

AIREBOROUGH LANDSCAPE CHARACTER & VALUE REPORT

A collaborative report led by **Tom Lonsdale, Placecraft**



ACCREDITATION

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Ecological information in section 11 and other places has been input from a research study done by Elizabeth Kirkpatrick and Kay Easton in 2016 with members of the Aireborough Neighbourhood Forum, under the direction and supervision of Richard Wilson Ecology.

Reference is made to work done by Andy Graham of The Urban Glow, who has produced Aireborough's Urban Character Study 2017

Reference is also made to work on a Green Masterplan Framework which was part of the Aireborough Natural and Built Environment Baseline Report done by AECOM in 2015.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Planning Context

Aireborough Neighbourhood Forum is preparing a Neighbourhood Plan (NDP) for a large part of the Aireborough District (historically the Parish of Guiseley), one of Leeds City Council's Housing Market Characteristic Areas (HMCA). The two areas of Aireborough the neighbourhood plan does not cover are East and West Carlton which are now in the Parish of Bramhope, and Rawdon, which is now a Parish in its own right (Fig 1).

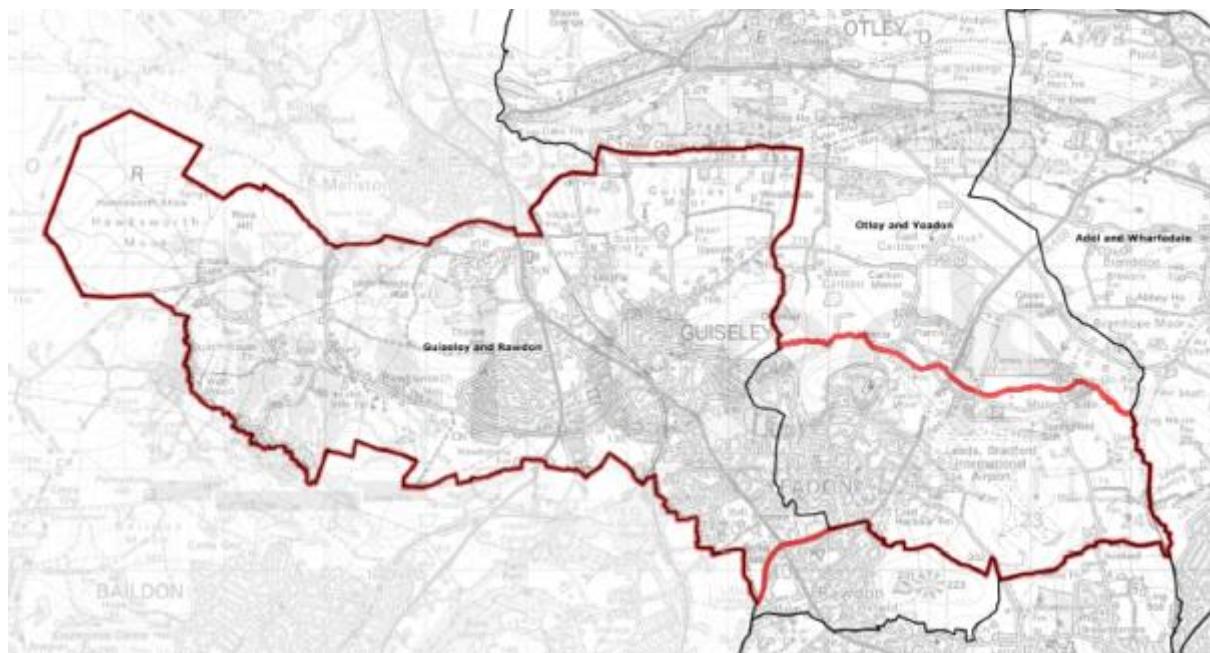


Fig 1 – Aireborough Neighbourhood Plan Area

The Neighbourhood Plan will be a comprehensive document addressing a wide range of environmental and planning issues, giving the community a voice in how the area might develop and change in the future, drawing on its landscape character. Leeds' Core Strategy 2012 – 2028 makes landscape, character and local distinctiveness important considerations in sustainable development in line with the NPPF

The District's distinctive landscape character needs to be respected, conserved and enriched. The challenge is to manage growth in ways which will maintain the setting of Leeds within an attractive network of connected green spaces that improve its environment. (page 17, section 2.41)

Policy P12 is one example of where this is used – The character, quality and biodiversity of Leeds' townscapes and landscapes, including their historical and cultural significance, will be conserved and enhanced to protect their distinctiveness through stewardship and the planning process.

The Vision for the Aireborough Neighbourhood Plan reflects the Leeds Core Strategy

"To stimulate identity in order to sustain vitality in this family of 'sibling' settlements; to live work and grow into a new modern economy together, as a unique cornerstone of Leeds City Region and the South Pennines National Character Area. To resist becoming a suburban dormitory"

This report will also discuss neighbouring areas of **Bradford Metropolitan District Council**, as there are large areas of shared landscape, and the NPPF 182 stresses the Duty to Co-operate on strategic planning matters, whilst NPPF 117 stresses the need to plan for biodiversity at a landscape-scale across local authority boundaries.

Aireborough Landscape Character and Value Study.

Landscape plays a profoundly important part in defining the character of the area but there is little available published material on **what contributes to the sense of place and character that is Aireborough and how it gives rise to local uniqueness**. Further, the area predominantly sits in an unusual glacial topographic feature called the Guiseley Gap¹ which links Airedale to Wharfedale and contains Guiseley and Yeadon, and which is not mentioned in the Leeds Landscape, Habitat or Green Infrastructure assessments. In its response to the Leeds Core Strategy Preferred Approach 2009 Natural England advised

"An up-to-date landscape character assessment is an essential part of the evidence base and Leeds should refresh existing work in this area to ensure that it is useful in informing the objectives of this Core Strategy."²

The purpose of this study is therefore

- **to build** a complete picture of the ingredients that shape the character and condition of the Aireborough landscape
- **to examine** the value of that landscape to sustainability and delivery of the Core Strategy and Neighbourhood Development Plan vision.
- **to prescribe** actions to ensure its value to sustainability into the future.

The study findings need to be read in conjunction with other aspects of the Neighbourhood Plan evidence base where landscape plays an important part, particularly the

- **Aireborough Urban Character Assessment 2017** – which identifies character quarters.
- **Aireborough Ecology Study 2016** – gives landscape level nature conservation opportunities.
- **Aireborough Natural and Built Environment Baseline Report 2015** – which lays out a conceptual Green Masterplan Framework for Aireborough.

The Baseline Report also sets the scene clearly in terms of the broad planning context, vision and policy aspirations of the community. Rather than repeat the commentary in the Baseline Report the intention here is to build more detail of understanding and prescription at a micro level.

Consistent with the concept of Neighbourhood Plans much of the data gathering and analysis has been carried out by volunteers in the Aireborough community, who have been trained in landscape appreciation skills by consultant Landscape Architect, Tom Lonsdale, who has subjected their findings to objective review and testing in the field. He has also supported the Forum in identifying potential actions and delivery mechanisms capable of achieving the landscape ambitions to emerge from the analysis.

¹ Dept of Scientific and Industrial Research, *Geological Survey of Great Britain: Geology of the Country Between Bradford and Skipton*, 1953, page 1 and page 136

² Leeds Core Strategy, *Green Infrastructure Background Paper CD27*, 2013 page 4

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2.1 Aireborough has a highly distinctive transitional position - **an edge land** - naturally, culturally, and administratively. From a landscape character and value perspective, it sits on the border of National Character Areas (NCA) 36 Southern Pennines and 38 Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Yorkshire Coalfield³. It is an urban rural fringe area between great industrial cities and the Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

This creates potential planning issues for Aireborough

- Leeds is primarily planning for NCA 38 whilst Aireborough's visual connection and diverse natural capital is orientated west to the South Pennines, and north to the AONB.
- Aireborough's transitional, semi-urban character requires an open aspect; the reason for the Green Belt designation. This must be an important consideration in sustainable planning.
- There is concern regarding the consequence of a narrowing of the open space between dense urban development of NCA 38 and rural countryside of NCA 36. *"A key challenge will be to improve links between this NCA and others in order to get a better understanding of the delivery of ecosystem services and how they can be improved."*⁴ This narrowing increases the pressure on the open space around Aireborough to fulfill the cultural, provisioning and regulating ecosystem services that it has to perform⁵; very little has currently been designated as strategic green infrastructure in the Core Strategy 2014. Yet, it has been established that urban ecosystem services are particularly valuable in urban fringe areas⁶.

2.2 This study has evaluated Aireborough's landscape value without the fragmenting effect of LA boundaries, and with consideration of ecosystem services. Findings reveal an interesting map of eighteen landscape character 'units' of richer diversity and value than the base LA landscape units. The **planning strategy** for Aireborough's landscape given in the Core Strategy is to conserve what is valuable whilst restoring quality where it is deficient. This report **identifies specific actions for each landscape unit** with this in mind, as well as NCA Strategic Environmental Opportunities (SEO) and in addition to potential NDP policies.

2.3 The evidence suggests that **the overall footprint of built development in Aireborough has reached a critical point in outward expansion**, beyond which further expansion will fundamentally change the character of the landscape setting, and provision of ecosystem services. Expansion will also erode diversity of recreational experience, bringing buildings ever nearer to the moorland edge and putting pressure on fragile landscapes and habitat from sheer weight of numbers. Conversely there are open spaces within the urban footprint (see the Urban Character Study) that could accommodate some regeneration – this should take priority.

2.4 The Aireborough landscape is **unique**⁷ in the South Pennines being made of millstone grit summits shaped by **glacial forces** and covered with a hummock forming glacial deposits and a mantle of boulder clay. The Guiseley Gap is an unusual plateau with drainage dikes and ghylls that links Airedale with Wharfedale; **neither LA assessment has recognized this important topographical feature which needs to be done**. Hillside development has already caused abrupt edges that interfere with the integrity of this landscape and more should be avoided.

2.5 A major characteristic of Aireborough is the **openness**, with extensive 'uplifting' views inside the area and dramatic long distance views out of the area. The general '**hilliness**' created by the geology makes for ever changing vistas, skies, and landmarks. This openness is already

³ Hereafter referred to as Yorkshire Coalfield

⁴ Profile of NCA 38 Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Yorkshire Coalfield

⁵ In accordance with EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020 and NPPF109

⁶ Wentworth J, *Urban Green Infrastructure and Ecosystem Services*. 2017 Houses of Parliament Brief Page4

⁷ SCOSPA, *South Pennines Landscape Character Assessment*, 1998 (page 76)

being destroyed in areas such as Unit 7 Nether Yeadon and Unit 11 Yeadon Banks and Haw.

2.6 Aireborough's topography means it is a **water catchment** area for the Aire and Wharfe. The drainage networks feeding both rivers comprise distinctive freshwater becks, waterbodies and wetlands that are important for biodiversity and ecological corridors- wading and ground-nesting birds are of note. Historically water management has been crucial, whilst today, groundwater levels in the area have been found to be underestimated by a factor of 10 in Defra Models. This is an issue for flooding and considering excess ground water flows into many pre 1940 pipes risking contamination in public streets and land – as has happened.

2.7 Two different **moorlands** (Rombalds Moor and Chevin Slopes) sweep down to historic woodland and ancient farmed pastures enclosed by dry stone walls and occasional hedgerows. The topography has given rise to acid soils that vary with altitude, peat on the moors, wet, rich loam and clay in the Guiseley Gap valley. This has affected land use and gives a time-rich cultural landscape, juxtaposing the prehistoric with modern technology; medieval fields with industrial architecture, creating an outlook described experientially in the study as uplifting. Urban development has mostly fossilized the older rural landscape and is recommended for distinctiveness by the Heritage Landscape Character Assessment (HLC). However, recent development has strayed from this principle and eschewed historic nomenclature – which residents consider to be '**cultural vandalism**'. The moorland peats and valley alluvium around Mire Beck are an important archaeological and palaeoenvironmental resource. Work should be carried out to **map and manage cultural landscape assets** in line with HLC recommendations, especially as some, such as those in unit 17 Coach Road, are in a state of dilapidation.

2.8 The range of soils support a variety of grassland, wetland, and of historic broad-leaved woodland (from stubbed hedgerows of holly to estate plantations and lines of sturdy commemorative trees) that gives **diversity of habitat**. There are also remnants of old wood boundaries, wood pasture and species-rich grassland. All provide valuable elements of natural capital for regulating ecosystem services and supporting priority species of birds, herptiles, small mammals and invertebrates. Land use changes and urban development have left many isolated fragments that need restoration, networking and linking to the main ecological corridors of the Aire and Wharfe. Yeadon Tarn area, for instance, has a moorland wetland habitat which is being managed but is ecologically isolated. Suggestions are made for **updates to the Leeds Habitat Network 2014** to improve ecological corridors at a landscape level.

2.9 **Pastoral Farming** in Aireborough is changing with farms being made less viable and going below critical mass. Land use is changing to and smallholdings and the upkeep of horses. This is all likely to create a crisis in landscape stewardship and provisioning ecosystem services. **Quarrying** too has an impact on landscape; the working quarries need to work with stewardship in mind. On the positive side great pride has always been taken in the use of local stone in building and structure and this should be encouraged. Some old quarries have exposed the geological sequence and SSSIs have been created.

2.10 Aireborough's historic land use determined a **dispersed settlement pattern** of town, hamlets and farms whose local materials assimilated into the landscape. The 20th century saw a move to planned semi-urban areas influenced by the Garden City Movement. However, more recent development has begun to stray from principles of siting, materials and design, and urban sprawl has grown; although distinct settlement character areas remain. This has set up **tensions in the relationship between the built-up areas and neighboring open landscape**. There are two locations in particular where settlement identity is under threat: the Wills Gill area is vital to the separation of Guiseley and Yeadon and connection of both to the wider countryside, whilst the Guiseley Gap wetlands mark a crucial end-point to Guiseley. These tensions should be considered in sustainable land use plans in the context of the whole area.

2.11 The dispersed settlement has left a network of snickets, footpaths, lanes, and bridleways whilst regeneration created a Sustrans track. The Baseline Reports recommends the establishment of an **Aireborough Green Route** to link the urban population to the countryside in various directions; this is a regeneration solution that could alleviate some of the increasing traffic and air pollution issues with the A65.

2.12 Aireborough's rural landscape is in close proximity to its urban counterpart and thus important for recreation. Recreational use needs planning and management so as not to over burden areas of beauty and tranquility, such as Yeadon Tarn and Chevin Forest Park⁸. Green spaces also counteract increasing hard surface-water runoff, so should play a key role in the design of SuDs. New developments have often been required to put in green patches as amenity space, and even a community orchard on High Royds, but few have a real purpose in terms of an ecosystem service, they are generally not well managed, and their isolation, one from another makes them forlorn 'hostages to fortune'. A **green infrastructure** needs to be networked and joined to the Leeds Strategic Green Infrastructure, in line with criteria in the Leeds GI Strategy, the North West Leeds Country Park, the Natural England Statements of Environmental Opportunity for NCA 36 and 38 and NPPF114. **This should be mapped in the Neighbourhood Plan in the light of the new evidence that the community have produced.** Consideration should also be given to the Leeds City Council's Director of Public Health Annual Report 2014-2015, '*Planning a Healthy City, Housing Growth in Leeds*'.

2.13 Management and enhancement of Aireborough green infrastructure could be done with a **Community Green Space Trust**⁹. Residents have already shown a propensity to get involved in green infrastructure improvements through Friends Groups, a sign of the level of topophilia that serves to encourage environmentally responsible behaviour through self-identity. There is also a place for large landowners such as Yorkshire Water and Leeds Bradford Airport to develop their holdings for ecology, recreation and other ecosystem services.

⁸ NPPF123 identify and protect areas of tranquillity which have remained relatively undisturbed by noise and are prized for their recreational and amenity value for this reason

⁹ Examples The Parks Trust, Milton Keynes and Milton Community Woodlands Association

3. OUR STARTING POINT - OTHER LANDSCAPE STUDIES

National Character Areas

Natural England has divided England into different National Landscape Character Areas (NCA) in accordance with the 2011 Natural Environment White Paper, Biodiversity 2020. The purpose is to assist decisions regarding local plans and how best to enhance and respect local distinctiveness and ecosystem services. Each area profiles key characteristics, ecosystem services and strategic environmental opportunities (SEO).

At this national scale Aireborough lies across two NCAs – the Northern part is in NCA 36 Southern Pennines (pub 2012), the Southern section in NCA 38 Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Yorkshire Coalfield (pub 2013).¹⁰ The Baseline Report (section 4.2) identifies the line across Aireborough, marking the transition. This seems a crude distinction on a small scale, thus this study has set out through visual observation and analysis to examine the nature of that transition, which also coincides with the point where the urban form of the Leeds conurbation currently peters out into the countryside.

Leeds and Bradford Landscape Assessments

The next steps down in scale of landscape subdivision is that adopted by the Leeds (1994 revised 2011) and the Bradford (2008) Local Authority Landscape Assessments.

- Leeds divides the Aireborough up into **landscape character areas** *Millstone Grit Plateau (MGP), Leeds Coal Measures (LCM), Wharfedale (WHD)*; then **landscape types** eg *agricultural, woodland, wetland*; finally **landscape units by location/type** (see Fig 2).
- Bradford divides the surrounding land into three **landscape character areas** that correspond to Leeds, *Rombalds Ridge, Esholt, Wharfedale*, then subdivides into more distinct **landscape type** eg moorland, enclosed pasture, parkland (Figs 3 – 5).

