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**Scottish Borders Council.  
Local Development Plan 2013  
Final draft: Modification**



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**Proposal for an amendment  
to the Landscape  
Designations Feb 2014.**

**Made by a group of  
residents local to Newlands**



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*It is a memorable experience to travel along a Borders valley on a bright day in late winter. Traces of vanished ramparts and ditches, hut circles, roads, field rigs and cultivation terraces thrown up by the oblique sunshine as lines of shadow on the green fields of the slope. ...an ancient landscape is projected as an endless and varying show...*

**Christopher Smout,  
Historiographer Royal,  
Edinburgh. 1997.**



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# Executive Summary

This paper has been produced by residents living within the River Lyne catchment. It is in response to Scottish Borders Council's consultation on its proposed Local Development Plan (LDP). More specifically, it focusses on the Tweedsmuir Uplands SLA. We support this designation but feel strongly that the SLA is unduly and unjustifiably restricted in scope. Instead we strongly advocate the inclusion into that SLA of an additional area which we define as the Lyne Catchment, namely part of UPO6, all of RV52 and a small area of UF32. Our reasons for advocating this extension to the SLA are set out in detail in the following submission. In essence, we believe that there is an overwhelming case for the area we define as the Lyne Catchment to be included in the Tweedsmuir SLA because:

- the current designation of the area that makes up the Lyne Catchment undervalues a landscape of great natural beauty and interest.
- the Lyne Catchment is an integral part of the Tweedsmuir SLA geologically, culturally, and scenically.
- the Lyne Catchment is functionally important as a natural boundary to the Tweedsmuir SLA.
- the Lyne Catchment is a diverse natural habitat well worthy of protection for its own sake and even more so for its potential appeal to tourists.

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We have come to this conclusion after reviewing the LLDR produced for SBC by LUC, and identifying weaknesses in it particularly in relation to its assessment of geology, cultural heritage, habitat provision and tourist potential which we address in detail.

We wrote this proposal because we care passionately about the place where we live: a passion that we hope you, the reader, can sympathise with or even share.

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# 1. Policy

**National Planning Framework (NPF2, 2009) states, as its main issue:**

“In their rich diversity, Scotland’s landscapes are a national asset of the highest value. They provide the context for our daily lives, and are a major attraction for our tourist visitors...”

We strongly support that statement, and since landscapes are recognised as among the most valuable of Scotland’s resources, we hope our contribution to Scottish Borders’ LDP is taken seriously.

NPF2 is implemented within Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) 2010 which lay out the duties of local authorities. These include:

- Clearly identify and protect locally important landscapes
- Ensure that the distinctive character and special qualities of the landscape are designated in such a way that greater understanding is achieved.
- Ensure that locally designated areas of landscape that are particularly sensitive are not developed.

We do not need to remind Scottish Borders Council of their responsibilities under these policies.

Finally, in relation to landscape designation, we refer to Policy EP2, Areas of Great Landscape Value Scottish Borders Consolidated Local Plan 2011:

“In assessing proposals for development in AGLV’s, the Council will seek to safeguard landscape quality and will have particular regard to the landscape impact of the proposed development.”

We always assumed that would be the case, but it pre-supposes that the test for effect on the landscape will have a lower threshold of acceptable damage in non-designated areas. It is for that reason we are proposing designating two areas in N Tweeddale.



## Existing Designations

- The draft LDP assessed the landscape in the Scottish Borders in a number of clearly-defined land-use types. These included UP (upland pasture) UF (upland farming) and RV (river valley). The system used is described in greater detail below.
- The area we are concerned with, shown on the adjacent map, lies in the NW corner of the Scottish Borders, astride the A72 and east of the A701. It contains two Landscape Character Units (LCU's) each of Upland Pasture (UP05, Broughton Heights and UP06, Eddleston/Lyne Interfluve); two River Valleys (RV 52, Lyne; and RV 59, Middle Tweed) and two Upland Farmland (UF23, West Linton Synclinal Belt and UF32, Skirling).
- The A72 boundary of UP05 is also the northern boundary of the SLA Tweedsmuir Uplands, and the western boundary of RV59 almost corresponds with that of the Tweed National Scenic Area. (see next map).
- Neither UP06 nor RV52 are designated.

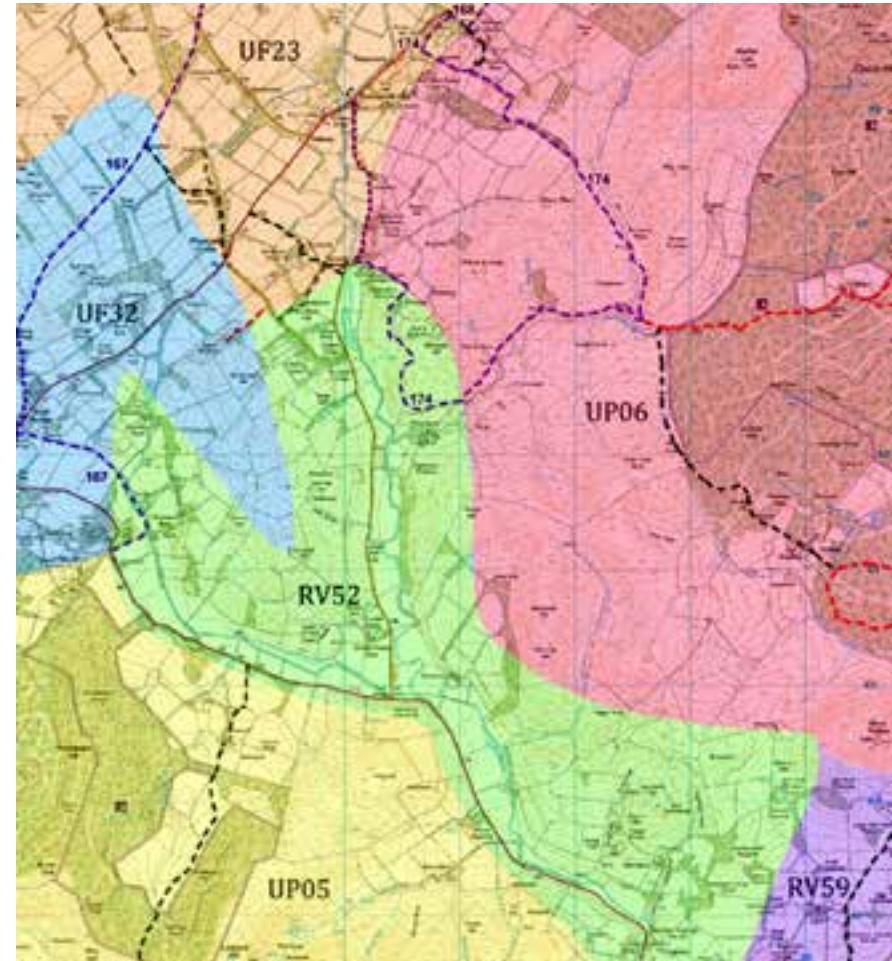


Fig 1. Landscape character units used by SBC. The A701 runs diagonally across the top left sector of the map.

## Proposed Designations

- We propose that part of UP06, all of RV52 and a small inclusion of UF32 (east of the A701) be included in with the Tweedsmuir SLA.
- The area can be defined as the Lyne Catchment. It lies east of the A701 and north of the A72,, and it includes land as far north as Kelly Heads. It roughly follows the old Newlands Parish Boundary along the west edge of Cloich Forest.
- In the rest of this proposal, we refer to it as Lyne Catchment .
- The justification for our proposal is based on:
  - Reassessment of the landscape as reviewed in the LLDC, for UP06 and RV52
  - Review of the geomorphology and geology of Lyne Catchment
  - Review of the cultural value of Lyne Catchment
  - Review of the natural habitats inLyne Catchment.
  - Review of the tourist potential of the area

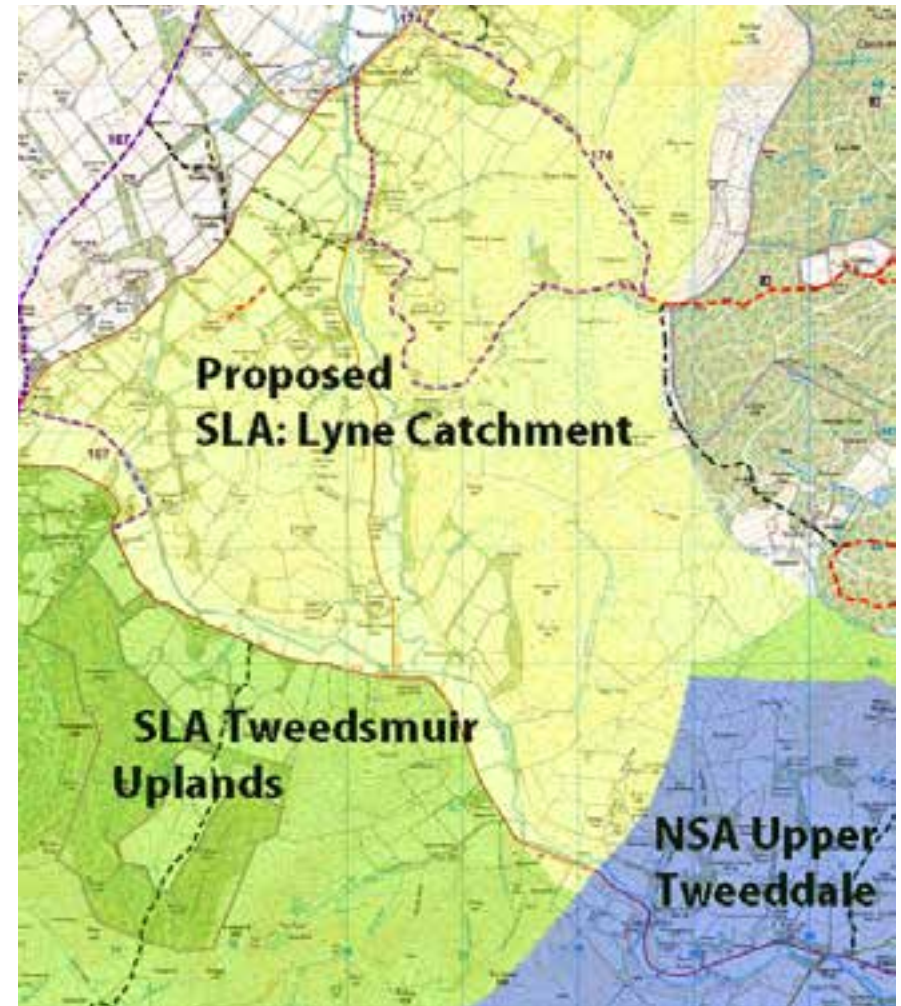


Fig 2. Proposed addition (yellow) to SLA Tweedsmuir Uplands (green).

