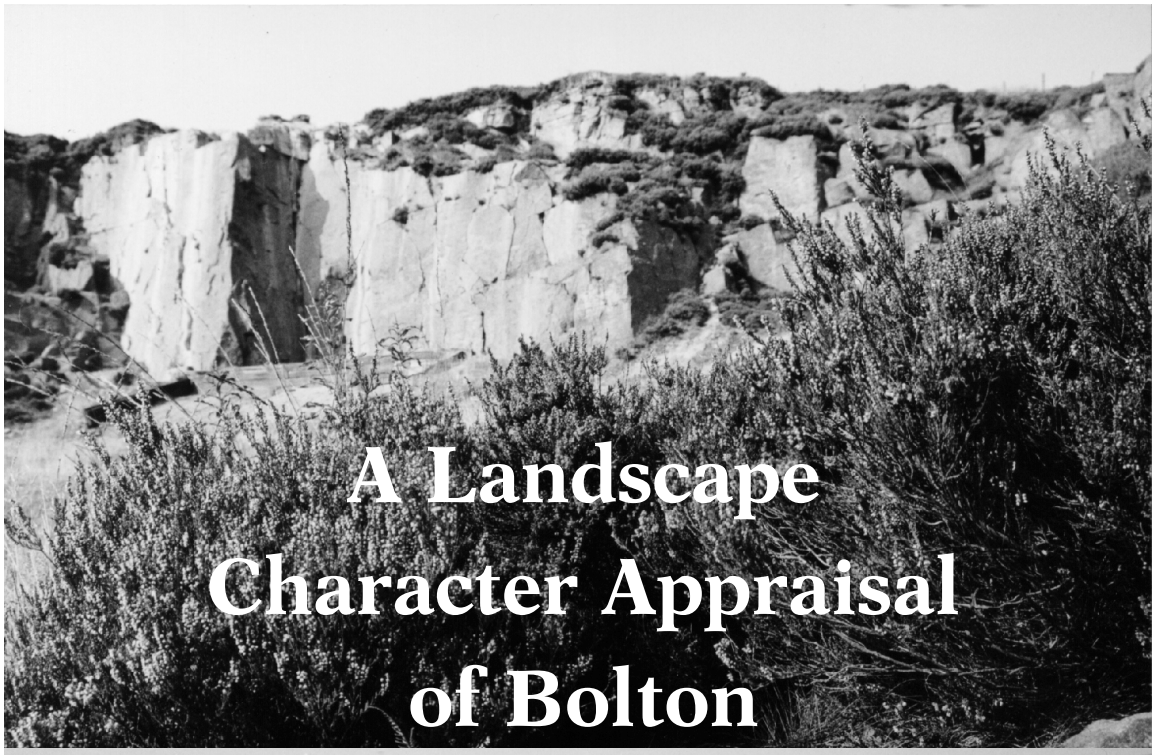
BOLTON METRO



A Landscape Character Appraisal of Bolton

October 2001

Photography courtesy of Pat Waring, 2001

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Contents Page

Introduction

The purpose of the Landscape Character Assessment is to assess the character, distinctiveness and qualities of the Borough's open countryside to enable us to find ways of protecting and enhancing the quality of the *whole* countryside and not just designated areas.

The Landscape Setting

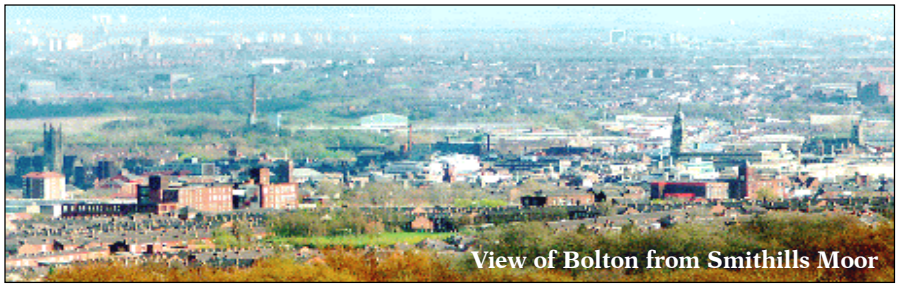
Bolton's landscape is rich and diverse and important features are often the result of the industrial and urban processes. Engineering features such as canals, mills, lodges and railways are all the product of industrial growth.

The special character of the Borough is derived from rural and agricultural landscapes, which were changed significantly by developments during the industrial age. More recently, the further sprawl of mixed urban developments together with the expansion in leisure related activities have also left their mark on the landscape. Relics from the industrialisation period include mills, warehouses, bleach works and mines. These together with the development of the associated transport routes such as canals and railways and recent influences on the landscape/townscape have added to the character and development of the Borough of Bolton.


63 steps at Barrow Bridge

The key features of the modern landscape of Bolton are the moorland backdrop, the remnant areas of woodland, the river valleys/wetland habitats and pastoral agricultural land. The undulating topography and rising land of the Pennines make the urban fringes of significant importance, softening the central urban area and providing visual breaks in the large areas of built development within the Borough. In recent years rural areas have come under significant pressure from housing and recreational developments, many of which have failed to preserve or enhance the underlying landscape character.

The relationship between urban areas and the surrounding countryside is a key aspect of Bolton's visual character; it is of paramount importance that this relationship between the landscape and the built edge of Bolton is protected and enhanced.


View of Bolton from Smithills Moor

Topography

The topography of the Borough is important both to the aesthetic value of the landscape as well as the potential for various uses such as recreation and agriculture. Altitudes vary from 450m at the Borough boundary on Winter Hill to 40m south of Westhoughton. Small hills rise from relatively flat ground, even in valleys, such as Bull Hill in the Croal/Irwell Valley. This landform structure may be divided into four areas, each with its own distinctive features:

- *The lowlands, often farmland, in broad valleys, in the south of the Borough;*
- *The river valleys;*
- *Intermediate ground to the west of the main urban areas of Bolton;*
- *High moorland in the north of the Borough.*

This landform structure is evident on the ground although in many places development has partially obscured and altered many features.

Geology

The character of the landscape is strongly influenced by the underlying geological structure. This character has developed from large scale earth movements resulting in folding and faulting, the differential erosion of soft and hard rocks and subsequent processes that occurred during the Ice Age.

The main solid rocks in the area belong to the Upper Carboniferous age, which is further divided into:

The Namurian Series (Millstone Grits)

The Westphalian Series (Coal Measures)

These Carboniferous rocks are overlain by rocks from the Permian and Triassic age, which are exposed mainly outside the Borough, although some exposures can be seen around Kearsley. The main rock unit is the Bunter (or Sherwood) Sandstone.

During the last Ice Age the landscape was modified by the advance and retreat of glaciers. Deep valleys were left across the hills, and glacial debris was transported from as far afield as Scotland and deposited over the whole area. As a result, most of the solid rock is obscured by a blanket of recent and primarily glacial deposits (drift). These comprise boulder clays, together with sands and gravel. More recent, post, glacial deposits of river alluvium and peats are also important features of soil composition/profile.

River valleys such as the Croal and Irwell Valleys were formed at the end of the last Ice Age, when glacial meltwater from the Rossendale Uplands flowed south, scouring the landscape.

Soil Types

The range of underlying rocks give rise to a variety of soils throughout the Borough which fall into five categories:

1) *Blanket Peat, on the northern areas of Smithills. These soils have been derived from blanket bogs which were once extensive in the uplands around Bolton's northwest fringes.*

2) *Seasonally waterlogged fine loamy soils, derived from sandstone and shale. These can be divided into two sub-categories:*

   (i) between Egerton and Horwich, where soils have a peaty surface horizon and consequently they are more acidic. This type is also found in small areas at Lostock, north west of Blackrod and at Red Moss;

   (ii) soils on the south, east, south-east and north-western fringes of Bolton are partly or entirely clay.

3) *Well drained coarse loamy soils. These can be further subdivided into:*

   (i) Dob Hill, west of Affetside, the Jumbles, Breightmet, Top O' Brow and north-west of Horwich. There is some waterlogging where soil becomes fine loam;

   (ii) Ringley and north-east of Blackrod, where soils are particularly sandy and have a high risk of wind and water erosion owing to their freely draining nature.

4) *Coarse loamy soils with a wet peaty surface and thin ironpan. These are acidic and poor in nutrients. They occur on Red Moss.*

5) *Raised Bog Peat characterised by layers of partially decomposed plant remains. These occur in a small area south-west of Kearsley, at Clifton, and at Kearsley Moss. Reduced groundwater levels and drying of the peat surface increases the risk of wind and water erosion.*

There are further areas of land where soils have been disturbed by past mining activity, but these have not been categorised here.

