

Landscape Character Type 1: Plateaux LCT 1C PEBBLE BED HEATHS

Constituent Land Description Units 107, 899

Location

North/south ridge west of Ottery St Mary south to the coast between Exmouth and Budleigh Salterton, forming the western edge of the Otter valley

Description

A high, level to gently undulating plateau forming a long north-south 'finger' north from Budleigh Salterton. This landform reflects its unusual geological formation. The Bunter Pebble Beds influence vegetation and land use and provide building materials for adjoining Land Description Units. The poor soils support extensive open areas of dry lowland heath with gorse and silver birch, interspersed with scattered groups of pine or beech and conifer plantations. These are used for forestry, nature conservation and recreation, with some military use locally. There are beech woods towards the edge of the plateau. Much of this area appears remote, with the road network mainly along the western edge and very little settlement within the East Devon AONB. At its northern end, outside the AONB, there is a large, well-treed modern settlement.



Key Characteristics

- High, level to gently undulating open plateau
- Extensive lowland heath, conifer plantations and some beech woods
- Mix of unenclosed heath and conifer plantations
- Major north-south route along western edge, with some minor roads
- Unsettled, except at northern end (outside AONB)
- Distinctive geology influences vegetation and land use
- Extensive recreational and biodiversity use
- Panoramic views



Management Guidelines

Field pattern: conserve by

1. Seeking to maintain unenclosed character by restricting change to that required for temporary enclosure for military or nature conservation uses.
2. Ensuring that where enclosure is essential, it remains low key and unobtrusive.

Semi-natural habitats: conserve and enhance by

1. Encouraging appropriate management, restoration and extension of open heathland areas, including scrub management by grazing where possible.
2. Ensuring that restoration of worked out quarries is primarily to heathland habitat wherever possible.

Woodland: conserve and enhance by

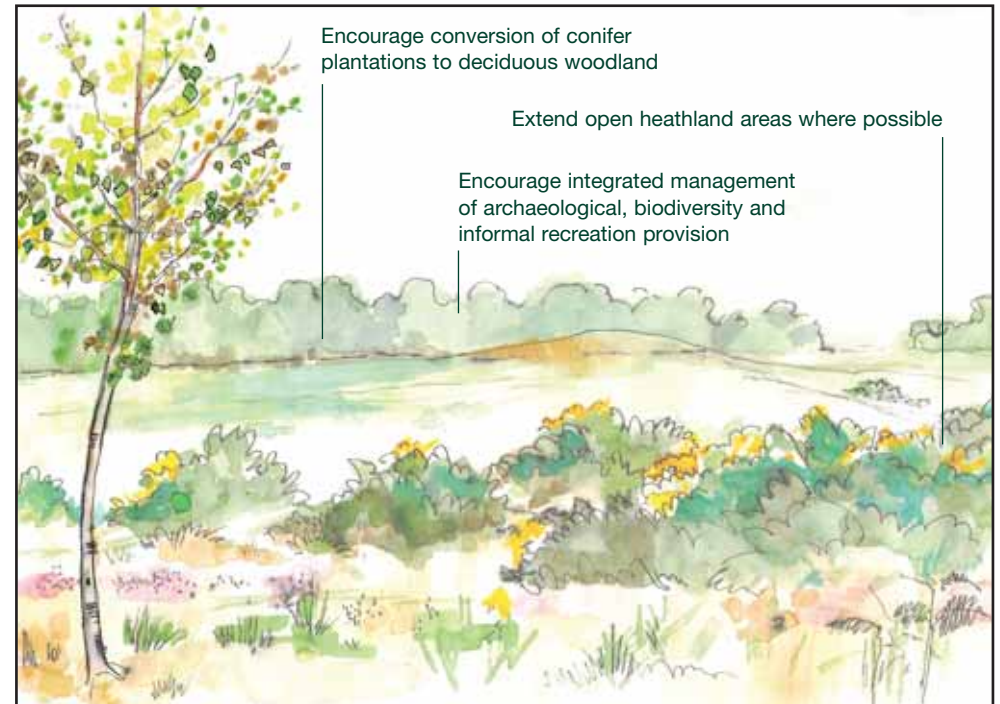
1. Encouraging appropriate reversion of plantations to broadleaf woodland or heathland as conifer plantations mature.
2. Encouraging continued management of beech woodland and conifer plantations.
3. Encouraging an integrated management approach to protect biodiversity interest and informal recreation provision.
4. Seeking amendment of boundaries and the planting of a deciduous edge where conifer plantations are replanted for overriding economic reasons.

Settlement and development: conserve by

1. Maintaining the inherent unsettled character of the AONB-designated area.
2. Restricting any expansion of settlements to the area outside the AONB boundary

Transport network: conserve by

1. Maintaining the existing road hierarchy.
2. Resisting any pressure to straighten or widen minor roads, or to alter road junctions, unless essential for road safety.
3. Encouraging sensitive, low-key signage for directions to recreational attractions.



Management Guidelines Illustration

Recommendations for further action

Semi-natural habitats: Encourage the provision of information about the biodiversity value and interest of heathland habitats.