

Landscape Character Type 4: Valley floors

LCT 4A UNSETTLED FARMED VALLEY FLOORS

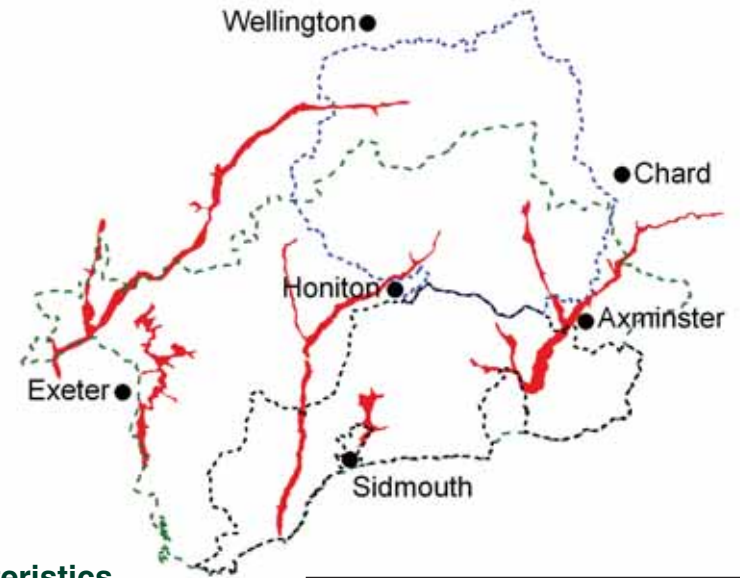
Constituent Land Description Units 108, 109, 146, 66, 90

Location

The general trend of river valleys is north-south, ending at the south coast, but the upper Culm valley runs east-west from the plateau uplands.

Description

This type has a low, flat open landform associated with upper river valleys, framed by vegetation on the floodplain edge and of a small scale. This encloses a landscape of shallow streams and lightly wooded mixed farmland in a small to medium regular pattern, with some orchards and occasional large arable fields. There is no settlement - farmhouses are on land above the floodplain, outside this type. Winding lanes along the edge of the floodplain are edged with bushy hedgerows, with bridges or fords across watercourses. Several of these valleys are accessible only by rights of way, so remain tranquil despite occasional visual intrusion from traffic on roads. Earth banks are not a characteristic but hedges are sometimes present within the open valleys.



Key Characteristics

- Open flat landform, often with distinct vegetated floodplain edge
- Shallow watercourses screened by riparian vegetation
- Hedges, not banks, generally on the boundary with rising land
- Pastoral land use, with wet meadows and some arable, with variable field sizes
- Unsettled
- Narrow winding lanes
- Open internally, with views out screened by boundary vegetation



Management Guidelines

Boundaries: conserve and restore by

1. Encouraging maintenance of hedges by shorter hedge-laying rotation than elsewhere, to mitigate effect of rapidly growing wetland species and avoid use of flail on over-sized branches.
2. Encouraging the appropriate management of ditches by infrequent or rotational management as required to conserve rare plants and insects.
3. Discouraging any further enclosure of floodplains, except temporary fencing for biodiversity conservation.

Farming and land use: conserve and restore by

1. Seeking to retain unimproved permanent pasture and wet grassland.
2. Promoting the management and restoration of orchards

Semi-natural habitats: conserve and enhance by

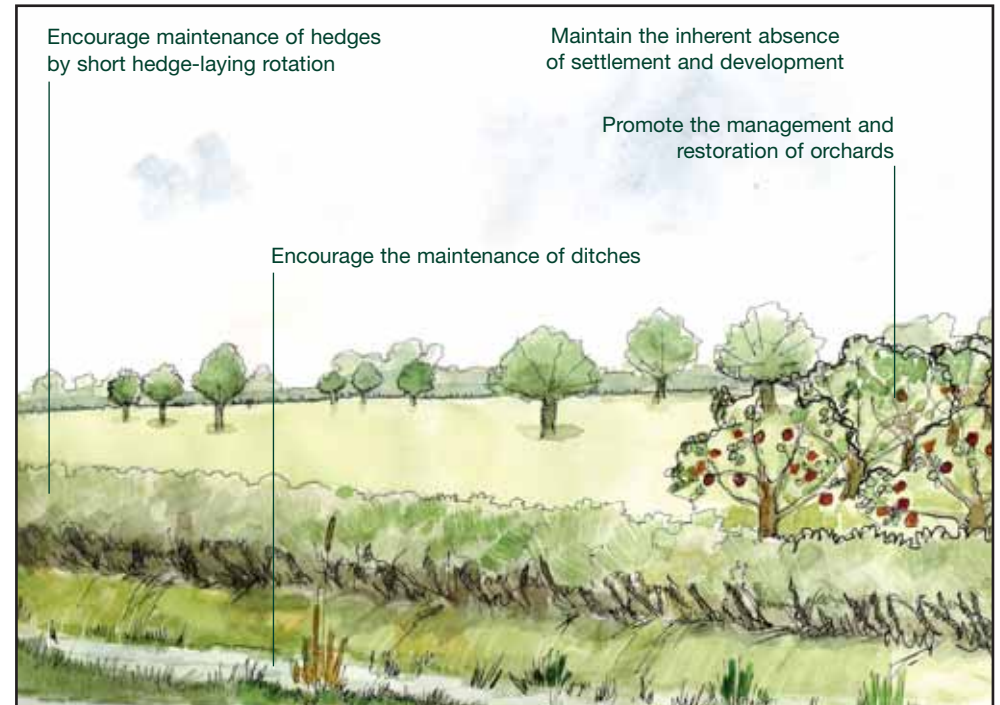
1. Encouraging the retention and management of riparian trees for age and species diversity, promoting locally indigenous wetland species.

Woodland: conserve and enhance by

1. Encouraging woodland management for age and species diversity, promoting locally indigenous wetland species.
2. Discouraging any spread of conifer plantations.

Settlement and development: conserve by

1. Maintaining the inherent absence of settlement and development.



Management Guidelines Illustration

Recommendations for further action

Semi-natural habitats: Explore the potential to restore wetland habitats along watercourses.