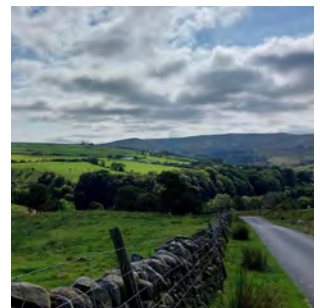




# Forest of Bowland National Landscape Landscape Character Assessment

Final Report  
July 2025



THE  
ENVIRONMENT  
PARTNERSHIP

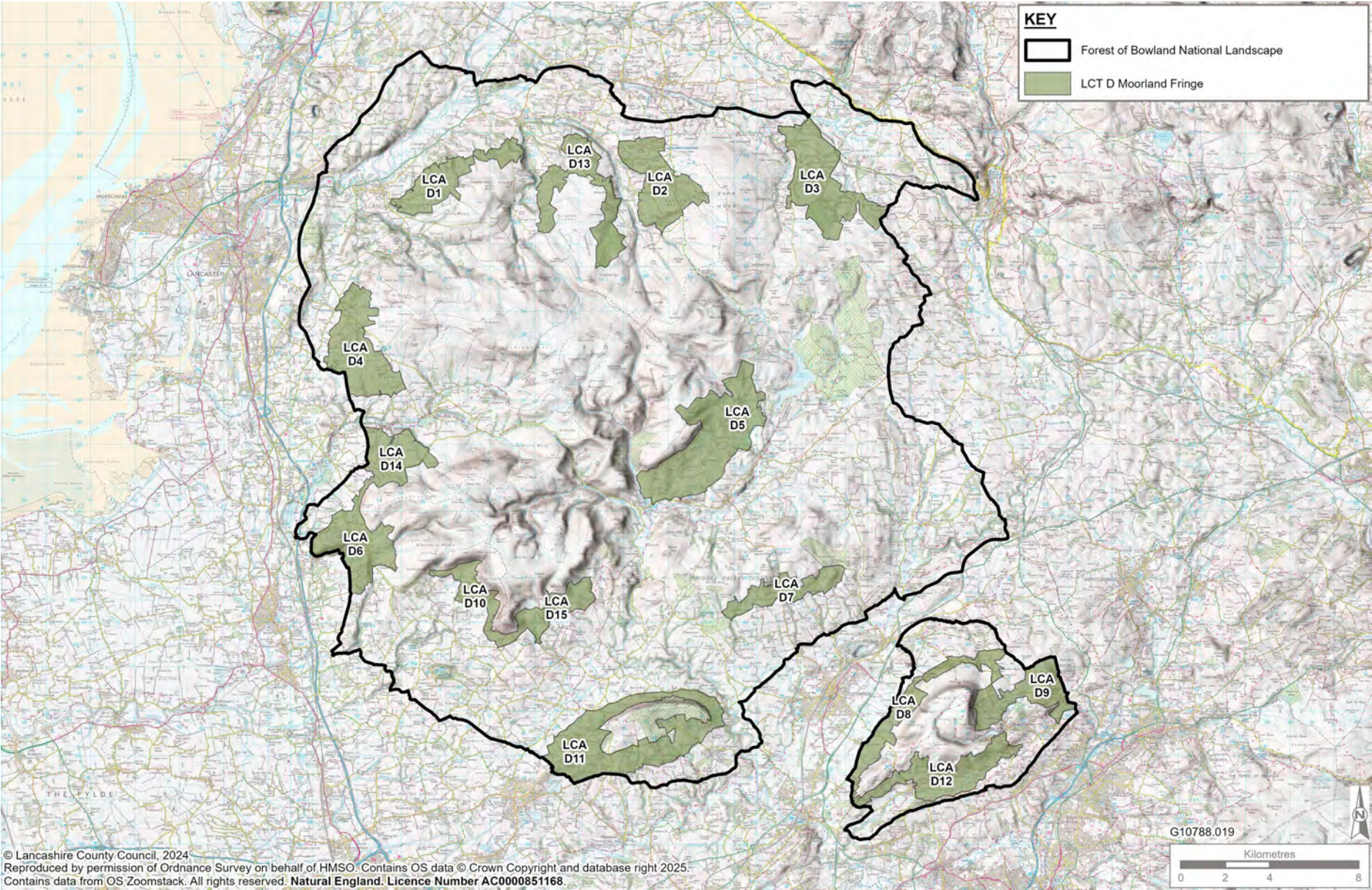


Forest of  
Bowland  
National  
Landscape

## LCT D: Moorland Fringe



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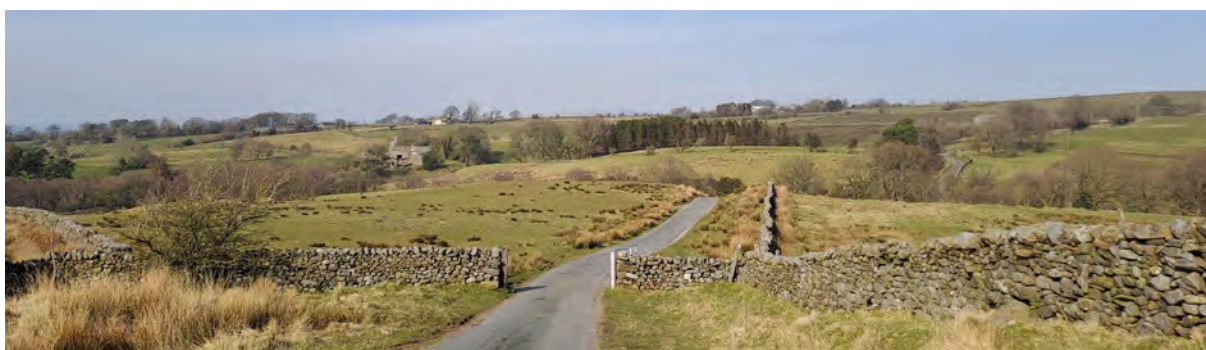


## LCT D: Moorland Fringe

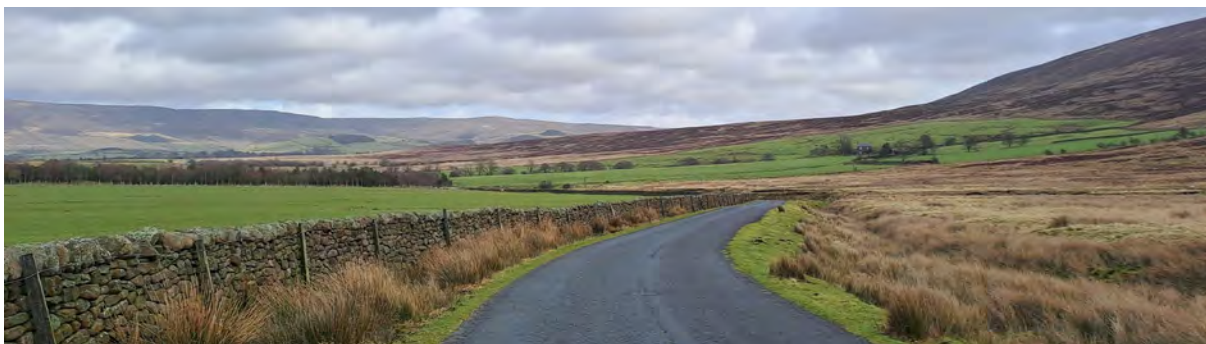
### Description and Location

- D.1 The Moorland Fringe LCT comprises the transitional rolling enclosed moorland and farmed landscape at the edges of the Moorland Hills, usually at an elevation of more than 200m linking the upland and lowland landscape. There is increasing evidence of human activity with more dry stone walls, improved pastures, scattered farmsteads and stone barns.
- D.2 The Moorland Fringe LCT occurs in several locations throughout the Forest of Bowland including on Pendle Hill.

