



**Peak District
Landscape Strategy
2022-31**

Foreword Ken Smith

This Landscape Strategy, like the National Park Management Plan that it builds on, is a strategy for the place, not just for the National Park Authority. It reviews and replaces the first version published in 2009. Since that time many changes have occurred which will have a profound influence on the landscape. Climate change is becoming a reality, affecting our natural and historic environments. To help combat climate change, interest in increasing tree cover, continued restoration of peatlands and renewable energy has never been greater. Tree diseases such as Ash Dieback and ramorum disease in Larch have affected large numbers of trees across the Peak District. Agricultural support systems are changing following Brexit, affecting land-use decisions; the scale of the global biodiversity crisis has become increasingly apparent; and the number, range and some of the behaviour of people visiting the Peak District has changed following the lockdown associated with the Covid pandemic. These issues bring related pressures for the land-use planning system from the need for slurry management, new livestock buildings to the need for careful placement of renewable energy. We need to balance these matters with the push for nature recovery and seek net gains for landscape over time. All of these emphasise the changing nature of the landscape, and the challenge - and importance - of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Park: one of our statutory purposes.

The Landscape Character Assessment, which formed part of the original Landscape Strategy in 2009, continues to provide an important description of the landscapes of the Peak District and identifies the features and characteristics that make those landscapes important. The role of the Landscape Strategy in helping guide management of a changing landscape was an important theme in the first version; this revised

version goes further in recognising the need to embrace positive change in the face of changing environmental and political factors. The importance of encouraging increased tree and shrub cover for carbon sequestration to combat climate change is recognised, for example, and a Wooded Landscapes Plan has been produced to accompany the Landscape Strategy. This provides more detailed guidance on how we can embrace increased tree and shrub cover within different landscapes of the Peak District, sometimes potentially involving significant landscape change, whilst still conserving and enhancing the quality and diversity of the landscapes across the National Park, the scenery that so many visitors (and residents) appreciate and which also supports our important tourism economy.

The global Covid pandemic has highlighted the fragility of our place in the natural world, and the important role that high quality landscapes such as National Parks play in our physical and mental health and wellbeing. During the lifetime of this Strategy we are likely to face significant challenges in conserving and enhancing the landscape, with increasing opportunities to do so, but also with greater awareness of the need to manage those changes positively. As someone who is 3 months older than the National Park, I still have my breath taken away by the range of different landscapes that make up the Park. I hope that you will find this document inspirational and informative in guiding landscape change within the Peak District National Park for the benefit of current and future generations.



Ken Smith
Chair, Peak District National Park Authority



"Our dilemma is that we hate change and love it at the same time; what we really want is for things to remain the same but get better."

Sydney J. Harris

Introduction



Hurdlow, looking south © Peak District National Park Authority

The Peak District National Park is Britain's first National Park.

It is a treasured landscape that has been shaped and continues to evolve through the interaction of natural and cultural forces. It is a landscape that is home to local communities and is of exceptional natural beauty that provides opportunities for physical and mental wellbeing to millions of people.

At a local scale, the Peak District National Park consists of many individual landscapes, each valued for their special characteristics. These landscapes contrast with surrounding industrial and urban landscapes, enriching the lives of everyone who visits, lives and works in them. They also provide many other essential ecosystem services to support life and economic activity, including fresh water supply, carbon storage, farming and tourism.

The overall management of the National Park is guided by the National Park Management Plan. This Landscape Strategy and Action Plan sets out in more detail how certain elements of the National Park Management Plan will be delivered and guides future work to protect, manage and plan the landscapes of the Peak District.

Document structure

This Strategy is a revised version of that published in 2009 which was undertaken by Garrie Tiedeman and Countryside.

The landscapes of the Peak District National Park have been mapped, with eight Landscape Character Areas representing broad areas of landscape which share a common identity, e.g. the White Peak. Within each area a number of Landscape Character Types have been defined based upon the pattern of natural and cultural characteristics, e.g. 'Open Moors' or 'Riverside Meadows'.

The following documents comprise the Landscape Strategy:

1 Introduction and Overview: A section that sets out the context and rationale behind the Landscape Strategy.

2 Landscape Character Descriptions: Each of the eight Landscape Character Areas – including the individual Landscape Character Types from which they are comprised - are described, and key elements of character are identified.

1. White Peak
2. Dark Peak
3. Dark Peak Western Fringe
4. Dark Peak Yorkshire Fringe
5. Derbyshire Peak Fringe
6. Derwent Valley
7. Eastern Moors
8. South West Peak

3 Guiding Landscape Change in the Peak District: this section outlines our desired landscape outcomes for the Park landscapes.

Appendix 1 Where the landscape outcomes are important in the Peak District: these tables show (for the different Landscape Character Types) where the landscape outcomes have most relevance.

Appendix 2: Wooded Landscapes Plan: this plan details the objectives of the Authority in terms of increased woodland and tree cover within the National Park.

Definitions

Landscape Character Assessment is the process of identifying and describing variation in the character of the landscape, and using this information to assist in managing change in the landscape. It seeks to identify and explain the unique combination of elements and features that make landscapes distinctive. The process results in the production of a Landscape Character Assessment. The Landscape Character Assessment for the Peak District is contained in Section 2.

Most Landscape Character Assessments identify both landscape character types and landscape character areas. The generic characteristics of a particular landscape can be described for a landscape character type, then the uniquely distinctive features can be drawn out to inform description of landscape character areas. In this way, landscape character assessment can convey a real sense of identity and distinctiveness without unnecessary repetition. For example, the 'open moors' are a landscape type that occurs in a number of different areas – this landscape type shares many common features, but is uniquely and noticeably different in different locations e.g. the 'open moors' LCT in the Dark Peak (with its incised plateaux) are different in character to the 'open moors' LCT in the Eastern Moors (with its prominent edges).

