



East Devon and Blackdown Hills Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and East Devon District

Landscape Character Assessment & Management Guidelines

Version 1 – 2008

THIS DOCUMENT IS AVAILABLE ON THE FOLLOWING WEBSITES:

1. **East Devon AONB** – www.eastdevonaonb.org.uk
2. **Blackdown Hills AONB** – www.blackdown-hills.net
3. **East Devon District Council** – www.eastdevon.gov.uk

Acknowledgements

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Chris Woodruff & Pete Youngman – East Devon AONB

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Cathy Fitzroy – Natural England

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Mark Diacono & Patricia Shears – Diacono Associates.



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Contents

Page

Foreword	1
1 Introduction	2
2 The Landscape Character Assessment process	4
3 Using the guidelines	11
4 Area-wide landscape management principles	13
5 Individual Landscape Character Type landscape management guidelines	
Landscape Character Type 1: Plateaux	
1A: Open inland planned plateaux	16
1B: Open coastal plateaux	18
1C: Pebble bed heaths	20
1E: Wooded ridges and hilltops	22
Landscape Character Type 2: Scarp slopes	
2A: Steep wooded scarp slopes	24
2B: Coastal slopes and combes	26
Landscape Character Type 3: Valley slopes	
3A: Upper farmed and wooded slopes	28
3B: Lower rolling farmed and settled slopes	30
Landscape Character Type 4: Valley floors	
4A: Unsettled farmed valley floors	32
4B: Unsettled marine levels	34
4C: Estuaries	36
4D: Lowland Plains	38
Landscape Character Type 5: Cliffs	
5: Coastal cliffs	40
Appendices	
Appendix 1: Useful contacts	42
Appendix 2: List of consultees	43
Appendix 3: Glossary	43
Appendix 4: Data sources	44

Foreword

East Devon District covers an area of 314 square miles. From the River Exe and the outskirts of Exeter in the west it stretches 30 miles to Dorset in the east, and 15 miles from the World Heritage Coast to Somerset in the north. With the exception of the towns, these guidelines cover the whole of the district and the rest of the Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) which extends into Mid Devon and Somerset.

The quality and diversity of the East Devon landscape is one of our greatest assets, from the sheer, high cliffs of red sandstone and steep wooded combs to the high flat topped plateaux of the Blackdown Hills and an amazing variety in between of sea-salt marshes, river estuaries, heaths and rolling farmland. Our coastline forms part of England's only World Heritage Site designated for its natural environment. The East Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty lies wholly within the District, together with the greater part of the Blackdown Hills AONB, covering about 66% of the district.

The 'characterisation' approach to landscape is based upon the principle that all landscape types are of value, not just the most prized landscapes. By identifying the features that define each landscape we can work towards conserving and enhancing local distinctiveness and reinforcing our sense of place. Characterisation provides the framework for us to better understand the geology, topography and soils and how they influence man's activities, combining to create intricate and distinct patterns of settlement, landscape features and habitats.

These guidelines and the assessment on which they are based highlight the differing landscape character throughout the area. They will inform new development through the planning system, farm and woodland management, habitat creation and enhancement work, all of which further influence the character of the landscape which is going through a period of considerable change due to climatic, economic and other development pressures.

It is therefore vitally important that all of us who value our exceptional countryside work together to conserve and enhance the landscape. I therefore commend this landscape character approach as an instrument to increase awareness of the need for landscape management and for guiding co-ordinated action in the District and AONBs for the years to come.

The guidelines were developed in consultation with stakeholder interests and we would like to take this opportunity to thank those who contributed, both financially and in kind, and especially Natural England, our Local Authority and AONB partner organisations.

Councillor Paul Diviani

*Chairman of East Devon District Council and
Chairman of Blackdown Hills AONB Partnership*

February 2008



1 Introduction

1.1 Context

These management guidelines are based on a detailed Landscape Character Assessment of East Devon, carried out between 2005 and 2007 by professional landscape consultants as part of a Devon-wide project. The area covered in these guidelines encompasses the whole of the East Devon district including the East Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and covers all of the Blackdown Hills AONB, including its extension into Somerset and Mid Devon district. The guidelines are based on the thirteen Landscape Character Types which make up the units of the landscape of the area covered.

The need for a more detailed Landscape Character Assessment was identified in the former East Devon District Local Plan and the Management Plans for both the East Devon and the Blackdown Hills AONBs (2004). These guidelines build on the previous Devon County Landscape Assessment (2002) and follow a nationally recognised landscape assessment approach (see section 2: The Landscape Character Assessment Process). Natural England, in its capacity as the national lead on landscape character assessment, welcomes the development of Landscape Character Assessment and such management guidelines, which are seen as an essential tool in the future management, conservation and enhancement of the landscape of the district and AONBs.

