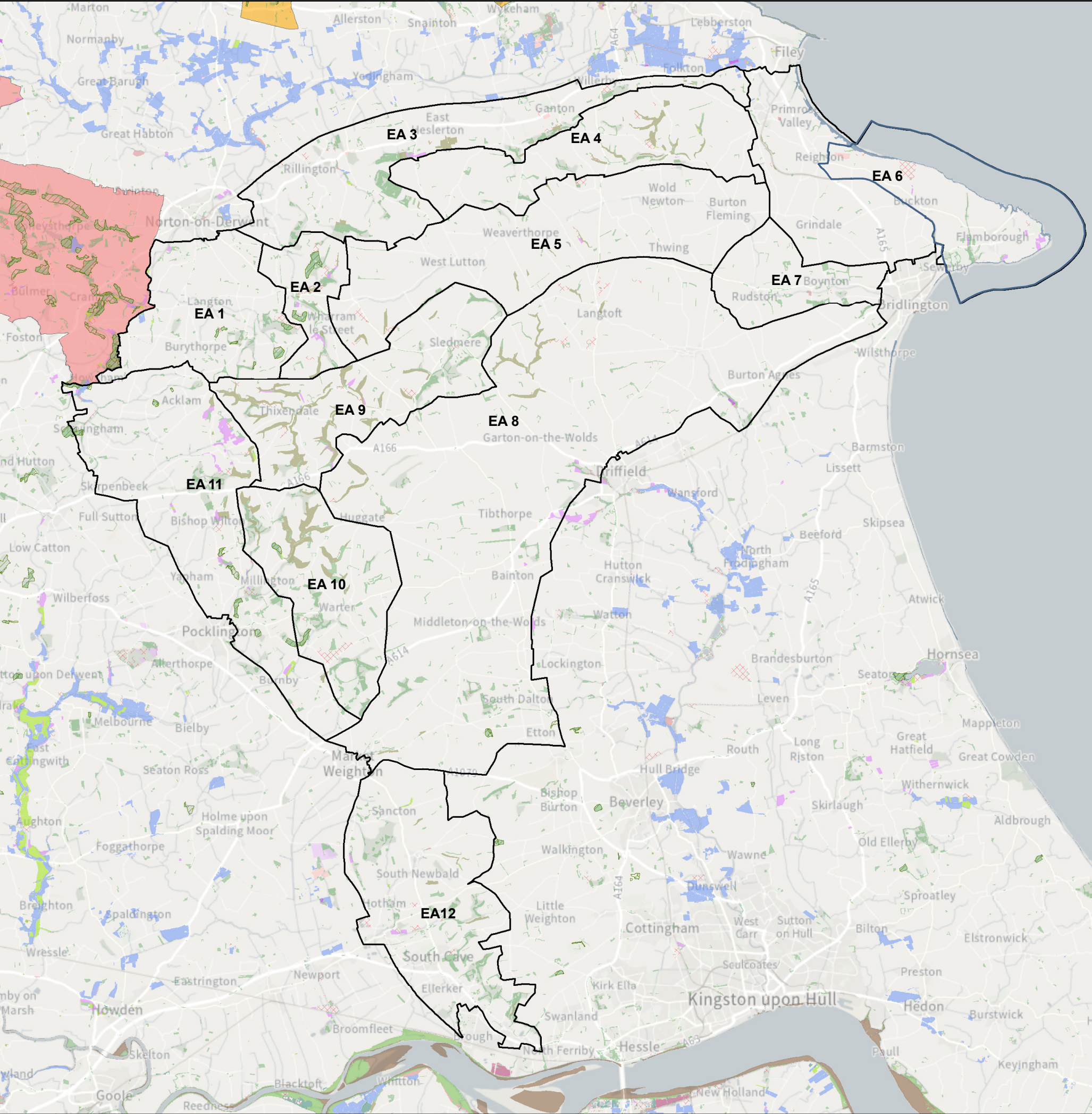
Scale at A3: 1:220,000


Coordinate System: British National Grid

0 5 10 15 20 25 km

© Natural England copyright.
© Crown copyright and database right 2024 Ordnance Survey Licence No. 100022021

