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Lincolnshire Wolds Landscape Network

Archaeology, Community and Landscape

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LANDSCAPE DECISIONS

University of Kent

Landscape Archaeology

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Archaeology, Community and Landscape

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Cover image: Excavation in progress of a Roman site at Brookenby, directed by Steve Willis, Aug 2021 (photo by J Last)

Summary

The Lincolnshire Wolds Landscape Network was funded between 2020 and 2022 through the UKRI's Landscape Decisions Programme, which aims to aid decision-making about how we use our land for the benefit of society, individual well-being, the economy and the environment. The Network brought together different communities of interest in the Wolds, including academics, policy-makers, curators and community groups, to help build connections between archaeological, ecological and well-being approaches. Its overall aim is to deliver better and more integrated cultural and natural heritage management and associated public benefits in what is a significant but (in terms of the historic environment) relatively overlooked rural landscape.

This report is divided into three sections, covering the main objectives of the Network:

- to promote understanding of the historic environment by developing a research strategy and proposals for future work;
- to collate evidence to help understanding and appreciation of the interrelationships between the natural and historic environment;
- to understand the values attached to the Wolds landscape and heritage by communities and visitors, and their role in people's well-being.

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Archive location

Relevant data generated by the project will be deposited with the Historic England Archive.

Date of research

The Network discussions took place between Feb 2020 and Feb 2022. The original reports that are collected in a single volume here were completed in Jul 2022.

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Contents

The Network

The Lincolnshire Wolds Landscape Network (LWLN) was funded between 2020 and 2022 through the UKRI's Landscape Decisions Programme[1], which aims to aid decision-making about how we use our land for the benefit of society, individual well-being, the economy and the environment. The Network brought together different communities of interest in the Wolds, including academics, policy-makers, curators and community groups, to help build connections between archaeological, ecological and well-being approaches; the conversations that took place through the Network have provided much of the information in this report and informed the recommendations. The Network's overall aim is to deliver better and more integrated cultural and natural heritage management and associated public benefits in what is a significant but (in terms of the historic environment) relatively overlooked rural landscape.

The report addresses the objectives of the Network as follows:

- to promote understanding of the historic environment by developing a research strategy and proposals for future work

We suggest that while key components of the heritage of the Lincolnshire Wolds are well known, there is more work to be done if heritage is to be seen as an essential aspect of landscape decisions. This includes (a) explaining the historic environment's collective contribution over time to the distinctive character of the Wolds landscape at a variety of spatial scales; and (b) developing a more comprehensive narrative by improving understanding of less well-known or visible components and periods. The report therefore summarises current understanding of the cultural heritage resource in the Wolds and outlines research questions for individual periods from the Palaeolithic to the post-medieval, as well as across traditional periods. These could form the basis for designing future investigative research projects.

- to collate evidence to help understanding and appreciation of the interrelationships between the natural and historic environment.

Taking the European Landscape Convention definition of landscape as a starting point we outline the character of the Wolds and how the appearance of the landscape and its habitats have changed over historical time in relation to changing climates and human land-use. It seeks to emphasise both how these past landscape decisions can provide

[1] https://landscapedecisions.org/

lessons in relation to current and future landscape change, and the need to consider the potential impacts of these decisions on the physical condition and accessibility of the historic environment. Enhancement of both heritage and nature in the Wolds landscape will depend on the sectors successfully working together to identify synchronicities and opportunities for mutual benefit.

- to understand the values attached to the Wolds landscape and heritage by communities and visitors, and their role in people's well-being

We consider how people feel connections to the landscape and its history, the close links between cultural heritage and nature when it comes to well-being in the landscape, the role of arts projects and the importance of being active. The different communities with an interest in the Wolds landscape are discussed in terms of their varying perspectives and needs. What makes certain places in the Wolds special or valued is considered, along with the potential for conflicting opinions and changing values as a result of factors like the Covid-19 pandemic. Finally a range of different possible approaches to engagement is outlined, addressing both recent social history and deeper archaeological heritage. In particular the importance of walking as an active engagement with the landscape is highlighted, along with the potential for linking walks to heritage values.

Part 1: Archaeology

Introduction

Although the Lincolnshire Wolds are designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), reflecting the distinctive character of the landscape (a combination of its topography and land use history), archaeological research frameworks and strategies have generally not clearly demonstrated the contribution of the Wolds' archaeology to that distinctiveness, and compared to other protected landscapes, this heritage, though often well known and appreciated locally, has not been well synthesised and can appear undervalued. This has implications for the role of archaeological heritage in wider landscape decisions (see Part 2) and in the well-being of Wolds communities, including both visitors and residents (see Part 3). The Lincolnshire Wolds Landscape Network aims to promote understanding of the historic environment of the Wolds by developing a research strategy and proposals for future work, supporting the AONB management plan policy of working 'with a range of partners and community groups to encourage and support research projects that can help increase our knowledge of the Wolds' heritage' (Lincolnshire Wolds Countryside Service 2018, 60).

The main components of the cultural heritage resource in the Wolds are summarised in various places. The National Character Area description for the Lincolnshire Wolds describes 'a treasure trove of heritage' including 'many ancient burial sites', 'evidence of Roman occupation' and a 'high concentration of deserted medieval villages' and moated sites. Also mentioned is the way this area 'has inspired many artists, writers and poets including Tennyson' (Natural England 2015, 4). The AONB management plan (Lincolnshire Wolds Countryside Service 2018, 23-4) lists routeways, burial mounds and monuments, deserted or shrunken medieval villages and Roman villas and settlements as important archaeological contributions to the 'natural beauty' of the Wolds. The Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) for Lincolnshire states that the Lincolnshire Wolds are 'remarkable for the depth of history identifiable in the landscape' (Lord and MacIntosh 2011a, 27).

However, none of these documents explains how these (and other) elements of the historic environment have collectively contributed to the character of the Wolds landscape, past and present, or how we might use them as the basis of a narrative that is relevant to strategic landscape decisions. This is a terrain heavily shaped by the forces of nature, with a complex geological/glaciological bedrock and topography, but overlain by centuries of human influence. In essence, the heritage of the Wolds is embedded in the landscape

character we know today, but in highly structured ways, which are the result of choices made in the past.

Any research strategy for the historic landscape of the Wolds also needs to balance different perspectives on what is important: there is a need to both promote and 'dig deeper' into the assets we already know about and value, but also to reach a baseline understanding of the elements we know less about or which have been undervalued in the past.

Landscape and Scale

Landscape, as we are often reminded, is not itself a scale; rather it is an approach that looks at places of different scale in a holistic way. For the archaeology of the Wolds, we can usefully think about various levels of scale. The most obvious is the Wolds as a whole, not just the AONB but the wider National Character Area (NCA), covering 845 sq km, whose topography is described as 'characterised by a range of varied yet unified features' (Natural England 2015, 3), which seems like a helpful way of thinking about the Wolds' historic environment too.

The HLC report describes the present landscape of the Wolds as 'primarily the result of the enclosure of a largely typical open field farming regime'. While ancient enclosures are 'both more extensive than in the county as a whole, and more widespread' and there are 'many examples of well-preserved deserted or shrunken settlements', in much of the area 'previous rural landscapes are hidden beneath a current HLC type of "planned enclosure"'. Despite the removal of many field boundaries since the Second World War, much of that planned enclosure landscape is still identifiable in the morphology of the modern fields (Lord and MacIntosh 2011a, 26–7; Fig 1).

The next level down can be termed the 'character zone', and the HLC divides the Wolds into six of these, reflecting topographical variation across the area. Collectively they cover a slightly larger area than the NCA and range from around 100 to 300 sq km in size (Lord and MacIntosh 2011b, 32–44; Fig 2), though they are not all greatly different in terms of their visible historic character. The remnants of medieval open-field farming in the form of ridge-and-furrow earthworks, typically at the edge of settlements or within surviving landscape parks, are found in **Brocklesby Heath** (WOL1), the **Upper Wolds** (WOL3), the **Dry Valleys** (WOL4) (which lacks the landscape parks) and the **Spilsby Crescent** (WOL6), while elsewhere (the **Caistor Spring-Line** [WOL2] and **Western Wolds Foothills** [WOL5]) there is less direct evidence of the medieval farming landscape, though elements are legible in the settlement pattern and modern field boundaries. Aerial mapping evidence (which does not cover the northern halves of Brocklesby Heath and the Caistor

Spring-Line) suggests surviving ridge-and-furrow earthworks are most common in the southern part of the NCA (Fig 2).

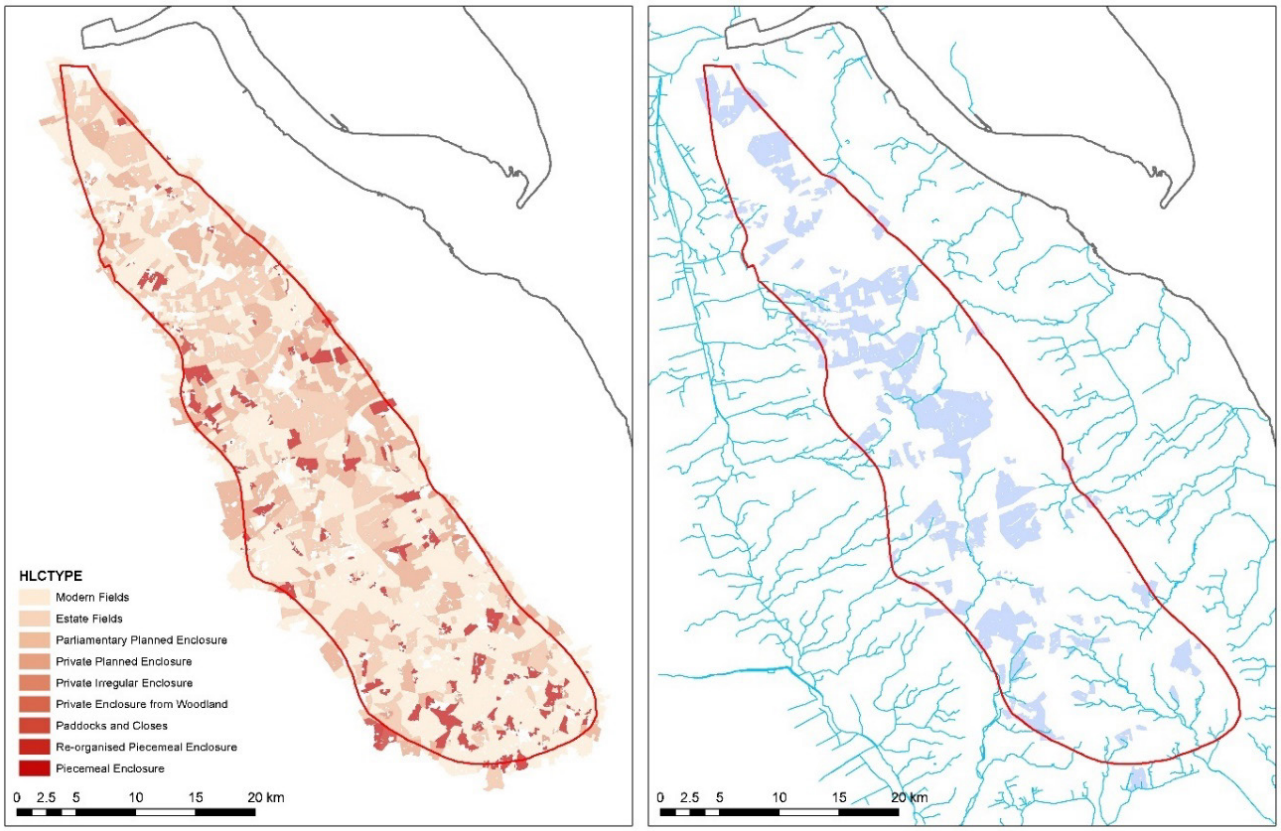

Figure 1: The Lincolnshire Wolds NCA showing HLC field types (darker colours indicate potentially older forms) (L) and areas of surviving Parliamentary enclosure (mauve) in relation to watercourses (R)

Earthwork sites of deserted medieval settlement are a notable feature of the Upper Wolds and Dry Valleys, while prehistoric barrows are found in these areas too, though in the latter 'they have little major landscape impact'. Meanwhile the Western Wolds Foothills are distinguished by the presence of significant Roman remains, especially at Horncastle.

A further level down is the local landscape, whether defined topographically (e.g. an individual valley) or culturally (a township), within which are nested particular places, sites or land parcels. Willis's (2019) study of the Waithe Valley and Hatcliffe Top is a case in point, the Waithe Beck running for some 17 km through the Wolds, while the Hatcliffe site as a whole covers about 1 sq km. In comparison, individual HLC polygons in the area range up to about 300 ha in size. A small-scale approach to the Wolds landscape helps capture its variety at a local level, which can be described in terms of changing vistas as you move around, never knowing quite what to expect around the next corner.

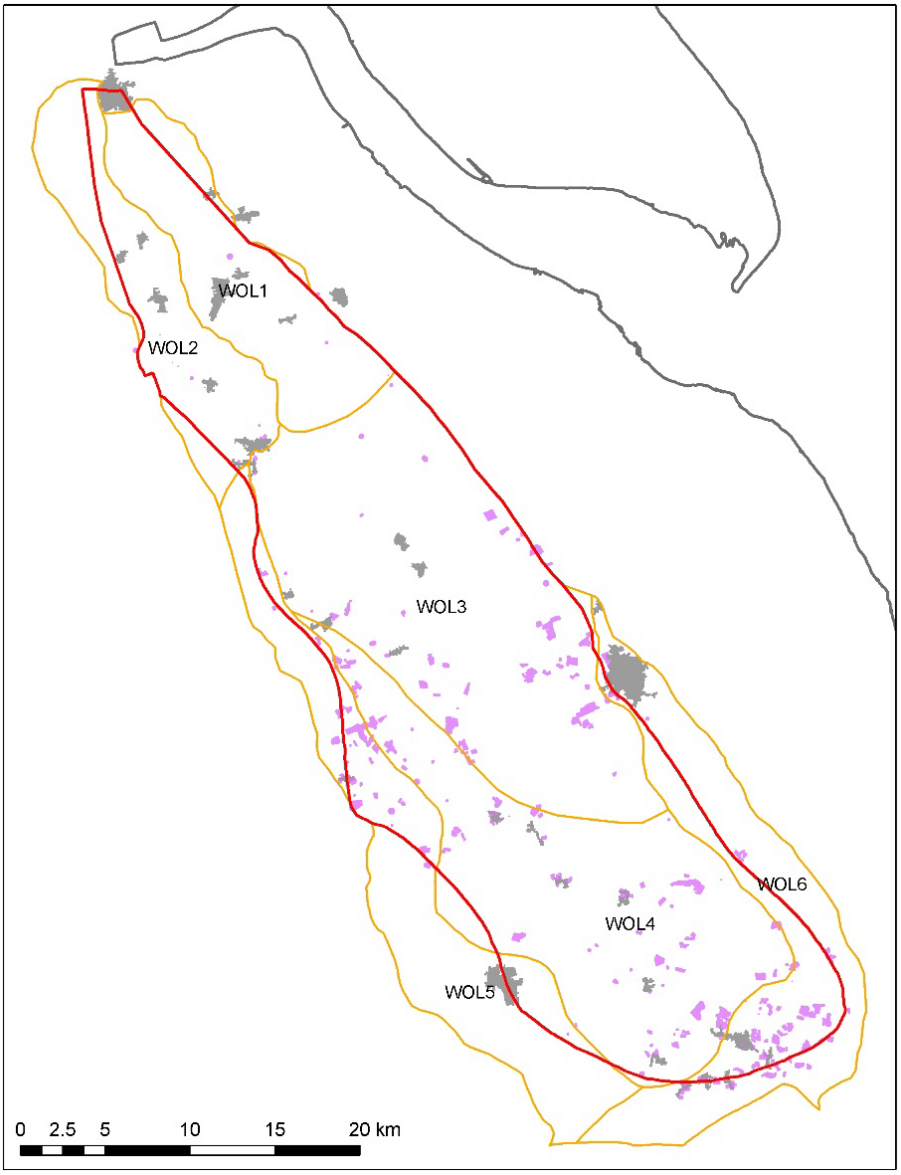

Figure 2: The Wolds NCA and HLC character zones (labelled) with built-up areas (grey) and earthwork ridge-and-furrow (mauve)

One way to link these different scales might be to think about how smaller places are connected within larger landscapes – the physical manifestations of those connections are the routes: roads, paths, rivers (or valleys); and the stuff that moved along them and is preserved archaeologically or within buildings. Such movement also had different scales, from local quotidian journeys between croft and field to the long-distance seasonal migrations of drovers and livestock. Can we use the records of more recent rural activities to imagine people's movements around the Wolds landscape over longer periods of time, and start to think about how these relate to the different scales at which landscape is perceived?

Above all this is the wider regional and national context. The distinctiveness of the Wolds can be set against that of other areas, whether they are topographically similar (notably the Yorkshire Wolds) or geographically proximate (such as the neighbouring Lincolnshire Marshes). The archaeology of these areas can shed light on connections with Wolds communities at different times. For example, certain features of the coastal marshes (e.g. medieval or earlier saltern mounds) indicate the kinds of resources that would have been exchanged with communities in the Wolds; while historically documented livestock movements between Wolds and marshland may have originated in much earlier periods. As the NCA profile puts it, 'the pastoral history of the area has historically been closely allied to the fortunes of the neighbouring marshes and fens' (Natural England 2015, 3). But the Wolds are a very different landscape and environment to the marshes and other surrounding areas, which has given rise to some contrasting agricultural practice and presented different options for cultural expression, as reflected in the presence and distribution of particular types of monument, for example.