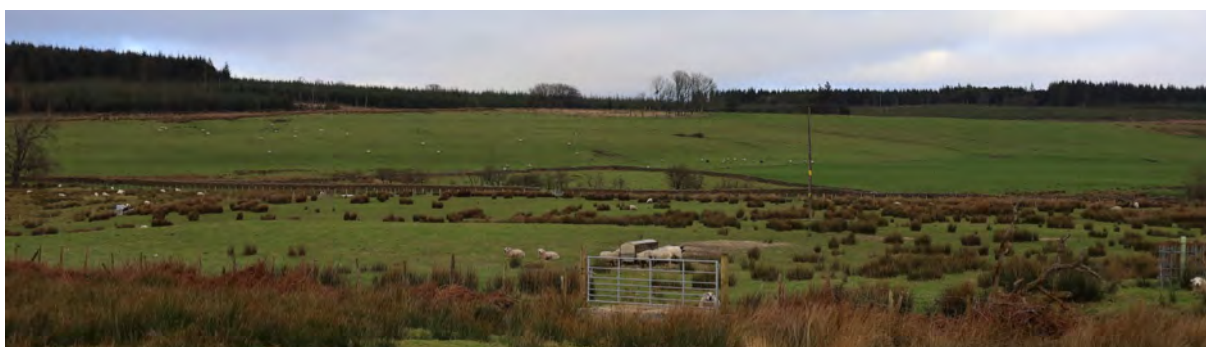
### Representative Photographs



*Moorland fringe in LCA D2: Tatham*



*Moorland fringe in LCA D14: Abbeystead Fringe*



*Moorland fringe on Longridge in LCA D11: Longridge Slopes*

## Key Characteristics

- Sheep grazing is the predominant land use with a patchwork of traditionally managed meadows, wet rushy pasture and acid grassland.
- Traditional field barns are recognisable landscape features.
- Dry stone walls of roughhewn stone create strong patterns within the landscape which reflect the underlying geology.

## Landscape Character Description

### Physical Character

- D.3 The moorland fringe is a transitional enclosed landscape between the higher fells and the more intensively farmed land of the lowlands. The Moorland Fringes are underlain predominantly by Millstone Grit with smaller areas of limestone overlain by soils of varying thickness with thicker soils on the gentler, more sheltered slopes and valleys than the summits. This LCT occupies the high ground fringing the main moorland, typically at an altitude of between 215 and 300m above sea level.
- D.4 The rolling landscape provides 'in-bye' pasture for sheep and some cattle, associated with the seasonal movement of stock. The moorland fringe comprises a rich mosaic of habitats including unimproved agricultural grassland, damp rushy pasture and acid grassland, drier calcareous meadows, patches of heather moorland, windswept trees and small woodlands. These habitats support a diverse flora and are important for wading birds.
- D.5 The lower slopes of the moorland fringes show a gradual transition to the more managed lush grasslands of the Undulating Lowland Farmlands LCT where brighter green 'improved' pastoral fields are a feature of the landscape. Within this more managed landscape flushes, streams and roadside verges provide ecological diversity.

### Perceptual and Scenic Qualities

- D.6 Built features such as sheepfolds, tramways and tracks, quarries, mines, field barns and stiles provide local distinctiveness and evidence of a more industrial past in the landscape.
- D.7 There are dramatic open views from these flanks of the fells towards the villages and valleys of the lowlands where reservoirs and parkland often feature in views.
- D.8 There are moderate levels of tranquillity and dark skies experienced as there is largely a lack of settlement across the LCT however there is some light pollution closer to larger settlements including Longridge and Sabden. Distinctive bird calls contribute to recognisable sense of place.

## Historic Character

- D.9 The moorland fridges below the more exposed open moors have a long history of land use and settlement. The small size of land holdings likely came from a system of land inheritance where land was divided equally between sons resulting in a landscape of closely scattered farmhouses. Some farmhouses are distinctive 'laithe' houses which are part house, part hay stall.
- D.10 In the 13th to 15th centuries vaccaries (large, open areas used to graze livestock) were created by feudal landowners to make economic returns on their 'waste's' beyond the boundaries of the Deer Parks. The pace of enclosure grew during the 16th and 17th centuries and continued due to the Parliamentary Enclosure Acts of the 18th and 19th centuries.
- D.11 Some of the road network has an ancient origin, possibly dating back to the prehistoric period, however the road network largely grew in industrial times and packhorse ways associated with the transport of salt, lime and wool are features of the landscape.
- D.12 Sheep grazing is the most common recent land use with most farms having rights for grazing on the open moorland in summer with land in the fringe used as in-bye land for winter grazing and hay making in the summer to feed livestock through the winter.
- D.13 The lower gentler slopes comprise older enclosures distinguished by their small size and irregular shape with later Parliamentary Enclosures represented by large regular rectangular fields enclosed by robust walls more evident on the higher slopes and steeper areas.
- D.14 Changes in farming practices has reduced the number of damp pastures and hay meadows and a decline in upland farming in places has seen more marginal fields taken over by rushes. There is good preservation of archaeological sites in the more marginal land where non intensive agricultural practices are adopted.