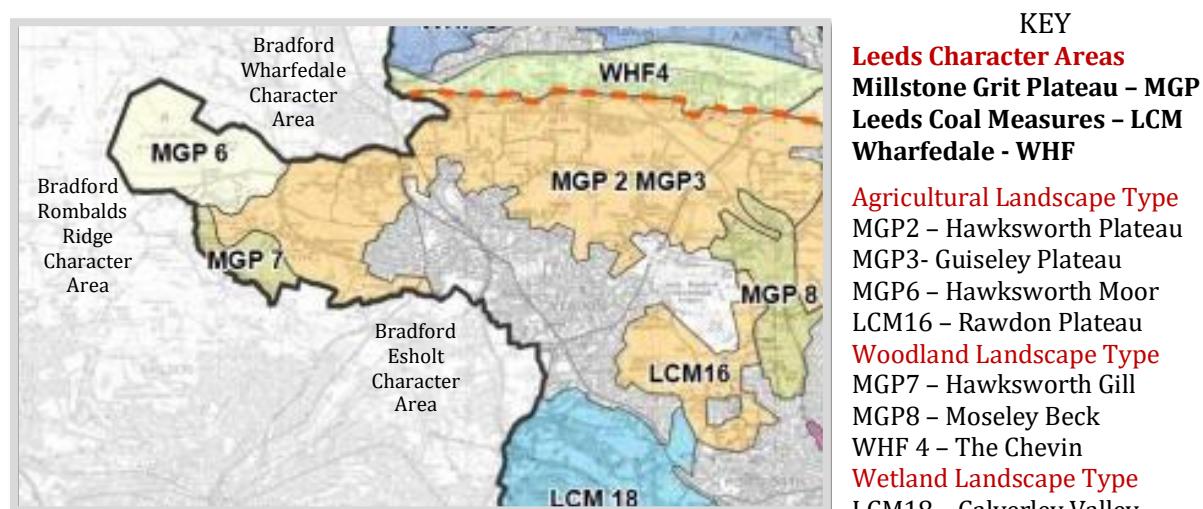


Fig 2 – Leeds Landscape Review Map 2011

¹⁰ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-character-area-profiles-data-for-local-decision-making/national-character-area-profiles>

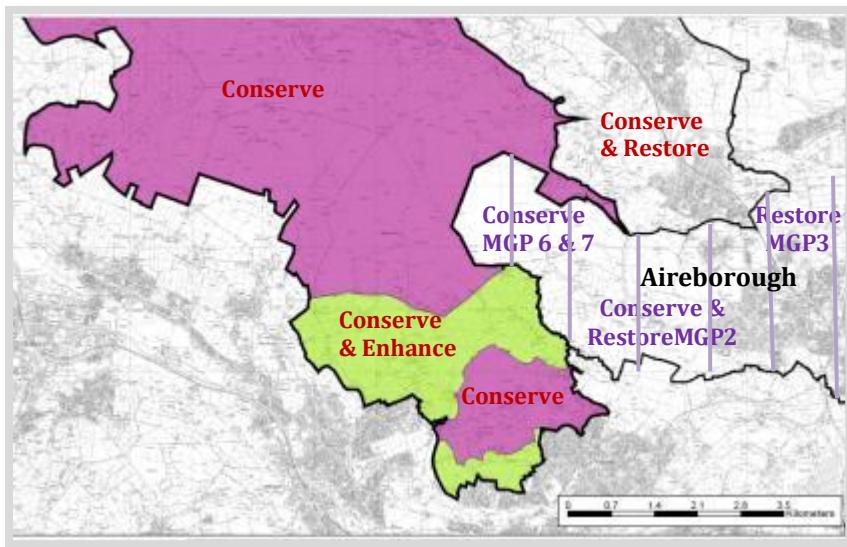


Fig 3 - Bradford's Rombold's Ridge Area

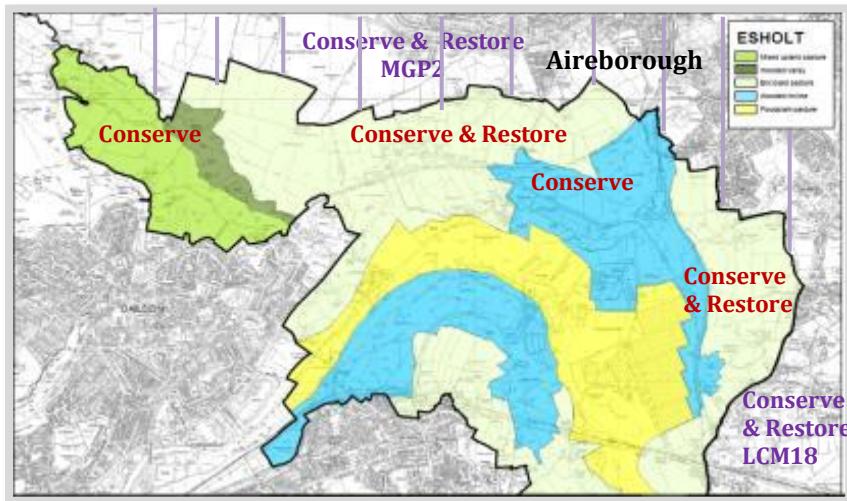


Fig 4 - Bradford's Esholt Area

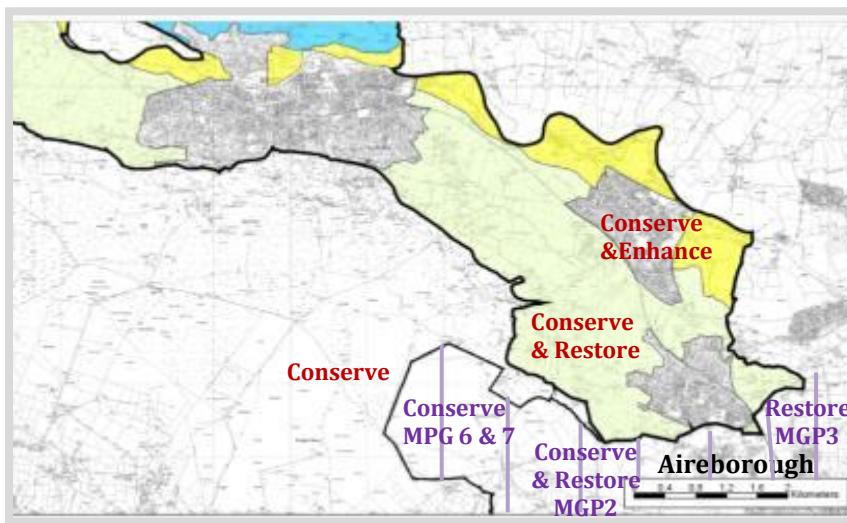


Fig 5 - Bradford's Wharfedale Area

The Leeds and Bradford Assessments were both completed¹¹ before the NCA profiles were published. Leeds is primarily a city in NCA 38 Yorkshire Coalfield, and Bradford is primarily a city in NCA 36 Southern Pennines. This creates a potential issue for Aireborough which has features of both NCAs, because each LA has primarily concentrated on its main character area. At the large-scale the local authority landscape character areas do have reasonable similarity one with the other. Upon more local scale analysis, there is a divergence in landscape unit types which have more relevance for ecosystem services.

A glaring omission by both Local Authorities' assessments is recognizing the Guiseley Gap. Their districts boundaries slice through the gap, taking no account of this unique landscape character feature, which was specifically noted by Geographer and Broadcaster Nicholas Crane as a 'fascinating feature' on a visit to the Ilkley Literature Festival in 2016 to give a talk on his book 'The Making of the British Landscape'¹². Other quotes

" In the Guiseley Gap, which provides an easy route from Airedale to Wharfedale, are the mill-towns of Yeadon and Guiseley" *The Geology of the Country Between Bradford and Skipton*. 1953

"Passing through the Guiseley Gap, the Professor explained how at one time Rombald's Moor and Otley Chevin had been one continuous line of Millstone Grit, but that during the glacial period this had been carried away and left this gap between". *Under-Managers' Geological Tour* 21 July 1934

From Beamsley Beacon, " here we have a complete panoramic circle, embracing Almscliff Cragg, Otley Chevin, a **peep through the Guiseley Gap to** Airedale, Rombalds Moor, the distant Pendle Hills, Skipton Moor, the hills in Upper Wharfedale, Simon's Seat, and right round to Nidderdale, and Harrogate to mention only a few points." *Yorkshire Landscapes*, Yorkshire Post 11 August 1949

There are also other areas on the southern border of Aireborough where the Leeds Assessment **does not recognize** the portion of a landscape unit within it boundary, whilst the Bradford Assessment does. These include the following and have implications under NPPF 117, where LA's should plan for biodiversity across boundaries.

- the wooded incline of Guiseley Beck Gill that Bradford calls the Esholt's *wooded incline*.
- the *enclosed pasture* around Nether Yeadon that Bradford have picked out on their side of the border

On the Wharfedale side of the Guiseley Gap Bradford does not recognize the edge of the 'hanging valley' with Ellar Ghyll. The Wharfedale Guide states that Menston is on the Wharfe 'valley floor'!¹³ .

Both LAs indicate a landscape strategy for each of their own landscape units, but these do not always correspond across the border; these are shown on Figs 3-5. In a similar way to the National Character Area boundary, this study has set out to make sense of the Aireborough landscape value without the fragmenting effect of LA boundaries, and with consideration of ecosystem services.

¹¹ The Leeds assessment was 1994, revised 2011. Bradford assessment 2008.

¹² Ilkley Literature Festival 2016, Kings Hall Ilkley, Saturday 15th October, 4.30pm

¹³ Bradford MDC, *Landscape Character SPD, vol 8 Wharfedale*, 2008

OUR AIREBOROUGH

Topography becomes landscape when it has marker and meaning that are woven into traditions and beliefs; this bonds society. Fig 6 maps important markers and meaning.

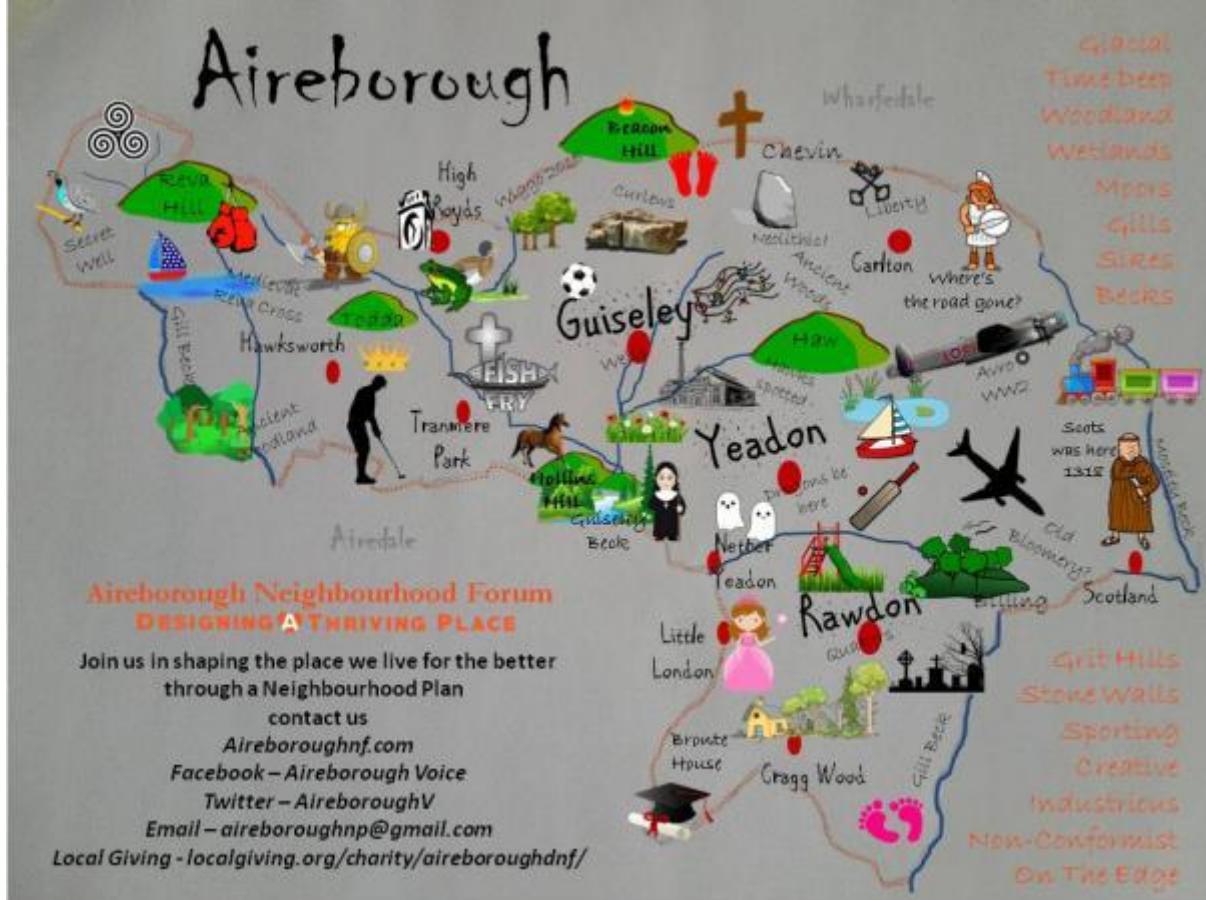


Fig 6 - A quirky depiction of Aireborough's key features and below typical landscape nomenclature

Royd	Leys	York
Shaw	Dean	Kel
Beck	Hollins	Ash
Ghyll	Moor	Springs
Syke	Lane	Haw
Law	Farn	Wham
Gate	Coppy	Dub
Overend	Tanning	Copt
Lands	Cow	Black
Flatts	Birks	Stone
Toft	Intake	White
Croft	Cliffe	Whackhouse
Ing	Nether	Doles
Hill	Sodhall	Clay
Stoop	Swine	West
Green	Tranmire	Chevin
Dike	Dibb	Dam
Stubbins	Rein	Well
Don	Ellar	Hole
Carr	Clapper	
Banks	Brow	

4. AIREBOROUGH'S LANDSCAPE CHARACTER - DESCRIPTION

"The air is full of sounds; the sky of tokens; the ground is all memoranda and signatures; and every object covered over with hints, which speak to the intelligent" Ralph Waldo Emerson¹⁴

A Transition Area Valued For Being On The Edge

Aireborough occupies a highly distinctive¹⁵ transitional position on the Northern edge of the Leeds and Bradford conurbations; it is a glacial 'hanging valley' or plateau, linking industrial middle Airedale, and rural lower Wharfedale. This notion of transition is not just confined to a sense of rurality: geological Leeds is a lowland city on the Yorkshire Coalfield, whilst Aireborough perches on the edge of the more rugged Pennine Uplands, a large part of its visual connection and diverse natural capital is orientated west to the 'hills' of the Southern Pennines, and northwards to the limestone of the Nidderdale AONB¹⁶



View over the Chevin Slopes towards the Hawkstone Ridge and beyond to the South Pennines.

Culturally and economically Aireborough has played a role 'on the edge' – from the defensive, forested, edge of the Kingdom of Elmet, to the economic edge of the Yorkshire textile area powered by the water of the millstone grit landscape. Aireborough is also on the wellbeing edge of great industrial cities where, in people sought natural relief from urban conditions in Aireborough's landscape; the reason why so much of the area was designated Green Belt in the 20th century. It is this urban-rural fringe transition with city on one side and divergent countryside on the other and all that means for ecosystem services and the economy, that presents the greatest challenge for those committed to shaping both Aireborough's future.

¹⁴ In 1850 in an essay on Goethe, Emerson talked of the idea that nature is a metaphor of the human mind

¹⁵ SCOSPA, *South Pennines Landscape Character Assessment*, 1998 (page 76)

¹⁶ Evidence from ANDF Research Study

CHARACTER AND FEATURES

Topography and Drainage As Drivers Of Landscape Character

Topography is arguably the single most important and influential factor in the area's identity and structure, accentuated by the very distinctive way that the natural drainage behaves as a result of the complex millstone grit geology and glacial forces. Glaciers left superficial deposits of limestone, boulder clay and gravels that have provided useful resources and dictated settlement patterns. Water action has left deep plateau ghylls, dikes and areas of alluvium.

The resulting physical factors have led to particular human activities, from Mesolithic nomads 10,000 years ago to industrialists and 20th century planners, which have created another layer of landscape character. Historically the area was one of dispersed settlement with a network of lanes and paths linking resources. The 20th century has seen a sprawling effect but distinct settlement areas remain each with their own character¹⁷. All three landscape shaping forces - geology, geomorphology and human activity- have led to a patchwork of grassland, woodland, moorland and wetland that provide valuable elements of natural capital for ecosystem services, and habitats for priority species such as skylarks, curlews, great crested newts, pipistrelle bats, and white-clawed crayfish.¹⁸

Aireborough's Major Characteristics

1. A major characteristic of Aireborough is the **openness**, with extensive 'uplifting' views available over a wide area of wood, grass and moorland. This changes in just two parts of the neighbourhood; the incised ghyll valleys and hillsides sloping down north to the River Wharfe and south to the River Aire. Here a greater tree cover gives a sense of enclosure and shortened views. A similar but less pronounced softening and greening occurs to the east of the Airport, with hedges becoming more evident than the dry stone walls that dominate most of Aireborough.
2. A second major characteristic is the '**hilliness**', from the surrounding high gritstone moorland crags and ghylls, to the attractive hummocky grassland caused by glacial moraine eg Cuddy hill and around Deipkier Wood. The hills also give rise to prominent features in the built environment for orientation eg Fieldhead School, the houses on Yeadon's South View Terrace, and the 'twin' Gothic clock towers of Yeadon Town Hall and High Royds.
3. The third major characteristic is the role of **moorland**. The unimproved gritstone moor to the northwest of Hawksworth with its mosaic of vegetation, contrasts markedly with the pastoral plateau and watershed of the Chevin with its enclosed fieldscape. The latter sweeps north above Guiseley and extends east to Carlton Moor and Yeadon Banks. Hawksworth Moor connects with the far bigger expanse of Rombalds Moor and so feels emphatically like the gateway to relatively wild upland countryside; whilst Guiseley Moor feels like an indispensable zone of transition, softening the change from town to country and ending in the Chevin Ridge with sublime views over Wharfedale and the Nidderdale AONB, and long distance views back to the edge of the Dark Peaks.¹⁹

¹⁷ The Urban Glow, *Aireborough Character Study and Urban Design Analysis*, 2017

¹⁸ See list of UK BAP Priority Species <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-5717>

¹⁹ NCA 50 and 51

4. The fourth major characteristic is the **natural drainage** and hydrology that cover the area as a result of geology and human engineering. From the unusual freshwater glacial becks, natural tarns, and valley wetlands that are so key for breeding birds and ecological corridors, to an array of historical engineering techniques used for land reclamation, a source of power, and to provide modern services for water, sanitation and leisure.

5. The geology and topography gives rise to the soils (Fig 7) that support the last major characteristic, a **range of broadleaved woodland and grasslands**.

Aireborough's landscape is dotted with veteran trees, woods and woodland fragments that give testament to soil conditions and historic management. Common nomenclature such as copt, hollins and shaw all bear strong witness to this heritage. The parliamentary enclosure plantation copse on Whale Jaws Hill ([picture](#)) and the wooded crown of Rawdon Billing are both iconic place markers. Grasslands vary with soil conditions and altitude, from the wet meadows on the acid rich loam and clay of the lower level Ings to the distinctive free-draining acid grasslands of the brows on higher slopes that give rise to gorse and bracken. The moorland peats and valley alluvium around Mire Beck are an important archaeological and palaeoenvironmental resource.

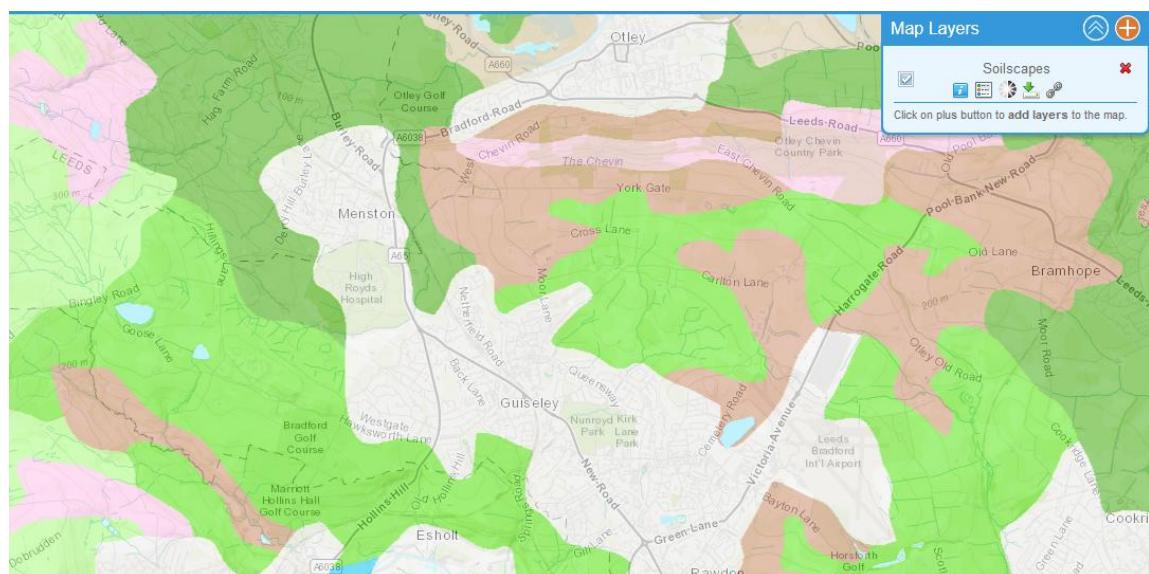


Fig 7 - Aireborough soils vary with the topography - Source: BGS - Soilscapes.

