

Bassetlaw Landscape Character Assessment
Idle Lowlands: IL PZ 11

Idle Lowlands

Policy Zone 11: Harworth

POLICY: CREATE

Character Summary

The area wraps around Harworth and Bircotes in the north and extends towards Blyth in the south and the A60 in the west. The River Ryton forms the eastern, and part of the southern, boundary. Both the A1[M] and the A614 transect the Policy Zone, numerous minor roads also cross the area throughout. The A631 partially borders the north of the area and the A634 runs along the south adjacent to the Ryton corridor. Styrrup is located in the west, there are a small number of dwellings fronting the A614 and farmsteads are apparent across the Policy Zone.

Landform is predominantly rounded and gently undulating with flatter areas in the north. Open views towards higher ground and wooded skylines are given in the north and west, becoming more restricted further south due to tree and hedgerow cover.

Arable and mixed farmland extends across the northern section of the Policy Zone while coal extraction [Harworth Colliery] dominates the central and southern area, though there is some arable farmland to the east and west of the colliery site. Evidence of small mineral workings is also apparent in the north. There is a sewage works in the north-west and also a redundant railway nearby.

Coniferous and deciduous woodland blocks are generally small scale and include Droversdale Wood [SINC] in the north. More substantial woodland blocks are evident in the west. Coniferous planting is more prominent across spoil heaps located at the centre of the Policy Zone. Hawthorn hedgerows provide field boundaries and are dominant alongside roads running through the area.

Idle Lowlands – Policy Zone 11: Harworth

PHOTOGRAPH



CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES

- Harworth Colliery [abandoned], other smaller mineral workings, associated spoil tips some of which have been reclaimed.
- A landscape fragmented by roads.
- Pockets of arable and mixed farmland.
- Small scale deciduous and coniferous woodland blocks and belts [including SINCs], coniferous planting across reclaimed spoil tips.
- Styrrup Quarry [SSSI].
- Non-vernacular housing dominant.

LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS

Condition

The landscape condition is very poor. The pattern of elements is described as incoherent as there are many detracting features; industrial and commercial land uses, evidence of mineral extraction [spoil heaps], busy roads including the A1 and A614. Overall the Policy Zone is **significantly interrupted visually**.

Essentially, land use combines intensive arable pockets with former coal mining, including the recently abandoned Harworth Colliery, evidenced in several spoil tips which remain dominant across the landscape, although some have been reclaimed and are now planted with coniferous species. Settlement also forms a significant part of the Policy Zone and is largely modern and quite uncharacteristic of the region, though the small village of Styrrup retains its traditional form and character. Both Harworth and Bircotes have developed adjacent to the colliery site creating a sizeable urban area of non-vernacular housing. Vernacular buildings are generally limited; there are a few red brick farmhouses and cottages, however these get somewhat lost among the colliery buildings and industrial sheds, and the unsympathetic development at Harworth and Bircotes. The cultural integrity is considered **poor**.

Ecological designations comprise five SINCs which include Blyth Wood [remnant ancient woodland] and a SSSI; Styrrup Quarry. Vegetation includes isolated blocks and belts of deciduous woodland throughout the area and notably along roadsides and adjacent to settlement, however the Policy Zone generally affords low tree cover. Field boundaries consist of gappy hedgerows and ditches, with fences around grazed and pastoral compartments. The ecological integrity is **moderate** which overall gives a **weak** habitat for wildlife/functional integrity. A **visually significantly interrupted** area combined with a **weak** functional integrity results in a **very poor landscape condition** overall.

Sensitivity

Features which give the area local distinctiveness are **indistinct** of the Idle Lowlands region and the continuity/time depth is **historic** [post 1600] giving a **weak** sense of place.

Landform is assessed as **apparent** and the visibility **moderate**. A **weak** sense of place combined with **moderate** visibility results in **low landscape sensitivity** overall.

LANDSCAPE ACTIONS

Create

Landscape Features

- **Create** new hedgerows and restore existing, seek opportunities to restore historic field pattern where feasible, contain new development within historic boundaries.
- Seek opportunities to restore arable land to pasture.
- Enhance tree cover and landscape planting generally to **create** increased visual unity and habitat across the Policy Zone, in particular along transport corridors.
- Conserve the ecological diversity, biodiversity and setting of Styrrup Quarry [SSSI] and other designated SINCs.

Built Features

- **Create** small scale woodland to contain and soften existing built development, particularly at Harworth and Bircotes.
- Conserve what remains of the rural landscape by concentrating new small scale development around Harworth and Bircotes.
- **Create** new development which reflects the local brick built vernacular.
- Sensitive design and siting of new agricultural buildings.

CONTEXT

Policy Zone: IL PZ 11

Land Cover Parcel[s]: IL36, IL38, IL40, IL41, IL42

Condition

Good	REINFORCE	CONSERVE & REINFORCE	CONSERVE
Moderate	CREATE & REINFORCE	CONSERVE & CREATE	CONSERVE & RESTORE
Poor	CREATE	RESTORE & CREATE	RESTORE

Low

Moderate

High

Sensitivity

SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS

Condition

Very Poor

Pattern of Elements: Incoherent

Detracting Features: Many

Visual Unity: Significantly Interrupted

Ecological Integrity: Moderate

Cultural Integrity: Poor

Functional Integrity: Weak

Sensitivity

Low

Distinctiveness: Indistinct

Continuity: Historic

Sense of Place: Weak

Landform: Apparent

Extent of Tree Cover: Intermittent

Visibility: Moderate