Settlement Pattern and Building Characteristics

The earliest settlements in the Borough were scattered clusters of buildings forming farmsteads or folds. Folds are typical of this part of Lancashire and consist of one or more farmhouses, cottages and barns grouped together in a random and informal layout. The buildings usually form short terraces, which have been added to over time so the scale, building line and detail of the individual phases of development differ slightly.

The oldest rural buildings are constructed of local vernacular materials, principally stone and timber, and blend well into the landscape. The majority of the older buildings have walls of coursed stone and roofs of stone flag or natural slate with gutters either of stone or of timber supported by stone corbels or wrought iron brackets. Door and window

openings have stone lintels and jambs, older farmhouses and cottages having stone mullioned windows. Window openings have strong vertical proportions and their opening lights originally of timber. Original doors to both dwellings and barns are usually of a vertical plank design. The style of these early buildings is very simple with little or no decoration other than the original owners' initials carved over the main entrance. Some early cottages have cellar loom shops and flights of steps up to the front entrances, flanked by iron railings.

Industrialisation from the late Eighteenth century saw the rapid growth of urban centres with mills, factories, mines and mass rectilinear developments of terraced housing progressively overlaying the previously rural landscape. Earlier development was still predominantly in stone, but this became increasingly replaced from the late-Nineteenth century by red brick.

Numerous groups of industrial buildings are sited in the bottoms of the river valleys as they originally relied on a plentiful water supply for power and processing, principally in connection with textile production, paper manufacture and bleaching. The oldest mills are of stone though most complexes have had brick built additions since the latter part of the Nineteenth Century. Again their grouping is fairly random and the scale, proportions and detail of the individual buildings varies considerably. The largest mills however created imposing elements within the wider landscape, and many still remain as landmarks visible from considerable distances.

A number of 'model' industrial villages are associated with the principal mills. These include Barrow Bridge, Eagley Bank and Egerton. These are sited on flat ground above the valleys, a short distance from the mills and consist of tightly developed, small, terraced cottages. They are of plain design, constructed of stone with slate roofs and a number have small front gardens. The settlements contain community buildings, including chapels as well as larger manager's houses and recreation space. Later red brick housing has been developed within or on the fringes of these villages.

During the Twentieth Century 'ribbon' development spread along many principal routes as road-borne transport improved. This development consists predominantly of detached and semi-detached houses, fronting onto roads and usually faced in brick or render with a variety of roofing materials, including red clay and concrete tiles. As a result of their formal arrangement and use of non-local vernacular building materials, these more recent houses form often incongruous and obtrusive additions to the landscape.

Most recently, during the last thirty years or so there has been significant impact on the landscape from estate-based housing development, commonly on green field sites on the edges of the urban areas of the Borough.

The Landscape Character Types

The open land of the Borough has been characterised into seven distinct character types:

- Agricultural Floodplains;
- Agricultural Coal Measures;
- Rural Fringes;
- Settled Valleys;
- Upland Moorland Hills;
- Urban Valleys;
- Wooded Rural Valleys.

Although each character type has its particular distinctive features, areas often blend with the next without clear definition of the boundaries between them. This document provides an outline of specific issues relating to landscape character. It also highlights areas of particular interest in landscape terms along with priorities for how each area can be protected, visually enhanced and best managed.

In a Borough-wide sense, the following are general forces for change within the open countryside, which may put pressure on the positive character of the existing landscape:

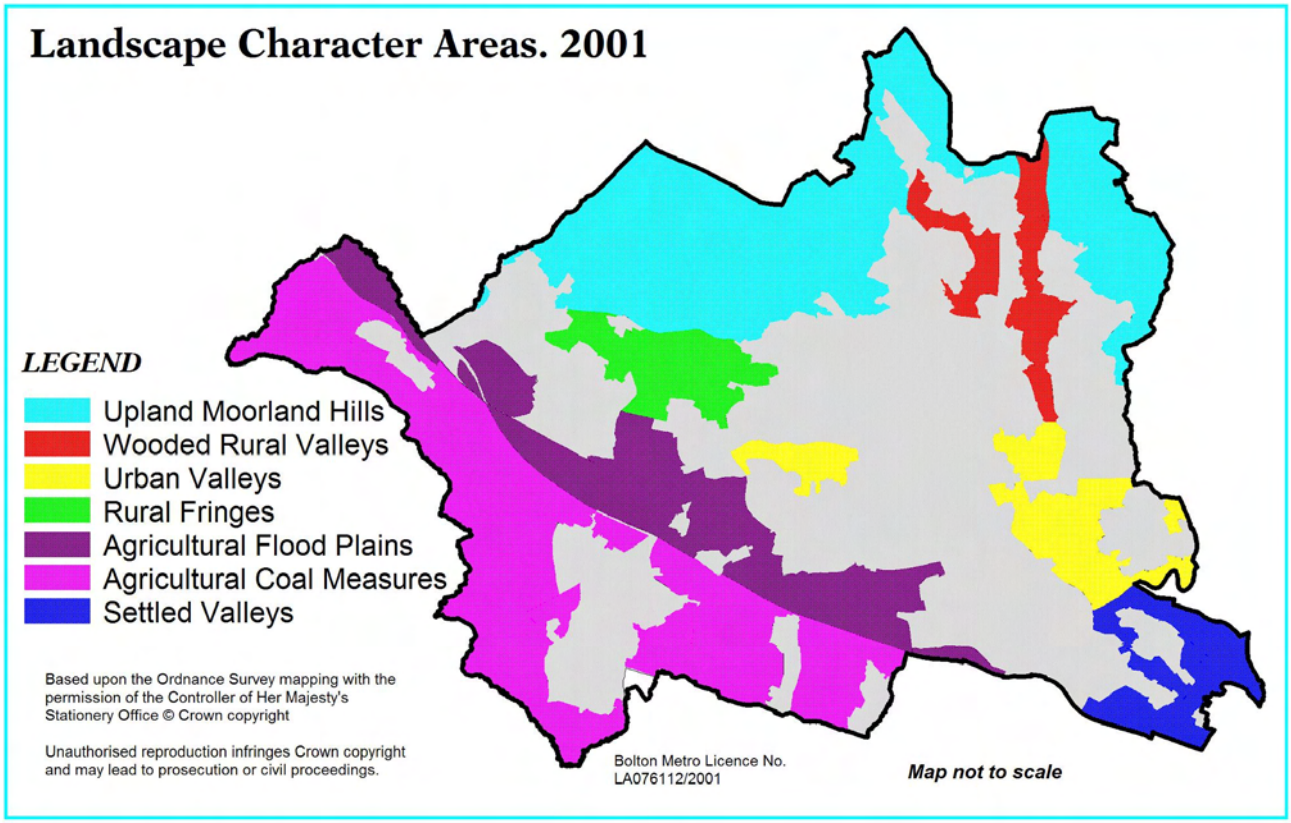
- Declining agriculture;
- Neglect of farmland;
- 'Horsiculture';
- Recreational related development;
- Release of green field sites for development; and
- Dereliction of land.

Within this setting there are substantial opportunities for improvements to existing and the creation of new, important landscape features. These include:

- Boundary reinstatement, e.g. drystone walls, hedgerows;
- Woodland planting & management;

- Habitat creation e.g. wetlands, woodlands, moorlands;
- Strategic tree planting, particularly in recreational uses;
- Habitat management;
- Interpretation facilities;
- Derelict land reclamation.

A number of documents are listed in each individual character area description. These provide background to the appraisal and should be consulted for further information, particularly regarding biodiversity and local distinctiveness.



Landscape Character Area:
Middle Brook & Douglas Valley

Landscape Character Type:
Agricultural Floodplain

The lowland mossland area centred on the Middle Brook is on the urban fringe and has been partly urbanised. This area is predominantly between 100 and 120 metres above sea level and follows the valley and floodplain of the Middle Brook. The area includes Red Moss Site of Special Scientific Interest, a nationally important nature conservation site. At the western extremity is the Douglas valley, on the boundary with the Borough of Chorley.

Key Landscape Features:

- Undulating topography of wetland areas and low-grade farmland.
- Remnant mossland areas, which are important for their archaeological and nature conservation resource.
- Small pockets of woodland.
- Enclosed character of the Douglas Valley contrasts with the more open character of the Middle Brook Valley.
- Major redevelopment and ribbon development fragments the landscape character.
- Noise from and visual dominance of the motorway and railway routes cutting through the area detracts from the landscape character.
- Recreational provision provides a manicured appearance and an urban fringe element to parts of this landscape area.
- Evidence of past industrial activity, such as spoil heaps, provide a sense of historic identity to the landscape as well as being important wildlife habitats.
- Large number of ponds provide attractive landscape features, however, they suffer from lack of management.


