

# Leeds Landscape Assessment

1994



## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

We would like to acknowledge the many organisations and individuals who helped us in the preparation of this report.

In particular we would like to thank the members of the Steering Group for their valuable advice and assistance during the course of the work, namely David Feeney, Andrew Pomeroy and Steve Halkon-Hunt from Leeds City Council, and Hazel Thomas and Ken Burgess from the Countryside Commission.

Thanks are also due to the West Yorkshire Archaeology Service, who provided information on the historical interest and evolution of the Leeds landscape and to the students of Leeds Metropolitan University, who carried out the interviews for the survey on public perceptions.

The Land Use Consultants project team was Carys Swanwick, Jane Rollins, Alex Minshull and Jane Gorst.

**Land Use Consultants  
February 1994**

Land Use Consultants  
Trioka House  
2 East Union Street  
Rugby  
Warwickshire CV22 6AJ

## **CONTENTS**

### **CHAPTER 1: Introduction and scope of report**

Introduction

Background

Contents of the report

## **PART 1 THE LEEDS LANDSCAPE**

### **CHAPTER 2: THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE LEEDS LANDSCAPE**

Introduction

Physical influences on the landscape

Human influences on the landscape

The first 9,000 years

The last 1200 years

### **CHAPTER 3: FEATURES OF THE LEEDS LANDSCAPE**

Introduction

Farmland Semi-natural habitats

Woodland Heathland and moor

Amenity and semi-natural grassland

Rivers and wetlands

Industrial, disused and restored land

Buildings and infrastructure

### **CHAPTER 4: CHARACTER OF THE LEEDS LANDSCAPE**

Introduction

Regional character areas Leeds Coal Measures Millstone Grit Plateau Wharfedale

Eastern Limestone Belt Vale of York

Landscape types Landscape units Hierarchical framework

### **CHAPTER 5: FORCES FOR CHANGE**

Introduction

The nature of change

New development - New housing, Farm development, Road schemes

Mineral extraction and waste disposal

Agriculture and land management

Trees and woodlands

Tourism and recreation

### **CHAPTER 6: PERCEPTIONS OF THE LEEDS LANDSCAPE**

Introduction

Past Perceptions: Artists and Descriptive writing

Present day perceptions

Character of the landscape

Landscape change Conclusions

### **CHAPTER 7: MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES AND GUIDELINES**

Introduction

Overall management strategy

Landscape management guidelines

Mechanisms for implementation

General management guidelines

## **PART 2 LANDSCAPE TYPES**

Pastoral fringe farmland  
Arable fringe farmland  
Urban fringe parklands  
Encapsulated countryside  
Open arable farmland  
Arable plateau farmland  
Pastoral plateau farmland  
Pastoral escarpment  
Small scale farmed ridges and valleys  
Gritstone moorland  
Limestone villages and farmland  
Wooded escarpment  
Wooded parkland  
Wooded plateau edge valleys  
Wooded farmland  
River floodplain  
River valley  
River gorge  
Degraded river valley