The term 'natural beauty' is enshrined in the 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act, but is not exhaustively defined in legislation. It is also a subjective characteristic of a landscape and ultimately involves a value judgment. It is widely accepted that the beauty of all our most cherished landscapes is in part due to human interventions such as agriculture and forestry, and it has long been the practice to include such factors in the assessment of natural beauty. Natural England has developed a list of factors that contribute to natural beauty¹ which provides a practical framework for an evidence-base which assists in making judgments about natural beauty in a rigorous and transparent way.

This list of factors that contribute to natural beauty include:

- **Landscape quality:** a measure of the physical state or condition of the landscape
- **Scenic quality:** the extent to which the landscape appeals to the senses
- **Relative wildness:** the degree to which relatively wild character can be perceived in the landscape makes a particular contribution to sense of place
- **Relative tranquillity:** the degree to which relative tranquillity can be perceived in the landscape
- **Natural heritage features:** the influence of natural heritage on the perception of the natural beauty of the area. Natural heritage includes flora, fauna, geological and physiographical
- **Cultural heritage:** the influence of cultural heritage on the perception of natural beauty of the area and the degree to which associations with particular people, artists, writers or events in history contribute to such perceptions

Landscape and landscape change

The European Landscape Convention defines landscape as:

“an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors”

Landscape is more than just 'the view'. It is about the relationship over time between people, place and nature. Landscape results from the way that the natural and cultural components of our environment interact together and are perceived and valued by people.

It is therefore important to understand the process of landscape change: what the landscape is like today, how it came to be like that and how it may change in the future.

The process of landscape change

In a National Park – which is designated for the national importance of its landscape quality and natural beauty - there must be a strong emphasis on the protection and enhancement of its landscape and natural beauty. The Landscape Strategy reflects this priority.

However, maintaining a past landscape is not always possible or necessarily desirable. Landscapes are dynamic, subject to constant and unpreventable forces of change which result from both human practices and changing natural processes.

Climate change will lead to greater, quicker and more unprecedented changes in our landscapes.

The historic development of the Peak District landscapes

Peak District landscapes have been shaped by human activity over millennia; no part of these landscapes is truly 'wild' or 'natural', rather the land has been made, and re-made, over countless generations. In our more remote and upland landscapes the influence of past human activity may be hard to see, but the legacy of prehistoric tree clearance and use of natural resources has shaped the soils and habitats. Well-worn routes cross our moorlands and traces of activity, from prehistoric settlement and ceremony to 20th century military training, are all part of these wilder places.

Generations of agriculture and changing patterns of land tenure and ownership are much more apparent on the lower plateau and in the dales and valleys. This evidence of deep-time human influence can be easily read in the layers and patterns of field enclosure and earthworks, the shape of settlements and paths and routeways that link them. The natural resources of the land have supported a wealth of industry, from the exploitation of minerals and stone to the harnessing of water power, resulting in some of our most iconic landscape features and built environment.

Our understanding of historic landscape change within the Peak District is further informed by detailed historic landscape characterisation that was undertaken over several years from the late 1990s. The mapping underpinning this study was fine-grained, to the level of individual field parcels; it was part of a suite of studies undertaken nationally. Historic landscape characterisation revealed the processes, patterns and connections within our landscapes, spatially and through time. Mapping change through time over such a large scale is complex; this work was

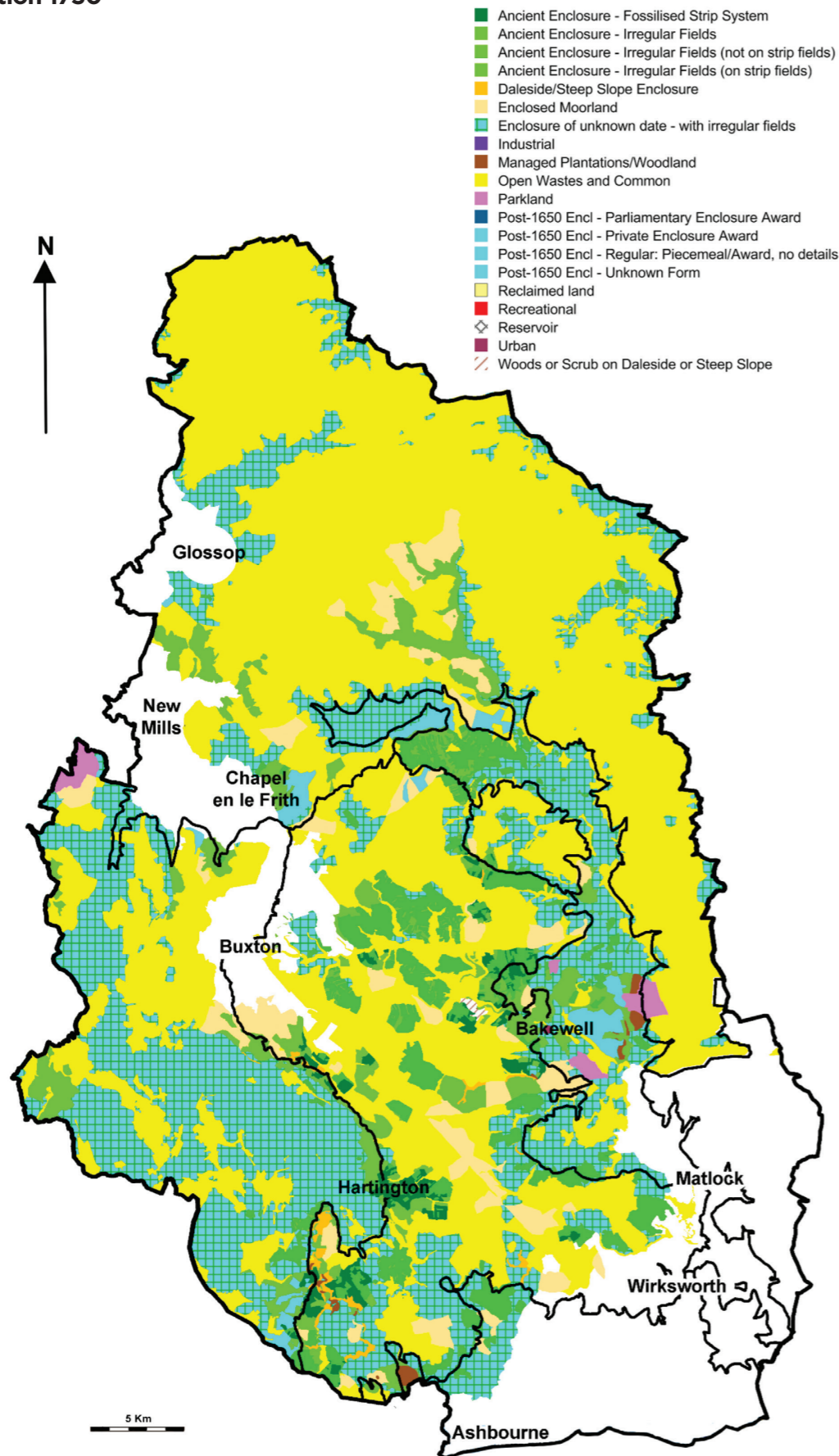
structured by identifying key themes that have particularly influenced Peak District landscape development, these being settlement, agriculture, industry, archaeological vestiges and social territories. Geology, topography and soils underpin all these landscapes, and there is a strong correlation between the human and natural influences on these historic character areas.