Rumworth Lodge

General Description:

This landscape area occupies the lowland belt between the Pennine fringe to the north and, to the south, the ridge that extends from Blackrod south-eastwards towards Kearsley. The geology, which is formed by the Lancashire coal measures, is reflected in the undulating topography. There are wetland and flash areas associated with derelict mine workings, areas of reed beds, open water and low grade farmland with isolated pockets of woodland. The area is divided by strong linear elements including the Middle Brook Valley, railway lines and the motorway.

Historically this area was particularly distinctive. It represented a belt of wetland and damp riverside meadows, which were almost continuous from Horwich through to Lostock. It was the largest area of moss or wetland in the Borough and has now almost disappeared. The surviving relict fragments, most notably Red Moss, are now of special significance as vestiges of a once more characteristic landscape.

There has been extensive development in the past 150 years in this lowland belt. These include the major industrial complex at Horwich and the more recent large scale industrial and commercial developments at Lostock Hall and Middle Brook areas. The Reebok Stadium for Bolton Wanderers Football Club, now forms a dominant visual feature in the wider landscape setting.

View from the A6 looking across to the Reebok Stadium, Horwich

The housing developments and golf courses around Lostock Station and the construction of motorway and railway routes have also added to the increased industrialised character of the area. These developments have had the cumulative effect of fragmenting and damaging the landscape from the Chorley boundary all the way to the built up area of Bolton.

Woodland within the floodplain is typically willow dominated with small pockets of semi-natural woodlands on steep sided valleys or cloughs, where the difficult terrain has prevented their clearance or conversion to other land uses.

The Douglas river valley is also of special importance with its predominantly enclosed and wooded character contrasting with the more open landscape to the east.

The more western parts of this area become more intensively agricultural, particularly around the important landscape features of Rumworth Lodge.

Formal and informal recreation provision in this area has lead to a manicured appearance in parts of this zone. These detract from the natural landscape character.

The condition of this landscape is variable with some scope for change and enhancement. However, those areas with an intact landscape character should be protected from development and alteration.

Sites of particular interest:

Red Moss

The Red Moss basin, commonly referred to as a 'peat bog,' is of considerable archaeological importance and it has been described as 'a classic palynological site' (the study of pollen), as a result of work carried out on pollen horizons dating back over 9000 years. The majority of the site is afforded protection as a Site of Special Scientific Interest because it is an example of a cutover lowland raised bog, supporting bog mosses (*Sphagnum* species). Lowland peat bogs are one of Europe's rarest habitats and even degraded examples are considered to be a priority habitat for nature conservation. More details are provided in a Habitat Action Plan entitled 'Lowland Raised Bogs.'


Red Moss

Rumworth Lodge

Set within an area of increasing urban development this pastoral environment retains its sense of historical character whilst also displaying a working landscape. The undulating landform dominated by agricultural use, gently


Rumworth Lodge

rolls towards a reservoir, occupying a natural depression in the middle of the landscape area. The reservoir and associated wetland are designated a Grade A Site of Biological Importance and have been identified as having value to over-wintering wildfowl, passage migrants and breeding waders whilst the ponds are of importance to great crested newts. Continuity of rural character and low maintenance use is essential to maintain the special features of this landscape; any change in land use is very likely to cause irreparable damage to the character and fabric of the area.

Shaping the future:

- Secure the maintenance and management of the existing woodland resource. Where possible, link woodland sites to form larger, more cohesive units, as long as this would not significantly reduce the area or integrity of other valuable habitats. Management should seek to enable natural woodland processes to take place, so that woodlands develop a natural and diverse structure with appropriate ground flora and understorey layers, in addition to the canopy of dominant tree species.
- Reduce the impact of the M61 motorway by encouraging planting on the embankments. This will serve as an acoustic and visual barrier.
- Secure the gapping up and maintenance of hedgerows and woodland areas within future development schemes. This will serve to strengthen the landscape character of the area.
- Protect the existing 'pondscape' and identify opportunities for management.
- Encourage more appropriate planting within existing recreation developments where the manicured appearance provides a sterile landscape character.
- Identify opportunities for the restoration of landscapes where appropriate. In particular, the re-establishment of wetland habitats along the Middle Brook valley bottom, close to the railway line at Lostock, would re-create one element of the lost historic landscape. Secondly, the tipped areas on the south side of the railway offer the chance to develop new woodland.
- Ensure any built development or changes in land use respect the overall character, in particular, by complimenting traditional design, in terms of scale, grouping, massing, materials and landscape treatment including hard/soft landscaping and boundary treatment.

Trees and Woodland Planting

A strong emphasis is placed on the planting of locally native species which are suitable to local soil types. Planting schemes must seek to ensure that new woods reflect the existing native woodland types, soils and other aspects of the landscape and ecology of the area.

Further Information:

Species Action Plans

Bats
Bluebell
Great crested newt
Water vole

Habitat Action Plans

Lowland dry acid grassland
Hedges
Lodges
Lowland heathland
Lowland mixed broadleaved woodland
Lowland raised bog
Ponds
Reedbeds
Rivers and floodplains
Semi-improved grassland
Spoil heaps
Unimproved neutral grassland
Wet woodland

Landscape Character Type:
Agricultural Coal Measures

Landscape Character Area:
Blackrod/Hulton Ridge

The Blackrod and Hulton Ridge is a gentle rolling ridge to the south of the Borough rising up from the lowland agricultural areas adjacent to the urban areas. Its altitude varies between approximately 120 metres rising to 165 metres above sea level. The area is characterised by poor grade farmland, which has suffered under-investment. This has led to deterioration and neglect, including the loss of hedgerows and their replacement with post and wire fencing. Within this setting there are patches of remnant deciduous woodland, particularly at Borsdane Wood, Arley Hall/Woods (along the Leeds and Liverpool canal) and at Hulton Park.

Key Landscape Features:

- Undulating topography with hills and valleys falling to the Mersey basin in the south.
- Low grade agricultural land with ponds and flash areas.
- Structure provided by broadleaved woodland.
- Fragmented landscape with scattered settlements and dissecting transport links.
- Lack of historical continuity and variety in landscape quality.

General Description:

Spoil heaps are not only a reminder of our industrial heritage, but modern day stronghold for some habitats of high importance for biodiversity

The landscape type reflects a history of coal mining in the area. It is an elevated landscape of gently sloping hills and valleys falling to the Mersey Valley in the south. It is further typified by low grade agricultural land with flashes which provide physical evidence of subsidence from former mine workings. The area is also characterised by a scattering of small ponds and broadleaved woodland. The broadleaved woods in this part of the Borough play a significant part in defining local landscapes with important examples at Borsdane Wood, Arley Woods and Hulton Park, all of which are Sites of Biological Importance. The ponds are of particular importance for supporting a European Protected Species, the great crested newt. This particular 'pondway' across southwest Bolton, Wigan and Salford is considered important in a regional context.

The pattern of settlement within this area, which includes Blackrod and Westhoughton, has created a very linear landscape. It is further characterised by degraded agricultural land dissected by ribbons of development, which closely mirror the road network. Despite this, some of the largest remaining areas of open rural land in Bolton are located within this zone.

The farmland is predominantly used for grazing livestock and is characterised by relatively small field sizes bordered by relict hedgerows. In some areas these hedgerows have been replaced by fencing. The landscape is permeated by footpaths /bridleways and unmade gravel tracks serving scatterings of agricultural buildings and dwellings. There are signs of physical deterioration in land quality especially towards the east of the area. The historical pattern of land use has been eroded since the 1940's primarily as a result of hedge removal, infilling of ponds and the reduction of woodland cover.

Site of Biological Importance: Ponds at Four Gates

This area contains an extensive network of major transport routes. The valley at Blackrod in particular has been visually damaged by the construction of the Blackrod bypass. Furthermore, it has been dissected from the remainder of the Borough by the M61 motorway, and the railway lines, creating thin strips of agricultural and recreation land separated by the transport routes. As examples of older transport routes, the presence of the Leeds–Liverpool canal not only visually enhances the northern extremes of this landscape character area with its related features such as bridges. It is now a valuable recreation resource and is afforded protection for its nature conservation value. A number of disused railway lines also cross the area and are now important for nature conservation and as low key recreational routes.