1.2 Purpose of this document

The purpose of this document is to encourage best practice in the maintenance and enhancement of the landscape. It is intended that the guidelines should provide an easily understood reference to help shape and guide landscape based plans, projects and schemes across the area, based on a widely endorsed assessment and detailed descriptions of the character types that make up the landscapes of East Devon and the Blackdown Hills.

It is anticipated that these guidelines will be used by planners, development control officers, farmers, land managers, foresters, wildlife and conservation agencies, countryside management teams, developers and a range of other agencies and organisations involved in landscape related matters.

The guidelines are not intended to provide a one-stop answer to any planning, development or land management query but rather to provide a framework within which answers can be derived. They are not meant to inhibit innovative planning, management or design, but have a key role to play in understanding how and where changes could take place whilst ensuring that the special characteristics and distinctive features of the landscape are conserved.

1.3 Consultation

In preparing this document key partner organisations, representing its potential audience, were involved in workshops and written consultation at two stages during 2007. The aims of this exercise were threefold:

- **To validate the key characteristics and descriptions of the landscape character types**
- **To agree the detail of the management guidelines**
- **To discuss the format, style and layout of the document**

A list of the consultees can be found in Appendix 2.

1.4 Relationship to other Plans

AONB Management Plans

The Countryside & Rights of Way Act 2000 requires management plans for AONBs to be produced, published and regularly reviewed by local authorities. By providing landscape management guidance, these guidelines contribute to the implementation of management plan objectives and policies.

Local Development Frameworks and planning applications

Policies set out in the Local Development Frameworks covering East Devon and the Blackdown Hills aim to ensure that any new development should respect and reinforce key characteristics and local distinctiveness and that the AONBs should be 'conserved and enhanced'. These guidelines help to articulate the elements that contribute to local character and provide a context for specific development proposals.

Parish Plans, Village Design Statements and other Design Guidance

A number of parishes have produced village design statements which describe the distinctive character of the village and surrounding countryside and identify design principles based on local character. These guidelines complement other more detailed guides, including design guidance for the built environment and farm buildings published by local authorities.

Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs)

Local BAPs set out a series of nature conservation actions for threatened and valued habitats and species. Some of the priority habitats are an integral part of the landscape and local character, for example lowland heath, and appropriate management will have advantages for both landscape character and biodiversity value.

1.5 Land Management

Changes in farming and forestry practices can potentially have a big impact on landscape character. These guidelines are intended to add a more local flavour to existing Joint Character Area descriptions and associated targeting statements for agri-environment schemes. They also provide an information base for the future targeting of these schemes. In respect of forestry and woodlands, the guidelines can help to steer the location, extent and nature of applications for felling licences and planting under the Woodland Grant Scheme.



2 The Landscape Character Assessment Process

2.1 Introduction

The process of Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) describes the characteristic patterns and features of our countryside, and explains how an area has developed over time. It does not judge or rank the character of a place – it simply records it in a systematic way. The study area is divided into areas of broadly similar character by overlaying different layers of information, either in paper form or using Geographic Information Systems software. These layers include information about the landform, the underlying geology and soils and the influence of human activity as seen in patterns of settlement, land cover and differences in tree cover. National guidance¹ is followed to ensure that this is carried out in a consistent way.

2.2 Evolution of the process

Landscape assessment has developed from the pseudo-scientific studies of the 1970s and early 1980s and is now a powerful decision support tool for policy makers, planners and land managers. The methods now in use are all broadly similar, being strongly influenced by two pioneering studies initiated by the Countryside Commission in the late 1980s - The Mid Wales Uplands landscape assessment and The Warwickshire Landscapes Project - which led to the development of the Countryside Character approach in the early 1990s and the publication of The Character of England map in 1996. Most counties in England have now completed, or are in the process of completing, some form of landscape assessment to assist with planning and land management decisions. This interest comes at a time of considerable concern about the costs and environmental sustainability of farming, the loss of habitats and species in agricultural landscapes and the pressures for new development in the countryside. It is, in part, a recognition of the need to treat the countryside as an integrated whole and a recognition that this can only be achieved within a spatial framework that reflects and captures the richness and diversity of different landscapes. There is a growing realisation that the countryside cannot be protected by simply focusing on the 'best' bits, and increasingly it is being recognised that it is not enough to protect only our most valued landscapes (even if there was a consensus as

to which these are), but that every landscape makes a contribution - no matter how small - to the overall picture. Numerous Planning Policy Guidelines and White Papers endorse this approach and encourage a holistic, multi-functional view of landscape with a more comprehensive, but targeted 'character based' approach to rural decision making.

