CHAPTER 16. THE LAKES THROUGH A GLASS DARKLY

by C Hardie

Introduction

"*Even the wild features of nature suffer continual change from various causes – inclosures – canals – quarries – buildings – and, above all, from the growth, or destruction, of timber. And if the wild scenes of nature suffer change; how much more may we expect to observe it in the improvement of particular places which are professedly altering with the taste, or fancy of their owners? Few of the scenes continue long the same….It is probable therefore, that many of the embellished scenes, described in the following work, are now totally changed; and that the author hath rather exhibited a history of the past, than a representation of the present*".

So said William Gilpin in his observations of picturesque beauty in the Lakes in 1772.[1] This case study examines the landscape around Derwentwater which was the favourite haunt of many artists who sought picturesque landscapes in the eighteenth century. The dramatic scenery led to an appreciation of the 'sublime' for artists and poets alike and the publication of some of the earliest guidebooks in the eighteenth century. In particular this case study uses Thomas West's guidebook published in 1776 and compares his descriptions of the eighteenth century picturesque landscape with what can be found today. An examination of how HLC has characterised the present day landscape allows the HLC methodology to be tested. It also provides an insight into how successful the conservation movement, which originated in the Lake District, has been in preserving the very qualities which attracted visitors from the eighteenth century onwards. The Derwent Water case study is wholly located within the Keswick and Derwent Water character area.

The Grand Tour in the Lakes and the growth of tourism

A glimpse into the landscape character of the seventeenth-eighteenth century Lakes can be obtained initially from the accounts of travellers or from illustrations. Celia Fiennes was the first person to publish an account of her journey through the Lakes in 1698,[2] predating even Defoe's description of his *Tour Through the Whole Island of Great Britain* (1724-27). Like Defoe her journey took her through the whole of England and parts of Scotland and Wales. She noted the stony hills around Kendal with lanes leading to the "*rich good… inclosed lands*" below[3] and the good hunting grounds of the forests and parks of the Ullswater area.[4] In contrast, when exploring the landscape of Lake Windermere[5] she gave an indication of the dramatic and dark nature of the landscape, some of the very qualities which were to attract the followers of the sublime:

"…*as I walked down at this place I was walled on both sides by those inaccessible high rocky barren hills which hangs over ones head in some places and appear very terrible…*"

Prior to the eighteenth century, art, literature and aesthetic taste focused on the tranquillity of pastoral beauty in landscapes. But with a new interest in wild nature, philosophers like Shaftesbury, Burke and Kant took more seriously the need for an aesthetic category which could explain how wild and great things could evoke an

[1] Gilpin 1788

[2] Morris 1982
[3] Morris 1982,165
[4] Morris 1982,169
[5] Morris 1982,168

aesthetic response which was not displeasure (as associated with ugliness), but pleasure mixed with fear.[6] This became known as the sublime and the Lake District was at the heart of its popularisation. The Lakes landscape was viewed as something awesome and terrible, perhaps best exemplified in Dr John Brown's letter to Lord Lyttelton where the mountains were described as:

> "*…of stupendous height, hanging over the lake in horrible grandeur, some of them a thousand feet high, the woods climbing up their steep and shaggy sides, where mortal foot never yet approached. On these dreadful heights the eagles build their nests; a variety of waterfalls are seen pouring from their summits, and tumbling in vast sheets from rock to rock in rude and terrible magnificence: while on all sides of this immense amphitheatre the loft mountains rise round, piercing the clouds in shapes as spiry and fantastic…*"[7]

The concept of the picturesque was developed mainly by William Gilpin and Sir Uvedale Price, during the eighteenth century. It differed from 'beauty' which could be associated with classical buildings or peaceful scenes and instead celebrated scenery which was broken and undulating with variety, including water, for example a lake with 'savage banks' and a surface broken rather than smooth, perhaps with a pattern in the water from the wind, or the fast flowing water of waterfalls and white water. Even trees could be picturesque if they were rugged and twisted with age. In picturesque landscapes trees were not placed evenly but in more irregularity and in clumps.[8] It is therefore easy to see why the Lakes landscape appealed so much to the followers of the picturesque.

The picturesque was popularised in the Lakes by Gilpin in 1772 in his Tour To The Lakes. He described the eighteenth century perception of a picturesque landscape; opinions which today sound extraordinary. In Gilpin's view "*Nature, for all her beauties, was unequal in composition; so Gilpin often had to put things right for her*".[9] And he did. Mountains and lakes had to be specified shapes in order to be beautiful – those which did not conform were considered grotesque, displeasing or disagreeable. Gilpin wrote that the landscape is composed of "*mountains – lakes – broken grounds – woods – rocks – cascades – vallies – and rivers*". In exploring the different shapes of the mountains in the Lakes, the saddleback form was considered disagreeable forming "*whimsical, grotesque shapes*".[10] This contrasted with Gray's[11] more simple and romantic perception of "*Saddleback, whose furrowed sides were gilt by the noon-day sun, whilst its brow appeared of a sad purple, from the shadow of the clouds as they sailed slowly by…*".

