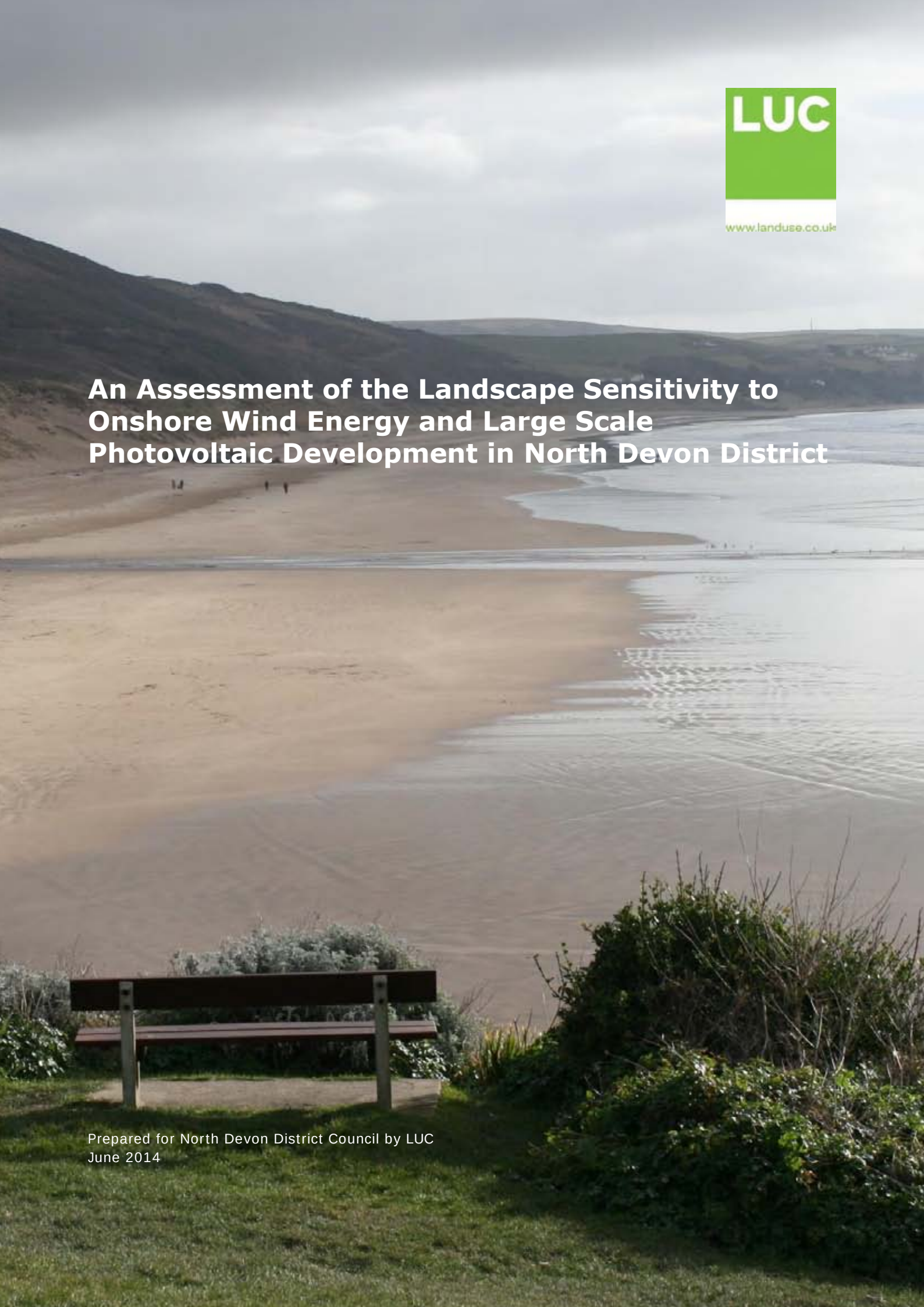

An Assessment of the Landscape Sensitivity to Onshore Wind Energy and Large Scale Photovoltaic Development in North Devon District

Prepared for North Devon District Council by LUC
June 2014

Project Title: An Assessment of the Landscape Sensitivity to Onshore Wind Energy and Large Scale Photovoltaic Development in North Devon District

Client: North Devon District Council

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An Assessment of the Landscape Sensitivity to Onshore Wind Energy and Large Scale Photovoltaic Development in North Devon District

Final Report
Prepared for North Devon District Council by LUC
June 2014

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Contents

1 Introduction

1 Introduction

Background to this study

1.1 North Devon, in common with the rest of the UK, is faced with a wide range of challenges arising from a changing climate. Balancing the need to make a meaningful contribution towards reducing emissions from our energy use (including through renewable energy production) with the management of North Devon's unique landscape being one of these challenges.

1.2 North Devon's landscape is vitally important to the local economy as well as parts being of national importance for its natural beauty: 7% of the District falls within the North Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and 18% is within Exmoor National Park[1]. North Devon's landscape has a significant economic, social and community value, contributing to a sense of identity, well-being, enjoyment and inspiration and being a major contributor to a strong tourism industry. At the same time, North Devon has good conditions to produce wind and solar energy which are already being capitalised upon through the installation of related developments. As such, it is a timely opportunity to ensure that a thorough assessment of the sensitivity of North Devon's landscapes is undertaken to inform planning decisions on renewable energy proposals. This follows on from earlier work undertaken to produce a similar assessment for Torridge District. Collectively, the two studies will form part of the evidence base for the new joint local plan that is being prepared by the two districts – the North Devon and Torridge Plan[2] (currently at draft stage).

1.3 The Council recognises these opportunities and understands the need to maximise renewable energy generation (which can have environmental, economic, social and other benefits). However, the development of wind and solar electricity generating installations within North Devon needs to be managed carefully to achieve the greatest contribution towards energy needs, while at the same time ensuring that the valued characteristics of the landscape are not unacceptably harmed. This is becoming increasingly important as multiple developments become operational within the district, as recognised by the Planning Practice Guidance for Renewable and Low Carbon Energy (July 2013), which notes that "*cumulative impacts require particular attention, especially the increasing impact that wind turbines and large scale solar farms can have on landscape and local amenity as the number of turbines and solar arrays in an area increases*".

1.4 In order to help understand how best to design and site wind and solar PV developments at the right scale and in the right places, taking account of variances in landscape character, North Devon District Council commissioned LUC to undertake an assessment of the sensitivity of the landscape to onshore wind and field-scale solar photovoltaic (PV) development[3] in the District.

Link to other studies

1.5 This study builds on the Devon Landscape Policy Group's (DLPG) Advice Note No. 2: '*Accommodating Wind and Solar PV Developments in Devon's Landscape: Guidance on minimising harm to the distinctive character and special qualities of Devon's landscape through sensitive siting and design*'[4], providing a local supplement for North Devon District and building on the generic guidance presented in the Advice Note.

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[1] Please note that this study excludes parts of the District that lie within the National Park, which is planned and managed under the jurisdiction of the National Park Authority as local planning authority

[2] http://www.northdevon.gov.uk/index/lgcl_planning/nonlgcl_planning_policy/north_devon_torridge_local_plan/local_plan_publications.htm

[3] For the purposes of this report, we will use the shorter term 'solar PV development(s)'

[4] http://www.devon.gov.uk/devon-guidance-v6-june-2013-final-report.pdf

1.6 This report relies on an understanding of the characteristics of wind energy development and solar PV development, and their potential landscape effects, as set out in the above DLPG Advice Note. It is also consistent with the types and scales of development defined in the Note.

1.7 This report builds on and is consistent with the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment undertaken for Torridge District Council in November 2011[5] using the framework of Landscape Character Types (LCTs) identified and described in the Joint Landscape Character Assessment for North Devon and Torridge (2010). For those LCTs that are also found within Torridge, and the adjacent Mid Devon District (whose sensitivity assessment has also recently been completed by LUC), where possible, consistent assessments of sensitivity have been sought to ensure compatibility across the districts. However, the results of the Torridge and Mid Devon studies have not constrained a thorough consideration of landscape sensitivity tailored to the North Devon landscape. In a small number of LCTs, variations from the sensitivity assessment undertaken for Torridge have been judged appropriate in the context of North Devon. In these instances, an extra row has been added to the individual assessment tables presented in Chapter 5, entitled *'Explanation for variations with the sensitivity assessment for Torridge (2011)'.*

1.8 It is also important to acknowledge that for solar PV, no schemes were operational in Devon (and very few elsewhere in the country) at the time of the Torridge assessment. Since its publication, solar farms at a variety of scales have become operational within different landscapes in the South West, allowing for a clearer understanding of their potential landscape effects and their design/siting requirements to be made. This deeper knowledge has also influenced some of the slight variances in the sensitivity results (in some cases higher, in some cases lower) presented for the two districts.

1.9 It is also important to note that the Torridge report was completed prior to the finalisation of the Devon-wide Landscape Character Assessment, which identifies county-wide Devon Character Areas (DCAs)[6]. This work for North Devon therefore seeks to make reference to the DCAs in the guidance produced for the study, and uses their descriptive information to supplement the landscape character evidence base used for the sensitivity assessment.

Limitations of the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment

1.10 While this Landscape Sensitivity Assessment provides a strategic-level assessment of the relative landscape sensitivities of different areas to wind energy and solar PV development and guidance for accommodating such developments in North Devon's landscape, it should not be interpreted as a definitive statement on the suitability of a certain location for a particular development. All developments will need to be assessed, and planning decisions made, on their individual merits, including with reference to *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, 3rd edition* (GLVIA 3) [7]. It is also important to note that this assessment is unrelated to any Government targets for renewable energy development or studies of technical potential.

1.11 This Landscape Sensitivity Assessment is based on an assessment of landscape character using carefully defined criteria. As with all analyses based upon data and information which is to a greater or lesser extent subjective, some caution is required in its interpretation. This is particularly to avoid the suggestion that certain landscape features or qualities can be absolutely associated with certain sensitivities – the reality is that landscape sensitivity is the result of a complex interplay of often unequally weighted variables (or 'criteria'). We have sought to address this issue in our summary of overall landscape sensitivity given for each LCT in Chapter 5 – which considers how the criteria-based assessments combine to give an overall sensitivity result for different scales of development within an LCT. Because of the complexity of the criteria, and their subtle interrelationships with each other, we have purposefully not used a numeric scoring system in expressing sensitivity. The assessments are based on professional judgement, taking account of the interplay between criteria, as well as those which might be more important [to landscape

[5] http://www.torridge.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=7340
[6] http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/environmentplanning/natural_environment/landscape/landscapecharacter.htm
[7] http://www.landscapeinstitute.co.uk/knowledge/GLVIA.php

character] in a particular LCT. The method and assessment criteria used for this study is explained in more detail in Chapter 3.

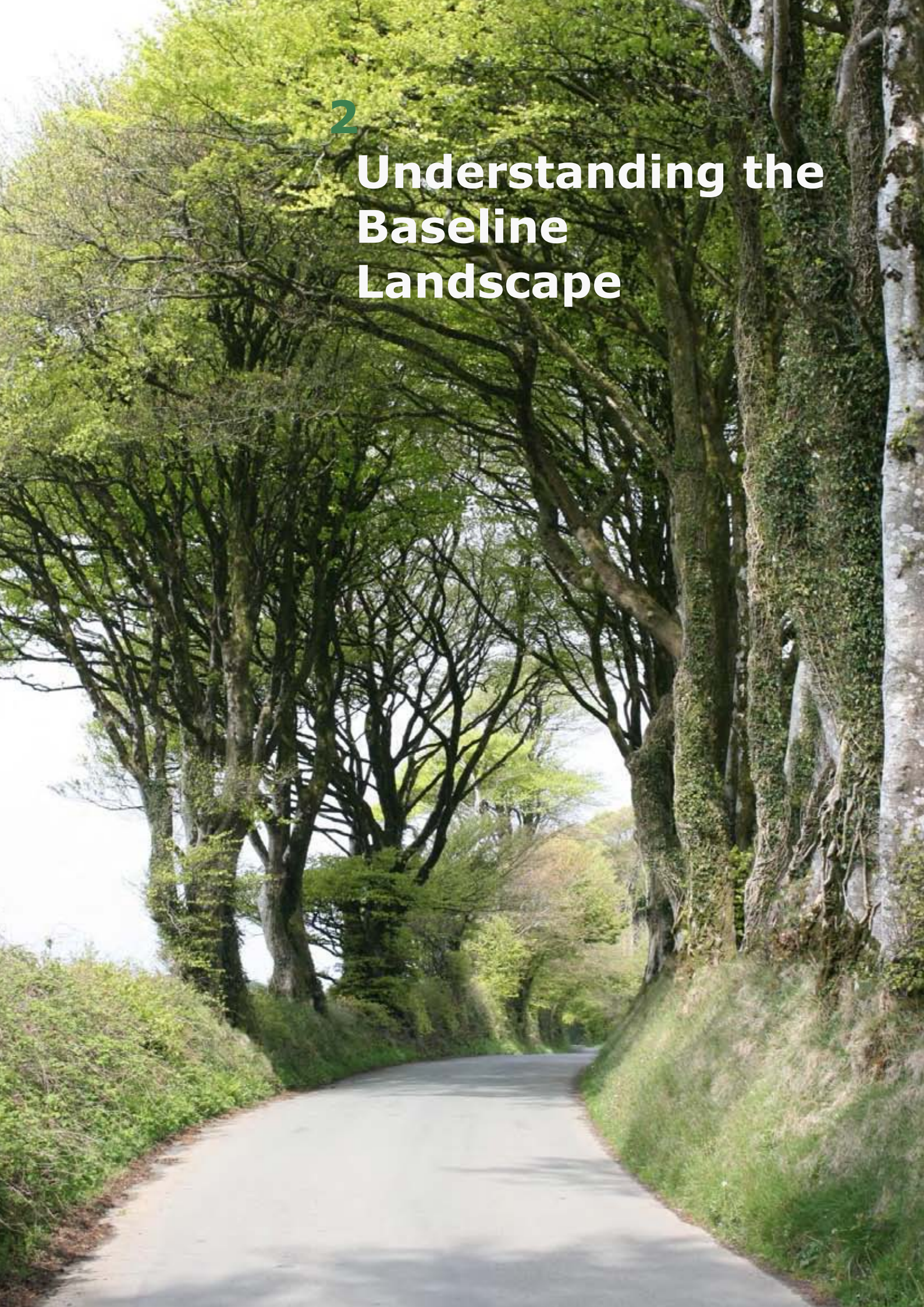
1.12 It is also worth noting that the assessment does not cover specific ecological issues associated with nature conservation designations or, in the case of wind turbines, bird flight paths; specific cultural heritage/archaeological issues associated with individual designated heritage assets and their settings[8]; visual amenity issues (including residential visual amenity) or impacts on tourism or recreation (or other economic activities); or technical issues, such as the fact that trees and woodland can create turbulence making siting of turbines more difficult. These are all issues that will need to be taken into account in site selection by developers, and when reporting on impacts at the time when individual proposals are being put forward – e.g. through the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process , which is required for proposals more than of local significance.

Structure of this report

1.13 The rest of this report is structured as follows:

- **Chapter 2** presents the landscape character and quality baseline for North Devon;
- **Chapter 3** sets out a method for assessing sensitivity to wind energy development and field scale solar PV development within North Devon District;
- **Chapter 4** summarises the overall results of the landscape sensitivity assessment undertaken for the District;
- **Chapter 5** includes the individual landscape sensitivity assessments and guidance produced for each LCT found in the District;
- **Appendix 1** provides a summary of the Devon Character Areas found within the District;
- **Appendix 2** presents a user guide to assist use of this report in designing and assessing proposals.

[8] For more information on considering the historic environment and setting of heritage assets, see the following English Heritage publications: *The Setting of Heritage Assets* (2011): http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/setting-heritage-assets/ and *Wind Energy and the Historic Environment* (2005): http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/wind-energy-and-the-historic-environment/



2 Understanding the Baseline Landscape

2 Understanding the Baseline Landscape

The Landscape of North Devon District

2.1 North Devon is an extremely diverse landscape, from the vast estuary of the Taw and Torridge rivers in the south, with extensive mudflats, sand dunes and salt marsh; through open downland with wooded valleys and parklands; ending abruptly at the high cliffs and steep coastal combes of the North Devon AONB and Exmoor coasts. The north-eastern edge of the District acts as a foreground to the open moorlands of Exmoor, as well as affording extensive views back into the heart of Devon. A patchwork of medieval pasture fields with beech hedges rises to the moorland rim; with secluded wooded valleys contributing to the variety of the landscape. The transition to the moor is displayed in a move from improved pasture and woodland through to rough moorland vegetation.

2.2 Open tracts of internationally important species-rich Culm grasslands are found on ridgelines and plateau tops across the district, also affording extensive views including to Dartmoor to the south. The tributary valley systems of the Taw and Torridge are more intimate; with substantial woodland cover including parkland estates forming a mosaic with pastoral fields and hedgerows. Superimposed on the farmed and semi-natural landscape is an sparse settlement pattern of scattered farmsteads and traditional villages, with Barnstaple and South Molton being the main centres serving the district. This rich landscape diversity is described in detail in the Joint Landscape Character Assessment for North Devon and Torridge[9], which in turn is reflected in this Landscape Sensitivity Assessment.

Landscape Character Baseline

2.3 Landscape Character Types (LCTs) and Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) form the spatial framework and evidence base for this Landscape Sensitivity Assessment (see **Figure 2.1**).

Joint Landscape Character Assessment for North Devon and Torridge Districts (2010)

2.4 There are 18 Landscape Character Types (LCTs) falling within North Devon District, as identified in the Landscape Character Assessment (2010):

LCT 1: Plateaux and Ridges

1E: Estate Wooded Ridges and Hilltops

1F: Farmed Lowland Moorland and Culm grassland

LCT 2: Scarp Slopes

2C: Steep Open Slopes

2D: Moorland Edge Slopes

LCT 3: Valleys

3A: Upper Farmed and Wooded Valley Slopes

3C: Sparsely settled farmed valley floors

3D: Upland River Valleys

3G: River Valley Slopes and Combes

3H: Secluded Valleys

[9] http://www.northdevon.gov.uk/north_devon___torridge_lca_19.11.10_low_res.pdf

LCT 4: Coasts

4A: Estuaries

4B: Marine Levels and Coastal Plains

4C: Coastal Slopes and Combes with Settlement

4E: Extensive Intertidal Sands

4F: Dunes

4H: Cliffs

LCT 5: Rolling Hills

5A: Inland Elevated Undulating Land

5C: Downland

5D: Estate Wooded Farmland

2.5 The Landscape Character Assessment provides descriptive information for each of these LCTs, forming the primary evidence base for the assessments provided in Chapter 5.

Devon Landscape Character Assessment (2011)

2.6 Devon County Council's county-wide Landscape Character Assessment[10] identifies ten Devon Character Areas (DCAs) that lie partially or wholly within North Devon District, shown alongside the LCTs mapped in **Figure 2.1**. **Table 2.1** below also shows how these fit with the District-scale LCTs. **Appendix 1** provides the character summaries for each DCA found within North Devon, using the same order as the table below.

[10] http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/environmentplanning/natural_environment/landscape/devon-character-areas.htm

North Devon Landscape Sensitivity Assessment

Figure 2.1

The Landscape Character Assessment Framework

North Devon District boundary

Landscape Character Areas

- 14: Codden Hill and Wooded Estates
- 16: Cruwys Morchard Wooded and Farmed Valleys
- 27: Exmoor Fringe
- 32: High Culm Ridges
- 43: North Devon Coastal Downs
- 44: North Devon Downs
- 45: North Devon High Coast
- 53: South Molton Farmland
- 58: Taw-Torridge Estuary
- 59: Taw Valley
- 67: Witheridge and Rackenford Moor

Landscape Character Types

- 1D: Estate Wooded Ridges & Hilltops
- 1F: Farmed Lowland Moorland & Culm Grassland
- 2C: Steep Open Slopes
- 2D: Moorland Edge Slopes
- 3A: Upper Farmed & Wooded Valley Slopes
- 3C: Sparsely Settled Farmed Valley Floors
- 3D: Upland River Valleys
- 3G: River Valley Slopes & Combes
- 3H: Secluded Valleys
- 4A: Estuaries
- 4B: Marine Levels & Coastal Plains
- 4C: Coastal Slopes & Combes with Settlement
- 4E: Extensive Inter-Tidal Sands
- 4F: Dunes
- 4H: Cliffs
- 5A: Inland Elevated Undulating Land
- 5C: Downland
- 5D: Estate Wooded Farmland
- 7: Main Cities and Towns

Map Scale @ A3:1:150,000

LUC

LUC LDN 5907-01_002_Fig2_1_LCA 13/02/2014

Source: Devon County Council, North Devon District Council

Table 2.1 Landscape Character Areas within North Devon and their LCTs

Devon Character Area (DCA)	Landscape Character Types (LCTs) contained within the DCA
Devon Character Areas that are wholly contained within North Devon	
DCA 14 Codden Hill and Wooded Estates	- LCT 1D Estate Wooded Ridges and Hilltops - LCT 1E Wooded Ridges and Hilltops - LCT 3B Lower Rolling Farmed and Settled Valley Slopes - LCT 3C Sparsely Settled Farmed Valley Floors - LCT 3G River Valley Slopes and Combes - LCT 3H Secluded Valleys - LCT 5D Estate Wooded Farmland
DCA 27 Exmoor Fringe	- LCT 1E Wooded Ridges and Hilltops - LCT 2D Moorland Edge Slopes - LCT 3A Upper Farmed and Wooded Valley Slopes - LCT 3B Lower Rolling Farmed and Settled Valley Slopes - LCT 3D Upland River Valleys
DCA 43 North Devon Coastal Downs	- LCT 2C Steep Open Slopes - LCT 4C Coastal Slopes and Combes with Settlement - LCT 4E Extensive Intertidal Sands - LCT 4F Dunes - LCT 4H Cliffs - LCT 5C Downlands
DCA 44 North Devon Downs	- LCT 2D Moorland Edge Slopes - LCT 3C Sparsely Settled Farmed Valley Floors - LCT 3H Secluded Valleys - LCT 5C Downlands
DCA 45 North Devon High Coast	- LCT 2D Moorland Edge Slopes - LCT 4C Coastal Slopes and Combes with Settlement - LCT 4H Cliffs - LCT 5C Downlands

Devon Character Area (DCA)	Landscape Character Types (LCTs) contained within the DCA
DCA 53 South Molton Farmland	- LCT 1F Farmed Lowland Moorland and Culm Grassland - LCT 3A Upper Farmed and Wooded Valley Slopes - LCT 3C Sparsely Settled Farmed Valley Floors - LCT 3H Secluded Valleys
Devon Character Areas that contain more than 60% of land within North Devon	
DCA 58 Taw-Torridge Estuary	- LCT 4A Estuaries - LCT 4B Marine Levels and Coastal Plains - LCT 4E Extensive Intertidal Sands - LCT 4F Dunes
DCA 59 Taw Valley	- LCT 1F Farmed Lowland Moorland and Culm Grassland - LCT 3A Upper Farmed and Wooded Valley Slopes - LCT 3C Sparsely Settled Farmed Valley Floors - LCT 3G River Valley Slopes and Combes - LCT 3H Secluded Valleys - LCT 5A Inland Elevated Undulating Land
DCA 67 Witheridge and Rackenford Moor	- LCT 1F Farmed Lowland Moorland and Culm Grassland - LCT 3A Upper Farmed and Wooded Valley Slopes - LCT 3H Secluded Valleys - 5D Estate Wooded Farmland
Devon Character Areas that contain less than 60% of land within North Devon	
DCA 32 High Culm Ridges	- LCT 1F Farmed Lowland Moorland and Culm Grassland - LCT 3A Upper Farmed and Wooded Valley Slopes - LCT 3G River Valley Slopes and Combes
Devon Character Areas that contain less than 10% within North Devon	
*DCA 16 Cruwys Morchard Wooded and Farmed Valleys	- LCT 1E Wooded Ridges and Hilltops - LCT 3A Upper Farmed and Wooded Valley Slopes

**Cruwys Morchard Wooded and Farmed Valleys DCA, which is located to the south east of the district, has not been considered in this assessment due to the small percentage which is within North Devon. The vast majority of the DCA lies within Mid Devon District where a Landscape Sensitivity Assessment has been undertaken, please refer to this report for further information.*

2.7 The DCA descriptions provide an important additional evidence base for the individual LCT assessments and guidance included in Chapter 5 of this report.

Historic Landscape Character Assessment for Devon

2.8 Devon's Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC), undertaken in 2005[11], maps historic landscape types found across Devon. The Historic Landscape Types (HLTs) used to inform this study are mapped in **Figure 2.2.**

2.9 For the purposes of this study, it is assumed that landscapes comprising medieval enclosures (including strip fields) have a higher sensitivity to the larger scale wind energy developments and larger scale PV developments than landscapes comprising larger post-medieval or modern enclosures or industrial/military historic landscape types (HLTs). This is due to the potential for the larger scale turbine developments to affect the coherence of these landscapes (including effects of access tracks on field boundaries) and the ability to appreciate them in the landscape. Historic Landscape Types such as rough ground, ancient woodland, other woodland[12], watermeadows and orchards also have a higher sensitivity to development of wind energy development and solar PV development of any size as a result of potential changes to the coherence of these HLTs.

2.10 It will be important that historic landscape character is conserved as far as possible when siting renewable energy development.

[11] http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/environmentplanning/historic_environment/landscapes/landscape-characterisation/historiclandscapecharacterisationmethodology.htm

[12] 'Other woodland' is defined as "*all other woodland including broad-leaved plantations, re-planted ancient woodland or secondary woodland that has grown up from scrub*" in the Devon Historic Landscape Characterisation (2005).

North Devon Landscape Sensitivity Assessment

Figure 2.2

Historic Landscape Types in North Devon

- North Devon District boundary
- Rough ground (various)
- Medieval enclosures (various)
- Barton fields
- Post-medieval enclosures (various)
- Modern enclosures (various)
- Orchard
- Former orchards
- Ancient woodland
- Conifers and other woodland
- Woodland with old field boundaries
- Public complex
- Military complex
- Airfield
- Industrial complex
- Water
- Watermeadow (various)
- Quarries
- Historic settlements
- Modern settlements
- Park/garden
- Recreation

Landscape Character Types

- 1D: Estate Wooded Ridges & Hilltops
- 1F: Farmed Lowland Moorland & Culm Grassland
- 2C: Steep Open Slopes
- 2D: Moorland Edge Slopes
- 3A: Upper Farmed & Wooded Valley Slopes
- 3C: Sparsely Settled Farmed Valley Floors
- 3D: Upland River Valleys
- 3G: River Valley Slopes & Combes
- 3H: Secluded Valleys
- 4A: Estuaries
- 4B: Marine Levels & Coastal Plains
- 4C: Coastal Slopes & Combes with Settlement
- 4E: Extensive Inter-Tidal Sands
- 4F: Dunes
- 4H: Cliffs
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Map Scale @ A3:1:150,000

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LUC LDN 5907-01_003_Fig2_2_Historic_landscape_types 13/02/2014

Source: Devon County Council, North Devon District Council

Landscape Quality Baseline

2.11 Parts of North Devon District include land within the North Devon Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), which also extends into Torridge. In addition, just under 30% of Exmoor National Park falls within the District, although this land has not been included in the sensitivity assessment. In both cases, the relationship between non-designated land within the district and the protected landscapes has been considered in the assessments (e.g. where LCTs form a rural backdrop to views from the National Park or AONB, and vice versa). The location of these protected landscapes in the context of the District is shown in **Figure 2.3**.

North Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

2.12 The North Devon AONB is located to the north and western extent of North Devon, covering 7,845 hectares and just over 7.2% of the District. The remainder of the protected landscape extends into Torridge District.

2.13 The management of the AONB is underpinned by the AONB Management Plan (2009-14)[13] which is currently being revised and due for publication shortly. A new 20-year vision for the AONB, as set out in the revised Plan (2014-19), is as follows:

'The North Devon Coast AONB will remain as one of England's finest landscapes and seascapes, protected, inspiring and valued by all. Its natural and cultural heritage will sustain those who live in, work in or visit the area. It will be valued by residents and visitors alike who will have increased understanding of what makes the area unique and will be addressing the challenges of keeping it special to secure its long term future..'

2.14 The revised Management Plan also includes a 'Statement of Significance' which underpins the designation of the protected landscape (the AONB was designated in 1959 as one of the first in England). This is extracted in **Table 2.2** below.

Table 2.2.2: Statement of Significance for the North Devon AONB

North Devon AONB Statement of Significance
Distinctive coastal scenery with rare features and qualities
Walking along the South West Coast Path across the open, windswept cliff tops, and gazing westward across the seemingly infinite expanse of ocean, one is struck with a timeless sense of raw nature devoid of human influence. The humbling feeling is sharpened when Atlantic storm waves crash against the twisted strata of exposed rocky cliffs, sending thunderous sprays of surf into the air. Dropping down into a coastal combe from the cliffs or farmland, a strong sense of refuge and shelter is felt, made more striking by the presence of enclosing woodland in the combes and the abrupt drop in wind speed. Where stretches of coastline are distant from the coast road, a sense of tranquillity and remoteness is strong. Such qualities are increasingly uncommon in the wider countryside, but even more rare is a quality found in some areas – that of wilderness. In Braunton Burrows this is perhaps most striking, comprising a vast sand-dune system, the infinite sky and an expanse of sandy beach and estuary bordered by tranquil marshland. Likewise, the Hartland Coast possesses a sense of wilderness, but this is a fragile quality, which can dissolve with the sight of a wind turbine or mast on a skyline, or a car parked in an open combe. Coastal landforms provide classic examples of erosion and deposition, as well as rare and characteristic landscape features.
A landscape and seascape of high visual quality
Panoramic views from elevated areas across rolling countryside within and outside the AONB are an important feature of the AONB. Within the combes, framed sea views are characteristic, and coastal vistas across to Lundy are wide and empty; further north the vista is framed by an intimate view of the Welsh coast. The countryside backdrop, much of it undesignated, is a

[13] http://northdevon-aonb.org.uk/pageresources/Management%20Plan%20single%20pages%20for%20web%2015%20May%2009.pdf

North Devon AONB Statement of Significance
defining element to the visual quality of the AONB providing a variety of open views. The coast path provides long views along the coast across the estuary and inland to undeveloped skyline and downland.
A significant wildlife resource *The rarest AONB habitat is the Culm Grassland, small fragments of which are found on the wet inland moors. Elsewhere are mosaics of maritime grassland, heathland and scrub along with sea cliffs, rocky shores, estuarine salt marsh and internationally important sand dunes; hundreds of miles of hedgerows provide extensive havens throughout the inland area. Western oak woodland is found along the Clovelly coast and within the combes, whilst excellent air quality, constantly freshened by Atlantic westerlies, is a particular asset and supports, a proliferation and variety of lichens, with straggling clumps of "Sausage lichen" contributing to the local landscape character.*
A varied geology *Much of the coastline is covered by SSSI for its geological importance. Coastal landforms provide classic examples of coastal erosion and deposition as well as rare and unique landscape features. Some features are particularly special and include the pebble ridge at Northam Burrows and the dramatic waterfalls cascading onto the rocky shores from truncated combes. The variety of coastal landforms from wave-cut platforms to wide sandy beaches offer an immense resource for marine wildlife that inhabit the foreshore.*
A remarkable heritage *The legacy of a long history of human habitation in the area is woven into the landscape, with some threads tracing back to pre-historic times. The most extensive historic landscape features are the enclosed fields defined by ancient hedge-banks, their patterns reflecting centuries of agricultural change and made more appealing by the historic farmsteads, hamlets and villages, and the winding lanes which connect them. Inland, the skyline is marked by ancient burial mounds whilst along the coast, promontory sites have been home to strategic defences from the Iron Age to the 20th Century. Devon's seagoing heritage is represented by, for example, historic quays and fishing villages of Clovelly with lime kilns in almost every inlet.*
Unique setting *What makes the North Devon AONB unique in Devon is that it is a long and narrow sliver of largely coastal land. Unlike other AONBs the designation line was based on the catchments of the coastal streams of Hartland and North Devon, rather than the wider catchments of the Taw and Torridge rivers. To many people who live and work within the area, most of North Devon is an area of natural beauty, and though special, in fact only a small proportion is designated. However, these non-designated areas, be they the vast expanse of ocean in the Bristol Channel; the solitary island of Lundy; or the settlements of Ilfracombe and Westward Ho!; or the beautiful inland scenery that lies adjacent to the designated area, all combine to provide an important setting or backdrop to the AONB. This means that development or management outside of the designated area,be it on land or at sea, can have a profound effect across the entire AONB and extreme care must be taken when making management decisions within these special areas.*

The Special Qualities of the North Devon AONB

2.15 The revised Management Plan also includes a new section which sets out fourteen 'special qualities' underpinning the national landscape designation. These have been derived from the Devon Landscape Character Assessment which was published in the period since the last management plan was adopted. The new special qualities are also important to account for in this landscape sensitivity assessment, and are set out below:

- Diversity of scenery contained within a small area, including some of the finest cliff scenery in the country (as mentioned at designation)

- Panoramic seascape, with seaward views to Lundy within the Atlantic Ocean, across the Bristol Channel to Wales and along the coastline. These views are of a landscape and seascape devoid of human influence.
- Narrow framed views of the sea from coastal mouths of steep-sided combes.
- Panoramic views across a rolling landscape of pastoral farmland and wooded combes and valleys towards the sea from elevated inland areas.
- Wild coastal scenery. In the north, hogsback cliffs of varying heights; in the south high, rugged cliffs, dramatic rock formations, exposed headlands, wavecut platforms and rocky coves.
- A vast sand dune system at Braunton Burrows of exposed wild character, with high nature-conservation interest of international importance, and the pebble ridge at Westward Ho!
- Long, broad sandy beaches backed by extensive dune systems.
- A strong sense of tranquillity and remoteness where the coast road is located away from the coastline.
- Rare and fragile quality of wilderness in Braunton Burrows and on the Hartland coast.
- Historic landscape pattern of hedge-banks, farmsteads, hamlets, villages and lanes.
- Historic coastal quays and fishing villages, coastal promontory sites for strategic defences and lighthouses.
- Deep combes and cliffs cloaked in ancient woodland along the Bideford Bay coast.
- Small pockets of remnant lowland coastal heathlands around Morte Point and Hartland Quay.
- Tourist-orientated settlements in sheltered seaside locations.

2.16 The landscape sensitivity assessments for those LCTs with land falling within the AONB (or that play an important role as part of its landscape setting) have taken account of those aspects of the Statement of Significance and the above special qualities, relevant to the parts of the AONB within North Devon district, that could be affected by wind or solar PV development.

Exmoor National Park

2.17 A significant area of the District (20,085 hectares or just over 18%) falls within Exmoor National Park. Although the sensitivity assessment does not cover land within the Park, consideration has been made in terms of the potential impacts of wind/solar PV development in adjacent areas on the special qualities of Exmoor. For example, large scale development close to the National Park could be intrusive in views from Exmoor if poorly sited and designed, and may affect the natural beauty of the Park and the special qualities noted in the bullet points below. These would need to be taken account of in siting any development close to the protected landscape.

2.18 The current Exmoor National Park Local Plan 2001-11[14] sets out a 'Vision For the Landscape' of the National Park, as follows:

"*Increased areas of wild landscape, including moorland, native woodland, bracken, scrub and mires. Sustainable farming practice conserving landscape features such as hedgebanks, orchards, unimproved grasslands and farm woodlands. Fewer eyesores, and buildings combining local materials and good design..*" [15]

2.19 The Exmoor National Park Partnership Plan 2012-2017 also describes the 'special qualities' that have underpinned the designation of Exmoor as a National Park since 1954. Because the area of the National Park within North Devon does not form part of this assessment, many of the National Park-wide special qualities do not relate to the specific land in question. However, those that are relevant include:

[14] Please note that the National Park new Local Plan (Core Strategy and Development Management Policies DPD) is currently in preparation, with consultation ending on 13 December 2013. Therefore for the purposes of this report we have used the information from the current 2001-2011 Local Plan.

[15] http://www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy/local-plan/local-plan-written-statement

- a timeless landscape mostly free from intrusive development, with striking views inside and out of the National Park, and where the natural beauty of Exmoor and its dark night skies can be appreciated; and
- large areas of open moorland providing a sense of remoteness, wildness and tranquillity rare in southern Britain.

2.20 Those LCTs with land abutting the National Park, or that form a backdrop to views from Exmoor, make reference to the above special qualities in their assessments.

Other designations

North Devon Biosphere Reserve

2.21 In addition to the two protected landscapes, it is also important to note that a large proportion of the district falls within the North Devon Biosphere Reserve – a landscape-scale UNESCO designation afforded to only eight sites in the UK (also shown in **Figure 2.3**). This designation was created to protect the biological and cultural diversity of a region while promoting and demonstrating sustainable economic development. In the case of North Devon, the wider reserve covers the wider catchment of the Taw and Torridge Rivers, stretching from Dartmoor and Exmoor to the coast and beyond to Lundy (around 3,300 km^2). The core area of the Reserve is focused on Braunton Burrows and the Taw/Torridge Estuary, areas of international importance for biodiversity. Whilst this designation is not recognised in planning policy terms in the same way as National Parks and AONBs, it forms a key element of the spatial planning vision for the area in the forthcoming Joint Core Strategy for North Devon and Torridge Districts.

Other designations

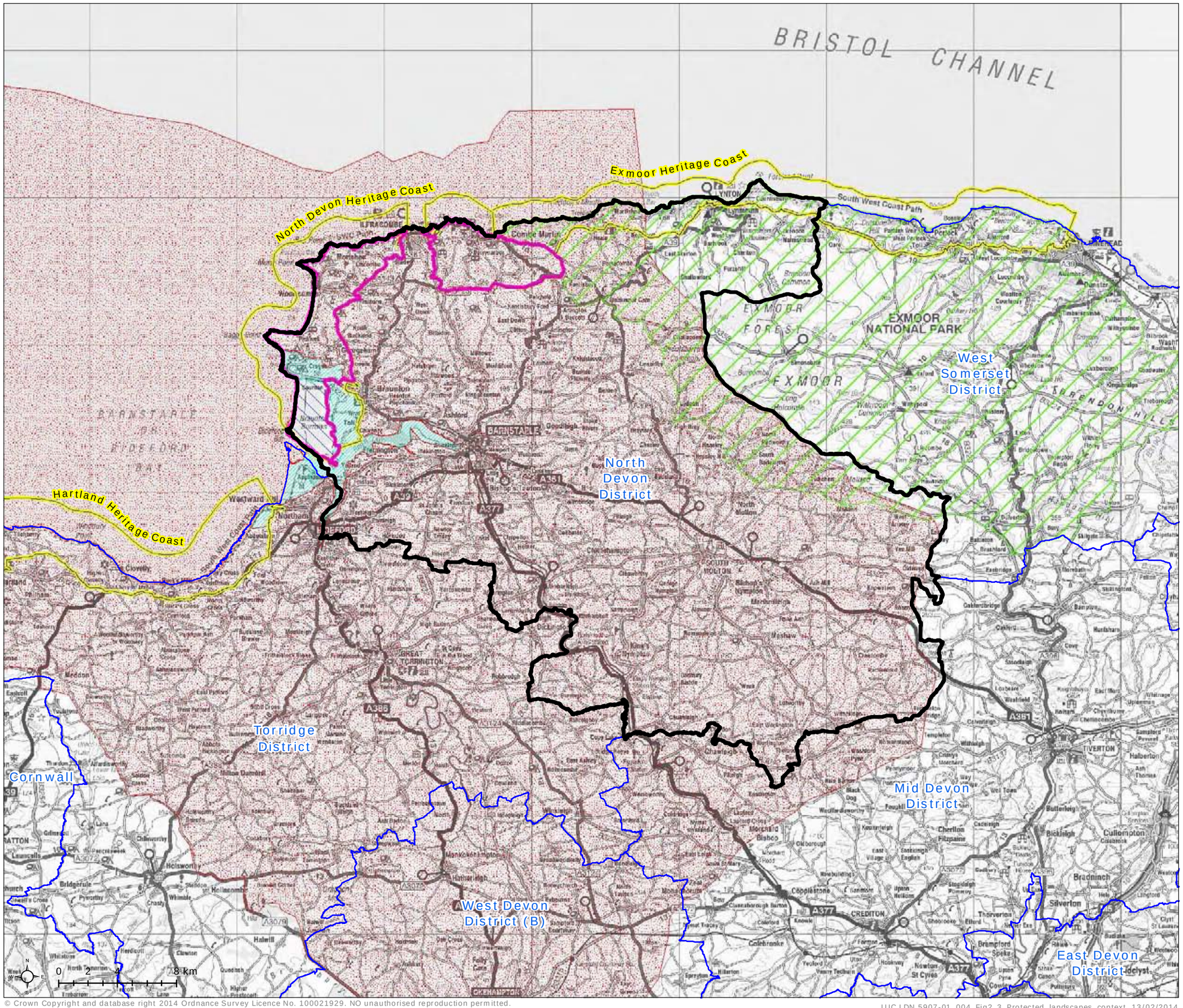
2.22 Due to the strategic scale of this study, designated sites and features such as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), Regionally Important Geological Sites (RIGS), Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, as well as other local designations have not been individually assessed. However, where they are of relevance to the specific landscape assessment criteria (e.g. Scheduled Monuments located on skylines; large tracts of SAC/SSSI-designated Culm grasslands which are a key landscape characteristic) these have been referred to in the assessments.

2.23 In all cases, the impacts of wind or solar PV developments on individual sites and features are considered at a site-specific level as part of the planning process, including through Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).

North Devon Landscape Sensitivity Assessment

Figure 2.3

North Devon In The Context Of Nearby Protected Landscapes



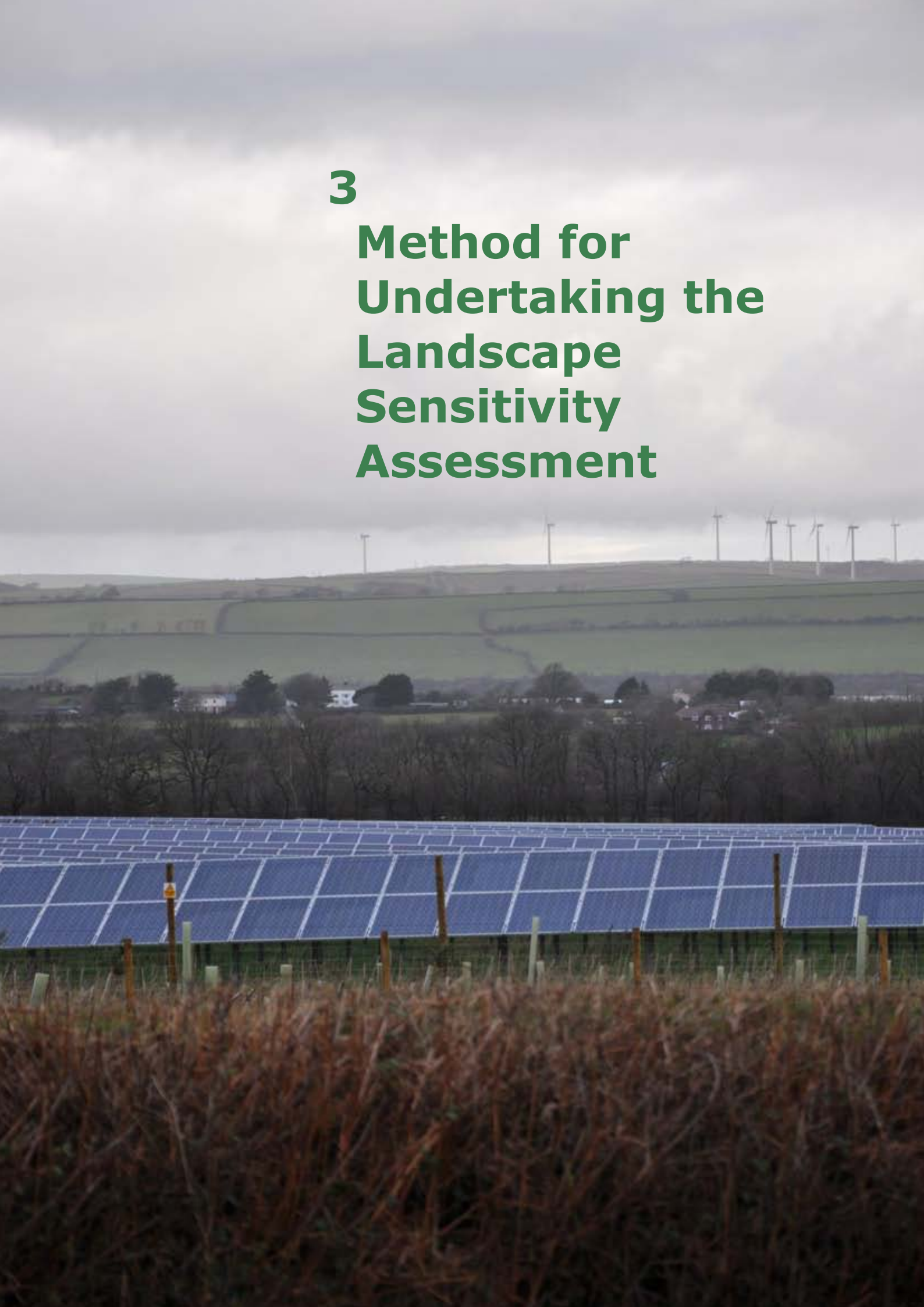
- North Devon District boundary
- District boundary
- North Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Heritage Coast
- Exmoor National Park

North Devon Biosphere Reserve Zone

- Buffer
- Core
- Transition

Map Scale @ A3:1:250,000

Source: Devon County Council, North Devon District Council



3 Method for Undertaking the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment

3 Method for Undertaking the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment

Spatial and descriptive framework

3.1 North Devon's Landscape Character Types (LCTs) form the spatial framework and primary evidence base for this Landscape Sensitivity Assessment, as previously discussed and illustrated in **Figure 2.1**. A thorough desk-based study, drawing on other sources of spatial and descriptive information about the landscape, was supplemented by field survey work by a team of landscape professionals to verify and use professional judgement to produce the landscape sensitivity assessments.

3.2 Other key sources of information used to inform the assessment include:

- The Devon Historic Landscape Character assessment (HLC).
- The special qualities and spatial boundaries of the North Devon AONB and Exmoor National Park.
- Ordnance survey base maps (1:250K, 1:50K and 1:25K).
- Aerial photography (Google Earth).

Development types considered

Wind turbines and field-scale solar photovoltaics (PV)

3.3 This Landscape Sensitivity Assessment applies to all forms of turbines, although it has been based on the most common horizontal axis three-bladed turbine, as described and illustrated in the DLPG Advice Note No. 2[16]. In terms of solar PV developments, the assessment is based on field scale developments, also described in the DLPG Guidance Note.

3.4 The North Devon assessment considers the suitability of different turbine heights, cluster sizes, and different scales of solar PV development based on bandings that reflect those that are most likely to be put forward by developers (now and in the future). These are also consistent with the DLPG Guidance Note, and are set out in **Table 3.1** below:

Table 3.1: Development sizes/scales used for this assessment

Wind Turbines		Solar PV scales
Height (to blade tip)	Cluster size	
Very small (15-25m)	Single turbine	Very small (<1ha)
Small (26-50m)	Small (<5 turbines)	Small (>1-5ha)
Medium (51-75m)	Medium (6-10 turbines)	Medium (>5-10ha)
Large (76-110m)	Large (11-25 turbines)	Large (>10-15ha)
Very large (111-150m)	Very large (>25 turbines)	Very large (>15-20ha)

[16] DLPG Advice Note 2: Accommodating wind and solar pv developments in Devon's landscape: guidance on minimising harm to the distinctive character and special qualities of Devon's landscape through sensitive siting and design http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/environmentplanning/natural_environment/landscape/landscape-policy-guidance.htm

3.5 For this study for North Devon, the 'very large' size band for solar PV has been given an upper limit of 20 hectares. This upper limit for the sensitivity assessment was recommended and agreed by the Steering Group as it is unlikely that developments larger than 20ha would be able to be accommodated within the district's landscape. Regardless of the upper limit of the sensitivity assessment, any proposals larger than 20ha will still need to take account of the guidance provided by this study.

Features as size comparators for wind turbines

3.6 In order to visualise how the different turbine heights set out above relate to features found in North Devon District, a list of comparable features/land marks is provided in **Table 3.2**.

Table 3.2: Features as size comparators for wind turbines

Feature	Size
Domestic buildings	6-10 metres
Very Small Turbines	15-25m (see **Figure 3.1** below)
Mature deciduous trees (dependent on species)	10-25m
Beech Farm Wind Turbine	24.5m (see **Figure 3.2** below)
Small Turbines	26-50m
Knowle Farm Wind Turbine	34.2m tip height (see **Figure 3.3** below)
Ilfracombe TV transmitter	45m (approx., see **Figure 3.4** below)
Standard 'lattice tower' pylons	46.5m (can be higher – see **Figure 3.5** below)
Medium Turbine	51-75m
Large Turbine	76-110m
Philip Dennis Wind Turbines	79.6m
Fullabrook Down Wind Turbines	110m (see **Figure 3.6** below)
Very Large Turbine	110-150m

Figure 3.1: Very small-scale wind turbine at Greencliff Farm near Abbotsham

© North Devon AONB

Figure 3.2: Small-scale wind turbine at Beech Farm

Figure 3.3: Small-scale wind turbine at Knowle Farm, Horwood

Figure 3.4: Ilfracombe TV Transmitter (within the same height band as a 'small' turbine)

Figure 3.5: Pylon near Hilltown (just under the height of a 'medium' turbine)

Figure 3.6: Wind energy Development at Fullabrook Down (within the same height band as 'large' turbines)

© North Devon AONB

Comparable features for solar PV developments

3.7 Table 3.3 below sets out a similar table for solar PV developments to provide size comparisons.

Table 3.3: Familiar features as size comparators for Solar PV developments

Feature	Size
Football pitch	0.6-0.8ha
Very Small Solar PV Scheme	**<1ha**
Hilltown Solar PV scheme	0.034ha (see **Figure 3.7** below)
Small Solar PV Scheme	**>1-5ha**
Average size of medieval enclosures based on strip fields	1ha
Medium Solar PV Scheme	**>5-10ha**
Large Solar PV Scheme	**>10-15ha**
Typical size of 'modern' field enclosures	5-15ha
Kingsland Barton Solar Farm (in construction)	13.02ha (see **Figure 3.8** below)
Horsacott Farm Solar Farm	15ha (see **Figure 3.9** below)
Very Large Solar PV Scheme	**>15ha**
Four Cross Way Solar Farm	18.7 ha (see **Figure 3.10** below)

Figure 3.7: Hilltown Solar Farm, Molland (in the 'very small' category)

Figure 3.8: Kingsland Barton, South Molton (under construction: in the 'large' category)

Figure 3.9: Horsacott Farm Solar Farm, Lydacott (in the 'large' category)

Figure 3.10: Four Cross Way, Bratton Flemming (in the 'very large' category)

Evaluating landscape sensitivity

3.8 There is currently no published method for evaluating the sensitivity of different types of landscape to renewable energy developments. However, the approach taken in this study builds on current guidance published by the Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage including the Landscape Character Assessment Guidance[17] and Topic Paper 6[18] that accompanies the Guidance, as well as LUC's considerable experience from previous and ongoing studies of a similar nature.

3.9 Paragraph 4.2 of Topic Paper 6 states that:

'*Judging landscape character sensitivity requires professional judgement about the degree to which the landscape in question is robust, in that it is able to accommodate change without adverse impacts on character. This involves making decisions about whether or not significant characteristic elements of the landscape will be liable to loss... and whether important aesthetic aspects of character will be liable to change'*

3.10 In this study the following definition of sensitivity has been used, which is based on the principles set out in Topic Paper 6. It is also compliant with the third edition of the *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment* (GLVIA 3, 2013) as well as definitions used in other landscape sensitivity studies of this type:

Landscape sensitivity is the extent to which the character and quality of the landscape is susceptible to change as a result of wind energy or solar PV developments.

Assessment criteria

3.11 In line with the recommendations in Topic Paper 6, this landscape sensitivity assessment is based on an assessment of landscape character using carefully defined criteria. Criteria for determining landscape sensitivity to wind energy and field-scale PV development are taken from the DLPG Advice Note No. 2.

3.12 These criteria are based on attributes of the landscape most likely to be affected by each development type. **Table 3.4** sets out the criteria that have been used for the assessment of landscape sensitivity to the principle of wind energy development (of any size); and **Table 3.5** for the assessment of landscape sensitivity to the principle of solar PV development (of any size). It includes guidance and examples for applying the criteria, which are then verified through professional judgement and field verification to apply to the particular landscape in question.

[17] The Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage (2002) Landscape Character Assessment: Guidance for England and Scotland CAX 84

[18] The Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage (2004) Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland Topic Paper 6: Techniques and Criteria for Judging Capacity and Sensitivity.

Table 3.4: Criteria and guidance for assessing landscape sensitivity to wind energy

Landform and scale				
A smooth gently sloping or flat landform is likely to be less sensitive to wind energy development than a landscape with a dramatic rugged landform, distinct landform features (including prominent headlands and cliffs) or pronounced undulations. Larger scale landforms are likely to be less sensitive than smaller scale landforms - because turbines may appear out of scale, detract from visually important landforms or appear visually confusing (due to turbines being at varying heights) in the latter types of landscapes. Information sources: Devon Landscape Character Assessment; Ordnance Survey basemaps; Topography data (Ordnance Survey Panorama); fieldwork.				
Examples of sensitivity ratings				
Lower sensitivity ⟷			**Higher sensitivity**	
e.g. an extensive lowland flat landscape or elevated plateau, often a larger scale landform	e.g. a simple gently rolling landscape, likely to be a medium-large scale landform	e.g. an undulating landscape, perhaps also incised by valleys, likely to be a medium scale landform	e.g.a landscape with distinct landform features, and/or irregular in topographic appearance (which may be large in scale), or a smaller scale landform	e.g. a landscape with a rugged landform or dramatic landform features (which may be large in scale), or a small scale or intimate landform
Land cover pattern and presence of human scale features				
Simple, regular landscapes with extensive areas of consistent ground cover are likely to be less sensitive to wind energy development than landscapes with more complex or irregular land cover patterns, smaller and / or irregular field sizes and landscapes with frequent human scale features that are traditional of the landscape, such as stone farmsteads and small farm woodlands [19]. This is because large features such as wind turbines may dominate smaller scale traditional features within the landscape. Information sources: Devon Landscape Character Assessment; Ordnance Survey basemaps; Google Earth (aerial photography); fieldwork.				
Examples of sensitivity ratings				
Lower sensitivity ⟷			**Higher sensitivity**	
e.g. a very large-scale landscape with uniform groundcover and lacking in human scale features	e.g. a landscape with large-scale fields, little variety in land cover and occasional human scale features such as trees and domestic buildings	e.g. a landscape with medium sized fields, some variations in land cover and presence of human scale features such as trees, domestic buildings	e.g.a landscape with irregular small-scale fields, variety in land cover and presence of human scale features such as trees, domestic buildings	e.g. a landscape with a strong variety in land cover and small-scale / irregular in appearance containing numerous human scale features

[19] Human scale features are aspects of land cover such as stone walls, hedges, buildings which give a 'human scale' to the landscape

Tracks / transport pattern

Landscapes that are devoid of tracks will be particularly sensitive to wind energy development because it will be more difficult to absorb permanent new tracks into the landscape without change to character in these areas. In addition, if a Landscape Character Type has a rural road network which contributes to landscape character (e.g. winding narrow lanes bounded by high hedgebanks or sunken lanes), this aspect of character may be affected by access works to enable HGVs carrying turbines to a site. This characteristic therefore also influences sensitivity.

Information sources: Devon Landscape Character Assessment; Ordnance survey basemaps showing presence of tracks; fieldwork.

Examples of sensitivity ratings

Lower sensitivity		⟷		**Higher sensitivity**
e.g. a landscape containing existing roads and vehicular tracks, and no restrictions in terms of narrow hedged lanes	a landscape containing existing roads and vehicular tracks, and few restrictions in terms of narrow hedged lanes	a landscape containing some existing roads and vehicular tracks, including some restrictions in terms of narrow hedged lanes	a landscape containing few lanes or vehicular tracks, and these are predominantly narrow lanes bounded by high hedgebanks	a landscape devoid of roads or vehicular tracks

Skylines

Prominent and distinctive and/or undeveloped skylines, or skylines with important landmark features, are likely to be more sensitive to wind energy development because turbines may detract from these skylines as features in the landscape, or draw attention away from existing landform or landmark features on skylines. These include the skylines of elevated coastlines and coastal headlands. Important landmark features on the skyline might include historic features or monuments.

Information sources: Devon Landscape Character Assessment; fieldwork.

Examples of sensitivity ratings

Lower sensitivity		⟷		**Higher sensitivity**
e.g. a large-scale flat or plateau landscape where skylines are not prominent and/or there are no important landmark features on the skyline	e.g. a large-scale landscape where skylines are not prominent and/or there are very few landmark features on the skyline – other skylines in adjacent LCTs are more prominent	e.g. a landscape with some prominent skylines, but these are not particularly distinctive. There may be some landmark features on the skyline.	e.g. a landscape with prominent skylines that may form an important backdrop to views from settlements or important viewpoints, and/or with important landmark features	e.g. a landscape comprising prominent or distinctive undeveloped skylines or skylines with particularly important landmark features

Perceptual qualities

Landscapes that are relatively remote or tranquil (due to freedom from human activity and disturbance and having a perceived naturalness or a strong feel of traditional rurality with few modern human influences) tend to increase levels of sensitivity to wind energy development compared to landscapes that contain signs of modern development (as the development will introduce new and uncharacteristic features which may detract from a sense of tranquillity and or remoteness/ naturalness).

Information sources: Devon Landscape Character Assessment; CPRE's Tranquillity and Intrusion mapping; Ordnance Survey basemaps (presence / absence of development, settlement, structures).

Examples of sensitivity ratings

Lower sensitivity ⟷				**Higher sensitivity**
e.g. a landscape with much human activity and development such as industrial areas or a port	e.g. a rural landscape with much human activity and dispersed modern development	e.g. a rural landscape with some modern development and human activity	e.g. a more naturalistic landscape and / or one with little modern human influence and development	e.g. a remote or 'wild' landscape with little or no signs of current human activity and development

Historic Landscape Character

Due to intrinsic historic landscape character significance, or potential for preserved archaeological evidence, historic landscape types (HLTs) such as rough ground with earlier remains, prehistoric fields, watermeadows, and fields with a medieval historic character type such as strip fields, enclosures (strips) and enclosures – medieval have a higher sensitivity to larger scale wind energy development due to their strong historic qualities. Some more recent but discrete enclosed landscapes may also be sensitive, such as 'barton' fields. Lower sensitivity landscapes include industrial landscapes, coniferous plantations, airfields, and post medieval/modern enclosures.

Information sources: Devon Landscape Character Assessment; Devon HLC.