The growing interest in character based decision making has been made possible through the development of a more structured and systematic approach to landscape assessment, which clearly separates the processes of characterisation and evaluation and gives equal weight to the natural, cultural and visual dimensions of the landscape. However, despite the publication of national guidance, many assessments are still heavily biased towards visual considerations, focusing on what can be seen rather than trying to understand the processes that drive landscape evolution and change. If landscape assessment is to be of practical value as a decision making tool it must be able to do more than simply describe what can be seen. The assessment process should also provide an informed analysis of the way in which the landscape has evolved, as a basis for understanding the dynamics of current and future change. The assessment of landscape character should thus be concerned not only with identifying and describing the distinctive patterns that contribute to particular scenes but, perhaps more importantly, with understanding the reasons why the constituent physical, biological and historical components occur in repeating patterns and share certain aesthetic characteristics.

2.3 The Landscape Character Assessment process for East Devon and the Blackdown Hills AONB

The process of Landscape Character Assessment for this entire area was carried out using a 'bottom up' approach, beginning with the desk-based derivation of Land Description Units (LDUs) that cover the entire county of Devon. These units were then field surveyed, and, based on this combination of desk and field work, agglomerated into larger Landscape Character Types (LCTs) (see Figure 1 for diagrammatic representation of this process). These Types provide the most appropriate scale at which to derive Management Guidelines that aim to encourage the sustainable future development of these landscapes.

¹ Swanwick, C & Land Use Consultants, 2002. Landscape Character Assessment: Guidance for England & Scotland. The Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage.

2.4 The 'bottom up' approach – importance of the spatial framework

The effective use of Landscape Character Assessment as a decision support tool requires the creation of a structured, spatial framework for describing and evaluating the countryside. This framework operates at different spatial levels, ranging from the national/regional (1:250,000 – Joint Character Areas shown with a blue boundary), through the county/ district (1:50,000 – Land Description Units shown

with a grey boundary), down to the individual farm/site (1:10,000 – Historic Landscape Characterisation shown as coloured polygons), with each tier providing the most appropriate scale for a specific range of uses (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Assessment hierarchy for Landscape Character Assessment

Level 0	BIO-CLIMATIC ZONES (1:1,000,000)
Level 1	REGIONAL (1:250,000)
	LAND DESCRIPTION UNITS (LDUs)
Level 2	LOCAL (1:50,000)
Level 3	LANDCOVER PARCELS/ HLC UNITS (1:10,000)
Level 4	SITE FEATURES (1:1,250)

Joint Character Areas
(blue boundary)

Land Description Units
(grey boundary)

Historic Landscape
Characterisation
(coloured units)

Figure 1 illustrates the relationship between the different levels of assessment. The blue line below is the boundary between the Devon Redlands and Blackdowns Joint Character Areas.



2.5 Land Description Units

The fundamental building block at the landscape level that we have used for developing these guidelines is known as the Land Description Unit (LDU). Land Description Units are distinct and relatively homogenous units of land, each defined by a series of definitive attributes, so called because they define the extent of each spatial unit.

There are four attributes used to define Land Description Units at Level 2:

- **Physiography - the geology and landform**
 - **Ground type - the soils**
 - **Landcover - reflecting surface vegetation**
 - **Cultural pattern - which describes the structural component of the cultural landscape.**
- } these two together encapsulate the underlying natural dimension of the landscape

The natural dimension of the landscape (physiography and ground type) is mapped first, as it not only provides a context for analysing the historical evolution of the landscape, but also because the baseline attributes of relief, geology and soils have 'real' boundaries which can be readily defined. In practice this entails firstly defining the more immediately distinct areas, where the pattern of topography relates clearly to changes in geology and soil. Cultural attributes do not usually have such clearly defined boundaries, but because of the constraints that have historically been imposed on land utilisation by slope, soil fertility and drainage it is often possible to map cultural patterns at the landscape scale using the emerging Land Description Unit framework. It is an iterative process requiring comparison of all the data to help define the less immediately visible distinctions in the landscape. For example, a break in slope which coincides with a change in soil type and tree cover to the plateau above will be easily identifiable as a sharp boundary, where a few steps takes you into a clearly different landscape, whereas the transition between a dispersed and a nucleated settlement pattern in a rolling landscape maybe several kilometres wide and is likely to require examination of other information, for example historic landscape information, to help map a line to its best location.





The primary digital datasets used in defining Land Description Units include: geology, 10m contours, soils, farm census data, settlements, woodland, ancient woodland, Historic Landscape Characterisation, moorland, Ordnance Survey 1:50,000 base map, and the National Typology. (The scales of these datasets varied between 1:10,000 – eg Historic Landscape Characterisation, and 1:150,000 eg National Typology). See Appendix 4 for further details.

Each aspect of the analysis and the attributes defined is outlined below.

