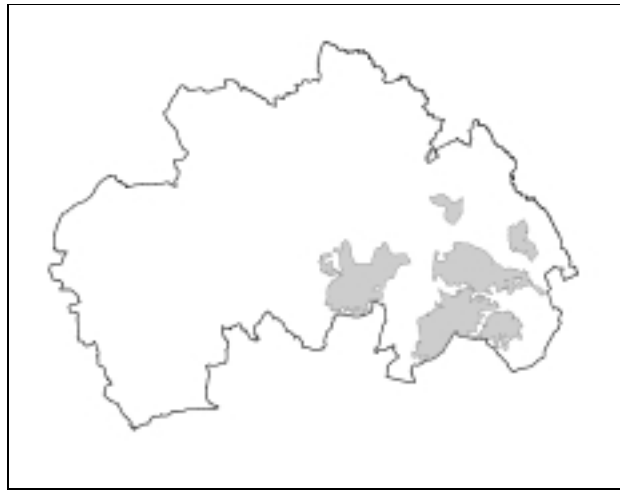


## 3. Forest

### ■ Forest Landscape Character Areas

Landscape Character Areas	Location
(3a) Cropton	
(3b) Langdale/ Harwood Dale/ Newton House	
(3c) Dalby	
(3d) Wykeham	

### 3. Forest



#### ■ Key Characteristics: Landscape Type

- Very extensive areas of forested land, overlying deltaic sandstones and mudstones, softer Oxford clay and Osgodby sandstone or Middle and Lower Calcareous Grit from the Corallian Group.
- Sited either within gradually rising upland areas on former moorland or moorland fringe areas, abutting open moorland and falling away towards the limestone escarpment in the south; or on the gently graded limestone plateau which falls away towards the lowland further south.
- The forests fall away steeply at the edge of the north facing scarp or into steep sided dales within the forests or within adjacent character areas, allowing views out from the forests in certain locations.
- Landcover is primarily coniferous forest; some areas planted in regular geometric blocks, separated by a grid iron pattern of unplanted rides and firebreaks, including large areas of recently felled or/and recently planted areas and other areas planted more sympathetically with irregular forms and edges reflecting the underlying topography. Deciduous species have been planted in some fringe areas e.g. adjacent to roads and the forests are interspersed by isolated pockets of ancient semi natural woodland within steeper areas or within valleys. In some areas there is an abrupt geometric edge to the forest.
- Areas of mainly replanted ancient woodland are present in blocks or linear belts, mainly associated with steeper valley side locations.
- A few farmsteads and areas of remnant farmland occur within openings in the forest. Fields of pasture are divided into a regular pattern of fields by both stone walls and fences.
- The forests are generally accessed by minor roads only or are inaccessible by road.
- Recreational provision within the forests varies; some have extensive provision while others are focused on intensive commercial timber production or research. All forests comprise Open Access land.

■ Pressures for Change

Pressures for Change	Predicted Consequence of Change to Landscape Feature	Degree of Pressure	Significance of Pressure to Landscape Character
<b>Recreational Pressures</b>			
Growth in visitor numbers	Increased traffic, parking problems, bridge and verge damage, footpath and bridleway erosion, off road vehicle/motorcycle/mountain bike damage, damage associated with other outdoor pursuits, disturbance to wildlife	Low	Low
	Increasing commercialism within villages, tourist related development, holiday homes, pressures to increase extent/number of camping/caravanning sites, potential pressure for large scale development	Low	Low
<b>Development Pressures</b>			
Infrastructure pressures	Telecom and mobile phone masts	Medium	Low
	Single wind turbines, overhead power and telephone lines	Low	Low
	Highway related changes, including road and bridge improvement, kerbing, parking controls, signage and lighting	Low	Low
	Increasing traffic	High	Medium
Development pressures generally	Reduction in tranquillity and solitude	Low	Low
	Loss of dark skies	Medium	Medium

