

Type 6

Intermediate Farmland



This is a large-scale open landscape of intermediate farmland that occurs between lowland and rolling upland areas. The land use is predominately grazing land bound by hedgerows and stone walls. Although there are no sub types there are characteristic changes within the type reflecting local geology and vernacular.

This was formerly called Intermediate Land in the Cumbria Landscape Classification, 1995 and in the Cumbria Wind Energy Supplementary Planning Document, 2007.



Location

This landscape type runs in three tongues around Penrith and in the Eden Valley. It is found from Wreay and Sedbergham south to Kings Meaburn, from Kirkoswald to Appleby and from Lazonby towards Penrith. It is also found further north running from Catlowdy south to the line of Hadrian's Wall near Brampton.

Key Characteristics

- Transitional farmland between the lowland and upland landscapes
- Extensive areas of improved pasture with some arable farming
- Planned villages with greens displaying topographical and archaeological evidence of their medieval origins
- In parts the landscape is dissected by the deeply incised or open river valleys
- Wooded valleys and ghylls
- Sandstone and limestone vernacular

Physical character

Carboniferous rocks overlain by glacial drift predominate areas to the north of Carlisle and to the north west and south of Penrith. To the north east of Penrith the geology is Permo Triassic sandstone overlain by glacial drift.

Land cover and land use

This type comprises of predominantly grazing land between 100-200m AOD. It is intermediate between the lowland and more rolling upland types. The higher parts are open and rolling with wide views, stone walls and few hedges. At lower levels land becomes more undulating and enclosed with a regular pattern of hedges or hedgerow trees.

In Carlisle the area is dissected by the deeply incised valleys of the Black and White Lyne which are well wooded. Settlements are dispersed and small. Field patterns vary between being large and irregular in shape, to being more medium and rectilinear in shape. These are mainly bounded by hedges and trees. In Eden very broad valleys and narrow ghylls

intersect the fields and woodland. Pasture dominates, interspersed with arable fields. Fields are large scale with mainly regular and rectilinear patterns. However there are some areas of older enclosures that provide variety to the landscape through more irregular field patterns. Field walls form a strong matrix and are built in rich red sandstone along the North Pennine edge. Elsewhere hedges are the predominant field boundary. Blocks of woodland reinforce the regular field patterns and are complemented by wooded ghylls and stream and river banks. Most of this landscape type is fairly simple in character with some strong features such as the parkland around Unthank.

Throughout this type some parts are lightly settled with small nucleated villages. Farms are dispersed with some large scale modern agricultural buildings forming new features in the landscape. Many of the settlements retain a traditional centre with rich red sandstone vernacular where the type is found in the eastern parts of the Eden Valley, with other traditional buildings being built in a lighter sandstone or limestone elsewhere. The M6 motorway and railway line provide modern linear features running through Eden and the telecommunications masts at Skelton form a distinctive vertical feature and modern landmark.

Ecology

This is a landscape of improved pastures with species-rich hedgerows and, in the Eden Valley small woodlands. Along the White and Black Lyne rivers there are more extensive river valley woodlands with a range of upland oak and wet woodland communities. Plantations are often sited on ancient woodland sites. Areas of rush pasture and purple moor-grass are occasional, with one area supporting the rare marsh fritillary butterfly. A couple of small basin mires are to be found near Penrith. Species-rich roadside verges are occasional to the north and south of Penrith. Tributaries of the River Eden, as well as the Black and White Lyne and River Petterill support otter and to the north of Brampton.

Historic and cultural character

Within this landscape type there is considerable cultural diversity. The Eden area is characterised by nucleated

villages, with some medieval planning, either as row settlements or as settlements around a village green, probably originating from the 12th century. They often possess large churches and consist of largely sandstone buildings. The villages are characterised by the large number of traditional farm buildings within them and are surrounded by large former open common field areas. Inglewood Forest is distinct from much of the rest of the intermediate land as it is late enclosed and characterised by post-medieval squatter settlements. Archaeological survivals include well preserved earthworks of late prehistoric and medieval settlements and a variety of Roman remains including roads, marching camps and forts. In Carlisle the area once formed part of the Debatable Lands. Settlements are dispersed and individual farms have become nucleated settlements and vice versa over time. Planned enclosure is mixed with ancient enclosures which can be seen in the current field patterns. Ancient woodland is concentrated in ghyll woodland alongside the Black and White Lyne Rivers.

Perceptual character

This is a large scale mainly open working farmed landscape. The woodland, valleys, farmland and strong but varied vernacular give interest to the general rural character. Hedges, trees and the undulating nature of the land can limit views and provide a more intimate feel to the landscape. Where land rises and opens out, there are extensive views to the Lakeland Fells and North Pennines, giving a more open and exposed feel linked to the dramatic backdrop. This experience can be influenced by changes in the weather bringing a more elemental character, particularly when the Fells and Pennines can be obscured by cloud or be snow capped. In parts of Eden, the M6 motorway and Skelton Masts are constant reminders of the working nature of the landscape but do not dominate the wide landscape.

Sensitive characteristics or features

Traditional villages with greens and vernacular stone architecture are sensitive to unsympathetic village expansion. Wooded valleys and ghylls, isolated parkland and hedge bounded fields are sensitive to changes in land management. The intersecting open valleys and deeply incised rivers are sensitive to valley side development.

Vision

This landscape will be restored and enhanced.

Neglected field boundaries will be restored, along with woodland and other features of landscape and wildlife interest. Neglected farmland will be restored and there prominent modern developments will be better integrated into the landscape. Traditional farmsteads and villages will be conserved in their setting. Development will be sited to respect local character, settlement patterns and will be designed to have an appropriate scale and to use vernacular materials.