'Time-slice' maps at 50-year intervals were made, from the 1600s to the present day, using a mixture of estate, tithe, enclosure award and Ordnance Survey mapping. These reflect the 'dominant' historic landscape character for these time periods, and comparison of these maps clearly illustrates significant landscape change that has occurred in the Peak District over the last 400 years.

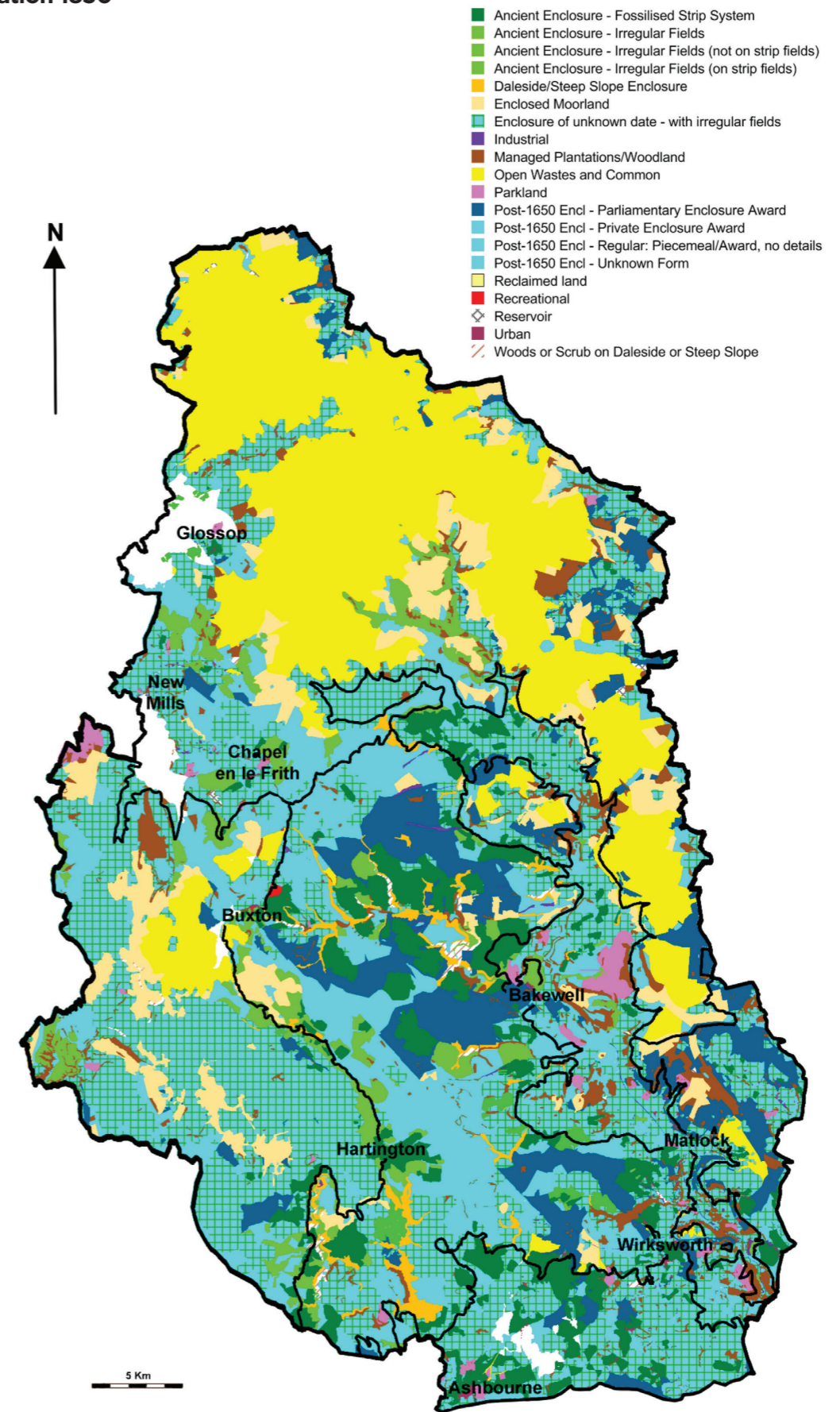
The two maps shown on the following pages represent historic landscape character maps from 1750 and 1850. Although there are some data gaps for the period pre-1850, the maps clearly demonstrate the amount of landscape change during this timeframe. Of particular note is almost total transformation of 'open waste and commons' to enclosed land in the White Peak and South West Peak.

