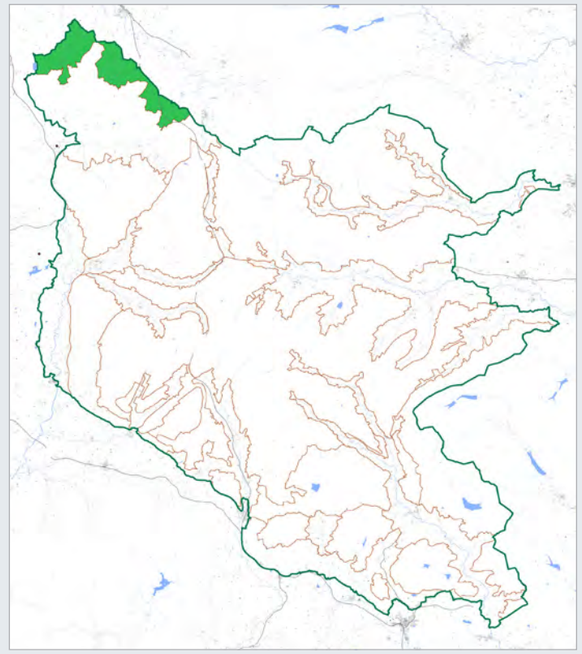
LCA 1 Eden Valley Fringe

Yorkshire Dales National Park - Landscape Character Assessment

YORKSHIRE DALES
National Park Authority

Valley of Dalebanks Beck, to the west of Crosby Raven



LCA 1 Eden Valley Fringe

Key characteristics

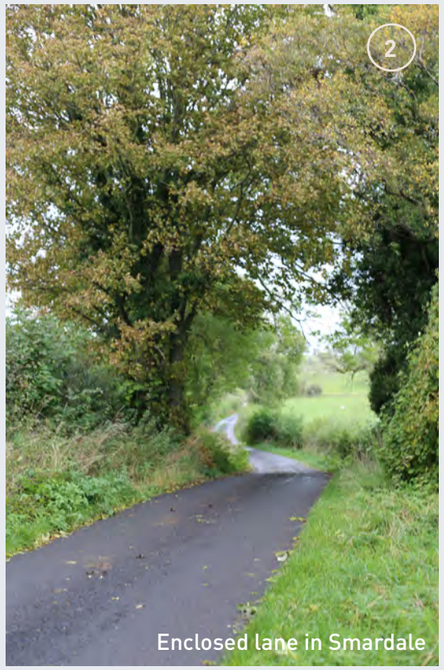
- Sheltered and enclosed farmland landscape on gently undulating slopes of the small tributary valleys of the River Eden which run north-east from the Orton Fells limestone plateau
- The steep becks on the edge of the limestone plateau flow sporadically, but there is a dense network of small, winding streams within the valleys and throughout the lowland valley fringe landscape
- Well settled landscape with spring-line villages on the edge of the fells to the south and nucleated stream-side villages within the valleys
- Small-scale, historic field pattern on fringes of villages, with strong patterns of long tofts defined by walls, and isolated farmsteads
- Fields are enclosed by limestone walls on the fringes of the limestone plateau and by a mixture of stone walls and hedgerows within the valleys.
- Narrow tree lined gills and becks are perceptible in the more open upper valley landscapes as wooded features; small blocks of woodland, tree belts and hedgerow trees create a fairly enclosed landscape character overall
- Small historic villages, built with local limestone and 'pink' sandstone, often centred on long greens
- Villages are connected by a network of winding, narrow lanes, which are often enclosed by tall hedgerows.
- Occasional long views from the upper valley slopes across the Eden Valley Fringe LCA to the upland ridges of the North Pennines and Cumbrian Fells to the north and west.

Numbered photographs illustrate specific key natural, cultural and perceptual features in the Eden Valley Fringe LCA (see page 6)

Informal grazed village greens bring the countryside right into the heart of the village



