

3. Regional Landscape Character Type Profiles

The following pages contain profiles setting out the key natural, cultural and perceptual characteristics that have been identified for each regional landscape character type.

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High Fells

Open, wild, tranquil and rugged uplands support rough grazing and acid grassland. Steep, dramatic and distinctive topography with tarns, crags and scree.

Location:

These upland fell landscapes are located in the north of the Region within the Lake District.

Broad Regional Landscape Character Type: High Fell Landscapes

Physical Landscape

- Ancient, Caledonian (Ordovician and Silurian) rocks, comprising a mixture of mudstones and sandstones with frequent igneous intrusions.
- Shallow, impoverished loamy soils, often with a peaty surface horizon.
- A varied, steeply sloping, in places undulating, highland topography forming high, often rounded, ridges.
- Crags and scree create texture. Occasional tarns and poorly drained areas. Mountain streams with occasional waterfalls form at the edges of the type.

Biodiversity & Land Use

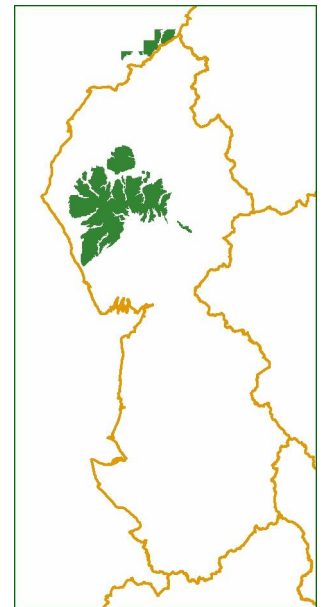
- Rough sheep grazing of acid grassland on open fell giving uniformity of colour and texture.
- Juniper & sessile oak wood patches on valley sides. Occasional trees (rowan & silver birch) at sheltered areas/watercourses. Some commercial plantations.
- Extensive acid grassland; patches of wet & dry heath, montane heath and blanket bog. Alpine species on summits.

Cultural Landscape

- Above the fell wall, land is open moorland, below it there is a complex pattern of intake enclosures: irregular fields, drystone walls and drove roads.
- Ancient unenclosed land. Some dry stone enclosures linked to seasonal grazing. Relics of past industry: mines, quarries, water supply, coppice woodland.
- Few inhabited dwellings: occasional scattered upland farmsteads. Some buildings converted to Youth Hostels or camping barns.
- Where they exist, buildings are of simple vernacular construction, with walls of locally-available dry stone and slate roofs.

Perceptual Landscape

- A very tranquil landscape: remote, elevated, limited settlement, dark night skies and sounds: birds and water, affected by low-flying military aircraft.
- Extensive open grassland, remoteness, exposure, lack of habitation and the perceived naturalness of the landscape, create a strong sense of wildness.
- Views are amongst the longest and most dramatic in the UK, with panoramic views across surrounding mountains and valleys.



Open Moorland Plateau

Expansive, open, exposed, upland landscapes, with uniformity of landcover, simplicity & occasional rock outcrops. Virtual absence of human habitation.

Location:

These upland fell landscapes are located in the north of the Region within the Lake District.

Broad Regional Landscape Character Type: Moorland Landscapes

Physical Landscape

- Lower Carboniferous and some Silurian rocks, comprising a mixture of gritstone, mudstone and occasional limestone, overlain by blanket peat.
- Thick very acid blanket peat, fringed by gleyed upland soils with a peaty surface horizon.
- Elevated landscape with a varied, in places steeply sloping, highland topography forming an expansive plateau with occasional distinct ridgelines.
- Localised outcrops of gritstone bedrock, incised streams and occasional reservoirs.

Biodiversity & Land Use

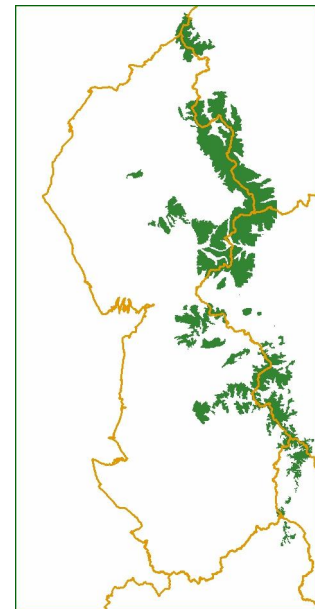
- Rough sheep grazing on open grass moorland with areas of bracken, rushes & heather, the latter being used for grouse shooting.
- Lack of trees notably on highest land with occasional deciduous trees/ linear woodlands alongside incised watercourses. Occasional coniferous plantations.
- Extensive areas of blanket bogs over poorly drained soil & extensive areas of dry heath & acidic grassland.

Cultural Landscape

- Mainly unenclosed with some large rectilinear enclosures of dry stone walls around the fringes and occasional sheepfolds and sheilings.
- Historically unenclosed common grazing land, some Parliamentary enclosures (1750-1850) at fringes. Ancient tracks & evidence of mining.
- Virtual absence of human habitation. Isolated farmhouses & farm buildings at heads of dales/valleys. Viking place names suggest pre-medieval settlement.
- Isolated farmhouses and associated farm buildings constructed of grey sandstone or limestone with stone or slate roofs at heads of dales/valleys.

Perceptual Landscape

- Tranquillity is high, enhanced by lack of movement and noise but occasionally broken by military aircraft and localised communications routes e.g. the M6.
- Elevation, exposure & sense of remoteness with little human habitation create a strong sense of wildness.
- Long views (with expansive foregrounds of moorland) and a sense of the enormity and dominance of sky from elevated viewpoints.
- Occurs in the eastern fringes of Cumbria, Forest of Bowland, southern Pennines and extends from the east of the Region into the Peak District.



Moorland Forestry Mosaic

A simple, expansive & large scale landscape: high rolling/undulating plateau extensively wooded with commercial forestry & absence of human habitation.

Location:

Located in northern Cumbria, extending into Dumfries and Galloway and Tynedale District.

Broad Regional Landscape Character Type: Moorland Landscapes

Physical Landscape

- Carboniferous rocks, comprising a mixture of gritstone and mudstone, overlain by blanket peat.
- Thick very acid blanket peat, fringed by gleyed upland soils with a peaty surface horizon.
- Elevated areas of varied undulating, in places steeply sloping topography. Some areas of glacial troughs.
- Localised outcrops of gritstone bedrock/crags. Incised stream courses often concealed by conifer plantations. Mires & reservoirs/loughs.

Biodiversity & Land Use

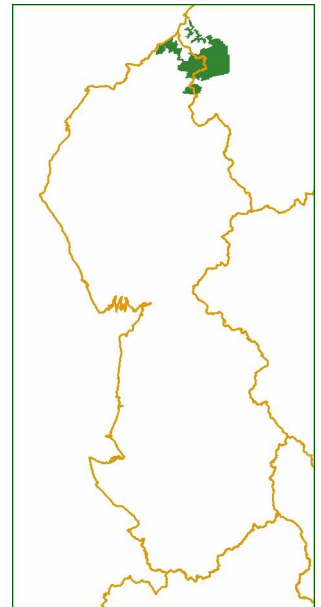
- Significant areas of conifer plantation, some straight sided, which may appear dark and imposing. Also areas of heather moorland and acid grassland.
- Primarily blocks of Sitka spruce but also some pine and larch. Occasional areas of broadleaved woodland along burns and plantation edges.
- Heather moorland, blanket bog and meadow grassland giving rise to open areas with rich colour and texture.

Cultural Landscape

- Generally unenclosed although there are occasional small in-by pastures associated with farmsteads defined by stone walls and post and wire fencing.
- Historically unenclosed common grazing land planted with conifers in the C.19th. Historic features include cairns, standing stones & Roman structures.
- Generally uninhabited with only occasional farmsteads or forestry settlements with a uniform character & integrity. Occasional military bases.
- Workers cottages in forestry settlements and isolated farm buildings. Building materials are often stone with slate roofs.

Perceptual Landscape

- Tranquillity in this landscape is undermined by extensive conifer plantations and dynamic nature of the landscape with felling and restocking activity.
- High sense of remoteness, lack of human habitation and disorientating nature of plantations increases sense of remoteness and relative wildness.
- Enclosed and sometimes claustrophobic within conifer plantations. Open exposed and with long distance views in moorland areas.



Upland Fringes and Ridges

Transitional land between uplands & lowlands. Pastoral with small fields, to rolling, open landscape of large fields on higher land, some relict mines.

Location:

Located adjacent to fell/moorland: northern Cumbria & fringes of: Lakeland fells; Yorkshire Dales; Forest of Bowland; South Pennines; & Peak District.

Broad Regional Landscape Character Type: Upland Fringes and Ridges Landscapes

Physical Landscape

- Ordovician, Carboniferous and some Silurian rocks, comprising a mixture of rock types, overlain in part by glacial till.
- Shallow impoverished, in places slowly permeable soils, seasonally waterlogged soils often with a peaty surface horizon.
- A varied undulating, in places steeply sloping, upland topography. This type forms the sloping edges of areas of higher open moorland or fell.
- Bare rock/boulders locally, crag & scree slopes. Hills dissected by streams & minor river valleys form steep gullies. Occasional small tarns & reservoirs.

Biodiversity & land use

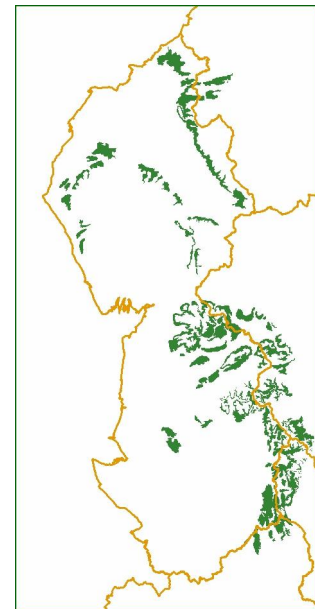
- Extensive unimproved-improved pasture giving rise to a mix of rough grazing areas on the highest land & verdant pastures on shallower sheltered slopes.
- Sparse: some small hawthorns. Upland oak woodlands in sheltered cloughs. Field boundary trees & tree clumps around farms, some conifer plantations.
- Improved grassland contrasts with unimproved grassland, moorland, fell & heath. Moorland vegetation e.g. bilberry at field boundaries & along verges.