For Gilpin, pools and fens were in summer "*a sink of putrefaction; and the receptacle of all those unclean, misshapen forms in animal life, which breed and batten in the impurities of stagnation…*". Lakes were considered to be splendid and spacious basins where streams discharge "*unsullied, and undiminished, through some winding vale, to form other lakes, or increase the dignity of some imperial river*".[12] Tarns were written off as lowly basins or reservoirs that "*want the pleasing accompaniments, which adorn the lower lakes*".[13] Gilpin's art was not intended to be a topographic representation of landscape, but a picturesque arrangement of the elements in the view and as such caution must be used when using them to determine land use in the

[6] www.lancaster.ac.uk/depts/philosophy /awaymave/407/block1.htm#sublime
[7] Taken from Talbot and Whiteman 1997, 7
[8] www.lancaster.ac.uk/depts/philosophy /awaymave/407/block1.htm#pict
[9] Bicknell 1984, 12
[10] Gilpin 1788, 87
[11] Bicknell 1984, 11
[12] Gilpin 1788, 100
[13] Gilpin 1788, 103

eighteenth century. However his written tour is more useful, being quick to write off that which he did not consider to be beautiful and to extol in great detail that which conformed to his idea of the picturesque.

Thomas West wrote the first guidebook in 1776, incorporating and verifying the views of earlier writers, including Gray who toured the Lakes in 1767, ("*lap'd in Elysium*").[14] West's guidebook was designed to "*encourage the taste of visiting the lakes*" while furnishing the traveller with sufficient information to "*relieve the traveller from the burthen of those tedious enquiries on the road, or at the inns, which generally embarrass, and often mislead*".[15] West prescribed tours throughout the Lakes along with viewing stations where the picturesque beauty of the Lakes could be admired, preferably using a telescope, and Claude glass.

The Claude glass was named after Claude Lorrain (1600-82), an artist based in Rome famous for drawings and paintings displaying a subtle gradation of tones. His work became immensely popular in England in the eighteenth century. A Claude glass was a slightly convex tinted mirror, which was designed to help artists produce works of art similar to those of Claude. The convex nature of the mirror shaped a large scene into a neat view, and the tinting (which was often sepia or brown) helped artists to see the relative tonal values of the view. Thomas West suggested that the Claude Glass would provide "much amusement in this tour":

> "*Where the objects are great and near, it removes them to a due distance, and shews them in the soft colours of nature, and in the most regular perspective the eye can perceive, or science demonstrate*".[16]

The Claude glass had to be used in a specific way. A dark Claude glass was considered best for sunny days, but should the unfortunate tourist find themselves out on a cloudy day, a glass could be used with a silver foil to compensate for the lack of light.

> "*The mirror is of greatest use in sunshine; and the person using it ought always to turn his back to the object he views. It should be suspended by the upper part of the case, holding it a little to the right or left (as the position of the parts to be viewed require) and the face screened from the sun. A glass of four inches, or four inches and a half diameter, is a proper size*".[17]

Not only did West prescribe the locations from which the beauty of the Lakes could best be appreciated (through the glass darkly), but he also recommended a specific time of the month relating to the new moon and a specific time of the day to get the best lighting conditions.

Following Gilpin and West's guidebooks the Lakes became the fashionable destination for wealthy tourists who increasingly found the European grand tour fraught with political difficulties (the French revolution of 1789 and subsequent wars and the Napoleonic conflicts of 1803-15). The inevitable backlash against Gilpin's prescriptive approach to the perceptions of landscape and "the Lakers" was led most notably by William Wordsworth who went on a "*Pikteresk Tour*" in 1799. In 1810 he wrote his Guide to the Lakes,[18] the first real rival to West's Guidebook, offering guidance on the "*manner in which topographical descriptions ought to be executed…*", although in many ways, Wordsworth found much to agree with West and Gilpin. In his book, initially published anonymously, he set out the description of the landscape "*as formed by nature*", what today we might call landscape

[14] West 1789, 4th edition is used here. Mr Gray's journal is also reproduced here p199ff
[15] West 1789, 2
[16] West 1789, 12
[17] West 1789, 12
[18] Bicknell 1984

characterisation and then "*Aspects of the Country as Affected by its inhabitants*" – what today we would call historic landscape characterisation. He then went on to provide "*Changes, and Rules of Taste for Preventing Bad Effects*", what we might today call conservation. Unlike West and Gilpin, he was already intimate with the landscape and shrugged off any suggestion that he should only visit viewing stations. Instead he wandered across the countryside writing about the landscape as he saw it.

Such was the backlash against the formal picturesque that even Jane Austen satirized it in her novel Northanger Abbey:[19]

> "*He talked of foregrounds, distances and second distances; side screens and perspectives; lights and shades; and Catherine was so hopeful a scholar, that when they gained the top of Beechen Cliff, she voluntarily rejected the whole city of Bath, as unworthy to make part of a landscape*".

Inevitably large numbers of visitors to the Lakes resulted in concerns for the landscape and the impact of the new infrastructure required to bring hoards of visitors from the towns to visit. Campaigns against the construction of reservoirs from former Lakes, initially at Thirlmere and the introduction of the railway led to the growth of the conservation movement, led most noticeably by Ruskin (1819-1900) and the founding of the Lake District Defence Society in 1883. Ruskin's outspoken views on tourism *(*"*stupid herds of modern tourists*") reflected the paradox which still forms the basis of management in the Lakes; that is how to preserve an area both for the nation and from the nation.[20] So in less than 100 years since the publication of West's Guidebook, the impact of tourism had resulted in conflict and the need for conservation. Less obvious was the impact on farming and consequently on land use. Sir John Colpoy reported to the Governors of Greenwich Hospital in 1805, "*All the farms* [about Keswick] *except perhaps the farthest, will no doubt be readily let for the accommodation of the inhabitants and at better prices than farmers (merely as such) could afford to pay*".[21] Property was being reassessed, rents increased and improvements made to the town to meet the needs of the tourists. By September 1828 the Whitehaven Gazette was able to report that the "*visitors to the Lakes have been very numerous this season, the inns and lodging houses at Keswick and Ambleside continue up to this time well filled*".[22]

