

Landscape Character Type 2: Scarp slopes

LCT 2A STEEP WOODED SCARP SLOPES

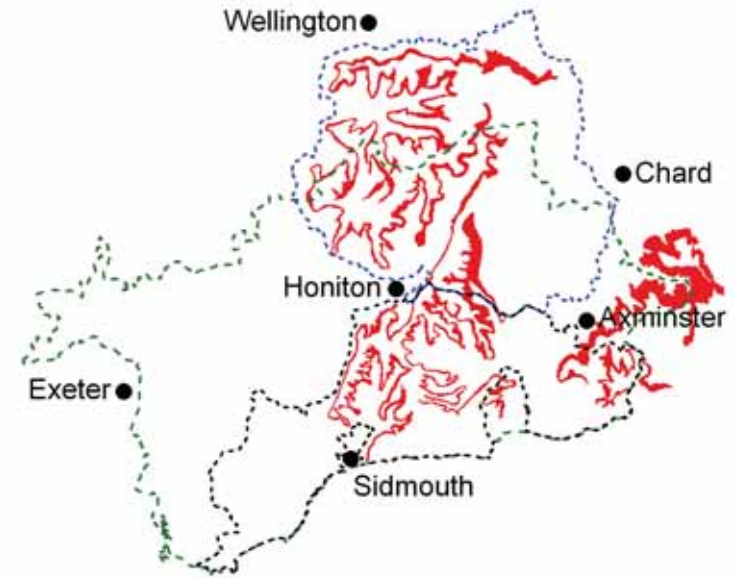
Constituent Land Description Units 103, 140, 152, 160, 161, 162, 167, 168, 58

Location

This Landscape Character Type is closely related to the plateaux type (LCT 1) and occurs throughout the East Devon and Blackdown Hills AONBs. It is distinguished from the less steeply sloping land below by being generally wooded and lacking settlement.

Description

This type consists of narrow ribbons of steeply sloping land immediately below the edge of the high plateaux. They are very restricted in width but extensive in length. Neither woodland nor pasture dominates overall, although they may do so in individual Land Description Units. The land cover is typically permanent grassland and woodland, with unimproved pasture, wetland scrub and small pockets of heathland. Although much of this type appears unenclosed, a network of earth banks and medium to tall bushy hedges with many hedgerow trees encloses an intricate mosaic of small irregular fields carved out of the woodland. This is a secluded area, very lightly settled, with infrequent farm buildings, and hamlets clustered at crossroads along the sparse network of narrow winding lanes frequently overhung with trees. The underlying poorly-draining Greensand geology gives rise to a high density of semi-natural habitats, including regionally important spring line mires, unimproved grassland, wet woodland, ancient semi-natural woodland and scrub.



Key Characteristics

- A narrow band of steeply sloping land immediately below the plateau edge
- Mixed woodland and semi-improved or unimproved pasture
- Pastoral cultivation, with small-scale irregular field pattern
- Springline mires
- Lightly settled
- Narrow winding lanes with well treed banks
- Occasional long views out over adjoining valleys
- Many patches of semi-natural habitats, including springline mires and scrub



Management Guidelines

Boundaries: conserve and enhance by

1. Encouraging the planting of oak as a hedgerow tree, with beech in the northern part of this type.
2. Encouraging the conservation and good management of roadside trees and the maintenance of characteristic tall earth banks in some Land Description Units.

Semi-natural habitats: conserve and enhance by

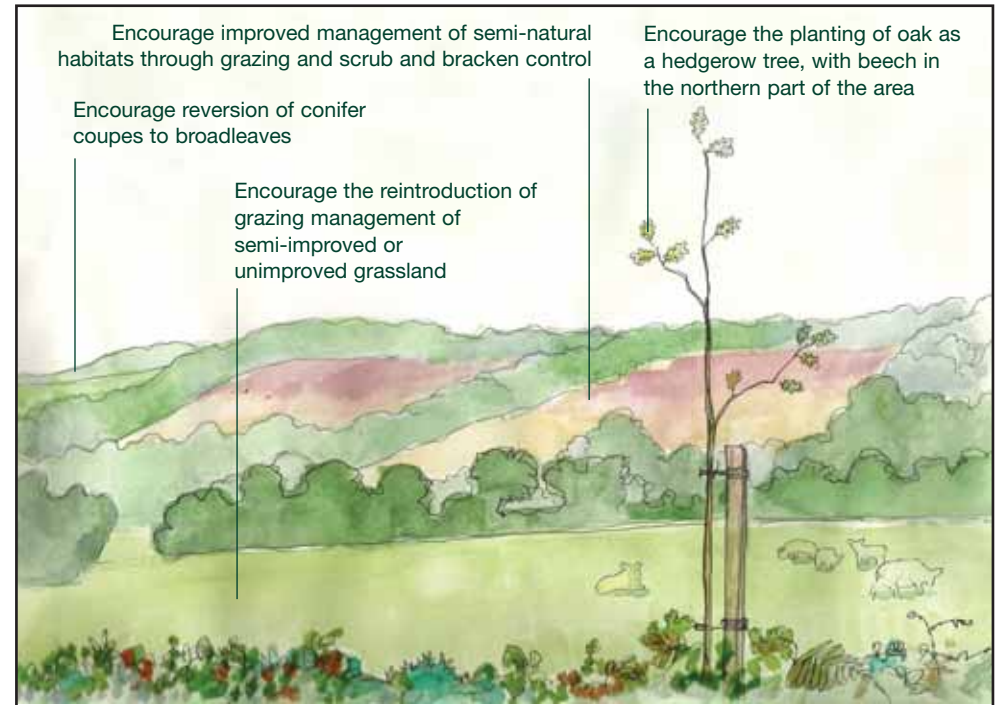
1. Encouraging improved management of semi-natural habitats, such as mires, gorse scrub, wet meadows, ancient woodland, heath and small copses, through grazing and scrub and bracken control.
2. Encouraging the reintroduction of grazing management of semi-improved or unimproved grassland to help control scrub encroachment.
3. In Land Description Units with discrete rather than extensive woodland, encouraging the management of earth banks and other semi-natural habitats to provide ecological corridors.

Woodland management: conserve, enhance and restore by

1. Encouraging reversion to broadleaf woodland when coniferous coupes are cleared, especially in areas of former Ancient Woodland, or
2. Encouraging medium to long term reversion from conifer to heathland and the introduction of scrub control with grazing management.

Settlement and development: conserve by

1. Maintaining the inherent sparsely settled character.



Management Guidelines Illustration