

### 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.



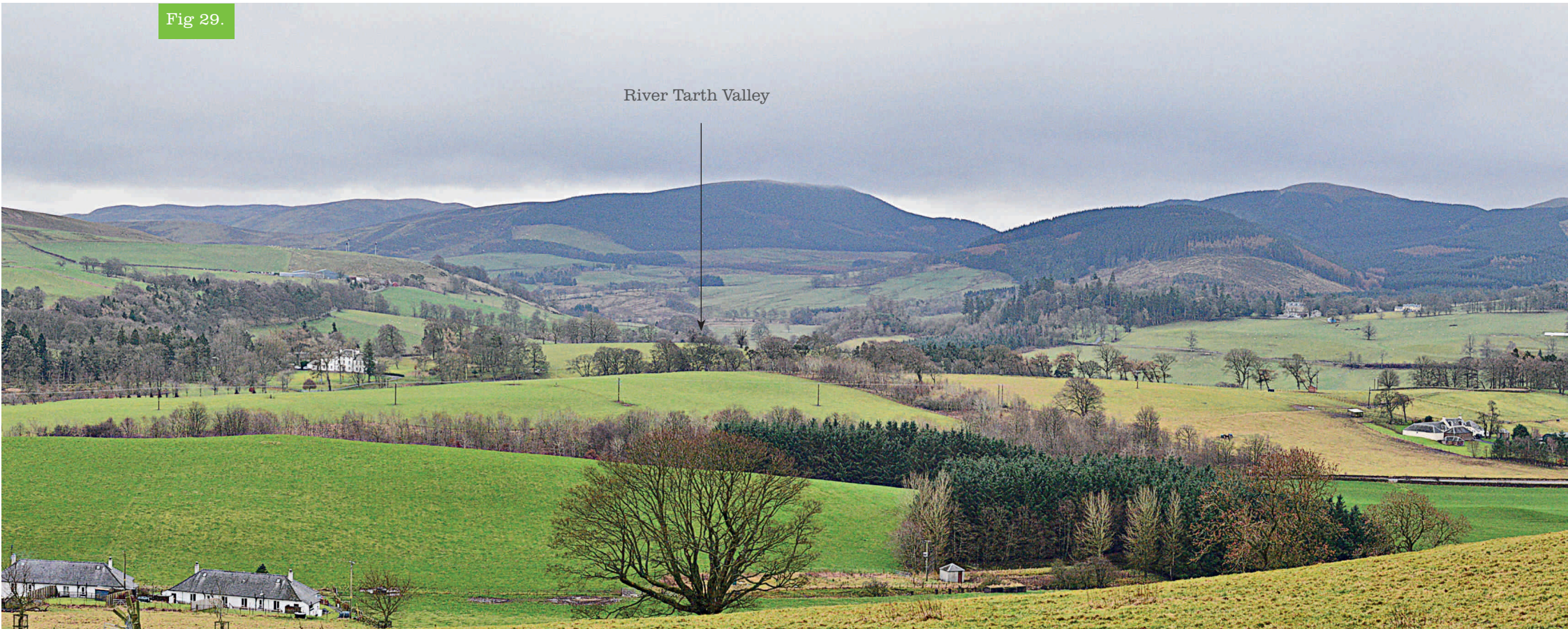


## 14. Landscape relationships (no map)

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

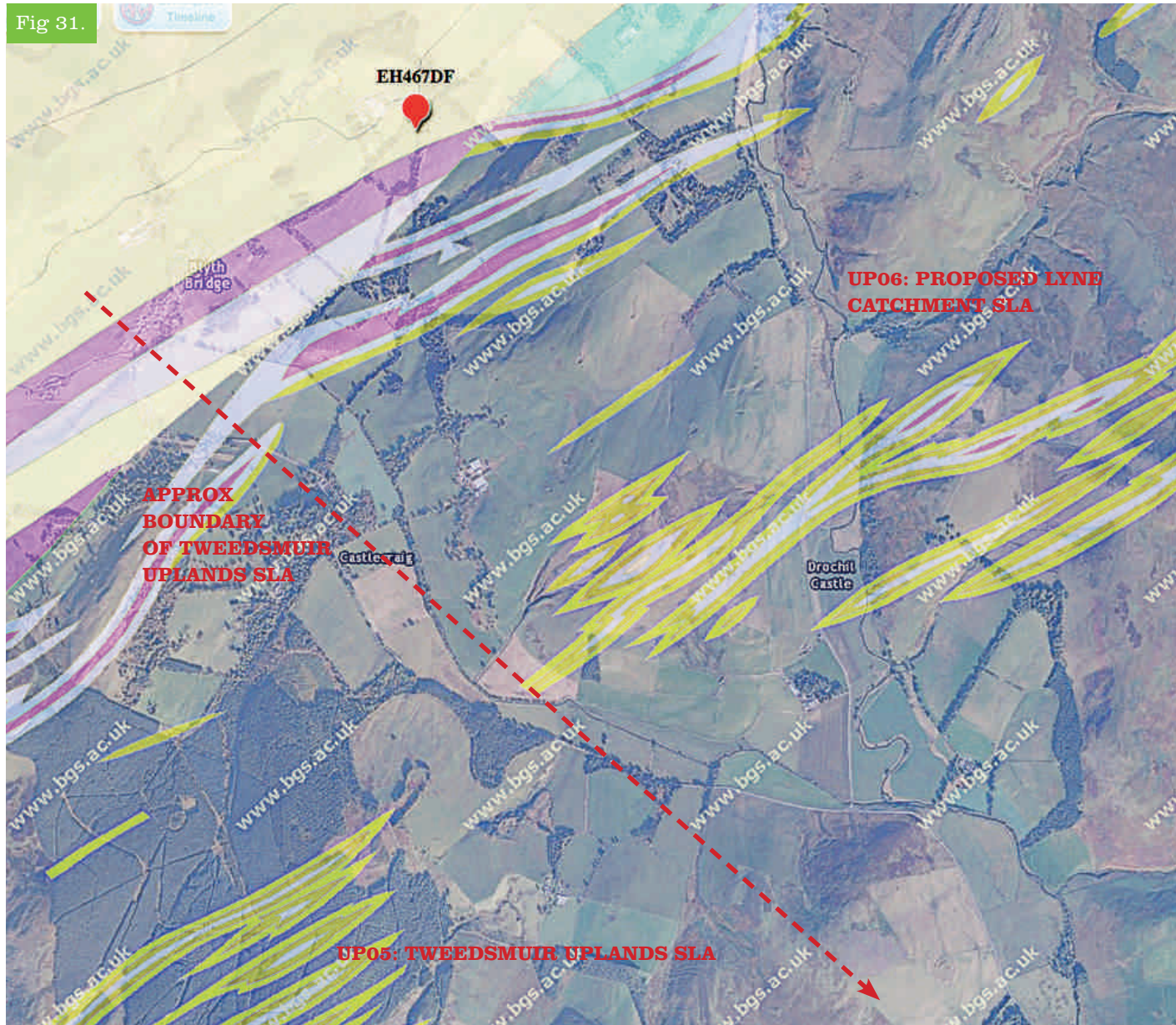
It may seem strange to concentrate on the geology of our local landscape when the issue is the landscape itself, and not its geology. However, as shown earlier in this proposal, the nature of the escarpment which defines the NW boundary of the Scottish Borders also determines the landscape and the way 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 ●





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.

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 Knoxe, 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.

