

N3 Barnsley Rolling Wooded Farmland

The landscape character area classified as *Barnsley Settled Wooded Farmland* is dominated by the presence of urban development in and around Barnsley. Small areas of green open space are enclosed by development on most sides, with occasional distant views out of the landscape character area. The underlying geology is middle coal measures, comprising alternating bands of shales and sandstones which have weathered at different rates, giving rise to a rolling landform. The landform slopes towards the River Dearne or River Dove, or to streams that feed these rivers. The elevation ranges from 50m to 170m AOD, with an isolated higher spot of 190m AOD at the crest of the reclaimed colliery spoil tip north of Dodworth (Dodworth Tip).

Views are generally enclosed by landform and urban development. Distant views out of the landscape character area are limited to particular directions on the location and aspect of the open space. These are either to countryside to the west (*E1 West Barnsley Settled Wooded Farmland*), north across the Dearne Valley to developed hills (*D1 North East Barnsley Settled Arable Slopes*), or west along the broad Dearne valley (*Lower Dearne Lowland River Floor*). These views are a mixture of rural, urban and industrial land use.

The landscape is characterised by six dominant land use patterns – agriculture, recreation, residential, industry, communication and landscape renewal. Their different physical qualities give rise to areas of land with different appearance. Poles and pylons carrying overhead wires are common features crossing open land.

Wedges of Urban Greenspace that are also within the existing green belt, as defined in Barnsley Unitary Development Plan, run into the urban fabric of Barnsley to the east of the character area. They provide valuable recreational facilities and wildlife corridors in these developed areas. They comprise a range of land uses including informal recreation (mown and rough grass, tree and shrub planting, woodland), formal recreation (playing fields, allotments), a cemetery, and agriculture. The spoil heap formed out of waste from Barnsley Main, the colliery around which Barnsley formed during the industrial revolution of the 19th and 20th Centuries, has recently been reclaimed. It is now known as Oakes Park and provides a new facility for casual outdoor recreation and a wedge of green space within the urban area.

In farmed areas agriculture is predominantly livestock farming and horse grazing, with some small areas of arable farming. Fields are small to medium sized and bounded by hawthorn hedgerows, which are often poorly maintained and overgrown or heavily grazed at their bases. Some fields appear to have been abandoned, or might be deliberately unfarmed for conservation or other purposes. These remnants of the previously dominant earlier agricultural landuse are now overshadowed by the enclosing urban development.

Mature trees are limited to the occasional small woodland (notably bounding the stream west of Gawber). Some recently planted medium sized and small trees lie on recreational or reclaimed land, within areas of Urban Greenspace.

A golf course lies to the west of the M1, outside the urban fabric of Barnsley and on the edge of open countryside.

The skyline is dominated by 20th Century brick housing of mixed styles and materials, and settlements generally sit on high ground overlooking the areas of countryside or Urban Greenspace. Occasionally, older stone houses stand on the edge of the urban areas. Large 20th Century warehouse style industrial or commercial buildings lie in small or medium sized industrial parks on the edges of urban areas, often on lower ground that has presumably been re-developed from previous industrial use. The occasional farmstead, still in agricultural use, lies within the agricultural land.

The M1 motorway cuts through the western part of this landscape character area and creates a narrow corridor of visual and noise intrusion. The adverse effects of the motorway are, however, minimised by its location in cuttings and naturally lower parts of the landform. From many places where there are views over the motorway to open countryside or developed

areas, landform or trees screen the motorway itself. The landscape character area is crossed or bordered by other smaller roads and by the railway line from Barnsley to Wakefield.

The landscape character area contains modern industrial estates and reclaimed spoil heaps indicating locations of old collieries. Oakes Park, the reclaimed tip of Barnsley Main, is discussed above. Dodworth Tip west of the M1 was reclaimed some years ago and now forms a characteristic wooded landform on the edge of Dodworth.