

JOINT LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT FOR NORTH DEVON & TORRIDGE DISTRICTS

**Prepared for North Devon & Torridge District Councils, Devon County Council
and
Natural England**



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1 Introduction

- 1.1 This Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) for North Devon and Torridge Districts has been prepared by Land Use Consultants for the two local authorities, in partnership with Devon County Council and with funding from Natural England. It forms part of a wider programme of LCA work being undertaken on a Devon-wide scale, designed to help guide strategic planning and development management decisions and provide guidelines for the conservation and enhancement of Devon's special landscape qualities.
- 1.2 This LCA will form part of the evidence base for the two districts' Local Development Frameworks (LDFs). It has been prepared jointly for the two local authorities, in common with other Development Plan Documents (DPDs). This includes the Joint Core Strategy, the main document which sets out the strategic policies and spatial objectives for the two districts.
- 1.3 This Landscape Character Assessment will be used both as a tool to guide development so that it is in sympathy with local variations in landscape character, as well as to inform land management activity to manage and enhance local distinctiveness. It covers all of the land within the North Devon Coast Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and Heritage Coast, but excludes parts of North Devon

District falling within Exmoor National Park¹. In so doing, this report takes account both of the special qualities of the AONB as well as the setting of both protected landscapes.

- 1.4 The location of the two districts is shown in **Figure 1.1** on page 3, showing their relationship with nearby Protected Landscapes.
- 1.5 This Chapter sets out the policy and overarching national and county-wide Landscape Character Assessment framework for the Joint LCA. The rest of this report is structured as follows:
- **Chapter 2:** The Evolution of the Landscape – looking at the physical and cultural influences that have shaped today's landscape.
 - **Chapter 3:** Method for undertaking the Landscape Character Assessment – a summary of the method undertaken to classify the two districts into Landscape Character Types.
 - **Chapter 4:** Landscape Descriptions – the character descriptions, strategy and landscape guidelines for each LCT.

¹ This LCA excludes Exmoor because the National Park Authority has already published its own Landscape Character Assessment (2007).

- **Appendix 1:** Workshop reports and list of organisations represented.
- **Appendix 2:** Key characteristics for LCTs found in North Devon and Torridge from the Devon Menu.
- **Appendix 3:** List of references used to inform this study.

I.6 Also accompanying this report is an interactive Published Map File (in ArcReader format), which presents spatial information relating to the LCA in a series of layers. It also includes geo-referenced photographs taken across the two districts during field survey work carried out in February (for the AONB) and May 2010.

POLICY CONTEXT

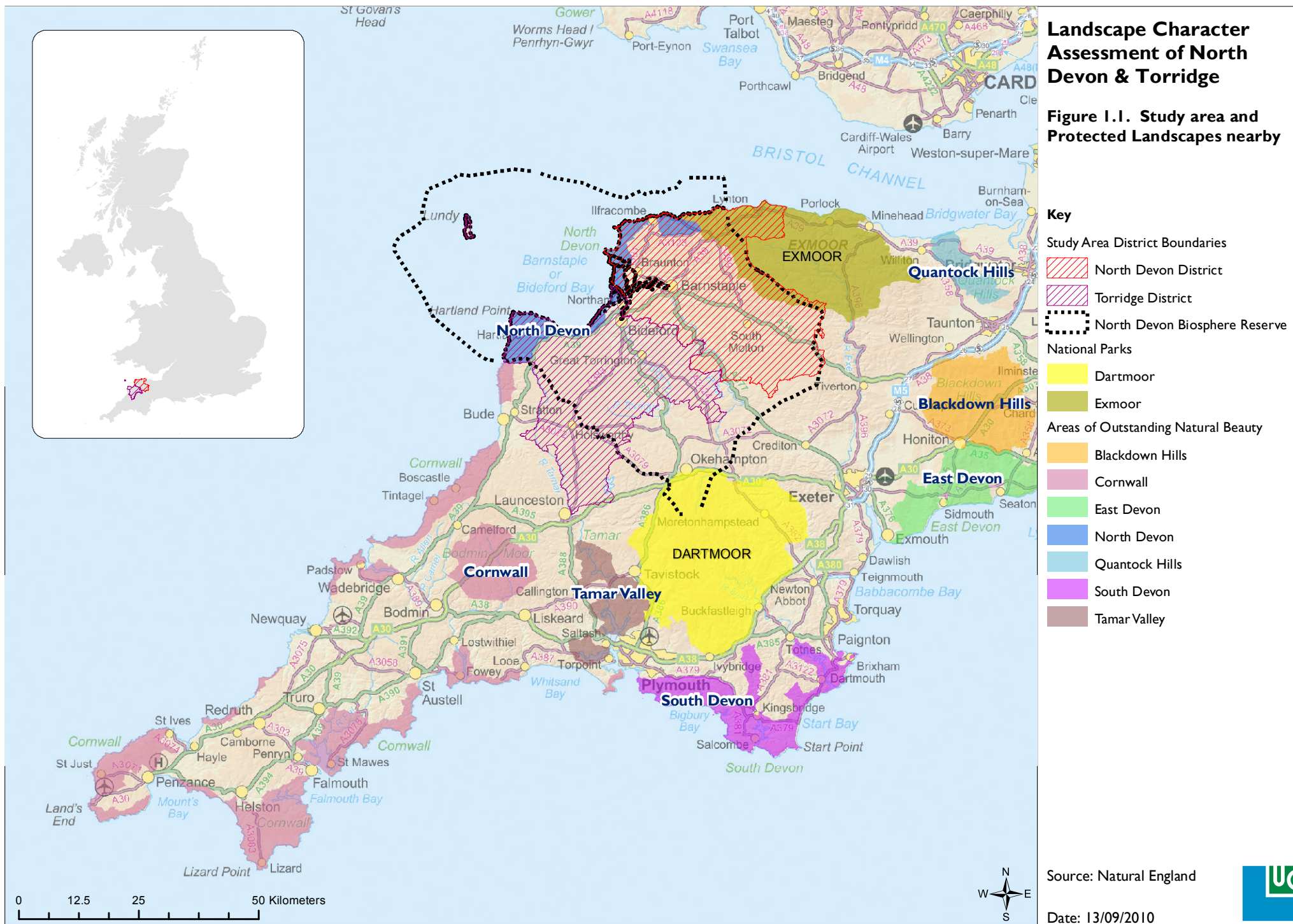
National, regional and county planning policy framework

- I.7 Nationally, guidance in Planning Policy Statement 7 (PPS 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas) advocates the use of tools such as Landscape Character Assessments to help guide appropriately sited and designed development.
- I.8 On a regional level, planning up until recently had been guided by the Draft Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS), prepared by the Regional Assembly covering the period up

to 2026². Policy ENV 2 of the RSS set out the need for local authorities to undertake strategic level landscape character assessments to help protect the region's landscapes from the impacts of inappropriate development. It also sought to promote quality development which enhances local character and distinctiveness. Policy ENV 3 specifically related to protected landscapes; seeking to ensure that any new development does not prejudice the statutory purposes of designation (see **Figure 1.1** which shows the location of protected landscapes within and close to the two districts). In the case of AONBs like the North Devon Coast, this policy also included a provision for local authorities to consider how development proposals might contribute towards promoting the understanding and enjoyment of the landscape's special qualities.

- I.9 In addition to protected landscapes, it is also important to note that a large proportion of the two districts falls within the North Devon Biosphere Reserve – a UNESCO designation afforded to only eight sites in the UK (also shown in Figure 1.1). 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

² Although the Regional Spatial Strategy has now been revoked, it has influenced local authorities' planning policy over the last few years and is therefore important to include in this chapter.



the coast and beyond to Lundy (around 3,300 km²). 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 Joint Core Strategy (see paragraph 1.11).

- 1.10 In the absence of an adopted RSS, strategic policies for development in the county of Devon remain guided by the Devon Structure Plan 2001-2016 (adopted in 2004). This includes Policy CO2 for AONBs (the predecessor to Policy ENV 3), which aims to protect areas of designated and adjacent land from inappropriate development, and Policy CO5 for Coastal Preservation Areas (CPAs). CPAs are currently being phased out and will eventually be replaced by Policy COR 6 of the Joint Core Strategy (see below).

Local planning policy framework

- 1.11 The two districts (shown in **Figure 1.1**) are currently preparing their Joint Core Strategy, publishing a draft consultation document in January 2010. The final document will set out the vision, objectives and key policies for northern Devon up to 2026. The pre-publication draft includes the following vision for the two districts:

‘Northern Devon supports vibrant low carbon communities where people are able to live well, work productively and enjoy excellent

education and leisure opportunities in harmony with nature and our world-class environment’.

- 1.12 In supporting this vision, the text specifically mentions how the role of the North Devon Biosphere Reserve as a ‘test bed’ can help support the above vision. The Core Strategy also gives an indication of future development provision across the district, as follows.
- 1.13 In summary, the market and coastal towns of Bideford/Northam, Great Torrington, Holsworthy, Ilfracombe, and South Molton are all set to expand to provide the full range of housing and employment growth, services and community facilities that are required to meet the needs of the community. Barnstaple is highlighted as developing its role as a sub-regional centre, as is Bideford/Northam for Torridge. The Strategy also sets new development against the context of the strategic needs of the two districts – with the area’s coastal resorts and tourist centres also identified for new development. The document includes specific visions and policies for the main towns.
- 1.14 Of key relevance to this LCA, the Joint Core Strategy also considers the landscape’s distinctive rural settlements; outlining plans for improved access to services whilst maintaining the rural and tranquil character of their surrounding countryside backdrop.

North Devon AONB

- I.15 The North Devon Coast Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) covers 171 square kilometres (66 square miles) of mainly coastal landscape from the border with Exmoor National Park at Combe Martin, through the mouth of the Taw-Torridge Estuary and beyond to the Cornish border at Marsland Mouth. It was designated in 1959 through the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act (1949) on merit of its outstanding coastal scenery and rich cultural, agricultural and maritime heritage. The AONB is also defined as Heritage Coast and is situated within the North Devon Biosphere Reserve.
- I.16 The Statutory Management Plan for the AONB (2009-2014) includes objectives and policies for planning development in the protected landscape. For example, Policy G1 seeks to encourage high quality and sustainable planning applications, whilst Policy G2 aims to facilitate the development of green infrastructure within the AONB. The Management Plan also includes an objective under its 'Landscape' theme to use this Landscape Character Assessment as a tool to assist in planning decisions (Objective LH2).

Areas of Great Landscape Value (AGLVs)

- I.17 AGLVs are a local landscape designation currently being phased out nationally. In North Devon and Torridge, these will be superseded by Policy COR6 (Environment and Heritage Assets) of the Joint Core Strategy. The previous North Devon Local Plan (adopted July 2006) identified five

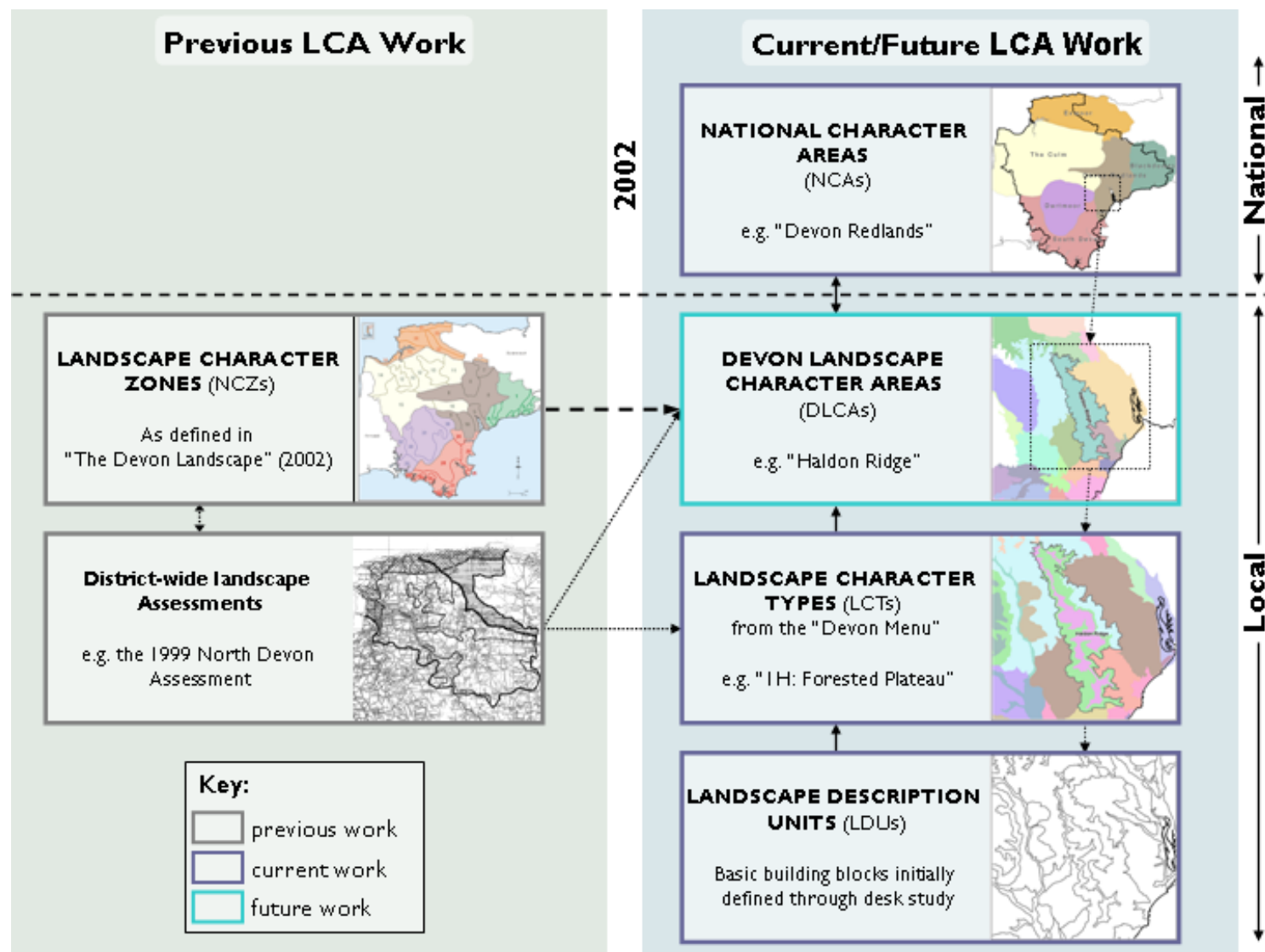
AGLVs of varying size; following the valleys of the Taw, Yeo, Bradiford Water and their tributaries, Hares Down and Knowstone Moor and the area surrounding Exmoor National Park. The Local Plan for Torridge (adopted 2004) chose not to designate AGLVs, instead using the previous district-level Landscape Character Assessment (1995) as the main evidence base for landscape planning.

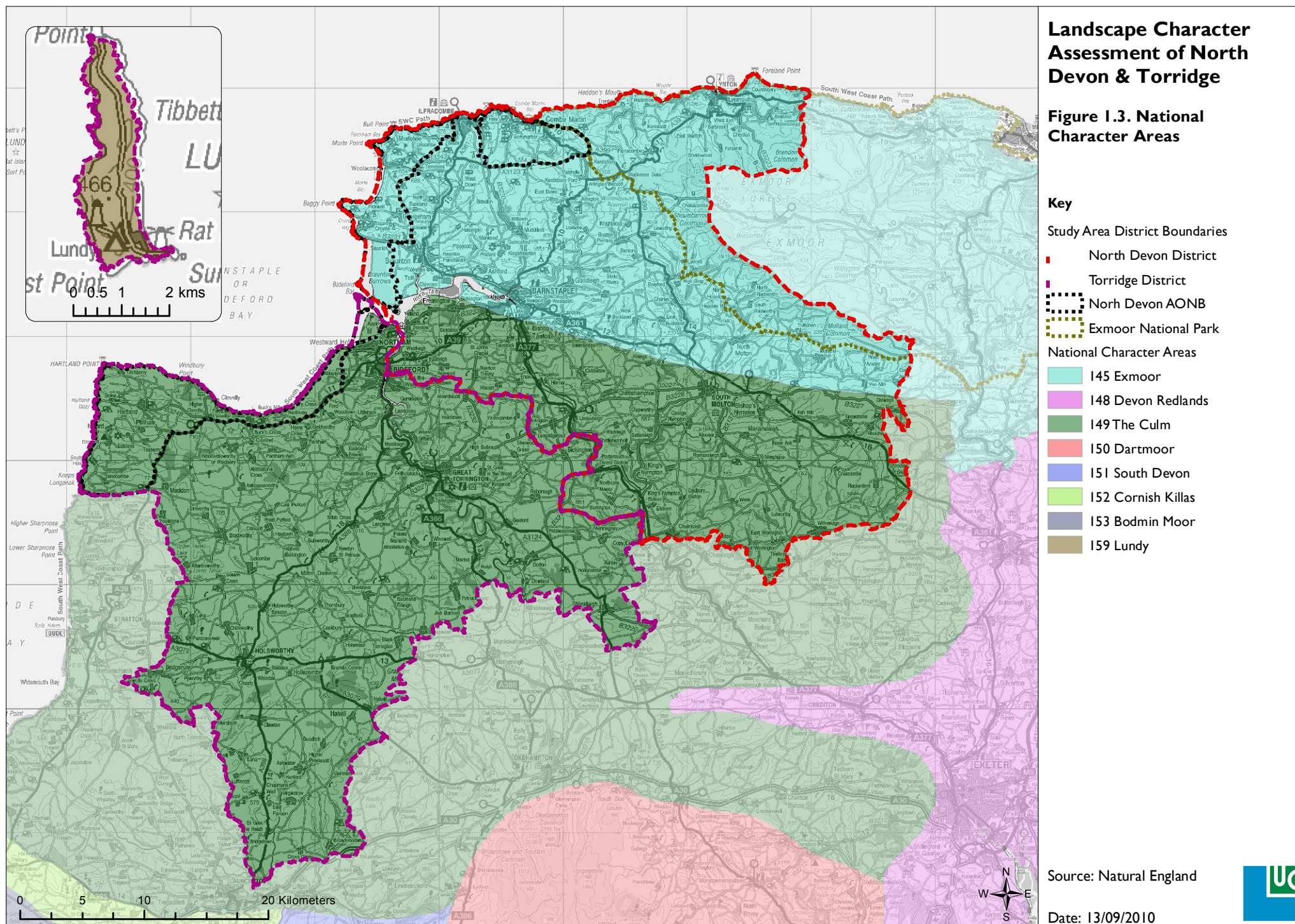
- I.18 Similarly, this LCA will be used to support Policy COR6 of the Joint Core Strategy. Through the identification of 'special qualities' and detailed landscape management and planning guidelines, the information contained in this report will help ensure that valued local landscapes continue to be understood, managed and planned appropriately.

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

- I.19 **Figure 1.2** illustrates the framework and hierarchy of national and county-wide Landscape Character Assessments which sit behind this LCA. This shows that at a national level, Natural England has identified 159 National Character Areas for England, including 149 *The Culm*, 145 *Exmoor* and 159 *Lundy* – see also Figure 1.3. Sitting below this tier is the county-wide work for Devon – both past and current. Past work at a county level included *The Devon Landscape (2002)* which split Devon into broad 'Visual Character Zones'. On a district and protected landscape level, various landscape character assessments have also been produced in the past,

Figure 1.2: Landscape Character Assessment Hierarchy





including for North Devon District (1993) Torridge District (1995) and the North Devon Coast AONB (1999).

- I.20 Since 2006, Devon has progressed a new county-wide landscape classification on a district-by-district basis. This work is following the *Living Landscapes* approach to landscape character assessment; based on a framework of Land Description Units (LDUs). Where possible, the LDUs have been used by the districts to form 'building blocks' of larger units of common character, known as 'Landscape Character Types' (LCTs).
- I.21 A 'Menu' of Landscape Character Types for Devon has been prepared as part of the ongoing county work. Where possible, LCTs from the Devon Menu have been used for the North Devon and Torridge LCA. Some areas of distinctive landscape character have, however, been identified across the districts through the creation of new LCTs. These have been included in the final version of the Devon Menu.
- I.22 In addition to the LCT descriptions contained in this report, a parallel study has been undertaken for the AONB to provide detailed descriptions at an LDU level. These descriptions will help support the AONB's use of the Landscape Character Assessment as a tool for assisting in planning decisions for areas within and adjacent to the protected landscape.

Mid Devon is the last district to be completed under the Living Landscapes methodology, the only exception being Exmoor National Park which has completed its own

assessment. The next step for the Devon work is to look at identifying county-wide Landscape Character Areas (LCAs). This work will pull together all of the information from the District-level LCTs to present it in geographically specific LCAs that people (including members of the public) can more easily engage with. Figure 1.2 shows how this could be done for the Haldon Ridge in East Devon (which is classified in the Teignbridge Assessment as part of two Landscape Character Types).

The European Landscape Convention (ELC)

- I.23 This Landscape Character Assessment has been prepared in accordance with the Articles of the European Landscape Convention. It will be one of the first ELC-compliant landscape character assessments in the South West.

Background

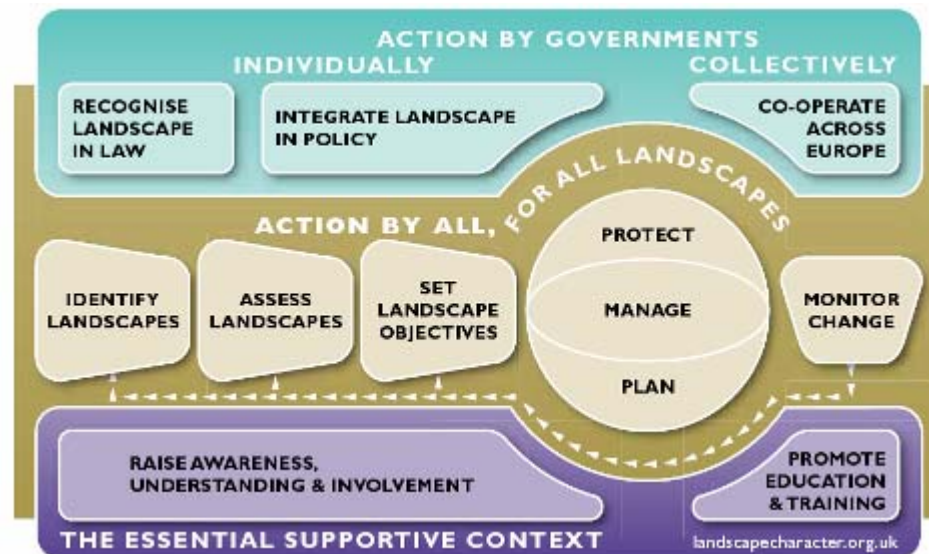
- I.24 The European Landscape Convention (ELC) came into force in the UK in March 2007. The Convention establishes the need to recognise landscape in law; to develop landscape policies dedicated to the protection, management and planning of landscapes; and to establish procedures for the participation of the general public and other stakeholders in the creation and implementation of landscape policies. It also encourages the integration of landscape into all relevant areas of policy, including cultural, economic and social policies. The European Landscape Convention defines landscape as:

“an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors.”

Implementing the European Landscape Convention

- I.25 Defra has charged Natural England with leading the implementation of the European Landscape Convention in England, working in partnership with English Heritage. An implementation framework has been published in 2007 and revised in 2009. The framework seeks to further strengthen the protection, management and planning of landscape in England by providing a structure for the Action Plans of partners and stakeholders. European Landscape Convention Action Plans have been produced by Natural England and English Heritage, providing a national steer.

Figure I.4: The practical steps needed to implement the European Landscape Convention



Implementing the ELC North Devon and Torridge

- I.26 This Landscape Character Assessment will make a key contribution to the implementation of the ELC in North Devon and Torridge. Through workshops held to inform this study, community representatives have been given the opportunity to identify the ‘positive attributes’ (or ‘special qualities’) of the districts’ landscapes, as well as influence the setting of ‘landscape quality objectives’. In so doing, the Landscape Character Type descriptions in Chapter 4 set out information regarding landscape change, a strategy for the future and a list of detailed landscape guidelines (equivalent to the ELC’s ‘landscape quality objectives’).
- I.27 The Assessment will help reaffirm the importance of landscape, co-ordinate existing work and guide future work to protect, manage and plan the landscapes of the two districts. This ELC-compliant approach is helping to steer the methodology adopted for the final stages of the Devon work (to identify Landscape Character Areas and landscape quality objectives through public consultation).

2 The Physical and Cultural Evolution of the Landscape

- 2.1 This Chapter gives an overview of the main phases of physical and cultural evolution which have shaped the North Devon / Torridge landscape today – the main references are listed in Appendix 3. The later descriptions of the individual Landscape Character Types highlight the key characteristics and valued attributes of significance on a more local level.

GEOLOGICAL AND PHYSICAL EVOLUTION

Geology and landform

- 2.2 The two districts are underlain by a complex and in parts world-renowned geology that has strongly shaped and influenced the character of the landscape over hundreds of millions of years. See **Figure 2.1**.
- 2.3 The area displays a clear divide in its underlying rocks – a geological boundary roughly follows the Taw-Torridge Estuary, above which lie the resistant Devonian slates and sandstones which form the high land of Exmoor and the North Devon Downs³. The northern extent of the wide, rounded ridges of the high downland is marked by a broad ridgeline running parallel to the coast. This connects all the long ‘fingers’ of downland running south, divided by steep

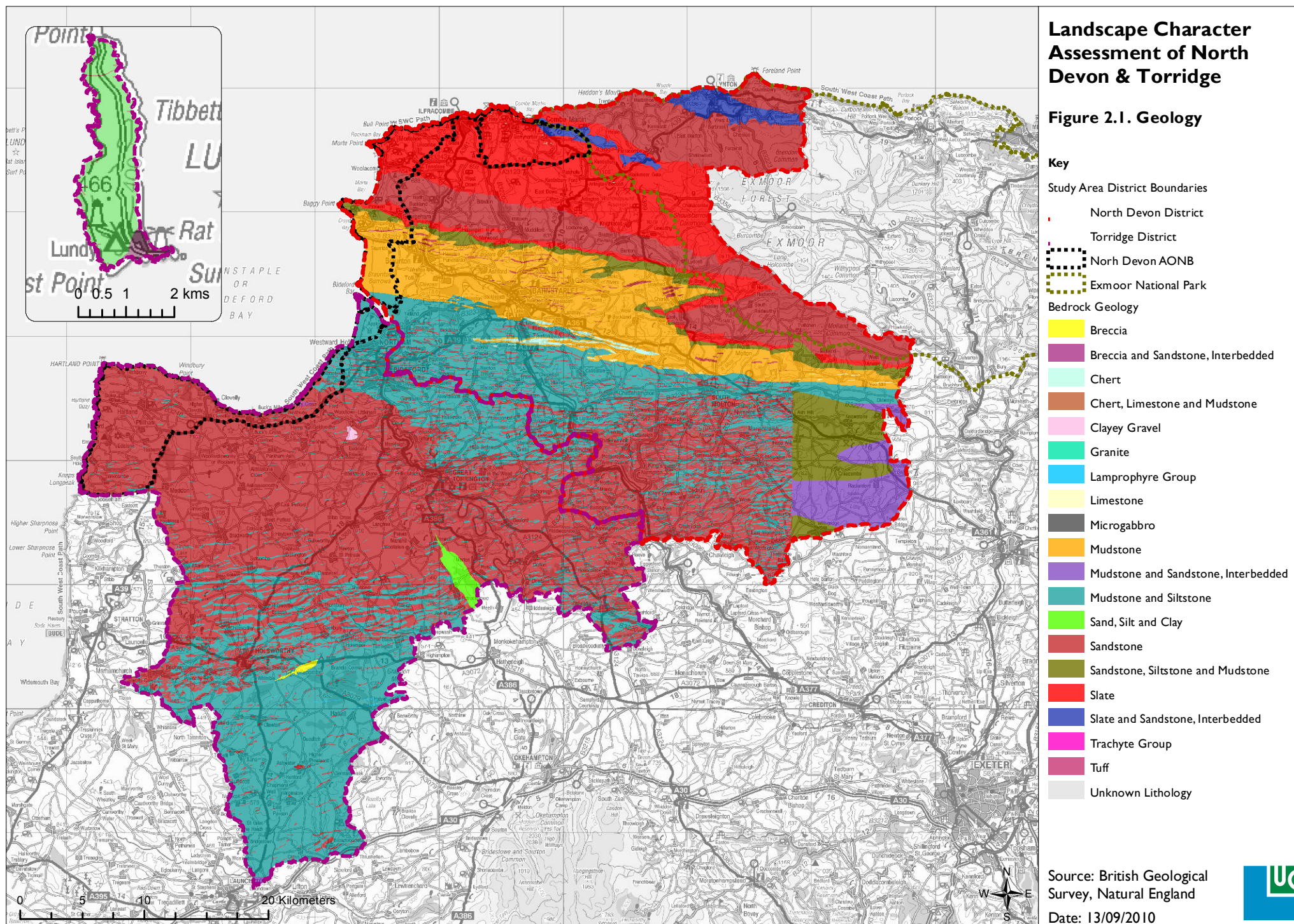
³ These are not ‘downs’ in the classic sense (i.e. the same as the chalk downs found in other parts of southern England); but locally, this is what the elevated area to the west of Exmoor and north of the Taw-Torridge Estuary is referred to.

wooded valleys and coastal combes. The Devonian rocks are displayed in a distinctive jagged coastline of folded strata and pronounced western headlands of more resistant Pickwell Down sandstone. These headlands have been landmarks for centuries; Morte Point being especially dreaded by mariners as a notorious wrecking ground.

Figure 2.2: Long views from the sandstone ridges in Torridge District



- 2.4 To the south of the estuary, spanning both North Devon and Torridge districts, are younger and softer Carboniferous ‘Culm Measures’, comprising crushed and



folded shales and sandstones originally laid down as sediments in a vast sea between 280 and 395 million years ago. These extend to cover a broad tract of the landscape and beyond, encompassing a significant portion of Devon from the Exe Valley westwards to the Atlantic seaboard. The resultant rolling landform is frequently dissected by small streams and rivers, but with a certain grain to the land – characterised by broad, poorly drained sandstone ridges separated by shale valleys. The high sandstone ridges are some of the most exposed land in the districts – for example, the farmland around Rackenford reaches some 280 metres above sea level. An anomaly in the typical Culm landform of much of the landscape is the thin band of limestone stretching from Swimbridge towards South Molton. This creates a series of distinctive whaleback chert ridges, including Codden Hill, affording panoramic views across the surrounding landscapes.

- 2.5 The coastline framing Torridge District showcases steeply inclined strata formed through considerable faulting and folding during periods of massive uplift at the end of the Carboniferous period, some 300 million years ago (the 'Variscan Orogeny'). One particular fault exposed a small amount of older Permian red sandstone at Portledge on the Clovelly coast. This gives the cliffs an isolated splash of colour against the sombre greys and browns of the neighbouring Carboniferous rocks. The shaping and folding of the rocks by the massive earth movements at this time are dramatically illustrated in the cliffs and rocky foreshore along the Hartland coast, including at Hartland Quay.

Figure 2.3: Strata visible in coastal cliffs



- 2.6 Following the uplift of the landscape at the end of the Carboniferous period, the newly revealed land emerged into a sub tropical arid climate, where storms swept large amounts of sediment into valleys and fringing desert plains. This gave rise to the local deposits of breccia and breccio-conglomerate now seen east of Clovelly. The strata were further displaced by a swarm of minor, and some major faults. Of most significance was the Sticklepath Fault, which occurred during the Tertiary Period, running north-west to south-east from Bideford Bay to Torbay in South Devon. This caused local subsidence to create the Petrockstowe Basin in Torridge District. Sand, clay and lignite accumulated in the beds of the rivers and lakes within the

basin, forming the Ball Clay deposits found and worked around Petrockstowe and Meeth.

- 2.7 Devon did not experience the full effects of the Ice Age in the subsequent Quaternary period. The south-moving ice sheet extended no further than the cliffs of Bideford Bay. Increased river erosion during this period, however, gradually created much of the present landform. The rises in sea level that occurred with the melting of the ice sheets also caused some river valleys to be drowned by the sea, including the Taw-Torridge Estuary which remains a major feature of today's landscape.
- 2.8 The scenery changes dramatically at the mouth of the estuary, where the extensive dune systems of Braunton Burrows to the north (see Figure 2.4) and the smaller Northam Burrows to the south stretch low and wide between enclosing headlands. These features were also largely the product of rising post-glacial sea levels which deposited estuarine clays and accumulations of marine sand. Onshore winds continue to feed the dune systems with sand blown from the wide beach at Saunton Sands.
- 2.9 Fronting Northam Burrows is an extensive pebble ridge, the continuation of a storm beach which fringes the cliff-foot from Clovelly eastwards. Material eroded from these cliffs enters the wave zone, becoming rounded into pebbles (or 'cobbles') which are lifted by waves and transported eastward by littoral drift. A relatively recent natural feature, in effect a 'shingle spit', the pebble ridge has been subject to considerable modification, and is slowly retreating landward.

This has led to the distinctive local custom of 'potwalloping'. Households with a hearth ("pot") in the parish of Northam gather annually to lob ("wallop") cobbles back into breaches formed by the winter storms.

Figure 2.4: Sand dunes at Braunton Burrows



- 2.10 In the millennia since the last Ice Age, rising sea levels and exposure to Atlantic storm waves have produced classic examples of coastal erosion and deposition, including tall rugged cliffs exposing wave-cut platforms, raised beaches, headlands, bays, caves, arches and stacks. Rising sea levels and consequent coastal retreat have also created hanging valleys where streams have been truncated to form cascading waterfalls falling down to beaches below, including Wargery Water and the Millford Water on the Hartland peninsula.

