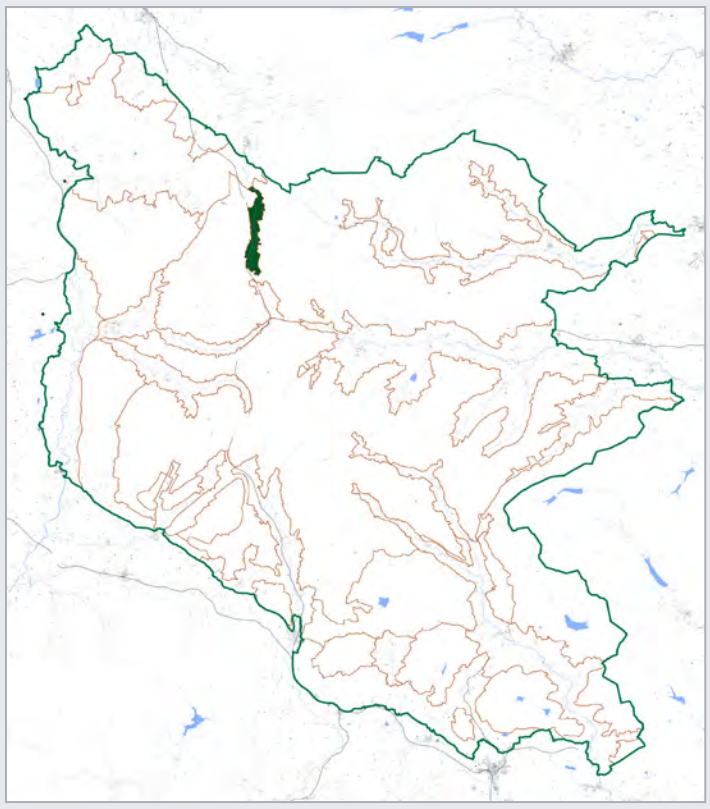
LCA 8 Mallerstang

Yorkshire Dales National Park
Landscape Character Assessment

YORKSHIRE DALES
National Park Authority

LCA 8 Mallerstang



Key characteristics

- Deep glacial U-shaped valley of the Upper River Eden, which dissects the plateau of northern gritstone moors
- Steep upland summits of Wild Boar Fell and High Seat and rocky limestone scars create distinctive profiles and are landmarks in views along the dale
- River Eden meanders along a narrow floodplain, which is often bordered by terraces of glacial drift; the small-scale of the verdant river corridor landscape contrasts with the expansive scale and exposed character of the surrounding uplands.
- Small, irregular floodplain meadows and larger rectangular lower slope pastures are enclosed by a network of drystone limestone walls, often containing small field barns.
- Well treed river floodplain and lower valley slopes, with strips of broadleaf woodland and lines of trees defining the contours, lining water courses and sheltering farms and cottages.
- Mallerstang is sparsely settled with no large settlements; a minor road runs the length of the dale, connecting dispersed groups of cottages and farms and providing access to regularly spaced farmsteads along the lower dale slopes
- Tranquil, deeply rural dale with a distinctive sense of place.