On the other hand, similar landscapes can have very different historic character; the archaeological record of the Yorkshire Wolds, across the Humber, is a case in point, with Neolithic cursus monuments and large round barrows as opposed to long barrows and long enclosures, and an Iron Age/Roman landscape of square barrows and ladder settlements to which there is little comparable in the Lincolnshire Wolds. What this demonstrates is that while people have always taken advantage of the natural affordances of particular areas, archaeological character is not determined geologically or topographically but reflects deeply rooted cultural processes. Some landscape decisions may be determined by forces from beyond the region but others are local choices or responses.

Landscape questions:

- How has the geomorphological variability of the Wolds (compared to other chalk landscapes) influenced the distribution of activity in different periods, and its present-day visibility?
- How can we collaborate with similar landscapes elsewhere in sharing information and understanding?
- What is the appropriate scale for historic landscape research in the Wolds?

Archaeological Landscapes

Rather than describe the components of the Wolds' archaeological record (individual sites and monuments) in any detail, this document aims to summarise its broader landscape

character and contribution to the development of the historic landscape. However, the biasing effects of data availability or the uneven distribution of archaeological effort always needs to be borne in mind; twenty years ago Lane (2002) noted that survey projects had not covered large areas of the Wolds, and work since then has been limited in scale (e.g. Willis 2019, ch 3). Distribution 'hotspots' may therefore simply reflect places where research has been undertaken or where material is visible/accessible (see Daubney 2016, ch 3), but they nevertheless provide an indication of the potential of similar landscape settings and contexts across the Wolds. Conversely, blank areas may reflect a lack of available data; for example, aerial mapping of archaeological features in the northern Wolds has been restricted because of the existence of a major civil airport at Kirmington (Humberside), with National Mapping Programme coverage not extending to the north of the airport. Since much of the area is designated as an AONB, development-led archaeological fieldwork within the Wolds has been very limited.

The sections below draw on a variety of datasets, especially aerial mapping (NMP) data reported in Bewley (1998), supplemented by the National Heritage List for England (NLHE) and other Historic England research records, Portable Antiquities findspots, historic landscape characterisation and farmsteads data, as well as various reports referenced below. The maps collate this previous research in order to identify patterns across the landscape but are not intended to be a comprehensive record of every site.

Palaeolithic

To begin at the beginning. The well-known Palaeolithic finds from Welton-le-Wold may represent in effect a keyhole investigation of the Pleistocene landscape of the Wolds but are important in demonstrating not only how much the landscape has changed since the Lower and Middle Palaeolithic occupation of the Wolds (Robinson 2000) but also the significance of historic quarrying for revealing some of this ancient past. The links with more recent landscape history may be one way of helping people connect with a deep time that can be hard to grasp. Certainly the depositional sequence at Welton-le-Wold is complex, with artefacts that were already old redeposited in gravels laid down by a small braided river during a cold period in MIS 8/7 and then buried beneath a series of tills deposited during MIS 6 around 150,000 years ago (White et al 2016, 109).

Equally important are finds of handaxes and other worked flints that were retained in capture points closer to the present land surface, such as patches of glacial till filling hollows in the bedrock; these perhaps indicate the use of higher ground by early humans monitoring game movements. Several finds come from the Lymn valley in the southern Wolds, around Salmonby (Bee 2005). All such artefacts have added significance because

the Wolds are close to the northern limit of known Lower/Middle Palaeolithic human occupation in Britain. However, there can be difficulties in interpreting finds of this period, as indicated by the material from Pleistocene beach deposits revealed in old brick and gravel pits at Kirmington. A number of lithics from beach gravels were originally interpreted as Palaeolithic artefacts, but might instead be the result of natural wave action (Bridgland et al 2014, 282-4).

Palaeolithic questions:

- *How do we engage people with the long-term, large-scale changes that the Wolds landscape underwent through the 'deep time' of the Palaeolithic - linking stone tools and extinct species to topography?*
- *How can we collaborate with geologists to promote Quaternary geoheritage as part of the historic environment?*

Mesolithic and Neolithic

As an area with relatively abundant flint – albeit variably available and not of optimum quality for tool manufacture – both from the chalk and the till, the Wolds are important for understanding human occupation after the last Ice Age too. As yet, however, Mesolithic and Neolithic settlement or occupation patterns remain poorly understood, though 20th century surveys provide some clues. Chowne (1994) studied the Bain valley in the western Wolds and found Mesolithic sites at the heads of small valleys feeding the main river, while Neolithic/Early Bronze Age sites were clustered on a ridge of clay-with-flints. Phillips' (1994) survey transect from Claxby to Ludborough led her to suggest that while Neolithic activity was widespread, with a focus on the valleys, Mesolithic occupation was restricted to the western edge of the Wolds, where the lighter soils on the coversands may have had a less dense tree cover. Unlike some other areas there may therefore be a lack of continuity between the Mesolithic and Neolithic periods but this requires further work.

Further south, Mesolithic flint scatters are known from the Lymn valley around Tetford and Salmonby, and on the southern edge of the Wolds. On the other hand, the Brocklesby Survey found few lithics (Lane 2002). Meanwhile the distribution of Neolithic flint and stone axeheads shows two distinct clusters on the Wolds, around Thoresway and in the Lymn valley (although both may be a function of where researchers have concertedly looked); finds reported to the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) add a further cluster in the north-west around Barnetby-le-Wold. It is notable that almost half the axes lie within 500 m of a watercourse, yet only a quarter of the project area falls into this category (Fig 3).

Mesolithic questions:

- *Understanding patterns of occupation in the landscape – where are the lithic scatters?*

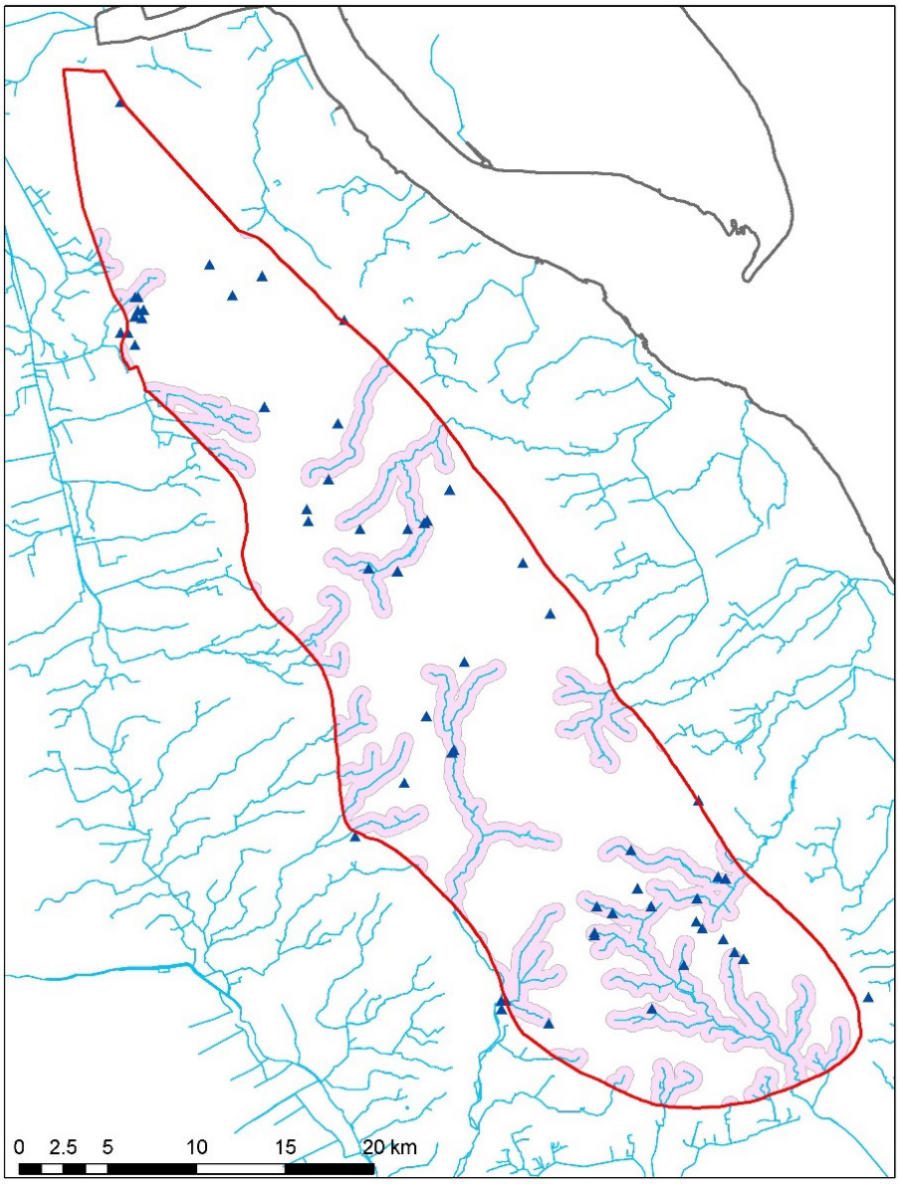

Figure 3: Flint and stone axe finds (triangles) in relation to watercourses (areas within 500m of a stream are shaded pink)

Neolithic long barrows and long enclosures are arguably the most distinctive feature of the Wolds' archaeology, and have been the subject of recent assessment (Drury and Cope-Faulkner 2019; Drury and Allen 2020). On a national scale, only the Wessex chalklands and the Cotswolds have a comparable density of long barrows to the Lincolnshire Wolds (Field 2006, fig 48). Jones (1998a) notes that 51 of 56 sites in Lincolnshire are on or at the

fringe of the Wolds. Wolds cropmark sites ‘show a marked clustering on the east, in the valleys of the Waithe Beck and the Great Eau, and in the south, in the valley of Fordington Bottoms, a tributary of the river Steeping. On the east and south also, and mostly from the same valleys’, are the surviving earthwork long barrows. Field (2006, 106) points out that the southern Wolds have steep-sided narrow valleys similar to those on the chalk of southern England, where long barrows are also common. The western Wolds have a smaller scatter of long enclosures along the heads of minor valleys but they seem to avoid the main Bain valley. There is limited evidence to suggest that the barrows were constructed in a landscape that was already fairly open (see Part 2).

Drury and Allen (2020, 126) note that ‘many of the long barrow sites are found on valley sides or at the head of valleys’, usually below the crest and frequently aligned along the contours. There is no close association with watercourses but they generally lie on or above the 75m contour, with the main exceptions around Calceby Beck (Fig 4). As Field (2006, 106) puts it in relation to the three groups of barrows at the southern end of the Wolds around Skendleby, ‘their position is intimately linked to the valley itself, beyond which they are invisible’. Elsewhere ‘several long barrows lie between palaeochannels, perhaps suggesting that they respect these features or were placed close to streams and spring lines’ (Drury and Allen 2020, 126). They are found as single examples, close pairs or groups of three within 100 m, and larger ‘groups’ of up to four within 900 m of each other (ibid., 130). This certainly suggests a more complex relationship between these monuments and the landscape than simply a reflection of Neolithic ‘territories’. The architecture of these monuments can also be seen as a representation of the local landscape, incorporating chalk, stones, soil, turf and timber into complex architectural structures, if the results from Giants Hills are anything to go by (Phillips 1935). They may also be associated with other types of structure, such as the palisade features found at Nettleton (Willis 2013).

The key outstanding question is how these comparatively visible sites relate to the more ephemeral evidence for settlement (lithic scatters) and other use of the landscape, practically or symbolically, reflected in artefacts like axes, as discussed above. We also need to remember that long barrows belong to the earlier part of the Neolithic while monuments of the later Neolithic (3rd millennium BC) are far less well represented in the Wolds, with a few exceptions such as the small henge preserved beneath a round barrow at West Ashby (Field et al 1985). Possibly other forms of ritual activity took place, such as the animal remains deposited into a stream at Partney (Atkins 2005). There may have been changes in preferred settlement locations during the period, with Phillips’ survey suggesting a greater use of plateau tops in the Late Neolithic and Early Bronze Age.

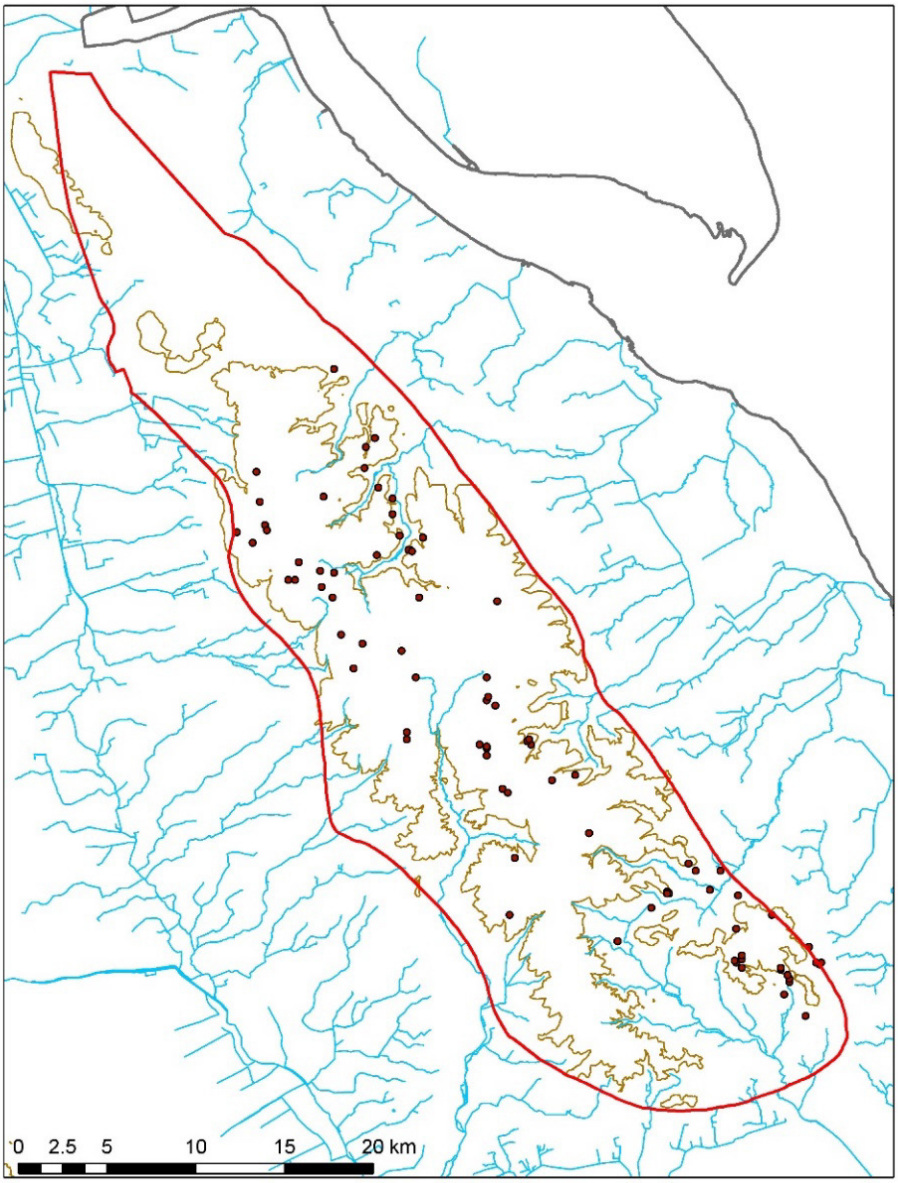

Figure 4: Long barrows and enclosures in relation to watercourses and the 75m contour. © Crown copyright and database right 2023. All rights reserved. Ordnance Survey licence number 100019088.

Neolithic questions:

- *Is the impression of widespread Early Neolithic clearance justified and does it relate to the high density of long barrows on the Wolds?*
- *How does the location of Neolithic monuments relate to features of the landscape?*
- *What other forms of monumentality are evident and what happened in the Late Neolithic?*

Early Bronze Age

Perhaps because they are less distinctive a feature of the Wolds compared to other regions and because few now survive as earthworks, the even more numerous Early Bronze Age round barrows have seen less investigation than the long barrows. In fact only around 25 of some 350 known sites are recorded as upstanding (Willis 2013, 9) and many barrows which lacked surrounding ditches may have disappeared entirely except for the graves (Field and Leahy 1993, 9). Settlement of this period is also difficult to recognise, with Early Bronze Age lithic assemblages usually hard to distinguish from the later Neolithic, while metalwork hoards are rare. Round barrows tend to be found in the same areas as long barrows but not directly adjacent (around 30% of long barrows and enclosures have a round barrow within 300 m, but over 90% have one within 1500 m); they are also spread more widely across the Wolds, with over 40% of round barrows more than 1500 m from a long barrow (Fig 5). A lot of the round barrows occur in linear arrangements on crests.

The potential of such sites in the wider region is clearly demonstrated by the recent high-status burial from Tetney golf club in the Lincolnshire Marshes which included a log coffin and a stone battle-axe. While we would not expect waterlogged preservation on the Wolds, it would be wrong to think of round barrows as simple monuments compared to those of the Neolithic. The few records of excavations on the Wolds show complex monuments with multiple phases. Coffins only survived as stains in the barrow at West Ashby, which contained various graves, including an inhumation with a Food Vessel and a cremation in a Collared Urn (Field et al 1985). A barrow at Salmonby recorded during destruction in the 1950s had a two-phase mound overlying a stone cairn which covered a platform holding a cremation burial (Phillips et al 1990). Identification of those with surviving mound material where the stratigraphy can be worked out ought to be a priority. As with the long barrows, lidar (where available) might help to identify sites we are not yet aware of.

