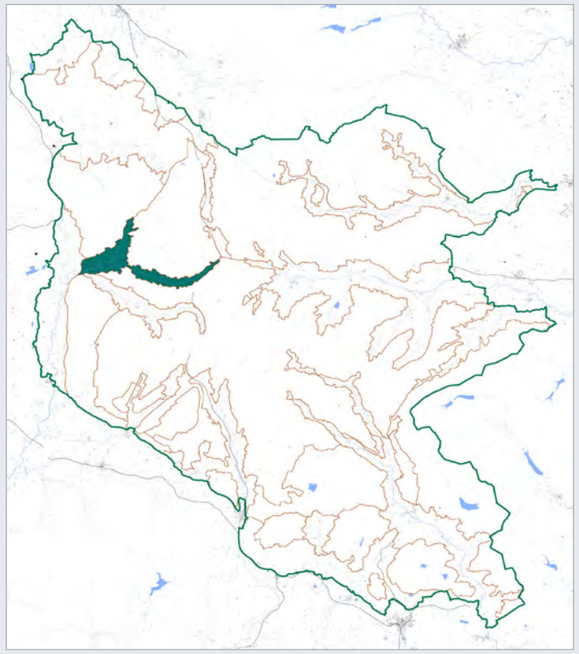
LCA 5 Garsdale and Rawthey Valley

Yorkshire Dales National Park - Landscape Character Assessment

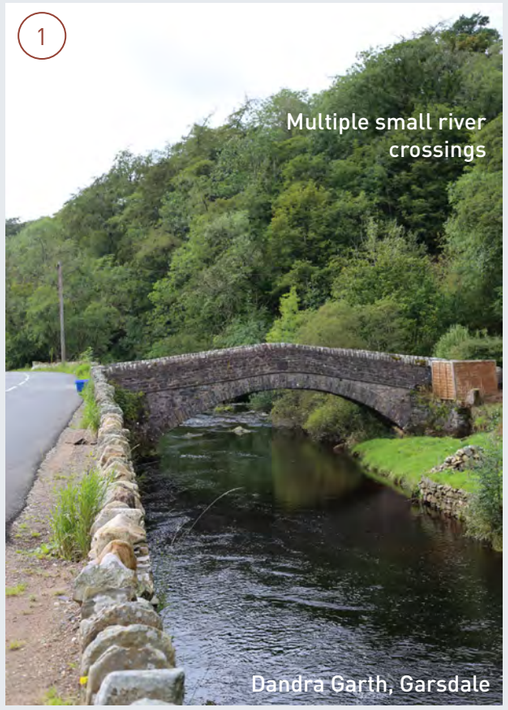
YORKSHIRE DALES
National Park Authority

LCA 5 Garsdale and Rawthey Valley



Key characteristics

- Long, curved U-shaped glacial valleys; extensive glacial drift forms an undulating valley floor in the wider Rawthey Valley. Garsdale has a narrower profile, with a flat valley floor.
- The steep, smooth-flanked slopes of the Howgill Fells dominate the Rawthey Valley, which divides the Silurian rocks of the Howgills (to the west) from the rocks of the Yoredale series, capped by gritstones, to the east.
- The fast-flowing Rivers Rawthey and Clough flow in rocky, shallow channels which are often hidden by extensive tree cover. Frequent steep wooded tributary gills, often with waterfalls, on the valley sides.
- Transition from a verdant, pastoral character within the valleys to a more open, exposed dale head, where the surrounding moorland landscape character predominates. There is also a strong moorland influence in the Frostrow Fells area, near the confluence of Garsdale and the Rawthey Valley.
- Field sizes irregular and generally elongated up the valley sides. Fields are enclosed by both hedges and stone walls.
- Well treed character, particularly in the Rawthey Valley, where there is dense and varied tree and hedgerow cover. In Garsdale trees are concentrated along the River Clough, with more scattered valley slope vegetation.
- Sedbergh is a historic market town and regional centre, but elsewhere the valleys have a dispersed settlement pattern, with individual farmsteads and groups of cottages at regular intervals along the lower valley slopes.