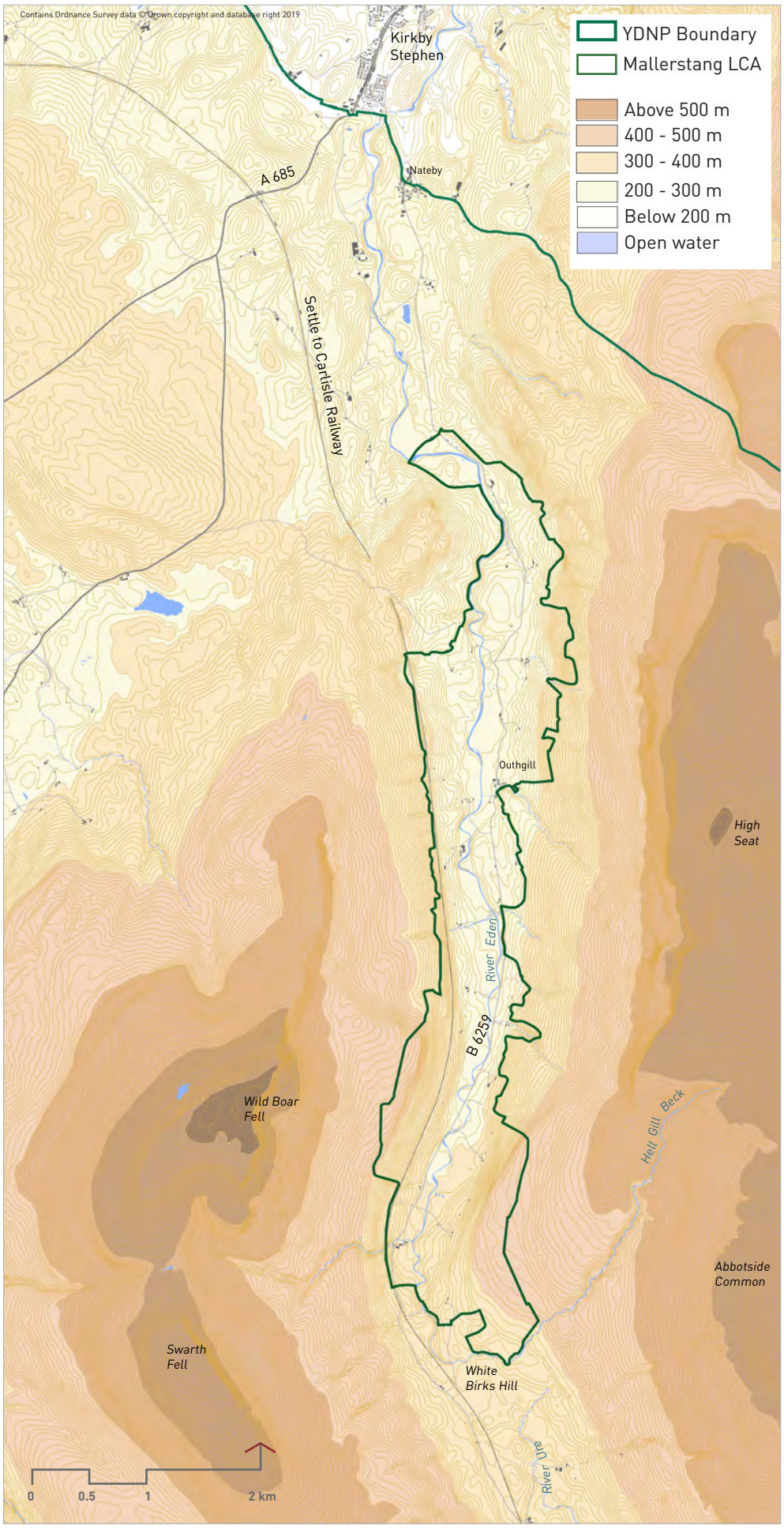
Numbered photographs illustrate specific key natural, cultural and perceptual features in the Mallerstang LCA (see page 6)

Striking contrast between the sheltered, pastoral dale and the wild open slopes and scree of the surrounding upland plateau



View to Deep Gill on the lower slopes of Wild Boar Fell

Landscape context: Mallerstang



Landscape character: Mallerstang



Landscape context

Mallerstang is the name given to the upland valley and associated dalesides of the upper reaches of the River Eden, which begins as Hell Beck Gill on Black Fell Moss, part of the Gritstone upland block that separates Wensleydale and Swaledale. As the River Eden flows northwards through the dale towards the Eden Vale to the north west of the National Park, it is bolstered by the flow from numerous becks, which drain the high fells to the east and west of Mallerstang. The source of the River Ure is also close by – on the slopes of Abbotside Common. While the River Eden turns to flow northwards, the River Ure flows to the south east and on through Wensleydale. At the southern edge of Mallerstang, the upper catchments of these two major rivers are separated by a low watershed at White Birks Hill (370m).

Mallerstang is a deep U-shaped valley, carved by glaciers, which dissects the surrounding high and erosion-resistant Millstone Grit plateau. The ragged rocky edges of limestone scars and steep escarpments which have been exposed by erosion on the valley sides are prominent features in views. The enclosing upland summits of High Seat to the east and Wild Boar Fell to the west are prominent and distinctive landmarks within views throughout Mallerstang.