Light Green – Peat moorland with low fertility and areas of bog and heather

Brown – Free draining acid loam, low fertility, arable, grassland, deciduous woodland, bracken, gorse

Mid green – Wet acid loam & clay, slow permeability/impeded drainage/low fertility. Grassland and forestry

Dark green – Acid, base rich loam & clay. Seasonally wet, slow permeability/moderate fertility. Grassland and woods

Significant Features

Guiseley Gap

Fig 8 depicts the contour map of the area, annotated to identify significant relief features. The most notable of all is the Guiseley Gap. The Gap is the product of glacial erosion that took place between the Wharfe and Aire valleys. This broad-bottomed hanging valley connecting

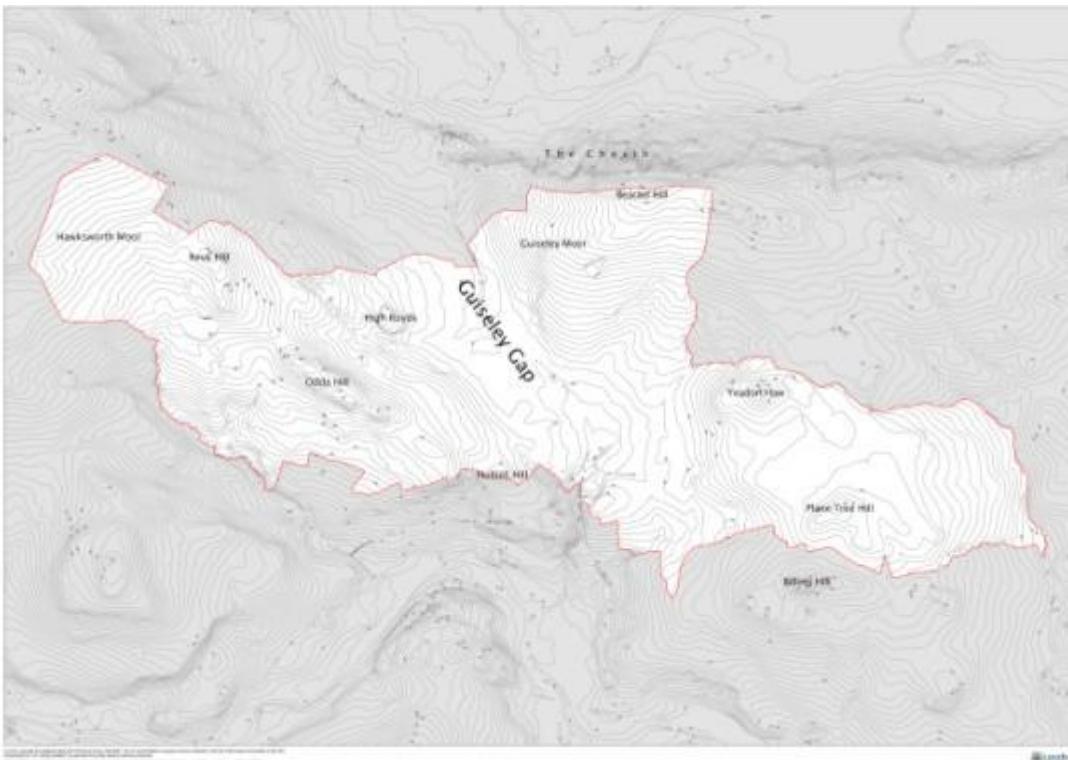


Fig 8 - Geography of the Guiseley Gap, linking Wharfedale and Airedale

the two Dales is incised through the millstone grit moorland plateau that would otherwise sweep eastwards as an extension from Rombalds Moor onto The Chevin. The lowest part of the Guiseley Gap is around 425ft (130m) above sea level, in contrast to the 125ft (38m) which is the lowest level of nearby Wharfedale and Airedale. Mire Beck flows in the western valley bottom; it rises on Revy Hill, and flows out through Ellar Ghyll. Tranmire Beck was engineered to flow from east from Mire Beck to Guiseley Beck draining Tran Mire as it ran its course.



View over the Guiseley Gap from Hawksworth Moor.

The topography of the Guiseley Gap created a 'valued' area for settlement and communication which led from pre-history nomadic wandering to the gradual development of Guiseley and Yeadon as principal settlements on this northern edge of Leeds and eastern edge of Bradford. When the A65 was built in the 19th century it was described thus

"one new road is from Kirkstall to Ilkley: this road will form one of the most beautiful rides in the kingdom. It will pass under Horsforth, Rawdon, Yeadon, through Guiseley and Menston to Ilkley: the rise and fall are so easy, that it will be what is usually termed trotting road all the way. Thus the two vallies of Wharfedale and Airedale will be united, by the only passable road, so as to avoid Otley Shevin and Rombold's Moor. Another important branch is from Shipley to Otley crossing the last-mentioned road between Menston and Guiseley" Leeds Mercury 11 June 1825

Prominent Gritstone Summits of the Hawkstone Ridge

The underlying geology of the area is complex and interesting (Fig 9): the bedrock is millstone grit made up of 20 named gritstone bands (eg East Carlton Grit, Guiseley Grit) separated from the next by a thick layer of shaly mudstone. These bands and layers were laid down in the shallow delta of a warm sea 315million years ago and contain various fossils, and tidal marks. The gritstone is harder than the shale and more resistant to weathering it therefore frequently outcrops on the surface giving rise to Aireborough's various summits and stepped hillsides.

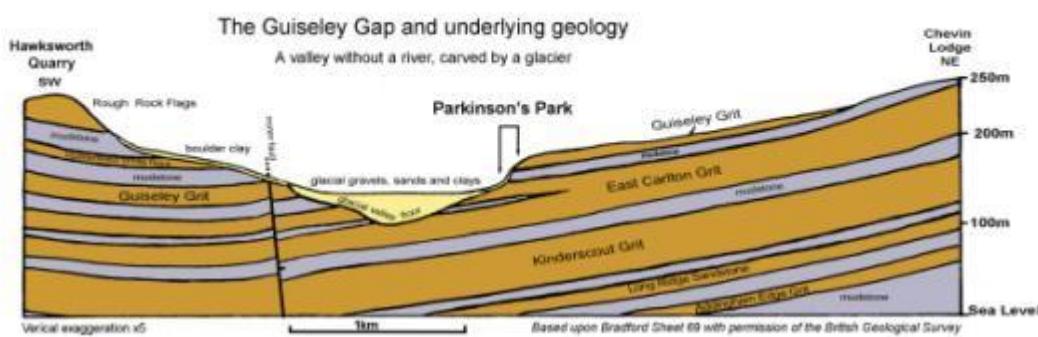


Fig 9 - The Millstone Grit Geology of the Guiseley Gap and Surrounding Hills

The summits of predominantly Rough Rock are arranged in a semi-circle that form the Hawkstone Ridge; they envelop much of Aireborough and act as signatures in the landscape bestowing distinctive character, individually and collectively.²⁰ They stretch like sentinels (Fig 10) from Reva Hill and the Odda in the west giving a dramatic setting for sunsets. Then they circle along the southern border through Hollins, Sodhall and Belmont Hills whose wooded slopes rise above Airedale giving advantageous 'lookouts'; then, on to the dominant Yeadon Haw in the east. These summits are ubiquitous in the language of the community, constantly being referred to as a means of locating and orientating conversations and incidents. They also play a crucial role in place identity, with Hawksworth being 'lined out' along the Odda, which gave rise to the name of the famous 20th century novel Windyridge by Willie Riley, whilst the steep slopes of Yeadon Banks 'guard' 'The Haw' with its Iron Age hill fort.

²⁰ Lancelot Capability Brown enclosed his landscapes with trees, Aireborough has hills



Fig 10 - Geology of Aireborough Source: British Geological Survey

The Chevin Slopes and Whale Jaws Hill

The Chevin is the largest topographic feature characterising the area, and an important watershed. Generally this name is applied to the scarp face that looks northward over Otley but its dip-slope sweeps down to Guiseley and Yeadon with a slight south-eastwards tilt. This area is covered with becks and remnants of ancient woodland and medieval wood pasture²¹; it may well be the Anglo Saxon Leah that gave rise to the name Guiseley. In the 19th century the lower slopes became part of the great Carlton Estate a mix of designed landscape, estate woodland management and dairy farms. Seen from the settlement, Guiseley Moor is a sheltering backcloth blocking long distance view north with its imposing ridgeline topped by woods and Beacon Hill once one of a chain of warning beacons across England but now just the rim of an old quarry.

The Western flank of the Chevin has a different feel, rising more steeply above the Guiseley Gap with its prominent, stone walled, regular patterned enclosed fields. Whale Jaws Hill²²; is a notable feature with its copse of trees an iconic landmark²³ that means 'home' for many residents; it features in art, photography, and even the names of local bands²⁴. Water here springs erratically from the geological layers and drains west to Mire Beck.

The Chevin Slopes contain many gritstone quarries, some dating back to very early times.²⁵ Most are now abandoned or repurposed, but one large working quarry remains at Moor Lane making a striking feature when seen from the Hawkstone Ridge to the south. Stone from these

²¹ The Domesday Record mention a Coppice Wood half a league long and 3 quarentines broad (1086).

²² Why it has this name is unknown, but it is perhaps linked to the idea of a whale-backed hill being a glacial feature. The OED notes whale-backed hills being used in the 19th century

²³ Appears on maps after parliamentary enclosure in 1796 – possible planted by Christopher Driver or Jonathan Craven.

²⁴ The Elephant Trees (formed in 2015), and The Chevin (formed in 2010) and the Guiseley

²⁵ Reference to use in 14th century

quarries features in local walls and building, and its excellent quality has led to use in significant civic buildings such as Bradford Cathedral, Foster Square Station, and the Lutyens' designed Heathcote in Ilkley. In the past, great pride was taken in the use of local stone, and when Guiseley Secondary School was built on Oxford Road in the 1920's there was uproar over the use of Horsforth stone.

Haworth Moor



Haworth Moor is the western flank of the Guiseley Gap, and part of the more extensive Rombalds Moor. The area is a semi-natural SSSI characterised by sweeping, breezy, open intake pastures and moorland around Reva Hill. There are superb views to the south giving a sense of connection to the Southern Pennines. During times of plague it is said Otley market moved here to blow away disease in the clear air. In the 19th and 20th century it became a favourite area of walking and recreation for city visitors.

Part grouse moor; part sheep-grazing pasture, with a mosaic of vegetation, Haworth Moor is dissected by natural and managed hydrology. It is the part of Aireborough that feels the most 'wild' and is important for birdlife, endangered moorland habitats and recreation – a delicate balance to maintain. The Moor has many prehistoric and historic tracks and artefacts, including 18th century boundary stones and a prehistoric cairn, as well as significant hummocks of glacial moraine used as a source of limestone for agriculture and industrial processes.

Rawdon Billing



This is a dominant landmark in Aireborough, with a copse of trees at its apex and extensive long distance views. It acts as a visual and geological 'full stop' to the area. Unlike Aireborough's more dramatic gritstone hills, Rawdon Billing sits on the Yorkshire Coalfield where the finer grained geology dictates more rounded, rolling hills. Numerous faults have led to rectilinear

drainage patterns rather than the more erratic network of becks which tunnel their way through the millstone grit layers. Historic features of coal extraction are found around the Billing, whilst the River Aire and Leeds Liverpool Canal run at its deep, wooded foot in the last southern outcrop of Aireborough's millstone grit landscape.

Ghylls and Dikes

The water captured and stored by the millstone grit finds its way off the 'plateau' to the rivers in the Dales below via dikes, ghylls and a network of swiftly flowing becks. The becks emanate from springs or water soak areas, and then join together in larger watercourses that have cut deep, narrow



© darren sanderson photography

ghylls through the rock at the edge of the plateau. The sides of the ghylls are mostly wooded, some ancient²⁶, and in times past were the location for the water powered corn and early textile mills. The lime-free water is ideal for textile processing, whilst the fast flow and plentiful supply, together with oak bark from the surrounding woods, is ideal for tanning.

Today the ghylls, dikes and becks are relatively hidden in the landscape or culverted under development. However, they have strong ecosystem service potential via improved sustainable urban drainage systems (SuDS), and ecological corridors. The main ghylls and dikes are

- **Ellar Ghyll** takes Mire Beck off the Plateau to the Wharfe; has a wealth of industrial archaeology.
- **Slack Dike** – channels water from Beacon Hill to Mire Beck via Chevin End and was used as a medieval boundary.
- **Matthew Dike** – this unusual feature channels water from Reva Hill to Mire Beck above High Royds and was used as a medieval boundary called Black Sike.
- **Hawksworth Gill** – takes Gill Beck and Jum Beck from Hawksworth Moor to the Aire, and still has ancient woodland.
- **Guiseley Beck Ghyll (picture)** takes the Beck to the Aire and was a well known walking route of beauty from Airedale to the Chevin or Rombalds Moor. Used by the Nuns of Esholt Priory to get to church it is possible that St Oswald's church was sited to look down the ghyll from its promontory site. The Victorian railway followed the route of the Ghyll as the optimum gradient to climb the steep incline to Guiseley from the Aire.
- **Yeadon Gill** – takes Gill Beck to the Aire, and links Low Hall and the Esholt Estate. Has some industrial archaeology that is in a poor state.
- **Moseley Beck** – flowing in a valley to the Aire on the eastern side of Yeadon Moor. The surrounding ancient woodland belonged to Kirkstall Abbey, whilst the beck was ideal for 19th century bleach mills. The beck frequently floods the nearby Bramhope Railway Tunnel.

²⁶ Ancient woods are a remnant of primordial woodland. The definition is given to woodland that has been in existence continuously since AD 1600.

Types of Hydrology

Aireborough's hydrology gives rise to its diverse woodland, wetland and grassland habitats. Becks also literally define Aireborough as boundary markers. Calfhole Beck was the Boundary of the Liberty of the Archbishop of York, from the 10th to the 19th century. Two of the most notable Aireborough water features are the natural Yeadon Tarn or Dam on Yeadon Moor and the man-made Reva Dam on Hawksworth Moor. The Tarn has historically been a key place for recreation and holiday makers and is a habitat for breeding birds. Reva Dam is one of a number of reservoirs built in the late 19th century to solve the issue of poor water supply predominantly to Yeadon. Other water features include, High Royds Pond, Nunroyd Lake, Guiseley Rectory Moat, Engine Fields Mill Pond, and the remains of many small reservoirs, mill ponds and dams.

Woodland Heritage Timeline

Aireborough has a timeline of woodland types as identified in the West Yorkshire Heritage Landscape Characterisation Report (HLC). Woodland first started to appear post glacial retreat as the climate warmed – alder in the wetter areas, oak, elm and lime on the slopes, and copses of oak, hazel and birch on the hill tops. The trees on the hill tops later turned to peat²⁷, giving a valuable resource for fuel and building²⁸. Woodland clearance began from the Mesolithic period and has occurred for different purposes down the centuries leaving a valuable heritage.

Ancient Woodland	Mesolithic clearances were for hunting; Neolithic, for farming; woodland not cleared remains in areas with poorest soils, mostly ghylls eg Hawksworth Woods.
Wet Woodland	Some of the poor soil conditions are due to flooding or very wet conditions, so ancient woods remain with relevant woodland indicators, and signs of woodland management in places such as eg Diepkier
Semi-Natural Woodland	Naturally regenerated woodland that was subsequently managed. Such woods have distinctive boundaries of blackthorn, hazel and hawthorn, woodland indicators, banks and ditches eg the remains of Royd Wood on the Chevin Slopes.
Woodland Management	In the Medieval period trees were used for enclosure in pastoral areas, and as a building resource; these were managed via techniques such as coppicing and stubbing. Holly was used as a cattle feed in winter. There are many remains of managed hedges and trees, including veteran trees all around Aireborough eg High Royds, Chevin Slopes.
Designed Landscape	In the 18 th century landscapes were increasingly designed by the wealthy estate owners using woodland planting. Examples are at Parkgate, Guiseley, Spring Wood, and on the Chevin Slopes.
Enclosure and Estate Plantations	Following parliamentary enclosure plantations and stands of trees were newly planted for timber supplies, for use as a windbreak or as a fox or pheasant covert. Examples -The Elephant Trees, or Yorkgate Plantation.
Commemorative Woodland	From the 19 th century it became a cultural 'habit' to plant trees to commemorate important national events; Aireborough has many examples eg Victoria Avenue, Parkinson's Park Guiseley, Freya's Spinney at Upcroft..

²⁷ About 7,000 years ago, as the climate cooled.

²⁸ The name Sodhall in the south of Guiseley likely refers to building(s) made of turves instead of timber; one of which is identified on a late 18th century map.

5. HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER, CULTURAL ASSOCIATIONS AND TRAJECTORY OF CHANGE

All landscapes change more than people imagine; natural forces play a part but human interaction with the landscape is a significant factor – from the use of resources to the way land is carved up for ownership and administration. Aireborough's landscape has been influenced by its culture for centuries; the story of its past can be unpicked in its landscape features giving a distinctive character and sense of place. Since the late nineteenth century the scale and pace of change has grown as a consequence of urbanisation and industrialisation. This has turned a culturally rural area into a semi-urban one on the urban fringe, and great care is called for in future planning if these distinctions of character are to be safeguarded in addition to ecosystem services' such as agriculture and flood mitigation. Land on the fringe can be assigned to rural or urban purpose and there is a value and opportunity cost to each that must be examined.

The West Yorkshire Historic Landscape Characterisation Report (2017)²⁹ was a baseline for this section, together with field landscape survey work done in 2016, and original research of the

historic record.

Prehistory to Roman Period

Aireborough sits in landscape shaped by glacial forces which left rich natural resources for settlement. Settlement probably began with Mesolithic hunter-gathers, as evidenced by several ancient long-distance tracks and flint shards on the Chevin. Later Neolithic farmers left a scattering of artefacts such as a Langdale stone axe and funeral urns, whilst their stone stoops such as the Bull Stone



(picture) are still in situ on the less disturbed hilltops of the Chevin, Yeadon Haw and Hawksworth Moor.

In the Roman period the area around Aireborough saw tension between the Brigantes and Roman Army: Cuddy Hill may well have been an important defensive location still evidenced in local names. Crossing the Chevin is Roman Road 72b from Tadcaster to Ilkley which was likely built using local labour and quarried stone from Ellar Ghyll: maps show a milestone stood at Carlton crossroads. Kelcliffe has signs of Romano-British settlement determined from geophysical surveys and the lie of stone walls, banks (picture) and ditches marking out fields and tracks. This is in line



²⁹ http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archives/view/west_yorkshire_hlc_2017/overview.cfm

with other historic evidence suggesting there was significant change in the local landscape from the Iron Age. The Leeds Character Assessment³⁰ suggests that at this time land was divided into farmsteads about half a mile apart, with ditched trackways between enclosed field systems, leading to woodland and open pasture. Certain of the springs in Aireborough, such as Guiseley Wells and St Helen's Well, may have had some significance for both pagans and early Roman Christians. Guiseley Wells sits at a symbolic topographic point, where the eastern facing Guiseley Moor, meets the western facing West Chevin Flank.³¹

Elmet and Anglo Scandinavian Period



After the Romans left Britain around AD 410, tribal kingdoms reasserted themselves. Aireborough was on the northern border of the British Kingdom of Elmet determined by the River Wharfe. It is likely a large area south of the Wharfe was reforested for protection. Elmet, remained Christian, staying independent from pagan Anglo Saxon encroachment until AD 627 when it was annexed by the newly baptised King Edwin of Northumbria.

