

## **Building amenity in areas of non-outstanding natural beauty in the southern Pennines**

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In *New Lives, New Landscapes*, Nan Fairbrother considered the impact of energy and communications infrastructure on upland landscapes, including sites for defence, high-voltage electricity pylons, and telecommunications masts:

We may not welcome such structures, but there seems little chance of avoiding them; what is essential is to prevent them becoming nuclei for the spread of other development and to remove or otherwise screen the surrounding clutter they engender. To keep them in fact remote non-human presences in the large-scale upland landscape.<sup>1</sup>

Sylvia Crowe's *The Landscape of Power*, published in 1958, considered that the spread of energy infrastructure as the defining feature of the post-war British countryside.<sup>2</sup> In 1970, Fairbrother posed a central conundrum of landscape management: how should modernising technology and economy accommodate public concerns about the impact of built infrastructure on the British countryside? The modernist response was proportion: as Fairbrother noted here, the size of pylons and masts needed to reflect the 'large-scale' lines of the landscape. The views of modernist planners and landscape architects converged with countryside preservationists in their preference for ordering and scale over the intrusion of urban 'clutter' into rural scenery. The

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<sup>1</sup> Nan Fairbrother, *New Lives, New Landscapes* (Architectural Press, London, 1970), p. 133.

<sup>2</sup> Sylvia Crowe, *The Landscape of Power* (Architectural Press, London, 1958).

state drive for reconstruction and modernisation served the countryside preservation movement with several challenges, not least the expansion and intensification of such infrastructure.

This chapter examines debates between preservationists, landscape architects and utility providers about the meaning of amenity and landscape change in upland England, specifically in the Pennine moorland of south-east Lancashire and the West Riding of Yorkshire. With the establishment of National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty as part of the post-war national socially democratic settlement, countryside preservation was focused on landscapes classed for their aesthetic value, as unspoilt areas worth saving for the nation. As we will see, it often excluded areas that were not regarded as ‘naturally beautiful’. Preservationist discourse about rural infrastructure was not unified, and the fault lines could be seen along the boundaries of the National Parks. This chapter looks beyond the chronologies of twentieth-century modernism to consider the earlier large-scale construction of reservoirs and canals in the rural landscape. It then charts three interventions raised by preservationists in the region, with evidence derived from the public local inquiries engendered by their challenges.<sup>3</sup> The controversies took place in the era of technological modernisation and nationalisation of utilities: first, the expansion of military requisitioning of moorland; second, the construction of networks for high-voltage electricity and television communications; and thirdly the contested route of the Pennine Way long distance trail. These landscape interventions exacerbated tensions between

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<sup>3</sup> The Museum of English Rural Life, University of Reading (MERL), SR CPRE C/1, Council for the Preservation of Rural England (CPRE) archives; Lancashire County Record Office (LCRO), Lancashire branch of the CPRE records; Parliamentary Archives, FCP, Forests and Commons Preservation Society records; The National Archives (TNA), POWE, Ministry of Fuel and Power records.

national and statutory definitions of amenity, within the preservationist movement between local and central committees, and between northern and southern interests. The conclusions of the debates ultimately rested on different interests' interpretations of amenity value and the impact of large-scale infrastructure for local residents.

### **Rural modernisms**

Rural modernism was shaped by the countryside preservation movements' negotiation with utility companies and local authorities over the siting of regional infrastructure projects. The regional bounds of these contests are central to this narrative. Denis Cosgrove, Simon Rycroft and Barbara Roscoe's study of the construction of Ladybower Reservoir in the Peak District in 1945 and Rutland Water in the 1970s is a starting point. They argue that, rather than a homogenous national Englishness, landscape design 'varied together with attitudes to environmental access and conservancy according to the "reading" of the different regional landscape types'.<sup>4</sup> Matthew Kelly's examination of landscape change in Dartmoor National Park in Devon similarly underlines the key role of preservationist bodies in defending a special regional landscape and molding the incursions of new infrastructure as well as the excesses of

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<sup>4</sup> Denis Cosgrove, Barbara Roscoe and Simon Rycroft, 'Landscape and Identity at Ladybower Reservoir', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 21: 3 (1996), 537; David Matless, 'Regional Surveys and Local Knowledges: the Geographical Imagination in Britain, 1918-39', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 17: 4 (1992), 464-80.

requisitioning of the moorland by utility companies and the military.<sup>5</sup> The Ladybower scheme demonstrated the postwar Labour government's technocratic-led reconstruction effort that characterises much of rural modernist infrastructure built in this period, involving large-scale facilities for urban utilities including water and electricity to the masses by harnessing the power of nature and its ecosystems services on a national scale. But these impulses were not new. They formed part of a much longer schema of modernisation. Victorian and Edwardian engineers and city fathers thought of themselves as modern, pushing forward civilisation through municipal projects. Modernist initiatives following the Second World War differed in that they were instigated by a socialistic and state-centred government programme of redevelopment, replacing the more speculative and laissez-faire private sector initiatives that local councils had adopted at the end of the nineteenth century. But the outcomes were, in many respects, aesthetically and technocratically, rooted in the earlier age.

There were other precedents of mass infrastructure in the uplands. In the 1870s, the controversy over Manchester Corporation's construction of Thirlmere reservoir in Cumberland was arguably the prototype for later environmental confrontations over the building of mass infrastructure. Harriet Ritvo notes the 'almost routine' level of contestation over large scale public works projects undertaken by municipal authorities in the late nineteenth century, not least other reservoir projects and railway expansion. What the Thirlmere case did in particular was to promote the idea of a pristine Lake District as a landscape antithesis to artificial reservoirs, even though it was widely accepted that the region was already scarred with quarries and mines and

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<sup>5</sup> Matthew Kelly, *Quartz and Feldspar: Dartmoor: a British Landscape in Modern Times* (Jonathan Cape, London, 2015).

altered by commercial forestry.<sup>6</sup> And as with the later National Trust and National Park designations, the Thirlmere case entrenched a preservationist ideal of a national landscape, that had to be defended against compulsory purchase by commercial or non-local interests against not merely local inhabitants but for the whole public who would use the landscape as an amenity and view it as a visual amenity.<sup>7</sup> The construction of Ladybower reservoir in 1945 should therefore be understood as a continuation of ‘the later Victorian vision of human conquest of nature’, as begun by the municipal authorities at Thirlmere and other reservoir and dam building projects.<sup>8</sup>

Although the preservationists sought to depict the southern Pennine moors as wilderness, in which the urban had intruded by quarrying and mines in the substructure, and textile mills on its waterways and valleys, they did so by conveniently glossing over other industrial constructions in the moorland landscape. Blackstone Edge is an isolated outcrop of millstone grit on the Lancashire-Yorkshire border near Rochdale. The landscape had been altered with major communications networks long before the erection of electricity pylons and other features of post-war energy infrastructure. The Rochdale Canal Act was passed in 1794, enabling a new, extensive and completely artificial supply system.<sup>9</sup> There were twenty miles of feeder channels, built using local gritstone, linking a series of reservoirs along the moors. The early nineteenth-

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<sup>6</sup> Harriet Ritvo, ‘Manchester v. Thirlmere and the Construction of the Victorian Environment’, *Victorian Studies*, 49: 3 (2007), 463.