Dandra Garth, Garsdale

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

Garsdale has a relatively open landscape pattern, with scattered trees and shrubs on the lower slopes



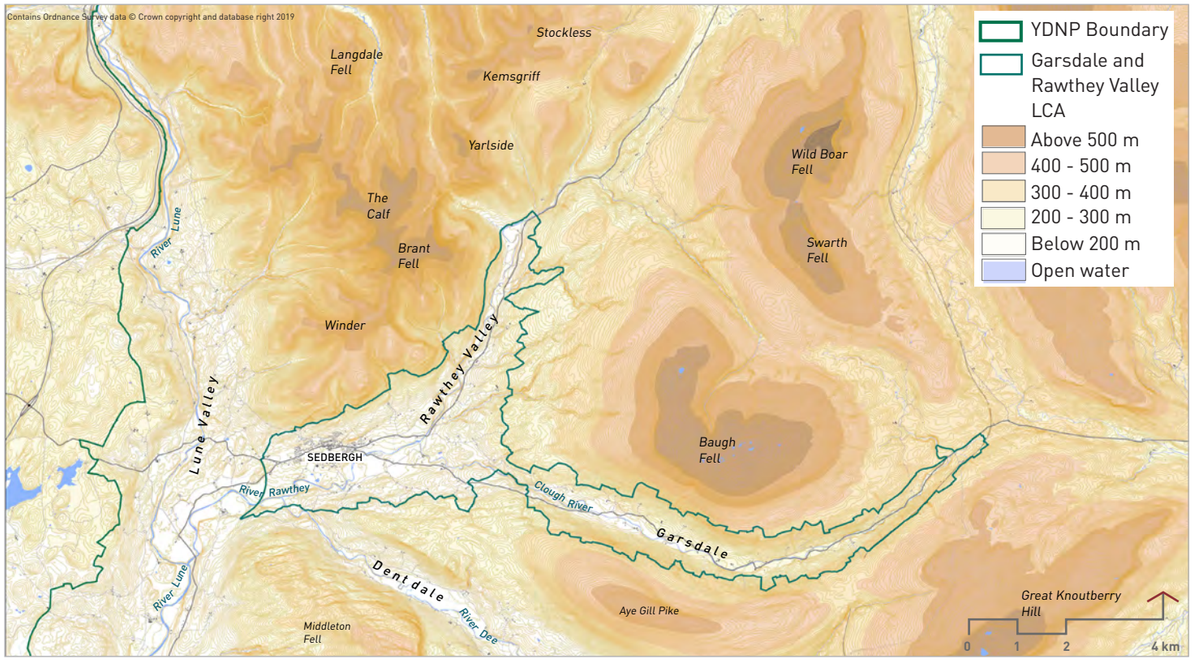
Garsdale looking south west at Banks Bridge