Early Bronze Age questions:

- *How can we raise the profile of round barrows in the Wolds, their patterning and potential, alongside the long barrows?*
- *How does the location of round barrows relate to features of the landscape?*

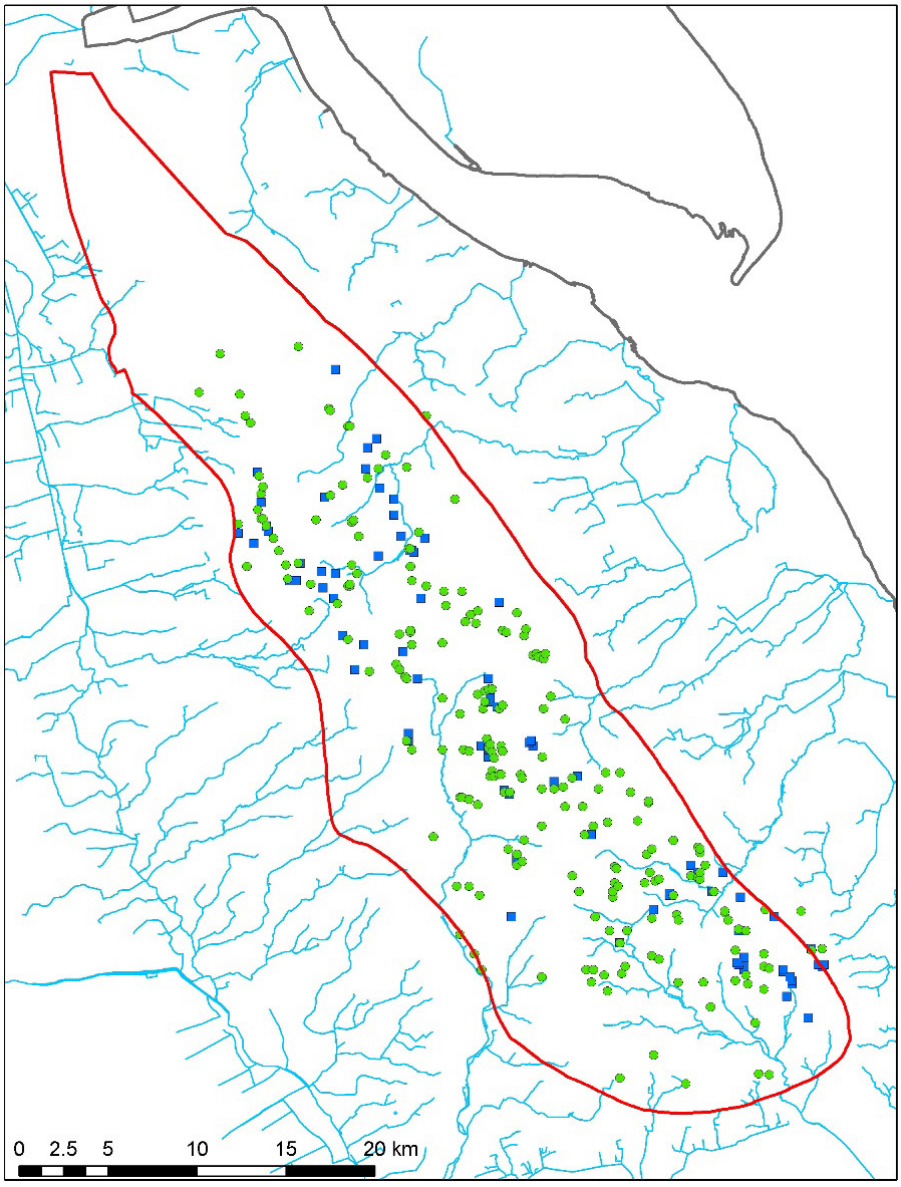

Figure 5: Round barrows (green) in relation to long barrows and enclosures (blue)

Later Bronze Age and Iron Age

In many areas of England the later prehistoric periods see more visible settlement and extensive land divisions in the form of field systems and linear boundaries but on the Wolds there is little such evidence. Unlike many other chalkland areas hillforts are not common in the Wolds. Yarborough Camp may well be Iron Age in origin, but is undated and could instead be Roman or medieval, while the enclosure recorded from aerial photographs at Swinhope Hill in Binbrook is reminiscent of a small hillfort but also undated.

Another site suggested to be a small hillfort is that at Low Wood near Barnetby (for all these sites see Lock and Ralston 2017).

However, earthwork banks on parish boundaries are a distinctive feature of the Wolds that may originate in this period. In the Brocklesby Survey area the most impressive is that between Great Limber and Caistor, a 1.2 km long earthwork with multiple ditches in places, following a natural watershed and intersecting a barrow towards its eastern end. Between Great Limber and Dearby cum Owmby another earthwork is aligned with the 'High Street' Roman road, while a 4 km long bank runs on the boundary between Melton Ross and Ulceby (Lane 2002). Some of the major ancient routes on the Wolds have also been suggested to be prehistoric in origin: the High Street, which runs along the western edge of the area, the Bluestone Heath Road, which branches south-eastwards off it, and Barton Street along the eastern edge of the Wolds.

Little Iron Age artefactual material has come from survey, but occasional finds of pottery indicate occupation in some form (e.g. Didsbury and Steedman 1992; Field and Knight 1992), and Iron Age precursors may underlie Roman settlements so there could well be later prehistoric elements among the Romano-British landscapes revealed from the air and discussed by Jones (1998b) (Fig 6). Willis (2021) reports that work in advance of pipeline construction has revealed extensive utilisation of the southern Wolds during the Middle Iron Age, especially around Brinkhill. Previously a major settlement had been found near Partney, including a Late Iron Age shrine (Atkins 2005). In contrast to the scarcity of sites, Late Iron Age activity across the Wolds is highlighted by the wide distribution of coins and brooch types, often recorded by the PAS.

Later Bronze Age and Iron Age questions:

- *Understanding the origins of the agricultural landscape: where were people living and were they visibly dividing up the land?*
- *What does the contrast with the Yorkshire Wolds tell us about Iron Age exploitation of these landscapes?*

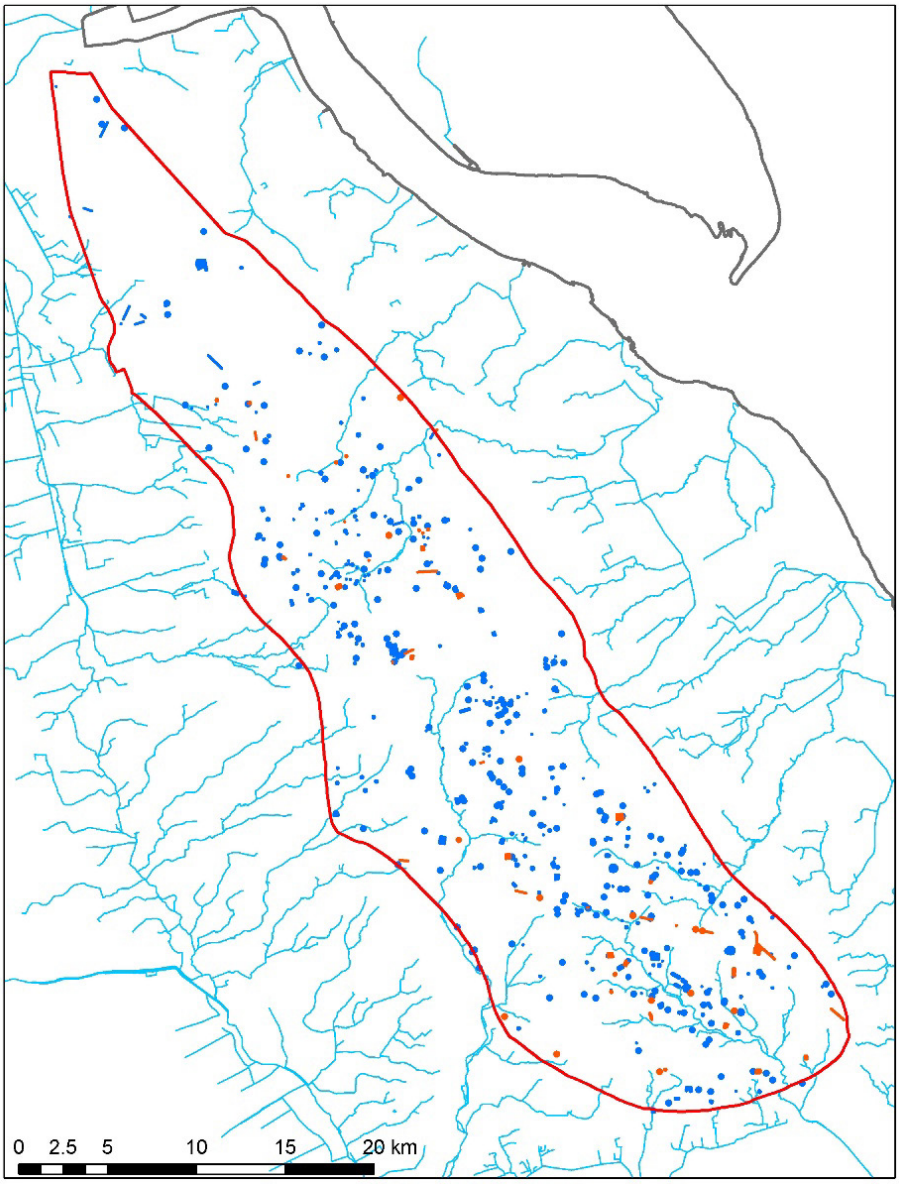

Figure 6: Sites identified as Roman (orange) in relation to those identified as ‘prehistoric to Roman’ (blue)

Roman

Although far more numerous and visible than settlements of earlier periods the dispersed distribution of Roman sites is suggestive of a relatively sparsely populated landscape, with a few denser concentrations of sites, especially in the Lymn valley and on the western Wolds edge (Jones 1998b; Fig 6). This was also the case around Brockleby where Roman settlements were sparse with a limited range of pottery, in contrast to the known small town at Kirmington (Lane 2002), which is not far from Yarborough Camp. The sites mapped from the air are usually on upper slopes and crests rather than in valley bottoms,

although some on lower ground have probably been obscured by later settlement. Villa sites often form part of larger cropmark landscapes but there is a continuing lack of evidence for field systems, which mirrors the rest of Lincolnshire apart from the Fens; exceptions include some excavated field boundary ditches from Partney in the Lymn valley (Atkins 2005). Recent work around Nettleton and Hatcliffe has revealed much new information about Roman rural settlement in the central Wolds, including a relatively prosperous roadside community at the former (Willis 2013) and a later Roman farming complex at the latter (Willis 2019). Ordinary rural farmsteads like Hatcliffe presumably persisted alongside the larger villa estates found elsewhere on the Wolds (Jones 1998b).

There are a number of larger settlements (up to 30 ha), some of which have been called small towns, and which may originate in the Late Iron Age. As well as Kirmington these are found at Ludford, Horncastle, Ulceby Cross and Spilsby. There are also two small later Roman forts on the western edge of the Wolds, at Horncastle and Caistor. What the Roman road network added to the earlier routes suggested above is not clear, though Oliver (2006) has suggested there were roads from Caistor towards Cleethorpes and across the Humber. The western Wolds edge was the focus for pottery production (especially around Market Rasen), stone quarrying for building material and fashioning quernstones, and seemingly for iron smelting. There was also material from other areas of the country coming into the Wolds, e.g. work at Nettleton recovered one of the first recognised examples of a fine sandstone from the Weald traded all the way to Lincolnshire during the Roman period.

Roman questions:

- *When did the big change in the visible settlement pattern take place: pre or post-conquest? Can we distinguish the Late Iron Age from the Early Roman landscape?*
- *What changes took place between the earlier and later Roman period?*

Early Medieval

The early medieval period is, like the Neolithic and Early Bronze Age, a time when funerary sites – in this case cemeteries rather than barrows – are much better known than settlements. Although the latter are generally difficult to find examples with sunken-featured buildings have been investigated in the northern Wolds at Riby, close to Barton Street (Steedman et al 1994), and in a prominent location at Nettleton Top (Field and Leahy 1993). Green (2020) argues for some continuity from the Roman into post-Roman period at various sites, including a villa at Welton-le-Wold. In this period Horncastle and Caistor became royal estates and there were early monasteries at Partney and possibly

Louth, while a number of Middle Saxon sites have been found along the eastern edge of the Wolds (Bennet 2009). Daubney (2016, 227) has identified a number of Middle Saxon 'productive sites' marked by artefact concentrations rather than structural evidence, including an example from the Wolds at Benniworth. The assemblages from such sites speak to a connectivity that is reinforced by the ceramic evidence for the growth of early medieval trade routes from Lincoln into the Wolds (Vince and Young 2009). The diversity of local ceramic industries is a particular feature of Lincolnshire.

The question of continuity between the Roman and medieval landscape has been investigated by Rippon et al. (2015, 342), who argue that the 'Central Zone' of England, which includes the Wolds, saw the creation of open fields 'within a physical framework inherited from the Romano-British countryside'. However, this is a huge area and there is little local information from in and around the Wolds. In fact there is evidence that the Roman and pre-Roman settlement pattern (as far as that is known) generally seems not to have determined the location of later settlements, such as Binbrook, Donington on Bain, Louth, Nettleton, Tealby and Walesby. The exceptions are those on some routeways that have prehistoric origins and which become more formalised in the Roman era (specifically Horncastle, Caistor and Ludford).

Early Saxon cemeteries are widely distributed across the Wolds, particularly around the edges (Fig 7). There are several large cremation cemeteries, such as South Elkington near Louth and Hall Hill in West Keal, often in prominent positions, and the same goes for the more numerous but generally smaller inhumation cemeteries (Bennet 2009). A recently excavated example of the latter at Scremby, on the southern edge of the Wolds, lies on a chalky outcrop with extensive views southward, the range of grave goods showing the connections between Wolds communities and other regions (Brundle 2019).

More research is needed to establish the early medieval attitude to older sites and monuments, and whether these communities avoided burying their dead near Neolithic and Bronze Age barrows or reused and appropriated such monuments, as was often the case in East Yorkshire, the Peak District and Wiltshire. Other questions about the early medieval burial landscape include what the absence of sites in the central Wolds tells us about local and regional identities. In particular does the location of cemeteries around the fringes of the Wolds signal a real or perceived social/political boundary between Wolds communities and those in the surrounding 'flatlands'?

Early medieval questions:

- *When did the modern settlement pattern emerge? Are the villages on earlier sites?*
- *What changes took place between the earlier and later Roman period?*

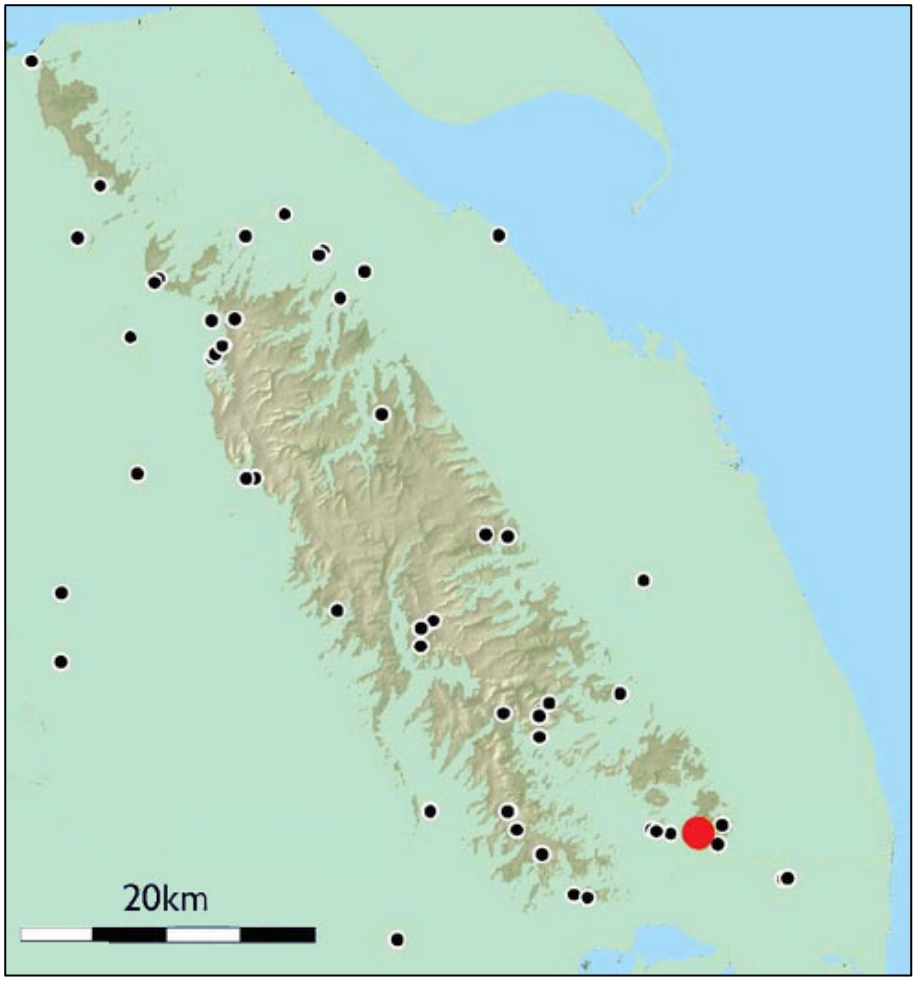

Figure 7: Anglo-Saxon cemeteries in and around the Wolds, with Scremby shown in red (after Brundle 2019)

High Medieval

The Wolds are well known for earthwork and cropmark remains of medieval settlement, some of which (those in West Lindsey) were surveyed by the Royal Commission (RCHME; Everson et al 1991); the high density of medieval settlement across the entire Wolds landscape is clear from Fig 8, however. The RCHME survey indicated that most larger settlements were located in places which afforded access to water, i.e. in 'river-edge, scarp-foot, spring-line, clay-edge or wold-valley positions', though exceptions include settlements such as Risby, Otby and Walesby on the scarp face of the Wolds, Normanby and Ludford on the scarp top, and some planned settlements that ignored local topography. There is a difference between the western edge of the Wolds, where settlements are located along a series of spring-lines, and the central and eastern Wolds

where they nestle within valleys. Also clear was how dynamic medieval settlement was, in terms of earthwork evidence for polyfocal villages that might represent the agglomeration of earlier hamlets as well as settlement reorganisation and replanning, the majority of this perhaps dating to the 12th century but much earlier or later too. However, once these sites were established there was a considerable inertia in settlement location.