Landscape change around Derwentwater since the eighteenth century

West's picturesque stations focused on the Lakes and for the purposes of this case study Derwentwater near Keswick has been selected – "*the most delightful Vale which perhaps ever Human Eye beheld*".[23] The sublime beauty of the lake had been captured by Dr Dalton in his poem on the Vale of Keswick first published in 1775:

> "*…Let other streams rejoice to roar*
> *Down the rough rocks of dread Lowdore,*
> *Rush raving on with boist'rous sweep,*
> *And foaming rend the frighted deep,*
> *Thy gentle genius shrinks away,*
> *From such a rude unequal fray;*
> *Through thine own native dale, where rise*
> *Tremendous rocks amid the skies,*
> *Thy waves with patience slowly wind,*
> *Till they the smoothest channel find,*
> *Soften the horrors of the scene,*

[19] Austin 2002, 90-91
[20] Edmonds 2004, 209
[21] Hughes 1965, 374
[22] Whitehaven Gazette September 1824, quoted in Hughes 1965, 375
[23] Quote from Crosthwaite's map of the Lake of Derwent, 1784.

And through confusion flow serene".[24]

In this report, comparisons are made between the landscape as perceived by Gray, Gilpin, West and Wordsworth and the analysis of those same areas using the Historic Landscape methodology, supplemented by field visits and some research of readily available sources. West's tour around Derwentwater started at Keswick and worked his way in a clockwise direction including eight viewing stations. A viewing station at each end of the lake (stations II and IV) provided all encompassing views from one end to the other, taking in the islands and the fellsides which formed the amphitheatre around the lake. Station II near Keswick viewed down the lake into the "*rocky jaws of Borrowdale*" and Station IV provided views from Borrowdale northwards to the more gentle landscape around Keswick. To the north of Keswick, Station VII was on the heights of Latrigg and provided views of the entire lake, Keswick and Borrowdale and so covered from one point all the landscape features seen from the other seven stations. The remaining stations were located around the water's edge and duplicated the other views with the exception of Station VIII which was located in the vicarage garden at Crosthwaite and never really accessible to large numbers of visitors. The viewing station at Swinside was also located above the water's edge and is no longer accessible. As a number of landscape features can be seen from more than one station, the examination of the landscape at each station today will focus on a particular group of elements to avoid duplication in the report.

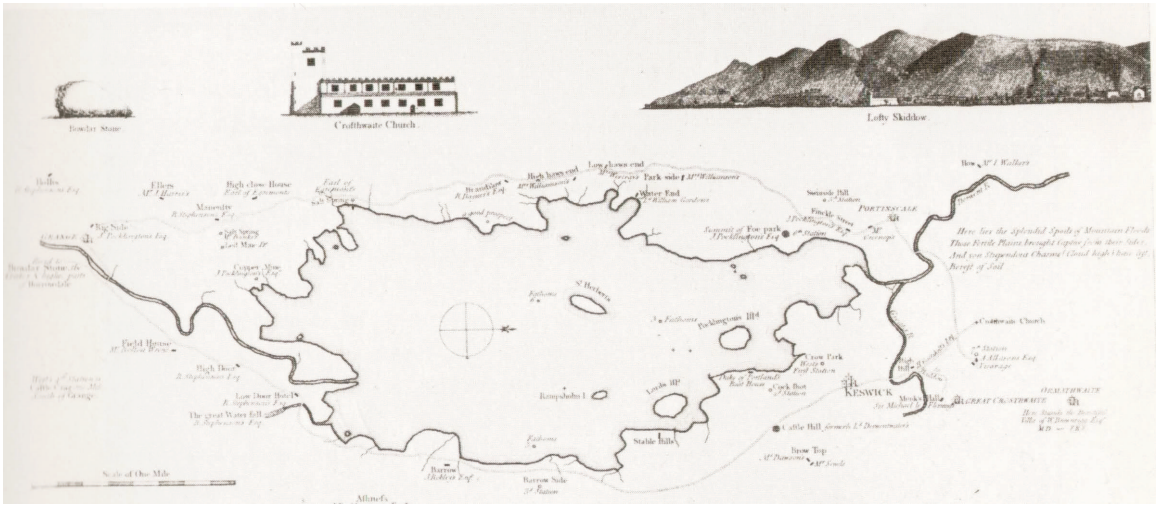

Plate 97. "An Accurate Map of the matchless Lake of Derwent (situate in the most delightful Vale which perhaps ever Human Eye beheld). Surveyed etc. by P Crosthwaite Admiral at Keswick Regatta; who keeps the Museum at Keswick, & is Guide, Pilot, Geographer & Hydrographer to the Nobility and Gentry, who make the Tour of the Lakes. August 20th, 1784", showing West's eight picturesque Stations.

