



**BRECON BEACONS NATIONAL PARK
LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT**

AUGUST 2012

PREPARED BY

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WITH

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1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Landscape Character Assessment was commissioned by the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority in March 2012. It has been prepared by Fiona Fyfe Associates, with Julie Martin Associates, Alison Farmer Associates and Countryside, between March and August 2012.

The spatial approach of the Landscape Character Assessment provides a clear geographic reference for landscape character, special qualities and issues of landscape change across the National Park. It is intended for use in a number of ways, including:

- Assessing the qualities of wildness, tranquillity and remoteness across the National Park to develop a policy related to the impacts of recreation and development on these qualities.
- Contributing to the development of policies with regard to large-scale developments on the fringes of the National Park.
- Use as Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG), supporting emerging policies in the Local Development Plan which aim to protect the special qualities of the National Park.
- Forming baseline evidence in the development of a visitor management strategy, as referenced in the Environment Minister's Strategic Grant Letter to the Welsh National Parks (29th March 2011).

In addition it will inform community development, village plans, Glastir-targeted elements, countryside priorities, education and information through its contribution to understanding of sense of place.

The methodology (comprising desk studies, fieldwork, consultation and writing-up) is in accordance with the current best practice guidelines for Landscape Character Assessment, and also utilises the Welsh LANDMAP landscape database. It reflects the holistic approach to landscape set out in the European Landscape Convention, and considers the natural, cultural and perceptual factors which together comprise the landscape.

The Brecon Beacons National Park was designated in 1957 on the grounds of its natural beauty and the opportunities it offers for open air recreation. Its varied landscapes are the result of its natural geology and topography, superimposed by thousands of years of human activity and management of the land. The landscapes of the National Park therefore contain a record of their evolutionary processes over millennia. The development of landscape is a dynamic process, and many forces for change continue to act on the landscape today.

There are five broad landscape types within the National Park: Uplands, Upland Valleys, Settled Valleys, Lowlands and Mountains and Valleys. Within these landscape types, fifteen Landscape Character Areas were identified. Each one has its own character, identity and 'sense of place' derived from the particular combinations of natural and cultural elements within it.

Each Landscape Character Area is described in terms of its location and context; historical development; distinctive characteristics; LANDMAP components; settlements; key views; special qualities; sensitivities; contribution to ecosystem services and Green Infrastructure and forces for landscape change. Each Landscape Character Area profile ends with a management strategy and recommended management guidelines to protect and strengthen its landscape character.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Introduction and Acknowledgements

2.1.1 This project was commissioned by the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority (BBNPA) in March 2012, and was undertaken between March and September 2012. It has been prepared by Fiona Fyfe Associates, in association with Julie Martin Associates, Alison Farmer Associates and Countryside. The project team also included Lepus Consulting, who advised on ecosystem services, and Robin Lines, who assisted with the fieldwork. The author would like to acknowledge and thank all members of the project team for their contributions, the project Steering

Group for their help and advice, CCW staff, and the National Park Warden Service for assisting with practical issues of access into the most remote areas. She would also like to thank the many National Park Authority staff and members of other organisations who contributed to the consultation workshops and shared their knowledge and understanding of the area and its issues. All photographs in this document have been taken by Fiona Fyfe unless stated otherwise.

2.2 Purposes of the Project

2.2.1 The purpose of the Landscape Character Assessment is to support the National Park Authority's role and that of its partners in managing the landscape of the National Park by way of implementation of the policies in the National Park Management Plan and Local Development Plan. The Landscape Character Assessment will provide the National Park Authority and relevant partners with a tool to identify and address pressures causing landscape change, and specify management guidance to address these likely pressures. Its spatial approach provides a clear geographic reference for landscape character, special qualities and issues across the National Park. Key uses of the Landscape Character Assessment will be:

- Assessing the qualities of wildness, tranquillity and remoteness across the National Park to develop a policy related to the impacts of recreation and development on these qualities.
- Contribute to the development of policies with regard to large-scale developments on the fringes of the National Park.
- Use as Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG), supporting emerging policies in the Local Development Plan which aim to protect the special qualities of the National Park.
- Form baseline evidence in the development of a visitor management strategy, as referenced in the Environment Minister's Strategic Grant Letter to the Welsh National Parks.

In addition it will inform community development; village plans; Glastir-targeted elements; countryside priorities; education and information, together with an understanding of sense of place.

2.3 Contents of the Report

- 2.3.1 Following this introduction, Section 3.0 provides background information on the designation and purposes of the Brecon Beacons National Park, and a short introduction to the process of Landscape Character Assessment. A summary methodology for the project is provided in Section 4.0 (the full methodology with technical detail is presented in Appendix 2). Section 5.0 contains a summary of the development of the Brecon Beacons landscape, and the natural and cultural processes which have influenced it. The Forces for Change which continue to impact on the National Park are summarised in Section 6.0. Section 7.0 presents the findings of the Landscape Character Assessment, and contains maps and a series of profiles, one for each of the fifteen Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) within the National Park. Potential future uses of the Landscape Character Assessment are given in Section 8.0. A series of technical appendices include a glossary, detailed methodology, technical information relating to LCA boundaries, perceptual qualities and LANDMAP components, and a reference list.

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 Location of the Brecon Beacons National Park

3.1.1 The Brecon Beacons National Park covers an area of 1347 square km (520 square miles). It lies between the industrialised valleys of South Wales and the rural countryside of Mid Wales (fig. 1). The majority of land within the National Park is in Powys Unitary Authority, but smaller areas are in Carmarthenshire, Monmouthshire, Rhondda Cynon Taff, Merthyr Tydfil, Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen (fig. 2). The largest settlements within the National Park are Brecon and Hay-on-Wye, with other towns including Abergavenny, Pontypool, Merthyr Tydfil, Glynneath, Llandeilo and Llandovery located just outside the National Park. A more detailed map of the National Park is shown in fig.3.



Fig. 1: UK National Parks and the location of the Brecon Beacons



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Fig. 2: Unitary Authorities within the National Park

3.2 Designation of the National Park

3.2.1 The Brecon Beacons National Park was designated in 1957 on the grounds of its natural beauty and the opportunities it affords for open air recreation. Under the 1995 Environment Act, the National Park Authority has two statutory purposes and a statutory duty, namely to:

- Conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Park;
- Promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities (of the Park) by the public, and
- Seek to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities (within the National Park) by working closely with the agencies and local authorities responsible for these matters.

3.3 Special Qualities of the National Park

3.3.1 The *Brecon Beacons National Park Management Plan*¹ sets out the special qualities of the Brecon Beacons National Park. These are:

- A National Park offering **peace and tranquillity** with opportunities for quiet enjoyment, inspiration, relaxation and spiritual renewal.
- A feeling of **vitality and heathfulness** that comes from enjoying the Park's fresh air, clean water, rural setting, open land and locally produced foods.
- A **sense of place and cultural identity** – “Welshness” – characterised by the indigenous Welsh language, religions and spiritual connections, unique customs and events, traditional foods and crafts, relatively unspoilt historic towns and villages, family farms and continued practices of traditional skills developed by local inhabitants to live and earn a living here, such as common land practices and grazing.
- A **sense of discovery** where people explore the Park's hidden secrets and stories such as genealogical histories, prehistoric ritual sites, relic medieval settlements, early industrial sites, local myths and legends and geological treasures from time immemorial.
- The park's **sweeping grandeur and outstanding natural beauty** observed across a variety of harmoniously connected landscapes, including marvellous gorges and waterfalls, classic karst geology with caves and sink holes, contrasting glacial landforms such as cliffs and broad valleys carved from old red sandstone and prominent hilltops with extensive views in all directions.
- A working, living ‘patchwork’ of **contrasting patterns, colours and textures** comprising well-maintained farmed landscapes, open uplands, lakes and meandering rivers punctuated by small-scale woodlands, country lanes, hedgerows and stone walls and scattered settlements.
- Extensive and widespread access to the Park's **diversity of wildlife and richness of semi-natural habitats**, such as native woodlands, heathland and grassland, natural lakes and riparian habitats, ancient hedgerows, limestone pavement and blanket bogs including those of international and national importance.
- In the context of the UK, geographically **rugged, remote and challenging** landscapes.
- **Enjoyable and accessible** countryside with extensive, widespread and varied opportunities to pursue walking, cycling, fishing, water-based activities and other forms of sustainable recreation or relaxation.
- An **intimate sense of community**, where small, pastoral towns and villages are comparatively safe, friendly, welcoming and retain a spirit of cooperation.

Some of these special qualities occur across the National Park whereas others are more place-specific. The Landscape Character Area descriptions in Section 7.0 help to illustrate where the special qualities listed above occur. Fig. 3 (below) shows the Brecon Beacons National Park.

¹ *Brecon Beacons National Park Management Plan 2010-2015*, Brecon Beacons National Park Authority
Brecon Beacons National Park Landscape Character Assessment Fiona Fyfe Associates, August 2012

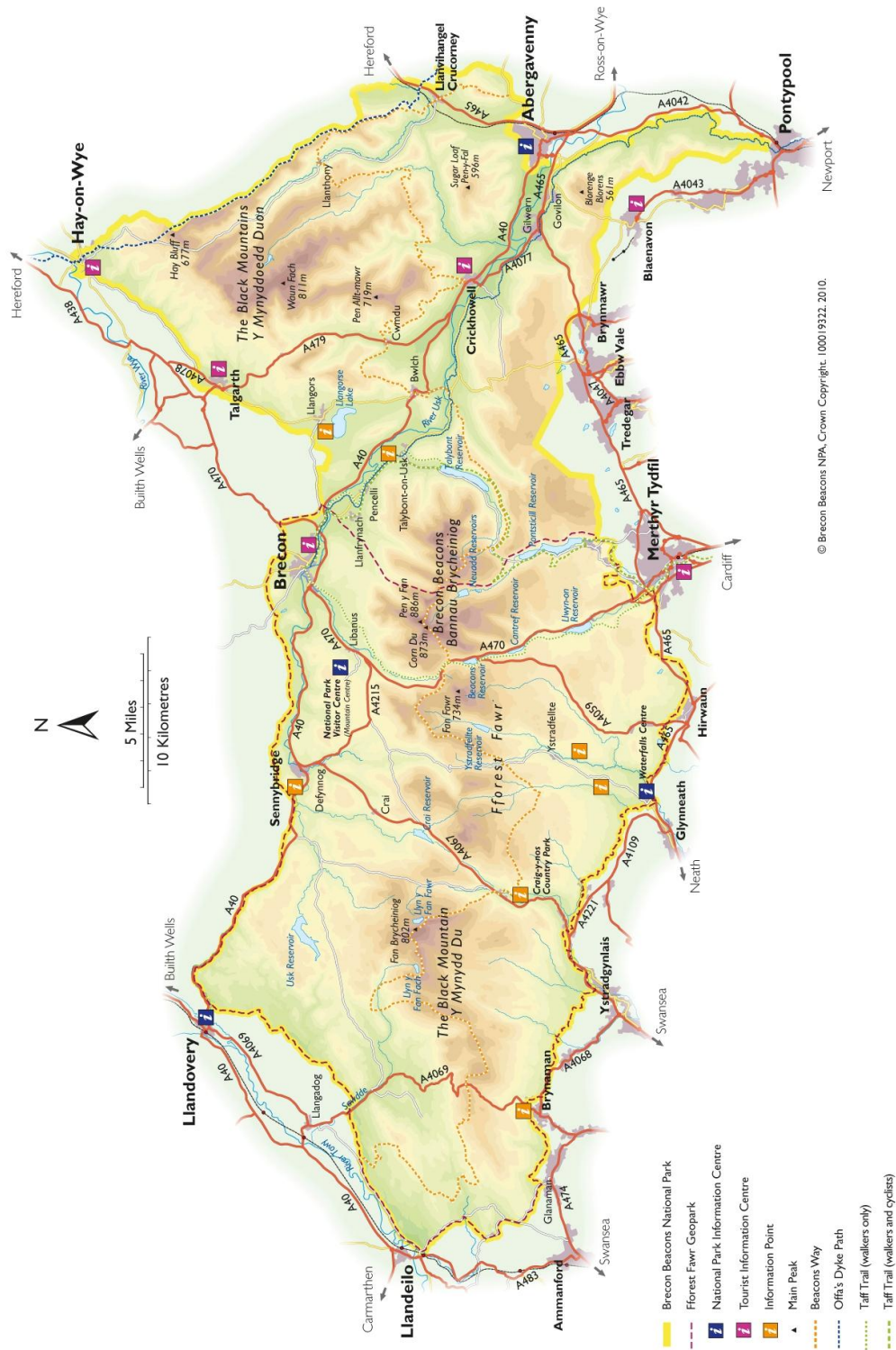


Fig. 3: The Brecon Beacons National Park

4.0 METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction to Landscape Character Assessment

4.1.1 The European Landscape Convention describes 'landscape' as *an area, as perceived by people, whose character is*

the result of the action and interaction of natural and human factors. This holistic approach encompasses physical landscape factors (geology, geomorphology, ecology etc.); cultural factors (archaeology, historic features, settlements etc) and perceptual qualities of the landscape such as tranquillity. Landscape Character Assessment therefore brings together information on many different aspects of the environment into a single document.

- 4.1.2 Landscape character can be defined as the **distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements** in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another (rather than better or worse). Landscape Character Assessment is a **tool for identifying and describing variation in landscape character**. It highlights the unique combinations of elements and features that make each landscape distinctive, and provides information to assist in managing change.
- 4.1.3 The Regional Landscape Character Assessment for Wales is currently nearing completion, and the map below (fig. 4) shows the resulting Landscape Character Areas in the vicinity of the Brecon Beacons National Park.

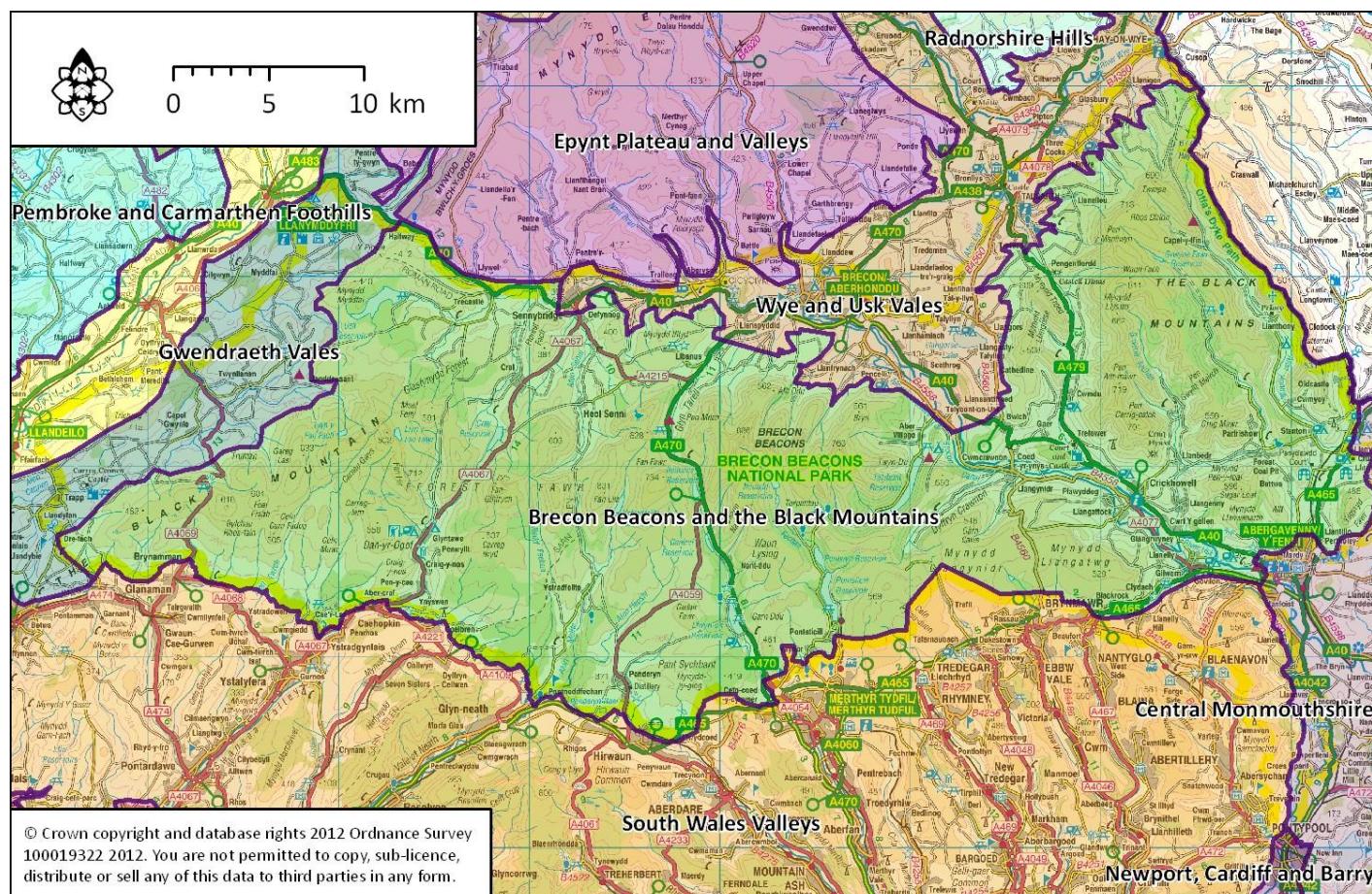


Fig. 4: Welsh Regional Landscape Character Areas (CCW)

4.2 Definitions of terminology

- 4.2.1 Landscape character assessment requires the identification of Landscape Character Types (LCTs) and Landscape Character Areas (LCAs). **Landscape Character Types** are defined as **distinct types of landscape that are relatively homogenous in character**. They are generic in nature in that they may occur...in different parts of the country, but wherever they occur they share broadly similar combinations of geology, topography, drainage patterns,

vegetation, historical land use and settlement patterns. ²Examples of LCTs within the Brecon Beacons are 'Uplands' and 'Upland Valleys'.

4.2.2 **Landscape Character Areas** are defined as *single unique areas which are the discrete geographical areas of a particular landscape type. Each has its own individual character and identity, even though it shares the same generic characteristics with other areas of the same LCT.*³ Landscape Character Areas are named with reference to specific places. For example, within the 'Uplands' LCT there are four LCAs, namely Mynydd Du, Fforest Fawr, Central Beacons and Mynyddoedd Llangatwg & Llangynidr.

4.2.3 **Perceptual qualities of landscape**

For clarity, key terms used within this Landscape Character Assessment when referring to perceptual qualities of landscape are explained here. A full glossary of technical terms and acronyms used in the LCA descriptions is provided in Appendix 1. This Landscape Character Assessment uses the perceptual qualities criteria as described in Countryside Council for Wales (CCW) (2011) *Methodology for Identifying and Designating Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty in Wales* as these are the most up-to-date and Welsh-focussed. However, these criteria can be usefully elaborated by reference to other documents, as described below.

4.2.4 **Tranquillity**

CCW criteria: *Presence and/or perceptions of natural landscape, birdsong, peace and quiet, natural-looking woodland, stars at night, streams and/or sea, natural sounds and similar influences.*

These criteria draw heavily on work undertaken by the Universities of Newcastle and Northumberland for the CPRE.⁴ This comprehensive study into tranquillity revealed that tranquillity is very difficult to define precisely as it is ultimately a state of mind rather than a specific environmental characteristic. However, extensive research and public consultation showed that a number of factors were found to be particularly influential in enhancing/detracting from tranquillity. These factors are set out in the table below, and were recorded for each of the Brecon Beacons LCAs during the fieldwork stage. It was also noted where LCAs were within the Brecon Beacons National Park core dark skies area.

² Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage (2002) *Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland* p. 9

³ As above

⁴ Jackson et. Al. (2008) *Tranquillity Mapping: Developing a Robust Methodology for Planning Support Brecon Beacons National Park Landscape Character Assessment* Fiona Fyfe Associates, August 2012

Factors which positively influence tranquillity	Factors which detract from tranquillity
Openness of the landscape, Perceived naturalness of the landscape, Rivers, Areas of low noise, Visibility of the sea.	Presence of other people, Visibility of roads, Visibility of human development, Road, train and urban area noise, Night time light pollution, Aircraft noise, Military training noise.

4.2.5 Remoteness

In previous work, the *Brecon Beacons National Park Remote Areas Working Group* has defined remote areas as **'areas more than 2km from a tarmac road'**. This method is easily quantifiable, and is a practical approach as it acknowledges the inherent difficulties of accessing these areas for management purposes/ emergency access etc. However, this definition only takes account of the 'inaccessibility' aspect of remoteness, when in reality there are other factors affecting perception of remoteness. There are some parts of the National Park where topography hides views of roads, even though they are relatively close. These areas are *perceived* as being remote, even though in reality they may be within 2km of a road. Therefore, this project uses the more comprehensive criteria for defining remoteness as used by CCW:

CCW criteria: ***Relatively few roads or other transport routes; distant from or perceived as distant from human habitation.***

Using the CCW criteria provides consistency with other Welsh projects (e.g. LANDMAP) and with the definitions of other perceptual qualities. The fieldwork record sheets (Appendix 5) recorded the CCW criteria (including a note of where landform created a sense of remoteness/ disorientation) and also recorded which LCAs contain areas more than 2km from a tarmac road.

Factors contributing to a sense of remoteness
Absence of roads/ transport routes Apparent absence of human habitation Landscape form and sense of disorientation



View south-east from trig. point on Mynydd Llangynidr. This viewpoint is less than 1.2km from a tarmac road, and only 3km from the urban edge of Ebbw Vale. Nevertheless its apparent absence of roads and settlement, and its landscape form creates a sense of remoteness.

4.2.6 Relative Wildness

CCW criteria: ***Low degree of human influence e.g. due to extensive semi-natural vegetation; few built features; openness and exposure to the elements.***

These criteria were recorded for each LCA during fieldwork, along with additional relevant criteria⁵:

Factors contributing to a sense of relative wildness
A sense of remoteness
A relative lack of human influence
A sense of openness and exposure
A sense of enclosure and isolation
A sense of the passing of time and a return to nature

4.3 LANDMAP

4.3.1 LANDMAP is the formally-adopted approach for landscape assessments in Wales, and is advocated by the Welsh Assembly Government. It is an all-Wales Geographic Information System (GIS)-based landscape information resource where characteristics, qualities and influences on the landscape are recorded as five themed spatial layers. Geographically discrete areas are identified and mapped by their landscape qualities and characteristics. Accompanying survey records document those qualities and characteristics in addition to management recommendations and criteria-based evaluations. The five spatial layers are as follows: 1. Geological Landscape; 2. Landscape Habitats; 3. Historic Landscape; 4. Visual and Sensory; 5. Cultural Landscape

4.3.2 LANDMAP data has been used throughout the process of preparing the Brecon Beacons Landscape Character Assessment, and LANDMAP area boundaries have been used as a basis for the Landscape Character Area boundaries. Where possible, LCA boundaries have followed boundaries from the Visual and Sensory LANDMAP layer. However, where there was no appropriate Visual and Sensory layer boundary, boundaries from other LANDMAP layers were used instead. Only in a very small number of cases was there no suitable boundary in any of the LANDMAP layers.

LANDMAP data has contributed to the information base of the Landscape Character Assessment. The following diagram (fig. 5) illustrates how the various LANDMAP layers fit with the components of landscape researched as part of the landscape characterisation process.

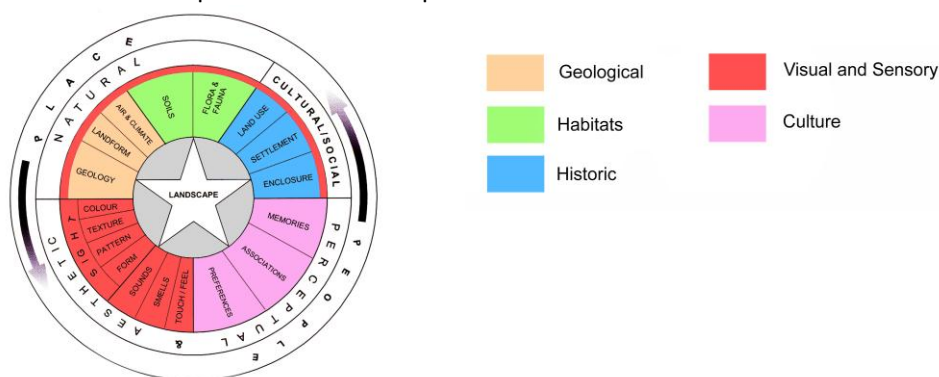


Fig.5: How LANDMAP layers fit into different components of landscape researched during the characterisation process. (Reproduced with permission of CCW).

⁵ Natural England (2011) *Guidance for assessing landscapes for designation as National Park or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in England. Appendix 1: Evaluation framework for Natural Beauty Criterion.*
Brecon Beacons National Park Landscape Character Assessment Fiona Fyfe Associates, August 2012

4.4 Stages of Work

The following diagram (fig. 6) shows the process of undertaking the Brecon Beacons National Park Landscape Character Assessment, which is in accordance with the current Guidelines on Landscape Character Assessment⁶. A full methodology with technical details is provided in Appendix 2.

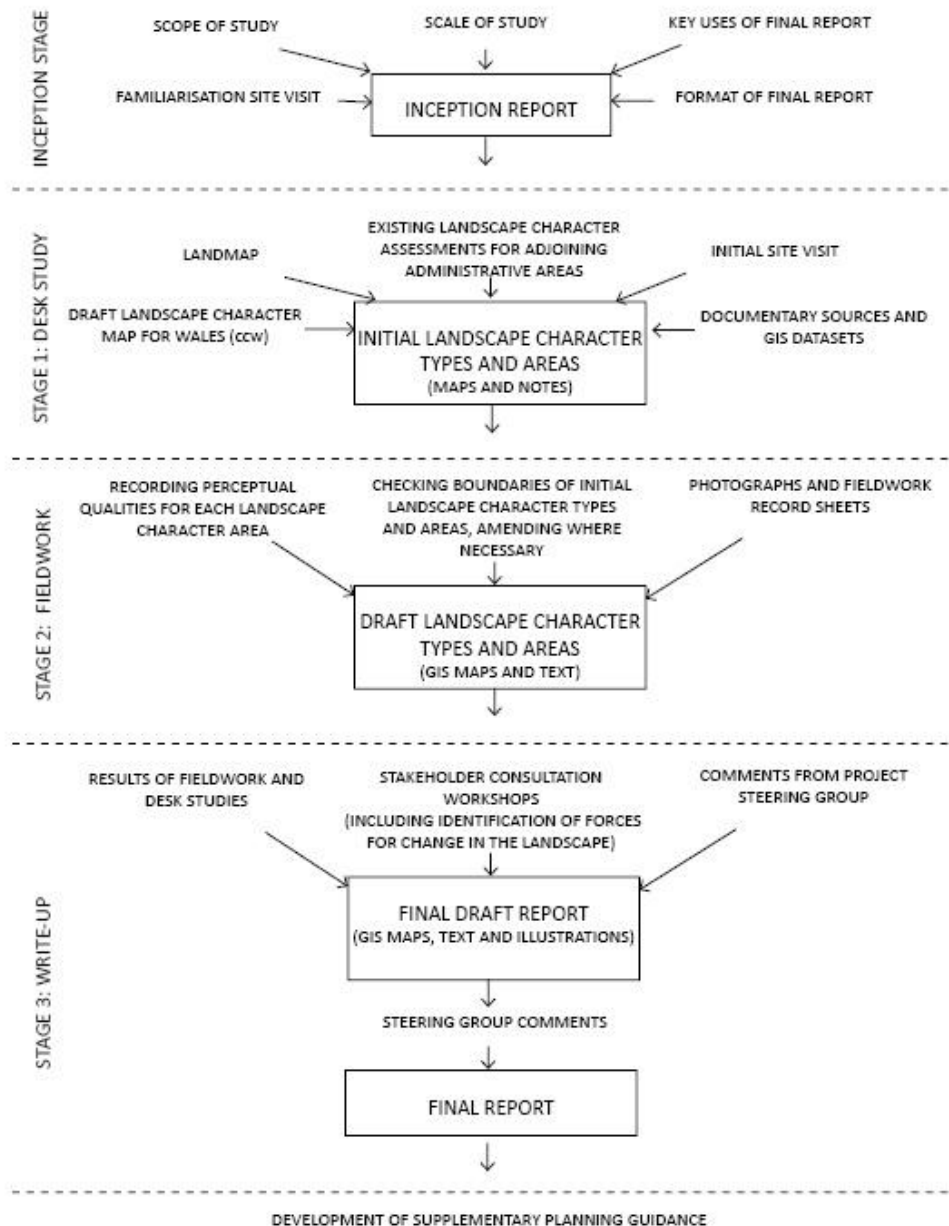


Fig. 6: Flowchart showing the Brecon Beacons Landscape Character Assessment methodology

⁶ Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage (2002) *Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland*
 Brecon Beacons National Park Landscape Character Assessment Fiona Fyfe Associates, August 2012

4.5 The importance of scale

- 4.5.1 In deciding on the appropriate scale and level of detail to be contained within a landscape character assessment, it is essential to consider the size of the study area and the end uses of the landscape character assessment. For example, 'The Brecon Beacons' are a single area in the Regional Landscape Character Assessment for Wales shown in fig. 4 above. Whilst useful at a strategic level, this scale does not pick up in any detail the variety of landscapes within the National Park. At the other end of the spectrum, a village undertaking a Parish Plan or similar exercise would need a very detailed study of their immediate surroundings, looking at buildings or fields on an individual basis.
- 4.5.2 The scale used for the Brecon Beacons Landscape Character Assessment is an appropriate balance between the strategic and the detailed. It enables the variation within the landscapes of the National Park to be appreciated and described, without becoming too 'bogged down' in detail, or losing the identity of the National Park as a whole. It provides the necessary level of detail required by the National Park Authority to fulfil the end uses set out in section 2.2.1.

4.6 Green Infrastructure

- 4.6.1 The LCA profiles in section 7.0 refer to the Green Infrastructure provided by each LCA. This section explains the terminology used in the LCA profiles.
- 4.6.2 Green Infrastructure is fast becoming recognised as an applied approach to land use management and conservation. Green Infrastructure can be defined as a *network of multi-functional greenspace, both new and existing, both rural and urban, which supports the natural and ecological processes and is integral to the health and quality of life of sustainable communities*. It is a cornerstone of spatial planning that is essential to provide wide-ranging benefits to various sectors through the use of "green" and semi-natural features. Careful planning of Green Infrastructure delivers social, economic and environmental benefits that can be derived in a cost effective and sustainable manner. Natural England's Green Infrastructure Framework (2009) identifies seven key functions of green infrastructure, many of which are applicable to the Brecon Beacons National Park:
1. Conservation and enhancement of biodiversity, including the need to mitigate the potential impacts of new development;
 2. Creating a sense of place and opportunities for greater appreciation of valuable landscapes and cultural heritage;
 3. Increasing recreational opportunities, including access to and enjoyment of the countryside and supporting healthy living;
 4. Improved water resource and flood management and sustainable design;
 5. Making a positive contribution to combating climate change through adaptation and mitigation of impacts;
 6. Sustainable transport, education and crime reduction; and
 7. Production of food, fibre and fuel.

4.7 Ecosystem Services

- 4.7.1 The LCA profiles in section 7.0 refer to the Ecosystem Services provided by each LCA. This section explains the terminology used in the LCA profiles.
- 4.7.2 Ecosystem services are the benefits and goods provided by different ecosystems which contribute to human wellbeing. The term 'services' is used to encompass the tangible and intangible benefits that humans obtain from ecosystems, which are sometimes separated into '**goods**' and '**services**'. According to the UK National Ecosystem Assessment (NEA) there are four broad categories of ecosystem services. These are outlined in the table below.

<p>Provisioning Services: The products obtained from ecosystems.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • food • fibre • fresh water • genetic resources
<p>Regulating Services: The benefits obtained from the regulation of ecosystem processes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • climate regulation • hazard regulation • noise regulation • pollination • disease and pest regulation • regulation of water, air and soil quality
<p>Cultural Services: The non-material benefits people obtain from ecosystems</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • spiritual or religious enrichment • cultural heritage • recreation and tourism • aesthetic experience
<p>Supporting Services: Ecosystem services that are necessary for the production of all other ecosystem services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • soil formation • nutrient cycling • water cycling • primary production

Ecosystem Service Types (from UK National Ecosystem Assessment, 2011)

Since ecosystem services are defined in terms of their benefits to people it should be recognised that ecosystem services are context-dependent, that is, the same feature of an ecosystem can be considered an ecosystem service by one group of people but not valued by another group.

5.0 THE STORY OF THE BRECON BEACONS LANDSCAPE

5.1 Geology

5.1.1 The variety of geology which underlies the Brecon Beacons National Park reflects the changing conditions under which the rocks were formed, and the processes which have subsequently acted on them. Fig. 7. shows the geology of the National Park.

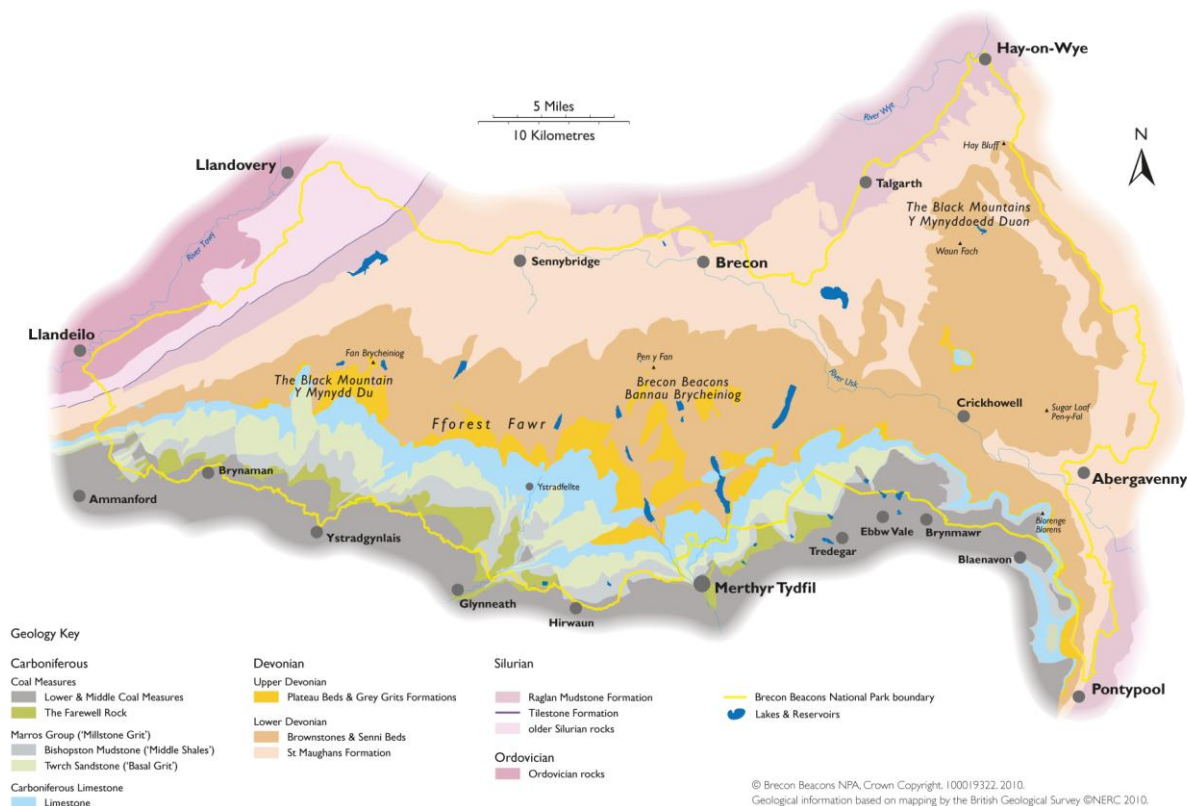


Fig. 7: Simplified geology map of the Brecon Beacons National Park

- 5.1.2 The oldest visible rocks (in the Towy valley near Llandeilo) are some of the oldest exposed rocks in Britain, dating from the Ordovician period. Generally, the oldest rocks are visible in the north and north-west of the National Park, with the exposed rocks becoming younger towards the south.
- 5.1.3 Different layers of sandstone were deposited in different environmental conditions. For example, the Old Red Sandstone visible in the north and north-west of the National Park was laid down in sandy desert conditions over 400 million years ago in the Devonian period. This sandstone weathers to create distinctive pinky-red soils. The harder Brownstones forming the distinctive northern scarp and flat-topped profiles of the Brecon Beacons were laid down later in the Devonian period. To the south of Pen y Fan, a layer of harder 'Plateau Beds' overlie the Brownstones. These were deposited in estuarine conditions and contain conglomerate rocks (a mixture of sand and pebbles) which are resistant to erosion and form the craggy ridges and 'table top' landform visible in this area.
- 5.1.4 At the start of the Carboniferous period (approx. 300 million years ago), the area which is now the Brecon Beacons was under a warm, shallow, tropical sea. In these conditions, limestone formed from the shells of dead sea creatures. These limestones occur towards the south of the National Park, and are grey in colour and rough in texture.
- 5.1.5 Later in the Carboniferous period, changes in environmental conditions resulted in the deposition of alternating hard sandstones and softer mudstones. Tropical forests grew and decayed, fossilizing seams of coal within layers of sandstone and mudstone known as the South Wales Coal Measures.
- 5.1.6 Subsequent earth movements have resulted in the uplifting of the area (during the Late Cenozoic era) and folding of the rocks so they are no longer flat, but sloping down towards the south. This has resulted in the asymmetric profile of the Brecon Beacons, with their steep northern scarp faces and smoother southern dip slopes.



Petrified ripple marks in Old Red Sandstone, Pen y Fan summit



Fossil-rich limestone, Herbert's Quarry



Contrasting craggy limestone and smooth-profiled sandstone, Tawe valley

5.2 Geomorphology

- 5.2.1 The rocks of the Brecon Beacons have been repeatedly covered by ice during the last two million years. Glaciers formed on the highest land and flowed downwards, creating the drainage system we see today. The underlying rocks were eroded by ice, creating a variety of distinctive features. Glaciated valleys, with steep back walls and sometimes small lakes, can be seen on many of the northern faces of the Brecon Beacons (e.g Cwm Llwyh). Many of the floors of these valleys have a lumpy appearance due to the rocks and other debris dumped by the glaciers as they melted. Larger valleys – such as the Usk Valley – were also carved by glaciers, creating a classic U-shape landform. Rocks were also weathered by frost-shattering, often creating crags and scree slopes.
- 5.2.2 More recent erosion by water has also had a major impact on the landscape of the area, with streams and rivers creating the many V-shaped valleys. This process has often been more dramatic on limestone, where water has eroded the rock to form gorges, caves, waterfalls and smaller features such as sink holes. These processes are still continuing today.



Cwm Llwyh



Clydach Gorge



Active scree formation and water erosion, Llyn-y-fan Fach

5.3 Early Inhabitants

- 5.3.1 The Brecon Beacons have a long history of settlement, with the earliest archaeological finds dating from the Mesolithic (mid stone-age) era. There are also some surviving Neolithic (late stone-age) sites such as the chambered tomb at Penywyrhod. Analysis of pollen from ancient soils suggests that much of the area was already cleared of trees by the Bronze Age. The numerous Bronze Age ritual monuments (for example the many different types of cairns, barrows, standing stones and stone circles which exist on the ridges of the uplands) and field systems suggest a settled landscape and sophisticated culture during this time.
- 5.3.2 Hillforts dating to the Iron Age occur throughout the National Park, although it is not known for what purpose they were originally constructed. There are many hillforts along the Usk Valley (including the well-known example of Table Mountain above Crickhowell) and also in strategic sites overlooking river valleys, such as Pen-y-crug north-west of Brecon and Carn Goch above the Towy Valley in the far west of the National Park.



Standing Stone, Maen Llia



Table Mountain hillfort



Roman Road and site of Roman camp on Mynydd Myddfai

5.4 Roman Occupation

5.4.1 There is a variety of evidence for Roman occupation of the area, with some Roman and Iron Age sites in close proximity, for example Y Gaer Roman fort is close to Pen-y-crug hillfort. Y Gaer Roman fort (west of Brecon) is located on the crossroads of Roman roads, including the route known as Sarn Helen which ran from Coelbren to Brecon Gaer. Several Roman roads are still visible in the landscape, often used as footpaths across the uplands today. The sites of associated forts and camps (often situated on the edges of the highest land) are also visible, and a Roman villa/ bath house was found in the Usk Valley near Brecon.

5.5 The Medieval Period

5.5.1 Many buildings and landscape features dating from the Medieval period survive in the Brecon Beacons landscape. Some of the most prominent medieval structures were defensive and reflect the political changes associated with the Norman conquest and local power struggles, as well as the ongoing divide between the Welsh and the English. One of the earliest of such structures to survive is the crannog (artificial island) on Llangors lake, which is thought to be the base of King Brychan of Brycheiniog and to date from the 9th Century. Offa's Dyke (which forms part of the eastern National Park boundary) was an earthwork built in the 8th Century to demarcate the territory of the English King Offa, effectively separating England and Wales. There are Norman castles at Hay-on-Wye and Brecon, and both these towns are thought to be planned settlements from this time, located at strategic river crossing points. Later defensive structures include Tretower castle (in the Usk Valley, with a magnificent adjacent Tudor manor house) and the 13th Century Carreg Cennen castle in the far west of the National Park.

5.5.2 A number of Medieval religious buildings also survive, including numerous village churches such as Myddfai and Ystradfellte, and St Michael's chapel on Skirrid. Llanelli church (on the western side of the Usk Valley) is surrounded by an ancient churchyard and is located at the meeting point of five roads, suggesting that this was an historically significant site. The most impressive ecclesiastical remains are both monastic: Llanthony Priory in the Vale of Ewys and Brecon Cathedral, formerly a monastic church.

5.5.3 Many of the 'everyday' features which make up the Brecon Beacons landscape are likely to date from the Medieval period, including lanes, farms, fields and villages. This can be illustrated through the legend of the Physicians of Myddfai and the Lady of the Lake, which was recorded in the 14th Century, and dates to the 12th Century. Several of the farms mentioned in this 12th Century legend are still features of the landscape today.

5.5.4 The main process which has led to the Brecon Beacons landscape we see today has been centuries of agriculture. Practices such as upland common grazing by hefted flocks, enclosure of lower land into fields, and construction of practical buildings from locally-available materials have been continuing for hundreds of years. Early field creation would have involved the enclosure of upland moorland or the clearance of valley woodlands (assarting), creating characteristically irregular fields, many still surrounded by trees and woodland today. Common grazing encouraged particular species of plants such as heather and grasses, and this, combined with natural variations in geology and soils, created a variety of moorland vegetation. Woodlands were also managed to enable the

'harvesting' of timber using techniques such as pollarding and coppicing. Woodlands were often grazed by animals, creating wood-pasture.



Reconstruction of Crannog on Llangors Lake



Llanelli churchyard



Ancient farms, fields and woodlands below the upland common, near Llanddeusant

5.6 Industrialisation

- 5.6.1 From the 17th century onwards, relative peace, social changes and the increasing pace of industrialisation saw many changes occur in the landscape. Transport routes were exploited, with a number of turnpike roads constructed in the 18th century. Some followed existing routes whilst others were probably new constructions. Many of these roads are still used today, and include the A40, the A470 Brecon-Merthyr, A4059 Brecon-Penderyn, A4067 Brecon-Swansea and A4069 Llangadog-Brynaman. The Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal was opened in 1812, enabling the transport of industrial and other goods by water.
- 5.6.2 A network of railway lines was constructed to connect the area's towns. Building graded track across the high and uneven terrain of the area presented major engineering challenges and often involved tunnels and viaducts. Some railway lines followed the routes of earlier quarry tramroads.
- 5.6.3 As industrial processes improved, and the demand for raw materials increased, industry and mineral extraction became larger in scale and greater in its impacts on the landscape. Limestone quarrying (which had been a small-scale, informal process for centuries) became much larger in scale as the demand for building stone and lime (for fertiliser and industrial use) increased. Lime kilns became a common feature in the landscape (with many surviving today) and quarry-based settlements developed. For example, in the mid 19th Century, Penwyllt was home to a community of over 200 people, with houses, chapels and pubs. Now, only a few cottages, the quarry and lime kilns survive.
- 5.6.4 The discovery of coal and iron ore in the area to the south of the National Park led to a rapid increase in industrialisation and associated social and landscape change. Furnaces, iron works, industrial villages and the tramways and railways necessary to transport the products and raw materials were constructed, and woodland was felled for charcoal and building.
- 5.6.5 However, not all eighteenth and nineteenth century landscape change was industrial. The 'picturesque' qualities of the landscape, with its atmospheric, rugged rocks and contrasting green fields were appreciated by the upper classes, who built themselves small country estates surrounded by gardens and parks. Many such estates can still be seen, particularly in the Usk Valley. Writers and influential artists such as JMW Turner visited sites including the Usk Valley and Llanthony Priory and helped to make the area a destination for visitors who wished to appreciate the qualities of its landscape. It was also popular for sport, with uplands used for grouse shooting. This continued the tradition of sporting use in the area: Fforest Fawr had been a Royal (later private) hunting forest since the 11th century.



Former railway line, Talybont valley



Abandoned lime kiln, Herbert's quarry



Parkland at the Glanusk estate in the Usk valley

5.7 The Twentieth Century

- 5.7.1 The twentieth century saw major changes to the Brecon Beacons landscape. The most visually prominent changes were the construction of numerous reservoirs to supply drinking water for the expanding populations of industrial towns and cities to the south. The construction of reservoirs was in many cases accompanied by the planting of extensive coniferous forests.
- 5.7.2 New infrastructure (particularly linear features such as pylons and roads) has been introduced into the landscape, and occasional telecommunications masts have become prominent features on summits (e.g. Yr Allt and Blorengel). Other features such as industrial tramways have become less visible in the landscape as resource-based extractive industries within the National Park declined. Twentieth century military use has left its mark on the landscape, including tank training obstacles on Mynydd Illtud and WW2 tank traps near Storey Arms.
- 5.7.3 Settlements have expanded in response to demand, often away from their traditional cores. Development outside the National Park (for example the introduction of large-scale open-cast coal mining) particularly to the south has affected views from the National Park. Light pollution from buildings, streetlights, vehicles and other sources within and beyond the National Park has reduced the darkness of the skies and the number of stars visible.
- 5.7.4 The industry beyond the National Park boundary has also had less direct consequences on the landscape. Pollution - including acid rain - damaged upland environments, particularly peat bogs. Loss of peat has affected species composition on the uplands and reduced groundwater storage capacity, leading to changes in water flows in rivers and underground cave systems.
- 5.7.5 Many agricultural changes occurred during the twentieth century (described more fully in the next section). Of these, perhaps the greatest landscape impacts have come from changes in the upland grazing regimes which have affected the appearance and species composition of the upland landscape. For example, a decline in traditional shepherding, combined with the agricultural headage payments of the 1980s and 1990s resulted in overgrazing of the uplands and commons, with a consequent loss of heather, and an increase in grassland species. In more recent years, grazing levels on common land have declined (exacerbated by the impact of foot and mouth disease in 2001), enabling invasive species such as gorse and bracken to establish in some areas.



Llywn-onn Reservoir, completed in 1926



WW2 tank traps near Storey Arms



Nature reserve and new planting at Tregyb wood near Llandeilo

- 5.7.6 One of the greatest changes of the twentieth century in the Brecon Beacons has been the rise of recreation, as demonstrated through designation as a National Park in 1957. Whilst increased visitor numbers have many positive social and economic effects, they have also had negative impacts on the landscape, for example footpath erosion, damage to archaeological monuments, increased traffic, car parks and informal parking, litter and illegal activities such as flytipping and illegal use of 4x4 vehicles and offroad motorbikes.
- 5.7.7 However, the twentieth century and the start of the twenty-first century have also seen many positive initiatives in landscape management. As well as the National Park designation, many sites have been designated for their cultural, biodiversity or geological importance at local, national or international level. Examples include Scheduled Monuments, Conservation Areas, World Heritage Site, Sites of Special Scientific Interest and Special Areas of Conservation, as illustrated on figures 8 and 9. In addition, the western part of the National Park is also designated a Geopark for its geological heritage. The designation of local and national Nature Reserves has made it easier for the public to access and experience sites of rich biodiversity, and access to upland landscapes has been made less restricted by the opening-up of access land under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000).
- 5.7.8 The Brecon Beacons landscape is continually evolving, and the following section (6.0) describes the key forces for change acting on the Brecon Beacons landscape today.