## 2. Review of SBC Landscape Assessment

Before coming to a conclusion about the inherent qualities of the LCU's that make up the Lyne Catchment, we reviewed the landscape assessment as undertaken for SBC by Land Use Consultants (LUC). We felt that they consistently underscored the attributes of both UPO6 and RV 52, and failed to take account of some issues which we think are in the best interests of SBC to consider.

Bear in mind when reading these data that (1) we are not trained in the art of assessing landscape numerically, but (2) we have the benefit of living locally, and were able to assess landscape qualities throughout the year and from more viewpoints than would have been available to LUC.

We came to the conclusion that the landscape assessment method chosen by both LUC and SBC is a fairly blunt instrument, albeit it may be the only practical one around. This lack of sensitivity is because it is based on a ranked, hierarchical score with a notional cut-off point that may well fail to identify those areas of the Borders where inappropriate development can have a disproportional effect on the economy of the Borders.

- The current Landscape Assessment as applied to the Scottish Borders ranks the scores applied to 14 different Evaluation Criteria which are used to judge the quality of the landscape in each of the 76 identified Landscape Units (see below).

- These criteria are:

1. representativeness
2. rarity
3. condition
4. intactness
5. wildness
6. scenic quality
7. enjoyment
8. cultural qualities
9. habitat value
10. settlement setting
11. views
12. tourist economy
13. consistency } these two not scored.
14. relationships }

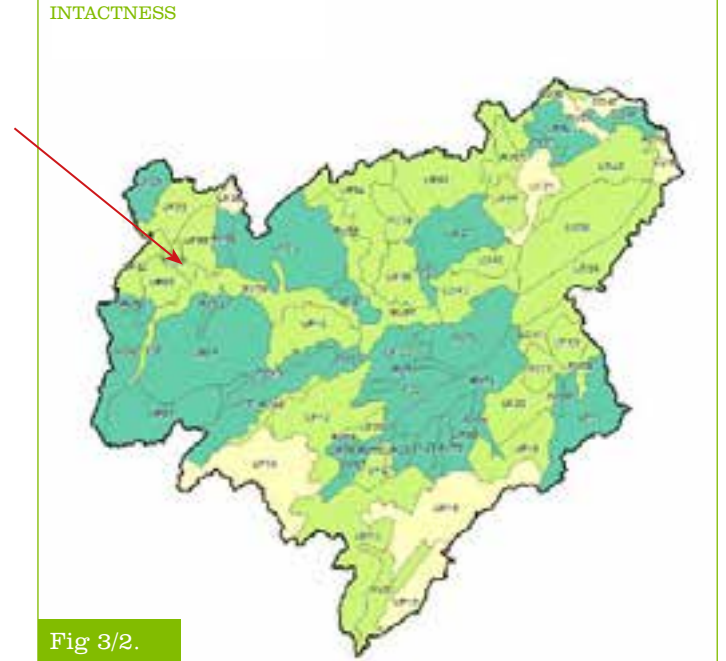
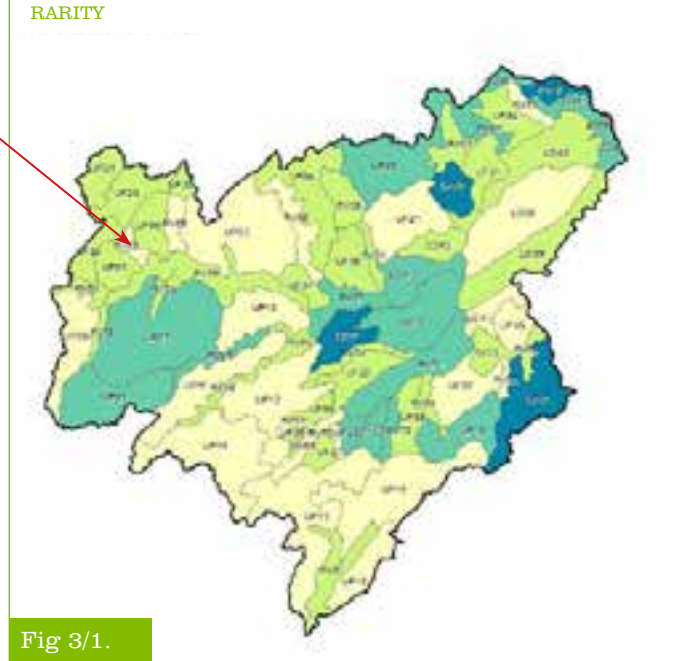
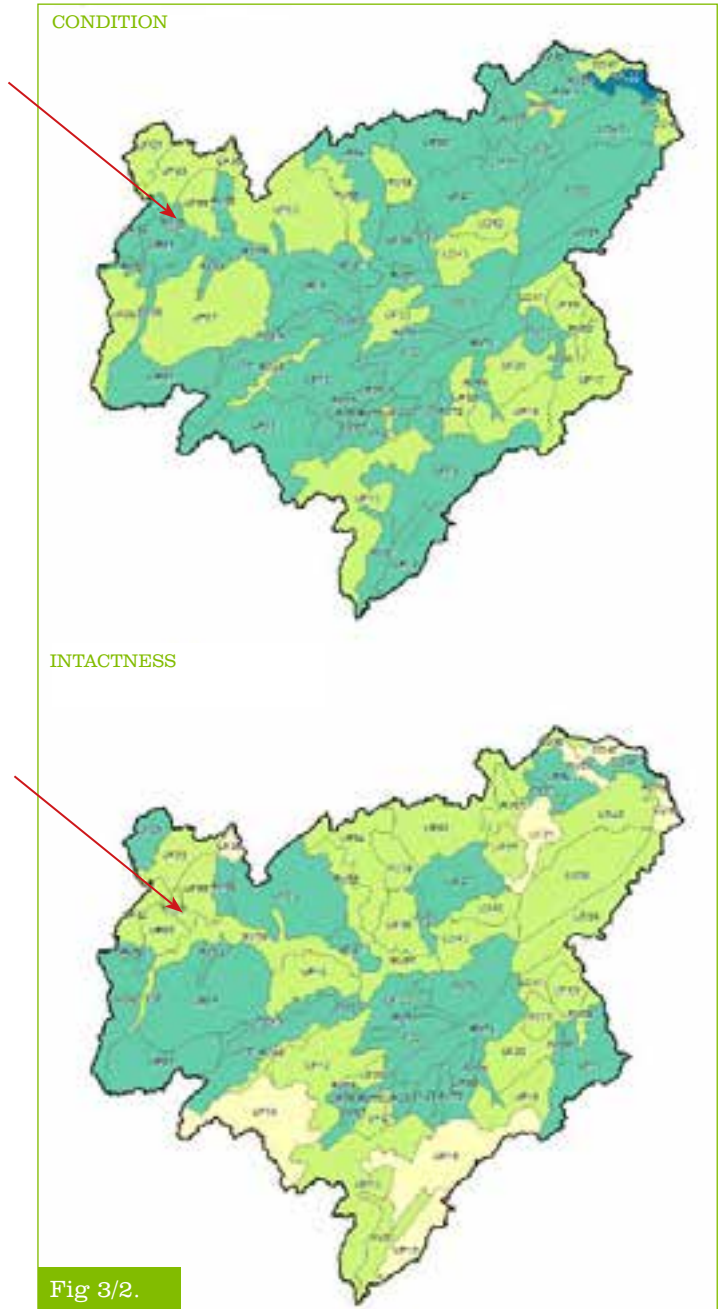
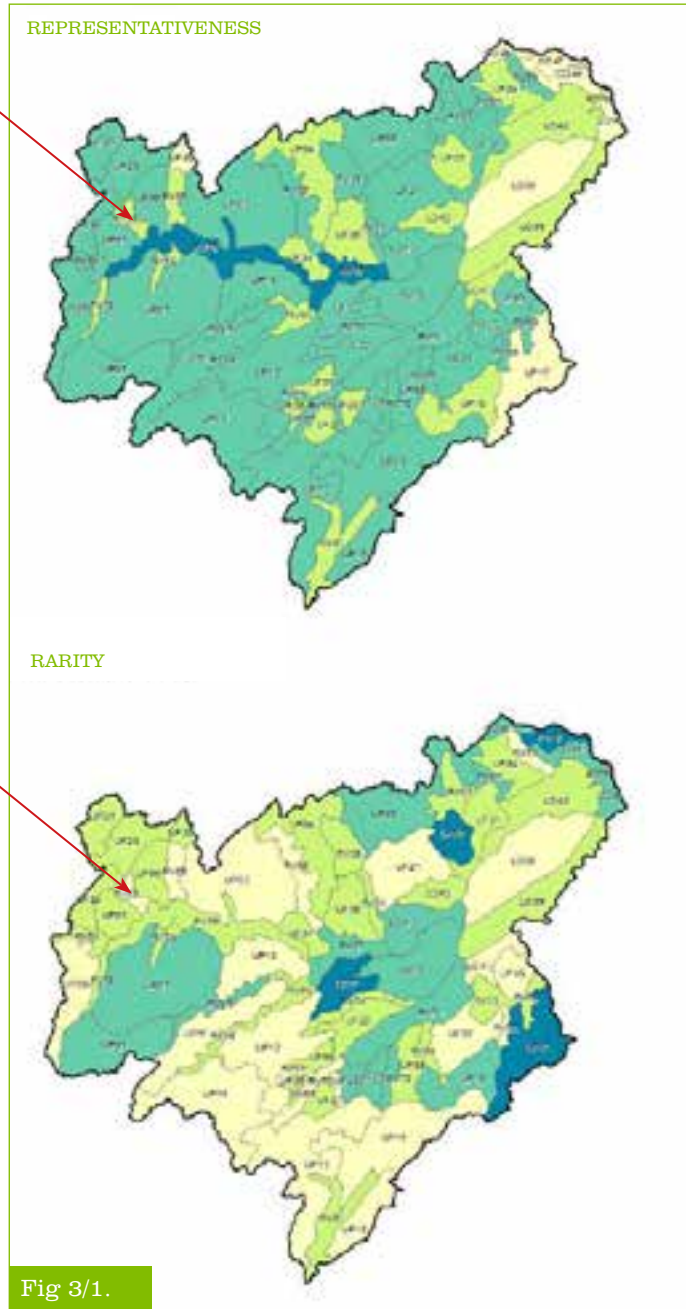
- Among these, the scores of four (rarity, scenic quality, settlement setting and views) are given arbitrary weighting to take

account of their relative contribution to the landscape experience.