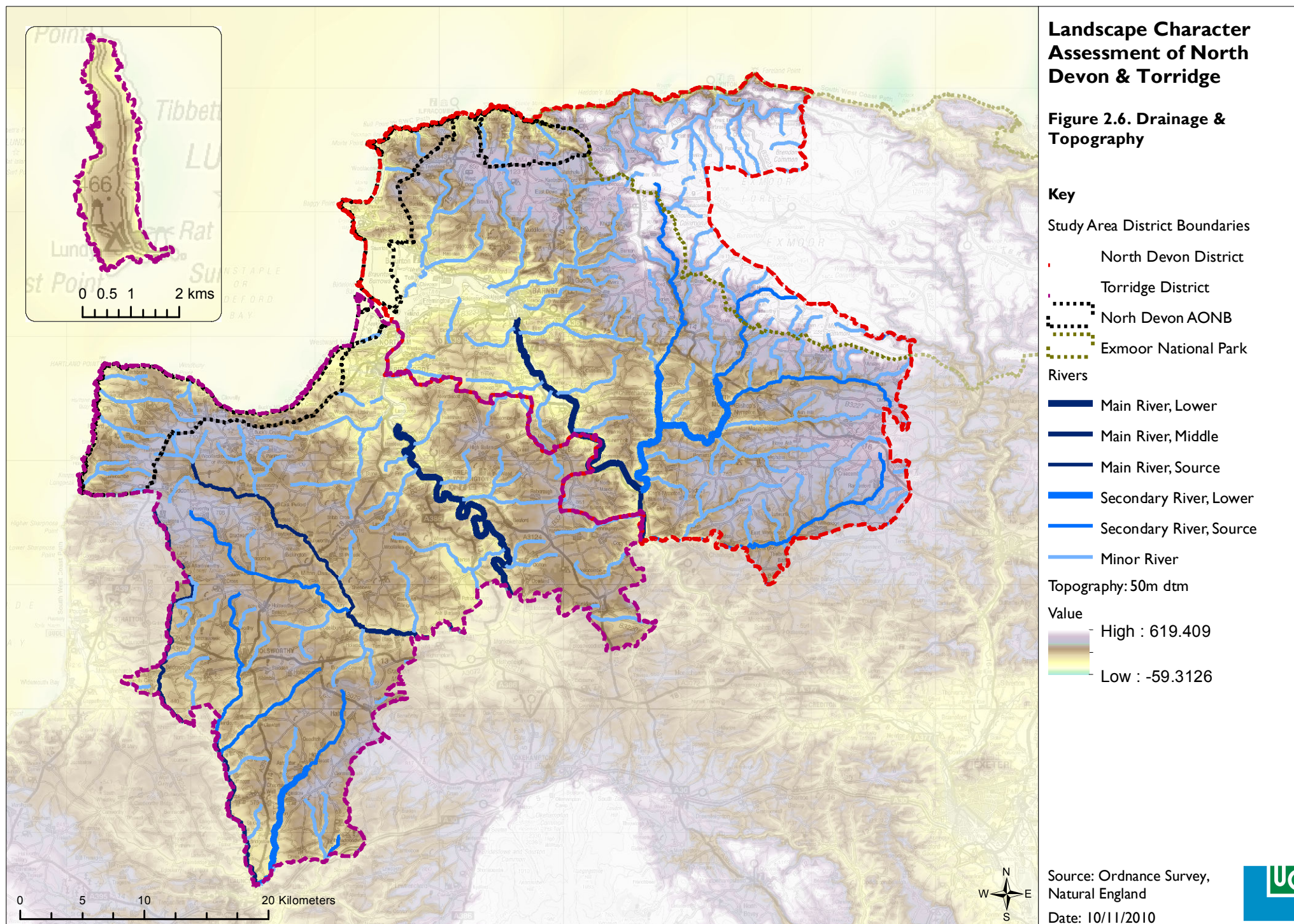
- 2.11 To the north-west of the North Devon coast lies Lundy Island, sitting in the Bristol Channel some 23 miles west of Ilfracombe and 11 miles from Hartland Point. The island is very distinct from the geology of the rest of the districts, formed from a plateau of Tertiary granite thought to be left as a legacy from an ancient volcano. In fact, the granite rock of the island is believed to represent the southern-most example of igneous rocks associated with the initial formation of the North Atlantic Ocean around 60 million years ago.
- 2.12 The south-eastern corner of Lundy is all that remains of the original slates that formed over 100 million years earlier – similar to the Morte slates of North Devon from the Upper Devonian period. A vertical intrusion (dyke) of igneous rock forms a large protective face to slates remaining behind the island's Landing Beach, preventing the further erosion of these older rocks. There is evidence in the form of rouches moutonnées, erratics and U-shaped valleys that, unlike mainland Devon, an ice sheet passed over Lundy during the last Ice Age.
- 2.13 This text summarises the main drainage patterns of Torridge and North Devon, starting with Torridge District (see **Figure 2.6**).
- 2.14 The River Taw flows from its source on Dartmoor across North Devon and into parts of Torridge District on its course to meet the River Torridge at the Taw-Torridge

Drainage

Estuary. The district is also drained by the upper courses of the Tamar and the full length of the Torridge River – both of which rise on high ground just inland of Hartland Point.

Figure 2.5: Tertiary granite exposed in cliffs along Lundy's west coast





- 2.15 The watershed between the Torridge and the Tamar, one mile east of Woolley Moor, was immortalised in Turner's painting shown in Figure 2.7 below.

Figure 2.7: Turner's painting *The Source of the Tamar and Torridge Rivers* (circa 1811-13)



- 2.16 From its source near the Hartland coast, the River Torridge flows south-east where it joins the River Waldon near Bradford. It then swings north and begins to flow towards the estuary at Bideford, and at Appledore it joins with the River Taw to feed into the Taw-Torridge Estuary. Tributaries of the river include the River Mere which joins south of Beaford, and the River Yeo which meets the river two kilometres south of Bideford.
- 2.17 The upper courses of the River Tamar are today dominated by two reservoirs (the Upper and Lower Tamar Lakes). As the river drains southwards on its course to meet the sea at Plymouth, it forms the county boundary with Cornwall.

Several tributaries join from within the district, including the Rivers Deer, Claw, Carey and Wolf. The Wolf is dammed by another reservoir – Roadford Lake – which straddles the south-eastern boundary of the district and into West Devon (see Figure 2.8).

- 2.18 Across in North Devon District, the high land of Exmoor, like Dartmoor, attracts high precipitation levels, serving as a more immediate source of the district's rivers. These drain south and west from the moorland core, including the Bray and Mole (both tributaries of the River Yeo and, in their lower courses, the Taw). The elevated North Devon Downs, which cover much of the district west of Exmoor, are also dissected by steep wooded valleys containing minor rivers and streams which generally flow southwards to meet the Taw/Torridge estuary.

Figure 2.8: Roadford Lake

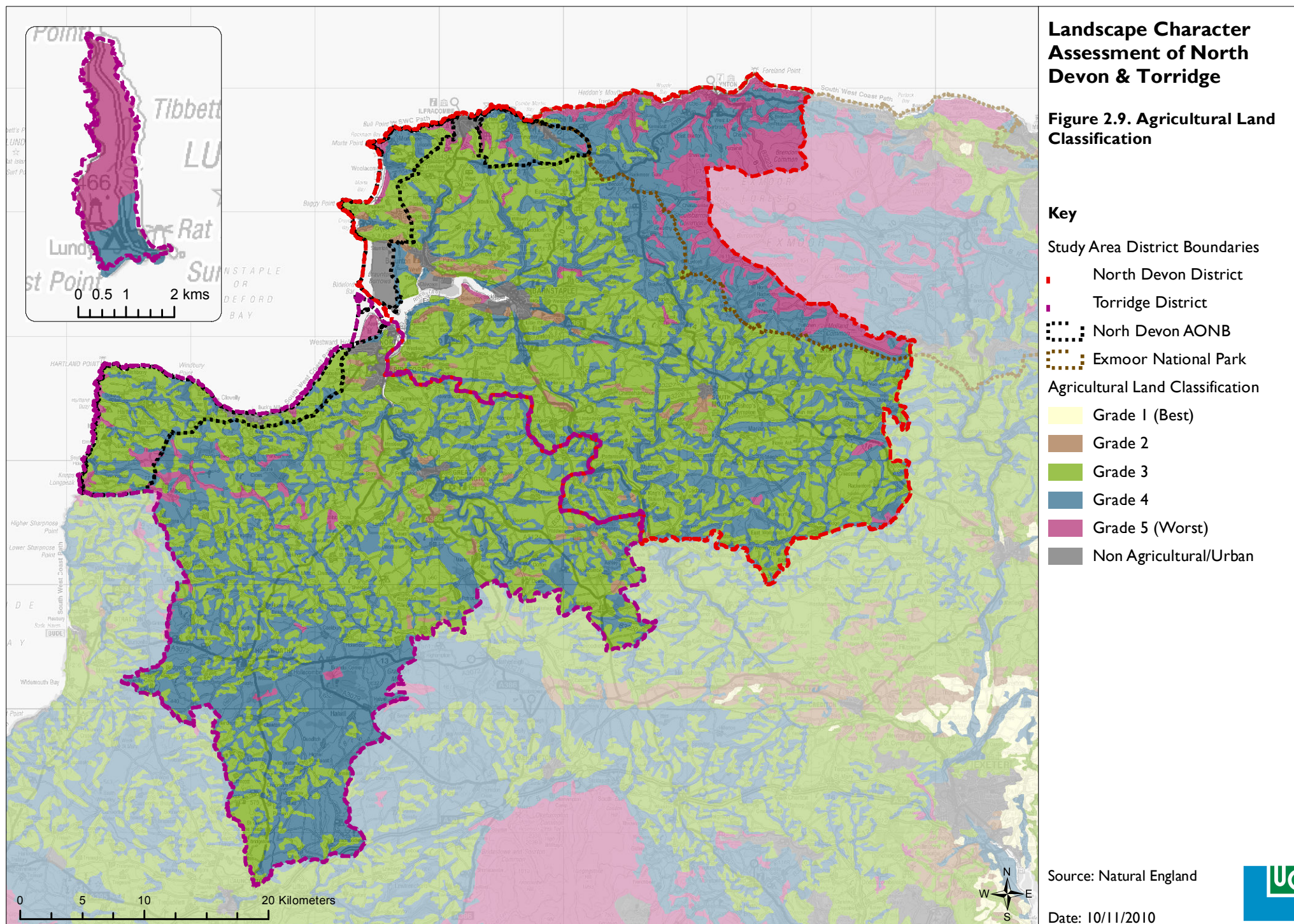


- 2.19 The south-western portion of the district, including the wet 'moors' lying above the slow-draining shales, mudstones and sandstones of the Culm Measures series, are crossed by numerous streams feeding into the Mole and Little Dart rivers – which are, in turn, tributaries of the River Taw, the main river of North Devon. Along with the River Torridge, the Taw is famously associated with Henry Williamson's 1927 novel *Tarka the Otter*. The Tarka Trail, which follows an old railway line along the two rivers, is also named after the otter depicted in Williamson's book.
- 2.20 The steep coastal plateaux and cliffs framing both districts are characterised by short streams cutting combs through the landscape on their route to the sea, sometimes forming hanging valleys and spectacular watercourses as they leave the land.

Soils and land use

- 2.21 The Culm Measures which underlie a large proportion of the landscape consist of dark shales and sandstone ridges, the former weathering into cold, heavy and badly drained soils and the latter into shallow, stony and agriculturally poor soils. Brown earth and waterlogged gley soils dominate, giving rise to a predominantly pastoral landscape supporting internationally important tracts of biodiversity-rich Culm grasslands and mires left unimproved for agriculture (see paragraph 2.28). The agriculturally unproductive nature of land within the Culm Measures is also likely to have had an influence over its choice for the location of large blocks of mixed and coniferous plantations.

- 2.22 North of the geological divide marked by the Taw-Torridge Estuary, the free-draining and more fertile soils sitting above the Devonian slates and sandstones support a combination of arable and pasture, as well as areas of traditional open sheep pasture (downland) towards the west coast.
- 2.23 Across the two districts the slopes of the main river valleys and their tributaries are sheltered and more freely drained, producing the most fertile soils of the area supporting rich farmland and traditional orchards.
- 2.24 **Figure 2.9** shows the Agricultural Land Classification of the two districts, which indicates how agriculturally productive different areas are.



Climate

- 2.25 The climate of the two districts, set within the context of the wider South West peninsula, affects the landscape through exposure, rainfall and temperature. In turn these influence the area's characteristic vegetation cover, soil quality and settlement patterns. Nowhere on the peninsula is the sea more than 25 miles away, resulting in a maritime climate characterised by milder winters and cooler summers than elsewhere in the UK. The predominant westerly winds also bring high rainfall (approximately 1,000 millimetres a year), generally favouring permanent pasture for livestock farming and influencing the development of the area's distinctive Culm grasslands.
- 2.26 The long coastline framing the two districts is greatly influenced by the prevailing weather conditions. The west-facing coast between Hartland Point and the Cornish border catches the full brunt of the Atlantic weather. Long exposure to salt-laden winds has produced a wild and windswept quality contrasting markedly with the adjacent Clovelly coastline which is more sheltered. Such degrees of exposure have in turn influenced the natural vegetation cover found along the coast. Trees are rare; those which do survive are stunted and pruned by the strong winds into distinctive forms. The coastal woodlands backing the more sheltered Bideford Bay (particularly around Clovelly) are therefore particularly important; internationally protected as part of a wider Special Area of Conservation (SAC) – see further in paragraph 2.33.

Figure 2.10: Isolated pine on the North Devon coast



- 2.27 The climate of the area (and Devon more widely) has been an important historical influence in various ways – above all determining farming types and practices along with the location of settlement and, over the last two centuries, the ever-growing popularity of the area for tourism.

Semi-natural habitats

- 2.28 The unique combination of climate, soils, topography and human interaction (the latter described in the following section) has produced a diverse range of semi-natural habitats across the two districts, supporting a rich variety of plants and animals. Reflecting the nature conservation importance of the landscape's semi-natural habitats are 58

- 2.29 Sites of Special Scientific Interest within the two districts covering nearly 4,000 hectares, along with six Special Areas of Conservation (wholly or partly within) and a strong network of County Wildlife Sites. See **Figure 2.11**.

Figure 2.12: Culm grassland on Bursdon Moor
(copyright: North Devon Coast AONB)



- 2.30 Particularly associated with the area are the Culm grasslands which are found scattered across the Hartland Peninsula and the Bideford Bay Coast, and represented more extensively across the wet inland moors and valley bottoms of both districts (see Figure 2.9 above). Most of the sites fall within the Culm Grasslands Special Area of Conservation (SAC), representing the remains of what was once a much larger network. The habitat is characterised by tussocks of Purple Moor Grass, interspersed with orchids, rushes, heath,

mosses and other rare plants. This rich flora supports a wide range of insects including grasshoppers and butterflies, including the Marsh Fritillary which is classified as 'vulnerable' in Europe. At some sites, such as Quoditch Moor Nature Reserve, some 28 species of butterfly have been recorded. Insects in turn attract birds including the barn owl and curlew, as well as mammals including the dormouse and several species of bat.

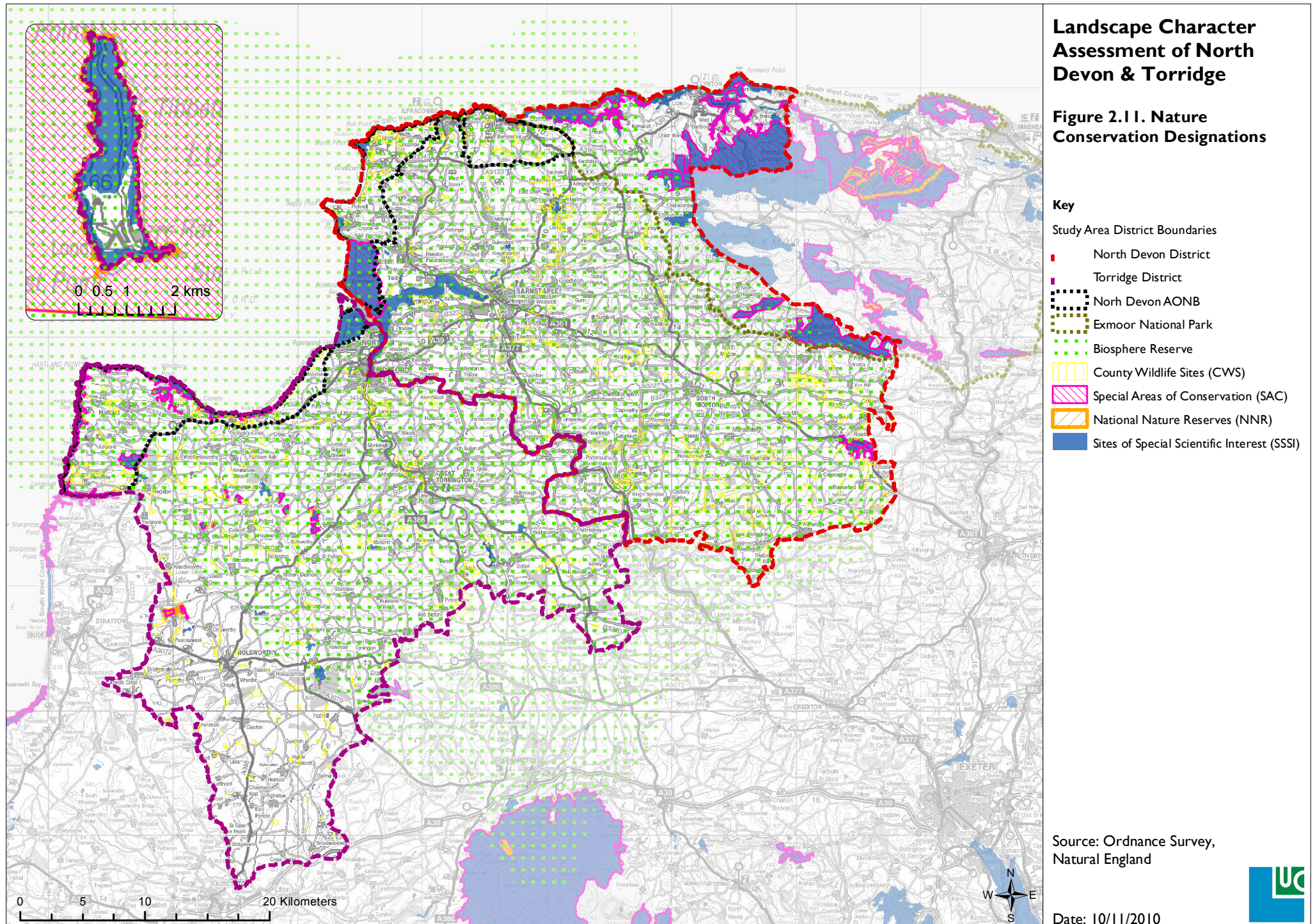
Figure 2.13: Marsh fritillary butterfly (copyright: Stockphoto.com/Sergey Chushkin)



- 2.31 Other habitats valued within the farmland landscape are the many hundreds of miles of hedgerows and distinctive species-rich Devon hedge-banks which define the field

Landscape Character Assessment of North Devon & Torridge

Figure 2.11. Nature Conservation Designations



patterns across the countryside. These support an abundance of wildlife, particularly as pasture and arable farming have intensified over recent decades, squeezing wildlife into smaller and smaller refuges. Woodlands cloaking valley sides, much ancient and oak-dominated, along with smaller farm woods and copses scattered throughout also provide important havens for wildlife. The streams and rivers themselves are highly valued for nature conservation – the clean, fast flowing water providing a stronghold for the otter, a UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Priority Species.

- 2.32 Along the coast are diverse mosaics of maritime grassland, heathland and scrub, combined with sea cliffs, rocky shores, estuarine salt marsh and sand dunes. These form a complex and in many parts internationally valuable coastal ecosystem within the North Devon Biosphere Reserve.
- 2.33 Western oak woodland along the Clovelly coast and within the coastal combes represents a significant and extensive wildlife resource, much of which comprises ancient semi-natural woodland. The quality of the air, unpolluted by industrial emissions and constantly freshened by Atlantic westerlies, is a particular asset, indicated by the proliferation and variety of lichens on rocks and within broadleaved woodlands, scrub and parklands. Straggling clumps of 'Sausage lichen' along the country lanes of the Hartland Peninsula are an example of how a locally indigenous species can contribute to the local landscape character. On Lundy Island, the endemic Lundy Cabbage, found nowhere else in the world, contributes to the distinctive local character and unique ecosystem of the island.

CULTURAL AND HISTORIC EVOLUTION

- 2.34 The physical processes that have shaped the landscape of the two districts have also had an indirect but significant influence on the character of the landscape once humans appeared on the scene. Mining resources, the presence of running water for power, building materials, along with the influence of landform on shelter, accessible transport routes and defensible positions, all played a part in forming the landscape's settlement pattern and the character of many of today's towns and villages. The rich cultural heritage is reflected in a number of national designations, including 374 Scheduled Monuments, 4,298 Listed Buildings, one Designated Wreck (off Lundy), seven English Heritage-registered Parks and Gardens and a Heritage Coast-designated coastline (see **Figure 2.12**). In total, the districts' Historic Environment Record lists some 14,000 sites of archaeological and historic interest, from Palaeolithic hand axes to Cold War bunkers; from single spot finds to landscape scale features such as Braunton Great Field.

The Mesolithic and Neolithic Periods (8,000-2,500 BC)

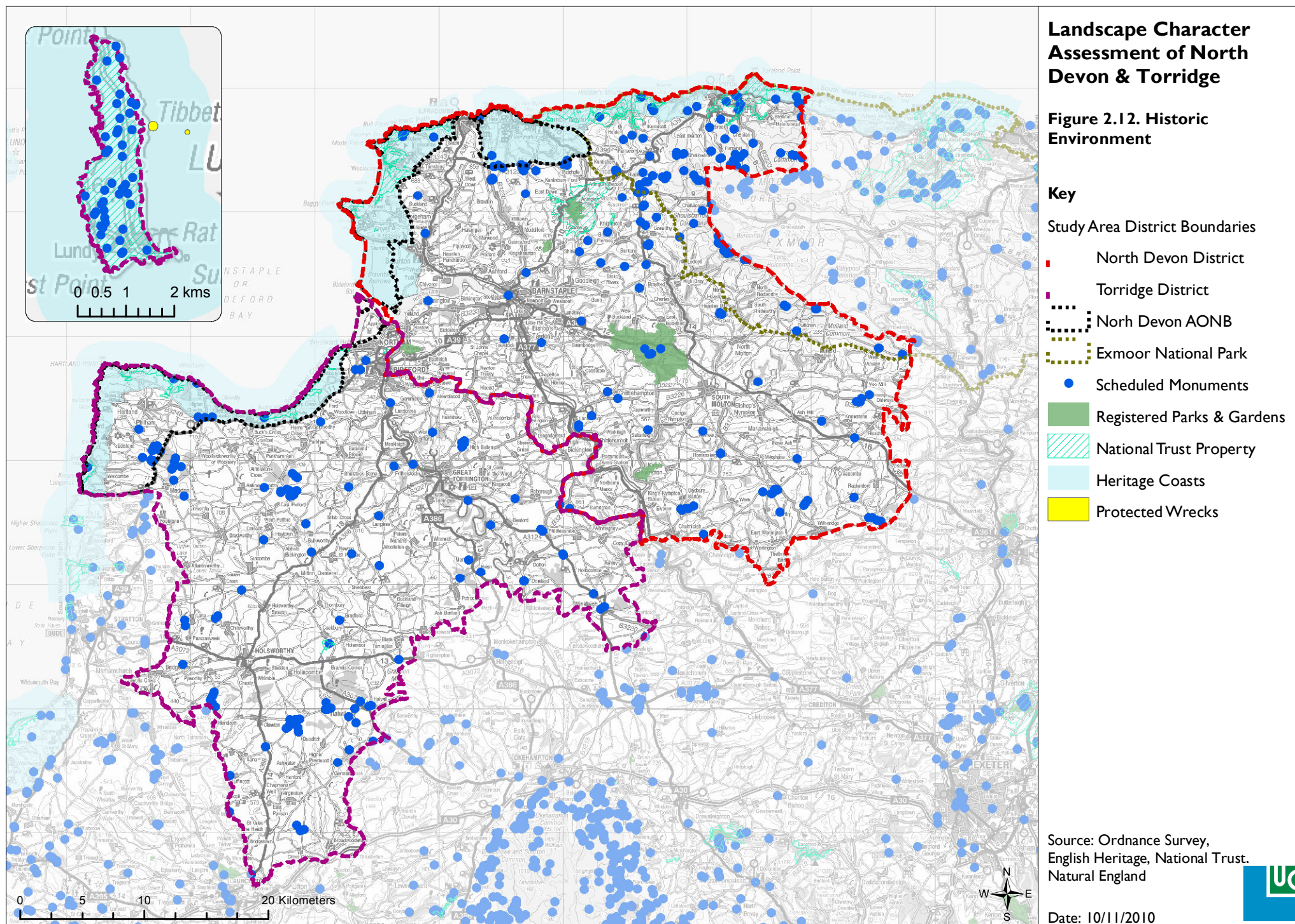
- 2.35 By Mesolithic times, as the climate warmed up after the last Ice Age, it is likely that the landscape was covered in extensive woodland. Man's impact on the landscape would have been very minimal, with hunter-gatherers beginning to clear the forests of oak, hazel, elm and lime to make clearings for herding larger mammals. Finds of Mesolithic

flint tools indicate this activity, mostly along the coast and on Lundy. Neolithic flints are more widespread, with particular concentrations around Georgeham and Abbotsham. It is believed from evidence from the uplands (particularly Dartmoor), that the methods of woodland clearance on higher ground led to the subsequent development of bog and heathland habitats.

- 2.36 The early Neolithic period witnessed the beginnings of agricultural cultivation, as well as the construction of settlements and trading posts. It is thought that the landscape at this time would have been divided into wild wood, cultivated and grazed land, with open moor remaining on higher ground over 300 metres above sea level. There are a few examples of late Neolithic / early Bronze Age communal/ritual monuments such as standing stones, stone rows and settings in clearances, largely confined to the uplands.
- 2.37 The coastline at this time would have extended further out than its present extent, with the sea level some 37 metres lower than today. Many archaeological remains which were situated on the coastal margins during this period have therefore been buried under coastal sediments or lost to the sea, with exceptions including a submerged stone row at Yelland.

The Bronze and Iron Ages (1,500 BC to 43 AD)

- 2.38 The Bronze Age marks the start of any significant visual evidence of human activity in the landscape, with a number



of the area's high ridges displaying a scattering of Bronze Age tumuli, barrows and small enclosures, including on Welsford and Bursdon Moors and along the high ridge of the North Devon Downs. Bronze Age barrows also feature in the landscape between the headwaters of the rivers Torridge and Lydeland, north of Pancrasweek, as well as on the high moorland north of Ashwater and between the Upper Torridge and the Upper Taw. It is thought that, as well as burials, the barrows may have served additional functions in marking prehistoric ridgeway routes or territorial boundaries. The choice of coastal locations for some barrows, such as Embury Beacon and Gallantry Bower, might have had some ritual significance.

- 2.39 Other components of the prehistoric landscape include standing stones at Lee and a number of major barrow cemeteries. The Iron Age saw the construction of a number of hill forts and defensive enclosures occupying prominent coastal and valley positions. Embury Beacon is one such example on the Hartland Coast, comprising the eroding remains of a dramatic promontory fort. Other enclosures include Hillsborough Hillfort (east of Ilfracombe) and Clovelly Dykes, the former occupying a commanding position looking out to sea and along the North Devon coast. Inland, a number of valleys are overlooked by defensive forts, including Castle Hill settlement above the Torridge, and Brighley Barton Camp above the Taw – both Scheduled Monuments.

Figure 2.13: Clovelly Dykes from the air (source: DCC)



- 2.40 Lundy Island is also incredibly rich in remains from the Bronze and Iron Ages, including relic huts (their granite circular walls – hut circles) and Iron Age field enclosures. It is thought that the island's use as a seasonal fishing base in the late Mesolithic period developed into a permanently inhabited landscape by the Bronze Age, used by early farmers for sheep grazing, hunting sea birds, fishing and egg collecting.
- 2.41 Across the district is a wider distribution of later prehistoric enclosed farmsteads surviving as earthworks and also visible as archaeological cropmarks. Concentrations of the latter are found in the hinterland of the Torridge estuary and around South Molton. It is possible that a more wooded area survived into the Romano-British period in the West

Devon/North Devon/Mid Devon borderlands – signified by ‘Nymet’ place-names.

The Romano-British Period and the Dark Ages (43 AD – 700 AD)

- 2.42 Most historians believe that the Roman Invasion failed to make any significant marks on the landscape of the two districts, with Exeter very much a frontier town for their occupation. However, recent discoveries include Roman iron smelting works at Brayford and coastal hillcamps at Martinhoe and Countisbury, both in Exmoor National Park. The Roman iron smelting industry, with its established coppiced woodland system, suggests that this activity was already happening in the earlier Iron Age; the original woods having been cleared centuries before.
- 2.43 During this time farming probably developed to the stage when unenclosed open field systems began to evolve around homesteads, but the landscape remained thinly populated.
- 2.44 Towards the end of the Roman occupation, it is widely believed that the influence of the Celtic church was strong in the area. This was felt particularly along the North Devon coast, as missionary saints travelled across the sea from Ireland and South Wales to preach the Christian faith. The Taw-Torridge estuary must have provided a natural point of entry for the Saints, breaking the almost continuous sequence of treacherous cliffs to either side. Chapels and churches located along the coast bear the names of these Celtic Saints, including St. Elen (on Lundy and at Croyde)

and St. Nectan (at Hartland and Welcombe) – both children of St. Brechan and therefore closely associated. To reinforce this bond, it is believed that the chapels on such sites were located within sight of each other, perhaps creating a web of inter-visibility reaching across to Wales. ‘Berry’ settlement names such as Blegberry and Titchberry may come from the defensive circuits located around ‘Dark Age’ native British sites.

The Saxon and Medieval Periods (700 – 1540)

- 2.45 While the date and speed of the Saxon Conquest of this part of Devon is uncertain, it is agreed that the takeover was complete by the turn of the eighth century, with only a few Native British place-names surviving. The Saxons had a significant influence on the landscape. As well as the establishment of the scattered pattern of hamlets and isolated farmsteads still characteristically associated with the rural landscape, nucleated villages developed, for example at Bideford, Braunton, Pilton and Northam – around which extensive open field systems were laid out.
- 2.46 Narrow winding lanes linked the new settlements and small irregular fields were enclosed by tall earth banks planted with hedges. Parishes were established or adopted from their Native British predecessors, with small stone churches and cottages clustered in sheltered hollows. Colonisation pushed more land into cultivation with woodland felled, heathlands ploughed, and waterlogged land drained. The open field systems surrounding some villages were enclosed into furlong strips with curving boundaries; these origins

clearly visible in the modern landscape (e.g. around Croyde and Combe Martin). The fertile valleys of the Taw and Torridge rivers inland were favoured over the heavy or stony soils found along the coast.

Figure 2.14: Braunton Great Field: famous for its surviving open medieval strip field system (copyright DCC)



- 2.47 Despite four centuries of widespread colonisation and occupation of the landscape by the Saxons, Hoskins (1954) observes that the population of Devon as a whole was still no larger than modern-day Exeter. There was little or no mining or industry (apart from small household ventures such as pottery or cloth-making) and trade was negligible; large parts of the landscape still lay 'waste' in moorland, woodland, heath and marsh.

- 2.48 The Norman Conquest and the subsequent two centuries saw immense changes to the Devon landscape, a period which Hoskins refers to as *'the great age of colonisation'*. In the rural areas, thousands of farms came into existence, combined with a rapid spread of cultivated land enclosed within intricate fields. The enclosure and cultivation of areas of moorland, woodland, heath and riverside marshes *'was the work of free peasants, armed with a charter from the lord of the manor which granted them a piece of territory within specified boundaries'* (Hoskins, 1954). Hoskins goes on to say that this activity:

'....coloured much of the political and social history of the county down to the 19th century, and even to the present day.'

Figure 2.15: Old medieval fields near Brownsham (source: North Devon AONB)



- 2.49 A significant religious revival during this period saw parish churches built in stone and the establishment of religious

houses such as Hartland Abbey. The abbeys and their successor estates also drove the process of agricultural improvement – creating larger fields with straightened boundaries. They also introduced new land uses such as rabbit warrens along the coast, often fossilising more marginal land.

- 2.50 Today, little remains of churches from this period, except some Norman fonts and doorways, as much was rebuilt in the 14th and 15th centuries. It also marked the beginnings of commercial trade and industry, such as the cloth industry which spurred on the development of towns like South Molton. Overseas trade burgeoned from Barnstaple (the third largest town in Devon at the time) and estuary ports

Figure 2.16: Hartland Abbey (copyright: North Devon Coast AONB)



such as Bideford, where great ships were built to export goods such as cloth from the local mill towns and tin from Dartmoor.

- 2.51 When the Black Death struck in 1348, a sharp decline in the rural population led to the abandonment of many farmsteads and hamlets, and a period of economic recession ensued. In the 14th century, Devon began to recover relatively quickly from the losses of the plague – heralding a period of rebuilding and re-population of rural areas. Most of the Devon churches as they stand now date from the 14th and 15th century, stone bridges were constructed over the larger rivers and manor houses were built in the countryside, many on the wealth of lawyers that settled in the county.