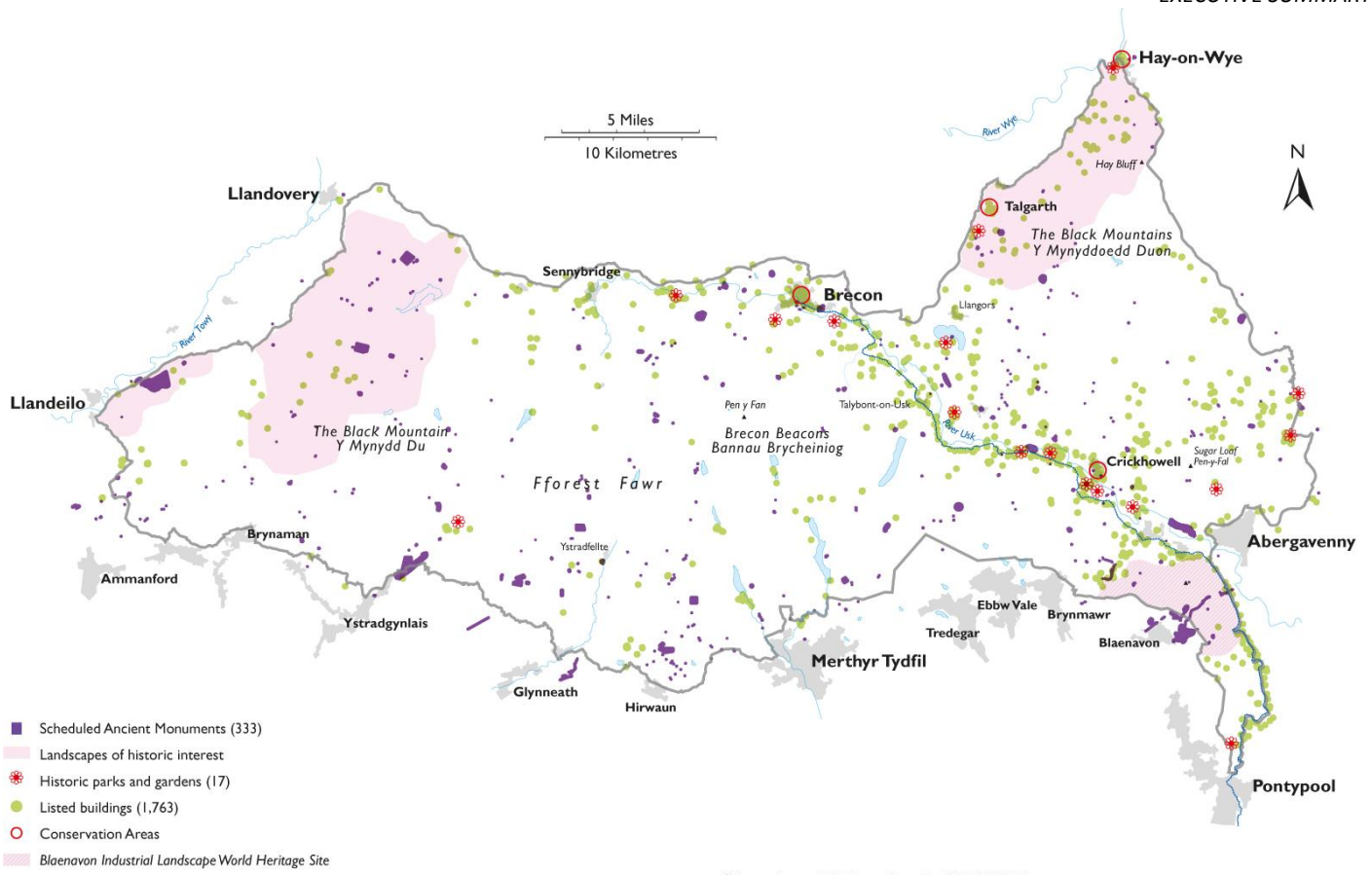


Fig. 8: Historic and built environment designations within the Brecon Beacons National Park

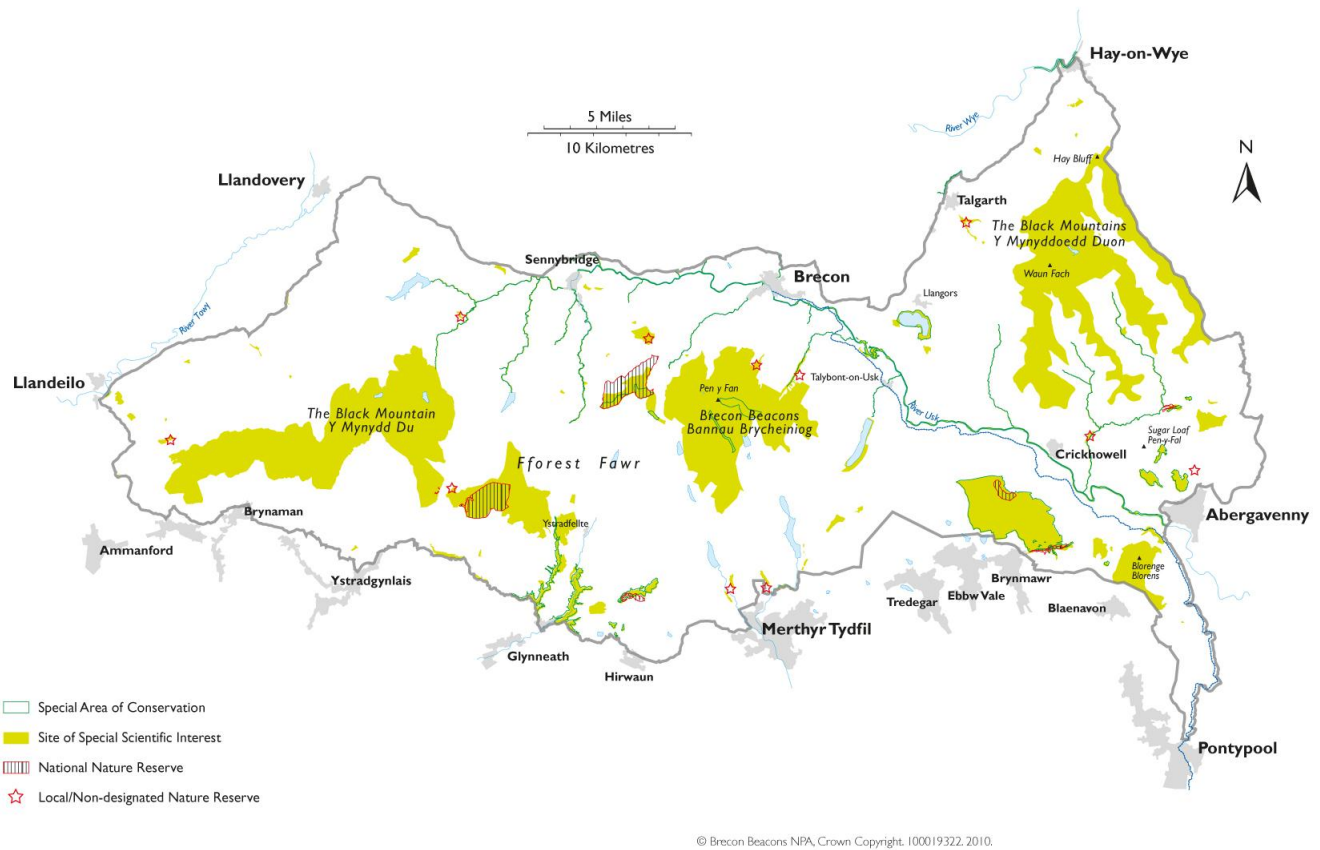


Fig. 9: SSSIs, SACs and Nature Reserves within the Brecon Beacons National Park

6.0 FORCES FOR CHANGE

6.1 Introduction

- 6.1.1 The landscape of the Brecon Beacons National Park is not static, and many processes of change continue to impact upon it. This section summarises the key forces for change acting on the landscapes of the National Park as a whole. For more detail on all these topics please refer to the *National Park Management Plan 2010-2015*. The Landscape Character Area (LCA) profiles in Section 7.0 describe the specific forces for change acting on individual LCAs. Although the key forces for change are described under separate headings below, they are closely interrelated.



Fig. 10: Challenges facing the National Park and its communities (reproduced from National Park Management Plan p. 51)

6.2 Climate Change

6.2.1 Climatic conditions have always fluctuated, and will continue to do so in the future. Exactly how the climate will change in the future cannot be predicted with certainty but it will have a variety of implications on all areas, including the Brecon Beacons National Park and its landscapes. Possible effects include changes in habitats, with some becoming lost or altered, thereby causing some species of plants and animals that are unable to adapt to become locally extinct. Examples of habitats potentially affected include woodlands, uplands and wetlands, all of which are key components in the landscapes of the Brecon Beacons. Changes in environmental conditions will also affect farming, particularly in terms of crop suitability, growing seasons, availability of drinking water and shade, and effects on livestock breeding. These agricultural changes will affect the character and appearance of the landscape, particularly where they depart from traditional hillfarming practices. Further landscape changes could occur as a result of increased intensity of storm events causing loss and damage to trees, particularly those on shallow soils which are less well rooted. Increased rainfall during winter would affect river flows and groundwater conditions, which could exacerbate flooding and change the character and biodiversity of lower-lying areas.

6.3 Biodiversity

6.3.1 Biodiversity describes the variety of species, habitats and individual variation which is essential for life on earth. The landscape we see today is a product of humanity's influence on biodiversity over thousands of years. Its habitats and species have been affected by management of the land to produce food, water, fuel, timber, minerals and places to live. People therefore do not live in a natural environment but a semi-natural one; *a place where naturally occurring habitats and species still exist but their form and location is dependent on where human activities have allowed or encouraged them to be*⁷.

6.3.2 Land management resulted in a rich biodiversity inextricably linked with the character and appearance of the Brecon Beacons landscape, for example its grazed upland moorlands, woodlands and hay meadows. However, the farming and forestry practices which created this biodiversity are changing, and traditional farming has been

⁷ National Park Management Plan 2012-2015, p. 44

revolutionised by mechanisation, artificial fertilizers, land drainage, pesticide use and intensification of single crop or livestock production. These agricultural methods have increased production but to the detriment of habitats and species. For example, improvement of grassland for grazing (through drainage and fertilizer use) has reduced the number of wild flowers present in meadows. Traditional management of woodland (for example through coppicing) has also declined, resulting in a loss of woodland diversity in terms of age and species. A general decline in mixed livestock grazing (by cattle, sheep and ponies) in favour of sheep has led to replacement of heather moorland with monospecies grass swards and an increase in bracken. Bracken has also increased as a result of as a consequence of farmers switching from lamb to mutton production, and poor heather/ grass burning practice. As well as reducing upland biodiversity, these changes also affect landscape character through changes in the appearance, texture and colour in the moorlands which form the backdrop to much of the National Park.

- 6.3.3 Biodiversity has also been lost as a result of development pressure: land which once contained semi-natural habitats is now taken up by housing, roads, industry and infrastructure, and this is also affecting the character of the landscape in some parts of the National Park. Further landscape change may also occur as a result of Glastir woodland planting schemes.
- 6.3.4 The Brecon Beacons National Park also has a rich subterranean environment in the form of cave systems which support their own biodiversity as well as preserving an historical record of past environmental conditions. These cave systems are affected by surface changes such as variations in groundwater flows and pollution of water supplies. Changes in surface land management, including agriculture and forestry, also have implications on the underground environment.

6.4 Farming Pressures

- 6.4.1 The landscape of the Brecon Beacons is the product of thousands of years of pastoralism: both enclosed lowland pastures and wide-open upland commons. The well-being of the farming community is therefore fundamental to the future of the landscape and communities of the National Park. At present, the livelihood of the farming community is under pressure from a number of challenges. Perhaps the greatest of these is the decline in the number of small family farms. The average age of farmers is increasing, and children may be reluctant to take on the demands of a family farm. This is a particular problem in the areas of most marginal agricultural land where farm viability is a particular issue. As traditional hillfarming declines, vital skills and traditions are lost, and these can have major impacts on the landscape and biodiversity. For example, decline in common grazing may lead to 'scrubbing up' of hillsides with invasive species such as gorse and bracken which out-compete the traditional grass and heather moorland as these areas succeed towards secondary woodland on the slopes within the tree line. Changes in stocking patterns (for example reduction in grazing by cattle and ponies) can also have impacts on moorland vegetation patterns.
- 6.4.2 Some farms are bought up by neighbouring farmers, resulting in fewer, larger farms, but with greater infrastructure requirements and larger buildings. Others are farmed 'part time' with simpler farming systems. Other challenges facing farmers come from reform of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and its associated agri-environment funding schemes (for example the recently-introduced Welsh Glastir Scheme). The CAP has a very strong influence on farming policy and hence on the character of the farmed landscape. The viability of farming (and rural living in general) is also affected by increases in fossil fuel prices- the costs of fuel for travel, machinery and heating continue to rise, as do the costs of oil-based products such as plastics, pesticides and veterinary pharmaceuticals. Markets continue to change, with increased pressure (particularly from some supermarkets) to keep prices low. The challenge within the National Park is to ensure that the special qualities of the landscape continue to evolve through maintenance of viable farming communities. Some schemes such as the promotion of 'Brecknock Lamb' are helping in this process.

6.5 Local Population Pressures

- 6.5.1 It is predicted that the population of the National Park will increase over the foreseeable future. This will be a result of in-migration to the area, as its farming population is likely to continue to decline. The area is a popular retirement destination, and improved transport links have made parts of the National Park a commuter base.

These population increases have resulted in an increase in house prices and housing demand, which is a particular problem for local young people who wish to stay in the area. Increasing the size of settlements to accommodate the increased population has impacts on the landscape of the National Park, potentially creating a more developed character. The Local Development Plan contains allocations of land for housing and other developments. Increasing the size of settlements to accommodate the increased population has impacts on the landscape of the National Park, potentially creating a more developed character.



Peat Erosion, Twmpa, Black Mountains.



Eco-friendly housing, Crickhowell



Upland car park, Storey Arms

6.6 Renewable and Non-Renewable Energy

6.6.1 The global depletion of fossil fuel supplies will have implications for the Brecon Beacons National Park's landscapes. For example, within the National Park small-scale renewable energy schemes such as solar-thermal, hydro-electric, wood-fuel, heat pumps and wind may alter the character of the landscapes and built form, particularly where there are issues of cumulative impact. Growing of biofuel crops may be a possibility in some parts of the National Park, but care must be taken not to adversely impact on the landscape. Larger renewable energy schemes outside the National Park such as wind turbines and solar farms may also affect views from within the National Park. Reduced availability of fossil fuels also increases the viability of large-scale coal mining outside the National Park, with consequent impacts on views from within the National Park.

6.7 Transport

6.7.1 Transport infrastructure is important to the local economy and the recreational use of the National Park. However, public transport provision is a challenge, particularly in the western part of the National Park where the communities are more scattered, and many of the National Park's residents and visitors are dependent on private vehicles. Improvements to road networks (including signage) and increase in traffic levels affect the character of the landscape. This is a particular issue where roads cross the upland parts of the National Park, and reduce their sense of tranquillity.

6.7.2 The National Park is aiming to cut its 'carbon footprint' by reducing the number and length of car journeys, and to develop more sustainable forms of transport including bus and cycling networks. These would potentially enhance the recreational resources of the National Park and enable visitors to enjoy the landscape in a more sustainable way.

6.8 Globalization

6.8.1 The loss of local distinctiveness in cultures, traditions, economies and biodiversity is a global phenomenon, and impacts on the Brecon Beacons where loss of local skills and 'know-how' is a particular problem. The most obvious examples of this in the Brecon Beacons are the decline of traditional knowledge and rural skills such as shepherding, dry stone wall construction and hedge laying. All of these losses lead to a gradual reduction in local distinctiveness and decline in landscape character.

6.9 Management Policies

6.9.1 The *National Park Management Plan 2010-2015* sets out the Guiding Principles and Strategic Objectives which

inform the management of the National Park as a whole. The management guidelines at the end of each Landscape Character Area profile (Section 7.0) should be read in conjunction with the Guiding Principles and Strategic Objectives in the *National Park Management Plan*.

7.0 LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT RESULTS

7.1 Broad Landscape Character Types

7.1.1 Five broad landscape character types were identified during the landscape characterisation process, as shown on fig. 11 overleaf. These are:

Mountains and valleys: The repeating pattern of ridges/peaks of high land and intervening straight valleys found in the eastern part of the National Park.

Upland Valleys: The lightly settled farmed/ forested valleys below the open moorland in the western and central parts of the National Park.

Uplands: The high, open land above the moorland line in the western and central parts of the National Park, used predominantly for grazing.

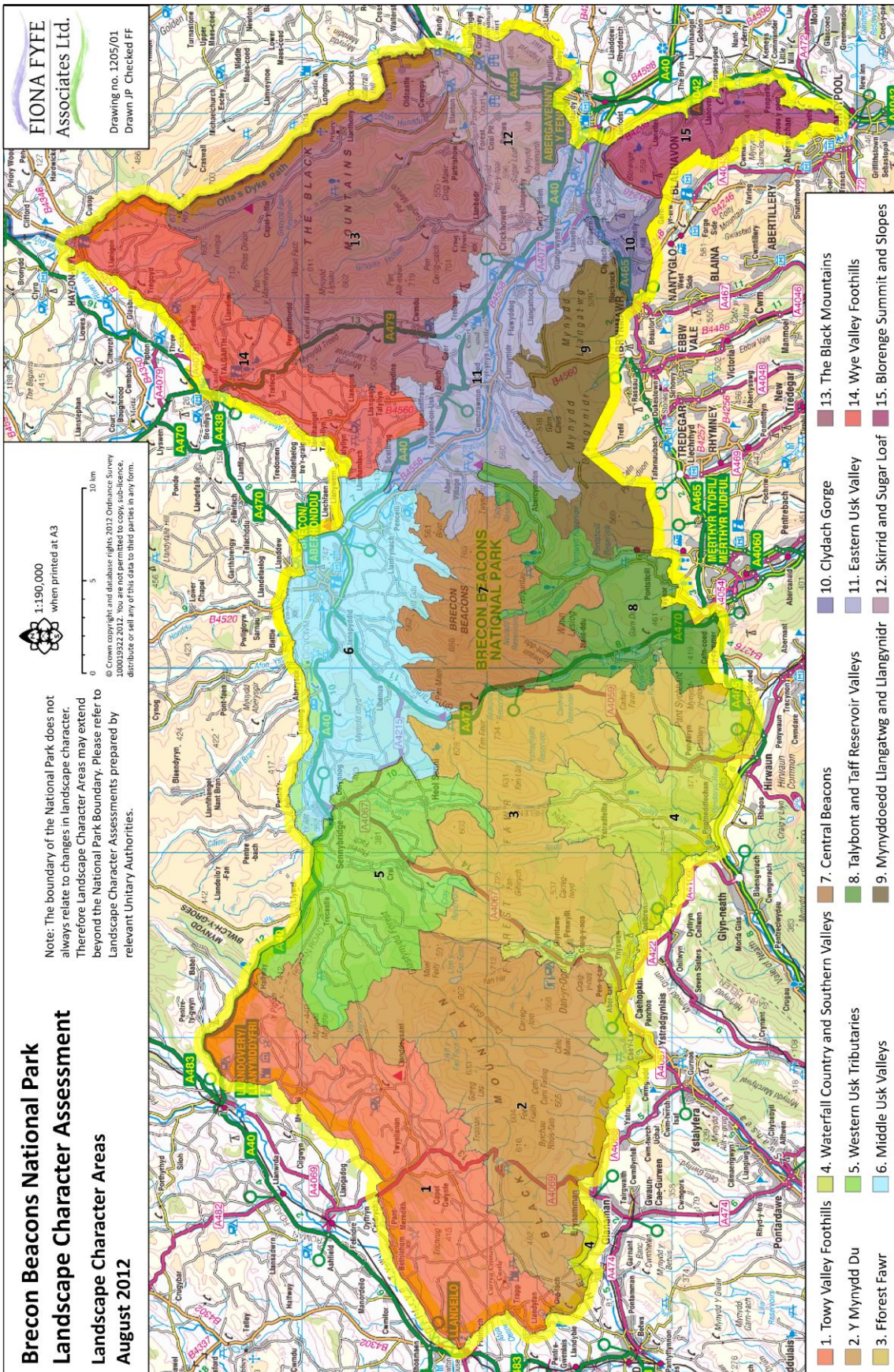
Settled Valleys: The relatively settled, farmed valleys found in the central part of the National Park which include the towns of Brecon and Crickhowell, and several smaller settlements.

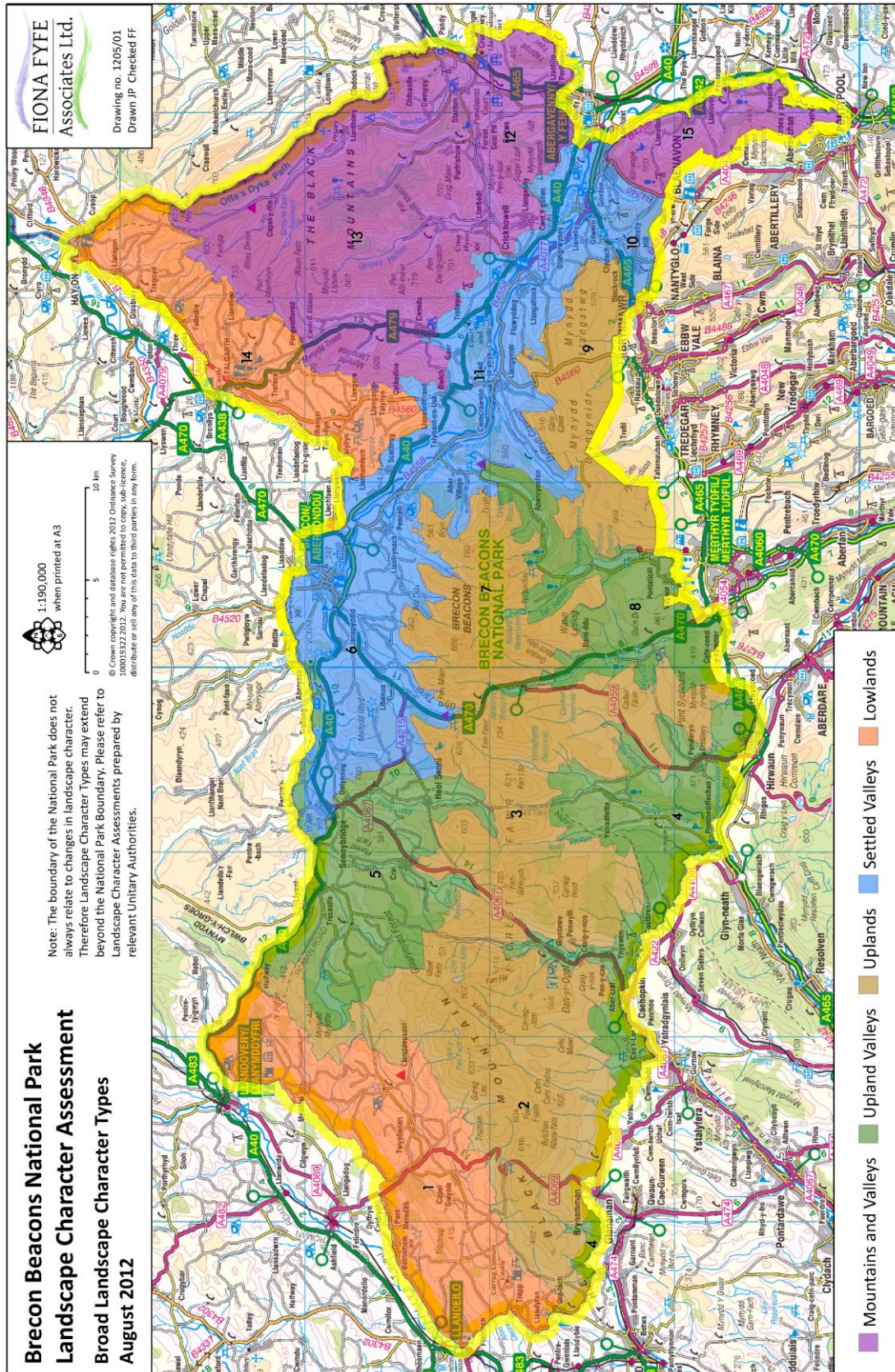
Lowlands: The slopes and ridges of farmland which lie between the high moorlands and the main river valleys of the Wye and Towy.

7.2 Landscape Character Areas

7.2.1 Fifteen Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) were identified within the Brecon Beacons National Park, as shown on fig. 12 overleaf. The remainder of this section describes each of the LCAs in more detail. The LCAs are as follows:

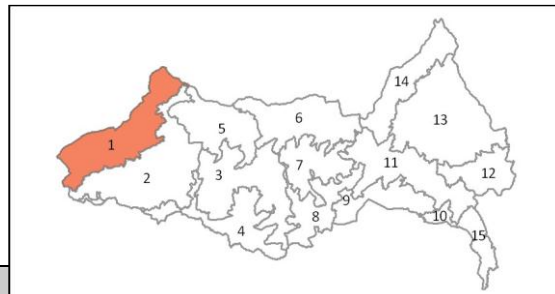
- LCA 1: Towy Valley Foothills
- LCA 2: Y Mynydd Du (the Black Mountain)
- LCA 3: Fforest Fawr
- LCA 4: Waterfall Country and Southern Valleys
- LCA 5: Western Usk Tributaries
- LCA 6: Middle Usk Valleys
- LCA 7: Central Beacons
- LCA 8: Talybont and Taff Reservoir Valleys
- LCA 9: Mynyddoedd Llangatwg and Llangynidr
- LCA 10: Clydach Gorge
- LCA 11: Eastern Usk Valley
- LCA 12: Skirrid and Sugar Loaf
- LCA 13: The Black Mountains
- LCA 14: Wye Valley Foothills
- LCA 15: Bloreng Summit and Slopes





LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA 1: TOWY VALLEY FOOTHILLS**Broad Landscape Type: LOWLANDS****Description****Location and Context**

This linear LCA forms the north-western edge of the National Park, and comprises the land between Y Mynydd Du and the Towy Valley including the villages of Myddfai and Llanddeusant. The towns of Llandovery and Llandeilo lie just outside the LCA, beyond the National Park boundary.

**Summary Description**

A peaceful, pastoral landscape lying below the distinctive uplands of Y Mynydd Du (the Black Mountain) and Mynydd Myddfai. Its landscape is characterised by low ridges of hills and extensive ancient woodlands, with its enclosed fields contrasting with the open moorland of Y Mynydd Du which forms its backdrop. It has a timeless, secretive quality, with winding lanes connecting ancient farmsteads, villages and prominent archaeological sites, and strong cultural associations with the legends of the Physicians of Myddfai.



The Sawddle valley near Llanddeusant

Historical Development of the Landscape

This is a long-settled landscape, with some farms traceable through legend back to the twelfth century. This ancient settlement is reflected in the patterns of lanes, farms, fields and woodland. Its most prominent historic sites (Carn Goch Iron-Age camp and Carreg Cennen Medieval Castle) are both defensive structures, reflecting the Towy Valley's past strategic importance.

Distinctive Characteristics

- Underlain by some of the oldest rocks in the National Park: mainly sandstones and mudstones from the Ordovician and Silurian and lower Devonian periods.
- Complex undulating topography comprising a series of ridges running broadly NE-SW, parallel to the Towy valley.
- Numerous rocky mountain streams flow into the rivers Cennen and Sawdde, both tributaries of the River Towy.
- Land use dominated by pastoral farming, with extensive areas of woodland and some forestry.
- Hedges with mature hedgerow trees enclose small, irregular fields (with evidence of assarting) and line deep lanes. Higher areas enclosed with stone walls, with fields generally more regular in shape.
- Extensive areas of deciduous ancient woodland with bluebell groundcover on valley sides and along watercourses. Some patches of coniferous forestry, particularly in the north and centre of the LCA.
- Semi-Natural Habitats of Principal Importance to Wales including broadleaved woodland, marshy grassland, fen/mire, dry heath, neutral and acid grassland.
- A rich historic landscape, including a diversity of defensive sites spanning several millennia.
- Settlement includes the nucleated village of Myddfai, plus numerous scattered farms and hamlets including Llanddeusant and Trap.
- A network of sunken, winding lanes and tracks often with high hedge banks. The A4069 runs across the centre of the LCA.
- An intricate, small-scale landscape, but with sudden open views providing a sense of space and orientation, particularly where there are views to landmarks such as the Mynydd Du, Trichrug and Carreg Cennen Castle.
- A rich, varied landscape with harmonious compositions of landform and woodland, and seasonal variation in colour and texture.

Landmap Components (See Appendix 3 for components of all LANDMAP aspect areas)

Visual and Sensory Aspect Areas	Dyffryn Tywi Valley sides south (O); Llanddeusant and Myddfai farmlands (H); Banc Pen Arthur ridge (M); Cefn Garreg ridge (M); Crwbin Ridge (H)
Key to Landmap evaluation criteria: (O) Outstanding: of international importance. (H) High: of regional or county importance. (M) Moderate: of local importance. (L) Low: of little/no importance	

Settlements

Within the LCA, settlement is limited to the nucleated village of Myddfai, plus numerous farms and hamlets. These are generally stone built, with some paint and/ or render. Barn conversions for residential use are becoming increasingly common. This LCA also plays an important role as the setting for larger settlements outside the National Park (Llandoverly and Llandeilo).

Key Views

Landmarks such as Carn Goch and Carreg Cennen Castle are prominent in views from within the LCA, and are also key viewpoints. Backdrops to views looking outwards from the LCA include the profiles of Y Mynydd Du and Mynydd Myddfai, and across the Towy Valley to the hills beyond. This LCA also forms the backdrop and setting to elevated views from Y Mynydd Du LCA.

Evaluation

Special Qualities

The natural beauty and recreational factors that make this landscape special are summarised in the table below, along with examples of their sensitivities to landscape changes. This LCA is closely related (both visually and in terms of land management) with the adjacent uplands of Y Mynydd Du. Any changes in one area will impact on the other. For example, reduced grazing on the uplands will change their appearance from the lowlands. Similarly, developments in this area are likely to be visible in views from the uplands. The LCA also has strong visual links with land beyond the National Park boundary, and will potentially be affected by developments in these areas.

Criteria	Special Qualities for this Landscape Character Area	Sensitivities
Scenic quality and Sense of place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scenic quality and sense of place results from the harmonious composition of deciduous woodland, landform, field patterns and distinctive upland skylines. 	<p>Loss of traditional features (woodland, lanes, hedgebanks, field boundaries, farm buildings etc.)</p> <p>Insensitive introduction of large-scale buildings which do not sit comfortably within the existing landscape.</p> <p>Changes to open upland skylines (e.g. telecommunications masts).</p>
Landscape quality and integrity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An intact and well-managed historic landscape including historic lanes, farms, fields, settlements, woodlands and archaeological sites which together create a very strong sense of time-depth and an unchanging quality. 	As above.
Perceptual qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A productive farmed, settled landscape with very few detracting features in the form of modern development, noise or transport corridors, and therefore high levels of tranquillity. Higher land (e.g. Carn Goch) has a sense of exposure, but generally the landscape is relatively enclosed and intimate with occasional long views. Long views generally include relatively wild upland landscapes (Y Mynydd Du and Mynydd Myddfai). 	<p>Loss of tranquillity resulting from increased development and/ or traffic.</p> <p>Loss of enclosure and intimacy as a result of woodland and/ or hedgerow loss.</p>
Artistic and cultural associations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural connections with the legendary Physicians of Myddfai, recorded in the C.14th <i>Red Book of Hergest</i>. 	
Rarity or representativeness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A rare example of an intact historic landscape which can be directly linked with twelfth century legends. It is also an excellent example of a landscape evolved from the hillfarming tradition with common grazing. 	Loss/ decline of hillfarming traditions and historic landscape features. (See comments under 'sense of place' above)
Natural heritage features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extensive ancient woodlands with bluebell groundcover, including accessible woodland Nature Reserves at Tregyb Wood and Cennen. Both of these (along with other woodland, grassland and geological sites) are SSSI. The LCA contains a concentration of semi-improved and unimproved species-rich pasture. 	<p>Decline in traditional woodland management (e.g. coppicing).</p> <p>Land management changes resulting in reduction of biodiversity, e.g. loss of unimproved grassland.</p>

Cultural heritage features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Numerous cultural designations, including approximately twenty Scheduled Monuments ranging from prehistoric barrows to post-medieval lime kilns. These include the exceptionally well-preserved defensive sites of Carn Goch Iron Age Hillfort and Carreg Cennen Medieval Castle; the latter is a popular visitor attraction, and both are prominent hilltop landmarks. Partially included in the Register of Landscapes of Special Historic Interest in Wales (Area 3). 	<p>Loss/ damage to archaeological sites as a result of visitor pressure, neglect, and/ or natural processes of erosion.</p> <p>Potential impacts of developments (including prominent development beyond the national park boundary) on the settings and views from elevated archaeological sites.</p>
Opportunities for landscape enjoyment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A network of lanes, tracks and footpaths (including the Beacons Way long distance route) enabling access into this high quality landscape, and enjoyment of its tranquillity. 	<p>Inappropriate use of tracks by 4x4 vehicles and off-road motorbikes.</p>
Recreation provision and access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publicly- accessible archaeological sites (e.g. Carn Goch Hillfort and Carreg Cennen Castle), woodland Nature Reserves and the red kite feeding centre provide further opportunities for understanding the area's special qualities and sense of place. Myddfai village is a focus for the area, with its ancient church and cultural connections. There is a Youth Hostel at Llanddeusant and campsites in the area. Accessible from local centres of population in Llandovery and Llandeilo, Llandovery railway station, and from the A40 and A4069. 	

Contribution to Ecosystem Services and Green Infrastructure (refer to sections 4.6 & 4.7 for terminology)

Principle ecosystem services include provisioning and regulating services, providing food, fibre, water, climate regulation and pollination. In common with the rest of the National Park, this LCA also contributes to cultural services e.g. spiritual enrichment, cultural heritage, recreation and tourism, and aesthetic experiences. Main Green Infrastructure features include extensive arable pasture, woodland, watercourses and long distance trails. These include the Beacons Way, River Towy tributaries, and extensive woodlands.



Deciduous woodland and pasture near Myddfai



Carreg Cennen Castle



View north-east from the stone banks of Carn Goch Hillfort

Forces for Change in the Landscape

Local Forces for Change and Their Landscape Implications

(See also the general forces for change described in section 6.0)

Past and Present

- Planting of coniferous forestry blocks (particularly in the north and west of the area) on open land, or as replanting

of ancient woodland.

- Farm modernisation and diversification, for example increase in the size of farm buildings, and the introduction of new features into the landscape such as ménages.
- Decline in traditional hillfarming, and an ageing farming community.
- Conversion of redundant agricultural buildings to private dwellings.
- Loss of traditional communities and associated village infrastructure such as pubs, changing the built heritage and social cohesion of the area.
- Entry of numerous areas of pasture into the pilot Tir Cymen agri-environment scheme.
- Influence of the Prince of Wales' estate, particularly around Myddfai where Prince Charles has a residence.
- Developments beyond the National Park boundary (e.g. Ribbon development along the A40 to the west of the Towy) affecting views out of the area and changing their undeveloped character.
- Damage by 4 x 4 vehicles and off-road motorbikes.

Future

- Continued decline in traditional hillfarming, resulting in amalgamation of holdings, redundant buildings, reduced grazing of common land, loss of traditional field boundaries etc. coupled with demand for agricultural modernisation.
- Unpredictability of future agri-environment schemes, potentially affecting farm income, farm conservation measures and maintenance of historic features such as hedgebanks.
- Potential loss or species change within native woodland and plantations as a result of climate change, increased pests and diseases (e.g. Phytophthora) and increased frequency of storm events.
- Demand for alternative energy sources within and outside the LCA with potential implications on the landscape and views.
- Continued development of settlements outside the National Park boundary with visual impacts on views from the National Park.



New ménage



Larger-scale modern agricultural buildings



Expansion of settlements just beyond the National Park Boundary (e.g. Llandeilo) can have visual impacts on the LCA

Strategy

Overall Strategy

To maintain and enhance the integrity and quality of this historic landscape through the retention and good management of historic features such as woodland, lanes, field boundaries, farms and archaeological sites. Agriculture is encouraged (for example through enabling modernisation to be done as sensitively as possible) and the landscapes associated with traditional hillfarming are retained and enhanced. The area's archaeological and nature conservation sites are well managed, and visitors are encouraged. The area remains an attractive foreground to views from higher land, and views from the area remain free from intrusive modern development.

LCA-Specific Management Guidelines

Protect

- Protect and appropriately manage the landscape's numerous **historic and archaeological sites**.
- Protect and restore where necessary **historic landscape features** such as field boundaries and bridges. Protect and enhance the **built heritage** of the area, including traditional farms and villages, whilst retaining its sparsely-settled character.
- Protect the landscape's network of **quiet lanes**, enclosed by species-rich hedgerows, resisting unsympathetic highway improvements or signage.
- Protect the **open upland skylines** which form the backdrop to the area.

Manage

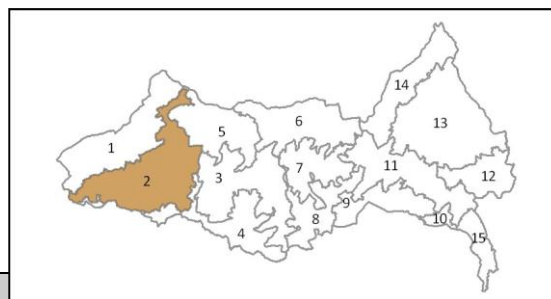
- Manage **conservation sites and semi-natural habitats** such as grasslands, wetlands and commons to retain biodiversity, using appropriate levels of grazing.
- Manage **woodland** to improve age and species diversity, using traditional techniques such as coppicing and grazing where appropriate, and control of non-native species.
- Manage **archaeological sites** and their settings, with sensitive interpretation as appropriate.
- Manage **farmland**, enabling change to occur sensitively, and encouraging a viable farming community using traditional methods to manage traditional landscape features and enhance biodiversity.

Plan

- Plan to **create, extend and link semi-natural habitats** such as woodland, wetlands and grassland.
- Plan to **increase visitor numbers** to this area (without detriment to its special qualities) through, for example, marketing of the area, and sensitive improvements to visitor infrastructure.
- Plan to **minimise the visual impacts** on this area of any **developments outside the National Park boundary**.

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA 2: Y MYNYDD DU**Broad Landscape Type: UPLANDS****Description****Location and Context**

This large LCA is located in the west of the National Park, and includes the uplands associated with Y Mynydd Du (the Black Mountain). To the north-west is the Towy Valley Foothills LCA, and to the north east and south east are Upland Valleys. The Uplands continue eastwards into the Fforest Fawr LCA. This LCA is prominent in views from roads and settlements to the south and north-west of the National Park.

**Summary Description**

This extensive upland LCA contains some of the most remote areas of the National Park. It includes the open moorland and dramatic scarps and lakes of Y Mynydd Du, locus of the legend of the 'Lady of the Lake'. It is an open, exposed landscape with few trees or settlements, but numerous prehistoric monuments and a legacy of quarrying and other industrial activity. From the edges of the LCA there are spectacular views over surrounding lowlands.



Bannau Sir Gaer and Fan Brycheiniog from the north

Historical Development of the Landscape

Clearance of woodland in this area is thought to have begun in the Bronze Age, and many cairns, standing stones and other monuments in the landscape date from this time. There was a strong Roman presence in the area, reflected in the Roman roads (some still in use) forts and camps. Centuries of common grazing have created today's open landscape, managed by farmers in close association with the lower enclosed land. There is also a strong industrial legacy in the landscape (particularly in the southern half) where minerals and stone were extracted and processed.

Distinctive Characteristics

- Varied underlying geology. Devonian age Old Red Sandstone in the north overlain by bands of Carboniferous Limestone, Marros Group sandstones and mudstones to their south. Sandstones and mudstones of the lowermost South Wales Coal Measures are exposed in the south. The highest land in the west is formed from the Twrch Sandstone, whilst that in the east is formed from Plateau Beds.
- Elevated, flat-topped ridge of the Carmarthen Fans running east-west across the area, with a distinctive northern scarp face. To the south is a gently sloping plateau dissected by steep valleys.
- Glacial lakes below the northern scarp: Llyn y Fan Fawr & Llyn y Fan Fach. Numerous mountain streams source in springs & bogs.
- Land use almost entirely open grazing (often by hefted flocks) on unenclosed common land.
- Very few field boundaries; limited to sheep-folds and occasional peripheral enclosures.
- Tree cover within the LCA limited to occasional broadleaved trees and shrubs alongside streams.
- Panoramic views north-west and south.
- Semi-Natural Habitats of Principal Importance to Wales including modified blanket bog, dwarf shrub heath, limestone pavement, limestone grassland, acid/ neutral flush and marshy grassland. Variations in vegetation cover caused by changes in underlying geology and grazing.
- Historic features include numerous prehistoric monuments, Roman features, transport routes, agricultural remains and industrial archaeology.
- Settlement within the LCA limited to scattered farms at the periphery, but there is a close visual relationship with communities and roads to the south of the National Park, and in adjacent LCAs.
- A4069 crossing the area in the west in a series of dramatic hairpin bends.
- An empty and open landscape, expansive and large in scale with smooth, open horizons. Generally simple composition, with vegetation and geology creating subtle changes in texture.

Landmap Components (See Appendix 3 for components of all LANDMAP Aspect Areas)

Key Visual and Sensory Aspect Areas	The Black Mountain (O); Dorwen ar Gledd (O); Bannau Sir Gaer and environs (O); Black Mountain (O); Mynydd Myddfai (H); Mynydd Bach Trecastell (H);
Key to Landmap evaluation criteria: (O) Outstanding: of international importance. (H) High: of regional or county importance. (M) Moderate: of local importance. (L) Low: of little/no importance	

Settlements

There are no settlements larger than individual farms within this LCA, but it nevertheless plays a very important role as a backdrop to the settlements which surround it. These include the farms and villages in LCA1 (for example Llanddeusant and Trap), and the towns and villages immediately to the south of the National Park including Glanamau, Garnant, Brynamman and Cwmllynfell. It is also visible from the high land and roads to the south of these settlements, and from the A4068 where it runs along the National Park boundary. It therefore makes an important contribution to the setting and sense of place of these settlements. The distinctive scarp of the Carmarthen Fans can be seen on the southern skyline from a long distance northwards.

Key Views

Magnificent views to the north-west (as far as Plynlimon) and South (over south Wales to the north Devon coast). From Mynydd Myddfai it is possible to see the entire length of the Brecon Beacons ridge. This LCA is very prominent in views from outside the National Park, particularly settlements and roads to the south.

Evaluation**Special Qualities**

The natural beauty and recreational factors that make this landscape special are summarised in the table below, along with examples of their sensitivities to landscape changes:

Criteria	Special Qualities for this Landscape Character Area	Sensitivities
Scenic quality and Sense of place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scenic quality and sense of place stemming from the scale and openness of the landscape, the distinctive topography of the summits, and the panoramic views over the LCA and surrounding lower land. 	<p>Impacts from built or other developments (including those in long views) which may detract from its sense of tranquillity and remoteness. As well as visual impacts, the area is also sensitive to noise and night-time light pollution associated with developments beyond the National Park boundary.</p> <p>Features which break the smooth, open skylines.</p> <p>Small-scale features within the landscape (e.g. Glastir markers and waymarking) which have an individual and cumulative impact on the sense of remoteness and relative wildness.</p> <p>Visual and noise impacts from traffic.</p>
Landscape quality and integrity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extensive areas of open moorland with smooth, open skylines and very few incongruous features within the LCA. 	
Perceptual qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High levels of tranquillity as a result of the landscape's openness, perceived naturalness, lack of noise, and dark skies. Few factors detract from the tranquillity, and the LCA is within the BBNP core dark skies area. Contains the National Park's most extensive area of land more than 2km from a tarmac road. This remoteness, and the area's sense of relative wildness, is enhanced by the LCA's openness, exposure, timelessness and lack of human influences. Its perceptual qualities are influenced by changes in the weather, becoming much harsher and more disorientating in low cloud. 	

Artistic and cultural associations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural associations with the Legend of the Lady of the Lake (centred on Llyn y Fan Fach) and the Physicians of Myddfai. Partially included in the Register of Landscapes of Special Historic Interest in Wales (Area 3). 	
Rarity or representativeness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One of the largest expanses of surviving open moorland in southern Britain, containing some of the most inaccessible land within the National Park. 	See above
Natural heritage features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Of considerable importance for nature conservation, with a very extensive SSSI covering much of the area, designated for its vegetation, geology, open water, bird life and cave systems (Including Dan yr Ogof Caves NNR). This LCA is within the Geopark, and contains two RIGs sites (limestone pavements). 	<p>Changes in land management, e.g. changes in grazing levels affecting the composition of moorland vegetation.</p> <p>Changes in environmental conditions (e.g. air and water quality) and water retention affecting surface vegetation, geological exposures and caves.</p>
Cultural heritage features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A rich archaeological landscape, with over 30 Scheduled Monuments (plus numerous non-scheduled sites), including a large proportion of prehistoric ritual features, including particularly well-preserved Bronze Age ring and round cairns on summits and ridges. Also Roman roads and camps, medieval settlement sites, and industrial archaeology associated with quarrying and lime burning. 	Damage to archaeological features through natural processes (e.g. erosion), neglect, visitor pressure, and also visual impacts on their settings.
Opportunities for landscape enjoyment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This LCA is entirely access land and provides valuable opportunities for people to experience remoteness, relative wildness and tranquillity permitted under various legislation. Footpaths and bridlepaths shown on definitive and OS maps do not always exist on the ground, so visitors should be capable of navigating using map and compass. 	The LCA's unique opportunities to experience remoteness, tranquillity and relative wildness are sensitive to a number of developmental and recreational management measures (see above) and over-intensification of recreational use.
Recreation provision and access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recreational opportunities include walking/ riding (including the Beacons Way across the northern part of the LCA), more limited horse riding, plus caving and outdoor adventure centres. A wheelchair-accessible path up the Twrch valley provides access for local communities into the National Park. Laybys on A4069 enable drivers to stop and appreciate the views from roads. 	

Contribution to Ecosystem Services and Green Infrastructure (refer to sections 4.6 & 4.7 for terminology)

Principal ecosystem services include provisioning through rough grazing and fresh water supply, and regulation and supporting services through deep peat, organic soils and water regulation. In common with the rest of the National Park, this LCA also contributes to cultural services such as spiritual enrichment, cultural heritage, recreation and tourism, and aesthetic experiences. There is potential for electricity generation through high head micro-hydro schemes.

Green Infrastructure features include watercourses and lakes such as Llyn y Fan Fach and tributaries to the Rivers Towy. and Tawe Y Mynydd Du LCA contains access land, walking trails (including the Beacons Way), viewpoints and historic features.



Llyn y Fan Fach, home of the legend of the Lady of the Lake and made into a reservoir in the 1920s.



Grassland near Herbert's Quarry showing the view north over LCA1 and the Towy Valley to Plynlimon.



Ancient woodland and industrial archaeology in the Twrch Valley.

Forces for Change in the Landscape

Local Forces for Change and Their Landscape Implications

(See also the general forces for change described in section 6.0)

Past and Present

- Past quarrying within the LCA, leading to scarring on hillsides and surface roughness.
- Construction of reservoirs and associated forests in the early 20th century in adjacent LCAs affecting views and reducing the sense of openness. Impoundment of water in Llyn y Fan Fach reservoir.
- Gas pipeline construction across Mynydd Myddfai creating a linear feature in the landscape and permanently affecting surface vegetation and buried archaeology.
- Large-scale opencast workings, windfarms and other built development just outside the southern National Park boundary prominent in views.
- Light-pollution from roads, settlements and quarries to the south.
- Historic air pollution and acid rain, and ongoing nitrogen deposition affecting vegetation.
- Loss of wetlands and peat bog due to pollution, historic peat cutting and artificial drainage.
- Illegal use of 4x4 vehicles/ off-road motorbikes causing damage to surfaces and vegetation.
- Unpredictable water flows (due to loss of peat bogs) affecting subterranean cave systems.
- Reduced diversity of moorland vegetation (in particular a loss of heather moorland to acid grassland) as a result of changing common grazing practices. See section 6.0 for more detail.
- Repeated damage by wildfires.
- Bracken encroachment on side slopes.
- Incremental changes from small modern features such as sheep pens (constructed from concrete blocks rather than indigenous stone) and Glastir markers.
- Positive moorland management e.g. controlled heather burning, cutting of areas of rank *Molinia* and protection of areas of bare, eroded peat bog. Previous efforts to control bracken by aerial spraying.

Future

- Developments beyond the National Park boundary (e.g. opencasting, development applications, road improvements) potentially affecting views from this LCA, and its tranquillity & special qualities.
- Wind farm applications from TAN8 Areas visible from the LCA potentially affecting its views, tranquillity and special qualities.
- Continued positive management of moorland, and restoration of upland habitats,
- Loss of traditional hillfarms, and potential changes to agri-environment schemes affecting grazing patterns and vegetation, e.g. effects and outcomes of the Glastir Common Land Element.
- Climate change potentially affecting environmental conditions and upland vegetation.
- Increasing pressure to promote and encourage greater recreational use, and infrastructure to manage increasing numbers of visitors, may lead to loss of qualities of tranquillity and remoteness.



Opencast coal mine, just to the south of the LCA. Further open casting is proposed.



4x4 ruts on a historic trackway to the west of the A4069. Note Carreg Cennen Castle in the distance.



Gorse encroachment on a hillside as a result of changing grazing patterns.

Strategy

Overall Strategy

To protect the open, remote and undeveloped character of the landscape, strengthening its special qualities and conserving its distinctive open skylines and long views. The special qualities of the area and its views are not damaged by intrusive development outside the National Park boundary. The area's outstanding archaeology is protected, managed and recorded as necessary, and the settings of monuments are respected. Good management of the moorland continues to enhance its biodiversity and habitats, including peat bogs. The geodiversity of the area is also appreciated and appropriately managed. The area is enjoyed by visitors seeking tranquillity and remoteness, but is not damaged by overly-intense recreational use.

LCA-Specific Management Guidelines

Protect

- Protect the **undeveloped character of the landscape**, and its qualities of exceptional **remoteness, tranquillity and dark night skies**.
- Protect the **open moorland** landscape, avoiding the development of vertical structures and the planting of trees.
- Protect the **geological and geomorphological features** of the area such as limestone pavements.
- Protect and enhance valuable **moorland habitats**.
- Protect (through appropriate management) the area's rich **archaeological landscape**, in particular its prehistoric and industrial features, and record archaeological features which are being lost through natural processes.
- Protect the **expansive views** to and from the National Park which are integral to its setting.

Manage

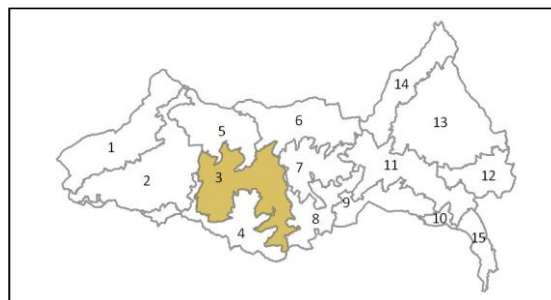
- Manage and enhance valuable **moorland habitats** (e.g. heather moorland and blanket bog), retaining and increasing the area's biodiversity.
- Manage **wetland sites** such as blanket bog to increase carbon sequestration and water storage capacity, reducing impacts of water flows on cave and river systems and potentially reducing downstream flooding.
- Manage **common grazing land** through the encouragement of a viable grazing regime which supports traditional hillfarming practices, encourages biodiversity and retains an open moorland landscape.
- Manage **limestone pavement**.
- Manage **recreational pressure** to avoid visual scarring and damage to sensitive habitats and archaeological features. Minimise impacts of recreation on **perceptions of remoteness and tranquillity**.

Plan

- Plan to reduce the **visual impact** of quarrying activities and other development beyond the National Park boundary.
- Plan for **community education and involvement** in the management of the area, developing links with the communities beyond the National Park boundary.
- Plan to retain the area's **dark skies** and reduce incidence of light pollution, in particular along the southern boundary.
- Plan for the **creation, extension and linking of traditional moorland habitats**, e.g heather moorland, blanket bog and heath. Reduce the overall area of acid grassland through encouragement of heather regeneration (whilst maintaining a mosaic of habitats for ground nesting birds and to retain species diversity).

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA 3: FFOREST FAWR**Broad Landscape Type: UPLANDS****Description****Location and Context**

This upland LCA is located towards the west of the National Park, between the uplands of the Central Beacons (to the east) and Mynydd Du (to the west). To the north and south are lower, enclosed Upland Valley landscapes.

**Summary Description**

A bleak, upland moorland landscape, the character of which is locally influenced by its past use as a royal hunting ground and more recent estate ownership, apparent through the dry stone boundary walls, estate cottages, shelterbelts and former rabbit farms. Remains of prehistoric and medieval occupation, and later industrial archaeological sites, are visible in the landscape. Away from the occasional roads which run across the area, it feels tranquil, and with a sense of remoteness and relative wildness. Its distinctive flat-topped summits and steep northern escarpment are prominent in views from the north.



View north up Afon Llia, with Maen Llia on the horizon

Historical Development of the Landscape

The area's long history of private ownership (first as a royal hunting forest and latterly as the Cnewr Estate) make it distinct from surrounding areas by its dry stone walls, estate cottages, shelter belts etc. Although this landscape feels empty and unsettled today, it has not always been so. The lack of recent development means that many features of earlier phases of occupation have survived including prehistoric monuments (cairns, standing stones etc.), field systems, abandoned medieval settlements, industrial sites (e.g. quarries and railway lines) and WW2 defences.

Distinctive Characteristics

- Complex underlying geology, with the Senni and Brownstones formations of the Old Red Sandstone in the north, a broken band of Carboniferous Limestone across the middle, and Marros Group sandstones and mudstones in the south. All three units form north-facing escarpments, that of the Old Red Sandstone being the most imposing.
- A glaciated landscape with a steep northern escarpment and a series of elevated summits. Cwms, and deep valleys are separated by intervening ridges (generally running north-south). Landform in the south of the LCA is less dramatic, forming a gently sloping plateau dissected by river valleys.
- Steep, fast flowing and rocky mountain streams (often spring-fed, or sourced from upland bogs), flow into larger rivers in valley bottoms. Ystradfellte Reservoir located near centre of LCA.
- Predominantly unenclosed moorland used for open grazing, with some forest blocks, particularly in the south and west of the LCA.
- Trees almost entirely coniferous, planted in forestry blocks often with sharp outlines. Distinctive coniferous shelter belts in the northern part of the area.
- Very few field boundaries, but dry-stone walls marking estate boundaries are distinctive to this LCA. Occasional post-and-wire fences.
- Semi-Natural Habitats of Principal Importance to Wales including marshy grassland, dry heath, acid/neutral flushes and small areas of blanket bog. Vegetation composition reflects variations in underlying geology.
- Extensive prehistoric ritual landscapes, particularly in the south-east. Also evidence of Roman road, medieval settlements, industrial archaeology, WW2 defences and estate influences.
- A very lightly-settled landscape today, with occasional estate cottages and farms at its periphery. However in the past it has been much more densely settled, and the landscape contains evidence of settlement over millennia.
- An elevated, simple and expansive landscape, with colours and textures varying subtly with the underlying geology. Much of the LCA remains inaccessible except on foot, giving a sense of tranquillity, remoteness and relative wildness.