## **PART 3 LANDSCAPE UNITS**

|                                     |                                       |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| WHF1 Linton Hills                   | LCM8 South Morley Fringe              |
| WHF2 West Harewood Escarpment       | LCM9 Roundhay Park                    |
| WHF3 East Harewood Escarpment       | LCM10 Temple Newsam                   |
| WHF4 The Chevin                     | LCM11 Middleton                       |
| WHF5 Harewood                       | LCM12 Meanwood Valley                 |
| WHF6 Otley to Pool Floodplain       | LCM13 Kirkstall Valley                |
| WHF7 Arthington Floodplain          | LCM14 Wyke Beck Valley                |
| WHF8 Linton - Collingham Floodplain | LCM15 Barwick to Garforth             |
| MGP1 Hollin Hall Plateau            | LCM16 Rawdon Plateau                  |
| MGP2 Hawksworth Plateau             | LCM17 Methley Park                    |
| MGP3 Guiseley Plateau               | LCM18 Calverley Valley                |
| MGP4 Eccup Plateau                  | LCM19 Cockersdale                     |
| MGP5 Wike Ridge to East Rigton      | LCM20 Lower Aire Valley               |
| MGP6 Hawksworth Moor                | ELB 1 East Garforth                   |
| MGP7 Hawksworth Gill                | ELB2 East Bramham                     |
| MGP8 Moseley Beck                   | ELB3 Boston Spa, Clifford and Bramham |
| LCM1 Gildersome Fringe              | ELB4 Bramham Park                     |
| LCM2 Bradford Fringe                | ELB5 West Bramham                     |
| LCM3 East Leeds                     | ELB6 Aberford                         |
| LCM4 Kippax and Swillington Fringe  | ELB7 Ledsham to Lotherton             |
| LCM5 Rothwell Fringe                | ELB8 Wetherby Gorge                   |
| LCM6 East Ardsley Fringe            | VOY1 East Wetherby                    |
| LCM7 East Morley Fringe             |                                       |

## **APPENDICES**

Appendix A: method of landscape assessment

Appendix B: public perception survey and focus groups

Appendix C: schemes and grants for management

Appendix D: sources of information and references

## **TABLES AND FIGURES**

Table 1: Regional character areas, landscape types and landscape units

Table 2: Summary of landscape change in sample areas

Table 3: Relevant grant and incentive schemes

Table 4: Summary of landscape character and management guidelines for landscape types

Figure 1: Topography, geology and drainage

Figure 2: Landscape types and landscape units

Figure 3: Location of sample areas

Figure 4: Management strategies

Figure 5.1-5.3: Photographs of landscape types

## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

### Background

- 1.1 Leeds is the second largest metropolitan district in the country, covering 552 square kilometres. Although Leeds itself is an extensive urban area, the surrounding countryside accounts for approximately two-thirds of the city council's total area, with the majority being designated as Green Belt. A key feature of the Leeds landscape is the considerable variety of landform, vegetation, patterns of cultivation, character of settlements and communications networks, which together create the great diversity of landscape character within the area.
- 1.2 In July 1993, Land Use Consultants were commissioned by Leeds City Council, with support from the Yorkshire and Humberside Region of the Countryside Commission, to produce a District wide landscape assessment of the area covered by the Leeds Countryside Strategy, (which largely corresponds with the Leeds Green Belt boundary).

The objectives of the landscape assessment, as set out in the brief were to:

- (i) describe and analyse the landscape character of the District, identifying individual landscape types and those features/elements which characterise them;
- (ii) provide a landscape framework to:
  - guide and inform those responsible for development, landscape change and the management of landscape;
  - seek to conserve and enhance the characteristic landscape types of the area;
  - seek to avoid management methods and forms of development which would be detrimental to landscape character;
  - specify measures to meet land management objectives;
  - identify areas where little or no original fabric remains, where there are opportunities to create new landscapes.
- (iii) identify the factors which have had an influence upon landscape change in the past and those that are likely to do so in the future, in making recommendations on how to respond to these changes;
- (iv) have regard to local perceptions of landscape both past and present, 'sense of place' and areas of local landscape value.

### Content of the report

- 1.3 This report sets out the results of our assessment, which has been based on both desk study and detailed field survey, as set out in Appendix A. It is divided into three parts:

**Part 1**, made up of Chapters 1 to 7, describes the Leeds landscape and the forces that have shaped it, as well as considering the way that it has been perceived in both the past and the present. It also sets out general management strategies and guidelines which are applicable for the whole of the Leeds landscape.

**Part 2** describes the character of the landscape types which have been identified within the Leeds area. It also sets out the management strategies and guidelines for each of the landscape types, with the aim of conserving and enhancing landscape character and responding to pressures for change.

**Part 3** contains detailed descriptions of individual landscape units, which are locally distinct landscape areas, and specific guidance on the conservation and enhancement opportunities in each area.