The Late and Post-Medieval Period (16th to early 19th Centuries)

- 2.52 By the 17th century new enclosure acts were encouraging the enclosure of even the wettest and highest Culm ridges and areas of Exmoor, building on what was started before the Plague. In comparison with other English counties Devon still retained a large percentage of rough grazing and moorland. Enclosure Acts awarded during this period were also fewer than in many other parts of England (most coming in during the later 19th century), a key reason why Devon is celebrated today as a strongly medieval landscape.
- 2.53 The later medieval period saw the prosperity of farming blossom, sustaining the population of the thriving nearby

towns and ports with meat, cider and grain, as well as feeding the rural population. Soil fertility was improved and yields increased through the addition of lime, seaweed and 'night-soil' to sweeten the soil and make it less acidic.

- 2.54 Following Acts of Parliament in the 18th and 19th centuries, remaining areas of downland, moorland and commons were enclosed into large fields with straight boundaries, as can be seen across parts of Welsford Moor in Hartland, and Pickwell Downs near Woolacombe. Braunton Marsh was also reclaimed from the sea as rich, fertile grazing land in the early 19th century. The Torrington Canal and parts of the Bude Canal were also developed at this time to transport in supplies such as sand, lime and fuel. They were also used as key export routes for the agricultural products produced from the land.
- 2.55 Most farms probably had their own orchard, with cider making first recorded in the 13th century. Woodlands were managed for firewood, tanning, charcoal and timber, with cattle being excluded by the stock-proof tall Devon banks. Distinct breeds of cattle, sheep, pigs and ponies were familiar, and the North Devon Red cattle (Ruby Reds) are still much favoured today.
- 2.56 Farm buildings became more specialised, with cider-making, dairying and water-mills to grind corn. The distinctive corn barn, with its threshing and winnowing doors, and linhays, the two-storey open-fronted cow sheds, were typical of this period, and many survive today. Farm sizes became larger, with country estates flourishing along with the wealth of the

country gentlemen. Designed landscapes of parks and plantations also developed during this time, including the Castle Hill Estate on the banks of the River Bray.

- 2.57 The creation of 'Boroughs' and administrative areas to collect tithes, along with the increasing population and agricultural surpluses all contributed to the further growth of population centres, including South Molton, the prosperous boroughs of Ilfracombe and Combe Martin and the ports of Barnstaple and Bideford. The building industry, with all its auxiliary crafts and trades from quarrying to carpentry, is likely to have rivalled the cloth and fishing industries in terms of economic contribution during this renaissance period.

Figure 2.17: Silver mine near Combe Martin (source: North Devon AONB)



- 2.58 Silver and lead mining accelerated as an important industry at Combe Martin, worked at intervals up until 1875 from its earlier medieval origins. Today, the legacy of the tall smelting chimneys remains as landmarks on the hillside above the town. Lime was also worked from outcrops in North Devon and from the chert ridge of the Coddan Hills, with small quarries and lime kilns remaining in the modern landscape. During this period, limestone and coal was also imported from South Wales to every convenient anchorage along the coast (e.g. Mouth Mill and Bucks Mills on the Clovelly coast). Mining became an increasingly significant industry, as did the wool / cloth trade locally – taking advantage of the abundant water power. As well as silver and lead mining around Combe Martin, iron ores were worked from the downland river valleys (e.g. the Caen and Bradiford Water); and iron and copper from the southern slopes of Exmoor – continuing what the Romans started.
- 2.59 Along the coast, the threat of pirate raids during this time was very real. This is demonstrated at Blegberry in Hartland where the ancient farmstead is surrounded by rampart walls built as a defence against such attacks in 1606. The treacherous seas and coastlines of North Devon have themselves proved deadly to seagoing vessels for centuries, many a ship having run aground and perished on the jagged rocks of Morte Point and Hartland Point. Lighthouses were built at strategic locations, providing a much-needed warning to ships passing through the Bristol Channel. The Hartland lighthouse remains as a prominent local landmark, as does the ‘Old Light’, crowning the highest land of Lundy Island.

th Century to the Second World War

- 2.60
19 The late 18th century witnessed a decline in the wool, cloth and mining industries, spurring an exodus of people leaving the countryside for the towns. The development of railways and the road system in the early 19th century accelerated the movement of people from the poorer farmlands to the larger settlements, particularly along the coast. The routes of Turnpike Roads developed during this period are still used today, with the many toll houses and stone milestones forming characterful landscape features. During this period the seaside towns were beginning to enjoy the growth of a new industry - tourism.
- 2.61 This trend of rural depopulation was further stimulated by an agricultural depression in the late 1870s, which saw arable crop prices fall, leading to much arable land being laid down to grass. In the Culm Measures areas, many improved fields were allowed to revert back to moorland.
- 2.62 The effect of the holiday industry on the North Devon and Torridge landscape started with the growth and changing form of towns, as well as the style of buildings, open spaces and sea fronts. The building of the Victorian rail network linked Great Torrington to Barnstaple (now the Tarka Trail) and Barnstaple to Ilfracombe, opening up the adjacent coastline to tourism. Later constructions linked Bideford to Appledore via Westward Ho!. The moneyed classes had already discovered the scenic and climatic amenities of the North Devon Coast during the previous century, but Westward Ho! and Ilfracombe were to grow significantly in

late Victorian times as popular holiday resorts. Villages such as Combe Martin and Croyde stretched seaward along the base of sheltered combes, whilst other small coastal hamlets such as Woolacombe expanded along the sea front with Victorian villas and imposing hotels.

Figure 2.18: Victorian/Edwardian style villas at Croyde (copyright: North Devon AONB)



- 2.63 By the 1920s the holiday industry had become the Devon's largest and most lucrative industry. The 1931 census shows that nearly 10% of the adult population were employed in 'personal service' trades, compared with 7.5% in farming. Nevertheless, before the Second World War Devon was the biggest cattle county in England and Wales, and second only to Northumberland in terms of sheep numbers in the English counties (Hoskins, 1954).

Post-War to the present

- 2.64 The two world wars had brought a degree of landscape change, whether it was the large-scale conversion of unimproved grassland to arable, or the construction of defensive sites such as pill-boxes at Braunton and Croyde, and structures relating to D-day landing practice undertaken by the allies at Baggy Point and Braunton Burrows. Two RAF airfields – Chivenor and Winkleigh – remain as major landscape features, as do radar stations still visible at Northam Burrows, Hartland Point and Wrafton. However, the post-war years witnessed much more dramatic and speedy change than possibly any other period in history.
- 2.65 The drive for agricultural intensification in the post-war decades, stimulated by production-related subsidies through the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) introduced in the 1970s, has had a significant effect on the farmed landscape. Farm units have steadily grown in size, amalgamating smaller farms and leaving some buildings ripe for conversion or falling into disrepair. Intensification has led to the loss of hedgerows to accommodate larger farm machinery and create larger fields in many parts of the landscape, including on Saunton Down. Despite this loss and damage to remaining sections through annual mechanical cutting, hedgerows and hedge-banks still perform vital functions for stock control and shelter. Organisations like the Devon Hedge Group have been established in recent years to educate farmers and the wider public about the importance and great diversity of Devon's hedges, seeking to encourage their future

protection and re-instatement reflecting local styles and traditions of construction.

Figure 2.19: Species-rich Devon hedges



- 2.66 Other agricultural improvements, such as land drainage (leading to the loss of significant areas of Culm grassland), crop spraying, ploughing up of pastures and the loss of traditional orchards have also left their mark, reducing the biodiversity of pasture and arable land, increasing the vivid green of fields and reducing local distinctiveness. Along the coast, farmed fields push to the very edge of the cliffs, often providing an abrupt transition to the tracts of coastal scrub, heathland and maritime grasslands that remain.
- 2.67 The extensive grazing traditionally practiced on marginal land such as the coastal edge has also declined in recent years, leading to a reversion of the open coastal grassland

and heathland habitats to scrub and bracken. This has contributed to the local extinction of the Large Blue butterfly from the AONB-designated coast.

Figure 2.20: Intensive arable cropping



- A decline in grazing on the valued Culm grasslands, in favour of more agriculturally productive land elsewhere, has also led to their succession to scrub and trees in places.
- 2.68 The introduction of agri-environment schemes in the early 1990s (Countryside Stewardship and Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESA) scheme) as well as the current Environmental Stewardship scheme have helped reinstate the links between agricultural management and the stewardship of the land. Where farmers have participated in these schemes, the support has helped stimulate a gradual

reversal of some of the trends described in the previous paragraphs. The Environmental Stewardship scheme is continuing to help manage and enhance key wildlife habitats and landscape features through environmentally sensitive farming methods.

- 2.69 A similar story has been seen for woodland management, with recent decades witnessing a decline in markets for wood products (such as charcoal, bark for tanning, coppice for firewood, timber for furniture), leading to creeping neglect and a decline in woodland management skills such as coppicing. The loss of significant numbers of elm trees during the Dutch Elm Disease outbreak of the 1970s/80s also had a dramatic effect on parts of the landscape. Initiatives such as the England Woodland Grant Scheme (EWGS) and the South West Woodland Renaissance grant provide financial incentives and support to woodland owners/managers to reinvigorate woodland management. In addition, the emergence of new markets for woodfuel, as a low carbon fuel source, is beginning to have a positive impact on woodland management and new woodland planting in the area.
- 2.70 Conversion of semi-natural woodlands and other habitats in favour of timber plantations in the 20th century has also had a significant impact on the woodland character of the landscape. The Forestry Commission now takes a holistic approach to the management of their sites – seeking to enhance their biodiversity and landscape value (including softening ‘hard’ edges, restructuring with broadleaves and restoring some areas to open habitats such as heathland and

Culm grassland) whilst also exploring the opportunities the plantations offer for recreation and, of course, future timber production. The Forest Design Plans and regional forestry strategy provide a guide to the future management of these landscape features.

- 2.71 The most significant recent and ongoing trends affecting the landscape stem from development pressure, tourism and climate change (both its effects and mitigation measures). In terms of development pressure, the Joint Core Strategy (pre-publication draft) sets out a requirement for 10,700 new dwellings in Torridge and 10,900 in North Devon up to 2026, including 4,800 dwellings in the Barnstaple urban area as well as 2,400 dwellings through urban extensions. A steady population growth (around 1.4% per year), the popularity of the area as a retirement destination and a general lack of affordable housing is fuelling a continuing demand for new housing and related services across the two districts. Development pressures on greenfield sites, particularly on the edges of settlements, are therefore becoming more and more significant. The recent national drive to incorporate Green Infrastructure into new development proposals seeks to ensure settlements are well integrated into their landscape setting, whilst providing additional benefits through the creation of new semi-natural habitats, recreational resources and carbon sinks.
- 2.72 Tourism-led development and the popularity of the area as a place to live has also steadily gathered pace over the last few decades. This has led to the location of holiday parks, caravan sites and car parks within prominent coastal

locations, along with highly visible ridgeline development of retirement apartments and holiday accommodation at Westward Ho! The diversification of traditional farm enterprises to tap into the burgeoning tourism market includes the provision of activities such as horse riding and off-road vehicular tracks. This has helped supplement traditional farm incomes which have dropped significantly over the last decade. On the other side of the coin this trend has also led to incremental landscape change in some locations, eroding local distinctiveness and traditional land uses.

- 2.73 The related impacts of development in the area include the modernisation of the road network to account for higher volumes of traffic – leading to unsympathetic line markings, signage, curbs and straightening. In addition, the requirements of modern living have led to the introduction of electricity pylons, overhead cables and radio masts into the rural landscape. The effect of these tall vertical structures on the skyline can affect the enjoyment of many rural views, including within the AONB.
- 2.74 The fabric of the districts' settlements has also been altered in recent decades - traditional buildings have been replaced and restored using mass-produced building materials and standardised building designs.

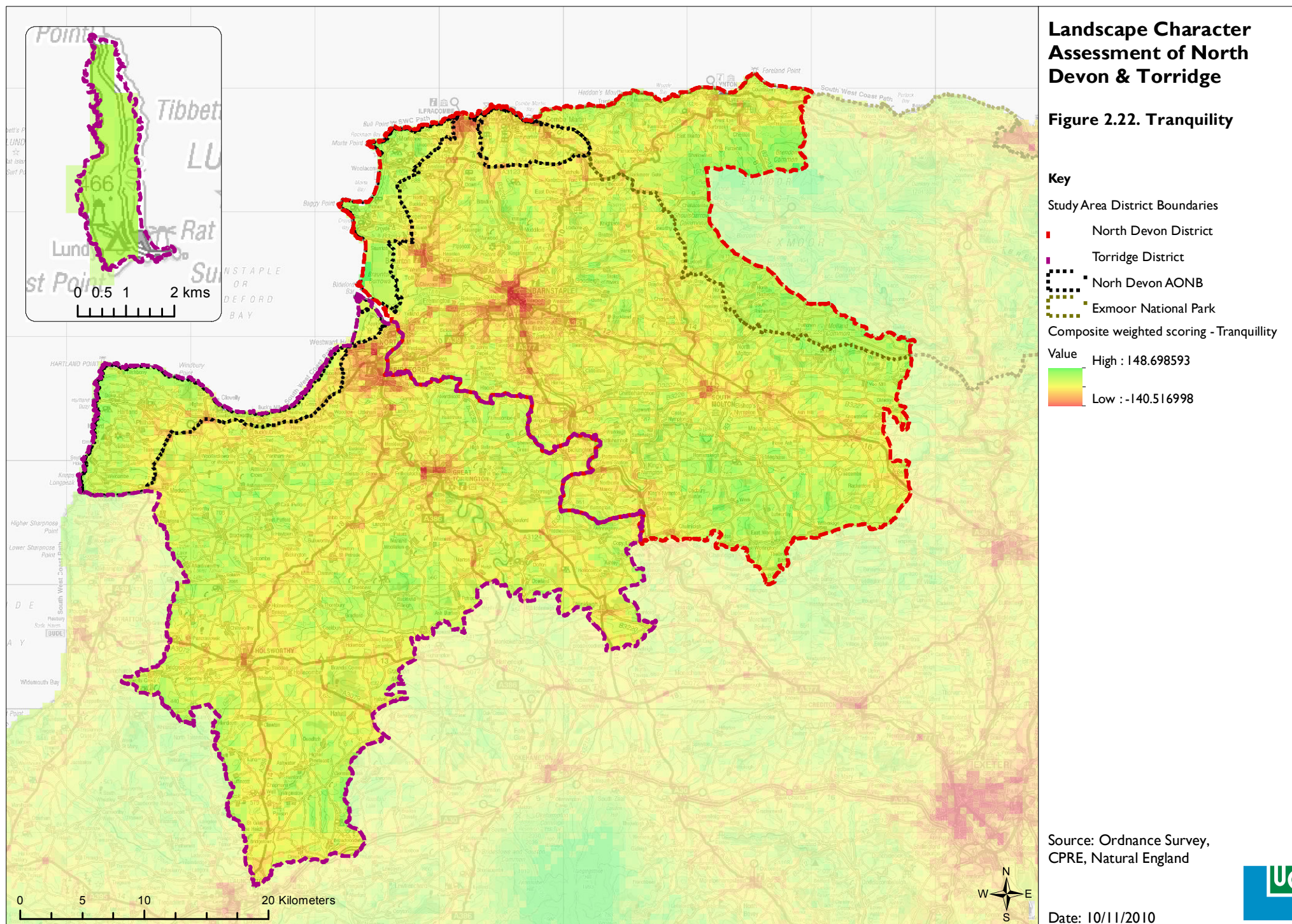
A decline in traditional building skills, the shortage and high price of local stone and the labour-intensive nature of the work has made modern building techniques preferable for many. A push for sustainable building design is also having

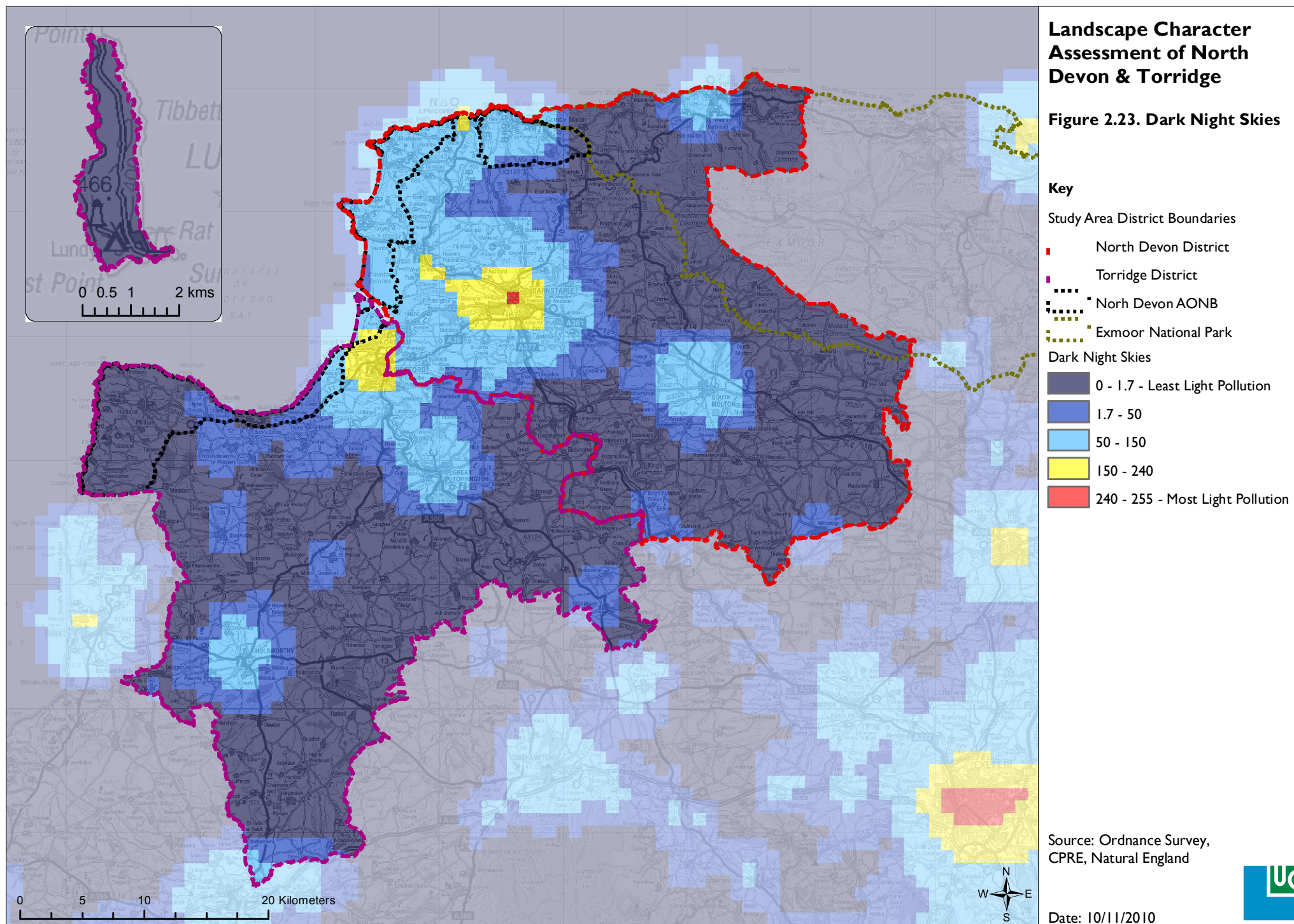
an impact on the design and materials chosen for new developments.

Figure 2.21: Holiday chalets and car parking on the edge of Braunton Burrows



Figure 2.22 shows levels of tranquillity across the landscape in 2006, clearly indicating lower levels associated with the main settlements and road networks. **Figure 2.23** shows the extent of dark night skies in 2007, similarly showing the influence of development (particularly around Barnstaple, Bideford and Ilfracombe). Nevertheless, both of these maps illustrate that there remains significant tracts of landscape largely unaffected by modern development – with high levels of tranquillity and dark night skies. These qualities are particularly rare in 21st century England.





FUTURE FORCES FOR CHANGE

2.75 The drivers of future landscape change are inherently difficult to predict, as well as the nature of their impacts, intensity and inter-relationships. The key drivers for landscape change in the two districts (a mixture of emerging forces for change discussed as well as a continuation of current ones discussed in the previous section) are likely to include a combination of some or all of the following:

- **Climate change** – mitigation (reducing the causes of climate change, including renewable energy generation) and adaptation (adapting to the effects of climate change both naturally and through planned interventions, seeking to minimise adverse effects).
- **Natural processes, including the effects of climate change** – such as flooding, erosion and the changing patterns of pests and diseases, all of which are likely to become more extreme with climate change.
- **Technological advancement** – advances in technology in all aspects of life from communication (e.g. spread of broadband and wireless technologies) and energy production to industrial-scale food growing.
- **Economic and market trends** – driven by booms / recessions, shifting economic power, globalisation / localisation.

- **Social and cultural trends** – such as demographic change including migration and life expectancy, health and physical wellbeing, human needs and wants, and changing patterns of living which in combination are likely to lead to increased development.
- **Changing values** – and increasing confidence in our ability to challenge undesired change.
- **Policy and regulatory responses** – International, national, regional and local policy and regulatory responses to all of the above.

2.76 The effects and our responses to climate change are fast becoming the most important driver for change in the 21st century. If current predictions are correct, rising sea levels will squeeze and put pressure on coastal habitats and species. Inland habitats and species will have to cope with new and changing seasonal temperatures and rainfall patterns. New pests and diseases are likely to take on a new prevalence, as well as exotic, non-native plant and animal species – combining to change the distribution and composition of semi-natural habitats across the landscape. South West Nature Map, prepared by the regional biodiversity partnership, is a strategic tool to help guide the expansion and restoration of semi-natural habitats within the region's landscape. This in particular seeks to strengthen their resilience to the effects of future climate change.

- 2.77 The character of the area's farmland is also likely to change in response to a changing climate. Changing weather patterns will affect growing seasons, yields, viable crops and stock. This is beginning to be seen as an opportunity for farmers to tap into new markets – such as bioenergy crop planting and English wine making. In addition, a push for more domestic food production is already leading to an industrialisation of farm production in parts of the districts' landscape, with large modern agricultural buildings and sheds appearing out of scale with their surroundings. An increase in related traffic (farm supplies, contractors etc), often transported in HGVs is also beginning to affect the character of the narrow, unmarked rural lanes. As well as an industrialisation of agriculture, new legislation relating to the storage of farm waste (to minimise diffuse pollution) is also leading to the construction of large buildings and covered livestock standing areas, often out of context with the small-scale, medieval landscapes found across much of the landscape.
- 2.78 The development of renewable and low carbon forms of energy is fast emerging as a major force for change in today's landscape. At a domestic and farm scale, the development of building-mounted or free-standing wind turbines is introducing new structures into the landscape. Farmers are beginning to use their farm waste as an energy source through the development of anaerobic digestion facilities.

Figure 2.21: Farm-based turbine along the Clovelly coast (copyright: North Devon Coast AONB)



The landscape's strong coastal winds and presence of significant tracts of non-designated land (i.e. National Parks or AONBs) mean that there is ever-increasing pressure for large scale wind turbines both onshore and offshore. A recent application for twenty-two 110 metre wind turbines on Fullabrook Down has been approved – a site which will be highly visible from across the surrounding landscape, the AONB and Exmoor National Park. In addition, proposals for an off-shore windfarm ('Atlantic Array') in the Bristol Channel just south of Lundy Island comprise some 250 turbines with a generating capacity of 1,500 megawatts. This is expected by the developers to supply the domestic energy needs of some 1.1 million households. If it goes ahead, the impacts on the character of the seascape and the

area's characteristically high levels of tranquillity and remoteness will be massively compromised.

- 2.79 Other marine-based proposals in the pipeline include local interest in underwater devices utilising ocean currents, a tidal barrage across the Taw-Torridge Estuary as well as the high profile proposal for the Severn Barrage further up the coast. All of these proposals seek to utilise the environment's natural resources to harness energy, but undoubtedly would have a significant effect on the character of the seascape and views from the surrounding land.

Figure 2.22: Solar PV panels on a house in North Devon



- 2.80 A new technology fast emerging as a potential renewable energy source building on the natural assets of the landscape is large-scale solar photovoltaics (also known as 'solar farms')

or 'solar parks'). Cornwall Council has recently approved the first application for a solar scheme in England, with potential developers particularly incentivised by the Feed-In tariffs introduced by the Government in April 2009 (due to expire in April 2012). The presence of south-facing slopes and a higher than average levels of solar radiation in Devon and Cornwall mean that parts of the two districts are coming under increasing pressure for the development of solar PV.

- 2.81 The LCT descriptions in Chapter 4 include more locally-specific information on current and future forces for change affecting landscape character.

3 Method for Undertaking the Landscape Character Assessment

KEY STAGES

3.1 Our approach to the North Devon & Torridge LCA follows the current national guidance on Landscape Character Assessment⁴, and, as explained in Chapter 1, seeks to be compliant with the requirements of the European Landscape Convention.

3.2 The methodology taken for classifying the two districts into Landscape Character Types followed a series of key stages, summarised as follows:

Stage 1: Desk based classification

3.3 This stage used various information layers presented in GIS format to start to identify draft LCT boundaries to be verified in the field. This included as a basic framework the 277 LDUs identified for the two districts, excluding Exmoor National Park, through the previous county-wide desk based exercise; as well as the Landscape Character Types identified by the completed assessments for the adjoining district of West Devon, as well as the information from the assessments undertaken for Exmoor National Park and Mid Devon (which used a different methodology).

3.4 This information was interrogated against various other spatially-available information layers, including:

- Geology
- Topography
- Agricultural Land Classification
- River catchments
- Habitats (BAP Habitat Inventory, South West Nature Map)
- Designations – e.g. SACs, SSSIs, Scheduled Monuments
- Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) and for Historic Environment Record (HER) for the AONB
- Aerial photographs
- 1:25,000 scale Ordnance Survey mapping (showing field boundaries and contours)

3.5 This task also drew on the written and mapped information from the previous landscape character assessments for the two districts and the AONB. All of this information was used to begin to roughly classify different parts of the two districts into LCTs, from the Devon Menu where possible.

⁴ Swanwick, C. and Land Use Consultants (2002) *Landscape Character Assessment: Guidance for England and Scotland*. Prepared for the Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage.

Stage 2: Fieldwork verification

- 3.6 Following the separate but parallel fieldwork undertaken to update the AONB's LDU descriptions in February 2010, a thorough fieldwork exercise was undertaken across the two districts in May 2010 to review and refine the draft LCT classification, make detailed notes on landscape character (key characteristics, visible forces for change, information on condition) and take photographs across the LCTs to help with subsequent write ups. GPS recording was used to ensure that the exact location of photographs was noted, to allow them to be mapped in GIS. Lundy Island was also visited separately in August 2010.
- 3.7 Following fieldwork, a first draft of the LCT boundaries was digitised and district-specific key characteristics produced for comment by the Steering Group and at the first stakeholder workshop held in June 2010.
- 3.8 As was found for Dartmoor National Park's and Torbay's Landscape Character Assessments, the fieldwork exposed some limitations in using the framework of LDUs as 'building blocks' for the identification of LCTs. This was not the case for all parts of the landscape, so the LDU boundaries were used (either individually or as merged groups) wherever they adequately coincided with variations of landscape character recorded in the field.

Stage 3: Stakeholder workshop

- 3.9 A workshop was held at the end of June 2010 to invite comments back on the draft classification and, where time

allowed, brainstorm the forces for change affecting different parts of the districts' landscapes. This workshop was attended by a range of different stakeholders including representatives from the two councils, Devon County Council, North Devon Coast AONB, North Devon Biosphere Reserve, Natural England, the Ramblers' Association and the National Trust. A full list of workshop attendees and a summary report of the discussions is included in Appendix 1.

- 3.10 The draft classification was then revised and the mapping tweaked following comments from the workshop. It was re-circulated to the Steering Group for any further comments or suggestions.

Stage 4: Wider stakeholder workshop

- 3.11 Two further workshops for the separate districts were held on 21st and 26th July 2010, involving a broader group of attendees including representatives from parish councils and other local interest groups. This sought to meet the ELC requirement of involving communities in making decisions about the future management and planning of their local landscapes.
- 3.12 The workshops included two main exercises; the first to brainstorm the 'positive landscape attributes' or 'special qualities' people felt were most important to each LCT; and the second for break-out groups to put forward suggestions for landscape guidelines under the 'protect', 'manage' and 'plan' categories for the different LCTs. The second

exercise also included discussions on the main past, present and future forces for change people felt were of prevalence to the different LCTs.

- 3.13 A full report of the workshop and list of attendees is included in **Appendix I**.

Stage 5: Devon Menu re-issue and Draft Report

- 3.14 Following the two workshops and further discussions with the Steering Group, suggestions for changes to the classification of LCTs were agreed and proposed additions/revisions to the Devon Menu finalised in agreement with the Devon Landscape Policy Group⁵. In addition, suggestions on how to appropriately ensure read across the Torridge / West Devon administrative boundaries were made to the landscape officer at Devon County Council.

- 3.15 A draft Landscape Character Assessment report was circulated to the Steering Group for final comments in September 2010.

Stage 6: Final report

- 3.16 Following discussions and thoughts put forward from the second workshop, and comments from the Steering Group, this Landscape Character Assessment report and the LCT classification was finalised.

⁵ The Devon Landscape Group comprises landscape representatives from each of the local authorities in Devon, as well as the AONBs and National Parks.

- 3.17 North Devon and Torridge Councils will then decide how the LCA will feed into their LDF process – whether as a Supplementary Planning Document or through the formulation of specific landscape policies, drawing on the LCT-scale information, to be incorporated into a Development Management and Delivery DPD, or just remaining as part of the evidence base for policies in the Core Strategy. It will also be used to form the basis of the county-wide Landscape Character Areas soon to be defined by Devon County Council.

