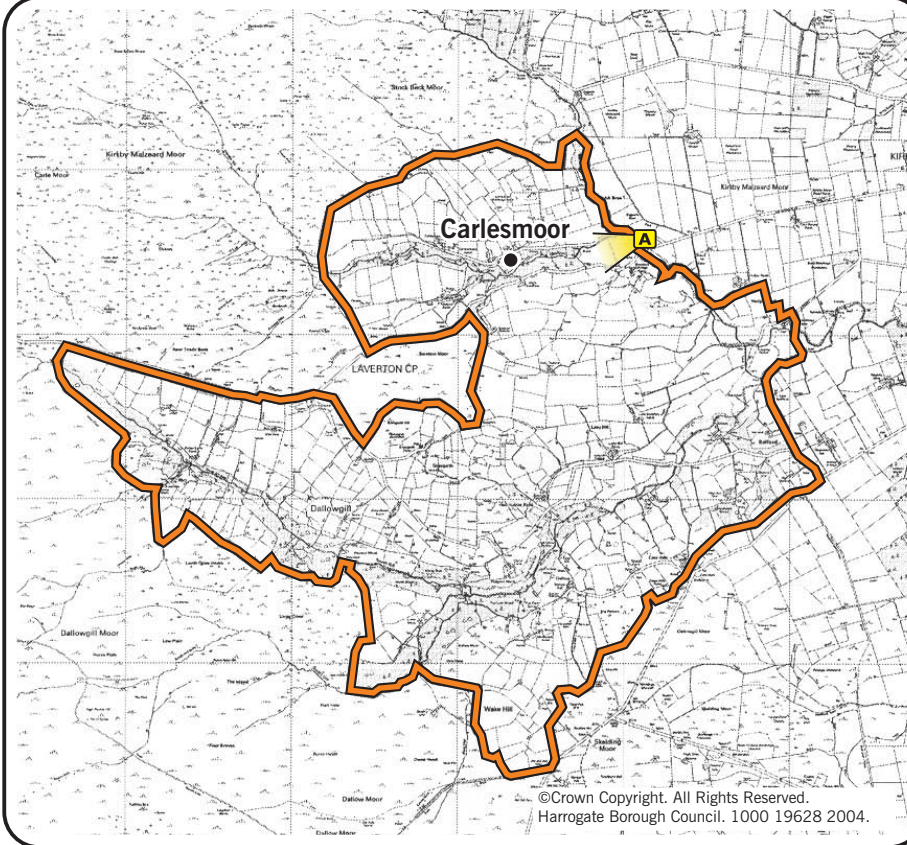## AREA 9

Approved Feb 2004

A View from Kendall Bank Farm west into the Character Area.

Laverton Upland Fringe

HARROGATE DISTRICT
Landscape Character Assessment

— Area boundary*

A Camera location & direction

N 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".

Location in Harrogate District

Description

This is a small to medium scale Character Area encompassing the valleys of Dallow Gill and Carlesmoor Beck at the upland edge before they meet to form the River Laver to the east. To the north west is the Gritstone Moorland of Kirkby Malzeard and on the moorland edge there is evidence of ancient field systems. The area covers 7.7km^2. Field pattern is higgledy-piggledy, probably the result of assarting (gradual woodland clearance), with small areas of parliamentary enclosure along the upland boundary with moorland.

In places views are channelled, becoming dispersed on higher ground. The well-wooded valleys of Dallow Gill and Carlesmoor beck are enclosed and intimate, with many springs and small streams feeding into them. There are many dispersed farmsteads and houses scattered across this remote landscape on the edge of the grit-stone moor. Two minor roads lead into the Character Area, which is criss-crossed by a network of public footpaths, bridleways and tracks.

The area was controlled by Fountains Abbey prior to its dissolution and contained a monastic Grange. It is likely that part of the field systems and the Ancient Semi-Natural woodland originate from that time.