Agricultural land bordering the M61 motorway

The landscape is of variable quality and there is some potential for change within this character area.

Sites of Particular Interest:

Hulton Park, (Westhoughton)

This is one of the best historic landscapes in the Borough, which has been described by David Crosby in 1998 as a 'remarkable oasis in a district which has suffered significant damage to countryside and farmland character.' It is an example of an 18th and early 19th century parkland and, although there were collieries and tramways outside the perimeter, the park itself is almost untouched so that the pattern of plantation woodlands, the open parkland and the chain of small lakes are in an excellent state of preservation. The woodlands in particular are afforded protection locally for their importance for nature conservation.

Copperas House (Blackrod)

This is the location of one of the earliest chemical works in the north-west of England which produced ferrous sulphate and sulphuric acid from pyrite found in the adjacent collieries, and is therefore of historic interest. It is sited in an extensive belt of woodland on the slope immediately south of Blackrod town where a high proportion of the older boundaries survive and where the pattern of folds is still just detectable.

Arley Hall/Abbey Farm

The moated site at Arley Hall, its 18th and 19th century house and the Gothic Abbey farm make an attractive and significant group of historic buildings. Their overall setting is enhanced by the adjacent Leeds and Liverpool canal with its related structures. In spite of the parkland being altered to create a golf course, these sites, along with the Douglas valley stretching northwards towards Adlington, form an area which has a great deal of historical interest.

Rope Works, Chequerbent

The alignment of the Bolton-Leigh Railway rope-worked incline at Chequerbent is of historical interest. Opened in 1828, it was the first public railway line in the north-west. The incline itself was later bypassed when steam traction was introduced throughout and some features still remain. The area has been affected by colliery working and later industrial development.

Shaping the future:

- Large tracts of deteriorating farmland present an opportunity for landscape enhancement and/or restoration through the planning system. South of the area there is potential for further woodland establishment or otherwise managed for conservation without serious detriment to the landscape character. (It is recognised that, there would be strong objections to the afforestation of areas where there is a better survival of older field patterns and agricultural buildings).
- Secure the maintenance and management of the existing woodland resource. Where possible, link woodland sites to

form larger, more cohesive units, as long as this would not reduce the area or interest of other valuable habitats. Management should seek to enable natural woodland processes to take place, so that woodlands develop a natural and diverse structure with appropriate ground flora and understorey layers, in addition to the canopy of dominant tree species.

- Seek to influence the management of land, in particular, by encouraging countryside stewardship applications. Where hobby farms and horse paddocks predominate, the aim should be to enhance the landscape framework created by hedgerows and ponds and encourage/maintain species rich pastures.
- Restrict the extension of the urban edge out into the rural fringes. The clear distinction between the urban fringe and the rural areas should be maintained and reinforced by natural strong defensible boundaries where possible. Where appropriate, this should include block woodland planting to create a visual screen to dominant and unsightly urban fringe uses.
- Recognise the cumulative landscape impact of small scale changes such as highway improvements, traffic calming and incremental development which have gradually imposed a more urban character on the rural fringes. In future therefore, the aim should be to secure the use of sympathetic materials and appropriate landscaping.
- Where new development is permitted, ensure that landscape screening of industrial areas and farm structures strengthens and enhances the landscape character.
- Secure the retention, enhancement and management of important elements of industrial heritage which will help reinforce and retain the area's cultural identity.
- Secure the retention, enhancement and management of the existing 'pondscape' to maintain its contribution to landscape character in addition to its importance as a wildlife haven.
- Ensure any built development or changes in land use respect the overall character, in particular, by complimenting traditional design, in terms of scale, grouping, massing, materials and landscape treatment including hard/soft landscaping and boundary treatment.

Trees and Woodland Planting

A strong emphasis is placed on the planting of locally native species which are suitable to local soil types. Planting schemes must seek to ensure that new woods reflect the existing native woodland types, soils and other aspects of the landscape and ecology of the area.

Further Information:

Species Action Plans

Bats
Bluebell
Great crested newt
Water vole

Habitat Action Plans

Lowland dry acid grassland
Canals
Hedges
Lodges
Lowland heathland
Lowland mixed broadleaved woodland
Ponds
Rivers and floodplains
Semi-improved grassland
Spoil heaps
Unimproved neutral grassland
Wet woodland

Red Rose Forest Documents

Red Rose Forest Plan
Red Rose Forest Landscape Assessment

Landscape Character Type:
Rural Fringes

Landscape Character Area:
Horwich

This area is largely in agricultural use, with some parts of relatively intense use compared to the often derelict appearance of the wider landscape areas of the Borough. The land rises towards the Pennine Hills but retains a similar rolling character to the majority of the Borough. The fields are predominantly bounded by hedgerows, although there remain a scattering of derelict grit stone walls. The hedgerows and stone walls are often neglected with large gaps. Woodland also forms an important part of the landscape mostly in strips and larger blocks, for example at Burnthwaite Hall. This area forms part of an important natural break between the urban areas of Horwich and Bolton.

Key Landscape Features:

- A more sheltered domestic landscape on the gentler lower slopes fringing the West Pennine Moors.
- Grassland pasture enclosed by gritstone walls as well as hedgerow boundaries.
- Extensive tree and woodland cover with trees in cloughs, shelterbelts and along field boundaries as well as small scale plantations.
- Manmade reservoirs enhance the nature conservation interest, which are especially important for wintering waterfowl.
- Settlement character of scattered farms, individual rural houses and groups of dwellings clustered into small villages located below the uplands.

High Rid Reservoir, Horwich

General Description:

The Rural Fringes form a low lying manicured landscape surrounding the uplands, characterised by gradually ascending pastureland with strong vertical links to the open moorland in the north. Rarely more than 200 metres above sea level, the prevailing weather conditions are less harsh than on the exposed moorlands and gentler slopes; these combined with a milder climate allows for more intensive farming. These factors have led to the development of a small scale complex landscape with more varied landform and vegetation cover than is typical of the higher areas. Boundary features include hedgerows and drystone walls, whilst wooded cloughs, copses and plantations give rise to a more overly wooded feel.

Hodgkinsons Farm, Doffcocker looking over to Smithills Moor

The majority of the fields are improved grassland with urban fringe elements including, horse pasture, the provision of recreation facilities including golf courses and crematoria. This structure has led to a more manicured appearance on the urban fringe. The presence of man-made reservoirs strongly influences the landscape character and provides a key habitat for bird-life as well as a visually accentuated landform.

Settlement includes scattered farmhouses often with modern outbuildings, dispersed rural dwellings and small groups of houses/villages, newer suburban infill and edge developments. The close proximity of the urban area has influenced landscape character by imposing urban land use patterns. Gaps in ribbon development along the main roads provide important views into the area.

Areas of Particular Interest:

Ridgmont House & Park

Built as a private residence in 1800 by Thomas Ridgeway, one of the two brothers who established Wallsuches Bleachworks, Ridgmont House and its grounds, now a park and cemetery, have a distinct identity. The park is relatively open and is bounded by mature trees and stone walls. The house on the crest of a ridge provides a focal point.

Shaping the future:

- Seek to maintain the characteristic pattern of pastures enclosed by gritstone walls, which create the framework for this landscape type. Encourage the repair/restoration of degraded sections of all principal walls. Priorities are for those stretches of wall that are located alongside footpaths and lanes, around settled areas and those that are in view from the road and lane network.

- New development should respect the small scale dispersed settlement pattern of farmsteads and clustered villages. The surrounding urban edge should not be allowed to extend out into the rural fringes and the clear distinction between urban fringe and rural areas should be maintained by the creation of strong natural boundaries.
- Seek to influence the management of land, where hobby farms and horse paddocks predominate the goal should be to maintain the landscape framework created by stonewall boundaries and to promote appropriate grazing regimes that maintain existing species rich pastures, using methods such as countryside stewardship grants.
- Enhance recreational opportunities in the rural fringes to help ease pressures on existing footpath and rights of way networks.
- Restrict imposition of urban characteristics on the rural area.
- Consider opportunities for tree planting in association with any new development for example, to provide screening around new farm buildings.
- Encourage the creation of new areas of broadleaved woodland, in appropriate locations.
- Recognise that cumulative landscape impact of small scale changes such as highway improvements, traffic calming and incremental development has been gradually imposing a more urban character on the rural fringes. Therefore in future it will be necessary to secure the use of sympathetic materials and appropriate landscaping.
- Secure the maintenance and management of the existing woodland resource. Where possible, link woodland sites to form larger, more cohesive units, as long as this would not reduce the area or interest of other valuable habitats. Management should seek to enable natural woodland processes to take place, so that woodlands develop a natural and diverse structure with appropriate ground flora and understorey layers, in addition to the canopy of dominant tree species.
- Ensure any built development or changes in land use respect the overall character, in particular, by complimenting traditional design, in terms of scale, grouping, massing, materials and landscape treatment including hard/soft landscaping and boundary treatment.

