

The Historic Landscape of the Forest of Bowland AONB

Introduction

Throughout the Forest of Bowland AONB, the landscape as it appears today is the product of human activity. Everything from the pattern of fields to the distribution of farms and villages has been shaped by people, in some cases stretching back over a few generations, in others over hundreds and even thousands of years.

The landscape is therefore made up of numerous features (e.g. monuments and buildings) and broad patterns (e.g. settlement and field), which together make it distinctive - it is the sum of its parts. These also give it 'time-depth' - rarely will an area be made up of features that only date to one period in time, instead it comprises a jumble of past activities that overlie each other, in some cases truncating and erasing surface remains, so that only isolated aspects of sites and former uses survive. Logically therefore the more recent the land use, the better its preservation in the landscape is likely to be. Indeed activity from the more recent centuries is often the most visible and can dominate over earlier and subtler remains, survival of which tends to diminish the further back in time they were constructed. However, a keen eye will soon observe that the 'time-depth' of the landscape of the Bowland landscape is rich and varied as the following paragraphs reveal, beginning with the more recent past and working back to the prehistoric period:

By looking at features that were established in the post-medieval period it is evident that much from this period survives in the landscape today. Across Bowland there are many fine examples of the stone buildings that were built to replace timber houses between the 16th and 18th centuries. Typically the vernacular style includes characteristic stone mullions, lintels and datestones. Those wastes and commons that hadn't already been divided were enclosed in the 17th and 18th centuries, in some cases by Act of Parliament and fields arranged in a regular pattern with isolated field barns are a reminder of these times. Industry also played an important role in shaping the landscape - two examples of this activity being the disused quarries that are located throughout Bowland, and the numerous limekilns, which were used to make mortar as well as quick lime to fertilise poor soils. Mills are also a common feature from this period and this includes cotton-spinning mills such as those at Oakenclough and Caton.

By the end of the medieval period the foundations of the modern landscape had been laid - field and settlement patterns were established, with dispersed farmsteads across much of the upland area and nucleation occurring in the more fertile and hospitable valleys; commons, waste and woodland were all comprehensively managed. Importantly, it was during the medieval period that Forests were established across the AONB. Today, the Forest of Bowland is a name that has been given to the AONB but in the Middle Ages, just a portion of the Bowland Fells was actually part of the designated Royal Forest of Bowland. There were three other Royal Forests within the modern boundaries of the AONB, all belonging to the earldom of Lancaster - Bleasdale to the west, which included the Forest of Bowland after 1311, Quernmore and Wyresdale.

There was also a chase belonging to Hornby Castle, located in the Roeburn and Hindburn valleys in the north. Forests were places for the hunting of deer, not for trees as the name might suggest and the designation of much of the area as Forest had a controlling impact upon the landscape, restricting development and prohibiting change. For those who lived within its jurisdiction, Forest Law was a great inconvenience. The desire of the King to hunt prevented landowners from clearing and extending cultivated areas and it also stopped them from planting hedgerows to deter deer from eating crops. Settlement creation and expansion were therefore severely restricted under the regime, which helps to explain why these areas underwent such limited growth during the medieval period. Officially Forest Law was not revoked until 1507.

However, Forests were costly to administer and maintain and in the later medieval period a move towards enclosed deer parks began, these being smaller and more manageable. As with the Forest, deer parks were popular with the nobility and a great expansion in their number occurred in the 13th century reflecting the growth of agriculture, wealth and population. In Bowland the first portion of the forest to be enclosed was known as Radholme Park, and appears to have been in existence by the end of the 13th century; a second park, Leagram, to the east of Chipping, was enclosed by the mid-14th century. Deer parks have left their mark upon the modern landscape. In some areas the deep bank and ditch of the park pale that once surrounded a park survives, but more commonly place names including 'park' and 'laund'- meaning a clearing where deer grazed - indicate their former locations.

There are many sites that survive as isolated reminders of the medieval heritage of the Bowland AONB, for example the motte and bailey castles in the Lune Valley, which are thought to have been constructed in the late 11th century by the Norman invaders and may mark a former frontier zone along the Lune Valley. Other sites of interest include the Cistercian monastery of Sawley, numerous medieval churches, moated sites such as those of Easington and Bolton Peel, and former vaccaries.

