

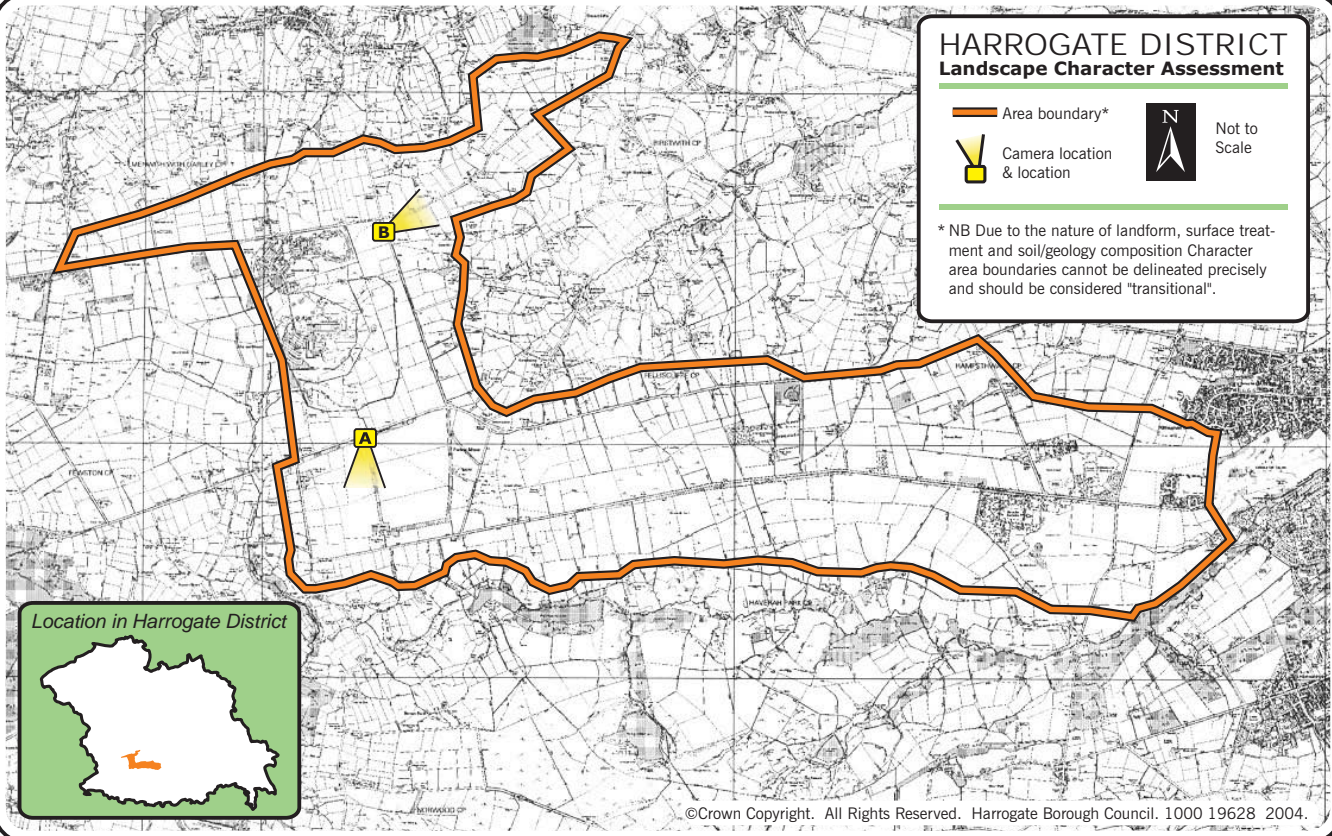
AREA 22

Approved
Feb 2004

A View south from Penny Pot Lane at edge of plateau.



Menwith and Penny Pot Grassland



Description

This is a simple, undulating plateau landscape covering around 18km² to the west of Harrogate between the valley systems of Oak Beck and Nidderdale.

The landform is large scale and generally flat. Lack of woodland cover means that the landscape remains open with extensive views.