¹ Guidance for assessing landscapes for designation as National Park or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in England, Natural England, March 2011

Historic landscape characterisation 1750



Historic landscape characterisation 1850



¹ Guidance for assessing landscapes for designation as National Park or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in England, Natural England, March 2011

More recent landscape changes

Work done by David Alexander (Mapping the Past against the Present, PDNPA) looked at field boundary changes and compared data from the 1950s to 2023.

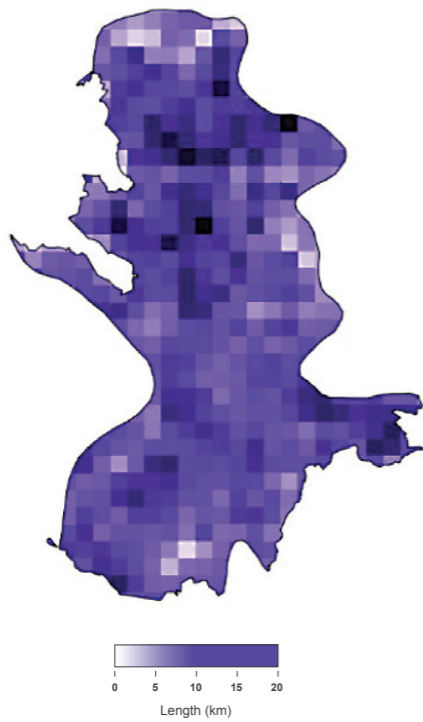
The 1950s map and 1950 - 2023 changes map are shown to the right.

This work shows that the estimated total length of historical boundaries within the open landscape of the White Peak was approx. 4,814 km in 1950. Of this, 4,264 km remain today, representing a loss of 551 km, or 12% of the original length.

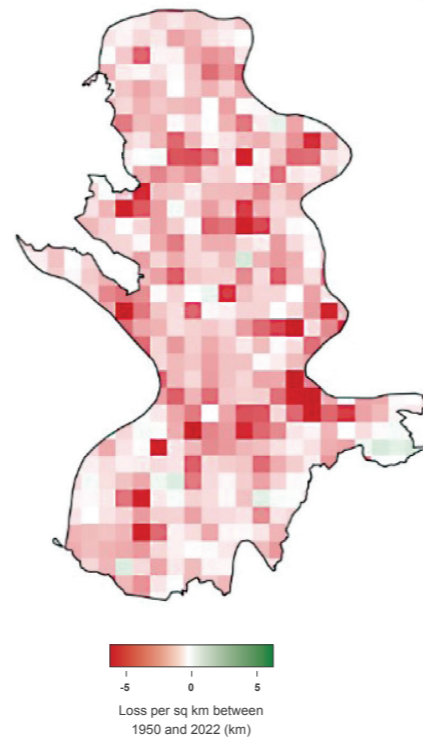
A 12% loss represents a significant, concentrated decline in many areas. Notably, 11 distinct 1 km² tiles lost over 4 km of walls since 1950 highlighting substantial shifts within areas of the Peak District landscape.

Furthermore, a targeted visual analysis of 13 km² tiles reveals a continuing trend, with an additional 2% loss noted between 2014 and 2023.

Total length of boundary features 1950



Net change in boundary features: 1950 - 2023



Scope and purpose of the Landscape Strategy

The aim of landscape policy is not to prevent landscape change, but to identify and protect the key elements and aesthetic/perceptual qualities which create the **‘sense of place’ and special qualities** of the different landscapes within the Peak District, while **planning for and guiding the positive management** of future changes to enhance the landscape and its natural beauty.

Given this, different landscape types within the Park will require a different **blend of protection, management and planning for/guiding future change**. Some aspects of the landscape are so highly valued that they must be protected, others should be allowed to evolve in a sustainable manner, while there will be some opportunities to introduce new elements, and new character, in some landscapes.

The landscape outcomes and outputs to achieve this blend for the Peak District National Park are included in **Section 3** (and in **Appendix 1 and 2**).

The character assessments, outcomes and objectives are intended to be used by all involved in the management of the Park’s landscapes (such as planners, applicants for planning permission and land managers) when designing schemes and making decisions about land use. This is essential to ensure the valued landscape character of the National Park is conserved and enhanced.

The Landscape Strategy adds detail to and underpins the National Park Management Plan and the Authority’s Delivery Plan and is an important tool that can be used to deliver the vision articulated in this key policy document.

It will also be used to:

- add detail to landscape policies in the Local Plan;
- provide evidence to steer delivery of specific National Park Management Plan objectives, for instance in relation to woodland creation and carbon sequestration;
- target investment in conservation activity by identifying spatial priorities for targeted project work and sourcing of external funding;
- form a common agenda for partnership working between the National Park Authority and partners / stakeholders; and
- promote understanding and enjoyment of the Peak District National Park.

