



# **Open Land Designations Study**

## **Appendix A – Landscape Value Assessment**

### **Preston City Council, South Ribble Borough Council and Chorley Council**

**Final report**

Prepared by LUC

October 2022

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Open Land Designations Study

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# Appendix A

## Landscape value assessment

## LCA 2a: West Pennine Moors

### Location and Key Characteristics

The key characteristics and strategy for the Landscape Character Area (LCA) below are copied in full from the 'Landscape Strategy for Lancashire: Landscape Character Assessment' (2000).

This LCA is located to the east of Chorley and Adlington, to the west of the main Pennine ridge. It falls partly within Chorley District in the west and partly within Blackburn with Darwen District in the east. It forms part of the Moorlands Hills Landscape Character Type (LCT), which is characterised by distinctive steep escarpments and dramatic landforms which are incised and drained by fast flowing streams.

Key characteristics for the wider LCA recorded in the Landscape Character Assessment are:

- The moorland occurs in a number of discrete blocks at Withnell, Anglezarke and Rivington Moors; Darwen and Turton Moors; and Oswaldtwistle and Holcombe Moors.
- The moors are generally slightly lower in altitude than those of the main South Pennine spine, although they include some notable high points, for example at Winter Hill on Rivington Moor.
- The hills can be seen from long distances and form a significant backdrop to the surrounding towns of Blackburn, Darwen and Accrington.
- The area is of considerable archaeological importance reflecting past land use and settlement history and has been the subject of some detailed archaeological research.
- On the West Pennines the sense of isolation is diminished because of the proximity of the urban areas, however the sense of wildness can be heightened by the contrast afforded by the dramatic and panoramic views

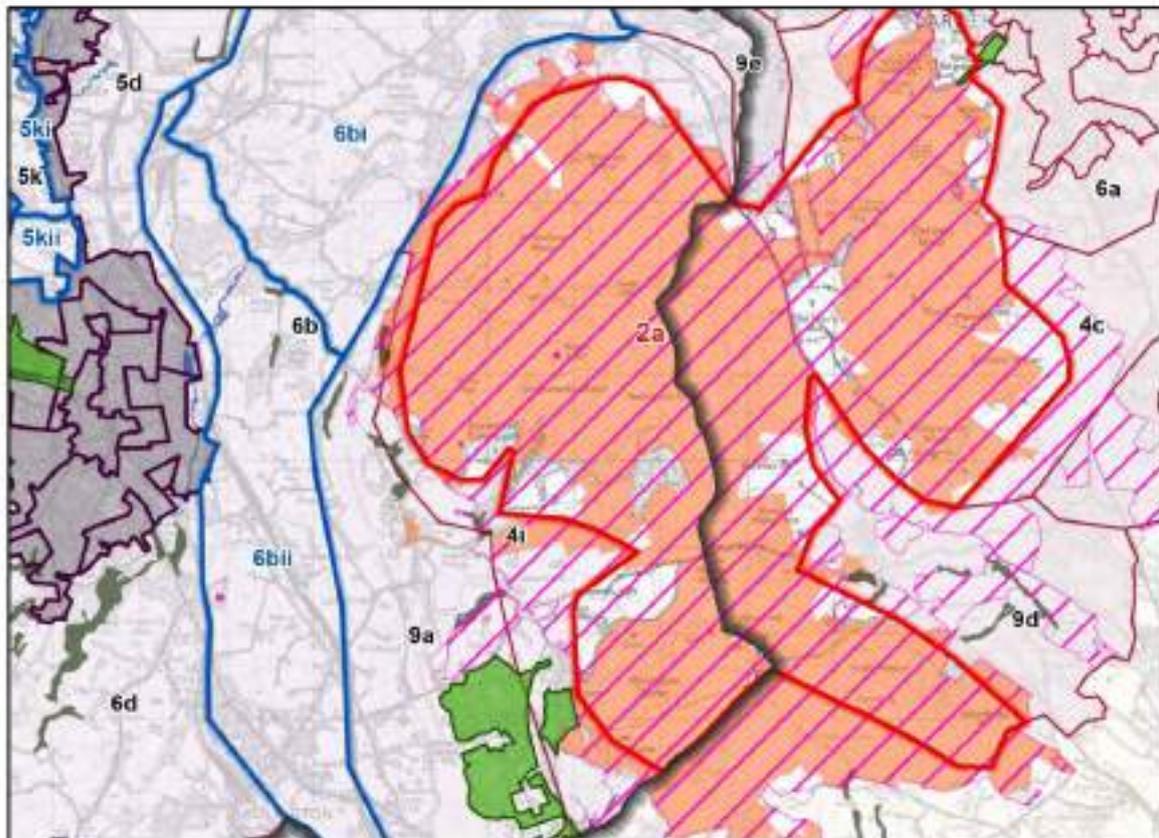
## Appendix A Landscape value assessment

across the adjacent urban areas of the Lancashire Plain and the East Lancashire Valleys.

The strategy for the Moorland Hills LCT as a whole is to:

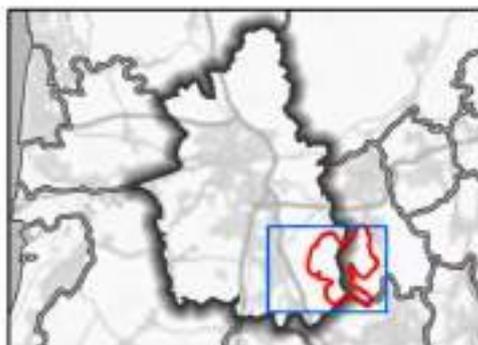
- Conserve the distinctive, historic character of the open moor.
- Conserve the wealth of archaeological landscapes in the Moorland Hills.
- Retain the characteristic pattern of gritstone walls.
- Enhance the existing valuable mosaic of moorland habitats.
- Improve the shape and structure of existing forestry plantations.
- Restore characteristic clough woodlands.

## Absolute Constraints



- Landscape Character Area**
- 02a West Pennine Moors
  - Neighbouring LCA
  - Urban area
  - Landscape Character Sub Area

- Absolute constraints**
- Site of Special Scientific Interest
  - Flood zone 3b
  - Scheduled Monument
  - Registered Parks and Gardens
  - Ancient Woodland
  - Open access land (CRoW Act)



## Other Constraints



- Landscape Character Area**
- 02a West Pennine Moors
  - Neighbouring LCA
  - Urban area
  - Landscape Character Sub Area

- Other constraints**
- Biological Heritage Sites
  - Local Nature Reserves
  - Country Parks
  - Conservation Areas
  - National Cycle Network
  - Public Right of Way
  - ▲ Grade I Listed building
  - ▲ Grade II\* Listed building
  - ▲ Grade II Listed building



## Value Evaluation

### Natural heritage

This considers the 'naturalistic' qualities of the landscape area. It looks at the distinctiveness of landforms, the presence and extent of semi-natural habitats and wildlife that contribute to sense of place. Designations such as SSSI will add value. It also considers any particular functional value of landscape elements.

- Rolling, rounded topography, which is very distinctive, formed of Millstone Grist topped with deep peat. Deeply incised streams form narrow gullies, creating a distinctive and engaging landscape.
- The LCA within the study area supports an extensive mosaic of upland and upland-fringe habitats, including blanket bog, wet and dry heathlands, upland flushes and lowland fens. It is designated as part of the West Pennine Moors SSSI for these nationally important habitats.

### Cultural heritage

This considers the extent to which the landscape displays time depth: either in terms of the presence of natural features, historic field patterns or heritage assets that contribute to landscape character. The designation of heritage assets such as Conservation Areas, Scheduled Monuments, listed buildings and areas of archaeological interest will add value.

- The Lancashire HLC (2002) identifies the LCA as containing Moorland, with areas of Reverted Moorland. Moorland has been formed by humans over the past 5,000 years. The majority of the landscape has never been enclosed, and would have been used for communal grazing. The areas of reverted moorland are on the edges of the moorland, and would have had more extensive activity, particularly summer pasture. These land uses create a sense of time-depth.

- Evidence of human activity on the moorland dates from the Early Neolithic to Bronze Age (3400-700 BCE) in the form of four funerary monuments, all designated as Scheduled Monuments.
- The area contains a number of derelict farm buildings that contribute to the rural remote character.

### **Landscape condition**

This considers the physical condition of the landscape in terms of both individual elements and overall structure.

- The moorland is in reasonable condition, with the majority of the SSSI units in unfavourable – recovering condition.
- Areas of acid grassland and upland fen either side of Rivington Road are in declining condition.
- A mixture of boundary features including stone walls, some of which are in poor condition, and post and wire fencing. The miscellaneous nature of field boundaries and lack of maintenance weakens the overall landscape structure.
- The Winter Hill TV transmitter station in the south-east is an incongruous modern feature that influences the undeveloped character of the landscape.

### **Distinctiveness**

This considers a landscape's strength of identity, with reference to the presence of distinctive or unusual features that are characteristic of a particular place. A landscape may have additional distinctiveness if it has high visual prominence, or a strong association with the character of a particular settlement, whether through strong views from the settlement or through providing a clear sense of arrival at the settlement.

- The distinctive topography, sense of time-depth associated with the land uses and funerary monuments, and mosaic of moorland habitats creates a strong sense of place.
- Exposed, vast skylines with very limited built development provide a backdrop for surrounding settlements including Chorley, Horwich, Abbey Village and Brinscall/Withnell.

### **Recreational**

This criterion considers the presence of features and facilities which enable enjoyment of the landscape, and the importance of these. This may include public rights of way, bridleways, open access land and outdoor tourist/visitor attractions with facilities. Recreation activities such as walking, cycling, horse riding or more formal recreation activities where enjoyment of the landscape is important to the experience. Accessibility from urban areas is also an important consideration. Importance of features may be indicated by designation such as long distance footpaths or recreation routes or national cycle routes.

- The majority of the landscape is designated as CROW Open Access Land and features an extensive network of Public Rights of Way, which also provides connection to surrounding nearby settlements. The area provides a valuable recreational resource, which allows enjoyment of the landscape.

### **Perceptual aspects**

This considers qualities such as rurality (traditional land uses with few modern, human influences), sense of remoteness or tranquillity. High scenic value, freedom from human activity/ disturbance and 'dark skies' would add to sensitivity in this criterion. It also considers whether there are any associations with notable people, historic events or artwork that contribute to positive perceptions of the landscape.

- The area has high levels of tranquillity and a sense of remoteness due to a lack of development and open moorland character. This also results in high scenic value.
- Proximity to the A675, Chorley and the Winter Hill TV transmitter station in the south-east locally detract from this.

## Assessment Sub-areas

Land within character area 2a is generally of a similar character, and so is assessed as a single area.

## Landscape value summary

The key aspects of landscape value (qualities and/or elements/features/areas of value) are:

- The distinctive natural qualities, including a rolling upland landform, moorland habitat mosaic and small streams. Many of the habitats are of national importance, as shown by its designation as a SSSI.
- Important archaeological remains, including Neolithic and Bronze Age funerary monuments, which create a sense of time-depth.
- The open character of the moorland with very limited development.
- A recreationally valued area of Open Access Land and Public Rights of Way connecting surrounding settlements.
- A landscape with strong perceptual qualities, including tranquillity, sense of remoteness and significant scenic qualities.

Based on the above, the landscape is considered to have **'above ordinary'** landscape value.

## LCA 4j: West Pennine Fringes

### Location and Key Characteristics

The key characteristics and strategy for the Landscape Character Area (LCA) below are copied in full from the 'Landscape Strategy for Lancashire: Landscape Character Assessment' (2000).

This LCA is located to the east of Chorley and Adlington, and to the west of the moorland fells. It falls within Chorley District, and forms part of the Moorland Fringe Landscape Character Type (LCT), which is characterised by a rolling landscape of marginal pastures divided by stone walls.

Key characteristics for the wider LCA recorded in the Landscape Character Assessment are:

- A transitional landscape between the unenclosed land of the west Pennine Fringes moors and the enclosed landscape of the industrial foothills below on the west fringes of the West Pennine Moors.
- The underlying millstone grit is close to the surface on the moorland fringe and the landscape is characterised by marginal pastures with scattered farmsteads.
- As is typical of the West Pennine Moor fringes, the character is influenced by industrial activity with reservoirs, mines and quarries scattered across the upper hillsides.
- A high density of public footpaths provides good public access and the wooded gardens on the hillside above Rivington Reservoir provide an unusual feature in the moorland fringe.

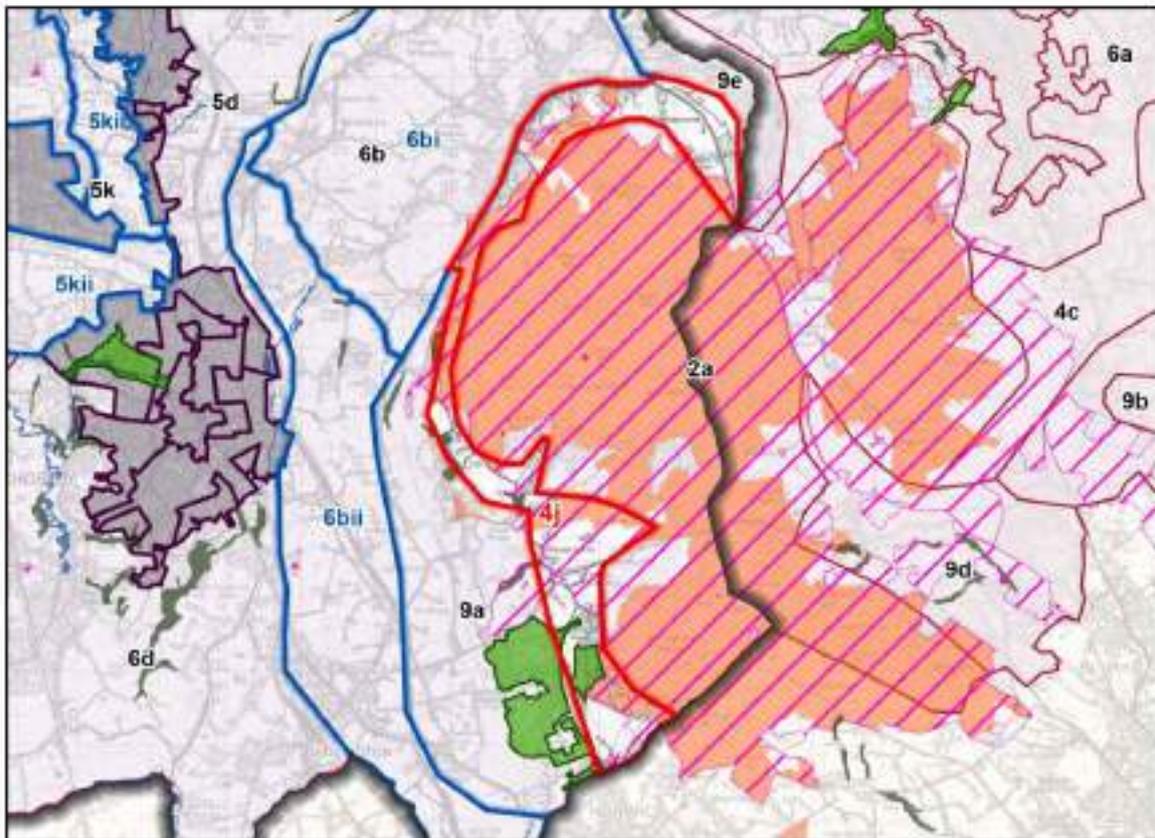
The strategy for the Moorland Hills LCT as a whole is to:

- Conserve the remote, multi-textured character and nature conservation interests of the Moorland Fringe.

## Appendix A Landscape value assessment

- Conserve the distinctive built character of the Moorland Fringe.
- Enhance opportunities for informal recreation.
- Enhance the characteristic diverse landcover pattern.
- Restore local field patterns in areas where they are degraded.
- Restore and recreate valuable habitats.
- Restore broadleaved woodland and scrub in appropriate locations at the head of valleys and near some farmsteads.
- Restore quarry sites sensitively.

## Absolute Constraints

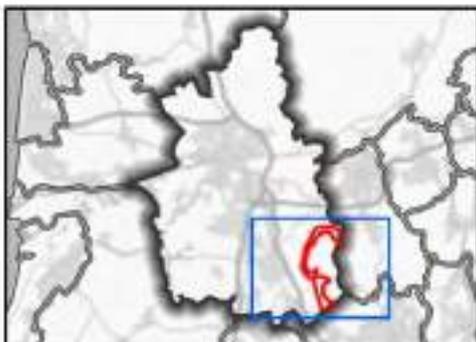


**Landscape Character Area**

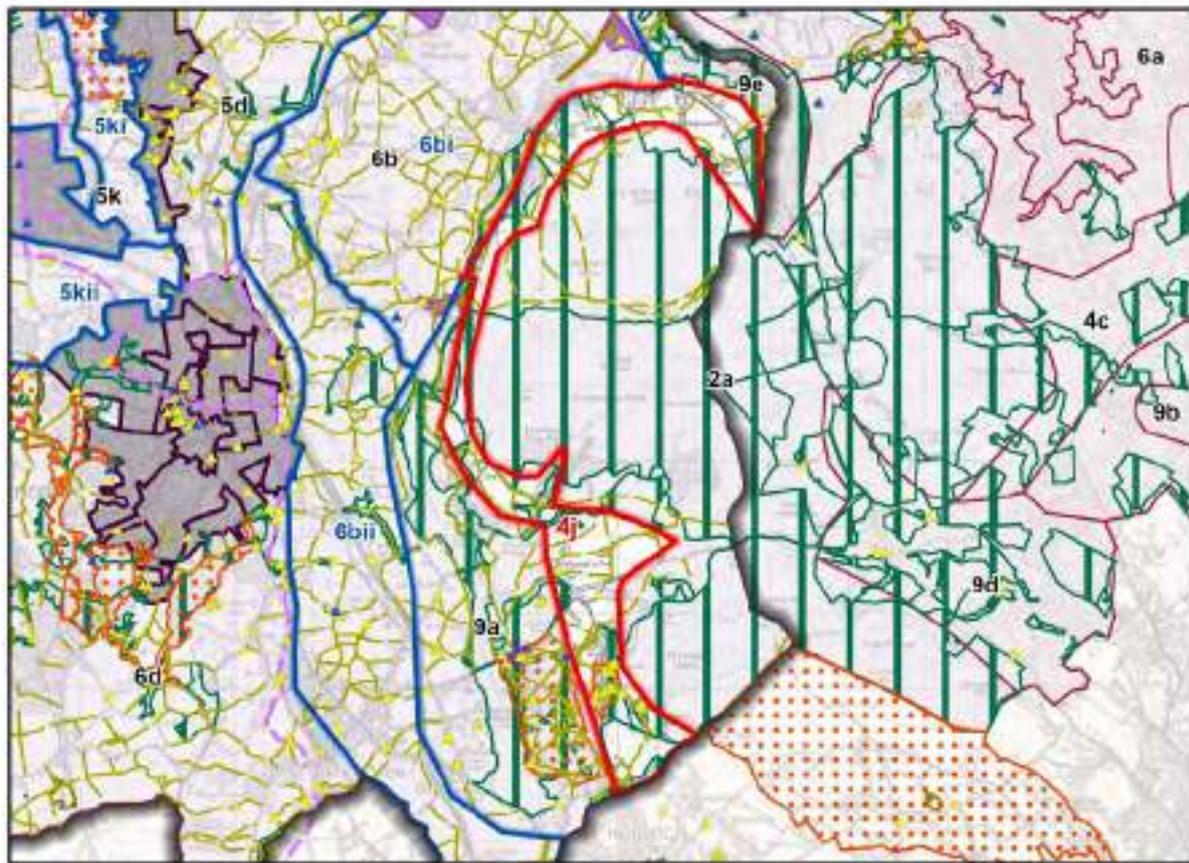
- 04j West Pennine Fringes
- Neighbouring LCA
- Urban area
- Landscape Character Sub Area

**Absolute constraints**

- Site of Special Scientific Interest
- Flood zone 3b
- Scheduled Monument
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Ancient Woodland
- Open access land (CRoW Act)



## Other Constraints



- Landscape Character Area**
- 04j West Pennine Fringes
  - Neighbouring LCA
  - Urban area
  - Landscape Character Sub Area

- Other constraints**
- Biological Heritage Sites
  - Local Nature Reserves
  - Country Parks
  - Conservation Areas
  - National Cycle Network
  - Public Right of Way
  - ▲ Grade I Listed building
  - ▲ Grade II\* Listed building
  - ▲ Grade II Listed building



## Value Evaluation

### Natural heritage

This considers the 'naturalistic' qualities of the landscape area. It looks at the distinctiveness of landforms, the presence and extent of semi-natural habitats and wildlife that contribute to sense of place. Designations such as SSSI will add value. It also considers any particular functional value of landscape elements.

- Rolling topography, rising towards the moorland fells. It is underlain by Millstone Grist, with waterfalls on the Limestone Brook providing a distinctive feature in the landscape.
- The LCA supports an extensive mosaic of upland and upland-fringe habitats, including upland heathlands and dry acid grassland. Part of the landscape is designated as part of the West Pennine Moors SSSI for these nationally important habitats.
- Priority habitat deciduous woodland, some recorded as Ancient Woodland, and some conifer plantations line the hillsides.

### Cultural heritage

This considers the extent to which the landscape displays time depth: either in terms of the presence of natural features, historic field patterns or heritage assets that contribute to landscape character. The designation of heritage assets such as Conservation Areas, Scheduled Monuments, listed buildings and areas of archaeological interest will add value.

- The Lancashire HLC (2002) identifies the LCA as containing areas of ancient enclosure (land enclosed prior to 1600AD). There are areas of post-medieval enclosure in the west, reflecting piecemeal enclosure from 1600 to 1850 CE. Areas of reverted moorland are found on the edges of the moorland, and would have had more extensive activity,

particularly summer pasture. Areas of modern woodland, in the form of coniferous plantations on the moorland fringe, are found in the north and west. Evidence of these historic land uses, which have slowly evolved over time, create a sense of time depth.

- Rivington Gardens is a 20<sup>th</sup> century designed landscape, now designated as a Grade II Registered Park and Garden. It was designed to exploit the natural environment, and engage with the wider moorland landscape. The stone farmsteads and manor houses in the landscape are also all Grade II listed, and add to the time-depth.

### Landscape condition

This considers the physical condition of the landscape in terms of both individual elements and overall structure.

- The moorland is generally in good condition, however the SSSI units of acid grassland and upland fen east of Sheephouse Lane are declining due to overgrazing and poor woodland management.
- A mixture of boundary features including stone walls, some in poor condition, post and rail and post and wire fencing. The miscellaneous nature of field boundaries and lack of maintenance weakens the overall landscape structure and sense of cohesion.
- The Withnell/Brinscall quarry on Butterworth Brow/Twist Moor Lane is an incongruous industrial feature in the landscape, although is now generally well-integrated into the landscape by surrounding tree cover.

### Distinctiveness

This considers a landscape's strength of identity, with reference to the presence of distinctive or unusual features that are characteristic of a particular place. A landscape may have additional distinctiveness if it has high visual prominence, or a strong association with the character of a

particular settlement, whether through strong views from the settlement or through providing a clear sense of arrival at the settlement.

- The undulating landform, time-depth associated with isolated farmsteads and Rivington Gardens, and mosaic of moorland habitats creates a strong sense of place.
- There are long views towards the moorlands and across the valleys of the industrial foothills to the west.
- The landscape forms an immediate landscape setting to the settlements of Brinscall and Withnell.

### **Recreational**

This criterion considers the presence of features and facilities which enable enjoyment of the landscape, and the importance of these. This may include public rights of way, bridleways, open access land and outdoor tourist/visitor attractions with facilities. Recreation activities such as walking, cycling, horse riding or more formal recreation activities where enjoyment of the landscape is important to the experience. Accessibility from urban areas is also an important consideration. Importance of features may be indicated by designation such as long distance footpaths or recreation routes or national cycle routes.

- Parts of the LCA are designated as CROW Open Access Land and there is an extensive network of Public Rights of Way. Terraced Gardens at Rivington Country Park also allows appreciation and enjoyment of the landscape. These features provide a valuable recreational resource, and provide direct access from nearby settlements.

### **Perceptual aspects**

This considers qualities such as rurality (traditional land uses with few modern, human influences), sense of remoteness or tranquillity. High

scenic value, freedom from human activity/ disturbance and 'dark skies' would add to sensitivity in this criterion. It also considers whether there are any associations with notable people, historic events or artwork that contribute to positive perceptions of the landscape.

- A rural landscape, albeit with proximity to Horwich in the south, and Brinscall, Withnell and the A675 in the north, locally impacting tranquillity and dark skies. Stone walls, and views up to the moorlands create a highly scenic transitional landscape, with areas of woodland providing enclosure.
- Rivington Gardens have a strong association with the industrialist and philanthropist Lord Leverhulme, who owned and commissioned the design of the gardens.

## Assessment Sub-areas

Land within character area 4j is generally of a similar character, and so is assessed as a single area.

## Landscape value summary

The key aspects of landscape value (qualities and/or elements/features/areas of value) are:

- The distinctive natural qualities including transitional rolling landform, a moorland habitat mosaic, woodland, and streams. Many of the habitats are of national importance, as shown by its designation as a SSSI.
- Rivington Gardens is an important 20<sup>th</sup> century garden, designed to exploit the natural environment and engage with the wider landscape, and is now a Registered Park and Garden.
- Stone walls and stone-built historic farmhouses provide a distinctive local vernacular.

## Appendix A Landscape value assessment

- A recreationally valued area of Open Access Land, visitor attraction and footpaths which connect to surrounding settlements.
- A landscape with strong perceptual qualities, including tranquillity, sense of remoteness and scenic beauty.

Based on the above, the landscape is considered to have '**above ordinary**' landscape value.

## LCA 5c: Lower Ribble

### Location and Key Characteristics

The key characteristics and strategy for the Landscape Character Area (LCA) below are copied in full from the 'Landscape Strategy for Lancashire: Landscape Character Assessment' (2000).

This LCA forms two distinct sections which flank LCA 11a: Lower Ribble Valley to the north and south, encompassing the valley sides of the River Ribble. These sections are located to the east of Preston, with the northern section falling within the Preston District and the southern section within the South Ribble District. They form part of the 'Undulating Lowland Farmland' Landscape Character Type (LCT) which is characterised by lowland undulating farmland lying between the major valleys and the moorland fringes, incised by wooded cloughs and gorges.

Key characteristics for the wider LCA recorded in the Landscape Character Assessment are:

- Lowland gritstone farmland between Longridge Fell to the north and Mellor Ridge to the south.
- Distinctive broad valley landform; the north and south valley sides are separated by a flood plain which contains the meandering course of the River Ribble.
- A particularly distinctive pattern of wooded cloughs which descend the valley sides, their streams emptying into the Ribble.
- A complex pattern of hedges and woodland form links to these wooded cloughs, giving an overall impression of a well wooded landscape.
- Although a rural valley, the area is well settled; a dense network of winding country lanes and tracks link the large number of stone farm buildings.
- Country houses and designed landscapes, for example Stonyhurst College, Huntingdon Hall and Showley Hall.

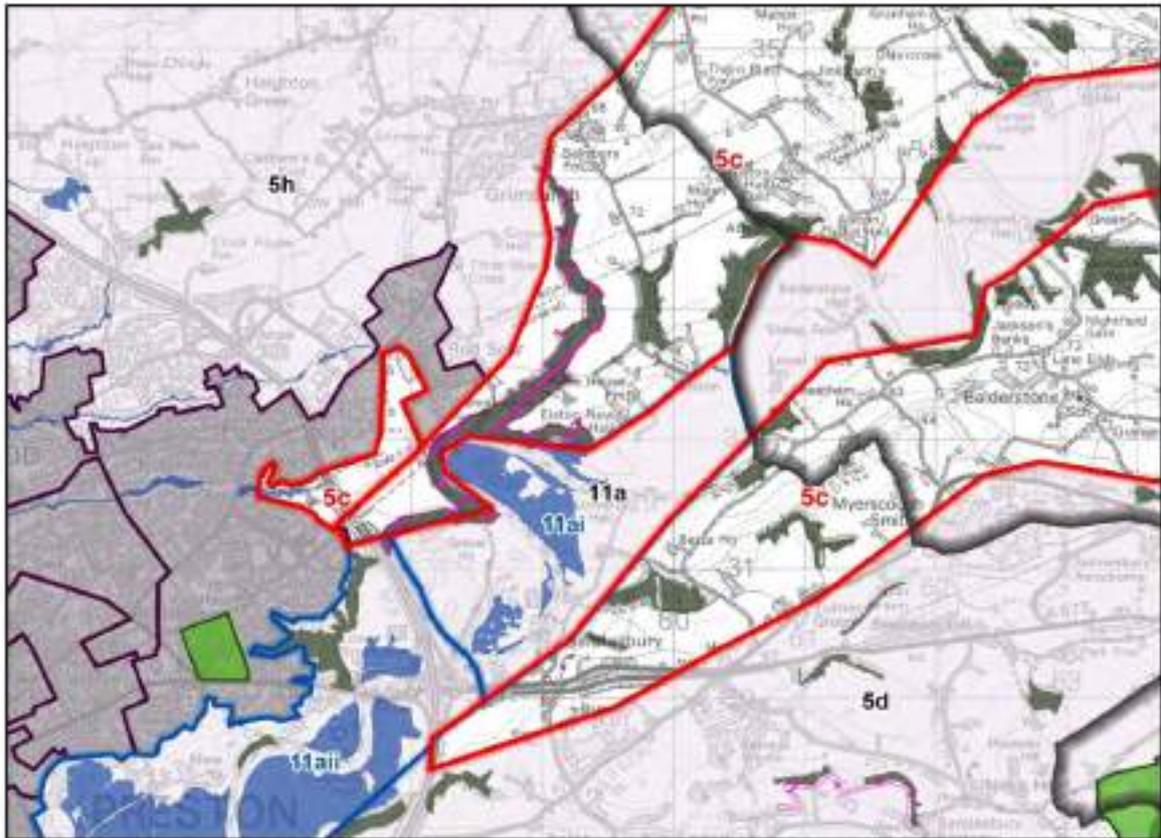
## Appendix A Landscape value assessment

- The Roman settlement of Ribchester is sited at an historic crossing point of the Ribble, a tranquil village in the centre of the valley.

The strategy for the Undulating Lowland Farmland LCT as a whole is to:

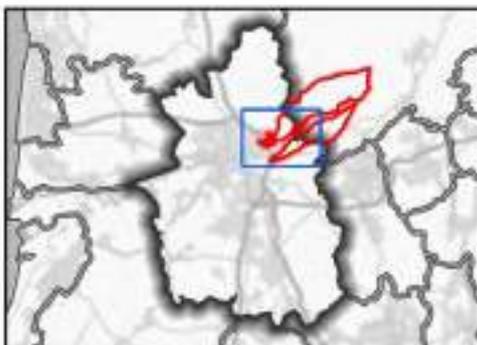
- Retain the characteristic pattern of river corridor and valley side woodlands.
- Conserve the distinctive rural hedgerow network.
- Conserve the lowland herb-rich haymeadows and unimproved neutral grasslands.
- Conserve the limestone reef knolls typical of the Ribble Valley.
- Conserve rural built features such as stone bridges, historic villages and stone walls.
- Conserve the Roman history and industrial archaeology of the area.
- Conserve country houses and parkland as features of the landscape.
- Conserve the distinctive settings to rural settlements.
- Enhance the wooded character of the lowland landscape.
- Restore and maintain historic rural buildings.