Cultural landscape

- Old, irregular enclosure near farms/lower slopes. High up: large square fields. Hedges low down, walls (limestone/gritstone) above. Post & wire fencing.
- C16 - 17 enclosure continued with the Enclosure Acts creating regular field pattern. Lower slopes enclosed before higher land. Dual economy farming.
- Dispersed isolated farms on steep slopes with minor roads and lanes. C.16th-17th bastles now farms. Linear settlement along roads on foot slopes.
- Use of local stone dependent on geology. Farmhouses reflect C17th 'great rebuilding' of sites. Castles, estate churches & some early industrial buildings.

Perceptual landscape

- A peaceful rural backwater: an agricultural landscape with a high degree of tranquillity. Urban influences & transport corridors have a localised effect.
- Sense of wildness varies: the settled agricultural landscape is influenced by close proximity to open moorland. Urban/rural contrast enhances wildness.
- Long views from higher land across valleys & lower areas: Open skylines, few visual detractors. On lower land, topography & vegetation create enclosure.



Low Fells

Upland, undulating elevated fells, often bare, comprising rough ground, prominent rocky knolls and ridges, and a strong pattern of stone walls.

Location:

Located in southern areas of the Lake District and east of Kendal.

Broad Regional Landscape Character Type: Upland Fringe and Valley Landscapes

Physical Landscape

- Silurian rocks, comprising a mixture of mudstone, siltstone and sandstone.
- Shallow impoverished fine loamy soils, with a peaty surface horizon on summits.
- A varied undulating, in places steeply sloping, upland topography. Rounded knolls are a feature.
- Bare rock locally, craggy outcrops. Small tarns and becks are found throughout this type.

Biodiversity & Land Use

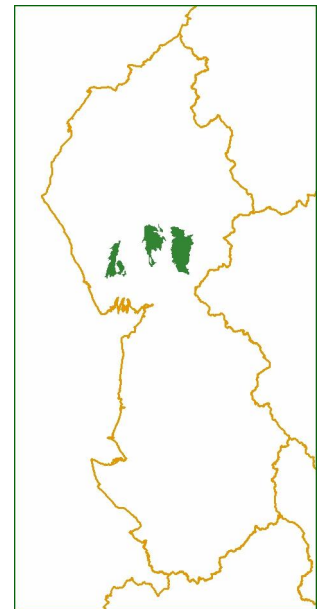
- Pasturing dominates, creating rich green areas contrasting with the more subdued unenclosed rough grassland and moorland on extensive fell tops.
- Small deciduous woods on steep valley sides/around farms, riparian/field boundary trees & ornamental species in parkland. Limited coniferous plantation.
- Improved pasture and unimproved pasture are the most extensive habitats.

Cultural Landscape

- Strong pattern of stone walls on upper slopes and thorn hedgerows lower down, highest land remains unenclosed. Fields are regular, varying in size.
- Mixed enclosure: ancient hedged enclosures, amid former common waste, enclosed with walls. Unenclosed higher, with waterbodies, relict/active quarries.
- Dispersed pattern of farms served by a lane network. Nucleated settlements retain historic composition, responding to the landscape. Some modern housing.
- Materials include limestone, sandstone, slate, cobbles, rubble & dressed stone and lime rendering. Some houses/ halls and estate villages.

Perceptual Landscape

- There is localised noise and visual intrusion from main roads - otherwise this is a tranquil landscape with a strongly rural character.
- The highest areas feel wild and open, whilst valleys feel settled and intimate.
- Topography and woodland shorten views, but there are frequent glimpses of the surrounding fells.



Wooded Low Fells

Heavily wooded (ancient, deciduous & coniferous) pastoral landscape of undulating low fells & ridges, dissected by river valleys.

Location:

Located in southern areas of the Lake District and east of Kendal.

Broad Regional Landscape Character Type: Upland Fringe and Valley Landscapes

Physical Landscape

- Silurian rocks, comprising a mixture of mudstone, siltstone and sandstone.
- Shallow impoverished fine loamy soils, with a peaty surface horizon on summits.
- A varied undulating, in places steeply sloping, upland topography.
- Rocky outcrops & bare rock locally. Small becks drain upland areas forming incised gullies & valleys. Upland tarns & lakes are features.

Biodiversity & Land Use

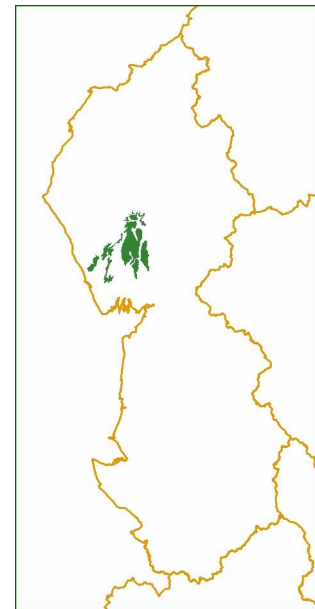
- Woodland mosaic (coniferous & deciduous) on valley sides, pockets of pasture & parkland in valley bottoms, more rugged heather & rough grassland on tops.
- Extensive areas of ancient woodland, semi-natural & coniferous plantations.
- Variety of woodland: yew, birch, hazel, juniper & holly woods on western slopes; oak & ash woods along streams. Species-rich grassland/meadows on floors.
- Ancient irregular enclosures on valley sides, more regular field patterns in valley floors. Drystone walls higher; hedgerows/ hedgebanks in valleys.

Cultural Landscape

- Ancient enclosed land with intakes on higher ground. Open fields in some valleys. Extensive ancient woodland evidencing past industry.
- Dispersed settlement developed from ancient farms, served by minor roads/tracks. Small nucleated villages linked with iron & gunpowder industries.
- Vernacular materials include limestone, slate, rubble & dressed stone. Many buildings are lime-rendered.

Perceptual Landscape

- Overall this is a very tranquil landscape although it is affected by visitors and honeypot sites.
- Areas of greatest wilderness can be found on the fells above the valleys as a result of elevation, sense of isolation and rugged land.
- Striking long-distance views from summits to surrounding fells. In the valleys, topography and tree cover give a strong sense of enclosure.



Upper Dales

High, broad valleys, adjacent to the Open Moorland Plateau. Moderately sloping valley sides form pastoral landscapes at the limits of agriculture.

Location:

Located in north Cumbria in the northern Pennines.

Broad Regional Landscape Character Type: Upland Fringe and Valley Landscapes

Physical Landscape

- Carboniferous and Silurian rocks, comprising a mixture of rock types overlain by glacial till and river alluvium.
- Deep, slowly permeable soils, locally shallow on steeper slopes, often associated with stripes of alluvial gley soils along the main valley river.
- Valleys, widening as they gain height, opening to broad, gently sloping daleheads. Lower reaches may have thin alluvial corridors along watercourses.
- Valley sides are incised by narrow steep sided gills and have occasional rocky outcrops whilst the lower valleys contain fast flowing rocky watercourses.

Biodiversity & Land Use

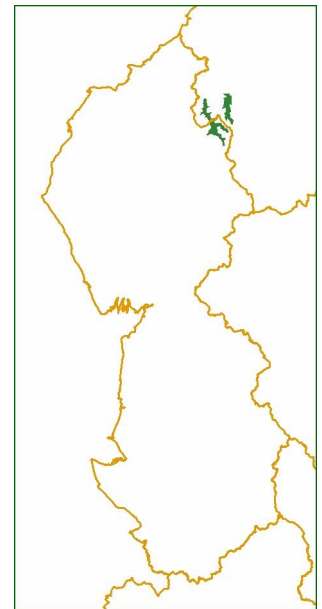
- Pastoral landscape of wet rushy pastures, upland hay meadows and rough grazing enclosed from the open moor.
- Sparsely wooded: streamside ash & oak-birch woods. Shelterbelts near some settlement. Isolated conifer plantations/shelterbelts of pine, larch & spruce.
- Habitats include flower-rich hay meadows, ancient semi-natural woodland and acid grassland.
- Fields are generally large and regular, bounded by low dry stone walls or wire fences, often in a poor state of repair.

Cultural Landscape

- Field patterns tend to reflect parliamentary enclosure and agricultural improvements from the late eighteenth century onwards. Mining also took place for lead, fluorspar and zinc.
- Scattered small farms, occasional farm clusters & hamlets on Dale floor/sides often along roads, with outlying stone field barns & sheepfolds.
- Vernacular buildings of limestone, dressed stone & stone flag/slate roofs. Many farms link with the lead mining industry & a dual economy with farming.

Perceptual Landscape

- A settled tranquil upland landscape with a strong sense of cultural continuity.
- Elevation creates a sense of wildness through exposure, remoteness, limited settled character and extensive areas of rough grazing.
- Visually open landscape but enclosed by encircling moorland ridgelines.



Upland Valleys

U-shaped valleys cut from high fells. Topography of dramatic scree to gentle gradient. Unique blend of woods, settlement, open water & backdrop of fells.

Location:

Occurs mainly in the Lake District and Yorkshire Dales but also found in Forest of Bowland and fringes of east Cheshire.

Broad Regional Landscape Character Type: Upland Fringe and Valley Landscapes

Physical Landscape

- Ordovician & Silurian rocks in the Lake District, Carboniferous elsewhere with a mixture of rock types overlain by glacial sand/till and river alluvium.
- Deep, often stony, well drained loamy, slowly permeable, seasonally waterlogged soils, usually with alluvial gley soil stripes along rivers and streams.
- Broad u-shaped valleys cut by glaciers, with valley bottoms & lower valley sides. Valleys floors -flat/gently rolling with watercourses, lake/reservoir.
- Scree slopes & rocky outcrops on valley sides. Rivers on valley bottoms fed by tributaries from valley sides with natural lakes/reservoirs.