How landscape links to the ‘Special Qualities’ of the Park

The Peak District National Park was designated because it exhibits a range of special qualities, which are nationally, and frequently internationally, significant. At the heart of the statutory purpose of the Peak District National Park is the need to document and clearly express these special qualities, their status and their condition.

Special qualities define what is distinctive and significant about the Peak District National Park compared with other parts of the country. Understanding these qualities helps us to plan effectively and manage the Peak District National Park in order to protect them. The special qualities are in no particular order. They should be read as an integrated set, rather than in isolation. The titles of the seven special qualities are below.

The special qualities of the Peak District National Park as outlined in the National Park Management Plan are:

- 1 Beautiful views created by contrasting landscapes and dramatic geology**
- 2 Internationally important and locally distinctive wildlife and habitats**
- 3 Undeveloped places of tranquillity and dark night skies within reach of millions**
- 4 Landscapes that tell a story of thousands of years of people, farming and industry**
- 5 Characteristic settlements with strong communities and traditions**
- 6 An inspiring space for escape, adventure, discovery and quiet reflection**
- 7 Vital benefits for millions of people that flow beyond the landscape boundary**

The landscape provides the critical foundation for all of the special qualities which in turn define what is distinctive and significant within the National Park.

¹ Guidance for assessing landscapes for designation as National Park or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in England, Natural England, March 2011



Chrome Hill © Peak District National Park Authority

Key Policy drivers

Statutory Purposes of the National Park

The National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 (as amended by the Environment Act 1995) defined the purposes of National Parks as:

- conserving and enhancing the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage
- promoting opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of their special qualities

In pursuing the above purposes, National Parks have a duty to:

- seek to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities within the National Park with regard to the statutory purposes

The Landscape Strategy contributes to the first purpose of the National Park by providing a context and direction for actions to conserve and enhance natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage within the Peak District National Park.

A Green Future: Our 25 Year Environment Plan to improve the Environment (Defra, 2018) sets out government action to help the natural world regain and retain good health. It aims to deliver cleaner air and water in our cities and rural landscapes, protect and restore threatened species and provide richer wildlife habitats. It calls for an approach to agriculture, forestry, land use and fishing that puts the environment first.

The 25 Year Environment Plan identifies six key areas, of which three are very relevant to this strategy (Using and managing land sustainably; recovering nature and enhancing the beauty of

landscapes; and connecting people with the environment).

Land use: Policies for a Net Zero UK (Climate Change Committee, 2020) identifies a range of actions related to land use to reduce carbon emissions. This concludes that 20% of agricultural land should be released by 2050 for actions that reduce emissions and sequester carbon, such as afforestation and agroforestry, increasing UK forestry cover from 13% to at least 17% by 2050 by planting around 30,000 hectares or more of broadleaf and conifer woodland each year and restoring at least 50% of upland peat.

The Landscapes Review: National Parks and AONBs ('The Glover Review') (Defra, 2019) considered whether the mechanisms by which National Parks and AONBs are managed and governed are fit for purpose in the 21st Century. It made a series of proposals, of which the following are particularly relevant to landscape management:

Proposal 1: National landscapes should have a renewed mission to recover and enhance nature, and be supported and held to account for delivery by a new National Landscapes Service

Proposal 2: The state of nature and natural capital in our national landscapes should be regularly and robustly assessed, informing the priorities for action

Proposal 3: Strengthened Management Plans should set clear priorities and actions for nature recovery including, but not limited to, wilder areas and the response to climate change (notably tree planting and peatland restoration). Their implementation must be backed up by stronger status in law

Proposal 4: National landscapes should form the backbone of Nature Recovery Networks – joining things up within and beyond their boundaries

Proposal 5: A central place for national landscapes in new Environmental Land Management Schemes

Government has responded and at the time of publishing this out for consultation.

Government response to the Landscapes Review (Defra, 2022) sets out the Governments' two priorities for National Parks: boosting biodiversity and improving public access for all. The Government's vision for protected landscapes is for them to be "A coherent national network of beautiful, nature-rich spaces that all parts of society can easily access and enjoy. Protected landscapes will support thriving local communities and economies, improve our public health and wellbeing, drive forward nature recovery and build our resilience to climate change."

England Tree Action Plan 2021-24 (Defra, 2021) sets out policy priorities to deliver the government's ambitious tree planting commitment of planting 30,000 hectares of trees a year across the UK by 2025. The plan focuses on expanding, protecting and improving woodlands, and how trees and woodlands can connect people to nature, support the economy, combat climate change and recover biodiversity. This will ensure that trees are established and managed for the many benefits they provide for people, the economy, the climate and nature itself.

Policy actions include:

- encourage National Parks to include net zero and tree establishment targets in their statutory management plans;
- support for catchment partnerships and utility companies to deliver on the strategy; and
- targeted support for landowners to deliver woodland creation and agroforestry.

It is supported by funding to deliver trees: The **England Woodland Creation Offer** (EWCO) is a flagship new grant scheme for farmers and landowners that supports the creation of a range of woodland types and sizes, including through natural colonisation, and planting of areas of land from 1 hectare upwards. The grant will cover standard capital costs for tree planting (up to a per hectare cap), as well as rewarding farmers and landowners for providing public and/or wider environmental benefits.

The **Woodland Carbon Code** (WCC) is the UK's voluntary carbon standard for woodland creation projects. It provides reassurance about the carbon savings that woodland projects may realistically achieve. This government-led scheme provides:

- a high quality, robust voluntary carbon standard
- a transparent UK Woodland Carbon Registry
- robust science to predict and monitor carbon sequestration
- independent validation and verification of projects

England Peat Action Plan (Defra, 2021) sets out the government's ambition to create and deliver a new ambitious framework for peat restoration in England. Peatland restoration will enable England's peatlands not only to meet their Net Zero contribution, but also contribute to wider environmental goals.