All the elements of the picturesque were brought together around Keswick with a number of different landscape types and had already been noted by Dr John Brown who listed them as "*beauty, horror and immensity*":

> "*…the full perfection of Keswick, consists of three circumstances, beauty, horror, and immensity united…to give you a complete idea of these three perfections, as they are joined in Keswick, would require the united powers of Claude, Salvator, and Poussin. The first should throw his delicate sunshine over the cultivated vales, the scattered cots, the groves, the lake,*

[24] Extract from Dr Dalton's descriptive poem enumerating the beauties of the Vale of Keswick, first printed 1775 and reproduced in West 1789, 197

> *and wooded islands. The second should dash out the horror of the rugged cliffs, the steeps, the hanging woods, and foaming waterfalls; while the grand pencil of Poussin should crown the whole, with the majesty of impending mountains*".[25]

The landscape does indeed reflect the three divisions noted by Dr Brown which translates from "*beauty, horror and immensity*" to ancient enclosed cultivated landscapes around Keswick, the islands and woods and parkland (beauty), plus Castle Crag and the rocky summits of Borrowdale (horror) and finally the fells of Swinside, Skiddaw and Castle Rigg (immensity). Wordsworth also felt that Derwentwater was,

> "*distinguished from all other Lakes by being surrounded with sublimity: the fantastic mountains of Borrowdale to the south, the solitary majesty of Skiddaw to the north, the bold steeps of Wallow-crag and Lodore to the east, and to the west the clustering mountains of New-lands*".[26]

Derwentwater today has extensive woodland, much of it defined as plantation by HLC, and it is interesting to note (see below) that these plantations are not recent developments but a replacement of woodlands felled in the sixteenth and mid eighteenth centuries. Indeed the very name Derwentwater is thought to derive from the British language meaning "*the lake of the river which abounds in oak trees*" and is first found in historical documents in *c* 1240.[27]

Despite these differences, Derwentwater sits within a typical Lakeland fellside landscape which has been termed through HLC as the Central Fells character area. It consists of a deep U-shaped valley, *c* 80m above sea level stretching up to *c* 600m above sea level, with open, rugged fellsides, rocky outcrops and boulder strewn fields. The exposed hillsides consist of unimproved grazing or woodland, all drained by narrow ghylls and streams. On high ground, grazed fell land stretches up the hillsides and on low lying ground around Keswick and occasionally around the lake there are a number of early farms. Here again we have a difference between Derwentwater and many other central lakes fells. The topography around Derwentwater, particularly to the west is very steep and there is little room for the typical arrangement of early farm, intakes and fellside. Instead, early farms are few and far between and so also are intakes. For the same reason, there is no evidence for a ring garth found in other valleys. Farming and arable production in particular has concentrated around Keswick where the open topography is more suitable, however even here farming was always dominated by pastoral rather than arable production. Land to the east near Castle Rigg Fell rises steeply leaving no room at all for enclosures, although the fellside has been carved up and divided by stone walls in the late eighteenth to early nineteenth centuries. Today the landscape is heavily wooded masking any evidence of earlier features, but HLC has identified small isolated ancient farmsteads, for example, above Otterbield Bay and Barrow Bay, Deerclose Cottage and Castle Rigg manor.

Historic Landscape Characterisation is unable to distinguish between the craggy jaw like hills of Castle Crag which could strike terror and admiration into the heart of the eighteenth century 'Laker' and the smoother sided mountain of Skiddaw or Saddleback which looms behind Keswick. Most upland areas are simply recorded as 'fell' or 'moorland'. Neither can the Countryside Agency's landscape characterisation programme which defines Derwentwater and the other central fells as 'Cumbria High Fells'.[28] The key characteristics of the Cumbria High Fells JCA are:

[25] Nicholson and Burn 1777, 84
[26] Wordsworth in Bicknell 1984, 139
[27] Gambles 1985, 15,21
[28] Countryside Commission 1998, 31-7