Landscape character

The small Mallerstang LCA is enclosed to east and west by the Northern Gritstone Uplands (LCA 9). To the north, the River Eden valley continues through the rolling upland fringe landscapes on the eastern side of the Orton Fells (LCA 2) to Kirkby Stephen, before turning north west to flow through the broad Vale of Eden to the north of the National Park.

To the south of Mallerstang is Upper Wensleydale, part of LCA 18.

Distinctive landscape character

The striking contrast between the narrow, verdant pastures that border the meandering upper course of the River Eden and the huge scale of the surrounding upland plateau and summits creates a distinctive and memorable sense of place.

The sweeping slopes of the enclosing uplands are occasionally broken by prominent screes and rocky cliffs, such as Mallerstang Edge along the eastern side of the dale. The distinctive flat-topped summit of Wild Boar Fell is of typical of the high Millstone Grit capped summits of the dales such as Pen-y-Ghent and Ingleborough. Tributary gills flowing down the valley slopes in areas with deep drift deposits have created a series of distinctive ridges along the lower valley slopes.

The River Eden begins as Hell Gill, which flows down a narrow, steep-sided limestone gorge before entering Mallerstang at Aisgill. From here it flows north, meandering across river floodplain pastures which are often bordered by ridges of glacial drift. These meadows, and the surrounding pastures, are enclosed by a network of drystone walls which extends up onto the lower valley slopes. Most fields are rough pasture, with patches of tussocky grass and scrub marking a gradual transition to open moorland on the upper slopes.

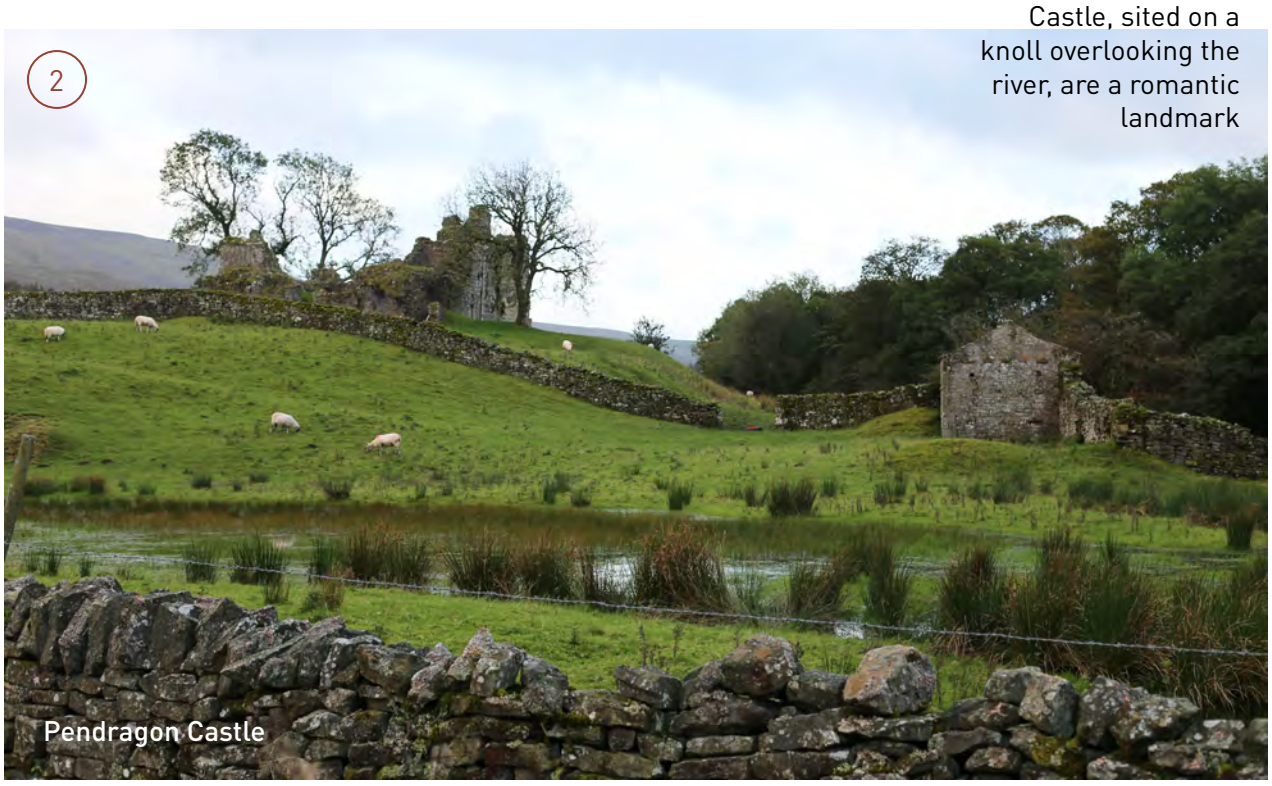
Mallerstang is a Viking name and the dale's dispersed pattern of settlement reflects that established over a thousand years ago by Norse settlers. There are isolated small farmsteads, often sheltered by groups of trees, dotted at regular intervals along the lower valley slopes, each accessed by a track from the minor road which runs the length of the dale (B6259). There are also many stone field barns within the pastures just above the valley floor.