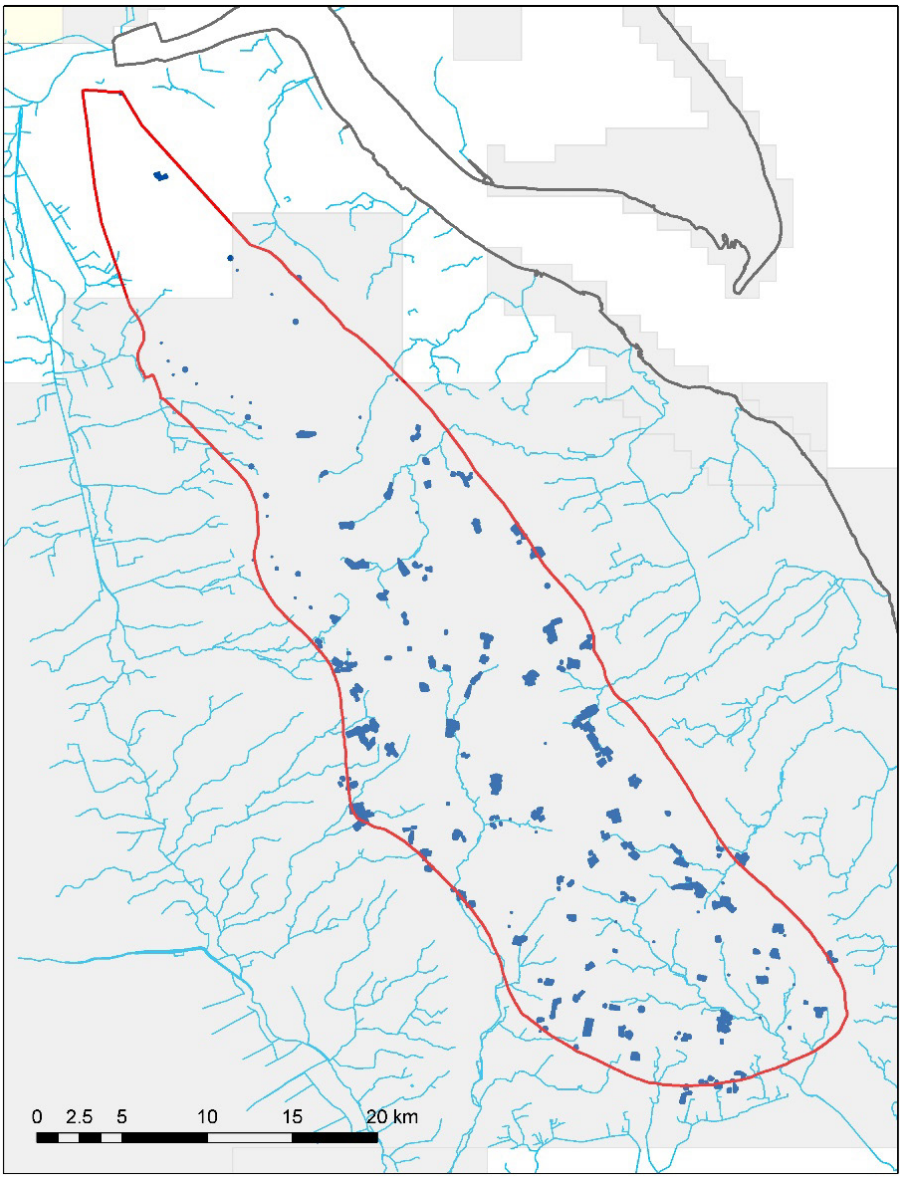

Figure 8: Sites identified as medieval settlement (blue) (grey shading shows limit of aerial mapping data)

The medieval farming landscape of the Wolds was ‘a typical Midlands mixed farming regime of nucleated villages surrounded by open arable fields set in a wider landscape of common grazing and waste’ (Historic England 2020). However, the 14th century saw the

start of a long process of landowners depopulating and enclosing the uplands of the Wolds for sheep-rearing. This resulted in a wave of settlement desertion and shrinkage, with most village sites having evidence of this in some form; indeed around one third of all deserted or shrunken medieval settlements identified in Lincolnshire are in the Wolds (Historic England 2020, 5). Although few have been totally deserted many settlements survive only as a single farm or manor house carrying the village name. The most vulnerable may have been those that were relatively remote within the local communication network, often located further up valleys (as at Nettleton Bottom, for example).

The rural medieval landscape also had a religious dimension, with monastic houses and estates (granges) found across the Wolds, some isolated from settlements and others added to villages. The importance of the monastic houses in community life might be indicated by the Lincolnshire Rising, a precursor to the larger Pilgrimage of Grace, which started in the Wolds in October 1536 as a protest against the dissolution of the monasteries.

For this period, unlike earlier times, we also have important documentary evidence and the Great Cowcher Books of the Duchy of Lancaster, subject of a new cataloguing project, tell us about the socio-economic landscape of the 14th century, especially around Bolingbroke.

There is also a need to consider the growth and influence of the towns around the edges of the Wolds on the wider landscape; for example, in later medieval times Louth dominated the southern Wolds with the villages in this area being relatively small.

Medieval questions:

- *Can we clarify further the processes of settlement growth, desertion and shrinkage?*
- *What was the landscape impact of the different monastic orders?*
- *What economic or trade connections were evident between the Wolds and other areas?*

Post-Medieval

The post-medieval rural landscape can be understood in terms of the visible historic fieldscape, as mapped by HLC, and the historic buildings resource, especially the numerous farmsteads but also listed buildings within settlements. Listed buildings as a whole are unevenly distributed across the Wolds, with a focus on the towns, as might be expected but a lower prevalence in the parishes of the central Wolds (Fig 9).

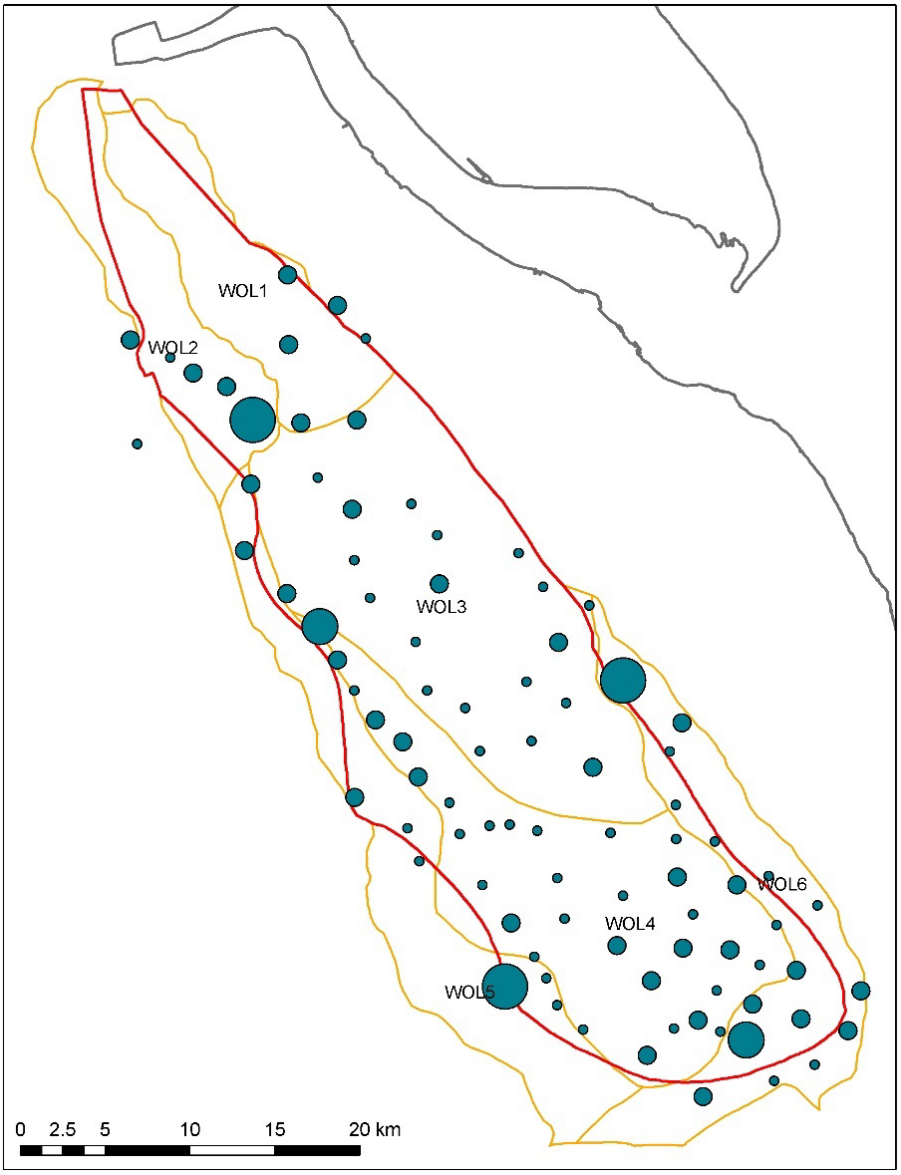

Figure 9: Numbers of listed buildings by parish, in relation to HLC character areas

Broadly speaking, farmsteads are larger in the north of the Character Area, while those in the south are more densely arranged and smaller. Older surviving farmsteads (16th and 17th century) tend to be in the south while 18th century examples spread further north-west (Fig 10). There is also a larger amount of potentially older piecemeal enclosure in the southern Wolds, as mapped by the Lincolnshire HLC, while areas of Parliamentary enclosure survive most extensively in the central Wolds (see Fig 1).

Designed landscapes (parks and gardens) are key indicators of how local communities and landowners tried to improve their surroundings, rather than simply using the land for subsistence. There are a few designated parklands in the Wolds, notably in Bolingbroke,

South Ormsby, Hainton and Harrington, but the RCHME survey (Everson et al 1991, 54) found many garden remains preserved as earthworks, mostly of 16th to 17th century date, including examples at Nun Cotham, Orford and Somerby. Recent work by Steffie Shields and colleagues has identified around 20 notable designed gardens within the Wolds, only a few of which are listed.

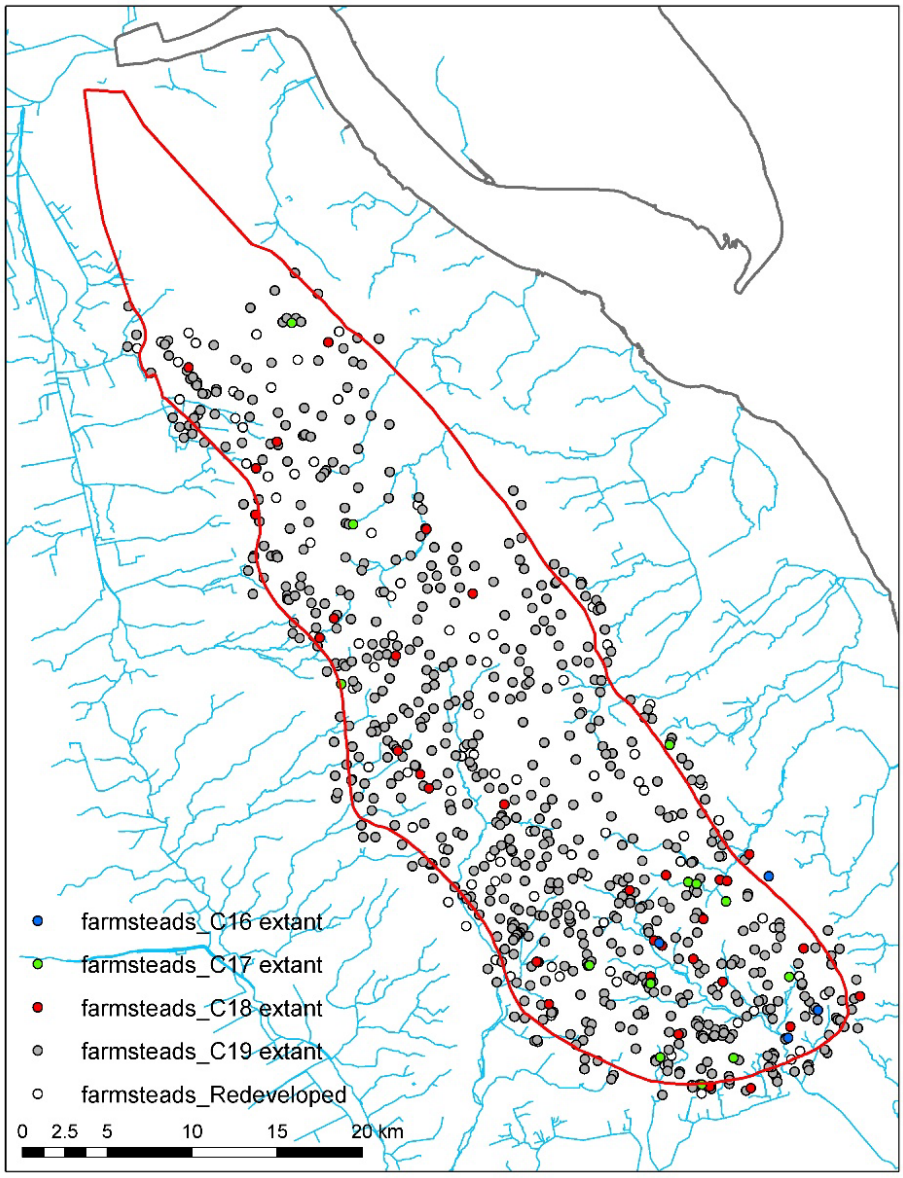

Figure 10: Post-medieval farmsteads of different periods

Although not always strictly archaeological, we also need to take account of the area's more recent social and cultural history. As well as being important in its own right, there is great community interest in such heritage which can provide a way of engaging people before introducing the Wolds' deeper past (see Part 3), and connecting the visible historic

landscape to the archaeological assets and approaches discussed here is an essential part of a whole-landscape approach (see Part 2).

Notably this recent heritage includes the Wolds' rich connections with Tennyson, who was born at Somersby in the southern Wolds (see Part 2) and the local population's contributions to the war efforts in the 20th century. During World War II, for example, the Wolds were the home to a number of RAF airfields and there are many stories of dogfights and crash landings, several of which are memorialised while others are included in literature (e.g. Finn 1973; Halpenny 1981).

Post-medieval questions:

- *Can we build on previous work on the farmstead resource with more fine-grained studies and new approaches to the 'fieldscape'?*
- *Can we improve the recording and appreciation of parks and gardens in the Wolds?*
- *How do we build intangible heritage (sense of place) into historic environment projects?*

The Long-Term Story

While the period-based approach outlined above conveys a sense of development and change in the landscape, much can be missed by narratives that stay within period or subject specialisms. They tend to overlook the things that do not change, in particular the idea of 'persistent places', where sites and finds of different archaeological periods co-occur, perhaps indicating places in the landscape that were favoured for settlement or other activity over long period of time. We can certainly envisage that the varied topography of plateaus, valleys and streams will have shaped how people moved, worked and physically experienced the landscape, creating routeways, tracks and bridges or fords (Albone 2016). Hence the landscape will have given rise to similar experiences, opportunities and constraints for people over time.

Daubney (2016, 103) has considered the evidence from PAS data in terms of '"hotspots" of high temporal diversity' which include some locations in the Wolds. Willis's (2013) work at Nettleton has revealed a sequence of Neolithic, Bronze Age, Iron Age and Roman remains around 'a nodal point on the Wolds' where a number of routeways come together. Elsewhere long barrows, for example, have significance not just as Neolithic monuments but because they have accrued stories over the centuries (as in the site named Cromwell's Grave), and the mounds form a kind of 'punctuation' in what can appear as a regimented

landscape. Similarly the time-depth and longevity of water mills provide another route into past landscapes (e.g. Sass 2018; 2022). At places like this there is the sense that each location has a story and there is always a strong sense of age and time in the landscape. Where can we see continuities of experience between past and present in the Wolds, and where are there differences or ruptures?

As an example we could map Wolds parishes that include features from multiple periods whose locations were probably influenced by aspects of the landscape: long barrows, round barrows, Romano-British settlements and medieval settlements. This throws up a group of parishes which mainly lie on higher ground at the heads of valleys in the central and south-eastern Wolds (Fig 11). If we also include (possible) Saxon cemeteries then four parishes are left: Nettleton, Binbrook, Ludford and Tetford.

Through long-term narratives around places like this the Wolds' archaeology offers exciting opportunities to engage with the big picture of life and death, to understand the speed and rhythm of change, and how that comes about. All this needs to be set within a more comprehensive understanding of the changing appearance of the landscape, addressing the paucity of study and sampling that has been directed at establishing the nature of past environments in the Wold (see Part 2). On the other hand, generalisations can be problematic; the heritage of the Wolds shares similarities with processes and trends through time that played out across the wider region, while the fortunes of the Wolds in terms of agriculture, industry, settlement and population has evidently fluctuated through time. The unfolding of these developments, both regionally and locally, has received comparatively little attention and understanding remains patchy. There is plenty of scope for making progress to a more nuanced and informed picture of the Wolds and its margins through both prehistory and the historical eras. This needs to include the inputs of institutional and business stakeholders, and the local community, as well as archaeological specialists, all of whose voices are of key importance to the purpose of the LWLN (see Part 3).

