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## 8 Consolidated Historic Landscape Character Assessment

### 8.1 Introduction

- 8.1.1 Landscapes, alongside buildings, monuments, archaeological sites, places or areas, can possess significance derived from their heritage interest. This appendix presents a preliminary assessment of the historic landscape character of the area surrounding the project, produced to inform the cultural heritage assessment (Chapter 8: Cultural Heritage).
- 8.1.2 The A66 is a route with a long history. It follows the course of a Roman road which itself may have traced the line of earlier tracks travelling up and through the Stainmore Pass. The high peat moorlands of the Pennines form a dividing line between the landscapes of the Eden Valley to the west and the Greta and Tees valleys to the east. The Eden Valley opens out into a broad and fertile landscape used for mixed farming and quarrying and lies to the west of the Stainmore area which is an area of higher ground on the edge of the Pennines, characterised by patterns of medieval enclosed land, including areas of intake from what would have been common moorland. To the east of the Pennines, beyond areas of later irregular and planned enclosure on the edges of the moorland, there is an extensive area to the south of Barnard Castle where medieval strip-fields are fossilised within later post-medieval field systems. Beyond Rokeby, the landscape opens up into the lowlands of the Tees Valley and Vale of Mowbray, where large and regular post-medieval fields dominate the area.
- 8.1.3 These different historic landscapes have been sorted into eight Historic Landscape Character Areas (HLCA), where distinctive traces of particular land use are identifiable in the modern landscape. All eight HLCA are shown in Figure 8.3: Historic Landscape Character Area and are further illustrated, individually, through this report.

### 8.2 Methodology

#### Identifying areas

- 8.2.1 This appendix is an assessment of the Historic Landscape Character (HLC) of the land the project crosses through and a 2km study area buffered from the draft DCO boundary. HLC is the attributes and qualities of a landscape which reflect past land use and settlement and are legible in the present. A 2km study area has been used as it allows an appropriately large area to be considered at a landscape scale. It also corresponds with the largest study area used within the cultural heritage assessment (Chapter 8: Cultural Heritage), allowing the HLCA to be used in considering both the values of the historic landscape and to underpin an understanding of landscape context within the setting of heritage resources. Where HLCA have been identified which extend beyond the 2km study area they have been mapped as far as practical to provide a rigorous understanding of their nature and significance. However, where they appear to extend a considerable distance from the project, such as the Pennines and Lowland Fields HLCAs, an indicative boundary has been used, such as a river, railway line or road.
- 8.2.2 Within the study area, the following sources have been used to inform the baseline:
- North Yorkshire HLC (Dalton, M., Rowe, P. and Toase, S., 2013)<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Dalton, M., Rowe, P. and Toase, S. (2013) North Yorkshire, York and Lower Tees Valley Historic Landscape Characterisation

- County Durham & Darlington HLC (Wiggins, H. and Boldrini, N., 2019)<sup>2</sup>
  - Cumbria HLC (Cumbria County Council, 2009)<sup>3</sup>
  - Eden Valley Natural England (Natural England, 2013a)<sup>4</sup>, North Pennines Natural England (Natural England, 2013b)<sup>5</sup>, Pennine Dales Fringe (Natural England, 2015a)<sup>6</sup>, Tees Lowland (Natural England, 2013c)<sup>7</sup> and Vale of Mowbray (Natural England, 2015b)<sup>8</sup> National Landscape Area (NCA) reports
  - Historic mapping including tithe maps and historic Ordnance Survey maps
  - Historic Environment Record data
  - Aerial photography
  - Familiarisation site visit.
- 8.2.3 Over the last twenty years there has been an extensive programme of assessing and mapping HLC across the country. This data is invaluable for understanding the nature of the historic landscape, establishing methods to manage and protect it, and to assess potential impacts from development upon it (Clark, J., Darlington, J. and Fairclough, G., 2004)<sup>9</sup>.
- 8.2.4 However, there are limitations in the ways that HLC data, in its raw form, can be used in the context of large, linear schemes. Since the first HLC was produced in Cornwall in 1994 the methodology for the assessment of historic landscapes has evolved, meaning that there tends to be inconsistency in the data across different parts of the country. The project crosses three counties, meaning that there are three HLC available, all of which have followed a slightly different approach. Even where the data is consistent, there are also limitations in using HLC data in the context of assessing the potential impacts of large-scale infrastructure projects. This is because the individual areas of land identified tend to be relatively small in comparison to the area affected, which can lead to an overstating of adverse impacts in proximity to the project footprint while understating the overarching effect on the wider historic landscape.
- 8.2.5 In order to overcome these limitations, this assessment uses the North Yorkshire, York and Lower Tees, County Durham and Darlington, and Cumbria HLC assessments as a foundation from which larger HLCA have been identified. These encompass areas of consistent patterns in the components of historic landscape, which share an overarching nature and quality. Both the Cumbria and Country Durham and Darlington HLC assessments already include a stage of grouping individual parcels of land into larger historic landscape character areas. However, these are on a different scale to each other and use the modern county boundaries as their edges. The original HLCA have, therefore, been used to inform an assessment for the project but have not been strictly followed, particularly on the eastern side of the project where smaller, more localised, HLCA have been differentiated to enable a closer assessment of the impact of the project. Where historic landscapes clearly cross between the administrative areas, such as the high