Around AD 678 Bishop Wilfred of York was given 'consecrated' lands in the region of Ingaedyne (Yeadon). The Archbishop of York's Ingaedyne 'estate' focused on Otley, was then organized in the 8th century into vills or hamlets around a green, such as Guiseley and Hawksworth. Large areas were carefully planned near settlements to take advantage of the resources - different types of woodland, grassland and wetlands - and given placenames. Agricultural innovations such as open fields and new ploughing techniques that left backward S shaped boundaries such as Crooked Lands in Guiseley's Parkinson's Park ([picture](#)), altered the landscape. The estate focussed on cattle farming and processing with leatherwork and woodland management important trades.

Life changed again in AD 876 when the Vikings conquered York, sharing out the Kingdom of Northumbria. For a century Aireborough was under Scandinavian rule which also left a mark in placenames eg 'Gate' as a road name ([picture](#)), and administrative boundaries that frequently used landscape features.



³⁰ 1994 page 4

³¹ See Units 8 and 9 in Fig 14, page 31



In AD 954 Northumbria became part of England. It is likely that it was at this time, between the 10th and 11th century, that St Oswald Church was founded on the site of a 9th century preaching crosses³² near an ancient baptismal spring (Guiseley Wells) and dedicated to its Northumbrian cult saint who was popular with the Earls of Northumbria for helping to bring 'authority'. The style of the stone preaching crosses was designed to stand out in the landscape, and is particular to this part of Northern England. They were highly painted and mixed Anglo Saxon patterns with Scandinavian figurative work. It is also likely that the large Parish of Guiseley, which included land not belonging to the Archbishop of York in Yeadon, Rawdon and Horsforth, had its beginnings in this period. [\(picture of cross in St Oswald's Church\)](#)

High Medieval Period

The Domesday Book records the downturn in fortune suffered by Aireborough after 1066, like much of the North. The Archbishop of York held on to Guiseley and Hawksworth; however Yeadon's two manors were allocated to Normans. Economic revival depended on the Lord of the Manor and how he used resources. Guiseley was likely replanned as a linear village along Town Street in the late 11th century, to service a cattle vaccary on the rich meadow and woodland from Calf Hole Wood to Ox Close; a deer park probably lay on the slopes of Hollins Hill above West Esholt³³. [\(picture of Guiseley mediaeval tofts and crofts looking towards the vaccary fields\)](#)

Upper Yeadon, Carlton and Hawksworth exploited woodland and stone from Yeadon Haw and the Odda - Yeadon also developed an early textile industry. Nether Yeadon and Guiseley Beck Ghyll near New Scarborough had water-powered corn mills to bring in manorial income Monasteries played an important role in the 12th century



© darren sanderson photography

Renaissance bringing learning and technical innovation; the Cistercian Nunnery of Esholt was founded around 1170 and allocated land in Nether Yeadon, Dibb and Guiseley.

³² Now in St Oswald's Church

³³ Remembered in field names such as Launds, and indications of a medieval palisade fence.

The carving up of the landscape between different owners and widespread resources meant



that Aireborough's settlement was dispersed in villages, hamlets and farms – setting the basic settlement pattern for today. This dispersal is reflected in, local surnames eg Overend. In such a landscape, boundary markers ([picture on Hawksworth Moor](#)) were crucial, with becks, ancient stoops and carved stones such as White Cross all being used. Residents 'beat the bounds' so they knew the limits of their common rights for pasture, turves and bracken.

Gradually, the population grew, requiring more land to be brought into use through drainage of the wetlands such as Tran Mire Beck and clearances for woodland pasture called Royds. Manor courts organized village labour and land usage whilst from the 1200's a surplus of produce was taken to new markets of which Otley was key, requiring tracks over the Chevin for animals and vehicles. The beginning of the 1300's saw incursions by Scottish Raiders across the Wharfe requiring hilltop lookouts remembered in names such as Whack house, and defensive buildings such as Guiseley church tower. Dean Grange was destroyed in one such raid in 1319.

Early Modern Period

The Black Death of 1348 triggered a chain of events that eventually gave ordinary people more economic power and sense of individual achievement. As feudal bonds relaxed in the 15th century and the Reformation brought land ownership change in the 16th century, strip holdings in common fields and pasture were swapped, sub-divided, and eventually enclosed by agreement to make individual plots where yields could be raised to fight famine. This agricultural change brought a patchwork look to the landscape ([picture across Nether Yeadon much of it owned by Esholt Priory before the Reformation](#)); it



- fossilised medieval curved strips into new stone walls on the lower slope,
- brought a network of closes named after their holder,
- saw land on the edge of the common enclosed as large intake fields,
- required more footpaths and stiles
- Needed tracks with wide herbage for animal movement.

By the 17th century a Yeoman class had emerged, wealthy enough to rebuild their timber framed houses in stone eg Low Hall. Those with small-holdings built laithe houses, with a barn at one end for animals ([picture Intake Farm](#)). Post Reformation the demise of the monasteries meant more social care fell to the manor courts and parishes thus began the development of new buildings such as schools and meeting houses for non-conformist religions such as the Quakers. Slowly, the medieval Priory buildings disappeared, their stones repurposed in new houses – a fate that also befell some ancient stone stoops from the hills³⁴



The division of land for productivity meant those with less took up trades in textiles, tanning, woodland management and quarrying, altering the configuration of settlements; Kelcliffe, for example, became a tannery, with pits and tenements, its landscape ideal for such a use. A new cart track was then made up from an old riding sty from Guiseley to Kelcliffe around 1708.

The Age of Revolutions

As science and trade grew in the 18th century, experimentation in new root crops and new industrial techniques led to regional specialisation. Aireborough specialised in a mix of pastoral farming eg cattle, horses and sheep, woodland management, worsted textiles, and quarrying.

Poor economic conditions at the start of the century led to the Manor of Guiseley being sold to



its tenants in 1719. But, by 1750 land was increasing in value and being accumulated back into larger, more economic ring-fenced farms or Gentlemen's estates eg Parkgate and the Carlton Estate, often by non-locals. These estates beautified the landscape in line with the prevailing Romantic Movement epitomised by Lancelot Capability Brown, using tree plantations, meandering carriage drives, old stone features and water –

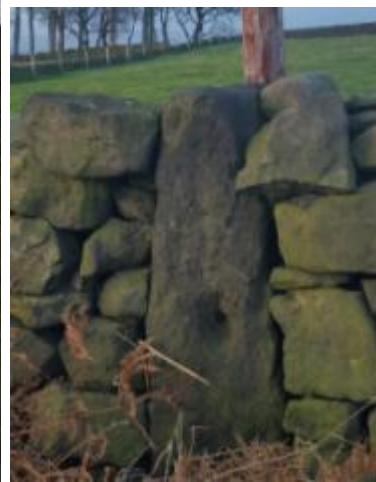
aspects still visible in areas around Parkgate, Esholt, Carlton, and Hawksworth. ([picture Park Gate park from Park Ghyll](#))

³⁴ one large stoop was removed from the Chevin ridge for a new house in Carlton.

By the start of the 19th century all the township's commons, mostly situated on the Chevin, had been enclosed via a parliamentary act. This led to a more organized and 'regimented' moorland landscape. Arable farming shifted to higher ground in regular, rectangular fields, enclosed by

regulation height stone walls, and bisected with straight occupation lanes and new roads eg Windmill Lane. Enclosure also saw the straightening of lanes with animal herbage into prescribed widths and paved. Slivers of land at the lane-sides, previously used for the

herbage, were sold off and developed.
(pictures of Guiseley Moor enclosure walls, allotment boundary stone and track)



All of this aided an early 19th century development boom as industry gathered pace. The cottage textile industry clubbed together in co-operative movements to improve workspaces and output, and terraces appeared on lane edges eg Back Lane and Kirk Lane. Larger clothier³⁵ houses popped up on settlement edges eg New Dykes, Guiseley. Meanwhile new mills took advantage of transport improvements in turnpikes, canals and railways, as well as new sources of power from horsemills and steam using diverted becks. The mills were often built in the open landscape eg Kirk Lane and were frequently a source of air and water pollution, turning the landscape black. Industry drew in new workers which led to sturdy terraces springing up next to factories; whilst successful men found new space with beautiful views (and less pollution) for large villas with designed gardens such as Yeadon's Rufford Park and Rawdon's Cragg Wood. (picture turnpike stone at White Cross on the A65 with High Royds fields behind)



³⁵ Clothiers organized the 'putting out' of weaving & took the finished cloth to market in Leeds/Bradford

By the mid-19th century Aireborough was an emerging manufacturing district changing in character from the rural to the semi-urban in some places. There were new civic facilities such as town halls, mechanics institutes, recreation grounds and Methodist chapels, along with



utilities for sanitation, water and street lights. Culturally, home, work and leisure continued in close proximity to each other, a situation that lasted until the late 20th century. In the 1880's High Royds was chosen as the site for a new West Riding Pauper Lunatic Asylum owing to its feeling of sanctuary in an area with good links to Leeds and Bradford. The hospital was self-sufficient, from its capture and use of water to its railway spur, farm, workshops and designed gardens, on what had once been Menston Common. ([picture of the sublime High Royds Reservoir at Matthew Gill](#))

Modern Aireborough Emerges

The Edwardians continued the move from rural to semi-urban with stylish, middle-class,

terraces on new streets eg Oxford Road, mixed with business ventures and recreation facilities, such as sportsfields and pleasure parks eg Nunroyd Park. Meanwhile, places like Yeadon Tarn ([picture](#)), Chevin Top, and Hawksworth Moor became favourite, accessible, leisure



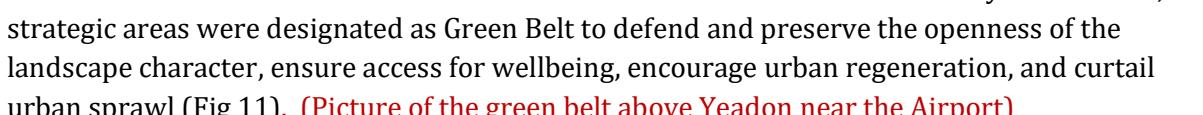
attractions for city visitors seeking fresh air and beauty.

The experiences of the First World War emphasised the need to also improve the lot of working families. This was enabled by different early 20th century schemes³⁶ to build better houses featuring allotments or influenced by the Garden City movement, who saw the growing need to balance town and country. The dispersed nature of Aireborough was ideal for this aim: many fields and parts of large estates such as Tranmere Park and Shaw Lane Gardens, were sold off for housing schemes – fossilising the older rural landscape in the emerging urban ones. The scale of development also brought debate about the amount of open land for recreation; new ‘green’ areas were established under the National Playing Fields Association, for example Shaw Lane Recreation Ground, and by private companies such as F & A Parkinson Ltd.



Fig 11 - OS Maps of Aireborough comparing 1847 with 2003 and showing need to control urban sprawl

The Second World War saw local business bent to the war effort and the growth of Yeadon aerodrome. The population explosion of the 1950's meant new housing was required for local people and Aireborough Urban District Council undertook slum clearances of the gritstone houses, developing new estates in concrete and brick along old tracks eg Queensway along what had been Long Causeway. Meanwhile, strategic areas were designated as Green Belt to defend and preserve the openness of the landscape character, ensure access for wellbeing, encourage urban regeneration, and curtail urban sprawl (Fig 11). (Picture of the green belt above Yeadon near the Airport)



³⁶ For example a)Smallholdings and Allotments Act 1908. b)Land Settlement Act 1919

As manufacturing declined at the end of the 20th century, work moved to the cities and commuting grew meaning a separation of home and work that brought cultural change. Gradually the great mills were replaced, firstly by retail, and then ubiquitous suburban housing often in material 'foreign' to the locality. This has created pressure that impacts on character, also how the settlement sits in the landscape and is experienced by people living, working and visiting Aireborough.

There are concerns with transport networks and infrastructure, along with issues over green infrastructure and farming /small holding on the urban fringe – these have not yet been solved. On the positive side, there have also been moves, often driven and/or worked on by local residents to

- create conservation areas,
- improve community green space, and footpaths for ecological habitats and recreation eg Engine Fields, Yeadon Tarn, Parkinson's Park.
- develop Yorkshire Water's holdings for ecology and recreation
- carry out improvements hand in hand with a 'celebration' of their historic cultural character eg a geology trail on the Chevin, demonstrating the importance of this aspect of landscape to local people.

These ecosystem services are explored later, as there is a lot more that could be improved through the Neighbourhood Plan and other Leeds Strategies than are currently being actively considered in the Leeds and Bradford Local Plans up to 2028 and 2030 respectively.



The one feature of Aireborough that has not changed over time is that residents "*tiring of the workaday world need only lift their eyes up to the hills – countryside and scenery is just as close as that*".
(Source – AUDC, Aireborough at Work and Play, 1955)

Picture of a summer sunset behind Rombalds Moor from Yeadon Banks

6. THE BIG SURVEY

Methodology

In the spirit of the community compiling its own Neighbourhood Plan, the decision was made to engage volunteers from the resident and working community of Aireborough to conduct a thorough landscape character and value survey. A training workshop took place during which Tom Lonsdale instructed just over 20 volunteers in how to look at the landscape in a more analytical way than they are used to in their daily lives. A survey template was designed (see Appendix) and guidance was given in what features and characteristics people were to look for and mark down. Participants were also asked to photograph all their observations, and there is now a central record of these. Volunteers were asked to work in pairs and debate observations between them in order to optimise objectivity. For the same reason, they were also asked to survey areas other than their immediate home environment. The Aireborough area was subdivided into manageable sectors according to initial research as shown in the map at Fig 12. The survey was conducted during March and April 2016.

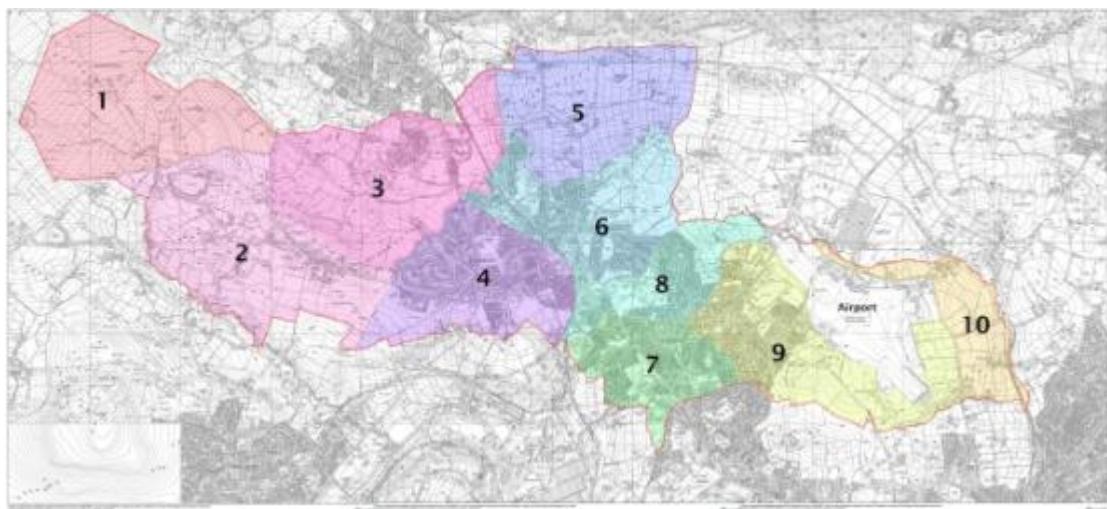


Fig 12 - Showing areas designated for the landscape value survey

1 Hawksworth Moor	6 Old Guiseley
2 Hawksworth Ridge	7 Nether Yeadon
3 High Royds	8 Post WW2 Infill
4 Guiseley Infill	9 Upper Yeadon
5 Guiseley Moor	10 Yeadon Moor

7. LANDSCAPE VALUE AND ECOSYSTEM SERVICES

The Big Survey and various consultations with the community have generated evidence of the value of the Aireborough landscape and urban green spaces, not least the level of attachment felt by its citizens. There is concern regarding the consequence of narrowing the open space between dense urban development and the truly rural countryside of the Pennine uplands and the Yorkshire Dales. This concern is shared by the Summary of the NCA 38 profile which states “*A key challenge will be to improve links between this NCA and others in order to get a better understanding of the delivery of ecosystem services and how they can be improved.*”

Any such narrowing will increase the pressure on surrounding open space to fulfil necessary ecosystem services³⁷. Ecosystem services are the benefits provided by the natural realm to humans, from a sense of wellbeing and inspiration (cultural), to resources (provisioning), and the mitigation of harmful activities and encouragement of healthy systems (regulating)³⁸. Many of the ecosystem services provided by the landscape were identified in the survey. With this information it is now possible to evaluate each of the landscape units (section 8) for their natural capital and value. Such fine grained enhancement options are what a Neighbourhood Plan should be aiming to do, so as to beneficially extend green infrastructure.

Cultural Ecosystem Services ³⁹

- **Provision of a setting for settlement** – humans have ‘topophilia’ they are attached to favourite places that have meaning and memory. Such places are given names and are frequently close to home eg The Elephant Trees is a recent name given to the copse on Whale Jaws Hill. Attachment serves to encourage environmentally responsible behaviour through self-identity – this is evidenced in the growing number of ‘Groups’ stepping forward to help look after the environment and local green spaces.
- **An agent for defining culture and local character.** Green common areas encourage social bonding between neighbours. As development has increased the population of Aireborough outdoor events such as walks and festivals and the restoration of galas and other old traditions are being organized, as a way of helping to integrate newcomers into the community and create community cohesion.
- **Support and inspiration for education and skills.** Many people cite their childhood experiences in nature as the foundations for their work. Businesses in Aireborough report that location is a key factor for them, particularly those in industries such as training, marketing, and professional services where ideas and innovation are crucial. Aireborough has also produced many international sportspeople and entertainers.
- **A store of antiquity for education and wellbeing.** There is widespread interest in the history of Aireborough that manifests in organizations, social media and events. Consequently, there is annoyance at the destruction of historic buildings, the slow ‘rotting away’ of cultural centres such as the Theatres, and the use of nomenclature in

³⁷ In accordance with EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020 and NPPF109

³⁸ Wentworth Jonathan, *Urban Green Infrastructure and Ecosystem Services*. 2017, Houses of Parliament

³⁹ Wolf, K.L., S. Krueger, and K. Flora. 2014. *Place Attachment and Meaning - A Literature Review*. In: *Green Cities: Good Health*. College of the Environment, University of Washington.

new development street names eg Branwell Road, Cartwright Avenue, and Edison Fields that have nothing to do with the area. All are examples of what residents consider to be 'cultural vandalism' wrought on the place and its landscape.

- **A resource for recreation, health (physical, mental) and wellbeing.** The benefits of landscape and green infrastructures to human health are promoted in LCC's Public Health Annual Report 2014-2015, '*Planning a Healthy City, Housing Growth in Leeds*', by Dr Ian Cameron. There are particular benefits for older populations such as Aireborough's..⁴⁰
- **Leeds Bradford Airport as a gateway to Yorkshire for a visitor economy.** The Airport's relevance is increasing, especially with the growth of Leeds, Harrogate and Bradford for international events such as the Tour de Yorkshire, and the appeal of the South Pennines and Dales as tourist destinations.