Pressures for Change	Predicted Consequence of Change	Significance of Pressure to Landscape Character
Moves towards increase in native woodland cover, the reversal of fragmentation of existing woods through replanting, the creation of new woodlands and improved management of existing woodlands. Also increase in tree cover in non-wooded areas. (BAP, NYMMP, Peterken Report, England Forestry Strategy)	Increased deciduous woodland cover within forests would be a significant benefit to landscape character, providing diversity and reducing the impact of forestry on surrounding landscapes through improvement to forest edges and profiles. .	High
Move towards multi purpose forestry and more sensitive management of forested areas (BAP, NYMMP, Peterken Report, England Forestry Strategy)	Established plantations are not being increased in size and new plantations unlikely. Cropping offers opportunity for replacement with broadleaves or return to other habitats	High
Move towards general habitat improvement and reinstatement (BAP, English Nature, DEFRA etc)	Habitat improvement, diversification and reinstatement, providing adequate funding and incentives are available, leading to improved wildlife diversity.	High

■ Landscape Character Areas

(3a) Cropton

- Very extensive area of forested land forming part of the North Riding Forest Park. The forest overlies deltaic sandstones and mudstones to the west and softer oxford clay and Osgodby sandstone to the east.
- Sited on undulating upland rising to a high point at Brown Howe 267m, Wardle Rigg 262m and Leaf at 290m, and falling away towards the limestone escarpment in the south; the southern edge of the forest rising up the scarp slope and dropping away steeply into Newtondale and Rosedale to the west and east.
- Minor becks flow west into Rosedale and east into Newtondale; small waterfalls are a feature of a number of the becks. Occasional man made ditches occur in the central and southern parts of the forest. Elleron Lake, a man made feature, is situated at the base of the escarpment on the southern edge of the character area.

- Extensive areas of coniferous woodland, divided into a grid pattern by a network of forest rides, is often fringed by broadleaved trees including oak, birch and ash and interspersed by isolated pockets of ancient semi natural woodland within steeper areas. Scots pine are frequent. In some areas there is an abrupt geometric edge to the forest, particularly where it abuts moorland to the north.
- Pockets of grazing land, divided into a regular pattern of fields by wire fences, occur within the forest; the largest pocket being around the hamlet of Stape. A relatively dense pattern of farmsteads and occasional chapels interspersed by pockets of Scots pine and small pockets of upland heath and enclosed by forest create an unusual and distinctive character.
- The forest is crossed by a single minor road; other roads extend into the forest and stop. The Newtondale Forest Drive, a private road, allows views into Newtondale and the isolated Newtondale Halt on the North York Moors Railway below.
- Recreational provision within the forest includes a camping/caravan site, log cabins, outdoor centre, mountain bike, walking and horse trails, picnic areas and adventure playgrounds, although the facilities have only a very local influence.
- Cawthorn Camp Roman remains are located at the southern edge of the forest on the limestone escarpment -well presented earthworks reveal a camp and two forts situated side by side with panoramic views north across Cropton Forest to the moors beyond.
- Wooden pole electric lines and wire fences detract.

### **(3b) Langdale/ Harwood Dale**

- Three separate areas of intensively managed coniferous forest, generally overlying deltaic mudstone and sandstone with local variations including a large area of Osgodby sandstone at Langdale Forest, and the Cleveland Dyke, cutting through the Newton House Plantation.
- Sited within gradually rising upland areas on former moorland or moorland fringe areas, abutting open moorland, at general elevations of between 180 and 280m; the larger Langdale Forest extends to incorporate steep sided v-shaped valleys which are at 80m AOD in the valley bottom.
- The River Derwent and a number of its tributaries drain Langdale Forest, cutting deeply incised valleys. Minor becks flow through Newton House Plantation, cutting shallow valleys with waterfalls at the forest edge. Both man-made channels and minor becks drain the Harwood Dale Forest.
- Landcover is primarily coniferous forest planted in regular geometric blocks, separated by a grid iron pattern of unplanted rides and firebreaks, including large areas of recently felled or/and recently planted areas. Deciduous species have been planted in some fringe areas e.g. adjacent to roads. Mixed woodland (replanted ancient woodland) is present along Barns Cliff, adjacent to the River Derwent. Other small areas of replanted ancient woodland occur within the east of the Langdale Forest. In some areas there is an abrupt geometric edge to the forest.
- The forests are very inaccessible by public road, access to Langdale Forest being limited to Reasty Road in the far east of the forest; the A171 providing access through the north of the Harwood Dale Forest. There are no roads through Newton House Plantation.
- Apart from isolated properties at High Langdale End and Birch Hall, settlement is almost completely absent from the area.
- Sites of archaeological importance are dotted throughout Langdale and Harwood Dale Forest.