Known sites and monuments that have been ascribed an early medieval date are few but activity from this period is documented in the landscape in the form of the placename record, which identifies the lasting Anglo-Saxon and Norse influence. For example, the placename *Bowland* is in fact derived from *Bu-* the Old Norse word for cattle and there are many other examples in the landscape including the Norse *thwaite* as in *Hawthornthwaite*, which indicates where a clearance was undertaken for arable land. Some settlements in Bowland are likely to have been in existence at this time, for example the Domesday record reveals that Grindleton was head of a large early medieval estate and the discovery of the decorated Angel stone at Slaidburn, which stylistically has been dated to the 10th century suggests that this settlement may have been an early ecclesiastical centre. Another interesting find that dates to this period is a log burial dating to the 7th century, which was discovered when the carpark at Jubilee Tower was being constructed.

During the Roman period (79 - 410 AD) the most enduring change to take place in the Bowland landscape was the construction of the Roman road network. Two are known to cross the AONB. One runs north from Manchester to the Fort at Ribchester, then on to Over Burrow Fort in the Lune Valley before continuing on to Carlisle. The limited

development that has occurred in the upland moor has allowed much of the route to survive undamaged for the past 2000 years, while one section visible from Jeffrey Hill has become fossilised in the field boundary pattern. The second road runs from Kirkham in west Lancashire to York via Ribchester, passing to the north of Downham as it crosses through the AONB. As for the early medieval period there are few known Roman monuments; they include kilns that were discovered at Quernmore, and a milestone found near Caton. Also finds such as potsherds and coins have been discovered at various locations across Bowland.

Traces of prehistoric activity survive in the form of a small number of monuments including the cairn on Parlick Pike and the nearby Bleasdale Circle. The chance discovery of finds such as the flint-chipping floor on Halstead Fell, indicate that this area was populated as far back as the Mesolithic period (c 8000-4000 BC). Other finds, for example, the Neolithic flint arrow head found on Pendle Hill and the Bronze Age stone axe hammer discovered near Chipping, all attest to human presence at these times but the overall understanding of prehistoric Bowland is limited - for example, there are no known settlement sites. However, prehistoric people have left a lasting impression upon the wider landscape, in particular assisting the formation of the upland moor through clearance and cultivation, which is discussed further below.

This is a very brief summary of the AONB's past, it would be impossible to mention every aspect of the development of this area and there is still much that is not fully understood. One method that has been devised to enhance understanding and to enable a coherent overview of the historic landscape and its development is called Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC). By dividing the landscape into a series of character types according to the dominant features and attributes of the landscape, HLC helps to explain why the landscape of the Forest of Bowland AONB looks how it does today¹.

Historic Landscape Character

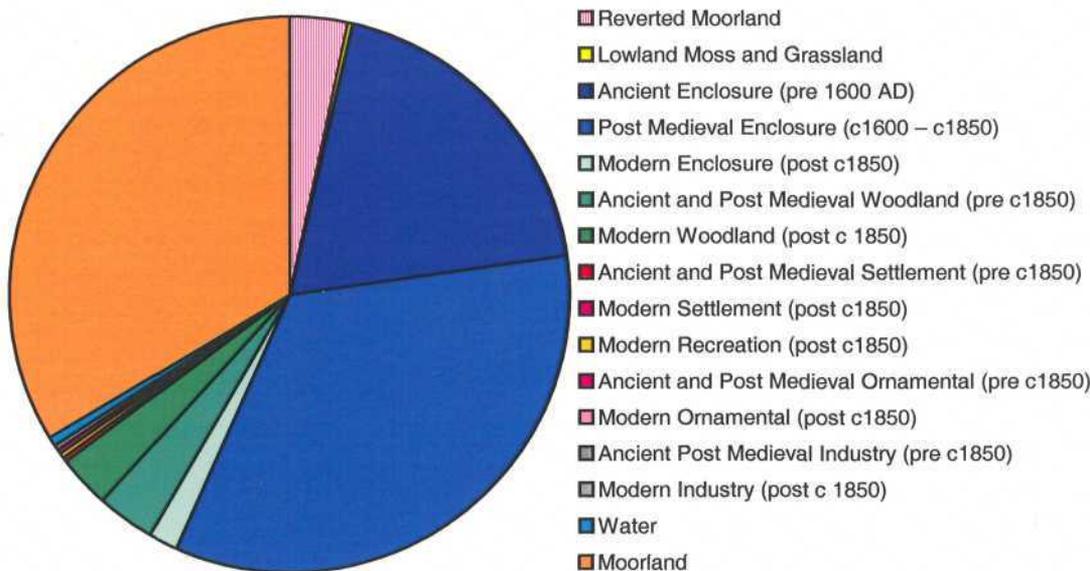
Through the HLC process the Bowland AONB has been divided into sixteen character types that include - open and enclosed land, woodland, settlement, recreation, ornamental landscapes, industry and major water bodies. This is a broad-brush exercise, for example it doesn't cover every stream and tributary, nor does it include every building and clump of trees. Instead it reveals the overall historic character of the landscape, which in Bowland is as follows:

Character Types	%
Rough Land:	
Moorland	33.7
Reverted Moorland	3.43
Lowland Moss and Grassland	0.1
Enclosed Land:	

¹ In 2000, the Historic Landscape Characterisation of Lancashire was completed for Lancashire, Craven and Sefton. This English Heritage sponsored initiative provides an overview of the historic time-depth within the modern landscape. It has divided the area into character types based upon common attributes and features. For each character type there is a detailed description and breakdown of typical morphological features and archaeological sites that would usually occur (see report - J Ede with J Darlington, 2002 Lancashire Historic Landscape Characterisation Programme)

Ancient Enclosure (pre 1600 AD)	19.3
Post Medieval Enclosure (c1600 - c1850)	33.8
Modern Enclosure (post c1850)	1.62
Woodland:	
Ancient and Post Medieval Woodland (pre c1850)	3.34
Modern Woodland (post c 1850)	3.11
Settlement:	
Ancient and Post Medieval Settlement (pre c1850)t	0.23
Modern Settlement (post c1850)	0.15
Recreation:	
Modern Recreation (post c1850)	0.15
Ornamental:	
Ancient and Post Medieval Ornamental (pre c1850)	0.26
Modern Ornamental (post C1850)	0.19
Industry:	
Ancient Post Medieval Industry (pre c1850)	0.03
Modern Industry (post c 1850)	0.09
Water:	
Water	0.5

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The Upland Moor

One of the dominant historic landscape character types in the AONB is the upland moor. For many, a popular view of the Forest of Bowland, are the exposed upland fells and the upland moor does in fact constitute a significant proportion of the total area of the AONB (272 square kilometres or 33.7%). While there is little material evidence of prehistoric activity on the fells beyond finds and funerary monuments actions dating back to the Bronze Age had a profound impact upon the landscape. The topography of the upland fells is the result of glaciation, (the Trough of Bowland is in fact a glacial melt channel) but the fact that the fell tops are treeless expanses covered in peat is due to a combination of climatic deterioration and the extensive clearance of trees that took place in the Bronze Age (c 2000 BC) to make way for arable cultivation. The poor soil of the Fells has never recovered and the extent of peat cover that developed at this time is known to have been similar to that of today.

Subsequently the vast expanses of moorland, which appear to be wild and natural, are and have been historically, the subject of intensive management regimes, designed to sustain grazing livestock and game birds such as grouse. These are far from being recent developments. Shooting can be traced back several centuries and accordingly the moor is dotted with traces of this activity in the form of shooting butts and huts some of which are of antiquity. While the use of this area for grazing and small-scale cultivation, can be traced back to the prehistoric period hence, the early clearances made in the Bronze Age. By the Iron Age the Bowland landscape was farmed and managed, with cereal cultivation on the higher levels as well as pastoral activities.

During the medieval period the upland fells were utilised for hunting as part of the Royal system of Forests and subsequently by the vaccaries. The pastoral economy had been important in this area for some time, as shown by the place name Bowland or cattle-land as it translates from Old Norse. Vaccaries were large, open tracts of land created by major feudal landowners to graze livestock. They were not common all over England, but are particular to Lancashire and other northern counties, presumably adapting to regional political and geographical situations.

Vaccaries utilised the special topography of their locations. They tended to be isolated and tucked away in steep-sided valleys that would ensure a good water supply and shelter from the worst weather. A moor wall separated the unenclosed common grazing on the fell-tops from the rest of the vaccary, and within this wall were droeways (driftways or stock funnels) that could be used to bring the cattle down from the upland pasture and these distinctive features sometimes survive within existing boundaries. Numerous vaccaries are known to have existed throughout the area including Sabden Fold on Pendle, and Marshaw near the Trough.