Biodiversity & Land Use

- Rough grazing on valley sides and pasture on lower slopes and valley floors create contrasting colours and textures within the landscape.
- Deciduous woods on valley sides, some plantations, trees fringe lakes/watercourses. Some mature parkland/ornamental species on valley floors.
- Rough grassland, pasture, woodland, rivers and lakes in similar positions in each valley relative to topography, creating a repeated landscape pattern.
- Valley sides/floor edges: pre1750, irregular, small, walled enclosure. Floors: later, small-

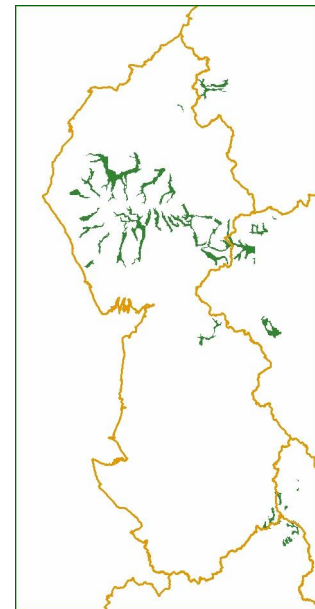
medium, rectilinear with walls/hedges/vertical flagstones.

Cultural Landscape

- Complex pattern of enclosure & land use over many centuries. Settled valleys show a higher proportion of land as Parks and Recreation than elsewhere.
- Isolated farms on valley sides, with occasional clusters. Small nucleated/linear settlements & larger towns on valley floors, usually adjacent to water.
- Vernacular agricultural buildings. Most architectural periods represented: country houses of varying styles. Local stone & some modern rendering.

Perceptual Landscape

- Tranquillity varies: bustling larger settlements with remote, isolated and tranquil valleys.
- Wildness is dependent on immediate surroundings but even from settlement centres the surrounding high fells are visible, increasing the sense of wildness.
- Dramatic, distinctive views typical of the “picturesque” movement: lakes, trees, woods & pastoral scenes, with High Fells as a dramatic backdrop/skyline.



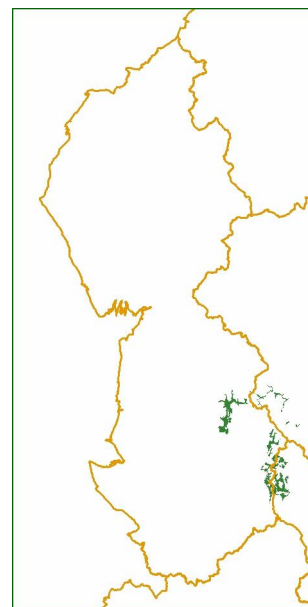
Valley Pastures with Industry

Steep sided valleys lying adjacent to or penetrating upland areas. Nucleated linear settlements & transport corridors create a settled character.

Location:

This RLCT exists in the south east of Lancashire, west of the Peak District moors and south of Manchester running towards Macclesfield.

Broad Regional Landscape Character Type: Upland Fringe and Valley Landscapes



Physical Landscape

- Carboniferous rocks, comprising a mixture of rock types overlain by glacial till and river alluvium.
- Deep, slowly permeable seasonally waterlogged soils, often associated with stripes of alluvial gley soils along rivers and streams.
- Narrow, in places steep sided, valleys, often with a thin alluvial corridor alongside the river, or stream.
- Network of rivers, streams and canals. Reservoirs and occasional small ponds/lakes and streams: often remnant mill lodges and races.

Biodiversity & Land Use

- Settlement is associated with textile production and transport routes. Many textile mills are not active but there is still significant industry.
- Broadleaved clough woodlands are often ancient oak woodland. Plantation woodlands, dense riverside trees, and hedgerow trees.
- Broadleaved woodland in lower valley cloughs is often associated with fast flowing streams which create important wet flushes.

Cultural Landscape

- Where evident, enclosure pattern is often small to medium scale and irregular. In places it is associated with historical booths.
- Historic character reflects textile production: mill lodges, mill races and packhorse bridges. Civic buildings and the urban realm reflect prosperity.
- Nucleated settlements with dense centres along valleys & lower south-facing slopes, at river crossings. Expanded by industrial cotton production.
- Dispersed vernacular farmsteads, recent, red brick development and modern industry exist.

Perceptual Landscape

- Tranquillity is affected by urban character, transport routes & energy infrastructure. Open spaces provide opportunities to experience tranquillity.
- This is a settled landscape and wildness is limited.
- With settlement pattern confined to the lower valleys & south facing slopes, there are frequent views to, and a strong association with, moorland edges.

Limestone Uplands

An upland landscape, exposed limestone provides distinct texture & light grey colour. Dramatic rock formations e.g. limestone pavements, cliffs and caves.

Location:

Occur in east and south Cumbria and extend into the Yorkshire Dales. Also occur east of the Region with the Peak District White Peak.

Broad Regional Landscape Character Type: Limestone Landscapes

Physical Landscape

- Lower Carboniferous limestone.
- Shallow, in places very shallow, silty/loamy soils over limestone.
- Steeply sloping hills and valley sides with higher, more undulating plateau summits.
- Rock exposures and crags, extensive areas of limestone pavement. Limited surface water with occasional small streams forming steep gullies in limestone.

Biodiversity & Land Use

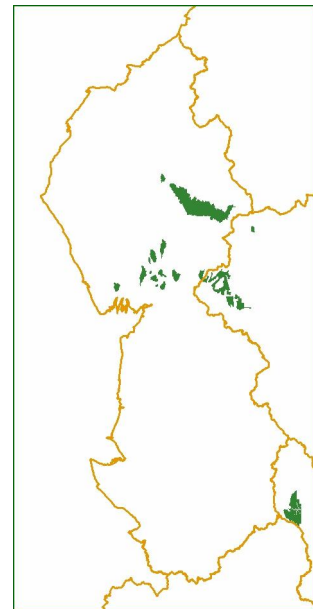
- Extensive areas of grassland and moorland grazed by sheep.
- Highest land is unwooded. Woodland limited to occasional windswept shrubs on pavements with very occasional deciduous woodland on dales sides.
- Diverse limestone grassland dominates. Some grassland is improved and distinctive bright green close-cropped springy turf results from sheep grazing.

Cultural Landscape

- Mainly unenclosed. When enclosed, dry stone walls bound large rectilinear fields (c1750-1850). Walled drove roads & packhorse routes create linear form.
- There are some areas of post-medieval enclosures resulting from enclosing common land. Deserted medieval villages add to the historic landscape.
- Settlement limited to isolated farmhouses and agricultural buildings associated with sheep farming at dale heads and the LCT fringes.
- Settlement limited to isolated sheep farms and agricultural buildings. Vernacular construction of limestone drystone walls with stone or slate roofs.

Perceptual Landscape

- Strong senses of remoteness and tranquillity, due to elevation, limited noise or light pollution. Localised intrusions include the M6 & extraction sites.
- Upland areas have a strong sense of wildness due to exposure and limited human influence. Settlements, roads and agriculture reduce wildness at fringes.
- Panoramic views are characteristic and dramatic landforms with exposed light grey limestone are distinctive features.



Limestone Farmlands

A rolling upland farmland landscape, with distinctive pattern of dry limestone walls and sense of time-depth.

Location:

Located to the north and south of the Lake District and extends eastwards into the Orton Fells.

Broad Regional Landscape Character Type: Limestone Landscapes

Physical Landscape

- Lower Carboniferous limestone, partially overlain by glacial till.
- Slowly permeable, seasonally waterlogged soils with localised patches of shallow, stony soils over limestone.
- A varied undulating, in places sloping, upland topography.
- Localised rock exposures and crags. Occasional watercourses flow through incised channels/gorges. Occasional tarns.

Biodiversity & Land Use

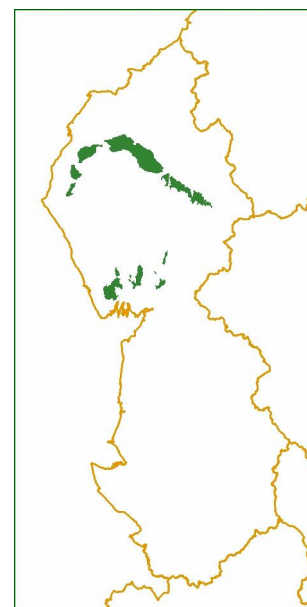
- Pasture is the dominant land use with a mosaic of grassland types: rough pasture on the highest land with improved and semi-improved pasture elsewhere.
- Variable: Small plantations; larger ancient coppice woodland or coniferous/mixed plantation; upland Ash woods along rivers; and mature parkland trees.
- Extensive calcareous grassland (unimproved to improved): improved grassland is a distinctive bright green colour due to centuries of sheep grazing.

Cultural Landscape

- High limestone walls bound relict enclosures (e.g. strip lynchets and deer parks), small irregular fields near settlement, & large regular fields high up.
- Many historic types and field systems are preserved, representing several thousand years of occupation & farming. Dismantled railways are characteristic.
- Dispersed farms and nucleated villages connected by dense, narrow winding lanes. Villages, some estate villages, have greens and farms within them.
- Vernacular, limestone farms & isolated field barns. Architectural unity of C17-C19 domestic buildings: symmetry, limestone/sandstone walls & slate roofs.

Perceptual Landscape

- This is a tranquil, peaceful, pastoral landscape, although there are occasional disruptive elements, such as major road/motorway corridors.
- Remoteness created by a strong rural character & distance from urban influence. This is a human influenced, landscape and not wild. High land is exposed.
- Extensive views from high ground, often towards dramatic upland areas adjacent. Views from lower areas are more intimate.



Limestone Dales

A steeply sloping dale landscape with limestone outcrops and extensive tracts of species rich limestone grassland with interlocking ash woodland and scrub.

Location:

Found in northern Lancashire abutting Yorkshire Dales.

Broad Regional Landscape Character Type: Limestone Landscapes

Physical Landscape

- Limestone bedrock.
- Very shallow calcareous upland soils. Thinnest on rocky slopes, deeper along valley floor.
- Steep sided main valleys and smaller subsidiary dry valleys. In places valley sides are vertical, watercourses having cut into the underlying limestone.
- Frequent outcrops of greyish white limestone and scree slopes. Fast flowing rocky watercourses and winterbourne streams in tributary valleys.