Examples of sensitivity ratings

Lower sensitivity ⟷				**Higher sensitivity**
e.g. majority of the landscape covered by least sensitive HLTs	e.g. majority of the landscape covered by lower sensitivity HLTs, but may include some small areas of higher sensitivity	e.g. majority of the landscape covered by medium sensitivity HLTs or a mixture of higher and lower sensitivity HLTs	e.g. majority of the landscape covered by higher sensitivity HLTs, but may include some small areas of lower sensitivity	e.g. the majority of the landscape covered by higher sensitivity HLTs

Scenic and special qualities				
Landscapes that have a high scenic quality (which may be recognised as a National Park, Heritage Coast or AONB) will be more sensitive than landscapes of low scenic quality. This is particularly the case where their special qualities (as recorded in the Landscape Character Assessment or designation documents) are likely to be affected by wind energy development. Scenic and special qualities may relate to landscapes that are not designated as well as landscape designated for their natural beauty. Information sources: National Park 'special qualities' and AONB 'Statements of Significance' in Management Plans; Landscape Character Assessment information on 'special qualities and features'.				
Examples of sensitivity ratings				
Lower sensitivity ⟷ **Higher sensitivity**				
e.g. landscape has low scenic quality such as an industrial area or despoiled land – special qualities will not be affected by wind energy development	e.g. landscape has low-medium scenic quality, or special qualities are unlikely to be affected by wind energy development	e.g. landscape has a medium scenic quality and some of the special qualities may be affected by wind energy development	e.g. landscape has a medium-high scenic quality – most of the special qualities are likely to be affected by wind energy development	e.g. area has a high scenic quality (likely to be recognised as National Park/AONB/ Heritage Coast) and the scenic qualities will be affected by wind energy development

Table 3.5: Criteria and guidance for assessing landscape sensitivity to solar PV

Landform				
A flat or gently undulating lowland landscape or extensive plateau is likely to be less sensitive to solar PV development than a landscape with prominent landforms and visible slopes, including coastal headlands. This is because arrays of solar PV panels will be less easily perceived in a flat landscape than on a slope, especially higher slopes. Information sources: Devon Landscape Character Assessment; contours from the Ordnance Survey basemaps; Topography data (Ordnance Survey Panorama); fieldwork.				
Examples of sensitivity ratings				
Lower sensitivity ⟷				**Higher sensitivity**
e.g. a lowland flat landscape or extensive plateau	e.g. a gently undulating lowland landscape or plateau	e.g. an undulating landscape with hidden areas as well as some visible slopes	e.g. a landscape with many prominent, visible slopes or an upland landscape	e.g. very steep landform and exposed, visible slopes
Sense of openness / enclosure				
A landscape with a strong sense of enclosure (e.g. provided by land cover such as woodland or high hedgebanks) is likely to be less sensitive to solar PV development than an open and unenclosed landscape because the development will be less easily perceived, especially at a distance, in an enclosed landscape. Information sources: Devon Landscape Character Assessment; Google Earth / aerial photographs; fieldwork.				
Examples of sensitivity ratings				
Lower sensitivity ⟷				**Higher sensitivity**
e.g. a very well enclosed landscaped – perhaps provided by thick, high hedgebanks and hedgerows, tree belts and woodland	e.g. relatively high levels of enclosure provided by hedgebanks and thick hedgerows with frequent hedgerow trees	e.g. a landscape with some open and some more enclosed areas – likely to be a rural landscape with some hedgebanks and hedgerows and tree belts	e.g. an open landscape with little sense of enclosure (low, few or no hedgebanks or hedgerows, few trees)	e.g. an extremely open landscape such as an unenclosed plateau with no field boundaries or trees

Field pattern and scale

Landscapes with small-scale, more irregular field patterns are likely to be more sensitive to the introduction of solar PV development than landscapes with large, regular scale field patterns because of the risk of diluting or masking the characteristic landscape patterns. This would be particularly apparent if development takes place across a number of adjacent fields where the field pattern is small and intricate (bearing in mind that the height of panels could exceed that of a hedge/ hedgebank).

Information sources: Devon Landscape Character Assessment; Devon Historic Landscape Characterisation; Ordnance survey 1:25K basemap (showing field patterns); Google Earth (aerial photography); fieldwork.

Examples of sensitivity ratings

Lower sensitivity ⟷				**Higher sensitivity**
e.g. a landscape with large-scale, regular fields of mainly modern origin	e.g. a landscape which is mainly defined by large, modern fields	e.g. a landscape with a mixture of large-scale, modern fields and some smaller, more historic enclosure	e.g. a landscape dominated by ancient, small-scale field patterns with a few isolated areas of modern enclosure	e.g. a landscape characterised by small-scale, ancient field patterns

Land cover

Since PV panels introduce a new land cover (of built structures) , landscapes containing existing hard surfacing or built elements (e.g. urban areas, brownfield sites or large-scale horticulture) are likely to be less sensitive to field-scale solar PV development than highly rural or naturalistic landscapes.

Information sources: Devon Landscape Character Assessment; Google Earth (aerial photography); fieldwork.

Examples of sensitivity ratings

Lower sensitivity				**Higher sensitivity**
e.g. an urban or 'brownfield' landscape	e.g. an area of large scale horticulture	e.g. a rural landscape, perhaps with some brownfield sites or urban influences	e.g. a rural landscape , perhaps with some areas of semi-natural land cover	e.g. a landscape dominated by semi-natural land cover

Perceptual qualities

Landscapes that are relatively remote or tranquil (due to freedom from human activity and disturbance and having a perceived naturalness or a strong feel of traditional rurality with few modern human influences) tend to increase levels of sensitivity to solar PV development compared to landscapes that contain signs of modern development (as the development will introduce new and uncharacteristic features which may detract from a sense of tranquillity and or remoteness/ naturalness).

Information sources: Devon Landscape Character Assessment; CPRE's Tranquillity and Intrusion mapping; Ordnance Survey basemaps (presence / absence of development, settlement, structures).

Examples of sensitivity ratings

Lower sensitivity ⟷				**Higher sensitivity**
e.g. a landscape with much human activity and development such as industrial areas or a port	e.g. a rural landscape with much human activity and dispersed modern development	e.g. a rural landscape with some modern development and human activity	e.g. a more naturalistic landscape and / or one with little modern human influence and development	e.g. a remote or 'wild' landscape with little or no signs of current human activity and development

Historic Landscape Character

Due to intrinsic historic landscape character significance, or potential for preserved archaeological evidence, historic landscape types (HLTs) such as rough ground with earlier remains, prehistoric fields, watermeadows, and fields with a medieval historic character type such as strip fields, enclosures (strips) and enclosures – medieval have a higher sensitivity to solar development. Some more recent but discrete enclosed landscapes may also be sensitive, such as 'barton' fields. Lower sensitivity landscapes include industrial landscapes, coniferous plantations, airfields, and post medieval/modern enclosures.

Information sources: Devon Landscape Character Assessment; Devon HLC.

Examples of sensitivity ratings

Lower sensitivity ⟷				**Higher sensitivity**
e.g. majority of the landscape covered by least sensitive HLTs	e.g. majority of the landscape covered by lower sensitivity HLTs, but may include some small areas of higher sensitivity	e.g. majority of the landscape covered by medium sensitivity HLTs or a mixture of higher and lower sensitivity HLTs	e.g. majority of the landscape covered by higher sensitivity HLTs, but may include some small areas of lower sensitivity	e.g. the majority of the landscape covered by higher sensitivity HLTs

Scenic and special qualities				
Landscapes that have a high scenic quality (which may be recognised as a National Park, Heritage Coast or AONB) will be more sensitive than landscapes of low scenic quality. This is particularly the case where their special qualities (as recorded in the Landscape Character Assessment or designation documents) are likely to be affected by solar PV development. Scenic and special qualities may relate to landscapes that are not designated as well as landscape designated for their natural beauty. Information sources: National Park 'special qualities' and AONB 'Statements of Significance' in Management Plans; Landscape Character Assessment 'special qualities and features' information.				
Examples of sensitivity ratings				
Lower sensitivity		⟷		**Higher sensitivity**
landscape has low scenic quality such as an industrial area or despoiled land– special qualities will not be affected by solar PV development	landscape has low-medium scenic quality, or special qualities are unlikely to be affected by solar PV development	landscape has a medium scenic quality and some of the special qualities may be affected by solar PV development	landscape has a medium-high scenic quality – most of the special qualities are likely to be affected by solar PV development	area has a high scenic quality (likely to be recognised as National Park/ AONB/ Heritage Coast) and the scenic qualities will be affected by solar PV development

The discussion on landscape sensitivity

3.13 Once the criteria have been assessed individually, the results are drawn together into a summary discussion on landscape sensitivity to the principle of the renewable energy development for that LCT. These are shown in Chapter 5.

3.14 If one criterion has a particularly strong influence on landscape sensitivity this is drawn out in the discussion (an example might be a landscape with prominent/ dominant skylines, or particularly high levels of tranquillity or remoteness).

3.15 In any given LCT there may be criteria that produce conflicting scores. For example, when considering sensitivity to wind energy development, a settled landscape, while containing greater human influence (indicating a lower sensitivity), will also include more human scale features that could be affected by large-scale wind turbines (indicating a higher sensitivity). Conversely, a more remote landscape will lack the human scale features but is likely to present a higher sensitivity from a perceptual point of view. When considering solar PV development, a landscape with a very small-scale field pattern and with a high sense of enclosure might score lower sensitivity for 'sense of enclosure/openness' but higher for 'field pattern and scale'. These issues are brought out in the overall discussion on landscape sensitivity.

3.16 The sensitivity assessment is not influenced by existing renewable energy developments in the landscape which pre-date this study.

Judging landscape sensitivity to different sizes of development

3.17 The next stage of the assessment is to come to a judgement on landscape sensitivity to different sizes/scales of development (height of wind turbines and size of solar PV development). In the case of wind turbines, notes are also provided in relation to sensitivity to different turbine cluster sizes.

3.18 Sensitivity is judged on a five-point scale as shown in **Table 3.6** below. These sensitivity ratings can apply to any landscape in England – they are not specific to North Devon.

Table 3.6: Sensitivity levels and definitions

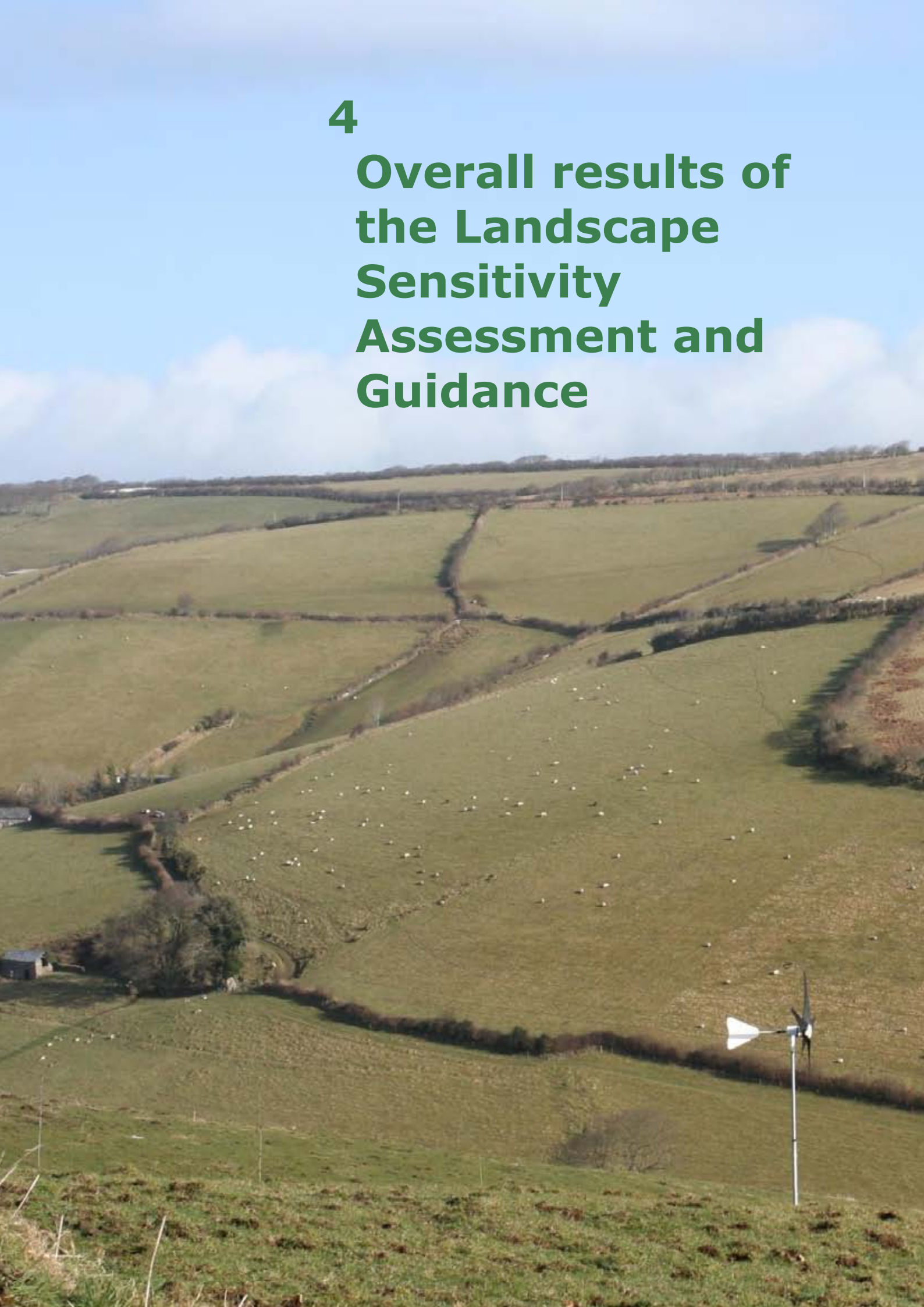
Sensitivity Level	Definition
High (H)	The key characteristics and qualities of the landscape are highly sensitive to change from the type and scale of renewable energy being assessed.
Moderate-High (M-H)	The key characteristics and qualities of the landscape are sensitive to change from the type and scale of renewable energy being assessed.
Moderate (M)	Some of the key characteristics and qualities of the landscape are sensitive to change from the type and scale of renewable energy being assessed.
Low-Moderate (L-M)	Few of the key characteristics and qualities of the landscape are sensitive to change from the type and scale of renewable energy being assessed.
Low (L)	Key characteristics and qualities of the landscape are robust and are less likely to be adversely affected by the type and scale of renewable energy development being assessed.

Presentation of results

3.19 The full landscape sensitivity assessments for each of the landscape character types (LCTs) are presented in tabular format in **Chapter 5**. The tables provide:

- A summary description of the LCT against each of the assessment criteria, giving a landscape sensitivity assessment 'score' for each (on the coloured five-point scale as set out in **Table 3.6** above).
- An overall discussion on landscape sensitivity for the LCT.
- Sensitivity ratings for different scales of development (different turbine heights for wind energy development and different areas of panels for solar PV development).
- For wind energy development, a commentary on landscape sensitivity to different cluster sizes.
- A list of key sensitive features/characteristics within the LCT (this comes at the top of the subsequent 'Guidance' section provided at the end of each assessment).

3.20 A summary of the results of the landscape sensitivity assessment is presented and mapped in Chapter 4.



4 Overall results of the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment and Guidance

4 Overall results of the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment and Guidance

4.1 **Table 4.1** provides a summary of the overall landscape sensitivity results for wind energy development and solar PV development respectively, across LCTs within North Devon District. The full assessment matrices provided in Chapter 5 (which contain specific information relating to different sensitivities within the LCTs) should always be referred to when interpreting the summary tables.

4.2 These overall results are also mapped in **Figures 4.1** to **4.10**. The aim of the maps is to show visually the results of the landscape sensitivity assessment at the LCT level; they aren't intended to illustrate the visual impacts of individual developments on the surrounding landscape. That would need to be undertaken for individual schemes, aided by the use of computer generated 'Zones of Theoretical Visibility' (ZTVs).

Observations on landscape sensitivity across North Devon

Interpretation of the landscape sensitivity assessment results

4.3 LCTs often contain areas of higher and lower sensitivity within them, which should be borne in mind when using the overall sensitivity results maps and tables. It is therefore very important to take note of the content of the specific LCT sensitivity assessments and guidance in Chapter 5, as well as the generic guidance on siting and design in the county-wide Devon Landscape Policy Group advice note. Variations may, for example, occur on urban fringes or around brownfield sites where sensitivity may be lower than the rural parts of an LCT. Another example is areas within an LCT which comprise sensitive Historic Landscape Types (as described in paragraph 2.9 and mapped at **Figure 2.2**) which will also have a higher sensitivity to wind energy development and solar PV development. The Council holds the GIS data for the Historic Landscape Types which can be queried at a site level to provide further fine-grained locational information on the presence of these sensitive HLTs.

Overall findings

4.4 Generally the landscapes across North Devon are relatively small scale (compared to other parts of the country), rural in character and the features they contain are also relatively small in scale e.g. historic buildings, church towers, small scale fields, windblown trees. As a result, the sensitivity of the District's landscape becomes progressively higher as you progress through the different sizes and scales of development, as indicated in Figures 4.1 to 4.10. In addition, the landscape's frequently narrow, winding lanes bordered by Devon hedges are characteristic features which create a practical constraint to the delivery of large scale turbines to a development site, further increasing sensitivity to the development of larger scale wind energy developments across much of the District.

4.5 Sensitivity to wind energy and solar PV developments tends to be higher in areas with higher scenic quality. This may relate to areas recognised for their nationally important scenic quality through inclusion within the North Devon AONB but may equally apply to other landscapes outside the AONB that may also have a high scenic quality as noted in the LCT and DCA 'special qualities' sections. LCTs that play a role as a valued rural backdrop and setting to the AONB and Exmoor National Park are may also be considered as more sensitive as a result of any indirect impacts potential developments within them might have on the special qualities of the designated landscapes. These incidences are also highlighted in the individual LCT assessments of relevance.

Table 4.1: Overall results of the Landscape Sensitivity Assessments for wind and solar PV in the District's LCTs

Landscape Character Type	Landscape Sensitivity for Wind Energy Development		Landscape Sensitivity for Solar PV Development	
LCT 1D: Estate Wooded Ridges and Hilltops	Very small (15-25m)	**M**	Very small (<1 ha)	**M**
	Small (26-50m)	**M-H**	Small (>1-5ha)	**M-H**
	Medium (51-75m)	**H**	Medium (>5-10ha)	**H**
	Large (76-110m)	**H**	Large (>10-15ha)	**H**
	Very large (111-150m)	**H**	Very Large (>15-20ha)	**H**
LCT 1F: Farmed Lowland Moorland and Culm Grassland				
	Very small (15-25m)	**M**	Very small (<1 ha)	**M**
	Small (26-50m)	**M**	Small (>1-5ha)	**M**
	Medium (51-75m)	**M-H**	Medium (>5-10ha)	**M-H**
	Large (76-110m)	**M-H**	Large (>10-15ha)	**H**
	Very large (111-150m)	**H**	Very Large (>15-20ha)	**H**
LCT 2C: Steep Open Slopes (100% in the AONB)				
	Very small (15-25m)	**H**	Very small (<1 ha)	**M-H**
	Small (26-50m)	**H**	Small (>1-5ha)	**H**
	Medium (51-75m)	**H**	Medium (>5-10ha)	**H**
	Large (76-110m)	**H**	Large (>10-15ha)	**H**
	Very large (111-150m)	**H**	Very Large (>15-20ha)	**H**
LCT 2D: Moorland Edge Slopes (<1% in the AONB)	**Land outside the AONB**		**Land within the AONB**	
	Very small (15-25m)	**M**	Very small (15-25m)	**H**
	Small (26-50m)	**M-H**	Small (26-50m)	**H**
	Medium (51-75m)	**H**	Medium (51-75m)	**H**
	Large (76-110m)	**H**	Large (76-110m)	**H**
	Very large (111-150m)	**H**	Very large (111-150m)	**H**
	Land outside the AONB		**Land within the AONB**	
	Very small (<1 ha)	**M**	Very small (<1 ha)	**M-H**
	Small (>1-5ha)	**M**	Small (>1-5ha)	**H**
	Medium (>5-10ha)	**M-H**	Medium (>5-10ha)	**H**
	Large (>10-15ha)	**H**	Large (>10-15ha)	**H**
	Very Large (>15-20ha)	**H**	Very Large (>15-20ha)	**H**

Landscape Character Type	Landscape Sensitivity for Wind Energy Development		Landscape Sensitivity for Solar PV Development	
LCT 3A: Upper Farmed and Wooded Valley Slopes				
	Very small (15-25m)	**L-M**	Very small (<1 ha)	**L-M**
	Small (26-50m)	**M**	Small (>1-5ha)	**M**
	Medium (51-75m)	**M**	Medium (>5-10ha)	**M-H**
	Large (76-110m)	**M-H**	Large (>10-15ha)	**H**
	Very large (111-150m)	**H**	Very Large (>15-20ha)	**H**
LCT 3C: Sparsely Settled Farmed Valley Floors				
	Very small (15-25m)	**M-H**	Very small: (<1 ha)	**M**
	Small (26-50m)	**M-H**	Small (>1-5ha)	**M-H**
	Medium (51-75m)	**H**	Medium (>5-10ha)	**H**
	Large (76-110m)	**H**	Large (>10-15ha)	**H**
	Very large (111-150m)	**H**	Very Large (>15-20ha)	**H**
LCT 3D: Upland River Valleys				
	Very small (<1 ha)	**M-H**	Very small (<1 ha)	**M-H**
	Small (>1-5ha)	**H**	Small (>1-5ha)	**M-H**
	Medium (>5-10ha)	**H**	Medium (>5-10ha)	**H**
	Large (76-110m)	**H**	Large (>10-15ha)	**H**
	Very large (111-150m)	**H**	Very Large (>15-20ha)	**H**
LCT 3G: River Valley Slopes and Combes				
	Very small (15-25m)	**M-H**	Very small (<1 ha)	**M-H**
	Small (26-50m)	**H**	Small (>1-5ha)	**H**
	Medium (51-75m)	**H**	Medium (>5-10ha)	**H**
	Large (76-110m)	**H**	Large (>10-15ha)	**H**
	Very large (111-150m)	**H**	Very Large (>15-20ha)	**H**

Landscape Character Type	Landscape Sensitivity for Wind Energy Development				Landscape Sensitivity for Solar PV Development			
LCT 3H: Secluded Valleys								
	Very small (15-25m)	**M-H**			Very small (<1 ha)	**M-H**		
	Small (26-50m)	**M-H**			Small (>1-5ha)	**M-H**		
	Medium (51-75m)	**H**			Medium (>5-10ha)	**H**		
	Large (76-110m)	**H**			Large (>10-15ha)	**H**		
	Very large (111-150m)	**H**			Very Large (>15-20ha)	**H**		
LCT 4A: Estuaries (<1% in the AONB)	**Land outside the AONB**		**Land within the AONB**		**Land outside the AONB**		**Land within the AONB**	
	Very small (15-25m)	**H**	Very small (15-25m)	**H**	Very small (<1 ha)	**H**	Very small (<1 ha)	**H**
	Small (26-50m)	**H**	Small (26-50m)	**H**	Small (>1-5ha)	**H**	Small (>1-5ha)	**H**
	Medium (51-75m)	**H**	Medium (51-75m)	**H**	Medium (>5-10ha)	**H**	Medium (>5-10ha)	**H**
	Large (76-110m)	**H**	Large (76-110m)	**H**	Large (>10-15ha)	**H**	Large (>10-15ha)	**H**
	Very large (111-150m)	**H**	Very large (111-150m)	**H**	Very Large (>15-20ha)	**H**	Very Large (>15-20ha)	**H**
LCT 4B: Marine Levels and Coastal Plains (4.7% in the AONB)	**Land outside the AONB**		**Land within the AONB**		**Land outside the AONB**		**Land within the AONB**	
	Very small (15-25m)	**M-H**	Very small (15-25m)	**H**	Very small (<1 ha)	**M-H**	Very small (<1 ha)	**H**
	Small (26-50m)	**H**	Small (26-50m)	**H**	Small (>1-5ha)	**H**	Small (>1-5ha)	**H**
	Medium (51-75m)	**H**	Medium (51-75m)	**H**	Medium (>5-10ha)	**H**	Medium (>5-10ha)	**H**
	Large (76-110m)	**H**	Large (76-110m)	**H**	Large (>10-15ha)	**H**	Large (>10-15ha)	**H**
	Very large (111-150m)	**H**	Very large (111-150m)	**H**	Very Large (>15-20ha)	**H**	Very Large (>15-20ha)	**H**
LCT 4C: Coastal Slopes and Combes with Settlement (93.6% in the AONB)	**Land outside the AONB**		**Land within the AONB**		**Land outside the AONB**		**Land within the AONB**	
	Very small (15-25m)	**M-H**	Very small (15-25m)	**M-H**	Very small (<1 ha)	**M-H**	Very small (<1 ha)	**M-H**
	Small (26-50m)	**H**	Small (26-50m)	**H**	Small (>1-5ha)	**H**	Small (>1-5ha)	**H**
	Medium (51-75m)	**H**	Medium (51-75m)	**H**	Medium (>5-10ha)	**H**	Medium (>5-10ha)	**H**
	Large (76-110m)	**H**	Large (76-110m)	**H**	Large (>10-15ha)	**H**	Large (>10-15ha)	**H**
	Very large (111-150m)	**H**	Very large (111-150m)	**H**	Very Large (>15-20ha)	**H**	Very Large (>15-20ha)	**H**

Landscape Character Type	Landscape Sensitivity for Wind Energy Development				Landscape Sensitivity for Solar PV Development			
	Land outside the AONB		Land within the AONB		Land outside the AONB		Land within the AONB	
LCT 4E: Extensive Intertidal Sands (85.7% in the AONB)	Very small (15-25m)	H	Very small (15-25m)	H	Very small (<1 ha)	H	Very small (<1 ha)	H
	Small (26-50m)	H	Small (26-50m)	H	Small (>1-5ha)	H	Small (>1-5ha)	H
	Medium (51-75m)	H	Medium (51-75m)	H	Medium (>5-10ha)	H	Medium (>5-10ha)	H
	Large (76-110m)	H	Large (76-110m)	H	Large (>10-15ha)	H	Large (>10-15ha)	H
	Very large (111-150m)	H	Very large (111-150m)	H	Very Large (>15-20ha)	H	Very Large (>15-20ha)	H
LCT 4F: Dunes (98.1% in the AONB)								
	Very small (15-25m)			H	Very small (<1 ha)			H
	Small (26-50m)			H	Small (>1-5ha)			H
	Medium (51-75m)			H	Medium (>5-10ha)			H
	Large (76-110m)			H	Large (>10-15ha)			H
	Very large (111-150m)			H	Very Large (>15-20ha)			H
LCT 4H: Cliffs (71.1% in the AONB)	Land outside the AONB		Land within the AONB		Land outside the AONB		Land within the AONB	
	Very small (15-25m)	H	Very small (15-25m)	H	Very small (<1 ha)	H	Very small (<1 ha)	H
	Small (26-50m)	H	Small (26-50m)	H	Small (>1-5ha)	H	Small (>1-5ha)	H
	Medium (51-75m)	H	Medium (51-75m)	H	Medium (>5-10ha)	H	Medium (>5-10ha)	H
	Large (76-110m)	H	Large (76-110m)	H	Large (>10-15ha)	H	Large (>10-15ha)	H
	Very large (111-150m)	H	Very large (111-150m)	H	Very Large (>15-20ha)	H	Very Large (>15-20ha)	H
LCT 5A: Inland Elevated Undulating Land								
	Very small (15-25m)			L-M	Very small (<1 ha)			L-M
	Small (26-50m)			M	Small (>1-5ha)			M
	Medium (51-75m)			M	Medium (>5-10ha)			M-H
	Large (76-110m)			M-H	Large (>10-15ha)			H
	Very large (111-150m)			H	Very Large (>15-20ha)			H

Landscape Character Type	Landscape Sensitivity for Wind Energy Development				Landscape Sensitivity for Solar PV Development			
	Land outside the AONB		Land within the AONB		Land outside the AONB		Land within the AONB	
LCT 5C: Downland (21.3% in the AONB)	Very small (15-25m)	**L-M**	Very small (15-25m)	**M-H**	Very small (<1 ha)	**L-M**	Very small (<1 ha)	**M**
	Small (26-50m)	**M**	Small (26-50m)	**H**	Small (>1-5ha)	**M**	Small (>1-5ha)	**M-H**
	Medium (51-75m)	**M**	Medium (51-75m)	**H**	Medium (>5-10ha)	**M-H**	Medium (>5-10ha)	**H**
	Large (76-110m)	**M-H**	Large (76-110m)	**H**	Large (>10-15ha)	**H**	Large (>10-15ha)	**H**
	Very large (111-150m)	**H**	Very large (111-150m)	**H**	Very Large (>15-20ha)	**H**	Very Large (>15-20ha)	**H**
LCT 5D: Estate Wooded Farmland								
	Very small (15-25m)			**M**	Very small (<1 ha)			**M**
	Small (26-50m)			**M**	Small (>1-5ha)			**M**
	Medium (51-75m)			**M**	Medium (>5-10ha)			**H**
	Large (76-110m)			**M-H**	Large (>10-15ha)			**H**
	Very large (111-150m)			**H**	Very Large (>15-20ha)			**H**

4.6 Reflecting the overall sensitive nature of the landscape as a whole, the assessment has found that there are no landscapes in North Devon that are assessed as of 'low' sensitivity to the development of wind energy or field-scale solar PV developments. All of the district is assessed as being of either 'moderate-high' or 'high' sensitivity to wind turbine developments of over 75m to blade tip; and for solar PV, all of North Devon is assessed as being highly sensitive to schemes of over 10 hectares, reflecting the potential for developments of this scale to affect the character of the landscape.

Summary of sensitivity results for land within the North Devon AONB

4.7 The majority of the North Devon AONB is assessed as of 'high' sensitivity to all scales of wind energy developments, with all of the protected landscape being classed as highly sensitive to turbines of 50 metres and above. However, there are some locations away from the coastal edge and its setting, and associated with existing development (within 5C: Downland and 4C: Coastal Combes with Settlements), where the landscape might be less sensitive to very small single turbines.

4.8 The high sensitivity of the AONB landscape is also reflected in the results for the solar PV sensitivity assessment; all LCTs within the AONB are classed as of 'high' sensitivity to any schemes occupying a footprint of over five hectares, with very few locations away from the coast being classed as slightly less sensitive to the smallest schemes (5C and 4C, as per wind).

4.9 The guidance concludes that any future wind energy developments within the AONB should generally be limited to very occasional 'very small'-scale single wind turbines (i.e. up to 25 metres to tip) linked to existing buildings and solar PV development limited to very occasional 'very small' scale (less than 1 ha) solar PV arrays. This is to ensure conservation of the natural beauty for which this coastal landscape is nationally recognised – as summarised in Chapter 2.

Guidance for accommodating wind energy and solar PV development across LCTs

4.10 The scale and spatial pattern of development that might be accommodated within an LCT will be informed by the guidance for wind energy development/ solar PV development set out in the tables in Chapter 5. These judgements are based on the results of the landscape sensitivity assessment. The guidance on accommodating multiple developments is informed by the degree to which a particular Landscape Character Type is able to accommodate change without significant effects on its character, or overall change of landscape character type[20]. However, as expressed previously, each development proposal will need to be assessed on a case by case basis.

Guidance for wind energy development

4.11 For wind energy, the guidance included for each LCT suggests that, in general, single or small clusters of turbines will be most appropriate in the North Devon landscape. Scale of turbines will be dependent upon the scale of the landscape and multiple developments within the same LCT should be of a similar scale and design (in terms of siting, layout, scale, form and relationship to key characteristics) to maintain a simple image and reinforce links between landscape characteristics and design response within the LCT. In many LCTs there may be opportunities for very small or small scale turbines associated with farm buildings (aiming for consistent scale and design of on-farm turbines) as well as occasional larger single turbines or, in larger scale landscapes, small groups of larger turbines, maintaining a distinct hierarchy between these two scales of turbine. In some of the larger scale landscapes it may be preferable to have fewer larger wind turbines than many small ones to avoid significant cumulative impacts and visual

[20] The Countryside Agency and SNH Topic Paper 6: Techniques and criteria for judging capacity and sensitivity (2002) states that *"Landscape capacity refers to the degree to which a particular landscape character type or area is able to accommodate change without significant effects on its character, or overall change of landscape character type. Capacity is likely to vary according to the type and nature of change being proposed".*

confusion. Guidance provided in the Devon Landscape Policy Group advice note[21] should be referred to in relation to assessing the cumulative impacts of multiple schemes.

4.12 The overall aim should be to make sure that wind energy developments do not become a key characteristic of the landscape of the LCT or have a defining influence on the overall experience of the landscapes of North Devon.

Guidance for solar PV development

4.13 For solar PV development the guidance for development included for each LCT suggests that, generally, the most suitable forms of solar PV development will be up those of up to 10 hectares in size located in more enclosed areas and on lower slopes, avoiding highly visible slopes. Multiple developments within the same LCT should be of a similar scale and design (in terms of siting, layout, scale, form and relationship to key characteristics) to maintain a simple image and reinforce links between landscape characteristics and design response within the LCT. Existing screening features should be used to screen these developments and the overall aim should be to make sure that solar PV developments do not become a key characteristic of the landscape of the LCT or have a defining influence on the overall experience of the landscape of the landscapes of North Devon. Reference to the guidance provided in the Devon Landscape Policy Group advice note (referenced above) should also be referred to when considering landscapes with multiple solar PV developments.

[21] LUC (June 2013) Devon Landscape Policy Group Advice Note No. 2: *Accommodating Wind and Solar PV Developments in Devon's Landscape*. Prepared for the Devon Landscape Policy Group. Available online at http://www.devon.gov.uk/devon-guidance-v6-june-2013-final-report.pdf. It is important to note that version 3 of the *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment* (July 2013) have been produced since the advice note, which should also be referred to (and should take precedence) when considering the assessment of cumulative impacts.

North Devon Landscape Sensitivity Assessment

Figure 4.1

Landscape Sensitivity to Wind Energy Development
Very Small (15-25m)

- North Devon District boundary
- North Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Exmoor National Park

Landscape Character Types

- 1D: Estate Wooded Ridges & Hilltops
- 1F: Farmed Lowland Moorland & Culm Grassland
- 2C: Steep Open Slopes
- 2D: Moorland Edge Slopes
- 3A: Upper Farmed & Wooded Valley Slopes
- 3C: Sparsely Settled Farmed Valley Floors
- 3D: Upland River Valleys
- 3G: River Valley Slopes & Combes
- 3H: Secluded Valleys
- 4A: Estuaries
- 4B: Marine Levels & Coastal Plains
- 4C: Coastal Slopes & Combes with Settlement
- 4E: Extensive Inter-Tidal Sands
- 4F: Dunes
- 4H: Cliffs
- 5A: Inland Elevated Undulating Land
- 5C: Downland
- 5D: Estate Wooded Farmland
- 7: Main Cities and Towns

Landscape sensitivity to very small wind energy developments

- Low - Moderate
- Moderate
- Moderate - High
- High

Map Scale @ A3:1:150,000

LUC

LUC LDN 5907-01_005_Fig4_1_Sensitivity_wind_vsmall 25/03/2014

Source: Devon County Council, North Devon District Council

North Devon Landscape Sensitivity Assessment

Figure 4.2

Landscape Sensitivity to Wind Energy Development
Small (26-50m)

- North Devon District boundary
- North Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Exmoor National Park

Landscape Character Types

- 1D: Estate Wooded Ridges & Hilltops
- 1F: Farmed Lowland Moorland & Culm Grassland
- 2C: Steep Open Slopes
- 2D: Moorland Edge Slopes
- 3A: Upper Farmed & Wooded Valley Slopes
- 3C: Sparsely Settled Farmed Valley Floors
- 3D: Upland River Valleys
- 3G: River Valley Slopes & Combes
- 3H: Secluded Valleys
- 4A: Estuaries
- 4B: Marine Levels & Coastal Plains
- 4C: Coastal Slopes & Combes with Settlement
- 4E: Extensive Inter-Tidal Sands
- 4F: Dunes
- 4H: Cliffs
- 5A: Inland Elevated Undulating Land
- 5C: Downland
- 5D: Estate Wooded Farmland
- 7: Main Cities and Towns

Landscape sensitivity to small wind energy developments

- Moderate
- Moderate - High
- High

Map Scale @ A3:1:150,000

LUC

LUC LDN 5907-01_005_Fig4_2_Sensitivity_wind_small 25/03/2014

Source: Devon County Council, North Devon District Council

North Devon Landscape Sensitivity Assessment

Figure 4.3

Landscape Sensitivity to Wind Energy Development
Medium (51-75m)

- North Devon District boundary
- North Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Exmoor National Park

Landscape Character Types

- 1D: Estate Wooded Ridges & Hilltops
- 1F: Farmed Lowland Moorland & Culm Grassland
- 2C: Steep Open Slopes
- 2D: Moorland Edge Slopes
- 3A: Upper Farmed & Wooded Valley Slopes
- 3C: Sparsely Settled Farmed Valley Floors
- 3D: Upland River Valleys
- 3G: River Valley Slopes & Combes
- 3H: Secluded Valleys
- 4A: Estuaries
- 4B: Marine Levels & Coastal Plains
- 4C: Coastal Slopes & Combes with Settlement
- 4E: Extensive Inter-Tidal Sands
- 4F: Dunes
- 4H: Cliffs
- 5A: Inland Elevated Undulating Land
- 5C: Downland
- 5D: Estate Wooded Farmland
- 7: Main Cities and Towns

Landscape sensitivity to medium wind energy developments

- Moderate
- Moderate - High
- High

Map Scale @ A3:1:150,000

LUC

LUC LDN 5907-01_005_Fig4_3_Sensitivity_wind_medium 25/03/2014

Source: Devon County Council, North Devon District Council

North Devon Landscape Sensitivity Assessment

Figure 4.4

Landscape Sensitivity to Wind Energy Development
Large (76-110m)

- North Devon District boundary
- North Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Exmoor National Park

Landscape Character Types

- 1D: Estate Wooded Ridges & Hilltops
- 1F: Farmed Lowland Moorland & Culm Grassland
- 2C: Steep Open Slopes
- 2D: Moorland Edge Slopes
- 3A: Upper Farmed & Wooded Valley Slopes
- 3C: Sparsely Settled Farmed Valley Floors
- 3D: Upland River Valleys
- 3G: River Valley Slopes & Combes
- 3H: Secluded Valleys
- 4A: Estuaries
- 4B: Marine Levels & Coastal Plains
- 4C: Coastal Slopes & Combes with Settlement
- 4E: Extensive Inter-Tidal Sands
- 4F: Dunes
- 4H: Cliffs
- 5A: Inland Elevated Undulating Land
- 5C: Downland
- 5D: Estate Wooded Farmland
- 7: Main Cities and Towns

Landscape sensitivity to large wind energy developments

- Moderate - High
- High

Map Scale @ A3:1:150,000

LUC

LUC LDN 5907-01_005_Fig4_4_Sensitivity_wind_large 25/03/2014

Source: Devon County Council, North Devon District Council

North Devon Landscape Sensitivity Assessment

Figure 4.5

Landscape Sensitivity to Wind Energy Development
Very Large (111-150m)

- North Devon District boundary
- North Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Exmoor National Park

Landscape Character Types

- 1D: Estate Wooded Ridges & Hilltops
- 1F: Farmed Lowland Moorland & Culm Grassland
- 2C: Steep Open Slopes
- 2D: Moorland Edge Slopes
- 3A: Upper Farmed & Wooded Valley Slopes
- 3C: Sparsely Settled Farmed Valley Floors
- 3D: Upland River Valleys
- 3G: River Valley Slopes & Combes
- 3H: Secluded Valleys
- 4A: Estuaries
- 4B: Marine Levels & Coastal Plains
- 4C: Coastal Slopes & Combes with Settlement
- 4E: Extensive Inter-Tidal Sands
- 4F: Dunes
- 4H: Cliffs
- 5A: Inland Elevated Undulating Land
- 5C: Downland
- 5D: Estate Wooded Farmland
- 7: Main Cities and Towns

Landscape sensitivity to very large wind energy developments

- High

Map Scale @ A3:1:150,000

LUC

LUC LDN 5907-01_005_Fig4_5_Sensitivity_wind_vlarge 13/02/2014

Source: Devon County Council, North Devon District Council

North Devon Landscape Sensitivity Assessment

Figure 4.6

Landscape Sensitivity to Solar PV Development
Very Small (less than 1ha)

- North Devon District boundary
- North Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Exmoor National Park

Landscape Character Types

- 1D: Estate Wooded Ridges & Hilltops
- 1F: Farmed Lowland Moorland & Culm Grassland
- 2C: Steep Open Slopes
- 2D: Moorland Edge Slopes
- 3A: Upper Farmed & Wooded Valley Slopes
- 3C: Sparsely Settled Farmed Valley Floors
- 3D: Upland River Valleys
- 3G: River Valley Slopes & Combes
- 3H: Secluded Valleys
- 4A: Estuaries
- 4B: Marine Levels & Coastal Plains
- 4C: Coastal Slopes & Combes with Settlement
- 4E: Extensive Inter-Tidal Sands
- 4F: Dunes
- 4H: Cliffs
- 5A: Inland Elevated Undulating Land
- 5C: Downland
- 5D: Estate Wooded Farmland
- 7: Main Cities and Towns

Landscape sensitivity to very small Solar PV developments

- Low - Moderate
- Moderate
- Moderate - High
- High

Map Scale @ A3:1:150,000

LUC

LUC LDN 5907-01_005_Fig4_6_Sensitivity_SPV_vsmall 13/02/2014

Source: Devon County Council, North Devon District Council

North Devon Landscape Sensitivity Assessment

Figure 4.7

Landscape Sensitivity to Solar PV Development
Small (1-5ha)

- North Devon District boundary
- North Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Exmoor National Park

Landscape Character Types

- 1D: Estate Wooded Ridges & Hilltops
- 1F: Farmed Lowland Moorland & Culm Grassland
- 2C: Steep Open Slopes
- 2D: Moorland Edge Slopes
- 3A: Upper Farmed & Wooded Valley Slopes
- 3C: Sparsely Settled Farmed Valley Floors
- 3D: Upland River Valleys
- 3G: River Valley Slopes & Combes
- 3H: Secluded Valleys
- 4A: Estuaries
- 4B: Marine Levels & Coastal Plains
- 4C: Coastal Slopes & Combes with Settlement
- 4E: Extensive Inter-Tidal Sands
- 4F: Dunes
- 4H: Cliffs
- 5A: Inland Elevated Undulating Land
- 5C: Downland
- 5D: Estate Wooded Farmland
- 7: Main Cities and Towns

Landscape sensitivity to small Solar PV developments

- Moderate
- Moderate - High
- High

Map Scale @ A3:1:150,000

LUC

LUC LDN 5907-01_005_Fig4_7_Sensitivity_SPV_small 13/02/2014

Source: Devon County Council, North Devon District Council

North Devon Landscape Sensitivity Assessment

Figure 4.8

Landscape Sensitivity to Solar PV Development
Medium (5-10ha)

- North Devon District boundary
- North Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Exmoor National Park

Landscape Character Types

- 1D: Estate Wooded Ridges & Hilltops
- 1F: Farmed Lowland Moorland & Culm Grassland
- 2C: Steep Open Slopes
- 2D: Moorland Edge Slopes
- 3A: Upper Farmed & Wooded Valley Slopes
- 3C: Sparsely Settled Farmed Valley Floors
- 3D: Upland River Valleys
- 3G: River Valley Slopes & Combes
- 3H: Secluded Valleys
- 4A: Estuaries
- 4B: Marine Levels & Coastal Plains
- 4C: Coastal Slopes & Combes with Settlement
- 4E: Extensive Inter-Tidal Sands
- 4F: Dunes
- 4H: Cliffs
- 5A: Inland Elevated Undulating Land
- 5C: Downland
- 5D: Estate Wooded Farmland
- 7: Main Cities and Towns

Landscape sensitivity to medium Solar PV developments

- Moderate - High
- High

Map Scale @ A3:1:150,000

LUC

LUC LDN 5907-01_005_Fig4_8_Sensitivity_SPV_medium 13/02/2014

Source: Devon County Council, North Devon District Council

North Devon Landscape Sensitivity Assessment

Figure 4.9

Landscape Sensitivity to Solar PV Development
Large (10-15ha)

- North Devon District boundary
- North Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Exmoor National Park

Landscape Character Types

- 1D: Estate Wooded Ridges & Hilltops
- 1F: Farmed Lowland Moorland & Culm Grassland
- 2C: Steep Open Slopes
- 2D: Moorland Edge Slopes
- 3A: Upper Farmed & Wooded Valley Slopes
- 3C: Sparsely Settled Farmed Valley Floors
- 3D: Upland River Valleys
- 3G: River Valley Slopes & Combes
- 3H: Secluded Valleys
- 4A: Estuaries
- 4B: Marine Levels & Coastal Plains
- 4C: Coastal Slopes & Combes with Settlement
- 4E: Extensive Inter-Tidal Sands
- 4F: Dunes
- 4H: Cliffs
- 5A: Inland Elevated Undulating Land
- 5C: Downland
- 5D: Estate Wooded Farmland
- 7: Main Cities and Towns

Landscape sensitivity to large Solar PV developments

- High

Map Scale @ A3:1:150,000

LUC

LUC LDN 5907-01_005_Fig4_9_Sensitivity_SPV_large 13/02/2014

Source: Devon County Council, North Devon District Council

North Devon Landscape Sensitivity Assessment

Figure 4.10

Landscape Sensitivity to Solar PV Development
Very Large (>15-20ha)

- North Devon District boundary
- North Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Exmoor National Park

Landscape Character Types

- 1D: Estate Wooded Ridges & Hilltops
- 1F: Farmed Lowland Moorland & Culm Grassland
- 2C: Steep Open Slopes
- 2D: Moorland Edge Slopes
- 3A: Upper Farmed & Wooded Valley Slopes
- 3C: Sparsely Settled Farmed Valley Floors
- 3D: Upland River Valleys
- 3G: River Valley Slopes & Combes
- 3H: Secluded Valleys
- 4A: Estuaries
- 4B: Marine Levels & Coastal Plains
- 4C: Coastal Slopes & Combes with Settlement
- 4E: Extensive Inter-Tidal Sands
- 4F: Dunes
- 4H: Cliffs
- 5A: Inland Elevated Undulating Land
- 5C: Downland
- 5D: Estate Wooded Farmland
- 7: Main Cities and Towns

Landscape sensitivity to very large Solar PV developments

- High

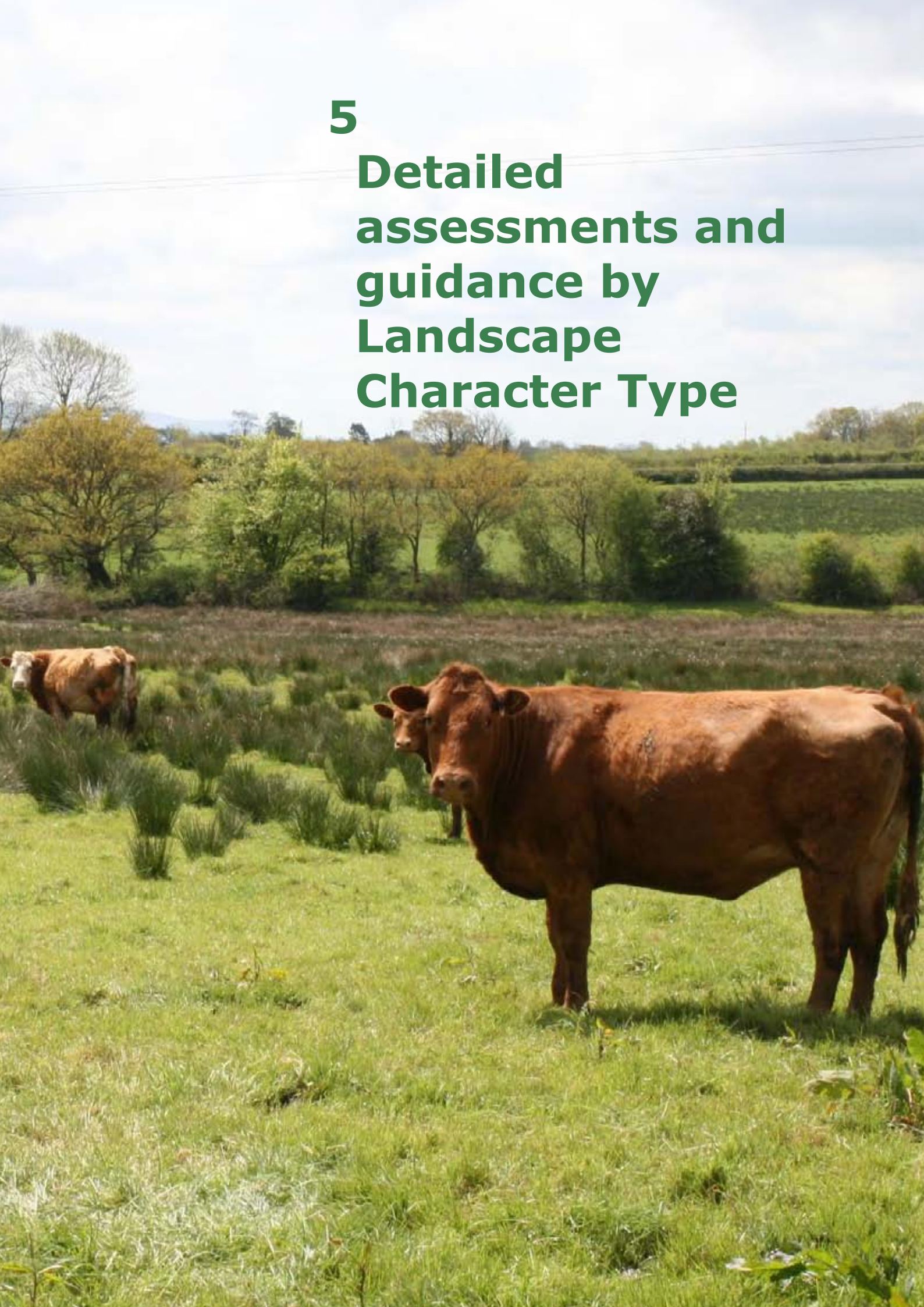
Map Scale @ A3:1:150,000

LUC

LUC LDN 5907-01_005_Fig4_10_Sensitivity_SPV_vlarge_rev1 05/06/2014

Source: Devon County Council, North Devon District Council

5 Detailed assessments and guidance by Landscape Character Type



5 Detailed assessments and guidance by Landscape Character Type (LCT)

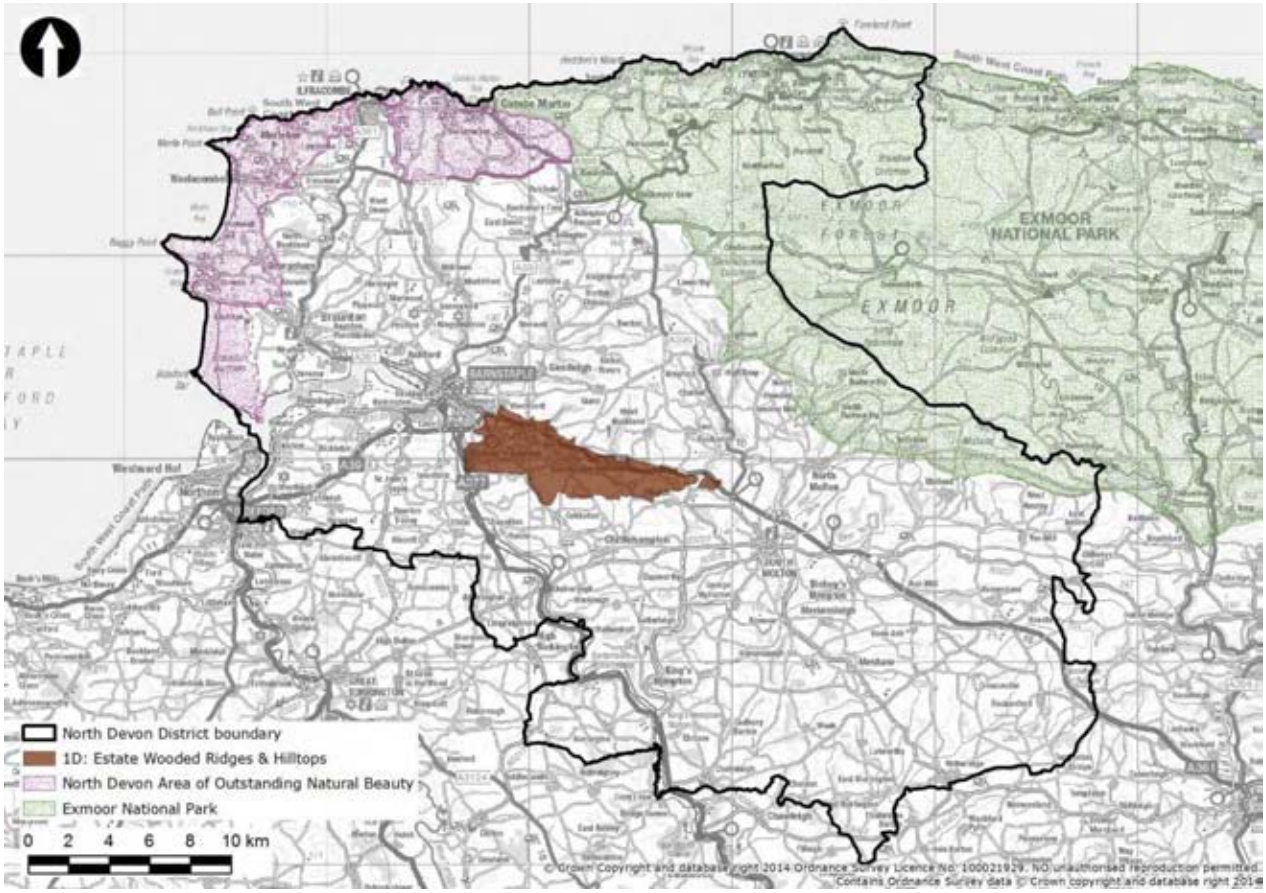
5.1 This Chapter contains the Landscape Sensitivity Assessments and Guidance tailored to each of the eleven Landscape Character Types (LCTs) found within North Devon District. Each document includes the following:

- A location map of the LCT as it occurs in North Devon.
- A list of the Devon Character Areas the LCT is found within (in the District).
- Key landscape characteristics taken from the Joint Landscape Character Assessment for North Devon and Torridge Districts (2010)
- Landscape sensitivity assessment results for wind energy development
- Key sensitivities and guidance for development for wind energy development
- Landscape sensitivity assessment results for solar PV development
- Key sensitivities and guidance for development for solar PV development

5.2 The LCTs are arranged in numeric order, starting with 1D Estate Wooded Ridges and Hilltops.

LCT 1D: Estate Wooded Ridges and Hilltops

LCT Location Map



Devon Character Areas

DCA 14: Codden Hill and Wooded Estates

Please note that while this LCT assessment for wind and solar PV development provides an initial indication of landscape sensitivity and guidance for accommodating developments in the landscape, it should not be interpreted as a definitive statement on the suitability of individual sites for a particular development. All developments will need to be assessed on their own merits.

Key Landscape Characteristics

- Distinctive topography of dramatic whale-backed ridges stretching east-west across the landscape, surrounded by strongly undulating land.
- Ridges of chert forming prominent hills rising up above the surrounding rolling landscape composed of mudstones with bands of sandstone. Exposures of limestone, chert and sandstone visible in local quarries (Highdown Quarry is a SSSI).
- Hill summits of up to 190 metres affording spectacular panoramic views, including to the uplands of Exmoor (to the north) and Dartmoor (to the south).
- Landscape cut by a series of streams draining from the ridges, forming tributaries of the Taw and Bray (to the west and east respectively).
- Large bands of broadleaved beech and oak woodland snaking across the ridges and along stream valleys, with blocks of conifer plantation and secondary woodland on hill slopes. Estate woodland with veteran trees around Castle Hill.
- Traditional orchards found around Dennington Barton.
- Predominantly pastoral character with sheep and cattle grazing. Hill slopes and summits provide rough grazing land, whilst the Castle Hill estate includes historic wood pasture and parkland.
- Elsewhere, nucleated hamlets and farmsteads are nestled at the base of slopes, with Swimbridge and Landkey being the main settlements overlooked by the landscape's hills.
- Mixture of curving small-medium scale medieval fields and more regular larger enclosures of recent origin, bounded by mixed species hedges with flower and fern-rich banks. Some Devon hedges are high with no topping hedgerows (particularly on hill summits), whilst banks on woodland edges are characterised by grown-out lines of beech.
- Rich variety of semi-natural habitats including heathland, bracken and semi-improved grassland on Codden Hill, rush pasture and neutral grasslands on Hangman's Hill, historic wood pasture and ancient trees on the Castle Hill estate, and rich broadleaved woodlands and damp meadows throughout.
- Historic features include a scheduled Bronze Age bowl barrow at Codden Beacon, as well as nationally important historic parkland features including fishpond, ice house and deer fencing on the Castle Hill estate. Historic quarries, traditionally worked for roadstone, are important landscape features.
- 18th century Castle Hill mansion (its creamy-yellow buildings standing out in the landscape) and ornamental parkland estate (Grade I Registered Park & Garden) conveys a strong influence in the east of the LCT. Bydown House (Grade II*) is also surrounded by a parkland estate.
- Strong traditional vernacular of whitewash with black painted details, with some buildings of cream cob/render as well as exposed local stone.
- Strong sense of tranquillity and history with little modern development. Venn Quarry (which closed in 2006) is a prominent feature in the open countryside, as is the Portmore Golf Park. The northern fringes of the LCT are influenced by the eastern fringes of Barnstaple and the A361 trunk road.

100% of the LCT falls within North Devon District

Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for wind energy development

Criteria	Lower sensitivity ▪▪▪▪▪▪▪▶ Higher sensitivity
Landform and scale	M-H Distinctive topography of dramatic whale-backed ridges stretching east-west across the landscape, surrounded by strongly undulating land.
Land cover pattern and presence of human scale features	M-H Hill slopes and summits provide rough grazing land, whilst the Castle Hill estate includes historic wood pasture with veteran trees and parkland. Large bands of broadleaved beech and oak woodland snake across the ridges and along stream valleys, with blocks of conifer plantation and secondary woodland on hill slopes. Traditional orchards are also found around Dennington Barton, rush pasture and neutral grasslands on Hangman's Hill, heathland and bracken on Codden Hill and damp meadows throughout. Agricultural land is predominantly pastoral. Frequent human-scale features include the dense tree cover, Devon hedges, estate buildings and dispersed cottages/hamlets.
Tracks / transport pattern	M The northern edge of the LCT is crossed by the A361 trunk road, with minor winding lanes and ancient trackways (often sunken with very steep sections) characterise the landscape elsewhere.
Skylines	H Prominent, undeveloped and frequently wooded skylines are a key characteristic of this landscape, forming an elevated backdrop to views including from as far as Lunday and the uplands of Exmoor and Dartmoor. A scheduled Bronze Age bowl barrow at Codden Beacon forms an important historic landmark on this skyline.
Perceptual qualities	M-H Strong sense of tranquillity and history with little modern development. Venn Quarry (which closed in 2006) is a prominent feature in the open countryside, as is the Portmore Golf Park. The northern fringes of the LCT are influenced by the eastern fringes of Barnstaple and the A361 trunk road.
Historic landscape character	M-H The Devon HLC indicates that the LCT comprises a mixture of 31% medieval enclosures based on strip fields, 10% 'other' woodland, 5% park and garden and 3% rough ground, all of which would have a high sensitivity to wind energy development. The LCA also includes a proportion of modern enclosures (31% - likely to be of low sensitivity to wind turbines). Post-medieval enclosures (5%) and those with medieval elements (5%), along with small parcels of modern settlement, recreation and quarries are likely to be of lower sensitivity. The landscape also includes part of the Grade II* Listed Castle Hill Estate.
Scenic and special qualities	M-H None of the LCT falls within a nationally protected landscape, although the LCT description includes special qualities that could be affected by wind energy development. These include its long, panoramic views including to Lundy Island and the uplands of Exmoor and Dartmoor, areas of ancient parkland and wood pasture with veteran trees, important wildlife habitats including lowland heath on Codden Hill, the network of winding rural roads and ancient trackways and high levels of peace and tranquillity. The Devon LCA description also notes the landscape's important scenic qualities and distinctive and prominent ridgeline, along with the presence of a number of Scheduled Monuments, Conservation Areas at Swimbridge and Landkey, Highdown Quarry SSSI, its inclusion within the North Devon Biosphere Reserve and the strong sense of peacefulness (in addition to those already mentioned above).
Discussion on landscape sensitivity	Although the LCT includes some larger scale modern field patterns and locations of human influence (e.g. quarries, golf course and the A361), the landscape's strongly rural and tranquil character, presence of prominent undeveloped and wooded skylines that form a backdrop to views from the district and beyond, historic estate character, and rich diversity of naturalistic land cover patterns all increase levels of sensitivity to wind energy development.

Sensitivity to different turbine heights	Very Small (15-25m)	M
	Small (26-50m)	M-H
	Medium (51-75m)	H
	Large (76-110m)	H
	Very large (111-150m)	H
	Due to the distinctiveness and visual prominence of the elevated whale-back ridges, frequency of human-scale features, and the landscape's small and complex land cover patterns it would be highly sensitive to any turbines greater than those within the 'small' height band.	
Commentary on different cluster sizes Single turbine Small (<5 turbines) Medium (6-10) Large (11-25) Very large (>25)	The small-scale and varied land cover patterns and complex, distinctive landform of the LCT mean that it would be highly sensitive to any clusters of wind turbines.	

SUMMARY OF KEY SENSITIVE FEATURES/CHARACTERISTICS

A summary list of the key sensitive features and characteristics for 1D Estate Wooded Ridges and Hilltops LCT in relation to wind energy development is included below:

- The distinctive, elevated whale-back ridges forming important skylines forming a backdrop to views, including from Dartmoor, Exmoor and Lundy.
- Strongly rural and estate character with sensitive historic land cover types including medieval enclosures based on strip fields, woodland and park and garden.
- Rich variety of naturalistic land cover patterns including historic wood pasture and parkland, broadleaved beech and oak woodland, lowland heathland and bracken on Codden Hill, rush pastures and neutral grasslands on Hangman Hill and damp meadows throughout.
- The rural road network, with ancient trackways and winding lanes frequently fringed by woodland.
- The presence of human scale features including frequent trees, estate buildings and dispersed settlement.
- The historic, wooded estate character of the landscape, particularly associated with the Grade II* Castle Hill Estate. The frequency of other nationally important archaeological assets, including the prominent Bronze Age barrow at Codden Beacon.