- These criteria are used to 'measure' the quality of the landscape in each of 76 landscape units within the Borders, set in three main landscape types (upland pasture UP, upland farming UF and river valley RV).
- The bare and weighted scores for each unit were then ranked, the highest score denoting the landscape of highest value.
- In simple terms, these ranked data were then assessed for the application of landscape designation (such as Special Landscape Area, SLA) to them.
- These assessments were then displayed in 12 maps of the Scottish Borders, which we reproduce below.
- We then review these assessments using our local knowledge and personal experience of this area where we live



These four maps, downloaded from the LUC report, suggest that the assessment graded the landscape of UP 06 and RV 52 (corresponding to the Lyne Catchment) as being moderately representative, but not rare in the Borders, in relatively poor condition, and not subject to major changes.



Very High
High
Medium
Low

## 1. Representativeness (map Fig 3/1.)

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Representativeness seeks to measure the extent to which the landscape is typical of the Borders area. In addition to reviewing the landscape within the Borders, we believe that in an area on the edge of the Borders (especially one as sensitive as is this) as much weight should be given to the landscape as viewed outwith the Borders as within. As seen by a traveling tourist on the A701, the distinction between the Scottish Borders to the south and Midlothian Basin to the north could not be clearer. We believe that the score for UP 06 should reflect this, and perhaps be raised to “High”.



Fig 4.



Fig 5.

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The upper photograph (Fig 4.) shows the view, from UF32, of the hills that make up the western part of UP 06, their line corresponding with that of the A701. Cloich forest is just visible above the skyline on the left, whilst the hills that line the Lyne Valley are on the right. This view shows the escarpment formed by the Southern Upland Fault, itself a unique feature of Scotland which is described in more detail elsewhere.

The view to the left, (Fig 5.) taken from that escarpment looking NE, shows how the landscape changes suddenly into the low-lying Midlothian Basin, itself bounded by the Pentland Hills.



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## 2. Rarity (map Fig 3/1.)

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The rounded hills and the alluvial valleys which make up the Lyne Catchment are broadly typical of the Scottish Borders, and while they are not rare within the Borders, they represent a landscape unreplicated within Scotland when viewed from beyond the Borders boundary. This sharp edge was created by vast geological forces in the form of the Southern Upland Fault, a feature unique to this area. And since the two gaps in this escarpment provide gateways into the Borders from the North, we are of the view that this iconic landscape deserves some protection.

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View NE from the A701, near Mountain Cross. The dominant hill in the centre is Drum Maw (1454ft). Whiteside Hillfort is on the extreme right.

Fig 6.





### 3. Condition (map Fig 3/2.)

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LUC presumed that the landscape in UP 06 is in poorer condition than that in RV52. This seems hard to substantiate, as these two pictures from different ends of the two areas suggest. On the right, a view from above the A701 looking south towards Deans Hill shows a tidy, well-ordered rural landscape in UP 06; conditions mirrored by Stevenson Farm, Drochil, set within RV52, below.



Fig 7. Deans Hill



Fig 8. Stevenson Farm



#### 4. Intactness (map Fig 3/2.)

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This attribute seeks to define the extent to which a landscape has been subject to change in the past which may have reduced its quality. Both UP 06 and RV 52 (together the Lyne Catchment) are landscapes which have been gently and superficially modified for hundreds of years, but these are changes that tend to enhance rather than detract from its true form. Thus, the outline of the hills has not been obscured and the patterns in the fields which lead up to them are not intrusive. Evidence of early mineral working or stone quarrying adds local interest. We very much doubt that there are any landscapes in Scotland which have avoided all change, and we therefore think that this criterion has been under-scored.

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This photograph, looking over the River Lyne towards Whiteside Hill, shows quarrying along the far riverbank, various patterns of land use on the lower, partially cultivated slopes and some evidence of quarrying or mineral mining on the skyline in the form of adits. These changes, which are all superficial, have taken place gradually over an unknown period: probably centuries.

Fig 9.



WILDNESS



SCENIC QUALITY

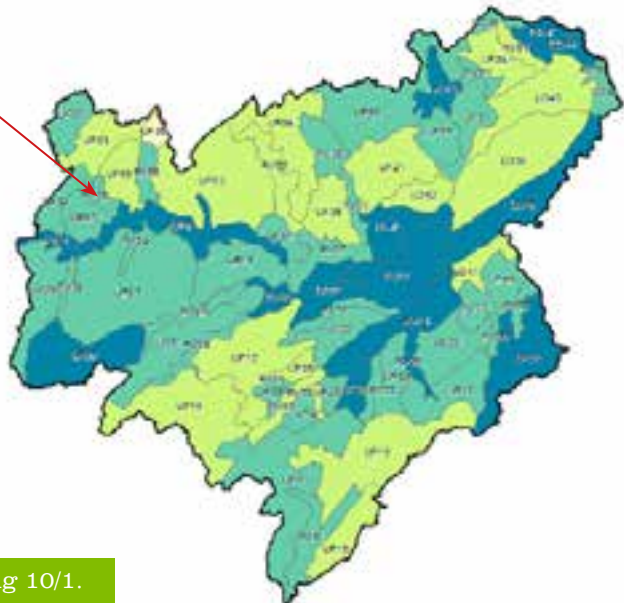


Fig 10/1.

ENJOYMENT



CULTURAL QUALITY

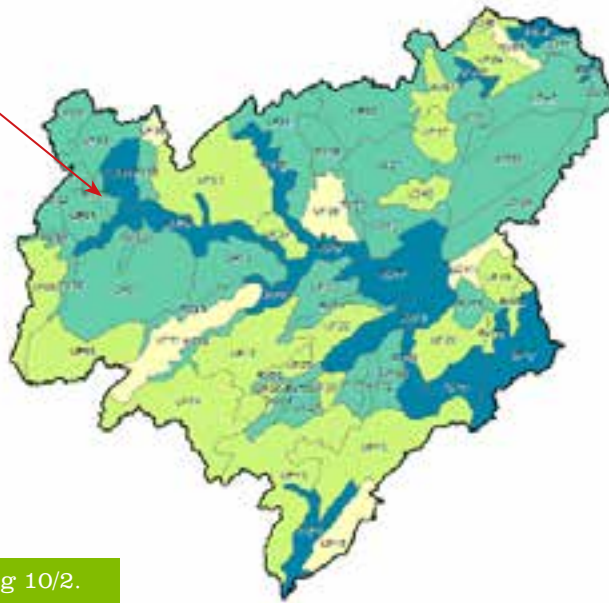


Fig 10/2.

Whilst LUC assessed the hills that make up UP 06 as moderately wild, the Lyne valley is not and the scenic qualities are classed as below average. The area apparently offers little enjoyment, albeit it is recognised as having high cultural value.

	Very High
	High
	Medium
	Low



#### 4. Wildness (map Fig 10/1.)

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The tops of the hills which form the watershed are very bleak and exposed, and are not ventured into for pleasure during stormy weather. But wildness is really a matter of perception, and for the traveller in the comfort of a car on the A701 or the B7059, the exposed tops of the hills appear to be wild throughout most of the year. It is this mix of wildness and management that gives the Lyne Catchment

its attractiveness, as here at Whiteside and Drum Maw. Clearly, the valleys of both the Tarth and Lyne could not be classed as wild. But include them with a landscape that is their catchment (UP 06), and some of the wildness of the hills rubs off on them. The recent SNH exercise mapping Scotland's wildness found that the Lyne catchment had some characteristics of wild land.

Fig 11. Whiteside and Drum Maw  
from Callands



## 6. Scenic quality (map Fig 10/1)

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Scenic quality cannot be objectively measured without understanding the psychological processes which influence human preferences. Some of these processes may be consciously controlled: others that may have been inherited during the course of *Homo sapiens*' evolution are not. So, this is a dangerous criterion on which to base future planning processes. The question is to what extent does the scenic quality contribute to the wider landscape?