Changes in the Landscape

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

Climate Change

- There could be increased interest in the planting of energy crops to support renewable energy generation. Energy crops could include miscanthus, short rotation coppice (usually willow) or short rotation forestry of fast growing tree species to provide biomass for electricity production and heat. Large scale planting or planting in sensitive locations could change the character of this landscape. Opportunities could also arise to bring woodland into better management to support the biomass and wood fuel markets.
- Farming practices could change if temperatures rise and it is more effective to grow arable crops.

Management Practices

- Agricultural improvements have been leading to the loss of hedgerows, wetland habitats and the neglect of field boundaries.
- There could be future pressures for arable intensification to help with food security and an increase in popularity for community farming and allotment schemes.

Development

- In the last decade there has been an increase in the number of large-scale farm buildings sometimes sited in prominent locations.
- The introduction of newer, larger slurry tanks within these types could impact upon character. In addition,

the potential for anaerobic digestion on farms could result in changes to farm buildings in the future and may affect traditional characteristics.

- The use of modern building materials has weakened the strong local vernacular character particularly around Penrith, Appleby and the outskirts of Carlisle.
- The M6 corridor as an element in the landscape could have the potential to attract new large scale commercial development. Improvements to surfacing, lighting and information systems along the motorway could affect its appearance and people's awareness of it in the landscape.
- The potential expansion of Carlisle Airport could influence the character of this type in the north of the county.
- There is an increased interest large scale wind energy development in parts of the county where this landscape type occurs. The development of energy infrastructure such as large scale wind turbines could result in an increase in vertical features. These could change the character of the landscape as vertical elements are currently mainly associated with the radio masts around Skelton.
- Farm diversification could lead to an increase in the use of farm land for horse grazing and equestrian uses could result in changes to field patterns and boundaries. An introduction of stables and ménages could cause incremental change the character of the farmed areas.

Access and Recreation

- Public rights of way provide a network of routes that enable quiet appreciation and enjoyment of the countryside. Ongoing maintenance is needed to support this network in the future.
- Current farm stewardship grants provide the opportunity to develop more public access in the countryside. Future grant or other programmes may continue to support this.

Guidelines

Climate Change

- Encourage biomass planting of a scale that respects the local characteristics. Edges to forestry or coppicing should respect existing field boundaries and be designed to reflect the general grain of the land.

Natural Features

- Strengthen and expand existing farm woodlands and shelterbelts to frame open views and soften the impact of prominent urban development.
- Manage existing broadleaved woodland by natural regeneration, restocking with local native deciduous species and through maintaining clearings and coppiced areas.
- Manage existing plantations on ancient woodland sites to allow regeneration of broadleaved woodland.
- Plant small to medium scale broadleaved woodlands on valley sides and within the motorway corridor and around the edges of plantations to help soften the cycles of clear felling of commercial woodlands. However, care should be taken to ensure new planting doesn't reinforce the linear corridor of the M6 motorway.
- Conserve important riverside trees.
- Maintain and enhance the landscape and ecological value of rivers and riparian floodplain habitats referring to local Biodiversity Action Plans (BAP) to guide habitat creation.
- Promote the conservation of existing semi-improved pastures and meadows and extend species rich grassland to provide visual contrast, botanical interest and consequent habitat for wildlife referring to the local BAP to guide habitat creation.
- Manage and enhance diverse swards in marginal farmland and roadside verges and conserve or create semi natural grassland habitats.

Cultural Features

- Maintain and enhance the pattern of hedgerows with additional / supplementary planting of scanty hedgerows and traditional management.
- Plant new hedgerow trees to replace maturing stock using indigenous species or tagging selected saplings.
- Establish ecological corridors using local native trees and shrubs.
- Encourage retention and traditional management of dry stone walls.

Development

- Conserve and enhance the stone built farm buildings and features within their landscape settings.
- Ensure new development respects the variable scale and character of the landscape, creates focal spaces and is also well related to distinctive built forms. This should help protect and enhance historic stone built

villages with distinctive nuclear or linear forms.

- Reduce the impact of large scale new buildings by careful siting and design and by the use of appropriate materials.
- Introduce appropriate roadside planting to frame long distance views of fells and estuary and improve visual awareness of the individual settlements, land uses, and cultural landmarks along each road and provide locations for stopping, viewing and picnicking.
- Avoid siting large scale wind energy, other vertical structures such as telecommunications masts, pylons and overhead transmission lines in open and prominent areas where it could degrade the rural character of the area.
- Retain the rural character of the M6 corridor by resisting large scale commercial development and ensuring new motorway infrastructure such as information signs and necessary lighting is sited to minimise adverse effects on open parts of the landscape. Noise pollution should be mitigated against through careful selection of surface materials.
- Ensure additional vertical features such as masts, large scale wind turbines and telegraph poles don't create a cluttered landscape or result in significant adverse changes to local character.
- Conserve parkland and sensitive development around the Penrith area in keeping with local character.
- Encourage farm diversification where it will benefit the landscape and economy.
- Encourage horse grazing and equestrian uses to respect field boundaries and field patterns. Stables and other facilities should be sited sensitively with appropriate landscape mitigation to prevent the erosion of the pastoral farmland character.

Access and Recreation

- Public rights of way should be well maintained and quiet recreational areas and facilities should be improved and developed to be compatible with the pastoral character of this sub type.
- Seek opportunities to enhance access to farmland through farm stewardship or other schemes.

