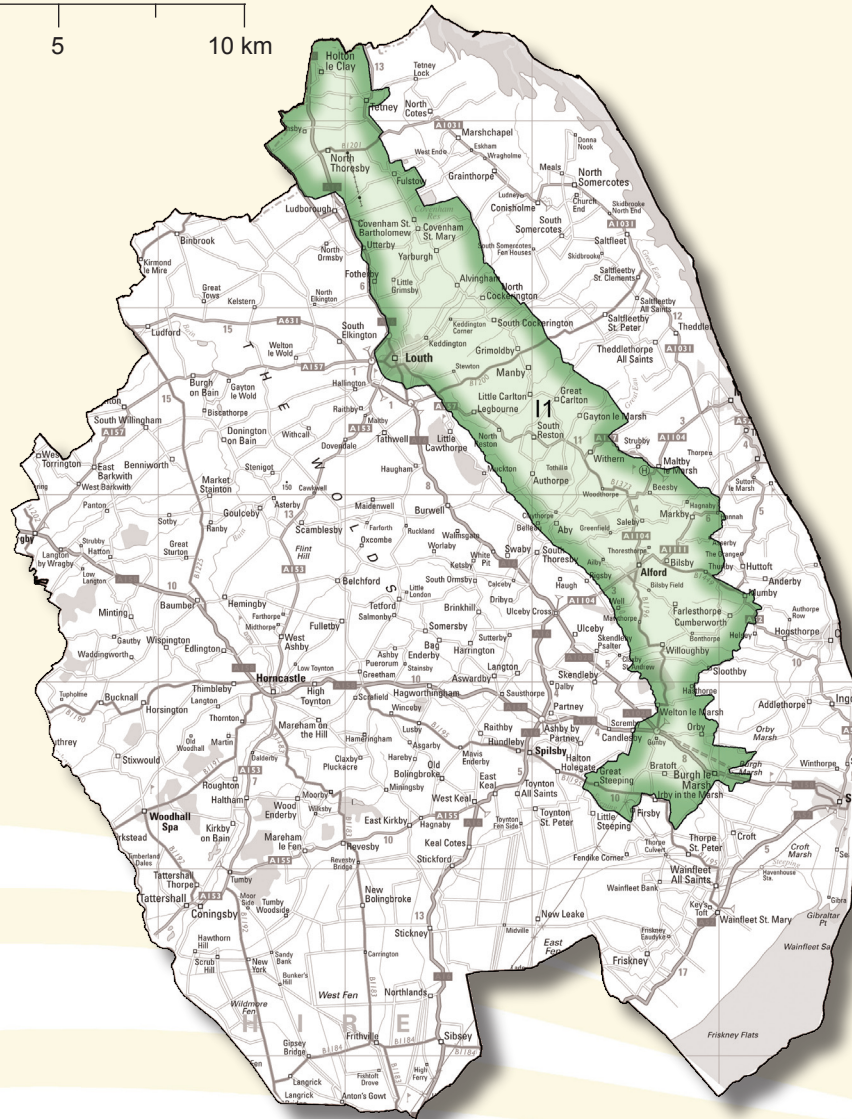


I1 Holton le Clay to Great Steeping Middle Marsh

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Key Characteristics

- Gently undulating foothills to the Wolds rising from *Tetney Lock to Skegness Coastal Outmarsh* with views to *Binbrook to Tetford Wolds Farmland* and *Little Cawthorpe to Skendleby Wolds Farmland*.
- Predominantly arable farmland with medium to large scale fields, some pasture with grazing sheep and cattle, bounded by ditches and dykes.
- Meandering rivers and streams, and the Louth Canal contained by flood embankments, which flow from the Wolds eastwards to the coast.
- Scattered blocks of mixed deciduous woodland throughout but more frequent around the south western boundary.
- Frequent scattered villages, hamlets, farmsteads and dwellings include a line of merging villages at the foot of the Wolds.
- Traditional and distinctive historic market towns of Louth, Alford and Burgh le Marsh.
- Scattered scheduled monuments and heritage features such as windmills and water mills, ridge and furrow fields, deserted medieval villages and disused railway tracks.
- A distinctive and tranquil rural landscape with very few minor detractors.

I1 Holton le Clay to Great Steeping Middle Marsh

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Landscape Character Description

Holton le Clay to Great Steeping Middle Marsh lies between *Tetney Lock to Skegness Coastal Outmarsh* and both *Binbrook to Tetford Wolds Farmland* and *Little Cawthorpe to Skendleby Wolds Farmland* in the east. It extends from the North East Lincolnshire District boundary in the north down to the Great Steeping River in the south.