Biodiversity & Land Use

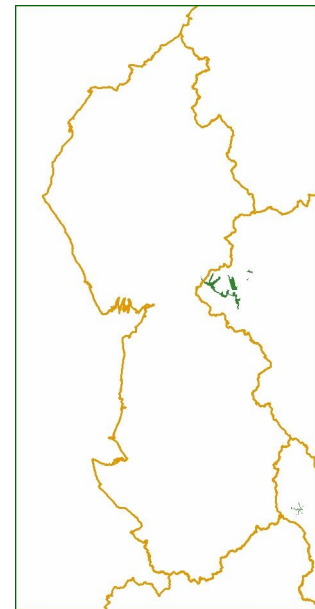
- Pastoral landscape of unimproved grassland and rough grassland.
- Ancient semi-natural woodland, interconnected with secondary woodland and scrub.
- Extensive patches of limestone grassland and some ancient semi-natural, mainly ash, woods.

Cultural Landscape

- Generally unenclosed although some valleys are subdivided by occasional drystone walls resulting in large enclosures.
- Long history of human use of the landscape with evidence of previously denser settlement on upper slopes in Romano-British times. Widespread remains of historic lead mining and quarrying.
- Largely unsettled with occasional villages and hamlets on the valley floor.
- Buildings are constructed of limestone and gritstone, with slate or stone tiled roofs.

Perceptual Landscape

- Relatively limited settlement and roads and the containment of valleys give rise to high degree of tranquillity particularly in tributary valleys.
- Extensive areas of limestone grassland and ancient woodland along with rock outcrops create a high degree of relative wildness.
- Smaller dales are intimate and secluded with views tightly controlled by landform and tree cover. Larger dales may have a more open aspect with long, dramatic views down and across the valley. Woodland creates visual containment.



Sandstone Hills and Ridges

Elevated sandstone ridges & hills, with rock outcrops and riverside bluffs. Diverse pattern of agricultural land, woodland & heath.

Location:

Located in three principal areas namely north of Penrith, St Bedes Head on the Cumbrian coast and in central Cheshire.

Broad Regional Landscape Character Type: Sandy Farmed Landscapes

Physical Landscape

- Permo-Triassic sandstone.
- Well drained sandy and coarse loamy soils, in places associated with brown podzolic soils.
- Steeply sloping hills and low ridges perceived as upstanding surrounded by lower lying land.
- Exposed rock outcrops (cliffs at coast, bluffs along rivers/streams). Watercourses flow through often incised, steep sided and secretive valleys.

Biodiversity & Land Use

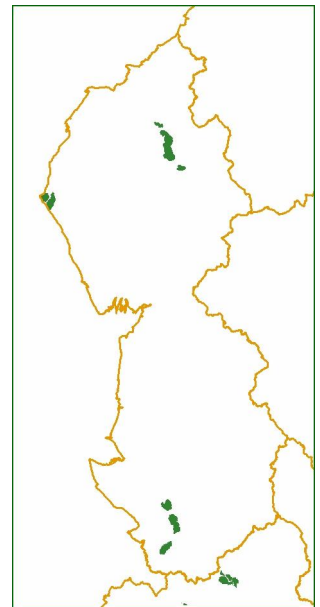
- Pastoral land use dominates and some area of conifer plantation.
- A high density of trees compared to surrounding areas. Post-medieval conifer plantations, ancient woodland & orchards.
- The landscape is dominated by a mosaic of agricultural land, woodland and heathland, which create a diverse landscape pattern.

Cultural Landscape

- Dominant enclosure is small-medium scale regular fields associated with the Enclosure Acts. Field boundaries are hawthorn hedgerows or sandstone walls.
- Relatively late enclosure of township commons in the early C.19th creates regular pattern of enclosure. Some medieval/ early medieval enclosure.
- Settlement is not a prominent feature. There is a low density of dispersed farms, & occasional nucleated villages, including estate villages.
- Vernacular buildings constructed of local sandstone/ red or brown brick. Occasional timber-framed buildings. Distinctive estate village architecture.

Perceptual Landscape

- Over much of the area there is a strong sense of detachment, particularly where views are limited.
- Some sense of wildness in woodland and uncultivated heathland areas.
- From the summits of the Sandstone Ridge there are spectacular long-distance views but ridges, hedgerows & sunken lanes create localised enclosure.



Farmed Sandlands

Undulating, wooded farmland on sandy soils with distinctive pattern of historic villages and parkland/estate influences.

Location:

Located in four principal areas namely north of Penrith, Cumbrian coast, southern Lancashire and in central/southern Cheshire.

Broad Regional Landscape Character Type: Sandy Farmed Landscapes

Physical Landscape

- Permo-Triassic sandstone, partially overlain by glacial sand and gravel. These landscapes derive mostly from windblown or fluvio-glacial deposits.
- Well drained sandy and coarse loamy soils, in places associated with brown podzolic soils with some patches of less well drained soil.
- Dissected undulating topography with localised steep slopes. In areas of glacial deposits rounded knolls may be a feature.
- Dissected by small watercourses with occasional ponds and flooded gravel/sand pits. Mires in poorly drained areas and lakes in designed landscapes.

Biodiversity & Land Use

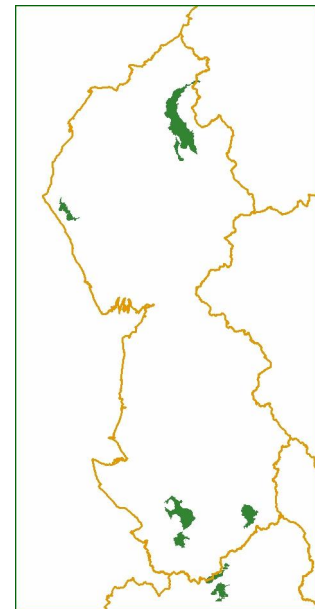
- Pasture is the dominant land use with areas of woodland (ancient and planted conifers) - the latter may create dark silhouettes.
- Dispersed, small deciduous secondary and ancient woodlands, shelterbelts and estate plantations add variety to the texture and pattern of the landscape.
- Extensive areas of agricultural land (predominantly pastoral with some arable) and mixed woodland.

Cultural Landscape

- Large hedged fields form a regular pattern in the landscape. Field boundaries are sometimes stone walls particularly adjacent to upland fringe landscapes.
- Strong time depth derived from prehistoric sites, medieval settlement pattern, halls, parkland and enclosure pattern. Much of this land was marginal, and was therefore enclosed relatively late, under the C.18th and C.19th Enclosure Acts.
- Settled character derived from a combination of historic nucleated villages and dispersed farmsteads and halls/estates.
- Use of locally available red sandstone in buildings is common along with red or brown brick for locally-distinctive detailing.

Perceptual Landscape

- A settled rural landscape with a high degree of tranquillity. Localised effects of quarrying and recreation undermine tranquillity to some degree.
- Remnant areas of scrub/gorse contribute to a sense of wildness and remoteness but this is mainly a settled landscape.
- Open areas have sweeping views and a feeling of spaciousness. Wooded areas feel more enclosed. The muted colours of this landscape are notable.



Settled Sandlands

Low-lying, gently rolling landscape of a medium scale and with a strongly settled character. Often influenced by communications routes.

Location:

Located north of Penrith, Cumbria coast, southern Lancashire and extending into Merseyside, and the southern and eastern fringes of Cheshire.

Broad Regional Landscape Character Type: Sandy Farmed Landscapes

Physical Landscape

- Permo-Triassic sandstone, overlain by glacial sand and till. These landscapes derive mostly from windblown or fluvio-glacial deposits.
- Well drained sandy and coarse loamy soils, in places affected by groundwater.
- Low lying, rolling topography.
- Meandering watercourses flow in open shallow valleys and small ponds/tarns in areas of poor drainage. This type is associated with former mossland.

Biodiversity & Land Use

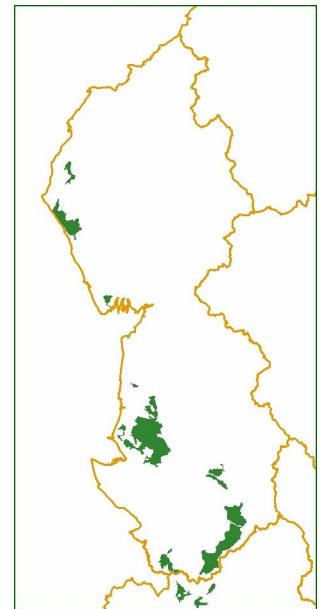
- A mixture of pastoral and arable agriculture, with land often intensively used. Localised active and restored large sand quarries.
- Relatively open landscape with blocks of woodland (coniferous and deciduous), coverts and riparian (along river banks).
- The landscape appears as a mosaic of arable and pastoral fields with some woodland. Field margins are important wildlife habitats.

Cultural Landscape

- Hedgerow & standard trees enclose medieval /post-medieval reorganised fields (irregular-regular up to 8ha). Some boundary loss creates large fields.
- Areas of ancient fieldscapes & post-medieval former common fields, with recent re-organisation. Railways and canals add to historic influence.
- Medium density dispersed farms, nucleated hamlets, villages & towns with historic lanes, modern routes, settlement expansion: ribbon development on roads.
- Red brick buildings, half-timbered structures and distinctive decorative brickwork are characteristic.

Perceptual Landscape

- Major roads and railway lines have localised influence on tranquillity. Elsewhere, there is a quiet, rural feel with a reasonable sense of isolation.
- Localised visual and audible intrusion of man-made structures reduces wildness.
- Views are often limited by the lack of elevated vantage points. Woodlands often provide a backdrop to views.



Drumlin Farmlands

Extensive rolling drumlins with consistent orientation creating uniformity. A settled, pastoral landscape divided by stone walls and hedges.

Location:

Occurs in central parts of the region on the boarder between Cumbria and Lancashire.

Broad Regional Landscape Character Type: Farmed Lowland and Valley Landscapes

Physical Landscape

- Carboniferous rocks, comprising a mixture of rock types, overlain by glacial till.
- Slowly permeable, seasonally waterlogged soils.
- Smooth rounded, regular low hills or drumlins with a consistent orientation creating a rolling to undulating upland topography ('basket of eggs').
- Small watercourses flow through inter-drumlin hollows.