Landmap Components (See Appendix 3 for components of all LANDMAP Aspect Areas)

Key Visual and Sensory Aspect Areas	Fforest Fawr West (O); Fan Fawr/Fan Llia [Fforest Fawr East] (O); Cadair Fawr (H); Carreg Cadno (O); Mynydd y Garn (H); Y Wern Forest (M); Senni Valley (H); Nant y Fedwyn Upland (M); Ystradfellte Reservoir (H)
Key to Landmap evaluation criteria: (O) Outstanding: of international importance. (H) High: of regional or county importance. (M) Moderate: of local importance. (L) Low: of little/no importance	

Settlements

Settlement is very limited in this area, but the estate buildings have a distinctive architecture, often symmetrical, whitewashed and embellished with porches etc. This LCA forms the horizon in views from a number of settlements to the north and south.

Key Views

Key views out from within the LCA include those from the summits, with panoramic views over surrounding lower land, and across to the neighbouring uplands. The LCA is an important component in views from surrounding areas, often forming the horizon.

Evaluation**Special Qualities**

The natural beauty and recreational factors that make this landscape special are summarised in the table below, along with examples of their sensitivities to landscape changes:

Criteria	Special Qualities for this Landscape Character Area	Sensitivities
Scenic quality and Sense of place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High scenic quality and a strong sense of place, particularly where there are views of distinctive summits and over surrounding lower land to provide a landscape context. 	Impacts from built or other developments (including quarrying within the LCA) which may detract from the LCA's sense of tranquillity and remoteness.
Landscape quality and integrity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An extensive area of upland which is particularly valued for the integrity of its historic landscapes, and for its tranquillity and sense of remoteness. 	Visual impacts, noise and night-time light pollution associated with developments beyond the National Park boundary.
Perceptual qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High tranquillity, resulting from many factors including openness, perceived naturalness, low noise (though roads have localised impacts at the periphery of the LCA), landform and dark skies (this LCA is within the BBNP core dark skies area). With the exception of occasional roads and Penwyllt quarry, few factors detract from the tranquillity. The LCA's inaccessibility, openness, timelessness and relative lack of human influence also contribute to its sense of relative wildness. In poor weather conditions the landscape becomes much more hostile and disorientating. 	<p>Features which break the smooth, open skylines.</p> <p>Small-scale features within the landscape (e.g. Glastir markers and waymarking) which have an individual and cumulative impact on the sense of remoteness and relative wildness.</p> <p>Traffic impacts: visual and noise.</p> <p>Neglect of estate features such as stone walls, particularly if estate management or ownership changes in the future.</p>
Artistic and cultural associations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Associations with Opera singer Madam Adelina Patti, who lived at Craig-y-nos (in LCA 4) and had a private area at Penwyllt railway station. 	
Rarity or representativeness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An example of an extensive upland landscape with a history of private land ownership going back to Medieval times, leaving distinctive traces in the landscape. The links between geology, biodiversity and people through time are readily apparent. The LCA also contains cliff habitats which support plant communities unique to the Brecon Beacons and are important examples of glacial geomorphology 	<p>See above</p> <p>Cliff habitats are sensitive to damage by climbing, abseiling etc.</p>

Natural heritage features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extensive SSSIs, designated for their vegetation representing limestone and brownstone plant communities including some Alpine plants, rare hawkweeds and whitebeam species unique to the Brecon Beacons. National Nature Reserves at Ogof Fynnon Ddu and Craig Cerrig-gleisiad. Part of the Brecon Beacons SAC is also within this area. • An important geological landscape, within the Geopark and containing good examples of limestone features such as limestone pavements (some designated RIGS sites), solution hollows and sink holes. The Ogof Ffynnon Ddu cave system (designated SSSI) is the deepest (and one of the largest) in Britain. 	<p>Changes in land management, e.g. changes in grazing levels affecting the composition of moorland vegetation.</p> <p>Changes in environmental conditions (e.g. air and water quality) and water retention affecting surface vegetation, geological exposures and cave systems.</p>
Cultural heritage features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A rich archaeological environment with an exceptionally large assemblage of prehistoric ritual sites (including ring cairns, round cairns and standing stones designated Scheduled Monuments). Other Scheduled Monuments include a section of Roman road, deserted Medieval settlements, Post-medieval pillow mounds (resulting from rabbit farming) and WW2 infantry support trenches. Other archaeological sites include those associated with mining and transport, including quarries, tramways (e.g. the Brecon Forest Tramroad) and the route of the Neath and Brecon Railway with its station at Penwyllt. South-east part of LCA included on the Register of Landscapes of Historic Interest in Wales (no.48). 	<p>Damage to archaeological features through natural processes (e.g. erosion), neglect, visitor pressure and also visual impacts on their settings.</p>
Opportunities for landscape enjoyment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities to explore and appreciate some of the most remote land in the National Park (and in Southern Britain) via the Beacons Way, extensive open access land and publicly-accessible nature reserves. Summits afford spectacular views. 	<p>Insensitive visitor management and over-intensification of visitor numbers may impact on the LCA's special qualities.</p>
Recreation provision and access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessible from major roads, and can be appreciated whilst driving along them. Caving offers further recreational opportunities. 	

Contribution to Ecosystem Services and Green Infrastructure (refer to sections 4.6 & 4.7 for terminology)

Principal ecosystem services include provisioning through rough grazing and fresh water supply, and regulation and supporting services through deep peat, organic soils and water regulation. Plantations provide timber and wood fuel. In common with the rest of the National Park, this LCA also contributes to cultural services such as spiritual enrichment, cultural heritage, recreation and tourism, and aesthetic experiences. There is potential for electricity generation through high head micro-hydro schemes. Green Infrastructure features include open access land, open water, rivers, woodland plantation, and the Beacons Way long distance trail. The Ogof Ffynnon Ddu - Pant Mawr and Craig Cerrig-gleisiad National Nature Reserves offer educational and leisure opportunities.



Prehistoric Standing Stone at Maen Llia



The distinctive table-top summit of Fan Gyhrych. Note the estate wall



Craig Cerrig gleisiad NNR on the Old Red Sandstone northern scarp

Forces for Change in the Landscape

Local Forces for Change and Their Landscape Implications

(See also the general forces for change described in section 6.0)

Past and Present

- Past construction of reservoirs and planting of forestry plantations, in this LCA and in adjacent LCAs which can be seen in views. Ongoing management/ clearance of plantations.
- Past quarrying leaving scars in the landscape. Continued occasional quarrying activities (particularly Penwyllt) locally reducing tranquillity.
- Developments beyond the National Park boundary affecting views from the area and its special qualities, especially to the south.
- Light pollution from roads, settlements and other developments affecting dark skies (particularly to the south of the LCA).
- Past and present estate management (e.g. shelter belt planting) affecting the landscape.
- Theft of walling stone, especially adjacent to roads, and poor maintenance of walls.
- Visually intrusive modern road signage on minor roads.
- Loss of traditional moorland vegetation (e.g. heather moorland) and ecological resilience resulting from changes in grazing practices (see section 6.0 for more detail).
- Bracken encroachment on side slopes.
- Repeated damage by wild fires.
- Acid rain, pollution and artificial drainage caused ecological degradation of upland habitats, particularly peat bogs, affecting biodiversity and the water flows in underlying cave systems.
- Loss of archaeological features as a result of natural processes (e.g. limestone solution and river erosion) and damage (e.g. illegal 4x4 vehicles/ off-road motorbikes on the Sarn Helen Roman road).
- Tir Gofal agri-environment scheme within the Cnewr estate.

Future

- Potential changes in land management /private ownership may affect the retention and management of estate features such as walls and cottages.
- Loss of traditional hillfarms, and potential changes to agri-environment schemes affecting grazing patterns and vegetation, e.g. effects and outcomes of the Glastir Common Land Element.
- Management of plantations, particularly if trees are cleared.
- Tree loss due to disease e.g. *Phytophthora ramorum*.
- Continued loss of archaeological features.
- Climate change potentially affecting environmental conditions and upland vegetation.
- Continued development pressure and planning applications beyond the southern boundary (e.g. windfarms (TAN 8 area), quarrying, open casting and waste developments) affecting views south from the area and impacting on tranquillity and dark skies.
- Positive moorland management schemes improving the condition and variety of upland vegetation.



Insensitive road sign, Tawe valley



Penwyllt quarry



Deer fencing along dry stone wall

Strategy

Overall Strategy

To protect and enhance the special qualities of the landscape, including tranquillity, remoteness and relative wildness, and its historic features, long views and open skylines. Development beyond the National Park boundary does not undermine the views or special qualities of the area. Positive land management enhances its biodiversity, geodiversity and distinctive estate features. The outstanding archaeology of the area is appropriately managed, protected from damage, recorded where necessary and its settings are respected. Visitors are encouraged to visit and appreciate the area and its special qualities (including its extensive Nature Reserves), but without putting unacceptable visitor pressure on the landscape or its biodiversity.

LCA-Specific Management Guidelines

Protect

- Protect the **undeveloped character** of the landscape, and its special qualities including **tranquillity, remoteness, and dark night skies**.
- Protect the **open moorland** landscape, avoiding the development of vertical structures and the planting of trees.
- Protect the **geological and geomorphological features** of the area such as limestone pavements.
- Protect and enhance valuable **moorland habitats**.
- Protect surviving **estate features** (e.g. stone walls).
- Protect (through appropriate management) the area's rich **archaeological landscape**, in particular its prehistoric features around Cwm Cadlan and Mynydd-y-glog, and record archaeological features which are being lost through natural processes.
- Protect the **views** to and from the National Park which are integral to its setting.

Manage

- Work with land owners and commoners to manage and enhance valuable **moorland habitats** (e.g. heather moorland and blanket bog), retaining and increasing the area's biodiversity.
- Manage **wetland sites** such as blanket bog to increase carbon sequestration and water storage capacity, reducing impacts of water flows on cave and river systems and potentially reducing downstream flooding.
- Work with landowners and commoners to manage **grazing land** using a viable grazing regime which supports traditional hillfarming, encourages biodiversity and retains an open moorland landscape.
- Manage **forestry plantations** with regard to their existing and potential biodiversity, and potential damage to underlying archaeology. Use/ develop forest management plans where possible.
- Manage **recreational pressure** to avoid visual scarring and damage to sensitive habitats and archaeological features. Minimise impacts of recreation on **perceptions of remoteness and tranquillity**.

Plan

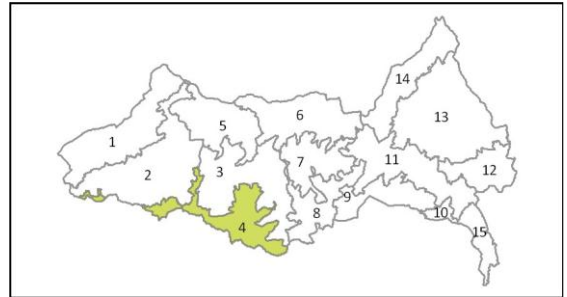
- Plan to **reduce quarrying** activities within the LCA.
- Plan to reduce the **visual impact** of mineral extraction, wind turbines and other development beyond the National Park boundary.
- Plan to retain the area's **dark skies** and reduce incidence of light pollution, in particular along the southern boundary.
- Plan for the **creation, extension and linking of traditional moorland habitats**, e.g heather, blanket bog and heath. Reduce the overall area of acid grassland and encourage heather regeneration (whilst maintaining a mosaic of habitats for ground nesting birds and to retain species diversity).
- Plan to encourage landowners, public bodies and NGOs to re-open old railway line as a **cycle route**.

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA 4: WATERFALL COUNTRY AND SOUTHERN VALLEYS

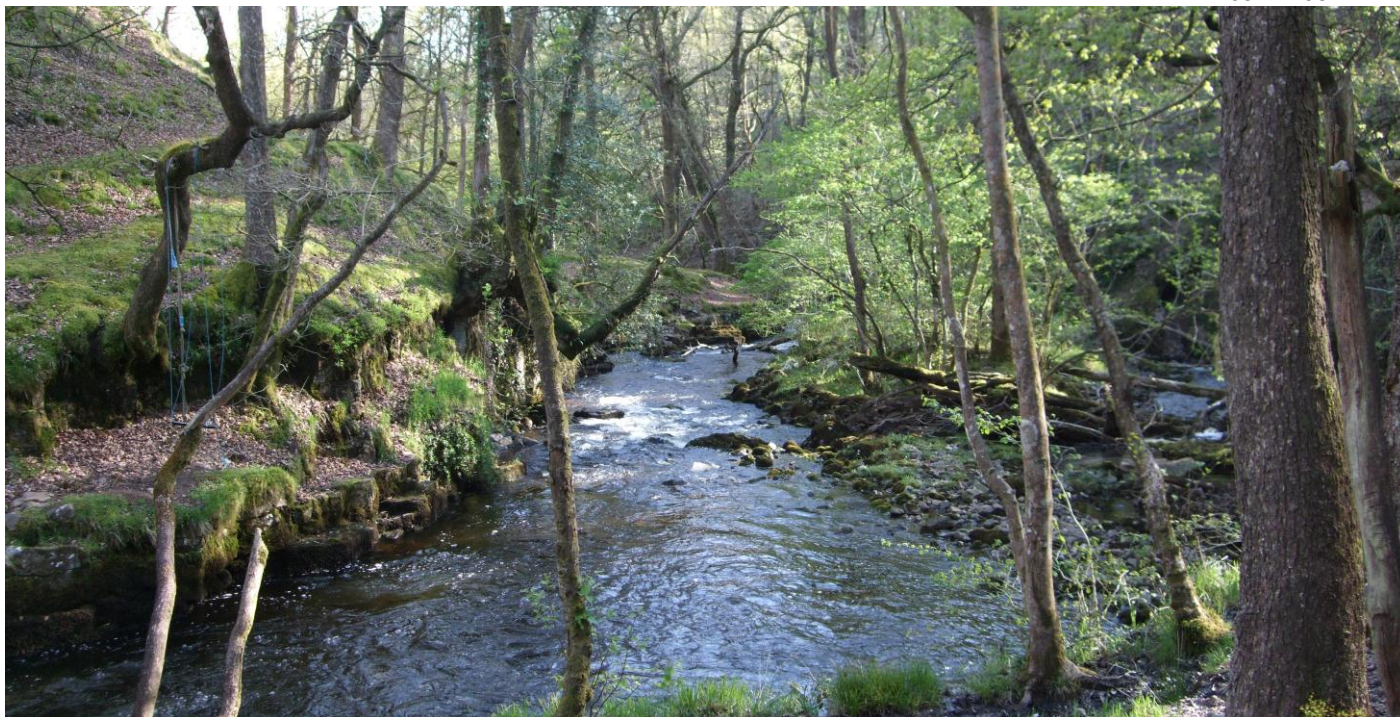
Broad Landscape Type: UPLAND VALLEYS

Description**Location and Context**

This LCA is located in the south of the National Park, adjacent to the National Park boundary. It includes the villages of Ystradfellte, Penderyn and Glyntawe, and comprises the enclosed limestone landscapes to the south of Y Mynydd Du and Fforest Fawr LCAs. It includes a small outlier of similar character to the west of Brynaman, and is partially intervisible with land beyond the southern National Park boundary.

**Summary Description**

The predominantly limestone geology of this LCA creates its characteristic rough texture and grey colour, appearing in the crags, walls and buildings of this enclosed and relatively settled pastoral landscape. Ancient woodlands surround the streams and spectacular waterfalls which are found in the south of the LCA, flowing in deep, fern-filled gorges. Between the valleys are ridges of higher land with a more open quality and long views. The dark green of the extensive blocks of conifers in the south of the area contrasts with the surrounding grasslands.



The Nedd Fechan river near Pont Melin-Fach has a popular riverside path and is designated SSSI and SAC

Historical Development of the Landscape

The relatively sheltered natural landform of this area has made it a focus for settlement, agriculture and transport for many centuries. Historic villages, farms, roads, bridges and fields are integral parts of this landscape. Evidence also remains in the landscape for Bronze Age settlement and ritual activity (cairns), Iron Age hillforts, Roman occupation (roads and camps) and later industrial activities including quarrying, lime burning, water-powered mills and a gunpowder factory. 20th century changes to the landscape included forest plantation and road improvements.

Distinctive Characteristics

- A complex underlying geology. Carboniferous limestone in the north with extensive cave systems. Elsewhere, predominantly sandstones and mudstones of the Marros Group and South Wales Lower Coal Measures.
- A dramatic landform of steep, enclosed valleys, separated by ridges of flatter, higher land.
- A series of fast-flowing, rocky streams and rivers running along the valley floors, often in shallow gorges. Numerous waterfalls – some spectacular- particularly at changes in geology. Many waterfalls are accessible, including the popular Sgwyd yr Eira ('fall of snow')
- Land use predominantly pastoral agriculture, but with extensive areas of forestry, particularly in the south of the area.
- Limestone walls and hedgerbanks enclosing irregular fields in valleys, with some hedges (predominantly beech or hawthorn). Higher land less enclosed, with more use of post-and-wire fencing.
- A well-wooded landscape, with ancient broad-leaved woodland in valleys and along streams, with blocks of conifer plantation on higher land.
- Key Semi-Natural Habitats of Principal Importance to Wales including broadleaved woodland, wet woodland, a range of grasslands (calcareous, neutral and acid), fens, limestone pavement and wet heath.
- A range of historic features in the landscape giving the area a strong sense of time-depth and reflecting the LCA's past use for settlement, agriculture, transport and industry.
- Settlements include villages of Ystradfellte and Penderyn, plus numerous scattered farms. Development concentrated in valley floors, particularly along the A4067 and A4059. Some intervisibility with settlements, roads and other development beyond the National Park boundary
- Limestone geology, field patterns and woodland creating a strongly textured landscape in the valleys, with grey and green the dominant colours. Higher areas are more open and simple in composition, with dark blocks of conifers contrasting in colour with the surrounding grassland.

Landmap Components (See Appendix 3 for components of all LANDMAP Aspect Areas)

Key Visual and Sensory Aspect Areas	Nedd Fechan and Mellte Valleys (O); Penderyn (M); Tawe Valley and Cwm Twrch (M); Upper Tawe Valley (H); Coed-y-Rhaiadr (M); Gwaun Hepste (M); Hepste Valley (H); Black Mountain Southern Slopes; Bryn Henllys Open Cast (L)
Key to Landmap evaluation criteria: (O) Outstanding: of international importance. (H) High: of regional or county importance. (M) Moderate: of local importance. (L) Low: of little/no importance	

Settlements

Settlement within this LCA is relatively limited, with small settlements including the clustered, valley floor villages of Ystradfellte and Penderyn, both with ancient church sites. Traditional buildings are usually stone built and painted white, with slate roofs. There are several settlements to the south (along the A4067 and A4109, outside the National Park boundary) which have a close visual relationship with this LCA. It provides their setting and backdrop when viewed from the south, and developments in these villages (which are generally linear in form, following the contours of the hillsides) are visible from the National Park.

Key Views

Long views across the area may be viewed from adjacent Upland LCAs, and from within the valleys themselves. Southern parts of the LCA (particularly higher land) have intervisibility with land beyond the National Park boundary, with long views southwards. Magnificent close-up views of waterfalls may be experienced from riverside paths.

Evaluation**Special Qualities**

The natural beauty and recreational factors that make this landscape special are summarised in the table below, along with examples of their sensitivities to landscape changes:

Criteria	Special Qualities for this Landscape Character Area	Sensitivities
Scenic quality and Sense of place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The combination of rivers, waterfalls, woodland and pastoral land against a rugged limestone backdrop gives the area high scenic quality and a strong sense of place. 	Changes in traditional land management, and introduction of incongruous features into the landscape
Landscape quality and integrity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuity of land use and restriction of development to the main roads along valley floors has generally enabled the LCA's landscape quality and integrity to be retained over the majority of the area. 	As above
Perceptual qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Waterfalls paths stimulate many senses, with unique combinations of sight, feel, sound and smell. They also provide opportunities to experience closeness to nature; their enclosure and visual isolation enabling a sense of tranquillity. Parts of the LCA are within the core dark skies area. 	Loss of tranquillity due to visible or audible developments.
Rarity or representativeness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contains some of the most dramatic and accessible waterfalls in the National Park. 	
Natural heritage features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High nature conservation importance, including numerous SSSIs covering woodlands, river systems, meadows, grasslands and other habitats. Three sites are also designated SAC for their variety of woodland and wetland habitats and the plants and butterflies they support. An important geological landscape, containing some of the largest cave systems in Britain. The area is within the Geopark and contains RIGS and geological SSSIs (exposures and limestone pavements). 	Changes in woodland and grassland management (e.g. changes in grazing practices). Cave systems are vulnerable to changes in surface conditions, e.g. denudation of peat bogs leading to increased groundwater flows.
Cultural heritage features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An historic landscape with a strong sense of time-depth. Scheduled Monuments and other archaeological sites and buildings reflect the survival of features in the landscape from many periods, including Roman roads, small traditional farms and industrial sites. The gardens of Craig-y-nos-Castle (home of opera singer Adeline Patti) are listed grade II* as an example of a romantic high Victorian garden in a spectacular setting. 	Decline in traditional hillfarming leading to loss of landscape features. Archaeological features vulnerable to natural processes (e.g. limestone solution; water erosion) as well as damage or neglect.

Opportunities for landscape enjoyment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunities include caving, canoeing cycling and walking, including the many accessible 'Waterfall Country' paths. These paths enable access to many waterfalls, including the iconic Sgwyd yr Eira and Upper Henrhyd waterfalls. 	
Recreation provision and access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A variety of recreation opportunities, with visitor infrastructure concentrated along main roads. Visitor attractions include Dan-yr-Ogof showcaves, Craig-y-nos Country Park, Porth-y-ogof cave entrance and Penderyn distillery. Accessible from main roads and from settlements outside the National Park to the south. 	

Contribution to Ecosystem Services and Green Infrastructure (refer to sections 4.6 & 4.7 for terminology)

Principal ecosystem services include extensive pasture (food provision), woodfuel and timber and water resources. In common with the rest of the National Park, this LCA also contributes to cultural services such as spiritual enrichment, cultural heritage, recreation and tourism and aesthetic experiences.

Green Infrastructure features include the extensive accessible woodland at Coed y Rhaiadr. Other features of note are the tributaries of the Tawe, Neath and Amman, and their associated landscapes. There are a number of recreational, leisure and cultural heritage assets such as Craig-y-nos Country Park and the access to Dan-yr-ogof caves.



Ystradfellte village in its landscape setting



Upper Henrhyd waterfall. (Photo by Robin Lines)



Bluebell woods in the Nant Cyw valley

Forces for Change in the Landscape

Local Forces for Change and Their Landscape Implications

(See also the general forces for change described in section 6.0)

Past and Present

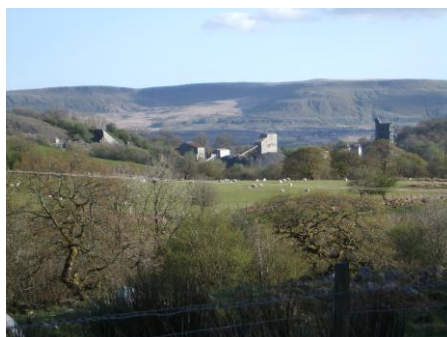
- Past mining of silica and gunpowder works in the Nedd and Mellte valleys.
- Past planting of extensive forestry plantations, particularly in the south of the area changing the composition of the landscape.
- Management of forests, especially as trees reach maturity.
- Decline in traditional hillfarming (particularly in more marginal areas) resulting in a loss of traditional practices such as common grazing, and landscape features such as dry stone walls. Economic pressures for farms to expand/ amalgamate, and to construct larger agricultural buildings.
- Loss/ alteration to vernacular domestic and agricultural buildings.
- Ongoing quarrying at Penderyn, adjacent to the LCA.
- Extensive existing opencast workings and a wind farm just beyond the southern boundary of the National Park are prominent in views, especially from higher land.
- Impact of light pollution on the area's dark skies.
- Recreation pressure (car parking, footpath erosion, litter, wild camping etc.) at popular sites, particularly along main roads.
- Localised 'urban fringe' issues such as fly tipping.

Future

- Continued decline in traditional hillfarming affecting the landscape and biodiversity of the area.
- Uncertainty over future agricultural grants potentially affecting stocking numbers and the maintenance of historic features such as walls and hedgebanks.
- Management of forests, particularly once trees have been felled.
- Tree loss due to disease e.g. *Phytophthora ramorum*.
- Continued implementation of the *Waterfall Country Management Plan*.
- Potentially significant impacts from future wind farm developments in close proximity to this area (TAN 8 areas E and F are close to the southern boundary of the National Park).
- Applications for further opencasting, quarrying, waste schemes and electricity schemes just beyond the southern boundary which would affect views from this area.



Forestry plantations and pylons in the south of the LCA, near the National Park boundary.



Afon Hepste quarry near Penderyn



Windfarm beyond the National Park boundary to the south, viewed from within the National Park.

Strategy

Overall Strategy

To maintain and enhance the special qualities of the landscape, in particular its historic features and magnificent waterfalls, resisting development which would impact on views from the area. Agriculture is supported, and traditional practices such as common grazing encouraged. Woodlands, rivers and other semi-natural habitats are well managed, as are historic features and their settings. The landscape is accessible to visitors and local people, with opportunities for appropriate recreation. Geological features, including caves, are in good condition. The special qualities of the area are not compromised by inappropriate development within or outside the National Park.

LCA-Specific Management Guidelines

Protect

- Protect (through appropriate management) **historic features** within the landscape, including those associated with **farming and settlement**.
- Protect the **built heritage** of the area, particularly **vernacular buildings**.
- Protect the **upland skylines** and occasional **long views** which form the backdrop to the area.
- Protect vulnerable **geological sites** such as limestone pavements.

Manage

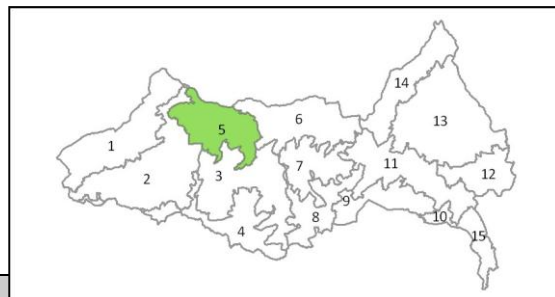
- Manage **semi-natural habitats** such as grasslands and moorlands through appropriate management and grazing.
- Manage **farmlands**, encouraging a viable farming community which farms in a traditional way to maintain the landscape and biodiversity of the area.
- Manage broadleaf **woodlands** using traditional techniques (e.g. coppicing) to encourage age and species diversity.
- Manage **coniferous forests** to maximise biodiversity and minimise visual impacts and damage to archaeology, particularly following felling.
- Manage (and record where necessary) **archaeological sites**, particularly where they are at risk (e.g. 4x4 damage to Sarn Helen Roman Road)
- Manage **recreation**, encouraging visitors and local people whilst minimising impacts on the area's biodiversity, heritage and special qualities.
- Manage **cave systems** (and related surface vegetation and activities) to protect subterranean habitats and features.

Plan

- Plan for **community education and involvement** in the management of the area, developing links with the communities beyond the National Park boundary.
- Plan for the **creation, extension and linking of semi-natural habitats**, e.g woodland and grasslands.
- Plan to **reduce the visual impacts** of existing open-cast sites, windfarms, quarries and other development beyond the National Park boundary, and **resist applications** for future development which would **harm the special qualities** of the area.
- Plan to retain the area's **dark skies** and reduce incidence of light pollution.
- Plan **recreation** strategically across the National Park, reducing pressure on 'honeypot' sites.

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA 5: WESTERN USK TRIBUTARIES**Broad Landscape Type: UPLAND VALLEYS****Description****Location and Context**

This LCA is located towards the west of the National Park, and lies between the northern National Park boundary and the uplands of Y Mynydd Du and Fforest Fawr. It includes the village of Trecastle and the smaller settlements of Defynnog, Crai and Heol Senni. To the east is a gradual transition into the Middle Usk Valleys.

**Summary Description**

This LCA comprises the valleys and intervening ridges which connect the unenclosed moorland with the lower land of the Usk valleys. It is a pastoral landscape, less expansive than the uplands but not as intimate as other more wooded or enclosed landscapes. Irregular fields surrounded by hedges fill valley floors and lower slopes, contrasting with the open moorland above. It is strongly influenced by the surrounding uplands which form its backdrop and contribute to its high visual quality. Management through centuries of hillfarming has given the area a strong sense of time-depth with ancient farms, winding lanes, wood pasture and species-rich fields.



The Senni Valley

Historical Development of the Landscape

Although the landscape contains some prehistoric monuments, the most profound influence on its development has been centuries of traditional hill farming, with enclosed pasture on lower land and common grazing on the moorlands above. The adjacent Cnewr estate also affects the appearance of this LCA, particularly in the architecture of the estate cottages and farmhouses. Along the northern edge of the LCA runs the A40, a former coaching route, with associated settlements such as Trecastle.

Distinctive Characteristics

- Underlying geology of Devonian mudstones, overlain by glacial deposits, and alluvium in the larger valleys.
- A series of relatively narrow valleys, the largest having glacially-eroded U-shaped profiles, whilst smaller ones are V-shaped, eroded by streams. Between the valleys are ridges of higher land.
- Meandering streams with narrow floodplains and occasional waterfalls flow into the larger but still fast-flowing River Usk. Bodies of open water include the Usk Reservoir and smaller Cray reservoir.
- Predominantly pastoral land use on improved/ semi-improved grass. Also significant areas of woodland, unimproved grassland, wood pasture on valley sides and moorland on higher ground.
- Field boundaries predominantly hedges enclosing irregular fields, often grown out or replaced with post-and-wire. Flower-rich hedgebanks along roads.
- Scattered patches of ancient deciduous woodland, particularly in valley bottoms and along streams. Occasional clumps of conifers and other non-native species around farms. Larger forestry plantations in the far west.
- Semi-natural habitats of principal importance to Wales including neutral and marshy grassland, swamp, wet heath/ acid grassland mosaic and broadleaved woodland.
- Farming landscape contains many historic features, e.g. lanes, farms, bridges, field patterns etc. Also pre-historic and medieval sites and transport routes including Roman road and coaching route.
- Settlement pattern consisting of occasional nucleated villages (Trecastle, Crai, Defynnog), and scattered farms. Main roads locally influence the landscape (e.g. A40; A4067)
- Varied texture and a timeless, peaceful quality. Moderate scale between the open uplands and more enclosed and wooded farmlands. Wide views over valleys, and a strong visual connection with Fforest Fawr and Y Mynydd Du.

Landmap Components (See Appendix 3 for components of all LANDMAP aspect areas)

Key Visual and Sensory Aspect Areas	Upper Usk and Hyddfer valleys (H); Senni Valley (H); Cwm Crai (H); Trecastle hinterland (M); Glasfynydd Forest (M); Usk Reservoir (H); Mynydd Wysg (M); Glasfynydd Forest (M); Fforest Fawr West (O); Fforest Fach (M); Cray Reservoir (H); Usk Valley West of Brecon (H)
Key to Landmap evaluation criteria: (O) Outstanding: of international importance. (H) High: of regional or county importance. (M) Moderate: of local importance. (L) Low: of little/no importance	

Settlements

The largest settlement in the LCA is Trecastle, situated on a major east-west route (a former coaching route and now the A40) with the remains of a medieval motte and bailey castle. Other smaller settlements include Crai and Defynnog, which has a prominent white-painted church tower, and a strong estate influence in its architecture. Farms and hamlets are scattered throughout the LCA, generally of traditional stone construction and often painted white, with some more modern farm buildings. In the eastern part of the LCA, there is more of an influence of estate architecture, particularly in the distinctive white-painted farms and cottages, often embellished with window pediments, gables etc.

Key Views

The area forms the setting to the higher areas of Fforest Fawr and Y Mynydd Du in terms of their foreground when viewed from the north, and also in views northwards from their summits. Some of the best views within LCA 5 are the long views down valleys (for example down the Senni Valley) often from near the boundaries of the LCA.

Evaluation

Special Qualities

The natural beauty and recreational factors that make this landscape special are summarised in the table below, along with examples of their sensitivities to landscape changes:

Criteria	Special Qualities for this Landscape Character Area	Sensitivities
Scenic quality and Sense of place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High scenic quality and a strong sense of place, resulting from the landforms, visual variety, distinctive upland backdrops and traditional pastoral management of the area. 	<p>Introduction of large scale or incongruous features, particularly where skylines are interrupted.</p> <p>Decline in hillfarming affecting the traditional management and landscape features of the area.</p>
Landscape quality and integrity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High landscape quality and integrity as a result of centuries of consistent agricultural management, and few incongruous features. 	As above
Perceptual qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A peaceful, pastoral landscape with few factors detracting from its tranquillity and timelessness. The western part is within the BBNP core dark skies area. 	As above
Rarity or representativeness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This landscape typifies the traditional hillfarming landscape, centred on the relationship between enclosed valleys and the open common land above. 	As above
Natural heritage features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A range of habitat sites designated SSSI, including rare examples of once-common habitats, e.g. unimproved wet pastures and fens. The River Usk is designated SSSI and SAC as an example of a river flowing over sandstone, and the associated plant and animal communities within this linear ecosystem. 	Changes in grazing patterns or improvement to grasslands could affect rare habitats.
Cultural heritage features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A strong sense of time-depth from built landscape features including lanes, bridges, farms and field patterns, as well as Scheduled Monuments from the Prehistoric period on higher land (cairns, barrows, standing stones and Twyn-y-Gaer hillfort) and the Medieval motte and bailey at Trecastle. 	Loss of archaeological/historic features as a result of erosion, damage, neglect or insensitive modernisation.

Opportunities for landscape enjoyment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Nature Reserve at Twyn-y-Gaer enables public access to a woodland site. 	
Recreation provision and access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A good network of lanes, footpaths and bridleways providing access into this attractive landscape. 	

Contribution to Ecosystem Services and Green Infrastructure (refer to sections 4.6 & 4.7 for terminology)

Principal ecosystem services include provisioning and regulating services. In addition to farmland, provisioning and regulating services derive from the extensive Glasfynydd Forest and the Usk Reservoir. These features support climate and water regulation whilst providing a source of fuel and fresh water. The River Usk provides food and recreation services including fish, angling, water craft and access to water. In common with the rest of the National Park, this LCA also contributes to cultural services including spiritual enrichment, cultural heritage, recreation and tourism, and aesthetic experiences.

Main Green Infrastructure features are the forest, reservoir and river system mentioned above, which can also support recreation and leisure pursuits. Other features of note include the Twyn y Gaer Nature Reserve and historic assets.



Pastoral scene west of Trecastle with Fforest Fawr and Central Beacons in the distance.



Rushy pasture habitat and traditional hillfarm in the Hydfer Valley



Trecastle village street (now the A40) and historic coaching inn.

Forces for Change in the Landscape

Local Forces for Change and Their Landscape Implications

(See also the general forces for change described in section 6.0)

Past and Present

- 20th century construction of Usk and Crai reservoirs impounding water and affecting water flows in the River Usk. Associated coniferous planting adding new features into the landscape, often with artificial straight-line boundaries.
- Construction of natural gas pipeline causing permanent changes to surface vegetation and buried archaeology.
- Construction and upgrading of roads including the A40 and A4067 with localised impacts on the area (traffic movement and noise).
- Loss of hillfarming traditions due to a lack of succession in hillfarming families. This is a particular problem in this relatively marginal farming area with small individual landholdings. Consequences on the landscape are the amalgamation of farm holdings (sometimes with new, larger-scale farm buildings), dilapidation of traditional farm buildings and poor management of hedgerows and meadows. Changes in grazing patterns on common land also affect the landscape of this LCA (see section 6.0)
- High-quality conversion of redundant agricultural buildings to residential use.
- Loss of hedgerows and replacement with post-and-wire fencing.
- New local farming initiatives can be a positive force for change e.g. Brecknock Lamb.
- Decline in traditional management of hedgerows, broadleaved woodlands and wood pasture.
- Management of coniferous plantations, particularly as trees reach maturity.
- Water quality of streams and rivers.
- Demographic changes, e.g. population decline in some hillfarming areas, but an increased demand for housing in other parts of the LCA (eg. around Trecastle).

Future

- Continued agricultural changes including loss of traditional hillfarms, farm amalgamation, new farming initiatives and changes in agri-environment schemes, all potentially affecting the traditional appearance of the landscape.
- Management of coniferous plantations, particularly following felling.
- Continued development pressure, particularly in the north of the area.



Usk Reservoir (constructed in 1955 to supply water to Swansea) and associated forestry. Viewed from the north, with Y Mynydd Du behind.



Brecknock Lamb for Marks and Spencer- an example of changing agricultural markets and positive local initiatives.



Barn in the Crai Valley, derelict as a result of changing farming practices. Many similar barns throughout the National Park have been converted to residential use.

Strategy

Overall Strategy

To maintain the traditional features and special qualities of the landscape, ensuring that any agricultural changes are as sensitive as possible to the area's landscape and habitats. Farming is supported and its viability is increased, with farmers encouraged to continue traditional hillfarming practices in their management of common land, hedgerows and meadows. The area continues to provide an attractive setting for the surrounding uplands. New development around existing settlements is sensitively accommodated into the landscape. Semi-natural habitats such as woodland and grassland sites are well managed, and archaeological/ historic features (including built heritage) are protected and well looked-after. Appropriate recreation is encouraged, and people enjoy and appreciate the landscape.

LCA-Specific Management Guidelines

Protect

- Protect the area's **archaeological sites**, and the **historic landscape features** such as lanes and hedgerows which contribute to the character of the area.
- Protect the area's **built heritage** ensuring that any changes (e.g. conversions of barns to residential use) are done as sensitively as possible.

Manage

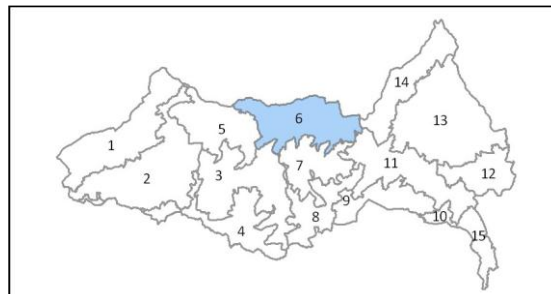
- Manage **farmland** through the encouragement of a viable farming community, farming the land in a traditional way which maintains the landscape and enhances biodiversity.
- Manage **wood-pasture and common land** through encouragement of appropriate levels of grazing and other positive management practices.
- Manage **woodland** (using traditional techniques such as coppicing) to retain age and species diversity.
- Manage **wetland and grassland sites** to maximise their biodiversity, using appropriate management and grazing.
- Manage **plantations** to enhance their biodiversity, protect archaeological features and improve their appearance in the landscape, particularly as trees reach maturity.
- Manage **recreation**, encouraging people to enjoy the landscape whilst retaining its special qualities.

Plan

- Plan to **create, extend and link semi-natural habitats** within the area such as woodland, hedgerows and grasslands.
- Plan to **work with landowners** (specifically Welsh Water and Forestry Commission Wales) with regard to reservoir and forestry management.
- Plan to ensure that any **new development is well designed and well sited** within the landscape.
- Plan to retain the area's **dark skies** and reduce incidence of light pollution.

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA 6: MIDDLE USK VALLEYS**Broad Landscape Type: SETTLED VALLEYS****Description****Location and Context**

This LCA is located in the north-central part of the National Park, between the Central Beacons LCA and the National Park boundary. It includes the settlements of Brecon and Sennybridge. Its boundaries with adjacent LCAs are transitional rather than abrupt: the Western Usk Tributaries to the west and the Eastern Usk Valley and the Wye Valley foothills to the east. Its character continues northwards beyond the National Park boundary.

**Summary Description**

This is an area of transitional landscape, connecting the uplands of the Central Beacons with the lower and more settled Usk Valley. It is visually dominated by the high northern scarps of the Central Beacons which form a dramatic southern backdrop to the area. A generally pastoral agricultural landscape of green fields divided by hedgerows, its character is also locally influenced by upland heath, designed parklands, urban development, valley floodplain and transport routes. A landscape of historical strategic importance, it contains defensive sites from the Iron Age, Roman and Medieval periods, and as well as recent military use.



View of Brecon town and the Central Beacons from Pen-y-crug Hillfort

Historical Development of the Landscape

Despite its peaceful appearance, many of the surviving historic features in this landscape reflect its strategic position and its need for defence over many centuries. Such sites include Iron-Age hillforts, Roman fort, Medieval castles, mottes and town defences, and more recent military sites including the army's Welsh headquarters at Brecon. Legacies also survive from more peaceful times, including historic houses and their associated parklands from the 17th to 19th centuries, and the historic Monmouthshire and Brecon canal.

Distinctive Characteristics

- Underlying geology largely of red/ brown Devonian mudstones with occasional sandstones overlain by glacial deposits of clay, and fertile alluvium deposited by rivers.
- Gently undulating landform containing the valley of the River Usk, and several tributary valleys leading down from the Central Beacons. Isolated hills of harder rock are prominent in the landscape (e.g. Yr Allt and Fenni-Fach).
- River Usk flows within a broad floodplain along the northern boundary before turning south-east. Fed by a series of rocky, fast-flowing tributary streams (e.g. Tarell and Cynrig). Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal follows the River Usk south-east of Brecon
- Predominantly pastoral land use, with pockets of heathland, forestry, arable, parkland, urban and military land uses.
- Field boundaries generally hedgerows (often trimmed) enclosing semi-regular fields).
- A variety of trees, including hedgerow and riparian trees, coppice woodlands, small conifer plantations and parkland trees including veteran trees and non-native specimens.
- Semi-Natural Habitats of Principal Importance to Wales including broadleaved woodland, dry heath/ acid grassland, neutral grassland, fen and standing water.
- Historic features from a range of periods (from prehistoric hillforts to early modern canal) but with a concentration of transport-based and defensive structures including Pen-y-crug hillfort, Y Gaer Roman fort and Medieval castles, mottes, town banks etc. Later historic parks and country houses also influence the landscape.
- The town of Brecon on a crossing point of the Usk, with its castle, cathedral (originally a priory church) colourful Georgian houses, and modern peripheral housing and industrial buildings.
- Important past and current transport corridors, including the A40, A470, and the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal.
- Good recreation/ tourist infrastructure e.g. Cycle / riding trails, National Park Visitor Centre, youth hostel, B&Bs.
- Visually dominated by the Central Beacons on the southern horizon, this is a relatively open landscape with a settled, verdant feel.

Landmap Components (See Appendix 3 for components of all LANDMAP aspect areas)

Key Visual and Sensory Aspect Areas	Glyn Tarell and Cynrig valley (H); Clos Coed and environs (H); Cilieni Valley (M); Sennybridge (L); Usk Valley West of Brecon (H); Mynydd Bach Trecastell (H); Mynydd Illtyd (H); Forest Lodge (M); Usk Valley East of Brecon (H); Ysgir Valley (M); Honddu Valley (H); Felinfach Farmlands (M); Llanfilo Farmlands (M); Brecon (M)
Key to Landmap evaluation criteria: (O) Outstanding: of international importance. (H) High: of regional or county importance. (M) Moderate: of local importance. (L) Low: of little/no importance	

Settlements

This LCA contains the historic town of Brecon- an important local commercial and administrative centre, and several smaller nucleated villages including Sennybridge (with its military base), Libanus and Llanfrynach. There are also numerous hamlets and scattered farms, many of which are built in traditional materials and styles. The LCA contributes to the approaches, backdrop and setting to these settlements, which themselves influence the character of the landscape, giving it a more settled and developed feel.

Key Views

High points such as Pen-y-crug hillfort offer panoramic views across the LCA and the countryside to the north outside the National Park. Views south from within Brecon town towards the Central Beacons create a very strong sense of place. Many major and minor roads within the LCA also have excellent views of the Central Beacons. The area also forms the foreground to views northwards from the summits of the Central Beacons.

Evaluation**Special Qualities**

The natural beauty and recreational factors that make this landscape special are summarised in the table below, along with examples of their sensitivities to landscape changes:

Criteria	Special Qualities for this Landscape Character Area	Sensitivities
Scenic quality and Sense of place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong sense of place, and high scenic quality particularly due to the visual dominance of the Central Beacons to the south. 	Introduction of visually-intrusive features, particularly on skylines or in locations which impact on views to or from the Central Beacons, and on the setting of Brecon.
Landscape quality and integrity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A well-managed landscape which forms the setting to the Central Beacons and to the town of Brecon. 	Changes in agricultural practices resulting in loss of traditional landscape features such as hedgerows and vernacular buildings. Decline in grazing affecting common land in the Central Beacons.
Perceptual qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Away from towns and main roads, the area has a peaceful, pastoral quality with a sense of timelessness. 	Insensitive development; loss of traditional hillfarming landscapes; Localised impacts of military training.
Artistic and cultural associations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early cultural association with Gerald of Wales who resided at Llanddew outside Brecon. Later strong military associations. 	
Rarity or representativeness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contains some of the most familiar and well-known views in the National Park, creating a very strong sense of local identity. 	As above
Natural heritage features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Designated nature conservation sites include ancient woodland (especially in river valleys) SSSIs at Nant Menasgin and Blaen-Car woods, Gyfartha meadow, Illtyd Pools (upland marsh) and the River Usk and its tributaries. The latter is also designated SAC as an example of a river running over sandstone forming a linear ecosystem with its associated habitats. Illtyd Pools is a Local Nature Reserve. 	Decline in management of woodland and other sites; river water quality issues.

Cultural heritage features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numerous Scheduled Monuments, many of which represent the occupation and defence of this area over millennia. Much of the area is within the Register of Landscapes of Special Historic Interest in Wales (area 58). • Sites included on the Register of Historic parks and gardens include Penpont (grade II*), an early C.19th 'picturesque' park in the Usk Valley influenced by Humphrey Repton and containing some of the earliest larch trees in Britain. • The attractive town of Brecon, with its castle, cathedral, bridges, historic college, Georgian buildings and 19th Century barracks. The core of the town is a Conservation Area, and there are numerous Listed Buildings. 	<p>Loss of archaeological sites as a result of natural processes, erosion and damage by visitors.</p> <p>Loss of historic landscape features due to neglect or changes in land management (particularly sites in private ownership).</p> <p>Insensitive modernisation affecting the appearance of built heritage features.</p>
Opportunities for landscape enjoyment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many opportunities for enjoyment of the landscape, including walking, cycling, horse riding, canoeing and boating. Many historic sites are publicly accessible (e.g. Pen-y-crug hillfort; Y Gaer Roman fort). 	
Recreation provision and access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A popular tourist/ recreation area with good tourist infrastructure and a range of attractions including the National Park Visitor Centre, horse riding centres, canoeing launch points on the Usk, the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal and towpath, the Taff Trail and the Three Rivers Ride. Accommodation includes numerous hotels, Bed and Breakfasts, campsites and a youth hostel. The area also provides access to popular walks in the Central Beacons. 	<p>Concentrations of recreational activities causing erosion problems and damage to historic/ environmental features.</p> <p>Informal signage and recreational development impacting on the character of the landscape.</p>

Contribution to Ecosystem Services and Green Infrastructure (refer to sections 4.6 & 4.7 for terminology)

Principle ecosystem services include pasture and arable farming (food provisioning), woodlands and fresh water. The River Usk provides food and recreation services including fish, angling, watercraft and access to water. In common with the rest of the National Park, this LCA also contributes to cultural services such as spiritual enrichment, cultural heritage, recreation and tourism, and aesthetic experiences. Main Green Infrastructure assets include the River Usk corridor, the extensive mix of coniferous and deciduous woodland stands, Traeth Mawr Nature Reserve, the Taff Trail, and visitor attractions including Brecon Cathedral and the Roman fort at Y Gaer.



Pen Y Fan with farmland and parkland in the foreground



Penpont Parkland in the Usk Valley



Brecon Castle and town with the Central Beacons beyond

Forces for Change in the Landscape

Local Forces for Change and Their Landscape Implications

(See also the general forces for change described in section 6.0)

Past and Present

- Settlement expansion, particularly linear development along main roads, and spreading of Brecon town from the valley floor up on to higher land, making built development much more visible within the landscape.
- Demand for development of settlements, including low-cost housing, economic growth, efficient transport etc.
- Construction and upgrading of main roads with traffic becoming a locally visual and audible presence in the landscape.
- Telecommunications mast on Yr Allt is a prominent feature in the landscape over a wide area.
- Construction of natural gas pipeline causing permanent changes to surface vegetation and buried archaeology.
- Water flows in River Usk affected by reservoir construction, past moorland drainage (grips) and climatic variation.
- Past planting of relatively small-scale conifer plantations on steeper slopes.
- Military training, particularly in the north of the LCA.
- Hedgerow loss and replacement with post-and-wire fencing.
- Decline in traditional hillfarming, particularly in higher and more marginal parts of the LCA. Consequences on the landscape are the amalgamation of farm holdings (sometimes with new, larger-scale farm buildings), dilapidation of traditional farm buildings, poor management of hedgerows and meadows, and undergrazing of common land.
- High-quality conversions of redundant agricultural buildings to residential use.

Future

- Continued demand for housing and other development, particularly around existing settlements in the northern part of the area.
- Continued modernisation of agriculture and a decline in traditional hillfarming techniques such as grazing of common land and meadows, affecting biodiversity and the traditional appearance of the landscape.
- Continued amalgamation of farm holdings and a need to construct larger farm buildings.
- Changes in agricultural grants and funding potentially affecting the maintenance of traditional landscape features such as hedgerows.



Development on edge of Brecon expanding up the hillside



The A470 through Glyn Tarell



Sign for military vehicles using rural lane south of Brecon

Strategy

Overall Strategy

To retain and enhance the area's special qualities, in particular its views and historic features, ensuring that any new development is sensitively designed and accommodated within its landscape setting. Agriculture is viable, with farmers encouraged to use traditional land management techniques to retain and enhance landscape features and biodiversity. Iconic views to and from the Central Beacons are protected and enhanced, and historic sites, buildings and features are in good condition. The landscape impacts of new developments and military use are minimised. Visitors and local people are encouraged to enjoy the landscape through a wide variety of recreation opportunities, but without detriment to the area's special qualities.

LCA-Specific Management Guidelines

Protect

- Protect the **open upland skylines and views to the Central Beacons** which form the backdrop to the area.
- Protect and appropriately manage the landscape's numerous **historic and archaeological sites**.
- Protect and enhance the **built heritage** of the area and the settings of settlements.
- **Protect** (and manage) **historic features within the agricultural landscape** e.g. **hay meadows, field boundaries and narrow lanes**.

Manage

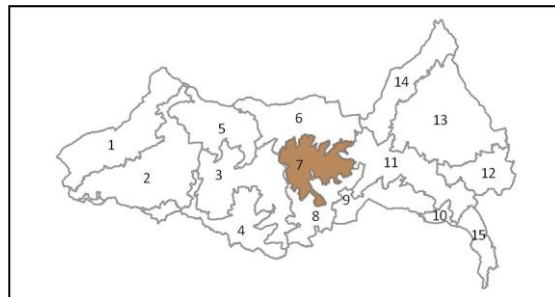
- Manage **recreation** where necessary to encourage enjoyment of the landscape, but minimise its impacts on the landscape and biodiversity of the area, and also to minimise conflicts between different recreational users (e.g. canoeists and fishermen).
- Manage **farmland**, encouraging a viable farming community using traditional methods to manage traditional landscape features and enhance biodiversity.
- Manage **semi-natural habitats** such as grassland, wetlands and commons to retain biodiversity, using appropriate management and levels of grazing.
- Manage **woodland** to improve age and species diversity, using traditional techniques (e.g. coppicing) where appropriate, and control of non-native species where necessary.
- Manage **archaeological sites** and their settings, with sensitive interpretation as appropriate.
- Manage **designed landscapes**, replacing parkland/ veteran trees to ensure their continued presence within the landscape.
- Manage **plantations** to enhance their biodiversity and appearance within the landscape, particularly as trees reach maturity.

