
1 Introduction

1.1 Aim

The principal aim of this study is to identify areas and means by which geodiversity can contribute to the vision of the Limestone Landscape Partnership: "Working together in a landscape-scale Partnership to make a positive difference to quality of life and to the unique natural environment of the Magnesian Limestone area".

The Limestone Landscapes Partnership

Aims

- A1 Champion and co-ordinate informed, participative and integrated action on the environment across a broad range of sectors.
- A2 Deliver environment-led actions that achieve social and economic benefits.
- A3 Work with communities connected to the natural area to help shape a landscape that reflects their need

Objectives

- O1. Conserve and enhance the unique biodiversity, geo-diversity, landscape, heritage and cultural assets of the partnership area and strengthen and develop local character and distinctiveness.
- O2. Improve access to countryside and natural green-space, and opportunities for healthy 'green exercise' that will improve mental, physical and social well-being.
- O3. Raise awareness of the environment of the partnership area as an educational resource and a source of local pride, creating stronger links between urban and rural areas.
- O4. Empower local people to participate in activities and decision-making on the environment. O5. Improve, promote and use the environment as a stimulus for economic regeneration and sustainable growth.
- O6. Support and promote activities that help to mitigate, or adapt to, the impacts of climate change.
- O7. Support and complement the work of partners through linking and securing resources and expertise

1.2 Scope of the study

- Geodiversity audit of main geological formations and features through desk top study of existing information
- Through existing data and field work: identification of a network of representative sites which encapsulate the essential features of the Durham Magnesian Limestone JCA's geology. To include or be additional to SSSIs and/or existing Local Sites
- Identification of interpretation opportunities and issues, particularly those that make links between geodiversity, landscape character, biodiversity and economic and cultural history.
- Prioritisation of sites according to interpretation, linkage and community use criteria
- A condition assessment of each site and management proposals.
- Suggestions for Action Points to be taken forward.
- Prepare a fully attributed digital file of sites compatible with ESRI GIS system.
- Photographs of key formations and features, and representative sites.

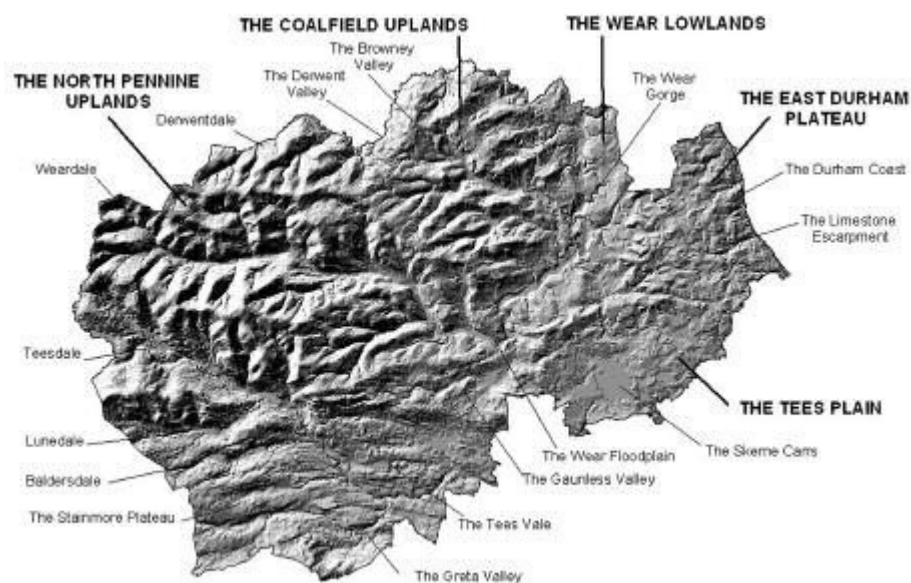
1.3 Area of study

The Limestone Landscapes area broadly follows the boundaries of the Durham Magnesian Limestone Plateau (see (Figure 1))

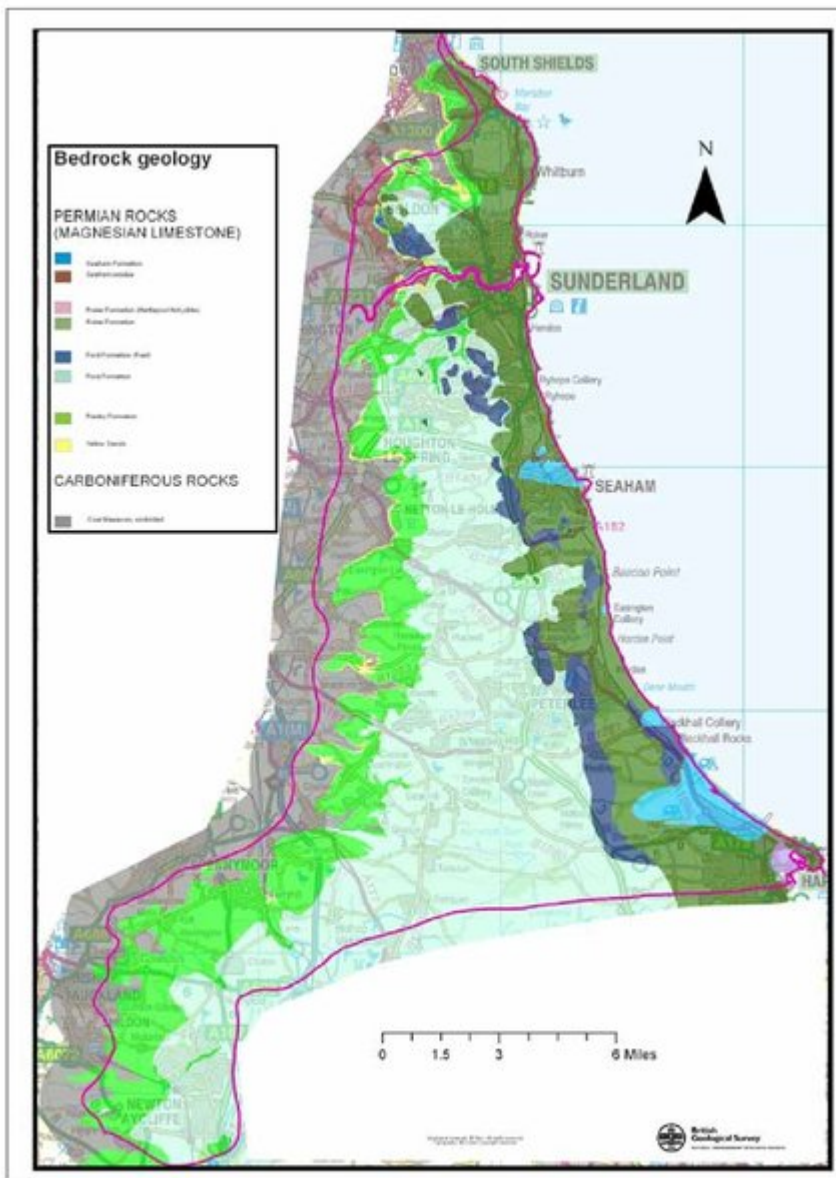
(http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/landscape/englands/character/areas/durham_magnesian_limestone_plateau.aspx).

This covers just over 44,000 ha of south-east Tyne & Wear and East Durham and Hartlepool and is described by the Durham Magnesian limestone Natural area profile (<http://www.english-nature.org.uk/science/natural/profiles/naProfile6.pdf>).

References



(Figure 1) *The Topography of County Durham.*



(Figure 1) Geological map of the area showing bedrock.