2.6 Physiographic analysis

Physiography is an expression of the shape and structure of the land surface as influenced both by the nature of the underlying geology and the effect of subsequent geomorphological processes. Two definitive attributes are used at Level 2, one defining the geological structure (and relative relief) of the unit and the other to describe the form (and relative relief) of the land surface. This is derived from interpretation of the relationship between geological and contour data. Physiographic boundaries should ideally follow clear 'breaks in slope' that are related to geological boundaries. Where there is no obvious break in slope (eg. the transition between the dip slope of an escarpment and an adjoining vale) a 'best fit' line (ie. a line that has been adjusted to match the surface landform) should be defined that reflects the geological boundary. (The primary data sources are the contour and geology – solid and drift).

2.7 Ground type analysis

Ground type is an expression of the soil forming environment and its influence in determining the surface pattern of vegetation and land use. Two definitive attributes are used at Level 2, one describing the nature of the underlying bedrock/drift, the other to reflect variations in the process of soil formation related to drainage and soil fertility. This is derived from interpretation of geological (rock type), soils and land use data. (The additional data sources are the paper based soils maps for the area).

2.8 Landcover analysis

Landcover is an expression of the type of vegetation (natural and man made) covering the land surface. Two definitive attributes are used at Level 2, one describing the predominant land use/type of farming, the other reflecting the contribution that trees and woodlands make to the character of the landscape. The broad pattern of primary land use and associated tree cover at the farm type level as related to the inherent physical (slope, drainage, fertility) and economic constraints within a particular area. (The additional data sources used are the Historic Landscape Characterisation, various woodland layers and farm census data).

2.9 Cultural pattern analysis

Cultural pattern is an expression of the structural component of the cultural landscape as reflected in the historic pattern of enclosure and rural settlement. Two definitive attributes are derived, one describing the broad pattern of village formation and settlement dispersion, the other reflecting the structure (size/tenure) of agricultural holdings. In addition to the other data sources noted, the Ordnance Survey base and Brian Roberts' settlement work (Routledge, 1996 - see Appendix 4) are used in this aspect of the analysis.

2.10 Merging the desk based information with the field surveys - definitive and descriptive information

The definition of discrete Land Description Units provides units which are the building blocks of the landscape. The four definitive attributes (physiography, ground type, land cover and cultural pattern) tell us much about each Land Description Unit, but not the complete picture. Descriptive information, such as the visual and perceptual aspects of landscape, must also be collected and this coverage of Land Description Units provides the meaningful and structured spatial framework for gathering this descriptive information about the landscape. Descriptive attributes include both character-based information (eg species associations, building styles, etc.), as well as qualitative information relating to the significance of particular attributes, their condition and their vulnerability to change. All of this information is electronically mapped.

Once the inherent character of the land has been described it is then much easier to understand and describe the more intangible aesthetic aspects of the landscape, such as scale, form and enclosure. Although these are the qualities which are most apparent to viewers on the ground, the fact that they are almost invariably controlled by relief, geology and soils (and the resultant surface pattern of vegetation and land use), explains why the Land Description Units defined by the process of overlay mapping can be used as a basis for defining Landscape Character Types and/or Character Areas.

The process of Land Description Unit mapping and subsequent characterisation with other descriptive data also enables broad patterns to be distinguished, which in turn makes it possible to begin to understand the relationship between the many factors that contribute to landscape character. The iterative nature of this process greatly assists in the understanding of how a particular landscape has developed and is the key to assessing the character of that landscape. It is much easier to evaluate the condition of a particular landscape, or its capacity to accept change, where this is underpinned by a working knowledge of how that landscape has evolved.

The process of deriving Character Types relies much on available visual and other perceptual information. The main sources for undertaking this process were the desk Land Description Unit information and the Land Description Unit field survey sheets, using a combination of definitive attributes with descriptive information collected through survey. It is an iterative process, and although many Character Types are easily defined by referring to the definitive and descriptive data, where the pattern is less clearly apparent then further discussion to achieve consensus may be used.

2.11 Field survey

The field survey therefore provides the opportunity to undertake a number of key tasks, including:

- **incorporating the visual/aesthetic/perceptual dimension**
- **recording the condition of the landscape, including both the ecological and cultural aspects**
- **verifying Land Description Units and identifying any refinements to their boundaries**
- **assessing any particular qualities, and/or problems in areas of particular pressure or sensitivity, including seascapes.**
- **deriving or reviewing Character Type boundaries and associated descriptions.**