Guidance for wind energy development

Permitted schemes within the LCT

Planning data held by the Council (November 2013) shows that there are no permitted wind energy developments in this LCT.

Guidance for Development

The landscape sensitivity assessment indicates that this LCT has a moderate sensitivity to 'very small' turbines, a moderate-high sensitivity to 'small' turbines (up to 50m to blade tip) and a high sensitivity to turbines greater than 'medium' in scale (from 50 to over 110m to tip). The assessment also notes that the LCT would be highly sensitive to any turbine clusters. This indicates that the landscape will be particularly sensitive to turbines higher than 25m and unlikely to be able to accommodate turbines over 50m to tip, or any developments comprising more than a single turbine, without introducing a change to landscape character.

A clear visual hierarchy should be maintained between 'very small' scale turbines associated with buildings (e.g. single on-farm turbines), and larger models within the 'small' category. A proliferation of varying heights and styles of turbine should be avoided. Within these distinct size categories of turbine, developments should be of a similar scale and design (in terms of siting, layout, style of turbine and relationship to key characteristics) to maintain a simple image and reinforce links between landscape characteristics and design response within the LCT.

The overall aim should be ensure that wind energy developments do not have a significant cumulative impact on the LCT resulting in an overall change of landscape character.

When siting and designing wind energy developments in this LCT, the generic guidance within Chapter 2 of the Devon Landscape Policy Group's Advice Note No. 2: *Accommodating Wind and Solar PV Developments in Devon's Landscape* should be followed, particularly when considering the cumulative impacts of multiple schemes. In addition, within this LCT particular care will need to be taken to ensure:

- Wind energy development does not overwhelm the human scale of the landscape and its frequent landscape features.
- The strong rural and historic character of the landscape with locally important levels of peace and tranquillity is retained.
- Wind turbines do not prevent the appreciation and understanding of distinctive skyline/ landmark features including estate woodland and the Bronze Age barrow on Codden Hill.
- Valued naturalistic habitats are retained – including damp meadows, lowland heath on Codden Hill, rush pastures and neutral grasslands on Hangman Hill, broadleaved oak and beech woodlands, wood pasture and parkland, and traditional orchards.
- The characteristic sunken lanes, ancient trackways and winding rural roads are not adversely affected by the delivery of turbines.
- The location of turbines does not impact on the heritage value of the Grade II* Listed Castle Hill estate.
- Wind turbines do not detract from the elevated backdrop provided by the LCT's undeveloped, wooded ridgelines to the wider district, Torridge and as far as Exmoor, Dartmoor and Lundy.
- Opportunities are sought to enhance the landscape in association with any development, and in accordance with the landscape strategy for the LCT, including protecting the distinctive character of the landscape, with areas of heathland extended and managed through grazing, long views from the hills protected and enhanced, and parkland estates traditionally managed and strengthened to build resilience to the effects of climate change.

Additional Guidance Specific to Particular Landscape Character Areas
This LCT falls entirely within DCA 14: Codden Hill and Wooded Estates. Wherever possible, future development should be in line with the overall landscape strategy of the Devon Character Area, as set out in the description on the DCC website[22].

[22] http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/environmentplanning/natural_environment/landscape/landscapecharacter.htm

Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for solar PV development

Criteria	Lower sensitivity ▪▪▪▪▪▪▪▶ Higher sensitivity				
Landform				M-H	
	Distinctive topography of dramatic whale-backed ridges stretching east-west across the landscape, surrounded by strongly undulating land with frequent steep slopes.				
Sense of openness / enclosure		L-M			
	Enclosure provided by bands of woodland, often high Devon hedges and grown-out beech hedgebanks as well as blocks of coniferous plantation and secondary woodland on slopes. Some higher summits and areas of heathland (on Codden Hill) are more open.				
Field pattern and scale			M		
	Mixture of curving small-medium scale medieval fields and more regular larger enclosures of recent origin. Open tracts of heathland and rough grazing land characterise Codden and Hangman Hills.				
Land cover				M-H	
	Hill slopes and summits provide rough grazing land, whilst the Castle Hill estate includes historic wood pasture with veteran trees and parkland. Large bands of broadleaved beech and oak woodland snake across the ridges and along stream valleys, with blocks of conifer plantation and secondary woodland on hill slopes. Traditional orchards are also found around Dennington Barton, rush pasture and neutral grasslands on Hangman's Hill, heathland and bracken on Codden Hill and damp meadows throughout. Agricultural land is predominantly pastoral.				
Perceptual qualities				M-H	
	Strong sense of tranquillity and history with little modern development. Venn Quarry (which closed in 2006) is a prominent feature in the open countryside, as is the Portmore Golf Park. The northern fringes of the LCT are influenced by the eastern fringes of Barnstaple and the A361 trunk road.				
Historic Landscape Character			M		
	The Devon HLC indicates that the LCT comprises a mixture of 31% medieval enclosures based on strip fields, 10% 'other' woodland, 5% park and garden and 3% rough ground, all of which would have a high sensitivity to solar PV development. The LCA also includes a proportion of modern enclosures (31% - likely to be of low sensitivity to solar farms). Post-medieval enclosures (5%) and those with medieval elements (5%), along with small parcels of modern settlement, recreation and quarries are likely to be of lower sensitivity. The landscape also includes part of the Grade II* Listed Castle Hill Estate.				
Scenic and special qualities				M-H	
	None of the LCT falls within a nationally protected landscape, although the LCT description includes special qualities that could be affected by solar PV development. These include its long, panoramic views including to Lundy Island and the uplands of Exmoor and Dartmoor, areas of ancient parkland and wood pasture with veteran trees, important wildlife habitats including lowland heath on Codden Hill, the network of winding rural roads and ancient trackways and high levels of peace and tranquillity. The Devon LCA description also notes the landscape's important scenic qualities and distinctive and prominent ridgeline, along with the presence of a number of Scheduled Monuments, Conservation Areas at Swimbridge and Landkey, Highdown Quarry SSSI, its inclusion within the North Devon Biosphere Reserve and the strong sense of peacefulness (in addition to those already mentioned above).				
Discussion on landscape sensitivity	Although this landscape has a sense of enclosure provided by high tree and woodland cover (including Devon hedges and grown-out beech hedgebanks), and the LCT includes some flatter areas and locations of human influence (e.g. quarries, golf course and the A361), the landscape's strongly rural and tranquil character, presence of highly visible slopes and ridgelines, historic estate character, and rich diversity of naturalistic land cover patterns all increase levels of sensitivity to solar PV development. Lower slopes and hidden areas will be less sensitive than upper slopes and ridgelines (particularly Codden and Hangman's Hills) that form a prominent rural backdrop to views.				

Sensitivity to different sizes of solar PV development	Very Small (<1ha)	M
	Small (>1-5ha)	M-H
	Medium (>5-10ha)	H
	Large (>10-15ha)	H
	Very Large (>15-20ha)	H
	The predominantly small-scale medieval field pattern and significant areas of woodland and other semi-natural habitats mean that this LCT would be highly sensitive to all but the smallest (less than 5ha) solar PV schemes.	

SUMMARY OF KEY SENSITIVE FEATURES/CHARACTERISTICS

A summary list of the key sensitive features and characteristics for 3A Upper Farmed and Wooded Valley Slopes LCT in relation to solar PV development is included below:

- The distinctive, elevated whale-back ridges with steep slopes forming a backdrop to views, including from Dartmoor, Exmoor and Lundy.
- Strongly rural and estate character with sensitive historic land cover types including small-scale medieval enclosures based on strip fields, woodland and park and garden.
- Rich variety of naturalistic land cover patterns including historic wood pasture and parkland, broadleaved beech and oak woodland, lowland heathland and bracken on Codden Hill, rush pastures and neutral grasslands on Hangman Hill and damp meadows throughout.
- The historic, wooded estate character of the landscape, particularly associated with the Grade II* Castle Hill Estate. The frequency of other nationally important archaeological assets, including the prominent Bronze Age barrow at Codden Beacon.

Guidance for solar PV development

Permitted schemes within the LCT

Planning data held by the Council (November 2013) shows that there is one permitted solar PV development in this LCT, at Higher Kerscott Farm, Swimbridge which falls within the 'very small' category. This scheme is situated within DCA 14: Codden Hill and Wooded Estates.

Guidance for Development

The landscape sensitivity assessment indicates that this LCT has a moderate sensitivity to 'very small' developments (of less than one hectare), a moderate-high sensitivity to 'small' developments (>1-5ha) and a high sensitivity to developments greater than five hectares. This indicates that the landscape would be particularly sensitive to any developments over 1ha and unlikely to be able to accommodate any over 5ha in size without introducing a change to landscape character. Any proposals should be located in more enclosed areas and on flatter areas, avoiding highly visible slopes/ridgelines and valued areas of semi-natural habitat, including heathland, rush pasture, semi-natural grasslands and wood pasture/parkland.

Multiple developments within the LCT should be of a similar scale and design (in terms of siting, layout, scale, form and relationship to key characteristics) to maintain a simple image and reinforce links between landscape characteristics and design response within the LCT. The overall aim should be to make sure that solar PV developments do not become a key characteristic of the landscape (i.e. developments would not result in a significant cumulative impact on the LCT or overall change of landscape character).

When siting and designing solar PV developments in this LCT the generic guidance within Chapter 3 of the Devon Landscape Policy Group's Advice Note No. 2: *Accommodating Wind and Solar PV Developments in Devon's Landscape* should be followed particularly when considering the cumulative impacts of multiple schemes. In addition, within this LCT particular care will need to be taken to ensure:

- The strong rural and historic estate character of the landscape, with locally important levels of tranquillity, is retained.
- Valued naturalistic habitats are retained – including damp meadows, lowland heath on Codden Hill, rush pastures and neutral grasslands on Hangman Hill, broadleaved oak and beech woodlands, wood pasture and parkland, and traditional orchards.
- The pastoral character of the landscape and its strong network of species-rich Devon hedges and grown out beech hedgebanks dividing small medieval fields, are retained.
- Where possible, development avoids areas of sensitive historic land cover types including medieval enclosures based on strip fields, woodland, rough ground and park and garden.
- The development of solar PV does not impact on the heritage assets and historic landscape character valued as part of the Grade II* Castle Hill estate.
- Opportunities are sought to enhance the landscape in association with any development, and in accordance with the landscape strategy for the LCT, including managing and extending farmland and woodland habitats.

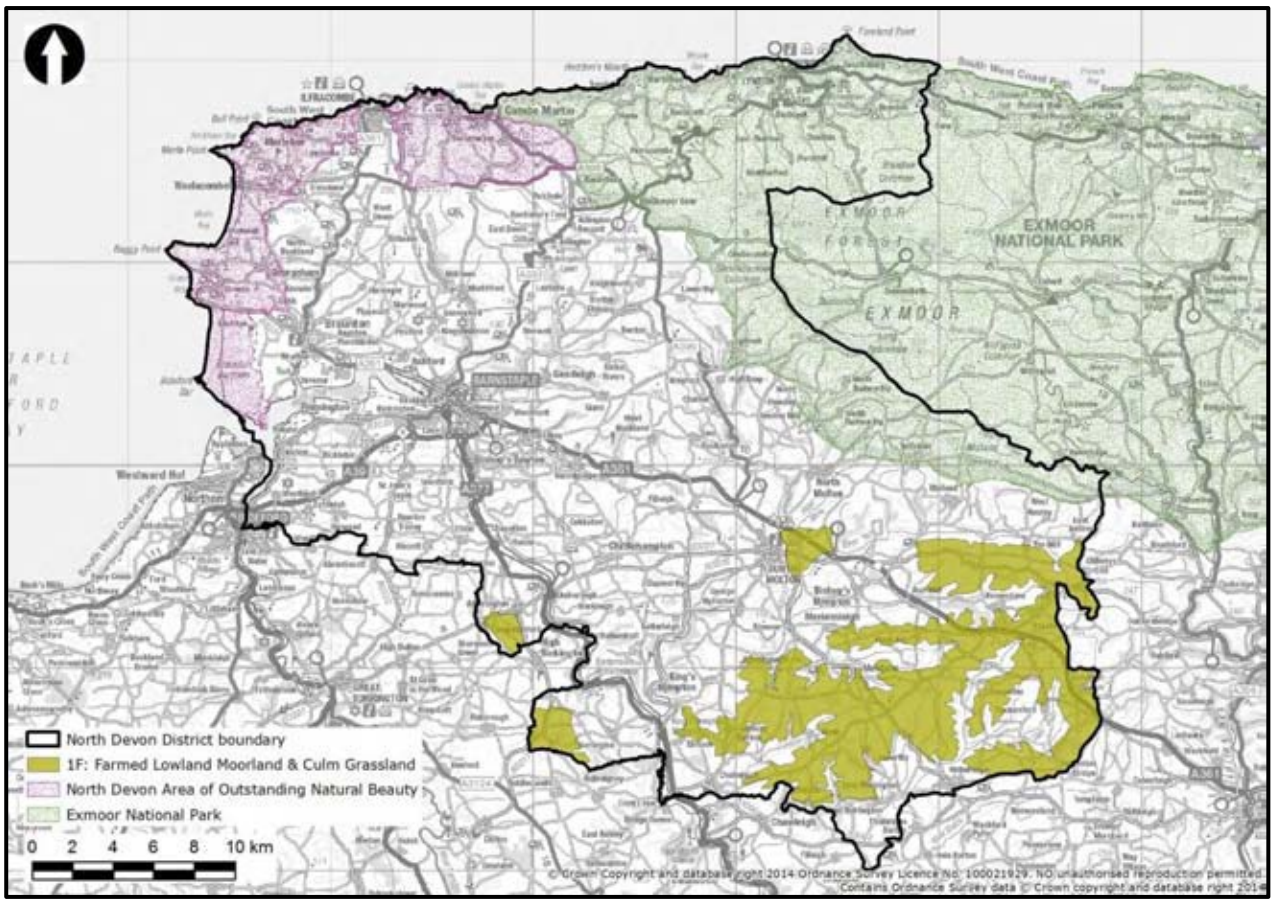
Additional guidance specific to particular Landscape Character Areas

This LCT falls entirely within DCA 14: Codden Hill and Wooded Estates. Wherever possible, future development should be in line with the overall landscape strategy of the Devon Character Area, as set out in the description on the DCC website[23].

[23] http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/environmentplanning/natural_environment/landscape/landscapecharacter.htm

LCT 1F: Farmed Lowland Moorland and Culm Grassland

LCT Location Map



Character Areas

DCA 32: High Culm Ridges

DCA 53: South Molton Farmland

DCA 59: Taw Valley

DCA 67: Witheridge and Rackenford Moor

Please note that while this LCT assessment for wind and solar PV development provides an initial indication of landscape sensitivity and guidance for accommodating developments in the landscape, it should not be interpreted as a definitive statement on the suitability of individual sites for a particular development. All developments will need to be assessed on their own merits.

Key Landscape Characteristics

- Gently undulating landform, in some places of a plateau-like character.
- Underlying geology of Culm Measures – mudstones and siltstones with bands of sandstone creating gently rolling topography. Areas where sandstone dominates are of a higher, plateau character.
- Elevation affording long views across the landscape and beyond – e.g. to the contrasting lush green fields of the surrounding farmland and the high moorland landscapes of Dartmoor and Exmoor.
- Large blocks of conifer plantation (particularly in Torridge District), as well as frequent patches of beech/oak woodland, secondary woodland on plantation edges and willow carr associated with streams.
- Open areas of Culm grassland and patches of heath surrounded by a regular pattern of medium-scale post-medieval and modern fields, with some earlier fields of medieval origin with curving boundaries.
- Square-cut beech hedgebanks with rushy verges bordering wet ditches. Patches of bracken and gorse, as well as wind-sculpted beech trees, give an exposed feel to higher locations. Areas on the fringes of more intensive farming include mixed species hedges with flower and fern-rich banks.
- Pastoral character including rough cattle/sheep grazing on expanses of Culm grassland and heath. More intensive farming, including occasional arable fields, poultry units and localised pony paddocks on the fringes of the 'moors'.
- Landscape crossed by frequent streams, springs, wet ditches and small ponds fringed by wet woodland, rush pasture and meadows.
- Internationally designated expanses of herb-rich Culm grassland supporting the most important regional stronghold for marsh fritillary butterflies. Large tracts of wet heath, rich flushes, valley mires, fen and marshy grasslands.
- Frequent clusters of nationally important Bronze Age barrows on elevated sites, disused quarries and the remains of a medieval castle at Winkleigh.
- Variety of traditional building styles, particularly white/cream cob render with slate. Villages often include white and cream modern bungalows extending out from the historic core.
- Sparse settlement pattern with scattered farmsteads, small clustered hamlets and nucleated villages often occupying ridgetop positions.
- Straight roads crossing along ridgelines, occasionally running through tunnels created by mature beech trees particularly on the fringes of settlements. Distinctive white finger posts at road crossing points.
- Golf courses, fishing lakes, caravan parks, equestrian centres, disused airfields, industrial land uses and main roads dilute perceptions of tranquillity and remoteness locally.

30% of the LCT falls within North Devon District

Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for wind energy development

Criteria	Lower sensitivity ▪▪▪▪▪▪▪▶ Higher sensitivity
Landform and scale	L-M
	Large scale gently undulating landform with plateau-like character in some places.
Land cover pattern and presence of human scale features	M
	Some variation in land cover including a strong pattern of medium scale fields surrounding open areas of Culm grassland and patches of heath. Some areas of smaller medieval fields are located on valley slopes. Fields are interspersed with large blocks of conifer plantation, frequent patches of beech/oak woodland, and areas of Culm grassland and patches of heath. Clustered hamlets and nucleated villages, scattered farmsteads, square-cut beech hedgebanks, trees and distinctive white finger posts at road crossing points form human scale features.
Tracks / transport pattern	M
	Mainly straight roads crossing along ridgelines, sometimes enclosed by mature beech trees, with some main roads, including the A361. Smaller rural roads lined with hedgebanks.
Skylines	M-H
	The LCT strategy makes reference to prominent open ridgelines and frequent clusters of Bronze Age barrows on elevated sites are noted as key characteristics of the landscape. Trees also form frequent features on skylines. These form an important backdrop to views, including from Exmoor National Park and the North Devon AONB.
Perceptual qualities	M-H
	This is a strongly rural landscape containing some conifer plantations and areas of undeveloped open Culm grassland and heathland which contribute to feelings of tranquillity and naturalness. Overall high levels of remoteness are disturbed locally by the main A361 North Devon Link Road which crosses the north of the LCT.
Historic landscape character	L-M
	The Devon HLC indicates that the majority of the landscape type is made up of modern enclosures (43%) - generally of lower sensitivity to wind energy development. However there are areas of medieval enclosures based on strip fields (18%) and some rough ground (9%) - both of higher sensitivity as well as post medieval enclosures (15%) - moderate sensitivity.
Scenic and special qualities	M-H
	Although not nationally designated for its scenic quality, parts of the LCT in the east are intervisible with Exmoor National Park, whose special qualities include: it being a timeless landscape mostly free from intrusive development, striking views inside and out of the National Park, and its sense of remoteness, wildness and tranquillity. These special qualities might be sensitive to development within adjacent areas and should be considered in any proposals. The LCT description notes the high levels of tranquillity and remoteness, long views across the landscape and beyond, the distinctive Culm grassland habitats, small field patterns enclosed by thick Devon banks and isolated farms and farmsteads. Some of these could be affected to a degree by wind energy development. Further special qualities mentioned in the Devon LCA descriptions, that could be affected by wind energy development, include the landscape's importance as a backdrop to views from a wide area (including from Bideford and Barnstaple and Exmoor National Park); locally high levels of tranquillity; sites of nature conservation importance including Culm grasslands and ancient woodlands; historic features such as ancient field patterns and Iron Age hillforts (Scheduled Monuments); as well as a number of RIGS and Conservation Areas.
Discussion on landscape sensitivity	Although the relatively large-scale landform (in the context of North Devon), presence of human influence and some main roads, and the predominantly medium-scale field pattern could indicate a lower sensitivity to wind energy development, the relatively high levels of tranquilly away from roads, some prominent skylines with historic features forming an important backdrop to views, presence of internationally important tracts of Culm grassland, medieval enclosures based on strip fields, and sensitive areas of rough ground all heighten sensitivity. Areas close to the National Park are also likely to have a higher sensitivity (although this will need to be judged on a case by case basis).

Sensitivity to different turbine heights	Very Small (15-25m)	M
	Small (26-50m)	M
	Medium (51-75m)	M-H
	Large (76-110m)	M-H
	Very large (111-150m)	H
	The strongly rural and often remote character of the landscape, with its pattern of medium- (and some small-scale) fields, presence of frequent human-scale features and largely undeveloped skylines with historic landmarks means that this landscape is likely to be highly sensitive to the larger sizes of turbines.	
Commentary on different cluster sizes Single turbine Small (<5 turbines) Medium (6-10) Large (11-25) Very large (>25)	The undulating nature of the landform, strong pattern of medium and some small-scale fields, largely undeveloped skylines with important historic monuments and presence of frequent human scale features means that it is likely to be highly sensitive to clusters greater than 'small' in size.	

Explanation for variations with the sensitivity assessment for Torridge (2011)

This LCT in Torridge contains a greater level of human influence, including golf courses, caravan sites, disused airfields and industrial land uses which resulted in a slightly lower assessment of sensitivity to medium-scale wind energy developments (resulting in a moderate score). In North Devon, the general absence of human development and industrial land uses, the presence of frequent human-scale features (including characteristic beech hedges and trees) and the role of a significant part of the LCT in forming a backdrop to 'striking' views from Exmoor National Park results in a moderate-high sensitivity to this turbine height category.

SUMMARY OF KEY SENSITIVE FEATURES/CHARACTERISTICS

A summary list of the key sensitive features and characteristics for the 1F Farmed Lowland Moorland and Culm Grassland LCT in relation to wind energy development is included below:

- Areas of open Culm grassland of international importance contributing to the landscape's high levels of perceived naturalness.
- Human-scale landscape features including woodlands, grown-out hedgebanks, distinctive white finger posts and beech hedgebanks.
- Predominately undeveloped skylines and historic landmark features including Bronze Age barrows and tumuli.
- Minor roads lined by hedges which could be affected by the delivery of turbines to site.
- Presence of sensitive historic land cover types including medieval enclosures based on strip fields and areas of rough ground.
- Locations which form a backdrop and setting to Exmoor National Park, whose special qualities include striking views out of the protected landscape and a sense of remoteness, wildness and tranquillity.

Guidance for wind energy development

Permitted schemes within the LCT

Planning data held by the Council (November 2013) shows that there are five permitted wind energy developments in this LCT, three of which are single turbine schemes of the 'very small' category at Cob Castle, Rackenford; Beech Farm, Horstone and Hollyfield Farm, Rackenford. A fourth single turbine scheme falls within the 'small' category at Pilliven Witheridge. The final permitted scheme is for nine turbines of 'large' category at Batworthy Cross, Knowstone. All five schemes are not yet operational and are in DCA 67: Witheridge and Rackenford Moor.

Guidance for Development

The landscape sensitivity assessment indicates that this LCT has a moderate sensitivity to 'very small' and 'small' turbines (up to 50m), and a moderate-high sensitivity to 'medium' turbines (up to 75m to blade tip). It concludes that it would be of high sensitivity to turbines of over 75m to tip due to the presence of frequent human-scale features within the landscape, its prominent, undeveloped skylines and remote naturalistic character. The assessment also states that the landscape would be highly sensitive to any clusters larger than 5 turbines without introducing a change to landscape character. Turbines should be located away from the most prominent undeveloped skylines and areas of open Culm grassland.

A clear visual hierarchy should be maintained between 'very small'/'small' scale turbines associated with buildings (e.g. single on-farm turbines), and 'medium' scale wind energy developments in larger scale areas (i.e. larger turbines located in small groups of under 5 turbines). A proliferation of varying heights and styles of turbine should be avoided. Within these distinct size categories of turbine, developments should be of a similar scale and design (in terms of number, siting, layout, style of turbine and relationship to key characteristics) to maintain a simple image and reinforce links between landscape characteristics and design response within the LCT.

The overall aim should be ensure that wind energy developments do not have a significant cumulative impact on the LCT resulting in an overall change in landscape character.

When siting and designing wind energy developments in this LCT, the generic guidance within Chapter 2 of the Devon Landscape Policy Group's Advice Note No. 2: Accommodating Wind and Solar PV Developments in Devon's Landscape should be followed, particularly when considering the cumulative impacts of multiple schemes. In addition, within this LCT particular care will need to be taken to ensure:

- Wind energy development does not overwhelm the human scale of the landscape features associated with the LCT (e.g. hedgerows, trees and woodland).
- Valued naturalistic habitats are retained - including open tracts of Culm grassland, heathland and wet woodland.
- Wind turbines do not prevent the appreciation and understanding of historic skyline/ landmark features including nationally important clusters of Bronze Age barrows.
- Lengths of minor roads and tracks, often framed by characteristic beech hedges and ancient hedgebanks, are not adversely affected by delivery of turbines.
- The strongly rural, frequently remote and tranquil character of the landscape is retained.
- Wind turbines do not detract from the countryside backdrop provided by the LCT to the settlements of Bideford and Barnstaple.
- Wind energy development does not adversely affect the sense of remoteness, wildness and tranquillity associated with Exmoor National Park, or unacceptably impact on the striking views from the National Park into the district (particularly relevant to DCAs 53 and 67).
- Opportunities are sought to enhance the landscape in association with any development, in accordance with the landscape strategy for the LCT, including protecting the landscape's

traditional farming systems (integral to the survival of rare Culm grassland habitats), ensuring new development is integrated into its landscape setting, avoiding prominent open ridgelines, and seeking opportunities for the creation of Green Infrastructure networks.

Additional Guidance Specific to Particular Landscape Character Areas

This guidance will apply consistently for all Devon Character Areas where this LCT is present. Consideration of the impact of wind turbine development on the special qualities of Exmoor National Park – particularly its sense of remoteness, wildness and tranquillity and striking views into the district, will be especially important in DCAs 53: South Molton Farmland and 67: Witheridge and Rackenford Moor).

Wherever possible, future development should be in line with the overall landscape strategy of the relevant Devon Character Area, as set out in the descriptions on the DCC website[24].

[24] http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/environmentplanning/natural_environment/landscape/landscapecharacter.htm

Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for solar PV development

Criteria	Lower sensitivity ▪▪▪▪▪▪▪▶ Higher sensitivity				
Landform			M		
	Gently undulating landform with plateau-like character at higher elevations and visible slopes associated with tributary valleys.				
Sense of openness / enclosure			M		
	The elevated nature of this landscape and the open nature of the Culm grasslands contribute to sense of openness in many locations. However, enclosure is provided elsewhere by blocks of woodland and plantation, square-cut beech hedges, grown-out hedgebanks and willow carr associated with streams.				
Field pattern and scale			M		
	Regular pattern of medium-scale fields of post-medieval and modern origin. Some smaller scale fields of medieval origin with less regular boundaries.				
Land cover				M-H	
	Mix of pastoral land including Culm grassland, some patches of heath and also some large blocks of conifer plantation as well as frequent patches of beech /oak woodland. Smaller areas of more intensive farming on the fringes of the 'moors'.				
Perceptual qualities				M-H	
	This is a strongly rural landscape containing some conifer plantations and areas of undeveloped open Culm grassland and heath land which contribute to feelings of tranquillity and naturalness. Overall high levels of remoteness are disturbed locally by the main A361 North Devon Link Road which crosses the north of the LCT.				
Historic Landscape Character		L-M			
	The Devon HLC indicates that the majority of the landscape type is made up of modern enclosures (43%) - generally of lower sensitivity to solar PV development. However there are areas of medieval enclosures based on strip fields (18%) and some rough ground (9%) - both of higher sensitivity as well as post medieval enclosures (15%) - moderate sensitivity.				
Scenic and special qualities				M-H	
	Although not nationally designated for its scenic quality, parts of the LCT are intervisible with Exmoor National Park, whose special qualities include: it being a timeless landscape mostly free from intrusive development, striking views inside and out of the National Park, and its sense of remoteness, wildness and tranquillity. These special qualities might be sensitive to development within adjacent areas and should be considered in any proposals. The LCT description notes the high levels of tranquillity and remoteness, long views across the landscape and beyond, the distinctive Culm grassland habitats, small field patterns enclosed by thick Devon banks and isolated farms and farmsteads. Some of these could be affected to a degree by solar PV development. Further special qualities mentioned in the Devon LCA descriptions, that could be affected by solar PV development, include the landscape's importance as a backdrop to views from a wide area (including from Bideford and Barnstaple and Exmoor National Park); locally high levels of tranquillity; sites of nature conservation importance including Culm grasslands and ancient woodlands; historic features such as ancient field patterns and Iron Age hillforts (Scheduled Monuments); as well as a number of RIGS and Conservation Areas.				
Discussion on landscape sensitivity	Although the areas of plateau landform, presence of medium scale modern fields, and sense of enclosure provided by woodland and hedgebanks could indicate a lower sensitivity to solar PV development, areas of internationally important Culm grassland, medieval enclosures based on strip fields, the predominantly rural, tranquil character of the landscape and its function as a scenic backdrop to views from settlements could increase sensitivity. Areas visible from the National Park are also likely to have a higher sensitivity (although this will need to be judged on a case by case basis).				

Sensitivity to different sizes of solar PV development	Very Small (<1ha)	M
	Small (>1-5ha)	M
	Medium (>5-10ha)	M-H
	Large (>10-15ha)	H
	Very Large (>15-20ha)	H
	This LCT is likely to be highly sensitive to 'large' and 'very large' scale solar PV developments due to its naturalistic and often remote character, areas of highly valued Culm grassland, and the presence of small-scale medieval enclosures based on strip fields.	

Explanation for variations with the sensitivity assessment for Torridge (2011)

This LCT in Torridge contains a greater level of human influence, including golf courses, caravan sites, disused airfields and industrial land uses which resulted in a slightly lower assessment of sensitivity to medium-scale solar PV developments (resulting in a 'moderate' score). In North Devon, the general absence of human development and industrial land uses, and the role of a significant part of the LCT in forming a backdrop to 'striking' views from Exmoor National Park results in a moderate-high sensitivity assessment being given to schemes of this scale.

SUMMARY OF KEY SENSITIVE FEATURES/CHARACTERISTICS

A summary list of the key sensitive features and characteristics for 1F Farmed Lowland Moorland and Culm Grassland LCT in relation to solar PV development is included below:

- Strong rural character, with high levels of tranquillity and remoteness and low levels of modern development.
- Areas of open Culm grassland, lowland heathland, willow carr and semi-natural woodland which contribute to the landscape's high levels of perceived naturalness.
- Nationally important historic features, including clusters of Bronze Age barrows on elevated sites.
- Presence of sensitive historic land cover types including small-scale medieval enclosures based on strip fields and areas of rough ground.
- Prominent elevated slopes which form a backdrop and setting to Exmoor National Park, whose special qualities include striking views out of the protected landscape and a sense of remoteness, wildness and tranquillity.

Guidance for solar PV development

Permitted schemes within the LCT

Planning data held by the Council (November 2013) shows that there are four permitted solar PV schemes in the LCT, three of which are in the 'very small' category at Aylescott Driers, Burrington; Pallavins Farm, South Molton and Middle Burrows Farm, East Worlington. All three 'very small' schemes are not yet operational. The fourth permitted scheme at Folly Lane, South Molton falls within the 'small' category and is operational. Two of the permitted schemes are within DCA 53: South Molton. There is one permitted schemes in DCAs 32: High Culm Ridges and one permitted scheme is in 67: Witheridge and Rackenford Moor

Guidance for Development

The landscape sensitivity assessment indicates that this LCT has a moderate sensitivity to schemes up to 5ha in size, a moderate-high sensitivity to 'medium' developments (>5-10ha) and a high sensitivity to developments greater than 10ha. This indicates that the landscape will be particularly sensitive to any developments over 5ha and is unlikely to be able to accommodate any over 10ha in size without introducing a change to landscape character. Any proposals should be located in more enclosed areas and on lower slopes, avoiding highly visible slopes and valued areas of semi-natural habitat, particularly internationally important tracts of Culm grassland.

Multiple developments within the LCT should be of a similar scale and design (in terms of siting, layout, scale, form and relationship to key characteristics) to maintain a simple image and reinforce links between landscape characteristics and design response within the LCT. The overall aim should be to make sure that solar PV developments do not become a key characteristic of the landscape (i.e. developments would not result in a significant cumulative impact on the LCT or overall change of landscape character).

When siting and designing solar PV developments in this LCT the generic guidance within Chapter 3 of the Devon Landscape Policy Group's Advice Note No. 2: *Accommodating Wind and Solar PV Developments in Devon's Landscape* should be followed particularly when considering the cumulative impacts of multiple schemes. In addition, within this LCT particular care will need to be taken to ensure:

- Valued naturalistic habitats are retained - including tracts of Culm grassland, heathland and wet woodland.
- The strongly rural, frequently remote and tranquil character of the landscape is retained.
- The distinctive pattern of historically important curving medieval fields is retained, and the setting of important archaeological sites is protected (e.g. clusters of Bronze Age barrows on elevated sites).
- Solar PV developments do not detract from the countryside backdrop provided by the LCT to the settlements of Bideford and Barnstaple.
- Solar PV developments do not adversely affect the sense of remoteness, wildness and tranquillity associated with Exmoor National Park, or unacceptably impact on the striking views from the National Park into the district (particularly relevant to DCAs 53 and 67).
- Opportunities are sought to enhance the landscape in association with any development, in accordance with the landscape strategy for the LCT, including protecting the landscape's traditional farming systems (integral to the survival of rare Culm grassland habitats), ensuring new development is integrated into its landscape setting, avoiding prominent open ridgelines, and seeking opportunities for the creation of Green Infrastructure networks.

Additional guidance specific to particular Landscape Character Areas

This guidance will apply consistently for all Devon Character Areas where this LCT is present.

Consideration of the impact of solar PV development on the special qualities of Exmoor National Park – particularly its sense of remoteness, wildness and tranquillity and striking views into the district, will be especially important in DCAs 53: South Molton Farmland and 67: Witheridge and

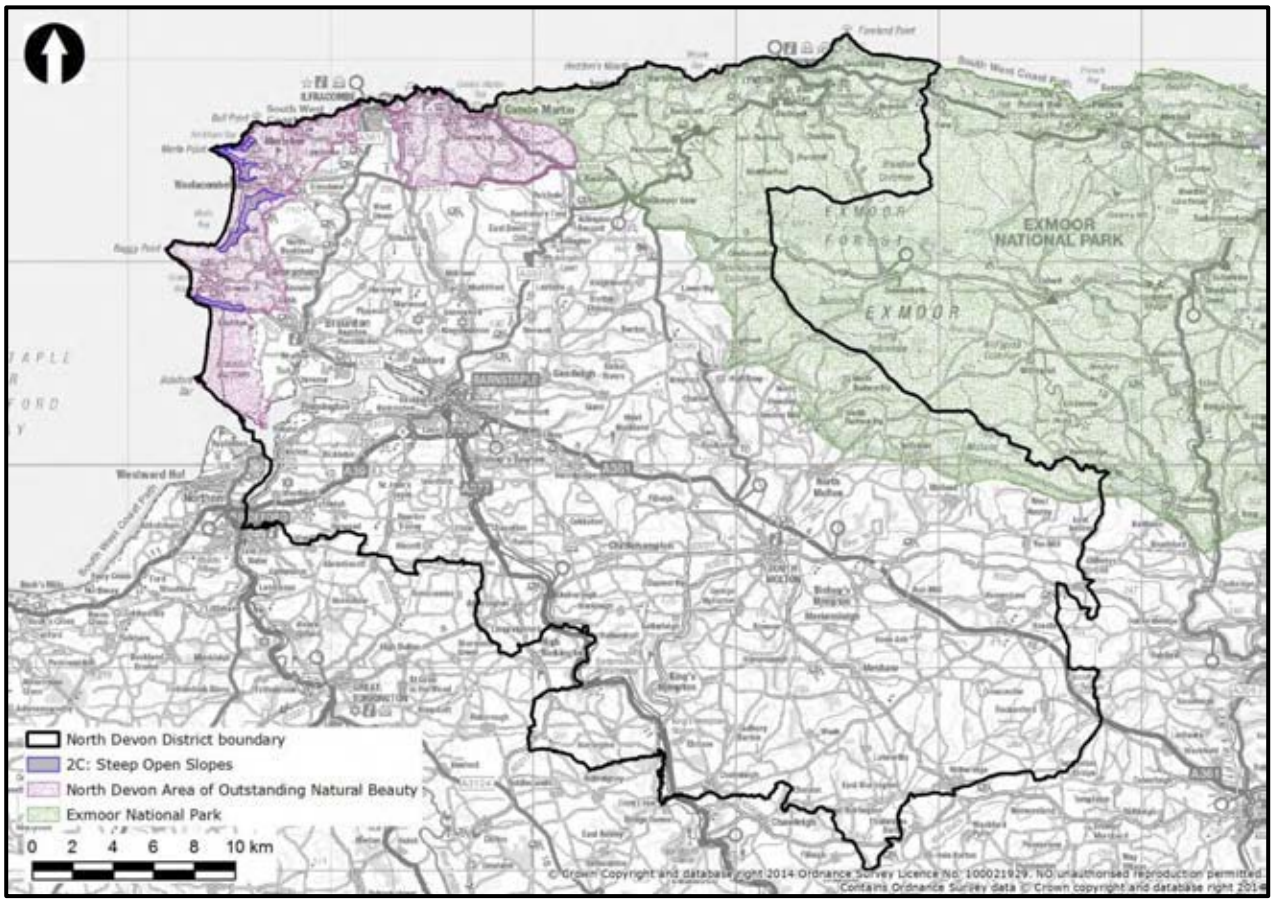
Rackenford Moor.

Wherever possible, future development should be in line with the overall landscape strategy of the relevant Devon Character Area, as set out in the descriptions on the DCC website[25].

[25] http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/environmentplanning/natural_environment/landscape/landscapecharacter.htm

LCT 2C: Steep Open Slopes

LCT Location Map



Character Areas

DCA 43: North Devon Coastal Downs

Please note that while this LCT assessment for wind and solar PV development provides an initial indication of landscape sensitivity and guidance for accommodating developments in the landscape, it should not be interpreted as a definitive statement on the suitability of individual sites for a particular development. All developments will need to be assessed on their own merits.

Key Landscape Characteristics

- Very steep slopes dropping away from downland hill summits towards the coast. The elevated slopes afford long-ranging and panoramic views across the coastal landscapes of the North Devon AONB.
- Varied geology, with the slope encircling Mortehoe comprised of Morte slate, the steep slope dropping westwards from Woolacombe Down underlain by sandstone, and the slope below Saunton Down comprising mudstones - all laid down during the Late Devonian period.
- An exposed, windswept landscape with tree cover limited to occasional wind-sculpted shelterbelts and individual pine specimens associated with properties, along with patches of blackthorn scrub and small areas of stunted oak woodland in the north.
- Stone-faced Devon hedges (with the use of Morte slate being locally distinctive) with sparse topping vegetation – usually patches of wind-pruned gorse and scrub. Some fields are divided by post-and-wire fencing.
- Nature conservation interest provided by a mosaic of maritime grasslands, coastal heath, bracken and scrub (including gorse and blackthorn). The slopes inland from Morte Point are designated as SSSI, primarily for their valued stretches of coastal heath and presence of breeding sea birds.
- The landscape is largely used for rough grazing (mainly by sheep).
- Slopes crossed by occasional springs and streams draining from the downland above, trickling down to meet the sea.
- Historic environment features include ancient cultivation terraces on the slopes above Saunton and a scattering of former quarries which historically provided local building stone. A lookout and arrow on the slopes above Putsborough beach dates from World War II.
- Range of vernacular building styles including the mix of Victorian and Edwardian villa-style houses and grand hotels of Woolacombe, the white-painted Art Deco-style landmark building of the Saunton Sands Hotel, as well as traditional buildings of whitewash and local Morte slate.
- Linear tourism-related development spreading along the road between Woolacombe and Mortehoe, with individual properties also strung out along the Saunton road overlooking Braunton Burrows. The majority of the landscape is unsettled owing to its steep topography.
- The slope below Saunton Down affords clear views of development at Braunton, Instow, Appledore, Northam and Westward Ho!, diluting the otherwise high levels of tranquillity and remoteness associated with this landscape.
- Upper slopes are mainly open downland and remnant heath, whilst lower slopes are often enclosed in a regular medium-large scale pattern of post-medieval and modern fields.

100% of the LCT falls within North Devon District

Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for wind energy development

Criteria	Lower sensitivity ▬▬▬▬▬▶ Higher sensitivity				
Landform and scale					H
	Small to medium-scale landscape with very steep slopes and strong undulations, elevated above rocky cliffs. The landform is recognised as 'distinctive' in the LCT description's section on special qualities; with dramatic headlands and minor combe valleys.				
Land cover pattern and presence of human scale features				M-H	
	Upper slopes are mainly open downland and remnant heath, whilst lower slopes are often enclosed in a regular medium-large scale pattern of post-medieval and modern fields. Field boundaries are predominately Devon hedges though some are divided by post-and-wire fencing. Tree cover is limited with occasional wind-sculpted shelterbelts and individual pine specimens associated with properties, along with patches of blackthorn scrub and small areas of stunted oak woodland in the north. The area's diverse land cover pattern is added to by a mosaic of maritime grasslands, coastal heath, bracken, scrub and rough grazing. As well as the limited tree cover and vegetation, human scale features include Devon hedges and localised areas of development (e.g. Saunton Sands hotels which is a prominent landmark feature, residential properties, and caravan park at Putsborough Sands).				
Tracks / transport pattern				M-H	
	Generally few roads with large areas inaccessible by vehicle. Where roads are present they are enclosed by a combination of scrubby verges, stone walling and steeply excavated banks, parking laybys occur at regular intervals. Larger roads generally follow contours while deeply sunken narrow lanes cross steeper slopes.				
Skylines					H
	Undeveloped skylines formed by strongly undulating exposed slopes, occasionally broken locally by low voltage electricity wires and road signs. The Mortehoe church tower on the northern edge of the LCT forms an important historic landmark features prominent in views to this LCT.				
Perceptual qualities				M-H	
	An exposed, windswept landscape which has a perceived sense of naturalness and is largely undeveloped. Where development is present, particularly between Mortehoe and Woolacombe, it dilutes the otherwise high levels of tranquillity and remoteness.				
Historic landscape character				M-H	
	The Devon HLC indicates that the majority of the LCT consists of 43% rough ground and smaller areas of 8% Barton fields (generally of higher sensitivity to wind energy developments), with areas of modern enclosures (18%), post-medieval enclosures (14%) and modern settlement (6%) – generally of lower sensitivity. The LCT also includes smaller areas of park/garden, other woodland, medieval enclosure based on strip fields (including cultivated terraces on southern slopes near Saunton), post medieval enclosure with medieval elements and sand – all of which would have a higher sensitivity to wind turbines.				
Scenic and special qualities	AONB	AONB	AONB	AONB	AONB
	All of this LCT is located within the North Devon AONB. The special qualities of this part of the protected landscape, which may be affected by wind energy development, include: its high visual quality, undeveloped skylines, strong sense of tranquillity and remoteness and panoramic views across rolling countryside. Wilderness is a rare and highly valued quality associated with the adjacent Braunton Burrows (LCT 4F). The LCT description also notes the landscape's distinctive topography, dramatic headlands, 'amazing' coastal views, sense of naturalness with important remnant areas of coastal heath and the exciting balance between lively coastal activities nearby and the slopes' remote feel. Further special qualities mentioned in the Devon LCA description for the North Devon Coastal Downs include: area of very high scenic quality, with 'amazing' coastal views and seascapes, high levels of tranquillity, important habitats, listed buildings (including Saunton Sands Hotel), Conservation Areas in Woolacombe and Mortehoe village. Some of these may be affected to a degree by wind energy development.				

Discussion on landscape sensitivity	Although there are already influences of modern development in some parts of the LCT, the landscape's distinctive landform with prominent headlands, high (nationally important) scenic qualities and levels of tranquillity, prominent skylines forming a backdrop to views from other LCTs and naturalistic land cover pattern all heighten sensitivity wind turbines.	
Sensitivity to different turbine heights	Very Small (15-25m)	H
	Small (26-50m)	H
	Medium (51-75m)	H
	Large (76-110m)	H
	Very large (111-150m)	H
	The high scenic quality of the landscape (all within the North Devon AONB), its open character, undeveloped, prominent skylines forming a backdrop to views from other landscapes, valued semi-natural land cover and high levels of remoteness and tranquillity all contribute to this landscape being highly sensitive to even the smallest scale of wind turbines.	
Commentary on different cluster sizes Single turbine Small (<5 turbines) Medium (6-10) Large (11-25) Very large (>25)	This LCT would be highly sensitive to any wind energy development.	

SUMMARY OF KEY SENSITIVE FEATURES/CHARACTERISTICS

A summary list of the key sensitive features and characteristics for 2C Steep Open Slopes LCT in relation to wind energy development is included below:

- The small-scale and distinct coastal land form with prominent, steep slopes.
- Open prospects with long ranging and often panoramic views out from and between different parts of this LCT.
- High visual quality of the landscape, with elevated skylines forming the backdrop to views from other LCTs.
- Valued naturalistic habitats including open downland, coastal heath, mosaic of maritime grassland and areas of stunted oak woodland.
- The lack of access tracks and roads and the sense of remoteness and tranquillity in these areas.
- Narrow roads and sunken winding lanes bounded by excavated banks and high hedgebanks.
- Important historic features relating to the area's ancient development including medieval cultivation terraces on slopes and locally distinctive stone-faced Devon hedgebanks.
- The special qualities of the North Devon AONB, particularly its strong sense of tranquillity and remoteness, high visual quality and undeveloped skylines.

Guidance for wind energy development

Permitted schemes within the LCT
Planning data held by the Council (November 2013) shows that there are no operational or permitted wind energy developments within this LCT.
Guidance for Development
The landscape sensitivity assessment indicates that this LCT is highly sensitive to all sizes and scales of wind turbine development, and therefore is unlikely to be able to accommodate any turbines without introducing a significant change to landscape character.
Additional Guidance Specific to Particular Landscape Character Areas
N/A – all of this LCT falls within one Devon Character Area – DCA 43: North Devon Coastal Downs. Any future development should be in line with the overall landscape strategy for the DCA, as set out in the description on the DCC website[26].

[26] http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/environmentplanning/natural_environment/landscape/landscapecharacter.htm

Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for solar PV development

Criteria	Lower sensitivity ▬▬▬▬▬▶ Higher sensitivity				
Landform					H
	Small to medium-scale landscape with very steep slopes and strong undulations, elevated above rocky cliffs. The landform is recognised as 'distinctive' in the LCT description's section on special qualities; with dramatic headlands and minor combe valleys.				
Sense of openness / enclosure				M-H	
	The sense of openness is greatest on elevated slopes where no field boundaries or only post and wire fences divide fields. From these locations long-ranging and panoramic views can be gained across the coastal landscapes, including to other parts of this LCT. It is typically an exposed, windswept landscape with limited tree cover. However, some enclosure is provided where Devon hedgebanks are present and within sheltered minor combes where tree cover is more common.				
Field pattern and scale			M		
	Upper slopes are mainly open downland and remnant heath, whilst lower slopes are often enclosed in a regular medium-large scale pattern of post-medieval and modern fields.				
Land cover					H
	Diverse and naturalistic land cover including important tracts of coastal heath, maritime grassland, bracken and scrub (including gorse and blackthorn) and areas of rough grazing land. Generally there is limited tree cover except in minor combes and in association with residential development.				
Perceptual qualities				M-H	
	An exposed, windswept landscape which is highly naturalistic and has few modern influences. These qualities also help contribute to perceptions of wilderness in adjacent LCTs (Braunton Burrows in LCT 4F). Where development is present, particularly between Mortehoe and Woolacombe, it dilutes the otherwise high levels of tranquillity and remoteness.				
Historic Landscape Character				M-H	
	The Devon HLC indicates that the majority of the LCT consists of 43% rough ground and smaller areas of 8% Barton fields (generally of higher sensitivity to solar PV developments), with areas of modern enclosures (18%), post-medieval enclosures (14%) and modern settlement (6%) – generally of lower sensitivity. Smaller areas of park/garden, other woodland, medieval enclosure based on strip fields (including cultivated terraces on southern slopes near Saunton), post medieval enclosure with medieval elements and sand – all of which would have a higher sensitivity to solar PV development.				
Scenic and special qualities	AONB	AONB	AONB	AONB	AONB
	All of this LCT is located within the North Devon AONB. The special qualities of this part of the protected landscape, which may be affected by solar PV development, include: its high visual quality, undeveloped skylines, strong sense of tranquillity and remoteness and panoramic views across rolling countryside. Wilderness is a rare and highly valued quality associated with the adjacent Braunton Burrows (LCT 4F). The special qualities of this landscape that could be affected by solar PV development, as recorded in the LCT description, include the distinctive topography including narrow slopes, dramatic headlands and minor combe valleys, 'amazing' coastal views and sense of naturalness with important areas of remnant coastal heath. Further special qualities mentioned in the Devon LCA description for the North Devon Coastal Downs include: area of very high scenic quality, with 'amazing' coastal views and seascapes, high levels of tranquillity, important habitats, listed buildings (including Saunton Sands Hotel), Conservation Areas in Woolacombe and Mortehoe village. Some of these qualities may also be affected by solar PV development.				
Discussion on landscape sensitivity	Although this LCT does have some limited enclosure with Devon hedgebanks and tree cover within the combes and some modern development which could indicate a lower sensitivity to solar PV developments, the landscape's distinctive topography, high sense of openness and levels of tranquillity, nationally important scenic qualities and valued naturalistic land cover all present higher sensitivities to this type of development.				

Sensitivity to different sizes of solar PV development	Very Small (<1ha)	M-H
	Small (>1-5ha)	H
	Medium (>5-10ha)	H
	Large (>10-15ha)	H
	Very Large (>15-20ha)	H
	This LCT is likely to be highly sensitive any developments larger than 'very small' in scale due to its naturalistic, remote and tranquil characteristic, as well as the lack of modern development, valued land cover including coastal heath and high scenic quality. The most prominent, open slopes would be highly sensitive to all scales of solar PV development.	

SUMMARY OF KEY SENSITIVE FEATURES/CHARACTERISTICS

A summary list of the key sensitive features and characteristics for 2C Steep Open Slopes LCT in relation to solar PV development is included below:

- Visually prominent and exposed steep slopes and coastal headlands.
- Strong feelings of remoteness and tranquillity associated with much of the landscape.
- Valued naturalistic habitats including open downland, coastal heath, mosaics of maritime grassland and areas of stunted oak woodland.
- The intimate nature of the strongly undulating land form and the presence of historically important medieval strip fields and cultivation terraces.
- The special qualities of the North Devon AONB, particularly its strong sense of tranquillity and remoteness, high visual quality and undeveloped skylines.

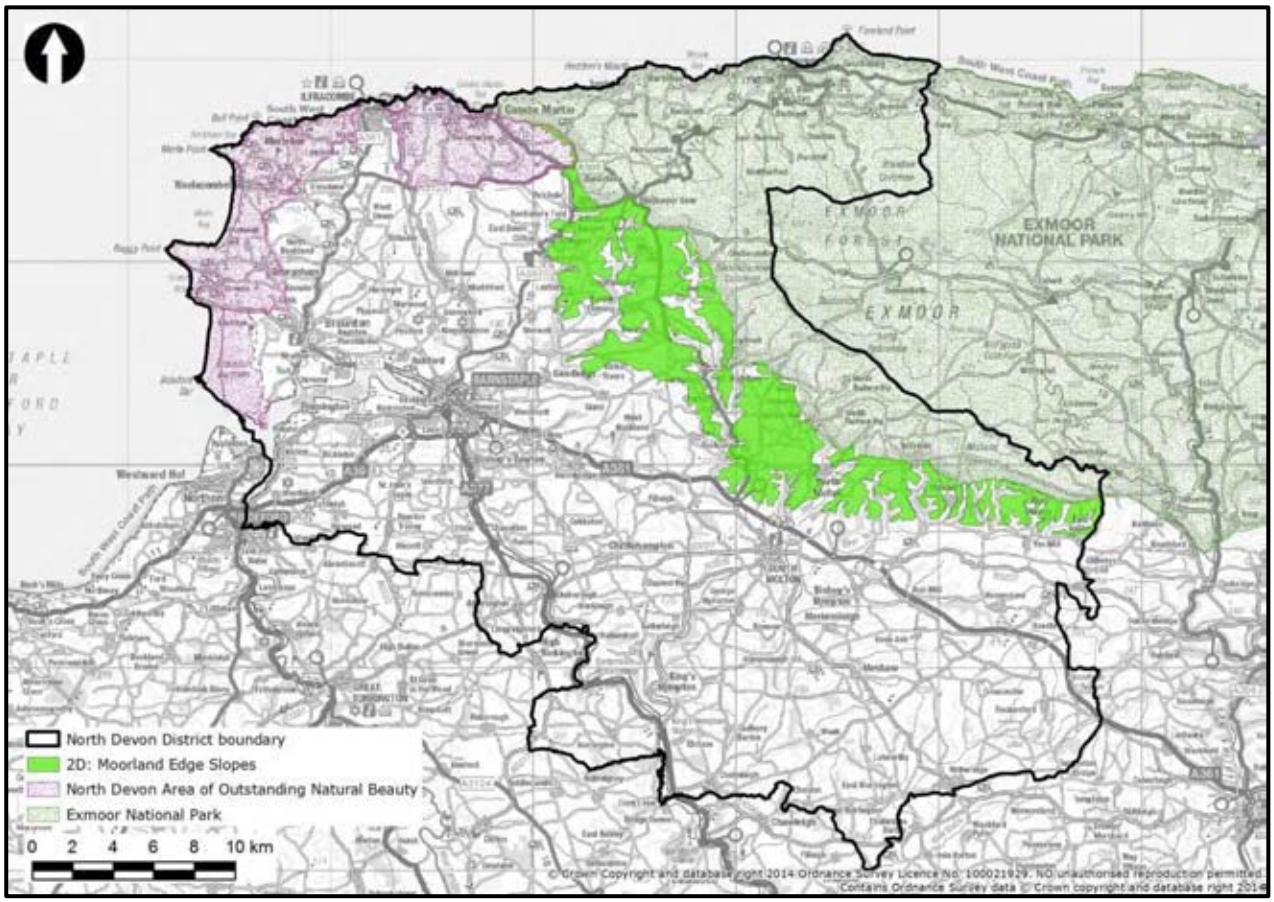
Guidance for solar PV development

Permitted schemes within the LCT
Planning data held by the Council (November 2013) indicates that there are currently no operational or permitted solar PV developments within this LCT.
Guidance for Development
The landscape sensitivity assessment indicates that this highly scenic landscape, entirely within the North Devon AONB, would be highly sensitive to any solar PV developments greater than 1 hectare in scale. Any developments should avoid the most prominent steep and open slopes, and be associated with sheltered, enclosed locations or locations with existing human influence. When siting and designing solar PV developments in this LCT the generic guidance within Chapter 3 of the Devon Landscape Policy Group's Advice Note No. 2: *Accommodating Wind and Solar PV Developments in Devon's Landscape* should be followed particularly when considering the cumulative impacts of multiple schemes. The overall aim should be to ensure solar PV development does not become a key characteristic of the landscape of the LCT. In addition, within this LCT particular care will need to be taken to ensure: • Solar PV schemes are not located on the most visually prominent slopes, especially those that are open in character. • The open, undeveloped upper slopes and coastal headlands remain free from development. • Locate development near existing settlement/ development so that the most remote areas remain free of development. • Make use of the area's limited tree/woodland cover to screen developments. • Solar PV development does no adversely affect areas of valued areas of semi-natural habitat, including open downland, coastal heath, mosaics of maritime grassland and areas of stunted oak woodland • Solar PV development does not adversely affect the integrity of areas of medieval strip enclosures and cultivation terraces, or the setting of Saunton Court Registered Park and Garden (immediately adjacent in LCT 5C). • The special qualities of the North Devon AONB, particularly its strong sense of tranquillity and remoteness, high visual quality and undeveloped skylines, are protected. • Opportunities are sought to enhance the landscape in association with any development, in accordance with the landscape strategy for the LCT. These include protecting the open and remote character of the landscape, with long coastal and seaward views; expanding remnant patches of coastal heath; ensuring archaeological features remain traceable in the landscape; and strengthening the network of stone-faced hedgebanks.
Additional Guidance Specific to Particular Landscape Character Areas
N/A – all of this LCT falls within one Devon Character Area – DCA 43: North Devon Coastal Downs. Any future development should be in line with the overall landscape strategy for the DCA, as set out in the description on the DCC website[27].

[27] http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/environmentplanning/natural_environment/landscape/landscapecharacter.htm

LCT 2D: Moorland Edge Slopes

LCT Location Map



Character Areas

DCA 27: Exmoor Fringe

DCA 44: North Devon Downs

DCA 45: North Devon High Coast

Please note that while this LCT assessment for wind and solar PV development provides an initial indication of landscape sensitivity and guidance for accommodating developments in the landscape, it should not be interpreted as a definitive statement on the suitability of individual sites for a particular development. All developments will need to be assessed on their own merits.

Key Landscape Characteristics

- Elevated land with a rolling topography, in parts steeply sloping down from the moorland core of Exmoor. Long-distance views from hill summits across North Devon and to the coast. This LCT is overlooked by Molland and East/West Anstey Commons (within the National Park).
- Devonian sandstone geology around the edges of Exmoor, with a band of Upcott Slate marking the transition with the softer siltstones and mudstones of the Culm Measures further south.
- Landscape crossed by streams and springs draining into the adjacent steeply incised wooded valleys (described as separate LCTs).
- Generally sparse woodland cover with occasional bands of broadleaved woodland lining streams and grown-out beech hedgebanks forming tree lines. Some pine shelterbelts on higher ground.
- Clustered hamlets and villages at road crossing points often centred on a square-towered church. Farmsteads scattered throughout, nestled in dips and shielded by beech shelterbelts.
- Modern expansion of Bratton Fleming (cream houses and bungalows), a caravan park at Stowford Cross and prominent telecommunications mast on Bratton Down - locally diluting overarching strong perceptions of tranquillity and remoteness.
- Mixture of regular modern and Parliamentary fields of small to medium scale, with smaller curving fields of medieval origin remaining on valley slopes.
- Fields enclosed by square-cut beech hedgebanks with some grown out sections of mature wind-sculpted trees and historic banks on the edge of Exmoor. Lengths near spring-lines include ferns in banks, and valley slopes are characterised by more species-diverse Devon hedges (e.g. beech and sycamore) with flower-rich banks.
- Mainly sheep grazing in improved pasture fields and rough grazing on areas of rush pasture on the edges of Exmoor. Some horse keeping on the edges of settlements (e.g. Stoke Rivers).
- Exmoor character reflected in areas of species-rich rush pasture and patches of gorse scrub. Sloping land south-east of Twitchen includes wet heath, Molinia mire and neutral grassland as part of the wider South Exmoor SSSI and Exmoor Heaths SAC. Historic wood pasture and parkland is nationally valued on the Arlington Hall estate.
- Bronze Age barrows forming crowning features on Bampfylde Hill, Berry Hill and the summits of Bratton Down. Iron Age hillforts in commanding positions above valleys, including Smythapark and Castle Roborough, as well as ancient settlement remains contributing to a strong time depth. The Regency Arlington Hall with 19th century parkland estate is Grade II* registered.
- Strong local vernacular of sandstone buildings with slate roofs and red brick detailing, with some cream cob/render buildings standing out against a pastoral backdrop.