Other features associated with the upland moor include shelter walls (bields), animal pounds, shielings, pack-horse routes, wayside crosses and there is also a high potential for buried remains within the peat cover, which in some areas has a depth of four metres. There have been phases of enclosure on the moor and drystone walls are important features in this character type. Often they delineate areas that were improved during periods of post medieval expansion into the moor. In some cases the

land has reverted back to moorland but the boundaries remain and this character type (reverted moorland) accounts for 27 square kilometres or 3.43%.

Lowland Moss and Grassland

This character type accounts for a very small portion of the AONB (0.1%). In fact it refers to just one surviving area of lowland moss at Austwick Moss near Lawkland that has been steadily reduced in size through drainage and enclosure. Historically this character type covered a much greater portion of the AONB and would have served a variety of important functions such as common grazing and rights of turbarry (peat cutting for fuel).

Enclosed Land

Enclosed land comprises the greatest proportion of the Forest of Bowland AONB, with 442 square kilometres or 55% of the total area. This is divided into three broad phases ancient (pre 1600 AD), post-medieval (1600-1850) and modern (post 1850), which cover 156 square kilometres or 19.3%, 273 square kilometres or 33.8% and 13 square kilometres or 1.62% respectively. On the HLC map the dark blue areas, which comprise just under a fifth of the AONB have been identified as fields that were enclosed during the medieval period and are in fact surviving relicts of the medieval landscape. Typical features that are associated with this landscape character type are irregularly shaped fields with distinctive boundary types, a predominantly dispersed settlement pattern and a distinctive network of roads and trackways that connect them. Where common fields were enclosed as groups of strips, there is a clear pattern of s-shaped (aratural) boundaries in the landscape. A particularly good example of this exists near Aughton and north of Wray in the Lune Valley.

The middle blue colour indicates where areas have been reorganised in later periods or where later phases of enclosure perhaps of commons and wasteland have occurred, associated with the 17th-18th centuries age of agricultural improvement, and these are referred to as Post-Medieval enclosure. Typically these fields are of a regular shape and layout. They are associated with stone field barns, stonewalls or quickset hedges, farms and trackways. Typical examples of fields that arose as a result of Parliamentary Enclosure Acts or similar agreements can be identified on the Claughton and Caton Moors, as well as in the Bleasdale area and in the vicinity of Sabden Fold.

The light blue colour of the HLC map identifies areas of Modern Enclosure, most of which is former Ancient and Post-Medieval enclosure that has been re-organised, boundaries removed etc, so that the character of the landscape has been lost. This is only a very small portion of the total AONB landscape, and is much lower than the average across Lancashire (8%).

Woodland

Ancient and Post-Medieval woodland makes up 3.34% of the area, while Modern woodland comprises 3.11%. Much of the latter is Gisburn Forest, the largest conifer woodland in Lancashire, planting of which began in 1949 and continued into the 1960s. Within Gisburn Forest time-depth exists in the form of prehistoric burial mounds, as well as farmsteads and barns, field boundaries, trackways and limekilns that are reminders of the more recent past.

Woodland is carefully managed and has been since at least the medieval period. Formal planting, coppicing, pollarding, and cutting of woodland have controlled the location and extent of woodland across the AONB. Therefore, ancient woodland has tended to survive in steep sided gulleys or on slopes in streams and river valleys because there is no pressure for alternative uses in these inaccessible locations. These are the edges to which woodland has been pushed and allowed to stay, very often therefore they are the parish boundaries, which tend to follow topography and natural features such as river valleys.

Associated with this landscape type are such features as ditch and bank boundaries, saw pits, evidence for charcoal production and where woodland has been planted in recent times, as Gisburn shows, there is a very high chance that traces of earlier land uses and activities will survive.

Settlement

The HLC also identifies towns and villages - both as Ancient and Post Medieval Settlement (that which was in existence by c1850) and Modern Settlement (post c1850). Settlement founded before c1850 accounts for 0.23% of the total area, and this is almost matched by the extent of settlement that has been developed since then (0.15%). Settlement is clearly not a foremost character type, as this is very much a rural area. The settlement pattern is predominantly dispersed, with some nucleation in the Lune and Hodder Valleys.

