

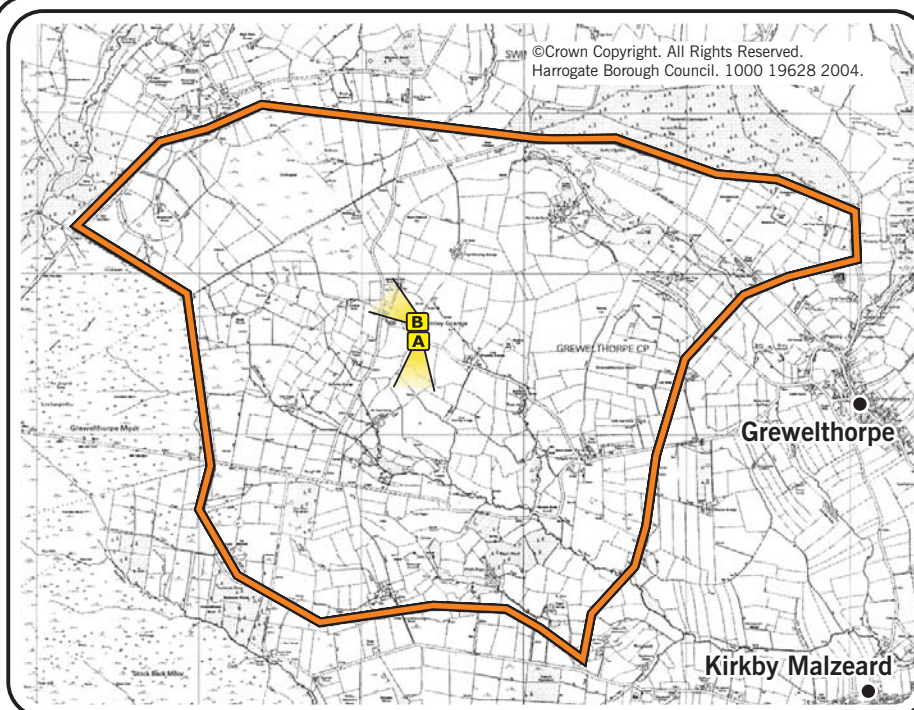
AREA
36

Approved
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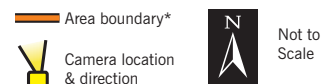
A From Bramley Grange looking south.



Grewelthorpe Moor Grassland



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 is a moderate scale undulating landscape, fringing the upland moors to the west and the Kirkby Malzeard and Grewelthorpe Vale grassland to the east. This transitional area covers approximately 9.7km² and is within the Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural beauty.

Conifer plantations and a moderate scattering of individual trees enclose and disperse views. Gorse grows within some of the fields, randomly scattered and evoking a sense of wildness in this relatively remote area.

Land use is a mixture of improved grassland and meadow managed for grazing livestock. Field pattern varies with rectilinear and regular parliamentary enclosures at higher elevations, bound with walls that have a strong visual impact in the landscape. The earlier enclosures at lower elevations are more random and are bound by hedges and walls that have less visual impact and suffer from neglect.

This area is unique with stunning views and an interesting variety of landscape elements. The edge of the Character Area with moorland fringe is well-defined due to the contrast between the green of the improved grass fields and the dark heather moorland beyond the boundary walls.

Key Characteristics

Geology, soils and drainage

- The solid millstone grit geology contains coal measures. The drift geology is glacial till.
- Slowly permeable, seasonally-waterlogged, fine loamy and fine loamy over clayey surface water gley soils with patches of better drained, coarse loamy brown soils over sandstone.

Landform and drainage pattern

- Undulating and rolling landform gradually falling eastwards from 270m to 150m AOD.
- Hutts Gill is the approximate boundary north east of Grewelthorpe and there are many becks running in a generally west to east direction through the character area and contributing to the undulating landform.
- Numerous springs and wells scattered across the area.

Land use, fields, boundaries, trees and wildlife

- Land use is improved and semi-improved grassland and meadow in small fields.
- Fields at higher elevations are enclosed by a strong pattern of parliamentary enclosure walls (generally in good condition) in contrast with early enclosures elsewhere bound by hedges reinforced with fencing.

Key Characteristics (Cont'd)

- Woodland cover is a scattering of rectilinear conifer and mixed plantations in areas of parliamentary enclosure along the moorland edge plus woodland along Hutts Gill and at Biggin Wood. Several smaller clumps relate to watercourses and early enclosure field pattern.
- Ancient Semi-Natural woodland at Bramley Wood.
- Individual tree cover along field boundaries is patchy throughout the area.

Settlement, built environment and communications

- There are no major settlements and several scattered houses and farmsteads.
- Building materials include local gritstone and stone slate plus occasional red tiles, Yorkshire boarding and breezeblock farm buildings.
- Minor roads through the area tend to be straight and orientated with the parliamentary enclosure field pattern.
- A network of public footpaths provides links between parallel minor roads and follows minor valleys.

Sensitivities & Pressures

- Landscape character owes much to field pattern so the area is sensitive to loss of hedgerows and stone walls due to neglect and amalgamation of fields for more cost-effective management.
- Farm buildings are highly visible where tree cover is poor. The impact these buildings have depend upon their location, size and materials. The older buildings use traditional materials and blend in where as larger modern buildings using non traditional materials e.g. breezeblock, significantly detract from character.
- Woodland cover is important to the area particularly deciduous clumps. There may be blocks of Ancient Semi-Natural woodland too small to be Registered (under 2 hectares) and are therefore not protected.
- Rectilinear blocks of conifers are prominent in the landscape.
- Proximity to Studley Park and the World Heritage Site.

Guidelines

Aim: To maintain varied landscape pattern.

- Encourage maintenance and management of hedgerows and planting of hedgerow gaps.
- Promote repair and maintenance of stone walls, particularly in the vicinity of farmsteads and at the moorland edge.
- Encourage woodland and tree management to maintain tree cover.
- Tree planting along field boundaries will ensure long term presence of trees which contribute to character.
- New woodland planting should be concentrated along beck corridors and use native planting mixes appropriate to the area, see Harrogate Council's Landscape Design Guide: LDG8.1.1.
- New buildings should relate to existing farmsteads, tree cover and landform avoiding the skyline. Building materials will be important in mitigating impact where new build is allowed.

Aim: To maintain the defined edge between moorland and grassland while allowing for some diversification of habitats at the moorland fringe.

- Research small woodland in the area to identify small blocks of Ancient Semi-Natural woodland.
- Promote woodland management and diversification of conifer plantations, in particular along their boundaries.
- Fields suitable for habitat creation at the moorland fringe will already demonstrate some features of rough and unimproved grassland including waterlogging.

Aim: Preserve vernacular buildings.

- Traditional barns linked to farmsteads are important to character. New buildings should not impact upon the contribution traditional buildings make to character.
- Promote the repair and consolidation of vernacular buildings.



B From Bramley Grange looking north west.