100% of the LCT falls within North Devon District

Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for wind energy development

Criteria	Lower sensitivity ▬▬▬▬▬▶ Higher sensitivity				
Landform and scale			M		
	Elevated land with a rolling topography, in parts steeply sloping down from the moorland core of Exmoor. Flatter areas are generally large in scale, but contrasting with smaller scale tributary valleys.				
Land cover pattern and presence of human scale features			M		
	Mixture of regular modern and Parliamentary fields of small to medium scale, with smaller curving fields of medieval origin remaining on valley slopes. Land cover is predominantly improved pasture and rough grazing land interspersed with patches of rush pasture, woodland, gorse scrub, wet heath, mire and historic wood pasture and parkland (associated with the Arlington Hall estate). Human-scale features include beech hedgebanks, mature wind-sculpted trees, scattered farmsteads, small settlements and churches.				
Tracks / transport pattern				M-H	
	Landscape crossed by minor lanes and tracks, often tightly hedged. The main A399 crossed through the northern part of the LCT near Bratton Fleming.				
Skylines			M		
	The landscape is valued for its distinctive undeveloped and exposed skylines below the moorland rim of Exmoor. Nationally important Bronze Age barrows and Iron Age hillforts occupy hill summits. Square church towers and tree clumps also form distinctive skyline features. Communications masts are prominent structures on the skyline at Bratton Down.				
Perceptual qualities				M-H	
	Sense of isolation, tranquillity and remoteness – the Devon Character Area description for the Exmoor Fringe refers to it as 'one of the most tranquil landscapes in Devon'. This is diluted locally by the modern expansion of Bratton Fleming (cream houses and bungalows) and a caravan park at Stowford Cross.				
Historic landscape character			M		
	The Devon HLC indicates that the majority of the landscape type is made up of medieval enclosures based on strip fields (29%) – generally of a higher sensitivity to wind energy development. There are also areas of Barton fields (19%) and smaller areas of medieval enclosures, other woodland and parks and gardens - all of which have a higher sensitivity. In addition, Arlington Hall estate is nationally valued for its historic wood pasture and parkland. There are areas within the LCT of lower sensitivity including modern enclosures (22%) and post-medieval enclosures (22%).				
Scenic and special qualities				M-H	
	AONB	AONB	AONB	AONB	AONB
	Less than 1% of this LCT falls within the North Devon AONB. The special qualities of this part of the protected landscape, which might be affected by wind energy development, include panoramic views from elevated areas across rolling countryside within and outside the AONB, wide and empty coastal vistas across to Lundy and beyond to the Welsh coast, and the legacy of a long history of human occupation – including fields defined by ancient hedge-banks, and historic farmsteads, hamlets and villages connected by winding lanes.. The countryside backdrop, much of it undesignated, is a defining element to the visual quality of the AONB providing a variety of open views. Although the majority of this LCT is not nationally designated for its scenic quality, parts of the LCT also lie in close proximity to Exmoor National Park, whose special qualities include: it being a timeless landscape mostly free from intrusive development, striking views inside and out of the National Park, and its sense of remoteness, wildness and tranquillity. These special qualities might be sensitive to development within adjacent areas and should be considered in any proposals. Other special qualities that could be affected by wind energy development, as recorded in the district's LCT description, include the senses of isolation, tranquillity and remoteness, picturesque villages and traditional buildings linked by rural lanes, moorland influence in the landscape's varied habitats and views to Exmoor and across North Devon. In addition, the DCA description notes the landscape's high scenic				

	quality and key role as a setting to Exmoor National Park, many Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings and the Grade II* registered Arlington Court.
Discussion on landscape sensitivity	Although this landscape includes some larger, modern field patterns and localised areas of human influence and intensive farming, its varied land cover patterns (including valued moorland fringe habitats), undeveloped and prominent skylines frequently marked by important historic features, high levels of tranquillity and remoteness, high scenic quality and its important role as a setting to Exmoor National Park and the North Devon AONB all increase sensitivity. Locations within the AONB will be highly sensitive to any wind energy development. Areas closest to and overlooked by the National Park and AONB are also likely to have a higher sensitivity (although this will need to be judged on a case by case basis).
Sensitivity to different turbine heights	**Land outside the AONB** / **Land within the AONB** Very Small (15-25m): M — Very Small (15-25m): H Small (26-50m): M-H — Small (26-50m): H Medium (51-75m): H — Medium (51-75m): H Large (76-110m): H — Large (76-110m): H Very large (111-150m): H — Very large (111-150m): H The strongly tranquil and historic character of the landscape, its prominent, exposed and unspoilt skylines with historic landmark features and its important role as a setting to the National Park and AONB mean it would be highly sensitive to turbines higher than 'small'. Locations within the AONB would be highly sensitive to all turbines.
Commentary on different cluster sizes Single turbine Small (<5 turbines) Medium (6-10) Large (11-25) Very large (>25)	The very sensitive nature of this landscape means that it would highly sensitive to all but single turbines – with locations within the AONB highly sensitive to any wind energy development. Areas adjacent to and overlooked by the protected landscapes are also likely to be highly sensitive to any turbines (although this will need to be judged on a case by case basis).

SUMMARY OF KEY SENSITIVE FEATURES/CHARACTERISTICS

A summary list of the key sensitive features and characteristics for 2D Moorland Edge Slopes LCT in relation to wind energy development is included below:

- The distinctive, unspoilt and exposed skylines below the Exmoor moorland rim.
- Human-scale features including hedgebanks, wind-sculpted trees and historic buildings.
- The strong moorland influence in the landscape's rich and varied semi-natural habitats.
- The minor road network with characteristic narrow, hedged lanes and tracks.
- Important historic features on skylines and the Grade II* registered wood pasture and parkland at Arlington Court.
- The scenic qualities of the landscape, including its strong tranquil and often isolated character.
- Its high scenic qualities, particularly within the North Devon AONB – whose special qualities include panoramic countryside views from elevated locations, framed seaward views, its role as a countryside backdrop and strong historic character, with valued features including historic buildings and ancient hedgebanks.
- Its role as an important setting to Exmoor National Park, whose special qualities include striking views out of the protected landscape and a sense of remoteness, wildness and tranquillity.

Guidance for wind energy development

Permitted schemes within the LCT

Planning data held by the Council (November 2013) indicates that there are nine permitted schemes within the LCT, all comprising single turbines within the 'very small' category. Two of the nine schemes are operational, one situated at Woodland Farm, West Antsey and the other at Wistlandpound, Kentisbury. All of the permitted schemes are located in DCA 27: Exmoor Fringe.

Guidance for Development

The landscape sensitivity assessment indicates that this LCT has a high sensitivity to any turbines greater than 'very small' in height, and would be highly sensitive to any clusters. Therefore the landscape would be least sensitive to single turbines associated with existing buildings or on farms, of less than 25 metres in height.

Single turbine developments should be of a similar scale and design (in terms of number, siting, layout, style of turbine and relationship to key characteristics) to maintain a simple image and reinforce links between landscape characteristics and design response within the LCT. The overall aim should be ensure that wind energy developments do not have a significant cumulative impact on the LCT resulting in an overall change of landscape character.

When siting and designing wind energy developments in this LCT, the generic guidance within Chapter 2 of the Devon Landscape Policy Group's Advice Note No. 2: *Accommodating Wind and Solar PV Developments in Devon's Landscape* should be followed, particularly when considering the cumulative impacts of multiple turbine developments. In addition, within this LCT particular care will need to be taken to ensure:

- Turbines do not impact on the distinctive and unspoilt character of the exposed skylines sitting below the moorland rim of Exmoor.
- Valued naturalistic habitats are retained - including rush pasture, woodland, gorse scrub, wet heath, mire and historic wood pasture and parkland.
- Turbines do not prevent the appreciation and understanding of historic skyline/ landmark features including Bronze Age barrows on Bampfylde Hill, Berry Hill and the summits of Bratton Down; and Iron Age hillforts overlooking valleys, including Smythapark and Castle Roborough.
- The characteristic network of winding lanes and tracks, often framed by characteristic square-cut and grown-out beech hedges, are not adversely affected by delivery of turbines.
- The scenic qualities of the landscape, including its strong tranquil and often isolated character, are protected.
- The highly scenic qualities of the landscape, including as part of the North Devon AONB, such as panoramic countryside views from elevated locations, framed seaward views and its strong historic character, are protected.
- Wind energy development does not adversely affect the sense of remoteness, wildness and tranquillity associated with Exmoor National Park, or unacceptably impact on the striking views from the National Park into the district.
- Opportunities are sought to enhance the landscape in association with any development, in accordance with the landscape strategy for the LCT. These include protecting the landscape's role as a setting to the National Park, strengthening its special qualities of tranquillity and remoteness, restoring and managing distinctive beech hedgebanks, and enhancing its moorland fringe character.

Additional Guidance Specific to Particular Landscape Character Areas

Most of this LCT falls within DCA 27: Exmoor Fringe, with a small section in the north included within DCA 45: North Devon High Coast. The above guidance will apply consistently for sites within either DCA. Wherever possible, future development should be in line with the overall

landscape strategy of the relevant Devon Character Area, as set out in the descriptions on the DCC website[28].

[28] http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/environmentplanning/natural_environment/landscape/landscapecharacter.htm

Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for solar PV development

Criteria	Lower sensitivity ▪▪▪▪▪▪▪▶ Higher sensitivity				
Landform				M-H	
	Elevated land with a rolling topography, in parts steeply sloping down from the moorland core of Exmoor and the edges of adjacent incised valleys.				
Sense of openness / enclosure			M		
	Strong sense of openness and exposure on hill summits, with areas of enclosure provided by grown-out beech hedgebanks, occasional bands of stream-side woodland and shelterbelts.				
Field pattern and scale			M		
	Mixture of regular modern and Parliamentary fields of small to medium scale, with smaller curving fields of medieval origin remaining on valley slopes.				
Land cover				M-H	
	Land cover is predominantly pasture and rough grazing land interspersed with patches of rush pasture, woodland, gorse scrub, wet heath, mire and historic wood pasture and parkland (associated with the Arlington Hall estate). Some horse keeping is found on the edges of settlements (e.g. Stoke Rivers) and intensive pastoral farming on the plateau around Bratton Flemming.				
Perceptual qualities				M-H	
	Sense of isolation, tranquillity and remoteness – the Devon Character Area description for the Exmoor Fringe refers to it as 'one of the most tranquil landscapes in Devon'. This is diluted locally by the modern expansion of Bratton Fleming (cream houses and bungalows) and a caravan park at Stowford Cross.				
Historic Landscape Character			M		
	The Devon HLC indicates that the majority of the landscape type is made up of medieval enclosures based on strip fields (29%) – generally of a higher sensitivity to solar PV development. There are also areas of Barton fields (19%) and smaller areas of medieval enclosures, other woodland and parks and gardens - all of which have a higher sensitivity. In addition, Arlington Hall estate is nationally valued for its historic wood pasture and parkland. There are areas within the LCT of lower sensitivity including modern enclosures (22%) and post-medieval enclosures (22%).				
Scenic and special qualities				M-H	
	AONB	AONB	AONB	AONB	AONB
	Less than 1% of this LCT falls within the North Devon AONB. The special qualities of this part of the protected landscape, which might be affected by solar PV development, include panoramic views from elevated areas across rolling countryside within and outside the AONB and the legacy of a long history of human occupation – including fields defined by ancient hedge-banks, and historic farmsteads, hamlets and villages connected by winding lanes. The countryside backdrop, much of it undesignated, is a defining element to the visual quality of the AONB providing a variety of open views. Although the majority of this LCT is not nationally designated for its scenic quality, parts of the LCT also lie in close proximity to and are overlooked by Exmoor National Park, whose special qualities include: it being a timeless landscape mostly free from intrusive development, striking views inside and out of the National Park, and its sense of remoteness, wildness and tranquillity. These special qualities might be sensitive to development within adjacent areas and should be considered in any proposals. Other special qualities that could be affected by solar PV energy development, as recorded in the district's LCT description, include the senses of isolation, tranquillity and remoteness, picturesque villages and traditional buildings linked by rural lanes, moorland influence in the landscape's varied habitats and views to Exmoor and across North Devon. In addition, the DCA description notes the landscape's high scenic quality and key role as a setting to Exmoor National Park, many Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings and the Grade II* registered Arlington Court.				
Discussion on landscape sensitivity	Although this landscape includes some larger, modern field patterns and localised areas of human influence and intensive farming, the presence of visible slopes, large areas of naturalistic land cover patterns (including valued moorland fringe habitats and curving small-scale medieval fields), high levels of tranquillity and remoteness,				

	high scenic quality and important role as a setting to Exmoor National Park and the North Devon AONB all increase sensitivity. Areas closest to the National Park and AONB are also likely to have a higher sensitivity (although this will need to be judged on a case by case basis).

Sensitivity to different sizes of solar PV development	Land outside the AONB		Land within the AONB	
	Very Small (<1ha)	M	Very Small (<1ha)	M-H
	Small (>1-5ha)	M	Small (>1-5ha)	H
	Medium (>5-10ha)	M-H	Medium (>5-10ha)	H
	Large (>10-15ha)	H	Large (>10-15ha)	H
	Very large (>15ha)	H	Very Large (>15-20ha)	H
	The presence of small scale fields (including historically important curving medieval fields), significant tracts of moorland fringe and wetland habitats and the landscape's key role as a setting to the National Park and AONB mean it would be highly sensitive to any solar PV schemes greater than 'medium' in scale. Land within the AONB would be highly sensitive to all but the smallest PV developments.			

SUMMARY OF KEY SENSITIVE FEATURES/CHARACTERISTICS

A summary list of the key sensitive features and characteristics for 2D Moorland Edge Slopes LCT in relation to solar PV development is included below:

- The presence of prominent, elevated slopes including those which form a visual and functional link to Exmoor National Park.
- The strong moorland influence in the landscape's rich and varied semi-natural habitats.
- Naturalistic land cover including rush pasture, woodland, gorse scrub, wet heath, mire and historic wood pasture and parkland.
- Small scale, curving fields of medieval origin emphasising the landscape's historic character.
- Nationally important historic features including Bronze Age barrows, Iron Age hillforts (including Smythapark and Castle Roborough) and the Grade II* registered parkland at Arlington Court.
- Its high scenic qualities and levels of tranquillity, particularly within the North Devon AONB – whose special qualities include the landscape's role as a countryside backdrop and strong historic character, with valued features including historic buildings and ancient hedgebanks.
- Its role as an important setting to Exmoor National Park, whose special qualities include striking views out of the protected landscape and a sense of remoteness, wildness and tranquillity.

Guidance for solar PV development

Permitted schemes within the LCT

Planning data held by the Council (November 2013) indicates that there are five permitted solar PV schemes within this LCT, three of which are located on the same site at Burcombe Farm, North Molton. All three schemes fall within the 'very small' category and are not operational. One of the remaining five schemes at Combeshead cross, North Molton fall within the 'small' category and is not operational. The final scheme is located at Four Cross Way, Bratton Flemming and is in the 'very large' category. This is the only operational scheme in this LCT. All of the permitted schemes are within DCA 27: Exmoor Fringe.

Guidance for Development

The landscape sensitivity assessment indicates that this landscape has a moderate sensitivity to 'very small' and 'small' schemes of up to 5 hectares, a moderate-high sensitivity to 'medium' scale schemes, and a high sensitivity to any developments with a footprint of over 10 hectares. This concludes that the LCT is unlikely to be able to accommodate any solar PV schemes over 10ha in size without introducing a change to landscape character. Any proposals should be located in more enclosed, flatter areas where more intensive farming practices dominate, avoiding highly visible slopes, irregular medieval fields and valued areas of semi-natural habitat, including rush pasture, mire, wet heath and wood pasture/parkland.

Multiple developments within the LCT should be of a similar scale and design (in terms of siting, layout, scale, form and relationship to key characteristics) to maintain a simple image and reinforce links between landscape characteristics and design response within the LCT. The overall aim should be to make sure that solar PV developments do not become a key characteristic of the landscape (i.e. developments would not result in a significant cumulative impact on the LCT or overall change of landscape character).

When siting and designing solar PV developments in this LCT the generic guidance within Chapter 3 of the Devon Landscape Policy Group's Advice Note No. 2: *Accommodating Wind and Solar PV Developments in Devon's Landscape* should be followed particularly when considering the cumulative impacts of multiple schemes. In addition, within this LCT particular care will need to be taken to ensure:

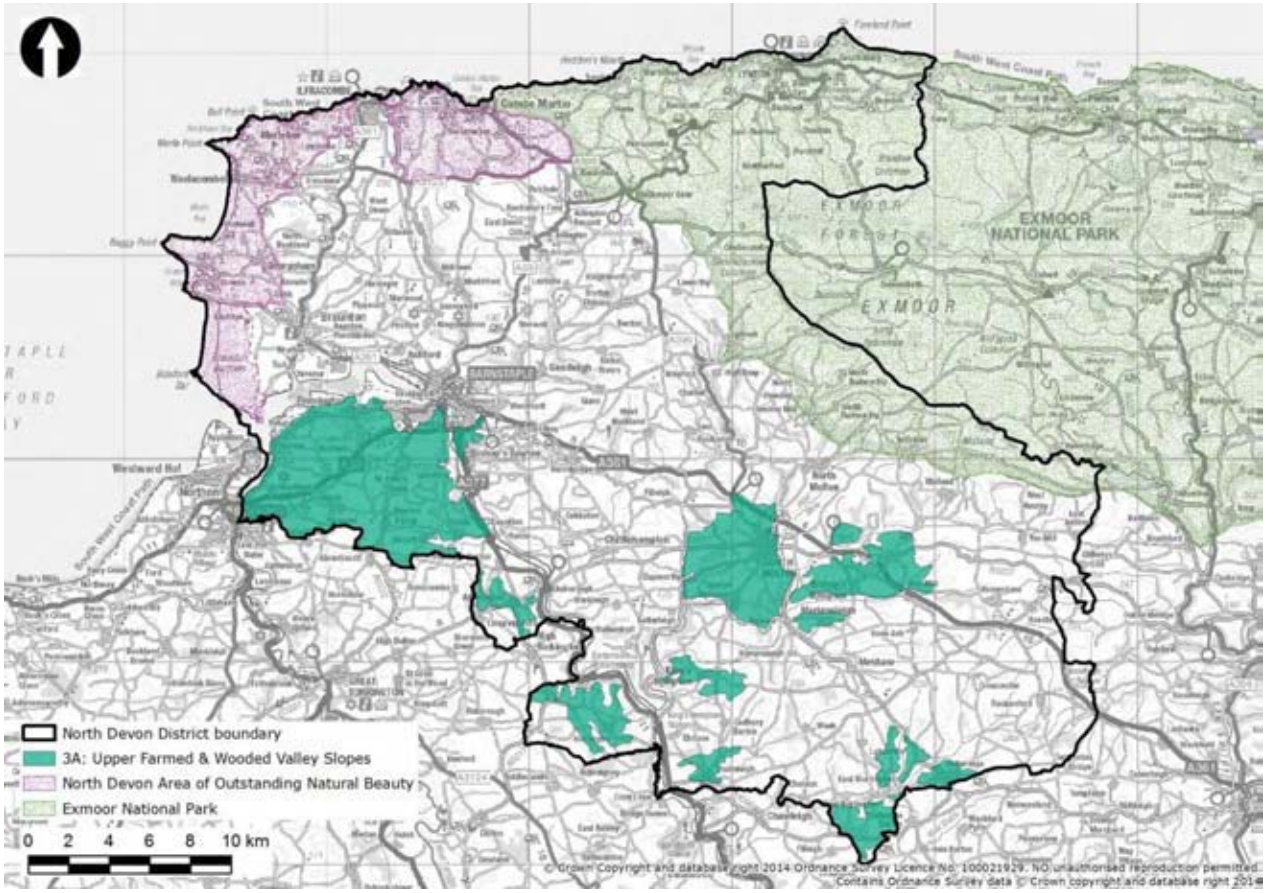
- The most prominent open slopes are avoided, particularly those that drop down from the moorland core of Exmoor.
- Valued naturalistic habitats are retained - including rush pasture, woodland, gorse scrub, wet heath and mire.
- Curving, small-scale medieval fields on slopes are avoided as sites for development, as well as areas of historic wood pasture and parkland associated with the Grade II* registered Arlington Court.
- The scenic qualities of the landscape, including its strong tranquil and often isolated, historic character, are protected.
- The highly scenic qualities of the landscape, including as part of the North Devon AONB, such as panoramic countryside views from elevated locations, framed seaward views and its strong historic character, are protected.
- Solar PV developments do not adversely affect the sense of remoteness, wildness and tranquillity associated with Exmoor National Park, or unacceptably impact on the striking views from the National Park into the district.
- Seek opportunities to enhance the landscape in association with any development, in accordance with the landscape strategy for the LCT. These include protecting the landscape's role as a setting to the National Park, strengthening its special qualities of tranquillity and remoteness, restoring and managing distinctive beech hedgebanks, and enhancing its moorland fringe character.

Additional Guidance Specific to Particular Landscape Character Areas
Most of this LCT falls within DCA 27: Exmoor Fringe, with a small section in the north included within DCA 45: North Devon High Coast. The above guidance will apply consistently for sites within either DCA. Wherever possible, future development should be in line with the overall landscape strategy of the relevant Devon Character Area, as set out in the descriptions on the DCC website[29].

[29] http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/environmentplanning/natural_environment/landscape/landscapecharacter.htm

LCT 3A: Upper Farmed and Wooded Valley Slopes

LCT Location Map



Devon Character Areas

DCA 32: High Culm Ridges

DCA 53: South Molton Farmland

DCA 59: Taw Valley

DCA 67: Witheridge and Rackenford Moor

Please note that while this LCT assessment for wind and solar PV development provides an initial indication of landscape sensitivity and guidance for accommodating developments in the landscape, it should not be interpreted as a definitive statement on the suitability of individual sites for a particular development. All developments will need to be assessed on their own merits.

Key Landscape Characteristics

- Strongly undulating landform of rolling hills and farmland cut by tributary streams feeding into the main river valleys.
- Underlying geology comprising mudstones and siltstones with bands of sandstone creating the rolling landform ('Culm Measures').
- A pastoral landscape, with some fields of arable cultivation on higher slopes, forming a strong mosaic with copses, interlinking Devon hedges and small woodlands as well as occasional small blocks of coniferous plantation.
- Strong pattern of medium-scale fields of medieval and post-medieval origin enclosed by species-rich Devon hedges with flower-rich banks. Thick hedges with frequent hedgerow trees found on more sheltered valley slopes.
- Some areas of intensive arable cultivation in larger, regular fields found on more elevated land. Villages and tributary valleys often characterised by smaller, historic field patterns.
- Nature conservation interest provided by areas of species-rich Culm grassland, rich valley mire, wet woodland and damp meadows associated with tributary valleys and springs. Patches of gorse on higher slopes give some areas an upland feel (e.g. around Abbots Bickington).
- Dispersed historic villages and hamlets clustered on hilltops with farmsteads distributed throughout, linked by a network of winding rural roads and steep sunken lanes crossing watercourses over stone bridges.
- Strong local vernacular of whitewash and white/cream rendered cottages with painted window and door frames and slate roofs. Some buildings constructed of exposed stone with red brick detailing, with the use of thatch important locally (e.g. Tawstock).
- Linhays (traditional animal shelters) constructed of cob and local stone with slate or corrugated iron roofs, reinforce a strong history of farming.
- Crossroads marked by distinctive white finger posts.
- Main roads (particularly the A39), prominent pylon lines and the influence of modern development at Bideford and East the Water erode levels of tranquillity locally − although overall this is a peaceful and highly rural landscape.
- Square church towers form strong local landmark features peeping through the rolling hills, many of which are Grade II* Listed. The Iron Age hillfort of Hembury Castle occupies a prominent position above the Duntz valley.

33% of the LCT falls within North Devon District

Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for wind energy development

Criteria	Lower sensitivity ▬▬▬▬▬▬▶ Higher sensitivity	
Landform and scale	M	Strongly undulating landform of rolling hills and farmland, ranging in scale from small-scale tributary valleys to larger scale and more open hill tops and upper slopes, including on the High Culm Ridges (DCA 32)
Land cover pattern and presence of human scale features	M	This is a pastoral landscape of mainly medium-scale irregular fields, with some larger, regular fields of arable cultivation on higher slopes, forming a strong mosaic with copses, interlinking Devon hedges and small woodlands as well as occasional small blocks of coniferous plantation. Further texture is added to the landscape through the presence of areas of species-rich Culm grassland, rich valley mire, wet woodland and damp meadows, and patches of gorse on higher slopes. Human scale features include farmsteads, cottages, linhays, church towers and a strong network of Devon hedges.
Tracks / transport pattern	M	The landscape is crossed by a network of winding rural roads and steep sunken lanes crossing watercourses over stone bridges. The LCT also includes some main roads, including the A39 and A361.
Skylines	M-H	Rural skylines (which frequently form a backdrop to views from settlements) often include small woodlands as well as hilltop settlements, historic church towers and nationally important hillforts at Whitechapel Moors and near Woodhouse. Occasional masts, turbines and pylons occupy some skylines as does the chimney and smoke plumes of the Norbord factory west of South Molton (DCA 53).
Perceptual qualities	M	Overall this is a peaceful and highly rural landscape, although these perceptions are broken locally by the presence of main roads (particularly the A39 and A361), prominent pylon lines and the influence of nearby modern development at Bideford and Barnstaple.
Historic landscape character	M	The Devon HLC indicates that the LCT predominantly comprises of 42% modern enclosures (likely to be of low sensitivity to wind turbines) and 23% medieval enclosures based on strip fields (higher sensitivity). It also includes smaller areas of highly sensitive medieval fields (8%) and other woodland (3%). Post-medieval enclosures with medieval elements (5%) and areas of post-medieval enclosures are likely to be of lower sensitivity.
Scenic and special qualities	M-H	None of the LCT falls within the North Devon Coast AONB, although some areas fall immediately adjacent to the protected landscape. Relevant special qualities include the open views into, and the backdrop provided by, the surrounding undesignated countryside, as well as the AONB's high levels of tranquillity and remoteness. Part of the LCT is also within close proximity to Exmoor National Park, whose special qualities include: it being a timeless landscape mostly free from intrusive development, striking views inside and out of the National Park, and its sense of remoteness, wildness and tranquillity. These special qualities might be sensitive to development within adjacent areas and should be considered in any proposals. Other special qualities that could be affected by wind energy development, as recorded in the district's LCT description, include its open character with important vantage points and uninterrupted vistas; narrow lanes and species-rich hedgebanks; copses, woodlands and tree clumps; cob, thatch and whitewashed buildings, including traditional linhays. The Devon LCA descriptions also cite these additional special qualities: the landscape's importance as a backdrop to views from a wide area (including from Bideford and Barnstaple and Exmoor National Park); locally high levels of tranquillity; sites of nature conservation importance including Culm grasslands and ancient woodlands; historic features such as ancient field patterns and Iron Age hillforts (Scheduled Monuments); as well as a number of RIGS and Conservation Areas.
Discussion on landscape sensitivity		Although parts of the landscape are relatively large scale in the context of North Devon (particularly at higher elevations) and parts are already influenced by modern development, the presence of species-rich Culm grassland, prominent skylines forming a backdrop to views (including from Exmoor National Park, the AONB and settlements), landmark features on skylines including square church towers and historic monuments,

	the distinctive network of sunken lanes, presence of frequent human scale features and important scenic qualities all increase levels of sensitivity to wind turbines. Areas close to the AONB and National Park are also likely to have a higher sensitivity (although this will need to be judged on a case by case basis).	
Sensitivity to different turbine heights	Very Small (15-25m)	L-M
	Small (26-50m)	M
	Medium (51-75m)	M
	Large (76-110m)	M-H
	Very large (111-150m)	H
	Although parts of the landscape are relatively large scale in the context of North Devon (particularly at higher elevations), the presence of small-scale valleys and significant areas of smaller-scale medieval field patterns mean that this LCT would be highly sensitive to the development of 'very large' wind turbines, and many locations would also be sensitive to those in the 'large' category. Some of the upper slopes and areas of larger scale field patterns would be less sensitive to 'large' turbines. The sensitivity of this landscape to wind turbines is higher in the more intricate valleys than on the hills.	
Commentary on different cluster sizes Single turbine Small (<5 turbines) Medium (6-10) Large (11-25) Very large (>25)	Although parts of the landscape are relatively large scale in the context of North Devon (particularly at higher elevations), the strongly undulating nature of the landscape and the presence of smaller-scale medieval enclosure mean that it would be highly sensitive to any clusters greater than 'medium' in size.	

Explanation for variations with the sensitivity assessment for Torridge (2011)

This assessment for the LCT in North Devon provides a slightly lower sensitivity rating for 'very small' turbines (low-moderate, rather than Torridge's moderate). This applies to areas of the LCT away from the intricate small-scale valleys and reflects the scale of the landscape and its landscape patterns – with a larger proportion of larger scale, modern fields than is found in Torridge.

SUMMARY OF KEY SENSITIVE FEATURES/CHARACTERISTICS

A summary list of the key sensitive features and characteristics for 3A Upper Farmed and Wooded Valley Slopes LCT in relation to wind energy development is included below:

- Strongly rural character with sensitive land cover types including medieval enclosures based on strip fields and Barton fields.
- Important patches of semi-natural habitat interspersed within the farmland, including areas of species-rich Culm grassland, rich valley mire, wet woodland and damp meadows, and patches of gorse.
- The rural road network, with characterful lanes bounded by flower-rich banks and Devon hedges.
- The presence of human scale features including frequent farmsteads, traditional cottages, linhays, Devon hedges, trees (including parkland specimens) and estate buildings.
- The historic, wooded estate character of the landscape, particularly associated with the Grade II* Castle Hill Estate.
- Undeveloped, frequently wooded skylines overlooked by Codden Hill to the north and forming a scenic backdrop to the Taw and Bray Valleys (to the west and east respectively).

Guidance for wind energy development

Permitted schemes within the LCT

Planning data held by the Council (November 2013) shows that there are four permitted wind energy schemes within this LCT, two of the four schemes are operational at Parsonage Farm, South Molton and Knowle Farm, Horwood. Both schemes fall within the 'small' turbine category, and are single turbines schemes. One of the remaining four schemes at Bedport Farm, Burrington also falls within the 'small' category. The final scheme at Collacott Farm, Newton Tracey falls within the 'Large' category. Two of the permitted sites are situated within DCA 32: High Culm Ridges, one within DCA 53: South Molton Farmland, and finally, one within DCA 59 Taw Valley.

Guidance for Development

The landscape sensitivity assessment indicates that this LCT has low-moderate sensitivity to 'very small' turbines, a moderate sensitivity to 'small' and 'medium' size turbines (between 26 and 75m), a moderate-high sensitivity to turbines between 76-110m and a high sensitivity to turbines over 110m to tip. The assessment also notes that landscape sensitivity to wind turbines will be higher in the tributary valleys, and that the LCT is likely to be highly sensitive to any clusters greater than 'medium' in size. This indicates that the landscape will be particularly sensitive to turbines higher than 75m and be unlikely to be able to accommodate turbines over 110m to tip, or in groups of more than ten turbines, without introducing a change to landscape character. .

A clear visual hierarchy should be maintained between 'very small'/'small' scale turbines associated with buildings (e.g. single on-farm turbines), and 'medium'/'large' scale wind energy developments in larger scale areas (i.e. larger turbines located in small groups of 5 or less turbines). A proliferation of varying heights and styles of turbine should be avoided. Within these distinct size categories of turbine, developments should be of a similar scale and design (in terms of number, siting, layout, style of turbine and relationship to key characteristics) to maintain a simple image and reinforce links between landscape characteristics and design response within the LCT.

The overall aim should be ensure that wind energy developments do not have a significant cumulative impact on the LCT resulting in an overall change of landscape character.

When siting and designing wind energy developments in this LCT, the generic guidance within Chapter 2 of the Devon Landscape Policy Group's Advice Note No. 2: *Accommodating Wind and Solar PV Developments in Devon's Landscape* should be followed, particularly when considering the cumulative impacts of multiple schemes. In addition, within this LCT particular care will need to be taken to ensure:

- Wind energy development does not overwhelm the human scale of the landscape and its landscape features.
- The strong rural character of the landscape with locally important levels of tranquillity is retained.
- Wind turbines do not prevent the appreciation and understanding of distinctive skyline/ landmark features including tree clumps, church towers and the hillforts at Whitechapel Moors and near Woodhouse.
- Valued naturalistic habitats are retained – including tracts of Culm grassland, valley mire, meadows and semi-natural woodlands.
- The characteristic sunken lanes and winding rural roads crossing stone bridges are not adversely affected by delivery of turbines.
- Wind turbines do not detract from the countryside backdrop provided by the LCT to the settlements of Bideford and Barnstaple.
- Wind energy development does not adversely affect the sense of remoteness, wildness and tranquillity associated with the Exmoor National Park, or unacceptably impact on the striking views from the National Park into the district (particularly relevant to DCAs 53, 57 and 67).
- Opportunities are sought to enhance the landscape in association with any development, and in accordance with the landscape strategy for the LCT, including managing and extending

farmland and woodland habitats and pursuing opportunities for Green Infrastructure links to settlements.
Additional Guidance Specific to Particular Landscape Character Areas
This guidance will apply consistently for all Devon Character Areas where this LCT is present. The high open ridgeline around Alverdiscott (DCA 32: High Culm Ridges) is particularly prominent, forming a backdrop to views from Torridge District and having strong intervisibility with distant ridges of a similar elevation, including within the North Devon Downs (DCA 44). Wherever possible, future development should be in line with the overall landscape strategy of the relevant Devon Character Area, as set out in the descriptions on the DCC website[30].

[30] http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/environmentplanning/natural_environment/landscape/landscapecharacter.htm

Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for solar PV development

Criteria	Lower sensitivity ▪▪▪▪▪▪▪▶ Higher sensitivity				
Landform			M		
	Strongly undulating landform of rolling hills and farmland, with some prominent valley and hill slopes (some valley slopes are hidden from view).				
Sense of openness / enclosure			M		
	Enclosure provided by copses, interlinking Devon hedges (thick and well-treed on valley slopes) and small woodlands as well as occasional small blocks of coniferous plantation. Some higher slopes and hill tops are more open.				
Field pattern and scale			M		
	The landscape comprises mainly medium-scale irregular fields, with some larger, regular fields of arable cultivation on higher ground. Land surrounding villages and within tributary valleys is often characterised by smaller, more historic field patterns.				
Land cover				M-H	
	This is a pastoral landscape of mainly medium-scale irregular fields, with some larger, regular fields of arable cultivation on higher slopes and hill summits, forming a strong mosaic with copses, interlinking Devon hedges and small woodlands as well as occasional small blocks of coniferous plantation. Further texture is added to the landscape through the presence of areas of species-rich Culm grassland, rich valley mire, wet woodland and damp meadows, and patches of gorse on higher slopes.				
Perceptual qualities			M		
	Overall this is a peaceful and highly rural landscape, although these perceptions are broken locally by the presence of main roads (particularly the A39 and A361), prominent pylon lines and the influence of nearby modern development at Bideford and Barnstaple.				
Historic Landscape Character			M		
	The Devon HLC indicates that the LCT predominantly comprises of 42% modern enclosures (likely to be of low sensitivity solar PV developments) and 23% medieval enclosures based on strip fields (higher sensitivity). It also includes smaller areas of sensitive medieval fields (8%) and other woodland (3%). Post-medieval enclosures with medieval elements (5%) and areas of post-medieval enclosures are likely to be of lower sensitivity.				
Scenic and special qualities				M-H	
	None of the LCT falls within the North Devon Coast AONB, although some areas fall immediately adjacent to the protected landscape. Relevant special qualities include the open views into, and the backdrop provided by, the surrounding undesignated countryside, as well as the AONB's high levels of tranquillity and remoteness. Part of the LCT is also within close proximity to Exmoor National Park, whose special qualities include: it being a timeless landscape mostly free from intrusive development, striking views inside and out of the National Park, and its sense of remoteness, wildness and tranquillity. These special qualities might be highly sensitive to development within adjacent areas and should be considered in any proposals. Other special qualities that could be affected by solar PV development, as recorded in the district's LCT description, include its open character with important vantage points and uninterrupted vistas; narrow lanes and species-rich hedgebanks; copses, woodlands and tree clumps; cob, thatch and whitewashed buildings, including traditional linhays. The Devon LCA descriptions also cite these additional special qualities: the landscape's importance as a backdrop to views from a wide area (including from Bideford and Barnstaple and Exmoor National Park); locally high levels of tranquillity; sites of nature conservation importance including Culm grasslands and ancient woodlands; historic features such as ancient field patterns; as well as a number of RIGS and Conservation Areas.				
Discussion on landscape sensitivity	Although this landscape has a sense of enclosure provided by high tree and woodland cover (including Devon hedges) and there are some areas in arable use or influenced by modern development, the landscape's predominantly irregular medieval field patterns, presence of visible slopes, and valued areas of semi-natural habitat (including internationally important Culm grasslands) increase levels of sensitivity to solar PV development.				

	Lower slopes and hidden areas will be less sensitive than upper slopes that often form a backdrop to views. Areas close to the AONB and National Park are also likely to have a higher sensitivity (although this will need to be judged on a case by case basis).	
Sensitivity to different sizes of solar PV development	Very Small (<1ha)	L-M
	Small (>1-5ha)	M
	Medium (>5-10ha)	M-H
	Large (>10-15ha)	H
	Very Large (>15-20ha)	H
	The predominantly medium-scale field patterns mean that this landscape would be highly sensitive to 'large' and 'very large' scale solar PV developments. Areas of smaller scale medieval field patterns and the more intimate valley landscapes would also be highly sensitive to 'medium' scale developments.	

Explanation for variations with the sensitivity assessment for Torridge (2011)

The significant proportion of medium-large field sizes within this LCT in North Devon, and high levels of enclosure away from hill summits and upper slopes results in a low-moderate sensitivity assessment to 'very small' schemes (rather than moderate in Torridge). However, the presence of significant areas of smaller-scale medieval fields results in an increased sensitivity to PV developments greater than 5 ha in size, resulting in a moderate-high sensitivity assessment to 'medium' schemes (also as opposed to moderate in Torridge).

SUMMARY OF KEY SENSITIVE FEATURES/CHARACTERISTICS

A summary list of the key sensitive features and characteristics for 3A Upper Farmed and Wooded Valley Slopes LCT in relation to solar PV development is included below:

- The small, intricate scale of the tributary valleys and undulating landform of rolling hills with some prominent slopes.
- The strong rural character of the landscape with locally high levels of tranquillity.
- Valued naturalistic habitats including internationally important Culm grasslands, meadows, valley mire and woodlands.
- Its predominantly irregular pattern of historic medieval fields.
- Areas of the LCT in close proximity to the North Devon Coast AONB, whose special qualities include the open views to and backdrop provided by the surrounding countryside.
- Locations which form a backdrop and setting to Exmoor National Park, whose special qualities include striking views out of the protected landscape and a sense of remoteness, wildness and tranquillity.

Guidance for solar PV development

Permitted schemes within the LCT

Planning data held by the Council (November 2013) shows that there are 13 permitted (but not yet operational) solar PV developments within the LCT, three of which are located at the same site at Kingsland Barton, South Molton. Two of these schemes are within the 'very small' category, the third falls within the 'large' category. Eight of the remaining permitted schemes fall within the 'very small' category. The final two permitted scheme: Hollamoor Farm, Tawstock falls within the 'medium' category and Horsacott Farm falls within the 'large' category. There are three schemes located within DCA 32: High Culm Ridges, nine schemes are situated with DCA 53: South Molton Farmland and the remaining scheme is situated within DCA 67: Witheridge and Rackenford Moor.

Guidance for Development

The landscape sensitivity assessment indicates that this LCT has a low-moderate or moderate sensitivity to small developments (>1-5ha), a moderate-high sensitivity to medium developments (>5-10ha) and a high sensitivity to developments greater than 10ha. This indicates that the landscape will be particularly sensitive to any developments over 5ha and is unlikely to be able to accommodate any over 10ha in size without introducing a change to landscape character. Any proposals should be located in more enclosed areas and on lower slopes, avoiding highly visible slopes and valued areas of semi-natural habitat, including Culm grasslands.

Multiple developments within the LCT should be of a similar scale and design (in terms of siting, layout, scale, form and relationship to key characteristics) to maintain a simple image and reinforce links between landscape characteristics and design response within the LCT. The overall aim should be to make sure that solar PV developments do not become a key characteristic of the landscape (i.e. developments would not result in a significant cumulative impact on the LCT or overall change of landscape character).

When siting and designing solar PV developments in this LCT the generic guidance within Chapter 3 of the Devon Landscape Policy Group's Advice Note No. 2: *Accommodating Wind and Solar PV Developments in Devon's Landscape* should be followed particularly when considering the cumulative impacts of multiple schemes. In addition, within this LCT particular care will need to be taken to ensure:

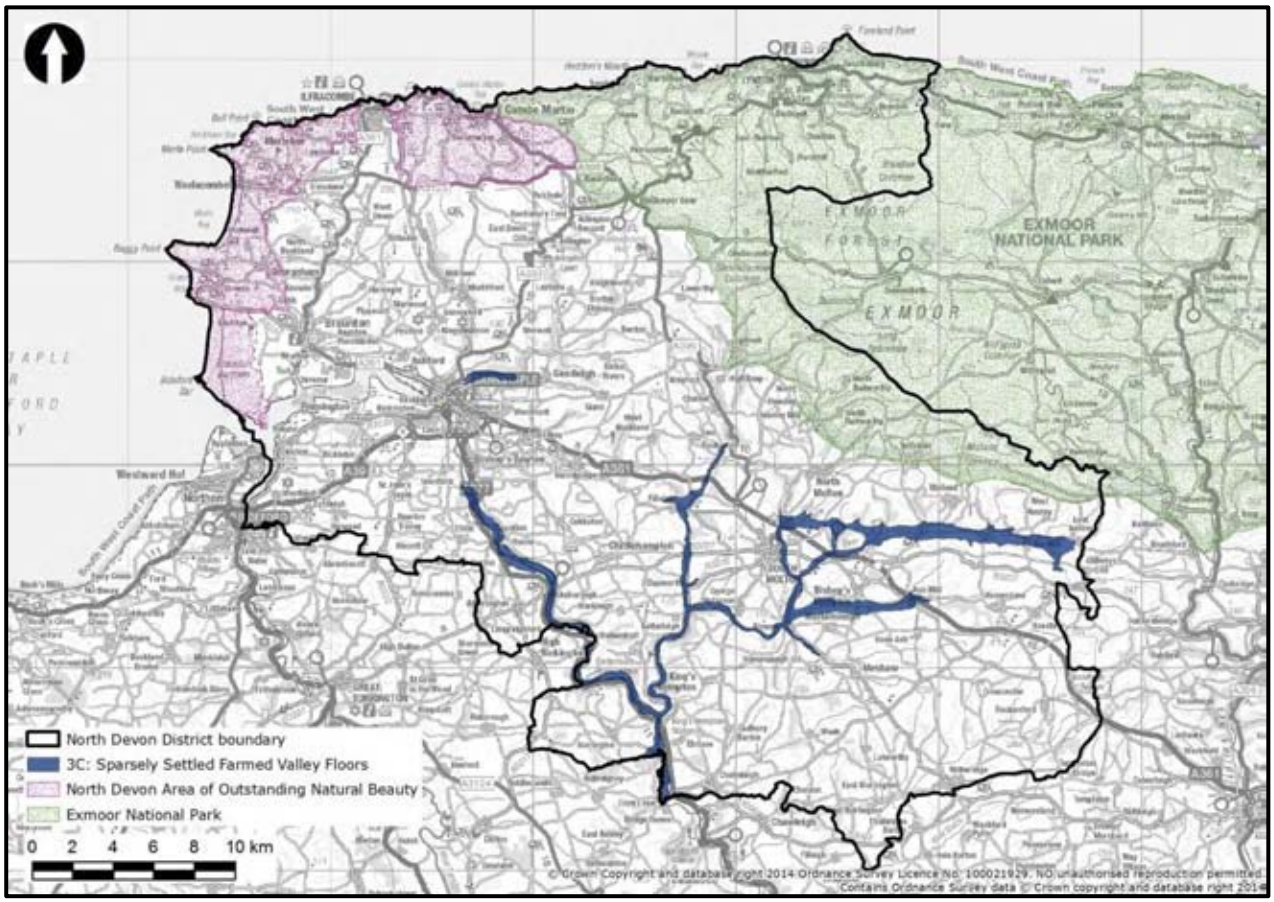
- The strong rural character of the landscape with locally important levels of tranquillity is retained.
- Valued naturalistic habitats are protected – including tracts of Culm grassland, valley mire, meadows and semi-natural woodlands.
- The predominantly pastoral character of the landscape and its strong network of well-managed, species-rich Devon hedges dividing medieval fields, are retained.
- Where possible, development avoids areas of sensitive historic land cover types including medieval enclosures and medieval strip fields.
- Solar PV development does not adversely affect the sense of remoteness, wildness and tranquillity associated with the Exmoor National Park, or unacceptably impact on the striking views from the National Park into the district (particularly relevant to DCAs 53, 57 and 67).
- Opportunities are sought to enhance the landscape in association with any development, and in accordance with the landscape strategy for the LCT, including managing and extending farmland and woodland habitats.

Additional guidance specific to particular Landscape Character Areas
This guidance will apply consistently for all Devon Character Areas where this LCT is present. Wherever possible, future development should be in line with the overall landscape strategy of the relevant Devon Character Area, as set out in the descriptions on the DCC website[31].

[31] http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/environmentplanning/natural_environment/landscape/landscapecharacter.htm

LCT 3C: Sparsely Settled Farmed Valley Floors

LCT Location Map



Character Areas

DCA 14: Codden Hill and Wooded Estates

DCA 44: North Devon Downs

DCA 53: South Molton Farmland

DCA 59: Taw Valley

Please note that while this LCT assessment for wind and solar PV development provides an initial indication of landscape sensitivity and guidance for accommodating developments in the landscape, it should not be interpreted as a definitive statement on the suitability of individual sites for a particular development. All developments will need to be assessed on their own merits.

Key Landscape Characteristics

- Gently meandering river courses flowing through open valley floors and floodplains contained by steep valley sides.
- Underlying geology comprising Culm Measures (mudstones, siltstones and shales) with more resistant bands of sandstone. Red/orange soils exposed by river channels cutting through the landform.
- Flat floodplains include traditional orchards (e.g. alongside the River Mole), bands of wet woodland and areas of estate parkland with ancient trees. Views often defined by heavily wooded valley sides - a combination of oak-dominated semi-natural woodland and conifer plantations (falling within LCT 3G).
- Open pastoral fields enclosed by low-cut thorn hedges, with some areas of unenclosed rough grazing on wet meadows / rushy pasture. Fields form a regular pattern, of post-medieval and modern origin.
- Floodplain pastures and meadows grazed by cattle and sheep. Some areas of wood pasture associated with parkland estates.
- Rich semi-natural habitats lining the river courses including Culm grasslands, Molinia-rich mire, rush pasture, unimproved meadows, ponds and wet woodland - including willow and alder carr.
- Historic parkland estates with veteran trees and ancient wood pasture, including the Grade I registered Castle Hill estate (banks of the River Bray) and King's Nympton Park overlooking the River Mole. Other cultural features include Iron Age hillforts occupying commanding positions above the river valleys (outside this LCT), and mills, weirs and arched stone bridges relating to the valleys' rich industrial heritage.
- Strong literary association of the Taw and Torridge valleys with Henry Williamson's 1927 novel Tarka the Otter. The Tarka Line heritage railway follows the course of the Taw, whilst the multi-user Tarka Trail follows the course of an old railway line between Barnstaple and Torrington.
- Hamlets and villages located at river crossing points, with some extending in linear form along the valley floors. Strong local vernacular of cream, whitewash and pale yellow coloured cottages with slate or thatched roofs, with some use of local sandstone with red brick detailing.
- The winding courses of the valley floors sometimes traced by roads including the main A377, and A386, with minor routes crossing the rivers on historic stone hump-backed bridges.
- High levels of peace and tranquillity with scenic views along the open valleys and to the surrounding wooded slopes. Perceptions of tranquillity broken only locally by the presence of main roads and the fringes of the larger settlements of Barnstaple and Torrington.

50% of the LCT falls within North Devon District

Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for wind energy development

Criteria	Lower sensitivity ▬▬▬▬▬▶ Higher sensitivity				
Landform and scale				M-H	
	Gently meandering river courses flowing through open valley floors and floodplains often contained by steep valley sides. The flat valley floors vary in scale depending on the size of the rivers flowing through them, but are generally medium to small-scale.				
Land cover pattern and presence of human scale features				M-H	
	Some complex land cover patterns including wet meadows and pastures, traditional orchards, bands of wet woodland and parkland (including estate woodlands). Fields snaking along the valley floors vary in size, including larger modern enclosures, Barton fields and areas of smaller-scale medieval fields. Semi-natural habitats add to the diversity of the floodplain landscape, such as Culm grasslands, Molinia-rich mire, rush pasture and ponds. There are also human scale features including development at Clapworthy, isolated cottages, stone bridges, mills and weirs.				
Tracks / transport pattern			M		
	The winding courses of the valley floors are sometimes crossed by roads including the main A361 and A377 with minor, winding lanes crossing the rivers on historic stone hump-backed bridges. Some locations within the valley floors are devoid of roads. As with the roads the Tarka railway line follows the Taw River valley floor.				
Skylines		L-M			
	Although the LCT description notes the presence of important historic parkland estates, as well as and mills, weirs and bridges in views along the valley floors, due to the nature of this LCT (being the valley floors), skylines are not particularly prominent or distinctive. Pylons at Bray Mill Cross and Bridgeheyne create prominent features on skylines as do numerous telegraph poles.				
Perceptual qualities				M-H	
	High levels of peace and tranquillity with scenic views along the open valleys and to the surrounding wooded slopes. Perceptions of tranquillity are broken only locally by the presence of main roads and the fringes of Barnstaple and South Molton.				
Historic landscape character		L-M			
	The Devon HLC indicates that the LCT is comprised of a mixture of 43% modern enclosures and 23% post-medieval enclosure (generally of lower sensitivity to wind energy development), with smaller areas of medieval enclosure based on strip fields (9%), other woodland32 (7%) and watermeadows (5%) which would be of high sensitivity to wind turbines.				
Scenic and special qualities			M		
	None of the LCT falls within the North Devon Coast AONB. However, special qualities are recorded in the district's LCA and the Devon County LCA. The special qualities of the valley floors, as identified in the district's LCT description, include their unspoilt, 'natural' and peaceful character, valued riparian and floodplain habitats / wildlife, trees and woodlands tracing watercourses, historic features including old barns, stone bridges and mills, and importance for recreation and 'escapism'. Some of these could be affected to a degree by wind turbine development. Further special qualities mentioned in the relevant Devon LCA descriptions include: the high scenic qualities, the role the Taw Valley and valleys around South Molton play in the east as a setting to Exmoor National Park; locally high levels of tranquillity, extensive areas of ancient woodland, wetlands and parkland, wealth of historic buildings, and the distinctive Tarka Line railway. Some of these could be affected to a degree by wind energy development.				
Discussion on landscape sensitivity	Although the flat landform, the presence of some large-scale modern enclosures and non-prominent skylines could indicate a lower sensitivity to wind turbine development, the relatively small scale of the landscape, the presence of complex				

[32] Other Woodland: Including broad-leaved plantations, re-planted ancient woodland or secondary woodland that has grown up from scrub (Devon HLC, 2005)

	land cover patterns, valued woodland, wetland and parkland habitats and high levels of peace and tranquillity heighten sensitivity. Locations in the east, forming a setting to Exmoor National Park, would be highly sensitive (though these should be judged on a case-by-case basis).	
Sensitivity to different turbine heights	Very Small (15-25m)	M-H
	Small (26-50m)	M-H
	Medium (51-75m)	M-H
	Large (76-110m)	H
	Very large (111-150m)	H
	The relatively small scale of the valleys and fields, as well as the presence of sensitive woodland, parkland and other semi-natural habitats means that this LCT would be particularly sensitive to 'large' and 'very large' turbines. The smaller scale valley floors would also be sensitive to 'medium' turbines. Locations in the east, forming a setting to Exmoor National Park, would be highly sensitive to any turbines larger than 'very small' in scale (though these should be judged on a case-by-case basis).	
Commentary on different cluster sizes Single turbine Small (<5 turbines) Medium (6-10) Large (11-25) Very large (>25)	The confined nature of the valley floors, along with the presence of sensitive habitats, mean that this LCT would be sensitive to any clusters of wind turbines. It is likely that only single turbines would be able to be accommodated within the LCT.	

SUMMARY OF KEY SENSITIVE FEATURES/CHARACTERISTICS

A summary list of the key sensitive features and characteristics for 3C Sparsely settled farmed valley floors LCT in relation to wind energy development is included below:

- The narrow intimate nature of the valley floors, enclosed and overlooked by steep valley sides.
- The presence of frequent human scale features.
- The lack of access tracks and roads (away from main roads) and the sense of isolation and tranquillity in these areas.
- Sunken winding lanes bounded by high hedgebanks and hedgerows.
- Naturalistic land cover including woodlands, Culm grasslands, Molinia-rich mire, rush pasture, orchards and ponds.
- Important historic features relating to the area's ancient development and long industrial history including stone bridges, weirs, watermeadows and historic parkland estates.
- The valleys' role in the east as an important setting to Exmoor National Park, whose special qualities include striking views out of the protected landscape and a sense of remoteness, wildness and tranquillity.

Guidance for wind energy development

Permitted schemes within the LCT

Planning data held by the Council (November 2013) shows that there are currently no operational or permitted wind energy developments in this LCT.

Guidance for Development

The landscape sensitivity assessment indicates that this LCT has moderate-high sensitivity to 'very small' and 'small' turbines (up to 50m to blade tip), and a high sensitivity to any turbines greater than 50m to tip due to the small-scale nature of the landscape. It also notes that the confined nature of the valley floors and presence of sensitive habitats means that this LCT would be highly sensitive to any clusters of wind turbines. This concludes that the LCT is only likely to be able to accommodate single 'very small' or 'small' single turbines associated with existing buildings. Locations that form a setting to Exmoor National Park are only likely to be considered for the development of single 'very small' turbines linked to existing buildings.

These single turbines should be of a similar scale and design (in terms of size and form) to maintain a simple image and design response within the LCT. The overall aim should be to make sure that wind turbines do not become a key characteristic of the landscape or have a defining influence on the overall experience of the landscape of the LCT.

When siting and designing wind energy developments in this LCT, the generic guidance within Chapter 2 of the Devon Landscape Policy Group's Advice Note No. 2: *Accommodating Wind and Solar PV Developments in Devon's Landscape* should be followed, particularly when considering the cumulative impacts of multiple schemes. In addition, within this LCT particular care will need to be taken to ensure:

- Turbines are in scale with the narrow intimate nature of the valley floors, and the human scale of the landscape.
- Areas with a high sense of peace and tranquillity (away from main roads and development) are protected.
- Delivery of turbines does not affect the sunken winding lanes or the high hedgebanks and hedgerows that border these lanes.
- Development does not adversely affect naturalistic land cover including semi-natural woodlands, Culm grasslands, Molinia-rich mire, orchards, rush pasture and ponds.
- Development (including road amendments associated with delivery of turbines) does not adversely affect the important historic features relating to the area's long industrial history including stone bridges, weirs and watermeadows.
- The development of turbines and ancillary equipment does not affect the character or setting of historic parkland estates, such Castle Hill and King's Nympton.
- Seek opportunities to enhance the landscape in association with any development, and in accordance with the landscape strategy for the LCT, including bringing woodlands back into management, expanding floodplain habitats and protecting / restoring distinctive features such as traditional orchards, stone hump-backed bridges and mills.

Additional Guidance Specific to Particular Landscape Character Areas

This guidance will apply consistently for all Devon Character Areas where this LCT is present. Wherever possible, future development should be in line with the overall landscape strategy of the relevant Devon Character Area, as set out in the descriptions on the DCC website[33].

[33] http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/environmentplanning/natural_environment/landscape/landscapecharacter.htm

Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for solar PV development

Criteria	Lower sensitivity ▪▪▪▪▪▪▪▶ Higher sensitivity				
Landform		L-M			
	Gently meandering river courses flowing through open flat valley floors and floodplains often contained by steep valley sides (note the valley sides generally fall within adjacent LCTs).				
Sense of openness / enclosure			M		
	Floodplain landscapes fringed by often extensive woodland cover, whilst some areas are less vegetated and therefore more open, especially near Umberleigh. The tree lines along watercourses and beech hedged lined roads increase enclosure where present.				
Field pattern and scale		L-M			
	A large proportion of the farmed land fringing the valley floors (between areas of woodland) is enclosed within regular fields of relatively large scale. There are also some areas of smaller, irregular fields of medieval origin.				
Land cover				M-H	
	Flat, open floodplains comprised of wet meadows and pastures, traditional orchards, bands of ancient and wet woodland and parkland (including estate woodlands). Semi-natural habitats add to the diversity of the floodplain landscape, such as Culm grasslands, Molinia-rich mire, rush pasture and ponds.				
Perceptual qualities				M-H	
	High levels of peace and tranquillity with scenic views along the open valleys and to the surrounding wooded slopes. Perceptions of tranquillity are broken only locally by the presence of main roads and the fringes of the Barnstaple and South Molton.				
Historic Landscape Character		L-M			
	The Devon HLC indicates that the LCT comprised a mixture of 43% modern enclosures and 23% post-medieval enclosure (generally of lower sensitivity to solar PV development), with smaller areas of medieval enclosure based on strip fields (9%), other woodland[34] (7%) and watermeadows (5%) which would be of high sensitivity to solar PVs.				
Scenic and special qualities			M		
	None of the LCT falls within the North Devon AONB. However, special qualities are recorded in the district's LCA and the Devon County LCA. The special qualities of the valleys, as identified in the district's LCT description, include their unspoilt, 'natural' and peaceful character, valued riparian and floodplain habitats / wildlife, trees and woodlands tracing watercourses, historic features including old barns, stone bridges and mills, and importance for recreation and 'escapism'. Further special qualities mentioned in the relevant Devon LCA descriptions (and not covered above) include: the high scenic qualities, the role the Taw Valley and valleys around South Molton play in the east as a setting to Exmoor National Park; locally high levels of tranquillity, extensive areas of ancient woodland, wetlands and parkland, wealth of historic buildings, and the distinctive Tarka Line railway. Some of these could be affected to a degree by solar PV development.				
Discussion on landscape sensitivity	Although the presence of modern enclosures of relatively large scale and the flat nature of the valley floors could indicate a lower sensitivity to solar PV development, the landscape's sense of openness, complex land cover patterns, valued riparian and floodplain habitats (with a desire to extend these through the landscape strategy in the district LCT), important historic parkland estates and high levels of tranquillity all heighten levels of sensitivity.				
Sensitivity to different sizes of solar PV development	Very Small (<1ha)	M			
	Small (>1-5ha)	M-H			
	Medium (>5-10ha)	H			
	Large (>10-15ha)	H			

[34] Other Woodland: Including broad-leaved plantations, re-planted ancient woodland or secondary woodland that has grown up from scrub (Devon HLC, 2005)

	Very Large (>15-20ha)	H
	The relatively small scale of the valleys and many of its fields and the presence of valued riparian and floodplain habitats mean that this LCT would be highly sensitive to developments of 'medium'-scale or greater. Some locations (e.g. where smaller, historic field patterns, semi-natural habitats and elevated levels of remoteness dominate) would also be sensitive to larger scales of development within the 'small' category.	

Explanation for variations with the sensitivity assessment for Torridge (2011)

The coverage of significant parts of the LCT in North Devon by regular medium-large modern and post-medieval fields, along with areas of high enclosure provided by extensive woodland cover, has resulted in a moderate sensitivity to the smallest solar PV schemes (as opposed to moderate-high in Torridge).

SUMMARY OF KEY SENSITIVE FEATURES/CHARACTERISTICS

A summary list of the key sensitive features and characteristics for 3C Sparsely Settled Farmed Valley Floors LCT in relation to solar PV development is included below:

- Strong feelings of peace and tranquillity found away from areas of development and main roads, with long scenic views along the valleys.
- Naturalistic land cover including grasslands, wetlands and ancient woodland which provide valued wildlife habitats.
- The distinctive pattern of small-scale, irregular medieval fields in some parts of the valleys.
- The intimate nature of the valley floors and the presence of small scale, medieval fields, watermeadows and areas of historic parkland at Castle Hill and King's Nympton.
- Important historic features relating to the area's ancient development and long industrial history including stone bridges, weirs and historic watermeadows.
- Its role in the east as an important setting to Exmoor National Park, whose special qualities include striking views out of the protected landscape and a sense of remoteness, wildness and tranquillity.

Guidance for solar PV development

Permitted schemes within the LCT

Planning data held by the Council (November 2013) indicates that they are currently no operational or permitted solar PV development in this LCT.

Guidance for Development

The landscape sensitivity assessment indicates that this LCT has low-moderate sensitivity to 'very small' schemes (less than 1ha) and a moderate sensitivity to 'small' schemes (1-5ha). It is highly sensitive to any schemes over this size due to the relatively small-scale and often intimate nature of the valley floors. This analysis indicates that the landscape is unlikely to be able to accommodate any schemes greater than 5ha in size. Any proposals should be located away from valued semi-natural habitats (including woodlands and wetlands) and associated with areas of existing human influence.

Locations that form part of the setting to Exmoor National Park are likely to be highly sensitive to developments over 1ha in scale.

Multiple developments within the LCT should be of a similar scale and design (in terms of siting, layout, scale, form and relationship to key characteristics) to maintain a simple image and reinforce links between landscape characteristics and design response within the LCT. The overall aim should be to make sure that solar PV developments do not become a key characteristic of the landscape (i.e. developments would not result in a significant cumulative impact on the LCT or overall change of landscape character).