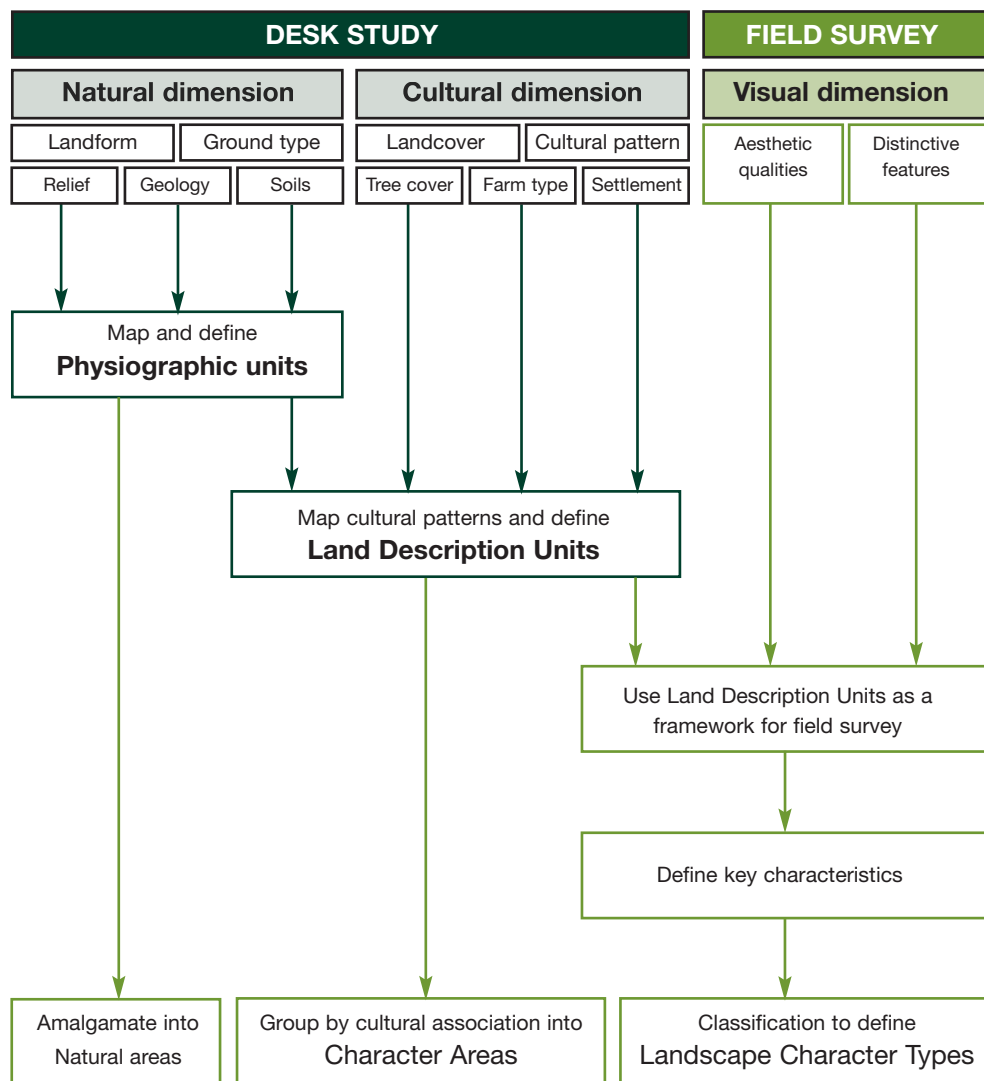
2.12 The characterisation process

Land Description Units are the building blocks of the landscape, and it is common to agglomerate these into larger Landscape Character Types and/or Character Areas. The latter refer to geographically discrete areas (eg The River Otter Valley), while the former is a generic term (eg River Valleys) and usually a particular type of landscape that can occur in numerous different places. Character Areas are typically used as a landscape unit for communicating descriptive information and very broad scale objectives, whereas Character Types are most appropriate for directing landscape management: Character Types were derived for the whole area.

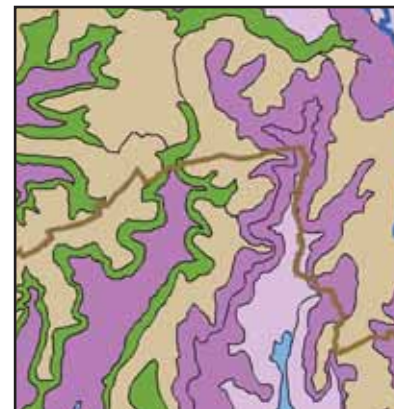
The reason for making a distinction between Landscape Character Types and Character Areas is largely a practical one. Landscape Character Types are very much a management tool and this is the level at which most countryside planning and land management activity takes place. For most people, however, landscape is strongly associated with place. Hence, although Character Areas often comprise several different types of landscape, they are a more appropriate vehicle for presenting countryside information to a public audience. It is envisaged that Landscape Character Areas will be derived for the whole of Devon at such time as the majority of the county has the information available from Land Description Unit field survey across the county.