Greygarth monument, a Victorian Jubilee monument, is a focal point near the moorland edge. Many of the farmsteads and the church date from the Victorian era along with some late 18th and early 19th century buildings.

The steep-sided valley of Dallow Gill was surveyed with the intention of creating a reservoir - this didn't happen but sighting towers remain. This relatively remote area is in the Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Key Characteristics

Geology, soils and drainage

- Millstone grit solid geology.

- Slowly-permeable, seasonally-waterlogged, fine loamy and fine loamy over clayey upland surface water gley soils, with a peaty surface horizon. There are also patches of loamy, very acid, upland soils with a peaty surface horizon often with a thin iron pan.

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Key Characteristics (Cont'd)

Landform and drainage pattern

- Landform is undulating from 280m to 150m AOD gradually falling away to the east from the high moorland plateau to the west.

- Rock outcrops are characteristic of the upland edge of this area.

- There are two narrow valleys associated with Carlesmoor Beck and North Gill Beck which becomes the River Laver where it meets with South Gill Beck.

- Many springs and small streams throughout the area drain to the east.

Land use, fields, boundaries, trees and wildlife

- Small, random grassland fields are examples of early enclosure, possibly medieval.

- Field boundaries are dry stone walls.

- The field systems, earthworks and disused quarries are all of historic importance.

- The rivers have associated woodland along their course, much of it coniferous.

- There is Ancient Semi-Natural woodland at Carlesmoor Beck and along parts of North Gill Beck.

- The East Nidderdale SSSI surrounds the area on three sides and includes the Ancient Semi-Natural woodland at the top of North Gill Beck.

Settlement, built environment and communications

- There are many scattered farmsteads and individual dwellings.

- Traditional building materials are local gritstone with stone slate and blue slate roofs.

- Numerous footpaths and two bridleways criss-cross the area.

- The area was surveyed with a view to the valley being flooded to become a reservoir but this never materialised. Sighting towers remain and are of interest.

Sensitivities & Pressures

- This distinct rural Character Area, with a long-established historic pattern, is sensitive to changes that development and changing land management regimes could bring. Distinctiveness will be lost if insensitive development is permitted.

- Access to the area is via a limited network of minor roads that wind along the sloping landform except at the moorland edge where the road becomes straight.

- Neglect of field boundaries has resulted in the amalgamation of fields and a simplfication of field pattern.

- Woodland management, possible neglect of Ancient Semi-Natural woodland and extension of conifer plantations.

- Neglect of heritage features resulting in their degradation.

- Neglect and degradation of the footpath network, which provides clues to the historic and cultural origins of the area, is detrimental.

Guidelines

Aim: To protect the distinct historic pattern and built form of the area.

- Encourage maintenance and restoration of field boundaries through established grant schemes (such as Countryside Stewardship and Environmental Enhancement Grants).

- Promote appropriate management of the Ancient Semi-Natural woodland.

- Research the historic and cultural origins of the landscape and identify features which require protection but which are not already designated.

- New development should be discouraged where it does not respect settlement pattern and vernacular. Where need is established design must consider location, scale and materials in relation to landscape character.

Aim: To protect and promote the strong footpath network that contributes to the historic character and recreational value of the area.

- Survey footpaths in the area and ensure they are maintained and kept open.

- Establish links to the open access land of the moor via the existing footpath network to reduce the use of motor vehicles to access the area.

- New signs for footpaths and open access areas will help promote use but must respect landscape character. Develop detailed guidelines related to access facilities needed

Aim: To promote and enhance the wooded characteristics of the two main valleys and link in with existing native woodland.

- Identify areas of Ancient Semi-Natural woodland too small to be Registered (under 2 hectares) and protect them.

- Encourage the diversification of conifer plantations, particularly along Dallow Gill, through the introduction of native planting mixes to the plantation edge as the opportunity arises.

- Promote woodland management and planting of new native woodlands in the valleys and gills to respect landform and character.

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