<sup>2</sup> Wiggins, H. and Boldrini, N. (2019) County Durham and Darlington Historic Landscape Characterisation

<sup>3</sup> Cumbria County Council (2009) A Guide to Using the Cumbria Historic Landscape Characterisation Database for Cumbria's Planning Authority

<sup>4</sup> Natural England (2013a) National Character Area Profile: 9. Eden Valley

<sup>5</sup> Natural England (2013b) National Character Area Profile: 10. North Pennines

<sup>6</sup> Natural England (2015a) National Character Area Profile: 22. Pennine Dales Fringe

<sup>7</sup> Natural England (2013c) National Character Area Profile: 23. Tees Lowlands

<sup>8</sup> Natural England (2015b) National Character Area Profile: 24. Vale of Mowbray

<sup>9</sup> Clark, J., Darlington, J. and Fairclough, G. (2004) Using Historic Landscape Characterisation. English Heritage's review of HLC Applications 2002-03

moorland of the Pennines, they have been combined into a single HLCA. This has been to ensure consistency across the project and to ensure that impacts can be appropriately assessed.

- 8.2.6 A programme of aerial photography and Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) interpretation has been undertaken across the project. The results include detail on features of the historic landscape, particularly including traces of agricultural remains including broad and narrow ridge and furrow, drainage and field boundaries. Where relevant details of these results are referred to in this report and the full photography and LiDAR report will be presented in the Environmental Statement (ES).

### Assessing value

- 8.2.7 Historic landscapes are a part of the historic environment and can be considered as a cultural heritage resource (Highways England, 2020a)<sup>10</sup>. The value of a historic landscape depends on a number of features, including its rarity and preservation, and is determined through an assessment of its historical, cultural or archaeological significance. Table 8-1: Typical descriptions (*DMRB LA 104*, Table 3.2) shows the methodology used for assessing the heritage value of each HLCA, which allows them to be considered within the cultural heritage assessment (Chapter 8: Cultural Heritage). The value of historic landscapes has been assessed in line with the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) approach (Highways England, 2020b)<sup>11</sup>.

Table 8-1: Typical descriptions (*DMRB LA 104*, Table 3.2)

Value of the resource	Typical description
Very High	Very high importance and rarity, international scale and very limited potential for substitution.
High	High importance or rarity, national scale, and limited potential for substitution
Medium	Medium or high importance and rarity, regional scale, limited potential for substitution.
Low	Low or medium importance and rarity, local scale.
Negligible	Very low importance and rarity, local scale.

## 8.3 Historic Landscape Character Areas

### Eden Valley (A66\_HLCA\_001)

- 8.3.1 This is a large area of enclosed fields and nucleated settlements in the upper Eden Valley. Traces of medieval agriculture fossilised within post-medieval enclosed fields mixed with planned post-medieval enclosure. Medium value.
- 8.3.2 The Eden Valley is a large, wide valley on the western side of the Pennines. This HLCA, shown in Figure 8.3: Historic Landscape Character Areas (A66\_HLCA\_001),

<sup>10</sup> Highways England (2020) Design Manual for Roads and Bridges LA 106 Cultural Heritage Assessment, available at: <https://www.standardsforhighways.co.uk/prod/attachments/8c51c51b-579b-405b-b583-9b584e996c80?inline=true> [accessed 6 September 2021]