Figure 2: The character assessment process



Map 1: Landscape Character Types and Land Description Units



The map extract shows an example of Landscape Character Types as coloured areas, with the constituent Land Description Units as dark boundaries nested within. (The brown and blue lines are administrative boundaries)

3 Using the guidelines

The overall assessment area was classified into 13 distinct Landscape Character Types, shown on the map overleaf. These types, or LCTs, contain within them 129 unique Land Description Units. Each Landscape Character Type is described and its Key Characteristics drawn out. It is further identified by a map associated with each of the Landscape Character Types. Each type is an aggregation of a number of individual units which all share most of their characteristics, such as landform, land cover and cultural pattern. This facilitates the derivation of management guidelines which are applicable to each of the component Land Description Units (LDUs) that make up each Landscape Character Type. Note that not all the types identified in Devon are found in this area and so the Landscape Character Type reference numbers in these guidelines do not necessarily follow sequentially.

The main body of the guidance is structured as follows:

Section 4 covers

- **AREA WIDE LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES** covering generic landscape management guidelines and principles that apply across the whole of the area, including suggestions for further areas of work and research - users may wish to refer to in any broad based schemes or proposals

Section 5 covers

- **LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT GUIDANCE FOR LANDSCAPE CHARACTER TYPES (LCT)** – for users to identify those which apply specifically to their site/area

Each Landscape Character Type is described as follows:

LCT Number and Name: eg LCT 1a: Open inland planned plateaux

Constituent Land Description Units (LDUs) that make up that LCT

(ie. Its sub units) eg LDU ... 104, 143, 145, 154

Location of the LCT

Description of the LCT

A map showing the extent of the LCT within district/AONB

Key Characteristics of the LCT eg High open flat plateau or Mixed cultivation on heavy soils

Illustrations and images of the LCT

Management Guidelines (not all of these headings will appear for every LCT)