Trees and Woodland Planting

A strong emphasis is placed on the planting of locally native species which are suitable to local soil types. Planting schemes must seek to ensure that new woods reflect the existing native woodland types, soils and other aspects of the landscape and ecology of the area.

Further Information:

Species Action Plans

Bats
Bluebell
Great crested newt


Bat

Habitat Action Plans

Lowland dry acid grassland
Hedges
Lodges
Lowland heathland
Lowland mixed broadleaved woodland
Ponds
Rivers and floodplains
Semi-improved grassland
Spoil heaps
Unimproved neutral grassland
Wet woodland

Conservation Area Character Statements

Wallsuches

Red Rose Forest Documents

Red Rose Forest Plan
Red Rose Forest Landscape Assessment

Landscape Character Type:
Settled Valleys

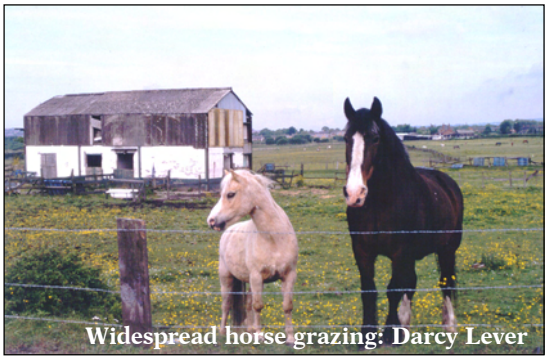
Landscape Character Area:
Lower Croal Irwell Valley, Kearsley and Ringley

The river valley areas share many features with the built up and lowland areas. The land falls to only 40m above sea level in the south east part of the Borough - the lowest lying part of the district.

Key Landscape Features:

- Wide floodplain.
- Medium/slow flowing river.
- Settlement and industrial development on valley floor adjacent to the river.
- Predominant exposed open character, little sense of enclosure.
- Large blocks of woodland on the valley sides, many of which are the result of planting schemes.
- Large fields with flat topography.
- Presence of the Manchester, Bolton and Bury canal contributes positively to the character of the area.
- Noise from and visual dominance of the motorway detracts from the landscape character.
- Visual dominance of power station with associated pylons, and power lines detract from landscape character.

General Description:

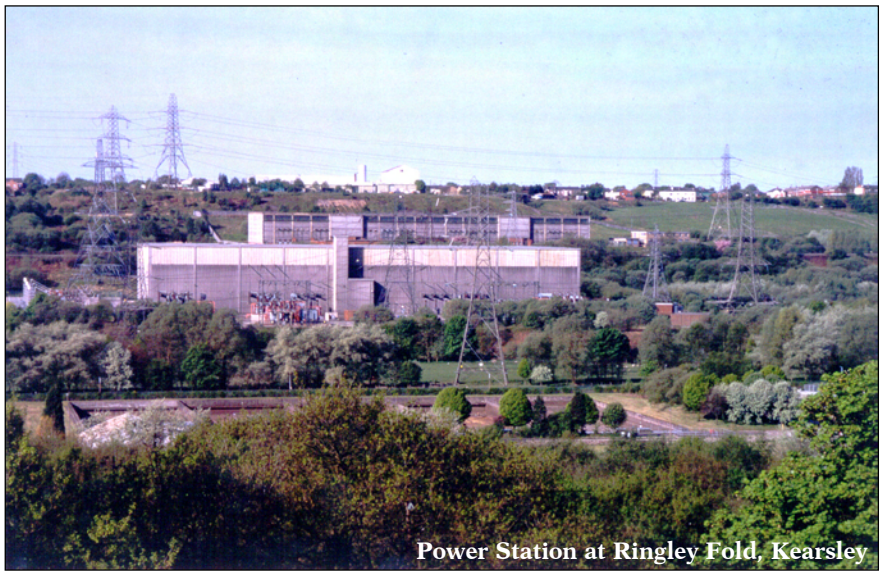

Widespread horse grazing: Darcy Lever

This area is dominated by the floodplain of the River Irwell. As the rivers that rise in the West Pennine Moors and flow into the Mersey Basin, they have developed a wide floodplain and so become medium to slow flowing. Settlements have developed with industrial development on the valley floor adjacent to the river, encroaching onto the floodplain. The river is defined in places by associated woodland on the valley slopes; much of this vegetation cover results from past planting schemes associated with landscape developments in the Croal Irwell Valley since the 1960's.

Large fields with hedged or post and wire boundaries combined with the flat topography lead to an exposed open character in parts. The main structure is provided by large blocks of woodland on the valley floor including plantations and semi-natural woodland.

Pylons and power lines tend to dominate parts of this area; they are prominent skyline features visible from most parts of the zone.

Historically, a belt of wetland habitats linked Horwich to the tracts of mossland in the Walkden/Kearsley area. This mossland was altered drastically by the construction of the M61/M60 interchange and although residual mossland remains, at Clifton Moss, it is in poor condition and lacks visual integrity having been heavily fragmented by the construction of this major engineering feature. Modern transport links make up a considerable proportion of the landscape character of this area. Noise from the M61 affects the open land adjacent to the motorway corridor. Industrial development along the valley floor, including the Ringley Sewage works also visually detracts from the overall landscape character.



Power Station at Ringley Fold, Kearsley

The valley, as a focus of historic transport routes, contributes to the specific landscape character of this zone. The pre-industrial period is represented not only by the bridges at Ringley and the Prestolee aqueduct, but also by stretches of the old 'packhorse' roads, including the ancient valley route which linked Manchester with Bolton via Ringley and Prestolee. There are also important sections of 18th and early 19th century turnpike roads, many lanes and tracks constructed to serve the multitude of industrial sites in the valley bottom and some traces of early colliery tramroads.

The most prominent feature apart from the river itself, is the Manchester-Bolton-Bury canal, which contributes positively to the overall character of the area; this is a site of high wildlife interest (designated a site of biological importance) and provides substantial recreational opportunities.

In general the condition of much of the landscape is poor and there is capacity for positive landscape enhancement.

Site of Particular Interest:

Ringley Fold

Pylons and power lines are a dominant feature in this area. The village, with its bridge, stocks and Ringley Old Bridge (a Scheduled Ancient Monument), has developed around an unusual sequence of three churches and several surviving groups of 17th and 18th century buildings. It forms an unexpected and attractive reminder of the pre-industrial landscape of the valley.

Shaping the Future:

- Encourage the development and re-creation of new large areas of woodland, which encompass a broad range of management objectives, including recreation, wood production, wildlife conservation and landscape improvement.
- Secure opportunities for tree planting in association with any new development, in particular, those that provide screening around farm buildings and industrial development.
- Strengthen boundary features, which will serve to enhance the sense of enclosure.
- Screen and provide acoustic barriers along the M61 motorway by providing a coherent network of structure planting.
- Encourage recreation along the canal network and strengthen existing recreational routes.
- Secure the maintenance and management of the existing woodland resource. Where possible, link woodland sites to form larger, more cohesive units, as long as this would not reduce the area or interest of other valuable habitats. Management should seek to enable natural woodland processes to take place, so that woodlands develop a natural and diverse structure with appropriate ground flora and understorey layers, in addition to the canopy of dominant tree species.
- Ensure any built development or changes in land use respect the overall character, in particular, by complimenting traditional design, in terms of scale, grouping, massing, materials and landscape treatment including hard/soft landscaping and boundary treatment.

Trees and Woodland Planting

A strong emphasis is placed on the planting of locally native species which are suitable to local soil types. Planting schemes must seek to ensure that new woods reflect the existing native woodland types, soils and other aspects of the landscape and ecology of the area.

Further Information:

Species Action Plans

Bats
Bluebell
Great crested newt

Habitat Action Plans

Lowland dry acid grassland
Canals
Hedges
Lodges
Lowland heathland
Lowland mixed broadleaved woodland
Ponds
Rivers and floodplains
Semi-improved grassland
Spoil heaps
Unimproved neutral grassland
Wet woodland

Conservation Area Character Assessments

Ringley Fold

Red Rose Forest Documents

Red Rose Forest Plan
Red Rose Forest Landscape-Assessment

Landscape Character Type:
Upland Moorland Hills

Landscape Character Area:
West Pennine Moors

The Pennines mark the northern fringes of the Borough, rising up to 450 metres above sea level. This area represents the only surviving moorland in the Borough. Within these areas, some remnants of parkland remain, including Moss Bank and Smithills. The agricultural parts of the areas have been in general decline for some years, with the neglect of many drystone walls in upland areas and some dereliction of vernacular farm buildings.