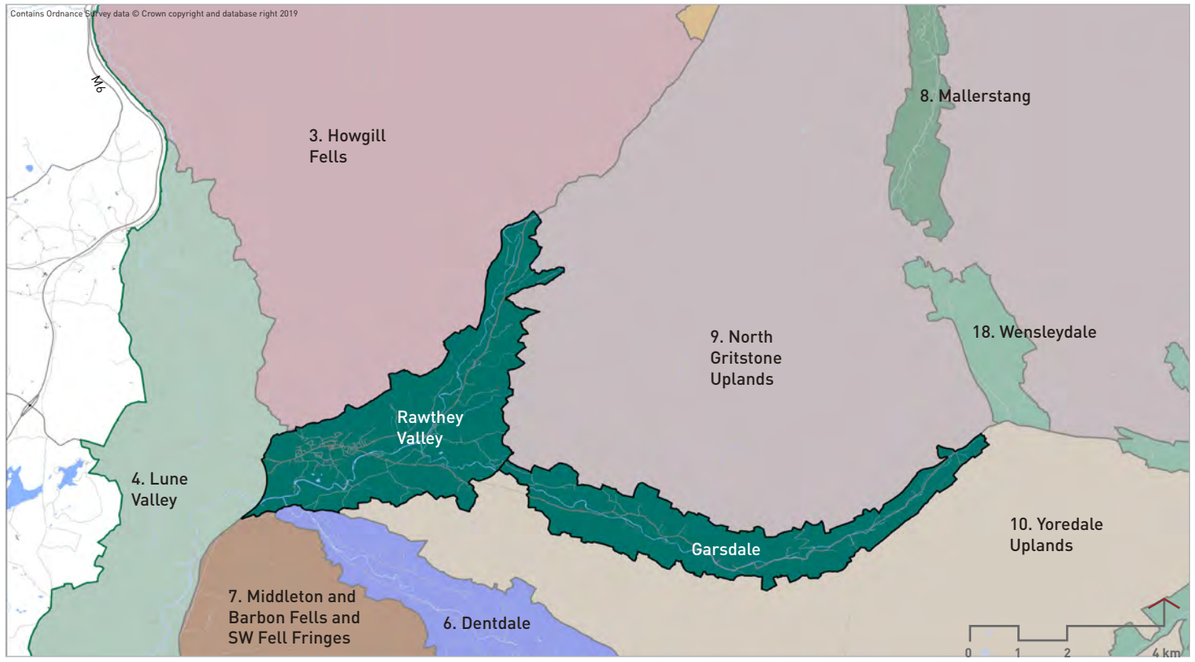
Scattered drumlins and undulating, drift landscape within the Rawthey Valley

Southern fringes of Sedbergh

Landscape context: Garsdale and Rawthey Valley



Landscape character: Garsdale and Rawthey Valley



Landscape context

The Dent Fault, which runs from Kirkby Stephen to Kirkby Lonsdale, is aligned along the northern part of Rawthey Valley before crossing Dentdale near Gawthrop to follow Barbondale. This is a significant geological feature, which splits the (older) Silurian rocks of the Cumbrian Fells to the west from the Millstone Grits of the Pennines to the east. As a result, the Rawthey Valley has an asymmetrical character: its western side is enclosed by the steep, high open slopes of the Howgill Fells (underlain by Silurian bedrock) while its eastern side is enclosed by the rounded slopes of Baugh Fell (underlain by rocks of the Yoredale series capped by gritstones).

During the Ice Age, the ice carved the valleys adjacent to the Howgills, gouging the rocks on the sides of the massif and depositing thick layers of boulder clay on the adjacent valley bottoms. The River Rawthey flows westwards along the Rawthey Valley, winding around a scattering of large drumlins in the Sedbergh area before joining the River Lune in the Lune Valley to the west. Garsdale is drained by the River Clough, a tributary of the River Rawthey.

There is a layer of Great Scar Limestone to the east of the Dent Fault which underlies Dentdale, Garsdale and the east side of the Rawthey Valley. Above the Great Scar limestone are the alternating beds of the Yoredale series of rocks, limestones, sandstones and shales. They are evident as horizontal scars along the valley sides of Garsdale and Dentdale.

There are seams of coal below the Main Limestone, near the top of the Yoredale Strata, and remnant old pits and shafts can be seen at Garsdale Common. The former workings, which date from the 17th century, are scattered near the Galloway Road between Garsdale and Dent stations.

Landscape character

The principal variations in landscape character at a local scale are:

- Rawthey Valley – steep-sided valley drained by the River Rawthey, with extensive glacial drift on an undulating valley floor. Enclosed by the steep, high Howgill Fells to the west and Baugh Fell to the west.
- Garsdale – narrow, curving valley of the River Clough, which is a tributary of the River Rawthey.



Rawthey Valley from Tom Croft Hill at the entrance to Garsdale

Distinctive landscape character

The market town of Sedbergh is a regional centre, with shops, services and a major independent school. However, to the east of this hub of activity, the Rawthey Valley and Garsdale LCA has a deeply rural character, with a dispersed pattern of settlement which reflects that of the Norse settlers from the 10th century.