Biodiversity & Land Use

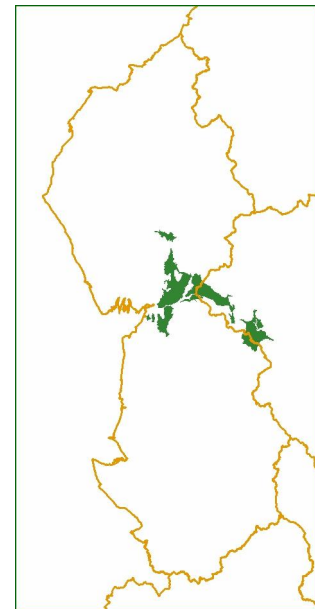
- Improved pasture for sheep grazing predominates, giving a verdant quality, seasonal colour and soft texture.
- Dense small mixed woods and designed landscapes associated with estates contribute to rural wooded character. Ancient woodland on steep slopes.
- Improved pasture (including drainage, fertilization and re-seeding) resulting in reduced species diversity.

Cultural Landscape

- Clipped hedges or stone walls, which rise up over hillocks accentuating relief.
- Parliamentary enclosure on higher ground, older medieval enclosures elsewhere. Parkland and designed landscapes are a feature.
- Generally dispersed, with small hamlets and farmsteads in sheltered sites on the mid-slope of drumlins linked by a network of winding lanes.
- Building materials include scattered stone farmsteads with slate or gritstone roofs, and traditional limestone or gritstone villages.

Perceptual Landscape

- The settled, rural character creates a strong sense of tranquillity. There are localised impacts from roads, railways, quarries and nearby settlement.
- This is a settled, rural, pastoral landscape which is strongly influenced by designed landscapes. It does not feel wild, but the majority of the area feels peaceful and in parts remote.
- Views are often restricted by the topography. However, there are sweeping long-distance views from the highest hills.



Coalfield Farmlands

Small scale, mainly pastoral landscape influenced by weaving, mining, industry and estates. Scattered settlements often associated with industry or roads.

Location:

This landscape is located between Chorley, Bolton, St Helens and Wigan. A small area also occurs along the coast in Cumbria.

Broad Regional Landscape Character Type: Farmed Lowland and Valley Landscapes

Physical Landscape

- Carboniferous Lower and Middle Coal Measures, comprising a mixture of mudstone, siltstone, sandstone and coal seams, overlain by glacial till.
- Heavy gleyed soils, with occasional humic patches, locally shallow on steeper slopes.
- Varied, gentle topography of rolling lowlands rising in places to low hills of undulating landform. Spoil heaps, flashes and subsidence from former mines.
- Rivers flow through lowland farmland - some have been altered and canalised. Small ponds and occasional small reservoirs are recurring features.

Biodiversity & Land Use

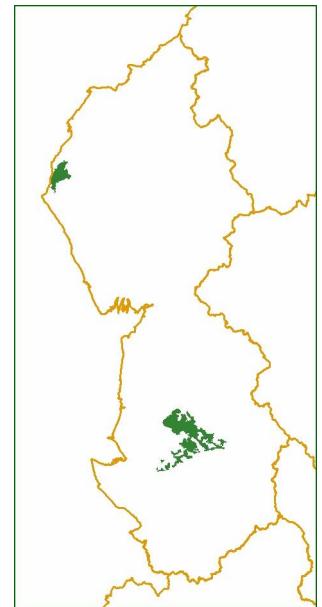
- Pastoral with small pockets of arable farming and some horse grazing, recreation land use and areas of industrial land uses.
- Small broadleaved woodlands, some of which are ancient. New plantations are often associated with reclamation of past industrial sites.
- Lowland dry acid grassland, riparian habitats and semi-natural woodland.

Cultural Landscape

- Regular shaped small/medium scale fields are enclosed by a mix of stone walls, hedgerows (neglected in places) and post and wire fencing.
- Some ancient or post medieval enclosure. Ancient woodland linked with historic parkland. Evidence of industry e.g. relict coal mines and sand pits.
- Intensively settled with strong association to industrial activity. Linear settlements associated with the transport network (roads, railways and canals).
- Gritstone is commonly used in farm buildings, laithe houses, mills, cottages while more modern, industrial related developments comprise red brick.

Perceptual Landscape

- Tranquillity limited by transport corridors and land uses. Proximity to settlement means the area may provide a resource of relative tranquillity.
- The proximity of transport, current and post industrial sites significantly reduces perceived naturalness and thus the wildness experience.
- Views tend to be small scale, filtered by trees and limited by development and infrastructure.



Lowland Settled Plains

Open, low lying, gently undulating agricultural landscape, forming extensive plains with horizontal grain. Simple in form & texture, varying in scale.

Location:

North Cumbria, the Cumbria coast, west Lancashire, north of Warrington & central Cheshire. This landscape occurs near Settled Mossland & Mossland.

Broad Regional Landscape Character Type: Farmed Lowland and Valley Landscapes

Physical Landscape

- Permo-Triassic bedrock, overlain by thick deposits of glacial till.
- Slowly permeable, seasonally waterlogged soils.
- A gently rolling lowland topography appearing flat in places.
- Network of streams & minor rivers forming shallow valleys. Marl pits & ponds are common features.

Biodiversity & Land Use

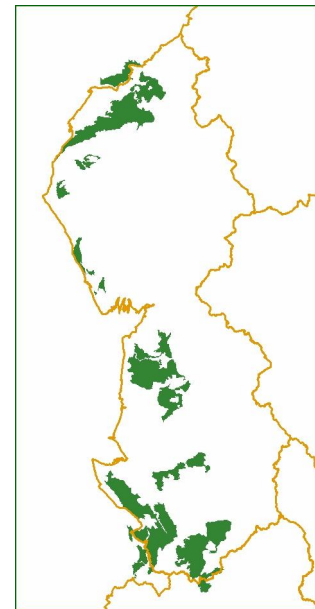
- The heavy clay soils result in extensive areas of lowland pasture, creating a pattern of medium-large fields divided by hedges.
- A well wooded landscape with native oak woodland & plantations (deciduous & coniferous). Parkland trees & hedgerow trees strengthen the wooded character.
- Species-rich neutral grassland, which is associated in places with species-rich hedgerows & hedgebanks.

Cultural Landscape

- Mixed age enclosure: ancient-C.20th. Hedges, fences; localised hedgebanks by roads. Some villages in traditional field systems with strips/large common fields.
- Historic character includes ornamental parkland, military use (particularly WW2 airfields), canals & railways.
- Dispersed farms & villages on ridges, nucleated, C.12th-13th villages/towns (with market towns). Modern ribbon development at edges of many settlements.
- Building materials include local stone & red brick with distinctive diamond detailing. Some areas are associated with timber framed buildings.

Perceptual Landscape

- Strong feeling of tranquillity & isolation although adjacent to industrial sites or transport corridors, tranquillity is reduced.
- A settled, often comfortable lowland landscape. Strongly rural & remote in places but also on the urban periphery/adjacent to busy roads & railways.
- Expansive views from open & elevated land to higher land or the coast/estuaries. Views can be constrained by topography & hedgerows.



Estate Farmlands

Strong estate influenced, flat to gently rolling landscape. Mixed farmland and ancient woodland land uses with halls, gardens, ponds, meres and mosses.

Location:

This RLCT exists in north and central Cheshire.

Broad Regional Landscape Character Type: Farmed Lowland and Valley Landscapes

Physical Landscape

- Permo-Triassic bedrock, overlain by thick deposits of glacial till.
- Slowly permeable, seasonally waterlogged gley soils and peaty soils in hollows.
- A rolling lowland topography, in places rising to low hills.
- Network of streams and minor rivers and occasional mosses, meres and ponds (marl pits).

Biodiversity & Land Use

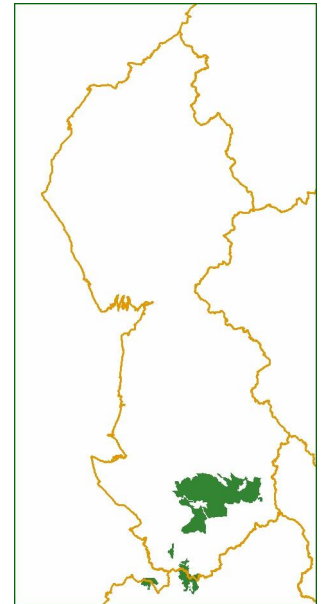
- Mixed arable and pastoral farmland including some areas of horse pasturing.
- Woodland comprises blocks, coverts, riverside and boundary trees. Mainly broadleaved ancient semi-natural woodland with mixed/coniferous plantations.
- Improved grassland with pockets of semi-improved/unimproved grassland and reed swamp, fen and damp pasture associated with meres.

Cultural Landscape

- Medium scale medieval and post medieval re-organised enclosures comprising thick thorn hedgerows with trees, some post and wire/rail fencing.
- The estate character is a defining feature of this type with halls and associated deer parks, ornamental gardens, and designed parkland.
- Dispersed pattern of farmsteads and moated sites/halls reflecting medieval origins. Some nucleated hamlets/villages: some have 20th century expansion.
- Constructions use red brick, white wash, timber frame and brick noggin for farmsteads and cottages. Halls of various styles from the 14th century onwards.

Perceptual Landscape

- Human influence is such that tranquillity is reduced particularly close to transport networks but is higher in the more wooded and parkland landscapes.
- This landscape feels settled with human influence.
- Views mainly short or filtered by trees, woodland and a lack of elevated vantage points. Occasional open views to adjacent uplands and along plains.



Valley Farmlands

Undulating, settled, pastoral landscape with small ancient woodlands in field corners. Trees are scattered along small streams & rivers.

Location:

This type often forms intermediate land between upland fringes & lowland valleys or plains in Cumbria, Lancashire, and southern fringes of Cheshire.

Broad Regional Landscape Character Type: Farmed Lowland and Valley Landscapes

Physical Landscape

- Carboniferous rocks, comprising a mixture of rock types, overlain by glacial till and river terrace drift comprising sand and gravels in larger valleys.
- Mixed: seasonally waterlogged clay soils; freer draining loamy & sandy brown soil in places affected by groundwater; locally shallow soil on steep slopes.
- A rolling to undulating topography, varying from small hills to occasional levels through which watercourses flow. Generally occurs between 70-200m AOD.
- Main river valleys and tributary streams dissect this landscape being a repetitive feature, sometimes incised, flowing through narrow gorges.