- Refined Evaluation Areas
- Ramsar
- Special Protection Areas (SPA)
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- National Nature Reserves (NNR)
- Local Nature Reserves (LNR)
- Local Geological Sites (LGS/RIGS)
- Local / County Wildlife Sites (LWS/SINC)
 - Designated/Ratified/Pre-Existing Sites
 - Candidate Sites
- National Designated/Defined Landscapes
 - Howardian Hills AONB
 - North York Moors National Park
 - Heritage Coast





Yorkshire Wolds Designation Project Natural Beauty Assessment

Fig.7 - Ancient Woodland & Priority Habitats



N


Scale at A3: 1:220,000


Coordinate System: British National Grid


0 5 10 15 20 25 km


© Natural England copyright.
© Crown copyright and database right 2024 Ordnance Survey Licence No. 100022021


- Refined Evaluation Areas
- Ancient Woodland (Natural England)
- Priority Habitats (Natural England)**


Coastal and floodplain grazing marsh


Coastal saltmarsh


Deciduous woodland


Good quality semi-improved grassland


Lowland calcareous grassland


Lowland dry acid grassland


Lowland fens


Lowland heathland


Lowland meadows


Maritime cliff and slope


Mudflats


No main habitat but additional habitats present


Purple moor grass and rush pastures

Reedbeds

Saline lagoons

Traditional orchard
- National Designated/Defined Landscapes**

Howardian Hills AONB

North York Moors National Park


Heritage Coast

Fig.8 - Cultural Heritage Designations



Scale at A3: 1:220,000

Coordinate System: British National Grid



© Natural England copyright.

© Crown copyright and database right 2024 Ordnance Survey Licence No. 100022021

Refined Evaluation Areas

Listed Buildings (Historic England)

- Grade I
- ▲ Grade II*
- Grade II

▨ Scheduled Monuments (Historic England)

▨ Registered Parks and Gardens (Historic England)