Plan

- Plan to **minimise the visual impacts** on this area of any **developments within or outside the National Park boundary, ensuring that new developments are well designed and sited**.
- Plan to **work with military authorities** to ensure that military use has minimal impacts on the area's landscape and special qualities.
- Plan to **create, extend and link semi-natural habitats** such as woodland, wetlands and grassland.
- Plan to **encourage local communities to enjoy the landscape**, and to be actively involved in its management.

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA 7: CENTRAL BEACONS**Broad Landscape Type: UPLANDS****Description****Location and Context**

The Central Beacons LCA is located in the centre of the National Park, and includes Pen y Fan, its highest point. The Uplands continue westwards into the Fforest Fawr LCA, whilst to the north and east are the Middle and Eastern Usk Settled Valleys. To the south are the Talybont and Taff Reservoir Valleys.

**Summary Description**

The dramatic sandstone crags which form the northern face of this LCA are one of the most distinctive and iconic features of the National Park, and form the setting to the town of Brecon and its surroundings. As the highest land in the National Park, the Central Beacons have spectacular views in all directions and provide popular walking routes. It has a sense of being at the heart of the National Park, detached from the more developed areas to the north and south.



Craig Cwn Sere and Cribyn from Bwlch Duwynt

Historical Development of the Landscape

This landscape illustrates human interaction with the landscape over a very long period of time, from clearance of the land in prehistoric times, to the WW2 remains and military memorials of the 20th century. One of the primary influences on this landscape has been the changing patterns of grazing over many centuries, often by hefted flocks of local breeds of sheep and cattle.

Distinctive Characteristics

- Geology of Devonian Senni and Brownstones Formations, highly visible in the northern scarp. Covering of plateau beds on the highest land gives the ridges a flat-topped appearance.
- A glacially-sculpted landscape with a dramatic northern scarp, below a line of dramatic peaks including Pen y Fan (the highest point in the Brecon Beacons at 886m ASL). A series of horseshoe-shaped valleys radiate out from the centre, with a gradual slope downward to the south.
- Fast-flowing streams (fed from springs or upland bogs) radiate out from this central point. The source of the River Taff is in this LCA. Small glacial lake at Llyn Cwm Llŵch below Corn Du.
- Land use almost entirely open grazing on unenclosed common land.
- An open landscape, with trees limited to small patches of wood pasture on sheltered valley sides, although there are views across the adjacent plantations of the Talybont and Taff Reservoir Valleys.
- Semi-Natural Habitats of Principal Importance to Wales including marshy grassland, montane heath, modified blanket bogs, and dry heath/acid grassland mosaic.
- A range of historic features, including abandoned settlements to 20th century artefacts including pill box, tank traps and military memorials. Relatively few prehistoric sites compared to other LCAs.
- Very little settlement or other development within this LCA. However, views from the area encompass the surrounding settled landscape. The A470 follows the western boundary of the LCA.
- An open, expansive landscape with a sense of airy spaciousness and of being 'on the top'. The simple texture of the vegetation contrasts with the rough, stripy appearance of the crags. A dramatic, repeating pattern of triangular-shaped faces on the northern scarp, and lines of flat-topped ridges extending into the distance to the east and west.

Landmap Components (See Appendix 3 for components of all LANDMAP Aspect Areas)

Visual and Sensory Aspect Areas	Brecon Beacons (O)
Key to Landmap evaluation criteria: (O) Outstanding: of international importance. (H) High: of regional or county importance. (M) Moderate: of local importance. (L) Low: of little/no importance	

Settlements

There is very little settlement within this LCA, although the remains of former settlements can be seen at the periphery of the area. The high peaks of the Central Beacons LCA contribute to the distinctive settings of lower-lying settlements, particularly Brecon.

Key Views

Panoramic views in all directions from summits and a sense of being 'on top of the world', whilst experiencing the full east-west extent of the Brecon Beacons. This LCA also forms the backdrop to views from adjacent uplands and valleys.

Evaluation**Special Qualities**

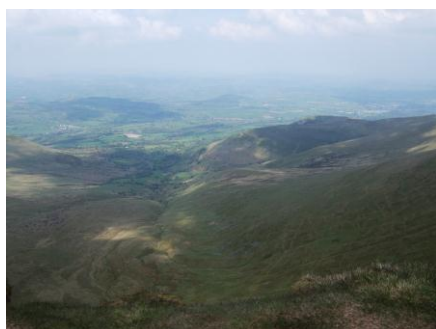
The natural beauty and recreational factors that make this landscape special are summarised in the table below, along with examples of their sensitivities to landscape changes:

Criteria	Special Qualities for this Landscape Character Area	Sensitivities
Scenic quality and Sense of place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An iconic landscape which forms the centre of the Brecon Beacons National Park. It has exceptionally high scenic quality and a strong sense of place resulting from its elevation, dramatic and distinctive topography, and panoramic views. 	<p>Introduction of incongruous features into the landscape which affect perceptions of tranquillity, remoteness and relative wildness. These can include recreational infrastructure e.g. car parks, waymarkers, paved paths. Concentrations of people can also reduce the sense of tranquillity.</p>
Landscape quality and integrity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An extensive and generally well-managed area of open, undeveloped landscape of high quality, which forms some of the highest land in southern Britain. 	<p>Development within or outside the LCA which impacts on views from summits (particularly on the lower land which forms the LCA's northern setting, and on the summits of the east-west ridge of the Brecon Beacons).</p> <p>As this open, exposed landscape is higher than its surroundings, it forms the horizon in views from many surrounding areas. It is therefore particularly sensitive to the introduction of features on its skylines (e.g trees, telecommunications masts) which would be prominent in views from a wide area.</p>
Perceptual qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High levels of tranquillity due to the landscape's openness, perceived naturalness, low noise and dark skies (the LCA is within the BBNP core dark skies area). There are few detracting features in terms of human development, but the numbers of people present on paths and summits can reduce the sense of tranquillity. The combination of inaccessibility, landform and absence of settlement gives the central part of the LCA a sense of remoteness. These qualities, combined with its sense of openness and exposure also create a sense of relative wildness, particularly when contrasted with the settled valleys to the north. The landscape can become hostile in poor weather conditions. 	
Artistic and cultural associations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visited by Tudor chronicler John Leyland (1506-52) who distinguishes between 'Arture's hille- the top or highest of the peaks' (probably Pen y Fan) and Banne Brekeniawk- the Brecon Beacons. 	
Rarity or representativeness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The northern scarp of the Central Beacons, with its triangular crags, is an iconic symbol for the Brecon Beacons National Park, and contains rare plant species. 	

Natural heritage features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Of importance for nature conservation, containing a very extensive SSSI (with smaller areas also designated SAC) designated for their moorland and cliff habitats. Crags and wet flushes contain a number of rare plants including Arctic alpine plants, bog orchids and Hawkweeds unique to the Brecon Beacons. Relict soil deposits enable the reconstruction of past environments. 	<p>Changes in land management, e.g. changes in grazing levels affecting the composition of moorland vegetation. Damage to fragile habitats through intense recreational use.</p> <p>Changes in environmental conditions (e.g. air and water quality) and water retention affecting surface vegetation, geological exposures and cave systems.</p>
Cultural heritage features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Memorials within the landscape include the Tommy Jones Obelisk and a discreet military memorial near the summit of Pen y Fan. There are also aeroplane crash sites. Scheduled Monuments include abandoned settlements from the prehistoric and medieval periods, and a Roman road crosses the area north-south. It also has a notable absence of prehistoric ceremonial sites compared with the slightly lower surrounding upland areas. 	<p>Loss/ damage to archaeological features through natural processes and erosion by visitors.</p>
Opportunities for landscape enjoyment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main summits and ridges are exceptionally popular walking routes with stunning views. The summit of Pen y Fan is relatively accessible, being an hour's walk from the A470 on a well-made path. 	<p>The popularity of the area for recreation can lead to footpath and habitat erosion, and also reduce the sense of tranquillity and remoteness which visitors come to seek</p>
Recreation provision and access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good recreation infrastructure in terms of car parks, paths, Beacons Way etc. providing access into the landscape. 	

Contribution to Ecosystem Services and Green Infrastructure (refer to sections 4.6 & 4.7 for terminology)

Principal ecosystem services include provisioning through rough grazing and fresh water supply, and regulation and supporting services through deep peat, organic soils and water regulation. In common with the rest of the National Park, this LCA also contributes to cultural services such as spiritual enrichment, cultural heritage, recreation and tourism, and aesthetic experiences. There is potential for electricity generation through high head micro-hydro schemes. Main Green Infrastructure assets include the Beacons Way and open access to uplands.



View north from Corn Du.



Corn Du Brownstones scarp.



The Central Beacons from Libanus

Forces for Change in the Landscape

Local Forces for Change and Their Landscape Implications

(See also the general forces for change described in section 6.0)

Past and Present

- 20th century construction of reservoirs and planting of forests in adjacent LCAs, affecting views from the area, particularly towards the south.
- Development in surrounding areas (e.g. roads, built development) affecting views from the LCA and reducing its special qualities of tranquillity and dark night skies.
- Loss of habitat variation and ecological resilience as a result of changes in common grazing practices (See section 6.0 for more detail) ,
- Historic air pollution and acid rain, and ongoing nitrogen deposition caused ecological degradation of upland habitats, particularly peat bogs, affecting biodiversity and the water flows in underlying cave systems.
- Bracken encroachment on side slopes.
- Denudation of peat bogs as a result of pollution, acid rain and land management.
- Current reduction in grazing numbers as a result of a decline in traditional hillfarming and common grazing.
- Recreational pressure e.g. path erosion, litter, demand for car parking.
- Pressure to waymark and/or pave popular routes, potentially reducing the area's feeling of wildness and remoteness.

Future

- Continued recreational pressure, and issues of path erosion, car parking etc.
- Loss of traditional hillfarms, and potential changes to agri-environment schemes affecting grazing patterns and vegetation, e.g. effects and outcomes of the Glastir Common Land Element.
- Positive moorland management improving vegetation diversity and improving the condition of the moorland, including peat bogs.
- Visual impacts associated with the management/ clearance of forestry plantations in adjacent LCAs.
- Developments in adjacent LCAs or beyond the National Park boundary which may affect the views and special qualities of this area, including tranquillity and dark night skies.
- Climate change potentially affecting environmental conditions and upland vegetation.



Path erosion on the summit of Pen y Fan, revealing the underlying sandstone.



Bags of stone (dropped by helicopter) for pitching the popular path to Corn Du from Storey Arms.



20th century forestry plantations and reservoirs have dramatically changed views to the south.

Strategy

Overall Strategy

To protect the area's open, undeveloped, dramatic and tranquil landscapes, and enhance its special qualities.

Recreation is encouraged, but discreetly managed to minimise its environmental and visual impacts. Appropriate levels of grazing and other land management techniques are encouraged to improve the area's biodiversity and upland habitats. Historic and cultural features within the landscape are protected where necessary. Views out from the LCA are unaffected by visually-intrusive development.

LCA-Specific Management Guidelines

Protect

- Protect the **undeveloped character of the landscape**, and its qualities of **remoteness, tranquillity and dark night skies**.
- Protect the **open moorland landscape**, avoiding the development of vertical structures, the planting of trees and inappropriate path construction methods.
- Protect the area's **geological and geomorphological features**, and its rare habitats and species.
- Protect and enhance valuable **moorland habitats**.
- Protect (through appropriate management) the **archaeological and cultural features** and their settings where appropriate.
- Protect **expansive views** across the LCA and into adjacent areas, paying special regard to the adjacent lowlands and the uninterrupted ridges which extend to the east and west.

Manage

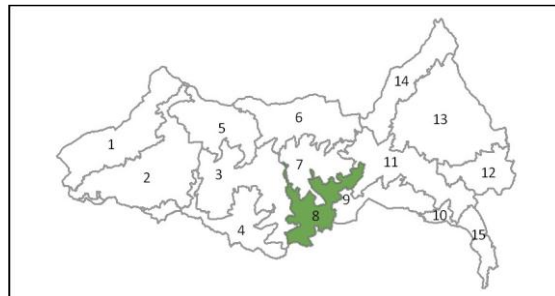
- Manage and enhance **upland habitats**, retaining and increasing the area's biodiversity.
- Manage **wetland** sites such as blanket bog to increase carbon sequestration and water storage capacity, reducing impacts of water flows on cave and river systems and potentially reducing downstream flooding.
- Manage **common grazing land** through the encouragement of a viable grazing regime which supports traditional hillfarming practices, encourages biodiversity and retains an open moorland landscape.
- Manage **recreational pressure** (e.g. footpath erosion) to minimise its visual impacts and damage to sensitive habitats. Minimise impacts of recreation on **perceptions of remoteness and tranquillity**.

Plan

- Plan to retain the area's **dark skies** and reduce incidence of light pollution.
- Plan for the **creation, extension and linking of traditional moorland habitats**, e.g. heather moorland, blanket bog and heath. Reduce the overall area of acid grassland through encouragement of heather regeneration (whilst maintaining a mosaic of habitats for ground nesting birds and to retain species diversity).
- Plan to **manage recreation strategically** across the National Park, encouraging visitors to explore areas beyond the popular 'honeypot' sites and summits.

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA 8: TALYBONT AND TAFF RESERVOIR VALLEYS**Broad Landscape Type: UPLAND VALLEYS****Description****Location and Context**

This LCA is located in the south of the National Park, and abuts its southern boundary near Merthyr Tydfil. To the north is the Central Beacons, to the west Fforest Fawr and to the east Mynyddoedd Llangatwg and Llangynidr, and the Eastern Usk Valley.

**Summary Description**

This LCA is characterised by its reservoirs, surrounded by steep sided, dark green forested valleys. Between the reservoir valleys are more open ridges of upland moorland which have long views across the reservoirs and their surrounding forests. This LCA is easily accessed from Merthyr Tydfil and the A470, and is a popular recreation destination.



The Talybont Valley

Historical Development of the Landscape

The landscape was dramatically altered in the early to mid 20th century, when strings of reservoirs were created through the damming of steep valleys. There are three reservoirs in the Taf valley, four in the Taf Fechan valley, and one large one in the Talybont valley (Glyn Collwn). All are surrounded by extensive conifer plantations and have associated water treatment works and other structures. Pockets of fields, farms and woodland remain (for example around Vaynor) which give an indication of how the valleys would have looked prior to their flooding. The area has strong links with the towns to the south; providing natural resources such as limestone and water, and also acting as a transport corridor. A Roman road, turnpike road (now the A470), industrial tramways, and the Brecon and Merthyr Railway (now forming part of the Taff Trail) all run through this LCA.

Distinctive Characteristics

- Mostly underlain by Devonian age sandstones of the Brownstones Formation, with small areas of the upper Old Red Sandstone Grey Grits and Carboniferous Limestone in the south, and Twrch Sandstone on the southern margin.
- A series of steep V-shaped valleys separated by flatter uplands. The Taff valleys have a strong north-south orientation and drain southwards, whilst the Talybont valley lies broadly north-east to south-west and drains into the Usk.
- Chains of artificial reservoirs occur in valleys, linked by rivers. Mountain streams (and occasional waterfalls) flow down the steep valley sides, sculpting sandstone and limestone rocks.
- Coniferous forestry is dominant land use, plus reservoirs, pasture and open moorland.
- Surviving field boundaries usually stone walls, occasionally patched with post and wire. Some former field boundaries still visible within forestry plantations.
- Extensive coniferous forests, with some larch and patches of more mixed deciduous woodland (for example on the western side of the Llwyn-onn valley). Deciduous trees also associated with watercourses.
- Semi-Natural Habitats of Principal Importance to Wales including modified blanket bog, marshy grassland, broadleaved and coniferous woodland, flush/ spring and acid grassland.
- Many historic features lost under reservoirs and forests. Surviving features include farms, field boundaries and Vaynor church. Parts of the Brecon and Newport Railway survive, including Pont-sarn viaduct, the opening of the tunnel which connected the Talybont and Taff valleys, and some track (now the Brecon Mountain Railway) and station buildings.
- Very limited settlement within the LCA (Llwyn-onn, Pontsticill and occasional farms). Other built development includes housing for reservoir workers, large-scale water treatment works below dams, and former limestone quarries.
- Recreation provision e.g. car parks, picnic areas, trails, Garwant Forest Visitor Centre, watersports.
- Generally a simple landscape composition, with large blocks of forest in simple valley landform. Forests appear strongly textured (especially where they include deciduous trees) and contrast in colour with surrounding open moorland.

Landmap Components (See Appendix 3 for components of all LANDMAP Aspect Areas)

Key Visual and Sensory Aspect Areas	Vaynor Uplands (H); Penmoelallt (M); Carnafell Valley and Talybont Forest (H); Upper Taf Fechan Valley (H); Taf Fawr Valley (H); Beacons Reservoir (M); Upper Taff Fawr (M); Taff Fawr (H); Vaynor Farmlands (M); Taff Fechan (H); Ponsticill and Pentwyn Reservoirs (O); Ponsticill Reservoir (O); Brecon Beacons (O); Talybont Reservoir (O); Upper Neuadd Reservoir (H)
Key to Landmap evaluation criteria: (O) Outstanding: of international importance. (H) High: of regional or county importance. (M) Moderate: of local importance. (L) Low: of little/no importance	

Settlements

Settlements within the LCA limited to the village of Pontsticill, hamlets such as Llwyn-onn and scattered farms. These include some traditional stone-built buildings, but also more modern development, including housing for reservoir workers. There is some visual connection with the towns to the south, particularly area of elevated modern housing, including the northern edge of Merthyr Tydfil.

Key Views

Key views include the attractive compositions of water, trees and distant hills which can be seen from many lakeside viewpoints. Higher ridges have views across the reservoir valleys, into the surrounding LCAs, and also encompass land beyond the National Park boundary. There are views across this LCA from surrounding uplands including the Central Beacons, and from popular summit viewpoints such as Pen y Fan.

Evaluation

Special Qualities

The natural beauty and recreational factors that make this landscape special are summarised in the table below, along with examples of their sensitivities to landscape changes:

Criteria	Special Qualities for this Landscape Character Area	Sensitivities
Scenic quality and Sense of place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Waterbodies, forests and landform combine to create a distinctive character, high scenic quality and strong sense of place, which is heightened by views to the Central Brecon Beacons and other high land on the horizons. 	Changes in the composition of the landscape and views from the area.
Landscape quality and integrity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A well-managed landscape, with forests and other land generally in good condition. 	Neglect/ poor management of forests and farmland. Changes to grazing patterns of upland areas.
Perceptual qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extensive forests create a sense of tranquillity and relative remoteness, despite this LCA's proximity to urban areas. The enclosure experienced within the forests contrasts with the openness and long views experienced across lakes and from higher land. Parts of the LCA are within the BBNP core dark skies area, which enhances the sense of tranquillity. 	Loss of tranquillity as a result of visually intrusive/ audible developments beyond the National Park boundary.
Rarity or representativeness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This LCA contains some of the largest forests and waterbodies in the National Park, giving it a unique character and recreational opportunities. 	
Natural heritage features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Particular geological interest, with the western part of the LCA in the Geopark. Also several geological SSSIs associated with the limestone (including Nant Glais Caves) and RIGS near Pontsticill. Accessible conservation sites include bird hides at Talybont Reservoir SSSI, and a Local Nature Reserve at Penmoelallt ancient woodland. This LCA also contains rare whitebeam trees and hawkweeds. 	Caves are sensitive to surface conditions (e.g. changes in vegetation and water storage capacity).
Cultural heritage features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A range of cultural heritage sites, including Scheduled Monuments dating from the Neolithic to Medieval periods, Vaynor church, and surviving industrial archaeology relating to the Brecon and Newport railway, including the Pont-sarn viaduct and tunnel openings. Extensive prehistoric sites survive on higher land. 	Archaeology vulnerable to natural processes, damage and erosion, including during forestry felling operations. Standing buildings (e.g. surviving railway buildings) vulnerable to neglect and vandalism.

Opportunities for landscape enjoyment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A wide range of outdoor recreation within a high quality landscape, including Nature Reserve and bird hides, Garwnant Forest Visitor Centre (with trails, low ropes course, children’s play area, café, visitors centre etc.), and water-based recreation including fishing and sailing. The landscape can also be experienced from the Brecon Mountain Railway from Pontsticill Station. 	<p>The forested nature of the landscape in this area gives it a relatively high carrying capacity for recreation, but it must be managed to ensure that the area’s special qualities are not affected.</p>
Recreation provision and access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exceptionally good access and infrastructure for recreation, including car parks, picnic sites, trails (including a wheelchair accessible trail at Taf Fechan forest), the Taff Trail cycle route, Beacons Way long distance route and numerous other paths. This LCA is a gateway into the National Park from the south, and is also a popular access route into the Central Brecon Beacons (LCA 7). 	<p>Potential impacts of recreation on reservoir water quality.</p>

Contribution to Ecosystem Services and Green Infrastructure (refer to sections 4.6 & 4.7 for terminology)

Extensive plantations aid in climate regulation and provide timber. The various reservoirs provide fresh water, support wildlife and regulate water flows, whilst small areas of farmland support food production. In common with the rest of the National Park, this LCA also contributes to cultural services such as spiritual enrichment, cultural heritage, recreation and tourism and aesthetic experiences.

Green Infrastructure features include the extensive woodland plantations and reservoirs which support leisure and recreational pursuits. This LCA includes a variety of visitor attractions such as the Brecon Mountain Railway, river corridors and mountain moorland.



Pontsticill Reservoir with the Brecon Beacons on the horizon



*Garwnant Visitor Centre, Llwyn-
onn Reservoir*



Water-eroded rocks in the Taf Fechan valley

Forces for Change in the Landscape

Local Forces for Change and Their Landscape Implications

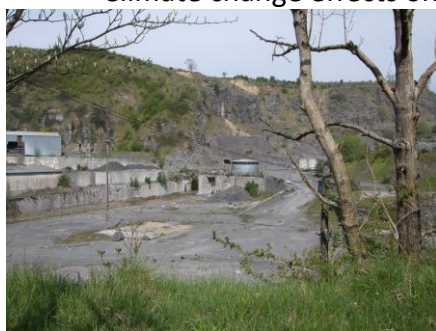
(See also the general forces for change described in section 6.0)

Past and Present

- Past construction of reservoirs and plantation of straight-edged forests, significantly altering the previous character of the landscape.
- Construction and upgrading of main Brecon- Merthyr road (A470) through the area with associated heavy and fast-moving traffic.
- Past quarrying of limestone leaving scars in the landscape.
- 'Urban fringe' influences of adjacent urban areas and high visitor numbers (e.g. litter, fly-tipping, 'police operation' notices, evidence of car break-ins etc).
- Land uses just beyond the southern boundary associated with adjacent development, e.g. golf clubs, derelict quarry etc.
- Water quality issues in reservoirs.
- Ongoing management of forests, particularly where trees are reaching maturity.
- Impacts of *Phytophthora ramorum* pathogens, particularly on larch trees.
- Decline in traditional hillfarming, particularly in more marginal areas, and associated impacts on traditional common grazing of upland areas.
- Loss/ damage/ neglect of archaeological and historic sites and buildings and their settings (including during forestry felling operations).
- Changes in surface conditions and management affecting underlying cave systems e.g. through impacts on groundwater flow.

Future

- Long-term management of forests to improve their biodiversity and fit within the landscape, and to ensure minimal damage to archaeology.
- Development proposals beyond the National Park boundary to the south (including open cast coal extraction, windfarms (TAN 8 area F is close to the southern boundary) and waste schemes) potentially affecting views southwards, particularly from higher land.
- Designation of the Talybont Reservoir as a Local Nature Reserve.
- Continued decline in grazing of upland areas affecting upland habitats and the open appearance of the landscape in these areas.
- Continued loss of archaeological and built heritage features.
- Climate change potentially resulting in increased storm damage to forests, new pests and diseases and changes in tree species to those more tolerant of altered conditions.
- Climate change effects on water quality and supply.



Vaynor Quarry, skirted by the southern boundary of the National Park.



Phytophthora felling and information poster near Storey Arms Centre



The main A470 near Cantref Reservoir

Strategy

Overall Strategy

To sensitively manage forestry, water resources and recreation to ensure the long-term enhancement of the area's biodiversity and special qualities, and enhance views of the area from adjacent higher ground.

Forests and woodlands are well managed to increase biodiversity, improve their fit within the landscape, encourage recreation and protect archaeology, particularly once trees reach maturity. People are encouraged to visit and enjoy a wide range of appropriate recreation within the landscape, but it is managed to minimise impacts on sensitive habitats and water resources. Archaeological and built-heritage features are protected, and recorded where necessary. Upland commons are in good condition.

LCA-Specific Management Guidelines

Protect

- Protect (through appropriate management) **historic features** within the landscape, including industrial archaeology, and prehistoric sites on higher land.
- Protect the **upland skylines** and occasional **long views** which form the backdrop to the area.
- Protect vulnerable **geological sites**.

Manage

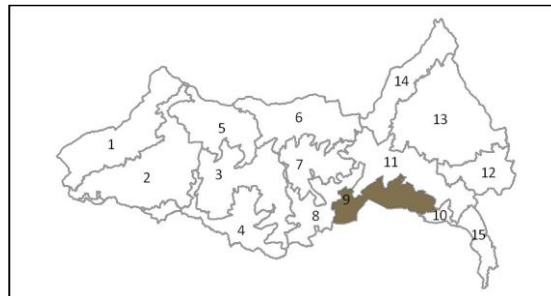
- Manage **coniferous forests** to maximise biodiversity, minimise damage to archaeology, and enhance views from surrounding uplands, particularly following felling.
- Manage **upland habitats**, (including through encouragement of appropriate levels of grazing) to retain and enhance biodiversity and environmental conditions in underlying cave systems.
- Manage **recreation**, encouraging visitors and local people to enjoy the landscape whilst minimising impacts on the area's biodiversity, heritage and special qualities.
- Manage **archaeological sites**, recording where necessary and respecting their settings.
- Manage pockets of remaining **farmland**, encouraging a viable farming community which farms in a traditional way to maintain the landscape and biodiversity of the area.
- Manage remnant **broadleaf woodlands** to encourage age and species diversity.

Plan

- Plan to **work closely with landowners** in the area (specifically Forestry Commission Wales and Welsh Water) with regard to forest and reservoir management.
- Plan for the **creation, extension and linking of semi-natural habitats**, e.g deciduous woodlands and grasslands.
- Plan **recreation** strategically across the National Park, reducing pressure on 'honeypot' sites and encouraging recreation in areas with relatively high capacity.
- Plan for **community education and involvement** in the management of the area, developing links with the communities beyond the National Park boundary.
- Plan to **reduce the visual impacts** of existing extraction/ development beyond the National Park boundary, and **resist applications** for future development which would **harm the special qualities** of the area.
- Plan to retain the area's **dark skies** and reduce incidence of light pollution.

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA 9: MYNYDDOEDD LLANGATWG & LLANGYNIDR**Broad Landscape Type: UPLANDS****Description****Location and Context**

This LCA is located on the southern edge of the National Park, stretching between the settlements of Merthyr Tydfil and Brynmawr. It is surrounded by lower-lying LCAs: The Talybont and Taff Reservoir Valleys to the west, the Eastern Usk Valley to the north and the Clydach Gorge to the east.

**Summary Description**

This LCA comprises an elevated plateau of moorland, characterised by its openness, smooth profile, lack of settlement, prehistoric archaeology and quarrying legacy. It contains many features of a karst (limestone) landscape, and a mosaic of high-quality moorland habitats. Despite its proximity to settlements, much of the area retains an open, undeveloped quality and is not heavily used for recreation although it has been used recently as a set for various films and TV programmes, Its crags and moorland also provide a dramatic and seasonally-changing backdrop to surrounding lower land including the Usk Valley.



Heather moorland near summit of Mynydd Llangynidr

Historical Development of the Landscape

The lack of modern settlement, forestry or other built development within the LCA has enabled the survival of a rich prehistoric ritual/ ceremonial landscape of individual cairns and a cairn cemetery. The most prominent modern features in the landscape are the huge limestone quarries, and the few modern structures in the landscape are associated with quarrying, e.g. tramroads and miners' housing.

Distinctive Characteristics

- A north-facing scarp formed by Carboniferous Limestone; the moors to the south having a thin cover of Twrch Sandstone and displaying karstic features including cliffs, caves, shake holes and limestone pavement. Area of lowermost South Wales Coal Measures sandstones ('Farewell Rock') and mudstones in the east.
- An elevated plateau-like landform, mostly above 400m ASL. From high ground, horizons appear low and smooth.
- Boggy ground and springs forming the sources of several rivers. Few waterbodies, including small upland pools and Llangyndir reservoir.
- Land use almost entirely open grazing on unenclosed common land. Extensive quarries (no longer worked), and small area of plantation on southern edge.
- An open landscape with no field boundaries and very few trees.
- Semi-Natural Habitats of Principal Importance to Wales including dry dwarf shrub heath, marshy grassland, unmodified blanket bog, modified blanket bog, acid/ neutral flush and limestone cliff habitats.
- A concentration of prehistoric archaeological sites, including numerous Cairns on high ground, plus more recent archaeology associated with quarrying.
- Very limited settlement, but views to settlement in the Usk valley to the north, and other development (e.g. roads, pylons) beyond the southern boundary of the National Park.
- An exceptionally open landscape, with subtle changes in texture and seasonal colour resulting from variations in moorland vegetation.

Landmap Components (See Appendix 3 for components of all LANDMAP Aspect Areas)

Key Visual and Sensory Aspect Areas	Mynydd Llangynidr and Mynydd Llangattock (H); Glangattwg Mountain (O); Mynydd Llangynidr (H); Cwm Carneilw (M); Clydach valley (M); Clydach Scree Slopes (M)
Key to Landmap evaluation criteria: (O) Outstanding: of international importance. (H) High: of regional or county importance. (M) Moderate: of local importance. (L) Low: of little/no importance	

Settlements

This LCA is characterised by its lack of settlement, although it does form an undeveloped moorland backdrop/ skyline in views from more settled areas, including towns and villages in the Usk Valley (e.g. Abergavenny, Llangattock and Crickhowell) and the Clydach Gorge. It also contributes to the settings of settlements immediately beyond the National Park boundary such as Brynmawr.

Key Views

Key views include prehistoric sites, views northwards across the Usk Valley and the hills beyond, and views across to the Central Beacons. This LCA also forms the horizon in views from the Usk Valley and from high land including the Central Beacons and the western part of the Black Mountains.

Evaluation

Special Qualities

The natural beauty and recreational factors that make this landscape special are summarised in the table below, along with examples of their sensitivities to landscape change:

Criteria	Special Qualities for this Landscape Character Area	Sensitivities
Scenic quality and Sense of place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scenic quality and sense of place resulting from combination of openness, landform, moorland vegetation, archaeology and views to distinctive skylines in other LCAs (e.g. profile of Central Beacons). 	<p>Introduction of incongruous features into the open landscape.</p> <p>Inappropriate development, (including outside the National Park) which affects skylines and/or views.</p>
Landscape quality and integrity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High-quality and good condition moorland mosaic with varied vegetation and age structure including heather, grasses, bog and rocky habitats. 	<p>Changes in land management, e.g. changes in grazing levels affecting the composition of moorland vegetation.</p> <p>Changes in environmental conditions (e.g. air and water quality) and water retention affecting surface vegetation, geological exposures and caves.</p>
Perceptual qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An exceptionally open and exposed landscape. Its landform, and absence of settlement and development give it a sense of tranquillity, remoteness and relative wildness in parts, despite its proximity to settlements to the south. The western part is within the BBNP core dark skies area. 	<p>Proximity to settlement and development to the south mean that perceptual qualities are sensitive to new development (including beyond the National Park boundary) and to anti-social behaviour such as fly tipping and illegal vehicle use.</p>
Artistic and cultural associations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Associations with the Chartist Movement whose members met covertly in the Llangynidr caves. Association with various feature films and TV series following its use as a set on many occasions (e.g. <i>Wrath of the Titans</i> filmed in Ystrad quarry). 	
Rarity or representativeness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vegetation includes heather moorland and rare actively-growing raised bog with an abundance of peat-forming bog mosses. Rare whitebeams and hawkweeds also grow in this LCA. 	<p>Changes in land management, e.g. changes in grazing levels affecting the composition of moorland vegetation.</p>

Natural heritage features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exceptional geological interest for limestone features including RIGS sites at Cefyn-yr-ystrad limestone pavement and Mynydd Pen Cynr patterned ground periglacial features; several geological SSSIs at quarry sites; National Nature Reserve at Craig y Cilau; and the cave system below Mynydd Llangatwg designated SSSI and SAC for its importance as a bat hibernation site. 	Changes in environmental conditions (e.g. air and water quality) and water retention affecting surface vegetation, geological exposures and caves.
Cultural heritage features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A prehistoric ritual landscape, with a concentration of Scheduled Monuments and other non-scheduled sites, including round cairns, platform cairns, cairn cemetery and hut circles. Later Scheduled Monuments include post-medieval/ modern tramroads associated with quarrying. 	Damage to archaeological features through natural processes (e.g erosion), neglect, visitor pressure, and also visual impacts on their settings.
Opportunities for landscape enjoyment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Almost entirely open access land with some footpaths/ bridlepaths enabling access to high quality landscapes and long views over the National Park to the Central Beacons. 	
Recreation provision and access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A high-quality, accessible moorland landscape located close to centres of population. 	

Contribution to Ecosystem Services and Green Infrastructure (refer to sections 4.6 & 4.7 for terminology)

Principal ecosystem services include provisioning through rough grazing and fresh water supply, and regulation and supporting services through deep peat, organic soils and water regulation. In common with the rest of the National Park, this LCA also contributes to cultural services such as spiritual enrichment, cultural heritage, recreation and tourism, and aesthetic experiences. There is potential for electricity generation through high head micro-hydro schemes.

Main Green Infrastructure features are the open access to uplands, numerous small watercourses and lakes, and the Craig y Cillau National Nature Reserve. The Usk Bat Sites SAC provides Green Infrastructure for bat species.



Prehistoric Cairn in heather moorland landscape near the summit of Mynydd Llangynidr.

Quarry face showing interbedded limestones and sandstones (also a nesting site for Peregrine Falcons).

Limestone grass moorland and road used in the filming of TV series 'Torchwood'.

Forces for Change in the Landscape

Local Forces for Change and Their Landscape Implications

(See also the general forces for change described in section 6.0)

Past and Present

- Extensive past quarrying operations (particularly in the south of the area) are highly visible in some views.
- Although quarrying has now ceased, redundant quarries are used for infilling, and as film sets which can have localised and occasional effects on the area's tranquillity and wildlife.
- Development pressures beyond the southern boundary of the National Park (e.g. pylon lines).
- Light pollution from roads and towns to the south of the National Park.
- Urban fringe issues such as informal kart-racing, 4x4 vehicles and off-road motorbikes, fly tipping etc. as a result of the proximity of the area to local centres of population.
- Reduced diversity of moorland vegetation (in particular a loss of heather moorland to acid grassland) as a result of changing common grazing practices. (See section 6.0 for more detail).
- Historic air pollution and acid rain, and ongoing nitrogen deposition caused ecological degradation of upland habitats, particularly peat bogs, affecting biodiversity and the water flows in underlying cave systems.
- Bracken encroachment on side slopes.
- Damage by wild fires.
- Loss of archaeological features as a result of natural processes (e.g. limestone solution) and damage.

Future

- Loss of traditional hillfarms, and potential changes to agri-environment schemes affecting grazing patterns and vegetation, e.g. effects and outcomes of the Glastir Common Land Element.
- Proposed developments beyond the National Park boundary including opencast mining, waste sites, road upgrades and wind turbines all potentially affecting the special qualities of the area, particularly in views southwards.
- Loss of dark night skies as a result of development and roads beyond the southern boundary of the National Park.
- Climate change potentially affecting environmental conditions and upland vegetation.
- Continued positive management of moorland, and restoration of upland habitats to retain and enhance the quality of the existing heather moorland mosaic.



Pylons, plantation etc. at southern boundary of National Park



Informal kart track near Cwar yr Hendre, with eroded peat bog in the middle distance, and the Central Beacons on the horizon.



Infilling at Cwar Blaen-dyffryn

Strategy

Overall Strategy

To protect and enhance the area's special qualities, including its tranquillity, valuable moorland habitats, geological and archaeological features. The special qualities of the area are not diminished by its proximity to existing and proposed development sites. The area's valuable geological and moorland habitats (particularly its cave systems, heather and peat bogs) remain in good condition. Archaeological sites are appropriately managed and recorded, and their settings are respected. Local communities and visitors are encouraged to visit, enjoy and care for the area.

LCA-Specific Management Guidelines**Protect**

- Protect the **undeveloped character** of the **open moorland** landscape, and its qualities of **tranquillity, relative wildness and dark night skies** which exist despite its proximity to centres of population.
- Protect the **geological and geomorphological features** of the area (eg. cave systems).
- Protect the area's valuable **upland habitats**, particularly heather moorland mosaic and active peat bogs .
- Protect (through appropriate management) the area's rich **archaeological landscape**, in particular its prehistoric features, and record archaeological features which are being lost through natural processes.
- Protect the long **views** from the area, including those southwards to land outside the National Park.

Manage

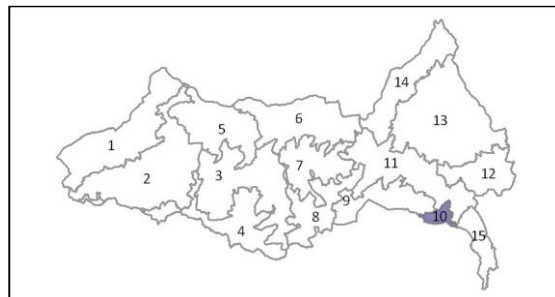
- Manage and enhance valuable **moorland habitats** retaining and increasing the area's biodiversity.
- Manage valuable **wetland** sites such as blanket bog to increase carbon sequestration and water storage capacity, reducing impacts of water flows on cave and river systems and potentially reducing downstream flooding.
- Manage **common grazing land** through encouragement of a viable grazing regime which supports traditional hillfarming practices, encourages biodiversity and retains an open moorland landscape.
- Manage **recreational pressure** and urban fringe issues to avoid the damage to sensitive habitats and archaeological features, and minimise any appearance of neglect.
- Manage **filming** to minimise impacts on the special qualities of the area.

Plan

- Plan to **reduce the visual impact** of road improvements, windfarms and other development beyond the National Park boundary.
- Plan to retain the area's **dark skies** and reduce incidence of light pollution.
- Plan for **community education and involvement** in the management of the area, developing links with the communities beyond the National Park boundary.
- Plan for the **creation, extension and linking of traditional moorland habitats**, e.g heather moorland, blanket bog and heath. Reduce the overall area of acid grassland through encouragement of heather regeneration (whilst maintaining a mosaic of habitats for ground nesting birds and to retain species diversity).

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA 10: CLYDACH GORGE**Broad Landscape Type: SETTLED VALLEYS****Description****Location and Context**

This small LCA is located towards the eastern end of the National Park, on its southern boundary. It includes the Clydach Gorge between the settlements of Brynmawr and Gilwern, and also Gilwern Hill. The A465 'Heads of the Valleys Road' runs through the gorge. To the north-west is Mynyddoedd Llangatwg and Llangynidr LCA and to the north-east is the Eastern Usk Valley LCA. Blorenge Hills and Slopes LCA is to the east.

**Summary Description**

This distinctive LCA is characterised by its dramatic and deep gorge. Beech woodlands cling to its steep sides, and contain remains of the area's rich industrial past, including viaducts, tramroads, quarries, ironworks and lime kilns. In the bottom of the gorge, the River Clydach leaps over rocks and waterfalls. Despite its steep topography, this is a settled landscape, with a busy main road running through the gorge, and lines of terraced houses along the hillside. Above is Gilwern Hill, also an important industrial site, with views across and into the gorge below. This part of the area is within Blaenavon Industrial Landscape World Heritage Site.



Clydach Gorge from Gilwern Hill

Historical Development of the Landscape

The area's exposed mineral resources, woodlands and water supply provided all the requirements for early industrial exploitation. Records of this begin in the 17th Century, but industrial processing may have begun earlier. From the 17th century until the end of the 20th century, the Clydach Gorge was used for iron ore extraction, charcoal production, iron production, stone quarrying and lime production. The remains of these industries, and their associated settlements, buildings, transport routes and spoil tips create an exceptionally rich historic landscape.

Distinctive Characteristics

- Complex underlying geology ranging from Brownstones at the foot of the gorge, through Carboniferous Limestone, and Marros Group sandstones and mudstones to South Wales Lower Coal Measures on the higher ground to the south. The rocks contain many caves.
- A spectacular, steep-sided gorge, falling from 350m ASL to 100m ASL over a distance of approx. 5km. Gilwern Hill on the south side of the gorge rises to over 440m ASL.
- Fast-flowing River Clydach running along the base of the gorge, fed by tributary streams and waterfalls down steep valley sides.
- Contemporary land use a mixture of woodland, settlement, moorland and derelict industrial land. Some pasture on shallower slopes.
- Enclosed fields generally limited to the shallower slopes at the gorge's eastern end. Here, small semi-regular fields are divided by walls or hedges.
- Extensive beech woodlands covering the valley floor and sides. Bluebell carpets in spring.
- Examples of regeneration of habitats on abandoned spoil tips and opencast sites.
- Semi-Natural Habitats of Principal Importance to Wales including broadleaved woodland, acid and calcareous grasslands, and heath (on Gilwern Hill).
- Outstandingly rich industrial archaeology of iron working, coal mining and quarrying, and their associated settlements and transport routes. Pen-fford Goch contains evidence of some of the earliest coal extraction processes around Pen-ffordd-goch.
- A well-settled landscape, including industrial villages and more recent development. Also a key transport route, including historic tramways and railways. The Heads of the Valleys Road (constructed in the 1960s) snakes down the gorge. Pylon lines also run through the gorge.
- A dramatic sense of enclosure at the base and sides of the gorge, contrasting with the more open feel of the hill tops above. Beech woods and limestone outcrops create a strongly textured, complex landscape with seasonal colour changes.

Landmap Components (See Appendix 3 for components of all LANDMAP Aspect Areas)

Key Visual and Sensory Aspect Areas	Clydach Gorge (H); Gilwern Hill (O); Llanelly hill tip (M); TRFNVS030 (M); A465 (L); Clydach Scree Slopes (M); Langattwg Mountain (O); Clydach valley (M); Tredegar town (M); A465 (M); Twyn Blaen-nant (L)
Key to Landmap evaluation criteria: (O) Outstanding: of international importance. (H) High: of regional or county importance. (M) Moderate: of local importance. (L) Low: of little/no importance	

Settlements

Settlements within the gorge itself (for example Clydach and Cheltenham) are generally linear in form, following the contours of the hillsides. They are industrial in their origins, containing workers' housing (usually terraced) and associated buildings such as chapels and pubs. On the flatter land above the gorge, settlements such as Llanelly Hill have developed in a much more scattered and piecemeal fashion.

Key Views

These include dramatic views across the gorge from the surrounding higher land, and from within the gorge itself (for example from the Heads of the Valleys road). Many views are framed by trees, and/ or include archaeological features such as viaducts, tramways or spoil tips.

Evaluation

Special Qualities

The natural beauty and recreational factors that make this landscape special are summarised in the table below, along with examples of their sensitivities to landscape changes:

Criteria	Special Qualities for this Landscape Character Area	Sensitivities
Scenic quality and Sense of place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spectacular landform, combined with woodland and industrial archaeology creates a strong sense of place which is unique within the National Park. 	<p>Development which detracts from the physical grandeur of the gorge (e.g. roads; pylons), results in woodland loss, or damages/ detracts from the area's archaeology and its setting.</p> <p>Ad-hoc development on high ground (e.g. Llanelli hill) is visually intrusive in views from this LCA and the Eastern Usk Valley.</p>
Perceptual qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The steepness of the landform creates a strong sense of awe, whether experienced from the bottom of the gorge or looking across it. 	As above
Artistic and cultural associations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Literary legend that William Shakespeare may have written 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' in a cave in Clydach Gorge. 	
Rarity or representativeness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A rare surviving assemblage of industrial archaeology concentrated within a small area, partially designated World Heritage Site, and representing a microcosm of the Welsh industrial past. 	<p>Loss of archaeological sites through neglect, 'redevelopment'/clearing-up or natural processes of revegetation and erosion. The settings of archaeological sites are also vulnerable to inappropriate development.</p>
Natural heritage features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Of importance for nature conservation, with four SSSIs, designated for their geological interest, habitats and/or importance to bats. Two sites (Cwm Clydach Woodlands and part of Mynydd Llangatwg) are also designated SAC. Ancient beech woodlands contain rare whitebeam trees, unusual fungi assemblages and rare vascular plants including orchids. 	<p>Decline in woodland management resulting in a loss of biodiversity and woodland condition.</p>

Cultural heritage features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several Scheduled Monuments and a large number of non-scheduled sites reflecting the area's rich industrial heritage, including iron works and furnace remains, quarries, limekilns and industrial settlements with their associated buildings (e.g. chapels, pubs etc.). Included in the Register of Landscapes of Special Historic Interest in Wales (Areas 16+52) • A concentration of transport routes including tramroads, railways and viaducts, and the canal embankment at Gilwern where the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal crosses the gorge. 	<p>As above.</p> <p>Archaeological sites and historic buildings in private ownership are particularly vulnerable to damage or neglect.</p>
Opportunities for landscape enjoyment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The landscape can be appreciated by walking, cycling and by vehicle along the lanes (often following historic tramroad routes) and from the dramatically-sited A465. Caving offers further recreational opportunities. 	<p>Difficulties of access: the A465 acts as a barrier to safe crossing of the gorge floor, and does not link with the lanes providing access to the sides of the gorge.</p>
Recreation provision and access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Footpaths, the Taff Trail and Cwm Clydach National Nature Reserve enable public access into the gorge. Gilwern Hill is open access land. 	<p>As above</p>

Contribution to Ecosystem Services and Green Infrastructure (refer to sections 4.6 & 4.7 for terminology)

The River Clydach provides fresh water, and surrounding woodland provides a source of wood fuel and timber production. In common with the rest of the National Park, this LCA also contributes to cultural services such as spiritual enrichment, cultural heritage, recreation and tourism and aesthetic experiences.

Main Green Infrastructure assets include the River Clydach corridor which is flanked by deciduous woodland and the Cwm Clydach Nature Reserve. There are numerous cultural heritage assets associated with former industry in the area.



Clydach Gorge ironworks (Scheduled Monument) in the base of the gorge.



Woodlands and viaduct on valley side



Revegetating spoil tips on Gilwern Hill

Forces for Change in the Landscape

Local Forces for Change and Their Landscape Implications

(See also the general forces for change described in section 6.0)

Past and Present

- Overhead high-voltage power lines are very dominant in views, particularly where they are seen against the sky.
- Construction of the A465 'Heads of the Valleys Road' along the gorge in the early 1960s. As well as its visual impacts and the physical barrier the road presents, traffic noise levels are very high as sound rebounds off the sides of the gorge.
- Relatively recent ad-hoc development (e.g. at Llanelly Hill) is visually intrusive, particularly on high ground.
- Past quarrying, coal working, and other industrial processes have left scars in the landscape, but also contribute to its sense of history.
- Loss/ dereliction of industrial and other heritage sites, particularly where it is in private ownership.
- Lack of appreciation of importance of sites (e.g. abandoned tips which are not necessarily visually appealing, but are of great importance for their archaeology and/or nature conservation interest).
- Abandonment of valley-side fields.
- Lack of management of upland areas (heath, grassland, etc) resulting in a loss of biodiversity.
- A scrappy, urban fringe appearance (e.g. poor-quality buildings, *Leylandii* hedges etc.), particularly on higher land.
- Incidence of anti-social behaviour such as fly-tipping.
- Positive management related to the Blaenavon Industrial Landscape World Heritage Site.

Future

- Proposals to dual the A465 Heads of the Valleys Road through the gorge.
- Continued development pressure.
- Continued woodland management issues (e.g. loss of species diversity due to climate change, storm damage and lack of management).
- Continued loss/ damage to archaeological sites and built heritage, particularly those which are not visually appealing.
- Improved management and interpretation of the area's industrial heritage through closer associations with the Blaenavon Industrial Landscape World Heritage Site.



Elevated modern development and pylons at Llanelly Hill seen from across the gorge. This development can also be seen from across the Usk valley.



Neglected industrial building alongside former railway line.



The Heads of the Valleys Road runs through the gorge, creating noise and visual impacts. Dualling of the road is currently being proposed.

Strategy

Overall Strategy

To enhance the special qualities of the area, whilst encouraging appreciation of its landscape value, biodiversity and archaeological importance. The area's rich archaeological heritage is protected, managed and recorded. The biodiversity of its woodlands, grasslands, upland habitats and derelict sites are retained and enhanced where necessary. Local people and visitors are encouraged to visit the area and access to its natural and heritage sites is improved. Any future development is used as a positive force for landscape change, through good design, siting and compensatory measures

LCA-Specific Management Guidelines

Protect

- Protect the **dramatic appearance of the landform** and its sense of scale.
- Protect (through appropriate management) the area's rich **archaeological landscape**, including its industrial features.
- Protect the area's **built heritage** (and its settings where appropriate).

Manage

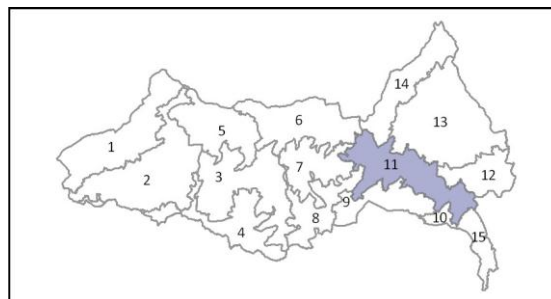
- Manage **archaeological sites and features** with regard to the recommendations of the World Heritage Site Management Plan where relevant. Particular care should be given to the management of less appreciated and/ or understood sites.
- Manage **woodland** (using traditional techniques such as coppicing where appropriate) to retain its biodiversity and to increase age and species diversity.
- Manage **upland areas and remnant farmland** to enhance their biodiversity.
- Manage **urban fringe issues** to avoid damage to sensitive habitats and archaeological features, and minimise any appearance of neglect.

Plan

- Plan to work with engineers/ designers from the earliest stages to ensure that proposals to dual the **A465 through the gorge have the minimal possible negative impacts** on the landscape, and where possible **enhance the special qualities** of the area (e.g. by improving access, enabling motorists to stop and appreciate the landscape, and reducing road traffic noise).
- Plan to ensure that any future development **fits with the grain of the landscape** and enhances its dramatic appearance.
- Plan to put **high-voltage power cables underground** where feasible.
- Plan to **reduce incidence of anti-social behaviour** such as fly tipping through **community education and involvement** in the management of the area.
- Plan to develop the area's relationship with the Blaenavon Industrial Landscape **World Heritage Site** and to extend the proportion of the area associated with it.

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA 11: EASTERN USK VALLEY**Broad Landscape Type: SETTLED VALLEYS****Description****Location and Context**

This linear LCA includes the floor and lower sides of the Usk Valley. It extends from Pencelli to the eastern edge of the National Park near Abergavenny, and includes several settlements including Crickhowell, Talybont and Bwlch. It has nine adjacent LCAs, including the high land of the Central Beacons to the west and the Black Mountains to the east.

**Summary Description**

This settled, luxuriant valley contrasts with the surrounding open and craggy hills. Its wide, flat valley floor with its patchwork of fields is an important transport route, containing main roads and the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal. A fertile, agricultural landscape, the Usk Valley is also strongly influenced by parkland planting and in places is densely wooded. The valley has a long history of settlement, and contains several villages, numerous farms and country houses with their associated grounds. A series of Iron Age hillforts overlook the valley, and the southern part has industrial links with the Clydach Gorge and Blaenavon Industrial Landscape World Heritage Site.



