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Appendices

DEVON STRUCTURE PLAN 2001 TO 2016 - EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM - ADOPTED OCT 2004

Appendix I: Landscape Character Zones - Key Characteristic Features

See Para 4.6 to 4.9, Policy CO1 and Map 5 (page 53).

Landscape Character Zones - Eastern Devon

1. Greensand Ridges

- Long greensand ridges including heath and forestry, beech hedges and avenues.
- Plateau landscape on ridge tops which includes common land, parliamentary enclosures, airfields and communications structures.
- Steep valleys between ridges enclosing a varied farming landscape, with woodland, hedgerow trees and springline flushes.
- Historic farm buildings utilising local materials.
- Springline settlements.

2. Coastal Chalk Plateaux

- The only chalk outcrop in Devon, and the most westerly in England, giving spectacular cliffs, local building materials (including Beer stone and flint) and chalk grassland.
- Flat plateau, more arable than surrounding Zones, exposed to salt-laden winds.
- Plateau dissected by deep, branching coastal combes with historic settlements.
- Shelterbelts, including species such as Monterey pine and larch.
- Varied underlying geology creating dramatic changes in cliff scenery in close proximity as well as dramatic landslips.

3. Axe and Otter Valleys

- Lowland rivers with noticeable flood plains and tightly meandering courses, unusual in most of Devon's major rivers.
- Shingle or pebble bars across both estuaries, both backed by ecologically important salt marsh.

- Historic settlements sited at old crossing points, just above the flood plain.
- Drainage channels.

4. Pebble Bed Heaths

- Extensive area of lowland heath.
- Popular recreational resource with fine panoramic views.
- Distinctive geology of Bunter Pebble Beds influencing vegetation, land-use and building materials.
- Backdrop to the Exe Estuary.
- Important archaeological features.

Landscape Character Zones - Central Devon

5. Exeter and Estuary Fringe

- Internationally important estuary for waders, wildfowl and sea birds, with associated dunes, marshes, mud and salt flats and a landscape which changes with the tides and seasons.
- Intensively farmed landscape with good quality soils and large fields.
- Few hedgerow trees, farm woods or shelterbelts.
- Glimpsed views of estuary or city of Exeter.
- Historic settlements associated with the estuary.
- Parkland and estate planting.
- The historic city of Exeter, marked by green corridors and inter-relationship with its countryside, especially along the Exe corridor.

6. Exe Valley and Environs

- Landscape dominated by dramatic topography.
- Extensive woodlands flanking the valley, contrasting with the flat and open valley floor.
- Tree-lined River Exe, fast-flowing in the north, weirs and wide tranquil stretches in the south.
- Picturesque historic villages on or near the river; thatched cottages hidden in side valleys.
- Surrounding hilly terrain.

7. Bampton and Beer Downs

- Relatively flat hilltop areas dominated by large farms with modern barns.
- Few trees on the hilltops but dense beech and holly hedges.
- Some isolated beech plantations in the higher areas.
- Woodland on fringe areas, especially in the valleys.
- Remote area unaffected by through routes.

8. Mid Devon Farming Belt

- Flat or rolling mixed farmland with distinctive red soils.
- Relatively few woodlands, meaning hedgerow trees are an important landscape element.
- Major road and rail corridors; also the route of transmission lines.
- Heavily settled, by Devon standards, with many villages and scattered farms and a number of large towns.
- Cob and thatch buildings.

9. Teign Valley

- Distinctive, often intimate, valley sandwiched between the highlands of Dartmoor and Great Haldon.
- Valley dominated by woodland on steep, sometimes rocky flanks.
- Small scale, irregular field pattern with strong hedgebanks.
- Small villages tucked into side valleys away from the main valley.

- Tree-lined river course with stone bridges, weirs, mills and daffodil woods.
- ## 10. Haldon Ridge
- Isolated high ridge forming a dominant backdrop to the Exe Estuary and Exeter, but also to the eastern edge of Dartmoor.
 - Extensive coniferous forest area covering former lowland heath.
 - Important areas of broad-leaved woodland on ridge flanks.
 - Forest, open glades, heathland and pasture providing a combination of valuable habitats.
 - Major trunk roads dissect the area.