Extensive belts and loose blocks of broadleaf woodland on the lower valley slopes and floodplain margins create an enclosed, soft and intimate valley landscape; there is a diverse sequence of valley views from the B6259 and from the Settle-Carlisle Railway, which runs along the western slopes of the valley, above the floodplain. There are occasional glimpses of the embankments and brick structures associated with the railway line between the trees along the valley, but the railway is a distinctive landscape feature to the south of Mallerstang near White Birks Hill, where the railway runs alongside the road.

Sited on a knoll overlooking the River Eden near the northern gateway to Mallerstang, The ruined site of Pendragon Castle represents a type of fortified tower house that was particularly characteristic of the English borderlands. The original tower house was founded in 1180 but has been twice destroyed (by Scottish armies) and rebuilt. The existing ruins date from 1685 and the monument includes the defensive earthworks. Pendragon Castle was restored in 1660 by Lady Anne Clifford in 1660, a wealthy peer and landowner who is said to have counted it as one of her favourite dwellings. The ancient road to the east of the river is known as 'Lady Anne's Highway'.

The steeply enclosing landform creates a distinctive gateway character at the 'entrances' to Mallerstang. From the north, there is a dramatic gateway view as the road turns into the dale and the valley floor widens to give stunning picturesque views set against the distinctive backdrop of Wild Boar Fell. The ruins of Pendragon Castle are a prominent and romantic landmark on the edge of the River Eden floodplain. From the south there are more open, sweeping views which take in the wider profile of Mallerstang within the context of the huge upland plateau. Here the Settle-Carlisle railway line, with its red brick walls and bridges are foreground features, which accentuate the perception of a threshold at the entrance to the dale. These gateways enhance the distinctive landscape character of Mallerstang, which is coloured by a sense of isolation, enclosure and tranquillity.

2



Pendragon Castle

The prominent ruins of Pendragon Castle, sited on a knoll overlooking the river, are a romantic landmark

3



Little Ing Farm, below Hangingstone Scar on the eastern slopes of Mallerstang

The historic field pattern, sheltered farmsteads and stone barns create a managed, domestic character in contrast to the wilder fells

4



Tributary gills flowing down the valley slopes in areas with deep drift deposits have created a series of distinctive ridges along the lower valley slopes.

