

LANDSCAPE & BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY

The existing A1237 Outer Ring Road corridor passes through, and alongside, a mixture of agricultural land, woodland, hedgerows, residential and commercial land. Much of the agricultural landscape, together with the rural character, existed before the present Outer Ring Road was constructed.

The urban extensions at Clifton Moor to the north-west and Huntington/Earswick to the north form substantial features in the landscape and are interspersed with open countryside. The River Foss, close to Huntington, includes flood defence features which intersect the existing Outer Ring Road.

A Landscape Strategy, that builds upon current Landscape Character Assessment undertaken for York and the surrounding areas, has been formulated for the proposed Outer Ring Road Dualling Scheme, and is referenced on the accompanying General Arrangement Drawings.

In summary the Strategy comprises:

- Seek to integrate the new road corridor into the existing landscape fabric.
- Identify where adverse visual impacts from sensitive receptors could be screened, ameliorated, or enhanced.
- Retain and protect existing trees, hedgerows and woodland wherever possible.
- Provide landscape mitigation measures that are in scale with the proposed ring road infrastructure and reflect landscape character.
- Facilitate the establishment, or re-connection, of visual and wildlife links between the ring road corridor and the existing landscape fabric.
- Employ a policy of 'net gain' to offset losses of existing trees, shrubs and woodland.
- Facilitate the assimilation and connectivity of any public rights of way within the ring road corridor, including any new cycleways, and explore opportunities for non-motorised users.
- Provide a green corridor along the route, with views out to open countryside where appropriate.
- Provide each junction with a unique Landscape Character that serves as an 'identifier' for users of the road network and 'sense of place' for the locality.
- Recognise the need for safe passage along the route for pedestrians and cyclists, with visibility at under passes and along footpaths and cycleways a priority.
- Protect and enhance Biodiversity within the road corridor.
- Prioritise the use of native tree and shrub species.
- Provide species rich native hedgerows along new highway boundaries.
- Create wildflower swards.
- Introduce wetland wildflower mixes to ditches and swales.
- Introduce reed planting adjacent to ditch outfalls.
- Introduce specific measures to provide protection and habitats for protected species.
- Provide opportunities for nesting and shelter to a range of species including birds, small mammals, invertebrates and insects.
- Provide pollinator friendly habitats, to support sustainable pollinator populations.
- Promote the sustainable re-use of excavated material for landscape purposes.
- Create a Landscape Management Plan to ensure successful establishment, and long-term sustainability, of the landscape scheme and biodiversity initiatives.

LANDSCAPE & BIODIVERSITY PROPOSALS

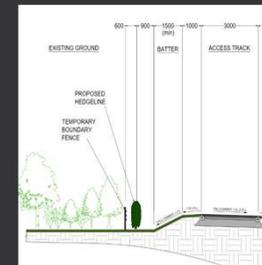
A comprehensive landscape scheme, incorporating a range of biodiversity features, will be designed to form an integral part of the proposed scheme to meet the objectives of the Landscape Strategy.

At this stage of scheme development, the Landscape Strategy identifies both the constraints and opportunities presented by the proposed Outer Ring Road Dualling Scheme, with the main features identified on the accompanying General Arrangement Plans.

An enhanced cycleway network will form an integral part of the scheme. This network will, through careful design and new planting, provide both physical and visual separation from the highway where possible and more varied alignment to enhance the experience for cyclists and other users.



Typical Cycleway Image



The proposed scheme junctions, in particular, offer the opportunity to establish features that would serve as an 'identifier' for road users and create a 'sense of place' for the locality. A variety of options are available, to be implemented through the landscape scheme, to establish character for the new scheme. Some examples are shown below; note that the landscape scheme may contain any combination of these features.



The summer highlight of species rich grassland and verges



Tree bark colour, in this example the trees are native Silver Birch



Mass planting of shrubs to achieve blocks of colour, where ornamental species are appropriate, with variation throughout the year. In particular at junctions in the more urban locations



Woodland blocks to both the roundabout and setting of the junction