<sup>7</sup> Ritvo, ‘Manchester v Thirlmere’, 457; Harriet Ritvo, *The Dawn of Green: Manchester, Thirlmere and Modern Environmentalism* (University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 2010); Kelly, *Quartz and Feldspar*, p. 278.

<sup>8</sup> Cosgrove, Roscoe and Rycroft, ‘Landscape and Identity’, 537.

<sup>9</sup> Manchester Archives, MISC Papers/5 (32652)/59, Ralph Shuttleworth papers, 1797.

century maintenance track alongside the feeder channel linking Blackstone Edge to Light Hazzles reservoirs became part of the Pennine Way in 1965.<sup>10</sup> Hollingworth Lake, constructed on the valley shelf in 1797, soon became a leisure resort for the local working classes in the 19th century. It is this designation as a public amenity that, as we will see, also fed into later debates about the value of the landscape.

Defining landscape amenity value in areas like the southern Pennines involved a distinction between aesthetic norms of ‘natural beauty’ and the more pragmatic defence of such areas as public amenities. Ecology and nature conservation were late to the decision-making process. This is not to say that naturalists and artists in the southern Pennines had a completely different view of ‘natural beauty’ or ecology. The political radical Samuel Bamford published *Walks in South Lancashire* in 1844, in which he nostalgically depicted the picturesque elements of the rapidly vanishing footpaths, flora and fauna of his local environment.<sup>11</sup> But the association between bare moorland and ‘wilderness’ with public access was also celebrated as the campaign to save commons and footpaths from enclosure grew apace during the nineteenth century.<sup>12</sup> Wilderness was appreciated both from afar in landscape painting and from within through literary culture (Emily Bronte’s *Wuthering Heights* was published in 1847). Various groups, from nonconformist religious sects and the Chartist democratic movement holding mass rallies

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<sup>10</sup> Keith Parry, *TransPennine Heritage: Hills, People and Transport* (David and Charles, Newton Abbot, 1981), pp. 62-69.

<sup>11</sup> Samuel Bamford, *Walks in South Lancashire and on its Borders* (Manchester, 1844), [https://minorvictorianwriters.org.uk/bamford/b\\_walks.htm](https://minorvictorianwriters.org.uk/bamford/b_walks.htm)

<sup>12</sup> Wendy Darby, *Landscape and Identity: Geographies of Nation and Class in England* (Berg, Oxford, 2000), p. 130.

on the moors, to pedestrianism and fell runners and Clarion cyclists, cemented an association between the Pennines and ideas about the working class being able to escape the problems of urban industrial life.<sup>13</sup> Melanie Tebbutt has shown how Derbyshire ramblers around the turn of the century promoted the wildness of the Dark Peak to prove a sense of masculinity in an era of social and imperial crisis.<sup>14</sup> Ben Anderson argues that the Manchester Ramblers' Federation employed the rhetoric of freedom in the fells to regulate and order urban users of the countryside.<sup>15</sup> But, wilderness was also associated with poverty. As Paul Readman suggests, by the later nineteenth century, the aesthetic concern with upland moorland scenery in art and literature increasingly reflected a middle-class preoccupation with investigating social problems. 'Dreary' landscapes provided 'appropriate settings for depictions of hardships of rural life and labour at a time of agricultural depression'.<sup>16</sup>

In the 1940s, 'wildness' and wilderness became central characteristics upon which natural landscape value was categorised. Discourses of national landscapes in the 1920s and 1930s were based on the preservationists' desire to preserve a variety of geographical features.

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<sup>13</sup> Katrina Navickas, 'Moors, Fields and Popular Protest in South Lancashire and the West Riding of Yorkshire, 1800–1848', *Northern History*, 46: 1 (2009), 93-111.

<sup>14</sup> Melanie Tebbutt, 'Rambling and Manly Identity in Derbyshire's Dark Peak, 1880s-1920s', *Historical Journal*, 49 (2006), 1125-53.

<sup>15</sup> Ben Anderson, 'A Liberal Countryside? The Manchester Ramblers' Federation and the "Social Readjustment" of Urban Citizens, 1929–1936', *Urban History*, 38: 1 (2011), 81-102.

<sup>16</sup> Readman, *Storied Ground*, pp. 54-5; Howard Rodee, 'The "Dreary Landscape" as a Background for Scenes of Rural Poverty in Victorian Paintings', *Art Journal*, 36: 4 (1977), 307-313.

But ecologists and writers in the 1940s promoted the value of wildness and natural ecology of uncultivated uplands, notably Arthur Tansley, in his 1945 book *Our Heritage of Wild Nature*. He noted in the case of upland hill country unsuited to arable farming that it was ‘unlikely that all the areas which should be protected from defacement and exploitation will be covered and the scheme of National Parks should be supplemented by a number of Scheduled Areas’. Tansley was appointed to the government’s Wildlife Conservation Special Committee in 1945, which made the case for National Nature Reserves. He became the first chairman of the Nature Conservancy in 1952.<sup>17</sup> The mass trespass on Kinder Scout in 1932 had also raised the profile of the issue of public access to grouse moors and mountains, and the unsatisfactory provisions of the 1939 Access to Mountains Act were ameliorated by the 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act. Yet the focus on these specific uplands therefore resulted in the exclusion of lowland and southern landscapes such as the South Downs in Sussex and the Norfolk Broads from the Act, as they were regarded as too cultivated or altered by human intervention (despite the long history of farming and extraction in the Lake District).<sup>18</sup> This shift to protection of ‘wild’ uplands made the lack of protection for the southern and western Pennines even more frustrating for local preservationists, as in their view, expressed at all the public inquiries, areas

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<sup>17</sup> Arthur George Tansley, *Our Heritage of Wild Nature* (1945; Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2013 edn), p. 50; Peter G. Ayres, *Shaping Ecology: the Life of Arthur Tansley* (Wiley, London, 2012), p. 9.

<sup>18</sup> Cosgrove, Rycroft and Roscoe, ‘Landscape and Identity’, 542; Gordon Cherry and A. W. Rogers, *Rural Change and Planning: England and Wales in the Twentieth Century* (Taylor and Francis, London, 2003),

such as Blackstone Edge and Belmont Moor were clearly made of the same landscape as those of the nearby Peak District moorland.

The southern and western Pennines were initially considered as one of thirty regional reserves proposed by John Dower at the Standing Committee on National Parks, in 1943. Dower did not solely advocate aesthetic beauty over everyday amenity for local residents. In a lecture he gave in July 1939 to the Lancashire branch of the CPRE, Dower considered preservation needs in what he termed the ‘ordinary’ countryside that characterised much of the landscapes outside the ‘extraordinary’ and ‘wilder’ areas he sought to designate as National Parks.<sup>19</sup> Kelly notes how the ‘wilderness’ attributed to National Parks was not drawn from their North American precedents of pristine nature unpeopled (by settler-colonists), but rather were conceived as heritage or cultural landscapes.<sup>20</sup> The resulting Dower Report of 1945 termed the area of moorland bordering what became the Peak District National Park, as ‘the Industrial Pennines’. This term classified the landscape in relation to the textile producing towns and villages in the Irwell, Ribble, and Calder valleys below the moors. During the nationalising, modernising, and centralising impulses of the post-war Atlee government, however, Dower’s holistic aims for the English and Welsh countryside were subsumed by other economic and agricultural imperatives.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> John Sheail, ‘John Dower, National Parks and Town and Country Planning in Britain’, *Planning Perspectives*, 10 (1995), 12.