Landscape Character Zones - Culm Measures

11. Witheridge-Rackenford Moor

- High, undulating series of ridges.
- Extensive views north and south.
- Mosaic of improved and unimproved grassland with generally straight-edged fields, often with beech hedges.
- Distinctive tree groups, generally beech and pine.
- Outgrown hedgerows often forming skyline features.
- Some small woodlands in sheltered locations and larger conifer plantations.
- North Devon Link A361 cuts across the Zone.

12. High Culm Ridges

- Exposed broad ridges with few trees except for isolated trees and clumps and some conifer plantations.
- Pastoral landscape with regular, rectangular fields and hedges.
- Scattered farmsteads, hamlets and high villages.
- Prominent landmarks of churches and chapels, also aeriels, pylons and hilltop farm buildings.
- High concentrations of species-rich grasslands.
- Wide views.

13. Taw and Torridge River Systems

- Natural river form, tree-lined banks and associated water features.
- Substantial woodland, broadleaved and coniferous, emphasising the distinctive landform and creating enclosure.
- Open valley floor with pastoral and sometimes parkland character.
- Roads, railways and bridges along the length of the valleys, few routes across the valley floors, steep wooded winding routes out of the valleys.
- High villages and farms overlooking the valleys.

14. Hartland and Atlantic Coast Interior

- Storm-lashed coastline with salt-laden winds influencing vegetation far inland.
- Spectacular geological cliff formations, including coastal waterfalls.
- Severely deformed hedgerow trees and stunted woodlands in coastal valleys.
- Clustered hamlets and regularly spaced sizeable historic villages.
- Rectilinear field pattern.
- Poorly drained rough pasture, commons and conifer blocks.

15. Broadbury and Western Devon Ridges

- Vast catchment area of streams and rivers, including Roadford Reservoir.
- High rainfall, heavy soils, wet pastures, unimproved grassland.
- High land dominated by views of Dartmoor and, more distantly, Bodmin Moor.
- Extensive coniferous plantations with pockets of wet pasture and secondary woodland.
- Individual hedgerow trees and oak-lined field boundaries.
- Sparsely populated "frontier" area.
- General features interrupted by softer, lush river valleys.

16. Tedburn St. Mary Area

- Panoramic views north over red Devon, south over the Teign, Haldon and the Exe Estuary and east over Exeter.
- Hilly landform backed by Dartmoor skyline.
- Dense network of narrow winding lanes with high hedgebanks.
- Secluded thatched cottages hidden in wooded valleys.
- Numerous small woodlands and hedgerow trees.

Landscape Character Zones - Northern Devon

17. Lundy

- Mostly granite tableland towering high above the sea.
- Exposed and open rolling heathland.
- Stone walls and wire fences.
- Immense seascapes.
- Lack of tree cover.
- Wind and sea swell.

18. Clovelly Coast

- High cliffs, sometimes unstable, blanketed by woodland and scrub.
- Narrow combes, thickly wooded; the woodland of ecological importance, spilling out over the adjacent farmland.
- Undulating mixed farmland on cliff tops.
- Picturesque settlements in larger combes.
- Wide seascapes over an extensive bay.

19. Taw-Torridge Estuary

- Vast estuary of two river systems.
- Extensive flat land including salt marshes, sand and mudflats, dune systems and slacks, historic open field, beaches.
- Urban waterfronts and historic estuary settlements.
- Important ecological habitats.

20. North Devon Downs

- Rounded, open downland, divided by three significant wooded river valleys.
- Large fields, closely trimmed hedgebanks.
- Wind-trimmed tree groups and occasional stunted hedgerow trees.
- Parkland scenery, especially in the east.
- Secluded hamlets and farms in valley bottoms.
- Coastal down headlands in west enclosing broad sandy bays.
- Picturesque cob and thatch coastal villages.

21. Exmoor and North Devon High Coast

- Geological strata shaping distinctive jagged features and headland landmarks.
- High cliffs rising in height to “hogsback” formations in the east.
- Hidden inlets and rocky coves.
- Steep, dramatic wooded combes with waterfalls and scree.
- Distinctive settlement pattern in sheltered combes - linear forms.
- Archaeological interest.
- Valuable ecological habitats.

22. Exmoor Fringe

- Foreground landscape to high lands of Exmoor.
- Beech hedges, occasionally grown out.
- Crossed by steep, wooded valleys.
- Drove roads and tracks leading to and from the high moor.
- Patchwork of fields.
- Individual hilltop tree features.