<sup>11</sup> Highways England (2020) Design Manual for Roads and Bridges LA 104 Environmental Assessment and Monitoring, available at: <https://www.standardsforhighways.co.uk/prod/attachments/0f6e0b6a-d08e-4673-8691-cab564d4a60a?inline=true> [accessed 6 September 2021]

is formed by the upper part of the valley, following the Eden Valley landscape character area identified within the *Cumbria HLC* (Cumbria County Council, 2021)<sup>12</sup>. It reflects the southern part of the Eden Valley NCA (Natural England, 2013a). The HLCA extends along the valley bottom from Penrith to Brough, bordered by the Pennines to the north (A66\_HLCA\_004) and the higher ground of Stainmore to the east (A66\_HLCA\_003). The topography is of gently rolling hills, with areas of former common arable typically on the lower ground and areas of post-medieval planned enclosure on the higher ground. Former common arable is the grouping used within the *Cumbria HLC* to denote areas of cultivated common fields, often with curving boundaries created by the lines of medieval ploughing, fossilised in later post-medieval enclosed fields. Traces of ridge and furrow have been recorded on the south banks of the River Eamont as well as around Kirkby Thore, where there is also evidence of medieval field boundaries and lynchets. Field boundaries within the HLCA are a mixture of hedgerow and stone walls. The planned enclosure are fields mostly enclosed from the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, often on areas formerly used as common pasture. To the east of Appleby there is also a clear area of medieval enclosed fields thought to reflect the site of a former deer park.

- 8.3.3 In the western part of the HLCA is the historic market town of Penrith. The town grew up around the medieval church of St Andrews, a Grade I listed building (01-0010) with the market place to the west of the church. To the south of the town is Penrith Castle and pele tower, a defensive building reflecting the proximity of Penrith to the Scottish border (02-0003). Beyond Penrith, the HLCA contains a number of small villages, including Brough, Kirkby Thore and Appleby-in-Westmoreland. The villages are nucleated, which is unusual for Cumbria and reflects the good quality agricultural land which was able to support larger settlements than is typical in the region. The survival of a mixture of medieval and post-medieval fieldscapes, combined with the patchwork of settlements, many of which have medieval origins, contributes to the historic and archaeological interest of this landscape.

### Lazonby Ridge (A66\_HLCA\_002)

- 8.3.4 This is an area of post-medieval enclosed fields north of Penrith. Low value.
- 8.3.5 This HLCA, shown in Figure 8.3: Historic Landscape Character Areas (A66\_HLCA\_002), follows the Lazonby Ridge landscape character area identified in the *Cumbria HLC*. It is a low fell, much of which was formerly covered by the Inglewood and Whinfell Forests, enclosed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The area's character is dominated by planned post-medieval enclosures with areas of woodland, most of which is more recent plantation but with small areas of ancient or replanted ancient woodland. However, there are traces of earlier agricultural activity in the form of both broad (medieval) and narrow (early post-medieval) ridge and furrow. The southern part of the HLCA is believed to have been a medieval deer park, Whinfell Park, which is recorded to have been near Brougham from 1258 onwards (03-0067). However, the HLC is consistently of planned post-medieval enclosure and there is only isolated survival of historic landscape elements pre-dating the later post-medieval period.

### Stainmore (A66\_HLCA\_003)

- 8.3.6 This is an area of ancient enclosures on the western edge of the Pennines. Medium value.

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<sup>12</sup> Cumbria County Council (2021) Historic landscape characterisation

8.3.7 This HLCA, shown in Figure 8.3: Historic Landscape Character Areas (A66\_HLCA\_003), is based on the Stainmore landscape character area identified within the *Cumbria HLC*. It is an area of land which slopes into the Stainmore Pass from the Eden Valley. In contrast to the mixed fields of the valley below it is almost entirely characterised by ancient enclosed fields and there are no areas of former common arable fields, reflecting a historic landuse of stock rearing rather than crop growing. This can be seen in a marked change in the presence of ridge and furrow identified by the aerial photography and LiDAR assessment, which identified a dense area of ridge and furrow along the edge of the Eden Valley HLCA to the south of the A66 near Warcop, but almost no traces of it on the northern side of the road which is within the Stainmore HLCA. Settlement is largely dispersed and mostly dates to the later post-medieval and modern period, reflecting patterns of more intensive farming on what was formerly open commons. The area is scattered with gill woodland, some of it ancient. There are also extensive quarrying remains. The clear traces of medieval landuse give this HLCA historic interest.

### Pennines (A66\_HLCA\_004)

8.3.8 This is an extensive area of open upland moorland and planned enclosures on either side of Stainmore Pass. Low value.