Biodiversity & Land Use

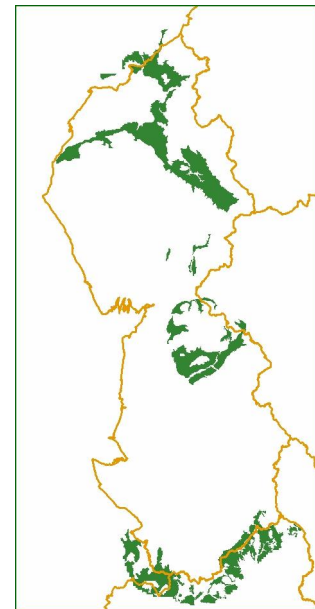
- Extensive areas of improved and semi-improved pasture with some arable interspersed with small ancient woodlands.
- A wooded landscape with open areas. Small ancient woods in field corners link to settlement/watercourses. Occasional conifer plantations & estate woods.
- Areas of unimproved and semi-improved grassland and ancient woodland.

Cultural Landscape

- Large former open common fields next to villages; small, irregular fields at times assarted from woodland enclosed by hedgerows.
- Prehistoric earthworks, Roman remains & medieval settlement at times associated with river crossings, designed parkland, industry & water power.
- Dispersed farms & a series of planned, at times clustered villages with greens & medieval origins. Settlement often associated with roads/river crossings.
- Traditional farm buildings within villages, large churches & designed halls. Many buildings vernacular in style, constructed in local stone.

Perceptual Landscape

- Major road routes/motorways and mainline railways are localised interruptions within what is otherwise a tranquil and peaceful landscape.
- This is a settled landscape and the sense of scale created through enclosure and woodland forms a comfortable sense of intimacy.
- Views vary: being greater from higher ground but the general openness creates long views although undulations, woodlands and hedgerows can be limiting.



Urban

Urban areas, including historic town cores and more recent residential and commercial development, punctuated by areas of amenity open space.

Location:

This RLCT occurs throughout the area and includes the Merseyside and Greater Manchester conurbations.

Broad Regional Landscape Character Type: Urban and Industrial Landscapes

Physical Landscape

- Geology soils and landform vary across this RLCT - see individual landscape unit data.
- There are rivers and canals that run through urban areas and occasional ponds.

Biodiversity & Land Use

- This is an urban land use supporting industry, retail, infrastructure, services and settlement.
- Street trees and parkland containing tree groups. Some parklands support mature specimens which provide important habitat.
- This is a built landscape with habitat mainly confined to amenity grasslands, public gardens and parks and residential gardens. Derelict land and former industrial sites can provide important habitat.

Cultural Landscape

- This is a built landscape where historic field enclosure patterns are no longer clearly defined.
- Older areas have organic character with winding streets and market places. Industrial age development includes civic squares, town halls and public gardens, recent settlement include tower blocks and amenity grassland.
- Settlement varies from workers terracing associated with factories, larger villas with gardens & larger houses associated with wealthy

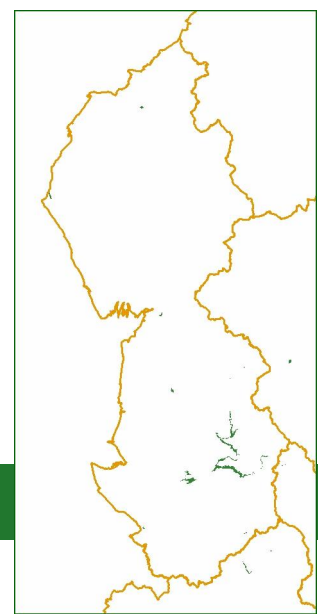
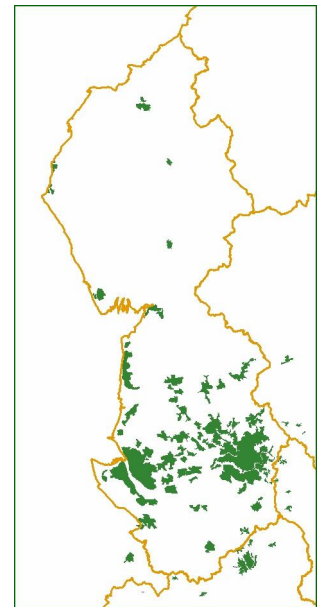
Urban River Valleys

owners. More recent development tends to be varied & includes housing estates and tower blocks.

- Building styles can be utilitarian red brick or stone workers terracing, decorative stone warehouses and civic buildings. More recent buildings styles vary greatly: often concrete buildings and more modern glass clad structures.

Perceptual Landscape

- Due to higher densities of population and a busy transport network tranquillity is generally very low although there are pockets of more tranquil landscapes often associated with open spaces and canals.
- The urban character tends to be busy although parks and open spaces offer opportunities to experience relative remoteness.
- Views vary and are often limited by built development. Views to surrounding hills are locally defining characteristics. Mills and associated chimneys are often characteristic of the views in smaller industrial towns.



A lowland river floodplain, urbanised & supporting settlement, industry & utility developments, interspersed with open land and the road network.

Location:

This landscape exists as a large unit south east of Manchester & as small discreet units elsewhere, including Cumbria, Lancashire and Cheshire.

Broad Regional Landscape Character Type: Urban and Industrial Landscapes

Physical Landscape

- Fluvial drift, comprising river alluvium, with small patches of river terrace sands and gravels.
- Deep loamy and clayey soils variably affected by groundwater.
- Narrow river corridors with a flat, low lying topography.
- Main river channel and fringing banks.

Biodiversity & Land Use

- Urban development: roads, utility infrastructure, industry, recreation routes & residential with occasional pasturing & recreation spaces.
- Woodland cover is limited: there are some scattered trees along watercourses and, in places, scrub generation.
- Rivers in this landscape contain freshwater species and marginal aquatic vegetation despite often being culverted or canalised. Improved grassland is associated with playing fields and golf courses.

Cultural Landscape

- Enclosure varies: thorn hedgerows enclose medium, irregular fields, elsewhere there is no enclosure, or it has been replaced by urban development.
- Relict industry & architectural styles reflect the evolution of urban realm. Old halls & parkland associated with estates are features in open landscapes.
- In parts this landscape is characteristically urban: utility & commercial development, settlement & roads. Occasionally, the landscape is unsettled.
- Historical & modern utility, commercial & industrial developments exist. Housing styles vary: Victorian, Edwardian & interwar suburban styles.

Perceptual Landscape

- Proximity of urban realm, transport infrastructure & utility developments limit tranquillity but this landscape can provide relative tranquillity.
- Remoteness/wildness varies: this landscape is close to settlement but lacks human habitation and can feel remote and inaccessible in places.
- Views can be open and distant along the floodplain, but contained by the rising ground beyond the floodplain or by developments along the floodplain.

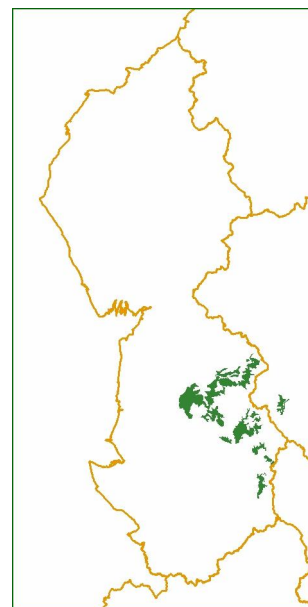
Industrial Foothills and Fringes

Rolling foothills with settlement, relict and active industry, transport routes and pasture often adjacent to urban areas. Strong industrial influence.

Location:

Concentrated east and north of Manchester, extending north to Burnley and Blackburn. Often associated with Upland Fringe and Open Moorland RLCTs.

Broad Regional Landscape Character Type: Urban and Industrial Landscapes



Physical Landscape

- Carboniferous rocks, comprising a mixture of rock types overlain by glacial till.
- Heavy gleyed soils, locally shallow on steeper slopes.
- A varied topography of rolling lowlands, rising in places to low hills, with a more broken, undulating landform.
- Former and active quarries, open rock faces adjacent to Upland fringes. There are canals, rivers and reservoirs often fed by small streams rising in higher land.

Biodiversity & Land Use

- Rough grazing on high land, pasturing on lower land. Some recreation uses (golf courses and country parks). Transport networks and settlement throughout.
- Hedgerows link woods and scrub creating, in places, a well wooded feel. Limited ancient woodland associated with former parkland/watercourses.
- Acid grasslands, wet and dry, sometimes improved.

Cultural Landscape

- Irregular small fields and larger regular fields enclosed by hedgerows with trees, some post and wire fencing and gritstone dry stone walls.
- Medieval - post medieval enclosure often re-organised. In lower areas past industry is evident. Upland farming system associated with wool production.
- Lower land mainly settled with industry, transportation and housing. Dispersed settlement on higher land with farmsteads and groups of weavers cottages.
- Lower areas use a mix of materials e.g. gritstone or red brick. Modern developments exist including housing estates and warehousing.

Perceptual Landscape

- Tranquillity limited by industry and transportation on lower land. Higher lands, and recreation routes lower in the landscape, provide tranquillity.
- Settlement and transport routes reduce wildness but higher up, in less settled areas, there is a sense of remoteness from settlement and activity.
- Views vary, with limited views on some lower lying land due to tree cover and development; higher in the landscape views can be long and panoramic.

Mosslands

Flat, very sparsely-populated landscape with few vertical features, and a mosaic of agricultural land, lowland moss, heath, willow carr and birch scrub.

Location:

Scattered through the region on low lying areas along the coast in north Cumbria and south of the Lake District and west of Manchester.

Broad Regional Landscape Character Type: Wetland Landscapes

Physical Landscape

- Fluvial drift, overlain by a varying thickness of peat.
- Deep very acid raw, in places earthy, peat soils.
- Low lying basins with a raised 'dome' of peat.
- Small water channels or brooks drain areas.

Biodiversity & Land Use

- When drained, arable farming & horticultural cropping dominate. When undrained, a mosaic of natural/semi-natural vegetation dominates.
- Willow carr and birch scrub add vertical elements to the landscape. There are woodland plantations and shelterbelts associated with agricultural land.
- Undrained areas consist of raised bog, heath, willow carr and birch scrub. In agricultural areas habitat consists of road verges and marshy pastures.