Key Landscape Features:

- Glaciated rounded hills, generally lower in altitude and less severe than the highest moorland plateaux.
- Valuable mosaic of upland habitats including blanket bog, heather moorland, wet heath and acid grassland.
- Important archaeological landscape.
- A sense of wildness created by the altitude and long, wide views.
- Accessible recreational resource for the surrounding urban areas with a number of recreational facilities and an extensive rights of way network.
- Close relationship with the adjacent urban areas providing the landscape backdrop for surrounding towns.

- Features typically associated with overgrazing on the lower slopes including moor-edge farms, access tracks and moor gates.
- A loss of traditional field boundaries and their replacement with post and wire fencing.
- Pockmarking of the moors with quarry faces.
- Intrusive features including transmission masts, overhead power lines and quarries.

General Description

This landscape type comprises the lower, gentler, outlying blocks of moorland to the west of the main Pennine ridge. The visual character of this moorland zone is formed by the soft rounded profile of the hills, which are surrounded by comparatively wide valleys. It is only the moorland tops that retain a sense of wilderness and isolation. The majority of the area affords excellent views out across the surrounding wide valleys and urban areas.

Hills at Affetside

The landscape area is diverse in character, with open moorland, wooded cloughs, areas of working farmland, former industrial sites and two major parkland areas at Moss Bank and Smithills. There is a clear unity derived from the upland topography but it is split into two sub-divisions and dissected by the built-up area of Egerton extending north towards the Borough boundary.

The use of the moorlands for rough grazing has been a major factor in the reduction and almost complete elimination of woodland cover and this activity has perpetuated the openness of the landscape by preventing woodland regeneration. Past land use has produced a distinctive agricultural landscape. The land was divided into intensively-used "infield' areas around the farmhouses and on the lower slopes, contrasting with the open land on the hilltops and upper slopes. This is still very apparent in the landscape today, for example, the view from Burnt Edge across to Smithills Moor or from the lowlands along the M61 looking up to the hills above Horwich.

The mosaic of upland habitats has high ecological value including blanket bog, heather moorland, wet heath and acid grassland. These are habitats which are afforded local protection status for their substantial nature conservation value and are also important for some Biodiversity Action Plan bird species such as twite. This area supports the largest continuous expanse of semi-natural vegetation cover in the Borough.

Archaeologically there are some important prehistoric landscapes with considerable evidence of prehistoric settlement and land use. Round Cairn at Old Harpers Farm is a Scheduled Ancient Monument. The moors have also been used for a range of industries, particularly in the period 1750-1900 and important evidence of these survives. Quarrying for sandstone and gritstone, widespread in the 18th and 19th century, still continues and the moor is pockmarked with small workings. The more recent workings are impressive in scale and occupy prominent positions on the edge of the hill. Abandoned sites are increasingly becoming used for recreation.

The moorlands have an intimate relationship with the urban area providing the landscape backdrop for surrounding towns and informal recreation opportunities through an extensive public rights of way network accessible from the edge of the urban area.

In general the condition of the landscape is reasonable and despite the capacity for change being limited, positive management is required.

Areas of Particular Interest:

Smithills Hall & Park

Smithills Hall and the surrounding estate is registered as a park of historic interest by English Heritage. The house is Grade 1 Listed. However the surrounding park has suffered major damage during the 20th Century. The area surrounding the Hall is designated a Site of Biological Importance and is of particular significance for its broadleaved woodland.

Wallsuches

The Conservation Area at Wallsuches (with its groups of 17th and 18th century farm buildings, the buildings of the former bleachworks dating from 1770s and handloom weavers' cottages amongst others) is of considerable historic interest and as a package provides a valuable complement to the adjacent agricultural landscapes.

Moss Bank Park

The Park has developed from 19th Century private grounds associated with the nearby bleachworks and the exceptionally planned industrial community at Barrow Bridge. Associated with these are the lodges which served the bleachworks and which represented one of the main leisure and recreational attractions for workers of the late 19th and early 20th century Bolton.

Shaping the future:

- Landscape restoration and enhancement of field boundaries by the replacement of non-characteristic field boundaries such as post & wire fencing with appropriate structures such as drystone walls or mixed species hedgerows on bank-and-ditch features. It is desirable to retain existing traditional boundaries where they still remain.
- Secure the retention, wherever possible, of the key features of old patterns of farming including the access tracks and moor gates.
- Retain evidence of historic industrial use (especially the period 1750-1900) and encourage their consolidation, conservation and interpretation.
- Encourage landscape restoration works at Smithills Hall and Country Park to take full account of the context of the house and its immediate surroundings. In particular, concentrate on the kitchen garden, patterns of planting, the network and management of ponds and watercourses and the reinstatement of older landscape features.
- Encourage opportunities for landscape improvement and restoration at Moss Bank Park, which could include features of the 19th century landscape such as the reinstatement of watercourses and water features, which were both ornamental and functional. It is important however that Barrow Bridge and Moss Bank are considered as a whole.
- Encourage management of the strong landscape features at Wallsuches, in particular the woodlands, lodges, ponds and drystone walls.
- Encourage appropriate management of existing golf course developments to ensure that they complement the surrounding landscape.
- Recognise that grazing plays a very significant role in woodlands and can have a strong influence on the appearance of the vegetation; it should be restricted to those areas with a long traditional history of this form of management. Areas that have developed without grazing should be protected from this practice.
- Secure the appropriate treatment of redundant quarries. This might include restoration in sensitive locations or ecological enhancement. Sites should be assessed for their geological, scientific or educational value and be protected/ managed accordingly.
- Encourage the restoration and enhancement of key characteristic habitats within the area, in particular upland heathland, blanket bog and semi-natural/ ancient woodland.
- Secure the maintenance and management of the existing woodland resource. Where possible, link woodland sites to form larger, more cohesive units, as long as this would not reduce the area or interest of other valuable habitats. Management should seek to enable natural woodland processes to take place, so that woodlands develop a natural and diverse

structure with appropriate ground flora and understorey layers, in addition to the canopy of dominant tree species.

- Recognise the sensitivity of the area in respect of light pollution, especially in new development proposals.
- Ensure any built development or changes in land use respect the overall character, in particular, by complimenting traditional design, in terms of scale, grouping, massing, materials and landscape treatment including hard/soft landscaping and boundary treatment.

Trees and Woodland Planting

A strong emphasis is placed on the planting of locally native species which are suitable to local soil types. Planting schemes must seek to ensure that new woods reflect the existing native woodland types, soils and other aspects of the landscape and ecology of the area.

Further Information:

Species Action Plans

Bats
Bluebell

Habitat Action Plans

Lowland dry acid grassland
Hedges
Lodges
Lowland heathland
Lowland mixed broadleaved woodland
Ponds
Rivers and floodplains
Semi-improved grassland
Spoil heaps
Unimproved neutral grassland
Upland heathland
Upland oak woodland
Wet woodland

Conservation Area Character Assessments

Barrow Bridge
Egerton
Riding Gate
Wallsuches

Register of Parks & Gardens of Special Interest

Smithills Hall & Estate
Smithills Restoration Plan
Smithills Management Plan

Red Rose Forest Documents

Red Rose Forest Plan
Red Rose Forest Landscape Assessment

Landscape Character Type:
Urban Valleys

Landscape Character Area:
Lower Bradshaw Valley, Mid reaches of the Croal Irwell Valley, The Tonge Valley, Middle Brook Valley

Key Landscape Features:

- Small/Medium scale valley floor.
- Fast flowing rivers.
- Small wooded cloughs along the river valley bottom.
- More open 'v shaped' valley.
- Secluded character even though adjacent to the urban areas.
- Important archaeological /historical sites.
- Formal and informal recreation provision.
- Redevelopment of sites for housing and industrial development.
- Post-industrial landscape features, which provide valuable nature conservation sites.

General Description:

Incised narrow valleys that dissect the West Pennine Moors and flow into the Manchester Basin and form one of the most distinctive landscape features of the South Pennines. The main valleys are particularly crowded by towns and urban areas, which more often than not originated at the point of a river crossing and expanded during the early industrial age. Despite this, they have managed to retain in part, a secluded, often rural character.