<sup>20</sup> Kelly, *Quartz and Feldspar*, p. 220.

<sup>21</sup> David Wilkinson, *Fight for It Now: John Dower and the Struggle for National Parks in Britain* (Signal Books, London, 2019), p. 207; Matthew Kelly, ‘Conventional Thinking and the Fragile Birth of the Nature State in Postwar Britain’, in Wilko Graf von Hardenberg, Matthew

The planning and designation process for areas outside the new National Parks were driven by interests both inside and outside the new government, not least the ministries of Defence, Housing and Local Government, and Agriculture, the Forestry Commission, and the newly nationalised water and electricity companies.

Fifty-two smaller Conservation Areas were then proposed in 1946, but by 1947, the Hobhouse report on National Parks narrowed down the list of areas to be designated. The plans eventually resulted in a smaller number of AONB established in 1951.<sup>22</sup> Even these AONB, as Margaret Anderson has pointed out, were less broadly supported than the ten National Parks that formed the backbone of the 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act, and were regarded merely as designations for the county council planning authorities to manage as amenity spaces.<sup>23</sup> Dower concluded that not all the ‘relatively wild’ areas were suitable for designation as they were ‘not beautiful enough, such as the industrial Pennines, or were used for quarrying, military use, forestry or ‘other purposes which cannot be successfully combined with

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Kelly, Claudia Leal and Emily Wakild, eds, *The Nature State: Rethinking the History of Conservation* (Routledge, Abingdon, 2017), p. 116.

<sup>22</sup> HMSO, *Report of the National Parks Commission, England and Wales*, July 1947, pp. 51-2; Wilkinson, *Fight for It Now*, p. 119.

<sup>23</sup> Margaret Anderson, ‘Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the 1949 National Parks Act’, *The Town Planning Review*, 61: 3 (1990), 313, 316.

National Park requirements'.<sup>24</sup> So the southern and west Pennines outside the boundaries of the Peak District National Park were left outside any national designation of protection.<sup>25</sup>

The term 'Industrial Pennines' was a contested designation that continued to be a bone of contention for the preservation and amenity bodies throughout the rest of the twentieth century. Much of the internal conflict involved questions of authority and agency in dealing with the legacy of nineteenth-century industrialisation in an era of firstly technological modernisation, and then de-industrialisation. As Fairbrother and other critical commentators recognised, local authorities and residents faced the problems of a post-industrial economy and of managing the legacies of industrial, fossil fuel, and infrastructural infrastructure on areas with damaged ecologies. The (post) industrial Pennines reveal tensions and divisions within different interest groups.

The debates — and the archives — were dominated by the two secretaries of the Lancashire and the Sheffield and Peak District branches of the CPRE. Philip Barnes of the Lancashire branch was a veteran Sheffield mass trespasser.<sup>26</sup> His counterparts in south Yorkshire

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<sup>24</sup> Michael Dower, 'AONB – the formative years, 1945 to 1988' (talk at NAAONB Conference July 2006), transcript, p. 1,

[https://landscapesforlife.org.uk/application/files/7615/8928/8605/Dower. M -  
Report to the NAAONB Conference 2006.pdf](https://landscapesforlife.org.uk/application/files/7615/8928/8605/Dower_M_-_Report_to_the_NAAONB_Conference_2006.pdf)

<sup>25</sup> Karl Spracklen, 'Millstone Grit; Blackstone Edge: Literary and Heritage Tourism in the South Pennines', in Glenn Hooper, ed., *Heritage and Tourism in Britain and Ireland* (Palgrave Macmillan, London, 2017), p. 73.

<sup>26</sup> David Hey, 'Kinder Scout and the Legend of the Mass Trespass', *Agricultural History Review*, 59: 2 (2011), 214.

were Lieutenant Colonel Gerald Haythornthwaite and his wife Ethel. Colonel Haythornthwaite was an architect, planning consultant, and national president of the Ramblers' Association. Ethel Haythornthwaite was the only woman to sit on the Hobhouse Committee on National Parks in 1945-6.<sup>27</sup> These branches of the CPRE and its affiliated groups clearly saw themselves as different from the southern branches. They were more defensive of working-class participation in the landscape and its activities, and often came into conflict with the central executive committee because of their ideas of what the rural landscape was and how amenity should be both defined and defended. Doubts had been raised both at the time by electricity and water boards, and more recently by historians, about the extent to which preservationist groups were representative of public opinion. Arguably — and Barnes and the Haythornthwaites made this defence at the various public inquiries — their branches of the CPRE, through their federated structure, represented the wide range of working-class memberships involved in rambling, mountaineering, cycling, and naturalist clubs, and co-operative holiday fellowships, more so than the more middle-class concerns of the central executives and aristocratic patrons.<sup>28</sup>

A statutory and administrative separation was enforced between preservation for amenity and for nature between the National Parks Commission and the Nature Conservancy also impacted on the ability of northern preservationists to make the case for protection. The concept of 'natural beauty' in the National Parks Act and in the designation of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty associated the aesthetics of preservation with particular types of landscape. By excluding the 'Industrial Pennines' from the preservation areas, the result of the National Parks

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<sup>27</sup> See *Sheffield Telegraph*, 1 November 1952, for a profile of the Haythornthwaites; Wilkinson, *Fight for It Now*, p. 171.

<sup>28</sup> TNA, POWE 14/1886, public inquiry, Barnsley, Oct. 1963, report.

Act, combined with the rationalisation of planning authorities in the 1947 Town and Country Planning Act, was to keep planning relating to preservation on a regional level. This was not necessarily a bad outcome, as it offered the potential for local knowledge to direct local policy. Zoning was mandated by regional plans developed by the county or county borough planning authorities. But often the more pressing priorities of developing large estates of residential housing took precedence over protecting green space or ameliorating post-industrial sites. And by the 1960s, the mid-century technocratic and somewhat abstract visions of land utilisation surveys and regional plans were becoming evident as out-dated and not workable in a changing economy.<sup>29</sup>

### Wirescapes

The Electricity Act 1957 was the first major piece of legislation to include an amenity clause, section 37, which mandated electricity companies to ‘take into account any effect which the proposals would have on the natural beauty of the countryside or on any such flora, fauna, features, buildings or objects’.<sup>30</sup> The insertion of the clause gave a national statutory effect for measures that had already been implemented in the Highlands and North Wales in the acts. The amenity clause was then considered in further legislation regarding coal and water from 1958 to

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<sup>29</sup> Simon Rycroft and Denis Cosgrove, ‘Mapping the Modern Nation: Dudley Stamp and the Land Utilisation Survey’, *History Workshop Journal*, 40: 1 (1995), 102.

