

Report to: **Strategic Planning Committee**

Date of Meeting: 23rd February 2021

Public Document: Yes

Exemption: None

Review date for release None



Subject: **East Devon Landscape Character Assessment – minor amendment**

Purpose of report: To advise of and seek approval for proposed minor amendments to the landscape character area mapping.

Recommendation: **To approve the minor mapping and description changes to the 2019 East Devon Landscape Character Assessment described below.**

Reason for recommendation: To ensure that the East Devon Landscape Character Assessment properly reflects local landscape character and remains relevant as guidance for planning policy and development management decisions across the district. As the approved Assessment was subject to public consultation prior to publication, the proposed amendments have been brought to committee to provide opportunity for democratic scrutiny.

Officer: Ed Freeman – Service Lead – Planning Strategy and Development Management

Portfolio Holder: Portfolio Holder for Strategic Development

Financial implications: No direct financial impact

Legal implications: The Landscape Character Assessment identifies locally distinctive landscape features, characters and special qualities which will be used to inform Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan preparation as well as cross-boundary issues and proposals which may impact on East Devon and therefore must be kept up to date. There are no legal implications other than as set out in the report.

Equalities impact: Low Impact

Climate change: Low Impact

Risk: Low Risk

Links to background information: Link to East Devon Landscape Character Assessment 2019: <https://eastdevon.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy/environment-and-green-infrastructure/landscape/>

Link to [Council Plan](#): [Appendix A Landscape Character Assessment](#)

Outstanding Place and Environment

Report in full

Background

The East Devon Landscape Character Assessment was originally prepared in 2008 and is used as guidance in the formulation of landscape policy and assessment of landscape implications of new planning applications at County, District and Parish level. Due to significant changes in land use policy, particularly the new Local Plan adopted in 2016 and recent landscape change arising from new development and changing environmental factors, an updated LCA was commissioned and approved by Strategic Planning Committee at the meeting on the 27th March 2019 following public consultation.

Proposed amendment

Since the launch of the updated Assessment some minor discrepancies have been noted in the mapping and descriptions of landscape character types LCT 1B - Open Coastal Plateau and LCT 5D - Estate Wooded Farmlands on the Otterton peninsula and minor changes are proposed to the boundary line between the two.

The amendments have been drawn up by the same consultant who prepared both the original and updated Assessment.

Copies of the existing and proposed LCT boundaries and descriptions within this area are provided in [Appendix A](#).

Justification for the change

The area to the east of the Otter valley is topographically LCT 1B Open Coastal Plateaux. However, superimposed on this are designed influences from the Bickton Estate, which contribute characteristics from LCT 5D Estate Wooded Farmlands.

The Estate influences are strongest in the western part of the area, nearest to the River Otter. To the east, the Estate influences are less marked, and the Open Coastal Plateaux character is stronger.

The area has therefore been split, with the western part in LCT 5D, and the eastern part in LCT 1B. The boundary has been drawn to include the following estate features within LCT 5D: Ornamental pines along the river cliff and headland; the open land which forms the backdrop to the planted river cliff in views from the west; South Farm (a model farm associated with the Bickton Estate); remnant ornamental pine planting around tumuli and along the ridge; planting associated with Otterton Park, and Catson Hill, which contributes to the setting of local estate villages and the Bickton Estate.