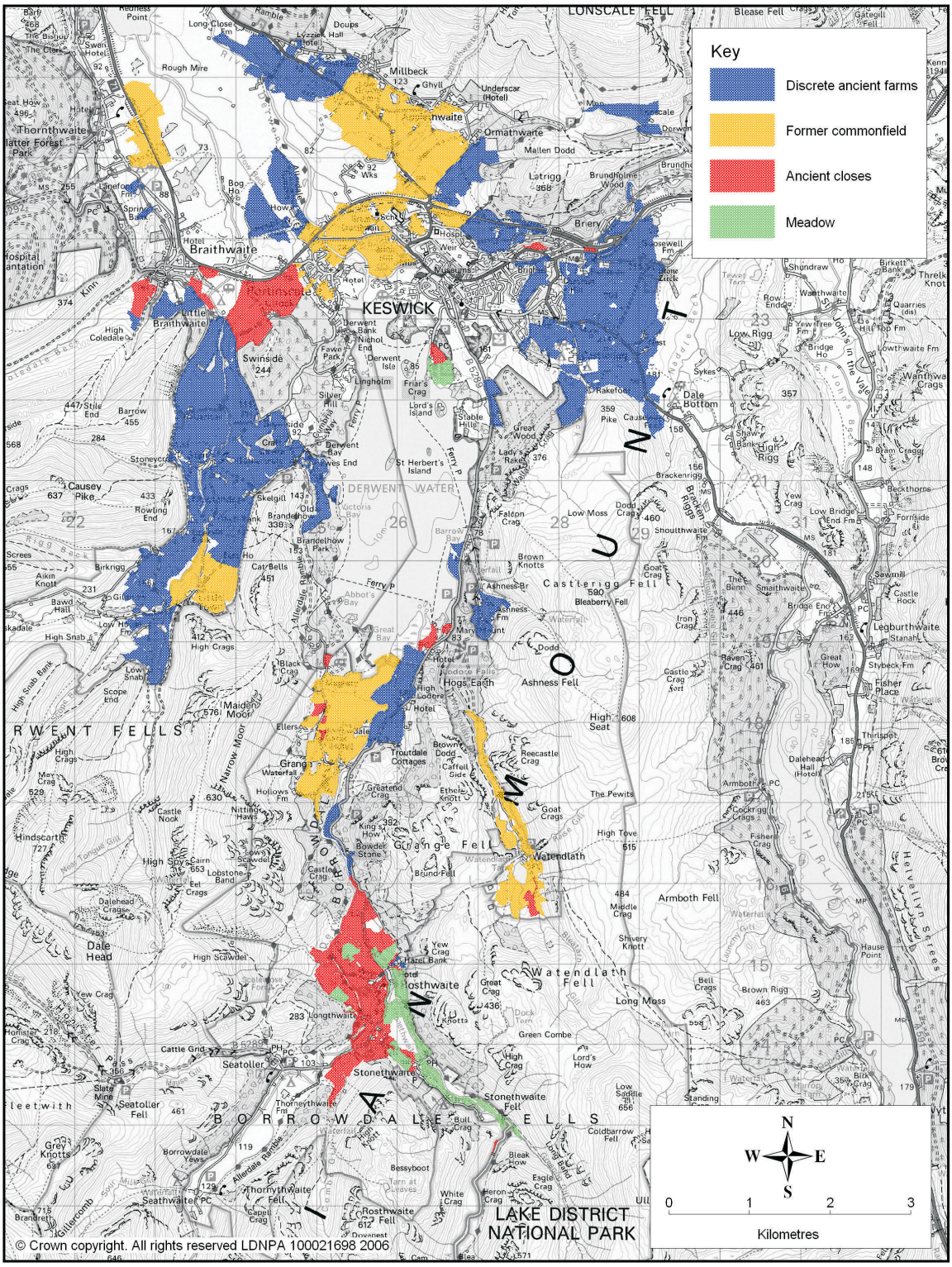

Figure 87. Ancient closes, discrete ancient farms, open fields and meadows which are indicative of early farming. The steep slopes around Derwentwater result in a distinctive field pattern resulting in only a few farms close to the waters edge. Only in the landscape around Rosthwaite to the south are the field patterns more typical of other Lakeland fells. The remaining farms cluster in the open landscape around Keswick and the valley to the west running from Braithwaite to Snab

Spectacular and rugged mountain scenery of open fells with an expansive character, and a mosaic of high craggy peaks and screes, heaths, mires, peatland, heather moorland, acid grassland, bracken and remote valleys with fast flowing streams and tarns

- A radiating pattern of deep glaciated valleys with extensive lakes, reed beds, carr woodlands, meadows and other lakeshore vegetation, rivers and semi-improved and improved grazing land
- Farmland and sheltered valley landscapes at lower altitudes with woodland, dry stone walls, hedgerows, copses, pollarded trees and scrub vegetation
- Traditional stone farm buildings in vernacular styles with slated roofs, circular chimneys and occasionally spinning galleries
- Extensive areas of ancient, semi-natural , broadleaved, mixed and conifer woodlands in Borrowdale, Buttermere, Ennerdale, Derwent Water, Duddon and the Thirlmere areas
- Relatively formal lakeshore landscapes of managed grassland with occasional boathouses and dwellings, and broadleaved woodland and individual trees in a parkland setting
- Ancient patterns of stone walls which subdivide lowland pasture and high fellsides with various densities, reflecting the management of land as inbye, intake and fell grazing
- Pressure for growth and development of the tourist industry
- Agriculture is predominately hill sheep farming.

Geology

The physical influences on this landscape are many[29] and explain the differences in the three very different landscapes types perceived around Derwentwater by Dr Brown. The Skiddaw group of rocks are the oldest rocks in the Lake District and consist of a succession of mudstones, siltstones and greywackes of Ordovician age, all of which have been altered or metamorphosed. Skiddaw Group scenery is characterised by steep, generally rather smooth-sided mountains of which Skiddaw itself is a fine example. Where erosion has marked, or where ridges intersect, striking crags occur.

The central part of the Lake District, between Keswick and Ambleside, coincides with the outcrop of the Borrowdale Volcanic Group. This is a complex sequence of volcanic rocks of Ordovician age, composed of lavas and volcanic sediments. All have suffered some alteration as a result of intrusion of a large underlying body of granite. The scenery of the volcanic rocks is some of the area's most spectacular with many rugged and precipitous crags, such as Castle Crag on Borrowdale. It is this combination of physical influences that results in the 'sublime' scenery so admired by the picturesque movement. Several of these volcanic sediments have metamorphosed to form the characteristic 'Lakeland Green Slate', the use of which in local buildings contributes to local distinctiveness. The remains of a large slate quarry have to be scrambled over to get to West's picturesque station IV.

These Lake District rocks host a variety of mineral veins including ores of copper, lead and zinc. Indeed the remains of lead mines can still be seen at Brandelhow[30] and north of Ellers Beck[31] and the presence of copper resulted in considerable mining activity around Derwentwater in Elizabethan times which in turn had a considerable impact on landscape character with the felling of trees for fuel.[32]

[29] Countryside Commission 1998, 33

[30] HER 12039
[31] HER 12137
[32] Bott 1994, 18

Glaciation has also been responsible for creating many of the landscape characteristics of the Lakeland fells area. The profile of the valleys was considerably modified by the scouring effects of valley glaciers producing the well known U-shaped cross section and over deepening of valley floors produced the rock basins occupied today by the lakes.

