

AREA 38

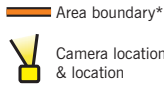
Approved
Feb 2004

A Looking south from Fearby.



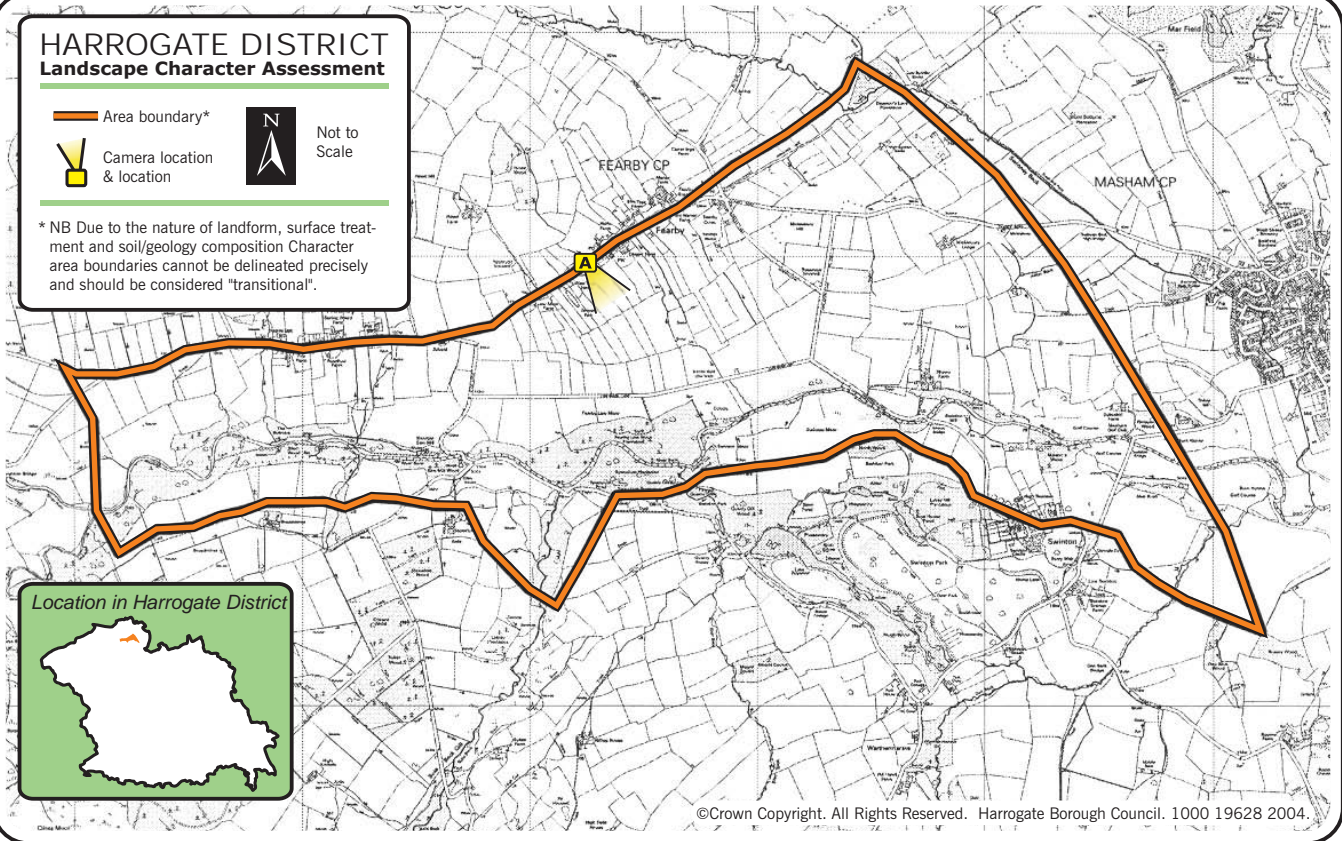
River Burn Valley Farmland

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".



