



Location and Context

The *Moorland Hills – Glasgow & Clyde Valley* Landscape Character Type occurs in one location within Glasgow and the Clyde Valley, the Western Pentland Hills. This lies on the eastern boundary of South Lanarkshire and extends eastwards into West Lothian.

Key Characteristics

- Western tail of the Pentland Hills, comprising areas of open moorland dropping steeply in places to the surrounding lowlands.
- Large scale, gently sloping plateau.
- Dominance of heather and peat moorland and rough grazing with small areas of coniferous forestry.
- Largely unsettled landscape with areas of archaeological interest.
- Apparently wild character of the landscape.
- Panoramic views to and from this Landscape Character Type.

Landscape Character Description

Landform

Generally, the geology of the *Moorland Hills – Glasgow & Clyde Valley* Landscape Character Type consists of Upper Old Red Sandstone of the Devonian period, with some outer areas of igneous rock.

The uplands here are over 400 metres and consist of a consolidated rolling moorland landscape of fairly even height dropping, in some cases quite steeply, to the outlying valleys (for example at Dunsyre where Dunsyre Hill drops steeply 150 metres down to the village of Dunsyre to the south). Despite these steeper slopes, many of the hills create a wide and gently sloping plateau of a large scale.

Several watercourses feed from this group of hills down to the outlying valleys. These

include the West Water and the Westruther Burn which both feed into the Medwin Water, a tributary of the Clyde. The watercourses have distinct valleys between the hills but often meander through flatlands on the valley floor.

Landcover

The area is predominantly heather and peat moorland and is unfarmed on the upper slopes. Lower down there are areas of rough grazing pasture used for sheep farming. There are also a few small to medium sized areas of coniferous forestry on lower slopes.

Settlement

The area is largely unsettled and inaccessible by road. It is isolated in character, exposed and bleak. There are very few built structures in the landscape. Modern human activity includes small-scale forestry, sheep farming and the management of moorland for grouse shooting. Of archaeological interest are the prehistoric settlement remains that lie in the west of the area and include an extensive field system and burial cairns. In addition, there is an impressive example of cultivation terraces on the eastern slopes of Dunsyre Hill.

Perception

The lack of settlement and elevated and exposed nature of this landscape contrasts with the relatively well-settled surrounds, creating a feeling of remoteness and wild character.

Long panoramic views are available from this Landscape Character Type, from hill tops and elevated slopes. Hill tops and cairns form the key landmarks within the *Moorland Hills – Glasgow & Clyde Valley*, although numerous landmarks in adjacent landscapes are visible. The Landscape Character Type and wider Pentlands range provide a distinctive skyline and undeveloped backdrop to the densely settled landscapes of the Central Belt and are highly visible from many locations.



This is one of 390 Landscape Character Types identified at a scale of 1:50 000 as part of a national programme of Landscape Character Assessment republished in 2019.

The area covered by this Landscape Character Type was originally included in the Glasgow and Clyde Valley LCA (Land Use Consultants), published 1999.