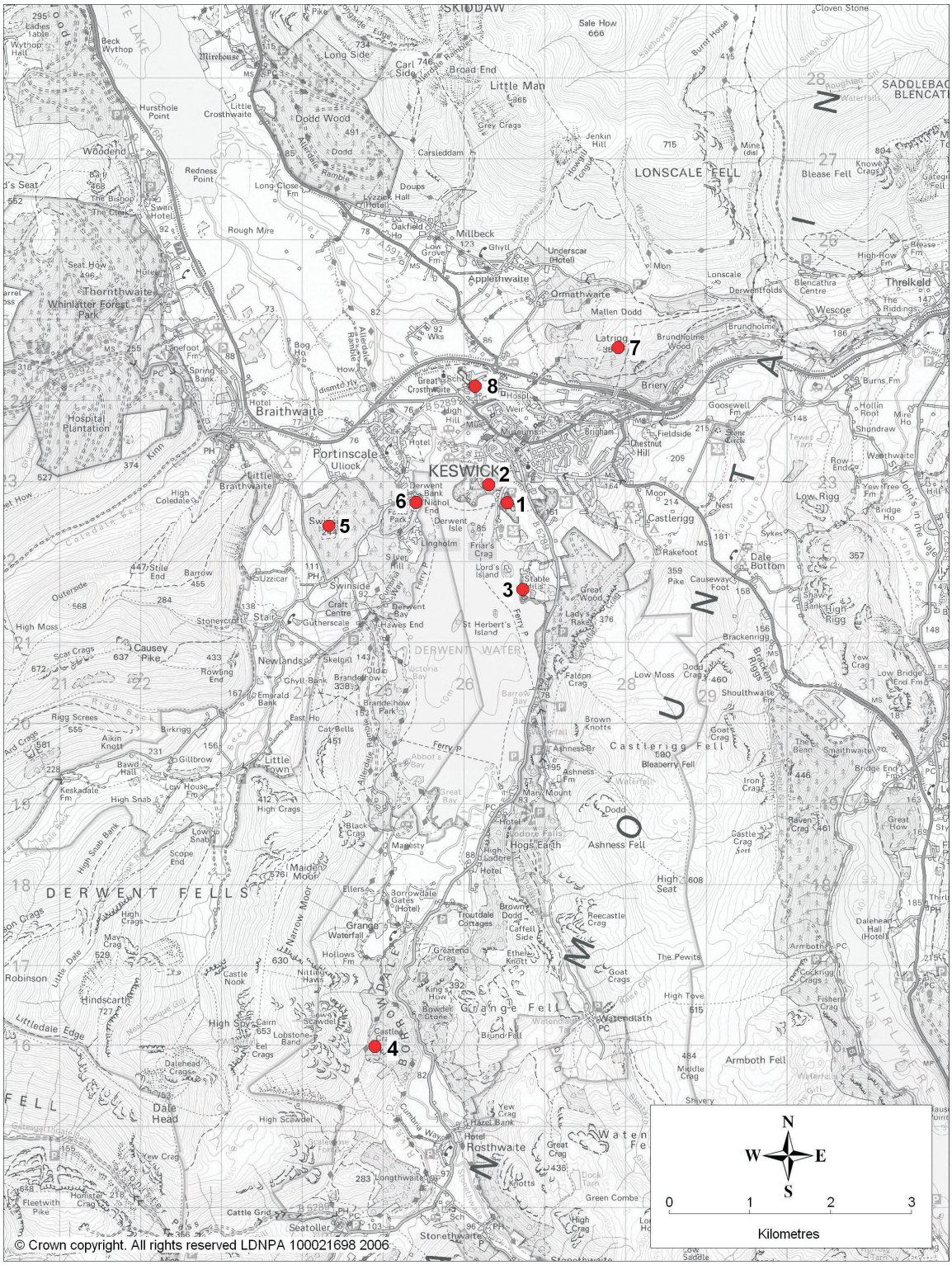

Figure 88. The sites of West's eight Picturesque viewing stations

West's Picturesque stations

Station I

West's Description

This station from Cockshut Hill (NY 26540 22740) was designed to provide a view of the mountainous amphitheatre surrounding the lake. At the time (1789), Cockshut Hill was covered in a "*motly mixture of young wood*" and the islands were "*adorned with wood, or cloathed with the sweetest verdure, that rise in the most pleasing forms above the watery plain*".[33] When Gray visited it in 1769 he wrote of the mound that it was covered with "*young trees, both sown and planted, oak, spruce, Scotch fir, &c. all which thrive wonderfully*". On a calm day the rocky summits of the hills were reflected by the surface of the water.

Perhaps its was from this station on Derwentwater that Beccabunga Veronica, in the comic opera The Lakers (1798) which satirized the cult of the picturesque, reached for her Claude-glass,

> "*I must throw a Gilpin tint over these magic scenes of beauty. (Looks through the glass.) How gloomily glaring! Now the blue. (Pretends to shiver with cold.) How frigidly frozen! What illusions of vision! The effect is inexplicably interesting. The amphitheatrical perspective of the long landscape; the peeping points of the many coloured crags of the headlong mountains…are so many circumstances of imagery, which all together combine a picture, which for its sentimental beauty and assemblages of sublimity, I never exceeded in the warmest glow of my fancied descriptions*".[34]

The Station today

Historic Landscape Characterisation of Cockshut Hill confirms that there have been no or insignificant boundary changes on the hill since the publication