The Usk Valley west of Crickhowell

Historical Development of the Landscape

The development of this landscape reflects its strategic role as a key route and transport corridor over millennia, as well as its long use for traditional agriculture and industry. Iron Age hillforts are prominent on the valley sides, with later defensive features including a series of Medieval mottes and castles such as Tretower. Villages developed at crossing points of the river, with some historic bridges surviving. Later, the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal was constructed along the valley, and the southern end was influenced by industrial development. The picturesque qualities of the valley were appreciated, and several small country houses were constructed, with associated parks and gardens.

Distinctive Characteristics

- Underlying geology of Devonian sandstone and mudstone, giving a characteristic red colour to soils and river banks. Depositions of silt create fertile soil on the valley floor.
- A generally broad, flat-bottomed glaciated valley, with steep sides and occasional dome-shaped hills of harder rock rising from the valley floor.
- The wide and fast-flowing River Usk following a meandering course along the valley floor, fed by streams flowing along smaller tributary valleys. The Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal also follows the valley.
- A mixture of land uses, predominantly agriculture (mainly pastoral and some arable), but also parkland, settlements, woodlands and forests (particularly on steeper slopes).
- Valley floor fields generally more regular in shape than those on valley sides, creating a patchwork effect. Mostly bounded by hedges, but with stone walls in higher tributary valleys, and sometimes associated with estates.
- A well-treed landscape containing coniferous forests and bluebell woodlands on valley sides, riparian trees along watercourses, hedgerow trees and a range of specimen and veteran trees in parkland and gardens.
- Semi-Natural Habitats of Principal Importance to Wales including broadleaved woodland, neutral grassland, hedgerows and riverine habitats.
- Concentration of historic buildings and structures, including castles, churches, villages, bridges, farms and country houses. A series of Iron-Age hillforts look down from the valley sides. Industrial archaeology associated with Garn Ddyrys ironworks and the canal.
- The canal has distinctive lifting bridges, and a basin and inclined planes at Llanfoist. A well-settled landscape with a long history of use as a transport corridor.
- Settlements generally centred around historic bridging points of the Usk. At the southern end of the valley are more recent industrial villages (e.g. Gilwern).
- A soft, gentle, verdant landscape contrasting with the rugged higher land above. Deciduous trees provide seasonal changes in colour and texture.

Landmap Components (See Appendix 3 for components of all LANDMAP Aspect Areas)

Key Visual and Sensory Aspect Areas	Usk Valley - Llangattock (H); Usk Valley Hills (H); Carnafell Valley and Talybont Forest (H); Crawnon Valley (H); Usk Valley East of Brecon (H); Usk Valley Northern Slopes (H); Crickhowell (H); Llanelly Hill (H); The Tumble (H); Gilwern (M); Lower Usk & Olway valleys (H); Sugar Loaf scarp slopes (H); River Usk (O); Govilon(L)
Key to Landmap evaluation criteria: (O) Outstanding: of international importance. (H) High: of regional or county importance. (M) Moderate: of local importance. (L) Low: of little/no importance	

Settlements

This part of the Usk valley contains several settlements, the largest of which is Crickhowell. Most of the older settlements originate on the valley floor at crossing points on the river, although there are exceptions, such as Llanelli with its ancient churchyard. Later industrial settlements (Gilwern and Govilon) are associated with the canal. Farms are generally situated on the valley sides, and are often painted white. There is a close physical and visual relationship between settlements and their landscape setting- for example Table Mountain hillfort can be seen from the main street in Crickhowell. In recent years, expansion of settlements onto the side slopes of the valleys has made them more apparent in views.

Key Views

Views across and into the valley from above contribute to the landscape quality and sense of place of adjacent LCAs, including the Central Beacons, Black Mountains, and Skirrid and Sugar Loaf. Framed views within the valley are contained - and often dominated - by the profiles of ridge tops above the valley sides.

Evaluation**Special Qualities**

The natural beauty and recreational factors that make this landscape special are summarised in the table below, along with examples of their sensitivities to landscape changes:

Criteria	Special Qualities for this Landscape Character Area	Sensitivities
Scenic quality and Sense of place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The contrasts between the settled, fertile, wooded valley and the open rugged land above it create a landscape of high scenic quality and with a strong sense of place. This is enhanced by the distinctive profiles of the ridges along the tops of the valley sides. Vistas constantly change along the valley. 	Introduction of intrusive development which affects the composition of the landscape, or the profiles of the ridges.
Landscape quality and integrity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A well-managed landscape, with a strong sense of time-depth, and although in places there is an awareness of modern developments this is generally not overwhelming. 	<p>Agricultural changes affecting the traditional management and appearance of the landscape (e.g hedgerow loss).</p> <p>Insensitive development which is poorly designed, sited or out of scale in relation to the surrounding landscape.</p>
Perceptual qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pockets of tranquillity occur in tributary valleys, away from the influences of main roads and settlements. Western ends of tributary valleys (below the Central Beacons) are within the BBNP core dark skies area. 	<p>Impacts from visually or audibly intrusive development.</p> <p>Increase in light pollution from roads and settlements.</p>
Artistic and cultural associations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tretower and the Usk Valley sketched by artist JMW Turner .Writer JRR Tolkien reputedly stayed at Buckland Hall while writing <i>Lord of the Rings</i>. 	
Rarity or representativeness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One of the best examples in the National Park of a fertile valley in very close proximity to rugged uplands. Contains important and rare industrial archaeology, particularly in relation to the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal, and the transport of industrial products to it. 	<p>Loss of the traditional composition of the landscape.</p> <p>Loss of industrial archaeology due to neglect, damage and natural processes.</p>
Natural heritage features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nature conservation sites include the River Usk (designated SSSI and SAC as a high-quality example of a river flowing over sandstone, with its associated habitats, plant and animal species within a linear ecosystem). The Usk tributaries are also designated SSSI, as are the Usk Bat Sites. Ancient woodland occurs along tributary streams, and there is a forest nature reserve at Dyffryn Cwannon. 	<p>Pollution affecting water quality.</p> <p>Decline in traditional woodland management.</p> <p>Loss of ecological connectivity.</p>

Cultural heritage features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A series of historic parks and gardens along the valley, reflecting the many opportunities to exploit its picturesque setting. Many contain veteran trees. • Numerous Scheduled Monuments, plus other archaeological sites, reflect the area's need for defence in the Iron Age, Roman and Medieval periods. Others represent its surviving built heritage (churches, bridges etc). The historic core of Crickhowell is a Conservation Area. The north and south of the area are included on the Register of Landscapes of Special Historic Interest in Wales (areas 58 and 16). • Important industrial archaeology associated with the canal and transport of iron products from Blaenavon (e.g. Llanfoist canal basin, tunnels, tramways, inclines, lifts etc.). The southern part of the LCA is included within the Blaenavon Industrial Landscape World Heritage Site. 	<p>Loss of mature parkland trees due to age, disease or storm damage. Lack of replacement of parkland trees.</p> <p>Loss of archaeological sites/features due to erosion, damage and natural processes.</p> <p>Neglect of built heritage and designed landscapes (particularly those in private ownership) and loss of character due to insensitive modernisation.</p>
Opportunities for landscape enjoyment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A network of footpaths (including the Beacons Way, Usk Valley Walk and canal towpath) provide opportunities to explore the valley landscape and access the surrounding higher land. Forest Nature Reserve at Dyffryn Crawnon. 	
Recreation provision and access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good visitor infrastructure in the main valley (hotels, restaurants, pubs, campsites etc.). Recreation opportunities encompassing cultural sites such as Tretower. 	<p>Physical impacts (e.g. erosion, traffic) and impacts on the character of popular sites due to recreation pressure.</p>

Contribution to Ecosystem Services and Green Infrastructure (Refer to sections 4.6 & 4.7 for terminology)

The River Usk and associated valley landscape provides food (pasture and arable farming), water (through abstraction) and woodland timber sources. The low lying landscape or arable floodplain and woodland stands support flood alleviation and climate regulation which benefits local settlements. The River Usk provides food and recreation services including fish, angling, watercraft and access to water. In common with the rest of the National Park, this LCA also contributes to cultural services such as spiritual enrichment, cultural heritage, recreation and tourism and aesthetic experiences. Prominent Green Infrastructure features include the River Usk, Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal, and woodlands. There are also long distance routes such as the Usk Valley Walk, Beacons Way and Taff Trail.



Forces for Change in the Landscape**Local Forces for Change and Their Landscape Implications**

(See also the general forces for change described in section 6.0)

Past and Present

- Development pressure causing settlements to expand up valley sides and become more visible in views across and within the valley.
- Continued demand for new housing and other development.
- The need to extend/ modernise traditional buildings to maintain viability and comfort.
- Introduction of pylon lines, particularly at the eastern end of the valley.
- Increase in traffic and upgrades to road infrastructure, including localised impacts from the A465 Heads of the Valleys Road.
- Water abstraction, and impoundment in upstream reservoirs, affecting the natural water flow and river processes in the River Usk. These factors, coupled with lowering of land levels in the floodplain (due to a reduction in groundwater levels) increase the area's susceptibility to flood risk.
- Increased volumes of sediment entering the River Usk due to increased ploughing, and a lack of semi-natural woodland alongside the river in LCAs 6 and 11. This affects the extent of sediment deposition in the riparian zone and impacts on river processes and ecology.
- Agricultural changes, e.g. decline in traditional hillfarms and grazing patterns, and the introduction of new crops such as oil seed rape and maize which affect the appearance of the landscape.
- Removal of hedgerows/ stone walls or replacement with post-and-wire fencing.
- Pressure for larger agricultural buildings and infrastructure (e.g. biodigester).
- Neglect of parkland and designed landscapes.
- Management of commercial forests, particularly as trees reach maturity.
- Recreation pressure at popular sites (erosion, litter, car parking issues etc.)
- Loss/ neglect of archaeological sites and historic features.
- Inclusion of the southern part of the area in the Blaenavon Industrial Landscape World Heritage Site should positively affect the management of industrial heritage features within the landscape.

Future

- Continued demand for housing and other development, and for improvements to transport and infrastructure.
- Continued agricultural change, including intensification of farming methods (requiring farm building infrastructure), new woodland planting, new Glastir agri-environmental schemes and crop changes.
- Potential for extraction of mineral resources, with associated visual and noise impacts.
- Ageing of commercial forestry plantations and the impacts of felling on landscape and biodiversity.



Hedgebanks replaced with post and wire fencing and commercial forestry on valley sides, Cwannon Valley.

Agricultural changes: ploughing of valley side land, large farm buildings and horse jumps near Llangattock.

Late 20th Century housing in Crickhowell expanding the settlement up the hillside

Strategy

Overall Strategy

To retain and enhance the special qualities of the landscape, ensuring that demands for development and infrastructure do not adversely affect its composition. Any new development, infrastructure and recreation facilities sit comfortably within the landscape. Agricultural changes are undertaken sensitively, with traditional features and grazing regimes maintained. Archaeological and historic sites are protected and managed, and built heritage is in a good state of repair. The biodiversity of the area is retained and enhanced, and appropriate recreation - including appreciation of cultural sites - is encouraged and well managed.

LCA-Specific Management Guidelines

Protect

- Protect the **open upland skylines** of the tops of the valley sides which frame the valley.
- Protect the **composition of the landscape** with its continuous vistas of fertile lowlands and woodland, juxtaposed with the distinctive craggy uplands and moorland above.
- Protect and appropriately manage the landscape's numerous **historic and archaeological sites, and designed parkland landscapes**.
- Protect and enhance the **built heritage** of the area and the settings of settlements.
- **Protect** (and manage) **historic features within the agricultural landscape** such as **hay meadows, field boundaries and narrow lanes**.

Manage

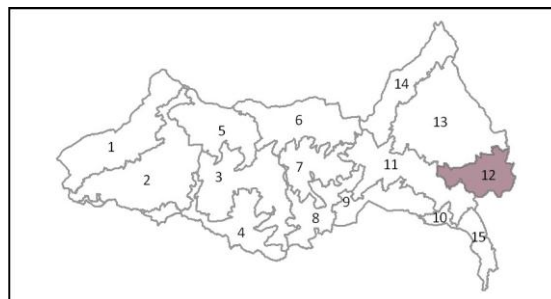
- Manage **recreation** where necessary to encourage enjoyment of the landscape and its cultural sites, but minimise its impacts on the landscape and biodiversity of the area. Also minimise conflicts between different recreational users (e.g. canoeists and fishermen).
- Manage **farmland**, enabling change to occur sensitively, and encouraging a viable farming community using traditional methods to manage traditional landscape features and enhance biodiversity.
- Manage **semi-natural habitats** such as grassland and river corridors to retain biodiversity, using appropriate management and levels of grazing.
- Manage **woodland** to improve age and species diversity, using traditional techniques (e.g. coppicing) where appropriate, and control of non-native species where necessary.
- Manage **archaeological sites** and their settings, with sensitive interpretation as appropriate. Manage relevant sites with regard to the World Heritage Site Management Plan.
- Manage **designed landscapes**, replacing parkland/ veteran trees to ensure their continued presence within the landscape.
- Manage **plantations** to enhance their biodiversity and appearance within the landscape, particularly as trees reach maturity.

Plan

- Plan for **community education and involvement** in the management of the area.
- Plan for the **creation, extension and linking of semi-natural habitats** such as heather moorland, woodland and species-rich grasslands.
- Plan to **minimise the visual impacts of new development and infrastructure** on this area, ensuring that new developments are **well designed and sited**.
- Plan to retain the dark skies in the western part of the area, and reduce incidence of light pollution.
- Plan to **underground power lines** where feasible.

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA 12: SKIRRID AND SUGAR LOAF**Broad Landscape Type: MOUNTAINS AND VALLEYS****Description****Location and Context**

This relatively small LCA is located on the eastern edge of the National Park. It comprises the land to the north of Abergavenny and forms the northern setting of the town. It includes the distinctive peaks of Sugar Loaf and Skirrid. To the north is the Black Mountains LCA, and to the west the Eastern Usk Valley.

**Summary Description**

The distinctive pointed summit of Sugar Loaf and landslip cleft of Skirrid are prominent landmarks over a wide area, including Abergavenny, the eastern end of the Usk valley and surrounding uplands. They provide popular walking routes for visitors and local people, affording panoramic views over the surrounding valleys, Somerset and the Bristol Channel, the Malvern Hills and across to the Black Mountains. Their open moorland contrasts with the surrounding lower land, which is characterised by farmland, woodland and deep flower-rich lanes.



View of Skirrid with deep lane in the foreground

Historical Development of the Landscape

This landscape contains evidence for its settlement and defence over many centuries, but with a particular concentration of Medieval sites such as churches (including St Michael's Chapel on Skirrid), inns, castles and Abergavenny Priory Deer Park. There are also two 17th gardens and their associated country houses, Prehistoric round cairns on Sugar Loaf and a prehistoric hillfort at Twyn-y-gaer.

Distinctive Characteristics

- Lower land underlain by Devonian mudstones. Sugar Loaf's lower slopes comprised of Senni Formation sandstones, its upper slopes comprised of Brownstones and its capping Quartz Conglomerate.
- Very distinctive landforms, caused by erosion of all but the hardest rocks which are left as distinctive pyramid-shaped peaks. Post-glacial landslips have given rise to Skirrid's cleft profile. Below the peaks are steep valleys, and the wider Gavenny Valley.
- Small streams draining the uplands, flowing into the River Usk (to the west), Abergavenny Reservoir or the River Gavenny (in the east of the LCA).
- Land use predominantly agricultural in valleys (mostly pasture with some arable) and grazed moorland on higher land.
- Extensive deciduous woodlands, particularly on the lower slopes of Sugar Loaf formerly connected with the tanning industry in Abergavenny. Small coniferous plantation on Skirrid.
- Field boundaries predominantly species-rich hedgerows, with deep, flower-rich banks along valley lanes.
- Semi-natural habitats of principal importance to Wales including broadleaved woodland, dwarf shrub heath, acid and neutral grassland, neutral rock exposures.
- Historic features include defensive structures, standing buildings e.g. churches (including St Michael's Chapel on Skirrid); country houses and inns as well as landscape features (lanes, hedgebanks etc.) and prehistoric sites.
- The town of Abergavenny is just outside the LCA, but has close visual and cultural links. Within the LCA is the village of Llanvihangel Crucorney, plus other scattered hamlets and farms. The Gavenny/ Honddu Valleys are a long-standing transport corridor and today contain a main road and railway line.
- Contrast between the soft, settled, wooded valleys and the open moorland and distinctive landforms of the higher land. Vegetation provides variation in texture and seasonal colour.

Landmap Components (See Appendix 3 for components of all LANDMAP Aspect Areas)

Key Visual and Sensory Aspect Areas	Sugar Loaf scarp slopes (H); Northern Hills (H); Vale of Grwyney (H); The Sugar Loaf (O); Llanvihangel Crucorney Hinterland (M); Sugar Loaf Mountain (O); Monnow Valley (H) Bettws Hill (H); Ysgryd Fawr (O);
Key to Landmap evaluation criteria: (O) Outstanding: of international importance. (H) High: of regional or county importance. (M) Moderate: of local importance. (L) Low: of little/no importance	

Settlements

The town of Abergavenny is located adjacent to this LCA, just outside the National Park Boundary. The visual relationship between Abergavenny and this LCA is very strong, so the landscape provides a distinctive backdrop and setting for the town, and views from the LCA are visually affected by expansion or prominent development in the town. The villages of Llanvihangel Crucorney and Llangenny are within the LCA, along with other scattered farms and hamlets. Most buildings in the LCA (including some modern developments) are constructed from local stone and blend into the landscape.

Key Views

Key views within the LCA are those from the summits of Sugar Loaf and Skirrid, which are strongly influenced by surrounding LCAs (and in the case of Skirrid, by land outside the National Park and into England). This LCA also plays an important role in the setting of Abergavenny and has a strong visual relationship with the town. It is a prominent feature in views from several surrounding LCAS.

Evaluation

Special Qualities

The natural beauty and recreational factors that make this landscape special are summarized in the table below, along with examples of their sensitivities to landscape change:

Criteria	Special Qualities for this Landscape Character Area	Sensitivities
Scenic quality and Sense of place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High scenic quality and sense of place, resulting from the composition of soft, wooded valleys and distinctive uplands. The surrounding LCAs (particularly the Black Mountains and Eastern Usk Valley) contribute to its character and views. 	Visually-intrusive development in surrounding areas affecting views, particularly where it extends up valley sides.
Landscape quality and integrity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A high-quality landscape, with farmland, woodland and moorland generally well managed and in good condition. 	Changes in grazing management or species composition affecting moorland vegetation (e.g. bracken infestation).
Perceptual qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Long views, openness and elevation give a sense of tranquillity despite their proximity to Abergavenny and other settlements. Indeed, the presence of settlements as small elements in views from high land can enhance the viewer's sense of detachment. 	Loss of tranquillity as a result of visible or audible development in surrounding areas.
Artistic and cultural associations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Numerous legends explaining the unusual shape of Skirrid. 	
Rarity or representativeness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very distinctive landforms give the surrounding area a strong sense of place. 	
Natural heritage features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extensive ancient deciduous woodlands (including Coed y Cerrig Nations Nature Reserve) which cover the lower slopes of Sugar Loaf are designated SAC and SSSI for their woodland and wet woodland habitats. Other ancient woodland exists in valleys throughout the area. Other SSSIs include Llanvihangel Moraine, Usk bat sites (also SAC), and the tributaries of the River Usk (also SAC). 	Loss of woodland as a result of poor management, disease (e.g. <i>Phytophthora ramorum</i>) or climate change.
Cultural heritage features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A rich cultural landscape, including three Registered Historic Parks/ Gardens (Abergavenny Priory Deer Park, Llanfihangel Court and Trewyn 17th Century gardens), and four Scheduled Monuments, of which three are medieval sites. There are also many historic buildings, including the 15th Century Skirrid Inn and a network of deep, ancient lanes. 	Potential neglect of historic landscape features in private ownership. Loss of character of rural lanes through insensitive highways development or road signs.

Opportunities for landscape enjoyment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skirrid and Sugar Loaf contain numerous footpaths and are very popular walks for visitors and local people. Coed y Cerrig National Nature Reserve provides public access to a wet woodland site of international importance. 	Large numbers of visitors leading to footpath erosion, and damage to habitats and archaeological sites.
Recreation provision and access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A high-quality recreation experience which is easily accessible from Abergavenny town and railway station. There are several campsites in the LCA, and Skirrid is the start of the Beacons Way Long Distance Route. 	

Contribution to Ecosystem Services and Green Infrastructure (refer to sections 4.6 & 4.7 for terminology)

Principal ecosystem services include food production from pasture and upland rough grazing. Tributaries of the Usk provide food and recreation services including fish, angling and access to water. In common with the rest of the National Park, this LCA also contributes to cultural services such as spiritual enrichment, cultural heritage, recreation and tourism and aesthetic experiences.

Green Infrastructure assets include numerous area of woodland, and long-distance paths including Offa's Dyke Path and Beacons Way. The Stanton and Coed y Cerrig Nature Reserves are educational and recreational features.



Coppice trees at Coed y Cerrig wet woodland nature reserve



SSSI and SAC ancient woodland to south of Sugar Loaf. The medieval deer park pale runs across the centre of the picture



View from the summit of Sugar Loaf showing the Usk Valley and Black Mountains beyond.

Forces for Change in the Landscape

Local Forces for Change and Their Landscape Implications

(See also the general forces for change described in section 6.0)

Past and Present

- Past and continuing expansion of adjacent settlements, making them more prominent in views.
- Traditional use of the Gavenny- Monnow watershed (running north-south between Sugar Loaf and Skirrid) as a transport corridor. Traffic on the A465 and railway line and the A465 add dynamic elements to the landscape.
- Coniferous plantation on the western slope of Skirrid.
- Construction of prominent, large-scale agricultural buildings, and diversification of agriculture away from traditional hillfarming towards arable cropping, poultry farming, etc.
- Conversions of traditional barns to residential use.
- Spread of bracken over areas of heather moorland/ grassland, particularly on Sugar Loaf.
- Reduced diversity of moorland vegetation as a result of changing common grazing practices. See section 6.0 for more detail.
- Decline in the traditional management of woodlands.
- Damage to hedgebanks alongside roads due to increased volumes of traffic or use by wide vehicles.
- Construction of mobile phone masts.
- Pipelines including gas supply and the water main from Grwyne reservoir to Abertillery affecting surface vegetation and buries archaeology.

Future

- Continued expansion of settlements.
- Decline in traditional hillfarms, and potential changes to agri-environment schemes affecting grazing patterns and vegetation, e.g. effects and outcomes of the Glastir Common Land Element.
- Intensification of farming in valleys, including construction of large farm infrastructure buildings, and decline in management of traditional features such as hedgebanks, hay meadows, vernacular buildings etc.
- Climate change potentially affecting the environmental conditions and species diversity of woodlands and upland areas.
- Loss of woodland and trees to pests/ diseases (e.g *Phytophthora ramorum*).
- Potential loss, neglect or damage to historic built features and parks/ gardens within the landscape, especially if in private ownership.
- Continued positive moorland management, programmes of bracken control etc.



Cumulative effects of incremental changes: Mobile phone mast, new woodland planting and barn conversion north of Skirrid.



Controlling the spread of bracken is an ongoing management issue on Sugar Loaf.



Abergavenny has a strong visual and cultural relationship with the surrounding peaks.

Strategy

Overall Strategy

To enhance the settings of the area's distinctive landforms, ensuring that the special qualities of upland peaks and surrounding valleys are retained and enhanced. Traditional management of upland commons, woodlands and farmland is encouraged. The historic features and landscapes of the area are maintained in good condition. Long views from high land are not affected by visually-intrusive development. Discreet visitor management enables high numbers of visitors to enjoy popular routes without damage to sensitive habitats or features.

LCA-Specific Management Guidelines

Protect

- Protect the **open moorland landscape** with its **distinctive profiles** and upland habitats.
- Protect the area's long **views**, minimising visual impacts from development in surrounding areas, (including outside the National Park boundary).
- Protect the area's **network of quiet lanes** enclosed by **species-rich hedgebanks**, ensuring that their character is not lost through unsympathetic highways works or signage.
- Protect enclosed **valley landscapes** and their **traditional features** such as vernacular farm buildings, hedgerows and hay meadows.
- Protect (through appropriate management) the area's **archaeological and historical sites** and their settings.

Manage

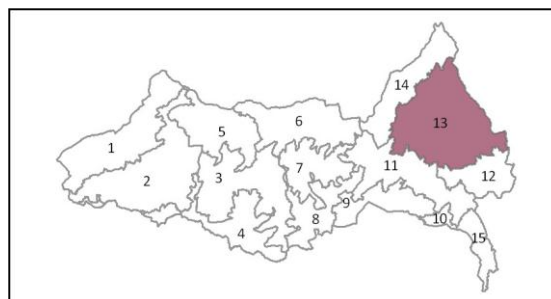
- Manage areas of **upland moorland** through encouragement of appropriate levels of livestock grazing and heather management to enhance biodiversity and maintain an open moorland landscape. Encourage control of bracken infestation to prevent it dominating other moorland vegetation.
- Encourage a **viable farming community** which enables the biodiversity and traditional appearance of the landscape to be retained.
- Manage **ancient woodlands** using traditional techniques to increase age and species diversity, and remove invasive non-native species where necessary.
- Manage **valley-floor meadows** using appropriate grazing and cutting to retain their biodiversity.
- Manage **recreational pressure** (particularly on popular walking routes) in order to minimise damage to habitats, paths and archaeological features.

Plan

- Plan to **create, extend and link semi-natural habitats such as woodlands**, heaths and meadows.
- Plan to **minimise the impacts on views** resulting from future development and transport infrastructure.
- Plan to develop a **Park-wide visitor management strategy** to minimise impacts of visitors on popular sites, and encourage visitors to explore lesser-known parts of the National Park.

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA 13: THE BLACK MOUNTAINS**Broad Landscape Type: MOUNTAINS AND VALLEYS****Description****Location and Context**

This large LCA includes the highest land associated with the Black Mountains. It is located on the eastern edge of the National Park, and its character extends beyond the National Park boundary into England. To the north is the Wye Valley Foothills LCA, to the west the Eastern Usk Valley LCA and to the south Skirrid and Sugar Loaf LCA.

**Summary Description**

This LCA is largely defined by its topography: a series of broad ridges running north-south and separated by narrow, steep-sided valleys. It contains some of the highest land in the National Park- the summit of Waun Fach is over 800m above sea level. The higher moorlands are empty and remote, contrasting with the more pastoral and settled valleys between them. This is a rich archaeological landscape, with a concentration of surviving prehistoric features on the higher land, as well as the Medieval Llanthony Priory in the Vale of Ewyas. The valleys contain a network of ancient farms, fields, woodland and winding lanes.



View south-west from Twmpa, showing the ridges of the Black Mountains

Historical Development of the Landscape

This landscape has been shaped over several millennia, with features surviving from many phases of human occupation. The earliest monuments are prehistoric cairns and barrows representing an extensive ritual landscape, and there are also early defensive sites including the prominent surviving Iron Age hillforts at Table Mountain. Surviving Medieval landscape features include Llanthony Priory, Cwmyoy church and many of the lanes and farms. The lack of modern development, and the continuation of traditional farming practices of valley pasture and upland common land has enabled the survival of many earlier features.

Distinctive Characteristics

- High ground formed by Senni formation sandstones creating the steep scarp which forms the northern edge of the LCA. Highest land formed by Devonian Brownstones which dip down slightly towards the south. Older mudstones occur in the depths of the Vale of Ewyas and Rhiangoll valley. Plateau Beds form the sloping tableland south from Pen Allt-mawr and a small area of Carboniferous rocks form the upper slopes of Pen Cerrig-calch.
- Distinctive ridged landform with flat tops, and dramatic scarps along the northern face. In long views from the west, the horizontal ridges have a profile similar to breakers on a beach. Landslips such as Cwmyoy create distinctive landforms.
- A series of rocky rivers (fed by tributary streams sourced in upland bogs and streams) draining southwards into the Usk or Monnow along V-shaped valleys. Reservoir at Grwyne Fawr constructed in the early C.20th to supply water to Abertillery.
- Higher land used for open grazing of sheep ponies and some cattle on unenclosed common land. Pastoral farming and forestry in valleys.
- Deciduous woodland limited to valley floors, particularly in south of LCA. Extensive forestry in central part (Mynydd Du Forest) with pockets in other valleys. Field boundaries generally hawthorn hedges enclosing semi-regular fields. Some hedges trimmed (especially in valleys) whilst others grown out, with hedgerow trees.
- Semi-natural Habitats of Principal Importance to Wales including dry modified bog, wet modified bog, blanket bog, bare peat, flushes, acid dry dwarf shrub heath, acid and neutral grassland and broadleaved woodland.
- Numerous prehistoric sites (ritual and defensive) surviving in their landscape context, particularly on higher land. Medieval ecclesiastical sites include Llanthony Priory and Cwmyoy church.
- Very limited settlement within the LCA (scattered farms and hamlets) but visual connections with towns beyond (e.g. Hay-on-Wye & Crickhowell). Roads generally restricted to valley bottoms.
- Upland areas large in scale, appearing empty and spacious, with distinctive flat horizons. Valleys more enclosed and intimate, with more complex patterns and varied textures. Ridges and valleys create a repeating rhythm in the landscape.

Landmap Components (See Appendix 3 for components of all LANDMAP Aspect Areas)

Key Visual and Sensory Aspect Areas	Black Mountains (O); Vale of Grwyney (H); Rhiangoll Valley (H); Mynydd Llangorse (O); Mynydd Du (M); Olchon Valley Ridge (O); Vale of Ewyas (O); Monnow Valley (H); Sugar Loaf scarp slopes (H)
Key to Landmap evaluation criteria: (O) Outstanding: of international importance. (H) High: of regional or county importance. (M) Moderate: of local importance. (L) Low: of little/no importance	

Settlements

This LCA is very lightly settled, with scattered farms and hamlets in valleys, usually constructed of local stone. However, it forms the backdrop and setting for larger settlements; the northern scarp creates a distinctive setting for Hay-on-Wye and other settlements along the Wye valley, and the ridge of Pen Cerrig-calch (and the hillfort at Table Mountain) contribute to the setting of Crickhowell and settlements in the Usk Valley.

Key Views

Panoramic views are obtained from high land over surrounding LCAs and out of the National Park to the north and east. The distinctive northern scarp and long ridges of this LCA contribute to views from a considerable distance away, including from Herefordshire to the east, and from the northern side of the Wye Valley, beyond the National Park. This LCA also contributes to the setting of the Usk Valley, and is visible from many summits and areas of high land within the National Park.

Evaluation

Special Qualities

The natural beauty and recreational factors that make this landscape special are summarised in the table below, along with examples of their sensitivities to landscape change:

Criteria	Special Qualities for this Landscape Character Area	Sensitivities
Scenic quality and Sense of place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High scenic quality and a strong sense of place, resulting from its elevation, panoramic views, dramatic and distinctive topography, historic sites, and traditional land uses. 	Development within this LCA and surrounding areas affecting views, particularly from higher land.
Landscape quality and integrity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High landscape quality, enhanced by the contrasts between pastoral agriculture in valleys and the open commons above. 	Decline in traditional hillfarming and grazing affecting the appearance of the landscape.
Perceptual qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A large-scale landscape, with a strong sense of openness and expansiveness on higher ground, particularly when valley bottoms are not visible. Horizons are notably flat and unbroken. In poor weather the landscape is bleak, exposed and disorientating. Extensive commons have a strong sense of tranquillity, remoteness and relative wildness, with very few incongruous features and little noise or disturbance caused by traffic or other detracting influences. Much of the common land is relatively inaccessible by road. Valleys (particularly forested areas) have a much greater sense of enclosure. Although they feel less remote and wild, many have a tranquil feel and few detracting features. 	Introduction of incongruous features, particularly on ridge lines.
Artistic and cultural associations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Llanthony Priory visited by 12th century chronicler Gerald of Wales, 19th Century poet Walter Savage Landor, and artist JMW Turner, who made studies and paintings of the Priory. 20th Century designer Eric Gill lived at Capel y Ffin. 	
Rarity or representativeness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Important upland habitats (e.g. peat bogs) and opportunities to experience tranquillity, remoteness and relative wildness. 	Changes in land management, e.g. changes in grazing levels affecting the composition of moorland vegetation.
Natural heritage features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Numerous nature/ geological conservation designations, including an extensive moorland SSSI. The River Usk tributaries are also designated SAC. Ancient woodland concentrated in the south of the LCA. 	Changes in environmental conditions (e.g. air and water quality) and water retention affecting surface vegetation.

Cultural heritage features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A rich archaeological landscape containing an exceptionally high concentration of Scheduled Monuments (over 40) including numerous prehistoric barrows, cairns, enclosures and hillforts, and also Medieval domestic and ecclesiastical sites (including Llanthony Priory). Several cultural sites (e.g Iron Age hillfort at Table Mountain) are prominent landmarks. Historic park at Tre-wyn partially within this LCA. • Railway and village of up to 450 people constructed in the heart of the LCA 1910-1928 during construction of Grwyne Fawr Reservoir. 	Loss/ damage to archaeological features as a result of natural processes or erosion/ damage by visitors.
Opportunities for landscape enjoyment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good opportunities to access extensive areas of high-quality, remote, tranquil and relatively wild landscape, including open access land, Beacons Way and Offa's Dyke Path (which runs along the eastern boundary of the National Park). Gospel Pass is a popular high-level road with parking areas. The area is particularly popular with less experienced walkers such as Duke of Edinburgh's award groups. Hang gliding at Hay Bluff and Three Wells. 	Too much footfall can result in damage to paths and habitats, and also reduce levels of tranquillity.
Recreation provision and access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further recreation opportunities at accessible cultural sites including Llanthony Priory and Crug Hywel hillfort on Table Mountain, both with outstanding views. Forestry trails provide active recreation such as mountain cycling, and there are popular picnic sites (e.g. Standing Stone car park) 	

Contribution to Ecosystem Services and Green Infrastructure (refer to sections 4.6 & 4.7 for terminology)

Principal ecosystem services include provisioning through rough grazing and fresh water supply, and regulation and supporting services through deep peat, organic soils and water regulation. Plantations provide timber and wood fuel. In common with the rest of the National Park, this LCA also contributes to cultural services such as spiritual enrichment, cultural heritage, recreation and tourism, and aesthetic experiences. There is potential for electricity generation through high head micro-hydro schemes. Green Infrastructure features include the extensive woodland plantations of the Mynydd Du Forest, Grywyne Fawr Reservoir and rivers. The LCA is popular for a range of recreational and leisure activities.



Hay meadow in Vale of Ewyas



Crug Hywel hillfort ,Crickhowell



Llanthony Priory

Forces for Change in the Landscape

Local Forces for Change and Their Landscape Implications

(See also the general forces for change described in section 6.0)

Past and Present

- Past construction of reservoir at Grwyne Fawr.
- Past extensive forestry plantation at Mynydd Du forest in the centre of the LCA.
- Historic air pollution and acid rain, and ongoing nitrogen deposition caused ecological degradation of upland habitats, particularly peat bogs, affecting biodiversity and water-holding capacity.
- Reduced diversity of moorland vegetation as a result of changing common grazing practices. See section 6.0 for more detail.
- Bracken encroachment on side slopes.
- Loss of traditional hillfarms and economic pressures for farm amalgamation and expansion, resulting in loss of agricultural buildings and changes in agricultural management.
- Forest management/ clearance.
- Footpath erosion on popular and accessible routes (e.g paths near Gospel Pass).
- Damage to hedgebanks along narrow lanes by wide/ passing vehicles, and insensitive signage/ highways works affecting the traditional character of lanes.

Future

- Potential loss of the open landscape and smooth horizons as a result of development (e.g. masts/ turbines) or planting of trees.
- Reduction in woodland management, and in management of traditional valley habitats such as hay meadows.
- Loss of traditional hillfarms, and potential changes to agri-environment schemes affecting management of historic landscape features, grazing patterns and vegetation, e.g. effects and outcomes of the Glastir Common Land Element.
- Management of forestry plantations, particularly if trees are cleared.
- Tree loss due to disease, e.g. *Phytophthora*.
- Loss of archaeological features as a result of damage and natural processes.
- Climate change potentially affecting environmental conditions and upland vegetation.
- Increased visitor pressure affecting upland habitats, archaeological sites and paths.
- Development and road schemes (including outside the National Park) affecting views from high land.
- Positive moorland management schemes improving the condition and variety of upland vegetation.



Coniferous forestry plantation



Footpath erosion (Gospel Pass)



A natural force for change: landslide at Cwmyoy.

Strategy

Overall Strategy

To retain and strengthen the special qualities of both mountains and valleys, protecting their tranquillity, remoteness and the area's distinctive topography of smooth horizontal ridges and steep northern scarp.

The area's valuable upland and valley habitats are well managed, and traditional agricultural methods (such as common grazing) are supported. Archaeological and historic features are protected and managed as appropriately. Visitors are encouraged, but good visitor management minimises damage to paths, habitats and archaeology. The area's long views are protected from visually-intrusive development.

LCA-Specific Management Guidelines

Protect

- Protect the **open character** of the ridges, their **unbroken skylines and qualities of tranquillity, remoteness and relative wildness**.
- Protect the **open moorland landscape** and its valuable **upland habitats**.
- Protect **valley landscapes** and their **traditional features** such as vernacular farm buildings and hay meadows.
- Protect (through appropriate management) the area's **archaeological sites and their settings**, in particular the prehistoric upland sites and medieval valley sites.
- Protect the area's **sparsely-settled character**, ensuring that any new development is carefully sited and designed.
- Protect the area's **network of quiet lanes** enclosed by **species-rich hedgebanks**, ensuring that their character is not lost through unsympathetic highways works or signage.

Manage

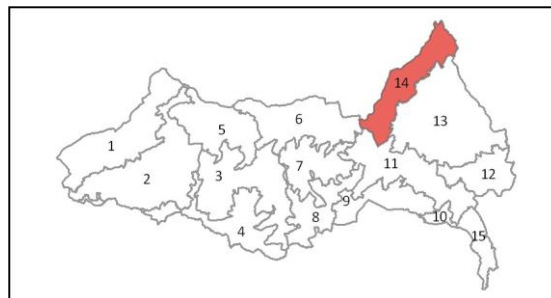
- Manage land through encouragement of a **viable farming community**, farming the land in a traditional way which enables the upland and valley landscapes of the area to be retained and enhanced.
- Manage areas of **upland common** through encouragement of appropriate levels of livestock grazing to enhance biodiversity and maintain an open moorland landscape.
- Manage upland **wetland** sites such as blanket bog to increase carbon sequestration and water storage capacity.
- Manage **plantations** to encourage biodiversity and minimise damage to archaeology.
- Manage **ancient woodlands** using traditional techniques to increase age and species diversity.
- Manage **valley-floor meadows** using appropriate grazing and cutting to retain their biodiversity.
- Manage **recreational pressure** (particularly on popular walking routes and at 'honeypot' sites with easy parking) in order to minimise damage to habitats, paths and archaeological features.

Plan

- Plan to **create, extend and link semi-natural habitats** such as heather moorland, broadleaved woodland and valley grasslands.
- Plan to develop a **National Park-wide visitor management strategy** to minimise impacts of visitors on popular sites, and encourage visitors to explore lesser-known parts of the National Park.

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA 14: WYE VALLEY FOOTHILLS**Broad Landscape Type: LOWLANDS****Description****Location and Context**

This linear LCA lies between the northern escarpment of the Black Mountains and the northern National Park Boundary. Hay-on-Wye is located at its north-eastern end of the LCA, which contributes to the setting of the town. At its western end (near Llangors Lake) it merges with the Middle and Eastern Usk LCAs.

**Summary Description**

A series of ridges run down from the Black Mountains towards the Wye Valley, creating a series of narrow, enclosed valleys which gradually broaden out. These valleys form the basis of a strongly agricultural landscape, visually dominated by the northern scarp of the Black Mountains, with farms nestling at the heads of valleys. It is a well-wooded landscape with ancient woodlands on valley sides and alongside streams, as well as some conifer plantations. The tops of the ridges support heath habitats, and many contain prehistoric monuments. Along the northern edge of the LCA are a series of nucleated settlements (Hay-on-Wye being the largest). Llangors Lake is an important archaeological and recreation site.



Typical scene near Llanigon, showing farmland and woodland with the northern scarp of the Black Mountains

Historical Development of the Landscape

This landscape has been shaped by patterns of settlement and farming for many centuries. The earliest features are prehistoric ritual sites (including tombs) which have survived on unenclosed higher land. Hay Castle dates from the early Norman period, and there are many other Medieval features, including the famous crannog on Llangors Lake. As well as the castles, many of the villages, churches, roads, field patterns and farms date from the Medieval period. Evidence for later quarrying and industrial use of the landscape includes tramways and pottery kilns.

Distinctive Characteristics

- Underlying geology of Devonian mudstones, with older Silurian mudstones in the Wye valley. The Brownstones scarp face of the Black Mountains lies immediately to the south.
- A series of ridges and intervening valleys running from the base of the Black Mountains scarp down towards the Wye valley.
- Llangors Lake (at the southern end of the LCA) the largest natural lake in Wales, formed in a large glacial kettle hole. A series of spring-fed steep mountain streams with waterfalls flow north-west from the base of the Black Mountains scarp to the Wye Valley.
- Land use predominantly agricultural (pastoral on valley sides, with some arable on flatter land), with areas of woodland, forest and common.
- Field boundaries mostly hedged, with high hedgebanks along lanes. Field patterns irregular in valleys, but straight-edged fields on higher land indicates later enclosure.
- Extensive ancient deciduous woodland on steep valley sides and alongside streams. Some areas of coniferous forestry, and occasional parkland trees.
- Semi-Natural Habitats of Principal Importance to Wales including mixed oak and ash woodlands, upland heath, lowland grassland, hedgerows, wetlands and reed beds.
- A rich historic landscape with a long history of settlement and defence. Archaeological sites include Neolithic chambered tombs and the early-medieval crannog (artificial island) on Llangors Lake, possibly built by Brychan, king of Brycheiniog in the 9th century.
- Norman town of Hay-on-Wye the largest settlement, at the northern tip of the LCA. A line of smaller villages follows the north-western boundary of the LCA.
- Contrasts of pattern, colour and texture between ridges and valleys, visually dominated by the Black Mountains scarp.

Landmap Components (See Appendix 3 for components of all LANDMAP Aspect Areas)

Key Visual and Sensory Aspect Areas	Black Mountains Northern fringe (O); Llangorse Lake Basin (H); Black Mountains (O); Three Cocks farmland (M); Llangorse Lake (O); Talgath (M); Hay-on-Wye (H); Wye Valley (H)
Key to Landmap evaluation criteria: (O) Outstanding: of international importance. (H) High: of regional or county importance. (M) Moderate: of local importance. (L) Low: of little/no importance	

Settlements

Hay-on-Wye is the largest and most well-known settlement in this LCA, and its landscape setting is integral to the town's identity and sense of place. Like the other smaller settlements in this LCA (e.g. Talgarth, Trefecca, Felindre, Llangors), Hay-on-Wye is located within the valley floor, and because it is set low in the landscape, is relatively well hidden in views from surrounding areas. The valley-floor villages are generally nucleated in form, although some (e.g. Llangors) have some modern linear development. There are historic farms scattered throughout the area, often at the heads of valleys. Barn conversions are common, as are larger modern agricultural buildings.

Key Views

This LCA forms the foreground to views north from the top of the Black Mountains scarp, and also forms the setting to the Black Mountains scarp in views looking south-east from the Wye Valley. Views within the LCA are often dominated by the Black Mountains scarp, and there are long views out across the Wye valley from high land.

Evaluation

Special Qualities

The natural beauty and recreational factors that make this landscape special are summarised in the table below, along with examples of their sensitivities to landscape changes:

Criteria	Special Qualities for this Landscape Character Area	Sensitivities
Scenic quality and Sense of place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scenic quality and a strong sense of place resulting from the backdrop of the Black Mountains scarp, the varied landform, and the harmonious but interesting composition of farmland, woodland and common land. 	Changes in land management and loss of landscape features associated with traditional hillfarming, e.g. common land and hedgerows. Introduction of incongruous features into the landscape.
Landscape quality and integrity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High landscape quality and condition, reflecting the overall good management of the land. Historic landscape patterns are generally well-preserved with few detracting influences, particularly away from the Wye Valley. 	As above
Perceptual qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moderate levels of tranquillity over much of the area, partly due to the ridged landform which creates a sense of isolation, and reduces factors (such as road noise and views to development) which detract from tranquillity. Despite being a settled landscape, much of the LCA has a strong sense of timelessness. 	Increased presence of factors detracting from tranquillity (e.g. roads; views of development)
Artistic and cultural associations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many literary connections, including the annual Hay-on-Wye literary festival. The early Welsh Stanzas <i>Canu Llywarch Hen</i> may have been written at Llangors, and parts of the LCA are also within 'Kilvert Country' described in Rev. Francis Kilvert's 19th century diary. Treffecca College was an early Methodist community and educational establishment. 	
Natural heritage features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Variety of nature conservation sites, including heathland, woodland, grassland, wetland and geological SSSIs, and SACs at Llangors Lake and River Wye. 	Loss of extent or biodiversity of woodlands and other semi-natural habitats as a result of changing farming practices or reduced management.

Cultural heritage features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An historic landscape with a long history of settlement and defence reflected in the number and variety of Scheduled Monuments and other archaeological sites, and the inclusion of much of the area in the Register of Landscapes of Special Historic Interest in Wales. (Areas 36+58). Of particular note are the prehistoric ritual sites (including tombs such as Penywyrhod), surviving medieval field systems on higher areas, and also medieval defensive sites on lower land (including Hay Castle, and Llangors crannog). • A rich built heritage (particularly in Hay-on-Wye) with Conservation Areas at Hay-on-Wye and Talgarth, historic parks and gardens, and associations with 12th century chronicler Gerald of Wales, who visited and described this area. 	<p>Loss of archaeological features as a result of natural processes, erosion or damage.</p> <p>Loss or neglect of historic buildings or landscapes (particularly those in private ownership) and loss of architectural integrity due to insensitive modernisation.</p>
Opportunities for landscape enjoyment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A good network of lanes and footpaths (including the Three Rivers Ride) provides access into the landscape. There are accessible conservation sites at Park Wood, Pwll-y-wrach and Llangasty Nature Reserves. 	
Recreation provision and access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Varied recreation opportunities, ranging from gliding, to watersports on Llangors Lake to Hay-on-Wye book festival. Hay-on-Wye is a centre for tourist accommodation, and there are also campsites and adventure centres. 	

Contribution to Ecosystem Services and Green Infrastructure (refer to sections 4.6 & 4.7 for terminology)

The principal ecosystem services are provisioning and cultural services. Extensive lowland agricultural land provides a source of food production, with woodland areas providing a source of fuel and timber. In common with the rest of the National Park, this LCA also contributes to cultural services such as spiritual enrichment, cultural heritage, recreation and tourism, and aesthetic experiences. Llangors Lake and its associated recreational facilities are prominent Green Infrastructure features. Woodland areas, Park Wood and Pwll-y-wrach Nature Reserves, long distance trails and heritage features form a network of Green Infrastructure assets.



*Meadow below the Black
Mountains scarp.*

Hay-on-Wye in its landscape setting

Llangors Lake

Forces for Change in the Landscape

Local Forces for Change and Their Landscape Implications

(See also the general forces for change described in section 6.0)

Past and Present

- Plantations of conifers, and disused stone extraction quarries visible in the landscape.
- Decline in traditional hillfarming and associated loss of traditional features of the agricultural landscape, e.g. replacement of stone walls or hedges with post and wire fencing.
- Intensification of agriculture resulting in large-scale agricultural buildings and alternative crops which affect the appearance of the landscape (e.g. bright yellow oil seed rape is visible over a wide area).
- Conversion of redundant agricultural buildings to domestic use.
- Lack of management of woodlands (e.g. decline in coppicing).
- Loss or damage to archaeological features and built heritage due to neglect/ poor management/ damage/ natural processes.
- Visual impacts and damage to sensitive habitats by illegal use of 4x4 vehicles and off-road motorbikes.
- Recreational influences at Llangors (boats, caravans etc.) and conflicts between different user groups (e.g. between sailing and motor boats).
- Water quality issues at Llangors Lake, including eutrophication.
- Housing demand and settlement expansion.
- Gas pipeline construction permanently affecting surface vegetation and buried archaeology.

Future

- Agricultural changes including continued modernisation (including increased scale of farm infrastructure buildings) and a decline in traditional hillfarming techniques such as grazing of common land and meadows, affecting biodiversity and the traditional appearance of the landscape.
- Future changes in agricultural grants and funding potentially affecting the maintenance of traditional landscape features such as hedgerows.
- Loss of trees and woodlands as a result of climate change, poor management and lack of replacement of veteran trees.
- Future development and settlement expansion, particularly in the Wye valley.
- Potential conflicts between demands for recreation and nature conservation at sites such as Llangors Lake.



Scarring and vegetation damage
by off-road vehicles

Intensive water-based recreation
at Llangors

New housing development
Felindre

Strategy

Overall Strategy

To conserve and enhance this agricultural and historic landscape, retaining the quality of settings to settlements, and accommodating development and recreation sensitively without compromising its special qualities.

Agriculture is encouraged (for example through enabling modernisation to be done as sensitively as possible) and the landscapes associated with traditional hillfarming are retained and enhanced. The historic features and built/ designed heritage of the area are appropriately managed and maintained, and their settings are respected. Recreational facilities and new development are sensitively accommodated within the landscape. The area remains an attractive foreground to views from higher land, and views from within the area remain free from intrusive modern development.

LCA-Specific Management Guidelines

Protect

- Protect the **open upland skylines** which form the backdrop to the area.
- Protect and appropriately manage the landscape's numerous **historic and archaeological sites**.
- **Protect** (and manage) **historic features within the agricultural landscape such as hay meadows, field boundaries and narrow lanes**.
- Protect and enhance the **built heritage** of the area and the settings of settlements.

Manage

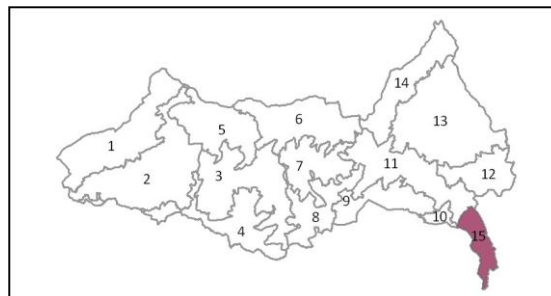
- Manage **semi-natural habitats** such as grassland, wetlands and commons to retain biodiversity, using appropriate levels of grazing.
- Manage **woodland** to improve age and species diversity, using traditional techniques (e.g. coppicing) where appropriate, and control of non-native species.
- Manage **archaeological sites** and their settings, with sensitive interpretation as appropriate.
- Manage **designed landscapes**, replacing parkland/ veteran trees to ensure their continued presence within the landscape.
- Manage **recreation** (particularly around Llangors) to minimise its impacts on the landscape and biodiversity of the area, and to minimise conflicts between different recreational users.

Plan

- Plan to **create, extend and link semi-natural habitats** such as woodland, wetlands and grassland.
- Plan to **minimise the visual impacts** on this area of any **developments within or outside the National Park boundary, ensuring that new developments are well designed and sited**.

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA 15: BLORENGE HILLS AND SLOPES**Broad Landscape Type: MOUNTAINS AND VALLEYS****Description****Location and Context**

This LCA forms a 'peninsula' of land which extends southwards at the south-east corner of the National Park. Its western boundary is the top of the Blorenges Ridge, and its eastern boundary is the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal. To the north are the Eastern Usk Valley and the Clydach Gorge.