8.3.9 This HLCA, shown on Figure 8.3: Historic Landscape Character Areas (A66\_HLCA\_004), is an expanse of open moorland and planned enclosures to the north and south of Stainmore Pass. The HLCA forms part of the North Pennines NCA, with the western side being part of the Pennines character area identified by the *Cumbria HLC* and the eastern part within the West Durham Uplands area identified in the *County Durham & Darlington HLCA* (Durham County Council, 2021)<sup>13</sup>. The Pass has been an important route through the Pennines for many people in the past. Archaeological investigations have found evidence of prehistoric settlement and religious activities across the moor, possibly partially reflecting the slightly warmer climate in the Bronze Age, and it became a strategic routeway in the Roman and later periods. There are numerous Roman camps, signal stations and forts alongside the modern A66, which follows the line of the Roman road through the Pennines, and there are later, medieval, castles at both Brough and Bowes to the west and east. In the medieval and post-medieval periods the moor would have been used for its resources – for seasonal pasture, quarrying and lead mining. In the latter part of the post-medieval period areas of formerly open moorland were enclosed, which combines with the historic patterns of livestock rearing on the fells to create a landscape of enclosed high pastures and meadows with drystone walls (Natural England, 2013b). The peat of the moor itself is also of archaeological interest, as it may contain well-preserved palaeoenvironmental evidence which would allow archaeologists to develop a greater understanding of the region's landscape in the past. The importance of this landscape is predominantly archaeological and it is part of an extensive area of upland moor in the Pennines.

### Pennine fringe above the Greta and Tees valleys (A66\_HLCA\_005)

8.3.10 Post-medieval enclosed fields on the edge of the Pennines. Low value.

8.3.11 Area of mostly stone-walled post-medieval enclosed fields on higher ground above the Greta and Tees valleys, shown on Figure 8.3: Historic Landscape Character

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<sup>13</sup> Durham County Council (2021) Historic landscape characterisation

Areas (A66\_HLCA\_005). This forms part of the Pennine Fringe NCA and, like many areas on the eastern flanks of the Pennines, was enclosed in the 18<sup>th</sup> century in a mixture of formal Parliamentary enclosure and other planned enclosure carried out without an Act of Parliament (Natural England, 2013c). Unlike the lower-lying farmland in the valleys to the east, the higher ground on the edge of the Pennines was outside of the area cultivated in the medieval period, and the enclosure divided it into regular fields. This landscape has some historical significance, representing the process of enclosure which dramatically transformed this landscape in the post-medieval period. The progression of fossilised medieval strip fields to the east (A66\_HLCA\_006), through enclosed upland pasture and then to open moorland (A66\_HLCA\_004) is particularly legible in the landscape.

### Greta and Tees Valley strip fields (A66\_HLCA\_006)

- 8.3.12 This is a large area of enclosed fields along the Great and Upper Tees valleys which has traces of medieval strip fields fossilised within later boundaries. HLCA also includes the market town of Barnard Castle and the historic parkland of Rokeby Park. Medium value.
- 8.3.13 This HLCA, shown in Figure 8.3: Historic Landscape Character Areas (A66\_HLCA\_006), is formed by the sweep of the Greta Valley running from the edge of the Pennines to where it joins the Tees and, to the north, to Barnard Castle. The character of the HLCA is predominantly derived from the patchwork of narrow fields, which reflect the fossilisation of medieval strip fields within later post-medieval enclosure. This distinctive landscape occupies the valley-bottom lowlands of the area and reflects the agricultural practices of the medieval communities, who would have farmed the most fertile land with the uplands used as open pasture held in common. It shares its character with much of the Pennine Dales Fringe NCA, which also includes the upland areas to the west and south of the HLCA (A66\_HLCA\_005 and A66\_HLCA\_007). Analysis of aerial photographs and LiDAR shows numerous areas of well-defined medieval ridge and furrow in the landscape around Bowes and to the west and north of Greta Bridge. To the north-east of Bowes there is evidence of a coaxial field system likely dating to the post-medieval period (07-0075).
- 8.3.14 In contrast to the flat Tees Lowlands to the east and the open Pennine moorland to the west, this is a relatively wooded area, with long, sinuous bands of often ancient broadleaved woodland following the rivers and tributaries that flow through the area. Many of the fields also have tree-lined boundaries, contributing to the distinctiveness of the HLCA in contrast to the stone walled pasture on the hills to the west (A66\_HLCA\_005) and the hedgerow-bound lowlands to the east (A66\_HLCA\_008). In recent years the HLCA has also been used for mineral extraction, with large quarries located to the north and south of the A66.
- 8.3.15 The HLCA has features of considerable time depth. The Roman Road, the Street, runs from east to west through the HLCA, followed by the modern course of the A66. The Roman fort of Lavatrae, a Scheduled Monument was located at Bowes in the south-west corner of the HLCA, guarding the important strategic position at the base of the Stainmore Pass. The Norman castle at Bowes, also a Scheduled Monument (07-0005), was built for the same reason and formed part of a defensive chain along what was, at that point, the border between England and Scotland. At Greta Bridge, in the western part of the HLCA, the current line of the A66 has been diverted away from the historic course of the Street, but the original road course still runs through the village where it is presumed that there would have been a Roman river crossing over the Greta. While evidence of the Roman bridge has not been found to date, there is considerable evidence for a Roman presence here, with a Roman fort and