Cultural Landscape

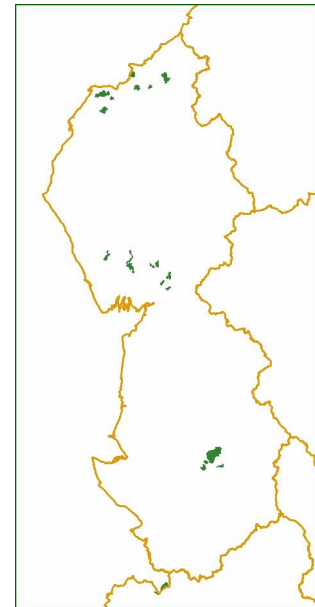
- Early reclaimed land enclosed by irregular fields with some hedges. Later reclaimed land of large

enclosures divided by ditches and/or post & wire fences.

- Largely unenclosed, often inaccessible land.
- Settlement is limited, creating a strong sense of remoteness and tranquillity. There are isolated farmsteads along small roads.
- Buildings date largely from the early 19th century. Agricultural buildings with distinctive construction using local river cobbles in places.

Perceptual Landscape

- Away from the transport network there are strong senses of tranquillity and remoteness due to limited human influence.
- Uncultivated mosses have a sense of wildness.
- Views are wide, to distant skylines, and more elevated land. There is a sense of openness and the horizontal plane dominates.



Settled Mosslands

A flat, open, large scale, low-lying, agricultural landscape characterised by dark peat soils, a geometric field pattern and wide views.

Location:

Occurs mainly in southern Lakes, western Lancashire and more isolated areas in Cheshire.

Broad Regional Landscape Character Type: Wetland Landscapes

Physical Landscape

- Fluvial drift, comprising marine, in places riverine alluvium, overlain by a varying thickness of peat.
- Deep fen peat (characteristically dark in colour) with localised humic alluvial soils and patches of acid raised bog peat.
- Low lying basins (relative to adjacent areas) and often at, or below sea level, with a level topography.
- Small watercourse or brooks drain areas along with drainage ditches or embanked watercourses which divide fields.

Biodiversity & Land Use

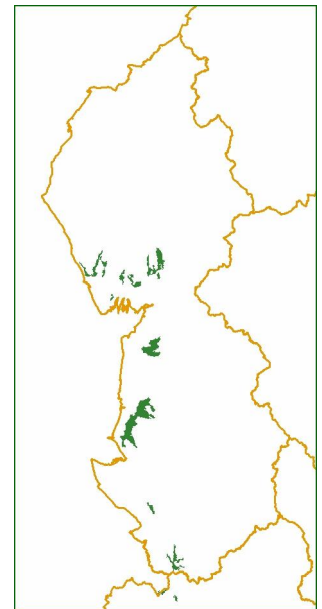
- Intensive arable agriculture (cereals and vegetables) with some areas of pasture on less well drained soils.
- Occasional discrete blocks of secondary woodland (some carr woodland), shelterbelts and linear trees along tracks and field boundaries.
- Wet meadows and semi-improved acid grasslands.

Cultural Landscape

- Rectilinear, very large fields with internal drainage ditches, some hawthorn hedges next to roads. Earlier reclaimed land has irregular enclosure.
- Planned enclosure dating from the early attempts at draining of the land from the 12th century onwards.
- Isolated farmsteads and hamlets clustered along raised roads with some linear villages on ridges of land.
- Vernacular building style varies between areas and includes stone buildings using river cobbles and brick.

Perceptual Landscape

- Tranquillity exists in less populated areas or woodlands. Vertical man made features e.g. wind turbines, and noise from roads reduce tranquillity.
- Wildness is reduced in areas drained for agriculture by the strong human influence. The lack of urban features aids the retention of rural character.
- Open wide views to distant skylines or adjacent elevated landform. Vertical elements such as shelter belts may be prominent in the landscape.



Valley Meadowlands

Valley floor, dominated by river corridors & flat floodplains, often defined by sloping wooded bluffs. Rich alluvial soils support pasture. Often wooded.

Location:

Scattered throughout the Region.

Broad Regional Landscape Character Type: Wetland Landscapes

Physical Landscape

- Fluvial drift, comprising river alluvium, with small patches of river terrace sands and gravels.
- Deep loamy and clayey soils variably affected by groundwater.
- Narrow river corridors with a flat, low lying topography.
- Eroded bluffs and terraces. Main river channel and tributaries with as ox-bow lakes and abandoned channels.

Biodiversity & Land Use

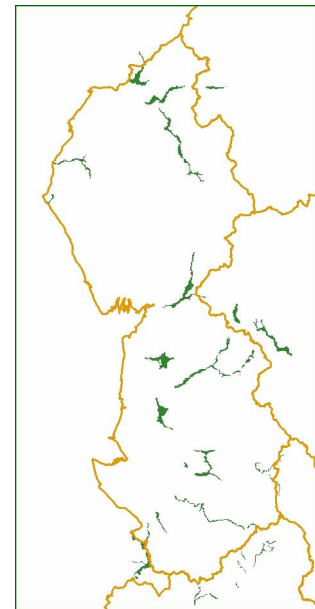
- Rich sheep & dairy pastures on fertile alluvial soils. Pasture fields create patchwork on valley floor. Woodland dominant adjacent to river in some areas.
- Wooded banks/ hanging ancient woods enclose floodplain. Linear trees (willow) along river courses. Hedgerows & parkland trees are floodplain features.
- Valley floor habitat dominated by fertile alluvial soils used for grazing. River channels provide freshwater & wetland habitats.

Cultural Landscape

- Medium-large fields: fences/hedgerows/stone walls. Low bunds signify ancient enclosure. Regular parliamentary enclosures on valley floor.
- Mostly enclosed: ancient & post-medieval enclosure. Canals, navigations & railways, designed landscapes, woodlands & water-powered industrial sites.
- Scattered pattern of isolated farms & halls set in parkland on edges of floodplain. Settlements often developed at important river crossing points.
- Impressive stone bridges, weirs, viaducts and flood defences prominent in the landscape. Legacy of C.18th and C.19th water-powered industry.

Perceptual Landscape

- Rural, unpopulated, pastoral, tranquil landscape.
- Wildness varies: Parts of the valley floor are inaccessible, with limited access to the river bank. Other areas are settled/ popular recreation routes.
- Views often restricted by vegetation/topography, top of valley side slopes form skyline. Some locations have extensive views of valleys.



Coastal Dunes

Ridges of mobile and fixed sand with occasional damp hollows. A small-scale, visually enclosed, undulating landscape. Vegetation creates distinctiveness.

Location:

Found along coastal fringes of the Region.

Broad Regional Landscape Character Type: Coastal Landscapes

Physical Landscape

- Recent windblown drift.
- Deep, well drained sandy soils.
- Rolling, in places undulating lowland topography.
- Sand dunes with damp hollows and an absence of running water.

Biodiversity & Land Use

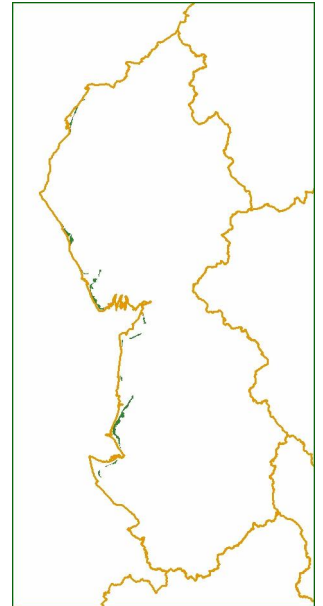
- Wild land.
- Characterised by lack of trees, although some dune areas “borrow” character from the mature pine woods immediately behind them.
- Extensive tracts of marram grass, with a delicate texture and silvery colour, dominate the landscape.

Cultural Landscape

- Characterised by lack of enclosure.
- Because of the ephemeral nature of this land, it has not been enclosed.
- Characterised by lack of settlement.
- Few permanent buildings.

Perceptual Landscape

- The sense of remoteness and seclusion, and the lack of noise, create a strong sense of tranquillity.
- Semi-natural vegetation, few human influences, sense of disorientation amongst larger dunes resulting in a strong sense of wildness.
- Views are generally short and enclosed by the undulating landform. However, wider vistas and glimpses of the sea are seen from dune summits.



Marine Levels

Low lying flat, open & pastoral landscape. Ditches/ hedgerows enclose fields. Low woodland cover & settlement pattern create settled yet remote character.

Location:

Along the coastal fringes & estuaries between Morecambe and Southport, along the Mersey Estuary at Wallasey & west of Chester.

Broad Regional Landscape Character Type: Coastal Landscapes

Physical Landscape

- Fluvial drift, comprising marine alluvium.
- Deep silty and fine sandy soils, in places with a humose surface horizon, variably affected by groundwater.
- Broad tracts of low lying land with a flat topography.
- Drainage ditches and small watercourses.

Biodiversity & Land Use

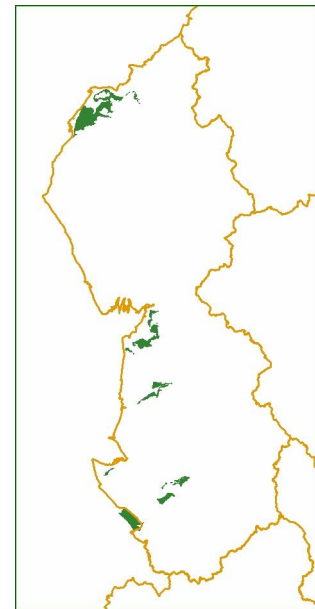
- A pastoral landscape with some rough, at times poorly drained, pasture often associated with gorse scrub/rush with pockets of arable cultivation.
- Limited tree cover comprising small copses, hedgerow trees, and birch scrub often associated with the edges of the mosslands.
- Predominately a pastoral landscape with tracts of improved grassland associated with hedgerows, copses and scrub providing habitat variation.

Cultural Landscape

- The majority of fields defined by drainage ditches with occasional hedgerows which tend to be low & clipped. There is some post and wire fencing.
- Formerly coastal marsh drained and enclosed from 19th and 20th centuries. Some long and narrow enclosures may well be medieval in origin.
- Dispersed pattern of farmsteads associated with late enclosure and some linear villages of greater antiquity located on slightly raised land.
- Mainly red brick, some older, local stone & vernacular buildings further north, to the south - mainly red brick, reflecting the later enclosure.

