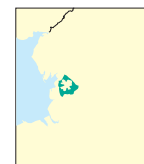


Bowland Fringe and Pendle Hill

Character Area

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Key Characteristics

- Undulating rolling landscape with local variation created by both the numerous river valleys and the outlying upland features of Beacon Fell, Longridge Fell and Pendle Hill.
- Strong outcrops of 'reef knolls' and limestone form distinct landscape features in the Ribble and Hodder Valleys.
- Meandering and commonly tree-fringed rivers with oxbow lakes form prominent features within the predominantly pastoral landscape.
- Predominantly Grade 3 agricultural land supporting permanent pasture, mostly improved, for dairy and livestock farming.
- Intensively managed landscape, with lush hay meadows in small- to medium-scale fields defined by well-maintained hedgerows with mature hedgerow trees. Some rough grazing at higher elevations.
- Extensive semi-natural woodland, much of which is ancient, on both main valley bottoms, side valleys and ridges.
- Dense north-south communication corridor, which comprises the M6, the railway line and the Lancaster Canal, defines the western boundary and also provides a physical and psychological barrier.
- Numerous water courses and bodies including the rivers Ribble, Hodder, Calder, Wyre, a number of reservoirs and field ponds north of Preston.
- Small villages, hamlets and scattered farmsteads, mostly in local stone, are well integrated into the landscape and connected by a network of winding hedge-lined country lanes.
- Bowland Fells provide a dramatic backdrop to the east and north with extensive views possible from high ground across the Lancashire and Amounderness Plain and across open valley bottoms.



MIKE WILLIAMS/COUNTRYSIDE COMMISSION

Pendle Hill is the most prominent of the Millstone Grit outcrops in the Bowland Fringe.

Landscape Character

The Bowland Fringe and Pendle Hill is a transitional landscape which wraps around the dramatic upland core of the Bowland Fells. It extends from the Lune Valley in the north around the slopes of the Bowland massif before merging imperceptibly eastward into the landscape of the Ribble Valley. The eastern boundary links with the Yorkshire Dales while to the south lie the Lancashire Valleys.

This is a diverse landscape of undulating pasture, broadleaved woodland, parkland and water bodies. Fields are small- to medium-sized and are enclosed by well-maintained hedgerows with large mature hedgerow trees. The sycamore of the Lancashire and Amounderness Plain is replaced by oak, ash and alder. This is a relatively well-wooded landscape, predominantly associated with the myriad of streams and valleys which cascade off the Bowland Fells and support large areas of semi-natural riparian woodland. This includes several areas of ancient woodland along the Brock and Calder and between Dolphinholme and Abbeystead.



stone villages, hamlets and farmsteads. The isolated country houses set in well-maintained formal parkland are a typical feature of this landscape. These managed estates are enclosed by belts of woodland and estate fencing. Farms tend to be larger than those in the Bowland Fells with better quality land supporting large dairy herds. Farms generally consist of a core of stone buildings with some conspicuous modern outbuildings.

The road network is typified by a complex system of narrow lanes with few direct routes between settlements. The railway, canal, and M6 form the major north-south links in Lancashire and are confined to a narrow corridor which defines the western boundary.

This is an intimate, tamed landscape in contrast to the wild exposed moorland of the Bowland Fells. The combination of well-maintained hedgerows and hedgerow trees with areas of parkland and well-grazed pasture gives this area an intensively managed character.

Physical Influences

This is a transitional zone between the coastal plain, with its unconsolidated glacial deposits, and the high fells of Bowland formed by the strong sandstone of the Millstone Grit. It is an area of undulating rolling landscape with local variation created by the valleys of the Brock, Calder and Wyre.

The transition from plain to fell landscape is rapid and reflects the existence of a substantial boundary fault which separates the soft Permo-Triassic rocks from the harder Carboniferous rocks. The M6 roughly follows the line of the fault. The transition is softened by the presence of thicker glacial deposits around the edge of the upland area and by the valley features where Bowland's upland streams flow out of the hills onto the plain. The mouths of the valleys are commonly filled by broad, flat alluvial fans. Ribbons of alluvial sand, gravel and silt follow the courses of these streams.