## Settlement Form and Built Character

- D.15 This LCT is characterised by isolated stone farmsteads which are usually constructed from local gritstone with a general absence of hamlets or villages. Farmsteads are often situated on tracks following a contours and dry stone walls form the majority of field boundaries, with distinctive through and coping stones creating strong patterns in the landscape and reflects the underlying geology. The network of narrow, winding roads, often at the foot of slopes is evident and other built elements in the landscape include stone field barns and walls.

## Key Landscape Sensitivities

- Valuable ecological habitats within the wider improved pasture including traditionally managed meadows and acid grassland which support a diverse range of bird species.
- Numerous scattered, isolated, traditional historic farmsteads.
- The presence of packhorse ways and parish boundary markers are still present in the landscape.
- Strong intervisibility with surrounding LCTs.
- The distinctive pattern of stone walls which exhibit traditional construction styles.

## Forces for Change

D.16 The Forces for Change are set out in Chapter 5. The forces relating to this LCT are summarised below.

### Past Landscape Change

- Improved pasture surrounded by stone walls where intensive farming has spread onto higher ground.
- Reduction in biodiversity through agricultural improvements.
- Evidence of historic settlement in the form of stone terraced cottages and 'laithe' houses.
- Increase in traffic levels, particularly the number of delivery wagons and buses.

### Future Landscape Change

- D.17 **Agricultural Change and Land Management** - Features including dry stone walls, sheepfolds, limekilns and traditional farm buildings are vulnerable to lack of management or removal for more extensive farming of livestock. The improvement of land and changes in agricultural practice may also lead to reduced biodiversity and changes to habitats. Stream corridors are vulnerable to run-off and pollution.
- D.18 **Climate Change** - Climate change is likely to be less marked in this transitional area although there may be a gradual change in species composition and habitat characteristics.
- D.19 **Development** – Loss of vernacular building styles and use of inappropriate building materials may also result in a loss of local landscape characteristics. Potential for large scale schemes to alter the character of the landscape. Renewable energy developments could affect the open and generally undeveloped character of the area.
- D.20 **Recreation** - Increasing traffic associated with tourism and recreation in the area could put pressure on the road system resulting in increased traffic, inappropriate highway improvements and signage.

## Management Guidelines

The overall management objective should be to **CONSERVE AND ENHANCE** landscape character.

### Landscape Management

#### *Farmed Fringe Landscape*

- Manage the marginal pastoral land to retain its features and characteristic attributes as a transitional landscape between the lowlands and uplands.
- Conserve species-rich meadows, acid grassland and damp pastures where they remain.
- Restore and re-create herb-rich grasslands.
- Encourage the management of pasture to maximise its ecological value by avoiding damaging operations and encouraging appropriate stocking levels.
- Encourage the reversion of improved grassland within the higher enclosure to an acid grassland/heathland cover, with the long term aim of extending the moorland landscape downslope where appropriate.
- Conserve the pattern of dry stone walls.
- Improve water quality within the surrounding upland catchments to protect and conserve aquatic habitats.
- Where possible remove invasive, non-native species.

#### *Woodland*

- Conserve the pattern of largely sparse tree cover, stunted hawthorns and trees associated with farmsteads.
- Improve the structure and condition of existing woodlands through active management.
- Ensure that any new woodland planting is sympathetic to local topography.
- Manage grazing to facilitate the natural regeneration of woodland and ground flora.

#### *Landscape Features*

- Retain the strong landscape pattern through management and enhancement of stone walls, hedgerows and other boundary features.
- Encourage maintenance of gritstone or limestone walls and associated banks and ditches with locally predominant rock.
- Conserve and enhance valuable landscape features, including traditional farm buildings, limekilns, sheepfolds, clough woodlands and field boundaries, including hedgerows.
- Conserve traditional roadside features, including boundary markers (stone and metal)

and signposts.