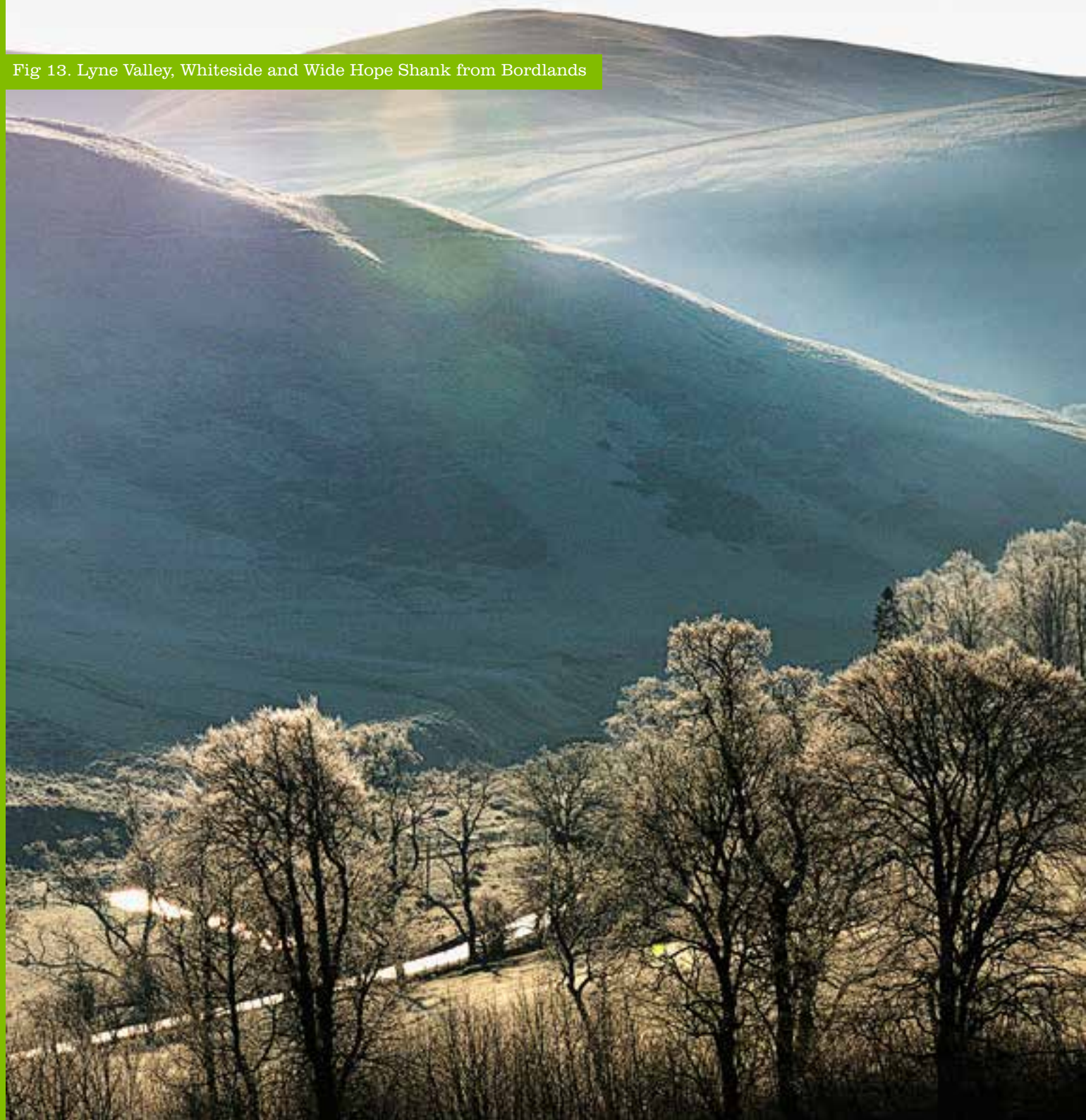
Map 7.7 would suggest that the assessors were not particularly impressed by either UP06 or RV52. However, the wider landscape includes views from outwith the Borders which are clearly worth preserving, as this view of Drum Maw from near the A701 would suggest. If quality is a measure of rhythm, detail and shape all leading to different points of interest and thus a heightened perception of what that land IS, then UP 06 has been sorely undervalued.



Fig 12. Drum Maw from A701 at Mountain Cross



Fig 13. Lyne Valley, Whiteside and Wide Hope Shank from Bordlands



The assessment also requires the assessor to consider the impact of the landscape on itself. Landscape is not just a series of shapes, lumps and bumps.

Under Scottish light, it is constantly changing and morphing. It is these subtle organic changes that teach us about the place we live, and in that growing perception lies enlightenment and pleasure. Often, it is largely a matter of the effect of light on the shapes and textures of the underlying anatomy and the overlying skin that makes up the experience. A landscape of hills and valleys intercept sunlight better than flat land, and is more fulfilling to observe.



## 7. Enjoyment (map Fig 10/2.)

Contrary to the scoring of LUC, it is our view that the lack of tourist centres, (such as those at Glentress) in this area allows a better appreciation of the Lyne Catchment landscape by locals and visitors alike (see photographs). As it stands the current scoring system could downgrade the potential for this area to be developed to provide a place for rest, relaxation and exercise. Bearing in mind our proximity to the nation's capital, Edinburgh, this would be a lost opportunity.

The Lyne Catchment is sufficiently gentle for young people to enjoy the challenge of taking their first steps in unspoiled nature. This is a significant asset for the Scottish Borders, so easily spoiled and yet so potentially valuable in the long term.



Fig 14. Kite flying, Whiteside Hillfort



Fig 15. ...and jumping the rapids in Lyne.



Fig 16. Boating, Lyne River, Drochil



Fig 17. Facing the ramparts of Whiteside hillfort.





## 8. Cultural qualities (map Fig 10/2.)

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We suspect that the assessors are not aware of all the sites of importance and interest embodied within the area we define as Lyne Catchment, albeit that their score for this criterion is relatively high. To reinforce that view, we will review the most up-to-date information on this aspect later in this document. Suffice it to say that remains from all periods starting in the Mesolithic indicate that the Lyne Valley and its hinterland was an important north/south communications corridor for thousands of years.

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The land below Whiteside Hillfort by Flemington Burn, now somewhat desolate, was once a well-managed, densely-populated landscape in the prehistoric. It indicates what else could be revealed by further aerial survey, including LIDAR.

Note the circular bases of at least two prehistoric dwellings on this photograph, and the interlaced and superimposed boundaries of many field systems.



Fig 18.



The habitat of UP06 and RV52 was judged by LUC to be no better than average, whilst the settlement setting is classed as poor. The views to and from the hills are highly rated, but the valley apparently lacks views. Tourism is not considered to be economically significant.

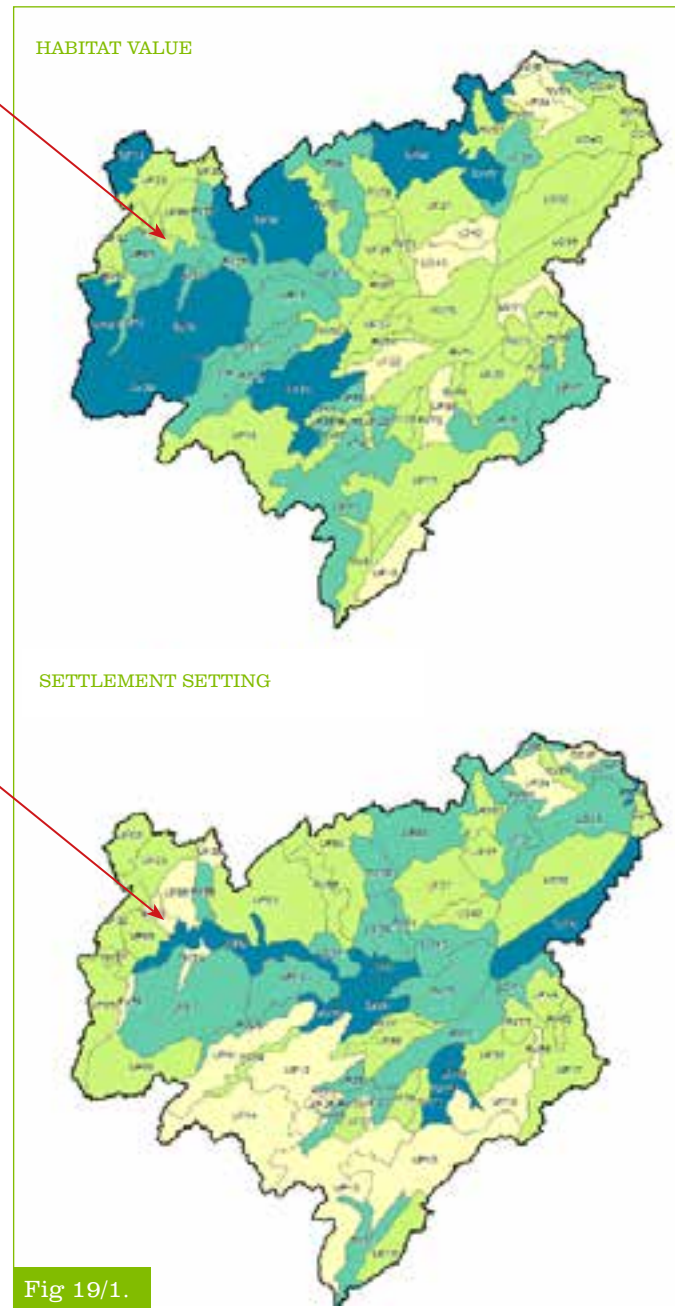


Fig 19/1.

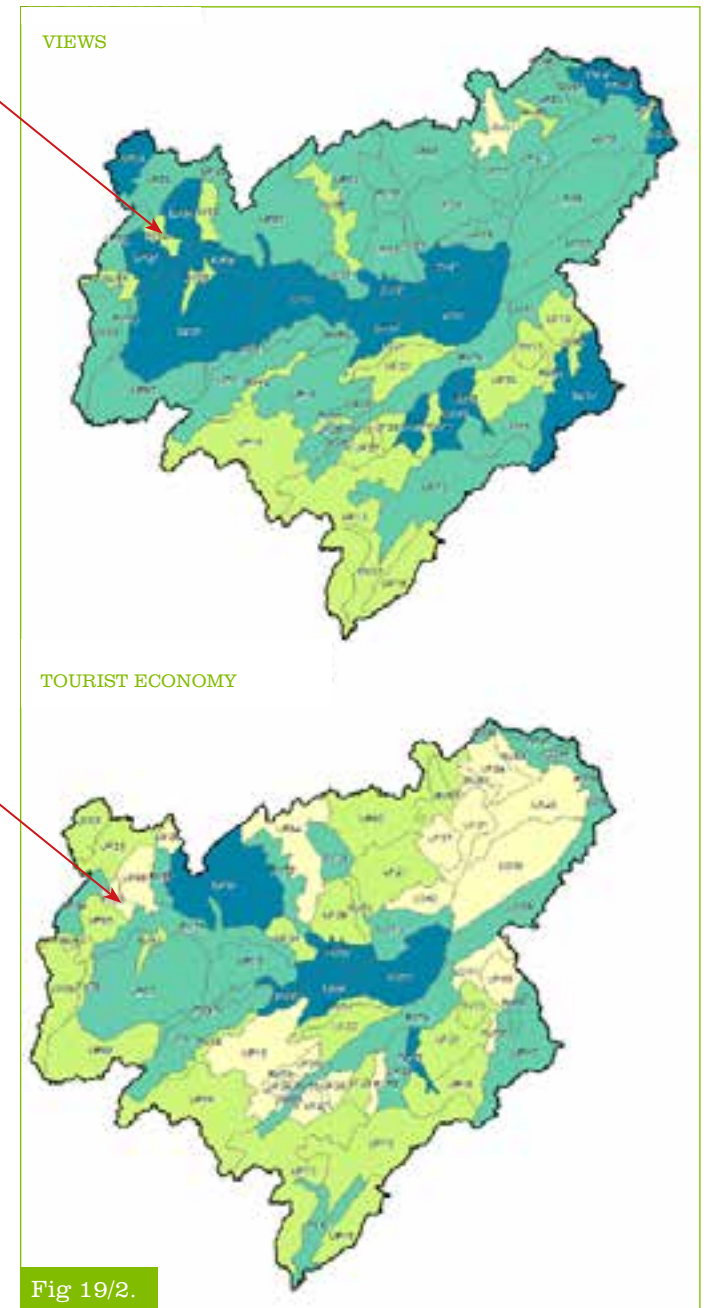


Fig 19/2.