LUNE VALLEY INITIATIVE/LANCASTER TOURISM

Improved pastureland defined by well-maintained hedgerows is characteristic of the agricultural land in the fringes, which supports both dairy and livestock farming.

In the south where the Brock Valley crosses the area, the coarse-grained sandstones of the Millstone Grit of Bowland give way to the softer calcareous mudstones, with limestone beds, of the Carboniferous Limestone. This accounts for the less dramatic change between the Fringe and the Fells landscape. Surface drift features also become more important as the Fringe merges imperceptibly south-eastwards into the landscape of the Ribble Valley.

The Ribble and Hodder drain the southern flanks of the Bowland Fells. The broad valleys, framed by the escarpments of the fells to the north and the moors to the south, broadly pick out the less resistant mudstones and limestones from the harder Millstone Grit rocks which form the fells. Within the valleys, strong mounded outcrops of 'reef knolls' form distinctive landscape features which give the area its special character. The Lune Valley area is gently sloping and undulating and is contained by steep scarp slopes with the river as the central feature. The sources of the Lune lie outside the county boundary but its many tributaries commonly arise from deep erosion scars or cloughs cut into the steep scarp slopes of the surrounding moorland upland.

The solid rocks are overlain by a complex of glacial deposits comprising mainly thick tills but with extensive areas of mounded sand and gravel deposited from glacial meltwater. One such complex in the Ribble and Hodder Valleys at Stoneyhurst/Hurst Green imparts a special quality of small wooded knolls to the local landscape. To the east of Gisburn a tract of drumlins forms a characteristic landscape.

Historical and Cultural Influences

The Lune valley has been used as a communication route since Roman times and formed a principal route for the Anglian invasion of Lancashire from the east from 570 AD. The *ing*, *ingham* and *ington* place names, such as Melling or Wennington, indicate Old English (pre-7th century) occupation of the area. In the 10th century the region was invaded by Christian Norse men who sailed from Northern Ireland. They settled peacefully alongside the Angles in the valley, and were often content to farm the inferior land on the lower slopes, giving rise to place names such as Cloughton, Tarleton, Hornby and Wray.

The lush pasture in the Lune Valley has long supported prosperous farms and this is reflected in the number of large farms and country estates which are scattered along the valley sides. Prior to the draining of the coastal marshes, this area would have constituted the only farming land available to early settlers. The development of these farms and country estates creates a well-maintained character to the area. The picturesque quality of the Lune valley attracted J M W Turner who was struck by its

beauty and painted a view from the Crook of Lune during a tour of the north of England in 1816.

The Ribble Valley formed an important Roman communication route to York and some evidence of Roman roads can still be found.



LUNE VALLEY INITIATIVE/LANCASTER TOURISM

Brookhouse is an example of a traditional stone settlement that is well integrated into the Bowland landscape.

The field pattern around settlements and on valley bottoms is generally irregular and small- to medium-scale indicating early piecemeal enclosure. However, areas of common land at higher elevations have a more regular field pattern following 18th and 19th century parliamentary enclosure.

A particular feature of this region is the number of large country houses and halls set in parkland and country estates, such as Abbeystead. These areas have been intensively managed for hunting and farming for many years.

Buildings and Settlement

The most significant characteristic of the Bowland Fringe and Pendle Hill is the influence of human habitation. Settlements are scattered along the valley and have largely escaped the effects of the industrial revolution. There are many villages dating from the 16th to 18th century, together with hamlets, farmsteads and also country houses and halls commonly set in parkland. Isolated stone villages tend to be nestled into the escarpments and are commonly characterised by distinctive becks, greens and mills each with its own unique charm.

On higher ground traditional stone barns are commonplace. The predominant building materials are stone and roofs are made of slate or, less commonly, stone flags. There has been some, limited, modern expansion of villages but these developments have generally been done sympathetically using local materials.

The settlement pattern is of smaller villages with isolated houses and farms dotted around the winding country

lanes. Many of the smaller villages and hamlets are linear in character and commonly take the form of terraced stone cottages along the main road. Farms tend to consist of a core of vernacular stone buildings, many dating from the 17th century, with either stone-flagged or slate roofs. Modern development around village fringes gives a suburban character with a mix of building materials and styles. In some of the more accessible areas, many farmhouses have been modernised and extensive barn conversions have taken place, not always in an appropriate manner.