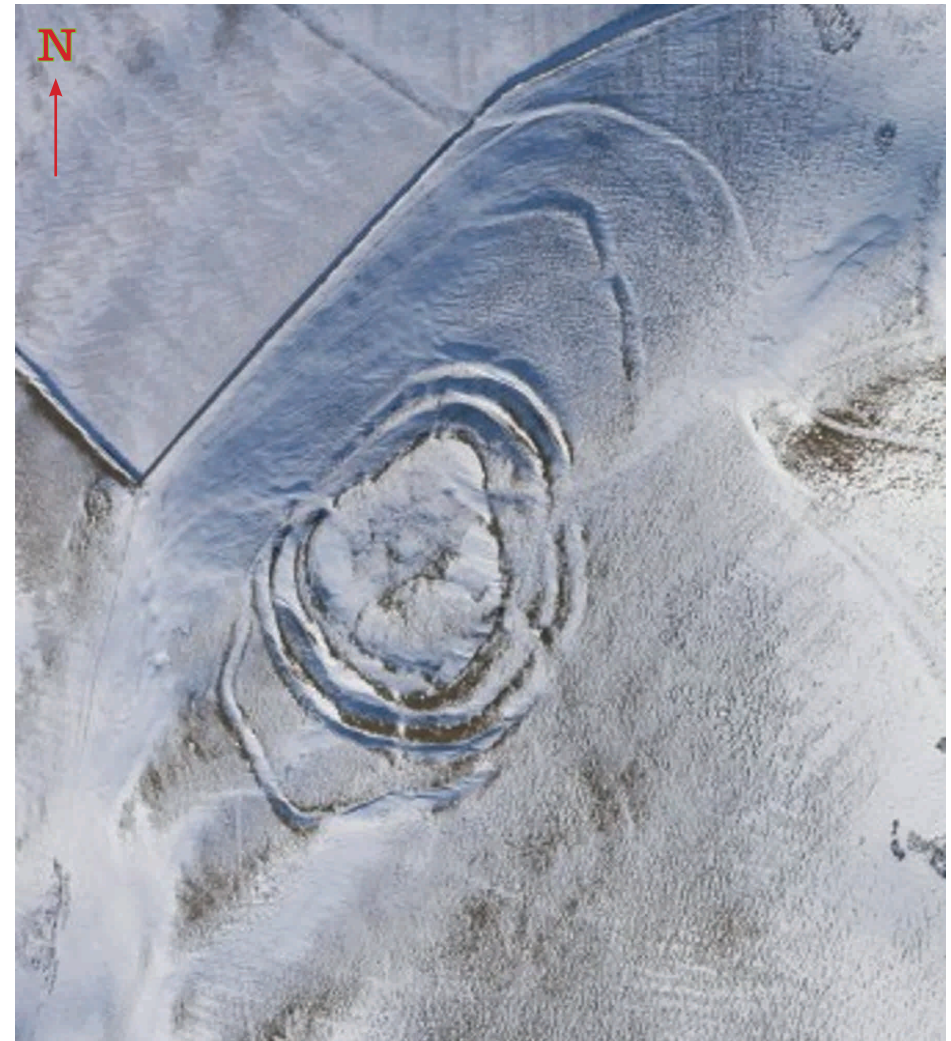


Fig 34. Whiteside Hillfort: (RCAHMS)



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.