Multi-period questions:

- *How do we prioritise research between filling in more of the story where we already have some of it (e.g. long barrows, Roman settlements) or addressing the blanks (e.g. the Iron Age landscape, early Anglo-Saxon settlement)?*
- *How do we identify the persistent places which have a long history of activity and distinguish them from places that have intense activity for a shorter period, and how do we explain the difference?*

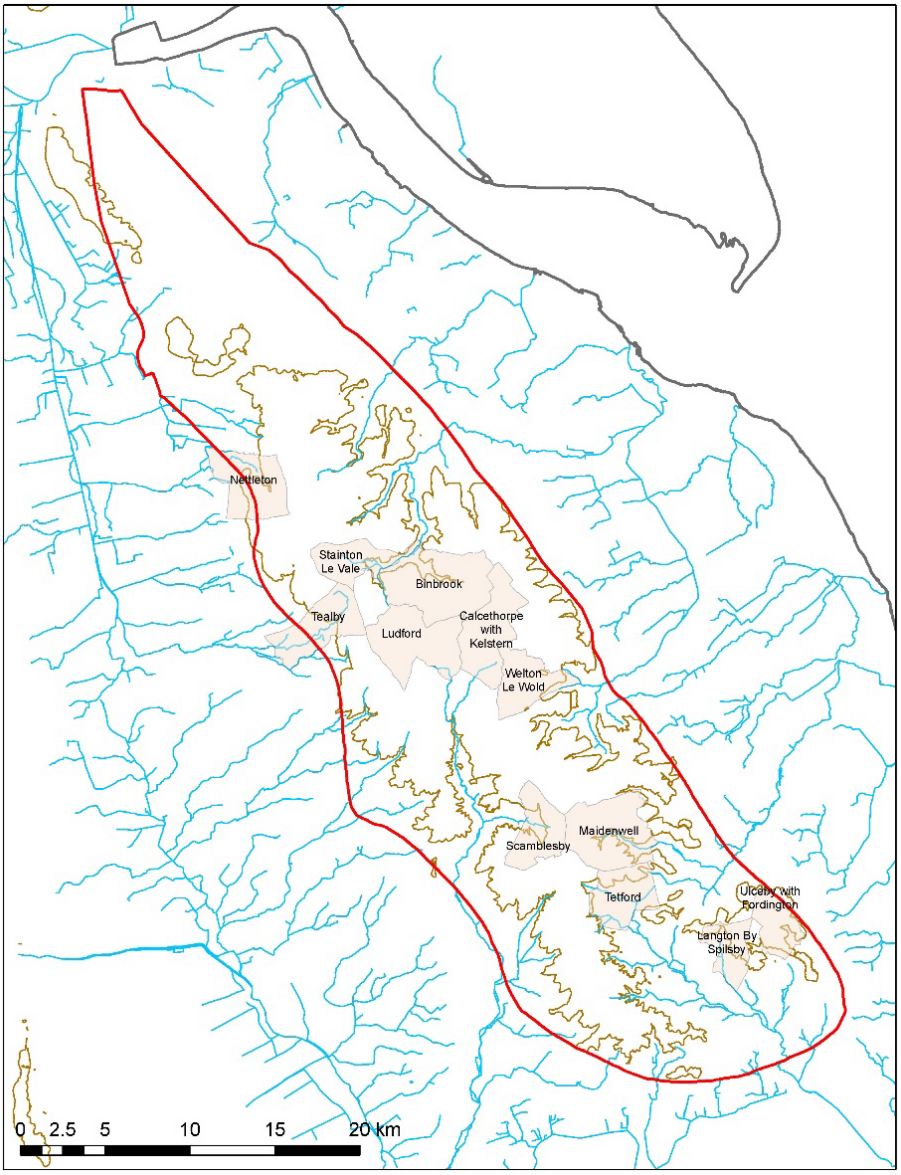

Figure 11: Parishes with concentrations of monuments of different period, in relation to watercourses and the 75 m contour. © Crown copyright and database right 2023. All rights reserved. Ordnance Survey licence number 100019088.

Part 2: Landscape

Introduction

The European Landscape Convention defines landscape as ‘an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors’. Any archaeological approach to landscape therefore needs to consider not only patterns of human occupation at a level higher than the individual site, but also the influence of the natural environment on people’s activities and perceptions, and of people on nature. One aim of the LWLN is to improve understanding and appreciation of the interrelationships between the natural and historic environment of the Wolds. As Bennet (2009) puts it, ‘seeking to understand how and why a landscape has been formed will help us to manage, protect and enjoy that landscape.’ To that end this document outlines the historical influence of people and nature in mutually forming the character of the Wolds landscape, in order to help identify opportunities for joint working in the future.

Landscape Character

The National Character Area (NCA) description for the Lincolnshire Wolds describes the landscape as ‘characterised by a range of varied yet unified features including open, arable plateau hill tops, chalk escarpments, deep dry valleys with sinuous beech woods and isolated ash trees punctuating the skyline. The area is sparsely settled with many villages hidden within the folds of the landscape and modest country houses and farmsteads’ (Natural England 2015, 3). Land use in the Wolds is dominated by arable agriculture (76%), with smaller areas of grassland (15%) and woodland (5%), especially along the western scarp (Fig 12). The chalk aquifer is ‘a major regional resource of freshwater’, and the ‘resulting springs and chalk streams… provide a nationally important wildlife habitat’. Of course these springs and streams have also been key influences in the development of the historic pattern of settlement and activity from Neolithic long barrows to present-day villages (see Part 1).

The Lincolnshire Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC; Lord and MacIntosh 2011a, 26) describes the present landscape of the Wolds as ‘primarily the result of the enclosure of a largely typical open field farming regime, and the subsequent changes to the associated nucleated settlement pattern’. Fields and enclosed land cover almost 90% of the land area. The character zones identified within the wider Wolds landscape (Lord and MacIntosh 2011b; Fig 13) add some sub-regional variety to the general pattern (Table 1) though there is scope for future work to provide more insight into local variations in character across the Wolds. Nevertheless, the HLC provides detailed information on the

historic character of the whole landscape (Fig 14) and represents a largely untapped resource for future landscape initiatives, such as monitoring change (see below) or capturing the values people attach to places (see Part 3).

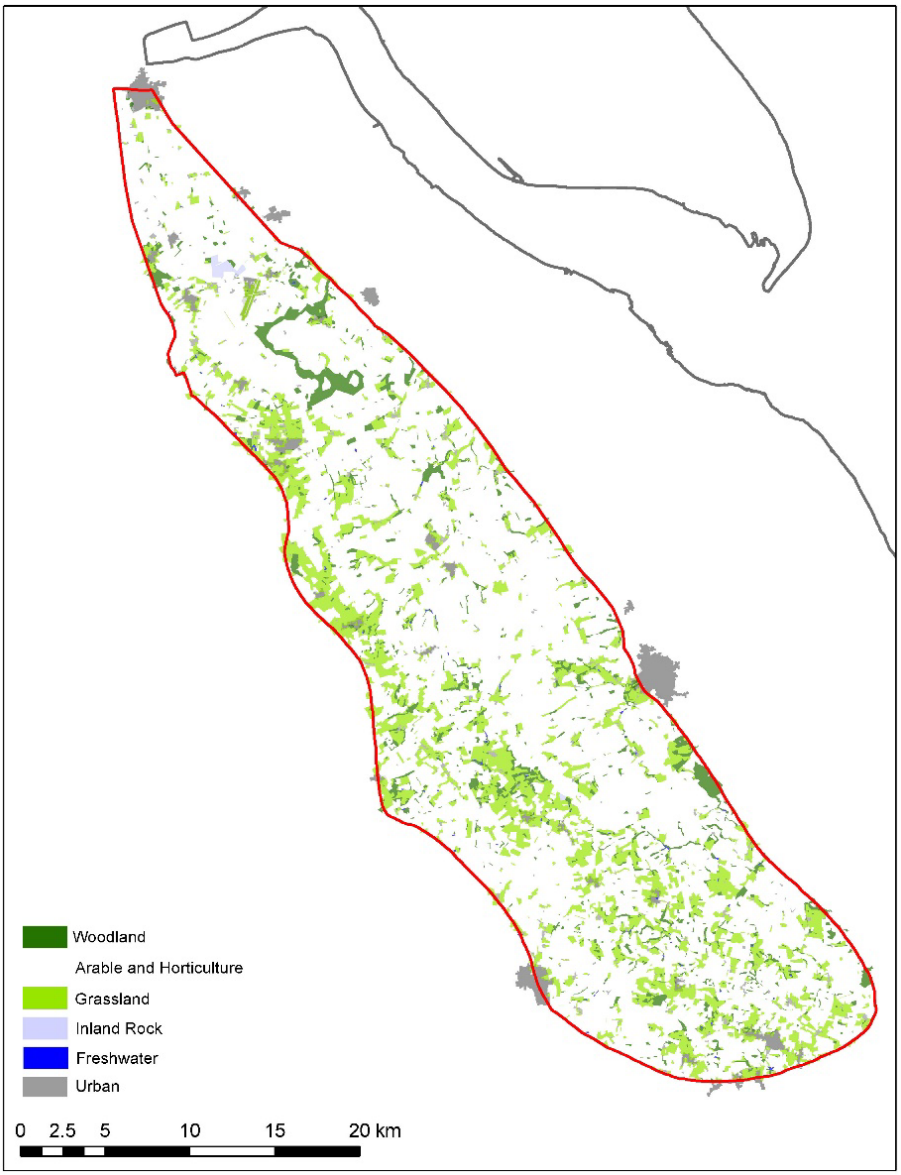

Figure 12: Land use within the Lincolnshire Wolds NCA

The Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) only covers about two thirds of the NCA, although a possible extension to the boundary is under discussion. Nevertheless the descriptions in the AONB management plan are relevant to the whole area, though landscape quality declines in the undesignated northern part of the NCA where there is more intensive farming, the M180 motorway and Humberside Airport. Despite the

continual intensification of farming, however, the area overall remains a rich tapestry with a deeply tranquil and bucolic resonance.

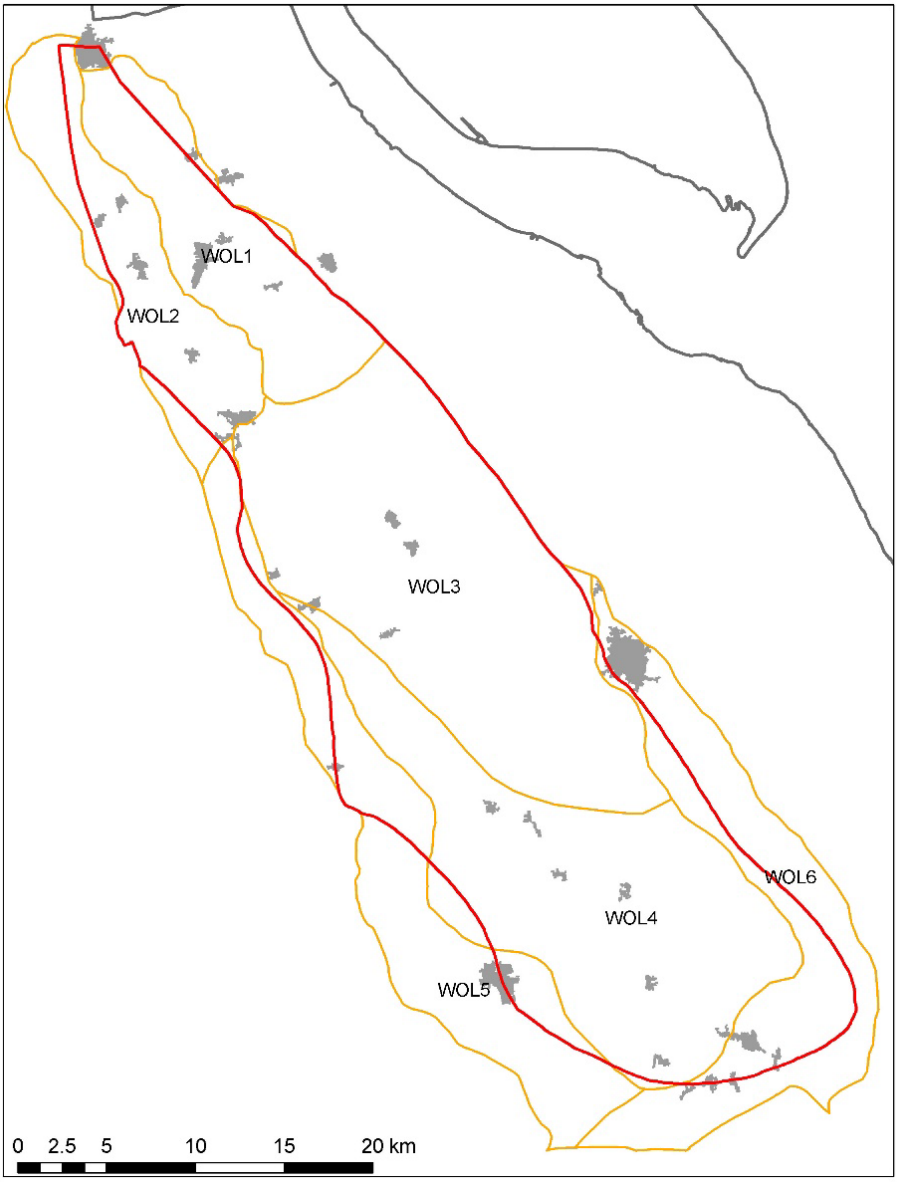

Figure 13: HLC Character Zones within the Lincolnshire Wolds NCA and built-up areas (grey)

Landscape History

Understanding how character has emerged from past landscape decisions, especially the roles of clearance and enclosure, is key to an integrated landscape approach. We may be able, for example, to unpick how the ‘natural’ landscape formed historically, e.g. from

understanding the age of hedges, woods and watercourses, and compare this with the long-term environmental sequences investigated by archaeologists and palaeoecologists.

Area	Dominant Field Types	Settlements	Buildings	Woodland	Features
Brocklesby Heath WOL1	Planned enclosure, Modern fields	Small, scattered	Brick	C18-19 plantations	Brocklesby Park, Humberside Airport
Caistor Spring-Line WOL2	Modern fields	Small nucleated, with isolated farms	Brick, many whitewashed	C18-19 plantations	Former military airfields
Upper Wolds WOL3	Planned enclosure	Small nucleated, scattered in dry valleys	Limestone (W), brick (E)	Treebelts around parkland	Country houses with parklands, former military airfields
Dry Valleys WOL4	Modern fields	Small, in dry valleys	Brick	Treebelts around parkland	Country houses with parklands
Western Wolds Foothills WOL5	Modern fields, Planned enclosure	Small nucleated, on spring line and around Horncastle, with isolated farms	(not specified)	Treebelts around parkland	Country houses with parklands
Spilsby Crescent WOL6	Modern fields	Small nucleated, on spring-line	(not specified)	Treebelts around parkland	Gunby Hall, mineral extraction, recreation

Table 1: Features of HLC Character Zones in the Wolds (from Lord and MacIntosh 2011b)

There are three main types of evidence for the changing appearance of the landscape over time: archaeological/palaeoenvironmental data, characterisation (especially for farmsteads and fields) and historical/documentary evidence. The last of these includes literary and visual depictions of more recent historical periods, as well as reconstructions/ imaginations of earlier ones. Collecting these descriptions of the landscape would be an interesting exercise in itself. Poets and writers will always capture a sense of place in ways that elude more prosaic and quantitative texts:

> I climb the hill: from end to end
> Of all the landscape underneath,
> I find no place that does not breathe
> Some gracious memory of my friend;

No gray old grange, or lonely fold,
Or low morass and whispering reed,
Or simple stile from mead to mead,
Or sheepwalk up the windy wold…

(from Tennyson, In Memoriam C)