This area has relatively little archaeological evidence from the prehistoric period. However, the Rawthey Valley has been an important transport route since Roman times, when a branch of the Roman road from Ribchester to Carlisle (which followed the Lune Valley between Kirkby Lonsdale and the Roman Fort of Borrowbridge, in the Lune Gorge) was aligned along the Rawthey Valley. This route subsequently became an established highway, connecting Sedbergh to Kirkby Stephen. The Norman castle (mott and bailey) of Castlehaw Tower at Sedburgh was built as a defence against the threat of raids from the north.

The Settle to Carlisle railway opened in 1875 and skirts the head of both Garsdale and Dentdale en route between the Eden and Ribble valleys. The stations that serve both Garsdale and Dent are high up and far from the villages themselves. The coming of the railway brought an increase in trade to these isolated dales.

Rawthey Valley

The Rawthey Valley is a broad u-shaped valley with a hummocky undulating valley floor. It is dominated by the overwhelming presence of the Howgill Fells. The smooth-flanked and steep rounded Silurian fells to the west contrast sharply with the eastern valley side, which rises gradually up to lower elevations and the flatter profile of Baugh Fell.

The sweeping, dramatic character of the Howgills, and the exposed rocky outcrops of Cautley Crags and Cautley Spout are prominent in views from the Rawthey Valley and contrast with the surrounding lush, green valley pastures and meadows. Views to the south are dominated by the sharper outline of the Frostrow Fells between Garsdale and Dentdale.

The River Rawthey becomes significantly broader where it merges with the Clough River from Garsdale, and has a rocky and shallow channel with stones and boulders. The valley floor is well vegetated and the undulating landform, combined with numerous bank side trees and shrubs, screen the river from general view. Well-defined wooded tributary gills line the valley sides, many contain waterfalls which are not visible from the valley floor.

The valley contains many individual trees, woodland copses and hedgerows and also has a strong parkland character, particularly around Sedbergh, where the gently rolling drumlin landforms combine with the dense trees to create a diverse landscape pattern. Sedbergh is a traditional market town, quite dispersed, with buildings constructed of gritstone or sandstone, with flagged roofs. Sedbergh School, founded in 1525 occupies a significant proportion of the town and is set against Winder (473m) on the south edge of the Howgills.

Moorland influences are more evident to the south east, close to lower Garsdale, and at the dale head where moorland vegetation encroaches significantly on both sides of the valley. At the head of the dale, there is an increase in scrub vegetation with gorse and bracken appearing on the Howgill Fells.

There is one main road, the A683, a wide and busy road which runs along the valley floor from Sedbergh to the dale head and on northwards to Kirkby Stephen. It connects the isolated groups of cottages and farmsteads that are located mainly on the valley floor and on the lower side slopes.

Field sizes within the valley are variable and irregular, enclosed by a mixture of drystone walls and hedgerows. The wall pattern is not strongly evident due to the screening effect of both vegetation and landform.

Garsdale

Garsdale is also a U-shaped, glacial valley, but it has a relatively narrow profile and glacial drift is not a strong influence on landform and landscape character. At the head of the valley the landscape is bleak and barren with a very open, exposed character and a strong moorland influence. The railway and associated cottages appear incongruous within the exposed upland landscape. Mid-way along the dale, the valley becomes more contained and enclosed, widening again in its lower reaches where moorland encroaches on either side contributing to the sense of exposure in the Frostrow Fells area. Generally, the valley floor is quite broad and flat, and the valley sides steeply sloping with gentle undulations. Field sizes are irregular and tend to be elongated up the valley sides.

The Clough River has its source at Garsdale Head and joins the River Rawthey at Garsdale Bridge in the Rawthey Valley. It is a gently meandering river with a shallow, stony channel, very well hidden from the nearby road by trees and shrubs outcropping rock occurs on the river bank to the east of Garsdale.

There are frequent winding gills on both sides of the valley that give an indented, folded appearance to the valley sides. Waterfalls are frequent within the gills. Some gill erosion is evident and, combined with the associated scattered, sparse tree cover, the gills have a more open and barren appearance than those within the Rawthey Valley to the north and Dentdale to the south.

