

AREA 2

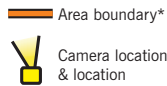
Approved
Feb 2004

A Scar House Reservoir.



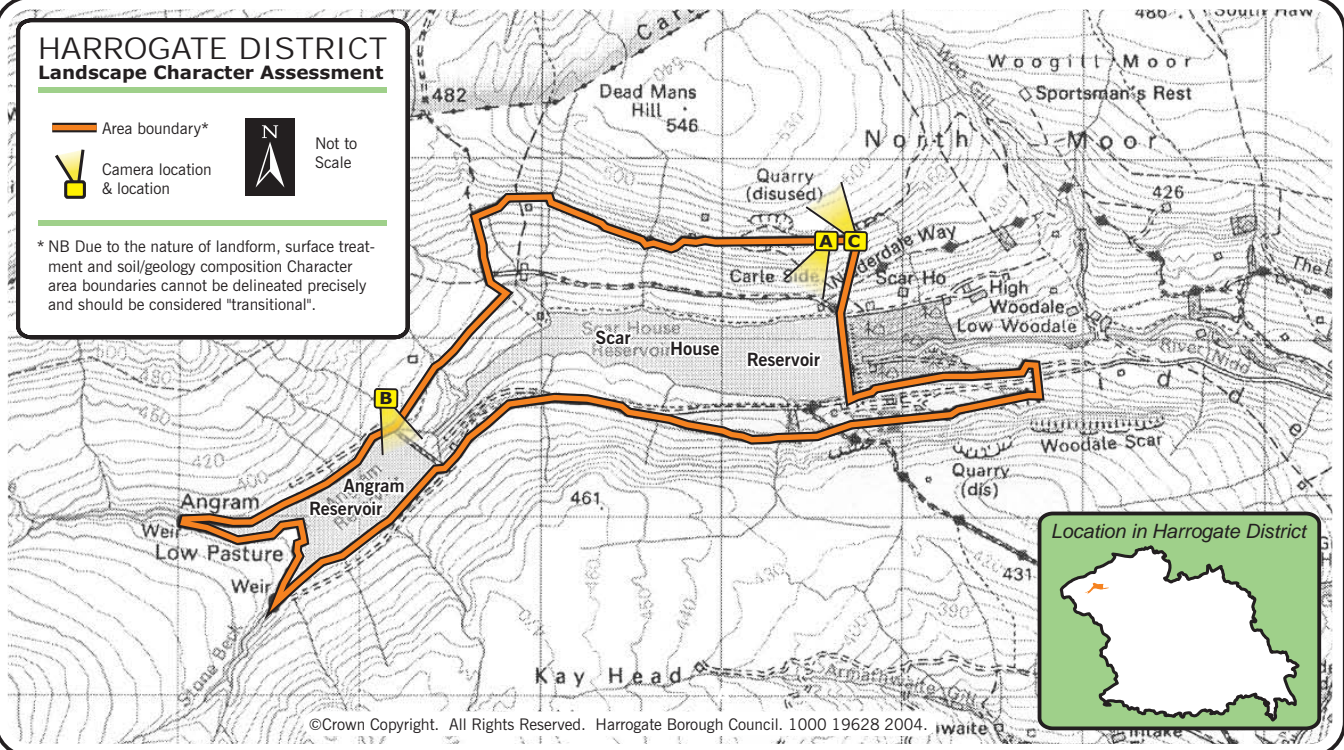
Upper Nidderdale Valley Reservoirs

HARROGATE DISTRICT Landscape Character Assessment



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".



Description

This Character Area covers approximately 3km² and incorporates the upper reaches of the Nidd Valley where it incises the upland moorlands in the west of the District. The narrow V-shaped valley floor has been flooded to create two reservoirs and here only the broader, shallow upper valley sides remain exposed. This is a landscape dominated by the vast expanse of water of the reservoirs and their engineered stone dams which are of historic and architectural interest.

Tree cover is sparse and limited to tributaries and gills. Small clumps grow along the south facing valley side just above Scar House Reservoir. The landscape is open with extensive views both along and across the valley into the moorland beyond.

The valley sides have a regular pattern of parliamentary enclosure grass fields. They are bound by stone walls, some of which are derelict, and there is a distinct boundary between the fields of the upper valley edge and the gritstone moor.

The area is remote, accessible by a minor road and approximately 10 miles from the nearest major settlement of Pateley Bridge. There are remains of a Medieval monastic farm which was continually occupied up to the 20th century at Lodge, which is highly vulnerable to damage from walkers and stock. Stone walls of the field system (flooded by the reservoir) are still visible when the water level is low.