Maulds Meaburn

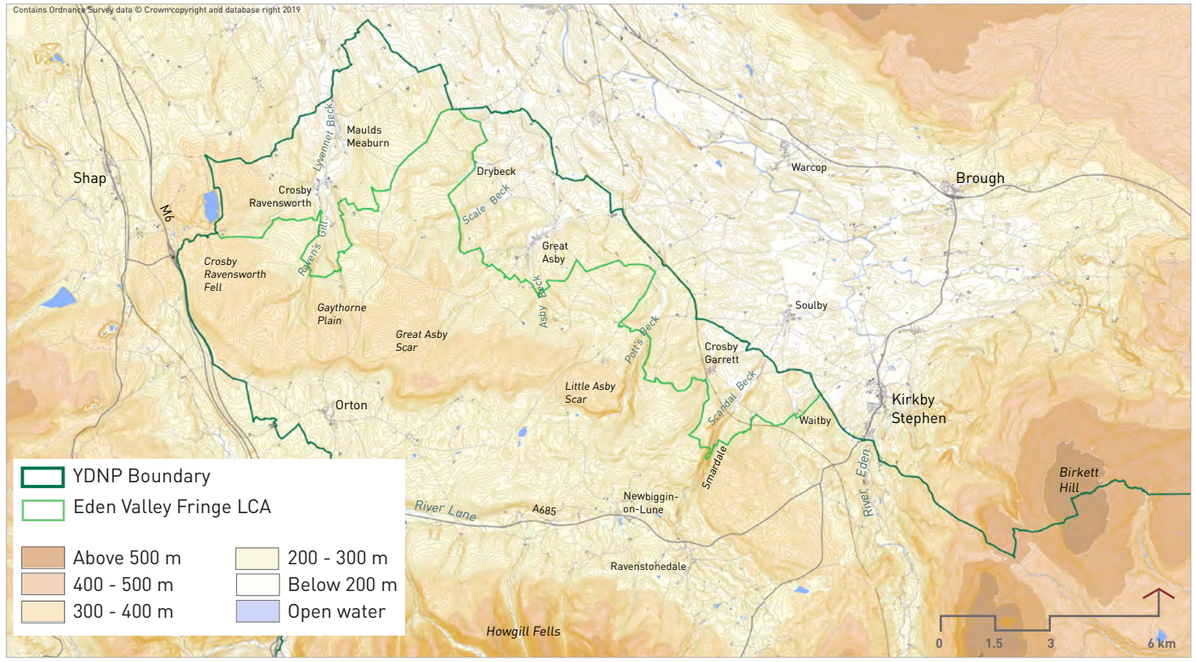


Enclosed lane in Smardale

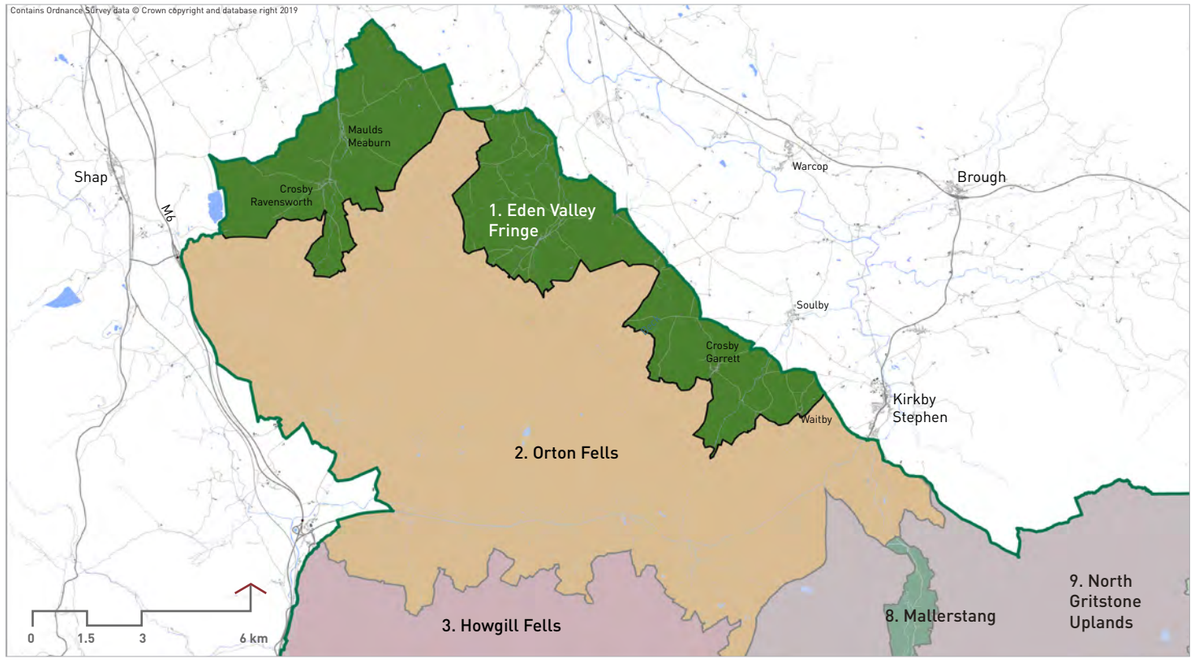


Road junction at gateway to the village of Waitby

Landscape context: Eden Valley Fringe



Landscape character: Eden Valley Fringe



Landscape context

The Eden Valley Fringe LCA includes the valleys that have eroded the northern margins of the upland limestone plateau which is aligned broadly east-west from Smardale Fell in the east to Crosby Ravensworth Fell in the west on the north-west boundary of the National Park. The upland limestone plateau landscapes fall within the Orton Fells (LCA 2) and the limestone scars, outcrops and screes on the northern margins of the limestone plateau often feature in views from the Eden Valley Fringe landscapes to the north.

The gill valleys have been incised by tributaries of the River Eden, which flow broadly north-eastwards to the Vale of Eden which lies north of the National Park. The area is underlain by bands of limestone and sedimentary mudstones, siltstones and sandstone. It is a transitional landscape between the limestone plateau to the south and the lowland sandstone farmland landscape of the vale of Eden to the north-west and pink-coloured sandstone is evident in building material in villages close to the northern boundary of the National Park.

From west to east, the main tributary streams, valleys and streamside settlements are:

- Raven's Gill and Blea Beck which have incised Crosby Gill and combine to form Lyvennet Beck which flows through the villages of Crosby Ravensworth and Maulds Meaburn;
- Asby Gill, which flows through the village of Great Asby to form Asby Beck and its tributary, Scale Beck. Asby Beck and Scale Beck combine to form Hoff Beck near the northern border of the National Park
- Pott's Beck, which flows through Pott's Valley and the hamlet of Waterhouses;
- Scandal Beck, which has cut the deep, narrow wooded Smardale Gill to the south west of Kirkby Stephen.



Numbered photographs illustrate specific key natural, cultural and perceptual features in the Eden Valley Fringe LCA (see page 6)

Distinctive landscape character

This sheltered valley farmland landscape seems relatively enclosed and intimate in scale compared to that of the sweeping, exposed upland limestone plateau to the south. There is a transition from steep, narrow and densely wooded gill valleys on the upland plateau margins to a broader, gently undulating valley farmland at lower elevations, with frequent clustered villages and hamlets alongside the streams.