SUMMARY OF THE CLASSIFICATION

- 3.18 A map of the 22 Landscape Character Types identified for North Devon and Torridge is shown at **Figure 3.1**. A summary list of the classification, with codings relating to the Devon Menu, is as follows. Bold indicates the additions to the Devon Menu from this LCA:

1: Plateaux and Ridges

- **ID:Estate Wooded Ridge and Hilltops**
- IF: Farmed Lowland Moorland **and Culm Grassland**

2: Scarp Slopes

- 2C: Steep Open Slopes
- 2D: Moorland Edge Slopes

Valleys

- 3A: Upper Farmed and Wooded Valley Slopes

3:

- 3C: Sparsely Settled Farmed Valley Floors
- 3D: Upland River Valleys
- 3G: River Valley Slopes and Combes
- 3H: Secluded Valleys

Coast

- 4A: Estuaries
- 4:** • 4B: Marine Levels **and Coastal Plains**
- 4C: Coastal Slopes and Combes with Settlement
- 4D: Coastal Slopes and Combes
- 4E: Extensive Inter-Tidal Sands
- 4F: Dunes
- 4H: Cliffs

Rolling Hills

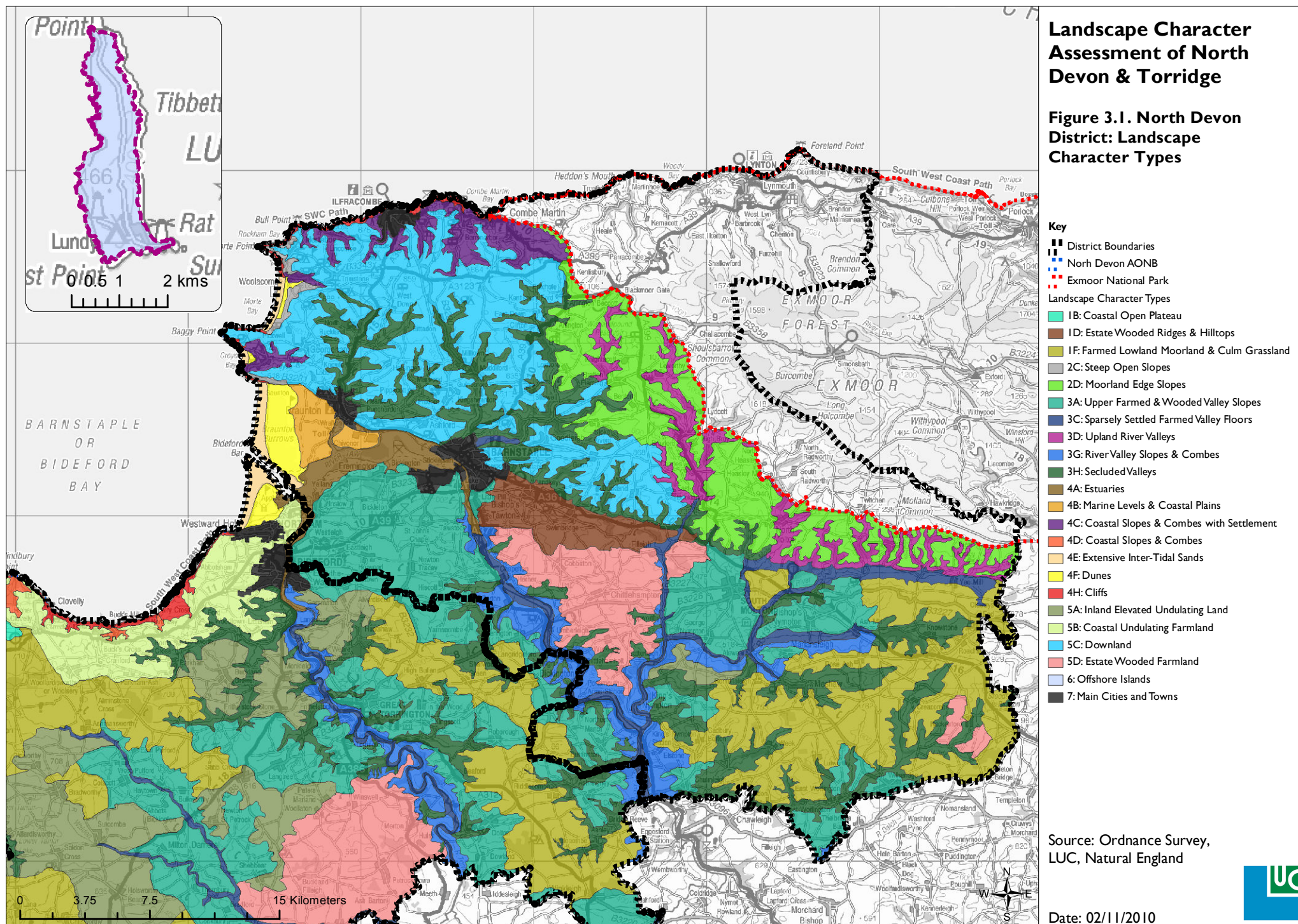
- 5A: Inland Elevated Undulating Land
- 5:** • **5B: Coastal Undulating Farmland**
- **5C: Downland**
- **5D: Estate Wooded Farmland**

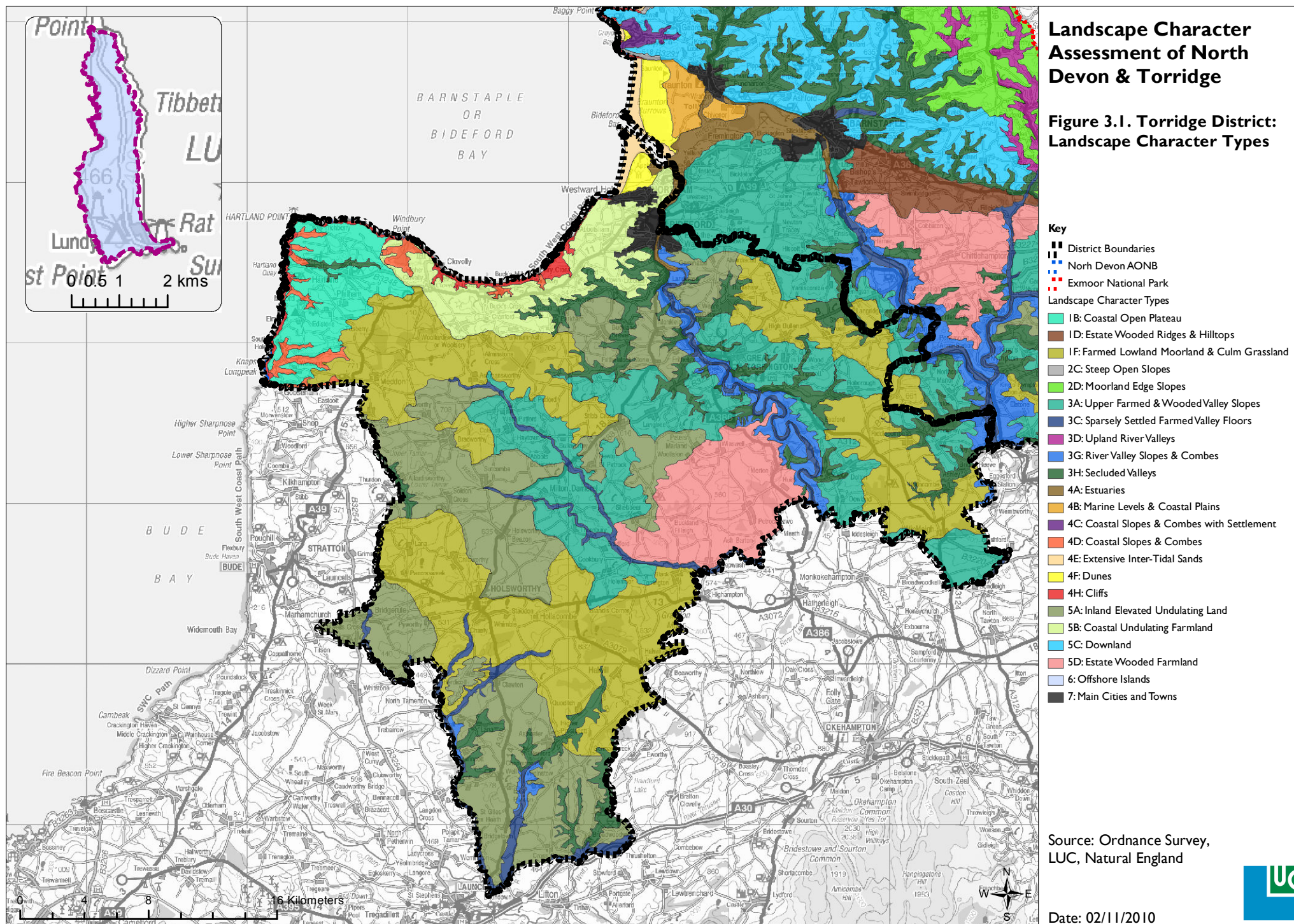
6: Offshore Islands

7: Main Cities and Towns

- 3.19 For '7: Main Cities and Towns', this report does not include a specific LCT description (see the Devon-wide key

characteristics shown in Appendix 2). This is because, whilst this assessment does consider settlement pattern and traditional vernacular building styles across each LCT, it does not include individual townscape assessments. Therefore, to be consistent with the approach rolled out across Devon, the main towns covering over 200 hectares are identified and mapped as a separate LCT.





4 Landscape Character Type Descriptions

4.1 Each LCT document comprises three main parts:

Description

4.2. This section begins with a paragraph providing a summary of overarching landscape character and the location of the LCT within the two districts (and AONB were relevant). It is followed by detailed district-specific key characteristics to further build up an accurate picture of the character of the LCT. The broader key characteristics for the LCTs across Devon, as they appear in the Devon Menu, are included in **Appendix 2**.

Evaluation

4.3. This section begins with a summary of the 'special qualities' – selected from fieldwork observations and opinions from the second workshops – which are really key to landscape character – i.e. if any one ceased to exist, it would have a major impact on the landscape concerned.

4.4. The second part of this section comprises a bullet point summary of past/current forces for change affecting landscape character, along with a list of potential future forces for change – gauged from opinions put forward at the first and second workshops, from fieldwork and from other references such as the AONB Management Plan, National

Character Area descriptions and Countryside Quality Counts (CQC) data.

3: Landscape Strategy and Guidelines

4.6. This section begins with an 'Overall Strategy' for the LCT – summarising what the subsequent landscape guidelines are seeking to achieve for the landscape as a whole in the future. This aims to provide an overarching ambition for the future landscape of the LCT concerned.

4.7. The landscape guidelines are arranged under the headings of 'protect', 'manage' and 'plan', the broad definitions provided by the European Landscape Convention. The second stakeholder workshops invited suggestions on guidelines for each LCT, which have been considered in the formulation of the final guidelines.

4.8. The ELC definitions are included below, followed by text in italics showing the 'traditional' terminology often used for landscape guidelines (including in the other Devon LCAs):

Landscape protection consists of measures to preserve the present character and quality of a landscape which is greatly valued on account of its distinctive natural or cultural configuration. Such protection must be active and involve upkeep measures to preserve significant features of a

landscape. *Other terms often used include 'conserve', 'preserve' and 'sustain'.*

Landscape management is any measure introduced, in accordance with the principle of sustainable development, to steer changes brought about by economic, social or environmental necessity. Such measures may be concerned with organisation of the landscape or its components. They will ensure a regular upkeep of the landscape and that the landscape evolves harmoniously and in a way that meets economic and social needs. The management approach must be a dynamic one and seek to improve landscape quality on the basis of the population's expectations. *Other terms used include 'maintain', 'enhance and 'strengthen'.*

Landscape planning is the formal process of study, design and construction by which new landscapes are created to meet the aspirations of the people concerned. It involves framing proper planning projects, more particularly in those most affected by change and badly damaged areas (for example suburbs, peri-urban and industrial areas, coastal areas). The purpose of such planning projects is to radically reshape the damaged landscapes. *Other terms include 're-create', 'create' and 'restore'. This is strong, forward-looking action which could include, for example, the restoration of former mineral sites to new uses (e.g. habitat recreation, access and recreation, low-carbon development).*

(Taken from Article I of the European Landscape Convention (Council of Europe), March 2004)

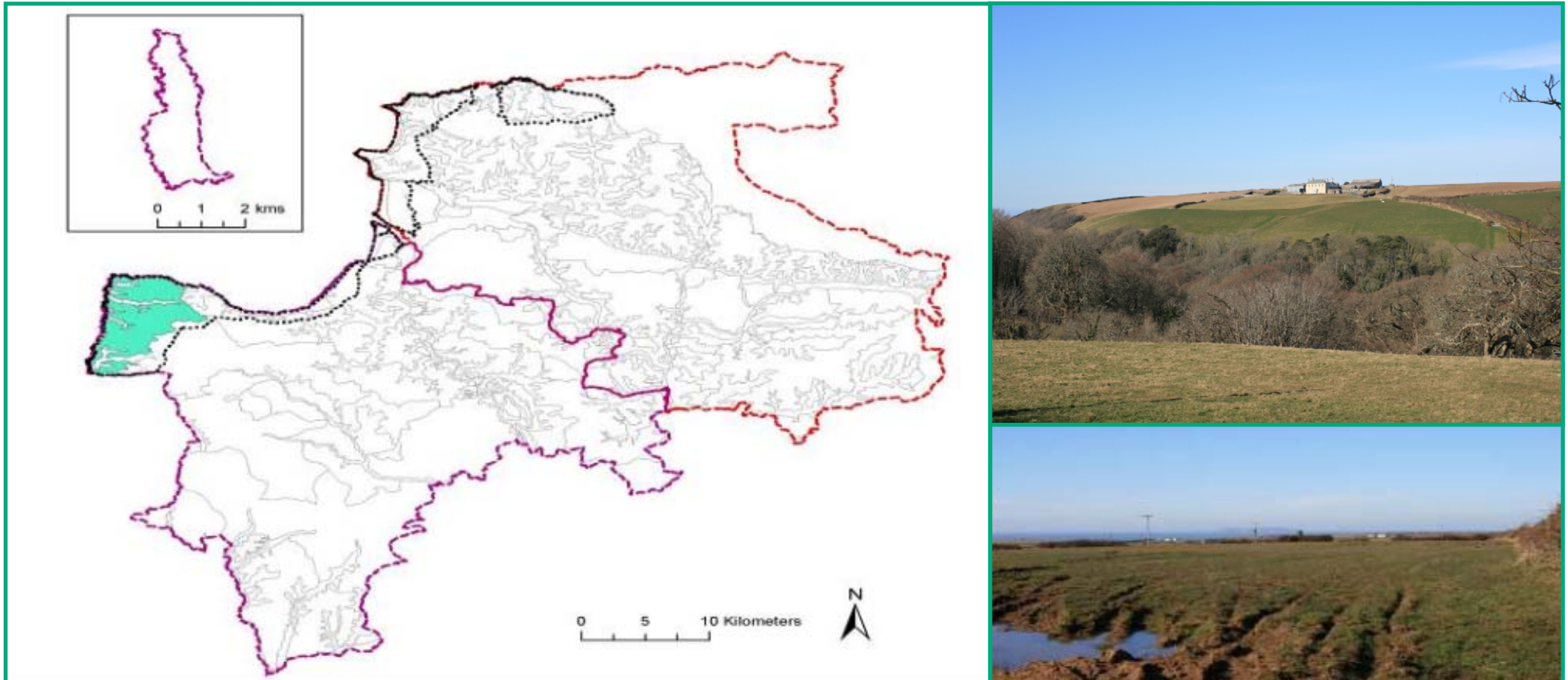
- 4.9. The ELC also provides a helpful overarching aim which has strongly influenced the approach taken in preparing the landscape strategies and guidelines for North Devon and Torridge's LCTs:

"In seeking the right balance between protection, management and planning of a landscape, it should be remembered that the aim is not the preservation or "freezing" of the landscape at a particular point in its lengthy evolution. Landscapes have always changed and will continue to change, both through natural processes and through human action. In fact, the aim should be to manage future changes in a way which recognises the great diversity and the quality of the landscapes that we inherit and which seeks to preserve, or even enhance, that diversity and quality instead of allowing them to decline." (paragraph 42 of Article I)

- 4.10. The format and detail provided in the LCT guidelines are also designed to complement the emerging approach being developed by Natural England through their review of the National Character Areas of England. In so doing, the landscape guidelines seek to deliver multiple benefits (sometimes referred to as the 'ecosystem services' approach).
- 4.11. In addition, the tabular format of the landscape guidelines has been designed to incorporate information on delivery – both through existing policy, schemes and initiatives, as well as through suggestions for future delivery mechanisms.

LANDSCAPE TYPE:
IB: COASTAL OPEN PLATEAU

PART I: DESCRIPTION



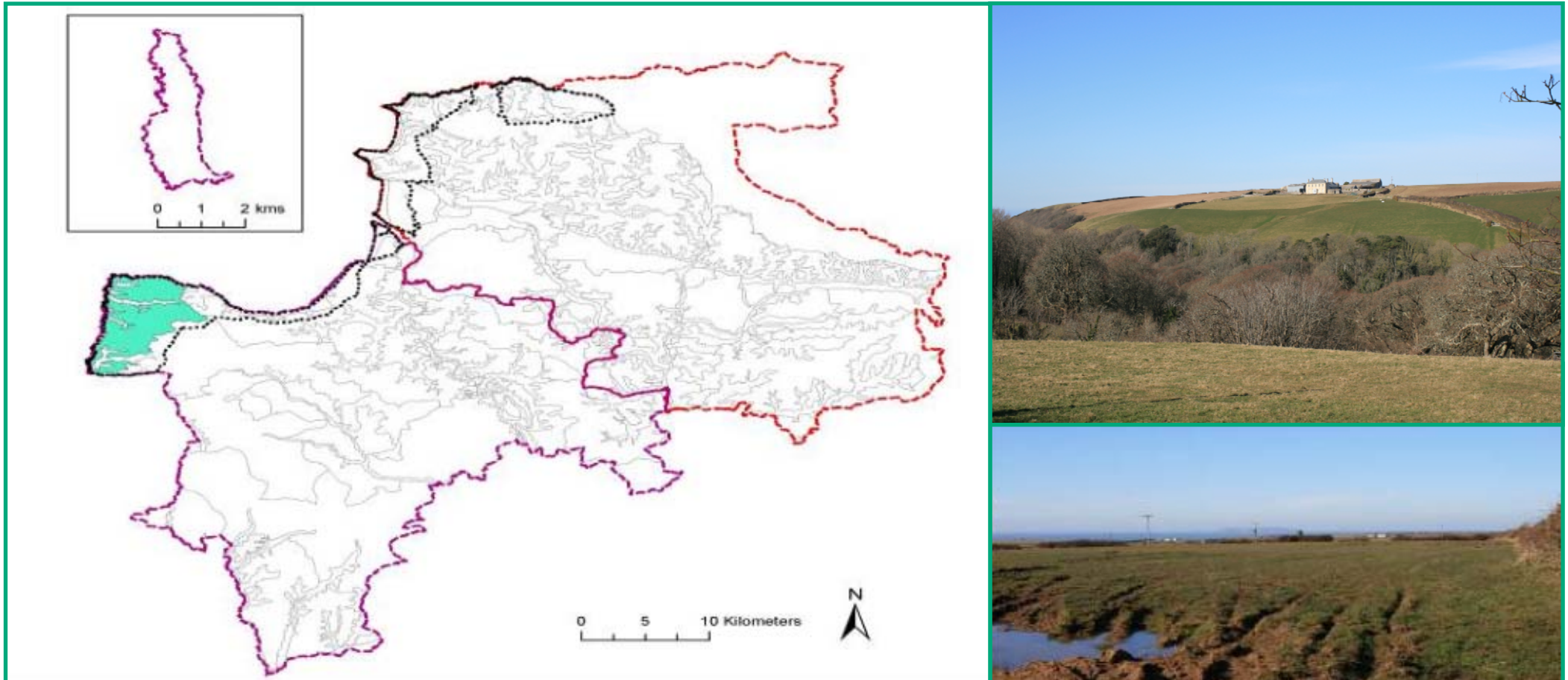
CONSITUENT LDUs: 405, 684, 686, 688, 689, 690, 691, 692, 693, 694

SUMMARY OF LOCATION

This LCT covers the high open plateau of the Hartland peninsular, falling entirely within the North Devon Coast AONB.

LANDSCAPE TYPE:
IB: COASTAL OPEN PLATEAU

PART I: DESCRIPTION



CONSITUENT LDUs: 405, 684, 686, 688, 689, 690, 691, 692, 693, 694

SUMMARY OF LOCATION

This LCT covers the high open plateau of the Hartland peninsular, falling entirely within the North Devon Coast AONB.

LANDSCAPE TYPE:
IB: COASTAL OPEN PLATEAU

KEY CHARACTERISTICS FOR THIS LCT WITHIN NORTH DEVON & TORRIDGE

- An expansive, gently undulating elevated coastal landscape dominated by broad ridgelines.
- Underlain by sandstone from the Crackington Formation.
- Streams occasionally dissect the plateau in narrow wooded combes, predominantly draining west to the coast.
- Predominantly an open, treeless landscape, with woodland cover restricted to settlements, valleys, outgrown hedgerows and occasional wind-sculpted trees.
- Regular modern field patterns predominate, with localised curving boundaries reflecting medieval enclosure of strip fields around some settlements, and regular post-medieval enclosure scattered throughout.
- Medium to large fields are typically enclosed by Devon hedgebanks topped with mixed-species hedgerows, generally intensively flailed.
- An intensively farmed landscape, pasture remains the main agricultural land use, although arable is a notable feature throughout.
- Semi-natural habitats are largely restricted to hedgebanks and hedgerows, although patches of semi-natural woodland and grassland occasionally occur along the LCT boundary.
- Archaeological features include several Iron Age hillforts, including Windbury Head and Embury Beacon camps. The medieval church tower at Stoke forming a prominent local landmark.
- Local vernacular is characterised by whitewash or exposed stone walls, with grey slate tile roofs and occasional thatch. Modern styles with cream-yellow render walls are a common feature, as are large modern farm buildings.
- A dispersed settlement pattern of small nucleated hamlets and scattered farmsteads, often nestled just below the ridgeline, connected by a network of rural lanes (some wide with verges, others single track) with numerous crossroads marked by traditional black and white wooden fingerposts.
- An open, exposed landscape with far-reaching views (often to the coast and along the peninsula), whilst out to sea the island of Lundy is an important feature visible from much of the area.
- Large modern farm buildings are often prominent features, as is the white-domed RAF radar at Hartland Point.
- Landscape defined by very high levels of tranquillity and remoteness, with dark night skies.



PART 2: EVALUATION

SUMMARY OF SPECIAL QUALITIES

- Open views and sense of space.
Nature conservation value of the landscapes woodlands, hedgerows and characteristic dwarf hedgerow trees.
High levels of tranquillity, dark night skies and the landscape's undeveloped character.
Windswept and wild character.
Culture and traditions.



FORCES FOR CHANGE

PAST / CURRENT FORCES FOR CHANGE AFFECTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

- Post-war intensification of agriculture spurred on by CAP-related subsidies in the 1970s, leading to field enlargement and hedgerow removal / damage.
- Intensive flailing of hedges reducing their wildlife value.
- Scrub encroachment due to a localised decline in grazing levels, particularly affecting coastal heathlands, maritime grasslands and archaeological features.
- Spread of invasive species and a decline in traditional management of woodlands.
- 20th century development and associated infrastructure around Hartland, including a range of non-vernacular building styles.
- Recent development on prominent open skylines, including large modern farm buildings.
- Lack of affordable housing – forcing young people out of the area and leading to a decline in the rural workforce (particularly farmers).
- Growth in tourism and recreation – including users of the South West Coast Path.
- Recent conifer planting / presence of shelterbelts standing out in the open landscape, e.g. around Yapham Farm.
- Demand for wind turbines (including the cumulative effects of individual

domestic and small scale turbines).

- Levels of tranquillity affected in the north-west of the LCT by the helicopter to Lundy Island, and locally on the main roads.



FORCES FOR CHANGE

FUTURE FORCES FOR CHANGE AFFECTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

- Further growth in popularity of the area for recreation and tourism, eroding the landscape's high levels of tranquillity and leading to increased demand for facilities (including farm conversions), infrastructure and higher traffic levels.
- Change in woodland / tree species composition as new pests/diseases spread (particularly phytophthora pathogens) and species intolerant of water level extremes die back.
- Individual hedgerow trees (key landscape features) may become more susceptible to damage from the increasing frequency and magnitude of storm events.
- Changes in crops and land use as a consequence of climate change and response to changing markets.
- Impacts of climate change on characteristic habitats and tree distribution, including an increased prevalence of pests and diseases.
- Sea level rise and coastal erosion as a result of climate change, leading to unstable sections of cliffs, the 'squeeze' of coastal habitats and impacts of the course of the South West Coast Path.
- Expansion in the growth of bioenergy crops such as Miscanthus as a result of market demand for 'green' energy and fuel sources, out of keeping with current cropping patterns and the plateau's open character.
- Demand for both on-shore and off-shore wind farms, as well as domestic scale turbines taking advantage of the open landscape's wind resource.

IB: COASTAL OPEN PLATEAU

FUTURE FORCES FOR CHANGE AFFECTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER (Continued)

- Demand for domestic and community-scale renewable energy installations such as solar panels, small wind turbines and ground-source heat pumps.
- Development pressure due to the ever-increasing popularity of the area as a place to live / retire to.



PART 3: LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

OVERALL STRATEGY: To protect the open, undeveloped character of the coastal plateau with expansive sea views and high levels of tranquillity. Distinctive woodlands surrounding settlements are managed (including for woodfuel) and coastal habitats are traditionally grazed. The ever-changing coastline is strengthened and prepared for the future effects of climate change.

Landscape and planning guidelines

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, initiatives and programmes)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
PROTECT		
<p>Protect the landscape's open vistas and sense of space, avoiding the location of new development and vertical structures on prominent skylines. Ensure that the medieval church tower at Stoke remains a prominent local landmark (e.g. by avoiding siting other vertical structures on the same skyline).</p> <p>Protect the character of the landscape's expansive sea views (including to Lundy).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify important views and viewpoints to and from the landscape, and identify why people think they are important (both onshore and offshore) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AONB Management Plan: Objectives EQ1, EQ2 and CO4; Policies B2 and D5. North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR4 and COR6 Devon Structure Plan: policies CO1, CO3, CO4, CO5 Shoreline Management Plan policies (SMP 2 currently at consultation phase) Guidance in development management planning to avoid the siting of vertical structures and large buildings on open skylines within this LCT. Consider undertaking a seascape assessment to help guide future off-shore development away from the most sensitive locations (following emerging Natural England guidance).
Protect the landscape's high levels of tranquillity and dark		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AONB Management plan: Objectives LH2,

IB: COASTAL OPEN PLATEAU

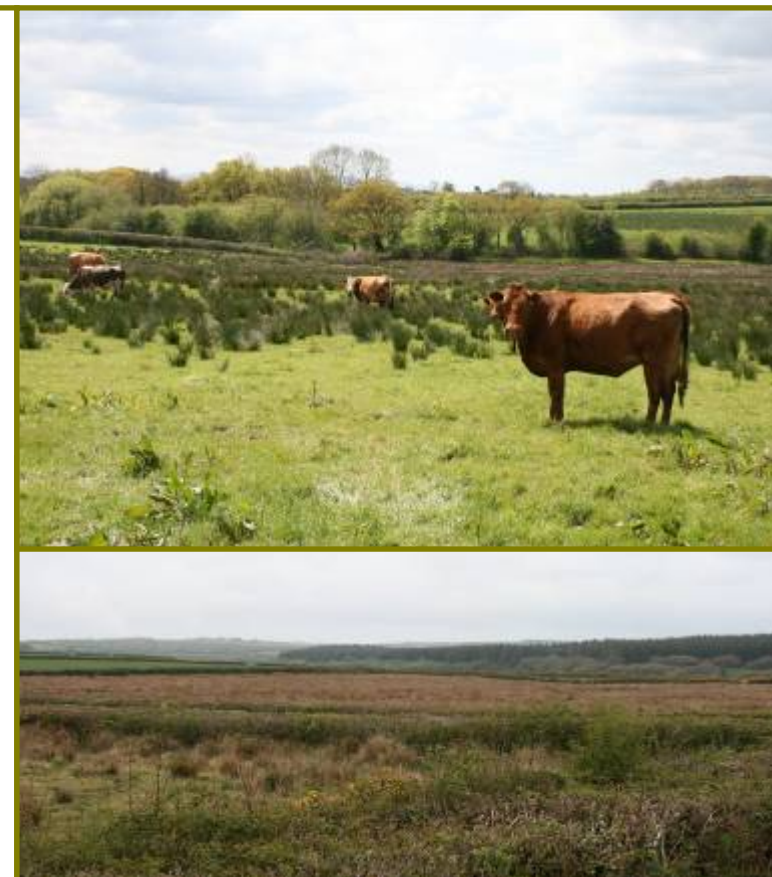
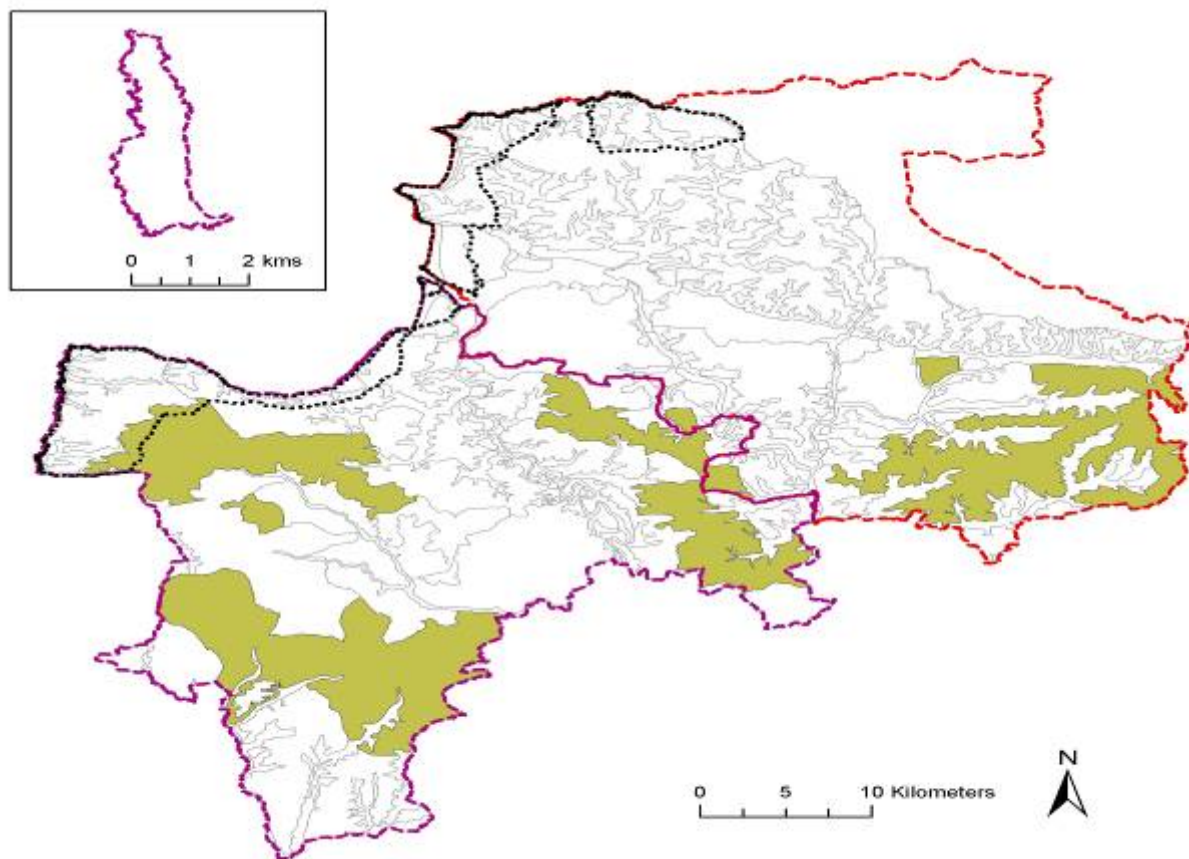
Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, initiatives and programmes)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
<p>night skies through the control and management of development, including highways.</p>		<p>EQI and TH3; Policies A1, B1, G5 and H2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policies COR4, COR5, COR6 and COR8 • Devon Structure Plan: Policies CO6 and CO16. • Prepare design guidance focused on the quality of development and the special attributes of the landscape (e.g. lighting design guidance to preserve dark night skies).
<p>Protect and appropriately manage the landscape's prominent Iron Age hillforts, including Windbury Head and Embury Beacon camps (including through grazing at appropriate levels and recreation management).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AONB Management Plan: Objective LH1, ART4, CC3; Policies A1 and F2. • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6 • Devon's Structure Plan: Policies CO7 and CO8
<p>Protect the historic character of the area, encouraging the sensitive location of new farm buildings away from open skylines, respecting the local characteristic clustering of agricultural buildings within the landscape, and ensuring that any new development incorporates local vernacular building styles of whitewash, local stone and thatch wherever possible (whilst seeking to incorporate sustainable and low carbon building construction and design).</p> <p>Characteristic features such as black and white wooden finger posts should be retained and kept in a good state of repair.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CORDIALE Interreg bid (South West Protected Landscapes Forum) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AONB Management Plan: Objectives, LH1 and LH2; Policies A1, A4, G1 and G4 • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policies COR4, COR6 and COR8 • Devon Structure Plan: Policies CO1 and CO7 • Prepare landscape-specific design guidance to support the LDF. • Prepare landscape-specific design guidance to support the LDF. • Devon CC Environmental Review of

IB: COASTAL OPEN PLATEAU

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, initiatives and programmes)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
<p>Protect the landscape's open vistas and sense of space, avoiding the location of new development and vertical structures on prominent skylines. Ensure that the medieval church tower at Stoke remains a prominent local landmark (e.g. by avoiding siting other vertical structures on the same skyline).</p> <p>Protect the character of the landscape's expansive sea views (including to Lundy).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify important views and viewpoints to and from the landscape, and identify why people think they are important (both onshore and offshore) 	<p>permitted highway development proposals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AONB Management Plan: Objectives EQ1, EQ2 and CO4; Policies B2 and D5. North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR4 and COR6 Devon Structure Plan: policies CO1, CO3, CO4, CO5 Shoreline Management Plan policies (SMP 2 currently at consultation phase) Guidance in development management planning to avoid the siting of vertical structures and large buildings on open skylines within this LCT. Consider undertaking a seascape assessment to help guide future off-shore development away from the most sensitive locations (following emerging Natural England guidance).
MANAGE		
<p>Manage the landscape's valued woodlands around settlements and in sheltered locations, controlling invasive species and moving towards a predominance of broadleaves over conifers to enhance their wildlife interest. New planting should consider species of greater resilience to a changing climate. Traditional woodland management (including coppicing) should be revived, with wood promoted as a sustainable energy source for local communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> England Woodland Grant Scheme Environmental Stewardship South West Woodland Renaissance South West Nature Map Devon BAP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AONB Management Plan: Objectives FL1, FL2 and G5; Policy E2. North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6. Devon Structure Plan: Policy CO9

IB: COASTAL OPEN PLATEAU

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, initiatives and programmes)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
Manage and protect the landscape's network of hedgerows and characteristic dwarf hedgerow trees, replanting ageing or diseased specimens (with climate hardy species) to ensure the future survival of these characteristic features.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • Devon BAP • Devon Rural Skills Trust • Devon Hedge Group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AONB Management Plan: Objectives FL1; Policy E1 • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6 • Devon Structure Plan: Policy CO9
Manage nationally important coastal habitats, including coastal heath and maritime grasslands, through supporting a continuation of extensive grazing at appropriate levels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • Devon Food Links • Devon BAP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AONB Management Plan: Objectives FL1; Policies E1 and E3. • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy: COR6. • Devon's Structure Plan: Policy CO5 • Strengthen and promote links between local markets and produce from the area.
PLAN		
Plan for the impacts of a changing climate on the coastline, allowing natural processes to take place whilst considering how habitats and the SW Coast Path can be expanded or relocated to account for coastal squeeze.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • SW Nature Map • Devon BAP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AONB Management Plan: Objectives CO1, CO3; Policies D1 and D5. • Shoreline Management Plan policies (SMP 2 currently under consultation) • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR2. • Devon Structure Plan: Policy CO5

IF: FARMED LOWLAND MOORLAND & CULM GRASSLAND**PART I: DESCRIPTION**

CONSITUENT LDUs: 405, 599, 603, 609, 610, 611, 660, 674, 678, 680, 681, 684, 686, 687, 688, 689, 705, 740, 741, 742, 743, 745, 793, 812, 817, 825, 834, 837, 842, 844, 875, 876, 881

SUMMARY OF LOCATION

This LCT is distributed across Torridge District, stretching into the south and south-eastern corner of North Devon. It covers the landscape's high open tracts of Culm grassland and 'moors' which sit on the poorly drained soils and sandstone ridges of the *Culm Measures* geological series.

IF: FARMED LOWLAND MOORLAND & CULM GRASSLAND

KEY CHARACTERISTICS FOR THIS LCT WITHIN NORTH DEVON & TORRIDGE

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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'. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. |
|---|---|



IF: FARMED LOWLAND MOORLAND & CULM GRASSLAND

PART 2: EVALUATION

SUMMARY OF SPECIAL QUALITIES

- Distinctive Culm grassland habitats and associated birdlife.
- Traditional management regimes (including grazing by North Devon Reds).
- Small field patterns enclosed by thick Devon banks and surrounded by open grazing land.
- Isolated farms and farmsteads.
- High levels of tranquillity and remoteness.