Policy actions include:

- develop a more up to date and detailed England peat map by 2024, establishing a clear evidence base on which to build.
- fund at least 35,000 ha of peatland restoration by 2025, through the Nature for Climate Fund and other sources. The government's new Sustainable Farming Incentive, Local Nature Recovery and Landscape Recovery Schemes will provide the main delivery mechanism for peatland restoration after 2024-
- consult on banning the sale of peat and peat containing products and phase out the use of peat in horticulture.
- continue to protect our peat from fire by both phasing out managed burning and reducing the risk of wildfire.

Nature Recovery Network policy paper (Defra, 2020) includes an objective to support work to increase woodland cover, as part of an ambition to establish a national network of wildlife-rich places.

Future landscapes in the Peak District

There are many possible future directions, challenges and pressures for change in the landscapes of Peak District National Park.

What are the likely pressures for landscape change in the next 10 years?

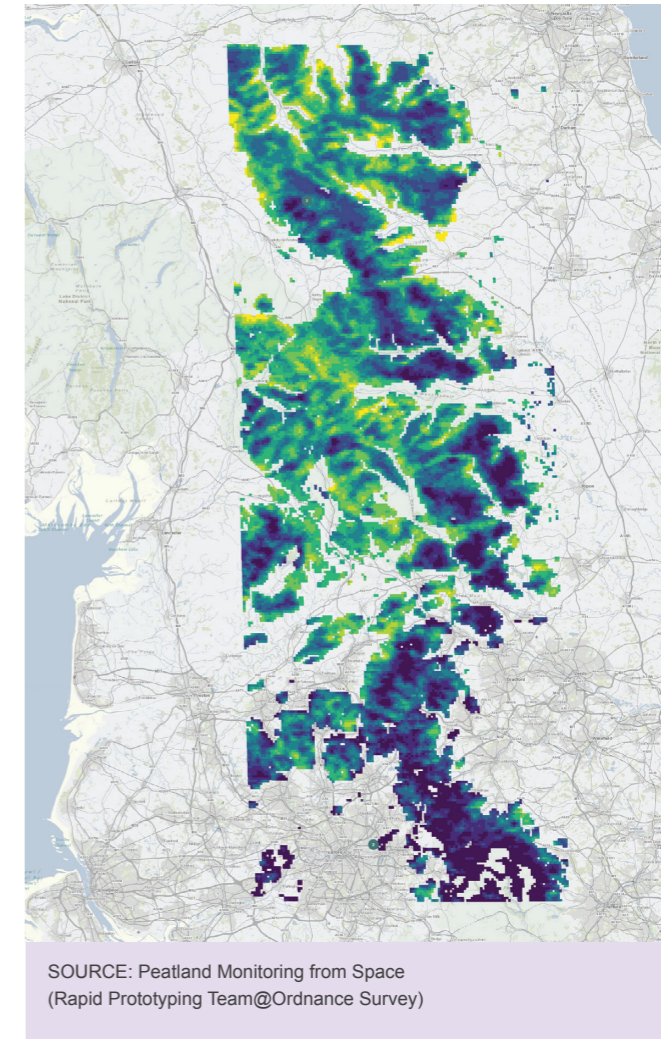
There will be an extensive loss of ash field trees, boundary trees and woodland trees throughout the Peak District as a result of **ash dieback**. Ash trees are the most common tree in the White Peak with an estimated 8 to 9 million ash trees of various ages. Ash is the overwhelmingly dominant tree in the woodlands of the steep limestone dales, where it may comprise up to 99% of the tree cover. These limestone dales contain the largest areas of ravine woodlands in Great Britain and are some of the best examples of this type of habitat in the UK. While large-scale Ash woodlands are a characteristic feature of the White Peak, it is likely all areas of the park will be affected.

Changes in rainfall, temperature and weather patterns as a direct result of ongoing **climate change** are likely to affect a number of characteristic landscape elements, including the distribution of tree species, the composition of woodlands and habitats, the increased likelihood of drought conditions in spring/summer and increased flooding episodes as a result of intense rainfall / saturated ground in winter. With warmer and drier summers already being experienced, the water flow in limestone rivers and streams may become more seasonal. It may also result in agricultural changes such as increased suitability for arable crops or, with wetter winters, increased demand for winter housing for livestock. Climate change may reduce the area and sustainability of

peat-forming blanket bog systems within the UK and research shows that the Peak District National Park is a highly vulnerable region. The Moors are vulnerable to ongoing climate change resulting in increased drying, desiccation and erosion of the peat and associated increased risks of fire and flash flooding. The natural environment can play a vital role in tackling the climate crisis as healthy ecosystems take up and store a significant amount of carbon in soils, sediments and vegetation. Alongside many other negative impacts, the destruction and degradation of natural habitats has resulted in the direct loss of carbon stored within them. Poorly-managed peatlands are net emitters of carbon. Restoring natural systems can start to reverse this damage at the same time as supporting and enhancing biodiversity, alongside delivering co-benefits for climate change adaptation, soil health, water management and society (Carbon storage and sequestration by habitat: a review of the evidence NE, October 2021).

Organisations such as Moors for the Future are working with landowners and land managers to manage this landscape for climate change resilience through re-wetting and other land management measures to promote sustainability and carbon storage.

