

## Landscape Character Type 4: Valley floors

### LCT 4D LOWLAND PLAINS

Constituent Land Description Units 025, 026, 028, 056, 077, 516, 879, 880,

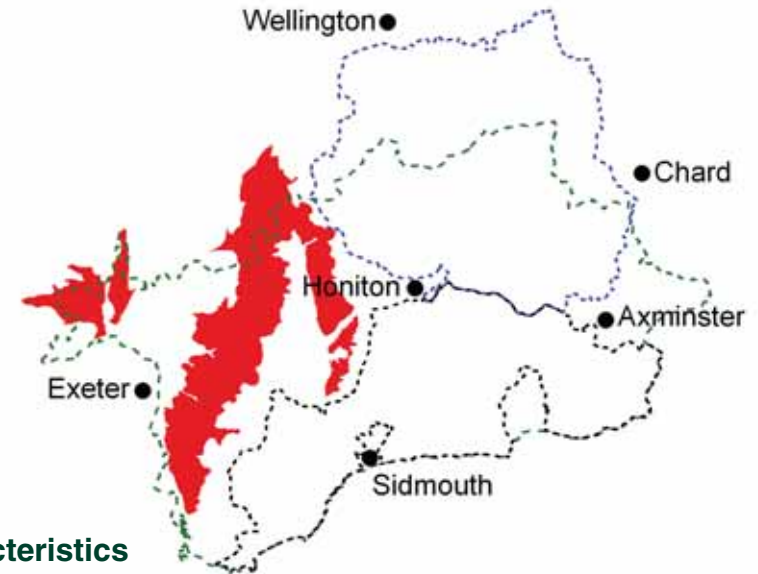
#### Location

Low-lying flat areas between shallow river valleys and lower rolling farmed and settled slopes, except Ashclyst Forest and NE of Westhill. Often interfluves between two rivers.

[Land Description Units 25, 28 and 516 lie partly outside East Devon District; Land Description Unit 880 is mainly outside East Devon District]

#### Description

These are areas of lowland adjacent to river valleys, distinguished by absence of wetland habitat or river valley character. They are flat and in mixed cultivation, with a variety of field size and pattern. Arable cultivation is frequently locally dominant, with orchards and paddocks present but not frequent. Wide hedges, often elm-dominated, and hedgebanks are distinctive, often with prominent hedgerow oaks. Tall sandstone banks to either side of highways are a local feature on the edge of settlements. The settlement pattern is variable, often dense, with much commercial development along key transport routes or clustered at key junctions. In less densely settled areas there is often a strong presence of Victorian architectural detail and use of red brick in buildings and boundary walls, often related to estate farms, with substantial farm buildings and estate cottages. The highway network consists generally of narrow winding lanes, with wider, straighter more modern roads in some parts.



#### Key Characteristics

- Level to gently sloping landform
- Mixed farmland, often in arable cultivation
- Small discrete broadleaf woodlands
- Regular medium to large field pattern with local variation
- Wide low roadside hedges and banks with hedgerow oaks
- Settled, with mixed pattern of large villages, hamlets or isolated farms
- Some villages significantly enlarged and modified by 20th century expansion
- Victorian estate cottages and large farm buildings
- Extensive commercial development
- Long views over low hedges
- Surprising feeling of remoteness in some parts, despite general level of development



## Management Guidelines

### Boundaries: conserve and enhance by

1. Encouraging gapping up of hedges with locally indigenous species
2. Encouraging the appropriate management of hedges, in particular to benefit elm hedgerows and ensure their survival in the face of Dutch Elm Disease
3. Encouraging the maintenance and increased planting of hedgerow oaks, to provide vertical elements and help screen development

### Farming and land use: conserve by

1. Encouraging traditional mixed farming as the dominant land use throughout this type
2. Encouraging the retention of traditional pastoral farming

### Semi-natural habitats: conserve by

1. Encouraging the maintenance and restoration of orchards

### Settlement and development: conserve by

1. Where development is permitted, including woodland and copses in development proposals, to increase screening and ecological links
2. Encouraging a characteristic low, small-scale pattern in new development, including industrial uses
3. Where development is permitted, using red brick for boundary walls in and around settlements
4. Encouraging housing development which reflects and respects local Victorian scale, detailing and materials.

### Informal recreation: renew character by

1. Encouraging the provision of recreational opportunities and a good rights of way linkage in all development and restoration



*Management Guidelines Illustration*