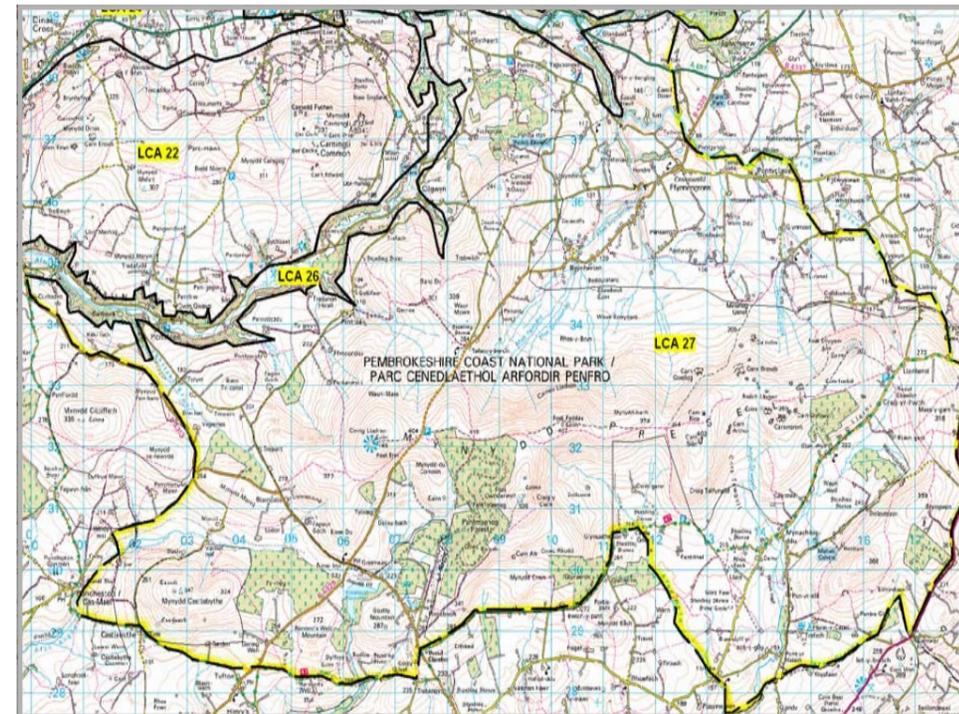
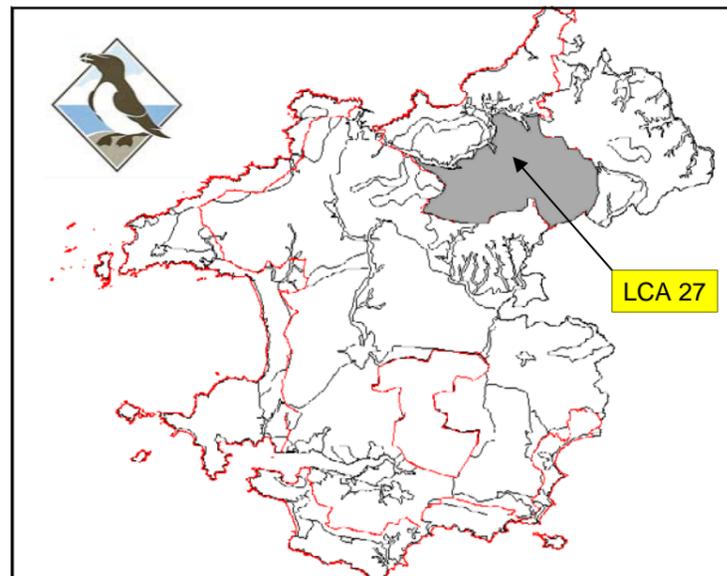


Pembrokeshire Coast National Park LCA 27 - MYNYDD PRESELI



Location, Context and Physical Characteristics

A large and very conspicuous inland upland area of heath and moorland, visible from a great distance. The views to the coast and the feeling of exposure provide a strong sense of place.

Visual and Sensory Characteristics

The Mynydd Preseli is a distinctive upland area characterised by open moorland and heath with rocky summits and scree slopes evident on the higher parts. Conifer plantations are also present, particularly on the southern flanks. The upland area affords wide-ranging views across to the neighbouring Mynydd Carningli, and along the coast.

Vegetation and Habitat Characteristics

The main ridge is characterised by acidic grassland and heathland which grades into much wetter vegetation on both north and south facing slopes below ridge. Numerous springs occur with associated boggy flushes, marshy grassland and wet heath. In the Mynachlogddu valley and the lower south facing flanks of the main ridge, there are several conifer plantations. Deciduous woodland is very restricted although mature scrub has developed in places.