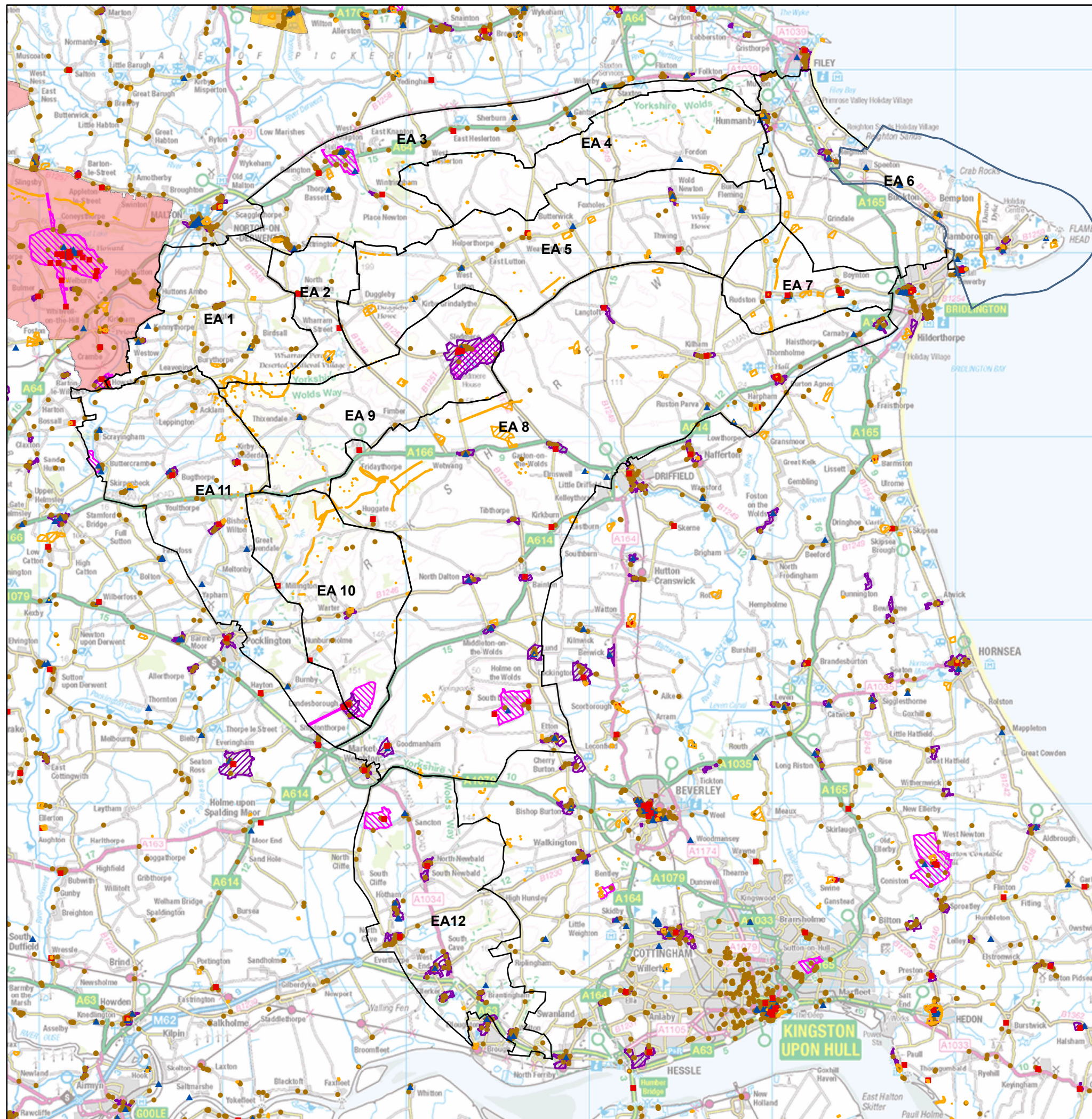
▨ Conservation Areas (Local Authorities)