<sup>30</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukgpa/Eliz2/5-6/48/enacted>

1963, and finally became a key element of the Countryside acts of 1967 and 1968.<sup>31</sup> Again the legislation cemented the association of aesthetic appreciation within amenity considerations. These tensions and parallel responsibilities were arguably still enshrined by the 1974 Sandford Report on National Parks policy, which established the Sandford Principle that ‘the preservation of natural beauty’ should take priority over the ‘promotion of public enjoyment’ in cases where public access might negatively affect conservation in National Parks.<sup>32</sup> Ecosystems services were essentially still separate issues for planners. While environmental and ecological concerns began to be appreciated in the later legislation, and perhaps more incrementally in regional planning, the experience of the preservationists in public inquiries illustrated the predominance of aesthetics over everyday use in amenity considerations in the implementation of infrastructure in the southern Pennines.

The construction of the Super Grid high-voltage electricity network posed bigger issues of scale than the initial National Grid erected in the 1930s. The National Parks Commission admitted that though overhead wires, pylons and transmitters would ‘seriously disfigure the landscape in areas of specially vulnerable beauty’, it recognised the huge extra cost in placing cabling underground and ‘the importance of economical electricity supply in National Parks as in

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<sup>31</sup> John Sheail, ‘The “Amenity” Clause: An Insight into Half a Century of Environmental Protection in the United Kingdom’, *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 17: 2 (1992), 152-165; John Sheail, ‘The Management of Wildlife and Amenity: a UK Post-War Perspective’, *Contemporary Record*, 7:1 (1993), 44-65.

<sup>32</sup> Kelly, ‘Conventional Thinking’, p. 128.

other rural areas will call for restraint in making such demands upon the industry'.<sup>33</sup> Preservation for public amenity, meaning access for leisure and recreation, was a debated definition, complicated by the multiplying layers of administrative and legal bodies responsible for areas of countryside.<sup>34</sup> In places outside the National Parks and AONB, by contrast, preservationists found it more difficult to argue for aesthetic appearance of the natural landscape as the key feature that would prevent the siting of infrastructure. At a debate at the Royal Society in 1959, Philip Barnes noted, 'I have never described a Super Grid pylon by itself as ugly: individually it may be a graceful thing. But again, what do we find in practice? ... all of different design, of different heights, of different spans ... Well, that may be the landscape of power, but it shows no respect for the beauty of England'.<sup>35</sup> The influence of Sylvia Crowe and the idea of the wirescape was clearly evident.

A process of negotiation between modernist requirements for function and preservationist concerns for aesthetic 'fit' with the landscape were at play. At Ladybower reservoir, the Sheffield and Peak District branch of the CPRE pushed for use of native gritstone, both crushed

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<sup>33</sup> HMSO, *Report of the National Parks Commission, England and Wales*, July 1947, paras 143-144; Rosemary Shirley, 'Pylons and Frozen Peas: the Women's Institute Goes Electric', in Paul Brassley, Jeremy Burchardt and Karen Sayer, eds, *Transforming the Countryside: the Electrification of Rural Britain* (Routledge, Abingdon, 2017), pp. 139-143.

<sup>34</sup> Katrina Navickas, 'Conflicts of Power, Landscape and Amenity in Debates over the British Super Grid in the 1950s', *Rural History*, 30: 1 (2019), 87-103.

<sup>35</sup> Christopher Hinton and William Holford, 'Preserving Amenities: Power Production and Transmission in the Countryside', *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts*, 108: 5043 (1960), pp. 205-6.

in the concrete for the viaducts, and cut and dressed for the control rooms and valve houses attached to the dam. The CPRE claimed that using local materials would achieve a ‘fitness of purpose’, which, Cosgrove et al argue, ‘signified a congruence between locality and form rather than a modern harmony of technique and function’.<sup>36</sup> Transmitter masts for police communications, radio, and now television, were also situated in the same areas. By functionality, they needed to be sited at the highest and unobstructed points of moorland. The BBC chose Holme Moss as the third site in its new public television transmitter network, 1700 feet above sea level on the moors above Huddersfield, West Riding of Yorkshire. Its transmitting range covered most of west Yorkshire, Lancashire and Cheshire. During its construction in 1949, the Sheffield and Peak District CPRE negotiated with the BBC to ensure that the base of the transmitter would be in a vernacular style, to ‘reduce the effect of the buildings upon their wild setting’, and should therefore be constructed in local stone, with dry laid walls, and a pitched roof. The BBC agreed, apart from retaining a pitched roof for technical reasons.<sup>37</sup> The publicity news reel produced by the BBC commented on how the locally quarried stone used for the exterior ‘tones it in with the soft colours of the moors’.<sup>38</sup> The base would always however be dwarfed by the 750 foot steel mast towering above it.<sup>39</sup> Similar negotiations were undertaken

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<sup>36</sup> Cosgrove, Roscoe and Rycroft, ‘Landscape and Identity’, 539-40.

<sup>37</sup> Annual Report, CPRE Sheffield and Peak District, 1950, p. 10.

<sup>38</sup> BBC online archive, 12 October 1951, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/archive/holme-moss-transmitter/z44drj6> (accessed 19 May 2021).

<sup>39</sup> See the front page of *The Radio Times*, 1456, 7-13 October 1951, <https://genome.ch.bbc.co.uk/page/e9e4e43177be442ba887975e4feec437> (accessed 19 May 2021).

with other companies building communications networks across the country in 1949-50. Writing to the Ministry of Works about a Post Office television relay station on Windy Hill, Bleakedgate Moor, Littleborough, south of Blackstone Edge (Figure 1), Philip Barnes was conciliatory and did not oppose the scheme. He took the example of his colleagues in the Sheffield branch in insisting nevertheless that the buildings should be built in stone to reflect the neighbouring farms and cottages.<sup>40</sup> The public popularity of the new erections should be noted. In July 1963, over a thousand people attended an open day at the Winter Hill transmitter (built by Independent Television in 1956) above Bolton, Lancashire.<sup>41</sup>

Transmitter masts fitted within the grand scale of the moorland environment because they were solitary. The new 400kV pylon network of the Super Grid constructed at the same time to modernise the existing 132kV National Grid erected in the 1930s, by contrast, was more problematic for preservationists. The electricity boards refused on economy grounds to run any cabling underground in sites outside National Parks.<sup>42</sup> The land use categorisations set out by the National Parks Act and regional plans intersected with the geographies laid out by modernising infrastructure, and created fault lines over what areas were designated of national importance. The preservationists accused the electricity board of having ‘escaped its obligations under planning laws because they were answerable only to Parliament and they had a close association with the Minister of Power who adjudicated on their proposals’.<sup>43</sup> But even within the terms of the National Parks Act, the NPC could only negotiate over the appearance of power stations

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<sup>40</sup> LCRO, CPRE archives, box 16, Barnes to Colquitt, 13 April 1950.

<sup>41</sup> *The Stage*, 20 August 1963.

<sup>42</sup> Shirley, ‘Pylons and Frozen Peas’, p. 143.