The area is underlain by Cretaceous chalk with a strip of Cretaceous sandstone near Louth, and some Jurassic mudstone at the south western tip of the area. This in turn is overlain by glacial till with pockets of glacial sands and gravels, river alluviums in the river valleys and some small areas of peat.

The low lying landform has subtle variations. In some locations it is flat and in others it is very gently undulating. It rises gradually to the west forming the foothills to the Wolds. It has partially enclosed settlements sheltered by trees, woodland blocks, hedge lines and landform, but is more open in many other parts. Views are mostly uncluttered and include those to the Wolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and to wind farms at Conisholme and offshore from Skegness.

This is a strongly rural landscape with many small historic villages and a patchwork of arable and pastoral fields interwoven with rows of hedgerows and trees. The area lies partially within Areas of Great Landscape Value (AGLV) on the edge of the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB.

Water is a recurring element in the landscape, which is divided by several chalk streams and rivers including Waithe Beck, the Great Eau and the Long Eau meandering from the Wolds towards the sea. The wide Louth Canal was created as a canalised waterway and was a historic trade route link to former ports on the east coast in the late

I1 Holton le Clay to Great Steeping Middle Marsh



eighteenth century. All these watercourses are physically and visually contained by flood embankments which have private access tracks on top of them. These create key features within the landscape. A geometric pattern of dykes and ditches overlays the landscape in the middle and northern regions of the character area and contrasts with the more sinuous meandering rivers. This pattern is emphasised by the raised minor road network and in some places by hedgerows and older telegraph poles and wires. This pattern alters in southern parts of the area around Burgh le Marsh where it becomes more irregular and winding.

Land use throughout the area is predominantly devoted to arable agriculture. Crops include wheat but also barley and legumes, which are grown in medium to large scale fields. Smaller often irregularly shaped fields of pasture with grazing cattle, horses and sheep are scattered throughout but are more commonly found around settlements and alongside waterways.

Blocks of woodland are scattered throughout, but woodland and hedgerows are more frequent in the south west where there is a transition into the more wooded *Little Cawthorpe to Skendleby Wolds Farmland*. Some of these are ancient and semi natural woodland, and some are ancient replanted woodland. A few small woodland plots are designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest. Occasional rows of poplars form strong architectural and vertical elements in the landscape. Some stretches of the chalk streams have associated riparian trees and vegetation, but most waterside embankments are covered with closely mown grass. Most villages are set within a rich and varied mix of mature ornamental trees which often include horse chestnuts.

I1 Holton le Clay to Great Steeping Middle Marsh



Settlement is spread across several market towns in the area. The important historic market town of Louth is set in a valley on the eastern edge of the Lincolnshire Wolds and on the western edge of *Holton le Clay to Great Steeping Middle Marsh* and is located on the ancient Barton Street where it crossed the River Lud. It is a busy Georgian market town renowned for its numerous independent shops and was historically the administrative and trading centre of both the marshes and the Wolds. It has an intact historical core and distinctive modern urban outskirts with mixed land uses, including a bypass and industrial estates to the north. The smaller traditional market towns at Alford and Burgh le Marsh are also historic and distinctive with many heritage buildings and features. In between are many small nucleated and linear villages, with a distinct north to south line of linear villages extending from Fulstow to Manby on a slightly raised and irregular ridge. Farmsteads and dwellings are scattered throughout the area. There is a mix of architectural styles, ages and materials, but the notable traditional materials are red brick and pantile roofs, and plaster or brick painted in light colours. There are also some yellow brick building materials and slate roofs found towards the south-eastern edge of the Wolds.

The area is rich in heritage features including deserted medieval villages, remnant ridge and furrow fields, and old churches and redbrick chapels. Other heritage features include old windmills and water mills, historic halls and parkland landscapes such as at Gunby Hall and Well Hall. More recent reminders of twentieth century events are disused WWII airfields and pill boxes. In addition, there are frequent smaller scale references to the past found in traditional black and white road signs, small traditional timber and metal stock enclosures in field corners, and small red brick field sheds. Numerous lines of leaning telegraph poles indicate the soft subsiding nature of the marshy ground beneath. A small section of a disused railway has been reinstated as a tourist attraction, the Lincolnshire Wolds Railway, which is a reminder of the presence and importance of railways in the past.