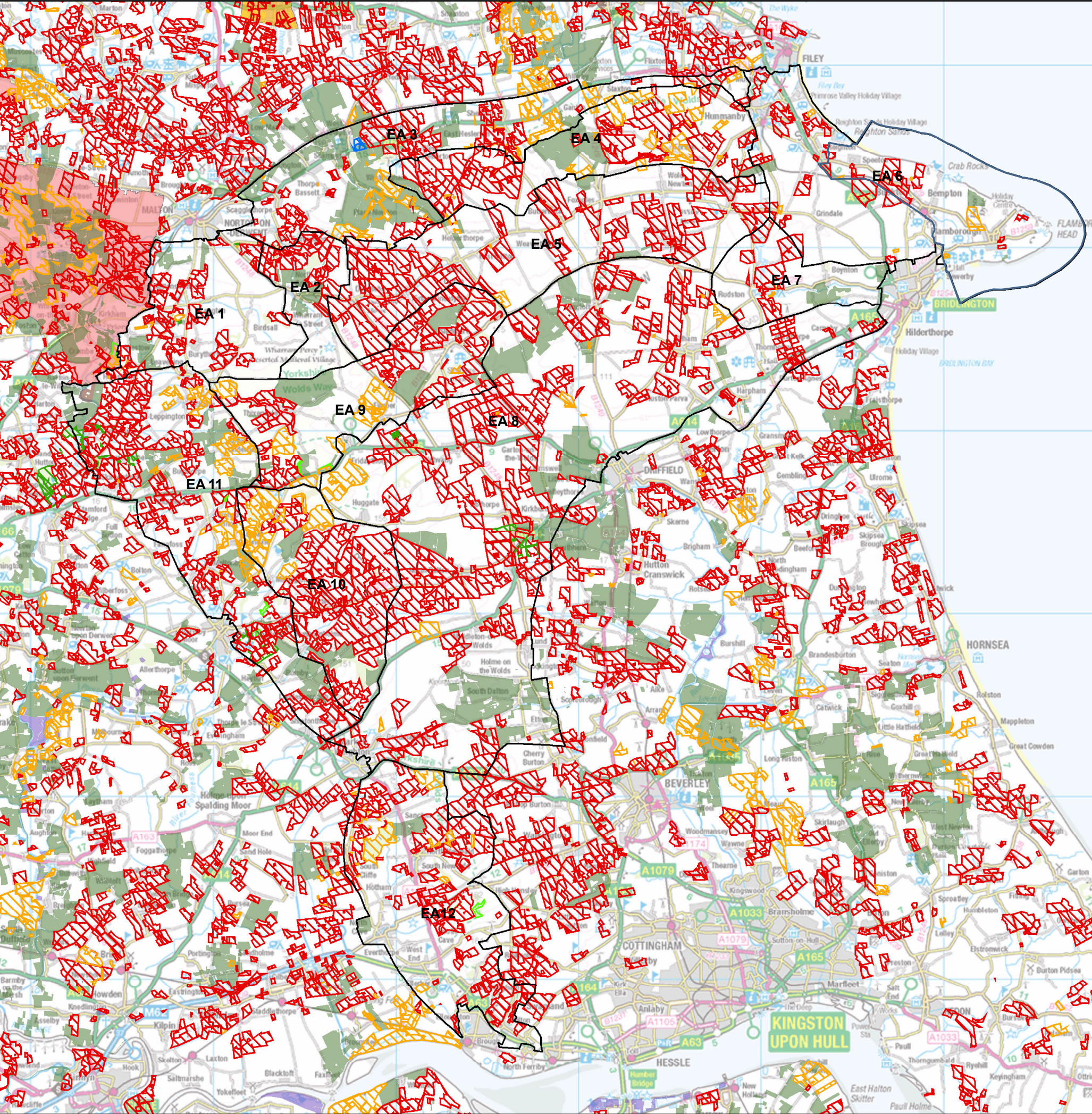
National Designated/Defined Landscapes


Howardian Hills AONB

North York Moors National Park

Heritage Coast







Yorkshire Wolds Designation Project Natural Beauty Assessment

Fig.9 - Stewardship Schemes

N

Scale at A3: 1:220,000

Coordinate System: British National Grid

0 5 10 15 20 25 km

© Natural England copyright.
© Crown copyright and database right 2024 Ordnance Survey Licence No. 100022021

- Refined Evaluation Areas
- Countryside Stewardship Scheme Management Areas**

Countryside Stewardship (Middle Tier)

Countryside Stewardship (Higher Tier)

Implementation plan

Tree Health Restoration

Woodland Management Plan
- Environmental Stewardship Scheme Agreements**

Entry Level plus Higher Level Stewardship

Higher Level Stewardship

Organic Entry Level plus Higher Level Stewardship
- National Designated/Defined Landscapes**

Howardian Hills AONB

North York Moors National Park

Heritage Coast



Appendix One:
Management Advisory Group – Terms of Reference

Management Advisory Group

Role: The group will bring together representatives from Natural England and a new proposed Yorkshire Wolds AONB Partnership to support a collaborative and effective approach to delivering the proposed Yorkshire Wolds AONB Designation Project.

Purpose of group:

- To assist NE in the assessment of natural beauty and desirability of designation and in the development of a potential boundary for a new Yorkshire Wolds AONB
- To foster a collaborative and effective process
- To develop and share understanding, learning, views and progress on potential improvements to the designation process

To foster communication and engagement with wider stakeholders and communities

Objectives

To achieve this, the group will:

- Provide a partner management group to secure progress
- Consider joint partner messaging on progress
- Support the work of the Technical Advisory Group to assist in securing:
 - Evidence in support of assessments
 - An identified area of search
 - Technical assessments including of natural beauty and desirability of designation
 - Identification of potential new boundaries
 - Local engagement & consultations
- Appraise need for, and secure resources

Membership:

NE Area Manager (Chair)
NE Project Manager
NE Technical Advisers
NE Principal Adviser
Chair of Technical Advisory Group
Statutory Local Authority representatives
+ Others to be involved as agreed on specific agenda items.