When siting and designing solar PV developments in this LCT, the generic guidance within Chapter 3 of the Devon Landscape Policy Group's Advice Note No. 2: *Accommodating Wind and Solar PV Developments in Devon's Landscape* should be followed, particularly when considering the cumulative impacts of multiple schemes. In addition, within this LCT particular care will need to be taken to ensure:

- The most prominent locations present in scenic views afforded down the valleys are avoided.
- Strong feelings of peace and tranquillity found away from areas of settlement, development and main roads, are maintained.
- Development does not result in loss of any naturalistic land cover including grasslands, watermeadows, wetlands and woodland.
- Any development respects the intimate nature of the valley floors and areas of historic, small scale medieval field patterns.
- Development does not adversely affect naturalistic land cover including semi-natural woodlands, Culm grasslands, Molinia-rich mire, orchards, rush pasture and ponds.
- Development does not adversely affect important historic features relating to the area's long industrial history including stone bridges, weirs and watermeadows.
- The siting of solar PV developments do not affect the character or setting of historic parkland estates, such Castle Hill and King's Nympton.
- Seek opportunities to enhance the landscape in association with any development, and in accordance with the landscape strategy for the LCT, including bringing woodlands back into management, expanding floodplain habitats and protecting / restoring distinctive features such as traditional orchards, stone hump-backed bridges and mills.

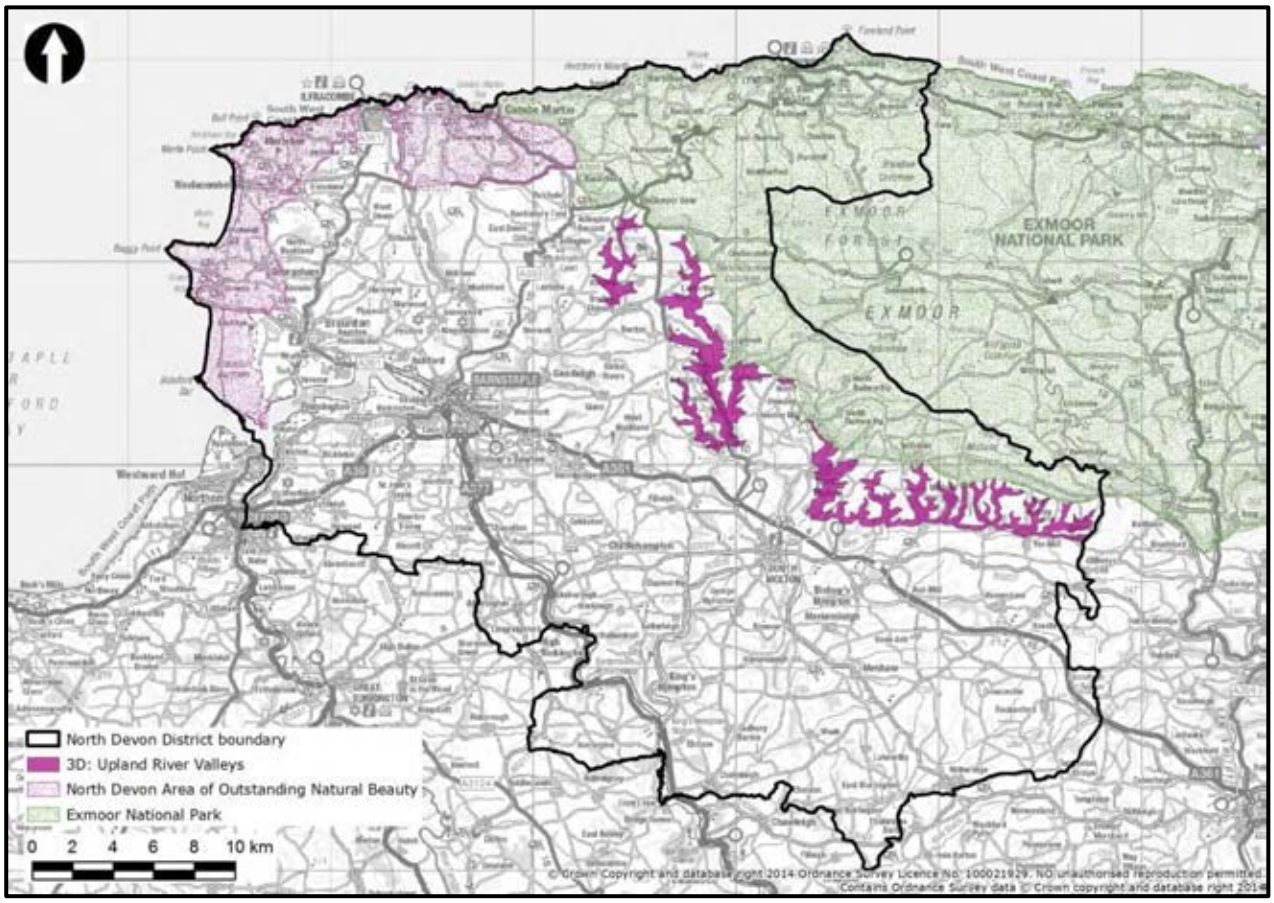
Additional Guidance Specific to Particular Landscape Character Areas

This guidance will apply consistently for all Devon Character Areas where this LCT is present. Wherever possible, future development should be in line with the overall landscape strategy of the relevant Devon Character Area, as set out in the descriptions on the DCC website[35].

[35] http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/environmentplanning/natural_environment/landscape/landscapecharacter.htm

LCT 3D: Upland River Valleys

LCT Location Map



Character Areas

DCA 27: Exmoor Fringe

Please note that while this LCT assessment for wind and solar PV development provides an initial indication of landscape sensitivity and guidance for accommodating developments in the landscape, it should not be interpreted as a definitive statement on the suitability of individual sites for a particular development. All developments will need to be assessed on their own merits.

Key Landscape Characteristics

- Deeply incised v-shaped valleys, with clear fast-flowing streams draining southwards from the high moorlands of Exmoor.
- Watercourses carving through rocky courses of Late Devonian geology – from Morte slates in the north, through sandstones and finally across the softer mudstones, siltstones and shales on the edges of the River Yeo.
- Dense woodland cover along valley sides – ancient oak with carpets of bluebells and primroses in spring; broadleaved beech-dominated woodlands; wet woodland along stream sides and conifer plantations. Traditional orchards found in some locations (e.g. Loxhore Mill, Newtown Bridge).
- Upper slopes defined by rough grassland and remnant heath grazed by sheep, whilst valley bottoms include open species-rich meadows, rushy pasture and floodplain grasslands.
- Fields between woodlands originating from the medieval and post-medieval period (including distinctive regular 'Barton fields'). Where enclosed, higher slopes often defined by the straight-sided fields of 19th century origin associated with the Exmoor landscape.
- Leisure activities and fishing associated with Wistlandpound Reservoir on the fringes of Exmoor.
- Fields on Exmoor fringes bounded by square-cut beech hedges and fencing, whilst further downstream lanes and fields are enclosed by mixed species hedges (including beech, ash and gorse) with wildflower, fern and moss-rich banks.
- Nature conservation interest provided by ancient semi-natural and broadleaved woodlands, areas of species-rich meadow and rush pasture fringing streams, as well as patches of gorse, bracken, mire, acid grasslands and remnant heath on upper slopes.
- Historic features including stone bridges, mills, quarries and dismantled railways as a legacy of past industry.
- Buildings of local red sandstone with red brick detailing around window/door frames and on chimneys. Cream rendered cottages (often thatched) with coloured beams also feature – the landscape contains many listed buildings and a Conservation Area at Molland.
- Very tranquil and rural landscape – disrupted in the Bray Valley by the route of the main A399.
- Sparsely settled with hamlets and small villages clustered at bridging points, with some larger settlements including linear housing spread outside their historic cores (e.g. Brayford and North Molton).

100% of the LCT falls within North Devon District

Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for wind energy development

Criteria	Lower sensitivity ▪▪▪▪▪▪▪▪▶ Higher sensitivity
Landform and scale	H Deeply incised, small-scale v-shaped valleys carving through the landscape from their sources on Exmoor.
Land cover pattern and presence of human scale features	M-H Varied naturalistic land cover including dense semi-natural woodland cover along valley sides, wet woodland and conifer plantations. Upper slopes are defined by rough grassland and remnant heath, whilst valley bottoms include open species-rich meadows, rushy pasture and floodplain grasslands. A mixture of field shapes and sizes are found between areas of woodland, with higher slopes often defined by the straight-sided fields of 19th century origin associated with the Exmoor landscape. Human-scale features include frequent trees, stone bridges, small villages clustered at bridging points and cottages.
Tracks / transport pattern	M-H Landscape crossed by narrow lanes which are very steep and winding in places and enclosed by mixed species hedges and wildflower, fern and moss-rich banks. They cross streams over historic stone bridges.
Skylines	M-H Most of the valley landscapes have hidden skylines, although their upper slopes form part of the valued skylines of DCA 27 sitting below Exmoor National Park; described as distinctive, unspoilt and exposed. Occasional church towers appear as skyline features (e.g. at Molland).
Perceptual qualities	M-H Overall a very tranquil and rural landscape enhanced by the natural qualities of the woodlands and rivers – disrupted in the Bray Valley by the route of the main A399 and by occasional quarries e.g. the Bray Valley Quarries. Wistlandpound Reservoir – a popular visitor attraction surrounded by conifer plantations – is a prominent feature in the north of the LCT. Overall however, the DCA description (for the Exmoor Fringe) refers to it being one of the most tranquil landscapes in Devon.
Historic landscape character	M-H The Devon HLC indicates that the LCT predominantly comprises a mixture of modern enclosure (27%) – generally likely to be of lower sensitivity to wind energy development, and medieval enclosures based on strip fields (17%) and other woodland'[36] (17%) - both likely to be of higher sensitivity. Smaller areas of Barton fields (10%), ancient woodland (8%), rough ground (7%) and medieval enclosures (3%) – all of high sensitivity to wind turbines. Small areas of post-medieval enclosures (7%) are also present which would have a low sensitivity.
Scenic and special qualities	M-H Although not nationally designated for its scenic quality, parts of the LCT lie in close proximity to Exmoor National Park, whose special qualities include: it being a timeless landscape mostly free from intrusive development, striking views inside and out of the National Park, and its sense of remoteness, wildness and tranquillity. These special qualities might be sensitive to development within adjacent areas and should be considered in any proposals. Other special qualities that could be affected by wind energy development, as recorded in the district's LCT description, include the senses of isolation, tranquillity and remoteness, picturesque villages and traditional buildings linked by rural lanes, and views to Exmoor and across North Devon. In addition, the DCA description notes the landscape's high scenic quality and key role as a setting to Exmoor National Park, many Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings and Molland Conservation Area.
Discussion on landscape sensitivity	Although this landscape includes some hidden skylines and localised areas of human influence, its varied land cover patterns (including semi-natural woodlands), some prominent, undeveloped skylines, high levels of tranquillity and remoteness, high scenic quality and important role as a setting to Exmoor National Park all increase

[36] Other Woodland: Including broad-leaved plantations, re-planted ancient woodland or secondary woodland that has grown up from scrub (Devon HLC, 2005)

	sensitivity. Areas closest to the National Park are also likely to have a higher sensitivity (although this will need to be judged on a case by case basis).	
Sensitivity to different turbine heights	Very Small (15-25m)	M-H
	Small (26-50m)	H
	Medium (51-75m)	H
	Large (76-110m)	H
	Very large (111-150m)	H
	The strongly tranquil and historic character of the landscape, the prominent, exposed and unspoilt skylines forming upper valley slopes, and its important role as a setting to the National Park mean it would be highly sensitive to all but the smallest turbines.	
Commentary on different cluster sizes Single turbine Small (<5 turbines) Medium (6-10) Large (11-25) Very large (>25)	The highly sensitive nature of this landscape means that it would highly sensitive to all but single turbines. Areas closest to the National Park are also likely to be highly sensitive to any turbines (although this will need to be judged on a case by case basis).	

SUMMARY OF KEY SENSITIVE FEATURES/CHARACTERISTICS

A summary list of the key sensitive features and characteristics for 3D Upland River_Valleys LCT in relation to wind energy development is included below:

- The distinctive, unspoilt and exposed skylines of the upper valley slopes sitting below the Exmoor moorland rim.
- Human-scale features including frequent trees, hedgebanks, historic buildings and stone bridges.
- The landscape's rich and varied semi-natural habitats, including dense semi-natural woodland cover, species-rich meadows, rushy pasture, traditional orchards and floodplain grasslands.
- The minor road network with characteristic narrow, hedged lanes crossing streams via stone bridges.
- The scenic qualities of the landscape, including its strong tranquil and often isolated character.
- Its role as an important setting to Exmoor National Park, whose special qualities include striking views out of the protected landscape and a sense of remoteness, wildness and tranquillity.

Guidance for wind energy development

Permitted schemes within the LCT

Planning data held by the Council (November 2013) indicates that there are no operational or consented wind energy developments in this LCT.

Guidance for Development

The landscape sensitivity assessment indicates that this LCT has a high sensitivity to any turbines greater than 'very small' in height, and would be highly sensitive to any clusters. Therefore the landscape would be least sensitive to single turbines associated with existing buildings or on farms, of less than 25 metres in height.

Single turbine developments should be of a similar scale and design (in terms of number, siting, layout, style of turbine and relationship to key characteristics) to maintain a simple image and reinforce links between landscape characteristics and design response within the LCT. The overall aim should be ensure that wind energy developments do not have a significant cumulative impact on the LCT resulting in an overall change of landscape character.

When siting and designing wind energy developments in this LCT, the generic guidance within Chapter 2 of the Devon Landscape Policy Group's Advice Note No. 2: *Accommodating Wind and Solar PV Developments in Devon's Landscape* should be followed, particularly when considering the cumulative impacts of multiple turbine developments. In addition, within this LCT particular care will need to be taken to ensure:

- Turbines do not impact on the distinctive and unspoilt character of the exposed skylines sitting below the moorland rim of Exmoor (the LCT's upper valley slopes).
- Valued naturalistic habitats are retained - including semi-natural ancient oak and beech-dominated woodlands, species-rich meadows, rushy pasture, traditional orchards and floodplain grasslands.
- The characteristic network of winding lanes crossing historic stone bridges, framed by species-rich hedges and floristic banks, are not adversely affected by delivery of turbines.
- The scenic qualities of the landscape, including its highly tranquil character and historic, picturesque villages and traditional buildings are protected.
- Wind energy development does not adversely affect the sense of remoteness, wildness and tranquillity associated with Exmoor National Park, or unacceptably impact on the striking views from the National Park into the district.
- Opportunities are sought to enhance the landscape in association with any development, in accordance with the landscape strategy for the LCT. These include enhancing the peaceful and historic character of the valley settlements and their industrial heritage, and restoring conifer plantations to broadleaves and heathland habitats, whilst providing recreational spaces within the less prominent plantations.

Additional Guidance Specific to Particular Landscape Character Areas

All of this LCT falls within DCA 27: Exmoor Fringe. Wherever possible, future development should be in line with the overall landscape strategy of the relevant Devon Character Area, as set out in the descriptions on the DCC website[37].

[37] http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/environmentplanning/natural_environment/landscape/landscapecharacter.htm

Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for solar PV development

Criteria	Lower sensitivity ▬▬▬▬▬▶ Higher sensitivity				
Landform					H
	Steep-sided, tightly enclosed v-shaped valleys with fast-flowing streams and rivers following the valley floors.				
Sense of openness / enclosure			M		
	Enclosure provided by extensive broadleaved woodland cover on valley slopes and large tracts of conifer plantations. Devon hedgebanks enclose areas of agricultural land and hedgerow trees occur more frequently on lower slopes. The upper slopes are more open and exposed as they take on more of a moorland fringe character.				
Field pattern and scale			M		
	Small-medium scale fields between woodlands originating from the medieval and post-medieval period (including distinctive regular 'Barton fields'). Where enclosed, higher slopes often defined by the straight-sided medium-scale fields of 19th century origin associated with the Exmoor landscape.				
Land cover					H
	This is a landscape of extensive woodland cover (including ancient semi-natural oak and beech-dominated broadleaved woodlands and conifer blocks) which mainly cover the valley sides. Woodland areas are interspersed with pasture, patches of rough grazing land on upper slopes, rushy meadows fringing watercourses and patches of wet woodland along the valley floors.				
Perceptual qualities				M-H	
	Overall a very tranquil and rural landscape enhanced by the natural qualities of the woodlands and rivers – disrupted in the Bray Valley by the route of the main A399. Wistlandpound Reservoir – a popular visitor attraction surrounded by conifer plantations – is a prominent feature in the north of the LCT. Overall however, the DCA description (for the Exmoor Fringe) refers to it being one of the most tranquil landscapes in Devon.				
Historic Landscape Character				M-H	
	The Devon HLC indicates that the LCT predominantly comprises a mixture of modern enclosure (27%) – generally likely to be of lower sensitivity to solar PV development, and medieval enclosures based on strip fields (17%) and other woodland (17%) - both likely to be of higher sensitivity. Smaller areas of Barton fields (10%), ancient woodland (8%), rough ground (7%) and medieval enclosures (3%) – all of high sensitivity to solar PV developments. Small areas of post-medieval enclosures (7%) are also present which would be of lower sensitivity.				
Scenic and special qualities				M-H	
	Although not nationally designated for its scenic quality, parts of the LCT lie in close proximity to Exmoor National Park, whose special qualities include: it being a timeless landscape mostly free from intrusive development, striking views inside and out of the National Park, and its sense of remoteness, wildness and tranquillity. These special qualities might be sensitive to development within adjacent areas and should be considered in any proposals. Other special qualities that could be affected by wind energy development, as recorded in the district's LCT description, include the senses of isolation, tranquillity and remoteness, picturesque villages and traditional buildings linked by rural lanes, and views to Exmoor and across North Devon. In addition, the DCA description notes the landscape's high scenic quality and key role as a setting to Exmoor National Park, many Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings and Molland Conservation Area.				
Discussion on landscape sensitivity	Although much of the landscape is enclosed by extensive tree cover and hedges which could indicate a lower sensitivity to solar PV development, the intimate scale of the valleys with prominent upper slopes, presence of medieval enclosures and historic Barton fields, the LCT's strong rural and highly tranquil character and important role as a setting to Exmoor National Park all increase sensitivity. Areas closest to the National Park are also likely to have a higher sensitivity (although this will need to be judged on a case by case basis).				

Sensitivity to different sizes of solar PV development	Very Small (<1ha)	M-H
	Small (>1-5ha)	M-H
	Medium (>5-10ha)	H
	Large (>10-15ha)	H
	Very Large (>15-20ha)	H
	The scale of the valleys and field patterns means that this LCT is likely to be particularly sensitive to medium and large scale developments. Land around settlements (e.g. Molland) where tranquillity is reduced will be less sensitive to 'very small' and 'small' schemes, however, within the AONB it is likely to be particularly sensitive to any scale of solar PV development.	

SUMMARY OF KEY SENSITIVE FEATURES/CHARACTERISTICS

A summary list of the key sensitive features and characteristics for 3D Upland River Valleys LCT in relation to solar PV development is included below:

- The prominent, open upper valley slopes.
- Naturalistic and varied land cover patterns including semi-natural ancient oak and beech-dominated woodlands, species-rich meadows, rushy pasture, traditional orchards and floodplain grasslands.
- Areas of historic, irregular field patterns of medieval origin on valley slopes, as well as distinctive Barton fields and sensitive areas of rough ground.
- The scenic qualities of the landscape, including its strong tranquil and often isolated character.
- Its role as an important setting to Exmoor National Park, whose special qualities include striking views out of the protected landscape and a sense of remoteness, wildness and tranquillity.

Guidance for solar PV development

Permitted schemes within the LCT

Planning data held by the Council (November 2013) shows that there are no operational or consented solar PV developments in this LCT.

Guidance for Development

The landscape sensitivity assessment indicates that this landscape is unlikely to be able to accommodate any solar PV schemes over 5ha in size without introducing a change to landscape character. Any proposals should be located in more enclosed, flatter areas where more intensive farming practices dominate, or on the fringes of settlements, avoiding highly visible slopes, irregular medieval fields and valued areas of semi-natural habitat, including rush pasture, mire, wet heath and wood pasture/parkland.

Multiple developments within the LCT should be of a similar scale and design (in terms of siting, layout, scale, form and relationship to key characteristics) to maintain a simple image and reinforce links between landscape characteristics and design response within the LCT. The overall aim should be to make sure that solar PV developments do not become a key characteristic of the landscape (i.e. developments would not result in a significant cumulative impact on the LCT or overall change of landscape character).

When siting and designing solar PV developments in this LCT the generic guidance within Chapter 3 of the Devon Landscape Policy Group's Advice Note No. 2: *Accommodating Wind and Solar PV Developments in Devon's Landscape* should be followed particularly when considering the cumulative impacts of multiple schemes. In addition, within this LCT particular care will need to be taken to ensure:

- The most prominent open upper valley slopes are avoided, particularly those that drop down from the moorland core of Exmoor.
- Valued naturalistic habitats are retained - including semi-natural ancient oak and beech-dominated woodlands, species-rich meadows, rushy pasture, traditional orchards and floodplain grasslands.
- Small-scale medieval and distinctive Barton fields on lower slopes are avoided as sites for development.
- The scenic qualities of the landscape, including its highly tranquil character and historic, picturesque villages and traditional buildings are protected.
- Solar PV developments do not adversely affect the sense of remoteness, wildness and tranquillity associated with Exmoor National Park, or unacceptably impact on the striking views from the National Park into the district.
- Opportunities are sought to enhance the landscape in association with any development, in accordance with the landscape strategy for the LCT. These include enhancing the peaceful and historic character of the valley settlements and their industrial heritage, and restoring conifer plantations to broadleaves and heathland habitats, whilst providing recreational spaces within the less prominent plantations.

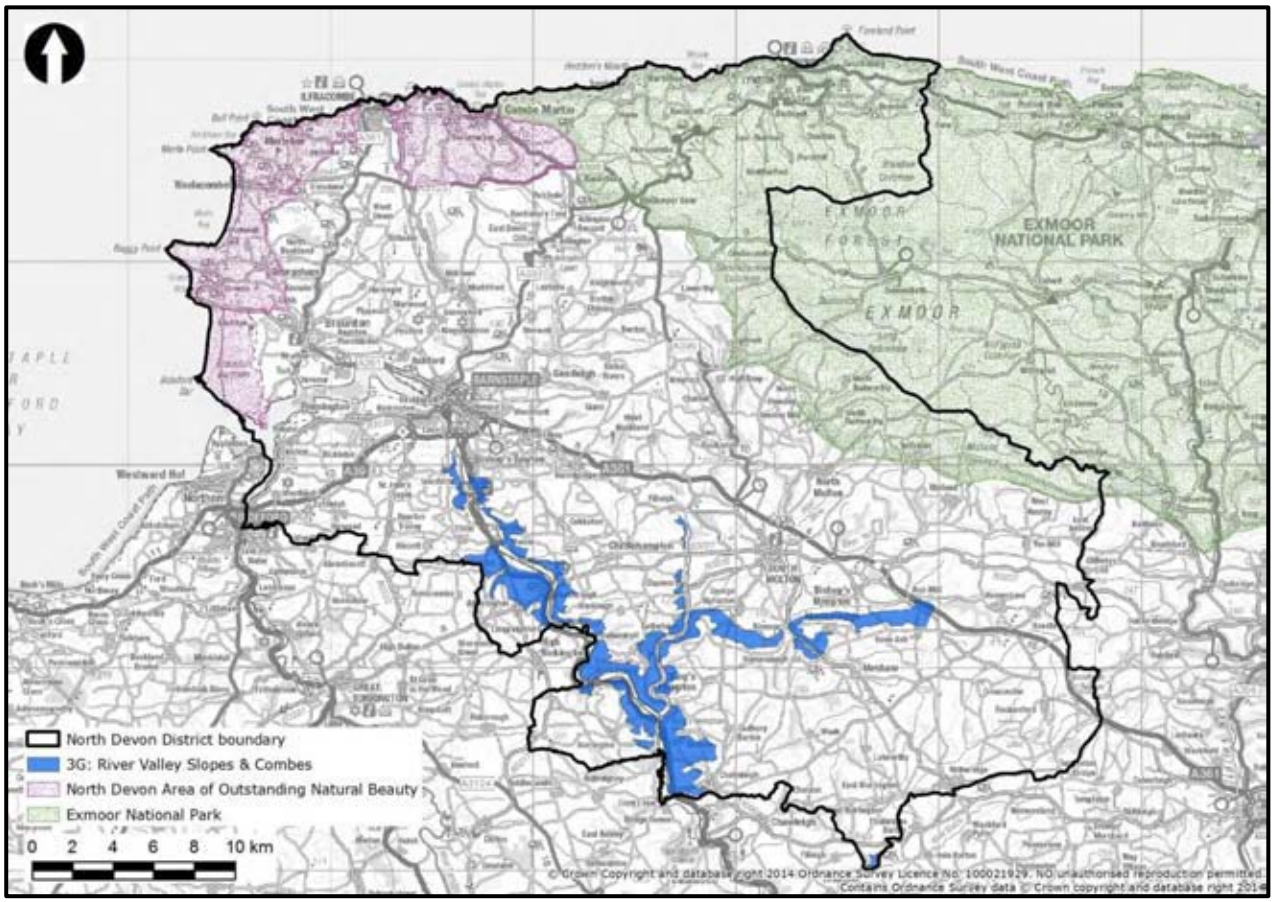
Additional Guidance Specific to Particular Landscape Character Areas

All of this LCT falls within DCA 27: Exmoor Fringe. Wherever possible, future development should be in line with the overall landscape strategy of the relevant Devon Character Area, as set out in the descriptions on the DCC website[38].

[38] http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/environmentplanning/natural_environment/landscape/landscapecharacter.htm

LCT 3G: River Valley Slopes and Combes

LCT Location Map



Character Areas

DCA 14: Codden Hill and Wooded Estates

DCA 32: High Culm Ridge

DCA59: Taw Valley

Please note that while this LCT assessment for wind and solar PV development provides an initial indication of landscape sensitivity and guidance for accommodating developments in the landscape, it should not be interpreted as a definitive statement on the suitability of individual sites for a particular development. All developments will need to be assessed on their own merits.

Key Landscape Characteristics

- Steep valley slopes with folds created by small tributary valleys feeding into the Rivers Torridge, Taw, Tamar, Carey and Mole. Elevated landform allowing extensive views across river valleys below.
- Underlying geology of Carboniferous mudstones, siltstones and sandstone, with river courses below carving steep sided, open valleys through the landform.
- Extensive tree cover clothing valley sides – including important areas of oak-dominated ancient semi-natural woodland, beech and non-native broadleaved plantations, patches of wet woodland and large tracts of conifer plantations (often on ancient woodland sites).
- Mixture of field sizes and origins, including irregular medium-scale medieval fields as well as larger regular fields of modern origin.
- Fields divided by mixed species Devon hedges often with wildflower-rich banks and frequent hedgerow trees on lower slopes. Some use of fencing.
- Agricultural land between woodlands comprising a mixture of sheep/dairy pasture, arable fields and rough grazing land.
- Valued semi-natural habitats associated with densely wooded valley slopes, supporting a rich ground flora. Patches of gorse and rough grassland contribute to local landscape diversity.
- Historic features including Iron Age hillforts occupying prominent positions on hill summits (e.g. Castle Hill settlement above the Torridge and Brighley Barton Camp above the Taw – both Scheduled Monuments).
- Estate woodland relating to the Grade I registered Castle Hill parkland fringing the Bray Valley, with an estate character also influencing the wooded slopes around Tawstock Park.
- Local vernacular building styles of cream/whitewashed thatched cottages, with some exposed stone and slate as a roofing material.
- Lightly settled with high levels of tranquillity – occasional farms and individual properties linked by steep narrow lanes plunging down valley slopes and wrapping around valley sides.
- Peaceful landscape with strong sense of remoteness – broken in the Taw Valley by the presence of the Tarka Line railway and main A377 following the valley floors.
- High levels of peace and tranquillity with scenic views along the open valleys and to the surrounding wooded slopes. Perceptions of tranquillity broken only locally by the presence of main roads and the fringes of the larger settlements of Barnstaple and Torrington.

48% of the LCT falls within North Devon District

Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for wind energy development

Criteria	Lower sensitivity ▬▬▬▬▬▶ Higher sensitivity				
Landform and scale				M-H	
	Steep valley slopes with folds created by small tributary valleys.				
Land cover pattern and presence of human scale features				M-H	
	Extensive tree cover clothing valley sides – including important areas of oak-dominated ancient semi-natural woodland, beech and non-native broadleaved plantations, patches of wet woodland and large tracts of conifer plantations. This is interspersed with a mixture of irregular medium-scale fields as well as larger regular fields of pasture, arable and rough grazing. There are some human scale features including whitewashed thatched cottages, occasional farmsteads, estate landscape features at Hall (near Brayford) and Devon hedges.				
Tracks / transport pattern				M-H	
	This landscape has relatively few roads (although the A377 runs along the lower slopes of the Taw Valley). Most are small rural roads linking across the valleys and narrow green lanes forming tunnels through woodland and roadside hedges.				
Skylines			M		
	The LCT makes no direct reference to skylines – skylines are not a feature of valley landscapes. However, the wooded crests of the valley slopes create prominent skylines viewed from the valley settlements and some have historic landmark features e.g. Brightley Barton Camp overlooking the Taw Valley.				
Perceptual qualities				M-H	
	The lightly settled and largely inaccessible nature of this LCT contributes to a sense of naturalness and relatively high levels of tranquillity, interrupted only locally by the main A377 and Barnstaple-Exeter railway line (both following the Taw Valley).				
Historic landscape character			M		
	The Devon HLC indicates that the majority of the landscape type is made up of modern enclosures (31%) - generally of a lower sensitivity to wind energy development. There are also some post-medieval enclosures (8%) –likely to be of low sensitivity. However, there are areas of medieval enclosure based on strip fields (23%), other woodland (16%) and smaller areas of medieval enclosure (4%) and Barton fields (4%) – all of which have a high sensitivity.				
Scenic and special qualities				M-H	
	None of the LCT falls within the North Devon Coast AONB. However, the landscape has some special qualities that are recorded in the district and county LCAs. In the district's LCT description, these include its broadleaved woodlands covering valley slopes; narrow green lanes forming tunnels through woodland and roadside hedges; sense of peace and tranquillity; important wildlife habitats and species and its importance for recreation. Some of these may be affected to a degree by wind energy development. Further special qualities mentioned in the Devon LCA descriptions, that could be affected by wind energy development, include the landscape's importance as a backdrop to surrounding character areas; panoramic views; its high scenic quality; remote areas with locally-high levels of tranquillity and dark skies particularly in the south, important areas of ancient woodland, numerous historic buildings; the Tarka Trail; as well as a number of SSSIs and the Conservation Area at Tawstock.				
Discussion on landscape sensitivity	Although parts of the landscape consist of modern large-scale enclosures, the prominent skylines with some historic landscape features, extensive naturalistic woodland cover, presence of medieval enclosures based on strip fields, sense of naturalness and high levels of tranquillity increase levels of sensitivity to wind energy development.				
Sensitivity to different turbine heights	Very Small (15-25m)	M-H			
	Small (26-50m)	H			
	Medium (51-75m)	H			
	Large (76-110m)	H			

	Very large (111-150m)	H
	The relatively small scale landform, presence of human scale features and small scale fields (including medieval enclosures based on strip fields) mean that this landscape is likely to be highly sensitive to all but the smallest size of turbines.	
Commentary on different cluster sizes Single turbine Small (<5 turbines) Medium (6-10) Large (11-25) Very large (>25)	The steep and folded landform, presence of human scale features and small scale fields (including medieval enclosures based on strip fields) mean that this landscape would be sensitive to any clusters of wind turbines.	

SUMMARY OF KEY SENSITIVE FEATURES/CHARACTERISTICS

A summary list of the key sensitive features and characteristics for 3G River Valley Slopes and Combes LCT in relation to wind energy development is included below:

- Steeply undulating landform and incised valley slopes with strong rural and remote character.
- Highly sensitive land cover patterns including ancient semi-natural woodland, medieval and Barton fields.
- Important historical features in prominent, elevated positions on wooded skylines, including Brightley Barton Camp.
- Frequently sunken, winding and narrow green lanes.
- The landscape's high levels of tranquillity.

Guidance for wind energy development

Permitted schemes within the LCT
Planning data held by the Council (November 2013) indicates that there are currently no operational or consented wind energy developments in this LCT.
Guidance for Development
The landscape will be highly sensitive to anything other than 'very small' single turbines, usually associated with farm buildings or other existing buildings. Multiple developments within the LCT should aim for consistent scale and design of single turbines to avoid visual confusion. When siting and designing wind energy developments in this LCT, the generic guidance within Chapter 2 of the Devon Landscape Policy Group's Advice Note No. 2: *Accommodating Wind and Solar PV Developments in Devon's Landscape* should be followed, particularly when considering the cumulative impacts of multiple schemes. In addition, within this LCT particular care will need to be taken to ensure that: • Turbines do not detract from the characteristically wooded skylines with important historic landmark features. • Wind energy development does not overwhelm the generally small scale of the complex landform and its frequent human scale features. • The delivery of turbines does not adversely impact on the character of the landscape's narrow green lanes framed by hedges. • The location of turbines does not adversely affect the historic integrity of medieval enclosures, Barton fields and woodland. • Turbines are linked to existing development and do not adversely affect the high levels of tranquillity and remoteness associated with this landscape. • Opportunities are sought to enhance the landscape in association with any development, in accordance with the landscape strategy for the LCT. This includes protecting and enhancing the peaceful character of the valley slopes, fringed by well-managed woodlands and fields enclosed by an intact network of species-rich Devon banks.
Additional Guidance Specific to Particular Landscape Character Areas
This guidance will apply consistently for all Devon Character Areas where this LCT is present. Wherever possible, future development should be in line with the overall landscape strategy of the relevant Devon Character Area, as set out in the descriptions on the DCC website[39].

[39] http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/environmentplanning/natural_environment/landscape/landscapecharacter.htm

Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for solar PV development

Criteria	Lower sensitivity ▬▬▬▬▬▶ Higher sensitivity				
Landform				M-H	
	Steep valley with folds created by small tributary valleys resulting in a landscape with prominent visible slopes.				
Sense of openness / enclosure		L-M			
	Enclosure provided by valley landform, extensive broadleaved woodland and large tracts of conifer plantations. Devon hedges enclose areas of agricultural land and hedgerow trees occur more frequently on lower slopes.				
Field pattern and scale			M		
	Where farmland exists it is a mixture of irregular medium-scale medieval fields as well as larger regular fields of modern origin.				
Land cover				M-H	H
	This is a landscape dominated by extensive woodland cover (semi-natural broadleaved and coniferous plantations), interspersed with small areas of agricultural land (pasture, arable and rough grazing land).				
Perceptual qualities				M-H	
	The lightly settled and largely inaccessible nature of this LCT contributes to a sense of naturalness and high levels of tranquillity, interrupted only locally by the main A377 and Barnstaple-Exeter railway line (both following the Taw Valley).				
Historic Landscape Character			M		
	The Devon HLC indicates that the majority of the landscape type is made up of modern enclosures (31%) - generally of a lower sensitivity to solar PV development. There are also some post-medieval enclosures (8%) – low sensitivity. However, there are areas of medieval enclosure based on strip fields (23%), other woodland (16%) and smaller areas of medieval enclosure (4%) and Barton fields (4%) – all of which have a high sensitivity.				
Scenic and special qualities				M-H	
	None of the LCT falls within the North Devon Coast AONB. However, the landscape has some special qualities that are recorded in the district and county LCAs. In the district's LCT description, these include its broadleaved woodlands covering valley slopes; narrow green lanes forming tunnels through woodland and roadside hedges; sense of peace and tranquillity; important wildlife habitats and species and its importance for recreation. Some of these may be affected by the development of solar PV. Further special qualities mentioned in the Devon LCA descriptions, that could be affected by solar PV development, include the landscape's importance as a backdrop to surrounding character areas; panoramic views; its high scenic quality; remote areas with locally-high levels of tranquillity and dark skies particularly in the south, important areas of ancient woodland, numerous historic buildings; the Tarka Trail; as well as a number of SSSIs and the Conservation Area at Tawstock.				
Discussion on landscape sensitivity	Although much of the landscape is enclosed by extensive woodland cover and the valley landforms themselves, and there are some areas of arable farmland which could indicate a lower sensitivity to solar PV development, the steep, distinctive landform, visibility of the slopes, extensive naturalistic woodland cover, high levels of tranquillity and special qualities increase levels of sensitivity.				
Sensitivity to different sizes of solar PV development	Very Small (<1ha)	M-H			
	Small (>1-5ha)	H			
	Medium (>5-10ha)	H			
	Large (>10-15ha)	H			
	Very Large (>15-20ha)	H			
	The relatively small scale landform and fields (including medieval enclosures based on strip fields) mean that this landscape is likely to be particularly sensitive to all but the 'very small' scale solar PV development. Areas of ancient semi-natural woodland will be sensitive to any development.				

SUMMARY OF KEY SENSITIVE FEATURES/CHARACTERISTICS
A summary list of the key sensitive features and characteristics for 3G River Valley Slopes and Combes LCT in relation to solar PV development is included below: • Small-scale steeply undulating landform with incised and visually prominent slopes. • Little human influence contributing to the strong peaceful and tranquil character. • Its high scenic qualities, including the textures and patterns produced by the variety in land- and woodland cover. • Valued naturalistic land cover, including ancient semi-natural woodlands and rough grassland. • Areas of small-scale medieval and Barton fields, of historic landscape importance.

Guidance for solar PV development

Permitted schemes within the LCT

Planning data held by the Council (November 2013) shows that there are currently no operational or consented solar PV developments in this LCT.

Guidance for Development

The landscape sensitivity assessment indicates that the landscape's small-scale landform and tranquil, naturalistic character make it highly sensitive to anything greater than 'very small' in size (<1ha). Any future schemes of this scale should be located in more enclosed areas and on lower slopes, avoiding highly visible slopes and valued areas of semi-natural habitat (including ancient semi-natural woodland).

Multiple developments within the LCT should be of a similar scale and design (in terms of siting, layout, scale, form and relationship to key characteristics) to maintain a simple image and reinforce links between landscape characteristics and design response within the LCT. The overall aim should be to make sure that solar PV developments do not change the character of the landscape.

When siting and designing solar PV developments in this LCT the generic guidance within Chapter 3 of the Devon Landscape Policy Group's Advice Note No. 2: *Accommodating Wind and Solar PV Developments in Devon's Landscape* should be followed particularly when considering the cumulative impacts of multiple schemes. In addition, within this LCT particular care will need to be taken to ensure:

- Solar PV schemes are not located on visually prominent upper valley slopes, especially those that are open in character.
- The small scale of the landscape is maintained by ensuring schemes are in scale with the area in which they are located.
- Locate development near existing settlement/ development so that the most remote areas remain free of development.
- The diverse land cover patterns that characterise this LCT are maintained and solar PV development does not dominate any one area.
- Solar PV development does no adversely affect areas of valued areas of semi-natural habitat, particularly tracts of ancient semi-natural oak woodland.
- Solar PV development does not adversely affect the integrity of areas of medieval enclosures and Barton fields.

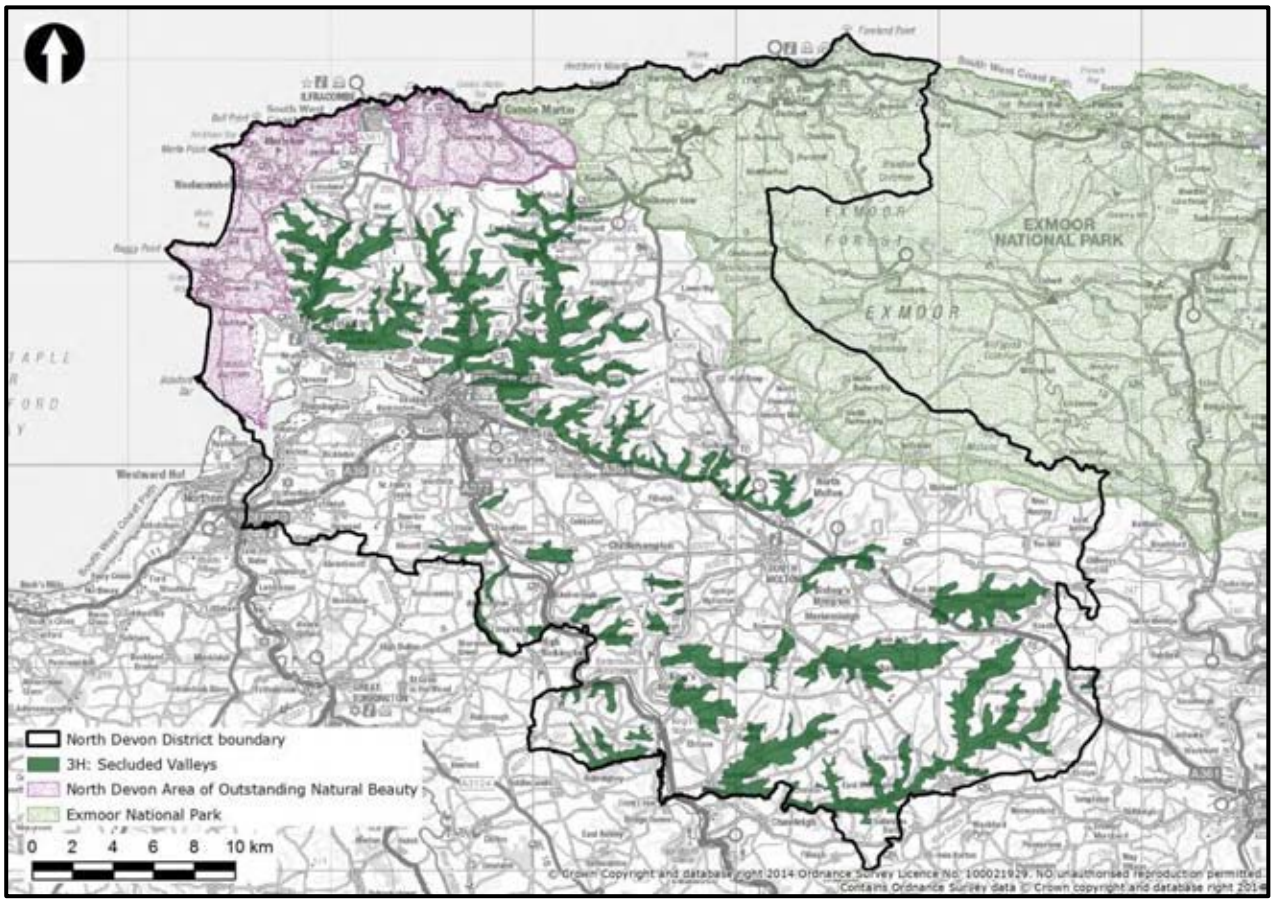
Additional Guidance Specific to Particular Landscape Character Areas

This guidance will apply consistently for all Devon Character Areas where this LCT is present. Wherever possible, future development should be in line with the overall landscape strategy of the relevant Devon Character Area, as set out in the descriptions on the DCC website[40].

[40] http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/environmentplanning/natural_environment/landscape/landscapecharacter.htm

LCT 3H: Secluded Valleys

LCT Location Map



Character Areas

DCA 44: North Devon Downs

DCA 53: South Molton Farmlands

DCA 59: Taw Valley

DCA 67: Witheridge and Rackenford Moor

Please note that while this LCT assessment for wind and solar PV development provides an initial indication of landscape sensitivity and guidance for accommodating developments in the landscape, it should not be interpreted as a definitive statement on the suitability of individual sites for a particular development. All developments will need to be assessed on their own merits.

Key Landscape Characteristics

- Steep-sided, v-shaped valleys with fast-flowing streams and rivers carving through the landscape, crowned by rounded hill summits.
- Includes the main tributary valleys of the Taw, Torridge, Bray and Mole, as well as the tightly enclosed southward-draining downland valleys of North Devon.
- Watercourses carve through underlying Carboniferous sandstones, mudstones and siltstones (Culm Measures). The downland valleys incise steeply through bands of Morte slate in their upper courses, flowing through the sandstones and mudstones from the Late Devonian as they flow south.
- Roadford Lake and the Upper & Lower Tamar Lakes (reservoirs) occupying the heads of the Wolf and Tamar Valleys respectively.
- Dense tree cover cloaking valley sides, including ancient semi-natural oak woodlands with a colourful ground flora, beech-dominated broadleaved woodlands and conifer blocks. Patches of wet woodland tracing river/stream courses.
- Mixture of field sizes and shapes – often smaller, irregular medieval enclosures on lower slopes, with upper slopes merging into larger post-medieval and modern fields, often retaining earlier curving boundaries.
- Species-rich Devon hedges on wildflower-rich banks, with bank-side ferns and frequent hedgerow trees associated with lower valley locations.
- Steep valley sides dominated by pasture grazed by sheep and cattle, with patches of rough grazing land on upper slopes and rushy meadows fringing watercourses.
- Ancient and broadleaved woodlands interspersed with patches of Culm grassland, species-rich rush pasture, Molinia mire, unimproved acid and neutral grasslands, wet meadows and gorse and willow scrub. Parkland estates containing veteran trees within wood pasture featuring along some valleys.
- Sense of time depth provided by a scattering of Bronze Age barrows and tumuli, Iron Age hillforts on prominent hill-top sites (e.g. East Kidland Camp), historic parkland estates (e.g. Grade II* Arlington Court and Grade II Youlston Park) and monastic remains at Hartland Abbey and Frithelstock Priory.
- Mills, dismantled railway lines, mining shafts and stone bridges reflecting the valleys' industrial heritage.
- Nucleated villages, hamlets and farmstead groups at crossing points, with some linear spread along valley floors (e.g. Weave Gifford). Settlement linked by minor roads running along valley floors and sunken lanes falling steeply down slopes.
- Strong local vernacular of exposed local stone and slate, along with cream, whitewashed and yellow buildings, some with thatched roofs. Derelict corrugated iron livestock sheds and linhays frequently feature in valleys within Torridge district.
- High levels of peace and tranquillity frequently defined by sounds of rushing water echoing out from the valley bottoms.

64% of the LCT falls within North Devon District

Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for wind energy development

Criteria	Lower sensitivity ▬▬▬▬▬▶ Higher sensitivity
Landform and scale	M-H Small-medium scale steep-sided, tightly enclosed v-shaped valleys with fast-flowing streams and rivers running along the valley floors.
Land cover pattern and presence of human scale features	M-H Irregular pattern of medium to large scale fields interspersed with areas of dense broadleaved and mixed woodlands, patches of Culm grassland, species-rich rush pasture, Molinia mire, unimproved acid and neutral grasslands, wet meadows and gorse and willow scrub forming a rich mosaic across the landscape. Some human scale features include nucleated villages, hamlets and farmstead groups including frequent derelict livestock sheds and linhays. There are also stone bridges and mills.
Tracks / transport pattern	M-H Mainly small rural roads, often following the line of the valley floor and plunging steeply down slopes, frequently sunken and tightly enclosed by woodland. Occasional A-roads cross and run along some valleys (e.g. A39, A399 and A361).
Skylines	M-L Skylines are not generally prominent due to the valley landforms, with upper slopes and valleys summits frequently covered in woodland characterising the local skylines.
Perceptual qualities	M-H The secluded nature of this landscape with its sense of naturalness and absence of main roads and large settlements contributes to relatively high levels of peace and tranquillity. The presence of streams and sounds of flowing water further add to the tranquil character along the valley floors. Road corridors and small settlements at river crossing points introduce areas of human activity and development in localised parts of the LCT, reducing perceptions of tranquillity.
Historic landscape character	M The Devon HLC indicates that the LCT comprises of 32% modern enclosures and 10% post-medieval enclosures (generally of lower sensitivity to wind energy development), with areas of medieval enclosures based on strip fields (22%) and other woodland (15%) – generally of high sensitivity. Smaller areas of rough ground (5%), medieval enclosures (4%), Barton fields (4%) and ancient woodland (2%) would be of high sensitivity to wind turbines.
Scenic and special qualities	M-H None of this LCT falls within the North Devon AONB. However, the District's LCT description notes the unspoilt, secluded and secretive character of the valleys, the broadleaved woodlands and coppice clothing valley sides, rich mosaic of water, hedges, small fields and woodland, important wildlife havens, narrow sunken lanes and stone bridges as special qualities of this landscape type. These could be affected to a degree by wind energy development. Further special qualities mentioned in the Devon LCA descriptions include: the high scenic qualities, the role the valleys around South Molton play in the east as a setting to Exmoor National Park; locally high levels of tranquillity, extensive areas of ancient woodland, wetlands and parkland, wealth of historic buildings and Conservation Areas at Knowstone and Middle Marwood. Some of these could be affected to a degree by wind energy development.
Discussion on landscape sensitivity	Although there is an absence of prominent skylines which could indicate a lower sensitivity to wind energy development, the valleys' imitate scale and extensive tree cover and woodland cover, presence of small-scale historic field patterns, as well as the LCT's sense of remoteness and high levels of tranquillity all increase levels of sensitivity.

Sensitivity to different turbine heights	Very Small (15-25m)	M-H
	Small (26-50m)	M-H
	Medium (51-75m)	H
	Large (76-110m)	H
	Very large (111-150m)	H
	The small scale of the landform and presence of human scale features mean that this landscape is likely to be particularly sensitive to the 'medium', 'large' and 'very large' size of turbines. Locations in the east, forming a setting to Exmoor National Park, would be highly sensitive to any turbines larger than 'very small' in scale (though these should be judged on a case-by-case basis).	
Commentary on different cluster sizes Single turbine Small (<5 turbines) Medium (6-10) Large (11-25) Very large (>25)	The unspoilt, secluded and tranquil nature of these valley landscapes with their steep landform mean that this landscape it is likely to be particularly sensitive to any clusters.	

SUMMARY OF KEY SENSITIVE FEATURES/CHARACTERISTICS

A summary list of the key sensitive features and characteristics for 3H Secluded Valleys LCT in relation to wind energy development is included below:

- The small-scale, intricate nature of the valleys.
- Naturalistic and valued land cover including patches of Culm grassland, species-rich rush pasture, Molinia mire, unimproved acid and neutral grasslands and semi-natural woodlands.
- Important historic features relating to the area's ancient development and long industrial history including stone bridges, mills and weirs.
- Narrow and winding lanes (often sunken) with tree lined hedgebanks.
- Its high levels of tranquillity and perceived naturalness.
- The valleys' role in the east as an important setting to Exmoor National Park, whose special qualities include striking views out of the protected landscape and a sense of remoteness, wildness and tranquillity.

Guidance for wind energy development

Permitted schemes within the LCT

Planning data held by the Council (November 2013) shows that there are four permitted wind energy development within this LCT. The only operational scheme is at Hartpiece Farm, Shirwell and is within the 'very small' category. There is one other permitted scheme which falls within the 'very small' category at Luscott Barton, Ashford. The other two schemes are located at West Catkill Farm, Rose Ash and North Combe Farm, Witheridge fall within the 'small' category. All of the schemes are single turbines except the permitted scheme at North Combe Farm. One scheme is situated within DCA 59: Taw Valley, two are within DCA 44: North Devon Downs, and one is situated within DCA 67: Witheridge and Rackenford Moor.

Guidance for Development

The landscape will be highly sensitive to anything other than 'very small' or 'small' single turbines, usually associated with farm- or existing buildings. Locations that form part of the setting to Exmoor National Park are likely to be highly sensitive to all but the smallest single turbines associated with existing buildings. Multiple developments within the LCT should aim for the consistent scale and design of single turbines to avoid visual confusion.

When siting and designing wind energy developments in this LCT, the generic guidance within Chapter 2 of the Devon Landscape Policy Group's Advice Note No. 2: *Accommodating Wind and Solar PV Developments in Devon's Landscape* should be followed, particularly when considering the cumulative impacts of multiple schemes. In addition, within this LCT particular care will need to be taken to ensure that:

- Wind energy development does not overwhelm the generally small scale of the steep valleys with their frequent human scale features.
- The delivery of turbines does not adversely impact on the character of the landscape's steep winding and frequently sunken lanes tightly enclosed by hedgebanks and woodland.
- Turbines do not detract from the characteristically wooded and undeveloped skylines or affect the setting or appreciation of important historic landmark features.
- Turbines and their ancillary development do not adversely affect the historic integrity of medieval enclosures, Barton fields, areas of woodland and rough ground.
- Valued naturalistic habitats are retained – including extensive areas of woodland (including ancient woodlands), scrub, heathland and riparian vegetation.
- Turbines are linked to existing development and do not adversely affect the peaceful and seclude nature of the valleys.
- In the east, wind energy development does not adversely affect the sense of remoteness, wildness and tranquillity associated with Exmoor National Park, or unacceptably impact on the striking views from the National Park into the district.
- Opportunities are sought to enhance the landscape in association with any development, in accordance with the landscape strategy for the LCT. These include protecting and enhancing the secluded character of the river valleys with a strong historic sense of place, and managing and expanding woodlands and wetlands to help prevent downstream flooding and protect water quality.

Additional Guidance Specific to Particular Landscape Character Areas

This guidance will apply consistently for all Devon Character Areas where this LCT is present. Consideration of the impact of wind turbine development on the special qualities of Exmoor National Park – particularly its sense of remoteness, wildness and tranquillity and striking views into the district, will be especially important in DCAs 53: South Molton Farmland and 67:

Witheridge and Rackenford Moor.

Wherever possible, future development should be in line with the overall landscape strategy of the relevant Devon Character Area, as set out in the descriptions on the DCC website[41].

[41] http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/environmentplanning/natural_environment/landscape/landscapecharacter.htm

Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for solar PV development

Criteria	Lower sensitivity ▪▪▪▪▪▪▪▶ Higher sensitivity				
Landform					H
	Steep-sided, tightly enclosed v-shaped valleys with fast-flowing streams and rivers following the valley floors. Many of the slopes are prominent and overlooked by adjacent LCTs (e.g. 1F, 2D, 3A, 5C and 5D).				
Sense of openness / enclosure			M		
	Enclosure provided by extensive broadleaved woodland and large tracts of conifer plantations. Devon hedges enclose areas of agricultural land and hedgerow trees occur more frequently on lower slopes. Open slopes are present north of the A361 corridor at Rapscott Hill, High Beer Wood and Buckingham's Leary.				
Field pattern and scale			M		
	This LCT has a combination of irregular medium-scale medieval fields on lower slopes with larger post-medieval and modern fields occurring on the upper slopes.				
Land cover					H
	This is a landscape of extensive woodland cover (including ancient semi-natural oak beech-dominated broadleaved woodlands and conifer blocks) which mainly cover the valley sides. Woodland areas are interspersed with agricultural pasture, patches of rough grazing land on upper slopes, rushy meadows fringing watercourses and patches of wet woodland along the valley floors.				
Perceptual qualities				M-H	
	The secluded nature of this landscape with its sense of naturalness and absence of main roads and large settlements contributes to relatively high levels of peace and tranquillity. Presence of streams and sounds of rushing water further add to the tranquil character along the valley floors. Small settlements at river crossing points in the valley floors contribute to human activity and development.				
Historic Landscape Character			M		
	The Devon HLC indicates that the LCT comprises of 32% modern enclosures and 10% post-medieval enclosures (generally of lower sensitivity to solar PV development), with areas of medieval enclosures based on strip fields (22%) and other woodland (15%) – generally of high sensitivity. Smaller areas of rough ground (5%), medieval enclosures (4%), Barton fields (4%) and ancient woodland (2%) would be of high sensitivity to solar PV.				
Scenic and special qualities				M-H	
	None of this LCT falls within the North Devon AONB. However, the District's LCT description notes the unspoilt, secluded and secretive character of the valleys, the broadleaved woodlands and coppice clothing valley sides, rich mosaic of water, hedges, small fields and woodland, important wildlife havens, narrow sunken lanes and stone bridges as special qualities of this landscape type. These could be affected to a degree by solar PV energy development. Further special qualities mentioned in the Devon LCA descriptions include: the high scenic qualities, the role the valleys around South Molton play in the east as a setting to Exmoor National Park; locally high levels of tranquillity, extensive areas of ancient woodland, wetlands and parkland, wealth of historic buildings and Conservation Areas at Knowstone and Middle Marwood. Some of these could be affected to a degree by solar PV energy development.				
Discussion on landscape sensitivity	Although much of the landscape is enclosed by extensive tree cover and Devon hedges which could indicate a lower sensitivity to solar PV development, the intimate scale of the valleys, presence of medieval enclosures based on strip fields, and the LCT's strong rural character increase sensitivity.				
Sensitivity to different sizes of solar PV development	Very Small (<1ha)				M-H
	Small (>1-5ha)				M-H
	Medium (>5-10ha)				H
	Large (>10-15ha)				H
	Very Large (>15-20ha)				H

	The scale of the valleys and field patterns means that this LCT is likely to be highly sensitive to all scales of solar PV development greater than 'small'. Locations in the east, forming a setting to Exmoor National Park, are likely to be highly sensitive to any solar PV developments larger than 'very small' in scale (though these should be judged on a case-by-case basis).

SUMMARY OF KEY SENSITIVE FEATURES/CHARACTERISTICS

A summary list of the key sensitive features and characteristics for 3H Secluded Valleys LCT in relation to solar PV development is included below:

- The valleys' intricate nature, with prominent slopes often overlooked by adjacent LCTs.
- Naturalistic and valued land cover including patches of Culm grassland, species-rich rush pasture, Molinia mire, unimproved acid and neutral grasslands and semi-natural woodlands.
- Sensitive historic land cover types including small-scale medieval enclosures, rough ground and ancient woodland.
- Its high levels of tranquillity and perceived naturalness.
- The valleys' role in the east as an important setting to Exmoor National Park, whose special qualities include striking views out of the protected landscape and a sense of remoteness, wildness and tranquillity.

Guidance for solar PV development

Permitted schemes within the LCT

Planning data held by the Council (November 2013) shows that there is one permitted solar PV development within this LCT. This site is situated at Little Comfort Farm, West Down and is within the 'very small' category. The scheme is situated within DCA 44: North Devon Downs.

Guidance for Development

The landscape sensitivity assessment indicates that the landscape's small-scale landform and secluded, naturalistic character make it highly sensitive to anything greater than 'small' in size. Any future schemes should be at the smaller end of the size bracket (and no larger than 5ha) and located in enclosed areas and on lower slopes, avoiding highly visible slopes and valued areas of semi-natural habitat (including ancient semi-natural woodland). Locations that form part of the setting to Exmoor National Park are likely to be highly sensitive to developments over 1ha in scale.

Multiple developments within the LCT should be of a similar scale and design (in terms of siting, layout, scale, form and relationship to key characteristics) to maintain a simple image and reinforce links between landscape characteristics and design response within the LCT. The overall aim should be to make sure that solar PV developments do not change the character of the landscape.

When siting and designing solar PV developments in this LCT the generic guidance within Chapter 3 of the Devon Landscape Policy Group's Advice Note No. 2: *Accommodating Wind and Solar PV Developments in Devon's Landscape* should be followed particularly when considering the cumulative impacts of multiple schemes. In addition, within this LCT particular care will need to be taken to ensure:

- Solar PV schemes are not located on visually prominent upper valley slopes, especially those that are more open in character (i.e. between blocks of woodland) and overlooked.
- The small scale of the landscape is maintained by ensuring schemes are in scale with the area in which they are located.
- Development is located near existing settlement/ development so that the most remote and secluded areas remain free of development.
- The diverse land cover patterns that characterise this LCT are maintained and solar PV development does not dominate any one area.
- Solar PV development does no adversely affect areas of valued areas of semi-natural habitat, including patches of Culm grassland, species-rich rush pasture, Molinia mire, unimproved acid and neutral grasslands and semi-natural woodlands.
- Solar PV development does not adversely affect the integrity of areas of medieval strip field enclosures, Barton fields and sensitive tracts of rough ground and ancient woodland.
- In the east, solar PV development does not adversely affect the sense of remoteness, wildness and tranquillity associated with Exmoor National Park, or unacceptably impact on the striking views from the National Park into the district.
- Opportunities are sought to enhance the landscape in association with any development, in accordance with the landscape strategy for the LCT. These include protecting and enhancing the secluded character of the river valleys with a strong historic sense of place, and managing and expanding woodlands and wetlands to help prevent downstream flooding and protect water quality.