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Description

This area covers more than 5km² of the Burn Valley from its confluences with Pot Beck in the west to Swinton Bridge at Masham Golf Club in the east and includes the villages of Healey and Fearby located on the south facing valley side. The area shares its southern boundary with that of Swinton Park, a Registered Park and Garden, situated at the top of the north facing valley side of the River Burn. The area is important to the setting of this historic park.



Landscape pattern is organised with elements of regularity in the linear layout of fields particularly on the north side of the river valley to the south of Fearby village. The riverbanks are well wooded and there are plantations in the valley bottom. Numerous individual trees on field boundaries contribute to the well-wooded appearance of the valley.

Earthworks are visible in a number of fields but have not been surveyed and are poorly recorded and understood. Evidence of coppicing and pollarding suggests Medieval industry took place here.




This is a stunning transitional landscape in the Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty following the course of the Burn from the upland down to the Ure corridor at Masham in the east.

Key Characteristics



Geology, soils and drainage

-  Millstone grit solid geology. Drift geology includes alluvium and river terrace deposits.
-  Soils are largely slowly permeable, seasonally-waterlogged surface water gleys.

Landform and drainage pattern

-  Landform is of a narrow river valley running east west with moderate to steep sloping sides from 100m AOD to 170m AOD.
-  The River Burn is the main watercourse with several streams incising the valley sides and feeding into it.
-  Springs are sparsely dotted along the valley side.

Land use, fields, boundaries, trees and wildlife

-  Improved grassland with occasional root crops for livestock.
-  Field size is small to medium with a combination of boundary types from hedges to walls and fences. As a rule walls predominate at the higher elevations.

Key Characteristics (Cont'd)

- Fields on the north valley side tend to be orientated in a north to south direction perpendicular to the course of the valley.
- There are many individual trees along field boundaries.
- The river corridor is heavily-wooded and includes three Ancient Semi-Natural woodlands; Hall wood, Fearby Low Moor and Hawkswell Wood.

Settlement, built environment and communications

- Fearby and Healey are two linear villages on the northern edge of the valley both of which have village Conservation Areas. A caravan park at Fearby is prominent on the hillside south of the village.
- Few sparsely scattered field barns along the valley sides.
- Traditional building materials are local sandstone and stone slate or blue slate roofs.
- Minor roads run the length of the valley either side of the river with two crossing points. A limited network of public footpaths links the area with Masham and surrounding upland.

Sensitivities & Pressures

- There are many views across the area encompassing the mix of characteristics which contribute to its distinctiveness. Change or loss to these characteristics will impact on character. As a result the landscape has a limited capacity to accept development. The caravan park at Fearby is an example of development that detracts from the characteristics of the area.
- Field pattern is important to the south facing valley slope and is under pressure as many walls are in poor condition and hedges fragmented.
- Telegraph poles are a detractor from the beauty of the area. However, generally they are not too prominent due to good tree cover.

- Neglect of woodland and trees, particularly the age of the trees and diversity of structure will cause a change in condition of key characteristics in the landscape.
- Tourism and recreation demands may result in pressure to extend existing facilities and create new ones.
- Proximity to Fountains Abbey, Studley Royal and the World Heritage Site.

Guidelines

Aim: To preserve and enhance characteristic landscape and settlement pattern.

- Promote the repair of fragmented field boundaries.
- Hedges may be used in places to replace walls but this should be assessed on a case-by-case basis.
- Encourage the planting of locally native trees along field boundaries (e.g. oak and ash).
- Promote proactive woodland and tree management to ensure long term tree cover in the valley.
- Development to the rear of settlement would impact upon linear characteristics and should be avoided.
- Protect the rural character of approaches to villages.

Aim: To integrate tourism facilities with landscape pattern and vernacular.

- Develop guidelines for tourism facilities and resist expansion of existing facilities that will impact on landscape character and settlement pattern.
- New facilities require appropriate mitigation measures in keeping with landscape character.
- Encourage the integration of existing facilities with the landscape through appropriate site boundary planting and the use of materials and colour.