FORCES FOR CHANGE

PAST / CURRENT FORCES FOR CHANGE AFFECTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

- Past drainage of Culm grasslands to convert land to agriculturally productive farmland (e.g. arable land and permanent pasture around Stibbs Cross).
- Uneven grazing levels and distribution leading to vegetation succession in some areas, whilst other areas of Culm grassland are closely grazed leading to a uniform grass sward.
- 20th century afforestation across significant areas of Culm grassland / lowland 'moors'. Some areas now being felled and restored to heathland / Culm grassland (e.g. Dunsdon National Nature Reserve).
- Tensions between the requirements of nature conservation designations (SAC / SSSI) and traditional farming practices.
- Agri-environment schemes too rigid / not tailored enough to local conditions (e.g. reduced stocking rates required on designated sites whilst higher stocking has traditionally been the norm).
- Legislative requirements of the Commons Act 2006 – including for all areas of common land to have management regimes in place.
- Development pressures encroaching into the landscape from the larger settlements such as Holsworthy, Quoditch and Winkleigh (including pony paddocks).
- Prominent ridgeline developments of white/cream housing.

IF: FARMED LOWLAND MOORLAND & CULM GRASSLAND

PAST / CURRENT FORCES FOR CHANGE AFFECTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER (Continued)

- Industrial land uses and intensive poultry farming on former airfields around Winkleigh.
- New development of white / cream rendered bungalows and cottages – generally in keeping with broad styles of the local vernacular.
- Small cluster of wind turbines visible in views from this LCT near Bradworthy.
- The installation of domestic-scale renewables such as building-mounted wind turbines,
- Tourism-related development and land uses, such as golf courses, caravan sites, fisheries and fishing lakes.
- Feeling of neglect in some locations due to an ongoing decline in the agricultural economy – e.g. overgrown hedges, derelict farm buildings, inappropriate farm building repairs, general farm ‘clutter’.



FORCES FOR CHANGE

FUTURE FORCES FOR CHANGE AFFECTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

- Increase in UK-based tourism with associated demands for new attractions (e.g. golf courses) and infrastructure, as well as an increase in traffic levels, car parking, recreational pressures and farm conversions.
- Population growth and settlement expansion, along with the need for supporting infrastructure and services.
- The effects of climate change – including more intense drought conditions affecting the landscape’s wetland habitats and Culm grasslands.
- Longer growing season and enhanced growth rates of vegetation including bracken, gorse and secondary woodland resulting in a decrease in remaining areas of heathland and Culm grassland.
- Change in woodland / tree species composition as new pests/diseases spread (particularly phytophthora pathogens) and species intolerant of water level extremes die back.
- Drive for increased domestic food production, putting further pressure on unimproved agricultural land.
- Uncertainty over future levels of agricultural subsidies to support farming on ‘marginal’ land such as the Culm grasslands and moors.
- UK-wide policy drive for increased woodland planting, planted to enhance the landscape’s roles in filtering water, minimising downstream flooding, storing and sequestering carbon dioxide and providing low-carbon fuel sources (through coppice management).

IF: FARMED LOWLAND MOORLAND & CULM GRASSLAND

FUTURE FORCES FOR CHANGE AFFECTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER (Continued)

- The elevated plateaux likely to come under increasing pressure for the development of commercial wind turbines.
- Expansion in the growth of bioenergy crops such as Miscanthus as a result of market demand for 'green' energy and fuel sources, out of keeping with current cropping patterns.
- Demand for domestic and community-scale renewable energy installations such as solar panels, small wind turbines and ground-source heat pumps



IF: FARMED LOWLAND MOORLAND & CULM GRASSLAND**PART 3: LANDSCAPE STRATEGY**

OVERALL STRATEGY: To protect the landscape's traditional farming systems which are integral to the survival of rare Culm grassland habitats. New development is integrated into its landscape setting, avoiding prominent open ridgelines, and opportunities are sought for the creation of Green Infrastructure networks to support future population growth and provide space for recreation.

Landscape and planning guidelines

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
PROTECT		
Protect the farming and land management traditions of the area, continuing to support local farmers to graze the Culm grasslands and lowland moors as integral parts of their farming system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • The Working Wetlands project (Devon Wildlife Trust) • Devon Food Links 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share best practice between farmers working in areas of Culm grassland (e.g. through demonstration events). • Strengthen and promote links between local markets and produce from the area (e.g. Ruby red beef raised on Culm grassland).
Protect the landscape's strong sense of tranquillity and remoteness through avoiding the location of new development on prominent, open ridgelines,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the most prominent skylines in the area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AONB Management Plan: Objective EQ1; Policies A1, B1, B2, G1, G5 and H2. • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR 4 and COR6. • Devon Structure Plan: Policies CO1, CO3 and CO16. • Consider adopting a development management policy stating that any new development in the area should avoid the

IF: FARMED LOWLAND MOORLAND & CULM GRASSLAND

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
		most prominent open skylines.
<p>Protect the landscape's variety of traditional building styles, including cream cob/render, slate and local stone. Any new development should utilise the same materials and building styles wherever possible (whilst seeking to incorporate sustainable and low carbon building construction and design). Characteristic features such as white wooden finger posts and linhays should be retained and kept in a good state of repair.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conservation Area Appraisals / Management Plans • Devon Rural Skills Trust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AONB Management Plan: Objectives LH1 and LH2; Policies A1, A4, G1 and G4. • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policies COR1, COR6 and COR8. • Devon Structure Plan: Policies CO1 and CO7. • Consider formulating a Design Guide as a SPD in the forthcoming LDF. • Devon CC Environmental Review of permitted highway development proposals.
<p>Protect the landscape's sparse settlement pattern of scattered farmsteads, small clustered hamlets and nucleated villages. Resist the further spread of new development outside the limits of the landscape's villages and hamlets, including along roads. Utilise the landscape's woodland cover and topography to filter views of any recent/ new development.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conservation Area Appraisals / Management Plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR3 and COR4
<p>Protect and appropriately manage the rich cultural heritage of the area, including Bronze Age barrows on elevated sites, disused quarries and the remains of the medieval castle at Winkleigh.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6 • Devon's Structure Plan: Policies CO7 and CO8.
MANAGE		

IF: FARMED LOWLAND MOORLAND & CULM GRASSLAND

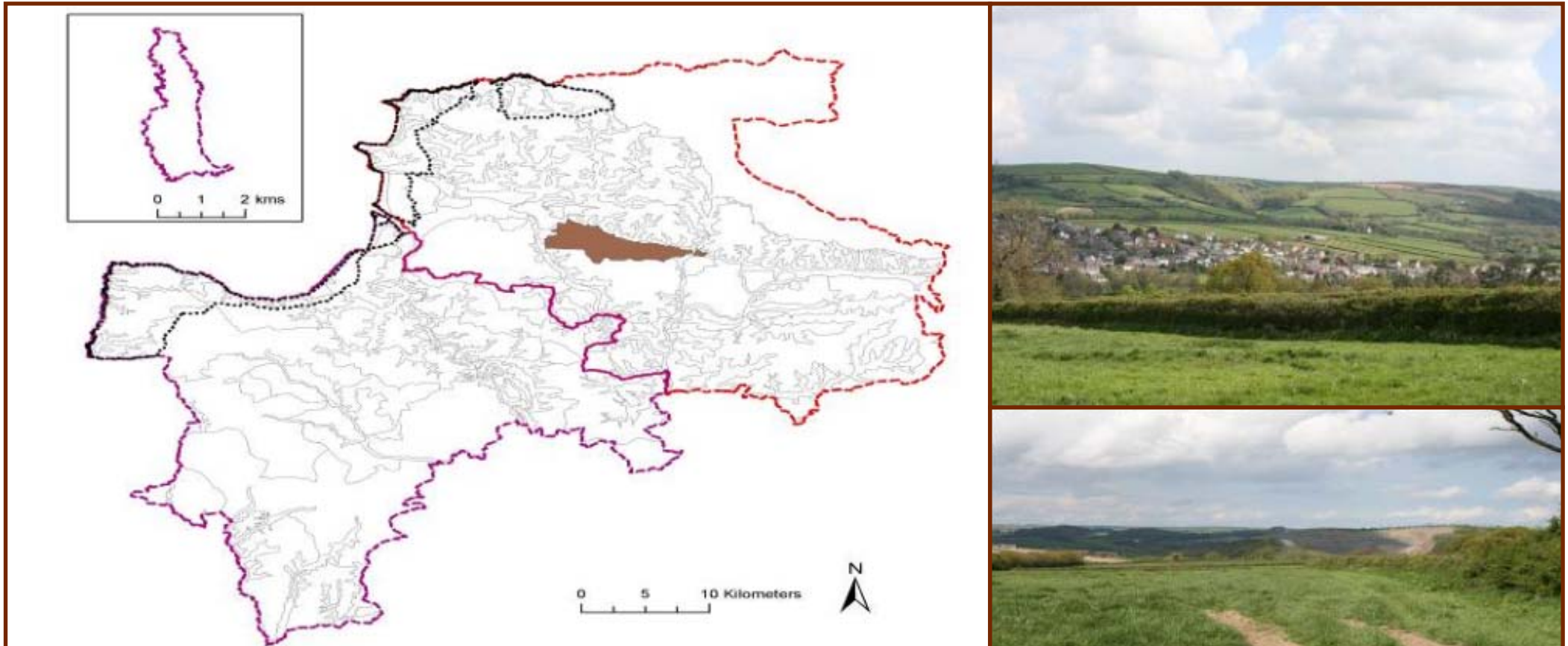
Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
<p>Manage areas of Culm grassland through appropriate grazing and burning regimes whilst protecting their high wildlife importance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • The Working Wetlands project (Devon Wildlife Trust) • Devon BAP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6 • Devon Structure Plan: Policy CO9. • Share best practice between farmers working in areas of Culm grassland (e.g. through demonstration events). • Ensure management prescriptions provide a balance between wildlife needs and those of local farmers so agriculture remains viable.
<p>Manage the area's existing plantations for sustainable timber production and wildlife interest, creating new green links to surrounding semi-natural habitats. Explore their use as recreational spaces away from the more sensitive habitats surrounding them.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • England Woodland Grant Scheme • Devon BAP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AONB Management Plan: Objectives C1, C3 and C4. • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policies COR6 and COR17 • Devon's Structure Plan: Policies CO9, TO6 and TO5. • Green Infrastructure Strategy
PLAN		
<p>Plan for the expansion of fragmented Culm grassland sites to create an intact green network, where conditions allow (e.g. considering underlying geology / soils).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • Devon BAP • The Working Wetlands project (Devon Wildlife Trust) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policies COR6 and COR17

IF: FARMED LOWLAND MOORLAND & CULM GRASSLAND

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
<p>Plan for the long-term restoration of the more prominent conifer plantations to open habitats (where their role in timber production has ceased), including re-creating Culm grasslands within open rides and on areas of wet ground.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • The Working Wetlands project (Devon Wildlife Trust) • Devon BAP • Forest Design Plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6
<p>Plan for a network of green spaces and green infrastructure links to support future population growth in nearby settlements; integrating development into the landscape and providing local spaces for access and recreation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green Infrastructure Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AONB Management Plan: Policies BG5 and G2. • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policies COR5 and COR17. • Devon's Structure Plan: Policy TO6.

LANDSCAPE TYPE:
ID: ESTATE WOODED RIDGES & HILLTOPS

PART I: DESCRIPTION



CONSITUENT LDUs: 367, 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 541, 546, 552, 567, 609, 682, 683, 812

SUMMARY OF LOCATION

This LCT occupies a small part of North Devon District, encompassing a prominent series of chert hills running parallel to the A361 from the eastern fringes of Barnstaple to the edges of the Castle Hill Estate.

ID: ESTATE WOODED RIDGES & HILLTOPS

KEY CHARACTERISTICS FOR THIS LCT NORTH DEVON & TORRIDGE

- 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.



PART 2: EVALUATION**SUMMARY OF SPECIAL QUALITIES**

- 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.
- Network of winding rural roads and ancient trackways.
- High levels of peace and tranquillity.

**FORCES FOR CHANGE****PAST / CURRENT FORCES FOR CHANGE AFFECTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER**

- Past loss of lowland heathland on Codden Hill – some fragmented patches remaining.
- Scrub encroachment on south facing slopes of Codden Hill due to a decline in grazing levels.
- Past quarrying activity leaving visible scars in the landscape (although some former quarries are important both for nature conservation and for displaying geological exposures).
- Some remnant areas of parkland estate being neglected. However, all of the Castle Hill Estate is managed favourable under an Environmental Stewardship agreement.
- Conifer planting on areas of heathland and within semi-natural woodlands.
- Visual and noise intrusion of the A361 North Devon link road which lies to the north of the LCT.
- 20th century and ongoing expansion of Barnstaple and the nearby villages of Swimbridge and Landkey, eroding local levels of tranquillity.
- Increased use of areas of common land in close proximity to settlements for recreation, including dog walking, with some negative impacts from erosion and litter.

ID: ESTATE WOODED RIDGES & HILLTOPS**FORCES FOR CHANGE****FUTURE FORCES FOR CHANGE AFFECTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER**

- Uncertainty over future levels of agricultural subsidies to support farming on 'marginal' land such as heathland on Codden Hill.
- Development pressure between Landkey and the South Molton roundabout impacting on northward views from the hills.
- Development pressure along the A361 corridor – probable future coalescence of Barnstaple and Landkey.
- Increase in UK-based tourism with associated demands for new attractions (e.g. golf courses) and infrastructure, as well as an increase in traffic levels on rural roads, car parking, recreational pressures and farm conversions.
- Potential change in ownership of parkland estates, leading to a gradual change in their character and patterns of management.
- Longer growing season and enhanced growth rates of vegetation (as a result of climate change) including bracken, gorse and secondary woodland resulting in a decrease in remaining areas of heathland.
- A changing climate resulting in an increase of pests/disease affecting the composition and distribution of woodlands and semi-natural habitats (e.g. Sudden Oak Death).
- Expansion in the growth of bioenergy crops such as Miscanthus as a result of market demand for 'green' energy and fuel sources, out of keeping with current cropping patterns.

FUTURE FORCES FOR CHANGE AFFECTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER (Continued)

- Demand for domestic and community-scale renewable energy installations such as solar panels, small wind turbines and ground-source heat pumps.
- Open hills and ridges likely to become under pressure from wind farm developers.



PART 3: LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

OVERALL STRATEGY: To protect 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.

Landscape and planning guidelines

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
PROTECT		
Protect important views to and from the hills and designed parkland landscapes – to as far as Lundy Island, Exmoor and Dartmoor.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify important views and viewpoints to and from the landscape (and identify why people think they are important) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guidance in development management planning to avoid siting vertical structures on the hills within this LCT, and on other hill summits visible from this landscape.
Protect the landscape's ancient trackways and network of quiet rural lanes, resisting unsympathetic highways improvements or signage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Devon Green Lanes and Veins Project Encourage the Highways Authority to respect the special character of the landscape's rural lanes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6 Develop a policy for protecting the character of rural lanes / ancient trackways in the forthcoming LDF. DCC to roll out a highways protocol / best practice guide on roadside management for rural areas. Devon CC Environmental Review of permitted highway development proposals.
Protect important geological exposures revealed through past quarrying activity (including through keeping vegetation at bay).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Natural England SSSI monitoring (e.g. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Devon & Torridge Joint Core

ID: ESTATE WOODED RIDGES & HILLTOPS

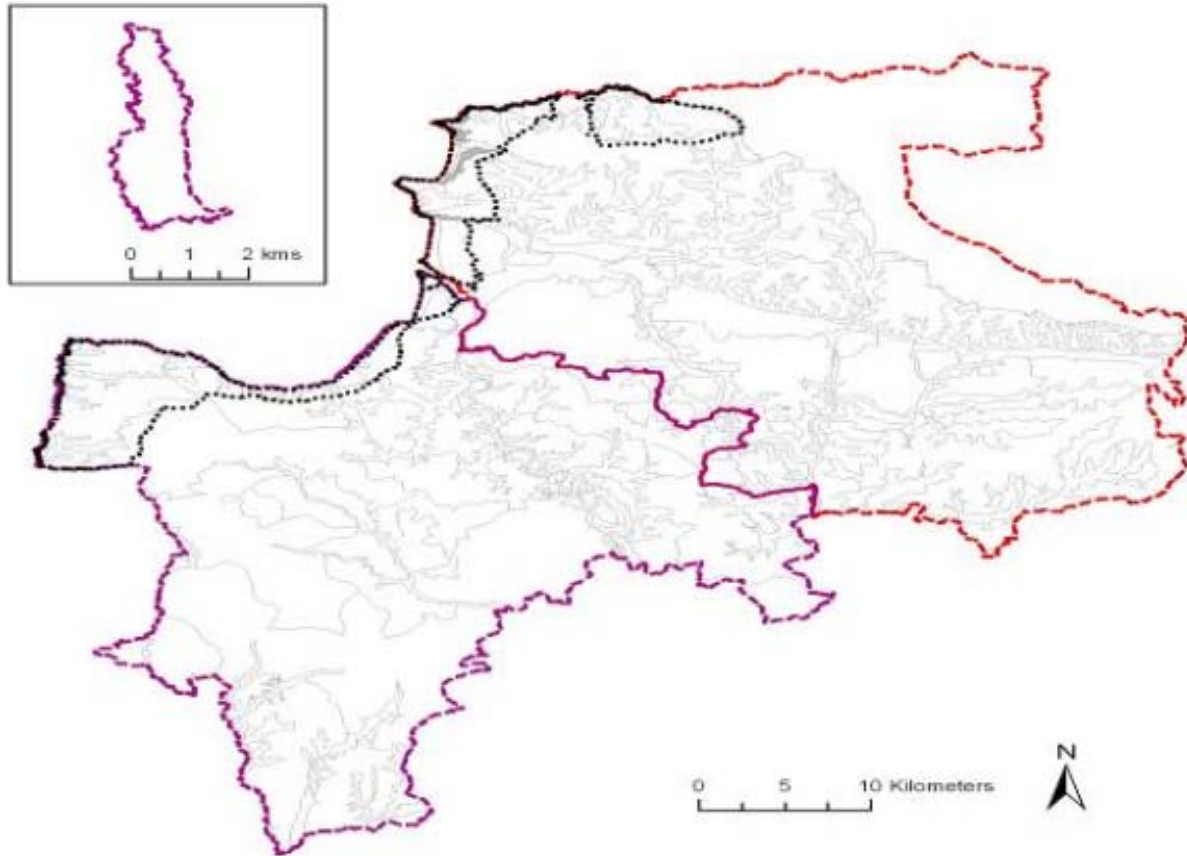
Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
Quarries should also be protected as valued historic landscape features.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> for High Down Quarry) Environmental Stewardship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategy: Policy COR6. Devon's Structure Plan: Policy CO1.
Protect in a good state of repair the traditional local vernacular of whitewash with black painted details, with some buildings of cream cob/render as well as exposed local stone. Limited new development should utilise the same materials and building styles wherever possible (whilst seeking to incorporate sustainable and low carbon building construction and design).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conservation Area appraisals / management plans Estate Management Plans Devon Rural Skills Trust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policies COR4. COR6 and COR8. Devon Structure Plan: Policies CO1 and CO7. Consider formulating a Design Guide as a SPD in the forthcoming LDF.
Protect and appropriately manage the nationally important features relating to the Castle Hill Estate (including parklands, fishpond, ice house and deer fencing) and the Bronze Age bowl barrow at Codden Beacon.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Stewardship Estate Management Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6. Devon Structure Plan: Policy CO7 and CO8.
MANAGE		
Sensitively manage the landscape's remaining ancient and veteran trees, including through traditional pollarding where appropriate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> England Woodland Grant Scheme Environmental Stewardship Devon BAP Estate Management Plans Devon Rural Skills Trust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6 Devon's Structure Plan: Policy CO9
Manage important areas of lowland heath on Codden Hill, including through appropriate grazing and controlled burning levels to keep levels of scrub/ young trees at bay.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Stewardship Devon BAP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6. Devon's Structure Plan: Policy CO9
PLAN		
Plan for the planting of the next generation of veteran trees, choosing climate resilient species to ensure longevity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> England Woodland Grant Scheme Environmental Stewardship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6

ID: ESTATE WOODED RIDGES & HILLTOPS

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Estate Management Plans 	
Plan for the expansion of lowland heath on Codden Hill, managed through appropriate grazing and burning levels, with remnant sites re-linked to form an intact habitat network.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Stewardship Devon BAP South West Nature Map 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policies COR6 Devon's Structure Plan: Policy CO9
Plan for potential habitat recreation in disused quarry sites, whilst protecting important geological outcrops revealed in rock faces.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Stewardship South West Nature Map Devon BAP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential links into a wider Green Infrastructure network for new development in the area (see below).
Plan for the future expansion of local settlements, integrating new development into its landscape framework through the provision of a surrounding network of green spaces, wildlife habitats and recreational routes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> South West Nature Map Devon BAP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policies COR2, COR4, COR5, COR8 and COR17 Devon Structure Plan: Policies CO6, CO9, TO6. Green Infrastructure Strategy

**LANDSCAPE TYPE:
2C: STEEP OPEN SLOPES**

PART I: DESCRIPTION



CONSITUENT LDUs: 385, 386, 402, 403, 579, 853

SUMMARY OF LOCATION

This LCT covers the steep west-facing slopes below Woolacombe Down and wrapping above the coastal cliffs around Morteohoe. It also includes the south-facing slopes that fall away below Saunton Down, overlooking Braunton Burrows and Saunton Sands. All of this LCT falls within the North Devon Coast AONB.

LANDSCAPE TYPE: 2C: STEEP OPEN SLOPES

KEY CHARACTERISTICS FOR THIS LCT WITHIN NORTH DEVON & TORRIDGE

- 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 Morteheoe 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 Morteheoe, 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.



PART 2: EVALUATION

SUMMARY OF SPECIAL QUALITIES

- Distinctive topography including windy narrow slopes, dramatic headlands and minor combe valleys
- Amazing coastal views
- Sense of naturalness with important areas of remnant coastal heath
- Valued area for recreation – including circular walks
- Exciting balance between lively coastal activities nearby and the slopes' remote feel.



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FORCES FOR CHANGE

PAST / CURRENT FORCES FOR CHANGE AFFECTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

- Post-war intensification of agriculture spurred on by CAP-related subsidies in the 1970s, leading to an improvement and enclosure of former areas of heathland and downland in favour of pasture.
- Scrub encroachment due to a localised decline in grazing levels, affecting the landscape's open character and wildlife interest of remaining heathland.
- Steady growth in tourism and recreation since the development of nearby seaside resorts in the Victorian era. Linear spread of modern development along roadsides (including between Morteheo and Woolacombe).
- Recreation pressure associated with the nearby beaches, sand dunes and the South West Coast Path, leading to erosion of paths and the presence of infrastructure such as car parks (e.g. the slope overlooking Woolacombe).
- Demand for wind turbines on the open slopes and the adjacent elevated downland.
- 20th century expansion of the nearby settlements of Braunton, Instow, Appledore, Northam and Westward Ho!, now dominating southward views along the coast.

LANDSCAPE TYPE: 2C: STEEP OPEN SLOPES

FORCES FOR CHANGE

FUTURE FORCES FOR CHANGE AFFECTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

- Further growth in popularity of the area for recreation and tourism, eroding the landscape's high levels of tranquillity and leading to increased demand for facilities and public access.
- Pine shelterbelts and individual wind-sculpted trees (key landscape features) may become more susceptible to damage from the increasing frequency and magnitude of storm events as a result of climate change.
- Changes in crops and land use as a consequence of climate change and response to changing markets (e.g. for increased UK food production and emerging markets for energy crops).
- Development pressure due to the ever-increasing popularity of the area as holiday destination



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- Further decline in grazing levels on the steeper slopes leading to an increase in scrub and low-level tree cover, affecting the biodiversity value of areas of coastal heath and the condition of archaeological features (e.g. cultivation terraces above Saunton).
- Sea level rise and coastal erosion as a result of climate change, leading to the 'squeeze' of coastal habitats, unstable sections of cliff and impacts on the course of the South West Coast Path.
- Demand for both on-shore and off-shore wind farms, as well as domestic scale turbines taking advantage of the open landscape's wind resource.
- Demand for domestic and community-scale renewable energy installations such as solar panels, small wind turbines and ground-source heat pumps.



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PART 3: LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

OVERALL STRATEGY: Protect the open and remote character of the landscape, with long coastal and seaward views. Expand remnant patches of coastal heath to strengthen landscape character and future climate change resilience, whilst ensuring archaeological features remain traceable in the landscape. Strengthen the network of stone-faced hedgebanks and promote further recreational links between nearby coastal resorts and adjacent inland areas, taking the pressure away from the busy North Devon coast.

Landscape and planning guidelines

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
PROTECT		
Protect the landscape's open and generally unsettled character, preventing the further spread of development from nearby tourist centres along roadsides.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conservation Area Appraisals / Management Plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AONB Management Plan: Objective EQ1; Policies A1, B1, B2, G1, G5 and H2. North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6. Devon Structure Plan: Policies CO1, CO3 and CO16.
Protect the slopes' extensive open views along the coast, out to sea and inland, ensuring new development avoids the most prominent open skylines.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify important views / viewpoints both from and to the landscape (and identify why people think they are important). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AONB Management Plan: Objectives EQ1, EQ2 and CO4; Policies B2 and D5. North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6 Devon Structure Plan: policies CO1, CO3, CO4, CO5
Protect and appropriately manage the landscape's archaeological features, including ancient cultivation terraces on the slopes above Saunton, historic quarries and World War	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Stewardship National Trust Estate Management Plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6

LANDSCAPE TYPE:
2C: STEEP OPEN SLOPES

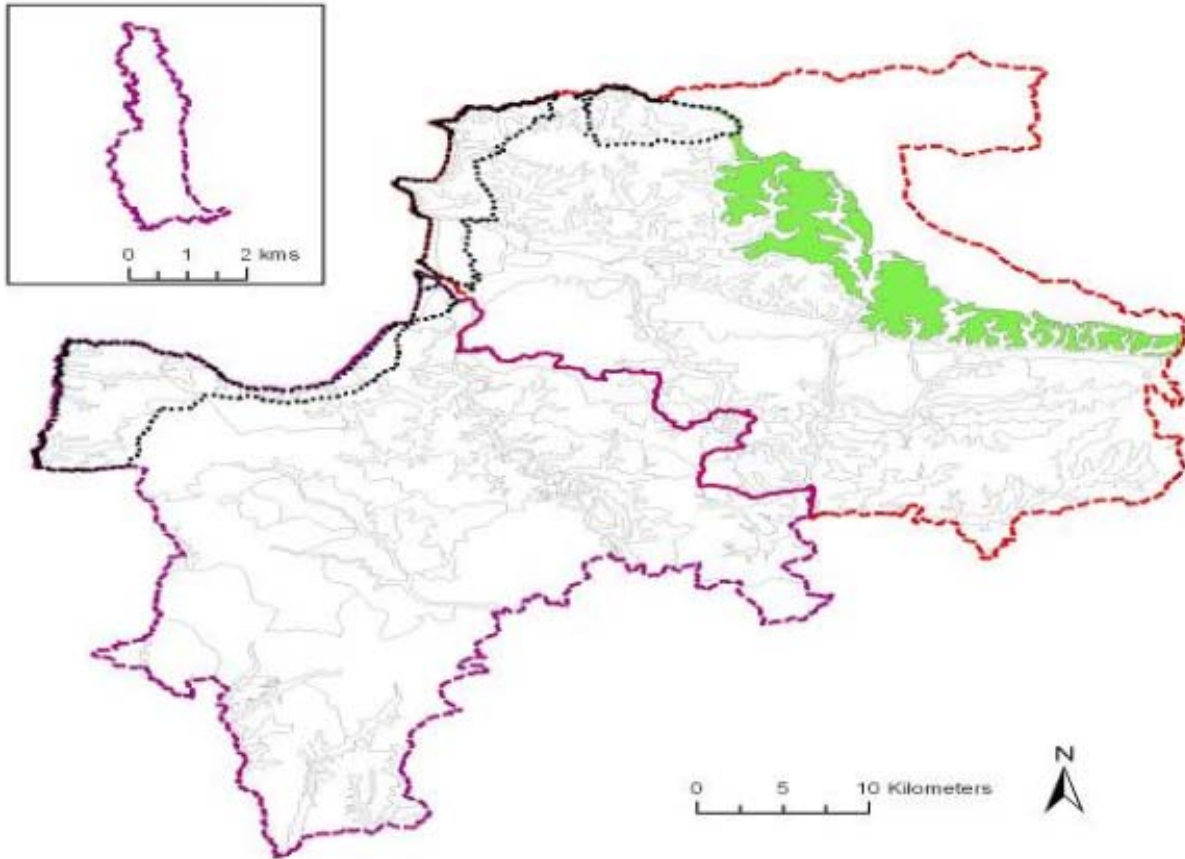
Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
<p>It features. Manage scrub encroachment by supporting extensive grazing at appropriate levels, and protect the sites from erosion by managing public access.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Devon's Structure Plan: Policies CO7 and CO8
MANAGE		
<p>Manage, extend and re-link patches of rough grassland and heath, including through a continuation of livestock grazing at appropriate levels. Support farmers to continue to farm these 'marginal' areas as integral parts of their farming systems.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Stewardship Devon BAP Devon Food Links National Trust Estate Management Plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policies COR6 Devon's Structure Plan: Policies CO6, CO9, TO6. Strengthen and promote links between local markets and produce from the area
<p>Manage the network of distinctive stone-faced hedges, restoring lost lengths to reinforce historic field patterns. Ensure any new sections replicate traditional styles of construction (e.g. patterns of stone facing) and species composition.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Stewardship Devon BAP Devon Hedge Group Devon Rural Skills Trust National Trust Estate Management Plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AONB Management Plan: Objectives FLI; Policy EI Devon Structure Plan: Policy CO9
PLAN		
<p>Plan for the future impacts of climate change, particularly coastal squeeze, seeking to expand semi-natural habitats and wildlife networks to allow for habitat/species migration within the landscape.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Stewardship South West Nature Map Devon BAP National Trust Estate Management Plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Devon Biosphere Reserve Sustainable Development Strategy (2008-12)

LANDSCAPE TYPE:
2C: STEEP OPEN SLOPES

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
<p>Plan for the continuing popularity of the area for tourism and recreation, seeking to link and create access routes to nearby tourism centres to encourage exploration of inland landscapes and reduce car use (taking the pressure off the coast).</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AONB Management Plan: Objectives BG5; Policies C1, C2 and C4 • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policies COR2, COR4, COR5, COR8 and COR17 • Devon Structure Plan: Policies CO6, CO9, TO6. • Green Infrastructure Strategy

LANDSCAPE TYPE:
2D: MOORLAND EDGE SLOPES

PART I: DESCRIPTION



CONSITUENT LDUs: 358, 384, 399, 403, 452, 526, 544, 545, 547, 548, 552, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 563, 564, 566, 567, 568, 570, 571, 572, 576, 579, 580, 603, 849

SUMMARY OF LOCATION

This LCT forms the southern and western edges of Exmoor National Park, providing an important setting and transition to the protected landscape.

LANDSCAPE TYPE:
2D: MOORLAND EDGE SLOPES

KEY CHARACTERISTICS FOR THIS LCT WITHIN NORTH DEVON & TORRIDGE

- 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.



PART 2: EVALUATION

SUMMARY OF SPECIAL QUALITIES

- Views to Exmoor and across to North Devon
- Small, square field patterns with beech hedges on stone-faced banks.
- Moorland influence in vegetation and rich, varied wildlife habitats.
- Picturesque villages with traditional buildings linked by rural lanes.
- Senses of isolation, tranquillity and remoteness.



FORCES FOR CHANGE

PAST / CURRENT FORCES FOR CHANGE AFFECTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

- The past planting of coniferous shelterbelts and plantations on higher ground forming conspicuous features in the open landscape.
- Agricultural improvement of former areas of moorland to pasture, beginning in the late 18th century and intensifying after the Second World War.
- Recent undergrazing on land of a moorland character leading to a spread of gorse and bracken.
- Small, privately owned woodlands suffering from a lack of management (particularly coppicing) and spread of invasive/exotic species.
- Hedgerow removal in the drive for agricultural intensification, spurred on by the introduction of the CAP in the 1970s. Replacement of some lengths with post-and-wire fencing.
- Lack of hedgerow management (laying and coppicing) leading to grown out sections of individual beech trees, now susceptible to wind thrown and storm damage. There is some evidence of recent laying and coppicing supported by agri-environment scheme payments.
- Prominent telecommunications mast on Bratton Down.
- 20th century expansion of Bratton Fleming in a linear form along roads, with cream houses and bungalows standing out in the landscape.

LANDSCAPE TYPE: 2D: MOORLAND EDGE SLOPES

PAST / CURRENT FORCES FOR CHANGE AFFECTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER (Continued)

- The wider area's importance for tourism and recreation leading to demand for facilities such as caravan parks, holiday accommodation and visitor attractions – many as farm diversification enterprises due to a decline in the agricultural economy.
- Pony paddocks on edges of settlements (e.g. Stoke Rivers) as smallholdings are taken out of traditional agricultural management.