## Absolute Constraints

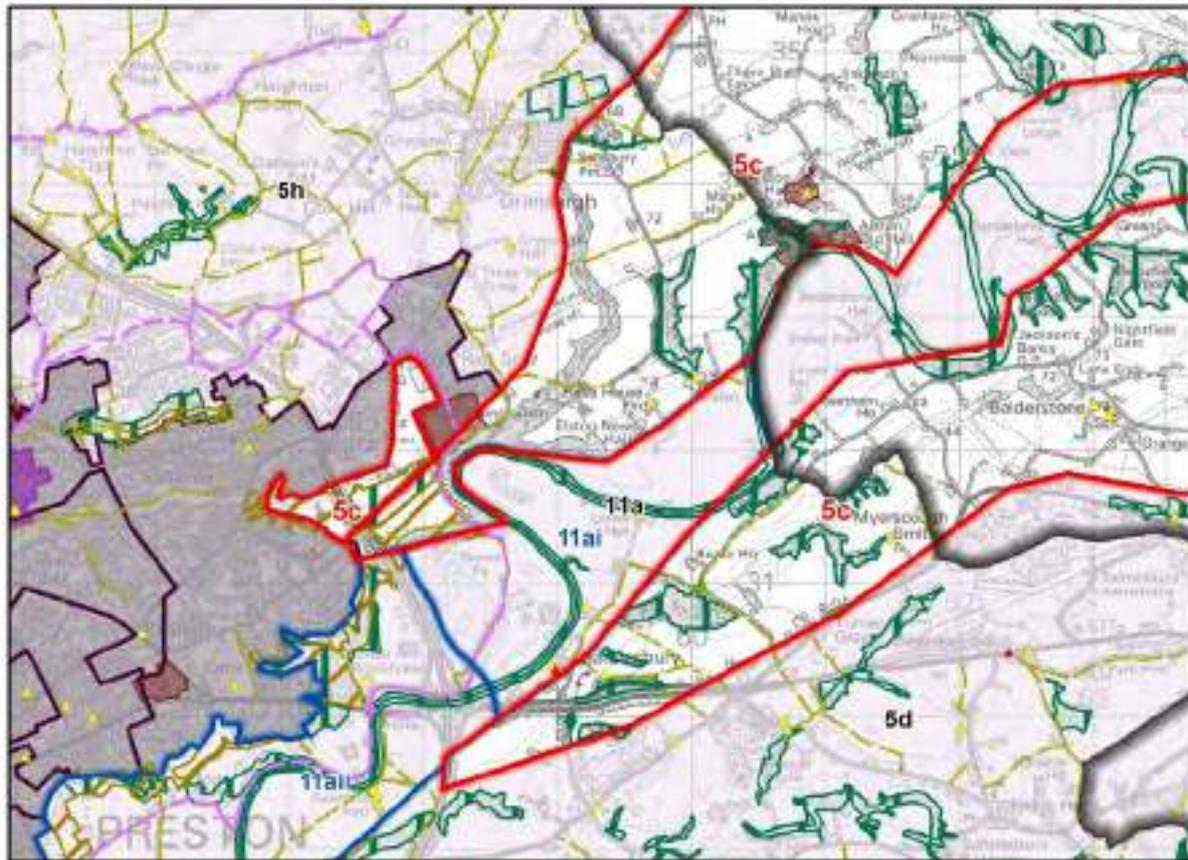


- Landscape Character Area**
- 05c Lower Ribble
  - Neighbouring LCA
  - Urban area
  - Landscape Character Sub Area

- Absolute constraints**
- Site of Special Scientific Interest
  - Flood zone 3b
  - Registered Parks and Gardens
  - Ancient Woodland

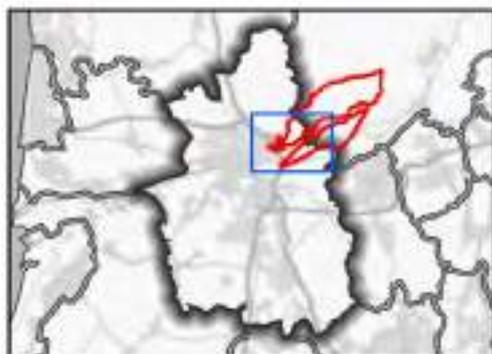


## Other Constraints



- Landscape Character Area**
- 05c Lower Ribble
  - Neighbouring LCA
  - Urban area
  - Landscape Character Sub Area

- Other constraints**
- Central Lancashire boundary
  - Preston Historic Designed Landscape
  - Biological Heritage Sites
  - Local Nature Reserves
  - Conservation Areas
  - National Cycle Network
  - Public Right of Way
  - ▲ Grade I Listed building
  - ▲ Grade II\* Listed building
  - ▲ Grade II Listed building



## Value Evaluation

### Natural heritage

This considers the 'naturalistic' qualities of the landscape area. It looks at the distinctiveness of landforms, the presence and extent of semi-natural habitats and wildlife that contribute to sense of place. Designations such as SSSI will add value. It also considers any particular functional value of landscape elements.

- The topography of both the northern and southern sections of the LCA is highly distinctive. Steep bluffs and terraces rise from the flat valley floor of LCA 11a: Lower Ribble Valley. Fast flowing brooks, such as the Tun Brook in the north and the Bezza Brook in the south, have cut steep cloughs/gorges into this higher ground. These incised valleys become shallower further north and south of the river, but influence the topography of the entire LCA.
- Localised areas of Ancient Woodland can be found on the steep valley sides of the Ribble Valley and the sides of incised cloughs and gorges. The largest of these areas is Red Scar and Tun Brook Woods which flanks the Tun Brook. This elongated strip of woodland is designated as a SSSI due to its ash-wych elm woodland and rich ground flora. Dense hedgerows with mature hedgerows trees within the agricultural areas add to the sense of a well wooded landscape.
- In the north of the LCA where the topography is flatter, there are a series of small scale ponds within the agricultural land. These contribute to a network of waterways, along with numerous brooks and the River Ribble.

### Cultural heritage

This considers the extent to which the landscape displays time depth: either in terms of the presence of natural features, historic field patterns or heritage assets that contribute to landscape character. The designation of

heritage assets such as Conservation Areas, Scheduled Monuments, listed buildings and areas of archaeological interest will add value.

- The majority of the area has been identified as either ‘ancient enclosure’ or ‘ancient or post-medieval woodland’ within the Lancashire HLC (2002). The field pattern is small scale with irregular boundaries. Some of the area adjacent to the Ribble Valley floor is categorised as ‘post-medieval enclosure’ and is characterised by a larger field pattern and less extensive hedgerow field boundaries with a resulting more open aspect.
- The LCA is not densely settled and the majority of the existing properties are traditional farmhouses and cottages, a number of which are Grade II Listed. The Grade II Listed Roman Catholic Church of Saint John Southworth is a notable structure located in the south-west of the area.
- The course of a roman road (Kirkham to Ribchester) also traverses the north of the LCA parallel to the River Ribble, providing evidence of the importance of the area in the Roman Period.

### **Landscape condition**

This considers the physical condition of the landscape in terms of both individual elements and overall structure.

- In this LCA, as with the much of the wider study area, there has been a degree of hedgerow loss. However, in large parts of this LCA the retained ancient field pattern survives and hedgerows contain a high proportion of mature trees. As a result, the landscape has a relatively strong landscape structure.
- The transport corridors of the M6 and A59 detract from the historic landscape pattern, but are relatively well integrated into the landscape due to the surrounding topography and woodland.

### **Distinctiveness**

This considers a landscape's strength of identity, with reference to the presence of distinctive or unusual features that are characteristic of a particular place. A landscape may have additional distinctiveness if it has high visual prominence, or a strong association with the character of a particular settlement, whether through strong views from the settlement or through providing a clear sense of arrival at the settlement.

- The distinctive topography of the River Ribble Valley's sides, punctuated by cloughs/gorges, contributes to the area's strength of identity.
- The LCA has a high proportion of woodland cover relative to the regional context, making the area distinct from its immediate surroundings.
- The River Ribble and associated valley form, although not within the LCA itself, is a key distinctive local landmark and a significant component of views from one side of the valley to the other. For example the opposite sides of the wooded valley are visible from Bezza Lane and Elston Lane.

### Recreational

This criterion considers the presence of features and facilities which enable enjoyment of the landscape, and the importance of these. This may include public rights of way, bridleways, open access land and outdoor tourist/visitor attractions with facilities. Recreation activities such as walking, cycling, horse riding or more formal recreation activities where enjoyment of the landscape is important to the experience. Accessibility from urban areas is also an important consideration. Importance of features may be indicated by designation such as long distance footpaths or recreation routes or national cycle routes.

- There is a network of Public Rights of Way and lanes within the LCA, which provide a recreational resource for cyclists and walkers. However, this does not provide extensive coverage and much of the LCA is relatively inaccessible.

- The Ribble Way long distance footpath passes through the north of the area and provides an opportunity for local and regional visitors to appreciate the landscape of the LCA.
- An off road section of National Cycle Route (NCR) 662 passes through the western extent of the LCA, close to the edge of Tun Brook Woods.

### Perceptual aspects

This considers qualities such as rurality (traditional land uses with few modern, human influences), sense of remoteness or tranquillity. High scenic value, freedom from human activity/ disturbance and 'dark skies' would add to sensitivity in this criterion. It also considers whether there are any associations with notable people, historic events or artwork that contribute to positive perceptions of the landscape.

- The M6 and A59 pass through the west of the LCA, which lies adjacent to the urban area of Preston . These are detracting elements that diminish the sense of tranquillity.
- The majority of the LCA is dominated by agricultural land uses and has limited modern influences. The varied topography and woodland cover screens views of the M6, A59 and the adjacent urban areas from the majority of the LCA, meaning that it retains a strong sense of rurality, remoteness and tranquillity.

## Assessment Sub-areas

Land within character area 5c: Lower Ribble is generally of a similar character, and so is assessed as a single area.

## Landscape value summary

The key aspects of landscape value (qualities and/or elements/features/areas of value) are:

- Distinctive and varied topography of steep bluffs, terraces and incised valleys.
- A series of small watercourses with associated steep wooded valleys.
- A well wooded landscape with a concentration of Ancient Woodland, some of which is designated as SSSI and LNR.
- The Ribble Way long distance footpath traverses the LCA and provides the opportunity to appreciate the areas landscape character.
- The landscape pattern, land use and traditional agricultural buildings create a sense of time-depth within the LCA. Additionally, the presence of a Roman road crossing the area contributes to the historical importance of the wider Ribble Valley as a Roman outpost.
- A sense of remoteness and rurality, despite proximity to a major urban area and major transport corridors.

Whilst the LCA has some valued landscape characteristics, it is not considered to have 'above ordinary' landscape value.

## LCA 5d: Samlesbury-Withnell Fold

### Location and Key Characteristics

The key characteristics and strategy for the Landscape Character Area (LCA) below are copied in full from the 'Landscape Strategy for Lancashire: Landscape Character Assessment' (2000).

This extensive LCA is located in the east of the study area, south of the Ribble Valley. This area encompasses a large proportion of both the South Ribble and Chorley Districts. It forms part of the 'Undulating Lowland Farmland' Landscape Character Type (LCT) which is characterised by lowland undulating farmland lying between the major valleys and the moorland fringes, incised by wooded cloughs and gorges.

Key characteristics for the wider LCA recorded in the Landscape Character Assessment are:

- Underlain by millstone grit and sandstone, the landscape is influenced by the mantle of glacial till which covers the surface, producing a gently undulating landscape of large lush green pastures divided by low cut hedgerows and hedgerow trees.
- Dramatic steep sided wooded valleys wind their way through the landscape carrying the River Darwen and its tributaries.
- Designed landscapes and parkland associated with Samlesbury Hall, Woodfold Hall, Pleasington Old Hall and Hoghton Tower add to the overall woodland cover in this lowland landscape.
- It is also influenced by infrastructure (major road and rail routes), industrial works, the airfield at Samlesbury and built development on the edges of Preston.

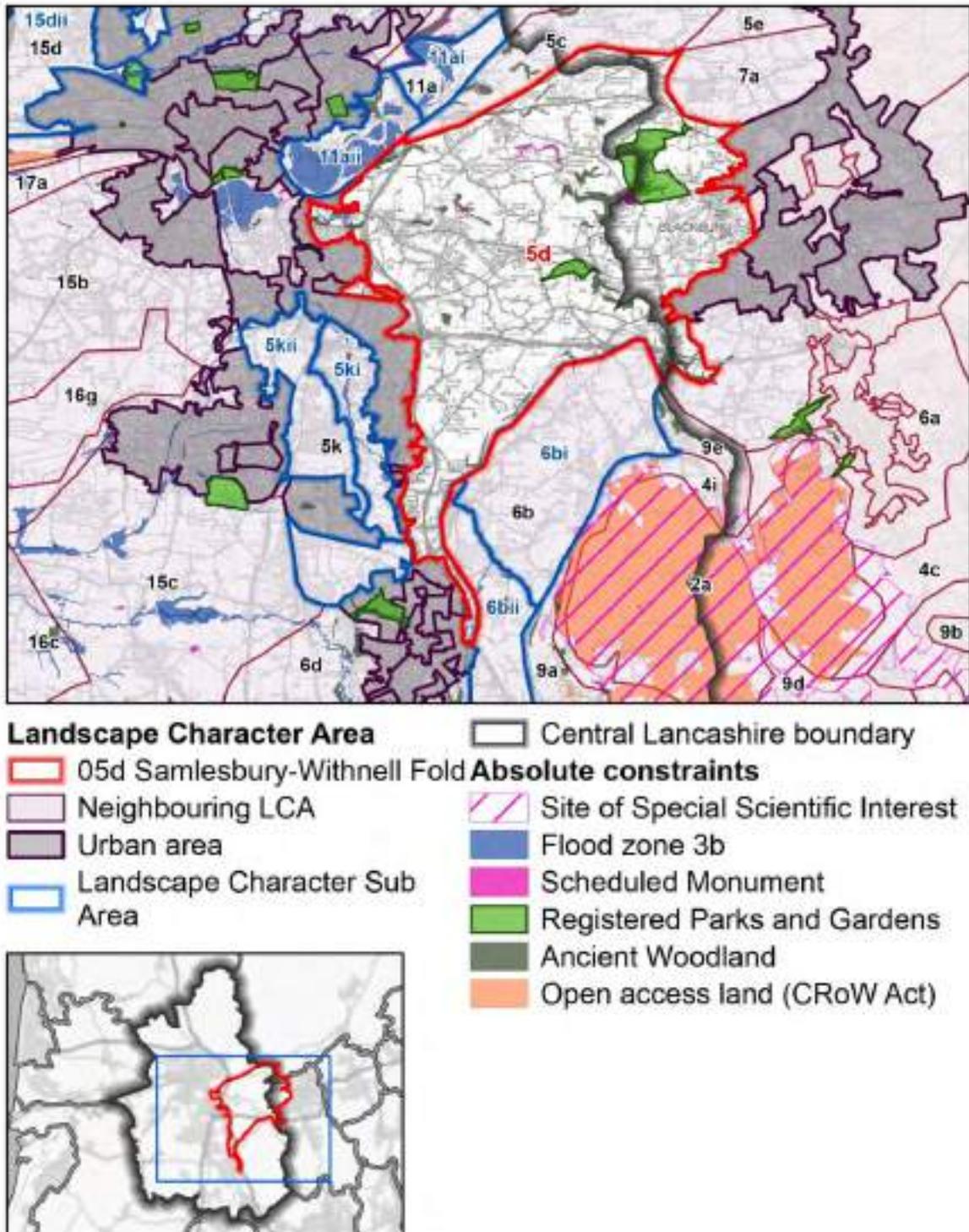
The strategy for the Undulating Lowland Farmland LCT as a whole is to:

- Retain the characteristic pattern of river corridor and valley side woodlands

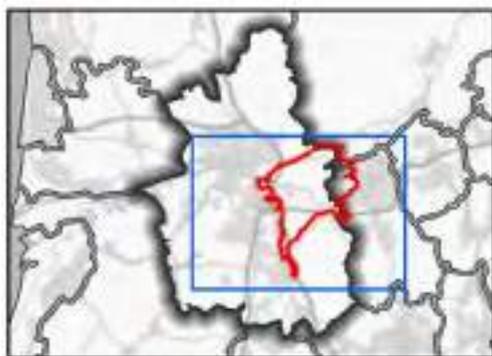
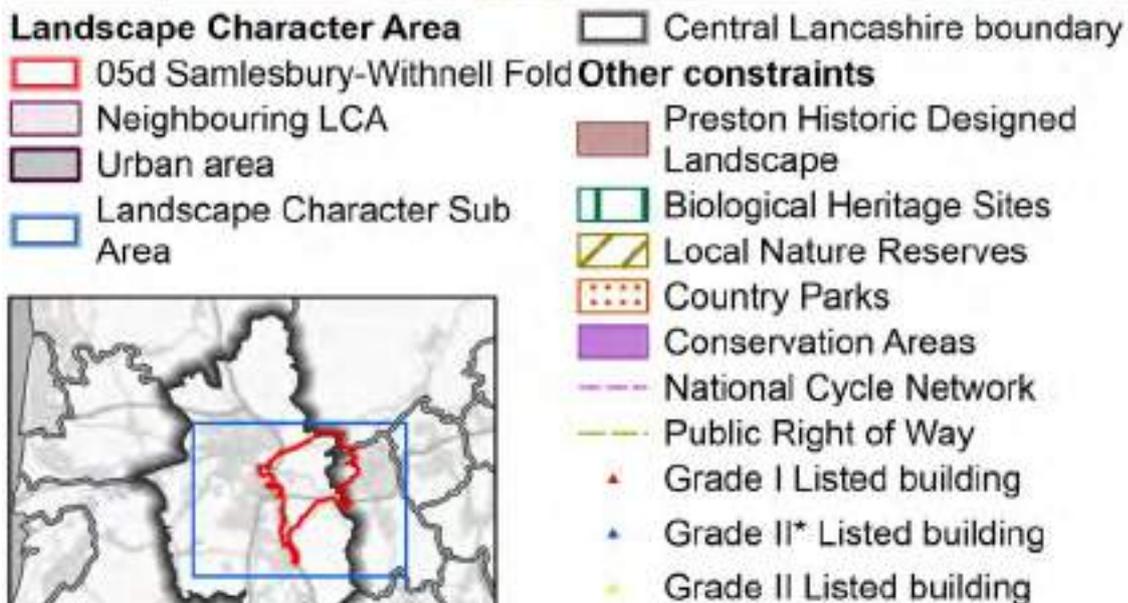
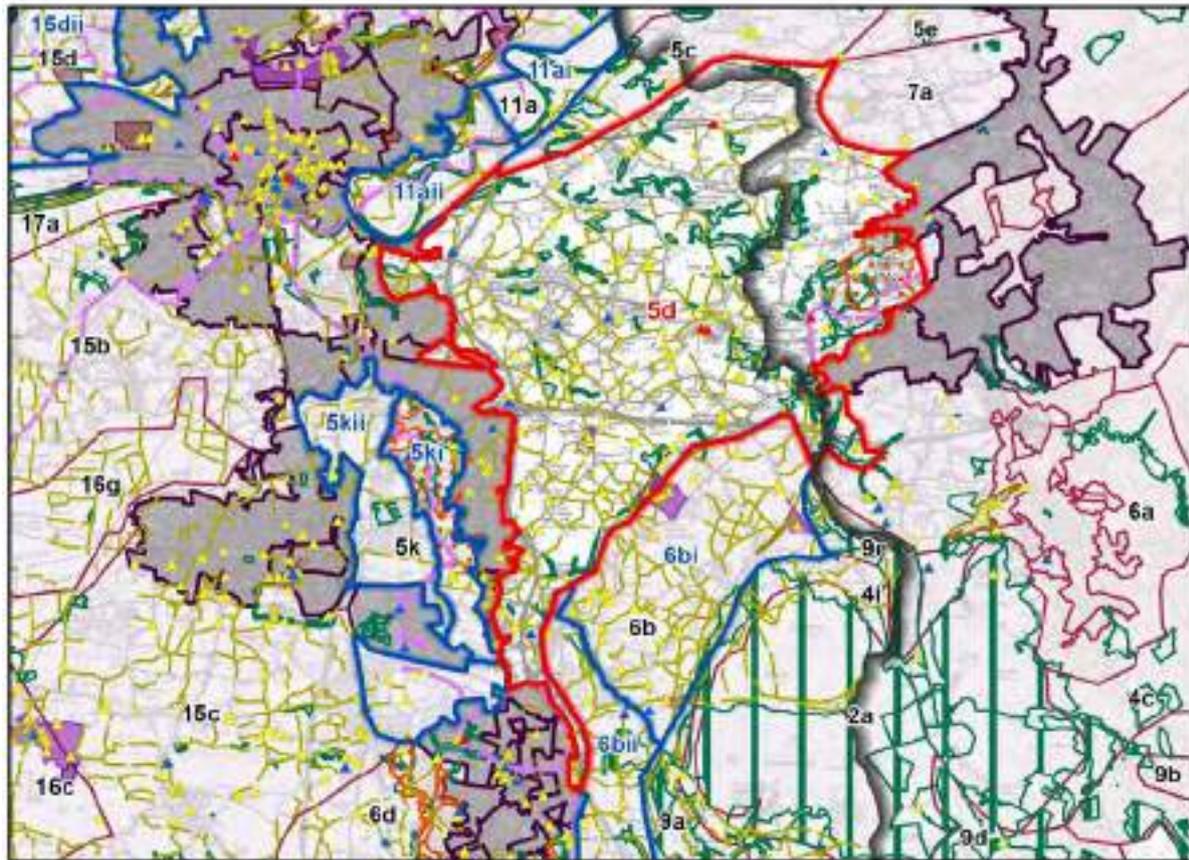
## Appendix A Landscape value assessment

- Conserve the distinctive rural hedgerow network.
- Conserve the lowland herb-rich hay meadows and unimproved neutral grasslands.
- Conserve the limestone reef knolls typical of the Ribble Valley.
- Conserve rural built features such as stone bridges, historic villages and stone walls.
- Conserve the Roman history and industrial archaeology of the area.
- Conserve country houses and parkland as features of the landscape.
- Conserve the distinctive settings to rural settlements.
- Enhance the wooded character of the lowland landscape.
- Restore and maintain historic rural buildings.

## Absolute Constraints



## Other Constraints



## Value Evaluation

### Natural heritage

This considers the 'naturalistic' qualities of the landscape area. It looks at the distinctiveness of landforms, the presence and extent of semi-natural habitats and wildlife that contribute to sense of place. Designations such as SSSI will add value. It also considers any particular functional value of landscape elements.

- In the north west the topography undulates gently, transitioning gradually to rolling hills the south-east. A series of high points at Houghton Tower, Duxon Hill and Denham Hill form a barely discernible ridge traversing the north of the LCA. The steep river valley of the River Darwen and, to a lesser degree, the River Lostock are key topographical features within the LCA. The small scale tributaries of these rivers have eroded incised gullies into the landform, giving the area its 'undulating' character in the north and rolling character in the south.
- In addition to the rivers and brooks, there is a scattering of small to mid-sized ponds across the agricultural land. The Leeds to Liverpool Canal also passes along the southern boundary of the LCA. This waterway network is important for flora and fauna. The pasture and flushes adjacent to Beeston Brook is designated as a SSSI for its species rich grassland. In addition, a section of the River Darwen is designated as a SSSI due to its geological interest.
- Woodland, much of which is identified as Ancient Woodland, is found on the steep sides of brook and river valleys. There is a particular concentration to the north-east of the area at the confluence of the River Darwen and Alum House Brook.

### Cultural heritage

This considers the extent to which the landscape displays time depth: either in terms of the presence of natural features, historical field patterns or heritage assets that contribute to landscape character. The designation of heritage assets such as Conservation Areas, Scheduled Monuments, listed buildings and areas of archaeological interest will add value.

- The LCA contains a series of important heritage assets. Located in the north is the Grade I Listed Samlesbury Hall, a timber framed hall dating from the 14<sup>th</sup> century. Woodford Park Grade II Registered Park and Garden and Pleasington Alum Works Scheduled Monument are both situated on the eastern boundary of the LCA. The Grade I Listed Hoghton Tower is located in the east of the LCA and is surrounded by associated listed buildings and an extensive Grade II Registered Park and Garden.
- The settlement of Brindle and part of Withnell Fold in the south are both designated as Conservation Areas.
- The East Lancashire Railway and the Leeds to Liverpool Canal traverse the LCA and have a number of listed structures associated with them, including the Grade II Listed Hoghton Viaduct which crosses the River Darwen valley.
- The majority of the area has been identified as 'ancient enclosure' within the Lancashire HLC (2000), although there are also areas of post-medieval and modern settlement and modern industry. The field pattern varies, from small-scale and intricate in the north, to mid-scale and regular in the south.

### **Landscape condition**

This considers the physical condition of the landscape in terms of both individual elements and overall structure.

- In the north where the field pattern is smaller and more intricate, hedgerows tend to be denser and better maintained. In the south of the

LCA, they have become increasingly gappy and degraded and this has weakened landscape structure.

- A series of large-scale industrial and commercial complexes, including Blackburn Water Treatment Works and the Samlesbury Aerodrome in the north, represent incongruous elements which disrupt the overall structure of the landscape in this area.
- The M61, M6, M65 and East Lancashire Railway result in a localised disruption to the landscape structure within their immediate surroundings.

### **Distinctiveness**

This considers a landscape's strength of identity, with reference to the presence of distinctive or unusual features that are characteristic of a particular place. A landscape may have additional distinctiveness if it has high visual prominence, or a strong association with the character of a particular settlement, whether through strong views from the settlement or through providing a clear sense of arrival at the settlement.

- The wooded, sinuous river valley of the River Darwen has a strong sense of place and is distinctive to the LCA. The frequent brooks, and the undulating topography created by them, forms a varied and engaging landscape with a strong sense of place. Long distance views are attainable from areas of higher ground in the south. These views extend over the lowland plains to the west, and towards distinctive upland areas to the north, east and south-east.
- The area contains a number of nationally distinctive historic buildings such as Samlesbury Hall and Houghton Tower. Wider parkland landscapes characterise the east of the LCA, distinguishing it from other areas of undulating farmland. In addition there are a number of distinctive structures associated with transport corridors including the Houghton Viaduct and a series of bridges on the Leeds to Liverpool Canal.

### Recreational

This criterion considers the presence of features and facilities which enable enjoyment of the landscape, and the importance of these. This may include public rights of way, bridleways, open access land and outdoor tourist/visitor attractions with facilities. Recreation activities such as walking, cycling, horse riding or more formal recreation activities where enjoyment of the landscape is important to the experience. Accessibility from urban areas is also an important consideration. Importance of features may be indicated by designation such as long distance footpaths or recreation routes or national cycle routes.

- Within the LCA there is an extensive network of Public Rights of Way, and lanes. The Witton Weavers Way long distance footpath passes through the area, following the course of the River Darwen.
- The grounds and gardens of Samlesbury Hall and Hoghton Tower are valuable regional visitor attractions.

### Perceptual aspects

This considers qualities such as rurality (traditional land uses with few modern, human influences), sense of remoteness or tranquillity. High scenic value, freedom from human activity/ disturbance and 'dark skies' would add to sensitivity in this criterion. It also considers whether there are any associations with notable people, historic events or artwork that contribute to positive perceptions of the landscape.

- The landscape patterns of small-scale fields, intersected by wooded brooks and river corridors creates an attractive rural landscape with a sense of time-depth. In the areas of higher ground in south-east the area has a sense of being an upland landscape, which fosters a sense of remoteness. Striking historic halls and their surrounds further enhance scenic value in localised areas. Together, these characteristics create a sense of perceived rurality and tranquillity. These qualities are

weakened by the transport corridors of the M65, M61 and A59, although in the south the rolling topography limits the visibility of these features.

## Assessment Sub-areas

Land within character area 5d: Samlesbury-Withnell Fold is generally of a similar character, and so is assessed as a single area.

## Landscape value summary

The key aspects of landscape value (qualities and/or elements/features/areas of value) are:

- A landscape dominated by small scale brooks and wooded, sinuous river corridors. Screened from the wider landscape, these have a strong sense of tranquility and remoteness.
- The undulating topography, frequent waterways and irregular field pattern creates a varied and engaging landscape.
- A series of nationally valued historic buildings and Registered Parks and Gardens, Ancient Woodland and historic settlements inform a strong sense of time depth, particularly in the east of the LCA.
- Long distance views over the surrounding lowland and towards upland areas.

Whilst the LCA has some valued landscape characteristics, overall it is not considered to have 'above ordinary' landscape value.

## LCA 5h: Goosnargh-Whittingham

### Location and Key Characteristics

The key characteristics and strategy for the Landscape Character Area (LCA) below are copied in full from the 'Landscape Strategy for Lancashire: Landscape Character Assessment' (2000).

This LCA is located on the north-east fringes of Preston, lying entirely within the Preston District. It forms part of the 'Undulating Lowland Farmland' Landscape Character Type (LCT) which is characterised by lowland undulating farmland lying between the major valleys and the moorland fringes, incised by wooded cloughs and gorges.

Key characteristics for the wider LCA recorded in the Landscape Character Assessment are:

- Undulating lowland farmland on the north-east fringes of Preston.
- Forms a transitional landscape between the upland landscape of the Bowland Fells to the north-east and the agricultural Amounderness Plain to the west.
- An historically interesting area on the fringe of the Forest of Bowland AONB.
- The landform gently descends from 150m at the moorland fringe of Beacon Fell to the 30m contour (approximately) which defines the edge of the sandstone agricultural plain of the Fylde.
- This is not a clear boundary and the visual transition from one to the other occurs across a broad area between the M6 and main Preston to Lancaster railway line.
- As a result of this gradual transition it demonstrates characteristics of both the Fylde and the Bowland fringes.

