



Location and Context

The *Rolling Farmland – Glasgow & Clyde Valley* Landscape Character Type occurs in several areas within Glasgow and the Clyde Valley, at Kirkintilloch, Blantyre and Lanark. These areas fall within East Dunbartonshire, West Dunbartonshire, North Lanarkshire and South Lanarkshire. They comprise undulating, generally pastoral farmland.

Key Characteristics

- Distinctive undulating landform of elongated hillocks, mounds and ridges created by fluvio-glacial action.
- Dominance of pastoral farming, varying in productivity according to elevation and exposure.
- Importance of woodland in structuring the landscape and providing shelter for agriculture and rural settlement.
- Settlement confined to scattered small farms and hamlets, with several small towns.
- Motorways and main roads in northern areas.
- Sand and gravel quarries.
- Medium to small scale landscape.
- Largely rural character.

Landscape Character Description

Landform

The underlying geology of the *Rolling Farmland- Glasgow & Clyde Valley* Landscape Character Type varies in detail, but consists predominantly of carboniferous limestone with some areas overlying the carboniferous millstone grit that surrounds the Glasgow coal basin.

Rolling Farmland – Glasgow & Clyde Valley is distinguished from *Plateau Farmland – Glasgow & Clyde Valley* by its lower altitude and more undulating landform. The physical

characteristics of the rolling farmlands are greatly affected by glacial and fluvio-glacial deposition and may include drumlins, kettleholes, kames and eskers (e.g. at Carstairs). These features combine to create a topography of elongated hillocks, with mounds and ridges of sands and gravels in lower lying areas. Hence, the general character is strongly influenced by the undulating, medium-small scale landforms which are soft in profile. The hydrology is complex as is usual with fluvio-glacial areas, but generally the rolling farmlands are traversed by small incised streams and larger incised rivers. Waterfalls and rapids occur where rock obstructs gorges and in areas of steeper topography. Kettleholes can lead to the formation of bogs and peats and small pools.

Landcover

Agriculture is the predominant land use in the *Rolling Farmland – Glasgow & Clyde Valley* Landscape Character Type. This comprises mainly pastoral farming, though small areas of arable occur on better quality well drained areas. Tree cover consists of coniferous forestry and shelterbelts. There are also farm woodlands, field boundary trees and isolated stands of Scots pine and beech, for example near Lanark. These form strong landmarks and distinctive patterns in this undulating landscape and emphasise the form of the land. Field boundary trees and hedges are declining and post and wire fences are becoming more common. Stone walls are found in some parts of this landscape type. Remnants of policy woodlands also exist in the *Rolling Farmland - Glasgow & Clyde Valley* relating to country houses and their estates. The variation of elevation results in changes to the degree of scale and enclosure, from medium-scale and enclosed at lower altitudes, to open and exposed on hilltops.

Settlement

Settlement within this landscape type is mainly limited to a scattering of farms and hamlets, many of which sit comfortably in the rolling hills. There are small towns in some areas of the Rolling Farmlands, e.g. Lanark in the Clyde Valley Area of Great Landscape Value. These are dense compact settlements, usually in a dip of the land or on the slopes of a major valley.

Urban influences include urban expansion pressure for housing development in what is seen as an attractive setting, especially around Cumbernauld, Bishopbriggs, Lenzie, Kirkintilloch and other smaller settlements. Development pressure often leads to a drop in agricultural investment and then to pockets of underused or unfarmed land.

The new M80 link road goes through and strongly influences the North Lanarkshire and East Dunbartonshire part of this Landscape Character Type, with large feeder roads linking to the motorway passing through the north of the area. The main Glasgow to Edinburgh rail line also crosses the *Rolling Farmland – Glasgow & Clyde Valley* with Scotland's largest park-and-ride facility at Croy. There are several medium-scale wind turbines present, on the edge of Cumbernauld and around Lanark.

The presence of fluvio-glacial sand and gravel adds to development pressure in the form of mineral workings. Examples of gravel pits and quarries in the Rolling Farmlands include the gravel pits to the west of Lanark near Bonnington Mains. Coal bings are also present. Other industrial pressures occur where the farmlands abut the city. Urban fringe land uses can be

found in the Rolling Farmlands and there is a close alliance in some areas between this landscape type and the Fragmented Farmland landscape type, for example in the triangle of land between Coatbridge and Kirkintilloch and Cumbernauld. This correlation generally exists on the edge of the conurbation where the previous landscape character has been weakened and fragmented by development.

The Forth and Clyde Canal, now restored, cuts across the area at Bishopbriggs, forming an important historic and recreational landscape feature.

The *Rolling Farmland - Glasgow & Clyde Valley* has a rich archaeological heritage and examples of remnants of designed policy landscapes exist especially in the long-settled valleys. In the area around Lanark there is a crannog in a small lochan and the remains of a Roman road. The northern edge represents the line of the Frontiers of the Roman Empire (Antonine Wall) World Heritage Site, built along the rim of the Kelvin Valley.

Perception

These areas are essentially rural in character with comparatively few urban influences, although this is less so in the north of the Landscape Character Type. The principal exception lies in the area to the south east of Lanark where the former Lanark Racecourse and Winston Barracks complex are located. Winston Barracks are currently being redeveloped for housing and the former racecourse, Lanark Racecourse Recreation Area, is now used for a wide range of outdoor recreation facilities.

The *Rolling Farmland – Glasgow & Clyde Valley* has relatively few landmarks. Church steeples act as local foci, and the distinctive rounded forms of Bar Hill and Croy Hill rising above the northern *Rolling Farmland* north west of Cumbernauld form localised landmarks. The areas have a strong relationship with the landscape to the north, with views to the Campsie Fells and Kilsyth Hills.

This Landscape Character Type is not remote, but has pockets of tranquillity, these being more frequent in the southern areas.



This is one of 390 Landscape Character Types identified at a scale of 1:50 000 as part of a national programme of Landscape Character Assessment republished in 2019.

The area covered by this Landscape Character Type was originally included in the Glasgow and Clyde Valley LCA (Land Use Consultants), published 1999.