Small and square conifer plantations and shelterbelts are sparsely scattered. Penny Pot Lane is densely wooded along its length by a linear band of trees.

Uniform, rectilinear grass fields typical of parliamentary enclosure are bound by stone walls and create a regular pattern on the landscape echoed by a grid of ditches and the straight line of the roads.

The area is easily accessible via a network of roads running east to west and north to south with the sound of constant traffic travelling to and from Harrogate.

The main settlement within the area is Menwith Hill that has large white circular radomes visible for miles around and brings discord and complexity to what is otherwise a well-balanced area.

Scattered farmsteads are a mixture of old, traditional farmhouses and new modern farm buildings.

Historically the area is within the boundary of the Royal Forest of Knaresborough a former medieval hunting park.

This area currently extends to the urban edge of Harrogate but it is likely that a separate character area will be needed for the area most affected by the town's edge. This is most likely to be an extension of Character Area 23: Saltergate Valley Grassland.

Key Characteristics

Geology, soils and drainage

- Millstone grit solid geology.
- Slowly permeable, seasonally-waterlogged and fine to coarse loamy over clayey soils.

Landform and drainage pattern

- Plateau landform gently undulating between 150m and 230m AOD.
- Drainage ditches forming a grid like network along field boundaries.

Key Characteristics (Cont'd)

- Several wells and springs.

Land use, fields, boundaries and trees

- Rough, semi-improved and improved grassland intensively managed for livestock with grade 4 agricultural land.
- Few square conifer plantations, deciduous clumps and linear shelterbelts.
- Parliamentary enclosures of medium sized rectilinear fields with a mix of walls, hedging and fencing of various conditions.
- Heavily treed road corridor of Penny Pot Lane and new woodland plantation at High Moor Farm screening caravan park.
- Very few Individual trees scattered along boundaries and patches of outgrown Hawthorn hedging.
- East of Saltergate Hill, evidence of past quarrying.

Settlement, built environment and communications

- The main settlement is RAF Menwith Hill with its large round radomes. The Army Foundation College is a large building to the east.
- Few scattered farmsteads and individual houses.
- Isolated field barns, many of them derelict, are characteristic particularly in hollows.
- Traditional building materials include Millstone grit with stone slate roofs.
- Caravan park at High Moor Farm south of A59.
- The A59 follows part of the route of the Roman road from Ilkley to Aldborough.

Sensitivities & Pressures

- This is an elevated exposed transitional landscape that is highly visible and as a result is sensitive to change through the expansion of existing development and new development. The radomes at RAF Menwith Hill are prominent and detract from the landscape character.
- Development pressure continues at the RAF Menwith Hill site and the increasing impact of this development is far reaching.
- An exposed location with high wind speeds resulting in pressure for wind farm development.
- Pressures for development close to the urban edge of Harrogate have resulted in changes to existing layout sites e.g. Army Foundation College and the former Queen Ethelbergers School site.
- Parliamentary enclosure field pattern is susceptible to change due to neglect and changing fortunes in farming.



B Looking north east from Cold Cotes Road end.

- Neglect of field barns and vernacular buildings is impacting upon landscape character.
- Impact of light pollution.

Guidelines

Aim: To reinforce landscape pattern.

- Encourage the protection and restoration of stone wall and hedge field boundaries.
- Discourage the amalgamation of fields.
- Repair and maintain field barns and vernacular buildings.
- Promote diversity of grassland communities through management.
- Tree planting should respect landscape pattern and landform allowing for open views across the area in key locations.

Aim: To mitigate impact of new and existing development on open landscape.

- Consider appropriate locations, orientation, design etc. for development in relation to views, particularly from Harrogate and the Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- Tree planting to mitigate impact should respect landscape pattern and value the openness of this area.

Aim: To enhance the diversity of the urban edge with the Character Area and maintain rural setting of Harrogate.

- Discourage development beyond the development limits of Harrogate.
- New built development should take account of views into and from Harrogate.
- Lighting requirements for new and existing development should consider the impact on rural setting and must not add light pollution in the countryside. Consider restricting wattage and times of lighting to mitigate impact.