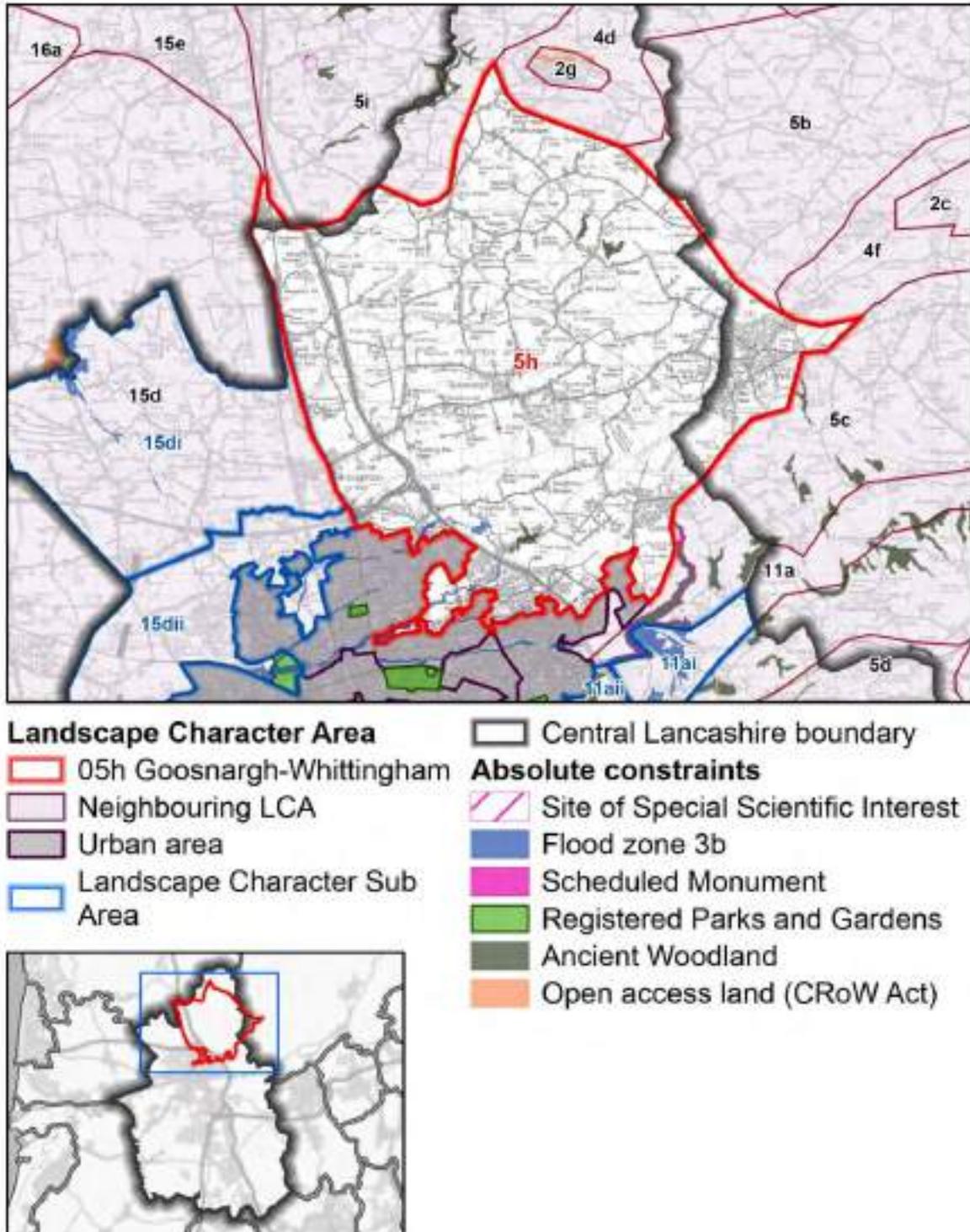
## Appendix A Landscape value assessment

- A pastoral landscape which is relatively open and intensively farmed with much hedgerow loss and few trees or woodlands although hedgerows along the network of lanes are important landscape features.
- There are often clear views over the plain below.
- The area is under pressure from built development as a result of its proximity to Preston.
- Vernacular buildings are of local stone, although a number of incongruous materials are seen throughout the area.
- The area is rich in evidence for Roman occupation.

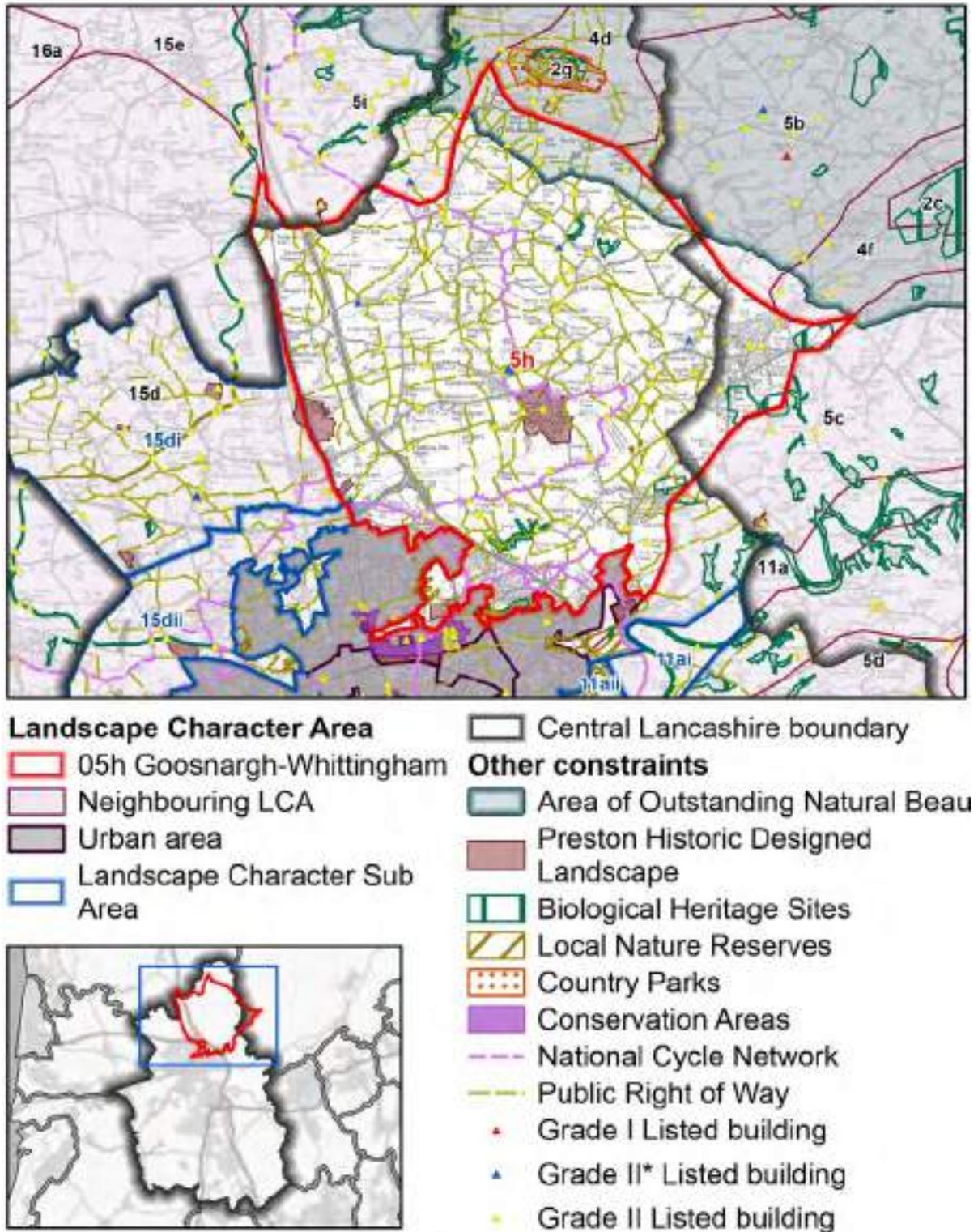
The strategy for the Undulating Lowland Farmland LCT as a whole is to:

- Retain the characteristic pattern of river corridor and valley side woodlands
- Conserve the distinctive rural hedgerow network.
- Conserve the lowland herb-rich haymeadows and unimproved neutral grasslands.
- Conserve the limestone reef knolls typical of the Ribble Valley.
- Conserve rural built features such as stone bridges, historic villages and stone walls.
- Conserve the Roman history and industrial archaeology of the area.
- Conserve country houses and parkland as features of the landscape.
- Conserve the distinctive settings to rural settlements.
- Enhance the wooded character of the lowland landscape.
- Restore and maintain historic rural buildings.

## Absolute Constraints



## Other Constraints



## Value Evaluation

### Natural heritage

This considers the 'naturalistic' qualities of the landscape area. It looks at the distinctiveness of landforms, the presence and extent of semi-natural habitats and wildlife that contribute to sense of place. Designations such as SSSI will add value. It also considers any particular functional value of landscape elements.

- The undulating landscape forms a gentle transition between the Millstone Grit fells of the Forest of Bowland (c. 150m AOD), and the low lying plains of soft glacial deposits to the west (c. 30m AOD). Brooks draining the high ground have created gentle valleys in the landscape, which become wider in the west of the LCA.
- Although woodland is limited, there is a high density of mature hedgerow trees and some small woodland copses scattered throughout the landscape. Hedgerow density and quality varies, but through much of the area they are key features and create a sense of being in a well wooded landscape. There is also woodland cover along the various brooks. This includes some localised instances of Ancient Woodland, such as Fulwood Park Woods along the Savick Brook and Bullsnape Wood on the Bullsnape Brook.
- Small scale ponds are found throughout the area and are important habitats for birds. Grimsargh Wetlands, a series of decommissioned reservoirs, represents larger water bodies.

### Cultural heritage

This considers the extent to which the landscape displays time depth: either in terms of the presence of natural features, historical field patterns or heritage assets that contribute to landscape character. The designation of

heritage assets such as Conservation Areas, Scheduled Monuments, listed buildings and areas of archaeological interest will add value.

- The majority of the area has been identified as 'ancient enclosure' within the Lancashire HLC (2002). These areas have an intricate and irregular field pattern with winding, small scale lanes. The remaining areas of the LCA are identified as 'post-medieval enclosure'.
- The moated site of Chingle Hall is the only Scheduled Monument in the LCA. However, there are numerous listed buildings throughout the LCA, predominantly comprising dispersed historic halls, farmhouses and barns, but with some clusters marking villages and hamlets.
- The historic field pattern, combined with numerous historic features creates a sense of time depth.

### **Landscape condition**

This considers the physical condition of the landscape in terms of both individual elements and overall structure.

- As with the much of the study area, there has been a degree of hedgerow loss in this LCA. However, in large parts of the LCA the retained ancient field pattern survives and hedgerows contain a high proportion of mature trees. As a result the landscape has a relatively strong landscape structure.
- The M6 traverses the LCA to the west and disrupts the historic landscape pattern, particularly around junction 32. However this has only a localised impact.

### **Distinctiveness**

This considers a landscape's strength of identity, with reference to the presence of distinctive or unusual features that are characteristic of a particular place. A landscape may have additional distinctiveness if it has high visual prominence, or a strong association with the character of a

particular settlement, whether through strong views from the settlement or through providing a clear sense of arrival at the settlement.

- The LCA is characteristic of undulating lowland farmland, and has some scenic qualities. However, there is nothing in particular which differentiates this landscape from similar landscapes in the wider area.
- The visual connection with the Forest of Bowland to the north provides some sense of distinctiveness, emphasising the landscape's transitional role between the upland fells to the east and agricultural plains to the west. As the land rises to the north there are some localised areas which afford expansive views over the surrounding lowlands.
- The majority of older buildings, including those listed, are constructed in the local vernacular using 'sandstone rubble'. This reflects the local geology and creates some sense of distinctiveness.

### Recreational

This criterion considers the presence of features and facilities which enable enjoyment of the landscape, and the importance of these. This may include public rights of way, bridleways, open access land and outdoor tourist/visitor attractions with facilities. Recreation activities such as walking, cycling, horse riding or more formal recreation activities where enjoyment of the landscape is important to the experience. Accessibility from urban areas is also an important consideration. Importance of features may be indicated by designation such as long distance footpaths or recreation routes or national cycle routes.

- There is an extensive network of Public Rights of Way, bridleways and small lanes. The concentration of these is greatest in the areas with the oldest enclosure.
- National Cycle Route (NCR) 6 and 662 traverse the LCA centrally and to the south respectively.

### Perceptual aspects

This considers qualities such as rurality (traditional land uses with few modern, human influences), sense of remoteness or tranquillity. High scenic value, freedom from human activity/ disturbance and 'dark skies' would add to sensitivity in this criterion. It also considers whether there are any associations with notable people, historic events or artwork that contribute to positive perceptions of the landscape.

- The historic and intricate field pattern and density of mature trees in the landscape create a strong sense of rurality and high scenic value. Historic buildings and valued views, both of and from the fells, enhance these qualities. Moving north and east, away from Preston and the M6, levels of tranquillity increase and skies become darker (as identified on CPRE Light Pollution and Dark Skies mapping). Overall the perceptual qualities of the LCA make a considerable contribution to its overall landscape value.

## Assessment Sub-areas

Land within character area 5h: Goosnargh-Whittingham is generally of a similar character, and so is assessed as a single area.

## Landscape value summary

The key aspects of landscape value (qualities and/or elements/features/areas of value) are:

- A small-scale and intricate landscape pattern with a strong landscape structure formed by hedgerows containing a high proportion of mature trees.
- A sense of time-depth provided by the historic field patterns, listed farmsteads and small scale villages and hamlets.
- Long distance views of the fells to the north and the expansive lowland plain to the west.

## **Appendix A** Landscape value assessment

- A strong rural character, with a sense of tranquility and remoteness, particularly in the north of the LCA.

Whilst the LCA has some valued landscape characteristics, overall it is not considered to have 'above ordinary' landscape value.

## LCA 5k: Cuerden-Euxton

### Location and Key Characteristics

The key characteristics and strategy for the Landscape Character Area (LCA) below are copied in full from the 'Landscape Strategy for Lancashire: Landscape Character Assessment' (2000).

This LCA is located on the north of Chorley and is constrained by the Suburban areas of Leyland and Euxton to the west, Bamber Bridge to the north and Clayton-le-Woods and Whittle-le-Woods to the east. The majority of the area lies in the Chorley District, with the north-west corner falling within the South Ribble District. It forms part of the 'Undulating Lowland Farmland' Landscape Character Type (LCT) which is characterised by lowland undulating farmland lying between the major valleys and the moorland fringes, incised by wooded cloughs and gorges.

Key characteristics for the wider LCA recorded in the Landscape Character Assessment are:

- The rural character of this landscape is largely obscured by built development which has taken place since the late 1970s.
- Motorways and motorway junctions dominate the northern sector.
- The principal landscape feature is Cuerden Valley Park, based upon the woodland and valley of the river Lostock. The park is managed for nature conservation and recreational use and is an important local resource.
- Pockets of farmland and vernacular buildings survive as a reminder of earlier land use and settlement pattern.

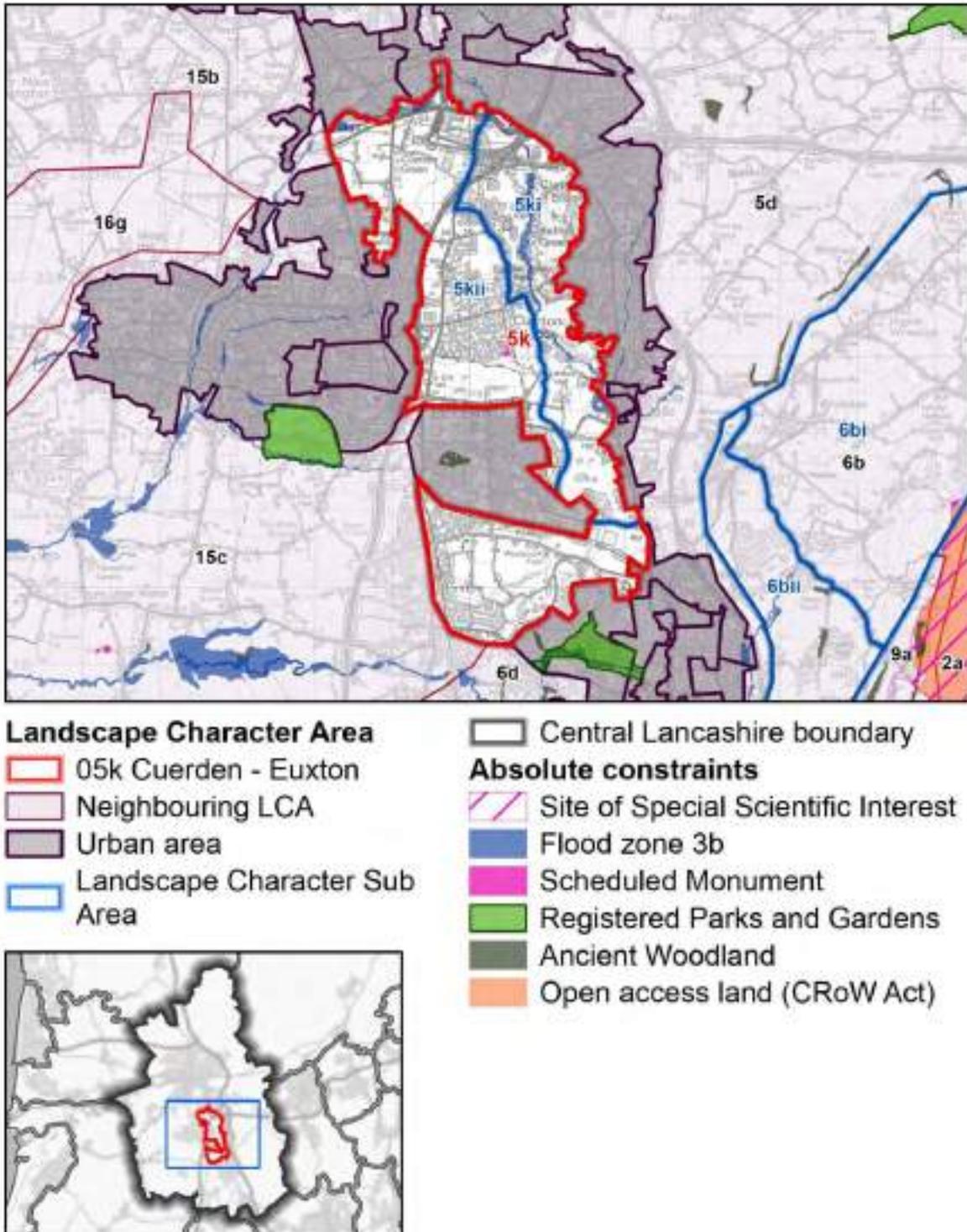
The strategy for the Undulating Lowland Farmland LCT as a whole is to:

- Retain the characteristic pattern of river corridor and valley side woodlands

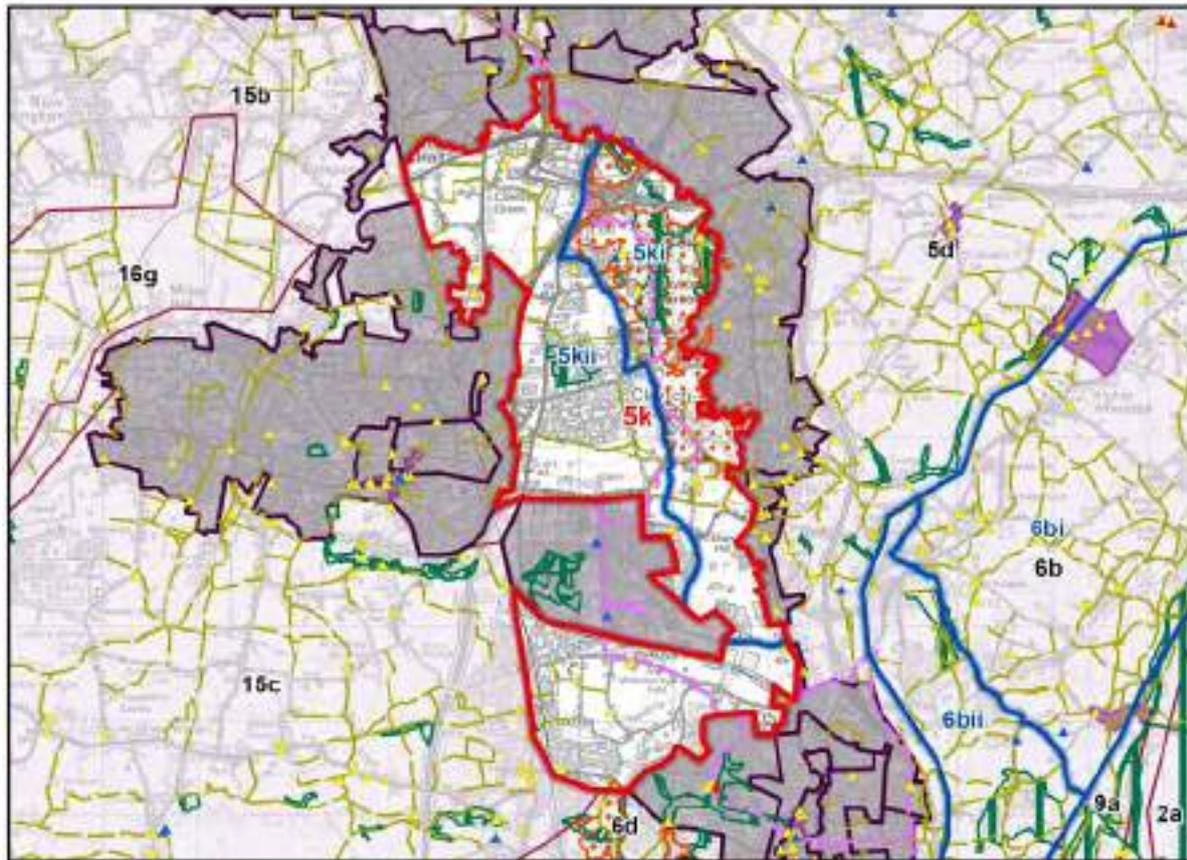
## Appendix A Landscape value assessment

- Conserve the distinctive rural hedgerow network.
- Conserve the lowland herb-rich haymeadows and unimproved neutral grasslands.
- Conserve the limestone reef knolls typical of the Ribble Valley.
- Conserve rural built features such as stone bridges, historic villages and stone walls.
- Conserve the Roman history and industrial archaeology of the area.
- Conserve country houses and parkland as features of the landscape.
- Conserve the distinctive settings to rural settlements.
- Enhance the wooded character of the lowland landscape.
- Restore and maintain historic rural buildings.

## Absolute Constraints



## Other Constraints



- Landscape Character Area**
- 05k Cuerden - Euxton
  - Neighbouring LCA
  - Urban area
  - Landscape Character Sub Area

- Other constraints**
- Biological Heritage Sites
  - Local Nature Reserves
  - Country Parks
  - Conservation Areas
  - National Cycle Network
  - Public Right of Way
  - ▲ Grade I Listed building
  - ▲ Grade II\* Listed building
  - Grade II Listed building



## Value Evaluation

### Natural heritage

This considers the 'naturalistic' qualities of the landscape area. It looks at the distinctiveness of landforms, the presence and extent of semi-natural habitats and wildlife that contribute to sense of place. Designations such as SSSI will add value. It also considers any particular functional value of landscape elements.

- The topography of the area is low lying and transitions gradually from an undulating landform to the east to flat plains to the west. The River Lostock passes through the centre of the LCA within a very shallow river valley .
- The River Lostock is a key unifying element across the LCA, contributing to sense of place and providing an important habitat for wildlife. It sits within a modest floodplain which provides a range of benefits, including alleviating flooding downstream in the urban area of Leyland. A number of small brooks and streams feed into the river, including Clayton Brook in the north-east. The designed landscapes of Cuerden Valley Park and of the two golf courses in the south have a number of man-made ponds, the largest of which is the Victorian Clayton Brook Reservoir. These in turn provide further wetland habitats, in addition to the small, natural ponds found throughout the landscape.
- As a result of the presence of designed landscapes and the corridor of the River Lostock, the area is relatively well wooded, particularly within Cuerden Valley Park. There are number of Biological Heritage Sites within the LCA, the majority of which fall within Cuerden Valley Park. There is no Ancient Woodland within the LCA.

### Cultural heritage

This considers the extent to which the landscape displays time depth: either in terms of the presence of natural features, historic field patterns or heritage assets that contribute to landscape character. The designation of heritage assets such as Conservation Areas, Scheduled Monuments, listed buildings and areas of archaeological interest will add value.

- Cuerden Valley Park comprises the former parkland associated with Cuerden Hall. There are a number of surviving features associated with the historic estate, including the Grade II\* Cuerden Hall and the Grade II Stag Lodge at the northern extent of the park. This extensive designed parkland landscape creates a strong sense of time-depth and strengthens the sense of place.
- In the south of the LCA are remnants of two smaller historic parklands associated respectively with Lisieux Hall and Shaw Hill country house. The original Shaw Hill estate is now a golf course, and much of its original woodland has been retained.
- Outside areas of retained parkland the historic landscape pattern has been widely eroded by development and peri-urban land uses such as landfill sites, industrial sites, transport corridors and new development such as Buckshaw Village. The Lancashire HLC published in 2002 identifies an assortment of HLC types across the LCA, including areas of 'ancient enclosure'. These areas have been further reduced and fragmented by development since and new development such as Buckshaw Village 2002, and provide minimal sense of time-depth within the landscape.
- A series of Listed farmhouses and barns found throughout the area, provide remnants of the areas agricultural past. However, the agricultural setting of many of these has been altered or lost, meaning that they make a limited contribution to landscape value.

### **Landscape condition**

This considers the physical condition of the landscape in terms of both individual elements and overall structure.

- Cuerden Valley Park is managed as a Country Park and is in a good condition. Similarly, the two golf courses in the south of the LCA are well maintained.
- This area contains a variety of peri-urban land uses, and as a result lacks a coherent structure. In the isolated locations where although they make a limited contribution to a strong, coherent landscape structure, have been retained, for example in the far north-west and south of the LCA, hedgerows are gappy and degraded in places.

### **Distinctiveness**

This considers a landscape's strength of identity, with reference to the presence of distinctive or unusual features that are characteristic of a particular place. A landscape may have additional distinctiveness if it has high visual prominence, or a strong association with the character of a particular settlement, whether through strong views from the settlement or through providing a clear sense of arrival at the settlement.

- The designed landscape of Cuerden Valley Park, and lesser extent the two remnant parkland landscapes in the south, has a strong distinct identity.
- Other parts of the landscape contain an assortment of peri-urban land uses characteristic of an urban fringe landscape and is therefore not distinctive. The landscape does not have a strong unifying character or sense of place.

### **Recreational**

This criterion considers the presence of features and facilities which enable enjoyment of the landscape, and the importance of these. This may include public rights of way, bridleways, open access land and outdoor tourist/visitor attractions with facilities. Recreation activities such as walking, cycling, horse riding or more formal recreation activities where enjoyment of

the landscape is important to the experience. Accessibility from urban areas is also an important consideration. Importance of features may be indicated by designation such as long distance footpaths or recreation routes or national cycle routes.

- The extensive and publicly accessible Cuerden Valley Park is an important recreational resource for the surrounding urban areas including Leyland, Bamber Bridge and Clayton-le-Woods.
- The National Cycle Network Route 55 traverse the LCA north-south, passing through Cuerden Valley Park.
- The majority of the LCA is moderately well connected with Public Rights of Way, but the presence of large areas of publicly inaccessible land (such a land fill site, a sand pit and two golf courses) limits public access in places.
- Leyland and Shaw Hill golf clubs in the south of the LCA provide recreational opportunities for a subset of the population.

### Perceptual aspects

This considers qualities such as rurality (traditional land uses with few modern, human influences), sense of remoteness or tranquillity. High scenic value, freedom from human activity/ disturbance and 'dark skies' would add to sensitivity in this criterion. It also considers whether there are any associations with notable people, historic events or artwork that contribute to positive perceptions of the landscape.

- This area sits between the major transport corridors of the M61 and the M6 to the east and west respectively. It is constrained on all sides by urban and sub-urban development. As a result it has low levels of rurality and tranquillity and a limited sense of remoteness.
- Within Cuerden Valley Park the naturalistic designed landscape contributes a localised sense of tranquillity, however the adjacent motorways are clearly audible throughout the park.

## Assessment Sub-areas

The LCA 5k: Cuerden-Euxton has been divided into following sub-areas for the purposes of this landscape value assessment:

- 15a i – Cuerden and Shaw Hill Parkland
- 15a ii – Leyland and Chorley Urban Fringe

## Landscape value summary

### 5k i – Cuerden and Shaw Hill Parkland

The key aspects of landscape value (qualities and/or elements/features/areas of value) are:

- The sinuous River Lostock contributes to the scenic quality of the area and sits within a functional floodplain which provides a range of benefits.
- The high proportion of woodland cover within the historic parklands, particularly within Cuerden Country Park and is valuable and helps reduce the perception of the adjacent transport corridors and settlement, creating a localised degree of tranquility.
- The naturalistic qualities, designed landscape and heritage structures within the parkland areas have a strong scenic quality and provide a sense of time depth.
- The publicly accessible Country Park provides an important recreational resource for the surrounding urban areas. A network of tracks and paths within the park, including the NCN route 55, provide opportunities for walkers and cyclists.

Whilst the sub-area has some valued landscape characteristics, overall it is not considered to have '**above ordinary**' landscape value..

## 5k ii – Leyland and Chorley Urban Fringe

The key aspects of landscape value (qualities and/or elements/features/areas of value) are:

- The area is relatively well wooded as a result of tree lined brooks and golf course landscaping.
- There are a series of small scale ponds and brooks which are positive for wildlife and contribute to landscape character.
- There are a few isolates remnants of traditional field patterns defined by hedgerows and some listed farm buildings which provide a limited degree of time depth.
- NCN route 55 passes through the south of this section of the LCA.

Overall, the sub-area is not considered not to have '**above ordinary**' landscape value.

## LCA 6b: West Pennine Foothills

### Location and Key Characteristics

The key characteristics and strategy for the Landscape Character Area (LCA) below are copied in full from the 'Landscape Strategy for Lancashire: Landscape Character Assessment' (2000).

This LCA is located to the east of Chorley, within Chorley District. It forms part of the 'Industrial Foothills and Valleys' Landscape Character Type (LCT) which is a transitional small-scale landscape with intensive settlement. The landscape has a mix of rural agricultural areas and settlement influenced by industrial development.

Key characteristics for the wider LCA recorded in the Landscape Character Assessment are:

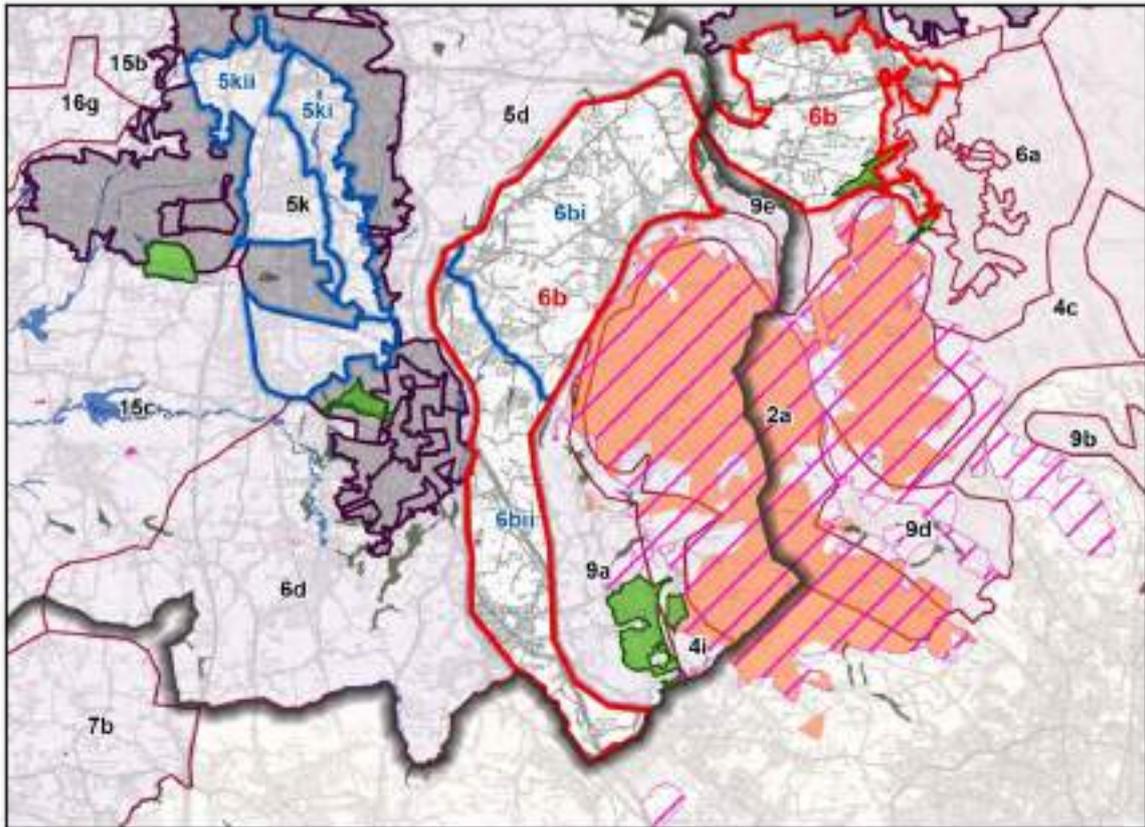
- The rural area forms the rolling foothills to the West Pennine Moors.
- Although it has the same undulating landform, underlying geology and industrial influences as the Calder Valley, it is more rural in character.
- Dominated by sheep grazed pastures and includes a number of designed landscapes, with associated country houses.
- The villages reflect their industrial basis with rows of terraces, and sandstone quarries are present.
- Urban influences include allotments, horse paddocks, street lighting and kerbs, electricity pylons, communication masts, golf courses, suburban housing and road signs.
- Evidence of past quarrying can be seen in the numerous remnant spoil heaps which are common landscape features, for example near Withnell.
- The many public footpaths are an important recreational resource from which walkers may experience distant views of the urban conurbations stretching out below them.