**Summary Description**

The slopes of this LCA have an exceptionally timeless and peaceful quality and a sense of being rarely visited. Scattered farms are linked by deep lanes lined with exposed tree roots and flower-rich banks, whilst the Blorenges moorland ridge provides a contrasting backdrop and sense of orientation. From the ridge there are panoramic views. The landscape has a rich industrial history (particularly apparent at the popular recreation site of Goytre Canal Wharf) and lies partially within the Blaenavon Industrial Landscape World Heritage Site.



Blorenges from the south-east

Historical Development of the Landscape

Although today this is a peaceful, agricultural landscape, it has been shaped by both agriculture and industry. The irregular fields and surviving woodland suggest that the fields were created by assarting (clearance of woodland for agriculture), probably in the Medieval period, and it is likely that many of the farms, fields and lanes date from this period. In the 17th-19th centuries, this was also an industrial landscape, connecting the mining and iron production sites in the valley of the Afon Lwyd to the west with the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal to the east. Numerous tracks and tramways survive, as well as the loading wharf at Goytre, and smaller-scale industrial features such as hammer ponds, charcoal hearths and limekilns. Blorenges was used as a grouse moor by the owners of Blaenavon Ironworks.

Distinctive Characteristics

- Old Red Sandstone and mudstones underlie most of the area, with Carboniferous Limestone, Marros Group and South Wales Lower Coal Measures Sandstones forming the plateau areas.
- Highest land of Bloreng in the north-west of the LCA, extending southwards in a craggy ridge along the western boundary of the LCA. Land slopes downwards towards the east, with concave slopes (more pronounced in the north) creating ‘punchbowl’ shapes to the landform.
- Fast-flowing streams (often spring fed) running down from the ridge towards the Usk (to the east of the LCA). Small glaciated cwm lake lying below Bloreng summit. Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal forming the eastern boundary of the LCA.
- Land cover of open moorland on Bloreng summit and ridge tops, with pastoral farmland & pockets of woodland/forestry on lower slopes
- Irregular fields on valley sides (possibly resulting from assarting) enclosed by hedgerows with some stone walls. Some replacement of traditional boundaries with post and wire fences. Moorland unenclosed.
- A well-treed landscape, including a blend of deciduous and coniferous trees in valley-side woodlands, plus hedgerow and riparian trees and tree-lined lanes.
- Semi-Natural Habitats of Principal Importance to Wales including wet and dry dwarf shrub heath, acid grassland, blanket bog, broadleaved woodlands, calcareous grassland and acid/neutral rock exposure.
- Many historic features relating to the area’s agricultural and industrial past, in particular its associations with the Blaenavon iron industry.
- A very lightly-settled landscape, with scattered farms increasing in density towards the east of the LCA. Distinctive domestic building styles more associated with canal architecture than the local vernacular.
- The high plateau of the Bloreng is easily accessible by car (B4246) and the public can enjoy panoramic views from the high car park.
- Contrasts in scale, texture, colour and enclosure between the open moorland and the pattern of woodland and pasture below. Together they create a harmonious composition with strong seasonal changes in colour. Folly prominent on western horizon in south of the LCA.

Landmap Components (See Appendix 3 for components of all LANDMAP aspect areas)

Visual and Sensory Aspect Areas	Bloreng scarp slopes (H); The Bloreng (O); Goytre Lowland (H); Garnclochdy Hills (O); Mynydd Garnclochdy (H); Twyn-Gwyn (M)
Key to Landmap evaluation criteria: (O) Outstanding: of international importance. (H) High: of regional or county importance. (M) Moderate: of local importance. (L) Low: of little/no importance	

Settlements

Settlements within the LCA are limited to scattered farms (reducing in density towards the north and west). Nevertheless there is a locally-distinctive building style influenced by canal architecture. The LCA contributes to the setting of a number of settlements surrounding it (including Abergavenny, Llanfoist, Govilon and Blaenavon) by providing an elevated backdrop which adds to their sense of place.

Key Views

Key views are mostly from higher land, including Bloreng summit and the ridge which forms the western boundary of the LCA. Because of its proximity to the National Park boundary, these panoramic views include land both within and outside the National Park. Within the LCA, the enclosure and deep lanes means that views are often sudden and spectacular. The LCA is prominent in views from outside the National Park, including from the A4092, and the Newport-Abergavenny railway line, from where it is seen as a wooded foreground with the western ridge behind.

Evaluation**Special Qualities**

The natural beauty and recreational factors that make this landscape special are summarised in the table below, along with examples of their sensitivities to landscape change:

Criteria	Special Qualities for this Landscape Character Area	Sensitivities
Scenic quality and Sense of place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High scenic quality resulting from the harmonious juxtaposition of moorland, woodland and pasture. Distinctive concave landforms, the Bloreng ridge and long views across the Usk valley create a strong sense of place, enhanced by the bluebell carpets, deep lanes and woodland. 	Negative changes in land management (e.g. replacement of hedgerows with post-and-wire fencing). Introduction of visually-intrusive features into views.
Landscape quality and integrity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A well-managed landscape of high visual quality, which has retained its integrity and intactness and has few detracting features within it. 	As above
Perceptual qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Valley sides are exceptionally peaceful, with a sense of enclosure, timelessness and very few detracting influences. Moorland feels more open and exposed, with longer views over surrounding landscapes. 	As above
Rarity or representativeness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant remains of industrial landscapes and features, partially included within the Blaenavon Industrial Landscape World Heritage Site. Building styles are distinctive within the National Park. 	Loss of archaeological features such as former tramways through neglect or damage. Insensitive alterations to buildings resulting in a loss of local distinctiveness.
Natural heritage features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High conservation and geological interest, with complex geology resulting in a variety of habitats within a relatively small area. Bloreng is designated an extensive SSSI for its moorland habitats, including peat bogs and is home to the southernmost population of red grouse in Britain. Extensive ancient woodlands with bluebells occur throughout the area, including Coed-y-person Beechwoods SSSI. Geological interest includes Llanover Quarry SSSI (site of a wide range of Devonian fossil plant material) and a possible extensive cave complex. 	Loss of upland and woodland habitats due to changes in land management and/ or grazing. Damage to habitats by fly tipping/ illegal fires and other antisocial behaviour.

Cultural heritage features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A rich historic landscape of particular importance for its industrial archaeology, specifically the tramroads, inclines, tunnels and wharves used to transport products from Afon Lwyd valley to the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal. It contains existing and remnant impounded water bodies (e.g. Keepers Pond), several Scheduled Monuments and numerous other archaeological sites including prehistoric cairns, a holy well, manor house, watermills, hammer ponds, limekins and charcoal hearths. Partially included in the Register of Landscapes of Special Historic Interest in Wales (Area 16). 	Archaeology vulnerable to neglect, damage and environmental processes. Settings to sites may also be affected.
Opportunities for landscape enjoyment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blorengel is open access land, easily accessible from Blaenavon, Govilon and Abergavenny and provides an accessible recreation resource for local communities as well as visitors. Woodland Local Nature Reserve at the Punchbowl. 	Localised 'urban fringe' issues such as off-roading and fly tipping.
Recreation provision and access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A relatively dense network of public rights of way (some following historic tramroads) enables access into this high quality landscape. Goytre Wharf is a focus for recreation accessible from the A4092. Air sports (e.g. hang gliding) is popular from the north-east face of the Blorengel. 	Lanes are narrow, steep and unsuitable for large numbers of vehicles. Potential conflicts with pedestrians and/or cyclists.

Contribution to Ecosystem Services and Green Infrastructure (refer to sections 4.6 & 4.7 for terminology)

Ecosystem services provided by this landscape include provisioning, regulating and cultural services. Examples include food production from pasture and moorland grazing land, and timber production. In common with the rest of the National Park, this LCA also contributes to cultural services such as spiritual enrichment, cultural heritage, recreation and tourism, and aesthetic experiences.

Main Green Infrastructure assets include the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal, numerous woodland stands and nature reserves. The Usk Valley Walk follows the canal towpath linking the area to wider Green Infrastructure resources such as the River Usk and Clytha Park.



Blorengel summit moorland and WHS interpretation.



Pastoral scene on valley side



Goytre Canal Wharf

Forces for Change in the Landscape

Local Forces for Change and Their Landscape Implications

(See also the general forces for change described in section 6.0)

Past and Present

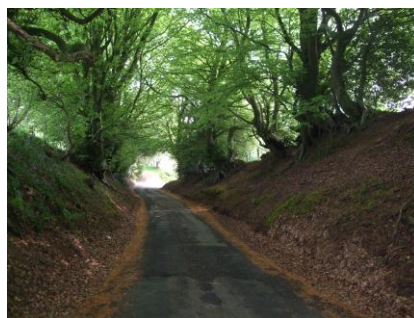
- Past planting of coniferous plantations on lower slopes.
- Localised impacts in the landscape reflecting agricultural changes, e.g. replacement of hedges/ walls with post-and-wire fences; introduction of larger agricultural buildings.
- Changes in common grazing practices and management of former grouse moors affecting upland habitats.
- Degredation of peat bogs as a result of pollution, drainage and changes in management.
- Repeated damage to habitats by wildfires and illegal burning.
- Decline in woodland management, and threat of tree loss through disease such as *Phytophthora ramorum*.
- Damage to hedgerows by wide vehicles or volume of traffic.
- Positive management and increased visitor numbers due to inclusion in the World Heritage Site and the Forgotten Landscapes Project.
- Localised 'urban fringe' issues e.g. off-roading and fly-tipping, particularly in the west of the area.
- Footpath erosion on summit path.
- Loss of locally-distinctive building styles as a result of neglect or insensitive modernisation (e.g. loss of wooden casement windows).
- Past settlement expansion and construction of large buildings outside the National Park which affect views out.
- Past construction of telecommunications masts on Bloreng summit interrupting the smooth skyline.

Future

- Continued agricultural modernisation, and potential changes in agri-environmental schemes affecting grazing levels and the repair of historic features such as hedgerows.
- Management of coniferous plantations, particularly when trees reach maturity.
- Continued expansion of surrounding settlements affecting views.
- Continued management of the area in association with Blaenavon Industrial Landscape World Heritage Site.
- Climate change affecting upland habitats and woodlands through changes in environmental conditions and species composition.



Hedgerow replaced with post and wire fencing.



Damage to hedgerows on narrow lanes caused by wide or passing vehicles.



Locally distinctive farmhouse in a poor state of repair

Strategy

Overall Strategy

To retain the area's peaceful character, long views and special qualities whilst celebrating its rich heritage. Farming is supported, with traditional practices such as common grazing and hedgerow maintenance encouraged. Woodland, plantations and upland moorland are well managed, increasing their biodiversity. The heritage of the area is understood, valued and visited by local people and visitors, but without damage to its historic features or undeveloped character.

LCA-Specific Management Guidelines

Protect

- Protect the area's valuable **upland habitats**, particularly heather moorland mosaic and active peat bogs.
- Protect (through appropriate management) the area's rich **archaeological landscape**, including its industrial features.
- Protect the **long views** from the area, including those to land outside the National Park.

Manage

- Manage **archaeological sites and features** with regard to the recommendations of the World Heritage Site Management Plan.
- Manage **farmland**, maintaining traditional landscape features such as hedges, stone walls and flower-rich meadows.
- Manage **woodland and plantations** to increase age and species diversity.
- Manage valuable **wetland sites** such as blanket bog to increase carbon sequestration and water storage capacity.
- Manage **common grazing land** through encouragement of viable grazing regimes and heather management which support traditional hillfarming practices, encourage biodiversity and retain an open moorland landscape.
- Manage **recreational pressure** and urban fringe issues to avoid the damage to sensitive habitats and archaeological features, and minimise any appearance of neglect.

Plan

- Plan to ensure that the World Heritage Site's emphasis on industrial archaeology does not overshadow the importance of other **archaeology** in the area.
- Plan to increase **visitors' awareness** of this part of the National Park and encourage recreational use, whilst ensuring that the area's **peaceful quality and narrow lanes** are not damaged by an increase in traffic e.g. develop cycle/ footpath routes along old tramways.
- Plan for **community education and involvement** in the management of the area.
- Plan for the **creation, extension and linking of semi-natural habitats** such as heather moorland, woodland and species-rich grasslands.
- Plan to **reduce the visual impact of development** beyond the National Park boundary.

8.0 FUTURE USES OF THE LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

8.1 Looking Ahead

- 8.1.1 The Brecon Beacons Landscape Character Assessment in its current form will be an extremely useful and comprehensive reference for the National Park Authority, suitable for many different applications (including those set out in the original brief).
- 8.1.2 It could also form a key 'building block' in the development of future studies which may be required by the National Park Authority. These future studies would require the extraction of relevant information from the Landscape Character Assessment and combining it with additional research specific to the topic being studied. These could relate (for example) to the historic environment, the built environment, perceptions of the landscape or community planning.
- 8.1.3 For example, the Landscape Character Areas could form the basis for a visitor perceptions study. This would require taking information from the Landscape Character Assessment on perceptual qualities (and possibly recreational opportunities) across the National Park, and combining it with data from a visitor survey, in order to achieve a much fuller picture of people's differing perceptions of different parts of the National Park, and how they are appreciated. This can then inform future management.
- 8.1.4 The Landscape Character Assessment could also inform the development of Design Guidance through its analysis of the relationships of settlements and buildings with the surrounding landscape. It would need to be supplemented by a more detailed survey of the National Park's buildings and the local variations in vernacular character. This would enable future development in the National Park to retain and enhance the variations in its character.
- 8.1.5 A further use for the Landscape Character Assessment is to inform topic-based sensitivity and/ or capacity studies, for example relating to wind turbines or fringe development.
- 8.1.6 In addition, the Landscape Character Assessment forms a good basis for the development of community-based projects. These would require additional survey work to build a more detailed picture of specific parts of the National Park. It could also be used in the development of partnership working with Unitary Authorities and other organisations beyond the National Park boundary.

APPENDIX 1: GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS AND TECHNICAL TERMS**Access land**

Land subject to an agreement made between a landowner in Britain and the governing body in that area which allows the public to use the land for recreation under the Countryside and Rights Of Way Act 2000.

Agri-environmental (grants)

Grants paid to farmers to manage land in a manner which enhances its nature conservation and/ or landscape value (for example Glastir).

Alluvium

Material deposited by rivers.

Ancient woodland

Woodland (in England and Wales) which has continuously existed since before 1600.

ASL

Above sea level (height in metres).

Assarting

Informal clearance of woodland for arable use.

BBNP Brecon Beacons National Park.

Biodigester

Sewage treatment method involving increased aeration.

Blanket bog

A peatland habitat found on flat or gently undulating ground in the British uplands where there is high rainfall. Under these 'waterlogged' conditions, peat forms from the partial decomposition of wetland plants, particularly Sphagnum mosses. The peat gradually accumulates, and over thousands of years can reach depths of several metres. The blanketing of the ground with peat gives this habitat its name.

CCW Countryside Council for Wales.

Calcareous

Rocks containing calcium carbonate such as limestone or chalk.

Carbon sequestration

The absorption and storage of atmospheric carbon in, for example, trees and soils.

Charcoal hearth

The first stage of the charcoal burning process was the preparation of the hearth or "pit". This consisted of the excavation of a flat level circular depression in the ground large enough for the amount of timber being converted to charcoal.

Conservation Area

An area designated under Section 69 of the Civic Amenities Act 1967, as an "area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance".

Coppice/Coppicing

Method of managing woodland in which trees are cut every 10-15 years for small diameter wood.

Crannog

An artificial island typically used as a dwelling. Used in Europe from Neolithic times until the eighteenth century.

Cwm

The geographical term for a rounded, glaciated valley also known as a corrie or [cirque](#); the Welsh word for a valley, sometimes anglicized to [coombe](#).

Ecosystem

A [community](#) of living organisms (plants, animals and microbes) in conjunction with the [nonliving components](#) of their environment (things like air, water and mineral soil), interacting as a system.

Flush

A relatively fertile habitat which occurs where water emerges from springs and seepages (e.g. through cracks in rocks). The water keeps soil conditions moist and brings in nutrients derived from solution from soils and rocks.

Geodiversity

The variety of rocks, minerals, fossils, soils, landforms and natural processes.

Geopark

A European Geopark is a territory whose geological heritage is of European significance. It will have a sustainable development strategy with a strong management structure, supported by a European funding programme, to aid further development.

Glastir

From 2012, Glastir replaces the existing Welsh agri-environment schemes. Glastir pays for the delivery of specific environmental goods and services aimed at: combating climate change; improving water management; and, maintaining and enhancing biodiversity. It is designed to deliver measurable outcomes at both a farm and landscape level in a cost effective way.

Hammer pond

An old ironworking lake, providing a source of water to power a forge.

Headage (payments)

Payment to hill farmers on a per-animal basis.

Hedgebanks

Earth bank topped with a hedgerow. The bank may be faced with stone or turf.

Hefted (animals)

Animals that have their own territory, often established over generations.

Inclined plane

Flat surface set at an angle to enable, for example, goods to be moved.

Karst landscape

Landscape of hard limestone rocks named after the Karst region of the former Yugoslavia, which often includes caves and underground rivers.

Kettle hole

The remains of a hollow where a block of ice melted in a glacial deposit. It may contain a lake.

LCA Landscape Character Area

A single unique area which is the discrete geographical area of a particular landscape type. Each has its own individual character and identity.

LCT Landscape Character Type

Distinct types of landscape that are relatively homogenous in character.

Lime kiln

Site where limestone was burnt to provide lime for fertiliser, builders' mortar etc.

Limestone pavements

A level area where hard limestone is found at the surface, following erosion.

LNR (Local Nature Reserve)

Nature Reserve with locally-important nature conservation features. They combine conservation with opportunities for quiet enjoyment of nature.

Ménage

An arena for the exercising and training of horses.

Moraine

Sediment laid down by a glacier or associated with it.

Motte (and bailey)

A mound, surrounded by a ditch, on which the strongpoint of a castle was built, overlooking the bailey, or enclosed courtyard.

NNR (National Nature Reserve)

The best national examples of habitats, geology, wildlife or a combination of these. They are owned or leased by the Countryside Council for Wales (or other conservation bodies). There are 66 in Wales.

Nucleated (settlement)

Settlement with a distinct core with buildings closely grouped together.

Opencast(ing)

Mining method in which surface earth and rock are moved to allow access to minerals below.

Pale

Earthwork marking the boundary of a medieval deer park.

Pastoral

Relating to the rearing of grazing livestock.

Pathogens

Micro-organisms that cause disease in their host plant or animal.

Patterned ground

A set of circles and other regular features formed when ice grows in the ground in periglacial conditions and causes material to move about. On a slope they may form linear features.

Phytophthora ramorum

Destructive parasitic fungi causing brown rot in plants.

Picturesque

Artistic quality and style particularly popular in Britain in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. Refers to landscape as being 'like a picture' in its elements and composition.

Pillow mound

Artificial rabbit warren.

Register of Landscapes of (Special) Historic Interest in Wales

Register of landscapes of outstanding or special historic interest in Wales listing 58 sites. Set up by the Countryside Council for Wales in partnership with CADW and the International Council of Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS UK).

Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic interest in Wales

Register compiled in 2002 in order to aid to informed conservation of historic parks and gardens by owners, local planning authorities, developers, statutory bodies and all concerned with them. They are deemed to be of national importance. Sites are graded I, II* and II in the same way as listed buildings.

Relative wildness

Low degree of human influence e.g. due to extensive semi-natural vegetation; few built features; openness and exposure to the elements. (CCW definition).

Remoteness

Relatively few roads or other transport routes; distant from or perceived as distant from human habitation. (CCW definition).

RIGS Regionally Important Geological Sites.

Riparian

Of, or on, a riverbank.

Riverine

Of a river.

Royal hunting ground/forest

Land set aside and subject to forest law where hunting was reserved for the monarch, or, by invitation, the aristocracy.

SACs Special Area of Conservation (European designation).

Scheduled Monuments

Nationally important sites which are given legal protection by being placed on a list or “schedule”.

Semi-Natural Habitats of Principal Importance to Wales

Semi-natural habitats which fulfill the criteria for designation as statutory or non-statutory wildlife sites.

Shake hole/ Swallow hole/ Sinkhole

Vertical hole, usually an enlarged joint, in the surface of limestone into which a river rising outside the area may disappear, continuing to flow underground.

SSSI Site of Special Scientific Interest

The purpose of the designation is to safeguard, for present and future generations, the quality, diversity and geographic range of habitats, species, geological features throughout the UK.

TAN 8

Technical Advice Note 8 (2005): Renewable Energy (published by Welsh Government).

Time-depth Ability to see a range of historic features which have been created over many years.

Tranquillity

Presence and/ or perceptions of natural landscape, birdsong, peace and quiet, natural-looking woodland, stars at night, streams and/or sea, natural sounds and similar influences. (CCW definition).

Veteran trees

Trees that are or look old relative to others of the same species. Characteristics include very large girth for the species, hollow or hollowing trunk and a large quantity of dead wood in the canopy.

WHS (World Heritage Site)

A site forming part of the cultural and natural heritage which the World Heritage Committee considers as having outstanding universal value.

Wood pasture

Area of open woodland which provided shelter and forage for grazing animals.

APPENDIX 2: METHODOLOGY

The Methodology for the landscape characterisation process has three main phases: Data gathering and desk study; fieldwork and writing-up.

Desk Study

The desk study stage defined draft landscape character areas across the National Park in accordance with accepted, systematic methods, and used an evidence-based approach as outlined in the Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland (Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage 2002).

An evidence base was assimilated in a GIS and included the five LANDMAP layers of geological landscape, landscape habitats, historic landscape, visual and sensory and cultural landscape and other datasets such as Phase 1 Habitat Survey, dark skies and tranquil area mapping and cultural and natural heritage designations. This was supplemented with reference to the main detailed descriptions for each layer in LANDMAP and other written sources of information such as the Brecon Beacons Management Plan (2010-2015) and existing character area assessments for adjoining administrative areas namely Merthyr Tydfil, Monmouthshire and Powys. The draft *Landscape Character Map for Wales* and its associated text was also consulted.

Paper maps of the study area were printed showing the National Park boundary, and LANDMAP visual and sensory area boundaries. With reference to the GIS datasets, LANDMAP database, publications and knowledge of the landscape following a previous familiarisation visit, draft Landscape Character Areas were identified and mapped. Where feasible the boundaries of the LANDMAP visual and sensory layer were used to define individual Landscape Character Areas as this layer was considered to be the most informative in defining Landscape Character Areas. This process of mapping also enabled provisional Landscape Character Types to be identified.

In defining the Landscape Character Areas care was taken to define areas:

- which were at an appropriate strategic scale for use across the National Park;
- which were perceived as distinctive from adjoining areas; and
- which reflected changes in visual character and perceptions in transitional landscapes.

Field Survey

The field survey took two full weeks, and was undertaken in generally good weather. Two days were spent with BBNP Wardens who were able to assist with access into the more remote parts of the National Park, and also provide detailed information on the area and its landscape issues. The field survey had three main purposes.

Firstly, the verification of the provisional Landscape Character Areas and Landscape Character Types identified in the desk study. Where amendments to Landscape Character Area boundaries were required, LANDMAP area boundaries were used wherever possible. Ideally the Landscape Character Area boundaries followed boundaries in the LANDMAP 'Visual and Sensory' layer, but where there were no suitable boundaries in this layer, boundaries from other LANDMAP layers were used.

Secondly, the fieldwork enabled completion of detailed field survey sheets for each Landscape Character Area. These sheets enabled consistent recording across the National Park, and were particularly detailed with regard to perceptual qualities such as tranquillity, wildness and remoteness, and in identifying

Special Qualities associated with natural beauty and recreation.

Thirdly, the photographs were taken which illustrate this final report and which also assisted in the writing-up.

Writing-Up

This stage involved the assimilation of data gathered during the desk and field studies and from other sources, including stakeholder consultation.

Maps and descriptions of the draft Landscape Character Areas were presented at a stakeholder workshop in Brecon on 28th June 2012, which brought together representatives from the National Park Authority and other organisations. At the workshop, delegates took part in group sessions which addressed the following questions: 1) Does this Landscape Character Area fit with your perceptions of the Brecon Beacons National Park? 2) What is important to you about this landscape? 3) What are the key forces for change and their impacts? 4) How should these issues be tackled?

The results of the Landscape Character Assessment process were presented as maps and written-up as series of Profiles (one for each Landscape Character Area). These profiles include the following sections:

Location and context

Summary description

Historical development of the landscape

Distinctive characteristics

LANDMAP components (visual and sensory layer)

Settlements

Key views

Special qualities*

Forces for change in the landscape

Strategy

Management guidelines

*The special qualities of each landscape character area are based on the recognised criteria for defining Natural Beauty and Markedly Superior Recreation⁸. A brief summary of the sensitivities of these Special Qualities in relation to forces for change is included in each Landscape Character Area profile.

Creating the GIS dataset of Landscape Character Areas

The Landscape Character Area GIS dataset was created by merging and splitting LANDMAP Visual and Sensory aspect areas. This method was followed to ensure that equivalent boundaries between the two datasets were exactly colinear.

The Visual and Sensory aspect areas that intersect with the Brecon Beacons National Park were selected and output as a new polygon feature layer. Following the lines marked on the maps developed following desk study and field survey, LANDMAP aspect areas that fell entirely within a Landscape Character Area were merged together.

⁸ Countryside Council for Wales (2006) *A Statement on Natural Beauty, May 2006*.

Natural England (2011) *Guidance for assessing landscapes for designation as National Park or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Appendix 2: Recreation*

In places the Visual and Sensory aspect areas spanned more than one Landscape Character Area and these polygons were split. In most cases the split followed the boundary of a LANDMAP aspect area from one of the other LANDMAP aspects. In a very small number of cases there was no suitable LANDMAP boundary to follow and the polygons were cut along a newly digitised line.

As a final stage the polygons were clipped to the National Park boundary. In a few cases the polygon boundaries derived from LANDMAP almost exactly followed the National Park boundary. Small discrepancies between the LANDMAP and National Park boundaries resulted in a few small slivers along the edge of the polygons. These slivers were merged with the adjacent polygon to give a coherent set of Landscape Character Areas.

APPENDIX 3: LANDMAP COMPONENTS WITHIN EACH LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA

LCA1: Towy Valley Foothills

LCA 1: Geological Landscape Aspect Layer

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
CRMRTGL348	Twynllanau	12.4
CRMRTGL312	Tregeyb	10.9
CRMRTGL316	Carnaugwyniau	10.3
CRMRTGL333	Ferdre	10.0
CRMRTGL411	Ffignant (1)	5.5
CRMRTGL279	Carn Powell - Pen Arthur	5.4
CRMRTGL310	Castell - Carreg Cennen	4.5
CRMRTGL332	Allt Llannerch-goch	3.9
CRMRTGL343	Cwar Glas	3.4
CRMRTGL297	Dre-fach - Forge Mill -Goetre	2.7
CRMRTGL331	Afon Gwydderig cwms (S)	2.6
CRMRTGL314	Heigwm	2.3
CRMRTGL410	Allt-y-Fedw (Sawdde Gorge)	1.6
CRMRTGL315	Gellybevan	1.5
CRMRTGL304	Sychlwch (cwm)	1.5
CRMRTGL324	Sawdde-Sychlwch cwms	1.3
CRMRTGL295	Gellifiog	1.3
CRMRTGL306	Garn Fawr	1.3
CRMRTGL307	Banc Wernwgan	1.2
CRMRTGL323	Mynydd Myddfai	1.1
CRMRTGL309	Trapp	1.1
CRMRTGL415	Cwm Tynewydd	1.1
CRMRTGL409	Capel Tydist	1.0
CRMRTGL413	Llangadog	1.0
CRMRTGL311	Crug-du Banc	1.0
CRMRTGL305	Capel Dewi (2)	0.9
CRMRTGL408	Carn Goch	0.9
CRMRTGL372	Nant Geidrych	0.8
CRMRTGL419	Cilgwyn Wood - Troedyrhiw Telych	0.8
CRMRTGL308	Afon Cennen	0.8
CRMRTGL407	Pentre Parr	0.8
CRMRTGL313	Maerdy	0.7
CRMRTGL291	Craigyrodyn (quarry)	0.6
CRMRTGL412	Mandinam	0.6
CRMRTGL290	Carreg Dwfn	0.5
CRMRTGL322	Afon Clydach (cwm)	0.5
CRMRTGL301	Cwm Sawdde Fechan	0.5
CRMRTGL319	Mynydd y Llan	0.4
CRMRTGL417	Nant-y-bendy	0.3
CRMRTGL303	Afon Sawdde (cwm)	0.3
CRMRTGL327	Afon Clydach	0.2
CRMRTGL296	Foel Deg - Drysgol - Mynydd Isaf	0.2
CRMRTGL326	Gelli-onen	0.1
CRMRTGL298	Cefn y Truman - Brest Cwm Llwyd	0.1
CRMRTGL389	Bethlehem	0.1
CRMRTGL330	Afon Gwydderig	0.1
CRMRTGL186	River Towy	< 0.1
CRMRTGL299	Garreg Lag (2)	< 0.1

LCA 1: Landscape Habitats Aspect Layer

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
CRMRTLH044	Mynydd Du North	50.8
CRMRTLH043		41.2
CRMRTLH049		2.2
CRMRTLH029	Mynydd Du	2.1
CRMRTLH048		1.4
CRMRTLH039	Carmarthen Coalfield	1.2
CRMRTLH037	Crwbin Llandybie	0.9
CRMRTLH121	Carreg Cennan	0.2

LCA 1: Visual and Sensory Aspect Layer

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
CRMRTVS017	Llandeusan and Myddfai farmlands	70.8
CRMRTVS013	Banc Pen Arthur ridge	9.4
CRMRTVS009	Cefn Garreg ridge	7.7
CRMRTVS274	Dyffryn Tywi Valley sides south	7.2
CRMRTVS665	Crwbin Ridge	3.1
CRMRTVS009	Cefn Garreg ridge	0.8
CRMRTVS010	Carn Goch	0.8
CRMRTVS437	A 40 Brecon corridor	0.2
CRMRTVS689	Pentre ty gwyn	< 0.1
CRMRTVS527	Llandeilo and Fairfach	< 0.1
CRMRTVS576	Black Mountain southern slopes	< 0.1

LCA 1: Historic Landscape Aspect Layer

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
CRMRTHL40287	LLANDDEUSANT-CAPEL-GWYNFE	39.0
CRMRTHL40264	MYDDFAI	6.5
CRMRTHL40263	TRICHRUG	6.4
CRMRTHL40235	ALLT TREGYB	6.3
CRMRTHL40257	BETHLEHEM	5.5
CRMRTHL42409	PENTRE-TY-GWYN	4.1
CRMRTHL40261	RHIWIAU	3.3
CRMRTHL40232	DAFADFA	2.8
CRMRTHL40291	ALLT Y FERDRE	2.7
CRMRTHL40229	TRAP	2.7
CRMRTHL40243	BLAENSAWDDE	2.5
CRMRTHL40262	PEN-ARTHUR PLANTATION	2.3
CRMRTHL40308	CILMAENLLWYD	2.1
CRMRTHL40288	CEFNTELYCH	2.1
CRMRTHL40230	UPPER CENNEN	2.0
CRMRTHL40258	GARN-WEN	1.8
CRMRTHL40309	BLAEN CENNEN	1.7
CRMRTHL39606	PANT Y MANGOED FARM, GARN LWYDWEN	1.4
CRMRTHL40254	CARN GOCH	1.1
CRMRTHL40294	THE BLACK MOUNTAIN-Y MYNYDD DDU	1.0
CRMRTHL39576	PISTYLL-BACH, CHWAREL CRAIGYROYN	0.6
CRMRTHL40260	CILGWYN-LLWYNWORMWOOD	0.4
CRMRTHL39605	CARREG DWFN	0.3
CRMRTHL40290	PENTREGRONW	0.3
CRMRTHL40234	LLANDEILO	0.2

LCA 1: Historic Landscape Aspect Layer - continued

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
CRMRTL42408	COED BLAEN Y CWM	0.2
CRMRTL39568	GARNBICA, MAES-Y-MEILLION	0.2
CRMRTL40310	CARREG CENNEN CASTLE	0.1
CRMRTL39604	GLYNHIR MANSION, GELLI-GWEIRDY	0.1
CRMRTL40293	BANC WERNWGAN-FOEL FRAITH QUARRIES	0.1
CRMRTL40231	BEDDAU Y DERWYDDON	< 0.1

LCA 1: Cultural Landscape Aspect Layer

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
CRMRTCL586	Mynydd Myddfai and Black Mountains	100.0
CRMRTCL061	Rural Carmarthenshire	< 0.1
CRMRTCL010	Tywi Valley RHL	< 0.1
CRMRTCL061	Rural Carmarthenshire	< 0.1
CRMRTCL061	Rural Carmarthenshire	< 0.1
CRMRTCL027	Gwendraeth Valley & Limestone Belt	< 0.1
CRMRTCL010	Tywi Valley RHL	< 0.1

LCA2: Y Mynydd Du**LCA 2: Geological Landscape Aspect Layer**

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
CRMRTGL296	Foel Deg - Drysgol - Mynydd Isaf	17.3
BRCKNGL955	Carreg Goch	11.9
CRMRTGL300	Tair Carn - Cefn Carn Fadog	10.9
CRMRTGL319	Mynydd y Llan	6.4
BRCKNGL852	Upper Tawe valley	6.1
BRCKNGL773	Cefn Maw	5.9
CRMRTGL298	Cefn y Truman - Brest Cwm Llwyd	5.6
BRCKNGL200	Waun Haffes - Fan Hir	4.7
BRCKNGL225	Rhyd-wen Fawr	4.2
CRMRTGL301	Cwm Sawdde Fechan	3.7
CRMRTGL244	Cefn Twrch	2.9
CRMRTGL323	Mynydd Myddfai	2.8
CRMRTGL272	Esgair Hir - Garreg Lag (1)	2.2
CRMRTGL318	Waun Sychlwch	1.9
BRCKNGL672	Cribarth	1.7
CRMRTGL293	Ystradowen	1.7
CRMRTGL306	Garn Fawr	1.6
BRCKNGL447	Tyle Garw	1.1
BRCKNGL551	Afon Hydfen Plateau	1.0
BRCKNGL689	Mynydd Bwlch-y-groes	1.0
CRMRTGL299	Garreg Lag (2)	0.9
CRMRTGL321	Cefn Disgwylfa	0.5
CRMRTGL325	Mawnbwll Lloi	0.5
CRMRTGL297	Dre-fach - Forge Mill -Goetre	0.5
BRCKNGL115	Fforest Fawr	0.4
CRMRTGL292	Afon Twrch	0.4
CRMRTGL302	Brownhill	0.4
CRMRTGL269	Bannau Sir Gaer	0.3
CRMRTGL348	Twynllanau	0.3
CRMRTGL326	Gelli-onen	0.3
CRMRTGL307	Banc Wernwgan	0.2
CRMRTGL315	Gellybevan	0.2
CRMRTGL294	Brynamman	0.2
CRMRTGL322	Afon Clydach (cwm)	0.1
CRMRTGL304	Sychlwch (cwm)	0.1
BRCKNGL149	Abercraf	0.1
CRMRTGL263	Afon Loughor - Afon Amman	< 0.1
BRCKNGL191	Cwm Crai	< 0.1
CRMRTGL324	Sawdde-Sychlwch cwms	< 0.1
BRCKNGL355	Halfway Forest	< 0.1
BRCKNGL268	SENTA A	< 0.1
CRMRTGL332	Allt Llannerch-goch	< 0.1
CRMRTGL415	Cwm Tynewydd	< 0.1
CRMRTGL316	Carnaugwyniau	< 0.1
CRMRTGL331	Afon Gwydderig cwms (S)	< 0.1
CRMRTGL295	Gellifiog	< 0.1
BRCKNGL151	Upper Tawe valley floor	< 0.1
CRMRTGL303	Afon Sawdde (cwm)	< 0.1

LCA 2: Landscape Habitats Aspect Layer

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
CRMRTLH029	Mynydd Du	60.8
BRCKNLH479	Fan Brycheiniog	24.6
BRCKNLH693	Llorfa - Cefn Mawr	8.0
BRCKNLH777	Tyle Garw	3.4
BRCKNLH950	Mynydd Bach Trecastell	1.0
CRMRTLH039	Carmarthen Coalfield	0.9
BRCKNLH254	Glyntawe	0.8
BRCKNLH128	Craig-y-nos	0.3
BRCKNLH456	Swansea Valley - Ystradgynlais	0.1
CRMRTLH044	Mynydd Du North	0.1
BRCKNLH456	Swansea Valley - Ystradgynlais	< 0.1
BRCKNLH567	Ystradgynlais Plantations	< 0.1
BRCKNLH915	Trecastell	< 0.1
CRMRTLH002		< 0.1
CRMRTLH043		< 0.1
BRCKNLH702	Glasfynydd Forest	< 0.1
BRCKNLH702	Glasfynydd Forest	< 0.1
BRCKNLH567	Ystradgynlais Plantations	< 0.1
BRCKNLH816	Cefn Cul	< 0.1
BRCKNLH338	Fan Nedd	< 0.1
BRCKNLH520	Pen y Cae	< 0.1
BRCKNLH101	Ystradowen	< 0.1

LCA 2: Visual and Sensory Aspect Layer

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
CRMRTVS016	The Black Mountain	35.0
BRCKNVS118	Dorwen ar Gledd	20.8
CRMRTVS015	Bannau Sir Gaer and environs	18.3
BRCKNVS363	Black Mountain	16.4
CRMRTVS014	Mynydd Myddfai	6.6
CRMRTVS008	Black Mountain south eastern fringes	1.0
BRCKNVS823	Mynydd Bach Trecastell	1.0
CRMRTVS576	Black Mountain southern slopes	0.8
CRMRTVS005	Ystradowen and Cefn-bryn-brain	< 0.1
BRCKNVS995	Glasfynydd Forest	< 0.1

LCA 2: Historic Landscape Aspect Layer

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
CRMRTHL40294	THE BLACK MOUNTAIN-Y MYNYDD DDU	50.8
BRCKNHL595	Mynydd Du	36.3
CRMRTHL40293	BANC WERNWGAN-FOEL FRAITH QUARRIES	8.8
BRCKNHL778	Mynydd Bach Trecastell	1.0
CRMRTHL39588	CATHILAS, PANT-Y-COEDCAE	0.7
CRMRTHL39600	WAUN-GRON, CEFN-BRYN-BRAIN	0.5
BRCKNHL540	Dyffryn Twrch	0.5
CRMRTHL39601	TY-GWYN	0.3
CRMRTHL40231	BEDDAU Y DERWYDDON	0.2
BRCKNHL735	Dyffryn Tawe	0.2
CRMRTHL39589	TWYNMYNYDD, BRYNPEDOL	0.2
BRCKNHL623	Glyntawe	0.1
CRMRTHL40287	LLANDDEUSANT-CAPEL-GWYNFE	0.1
CRMRTHL39602	YNYS TRE-DEG, DORWEN	0.1

LCA 2: Historic Landscape Aspect Layer - continued

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
CRMRTL39606	PANT Y MANGOED FARM, GARN LWYDWEN	0.1
CRMRTL39604	GLYNHIR MANSION, GELLI-GWEIRDY	< 0.1
BRCKNHL260	Trecastell	< 0.1
CRMRTL40290	PENTREGRONW	< 0.1
BRCKNHL753	Bryn-henllys	< 0.1
CRMRTL40309	BLAEN CENNEN	< 0.1
BRCKNHL852	Gierdd Forest	< 0.1
CRMRTL40292	GLASFYNYDD FOREST-USK RESERVOIR	< 0.1
GWNDDHL472	Intermediary slopes of the Moelwyns	< 0.1
BRCKNHL433	Craig-y-Nos	< 0.1
BRCKNHL727	Glasfynydd Forest	< 0.1
BRCKNHL605	Glasfynydd Forest (part)	< 0.1
CRMRTL40243	BLAENSAWDDE	< 0.1
BRCKNHL825	Cnewr	< 0.1
BRCKNHL132	Tir y Gof	< 0.1
CRMRTL42409	PENTRE-TY-GWYN	< 0.1
CRMRTL42408	COED BLAEN Y CWM	< 0.1

LCA 2: Cultural Landscape Aspect Layer

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
CRMRTCL586	Mynydd Myddfai and Black Mountains	61.8
BRCKNCL957	Black Mountain Mynydd Myddfai	23.8
BRCKNCL839	The Beacons	9.8
BRCKNCL113	Cave Country	2.8
BRCKNCL957	Black Mountain Mynydd Myddfai	1.0
BRCKNCL567	Llyn-y-Fan/Myddfai	0.7
BRCKNCL501	Waterfall Country	0.1
CRMRTCL060	Brynamman, Glanaman	< 0.1
BRCKNCL957	Black Mountain Mynydd Myddfai	< 0.1
BRCKNCL536	Upper Usk River Valley	< 0.1
CRMRTCL061	Rural Carmarthenshire	< 0.1

LCA 3: Fforest Fawr**LCA 3: Geological Landscape Aspect Layer**

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
BRCKNGL436	Mynydd y Garn	19.6
BRCKNGL876	Fan Nedd - Fan Fawr	19.2
BRCKNGL115	Fforest Fawr	8.4
CynonGL023	Neath Fault Zone	8.2
BRCKNGL852	Upper Tawe valley	7.7
BRCKNGL260	Fan Frynych - Blaen Senni	6.6
BRCKNGL884	Coed y Rhaiadr	6.2
BRCKNGL966	Upper Nedd Fechan	5.7
CynonGL019	Upper Cynon valley- E	3.4
BRCKNGL473	Upper Taf Fawr	2.8
CynonGL022	Cefn Sychbant	2.6
BRCKNGL191	Cwm Crai	2.5
BRCKNGL501	Y Gyrn	2.4
BRCKNGL383	Penwyllt	1.3
BRCKNGL807	Craig Cerrig-Gleisiad	1.3
CynonGL021	Penderyn	0.9
BRCKNGL178	Twyn Dyllnan Ddu	0.8
BRCKNGL487	Cwm Treweryn	0.2
BRCKNGL937	Heol Cefn y Garn	0.2
BRCKNGL377	Traeth Mawr	< 0.1
BRCKNGL670	Ystradgynlais	< 0.1

LCA 3: Landscape Habitats Aspect Layer

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
BRCKNLH338	Fan Nedd	20.8
BRCKNLH801	Fan Llia - Fan Fawr	18.4
CynonLH045		13.5
BRCKNLH104	Waun Llywarch - Waun Lysiog	13.1
BRCKNLH779	Nedd Fechan - Afon Mellte	4.7
BRCKNLH745	Carreg Cadno	4.3
BRCKNLH509	Fan Frynach - Craig Cerrig-gleisiad	3.6
BRCKNLH713	Mynydd y Garn	3.1
BRCKNLH584	Y Wern	3.1
BRCKNLH128	Craig-y-nos	2.1
BRCKNLH816	Cefn Cul	1.7
BRCKNLH779	Nedd Fechan - Afon Mellte	1.4
BRCKNLH338	Fan Nedd	1.3
BRCKNLH779	Nedd Fechan - Afon Mellte	1.0
CynonLH047		0.9
BRCKNLH829	Ystradfellte	0.8
BRCKNLH338	Fan Nedd	0.7
BRCKNLH800	Crai Valley	0.7
BRCKNLH584	Y Wern	0.7
BRCKNLH117	Y Gelli	0.6
CynonLH051		0.5
BRCKNLH829	Ystradfellte	0.4
BRCKNLH800	Crai Valley	0.4
BRCKNLH117	Y Gelli	0.4
BRCKNLH584	Y Wern	0.4

LCA 3: Landscape Habitats Aspect Layer - continued

BRCKNLH912	Brecon Beacon Reservoirs	0.3
BRCKNLH644	Glyn Tarell	0.3
CynonLH049		0.2
BRCKNLH456	Swansea Valley - Ystradgynlais	0.2
BRCKNLH779	Nedd Fechan - Afon Mellte	0.1
BRCKNLH479	Fan Brycheiniog	0.1
BRCKNLH584	Y Wern	0.1
BRCKNLH672	Cray Reservoir	0.1
BRCKNLH584	Y Wern	0.1
BRCKNLH698	Cwm Senni	< 0.1
BRCKNLH197	Taff - Caerfanell Woodlands	< 0.1
BRCKNLH779	Nedd Fechan - Afon Mellte	< 0.1
BRCKNLH779	Nedd Fechan - Afon Mellte	< 0.1
BRCKNLH929	Pontneddfechan - Penderyn	< 0.1
BRCKNLH870	Waun Dwr	< 0.1
BRCKNLH929	Pontneddfechan - Penderyn	< 0.1
BRCKNLH598	Corn Du - Pen y Fan	< 0.1
BRCKNLH706	Libanus	< 0.1
BRCKNLH242	Defynnog - Brecon West	< 0.1
BRCKNLH702	Glasfynydd Forest	< 0.1
BRCKNLH779	Nedd Fechan - Afon Mellte	< 0.1
BRCKNLH648	Cray Reservoir	< 0.1
BRCKNLH156	Pontneddfechan - Ystradfellte	< 0.1
BRCKNLH156	Pontneddfechan - Ystradfellte	< 0.1

LCA 3: Visual and Sensory Aspect Layer

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
BRCKNVS955	Fforest Fawr West	28.2
BRCKNVS141	Fan Fawr/Fan Llia [Fforest Fawr East]	27.5
CYNONVS735	cadair fawr	15.1
BRCKNVS230	Carreg Cadno	9.6
BRCKNVS307	Mynydd y Garn	8.8
BRCKNVS185	Y Wern Forest	5.2
BRCKNVS922	Nant y Fedwyn Upland	3.2
BRCKNVS966	Senni Valley	2.1
BRCKNVS270	Ystradfelltefellte Reservoir	0.2
BRCKNVS995	Glasfynydd Forest	< 0.1
CYNONVS207	Penmoelallt	< 0.1

LCA 3: Historic Landscape Aspect Layer

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
BRCKNHL829	Bannau Brycheiniog	38.7
BRCKNHL825	Cnewr	36.6
CynonHL580	Mynydd-y-glog & Cefn Cadlan	14.0
BRCKNHL461	Coed y Rhaiadr	5.1
BRCKNHL202	Cefngwaunhynog	2.9
CynonHL176	Penderyn	1.0
BRCKNHL766	Pen-wyllt	0.5
BRCKNHL735	Dyffryn Tawe	0.4
BRCKNHL525	Libanus	0.3
BRCKNHL260	Trecastell	0.3
BRCKNHL953	Blaen Llia	0.2

LCA 3: Historic Landscape Aspect Layer - continued

CynonHL635	Upper Cwm Taf	0.1
BRCKNHL595	Mynydd Du	< 0.1
BRCKNHL798	Ystradfellte	< 0.1
BRCKNHL623	Glyntawe	< 0.1
BRCKNHL170	Dyffryn Hepste	< 0.1
BRCKNHL641	Carnau Gwynion	< 0.1
BRCKNHL670	Coed Taf Fawr	< 0.1
BRCKNHL253	Cray Reservoir	< 0.1
BRCKNHL271	Gwaun Hepste	< 0.1

LCA 3: Cultural Landscape Aspect Layer

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
BRCKNCL839	The Beacons	69.6
CynonCL044	Brecon Beacons National Park	15.1
BRCKNCL501	Waterfall Country	8.4
BRCKNCL847	Brecon Beacons National Park	2.6
BRCKNCL977	High Altitude Summits	1.9
BRCKNCL977	High Altitude Summits	1.7
BRCKNCL977	High Altitude Summits	0.4
BRCKNCL935	Reservoirs	0.2
BRCKNCL935	Reservoirs	< 0.1
BRCKNCL935	Reservoirs	< 0.1
CynonCL056	Designated Landscape Areas	< 0.1
BRCKNCL275	Storey Arms	< 0.1

LCA 4: Waterfall Country and Southern Valleys**LCA 4: Geological Landscape Aspect Layer**

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
BRCKNGL436	Mynydd y Garn	24.9
BRCKNGL884	Coed y Rhaiadr	22.2
BRCKNGL773	Cefn Maw	9.0
CynonGL019	Upper Cynon valley- E	9.0
CynonGL023	Neath Fault Zone	7.0
BRCKNGL876	Fan Nedd - Fan Fawr	3.9
CynonGL028	Rhigos	3.0
BRCKNGL151	Upper Tawe valley floor	2.7
CynonGL021	Penderyn	2.4
BRCKNGL670	Ystradgynlais	2.4
CRMRTGL294	Brynamman	2.2
BRCKNGL852	Upper Tawe valley	2.0
BRCKNGL149	Abercraf	2.0
CynonGL020	Upper Cynon valley - W	1.9
BRCKNGL672	Cribarth	1.6
CRMRTGL296	Foel Deg - Drysgol - Mynydd Isaf	1.3
BRCKNGL383	Penwyllt	0.9
BRCKNGL955	Carreg Goch	0.8
BRCKNGL966	Upper Nedd Fechan	0.5
BRCKNGL200	Waun Haffes - Fan Hir	0.2
CynonGL022	Cefn Sychbant	0.1
CRMRTGL221	Ammanford (Gorsedd)-Glanaman (Maesyglyn)	< 0.1
CRMRTGL263	Afon Loughor - Afon Amman	< 0.1
NPTGL018	Banwen	< 0.1

LCA 4: Landscape Habitats Aspect Layer

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
BRCKNLH779	Nedd Fechan - Afon Mellte	8.8
BRCKNLH456	Swansea Valley - Ystradgynlais	8.4
CynonLH051		8.2
BRCKNLH929	Pontneddfechan - Penderyn	7.5
CynonLH047		6.9
BRCKNLH456	Swansea Valley - Ystradgynlais	6.1
BRCKNLH797	Pontneddfechan	4.2
BRCKNLH156	Pontneddfechan - Ystradfellte	4.0
CRMRTLH039	Carmarthen Coalfield	3.2
BRCKNLH779	Nedd Fechan - Afon Mellte	3.2
CynonLH050		2.9
BRCKNLH567	Ystradgynlais Plantations	2.8
BRCKNLH779	Nedd Fechan - Afon Mellte	2.8
CynonLH046		2.3
BRCKNLH156	Pontneddfechan - Ystradfellte	1.9
BRCKNLH338	Fan Nedd	1.9
BRCKNLH929	Pontneddfechan - Penderyn	1.7
BRCKNLH254	Glyntawe	1.6
BRCKNLH520	Pen y Cae	1.6
BRCKNLH335	Gors Llwyn	1.6
BRCKNLH156	Pontneddfechan - Ystradfellte	1.5
BRCKNLH584	Y Wern	1.4

LCA 4: Landscape Habitats Aspect Layer - continued

BRCKNLH829	Ystradfellte	1.3
CynonLH048		1.3
BRCKNLH776	Pontneddfechan	1.3
BRCKNLH567	Ystradgynlais Plantations	1.1
CynonLH045		1.1
CynonLH061		0.9
BRCKNLH479	Fan Brycheiniog	0.8
BRCKNLH929	Pontneddfechan - Penderyn	0.7
BRCKNLH330	Bronwydd - Nantllechau	0.7
BRCKNLH929	Pontneddfechan - Penderyn	0.6
BRCKNLH779	Nedd Fechan - Afon Mellte	0.6
BRCKNLH713	Mynydd y Garn	0.5
BRCKNLH801	Fan Llia - Fan Fawr	0.5
BRCKNLH779	Nedd Fechan - Afon Mellte	0.5
BRCKNLH156	Pontneddfechan - Ystradfellte	0.5
BRCKNLH779	Nedd Fechan - Afon Mellte	0.4
BRCKNLH777	Tyle Garw	0.4
BRCKNLH128	Craig-y-nos	0.4
BRCKNLH584	Y Wern	0.3
CRMRTLH029	Mynydd Du	0.3
BRCKNLH808	Ystradgynlais	0.3
BRCKNLH797	Pontneddfechan	0.2
BRCKNLH829	Ystradfellte	0.2
BRCKNLH929	Pontneddfechan - Penderyn	0.2
BRCKNLH101	Ystradowen	0.2
BRCKNLH808	Ystradgynlais	0.1
BRCKNLH745	Carreg Cadno	< 0.1
BRCKNLH584	Y Wern	< 0.1
BRCKNLH816	Cefn Cul	< 0.1
NPTLH021		< 0.1
BRCKNLH104	Waun Llywarch - Waun Lysiog	< 0.1
BRCKNLH128	Craig-y-nos	< 0.1
BRCKNLH779	Nedd Fechan - Afon Mellte	< 0.1
NPTLH022		< 0.1
BRCKNLH338	Fan Nedd	< 0.1
CynonLH060		< 0.1
BRCKNLH693	Llorfa - Cefn Mawr	< 0.1