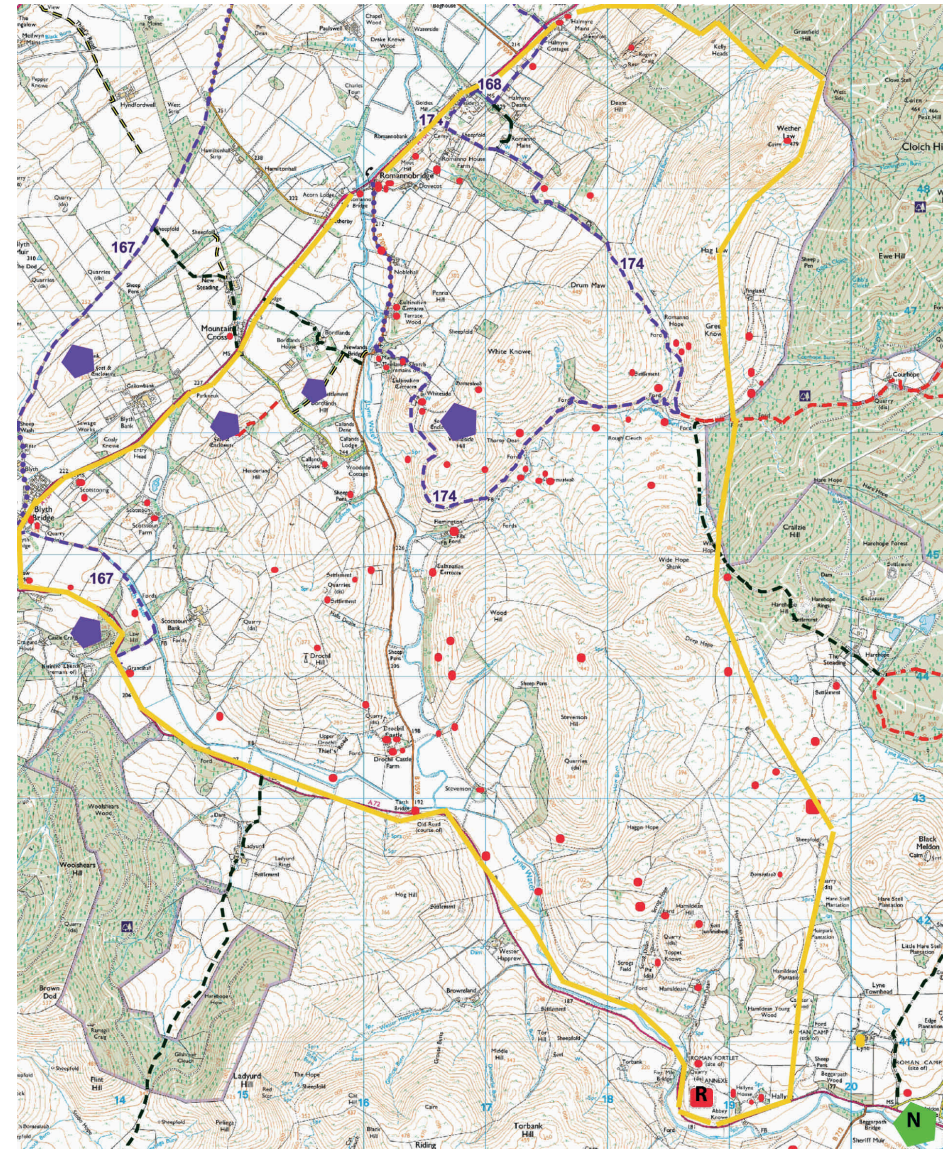


Fig 35. The Lyne Catchment and its RCAHMS Canmore-listed sites of historic or archaeological interest.



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.

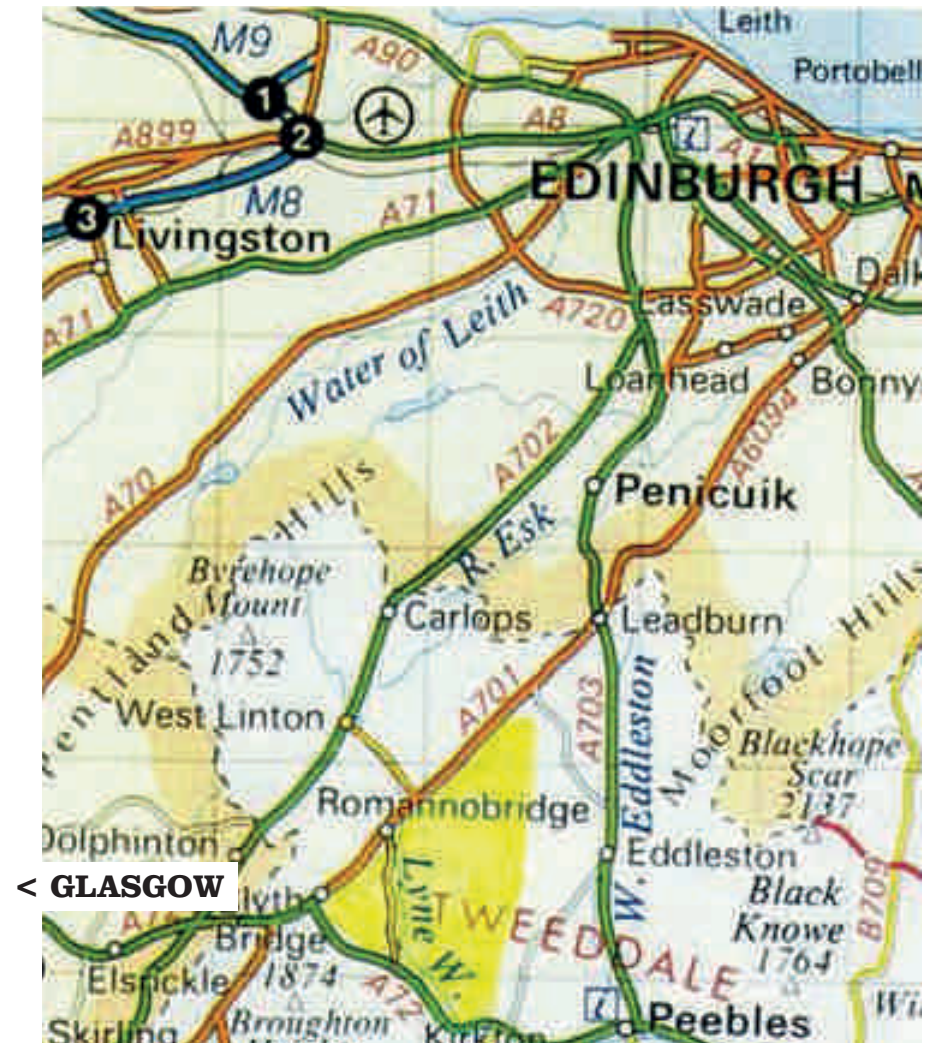


Fig 43. Location map. Lyne catchment in yellow



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.