I1 Holton le Clay to Great Steeping Middle Marsh



Towns and villages are linked by a good network of minor roads that generally run from the Wolds towards the east coast with links across between them. There are several principal routes including the A16 road in the north and the A1028 road in the south. Neat mown verges particularly around settlements are a distinctive feature as they are across East Lindsey as a whole. A small number of local public rights of way link settlements and cut across fields. This area has a unique and strongly rural character with many heritage features.

Landscape Forces For Change

- Development of infrastructure such as the A158 bypass around Burgh le Marsh and A16 around Louth.
- Commercial and industrial developments on the outskirts of Louth.
- Intensification of farming practices and farm amalgamation resulting in increased field sizes, loss of hedgerows, trees and field stock enclosures, and conversion of pasture to arable land.
- Wind farms at Conisholme and in the adjacent *Tetney Lock to Skegness Coastal Outmarsh* character area.
- New housing within and around existing settlements particularly bungalows.
- Countryside and Environmental Stewardship Schemes, affecting the vegetation and appearance of hedgerows, field edges and ditches through changed farming and management practices.



Landscape Sensitivity

Holton le Clay to Great Steeping Middle Marsh is a very distinctive and very intact rural landscape with very few detracting features. The gently undulating landform, woodland and mature trees in shelter belts provide a moderate degree of enclosure. These features may help to screen future changes in the landscape. There are a small number of sensitive viewers and several less sensitive viewers passing through the area, within the AGLV, and in the adjacent Wolds AONB to the west. There is some potential for reducing landscape and visual impacts as described below.

Any development should be sympathetic to the scale, pattern and rural character of the area, taking into account the small scale of existing developments, the uncluttered views, and the distinctive patterns of hedgerows, trees, woodland and shelter belts. The distinctive heritage features including the architecture and materials used in the small traditional rural hamlets and towns should also be used to inform design. Positioning of any future developments should use the existing screening elements, which are characteristic to the area and their location should be concentrated around existing settlements to prevent any further loss of the rural landscape.

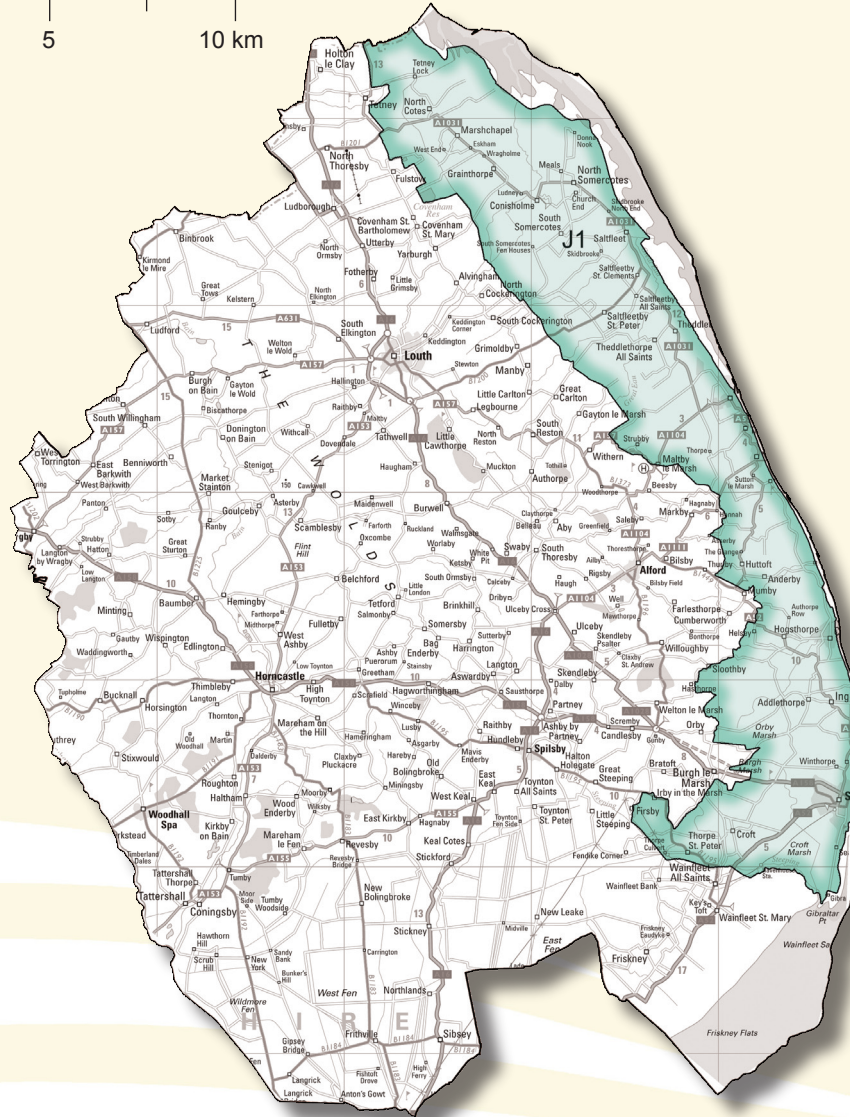
The overall landscape character sensitivities of the adjacent character areas should also be taken into account when deciding upon the appropriateness of development within this landscape character area as well as the potential effects on tranquillity and dark night skies.