FORCES FOR CHANGE

FUTURE FORCES FOR CHANGE AFFECTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

- Uncertain future for the agricultural economy – levels of future agri-environment support and market prices for farmed products unknown.
- Development pressure within the area and along the main A399 corridor, particularly due to its attractiveness of the area as a place to live.
- Continued trend in hobby farming and the development of further equine enterprises – pushing house prices out of the reach of many local people (particularly young farmers) leading to a further decline in rural skills.
- Increase in domestic tourism with associated demands for new facilities and infrastructure, as well as an increase in traffic levels on rural roads and farm conversions.
- Longer growing season and enhanced growth rates of vegetation including bracken, gorse and secondary woodland resulting in a decrease in remaining areas of heathland and rush pasture.
- Change in woodland / tree species composition as new pests/diseases spread (particularly phytophthora pathogens) and species intolerant of water level extremes die back.
- Individual hedgerow beech trees may become increasingly susceptible to damage from the increasing frequency and magnitude of storm events.
- Increase in the area of coniferous plantation and woodland; planted to enhance the landscape's roles in filtering water, minimising downstream flooding, storing and sequestering carbon dioxide and providing low-

LANDSCAPE TYPE: 2D: MOORLAND EDGE SLOPES

FUTURE FORCES FOR CHANGE AFFECTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER (Continued)

carbon fuel sources (through coppice management).

- Changes in crops and land use as a consequence of climate change and response to changing markets – including bioenergy crops.
- Increased demand for wind turbines and communications masts within the open, exposed parts of the LCT.
- Demand for domestic and community-scale renewable energy installations such as solar panels, small wind turbines and ground-source heat pumps.



PART 3: LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

OVERALL STRATEGY: To protect the landscape's role as a setting to Exmoor National Park, strengthening its special qualities of tranquillity and remoteness. Square field patterns are reinforced through the restoration and management of distinctive beech hedgebanks and the area's moorland fringe character is extended. The landscape's historic sense of place and time depth continues to have a strong pervading influence, whilst opportunities for sustainable recreation and limited low-carbon development are sensitively incorporated into its landscape setting.

Landscape and planning guidelines

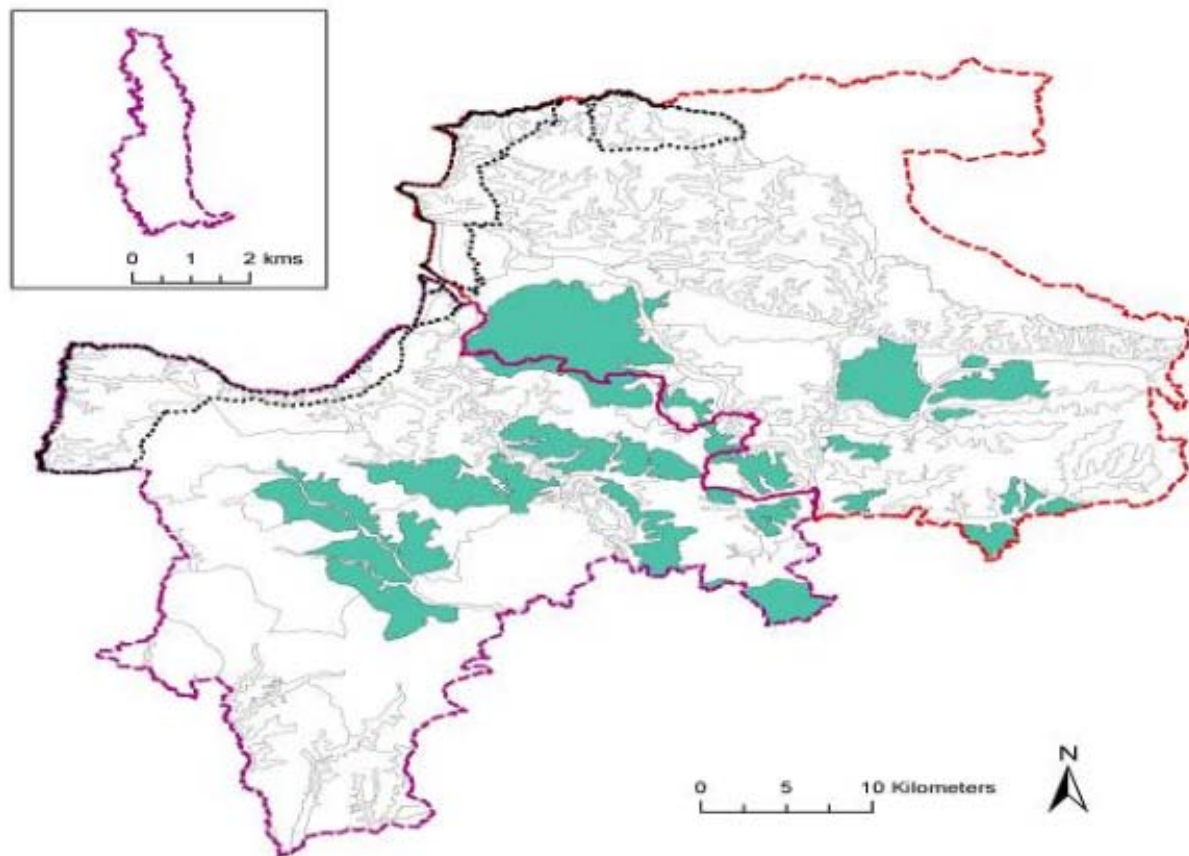
Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
PROTECT		
Protect the landscape's role as a setting to Exmoor National Park, as well as its important views to the protected landscape and across North Devon district.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the most prominent skylines in the area Identify important views and view points (and identify why people think they are important). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policies COR6. Devon Structure Plan: Policies CO1, CO2 and CO3. Guidance in development management planning to avoid siting vertical structures on hill summits within this LCT, and on other hill summits visible from this landscape (e.g. the North Devon Downs).
Protect the landscape's strong sense of tranquillity and remoteness with clustered villages and hamlets reinforcing a strong historic sense of place.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider the distinctive settlement pattern of the area when proposing any new development, including new tourism-related facilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policies COR4 and COR6. Devon's Structure Plan: Policies CO1 and CO16.
Protect and manage the landscape's strong local vernacular of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conservation Area Appraisals / 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Devon & Torridge Joint Core

2D: MOORLAND EDGE SLOPES

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
sandstone buildings with slate roofs and red brick detailing, with some cream cob/render buildings Any new development should utilise the same materials and building styles wherever possible (whilst seeking to incorporate sustainable and low carbon building construction and design). Characteristic features such as white wooden finger posts and stone bridges should be retained and kept in a good state of repair.	<p>Management Plans</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Devon Rural Skills Trust 	<p>Strategy: Policies COR6 and COR8.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Devon Structure Plan: Policies CO7 and CO8. Consider formulating a Design Guide as a SPD in the forthcoming LDF.
Protect and appropriately manage the rich cultural heritage of the area, such as Bronze Age barrows, Iron Age hillforts and ancient settlement remains, including through livestock grazing at appropriate levels and recreation management.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Stewardship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6. Devon's Structure Plan: Policy CO7.
Protect the character and setting of the Grade II* Listed Arlington Hall, ensuring any new development does not encroach into the historic landscape or views to it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Devon's Structure Plan: Policy CO7 North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policies COR6 and COR8.
Protect the landscape's network of quiet rural lanes, resisting unsympathetic highways improvements or signage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Devon Green Lanes and Veins Project Encourage the Highways Authority to respect the special character of the landscape's rural lanes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policies COR5, COR6 and COR8 Devon's Structure Plan: Policy CO1 Develop a policy for protecting the character of rural lanes in the forthcoming LDF. DCC to roll out a highways protocol / best practice guide on roadside management for rural areas. Devon CC Environmental Review of permitted highway development

2D: MOORLAND EDGE SLOPES

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
		proposals.
MANAGE		
Manage the landscape's distinctive beech hedges to strengthen the strong square field pattern. Reinstall coppicing to mature sections and grown-out trees to ensure the future survival of these characteristic features. Replant lost hedges particularly along slopes to minimise soil erosion and reduce diffuse pollution. Respect the traditional methods and styles of construction (including stone facing on banks).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • Devon BAP • Devon Hedge Group • Devon Rural Skills Trust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6 •
Manage areas of rough grassland, heath and rush pasture through a continuation of livestock grazing at appropriate levels, along with a programme of scrub removal. Support farmers to continue to farm these 'marginal' areas as an integral part of their farming system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • Devon BAP • Devon Food Links 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6 • Strengthen and promote links between local markets and produce from the area
Manage the area's conifer plantations for sustainable timber production and wildlife interest, creating new green links to surrounding semi-natural habitats. Explore their use as recreational spaces away from the more sensitive habitats surrounding them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • England Woodland Grant Scheme • Devon BAP • Forest Design Plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green Infrastructure Strategy • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR17 • Devon Structure Plan: Policy CO9.
• PLAN		
Plan for the long-term restoration of the more prominent conifer plantations and pine shelterbelts to open habitats (where their role in timber production has ceased), including re-creating heathland and rush pasture.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • Devon BAP • Forest Design Plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6

3A: UPPER FARMED WOODED VALLEY SLOPES**PART I: DESCRIPTION**

CONSITUENT LDUs: 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 372, 375, 378, 380, 454, 455, 456, 552, 598, 600, 609, 610, 611, 653, 660, 665, 674, 675, 676, 678, 680, 681, 686, 705, 740, 741, 812, 87, 825, 826, 837, 844, 845, 873, 875, 876

SUMMARY OF LOCATION

This LCT comprises the upper catchments of the main river valleys, comprising a gently rolling pastoral landscape of fields bounded by thick Devon hedges, crossed by a network of springs and tributary streams.

3A: UPPER FARMED WOODED VALLEY SLOPES

KEY CHARACTERISTICS FOR THIS LCT WITHIN NORTH DEVON & TORRIDGE

- 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.



3A: UPPER FARMED WOODED VALLEY SLOPES

PART 2: EVALUATION

SUMMARY OF SPECIAL QUALITIES

- Open landscape with important vantage points and uninterrupted vistas.
- Narrow sunken lanes and species-rich hedgebanks.
- Copses, woodlands and tree clumps.
- Cob, thatch and whitewashed buildings, including traditional linhays.
- Little or no light pollution resulting in starlit skies.



FORCES FOR CHANGE

PAST / CURRENT FORCES FOR CHANGE AFFECTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

- The past planting of small blocks of conifer plantations in parts of the landscape (e.g. Winkleigh).
- Small, privately owned woodlands suffering from a lack of management (particularly coppicing) and spread of invasive/exotic species.
- Conversion of pasture to arable production on higher land, particularly spurred on by the introduction of the CAP in the 1970s.
- Post-war Intensification leading to the loss of areas of Culm grassland (through drainage), meadows, traditional orchards and rough grasslands on higher land.
- 20th century farm amalgamation and modernisation, with large buildings often occupying prominent locations.
- Hedgerow removal on more elevated land in the drive for agricultural intensification. Replacement of some lengths with post-and-wire fencing whilst others are tightly flailed.
- Widening of gateways to fit larger farm machinery.
- Smallholdings being taken on as 'hobby farms', with a spread of equine enterprises and second homes spurring on a decline in affordable housing.
- Prominent telecommunications masts and pylon lines crossing the landscape (e.g. north of Hiscott).

3A: UPPER FARMED WOODED VALLEY SLOPES

PAST / CURRENT FORCES FOR CHANGE AFFECTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER (Continued)

- Presence of main roads such as the A39, eroding local perceptions of peace and tranquillity.
- 20th century expansion of some ridgeline settlements (e.g. Lower Lovacott, Winkleigh, Great Torrington) – white / cream dwellings standing out in a linear form on the skyline.
- Views to modern development at Bideford, Northam and East-the-Water and South Molton (including the Norboard Factory).
- Gradual ‘gentrification’ and suburban influences creeping into the landscape, eroding the historic character of some villages and farms.
- The wider area’s importance for tourism and recreation leading to demand for facilities such as caravan parks, holiday accommodation and visitor attractions – many as farm diversification enterprises due to a decline in the agricultural economy.



FORCES FOR CHANGE

FUTURE FORCES FOR CHANGE AFFECTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

- Uncertain future for the agricultural economy – levels of future agri-environment support and market prices for farmed products unknown.
- Development pressure within the area (including Great Torrington, South Molton and along the main A39 / A361 corridors), particularly due to its attractiveness of the area as a place to live. Linked knock-on effect on availability of affordable housing and rural skills.
- Continued trend in hobby farming and the development of further equine enterprises – pushing house prices out of the reach of many local people (particularly young farmers) leading to a further decline in rural skills.
- Increase in domestic tourism with associated demands for new facilities and infrastructure, as well as an increase in traffic levels on rural roads.
- Longer growing season and enhanced growth rates of vegetation including bracken, gorse and secondary woodland resulting in a decrease in remaining areas of Culm grassland and other open habitats.
- Change in woodland / tree species composition as new pests/diseases spread (particularly phytophthora pathogens) and species intolerant of water level extremes die back.
- Individual hedgerow trees may become increasingly susceptible to damage from the increasing frequency and magnitude of storm events.

3A: UPPER FARMED WOODED VALLEY SLOPES

FUTURE FORCES FOR CHANGE AFFECTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER (Continued)

- Changes in crops and land use as a consequence of climate change and response to changing markets (e.g. bioenergy crops such as miscanthus).
- Increased demand for wind turbines and communications masts on the open ridgelines.
- Emerging demand for large-scale photovoltaic developments, capitalising on the solar radiation levels of slopes with a southerly aspect.
- Demand for domestic and community-scale renewable energy installations such as solar panels, small wind turbines and ground-source heat pumps.



3A: UPPER FARMED WOODED VALLEY SLOPES

PART 3: LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

OVERALL STRATEGY: To protect the landscape's strong rural character and historic sense of place. The farmed landscape comprises a rich mosaic of fields bounded by an intact network of species-rich Devon hedges. Valued farmland and woodland habitats are managed and extended, with opportunities for Green Infrastructure links to settlements pursued.

Landscape and planning guidelines

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
PROTECT		
Protect important views to and from the hills across the surrounding landscapes, including to Dartmoor, Exmoor and the North Devon Coast AONB. Protect stone church towers as important landmark features.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify important views and viewpoints (and identify why people think they are important). Avoid the location of skyline development which would detract from landmark church towers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guidance in development management planning to avoid siting vertical structures on the hills within this LCT, and on other hill summits visible from this landscape.
Protect the landscape's strong rural character and dark night skies, resisting highway improvements and lighting schemes that would affect these special qualities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage the Highways Authority to respect the special qualities of the landscape's sunken lanes Devon Green Lanes and Veins project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policies COR4, COR5 and COR6 Devon's Structure Plan: Policy CO1. Prepare design guidance focused on the quality of development and the special attributes of the landscape (e.g. lighting design guidance to preserve dark night skies). Develop a policy for protecting the character of rural lanes / ancient

3A: UPPER FARMED WOODED VALLEY SLOPES

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
		<p>trackways in the forthcoming LDF.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DCC to roll out a highways protocol / best practice guide on roadside management for rural areas.
<p>Protect the landscape's variety of traditional building styles, including whitewash and painted window/door frames, exposed local stone and red brick and thatch. Any new development should utilise the same materials and building styles wherever possible (whilst seeking to incorporate sustainable and low carbon building construction and design). Characteristic features such as cob/stone linhays, white wooden finger posts and stone bridges should be retained and kept in a good state of repair.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devon Rural Skills Trust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policies COR1, COR4 and COR6, and COR8 • Devon's Structure Plan: Policies CO1 and CO7. • Consider formulating a Design Guide as a SPD in the forthcoming LDF. • Devon CC Environmental Review of permitted highway development proposals.
<p>Protect the setting and integrity of Hembury Castle hillfort (including through sensitive grazing levels and recreation management) and other archaeological features found across the landscape.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devon Structure Plan: Policies CO1, CO7 and CO8 • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6
<p>Protect the landscape's dispersed settlement pattern of historic nucleated villages and scattered farmsteads. Resist the further spread of new development (including caravan and camping sites) outside the limits of the landscape's villages and hamlets, including along roads. Utilise the landscape's woodland cover and topography to filter views of any recent/ new development.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conservation Area Appraisals / Management Plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policies COR4, COR6, and COR8 • Devon's Structure Plan: Policies CO6 and TO5

3A: UPPER FARMED WOODED VALLEY SLOPES

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
MANAGE		
Manage and enhance the strong irregular field patterns of much of the landscape, restoring lost and gappy Devon hedgebanks (particularly on intensively farmed slopes where they can provide a role in stabilising the soil and reducing agricultural run-off into the main river catchments). Respect any local variations in Devon bank construction and topping hedgerow species, utilising local materials wherever possible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • Devon Hedge Group • Devon Rural Skills Trust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devon's Structure Plan: Policy CO1 • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6
Manage and enhance the wildlife interest of the farmed landscape, including through the creation of species-rich grass buffers around arable fields (also serving to reduce agricultural run-off). Retain areas of rough grazing land and heathy patches on high slopes to reinforce their 'upland' character.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • Devon BAP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devon Structure Plan: Policy CO1, CO9 and CO14 • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6
Manage and extend areas of Culm grassland, rich valley mire, wet woodland and damp meadows through appropriate grazing and traditional land management regimes – both to enhance their wildlife value and functions in flood prevention.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • The Working Wetlands project (Devon Wildlife Trust) • Devon BAP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6 • Share best practice between farmers working in areas of Culm grassland (e.g. through demonstration events). • Ensure management prescriptions provide a balance between wildlife needs and those of local farmers so agriculture remains viable.
Reinstate traditional management techniques to the landscape's semi-natural woodlands, particularly coppicing, to promote a diverse age and species structure and provide a low carbon fuel source to local communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • England Woodland Grant Scheme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6

3A: UPPER FARMED WOODED VALLEY SLOPES

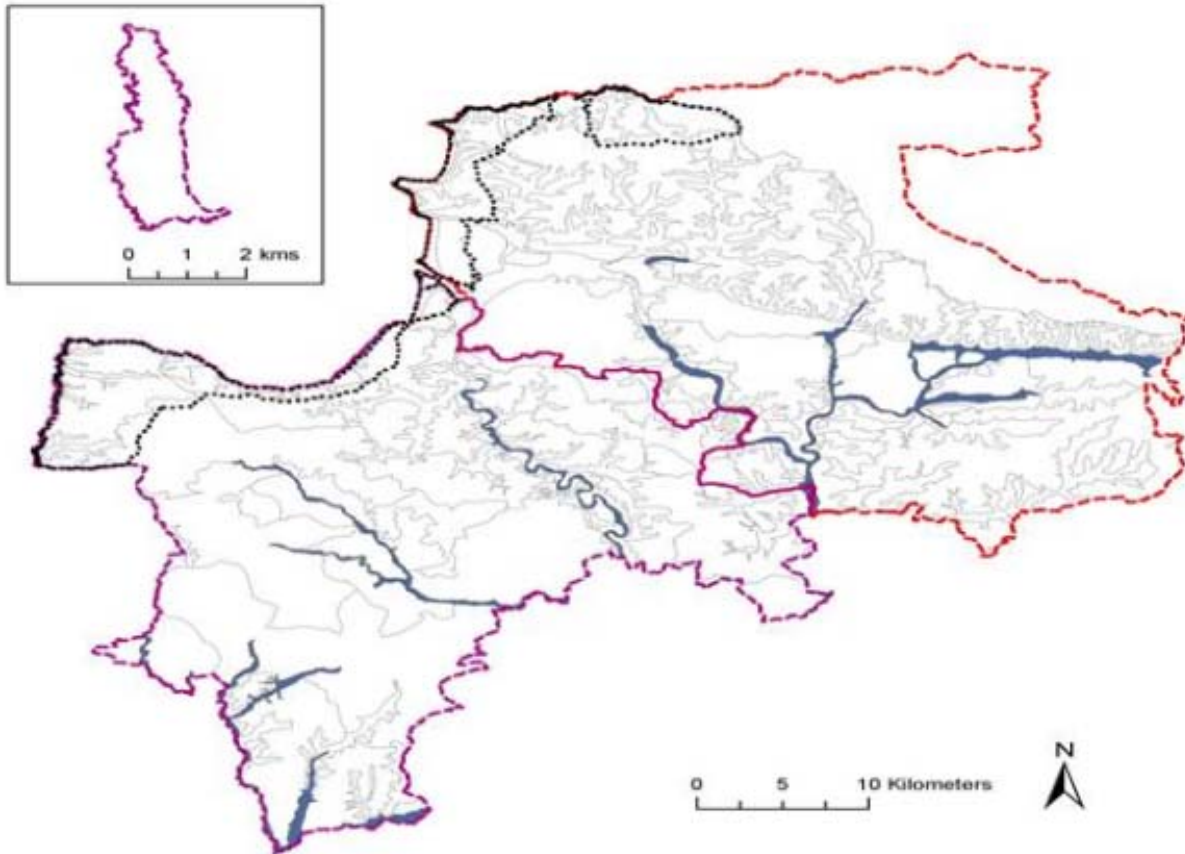
Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
Manage the area's existing plantations for sustainable timber production and wildlife interest, creating new green links to surrounding semi-natural habitats. Explore their use as recreational spaces away from the more sensitive habitats surrounding them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Stewardship England Woodland Grant Scheme Devon BAP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6 and COR17 Devon's Structure Plan: Policy CO9 Green Infrastructure Strategy
PLAN		
Plan for the expansion of fragmented Culm grassland sites and other wetland habitats to create an intact and climate-resilient green network, where conditions allow (e.g. considering underlying geology / soils).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Stewardship Devon BAP The Working Wetlands project (Devon Wildlife Trust) South West Nature Map 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6
Plan for the long-term restoration of the more prominent conifer plantations to open habitats (where their role in timber production has ceased).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Stewardship The Working Wetlands project (Devon Wildlife Trust) South West Nature Map Devon BAP Forest Design Plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6
Plan for a network of green spaces and green infrastructure links to support future population growth in existing settlements whilst integrating development into the landscape and providing local spaces for access and recreation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> South West Nature Map 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policies COR5 and COR17. Devon's Structure Plan: Policy TO6 Green Infrastructure Strategy
Restore and manage areas of relict traditional orchards and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Stewardship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Devon & Torridge Joint Core

3A: UPPER FARMED WOODED VALLEY SLOPES

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
explore opportunities for the creation of new ones, including community orchards to promote local food and drink production.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Devon BAP• South West Nature Map• Devon Food Links	Strategy: Policy COR6 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strengthen and promote links between local markets and produce from the area

LANDSCAPE TYPE:
3C: SPARSELY SETTLED FARMED VALLEY FLOORS

PART I: DESCRIPTION



CONSITUENT LDUs: 367, 376, 377, 455, 469, 535, 536, 537, 542, 543, 546, 552, 567, 598, 599, 600, 603, 609, 653, 660, 664, 665, 666, 674, 675, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683, 686, 705, 734, 738, 739, 740, 741, 742, 743, 745, 812, 817, 837, 849, 875, 876

SUMMARY OF LOCATION

This LCT covers the broad valley floors and floodplains of the main river valleys which flow through the two districts.

3C: SPARSELY SETTLED FARMED VALLEY FLOORS**KEY CHARACTERISTICS FOR THIS LCT WITHIN NORTH DEVON AND TORRIDGE**

- 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.



3C: SPARSELY SETTLED FARMED VALLEY FLOORS**PART 2: EVALUATION****SUMMARY OF SPECIAL QUALITIES**

- Unspoilt, 'natural' and peaceful landscapes.
- Valued riparian and floodplain habitats / wildlife.
- Trees and woodlands tracing watercourses.
- Historic features including old barns, stone bridges and mills.
- Importance for recreation and 'escapism'.

**FORCES FOR CHANGE****PAST / CURRENT FORCES FOR CHANGE AFFECTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER**

- Riverside woodlands replaced with coniferous plantations in the 20th century.
- Ongoing decline in management including coppicing, damage by deer and an influx of invasive species affecting the biodiversity of the landscape's woodlands.
- Increasing demand for water for agriculture and from increasing populations – the River Yeo near Barnstaple is classed by the Environment Agency as over-abstracted (January 2006).
- Diffuse pollution from agriculture affecting the river's water quality – the Tamar catchment (including the Carey, Deer and Claw) is classed by Defra as a Priority Catchment.
- Recreation pressures leading to footpath erosion in some locations, particularly those close to the main settlements.
- Decline in grazing levels on areas of Culm grassland and wet meadows, leading to a spread of rank vegetation and scrub.
- Non-native wildlife species such as mink introduced, disrupting the natural balance of the river ecosystems.
- Loss of traditional orchards along riversides in favour of timber plantations or productive farmland.
- Peace and tranquillity interrupted by forestry operations (e.g. noise from chainsaws).

3C: SPARSELY SETTLED FARMED VALLEY FLOORS



FORCES FOR CHANGE

FUTURE FORCES FOR CHANGE AFFECTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

- Development pressure from the larger settlements leading to higher water supply demands – further impacting on water levels and potential demand for reservoirs.
- Continuing decline in traditional woodland management skills threatening the age and species diversity of semi-natural woodlands.
- Intensification of agriculture on more fertile valley pastures to meet rising food demands, leading to an increased risk of diffuse pollution in watercourses.
- More intense periods of drought leading to the drying out of important wetlands including wet meadows, Culm grassland and wet woodland – affecting their functions in reducing flood risk in the winter months.
- Summer droughts reducing the water supply from the uplands of

Exmoor, Dartmoor and the Hartland plateau.

- Increased autumn and winter precipitation levels leading to higher water and consequential increases in flood risk in their lower catchments.
- Increase in poaching on river banks due to wetter autumn and winter conditions leading to waterlogged ground.
- Longer growing season and enhanced growth rates of vegetation including secondary woodland resulting in a spread of such vegetation in understoreys.
- Change in woodland / tree species composition as new pests/diseases spread (particularly phytophthora pathogens) and species intolerant of water level extremes die back. Individual trees may become more susceptible to damage from the increasing frequency and magnitude of storm events.
- Further spread of non-native and alien species in response to a changing climate.
- Increased demand for bioenergy planting, including Short Rotation Coppice (SRC) as well as a drive towards active woodland management to produce woodfuel as a low-carbon fuel source.
- Pressure for an expansion of the area of coniferous plantation and woodland, planted and allowed to spread through natural regeneration to enhance the landscape's roles in filtering water, minimising downstream flooding, storing and sequestering carbon dioxide and providing a low-carbon fuel source (through coppice management).
- Planting of non-native woodland species to respond to different growing conditions – altering the species composition of the landscape's oak-dominated valley woodlands.
- Higher demand for domestic food production potentially leading to an increase in stocking levels and consequential impacts of poaching and over-grazing.

3C: SPARSELY SETTLED FARMED VALLEY FLOORS

FUTURE FORCES FOR CHANGE AFFECTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER (Continued)

- Increase in UK-based tourism with associated demands for new facilities and infrastructure, as well as an increase in traffic levels and recreational pressure at 'honeypot' sites (both on the rivers and within the surrounding valleys)



3C: SPARSELY SETTLED FARMED VALLEY FLOORS**PART 3: LANDSCAPE STRATEGY**

OVERALL STRATEGY: To protect the peaceful and unspoilt attributes of the valley floors, seeking to bring woodlands back into management and expanding floodplain habitats to build climate change resilience. Distinctive features such as traditional orchards, stone hump-backed bridges and mills are protected and restored for future generations.

Landscape and planning guidelines

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
PROTECT		
Protect the sparse settlement pattern of clustered hamlets and villages often focused at river crossing points. Prevent the linear spread of development along river valleys wherever possible, to maintain their tranquil and unspoilt character.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conservation Area Management Plans / Appraisals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Devon Structure Plan: Policies CO1, CO6, CO7 North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policies COR3, COR4 and COR6.
<p>Protect the landscape's traditional building styles, including cream, whitewash and pale yellow coloured cottages with slate or thatched roofs, with some use of local sandstone with red brick detailing. Any new development should utilise the same materials and building styles wherever possible (whilst seeking to incorporate sustainable and low carbon building construction and design).</p> <p>Characteristic features such as white wooden finger posts and stone hump-backed bridges should be retained and kept in a good state of repair.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conservation Area Management Plans / Appraisals Devon Rural Skills Trust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider formulating a Design Guide as a SPD in the forthcoming LDF. North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policies COR1 and COR6. Devon CC Environmental Review of permitted highway development proposals.
Protect and restore historic features within the valley landscapes, particularly those relating to the rivers' industrial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Stewardship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Devon Structure Plan: Policies CO7 and CO8

3C: SPARSELY SETTLED FARMED VALLEY FLOORS

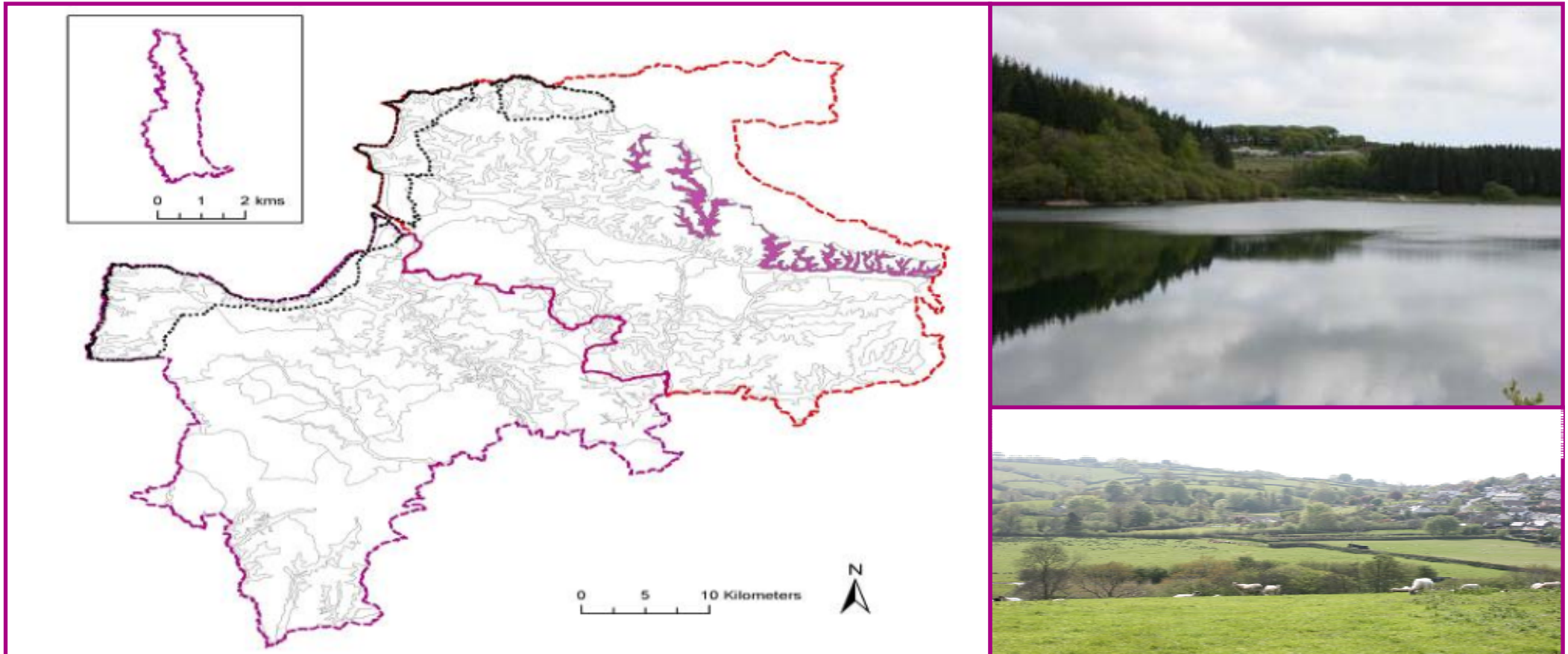
Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
heritage such as mill buildings.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6
MANAGE		
Manage and enhance the valleys' semi-natural woodlands through traditional techniques including coppicing. Control access by livestock, promoting natural regeneration to enhance longevity whilst using extensive grazing to promote the species diversity of woodland ground flora. Explore opportunities for community utilisation of coppice residues as a low-carbon fuel source.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Stewardship England Woodland Grant Scheme Devon BAP South West Woodlands Renaissance scheme Devon Rural Skills Trust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Devon Structure Plan: Policy CO1 North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6
Manage and extend areas of Culm grassland, wet woodland, valley mires, ponds and damp meadows through appropriate grazing and traditional land management regimes – both to enhance their wildlife value and functions in flood prevention.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Stewardship The Working Wetlands project (Devon Wildlife Trust) Devon BAP South West Nature Map 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6 Share best practice between farmers working in areas of Culm grassland (e.g. through demonstration events). Ensure management prescriptions provide a balance between wildlife needs and those of local farmers so agriculture remains viable.
Manage recreational pressure at popular sites by promoting alternative locations and sustainable transport options. Any signage or infrastructure requirements should be kept to a minimum and be sensitively sited within its landscape setting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustainable transport initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Devon's Structure Plan: Policies CO6, TO5 and TO6. North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policies COR5, COR8 and COR17 Devon Rights of Way Improvement Plan

3C: SPARSELY SETTLED FARMED VALLEY FLOORS

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
		(ROWIP)
Manage the area's existing plantations for sustainable timber production and wildlife interest, creating new green links to surrounding semi-natural habitats. Explore their use as recreational spaces away from the more sensitive habitats surrounding them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • England Woodland Grant Scheme • Devon BAP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policies COR6 and COR17 • Devon Structure Plan: Policies CO9 • Green Infrastructure Strategy
PLAN		
Plan for the expansion of fragmented Culm grassland sites and other wetland habitats to create an intact and climate-resilient green network.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • Devon BAP • The Working Wetlands project (Devon Wildlife Trust) • South West Nature Map 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6
Create, extend and link woodland and wetland habitats to enhance the water storage capacity of the landscape (reducing incidences of downstream flooding) and improve water quality through reducing soil erosion and agricultural run-off. The natural regeneration of woodland should be encouraged and new planting [using climate-hardy species] undertaken to link fragmented sites.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • The Working Wetlands project (Devon Wildlife Trust) • Devon BAP • Forest Design Plans • South West Nature Map 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6
Restore and manage areas of relict traditional orchards and explore opportunities for the creation of new ones, including community orchards to promote local food and drink production.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • Devon BAP • Devon Food Links • South West Nature Map 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6 • Strengthen and promote links between local markets and produce from the area

LANDSCAPE TYPE:
3D: UPLAND RIVER VALLEYS

PART I: DESCRIPTION



CONSITUENT LDUs: 452, 544, 545, 547, 548, 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 563, 566, 567, 570, 571, 572, 576, 603, 609, 660, 812, 849

SUMMARY OF LOCATION

The upland river valleys drain southwards from the high moorland core of Exmoor, containing clean-fast flowing water and slopes clothed in ancient oak woodlands.