Variations in the scale and character of local landscape patterns have been shaped by the development of villages and hamlets within the valleys. There are isolated farmstead and small hamlets in some of the upper valleys, but most villages have developed along the spring line or downstream at river crossing points. The villages are an attractive focus for views and a hub for the network of narrow hedged lanes that thread across the valley landscapes.

The landscape is characterised by improved pasture, meadows and areas of unimproved pasture. The occasional unimproved meadows and road verges provide a colourful summer display and some have nationally important meadow habitats eg. Town End Meadows and Little Asby Inrakes and Outrakes SSSIs). Drystone walls form a prominent patchwork on the upper valley edges but are supplemented and occasionally replaced by hedgerows and trees on lower elevations creating a more sheltered and enclosed character.

The narrow tree lined gills and becks incised within the upper valley slopes are visible in the landscape as wooded features; woodlands become larger and interspersed with pastures at lower elevations, but woodland cover is typically more extensive alongside the many watercourses within the undulating valley farmland landscape, often combining with copses, tree belts and hedgerow trees to create an enclosed character.

Small linear villages are located along the watercourses in the lower parts of the valleys, as at Maulds Meaburn, Crosby Ravensworth and Great Asby. The villages are distinctive with an intact character typically containing terraces of houses and isolated cottages often set around an area of open space and common land through which the river flows, with numerous small bridging points providing access within the village. The open common land creates an informal loose settlement pattern, united by the common built vernacular of limestone walls and white render, with occasional dressed sandstone lintels and quoins alluding to the sandstone buildings of the adjacent Eden valley. The use of sandstone is more prevalent towards the northern fringes of the LCA, as in the village of Drybeck. A distinctive pattern of medieval fields divided into linear strips often surrounds settlements. Rigg and furrow and strip lynchet features are prominent in the farmland landscape in some areas and there is remnant parkland at Crosby Ravensworth (Cow Green Deer Park and Crosby Ravensworth Park Pale).