The overall landscape character sensitivity of *Holton le Clay to Great Steeping Middle Marsh* is considered to be **moderate to high**.

J1 Tetney Lock to Skegness Coastal Outmarsh

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Key Characteristics

- A low lying, drained coastal plain contained to the east by sea embankments, sand dunes and sea defences.
- Mostly flat with some areas of gentle undulations including some saltern mounds.
- Some wide open views and big skies. Some views enclosed by landform, embankments, sand dunes or trees.
- Extensive network of drains, ditches and dykes with a strong geometric pattern in the northern and central parts of the area.
- Rivers and the historic Louth Canal cross from the Lincolnshire Wolds in the west towards the coast.
- Predominantly mixed agricultural landuse with both arable and pasture, and some remnants of ridge and furrow.
- Several important coastal nature reserves with a high level of nature conservation designation with associated wildlife.
- Sparsely scattered settlements set within mature ornamental trees and hedgerows.
- A stretch of coastal resorts from Mablethorpe to Skegness with caravan parks, and new residential and commercial developments on their outskirts.
- An extensive network of raised minor roads with a few larger A roads serving the coastal resorts.
- A predominantly intact and distinctive rural landscape with some man-made influences including a gas terminal, an oil storage facility and several wind farms.

J1 Tetney Lock to Skegness Coastal Outmarsh

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Landscape Character Description

Tetney Lock to Skegness Coastal Outmarsh runs down the eastern side of East Lindsey District forming the hinterland of *Donna Nook to Gibraltar Point Naturalistic Coast*. It extends from the North Lincolnshire District boundary in the north down to the Great Steeping River in the south and across to *Holton le Clay to Great Steeping Middle Marsh* in the west.

This area is underlain by Cretaceous chalk with some bands of Cretaceous mudstone and some clay and limestone at the southernmost tip. This is in turn overlain by glacial, marine and estuary deposits of sands, gravels, silts, clays and windblown sands which form the dunes. A very narrow strip of older storm beach deposits of silt and very fine sand underlie the A52 from Skegness to Wainfleet All Saints. There are also some areas of saltern mounds.

This is a mainly flat and drained agricultural coastal plain. There are some very gentle undulations including an area of salterns stretching from Tetney Lock to Grainthorpe and also in the area around Croft in the south. There are localised ridges of sand dunes where the area borders *Donna Nook to Gibraltar Point Naturalistic Coast*. Some views are open and expansive with big skies that meet level horizons. Others are more enclosed by landform, embankments, sand dunes, sea defences and trees associated with settlements or shelter belts around built elements. Views include those to the Wolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and to wind farms at Conisholme and offshore from Skegness.

This is a mostly simple and rural landscape with intensive agricultural fields. There are more urban influences around the busy traditional seaside resorts of Skegness, Ingoldmells, Sutton on Sea and Mablethorpe in the southern part of the area.

J1 Tetney Lock to Skegness Coastal Outmarsh



The area is divided by the Great Eau and Long Eau rivers and the Waithe Beck meandering from west to east to tidal estuaries at the coast, along with the straighter Louth Canal. All these waterways are enclosed by grassed embankments which form strong features within the landscape and mask views to the waterways. The extensive drainage system dominates the landscape. Associated with this are several pumping stations. There is a predominantly straight and rectilinear pattern of raised roads and dykes in the northern and middle parts of this character area. This pattern is emphasised by rows of telegraph poles and wires. It becomes more irregular and winding in the southern part of the character area.