Large country houses set in their own parkland settings are located across this area, such as Ellel Grange, Waddow Hall, Bolton Park and Leagram Hall. There are a number of small industrial/mill settlements at Calder Vale, Oakenclough, Dolphinholme and Galgate with terraced workers' cottages lining the narrow lanes.

Land Cover

This is an area of lush verdant pasture supporting dairy herds and other livestock as well as species-rich hay meadows. The area has an irregular field pattern of medium-sized fields defined by well-maintained hawthorn hedgerows with a high proportion of mature hedgerow trees - predominantly oak, ash and alder. Hedgerows are replaced by stone walls and post and wire fencing at the transition to the Forest of Bowland Fells.

Areas of semi-natural woodland are commonly associated with managed estates and parkland. Ancient woodland is notable along the Brock and Calder and between Abbeystead and Dolphinholme. These woodlands, combined with hedgerows and hedgerow trees, make a significant contribution to the landscape.



The river Lune near Caton meanders through a typical valley landscape of deciduous woodlands and pastureland.

LANCASHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Parkland in this area adds to the intensively managed character of the landscape. While there are no famous, large-scale, designed park landscapes, they are generally attractive areas forming the setting for modest country houses. These areas are enclosed by belts and blocks of woodland with areas of open grassland and isolated, well-spaced, open grown trees of oak, ash, sycamore and lime.

Several bodies of standing water, including reservoirs and disused gravel pits in the Wyre Valley east of Garstang, form prominent features. A high density of field ponds further contributes towards this important ecological corridor.

There are a number of sand and gravel extraction sites, mainly confined to valley bottoms to the south of the area. There are also clay pits and the most prominent of these is at Cloughton Brickworks where aerial ropeways extend from Cloughton Moor across the A683 to the brickworks.

The Changing Countryside

- Exploitation of mineral deposits, in particular potential expansion associated with Clitheroe Cement Works as

well as sand and gravel deposits in Ribble Valley, could result in indirect pressures for road widening, strengthening of minor bridges and landfill pressures at extraction sites.

- Decline of riverside woods due to excessive grazing and lack of management.
- Marked tendency for farm amalgamations though with less hedgerow removal than in arable parts of the Lancashire and Amounderness Plain.
- Loss of character caused by road widening schemes including loss of hedges and roadside trees.
- Recreational honey pots including Beacon Fell, Brockbottom, Jeffrey Hill and Kemple End which attract large numbers of visitors and require considerable management of various kinds.
- Re-use of hospital sites and considerable impact caused by increased road traffic.
- Substantial urban expansion pressures around major centres of population.



Throughout the Bowland Fringe scattered stone farmsteads are linked by winding country lanes.

- Dilution of traditional vernacular styles by extensive suburban developments of nondescript 20th century housing and modern farm buildings.
- Growth in conspicuous caravan sites.
- Increase in numbers of obtrusive communication towers and aerials particularly adjacent to the M6 corridor.
- More effective drainage of upland areas, resulting in sudden and powerful surges in river flows, has led to increased erosion of river banks and riverside trees.
- Damage to smaller areas of semi-natural woodland from grazing stock and wild deer.
- Former unspoilt farmland and farmsteads being compromised by addition of conspicuous modern farm buildings, slurry tanks, silage bays and abandoned farm machinery.

Shaping the Future

- The conservation and management of riparian woodland, semi-natural and ancient woodland, hedgerows, hedgerow trees, and avenues should be considered.
- There are opportunities for the appropriate management of recreational sites subject to visitor pressure.
- The subtle variations in character between the western Bowland Fringe and the Ribble Valley, especially field size and boundary treatment, should be respected and maintained.
- The restoration and management of the characteristic field ponds to north of Preston should be addressed.
- The rural and agricultural character of the Lune valley is particularly important.
- Species-rich hay meadows form valuable landscape and ecological areas.

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Glossary

cloughs: ravines; steep valleys

reef knolls: hard lime mud banks of complex origin and composition