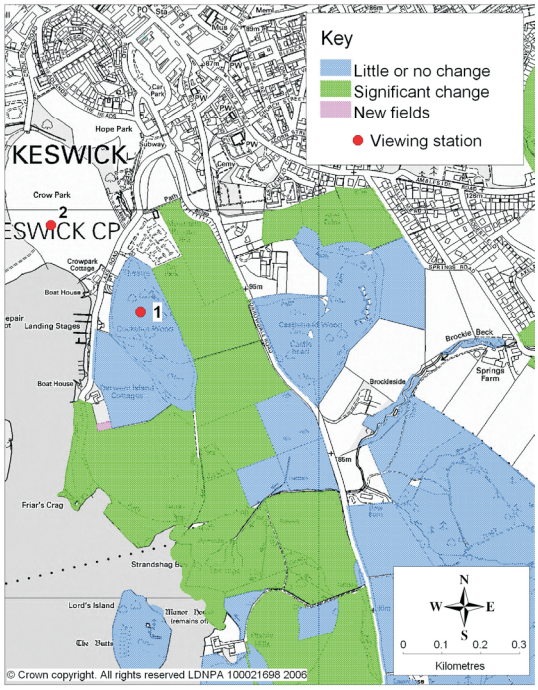

Figure 89: Boundary change near Cockshutt Hill

of the 1st edition OS map in the 1860s and even today Cockshut Hill is still surprisingly covered in a "*motly mixture of young wood*" but the views are now obscured by tree growth (beech, sycamore, holly, Corsican pine and oak). The land use type on the station site itself has been correctly identified as ancient woodland, although the present day trees appear to be replacements of those that West saw. The land to the east and south of the hill has undergone some significant boundary changes with the creation of some planned enclosures to the east of Cockshut Hill, the creation of a road from the town centre car park and the construction of an additional car park on Lake Road. These changes do not affect the views from the Station. Land to the south of the station has been identified as ancient enclosures. The HLC map below shows quite clearly that planned and parliamentary enclosure concentrated around the west of this station and very little occurred elsewhere in the Derwentwater area.

Public access to the hill is signed from Lake Lane and around the base of the hill, but an approach to the summit where West would have stood with his picturesque followers is not formally

[33] West 1789, 87
[34] Taken from Talbot and Whiteman 2004, 55

signed nor does the public right of way lead to the original viewing point. Some footpath erosion would suggest however that a few visitors still scramble to the top. On the summit is an area of bedrock and surely this must have been the place upon which West and Gray stood? No longer are the views of the islands possible, but with a small amount of woodland thinning and lopping and a formal access route to the top of Cockshut Hill, this place could be returned to its eighteenth century picturesque glory.

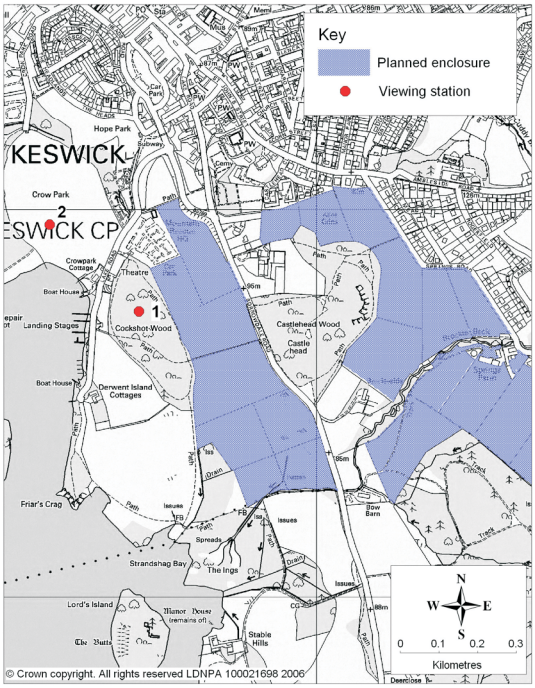

Figure 90: Planned enclosure was plotted only around Cockshut Hill and Keswick, although this is probably an under representation of its original extent, as some probably lay in the area of Keswick's modern urban expansion

Plate 98: The views from Cockshut Hill are now obscured by tree growth (© Archaeo-Environment Ltd)

Station 1 Summary recommendation

The National Trust could consider a permissive footpath to the summit and the clearance or lopping of some trees to restore the views of the lake.