With the exception of the coastal strip between Mablethorpe and Skegness, the land use is mainly intensive arable farming with crops of oil seed rape, wheat, barley, legumes and brassicas. Some pasture is found around villages and along watercourses, often in smaller fields with hedges. Several fields with medieval ridge and furrow are scattered throughout the area. There has been some farm diversification which includes several plant nurseries, fishing lakes, and small caravan and chalet parks. Nature reserves are also a feature of the landscape outside of the coastal resorts, and are found in the coastal sand dunes and grazing saltmarshes adjacent to *Donna Nook to Gibraltar Point Naturalistic Coast*.

Mature trees are mainly found as shelter and amenity planting in and around settlements, farmsteads and dwellings. There is limited woodland, and hedgerow cover is also sparse. There are some intact hedgerows, particularly around the smaller scale fields of pasture associated with settlements, and also alongside trees around fishing ponds. An atypical woodland of pine trees is found near North Somercotes which is reported to have been planted for use as pit props but they were never harvested.

J1 Tetney Lock to Skegness Coastal Outmarsh



Sand dunes and some sea embankments have been colonised by marram grasses, with pines, sea buckthorn, elder and dog rose, in places. There is a rich and diverse flora of wildflowers amongst the grasslands of the Saltfleetby to Theddlethorpe sand dunes. These sand dunes and Gibraltar Point are both National Nature Reserves. The diversity of these wildlife habitats is maintained by mowing, grazing and scrub management. There are also some wetland reed bed systems at the old 'borrow pits' around Anderby Creek and the distinctive Tetney Blow Wells Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust nature reserve near Tetney which are all Sites of Special Scientific Interest. Most dykes are kept clear but associated wetland vegetation survives in some smaller ditches.

Settlement throughout most of the landscape character area is sparse with widely scattered isolated farmsteads and dwellings. Some lines of older linear and nucleated settlements are associated with the A1031 and some with roads linking to the Wolds. Dwellings include a mix of ages, styles and materials with traditional red brick, pantile roofs and white painted plaster being particularly distinctive. Stone church towers stand tall in tree sheltered villages and are a common landmark feature. Some have distinctive leaning towers and several churches are located outside of existing settlements.

The coastal resorts have been developed from earlier villages since Victorian times. Mablethorpe, Ingoldmells and Skegness include large scale modern stark caravan parks, leisure developments, retail parks, light industry and new housing estates on their outskirts, which detract from an otherwise rural landscape.

There are many historic references in the area. Those which are particularly visible in the landscape include saltern mounds, church towers, mud and stud buildings at North Somercotes, medieval ridge and furrows, Gayton Engine Pumping Station, old red brick field sheds,

J1 Tetney Lock to Skegness Coastal Outmarsh



gun emplacements and pill boxes from WWII, medieval moated sites, relict sea banks, windmills, and black and white striped traditional road signage. North Coates airfield is a reminder of the strong association of Lincolnshire and East Lindsey with the military activities of the RAF since the early twentieth century. The Roman Bank and water filled sea bank 'borrow pits' are also a lost reminder of past inundations from the sea where the clay dug from the pits was used to repair the sea banks.

The coastal resorts are well connected to Louth, Horncastle and Boston and beyond by the A158, A1104, A1111 and A52 roads. The A1031 runs from Grimsby in the north to Mablethorpe in the south, just inland from the coast connecting many villages which lie along it. Elsewhere there are many raised minor roads which generally run from the Wolds towards the east coast with links across between them. Neat mown roadside verges, particularly around settlements, are a distinctive feature as they are across the whole of East Lindsey. The number of public rights of way is limited and intermittent and many local public footpaths only link to local settlements. There are a few longer routes which run through the nature reserves along the coast.

Other more industrial man-made features in this coastal area include the wind turbines at Conisholme, Tetney oil storage tanks and the Theddlethorpe gas terminal.

This is an intact rural landscape with a distinctive character created in part by the extensive pattern of drainage alongside other characteristic features.



Landscape Forces For Change

- Agricultural intensification and amalgamation of small farms has resulted in an increase in field sizes.
- The loss of ridge and furrow fields due to arable cultivation of traditional pasture land.
- Loss of field sheds and old farm buildings falling into disrepair.
- Increasing spread of the coastal resorts between Mablethorpe and Skegness including holiday homes, caravan parks, theme parks and light industry.
- Rural villages have suffered from sporadic and in some cases unsympathetic infill development, most notably modern bungalows.
- Wind farm developments at Conisholme and Trusthorpe and views to the offshore windfarm at Skegness.
- Countryside and Environmental Stewardship Schemes, affecting the vegetation and appearance of field edges and dykes through changed farming and management practices.
- Closure of local businesses leaving boarded up premises.
- Increase in the extent of nature conservation areas and changes in management regimes affecting both landcover and landuse such as the introduction of grazing cattle on the marsh at Gibraltar Point.
- A proposed new coastal country park near Anderby Creek.