Geological Characteristics

A very conspicuous and famous upland ridge rising to 536m AOD and crested by a line of rocky crags/tors with associated block-littered slopes. The ridge is steep-sided, especially to the north. Includes the north east-orientated continuation of the ridge, but dropping to lower altitudes in the Gilgwyn Mawr area. The bedrock is dominated by Ordovician slates with igneous intrusions (dolerite) capping the peaks but the surface features are predominantly peri-glacial (Quaternary, Pleistocene). Broad, concave slopes occur on the north side of the Preseli Mountains, developed below a steep upper escarpment. This area is characterised by fan-like groupings of coalescing streams, which feed funnel-like features projecting into undulating farmland areas below. widespread surface scatters of blocks are typical.

Historic and Cultural Characteristics

The unenclosed moorland contains nationally important features, including Iron Age Hill forts, Round Barrows and Deserted Settlements. This archaeological wealth has led to its designation as the Mynydd Preseli Registered Landscape of Outstanding Interest in Wales. Much of the hill area is common land - 19th & 20th century enclosure of common land is evident on the southern flank of the mountain block. The boundary between cultivated land and moorland on the northern fringe, however, appears to have changed little since the early 19th century. The rectilinear field shapes were formed following enclosure of common land.

Map Notation:

-  National Park Boundary
-  LCA Boundary
-  LCA Boundary defined by the National Park Boundary



Evaluation & Recommendations

LCA No.	Character Area	Visual & Sensory Aspect Areas	Geological Landscape Aspect Areas	Landscape Habitats Aspect Areas	Historic Landscape Aspect Areas	Cultural Landscape Aspect Areas
27	Mynydd Preseli	03 - Moderate 04 - High 44 - Moderate	40 - Outstanding 70 - Outstanding	154 - Moderate 324 - Outstanding 426 - Outstanding 431 - Moderate 435 - Moderate 596 - Low 622 - High 640 - Low 832 - Moderate 890 - High	42266 - Outstanding	001 - Outstanding 331 - Outstanding

LANDMAP Aspect Evaluation Terms:

Outstanding:	Of International or National Importance
High:	Of Regional or County Importance
Moderate:	Of Local Importance
Low:	Of Little or No Importance

(The reference numbers in the table refer to the discrete Aspect Areas identified)

Special Qualities (Key Landscape Characteristics)

- The Mynydd Preseli and Mynydd Carningli range of hills is unique within the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park because of its extensive broad upland mass which stretches inland, contrasting strongly with the narrow ribbon of coastal land which characterises the great majority of the National Park. It is visible from large parts of the National Park and from extensive parts of the surrounding county of Pembrokeshire, providing a familiar and readily discernible reference point in conditions of moderate to clear visibility
- There is a pervading sense of remoteness and wildness, especially on the summits and the upper slopes of these hills, and a strong sense of exposure, resulting from the proximity of the sea and the lack of cover and shelter on the open high ground
- Distinctive rock formations at the summits provide visual punctuation points as the eye is drawn up the slopes and along the smooth ridges forming the horizon; this is a landscape of outstanding geological value
- This is a landscape of recognised national historical and cultural significance within Wales. There are close historical and archaeological links with the adjacent Mynydd Carningli and many common attributes, especially the prehistoric ritual landscape. The blue stones for the earliest stone phase of Stonehenge originated from Carn Menyn. Abandoned settlements are testimony to the repeated phases of human use of this landscape. The east-west ridge trail is popularly regarded as being prehistoric
- This archaeological and historical interest has been recognised by the inclusion of a large part of this LCA in the Preseli Registered Landscape of Outstanding Historic Interest in Wales, representing the best surviving and most complete, typical historic cross-section across the Preseli Hills. The area contains remarkable and extensive evidence for prehistoric land use and ritual, superimposed in part by recent enclosure.

Discernible Landscape Trends

- The planting of coniferous woodland on lower slopes contrasts with the semi-natural character of the upper slopes and summits and this trend threatens to alter the predominantly open character of the hills, which have a visual effect far beyond the boundaries of this Landscape Character Area
- Unfavourable land management practices are altering key vegetation types to the detriment of the landscape and quality of habitats, including grazing and cropping and the failure to control bracken encroachment
- The appearance of the landscape is largely semi-natural except where angular blocks of coniferous woodland clothe the upper slopes and especially where they break the skyline. These dark colours and harsh lines contrast unfavourably with the soft, muted colours and textures of the open moorland and rush pasture.

Management Guidance

- Conserve the heathland and moorland so that they remain in a favourable condition
- Consider the appropriateness of conifer plantations with options including removal and replacement with heathland/moorland habitats, and planting broadleaved woodland on the lower slopes
- Encourage landowners to participate in agri-environmental schemes and leave overgrown areas around the margins of arable fields for the benefit of wildlife, and alter grazing pressure to allow areas of acid grassland to flourish
- Manage the wealth of upstanding archaeological sites to retain their integrity and their visual context
- Ensure that as far as possible no significant geological or geomorphological features are lost or damaged.
- Ensure that as far as possible ancient monuments and remains are not lost or damaged.