civillian settlement (vicus) near the river crossing (08-0002). In the northern part of the HLCA is the medieval market town of Barnard Castle; the settlement developed around the castle which defended an important crossing of the River Tees. In the west of the HLCA is the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century parkland at Rokeby Park. This is designated as a Grade II\* Registered Park and Garden (08-0048) and includes numerous listed buildings and parkland features associated with the hall. There were gardens and pleasure grounds laid out around the house, including romantically inspired features along the steep sides of the River Greta.

- 8.3.16 The HLCA has archaeological significance, reflecting patterns of defensive and logistical infrastructure and historic settlement and agriculture through the Roman to post-medieval periods, as well as having historical significance through the extensive survival of traces of the medieval farming landscape.

### Pennine fringe west of the A66 (A66\_HLCA\_007)

- 8.3.17 Irregular mix of field types on the Pennine edge. Low value.
- 8.3.18 This HLCA, shown in Figure 8.3: Historic Landscape Character Areas (A66\_HLCA\_007), is a transitional landscape between the Tees Lowlands and the Vale of Mowbray to the east and the Pennine dales to the west. While the area to the east has been more intensively farmed and is characterised by numerous modern agglomerated fields, this HLCA retains an irregular layout of fields reflecting piecemeal enclosure in the early post-medieval period. The higher ground to the west was enclosed as part of a large-scale programme of Parliamentary enclosure, but the fields within the HLCA were created through more informal processes, with individual farms or communities enclosing a group of fields, with more being added later. Mixed among the piecemeal enclosure are other areas of apparently planned enclosure, although this also was not carried out through an Act of Parliament and likely reflects the work of communities but in a more formal manner than the earlier piecemeal enclosure. The survival of early post-medieval fields within the modern landscape is of some historical significance, but it is not rare on a regional level, with over 130,000ha of piecemeal enclosure recorded in the *North Yorkshire and Lower Tees Valley HLC* (North Yorkshire County Council, 2021)<sup>14</sup>.

### Lowland Fields (A66\_HLCA\_008)

- 8.3.19 Extensive area of intensively farmed post-medieval and modern fields. Low value.
- 8.3.20 The Lowland Fields HLCA is shown in Figure 8.3: Historic Landscape Character Areas. There is a progression of landscape types, with open moorland transitioning to regularly enclosed fields on the hillsides, to the lowlands around the Rivers Greta and Tees which have a higher prevalence of fossilised medieval fields. East of these is the Lowland Fields HLCA on the edge of the low-lying plains of the Vale of Mowbray and the Tees Lowlands. This HLCA is part of a very large area of intensively farmed and often very large post-medieval and modern fields. Artificially, the eastern and northern boundaries of the HLCA have been delineated as the line of the A1, which follows the line of a Roman Road and which cuts a clear line through the landscape, and the Newsham Beck and a disused railway line (NER Darlington and Barnard Castle Branch). Beyond these limits the fieldscape continues in much the same way. To the south, the HLCA traces the edge of the more irregular fieldscape on the Pennine fringe west of the A66 (A66\_HLCA\_007) as far as the town of Richmond.

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<sup>14</sup> North Yorkshire County Council (2021) North Yorkshire, York and Lower Tees Valley Historic Landscape Character

Despite the general character of this area of large modern fields, there are still traces of earlier agricultural activity, including ridge and furrow at Browson Bank, East Browson and West Layton. Part of a broader pattern of agricultural improvement and intensification, which gives it some limited historical significance, and typical of a large area of landuse east of the Pennines.