Climate change adaption and mitigation measures (including the potential expansion of woodland creation schemes, moorland restoration and increased natural flood management) are likely to result in changes in landscape character. There is an increasing cultural and political demand for our landscapes to provide greater 'public goods' (such as climate change mitigation, increased biodiversity or increased floodwater retention) and these demands will likely increase pressure to change land management practices in the future.



SOURCE: Peatland Monitoring from Space (Rapid Prototyping Team@Ordnance Survey)

Reducing emissions from degraded ecosystems and promoting carbon uptake, for example through restoring peatlands and planting trees, are important elements of achieving net zero. In 2019, the UK GHG emissions from the agriculture sector and land use, land use change and forestry (LULUCF) sector accounted for 12 per cent of all UK emissions. The LULUCF sector is a net source of emissions due to the high emissions associated with agricultural land use on peatlands soils (BEIS 2021b). Overall, degraded peatlands represents an increase of 16 Mt CO₂e (3.5 per cent) to national emission levels (Carbon storage and sequestration by habitat: a

review of the evidence NE, October 2021).

In June 2022, the Climate Change Committee warned that peat restoration rates nationally were well below the levels needed to achieve net zero by 2050, peatland under restoration management actually declined last year, and that damaged peat is the biggest source of greenhouse gas emissions from land use.

In the Dark Peak, historic and ongoing management regimes have played a key role in shaping the current landscape. Here, historic pollution and inappropriate land management practices have left species-poor grass moorland, degraded bog or monoculture heather over significant areas

of our peatlands. This has resulted in a simplification in the diversity of the upland landscape mosaic and degradation of the underlying peat resource. 88% of designated moorland in the Dark Peak remains in unfavourable recovering condition.

The above illustrates the Peat Health Index of the Pennines (Peatland Monitoring from Space, Space Climate, OS, Assimila & Durham University, 2021). Healthier areas shown in yellow/green with less healthy in dark blue.

The North Pennines are more isolated than the south, resulting in fewer visitors

and less pollution. Throughout history agricultural and grazing practices have been less intensive resulting in reduced damage.

The South Pennines (and northern part of the Peak District) are noticeably less healthy, shown in dark blue. Peatland degradation in this region has been caused by a combination of historic pollution from nearby cities, over-grazing and excess footfall. These factors damage the top layer of vegetation, leading to exposure of the topsoil and erosion from rain.

Ongoing inappropriate management practices have implications for water quality, species management (including populations of raptors), flood risk and the ability of the moors to store carbon. There will be increasing public and political pressures for the more sustainable management of the moorland and peatland resource in the future.

Demands for renewable energy may again rapidly increase as fuel security, set against a background of increasing climate change, becomes a key issue internationally. There will be increasing pressure on the wider landscape to include climate change adaptation and mitigation measures including coping with flash flooding, heavier rainfall and extremes of temperatures.

Potential changes to agricultural land management, driven by the push to Net Zero and loss of biodiversity, is likely to have the biggest impact on the landscapes of the Peak District. Food production has been the key driver for landscape change across the landscapes of the UK, profoundly shaping historical and cultural perspectives. Agricultural change and intensification over the past 50 years has been the most important driver of biodiversity loss. Essential

components of the landscape (such as field pattern and scale, drystone walls, relic patches of heathland, unimproved grasslands, wet pastures, scrub field barns, and mature trees) are all vital for the character of the landscape and are potentially threatened by agricultural improvement and intensification.

Changes to the agricultural support system, including the phasing out of the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS), could potentially lead to landscape-scale change. While the detail of the new Agri-environment scheme has not been finalised, it is clear that agricultural support payments will move away from payments based simply on the area of land farmed, and instead be based on the principle of payment of public money for the delivery of public goods, in the form of agreed environmental outcomes and standards. The detail of how this scheme is implemented and funded could lead to significant landscape change.

For example some areas with better quality agricultural land, such as areas of the White Peak, could see pressure for intensification to replace lost income from area payments by increasing productivity. This has the potential to continue to erode characteristic features such as drystone walls. Agricultural intensification may also result in an increase in large modern agricultural buildings for housing livestock. If poorly sited and designed these buildings have the potential to result in significant harm to valued landscape character. Other areas, such as marginal grazing land in the Dark Peak and its fringes, could experience a potential reduction in intensity of use; this may provide opportunities for Local Nature Recovery, Landscape Recovery or carbon / biodiversity offsetting.

There will be a driver for nature recovery which would look to restore

natural processes with the aim of decreasing the amount of human intervention in the landscape. Many projects within the National Park could be considered under this definition, including the work to 're-wet' areas of peatland. The challenge will be to retain the important special qualities of the landscape, including cultural heritage, while using Nature Recovery Networks as a tool in the fight against climate change and to provide solutions to help tackle the biodiversity crisis.

The proximity of major populations means that the enjoyment of the Peak District landscapes is under pressure by many different and occasionally conflicting types of recreational use. The level and type of use can also contribute to pressures for new routes, deterioration in the condition of routes, an increase in littering and a loss of tranquillity and sense of remoteness / wildness. Increasing vehicle numbers continues to be a major issue with high levels of vehicle use increasing damage to roads, walls, and verges, and creating an increased demand for parking. An increase in the number and size of road signs also affects the character of the area and political and economic pressures are driving plans to upgrade cross-Park routes.