- Ensure any highway improvement schemes respect and reflect local character and encourage the use of traditional signage where possible.
- Conserve and maintain the historic network of footpaths and packhorse trails.

### *Biodiversity*

- Manage the spread of invasive species.
- Enhance the existing valuable mosaic of pasture and other habitats.
- Encourage habitat linkage.

### *Historic Environment*

- Protect traditional farm buildings, limekilns, sheepfolds which are distinctive historic features of the landscape.
- Conserve distinctive historic features such as parish boundary features, earthworks, packhorse tracks and sheepfolds to maintain a rich cultural landscape.

### *Access*

- Conserve Open Access land, footpaths, bridleways and byways, many which represent historic routeways, along with associated features such as traditional stiles and gates.

### **Development Management**

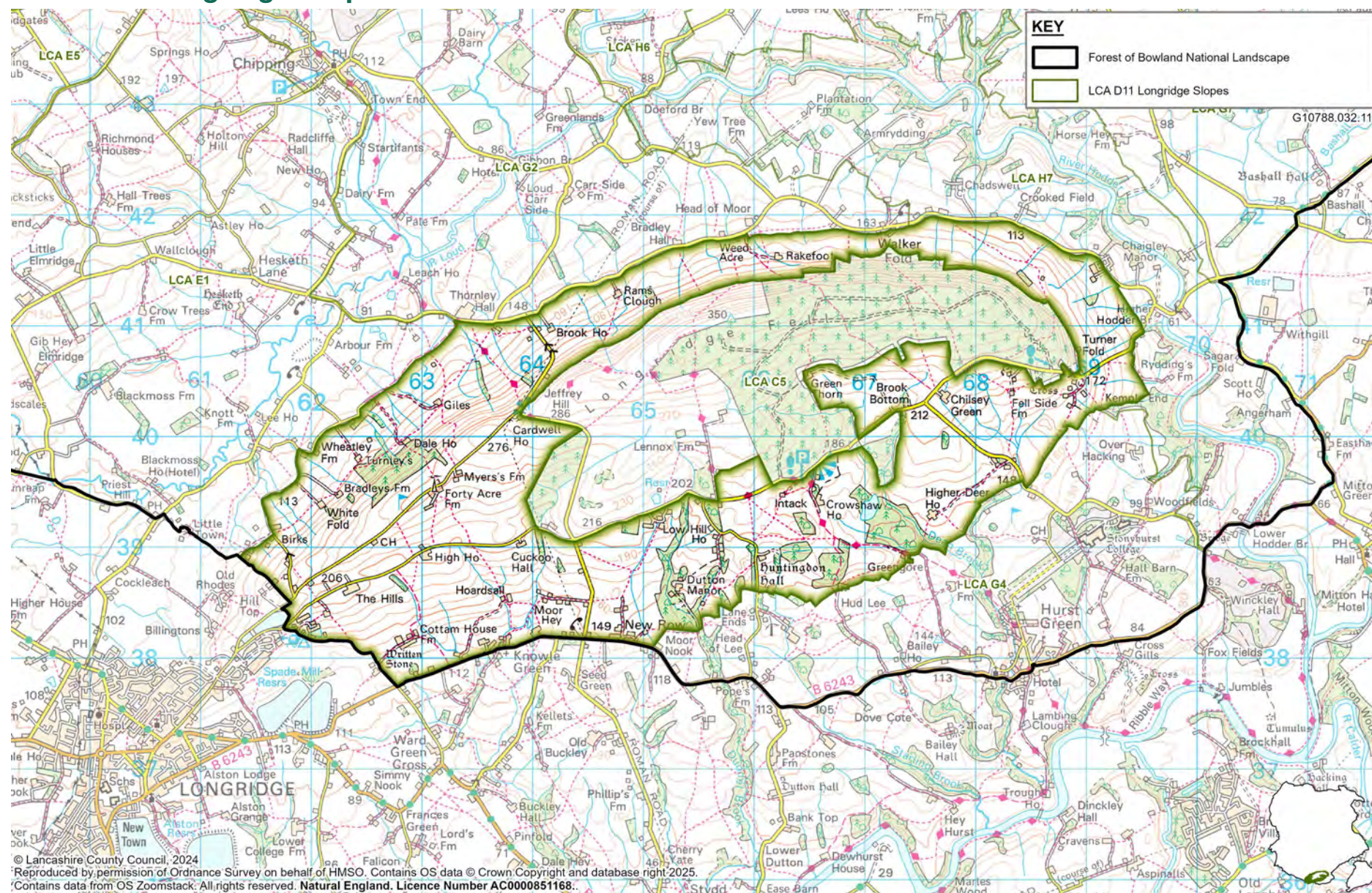
- Conserve and enhance existing buildings and farmsteads using local gritstone and limestone as appropriate for repairs and additions.
- Ensure any new built form respects the simple architecture of farmsteads and reflects the characteristic settlement pattern of small with isolated clusters of dwellings and individual farmsteads.
- Ensure that any highway improvement schemes respect and reflect local character and encourage the use of traditional signage where signage is necessary.
- Protect skylines and key views to and from the area from tall, vertical and large-scale developments that may affect the character and views to and from the area.
- Promote informal recreation through appropriate signage and management.