<sup>43</sup> TNA, POWE 14/1686, public inquiry, Barnsley, Oct. 1963, report, p. 19.

rather than object outright to their siting.<sup>44</sup> Matthew Kelly's study of the public inquiry into the siting of the BBC transmitter on North Hessary Tor on Dartmoor has shown a similar situation whereby preservationists rapidly became disillusioned with the seemingly toothless powers of National Park authorities.<sup>45</sup>

These conflicts were undercut with differences of class and geography. Tensions were evident not just between the electricity companies and the preservationists, but within the preservationist groups themselves, and indeed between centre and local branches of the main societies, notably within the CPRE. In September 1950, Barnes challenged the priorities laid out by Sir Herbert Griffin, general secretary of the CPRE and a National Parks commissioner. The central committee had issued their opposition to the Super Grid pylons crossing areas of what they termed national significance. Barnes retorted: 'At the end I think the word "national" should not be used. The interference is that only in areas of "national" landscape interest should cables be placed underground'. Barnes vociferously asserted that by focusing solely on National Parks, there would be an inevitable neglect of areas outside their remit, not least the western and southern Pennines:

Many of your Branches are not concerned with National Parks at all but are concerned with lovely country of regional or local importance. I have never believed that you can so define landscape values and if you do so you run into the grave danger of persuading the

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<sup>44</sup> See Christine Wall, 'Nuclear prospects': the Siting and Construction of Sizewell A Power Station 1957-1966', *Contemporary British History*, 33: 2 (2019), 1-28.

<sup>45</sup> Kelly, *Quartz and Feldspar*, p. 241.

official world to spend what little they will on “amenity” in a few areas only and allowing the great bulk of the countryside to go without any.<sup>46</sup>

In the consultations before the Super Grid public local inquiry at Oldham, Lancashire, in 1959, Barnes wrote to Griffin about his disappointment at ‘how extremely unhelpful the National Parks Commission can be when dealing with landscapes which, although in easy reach of millions of people, cannot be labelled of “national” importance’.<sup>47</sup> He reiterated the use value of amenity of the southern Pennines to industrial urban inhabitants, which he defended as just as or indeed more important ‘than the more famous places the majority will never see’, such as the Lake District or Mount Snowdon.

This thread of defining visual amenity and natural beauty continued into the 1960s. In 1963, at the public local inquiry at Barnsley into the section of the Super Grid that crossed from Stalybridge in Cheshire into the top of the Peak District at Thorpe Marsh, the Central Electricity Generating Board (CEGB) argued that only ‘transcendent’ landscapes could justify the cost of underground cabling over the erection of pylons. Their representatives insisted: ‘It is plainly not enough to justify the incurring of costs of this kind up and down the length and breadth of England that the landscape should merely be something pleasing or interesting or fine. It must be something of transcendent or surpassing value’. Speaking for the CPRE, Colonel Haythornthwaite was incensed that the CEGB had described the Pennine moorland as ‘bleak and grim’. The CEGB even questioned the visual amenity of the section of the Peak District that bordered the industrial districts at Stalybridge: ‘the Board argued that the northern part of the

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<sup>46</sup> LCRO, CPRE, box 16, Barnes to Griffin, 15 September 1950.

<sup>47</sup> MERL, SR CPRE C/1/62/90, Barnes to Griffin, 9 July 1959.

Park which this line would cross was grim and monotonous, quite different in quality from the dales in the south where the real beauty of the Park lay'.<sup>48</sup> Haythornthwaite stressed the need to maintain the areas as a place of adventure and wilderness. His defence directly cited Sir Christopher Hinton's 1959 lecture to the Royal Society, *Preserving Amenities*, and Sylvia Crowe's *Landscapes of Power*, on the difficulties of maintaining integrity in a mass mechanical infrastructure. In part, this was rhetorical flourish, using the chair of the CEGB and its landscape consultant to complicate the debate. But it also reflected his genuine concern for the impact on the rural environment in terms of scale and access. Haythornthwaite lamented: 'The overhead transmission line was a symbol of men's anxiety for security, comfort and convenience, not wanted where man wished to find his full stature in the presence of nature'. In arguing, ultimately unsuccessfully, for underground cabling, he pointed to the previous failures of the National Parks Commission to prevent landscape desecration, and the more effective resistance of the CPRE in negotiating with the government and corporations, notably with the BBC over the appearance of the Holme Moss television mast.<sup>49</sup>

Friction continued between the central executive of the CPRE and its northern branches. In several cases, they feared that Philip Barnes in particular was going directly against central policy in his statements to public inquiries on all kinds of landscape change, and in their publicity. One such case was in 1962, in relation to the public inquiry into the siting of a power station in Holme Pierrepont, Nottinghamshire. The massive increase in demand for power for industry and new housing encouraged the electricity boards to invest in developing a huge power

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<sup>48</sup> TNA, POWE 14/1686, Public Inquiry, Barnsley, Oct. 1963.

<sup>49</sup> TNA, POWE 14/1686, Public Inquiry, Barnsley, Oct. 1963, p. 20, citing Christopher Hinton, *Preserving Amenities* (CEGB, 1959), p. 7; Crowe, *Landscapes of Power*, pp. 20-21.

plant network integrated with nearby coal mines and the river Trent, that quickly became known as ‘Megawatt Valley’, producing a quarter of the UK’s power.<sup>50</sup> CPRE assistant secretary M. V. Osmond wrote to Barnes about comments in the Lancashire branch’s annual report that railed against the new power stations: ‘If the CPRE goes on record as opposing an application to which there are clearly no objections on rural amenity grounds whatever, it will make it almost impossible for us to oppose any coal fired power station in a rural setting ever again - or for that matter many other industrial undertakings’. It is evident that the central executive saw the urban base of the Lancashire branch in particular as a problem.<sup>51</sup> Barnes typically defended himself and the branch in his reply, arguing that CPRE branches in industrial areas ‘must think along broader lines than that of strict rural preservation’. Again he emphasised their wider definition of amenity: ‘ I am confident that the CPRE time and time again, has stressed “amenity” objections which are not “visual” objections - such as the likelihood of smells, noise and public safety’.<sup>52</sup> The divide over the meaning of amenity began with questions of aesthetic value, but fractured over whether an association dedicated to ‘rural England’ should include defending landscapes they regarded as too urban or industrial to have value for local (working-class) inhabitants.

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<sup>50</sup> Historic England, *20th Century Coal and Oil-Fired Power Generation: introduction to heritage assets* (Historic England, 2015), pp. 7-8, <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/iha-20thcentury-coal-oil-fired-electric-power-generation/heag056-electric-power-generation-iha/>

<sup>51</sup> MERL, SR CPRE C/1/34/18, Osmond to Barnes, 6 September 1962.

<sup>52</sup> MERL, SR CPRE C/1/34/18, Barnes to Osmond, 11 September 1962.

