

Unit 5: Brendon Common

Contiguous with units 4, 6 and 12/13 and part of the Northern Forest.



A traditionally managed moorland landscape



A small population of breeding snipe occurs on Brendon Common



Extensive views across the open moorland of Brendon Common.

Overview:

An excellent example of heather moorland containing most of the characteristic species and providing an open, extensive and beautiful landscape. Maintain its current character and management regime.

Principal interests:

Landscape - An outstanding area of high open moorland, with streams and combes

Historic environment - The area is well known for its association with RD Blackmore's Lorna Doone; the remarkably well preserved deserted medieval settlement at Badgworthy Water was the inspiration for the Doonee village. The area also contains a wealth of other archaeological sites which include Mesolithic hunter gatherer sites, Bronze Age burial and ritual monuments and WWII firing ranges.

Ecological - An area of high quality moorland including blanket bog and valley mires with associated species. Supports a small population of breeding snipe and excellent assemblage of other moorland birds including stonechat, wheatear, whinchat and grasshopper warbler. Area previously held important Heath Fritillary sites. The majority of this unit falls within the North Exmoor SSSI (including units 38, 39, 40, 41, 42 and 43).

Access - A popular area for walking and horse riding, it is served by six car parks on the B3223, the Tarka Trail and the Two Moors Way and numerous bridleways.

Main issues:

1. Bracken encroachment, especially on archaeological sites.
2. Erosion at well used sites (e.g. Lankcombe Ford and alongside Badgworthy Water).
3. Some visually intrusive car parking.
4. Intensive use of some rights of way especially horse riding in the Doonee Valley.
5. Rhododendron invasion through Doonee Valley.

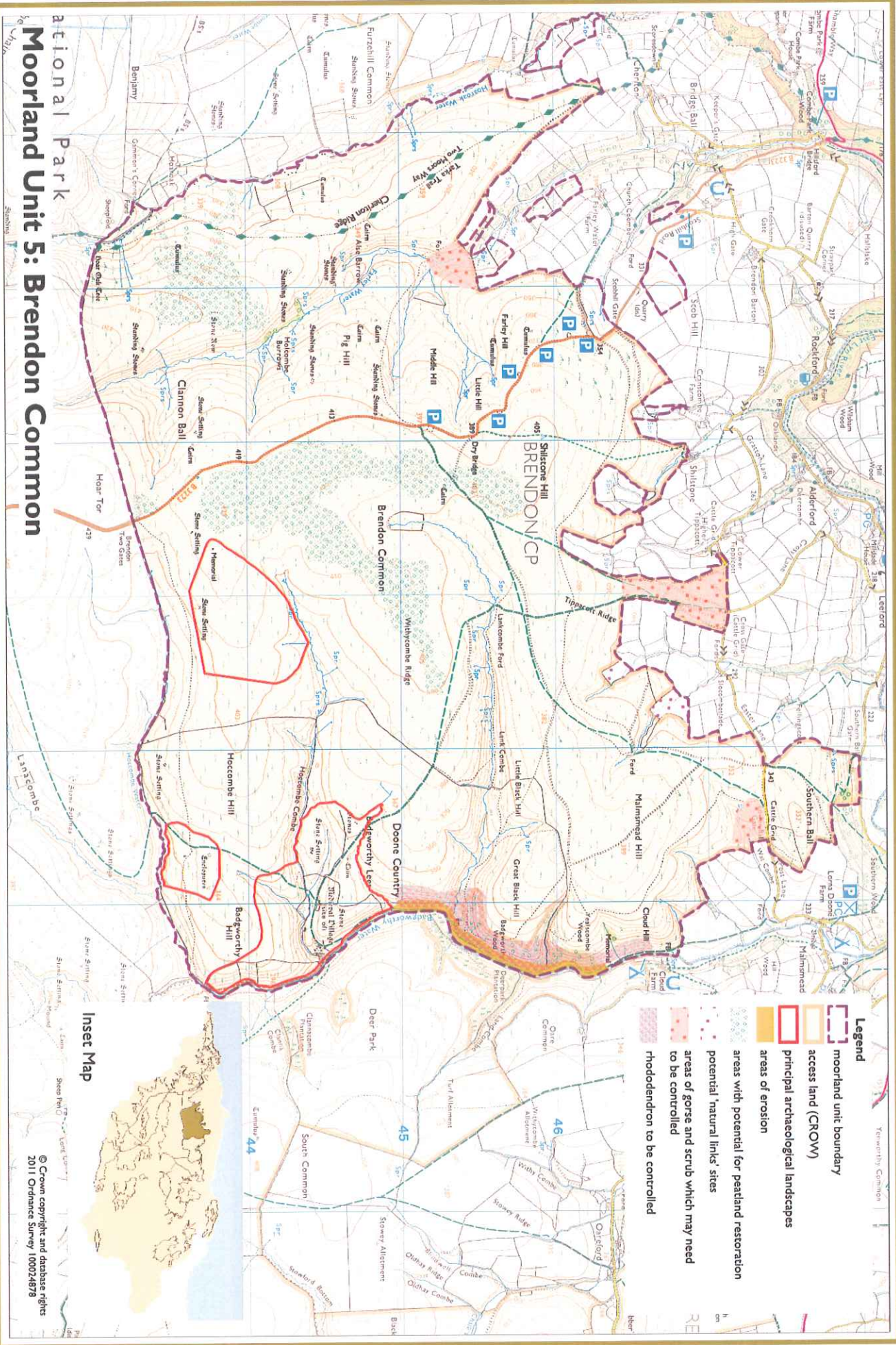
Potential actions:

1. On Brendon Common, consider rationalisation of "pull-ins", improve the condition of existing car parks and prevent unauthorised vehicle access onto open moorland.
2. Consider proposal to reduce visual impact if car parking at Lankcombe
3. Consider potential for mire restoration.
4. Control bracken where it has no ecological value.
5. Control invading rhododendron.
6. Ensure traditional swaling.
7. Control gorse.
8. Increase grazing levels to control vegetation on archaeological sites

Additional notes:

It is a Common and generally in good management. It has significant peat resources and is a water catchment.

National Park Moorland Unit 5: Brendon Common



- Legend**
- moorland unit boundary
 - access land (CROW)
 - principal archaeological landscapes
 - areas of erosion
 - areas with potential for peatland restoration
 - potential 'natural links' sites
 - areas of gorse and scrub which may need to be controlled
 - rhododendron to be controlled

Inset Map

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