Additional Guidance Specific to Particular Landscape Character Areas

This guidance will apply consistently for all Devon Character Areas where this LCT is present. This guidance will apply consistently for all Devon Character Areas where this LCT is present. Consideration of the impact of solar PV development on the special qualities of Exmoor National Park – particularly its sense of remoteness, wildness and tranquillity and striking views into the

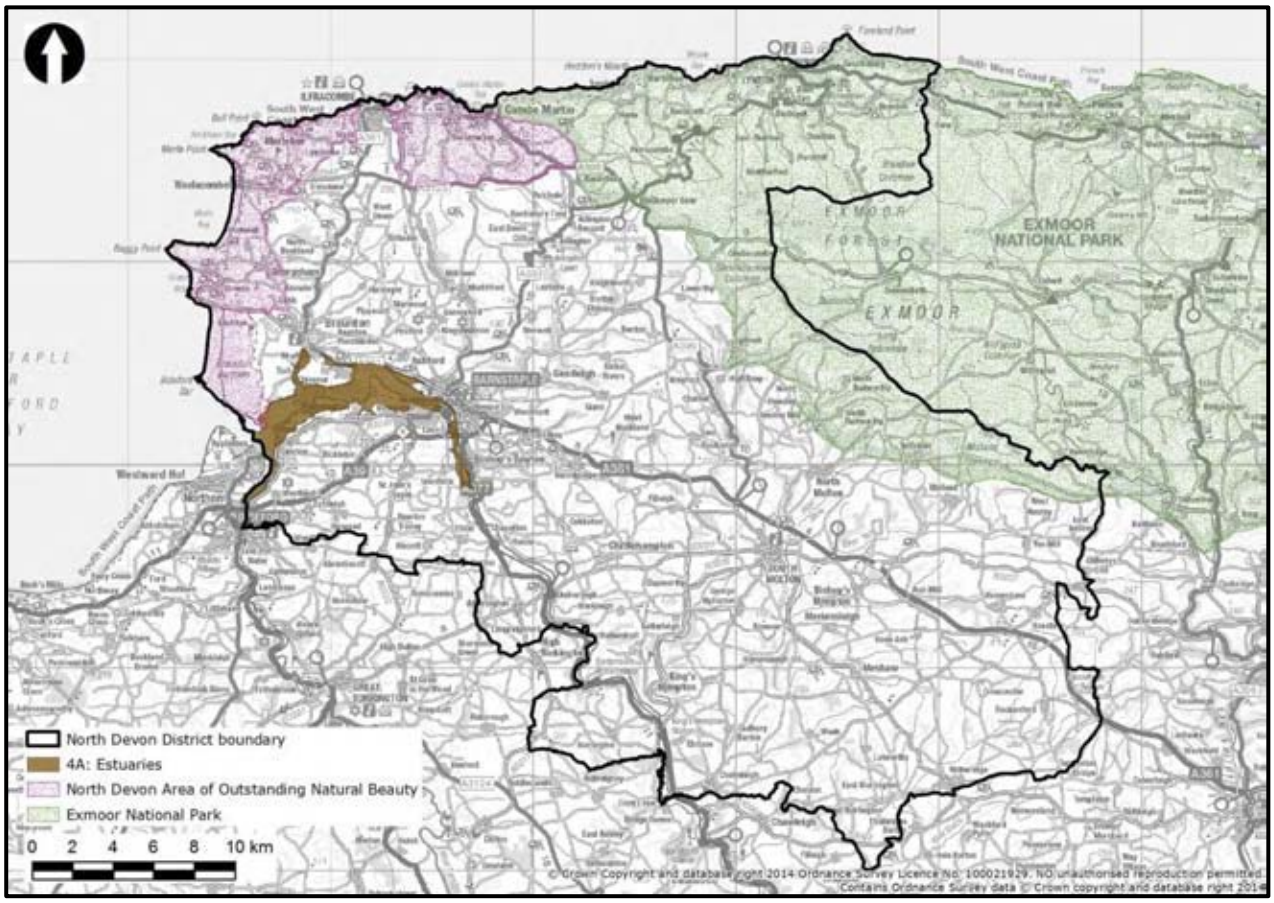
district, will be especially important in DCAs 53: South Molton Farmland and 67: Witheridge and Rackenford Moor.

Wherever possible, future development should be in line with the overall landscape strategy of the relevant Devon Character Area, as set out in the descriptions on the DCC website[42].

[42] http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/environmentplanning/natural_environment/landscape/landscapecharacter.htm

LCT 4A: Estuaries

LCT Location Map



Character Areas

DCA 58: Taw-Torridge Estuary

Please note that while this LCT assessment for wind and solar PV development provides an initial indication of landscape sensitivity and guidance for accommodating developments in the landscape, it should not be interpreted as a definitive statement on the suitability of individual sites for a particular development. All developments will need to be assessed on their own merits.

Key Landscape Characteristics

- Broad, sweeping estuary of the Taw / Torridge, with expansive mudflats and sandbanks inundated by water from the sea at high tide.
- Backed by gradually rising land, the estuary reaching its coastal extent between the sand dunes of Braunton and Northam Burrows.
- Estuary immediately fringed by areas of saltmarsh, sand spits, lagoons and reclaimed farmland.
- Tree cover limited to overgrown hedges and areas of scrub within fringing farmland, with small blocks of broadleaved and ancient woodlands overlooking the tidal reaches of the Taw and Torridge rivers.
- Banks of estuary defined by grazing marsh, arable fields and rough grassland divided by brackish ditches, fencing and thorny hedges.
- Farmland drained and enclosed in post-medieval and recent times, comprising regular fields and unenclosed marshes.
- Nationally important for biodiversity – supporting major populations of migratory and overwintering wading birds, fish including sea trout and salmon, rich saltmarshes with rare plants and flowers, and areas of brackish water fringed by willow.
- Streams and drainage ditches flowing into the estuary across the surrounding farmland.
- Strong maritime history associated with the textile trade – including the 24-arched Grade 1 listed Long Bridge in Bideford, the listed Barnstaple Long Bridge and historic quays dotted along the shore.
- Unsettled landscape, although strongly influence by housing, industrial and commercial development associated with Barnstaple, Appledore and Bideford sitting on the estuary banks.
- Main roads crossing the water on bridges; adjacent farmland crossed by the Tarka Trail and South West Coast Path.
- Sewage works located on the north bank of the estuary, with views of nearby development and the airfield at Chivenor also affecting overarching perceptions of tranquillity and remoteness associated with the estuary.
- Strong sensory characteristics: colour and texture of habitats; smell of mudflats and the sea; birdsong and calls; sight of sunlight reflecting off water.

78% of the LCT falls within North Devon District

Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for wind energy development

Criteria	Lower sensitivity ▬▬▬▬▬▶ Higher sensitivity				
Landform and scale	L				
	An extensive flat lowland landscape comprising the broad, sweeping estuary of the Taw / Torridge, with expansive mudflats and sandbanks.				
Land cover pattern and presence of human scale features			M		
	The land cover of the LCT is dominated by expansive mudflats and sandbanks inundated by water from the sea at high tide. However, variation is provided by areas of saltmarsh, sand spits and lagoons. There are some human scale features in the form of historic shoreline quays and bridges.				
Tracks / transport pattern					H
	The main A361, A39 and A386 roads cross the estuary via bridges. However, the mudflats and sandbanks fringing the water are inaccessible to vehicles.				
Skylines		M-L			
	The low-lying nature of the estuary landscape means that its skylines are not particularly prominent or distinctive. However, views across the estuary are wide and dominated by the expanse of mud or water at high tide, and the listed Long Bridge at Barnstaple forms an important landmark feature.				
Perceptual qualities				M-H	
	The estuary evokes strong sensory perceptions – the colour and texture of habitats; smell of mudflats and the sea; birdsong and calls; sight of sunlight reflecting off water. There is a sense of relative remoteness within the LCT.				
Historic landscape character				M-H	
	The Devon HLC indicates that the majority of the LCT is sand (34%) or mud and sand (15%), along with areas of marsh (8%) along the estuary fringes. These HLTs have a high sensitivity to wind energy development as a result of potential change to the coherence of these historic landscape types. There are also areas of post-medieval enclosures (14%), modern enclosures (10%) and medieval enclosures based on strip fields (5%) all of which have a lower sensitivity to wind turbines.				
Scenic and special qualities					
	AONB	AONB	AONB	AONB	AONB
	Less than 1% of the LCT is within the North Devon Coast AONB. The special qualities of this part of the AONB include the areas of valuable estuarine salt marsh and the sense of tranquillity and remoteness. In addition, the district's LCT description notes the estuary's open feeling and expansive views, unique flora and fauna (particularly important for overwintering birds), its opportunities for waterfront access and recreation and evidence of historic quays as special qualities. Further special qualities mentioned in the Devon LCA description for the Taw-Torridge Estuary, which could be affected by wind energy development, include: its high scenic qualities (both within and as a setting to the AONB), RIGS site at The Skern, Scheduled Monument on Isley Marsh and the historic bridge at Barnstaple; as well as recreational opportunities provided by the South West Coast Path and Tarka Trail.				
Discussion on landscape sensitivity	Although the estuary is an expansive and low-lying landscape without prominent skylines and with relatively simple land cover patterns, it is an important feature strongly associated with this part of the district and its naturalistic estuarine habitats cover the vast majority of the LCT. Sensitive historic landscape types, the naturalistic and remote character, and its high scenic quality also heighten sensitivity to wind turbine development to that extent that overall it is considered to have a high sensitivity inside and outside the AONB. The LCT also falls wholly within the Coastal Preservation Area on merit of its unspoilt character. The AONB's particularly high scenic quality means that the area within the AONB would be particularly sensitive.				

Sensitivity to different turbine heights	Land outside the AONB		Land within the AONB	
	Very Small (15-25m)	H	Very Small (15-25m)	H
	Small (26-50m)	H	Small (26-50m)	H
	Medium (51-75m)	H	Medium (51-75m)	H
	Large (76-110m)	H	Large (76-110m)	H
	Very large (111-150m)	H	Very large (111-150m)	H
	Because of the LCT's high levels of landscape sensitivity, particularly its overarching naturalistic and tranquil characteristics, the estuary would be sensitive to the development of all sizes of wind turbine.			
Commentary on different cluster sizes Single turbine Small (<5 turbines) Medium (6-10) Large (11-25) Very large (>25)	Because of the LCT's high levels of landscape sensitivity (as above), the estuary would be sensitive to the development of all scales of wind turbine development.			

SUMMARY OF KEY SENSITIVE FEATURES/CHARACTERISTICS

A summary list of the key sensitive features and characteristics for 4A Estuaries LCT in relation to wind energy development is included below:

- The wide expanse of the estuary forming a backdrop to views (e.g. from Barnstaple and Bideford (in Torridge)), dominated by nature: tidal water, mudflats, sands, wetlands and birdlife.
- The presence of historic waterside quays and bridges bringing a human-scale to the landscape.
- The strong sense of relative remoteness associated with the estuary.
- The presence of sensitive historic land cover types – including sand, mud, marsh and medieval enclosures based on strip fields on estuary fringes.
- The role of the estuary as a setting to the North Devon AONB, and the high scenic qualities of land falling within the protected landscape – including areas of valuable estuarine salt marsh and the sense of tranquillity and remoteness.

Guidance for wind energy development

Permitted schemes within the LCT
Planning data held by the Council (November 2013) indicates that there are currently no operational or consented wind energy developments within this LCT.
Guidance for Development
The landscape sensitivity assessment indicates that this LCT is highly sensitive to all sizes and scales of wind turbine development, and therefore is unlikely to be able to accommodate any turbines without introducing a significant change to landscape character.
Additional Guidance Specific to Particular Landscape Character Areas
N/A

Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for solar PV development

Criteria	Lower sensitivity ▬▬▬▬▬▬▶ Higher sensitivity				
Landform	L				
	A flat lowland landscape comprising the broad, sweeping estuary of the Taw / Torridge, with expansive mudflats and sandbanks.				
Sense of openness / enclosure					H
	A landscape with a strong sense of openness owing to its wide expanses of mudflats, water (at high tide) and fringing saltmarshes and lagoons. There are no enclosure elements within this LCT.				
Field pattern and scale			M		
	Farmland drained and enclosed in post-medieval and recent times, comprising regular fields of pasture and arable and unenclosed marshes.				
Land cover					H
	The land cover of the LCT is dominated by expansive mudflats and sandbanks inundated by water from the sea at high tide. It is fringed by areas of saltmarsh, sand spits and lagoons.				
Perceptual qualities				M-H	
	The estuary evokes strong sensory perceptions – the colour and texture of habitats; smell of mudflats and the sea; birdsong and calls; sight of sunlight reflecting off water. There is a sense of relative remoteness within the LCT.				
Historic Landscape Character				M-H	
	The Devon HLC indicates that the majority of the LCT is sand (34%) or mud and sand (15%), along with areas of marsh (8%) along the estuary fringes. These HLTs have a high sensitivity to solar PV development as a result of potential change to the coherence of these historic landscape types. There are also areas of post-medieval enclosures (14%), modern enclosures (10%) and medieval enclosures based on strip fields (5%) all of which have a lower sensitivity to solar PV development.				
Scenic and special qualities				M-H	
	AONB	AONB	AONB	AONB	AONB
	Less than 1% of the LCT is within the North Devon Coast AONB. The special qualities of this part of the AONB include the areas of valuable estuarine salt marsh and the sense of tranquillity and remoteness. In addition, the district's LCT description notes the estuary's open feeling and expansive views, unique flora and fauna (particularly important for overwintering birds), its opportunities for waterfront access and recreation and evidence of historic quays as special qualities. Further special qualities mentioned in the Devon LCA description for the Taw-Torridge Estuary, that could be affected by solar PV development, include its high scenic qualities (including as a backdrop to the North Devon AONB), RIGS site at The Skern, Schedule Monument on Isley Marsh and historic bridge at Barnstaple; as well as recreational opportunities provided by the South West Coast Path and Tarka Trail.				
Discussion on landscape sensitivity	Although this is a flat lowland landscape with no prominent slopes, the landscape's naturalistic estuarine habitats covering the vast majority of the LCT, its very open character, absence of farmed land, sensitive historic landscape types, unspoilt character, sense of remoteness and high scenic qualities mean that it would be highly sensitive to any solar PV development.				

Sensitivity to different sizes of solar PV development	Land outside the AONB		Land within the AONB	
	Very Small (<1ha)	H	Very Small (<1ha)	H
	Small (>1-5ha)	H	Small (>1-5ha)	H
	Medium (>5-10ha)	H	Medium (>5-10ha)	H
	Large (>10-15ha)	H	Large (>10-15ha)	H
	Very Large (>15-20ha)	H	Very Large (>15-20ha)	H
	Because of the LCT's high levels of landscape sensitivity particularly its overarching naturalistic and tranquil characteristics, the estuary would be sensitive to the development of any solar PV development.			

SUMMARY OF KEY SENSITIVE FEATURES/CHARACTERISTICS

A summary list of the key sensitive features and characteristics for 4A Estuaries LCT in relation to solar PV development is included below:

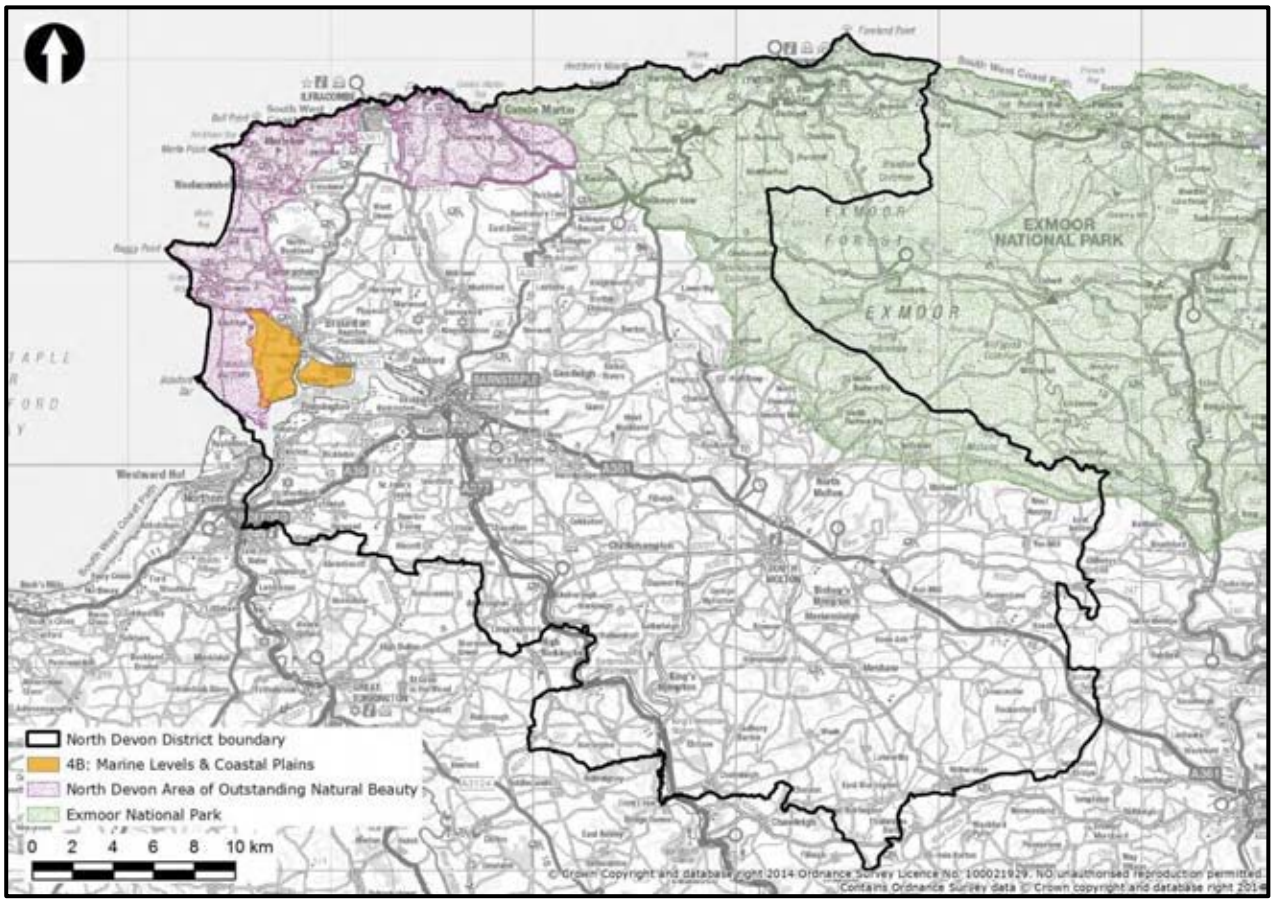
- The wide expanse of the estuary forming a backdrop to views (e.g. from Barnstaple and Bideford (in Torridge)), dominated by nature: tidal water, mudflats, sands, wetlands and birdlife.
- The strong sense of relative remoteness associated with the estuary.
- The presence of sensitive historic land cover types – including sand, mud, marsh and small-scale medieval enclosures based on strip fields on estuary fringes.
- The role of the estuary as a setting to the North Devon AONB, and the high scenic qualities of land falling within the protected landscape – including areas of valuable estuarine salt marsh and the sense of tranquillity and remoteness.

Guidance for solar PV development

Permitted schemes within the LCT
Planning data held by the Council (November 2013) shows that there are currently no operational or consented solar PV developments within this LCT.
Guidance for Development
The landscape sensitivity assessment indicates that this LCT is highly sensitive to all sizes and scales of solar PV development, and is therefore unlikely to be able to accommodate any solar PV development without introducing a significant change to landscape character.
Additional Guidance Specific to Particular Landscape Character Areas
N/A

LCT 4B: Marine Levels and Coastal Plains

LCT Location Map



Character Areas

DCA 58: Taw-Torridge Estuary

Please note that while this LCT assessment for wind and solar PV development provides an initial indication of landscape sensitivity and guidance for accommodating developments in the landscape, it should not be interpreted as a definitive statement on the suitability of individual sites for a particular development. All developments will need to be assessed on their own merits.

Key Landscape Characteristics

- Flat expansive landscapes bordering the Taw-Torridge Estuary, often with 'big skies' and long views across the wide estuary and seascape.
- Geology of Devonian and Carboniferous mudstones topped with tidal and alluvial deposits of clay, silt and sand.
- Wet pastures and reclaimed marshes enclosed by reed-fringed drainage ditches or low-cut thorn hedges in large, regular fields.
- Preserved medieval open strip fields associated with Braunton Great Field, one of the finest examples surviving in the UK. Landsherds (small earth mounds) and furlong boundaries (tracks) still exist; these originally divided the strip fields when they were created from the communal open field in the later medieval period.
- Mixture of wet grazing marsh and pasture defining the reclaimed land backing the estuary. Braunton Great Field characterised by fertile arable farmland.
- Open ground surrounding Chivenor Airfield and barracks comprising a mixture of recreational grounds, fenced-off airfields and pony paddocks.
- An exposed landscape with limited tree cover; occasional stands providing shelter to isolated farmsteads, with riparian and secondary woodland associated with Swanpool Marsh and the grounds surrounding Willowfield Holiday Centre.
- Reclaimed land backing the estuary crossed by a network of drainage ditches (often brackish) and streams draining into the Taw-Torridge Estuary.
- Habitats of national importance include coastal grasslands, reedbeds, grazing marsh and the landscape's network of drainage ditches (supporting rare aquatic plants). Part of the wider UNESCO Biosphere Reserve centred on the adjacent Braunton Burrows.
- Braunton Great Field is an outstanding preserved example of a medieval open strip field system.
- Strong sense of time depth telling the story of the marsh's 19th century land reclamation from the sea for agriculture, including banks, stone bridges, linhays and sluices. Chivenor Airfield (Royal Marine Base) has a long association with the military.
- Braunton Great Field and Braunton Marsh defined by an absence of settlement; with occasional isolated farms, bungalows and cottages along with a scattering of traditional stone livestock shelters, often with thatched roofs.
- Strong sense of exposure and of being close to the coast, with the horizontal landscape giving a feeling of space and evoking perceptions of 'wildness'.
- Chivenor Airfield includes a dense mixture of 20th century housing, hangars and other military structures. The nearby town of Braunton has a strong influence in views and erodes local perceptions of tranquillity.

100% of the LCT falls within North Devon District

Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for wind energy development

Criteria	Lower sensitivity ▪▪▪▪▪▪▪▶ Higher sensitivity				
Landform and scale	L				
	Flat expansive landscapes bordering the Taw-Torridge Estuary, comprising reclaimed marshes and wet pasture. Braunton Burrows (4F) creates a distinctive naturalistic backdrop and contains the flat landscape of Braunton Marsh/Great Field to the west.				
Land cover pattern and presence of human scale features			M		
	Wet pastures and reclaimed marshes enclosed by reed-fringed drainage ditches or low-cut thorn hedges in large, regular fields. The LCT includes the preserved medieval open strip fields associated with Braunton Great Field, characterised by fertile arable farmland with limited tree cover. Open ground surrounding Chivenor Airfield and barracks includes a mixture of recreational grounds, fenced-off airfields and pony paddocks. This part of the LCT also includes a dense mixture of 20th century housing, hangars and other military structures. Human-scale features include occasional isolated farms, bungalows, cottages and stone bridges along with a scattering of traditional stone livestock shelters (linhays).				
Tracks / transport pattern		L-M			
	The landscape is crossed by straight minor roads and tracks, which tend to be open within the flat, unenclosed landscape.				
Skylines			M		
	This is a horizontal landscape giving a feeling of space. Due to elevation, skylines are not particularly prominent, but man-made features and structures stand out due to the flat topography, including historic animal shelters associated with Braunton Great Field.				
Perceptual qualities				M-H	
	Strong sense of exposure and of being close to the coast, with the horizontal landscape giving a feeling of space and evoking perceptions of 'wildness'. The nearby town of Braunton erodes local perceptions of tranquillity, as do the developments associated with Chivenor Airfield within the eastern part of the LCT.				
Historic landscape character			M		
	The Devon HLC indicates that the LCT comprises of 49% post-medieval enclosures, 23% airfields, 3% recreation and 3% modern enclosures (generally of lower sensitivity to wind energy development), with areas of strip fields (14%) (Braunton Great Field) and dunes (5%) – which would be of high sensitivity. Braunton Great Field is an outstanding preserved example of a medieval open strip field system.				
Scenic and special qualities				M-H	
	AONB	AONB	AONB	AONB	AONB
	Less than 5% of this LCT falls within the North Devon Coast AONB and Heritage Coast. The special qualities of this part of the AONB, that may be affected by wind energy development, include the views of the ocean devoid of human influence, wilderness qualities of the adjacent Braunton Burrows, the tranquil marshland, long views from the SW Coast Path along the coast, across the estuary and inland to undeveloped skylines and downland, and the legacy of a long history of human habitation. In addition, the LCT description notes the following special qualities: Braunton Great Field medieval field system (a jewel in North Devon's crown), the historic landscape of landsherds, furlongs, ditches, stone walls, animal shelters and traditional farming methods, rich biodiversity and wetland habitats for birds and its peaceful and tranquil character.				
Discussion on landscape sensitivity	Although this is a large-scale, flat landscape with existing areas of modern development and human influence, the presence of nationally important wetland habitats, human-scale features, the historically outstanding medieval strip-field system of Braunton Great Field, and areas of tranquil and highly scenic character all heighten sensitivity to wind energy development. Areas within Braunton Marsh, Braunton Great Field and within or adjacent to the AONB are likely to have a higher sensitivity (although this will need to be judged on a case by case basis).				

<table>
<tr><td rowspan="7">Sensitivity to different turbine heights</td><td colspan="2">Land outside the AONB</td><td colspan="2">Land within the AONB</td></tr>
<tr><td>Very Small (15-25m)</td><td>M-H</td><td>Very Small (15-25m)</td><td>H</td></tr>
<tr><td>Small (26-50m)</td><td>H</td><td>Small (26-50m)</td><td>H</td></tr>
<tr><td>Medium (51-75m)</td><td>H</td><td>Medium (51-75m)</td><td>H</td></tr>
<tr><td>Large (76-110m)</td><td>H</td><td>Large (76-110m)</td><td>H</td></tr>
<tr><td>Very large (111-150m)</td><td>H</td><td>Very large (111-150m)</td><td>H</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">Although this is a large-scale landscape, significant areas of small-scale medieval fields, the presence of human-scale features and valued wetland habitats mean that it would be highly sensitive to turbines greater than ‘very small’ in scale. Land within the AONB, Braunton Marsh and Braunton Great Field would be highly sensitive to any wind turbine developments. There may be some limited potential for sensitively sited single ‘very small’ turbines related to development at Chivenor Airfield.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Commentary on different cluster sizes

Single turbine
Small (<5 turbines)
Medium (6-10)
Large (11-25)
Very large (>25)</td><td colspan="4">The presence of small-scale medieval field systems and nationally important wetland habitats, along with areas of a highly tranquil nature mean that this LCT would be sensitive to any clusters of wind turbines. Land within the AONB and Braunton Great Field would be highly sensitive to any wind turbine developments.</td></tr>
</table>

SUMMARY OF KEY SENSITIVE FEATURES/CHARACTERISTICS

A summary list of the key sensitive features and characteristics for the 4B Marine Levels Coastal Plains LCT in relation to wind energy development is included below:

- Nationally important wetland habitats (including as part of the UNESCO Biosphere Reserve), including coastal grasslands, reedbeds, grazing marsh and the landscape’s ancient network of drainage ditches.
- The outstanding preserved example of a medieval open strip field system at Braunton Great Field.
- The presence of human scale features including historic livestock shelters, thorn hedges, isolated farmsteads and development associated with Chivenor Airfield.
- The peaceful and tranquil character of the marshland, with a perception of ‘wildness’ in places.
- Its high scenic qualities, particularly within the North Devon AONB – whose special qualities include the wilderness qualities of the adjacent Braunton Burrows, long views from the SW Coast Path along the coast, across the estuary and inland to undeveloped skylines and downland, and the legacy of a long history of human habitation.

Guidance for wind energy development

Permitted schemes within the LCT

Planning data held by the Council (November 2013) shows that there are no operational or permitted wind energy developments within this LCT.

Guidance for Development

The landscape sensitivity assessment indicates that, outside the AONB, this LCT has a moderate sensitivity to 'very small' turbines, a moderate-high sensitivity to 'small' turbines, and a high sensitivity to turbines over 50m to blade tip. It also states that the landscape is likely to be highly sensitive to any turbine clusters. Therefore the landscape is only likely to be able to accommodate single turbines associated with existing buildings (e.g. relating to Chivenor Airfield) or on farms, of less than 26m in height to blade tip. This will reduce the likelihood of introducing a change to landscape character. Locations within the historically important Braunton Great Field and the naturalistic Braunton Marsh should be avoided.

Within the AONB, the sensitivity assessment concludes that the landscape will be unlikely to accommodate any wind turbines without introducing a significant change to landscape character. Developments should be of a similar scale and design (in terms of height, siting, layout, style of turbine and relationship to key characteristics) to maintain a simple image and reinforce links between landscape characteristics and design response within the LCT. The overall aim should be ensure that wind energy developments do not have a significant cumulative impact on the LCT resulting in an overall change of landscape character.

When siting and designing wind energy developments in this LCT, the generic guidance within Chapter 2 of the Devon Landscape Policy Group's Advice Note No. 2: *Accommodating Wind and Solar PV Developments in Devon's Landscape* should be followed, particularly when considering the cumulative impacts of multiple schemes. In addition, within this LCT particular care will need to be taken to ensure:

- Wind energy development does not overwhelm the human scale of characteristic landscape features, including those of historic importance (e.g. drainage ditches and livestock shelters (linhays)).
- Important wetland habitats are retained – including coastal grasslands, reedbeds, grazing marsh and the landscape's ancient network of drainage ditches.
- Where possible, development avoids areas of sensitive historic land cover types including strip fields and dunes (on the edge of the adjacent Braunton Burrows).
- Wind turbines do not detract from the open backdrop provided by the LCT to the Taw-Torridge estuary and the transition it creates between land, estuary and sea.
- The perceptions of tranquillity and 'wildness' are retained, particularly on Braunton Marsh.
- The highly scenic qualities of the landscape are protected, including as part of the North Devon AONB, such as the wilderness qualities of the adjacent Braunton Burrows, long views from the SW Coast Path along the coast, across the estuary and inland to undeveloped skylines and downland, and the legacy of a long history of human habitation.
- Opportunities are sought to enhance the landscape in association with any development, in accordance with the landscape strategy for the LCT. These include protecting the open character of the landscape as an important backdrop to the Taw-Torridge Estuary and wider coastline, protecting and enhancing Braunton Great Field whilst supporting its importance for agriculture, integrating any new development into its landscape setting, and strengthening/expanding wildlife habitats.

Additional Guidance Specific to Particular Landscape Character Areas

Wherever possible, future development should be in line with the overall landscape strategy of the Taw-Torridge Estuary Devon Character Area (DCA 58), as set out in the descriptions on the DCC website[43].

[43] http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/environmentplanning/natural_environment/landscape/landscapecharacter.htm

Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for solar PV development

Criteria	Lower sensitivity ▬▬▬▬▬▶ Higher sensitivity				
Landform	L				
	Flat expansive landscapes bordering the Taw-Torridge Estuary, comprising reclaimed marshes and wet pasture. The distinctive dunes of Braunton Burrows (4F) create a naturalistic backdrop and contain the flat landscape of Braunton Marsh/Great Field to the west.				
Sense of openness / enclosure				M-H	
	An open landscape with little enclosure – low thorn hedges occasionally divide fields; tree cover is limited to occasional stands providing shelter to isolated farmsteads, with riparian and secondary woodland associated with Swanpool Marsh and the grounds surrounding Willowfield Holiday Centre.				
Field pattern and scale			M		
	Most of the reclaimed landscape is defined by large, regular fields. The LCT includes the preserved medieval open strip fields associated with Braunton Great Field, characterised by fertile arable farmland in narrow plots. Open ground surrounding Chivenor Airfield and barracks includes pony paddocks divided by fencing.				
Land cover			M		
	Wet pastures and reclaimed marshes enclosed by reed-fringed drainage ditches or low-cut thorn hedges. Habitats of national importance include coastal grasslands, reedbeds, grazing marsh and the landscape's network of drainage ditches (supporting rare aquatic plants). The preserved medieval open strip fields associated with Braunton Great Field are characterised by fertile arable farmland with limited tree cover. Open ground surrounding Chivenor Airfield and barracks includes a mixture of recreational grounds, fenced-off airfields and pony paddocks. This part of the LCT also includes a dense mixture of 20th century housing, hangars and other military structures.				
Perceptual qualities				M-H	
	Strong sense of exposure and of being close to the coast, with the horizontal landscape giving a feeling of space and evoking perceptions of 'wildness'. The nearby town of Braunton erodes local perceptions of tranquillity, as do the developments associated with Chivenor Airfield within the eastern part of the LCT.				
Historic Landscape Character			M		
	The Devon HLC indicates that the LCT comprises of 49% post-medieval enclosures, 23% airfields (Chivenor Airfield (Royal Marine Base)), 3% recreation and 3% modern enclosures (generally of lower sensitivity to solar PV development), with areas of strip fields (14%)(Braunton Great Field) and dunes (5%) – generally of high sensitivity.				
Scenic and special qualities				M-H	
	AONB	AONB	AONB	AONB	AONB
	Less than 5% of this LCT falls within the North Devon Coast AONB and Heritage Coast. The special qualities of this part of the AONB, that may be affected by solar PV development, include the views of the ocean devoid of human influence, wilderness qualities of the adjacent Braunton Burrows, the tranquil marshland, long views from the SW Coast Path along the coast, across the estuary and inland to undeveloped skylines and downland, and the legacy of a long history of human habitation. In addition, the LCT description notes the following special qualities: Braunton Great Field medieval field system (a jewel in North Devon's crown), the historic landscape of landsherds, furlongs, ditches, stone walls, animal shelters and traditional farming methods, rich biodiversity and wetland habitats for birds and its peaceful and tranquil character. The DCA description also notes the high scenic quality of the landscape within the AONB.				
Discussion on landscape sensitivity	Although this is a large-scale, flat landscape with some areas of development and human influence which could indicate a lower sensitivity to solar PV development, its open character, the presence of the historically outstanding Braunton Great Field, presence of nationally important wetland habitats and areas of tranquil and highly scenic character all heighten sensitivity. Areas within Braunton Marsh, Braunton Great Field and within or adjacent to the AONB are likely to have a higher sensitivity (although this will need to be judged on a case by case basis).				

Sensitivity to different sizes of solar PV development	**Land outside the AONB**		**Land within the AONB**	
	Very Small (<1ha)	M-H	Very Small (<1ha)	H
	Small (>1-5ha)	H	Small (>1-5ha)	H
	Medium (>5-10ha)	H	Medium (>5-10ha)	H
	Large (>10-15ha)	H	Large (>10-15ha)	H
	Very Large (>15-20ha)	H	Very Large (>15-20ha)	H
	Although this landscape includes large-scale fields and areas of development, its open character and role as a backdrop to the Taw-Torridge Estuary, areas of important wetland habitat and the presence of the historically important open medieval strip field system of Braunton Great Field mean it will be highly sensitive to all but 'very small' solar PV developments. Land within the AONB and Braunton Marsh and Braunton Great Field itself would be highly sensitive to any solar PV developments. Brownfield land at Chivenor Airfield would be less sensitive to 'very small' and 'small' solar PV developments.			

SUMMARY OF KEY SENSITIVE FEATURES/CHARACTERISTICS

A summary list of the key sensitive features and characteristics for the 4B Marine Levels Coastal Plains LCT in relation to solar PV development is included below:

- The open and largely unenclosed character of the landscape.
- Nationally important wetland habitats (including as part of the UNESCO Biosphere Reserve), including coastal grasslands, reedbeds, grazing marsh and the landscape's ancient network of drainage ditches.
- The outstanding preserved example of a medieval open strip field system at Braunton Great Field.
- The peaceful and tranquil character of the marshland, with a perception of 'wildness' in places.
- Its high scenic qualities, particularly within the North Devon AONB – whose special qualities include the wilderness qualities of the adjacent Braunton Burrows, long views from the SW Coast Path along the coast, across the estuary and inland to undeveloped skylines and downland, and the legacy of a long history of human habitation.

Guidance for solar energy development

Permitted schemes within the LCT

Planning data held by the Council (November 2013) shows that there are currently no operational or permitted solar PV developments within this LCT.

Guidance for Development

The landscape sensitivity assessment indicates that this landscape (outside the AONB) is highly sensitive to all solar PV developments greater than 'very small' in scale, and is therefore unlikely to be able to accommodate any solar PV schemes over 1ha in size without introducing a change to landscape character. Land within Braunton Great Field, Braunton Marsh and the AONB is unlikely to be able to accommodate any solar PV developments without a significant impact on landscape character. Any proposals should be located in more enclosed areas already associated with development and human influence (e.g. in the east at Chivenor Airfield), avoiding valued wetland habitats.

Multiple developments within the LCT should be of a similar scale and design (in terms of siting, layout, scale, form and relationship to key characteristics) to maintain a simple image and reinforce links between landscape characteristics and design response within the LCT. The overall aim should be to make sure that solar PV developments do not become a key characteristic of the landscape (i.e. developments would not result in a significant cumulative impact on the LCT or overall change of landscape character).

When siting and designing solar PV developments in this LCT the generic guidance within Chapter 3 of the Devon Landscape Policy Group's Advice Note No. 2: *Accommodating Wind and Solar PV Developments in Devon's Landscape* should be followed particularly when considering the cumulative impacts of multiple schemes. In addition, within this LCT particular care will need to be taken to ensure:

- Important wetland habitats are retained – including coastal grasslands, reedbeds, grazing marsh and the landscape's ancient network of drainage ditches.
- Where possible, development avoids areas of sensitive historic land cover types including strip fields and dunes (the latter on the edge of the adjacent Braunton Burrows).
- Solar PV developments do not detract from the open backdrop provided by the LCT to the Taw-Torridge estuary and the transition it creates between land, estuary and sea.
- The perceptions of tranquillity and 'wildness' are retained, particularly on Braunton Marsh.
- The highly scenic qualities of the landscape are protected, including as part of the North Devon AONB, such as the wilderness qualities of the adjacent Braunton Burrows, long views from the SW Coast Path along the coast, across the estuary and inland to undeveloped skylines and downland, and the legacy of a long history of human habitation.
- Opportunities are sought to enhance the landscape in association with any development, in accordance with the landscape strategy for the LCT. These include protecting the open character of the landscape as an important backdrop to the Taw-Torridge Estuary and wider coastline, protecting and enhancing Braunton Great Field whilst supporting its importance for agriculture, integrating any new development into its landscape setting, and strengthening/expanding wildlife habitats.

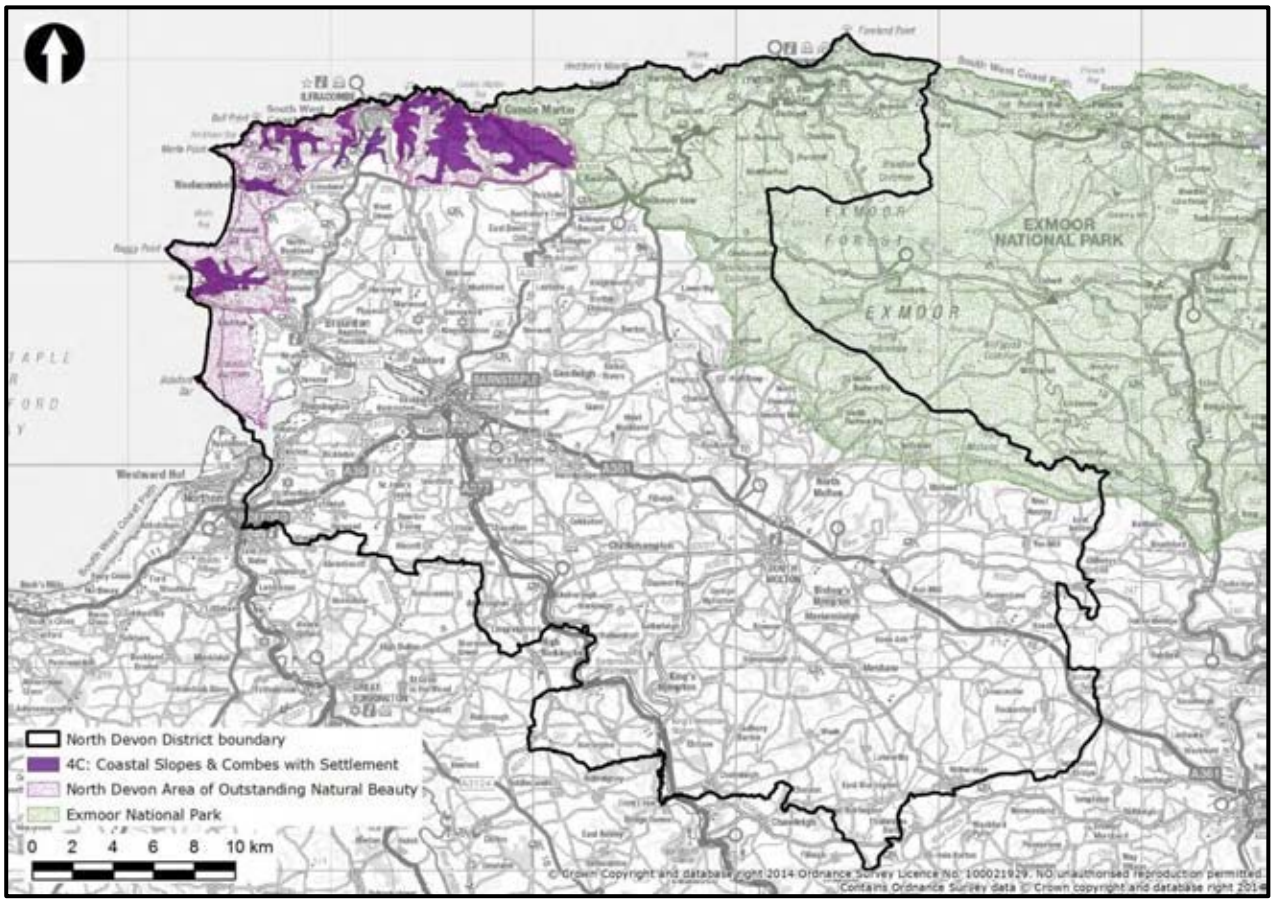
Additional Guidance Specific to Particular Landscape Character Areas

Wherever possible, future development should be in line with the overall landscape strategy of the Taw-Torridge Estuary Devon Character Area (DCA 58), as set out in the descriptions on the DCC website[44].

[44] http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/environmentplanning/natural_environment/landscape/landscapecharacter.htm

LCT 4C: Coastal Slopes & Combes with Settlement

LCT Location Map



Character Areas

DCA 43: North Devon Coastal Downs

DCA 45: North Devon High Coast

Please note that while this LCT assessment for wind and solar PV development provides an initial indication of landscape sensitivity and guidance for accommodating developments in the landscape, it should not be interpreted as a definitive statement on the suitability of individual sites for a particular development. All developments will need to be assessed on their own merits.

Key Landscape Characteristics

- Steep-sided and narrow branching combes carving through the surrounding rolling landform to the coast.
- Dense woodland found at the heads of some combes, whilst lines of trees follow the stream courses and provide shelter to settlements.
- Mixed fields, including small-scale irregular medieval patterns following valley contours and larger post-medieval and modern fields along the combe bottoms and summits, with numerous localised variations (including medieval strip fields around settlements).
- Fields bounded by a range of Devon hedge styles, including sections faced by Morte slate, as well as windblown, sparse hedges on exposed slopes.
- Rough sheep-grazed pasture characterises much of the landscape, including open tracts on steep combe slopes and summits.
- Semi-natural habitats include ancient oak-dominated woodland, wet woodland, and mosaics of unimproved grassland (including Culm grassland), heath and scrub, with maritime grassland, heath and scrub occurring towards the coast.
- Historic features include the limekilns, silver mines and other mineral workings on the edge of Exmoor National Park, the stone church towers of Combe Martin and Berrynarbor, the castle at Newbury, and Whitestone standing stone.
- Long linear settlements generally follow the narrow valley floors, whilst dispersed farmsteads and hamlets are scattered throughout and are nestled into valley sides. Villages are typically historic, such as Berrynarbor and Lee, while modern expansion outwards from a settlement's historic core is also common, including at Combe Martin and Croyde.
- Traditional vernacular of whitewash walls and grey slate roofs, with exposed stone and thatch a local variation. Victorian and Edwardian seaside properties are a feature of some combes, such as Combe Martin.
- Winding rural lanes traverse the combe slopes and follow the valley floor. The South West Coast Path passes along the coastline and often connects with rights of way running inland along the combe bottoms.
- A strong sense of containment, with views often limited by the steep wooded combe slopes; levels of tranquillity vary greatly according to the proximity of development.
- The combes of Combe Martin and Croyde are influenced by modern resort activities, including holiday parks, caravan and camping sites and car parks.

100% of the LCT falls within North Devon District

Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for wind energy development

Criteria	Lower sensitivity ▪▪▪▪▪▪▪▶ Higher sensitivity				
Landform and scale					H
	Steep-sided and narrow branching combes carving through the surrounding rolling landform to the coast.				
Land cover pattern and presence of human scale features				M-H	
	Predominantly rough pastoral fields, including small-scale irregular medieval patterns following valley contours and larger post-medieval and modern fields along the combe bottoms and summits, with numerous localised variations. Variety is provided by areas of ancient oak-dominated and wet woodland at combe heads, as well as conifer plantations, mosaics of unimproved grassland (including Culm grassland), heath and scrub, with maritime grassland, coastal heath and scrub occurring towards the coast. Long linear settlements follow the narrow valley floors, with scattered farmsteads, hamlets, caravan parks, landmark church towers, hedges and trees forming frequent human-scale features.				
Tracks / transport pattern			M		
	The road network is primarily comprised of often winding minor roads traversing the combe slopes and following the valley floors, with steeper tracks linking farms located higher up the slopes. The main A399 and A361 routes pass through combes on the north coast (serving the settlements of Combe Martin and Ilfracombe).				
Skylines			M		
	The combe landforms mean that skylines are not particularly prominent, although their upper slopes and summits tend to be undeveloped and often marked by hedgebanks and hedgerow trees (forming the transition to the adjacent North Devon Downs), except at Clorridge Hill and Berrynarbor where masts are also prominent features. Stone church towers at Combe Martin and Berrynarbor form local landmarks in views from across and along the local combes. The combes themselves form a rural backdrop to views from the coastal settlements.				
Perceptual qualities			M		
	Levels of tranquillity vary greatly according to the proximity of development and the influence of main roads (A399 and A361). The combes of Combe Martin and Croyde are influenced by modern resort activities, including holiday parks, caravan and camping sites and car parks. Away from these settlements a strong rural character pervades.				
Historic landscape character				M-H	
	The Devon HLC indicates that the majority of the landscape type is made up of medieval enclosures based on strip fields (25%) and other woodland (17%) – generally of higher sensitivity to wind energy development. There are smaller areas of rough ground (9%), medieval strip-enclosures (3%), Barton fields (2%), historic settlement (2%), woodland with old field boundaries (2%) – all of higher sensitivity. However, there are areas of modern enclosures (15%), post-medieval enclosures (11%), modern settlement (6%) and recreation (4%) – all of lower sensitivity to wind turbines.				
Scenic and special qualities				M-H	
	AONB	AONB	AONB	AONB	AONB
	93.5% of the LCT falls within the North Devon AONB and Heritage Coast. The special qualities of this part of the AONB include panoramic views from elevated areas across rolling countryside within and outside the AONB, framed sea views from within the combes including to Lundy and Wales, long views along the coast from the SW Coast Path, mosaics of maritime grassland, heathland, scrub and Western oak woodland, and the legacy of a long history of human occupation – including fields defined by ancient hedge-banks, and historic farmsteads, hamlets and villages connected by winding lanes. Some of these may be affected by wind energy development. In addition, the LCT description notes the following special qualities: the strong medieval strip field systems around Combe Martin, the area's industrial heritage, including stone-built harbours, lime kilns and mining remains, and the traditional vernacular of cob, Morte slate, thatch, whitewash and stone. The DCA descriptions note the high scenic quality of the landscape, its role as a setting to Exmoor National Park (in the north-east) and 'amazing' coastal views. Some of these special qualities may also be affected by wind energy development.				

Discussion on landscape sensitivity	Although this LCT includes some areas of settlement, modern development, main roads, and some larger-scale field systems which could indicate a lower sensitivity to wind energy development, its intricate combe landforms, strong variety in land cover with valued semi-natural habitats and small-scale medieval strip fields, frequent human-scale features, role as a rural backdrop to views from settlements and high scenic qualities all heighten levels of sensitivity. Areas within or on the edge of the AONB or closest to Exmoor National Park are likely to have a higher sensitivity (although this will need to be judged on a case by case basis).

Sensitivity to different turbine heights				
	Land outside the AONB		**Land within the AONB**	
	Very Small (15-25m)	M-H	Very Small (15-25m)	M-H
	Small (26-50m)	H	Small (26-50m)	H
	Medium (51-75m)	H	Medium (51-75m)	H
	Large (76-110m)	H	Large (76-110m)	H
	Very large (111-150m)	H	Very large (111-150m)	H
	The highly rural character of large parts of the combe landscapes, frequent human-scale features, high scenic qualities (with the majority falling within the AONB), varied complex, small-scale combe landforms and often small-scale land cover patterns with valued semi-natural habitats mean it would be highly sensitive to all turbines larger than 'small' in scale.			

Commentary on different cluster sizes Single turbine Small (<5 turbines) Medium (6-10) Large (11-25) Very large (>25)	The very sensitive nature of the LCT, particularly its intricate combe landforms, means that it would be sensitive to any clusters of wind turbines.

SUMMARY OF KEY SENSITIVE FEATURES/CHARACTERISTICS

A summary list of the key sensitive features and characteristics for the 4C Coastal Slopes Combes with Settlement LCT in relation to wind energy development is included below:

- The complex, intricate form of the combes – key landscape features of the North Devon coast.
- Valued coastal and woodland habitats, including ancient oak-dominated and wet woodland, unimproved grassland (including Culm grassland), heath and scrub, with maritime grassland, coastal heath and scrub found towards the coast.
- The presence of frequent human scale features including farmsteads, hamlets, caravan parks, landmark church towers, hedges and trees.
- Strongly rural character within the combes with sensitive historic land cover types including medieval strip fields, woodland, rough ground, historic settlement and woodland with old field boundaries.
- Its high scenic qualities, particularly within the North Devon AONB – whose special qualities include panoramic countryside views from elevated locations, framed seaward views and its strong historic character with valued features including historic buildings and ancient hedgebanks.
- Its role (in the north-east) as an important setting to Exmoor National Park, whose special qualities include striking views out of the protected landscape and a sense of remoteness, wildness and tranquillity.

Guidance for wind energy development

Permitted schemes within the LCT

Planning data held by the Council (November 2013) shows that there are no operational or consented wind energy developments within this LCT.

Guidance for Development

The landscape sensitivity assessment indicates that this LCT has a high sensitivity to any turbines greater than 'very small' in height, and would be unable to accommodate any clusters without introducing a change to landscape character. These parts of the landscape might therefore be able to accommodate single turbines associated with existing buildings or on farms, of less than 25 metres in height.

Single turbine developments should be of a similar scale and design (in terms of number, siting, layout, style of turbine and relationship to key characteristics) to maintain a simple image and reinforce links between landscape characteristics and design response within the LCT. The overall aim should be ensure that wind energy developments do not have a significant cumulative impact on the LCT resulting in an overall change of landscape character.

When siting and designing wind energy developments in this LCT, the generic guidance within Chapter 2 of the Devon Landscape Policy Group's Advice Note No. 2: *Accommodating Wind and Solar PV Developments in Devon's Landscape* should be followed, particularly when considering the cumulative impacts of multiple turbine developments. In addition, within this LCT particular care will need to be taken to ensure:

- Turbines do not impact on the undeveloped, elevated skylines that characterise the summits of the combe slopes.
- Valued naturalistic habitats are retained – including Western oak woodlands, unimproved grassland (including Culm and maritime grasslands), heath and scrub.
- Where possible, development avoids sensitive historic land cover types including medieval strip fields, woodland, rough ground, historic settlement and woodland with old field boundaries.
- The location of turbines does not impact on the appreciation or setting of landmark square church towers at Combe Martin and Berrynarbor.
- The network of winding lanes and tracks, often framed by characteristic square-cut and grown-out beech hedges, are not adversely affected by delivery of turbines.
- The highly scenic qualities of the landscape, including as part of the North Devon AONB, such as panoramic countryside views from elevated locations, framed seaward views and its strong historic character, are protected.
- Wind energy development does not adversely affect the sense of remoteness, wildness and tranquillity associated with Exmoor National Park, or unacceptably impact on the striking views from the National Park into the district.
- Opportunities are sought to enhance the landscape in association with any development, in accordance with the landscape strategy for the LCT. These include ensuring landscape character is managed and strengthened, medieval field patterns are divided by an intact network of Devon hedges, and semi-natural habitats are managed and extended.

Additional Guidance Specific to Particular Landscape Character Areas

This guidance will apply consistently for the two Devon Character Areas where this LCT is present. Wherever possible, future development should be in line with the overall landscape strategy of the relevant Devon Character Area, as set out in the descriptions on the DCC website[45].

[45] http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/environmentplanning/natural_environment/landscape/landscapecharacter.htm

Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for solar PV development

Criteria	Lower sensitivity ▪▪▪▪▪▪▪▶ Higher sensitivity				
Landform					H
	Steep-sided and narrow branching combes carving through the surrounding rolling landform to the coast. The LCT includes many prominent slopes.				
Sense of openness / enclosure			M		
	Combe slopes and summits are generally open and windswept (particularly where closer to the coast), with patches of scrub, hedgebanks and wind-sculpted trees providing limited enclosure. Enclosure is provided at the combe heads and along valley floors by extensive woodland cover. The combe landforms themselves provide a sense of containment within the wider landscape.				
Field pattern and scale				M-H	
	Predominantly rough pastoral fields, including small-scale irregular medieval patterns following valley contours and larger post-medieval and modern fields along the combe bottoms and summits, with numerous localised variations. Distinctive small-scale medieval strip field systems are associated with the edges of Combe Martin. Open tracts of rough sheep grazing characterise some combe summits.				
Land cover				M-H	
	Variety is provided by areas of ancient oak-dominated and wet woodland at combe heads, as well as conifer plantations, mosaics of unimproved grassland (including Culm grassland), heath and scrub, with maritime grassland, coastal heath and scrub occurring towards the coast. Long linear settlements generally follow the narrow valley floors, and tourism-related land uses are associated with the fringes of the main resort towns, including holiday parks, caravan and camping sites and car parks.				
Perceptual qualities			M		
	Levels of tranquillity vary greatly according to the proximity of development and the influence of main roads (A399 and A361). The combes of Combe Martin and Croyde are influenced by modern resort activities, including holiday parks, caravan and camping sites and car parks. Away from these settlements a strong rural character pervades.				
Historic Landscape Character				M-H	
	The Devon HLC indicates that the majority of the landscape type is made up of medieval enclosures based on strip fields (25%) and other woodland (17%) – generally of higher sensitivity to solar PV development. There are smaller areas of rough ground (9%), medieval strip-enclosures (3%), Barton fields (2%), historic settlement (2%), woodland with old field boundaries (2%) – all of higher sensitivity. However, there are areas of modern enclosures (15%), post-medieval enclosures (11%), modern settlement (6%) and recreation (4%) – which would be of lower sensitivity to solar PV development.				
Scenic and special qualities				M-H	
	AONB	AONB	AONB	AONB	AONB
	93.5% of the LCT falls within the North Devon AONB and Heritage Coast. The special qualities of this part of the AONB include panoramic views from elevated areas across rolling countryside within and outside the AONB, long views along the coast from the SW Coast Path, mosaics of maritime grassland, heathland, scrub and Western oak woodland, and the legacy of a long history of human occupation – including fields defined by ancient hedge-banks, and historic farmsteads, hamlets and villages. Some of these may be affected by solar PV development. In addition, the LCT description notes the following special qualities: the strong medieval strip field systems around Combe Martin, the area's industrial heritage, including lime kilns and mining remains, and the traditional vernacular of cob, Morte slate, thatch, whitewash and stone. The DCA descriptions note the high scenic quality of the landscape, its role as a setting to Exmoor National Park (in the north-east) and 'amazing' coastal views. Some of these special qualities may also be affected by solar development.				
Discussion on landscape sensitivity	Although this LCT includes some areas of modern development, conifer plantations (indicating human influence), enclosed land and some larger-scale field systems which could indicate a lower sensitivity to solar PV development, its intricate combe landforms with visible slopes, strong variety in land cover with valued semi-natural habitats and small-scale medieval strip fields, role as a rural backdrop to views from				

	settlements and high scenic qualities all heighten levels of sensitivity. Areas within or on the edge of the AONB or closest to Exmoor National Park are likely to have a higher sensitivity (although this will need to be judged on a case by case basis).

Sensitivity to different sizes of solar PV development				
	Land outside the AONB		**Land within the AONB**	
	Very Small (<1ha)	M-H	Very Small (<1ha)	M-H
	Small (>1-5ha)	H	Small (>1-5ha)	H
	Medium (>5-10ha)	H	Medium (>5-10ha)	H
	Large (>10-15ha)	H	Large (>10-15ha)	H
	Very Large (>15-20ha)	H	Very Large (>15-20ha)	H
	The landscape's prominent combe slopes, significant areas of medieval enclosures and historically important strip fields, valued tracts of semi-natural habitat and woodland, high scenic qualities and historic sense of place mean that this LCT would be highly sensitive to solar PV schemes larger than 'small' in scale. Land within the AONB would be highly sensitive to any developments larger than 'very small'.			

SUMMARY OF KEY SENSITIVE FEATURES/CHARACTERISTICS

A summary list of the key sensitive features and characteristics for the 4C Coastal Slopes Combes with Settlement LCT in relation to solar PV development is included below:

- The complex, intricate form of the combes with visually prominent slopes and open, undeveloped summits.
- Large tracts of naturalistic land cover, including ancient oak-dominated and wet woodland, unimproved grassland (including Culm grassland), heath and scrub, with maritime grassland, coastal heath and scrub found towards the coast.
- Strongly rural character within the combes with sensitive historic land cover types including medieval strip fields, woodland, rough ground, historic settlement and woodland with old field boundaries.
- Its high scenic qualities, particularly within the North Devon AONB – whose special qualities include panoramic countryside views from elevated locations, framed seaward views and its strong historic character with valued features including historic buildings and ancient hedgebanks.
- Its role (in the north-east) as an important setting to Exmoor National Park, whose special qualities include striking views out of the protected landscape and a sense of remoteness, wildness and tranquillity.

Guidance for solar energy development

Permitted schemes within the LCT

Planning data held by the Council (November 2013) shows that there are currently no operational or consented solar PV developments within this LCT.

Guidance for Development

The landscape sensitivity assessment indicates that this landscape is unlikely to be able to accommodate any solar PV schemes over one hectare in size without introducing a change to landscape character. Any proposals should be located in more enclosed areas, avoiding the most visible, upper combe slopes, irregular medieval fields and distinctive strip fields and valued areas of semi-natural habitat, including Western oak woodlands, unimproved grassland (including Culm and maritime grasslands), heath and scrub.

Multiple developments within the LCT should be of a similar scale and design (in terms of siting, layout, scale, form and relationship to key characteristics) to maintain a simple image and reinforce links between landscape characteristics and design response within the LCT. The overall aim should be to make sure that solar PV developments do not become a key characteristic of the landscape (i.e. developments would not result in a significant cumulative impact on the LCT or overall change of landscape character).

When siting and designing solar PV developments in this LCT the generic guidance within Chapter 3 of the Devon Landscape Policy Group's Advice Note No. 2: *Accommodating Wind and Solar PV Developments in Devon's Landscape* should be followed particularly when considering the cumulative impacts of multiple schemes. In addition, within this LCT particular care will need to be taken to ensure:

- The most prominent open upper combe slopes and summits are avoided, particularly those close to the highly visible coastline and Exmoor National Park.
- Valued naturalistic habitats are retained - including Western oak woodlands, unimproved grassland (including Culm and maritime grasslands), heath and scrub.
- Small-scale medieval fields and distinctive strip field systems on settlement edges (including around Combe Martin) are avoided as sites for development.
- The highly scenic qualities of the landscape, including as part of the North Devon AONB, such as panoramic countryside views from elevated locations and its strong historic character (including fields divided by ancient hedge banks), are protected.
- Solar PV developments do not adversely affect the sense of remoteness, wildness and tranquillity associated with Exmoor National Park, or unacceptably impact on the striking views from the National Park into the district.
- Opportunities are sought to enhance the landscape in association with any development, in accordance with the landscape strategy for the LCT. These include ensuring landscape character is managed and strengthened, medieval field patterns are divided by an intact network of Devon hedges, and semi-natural habitats are managed and extended.