PART 2: EVALUATION

SUMMARY OF SPECIAL QUALITIES

- Views across North Devon.
- Narrow winding lanes crossing historic stone bridges.
- Natural qualities of the rivers and valley woodlands.
- Function of the valleys as part of the setting of Exmoor National Park.
- Strong senses of tranquillity, isolation and 'escapism'.



FORCES FOR CHANGE

PAST / CURRENT FORCES FOR CHANGE AFFECTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

- Construction of the Wistlandpound Reservoir in 1956 (on one of the tributaries of the Yeo). The reservoir also flooded part of the Lynton and Barnstaple Railway which is visible when water levels are low.
- Large swathes of 20th century conifer planting along valley sides and associated with Wistlandpound Reservoir.
- Decline in woodland management including coppicing, deer damage and a spread of invasive species affecting the biodiversity of the landscape's woodlands.
- Recreation pressures and increasing levels of traffic on rural roads, particularly in holiday periods. Wistlandpound Reservoir is a popular visitor destination and the site of the Calvert Trust's activity centre for the disabled.
- Heavy farm traffic the landscape's narrow, winding roads – leading to vehicular damage to roadside hedges and woodland. Resultant removal of vegetation by Highways' Authority leading to a change in the character of the roads.
- Decline in grazing levels on steep valley sides, leading to a spread of bracken and gorse particularly on upper slopes.
- Loss of traditional orchards along riversides.
- Peace and tranquillity interrupted by main roads in some valleys – particularly the A399 alongside the River Bray.

LANDSCAPE TYPE: 3D: UPLAND RIVER VALLEYS

PAST / CURRENT FORCES FOR CHANGE AFFECTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER (Continued)

- 20th century expansion of some settlements, spreading in a linear form from their historic cores e.g. Brayford.



FORCES FOR CHANGE

FUTURE FORCES FOR CHANGE AFFECTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

- Continuing decline in traditional woodland management skills threatening the age and species diversity of semi-natural woodlands.
- Increase in UK-based tourism with associated requirements for new facilities and infrastructure, as well as an increase in traffic levels on the main roads which cross the landscape.
- Further development pressures and demand for farm conversions as the area continues to be a desirable place to live.
- Population increase in the nearby settlements such as Barnstaple, Combe Martin and South Molton leading to higher water supply demands and the potential need for further reservoirs in the landscape.
- Intensification of agriculture on more fertile valley pastures in the valleys' lower courses to meet rising food demands, leading to an increased risk of diffuse pollution in watercourses.
- Pressure for an expansion of the area of coniferous plantation and woodland, planted and allowed to spread through natural regeneration to enhance the landscape's roles in filtering water, minimising downstream flooding, storing and sequestering carbon dioxide and providing a low-carbon fuel source (through coppice management).
- Change in woodland / tree species composition as new pests/diseases spread (particularly phytophthora pathogens) and species intolerant of water level extremes die back. Individual trees may become more

3D: UPLAND RIVER VALLEYS

FUTURE FORCES FOR CHANGE AFFECTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER (Continued)

- More intense periods of drought, as a result of climate change, leading to the drying out of important wetlands including wet meadows and rush pasture,
- Summer droughts also likely to reduce the valleys' water supply from the uplands of Exmoor, also potentially impacting on water quality due to enhanced levels of peat/blanket bog erosion (this is being addressed through the Exmoor Mire project and its successor 'Mires of the Moors').
- Increased autumn and winter precipitation levels leading to higher water levels and consequential increases in flood risk in their lower catchments.
- Increase in poaching on river banks due to wetter autumn and winter conditions leading to waterlogged ground.
- Longer growing season and enhanced growth rates of vegetation including secondary woodland resulting in a spread of such vegetation in understoreys.
- Change in woodland / tree species composition as new pests/diseases spread (particularly phytophthora pathogens) and species intolerant of water level extremes die back. Individual trees may become more susceptible to damage from the increasing frequency and magnitude of storm events.
- Further spread of non-native and alien species in woodlands, spurred on by a changing climate.
- Planting of non-native woodland species to respond to different growing conditions – altering the species composition of the landscape's oak and beech-dominated valley woodlands.

- Higher demand for domestic food production potentially leading to an increase in stocking levels and consequential impacts of poaching and over-grazing.
- Increased demand for bioenergy planting, including Short Rotation Coppice (SRC) as well as a drive towards active woodland management to produce woodfuel as a low-carbon fuel source.

Potential future schemes to harness the power of the water to produce electricity as a renewable source (hydro-power).



PART 3: LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

OVERALL STRATEGY: To protect the special qualities of the upland river valleys and their role as part of the setting to Exmoor National Park. The peaceful and historic character of the valley settlements and their industrial heritage is enhanced, whilst woodlands and wetlands are managed and expanded to help prevent downstream flooding and protect water quality. Opportunities are sought to restore conifer plantations to broadleaves and heathland habitats, whilst providing recreational spaces within the less prominent plantations. The potential for harnessing the power of the water for renewable energy, through small-scale hydro schemes, is explored.

Landscape and planning guidelines

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
PROTECT		
Protect the landscape's role as a setting to Exmoor National Park, as well as its important views to the protected landscape and across North Devon district.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the most prominent skylines on the upper valley slopes Identify important views and view points (and identify why people think they are important) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policies COR6. Devon's Structure Plan: Policies CO1, CO2 and CO3 Guidance in development management planning to avoid siting vertical structures on hill summits within this LCT, and on other hill summits visible from this landscape (e.g. the North Devon Downs).
Protect the sparse settlement pattern of clustered hamlets, villages and farmsteads often focused at river crossing points. Prevent the linear spread of development along river valleys and roads wherever possible, to maintain the settlements' characteristic form and peaceful character.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conservation Area Management Plans / Appraisals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider producing a Design Guide as a SPD to the LDF. North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policies COR3, COR4 and COR8. Devon's Structure Plan: Policies CO1 and

LANDSCAPE TYPE:
3D: UPLAND RIVER VALLEYS

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
		CO7
<p>Protect the landscape's traditional building styles and materials, particularly local red sandstone with red brick detailing and cream render / thatch cottages. Any new development should utilise the same materials and building styles wherever possible (whilst seeking to incorporate sustainable and low carbon building construction and design).</p> <p>Characteristic features such as white wooden finger posts and stone hump-backed bridges should be retained and kept in a good state of repair.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conservation Area Management Plans / Appraisals • Devon Rural Skills Trust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider formulating a Design Guide as a SPD in the forthcoming LDF. • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policies COR1, COR2 and COR6. • Devon's Structure Plan: Policies CO1 and CO7 • Devon CC Environmental Review of permitted highway development proposals.
<p>Protect the landscape's network of quiet sunken lanes enclosed by woodland and species-rich hedgebanks, resisting unsympathetic highways improvements (e.g. hedgerow/woodland cutting) or signage.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Devon Green Lanes and Veins Project • Encourage the Highways Authority to respect the special character of the landscape's rural lanes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policies COR5, COR6 and COR8 • Devon's Structure Plan: Policy CO1 • Develop a policy for protecting the character of rural lanes in the forthcoming LDF. • DCC to roll out a highways protocol / best practice guide on roadside management for rural areas.
<p>Protect and restore historic features within the valley landscapes, particularly those relating to the rivers' industrial heritage such as mills, dismantled railways and bridges.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • Conservation Area Management Plans / Appraisals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devon's Structure Plan: Policies CO7 and CO8 • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core

LANDSCAPE TYPE:
3D: UPLAND RIVER VALLEYS

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
		Strategy: Policy COR6
MANAGE		
Manage and enhance the valleys' semi-natural woodlands through traditional techniques including coppicing. Control access by livestock, promoting natural regeneration to enhance longevity whilst using extensive grazing to promote the species diversity of woodland ground flora. Explore opportunities for community utilisation of coppice residues as a low-carbon fuel source.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • England Woodland Grant Scheme • Devon BAP • South West Woodlands Renaissance scheme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devon Structure Plan: Policy CO1 • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6
Manage and extend areas of rush pasture, species-rich meadows and floodplain grasslands through appropriate grazing and traditional land management regimes – both to enhance their wildlife value and functions in flood prevention.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • The Working Wetlands project (Devon Wildlife Trust) • Devon BAP • South West Nature Map 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devon Structure Plan: Policy CO1 • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6
Manage the landscape's distinctive beech hedges on higher slopes to strengthen the strong square field pattern. Reinstate coppicing to mature sections and grown-out trees to ensure the future survival of these characteristic features. Replant lost hedges particularly along slopes to minimise soil erosion and reduce diffuse pollution. Respect the traditional methods and styles of construction (including stone facing on banks).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • Devon BAP • Devon Hedge Group • Devon Rural Skills Trust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6
Manage areas of rough grassland and heath on upper slopes through a continuation of livestock grazing at appropriate levels, along with a programme of scrub removal (including through controlled burning). Support farmers to continue to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • Devon BAP • Devon Food Links 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6 • Strengthen and promote links between local markets and produce from the area

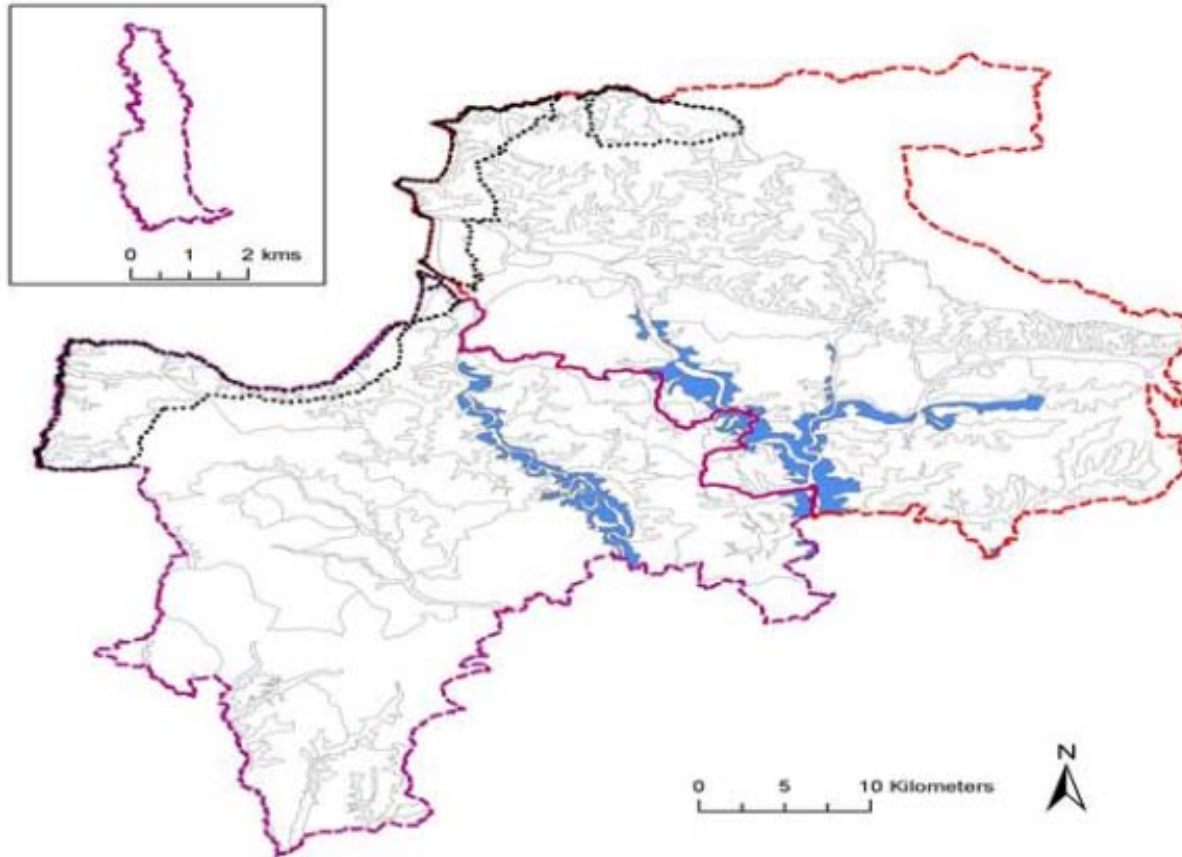
LANDSCAPE TYPE:
3D: UPLAND RIVER VALLEYS

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
farm these 'marginal' areas as an integral part of their farming system.		
Manage the area's existing plantations for sustainable timber production and wildlife interest, creating new green links to surrounding semi-natural habitats. .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • England Woodland Grant Scheme • Devon BAP • Green Infrastructure Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policies COR6. • Devon's Structure Plan: Policy CO9.
PLAN		
Create, extend and link woodland and wetland habitats to enhance the water storage capacity of the landscape (reducing incidences of downstream flooding) and improve water quality through reducing soil erosion and agricultural run-off. The natural regeneration of woodland should be encouraged and new planting [using climate-hardy species] undertaken to link fragmented sites.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • The Working Wetlands project (Devon Wildlife Trust) • Devon BAP • Forest Design Plans • South West Nature Map 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6
Restore and manage areas of relict traditional orchards and explore opportunities for the creation of new ones, including community orchards to promote local food and drink production.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • Devon BAP • Devon Food Links • Devon Rural Skills Trust • South West Nature Map 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6 • Strengthen and promote links between local markets and produce from the area
Plan for the long-term restoration of the more prominent conifer plantations to open habitats and broadleaved woodlands (where their role in timber production has ceased). Explore the retention of other plantations as recreational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • The Working Wetlands project (Devon Wildlife Trust) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devon Structure Plan: Policy CO1 • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6

3D: UPLAND RIVER VALLEYS

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
spaces (e.g. for mountain biking trails) away from the more sensitive habitats surrounding them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devon BAP • Forest Design Plans 	
Plan for the potential development of small scale hydro schemes as a valuable source of renewable energy on suitable sites (both in ecological and landscape terms).		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR7. • Devon Structure Plan: Policy CO12

PART I: DESCRIPTION



CONSITUENT LDUs: 367, 370, 380, 455, 610, 611, 664, 665, 666, 674, 675, 676, 677, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683, 738, 741, 743, 745, 793, 812, 817, 826, 837, 844, 845, 873, 875, 876

SUMMARY OF LOCATION

This LCT covers the steep wooded slopes enclosing the main river valleys that cross the two districts (the Taw, Torridge, Tamar, Carey and Mole).

LANDSCAPE TYPE:
3G: RIVER VALLEY SLOPES & COMBES

KEY CHARACTERISTICS FOR THIS LCT WITHIN NORTH DEVON & TORRIDGE

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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. |
|---|---|



PART 2: EVALUATION**SUMMARY OF SPECIAL QUALITIES**

- Broadleaved woodlands covering valley slopes.
- Important wildlife habitats and species.
- Narrow green lanes forming tunnels through woodland and roadside hedges.
- Importance for recreation, including the Tarka Trail.
- Sense of peace and tranquillity.

**FORCES FOR CHANGE****PAST / CURRENT FORCES FOR CHANGE AFFECTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER**

- Large swathes of 20th century conifer planting along valley sides.
- Forestry operations (e.g. use of chainsaws, logging vehicles) interrupting the peace and quiet of the landscape.
- Loss of pasture and rough grasslands on valley slopes to intensive arable production, particularly driven by the introduction of the CAP in the 1970s.
- Decline in grazing levels on the steeper slopes, leading to a spread of scrub, gorse and secondary woodland.
- Removal of species-rich Devon banks to support agricultural intensification, with lengths of fencing replacing traditional boundaries in some locations.
- Decline in woodland management including coppicing and a spread of invasive species affecting the biodiversity of the landscape's woodlands. Deer damage is also an issue in this LCT.
- Decrease in the number and area of traditional farm orchards.
- Recreation pressures and increasing levels of traffic on rural roads. The Tarka Trail multi-user route, created in 1987 along the disused Barnstaple-Bideford railway line, is a popular recreational facility in the landscape.
- Heavy farm traffic the landscape's narrow, winding roads – leading to

PAST / CURRENT FORCES FOR CHANGE AFFECTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER (Continued)

- vehicular damage to roadside hedges and woodland. Resultant removal of vegetation by Highways' Authority leading to a change in the character of the roads.
- Decline in grazing levels on steep valley sides, leading to a spread of bracken and gorse particularly on upper slopes.
- Loss of traditional orchards along lower valley slopes.
- Peace and tranquillity interrupted by main roads running along the lower valley slopes – including the A377 along the River Taw and the A386 along the Torridge.
- 20th century expansion of some settlements, spreading in a linear form from their historic cores e.g. Great Torrington
- Increased traffic on main roads encircling the National Park, particularly the A30 and A38, which associated impacts on tranquillity.
- Views to and intrusion from urban development at Barnstaple and Bideford.

**FORCES FOR CHANGE****FUTURE FORCES FOR CHANGE AFFECTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER**

- Continuing decline in traditional woodland management skills threatening the age and species diversity of semi-natural woodlands.
- Increase in UK-based tourism with associated requirements for new facilities and infrastructure, as well as an increase in traffic levels on the main roads which cross the landscape.
- Further development pressures leading to the expansion of the fringing settlements of Great Torrington, Bideford and Barnstaple and consequential impacts on levels of tranquillity.
- Further Intensification of agriculture along the valley slopes to support rising food demands, leading to an increased risk of diffuse pollution in watercourses.
- Pressure for an expansion of the area of coniferous plantation and woodland, planted and allowed to spread through natural regeneration to enhance the landscape's roles in filtering water, minimising downstream flooding, storing and sequestering carbon dioxide and providing a low-carbon fuel source (through coppice management).
- Longer growing season and enhanced growth rates of vegetation as a result of climate change, including secondary woodland, resulting in a spread of such vegetation in the understoreys of the area's semi-natural and estate woodlands.
- More intense summer drought conditions as a result of climate change, leading to a drying out of wetland habitats including riparian woodlands and meadows.

3G: RIVER VALLEY SLOPES & COMBES

FUTURE FORCES FOR CHANGE AFFECTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER (Continued)

- Change in woodland / tree species composition as new pests/diseases spread (particularly phytophthora pathogens) and species intolerant of water level extremes die back. Individual trees (including valued parkland / veteran trees) may become more susceptible to damage from the increasing frequency and magnitude of storm events.
- Further spread of non-native and alien species in woodlands, spurred on by a changing climate.
- Planting of non-native woodland species to respond to different growing conditions – altering the species composition of the landscape's semi-natural oak and historic estate woodlands.
- Increased demand for bioenergy planting, including Short Rotation Coppice (SRC) as well as a drive towards active woodland management to produce woodfuel as a low-carbon fuel source.



PART 3: LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

OVERALL STRATEGY: To protect and enhance the peaceful character of the valley slopes, fringed by well-managed woodlands and fields enclosed by an intact network of species-rich Devon banks. Opportunities are sought to restore conifer plantations to broadleaves and other semi-natural habitats, creating a climate resilient green network. New recreational spaces and infrastructure links are provided to nearby settlements.

Landscape and planning guidelines

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
PROTECT		
Protect the lightly settled and tranquil character of the landscape, ensuring that new development on the edges of nearby settlements does not encroach into the area (including related lighting schemes).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conservation Area Management Plans / Appraisals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policies COR3, COR4 and COR8. Devon's Structure Plan: Policies CO1 and CO7 Consider producing a Design Guide as a SPD to the LDF. Prepare design guidance focused on the quality of development and the special attributes of the landscape (e.g. lighting design guidance to preserve dark night skies).
Protect the landscape's traditional building styles and materials, particularly cream/whitewashed thatched cottages, as well as exposed stone and slate. Any new development or extensions should utilise the same materials and building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conservation Area Management Plans / Appraisals Devon Rural Skills Trust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policies COR1, COR2 and COR6. Devon's Structure Plan: Policies CO1 and

3G: RIVER VALLEY SLOPES & COMBES

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
styles wherever possible (whilst seeking to incorporate sustainable and low carbon building construction and design).		CO7 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider formulating a Design Guide as a SPD in the forthcoming LDF.
Protect the landscape's network of quiet sunken lanes enclosed by woodland and species-rich hedgebanks, resisting unsympathetic highways improvements (e.g. hedgerow/woodland cutting) or signage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Devon Green Lanes and Veins Project Encourage the Highways Authority to respect the special character of the landscape's rural lanes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policies COR5, COR6 and COR8 Devon's Structure Plan: Policy COI Develop a policy for protecting the character of rural lanes in the forthcoming LDF. DCC to roll out a highways protocol / best practice guide on roadside management for rural areas. Devon CC Environmental Review of permitted highway development proposals.
Protect and sensitively manage historic features within the landscape, including Iron Age hillforts occupying prominent positions on hill summits (including through grazing at appropriate levels and recreation management).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Stewardship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Devon's Structure Plan: Policies CO7 and CO8 North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6
MANAGE		
Manage and enhance the valleys' semi-natural woodlands through traditional techniques including coppicing. Control access by livestock, promoting natural regeneration to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Stewardship England Woodland Grant Scheme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Devon Structure Plan: Policy COI North Devon & Torridge Joint Core

3G: RIVER VALLEY SLOPES & COMBES

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
enhance longevity whilst using extensive grazing to promote the species diversity of woodland ground flora. Explore opportunities for community utilisation of coppice residues as a low-carbon fuel source.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devon BAP • South West Woodlands Renaissance scheme • Devon Rural Skills Trust 	Strategy: Policy COR6
Manage and extend areas of wet woodland and floodplain grasslands through appropriate grazing and traditional land management regimes – both to enhance their wildlife value and functions in flood prevention.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • Devon BAP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devon Structure Plan: Policy CO1 • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6
Manage species-rich Devon hedgebanks through the regular coppicing of hedgerow trees and re-laying of gappy sections, strengthening irregular medieval field patterns. Replace lost lengths and lines of fencing, respecting traditional bank styles and species composition, particularly locations at right angles to slopes to help reduce soil erosion and run-off into watercourses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • Devon BAP • Devon Hedge Group • Devon Rural Skills Trust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6
Manage important areas of rough grassland and gorse scrub on upper slopes through a continuation of livestock grazing at appropriate levels. Support farmers to continue to farm these ‘marginal’ areas as an integral part of their farming system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • Devon BAP • Devon Food Links 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen and promote links between local markets and produce from the area
Manage the area’s existing plantations for sustainable timber production and wildlife interest, creating new green links to surrounding semi-natural habitats. .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • England Woodland Grant Scheme • Devon BAP • Green Infrastructure Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policies COR6 and COR17. • Devon’s Structure Plan: Policy CO9.

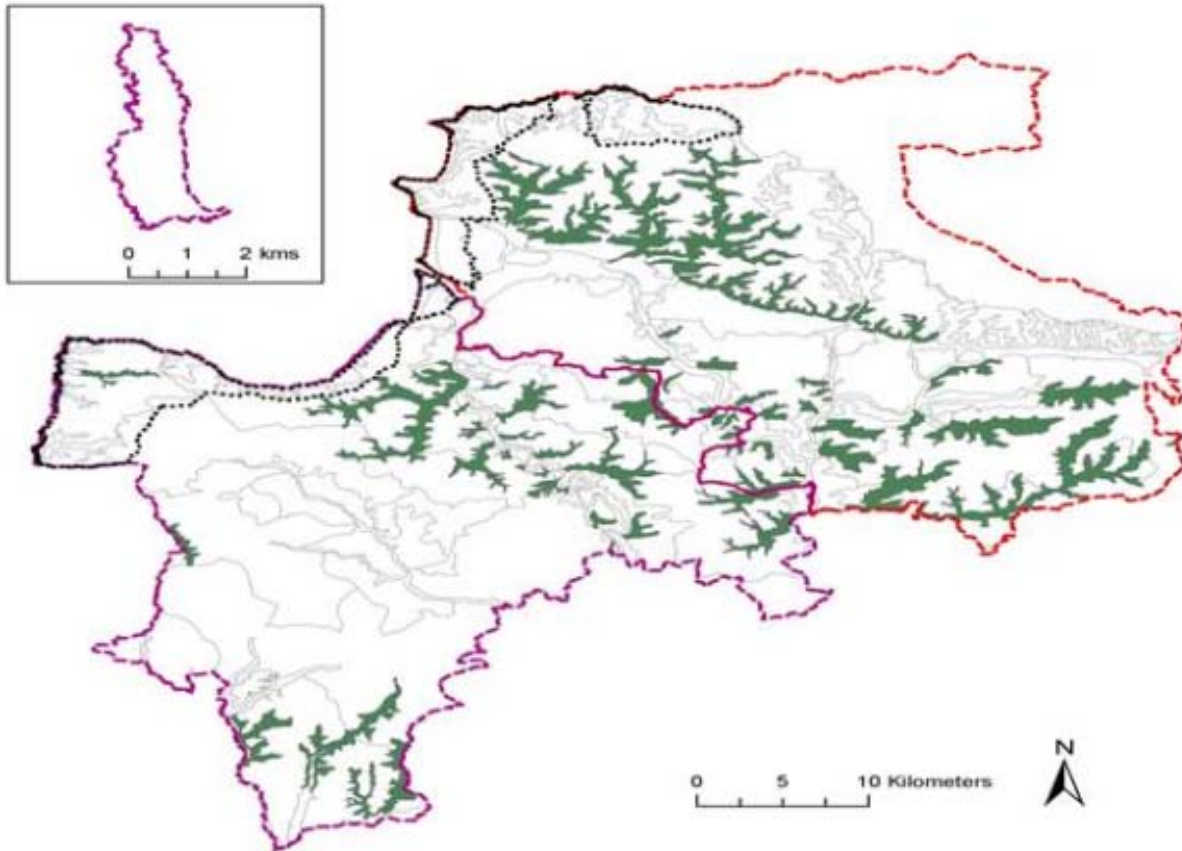
3G: RIVER VALLEY SLOPES & COMBES

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
PLAN		
Create, extend and link woodland and wetland habitats to enhance the water storage capacity of the landscape (reducing incidences of downstream flooding) and improve water quality through reducing soil erosion and agricultural run-off. The natural regeneration of woodland should be encouraged and new planting [using climate-hardy species] undertaken to link fragmented sites.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • The Working Wetlands project (Devon Wildlife Trust) • Devon BAP • Forest Design Plans • South West Nature Map 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6
Restore and manage areas of relict traditional orchards and explore opportunities for the creation of new ones, including community orchards to promote local food and drink production.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • Devon BAP • Devon Food Links • Devon Rural Skills Trust • South West Nature Map 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6 • Strengthen and promote links between local markets and produce from the area
Plan for the long-term restoration of the more prominent conifer plantations to open habitats and broadleaved woodlands (where their role in timber production has ceased). Explore the retention of other plantations as recreational spaces (e.g. for mountain biking trails).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • The Working Wetlands project (Devon Wildlife Trust) • Devon BAP • Forest Design Plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policies COR6 and COR17. • Devon's Structure Plan: Policy CO9.

3G: RIVER VALLEY SLOPES & COMBES

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
Plan for the creation of green infrastructure links to nearby settlements such as Great Torrington, Bideford and Barnstaple, maximising connections with the Tarka Trail.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Devon BAP• South West Nature Map	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policies COR6 and COR17.• Devon's Structure Plan: Policy CO9.• Green Infrastructure Strategy

PART I: DESCRIPTION



CONSITUENT LDUs: 88, 371, 376, 390, 391, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 402, 403, 452, 453, 455, 525, 526, 527, 528, 529, 533, 534, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 541, 542, 543, 545, 546, 552, 566, 567, 571, 572, 576, 609, 610, 611, 660, 665, 666, 674, 675, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683, 684, 686, 687, 691, 734, 738, 740, 741, 743, 745, 793, 812, 817, 825, 826, 834, 837, 838, 842, 843, 844, 845, 848, 849, 851, 852, 853, 875, 876, 881

SUMMARY OF LOCATION

The Secluded Valleys carve through the highest land of the districts, forming tributaries of the main rivers including the Taw, Torridge, Bray and Mole.

LANDSCAPE TYPE:
3H: SECLUDED VALLEYS

KEY CHARACTERISTICS FOR THIS LCT WITHIN NORTH DEVON & TORRIDGE

- 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 lincays 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.



PART 2: EVALUATION

SUMMARY OF SPECIAL QUALITIES

- Unspoilt, secluded and secretive character.
- 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.



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FORCES FOR CHANGE

PAST / CURRENT FORCES FOR CHANGE AFFECTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

- Construction of reservoirs at Roadford Lake (in 1989) and the Upper & Lower Tamar lakes (in 1975 and the 1820s respectively), forming prominent landscape features and popular recreation spots.
- Large swathes of 20th century conifer planting along valley sides and associated with reservoirs. Recent broadleaved woodland planting a feature of some valley slopes.
- Decline in woodland management including coppicing, leading to a spread of invasive species and an even age structure, affecting the biodiversity value of the landscape's woodlands.
- Traditional farm buildings (including lincays) falling into a poor state of repair and, in some cases, dereliction – due to their original agricultural functions ceasing.
- Recreation pressures and associated facilities such as holiday parks, along with increasing levels of traffic on rural roads, particularly during holiday periods.
- Heavy farm traffic the landscape's narrow, winding roads – leading to vehicular damage to roadside hedges and woodland. Resultant removal of vegetation by Highways' Authority leading to a change in the character of the roads.
- Decline in grazing levels on steep valley sides, leading to a spread of bracken and gorse particularly on upper slopes.

LANDSCAPE TYPE:
3H: SECLUDED VALLEYS

**PAST / CURRENT FORCES FOR CHANGE AFFECTING
LANDSCAPE CHARACTER (Continued)**

- Experimental project by Devon Wildlife Trust to monitor the reintroduction of the beaver to one of the valleys, with consequential changes to riparian vegetation.
- Non-native wildlife species such as mink introduced, disrupting the natural balance of the river ecosystems.
- Loss of traditional orchards along riversides.
- Peace and tranquillity interrupted by forestry operations (e.g. noise from chainsaws).
- Peace and tranquillity interrupted by main roads in some valleys – including the A361, A39, B3230 and A388.
- Spread of commercial and industrial development on the fringes of Plymouth and Ivybridge – with associated noise and visual impacts felt within the southern parts of the LCT.
- Increased traffic on main roads encircling the National Park, particularly the A30 and A38, which associated impacts on tranquillity.
- 20th century expansion of some settlements, spreading in a linear form from their historic cores e.g. Weave Gifford.
- Some valleys crossed by prominent pylon lines, diluting perceptions of tranquillity and remoteness (e.g. the Duntz).
- Prominent views of urban development outside the LCT, including Great Torrington and Bideford.



FORCES FOR CHANGE

FUTURE FORCES FOR CHANGE AFFECTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

- Continuing decline in traditional woodland management skills threatening the age and species diversity of semi-natural woodlands.
- Increase in UK-based tourism with associated requirements for new facilities and infrastructure (including holiday parks and farm diversification enterprises), as well as an increase in traffic levels on the main roads which cross the landscape.
- Further development pressures and demand for farm conversions as the area continues to be a desirable place to live.
- Population increase in the nearby settlements such as Barnstaple, Combe Martin and South Molton leading to higher water supply demands and the potential need for further reservoirs in the landscape.
- Intensification of agriculture on more fertile valley pastures in the valleys' lower courses to meet rising food demands, leading to a loss of semi-natural grasslands and rush pasture and an increased risk of diffuse pollution in watercourses.
- Pressure for an expansion of the area of coniferous plantation and woodland, planted and allowed to spread through natural regeneration to enhance the landscape's roles in filtering water, minimising downstream flooding, storing and sequestering carbon dioxide and providing a low-carbon fuel source (through coppice management).
- More intense periods of drought, as a result of climate change, leading to the drying out of important wetlands including wet meadows and rush pasture,

- Summer droughts also likely to reduce the valleys' water supply from the uplands of the area.
- Increased autumn and winter precipitation levels leading to higher water levels and consequential increases in flood risk in their lower catchments.
- Increase in poaching on river banks due to wetter autumn and winter conditions leading to waterlogged ground.
- Longer growing season and enhanced growth rates of vegetation including secondary woodland resulting in a spread of such vegetation in the understoreys of the landscape's valued semi-natural woodlands.
- Change in woodland / tree species composition as new pests/diseases spread (particularly phytophthora pathogens) and species intolerant of water level extremes die back. Individual trees (including valued parkland/veteran specimens) may become more susceptible to damage from the increasing frequency and magnitude of storm events.
- Further spread of non-native and alien species in woodlands, spurred on by a changing climate.
- Planting of non-native woodland species to respond to different growing conditions – altering the species composition of the landscape's oak and beech-dominated valley woodlands.
- Higher demand for domestic food production potentially leading to an increase in stocking levels and consequential impacts of poaching and over-grazing.
- Increased demand for bioenergy planting, including Short Rotation Coppice (SRC) as well as a drive towards active woodland management to produce woodfuel as a low-carbon fuel source.
- Potential future schemes to harness the power of the water to produce electricity as a renewable source (hydro-power).