Landscape Sensitivity

Tetney Lock to Skegness Coastal Outmarsh is mostly a very intact and distinctive rural landscape. However this distinctiveness is weaker where some man-made influences detract from the landscape. The enclosure varies from wide and open to a moderate level of enclosure created by very gently undulating landform and mature tree shelter belts. Existing tree shelter belts in the rural areas may help to create a moderate level of screening for future changes. The landscape around the coastal resorts is viewed by a large number of sensitive viewers but there are fewer viewers in the rural areas. There is some potential for reducing landscape and visual impacts as described below.

Development should be sensitively designed to respect the small scale localised distinctiveness within the rural areas and be sensitive to any small scale, patterns and characteristics of the area. These include the drainage network, historic features and the distinctive small villages with predominantly traditional building materials. Development within and on the edges of the coastal resorts should also take into consideration the historic features and distinctiveness of the surrounding countryside, possibly using tree and hedgerow planting as screening in keeping with the existing character. The location of new developments should take advantage of the existing screening provided by settlements, tree cover and hedgerows, and should be concentrated around existing settlements to prevent further loss of the rural landscape.

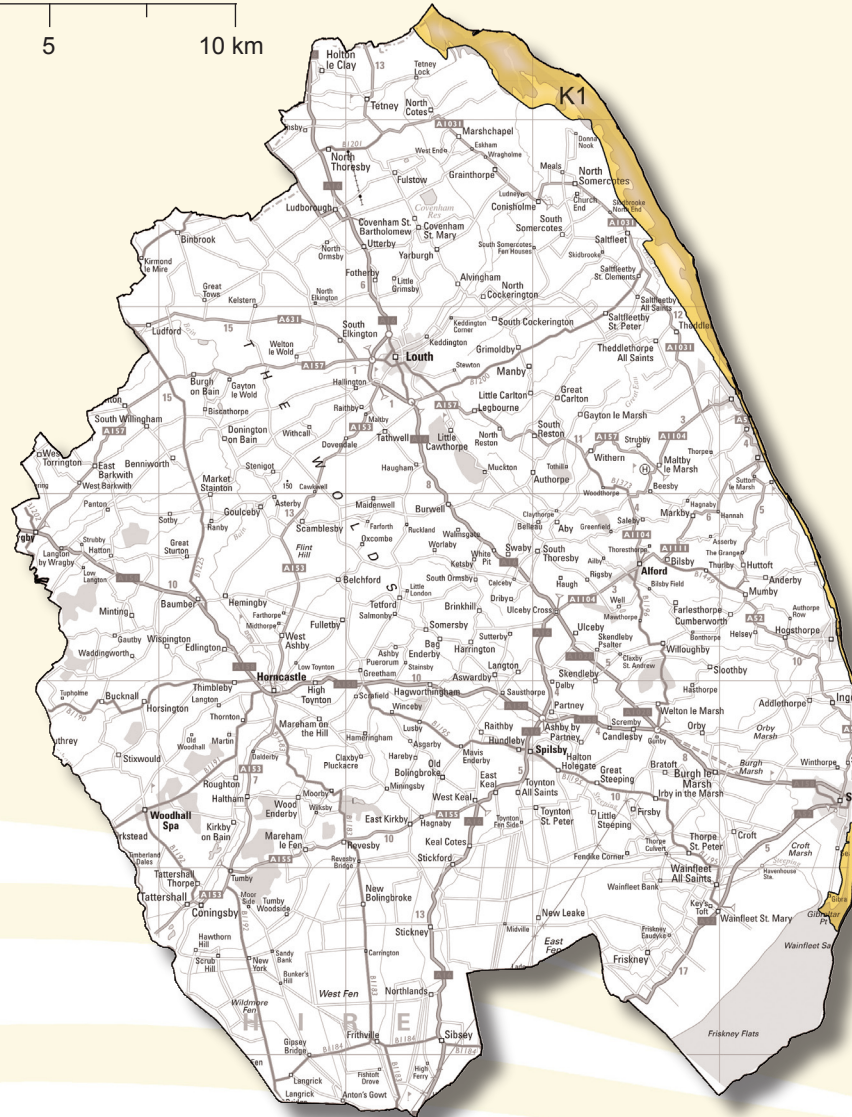
The overall landscape character sensitivities of the adjacent character areas should also be taken into account when deciding upon the appropriateness of development within this landscape character area as well as the potential effects on tranquillity and dark night skies.

