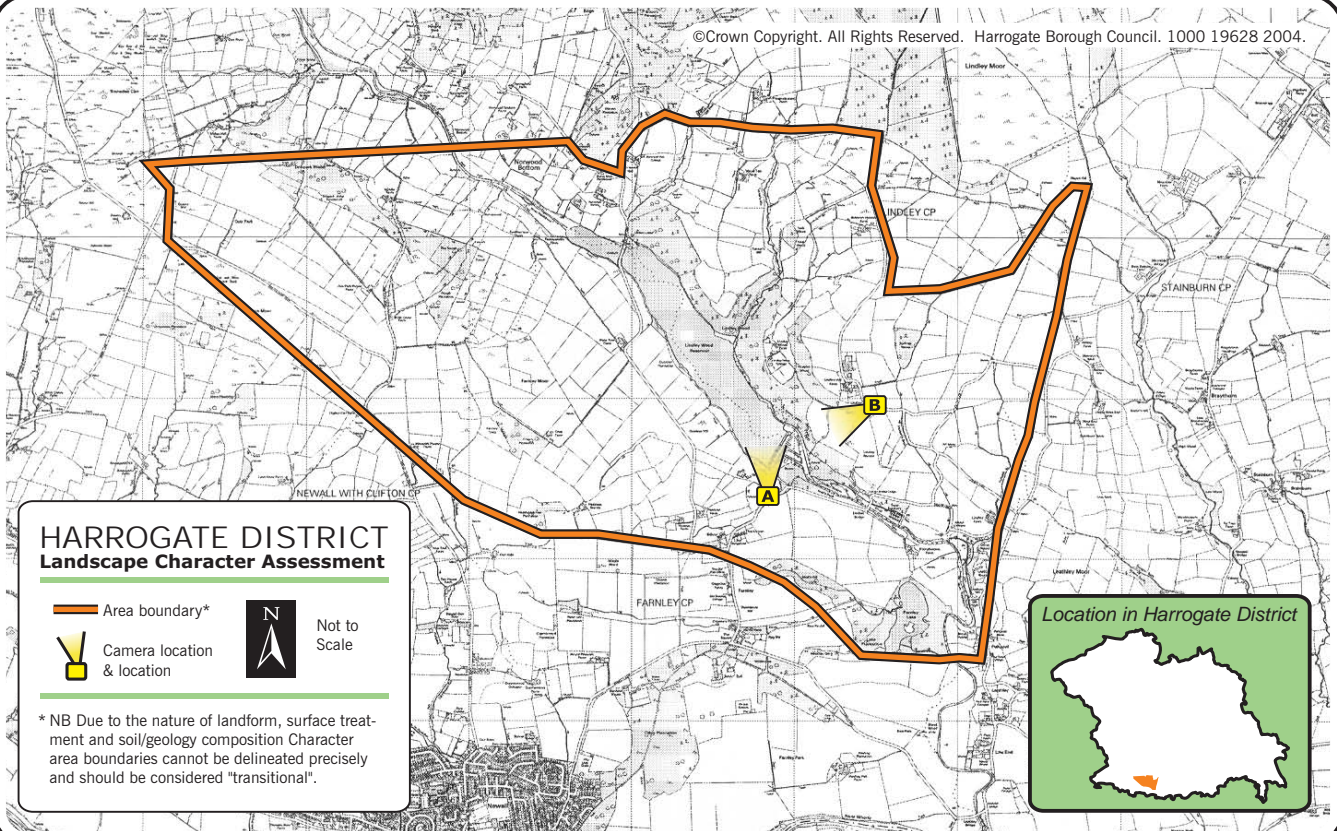


# AREA 19

Approved  
Feb 2004

**A** Lindley Wood Reservoir from the south side.

## Lower Washburn Valley



## Description

This Character Area is the lower reach of the River Washburn Valley on its journey southward to join the River Wharfe. The area covers 11.3km<sup>2</sup>. The long and slender Lindley Wood Reservoir occupies most of the valley floor with organised fields creating a regular pattern on the valley sides. The sloping topography partially encloses the landscape and channels views across the water and along the valley. Land use is in the form of pasture managed for livestock.