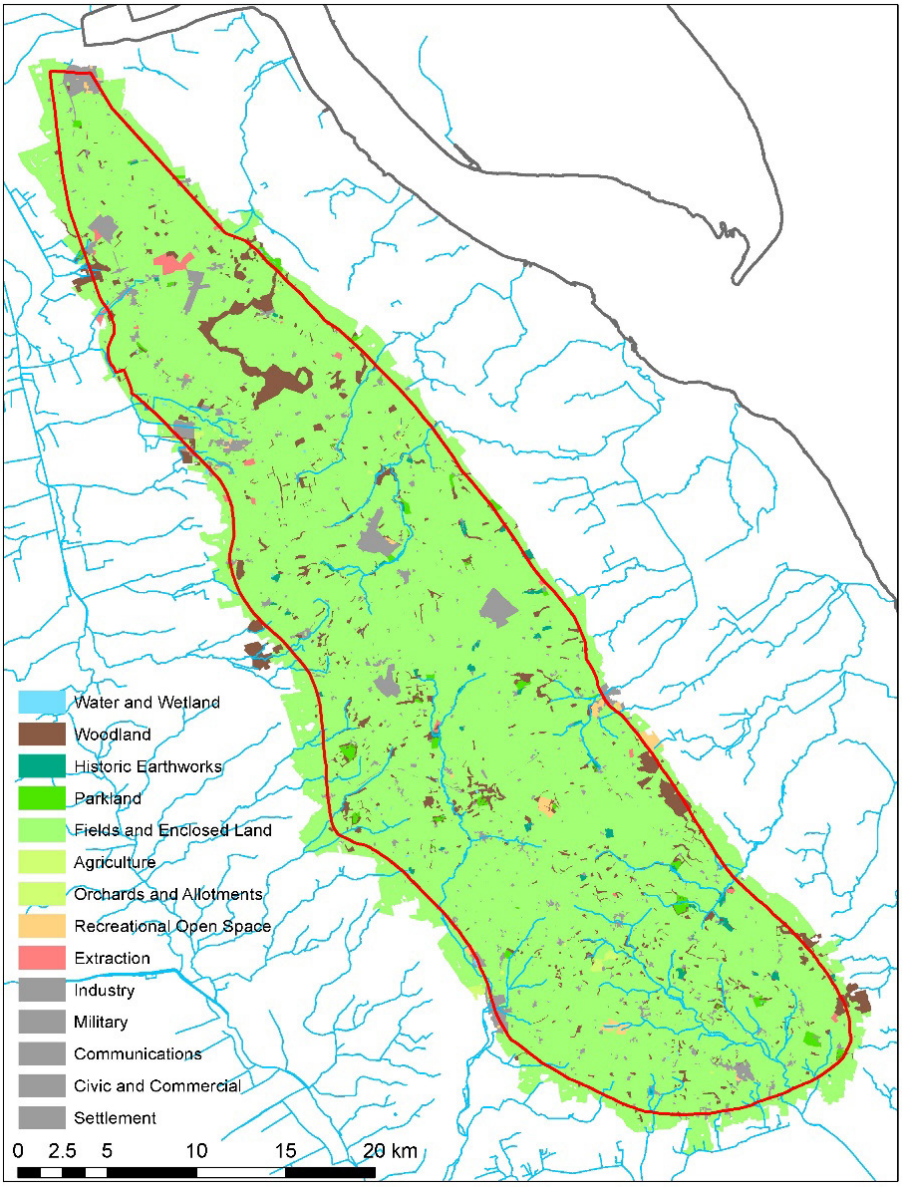

Figure 14: HLC broad types within the Lincolnshire Wolds NCA

The previous focus on pasture for sheep had endured since the 14th century, when local landowners began to depopulate and enclose the Wolds uplands. This resulted in a wave of settlement desertion and shrinkage; some isolated farmsteads derived from these are

an important link to former patterns of settlement and land use. Late medieval country houses and estates illustrate the wealth of some landowners resulting from early enclosure for sheepwalks. There were also important links to the neighbouring marshes and fens, where wealthy Wolds farmers would rent grazing land in order to fatten their stock, using the many east-west aligned roads and tracks that were perhaps initially intended to provide access to the coastal salt industry. These links survived through the period of Parliamentary Enclosure when drove roads up to 20 m in width were created for sheep headed for the coastal grazing marshes. Some of today's key grassland habitats in the Wolds are found on the wide verges of these roads.

Before the production of wool took over, the area had been farmed according to a typical Midlands mixed farming regime of nucleated villages surrounded by open arable fields set in a wider landscape of common grazing and waste. There was only sparse woodland at the time of Domesday, though there is some evidence for a royal estate centre at Waltham within a wooded area. According to the Fields of Britannia project the wider 'Central Zone' seems to have remained open through the early medieval period (Rippon et al 2015). There is little direct evidence from the Wolds but a pollen sequence from the Yorkshire Wolds showed abundant grassland from the Iron Age through to the Middle Saxon period. Despite Late Saxon reorganisation of settlement patterns, there is evidence across this zone for potential continuity in fieldscapes from the Roman period into the medieval landscape (early features forming furlong boundaries within the open fields), but that may not have been the case in the Wolds. Environmental evidence from the ditches of Hoe Hill long barrow (see below) suggests that Roman grassland was succeeded by post-Roman arable episodes.

The Central Zone was also the least wooded area of Roman Britain. Hoe Hill produced evidence that the Roman landscape was a rich grassland with some scrub. At the Hatcliffe Top farmstead there is similarly evidence of open grassland near the site, suggesting pasture predominated on the valley sides and floor with hedges between fields; the arable land that produced the cereals processed at the site may have been on the higher plateau, perhaps with sheep grazing calcareous grassland on the thinner soils (Willis 2019).

The Wolds lacks the kind of extensive evidence of Iron Age routeways, settlements and funerary sites that is seen on the Yorkshire Wolds, so the appearance of the landscape prior to the Roman conquest remains unclear. However, evidence from the surrounding areas suggests woodland clearance had progressed through the Bronze Age (a marked reduction in canopy density is a characteristic feature of pollen diagrams of this period throughout the East Yorkshire/North Lincolnshire area) and Iron Age (when Crosby Warren near Dragonby saw extensive woodland clearance). At Butterbump in the

Lincolnshire marshes the first clearance dates to the early 2nd millennium BC, with further sporadic clearance through the later Bronze Age and Iron Age.

Plant remains from palaeochannels at Partney indicate that the local Neolithic and Early Bronze Age landscape comprised open hazel/alder woodland and scrubby dry grassland (Fryer in Atkins 2005, 51). The abundance of Neolithic monuments across the Wolds suggests that significant areas of open ground existed widely at an early stage. The ditches of the Ash Hill and Hoe Hill long barrows, excavated by Phillips (1989; Fig 15), have produced molluscan and pollen evidence spanning the Neolithic to Roman periods. At Hoe Hill the mollusca showed Early Neolithic herbaceous grassland with some scrub and trees, and regenerated woodland in the Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age, followed by renewed clearance. The pollen evidence similarly suggests the monument was constructed in an open landscape with residual lime-oak woodland, followed by woodland regeneration, but perhaps only on the barrow itself since there are also indications of arable agriculture in the area. At Ash Hill there is evidence for grazed grassland continuing during the later Neolithic, with more scrub and woodland from the Bronze Age until the Roman period. In the absence (so far at least) of extensive evidence for Neolithic occupation (see Part 1) we can probably assume the barrows were used by mobile pastoralist communities with small areas of cereal cultivation.

Before these initial episodes of Neolithic clearance, the relatively shallow, chalk-rich soils are likely to have favoured ash in particular, whilst areas of open scrub or grassland probably existed naturally on unstable valley floors. In the earliest Holocene birch and pine woodland is evidenced in the Yorkshire Wolds but the area of open grassland increased markedly from around 8000 BC though it is likely that woodland remained important; the impact of Mesolithic communities on the landscape is hard to assess but elsewhere there is evidence they used fire to create or maintain clearings.

The Late Glacial vegetational development of the Wolds is also unclear but it is probable that a greater proportion of open ground persisted than in other areas. The maximum advance of the Devensian ice sheet (MIS2) probably reached the eastern edge of the Wolds where it led to the creation of marginal meltwater spillways. Before that, in the Mid-Devensian period (MIS3), it seems likely that ice-free localities like the Wolds would have supported limited areas of tundra vegetation. It was the previous interglacial (MIS5e) which likely saw ‘the main incision of the Wolds valleys under full forest cover, while its high sea level probably trimmed the marine cliff along the eastern edge of the Wolds’ (Robinson 2000).

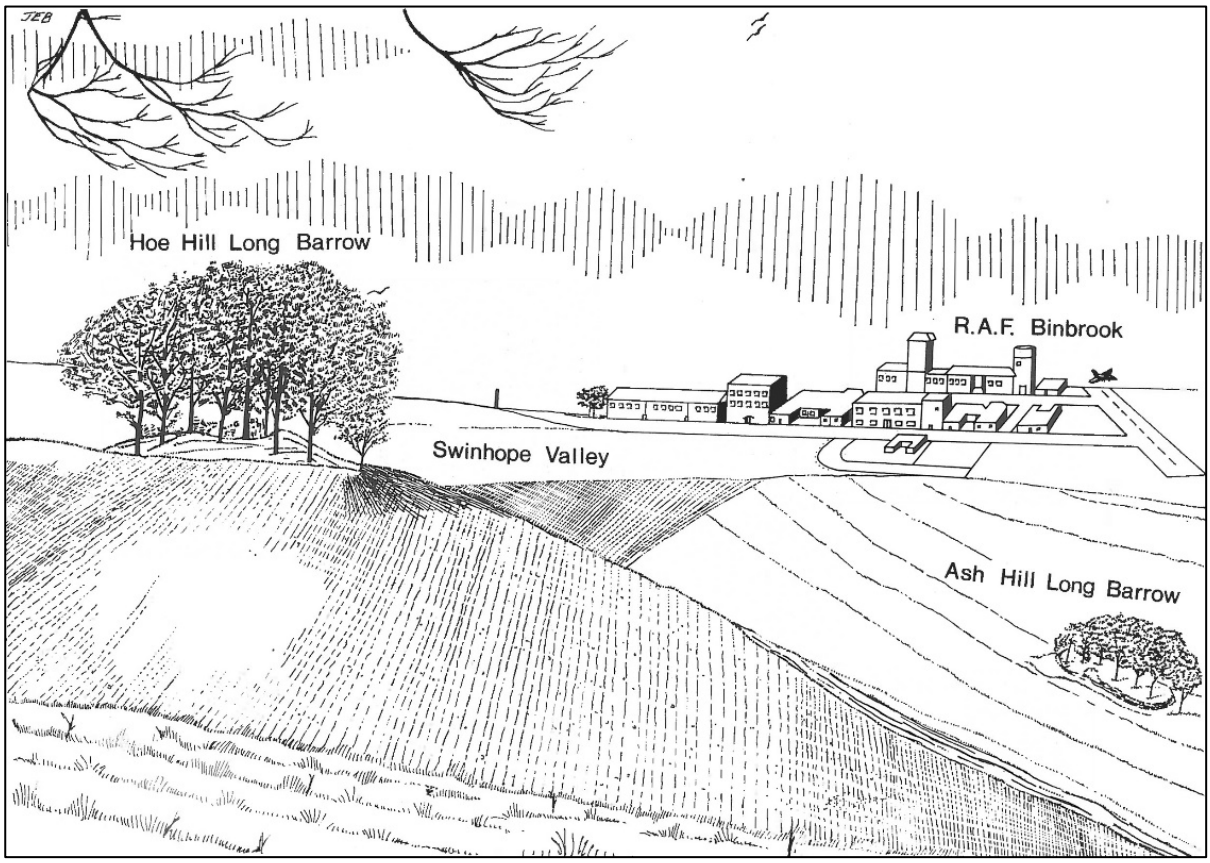

Figure 15: View of the Swinhope valley, with some artistic licence in its perspective (from Phillips 1989, 2; reproduced with permission of BAR Publishing, www.barpublishing.com)

The work by Phillips (1989) has shown that past environments can be reconstructed from feature fills in dry-land locations (though wet environments do exist in the landscape and could be targeted in the future). More data will add nuance and highlight differences and contrasts across the Wolds region. Certainly a targeted, properly funded programme of specialist palaeoenvironmental study is long overdue, so we no longer need refer only to studies carried out decades ago or from well beyond the Wolds. Further work on landscape history needs to consider what size of palaeoenvironmental assemblage specialists need in order to advance the understanding of past environment and economy; and therefore where and how we can get such data. And while we are understandably interested in the bigger landscape picture, archaeology can also tell more intimate stories about past environments. Finds from excavated features and soil samples provide details of past local ecologies, e.g. remains of Neolithic red deer and aurochs from Caistor High Street, as well as Roman house mouse, water vole and water shrew. The Lincolnshire Chalk Streams Trust has recorded the latter two rodents along nearby Nettleton Beck in the present day; the survival of their habitats despite all the landscape changes and development is a significant piece of information.

What underlies these past ‘landscape decisions’? Certainly powerful individuals and institutions have determined developments on and around the Wolds at points in the past, as with Roman estates, planned medieval settlements, monastic granges, desertion of those settlements, and enclosure of open fields; some were locally determined while others show the influence of wider socio-economic forces. One cannot help wondering who made decisions in the era before historical records? Was the construction of the barrows of the Neolithic and Bronze Age a communal expression of shared understandings and goals, or the imposition of a social elite who had access to prestige goods and symbols of power? To what extent was the creation of monuments a different process from the management of land for settlement and farming in these periods? Given the distribution of the burial monuments, it appears that similar decisions were being made right across the Wolds, so what facilitated this co-ordination in a small-scale society? Investigation of particular localities will help to establish differences in dates and practices at sites of similar type. That may in due course help us to gain an improved understanding of past landscape decisions in the Wolds.

Future Landscapes

Conservation of the historic landscape needs good data about sites and monuments. For example, recent work on the long barrows of the Wolds (see Part 1) has much improved the information available on the location and character of these sites and this will lead to better management. Unlike individual sites, however, which can (sometimes) be preserved just as they are, landscapes are always changing; as the summary above shows, past landscape decisions have led to major changes in the appearance and character of the landscape. In the future, therefore, the question for the heritage sector is how to manage that ongoing change sustainably, in order to maintain (or if possible enhance) both individual heritage assets and the historic character of the landscape. Heritage interests are sometimes seen as opposed to change, but we can challenge this idea; even the appreciation of literary heritage like Tennyson’s need not always lead to such opposition.

As the Network discussions revealed, whilst the generality of the landscape has not altered over the last 30 years or so, there have been many transitory changes in practice as well as shifts that may prove to be long-term. For example, many outbuildings at Wolds farms that were too small for modern farm machinery and storage have been converted to (holiday) accommodation, usually in a manner that is sensitive to historic character. On the other hand, the farmsteads characterisation project suggested that (as of 2006) a low proportion of listed farm buildings had been converted to non-agricultural use, about half the national average, and an above-average percentage (20%, compared to a national average of 7.5%) showed signs of disrepair (Historic England 2020).

In terms of agricultural practices, the burning of stubble has been outlawed, both set-aside and environmental stewardship schemes have come and gone, as have new crops like elephant grass and borage, grain stalks have become shorter, trees have been planted, wildlife margins created and wildflower borders sown. Precision farming techniques present future management opportunities. All this has largely come about through national and local policy developments, market forces and consumer choices, enlightened farming and conservation initiatives. Understanding what changes may come in the future, and what opportunities or threats to the historic landscape might be associated with them requires foresight, in the formal sense.

Lord and MacIntosh (2011a, 27) and the AONB management plan (Lincolnshire Wolds Countryside Service 2018) have set out the recent drivers of change in the Wolds, many of which have a potential impact on both landscape character and archaeological remains. In relation to agriculture, the main destructive trends are the consolidation of farm holdings leading to abandonment of buildings and loss of field boundaries; and the erosion of historic earthworks by ploughing. Land-use change, especially conversion of pasture to arable, is a key risk although minimum tillage techniques can help minimise disturbances from deep ploughing and no-tillage techniques are in development, which may have significant benefits for managing archaeological sites and monuments. On the other hand, the transfer of land from arable to pasture could protect earthworks and buried features, depending on future arrangements for agri-environment schemes, currently in development. However, at a national level such arable reversion is often temporary rather than long-term and we need better understanding of what the barriers are to maintaining it. How, for example, might grassland areas become destination points for visitors without hindering other environmental concerns?

Although the Wolds' high scenic quality depends almost entirely upon their use for agriculture, the expansion of arable farming in the second half of the 20th century has certainly had a destructive impact on archaeological remains. Of a total of 260 sites in West Lindsey (not only within the Wolds) known to have had upstanding earthworks in 1946, over half were totally or partly destroyed by 1990 (Everson et al 1991). This is concerning, but it should also be noted that intensive farming can expose earlier archaeology beneath, and previously masked by, later medieval and post-medieval landscapes; it is therefore important to monitor these sites as they are brought into the zone of agricultural impacts. Moreover such impacts themselves have a long history; Jones (1998b) notes that a number of Neolithic sites in his survey of long barrows 'were buried beneath ridge and furrow cultivation. This suggests that the process of plough erosion of prehistoric monuments was already taking place by medieval times.' Pre-

medieval monuments will therefore only survive as earthworks in the limited areas of non-arable medieval land-use.

Changing arable regimes can also have an impact on our ability to do archaeological fieldwork, with windows of opportunity for ground-based survey on farmland often very limited. The work at Nettleton shows how much you can learn with a good geophysical survey and intensive surface collection, but if access becomes more restricted then careful planning will be required to keep this kind of work going. It remains important to try and understand what we are losing to the plough, for example phases with more fragile pottery or shallower features, and why ploughzone assemblages are sometimes very different to those from excavations. A related issue is understanding how serious is the impact of metal-detecting on archaeological sites within these arable areas.

Climate impacts identified by Lord and MacIntosh (2011a, 27) include possible increased flood risk and the introduction of new crops, such as biofuels. The creation of woodland needs to be managed to avoid damage to heritage assets and historic character through inappropriate planting; ancient woodland once lost cannot be recreated but archaeological and historical evidence can at least indicate where woodland formerly existed and what species it comprised.

There is also potential for development, particularly outside the AONB, of residential housing and renewable energy facilities. Changing patterns of tourism and recreation may have an impact on the historic landscape in the future as well, potentially increasing its appreciation but also the pressure in certain areas.

Working Together

The AONB management plan (Lincolnshire Wolds Countryside Service 2018) comprehensively deals with the management of biodiversity, geodiversity and the historic environment as separate interests, but a landscape approach requires finding the links, overlaps and synchronicities between these. Arts and culture can play an important role in understanding landscape values that gets away from the essentialist idea of nature in opposition to culture.

The LWLN is heritage-led so the focus in the discussions was on identifying links between historical and archaeological objectives and other aspects of landscape. For example, the biodiversity objective to ‘increase the extent and quality of wildlife-friendly grasslands across the AONB’ (Lincolnshire Wolds Countryside Service 2018, 44) is relevant not only to the management of archaeological sites currently in arable, but also to strengthening historic landscape character, given the importance of grassland in many prehistoric and

historical periods in the Wolds. Indeed, nature recovery efforts in the present can be informed by archaeological reconstructions of past landscapes while hedgerow condition surveys for the benefit of wildlife, for example, can also provide information on the historical value of these key cultural landscape features.

