

Landscape Character Type 4: Valley floors LCT 4B UNSETTLED MARINE LEVELS

Constituent Land Description Units 49, 898

Location

Lower section river valleys of the Axe and Otter.

Description

This type is distinguished from the farmed and settled river valleys by marine influence: saline intrusion precludes settlement and limits agricultural cultivation. It consists of lower river valleys and their associated semi-natural habitats, which form a mosaic of open water, ditches, saltmarsh and grazing marsh, often of high biodiversity value. Generally they contain neither settlement nor roads and are unenclosed internally, although contained by the rising landform on their drier land boundaries. Their inherent unspoilt and unsettled character may be compromised by development in adjoining Landscape Character Types. This type has strong sensory characteristics, such as the colour and texture of habitats, smell of mudflats, sound of seagulls and the sight of sunlight reflecting off the sea.



Key Characteristics

- Flat unsettled river valley
- Marine influence on terrestrial habitats, such as reedbed and saltmarsh
- Unsettled and unenclosed
- Proximity of roads and settlements in adjoining areas reduces tranquillity
- Traditional floodplain habitats of high biodiversity value
- Open water
- Extensive informal recreational use



Management Guidelines

Farming and land use: conserve by

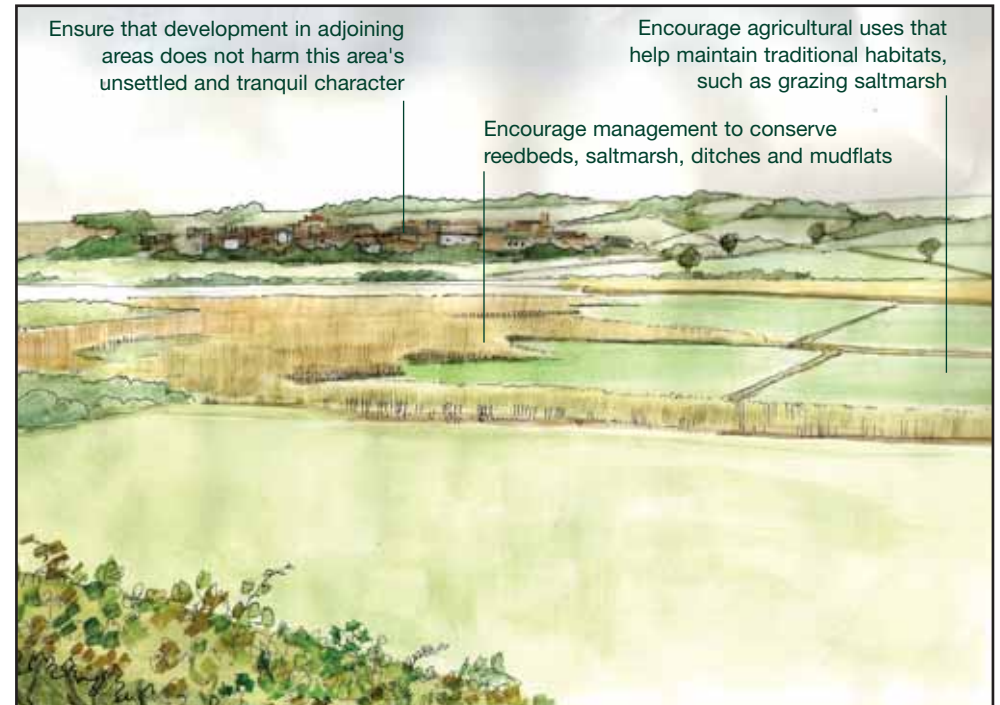
1. Encouraging agricultural uses which help maintain traditional habitats, such as seasonal grazing on saltmarsh and management of ditches as field boundaries.

Semi-natural habitats: conserve by

1. Encouraging management to conserve reedbeds, saltmarsh, grazing marshes, ditches and mudflats.

Settlement and development: conserve by

1. Ensuring that development proposals within or adjoining this type would not harm its unsettled and tranquil character.



Management Guidelines Illustration