The demand for housing could adversely affect the character of the historic settlement pattern and the relationship of settlements to the wider landscape. The conversion of agricultural buildings to domestic use could adversely affect the character of the landscape, particularly the more sparsely settled areas where evidence of the effects of residential properties, such as car parking or lighting, is currently very limited. Conversely farming changes have led to the abandonment, degradation and loss of traditional features which contribute to the landscape, such as field barns. The



Rainbow, Morridge © Peak District National Park Authority

Peak District has a strong association with surrounding urban areas and the demand for housing around the Park means that there will be pressure to increase residential development in the surrounding areas. This could adversely affect the landscape setting of the Park. Quarries in the White Peak serve local and national demand for limestone used by the construction, cement and chemical industries. There are many landscape impacts associated with these sites, including visual intrusion, adverse effects on the historic landscapes and cultural heritage features, wildlife habitats, the transportation of products and loss of tranquillity. There is also pressure to re-work old mineral workings, extend the size of the quarries and prolong quarrying beyond the dates of current planning permissions.

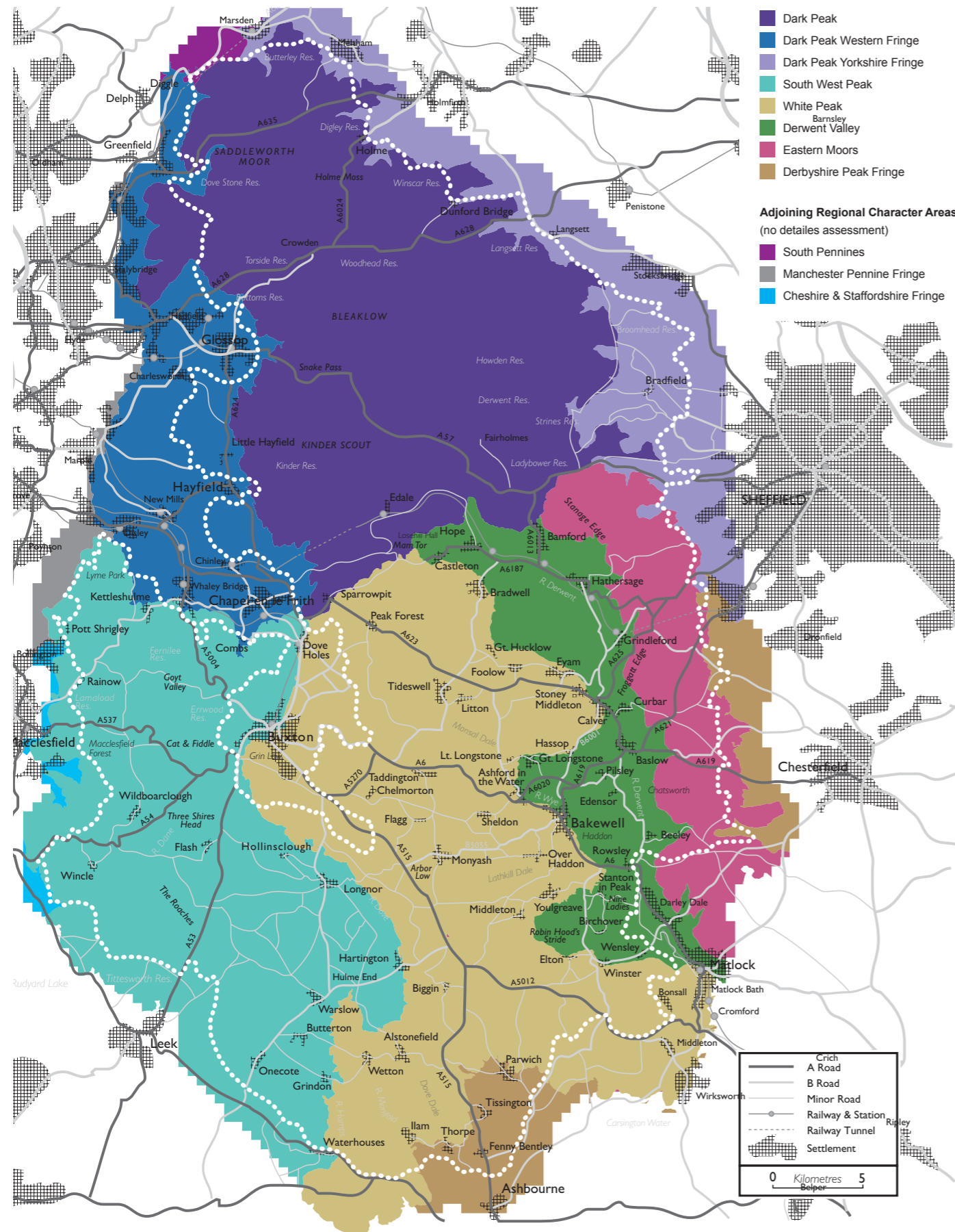
How to use this landscape strategy

When considering a possible landscape change, it is important to consider the valued characteristics of the landscape and how they will be affected by the change. The Landscape Strategy and Action Plan helps to raise an understanding of the character and dynamics of the different landscapes of the Peak District National Park. There are many local variations in landscape and it is essential that site-based decisions take account of local circumstances.

Decisions about landscape changes should, wherever possible, be made through discussion and partnership amongst people who live in, work in and visit an area. The steps below describe how to use information from the Landscape Strategy and Action Plan to inform decisions about landscape change.

- Use the Landscape Character Area / Types maps overleaf (or on our website mapping portal) to locate which are relevant to your proposal / area of interest.
- Refer to Section 2 Landscape Character Descriptions to gain an understanding of how the landscape has developed, what the important elements are and what makes the area special.
- Consider which elements of landscape character and which of the landscape outcomes and objectives (Section 3 and Appendix 1) are relevant to your proposal.
- Consider the effect that the proposal would have on the landscape and, if necessary, modify the proposal to ensure a positive contribution to landscape character and sense of place.

Landscape Character Areas



Landscape Character Types

