

D5 Hameldon Oswaldtwistle and Darwen Moor Fringe

The northern edge of the West Pennines rises sharply from the settlement edge of Blackburn and Accrington. These steep north facing slopes are colder and more exposed than those to the south and provide a relatively short link with the lowland farmland and towns which surround the Pennine uplands. The high land affords extensive views out across the adjacent urban areas and the distant Lancashire valleys, while dramatic tower on Darwen Hill provides an important landmark on the skyline in the view from a wide area. This is a bleak upland or large walled enclosures, some with improved grassland and others, in the absence of management, reverting back to a rushy grass moor or beginning to scrub up. Stone walls are frequently in a poor state of repair and the whole area has a bleak appearance. There are scattered buildings and farms on the slopes but they retain their harsh moorland character. On the slopes south of Blackburn there is a more concentrated pattern of settlement around Belthorn and Pickup Bank. The number of roads which cross the area linking the main settlements and towns of Haslingden and Darwen are a particular feature. The presence of roads and traffic combined with the views across urban areas diminish the sense of remoteness.