The overall landscape character sensitivity of *Tetney Lock to Skegness Coastal Outmarsh* is considered to be **moderate to high** but lower in areas influenced by localised industrial and urban areas.

K1 Donna Nook to Gibraltar Point Naturalistic Coast

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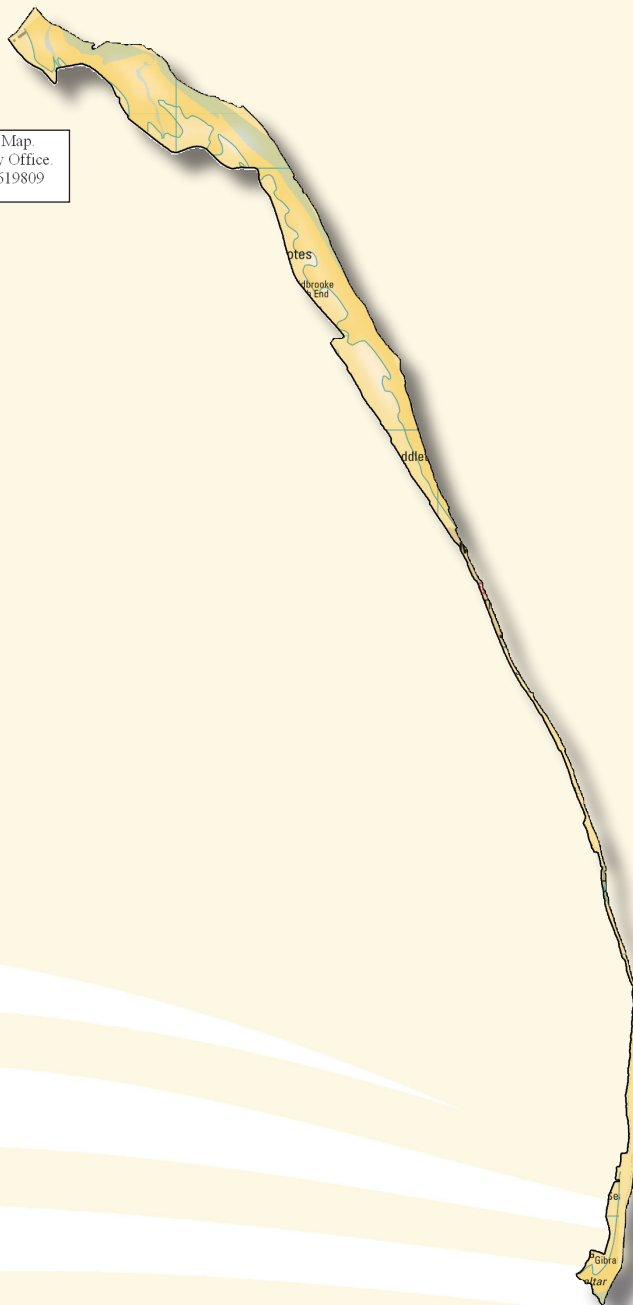
Key Characteristics

- Flat tidal strip with some stretches of long sandy beaches and mud flats with areas of saltmarsh.
- Wide open views with big skies which extend out to sea.
- Views influenced by and contained to the landward side in some areas by concrete promenades defending coastal sea resorts, and in other areas by vegetated sea banks or coastal sand dunes.
- Large areas used by the Ministry of Defence (MOD).
- Drains flowing onto the tidal marshes create intricate dendritic patterns emphasised by the saltmarsh vegetation.
- Mosaic of coastal, dune, mudflat and saltmarsh vegetation.
- No settlements but occasional small scale built structures in MOD designated Danger Areas.
- Protected by international, national and local nature conservation designations.
- Remote and tranquil for the most part, but less tranquil adjacent to coastal resorts and designated MOD Danger Areas.
- A very distinctive and mostly unspoilt natural landscape with very few detractors.

K1 Donna Nook to Gibraltar Point Naturalistic Coast

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Landscape Character Description

Donna Nook to Gibraltar Point Naturalistic Coast lies in the narrow strip of tidal coast between the North Sea and *Tetney Lock to Skegness Coastal Outmarsh*. The area stretches from Tetney High Sands, just south of Cleethorpes to Gibraltar Point just north of the Wash.