## Appendix A Landscape value assessment

The strategy for the Reservoir Valleys LCT as a whole is to:

- Conserve valuable habitats.
- Conserve built industrial heritage.
- Conserve the pattern and distinctive settings to settlements.
- Enhance the characteristic field pattern.
- Enhance opportunities for informal recreation.
- Restore and enhance the existing woodland resource.
- Restore semi-natural habitats.
- Create new distinctive landscapes in association with new development.

## Absolute Constraints

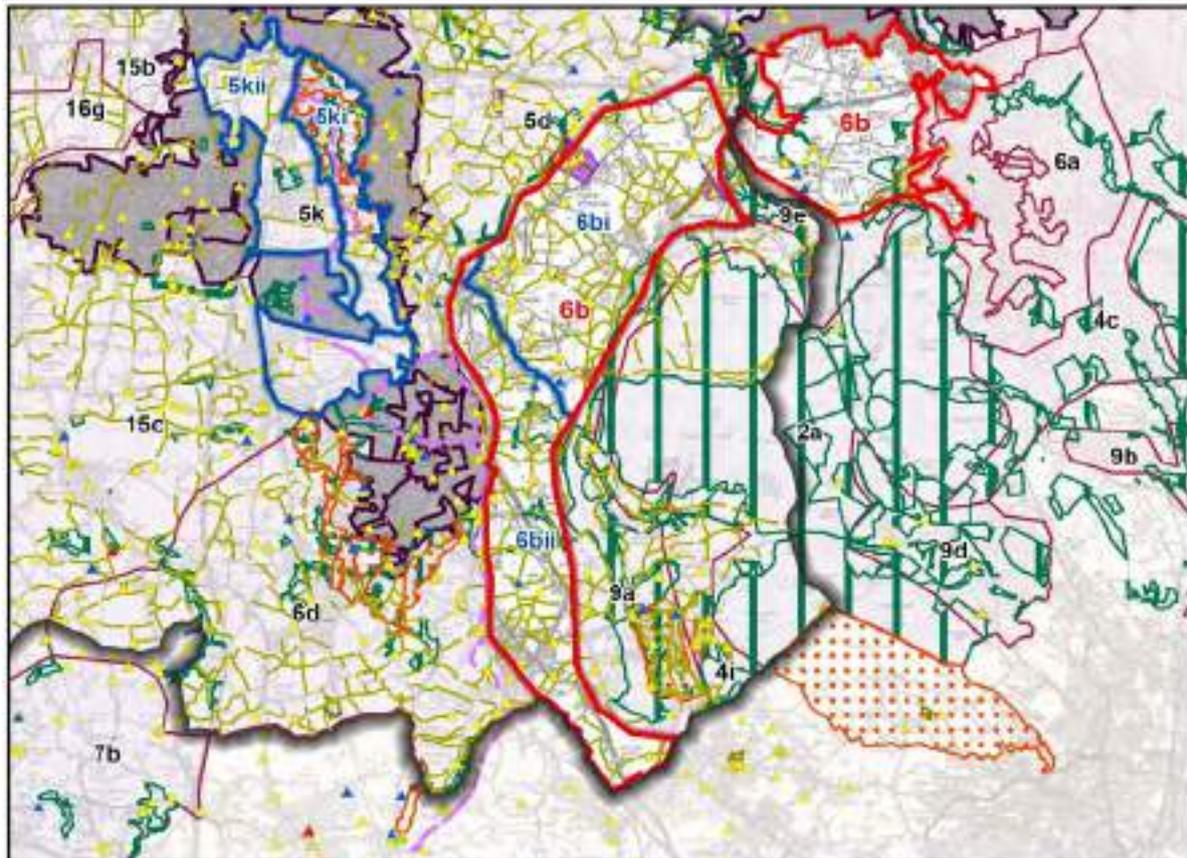


- Landscape Character Area**
- 06b West Pennine Foothills
  - Neighbouring LCA
  - Urban area
  - Landscape Character Sub Area

- Absolute constraints**
- Central Lancashire boundary
  - Site of Special Scientific Interest
  - Flood zone 3b
  - Scheduled Monument
  - Registered Parks and Gardens
  - Ancient Woodland
  - Open access land (CRoW Act)

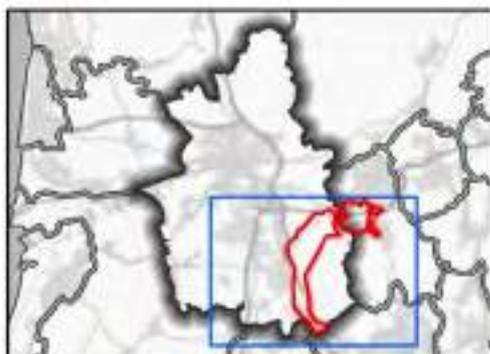


## Other Constraints



- Landscape Character Area**
- 06b West Pennine Foothills
  - Neighbouring LCA
  - Urban area
  - Landscape Character Sub Area

- Other constraints**
- Biological Heritage Sites
  - Local Nature Reserves
  - Country Parks
  - Conservation Areas
  - National Cycle Network
  - Public Right of Way
  - ▲ Grade I Listed building
  - ▲ Grade II\* Listed building
  - Grade II Listed building



## Value Evaluation

### Natural heritage

This considers the 'naturalistic' qualities of the landscape area. It looks at the distinctiveness of landforms, the presence and extent of semi-natural habitats and wildlife that contribute to sense of place. Designations such as SSSI will add value. It also considers any particular functional value of landscape elements.

- A rolling landscape, which forms the foothills to the West Pennine Moors to the east.
- Small, scattered areas of woodland, generally priority habitat deciduous woodland. Two areas of Ancient Woodland at Nab Wood and Temple Wood. Hedgerow boundaries with mature hedgerow trees also contribute to the wooded character.
- Lowland heathland is found around Grey Heights.

### Cultural heritage

This considers the extent to which the landscape displays time depth: either in terms of the presence of natural features, historic field patterns or heritage assets that contribute to landscape character. The designation of heritage assets such as Conservation Areas, Scheduled Monuments, listed buildings and areas of archaeological interest will add value.

- The majority of the landscape is identified as ancient enclosure within the Lancashire HLC (2002), with small-scale irregular fields and small lanes. A more regular post-medieval enclosure landscape is noted in the north, around Brinscall and Withnell.

- The dispersed settlement pattern is still evident, with historic settlements covered by Conservation Areas and a number of listed farmhouses and barns outside of villages.
- Bretters Farm moated site and fishponds is the only Scheduled Monument in the LCA, and provides evidence of settlement dating from the 12/13<sup>th</sup> century.
- Modern infrastructure including the M61 and Bolton West service station detract from the historic character.

### **Landscape condition**

This considers the physical condition of the landscape in terms of both individual elements and overall structure.

- Stone walls and hedgerow field boundaries are generally in good condition, although there has been some replacement with post and rail and post and wire fencing. The area has a relatively strong landscape structure.
- The M61 and Bolton West service station, golf courses at Royal Oak and Chorley, and suburban characteristics including kerbs and street lighting are detracting features which negatively influence the landscape structure and condition to the south and west.

### **Distinctiveness**

This considers a landscape's strength of identity, with reference to the presence of distinctive or unusual features that are characteristic of a particular place. A landscape may have additional distinctiveness if it has high visual prominence, or a strong association with the character of a particular settlement, whether through strong views from the settlement or through providing a clear sense of arrival at the settlement.

- Away from the M61 and urban edges of Chorley and Adlington, the rural character, small lanes, small irregular field pattern and scattered

settlements contribute to a moderate sense of place. This rural character is not unusual within Lancashire, and the landscape features do not have a strong association with a particular area.

- There are views from the LCA down towards the larger urban conurbations of Chorley and Preston.
- To the north and east the landscape provides a rural setting and approach to historic settlements at , Abbey Village and Withnell Fold, which creates some sense of place.

### Recreational

This criterion considers the presence of features and facilities which enable enjoyment of the landscape, and the importance of these. This may include public rights of way, bridleways, open access land and outdoor tourist/visitor attractions with facilities. Recreation activities such as walking, cycling, horse riding or more formal recreation activities where enjoyment of the landscape is important to the experience. Accessibility from urban areas is also an important consideration. Importance of features may be indicated by designation such as long distance footpaths or recreation routes or national cycle routes.

- There is an extensive network of Public Rights of Way and small lanes, which provide access from nearby settlements (including Chorley and Adlington) into the wider countryside and the moorland fells to the east. The promoted route the Rotary Way runs through the south of the LCA.

### Perceptual aspects

This considers qualities such as rurality (traditional land uses with few modern, human influences), sense of remoteness or tranquillity. High scenic value, freedom from human activity/ disturbance and 'dark skies' would add to sensitivity in this criterion. It also considers whether there are

any associations with notable people, historic events or artwork that contribute to positive perceptions of the landscape.

- The landscape to the south and west is impacted by proximity to the M61 and the urban edges of Adlington and Chorley, which reduce tranquillity and introduce light pollution.
- Away from these modern influences to the north and east, this is a largely rural landscape of small pasture fields, mature woodlands and hedgerows.
- There are no particular associations with notable people or historic events.

## Assessment Sub-areas

The LCA 6b: West Pennine Foothills has been divided into the following sub-areas for the purposes of this landscape value assessment:

- 6b i – Northern West Pennine Foothills
- 6b ii – Southern West Pennine Foothills

## Landscape value summary

### 6b i – Northern West Pennine Foothills

The key aspects of landscape value (qualities and/or elements/features/areas of value) are:

- Small-scale rural landscape with historic field patterns, small lanes and landscape structure provided by hedgerows and stone walls.
- A sense of time-depth provided by the historic field patterns and scattered listed farmhouses.
- Long distance views of the fells to the east.

## Appendix A Landscape value assessment

- An extensive network of footpaths provide recreational access across the sub-area, and links to the wider moorland landscape.

Whilst the LCA has some valued landscape characteristics, overall it is not considered to have 'above ordinary' landscape value.

### 6b ii – Southern West Pennine Foothills

The key aspects of landscape value (qualities and/or elements/features/areas of value) are:

- A sense of time-depth provided by the historic field patterns, scattered listed farmhouses and areas of woodland.
- A landscape more influenced by urban fringe landscape uses, including the Chorley Golf Course and Bolton West service station, the M61 and proximity to the urban edges of Adlington and Chorley.
- No strong sense of rurality or tranquillity due to audibility and visibility of immediately adjacent urban areas.
- An extensive network of footpaths provide recreational access across the sub-area, and links to the surrounding settlements.

Based on the above, the landscape is not considered to have 'above ordinary' landscape value.

## LCA 6d: Adlington-Coppull

### Location and Key Characteristics

The key characteristics and strategy for the Landscape Character Area (LCA) below are copied in full from the 'Landscape Strategy for Lancashire: Landscape Character Assessment' (2000).

This LCA is located to the south of Chorley, in the south of Chorley District. It forms part of the 'Industrial Foothills and Valleys' Landscape Character Type (LCT) which is a transitional small-scale landscape with intensive settlement. The landscape has a mix of rural agricultural areas and settlement influenced by industrial development.

Key characteristics for the wider LCA recorded in the Landscape Character Assessment are:

- This area is bordered by the Coastal Plain to the west and the town of Chorley to the north.
- Much of the area lies on the Coal Measures and has been extensively mined in the past, notably at Chisnall, Birkacre and Duxbury.
- This industrial past is reflected in the expanded industrial settlements of Coppull and Adlington.
- Whilst there is some evidence of early mine shafts and adits, much of the land has been reclaimed or has re-vegetated naturally.
- There is also evidence of sand quarrying, some disused, some ongoing, as at Rigby House.
- Whilst the area is not generally well wooded, it contains important semi-natural woodland within the Yarrow Valley and plantations associated with large reclamation schemes.
- The area is traversed by major transport routes, including the main west coast railway and M6 motorway.

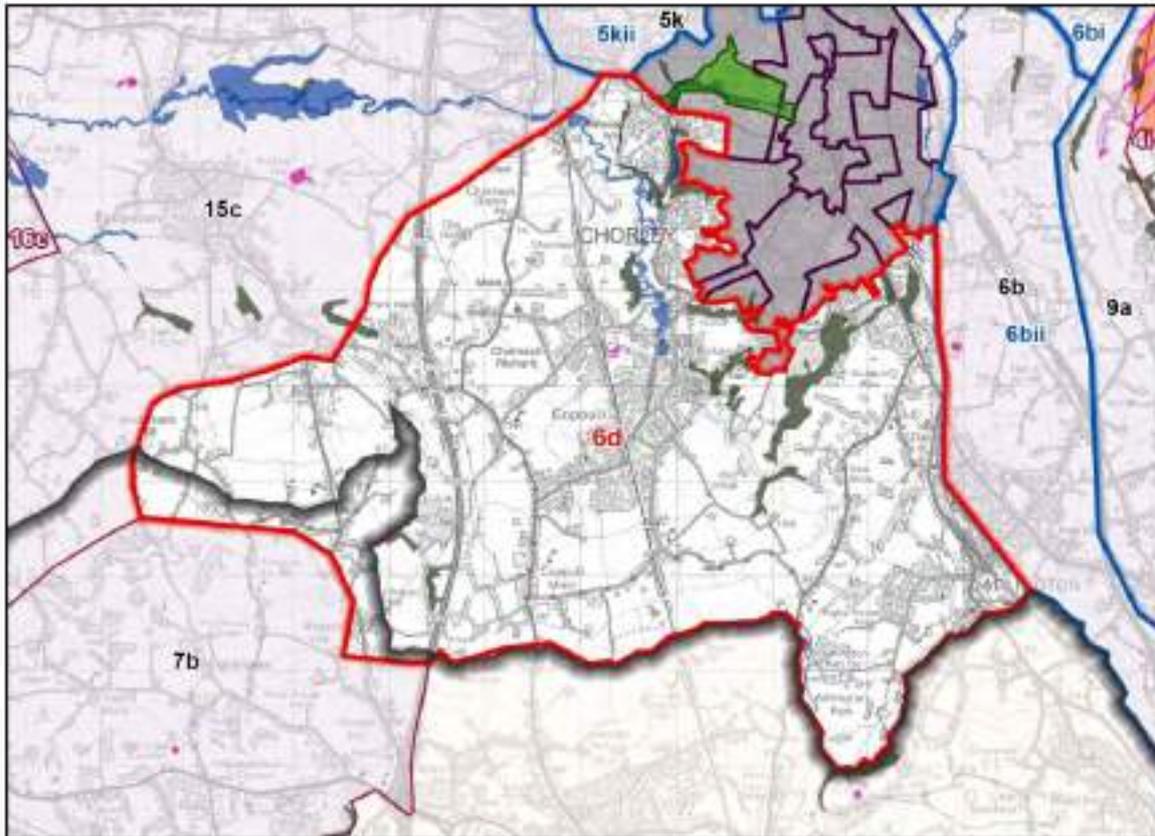
## Appendix A Landscape value assessment

- A major leisure facility is located at Park Hall and a large golf course at Duxbury Park.
- The area is under considerable pressure for further built development.

The strategy for the Reservoir Valleys LCT as a whole is to:

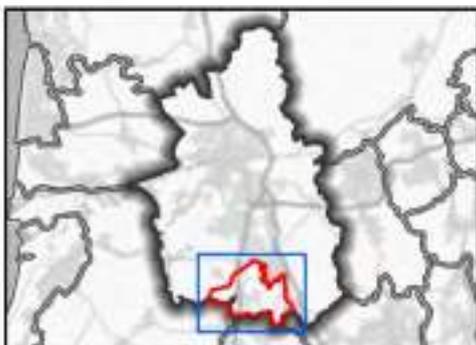
- Conserve valuable habitats.
- Conserve built industrial heritage.
- Conserve the pattern and distinctive settings to settlements.
- Enhance the characteristic field pattern.
- Enhance opportunities for informal recreation.
- Restore and enhance the existing woodland resource.
- Restore semi-natural habitats.
- Create new distinctive landscapes in association with new development.

## Absolute Constraints

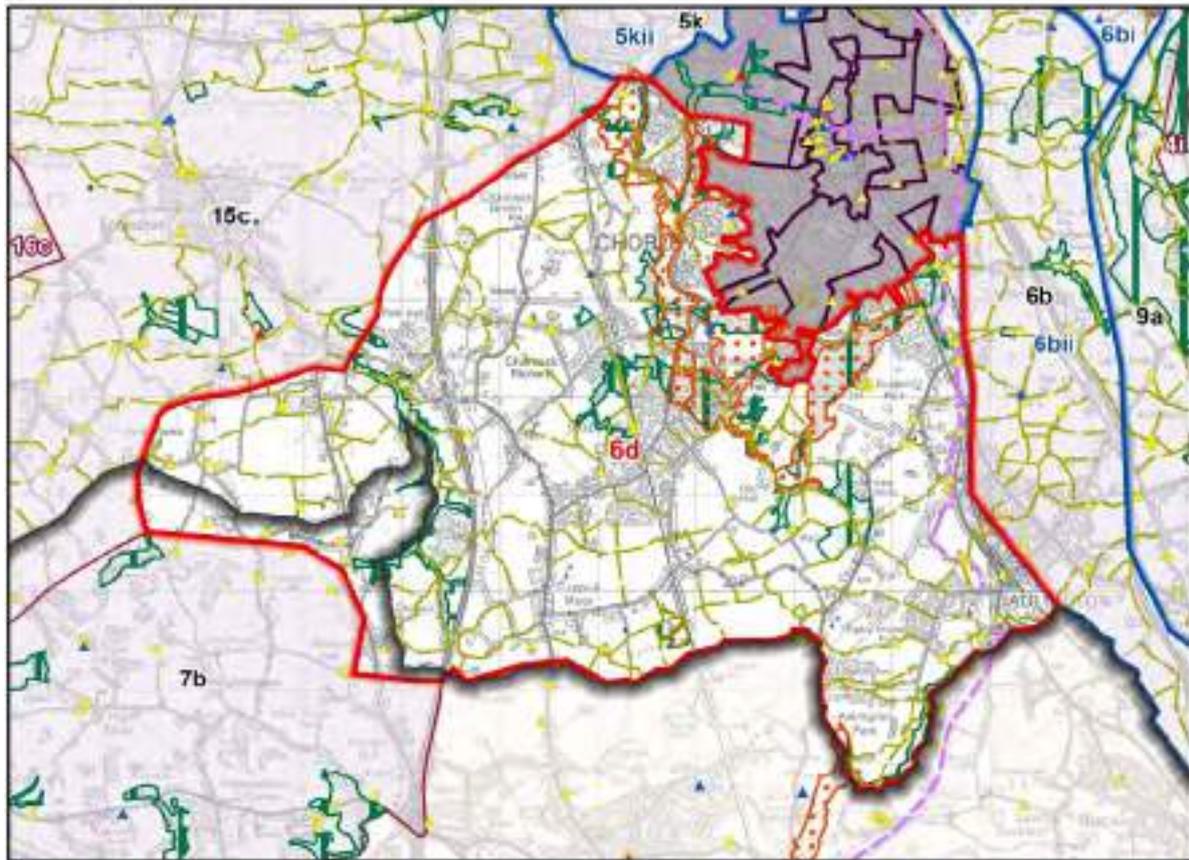


- Landscape Character Area**
- 06d Adlington - Coppull
  - Neighbouring LCA
  - Urban area
  - Landscape Character Sub Area

- Absolute constraints**
- Site of Special Scientific Interest
  - Flood zone 3b
  - Scheduled Monument
  - Registered Parks and Gardens
  - Ancient Woodland
  - Open access land (CRoW Act)

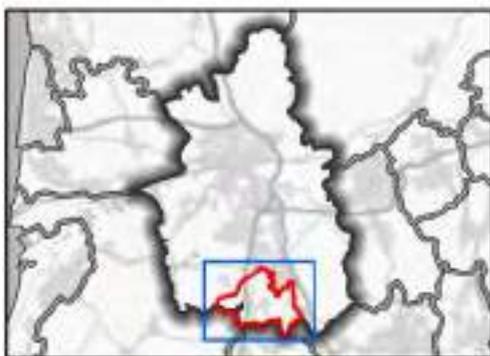


## Other Constraints



- Landscape Character Area**
- 06d Adlington - Coppull
  - Neighbouring LCA
  - Urban area
  - Landscape Character Sub Area

- Other constraints**
- Central Lancashire boundary
  - Biological Heritage Sites
  - Local Nature Reserves
  - Country Parks
  - Conservation Areas
  - National Cycle Network
  - Public Right of Way
  - ▲ Grade I Listed building
  - ▲ Grade II\* Listed building
  - Grade II Listed building



## Value Evaluation

### Natural heritage

This considers the 'naturalistic' qualities of the landscape area. It looks at the distinctiveness of landforms, the presence and extent of semi-natural habitats and wildlife that contribute to sense of place. Designations such as SSSI will add value. It also considers any particular functional value of landscape elements.

- A gently rolling landscape, with steeper sided valley slopes of the River Yarrow and Syd Brook.
- Sinuous woodlands follow the river courses. These are predominantly priority habitat deciduous woodland, with significant tracts of Ancient Woodland on the edges of Chorley.
- Small areas of lowland meadow and lowland fens are found adjacent to the Clancutt Brook and River Yarrow north of Coppull.

### Cultural heritage

This considers the extent to which the landscape displays time depth: either in terms of the presence of natural features, historic field patterns or heritage assets that contribute to landscape character. The designation of heritage assets such as Conservation Areas, Scheduled Monuments, listed buildings and areas of archaeological interest will add value.

- The majority of the landscape is identified as 'ancient enclosure' within the Lancashire HLC (2002), comprising small-scale irregular fields and small lanes. There are areas of more regular post-medieval enclosure landscape east of Coppull and modern enclosure at Adlington Park in the south. The latter may be associated with the former collieries in the area.

- Historic farmsteads and halls are scattered throughout the LCA, and are generally Grade II listed. The local vernacular is brick and sandstone. These contrast with more modern development at Coppull, Adlington and Charnock Richard, and ribbon development along the main roads.
- Transport corridors of the M6, including a service station, A49 and west coast mainline railway are modern features which detract from the landscape character.

### **Landscape condition**

This considers the physical condition of the landscape in terms of both individual elements and overall structure.

- Hedgerow field boundaries are generally in good condition, although there has been some replacement with post and rail and post and wire fencing in places. Overall the area has a relatively strong landscape structure.
- Chorley Sand Quarry is active and forms an incongruous feature that negatively impacts on the landscape structure. Large farm buildings and urban fringe land uses, including leisure centres and BMX courses, also impact on the landscape condition.
- Suburban characteristics, including street lighting and kerbs, and golf courses at Yarrow Valley and Duxbury Park are modern detractors of landscape character.

### **Distinctiveness**

This considers a landscape's strength of identity, with reference to the presence of distinctive or unusual features that are characteristic of a particular place. A landscape may have additional distinctiveness if it has high visual prominence, or a strong association with the character of a particular settlement, whether through strong views from the settlement or through providing a clear sense of arrival at the settlement.

- A mixed landscape of rural pastoral character with hedgerows and small lanes, and more suburban land uses, with major transport corridors running through the landscape and proximity to large settlements. This character is not unusual within Lancashire, and the landscape features do not have a strong association with a particular area.
- The Yarrow valley with its Ancient Woodlands has a more distinct sense of place.
- There are views from the LCA to the larger urban conurbations of Chorley and Preston, and east towards the moorland fells.
- The landscape provides a rural setting and separation between Charnock Richard, Coppull and Chorley.

### Recreational

This criterion considers the presence of features and facilities which enable enjoyment of the landscape, and the importance of these. This may include public rights of way, bridleways, open access land and outdoor tourist/visitor attractions with facilities. Recreation activities such as walking, cycling, horse riding or more formal recreation activities where enjoyment of the landscape is important to the experience. Accessibility from urban areas is also an important consideration. Importance of features may be indicated by designation such as long distance footpaths or recreation routes or national cycle routes.

- The Yarrow Valley Country Park is large park that provides an important recreational resource.
- There is a good network of Public Rights of Way and small lanes, which provide access from settlements including Coppull, Adlington and Chorley into the wider countryside.
- The Leeds and Liverpool Canal provides quiet recreational opportunities, and the towpath is also part of the route of National Cycling Route 55.

### Perceptual aspects

This considers qualities such as rurality (traditional land uses with few modern, human influences), sense of remoteness or tranquillity. High scenic value, freedom from human activity/ disturbance and 'dark skies' would add to sensitivity in this criterion. It also considers whether there are any associations with notable people, historic events or artwork that contribute to positive perceptions of the landscape.

- The rural landscape is impacted by the M6, West Coast Main Line railway, and the settlements of Adlington, Chorley and Coppull, which reduce tranquillity.
- There are no particular associations with notable people or historic events.

## Assessment Sub-areas

Land within character area 6d: Adlington-Coppull is generally of a similar character, and so is assessed as a single area.

## Landscape value summary

The key aspects of landscape value (qualities and/or elements/features/areas of value) are:

- Stream corridors with priority habitat deciduous woodland, some of ancient origin, provides important habitats and biodiversity.
- A sense of time-depth provided by the historic field patterns, scattered listed farmhouses and areas of Ancient Woodland.
- Long distance views of the fells to the east.

## **Appendix A** Landscape value assessment

- Yarrow Valley Country Park, Leeds to Liverpool Canal, and a good network of footpaths provide recreational access across the LCA, and links to the wider countryside.

Overall, the landscape is not considered to have 'above ordinary' landscape value, with the exception of the wooded stream valleys.

## LCA 9a: Rivington Reservoir Valley

### Location and Key Characteristics

The key characteristics and strategy for the Landscape Character Area (LCA) below are copied in full from the 'Landscape Strategy for Lancashire: Landscape Character Assessment' (2000).

This LCA is located to the south-east of Chorley, east of the M61 within Chorley District. It forms part of the 'Reservoir Valleys' Landscape Character Type (LCT) which is characterised by large reservoirs constructed in the mid-late nineteenth century to supply water for Lancashire's growing urban population. The valleys are predominantly rural, with mixed woodlands and large expanses of water with associated engineered landforms.

Key characteristics for the wider LCA recorded in the Landscape Character Assessment are:

- A wide shallow valley almost entirely water-filled containing the three large reservoirs of Anglezarke, Upper and Lower Rivington and Yarrow.
- These waterbodies, built by Liverpool Corporation in the mid-nineteenth century, cover the courses of three separate streams on this western edge of the West Pennine Moors.
- Much of the character of the lower part of the valley is owed to the influence of Lord Leverhulme who had his home at Rivington Hall.
- His interest in architecture and landscape design is reflected throughout the valley and includes long tree lined avenues, a network of footpaths, the Rivington Terraced Gardens and a replica of Liverpool Castle ruins on the banks of the reservoir.
- The listed historic landscape of Lever Park now forms part of Rivington County Park and is an extremely popular area for recreation.

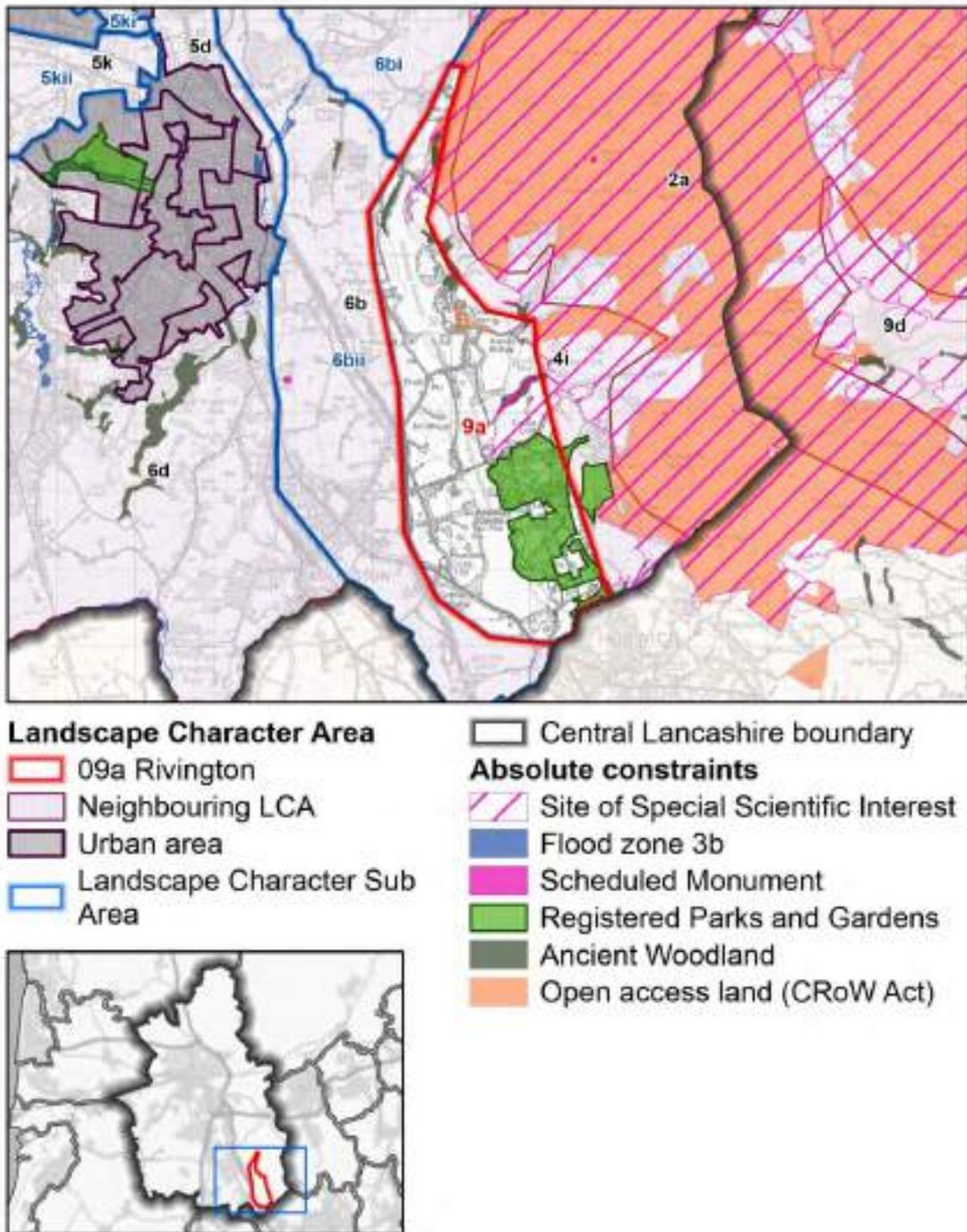
## Appendix A Landscape value assessment

- The landscape of the upper part of the valley is dominated by the engineering structures associated with the reservoirs, including the overflow cascades, bridges and embankments.
- The valley forms the transition from the high West Pennine Moors to the low-lying plain of Leyland Hundred.

