

Disturbed Areas

Location

This sub type is found in three small areas north of Dalton-in-Furness.

Key Characteristics

- Undulating glacial till
- Restored mine working landscape
- Patchy woodland cover; small areas of marsh, ponds and reed beds
- Abandoned mine buildings, old limestone quarries and reclaimed agricultural land

Physical character

Glacial till and mineral veins on Carboniferous limestone underpin this sub type. The hummocky land rises up to 130m AOD. It has been created by iron mine workings superimposed on undulating land. Mining has left an irregular landform strewn with spoil heaps and steep sided depressions containing ponds.

Land cover and land use

This disturbed hummocky land is fast becoming naturalised and taking on a bosky appearance, although the new man made landforms still dominate the character of the sub type. The sides of the spoil heaps and depressions are commonly covered by a mixed native scrub of willow, alder, hawthorn, gorse, elder, bramble and rose. Several pits have been filled in with refuse and reclaimed for agriculture. Grazed pasture can be found between these semi natural habitats. Small patches of marsh occur in the lower areas along with ponds and reed beds.

Woodland cover is patchy. Ash and birch are colonizing land around Burlington Pits and ash and sycamore can be found around Lineal Moor.

Views tend to be intermittent and limited by the hummocky terrain. The hilltops offer long views across the coast.

Ecology

A rich diversity of semi-natural habitats forms a valuable wildlife refuge bounded by pasture or built up areas. Habitats include open water, scrub, woodland, carr and roadside verges. Ponds are steep sided and deep with little emergent vegetation. Shallow ponds have been created to improve the habitat for fish. Between the ponds there is willow/alder carr, hawthorn scrub and patches of unimproved, herb rich grassland which was formerly found in surrounding fields. Birds using the ponds include mallard, moorhen, common and black-headed gull. Insects such as butterflies, dragonflies and damselflies also occur.

Former mine workings and quarries and steep banks support stands of limestone grassland, together with areas of gorse and hawthorn scrub. Damp hollows hold stands of rush pasture, reed bed and wet woodland in the form of willow carr.

Historic and cultural character

These areas have a heavy industrial mining heritage. This is celebrated through Norman Nicholson's poetry of Millom. Percy Kelly, a local artist painted around Hodbarrow iron mines and also the works at Millom. This is an industrial landscape with evidence of former iron mining and limestone quarrying. Little evidence of pre 19th century field patterns.

Perceptual character

The unity and identity of this landscape is derived from the disturbance by mining which has produced a distinctive landform and land cover. The industrial scars are softened by the colonizing vegetation. They give a strong sense of both the pre and post industrial character associated with nearby quarries and towns.

Sensitive characteristics or features

Emerging semi natural habitats and recently colonised land support rich biodiversity that is sensitive to changes in land management.

Vision

These areas will be conserved and enhanced to retain their industrial legacy and wildlife interest. Recreational demands such as fishing will be carefully managed. Other areas which are predominantly working landscapes will be enhanced and restored through the improved management of key features and the integration of high quality development respecting traditional character. In order to achieve this, field patterns and woodland cover will be strengthened, field enlargement will be resisted and the intrusion of modern farm buildings will be reduced. There will be little capacity to accommodate further development; therefore, harsh development edges will be softened and peripheral development will be integrated within a stronger landscape framework.

Changes in the Landscape

Over the next 10 – 20 years this landscape could be subject to the following changes or issues:

Management Practices

- Activities such as tipping and agricultural reclamation can damage character of these areas.

Development

- Some areas are subject to development pressures, often linked to village expansion. There is some loss of hedges and replacement with intrusive fences.

Access and Recreation

- Given their proximity to urban centres these landscapes can provide opportunities for quiet enjoyment and other recreational activities. However the areas are susceptible to damage from inappropriate activities, such as motorbike scrambling,

Guidelines

Natural Features

- Conserve and enhance the diversity of natural habitats including scrub woodland, open water, marsh and herb-rich grassland. This may include exclusion of livestock, avoidance of agricultural improvements such as liming, herbicide and fertiliser applications, maintenance of a high water table and controlling access and recreation use.
- Resist land filling or tipping within pits and quarries of historical, ecological or geological importance.
- Ensure where possible that 'linked networks' of vegetation are created using native trees and shrubs to enhance their nature conservation value and their use as 'ecological corridors'.
- Improve and manage facilities for recreation such as existing car parks in appropriate rural vernacular and using high quality durable materials.

Cultural Features

- Encourage retention, restoration and traditional maintenance of hedgerows.
- Increase planting of native broadleaf trees as features within hedgerows.
- Encourage retention and restoration of stone walls, traditional gate posts and features on a whole farm basis.

Development

- Encourage retention of existing traditional stone buildings, gate posts, planting on garths, around buildings, along farm access roads and main entrances.
- Reduce the impact of any large scale new farm buildings by sensitive siting, breaking down mass, choice of sympathetic colours and non-reflective finishes and landscaping using traditional hedgerows and woodland screen planting.
- Resist proposals to reclaim former mining areas for development.

Access and Recreation

- Improve the network of public rights of ways and encourage the quiet enjoyment of these areas by sensitively upgrading routes with appropriate surfacing, better waymarking, improved gates and gaps (that can restrict unauthorised vehicular activities), better interpretation and enhancement of viewpoints.