

# AREA 11

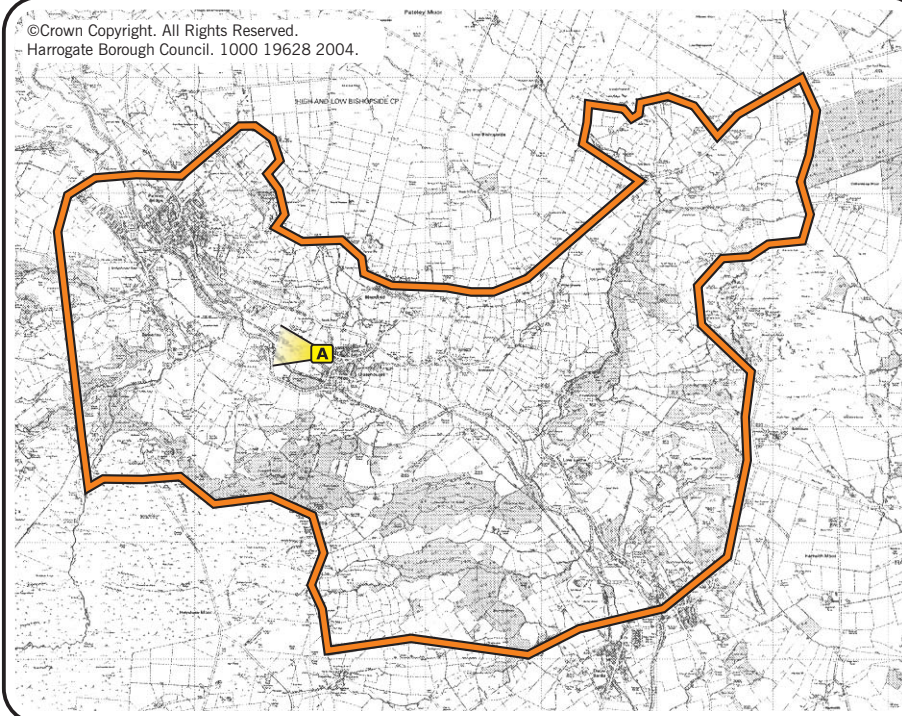
Approved  
Feb 2004

**A** View up Nidderdale from Glasshouses.



## Nidderdale Valley Pateley Bridge to Summerbridge

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### HARROGATE DISTRICT Landscape Character Assessment

— Area boundary\*



Camera location  
& direction



Not to  
Scale

\* NB Due to the nature of landform, surface treatment and soil/geology composition Character area boundaries cannot be delineated precisely and should be considered "transitional".

Location in Harrogate District



## Description

This is the broad, well-wooded valley landscape of the River Nidd south-east of Pateley Bridge and includes the narrow V-shaped wooded valley of Fell Beck Valley west of Brimham Rocks. The area covers more than 19km<sup>2</sup> and extends as far down the valley as Summerbridge.



There are several villages and a town in the valley bottom as well as scattered farmsteads and hamlets up the valley sides. In general, built form relates well to this wooded landscape where views tend to be channelled becoming dispersed at higher elevations up the valley sides. Tree and woodland cover is critical to the character of the valley. A large proportion of the woodland is registered as Ancient Semi-Natural indicating a long tradition of woodland management in the area.

In monastic times several granges, linked to Fountains Abbey, were located in this area. There is industrial archaeology throughout with mills along the river, a dismantled railway on the valley bottom and several disused quarries.




This is a busy area, intensively farmed and important to tourism within the Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

## Key Characteristics




### Geology, soils and drainage

-  Millstone grit solid geology with glacial till drift geology and river alluvium in the valley bottom.
-  Deep, stoneless, permeable, coarse, loamy soils over river alluvium in flat valley bottom. Well-drained, coarse, loamy soils on lower valley sides, with slowly-permeable, seasonally-waterlogged soils further up.