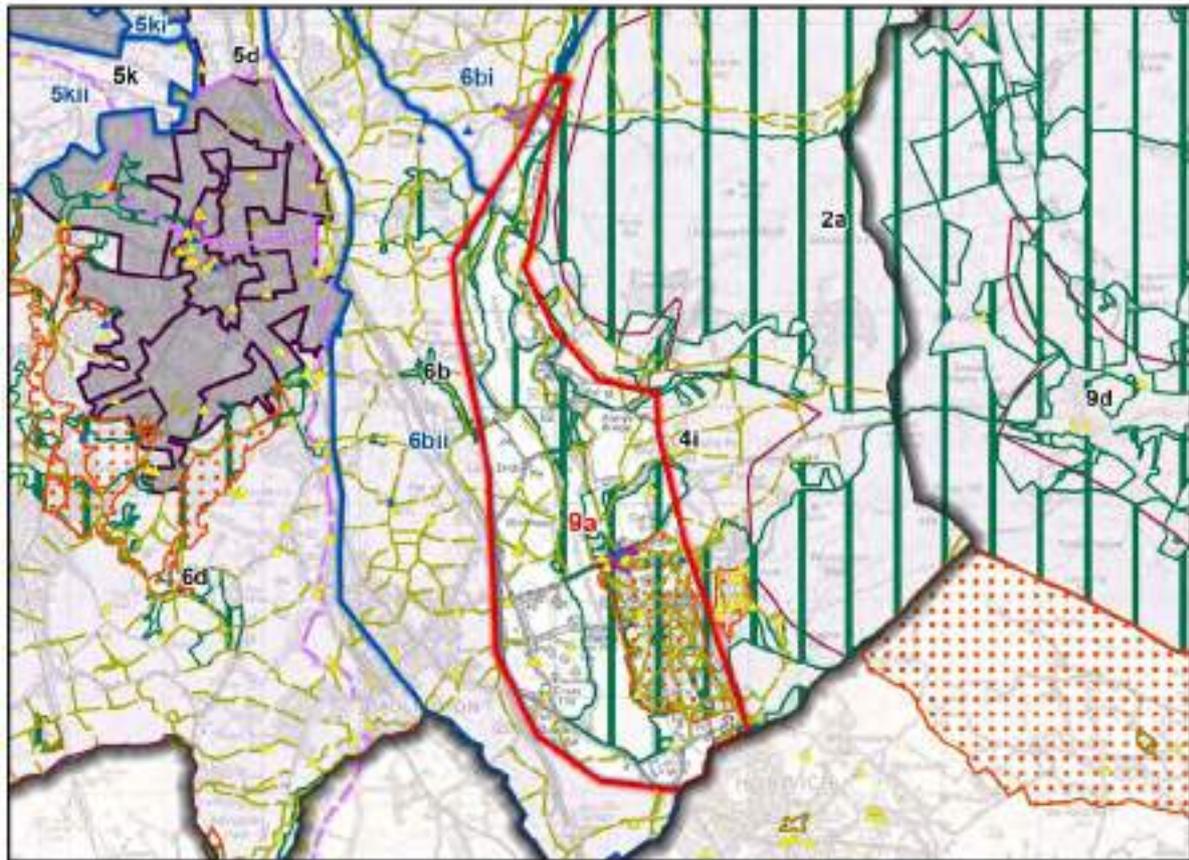
The strategy for the Reservoir Valleys LCT as a whole is to:

- Conserve the distinctive built character of the Reservoir Valleys.
- Conserve and manage all existing woodlands.
- Conserve the important historic designed landscape at Lever Park.
- Enhance valuable wildlife habitats.
- Enhance opportunities for informal recreation.
- Restore broadleaved woodlands in areas where woodland cover has become denuded or highly fragmented.

## Absolute Constraints



## Other Constraints



- Landscape Character Area**
- 09a Rivington
  - Neighbouring LCA
  - Urban area
  - Landscape Character Sub Area

- Other constraints**
- Biological Heritage Sites
  - Local Nature Reserves
  - Country Parks
  - Conservation Areas
  - National Cycle Network
  - Public Right of Way
  - ▲ Grade I Listed building
  - ▲ Grade II\* Listed building
  - Grade II Listed building



## Value Evaluation

### Natural heritage

This considers the 'naturalistic' qualities of the landscape area. It looks at the distinctiveness of landforms, the presence and extent of semi-natural habitats and wildlife that contribute to sense of place. Designations such as SSSI will add value. It also considers any particular functional value of landscape elements.

- The broad, deep glacial valley forms a gentle transition between the low-lying plains to the west and the Millstone Grit fells of the West Pennine Moors to the east.
- Mixed woodlands, including Ancient Woodland and priority habitat deciduous woodlands, and some conifer plantations on replanted ancient woodlands, create a wooded character. Areas of lowland heathland, hay meadow and dry acid grassland mark the transition to moorland habitats, and are designated as part of the West Pennine Moors SSSI.
- The three reservoirs cover the courses of streams, and provide important habitats to support a range of over wintering and breeding birds.

### Cultural heritage

This considers the extent to which the landscape displays time depth: either in terms of the presence of natural features, historic field patterns or heritage assets that contribute to landscape character. The designation of heritage assets such as Conservation Areas, Scheduled Monuments, listed buildings and areas of archaeological interest will add value.

- The construction of the three large reservoirs in the 1850s altered the landscape of this valley. Areas which were not flooded are identified as

'ancient enclosure' within the Lancashire HLC (2002). These areas have an intricate and irregular field pattern with winding, small scale lanes and paths. Areas not covered by woodland to the east of the reservoirs are identified as 'post-medieval enclosure'.

- Lever Park to the east of Lower Rivington Reservoir is a Grade II Registered Park and Garden (RPG) laid out for Lord Leverhulme as a public park. The park aimed to utilise the existing moorland topography, water features and enhance the rural qualities of the area. The small village of Rivington lies within the RPG, and is covered by a Conservation Area. There are a number of listed buildings relating to the village and park, including the Grade II \* Rivington Hall and the Grade II Rivington Castle (a replica of the ruins of Liverpool Castle) on the banks of the reservoir.
- There is limited development away from Lever Park and Rivington, although a number of farmhouses and associated barns to the west of Rivington Reservoir are Grade II listed. An Anglo-Saxon decorated wayside cross is a rare survival in Lancashire, and is a Grade II listed structure and a Scheduled Monument.

### Landscape condition

This considers the physical condition of the landscape in terms of both individual elements and overall structure.

- Stone walls and hedgerow field boundaries are generally in good condition, although there has been some reinforcement and replacement with post and rail and post and wire fencing in places. The landscape has a relatively strong landscape structure.
- Lever Park is a RPG and is well-maintained as a Country Park and is therefore generally in good condition.
- The dry acid grassland to the east of Rivington Reservoir is part of the West Pennine Moors SSSI and is in an unfavourable condition due to under grazing and inappropriate woodland management.

- The M61 lies adjacent to the LCA to the west and disrupts the historic landscape pattern. However this has only a localised impact.

### **Distinctiveness**

This considers a landscape's strength of identity, with reference to the presence of distinctive or unusual features that are characteristic of a particular place. A landscape may have additional distinctiveness if it has high visual prominence, or a strong association with the character of a particular settlement, whether through strong views from the settlement or through providing a clear sense of arrival at the settlement.

- The reservoirs, valley side woodlands and views to the moorland fells have scenic value and provide a strong sense of place.

### **Recreational**

This criterion considers the presence of features and facilities which enable enjoyment of the landscape, and the importance of these. This may include public rights of way, bridleways, open access land and outdoor tourist/visitor attractions with facilities. Recreation activities such as walking, cycling, horse riding or more formal recreation activities where enjoyment of the landscape is important to the experience. Accessibility from urban areas is also an important consideration. Importance of features may be indicated by designation such as long distance footpaths or recreation routes or national cycle routes.

- There is an extensive network of Public Rights of Way, and small lanes. The promoted route the Rotary Way runs through the south of the LCA.
- Lever Park was always intended as a public park, gifted by Lord Leverhulme. It is now a Country Park, and therefore a highly valued recreational destination. Lever Park and the reservoirs provide a range of recreational activities include fishing, walking, water sports and the Go Ape aerial trail.

### Perceptual aspects

This considers qualities such as rurality (traditional land uses with few modern, human influences), sense of remoteness or tranquillity. High scenic value, freedom from human activity/ disturbance and 'dark skies' would add to sensitivity in this criterion. It also considers whether there are any associations with notable people, historic events or artwork that contribute to positive perceptions of the landscape.

- A rural landscape, with some limited intrusion from the M61 to the west. Tranquillity and dark skies increase to the east towards the West Pennine Moors.
- The historic and intricate field pattern, mature woodlands and large still bodies of water create a strong sense of rurality and high scenic value.

## Assessment Sub-areas

Land within character area 9a: Rivington is generally of a similar character, and so is assessed as a single area.

## Landscape value summary

The key aspects of landscape value (qualities and/or elements/features/areas of value) are:

- An open valley landscape with gently sloping sides, forming a gentle transition between the low-lying plains to the west and the West Pennine Moors to the east.
- A strong landscape structure provided by hedgerows and stone walls generally in good condition.

## Appendix A Landscape value assessment

- A strong sense of place provided by the large reservoirs, valley side woodlands and views to the moorland fells.
- A sense of time depth provided by the historic field patterns, Lever Park RPG, Rivington Conservation Area, Ancient Woodlands and several listed buildings.
- Recreational value provided by numerous footpaths, a Country Park and more formal activities such as water sports.
- A strong rural character, with a sense of tranquility and remoteness, particularly in the east of the LCA.

Based on the above, the landscape is considered to have **'above ordinary'** landscape value.

## LCA 11a: Lower Ribble Valley

### Location and Key Characteristics

The key characteristics and strategy for the Landscape Character Area (LCA) below are copied in full from the 'Landscape Strategy for Lancashire: Landscape Character Assessment' (2000).

This is a linear LCA following the course of the River Ribble to the east of Preston. It falls within Preston District to the north of the river and within South Ribble District to the south. It forms part of the Valley Floodplains Landscape Character Type (LCT) which is characterised by the broad, open, fertile floodplains of the larger meandering lowland rivers.

Key characteristics for the wider LCA recorded in the Landscape Character Assessment are:

- The open flat and fertile plain of the lower Ribble is a pastoral, tranquil landscape containing the meandering course of the river.
- Its extent is defined by the steep wooded bluffs and terraces which enclose the floodplain.
- Lush green fields of semi-improved pasture are grazed by sheep and cattle.
- The large regular fields are defined by gappy hedgerows, supplemented by sections of post and wire, wooden fencing or stone walls. This array of materials and styles conveys a lack of visual unity despite the natural beauty of the landscape.
- Mature floodplain trees are notable features in this character area; ash and oak stand in the floodplain, their silhouettes striking against the open landscape.
- There is little settlement within the floodplain itself, but a number of large farms and country halls are positioned along the edges of the floodplain.

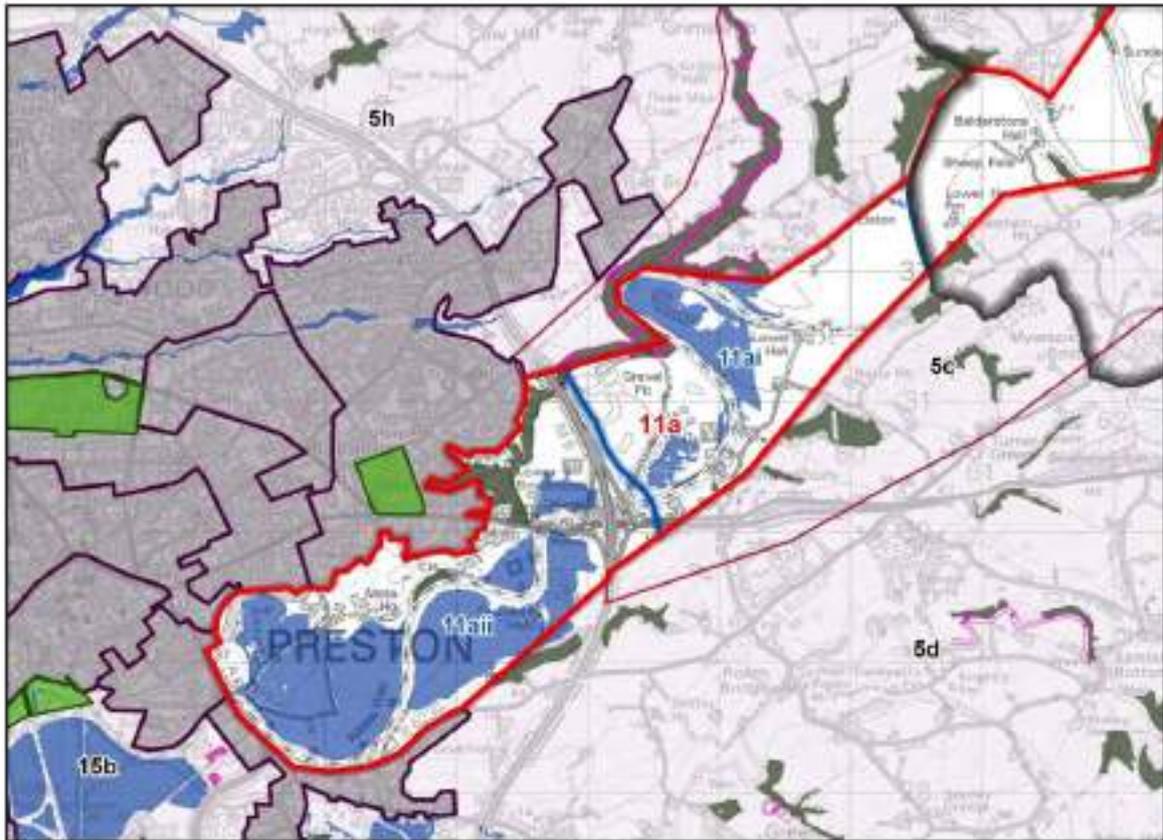
## Appendix A Landscape value assessment

- Settlements, such as Ribchester, Great Mitton, West Bradford, Grindleton and Sawley, are also sited on the adjacent river terraces, their extremities sometimes extending onto the floodplain.
- There are a number of historic crossing points which coincide with these settlements where old stone bridges are important historic features of the floodplain.

The strategy for the Valley Floodplain LCT as a whole is to:

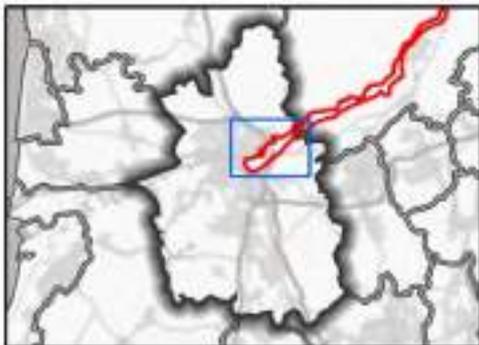
- Conserve valuable floodplain habitats.
- Conserve a natural river form.
- Conserve historic and archaeological sites in the Valley Floodplains.
- Conserve the distinctive stone walls in the Aire Valley.
- Enhance woodland planting on the outer fringes of the Valley Floodplains.
- Enhance opportunities for maintaining the distinctive character of the floodplain trees.
- Enhance opportunities for informal recreation.

## Absolute Constraints

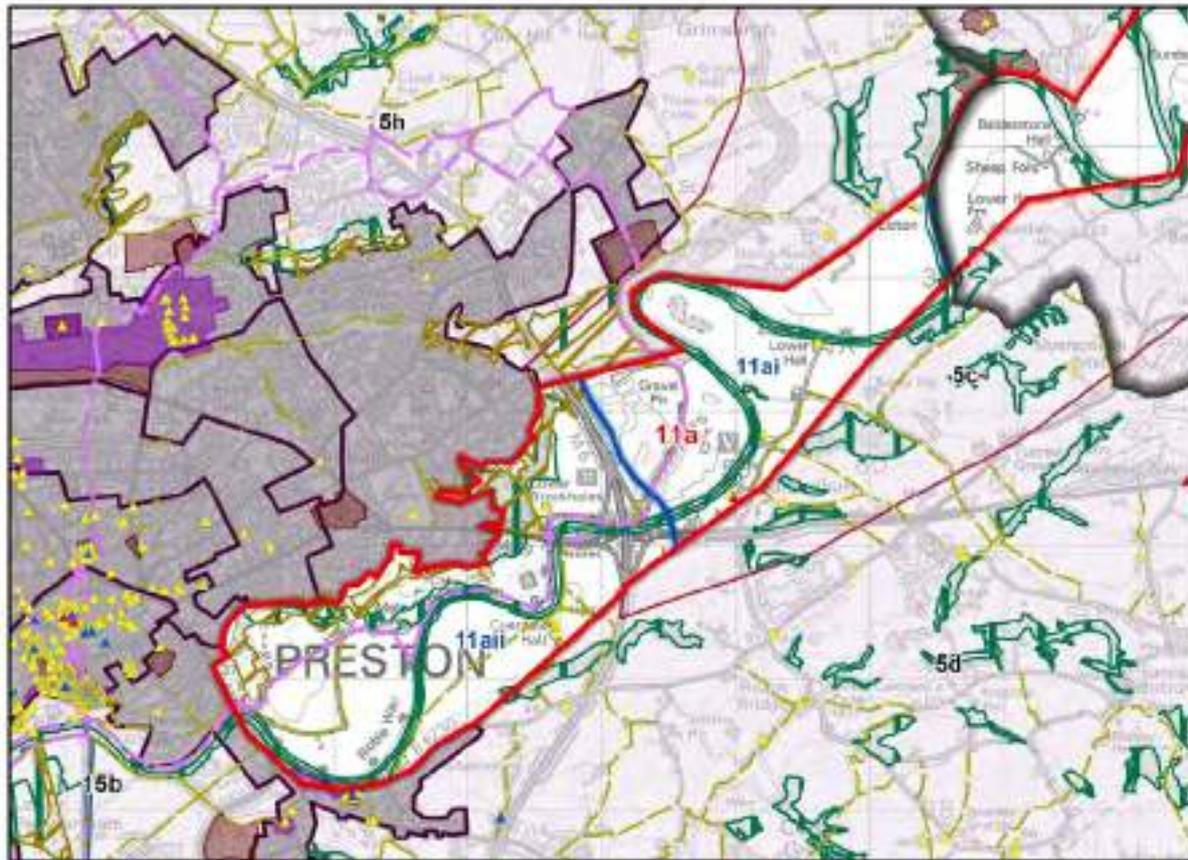


- Landscape Character Area**
- 11a Lower Ribble Valley
  - Neighbouring LCA
  - Urban area
  - Landscape Character Sub Area

- Absolute constraints**
- Site of Special Scientific Interest
  - Flood zone 3b
  - Scheduled Monument
  - Registered Parks and Gardens
  - Ancient Woodland



## Other Constraints



- Landscape Character Area**
- 11a Lower Ribble Valley
  - Neighbouring LCA
  - Urban area
  - Landscape Character Sub Area

- Other constraints**
- Central Lancashire boundary
  - Preston Historic Designed Landscape
  - Biological Heritage Sites
  - Local Nature Reserves
  - Conservation Areas
  - National Cycle Network
  - Public Right of Way
  - Grade I Listed building
  - Grade II\* Listed building
  - Grade II Listed building



## Value Evaluation

### Natural heritage

This considers the 'naturalistic' qualities of the landscape area. It looks at the distinctiveness of landforms, the presence and extent of semi-natural habitats and wildlife that contribute to sense of place. Designations such as SSSI will add value. It also considers any particular functional value of landscape elements.

- The River Ribble has retained its natural meandering course and is very characteristic of a naturalised river valley transitioning from an upland to lowland area. The river flows through a wide valley floor defined by steep bluffs and terraces, which tend to be steeper on the outer banks of meanders. The flat valley floor and contrasting steep valley sides creates a distinctive and engaging landform.
- On the valley floor there are extensive areas of Coastal and Floodplain Grazing Marsh; and on the valley sides there are continuous strips of woodland, much of which is Ancient Woodland. In the north of the LCA Fishwick Bottoms is designated as a Local Nature Reserve and on the LCA boundary Red Scar and Tun Brook Ancient Woodland is designated as a SSSI. 'Brockholes Nature Reserve', a reclaimed sand and gravel quarry, consists of woodland and series of lakes which provides a habitat for a range of breeding birds (described by the Wildlife Trust as 'unreserved' Nature Reserve).
- Much of the LCA is classified as Flood Zone 3b. As the natural floodplain of the River Ribble this area has high functional value. It filters and stores water, alleviates flooding downstream, benefits biodiversity and maintains the fertility of the agricultural land on the valley floor.

### Cultural heritage

This considers the extent to which the landscape displays time depth: either in terms of the presence of natural features, historical field patterns or heritage assets that contribute to landscape character. The designation of heritage assets such as Conservation Areas, Scheduled Monuments, listed buildings and areas of archaeological interest will add value.

- The Lancashire HLC (2002) identifies the LCA as containing a mixture of ancient and post-medieval woodland, ancient enclosure, post medieval enclosure and modern enclosure. The various phases of enclosure tend to relate to the area's topography: the flatter, most frequently flooded parts of the valley floor were the last to be enclosed; whilst the steeper banks of the river terraces were of no agricultural value, and so Ancient Woodland has persisted in these locations. This creates a sense of time-depth, particularly where Ancient Woodland abuts areas of ancient enclosure such as in the north of the LCA.
- The area contains a limited amount of built development, although a much of it is listed. The majority of these are Grade II listed historic farmhouses and associated outbuildings. Other notable structures in the south of the LCA are the Grade I Listed Church of St Leonard the Less and the Grade II Listed Walton Bridge.

### **Landscape condition**

This considers the physical condition of the landscape in terms of both individual elements and overall structure.

- The area contains a relatively large amount of Ancient Woodland as well as a high density of mature hedgerow and field trees, which are generally in good condition.
- The varied field pattern is defined by a mixture of boundary features, including gappy hedgerows, post and wire fencing and wooden fencing . The miscellaneous nature of field boundaries and their lack of maintenance weakens landscape structure.

- The M6 cuts across the LCA dividing the area and creating a physical barrier. This, along with the former gravel extraction at Brockholes Quarry, has disrupted the characteristic landscape structure, although this is a localised effect.

### **Distinctiveness**

This considers a landscape's strength of identity, with reference to the presence of distinctive or unusual features that are characteristic of a particular place. A landscape may have additional distinctiveness if it has high visual prominence, or a strong association with the character of a particular settlement, whether through strong views from the settlement or through providing a clear sense of arrival at the settlement.

- The characteristics of this LCT are generally associated with rivers of a certain size which has not been overly engineered to limit flooding. As a result, these characteristics are rare in the context of Lancashire and more widely.
- This undeveloped pastoral landscape, framed by woodland and dominated by the sinuous River Ribble, has a strong sense of identity.
- The LCA provides a valuable rural setting to the south-east of Preston. The river creates a natural boundary to the south of the city, both physically and administratively. Waldon Bridge in the south-east of the LCA is a key entrance point into Preston and crossing the water creates a sense of arrival when entering the city. The LCA also provides a valuable setting for other, smaller settlement such as Walton-le-Dale and Samlesbury.

### **Recreational**

This criterion considers the presence of features and facilities which enable enjoyment of the landscape, and the importance of these. This may include public rights of way, bridleways, open access land and outdoor tourist/visitor attractions with facilities. Recreation activities such as walking,

cycling, horse riding or more formal recreation activities where enjoyment of the landscape is important to the experience. Accessibility from urban areas is also an important consideration. Importance of features may be indicated by designation such as long distance footpaths or recreation routes or national cycle routes.

- National Cycle Route 622 and the Ribble Way long distance footpath traverse the area, broadly following the course of the river and passing through Brockholes Quarry Nature Reserve. These routes provide a valuable recreational resource, which allow enjoyment of the landscape and provide direct access from settlements such as Preston and Walton-le-Dale.
- Although there is not an extensive network of Public Rights of Way within the area, there are some footpaths, bridleways and lanes which provide connection to the valley floor from surrounding areas.
- The Brockholes Quarry Nature Reserve is valuable recreational resource. Covering 250 acres, it contains a floating visitor centre, a number of promoted trails and natural play areas.

### Perceptual aspects

This considers qualities such as rurality (traditional land uses with few modern, human influences), sense of remoteness or tranquillity. High scenic value, freedom from human activity/ disturbance and 'dark skies' would add to sensitivity in this criterion. It also considers whether there are any associations with notable people, historic events or artwork that contribute to positive perceptions of the landscape.

- The majority of the area has a strong sense of rurality, due to lack of development, pastoral character and the prominence of natural features such as the river, woodland and mature trees. As a result the landscape is highly scenic and has a sense of tranquillity. The landscape is generally visually well-contained, due to the steep river terraces and

woodland cover, and is therefore generally experienced as being separate from the urban context to the west.

- The proximity of the city of Preston and presence of the M6 detract from the rural character to the west. Built form in Walton-le-Dale is also visible on the top of the steep river terraces to the south-west of the LCA.

## Assessment Sub-areas

The LCA 11a: Lower Ribble Valley has been divided into following sub-areas for the purposes of this landscape value assessment:

- 15a i – Brockholes open floodplain
- 15a ii – Fishwick Bottoms urban fringe

## Landscape value summary

### 11a i – Brockholes open floodplain

The key aspects of landscape value (qualities and/or elements/features/areas of value) are:

- The distinctive natural qualities including a fertile floodplain, river terraces and bluffs, a meandering river and ancient woodland.
- The strong pastoral character informed by historic farmsteads and a varied field pattern with a high density of mature trees.
- A diverse range of recreational assets including a NCR, a long distance footpath and nature reserves.
- A landscape with strong perceptual qualities, such as tranquility and a sense of rurality, and significant scenic beauty, although these qualities are slightly impaired by noise pollution.

Overall, the landscape is considered to have **'above ordinary'** landscape value.

### 11a ii – Fishwick Bottoms urban fringe

The key aspects of landscape value (qualities and/or elements/features/areas of value) are:

- The distinctive topographical context of the wider LCA is less prominent due to development.
- A landscape characterised by pastoral elements on the valley floor, but also in part by the adjacent urban elements.
- There are striking views to and from the Preston and Walton-le-Dale north and south of the LCA. Although tranquillity and remoteness are lower in this sub-area, it contributes very positively to the character of Preston and Walton-le-Dale.
- A valued urban fringe greenspace and recreational area, with assets such as a NCR, a long distance footpaths in close proximity to a densely populated urban area.
- No strong sense of rurality or tranquillity due to noise pollution and visibility of immediate urban areas.

Overall, the landscape is considered to have **'above ordinary'** landscape value.

## LCA 15b: Longton-Bretherton

### Location and Key Characteristics

The key characteristics and strategy for the Landscape Character Area (LCA) below are copied in full from the 'Landscape Strategy for Lancashire: Landscape Character Assessment' (2000).

Longton-Bretherton LCA covers an extensive area of the west of the South Ribble District, stretching from Walton-le-Dale and Lostock Hall in the east to the River Douglas in the west. A small part of the area extends into the Chorley District to the south and into West Lancashire District to the west (outside the study area). The area is divided into a small eastern section and a much larger western section by the urban areas of Lower Penwortham and Tardy Gate. It forms part of the Coastal Plain Landscape Character Type (LCT) which is characterised by a gently undulating or flat lowland farmland landscape divided by ditches and/or low clipped hedgerows.

Key characteristics for the wider LCA recorded in the Landscape Character Assessment are:

- The Longton landscape character area lies close to the south-western urban fringes of Preston. The proximity to a large urban centre has influenced landscape character.
- The network of minor lanes is dominated by dense ribbon development and the A59, now a dual carriageway, links the former villages of Hutton, Longton, Walmer Bridge and Much Hoole. Red brick is the dominant built material in these areas.
- The agricultural landscape is influenced by urban fringe elements such as schools, colleges, nurseries, glass houses, hotels, horse paddocks, communication masts and electricity pylons; the network of hedgerows and hedgerow oaks is gradually being eroded by these uses.

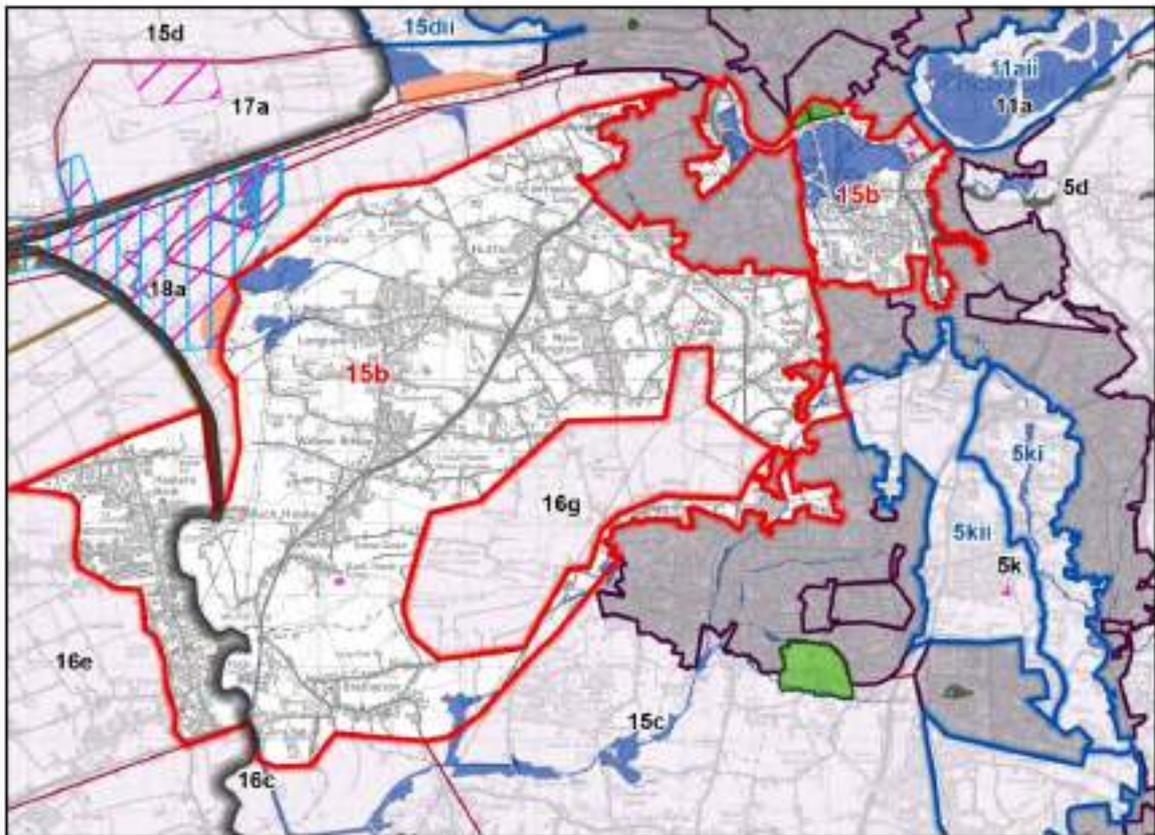
## Appendix A Landscape value assessment

- The village of Bretherton has remained separate and therefore displays a more traditional character; a former windmill lies on its western edge.