Perceptual Landscape

- A tranquil landscape due to the rural character. Human made features e.g. roads, settlement & vertical elements (pylons) locally reduce tranquillity.
- An open landscape but settlement & human factors e.g. roads, create a perception of human activity and consequently a comfortable landscape.
- Views are often long and expansive in this landscape due to the land form and the limited tree cover.



Saltmarshes

A low lying, flat, dynamic landscape consisting of saltmarshes. Some are grazed, intersected by dendritic creeks running out to sea. A remote landscape.

Location:

This landscape exists in discreet units along the north west coast, from the River Eden in the north, to Neston in the south.

Broad Regional Landscape Character Type: Intertidal Landscapes

Physical Landscape

- Fluvial drift, comprising marine alluvium.
- Soft, raw soils flooded by high tides.
- Broad tracts of low lying land with a flat topography.
- Intertidal marine creeks.

Biodiversity & Land Use

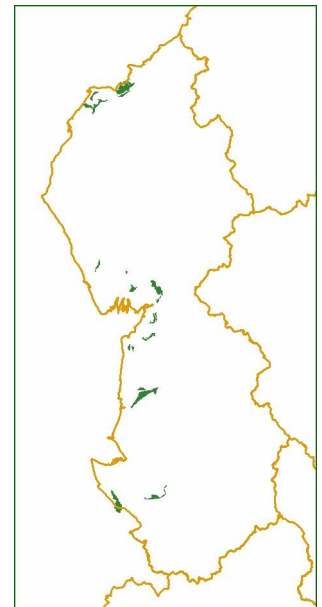
- Saltmarsh and tidal creeks. Human activity is limited within this landscape.
- There are occasional patches of scrub beyond the high water mark.
- Pioneer species close to the shoreline e.g. glasswort, inland species include common saltmarsh grass & herbs such sea thrift if not grazed.

Cultural Landscape

- Largely unenclosed with only occasional hedge topped sea dykes. Man made dykes separate enclosed marshes and farmland further in land in places.
- An unenclosed and transitional landscape with limited human influence. There are old salt workings and monolithic structures in this landscape.
- This is an unsettled landscape.

Perceptual Landscape

- Tranquillity is quite high, enhanced by the strong presence of wading birds, waterfowl and the limited human activity.
- The lack of human-made features, contrast with surrounding human influences creates a sense of remoteness, enhanced by proximity to the sea.
- Views are panoramic, particularly seawards and this is enhanced by the horizontal nature of the landscape.



Estuaries/ Firths

Intertidal landscapes ranging in character with narrow, bounded riverine channels inland, and wider, open & flat channels at the sea mouth. Occasional ports & fuel terminals along banks contrast with the more dominant semi-natural character.

Location:

This RLCT occurs along the coast at the mouth of major rivers.

Broad Regional Landscape Character Type: Intertidal Landscapes

Physical Landscape

- Mainly marine sediment with limited rock.
- Marine sediments and sands.
- Landform varies according to location along the estuary, grading inland from bounded riverine channels to the more open and flat sea mouth.

Biodiversity & Land Use

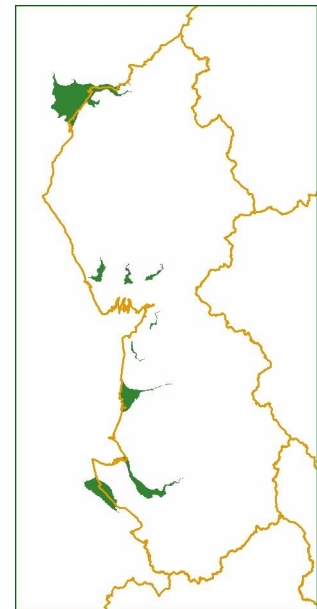
- Deep channels tend to run along the estuaries. These are permanently inundated and support clams & urchins which provide food sources for diving bird species.
- Estuaries provide important habitats but there are also uses such as fuel supply lines running from fuel fields out at sea along the estuaries to terminals on the estuary banks.
- N/A
- Tidal mudflats are often internationally valuable habitats for wildfowl & wading birds.

Cultural Landscape

- There are shipwrecks in some estuaries: many were historically used as shipping lanes carrying international cargo.
- This is an unsettled landscape.
- Buildings along the shoreline provide varied built character from adjacent character types including industry and parkland. There are buoys, beacons and lights within the estuaries.

Perceptual Landscape

- Tranquillity varies, reduced in places by human activities such as industrial processes. In places, there is a strong sense of tranquillity particularly when contrasted with local urban areas.
- Remoteness is limited due to human activity, however some estuaries are more remote.
- Views can be open or channelled; sometimes views are limited by estuary banks.



Bays

A sheltered marine landscape comprising rocky perimeters with coarse sediment channels cutting through them. Worm beds & reefs provide habitat & food for spawning fish which are common in the area, as well as waterfowl & wading birds.

Location:

This RLCT exists in one area: Morecambe Bay.

Broad Regional Landscape Character Type: Intertidal Landscapes

Physical Landscape

- Marine sediments with rocky perimeters and cobble skears, channels tend to contain coarser sediments.
- Marine sediments and sands.
- Intertidal flats with incised channels.
- There is some localised quicksand and deep channels.

Biodiversity & Land Use

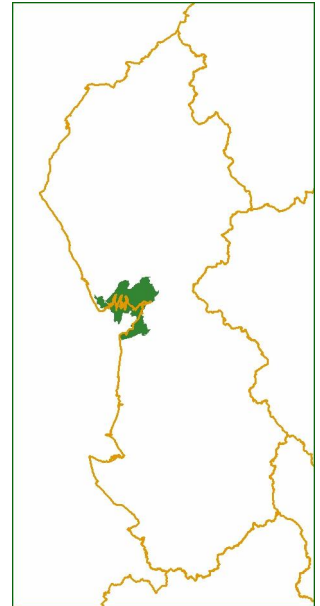
- Land use is limited by the marine environment, however, cockle harvesting and other fishing industries exist in this area.
- Unwooded.
- There are a number of worm habitats, including living reefs of peacock worms, trumpet worm beds and honeycomb worm living reefs.

Cultural Landscape

- There are a few scattered shipwrecks mainly located near to the open sea.
- This is an unsettled landscape.
- Onshore buildings and transport routes are visible from this landscape. Structures such as buoys and warning lights also exist to mark channels and dangers.

Perceptual Landscape

- This is a tranquil landscape with limited human intervention, proximity to the coast reduces tranquillity, as do structures such as buoys and beacons.
- This is a remote landscape, although open, views to settled landscapes reduce the sense of remoteness in places. Adjacency to the shore also reduces the sense of remoteness.
- Views are open and expansive.



Open Seashores

An exposed, intertidal landscape, with a gently sloping beach, some rocky areas and distant views out over the sea to the far horizon. This is a dynamic landscape affected by the movements of the sea.

Location:

This landscape exists as a broken strip along the coast from Carlisle to Liverpool.

Broad Regional Landscape Character Type: Intertidal Landscapes

Physical Landscape

- Geology comprises mainly marine sediments and sands with localised rocks and boulders.
- Soils vary, with coarse and mixed marine sediments, sand plains and mud plains.
- This is a flat to gently sloping landscape. Slopes can become steeper when the shoreline becomes rocky.
- The open seashore provides internationally important feeding and roosting grounds for a variety of bird species.

Biodiversity & Land Use

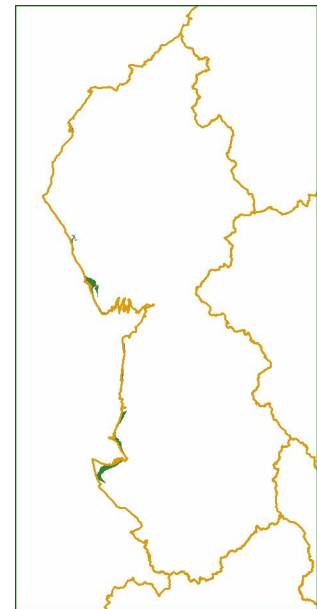
- The shoreline provides important semi-natural habitats.
- The open seashores often provide internationally important feeding grounds and roosts to wild fowl and wading birds.

Cultural Landscape

- There has been long use of the seashore for salt production, shell fish harvesting and as a routeway. There are localised prehistoric foot prints and submerged forests.
- This is an unsettled landscape.
- This is an unsettled landscape although there is evidence of past structures.

Perceptual Landscape

- Tranquillity varies with recreational pressure, in places the seashore can be busy, in less visited areas, the seashore can be desolate and highly tranquil.
- Remoteness varies, near to honeypot sites it is very limited, whilst away from such areas and often associated with the bird habitats, there is a very strong sense of remoteness.
- Views are open and expansive looking out to sea, structures such as wind turbines and oil platforms serve to break up views. There are often very long views to distant shorelines.



Open Sea

An open & expansive marine landscape with shallow plains of mud, sand & mixed sediment. Rocks & canyons provide habitat variation for anemones & seaweeds. The open water supports a large variety of fish and some marine mammals.

Location:

This type fringes the west of the region, from the Solway Firth to the Dee Estuary and extending to the Isle of Mann and Ireland.

Broad Regional Landscape Character Type: Marine Landscapes

Physical Landscape

- Marine sediments.
- Variation of sand plains, mud plains and mixed sediment plains which can comprise coarse sediment.
- Flat to gently sloping with occasional shelves and canyons, depth varies from coastline to wave base.
- There are a variety of features including a deep canyon near Morecambe Bay and sandstone rocks off St Bees Head both providing important and unusual habitat variation supporting sponges, sea pen gardens and sea urchin ranges.

Biodiversity & Land Use

- Occasional oil drilling platforms, shipping and some energy production.
- A permanent sea front exists where slow tides closer to shore meet faster tides from the deeper Irish Sea, separating salty oceanic water from less salty inshore water creating ideal conditions for a variety of sealife e.g. dolphin & shoals of mackerel.

Cultural Landscape

- There are a significant number of shipwrecks which provide historical character, although many are not visible.
- This is an unsettled landscape.
- Occasional oil drilling platforms associated with oil and gas fields, wind turbines and features such as buoys and beacons.

Perceptual Landscape

- This is a tranquil landscape with limited human intervention, proximity to the coast does reduce tranquillity, as do structures such as buoys, beacons and wind farms.
- This is a remote landscape although the open views to settled landscapes reduces the sense of remoteness in places.
- Views are open and expansive.