Secretariat:

The secretariat for this group will be provided by Natural England

Frequency of Meetings:

The group will initially meet monthly, to be reviewed as project progresses.

Engagement:

Members of the Liaison Group will:

- Act as positive ambassadors for the collaborative process
- Act as links to constituent bodies, ensuring good flow of information and issues.
- Contribute to the purpose and objectives of the group through solution focused dialogue
- Build on their existing skills and knowledge to improve their own and others' understanding and knowledge of landscape designation process and the purpose of designation
- Consider and treat information and views shared in confidence to further effective joint working
- Act without prejudice to views subsequently expressed by member organisations.

Appendix Two:
Technical Advisory Committee – Terms of Reference

Technical Advisory Group

Role: The group brings together key partners from across the potential AONB who have relevant technical expertise that will support the delivery of the proposed Yorkshire Wolds AONB boundary variation.

Purpose of group:

- To provide technical information, advice and assistance to the project team
- To act as a sounding board and quality assurance group for the proposals as they develop.

Objectives

- To advise and assist through the provision of expertise and relevant evidence with regard to:
 - review of area of search
 - the assessment of natural beauty;
 - the desirability of designation; and
 - the identification of boundaries.
- To provide signposting to relevant up to date data, documents and other information, as required; providing details of relevant initiatives/ issues in the area.
- To advise on database of local stakeholders.
- To contribute to the development of a collaborative, best practice approach to the informal and statutory consultations on the assessments of natural beauty and desirability of designation, and on proposed boundaries.

Membership:

Chair - to be elected by group

NE Project Manager

NE Technical Advisers

Officer representatives from each potential statutory Local Authority (ideally landscape or planning professionals)

Other stakeholders as appropriate

Secretariat:

The secretariat for this group will be provided by Natural England.

Frequency of Meetings:

The group will initially meet monthly to be reviewed as project progresses.

Engagement:

Members of the Technical Advisory Group will:

- Act as links to constituent bodies, ensuring good flow of information and issues.
- Contribute to the purpose and objectives of the group through solution focused dialogue
- Build on their existing skills and knowledge to improve their own and others' understanding and knowledge of landscape designation process and purpose of designation
- Consider and treat information and views shared in confidence to further effective joint working
- Act without prejudice to views subsequently expressed by member organisations

Appendix 3: Area of Search



Appendix 4:

Summary Landscape Description of Evaluation Areas

Yorkshire Wolds Evaluation Areas

EA1: Derwent Tributaries Farmland

Includes the Limestone Ridge which extends into Howardian Hills AONB, Chalk Foothills, and Scarp of the Chalk Wolds and small section of Derwent Gorge as defined in local character assessments.

This area has an undulating topography and is drained by a series of tributaries which flow north-west into the Derwent.

Settlements include Langton, Burythorpe and Birdsall.

EA2: Wharram Percy Wolds

Includes the chalk foothills and chalk wolds as defined in local character assessments.

This landscape is predominantly inward looking, constrained by topography. It comprises a series of distinct wold valleys and surrounding uplands. It contains notable areas of woodland and spring lines along the incised valleys and watercourse of the Whitestone Beck.

Settlements include North Grimston. Issues relate to intensive farming practices.

EA3: Northern Scarp Slopes

Includes the Chalk Wolds (wooded scarp), Chalk Foothills and Sand and Gravel Vale Fringe as defined in local character assessments.

This landscape is north facing and looks out across a wider landscape. Settlements comprise edge of scarp villages strung out along the A64 and A1098 including Settrington, Scagglethorpe, Rillington, East and West Heslerton, Sherburn, Ganton, Staxton, Flixton and Folkton.

EA4: Central Dissected Plateau

Includes the Chalk Wolds and Chalk Tributary Valleys as defined in local character assessments.