Mallerstang Edge from Castlethwaite

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

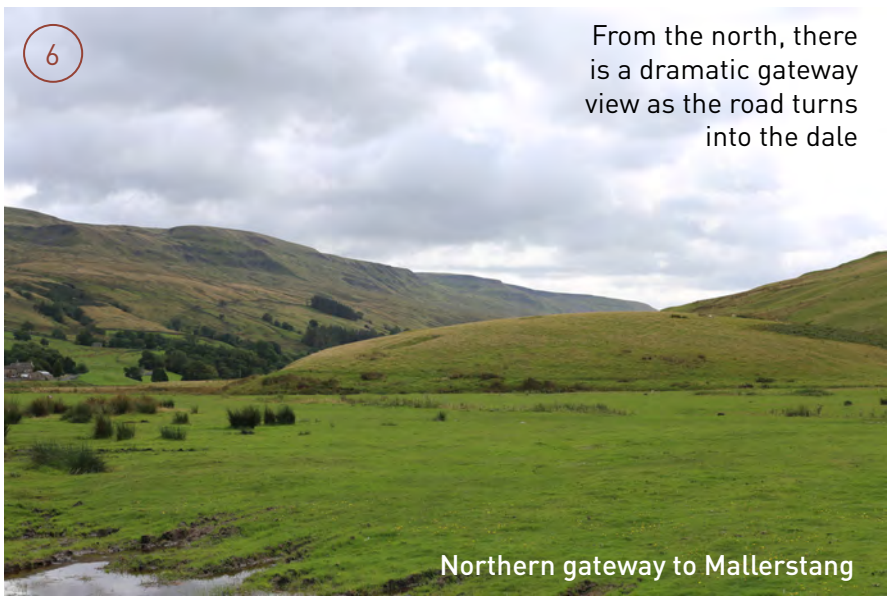


River Eden floodplain near Outhgill, looking north east towards Birkett Common



Impressive gritstone gateposts near Southwaite

The tracks and brick infrastructure of the railway are prominent features at the gateway to Mallerstang from the south



Northern gateway to Mallerstang



Settle-Carlisle Railway at Cotegill Bridge



Looking south west across the River Eden floodplain towards Wild Boar Fell from just north of Outhgill

The upper River Eden is an internationally important wetland habitat



9

River Eden near Angerholm

The undulating valley road, bordered by stone walls



B6259 south of Outhgill

Natural gateway landscapes - steep enclosing landforms and distinctive views, which open out suddenly as the road turns and passes through the hills

10

Key natural, cultural and perceptual features

NATURAL

Spectacular topography formed by a deeply enclosed glaciated trough and the cliffs and vertical escarpments of High Seat and Wild Boar Fell facing each other high on the opposite sides of the dale. (8) (13)

Wild Boar Fell is one of the most distinctive summits of the central Pennines, with an easily recognisable long and level summit plateau, and a sharp stepped profile of rocky cliffs. (8)

Natural gateway landscapes, defined by steep enclosing landforms and distinctive views, which open out suddenly as the road turns and passes through the hills to the north and south of Mallerstang. (10)

The meandering River Eden channel is designated as part of the River Eden SAC in recognition of the international importance of its aquatic habitats. It is also part of the River Eden and Tributaries SSSI and the headwaters of the Eden are noted as being one of the most important British sites for the native white-clawed crayfish. (9)

Linear bands of riverside trees and strips of broadleaf woodland create an enclosed, intimate landscape in the centre of the dale. (5)

CULTURAL

The historic field boundary pattern, sheltered farmsteads and field barns in the dale create a domestic managed character in contrast to the wilder fells. (3) (4)

The prominent ruins of Pendragon Castle, sited on a knoll overlooking the River Eden, are a romantic landmark within the dale. (2)

The tracks and brick infrastructure of the Settle-Carlisle Railway (a Conservation Area) are prominent features at the gateway to Mallerstang from the south, where the railway runs alongside and crosses the valley road. (7) (12)

PERCEPTUAL

Exceptionally strong and distinctive sense of place, which is accentuated by the striking gateway views at the 'entrances' to Mallerstang across White Birks Hill and the railway to the south and at Birkett Bottom to the north. (6) (10)

Sharp contrast between the sheltered pastoral dale and the wild, open slopes and screes of the surrounding upland plateau, which form a backdrop to valley views. (1)

The concentration of different types and patterns of landscape within a confined narrow valley and the contrast with the surrounding moorland uplands creates **diverse colours and textures** and contributes to a strong local identity. (11)

A remote area with a strong sense of relative wildness, particularly where the dale is steeply enclosed by the eastern ridge of Wild Boar Fell to the west and High Seat to the east. (13)

Strong historical and cultural associations - Pendragon Castle is anecdotally linked with King Arthur and was restored in the 16th century by Lady Anne Clifford, a well-known character in the Dales. (2)

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



Gateway to Mallerstang from th suth. Looking north from Smithy Gill Bridge

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

Diverse colours and textures of different types and patterns of landscape contribute to a strong local identity



Hazelgill, beneath High Bank Scar



Aisgill Viaduct



Mallerstang Common

13

Deeply enclosed glaciated trough with a sequence of distinctive landforms and skylines