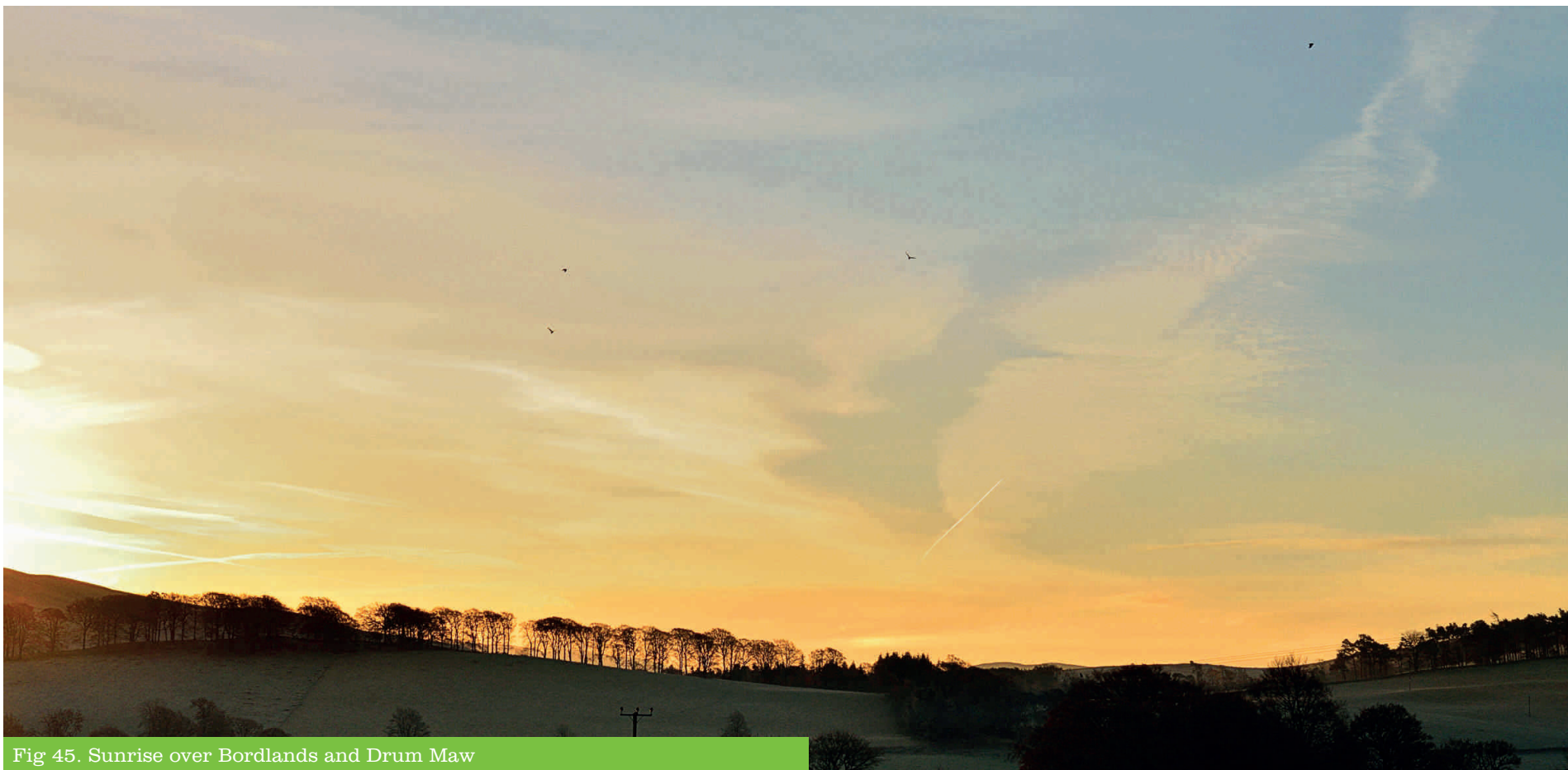


Fig 45. Sunrise over Bordlands and Drum Maw



## 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).

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