	Very High
	High
	Medium
	Low

## 9. Habitat value (map Fig 19/1.)

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A true assessment of the habitat potential of a piece of landscape should take into account the entire ecological envelope of the landscape as it is, and not be split into artificial pocket-handkerchief sized elements. In the Lyne Catchment the hills (UP06) are as integral as the river valleys (RV52) in determining the diversity and the potential value of a site, which in this case has been undervalued. Like the cultural value, we will review this aspect in more detail later in this document.



Fig 20. Wood Hill and Hog Hill from Bordlands.



Fig 21. Lyne valley and Broughton heights from Whiteside

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A wide range of habitat is visible on these two photographs looking south down the Lyne valley, towards the Broughton Heights (UP 05). Add to these the thousands of hectares of open moor and the forest edges on the tops, along with the gardens and policies of the local houses and the potential of the area becomes apparent.



## 10. Settlement setting (map Fig 19/1)

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Whilst it is true that relatively few settlements exist within the Lyne Catchment itself, views from it (especially towards the Midlothian Basin) provide excellent opportunity to appreciate settlements from above and in their full context, as in this view from Whiteside north-west over Newlands Church towards Lanarkshire

Fig 22.





Fig 23. Newlands Old Kirk and Manse below Drum Maw, from Bordlands Hillfort



## 10. Settlement setting (contd.)

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Nowhere in the Borders is a very long-standing settlement better fitted into its landscape that at Newlands, at a site probably chosen for that reason by early Christian settlers. In this case, the landscape provides the settlement with shelter, water, food for stock, land to cultivate and game to harvest, along with abundant fuel and regular, passing visitors. In turn, the settlement provides peace and security for the local people, in this life and the next.



## 11. Views (map Fig 19/2)

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LUC considered the views around the hills in UP 06 as higher in quality than those of the Lyne Valley, RV52. Whilst we agree (and have illustrated) the quality of views into and from the hills, we dispute the score applied to the Lyne Valley, especially as seen from the A72, the B 7059, and from the public rights of way on the area.

We who travel these roads regularly throughout the year are more than just aware of the dynamic, subtle changes in the landscape as the sun sinks or swirls in squadrons of clouds under a hefty breeze. It is a landscape with its own rhythm, a landscape that flows and grows and dies in the mist.



Fig 24. View from B7059 at Flemington across the Lyne River into the heart of UP 06, winter.

## 11. Views (contd.)

An area can be in full sun one moment; a stage lit by low and slanting light which casts shadows of stories of past endeavors, and stops you in your tracks.



Two views within the Lyne valley: above (Fig 25) in mid-winter looking north to Newlands, below (Fig 26) looking east towards Stevenson Hill with Wood Hill on the left, in late spring. Both photographs taken from the B7059





## 12. Tourist economy (map Fig 19/2)

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Bearing in mind the visibility of the hills that make up UP06 from the major tourist route from England into Scotland along the A701, the low score applied to both UP06 and RV52 is frankly incredible. This is one of the first views of the Southern Uplands escarpment seen by many tourists. Its dominating hill Drum Maw (1454 ft). is as iconic of the Borders as are the Eildons. It marks gateways into the Borders from Edinburgh and Glasgow along river valleys

(Lyne and Tarth) that are jewels in their own right. This view, from the A701 at Mountain Cross, is also a popular place for tourists to stop and photograph. It reminds us that the Lyne Catchment has the resources to encourage rather than to discourage tourism: Scottish Borders Council should use these valuable resources wisely.



Fig 27.

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View towards Bordlands Farm and Drum Maw from the main tourist route into Scotland, the A701, at Mountain Cross

### 13. Landscape consistency (no map)

The question here is the extent to which the assessed Landscape Unit is adequately described by the assessment methodology. We interpret that to require a measure of homogeneity within the LCU. Although our proposed construct Lyne Catchment is an amalgam of hills and river valleys in two different types of LCU, we believe that it is an homogenous landscape and thus meets the criteria

for consistency. This is because the Lyne Catchment is derived from a single geological process, uplifted and eroded in the normal course of the constantly changing evolution of landscape. It has a coherence and integrity which is aesthetically pleasing to the eye while being comprehensible and of a scale that is comforting.

This view north from Ladyurd Forest (part of the Tweedsmuir Uplands SLA) into the Lyne catchment shows clearly how the Lyne and Tarth river valleys (RV 52) morph into the hills which form UP 06, and that combining the two Landscape Units does not degrade either.

Fig 28.





## 14. Landscape relationships (no map)

On page 30, we show that the area along the north-western edge of the Tweedsmuir SLA is geomorphologically and geologically inseparable from that which forms the Lyne Catchment, and is contiguous other than in a narrow gap at Blyth Bridge that holds the Tarth River. Indeed, the Lyne Catchment is inseparable in shape, form, land-use, habitat and appearance to the SLA, to which it should be added as an extension.

In this panorama looking due south from Blyth Hill, the Broughton Heights part of the Tweedsmuir Uplands SLA appear in the background and to the right, with Henderland Hill part of the proposed Lyne Catchment to the left. Between them is the river Tarth, flowing SE towards its junction with the River Lyne and the Tweed near Peebles

Fig 29.



## Landscape Assessments: conclusions

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A detailed review of the landscape assessment made by LUC and accepted by SBC shows that the allocations of scores to Landscape Units using a number of often subjective criteria, and the practice of weighting and then ranking them to find those areas within the Borders which are worthy of being protected and those which are not is inevitably going to throw up some problem areas, and this is one of them.

The limitations of the assessment methodology are compounded by the process of treating landscape in small 'bits' which may be contiguous and closely-related on the ground, but which are treated separately in the assessment protocol. So, for example, the small area of RV52 (13.3 sq. km) prevents the allocation of high scores allocated for RV59 because it inevitably lacks the diversity of the larger Tweed river-valley landscape unit. However, if the scores for RV 52 are combined

with its natural partner UP 06, the combined score would make it appear a more attractive place.

The limitations of the method have resulted in an area of considerable landscape beauty and interest (namely UP 06 and RV52) on the edge of the Borders territory being exposed to the possibility of inappropriate development of a landscape which, in any other part of our country, would be venerated and protected.

We identified four key issues within the Lyne Catchment Assessment which we feel were inadequately considered by LUC and SBC, namely Geology, Cultural Values, Habitat and Tourism and in the next few pages, we offer some thoughts on each.



## 3. Geology

It may seem strange to concentrate on the geology of our local landscape when the issue is the landscape itself, and not its geology. However, as shown earlier in this proposal, the nature of the escarpment which defines the NW boundary of the Scottish Borders also determines the landscape and the way in which we see it. Here, we offer two compelling reasons why a study and understanding of the geology affects our attitude to landscape.

- The Southern Upland Fault, one of Scotland's major geological features, is well expressed by the scarp below the hill ridge of the Lyne Catchment, and is an important landscape feature. Together with the Great Glen and the Highland Boundary Fault the Southern Upland Fault has shaped the topography of Scotland and is a natural marker for the northern margin of the Scottish Borders. The fault scarp below the hill ridge marks the fault line and any inappropriate development that breaks the skyline would have a serious VISUAL IMPACT".
- A second point that is important to the proposal is the geological similarity and continuity between the Lyne Catchment and the Tweedsmuir Uplands SLA.