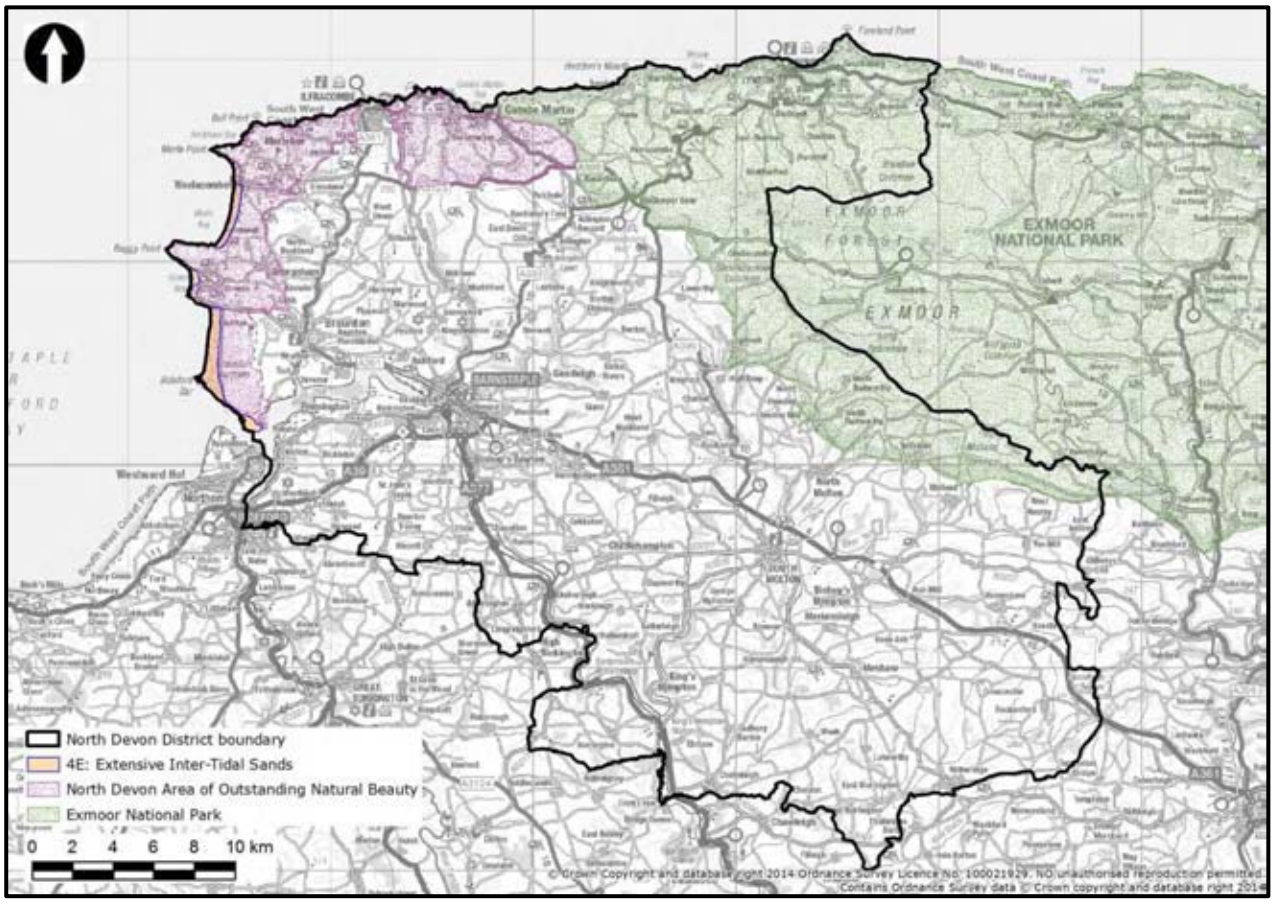
Additional Guidance Specific to Particular Landscape Character Areas

This guidance will apply consistently for the two Devon Character Areas where this LCT is present. Wherever possible, future development should be in line with the overall landscape strategy of the relevant Devon Character Area, as set out in the descriptions on the DCC website[46].

[46] http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/environmentplanning/natural_environment/landscape/landscapecharacter.htm

LCT 4E: Extensive Intertidal Sands

LCT Location Map



Character Areas

DCA 43: North Devon Coastal Downs

DCA 58: Taw-Torridge Estuary

Please note that while this LCT assessment for wind and solar PV development provides an initial indication of landscape sensitivity and guidance for accommodating developments in the landscape, it should not be interpreted as a definitive statement on the suitability of individual sites for a particular development. All developments will need to be assessed on their own merits.

Key Landscape Characteristics

- Wide sandy beaches with a westerly aspect, backed by sand dunes and framed within broad bays often marked by spectacular cliffs.
- Westward Ho! Beach separated from its adjacent sand dunes by a distinctive cobble ridge of pebbles and boulders – a nationally recognised coastal feature.
- Landscape often crossed by small streams draining to the sea.
- Expansive views along the scenic AONB coastline, including to Hartland Point in clear conditions.
- Beaches linked to wider coastal wildlife networks. The lime-rich beach of Saunton Sands is part of the internationally important ecosystem of Braunton Burrows, acting as a focal point for bird migration routes down the west coast of Britain.
- Few static historic features revealed due to the constantly changing nature of the coastline. At Northam, a submerged forest is visible during certain low tides, indicating past sea level rise during the Holocene period.
- Unsettled, 'wild' landscapes with perceptual qualities strongly affected by the seasons. In summer periods the beaches are alive with movement and activity – popular destinations for surfing, kite boarding and family beach holidays.
- Views south from Saunton Sands and Westward Ho! Beach dominated by ridgeline development at Westward Ho! and Northam.
- Views inland from Croyde and Woolacombe beaches include frequent glimpses of tourism-related development, including holiday parks and caravan sites.

63% of the LCT falls within North Devon District

Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for wind energy development

Criteria	Lower sensitivity ▪▪▪▪▪▪▪▶ Higher sensitivity				
Landform and scale	L				
	Extensive flat lowland landscapes comprising wide sandy beaches within bays of a westerly aspect. .				
Land cover pattern and presence of human scale features	L				
	Uniform groundcover of sand, and a small area of shingle bank at the southern end of Saunton Sands, and rocky outcrops at Croyde Sand. Simple land cover pattern. Human-scale features are formed by development located behind the beaches (in adjacent LCTs).				
Tracks / transport pattern					H
	There are no roads or tracks crossing the beaches, with access to the landscapes provided by roads passing through adjacent LCTs.				
Skylines		L-M			
	The flat and low-lying nature of the beaches means that the skylines are not prominent, although they do form a backdrop to views from the sea and Lundy Island, and across from Bideford Bay. There is an absence of landmark skyline features within the LCT itself.				
Perceptual qualities				M-H	
	This unsettled landscape has 'wild' and remote qualities due to its coastal location and lack of development. However, its perceptual qualities change with the seasons - the summer months see the most intensive use of the beaches for recreation purposes (including surfing, kite boarding and family beach holidays).				
Historic landscape character					H
	The Devon HLC indicates that the LCT comprises of predominantly 'sand' (99%) - with the remaining areas comprising mainly of rock - likely to be unsuitable for wind turbines.				
Scenic and special qualities					H
	AONB	AONB	AONB	AONB	AONB
	Most of this LCT falls within the North Devon AONB and Heritage Coast (85.7%). The special qualities of this part of the AONB that may be particularly affected by wind energy development include the views of the ocean devoid of human influence, sense of tranquillity and remoteness away from the coastal road, and the wide and empty coastal vistas across to Lundy. In addition, the District's LCT description notes the open space and wide panoramas out to sea, the wildlife (including feeding grounds for wading birds), largely unspoilt nature despite the close proximity to areas of modern development and opportunities for recreation and enjoyment, including surfing, water sports, fishing and family relaxation. Further special qualities mentioned in the Devon LCA description for the Taw-Torridge Estuary and North Devon Coastal Downs, that could be affected by wind energy development, include: exceptionally high scenic quality including areas with amazing coastal views; high levels of scenic quality; areas of high tranquillity; Heritage Coast; Braunton Burrows SAC; North Devon Biosphere Reserve as well as a number of SSSIs.				
Discussion on landscape sensitivity	Although this is a flat, large-scale landscape with very little variance in land cover pattern, its undeveloped nature, wild and remote characteristics and high scenic quality (much of which is AONB designated) increase sensitivity to wind energy development.				

Sensitivity to different turbine heights	**Land outside the AONB**		**Land within the AONB**	
	Very Small (15-25m)	H	Very Small (15-25m)	H
	Small (26-50m)	H	Small (26-50m)	H
	Medium (51-75m)	H	Medium (51-75m)	H
	Large (76-110m)	H	Large (76-110m)	H
	Very large (111-150m)	H	Very large (111-150m)	H

	Because of the LCT's high levels of landscape sensitivity and location (of the majority) within the North Devon AONB, the landscape would be highly sensitive to the development of any wind turbines.
Commentary on different cluster sizes Single turbine Small (<5 turbines) Medium (6-10) Large (11-25) Very large (>25)	Because of the LCT's high levels of landscape sensitivity (as above), the LCT would be sensitive to the development of any scales of wind energy development.

SUMMARY OF KEY SENSITIVE FEATURES/CHARACTERISTICS

A summary list of the key sensitive features and characteristics for 4E Extensive Intertidal Sands LCT in relation to wind energy development is included below:

- The overarching naturalistic character of the beaches, dominated by sand and shingle.
- The role of the LCT in providing a scenic backdrop to views from across Bideford Bay, the wider coastline and the sea (including views inland from Lundy Island).
- The unsettled, 'wild' and remote character of the coastal landscapes.
- The LCT's special qualities, including the largely unspoilt nature of the beaches despite the close proximity to areas of modern development; and the qualities of the North Devon AONB, such as views of the ocean devoid of human influence.

Guidance for wind energy development

Permitted schemes within the LCT
Planning data held by the Council (November 2013) shows that there are currently no operational or consented wind energy developments within this LCT.
Guidance for Development
The landscape sensitivity assessment indicates that this LCT is highly sensitive to all sizes and scales of wind turbine development, and is therefore unlikely to be able to accommodate any turbines without introducing a significant change to landscape character.
Additional Guidance Specific to Particular Landscape Character Areas
The above guidance will apply consistently for sites within either DCA in which the LCT is found. Wherever possible, future development should be in line with the overall landscape strategy of the relevant Devon Character Area, as set out in the descriptions on the DCC website[47].

[47] http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/environmentplanning/natural_environment/landscape/landscapecharacter.htm

Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for solar PV development

Criteria	Lower sensitivity ▬▬▬▬▬▬▶ Higher sensitivity				
Landform	L				
	A lowland flat landscape comprising a wide low-lying sandy beach backed by sand dunes forming the southern side of a broad bay.				
Sense of openness / enclosure					H
	This coastal landscape is open and exposed to the sea. The beaches are sheltered in the east by sand dunes (within adjacent 4F).				
Field pattern and scale	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	N/A there is no farmed land in this LCT.				
Land cover					H
	Uniform groundcover of sand, and a small area of shingle bank at the southern end of Saunton Sands, and rocky outcrops at Croyde Sand. Simple land cover pattern.				
Perceptual qualities				M-H	
	This unsettled landscape has 'wild' and remote qualities due to its coastal location and lack of development. However, its perceptual qualities change with the seasons - the summer months see the most intensive use of the beaches for recreation purposes (including surfing, kite boarding and family beach holidays).				
Historic Landscape Character					H
	The Devon HLC indicates that the LCT comprises of predominantly 'sand' (99%) - with the remaining areas comprising mainly of rock - likely to be unsuitable for solar PV development.				
Scenic and special qualities				M-H	
	AONB	AONB	AONB	AONB	AONB
	Most of this LCT falls within the North Devon AONB and Heritage Coast (85.7%). The special qualities of this part of the AONB that may be particularly affected by solar PV development include the views of the ocean devoid of human influence, sense of tranquillity and remoteness away from the coastal road, and the wide and empty coastal vistas across to Lundy. In addition, the District's LCT description notes the open space and wide panoramas out to sea, the wildlife (including feeding grounds for wading birds), largely unspoilt nature despite the close proximity to areas of modern development and opportunities for recreation and enjoyment, including surfing, water sports, fishing and family relaxation. Further special qualities mentioned in the Devon LCA description for the Taw-Torridge Estuary and North Devon Coastal Downs, that could be affected by solar PV development, include: exceptionally high scenic quality including areas with amazing coastal views; high levels of scenic quality; areas of high tranquillity; Heritage Coast; Braunton Burrows SAC; North Devon Biosphere Reserve as well as a number of SSSIs.				
Discussion on landscape sensitivity	Although this is a flat lowland landscape, the wide open, unenclosed and undeveloped nature of the beaches, their sense of remoteness and high scenic qualities (including much within the North Devon AONB) makes it highly sensitive to any solar PV development.				

Sensitivity to different sizes of solar PV development	**Land outside the AONB**		**Land within the AONB**	
	Very Small (<1ha)	H	Very Small (<1ha)	H
	Small (>1-5ha)	H	Small (>1-5ha)	H
	Medium (>5-10ha)	H	Medium (>5-10ha)	H
	Large (>10-15ha)	H	Large (>10-15ha)	H
	Very Large (>15-20ha)	H	Very Large (>15-20ha)	H
	Because of the LCT's high levels of landscape sensitivity, particularly the absence of human development and location of the majority within the North Devon AONB, the beaches would be sensitive to all scales of solar PV development.			

SUMMARY OF KEY SENSITIVE FEATURES/CHARACTERISTICS

A summary list of the key sensitive features and characteristics for 4E Extensive Intertidal Sands LCT in relation to solar PV development is included below:

- The overarching naturalistic character of the beaches, dominated by sand and shingle.
- The role of the LCT in providing a scenic backdrop to views from across Bideford Bay, the wider coastline and the sea (including views inland from Lundy Island).
- The unsettled, 'wild' and remote character of the coastal landscapes.
- The LCT's special qualities, including the largely unspoilt nature of the beaches despite the close proximity to areas of modern development; and the qualities of the North Devon AONB, such as views of the ocean devoid of human influence.

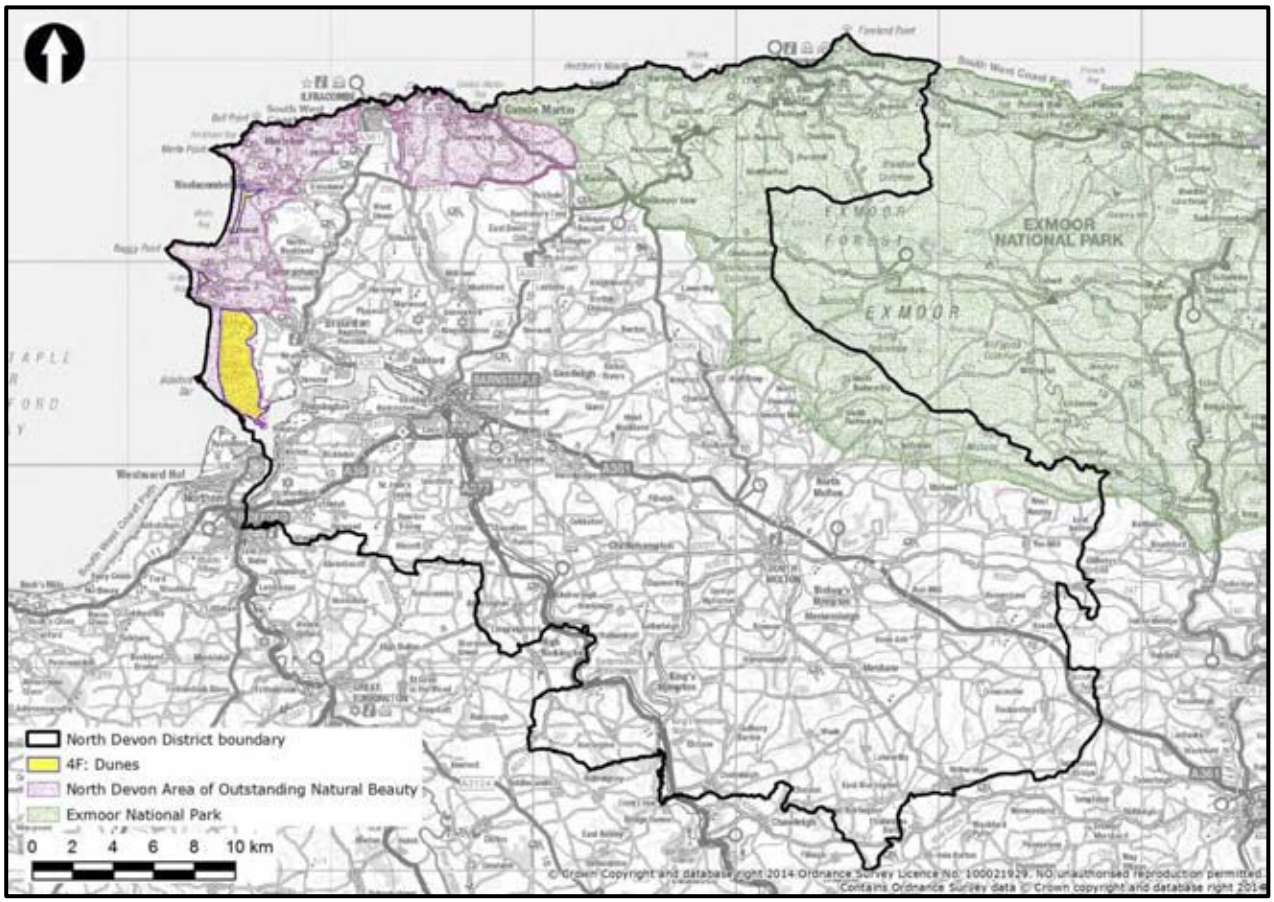
Guidance for solar PV development

Permitted schemes within the LCT
Planning data held by the Council (November 2013) indicates that there are currently no operational or consented solar PV developments within this LCT.
Guidance for Development
The landscape sensitivity assessment indicates that this LCT is highly sensitive to all scales of solar PV development, and is therefore unlikely to be able to accommodate any solar PV developments without introducing a significant change to landscape character.
Additional Guidance Specific to Particular Landscape Character Areas
The above guidance will apply consistently for sites within either DCA in which the LCT is found. Wherever possible, future development should be in line with the overall landscape strategy of the relevant Devon Character Area, as set out in the descriptions on the DCC website[48].

[48] http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/environmentplanning/natural_environment/landscape/landscapecharacter.htm

LCT 4F: Dunes

LCT Location Map



Character Areas

DCA 43: North Devon Coastal Downs

DCA 58: Taw-Torridge Estuary

Please note that while this LCT assessment for wind and solar PV development provides an initial indication of landscape sensitivity and guidance for accommodating developments in the landscape, it should not be interpreted as a definitive statement on the suitability of individual sites for a particular development. All developments will need to be assessed on their own merits.

Key Landscape Characteristics

- Hummocky dune systems backing sandy beaches, forming prominent features along the west coast of the North Devon AONB.
- Elevated and exposed topography affording extensive views along the coast, out to sea and inland.
- Dunes underlain by Late Devonian sandstones and mudstones.
- Low-growing wind-sculpted scrub and small patches of secondary woodland.
- Some rough grazing on Braunton Burrows and common land grazing (particularly by ponies) on the saltmarshes and dunes of Northam Burrows. Most of the dunes are under non-agricultural uses or left as 'wild' landscapes.
- High nature conservation interest associated with the dunes – Braunton Burrows is internationally protected (UNESCO Biosphere reserve, SAC and SSSI), Northam Burrows and Croyde dunes are designated as SSSI, and Woolacombe Warren is a County Wildlife Site.
- Biodiversity value associated with rich dune grasslands, wildflowers and scrub supporting numerous plant and animal species.
- Long-standing military use of Braunton Burrows for training exercises – concrete practice landing craft from the Second World War remain in the landscape. Northam Burrows include the oldest golf course in Britain (North Devon Royal).
- Dunes crossed by a network of unsurfaced paths and rights of way, often including lengths of the South West Coast Path and Tarka Trail.
- Undeveloped landscape with strong sense of wildness and high levels of tranquillity.
- Perceptual qualities affected by views of nearby urban and tourism-related development, as well as the extensive use of the dunes for recreation (particularly in the summer months).
- Golf courses integrated into the sand dune landscapes at Braunton and Northam Burrows.

76% of the LCT falls within North Devon District

Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for wind energy development

Criteria	Lower sensitivity ▪▪▪▪▪▪▪▶ Higher sensitivity
Landform and scale	M-H Hummocky large-scale dune systems with an exposed and irregular topography affording extensive views along the coast, out to sea and inland. The dunes form distinctive landform features.
Land cover pattern and presence of human scale features	M A variety of naturalistic land cover comprising sand dunes with low-growing wind-sculpted scrub and small patches of secondary woodland. Occasional human scale features within the LCT include tourism-related developments on the fringes of the sand dunes.
Tracks / transport pattern	M-H The landscape is largely devoid of roads; limited to surfaced tracks providing access to the golf course, military practice areas, Croyde Sand beach and car parking above Woolacombe beach. Elsewhere the LCT is crossed by a network of unsurfaced paths and lengths of the South West Coast Path.
Skylines	M-H Although the skylines are not particularly prominent, they are characterised by the form of the hummocky dunes. They feature in views from the adjacent holiday resorts of Woolacombe, Croyde and Saunton, and feature as a distinctive backdrop to views from the sea and Lundy Island, and across the Bideford Bay coastline.
Perceptual qualities	M-H A predominantly undeveloped landscape with an overriding sense of wildness and exposure and a strong maritime influence. These qualities are in sharp contrast to the adjacent developed areas with much lower levels of tranquillity. The wild nature of the dunes themselves is intermittently affected by their use for recreation, particularly in the summer months, and – in the case of Braunton Burrows –by military training exercises.
Historic landscape character	H The Devon HLC indicates that the majority (72%) of the LCT is dunes which would be of high sensitivity to wind turbine development. There are also some smaller pockets of rough ground (5%) and sand (9%); also of high sensitivity. At Saunton there is a small area (10%) of recreation, which would be of lower sensitivity to the development of wind turbines.
Scenic and special qualities	H All of this LCT falls within the North Devon AONB and Heritage Coast. The special qualities of this part of the AONB, that could be affected by solar PV development, include views of the ocean devoid of human influence, sense of tranquillity and remoteness, wide and empty coastal vistas across to Lundy, internationally important sand dune habitats and views of an undeveloped skyline. In addition, the LCT description notes the special qualities of the landscape's wilderness, tranquillity and natural qualities, open views, valuable and unique habitats as part of the UNESCO Biosphere Reserve and freedom to roam and find space away from other people. Some of these could be affected by wind energy development. Further special qualities mentioned in the Devon LCA descriptions for the Taw-Torridge Estuary and North Devon Coastal Downs include the landscape's 'exceptionally high' scenic quality and elevated levels of tranquillity, as well as its importance as a recreational resource, including lengths of the South West Coast Path.
Discussion on landscape sensitivity	Although this LCT is large in scale and is affected in parts by nearby development, its sensitive internationally important sand dune habitats, undeveloped character, high scenic qualities within the North Devon AONB and sense of wilderness and tranquillity mean that the landscape would be highly sensitive to the development of wind turbines.

Sensitivity to different turbine heights	Very Small (15-25m)	H
	Small (26-50m)	H
	Medium (51-75m)	H
	Large (76-110m)	H
	Very large (111-150m)	H
	This LCT would be highly sensitive to all sizes of wind turbine.	
Commentary on different cluster sizes Single turbine Small (<5 turbines) Medium (6-10) Large (11-25) Very large (>25)	Because of the LCT's high levels of landscape sensitivity (as above), the LCT would be sensitive to the development of any scales of wind energy development.	

Explanation for variations with the sensitivity assessment for Torridge (2011)

This LCT in Torridge includes some urban fringe farmland and a golf course (with related buildings) overlooked by existing development. This resulted in a moderate-high sensitivity rating for 'very small' turbines, rather than the high sensitivity rating given for North Devon.

SUMMARY OF KEY SENSITIVE FEATURES/CHARACTERISTICS

A summary list of the key sensitive features and characteristics for 4F Dunes LCT in relation to wind energy development is included below:

- The internationally important sand dune habitats that make up the majority of the LCT – key parts of the North Devon Biosphere Reserve.
- The role of the LCT in providing a scenic and distinctive backdrop to views from across Bideford Bay, the wider coastline and the sea (including views inland from Lundy Island).
- The undeveloped, 'wild' and remote character of the sand dunes.
- The LCT's special qualities, including the largely unspoilt nature of the sand dunes despite the close proximity to areas of modern development; and the qualities of the North Devon AONB, such as views of the ocean devoid of human influence.

Key sensitivities and guidance for wind energy development

Permitted schemes within the LCT
Planning data held by the Council (November 2013) shows that there are currently no operational or consented wind energy developments within this LCT.
Guidance for Development
The landscape sensitivity assessment indicates that this LCT is highly sensitive to all sizes and scales of wind turbine development, and is therefore unlikely to be able to accommodate any turbines without introducing a significant change to landscape character.
Additional Guidance Specific to Particular Landscape Character Areas
The above guidance will apply consistently for sites within either DCA in which the LCT is found. Wherever possible, future development should be in line with the overall landscape strategy of the relevant Devon Character Area, as set out in the descriptions on the DCC website[49].

[49] http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/environmentplanning/natural_environment/landscape/landscapecharacter.htm

Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for solar PV development

Criteria	Lower sensitivity ▪▪▪▪▪▪▪▶ Higher sensitivity				
Landform				M-H	
	Hummocky large-scale dune system with a distinctive topography and some prominent, steep slopes.				
Sense of openness / enclosure					H
	An open and exposed landscape, with limited shelter provided by patches of wind-sculpted scrub and small areas of secondary woodland.				
Field pattern and scale					H
	The majority of the LCT is unenclosed semi-natural sand dune habitats. None of the land within this LCT in North Devon is enclosed for agriculture.				
Land cover					H
	The land cover is dominated by semi-natural habitats, including sand dunes with low-growing wind-sculpted scrub and small patches of secondary woodland. Braunton Burrows is fringed to the north by a few buildings and infrastructure related to the Saunton golf course. The dunes at Croyde and Woolacombe Warren are also influenced by adjacent tourism-related development on the edge of the LCT.				
Perceptual qualities				M-H	
	A predominantly undeveloped landscape with an overriding sense of wildness and exposure and a strong maritime influence. These qualities are in sharp contrast to the adjacent developed areas with much lower levels of tranquillity. The wild nature of the dunes themselves is intermittently affected by their use for recreation, particularly in the summer months, and – in the case of Braunton Burrows –by military training exercises.				
Historic Landscape Character					H
	The Devon HLC indicates that the majority (72%) of the LCT is dunes which would be of high sensitivity to solar PV development. There are also some smaller pockets of rough ground (5%) and sand (9%); also of high sensitivity. At Saunton there is a small area (10%) of recreation, which would be of lower sensitivity to the development of solar PV.				
Scenic and special qualities					H
	All of this LCT falls within the North Devon AONB and Heritage Coast. The special qualities of this part of the AONB, which could be affected by solar PV development, include views of the ocean devoid of human influence, sense of tranquillity and remoteness, wide and empty coastal vistas across to Lundy, internationally important sand dune habitats and views of an undeveloped skyline. In addition, the LCT description notes the special qualities of the landscape's wilderness, tranquillity and natural qualities, open views, valuable and unique habitats as part of the UNESCO Biosphere Reserve and freedom to roam and find space away from other people. Some of these could be affected by solar PV development. Further special qualities mentioned in the Devon LCA descriptions for the Taw-Torridge Estuary and North Devon Coastal Downs include the landscape's 'exceptionally high' scenic quality and elevated levels of tranquillity, as well as its importance as a recreational resource, including lengths of the South West Coast Path.				
Discussion on landscape sensitivity	The undeveloped and open, internationally important sand dune habitats with some prominent slopes, their high scenic qualities as a key part of the North Devon AONB, strong sense of tranquillity and 'wildness', and absence of agricultural land uses mean that this LCT would be highly sensitive to any solar PV developments.				
Sensitivity to different sizes of solar PV development	Very Small (<1ha)				H
	Small (>1-5ha)				H
	Medium (>5-10ha)				H
	Large (>10-15ha)				H
	Very Large (>15-20ha)				H
	This LCT would be highly sensitive to any scale of solar PV developments.				

Explanation for variations with the sensitivity assessment for Torridge (2011)
This LCT in Torridge includes some urban fringe farmland, comprising some areas of large-scale regular fields. This resulted in a moderate-high sensitivity rating for 'very small' solar PV developments, rather than the high sensitivity rating given for the LCT in North Devon.
SUMMARY OF KEY SENSITIVE FEATURES/CHARACTERISTICS
A summary list of the key sensitive features and characteristics for 4F Dunes LCT in relation to solar PV development is included below: • The distinctive hummocky topography of the dunes, with open, visible slopes. • The internationally important sand dune habitats that make up the majority of the LCT – key parts of the North Devon Biosphere Reserve. • The role of the LCT in providing a scenic and distinctive backdrop to views from across Bideford Bay, the wider coastline and the sea (including views inland from Lundy Island). • The undeveloped, 'wild' and remote character of the sand dunes. • The LCT's special qualities, including the largely unspoilt nature of the sand dunes despite the close proximity to areas of modern development; and the qualities of the North Devon AONB, such as views of the ocean devoid of human influence.

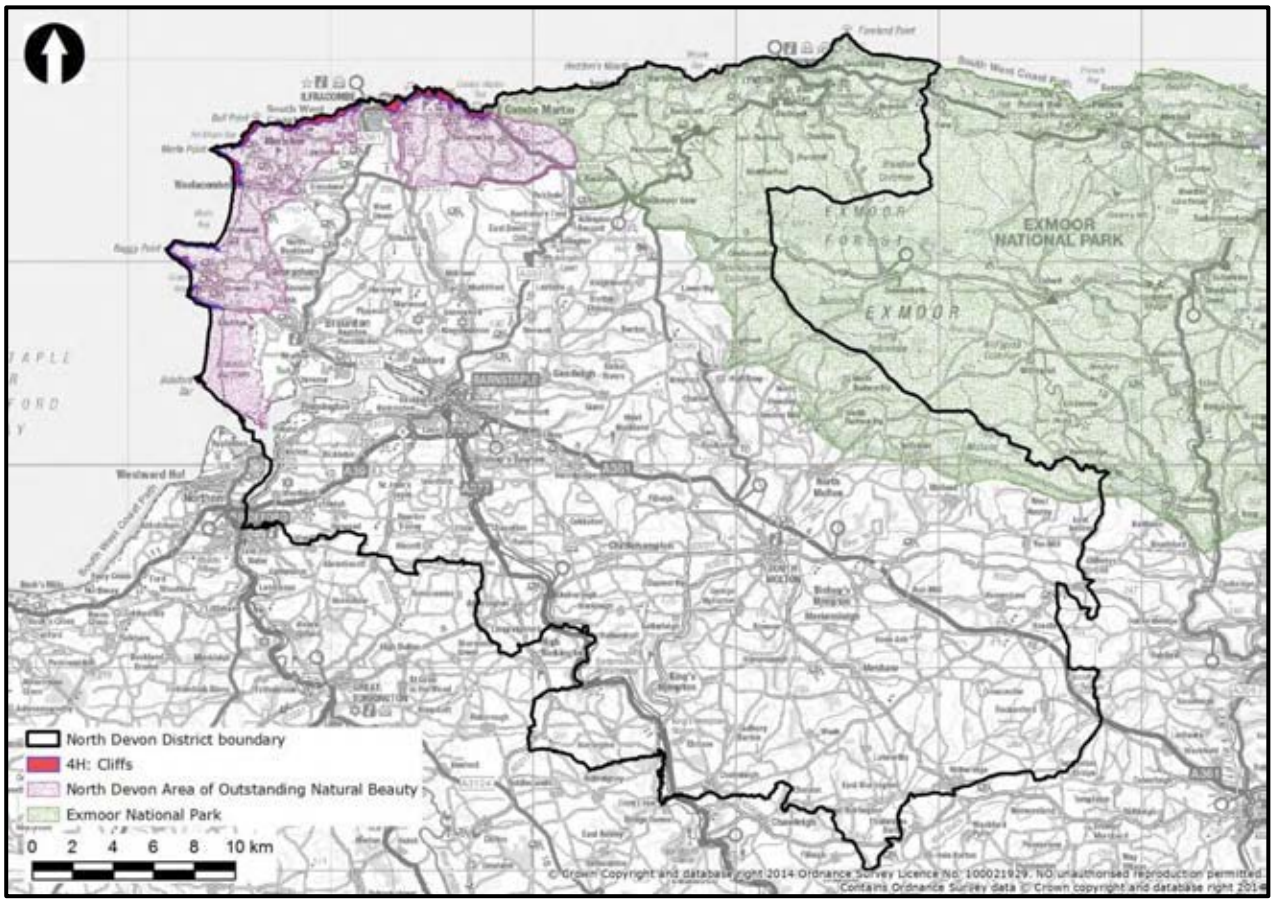
Key sensitivities and guidance for solar PV development

Permitted schemes within the LCT
Planning data held by the Council (November 2013) shows that there are currently no operational or consented solar PV developments within this LCT.
Guidance for Development
The landscape sensitivity assessment indicates that this LCT is highly sensitive to all sizes and scales of solar PV development, and is therefore unlikely to be able to accommodate any solar PV development without introducing a significant change to landscape character.
Additional Guidance Specific to Particular Landscape Character Areas
The above guidance will apply consistently for sites within either DCA in which the LCT is found. Wherever possible, future development should be in line with the overall landscape strategy of the relevant Devon Character Area, as set out in the descriptions on the DCC website[50].

[50] http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/environmentplanning/natural_environment/landscape/landscapecharacter.htm

LCT 4H: Cliffs

LCT Location Map



Character Areas

DCA 43: North Devon Coastal Downs

DCA 45: North Devon High Coast

Please note that while this LCT assessment for wind and solar PV development provides an initial indication of landscape sensitivity and guidance for accommodating developments in the landscape, it should not be interpreted as a definitive statement on the suitability of individual sites for a particular development. All developments will need to be assessed on their own merits.

Key Landscape Characteristics

- A largely undeveloped coastline of steep rocky or vegetated cliffs of varying heights, often punctuated by dramatic features such as waterfalls, rocky coves and features such as stacks and sea arches.
- Distinctive and internationally renowned exposed rock stratifications often clearly visible (sandstone along much of the Hartland and Clovelly peninsulas; with a more complex north coast with thick bands of contorted Morte slate).
- Extensive and dramatic views, reaching out to sea (often to Lundy), along the coastline and inland over ridgelines.
- Predominantly treeless, although several north-facing stretches along the Clovelly coast are characterised by significant mature oak-dominated woodlands clinging to the cliff tops.
- Minor combes draining to the sea often lined by ancient sessile oak woodland of high nature conservation interest. These provide shelter and contrast to the open cliffs.
- Rough grazing land on sloping cliff tops, with field boundaries of post-and-wire fencing or stone-faced hedgebanks.
- Rich in semi-natural habitats, including mosaics of maritime grassland, heath and scrub of national and international importance along the cliff tops and sloping faces. The cliffs support important breeding colonies of seabirds.
- Notable historic features including several Iron Age hillforts in commanding cliff-top positions, remnants of the area's industrial past including limekilns and quarries along the shore, and the lighthouses at Hartland and Bull Points.
- Settlement mainly limited to small fishing villages and clusters of cottages at the mouths of combes, with traditional whitewash or exposed stone vernacular. The historic estate village of Clovelly is a popular visitor destination.
- The northern coastline surrounding Croyde, Woolacombe, Ilfracombe and Combe Martin includes tourism-related development with some recent development spreading along the coast.
- A 'wild' and remote landscape with high levels of tranquillity. Access is largely restricted to the South West Coast Path and rights of way within combes.

35% of the LCT falls within North Devon District

Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for wind energy development

Criteria	Lower sensitivity ▪▪▪▪▪▪▪▶ Higher sensitivity				
Landform and scale					H
	Steep, large-scale rocky or vegetated cliffs of varying heights, often punctuated by dramatic features such as waterfalls, rocky coves, stacks and sea arches. The cliffs are visible from long distances along the coast and out to sea (e.g. from Lundy and as far afield as Wales in clear conditions).				
Land cover pattern and presence of human scale features					H
	Varied land cover of rough grazing land on sloping cliff tops, with minor combes lined with ancient sessile oak woodland, along with important mosaics of maritime grassland, heath and scrub. Land is generally unenclosed, but there are areas of enclosed fields – generally medium-large in scale, although some smaller historic strip fields remain. Human scale features include fishing villages, wind-sculpted hedges and the lighthouse at Bull Point.				
Tracks / transport pattern					H
	Access is largely restricted to the South West Coast Path and rights of way within combes. There is little or no vehicular access to the cliffs.				
Skylines					H
	Open and dramatic coastal skylines with notable historic features including Hillsborough promontory fort and Watermouth Castle in commanding cliff-top positions.				
Perceptual qualities				M-H	H
	A 'wild' and remote landscape with high levels of tranquillity away from development (e.g. holiday parks on the fringes of the main resort centres such as Combe Martin, Croyde and Woolacombe).				
Historic landscape character				M-H	
	The Devon HLC indicates that the majority of the landscape is comprised of rock (54%) or rough ground (22%), both of which would be highly sensitive to wind energy development. Smaller areas of post-medieval enclosures (6%) and recreation (4%) would be of lower sensitivity whereas areas of other woodland, park/garden and sand would be of higher sensitivity.				
Scenic and special qualities					H
	AONB	AONB	AONB	AONB	AONB
	Most of the LCT (71%) falls within the North Devon Coast AONB. The special qualities of this part of the protected landscape include its open cliff tops, views of the ocean devoid of human influence, sense of tranquillity and remoteness, wide and empty coastal vistas across to Lundy, views of an undeveloped skyline, mosaics of maritime grassland, heathland and scrub, strategic defence sites and ancient burial mounds on the skyline. Some of these may be affected by wind energy development. In addition, the LCT description notes the following special qualities: wild, exposed and dramatic landscape with expansive coastal views; unique scenery, including spectacular geological formations and rugged coastal landforms; important wildlife habitats and archaeological features (including cliff castles and lighthouses); and the access and enjoyment of the cliff top via the South West Coast Path. Further special qualities mentioned in the Devon LCA descriptions, that could be affected by wind energy development, include the area's exceptionally high scenic quality, elevated levels of tranquillity; nationally and internationally important shoreline and cliff-top habitats; setting to the Exmoor National Park (in the north-east); numerous SSSIs, Conservation Areas and listed buildings; ancient woodland and Scheduled Monuments, as well as recreational opportunities provided by the South West Coast Path and the Tarka Trail.				
Discussion on landscape sensitivity	The open cliffs' high visual prominence and dramatic landform features, important maritime and coastal habitats, overall absence of modern development, distinctive skylines marked by historic features, lack of road access, strong sense of tranquillity and remoteness and high scenic quality (as recognised through AONB designation) mean this LCT is highly sensitive to any wind energy development.				

Sensitivity to different turbine heights	**Land outside the AONB**		**Land within the AONB**	
	Very Small (15-25m)	H	Very Small (15-25m)	H
	Small (26-50m)	H	Small (26-50m)	H
	Medium (51-75m)	H	Medium (51-75m)	H
	Large (76-110m)	H	Large (76-110m)	H
	Very large (111-150m)	H	Very large (111-150m)	H
	This LCT would be highly sensitive to the development of any wind turbines.			
Commentary on different cluster sizes Single turbine Small (<5 turbines) Medium (6-10) Large (11-25) Very large (>25)	This LCT would be highly sensitive to any scales of wind energy development.			

SUMMARY OF KEY SENSITIVE FEATURES/CHARACTERISTICS

A summary list of the key sensitive features and characteristics for 4H Cliffs LCT in relation to wind energy development is included below:

- The dramatic and prominent landforms of the cliffs, with elevated skylines frequently marked by historic landmarks.
- Their largely undeveloped character, with swathes of important semi-natural coastal and maritime habitats.
- The scenic qualities of the landscape, including within the AONB - the open cliff tops, views of the ocean devoid of human influence, sense of tranquillity and remoteness, and wide and empty coastal vistas across to Lundy.
- Its role (in the north-east) as an important setting to Exmoor National Park, whose special qualities include striking views out of the protected landscape and a sense of remoteness, wildness and tranquillity.

Guidance for wind energy development

Permitted schemes within the LCT
Planning data held by the Council (November 2013) shows that there are currently no operational or permitted wind energy developments within this LCT.
Guidance for Development
The landscape sensitivity assessment indicates that this LCT is highly sensitive to all sizes and scales of wind turbine development, and is therefore unlikely to be able to accommodate any turbines without introducing a significant change to landscape character.
Additional Guidance Specific to Particular Landscape Character Areas
The above guidance will apply consistently for sites within either DCA in which the LCT is found. Wherever possible, future development should be in line with the overall landscape strategy of the relevant Devon Character Area, as set out in the descriptions on the DCC website[51].

[51] http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/environmentplanning/natural_environment/landscape/landscapecharacter.htm

Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for solar PV development

Criteria	Lower sensitivity ▬▬▬▬▬▶ Higher sensitivity				
Landform					H
	Steep rocky or vegetated cliffs of varying heights, often punctuated by dramatic features such as waterfalls, rocky coves, stacks and sea arches. The cliffs are visible from long distances along the coast and out to sea (e.g. from Lundy and as far afield as Wales in clear conditions).				
Sense of openness / enclosure				M-H	
	This is a predominantly treeless landscape, resulting in an open, exposed character.				
Field pattern and scale				M-H	
	Land is generally unenclosed, but there are areas of enclosed fields – generally medium-large in scale, although some smaller historic strip fields remain.				
Land cover					H
	Varied land cover of rough grazing land on sloping cliff tops, with minor combes lined with ancient sessile oak woodland, along with important mosaics of maritime grassland, heath and scrub.				
Perceptual qualities				M-H	
	A 'wild' and remote landscape with high levels of tranquillity away from development (e.g. holiday parks on the fringes of the main resort centres such as Combe Martin, Croyde and Woolacombe).				
Historic Landscape Character				M-H	
	The Devon HLC indicates that the majority of the landscape is comprised of rock (54%) or rough ground (22%), both of which would be highly sensitive to solar PV development. Smaller areas of post-medieval enclosures (6%) and recreation (4%) would be of lower sensitivity whereas areas of other woodland, park/garden and sand would be of higher sensitivity.				
Scenic and special qualities					
	AONB	AONB	AONB	AONB	AONB
	Most of the LCT (71%) falls within the North Devon Coast AONB. The special qualities of this part of the protected landscape include its open cliff tops, views of the ocean devoid of human influence, sense of tranquillity and remoteness, wide and empty coastal vistas across to Lundy, views of an undeveloped skyline, mosaics of maritime grassland, heathland and scrub, strategic defence sites and ancient burial mounds on the skyline. Some of these may be affected by solar PV development. In addition, the LCT description notes the following special qualities: wild, exposed and dramatic landscape with expansive coastal views; unique scenery, including spectacular geological formations and rugged coastal landforms; important wildlife habitats and archaeological features (including cliff castles and lighthouses); and the access and enjoyment of the cliff top via the South West Coast Path. Further special qualities mentioned in the Devon LCA descriptions, that could be affected by solar PV development, include the area's exceptionally high scenic quality, elevated levels of tranquillity; nationally and internationally important shoreline and cliff-top habitats; setting to the Exmoor National Park (in the north-east); numerous SSSIs, Conservation Areas and listed buildings; ancient woodland and Scheduled Monuments, as well as recreational opportunities provided by the South West Coast Path and the Tarka Trail.				
Discussion on landscape sensitivity	The open cliffs' high visual prominence, general lack of enclosure, important maritime and woodland habitats, absence of modern development, general absence of farmed land, strong sense of tranquillity and remoteness and high scenic quality result in this LCT being highly sensitive to solar PV development.				

	Land outside the AONB		Land within the AONB	
Sensitivity to different sizes of solar PV development	Very Small (<1ha)	H	Very Small (<1ha)	H
	Small (>1-5ha)	H	Small (>1-5ha)	H
	Medium (>5-10ha)	H	Medium (>5-10ha)	H
	Large (>10-15ha)	H	Large (>10-15ha)	H
	Very Large (>15-20ha)	H	Very Large (>15-20ha)	H
	This LCT would be highly sensitive to any scale of solar PV development.			

SUMMARY OF KEY SENSITIVE FEATURES/CHARACTERISTICS

A summary list of the key sensitive features and characteristics for 4H Cliffs LCT in relation to solar PV development is included below:

- The dramatic and highly visible cliffs landforms, visible from long distances along the coast and out to sea.
- Their largely undeveloped and uncultivated character, with swathes of open coastal and maritime habitats of high value for nature conservation.
- The scenic qualities of the landscape, including within the AONB - the open cliff tops, views of the ocean devoid of human influence, sense of tranquillity and remoteness, and wide and empty coastal vistas across to Lundy.
- Its role (in the north-east) as an important setting to Exmoor National Park, whose special qualities include striking views out of the protected landscape and a sense of remoteness, wildness and tranquillity.

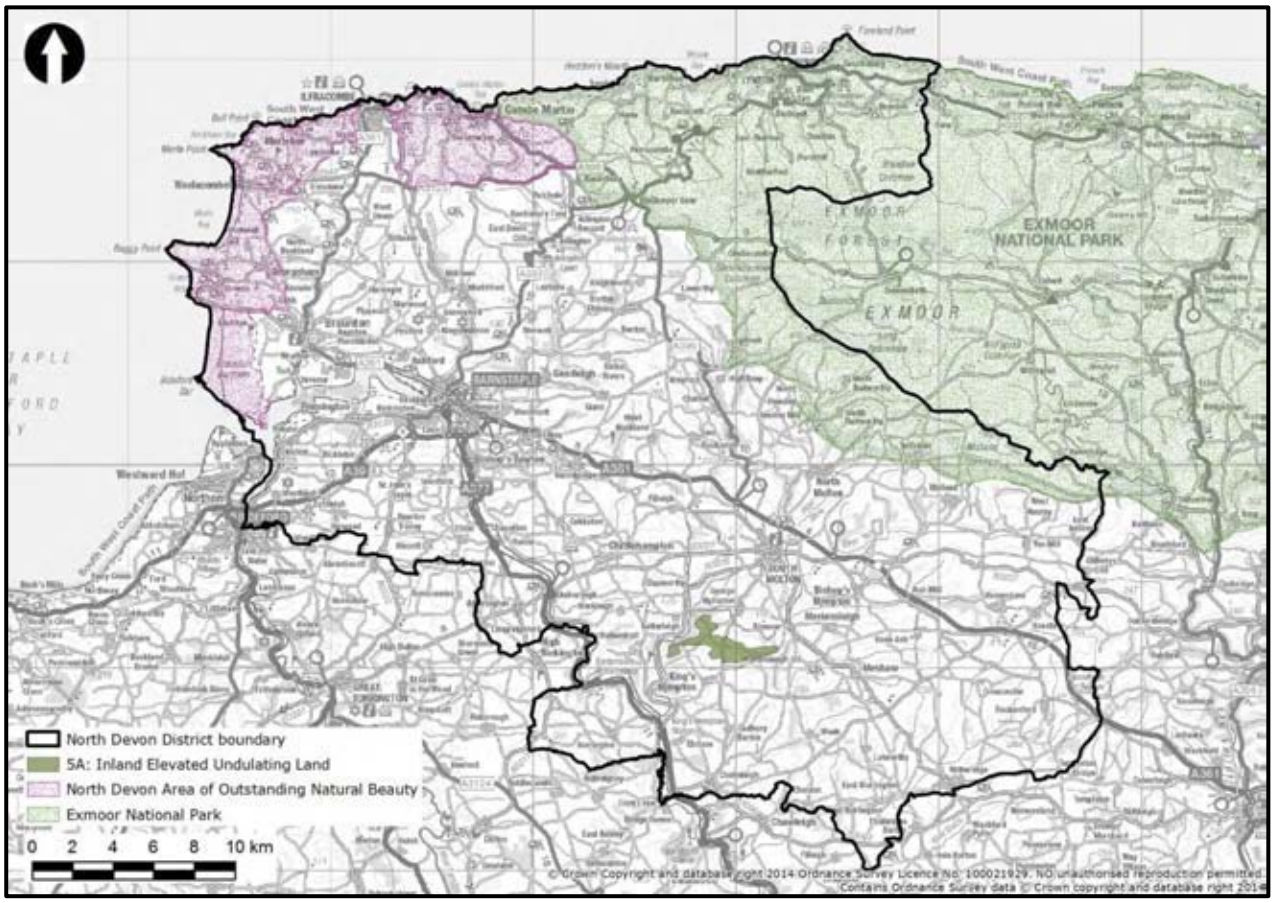
Guidance for solar energy development

Permitted schemes within the LCT
Planning data held by the Council (November 2013) shows that there are currently no operational or consented solar PV developments within this LCT.
Guidance for Development
The landscape sensitivity assessment indicates that this LCT is highly sensitive to all sizes and scales of solar PV development, and is therefore unlikely to be able to accommodate any solar PV development without introducing a significant change to landscape character.
Additional Guidance Specific to Particular Landscape Character Areas
The above guidance will apply consistently for sites within either DCA in which the LCT is found. Wherever possible, future development should be in line with the overall landscape strategy of the relevant Devon Character Area, as set out in the descriptions on the DCC website[52].

[52] http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/environmentplanning/natural_environment/landscape/landscapecharacter.htm

LCT 5A: Inland Elevated Undulating Land

LCT Location Map



Character Areas

DCA 59 Taw Valley

Please note that while this LCT assessment for wind and solar PV development provides an initial indication of landscape sensitivity and guidance for accommodating developments in the landscape, it should not be interpreted as a definitive statement on the suitability of individual sites for a particular development. All developments will need to be assessed on their own merits.

Key Landscape Characteristics

- Elevated land cut by a series of tributaries forming folds in the landform. Parts are high and remote with far-reaching views to Dartmoor, including summits of over 200 metres.
- Underlying geology of Culm Measures – comprising smooth bands of mudstones, siltstones and harder outcrops of sandstone. Rich red soils are often exposed through ploughing.
- Tributary valleys lined by broadleaved and wet woodland providing contrasting shelter and texture. Small farm woods, occasional conifer blocks and avenues of mature beech on hill summits and along roadsides.
- Medium-scale regular fields of recent enclosure, with pockets of smaller fields of medieval origin on valley slopes and tracts of unenclosed rough grazing along valley bottoms.
- Fields enclosed by mixed species hedges (predominantly thorn) with flower-rich banks and frequent hedgerow trees in sheltered locations. Some locally distinctive hedges topped with gorse and beech (e.g. near Hele and around Holsworthy). Occasional amalgamated fields bounded by fences.
- Strong farmed character with pasture fields grazed by cattle and sheep, occasional fields of arable cultivation and rough grazing of rushy meadows along valleys.
- Linhays (traditional livestock shelters) of local stone and cob, with corrugated iron or slate roofs, forming notable features of the farmed landscape.
- Local vernacular of white-washed buildings with slate or thatch roofs, often with red brick detailing. Some buildings of local sandstone with red bricks around window/door frames. Square church towers with ornate pinnacles form distinctive local landmarks (e.g. Bradworthy).
- Scattered historic features including clusters of Bronze Age bowl barrows on summits, an Iron Age hillfort overlooking the Tamar Valley at Northcott Wood, Iron Age enclosure and Roman marching camp at Higher Kingdon and the remains of the 13th century Frithelstock Priory.
- Farms dispersed throughout the landscape often on exposed ridges, sheltered by groups of trees of evergreen shelterbelts. Nucleated villages also occupying prominent ridgeline positions, with linear development of white/cream houses and bungalows often spreading outwards from the historic core.
- Straight roads traversing ridges and dipping down into valleys, crossing streams on sandstone bridges.
- Landscape's strongly rural character diluted by the presence of prominent pylon lines, wind turbines near Bradworthy, industrial developments outside Holsworthy and busy roads including the main A388.
- Overall high levels of tranquillity with dark night skies.
- Important sites of Culm grassland (including Brendon Farm and Common Moor Langtree SSSIs and Kismeldon Meadows SSSI and SAC), species-rich fen and rush pasture, valley mire, unimproved grasslands and scrub in valley bottoms and areas of impeded drainage.

2% of the LCT falls within North Devon District

Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for wind energy development

Criteria	Lower sensitivity ▪▪▪▪▪▪▪▶ Higher sensitivity				
Landform and scale			M		
	Elevated relatively large-scale gently domed land, cut by a series of minor tributaries forming folds in the landform. Elevation reaches 204 metres at Jose's Cross.				
Land cover pattern and presence of human scale features			M		
	Medium scale regular fields of modern enclosure with pockets of smaller irregular fields of medieval origin on upper valley slopes. The LCT has a strong farmed character with pasture fields and occasional fields of arable cultivation. Small areas of broadleaved woodland and semi-improved grasslands contribute to landscape variation. Scattered farmsteads, hedgerows and hedgerow trees form human scale features.				
Tracks / transport pattern			M		
	Mixture of straight and gently winding minor roads that traverse ridges, enclosed by hedgebanks.				
Skylines				M-H	
	Skylines are generally large scale and undeveloped, with ridgelines forming a backdrop to views including from Exmoor, and settlements such as the nearby South Molton. Occasional modern agricultural sheds and trees form features on the skyline.				
Perceptual qualities			M		
	The landscape has a strongly rural character and overall high levels of tranquillity. However, most of the landscape is intensively farmed contributing to perceptions of human activity.				
Historic landscape character		L-M			
	The Devon HLC indicates that a large part of the landscape type is made up of modern enclosures (80%) - generally lower sensitivity to wind energy development. However there are some smaller areas of medieval enclosures based on strip fields (10%), medieval enclosures (3%) and areas of other woodland (3%) that have a higher sensitivity. Other areas with a lower sensitivity to wind turbines include post-medieval enclosures (2%).				
Scenic and special qualities			M		
	None of this landscape is nationally designated for its scenic qualities. However, special qualities are recorded in the district's LCA and the Devon County LCA. The District's LCT description notes a number of special qualities including the long views from elevated ridges, the patchwork of fields and hedgebanks, the working rural character of the landscape, the valued Culm grasslands and the quiet relaxed and tranquil nature of the landscape. Some of these could be affected to a degree by the presence of wind energy development. Further special qualities mentioned in the Devon LCA description for the Taw Valley include: the area's high scenic quality; strong sense of enclosure; locally elevated levels of tranquillity; areas of dark skies; ancient woodland and numerous historically important listed buildings.				
Discussion on landscape sensitivity	The relatively large-scale landform, human influence (in the form of a working agricultural landscape), and presence of medium scale regular fields of modern enclosure could indicate a lower sensitivity to wind energy development. However, the LCT's elevated undeveloped ridges forming a backdrop to views (including from Exmoor), presence of narrow hedged lanes, high levels of tranquillity away from roads, small-scale medieval enclosures (based on strip fields) and areas of valued semi-natural habitat all increase levels of sensitivity.				
Sensitivity to different turbine heights	Very Small (15-25m)	L-M			
	Small (26-50m)	M			
	Medium (51-75m)	M			
	Large (76-110m)	M-H			
	Very large (111-150m)	H			

	The varying scale of the landform, its land cover patterns and the presence of human-scale features mean that this landscape is likely to be highly sensitive to 'large' and 'very large' turbines.
Commentary on different cluster sizes Single turbine Small (<5 turbines) Medium (6-10) Large (11-25) Very large (>25)	The scale of the landform and fields means that this LCT is likely to be highly sensitive to any clusters larger than 'small' in scale.

Explanation for variations with the sensitivity assessment for Torridge (2011)

The proportion of large-scale modern field patterns in this LCT and the presence of existing development [modern agricultural sheds] on skylines results in a low-moderate sensitivity to 'very small' turbines (as opposed to the moderate assessment in Torridge).

SUMMARY OF KEY SENSITIVE FEATURES/CHARACTERISTICS

A summary list of the key sensitive features and characteristics for 5A Inland Elevated Undulating Land LCT in relation to wind energy development is included below:

- The elevated nature of the landscape with prominent, undeveloped skylines forming a backdrop to views including from Exmoor National Park and South Molton.
- Strongly rural character with sensitive land cover types including medieval enclosures based on strip fields and 'other woodland'.
- Important patches of semi-natural habitat interspersed within the farmland, including broadleaved farm woodlands and semi-improved grasslands (e.g. at Huxford Woods).
- The rural road network, with characterful lanes bounded by flower-rich banks and Devon hedges.
- The presence of human scale features including traditional farmsteads, Devon hedges and trees.
- The area's scenic qualities, with locally important levels of peace and tranquillity and dark night skies.

Guidance for wind energy development

Permitted schemes within the LCT

Planning data held by the Council (November 2013) shows that there are currently no operational or consented wind energy developments within this LCT.

Guidance for Development

The landscape sensitivity assessment indicates that this LCT has low-moderate sensitivity to 'very small' turbines, a moderate sensitivity to 'small' and 'medium' turbines (between 26 and 75m), a moderate-high sensitivity to 'large' turbines (up to110m to blade tip) and high sensitivity to those over 110m to tip. The assessment also notes the LCT is likely to be highly sensitive to any clusters greater than 'small' in size. This indicates that the landscape will be particularly sensitive to turbines higher than 75m and be unlikely to be able to accommodate turbines over 110m to tip, or in groups of more than 5 turbines, without introducing a change to landscape character.

A clear visual hierarchy should be maintained between 'very small'/'small' scale turbines associated with buildings (e.g. single on-farm turbines), and 'medium' scale wind energy developments in larger scale areas (i.e. larger turbines located in small groups of 5 or less turbines). A proliferation of varying heights and styles of turbine should be avoided. Within these distinct size categories of turbine, developments should be of a similar scale and design (in terms of number, siting, layout, style of turbine and relationship to key characteristics) to maintain a simple image and reinforce links between landscape characteristics and design response within the LCT.

The overall aim should be ensure that wind energy developments do not have a significant cumulative impact on the LCT resulting in an overall change of landscape character.

When siting and designing wind energy developments in this LCT, the generic guidance within Chapter 2 of the Devon Landscape Policy Group's Advice Note No. 2: *Accommodating Wind and Solar PV Developments in Devon's Landscape* should be followed, particularly when considering the cumulative impacts of multiple schemes. In addition, within this LCT particular care will need to be taken to ensure:

- Turbine locations avoid the most visually prominent skylines wherever possible, particularly those that are intervisible with Exmoor National Park.
- Wind energy development does not overwhelm the human scale of the LCT's landscape features, including Devon hedges and farmsteads.
- The strong rural of the landscape with locally important levels of tranquillity is retained.
- Valued naturalistic habitats within the predominantly farmed landscape are retained – including broadleaved farm woodlands and semi-improved grasslands.
- Areas of smaller scale and historically important medieval enclosure are avoided as sites for larger turbines.
- The LCT's characteristic winding rural roads enclosed by Devon hedges are not adversely affected by delivery of turbines.
- Opportunities are sought to enhance the landscape in association with any development, in accordance with the landscape strategy for the LCT, including protecting the landscape's important role in agriculture whilst strengthening and expanding fragmented areas of semi-natural habitat, protecting ridgelines, long-ranging views and valued cultural features through the careful siting of new development, integrating new development into its landscape setting and providing Green Infrastructure links to enhance sustainable recreational opportunities.

Additional Guidance Specific to Particular Landscape Character Areas

This guidance will apply consistently across the Devon Character Area (59: Taw Valley) where this LCT is present. Wherever possible, future development should be in line with the overall landscape strategy, as set out in the description on the DCC website[53].

[53] http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/environmentplanning/natural_environment/landscape/landscapecharacter.htm

Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for solar PV development

Criteria	Lower sensitivity ▪▪▪▪▪▪▪▶ Higher sensitivity
Landform	M-H This LCT contains some prominent, elevated slopes and ridgelines whilst tributary valleys include slopes hidden from view. It consists of gently domed land, cut by a series of minor tributaries forming folds in the landform. Elevation reaches 204 metres at Jose's Cross.
Sense of openness / enclosure	M Relatively open landscape, particularly on higher, more exposed ground. Some enclosure is provided by hedgebanks / hedgerow trees and woodland within tributary valleys. Small farm woods, occasional conifer blocks and avenues of beech provide some enclosure elsewhere.
Field pattern and scale	M Medium scale regular fields of modern enclosure with pockets of smaller fields of Medieval origin on valley slopes and some medieval strip fields.
Land cover	M Mainly pasture with occasional fields of arable cultivation. Rough grazing of rushy meadows along valleys. Broadleaved farm woodlands and semi-improved grasslands provide some land cover variety.
Perceptual qualities	M The landscape has a strongly rural character and overall high levels of tranquillity. However, most of the landscape is intensively farmed contributing to perceptions of human activity.
Historic Landscape Character	L-M The Devon HLC indicates that a large part of the landscape type is made up of modern enclosures (80%) - generally lower sensitivity to solar PV development. However there are areas of medieval enclosures based on strip fields (10%), medieval enclosures (3%) and areas of other woodland (3%) that have a higher sensitivity. Other areas with a lower sensitivity to solar PVs include post-medieval enclosures (2%).
Scenic and special qualities	M This LCT lies outside the North Devon AONB. However, special qualities are recorded in the district's LCA and the Devon County LCA. The District's LCT description notes a number of special qualities including the long views from elevated ridges, the patchwork of fields and hedgebanks, the working rural character of the landscape, the valued Culm grasslands and the quiet relaxed and tranquil nature of the landscape. Some of these could be affected to a degree by the presence of solar PV development. Further special qualities mentioned in the Devon LCA description for the Taw Valley include: the area's high scenic quality; strong sense of enclosure; locally elevated levels of tranquillity; areas of dark skies; ancient woodland and numerous historically important listed buildings.
Discussion on landscape sensitivity	Although the presence of medium-scale regular fields of modern enclosure and human influence (in the form of a working agricultural landscape) could indicate a lower sensitivity to solar PV development, the presence of some prominent and elevated slopes, sense of openness, its strongly rural character with locally important levels of tranquillity, and presence of small scale medieval enclosures (based on strip fields), all increase sensitivity.
Sensitivity to different sizes of solar PV development	Very Small (<1ha) — L-M Small (>1-5ha) — M Medium (>5-10ha) — M-H Large (>10-15ha) — H Very Large (>15-20ha) — H The scale of the fields in this LCT mean that it is likely to be highly sensitive to 'large' and 'very large' scale solar PV development. Areas with a smaller scale field pattern (e.g. medieval enclosures based on strip fields) are also likely to be highly sensitive to

	'medium' scale solar PV developments.

