

N4 Grimethorpe Rolling Wooded Farmland

The landscape character area classified as *E3 Grimethorpe Settled Wooded Farmland* is underlain by middle coal measures, comprising alternating bands of shales and sandstones with coal seams, which have weathered and eroded at different rates, giving rise to a rolling landform. The majority of this character area consists of a west facing valley side and a smaller area covers part of the flat narrow ridge at the top of the slope. The valley side is interrupted at frequent intervals by steep narrow valleys that contain narrow watercourses flowing towards the valley floor in the west. The lower part of two of these watercourses contains narrow alluvial deposits lying over the middle coal measures. The elevation rises from 50m AOD on the western side of Grimethorpe to 115m AOD on the ridge top plateau within West Haigh Wood.

Land use is a simple mixture of residential areas, agriculture and woodland. The edges of the settlements also contain recreational green space. The boundaries between each of these land uses is well defined but convoluted. The area also contains a small reclaimed spoil tip.

Arable land is found on the more gentle slopes of the valley sides and permanent pasture (occasionally being invaded by scrub) is found in pockets associated with the steeper land along the watercourses. Fields are either enclosed by fairly intact hawthorn hedgerows containing occasional mature trees, or have no enclosure. Intact farmed land comes up to the edge of settlements where it joins houses, gardens, roads, schools and recreational green space.

The overall south west aspect of the valley slopes provides very distant views to the west and south west, including views of the far western side of the Borough. Areas of woodland, built development and the steeper land alongside the watercourses give localised enclosure. Woodland also provides enclosure on the flat, elevated ridge top.

Some parts of the watercourses are lined with deciduous woodland strips. There are several deciduous woodlands to the south of Grimethorpe that are linked to form a larger area of woodland, some of which is designated as Ancient Woodland. Some mature trees are found within hedgerows bounding fields.

Two settlements are found on the lower slopes of the valley side. Grimethorpe, is spread across a large area from the boundary with character area *C2 Lower Dearne Lowland Valley Floor* and up part of the valley side, with no particular relationship to landform or landscape elements. The predominant building material on the eastern urban edge is red brick that has a strong influence on the character of the adjacent area. A working stone farmstead, which would have once been in open countryside, is now situated on the urban edge of Grimethorpe. There are several large areas of recreational green space along the urban edge that link with the surrounding countryside. Great Houghton is more compact and is situated along a road. Red brick buildings also dominate the edge of this settlement.

Individual dwellings are scattered throughout the farmed land. Many are historic halls and lodges constructed in sandstone and others are more modern buildings.