The strategy for the Coastal Plain LCT as a whole is to:

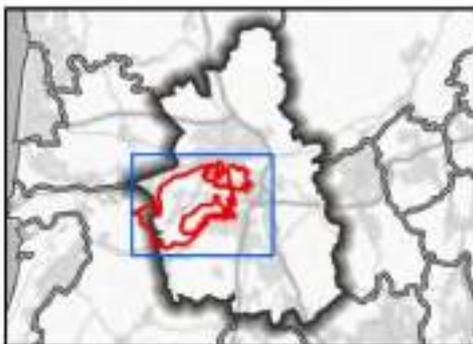
- Conserve distinctive field patterns and related landscape features and landforms.
- Conserve remnants of former agricultural habitat mosaics.
- Conserve remaining field ponds.
- Enhance the distinctive character and landscape setting of rural settlements.
- Enhance the river corridor landscapes.
- Enhance opportunities for informal recreation.
- Enhance landscapes associated with major infrastructure developments such as the M6 and M55 corridors.
- Restore, retain, manage and replant hedgerows and hedgerow trees.
- Restore broadleaved woodlands particularly in the vicinity of watercourses.
- Restore completed sand and gravel workings.

## Absolute Constraints

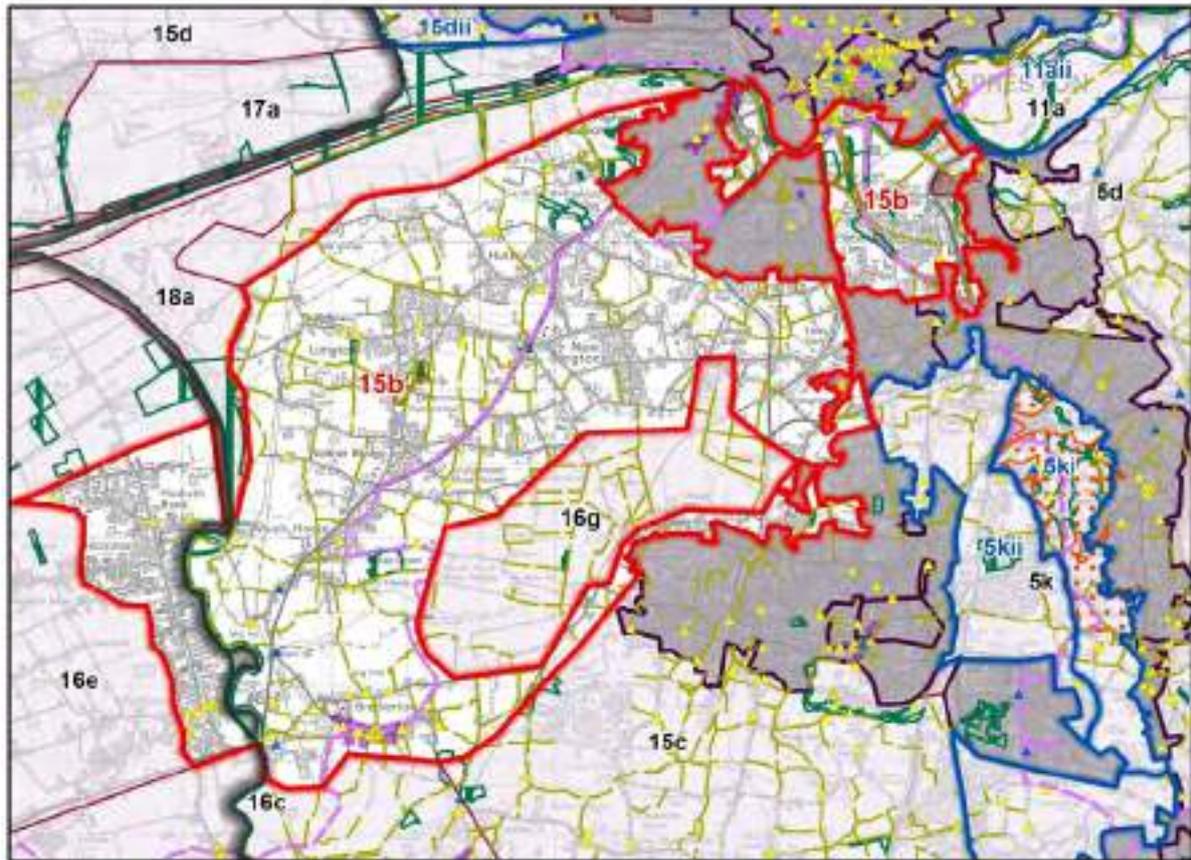


- Landscape Character Area**
- 15b Longton - Bretherton
  - Neighbouring LCA
  - Urban area
  - Landscape Character Sub Area

- Absolute constraints**
- Special Protection Area
  - Site of Special Scientific Interest
  - Flood zone 3b
  - Scheduled Monument
  - Registered Parks and Gardens
  - National Nature Reserve
  - Ancient Woodland
  - Open access land (CRoW Act)

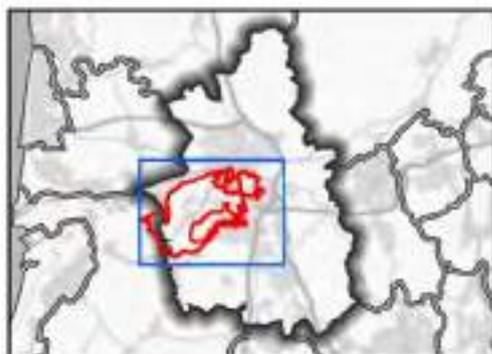


## Other Constraints



- Landscape Character Area**
- 15b Longton - Bretherton
  - Neighbouring LCA
  - Urban area
  - Landscape Character Sub Area

- Other constraints**
- Central Lancashire boundary
  - Preston Historic Designed Landscape
  - Biological Heritage Sites
  - Local Nature Reserves
  - Country Parks
  - Conservation Areas
  - National Cycle Network
  - Public Right of Way
  - ▲ Grade I Listed building
  - ▲ Grade II\* Listed building
  - Grade II Listed building



## Value Evaluation

### Natural heritage

This considers the 'naturalistic' qualities of the landscape area. It looks at the distinctiveness of landforms, the presence and extent of semi-natural habitats and wildlife that contribute to sense of place. Designations such as SSSI will add value. It also considers any particular functional value of landscape elements.

- This area forms part of an extensive glacial till plain. As a result the landform is predominantly flat and very uniform. It begins to rise very slightly and is more gently undulating around New Longton and Lostock Hall in the east. The eastern section of the area on the banks of the River Ribble forms part of the very flat river floodplain.
- The combination of intensive agriculture and urban development has resulted in the limited survival of semi-natural habitat. In the north-west of the LCA there are areas categorised as coastal and floodplain grazing marsh, but these are enclosed and farmed.
- Throughout the area there are scattered blocks of deciduous woodland, but they are generally small scale and do not form a continuous habitat network. What little tree cover is present is generally concentrated along field boundaries, watercourses and current and disused railway lines.
- The River Ribble, the River Asland/Douglas and the Leeds to Liverpool Canal pass around the periphery of the area. Drainage ditches and small brooks contribute to a network of wetland habitats which was previously far more extensive. Historic extraction sites have flooded, forming a pattern of scattered ponds throughout the landscape. The largest of these are the reservoir at Penwortham Mill and the three ponds at Longton Brick Pits, which are now designated as part of a Local Nature Reserve.

### Cultural heritage

This considers the extent to which the landscape displays time depth: either in terms of the presence of natural features, historic field patterns or heritage assets that contribute to landscape character. The designation of heritage assets such as Conservation Areas, Scheduled Monuments, listed buildings and areas of archaeological interest will add value.

- The majority of the LCA is categorised as ‘ancient enclosure’ (pre-AD 1600) within the Lancashire HLC (2002). Around the settlements of Longton and Bretherton the medieval remnants of an open-field system can be seen in the elongated fields running at right angles to the historic main streets. The core of the settlements of Longton, Hutton, Walmer Bridge, Much Hoole and Bretherton are identified as ancient and post-medieval settlements.
- There are some Listed Buildings present within the area. There is a particular concentration in and around the villages of Tarleton and Bretherton; the latter is also contains a Conservation Area. To the west of Bretherton is a Grade II Listed Windmill dating from 1741. Windmills are key historic features of the wider coastal plain landscapes.
- There are five Scheduled Monuments within the area, one is a Moated site south of Much Hoole in the centre of the LCA. The four others are all located on the River Ribble and are connected to the historic strategic importance of the Ribble Valley. This includes Castle Hill Motte and Bailey and Penwortham Old Bridge.
- The historic character and layout of many settlements in the area has been altered by the introduction of later development, in particular ribbon development along roads.

### **Landscape condition**

This considers the physical condition of the landscape in terms of both individual elements and overall structure.

- The distinctive medieval field pattern has been lost in places due to residential development and field amalgamation. In places hedgerows

are poorly maintained, and have become gappy and/or have been lost. However, despite these pressures the overall structure of the landscape has been maintained in places.

- The area contains a number of urban hinterland structures and facilities such as the Penwortham National Grid Substation, sewage works and business parks which detract from landscape character. In the west of the area there are a number examples of vertical infrastructure, including a telecommunication mast and two overhead electricity lines running parallel to each other.

### **Distinctiveness**

This considers a landscape's strength of identity, with reference to the presence of distinctive or unusual features that are characteristic of a particular place. A landscape may have additional distinctiveness if it has high visual prominence, or a strong association with the character of a particular settlement, whether through strong views from the settlement or through providing a clear sense of arrival at the settlement.

- Within West Lancashire this landscape type is fairly common and covers a large proportion of the study area. The field pattern is indicative of ancient enclosure, although has been partially eroded by later development in and around settlements.

### **Recreational**

This criterion considers the presence of features and facilities which enable enjoyment of the landscape, and the importance of these. This may include public rights of way, bridleways, open access land and outdoor tourist/visitor attractions with facilities. Recreation activities such as walking, cycling, horse riding or more formal recreation activities where enjoyment of the landscape is important to the experience. Accessibility from urban areas is also an important consideration. Importance of features may be indicated

by designation such as long distance footpaths or recreation routes or national cycle routes.

- Two national cycle routes (NCRs) pass through the area: NCR 62 which passes through the west of the LCA via Bretherton and Hutton on route to Preston; and NCR 55 which runs along a historic plateway, then skirts the southern bank of the River Ribble in the north-east of the area.
- The landscape hosts a dense network of Public Rights of Way and lanes. These link the various settlements and connect the adjacent urban areas (such as Howick Moss) to the landscape, providing a valuable recreational resource.

### Perceptual aspects

This considers qualities such as rurality (traditional land uses with few modern, human influences), sense of remoteness or tranquillity. High scenic value, freedom from human activity/ disturbance and 'dark skies' would add to sensitivity in this criterion. It also considers whether there are any associations with notable people, historic events or artwork that contribute to positive perceptions of the landscape.

- In the south of the LCA there are localised areas that are more distant from settlements, which as a result have a stronger rural character and a higher sense of remoteness and tranquillity.
- However, throughout the majority of the area, the presence of settlements and the busy A59 diminish the rural character and sense of tranquillity.

## Assessment Sub-areas

LCA 15b: Longton Bretherton is generally of a similar character, therefore it is assessed as a single area. No sub-areas have been identified.

## Landscape value summary

The key aspects of landscape value (qualities and/or elements/features/areas of value) are:

- A network of wetland habitats including a brief section of the River Ribble, the River Asland/ River Douglas, the Leeds to Liverpool Canal, brooks, drainage ditches and scattered ponds.
- A series of settlements with historic centers and, in the case of Bretherton and Longton, distinctive historic field patterns forming part of the settlement settings.
- Scheduled monuments and Listed Buildings located on the River Ribble providing an understanding of the historic importance of the river valley and contributing to the scenic quality of the area.
- A strong network of Public Rights of Way, lanes and cycle routes which provide a valuable recreational resource.

Whilst the LCA has some valued landscape characteristics, overall it is not considered to have '**above ordinary**' landscape value.

## LCA 15c: Croston-Mawdesley

### Location and Key Characteristics

The key characteristics and strategy for the Landscape Character Area (LCA) below are copied in full from the 'Landscape Strategy for Lancashire: Landscape Character Assessment' (2000).

This LCA is located predominantly within the south-west of Chorley District, with a small area to the north also falling within South Ribble District. It forms part of the Coastal Plain Landscape Character Type (LCT) which is characterised by gently undulating lowland farmland.

Key characteristics for the wider LCA recorded in the Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) are:

- A gently undulating agricultural landscape with steep sided shallow valleys and hedged fields which support rich pasture or arable crops.
- A relatively well wooded landscape, with small farm woods and wooded valleys.
- Field hedges are notable for their hedgerow oaks and high proportion of holly.
- Country halls, moated farms and designed landscapes provide historic and cultural links.
- Red brick is used throughout the area; the subdued tones of the older brick houses and farmsteads are well integrated within the landscape.
- Villages are traditionally clustered, but show signs of rapid expansion with ribbon development.
- New housing on the outskirts of settlements, which is often built of imported bricks, creates a harsh edge to villages when viewed from the surrounding countryside.

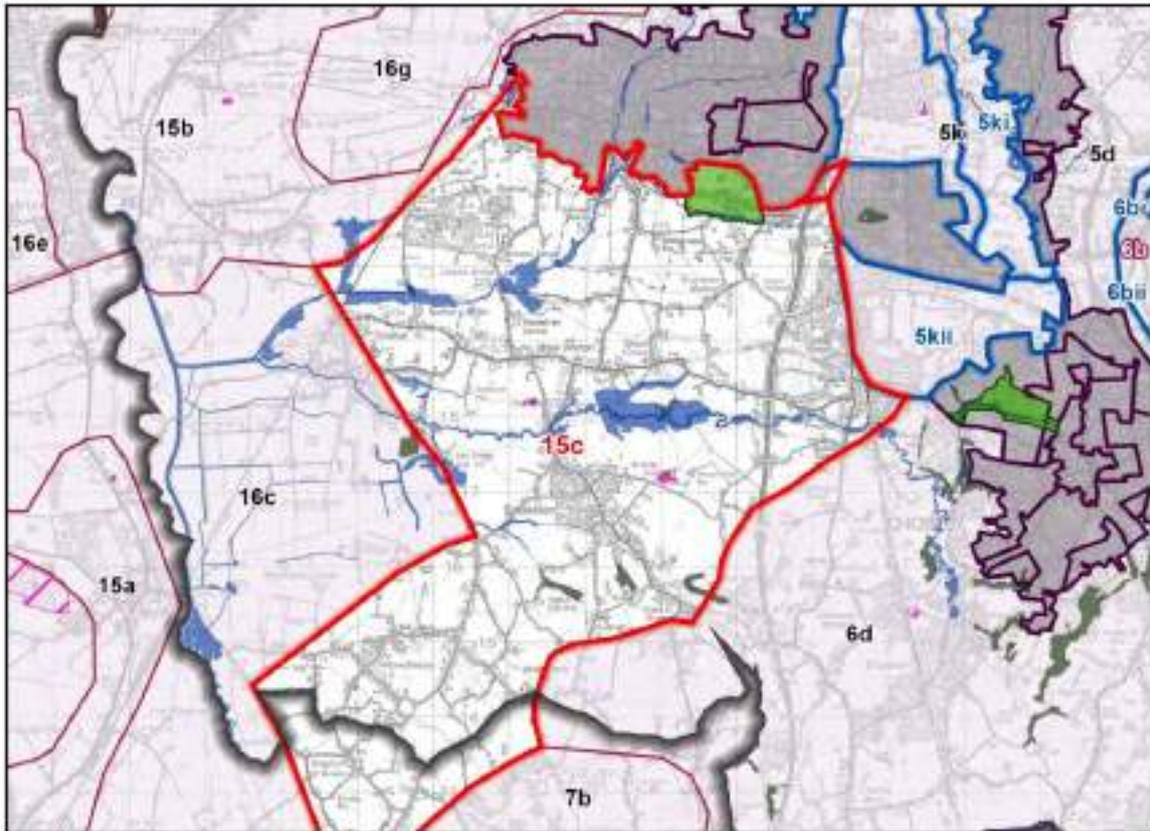
## Appendix A Landscape value assessment

- Where screen planting is attempted it often incorporates alien plant species, which further urbanises the attractive rural setting.
- In addition to its historic rural agricultural land use, the landscape has more recently been influenced by urban fringe activities such as nurseries, schools, camp sites, hotels, equestrian centres, golf courses, traffic and built development, which indicate its proximity to the western edge of Chorley.
- Urbanising influences such as kerbs and lighting are increasingly evident on major roads.

The strategy for the Coastal Plain LCT as a whole is to:

- Conserve distinctive field patterns and related landscape features and landforms.
- Conserve remnants of former agricultural habitat mosaics.
- Conserve remaining field ponds.
- Enhance the distinctive character and landscape setting of rural settlements.
- Enhance the river corridor landscapes.
- Enhance opportunities for informal recreation.
- Enhance landscapes associated with major infrastructure developments such as the M6 and M55 corridors.
- Restore, retain, manage and replant hedgerows and hedgerow trees.
- Restore broadleaved woodlands particularly in the vicinity of watercourses.
- Restore completed sand and gravel workings.

## Absolute Constraints

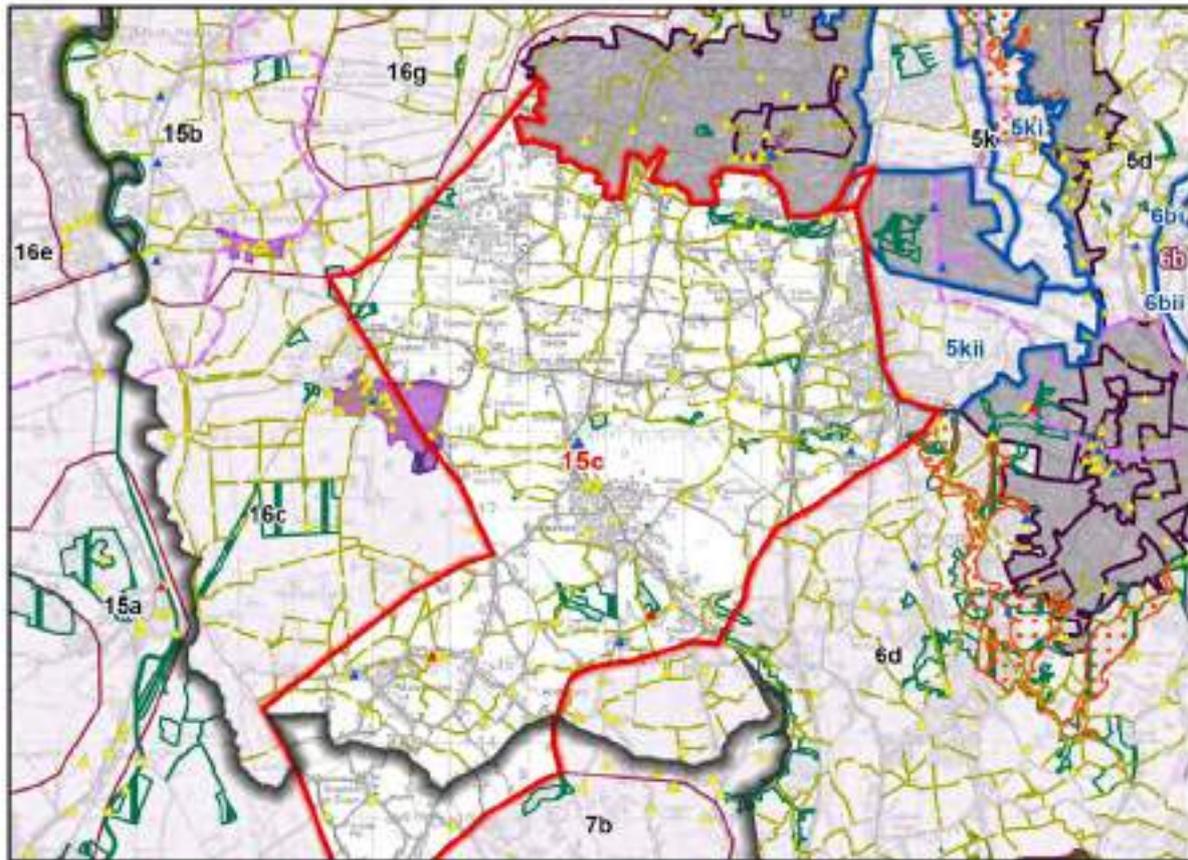


- Landscape Character Area**
- 15c Croston - Mawdesley
  - Neighbouring LCA
  - Urban area
  - Landscape Character Sub Area

- Absolute constraints**
- Site of Special Scientific Interest
  - Flood zone 3b
  - Scheduled Monument
  - Registered Parks and Gardens
  - National Nature Reserve
  - Ancient Woodland

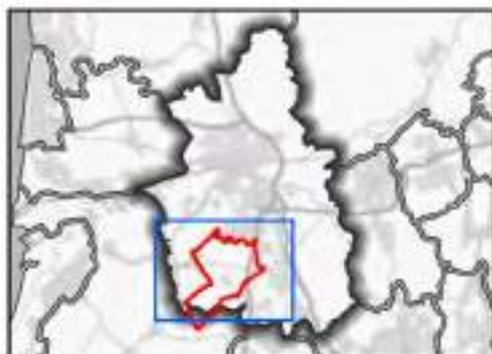


## Other Constraints



- Landscape Character Area**
- 15c Croston - Mawdesley
  - Neighbouring LCA
  - Urban area
  - Landscape Character Sub Area

- Other constraints**
- Biological Heritage Sites
  - Local Nature Reserves
  - Country Parks
  - Conservation Areas
  - National Cycle Network
  - Public Right of Way
  - ▲ Grade I Listed building
  - ▲ Grade II\* Listed building
  - ▲ Grade II Listed building



## Value Evaluation

### Natural heritage

This considers the 'naturalistic' qualities of the landscape area. It looks at the distinctiveness of landforms, the presence and extent of semi-natural habitats and wildlife that contribute to sense of place. Designations such as SSSI will add value. It also considers any particular functional value of landscape elements.

- This is a gently undulating landscape influenced by drift deposits of boulder clays, sands and gravels. This is incised in places by steep sided but shallow valleys associated with watercourses, including the River Yarrow and several smaller brooks.
- The land is highly productive (rich pasture or arable cropping) meaning semi natural vegetation and wildlife habitats are typically small and fragmented. Ancient Woodland is rare, the only notable examples being Knowles Wood, Spring Wood and Little Wood to the south of Ecclestone. However, there are a number of small farm woods and wooded valleys, and flooded marl pits are often rich in species diversity.

### Cultural heritage

This considers the extent to which the landscape displays time depth: either in terms of the presence of natural features, historic field patterns or heritage assets that contribute to landscape character. The designation of heritage assets such as Conservation Areas, Scheduled Monuments, listed buildings and areas of archaeological interest will add value.

- Several country halls, moated farms and designed landscapes provide historic and cultural links and contribute to landscape character; there are a number of scheduled monuments and listed buildings scattered

throughout the landscape and a Grade II Registered Park and Garden at Warden Hall to the north.

- The landscape has a strong sense of time-depth, featuring an irregular small and medium-scale field pattern identified as ‘ancient enclosure’ (pre-AD1600) within the Lancashire HLC (2002).
- Villages were traditionally clustered but today show signs of ribbon development and expansion. Elsewhere, the settlement pattern remains one of isolated hamlets and farmsteads, with older settlements generally located on higher, free draining land and are typically brick built.

### Landscape condition

This considers the physical condition of the landscape in terms of both individual elements and overall structure.

- The small to medium-scale field pattern is defined by hedgerows, which are generally in good condition and are notable for their hedgerow oaks and high proportion of holly. Whilst there is some evidence of hedgerow loss and field amalgamation in places, overall the landscape retains a strong pattern of elements that result in a coherent structure.

### Distinctiveness

This considers a landscape’s strength of identity, with reference to the presence of distinctive or unusual features that are characteristic of a particular place. A landscape may have additional distinctiveness if it has high visual prominence, or a strong association with the character of a particular settlement, whether through strong views from the settlement or through providing a clear sense of arrival at the settlement.

- The landscape type is relatively common, accounting for a large proportion of West Lancashire. However, it does contain a distinctive field pattern that, as noted, is identified as being ‘ancient enclosure’ (pre AD 1600).

### Recreational

This criterion considers the presence of features and facilities which enable enjoyment of the landscape, and the importance of these. This may include public rights of way, bridleways, open access land and outdoor tourist/visitor attractions with facilities. Recreation activities such as walking, cycling, horse riding or more formal recreation activities where enjoyment of the landscape is important to the experience. Accessibility from urban areas is also an important consideration. Importance of features may be indicated by designation such as long distance footpaths or recreation routes or national cycle routes.

- The landscape features an extensive network of footpaths, bridleways, lanes and tracks which provide connections between villages, hamlets and farmsteads, and allow enjoyment of the landscape.
- Worden Park is a notable recreational resource located to the north of the LCA. This comprises over 60 ha of meadows, woodlands and playing fields.

### Perceptual aspects

This considers qualities such as rurality (traditional land uses with few modern, human influences), sense of remoteness or tranquillity. High scenic value, freedom from human activity/ disturbance and 'dark skies' would add to sensitivity in this criterion. It also considers whether there are any associations with notable people, historic events or artwork that contribute to positive perceptions of the landscape.

- This is an agricultural landscape with an over-riding rural character. There is a general sense of remoteness and tranquillity, albeit this is diminished in proximity to the larger settlements and the M6 to the east. New housing on the outskirts of villages often creates a harsh edge when viewed from the surrounding countryside. In addition, the landscape has more recently been influenced by urban fringe activities

such as nurseries, schools, equestrian centres, golf courses, traffic and built development, which indicate its proximity to the western edge of Chorley; Urbanising influences such as kerbs and lighting are also increasingly evident on major roads.

- The landscape is relatively open, particularly in the south and affords expansive views over the lower land to the west.

## Assessment Sub-areas

Land within character area 15c: Croston-Mawdesley is generally of a similar character, and so is assessed as a single area.

## Landscape value summary

The key aspects of landscape value (qualities and/or elements/features/areas of value) are:

- The River Yarrow and a number of small water courses are key features within the landscape which vary the otherwise homogenous topography and contribute to scenic quality.
- The landscape has a wealth of designed landscapes, including Worden Park, and country historic halls which create a sense of time-depth and contribute to landscape character.
- The area has a strong network of footpaths, bridleways, lanes and tracks which traverse the rural landscape providing opportunities to appreciate it.
- In places the landscape benefits from long ranging views to the west.

Whilst the LCA has some valued landscape characteristics, overall it is not considered to have '**above ordinary**' landscape value.

## LCA 15d: The Fylde

### Location and Key Characteristics

The key characteristics and strategy for the Landscape Character Area (LCA) below are copied in full from the 'Landscape Strategy for Lancashire: Landscape Character Assessment' (2000).

This LCA is located to the north-west of Preston, covering much of the Fylde Plain Peninsula. It extends between Preston and the M6 corridor to the east and Blackpool to the west and between the River Ribble in the south and the River Wyre in the north. A small part of the LCA lies within the Preston District; the majority falls outside of the study area within the Fylde District. The LCA forms part of the 'Coastal Plain' Landscape Character Type (LCT) which is a gently undulating or flat lowland farmland landscape divided by ditches and low clipped hedgerows.

Key characteristics for the wider LCA recorded in the Landscape Character Assessment are:

- It has been formed of boulder clay deposits which lie on soft Triassic sandstones and mudstones and is naturally poorly drained.
- Field ponds are a particularly characteristic feature of this area and provide important wildlife habitats.
- The predominant land use is dairy farming on improved pasture and lowland sheep farming with a small amount of arable on the freer draining soils.
- Red brick nineteenth century two storey farmsteads with slate roofs and red brick barns are dominant built features of this landscape character area; occasional windmills also reflect the historic importance of the area for corn milling.

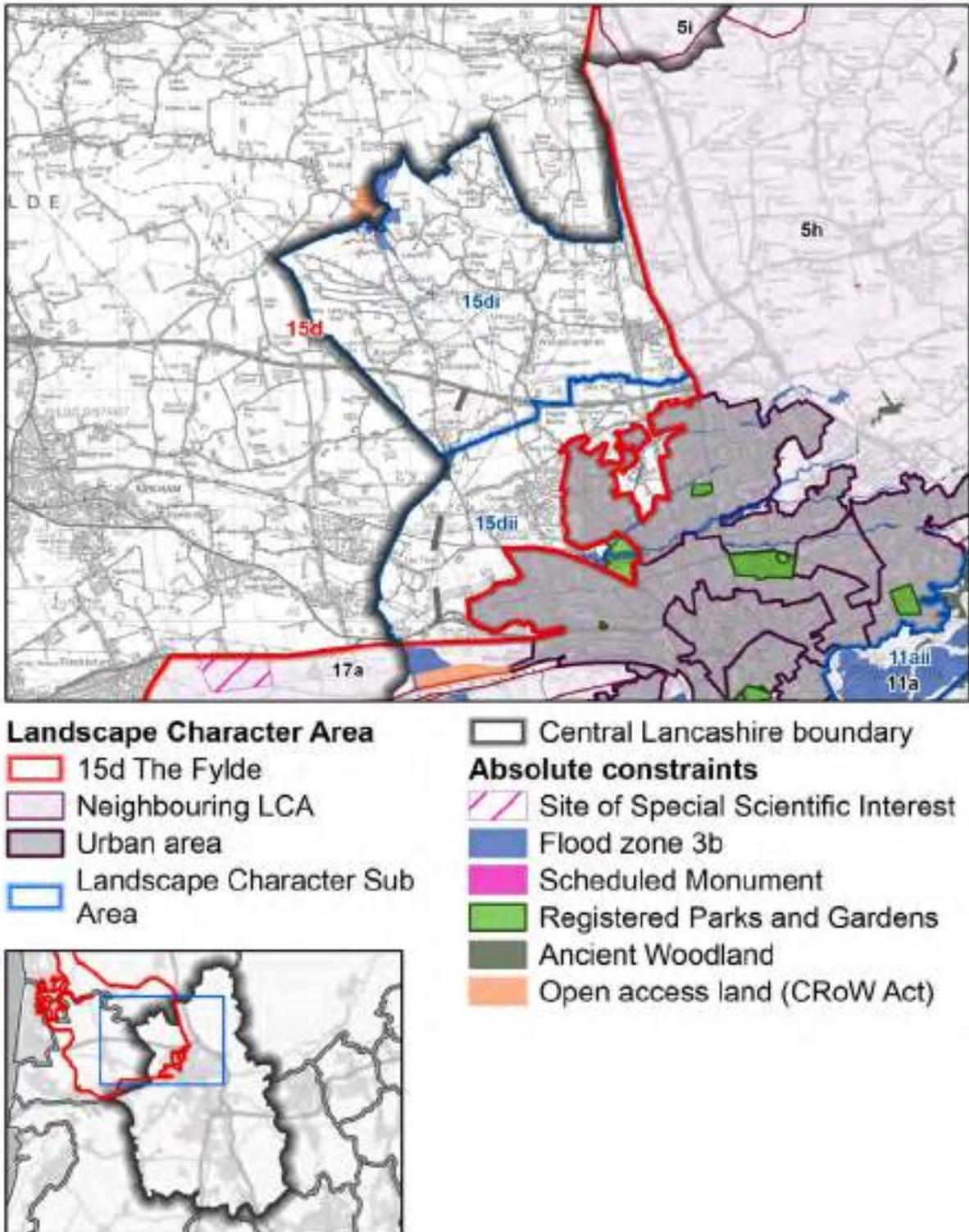
## Appendix A Landscape value assessment

- Field size is large and field boundaries are low clipped hawthorn, although hedgerow loss is extensive.
- Blocks of woodland are characteristic, frequently planted for shelter and/or shooting and views of the Bowland fells are frequent between the blocks.
- There are many man-made elements; electricity pylons, communication masts and road traffic are all highly visible in the flat landscape.