Provisioning Ecosystem Services

- **A resource for agricultural food production animal and vegetable.** This can only be achieved where there are economies of scale and a support network. Aireborough still has a number of working farms, but these are threatened with the speculative sale of fields.
- **Provision of land for community food growing.** This covers both allotments and community foraging as encouraged by groups such as Incredible Edible Aireborough. Community food also provides cultural benefits in health and social wellbeing.
- **A resource for water collection/storage.** The millstone grit geology of Aireborough collects and stores water, which then flows into both the Aire and the Wharfe.
- **A source of raw materials e.g. stone, wood, clay.** Traditionally the area has resources in stone and wood. There are still working quarries and potential for more woodland.
- **Part of the urban-rural economy, providing jobs and income.** From research⁴¹ we have found that the Aireborough landscape is an attraction to small to medium sized businesses, and a haven for micro-businesses, given the demographics of the population.

Regulating Ecosystem Services

- **Provides a link in habitat networks between Wharfedale and Airedale.** Both the Wharfe and the Aire are wildlife corridors; Aireborough's becks and landscape are a link between the two and thus need to be improved.
- **Habitat with potential for even greater biodiversity.**⁴² The traditional rural land usage for meadow, wetlands, woodland and wood pasture, as well as some of the acid grasslands, makes it an ideal location to restore and improve habitats on the urban fringe. Small projects have already been started and areas identified to strengthen local

⁴⁰ Wentworth, *Urban Green Infrastructure*. Page 2 and 3

⁴¹ Both done by ANDF and Leeds City Council Employment Research in the area.

⁴² ANDF, Ecology Survey, 2016

ecological corridors (section 11). Conversely, continued urbanisation of an area is a cause of loss degradation and fragmentation of habitats.⁴³

- **Meadows for improvements to pollination .** Aireborough has numerous opportunities to enhance the floristic diversity to benefit pollinators such as bees, sawflies, flies and beetles⁴⁴
- **Woodland for use in climate adaptation.** See above
- **Space to mitigate the risk of flooding.** Aireborough is a water catchment area for both the Aire and the Wharfe. The groundwater levels in the area are underestimated by a factor of 10 in Department of Environment Models.⁴⁵ Additionally, much of Aireborough's ground water flows into pre 1940 pipes combined sewer, risking contamination in public streets and land – as has already happened. Green spaces and parks have been found to counteract hard surface runoff, so should play a key role in increased use of SuDS.

It has been found that urban ecosystem services are particularly valuable in urban fringe areas such as Aireborough⁴⁶. This is supported by the Statements of Environment Opportunity in NCA 36 and 38 (see appendix). Examples of some of the key issues in Aireborough are:

- a) A classic feature of the urban fringe, clearly evident in the fields around Aireborough, is the grazing and stabling of horses. Whilst not especially beneficial to soil and vegetation this is a land use that will continue to move outwards as settlement expands, displacing traditional agriculture as it goes. The presence of protected moorland close by gives traditional agriculture nowhere to go, so there is a risk that it closes down altogether with substantial impact on the character of the landscape setting.
- b) Recreational use of the countryside is a key indicator of condition and value⁴⁷. At present the green margins of Aireborough afford exceptional diversity of experience for residents who venture out: leafy greenways and field footpaths thread through the undulating landscape and connect in a short distance with open moorland. Both the Baseline Report (section 5.2) and Urban Character report (page 84) suggest establishing an Aireborough Green Route. However, expansion of the built settlement will erode that diversity of experience, bringing buildings ever nearer to the moorland edge and putting pressure on fragile landscapes and habitat from sheer weight of numbers – this is already happening in places like Chevin Forest Park and Tarnfield Park.

⁴³ Wentworth, *Urban Green Infrastructure*, page 4

⁴⁴ ANDF, *Ecology Survey*, 2017

⁴⁵ Rhodes David, Presentation in Kirklands Menston, April 2016

⁴⁶ Wentworth, *Urban Green Infrastructure*. Page 4

⁴⁷ Wentworth, *Urban Green Infrastructure*. Page 9

8. ANALYSIS OF LANDSCAPE CHARACTER UNITS

The survey has taken a fine-grain approach to identifying local variations in **landscape character type**, including distinctions of management, usage, and drainage that start indicating natural capital and potential ecosystem services. These distinctions have translated into detailed recommendations for action and policy, which are outlined in section 12, but a synthesis of the findings reveals an extremely interesting map of **landscape character 'units'** of richer diversity, and thus value, than the base LA landscape units. As an example, the area identified as MGP3 Guiseley Plateau in the Leeds Landscape Assessment can now be seen clearly to comprise several discernibly distinct units. This new map is illustrated at Fig 13 together with a commentary on the characteristics of each unit.

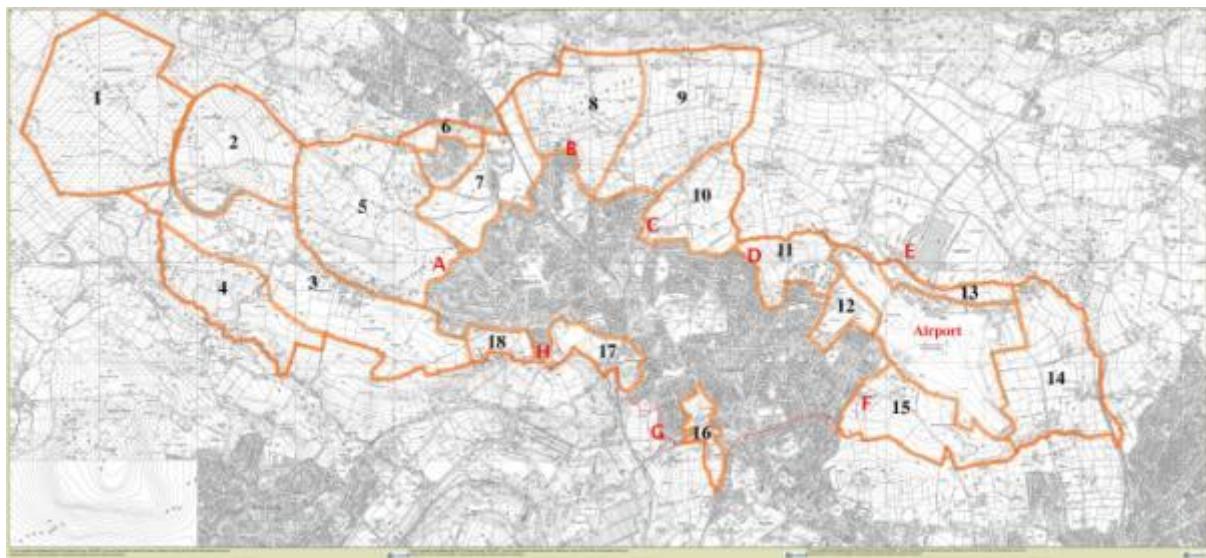


Fig 13 - Aireborough Landscape Units and Tension Points.

1. **Hawthorn Moor:** Open moorland sweeping up onto Rombalds Moor, affording extensive views. Semi-natural, much of it is traditionally managed as grouse moor with significant habitat for ground-nesting birds. The ground is very wet and boggy, acting as source catchment for a network of becks that flow eventually into both the Aire and Wharfe; also exploited for water storage and management. Prehistoric stone artefacts are a notable feature along with a circle of stone boundary markers with the landowner's initials on. Horncliffe Well to the west also a notable feature for visitors.
2. **Reva Hill** is a pronounced landmark prominence, which initiates the ridge that sweeps eastward, over the Odda, to contain the southern side of Aireborough. On the north is the intriguing Matthew Dike. This unit comprises large areas of semi-improved intake grassland used for grazing, and includes areas of lumpy glacial moraine, giving part of Reva Hill and its flanks a discrete local character. The hill has a sense of



tranquillity and stands at the same height as Beacon Hill on the Chevin, one of the two 'caps' that dominate the Guiseley Gap. It is the location for the ancient Reva Cross ([picture](#)) as well as a 19th century rifle range. This unit also contains Reva reservoir used for both water management and sailing. Loss of farming will cause this area to fall into neglect.

3. **Hawksworth Slopes:** Gently sloping southwards, this is an extensive tract of undulating open grassland, with stone walls, small water bodies and mature trees, once Hawkworth's medieval open fields and later the Hall's parkland. Jum Beck flows through the west and Bradford Golf Course defines the east. Extensive views are afforded to the south and west but are contained to the north by the Odda and the picturesque linear Hawksworth village. The combined gravitas of the historic village, its woods and Hawksworth Hall permeate the character of these slopes which feel more remote from urban Guiseley than measurement would suggest. In the 20th century planning decisions were taken to deliberately retain Hawksworth as a 'rural' settlement, rather than semi-urban.
4. **Hawksworth Gill Valley:** Land begins to slope more steeply to the south and southwest with increased ancient broad-leaved tree cover dominated by oak on the higher ground and holly and alder on the wetter slopes. Introspective, tranquil character prevails, with short dramatic views. Gill Beck and ancient woodland dominate the internal atmosphere. The area contains the old Hawksworth Mill, now a converted development and an exclusive Leisure Caravan Park for the retired and semi-retired hidden in the valley.
5. **Upper High Royds:** Topped by the gorse-covered north side of the Odda, this is a tract of open and undulating moorland pasture with copses, hedges containing mature, managed trees and old dry stone wall features. The top of the Odda was a medieval rabbit warren, and also used extensively for quarrying on a small scale; one open quarry remains. It is edged abruptly by Tranmere Park on the southeast. There are extensive views north and east towards the Chevin. Public footpaths and bridleways enable access between surrounding settlements and moor. The ridge of the Odda obscures views to Hawksworth and more distant areas to the south and west. The amphitheatre landform acts as a gathering basin for Mire and Tranmire Beck, thus, management of the drainage is a major determining factor in the area's character. High Royds Hall is a vernacular building of some significance, as is High Royds' dramatic reservoir.
6. **Menston Buffer:** These spatially confined wet, grassy slopes, which have recently developed ponds fall eastward and serve to separate the settlements of Menston and High Royds. A significant and recently thickened estate tree belt on the northern boundary helps to give a rural character to what feels like the eastern limit of Menston, leaving the High Royds neighbourhood as an autonomous enclave in its own right. The area is used for casual recreation such as winter sledging.
7. **Guiseley Gap Wetlands:** Gradients fall more gently as this area approaches the floor of the glacial valley. Mire Beck twists through mature tree and scrub banks, collecting water from east and west, resulting in an area dominated by grassland and marsh on moderately fertile soil and alluvium. These are advantageous for beef cattle, breeding waders such as lapwings, snipes and curlews, and predatory owls and buzzards. On the eastern side are historic Ings which regularly hold surface flood water. Around Intake Farm there are signs of a water management system below long curved stone walls and managed holly hedgerows, probably used for animal husbandry. In the grounds near High Royds is an ancient dam which diverts water from Mire Beck to Tranmire Beck. Close by a holding pond is becoming increasingly important for wildlife including

pipistrelle bats and frogs. The area is cut by the A65 at White Cross, creating a break from the built area in the approach from both Leeds and Bradford. This punctuation is where local people feel the urban finally gives way to the start of rural Wharfedale – the reason the Tram Shed and Harry Ramsden's are located there. It also mirrors the effect of the Menston buffer in respecting the autonomy of High Royds. Views are relatively short, owing to low-lying ground creating a basin effect, focusing attention down on the iconic High Royds clock tower. The area contains sporting facilities, graveyards and a railway, and is popular with birdwatchers.

8. **West Chevin Flank** This unit is the western part of the open, pastoral Chevin Slopes that form an imposing green backdrop to Aireborough; it has extensive and dramatic views west. Attractive, steep valley sides orientate mostly towards High Royds clock-tower, with views leaking to Wharfedale in the northwest, and Airedale in the southwest. The area is crossed by ancient long distance tracks and contains traces of ancient rural settlement, with a range of historic dry stone walls, banks and stoops. The soil is relatively deep and free draining and farming is still flourishing – cattle, pigs and geese, along with an expanding plant nursery. Whale Jaws Hill, with its enclosure plantation known as the 'Elephant Trees' copse, is a key feature that provides an emphatic cultural landmark, visible from miles around and immediately recognisable as marking the western edge of Guiseley. Another smaller but notable landmark at Chevin End is Windmill Hill with the narrow curve of Buckle Lane to the north. As much of the higher ground was Guiseley Common the straight roads of this unit were made during Parliamentary enclosure at the end of the 18th century, whilst the straight, regulation, enclosure walls contain stone from the Roman Road. On the lower slopes this unit links with Parkinson's Park.
9. **Guiseley Moor:** This area slopes south more gently than the steeper West Chevin Flank owing to the lie of the geology, and is wetter in parts, so is sufficiently different to be seen as a separate unit although unit 8 and 9 together display a potent unity, capped by Beacon Hill and the wooded Chevin ridge. The whole sweep of open landscape, right along to include Carlton Moor beyond the Guiseley boundary, is one of the most resounding features that define the Aireborough landscape, so local people refer to them collectively as the **Chevin Slopes**. Generally development sits at the foot of these slopes. Above Carlton Lane there is a band of fertile land used for arable fields since medieval times with a hamlet at Upcroft; these fields have sixteenth century enclosure walls which fossilised the older strip landscape. The rising ground, with small disused quarries, gives this lower area an enclosed feel helped by mature trees and woodland. Higher up, on the east of Guiseley Moor poorer soils caused by glacial till support marginal agricultural and equestrian activity, but the west is altogether dryer ground as reflected in the vegetation and larger farms; a large quarry still flourishing. On the high ground of the old Guiseley common, extensive water management accompanies a strong pattern of rectangular enclosure fields and regulation height stone walls. The area still has remnants of old stoops - to the east is the pre Roman Bull Stone - and traces of Roman Road 72b cross the area. On the ridge, more water management, a car park, footpaths, pub and a club for dry stone wallers, who improve the landscape with skilful demonstrations of their trade.
10. **Wills Gill:** Topographically, this area is an extension of Guiseley Moor but it is separated spatially by Carlton Lane and a heavy tree belt northwest of the road and around Upcroft. What makes this attractive, green, pastoral area different is the undulating deposits of glacial moraine and wetter ground. This beck-littered landscape, with its moorland birds, sky larks, hares and foxes, contains remnants of trees and plant species that are strong indicators of the managed wood pasture/meadow/woodland landscape of the past eg Opposite-Leaved Golden-Saxifrage *Chrysosplenium*

oppositifolium, Pignut *Conopodium majus* and Dog's Mercury *Mercurialis perennis*, with the ancient Deipkier and Calf Hole Woods an important feature and local nature area. The unit has strong habitat enhancement potential and Calfhole Beck has been identified as an important ecological corridor. In the 19th century the area was part of the great Carlton Estate a designed landscape that still gives a sense of unity. In the 20th century, the meadow around Wills Gill beck engendered deep memories for children of an idyllic, flower rich, gathering place for picnics and exploration – today this needs restoration. The open land, crossed by stone walls and hedges sweeps up onto Carlton Moor and right down to Queensway, affording the strongest possible link between the whole of Aireborough's built area and true countryside. Tenuous but valuable green links exist between this open countryside and urban green spaces within the built area.

11. **Yeadon Banks and Haw:** Steeply sloping banks, with sublime views west, rise to the relatively flat top of the Haw that ends Aireborough's semi-circle of enclosing rough rock summits. An area visible from many vantage points in Aireborough, recent development has encroached unsympathetically onto the slopes. Marginal farming includes equestrian uses but since 2012 a large part of the area has been designated as a village green for recreational use. Grasses dominate where horses graze but the wilder areas are reported to be rich in regenerating flora, trees and insect life – buzzard and red kites regularly fly and nest in the area. This unit has a number of 'ancient' features, on its freer draining soils, including pre-Roman artefacts, medieval strip fields and an old pack horse trail that crosses the Banks on its way to Otley from the Aire; another old track encircles the Haw. Yeadon cemetery sustains a green crown to the Haw and is a favourite place for plane spotting along the airport runway. Yeadon likely means the water on the hill and this unit together with 12 contains the two defining natural features of the township -
12. **Yeadon Tarn:** This is now the much visited and loved area of public open space called Tarnfield Park surrounding Yeadon 'Tarn'. More or less adjacent is Yeadon's Victorian cricket field, on what used to be called Town End Dub. The Tarn or Dam is a shallow natural body of water lying in clay lined hollow in the rock and used for water recreation sports and pastimes; it is also an ideal place for numerous breeding waterfowl. The area has a moorland wetland habitat which is being managed, but it is ecologically isolated. The popularity of the Park makes the balance of recreation and ecology difficult. Trees are primarily in hedgerows or plantations on the edge of the area. The adjacent Airport runway introduces regular noise intrusion but height gives a welcome sense of openness and connection to countryside beyond. This and the area where Leeds Bradford Airport stands was once fiercely disputed commons for Yeadon, Carlton, Horsforth and Rawdon with ancient stone stoops as boundary markers. It has always been a rural 'industrial quarter' including an ancient bloomery, medieval enclosure and early 17th century rabbit warren (now under a runway) and the famous Avro Factory to the north of unit 13.
13. **Carlton Moor:** A vagary of the boundaries means that a narrow strip of Aireborough land abuts the Airport's northern edge. Land uses supporting various Airport-related functions suppress any sense of connection between the Aireborough community and the much more open countryside to the north.

The Airport: This is a crucial component of the Aireborough landscape but it is strictly out of bounds for the community, so it has not been assessed in the way that other parts have. Its position on the ridge between Yeadon and Cookridge even means that it is not clearly overlooked from within the Aireborough area except from high on Beacon Hill but its influence is felt strongly both in terms of the air traffic, landing paraphernalia and

the road traffic serving it. The flight path over units 9 and 10 is especially noticeable and disturbs what are otherwise tranquil units.

14. **Moseley Vale:** An area of leafy, tranquil, farmland and grassland for stables stretches from Carlton Beck at Moor Side in the north to Scotland in the south. The Airport to the west occupies the high ground, effectively shutting out awareness of Yeadon. Rather, the gentle gradient to the east over Moseley Beck relates this area spatially more closely to Cookridge, as does the geology. Whilst not impacting strongly on the lives of residents in the heart of Aireborough there are important heritage issues relating to this area, with Dean Grange Farm a medieval manor outpost from Kirkstall abbey being dominant; in addition to the dramatic Bramhope tunnel on the eastern edge. Field patterns are early medieval, and nomenclature indicates the importance for woodland management and tanning. The remnants of bleaching mills, which used the fast running water, are also an important feature. Moseley Beck is also important in terms of hydrology and habitat network, with very wet land tipping towards it.

15. **Plane Tree Hill:** This undulating area was once part of Rawdon Common and belongs to the same outcrop of the Yorkshire Coalfield as Rawdon Billing, whose more prominent, tree-covered top rises behind. The steep gradient to the west of Plane Tree Hill affords dramatic views west and holds the edge of Yeadon, which rapidly disappears from view and consciousness as the viewer move eastward along Bayton Lane. The unit's character is otherwise dominated by Horsforth Golf Course and is used for plane spotting, recreation and cattle farming on its more freely draining soils.



The profile of hills from Hawksworth down to the lower parts of Guiseley at Spring Wood.
Taken from Plan Trees Hill near Leeds Bradford Airport.