This landscape comprises a series of incised dry chalk valleys which are tightly defined tributary valleys to the Gypsy Race. Between the valleys are higher areas of open wold farmland. There are no significant settlements in this area.

EA5: Great Wold Valley

Includes the Chalk Wolds and Broad Chalk Valley as defined in local character assessments.

This landscape comprises the broad chalk valley of Gypsy Race, its gently reclining valley slopes and shallow tributary valleys. Settlements include the villages of Duggleby, Kirby Grindalythe, West and East Lutton, Helperthorpe, Weaverthorpe, Butterwick, Foxholes, Wold Newton, Burton Fleming and Twing. The majority of the villages are nucleated and are located along the valley floor.

EA6: Flamborough to Hunmanby Coastal Landscapes

Includes Chalk Foothills Open High Rolling Farmland including headland and cliffs as defined in local character assessments.

This area comprises those chalk landscape which are located along the coast and either face out to sea or are strongly influenced by their proximity to the coast.

Settlements include Reighton, Speeton, Bempton, Flamborough and Hunmanby.

EA7: Rudstone and Boynton Valley

Includes Wolds Valley Farmlands as defined in local character assessments.

This area comprises the east-west Gypsy Race valley and watercourse where it flows above ground between Rudston and Bridlington. It includes the settlements of Rudston and Boynton and notable areas of open water and woodland/woodpasture. It has an enclosed and well-defined character.

EA8: Southern and Eastern Wold Fringes

Includes Central Dissected Plateau and Open High Rolling Farmland as defined in local character assessments.

This area comprises the southern and eastern fringes of the Wolds which drop in elevation gradually to the south. In the north and west where the wolds are at their highest, valleys are more clearly defined and incised but become increasingly less so further south.

Settlements include small villages within the valleys and larger settlements in the rolling farmland such as Fridaythorpe, Kilham, Wetwang, Garton on the Wolds, North Dalton, Middleton on the Wolds, Cherry Burton and Walkington. There is also a string of villages along the southern fringes of the area associated with the A614.

EA9: Thixendale Valleys and Sledmere

Includes Dissected Central Plateau, Chalk Wolds and Narrow Chalk Valley as defined in local character assessments.

This area comprises the convoluted and deeply incised dales associated with Birdsall Dale, Water Dale, Thixen Dale, Brubber Dale and York Dale amongst others.

Settlements include Thixendale and hilltop settlements of Towthorpe and Fimber as well as estate village of Sledmere.

EA10: Western Wolds and Valleys

Vale Farmland and Plantation Woodland and Heaths, Open Farmland, Flat Open Farmland, Chalk Foothills, Complex Incised Sloping Wooded Chalk Wolds Farmland as defined in local character assessments.

This area comprises the deeply incised western Wolds between Garrowby and Londesborough which penetrate into the high western wolds. Settlements include Millington and Warter.

EA11: Western Wolds Scarp and Foothills

Includes Vale Farmland and Plantation Woodland and Heaths, Open Farmland, Flat Open Farmland, Chalk Foothills, Complex Incised Sloping Wooded Chalk Wolds Farmland as defined in local character assessments.

This area comprises the west facing chalk scarp slope and foothills that face onto the Vale of York and Derwent Valley. Settlements occur within the foothills including Leaverling, Acklam, Bugthorpe, Kirby Underdale, Bishop Wilton, Nunburnholme, Burnby and Londesborough.

EA12: Southern Wolds

Includes Open High Rolling Farmland, Sloping Wooded Farmland and Jurassic Hills Farmland and as defined in local character assessments.

This area comprises the most southern extent of the high wolds which are incised by a series of east-west tight valleys. This is fringed by open farmland drained by a series of watercourses including Hotham Beck and Drewton Beck. The outer edge of the area is marked by a distinct limestone scarp before dropping into open fen farmland.

Settlements located at the edge of the wolds include Sancton, North and South Newbald, Hotham, North Cave and South Cave, and Welton.

