

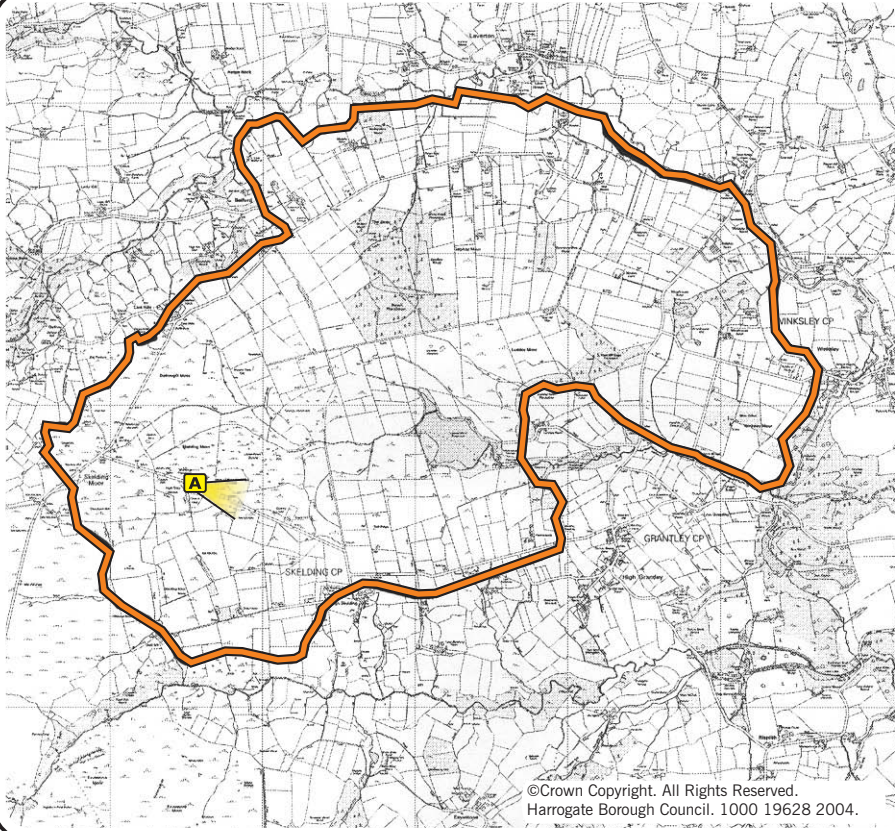
AREA 32

Approved
Feb 2004

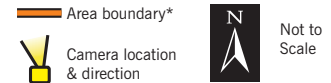
A View east from Skelding Moor.



Skelding Moor, Galphay Moor and Lumley Moor Upland Fringe Farmland



HARROGATE DISTRICT Landscape Character Assessment



* 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 upland area of Galphay Moor and Lumley Moor between the River Laver and River Skell corridors was open moorland prior to parliamentary enclosure. The area covers approximately 11km² and is moderate to large scale, semi-enclosed at the lower elevations becoming exposed on higher ground. Landscape pattern is organised and the result of the regular rectilinear field pattern imposed on the landscape as a result of parliamentary enclosure. The tended landscape, with patches that appear neglected, is simple and well-balanced. This is a relatively remote area with few roads and footpaths. Views are extensive.

The area is exposed where tree cover is limited at higher elevations. Farmsteads and houses are scattered throughout the area, most dating from parliamentary enclosure to the present day.

Post and wire fencing and telegraph poles detract from the area's appearance. However, this is a pleasant and attractive landscape in the Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and has stunning views and areas of interest.

Key Characteristics

Geology, soils and drainage

- Solid geology of Millstone grit and coal measures and some drift geology of till.
- A mix of slowly-permeable, seasonally-water-logged upland surface water gley soils with a peaty surface horizon. Patches of loamy, very acid, upland soils with a wet peaty surface horizon and loamy brown soils.

Landform and drainage pattern

- Landform is generally flat to gently rolling between 260m AOD in the west adjacent to the open moorland to 150m AOD in the east adjacent to the River Laver corridor.
- Rock outcrops are a characteristic of the moorland edge.
- Lumley Moor Reservoir is a notable water feature.
- Several springs are dotted across the area and small becks generally run eastwards incising the sloping landform.

Key Characteristics

Land use, fields, boundaries, trees and wildlife

- Improved and semi-improved grassland for intensive livestock production in medium-sized rectangular fields bounded by hedges or walls and typical of parliamentary enclosure.
- There are a few small and medium-sized woodland blocks, including one block of Ancient Semi-Natural woodland at Foster Field, as well as several conifer plantations.
- Many individual trees on boundaries at lower elevations becoming sparse on higher ground.
- Part of the East Nidderdale Moors SSSI extends into this character area at Skelding moor.
- Lumley Moor Reservoir is a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation as is the land to its north east.

Settlement, built environment and communications

- There are several scattered farmsteads in the area.
- Evidence of old settlement, possibly prehistoric, at Cast Hills on the western edge of the area.
- Disused mine workings at Skelding Moor and several small disused quarries.
- A network of public footpaths crosses the area via Lumley Moor Reservoir.

Sensitivities & Pressures

- The regular pattern created by the parliamentary enclosure fields and the relative openness of this area in combination with the sparse and scattered distribution of farmsteads and houses make it sensitive to change as a result of development.
- Conifer forestry has had a considerable, and detrimental, impact on character. Their stark, dark green plantation boundaries, often viewed against the skyline, have no regard to landform and are incongruous among the muted greens and greys of the fields, walls, buildings and hedges.

- Changing fortunes of farming has resulted in deterioration of drystone walls and use of post and wire fencing for stock proofing.
- Individual trees in the landscape are of a similar age.
- Deterioration in water quality would impact upon the wildlife value of Lumley Moor Reservoir and adjacent land resulting in a change of character.
- Unimproved grassland in the area may come under threat from changing farming practices due to economic pressures on landowners.

Guidelines

Aim: To protect and enhance the landscape pattern that makes this area distinct.

- Encourage maintenance and repair of field boundaries.
- Promote diversification of conifer plantations in consultation with the Forestry Commission and landowners.
- Encourage planting of trees to replace existing similar age trees in the long run.
- Built development should be discouraged where it does not relate to existing farmsteads and rural business.
- Resist the conversion of barns where new access arrangements would be required and where domestication of the setting would impact upon the rural character of the countryside and sparse settlement pattern.

Aim: Enhance the characteristics that give texture of the landscape and provide habitat diversity.

- Explore ways of maintaining and improving biodiversity in the area through water quality and grassland management.
- Promote diversity at the moorland edge in accordance with the Harrogate District Biodiversity Action Plan.