Explanation for variations with the sensitivity assessment for Torridge (2011)

The greater proportion of larger scale, modern fields within this LCT in North Devon results in a low-moderate sensitivity to the smallest category of solar PV developments (rather than moderate in Torridge). However, the visual prominence of the open ridge, including in views from Exmoor, as well as the presence of smaller historic field patterns results in a moderate-high sensitivity to medium schemes (rather than moderate in Torridge) and high sensitivity to those of over 10ha (as opposed to moderate-high).

SUMMARY OF KEY SENSITIVE FEATURES/CHARACTERISTICS

A summary list of the key sensitive features and characteristics for 5A Inland Elevated Undulating Land LCT in relation to solar PV development is included below:

- The presence of some elevated and visually prominent slopes forming a backdrop to views from surrounding landscapes (including Exmoor and South Molton).
- Its strongly rural character and scenic qualities, with locally important levels of tranquillity.
- Sensitive historic land cover types including medieval enclosures based on strip fields and Barton fields.
- Important patches of semi-natural habitat interspersed within the farmland, including broadleaved farm woodlands and semi-improved grasslands (e.g. at Huxford Woods).

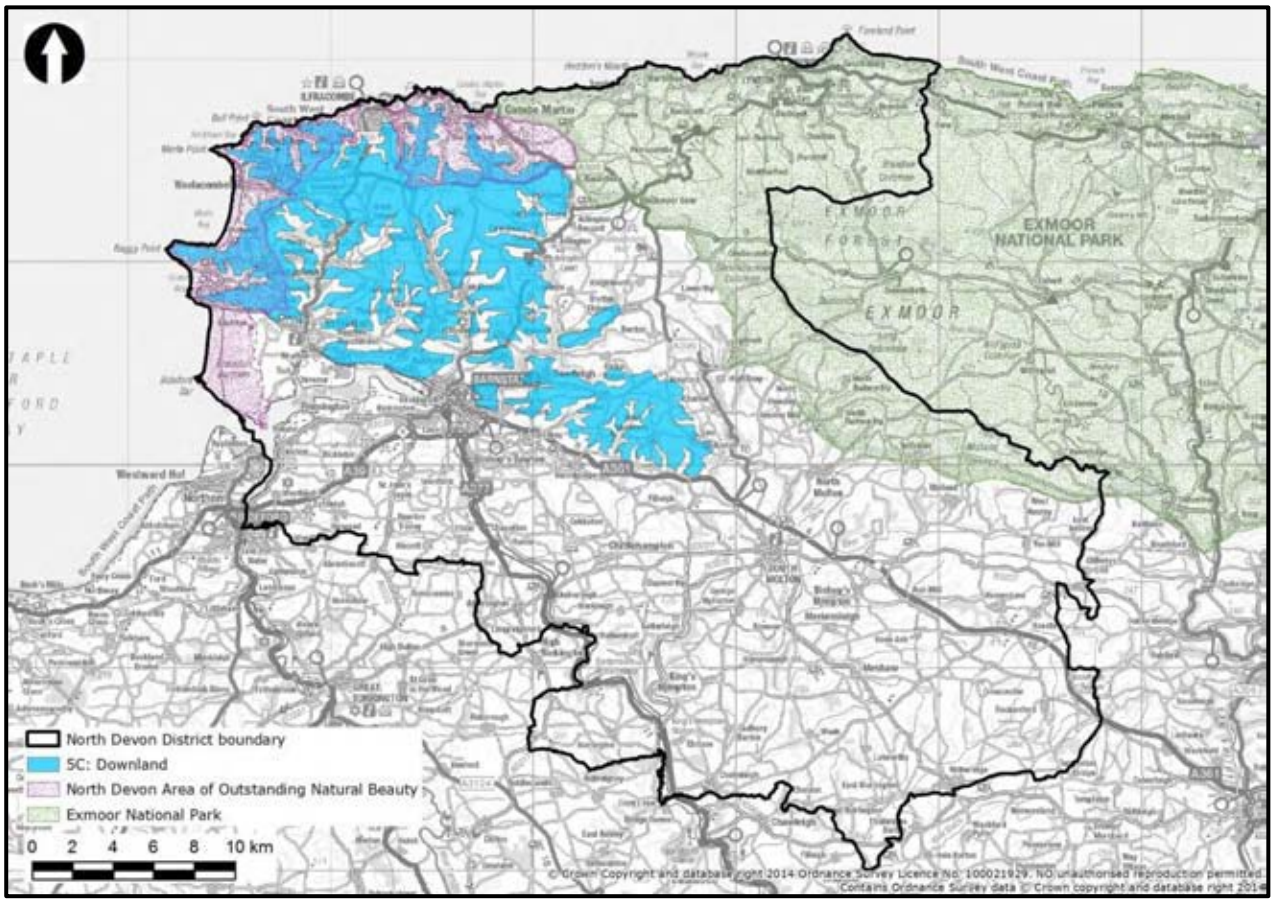
Guidance for solar PV development

Permitted schemes within the LCT
Planning data held by the Council (November 2013) shows that there are currently no operational or consented solar PV developments within this LCT.
Guidance for Development
The landscape sensitivity assessment indicates that this LCT has a low-moderate or moderate sensitivity to small developments (>1-5ha), a moderate-high sensitivity to medium developments (>5-10ha) and a high sensitivity to developments greater than 10ha. This indicates that the landscape will be particularly sensitive to any developments over 5ha and is unlikely to be able to accommodate any over 10ha in size without introducing a change to landscape character. Any proposals should be located in more enclosed, avoiding highly visible slopes and valued fragments of semi-natural habitat remaining within the farmed landscape. Multiple developments within the LCT should be of a similar scale and design (in terms of siting, layout, scale, form and relationship to key characteristics) to maintain a simple image and reinforce links between landscape characteristics and design response within the LCT. The overall aim should be to make sure that solar PV developments do not become a key characteristic of the landscape (i.e. developments would not result in a significant cumulative impact on the LCT or overall change of landscape character). When siting and designing solar PV developments in this LCT the generic guidance within Chapter 3 of the Devon Landscape Policy Group's Advice Note No. 2: *Accommodating Wind and Solar PV Developments in Devon's Landscape* should be followed particularly when considering the cumulative impacts of multiple schemes. In addition, within this LCT particular care will need to be taken to ensure: • The most prominent, open slopes are avoided – particularly those visible in long views from the surrounding landscapes and Exmoor National Park. • The strong rural character of the landscape with locally important levels of tranquillity is retained. • Where possible, development avoids areas of sensitive historic land cover types including medieval enclosures and strip fields, and 'other woodland'. • Valued naturalistic habitats are protected within the farmed landscape – including broadleaved farm woodlands and semi-improved grasslands. • The predominantly pastoral character of the landscape and its strong network of well-managed, species-rich Devon hedges dividing medieval fields, are retained. • Opportunities are sought to enhance the landscape in association with any development, in accordance with the landscape strategy for the LCT, including protecting the landscape's important role in agriculture whilst strengthening and expanding fragmented areas of semi-natural habitat, protecting ridgelines, long-ranging views and valued cultural features through the careful siting of new development, integrating new development into its landscape setting and providing Green Infrastructure links to enhance sustainable recreational opportunities.
Additional Guidance Specific to Particular Landscape Character Areas
This guidance will apply consistently across the Character Area (59: Taw Valley) where this LCT is present. Wherever possible, future development should be in line with the overall landscape strategy, as set out in the description on the DCC website[54].

[54] http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/environmentplanning/natural_environment/landscape/landscapecharacter.htm

LCT 5C: Downland

LCT Location Map



Character Areas

DCA 43: North Devon Coastal Downs

DCA 42: North Devon Downs

DCA 45: North Devon High Coast

Please note that while this LCT assessment for wind and solar PV development provides an initial indication of landscape sensitivity and guidance for accommodating developments in the landscape, it should not be interpreted as a definitive statement on the suitability of individual sites for a particular development. All developments will need to be assessed on their own merits.

Key Landscape Characteristics

- Rolling downland landscape with broad rounded ridges and hilltops, dropping in altitude in the south to meet the Taw/Torridge estuary and Barnstaple. Hill summits afford expansive views across the landscape and beyond, including to the coast and estuary.
- Northern and coastal sections of the landscape underlain by resistant Morte slate, whilst softer bands of sandstone, shales and mudstone characterise southern parts of the LCT, resulting in a more undulating topography.
- Landscape drained by springs and small streams feeding into steep valleys and combes carving through the downland (separate LCTs). Views to these wooded valleys provide contrasting colour and texture to this strongly agricultural landscape.
- A simple agricultural landscape dominated by the sky – glimpses of the north and west coasts convey a maritime influence to the areas of downland closer to the sea.
- Sparse woodland cover, limited to occasional blocks of coniferous plantations (e.g. King's Warren), small farm woods and wind-sculpted pine shelterbelts. Sporadic clumps and avenues of beech sit on prominent ridgelines – e.g. above Shirwell Cross.
- Mixture of medium-scale curving medieval fields and larger post-medieval and modern fields with dead-straight boundaries. Some areas of open downland still remain.
- Range of boundary styles including grassy Devon banks with patches of wind-pruned gorse and scrub (particularly where exposed to coastal winds), flower-rich banks with mixed-species hedges, and Morte slate-faced grassy banks.
- Square-cut beech hedgebanks particularly in the east where influenced by the proximity to Exmoor. Post-and-wire fences enclose some of the more intensively farmed fields.
- Semi-natural habitats limited to fragmented sites of species-rich acidic and neutral grassland, rush pasture, small patches of semi-natural woodland, scrub and bracken.
- Historic features include nationally important prehistoric burial sites (round and bowl barrows crowing hills), ancient hilltop enclosures, historic quarries as well as parkland estates including the 15th century Saunton Court and the 18th century Youlston Park (both Grade II Listed).
- Strong local vernacular including cream and whitewashed cob/render, exposed local stone with slate roofs and some local use of thatch, e.g. Heanton Punchardon and Prixton. Square stone church towers are characteristic landmarks. This LCT includes many listed buildings.
- Sparsely settled and peaceful character, with dispersed farmsteads sited in dips in the landform and nucleated villages and hamlets located in tributary valleys and around crossroads.
- Settlement linked by straight roads enclosed by hedgbanks, with occasional gaps providing long views across the landscape and intermittent views of the sea.
- Caravan and holiday parks, as well as other tourism-related land uses detract from traditional landscape character, particularly in locations close to the coast.

100% of the LCT falls within North Devon District

Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for wind energy development

Criteria	Lower sensitivity ▪▪▪▪▪▪▪▶ Higher sensitivity				
Landform and scale				M-H	
	Rolling, elevated downland landscape with broad rounded ridges and hilltops, dropping in altitude in the south to meet the Taw/Torridge estuary and Barnstaple. The northern and coastal sections of the LCT are defined by a more undulating topography with prominent ridgelines. This is a large-scale, open landscape.				
Land cover pattern and presence of human scale features			M		
	This is a strongly agricultural landscape, dominated by intensive mixed farming within a pattern of medium-scale curving medieval fields and larger post-medieval and modern fields with dead-straight boundaries. The LCT has sparse woodland cover, with occasional blocks of coniferous plantations, small farm woods and wind-sculpted pine shelterbelts. Semi-natural habitats are limited to fragmented sites of species-rich acidic and neutral grassland, rush pasture, small patches of semi-natural woodland, scrub and bracken. Caravan and holiday parks, as well as other tourism-related land uses detract from traditional landscape character, particularly in locations close to the coast. Human-scale features include hedges, occasional trees and scattered farmsteads, villages and hamlets.				
Tracks / transport pattern			M		
	Settlements are linked by straight roads enclosed by hedgebanks, supplemented by narrow farm tracks. The LCT is crossed by lengths of the main A3123, A361 and A39 roads.				
Skylines				M-H	
	This landscape is dominated by the sky, with smooth, prominent skylines marked by landmark square stone church towers and sporadic clumps and avenues of beech. Nationally important prehistoric burial sites crown some hills, and ancient hilltop enclosures are also features. The wind turbines of Fullabrook Wind Farm feature on the south-western skyline above the Taw/Torridge estuary behind Barnstaple and Braunton. Smaller turbines at Mullacott Cross and a number of masts and overhead electricity lines form additional man-made structures on skylines. The DCA description for North Devon Downs notes the role of the LCT's skylines in forming a backdrop and setting to surrounding settlements and the protected landscapes.				
Perceptual qualities			M		
	The LCT retains locally high levels of tranquillity away from settlements and major roads. Caravan and holiday parks, as well as other tourism-related land uses and structures such as masts and turbines detract from traditional landscape character in parts.				
Historic landscape character			M		
	The Devon HLC indicates that the LCT comprises a mixture of 32% medieval enclosures based on strip fields and 17% Barton fields (generally of a higher sensitivity to wind energy development), with other areas of modern enclosures (24%) and post-medieval enclosures (16%) which would be of lower sensitivity to wind turbines. Smaller areas of medieval enclosures (2%), rough ground (2%) and other woodland (2%) – all of which would have a higher sensitivity. The landscape also includes parkland estates including the 15th century Saunton Court and the 18th century Youlston Park (both Grade II Listed).				
Scenic and special qualities				M-H	
	AONB	AONB	AONB	AONB	AONB
	21% of this LCT falls within the North Devon AONB (21%) and Heritage Coast. The special qualities of this part of the AONB include panoramic views from elevated areas across rolling countryside within and outside the AONB, wide and empty coastal vistas across to Lundy and beyond to the Welsh coast, and the legacy of a long history of human occupation – including fields defined by ancient hedge-banks, and historic farmsteads, hamlets and villages connected by winding lanes.. The countryside backdrop, much of it undesignated, is a defining element to the visual quality of the AONB providing a variety of open views. Some of these qualities may be affected by wind energy development.				

	In addition, the LCT description notes the following special qualities which may be affected by wind energy development: dramatic and far-reaching views, smooth rolling skylines often only broken by protruding square church towers and archaeological features, and valued wildlife habitat within the farmland and associated with the hedge network. The DCA descriptions also note the high scenic quality of the landscape, its role as a backdrop and setting to settlements, the AONB and Exmoor National Park (in the north-east) and 'amazing' coastal views.
Discussion on landscape sensitivity	Although this is a large-scale landscape (in terms of landform) and includes areas of large post-medieval and modern fields, tracts of consistent and often intensively managed land cover, main A-roads and other areas of human influence and development which may indicate a lower sensitivity to wind energy development, its prominent and distinctive skylines which form backdrop to views, landmark historic church towers and other human-scale features, areas of historic field patterns and naturalistic land cover, and the landscape's high scenic quality all heighten sensitivity. Areas within or on the edge of the AONB or closest to Exmoor National Park are likely to have a higher sensitivity (although this will need to be judged on a case by case basis).
Sensitivity to different turbine heights	**Land outside the AONB** / **Land within the AONB** Very Small (15-25m): L-M / Very Small (15-25m): M-H Small (26-50m): M / Small (26-50m): H Medium (51-75m): M / Medium (51-75m): H Large (76-110m): M-H / Large (76-110m): H Very large (111-150m): H / Very large (111-150m): H Although this is a large-scale landscape in the context of North Devon, areas of smaller-scale historic field patterns, the presence of human-scale features and areas of naturalistic habitat mean that – outside the AONB – the landscape would become progressively more sensitive to larger scale turbines and would be highly sensitive to 'very large' turbines, with some of the smaller-scale parts of the landscape also being highly sensitive to 'large' and 'medium' turbines (at the higher end of the size bracket). Areas within the AONB would be highly sensitive to all but 'very small' turbines, sited in close accordance with the guidance below.
Commentary on different cluster sizes Single turbine Small (<5 turbines) Medium (6-10) Large (11-25) Very large (>25)	Although significant parts of the landscape are relatively large scale in the context of North Devon, the visual prominence of the elevated (and often undeveloped) skylines and role of the LCT as a scenic backdrop to the AONB and nearby settlements mean that it would be highly sensitive to all turbine clusters larger than 'small'. Within the AONB, the landscape would be highly sensitive to any clusters of wind turbines. Larger clusters of up to 10 turbines may be considered in exceptional circumstances (and where the guidance set out in this document is followed).

SUMMARY OF KEY SENSITIVE FEATURES/CHARACTERISTICS

A summary list of the key sensitive features and characteristics for the 5C Downland LCT in relation to wind energy development is included below:

- The landscape's prominent ridgelines and elevated skylines, often broken only by historic square church towers, archaeological features or beech clumps/avenues.
- Its strongly rural character, including some areas of sensitive historic land cover types including medieval enclosures based on strip fields, Barton fields and historic parkland estates.
- The presence of human scale features including hedges, occasional trees and scattered farmsteads, villages and hamlets.
- Its high scenic qualities, particularly within the North Devon AONB – whose special qualities include panoramic countryside views from elevated locations, framed seaward views, its role as a countryside backdrop and strong historic character, with valued features including historic buildings and ancient hedgebanks.
- The function of the open, elevated ridgelines as part of an important rural backdrop and setting to the AONB (as noted in the Statement of Significance for the protected landscape).
- Its role (in the north-east) as an important setting to Exmoor National Park, whose special qualities include striking views out of the protected landscape and a sense of remoteness, wildness and tranquillity.

Guidance for wind energy development

Permitted schemes within the LCT

Planning data held by the Council (November 2013) shows that there are ten permitted wind energy developments within this LCT, three of which are operational. These are Fullabrook Down (22 turbines within the 'very large' category); Philip Dennis, Ilfracombe with 1 'large' turbine; and Boode Farm, Braunton with 2 'very small' turbines. Of the remaining seven permitted schemes all are single turbines, one of which at Mullacott, Ilfracombe falls within the 'large' category. The other six fall within the 'very small' category. All of the schemes are situated within DCA 44: North Devon Downs.

Guidance for Development

The landscape sensitivity assessment indicates that, outside the AONB, this LCT has low-moderate sensitivity to 'very small' turbines, a moderate sensitivity to 'small' and 'medium' turbines, a 'moderate-high' sensitivity to 'large'-scale turbines (76-110m high) and a high sensitivity to turbines between over 110 metres to tip. It also states that, apart from in exceptional circumstances, the landscape is likely to be highly sensitive to any clusters greater than 'small' in size. This indicates that the landscape will be particularly sensitive to turbines of over 75m in height, and unlikely to be able to accommodate turbines over 110m to tip, or in groups of more than 5 turbines, without introducing a change to landscape character. Ridgelines that form a setting to the AONB should be avoided as sites for development.

Within the AONB, the sensitivity assessment concludes that the landscape will be unlikely to accommodate turbines of over 25m to blade tip or developments of more than a single turbine, without introducing a change to landscape character. Any single turbine developments within the AONB should be visually linked with existing buildings.

A clear visual hierarchy should be maintained between 'very small'/'small' scale turbines associated with buildings (e.g. single on-farm turbines), and 'medium' or 'large' scale wind energy developments in larger scale areas (i.e. larger turbines located in small groups of 5 or less turbines). A proliferation of varying heights and styles of turbine should be avoided. Within these distinct size categories of turbine, developments should be of a similar scale and design (in terms of number, siting, layout, style of turbine and relationship to key characteristics) to maintain a simple image and reinforce links between landscape characteristics and design response within the LCT.

The overall aim should be ensure that wind energy developments do not have a significant cumulative impact on the LCT resulting in an overall change of landscape character.

When siting and designing wind energy developments in this LCT, the generic guidance within Chapter 2 of the Devon Landscape Policy Group's Advice Note No. 2: Accommodating Wind and Solar PV Developments in Devon's Landscape should be followed, particularly when considering the cumulative impacts of multiple schemes. In addition, within this LCT particular care will need to be taken to ensure:

- The most prominent ridgelines (particularly those that form a backdrop and setting to the AONB in the south and west of the LCT) are protected from development.
- The location of wind turbines does not prevent the appreciation and understanding of distinctive skyline features including prehistoric archaeological features and historic church towers.
- Wind energy development does not overwhelm the human scale of characteristic landscape features including beech clumps, avenues and hedges.
- Valued fragments of naturalistic habitats are retained – including areas of species-rich acidic and neutral grassland, rush pasture, patches of semi-natural woodland, scrub and bracken.
- Where possible, development avoids areas of sensitive historic land cover types including medieval enclosures based on strip fields, Barton fields and the registered parkland estates of

Saunton Court and Youlston Park.

- The hedged rural road network is not adversely affected by delivery of turbines.
- Wind turbines do not detract from the scenic countryside backdrop provided by the LCT to the settlements of Barnstaple and Braunton.
- The strong rural character of the landscape, with locally important levels of tranquillity, is retained.
- The highly scenic qualities of the landscape, including as part of the North Devon AONB, such as panoramic countryside views from elevated locations, framed seaward views and its strong historic character, are protected.
- Wind energy development does not adversely affect the sense of remoteness, wildness and tranquillity associated with Exmoor National Park, or unacceptably impact on the striking views from the National Park into the district.
- Opportunities are sought to enhance the landscape in association with any development, in accordance with the landscape strategy for the LCT. These include preserving the landscape's high levels of tranquillity, its importance for farming and its potential for creating new wildlife refuges.

Additional Guidance Specific to Particular Landscape Character Areas

This guidance will apply consistently for the two Devon Character Areas where this LCT is present. Wherever possible, future development should be in line with the overall landscape strategy of the relevant Devon Character Area, as set out in the descriptions on the DCC website[55].

[55] http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/environmentplanning/natural_environment/landscape/landscapecharacter.htm

Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for solar PV development

Criteria	Lower sensitivity ▪▪▪▪▪▪▪▶ Higher sensitivity				
Landform			M		
	Rolling, elevated downland landscape with broad rounded ridges and hilltops, dropping in altitude in the south to meet the Taw/Torridge estuary and Barnstaple. The northern and coastal sections of the LCT are defined by a more undulating topography with distinctive ridgelines. It includes some visually prominent slopes.				
Sense of openness / enclosure				M-H	
	This is an open, downland landscape with limited enclosure provided by hedgebanks and occasional small woodlands, conifer blocks and shelterbelts.				
Field pattern and scale		L-M			
	This is a strongly agricultural landscape, dominated by intensive mixed farming within a pattern of medium-scale curving medieval fields and larger post-medieval and modern fields with dead-straight boundaries.				
Land cover			M		
	The LCT is dominated by intensive mixed farming, with sparse woodland and tree cover. Semi-natural habitats are limited to fragmented sites of species-rich acidic and neutral grassland, rush pasture, small patches of semi-natural woodland, scrub and bracken. Caravan and holiday parks, as well as other tourism-related land uses detract from traditional landscape character, particularly in locations close to the coast.				
Perceptual qualities			M		
	The LCT retains locally high levels of tranquillity away from settlements and major roads. Caravan and holiday parks, as well as other tourism-related land uses and structures such as masts and turbines detract from traditional landscape character in parts. Much of the landscape is under intensive agricultural use.				
Historic Landscape Character			M		
	The Devon HLC indicates that the LCT comprises a mixture of 32% medieval enclosures based on strip fields and 17% Barton fields (generally of a higher sensitivity to solar PV development), with other areas of modern enclosures (24%) and post-medieval enclosures (16%) which would be of lower sensitivity to solar PV developments. Smaller areas of medieval enclosures (2%), rough ground (2%) and other woodland (2%) – all of which would have a higher sensitivity. The landscape also includes parkland estates including the 15th century Saunton Court and the 18th century Youlston Park (both Grade II Listed).				
Scenic and special qualities				M-H	
	AONB	AONB	AONB	AONB	AONB
	21% of this LCT falls within the North Devon AONB (21%) and Heritage Coast. The special qualities of this part of the AONB include panoramic views from elevated areas across rolling countryside within and outside the AONB, wide and empty coastal vistas across to Lundy and beyond to the Welsh coast, and the legacy of a long history of human occupation – including fields defined by ancient hedge-banks, and historic farmsteads, hamlets and villages connected by winding lanes.. The countryside backdrop, much of it undesignated, is a defining element to the visual quality of the AONB providing a variety of open views. Some of these qualities may be affected by solar PV development. In addition, the LCT description notes the following special qualities which may be affected by solar PV development: dramatic and far-reaching views, smooth rolling skylines often only broken by protruding square church towers and archaeological features, and valued wildlife habitat within the farmland and associated with the hedge network. The DCA descriptions also note the high scenic quality of the landscape, its role as a backdrop and setting to settlements, the AONB and Exmoor National Park (in the north-east) and 'amazing' coastal views.				
Discussion on landscape sensitivity	Although this landscape includes large areas of intensive farming (including in large, modern fields), some flatter, plateau-like areas and is in parts influenced by modern development and human activity, its open character with some visible slopes and distinctive ridgelines, valued fragments of semi-natural habitat, its function as a countryside backdrop and the landscape's high scenic quality all heighten sensitivity. Areas within or on the edge of the AONB or closest to Exmoor National Park are likely				

	to have a higher sensitivity (although this will need to be judged on a case by case basis).

Sensitivity to different sizes of solar PV development				
	Land outside the AONB		**Land within the AONB**	
	Very Small (<1ha)	L-M	Very Small (<1ha)	M
	Small (>1-5ha)	M	Small (>1-5ha)	M-H
	Medium (>5-10ha)	M-H	Medium (>5-10ha)	H
	Large (>10-15ha)	H	Large (>10-15ha)	H
	Very Large (>15-20ha)	H	Very Large (>15-20ha)	H
	The predominantly medium-scale field patterns mean that this landscape would be highly sensitive to 'large' and 'very large' scale solar PV developments. Areas of smaller scale medieval field patterns and the more undulating coastal areas would also be highly sensitive to 'medium' scale developments. Areas within the AONB would be highly sensitive to any solar PV developments greater than 'small' in scale, with locations forming a setting to the protected landscape also likely to be highly sensitive to developments at the higher end of the 'small' size category.			

SUMMARY OF KEY SENSITIVE FEATURES/CHARACTERISTICS

A summary list of the key sensitive features and characteristics for the 5C Downland LCT in relation to solar PV development is included below:

- Its visually prominent slopes, ridgelines and undulating topography particularly near the coast and in the north of the LCT.
- Valued fragments of naturalistic land cover, including areas of species-rich acidic and neutral grassland, rush pasture, patches of semi-natural woodland, scrub and bracken.
- The landscape's strongly rural character with sensitive historic land cover types including medieval enclosures based on strip fields, Barton fields and the registered parkland estates of Saunton Court and Youlston Park.
- Its high scenic qualities, particularly within the North Devon AONB – whose special qualities include panoramic countryside views from elevated locations, its role as a countryside backdrop and strong historic character, with valued features including ancient hedgebanks.
- Its role (in the north-east) as an important setting to Exmoor National Park, whose special qualities include striking views out of the protected landscape and a sense of remoteness, wildness and tranquillity.

Guidance for solar PV development

Permitted schemes within the LCT

Planning data held by the Council (November 2013) indicates that there are four permitted (but not yet operational) solar PV developments within this LCT. Two are located at the same site at West Hill Farm, West Down. One of these schemes falls within the 'very large' category, whilst the other falls within the 'very small' category - as do the remaining two permitted schemes (Bampfield Farm, Barnstaple and Cheglinch Farm, West Down). All of the proposals are located within DCA 44: North Devon Downs.

Guidance for Development

The landscape sensitivity assessment indicates that, outside the AONB, this LCT has a low-moderate or moderate sensitivity to 'small' developments (>1-5ha), a moderate-high sensitivity to 'medium' developments (>5-10ha) and a high sensitivity to developments greater than 10ha. This indicates that the landscape will be particularly sensitive to any developments over 5ha and is unlikely to be able to accommodate any over 10ha in size without introducing a change to landscape character. Any proposals should be located in more enclosed areas and on lower slopes, avoiding highly visible slopes (particularly closer to the coast) and the LCT's valued remaining areas of semi-natural habitat.

Within the AONB, the assessment concludes that the landscape would be unlikely to be able to accommodate any solar PV schemes over 5ha in size without introducing a change to landscape character. Areas closest to the coast are only likely to be able to accommodate solar PV schemes of less than one hectare in scale.

Multiple developments within the LCT should be of a similar scale and design (in terms of siting, layout, scale, form and relationship to key characteristics) to maintain a simple image and reinforce links between landscape characteristics and design response within the LCT. The overall aim should be to make sure that solar PV developments do not become a key characteristic of the landscape (i.e. developments would not result in a significant cumulative impact on the LCT or overall change of landscape character).

When siting and designing solar PV developments in this LCT the generic guidance within Chapter 3 of the Devon Landscape Policy Group's Advice Note No. 2: *Accommodating Wind and Solar PV Developments in Devon's Landscape* should be followed particularly when considering the cumulative impacts of multiple schemes. In addition, within this LCT particular care will need to be taken to ensure:

- The most visually prominent slopes and ridgelines are avoided, particularly near the coast and in the north of the LCT (including those forming setting to the AONB and National Park).
- Solar PV developments do not detract from the scenic countryside backdrop provided by the LCT to the settlements of Barnstaple and Braunton.
- Valued naturalistic habitats are protected – including the remaining fragments of species-rich acidic and neutral grassland, rush pasture, patches of semi-natural woodland, scrub and bracken.
- The integrity of sensitive historic land cover types is protected, including medieval enclosures based on strip fields, Barton fields and the registered parkland estates of Saunton Court and Youlston Park.
- The strong rural character of the landscape, with locally important levels of tranquillity, is retained.
- The highly scenic qualities of the landscape, including as part of the North Devon AONB, such as panoramic countryside views from elevated locations and its strong historic character, are protected.
- Solar PV development does not adversely affect the sense of remoteness, wildness and tranquillity associated with Exmoor National Park, or unacceptably impact on the striking

views from the National Park into the district.

- Opportunities are sought to enhance the landscape in association with any development, in accordance with the landscape strategy for the LCT. These include preserving the landscape's high levels of tranquillity, its importance for farming and its potential for creating new wildlife refuges.

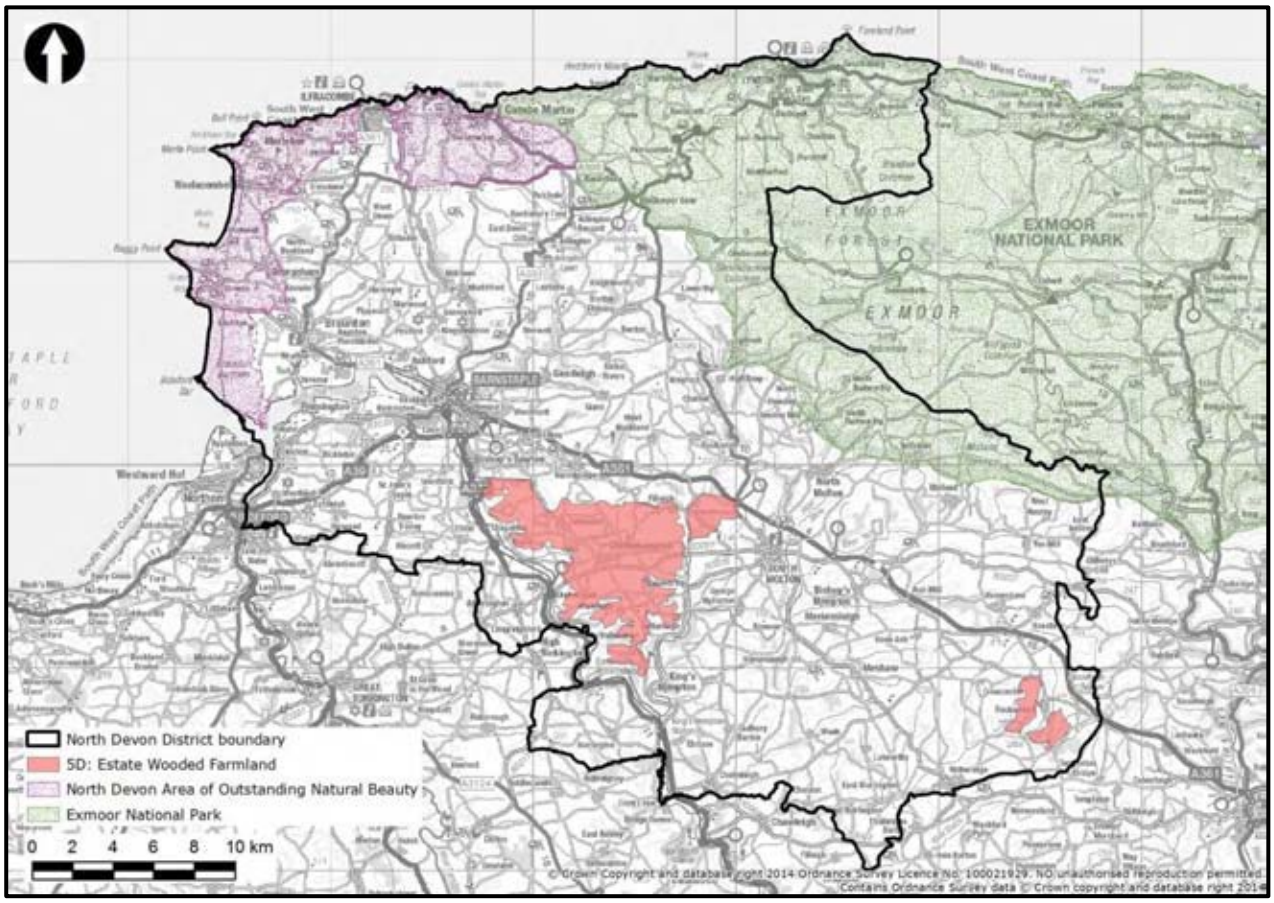
Additional Guidance Specific to Particular Landscape Character Areas

This guidance will apply consistently for all Devon Character Areas where this LCT is present. Wherever possible, future development should be in line with the overall landscape strategy of the relevant Devon Character Area, as set out in the descriptions on the DCC website[56].

[56] http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/environmentplanning/natural_environment/landscape/landscapecharacter.htm

LCT 5D: Estate Wooded Farmland

LCT Location Map



Character Areas

DCA 14: Codden Hill and Wooded Estates

DCA 67: Witheridge and Rackenford Moor

Please note that while this LCT assessment for wind and solar PV development provides an initial indication of landscape sensitivity and guidance for accommodating developments in the landscape, it should not be interpreted as a definitive statement on the suitability of individual sites for a particular development. All developments will need to be assessed on their own merits.

Key Landscape Characteristics

- Rolling hills and farmland drained by frequent streams, brooks and springs creating an undulating topography.
- Underlying geology comprising mudstones and siltstones, with harder outcrops of sandstone creating rolling hills and ridges ('Culm Measures').
- Higher land affords long views across the landscape, including to Dartmoor from the Sheepwash area.
- Well-wooded character, with frequent mixed and broadleaved plantations (often beech and oak), estate woodlands, wet woodland lining streams, historic wood pasture and conifer blocks.
- Grown-out beech and oak hedgebanks, veteran in-field trees and streamside orchards contributing to the landscape's wooded estate character.
- Mixture of sinuous medium-scale medieval fields and larger, more regular enclosures. Some villages retain small historic strip fields around their fringes.
- Fields enclosed by wildflower-rich Devon banks often topped with closely-cut mixed thorn, beech and sycamore hedges. Some use of fencing (including estate railings where associated with historic parklands).
- Predominantly pastoral land use, particularly dairying, with areas of arable cultivation and some ancient wood pasture. Pony paddocks sometimes found around villages and land around Higher Langton includes an alpaca farm.
- Nature conservation interest provided by areas of Culm grassland, rush pasture, unimproved meadows, ponds and valley mire, as well as bands of ancient semi-natural woodland lining minor valleys.
- Historic parkland, estates and manors influencing landscape character, including Heanton Satchville, Great Halmpstone Manor (Grade II* Listed), the wider Castle Hill estate around Filleigh (Grade I Registered Park & Garden) and Rackenford Manor.
- Nationally important Bronze Age bowl barrows, the Iron Age hillfort of Berry Castle, a moated site and the medieval Durpley Castle contributing to an historic sense of place.
- Traditional local vernacular of whitewash and cream cob/render cottages with slate or thatched roofs, as well as some buildings of local stone.
- Linhays (traditional livestock shelters) constructed of cob and local stone with slate or corrugated iron roofs, reinforce a strong history of farming.
- Nucleated historic hamlets and villages focused around crossroads or stream crossing points, with square stone church towers forming local landmarks. Frequent farmsteads distributed throughout.
- Winding rural roads bounded by flower-rich Devon banks restricting views, crossing many streams on stone bridges. Crossroads marked by distinctive white finger posts.
- Strong sense of peace and tranquillity and feeling of being in the heart of Devon.
- The Norboard factory on the fringes of South Molton forms a detracting feature in views from around Chittlehampton and the Castle Hill estate.

45% of the LCT falls within North Devon District

Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for wind energy development

Criteria	Lower sensitivity ▪▪▪▪▪▪▪▶ Higher sensitivity
Landform and scale	M
	Medium scale undulating rolling hills and ridges drained by streams, brooks and springs.
Land cover pattern and presence of human scale features	M-H
	Mixed pattern of sinuous medium-scale medieval fields and larger more modern regular fields on higher slopes. The mainly pastoral land is interspersed with frequent mixed and broadleaved plantations, estate woodlands, wet woodland lining streams, historic wood pasture, conifer blocks and some areas of arable land and pony paddocks (often around villages). Also contributing to this mixed pattern are areas of Culm grassland, rush pasture, unimproved meadows, ponds and valley mire, as well as bands of ancient semi-natural woodland lining minor valleys. Some villages are surrounded by historic strip fields. Human scale features include villages and historic hamlets, frequent farmsteads, traditional cottages, linhays (traditional livestock shelters), Devon hedges, frequent trees and Castle Hill estate buildings.
Tracks / transport pattern	M-H
	Most roads that cross this LCT are smaller rural lanes bounded by flower-rich Devon banks, with the exception of one road (B3227) which runs east west in the centre of the northern part of the LCT linking Great Torrington and South Molton.
Skylines	H
	Although the LCT description does not refer to skylines, there are mature trees on more open skylines forming silhouettes, and wooded skylines (including estate plantings) characterise much of the landscape. Church towers and spires form occasional local landmarks at Chittlehampton and Filleigh.
Perceptual qualities	M
	The strong rural character of this landscape with its scattered farmsteads and linhays, absence of many main roads and the influence of historic parkland, estates and manors all contribute to high levels of peace and tranquillity.
Historic landscape character	M-H
	The Devon HLC indicates that the LCT comprises a mixture of medieval enclosures based on strip fields (48%) – likely to be of higher sensitivity to wind energy development and modern enclosures (25%) - likely to be of lower sensitivity. There are also areas of Barton fields (7%) and other woodland (6%) - both likely to be of higher sensitivity to wind turbines. Small areas of post-medieval enclosures (7%) found within the LCT are likely to be of low sensitivity.
Scenic and special qualities	M
	None of the LCT falls within the North Devon Coast AONB. However, special qualities are recorded in the district's LCT description and the Devon LCA descriptions for DCAs 14 and 67. The special qualities of this landscape, as recorded in the district's LCT description, include large specimen trees within parkland and open farmland, strong coherence in building styles, a managed working landscape, large areas of woodland (including ancient woodland), and a strong sense of history and culture. Some of these could be affected to some degree by wind energy development. Further special qualities mentioned in the Devon LCA descriptions, that could be affected by wind energy development, include: the landscape's panoramic views; high scenic quality; generally high levels of tranquillity and strong sense of remoteness; areas with dark night skies; internationally and nationally protected habitats including pockets of ancient woodland; Scheduled Monuments (e.g. hillforts at Berry Castle and churchyard crosses); the Conservation Area at Chittlehampton and Registered Historic Parks and Gardens (i.e. the Castle Hill Estate).
Discussion on landscape sensitivity	Although this landscape has a relatively simple undulating landform, contains areas of larger modern enclosures and has simple skylines, the presence of smaller scale medieval enclosures based on strip fields, variety in land cover, the landscape's strong rural and historic estate character, frequent human scale features and sense of peace

	and tranquillity increase levels of sensitivity to wind energy development.	
Sensitivity to different turbine heights	Very Small (15-25m)	M
	Small (26-50m)	M
	Medium (51-75m)	M
	Large (76-110m)	M-H
	Very large (111-150m)	H
	The medium scale of this landscape and presence of frequent human scale features means that this landscape is likely to be particularly sensitive to turbines in the 'large' and 'very large' size category.	
Commentary on different cluster sizes Single turbine Small (<5 turbines) Medium (6-10) Large (11-25) Very large (>25)	The LCT's distinctive undulating landform and predominantly medieval field patterns mean that it is likely to be particularly sensitive to 'large' or 'very large' clusters.	

SUMMARY OF KEY SENSITIVE FEATURES/CHARACTERISTICS

A summary list of the key sensitive features and characteristics for 5D Estate Wooded Farmland LCT in relation to wind energy development is included below:

- Strongly rural and historic character with sensitive land cover types including medieval enclosures based on strip fields and Barton fields.
- Important tracts of valued semi-natural habitats, including areas of Culm grassland, rush pasture, unimproved meadows, ponds and valley mire, and bands of ancient semi-natural woodland.
- The rural road network, with characterful lanes bounded by flower-rich banks and Devon hedges.
- The presence of human scale features including frequent farmsteads, traditional cottages, linhays, Devon hedges, trees (including parkland specimens) and estate buildings.
- The historic, wooded estate character of the landscape, particularly associated with the Grade II* Castle Hill Estate.
- Undeveloped, frequently wooded skylines overlooked by Codden Hill to the north and forming a scenic backdrop to the Taw and Bray Valleys (to the west and east respectively).

Guidance for wind energy development

Permitted schemes within the LCT
Planning data held by the Council (November 2013) shows that there are currently no operational or consented wind energy developments within this LCT.
Guidance for Development
The landscape sensitivity assessment indicates that this LCT has a moderate sensitivity to 'very small', 'small' and 'medium' size turbines (up to 75m), a moderate-high sensitivity to turbines between 76-110m and a high sensitivity to turbines over 110m to tip. The assessment also notes the LCT is likely to be highly sensitive to any clusters greater than 'medium' in size. This indicates that the landscape will be particularly sensitive to turbines higher than 75m and be unlikely to be able to accommodate turbines over 110m to tip, or in groups of more than ten turbines, without introducing a change to landscape character. A clear visual hierarchy should be maintained between 'very small'/'small' scale turbines associated with buildings (e.g. single on-farm turbines), and 'medium'/'large' scale wind energy developments in larger scale areas (i.e. larger turbines located in small groups of 5 or less turbines). A proliferation of varying heights and styles of turbine should be avoided. Within these distinct size categories of turbine, developments should be of a similar scale and design (in terms of number, siting, layout, style of turbine and relationship to key characteristics) to maintain a simple image and reinforce links between landscape characteristics and design response within the LCT. The overall aim should be ensure that wind energy developments do not have a significant cumulative impact on the LCT resulting in an overall change of landscape character. When siting and designing wind energy developments in this LCT, the generic guidance within Chapter 2 of the Devon Landscape Policy Group's Advice Note No. 2: *Accommodating Wind and Solar PV Developments in Devon's Landscape* should be followed, particularly when considering the cumulative impacts of multiple schemes. In addition, within this LCT particular care will need to be taken to ensure: • Wind energy development does not overwhelm the human scale of the LCT's frequent landscape features, including specimen parkland trees, farmsteads, estate buildings and traditional linhays. • The strong rural and historic character of the landscape with locally important levels of peace and tranquillity is retained. • Valued naturalistic habitats are retained – including areas of Culm grassland, rush pasture, unimproved meadows, ponds and valley mire, and bands of ancient semi-natural woodland. • The LCT's characteristic winding rural roads enclosed by flower-rich banks and Devon hedges are not adversely affected by delivery of turbines. • Wind energy development does not affect the character or setting of the Grade II* Castle Hill estate. • Turbines do not detract from the scenic backdrop provided by the LCT to the Taw and Bray Valleys. • Opportunities are sought to enhance the landscape in association with any development, and in accordance with the landscape strategy for the LCT, including protecting the unique character and identity of the estate landscape (ensuring that its special sense of place flourishes into the 21st century), managing ancient and parkland woodlands for wildlife and to produce timber and woodfuel, encouraging new low-carbon development which reinforces and replicates the local vernacular, integrates into its landscape setting and provides green links into the surrounding countryside.

Additional Guidance Specific to Particular Landscape Character Areas
This guidance will apply consistently to the two Devon Character Areas where this LCT is present. Wherever possible, future development should be in line with the overall landscape strategy of the relevant Devon Character Area, as set out in the descriptions on the DCC website[57]. The LCT has a close relationship with the Taw Valley (DCA 59) to the west, and forms a wooded, scenic countryside backdrop to westward views from South Molton (DCA 53).

[57] http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/environmentplanning/natural_environment/landscape/landscapecharacter.htm

Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for solar PV development

Criteria	Lower sensitivity ▪▪▪▪▪▪▪▶ Higher sensitivity				
Landform			M		
	Undulating rolling hills and ridges drained by streams, brooks and springs. The landscape includes some prominent slopes due to its elevation.				
Sense of openness / enclosure		L-M			
	A sense of enclosure is provided by the landscape's wooded character including frequent mixed and broadleaved plantations, estate woodlands, wet woodland lining streams, historic wood pasture and conifer blocks. This sense of enclosure is further added to by the presence of Devon banks, grown-out beech and oak hedgebanks. There are some more open ridgelines and higher slopes.				
Field pattern and scale			M		
	A mixture of sinuous medium-scale medieval fields and larger more modern regular fields. Some small historic strip fields and pony paddocks are located around the fringes of villages.				
Land cover				M-H	
	Mainly pastoral farmland but also areas of arable cultivation and pony paddocks, Culm grassland, rush pasture, unimproved meadows, ponds and valley mire. Frequent mixed and broadleaved plantations, estate woodlands, wet woodland lining streams, historic wood pasture and conifer blocks are interspersed with this agricultural land.				
Perceptual qualities			M		
	The strong rural character of this landscape with its scattered farmsteads and linhays, absence of main roads and the influence of historic parkland, estates and manors all contribute to a strong sense of peace and tranquillity.				
Historic Landscape Character				M-H	
	The Devon HLC indicates that the LCT comprises a mixture of medieval enclosure based on strip fields (48%) – likely to be of higher sensitivity to solar PV development and modern enclosures (25%) - likely to be of lower sensitivity. There are also areas of Barton fields (7%) and other woodland (6%) - both likely to be of higher sensitivity to solar PV developments. Small areas of post-medieval enclosures (7%) found within the LCT are likely to be of low sensitivity.				
Scenic and special qualities			M		
	None of the LCT falls within the North Devon Coast AONB. However, special qualities are recorded in the district's LCT description and the Devon LCA descriptions for DCAs 14 and 67. The special qualities of this landscape, as recorded in the district's LCT description, include large specimen trees within parkland and open farmland, strong coherence in building styles, a managed working landscape, large areas of woodland (including ancient woodland), and a strong sense of history and culture. Some of these could be affected to some degree by solar PV development. Further special qualities mentioned in the Devon LCA descriptions, that could be affected by solar PV development, include: the landscape's panoramic views; high scenic quality; generally high levels of tranquillity and strong sense of remoteness; areas with dark night skies; internationally and nationally protected habitats including pockets of ancient woodland; Scheduled Monuments (e.g. hillforts at Berry Castle and churchyard crosses); the Conservation Area at Chittlehampton and Registered Historic Parks and Gardens (i.e. the Castle Hill Estate).				
Discussion on landscape sensitivity	The sense of enclosure, presence of modern, arable fields and existence of human influences could indicate a lower sensitivity to solar PV development. However, the presence of prominent, open ridgelines, smaller scale medieval enclosures based on strip fields, predominance of permanent pasture and mosaic of semi-natural habitats including Culm grassland and historic wood pasture and parkland increase levels of sensitivity to solar PV development.				

Sensitivity to different sizes of solar PV development	Very Small (<1ha)	M
	Small (>1-5ha)	M
	Medium (>5-10ha)	H
	Large (>10-15ha)	H
	Very Large (>15-20ha)	H
	Areas of smaller scale, medieval enclosures based on strip fields are also likely to be highly sensitive to 'medium' and 'large' scale solar PV development.	

Explanation for variations with the sensitivity assessment for Torridge (2011)

The greater proportion of smaller-scale medieval strip field enclosures within this LCT in North Devon has resulted in a high landscape sensitivity rating for medium and large-scale solar PV developments (rather than moderate-high in Torridge).

SUMMARY OF KEY SENSITIVE FEATURES/CHARACTERISTICS

A summary list of the key sensitive features and characteristics for 5D Estate Wooded Farmland LCT in relation to solar PV development is included below:

- Open ridgelines and elevated slopes forming a backdrop to views.
- Strongly rural and historic character with sensitive land cover types including curving medieval enclosures based on strip fields, woodland and Barton fields.
- Important tracts of valued semi-natural habitats, including areas of Culm grassland, rush pasture, unimproved meadows, ponds and valley mire, and bands of ancient semi-natural woodland.
- The historic, wooded estate character of the landscape, particularly associated with the Grade II* Castle Hill Estate.
- Valued local levels of peace and tranquillity with large areas free from modern human influence.

Guidance for solar PV development

Permitted schemes within the LCT

Planning data held by the Council (November 2013) shows that there is one permitted solar PV development within this LCT. This 'small' scheme is located at Castle Hill Barton, Filleigh and is not yet operational. It is situated within DCA 14: Codden Hill and Wooded Estates.

Guidance for Development

The landscape sensitivity assessment indicates that this LCT has a low-moderate or moderate sensitivity to 'very small' and 'small' solar PV developments (>1-5ha), a moderate-high sensitivity to 'medium' developments (>5-10ha) and a high sensitivity to developments greater than 10ha. This indicates that the landscape will be particularly sensitive to any developments over 5ha and is unlikely to be able to accommodate any over 10ha in size without introducing a change to landscape character. Any proposals should be located in more enclosed areas and on lower slopes, avoiding open ridgelines and valued areas of semi-natural habitat, including Culm grasslands, ancient woodlands and historic wood pasture.

Multiple developments within the LCT should be of a similar scale and design (in terms of siting, layout, scale, form and relationship to key characteristics) to maintain a simple image and reinforce links between landscape characteristics and design response within the LCT. The overall aim should be to make sure that solar PV developments do not become a key characteristic of the landscape (i.e. developments would not result in a significant cumulative impact on the LCT or overall change of landscape character).

When siting and designing solar PV developments in this LCT the generic guidance within Chapter 3 of the Devon Landscape Policy Group's Advice Note No. 2: *Accommodating Wind and Solar PV Developments in Devon's Landscape* should be followed particularly when considering the cumulative impacts of multiple schemes. In addition, within this LCT particular care will need to be taken to ensure:

- The most prominent upper slopes and open ridgelines are avoided.
- The strong rural character of the landscape with locally important levels of peace and tranquillity is retained.
- Valued naturalistic habitats are protected – including tracts of Culm grassland, valley mire, meadows, historic wood pasture and semi-natural woodlands.
- The predominantly pastoral character of the landscape and its strong network of species-rich Devon hedges dividing medieval fields, are retained.
- Where possible, development avoids areas of sensitive historic land cover types including medieval strip-field enclosures and Barton fields.
- Solar PV development does not affect the character or setting of the Grade II* Castle Hill estate.
- Opportunities are sought to enhance the landscape in association with any development, and in accordance with the landscape strategy for the LCT, including protecting the unique character and identity of the estate landscape (ensuring that its special sense of place flourishes into the 21st century), managing ancient and parkland woodlands for wildlife and to produce timber and woodfuel, encouraging new low-carbon development which reinforces and replicates the local vernacular, integrates into its landscape setting and provides green links into the surrounding countryside.

Additional Guidance Specific to Particular Landscape Character Areas
This guidance will apply consistently to the two Devon Character Areas where this LCT is present. Wherever possible, future development should be in line with the overall landscape strategy of the relevant Devon Character Area, as set out in the descriptions on the DCC website[58]. The LCT has a close relationship with the Taw Valley (DCA 59) to the west, and forms a wooded, scenic countryside backdrop to westward views from South Molton (DCA 53).

[58] http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/environmentplanning/natural_environment/landscape/landscapecharacter.htm

Appendix 1: Devon Character Area summary descriptions

Summary descriptions for each Devon Character Area with land in North Devon District are included in the table below for reference. This information is taken from the full descriptions available on Devon County Council's website[59] and is arranged in descending order in terms of area falling within the district.

DCA	Devon Character Area	Character Text
DCA14	Codden Hill and Wooded Estates	A landscape distinguished by its landform of high, whale-backed hills, and the presence of large estates of woodland and parkland. There is a strong sense of peace and tranquillity in the woodlands and along the winding, hedge-banked lanes, with a feeling of being at the 'heart of Devon'. This is a managed, working landscape with a strong sense of history and culture, with many historic parkland features still visible in today's landscape. Estate villages cluster around stone bridges or crossroads, and farms nestle into folds in the hills.
DCA27	Exmoor Fringe	This landscape of rolling, interlocking ridges, deeply incised by river valleys and patterned by beech hedges, provides an important setting and transition to Exmoor. The upland river valleys drain southwards from the high moorland, forming deep clefts in the landscape that contain clean, fast-flowing water and are clothed in ancient oak woodlands. The Bray valley is the major landscape feature of the western part of the area; further east the valleys are shorter, steeper and narrower. Tree features and hilltop clumps form notable landmarks. The area is sparsely settled, with individual farmsteads and small hamlets and vernacular buildings that are mainly of sandstone and slate. Seen from the south, the area forms the foreground landscape to Exmoor. Seen from the north it forms a diverse and strongly patterned patchwork of fields and wooded valleys.
DCA43	North Devon Coastal Downs	This is a landscape of contrasts, dominated by its seascape. There are wide westerly views to the sea, with the long, low outline of Lundy visible on the horizon, and views across Bideford Bay as far as Hartland Point. A series of rolling downland ridges run on to long headlands interspersed with sandy beaches. The smooth downland has an elevated, open, character, whilst the rough headlands feel wild, remote and windswept. The beaches are crowded with holidaymakers in summer, but in winter they feel empty and desolate. This is a colourful landscape – green fields; golden sands; vivid purple and yellow heath; brown and grey rocks; and glorious sunsets – but its mood is always set by the ever-changing sea.
DCA44	North Devon Downs	This is a simple, agricultural landscape dominated by the sky within an open, westerly aspect. The smooth hills have rounded profiles, and are covered by a patchwork of large, regular fields. Views are long and wide, sometimes with glimpses of the sea or estuary as a backdrop. The steep valleys which punctuate the downland run like wooded ribbons across the landscape, contrasting with the farmland in their rich colours and textures. These valleys have a secluded and secretive character. They are very tranquil, the only sounds often being birds and running water; and their sunken lanes have a timeless quality.

[59] http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/environmentplanning/natural_environment/landscape/devon-character-areas.htm

DCA	Devon Character Area	Character Text
DCA45	North Devon High Coast	This is an area of spectacular seascapes, with a rugged, jagged coastline containing a series of rocky headlands and small coves with grey shingle beaches. The western part of the area has a remote and ancient feel, with extensive areas of colourful coastal heath and grassland containing prehistoric standing stones. The area around Ilfracombe is more developed, its imposing Victorian architecture telling the story of its rise as holiday destination. The enclosed, wooded coastal combes (each with its own unique character) cut through rolling, agricultural downland to the sea. Trees are prominent features which soften the windswept landscape of the open downland below the ridge tops. -
DCA53	South Molton Farmland	Bright green fields divided by thick dark green hedgerows create a strong patchwork pattern across this peaceful and highly rural landscape. Steep, narrow and ancient lanes and tracks wind across the hills between flower-rich banks and luxuriant hedgerows. South Molton is a thriving market town with a wealth of colourful medieval, Elizabethan and Georgian buildings laid out around its busy main square. The square towers of the churches of South Molton, George Nympton and Bishop's Nympton are glimpsed between the hills and form important local landmarks.
DCA58	Taw-Torridge Estuary	This is a flat, sky-dominated landscape with strong sensory characteristics. The habitats within the mosaic (dunes, beach, saltmarsh, mudflats and farmland) each have unique qualities of pattern, colour and texture which are juxtaposed in different combinations. The salty smell of mudflats and the sea are ever-present, as are the calls of birds. Within the dunes, the landscape feels disorientating, and has a strong sense of enclosure, isolation and wilderness. This contrasts with the open views towards the surrounding settlements, and the time-depth associated with the strip fields at Braunton. The estuary settlements have a strong maritime character, with historic quays and impressive bridges.
DCA59	Taw Valley	This is an intricate, complex and varied landscape within a dramatic valley, which contrasts with the surrounding open, elevated farmland. Woodland and slopes combine with bends and spurs in the valley to hide views onward and create constant surprises. Tightly wooded sections unexpectedly open out to display wide vistas across the valley. Around Eggesford, the steep valley sides and mixture of broadleaved and coniferous woodland is evocative of continental Europe. Elsewhere, tranquil parkland gives the valley a soothing atmosphere.
DCA67	Witheridge and Rackenford Moor	An elevated, open landscape with long views to Dartmoor and/or to Exmoor. Within the patchwork of pastoral fields are extensive areas of rough Culm grassland and heathland. These Culm 'moors' have a strong sense of remoteness, even wildness, which is accentuated by the relative lack of settlement and the wind-sculpted trees and hedgerows; they give an impression of how large areas of Devon might have looked before agricultural improvements such as drainage, ploughing and fertilizers. The presence in the landscape of numerous clusters of prehistoric barrows adds to this sense of history and changelessness. The strong textures of plantations, beech hedgerows, heathland and grasses contrast with the smooth improved agricultural land which surrounds them. Patches of colour in the landscape change with the seasons – golden, brown and green grasses, purple heather and bright yellow gorse.

Appendix 2: User Guide

This brief User Guide is designed for both developers and decision-makers to help them consider landscape character and sensitivity when making proposals for wind energy or solar PV developments. It is arranged under three key stages, and sets out a series of questions as prompts to assist in using available information to shape proposals / assist in planning decisions. Please also refer to the criteria set out in paragraph 4.4 of the 'Managing Landscape Change' chapter of the DLPG Advice Note 2[60] when considering whether a development can be accommodated within the landscape.

Stage 1 – Landscape sensitivity

- What size development is proposed (number/height of turbines for wind energy development, or footprint for solar PV)?
- Which Landscape Character Type (LCT) is the proposed development in?
- Is the site characteristic of the wider LCT (as per the key characteristics provided at the beginning of each LCT assessment in Chapter 5)?
- What is the sensitivity rating for the LCT and type/scale of development being proposed?

Stage 2 – Detailed siting and design considerations

- Is the number/height of turbines (for wind energy development) or footprint (for solar PV development) consistent with the 'Guidance for Development' provided for the relevant LCT, including the 'Additional Guidance Specific to Particular Landscape Character Areas', as set out in Chapter 5? If not how does it differ?
- Does the development accord with the generic guidance for that type of development contained in the DLPG Advice Note 2? If not, what aspects of the proposed development conflict with which parts of the guidance?
- Does the siting and design of the scheme accord with the 'Guidance for Development' for the relevant LCT, as set out in Chapter 5? If not, what aspects of the proposed development conflict with which parts of the guidance?
- Have opportunities been taken to mitigate significant adverse effects and opportunities for landscape enhancement been included as part of the proposal?

Stage 3 – Cumulative impact

- Is the development in line with the guidance on 'designing for multiple developments' set out in the DLPG Advice Note 2 and the 'Guidance for Development' set for the relevant LCT, as set out in Chapter 5?
- If not, which guidance does it conflict with?
- Will wind energy/solar PV developments have a defining influence on the overall experience of the landscape of that LCT?

[60] http://www.devon.gov.uk/devon-guidance-v6-june-2013-final-report.pdf