The northern side of the reservoir is heavily-wooded with a thick conifer plantation along its edge. Individual trees are scattered along and within field boundaries in contrast to the sparsely-wooded southern side.

This is an attractive area, mostly within the Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, that is easily accessible. However, the noisy B6451 road provides constant traffic noise.

## Key Characteristics

### Geology, soils and drainage

- Millstone grit solid geology.
- Deep well-drained, fine and coarse loamy brown soils on steep slopes locally on the north east valley side and slowly-permeable, seasonally-waterlogged soils. Fine loamy and fine loamy over clayey surface water gley on the south west valley side.

### Landform and drainage pattern

- V-shaped valley with steep sides between 100m and 270m AOD.
- Lindley Wood Reservoir and dam are major features on the course of the Washburn and are key to the current character of the area having changed the appearance of the V-shaped valley.
- Watercourses include the River Washburn plus several wooded gills incising the valley sides.
- There is a lake at Farnley Hall at the southern end of the Character Area.

## Key Characteristics (Cont'd)

### Land use, fields, boundaries, trees and wildlife

- Medium to large improved grassland fields enclosed with drystone walls in varying condition, often reinforced with post and wire fencing.
- On the upper valley sides there are flatter areas of parliamentary enclosed grassland.
- A large mixed and coniferous plantation dominates the north east valley side.
- Individual trees along field boundaries and scattered within fields.
- Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation are Dob Park wood, Lindley Wood Reservoir and Oxmires Hill.
- Ancient Semi-Natural woodland along Turner Gill above Greystone Beck, at Coppice Wood east of Lindley Farm and at Lindley Warren south east of Lindley Dam.

### Settlement, built environment and communications

- No major settlement but several scattered farmsteads.
- Traditional building materials include local sandstone and grey slate.
- The B6451 is the main road through the area crossing the valley at the top end of Lindley Wood Reservoir and continuing down the south west valley side.
- Public rights of way run either side of the valley.
- Evidence of milling industry at Lindley bridge.
- Dob Park Hunting lodge is a Scheduled Monument and the north east side of the Washburn lies in the Royal Forest of Knaresborough, a former medieval hunting park.

## Sensitivities & Pressures

- The reservoir and associated coniferous plantations dominate the lower valley. Flooding the valley caused considerable change to what was once a narrow V-shaped valley and many original characteristics have been lost. Downstream of Lindley Reservoir dam some of the original characteristics remain in the steep sided valley including a mill goit.

- Field boundaries are neglected in places. The area is sensitive to the loss of the strong field pattern which is particularly apparent on the north east facing valley side.
- Little is known about the historic importance of the area. There are signs of early enclosure among the parliamentary enclosure and the area was important to the milling industry in the past.

## Guidelines

### Aim: Preserve and enhance original key characteristics of the area.

- Identify areas of early enclosure, research their origin and promote the maintenance of field boundaries.
- Promote management of registered Ancient Semi-Natural woodland to respect native woodland for the area.
- Reintroduce native woodland mixes where possible and diversify the edge of conifer plantations (see Harrogate Council's Landscape Design Guide: LDG8.1.2).
- New planting should respect landform and character. Avoid planting on the skyline and use dips, hollows and gills.

### Aim: Preserve vernacular architecture.

- Recent work on Lindley dam has respected vernacular materials resulting in minimal additional impact on landscape character.
- Modern farm development may be accommodated where associated with existing farms particularly where set amongst trees or against a craggy backdrop.
- Settlement is scattered and sparse in the area and should remain so to avoid detrimental change to character.



**B** Lindley Wood Reservoir from the north side.