



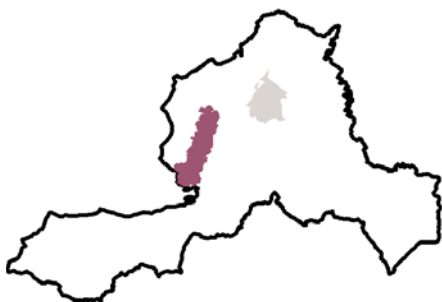
Eastern Slopes of Ruabon Mountain 5b

This is one of a series of Local Planning Guidance Notes based on Wrexham LANDMAP (adopted November 2004), setting out recommendations for each Landscape Character area.

East-facing slopes of Ruabon/Esclusham Mountain below the moorland edge, with a landscape of relatively unspoilt pastoral farmland, small farms, woodlands and reservoirs.

Landscape context

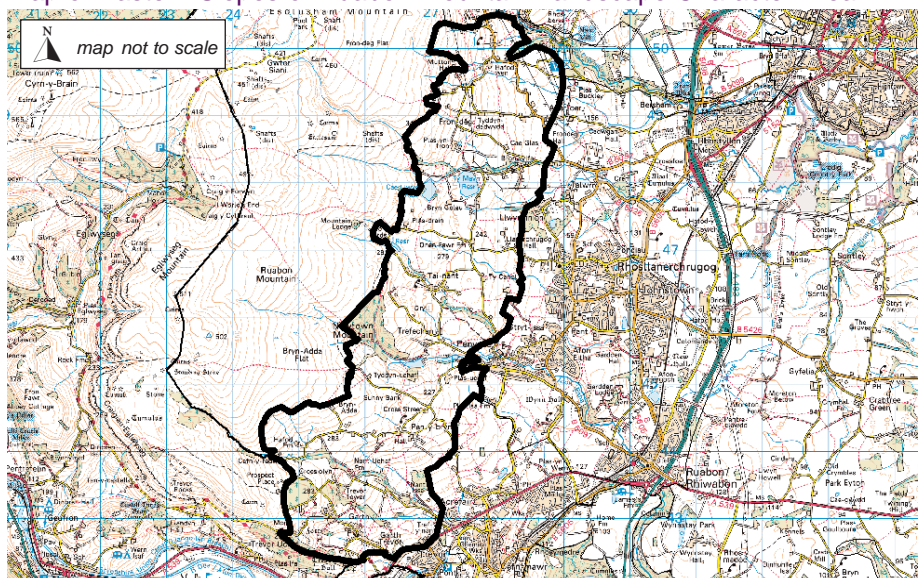
This landscape type lies on the edge of the uplands facing towards the lowlands, with a transition from steeper upper slopes to gentler lower slopes. There are two such areas in Wrexham, the other being Chirk Estate to Froncysyllte. The eastern slopes of Ruabon and Esclusham Mountain form a constant background to Wrexham town and other areas of lowland, with the green landscape of small fields contrasting with the open heather moorland above.



Eastern Slopes of Ruabon Mountain summary:

- Scenic area between moorland and developed lowlands
- Small irregular fields on east facing slopes, used for pasture
- Sharp boundary between farmland and moorland
- Linear woodlands and reservoirs in minor valleys
- Remnants of historic mining, although area appears undisturbed
- Isolated farms and very small hamlets

Map of Eastern Slopes of Ruabon Mountain Landscape Character Area



Character Area boundaries should be considered transitional rather than precise © Crown copyright. All rights reserved Licence No.100023429. 2006

Key characteristics

Visual character:

- Open farmland with small scale field pattern, with more woodland to south, with a small wooded valley at Newtown Mountain
- Network of narrow winding lanes enclosed by mixed hedges with much holly, sometimes with stone retaining walls
- Vernacular buildings often in local Cefn sandstone
- Reservoirs are local features, collecting water to supply lowland settlements
- Excellent views, where hedges permit, over both lowlands and moorland

Geological character:

- East-facing slopes from between 180 m to 350 m above sea level form the flanks of the Ruabon Mountain plateau
- Carboniferous Cefn-y-Fedw Sandstone (Millstone Grit) underlies the steeper upper slopes, and Coal Measures the gentler lower slopes
- Bedrock is generally overlaid with glacial deposits, with better drained soils found on glacial sands and gravels and seasonally waterlogged fine loamy soils on glacial clays

Ecological character:

- Most farmland is agriculturally



improved grassland, but the dense network of hedgerows forms a valuable habitat for wildlife

- Semi-natural ancient woodland, including mixed ash woodland, is found in small valleys, forming wildlife corridors. Conifer plantations and mixed plantation woodland are found in the Garth area
- Some small vulnerable grassland habitats on moorland margins
- Reservoirs are aquatic habitats of moderate value

Historical character:

- The small irregular fields characteristic of the area evolved from progressive enclosure of the commons
- At Newtown Mountain the conifer plantation contains significant archaeological remains of abandoned upland lead and coal mining village and smallholdings and there are other remnants of historic mining activity in the area
- Former military border area - Pen y Gaer hillfort is strategically sited to the north west of Ruabon, above the Vale of Llangollen
- Historically rich area with potential for further discovery

Cultural character:

- Predominantly rural, although farm buildings are increasingly being converted to non-agricultural uses, mainly residential, with consequent changes to local character and culture
- The small lanes and footpaths are used by walkers and cyclists
- Rich cultural heritage

Overall management strategy:

Conservation

Management Guidance

Aims	Guidelines
Maintain rural character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Resist unsympathetic development and conversion of farmstead ● Ensure that any new development is integrated within the landscape in local and distant views, through appropriate siting, form of development, retention of vegetation and traditional hedgerow/stone wall boundaries to minimise visual impact ● Restore and maintain stone buildings and walls ● Further develop 'green' links into urban areas
Retain unbroken skyline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Avoid development which would be seen on skyline and assess proposals from at least 15 km distance
Preserve geology new exposures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Maintain integrity and continuity of geological exposures and mines ● Continue current management practices and assess any
Maintain, extend and link habitats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Maintain, enhance and expand lowland acid grassland, lowland pasture and upland mixed ash woods ● Maintain existing wildlife corridors (e.g. woodlands, hedgerows, road verges) and extend where possible
Manage woodlands for biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Replace coniferous trees with native species
Preserve archaeology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Preserve and record village at Newtown Mountain, discourage new planting over structures ● Preserve Pen y Gaer hillfort and associated structures, discourage woody vegetation, avoid overgrazing ● Preserve existing field pattern, farmsteadings and early industrial archaeology and carry out further surveys
Preserve and raise awareness of cultural heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Liaise with local history societies, Welsh Mines Preservation Trust, Clwyd Powys Archaeological Trust and County Archaeologist
Maintain traditional farming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Promote agri-environment schemes, and sensitive economic diversification where required ● Ensure recreational interests and access do not conflict with farming interests

Landscape sensitivity

Very sensitive - the area is high and open but close to settlements, and is very vulnerable to loss of vernacular building character and development of masts and power lines, as well as changes in agricultural practices due to economic and climatic factors



For further information contact:

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All our information is available in accessible formats