Fords (often across fast flowing becks) are a characteristic feature of the landscape towards the east of the LCA.

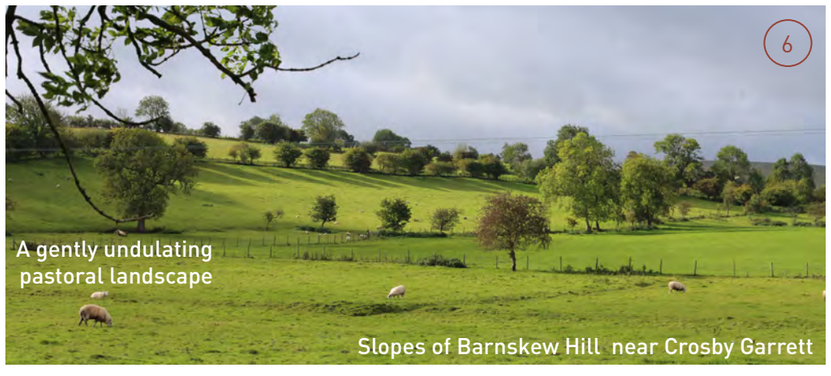
Outside the villages, isolated stone farmsteads and barns sheltered by clumps and plantations of ash and sycamore are a feature. This is overall, a sheltered and domesticated landscape frequently perceived as remote and with a strong sense of tranquillity.

The River Eden is considered to have an exceptionally high diversity of aquatic plants and several tributaries of the Eden within this LCA, including Lyvennet Beck, Scale Beck, Pott's Beck and Scandal Beck are designated as an SAC, supporting rich plant communities along with brook and river lamprey, bullhead, salmon, whiteclawed crayfish and otters. The water quality of the tributary streams is high and, as they flow over both limestone and bands of sandstone, although some of the upland becks, which flow over stretches of limestone, are ephemeral and only flow on the surface for part of the year, as at Drybeck.

The steep side slopes of the narrow gill valleys at Smardale and Crosby Gill have nationally important upland ash dominated woodlands and calcareous grassland communities (Smardale Gill and Crosby Gill SSSIs).



Long view from Grammary Bank on the slopes of Smardale, looking west across the Eden Valley Fringe LCA towards the Cumbrian Fells



Slopes of Barnskew Hill near Crosby Garrett



Ford across the fast-flowing Scandal Beck, near Smardale Mill

Diverse, lively domestic character - linear village greens, flowing streams and a mix of building materials







Packhorse bridge crossing beside a linear village green





Numbered photographs illustrate specific key natural, cultural and perceptual features in the Eden Valley Fringe LCA



Maulds Meaburn from the valley slopes to the east of the village



Drybeck Hall

Streams flowing over limestone and sandstone have exceptionally important aquatic habitats



Photo © Jim Barton cc_by-sa/2.0

Lyvennet Beck in part of the River Eden SAC - at Crosby Ravensworth

Key natural, cultural and perceptual features

NATURAL

Narrow, wooded gill valleys on the fringes of the limestone plateau have nationally important grassland and woodland habitats, including semi-natural ash-dominated woodlands eg. Crosby Gill and Smardale. (17)

Branching streams flowing over limestone and sandstone bedrock typically have high water quality; Lyvennet Beck, Scale Beck, Pott's Beck and Scandal Beck are designated as part of the River Eden SAC in recognition of the international importance of their aquatic plant communities. (13)

Valuable meadow habitats - occasional unimproved pastures and hay meadows have nationally important grassland flora eg. Town End Meadows and Little Asby Inrakes and Outrakes SSSIs. The former is part of the North Pennine Dales Meadows SAC.

Network of narrow lanes bordered by limestone walls on upper valley slopes and often tightly enclosed by tall hedgerows within valleys. (2) (3)

CULTURAL

Historic villages with distinctive linear greens, areas of common land criss-crossed by bridges over rushing streams. The sheep grazed village greens at Maulds Meaburn are particularly unusual and attractive. (13) (14)

Multiple small river crossings - stone bridges and fords. (7) (11) (16)

Villages are often surrounded by small fields, which retain remnants of medieval strip field patterns. There are extensive earthworks associated with the sites of medieval settlements and their open field systems on the outskirts of the villages of Maulds Meaburn and Waitby (both sites are scheduled monuments). (10) (12)

Archaeological sites for Romano British settlements and field systems at Burwens, Crosby Gill and on Holburn Hill near Great Asby

The use of pink sandstone as a building material is unique in the YDNP. (18)

Remnant historic parkland near Crosby Ravensworth (Cow Green Deer Park and Crosby Ravensworth Park Pale).