Vegetation is mainly concentrated on the valley floor where narrow belts of woodland and riverside trees mark the river. Higher up the valley slopes vegetation becomes more scattered, scant and scrubby in appearance although occasional coniferous plantations on the valley sides frame the valley and add to the sense of enclosure in the narrower stretches.

The A684 road follows the line of the river along the valley floor, crossing back and forth over the river via stone/brick bridges. Buildings within Garsdale vary from traditional farmsteads, often rendered and painted white, to a row of visually prominent terraced railway cottages situated at Garsdale Station. Some properties are pebble-dashed. The dispersed pattern of settlement, with farmstead and groups of cottages at regular intervals along both side of the valley, is a defining characteristic of the dale. Garsdale has a more exposed and slightly industrial character than the Rawthey Valley and Dentdale.



5

Distinct mid-slope change from well treed Rawthey Valley to the dramatic open slopes of the Howgills

Fawcett Bank (part of the Howgill Fells) from Bluecaster Side in the Upper Rawthey Valley

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

6



Garsdale has a more exposed character, with a simple, repetitive landscape pattern

Garsdale from Tom Croft Hill

7



Dispersed settlement pattern, retains influence of 10th c Norse settlers; traditional farmsteads sheltered by trees

Green, near Millthrop

8



River Rawthey from Millthrop Bridge

Fast-flowing water courses are often hidden by trees - the tumbling water may be heard before it is seen

9



Photo © Russel Wills cc by sa/2.0

Castlehaw Tower, site of a motte and bailey castle

Numbered photographs illustrate specific key natural, cultural and perceptual features in the Garsdale and Rawthey Valley LCA



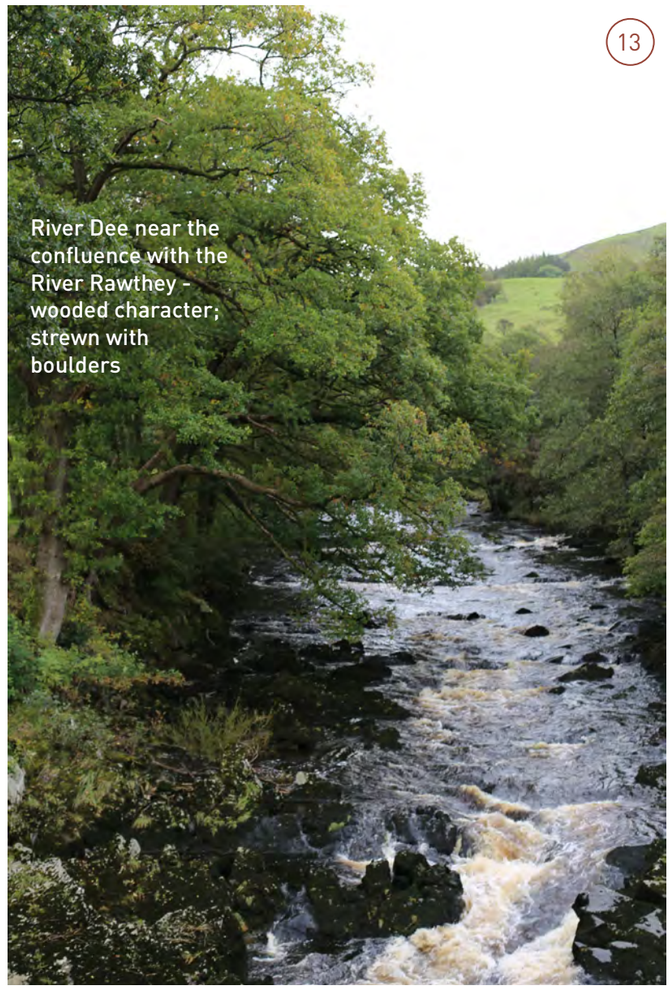
Winder Fell looms above the historic town of Sedbergh