Appendix 5:

Evaluation Framework for Natural Beauty Criterion, Appendix 1, taken from Guidance for Assessing Landscapes for Designation as National Park or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Natural England, June 2021.

Evaluation Framework for Natural Beauty Criterion

The sub-factors and associated indicators should be regarded as a menu of examples (Developed from past designations and subsequent consultation) from which those appropriate to the character of the landscape under consideration should be chosen, adapted or added to. There is no scoring process involving accumulations of indicators and it is possible for a landscape to exhibit natural beauty or offer opportunities for open air recreation even if a number of the indicators shown in this appendix are not present.

Factor	Example sub-factor	Example Indicator
Landscape quality	Intactness of the landscape in visual, functional and ecological perspectives	Characteristic natural and man-made elements are well represented throughout
	The condition of the landscape's features and elements	Landscape elements are in good condition
	The influence of incongruous features or elements (whether man-made or natural) on the perceived natural beauty of the area	Incongruous elements are not present to a significant degree, are not visually intrusive, have only localised influence or are temporary in nature
Scenic quality	A distinctive sense of place	Landscape character lends a clear and recognisable sense of place
	Striking landform	Landform shows a strong sense of scale or contrast
		There are striking landform types or coastal configurations
	Visual interest in patterns of land cover	Land cover and vegetation types form an appealing pattern or composition in relation to each other and/or to landform which may be appreciated from either a vantage point or as one travels through a landscape
	Appeal to the senses	Strong aesthetic qualities, reflecting factors such as scale and form, degree of openness or enclosure, colours and textures, simplicity or diversity, and ephemeral or seasonal interest
		Memorable or unusual views and eye-catching features or landmarks
		Characteristic cognitive and sensory stimuli (e.g. sounds, quality of light, characteristic smells, characteristics of the weather)
		Relatively few roads or other transport routes

Relative wildness	A sense of remoteness	Distant from or perceived as distant from significant habitation
	A relative lack of human influence	Extensive areas of semi-natural vegetation Uninterrupted tracts of land with few built features and few overt industrial or urban influences
	A sense of openness and exposure	Open, exposed to the elements and expansive in character
	A sense of enclosure and isolation	Sense of enclosure provided by (e.g.) woodland, landform that offers a feeling of isolation
	A sense of the passing of time and a return to Nature	Absence or apparent absence of active human intervention
Relative tranquillity	Contributors to tranquillity	Presence and/or perceptions of natural landscape, birdsong, peace and quiet, natural-looking woodland, stars at night, stream, sea, natural sounds and similar influences
	Detractors from tranquillity	Presence and/or perceptions of traffic noise, large numbers of people, urban development, overhead light pollution, low flying aircraft, power lines and similar influences
Natural heritage features	Geological and geo-morphological features	Visible expression of geology in distinctive sense of place and other aspects of scenic quality Presence of striking or memorable geo-morphological features
	Wildlife and habitats	Presence of wildlife and/or habitats that make a particular contribution to distinctive sense of place or other aspects of scenic quality Presence of individual species that contribute to sense of place, relative wildness or tranquillity
Cultural heritage	Built environment, archaeology and designed landscapes	Presence of settlements, buildings or other structures that make a particular contribution to distinctive sense of place or other aspects of scenic quality Presence of visible archaeological remains, parkland or designed landscapes that provide striking features in the landscape
	Historic influence on the landscape	Visible presence of historic landscape types or specific landscape elements or features that provide evidence of

		time depth or historic influence on the landscape
		Perceptions of a harmonious balance between natural and cultural elements in the landscape that stretch back over time
	Characteristic land management practices	Existence of characteristic land management practices, industries or crafts which contribute to natural beauty
	Associations with written descriptions	Availability of descriptions of the landscape in notable literature, topographical writings or guide books, or significant literature inspired by the landscape
	Associations with artistic representations	Depiction of the landscape in art, other art forms such as photography or film, through language or folklore, or in inspiring related music
	Associations of the landscape with people, places or events	Evidence that the landscape has associations with notable people or events, cultural traditions or beliefs