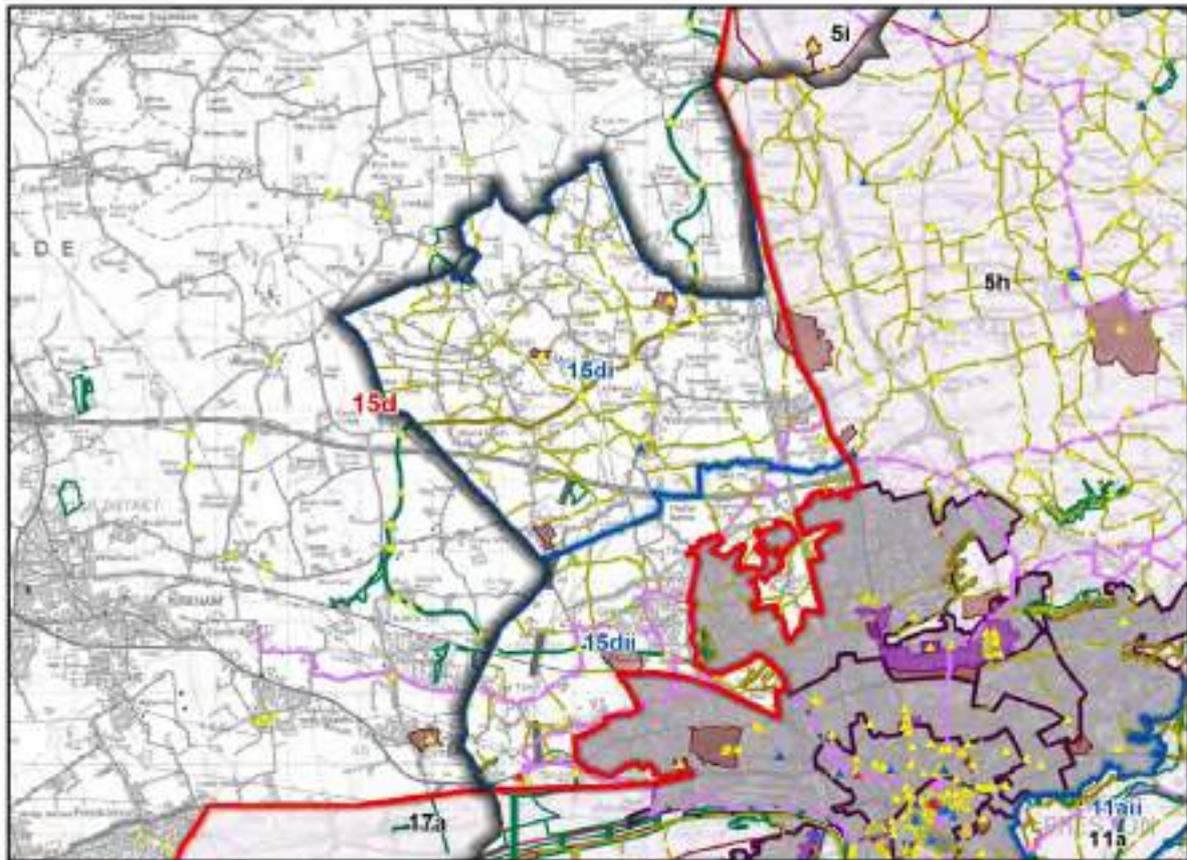
The strategy for the Coastal Plain LCT as a whole is to:

- Conserve distinctive field patterns and related landscape features and landforms.
- Conserve remnants of former agricultural habitat mosaics.
- Conserve remaining field ponds.
- Enhance the distinctive character and landscape setting of rural settlements.
- Enhance the river corridor landscapes.
- Enhance opportunities for informal recreation.
- Enhance landscapes associated with major infrastructure developments such as the M6 and M55 corridors.
- Restore, retain, manage and replant hedgerows and hedgerow trees.
- Restore broadleaved woodlands particularly in the vicinity of watercourses.
- Restore completed sand and gravel workings.

## Absolute Constraints

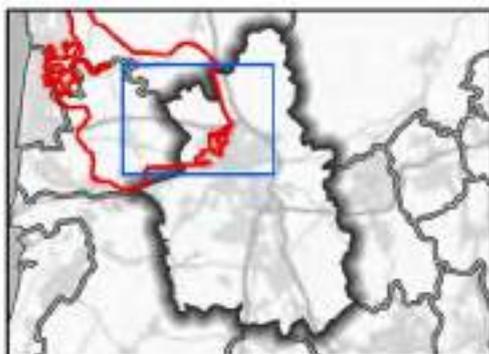


## Other Constraints



- Landscape Character Area**
- 15d The Fylde
  - Neighbouring LCA
  - Urban area
  - Landscape Character Sub Area

- Other constraints**
- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
  - Preston Historic Designed Landscape
  - Biological Heritage Sites
  - Local Nature Reserves
  - Conservation Areas
  - National Cycle Network
  - Public Right of Way
  - ▲ Grade I Listed building
  - ▲ Grade II\* Listed building
  - Grade II Listed building



## Value Evaluation

### Natural heritage

This considers the 'naturalistic' qualities of the landscape area. It looks at the distinctiveness of landforms, the presence and extent of semi-natural habitats and wildlife that contribute to sense of place. Designations such as SSSI will add value. It also considers any particular functional value of landscape elements.

- To the north and west of Woodplumpton the landform is extremely flat, whereas to the east of Woodplumpton and to the south of the M55 it begins to rise gradually and is more gently undulating. Across the LCA there is generally little topographical variation.
- The land is highly productive farmland. As a result of intensive management, semi-natural vegetation is mainly limited to field boundaries and watercourses edges. The Lancaster Canal traverses the area, taking a sinuous course across the landscape. There is an extensive and well connected network of minor waterways, including Savick Brook and Barton Brook. Drainage ditches contribute to this network and provide habitat connectivity between numerous field ponds (flooded Marl pits), important wetland habitats in an otherwise intensively farmed landscape.

### Cultural heritage

This considers the extent to which the landscape displays time depth: either in terms of the presence of natural features, historic field patterns or heritage assets that contribute to landscape character. The designation of heritage assets such as Conservation Areas, Scheduled Monuments, listed buildings and areas of archaeological interest will add value.

- The wider LCA is characterised by a large, regular field pattern. However within the study area, fields tend to be smaller and more irregular in form. The majority of the surviving field pattern is identified by Lancashire HLC (2000) as 'ancient enclosure' (enclosed prior to 1600 AD). To the south of the M55 less ancient enclosure survives due to the expansion of Preston (Cottam and Lea) and urban fringe development such as the Ashton Lea Golf Club and the UCLan Sports Arena.
- The numerous marl pits found across the area are characteristic features and provide evidence of historic agricultural land management practices.
- The Lancaster Canal is a key historic landscape feature. It is one of very few coastal canals in England and was constructed in 1792 to maintain trade in Lancaster. There are a number of Grade II Listed Bridges and one Aqueduct along its course. Evidence of the wider areas identity as a historic transport corridor can be seen in the high density of historic brick buildings.
- In the south of the LCA there is a Grade II Registered Parks and Gardens Haslam Park which dates from the early 1900s. The park was designed by the landscape architect Thomas Hayton Mawson and was funded by profits from the cotton industry. It provides evidence of the wealth and importance of the cotton industry in the area in the 18th and 19th centuries.
- There are no Scheduled Monuments or Conservation Areas in the LCA.

### **Landscape condition**

This considers the physical condition of the landscape in terms of both individual elements and overall structure.

- There is limited woodland cover, but hedgerow trees and trees along watercourses are important features within the landscape. In the north, although hedgerows have become gappy in places, extensive hedgerow trees create a sense of a well wooded and enclosed landscape. In the

south, further semi-natural coverage has been lost due to development. Here, hedgerows bordering the road network are generally well maintained, but those between fields have become gappy and/ lost in places.

### **Distinctiveness**

This considers a landscape's strength of identity, with reference to the presence of distinctive or unusual features that are characteristic of a particular place. A landscape may have additional distinctiveness if it has high visual prominence, or a strong association with the character of a particular settlement, whether through strong views from the settlement or through providing a clear sense of arrival at the settlement.

- The most distinctive characteristics are the areas waterways and wetland features such as the marl ponds, network of drainage ditches and the Lancaster Canal. Due to the density of brooks and the presence of the Canal, there are frequent bridges . This creates sense of place for those travelling through the landscape. These characteristics are concentrated in the north of the LCA.
- The land to the north of the M55 comprises a small scale field pattern that, as noted, preserves an ancient enclosure pattern. Whilst this is also found to the south of the M55, it has become diluted by the introduction of infrastructure and other development.
- The area does not provide a strong setting to the city of Preston. Views from settlements into the surrounding countryside are generally foreshortened due to a combination of the flat topography and field boundary vegetation.

### **Recreational**

This criterion considers the presence of features and facilities which enable enjoyment of the landscape, and the importance of these. This may include public rights of way, bridleways, open access land and outdoor tourist/

visitor attractions with facilities. Recreation activities such as walking, cycling, horse riding or more formal recreation activities where enjoyment of the landscape is important to the experience. Accessibility from urban areas is also an important consideration. Importance of features may be indicated by designation such as long distance footpaths or recreation routes or national cycle routes.

- The area has a dense network of Public Rights of Way that connect the various settlements and farmsteads. There is also an accessible towpath along the length of the Lancaster Canal. This network is particularly valuable in connecting the urban area of Preston to the surrounding countryside.
- The Lancaster Canal, provides a resource for water sports such as canoeing. It is particularly valuable in this capacity, as unusually it was built along the natural lie of the land and as a result has the longest lock free stretch of any English canal.
- The National Cycle Route 62 and Regional Route 90 traverse the LCA, from north to south, with the former passing through Lea Town and the latter Woodplumpton.

### Perceptual aspects

This considers qualities such as rurality (traditional land uses with few modern, human influences), sense of remoteness or tranquillity. High scenic value, freedom from human activity/ disturbance and 'dark skies' would add to sensitivity in this criterion. It also considers whether there are any associations with notable people, historic events or artwork that contribute to positive perceptions of the landscape.

- The landscape on the edge of Preston to the south of the M55, is strongly influenced by the adjacent urban area and infrastructural elements (major transport routes including the M55 and overhead power lines ). It therefore has an urban-fringe character and relatively low levels of tranquillity.

- The landscape to the north of the M55 has a stronger rural character with relatively limited human influences. However, the tranquillity and sense of remoteness is reduced in the vicinity of the M55, the A6, the Carnforth to Preston railway line, mineral extraction works south-east of Woodplumpton and overhead power lines and pylons .
- Two overhead electricity lines traverse the LCA running from north to south. They represent incongruous features which detract from landscape character. They run parallel to one another in the south which increases their impact.

## Assessment Sub-areas

LCA 15d: The Fylde has been divided into two sub-areas for the purposes of this landscape value assessment. To the north of the M55, the area is generally sparsely settled with scattered farmsteads and villages. South of the M55 the landscape is influenced by the urban area of Preston and other urban fringe development such as the Ashton Lea Golf Club and the UCLan Sports Arena.

- 15d i – Woodplumpton and surrounds small scale farming
- 15d ii – Lea and Cottam urban fringe

## Landscape Value Summary

### 15d i – Woodplumpton and surrounds small scale farming

The key aspects of landscape value (qualities and/or elements/features/areas of value) are:

- An extensive waterway network, including the man-made Lancaster Canal, and several brooks, drainage ditches and flooded marl pits.

## Appendix A Landscape value assessment

- An intricate and historic field pattern accentuated by the presence of mature hedgerow trees.
- The Lancaster Canal is an important cultural feature with a number of Listed structures associated with it. Its historic influence evident in the use of brick as the predominant building material in the surrounding area.
- A rural landscape with limited development, winding lanes, frequent bridges and waterways providing scenic and perceptual value.

Overall, the sub-area is not considered to have ‘**above ordinary**’ landscape value.

### 15d ii – Ashton and Cottam urban fringe

The key aspects of landscape value (qualities and/or elements/features/areas of value) are:

- A network of freshwater habitats including the Lancaster Canal, numerous brooks including Savick Brook, ponds and drainage ditches.
- The Willows and Haslam Park Grade II Registered Parks and Gardens provide a sense of time depth indicative of the wealth produced by the areas industrial heritage.
- A network of footpaths, bridleways, National Cycle Network routes and promoted walking routes like the Millennium Ribble Link providing recreational opportunities for the surrounding urban areas.

Overall, the sub-area is not considered to have ‘**above ordinary**’ landscape value.

## LCA 16c: Martin Mere and South West Mosses

### Location and Key Characteristics

The key characteristics and strategy for the Landscape Character Area (LCA) below are copied in full from the 'Landscape Strategy for Lancashire: Landscape Character Assessment' (2000).

This LCA is located to the south-west of Lancashire, occupying an area between Southport and Formby to the west and the Coastal Plain of Chorley to the east. A small part of the LCA falls within the Central Lancashire area (Chorley District), covering Croston Moss and Mawdesley Moss to the south, south-west and west of Croston. The LCA forms part of the 'Mosslands' Landscape Character Type (LCT) which is defined by an extremely flat, low lying landscape comprised of peat deposits which were formerly an extensive series of lowland raised mires.

Key characteristics for the wider LCA recorded in the Landscape Character Assessment are:

- Occurs in pockets on the West Lancashire Plain, consistent with the deposits of peat.
- A relatively new landscape, being more recently drained than the Tarleton Mosses to the north.
- Confined by the urban form of Southport to the west and to the east and south by the Coastal Plain of Ormskirk and Chorley.
- An arable landscape of large geometric fields, geometric woodlands and small villages.
- Although there is much modern built development, there is important evidence of pre-drainage occupation. This occupation, along with the windmill and pumping sites, are important archaeological and historical sites.

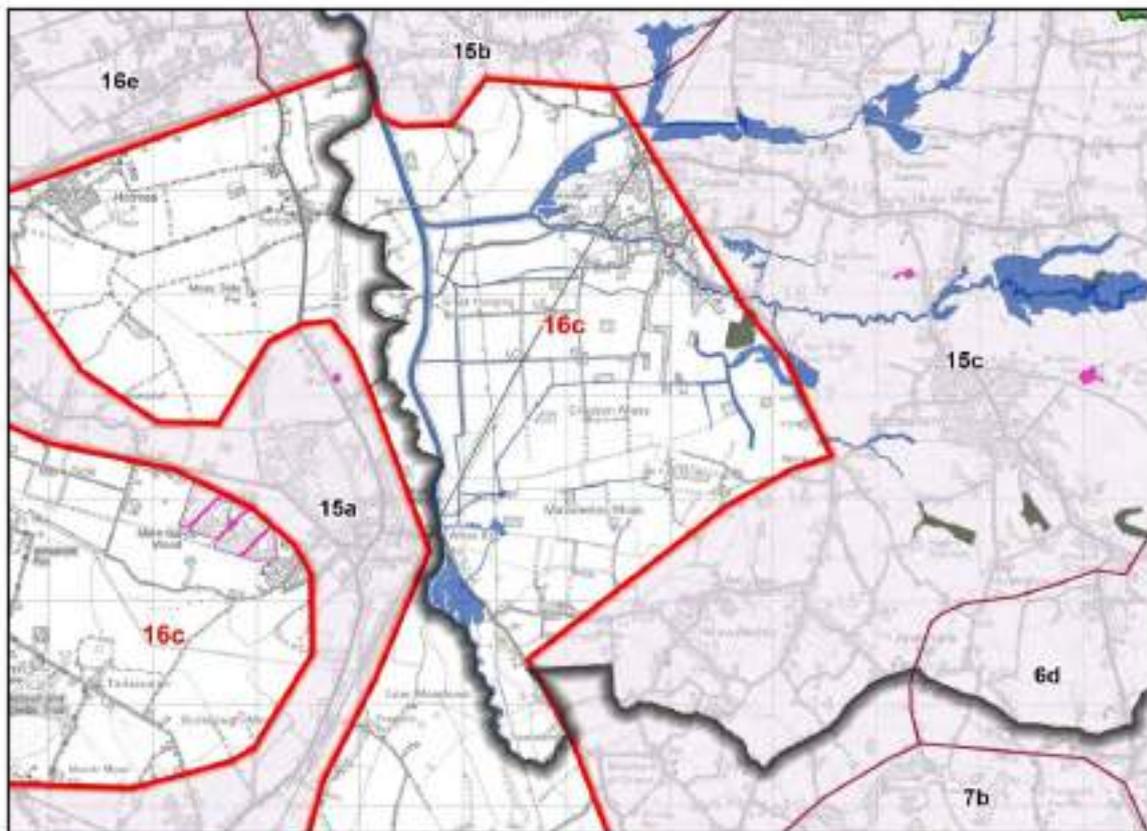
## Appendix A Landscape value assessment

- The dominant built material is red brick.
- There are several wetlands and meres which are of great importance ecologically; Martin Mere is a popular visitor attraction for bird watching and the area is an important winter feeding ground for over-wintering birds.

The strategy for the Mosslands LCT as a whole is to:

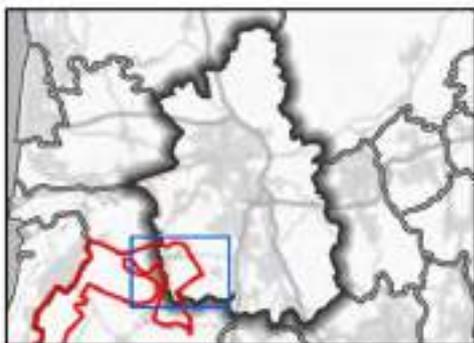
- Conserve the distinctive character and landscape structure of the Mosslands.
- Conserve historic settlement patterns and building styles.
- Conserve important habitats.
- Enhance the character and wildlife value of water courses and their environs.
- Enhance the character and landscape setting of settlements.
- Restore the relict mosslands

## Absolute Constraints

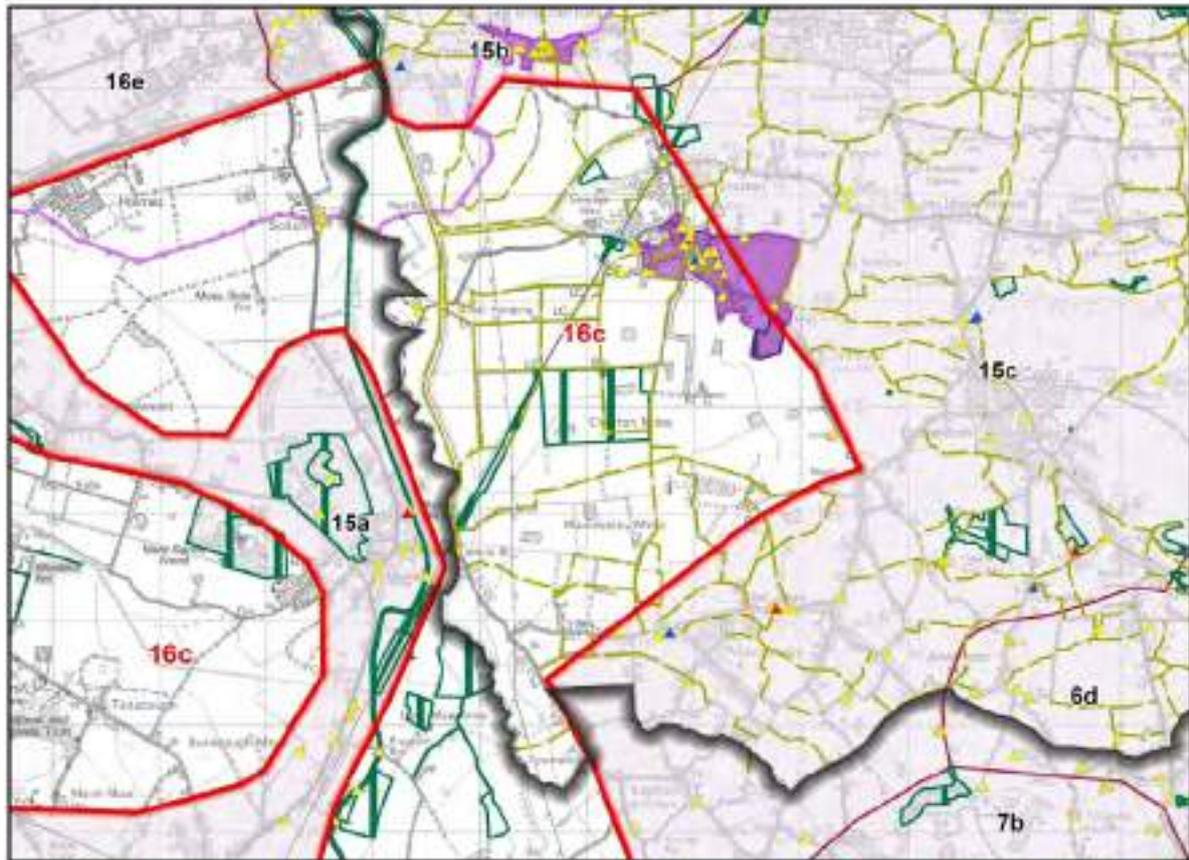


- Landscape Character Area**
- 16c Martin Mere & South West Mosses
  - Neighbouring LCA
  - Landscape Character Sub Area

- Absolute constraints**
- Site of Special Scientific Interest
  - Flood zone 3b
  - Scheduled Monument
  - Registered Parks and Gardens
  - Ancient Woodland

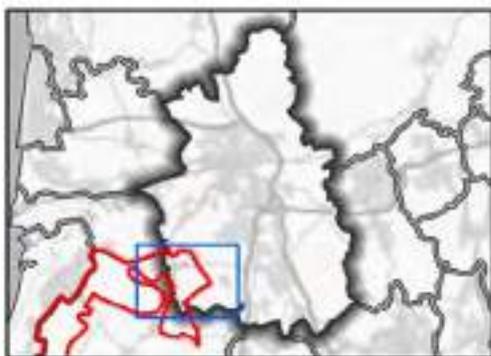


## Other Constraints



- Landscape Character Area**
- 16c Martin Mere & South West Mosses
  - Neighbouring LCA
  - Landscape Character Sub Area

- Other constraints**
- Central Lancashire boundary
  - Biological Heritage Sites
  - Conservation Areas
  - National Cycle Network
  - Public Right of Way
  - ▲ Grade I Listed building
  - ▲ Grade II\* Listed building
  - Grade II Listed building



## Value Evaluation

### Natural heritage

This considers the 'naturalistic' qualities of the landscape area. It looks at the distinctiveness of landforms, the presence and extent of semi-natural habitats and wildlife that contribute to sense of place. Designations such as SSSI will add value. It also considers any particular functional value of landscape elements.

- The landform is distinctive, being extremely flat and low lying; the only notable topographical variations are the man-made river and railway embankments.
- Intensive drainage and arable farming has left little semi-natural habitat, although there are small fragmented areas of remnant carr woodland, natural water courses (Rivers Douglas, Yarrow and Lostock) and a network of drainage ditches and channels which are of value to wildlife. Croston Big Wood, located to the south-east of Croston, is the only area of identified Ancient Woodland.

### Cultural heritage

This considers the extent to which the landscape displays time depth: either in terms of the presence of natural features, historic field patterns or heritage assets that contribute to landscape character. The designation of heritage assets such as Conservation Areas, Scheduled Monuments, listed buildings and areas of archaeological interest will add value.

- The landscape offers an element of natural time-depth, comprising peat deposits which were formerly lowland raised mires. The villages of Croston, Mawdesley and Rufford represent areas of historic settlement on the fringes of the mossland. All three settlements contain clusters of listed buildings, including examples of Grade I and II\*; and Croston and

Rufford contain Scheduled Monuments and are designated as Conservation Areas . The pattern of large geometric fields, geometric woodlands, straight drainage ditches and low hedgerows, and narrow lanes also preserve the historic pattern of post-medieval mossland reclamation. The area is identified as 'post-medieval enclosure from moss' within the Lancashire HLC (2000).

### **Landscape condition**

This considers the physical condition of the landscape in terms of both individual elements and overall structure.

- Individual woodlands and ditches are generally in a well-maintained, good physical condition, whereas many of the hedgerows tend to be gappy. Overall, the area contains a strong pattern of elements that result in a coherent landscape structure.

### **Distinctiveness**

This considers a landscape's strength of identity, with reference to the presence of distinctive or unusual features that are characteristic of a particular place. A landscape may have additional distinctiveness if it has high visual prominence, or a strong association with the character of a particular settlement, whether through strong views from the settlement or through providing a clear sense of arrival at the settlement.

- The landscape type is relatively rare, accounting for only a small proportion of West Lancashire. The landscape has a distinctive character, being extremely flat, low lying and relatively open. The geometric structure of the landscape is distinctive and preserves the historic pattern of mossland reclamation.

### **Recreational**

This criterion considers the presence of features and facilities which enable enjoyment of the landscape, and the importance of these. This may include public rights of way, bridleways, open access land and outdoor tourist/visitor attractions with facilities. Recreation activities such as walking, cycling, horse riding or more formal recreation activities where enjoyment of the landscape is important to the experience. Accessibility from urban areas is also an important consideration. Importance of features may be indicated by designation such as long distance footpaths or recreation routes or national cycle routes.

- This area features an extensive network of footpaths, lanes and tracks which is particularly dense across Croston Moss. Footpaths also follow the course of the Rivers Douglas, Yarrow and Lostock, often along the raised river banks. National Cycle Network Regional Route 91 traverses the area along Back Lane and Eyes Lane to the west of Croston. The various routes allow enjoyment of the landscape and provide direct access from settlements such as Croston and Mawdesley.

### **Perceptual aspects**

This considers qualities such as rurality (traditional land uses with few modern, human influences), sense of remoteness or tranquillity. High scenic value, freedom from human activity/ disturbance and 'dark skies' would add to sensitivity in this criterion. It also considers whether there are any associations with notable people, historic events or artwork that contribute to positive perceptions of the landscape.

- In contrast to the LCA as a whole there is a general lack of built development within the area that lies within Central Lancashire, and the narrow rural lanes and tracks are unlit and do not feature urbanising road infrastructure (such as signage and kerbing). This results in an over-riding rural character, sense of tranquillity and dark skies relative to the surrounding areas (as identified on CPRE Light Pollution and Dark Skies mapping). However, vertical elements such as electricity pylons and wind turbines are particularly visible/prominent within long views

across this open landscape, in particular from raised bridges and embankments. The presence of the railway line crossing through the area between Croston and Rufford also locally diminishes the sense of rurality.

## Assessment Sub-areas

The land within LCA 16c that falls within Central Lancashire (Chorley District) is generally of a similar character and is therefore assessed as a single area. No sub-areas have been identified.

## Landscape value summary

The key aspects of landscape value (qualities and/or elements/features/areas of value) are:

- The pattern of large geometric fields, geometric woodlands and straight drainage ditches and narrow lanes, which preserve the historic pattern of post-medieval mossland reclamation.
- The extremely flat, low lying and relatively open character, which is a distinctive and rare landscape within the area.
- An extensive network of footpaths, lanes and tracks which allow enjoyment of the landscape and provide direct access from settlements.
- The overall rural character, sense of tranquillity and dark skies (relative to the surrounding areas).

Whilst the LCA has some valued landscape characteristics, overall it is not considered to have '**above ordinary**' landscape value.

## LCA 16g: Hoole and Farington Mosses

### Location and Key Characteristics

The key characteristics and strategy for the Landscape Character Area (LCA) below are copied in full from the 'Landscape Strategy for Lancashire: Landscape Character Assessment' (2000).

This LCA is relatively small in extent and forms an arc around the outskirts of Leyland, extending from New Longton in the north to Bretherton in the south. The majority falls within the South Ribble District, with a small area extending south into the Chorley District. The LCA forms part of the 'Mosslands' Landscape Character Type (LCT) which is defined by an extremely flat, low lying landscape comprised of peat deposits which were formerly an extensive series of lowland raised mires.

Key characteristics for the wider LCA recorded in the Landscape Character Assessment are:

- A small area of mossland almost entirely fringed by settlements lying on the higher ground above the moss.
- The town of Leyland lies to the east, whilst to the north are a series of expanded villages running from Farington in the east to Much Hoole in the west.
- The small village of Bretherton lies on a ridge of higher ground to the south west.
- The moss is largely cultivated and is drained into the Carr and Wynott Brooks which feed into the River Douglas. However there is a pocket of moss with remnant bog vegetation at Much Hoole Moss, which is a Biological Heritage Site.

## Appendix A Landscape value assessment

- The Liverpool to Preston railway crosses the moss and straight lanes penetrate into it from the edges, with associated farms and modern brick houses.
- A number of footpaths associated with boundary ditches link lanes and properties.

The strategy for the Mosslands LCT as a whole is to:

- Conserve the distinctive character and landscape structure of the Mosslands.
- Conserve historic settlement patterns and building styles.
- Conserve important habitats.
- Enhance the character and wildlife value of water courses and their environs.
- Enhance the character and landscape setting of settlements.
- Restore the relict mosslands.





## Value Evaluation

### Natural heritage

This considers the 'naturalistic' qualities of the landscape area. It looks at the distinctiveness of landforms, the presence and extent of semi-natural habitats and wildlife that contribute to sense of place. Designations such as SSSI will add value. It also considers any particular functional value of landscape elements.

- The landform of the area is extremely flat and low lying. The landform falls slightly around Carr Brook in the south-west of the area and rises very gently in the north. The area is surrounded by slightly higher coastal plains upon which settlements were historically sited. The flat nature of the area is distinctive and is a key defining characteristic.
- The area has been intensively farmed and therefore only minimal fragmented areas of semi-natural habitat remain. A very limited area (approximately 8 ha) of remnant Lowland Raised Bog is located at Much Hoole Moss. Small scattered ponds, brooks and drainage ditches provide a network of wetland habitats. There are also some small and isolated patches of deciduous and coniferous woodland.

### Cultural heritage

This considers the extent to which the landscape displays time depth: either in terms of the presence of natural features, historic field patterns or heritage assets that contribute to landscape character. The designation of heritage assets such as Conservation Areas, Scheduled Monuments, listed buildings and areas of archaeological interest will add value.

- The landscape offers an element of natural time-depth, comprising peat deposits which were formerly lowland raised mires.

- The strong geometric pattern of field boundaries and drainage ditches clearly display the area's history as a reclaimed mossland landscape. The area is identified as 'post-medieval enclosure from moss' within the Lancashire HLC (2002).
- The area is sparsely settled and has no Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments or Conservation Areas.
- The Liverpool to Preston Railway passes through the centre of the area and reflects the industrial heritage of the wider surrounding area. It was constructed in the 1840s when Preston was a centre of industrial activity and railway building.

### Landscape condition

This considers the physical condition of the landscape in terms of both individual elements and overall structure.

- The landscape is generally well maintained with ditches and the limited areas of woodland kept in a good condition. In some places elongated strip fields have been amalgamated and hedgerows left to deteriorate. The majority of the remaining hedgerows are well maintained, but in places they are gappy. Despite this, the strong and distinctive structure of the area has been maintained overall.
- An overhead electricity line passes through the north east of the area. The flat, open nature of the landscape forms a contrast with the pylons and increases their dominance in the landscape. They detract from the area's landscape character.

### Distinctiveness

This considers a landscape's strength of identity, with reference to the presence of distinctive or unusual features that are characteristic of a particular place. A landscape may have additional distinctiveness if it has high visual prominence, or a strong association with the character of a

particular settlement, whether through strong views from the settlement or through providing a clear sense of arrival at the settlement.

- The landscape type is relatively rare, accounting for only a limited proportion of West Lancashire. The landscape has a distinctive character, being extremely flat, low lying and open. The geometric structure of the landscape is distinctive and preserves the historic pattern of mossland reclamation. This area covers relatively limited extent compared with other areas of this LCT. Despite the proximity of urban areas, the area is well contained and retains a distinctive character.