Historic bridge over the River Rawthey to south of Sedbergh



Dandrymire Viaduct is prominent in the open dale head landscape



River Dee near the confluence with the River Rawthey - wooded character; strewn with boulders

Key natural, cultural and perceptual features

NATURAL

Asymmetric profile of Rawthey Valley, as a result of the Dent fault, with dramatic, looming bare flanks of the Howgill Fells (underlain by Silurian rocks) to the west and more gradual, rounded slopes of Baugh Fell (underlain by rock of the Yoredale series) to the east. 14 16

Scattered drumlins and undulating, hummocky drift landscape within the Rawthey Valley create diverse landscape character and patterns. 3

Semi-natural ancient woodland alongside the narrow tributary gills which dissect the slopes of Baugh Fell in the Rawthey Valley eg Hebblethwaite Hall Gill and Whinny Gill.

Species-rich acid and wet grassland habitat in the Upper Rawthey Valley - at Cautley Thwaite Meadows and Ecker Secker Beck SSSI.

CULTURAL

Historic market town of Sedbergh, which has a dramatic landscape setting at the foot of Winder Fell. The layout of the town is strongly influenced by steeply undulating drumlin landforms, which are interspersed with built neighbourhoods to create a settlement with a distinctive identity. 10

Castlehaw Tower - medieval motte and bailey castle on a defensive site overlooking the River Rawthey and Sedbergh, The site incorporates the remains of a Royal Observer Corps monitoring post (1960s) which was part of a national network to monitor nuclear explosions and radioactive fallout in the event of a nuclear attack. 9

Dispersed settlement pattern, influenced by Norse settlers, with individual traditional farmsteads and cottages sited at regular intervals along the lower valley slopes. A high proportion of the buildings in both valleys are listed buildings, of historic importance. 7 15

Multiple small river crossings - stone bridges and fords at road crossings and to provide access to farmsteads. 1 11

Fairfield Mill - tightly clustered complex of Victorian textile mill buildings, attractively sited on the banks of the River Clough, now converted for use as an arts and heritage centre.

Dandrymire Viaduct and the distinctive terrace of houses (Railway Terrace) at Garsdale Station on the Settle to Carlisle line, which are prominent in the exposed dale head landscape. 12

PERCEPTUAL

Sheltered and verdant character of the valley landscapes contrasts with the open, sweeping scale of the enclosing moorlands. 4 5

Hidden character of the fast-flowing watercourses, which are often screened by a combination of trees and drumlins, or glacial drift landforms. The tumbling water can often be heard, before it is visible as the water flows over and around the boulders within the channel. 8 13

The two valleys have contrasting characters - the floor and lower slopes of the Rawthey Valley are well treed and the sense of enclosure is augmented by the disorientating influence of the drumlins; Garsdale has a relatively simple, repetitive landscape pattern, with a treed river corridor and more open valley slopes. 2 6

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

14

The looming, dramatic, open slopes of the Howgill Fells dominate the Rawthey Valley ...



Rawthey Valley - incised wooded channel and slopes of Fawcett Bank from Cross Haw

