

4 Landscape Character Type Descriptions

4.1 Each LCT document comprises three main parts:

1: Description

4.2. This section begins with a paragraph providing a summary of overarching landscape character and the location of the LCT within the two districts (and AONB were relevant). It is followed by detailed district-specific key characteristics to further build up an accurate picture of the character of the LCT. The broader key characteristics for the LCTs across Devon, as they appear in the Devon Menu, are included in **Appendix 2**.

2: Evaluation

4.3. This section begins with a summary of the ‘special qualities’ – selected from fieldwork observations and opinions from the second workshops – which are really key to landscape character – i.e. if any one ceased to exist, it would have a major impact on the landscape concerned.

4.4. The second part of this section comprises a bullet point summary of past/current forces for change affecting landscape character, along with a list of potential future forces for change – gauged from opinions put forward at the first and second workshops, from fieldwork and from other references such as the AONB Management Plan, National

Character Area descriptions and Countryside Quality Counts (CQC) data.

3: Landscape Strategy and Guidelines

4.6. This section begins with an ‘Overall Strategy’ for the LCT – summarising what the subsequent landscape guidelines are seeking to achieve for the landscape as a whole in the future. This aims to provide an overarching ambition for the future landscape of the LCT concerned.

4.7. The landscape guidelines are arranged under the headings of ‘protect’, ‘manage’ and ‘plan’, the broad definitions provided by the European Landscape Convention. The second stakeholder workshops invited suggestions on guidelines for each LCT, which have been considered in the formulation of the final guidelines.

4.8. The ELC definitions are included below, followed by text in italics showing the ‘traditional’ terminology often used for landscape guidelines (including in the other Devon LCAs):

Landscape protection consists of measures to preserve the present character and quality of a landscape which is greatly valued on account of its distinctive natural or cultural configuration. Such protection must be active and involve upkeep measures to preserve significant features of a

landscape. *Other terms often used include 'conserve', 'preserve' and 'sustain'.*

Landscape management is any measure introduced, in accordance with the principle of sustainable development, to steer changes brought about by economic, social or environmental necessity. Such measures may be concerned with organisation of the landscape or its components. They will ensure a regular upkeep of the landscape and that the landscape evolves harmoniously and in a way that meets economic and social needs. The management approach must be a dynamic one and seek to improve landscape quality on the basis of the population's expectations. *Other terms used include 'maintain', 'enhance and 'strengthen'.*

Landscape planning is the formal process of study, design and construction by which new landscapes are created to meet the aspirations of the people concerned. It involves framing proper planning projects, more particularly in those most affected by change and badly damaged areas (for example suburbs, peri-urban and industrial areas, coastal areas). The purpose of such planning projects is to radically reshape the damaged landscapes. *Other terms include 're-create', 'create' and 'restore'. This is strong, forward-looking action which could include, for example, the restoration of former mineral sites to new uses (e.g. habitat recreation, access and recreation, low-carbon development).*

(Taken from Article I of the European Landscape Convention (Council of Europe), March 2004)

- 4.9. The ELC also provides a helpful overarching aim which has strongly influenced the approach taken in preparing the landscape strategies and guidelines for North Devon and Torridge's LCTs:

"In seeking the right balance between protection, management and planning of a landscape, it should be remembered that the aim is not the preservation or "freezing" of the landscape at a particular point in its lengthy evolution. Landscapes have always changed and will continue to change, both through natural processes and through human action. In fact, the aim should be to manage future changes in a way which recognises the great diversity and the quality of the landscapes that we inherit and which seeks to preserve, or even enhance, that diversity and quality instead of allowing them to decline." (paragraph 42 of Article I)

- 4.10. The format and detail provided in the LCT guidelines are also designed to complement the emerging approach being developed by Natural England through their review of the National Character Areas of England. In so doing, the landscape guidelines seek to deliver multiple benefits (sometimes referred to as the 'ecosystem services' approach).
- 4.11. In addition, the tabular format of the landscape guidelines has been designed to incorporate information on delivery – both through existing policy, schemes and initiatives, as well as through suggestions for future delivery mechanisms.