It is a valuable recreation resource and lies within the designated Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty offering a doorway into a stunning landscape that is well used by walkers.



B Angram Reservoir and dam wall.

Key Characteristics

Geology, soils and drainage

- ▶ Millstone grit solid geology with slowly permeable, seasonally-waterlogged, fine loamy and fine loamy over clayey soils with an acidic peaty topsoil.

Landform and drainage pattern

- ▶ Narrow V-shaped flooded valley rising between 330m AOD in the valley bottom to approximately 470m AOD up the valley side.
- ▶ Scar House and Angram reservoirs flood the valley floor and are fed by numerous tributaries at this the source of the River Nidd.

Land use, fields, boundaries and trees

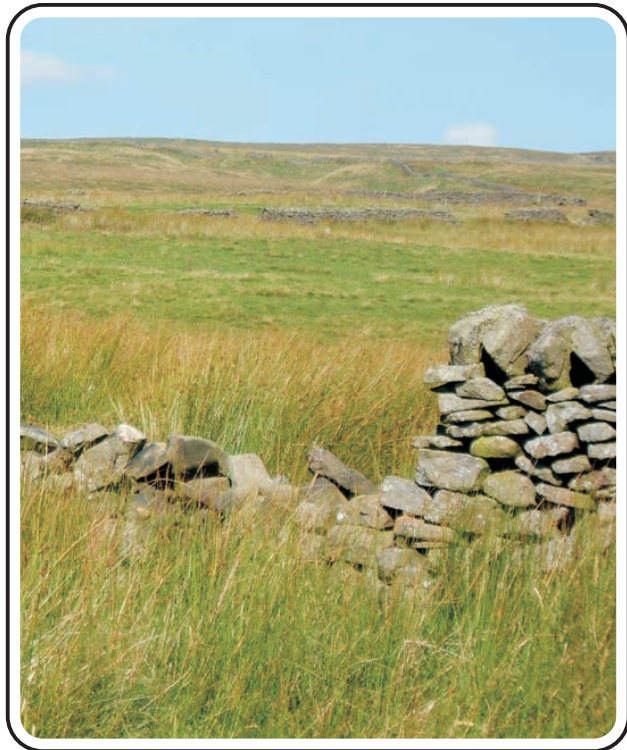
- ▶ Rough and semi-improved grassland above reservoirs is managed for livestock and is typically grade 4 agricultural land.
- ▶ Large rectangular fields with stone wall boundaries. Many of the walls are in a state of disrepair.
- ▶ Small areas of deciduous woodland along tributaries and gills, both established and new.

Settlement, built environment and communications

- ▶ A house at Scar House dam plus a public car park and toilet facilities.
- ▶ Several field barns in various states of repair.
- ▶ Disused quarries along valley rim provided the gritstone used to build dams and possibly stone walls and barns.
- ▶ Public access around the lower reservoir, with the Nidderdale Way public footpath crossing the Scar House Reservoir dam.

Sensitivities & Pressures

- ▶ Reservoir management by Yorkshire Water has impacted upon the character of the upland valley. Recreation facilities, access signs and car parking, in addition to the reservoirs, impact on the feeling of remoteness and wildness.
- ▶ Field barns and stone walls are neglected in places giving the appearance of abandoned field systems - a strong characteristic of the area which repairs would affect.
- ▶ The landscape is sensitive to change due to its openness and remoteness and it does not have the capacity to absorb additional built form without adverse change.
- ▶ Remoteness and pressure on farm businesses is likely to result in changing management practices, which may impact upon character.
- ▶ Key access points to open moorland across area.



▶ Drystone wall remnant on north valley side.

Guidelines

Aim: To maintain key characteristics while allowing for recreational enjoyment.

- ▶ Car parking and associated facilities need to be better integrated with the landscape through appropriate planting and boundary and surface treatment.
- ▶ Paths should be informal where possible and constructed from local materials. Liaise with Yorkshire Water regarding tourism and walking in the area. Ensure the maintenance of well-used paths.
- ▶ Signs need to be coordinated to respect the character of the area and adjacent character areas.
- ▶ Paths and 'gateways' to open access areas requires coordination.

Aim: To improve transitional habitats between moorland edge and improved grassland while respecting the open and remote character of the area.

- ▶ Encourage less intensive management of grassland at the boundary with moorland character area.
- ▶ Concentrate native planting to the gills but ensure that the gills maintain their character and are not lost in large plantations.
- ▶ Geometric conifer plantations would not blend with landscape character and should be avoided.