### Military requisitioning

Military requisitioning of land remained a significant issue after the Second World War. The Requisitioned Land and War Works Act 1945 allowed for Compulsory Purchase Orders for land deemed suitable for military service requirements, and its passage was contested by the preservation societies. In 1946, the armed services controlled nearly a million acres, but were calling for the acquisition of a further three million acres.<sup>53</sup> Although moves towards greater sensitivity to the landscape were considered in the establishment of the Nature Conservancy in 1949, as Paul Readman's chapter in this volume illustrates, the impact of military infrastructure and activity on the ecology and environment of such sites was intense and prolonged.<sup>54</sup> The CPRE were at the forefront of opposing further expansion of the military estate in new areas. At a joint conference with the Town and Country Planning Association in 1947, 'The Countryside Today and Tomorrow', the CPRE assistant secretary noted the tension in the proposals for military uses of areas in the proposed National Parks. By definition, these were 'extensive areas of relatively wild country' and were therefore better suited for the purpose than 'equally

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<sup>53</sup> David Evans, *History of Nature Conservation in Britain* (Routledge, London, 1992), p. 72.

<sup>54</sup> See Marianna Dudley, *An Environmental History of the UK Defence Estate* (Continuum, London, 2012); Marianna Dudley, 'Traces of Conflict: Environment and Eviction in British Military Training Areas, 1943 to Present', *Journal of War and Culture Studies*, 6: 2 (2013), 112-126; John Sheail, 'War and the Development of Nature Conservation in Britain', *Journal of Environmental Management*, 44:3 (1995), 267-83.

extensive areas of productive agricultural land'. Public inquiries had already been raised to consider proposals on Dartmoor and Ashdown Forest.<sup>55</sup>

Outside the National Parks, the issue was entangled in the control of large swathes of moorland by water companies for reservoirs and catchment areas, the continuing legacy of the nineteenth-century rural infrastructure servicing the industrial cities. In 1948, the Ministry of Defence proposed to requisition three thousand acres of moorland in the west Pennines near Bolton for a territorial training ground. The Army's justification for using the site was that the whole area had been used extensively by US troops during the war, including employing abandoned farmsteads for target practice.<sup>56</sup> The chosen site in the western Pennines was part of the catchment area of Liverpool Corporation's waterworks at the Anglezarke reservoir. It was also within sight of the line that would be proposed for the Super Grid over Belmont Hill, and near to Winter Hill, where the police and television transmitter towers were being erected at the same time. The preservationist bodies and local authorities' planning committees proposed an alternative site of Hailstorm Hill, 1580 acres in the Rossendale valley in east Lancashire, which was in the catchment area of Heywood and Middleton Water Board. A second alternative site

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<sup>55</sup> Gary Willis, 'An Arena of Glorious Work: the Protection of the Rural Landscape Against the Demands of Britain's Second World War Effort', *Rural History*, 29: 2 (2018), 261, 273-4; Kelly, *Quartz and Feldspar*, pp. 309-11. London Metropolitan Archives, CL/PK/1/46, CPRE and TCPA conference, 1947. Willis argues however that in participating in the 1946-7 Inter Departmental Committee on Service Land Requirements, the CPRE ended up ultimately in aiding the government and the Ministry of Defence in their requisitioning schemes. Nor did the CPRE challenge wholesale felling of woodland and open cast mining until late in the War (276).

<sup>56</sup> <http://www.lancashireatwar.co.uk/rivington-at-war/4594325800> (accessed 19 May 2021).

was located at the foothills of Blackstone Edge, part of the gathering grounds of Oldham and Rochdale Water Joint Board (Figure 2). The Lancashire branch of the CPRE opposed the plan for the sites at both Anglezarke and Blackstone Edge. They argued that the rifle shooting and tank manoeuvres would disturb the leisure facilities at Hollingworth Lake, which Philip Barnes described as ‘one of Lancashire’s most popular playgrounds, where the ordinary working folk of the nearby towns congregate at weekends’. Another objection feared that military vehicles would endanger the nearby ‘Roman Road’ (actually a seventeenth-century paved packhorse route) over the top of the moor, which the Council of British Archaeology had designated of specific interest.<sup>57</sup>

Much of the language surrounding the opposition sought to define the Pennine moorland as a place of both natural beauty and local amenity. All three moorlands were classified as commons with a general public right of access under section 193 of the 1925 Law of Property Act, as they lay within the boundaries of urban district councils. Barnes further pointed out with regard to Blackstone Edge that ‘all of the area lies within the boundary of the South Pennines Conservation Area recommended in the National Parks Report’ (although this was a rhetorical guise, given that the recommended area was not implemented).<sup>58</sup> A comparison of the three sites in a CPRE document of May 1949 exemplified their categorisations of types of natural beauty and amenity. Anglezarke Moor was classed as ‘of high scenic and amenity value being in a unique position in the heart of industrial Lancashire’. Hailstorm Hill was ‘not of high scenic or amenity value’, and ‘the natural contours have been spoiled to some extent by quarrying and the

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<sup>57</sup> LCRO, Lancashire CPRE annual report, 1950-1; *Manchester Evening News*, 9 September 1950.

<sup>58</sup> LCRO, Lancashire CPRE files, box 14, 1951, statement by Barnes, 10 March 1950.

scenery is certainly not of the same grandeur and popularity as on Anglezarke.<sup>59</sup> Blackstone Edge was classed as ‘more attractive than Hailstorm Hill’, and as stated, had high amenity as a leisure destination for local residents.<sup>60</sup>

A public local inquiry was held at Chorley in January 1951. The War Department and Ministry of Health advised that the Hailstorm Hill area was unsuitable owing to possible pollution of water supplies. Anglezarke Moor was chosen, and despite an appeal, was approved by the government as the site for the territorial army training ground and mortar range.<sup>61</sup> Throughout the debates, the question of amenity had been channelled to the potential impact on the main landowners’ ecosystems services, that is on the purity of the water in the gathering grounds of the water boards. The leisure and beauty definitions of amenity put forward by the preservationist groups were a secondary consideration in the decision. The debates differed from those related to National Parks areas because public access was intended for local (and predominantly working-class) residents of the industrial towns and villages, rather than considering these as ‘national’ landscapes visited by all. Any impact on the ecology of the moorland, other than pollution of the drinking supply, was also a secondary consideration. It would take the implementation of large-scale energy and communications infrastructure to alert planners to environmental amenity concerns, though again there was always a difficult negotiation over economic efficiency and the rights of private landowners. Yet it was not long until the military priorities began to change. Following a Defence White Paper in 1957, demilitarisation of some formerly requisitioned sites and the transformation of others to deal

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<sup>59</sup> LCRO, Lancashire CPRE annual report, 1947-8.

<sup>60</sup> LCRO, Lancashire CPRE files, box 14, 1951, report of May 1949.

<sup>61</sup> *Manchester Evening News*, 28 December 1951.

with the nuclear threat with new modernist installations, not least the ‘golf balls’ mendores on RAF Menwith Hill, north Yorkshire.<sup>62</sup>

### The Pennine Way

Proposals for the route of the Pennine Way, the first long distance National Trail, also stoked tensions within the preservationist movement, notably leading again to central executive committees seeking to rein in their local branches. The 250 mile route of the Pennine Way stretched from Edale in the Peak District along the Pennine ridge to the Yorkshire Dales and on through Northumberland to the Scottish border. Tom Stephenson lobbied for the proposals upon taking up the secretaryship of the Ramblers’ Association after the Second World War. The concept of the Pennine Way was approved in 1950 by Hugh Dalton, then Minister of Town and Country Planning and president of the Ramblers’ Association.<sup>63</sup> But the exact route was not yet fixed and it was not officially opened until 1965. Part of the reason for the delay was due to negotiations with water boards and electricity companies where the route passed through their gathering grounds and pylon wayleaves respectively.