A second example is the geodiversity objective to 'protect and enhance the geological and geomorphological features of the AONB for enjoyment, education and research' (Lincolnshire Wolds Countryside Service 2018, 56), which is relevant to Palaeolithic archaeology and the history of extractive industries (see Part 1), as well as understanding the topographical affordances of the landscape that have influenced human activity in all periods.

There are also shared practical challenges for the natural and historic environment sectors; for example, the lack of public transport provision not only hinders visitors getting access to the landscape but also makes green visitor messages harder. Landscapes are always about movement and connections and – grand vistas notwithstanding – cannot be fully appreciated from one place; the sense of never quite knowing what is around the next corner is a key aspect of the Wolds' character. Hence while the benefits of getting out into nature are much heralded, the promotion of walking as a means of engaging with the historic environment as well is important (see Part 3).

One way of looking at the landscape in interdisciplinary terms is by considering it as an interlocking series of 'capitals' that deliver 'services' of various kinds to people (the language can appear incongruous when we are thinking about nature and history but the key is whether it facilitates understanding of how landscapes work). The kind of framework shown in Fig 16 may be one way of structuring a future landscape heritage project. Cultural capital and natural capital may be the 'stuff' we are concerned with but knowledge and skills (human and social capital) are also of critical importance in a multi-capital approach.

Potential cross-overs between specific projects include the asset-focussed work on long barrows and their topographic relationships, especially to the chalk streams where there is a current focus, i.e. linking past landscape reconstruction to conservation in the present. Long barrows also serve as havens for wildlife, where covered by vegetation, and a balance needs to be struck between managing this to protect archaeological deposits and maintaining the habitat benefits. The England Tree Strategy presents potential opportunities for linking nature and heritage through identifying new areas of woodland for different activities. At present, while major areas of woodland are well-mapped, smaller pockets are a gap in the record.

There are common issues of engagement for the historic and natural environment sectors (see Part 3): in both cases there is a need to make things relevant by taking heritage and nature to people, not expecting people simply to come to the landscape. The market towns around the edges of the Wolds have long served as gateways or hubs to the Wold landscape, and although walkers are well catered for cycle routes could be improved. Town and countryside could be linked through new ELM schemes aiming to make connections between rural and urban/peri-urban greenspace such as parks. The transitional spaces of the urban edge may be a place where town and countryside communities can meet and potentially help break down the urban/rural divide.

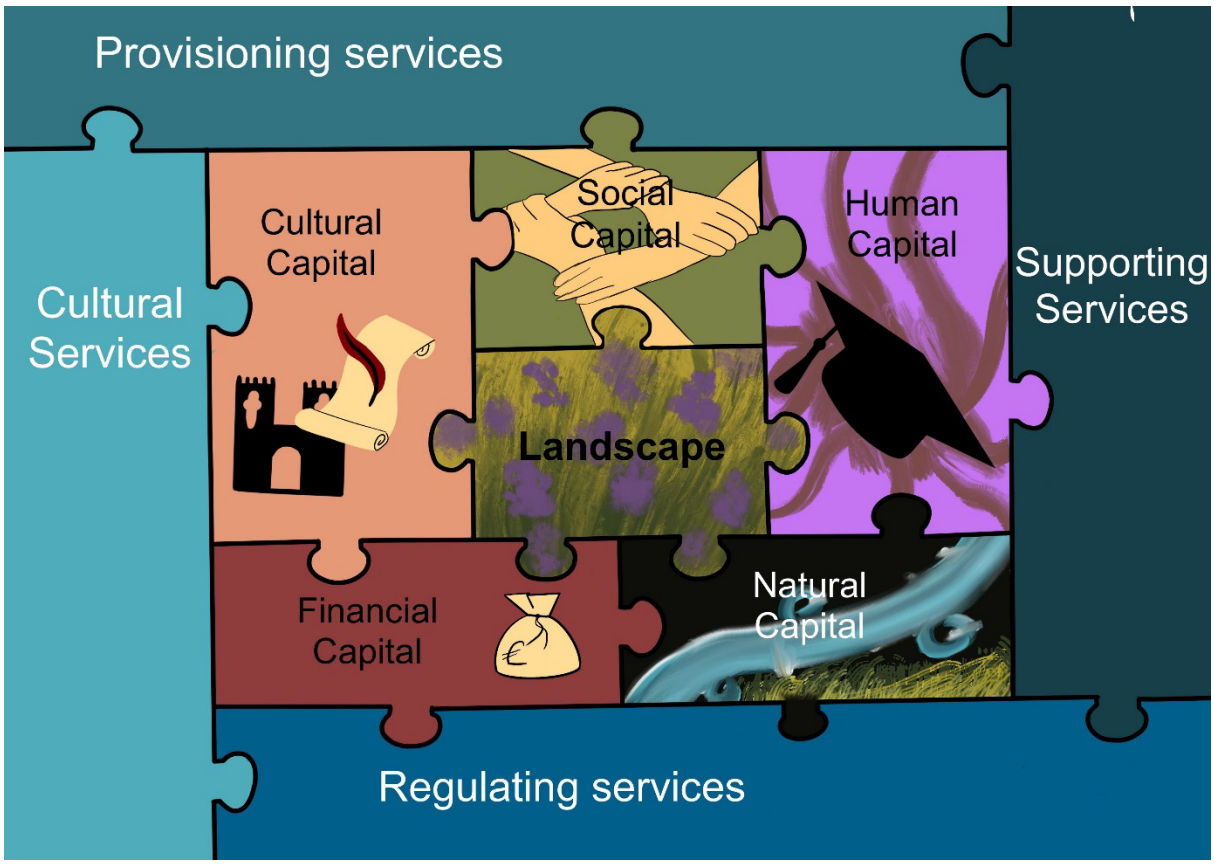

Figure 16: A multiple capitals approach to landscape (by L Banford & L Mansfield, 2021; reproduced with permission)

Archaeological research is never solely about understanding the past; working in any location provides a textured understanding of a contemporary place that complements the archaeology – the shared experience of past and present. In turn, archaeological investigations give us more context within the world we inhabit, showing how what has happened in history made the landscape we have and the habitats it contains.

Part 3: Communities

Introduction

Well-being and participation have become key objectives for the heritage sector in recent times. One aim of the LWLN is to understand the values attached to the Wolds landscape and heritage by communities, and their role in people's well-being. Historic environment projects need to involve communities in their planning and deliver outputs with tangible public benefit. Landscape decisions also need to attend to the values people attach to particular places. This section of the report draws on the Network conversations to discuss issues around communities, well-being, engagement and participation.

Well-Being

In general heritage has lagged behind the natural environment sector in promoting the health benefits of what we do. Everyone accepts the therapeutic value of getting out ‘into nature’, yet the heritage sector has only recently managed to collate a wider range of evidence about well-being benefits (Monckton 2022). Most of this work, however, is about participation in specific projects and/or at particular historic sites; unlike with nature there has been little research on the benefits of the wider historic landscape, with a few exceptions. Darvill et al (2019) point out that certain landscapes can be considered therapeutic by those who experience them; how exactly this works in terms of neural responses, for example, remains unclear but the places that evoke well-being are somehow meaningful to people.

A key point made by Nolan (2019) is that places which evoke a strong presence of the past can become a means of escape from everyday life, a place of imagination and creativity. This may be not only for recreation but perhaps also linked to a revisitation of positive memories. Much of the work on therapeutic value has focussed on landscapes with a particularly obvious presence of the past, especially the World Heritage Site around Avebury and Stonehenge. So what about the more subtle historic components of a landscape like the Wolds? What does knowledge of a deeper past add to people’s experience of a landscape that has already been designated as beautiful? For some there is always a strong sense of age and time in the Wolds landscape and people's connection with it, even though the nature of those connections must have changed over time.

The designation of the Wolds as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) was the first step to official recognition that landscape can enhance well-being; its statutory purpose is to conserve and enhance ‘natural beauty’ (including cultural heritage) and

promote recreation, while taking into account the needs of those who live and work in the Wolds. For older generations in particular, many would see the Wolds very much as a working landscape and not really have thought a great deal about its aesthetic and historical interest. One story told to the LWLN was about a family who owned a farm in Walesby and a grandmother whose diary recorded her wedding day – getting married in the morning and going back to work in the afternoon!

At the same time, the land was never used solely for work; local communities and landowners also tried to improve their surroundings by planting, creating water features and building structures; the designed landscapes of the post-medieval period were created in part for security and profit, but also for beauty and – though they may not have used the term – well-being. Many of these landscapes are still quite visible and legible so recognising and recording them in order to understand how they achieved their aesthetic effects could be the subject of a community project with contemporary well-being outcomes.

We also need to consider the links between cultural heritage and nature (see Part 2) where, as mentioned, health and well-being benefits are well-established. Rather than separating out the natural and historic environment, a focus on well-being requires us to understand how they intersect and add value to one another. Understanding the history of an apparently 'natural' place can enhance the health benefits it provides by offering a sense of continuity and connection to the past; for example, ancient trees have great value for people’s imagination and their mental health. Conversely the presence of other species, both plants and animals, on historic sites and landscape features ensures a vibrancy and liveliness to these parts of the historic environment, though they sometimes need to be carefully managed. Celebrating the links between culture and nature can be done effectively through arts-based projects, such as a project on long barrows, currently in development, which aims to reconnect people with the landscape as it is now and how it was in the ancient past. Such initiatives could even engage with buried archaeology, for example by having artworks that mark the sites of monuments which are no longer visible.

As well as simply being active in the landscape, enhancing well-being through heritage can also involve learning skills, connecting to others and being mindful. Cultural activities can contribute as much as nature-based ones in many different ways and for all ages, abilities, interests and needs. The value of such activities is increasingly recognised in health policy, through social prescribing to help prevent people reaching the point where they need potentially costly clinical care. This is increasingly based on partnerships between health services, local authorities and the voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector. In Lincolnshire the Improve Network aims to ensure that both

cultural and nature organisations with an interest in supporting health and well-being are involved. One objective is to find a sustainable model that does not depend on specific short-term projects; we need to ensure that the impact does not stop along with the funding. Ensuring heritage is recognised in these partnerships may help with the use of places recognised as ‘community assets’ for health reasons in cultural events or activities.

Wolds Communities

We know that people value many different aspects of the historic environment of the Wolds, but before considering these in detail we need to understand the perspectives of different communities within or with an interest in the Wolds landscape. By communities we do not just mean local residents; in a national protected landscape consideration has to extend to visitors, and there is also a professional community well-represented on the LWLN. Each of these groups may value different things.

For example, visitors and locals may have different perspectives on the working landscape versus its beauty or historic interest; heritage professionals may emphasise the significance of an archaeological resource that is less visible and therefore less appreciated by other communities. There are many points of contact, however. Visitors to the Wolds often come because they have some family or historical connection to the landscape. It is also notable that local people are often keen to talk to professionals who they know are likely to be keen listeners and who can tell them what has been found. Such conversations tell us, one way or another, what people value and help us comprehend the history of places, while also serving to affirm overlaps of experience and interest between different groups and communicate shared values.

The three broad groups identified here are themselves very diverse and can be further sub-divided. For example, as Dave Start (2018) has put it, ‘This picture of prosperous, middle-class, incomers enjoying their retirement in Lincolnshire does rather miss the point that the real background to a sparsely populated rural idyll is actually one of low employment and poverty. This is particularly marked in the coastal areas of the county, but deprivation and poverty are also a feature of the Lincolnshire Wolds.’

Farmers may be a numerically small part of Wolds communities (less than 1000 people are employed in agriculture within the AONB) but they have a key relationship to the landscape. The goodwill and support of landowners will be crucial to the success of any historic landscape project in the Wolds and often, of course, they have great knowledge of historic features on their land and some have their own collections of finds. The Farming Finds Pilot Project included a case study of Home Farm, Withcall, in the Upper Wolds. The heritage assets on the farm and the finds made by the farmer epitomised the rich diversity

of human activity in this area including prehistoric barrows, upstanding medieval earthworks, Victorian industrial and transportation remains, and 20th century military history. Building positive connections between landowners/farmers and those interested in heritage could also take advantage of established connections with responsible metal detectorists, for example.

Among visitors we can differentiate archetypal tourists from residents of the coastal towns who may be physically close to the Wolds and see the countryside as an escape but often lack easy means of access. For people who are not car owners, the limited public transport provision hinders travel from coastal communities to and through the Wolds and also affects Wolds residents, who may have less access to rural heritage than many in the towns. In Grimsby a variety of cultural and heritage initiatives are linked to the Heritage Action Zone which is focussed on the town centre but might offer a forum for exploring people's connections to the rural hinterland of the Wolds. Sutton Estates linked up with a 'challenging' neighbourhood in Grimsby for open farm events, for example, and this approach could perhaps be extended to historic landscape initiatives.

What People Value

Landscape and heritage values are very subjective, of course, and cross-cut by the perspectives of different communities, as set out above. Perhaps we cannot define the aspects of character that matter for someone else but we might be able to identify some broad distinctions in how different aspects of the historic landscape are valued. One is between the visible (historic buildings and landscape) and hidden (archaeological) heritage; another is between what coheres around personal and subjective heritage and the more formal designated or mapped heritage assets.

It is easier to engage with visible and legible features than with buried, less visible archaeology – though what is apparent also changes over time (see Part 2) and there is always the potential for new discoveries, e.g. through community surveys. It is somewhat ironic that the historic features listed as of 'outstanding quality' in landscape character assessments (such as barrows and deserted villages) are often virtually invisible to all but the most persevering or informed visitors to the area. Getting people interested and engaged with the archaeological landscape is therefore more of a challenge but if we accept that appreciation of the past contributes to well-being then it is a worthwhile one. Learning about the landscape provides inspiration to people to find out and get out more. Archaeology is brought to life by people's interactions with it; it provides opportunities to engage people with the big picture of life and death over millennia in different ways (as stakeholders, stewards or sleuths, for example). And with prehistoric monuments there is

scope for more imaginative interpretation, which is not as prescribed as with some later sites.

Identifying where the official record does not capture what people actually value is an important element that has been helped by the recent Local Listing pilot project in Lincolnshire. Within the Wolds participation has been active in the towns and intermittent within the AONB. So far archaeology has not been included but a wide variety of built structures have been nominated and a number of landscape sites including some areas of parkland.

A selection of specific places identified by the LWLN that are valued within the Wolds ranges from nature reserves (Snipe Dales Country Park) to walks (the route across Nettleton Top and along the Viking Way, with the site of former ironstone mines and a wildflower reserve), quarries (Welton le Wold gravel workings), a battlefield (the site of the Battle of Winceby in 1643, which is Lincolnshire's only Registered Battlefield – though much later the skies above the WW2 airfields were also a battlefield), monastic earthworks (Orford) and places with literary connections (Somersby where Tennyson was born). A bibliography of local studies on these and other places could be a valuable resource.

However, some of the key aspects which people value revolve around the qualities of places (and people) rather than specific locations:

- Diversity and variety in vistas, places, activities and local stories; never knowing quite what to expect round the next corner
- The contrast between what on the face of it seems a sleepy rural landscape but in fact is busy and full of activities connected to the nature of the landscape
- The landscape palimpsest which prompts imagination of past lives, both distant and more recent
- That each location has a story, especially of how life and work have been integrated with agriculture: the bump in the field... the dip in the slope... the corner where the ploughman used to have his lunch (to which 19th century beer bottle fragments now bear testimony)… the old man who once found kiln debris in his back garden
- The people who tell those stories, their enthusiasm to talk about what they know of places and interest in learning about what went before
- The importance of fields: usually unnoticed except as backdrop, the right angles laid over the landscape, seemingly independent of topography, at the time of Enclosure, but scenes of intense activity from time to time, e.g. harvesting, and places of numerous encounters with all sorts of people from game-keepers to agricultural

> contractors, bailers, hedgers, infrastructure workers, naturalists, dog walkers, lost ramblers and the merely curious…

Conflicting values may be apparent, of course: some people value the seclusion of the Wolds, while others would welcome more visitors and events. This divided viewpoint is understood by the AONB managers; tourism needs more promotion but the AONB is not a National Park so sensitivity is required with any such initiatives.

We also need to consider the things that are not valued so positively or are neglected. As well as asset-based heritage-at-risk records, many aspects of the wider environment are relevant, including flood risk or habitat loss, and socio-economic issues, notably public transport, shortage of jobs and affordable homes, rural isolation and loneliness. A real challenge for any heritage initiative seeking to reach a wider audience is to get those people currently disconnected from the landscape because of the day-to-day problems of poverty, opportunity and aspiration to see the benefits of heritage to them, especially if it goes beyond the immediately practical, such as the repurposing of historic buildings. This will involve making connections between social provision, environmental issues and well-being. Heritage projects must somehow benefit people's lives in a holistic and practical way, i.e. improving their immediate environments as well as providing better access to historic sites and features.

Modern planning policies focus on sustainability but can make it difficult to develop in smaller settlements, especially in protected landscapes. We need to recognise that while this helps maintain physical character it can drive up prices, often leading to locals being priced out and potentially affecting the sense of community.

In addition we need to recognise that people's values are themselves changing, particularly recently as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. The perceived value of 'community assets' like pubs and village halls may increase as people return to physical gatherings, though many may be nervous about big events for a while. Even more than before the pandemic it will be important for heritage projects to try and understand the 'temperature' of society.