## Landscape Character Areas

D.21 The Moorland Fringe LCT is sub-divided into fifteen LCAs which are described in the following sections:

- D1: Caton Moor
- D2: Tatham
- D3: Kettlesbeck
- D4: Hare Appletree
- D5: Dunsop Bridge to Gisburn Forest
- D6: Nicky Nook
- D7: Moorcock
- D8: Pendleton
- D9: Wheathead
- D10: Bleasdale to Oakenclough
- D11: Longridge Slopes
- D12: Upper Sabden Valley
- D13: Park House
- D14: Catshaw Fringe
- D15: Wolfen and Stanley Common

## LCA D11: Longridge Slopes



## LCA D11: Longridge Slopes



*View north from moorland fringe in Longridge near Jeffrey Hill viewpoint*

### Location

D11.1 This LCA is to the south of the Forest of Bowland and covers the moorland fringe surrounding Longridge Fell.

### Key Characteristics

- This area provides the setting for Longridge Fell and is the foreground of views towards Longridge Fell.
- Open views from the higher ground across the surrounding landscape although woodlands provide a sense of enclosure in places.
- Predominantly sloping pastoral grazing with areas of woodland, forestry, a reservoir and a golf course.
- Rushy marginal pasture compared to the surrounding lower lying lush farmland.
- Predominantly dry stone wall boundaries or variable condition.
- Marked OS Viewpoint on Jeffrey Hill and Old Clitheroe Road (views currently obscured by vegetation) provide views over the surrounding landscape.

### Landscape Sensitivities Specific to LCA D11: Longridge Slopes

D11.2 In addition to the landscape and visual sensitivities outlined for LCT D specific sensitivities of this character area are:

- Sloping rushy pasture interspersed with woodland with views over the surrounding landscape.

- Numerous PRow including Ribble Valley Jubilee Trail long distance footpath and areas of Open Access Land closer to the summit of Longridge Fell.
- Cultural associations including Listed Buildings such as Grade II\* Listed Huntingdon Hall.

### **Forces for Change Specific to LCA D11: Longridge Slopes**

D11.3 In addition to the forces for change set out in Chapter 5 and outlined for LCT D specific considerations for this LCA are:

- Recent residential development at Green Bank Park on Higher Road within the National Landscape boundary.
- Holiday park development on north-east edge of Longridge adjacent the boundary of the National Landscape.

### **Management Guidelines Specific to LCA D11: Longridge Slopes**

D11.4 In addition to the management guidelines set out for LCT D, specific considerations for this LCA are:

- Retain dry stone walls, repairing those that are in disrepair.
- Protect and where possible enhance views northwards to the Bowland Hills, notably from the Marked OS Viewpoint on Jeffrey Hill, and southwards, notably from the marked OS viewpoint on Old Clitheroe Road (where vegetation clearance is required to open up the currently restricted views).
- Ensure any new development is sensitive to local vernacular and siting and design considers effects on the National Landscape.