16. **Nether Yeadon Gill:** This is an area of dispersed farmsteads of intimate scale and enclosure with Yeadon Gill Beck cutting through the area down to Esholt Woods and the River Aire, giving a strong sense of connection to the Aire valley. Old texts give an

indication that the undeveloped landscape rose from the Aire to Yeadon Haw, with the settlements of Nether Yeadon and Henshaw part way up the slope. The uplifting, wooded landscape of mature trees dominated by oak and ash, embraces Low Hall and the settlement of Nether Yeadon gathered around its medieval green. This feel changes dramatically to the south of Warm Lane where a change in geology means that unexpected and extensive views open up over woods down to Aire valley floor. The area was traditionally linked to Esholt Priory, as evident in the character of the curved lanes that lead in that direction. This unit represents a significant, rare, and timeless break in the built area on the south side of the A65, and helps to divide Yeadon from Rawdon, making the built up area feel less oppressive. This openness has already been partially eroded by development. The area is still used for farming, but this is under threat. The land down the hill to Esholt belongs to Yorkshire Water, who are looking at developing recreational uses.

17. **Coach Road & Guiseley Beck Ghyll** - A relatively secluded and introspective area where the woodlands are noted for bluebells and encompass the Victorian Esholt Estate pleasure drives and the tree-studded landscape of the Georgian Park Gate estate: both probably belonged to an historic, possibly medieval, deer park. The mature tree-lined Park Gate landscape now comprises fields used for grazing and a stud farm; it had a high experiential score for beauty in the survey. Guiseley Beck falls through the attractive wooded sides of the Ghyll where it meets other descending becks as it flows towards the Aire valley. The historic cobbled Coach Road and the railway line junction connecting to Leeds and Bradford and Yeadon (now a Sustrans track) slice through the area, leaving the site of Guiseley Mills on Guiseley Beck in a forlorn, isolated no-man's-land. To the east is New Scarborough Brickworks where a quarry has hollowed out the sandstone and shale of 'Bell Mont' – a site now designated as a geological SSSI - the type locality of Yeadonian shale. Opposite the Brickworks the grassland has been influenced by the presence of the factory and supports species largely unknown in the rest of Aireborough, such as marsh orchid (*Dactylorhiza fuchsiae*), eyebright (*Euphrasia* sp.) and marsh spike-rush (*Eleocharis palustris*). Of all the Aireborough landscape units this is one most threatened and in need of restoration to reinstate its beauty and ecosystem services at a landscape level.
18. **Hollins Hill**: A very imposing area of open farmland straddles the summit of the Hawkstone ridge, affording a strong sense of arrival for anyone approaching Guiseley from Baildon along the A6038. Equally the view over the Aire from the top of Old Holling Hill as the traveller leaves the Guiseley Gap is quite simply stunning. Land falls away again to the north, so the openness contrasts vividly with the wooded climb up Hollins Hill and the built-up descent down Bradford Road to the north or Park Road to the east. The open land is still part of a working farm, but edged abruptly on its eastern boundary by the Hawkstone Avenue development – a hilltop development that destroys the integrity of the landscape. Hawksworth Lane is part of an ancient long distance track linking Guiseley and Hawksworth and has strong connection to this openness until interrupted by the Greenfield Avenue enclave around Hawksworth Common. Viewed from the Chevin slopes this open space enjoys a positive link with Odda and Reva Hill, establishing a green edge to Airborough similar to that on the north, but less emphatic and connected and much more endangered.

9. DEVELOPMENT 'TENSION POINTS'

The landscape character units reveal the important part played by topography and openness in shaping character. This is tested by the way that the built development has been assimilated into the landscape over time.

Ancient development tended to assume one of two main forms, namely, clusters around destinations or linear groupings along movement corridors. The township of Upper Yeadon typifies the former, old Guiseley and Hawksworth the latter. Before the 20th century both forms avoided the crests of ridges and hilltops with the exception of occasional properties where such a position was advantageous eg a lookout, or a windmill. Both nuclear and linear forms also established 'organic edges' where expansion intruded onto open land slowly over time and rarely in straight lines or large blocks. Overall, Aireborough's varied landscape and widespread resources led to a dispersed pattern of settlement with farmsteads, and hamlets that acted as 'landmark punctuation'. These were connected by sinuous lanes and footpaths that hugged the 'hilly', tree-clad, topography.

"There I made a comma, and there, where a more decided turn is proper, I made a colon, at another part where an interruption is desirable to break a view, a parenthesis, now a full stop."

Lancelot Capability Brown 1782, describing the principles of landscape design.

The use of natural stone as the principal building material from the 17th century, which has weathered to a soft, dark tone, contributed further to the landscape's capacity to assimilate development and contributed to a distinctive and pleasing overall character. Early 20th century housing schemes drew from the Garden City Movement and designed in green space that followed the flow of old field patterns or tracks. However, more recent development has begun to stray from these principles of siting, materials and design, setting up tensions in the relationship between the built-up areas and neighbouring open landscape. It is interesting to map these tension points (Fig 14) and to analyse the stresses in order to inform future design and planning, including in relation to the Statements of Environmental Opportunity (SEO) of the NCA 36 and 38 profiles see Table 1.

NCA Strategic Environmental Opportunities	
NCA36 SEO2	Manage and enhance the pastoral character of the moorland fringes , lower hills and valleys, with their mosaics of pastures and meadows, and their strong field patterns defined by dry stone walls, to improve ecological networks and strengthen landscape character.
NCA36 SEO3	Protect the comprehensive range of historic landscape features for their cultural value and the contribution they make to local distinctiveness and sense of identity.
NCA38 SEO1	Restore and enhance existing areas and create new landscapes through the inclusion of woodland and networks of green infrastructure to raise the overall quality of design and location of new developments. Regeneration and restoration of industrial sites should seek to create green infrastructure that links fragments of the natural environment, leading to a functioning network for wildlife and access and recreational amenities for people.
NCA38 SEO3	Conserve, enhance and expand areas and corridors of semi-natural habitat such as grasslands and woodlands to create a functioning ecological network that links the fragmented patches of habitats through urban and sustainably farmed environments, thus assisting species and habitat adaption to climate, reducing soil erosion and diffuse pollution.

Table 1 – National Character Areas – Strategic Environment Opportunities

Additionally, nature conservation is now seen as important at a landscape level. Richard Wilson notes in his Aireborough Ecology Report, 2016 – *“The relevance of the tension points to biodiversity is that this may result in habitats becoming fragmented and isolated, preventing less mobile species such as amphibians from dispersing through the landscape. By identifying the nearest ‘tension point’, particularly in relation to the Leeds Habitat Network, this can lead to local opportunities within the context of the Leeds Core Strategy that can prioritise mitigation and enhancement opportunities”*.

Potential for enhancements close to the tension points were independently identified by AECOM in their Aireborough Green Masterplan Framework 2015 (Fig 15). The following locations are considered the most conspicuous tension points.

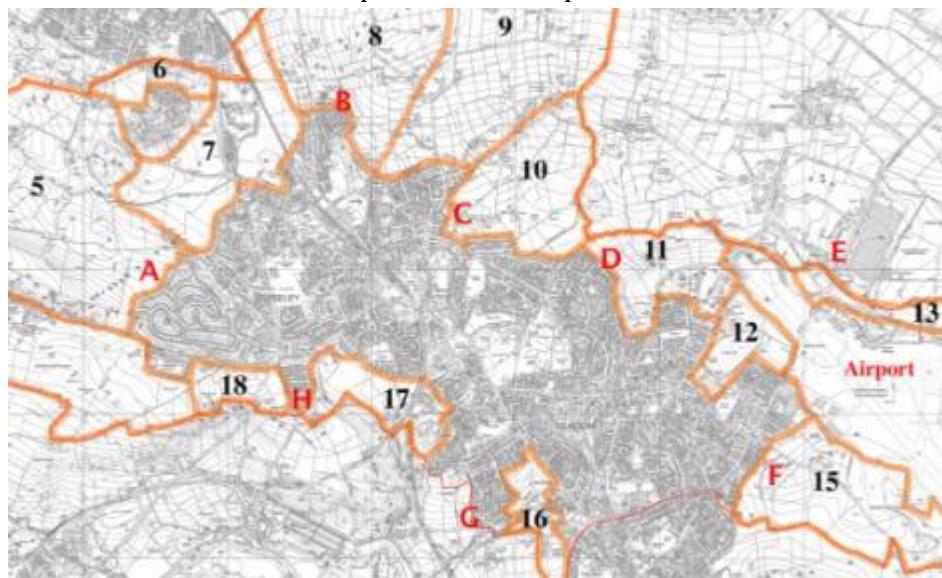


Fig 14 - Tension Points

A: The later phases of the Tranmere Park estate climb right over the ridgeline, setting up intense tension with the rationale of keeping development off the skyline, also squeezing to a minimum the separation between Guiseley and Hawksworth. The potential power of the Odda as a culturally iconic landscape and its continuation along the ridge to Hollins Hill has been severely compromised, exacerbated by the dominance of white in the architectural decor of the houses, in contrast with the more recessive tones of buildings lower in the valley. For Management Strategy it falls under NCA 36 SEO2, SEO3 (see Table 1 and Appendix).

B: The Hillside Avenue development to the east of Chevin End Road climbs aggressively up the hillside (as the name suggests), again with extensive use of white in the decor. There is no sense of this development respecting or responding to the landscape setting and it sets an unwelcome precedent on the north side of the Guiseley Gap valley for building to creep up the Chevin Slopes. For Management Strategy it falls under NCA 36 SEO2, SEO3,

C: The Wills Gill landscape’s contact with Queensway and the reciprocal sense of connection with countryside is fundamental to the character of Guiseley and Yeadon. This point of connection is already squeezed to its limit and could easily be lost. This area is also an important contender for an ecological corridor to help network fragmented habitats. For Management Strategy it falls under NCA 36 SEO2, SEO3 and NCA38 SEO3.

D: Development on the flanks of Yeadon Haw already sets up an abrupt and unsympathetic edge but just stops short of obscuring the relationship between the Haw itself and the open land of Wills Gill and Guiseley Moor. The slopes known as Yeadon Banks are conspicuous from many viewpoints and form a crucial part of the sweep referred to earlier under Chevin Slopes (area 7 on the map), so any further creep here would be highly damaging. For Management Strategy it falls under NCA 36 SEO2, SEO3 . and NCA38 SEO3 .

E: The land north of the Airport is outside the Plan area but development would change the nature of relationship between Yeadon and countryside to the north. NCA 38 SEO1, SEO3

F: The approach to Yeadon from the east along Bayton Lane and from public viewpoints on Plane Tree Hill and Rawdon Billing are confronted with a hard and abrupt edge to built development, which threatens to encroach on these prominent high points. NCA38 SEO1, SEO3

G: The sloping fields of Westfield are outside the Plan area and under Bradford's jurisdiction but further development here would change the nature of the relationship with the valley, which is already compromised by the existing development on Woodlea and Greenlea to the east. NCA 36 SEO2, SEO3

H: The built development on the crest of Hollins Hill is a profoundly insensitive imposition on the legibility of the Hawkstone ridge and destroys any chance of connecting units 17 and 18, which more sensitively would confine settlement to areas north of the ridge in both units. Unit 17 is in much need of conservation and restoration, yet does not appear to be recognised on the Leeds Landscape Assessment, whilst the land on the Bradford side is recognised for a conserve and restore strategy. For Management Strategy it falls under NCA 36 SEO2. SEO3

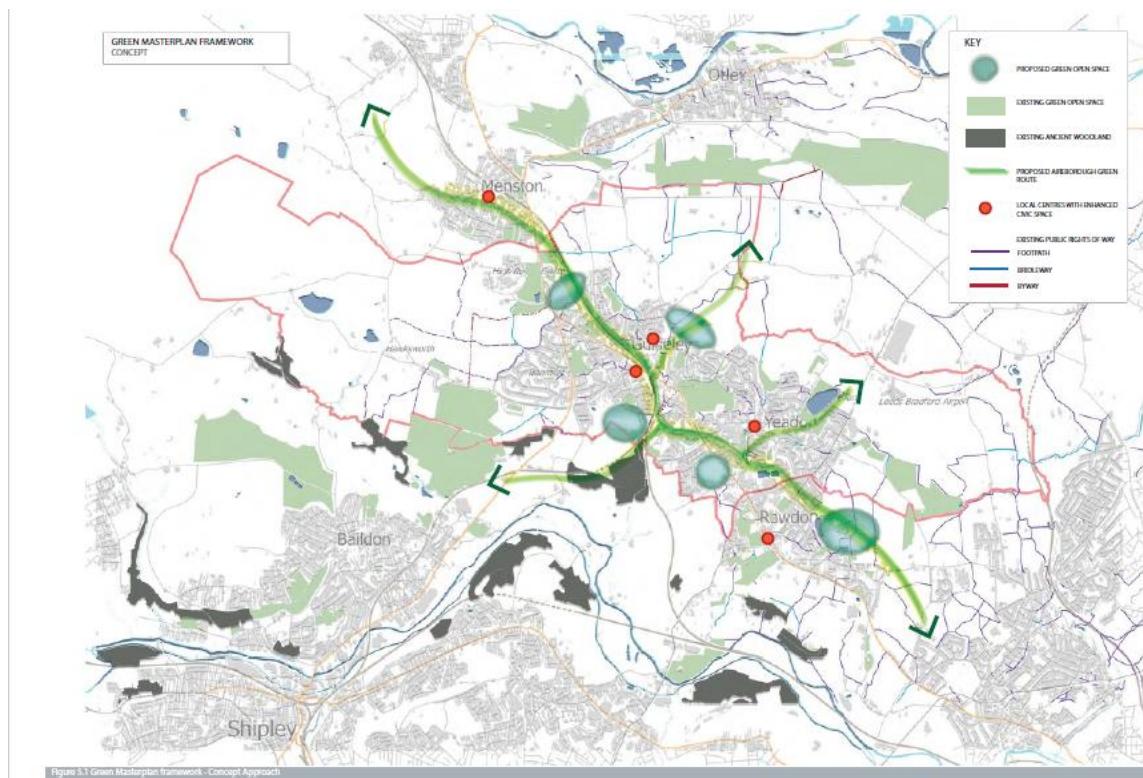


Fig 15 – Conceptual Green Infrastructure Framework Designed by AECOM 2015

10. URBAN GREEN SPACES

The previous analysis concentrates on the open landscape setting of Aireborough outside the main built-up areas. However, the character and experiential quality of the settlements are also influenced by the availability and distribution of valuable green spaces (Fig 16) that draw the surrounding landscape into the settlement to give the urban-rural fringe character and create habitat networks⁴⁸: the built -up area should not be 'rounded off'⁴⁹. Consequently recommendations are required in relation to how the urban green spaces may be better connected and work as green infrastructure to the benefit of Aireborough.

Some of the open spaces within the built-up area are of brownfield land rather than recognised green spaces. These will have the potential to be developed either as future green infrastructure or to accommodate new built development. As a general principle it is preferable that such sites be developed as well-designed infill, sparing green-field sites that lie beyond the current development boundary.

The community survey volunteers identified a huge number of incidental green spaces within the built area both public and private and these have been documented. Below are the important strategic urban green spaces that merit a brief mention⁵⁰:

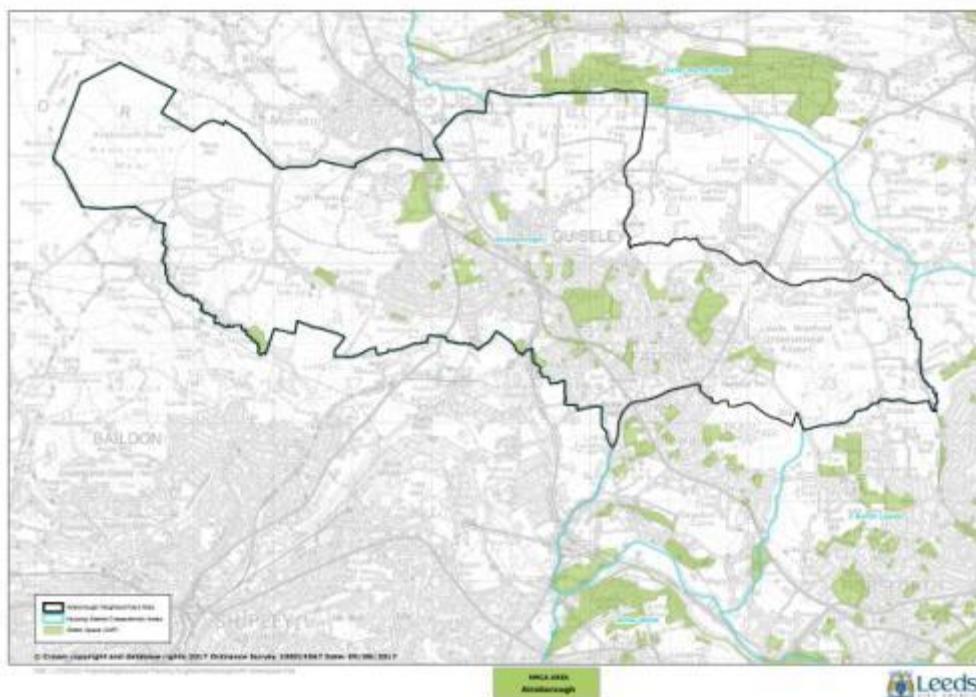


Fig 16 - Map of Aireborough's Green Spaces

⁴⁸ Aireborough Ecology Report 2016 notes that the biodiversity of urban green spaces is generally isolated one from another.

⁴⁹ LCC, SAP, 2017

⁵⁰ These do not include Chevin Forest Park and Tarnfield Park both of which are included in landscape character units.

High Royds Sports Field and Gardens:- An area of Victorian designed garden directly around High Royds (HR) being revived by the Developer for Community use for events, sports and recreation, to be put under the management of High Royds Sports Association. The latter is a collaboration between the local cricket club, two junior football clubs, the Social Club, Highroyds Residents Association and St Mary's Menston High School. There are two football pitches which are used by junior teams mainly on Sunday mornings in season. CromPark Cricket Club has a dedicated pitch and pavilion (and car park). In the grounds of HR are bridle paths which are used by cyclists, walkers, joggers, dog walkers and occasionally horses, and a neglected community orchard.

Fieldhead Playing Fields and Surrounds

This extensive green space is in the marshy area in the bottom of the Guiseley Gap and has been extensively drained down the centuries by Tramire Beck. Part in the Manor of Hawksworth and part in Guiseley, banks across the fields indicate the old manor boundary. It is now used as playing fields for two schools (Green Meadows and Fieldhead), by youth football teams during weekends and as a picnic venue for use by all age groups in the summer. The area is highly valued by the local community and is a welcome break between Guiseley and Tranmere Park along the A6038 affording a feeling of openness and space. Old names, such as Castle Close indicate that this area may have been defensive in early centuries and West Yorkshire Archaeology indicate that there may be evidence of this. Later use was as an Ing. The land to the south east rises on the back of a lump of glacial moraine, with an ancient long distance track circling it; there are enigmatic views from here across the green space, down the Guiseley Gap, and up to Reva Hill with the Chevin Slopes protecting. In the less intensively used parts to the North West the marsh conditions are returning and there is opportunity for enhanced biodiversity, as well as improved recreational use. A better plan for the area needs to be discussed with Leeds City Council and the School, as 400sqm of the site was suggested in 2008 as a primary school; unless it is enhanced as green infrastructure, especially for educational purposes, there is a danger that development could encroach.

Nethermoor Park: The home of Guiseley Bowling Club, Guiseley Cricket Club and Guiseley AFC for nearly a century. This park appears to be in good hands and with a secure future. Some concerns about privatisation of public green space have to be weighed against the cultural value of the teams' presence and the economic sustainability of the park's upkeep. By the same token the clubs have a moral and legal duty to respect the amenities of their neighbours and can benefit from an ongoing relationship based on goodwill and open dialogue. The Park would be enhanced by links to other visitor facilities, such as the railway station.