### (3c) Dalby Forest

- A large and diverse area of coniferous and deciduous forest, situated on the Tabular Hills and overlying Middle and Lower Calcareous Grit from the Corallian Group.
- Landform is typical of the Tabular Hills landscape; a gently graded plateau towards the north of the forest (at a maximum height of 240m) falls away towards the Vale of Pickering in the south. The plateau is deeply incised by river valleys with steep sides and occasional clifflines and by shallow dry valleys mainly orientated in a north east to south west direction. The forest extends down the edge of the north facing scarp with its irregular wavelike form, the top edge of which allows views across Langdale Forest to the north.
- The northern and western edges of the character area are bounded by deeply incised watercourses including Dalby Beck, Grain Beck and Crosscliffe Beck. The eastern edge of the area is bounded by a steep sided valley of Troutsdale, within the adjacent Hackness character area. The plateau itself is drained by minor becks that are steeply incised into the plateau edges and follow a winding dendritic pattern; surface drainage is largely absent on the plateau top.
- Two waterbodies are present; a small reservoir at Staindale Water (along the course of Grain Beck) and a waterbody of a similar size along the course of Crosscliffe Beck.
- The extensive forestry includes large area of recently felled and newly planted areas. The forest contains a diverse range of habitats, including sizable blocks and linear belts of deciduous woodland are present particularly within valleys and on steeper slopes. Species present include larch, Scots pine, birch, cherry, ash, rowan and oak. A small area of upland heath – Troutsdale Moor – is included to the east of the character area. Small areas of rough pasture and fen occur. In some areas there is an abrupt geometric edge to the forest.
- Areas of mainly replanted ancient woodland are present in linear belts to the edges of the character area, mainly associated with steeper valley side locations.
- Some areas of remnant farmland occur within openings in the forest. Fields of pasture are divided by both stone walls and fences.
- The public vehicular access to the forest is via Dalby Forest Drive, a toll road, with numerous car parking, picnic areas and other facilities for tourists located along its length, or via Ebberston. Tracks through the woodland, in a loose grid pattern, provide access for forestry vehicles.
- The small hamlet of Low Dalby is the main settlement in the area situated in a narrow opening in the forest in the valley of Dalby Beck. Other settlements are limited to very occasional isolated farms within the open areas.
- The forest is strongly focused on carefully designed recreational provision and has a manicured appearance in places; facilities include picnic areas, orienteering points, car parks, the visitor centre and shop at Low Dalby, an astronomical centre and observatory and footpaths/ habitat trails. Adderstone Field adjacent to the Forest Drive is used for the staging of open air events and concerts. Motor rallies are also held in the forest.

### 3(d) Wykeham Forest

- A large area of mainly coniferous forest situated on the Tabular Hills and overlying Middle and Lower Calcareous Grit from the Corallian Group.
- Landform is typical of the Tabular Hills landscape; a gently graded plateau towards the north of the forest (at a maximum height of 222m) falls away towards the Vale of Pickering in the south. The forest extends down the edge of the north facing scarp which projects into Troutsdale and the Hackness valley; the top edge of the scarp at Highwood Brow allows views across the Hackness valley area and Langdale Forest to the north.

- The western, northern and eastern edges of the area are bounded by the steep sided valleys of Troutsdale and Hackness, within the adjacent character area. The plateau itself is drained by minor becks that are steeply incised into the plateau edges; surface drainage is largely absent on the plateau top. Two ponds are present in the Brompton Moor area.
- The forest of pine and other conifers planted in regular blocks in a grid pattern includes areas of recently felled and newly planted areas. An area of mixed plantation is present together with sizable blocks and linear belts of deciduous woodland (including areas of mainly replanted ancient woodland) located mainly within the valleys and on the steeper slopes. In some areas there is an abrupt geometric edge to the forest.
- The forest includes a tree nursery and is a centre for research into alternatives to clear felling. The nurseries feature strongly in the landscape; large cleared areas support regular lines of young trees separated by straight lines of hedging which act as shelterbelts.
- There are a large number of nationally important archaeological sites within the forest including burial mounds and other earthworks, mostly thought to be of Bronze and Iron Age origin.
- A few isolated houses occur towards the edges of the character area amongst small areas of remnant farmland.
- Minor roads access the western part of the forest; the eastern part is less accessible. A network of forest tracks form a rough grid pattern throughout the area and a number of footpaths access the forest.