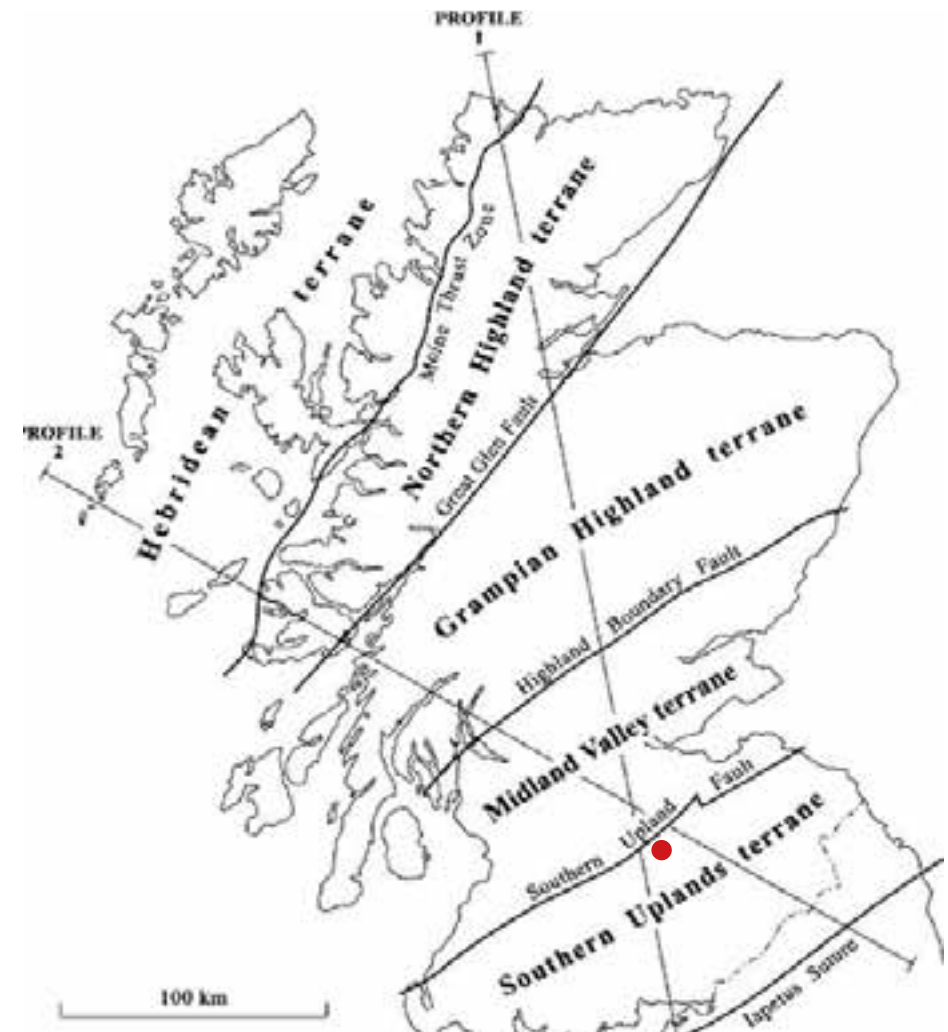
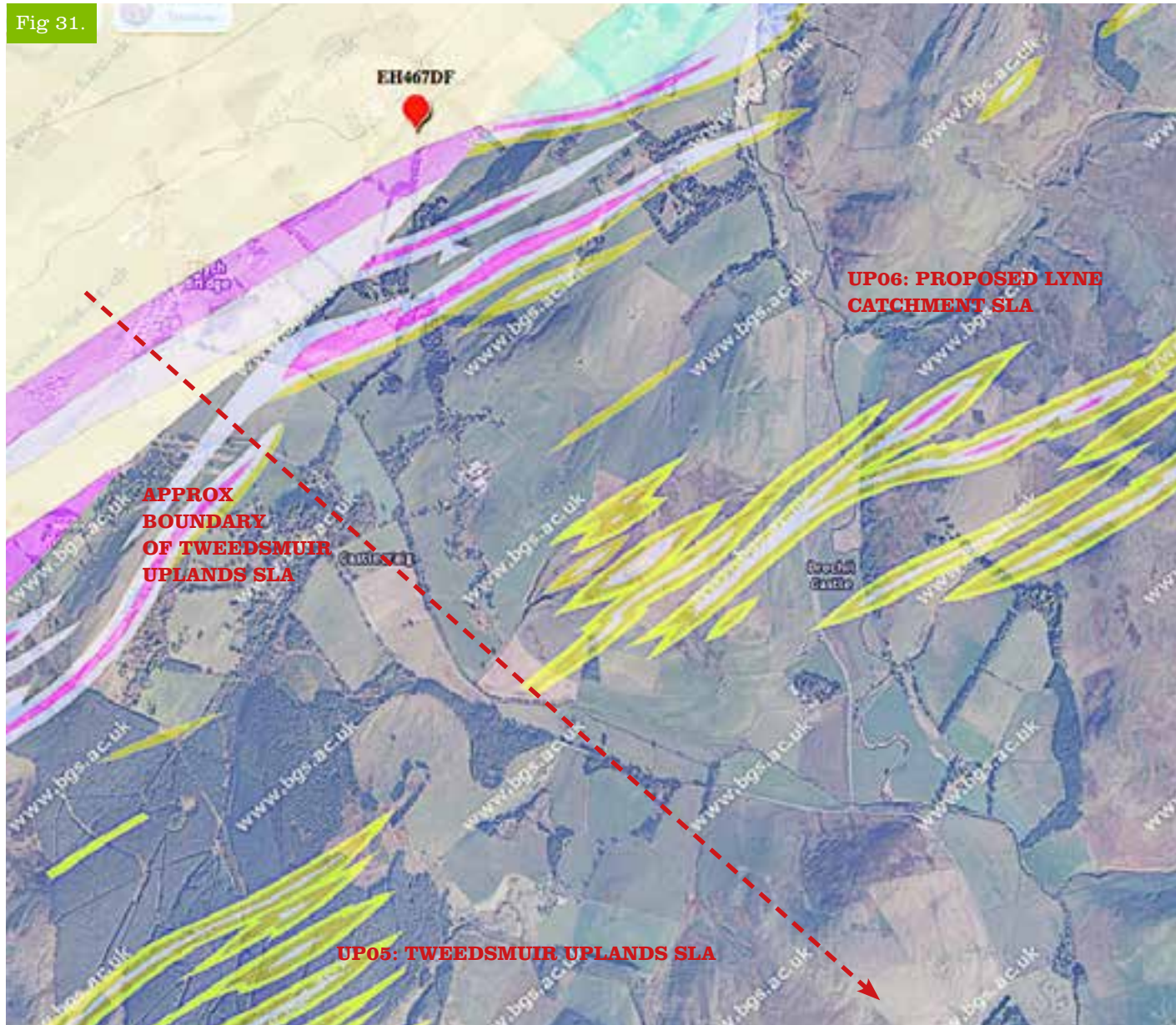


Fig 30. Location of the Lyne Catchment ●

Fig 31.



This map, from the British Geological Survey of the junction of UP05 with UP06 shows that the geology of both LCU's is the same. This means that geologically the Lyne Catchment and the Tweedsmuir Upland SLA's are indistinguishable.

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Underlying geology of the UP05 and UP06, across the boundary of the SLA Tweedsmuir Uplands.



The Southern Upland Fault lies roughly along the base of the escarpment that forms the NW edge of the Southern Uplands terrane. The escarpment is marked by these hills in UPO6, from Deans Hill in the north to Whiteside Hill, which overlooks the Lyne valley at Newlands. Strikingly, these hills are close to the line of the NW boundary of the Scottish Borders.



Fig 32. Along the length of the escarpment, there is clear evidence of earlier mining or quarrying on the slopes of White Knowe, which in this picture appears to lie above Bordlands. Minerals formed along the line of the fault have been exploited elsewhere in South Scotland



Fig 33. This industrial activity has not been noted before, but it may be relevant to our understanding of the origins of the hillforts which also lie along the escarpment

## Geology: conclusion

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The geology and the geomorphology of the Lyne Catchment is no different from that which defines the SLA Tweedsmuir Uplands, of which it is conterminous and contiguous. That reason alone provides justification for extending the SLA north to include the area we define as the Lyne Catchment.

Inappropriate development inevitably detracts from our perception of something as apparently cryptic as the signs of a major geological fault, and devalues its importance. Where the geology is spectacular (Arthur's Seat is an example), society has no difficulty in ensuring that some protection is provided. With time, the Southern Upland Fault may fall within that category.



## 4. Cultural value

The Lyne Catchment lies at the northern extremity of the area that is now Scottish Borders. Beyond lies the rest of Scotland and the Islands, separated by a low-lying 20-mile wide valley in which two large rivers, Forth and Clyde, make an obstacle to movement.

Over the 6000 or so years that this country has been inhabited, that midland valley has influenced many different social and political groupings. The important point is that the escarpment which marks the southern boundary of the valley also delimits the Lyne Catchment, and may have represented some kind of frontier. If so, the routes through that escarpment would have been strategically important at some periods in the past.

One piece of evidence supporting this view comes from the collection of five hillforts strung along the escarpment edge, each probably reporting to the major fort at Whiteside (Fig 34).

Others suggest these forts express a different kind of social grouping, perhaps founded on the wealth from mineral extraction, and that they were not strategically placed.

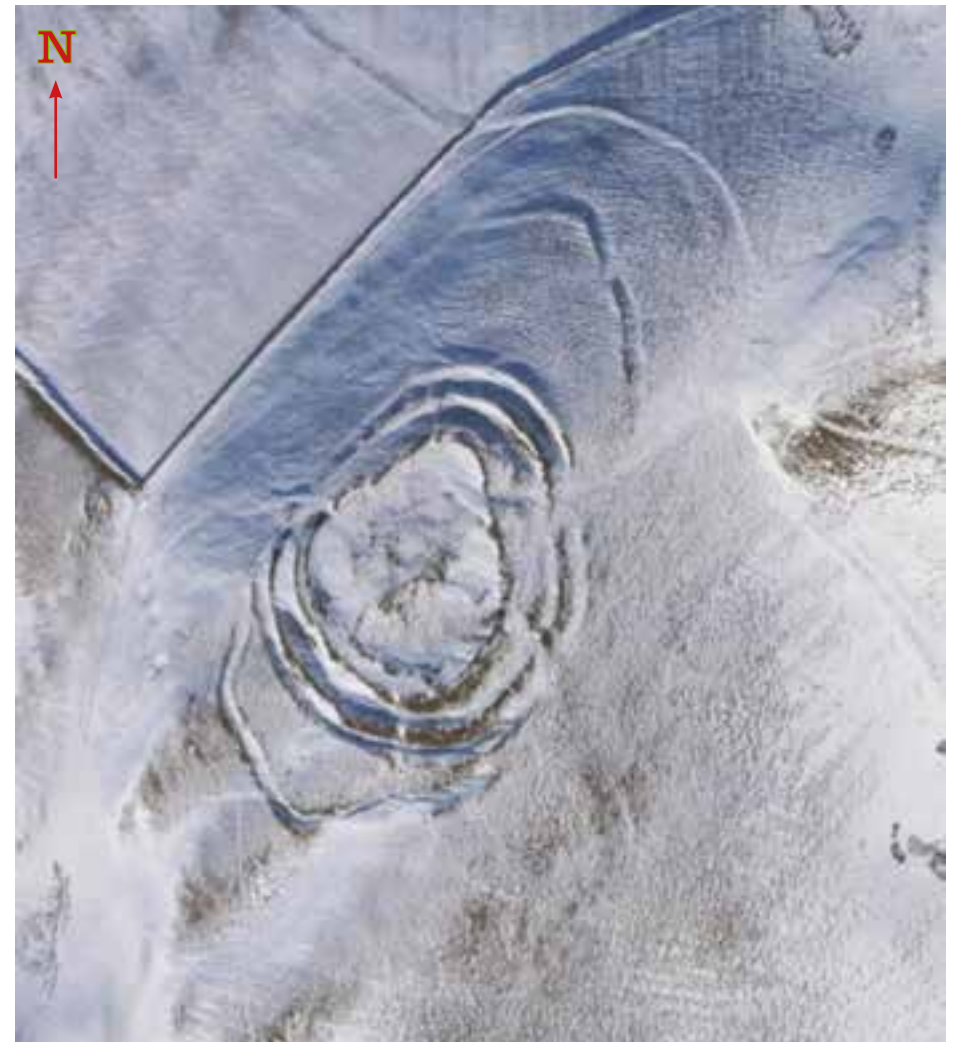


Fig 34. Whiteside Hillfort: (RCAHMS)