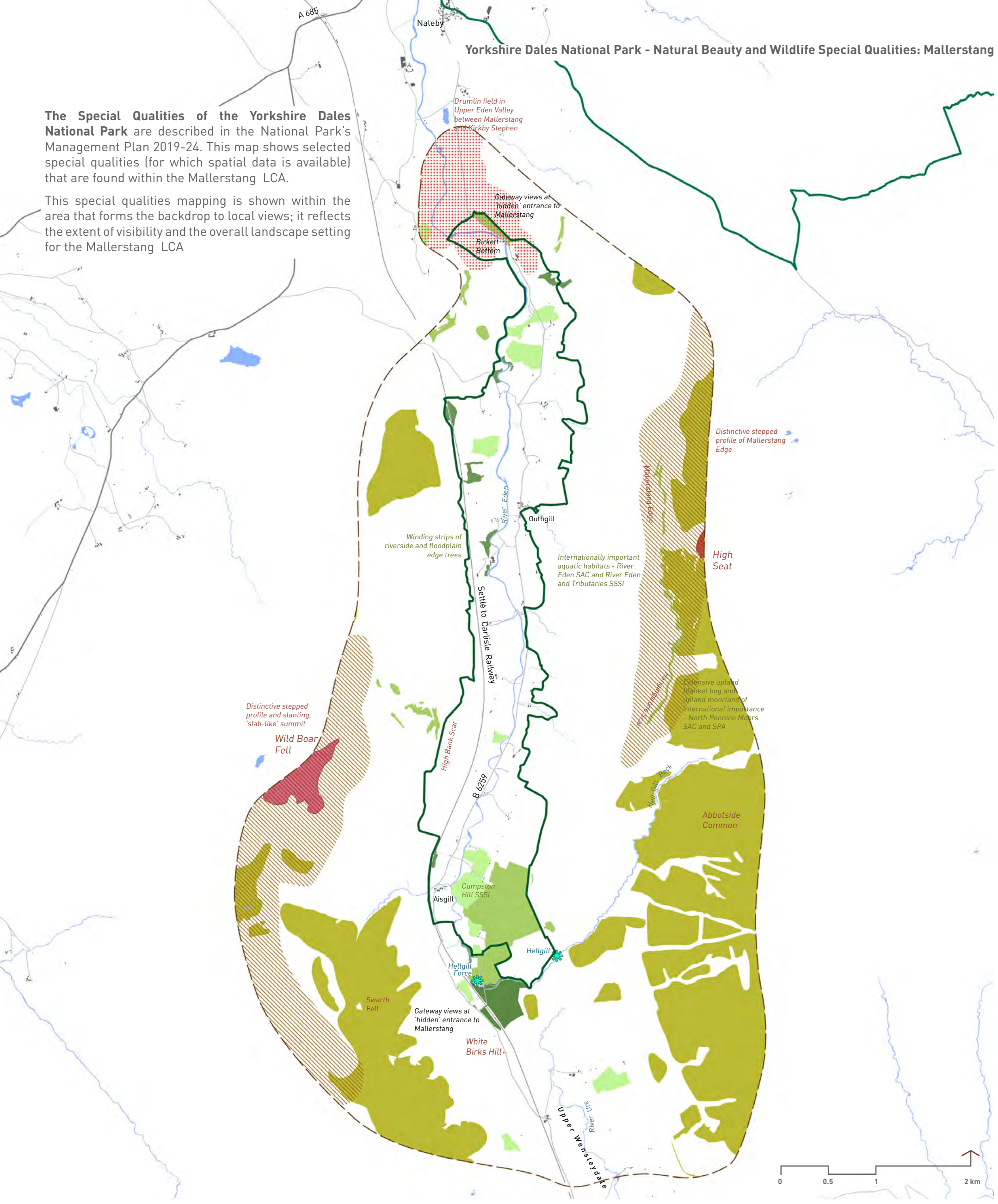


B6259 from Angerholm, looking towards Mallerstang Edge

Yorkshire Dales National Park - Natural Beauty and Wildlife Special Qualities: Mallerstang

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 Mallerstang 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 Mallerstang LCA



Special Qualities of the YDNP

- YDNP Boundary
- Mallerstang LCA boundary
- Extent of area that forms the backdrop to views from the Mallerstang LCA