In 1954, the waterworks committee of Manchester Corporation raised objections about the route going through gathering grounds between two of their reservoirs at Longdendale,

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<sup>62</sup> David Wood, ‘Territoriality and Identity at RAF Menwith Hill’, in Andrew Ballantyne, ed., *Architectures: Modernism and After* (Blackwell Publishing, Oxford, 2004), pp. 142-62.

<sup>63</sup> Tom Stephenson and Mike Harding, *Forbidden Land: The Struggle for Access to Mountain and Moorland* (Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1989), p. 70.

Cheshire, on the north-western edge of the Peak District. The reservoirs dated from the 1840s. Huddersfield Corporation similarly objected to the route crossing feeder streams to its reservoir at Digley, near Holmfirth in the West Riding of Yorkshire, construction of which was only just being completed in 1954. Both corporations claimed that the Pennine Way would ‘lead to the pollution of the reservoirs’, a claim that was strenuously denied by the Commons Open Spaces and Footpaths Society.<sup>64</sup> The Ramblers’ Association pointed out that the Longdendale Estate was ‘over 10,000 acres of fine moorland scenery which belong to the people of Manchester’, and therefore access should be granted.<sup>65</sup> Following public inquiries, the government rejected the corporations’ objections, and the route was confirmed.<sup>66</sup>

Dower’s report into the National Parks complained about ‘considerable interference - amounting in some instances to a virtually complete depopulation of the whole catchment area by prohibition of rambling, closing of footpaths and elimination of resident farming - where the water is surface gathered and relatively untreated’. He pointed to the inconsistencies of approach by the water companies and landowners who restricted public access, particularly in grouse shooting areas, in gathering grounds where the water was then fully treated, whereas in other prominent sites such as Thirlmere in the Lake District, access had never been an issue, despite

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<sup>64</sup> Parliamentary Archives, FCP 2/591-595, Williams to Boulger, 12 February 1954; *Manchester Guardian*, 22 January 1954; *Bradford Observer*, 20 May 1954, 19 July 1954; *Manchester Evening News*, 31 December 1954.

<sup>65</sup> MERL, SR CPRE, C/1/35/8, Ramblers’ Association statement, ‘Public Access to the Longdendale Moors’, 1954.

<sup>66</sup> *Halifax Evening Courier*, 19 July 1954.

the water being untreated.<sup>67</sup> The Institution of Water Engineers were more hesitant of widening the public amenity of their members' landholdings. In their 1963 report, 'Recreational Use of Waterworks', summarising the results of a survey of 73 local authority water engineers, they expressed cautious encouragement for expanding organised leisure activities on reservoirs, such as sailing clubs and fishing, but were much more hesitant about public access to gathering grounds due to concerns about water pollution, particularly on the moorlands of northern England.<sup>68</sup>

Another reason for the delay lay in the necessity for public local inquiries to be held over the route, which acted as magnets for opposition raised by members of the preservationist groups. The Haythornthwaites and Philip Barnes raised concerns about the section across Kinder Scout Plateau. Obviously Kinder Scout held totemic symbolic significance for the Right to Roam movement.<sup>69</sup> But Barnes and the Haythornthwaites feared that by designating a route as a national right of way, the landscape risked spoliation. They argued the way would have to be clearly signposted with new signs, and potentially the path would have to be improved with paving to make it more accessible for inexperienced hikers. Here lay the contradiction in the position of the local branches of the CPRE about the politics of access. Barnes tabled a motion at the Annual Council of the Ramblers' Association in April 1951 claiming that the Pennine Way was detrimental to the landscape of Kinder Scout. Tom Stephenson had to rein Barnes in, tabling

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<sup>67</sup> Wilkinson, *Fight for it Now*, p. 155; TNA, HLG 93/56, Rambling and Water Supply Catchment, 11 January 1945, paras 44-47.

<sup>68</sup> Institution of Water Engineers, *Final Report of the Council on the Recreational Use of Waterworks* (Institution of Water Engineers, London, 1963), p. 11.

<sup>69</sup> Hey, 'Kinder Scout', 199.

an amendment that removed most of the wording of the motion, including that the signs and the path would endanger, as Barnes put it, ‘one of the wettest, wildest and most primeval wildernesses in Britain’.<sup>70</sup> This was not the official position of the Ramblers’ Association executive.

The local branches’ opposition to the route did not reflect the position of the central CPRE, nor that of other amenity societies. The argument between Stephenson and Barnes took place publicly within the letters to the editor pages of the *Manchester Guardian*. It climaxed in a tense encounter between them at a conference arranged by the Haythornthwaites at Edale in September 1951.<sup>71</sup> Stephenson accused the local branches of hypocrisy as they had not raised opposition to the ‘serious desecration’ of the Hope Valley Cement Works built in the Peak District National Park (Barnes retorted ‘that is a lie’).<sup>72</sup> Again the issue of the impact of the route was about the relationship between class, amenity and the idea of the moor as a ‘wilderness’. But in this case, the local CPRE branches argued for restricting access to the site. Stephenson wrote to Herbert Griffin, general secretary of the CPRE, in March 1952:

I certainly agree that there should be the least possible interference with the wild state of Kinder Scout and similar areas. On the other hand, there is a tendency to be overmuch concerned with the preservation of natural beauty and a reluctance to allow facilities for

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<sup>70</sup> MERL, SR CPRE C/1/35/8, Stephenson to E. Haythornthwaite, 12 April 1951.

<sup>71</sup> *Manchester Guardian*, 17 September 1951.

<sup>72</sup> MERL, SR CPRE C/1/35/8, verbatim report of the conference at Edale, 15 September 1951.

enjoying it. It is no use designating areas as natural parks if one wishes to keep them unvisited except by a few privileged people.<sup>73</sup>

Kinder Scout was an obvious location to defend, and it was within the National Park remit. But Barnes also sought to oppose the route going across areas outside these designations, not least the potential impact on Blackstone Edge.<sup>74</sup> Following the local public inquiry, Barnes wrote, ‘I feel strongly that it is a waste of public money to ‘improve’ a route across wild moorland country ... To put up signposts, cairns, etc, cannot make Blackstone Edge any more accessible than it is now, and they may well detract from that quality of wildness and complete unsophistication in which lies the essential appeal of this type of scenery’.<sup>75</sup> The signpost design (Figure 3) was produced in 1952, approved by the Royal Fine Art Commission, Ministry of Transport, and local authority associations, ‘made of unpainted oak with the words Pennine Way in raised lettering’.<sup>76</sup>

Unlike the debates over the siting of the Super Grid and power stations, where the tensions between local branches and the central committee was an issue over amenity, the conflict touched on one of the core principles of access and the right to roam. Compromise had been the general strategy from the centre as they navigated the complex and entrenched interests of landowners and government. The more radical members of the movement nevertheless maintained a deep attachment to principles from their involvement in Mass Trespass activism in the 1930s. The backing of the state for the establishment of National Parks and national paths

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<sup>73</sup> MERL, SR CPRE C/1/35/8, Stephenson to Griffin, 1 March 1952.