There are many villages in the AONB that have long and interesting histories such as Chipping which was valued at three ploughlands at Domesday (1086), granted first to Roger of Poitou and later to Robert de Lacy, after which time it became part of the honour of Clitheroe. A number of churches, associated with many of these early settlements were founded in the medieval period eg Chipping, Bolton-by-Bowland and Hornby. The vernacular architecture of Bowland is distinctive and there are many splendid examples of post-medieval stone built houses still surviving, with datestones providing conclusive evidence of when they were erected. The built environment of much of Bowland survives in good condition and this is particularly evident in the estate villages of Downham and Slaidburn where the collective character of the villages has been maintained.

While most settlement has undergone expansion in recent centuries years, Calder Vale is an example of a settlement that was only developed in the 19th century, following the successful establishment of the four storey Vale spinning mill, nineteen workers houses and a mill managers house. This is one of the few surviving examples in the AONB of industry and its legacy in the landscape. Of course not all settlements have endured - including the deserted settlement of Hawthornthwaite, and the submerged Dalehead, which is now beneath Stocks Reservoir.

Modern Recreation

Modern recreation, which has appeared in the landscape after about 1850, accounts for just 0.15% of the total AONB landscape, this character type includes the Crook o'Lune caravan park, and Stonyhurst golf course and playing fields. Within this character type

there is a high potential for time-depth as these land uses are frequently superimposed upon the landscape and earlier features such as boundaries are likely to survive.

Ornamental

Following the break up of the Royal Forests, much of the AONB has been under the influence of a small number of estates, which as for the estate villages has had an impact upon the nature and extent of development that has been allowed to take place.

Associated with these estates are many grand halls and houses throughout the AONB, for example, Browsholme Hall, which is still the family home of the Parkers who were once the Bow Bearers of Bowland Forest; and Hornby Castle, which is now divided into a series of private apartments. These examples of splendid local architecture often have ornamental landscapes associated with them, for example the park at Browsholme, the deer park at Hornby Castle, plus Leagram Park at Leagram Hall, and Quernmore Park at Old Park Hall. Such landscapes are referred to as Ancient and Post-Medieval Ornamental types (0.26% of the AONB), while examples of Modern Ornamental landscapes (post C1850) are located at North Park, east of Lancaster and at Stonyhurst College and cover 0.19% of the AONB.

Industrial

In terms of landscape character ancient and post medieval industry (predominantly disused quarries) comprise just 0.03% of the total AONB area, while modern industry eg quarries on Waddington Fell, the windfarm on Caton Moor and the clay pits/brick works on Claughton Moor covers 0.09%. However, industries and proto-industries have played an important role in the late medieval and post-medieval history of the AONB, although their influence is perhaps not so apparent. One example, being the production of fulled cloth. Part of this process included stretching the cloth on a frame to which it was attached via tenter-hooks and it is the survival of the placename *tenter which* indicates where this activity was carried out. Tenter Hill for example is located to the west of Slaidburn and a medieval fulling mill is known to have been located nearby. Other industries include nail making, hat and shoe making, indeed a hat factory survives at Quernmore, plus bobbin milling, lead mining and making lime as attested by the numerous lime kilns across Bowland. Today there are very few industrial sites still operating in the Bowland AONB. With the advent of coal power and large-scale production, the era of small-scale industry came to an end and focus shifted to South Lancashire and the mill towns that developed there.

Water Bodies

This character type covers 0.5% of the AONB and includes natural water bodies (86%) as well as reservoirs and artificial lakes (14%), which measure four square kilometres and are a common characteristic of the AONB. In the late 19th century the use of the Forest of Bowland and Pendle Hill as a supply of water for the towns of Lancashire began. Of the reservoirs that exist throughout this area the most prominent is that of Stock's, which was constructed between 1922 and 1932, and measures over three kilometres in length. Various structures associated with the water industry are located in the AONB including notable Victorian constructions such as the waterworks at Langden Valley and at the Abbeystead reservoir.

Summary

The historic landscape of the Forest of Bowland AONB is therefore rich and varied, comprising amongst others features that date back as far as prehistory and settlement and field patterns that can be traced back to the medieval period. This is a dynamic landscape that has undergone numerous changes - from the clearance of woodland for cultivation and pastoral grazing in prehistory to the introduction of Forests in the medieval period and more recently in its history its designation in 1964 as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.