Boundaries

Farming and land use

Field Pattern

Semi-natural habitats

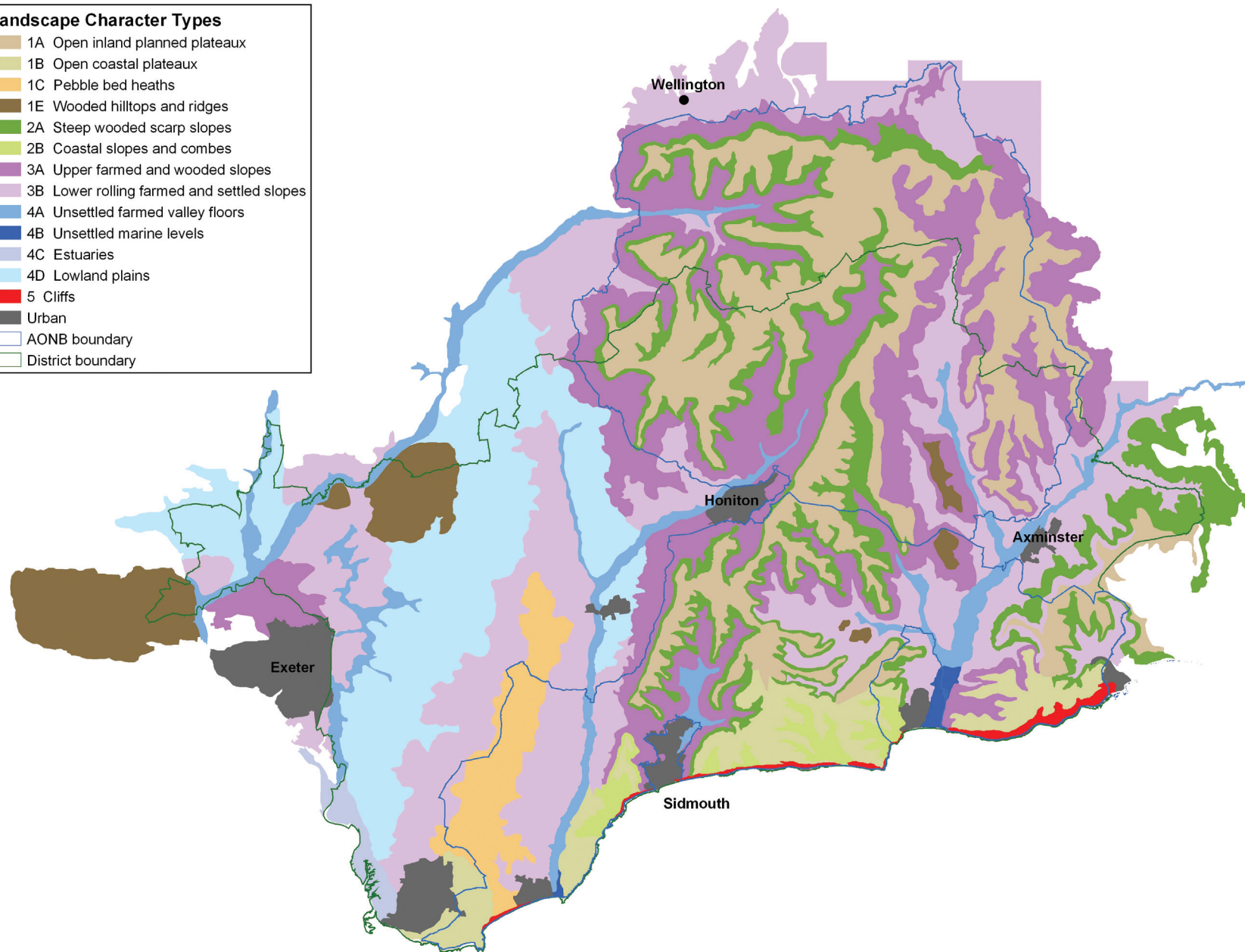
Woodland

Informal recreation

Settlement and development

Transport network

Recommendations for further action – suggested areas for further work or research



Map 2: Landscape Character Types

Appendices

Appendix 1 Useful Contacts

Local authorities

East Devon District Council

Council Offices
The Knowle
Sidmouth
Devon
EX10 8HL
Tel: 01395 516551
www.eastdevon.gov.uk

Mid Devon District Council

Phoenix House
Phoenix Lane
Tiverton
Devon
EX16 6PP
Tel: 01884 255255
www.middevon.gov.uk

South Somerset District Council

Council Offices
Brympton Way
Yeovil
Somerset
BA20 2HT
Tel: 01935 462462
www.southsomerset.gov.uk

Taunton Deane Borough Council

The Deane House
Belvedere Road
Taunton
Somerset
TA1 1HE
Tel: 01823 356356
www.tauntondeane.gov.uk

Devon County Council

County Hall
Topsham Road
Exeter
Devon
EX2 4QW
Tel: 0845 155 1015
www.devon.gov.uk

Somerset County Council

County Hall
Taunton
Somerset
TA1 4DY
Tel: 0845 3459166
www.somerset.gov.uk

AONB Units

Blackdown Hills AONB

St Ivel House
Station Road
Hemyock
Cullompton
Devon
EX15 3SJ
Tel: 01823 680681
www.blackdown-hills.net

East Devon AONB Partnership

East Devon Business Centre
Heathpark Way
Heathpark
Honiton
Devon
EX14 1SF
Tel: 01404 46663
www.eastdevonaonb.org.uk

Organisations and Agencies

Environment Agency

South West Regional Office
Manley House
Kestrel Way
Exeter
Devon
EX2 7LQ
Tel: 08708 506506
www.environment-agency.gov.uk

Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG)

Devon FWAG
Unit 4
Halthaies
Bradinch
Exeter
Devon
EX5 4LQ
Tel: 01392 882080

Somerset FWAG
Environment Department
County Hall
Taunton
Somerset
TA1 4DY
Tel: 01823 355427

www.fwag.org.uk

Forestry Commission

South West England Regional Office
Mamhead Castle
Mamhead
Nr Exeter
Devon
EX6 8HD
Tel : 01626 890666
www.forestry.gov.uk

Natural England Devon

Level 2, Renslade House
Bonhay Road
Exeter
EX4 3AW
Tel: 01392 889770

1st Floor, Estuary House
Peninsula Park
Rydon Lane
Exeter
Devon
EX2 7XE
Tel: 01392 352000

Natural England Somerset

Riverside Chambers, Castle Street
Taunton
Somerset
TA1 4AP
Tel: 01823 285500

www.naturalengland.org.uk

Royal Society for the Protection of Birds

South West Regional Office
Keble House
Southernhay Gardens
Exeter
Devon
EX1 1NT
Tel: 01392 432691
www.rspb.org.uk

Wildlife Trusts

Devon
Cricklepit Mill
Commercial Road
Exeter
EX2 4AB
Tel: 01392 279244
www.devonwildlifetrust.org

Somerset
Tonedale Mill
Tonedale
Wellington
Somerset
TA21 0AW
Tel: 01823 652400
www.somersetwildlife.org

Appendix 2 List of Consultees

The Landscape Character Assessment & Management Guidelines have been produced in association and consultation with the following key organisations:

Blackdown Hills AONB
Clinton Devon Estates
Country Land and Business Association
Devon County Council
Devon Wildlife Trust
Dorset AONB
East Devon AONB
East Devon District Council
Environment Agency
Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group
Forestry Commission
Mid Devon District Council
Natural England
Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
Somerset County Council
South Somerset District Council
Taunton Deane Borough Council

Appendix 3 Glossary

Note: This glossary is not a complete coverage of all words or terms used in the study.