Natural beauty

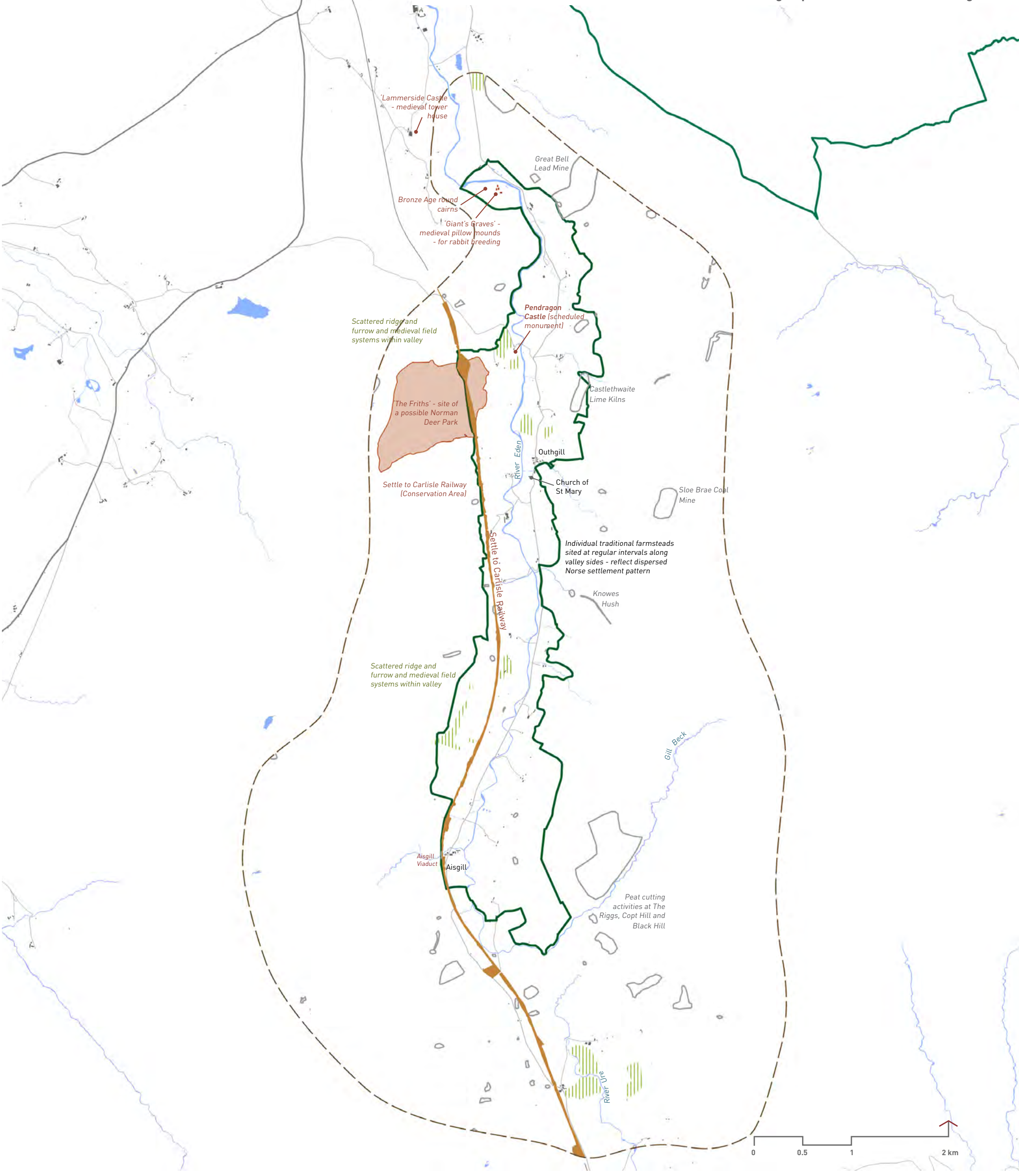
- **Dales with distinctive stepped profiles**
  [Displaying outcrops of rocks from the Yoredale series]
- **Fells that rise to over 700m**
  Including the Millstone Grit capped 'Three Peaks']
- **Significant glacial/post-glacial features**
  [Prominent drumlins and glacial drift landforms]
- **Spectacular 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: Mallerstang



Special Qualities of the YDNP

- YDNP Boundary
- Mallerstang LCA boundary
- Extent of area that forms the backdrop to views from the Mallerstang LCA

Cultural heritage*

* YDNPA Historic Environment Record

- **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

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