### Landform and drainage pattern

-  Broad valley of the Nidd, moderately steep in places with undulating valley sides.
-  The Nidd follows a south east course and is fed by numerous springs and becks which incise the valley sides.
-  Rock outcrops are characteristic of the upper valley rim, as at Guisecliffe and Brimham Rocks.

### Land use, field boundaries, trees and wildlife

-  Small to medium sized improved grassland fields are intensively managed for livestock.
-  Early enclosure field pattern.
-  Fields have hedge boundaries in the valley bottom with more drystone wall boundaries up the valley side. Individual trees along hedge boundaries.

## Key Characteristics

- Woodland and tree cover throughout the area is good and layout generally respects landform with few straight edges.
- Registered Ancient Semi-Natural woodlands at Guisecliffe, Skrikes Wood, Hawkshaw Gill Wood, Clarkes Carr, Braisty Woods, Old Spring Wood, Birch wood, Knox Wood, and Great Wood, Fellbeck.
- West Nidderdale, Blubberhouses and Barden Moor SSSI, SAC and International Wildlife Site at Guisecliffe.
- Sites of Interest for Nature Conservation are:
  - North Pasture (marshy grassland) in the Fell Beck Valley;
  - Skrikes Wood (oak woodland) on upper valley side south of Bewerley;
  - Braisty Wood and Horse Wood Oak woodland north of Summberbridge;
  - Fell Beck Oak Woodland;
  - Woodland at Hollin Farm near Glasshouses.

### Settlement pattern, built form and communications

- Pateley Bridge is the largest settlement in the area and developed as a lead mining town.
- Farmsteads, houses, villages and hamlets are scattered along the valley floor and sides. The larger villages are at crossing points on the Nidd and were associated with milling in the past.
- Along the valley sides settlement tends to be nestled into the wooded undulations.
- There is also small-scale industry along the valley floor.
- Traditional building materials are local sandstone with stone slate and blue slate roofs. Modern farm buildings can be visual detractors in the landscape when poorly located.
- The main Pateley to Ripley Road follows the north-east valley side
- Footpaths and tracks cross the area.

## Sensitivities & Pressures

- This busy and industrious valley landscape is sensitive to change resulting from the changing fortunes of rural industry. Pressure comes from the need to diversify to maintain the viability of farm business' and also from tourism which is important to the economy of the valley.
- There are extensive views across and along the valley. As a result new development can have considerable impact.
- The capacity of this Character Area to accept new built form is limited as the rural pastoral landscape is at saturation point and will be lost if there is more building between settlements.

- Many houses on the edge of villages have large gardens with highly ornamental boundaries that impact upon the rural character of the valley. Pressure continues for the extension of gardens.
- There is also considerable pressure for housing as this is a popular place to live within commuting distance of Harrogate and Leeds. Barn conversions have had their impact on character making the landscape appear more manicured.
- Retaining significant and vital tourist income which the area generates depends partly on preserving the area's natural beauty.

## Guidelines

### Aim: To preserve the rural pastoral character of the valley landscape.

- Discourage development beyond development limits and ensure that all new development respects vernacular and landscape pattern.
- Encourage diversification of management of improved grassland fields to improved habitat diversity and reintroduce a diversity of textures to the green field patterns.
- Maintain field pattern through management and repair of field boundaries.
- Maintain individual tree cover for the long term by promoting the planting of native field boundary trees (oak, ash and field maple).
- Development of a scale and type that impacts upon the rural character of the area should be resisted.
- Commercial forestry in the area is reasonably well-integrated

### Aim: To preserve existing vernacular buildings and styles.

- Not all vernacular buildings that contribute to character are protected by listing. The important contribution made to landscape character by vernacular buildings needs to be recognised and respected.
- Ensure that design of proposed new building respects vernacular.

### Aim: To integrate recreation facilities and other development where acceptable.

- Existing recreation facilities and small scale industrial development, which is prominent in the landscape, would benefit from appropriate landscape works to screen and integrate the development with tree cover and landscape pattern.
- New facilities and buildings should only be permitted where they are not highly visible, respect landform and landscape pattern and are accompanied by a comprehensive landscape scheme to deal with predicted impacts.