Parkinson Park: A case could well be made for including this land in Unit 8 because there is no built development separating it from the open land



Community Tug of War in Parkinson's Park

above. However, there is a significant change of gradient and dense vegetation along the greenway that borders the park, which has diverse habitats including an acid grassland bank, meadow and mature 'commemorative' trees. The land is being gifted to a new Community Interest Company (CIC). The precise aims and management regime are the business of the CIC to agree with the wider community and any funders involved. If the CIC performs well and gains solid community backing there is huge potential for other areas of urban green to be brought under its control, giving the community a high degree of influence on the assets and facilities that shape the character of the area and experience of living in Aireborough. Opportunities to link with other green spaces nearby should be considered to create a link across the Guiseley Gap, and on to the Chevin Slopes.

Springfield Park: This is a welcome small piece of incidental green space, once Guiseley's medieval green. It has been recently enhanced to encourage species diversity with fruit trees, a wildflower and wet meadow, together with a new children's play area and a constructed boardwalk,. The Park seems to be under sustainable management through Leeds Parks and in conjunction with Guiseley In Bloom. Better SuDS use could be made of the beck that runs from Guiseley Wells with a SUDs system, and there needs to be better linkage with the green space on the neighbouring Springfield development. The Forum could act as a sounding board for future modest improvements.

Guiseley Churchyard and Rectory Gardens and Surrounds

The Church property was traditionally useful community space, but as it has been sold into private hands so an important resource has dwindled. The Rectory Gardens, with their half moon medieval moat, are regrettably no longer used for community events such as Fairs and Pageants. The church was always noted for being surrounded by blossom-bearing trees. Part of the old Glebe land south of the Rectory is now used by the Guides and Scouts; the Scout land has now been made the subject of a Community Right to Buy. The Memorial Garden in the churchyard is now used by the Church Youth Club, not to the approval of all. St Oswald's Primary School has developed another area of ex glebe land as an exercise trail. This demonstrates the importance of safe open spaces for young people to develop skills and run activities; public parks are not always suitable and such land is in short supply Another beck running through this area could also be considered as an ecological corridor.

Nunroyd and Kirk Lane Park: This park ([picture](#)) is a Leeds Nature Area and its central location means that it is of immeasurable value to the surrounding neighbourhoods. It is also the home of amateur sports clubs for cricket, rugby and running, but it is already showing signs of stress, which are almost



certainly the product of financial constraints on Local Government grounds maintenance. This is a predicament being witnessed nationally and it is important that the community take an active

interest. Therefore it is to be welcomed that a newly formed Friends Group may take on some of the aspects of looking after this area. In the short term liaison with Leeds Council is essential, clarifying the sort of improvements that the community will value most and exploring new ways of securing the funding necessary to keep the park in good condition. In the longer term the possibility of asset transfer should not be ruled out, provided the new Parkinson's Park CIC demonstrates the community's capacity for large scale landscape management. The wild edges of the Park are useful habitats with marsh orchid (*Dactylorhiza sp*) and an area of woodland containing English native bluebells and other woodland plants. This is another area with high potential as an ecological corridor especially along Nunroyd Beck.

Shaw Lane Recreation Ground.

Created in the 1920's by a local branch of the National Playing Fields Association when Guiseley was felt to have too little recreation land for its growing population and too much agricultural land was being lost to housing. It is now a valued space for sport especially football. The margins are used by the local Incredible Edible group for growing fruit. Ecological links with Wills Gill and Nunroyd Park could be considered.



Sustrans to achieve optimum management, especially as this is part of the habitat network from Engine Fields to Guiseley Beck.

Engine Fields: This area has good potential based on its wildlife value and Leeds Nature Area status, but its future is closely tied to the development potential of Old Dog Mill. A sympathetic developer could initiate a very interesting design that interprets the history of the mill whilst both benefiting and taking advantage of the green space. There would be merit in forging a better connection for wildlife and pedestrian movement in the surrounding areas.

Allotments: Evidence suggests Aireborough is short of allotments – plots on areas like Moor Lane, Guiseley are being subdivided to accommodate demand. Interest in both allotments and 'community foraging' is intense nationally. The one thing that is certain is that once lost to development it is much harder to establish new replacements than to hold onto existing provision. Ownership issues and developer interest, as exist on the Silverdale site, generate strong feelings. It is recommended that the Forum gathers reliable data about demand for allotments and build provision into the Neighbourhood Plan. Given constructive dialogue there

Sustrans Greenway: This valuable and popular route (picture) affords movement that avoids much of the vehicular traffic and air pollution that churns at street level. The verdant vegetation is an important part of the atmosphere but is already in need of some judicious pruning and thinning to keep the sunlight penetrating and afford the visibility needed for pedestrian safety. There is a role for community partnership with

is scope for partial development that can then covenant the residual allotments for long-term use. Meanwhile the Silverdale site is in very poor condition, having been intended for many years by many owners, and contributes little to the neighbourhood amenity. If there is evidence of abundant demand, the Neighbourhood Plan could possibly safeguard allotment use and ensure that those who want to sell can only do so to others who want an allotment.

Picture is of a local pigeon keeper who uses Silverdale Allotments – where else to go?

Small Green Spaces: The built environment has numerous small green spaces; many of these are part of the design of developments that

- drew on the Garden City Movement in the early 20th century eg Tranmere Park,
- were part of housing schemes designed to draw on the agricultural heritage with features such as allotments, eg Henry Terrace, Hawthorn Crescent, Yeadon, Moorland Crescent, Guiseley
- were made by those who appreciated the semi-urban character of the area eg Queensway Estate

In addition, the developments of the early 21st century have often reluctantly, as required in planning permissions, put in green patches as amenity space. Places such as High Royds have even designed in 'community foraging' with an orchards. However, despite annual 'onsite green space payments' by local residents, few have a real purpose in terms of an ecosystem service, they are not well managed, and their isolation, one from another, makes them forlorn 'hostages to fortune'. A green infrastructure that is of real benefit needs to be networked, and the Neighbourhood Plan could usefully map and link these areas with a Community Green Space Trust⁵¹ in mind for enhancement and management.



⁵¹ Examples The Parks Trust, Milton Keynes and Milton Community Woodlands Association

11. AIREBOROUGH ECOLOGY SURVEY – ECOLOGICAL CORRIDORS AND NETWORKS

Connectivity and wildlife corridors are now an important aspect of the ecology and nature conservation at a landscape level. As well as ensuring protection for designated nature conservation sites, effort is now directed towards the creating of ecological networks and corridors to facilitate species mobility and encourage healthy species populations. This policy is reflected in the NPPF 109 – 125⁵².

The Leeds Habitat Network 2014 (LHN) has begun to identify, through desk research and current records, notable main and local ecological corridors within the district including those that link to Bradford. The aim is to protect integrity and connectivity and provide a '*guide to the best locations for provision of new areas and opportunities for ecosystem services via habitat creation and enhancement*'⁵³. BAP Priority Habitats and Species are especially important⁵⁴.

The Aireborough Ecology Survey 2016, took sites identified for ecological potential in Phase 1 Ecology Studies and the Aireborough Landscape Study 2016 and conducted a field survey over several months on the sites, under the guidance of Richard Wilson Ecology. This project identified a number of corridor opportunities for the LHN that would improve the natural capital and ecosystem services in Aireborough through nature conservation stewardship and linking the fragmented habitats. The project also found that local residents give a high intrinsic value to their greenspace and there are signs across the area of growing interest in working on nature conservation and improving biodiversity.

Leeds Habitat Network (LHN) 2014 Main and Local Corridors		
Main Corridor	River Aire	Not in Aireborough
	River Wharfe	Not in Aireborough
Local Corridor LC 1a,1b	Rombalds Moor to the Aire via Hawksworth	Starts on Hawksworth Moor than takes Gill Beck through Old and West Wood, on to Hawksworth Gill and down to the Aire. Another branch crosses the Odda and Bradford Golf Course to Hawkstone Wood on the border with Bradford.
LC2	Rombalds Moor to the Wharfe via Guiseley Gap/Mire Beck	The Guiseley Gap connects Airedale and Wharfedale it affords a key corridor for nature, ecology, habitat and movement. Mire Beck is the watercourse in the bottom of the western part of the Gap; this flows from Reva Hill, across Hawksworth Moor, down Matthew Dike and Upper High Royds and along a portion of the bottom of the glacial valley to Ellar Ghyll. The area where Mire Beck crosses the Guiseley Ings needs strengthening.
LC3	West Chevin Flank	Picking up LC1 near St Mary's School the LHN goes up to Chevin End and on across the area of Slack Dike to the Chevin Ridge.
LC 4	Along the Chevin Ridge	Lies on a corridor from Wharfedale to Bramhope.
LC 5	Chevin Slopes to Yeadon Tarn	Chevin ridge, down the Chevin Slopes towards Calfhole Wood, Deipkier Wood and on towards Yeadon Banks. Disconnect between Yeadon Banks and Yeadon Tarn.
LC6	Chevin Slopes to LBA via Carlton	Starts as with LC5, at Deipkier goes towards East Carlton, turns south through Novia Plantation, then somewhat disconnected from the small corridor north of Whitehouse Lane at LBA.

⁵² Natural England, *Think Big*, June 2011

⁵³ LCC, *Nature Conservation Background Paper*, 2015, page 10

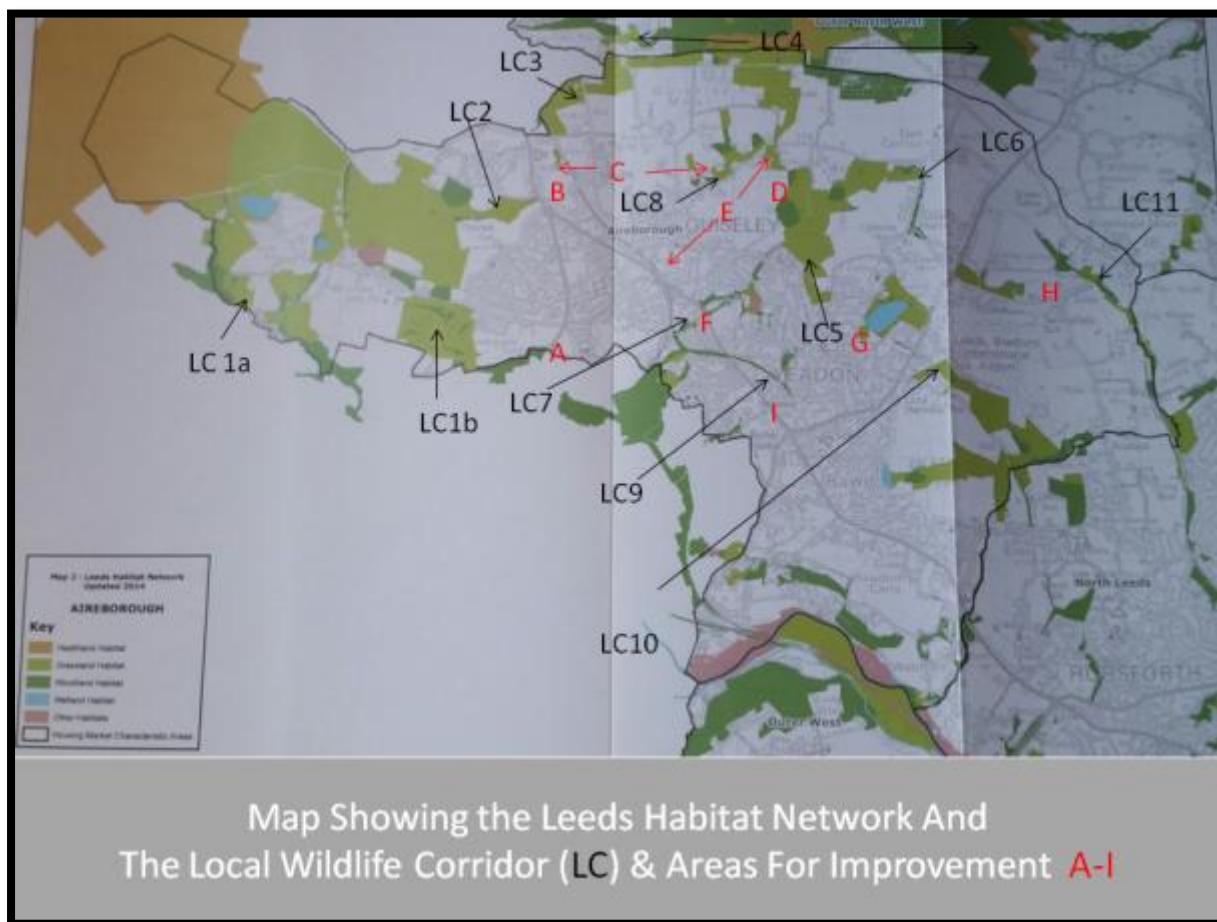
⁵⁴ <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-5705>

LC 7	Chevin Slopes via Calfhole Beck to Ghyllroyd	Runs from behind the Royalty Pub, down Calfhole, Shaw, and Nunroyd Becks to Ghyllroyd Clapper Bridge/Sustrans Track. Weak connection to Guiseley Beck and Spring Wood BNA.
LC 8	Upcroft to East Field Guiseley	Runs from Upcroft along the line of the old East Field above Carlton Lane. Seems detached and could link with the West Chevin Flank across Kelcliffe and the Chevin watershed.
LC 9	Engine Fields to Esholt along the Sustrans Track	Runs from Engine Fields along the Sustrans track, under the A65 through diverse habitats around Yeadon Brickworks and the railway cutting to the woods of Guiseley Beck Ghyll, and the Aire. There is potential for another branch down Yeadon Gill Beck through Nether Yeadon where there is a small disconnected part of the LHN.
LC 10	Tarn to Rawdon Billing via Plan Tree Hill	Yeadon Tarn currently isolated a tiny corridor exists along footpaths to Plane Tree Hill, through Horsforth Golf Club to Rawdon Billing.
LC 11	Carlton Moor to Ling Bob Horsforth and beyond. Via Moseley Beck.	Starts on a wooded footpath behind Green Gates Farm on Carlton Moor, follows the beck that runs under Dean Lane and joins with Moseley Beck and the Bramhope Tunnel via Scotland to Lin Bob and beyond to Horsforth. There is a disconnect between this and LC10 along Scotland Beck. Also with LC 6 along Carlton Beck.
Aireborough Sites Identified for Corridor Opportunities ⁵⁵		
A.	LC1 Hollins Hill	Link to the Hawkstone Wood and Jerrison Wood BNA as currently isolated part of the key Hawkstone Ridge landscape. Use pollinator-friendly enhanced greenspace in combination with hedgerows.
B.	LC 2. Mire Beck across Guiseley Ings,	Corridor should be enhanced to protect the integrity of the LHN in this sector of Aireborough, particularly floristic diversity to benefit pollinators, and the habitat for breeding waders. The latter needs an identification of territory distribution, particularly curlews and lapwing. A SuD scheme following the principles of Graham et al (2013) ⁵⁶ would help the former.
C.	LC3, LC8, LC5 Joining Mire Beck to Chevin Slopes via Kelcliffe.	Significant opportunities to connect LC3 and LC8 across the land parcel boundaries of Kelcliffe and create landscape scale biodiversity across the north of Guiseley and Yeadon linking the settlements and urban green spaces via hedges, boundaries, watercourses and wildflowers. This area includes quarries both used and disused. Parkinson's Park should build up swathes of pollinator-friendly wildflower meadows with a species-mix replicating lowland hay meadows. ,
D.	LC5 Chevin Slopes	A South Pennines Woodland Heritage project done in April 2017 will be making recommendations for the land management around Deipkier Wood.
E.	LC 7 Chevin Slopes	A beneficial corridor exists from Upcroft down Wills Gill Beck to Guiseley St Oswald's and beyond connecting in urban green spaces, including education sites at St Oswald's School..
F.	LC 7 Ghyllroyd	Restore the area around Ghyllroyd and strengthen the field boundary and watercourse connection to Guiseley Beck and BNA in Spring Wood. Pollinator-friendly enhanced greenspace in combination with hedgerows which provide a network of corridors that penetrate the land parcel and enhance informal habitat network provided by the railway lines would also be of benefit. Improve connections into Nunroyd Park.

⁵⁵ Richard Wilson Ecology, Aireborough Ecology Survey 2016

⁵⁶ Graham et al, *Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems: Maximising the potential for people and wildlife*, RSPB/Wildfowl and Wetland Trust, 2013

G.	LC 5, LC6, LC 10 Yeadon Tarn	Connect Yeadon Tarn with Yeadon Banks, Rawdon Billing Whitehouse Lane, and Moseley Beck. Strengthening field boundaries and the provision of SuDS, in addition to pollinator-friendly enhanced greenspace.
H.	LC 10 and LC11 Around Leeds Bradford Airport.	This would connect other elements of corridor and create a landscape level connection of diverse habitats.
I.	LC9 Nether Yeadon	Strengthen the link between the disconnected wooded Yeadon Gill LHN with the trees and field boundaries around Nether Yeadon green and Low Hall.



12. RECOMMENDATIONS

Generally

The intention is to conserve and protect what is best about the Aireborough landscape restoring and enhancing where it is deficient, so that it continues to retain its value. This will involve actions by today's residents in the short term but also establishing some policies by which the actions of others, especially landowners, developers and those involved in governance such as Planning, can be guided. This report identifies specific actions relative to individual sites and with LA Local Plan strategies and the NCA SEOs in mind. There also needs to be an overarching Neighbourhood Plan policy framework.

- Arguably the strongest headline to emerge from the survey has been the oversight in the plans of both Leeds and Bradford in failing to recognise the landscape and cultural importance of the Guiseley Gap. This report has identified numerous characteristics that should inform planning policy at district level, helping to maintain and reinforce the distinctive sense of place that is attributable to the extraordinary topographic formation of the gap.
- The green backdrop of the Chevin slopes on the North and the Hawkstone ridge on the South serve to contain the urban development that has filled most of the Guiseley Gap. Jointly, they protect the higher parts of the ridge between the Wharfe and Aire Valleys from development and conserving the integrity of these two sweeps of open ground is fundamental to the identity and character of Aireborough. This involves resisting any new development on the crest of the Hawkstone ridge and creep up the Chevin slopes from Guiseley and Yeadon. Little can be done about the existing encroachment in these two locations but there may be some potential for softening their impact with tree .
- There are two locations where settlement identity is under threat: the Wills Gill area is vital to the separation of Guiseley and Yeadon and connection of both to the wider countryside, whilst the Guiseley Gap Wetlands mark a crucial end-point to Guiseley. No similar body of open space survives at the transition from Rawdon to Yeadon, so there is a strong case for safeguarding these two remaining open spaces and their direct links with the two major sweeps along the ridges on the North and South.
- The evidence suggests that the overall footprint of built development has reached a critical point in outward expansion, beyond which further expansion will fundamentally change the character of the landscape setting. Conversely there are some open spaces within the footprint that could accommodate some brownfield infill and that should take priority over new building on the fringe. Some of these are referred to in the Aireborough Urban Character Study.
- There is striking consistency between the tension points identified in this report and the recommendation for 'proposed green open spaces', indicated on the Green Masterplan Framework concept plan (Page 42 map of the Baseline Report). These locations deserve special attention in strategic planning as their long-term treatment will have especially noticeable impact on Aireborough's character and appeal as a place to live, work or visit.
- In all cases where proposals for development do come forward for planning permission on a specific site there should be an obligation, imposed on the applicant by Leeds Planning, to commission a more detailed landscape assessment of the site itself than has been possible under this exercise, ideally by appointing a Chartered Landscape Architect to advise fellow professionals on the landscape impact of design proposals.