Such a fundamental difference in thinking shows that there is much to learn of value about this tiny fragment of Scotland's landscape. So, what is the evidence? The RCAHMS Canmore register of sites of historical or archaeological importance shows some 90-odd within the boundaries of the Lyne Catchment. These are shown on the map (right) as red dots. The approximate outline of the Lyne Catchment is shown in yellow. Note the hillforts along the NW escarpment (purple), the sites of the major Neolithic palisaded enclosure at Meldon Bridge (green, N ) and the Roman Auxiliary fort at Lyne (red square, R) at the southern end of the Lyne Valley system.

The potential importance to the current landscape of the 4,500 yr-old Neolithic site at Meldon Bridge cannot be over-estimated. By any standards, it was a huge engineering undertaking by an organised society involving the building of a 4m high , 500m long stock-proof enclosure of some 6 ha using hundreds of tonnes of Oak logs (some more than 2 tonnes) set in deep post-pits, all this at around the time of the formation of Stonehenge.

The enclosure seems to have had one entrance, reached via an avenue

(or cursus) of huge posts, set in a NW direction and pointing towards the Lyne Valley. The many people who contributed to the building of this, possibly ceremonial site, would probably have been local, and evidence of their habitations and farms remain to be found, possibly at higher elevation than we inhabit today.

Some 2500 years later, the Roman military also recognised the strategic value of this particular place and built a fort at Lyne with radiating communications that clearly involved both the Tarth and the Lyne River Valleys. Whether the hillforts on the escarpment were associated with the Roman occupation or not remains a moot point.

Physical evidence in the landscape that this was a place to live in comes also from the historical remains, from the cultivated terraces (9th century), the building of the church in Newlands in around 1300AD, C16th Drochil Castle, C18th Scotstoun.

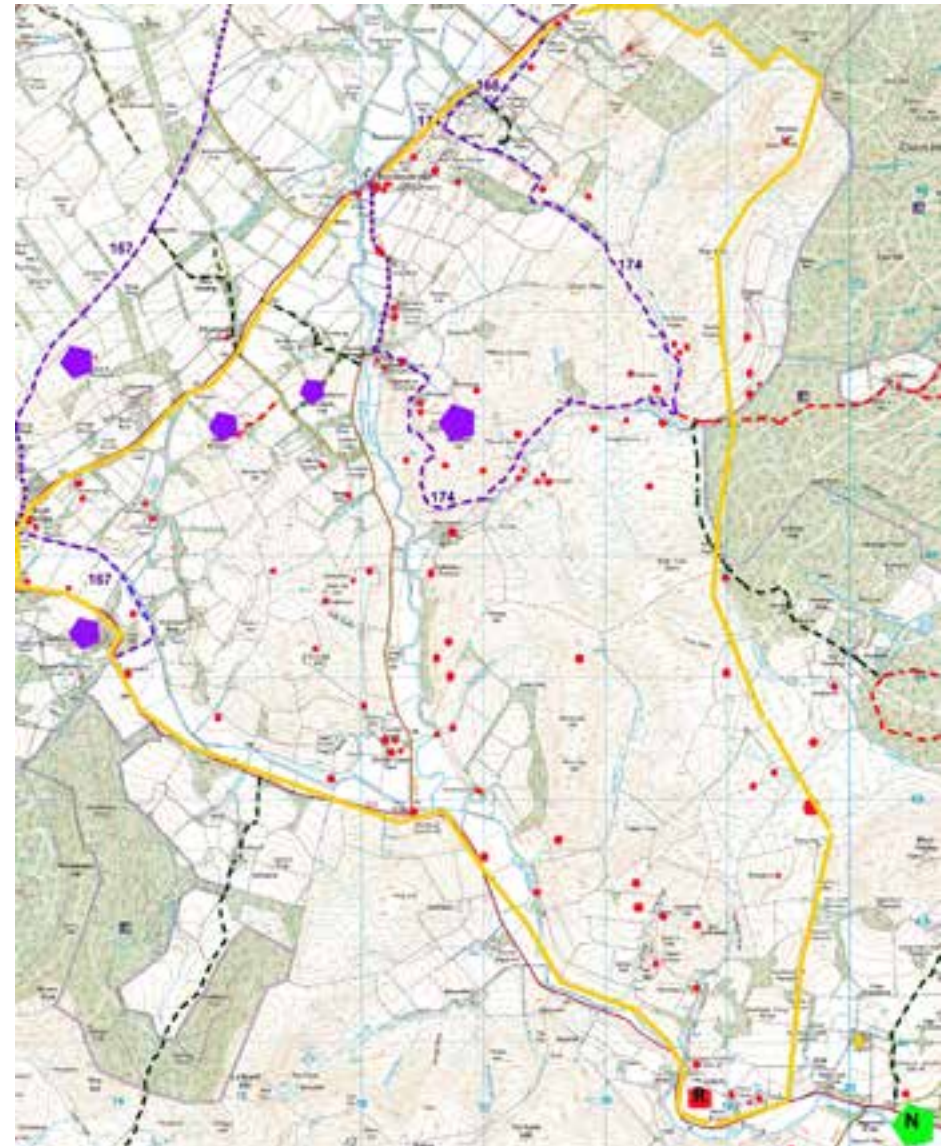


Fig 35. The Lyne Catchment and its RCAHMS Canmore-listed sites of historic or archaeological interest.



Although no Neolithic or Roman routes along the tops of the hills are known, a major drove-road to the south certainly existed in the C18th shown here climbing the escarpment above Halmyre.



The double line of fences marks the route of the drove road from West Linton to Peebles. (Photo courtesy Graham Whistler FRPS).

Fig 36.



The continuity of occupation is exemplified by the settlement of Newlands, which is clustered below the slopes of Drum Maw at the point where the Newlands Burn (possibly straightened up-slope for mineral working) joins the Lyne River close to the cultivated terraces (reckoned to be the best preserved in Scotland), the medieval church and its 19th century successor. The major hillfort on Whiteside, just beyond the right edge of the photograph, reinforces the strategic value of this area on the northern edge of the Upland massif that dominates the Scottish Borders.



Fig 37. Newlands: occupied for over 1000 years.



Fig 38. Young Rowan Krumbhaar, from San Francisco, getting inspiration from Drochil Castle, 2012. (Photo courtesy Ruth Krumbhaar)



Culture is more than archaeology or history; the arts play a part, too.

An appreciation of the natural joys in the Lyne Catchment by William Welsh, a local farmworker who died at Bordlands in 1883 at the age of 89 sums it up well:

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#### **Drochil Castle**

Where the waters of Tarth and the Newlands are meeting  
The auld Drochil Castle stands high on the brae  
Among the green hills where the flocks are a' bleatin  
I canty hae wrought thro' the hale summer day

At Morn when the mist from the hills is ascending  
And Phoebus returning, how pleasant to see  
The lark swells her notes and the wild flowers are sending  
A fresh fragrant smell o'er the green dewy lea.

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## Cultural value: conclusion

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This is an area where the historical and prehistoric attributes have yet to be fully evaluated: surprising given its strategic position on the northern edge of the Southern Uplands and because of the proximity to sites of major archeological significance such as Meldon Bridge. Because of this untapped potential, the lack of significant protection afforded to it in the Local Development Plan raises serious concerns. For that reason alone, we would ask that the Lyne Catchment be designated SLA and absorbed into the existing SLA Tweedsmuir Uplands, of which it is rightfully a part.



## 5. Habitat

The varied nature of the habitat of the Lyne Catchment has been illustrated throughout this document, the main elements being farmland (arable, pasture and upland grazing), freshwater rivers and burns, bogs, woodland (hardwood shelterbelts, conifer plantations) and domestic properties' gardens and parks. Altitude ranges roughly 1000ft from Hallyne to Wether Law. The soils are sandy-loams on the lower slopes merging into gleys and ironpans on the tops. Rainfall is circa 1000 mm/yr, evenly-distributed. Temperatures are modest, the average range being around 10°C. Snow falls on around 30 days in the year. The relative coolness does not mitigate the numbers

of bird species recorded in regular surveys of the area, which range from a winter high of 56 down to a summer low of 18.

Surveys into fish stocks (Salmon and trout fry) by Tweed Forum in 2009 and 2012 show modest stocks of Salmon in the main part of the Lyne, with less in its tributaries including Tarth and Flemington. In contrast, trout stocks are shown as moderate for the Lyne and all its tributaries. Other fish caught included eel (Lyne) and lamprey (Tarth). These figures show the potential of the habitat, if it is properly managed and is not destroyed during development.

The varied nature of habitat is shown in these two views separated by 200m: the left (Fig 39) of ancient ash trees on bog-side on the slopes of Drum Maw, the right (Fig 40) from Newlands Bridge



Fig 39.



Fig 40.