LCA 4: Visual and Sensory Aspect Layer

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
BRCKNVS876	Nedd Fechan and Mellte Valleys	24.6
CYNONVS833	penderyn	23.4
BRCKNVS436	Tawe Valley and Cwm Twrch	19.5
BRCKNVS597	Coed-y-Rhaiadr	11.1
BRCKNVS811	Upper Tawe Valley	7.8
BRCKNVS473	Hepste Valley	5.1
BRCKNVS911	Gwaun Hepste	4.5
CRMRTVS576	Black Mountain southern slopes	3.5
BRCKNVS365	Bryn Henllys Open Cast	0.3
NPTVS970	Banwen Pyrddin	< 0.1
CYNONVS522	aberdare	< 0.1
BRCKNVS005	Ystradgynlais, Gurnos and Twrch	< 0.1

LCA 4: Historic Landscape Aspect Layer

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
CynonHL176	Penderyn	19.4
BRCKNHL798	Ystradfellte	17.2
BRCKNHL735	Dyffryn Tawe	16.7
BRCKNHL461	Coed y Rhaiadr	10.7
BRCKNHL271	Gwaun Hepste	4.5
BRCKNHL170	Dyffryn Hepste	4.2
BRCKNHL641	Carnau Gwynion	4.0
BRCKNHL623	Glyntawe	3.7
CRMRTL39589	TWYNMYNYDD, BRYNPEDOL	3.4
CynonHL150	Moel Penderyn	3.2
BRCKNHL852	Gierdd Forest	2.9
BRCKNHL953	Blaen Llia	2.7
BRCKNHL132	Tir y Gof	1.0
BRCKNHL825	Cnewr	1.0
BRCKNHL829	Bannau Brycheiniog	0.9
BRCKNHL202	Cefngwaunhynog	0.7
BRCKNHL830	Pontneddfechan	0.7
BRCKNHL314	Nant Bryn	0.6
CynonHL580	Mynydd-y-glog & Cefn Cadlan	0.4
BRCKNHL753	Bryn-henllys	0.4
BRCKNHL124	Ystradgynlais / Abercraf	0.4
BRCKNHL595	Mynydd Du	0.3
CynonHL117	Cynon Valley Corridor	0.3
BRCKNHL433	Craig-y-Nos	0.3
CRMRTL40294	THE BLACK MOUNTAIN-Y MYNYDD DDU	0.1
BRCKNHL105	Abercrave Farm	0.1
BRCKNHL766	Pen-wyllt	< 0.1
NPTHL019	Banwaen Tor-y-Betal	< 0.1
BRCKNHL604	Coelbren	< 0.1
BRCKNHL540	Dyffryn Twrch	< 0.1

LCA 4: Cultural Landscape Aspect Layer

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
BRCKNCL501	Waterfall Country	41.8
BRCKNCL839	The Beacons	27.9
CynonCL044	Brecon Beacons National Park	22.3
CRMRTCL586	Mynydd Myddfai and Black Mountains	3.5
BRCKNCL957	Black Mountain Mynydd Myddfai	1.9
BRCKNCL113	Cave Country	1.2
CynonCL041	The Rhigos	1.1
BRCKNCL847	Brecon Beacons National Park	0.1
CynonCL042	Hirwaun	< 0.1
CynonCL056	Designated Landscape Areas	< 0.1
BRCKNCL847	Brecon Beacons National Park	< 0.1
NPTCL045	West Central High Ridge: Mynydd Marchywe	< 0.1
BRCKNCL965	Ystradgynlais	< 0.1
CynonCL056	Designated Landscape Areas	< 0.1
CRMRTCL060	Brynamman, Glanaman	< 0.1
CRMRTCL061	Rural Carmarthenshire	< 0.1
BRCKNCL966		< 0.1

LCA 5: Western Usk Tributaries**LCA 5: Geological Landscape Aspect Layer**

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
BRCKNGL551	Afon Hydfen Plateau	26.7
BRCKNGL191	Cwm Crai	14.5
BRCKNGL377	Traeth Mawr	11.5
BRCKNGL487	Cwm Treweryn	11.1
BRCKNGL268	SENTA A	7.6
BRCKNGL363	Sennybridge Usk	5.1
BRCKNGL937	Heol Cefn y Garn	3.9
BRCKNGL689	Mynydd Bwlch-y-groes	3.4
CRMRTGL319	Mynydd y Llan	3.3
BRCKNGL225	Rhyd-wen Fawr	2.9
BRCKNGL704	Trecastle	2.7
BRCKNGL260	Fan Frynych - Blaen Senni	2.5
BRCKNGL899	Mynydd Illtyd	2.2
CRMRTGL320	Usk Reservoir	0.9
BRCKNGL115	Fforest Fawr	0.6
BRCKNGL355	Halfway Forest	0.5
BRCKNGL484	Yr Allt	0.3
BRCKNGL178	Twyn Dyllnan Ddu	0.2
CRMRTGL325	Mawnbwll Lloi	< 0.1
CRMRTGL331	Afon Gwydderig cwms (S)	< 0.1
CRMRTGL323	Mynydd Myddfai	< 0.1

LCA 5: Landscape Habitats Aspect Layer

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
BRCKNLH915	Trecastell	31.4
BRCKNLH242	Defynnog - Brecon West	18.8
BRCKNLH800	Crai Valley	13.7
BRCKNLH702	Glasfynydd Forest	8.3
BRCKNLH702	Glasfynydd Forest	4.6
BRCKNLH399	Fforest Fach	4.5
CRMRTLH002		3.3
BRCKNLH698	Cwm Senni	2.5
BRCKNLH895	Usk Valley	1.7
BRCKNLH870	Waun Dwr	1.4
BRCKNLH714	Cwm Dwr	1.1
BRCKNLH579	Senni Valley	0.9
CRMRTLH001		0.8
BRCKNLH242	Defynnog - Brecon West	0.8
BRCKNLH800	Crai Valley	0.7
BRCKNLH570	Usk Reservoir	0.5
BRCKNLH801	Fan Llia - Fan Fawr	0.5
BRCKNLH619	Crai	0.5
BRCKNLH870	Waun Dwr	0.5
BRCKNLH648	Cray Reservoir	0.5
BRCKNLH338	Fan Nedd	0.4
BRCKNLH672	Cray Reservoir	0.4
BRCKNLH950	Mynydd Bach Trecastell	0.4
BRCKNLH338	Fan Nedd	0.3
BRCKNLH479	Fan Brycheiniog	0.3
BRCKNLH619	Crai	0.3

LCA 5: Landscape Habitats Aspect Layer - continued

BRCKNLH314	Cefn Llechid	0.2
BRCKNLH619	Crai	0.2
BRCKNLH509	Fan Frynach - Craig Cerrig-gleisiad	0.2
BRCKNLH338	Fan Nedd	0.1
BRCKNLH950	Mynydd Bach Trecastell	0.1
CRMRTLH029	Mynydd Du	< 0.1
BRCKNLH619	Crai	< 0.1
BRCKNLH117	Y Gelli	< 0.1
BRCKNLH867	Sennybridge	< 0.1
CRMRTLH043		< 0.1

LCA 5: Visual and Sensory Aspect Layer

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
BRCKNVS966	Senni Valley	30.1
BRCKNVS790	Upper Usk and Hyddfer valleys	22.3
BRCKNVS992	Cwm Crai	14.3
BRCKNVS113	Trecastle hinterland	11.1
BRCKNVS995	Glasfynydd Forest	8.2
BRCKNVS428	Mynydd Wysg	4.7
CRMRTVS003	Glasfynydd Forest	3.3
BRCKNVS424	Fforest Fach	3.3
CRMRTVS004	Usk Reservoir	0.8
BRCKNVS544	Usk Valley West of Brecon	0.6
BRCKNVS572	Usk Reservoir	0.5
BRCKNVS880	Cray Reservoir	0.5
BRCKNVS955	Fforest Fawr West	0.3
CRMRTVS014	Mynydd Myddfai	< 0.1
BRCKNVS363	Black Mountain	< 0.1
BRCKNVS847	Cilieni Valley	< 0.1

LCA 5: Historic Landscape Aspect Layer

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
BRCKNHL260	Trecastell	76.4
BRCKNHL605	Glasfynydd Forest (part)	8.4
BRCKNHL727	Glasfynydd Forest	4.6
CRMRTLH40292	GLASFYNYDD FOREST-USK RESERVOIR	4.1
BRCKNHL126	Fforest Fach	3.3
BRCKNHL825	Cnewr	1.7
BRCKNHL576	Usk Reservoir	0.7
BRCKNHL253	Cray Reservoir	0.5
BRCKNHL829	Bannau Brycheiniog	0.2
BRCKNHL495	Sennybidge	< 0.1
BRCKNHL778	Mynydd Bach Trecastell	< 0.1
BRCKNHL595	Mynydd Du	< 0.1
CRMRTLH40294	THE BLACK MOUNTAIN-Y MYNYDD DDU	< 0.1
CRMRTLH42408	COED BLAEN Y CWM	< 0.1

LCA 5: Cultural Landscape Aspect Layer

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
BRCKNCL847	Brecon Beacons National Park	48.5
BRCKNCL536	Upper Usk River Valley	32.1

LCA 5: Cultural Landscape Aspect Layer - continued

BRCKNCL957	Black Mountain Mynydd Myddfai	7.0
CRMRTCL586	Mynydd Myddfai and Black Mountains	4.2
BRCKNCL839	The Beacons	4.0
BRCKNCL327	Sennybridge	1.5
BRCKNCL847	Brecon Beacons National Park	1.0
BRCKNCL935	Reservoirs	0.7
BRCKNCL935	Reservoirs	0.6
BRCKNCL847	Brecon Beacons National Park	0.4
BRCKNCL136	Powys Rural Hinterland	< 0.1
BRCKNCL847	Brecon Beacons National Park	< 0.1

LCA 6: Middle Usk Valleys**LCA 6: Geological Landscape Aspect Layer**

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
BRCKNGL961	Cefn Cantref	25.4
BRCKNGL899	Mynydd Illtyd	23.4
BRCKNGL377	Traeth Mawr	7.3
BRCKNGL184	Brecon Usk valley	6.8
BRCKNGL468	Brecon	5.4
BRCKNGL363	Sennybridge Usk	4.9
BRCKNGL723	Pen y Fan - Fan Big	4.8
BRCKNGL854	Pen y Crug Fort	4.4
BRCKNGL196	Llanfihangel Tal-y-Llyn	3.9
BRCKNGL838	Afon Tarell	3.1
BRCKNGL484	Yr Allt	2.9
BRCKNGL936	Coed Fenni-fach	2.1
BRCKNGL318	Glanusk Farm	1.4
BRCKNGL501	Y Gyrn	1.0
BRCKNGL807	Craig Cerrig-Gleisiad	0.9
BRCKNGL885	Cwm Llwyd	0.7
BRCKNGL909	SENTA B	0.6
BRCKNGL619	Mynydd Aberysgir	0.5
BRCKNGL950	Pentre'r felin	0.4
BRCKNGL178	Twyn Dyllnan Ddu	0.1
BRCKNGL900	Honddu Valley	0.1
BRCKNGL704	Trecastle	< 0.1
BRCKNGL487	Cwm Treweryn	< 0.1
BRCKNGL512	Bronllys	< 0.1
BRCKNGL987	Cwm Banw - Cwm Cwy	< 0.1

LCA 6: Landscape Habitats Aspect Layer

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
BRCKNLH895	Usk Valley	53.0
BRCKNLH242	Defynnog - Brecon West	14.1
BRCKNLH706	Libanus	13.9
BRCKNLH792	Mynydd Illtud	2.9
BRCKNLH709	Brecon	2.8
BRCKNLH502	Llanfrynach	2.8
BRCKNLH644	Glyn Tarell	1.5
BRCKNLH307	Brecon Woods	1.4
BRCKNLH307	Brecon Woods	0.9
BRCKNLH151	Cilieni Valley	0.8
BRCKNLH314	Cefn Llechid	0.6
BRCKNLH502	Llanfrynach	0.6
BRCKNLH764	Talybont - Allt Lwyd	0.6
BRCKNLH867	Sennybridge	0.5
BRCKNLH117	Y Gelli	0.5
BRCKNLH973	Yr Allt	0.5
BRCKNLH307	Brecon Woods	0.5
BRCKNLH609	Pen-y-crug	0.4
BRCKNLH509	Fan Frynach - Craig Cerrig-gleisiad	0.3
BRCKNLH502	Llanfrynach	0.3
BRCKNLH764	Talybont - Allt Lwyd	0.3

LCA 6: Landscape Habitats Aspect Layer - continued

BRCKNLH001	Honddu Valley	0.2
BRCKNLH625	Alexanderstone	0.1
BRCKNLH404	Cefn Twrch	0.1
BRCKNLH502	Llanfrynach	0.1
BRCKNLH307	Brecon Woods	0.1
BRCKNLH598	Corn Du - Pen y Fan	0.1
BRCKNLH502	Llanfrynach	< 0.1
BRCKNLH764	Talybont - Allt Lwyd	< 0.1
BRCKNLH232	Penoyre House	< 0.1
BRCKNLH915	Trecastell	< 0.1
BRCKNLH197	Taff - Caerfanell Woodlands	< 0.1
BRCKNLH801	Fan Llia - Fan Fawr	< 0.1
BRCKNLH706	Libanus	< 0.1

LCA 6: Visual and Sensory Aspect Layer

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
BRCKNVS148	Glyn Tarell and Cynnig valley	43.9
BRCKNVS394	Clos Coed and environs	14.1
BRCKNVS293	Ysgir Valley	4.9
BRCKNVS735	Usk Valley East of Brecon	4.7
BRCKNVS544	Usk Valley West of Brecon	4.5
BRCKNVS236	Forest Lodge	4.3
BRCKNVS338	Felinfach Farmlands	3.9
BRCKNVS711	Llanfilo Farmlands	3.9
BRCKNVS633	Brecon	3.0
BRCKNVS847	Cilieni Valley	2.9
BRCKNVS884	Mynydd Illtyd	2.6
BRCKNVS823	Mynydd Bach Trecastell	2.3
BRCKNVS337	Honddu Valley	1.9
BRCKNVS735	Usk Valley East of Brecon	1.3
BRCKNVS936	Sennybridge	0.7
BRCKNVS980	River Usk	0.4
BRCKNVS735	Usk Valley East of Brecon	0.4
BRCKNVS980	River Usk	0.2
BRCKNVS351	Nant Bran Valley	< 0.1
BRCKNVS522	Llangorse Lake Basin	< 0.1

LCA 6: Historic Landscape Aspect Layer

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
BRCKNHL525	Libanus	39.0
BRCKNHL260	Trecastell	21.6
BRCKNHL857	Llanhamlach	8.8
BRCKNHL541	Pen-y-crug	6.9
BRCKNHL951	Llanspyddid	5.5
BRCKNHL121	Brecon	3.8
BRCKNHL453	Aberbran	3.8
BRCKNHL694	Llanddew	3.6
BRCKNHL970	Mynydd Illtud	2.7
BRCKNHL266	Brynych	0.9
BRCKNHL886	Allt Aber-bran-fawr	0.8
BRCKNHL495	Sennybidge	0.7
BRCKNHL903	Ffrwdgrech	0.7

LCA 6: Historic Landscape Aspect Layer - continued

BRCKNHL829	Bannau Brycheiniog	0.4
BRCKNHL501	Coity	0.4
BRCKNHL517	Penpont	0.2
BRCKNHL431	Upper Chapel	0.2
BRCKNHL492	Gilestone	< 0.1
BRCKNHL692	Llechfaen	< 0.1

LCA 6: Cultural Landscape Aspect Layer

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
BRCKNCL847	Brecon Beacons National Park	48.6
BRCKNCL712	Vale of Usk	37.2
BRCKNCL541	Brecknock	5.0
BRCKNCL536	Upper Usk River Valley	3.9
BRCKNCL847	Brecon Beacons National Park	1.7
BRCKNCL839	The Beacons	1.5
BRCKNCL565	Brecon Beacons National Park Centre	1.3
BRCKNCL327	Sennybridge	0.8
BRCKNCL136	Powys Rural Hinterland	< 0.1

LCA 7: Central Beacons**LCA 7: Geological Landscape Aspect Layer**

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
BRCKNGL473	Upper Taf Fawr	24.8
BRCKNGL723	Pen y Fan - Fan Big	22.4
BRCKNGL833	Glyn Collwyn	15.9
BRCKNGL141	Upper Taf Fechan	13.7
BRCKNGL885	Cwm Llwyh	9.1
BRCKNGL987	Cwm Banw - Cwm Cwy	7.0
BRCKNGL501	Y Gyrn	5.8
BRCKNGL738	Neath Fault Zone	1.3
BRCKNGL961	Cefn Cantref	0.1
MRTHRGL014	Cwm Llysiog	< 0.1
MRTHRGL013	Cefn Car	< 0.1

LCA 7: Landscape Habitats Aspect Layer

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
BRCKNLH598	Corn Du - Pen y Fan	65.5
BRCKNLH104	Waun Llywarch - Waun Lysiog	18.3
BRCKNLH687	Allt Lwyd	7.5
BRCKNLH644	Glyn Tarell	3.8
BRCKNLH764	Talybont - Allt Lwyd	2.1
BRCKNLH764	Talybont - Allt Lwyd	2.0
BRCKNLH618	Cwm Banw	0.4
BRCKNLH197	Taff - Caerfanell Woodlands	0.1
BRCKNLH618	Cwm Banw	0.1
BRCKNLH502	Llanfrynach	0.1
BRCKNLH197	Taff - Caerfanell Woodlands	0.1
BRCKNLH502	Llanfrynach	< 0.1
BRCKNLH197	Taff - Caerfanell Woodlands	< 0.1
BRCKNLH895	Usk Valley	< 0.1
BRCKNLH764	Talybont - Allt Lwyd	< 0.1
BRCKNLH502	Llanfrynach	< 0.1
BRCKNLH706	Libanus	< 0.1
BRCKNLH197	Taff - Caerfanell Woodlands	< 0.1
BRCKNLH807	Byniau Gleision - Waun y Gwair	< 0.1
BRCKNLH801	Fan Llia - Fan Fawr	< 0.1
BRCKNLH912	Brecon Beacon Reservoirs	< 0.1

LCA 7: Visual and Sensory Aspect Layer

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
BRCKNVS833	Brecon Beacons	100.0

LCA 7: Historic Landscape Aspect Layer

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
BRCKNHL829	Bannau Brycheiniog	98.4
BRCKNHL864	Taf Fechan	1.0
BRCKNHL525	Libanus	0.5
BRCKNHL270	Talybont Reservoir	0.1
BRCKNHL670	Coed Taf Fawr	< 0.1
BRCKNHL501	Coity	< 0.1

LCA 7: Cultural Landscape Aspect Layer

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
BRCKNCL839	The Beacons	81.2
BRCKNCL977	High Altitude Summits	18.7
BRCKNCL847	Brecon Beacons National Park	0.1
BRCKNCL935	Reservoirs	< 0.1
BRCKNCL275	Storey Arms	< 0.1

LCA 8: Talybont and Taff Reservoir Valleys**LCA 8: Geological Landscape Aspect Layer**

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
BRCKNGL833	Glyn Collwyn	18.4
BRCKNGL141	Upper Taf Fechan	12.7
MRTHRGL011	Cwm Taf Fechan	12.2
MRTHRGL012	Garn Ddu	10.5
BRCKNGL473	Upper Taf Fawr	6.8
MRTHRGL014	Cwm Llysiog	6.7
CynonGL023	Neath Fault Zone	6.1
CynonGL021	Penderyn	5.0
CynonGL024	Pen moelallt	4.4
MRTHRGL013	Cefn Car	3.5
BRCKNGL811	Waun Rydd	3.4
CynonGL022	Cefn Sychbant	2.4
BRCKNGL738	Neath Fault Zone	2.3
MRTHRGL002	AvonTaf Fawr	2.2
MRTHRGL007	Gellideg	1.4
MRTHRGL010	Bryniau	0.8
CynonGL019	Upper Cynon valley- E	0.8
BRCKNGL785	Dyffryn Crawnon	0.3
BRCKNGL501	Y Gyrn	0.1

LCA 8: Landscape Habitats Aspect Layer

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
MRTHRLH001		26.3
CynonLH049		16.1
BRCKNLH197	Taff - Caerfanell Woodlands	13.3
BRCKNLH197	Taff - Caerfanell Woodlands	12.7
BRCKNLH197	Taff - Caerfanell Woodlands	4.8
MRTHRLH004		3.9
BRCKNLH807	Byniau Gleision - Waun y Gwair	3.8
MRTHRLH005		2.6
MRTHRLH002		2.3
BRCKNLH912	Brecon Beacon Reservoirs	2.0
CynonLH052		1.9
BRCKNLH912	Brecon Beacon Reservoirs	1.7
MRTHRLH003		1.7
BRCKNLH104	Waun Llywarch - Waun Lysiog	1.6
BRCKNLH895	Usk Valley	1.0
BRCKNLH153	Pontsticill	0.8
BRCKNLH598	Corn Du - Pen y Fan	0.7
CynonLH045		0.6
BRCKNLH764	Talybont - Allt Lwyd	0.6
MRTHRLH006		0.5
BRCKNLH912	Brecon Beacon Reservoirs	0.4
BRCKNLH912	Brecon Beacon Reservoirs	0.3
BRCKNLH912	Brecon Beacon Reservoirs	0.2
BRCKNLH912	Brecon Beacon Reservoirs	0.1
BRCKNLH801	Fan Llia - Fan Fawr	< 0.1
BRCKNLH895	Usk Valley	< 0.1
BRCKNLH104	Waun Llywarch - Waun Lysiog	< 0.1

LCA 8: Landscape Habitats Aspect Layer - continued

MRTHRLH009		< 0.1
BRCKNLH687	Allt Lwyd	< 0.1
BRCKNLH265	Mynydd Llangynidr	< 0.1
MRTHRLH007		< 0.1
BRCKNLH618	Cwm Banw	< 0.1
BRCKNLH620	Llangynidr	< 0.1
BRCKNLH764	Talybont - Allt Lwyd	< 0.1
MRTHRLH008		< 0.1

LCA 8: Visual and Sensory Aspect Layer

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
MRTHRVS387	Vaynor Uplands	22.1
CYNONVS207	Penmoelallt	18.6
BRCKNVS797	Carnafell Valley and Talybont Forest	15.4
BRCKNVS838	Upper Taf Fechan Valley	14.9
BRCKNVS738	Taf Fawr Valley	6.3
MRTHRVS393	Taff Fawr	4.1
MRTHRVS198	Vaynor Farmlands	3.9
MRTHRVS624	Upper Taff Fawr	3.3
BRCKNVS833	Brecon Beacons	2.7
BRCKNVS785	Talybont Reservoir	2.1
BRCKNVS443	Ponsticill and Pentwyn Reservoirs	1.7
MRTHRVS852	Upper Taff Fechan	1.7
MRTHRVS288	Taff Fechan	1.0
MRTHRVS359	Ponsticill Reservoir	0.5
MRTHRVS458	Llwyn -on Reservoir	0.4
BRCKNVS524	Upper Neuadd Reservoir	0.4
BRCKNVS606	Beacons Reservoir	0.3
BRCKNVS982	Cantref Reservoir	0.2
MRTHRVS179	Vaynor Quarry	0.2
MRTHRVS917	Merthyr West Flank	0.1
MRTHRVS917	Merthyr West Flank	< 0.1
MRTHRVS762	A465 Corridor	< 0.1
MRTHRVS460	A470 Corridor	< 0.1

LCA 8: Historic Landscape Aspect Layer

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
MRTHRHL002	HL002 Garn Ddu	22.1
BRCKNHL864	Taf Fechan	16.3
BRCKNHL270	Talybont Reservoir	15.8
CynonHL635	Upper Cwm Taf	12.4
MRTHRHL001	HL001 Taff Fawr valley	7.7
MRTHRHL003	HL003 Taff Fechan valley	7.3
CynonHL580	Mynydd-y-glog & Cefn Cadlan	6.2
BRCKNHL829	Bannau Brycheiniog	5.7
BRCKNHL670	Coed Taf Fawr	5.0
BRCKNHL750	Abercriban Quarry	0.6
BRCKNHL636	Cwmcrawnon	0.3
BRCKNHL118	Cantref Reservoir	0.3
MRTHRHL020	HL020 Vaynor Quarry	0.2
BRCKNHL133	Mynydd Llangynidr	< 0.1
BRCKNHL404	Tor y Foel	< 0.1

LCA 8: Historic Landscape Aspect Layer - continued

BRCKNHL525	Libanus	< 0.1
MRTHRHL025	HL025 Trefechan	< 0.1

LCA 8: Cultural Landscape Aspect Layer

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
BRCKNCL839	The Beacons	32.2
MRTHRCL005	Garn Ddu Uplands	23.6
CynonCL044	Brecon Beacons National Park	18.2
MRTHRCL006	Vaynor (inc. Pontstycyll, Ponsarn, Fiel	5.0
BRCKNCL847	Brecon Beacons National Park	3.8
BRCKNCL935	Reservoirs	3.0
MRTHRCL004	Llywyn-On and Pontstycyll Reservoirs	2.9
BRCKNCL935	Reservoirs	2.8
MRTHRCL004	Llywyn-On and Pontstycyll Reservoirs	1.5
MRTHRCL017	Gellideg, Heolgerrig, Mynydd Aberdar	1.0
MRTHRCL005	Garn Ddu Uplands	1.0
BRCKNCL935	Reservoirs	0.8
BRCKNCL935	Reservoirs	0.6
MRTHRCL029		0.5
BRCKNCL935	Reservoirs	0.4
CynonCL058		0.4
MRTHRCL030		0.4
MRTHRCL004	Llywyn-On and Pontstycyll Reservoirs	0.4
MRTHRCL004	Llywyn-On and Pontstycyll Reservoirs	0.3
BRCKNCL275	Storey Arms	0.3
MRTHRCL017	Gellideg, Heolgerrig, Mynydd Aberdar	0.2
MRTHRCL006	Vaynor (inc. Pontstycyll, Ponsarn, Fiel	0.1
MRTHRCL001	A470(T)	0.1
MRTHRCL017	Gellideg, Heolgerrig, Mynydd Aberdar	0.1
MRTHRCL006	Vaynor (inc. Pontstycyll, Ponsarn, Fiel	0.1
MRTHRCL017	Gellideg, Heolgerrig, Mynydd Aberdar	< 0.1
MRTHRCL003	National Cycle Network: Celtic Trail/Taf	< 0.1
MRTHRCL011	Cefn Coed y Cymmer and cemetery	< 0.1
MRTHRCL001	A470(T)	< 0.1
BRCKNCL977	High Altitude Summits	< 0.1
MRTHRCL002	A465	< 0.1
MRTHRCL001	A470(T)	< 0.1
MRTHRCL003	National Cycle Network: Celtic Trail/Taf	< 0.1
MRTHRCL011	Cefn Coed y Cymmer and cemetery	< 0.1
MRTHRCL007	Morlais Castle and Quarries	< 0.1
MRTHRCL007	Morlais Castle and Quarries	< 0.1

LCA 9: Mynyddeodd Llangatwg and Llangynidr**LCA 9: Geological Landscape Aspect Layer**

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
BRCKNGL372	Mynydd Llangynidr - Mynydd Llangatwg	38.3
BRCKNGL361	Blaen Onneu	24.8
BRCKNGL785	Dyffryn Crawnnon	12.4
BRCKNGL811	Waun Rydd	5.5
BRCKNGL797	Twyn y Llyn	3.7
MNMTHGL053	Penylanfach	3.6
BLNGWGL016	Clydach	3.5
BRCKNGL113	Llangynidr	3.3
BRCKNGL738	Neath Fault Zone	2.2
BRCKNGL622	Brynmawr	0.9
BLNGWGL015	Nantyglo	0.7
BRCKNGL833	Glyn Collwyn	0.6
BRCKNGL622	Brynmawr	0.3
BRCKNGL141	Upper Taf Fechan	0.2
MNMTHGL054	Llanelly	< 0.1
BLNGWGL002	Dros y Llyn	< 0.1
BLNGWGL004	Rassau	< 0.1
BLNGWGL001	Trefil	< 0.1
CynonGL007	Uppermost Rhymney valley	< 0.1
MRTHRGL011	Cwm Taf Fechan	< 0.1
MNMTHGL052	Cwm Clydach	< 0.1
MRTHRGL009	Pen-y-darren	< 0.1
MRTHRGL010	Bryniau	< 0.1

LCA 9: Landscape Habitats Aspect Layer

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
BRCKNLH265	Mynydd Llangynidr	38.3
BRCKNLH222	Mynydd Llangatwg	18.0
BRCKNLH956	Mynydd Llangatwg - Tor y Foel	10.9
BRCKNLH222	Mynydd Llangatwg	9.9
BRCKNLH807	Byniau Gleision - Waun y Gwair	9.4
BRCKNLH807	Byniau Gleision - Waun y Gwair	3.6
MNMTHLH035	Pant Mawr	3.5
BLNGWLH037		2.1
BLNGWLH040		1.5
BRCKNLH343	Cwm Carneilw	1.2
BLNGWLH044		0.6
BRCKNLH153	Pontsticill	0.5
BRCKNLH620	Llangynidr	0.3
MNMTHLH061	Clydach	0.1
BLNGWLH001		< 0.1
MNMTHLH123	Farmland surrounding Gilwern	< 0.1
BRCKNLH197	Taff - Caerfanell Woodlands	< 0.1
BRCKNLH197	Taff - Caerfanell Woodlands	< 0.1
BRCKNLH764	Talybont - Allt Lwyd	< 0.1
BLNGWLH009		< 0.1
BRCKNLH197	Taff - Caerfanell Woodlands	< 0.1
CynonLH107		< 0.1
BLNGWLH091		< 0.1

LCA 9: Landscape Habitats Aspect Layer - continued

MRTHRLH007	< 0.1
MRTHRLH005	< 0.1

LCA 9: Visual and Sensory Aspect Layer

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
BRCKNVS372	Mynydd Llangynidr and Mynydd Llangattock	90.9
MNMTHVS008	Glangattwg Mountain	2.2
BLNGWVS399	mynydd llangynidr	2.0
BLNGWVS993	Clydach valley	1.9
MNMTHVS001	Clydach Scree Slopes	1.5
BRCKNVS908	Cwm Carneilw	1.2
BLNGWVS143	A465	0.2
BLNGWVS399	mynydd llangynidr	< 0.1
BLNGWVS643	Beaufort Hill	< 0.1
BLNGWVS307	Carno forest	< 0.1
CYNONVS361	rhoslas	< 0.1
MRTHRVS313	Merthyr North Flank	< 0.1

LCA 9: Historic Landscape Aspect Layer

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
BRCKNHL133	Mynydd Llangynidr	86.9
MNMTHHL030	Clydach Gorge	3.6
BRCKNHL829	Bannau Brycheiniog	3.4
BLNGWHL007	HAA 7 Mynydd Llangatwg	2.3
BLNGWHL010	HAA 10 Clydach Fieldscape North	1.9
BRCKNHL549	Cwm Carneilw	1.2
BRCKNHL750	Abercriban Quarry	0.4
BRCKNHL636	Cwmcrawnon	0.1
BRCKNHL708	Dyffryn Crawnon	< 0.1
BRCKNHL864	Taf Fechan	< 0.1
BLNGWHL001	HAA 1 Trefil Ddu	< 0.1
BRCKNHL928	Coedcae	< 0.1
BLNGWHL792	HAA 46 Cwm Clydach Transport Corridor	< 0.1
BLNGWHL005	HAA 3 Trefil	< 0.1
BRCKNHL270	Talybont Reservoir	< 0.1
BLNGWHL009	HAA 9 Brynmawr	< 0.1
MNMTHHL045	Llanelly	< 0.1
CynonHL706	Pen March	< 0.1
CynonHL866	Blaen Rhymni	< 0.1
MRTHRHL019	HL019 Twynau Gwynion	< 0.1
MRTHRHL003	HL003 Taff Fechan valley	< 0.1
MRTHRHL009	HL009 Pen March	< 0.1

LCA 9: Cultural Landscape Aspect Layer

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
BRCKNCL847	Brecon Beacons National Park	55.2
BRCKNCL839	The Beacons	32.1
BRCKNCL712	Vale of Usk	4.6
BLNGWCL766	Brecon Beacons National Park	4.1
MNMTHCL033	Sugar Loaf Mountain	3.6
BRCKNCL935	Reservoirs	0.3

LCA 9: Cultural Landscape Aspect Layer - continued

BLNGWCL843	General upland Areas, inc. pre-industria	0.1
BLNGWCL971	"Limestone" landscapes	< 0.1
BRCKNCL847	Brecon Beacons National Park	< 0.1
BLNGWCL971	"Limestone" landscapes	< 0.1
BLNGWCL228	Special Landscape Areas	< 0.1
MNMTCL037	Clydach Gorge	< 0.1
BLNGWCL713	Brynmawr	< 0.1
CynonCL056	Designated Landscape Areas	< 0.1
MRTHRCL007	Morlais Castle and Quarries	< 0.1
BRCKNCL847	Brecon Beacons National Park	< 0.1
MRTHRCL015	Merthyr Common	< 0.1

LCA 10: Clydach Gorge**LCA 10: Geological Landscape Aspect Layer**

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
MNMTHGL050	Bloreng	45.6
MNMTHGL051	Blaen Pig	14.8
MNMTHGL052	Cwm Clydach	11.8
BLNGWGL016	Clydach	8.6
MNMTHGL086	Caldicot Moor	7.0
MNMTHGL054	Llanelly	4.7
MNMTHGL055	Afon Clydach	2.0
MNMTHGL053	Penylanfach	2.0
TRFNGL018	Blaenavon	1.8
MNMTHGL049	Twyn Wenallt	1.5
BLNGWGL015	Nantyglo	0.1
MNMTHGL056	Dan-y-bont	0.1

LCA 10: Landscape Habitats Aspect Layer

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
MNMTHLH033	Gilwern & Llanelly Hills	28.2
MNMTHLH061	Clydach	18.6
MNMTHLH139	S. of Cwm Clydach	11.8
MNMTHLH062	E. of Mynydd Rheinallt	6.9
MNMTHLH030	Disused Tip at Blaen Pig	6.7
MNMTHLH038	Gilwern Hill (Calcareous grassland)	4.0
BLNGWLH040		3.8
MNMTHLH031	Bloreng Heath	3.5
MNMTHLH123	Farmland surrounding Gilwern	2.9
BLNGWLH041		2.2
MNMTHLH033	Gilwern & Llanelly Hills	1.9
TRFNLH039		1.8
MNMTHLH123	Farmland surrounding Gilwern	1.7
BLNGWLH091		1.5
MNMTHLH035	Pant Mawr	1.2
MNMTHLH030	Disused Tip at Blaen Pig	1.1
BLNGWLH042		0.9
MNMTHLH040	Gilwern	0.7
BLNGWLH044		0.2
MNMTHLH061	Clydach	0.1
MNMTHLH033	Gilwern & Llanelly Hills	0.1
MNMTHLH032	Cwm Llanwenarth & linked woods	< 0.1
TRFNLH022		< 0.1
MNMTHLH061	Clydach	< 0.1
BLNGWLH037		< 0.1

LCA 10: Visual and Sensory Aspect Layer

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
MNMTHVS021	Clydach Gorge	38.0
MNMTHVS002	Gilwern Hill	31.2
MNMTHVS021	Clydach Gorge	6.8
MNMTHVS083	Llanelly hill tip	6.5
MNMTHVS001	Clydach Scree Slopes	3.3

LCA 10: Visual and Sensory Aspect Layer - continued

BLNGWVS993	Clydach valley	2.3
BLNGWVS291	Twyn Blaen-nant	2.2
BLNGWVS143	A465	2.1
TRFNVS030		1.8
MNMTHVS083	Llanelly hill tip	1.5
MNMTHVS097	A465	1.4
BLNGWVS958	Tredegar town	1.2
BLNGWVS688	Mynydd Bedwellte	0.9
MNMTHVS008	Glangattwg Mountain	0.7
BLNGWVS958	Tredegar town	0.1

LCA 10: Historic Landscape Aspect Layer

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
MNMTHHL029	Blaenavon Hinterland	48.8
MNMTHHL030	Clydach Gorge	40.6
BLNGWHL792	HAA 46 Cwm Clydach Transport Corridor	3.9
BLNGWHL876	HAA 47 Clydach Fieldscape South	2.6
TRFNHL021	HL021 Cefn Garnyrerw and Cwm Darrenfelen	1.8
BLNGWHL009	HAA 9 Brynmawr	1.7
BLNGWHL025	HAA 25 Mynydd Coety	0.3
BLNGWHL007	HAA 7 Mynydd Llangatwg	0.1
BLNGWHL010	HAA 10 Clydach Fieldscape North	0.1
MNMTHHL045	Llanelly	< 0.1

LCA 10: Cultural Landscape Aspect Layer

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
MNMTHCL038	The Bloreng, Llanelly, Gilwern	59.7
MNMTHCL037	Clydach Gorge	17.7
MNMTHCL037	Clydach Gorge	8.9
BLNGWCL228	Special Landscape Areas	4.0
BLNGWCL713	Brynmawr	3.2
TRFNCL960	Blaenafon World Heritage Landscape	1.8
BLNGWCL766	Brecon Beacons National Park	1.5
MNMTHCL033	Sugar Loaf Mountain	1.3
MNMTHCL029	Upper Gwent	1.1
MNMTHCL040	Middle Usk River Valley	0.6
BLNGWCL843	General upland Areas, inc. pre-industria	0.1
MNMTHCL039	Monmouthshire & Brecon Canal	< 0.1
MNMTHCL040	Middle Usk River Valley	< 0.1
MNMTHCL040	Middle Usk River Valley	< 0.1

LCA 11: Eastern Usk Valley**LCA 11: Geological Landscape Aspect Layer**

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
BRCKNGL113	Llangynidr	16.5
BRCKNGL662	Black Mountains	13.6
BRCKNGL184	Brecon Usk valley	13.2
BRCKNGL785	Dyffryn Cwannon	10.2
BRCKNGL987	Cwm Banw - Cwm Cwy	6.4
BRCKNGL833	Glyn Collwyn	6.2
BRCKNGL580	Usk valley	5.4
BRCKNGL574	Allt yr Esgair	3.7
MNMTHGL086	Caldicot Moor	3.2
BRCKNGL667	Myarth	3.2
MNMTHGL001	Sugar Loaf	3.1
MNMTHGL054	Llanelly	3.0
MNMTHGL040	Usk-Nant y Wilcae	2.9
MNMTHGL044	Llanfoist	2.8
MNMTHGL050	Blorenge	1.2
MNMTHGL002	Bettws	1.1
BRCKNGL961	Cefn Cantref	0.8
MNMTHGL049	Twyn Wenallt	0.6
MNMTHGL056	Dan-y-bont	0.6
MNMTHGL046	Coed-y-Prior	0.5
BRCKNGL196	Llanfihangel Tal-y-Llyn	0.4
BRCKNGL893	Llangorse Lake	0.3
MNMTHGL053	Penylanfach	0.3
BRCKNGL797	Twyn y Llyn	0.2
BRCKNGL361	Blaen Onneu	0.1
BRCKNGL723	Pen y Fan - Fan Big	0.1
MNMTHGL055	Afon Clydach	0.1
MNMTHGL015	Triley	0.1
BRCKNGL735	Sugar Loaf	0.1
MNMTHGL052	Cwm Clydach	< 0.1
MNMTHGL045	Llanover	< 0.1
MNMTHGL051	Blaen Pig	< 0.1
BRCKNGL738	Neath Fault Zone	< 0.1

LCA 11: Landscape Habitats Aspect Layer

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
BRCKNLH620	Llangynidr	26.8
BRCKNLH163	Bwlch - Crickhowell	19.0
BRCKNLH895	Usk Valley	17.7
MNMTHLH123	Farmland surrounding Gilwern	3.8
MNMTHLH123	Farmland surrounding Gilwern	2.7
MNMTHLH121	River Usk's floodplain	2.5
BRCKNLH818	Buckland Hill - Myarth	2.5
MNMTHLH098	N. rural Monmouthshire	2.4
BRCKNLH197	Taff - Caerfanell Woodlands	2.2
MNMTHLH121	River Usk's floodplain	2.0
BRCKNLH818	Buckland Hill - Myarth	2.0
BRCKNLH197	Taff - Caerfanell Woodlands	1.6
MNMTHLH034	Cwm Gwenffrwd & Graig	1.6

LCA 11: Landscape Habitats Aspect Layer - continued

BRCKNLH618	Cwm Banw	1.4
MNMTHLH032	Cwm Llanwenarth & linked woods	1.1
BRCKNLH764	Talybont - Allt Lwyd	1.1
MNMTHLH045	W. side of Cwm Llanwenarth	0.9
BRCKNLH956	Mynydd Llangatwg - Tor y Foel	0.8
BRCKNLH674	Tor y Foel	0.7
BRCKNLH813	Crickhowell - Llangattock	0.7
BRCKNLH197	Taff - Caerfanell Woodlands	0.6
MNMTHLH061	Clydach	0.5
BRCKNLH771	Allt yr Esgair	0.5
BRCKNLH197	Taff - Caerfanell Woodlands	0.4
MNMTHLH040	Gilwern	0.4
BRCKNLH974	Black Mountains	0.4
MNMTHLH039	Govilon	0.4
BRCKNLH618	Cwm Banw	0.4
BRCKNLH813	Crickhowell - Llangattock	0.3
MNMTHLH140	River Usk	0.3
BRCKNLH974	Black Mountains	0.3
BRCKNLH813	Crickhowell - Llangattock	0.3
BRCKNLH764	Talybont - Allt Lwyd	0.2
MNMTHLH033	Gilwern & Llanelly Hills	0.2
MNMTHLH031	Bloreng Heath	0.2
BRCKNLH618	Cwm Banw	0.2
MNMTHLH040	Gilwern	0.1
MNMTHLH026	Craig Ddu, Glebe Wood & Llanfoist Wood	0.1
MNMTHLH035	Pant Mawr	0.1
MNMTHLH033	Gilwern & Llanelly Hills	0.1
BRCKNLH598	Corn Du - Pen y Fan	0.1
MNMTHLH065	Lower slopes of N. side of Bloreng	0.1
BRCKNLH618	Cwm Banw	0.1
BRCKNLH502	Llanfrynach	0.1
BRCKNLH265	Mynydd Llangynidr	< 0.1
BRCKNLH687	Allt Lwyd	< 0.1
BRCKNLH807	Byniau Gleision - Waun y Gwair	< 0.1
MNMTHLH038	Gilwern Hill (Calcareous grassland)	< 0.1
MNMTHLH033	Gilwern & Llanelly Hills	< 0.1
BRCKNLH618	Cwm Banw	< 0.1
BRCKNLH910	Black Mountains	< 0.1
MNMTHLH037	Mynydd Llanwenarth	< 0.1
BRCKNLH764	Talybont - Allt Lwyd	< 0.1
BRCKNLH912	Brecon Beacon Reservoirs	< 0.1
MNMTHLH077	Abergavenny	< 0.1
MNMTHLH061	Clydach	< 0.1
BRCKNLH620	Llangynidr	< 0.1
BRCKNLH288	Sugar Loaf	< 0.1

LCA 11: Visual and Sensory Aspect Layer

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
BRCKNVS361	Usk Valley - Llangattock	25.2
BRCKNVS1000	Usk Valley Hills	14.4
BRCKNVS302	Crawnnon Valley	8.5
BRCKNVS397	Usk Valley Northern Slopes	7.7

LCA 11: Visual and Sensory Aspect Layer - continued

BRCKNVS797	Carnafell Valley and Talybont Forest	7.5
BRCKNVS735	Usk Valley East of Brecon	6.7
MNMTHVS025	The Tumble	4.8
BRCKNVS735	Usk Valley East of Brecon	4.6
MNMTHVS029	Sugar loaf scarp slopes	4.1
MNMTHVS026	Llanelly Hill	3.6
MNMTHVS045	Lower Usk and Olway valleys	3.1
BRCKNVS735	Usk Valley East of Brecon	2.9
MNMTHVS045	Lower Usk and Olway valleys	2.0
BRCKNVS735	Usk Valley East of Brecon	0.8
BRCKNVS980	River Usk	0.8
BRCKNVS711	Llanfilo Farmlands	0.7
BRCKNVS622	Crickhowell	0.6
MNMTHVS074	Gilwern	0.6
MNMTHVS045	Lower Usk and Olway valleys	0.4
MNMTHVS073	Govilon	0.4
MNMTHVS045	Lower Usk and Olway valleys	0.2
MNMTHVS087	River Usk	0.2
MNMTHVS097	A465	0.1
MNMTHVS072	Abergavenny	< 0.1
BRCKNVS372	Mynydd Llangynidr and Mynydd Llangattock	< 0.1

LCA 11: Historic Landscape Aspect Layer

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
BRCKNHL636	Cwmcrawnon	30.0
BRCKNHL525	Libanus	9.4
MNMTHHL061	Usk Valley	7.5
BRCKNHL890	Cwm-gu	6.2
MNMTHHL029	Blaenavon Hinterland	5.0
BRCKNHL857	Llanhamlach	4.3
BRCKNHL492	Gilestone	3.7
BRCKNHL385	Penygaer	3.4
BRCKNHL484	Glanusk Park / Gliiffaes	3.3
MNMTHHL045	Llanelly	3.3
MNMTHHL033	Black Mountains & Vale of Ewyas	3.0
BRCKNHL172	Cathedine	2.7
BRCKNHL387	Gilfach	2.6
BRCKNHL708	Dyffryn Crawnon	2.3
BRCKNHL501	Coity	2.2
BRCKNHL835	Buckland	1.8
BRCKNHL329	Belfountain	1.4
BRCKNHL404	Tor y Foel	1.4
BRCKNHL256	Glangrwyney	0.9
MNMTHHL030	Clydach Gorge	0.8
BRCKNHL707	Crickhowell	0.7
BRCKNHL270	Talybont Reservoir	0.7
BRCKNHL183	Llangynidr	0.6
BRCKNHL298	Bwlch	0.5
BRCKNHL133	Mynydd Llangynidr	0.4
BRCKNHL946	Craig-lwyd-fawr	0.4
BRCKNHL956	Llangattock Park	0.4
BRCKNHL389	Ffawyddog	0.3

LCA 11: Historic Landscape Aspect Layer - continued

BRCKNHL658	Llangattock	0.3
BRCKNHL654	Talybont-on-Usk	0.2
BRCKNHL567	Mynydd Llangorse	0.2
BRCKNHL642	Black Mountains	0.1
BRCKNHL176	Vale of Grwyney	0.1
BRCKNHL829	Bannau Brycheiniog	< 0.1
MNMTHHL031	Modern Abergavenny	< 0.1
BRCKNHL426	Mynydd Pen-y-fai	< 0.1

LCA 11: Cultural Landscape Aspect Layer

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
BRCKNCL712	Vale of Usk	50.3
BRCKNCL847	Brecon Beacons National Park	14.6
MNMTHCL040	Middle Usk River Valley	6.4
BRCKNCL839	The Beacons	6.0
MNMTHCL038	The Blorenge, Llanelly, Gilwern	5.0
BRCKNCL376	Crickhowell	4.0
MNMTHCL033	Sugar Loaf Mountain	3.9
BRCKNCL847	Brecon Beacons National Park	3.5
MNMTHCL033	Sugar Loaf Mountain	3.2
BRCKNCL924	Black Mountains	1.7
MNMTHCL047	Lower Usk River Valley	0.8
BRCKNCL935	Reservoirs	0.2
MNMTHCL029	Upper Gwent	0.1
BRCKNCL847	Brecon Beacons National Park	0.1
MNMTHCL037	Clydach Gorge	0.1
BRCKNCL847	Brecon Beacons National Park	< 0.1
MNMTHCL039	Monmouthshire & Brecon Canal	< 0.1
MNMTHCL039	Monmouthshire & Brecon Canal	< 0.1
MNMTHCL040	Middle Usk River Valley	< 0.1
MNMTHCL032	A465 Highway	< 0.1
MNMTHCL037	Clydach Gorge	< 0.1
MNMTHCL040	Middle Usk River Valley	< 0.1
BRCKNCL712	Vale of Usk	< 0.1

LCA 12: Skirrid and Sugar Loaf**LCA 12: Geological Landscape Aspect Layer**

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
MNMTHGL001	Sugar Loaf	23.3
BRCKNGL735	Sugar Loaf	11.1
MNMTHGL002	Bettws	9.2
MNMTHGL042	Llantilio Pertholey	7.9
MNMTHGL020	Skirrid Mountain	7.4
BRCKNGL662	Black Mountains	6.9
MNMTHGL016	Llangattock-Newcastle	5.2
MNMTHGL003	Bryn Arw	5.1
MNMTHGL015	Triley	4.7
MNMTHGL014	Llanvihangel Crucorney	4.1
MNMTHGL006	Hatterrall Hill	3.5
MNMTHGL005	Bal Mawr	3.4
MNMTHGL013	Oldcastle	2.1
MNMTHGL007	Honddu-Monnow	1.5
MNMTHGL094	Stanton	1.5
MNMTHGL004	Grwyne Fawr	1.4
MNMTHGL095	Glandwr	0.8
MNMTHGL011	Cwmyoy	0.3
MNMTHGL012	Cwmlau	0.2
BRCKNGL580	Usk valley	0.1
MNMTHGL043	Gavenny	0.1

LCA 12: Landscape Habitats Aspect Layer

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
MNMTHLH098	N. rural Monmouthshire	35.5
MNMTHLH058	Llanvihangel Crucorney & surrounds	15.9
BRCKNLH163	Bwlch - Crickhowell	11.4
MNMTHLH037	Mynydd Llanwenarth	5.7
MNMTHLH078	Sugarloaf and heath to N. & E.	4.4
BRCKNLH590	Grwyne Fechan - Fawr	3.9
MNMTHLH025	The Park	3.2
MNMTHLH056	Bryn Arw	2.8
MNMTHLH079	Deri	2.2
BRCKNLH288	Sugar Loaf	2.0
MNMTHLH057	Cwm Coed-y-Cerrig	1.9
MNMTHLH059	Vale of Ewyas	1.8
MNMTHLH132	Woodland w. of Ysgyryd Fawr	1.5
MNMTHLH012	Tywn-yr-allt	1.4
MNMTHLH024	Ysgynydd Fawr	1.3
MNMTHLH036	Deri Fach	1.0
BRCKNLH785	Sugar Loaf - Mynydd Pen-y-fal	0.9
MNMTHLH137	Woodland N. of The Park	0.8
MNMTHLH005	Moorland N & W of Sugarloaf	0.8
MNMTHLH022	N. slopes Mynydd Pen-y-fal (Bracken)	0.7
MNMTHLH060	W. of Llanthony Wood	0.7
MNMTHLH133	E. slopes of Hatterrall Hill	0.2
BRCKNLH974	Black Mountains	< 0.1
MNMTHLH010	Llanthony Wood	< 0.1
MNMTHLH131	Area surrounding Oldcastle	< 0.1