23. Exmoor Upland

- Extensive grass and heather moorland.
- Broad, sweeping landforms.
- Distinctive beech hedgebanks, some stone faced.
- Old oak coppice woodlands, especially associated with valleys, rivers and upland streams.
- Fast - flowing upland streams cutting across open moorland.
- Extensive views.

Landscape Character Zones - Southern Devon

24. Bovey Basin

- Largely flat river basin ringed by hills, often wooded, including the rim of Dartmoor.
- Vast open-cast ball clay quarrying, spoil pits, settling lakes and associated buildings.
- Artificial lakes and ponds from past quarrying activity.
- Conifer plantations, other woodland belts and scrub.
- Open heathland areas
- Expanding urban areas, scattered residential development, industrial estates, main roads, power lines.

25. Tourist Riviera

- Extensive coastal development of resorts and associated tourist infrastructure.
- Elegant seafront parks, promenades, palms, pines, white “Riviera” buildings.
- Small scale, dissected, hilly landscape in hinterland.
- Tidal Teign Estuary, largely undeveloped.
- Coastal cliffs, ranging from red sandstone to limestone headlands.
- Steep urban areas overlooking bay, estuary and harbours.

26. South Devon Coastal Plateaux

- Unconnected areas of relatively flat coastal plateaux cut by narrow, steep combs which are sometimes wooded.
- Arable or mixed farming landscape with exposed character of windswept, stunted trees.
- Distinctive geological coastal features.
- Historic coastal features - lighthouses, daymarks, coastguard cottages, forts, wrecks.
- No through roads creating "cut-off" character
- Popular recreation locations.

27. Ria Coastline

- Major estuaries and rias (drowned river valleys) forming large expanses of inland tidal water and mudflats.
- Sudden landform variations adjacent to estuaries and rias.
- Plateau areas between rivers cut by streams and creeks with steeply undulating farmland and woodland.
- Historic settlements.
- Waterside features and water activities.
- Dense network of hedgebanks, green lanes, coastal tree groups, orchards.
- Freshwater coastal lagoons.

28. Under Dartmoor

- A plateau surface dissected by major rivers flowing off Dartmoor.
- Complex, steeply undulating landform shaping the overall plateau, the result of a network of streams and valleys.
- Farming landscape dominated by Dartmoor on the northern skyline.
- Patchwork of fields, small woodlands and hedgerows with some estate planting, including hilltop clumps.
- Scattered settlement of dispersed farmsteads and villages.
- Elements of limestone scenery in the north east.
- Influence of the A38 road along the northern edge.

Landscape Character Zones - Dartmoor and West Devon

29. Plymouth City, Estuary and Environs

- Historic waterfronts and dockyards surrounding a vast natural harbour.
- Water-based features - quays, marinas, dockyards, breakwaters, buoys, naval installations, Tamar Bridges.
- Water activity - ferries, yachts, dinghies, warships, sightseeing boats, fishing vessels, commercial shipping.
- Parkland, hilltop planting, tree features, steep wooded slopes, ridges and valleys.
- Skyline of Dartmoor as a backdrop.
- Variety of ecological habitats - cliffs, tidal estuaries, wooded valleys.
- Housing estates with regimental layouts often unsympathetic to landform.

30. Dartmoor - Enclosed

- Strongly undulating landscape underlain by granite geology.
- Cut by distinctive wooded valleys.
- Strong field pattern, characterised both by hedges and stone walls.
- Enclosed, wooded appearance deriving from the valley woodlands, bushy hedgerows and hedgerow trees.
- Close visual relationship with adjacent high moor.
- Granite buildings, especially farmhouses.
- China clay works.

31. Dartmoor - High Moor

- Extensive high moorland of blanket bog, heath and grass moor.
- Natural granite features providing characteristic landmarks.
- Archaeological features, remnants of quarrying and other extractive workings.
- Visual skyline element of many Devon landscapes.

- Broad, sweeping skylines punctuated by tors; panoramic views and wild “internal” vistas.
- Exposure to the elements.
- Recreational use.
- Ponies, cattle, sheep, walkers, cyclists, horse riders, kite-flyers, paragliders, parked cars.

32. Tamar and Tavy Valleys

- Historic transport route, with quays, lime kilns, old ferry points, stone bridges.
- Wide estuary landscape lined with wetlands.
- Tidal middle valley with creeks, wetlands and wooded sides.
- Granite ridge giving gorge-like qualities.
- Mining heritage, including chimneys.
- Market gardens and orchards.
- Landscaped estates.