PERCEPTUAL

Sheltered and well treed character of the valley landscapes contrasts with the open, sweeping scale of the adjacent upland limestone plateau. (9)

Diverse, lively domestic character - the informal, village greens, rushing streams and bridges are an attractive focus for views, activity community life. (1) (8) (13) (14) (15)

Pastoral landscape - verdant, rolling meadows dotted with sheep and bordered by mature trees. (4) (6)

Occasional long views from the upper valley slopes across the Eden Valley Fringe LCA to the distant high ridges of the North Pennines and Cumbrian Fells. (5) (17)

Photos that illustrate specific key natural, cultural and perceptual features are numbered eg. (10)



Distinctive sheep-grazed village greens

Village houses next to Low Bridge, Maulds Meaburn

Informal village greens criss-crossed by bridges over rushing streams



Great Asby



Low Bridge, Maulds Meaburn

Ribbons of semi-natural ancient woodland along narrow gill valleys



Smardale Mill and Lower Smardale from Tarn Lane; Oxenbrow Wood (within Smardale to the right of the image) is an ancient woodland



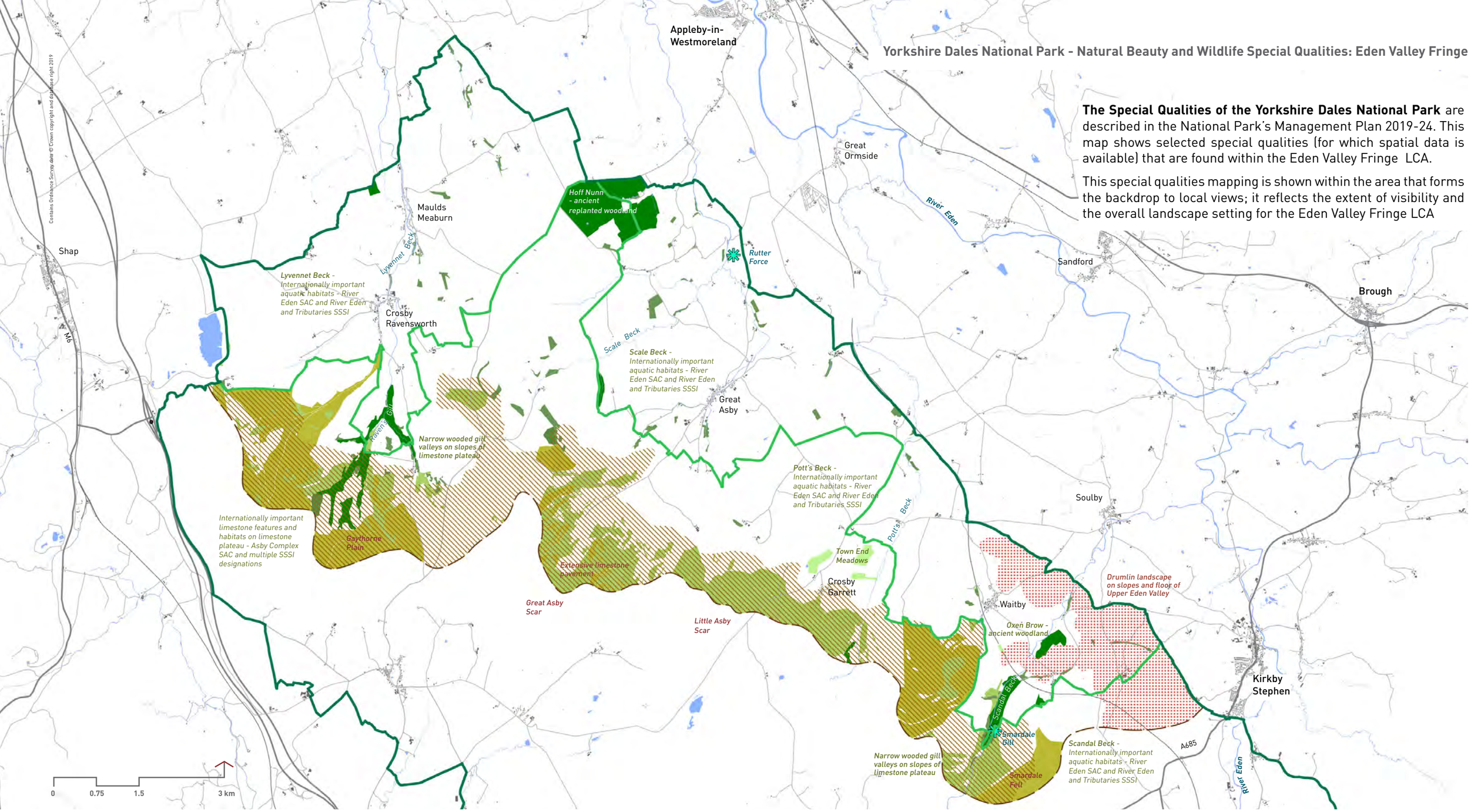
Church of St Lawrence at Crosby Ravensworth