### **Recreational**

This criterion considers the presence of features and facilities which enable enjoyment of the landscape, and the importance of these. This may include public rights of way, bridleways, open access land and outdoor tourist/visitor attractions with facilities. Recreation activities such as walking, cycling, horse riding or more formal recreation activities where enjoyment of the landscape is important to the experience. Accessibility from urban areas is also an important consideration. Importance of features may be indicated by designation such as long distance footpaths or recreation routes or national cycle routes.

- This area features a very extensive network of footpaths, lanes and tracks which follow the geometric field pattern. Traffic in the area is limited and the network is a valuable resources for walkers and cyclists. The network has strong connections with the urban area of Leyland and the surrounding villages of New Longton and Much Hoole.
- National Cycle Route 62 skirts the very eastern boundary of the LCA.

### **Perceptual aspects**

This considers qualities such as rurality (traditional land uses with few modern, human influences), sense of remoteness or tranquillity. High scenic value, freedom from human activity/ disturbance and 'dark skies' would add to sensitivity in this criterion. It also considers whether there are any associations with notable people, historic events or artwork that contribute to positive perceptions of the landscape.

- The area contains very few roads and development is limited to a few scattered farmsteads. The very flat topography in combination with some blocks of woodland limit views towards the surrounding urban areas. As a result, the area has a rural character and a certain degree of tranquillity. Tranquillity and Dark skies are greater here, particularly in the south of the LCA, than the surrounding areas (as identified on CPRE Light Pollution and Dark Skies mapping). However, these qualities are reduced slightly by the presence of vertical elements such as electricity pylons and telephone masts which are particularly prominent due to the topography. The Liverpool to Preston Railway also reduces the sense of remoteness and tranquillity in the east of the LCA.

## Assessment Sub-areas

The land within LCA 16g that lies within Central Lancashire is generally of a similar character, therefore it is assessed as a single area. No sub-areas have been identified.

## Landscape value summary

The key aspects of landscape value (qualities and/or elements/features/areas of value) are:

- The strong pattern of elongated geometric fields, straight drainage ditches and narrow lanes, which indicate the area's history as a reclaimed mossland landscape.

## Appendix A Landscape value assessment

- The distinctive flat topography, low lying and relatively open character of the landscape which is rare within the wider area.
- An extensive network of footpaths, lanes and tracks which allow enjoyment of the landscape and provide direct access from nearby settlements.
- The overall rural character, created by limited development and reduced visibility of surrounding urban areas.

Whilst the LCA has some valued landscape characteristics, overall it is not considered to have '**above ordinary**' landscape value.

## LCA 17a: Clifton and Hutton Marsh

### Location and Key Characteristics

The key characteristics and strategy for the Landscape Character Area (LCA) below are copied in full from the 'Landscape Strategy for Lancashire: Landscape Character Assessment' (2000).

Clifton and Hutton Marsh is a narrow, wedge shaped LCA which straddles the River Ribble. Within the Central Lancashire Area, the LCA covers a small area to the north of the River Ribble in Preston District and a longer section to the south of the river in South Ribble District. It stretches between the edges of Penwortham and Preston in the east and the confluence with the River Ribble and River Douglas in the west. The LCA forms part of the 'Enclosed Coastal Marsh' Landscape Character Type (LCT) which is characterised by flat expanses of recently reclaimed coastal land.

Key characteristics for the wider LCA recorded in the Landscape Character Assessment are:

- Reclaimed and relatively recently enclosed marsh, located to the west of Preston, separated from the unenclosed salt marshes of the Ribble Estuary by sea dykes.
- Large geometric pastoral and arable fields are drained by numerous parallel ditches which produce a regimented, productive landscape.
- Fields are bounded by low clipped thorn hedgerows and tree cover is restricted to narrow linear plantations which function as shelter belts.
- There is a feeling of isolation with straight dead-end tracks ending at isolated farm houses which are constructed from a mixture of materials, but red brick is the most common.

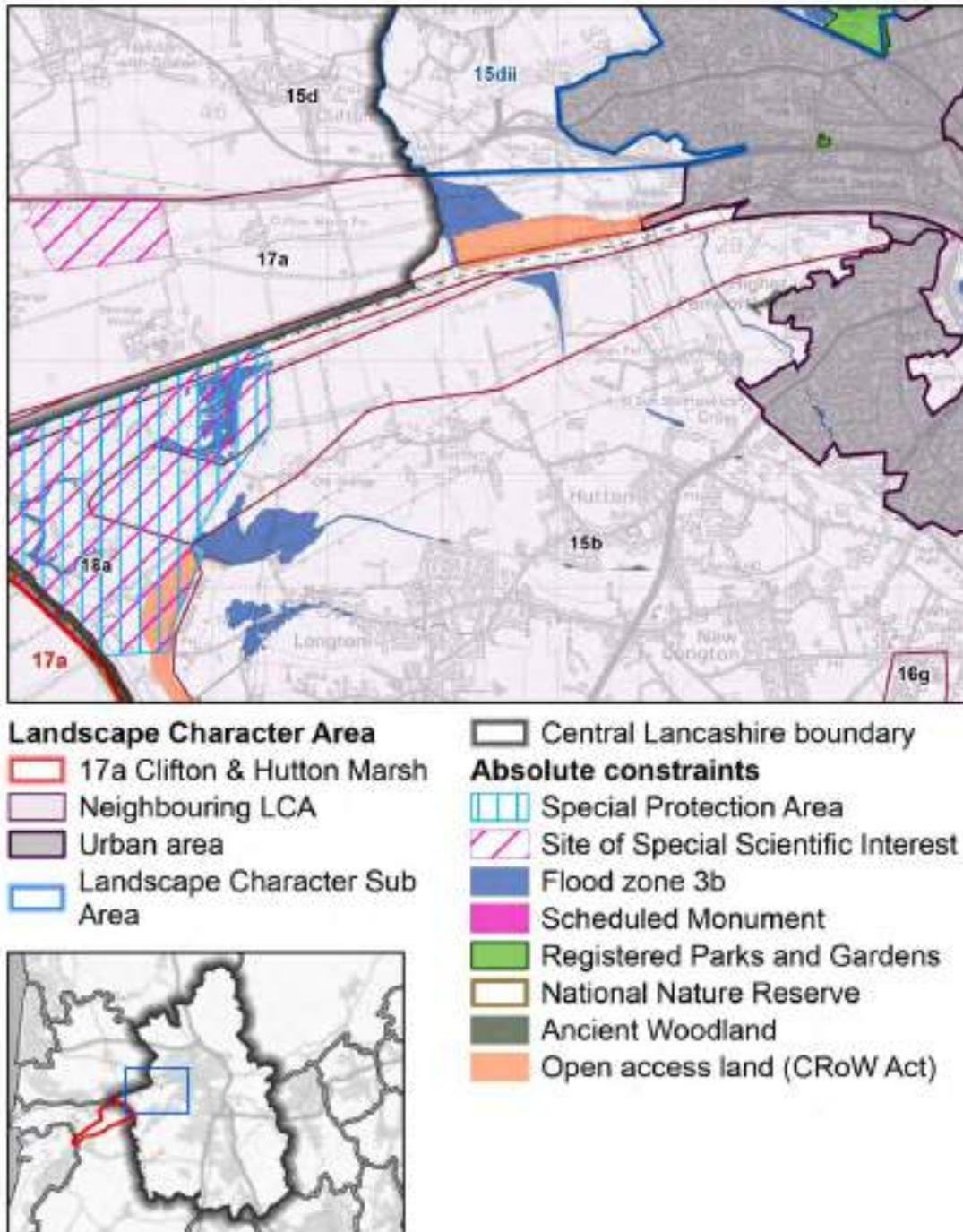
## Appendix A Landscape value assessment

- Where seas defences allow some inundation, and where agricultural practices are not intensive, areas of wet marsh exist alongside intensive agriculture, for example at Lea Marsh which is attractive to birdlife. The grasslands are of international importance for feeding wild geese and swans.

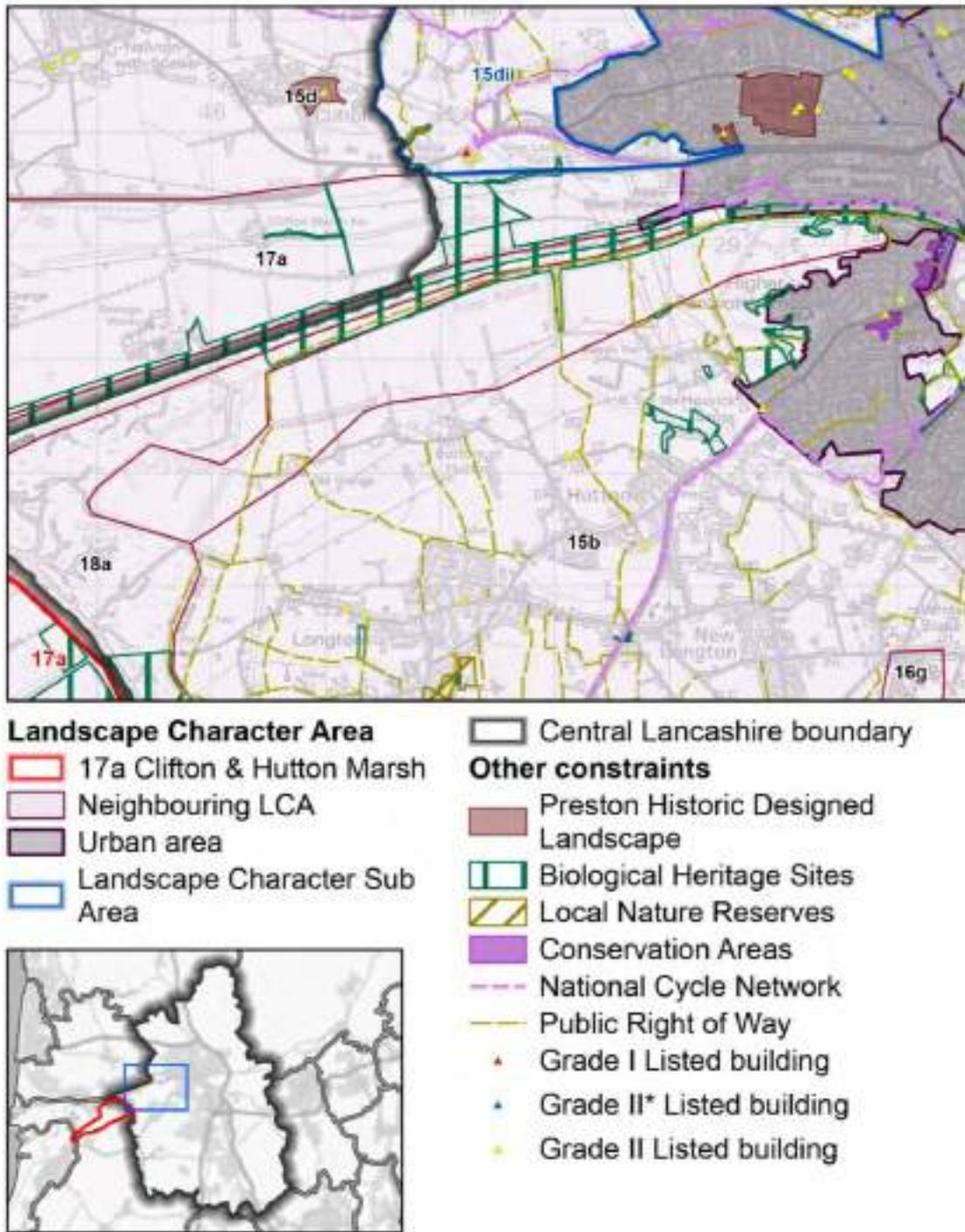
The strategy for the Enclosed Coastal Marsh LCT as a whole is to:

- Conserve the expansive landscape and remote character of the Enclosed Coastal Marsh.
- Conserve valuable wetland habitats.
- Enhance opportunities for informal recreation.
- Restore wetland habitats and species.

## Absolute Constraints



## Other Constraints



## Value Evaluation

### Natural heritage

This considers the 'naturalistic' qualities of the landscape area. It looks at the distinctiveness of landforms, the presence and extent of semi-natural habitats and wildlife that contribute to sense of place. Designations such as SSSI will add value. It also considers any particular functional value of landscape elements.

- As reclaimed coastal marsh, the landform of the LCA is extremely flat, generally below 10m, with the exception of the sea dykes or bunds which protect the area from flooding. This low-lying landform is a key distinctive characteristic and is uniform across the areas relatively modest extent.
- Prior to the enclosure and drainage of the land it would have been open coastal marsh of high biodiversity value. Whilst agricultural improvement has reduced this, there are areas surviving wet marsh, a network of ditches and former salt marsh creeks which contribute to a network of wetland habitat dominated by the adjacent open coastal marshes. The fields provide an important feeding ground for over-wintering birds such as swans and geese.
- The River Ribble dissects the LCA, and although it technically falls outside the area boundary it is important feature in the landscape. Two small sections of the Ribble Estuary SSSI and Ribble & Alt Estuaries Ramsar and SPA sites fall within the area to the west. This comprises the river and a large area of intertidal mud, sandflats and saltmarsh which provides important feeding habitat for birds and roosting sites for large populations of waterbirds. In the north Newton Marsh is also designated as a SSSI, due the importance of the site for over-wintering and migrant birds.

### Cultural heritage

This considers the extent to which the landscape displays time depth: either in terms of the presence of natural features, historic field patterns or heritage assets that contribute to landscape character. The designation of heritage assets such as Conservation Areas, Scheduled Monuments, listed buildings and areas of archaeological interest will add value.

- This area was relatively recently reclaimed and enclosed in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century after the River Ribble was straightened to make it more navigable for shipping. All built form in the area dates from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards.
- There is minimal time depth displayed in the landscape due to its relatively recent reclamation. However, the draining of the landscape and the resulting legacy of features, such as the sea dykes, provide a sense of landscape history. They are indicative of how the historic sequence of coastal reclamation and corresponding changes in drainage technology has shaped the landscape and influenced landscape character.

### Landscape condition

This considers the physical condition of the landscape in terms of both individual elements and overall structure.

- Field boundaries are defined by a mixture of hedgerows, drainage ditches and post and wire fences. Hedgerows are gappy in places, but are otherwise well maintained. Drainage ditches have been kept clear and, generally, there is a sense that the area is a well maintained.
- Two units of the Ribble Estuary SSSI fall within the LCA, one south of the river and the other north of the river. The condition of the area south of the river has been categorised as Unfavourable No Change, while the (smaller) area to the north has been categorised as Favourable. The

condition of Newton Marsh SSSI in the north is Unfavourable Recovering.

### **Distinctiveness**

This considers a landscape's strength of identity, with reference to the presence of distinctive or unusual features that are characteristic of a particular place. A landscape may have additional distinctiveness if it has high visual prominence, or a strong association with the character of a particular settlement, whether through strong views from the settlement or through providing a clear sense of arrival at the settlement.

- There are limited areas of reclaimed and enclosed coastal land in Lancashire and as a result this landscape type is relatively rare. The extremely flat topography, openness, expansive skies and regimented field pattern create a distinctive character. As the extent of this character type is not great, the cohesion and strength of the character area is influenced by surrounding more urban and suburban localised character.

### **Recreational**

This criterion considers the presence of features and facilities which enable enjoyment of the landscape, and the importance of these. This may include public rights of way, bridleways, open access land and outdoor tourist/visitor attractions with facilities. Recreation activities such as walking, cycling, horse riding or more formal recreation activities where enjoyment of the landscape is important to the experience. Accessibility from urban areas is also an important consideration. Importance of features may be indicated by designation such as long distance footpaths or recreation routes or national cycle routes.

- On the northern banks of the River Ribble is a narrow stretch of Open Access Land sandwiched between the river and Lea Marsh. It is currently utilised as a Go Karting site.
- The Ribble Way long distance footpath runs along the southern bank of the river. This footpath is a valuable recreational resource, providing access along the river. This also connects with some other footpaths and tracks which link with adjacent settlements such as Longton, Hutton and Penworthan. With this exception, there are very few public rights of way and a limited lane network making the interior of the area largely inaccessible.

### Perceptual aspects

This considers qualities such as rurality (traditional land uses with few modern, human influences), sense of remoteness or tranquillity. High scenic value, freedom from human activity/ disturbance and 'dark skies' would add to sensitivity in this criterion. It also considers whether there are any associations with notable people, historic events or artwork that contribute to positive perceptions of the landscape.

- There is very limited development and a limited road network within the LCA, particularly within the west of the area, which creates a sense of remoteness and tranquillity. The expansive open skies and views over the coastal marshes to the west enhance this further.
- Two overhead electricity lines traverse the area to the east, running parallel where they cross the River Ribble. Their prominence is emphasised by the extremely flat topography. In the immediate surroundings of the LCA are a number of prominent features which influence the areas character: a landfill site, the National Grid Penwortham Substation and Preston Sewage Works. The presence of these features within or in close proximity to the LCA detracts from its rural and remote character.

## Assessment Sub-areas

The land within LCA 17a that falls within the Central Lancashire Area is generally of a similar character, and is therefore assessed as a single area. No sub-areas have been identified.

## Landscape value summary

The key aspects of landscape value (qualities and/or elements/features/areas of value) are:

- The dramatically flat topography and open character of the landscape, creating expansive views dominated by the sky.
- The regimented, geometric field pattern typical of relatively recently reclaimed and enclosed land. This landscape type is relative rare within the study area.
- Attributes of wetland character, including areas of surviving wet marsh, a network of drainage ditches, former salt marsh creeks and the River Ribble.
- The sense of tranquility and remoteness (relative to the surrounding areas) created by the lack of development. These qualities are limited by surrounding land uses.

Whilst the LCA has some valued landscape characteristics, overall it is not considered to have '**above ordinary**' landscape value.

## LCA 18a: Ribble Marshes

### Location and Key Characteristics

The key characteristics and strategy for the Landscape Character Area (LCA) below are copied in full from the 'Landscape Strategy for Lancashire: Landscape Character Assessment' (2000).

The Ribble Marshes occupies a small proportion of the study area in the far west of the South Ribble District. It contains the unenclosed, undrained marshy peripheries of the River Ribble and River Douglas. The LCA forms part of the 'Open Coastal Marsh' Landscape Character Type (LCT) which is characterised by salt marshes and intertidal flats extending to the low water mark.

Key characteristics for the wider LCA recorded in the Landscape Character Assessment are:

- Extensive and expanding unenclosed coastal marsh in the sheltered estuary of the River Ribble, most of which is protected and managed as a National Nature Reserve.
- Characterised by a fine green sward stretching out to sea.
- Its amorphous, natural form provides a dramatic contrast to the regular enclosures of the adjacent Hesketh Marsh and the urban form of the Warton Aerodrome.
- Urban buildings are never far away and provide a backdrop to views.
- A large number of visiting birds are encouraged by the standing water. Large numbers of waders and wildfowl are attracted to the marshes, adjacent mudflats and estuary.

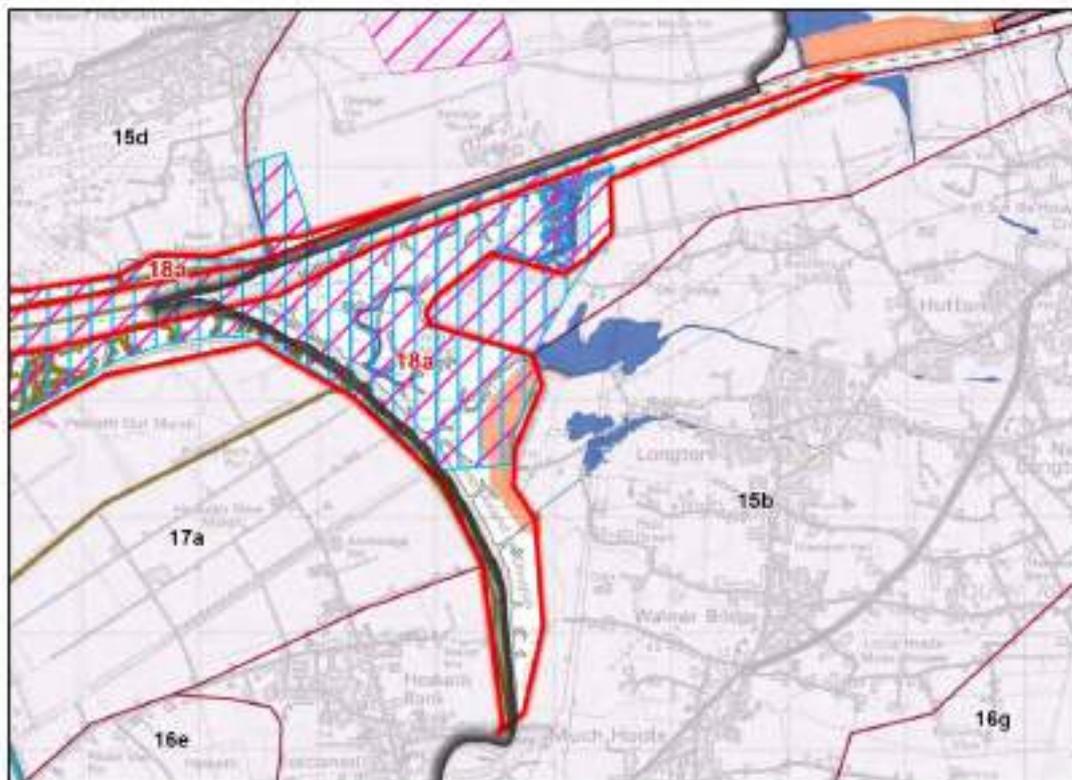
The strategy for the Open Coastal Marsh LCT as a whole is to:

- Conserve valuable wildlife habitats.

## **Appendix A** Landscape value assessment

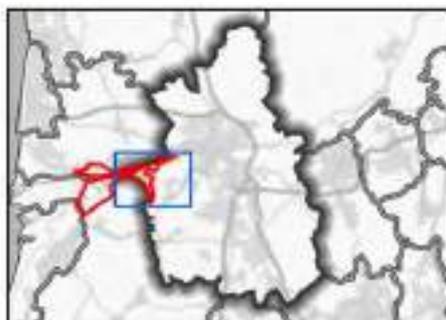
- Conserve the expansive landscape and tranquillity of the Open Coastal Marsh.
- Enhance coastal defences.
- Enhance opportunities for informal recreation.

## Absolute Constraints

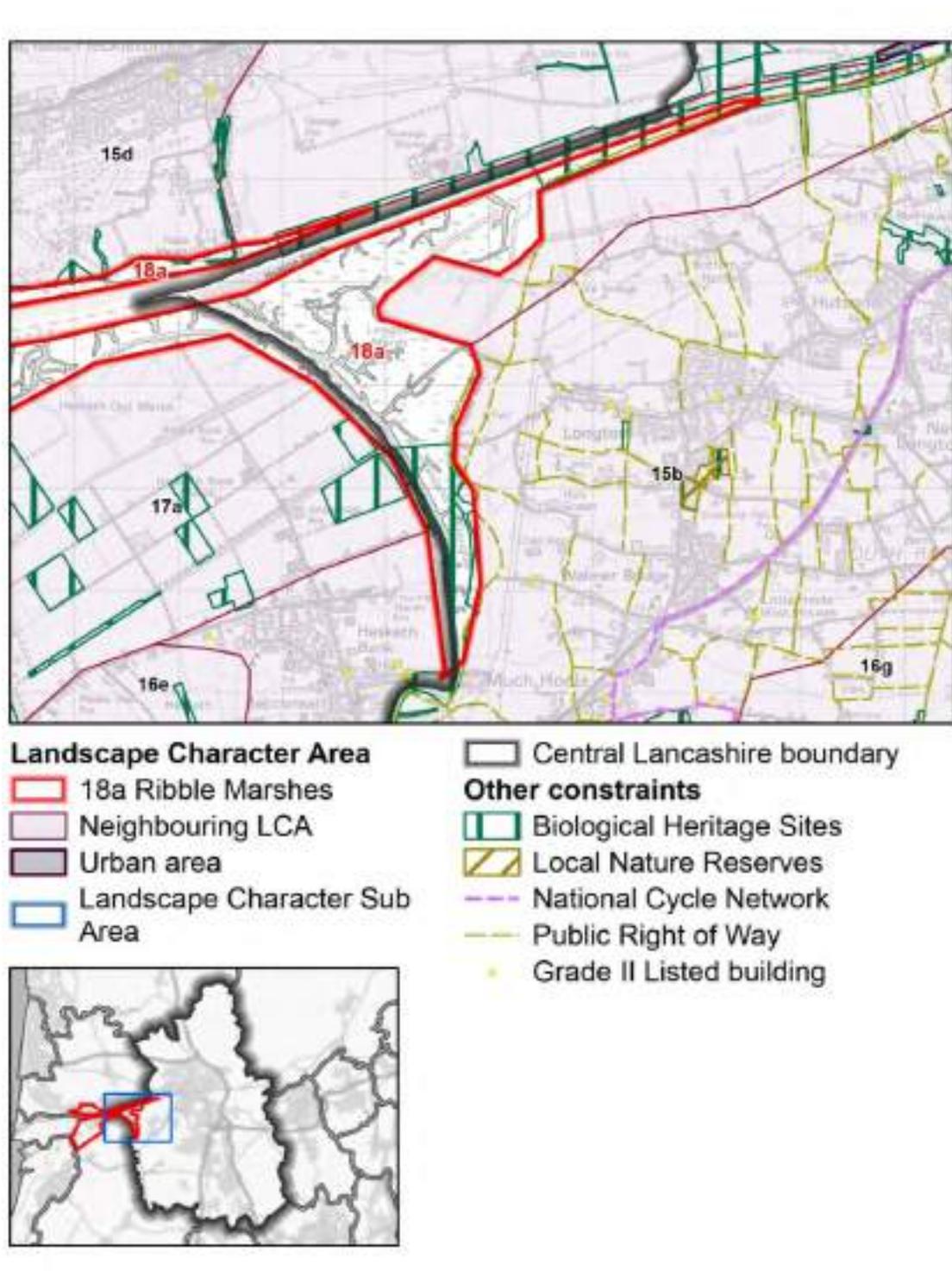


- Landscape Character Area**
- 18a Ribble Marshes
  - Neighbouring LCA
  - Urban area
  - Landscape Character Sub Area

- Absolute constraints**
- Special Protection Area
  - Site of Special Scientific Interest
  - Flood zone 3b
  - National Nature Reserve
  - Open access land (CRoW Act)



## Other Constraints



## Value Evaluation

### Natural heritage

This considers the 'naturalistic' qualities of the landscape area. It looks at the distinctiveness of landforms, the presence and extent of semi-natural habitats and wildlife that contribute to sense of place. Designations such as SSSI will add value. It also considers any particular functional value of landscape elements.

- The entire LCA is extremely low-lying, rising only slightly above the high tide level, with the majority of the area at between 5m and 7m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD).
- The marsh is unenclosed and features a dense network of sinuous brooks and channels, which contrast starkly with the regimented and linear drainage ditches of surrounding enclosed areas.
- The majority of the LCA forms part of the Ribble Estuary SSSI and Ribble & Alt Estuaries Ramsar and SPA sites. The area is of international importance for passage and wintering waterfowl and also supports a diverse breeding bird community.
- The areas within the LCA not within the SSSI are designated locally as Biological Heritage Sites due to their coastal habitats and habitat mosaic.

### Cultural heritage

This considers the extent to which the landscape displays time depth: either in terms of the presence of natural features, historic field patterns or heritage assets that contribute to landscape character. The designation of heritage assets such as Conservation Areas, Scheduled Monuments, listed buildings and areas of archaeological interest will add value.

- The unenclosed marshes contains limited signs of historic human intervention or occupation, as this landscape has always been saltmarsh and therefore unoccupied. As a result it contains no designated heritage assets.
- However, the lack of human intervention creates a sense of natural time-depth. This Ribble Marshes illustrate what the character of the wider surrounding context would have looked like, prior to the draining and enclosure of the land.

### **Landscape condition**

This considers the physical condition of the landscape in terms of both individual elements and overall structure.

- The SSSI units within the LCA are classified as being in favourable condition.
- Waterways have been allowed to meander organically across the marshes maintaining the natural, high quality condition of the landscape.

### **Distinctiveness**

This considers a landscape's strength of identity, with reference to the presence of distinctive or unusual features that are characteristic of a particular place. A landscape may have additional distinctiveness if it has high visual prominence, or a strong association with the character of a particular settlement, whether through strong views from the settlement or through providing a clear sense of arrival at the settlement.

- The coastal marshes are a highly distinctive landscape due to their natural form and extreme openness. The lack of human intervention, texture of the marshland vegetation and natural winding brooks and

channels create a striking character which contrasts with its wider surroundings.

- From the marshes long distance views of the Forest of Bowland and the West Pennine Moors can be perceived. The stark contrast between the low-lying marshland landscape and the distant uplands strengthen sense of place.
- The abundance of avian wildlife makes a positive contribution to sense of place.

### Recreational

This criterion considers the presence of features and facilities which enable enjoyment of the landscape, and the importance of these. This may include public rights of way, bridleways, open access land and outdoor tourist/visitor attractions with facilities. Recreation activities such as walking, cycling, horse riding or more formal recreation activities where enjoyment of the landscape is important to the experience. Accessibility from urban areas is also an important consideration. Importance of features may be indicated by designation such as long distance footpaths or recreation routes or national cycle routes.

- A strip of Registered Common Land – Longton Out Marsh – lies within the LCA.
- Whilst the wider marshes are not formally accessible to the public, with no Public Rights of Way within the interior of the LCA. However, there are generally no barriers to access and a network of informal footpaths traverse the landscape.
- The Ribble Way long distance footpath, begins/terminates on the edge of the LCA and then follows the edge of the LCA on a well maintained footpath. This is located on slightly raised ground, making it accessible throughout more of the year than the lower-lying marshland to the west.

### Perceptual aspects

This considers qualities such as rurality (traditional land uses with few modern, human influences), sense of remoteness or tranquillity. High scenic value, freedom from human activity/ disturbance and 'dark skies' would add to sensitivity in this criterion. It also considers whether there are any associations with notable people, historic events or artwork that contribute to positive perceptions of the landscape.

- The area has a strong sense of remoteness and tranquillity due to the lack of agriculture, infrastructure and built form. The open expansive views with wide skies and dominance of water creates a perceptual experience that feels very detached from the urban areas to the east.
- The area has high levels of tranquillity (CPRE, 2007) and low levels of light pollution (CPRE 2016) relative to the wider Central Lancashire Area. However, these perceptual qualities are influenced to some extent by the visibility of overhead electricity lines in the adjacent landscape character area to the east.

## Assessment Sub-areas

The land within LCA 18a is generally of a similar character, and is therefore assessed as a single area. No sub-areas have been identified.

## Landscape value summary

The key aspects of landscape value (qualities and/or elements/features/areas of value) are:

## Appendix A Landscape value assessment

- The natural character of the marshes, with its sinuous network of waterways and low-lying wetland vegetation.
- Natural heritage value, as reflected by the Ribble Estuary SSSI and Ribble & Alt Estuaries Ramsar and SPA designations.
- The abundance of avian wildlife, which creates interest and seasonal variety in the landscape and provides a draw for visitors.
- The flat, extremely open and expansive wetland landscape, which creates a highly distinctive landscape; this is heightened by the contrast with uplands areas to the west, which are visible as a distant backdrop.
- The sense of remoteness and tranquility due to the lack of human activity and development, and the dominance of open water in the landscape.

Overall, the landscape is considered to have **'above ordinary'** landscape value.

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