This area is underlain by Cretaceous chalk which in turn is overlain by differentiated glacial, marine and estuary deposits of sands, gravels, silts and clays. In the north the shallow seaward gradient has led to accretion of fluvial and marine deposits forming a wide strip of saltmarsh, mud flats and sand flats between the land and the sea, backed by old storm sand dune systems. Further south the coastline is subject to erosion, and beach nourishment is used to maintain the narrow sandy beaches found between Mablethorpe and Skegness.

This tidal landscape is flat, open and vast with big skies and views that extend out to sea. These ever changing views are dependant upon the tides and the weather. Views inland are enclosed by sand dunes and man-made sea defences in the form of sea banks and concrete embankments alongside the coastal resorts.

This is a simple, peaceful and remote landscape, made up of natural coastal saltmarsh, mud flats and sand banks with long sandy beaches. At the southern-most tip is Gibraltar Point which has sand dunes and saltmarsh with freshwater and saltwater lakes and marshes.

Saltmarsh vegetation creates a mosaic in the mudflats of different herbaceous species including the distinctive samphire beds, sea lavender, plantains and various sedges and rushes that are interlaced with a dendritic pattern of winding creeks. Sand dunes and sea embankments have been colonised largely by marram grasses, but in other parts by scrub vegetation including sea buckthorn.

K1 Donna Nook to Gibraltar Point Naturalistic Coast



Herbaceous vegetation with a rich flora of wildflowers can also be found in the grasslands on the older sand dunes. This range of coastal habitats are particularly important for providing food for many resident and migrating wildfowl and wading birds. Seals also pup on the beaches from October to December and attract thousands of visitors. Many important sites along this coastline are protected by international, national and local nature conservation designations including Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas, and a Ramsar site. Three notable important national nature reserves are; Gibraltar Point, Saltfleetby and Theddlethorpe Dunes and Donna Nook. A submerged oak forest near Anderby Creek is visible during very low tides.

The landscape is mostly natural, with some minor intrusions from occasional Ministry of Defence (MOD) structures including watch towers and warning signs in the MOD Danger Zone at Donna Nook. There are some strong urban influences near the coastal resorts including views to the large rollercoaster at Ingoldmells and to an offshore wind farm east of Skegness outside of the character area.

Visible heritage features include WWII pill boxes, gun emplacements, and anti-tank blocks, partially buried remains of boat and shipwrecks, causeways and havens, wooden stakes and a drowned forest visible in areas at exceptionally low tides.

There are no official rights of way or roads, resulting in a largely desolate naturalistic landscape, but people have general access to nature reserves and along the shoreline. In some areas the beaches and shoreline are used by occasional fishermen, dog walkers, nature lovers and horse riders. The beaches between Mablethorpe and Skegness are much busier with tourists during the summer season.

This is a distinctive naturalistic coastal landscape with a variety of views influenced by changing tides, light, and weather conditions.



Landscape Forces For Change

- Views to new tourist related developments in coastal resorts.
- Views to offshore wind farms near Skegness (outside of landscape character area).
- Coastal protection works against rising sea levels and tidal flooding by adding sand to beaches and past engineering works.
- Both accretion and erosion of the coast.
- Changing management practices at nature reserves, such as scrub clearance on sand dunes.
- Growth of beach sports such as sand yachting and motor cycling.
- New proposed coastal country park near Anderby Creek.



Landscape Sensitivity

Donna Nook to Gibraltar Point Naturalistic Coast is a highly distinctive and very intact natural landscape with very few detractors. It has a high level of nature conservation protection across large areas. It is a very open and exposed landscape, screened on its inland side only by the dunes and sea defences which separate it from *Tetney Lock to Skegness Coastal Outmarsh*. Therefore any future changes in this area would be highly visible. The landscape is highly valued by a moderate number of sensitive viewers in the nature conservation areas such as Gibraltar Point, Saltfleetby and Theddlethorpe Dunes and Donna Nook, and a high number of sensitive viewers near the busy coastal resorts. In general terms development would not be in keeping with the landscape character, and would not be considered to be appropriate for this area. Landscape and visual impacts could not be easily mitigated for.

Any development should be extremely sensitive to the naturalistic state of the landscape and also to the habitats and vegetation types that are unique to the area. Green architecture may be appropriate but only on a very small scale, and situated close to the existing screening elements of the sand dunes and sea defences.

The potential effects on tranquillity and dark night skies should also be taken into account when deciding upon the appropriateness of development within this landscape character area.

The overall landscape character sensitivity of *Donna Nook to Gibraltar Point Naturalistic Coast* is considered to be **high**.