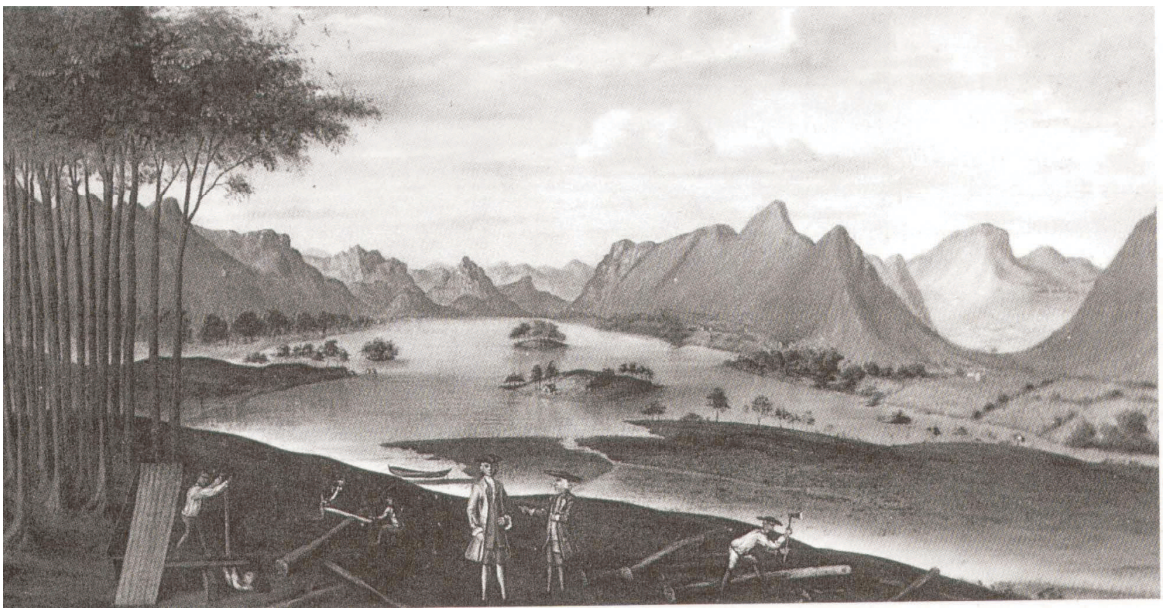

Plate 99: The sale of oaks at Crow Park. The picture was commissioned by the Speddings of Whitehaven who purchased the timber. The spindly trees bear little relation to the sturdy oaks recorded elsewhere. (Picture from Bott 1994, 39)

Station II

West's Description

This station was located at Crow-park (NY 26350 23040) and at the time of West's first visit had recently undergone a substantial change of character from a gentle eminence crowned by a grove of oaks "*of immemorial growth*" (see Bellers painting below plate 99) to a "*shadeless pasture*" when West wrote his Guide. This station had already been identified by Gray who preferred it to Cockshut Hill due to its proximity to the Lake. When Gray visited in 1767 the only remnants of the woodland on the hill were large tree roots and this would correspond with Thomas Smith's painting from this spot, produced sometime between 1752-61 (see plate 100). However it would be foolish to rely on these paintings as accurate representations of contemporary landscape character, but rather an accurate representation of how the artists felt that the picturesque landscape should look like.

This site had in fact been referred to in a much earlier account by Thomas Denton dating to between 1687-1680,[35] "*By Derwentwater side there grows the loveliest grove of large oak trees, all of an equall hight and bigness, each tree being worth 5li at the least; the whole wood being worth a 1,000li.*" The trees were sold by Greenwich Hospital in 1749 and later, Mr Scott a local farmer dug out the remaining roots and ploughed the land, "*starting at the bottom of the rise and cutting a single ridge and furrow in a spiral*",[36] West would not have known that the site was subsequently used as a race course and for the Cumberland Games in the eighteenth century,[37] It was also the starting point for a number of regattas started by Pocklington in 1781, where it provided a natural grandstand,[38] So in addition to being used for pasture, the site also had a historical role in local cultural activities, not least for the young local boys in 1740 who could swing from tree to tree like squirrels,[39]

[35] Winchester 2003b, 128
[36] Bott 1994, 37
[37] Winter 1991, chapter 6
[38] Bott 1994, 55
[39] Bott 1994, 37

Plate 100: 'A View of Derwentwater, towards Borrodale' by William Bellers…October 10 1752. This is the earliest print of British mountain scenery to adopt the picturesque conventions derived from seventeenth-century landscape painters such as Claude, Salvator and Poussin. This post dates the removal of the trees which were felled in the 1740s. Compare to today's view and that of 1752-61 by Smith – Plates 101 and 100 respectively

Plate 101: 'A view of Darwentwater &c. from Crow-Park' by Thomas Smith of Derby, 1761. Allowing for the picturesque manipulation of the elements in the scene, the islands on the lake and fells to the west (right) appear to be much less wooded than today and the stumps of trees can still be seen in the foreground as noted by Gray. There is certainly less vegetation on the station itself than seen in 1752 and no evidence of the later grubbing up and ploughing (see plate 98 above)

Plate 102: View south from Station II. Compare to the 1752 view depicted by Bellers and the 1761 view by Smith – see plates 99 and 100 above

Crow Park today

Today the "*gentle eminence*" still consists of a "*shadeless pasture*", although it is now surrounded by recreational land and bounded by railings more typical of an urban park. The trees were clearly never replaced and it remained open pasture on both the 1st (1867, 1:10,560) and 2nd edition (1898-9, 1:10,560) OS maps. Due to the proximity of recreational land, Crow Park was allocated a recreational use by the HLC programme before fieldwork, but this was subsequently changed in the light of fieldwork to reflect its current use as pasture. The HLC methodology cannot reflect the more complex series of changes which have taken place here in the last 300 years.

The station today affords fine views to what is still essentially an eighteenth century picturesque landscape and the pasture continues to be used to admire the wooded islands and rocky jaws of Castle Crag. West would have been pleased to note the replanted woodlands on the west side of the Lake at Foe Crag (also Stations V and VI) which had so recently been felled in the eighteenth century. HLC correctly identified this area as having changed considerably since the publication of the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map when it was open land, but it was not able to place this in a longer historic context of having lost its woodland in the eighteenth century and then being replaced in the nineteenth century. There is very little farming land here; instead the picturesque qualities were sought in the Lake, the sublime nature of Castle Crag and the wild fells. The islands are considerably more wooded than they were in the eighteenth century and the buildings on them are no longer visible from this station. The views have altered to the north with the expansion of Keswick and the construction of Victorian villas, but Crow Park was selected for its views of the Lake and beyond rather than the town.

Station II Summary Recommendation

None