The LWLN discussed the impact of the 2020-21 lockdowns; the lack of traffic was valued by some, which raised questions about opening up the Wolds to visitors again. AONB managers had also noticed an increase in antisocial behaviour through lockdown, relating to a lack of infrastructure with few sites open to the public and a lack of places for walkers to park. As a result some landowners had withdrawn permissive access. We might wonder if a rush to return to 'normal' means some of the lessons from the pandemic will not be

learnt. A balance needs to be struck: we cannot keep the Wolds secret but we can plan sensibly to avoid overloading the landscape.

More generally, can we make connections between past and present to help people's well-being? Are there lessons to be learnt from the historic landscape about how people interacted in earlier periods when travel was more difficult, and from the values they attached to particular forms of social interaction in different places: whether exchange, ritual, or working the land?

Approaches to Engagement

There is a lot to learn from previous initiatives, notably the HLF-funded 'Down Your Wold' community heritage project which held various events between 2013 and 2016, and produced outputs such as a 'Heritage Spotters' Handbook' (Fig 17), and the subsequent 'Layers of History' project which covered the whole of Lincolnshire. However, most archaeological work in the Wolds has been undertaken for academic research or management purposes and has not really sought to understand which aspects and stories might be of interest to the communities identified above and the contribution of these to people's well-being. The local AONB partnership recognises that there is a continued need for further holistic research, especially in respect of the important archaeological features found across the Wolds. Such studies will undoubtedly further our understanding of the AONB's cultural capital and links between people, place and landscapes, and in doing so aid future protection, interpretation and management of both protected and unprotected heritage sites and features of interest.

There remains a need for local spaces in the Wolds where people can learn more about the heritage of the landscape and where they can go to experience it. The Wolds has a few places where tourists and visitors and local people come together, including the Waltham Windmill Centre, Caistor Arts and Heritage Centre, Gunby Hall and Hubbards Hills; probably a high proportion of visitors in each case are local. These places, in various ways, demonstrate the local and regional experiences of the past, and the built venues are staffed largely by volunteers who help make them come to life; there is a great deal that can be learned through conversations at such places.

In an increasingly digital world people are likely to go to venues that are recommended and liked on social media. There are many online guides for walks on the Wolds, and provision for fuller commentaries (drawing on local and expert knowledge) may over time enrich the visitor experience (see below). Digital provision can help compensate for the lack of many physical venues for heritage resources, make information more accessible, and perhaps provide a means to capture some of the otherwise undocumented oral

record. StoryMaps[2] are one potential tool for providing multimedia landscape information; dedicated phone apps, 3D visualisations and augmented reality are increasingly available to people as they are out in the landscape.

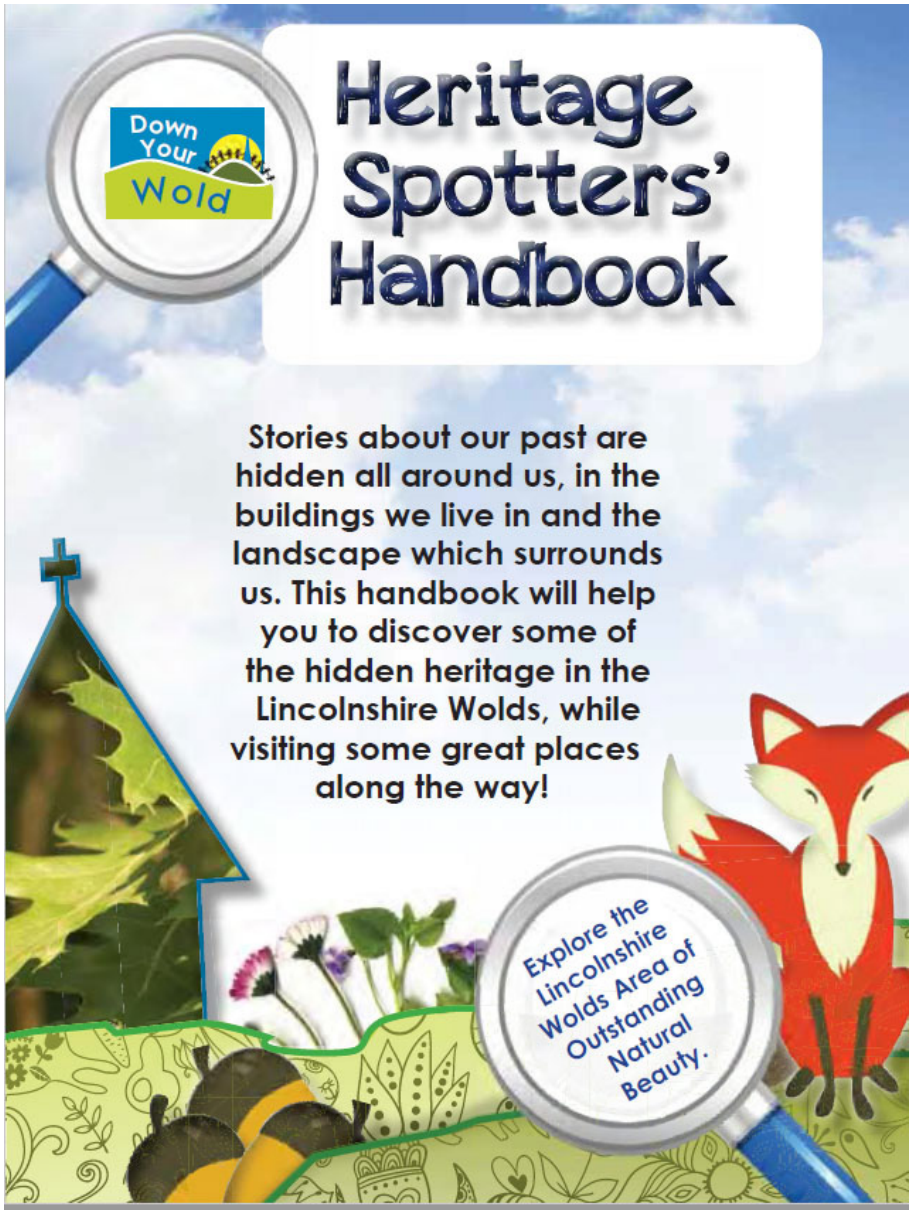

Figure 17: Popular output from the 'Down Your Wold' project

We need to be conscious of the need to disseminate archaeological findings in ways other than the usual formal academic reports and lectures, which only appeal to a fraction of the constituency we might potentially reach. In the current climate, we need to increase the

[2] https://storymaps.arcgis.com/

utilisation of more contemporary forms of media, from YouTube podcasts to Zoom forums and the like. Recent examples include: Alan Dennis's film for the Caistor Heritage Trust and the Caistor & District Community Trust showing how the town developed up until the 1700s; the development of some Caistor tours on the Ordnance Survey's 'Secret Stories' app, which could be a model for wider heritage tours in and around the Wolds; and a community excavation on a metal-detected site with 3000 Facebook followers, changing the approach to doing community archaeology with a much wider online audience. Similarly, local groups and societies moving talks and events online may have lost some members without the technology but have gained far more from a wider Lincolnshire 'diaspora'. Getting out there might be important, as discussed below but remote engagement, when done well with engaging resources, can bring larger numbers.

Successful approaches to communication might vary with the audience. For example, adults will engage with archaeological material if it has a story attached, e.g. knowing the place where a pot was made or showing evidence of what it was used for. Rather simple tools can link different eras of landscape use; for instance the stone sharpening tools found during the Caistor High Street project, including both formal whetstones and casual field stones. Those from the ploughzone are undated but people who are not 'heritage professionals' would doubtless still recognise them and see some (e.g. 20th century carborundum) as particularly familiar. It is almost possible to envisage a hedge layer or harvester sharpening their tools in both the distant and more recent past with the stones recovered during the project, though those items would be only a minor part of any academic report.

Developing links to local schools and youth groups is often resource-heavy but can be very effective. Schoolchildren love seeing animal bones and teeth that have been dug up; the bigger the better! They offer an opportunity to connect the past to the species they might see around the landscape in the present. Domesticated animals have changed a lot over the centuries so there is an interesting story therein too. Everyone can relate to matters of diet and food, which offer potential connections between heritage, landscape and our own times. In the Yorkshire Wolds the ongoing development of a historic environment research framework is structured around the theme of 'Food for Thought' (Redfern 2020). In the Lincolnshire Wolds such a theme could form a focus for a 'medieval festival' linked to more interpretation of the village sites; it is also a very appropriate theme for engagement with the farming community.

For those who live in and around the Wolds there is potential for looking deeper into the history of local people, communities, landscapes and materials to tell the stories of particular places and capture more of what people value, whether it's a quiet spot, a long-

distance view or a decent pub, amongst other things. The Wolds' rich connections with Tennyson could be emphasised, along with the local population's contributions to the war efforts in the 20th century, often including moving and poignant hardships, such as the risks faced by Bomber Command airmen returning to the Wolds' RAF bases. Archaeology can recover more recent items too; for example an Art Deco-style Ronson Chrome cigarette lighter from the late 1950s or early 1960s is the sort of bygone that a proportion of the population these days will recall, triggering memories in the same way as a visit to antique showrooms. At the same time the discovery of a Roman lamp in the same field makes connections to a deeper past through the common need, worlds apart in time, to harness flames.

Apart from the few venues mentioned above, the Wolds lacks major tourist destinations (and the infrastructure for them); instead, heritage interest is dispersed so walking and cycling are key means of exploring the historic landscape. The Wolds is well-provisioned with footpaths (over 200 km of footpaths and 150 km of bridleways within the AONB), walking leaflets and a longstanding walking festival. In a society reshaped by the Covid-19 pandemic, this can also be seen as a safe, socially distanced outdoor activity. Improving public access to the landscape through walking involves both physical actions, such as maintaining routes and gates, and provision of information to enhance intellectual access.

Participation is an important aspect of engagement, as mentioned above, and there are multiple avenues for this; whether through enhancement of heritage links to events like the walking festival, or research projects involving volunteers, including those on historic farm buildings and hedgerow recording. The intensive ploughing of the land means that responsible metal detecting and volunteer fieldwalking or test-pitting can have important roles in helping to identify previously unknown sites; such community fieldwork needs to be complemented by cataloguing finds and making them available for people to view locally, along with workshops to help people identify and understand the finds of pottery etc that they make themselves. Site visits to 'walk the ground' are invaluable in engaging new audiences to observe and gather evidence of early features in parks and gardens and the wider landscape. Moving from a lidar image to visits on the ground is a proven way of connecting to the community and creating interest in a purposeful activity at perhaps very little cost. The availability of drones offers the potential for new forms of community landscape survey projects. However, people also need assistance to participate effectively, e.g. with the use of software to process drone imagery or lidar; or the complexity of archive records related to historic buildings, which if made more accessible might provide information on the history of local families and encourage involvement.

For harder-to-reach groups and people who may not have thought much about heritage before, it may be best to start with what people can relate to most easily, i.e. family history or existing buildings that they are familiar with. This can widen out subsequently into other areas of interest and time periods. Some groups will of course need particular adjustments to help them get access, e.g. assistance with transport and designing activities that would be good for particular groups and organisations with specific needs. The Southrey Woods project that was part of Heritage Lincolnshire's Layers of History project, working with the People's Partnership, who aim to connect with hard-to-reach groups through job centres, refuges and special needs schools, ran workshops in the woods for people who would not normally get a chance to take part for a variety of reasons. As well as learning about the historic and natural landscape in a special place people took part in something sociable and learnt new skills, with very positive feedback from participants. Provision of facilities like transport and toilets is a basic practical step that is a key to success.

People have a clearly articulated interest in the more recent social and oral histories of living in the Wolds, learning from their elders to help document the living fabric of the land. This could include recording local dialect to capture words and phrases that might otherwise be lost, and to interpret names of fields and other local features that could also be lost with the passage of time. Local residents, both new and old, like to know what went before and if they have a more comprehensive knowledge of what they see it will influence decisions about how to treat their environment and how they think others should. We could through various sources and conversations build mini-ethnographies: cameos of places through the past 100–150 years. At almost any location on the Wolds, after a while, whether researching as an archaeologist, historian, or there for other reasons, one could establish a textured understanding through those stories about places. Writing projects like those run by Rosanna McGlone-Healy can encourage people to record their stories, while the development of a digital ‘mood board’ for the area would allow people to contribute pictures and opinions.

The important point is that this complements and enriches the very different and usually much older evidence of the archaeology in the ground, which in turn informs new stories about the histories of places. As well as more recent social history there is a desire to know more about the origins and early development of places that we often have comparatively little evidence for, and imagining how communities would have lived in previous centuries – from Palaeolithic foragers to Neolithic pastoralists and wealthy Roman villa owners. Those places settled in the past that were successful (for whatever reasons) still exist now, so can we identify the reasons for each place being there (transport, work, water, etc) and see if these still contribute to the place now; in other words, relating past and present through shared experiences of place. How have the

modern settlement pattern and associated flows of people and goods emerged from past decisions that also shaped the character of the landscape?

Walking as Heritage Practice

Walking has great well-being benefits and the footpath network is key to getting people into the landscape. As well as ongoing work to improve this, e.g. reviewing routes with potentially dangerous crossings, or incorporating shorter loops to cater for casual walkers, there are numerous walking guides and leaflets, and the Lincolnshire Wolds Walking Festival is being relaunched post-Covid as the Outdoor Festival in May 2022. While these walks often take in historic buildings and landscape features, there is scope for using walking more effectively to engage people with archaeology and the historic landscape. Could walks offer a model for outreach from future landscape heritage projects that engages people and connects the historic environment to the well-being and natural environment agendas?

Now that the Lincolnshire HER has been made available online as an interactive map[3] and the Historic England Aerial Archaeology Mapping Explorer[4] allows access to the National Mapping Programme coverage of the Wolds there is far more landscape-level heritage data available, but much of it comprises GIS polygons that are not especially user-friendly. The same goes for HLC mapping, which has never quite achieved its aspiration of incorporating community perspectives on the historic landscape.

However, such maps can be translated into engagement with the historic landscape on the ground by visualisations and in particular by walks that provide more information about not only what you can see but also what is under your feet (Fig 18). Moreover, those following the walks, whether residents and visitors, can be invited to contribute by feeding back impressions, photos and other information, for example documenting changing weather, seasons, plant and animal life; the natural world in which the historic landscape is embedded. It may even be possible to link such contributions to the relevant HLC polygons, producing a far more engaging resource about the historic landscape.

Everyone living in or visiting the Wolds has a reason why they are there, whether it be deep and ancestral or more recent and pragmatic, but all have interesting stories that could be captured and incorporated into the deeper story of the historic landscape revealed by archaeological and historical research. The premise for developing future

[3] https://heritage-explorer.lincolnshire.gov.uk/map

[4] https://historicengland.org.uk/research/results/aerial-archaeology-mapping-explorer/

landscape projects is that making the connections between people and places, recent history and deep time, archaeological research and well-being, will help communities engage with the landscape decisions that are relevant to their historic environment.

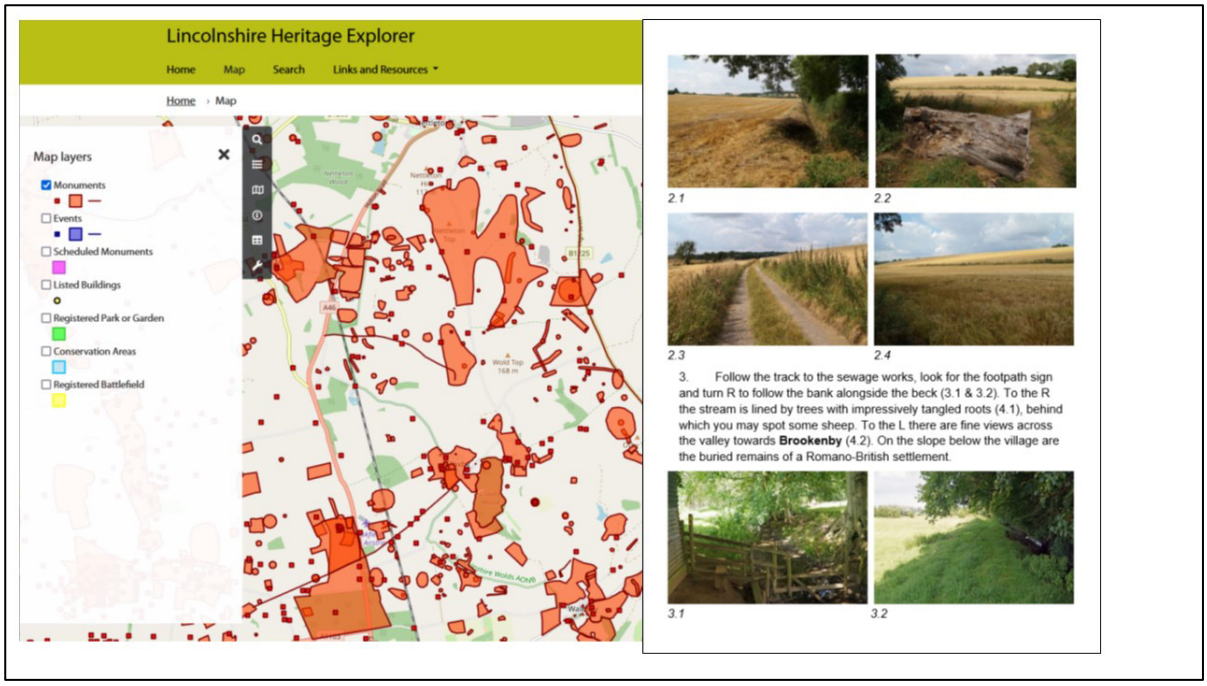

Figure 18: Translating heritage map data into engagement on the ground through walks

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