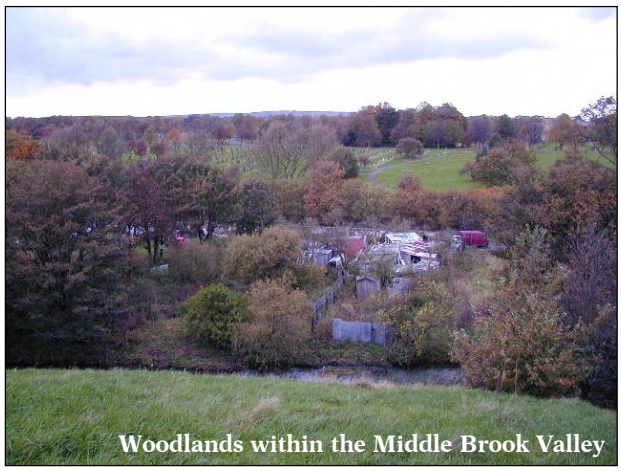
Bolton was an early focus of ecclesiastical estate organisation. It was a 'central' place which flourished in a prominent position in the angle of the river Croal and in a key position at the confluence of several valleys, hills and the Mersey Valley flood plain. This centrality and importance was reinforced by Bolton's role as a market centre. However industrialisation during the period 1700 – 1900 was the most important influence upon the landscape development of the Borough. This period brought about intensive growth of mills and bleaching works along the River Tonge, Bradshaw Brook and the Rivers Croal and Irwell. The textile mills with their distinctive chimneys dominated the urban skyline and became a hallmark of the South Pennines Landscape.

Transport developments line the valley floor with canals, railway links and road development encroaching onto the natural landscape.

Railway Line - Middle Brook

North facing slopes of these valleys usually remain free of development so that even within the urban areas there are frequently dramatic views towards woodlands or the patchwork of in-bye pastures and the moorland edge.

Some semi-natural broadleaved woodlands cling to the steeper slopes and fill the valley sides. This helps to reinforce a sense of enclosure within the valleys.


Woodlands within the Middle Brook Valley

The middle section of the River Croal is enhanced by the presence of Moses Gate Country Park. This site was developed on an area of past industrial development, including a bleachworks, lodges, chemical tips and gravel workings. It incorporates Rock Hall Visitor Centre, three lodges and woodland. It is important not only as a recreational resource but also ecologically. It is extremely valuable for nature conservation.

Much of the older landscape along the Middle Brook valley from Lostock to central Bolton has been lost, and many of the small industrial sites beside the river (including watermills) have vanished without trace. Suburban housing, especially on the northern side of the valley, has however provided an alternative element of historic interest, for this area shares with the more urban parts of Bolton some of the more architecturally and historically significant high-class and exclusive housing built in the late 19th century onwards as wealthier Boltonians moved out of Bolton Town Centre. Parts of the Middle Brook valley appear, from the valley bottom, to be relatively rural despite the surrounding urban areas.

The condition of this landscape type varies dramatically with the presence of modern industrial estates and factory units, derelict mills and the presence of tipping and dumping of waste often detracting from the natural river system.

The capacity for change in this landscape type is considerable.

Area of particular interest:

Leverhulme Park

Leverhulme Park was given to the Borough in 1920 by Lord Leverhulme; it is probably the most significant single landscape element of the Bradshaw valley. Most of the park has been levelled and artificially contoured, thus removing the original ground surface.


Leverhulme Park

It is somewhat sterile and featureless in historic terms. Much of its appeal however, lies in the impression of an older valley landscape which is conveyed by the vegetation characteristics and the landforms. In contrast, the golf course and associated parkland at Longsight retains more of its older agricultural landscape. Parts of the Park have considerable nature conservation interest and are designated as a site of biological importance.

Tonge Cemetery

This has been identified as a site of historic interest in a survey by and is a good example of a great urban cemetery, many of which were established in most towns after the 1850 Burials Act. It retains many of its original features and has an impressive array of funerary monuments. The cemetery makes a major contribution to the historic landscape of this section of the valley.

Nob End

The site consists of a calcareous waste heap from previous alkali industrial use. It has gradually become covered in vegetation. Nob End is particularly important for its grassland plant communities and is afforded protection as a Site of Special Scientific Interest, a Local Nature Reserve and a Site of Biological Importance.

Shaping the future:

- Recognise that the valleys contain a wealth of diverse habitats, such as calcareous, neutral and acidic grasslands.
- Strengthen these wildlife corridors given their accessibility to large numbers of the public; and promote their accessibility and interpretation potential.
- Acknowledge the importance of the linear areas for both informal and formal recreation and leisure and continue to promote new opportunities whilst respecting existing habitats.
- Encourage the development and re-creation of large areas of new multi-purpose woodland, that encompasses a broad range of management objectives including recreation, wood production, wildlife conservation and landscape improvement.
- Secure opportunities for tree planting to provide screening around farm buildings and industrial development.
- Secure the maintenance and management of the existing woodland resource. Where possible link woodland sites to form larger, more cohesive units, provided this does not reduce the area or interest of other valuable habitats. Management should seek to enable natural woodland processes to take place. Woodlands should develop a natural and diverse structure with appropriate ground flora and understorey layers, in addition to the canopy of dominant tree species.
- Ensure any built development or changes in land use respect the overall character, in particular, by complimenting traditional design, in terms of scale, grouping, massing, materials and landscape treatment including hard/soft landscaping and boundary treatment.

Tree and Woodland Planting

A strong emphasis is placed on the planting of locally native species which are suitable to local soil types. In all planting schemes we will seek to ensure that new woods reflect the existing native woodland types, soils and other aspects of the landscape and ecology of the area.

Further Information:

Species Action Plans

Bats
Bluebell


Bluebell

Habitat Action Plans

Lowland dry acid grassland
Calcareous grassland
Hedges
Lodges
Lowland heathland
Lowland mixed broadleaved woodland
Ponds
Rivers and floodplains
Semi-improved grassland
Spoil heaps
Unimproved neutral grassland
Wet woodland

Conservation Area Character Assessments

Chorley New Road
Deane

Red Rose Forest Documents

Red Rose Forest Plan
Red Rose Forest Landscape Assessment

Other

Nob End Management Plan

Landscape Character Type:
Wooded/Rural Valleys

Landscape Character Area:
Eagley Brook, Bradshaw Brook

The Eagley Brook and Bradshaw Brook are valleys between the urban area and the Pennine Moors. The area retains the rolling topography of the majority of the Borough. It is dominated by deciduous woodland. Mature hedgerows and larger pockets of woodland break up the urban fringes. These woodland areas are prominent within the wider landscape. They include those at Hall i' th' Wood which form a linear break to the urban area.

Key Landscape Features:

- Distinctive incised 'v shaped valley' landform.
- Steep sided valleys enclosed by woodland.
- Secluded, hidden character.
- Strings of often derelict water-powered mills, many subject to development and/or refurbishment.
- Largely inaccessible except by foot.
- Inappropriate redevelopment of old industrial sites.

General Description:

Although each of the valleys is distinctive they share some common characteristics. Generally they are steep v-shaped valleys and contain extensive semi-natural woodlands. The difficult terrain has, in the past, prevented clearance and conversion of the land to other uses. This type of woodland is of great ecological significance because of the high diversity and fragility of its associated flora and fauna.

A secluded intimate character is derived from this combination of deeply incised topography. Abundant woodland clothes the valley sides often blocking the sky from view. Although they exist in close proximity to densely urbanised areas, they are in the main only accessible by foot.

The swift flowing streams which tumble over the gritstone rocks often create waterfalls. These waters once provided power for the industry of the region. The valleys are lined with the remains of cotton mills.

The valleys include a number of important features of the past industrial periods and its rural precursor. The valley of the Bradshaw Brook below the reservoir at Jumbles was once heavily industrialised, with a large number of small coal pits and sandstone quarries, together with a chain of print, bleach and dye works, all of which made use of the available water power. All of these sites have closed and most have been abandoned for many decades. Their footprints are overgrown and can only be traced with great skill and a certain amount of difficulty. There are also traces of old coal pits and

sandstone quarries, notable among the latter is the quarry below the dam at Jumbles, with its waterfall. Past industrial features are now recognised as making a significant contribution to the conservation of biodiversity. An example of this are the Bradshaw Lodges which support important plant and insect communities and are included in the Bradshaw Woods Site of Biological Importance. Surviving elements of the older agricultural landscape remain, for example, the lane from Bradshaw Road to the foot of the dam at Jumbles.