- Where either this study or the companion ecological study has identified ecological value or potential, the developer should also be required to commission further detailed ecological survey and this information used to inform the design. In some cases this will reveal ecological constraints that should prevent development altogether.
- The network of movement corridors for pedestrian and cycle traffic is a valuable component of the Aireborough makeup in terms of connectivity, character, conservation of historic features, clean air and energy conservation. The recent work of Sustrans and the ancient tracks all need to be maintained and would benefit from further extension and connection to form a Green Route, doubling up as corridors for wildlife migration where possible.
- The design briefs for new development should highlight the importance of open and green spaces within the layout acknowledging historic patterns and traces of the former landscape. Wherever possible these green spaces should also forge connections with other green spaces that already exist and to the wider countryside that surrounds Aireborough.
- There is some affection for the white décor on developments such as Tranmere Park but it is highly intrusive on the quiet landscape character of the slopes. Leeds Planning should be mindful of this impact in any new development proposals and favour material choices that respect the dominant local palette.
- Colour is also important in roofing materials, so Leeds Planning should be watchful and resist light coloured roofs in locations where they can be viewed from above on the valley sides. Green roofs both play a part in ecosystem services and look better.
- Numerous cultural relics and associations have been identified through this survey. These should be documented more comprehensively by developers hoping to build and Leeds Planning should ensure that appropriate design consideration is exercised in conserving and celebrating remnants and evidence of Aireborough's past in line with HLC recommendation (see appendix).
- The Forum is recommended to establish a DIY mechanism for carrying out modest scale clean-ups and improvements, such as litter-picking and painting. Sites identified as needing improvement in the landscape survey can be added to by further observation. Discussions with landowners would be necessary to agree a specification and obtain permission for volunteers to do the work. In cases where the community feels more ambitious and has capacity for more sustained commitment a long-term management agreement can be entered into or even an asset transfer into community ownership. Such agreements have potential liability implications so specialist advice should be obtained before entering into binding contract.

Landscape Units Specific Recommendations

The units identified in the section 8 should each be approached in a bespoke manner as follows:

1. **Hawsworth Moor:** Conserve as open moorland for ecological benefit and outdoor leisure. Liaise with Leeds Council to ensure that there are no development threats and with Bradford to clarify management regime for optimum integration of habitat with adjoining extensive moor.
2. **Reva Hill:** Liaise with farmers and Yorkshire Water to optimise management for outdoor leisure, especially sailing and walking. Promote footpath maintenance, signing, and interpretation.

3. **Hawsworth Slopes:** Currently in beneficial use and very attractive so attention should concentrate on vigilance for change. Most sensitive area is the downhill edge of Hawsworth, where modest scale development can change the visual impact on the landscape and affect historic character of the Conservation Area: liaise with Planning regarding mitigation.
4. **Hawsworth Gill valley:** Monitor ecological condition and biodiversity of this attractive area. Liaise with owners of caravan park to improve visual quality of areas visible from public viewpoints.
5. **Upper High Royds:** Already designated as a Special Landscape, so development threats unlikely. Liaise with farmers and landowners to promote farming practices that safeguard the openness and maintenance of public rights of way, walls and hedges. Encourage localised planting capable of softening the edge of Tranmere Park further.
6. **Menston buffer:** Monitor for development threats to separation of Menston. Encourage landowners to safeguard tree belt, perhaps with additional planting to improve age structure and understorey.
7. **Guiseley Gap Wetlands:** Concentrate on biodiversity and maintaining green link across Guiseley Gap. Potential for further outdoor leisure use provided it conserves openness. New Birks Farm buildings on Ings Lane have considerable potential for sensitive refurbishment, which may require a small amount of compatible enabling development confined to the fields South of the farm.
8. **West Chevin Flank:** Liaise with farmers to ensure sustained agricultural activity on this vital area of farmland and ensure the long-term health and condition of the Elephant Trees copse on Whale Jaws Hill to perpetuate its landmark role. Encourage biodiversity, green links and drystone wall maintenance..
9. **Guiseley Moor:** Considerable scope for improving management of the agricultural land, including field boundary improvements, both for visual quality and biodiversity. Look at how to create the beck as an ecological corridor, and how wood pasture and other meadow habitat might be reinstated. Liaise with landowners and managers to this end. Similarly liaise with quarry owners to minimise negative impact of their operations and optimise eventual restoration. Also explore management of the leisure activities to protect against visual impact and wear.
10. **Wills Gill:** Promote farm management geared to biodiversity and especially watercourses and woodland/wood pasture. Link Wills Gill beck into the habitat network. Leisure usage could benefit from footpath improvements and maintenance. Watch carefully for development pressures threatening the remnant historic field pattern and the vital separation of Guiseley and Yeadon with their connection to open countryside.
11. **Yeadon Banks and Haw:** Opportunities to improve the newly designated village green and soften the uncomfortable edge of development. The condition of the lane could be improved as a local walk with great views. Upkeep of grassland and boundaries should be improved with landowner agreements. Some tree planting/wood pasture would improve character. Improve connectivity with Yeadon Tarn.
12. **Yeadon Tarn:** Liaise with managers to refresh this popular leisure facility and maintain it in good condition. Improve legibility and awareness of its presence and the

attractions it offers. Consider biodiversity enhancement where possible. Improve connectivity with Yeadon Haw, Rawdon Billing and land around the Airport.

13. **Carlton Moor:** Whilst this narrow strip is wholly dominated by the Airport it still acts as a gateway into Aireborough from the North and has potential to have impact over a large area, especially if there is new development extending outside the Aireborough boundary (tension point E). A long term working relationship with the Airport management is already established and this is vital to continue, with regular liaison over design as proposals emerge. Landscape Architects should be integral with the design teams from the beginning of each project's inception, with a particular remit to assess massing and visual impact.

The Airport: The operational area of the Airport is so strictly controlled by authorities responsible for its economic performance and safety that the Neighbourhood Forum can exercise little influence. The Airport landscape must be accepted as being essentially a functional one but the existing relationship with the Airport Company should be tested for its ability to secure the best possible amenity where there is some flexibility, for instance signage and boundary treatment.

14. **Moseley Vale:** The intimate scale of this landscape should be respected and carefully conserved, especially the areas that dip eastwards towards the Beck. If development associated with the Airport is planned on the more level area it should be approached in the same manner as the Carlton Moor unit above, taking care to consider the effects on Cookridge. High buildings would also be visible to the west and impair Aireborough's sense of having open countryside beyond the Airport. Could be better linked into the habitat network around the Airport including the Tarn and Rawdon Billing.
15. **Plane Tree Hill:** The golf course section of this unit works well but there is a sense of vulnerability to the open land of plane Tree Hill itself and the slopes to its west and south. This is important as a setting for Rawdon Billing and as containment for Yeadon, so its openness should be conserved. Softening of the eastern edge of the Yeadon built area is desirable, which could contain a very small amount of new building and tree planting to introduce informality.
16. **Nether Yeadon Gill:** Liaise with smallholders in this area to conserve the intimate scale but improve the detail of boundaries and any structures. Strengthen the habitat network
17. **Coach Road & Guiseley Beck Ghyll:** There is potential here to celebrate and interpret the historic landscape of deer park and formal grounds, which will require liaison with landowners. There may be potential for a very modest amount of new building but only if a more detailed professional landscape and heritage appraisal can demonstrate a sensitive integration. However, there is a real threat of encroachment onto the open landscape that sweeps down to the Aire, so quantum is minimal. Major restoration needed on the site of the old Guiseley Mill at Ghyllroyd behind the Retail Park, and green corridor connection with Nunroyd Park.
18. **Hollins Hill:** It is important to keep this part of the ridge open and in agricultural management, ideally with some planting to soften the impact of the Hollins Hill development that overlooks it. Ecology could be enhanced by linking into network.

APPENDIX

NCA STATEMENTS OF ENVIRONMENTAL OPPORTUNITY (SEO)

NCA 36 Southern Pennines

SEO1 – Safeguard, manage and enhance the large areas of **open, expansive moorland and the internationally important habitats** and species they support, as well as protecting soils and water courses.

SEO2 – Manage and enhance the **pastoral character of the moorland fringes**, lower hills and valleys, with their mosaics of pastures and meadows, and their strong field patterns defined by drystone walls, to improve ecological networks and strengthen landscape character.

SEO3 – Protect the comprehensive range of **historic landscape features** for their cultural value and the contribution they make to local distinctiveness and sense of identity.

SEO4 – Increase the enjoyment and understanding of the landscape and to experience a sense of escapism and inspiration, while also conserving the qualities of the landscape and its valuable historic and wildlife features.

NCA 38 Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Yorkshire Coalfield

SEO1 – Restore and enhance existing areas and create new landscapes through the inclusion of woodland and networks of green infrastructure to raise the overall quality of design and location of new developments. Regeneration and restoration of industrial sites should seek to create **green infrastructure** that links fragments of the natural environment, leading to a **functioning network** for wildlife and access and recreational amenities for people.

SEO 2 – Protect and manage the **archaeological and historical environment** to safeguard a strong sense of cultural identity and heritage, particularly mining heritage, and use the area's distinctive sense of place to inspire interpretation and new development. Engage local communities with their past by enhancing the early, industrial and mining landscapes through restoration of key features of sites and improving access and interpretation.

SEO 3 – Conserve, enhance and expand areas and corridors of semi-natural habitat such as grasslands and woodlands to **create a functioning ecological network that links the fragmented patches of habitats** through urban and sustainably farmed environments, thus assisting species and habitat adaption to climate, reducing soil erosion and diffuse pollution.

SEO 4 – Manage, enhance and extend **wetland habitats** associated with the rivers, Aire, Calder, Dearne, Don, Rother and Erewash and their tributaries to increase the landscape's ability to naturally and sustainable manage flooding, improve water quality, and increase the resilience of these habitats, the riverline landscape and associated species to climate.

WEST YORKSHIRE HLC LANDSCAPE RECOMMENDATIONS⁵⁷

These are the HLC's recommendations for various historic fieldscapes, wetlands, moorland, and commons, woodlands of various historic types, and parklands of various types.

Existing historic boundaries, structures and associated landscape features should be retained and actively maintained as providing heritage interest. Relict field or woodland boundaries can be restored or reinstated to enhance the legibility of historic landscapes.
Historic buildings and structures that are neither listed nor in a Conservation Area but are nonetheless of local interest can be placed on a 'local list' which acknowledges this interest. This could include historic boundaries of locally distinct types.
Farm buildings identified as being of historic or architectural significance, including examples that have retained original fixtures, fittings and decoration and external surface materials and walls, should be retained. Where no viable use can be found and such buildings must be demolished, detailed recording should be carried out prior to any demolition works
Protection of historic landscapes can be promoted through appropriate agricultural methods and management regimes
Where good legibility of historic character exists, there should be enhancement through positive management, including restoration, and protection through the planning process
Protection can also be encouraged through conditions attached to grants to agricultural businesses
Links should be developed between HLC and green infrastructure strategies and management plans, with trees, hedges and wildlife value also considered
Where development is proposed, applicants should comply with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012), by identifying heritage assets and their significance at pre-application stage. The extent of surviving historic boundaries and other above ground archaeological features such as earthworks should be assessed.
Where planning permission is granted for a site located in an area of unenclosed or enclosed land or where development affects historic buildings, conditions should be attached to ensure that provision is made for the investigation of the site's archaeological potential and for the preservation in situ or recording of any archaeological deposits that are encountered
The layouts of new developments such as residential estates can be designed so that the lines of key field boundaries are retained within the landscape, either as route ways or as modern property boundaries.
Where good, representative examples of historic buildings are affected by development proposals, recording of the site at an appropriate level, such as a photographic and drawn survey, should be considered
Continuity of historic enclosure boundaries in a modern street scene should be respected to retain distinctiveness
Memories of historic identity could be retained in street naming, public art etc.
Awareness of issues relating to the importance of historic land use should be promoted and should feed into Local Plans, Neighbourhood Plans and Spatial Strategies.
Where applications are made for new woodland planting, the effect that this will have on historic landscapes and potential archaeological remains should be taken into account in the planning process.
Wetland specific: Steps should be taken to maintain below ground environmental conditions such as ground water levels to avoid desiccation of archaeological remains
Where possible, stratified layers should be retained to avoid the destruction of archaeological and palaeoenvironmental remains – their potential should be assessed prior to development.

⁵⁷ http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archives/view/west_yorkshire_hlc_2017/downloads.cfm See Leeds, Part 5 Management Tables. Pdf

AIREBOROUGH NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM – LANDSCAPE VALUE STUDY
March 2016

Area of land (as referenced on your map)

1. Appearance: Is the land scenically attractive in itself? (Scenic – a pleasing view of open land)
(please tick a point between the two ends of each box that is relevant to your view on all questions on the survey with this format)

Beautiful Ugly

Gentle Dramatic

Uplifting Depressing

2. Usage: a) Is the land currently in active use? (include farming) (tick the relevant boxes)

By others Yes all of it Part of it No

By you or your family Yes all of it Part of it No

Short description of use and users -----

b) Do you consider this use/uses to be beneficial or detrimental to the 'character' of Aireborough?

Beneficial Detimental

3. Setting: a) How would you describe the area surrounding the land?

(tick one) Built up all round Open countryside Edge of town

Noisy Quiet

Bustling Tranquil

b) How would you describe the topography? (tick one)

Slope Undulating Flat Hollow

c) Is there public right of access to the land? **By car:** Yes No

On foot: Yes No

d) What part does vegetation (e.g. trees, hedgerows, scrub etc) play in the character of the area?

Enhances it Detracts from it

Include a short description of how and why -----

d) Are there other notable natural or man-made features that give character to the area or its setting eg rocks, stone walls, lanes, gradients, copse (Note the features, pictures may be useful)

1. Visibility: Is the land overlooked, is it a viewpoint, can views be seen from the land?

(tick one of each pair)

<input type="radio"/> Overlooked by many houses	<input type="radio"/> Few or no buildings overlook
<input type="radio"/> Overlooked from roads	<input type="radio"/> Not overlooked from roads
<input type="radio"/> A viewpoint	<input type="radio"/> Secluded
<input type="radio"/> A point that is highly visible from many places	<input type="radio"/> Hidden away

2. Hydrology: a) What water features does the land have (eg watercourses, ponds, boggy ground)?

Short description:-----

b) Does this natural or artificial water features play a significant part in the character and condition of all or part of the land?

Yes No

If yes, explain how and why in a few words -----

3. Biodiversity: To your knowledge does this land have any animal/or bird habitats or contain any uncommon plant or tree species? (Write in what you know, an Ecologist will explore further)

4. Cultural & Historic Traces: Are there obvious historic relics on the land? Do you know about any history associated with it? Do you know anything of the historic use of the site?

Write in Historic features identified -----

Any other historic information (include source if known) -----

Name

Date Completed

AIREBOROUGH BIODIVERSITY TABLE.

SPECIAL PROTECTION AREAS (SPA) AND SPECIAL AREAS OF CONSERVATION (SAC)

International	Special Protection Area (SPA)	South Pennine Moors	The South Pennine Moors SPA covers extensive tracts of semi-natural moorland including upland heath and blanket mire. They have been designated for important breeding populations of European golden plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>), merlin (<i>Falco columbarius</i>), peregrine (<i>Falco peregrinus</i>), short-eared owl (<i>Asio flammeus</i>) and dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina</i> ssp. <i>schinzii</i>). Just over 1 % of the SPA is located within Aireborough.
	Special Area of Conservation (SAC)	South Pennine Moors	The South Pennine Moors SAC is designated for its heathland, blanket bogs and old sessile oak woodlands, in addition to important wet heaths, transitional mires and quaking bog communities. Approximately 0.35 % of the SAC is located within Aireborough.

SITES OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST (SSSI) lying wholly or partly within Aireborough

National	Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	South Pennine Moors	The Moors have been designated for their upland vegetation communities and breeding bird assemblages, which in addition to those cited in the SPA, include ring ouzel (<i>Turdus torquatus</i>) and whinchat (<i>Saxicola rubetra</i>). The Unit within Aireborough (Haworth Moor) is identified as being in Unfavorable Recovering, as are all adjacent units. The reason cited for this is excessive burning, with little diversity and a poor bryophyte layer; characteristic of intensive grouse moor management. Just over 1 % of the SSSI is located within Aireborough.
		Yeadon Brickworks and Railway Cutting	The rock exposures within this site provide a most important cross-section through shales and sandstones of the Namurian Series, originally formed about 350 million years ago during the Carboniferous Period of geological history. The shales include important layers rich in the fossil remains of marine animals known as goniatites (related to ammonites). The site has been assessed as being of International importance as the type locality for one of the major subdivisions of the Carboniferous period, named the Yeadonian Stage
		Great Dib Wood, The Chevin	This site provides exposures of rocks of the Namurian Series, formed during the Carboniferous Period of geological history about 320 million years ago. Two sandstone layers are exposed, separated by a layer of mudstone and limestone known as the Otley Shell Bed which is rich in the fossilised remains of the animals that inhabited the Carboniferous sea. This fossil-rich bed is of great geological interest principally because of the variety of fossils it contains, but also because it is one of the youngest rock-layers known to contain the remains of a now-extinct group of animals known as trilobites. Great Dib Wood, is, by a matter of a few meters, just outside the northern boundary of Aireborough and is included in this table for completeness

SITES OF ECOLOGICAL or GEOLOGICAL INTEREST (SEGI) representing a countywide (West Yorkshire) level of importance, lying wholly or partly within Aireborough (All in the 2006 UDP, none added.)

Bramhope Tunnel Pond	
Haworth Spring Wood	A proportion of this broadleaved woodland straddles the Aireborough boundary. It can be divided into three distinct communities: an oak-dominated canopy with a variable understorey and ground flora, which includes a number of ancient woodland indicators. The steeper slopes support a community with an increase in holly (<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>), and the wet woodland community associated with Gill Beck has a canopy predominantly of alder (<i>Alnus glutinosa</i>) and a ground flora that includes the rare, in Yorkshire, alternate-leaved golden-saxifrage (<i>Chrysosplenium alternifolium</i>).
Rawdon Ponds (Rawdon Common Pond)	A grazed field with a waterbody supporting a population of great crested newt (<i>Triturus cristatus</i>) and four other species of amphibian. The waterbody's vegetation is relatively diverse and includes the regionally rare tubular water-dropwort (<i>Oenanthe fistulosa</i>) and water soldier (<i>Stratiotes aloides</i>). Surrounding the waterbody is a marshy grassland/rush pasture community.
Otley Chevin (Regionally Important Geological Site RIGS)	Designated as a regionally important geological site and a Local Nature Reserve. The latter supports scrub, heathland and grassland communities. Most of the site is outside Aireborough but runs along the northern boundary following the escarpment.

LEEDS NATURE AREAS – LNA lying wholly or partly within Aireborough (all in the 2006 UDP – no new areas added.)

1. Airport Reservoirs
2. Billing Hill
3. Bramhope Tunnel Top
4. Cragg Wood, (Local Wildlife Site LWS12)
5. Deipkeir Wood (*to strengthen*)
6. Engine Fields
7. Hawksworth Woods (Local Wildlife Site LWS19)
8. Larkfield Dam
9. Moseley Beck
10. New Dam, Jum Bridge
11. Nunroyd Park
12. West Wood Hawksworth (Local Wildlife Site LWS)
13. Yeadon Tarn (*Isolated*)

BRADFORD NATURE AREAS – BNA lying on the border with Aireborough

- A. Hawkstone Wood
- B. Spring and Jerrison Wood (*should also include the part of the Guiseley side*)