15

Garsdale - Dandra Garth



... compared to the the more rounded, gentle slopes of Baugh Fell in Garsdale

16



Garsdale from Kiln Haw

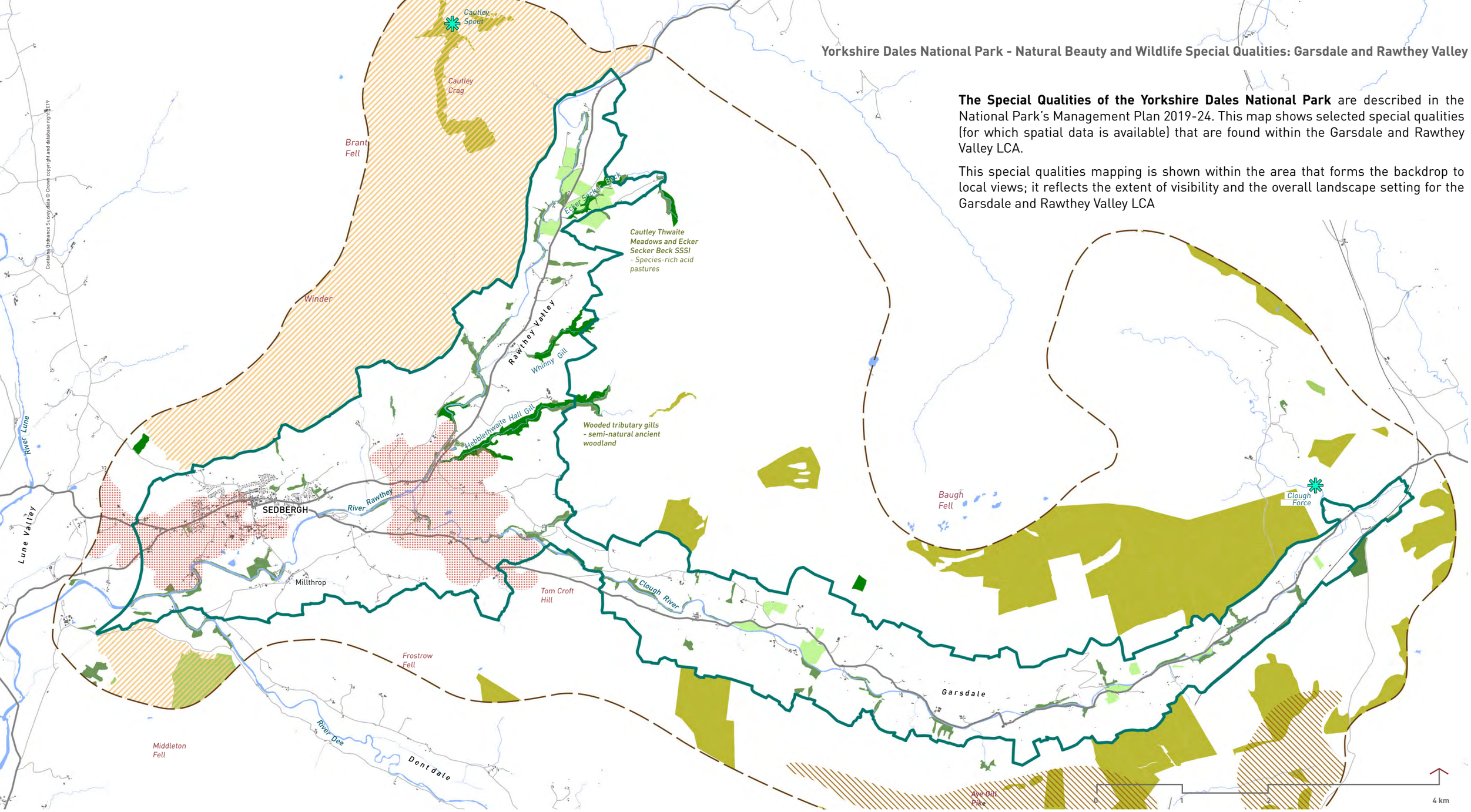


Garsdale slopes of Baugh Fell from near Blades Farm

Yorkshire Dales National Park - Natural Beauty and Wildlife Special Qualities: Garsdale and Rawthey Valley

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 Garsdale and Rawthey Valley 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 Garsdale and Rawthey Valley LCA



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Special Qualities of the YDNP

- YDNP Boundary
- Garsdale and Rawthey Valley LCA boundary
- Extent of area that forms the backdrop to views from the Garsdale and Rawthey Valley LCA