<sup>74</sup> MERL, SR CPRE C/1/35/8, Barnes to Griffin, 8 May 1951.

<sup>75</sup> LCRO, Lancashire CPRE, box 15, 1951, Barnes statement, 15 March 1951.

<sup>76</sup> MERL, SR CPRE C/1/35/8, design for Pennine Way sign, 1952.

was a major step in the preservation of open space and rights of way. But for the more adamantly purist of the right to roam movements, these measures were a compromise not a victory of their ultimate aims of public access to all countryside. Barnes and the Haythornthwaites certainly thought so. But the official policy voted by the Ramblers' Association was to work with the state to achieve rights of way; blanket public access was not the primary aim as it was still unachievable. The further split between the local branches and the national executive committees lay on class and provincial grounds; mistrust of the metropolitan intentions of the executive combined with a belief they did not really know the landscapes of the Pennines.

### **Conclusion**

Landscape change is not a short-term phenomenon, however quickly new structures are erected or political imperatives are suggested by incoming governments or their agents. The 'Industrial Pennines' had long been a site for human intervention, extraction of minerals, and enclosure for agriculture, though mainly on a local or regional scale. The reservoirs, water channels and dams built by canal companies from the early nineteenth century onwards were the first kind of rural modernism. They were interventions of large-scale energy infrastructure constructed on the basis of form and efficiency for national needs. Nationalisation of the water and electricity industries after the Second World War, and the quickly spreading reach of the BBC and Independent Television networks, enabled modernisation of technology and expansion of national networks of power and communications. But these infrastructures were not entirely new either. The National Grid of the 1930s offered the blueprint for the Super Grid of the 1950s. Every era saw these changes as modern and improving with technology.

Different readings of northern upland landscapes were closely related to contested definitions of land use and public amenity. The preservationist mistrust of urban ‘wirescapes’ intruding in the countryside were overcome by negotiation and conciliation as well as the need for economic and technological improvement. Many of the same issues stirred the preservationist associations hefted to the landscapes of National Parks, and much of the same contests were enacted between these groups and the planning authorities as well as utility companies and the Ministry of Defence. But unlike the National Parks from 1949, the landscapes adjoining industrial centres were not classed officially as nationally significant in terms of amenity. The dominance of an aesthetic of ‘natural beauty’, encapsulated in the amenity clause’ of legislation and especially the focus on National Parks by the central executive of preservationist bodies, hampered the efforts of local activists to protect local residents’ access and use of the west and southern Pennine foothills for everyday leisure or, somewhat contradictorily, preservation of the moors as an imagined wilderness.

The designation of the ‘Industrial Pennines’ persisted. And as the textile and mining industries of northern and midland England faced economic collapse and government policies of de-industrialisation, the term came to signify *post*-industrial landscape degradation. In 1970, Nan Fairbrother pictured upland areas in England as failing, held back economically by old practices in agriculture.<sup>77</sup> She proposed an expansion of forestry as one solution. The Forestry Commission appointed Sylvia Crowe as a consultant, whom Fairbrother hoped would engender a more sensitive approach to mass silviculture. Economic imperatives however often surpassed growing ecological awareness about planting. Fairbrother’s second solution for the uplands was tourism and leisure. She argued that the new Rural Development Boards, introduced under the

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<sup>77</sup> Kelly, ‘Conventional Thinking’, p. 130.

1967 Agriculture Act to push forward economic development in upland areas, should ‘accept urban recreation as a potentially valuable land use’.<sup>78</sup> Ensuring access for ramblers passing through was less of a driver for her plan than holidaymakers spending time (and money) in the area, which contrasted with the views of countryside preservation and access groups.

Afforestation with conifers continued to be resorted to as both an economic driver and a quick fix to degradation of moorland. As noted in Ysanne Holt’s chapter in this volume, by the 1980s, the Forestry Commission and Nature Conservancy had reconsidered the ecological impact of conifer planting, moving towards a preference for more mixed deciduous woodland. In October 1988, however, the Minister for Agriculture and the Secretary of State for the Environment announced a loosening of their previous policy, suggesting that ‘conifers may have a role to play in ameliorating the environment of the industrial areas of the Pennines’. Significantly, the plans designated the area that could be afforested as the ‘Industrial Pennines’, the term that Dower had employed in his 1943 report.<sup>79</sup> The secretary of the Derbyshire branch of the Ramblers’ Association wrote to the executive, complaining:

The use of the term “industrial Pennines” is very misleading. It gives the impression that the areas regarded as potential coniferous planting areas are suffering from industrial

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<sup>78</sup> Fairbrother, *New Lives, New Landscapes*, pp. 118, 136; Guy M. Robinson, *Conflict and Change in the Countryside* (Wiley, Chichester, 1990), p. 285. Only one Rural Development Board, for the North Pennines, was established in England. It was abandoned after the election of the new government in 1969.

<sup>79</sup> LMA 4287/02/252, Ramblers’ Association files, ‘Industrial Pennines’, Department of Environment Circular, 15 June 1990; *Halifax Evening Chronicle*, 14 November 1990.

dereliction. For the most part, this is simply not true. ... There is no reason why these upland areas, which provide attractive landscapes and valuable wildlife habitats, should be subjected to a forestry policy which is any different from that now applied to other upland areas in England.

The director of the Ramblers' Association then wrote to the Department of the Environment, noting: 'the committee considered that the adjective "industrial" was inappropriate and denigratory, and suggested "southern" or "south central" or "mid" as acceptable alternatives'. The CPRE also opposed the term, suggesting it provoked connotations of 'dark Satanic hills', a sardonic twist on William Blake's phrase often associated with the industrial North. Despite focus on national bodies and frameworks created by statute legislation, in effect landscape was shaped by regional planning imperatives, and pursued by the efforts of individuals and local groups, often in conflict with their own central executives. Coming to the surface in public local inquiries, the tensions rested on the local and the personal.

By the end of the 20th century, environmental evaluation was part of considerations of land use, amenity value, and ecosystems services in landscape change and planning. But amenity still encompassed definitions of aesthetic value and the deleterious effects of post-industrialisation still blighted the Pennines. Continued debates about access to grouse shooting moors, and the impact of wind turbines erected on the same sites as the pylons, exemplify how amenity in terms of class, aesthetics and public use, remains an unsettled issue.<sup>80</sup> Any future

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<sup>80</sup> 'Plans refused for England's largest onshore wind farm on Scout Moor', BBC News, 8 July 2017, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-40532195>; Tom Mordue, Oliver Moss and Lorraine Johnston, 'The Impacts of Onshore-Windfarms on a UK Rural Tourism

infrastructures implemented nationally will have to negotiate with the needs of local economies and community understandings of amenity.

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Landscape: Objective Evidence, Local Opposition and National Politics', *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 28: 11 (2020), 1882-1904.