A striking habitat, of modest size, exists on the steep slope on the left bank of the River Lyne, under Wood Hill. In addition to its contribution to the landscape, it is important as the only stand of native woodland in the immediate area (although it is isolated). It is riparian on the edge of a flood plain, which adds to its habitat value, since it contains wet- slope alder woodland, which is locally scarce. It provides good habitat for bird

populations. It is now used as a seed source for future expansion of South Scotland's woodland, having over the past few years provided seed of hazel, bird cherry and alder. There is also birch and oak. The age of the stand is difficult to assess. Although marked on the 1856 OS map as mature existing woodland/scrub, it may well be much older.



Fig 41. Ancient mixed hardwood and scrub below Wood Hill, Lyne valley



A recent find has been of these ancient Scots pine growing along the edge of a conifer plantation on the slopes of Drum Maw (Fig 42). Scots pine, already old in 1856, provided a sheltered and varied environment at around 1100 ft.



Fig 42.

## Habitat conclusion

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The evidence that prompted the assessors of the landscape to under-score the habitat potential of both RV52 and UP 06 needs to be re-examined before the flood gates of development are let loose on the complex, delicate ecological systems that have evolved in this upland riverine environment that also happens to be a key tributary of the River Tweed, and is designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC).



## 6. Tourism

Tourism is recognised as being a major earner for the Scottish Borders (see Policy this document). Any project which impedes or reduces the potential for tourism needs to be properly justified before it is started, and that includes proposals which would have a detrimental effect on the landscape of the area. It is unfortunate, but inevitable, that landscape needs protection from inappropriate development, and that is provided by the way a particular area is designated. The lack of such designation for a small area in the north of the Scottish Borders within the Local Development Plan leaves it open to exploitation and development which can only harm the tourist potential of the whole Borders. Our proposal seeks to remedy that omission, by designating an area which we choose to name Lyne Catchment and adding it to an existing SLA.

The Lyne Catchment lies half-way between the nation's capital Edinburgh and the major tourist centre of Peebles and the Tweed valley. It is close to the conservation village of West Linton, is well served by footpaths, and contains a multitude of historic sites.

More particularly, it abuts a major and official tourist route into Scotland from the English border via Moffat and the A701. Its north-west edge is marked by the spectacular hills along the Southern Upland Fault, and these and the valleys which intersect them provide another, significant gateway into the heart of the Borders.

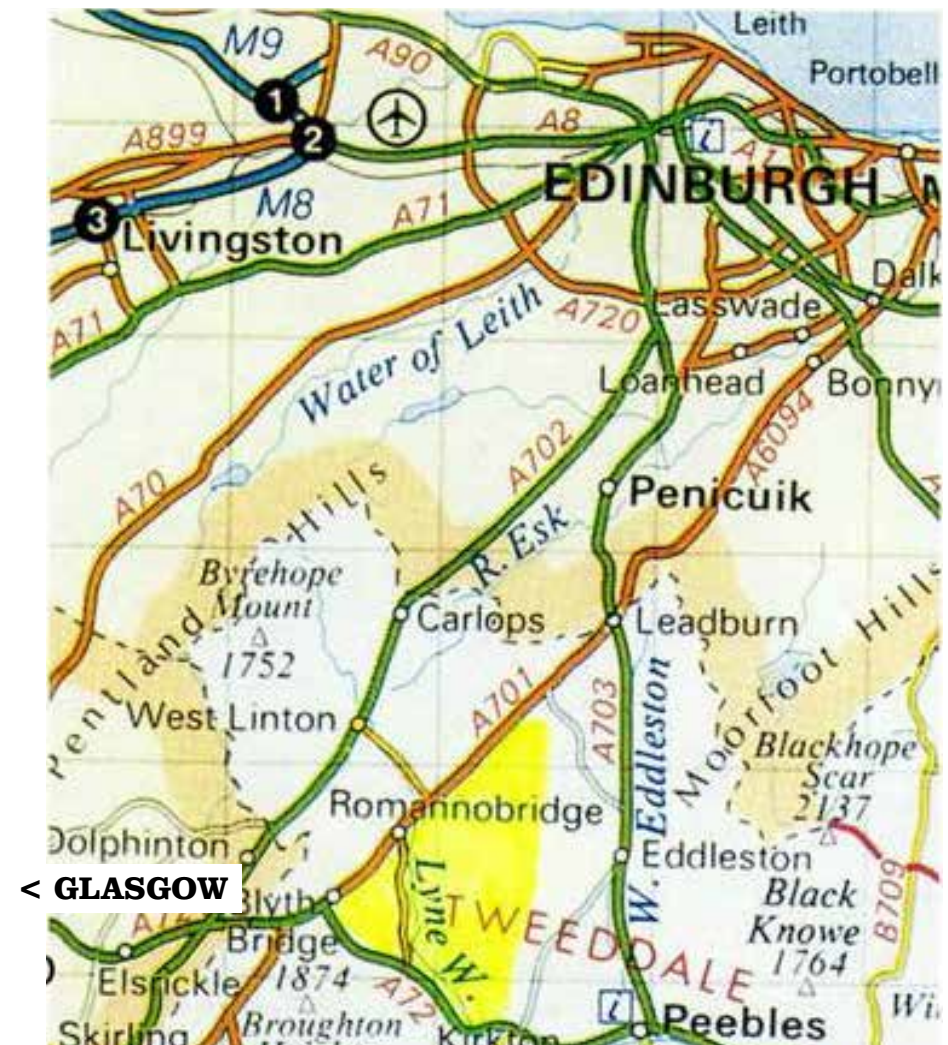


Fig 43. Location map. Lyne catchment in yellow

Behind this imposing escarpment lies an area well-suited to tourism in all its forms: walking, riding, kite flying, fishing and, perhaps just as important, a relatively safe place for young people to explore an area as yet unspoilt by tourist facilities, such as the bike riding industry which is in the process of disfiguring the forests of the Tweed valley.

But the sense of wildness and availability which exists in the Lyne Catchment cannot be experienced if visitors are put off from entering the Borders on its very boundary by inappropriate and disfiguring development. Such an act would be contrary to both national and local policies to encourage tourism.



Fig 44.

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This invitation to Scottish Borders on the A701 north of Moffat could not be more explicit. It leads directly to the Lyne Catchment.



## Tourism conclusion

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Designating the two LCU's UP06 and RV52 as a single SLA (namely Lyne Catchment) and incorporating it into an existing SLA will add a level of protection to two very important routes into the Borders along the Tarth and Lyne river valleys, and to the nationally important geological feature, namely the Southern Upland Fault, which forms the gateway to the valleys.



Fig 45. Sunrise over Bordlands and Drum Maw

## 7. Acceptability of our proposal for inclusion into the Local Development Plan

In this proposal, we based our assessments of landscape on “Local Landscape Designation Review (LLDR) Revised Report June 2012, prepared for SBC by Land Use Consultants Ltd. We approached them for help with some of the criteria, and would like to record our thanks to Paul MacRae for his clear explanations of some of the terms.

Because the LLDR was subsequently largely accepted by SBC, we reviewed Scottish Borders Planning Guidance: Local Landscape Designation Aug 2012 to test whether our proposal to add 10% of area to Special Landscape Area 1, Tweedsmuir Uplands, would conflict with present landscape criteria applied to that area, or to future plans for that area. These notes refer to that report.

- Para 3.9, Broughton Heights. Lyne Catchment meets these criteria.
- Para 3.10, Practical Criteria . Lyne Catchment fits the criteria on Identity and coherence, Suitable size, Boundary features.
- Para 4.1 (as applied to Special Landscape Area 1, Tweedsmuir Uplands). None of the criteria in the Location and Boundaries, the Designation Statement, Force for Change, and Management recommendation conflict with the characteristics of Lyne Catchment, so that adding 10% to the Special Landscape 1 by extending its northern boundaries would not alter these statements: in some cases, it would reinforce them.
- Para 6, Table 1. Tweedsmuir Uplands. There is nothing in the explanation that would mitigate against adoption of Lyne Catchment as part of the existing SLA Tweedsmuir Uplands.

**From this exercise, we conclude that there are no obvious obstacles to the adoption of our proposal as part of the 2014 Local Development Plan. Indeed, in the body of our proposal, we suggest a number of cogent reasons why it would be in the long-term interest of the Scottish Borders to adopt them.**



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## Conclusion

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We believe there is an overwhelming case for the area we define as the Lyne Catchment to be included in the Tweedsmuir SLA, because: .

- The current designation of the area that makes up the Lyne Catchment undervalues a landscape of great natural beauty and interest.
- The Lyne Catchment is an integral part of the Tweedsmuir Uplands SLA geologically, culturally, and scenically.
- The Lyne Catchment is functionally important as a natural boundary to the Tweedsmuir Uplands SLA.
- The Lyne Catchment is a diverse natural habitat well worthy of protection for its own sake and even more so for its potential appeal to tourists.

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## Acknowledgements

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Anne Brown, Christopher Bowles, Paul Binns, James Hunt, Ruth and Krista Krumbhaar, Sam Lowndes, Paul MacRae, Michael Matthews, John Savory.

## The Authors

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This proposal was put together by the following residents Drs Duncan and Janice Davidson, Jim and Karen Pratt (Mountain Cross); William and Lucinda Bannister, Jane Dickson, Joe Fernand (Romanno Bridge); Alan and Judith Gray, Hamish Lockie, Keith Thomas (Callands); Iain Lamb (Blyth Bridge). We did so because, having lived here for many years, we share a deep and abiding love of our surroundings, as viewed from where we live, and as places where we walk or ride or fish or bring up our children. We think this countryside deserves protection.

This proposal has also been endorsed by the following Community Councils: Lamancha, Newlands and Kirkurd; Manor, Stobo and Lyne; West Linton. Additional support is offered by the Krumbhaar families in Washington, San Francisco and Boulder, USA, by Mike Madden, Mr & Mrs Eydes (Halmyre), Mike Devlin (Callands), Cilla Davidson (Lamancha), Tony & Pat Winkle, (Macbiehill).

The proposal was written and illustrated by Jim Pratt, to whom all correspondence should be sent (to J.E.Pratt MBE, Cross House, Mountain Cross, West Linton, Peeblesshire EH46 7DF. [K.M.Pratt@btinternet.com](mailto:K.M.Pratt@btinternet.com) )

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