The narrow valley of Eagley Brook, running southwards from Dunscar, is also a landscape of great historical interest for its early industrial importance and for the survival of sites and features from that period. These include the major cotton mill complexes at Dunscar and Eagley Bridge.

The site of the old Firwood Bleachworks has been redeveloped in recent years although a small number of the old buildings remain. The modern buildings that have been erected in this section of the valley provide an urbanised feel that appears alien and obtrusive now, such is the extent of the re-naturalisation that has occurred.


Jumbles Country Park

Sites of Particular Interest:

Bradshaw Works

The former bleachworks at Bradshaw was once an important industrial site. It has recently been redeveloped for housing. In Bolton, this is a good example of best practice when new development takes place. Attention to detail is of a high standard and the use of natural stone compliments the landscape character.

Hall i' th' Wood

The Hall and museum at Hall i' th' Wood are extremely important in the history of the Industrial Revolution and because of its role in the story of Samuel Crompton. The museum holds key artefacts from the Industrial Revolution. During a refurbishment of the building the original Crompton's Mule was found and has since been restored. The house itself is now carefully protected but its historical context in the landscape has been lost to a large extent.

Shaping the future:

- Stabilise, conserve or sensitively redevelop vernacular features such as the derelict mills, which line the valley floors.
- Conserve landscape features associated with the historic mills including races, mill ponds, leats and meadows. These features may have developed considerable nature conservation interest and should be respected for this. Potential opportunities for interpretative work should be seized where possible; highlighting the part industry has played in the development of this valley and in shaping its present character.
- Pursue opportunities to extend and promote informal recreational use within these valleys.
- Recognise and develop opportunities for the further enhancement of the landscape of the Eagley Valley and its industrial heritage. For example conserve the surviving remnants of agricultural field boundaries, tracks and pathways and residual or recent woodland. Such work might allow Hall i' th' Wood to be reintegrated in a more appropriate landscape context.
- There is limited scope for development within these quiet and secluded valleys. Any development that does take place should respect the landscape character. It should be ensured that any development of the industrial sites take into consideration archaeological, historic and landscape character type.
- Recognise and seek to protect all habitats.
- There is scope for additional planting on the urban edge to soften recent residential developments which form uncharacteristic hard edges to the urban/rural fringe.
- Secure the maintenance and management of the existing woodland resource. Where possible, link woodland sites to form larger, more cohesive units, as long as this would not reduce the area or interest of other valuable habitats. Management should seek to enable natural woodland processes to take place, so that woodlands develop a natural and diverse structure with appropriate ground flora and understorey layers, in addition to the canopy of dominant tree species.
- Ensure any built development or changes in land use respect the overall character, in particular, by complimenting traditional design, in terms of scale, grouping, massing, materials and landscape treatment including hard/soft landscaping and boundary treatment.

Tree and Woodland Planting

A strong emphasis is placed on the planting of locally native species which are suitable to local soil types. In all planting schemes we will seek to ensure that new woods reflect the existing native woodland types, soils and other aspects of the landscape and ecology of the area.

Further Information:

Species Action Plans

Bats
Bluebell
Great crested newt
Water vole


Water vole

Habitat Action Plans

Lowland dry acid grassland
Hedges
Lodges
Lowland heathland
Lowland mixed broadleaved woodland
Ponds
Rivers and floodplains
Semi-improved grassland
Spoil heaps
Unimproved neutral grassland
Wet woodland

Conservation Area Character Statements

Dunscar
Bradshaw Chapel

Red Rose Forest Documents

Red Rose Forest Plan
Red Rose Forest Landscape Assessment

Appendices

Aims

The aims of the Landscape Assessment process were endorsed by both Leisure Services and Environment Committees, on 2 June and 17 June 1999 respectively, and are as follows:

- To promote debate on the future of the landscape within the Borough of Bolton and help determine how best the Council's objectives can be achieved.
- To classify and describe the distinct and diverse landscape character of the Borough.
- To produce a clear set of policies which serve to protect and enhance the landscape of Bolton.
- To provide a context for landscape policies within the Unitary Development Plan Review.
- To develop a strategy which promotes better protection, enhancement and long term management of the town's outdoor spaces and landscape features.
- To provide important information and guidance for anyone involved in making decisions that affect the physical environment.
- To identify and maximise opportunities for landscape conservation, enhancement and restoration.
- To identify and ensure that existing features, which give character and a sense of place to new development, are retained and protected.
- To provide a basis for and inform the formulation of Countryside and Urban Design Guidance.
- To provide a baseline for monitoring change in landscape character.
- To describe the importance of the landscape and its contribution to the quality of life in the Borough.
- To identify the diverse character of the Borough and assist in developing a sense of place in each district area.

Within the UDP the Landscape Assessment is only intended to provide guidance within areas of open countryside. Therefore the Landscape Character Areas only relate to the areas defined as Green Belt or Other Protected Open Land, although the influence of the built environment on these areas was assessed in detail during the study. In order for the Assessment to be fully incorporated into the UDP Review process and enable its findings to form the basis for development control decisions, it was decided to carry out the assessment at a scale of 1:10,000.

Individual decisions on sites *may* need a more detailed assessment on a case by case basis. However, this document should provide a framework within which that can occur and indicators against which to assess the relationship of a site to its surroundings.

Methodology

Desk Study

A series of overlays at 1:10,000 of Bolton was prepared showing various physiographic factors e.g. geology, relief, soils, land capability; and the relationship between these and the landscape considered. The relief map was identified as being the most useful. Historic and human factors were also considered.

Preliminary Field Study

A preliminary field survey using a survey sheet was carried out: at least three sites per major relief feature were visited and surveyed. Photographs were taken.

Broad Landscape Associations

Broad landscape associations were identified and mapped. Areas for detailed survey were identified and draft landscape types generated.

Detailed Field Study

A detailed field survey was carried out and detailed descriptions of landscape types were recorded. The key visual characteristics of individual landscape types were identified, whether physiographic or historic in origin, and the landscapes measured against this criteria. The landscape types were mapped at 1:5000. Photographs were taken.

Analysis and Classification

The survey sheets were analysed to refine the individual landscape types, boundaries and landscape classification.

The Product

The products of the study were:

- A classification of landscape types
- A list of key landscape features
- A general description
- Identification of areas of special interest
- A list of the key issues affecting areas with the direction the Council intends to take
- Identification of sources for further information on issues which contribute to the local distinctiveness of the identified character area.

Bolton's Unitary Development Plan

The replacement UDP contains a specific policy in respect of Landscape Character Areas. This policy was subject to two rounds of public consultation: from 5th June to 17th July 2000 and 22nd January to 5th March 2001. Policy R5 of the emerging UDP states:

Landscape Character

R5. The Council will permit development within the Landscape Character Areas, as indicated below, which makes a positive contribution to or strengthens the character of the landscape. Development which adversely affects the character of the landscape will not be permitted.

A detailed landscape appraisal of Bolton has recently been carried out which has resulted in the identification of seven Landscape Character Areas as follows:

1. *Upland Moorland Hills*
2. *Rural Fringes*
3. *Wooded/ Rural Valleys*
4. *Settled Valleys*
5. *Urban Valleys*
6. *Agricultural Floodplains*
7. *Agricultural Coal Measures*

Where development is permissible under other policies in the plan it is important that it respects the landscape character of the surrounding countryside and maintains its distinctiveness. New development should respect, and where possible enhance, the environment in its location, scale and design. The appraisal also identifies important landscape features, potential threats to their character and future management needs. The Landscape Appraisal is currently undergoing public consultation and will then be adopted by the Council for use as supplementary planning guidance.

Previously, 'Areas of Special Landscape Value' were identified as being of high value as areas of unspoiled countryside and forming attractive, richly varied human and natural landscapes. However, Government guidance has shifted emphasis from these local countryside designations towards enriching the quality of the entire countryside. The character and qualities for which these areas were originally identified will still be afforded protection by this Policy, although it will now be appropriate to consider their identified relationship with the remainder of their identified Character Area.

The West Pennine Moors (WPM) were specifically identified for their attractive landscape and their importance for informal recreation opportunities and wildlife and geological value. The area now forms a distinct Landscape Character Area (Upland Moorland Hills). The Council has adopted the Statement of Intent, (a policy statement produced by the WPM Management Committee), as supplementary planning guidance.

This puts forward policies aimed at meeting the needs of people living and working in the area, and those wishing to use the area for recreation, in a sustainable way having regard to the environment. In determining planning applications the Council will also have regard to the South Pennine Landscape Assessment, the South Pennine Landscape Guidelines and the South Pennine Countryside Design Strategy.