LCA 12: Landscape Habitats Aspect Layer - continued

MNMTHLH077	Abergavenny	< 0.1
MNMTHLH034	Cwm Gwenffrwd & Graig	< 0.1

LCA 12: Visual and Sensory Aspect Layer

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
MNMTHVS029	Sugar loaf scarp slopes	26.4
MNMTHVS015	Northern Hills	16.8
BRCKNVS580	Vale of Grwyney	15.6
MNMTHVS004	The Sugar Loaf	12.7
MNMTHVS051	Llanfihangel Crucorney Hinterland	11.8
MNMTHVS022	Monnow Valley	8.2
MNMTHVS007	Bettws Hill	3.0
MNMTHVS012	Ysgryd Fawr	2.8
BRCKNVS369	Sugar Loaf Mountain	2.6
MNMTHVS050	kentchurch valley floor	0.1
MNMTHVS045	Lower Usk and Olway valleys	< 0.1
MNMTHVS072	Abergavenny	< 0.1
BRCKNVS660	Black Mountains	< 0.1

LCA 12: Historic Landscape Aspect Layer

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
MNMTHHL033	Black Mountains & Vale of Ewyas	81.8
BRCKNHL176	Vale of Grwyney	9.3
BRCKNHL329	Belfountain	5.0
BRCKNHL426	Mynydd Pen-y-fai	2.6
BRCKNHL890	Cwm-gu	1.2
BRCKNHL256	Glangrwyney	0.1
MNMTHHL049	East Bergavenny	< 0.1
MNMTHHL061	Usk Valley	< 0.1
MNMTHHL031	Modern Abergavenny	< 0.1
BRCKNHL642	Black Mountains	< 0.1

LCA 12: Cultural Landscape Aspect Layer

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
MNMTHCL033	Sugar Loaf Mountain	37.0
MNMTHCL029	Upper Gwent	19.4
MNMTHCL029	Upper Gwent	17.0
BRCKNCL847	Brecon Beacons National Park	12.5
BRCKNCL712	Vale of Usk	5.5
MNMTHCL029	Upper Gwent	4.4
MNMTHCL034	Skirrid Fawr	2.1
MNMTHCL035	Vale of Ewias	1.2
MNMTHCL054	Newport, Abergavenny, Hereford Railway	0.4
MNMTHCL031	Abergavenny Town	0.3
BRCKNCL376	Crickhowell	0.1
BRCKNCL712	Vale of Usk	< 0.1
MNMTHCL032	A465 Highway	< 0.1
BRCKNCL924	Black Mountains	< 0.1

LCA 13: The Black Mountains**LCA 13: Geological Landscape Aspect Layer**

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
BRCKNGL662	Black Mountains	73.9
MNMTHGL005	Bal Mawr	9.0
MNMTHGL006	Hatterrall Hill	5.0
BRCKNGL184	Brecon Usk valley	2.6
MNMTHGL011	Cwmyoy	2.4
MNMTHGL007	Honddu-Monnow	1.5
MNMTHGL008	Vale of Ewyas (W)	1.4
MNMTHGL013	Oldcastle	1.4
MNMTHGL009	Vale of Ewyas (E)	1.1
MNMTHGL010	Henllan	0.9
MNMTHGL095	Glandwr	0.5
MNMTHGL012	Cwmlau	0.3
BRCKNGL648	Llangors	0.2
MNMTHGL004	Grwyne Fawr	< 0.1

LCA 13: Landscape Habitats Aspect Layer

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
BRCKNLH910	Black Mountains	26.1
BRCKNLH974	Black Mountains	9.2
BRCKNLH613	Black Mountain Plateau	8.4
BRCKNLH590	Grwyne Fechan - Fawr	7.6
MNMTHLH059	Vale of Ewyas	6.5
BRCKNLH284	Cwm Du - Pengenffordd	6.4
MNMTHLH126	Bwlch Bach	4.8
BRCKNLH230	Mynydd Du Forest	4.7
BRCKNLH974	Black Mountains	4.4
BRCKNLH163	Bwlch - Crickhowell	2.2
BRCKNLH332	Capel-y-ffin	1.9
MNMTHLH007	E. slopes of Vale of Ewyas (Bracken)	1.8
MNMTHLH131	Area surrounding Oldcastle	1.6
BRCKNLH416	Mynydd Troed - Pen Tir	1.6
MNMTHLH008	E. slopes of Vale of Ewyas (Heath)	1.5
MNMTHLH006	Mynydd Du Forest	1.2
MNMTHLH009	W. slopes of Vale of Ewyas	1.1
BRCKNLH416	Mynydd Troed - Pen Tir	1.1
MNMTHLH011	Hatterrall Hill	1.1
MNMTHLH060	W. of Llanthony Wood	0.9
BRCKNLH230	Mynydd Du Forest	0.7
MNMTHLH021	W. slopes of Hatterrall Hill	0.7
MNMTHLH133	E. slopes of Hatterrall Hill	0.6
BRCKNLH230	Mynydd Du Forest	0.5
MNMTHLH010	Llanthony Wood	0.5
BRCKNLH974	Black Mountains	0.4
MNMTHLH099	River Monnow & adjacent land	0.4
BRCKNLH974	Black Mountains	0.3
MNMTHLH009	W. slopes of Vale of Ewyas	0.3
BRCKNLH264	Talgarth East	0.3
BRCKNLH974	Black Mountains	0.2
MNMTHLH010	Llanthony Wood	0.2

LCA 13: Landscape Habitats Aspect Layer - continued

BRCKNLH590	Grwyne Fechan - Fawr	0.2
BRCKNLH230	Mynydd Du Forest	0.2
MNMTHLH010	Llanthony Wood	0.2
BRCKNLH590	Grwyne Fechan - Fawr	0.1
BRCKNLH590	Grwyne Fechan - Fawr	0.1
MNMTHLH098	N. rural Monmouthshire	0.1
MNMTHLH021	W. slopes of Hatterrall Hill	< 0.1
BRCKNLH895	Usk Valley	< 0.1
BRCKNLH974	Black Mountains	< 0.1
BRCKNLH230	Mynydd Du Forest	< 0.1
MNMTHLH058	Llanvihangel Crucorney & surrounds	< 0.1
BRCKNLH974	Black Mountains	< 0.1
MNMTHLH009	W. slopes of Vale of Ewyas	< 0.1
BRCKNLH818	Buckland Hill - Myarth	< 0.1
MNMTHLH059	Vale of Ewyas	< 0.1
MNMTHLH059	Vale of Ewyas	< 0.1

LCA 13: Visual and Sensory Aspect Layer

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
BRCKNVS660	Black Mountains	43.5
BRCKNVS580	Vale of Grwyney	9.9
BRCKNVS368	Rhiangoll Valley	9.6
MNMTHVS020	Vale of Ewyas	8.3
MNMTHVS005	Black Mountains	7.2
BRCKNVS858	Mynydd Llangorse	6.6
BRCKNVS590	Mynydd Du	4.9
MNMTHVS006	Olchon Valley Ridge	4.8
BRCKNVS389	Vale of Ewyas	2.2
MNMTHVS022	Monnow Valley	2.0
MNMTHVS029	Sugar loaf scarp slopes	1.0
MNMTHVS050	kentchurch valley floor	0.1

LCA 13: Historic Landscape Aspect Layer

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
BRCKNHL642	Black Mountains	43.6
MNMTHHL033	Black Mountains & Vale of Ewyas	23.3
BRCKNHL176	Vale of Grwyney	7.3
BRCKNHL567	Mynydd Llangorse	6.7
BRCKNHL929	Dyffryn Rhingoll	6.6
BRCKNHL393	Mynydd Du Forest	4.9
BRCKNHL272	Ty Commins	2.5
BRCKNHL990	Vale of Ewyas	2.0
BRCKNHL636	Cwmcrawnon	1.7
BRCKNHL285	Castell Dinas	0.5
BRCKNHL890	Cwm-gu	0.4
BRCKNHL385	Penygaer	0.3
BRCKNHL669	Rhos Fawr	< 0.1
BRCKNHL172	Cathedine	< 0.1
BRCKNHL485	Maestorglwydd	< 0.1
BRCKNHL298	Bwlch	< 0.1
BRCKNHL329	Belfountain	< 0.1

LCA 13: Cultural Landscape Aspect Layer

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
BRCKNCL924	Black Mountains	37.9
MNMTHCL035	Vale of Ewias	21.7
BRCKNCL932	Middle Wye Valley	16.5
BRCKNCL847	Brecon Beacons National Park	9.6
BRCKNCL847	Brecon Beacons National Park	9.6
BRCKNCL838	Vale of Ewyas	2.8
MNMTHCL029	Upper Gwent	1.5
BRCKNCL712	Vale of Usk	0.1
BRCKNCL935	Reservoirs	0.1
MNMTHCL035	Vale of Ewias	< 0.1
MNMTHCL036	Llanthony Priory	< 0.1
MNMTHCL028	Monnow River	< 0.1
MNMTHCL028	Monnow River	< 0.1
MNMTHCL029	Upper Gwent	< 0.1
MNMTHCL028	Monnow River	< 0.1
MNMTHCL028	Monnow River	< 0.1
MNMTHCL029	Upper Gwent	< 0.1
MNMTHCL028	Monnow River	< 0.1
MNMTHCL028	Monnow River	< 0.1
MNMTHCL029	Upper Gwent	< 0.1
MNMTHCL028	Monnow River	< 0.1
MNMTHCL035	Vale of Ewias	< 0.1
MNMTHCL028	Monnow River	< 0.1
MNMTHCL029	Upper Gwent	< 0.1
MNMTHCL035	Vale of Ewias	< 0.1
MNMTHCL028	Monnow River	< 0.1
MNMTHCL029	Upper Gwent	< 0.1
MNMTHCL028	Monnow River	< 0.1
MNMTHCL029	Upper Gwent	< 0.1
MNMTHCL028	Monnow River	< 0.1
MNMTHCL029	Upper Gwent	< 0.1
MNMTHCL028	Monnow River	< 0.1
MNMTHCL029	Upper Gwent	< 0.1
MNMTHCL033	Sugar Loaf Mountain	< 0.1

LCA 14: Wye Valley Foothills**LCA 14: Geological Landscape Aspect Layer**

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
BRCKNGL648	Llangors	59.6
BRCKNGL972	Talgarth	19.9
BRCKNGL893	Llangorse Lake	7.5
BRCKNGL196	Llanfihangel Tal-y-Llyn	5.4
BRCKNGL662	Black Mountains	3.6
BRCKNGL574	Allt yr Esgair	3.1
BRCKNGL625	Wye valley	0.9
BRCKNGL512	Bronllys	< 0.1
RDNRGL260	Wye	< 0.1

LCA 14: Landscape Habitats Aspect Layer

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
BRCKNLH895	Usk Valley	51.3
BRCKNLH264	Talgarth East	36.2
BRCKNLH974	Black Mountains	3.4
BRCKNLH941	Llangorse Lake	1.7
BRCKNLH974	Black Mountains	1.6
BRCKNLH841	Trefeinon	1.2
BRCKNLH974	Black Mountains	0.8
BRCKNLH974	Black Mountains	0.7
BRCKNLH771	Allt yr Esgair	0.5
BRCKNLH832	Bronllys	0.5
BRCKNLH796	Llangorse	0.4
BRCKNLH796	Llangorse	0.4
BRCKNLH796	Llangorse	0.2
BRCKNLH910	Black Mountains	0.2
BRCKNLH796	Llangorse	0.2
BRCKNLH284	Cwm Du - Pengefnfordd	0.2
BRCKNLH796	Llangorse	0.1
BRCKNLH832	Bronllys	0.1
BRCKNLH796	Llangorse	0.1
BRCKNLH796	Llangorse	< 0.1
BRCKNLH771	Allt yr Esgair	< 0.1
BRCKNLH796	Llangorse	< 0.1
BRCKNLH796	Llangorse	< 0.1
BRCKNLH416	Mynydd Troed - Pen Tir	< 0.1
RDNRHLH038		< 0.1

LCA 14: Visual and Sensory Aspect Layer

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
BRCKNVS683	Black Mountains Northern fringe	62.0
BRCKNVS522	Llangorse Lake Basin	25.4
BRCKNVS660	Black Mountains	5.1
BRCKNVS003	Three Cocks farmland	3.1
BRCKNVS998	Llangorse Lake	1.7
BRCKNVS711	Llanfilo Farmlands	1.1
BRCKNVS527	Hay-on-Wye	0.7
BRCKNVS151	Talgath	0.6

LCA 14: Visual and Sensory Aspect Layer - continued

BRCKNVS004	Wye Valley	0.2
BRCKNVS160	River Wye	0.1
RDNRVS167	River Wye	< 0.1

LCA 14: Historic Landscape Aspect Layer

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
BRCKNHL485	Maestorglwydd	41.5
BRCKNHL172	Cathedine	18.5
BRCKNHL857	Llanhamlach	9.9
BRCKNHL611	Trefecca	9.8
BRCKNHL687	Porthamal	5.6
BRCKNHL642	Black Mountains	4.7
BRCKNHL669	Rhos Fawr	3.7
BRCKNHL377	Llangorse Lake	1.7
BRCKNHL269	Great Porthmael	1.6
BRCKNHL846	Hay	0.8
BRCKNHL848	Talgarth	0.8
BRCKNHL567	Mynydd Llangorse	0.6
BRCKNHL701	Llangorse	0.3
BRCKNHL966	Pipton	0.2
BRCKNHL929	Dyffryn Rhingoll	0.1
BRCKNHL285	Castell Dinas	0.1
RDNRHL993	Middle Wye	< 0.1
BRCKNHL913	Old Gwernyfed	< 0.1

LCA 14: Cultural Landscape Aspect Layer

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
BRCKNCL932	Middle Wye Valley	72.0
BRCKNCL712	Vale of Usk	10.7
BRCKNCL847	Brecon Beacons National Park	7.7
BRCKNCL458	Llangors	7.0
BRCKNCL253	Hay on Wys	0.9
BRCKNCL136	Powys Rural Hinterland	0.5
BRCKNCL712	Vale of Usk	0.3
BRCKNCL429	Trefecca	0.3
RDNRCL006	Wye Valley	< 0.1

LCA 15: Bloreng Summit and Slopes**LCA 15: Geological Landscape Aspect Layer**

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
MNMTHGL050	Bloreng	41.2
MNMTHGL046	Coed-y-Prior	20.0
MNMTHGL045	Llanover	17.6
MNMTHGL048	Pentre Hill	10.5
MNMTHGL047	Mamhilad	6.3
TRFNGL030	Llanfihangel Pontymoel	2.0
TRFNGL027	Mynydd Garn Wen	2.0
MNMTHGL051	Blaen Pig	0.4
TRFNGL020	Mynydd Garn Clochdy	0.1
MNMTHGL044	Llanfoist	< 0.1
MNMTHGL086	Caldicot Moor	< 0.1
TRFNGL019	Mynydd y Garn Fawr	< 0.1
TRFNGL021	Cwm y Nant	< 0.1
TRFNGL018	Blaenavon	< 0.1

LCA 15: Landscape Habitats Aspect Layer

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
MNMTHLH067	Farmland to W. of Llanover	30.9
MNMTHLH031	Bloreng Heath	13.9
MNMTHLH068	Craig yr Allt	12.7
MNMTHLH066	Coed-y-Prior Common & surrounds	12.3
MNMTHLH065	Lower slopes of N. side of Bloreng	4.3
MNMTHLH019	Graig -y-cwm	4.0
TRFNLH023		4.0
MNMTHLH067	Farmland to W. of Llanover	3.7
MNMTHLH027	Ffrwd Wood & Graig Syddi	3.4
MNMTHLH026	Craig Ddu, Glebe Wood & Llanfoist Wood	3.0
MNMTHLH046	Farmland between Llanfoist and Bloreng	3.0
MNMTHLH020	Mynydd Garnlochdy	1.9
MNMTHLH063	Penperlleni - Llanover	0.9
MNMTHLH020	Mynydd Garnlochdy	0.7
MNMTHLH068	Craig yr Allt	0.5
MNMTHLH018	Bloreng (Calcareous grassland)	0.4
TRFNLH040		0.1
MNMTHLH045	W. side of Cwm Llanwenarth	0.1
MNMTHLH039	Govilon	0.1
MNMTHLH026	Craig Ddu, Glebe Wood & Llanfoist Wood	< 0.1
TRFNLH026		< 0.1
TRFNLH022		< 0.1
TRFNLH011		< 0.1
MNMTHLH123	Farmland surrounding Gilwern	< 0.1
TRFNLH012		< 0.1
MNMTHLH046	Farmland between Llanfoist and Bloreng	< 0.1
MNMTHLH067	Farmland to W. of Llanover	< 0.1

LCA 15: Visual and Sensory Aspect Layer

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
MNMTHVS028	Bloreng scarp slopes	66.3

LCA 15: Visual and Sensory Aspect Layer - continued

MNMTHVS003	The Bloreng	19.8
MNMTHVS042	Goytre Lowland	5.8
TRFNVS028	Twyn-Gwyn	3.9
MNMTHVS010	Mynydd Garnclochdy	3.4
MNMTHVS009	Garnclochdy Hills	0.7
TRFNVS033		0.1
TRFNVS015	Llanfihangel	< 0.1
TRFNVS027		< 0.1

LCA 15: Historic Landscape Aspect Layer

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
MNMTHHL044	Coed-y-Prior	43.0
MNMTHHL029	Blaenavon Hinterland	25.6
MNMTHHL055	Goetre	23.5
TRFNHL013	HL013 Cilgoegan and Lasgarn	4.0
MNMTHHL056	Mynydd Garnclochdy	3.7
TRFNHL014	HL014 Mynydd Garnclochdy	0.1
MNMTHHL061	Usk Valley	< 0.1
TRFNHL022	HL022 Mynydd y Garn-fawr	< 0.1
TRFNHL014	HL014 Mynydd Garnclochdy	< 0.1
TRFNHL021	HL021 Cefn Garnyrerw and Cwm Darrenfelen	< 0.1

LCA 15: Cultural Landscape Aspect Layer

UID	Aspect Area Name	% of LCA
MNMTHCL038	The Bloreng, Llanelly, Gilwern	95.7
TRFNCL913	Lowlands and Southern Ridges	4.0
MNMTHCL039	Monmouthshire & Brecon Canal	0.2
TRFNCL617	Uplands	0.1
TRFNCL960	Blaenafon World Heritage Landscape	< 0.1
MNMTHCL047	Lower Usk River Valley	< 0.1
TRFNCL263	Pontypool Park	< 0.1

APPENDIX 4: NOTES ON LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA BOUNDARIES

Landscape Character Area (LCA) boundaries follow LANDMAP 'Visual and Sensory' aspect area boundaries where possible. Where there are no suitable boundaries in the 'Visual and Sensory' aspect layer, other LANDMAP aspect area boundaries have been used. Only in a very few cases has it been necessary to draw short stretches of LCA boundaries which do not follow LANDMAP boundaries.

Some LCA boundaries are abrupt (e.g. many of those which follow the moorland line) whilst others are transitional. In the latter cases, a suitable line has been used within the area of transition.

LCA 1: TOWY VALLEY FOOTHILLS

Adjacent LCA	Boundary (general)
LCA 2: Y Mynydd Du	Moorland line
LCA 5: Western Usk Tributaries	Topographic aspect

LCA 2: Y MYNYDD DU

Adjacent LCA	Boundary (general)
LCA 1: Towy Valley Foothills	Moorland line
LCA 3: Fforest Fawr	Estate boundary wall and road
LCA 4: Waterfall Country and Southern Valleys	Moorland line
LCA 5: Western Usk Tributaries	Moorland line

LCA 3: FFOREST FAWR

Adjacent LCA	Boundary (general)
LCA 2: Y Mynydd Du	Estate boundary wall and road
LCA 4: Waterfall Country and Southern Valleys	Moorland line; forest boundary
LCA 5: Western Usk Tributaries	Moorland line; estate influences south of Crai
LCA 6: Middle Usk Valleys	Moorland line
LCA 7: Central Beacons	Topography (follows Taff Trail railway line)
LCA 8: Talybont and Taff Reservoir Valleys	Moorland line/ forest boundary

LCA 4: WATERFALL COUNTRY AND SOUTHERN VALLEYS

Adjacent LCA	Boundary (general)
LCA 2: Y Mynydd Du	Moorland line
LCA 3: Fforest Fawr	Moorland line; forest boundary

LCA 5: WESTERN USK TRIBUTARIES

Adjacent LCA	Boundary (general)
LCA 1: Towy Valley Foothills	Topographic aspect
LCA 2: Y Mynydd Du	Moorland line
LCA 3: Fforest Fawr	Moorland line; estate influences south of Crai
LCA 6: Middle Usk Valleys	Topography; field patterns; visual influence of Central Beacons and Usk Valley

LCA 6: MIDDLE USK VALLEYS

Adjacent LCA	Boundary (general)
LCA 3: Fforest Fawr	Moorland line; estate influences south of Crai
LCA 5: Western Usk Tributaries	Topography; field patterns; visual influence of Central Beacons and Usk Valley
LCA 7: Central Beacons	Moorland line
LCA 11: Eastern Usk Valley	Visual impact of Central Beacons northern scarp; topography- broadening of floodplain
LCA 14: Wye Valley Foothills	Topographic aspect

LCA 7: CENTRAL BEACONS

Adjacent LCA	Boundary (general)
LCA 3: Fforest Fawr	Topography (follows Taff Trail railway line)
LCA 6: Middle Usk Valleys	Moorland line
LCA 8: Talybont and Taff Reservoir Valleys	Moorland line/ forest boundary; topographic watershed; sense of being at the heart of the National Park.
LCA 11: Eastern Usk Valley	Moorland line

LCA 8: TALYBONT AND TAFF RESERVOIR VALLEYS

Adjacent LCA	Boundary (general)
LCA 3: Fforest Fawr	Moorland line/ forest boundary
LCA 7: Central Beacons	Moorland line/ forest boundary; topographic watershed; sense of being at the heart of the National Park.
LCA 9: Mynyddoedd Llangatwg and Llangynidr	Moorland line/ forest boundary; topographic watershed
LCA 11: Eastern Usk Valley	Moorland line; forest boundary; aspect and views of Usk Valley

LCA 9: MYNYDDOEDD LLANGATWG AND LLANGYNIDR

Adjacent LCA	Boundary (general)
LCA 8: Talybont and Taff Reservoir Valleys	Moorland line/ forest boundary; topographic watershed
LCA 10: Clydach Gorge	Topography- break of slope; change in settlement density and developed character
LCA 11: Eastern Usk Valley	Moorland line

LCA 10: CLYDACH GORGE

Adjacent LCA	Boundary (general)
LCA 9: Mynyddoedd Llangatwg and Llangynidr	Topography- break of slope; change in settlement density and developed character
LCA 11: Eastern Usk Valley	Change in settlement density and developed character; Topographic aspect and views; moorland line around Gilwern Hill
LCA 15: Bloreng Summit and Slopes	Topographic aspect and views; change in vegetation character

LCA 11 EASTERN USK VALLEY

Adjacent LCA	Boundary (general)
LCA 6: Middle Usk Valleys	Visual impact of Central Beacons northern scarp; topography- broadening of floodplain
LCA 7: Central Beacons	Moorland line
LCA 8: Talybont and Taff Reservoir Valleys	Moorland line; forest boundary; aspect and views of Usk Valley
LCA 9: Mynyddoedd Llangatwg and Llangynidr	Moorland line
LCA 10: Clydach Gorge	Change in settlement density and developed character; Topographic aspect and views; moorland line around Gilwern Hill
LCA 12: Skirrid and Sugar Loaf	Moorland line; visual dominance of Sugar Loaf
LCA 13: The Black Mountains	Moorland line; change in topography to north-south valleys
LCA 14: Wye Valley Foothills	Topography and views of the Usk valley
LCA 15: Bloreng Summit and Slopes	Topographic aspect and views; moorland vegetation

LCA 12 SKIRRID AND SUGAR LOAF

Adjacent LCA	Boundary (general)
LCA 11: Eastern Usk Valley	Moorland line; visual dominance of Sugar Loaf
LCA 13: The Black Mountains	Change in topography to north-south valleys; changes in visual dominance of Sugar loaf/ Skirrid.

LCA 13: THE BLACK MOUNTAINS

Adjacent LCA	Boundary
LCA 11: Eastern Usk Valley	Moorland line; change in topography to north-south valleys
LCA 12: Skirrid and Sugar Loaf	Change in topography to north-south valleys; changes in visual dominance of Sugar loaf/ Skirrid.
LCA 14: Wye Valley Foothills	Topography- break of slope at base of northern scarp

LCA 14: WYE VALLEY FOOTHILLS

Adjacent LCA	Boundary
LCA 6: Middle Usk Valley	Topographic aspect
LCA 11: Eastern Usk Valley	Topography and views of the Usk valley
LCA 13: The Black Mountains	Topography- break of slope at base of northern scarp

LCA 15: BLORENGE SUMMIT AND SLOPES

Adjacent LCA	Boundary
LCA 10: Clydach Gorge	Topographic aspect and views; change in vegetation character
LCA 11: Eastern Usk Valley	Topographic aspect and views; moorland vegetation

APPENDIX 5: PERCEPTUAL QUALITIES OF LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREAS

LCA 1: TOWY VALLEY FOOTHILLS

Perceptual qualities as assessed during fieldwork

Tranquillity

Contributing Factor	High/ Med/ Low	Notes	Detracting Factor	High/ Med/ Low	Notes
Openness of the landscape,	M	Varies between small scale and open views	Presence of other people,	L	
Perceived naturalness of the landscape,	M		Visibility of roads,	L	
Rivers,	M/H		Visibility of human development,	L	
Areas of low noise,	H		Road, train and urban area noise,	L	
Visibility of the sea.	L		Night time light pollution,	L	
Within BBNP Core dark skies area?	No	Little light pollution	Aircraft noise,	L	
			Military training noise.	L	

Relative Wildness

Contributing Factor	High/ Med/ Low	Notes
Sense of Remoteness/ Inaccessibility	M/H	Lots of lanes, but still feels inaccessible- roads steep and difficult, especially in winter.
A relative lack of human influence	L/M	
Sense of openness and exposure	M	On ridge tops
Sense of enclosure and isolation	M/H	Especially in valleys and woodlands
Sense of passing of time/ return to nature	L	But has strong sense of timelessness

Remoteness

Contributing factor	High/ Med/ Low	Notes
>2miles from tarmac road (definition used by BBNP Remote areas working group)	No	
Absence of roads/ transport routes	L	
Apparent absence of human habitation	L	
Landscape form and sense of disorientation	M/H	Higher in valley floors, where landmarks are not visible

LCA 2: Y MYNYDD DU**Perceptual qualities as assessed during fieldwork****Tranquillity**

Contributing Factor	High/ Med/ Low	Notes	Detracting Factor	High/ Med/ Low	Notes
Openness of the landscape,	H		Presence of other people,	L	
Perceived naturalness of the landscape,	H		Visibility of roads,	L	Occasional roads-moving vehicles sometimes visible
Rivers,	L		Visibility of human development,	L	But occurs in views outside LCA
Areas of low noise,	H		Road, train and urban area noise,	L	Localised road noise
Visibility of the sea.	L	Visible from summits on clear days	Night time light pollution,	L/M	
Within BBNP Core dark skies area?	Yes	Some light pollution in views to south	Aircraft noise,	L	? Occasional
			Military training noise.	L	? Occasional

Relative Wildness

Contributing Factor	High/ Med/ Low	Notes
Sense of Remoteness/ Inaccessibility	H	
A relative lack of human influence	H	
Sense of openness and exposure	H	
Sense of enclosure and isolation	L	L for enclosure, but often feel isolated in empty landscape.
Sense of passing of time/ return to nature	L	Strong sense of timelessness

Remoteness

Contributing factor	High/ Med/ Low	Notes
>2miles from tarmac road (definition used by BBNP Remote areas working group)	Yes	Largest area of 'remote from road'n land in NP in this LCA- some parts >4km from tarmac road.
Absence of roads/ transport routes	H	
Apparent absence of human habitation	H	
Landscape form and sense of disorientation	L	High in misty weather conditions

LCA 3: FFOREST FAWR**Perceptual qualities as assessed during fieldwork****Tranquillity**

Contributing Factor	High/ Med/ Low	Notes	Detracting Factor	High/ Med/ Low	Notes
Openness of the landscape,	H		Presence of other people,	L	
Perceived naturalness of the landscape,	H		Visibility of roads,	L	Localised impacts
Rivers,	L/M		Visibility of human development,	L	But occurs in views outside LCA esp. to south
Areas of low noise,	H		Road, train and urban area noise,	L	Localised impacts near roads
Visibility of the sea.	L		Night time light pollution,	L	
Within BBNP core dark skies area?	Yes		Aircraft noise,	L	? Occasional
			Military training noise.	L	? Occasional

Relative Wildness

Contributing Factor	High/ Med/ Low	Notes
Sense of Remoteness/ Inaccessibility	H	Less near main roads
A relative lack of human influence	H	
Sense of openness and exposure	H	
Sense of enclosure and isolation	L	
Sense of passing of time/ return to nature	H	

Remoteness

Contributing factor	High/ Med/ Low	Notes
>2miles from tarmac road (definition used by BBNP Remote areas working group)	Yes	2 separate areas
Absence of roads/ transport routes	H	2 main roads at edges of area. Minor road in centre, but visual impacts of roads generally limited as in valleys.
Apparent absence of human habitation	H	
Landscape form and sense of disorientation	M	Landmarks = hills in LCA and surroundings. Valleys feel more remote than hill summits and ridges, as less landscape context. High in misty weather conditions.

LCA 4: WATERFALL COUNTRY AND SOUTHERN VALLEYS**Perceptual qualities as assessed during fieldwork****Tranquillity**

Contributing Factor	High/ Med/ Low	Notes	Detracting Factor	High/ Med/ Low	Notes
Openness of the landscape,	M	Looking across/ along valleys. L in valleys	Presence of other people,	L	Locally H at major tourist sites and popular paths
Perceived naturalness of the landscape,	M/H	Waterfalls and woodland = natural	Visibility of roads,	L	Locally H
Rivers,	H	Good access to rivers	Visibility of human development,	M/H	e.g. quarries, towns to south, wind turbines to S etc.
Areas of low noise,	H	But localised impacts from roads. Waterfalls are noisy!	Road, train and urban area noise,	L/M	Locally affected by roads
Visibility of the sea.	L		Night time light pollution,	?M	From roads and towns to south
Within BBNP Core dark skies area?	Small parts		Aircraft noise,	L	? occasional
			Military training noise.	L	

Relative Wildness

Contributing Factor	High/ Med/ Low	Notes
Sense of Remoteness/ Inaccessibility	L/M	Sense of remoteness higher in areas accessible on foot rather than by car.
A relative lack of human influence	H/M/L	M/H looking north M/L looking south
Sense of openness and exposure	M/H	Highest on higher land
Sense of enclosure and isolation	M/H	Highest in valleys
Sense of passing of time/ return to nature	M	e.g. plant colonisation of quarries. Much of area has strong sense of timelessness.

Remoteness

Contributing factor	High/ Med/ Low	Notes
>2miles from tarmac road (definition used by BBNP Remote areas working group)	No	
Absence of roads/transport routes	L	
Apparent absence of human habitation	M/L	Awareness of influences beyond NP boundary, because of landform (esp. in south) and road system.
Landscape form and sense of disorientation	M/L	

LCA 5: WESTERN USK TRIBUTARIES**Perceptual qualities as assessed during fieldwork****Tranquillity**

Contributing Factor	High/ Med/ Low	Notes	Detracting Factor	High/ Med/ Low	Notes
Openness of the landscape,	M/H		Presence of other people,	L	
Perceived naturalness of the landscape,	M	Pockets of woodland and backdrop of moors, but feels managed	Visibility of roads,	L/M	Often hidden behind banks. Local impacts from A40
Rivers,	L/M	Generally hidden by landform	Visibility of human development,	L/M	Villages in N. Mast on Yr Allt prominent
Areas of low noise,	H		Road, train and urban area noise,	L	Locally M/ H near A40
Visibility of the sea.	L		Night time light pollution,	L	
Within BBNP Core dark skies area?	Small part at margin		Aircraft noise,	L	? Occasional
			Military training noise.	L	? Occasional

Relative Wildness

Contributing Factor	High/ Med/ Low	Notes
Sense of Remoteness/ Inaccessibility	L/M	
A relative lack of human influence	M	
Sense of openness and exposure	M	Esp. on high land
Sense of enclosure and isolation	M	Esp. in valleys
Sense of passing of time/ return to nature	L	Strong sense of timelessness

Remoteness

Contributing factor	High/ Med/ Low	Notes
>2miles from tarmac road (definition used by BBNP Remote areas working group)	No	
Absence of roads/transport routes	M/L	
Apparent absence of human habitation	M	
Landscape form and sense of disorientation	M	Landmark peaks not always visible from valleys

LCA 6: MIDDLE USK VALLEYS**Perceptual qualities as assessed during fieldwork****Tranquillity**

Contributing Factor	High/ Med/ Low	Notes	Detracting Factor	High/ Med/ Low	Notes
Openness of the landscape,	M/H		Presence of other people,	M	Varies within LCA, Brecon busy.
Perceived naturalness of the landscape,	M		Visibility of roads,	M	Major and minor roads
Rivers,	M	Locally H. Riparian trees visible as ribbons thro' landscape	Visibility of human development,	M/H	Esp. around Brecon
Areas of low noise,	M	Locally H, esp. around A40 and Brecon	Road, train and urban area noise,	M	Locally H around A40 and A470.
Visibility of the sea.	L		Night time light pollution,	M	Lights from settlements and roads
Within BBNP Core dark skies area?	No		Aircraft noise,	L	? Occasional
			Military training noise.	L	? Occasional

Relative Wildness

Contributing Factor	High/ Med/ Low	Notes
Sense of Remoteness/ Inaccessibility	M/L	
A relative lack of human influence	M/L	
Sense of openness and exposure	M	
Sense of enclosure and isolation	M/L	
Sense of passing of time/ return to nature	M	Some of LCA has strong sense of timelessness, Elsewhere L due to modern development

Remoteness

Contributing factor	High/ Med/ Low	Notes
>2miles from tarmac road (definition used by BBNP Remote areas working group)	No	
Absence of roads/transport routes	L/M	In parts, lanes hidden by hedgebanks
Apparent absence of human habitation	L/M	Peripheries of LCA feel more remote.
Landscape form and sense of disorientation	L	Central Beacons provide visual reference

LCA 7: CENTRAL BEACONS**Perceptual qualities as assessed during fieldwork****Tranquillity**

Contributing Factor	High/ Med/ Low	Notes	Detracting Factor	High/ Med/ Low	Notes
Openness of the landscape,	H		Presence of other people,	H/M	Concentration on summits and main paths
Perceived naturalness of the landscape,	H		Visibility of roads,	L	Main roads at edges
Rivers,	L		Visibility of human development,	L	Brecon in distance from summit. Southern towns visible from S of LCA
Areas of low noise,	H		Road, train and urban area noise,	L	
Visibility of the sea.	L		Night time light pollution,	L	
Within BBNP Core dark skies area?	Yes		Aircraft noise,	L	Occasionally high from helicopters
			Military training noise.	L	? Occasional

Relative Wildness

Contributing Factor	High/ Med/ Low	Notes
Sense of Remoteness/ Inaccessibility	H	
A relative lack of human influence	H	
Sense of openness and exposure	H	
Sense of enclosure and isolation	L	
Sense of passing of time/ return to nature	L	Strong sense of timelessness and changelessness in the landscape

Remoteness

Contributing factor	High/ Med/ Low	Notes
>2miles from tarmac road (definition used by BBNP Remote areas working group)	Yes	Larger area in centre of LCA, smaller area in south of LCA
Absence of roads/ transport routes	H	Roads at edges of LCA
Apparent absence of human habitation	H	
Landscape form and sense of disorientation	M	H in misty conditions. When clear, disorientation is often greatest in valleys as landmarks hidden by landform.

LCA 8: TALYBONT AND TAFF RESERVOIR VALLEYS**Perceptual qualities as assessed during fieldwork****Tranquillity**

Contributing Factor	High/ Med/ Low	Notes	Detracting Factor	High/ Med/ Low	Notes
Openness of the landscape,	H/L	Views across = H In forests = L	Presence of other people,	H	Lots of carparks, trails etc.
Perceived naturalness of the landscape,	L	BUT water and trees are naturalistic	Visibility of roads,	L/M	A470 and minor roads visible from some areas
Rivers,	L	But do have tranquil lakes	Visibility of human development,	H	Forests and reservoirs
Areas of low noise,	H	Local influence of A470	Road, train and urban area noise,	L	Locally H eg by A470
Visibility of the sea.	L		Night time light pollution,	M	Darker in N, More light pollution from beyond NP to S
Within BBNP Core dark skies area?	Approx. half	In north of LCA	Aircraft noise,	L	? Occasional
			Military training noise.	L	

Relative Wildness

Contributing Factor	High/ Med/ Low	Notes
Sense of Remoteness/ Inaccessibility	H/L	H at N end L in S, nearest towns
A relative lack of human influence	L	Forests planted, and clearly managed
Sense of openness and exposure	L	But greater on higher land which is not planted.
Sense of enclosure and isolation	H	Few long views from within forests
Sense of passing of time/ return to nature	L	Aware of changes in landscape e.g. reservoir construction

Remoteness

Contributing factor	High/ Med/ Low	Notes
>2miles from tarmac road (definition used by BBNP Remote areas working group)	No	
Absence of roads/ transport routes	L	Moorland ridges feel more remote and inaccessible by road.
Apparent absence of human habitation	H	Though views out to S contain views of settlements
Landscape form and sense of disorientation	H	Due to forests blocking views and creating sense of disorientation

LCA 9: MYNYDDOEDD LLANGATWG AND LLANGYNIDR**Perceptual qualities as assessed during fieldwork****Tranquillity**

Contributing Factor	High/ Med/ Low	Notes	Detracting Factor	High/ Med/ Low	Notes
Openness of the landscape,	H		Presence of other people,	L	
Perceived naturalness of the landscape,	H		Visibility of roads,	L	
Rivers,	L		Visibility of human development,	M	Pylons etc. to S, also quarries
Areas of low noise,	H		Road, train and urban area noise,	M/L	Occasional filming reducing tranquillity
Visibility of the sea.	L		Night time light pollution,	?	? Glow to south and lighting on A686
Within BBNP Core dark skies area?	Part (in west)		Aircraft noise,	L	? occasional
			Military training noise.	L	? occasional

Relative Wildness

Contributing Factor	High/ Med/ Low	Notes
Sense of Remoteness/ Inaccessibility	H/M	Relatively easy to access, but feels remote once you're there.
A relative lack of human influence	H	Though views to pylons, and local views to quarries
Sense of openness and exposure	H	
Sense of enclosure and isolation	L	
Sense of passing of time/ return to nature	M	Abandoned quarries reverting to nature

Remoteness

Contributing factor	High/ Med/ Low	Notes
>2miles from tarmac road (definition used by BBNP Remote areas working group)	Yes- small area in W	
Absence of roads/ transport routes	H/M	Local influence of B4560
Apparent absence of human habitation	H	
Landscape form and sense of disorientation	M	H in mist- difficult to orientate without landmarks

LCA 10: CLYDACH GORGE**Perceptual qualities as assessed during fieldwork****Tranquillity**

Contributing Factor	High/ Med/ Low	Notes	Detracting Factor	High/ Med/ Low	Notes
Openness of the landscape,	L	Medium on hill tops	Presence of other people,	H	Cars and buildings
Perceived naturalness of the landscape,	M	Landform and trees natural	Visibility of roads,	H	A465
Rivers,	H		Visibility of human development,	H	Very high, especially pylons
Areas of low noise,	L		Road, train and urban area noise,	H	Noise from A465 rebounds up gorge sides
Visibility of the sea.	L		Night time light pollution,	H	Cars, buildings and streetlighting
Within BBNP Core dark skies area?	No		Aircraft noise,	L	? Occasional
			Military training noise.	L	

Relative Wildness

Contributing Factor	High/ Med/ Low	Notes
Sense of Remoteness/ Inaccessibility	L	
A relative lack of human influence	L	
Sense of openness and exposure	L/M	M on higher land
Sense of enclosure and isolation	M	Enclosure by landform, woodlands give some sense of isolation.
Sense of passing of time/ return to nature	M	Locally high on re-colonising spoil tips, and abandoned quarries and other industrial sites. Woodlands have strong sense of timelessness.

Remoteness

Contributing factor	High/ Med/ Low	Notes
>2miles from tarmac road (definition used by BBNP Remote areas working group)	No	
Absence of roads/ transport routes	L	
Apparent absence of human habitation	L	
Landscape form and sense of disorientation	L	

LCA 11 EASTERN USK VALLEY**Perceptual qualities as assessed during fieldwork****Tranquillity**

Contributing Factor	High/ Med/ Low	Notes	Detracting Factor	High/ Med/ Low	Notes
Openness of the landscape,	M	Broad valley, but enclosed with relatively steep sides	Presence of other people,	M	Highest in settlements, lowest in tributary valleys
Perceived naturalness of the landscape,	L/M	Farmed landscape, but still has influence of moorland above	Visibility of roads,	M	Lowest in tributary valleys
Rivers,	H		Visibility of human development,	H	Settled landscape; human development not necessarily negative
Areas of low noise,	M	Localised influences from roads and settlements	Road, train and urban area noise,	M/L	
Visibility of the sea.	L		Night time light pollution,	M	
Within BBNP Core dark skies area?	Very small area	Small part included in west of LCA	Aircraft noise,	L	Locally High
			Military training noise.	L	

Relative Wildness

Contributing Factor	High/ Med/ Low	Notes
Sense of Remoteness/ Inaccessibility	L	
A relative lack of human influence	L	
Sense of openness and exposure	L	
Sense of enclosure and isolation	L	Locally M or H, especially in tributary valleys
Sense of passing of time/ return to nature	L	

Remoteness

Contributing factor	High/ Med/ Low	Notes
>2miles from tarmac road (definition used by BBNP Remote areas working group)	No	
Absence of roads/ transport routes	L	
Apparent absence of human habitation	L	
Landscape form and sense of disorientation	L	

LCA 12 SKIRRID AND SUGAR LOAF**Perceptual qualities as assessed during fieldwork****Tranquillity**

Contributing Factor	High/ Med/ Low	Notes	Detracting Factor	High/ Med/ Low	Notes
Openness of the landscape,	M/H	Open on summits. Valleys rel. wide	Presence of other people,	M/L	Paths busy, also views of towns
Perceived naturalness of the landscape,	M	Woodland, moorland over much of LCA	Visibility of roads,	M	Main roads locally visible
Rivers,	L	Not wide or visually prominent	Visibility of human development,	M/H	e.g. Abergavenny, Gilwern, A-roads, railway etc,
Areas of low noise,	M	Summits quieter than valleys	Road, train and urban area noise,	M/L	Noise impacts localised
Visibility of the sea.	L		Night time light pollution,	M	Lights from Abergavenny, other villages, roads etc.
Within BBNP Core dark skies area?	No		Aircraft noise,	L	? Occasional
			Military training noise.	L	

Relative Wildness

Contributing Factor	High/ Med/ Low	Notes
Sense of Remoteness/ Inaccessibility	L	Easy access from roads and towns
A relative lack of human influence	L/M/H	Variable across the area
Sense of openness and exposure	M/H	Highest on summits
Sense of enclosure and isolation	M/H	Highest in valleys
Sense of passing of time/ return to nature	M	Heightened by awareness of proximity to towns

Remoteness

Contributing factor	High/ Med/ Low	Notes
>2miles from tarmac road (definition used by BBNP Remote areas working group)	No	
Absence of roads/ transport routes	L	
Apparent absence of human habitation	L	
Landscape form and sense of disorientation	L	Distinctive landforms provide orientation. Lower in misty weather.

LCA 13: THE BLACK MOUNTAINS**Perceptual qualities as assessed during fieldwork****Tranquillity**

Contributing Factor	High/ Med/ Low	Notes	Detracting Factor	High/ Med/ Low	Notes
Openness of the landscape,	H/M/L	H on tops, L/M in valleys	Presence of other people,	L	
Perceived naturalness of the landscape,	H	Esp. moorland	Visibility of roads,	L	
Rivers,	L/M	Most aware of rivers when in valleys	Visibility of human development,	L	Only farms and occasional roads
Areas of low noise,	H		Road, train and urban area noise,	L	
Visibility of the sea.	L		Night time light pollution,	L	
Within BBNP Core dark skies area?	No	BUT few sources of light pollution in LCA	Aircraft noise,	L	? occasional
			Military training noise.	L	? occasional

Relative Wildness

Contributing Factor	High/ Med/ Low	Notes
Sense of Remoteness/ Inaccessibility	H	Particularly on ridges
A relative lack of human influence	H	
Sense of openness and exposure	H	On ridges
Sense of enclosure and isolation	M	In valleys
Sense of passing of time/ return to nature	L	

Remoteness

Contributing factor	High/ Med/ Low	Notes
>2miles from tarmac road (definition used by BBNP Remote areas working group)	Yes	Remote Area in centre of LCA
Absence of roads/ transport routes	H	
Apparent absence of human habitation	H	
Landscape form and sense of disorientation	H	Flat tops to landform can make orientation difficult, especially in poor visibility.

LCA 14: WYE VALLEY FOOTHILLS**Perceptual qualities as assessed during fieldwork****Tranquillity**

Contributing Factor	High/ Med/ Low	Notes	Detracting Factor	High/ Med/ Low	Notes
Openness of the landscape,	M	Changes constantly. More open on ridge tops; less on valley sides	Presence of other people,	M	Hay and other towns and rec. centres
Perceived naturalness of the landscape,	M		Visibility of roads,	L	Localised impacts eg A479 and Hay
Rivers,	M	Wye visible in some parts of LCA. Also small streams and Llangorse lake	Visibility of human development,	L	Locally high within settlements
Areas of low noise,	M	Generally quiet, but local influences from roads, towns, gliders..	Road, train and urban area noise,	L	Locally high within settlements
Visibility of the sea.	L		Night time light pollution,	?M	Local influence from Hay and lights on roads
Within BBNP Core dark skies area?	No	BUT much of area probably not affected by light pollution	Aircraft noise,	L	But occasional jets and gliders
			Military training noise.	L	? Occasional

Relative Wildness

Contributing Factor	High/ Med/ Low	Notes
Sense of Remoteness/ Inaccessibility	M	Narrow lanes feel inaccessible esp. in winter
A relative lack of human influence	L	
Sense of openness and exposure	M/H	Highest on ridges
Sense of enclosure and isolation	M/H	Highest in valleys
Sense of passing of time/ return to nature	L	Much of LCA has strong sense of timelessness

Remoteness

Contributing factor	High/ Med/ Low	Notes
>2miles from tarmac road (definition used by BBNP Remote areas working group)	No	
Absence of roads/ transport routes	L	
Apparent absence of human habitation	L	
Landscape form and sense of disorientation	L/M	Valleys cut-off visually as landmarks not visible

LCA 15: BLORENGE SUMMIT AND SLOPES**Perceptual qualities as assessed during fieldwork****Tranquillity**

Contributing Factor	High/ Med/ Low	Notes	Detracting Factor	High/ Med/ Low	Notes
Openness of the landscape,	L/H	L on valley floor +sides. H on summits	Presence of other people,	L	Concentration on summit and around Goytre wharf. Otherwise feels v. empty
Perceived naturalness of the landscape,	H		Visibility of roads,	L	Distant views of A4042 in E part
Rivers,	M	Canal in E part of LCA	Visibility of human development,	L	Localised views of large buildings E of NP boundary.
Areas of low noise,	H		Road, train and urban area noise,	L	
Visibility of the sea.	L		Night time light pollution,	L	Localised impacts of lights from settlements and roads outside NP
Within BBNP Core dark skies area?	No	Glow from SW minimised by landform	Aircraft noise,	L	? Occasional
			Military training noise.	L	

Relative Wildness

Contributing Factor	High/ Med/ Low	Notes
Sense of Remoteness/ Inaccessibility	H	Lanes v narrow and steep. Feels remote esp. in winter. Much of area not accessible by vehicle
A relative lack of human influence	M	Valley slopes + floor managed through farming.
Sense of openness and exposure	M/H	Highest on summit/ ridge
Sense of enclosure and isolation	M/H	Highest in valley/ slopes, and in sunken lanes and woodland
Sense of passing of time/ return to nature	L	Landscape feels very unchanging

Remoteness

Contributing factor	High/ Med/ Low	Notes
>2miles from tarmac road (definition used by BBNP Remote areas working group)	No	
Absence of roads/ transport routes	M	Parts have no road access
Apparent absence of human habitation	H	
Landscape form and sense of disorientation	H	Views from roads often limited by vegetation so easy to get disorientated. Bloreng provides landmark on clear days.

APPENDIX 6: REFERENCES AND SOURCES OF FURTHER INFORMATION

Publications

Brecon Beacons National Park Authority (2010) *Management Plan 2010-2015*

Brecon Beacons National Park Authority/ Fforest Fawr Geopark (undated leaflet) *Brynaman and the Black Mountain*

CADW (1998 + 2001) *Register of Landscapes of Outstanding Historic Interest in Wales Parts I and II* (And associated historic landscape characterisations undertaken by relevant Archaeological Trusts)

Council of Europe (2002) *European Landscape Convention* Council of Europe

Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage (2002) *Landscape Character Assessment: Guidance for England and Scotland*

Countryside Council for Wales (2006) *A Statement on Natural Beauty, May 2006.*

Jackson et. Al. (2008) *Tranquillity Mapping: Developing a Robust Methodology for Planning Support*

Land Use Consultants for CCW (2009) *Wales Tranquil Areas Map*

Leighton (2012) *The Western Brecon Beacons: The archaeology of Mynydd Du and Fforest Fawr* RCAHMW

Natural England (2009) *Green Infrastructure Guidance*

Natural England (2011) *Guidance on Assessing Landscapes for Designation as National Park or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in England*

Research Box et.al. (2009) *Experiencing Landscapes: Capturing the 'Cultural Services' and 'Experiential Qualities' of Landscape* Natural England

Welsh Assembly Government (2005) *Technical Advice Note 8: Renewable Energy*

Maps

Ordnance Survey Explorer Maps OL12 and OL13

Ordnance Survey Pathfinder Maps 159, 160, 161, 171

British Geological Survey 1:50,000 Map Sheets 197, 212, 213, 214, 230, 231, 232

Cassini Maps reprints of OS Old Series(1834), Revised New Series (1901)and Popular Edition (1923)

Internet Resources

LANDMAP:

www.landmap.ccw.gov.uk/

Fforest Fawr Geopark:

www.fforestfawrgeopark.org.uk/

Blaenavon Industrial Landscape World Heritage Site Management Plan:

www.visitblaenavon.co.uk/en/WorldHeritageSite/Documents.aspx

Cambrian Cave Registry:

www.cambriancavingcouncil.org.uk/cave_registry.htm

Countryside Council for Wales (information on designations etc.):

www.ccw.gov.uk

UK National Ecosystem Assessment:

www.uknea.unep-wcmc.org/

Natural England information on Green Infrastructure:

<http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/planningdevelopment/greeninfrastructure/default.aspx>

Brecon Beacons National Park Data Sets

Core Dark Skies Area

Remoteness from Roads

Rights of Ways

Current planning applications beyond the southern boundary of the National Park

Built Heritage Designations

Ecology and Designations

Hydrology

Phase I Habitat Survey

Habitat Vulnerability

Other Documents

CCW (Ongoing) Wales Landscape Character Assessment (draft)

Monmouthshire Landscape Character Assessment

Powys Landscape Character Assessment

Merthyr Tydfil Landscape Character Assessment

Paul Sinnadurai: Senior Ecologist, Conservation Services Brecon Beacons National Park Authority (2005) *A review of current literature on the evidence for climate change and its implications for the Brecon Beacons National Park*

Ecologists of the National Parks of England, Scotland and Wales (2008) *Britain's National Parks as test beds for ecological mitigation and adaptation to the impacts of climate change – an agenda for action*