Ancient Woodland Land continuously wooded since AD 1600. It is an extremely valuable ecological resource, usually with a high diversity of flora and fauna.

Biodiversity The variety of life including all the different habitats and species in the world.

Combe A short valley or hollow on a hill or coastline, often dry valleys in a limestone area.

Coppicing The practice of cutting semi-mature or mature trees back to a stump, thereby encouraging regrowth and providing timber products.

Cultural pattern The historic development and present day pattern of settlement and farming.

Curtilage The enclosed area of land around a dwelling. It is distinct from the dwelling by virtue of lacking a roof, but distinct from the area outside the enclosure in that it is enclosed within a wall or barrier of some sort.

Downland A downland is an area of open chalk hills.

Ecological corridor An area of vegetated land linking other areas of biodiversity interest, encouraging the spread of plant, animal and insect species.

Estuary The broad mouth of a river that flows into the sea, where fresh water mixes with tidal sea water.

Field pattern The distinctive pattern created within the landscape by the size and shape of contiguous fields. The relationship between size and shape is often strongly related to the age of the pattern itself. Irregular, smaller fields are generally older than larger, more regular field patterns.

Habitat The place where a particular species lives and grows. It is essentially the environment—at least the physical environment—that surrounds (influences and is utilized by) a species population.

Heathland Usually open habitats characterized by a mosaic of dwarf shrubs and taller vegetation, including some tree species, associated with unimproved areas underlain by infertile acid soils.

Hedgebank Earth bank or mound cast up from adjacent soil to a height of 4-5 feet/1.2- 1.5m, with a hedge established along the crown of the bank.

Hedge laying A traditional country skill, typically found in the United Kingdom and Ireland, which seeks to create and maintain of hedges by removal of some trees, retaining others, with a proportion of appropriate branches part cut and laid tight into the hedge bank or ground.

Hedgelaying cycle or rotation The period of time between each major intervention in the growth of the hedge.

Historic Landscape Characterisation
A method for understanding and mapping the nature of the landscape with reference to its historical development.

Indigenous Plants or animals belonging naturally to or occurring naturally in a particular area.

Interfluvium An area of dry land between two watercourses.

Joint Character Areas/ National Character Areas The Character of England maps the variety of landscape character at the national scale. It comprises 159 Joint (or National) Character Areas, combining English Nature's Natural Areas and the former Countryside Commission's countryside character areas.

Land cover Combinations of natural and man-made elements including vegetation that cover the land surface.

Permanent pasture/grassland An established plant community in which the dominant species are perennial grasses, there are few or no shrubs and trees are absent.

Planned Refers to a more recently enclosed area of land, that is often characterised by regularity in shape, and is usually large in size.

Plateau An extensive area of relatively flat high land, usually bounded by steep sides.

Riparian Associated with the banks of watercourses.

Rough ground Land that has little agricultural potential, even as formal enclosed grazing, and is usually open, unenclosed and possibly used for common grazing.

Saltmarsh An area of land which is usually, or liable to be, flooded with salt water and is covered with a low growing layer of salt-tolerant plant species.

Scrub Vegetation consisting of stunted trees and evergreen shrubs collectively.

Semi-natural habitat Vegetation which has been modified by humans that is still of significant nature conservation interest because it is composed of native plant species, is similar in structure to natural types and supports native animal communities.

Settlement pattern The predominant pattern of settlement in an area.

Spring line mires Areas of wet ground associated with watercourses upwelling at geological boundaries.

Turbaries An area of land that has been formerly designated as a place where peat may be dug.

Undercliff A terrace formed above beach level from material that has fallen from a cliff.

Unimproved pasture/rough pasture Pasture that has not had the addition of fertiliser and/or reseeded with more productive grass species.

Wildland Extensive areas of uncultivated, mostly unenclosed land, including moorland, heath and salt marsh, characterised by the virtual absence of human habitation. Often remote.

Appendix 4 Data Sources

Data provided by Devon County Council

Ordnance Survey 1:10,000 mapping
Ordnance Survey 1:50,000 mapping
10m contours mapping
Geology – solid and drift mapping (British Geological Survey)
Historic Landscape Characterisation

Data provided by Somerset County Council

Historic Landscape Characterisation

Other data sources

Soil survey paper maps (The Soil Survey and Land Research Centre)
Landscapes of Settlement: Prehistory to the Present by Brian K. Roberts, Routledge, 1996. – also, digital maps derived from this work by University of Reading
1995 farm census data – University of Reading
Ancient woodland – downloaded from the MAGIC website (www.magic.gov.uk)
National Typology – downloaded from the MAGIC website (www.magic.gov.uk)

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