Quality buildings of pink sandstone reflect the availability of sandstones from the Eden Vale

Yorkshire Dales National Park - Natural Beauty and Wildlife Special Qualities: Eden Valley Fringe

The Special Qualities of the Yorkshire Dales National Park are described in the National Park's Management Plan 2019-24. This map shows selected special qualities (for which spatial data is available) that are found within the Eden Valley Fringe LCA.

This special qualities mapping is shown within the area that forms the backdrop to local views; it reflects the extent of visibility and the overall landscape setting for the Eden Valley Fringe LCA



Special Qualities of the YDNP

- YDNP Boundary
- Eden Valley Fringe LCA boundary
- Extent of area that forms the backdrop to views from the Eden Valley Fringe LCA

Natural beauty

- **Outstanding classic limestone scenery**
  [Underlain by Great Scar Limestone & displaying distinctive karst character]
- **Significant glacial/post-glacial features**
  [Prominent drumlins and glacial drift landforms]
- **Spectacular waterfalls**
  ['Water features' noted as 'recognised attraction' in YDNPA Visitor Strategy]

Wildlife*

- **Flower-rich hay meadows and pastures**
  [Lowland meadows; Upland hay meadows]
- **A range of rare limestone habitats**
  [Limestone pavements; Lowland calcareous grassland; Upland calcareous grassland]
- **Extensive areas of moorland**
  [Upland heathland; Blanket bog; Lowland raised bog]
- **Small areas of broadleaf woodland**
  [Deciduous woodland; ancient woodland (darker tone)]

*Priority Habitats [S41 NERC Act 2010]

Yorkshire Dales National Park - Cultural Heritage Special Qualities: Eden Valley Fringe

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Appleby-in-Westmoreland
Great Ormside
River Eden
Sandford
Brough
Shap
M6
Site of medieval deer park near Meaburn Hall
Maulds Meaburn medieval village and associated field systems and mill race
Maulds Meaburn
Extensive medieval field systems
Crosby Ravensworth Park Pale
Crosby Ravensworth
Scale Beck
Extensive medieval field systems
Great Asby
Raven's Gill
Gaythorne Earthworks
Bronze Age cairns
Cow Green Deer Park
Blasterfield Grange
Asby Grange Farmstead
Port's Beck
Soulby
Waitby medieval village and associated field systems
Crosby Garrett
Waitby
Smardale Viaduct
Scandal Beck
Kirkby Stephen
Orton
Dykes and mounds on either side of Scandal Beck valley - Iron Age - Roman-British field system and medieval pillow mounds
A685
River Eden
0 0.75 1.5 3 km

Special Qualities of the YDNP

- YDNP Boundary
- Eden Valley Fringe LCA boundary
- Extent of area that forms the backdrop to views from the Eden Valley Fringe LCA

Cultural heritage*

- **A traditional pastoral landscape**
  [Traditional stone-built field barns]
- **An exceptional range of archaeology**
  [Strip lynchets & prehistoric field systems that are prominent]
- **Powerful reminders of periods of dominance by large estates and religious houses**
  [Ancient & historic parklands & other ornamental landscapes]
- **The remains of former rural industries**
  [Sites of former lead & coal mines & lime kilns]
- **Settle-Carlisle Railway Line**
  [Conservation Area]
- **Historic settlements with distinctive traditional architecture**
  [Conservation Areas]

* YDNPA Historic Environment Record

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