Natural beauty

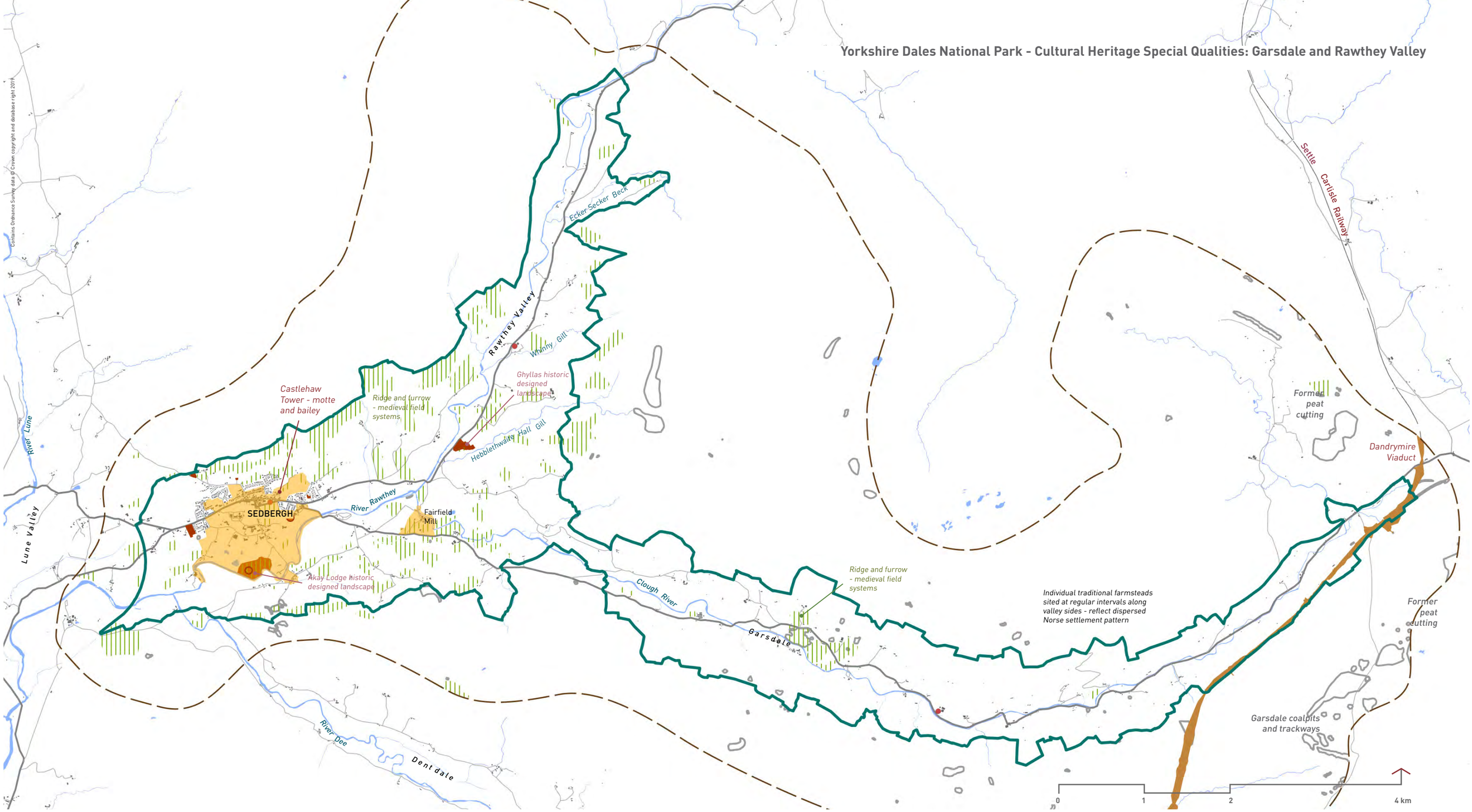
- **Dales with distinctive stepped profiles**
  [Displaying outcrops of rocks from the Yoredale series]
- **The Howgills**
  [Areas in the YDNP underlain by Silurian rocks]
- **Significant glacial/post-glacial features**
  [Prominent drumlins and glacial drift landforms]
- **Spectacular waterfalls**
  ['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: Garsdale and Rawthey Valley



Special Qualities of the YDNP

- YDNP Boundary
- Garsdale and Rawthey Valley LCA boundary
- Extent of area that forms the backdrop to views from the Garsdale and Rawthey Valley 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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