PART 3: LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

OVERALL STRATEGY: To protect and enhance the secluded character of the river valleys with a strong historic sense of place. Woodlands and wetlands are managed and expanded to help prevent downstream flooding and protect water quality. Opportunities are sought to restore conifer plantations to broadleaves and other semi-natural habitats, creating a climate resilient green network. New recreational spaces are created away from the most sensitive locations, and the valleys' potential to harness power from their fast-flowing water is explored.

Landscape and planning guidelines

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
PROTECT		
Protect the sparse settlement pattern of clustered hamlets, villages and farmsteads often focused at river crossing points. Prevent the linear spread of development along river valleys and roads wherever possible, to maintain the settlements' characteristic form and peaceful character.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conservation Area Management Plans / Appraisals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policies COR3, COR4 and COR8. Devon's Structure Plan: Policies CO1 and CO7 Consider producing a Design Guide as a SPD to the LDF. Prepare design guidance focused on the quality of development and the special attributes of the landscape (e.g. lighting design guidance to preserve dark night skies).
Protect the landscape's traditional building styles and materials, particularly exposed local stone and slate, cream, whitewashed and yellow buildings, and the local use of thatch. Any new	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conservation Area Management Plans / Appraisals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policies COR1, COR2 and COR6.

LANDSCAPE TYPE:
3H: SECLUDED VALLEYS

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
<p>development should utilise the same materials and building styles wherever possible (whilst seeking to incorporate sustainable and low carbon building construction and design).</p> <p>Characteristic features such as white wooden finger posts, stone bridges and linhays should be retained and kept in a good state of repair.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devon Rural Skills Trust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devon's Structure Plan: Policies CO1 and CO7 • Consider formulating a Design Guide as a SPD in the forthcoming LDF. • Devon CC Environmental Review of permitted highway development proposals.
<p>Protect the landscape's network of quiet sunken lanes enclosed by woodland and species-rich hedgebanks, resisting unsympathetic highways improvements (e.g. hedgerow/woodland cutting) or signage.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Devon Green Lanes and Veins Project • Encourage the Highways Authority to respect the special character of the landscape's rural lanes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policies COR5, COR6 and COR8 • Devon's Structure Plan: Policy CO1 • Develop a policy for protecting the character of rural lanes in the forthcoming LDF. • DCC to roll out a highways protocol / best practice guide on roadside management for rural areas. • Devon CC Environmental Review of permitted highway development proposals.
<p>Protect and restore historic features within the valley landscapes, particularly those relating to the rivers' industrial heritage such as mills, dismantled railways and mining shafts.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • Conservation Area Management Plans / Appraisals • Estate Management Plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devon's Structure Plan: Policies CO7 and CO8 • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6

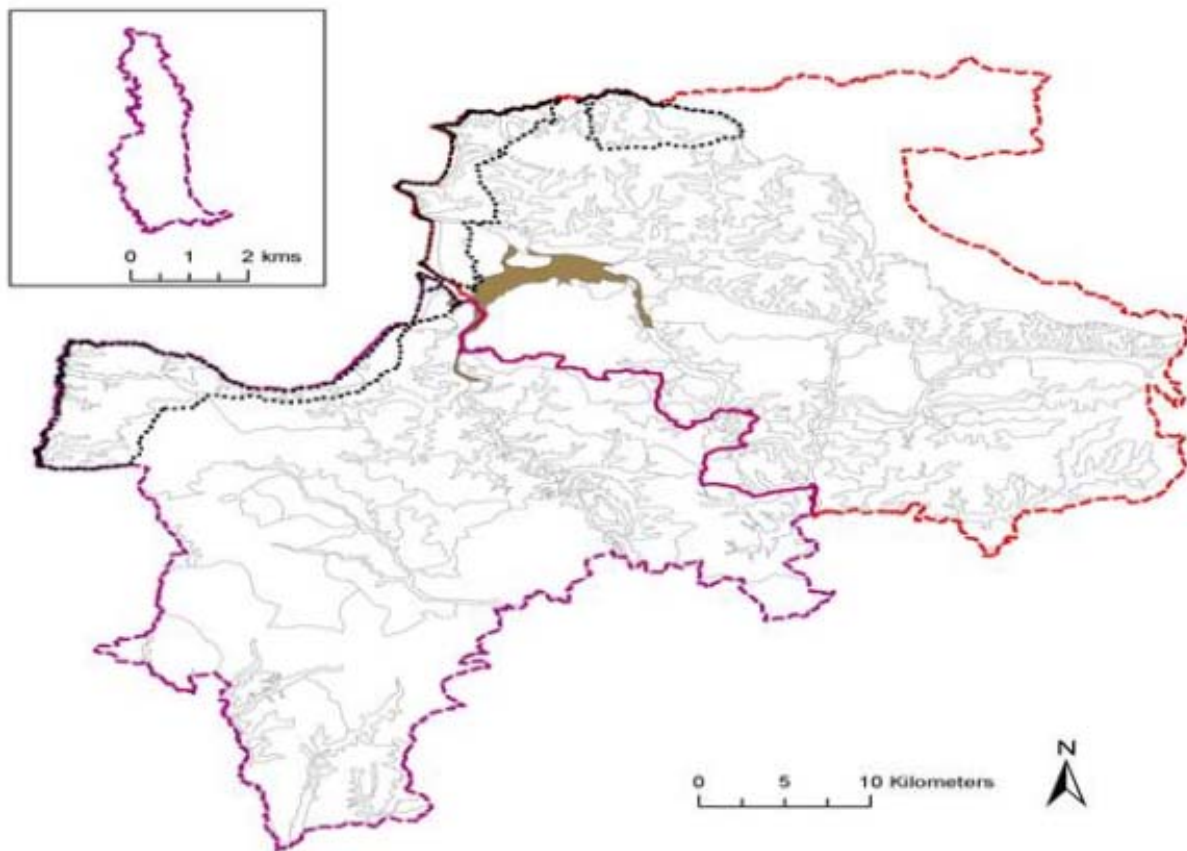
LANDSCAPE TYPE:
3H: SECLUDED VALLEYS

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
MANAGE		
Manage and protect parkland estates within the valleys, including through tree pollarding, new tree planting (for a future generation of climate-hardy veteran trees) and grazing of wood pasture.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • Estate Management Plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6. • Devon's Structure Plan: Policy CO7.
Manage and enhance the valleys' semi-natural woodlands through traditional techniques including coppicing. Control access by livestock, promoting natural regeneration to enhance longevity whilst using extensive grazing to promote the species diversity of woodland ground flora. Explore opportunities for community utilisation of coppice residues as a low-carbon fuel source.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • England Woodland Grant Scheme • Devon BAP • South West Woodlands Renaissance scheme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devon's Structure Plan: Policy CO1 • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6, COR7
Manage and extend areas of grassland, species-rich rush pasture, Molinia mire, unimproved acid and neutral grasslands, wet meadows and gorse and willow scrub through appropriate grazing and traditional land management regimes – both to enhance their wildlife value and functions in flood prevention.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • The Working Wetlands project (Devon Wildlife Trust) • Devon BAP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devon Structure Plan: Policy CO9 • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6
Manage the area's existing plantations for sustainable timber production and to enhance their wildlife interest, creating new green links to surrounding semi-natural habitats. .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • England Woodland Grant Scheme • Devon BAP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR17 • Devon Structure Plan: Policies CO9.
Manage species-rich Devon hedgebanks through the regular coppicing of hedgerow trees and re-laying of gappy sections, strengthening irregular medieval field patterns. Replace lost lengths respecting traditional bank styles and species composition, particularly locations at right angles to slopes to help reduce soil erosion and run-off into watercourses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • Devon BAP • Devon Hedge Group • Devon Rural Skills Trust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6

LANDSCAPE TYPE:
3H: SECLUDED VALLEYS

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
PLAN		
Create, extend and link woodland and wetland habitats to enhance the water storage capacity of the landscape (reducing incidences of downstream flooding) and improve water quality through reducing soil erosion and agricultural run-off. The natural regeneration of woodland should be encouraged and new planting [using climate-hardy species] undertaken to link fragmented sites.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • The Working Wetlands project (Devon Wildlife Trust) • Devon BAP • Forest Design Plans • South West Nature Map 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6
Restore and manage areas of relict traditional orchards and explore opportunities for the creation of new ones, including community orchards to promote local food and drink production.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • Devon BAP • Devon Food Links • South West Nature Map 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6 • Strengthen and promote links between local markets and produce from the area
Plan for the long-term restoration of the more prominent conifer plantations to open habitats and broadleaved woodlands (where their role in timber production has ceased). Explore the retention of other plantations as recreational spaces (e.g. for mountain biking trails) away from the more sensitive habitats surrounding them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • The Working Wetlands project (Devon Wildlife Trust) • Devon BAP • Forest Design Plans • South West Nature Map 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devon Structure Plan: Policy CO1 • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6
Plan for the potential development of small scale hydro schemes as a valuable source of renewable energy on suitable sites (both in ecological and landscape terms).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR7. • Devon Structure Plan: Policy CO12

PART I: DESCRIPTION



CONSITUENT LDUs: 358, 88, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 372, 378, 380, 393, 419, 454, 536, 540, 664, 665, 675, 676, 677, 681, 683, 837, 838, 839, 840, 850, 851

SUMMARY OF LOCATION

This LCT covers the broad Taw-Torridge Estuary and its surrounding mudflats and marshes. All but the estuary mouth falls within North Devon district.

KEY CHARACTERISTICS FOR THIS LCT WITHIN NORTH DEVON & TORRIDGE

- 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 I 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.



PART 2: EVALUATION

SUMMARY OF SPECIAL QUALITIES

- Open feeling and expansive views
- Unique flora and fauna, particularly important for overwintering birds.
- Opportunities for waterfront access and recreation (including cycle paths).
- Evidence of historic quays.



FORCES FOR CHANGE

PAST / CURRENT FORCES FOR CHANGE AFFECTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

- Light and noise pollution, as well as visual intrusion, from nearby development at Barnstaple, Appledore, Northam and Braunton.
- Estuary crossed in two locations by the A39 major road corridor, impacting on the landscape's levels of peace and tranquillity.
- Noise and air pollution also produced from the main A361 running parallel to the northern estuary bank.
- Industrial and commercial development close to the estuary, including sewerage works on the northern bank.
- Past sand and gravel dredging from Crow Point (5,000 tonnes per year), decreasing the feature's ability to protect the estuary mouth from coastal erosion.
- Development of Chivenor Airfield and associated barracks in the 1940s, forming significant features on the fringes of the estuary.
- Some fields fringing the estuary suffering from a lack of grazing, with a spread of brambles and scrub giving an impression of neglect.
- Lack of hedgerow management also resulting in gappy and overgrown sections, with some lengths replaced by fencing.
- Saltmarshes fringing the estuary at Skern currently assessed as in unfavourable declining condition by Natural England, due in part to poaching and overgrazing by commoners' stock wandering from Northam Burrows.

LANDSCAPE TYPE: 4A: ESTUARIES

PAST / CURRENT FORCES FOR CHANGE AFFECTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER (Continued)

- Popularity of the Tarka Trail and South West Coast Path for informal recreation. The wider coast's popularity as a visitor destination resulting in high traffic levels on surrounding roads at weekends and during holiday periods.



FORCES FOR CHANGE

FUTURE FORCES FOR CHANGE AFFECTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

- Further growth in popularity of the area and the surrounding coast for recreation and tourism, impacting on the estuary's levels of tranquillity and leading to increased demand for facilities, infrastructure (including car parks and signage) and higher traffic levels.
- Future growth of Barnstaple, Braunton and Bideford/ Northam/Appledore as the main towns serving the two districts, further intruding into the open estuary landscape.
- Spread of hobby farming and the rising cost of land close to the main settlements, resulting in a further erosion of traditional agricultural land uses and neglect of hedgerows alongside the estuary.
- Sea level rise and coastal erosion as a result of climate change, resulting in a significant rise in the estuary's water levels and a consequential widening of its channels.
- Future climate change modelling predicting that by 2100, most spring tides will breach the current flood defences protecting settlements and farmland along the estuary fringes.
- Increasing demand for the tidal energy of the estuary to be harnessed as a renewable energy source in response to government targets for climate change mitigation (proposals have already been put forward for this type of scheme).

PART 3: LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

OVERALL STRATEGY: To protect the open character and expansive views to and from the estuary, ensuring new development on its fringes is incorporated into its landscape setting. The cultural heritage and natural evolution of the estuary is conveyed through sensitive interpretation, and local communities are involved in planning for future landscape change as a result of sea level rise and changes in coastal erosion.

Landscape and planning guidelines

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
PROTECT		
Protect the open character of the estuary and its important views to and from the surrounding landscapes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify important views and view points (and identify why people think they are important) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake a seascape assessment to help inform the sensitive siting of future development (including within and along the estuary fringes) – following the emerging Natural England guidance. Taw Torridge Estuary Management Plan (2010, currently draft): Policies H1, C5; Objectives HCL1, HCL6. North Devon Biosphere Reserve Sustainable Development Strategy (2008-2012)
Protect, and where appropriate, restore historic features along the estuary edges, including quays and bridges. Provide sensitively sited interpretation to help tell the story of the ever-changing nature of the landscape and its cultural significance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborative working with English Heritage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AONB Management Plan: Objective LH1, LH2, ART4, CC3; Policies A1, F2, G1 Devon's Structure Plan: Policies CO7 and CO8 North Devon & Torridge Joint Core

LANDSCAPE TYPE:
4A: ESTUARIES

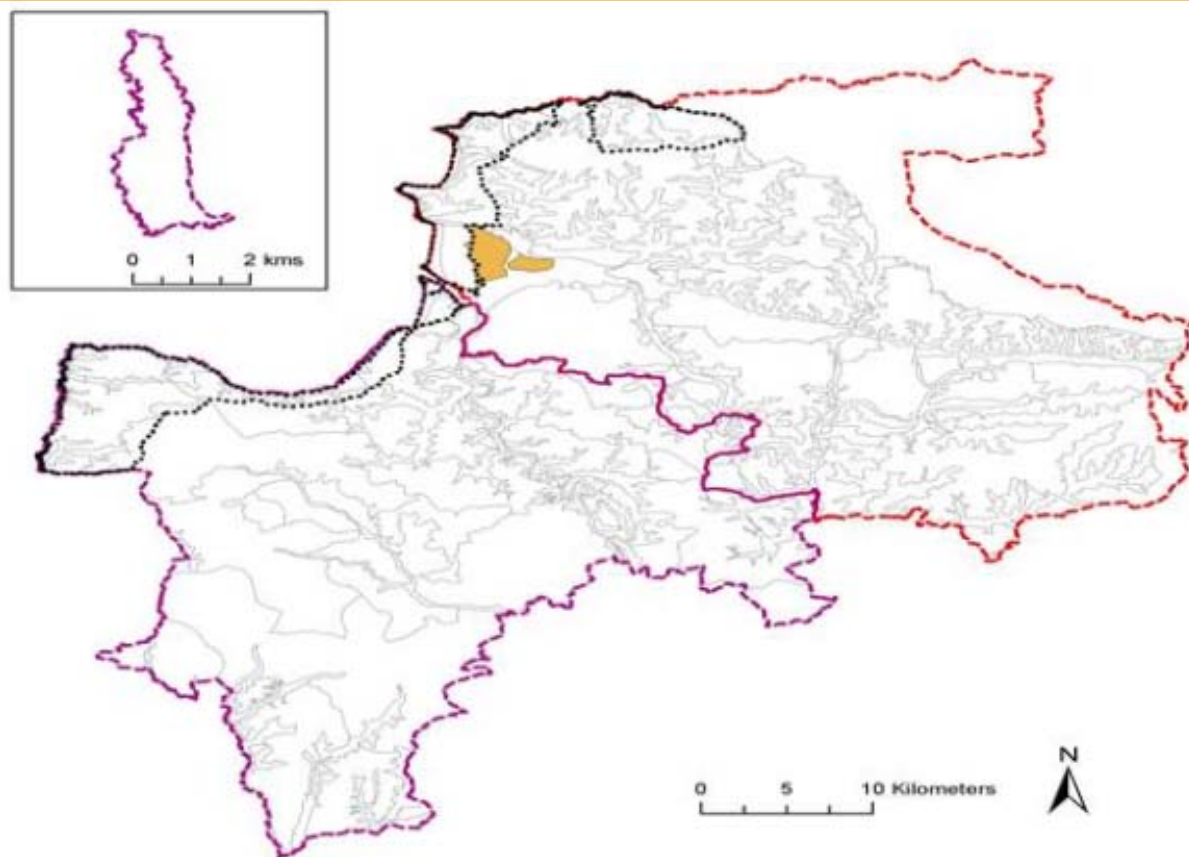
Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
		<p>Strategy: Policy COR6</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Taw Torridge Estuary Management Plan (2010, currently draft): Policies H3, E4, L1, L3; Objectives HCL2, HCL5, CL3
MANAGE		
<p>Manage the landscape's popularity for recreation, encouraging use of existing facilities such as the Tarka Trail and SWCP whilst providing sustainable transport options and green infrastructure links to the surrounding towns (see further under 'Plan').</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider the use of 'zoning' and promote less sensitive sites for tourism (e.g. inland). Develop further sustainable transport initiatives / park & ride schemes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AONB Management Plan: Objectives BG5, ART1, ART3; Policies F1, F3, G2, H1. Devon's Structure Plan: Policy TO6. North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policies COR5 and COR17 Taw Torridge Estuary Management Plan (2010, currently draft): Policies S2, S3, S5, C3; Objectives SSHC1, SSHC8, CC5.
<p>Manage the agricultural land fringing the estuary, encouraging local farmers to use the pastures and marshes for livestock grazing as part of their farming systems.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Stewardship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Taw Torridge Estuary Management Plan (2010, currently draft): Policies H4, E2 & R1; Objectives HCL1, RES2, ECON1, ECON5
<p>Manage the estuary's internationally important habitats, including saltmarshes and mudflats, ensuring marshes are grazed at appropriate levels and the location of engineered sea defences respect the natural environment wherever possible.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Stewardship Devon BAP South West Nature Map 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AONB Management Plan: Objectives; CO3, Policies C1, D3, D5 North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6 Devon's Structure Plan: Policy CO5 Shoreline Management Plan (SMP2

LANDSCAPE TYPE:
4A: ESTUARIES

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
		<p>currently in consultation phase).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Devon Biosphere Reserve Sustainable Development Strategy (2008-2012) • Taw Torridge Estuary Management Plan (2010, currently draft): Policies B1 & B3; Objectives Bio 2, Bio5, Bio6 and CCI
<p>Manage and restore lost and gappy hedgerow sections, particularly at right angles to slopes, to reinforce the landscape's regular field patterns and reduce erosion/diffuse pollution into streams and the estuary.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • Devon Hedge Group • Devon Rural Skills Trust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AONB Management Plan: Policy A1 • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6
PLAN		
<p>Plan for the future impacts of climate change, particularly as a result of sea level rise and coastal erosion, allowing natural processes to take place wherever possible whilst ensuring that local communities are involved in making decisions about their future landscape. Plan for opportunities to expand estuarine habitats to build resilience to future climate change.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South West Nature Map 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AONB Management Plan: Objectives; EQ3, CC4, Policies A2, D1, K2, L1 North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR2 • Devon Structure Plan: Policy CO5 • North Devon Biosphere Reserve Sustainable Development Strategy (2008-2012) • Taw Torridge Estuary Management Plan (2010, currently draft): Policies C1, C2, C8; Objectives CCI, CC2, CC6 • Shoreline Management Plan (SMP2

LANDSCAPE TYPE:
4A: ESTUARIES

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
		currently at consultation stage)
<p>Plan for the future expansion of nearby towns on the estuary fringes (Barnstaple, Braunton, Bideford), incorporating new development into its landscape setting and providing green infrastructure links to routes such as the Tarka Trail and SW Coast Path.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South West Nature Map 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AONB Management Plan: Objectives; BG5, ART1, TH1, TH2; Policies: FI, GI, HI • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR3, COR5 and COR17 • Devon Structure Plan: Policy TO6 • Taw Torridge Estuary Management Plan (2010, currently draft): Policies C5, E4 • North Devon Biosphere Reserve Sustainable Development Strategy (2008-2012)

4B: MARINE LEVELS & COASTAL PLAINS**PART I: DESCRIPTION**

Copyright: North Devon Coast AONB

CONSITUENT LDUs: 358, 88, 363, 393, 398, 399, 400, 401, 540, 850

SUMMARY OF LOCATION

The Marine Levels and Coastal Plain LCT covers the reclaimed estuary fringes of Braunton Marsh and Chivenor airfield on the northern banks of the Taw-Torridge Estuary. It also includes the historic landscape of Braunton Great Field backing Braunton Marsh, classified for the purposes of this LCA as a 'coastal plain'. Both Braunton Great Field and Braunton Marsh fall within the North Devon Heritage Coast.

4B: MARINE LEVELS & COASTAL PLAINS

KEY CHARACTERISTICS FOR THIS LCT WITHIN NORTH DEVON & TORRIDGE

- 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 Branton Great Field, one of the finest examples surviving in the UK. Landsheds (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. Branton 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 Branton Burrows.
- Branton 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.
- Branton Great Field and Branton 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 Branton has a strong influence in views and erodes local perceptions of tranquillity.



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PART 2: EVALUATION

VALUED LANDSCAPE ATTRIBUTES

- Branton Great Field medieval field system: a jewel in North Devon's crown ('our World Heritage Site')
- An obvious historic landscape: landsheds, furlongs, ditches, stone walls, animal shelters and traditional farming methods.
- Rich biodiversity and wetland habitats for birds.
- Peaceful and tranquil.
- Transition between land/estuary/sea.



FORCES FOR CHANGE

PAST / CURRENT FORCES FOR CHANGE AFFECTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

- Development of Chivenor Airfield and barracks on the northern shores of the estuary in the 1930s, now used as a Royal Marines base and search-and-rescue station. Large-scale hangers are dominant in many views from the open landscapes surrounding the estuary.
- Unmanaged and neglected character of parts of Chivenor Airfield, with scrap caravans and some redundant spaces enclosed by prominent, high fencing out of context with the open landscape setting.
- Encroaching development and urban fringe pressures (including pony paddocks) from Branton on the eastern fringes of Branton Great Field / Marsh and the northern-western fringes of Chivenor Airfield.
- Traffic and development associated with the industrial and trading estate east of Chivenor Airfield, impacting on the landscape's natural estuary setting and levels of tranquillity.
- Noise and air pollution from the nearby A361 Barnstaple-Branton road.
- Presence of modern bungalows, industrial-scale agricultural sheds and polytunnels on land surrounding Branton Great Field, eroding its historic and open character. However, bulb growing is in itself an historic land use strongly associated with the area.
- Improvement of drained grazing pastures to intensive arable production and horticulture. Falling water levels on the Branton Marsh having an effect on wildlife and the hydrology of the adjacent SAC/SSSI at Branton Burrows.

4B: MARINE LEVELS & COASTAL PLAINS**PAST / CURRENT FORCES FOR CHANGE AFFECTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER (Continued)**

- Stone walls and traditional linhays falling into a poor state of repair due to a lack of maintenance.
- Decline in the total number of landowners and land managers on the Great Field (from 140 in the 1830s to 30 owners and 4 strip holders at the turn of the 20th century), leading to a loss of strips and their characteristic landsherd / furlong boundaries.
- Past agri-environment schemes too prescriptive and setting out a metric (rather than the traditional imperial) measurement to form the basis for landsherd restoration on the Great Field. Stewardship in the 1990s / early 2000s therefore failed to halt the decline.
- Spread of secondary woodland and scrub in parts of the landscape, affecting its open character, the condition of semi-natural habitats (e.g. marsh and reedbeds) and creating an 'unkempt' appearance.
- Lack of hedgerow management resulting in overgrown sections, e.g. around Gallowell, Lower Thorn and Middle Thorn fields.
- Popularity of the Tarka Trail and South West Coast Path for informal recreation. The wider coast's popularity as a visitor destination resulting in high traffic levels on surrounding roads at weekends and during holiday periods.
- Expansive views to the surrounding open landscape fringing the estuary, and downland hills beyond. The telecommunications masts on Ora Hill (Saunton Down) form detracting features on the northern skyline above Braunton Great Field.

FORCES FOR CHANGE**FUTURE FORCES FOR CHANGE AFFECTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER**

- Future growth of Braunton, Barnstaple and Bideford/ Northam/Appledore as the main towns serving the two districts, further intruding into the open landscape.
- Uncertain future for the use of Chivenor Airfield by the MOD (following budget cuts), potentially leading to redundant buildings and land uses within the landscape.
- Further growth in popularity of the area and the surrounding coast for recreation and tourism, impacting on the wider area's levels of tranquillity and leading to increased demand for facilities, infrastructure (including car parks and signage) and higher traffic levels and roads crossing through the landscape (e.g. linking Braunton to car parks serving Braunton Burrows and Saunton Sands, via Braunton Great Field / Marsh).
- Spread of hobby farming and the rising cost of land close to the main settlements, resulting in a further erosion of traditional agricultural land uses and neglect of field boundaries.
- Further intensification and industrialisation of agriculture, potentially leading to an increase in areas of grazing marsh improved for arable / horticulture and further modern, large scale agricultural buildings appearing in the open landscape.
- Sea level rise and coastal erosion as a result of climate change, resulting in rising water levels across Braunton Marsh and more frequent flood events, affecting the agricultural viability of the area and the composition of valued semi-natural habitats.

4B: MARINE LEVELS & COASTAL PLAINS**PART 3: LANDSCAPE STRATEGY**

OVERALL STRATEGY: To protect the open character of the marine levels and coastal plain landscape, as an important backdrop to the Taw-Torridge Estuary and wider North Devon Coast. The outstanding preserved medieval open strip field landscape of Braunton Great Field is protected and enhanced, whilst its importance for agriculture is supported. New development is integrated into its landscape setting and opportunities are sought to promote sustainable access and recreation to the landscape and the wider coastline. The landscape is prepared for the future effects of a changing climate, with wildlife habitats strengthened and expanded to build resilience to the changes that might lie ahead.

Landscape and planning guidelines

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
PROTECT		
Protect the open and largely undeveloped character of Braunton Marsh and Braunton Great Field, ensuring any limited new development respects the scale and historic character of the landscape.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policies COR3, COR4 and COR8. • Devon's Structure Plan: Policies CO1 and CO7 • North Devon Biosphere Reserve Sustainable Development Strategy (2008-2012) • Taw Torridge Estuary Management Plan (2010, currently draft): Policies H1, C5; Objectives HCL1, HCL4, HCL6.
Protect the landscape's expansive views across the Taw-Torridge Estuary and higher downland summits on more distant horizons.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify important views and view points (and identify why people think they are important) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policies COR6 and COR8. • Devon's Structure Plan: Policies CO1,

4B: MARINE LEVELS & COASTAL PLAINS

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoid the siting of vertical structures or large-scale buildings in views from the historic landscape of Braunton Great Field. 	CO2, CO3 and CO6 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake a seascape assessment to help inform the sensitive siting of future development along the edge of the Taw-Torridge Estuary (following the emerging Natural England guidance). North Devon Biosphere Reserve Sustainable Development Strategy (2008-2012) Taw Torridge Estuary Management Plan (2010, currently draft): Policies H1, C5; Objectives HCL1, HCL4, HCL6.
Protect and restore historic features relating to the long-standing agricultural use of the area, including stone walls, linhays, bridges, sluices and the strip / furlong / landsheds of Braunton Great Field. Provide sensitively sited interpretation which explains the rich cultural history of the area as well as the changes that might come about as a result of future climate change and sea level rise.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Stewardship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Devon's Structure Plan: Policies CO7 and CO8 North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6 North Devon Biosphere Reserve Sustainable Development Strategy (2008-2012) Taw Torridge Estuary Management Plan (2010, currently draft): Policies H3, E4, L1, L3; Objectives HCL2, HCL5, CL3
MANAGE		
Manage the wider landscape's popularity for recreation, encouraging the use of existing facilities such as the Tarka	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider the use of 'zoning' and promote less sensitive sites for tourism (e.g. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Devon's Structure Plan: Policy TO6. North Devon & Torridge Joint Core

4B: MARINE LEVELS & COASTAL PLAINS

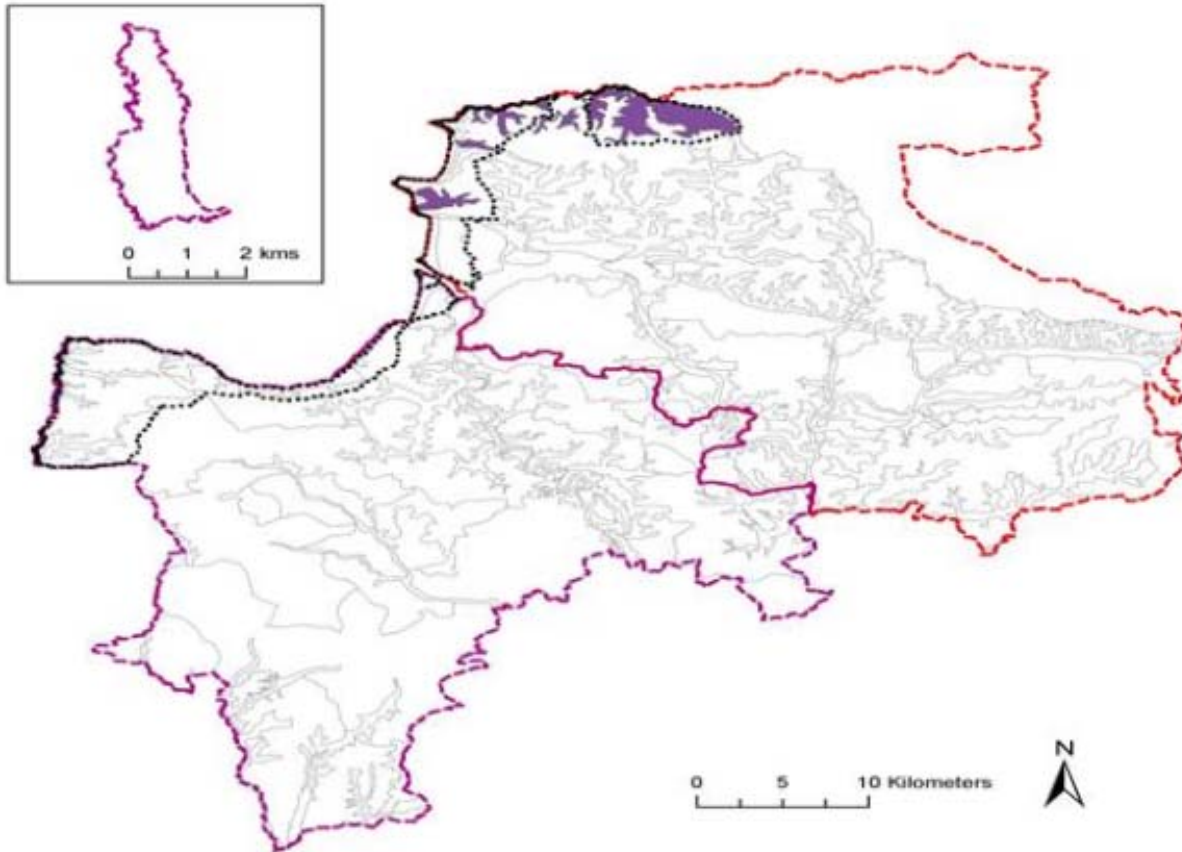
Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
Trail and South West Coast Path whilst providing sustainable transport options to reduce levels of traffic on minor roads crossing through the landscape.	<p>inland).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop further sustainable transport initiatives / park & ride schemes. 	<p>Strategy: Policies COR5 and COR17</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Devon Biosphere Reserve Sustainable Development Strategy (2008-2012) Taw Torridge Estuary Management Plan (2010, currently draft): Policies S2, S3, S5, C3; Objectives SSHC1, SSHC8, CC5.
Manage areas of grazing marsh, resisting agricultural improvements or conversion to arable / horticulture. Support a continuation of arable and horticultural farming on Braunton Great Field within the original medieval strips, resisting an industrialisation of production (particularly in relation to agricultural buildings). Ensure marginal land fringing Chivenor Airfield remains in agricultural management to protect its open character and role as a backdrop to the Taw-Torridge Estuary.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Stewardship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Devon Structure Plan: Policy CO9 North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6 Taw Torridge Estuary Management Plan (2010, currently draft): Policies H4, E2 & R1; Objectives HCL1, RES2, ECON1, ECON5
Manage the landscape's valued coastal grasslands, reedbeds, grazing marsh and network of drainage ditches, including through a continuation of livestock grazing at appropriate levels and the careful management of water levels on Braunton Marsh.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Stewardship Devon BAP South West Nature Map 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6 Devon's Structure Plan: Policy CO5 North Devon Biosphere Reserve Sustainable Development Strategy (2008-2012) Taw Torridge Estuary Management Plan (2010, currently draft): Policies B1 & B3; Objectives Bio 2, Bio5, Bio6 and CCI
Manage and restore the historic strip and furlong field	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Stewardship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Devon & Torridge Joint Core

4B: MARINE LEVELS & COASTAL PLAINS

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
patterns across Braunton Great Field, ensuring imperial measurements are used to reinforce the original landscape patterns. Manage hedgerows around Gallowell, Lower Thorn and Middle Thorn to reinforce the sense of a well-managed landscape.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devon Hedge Group • Devon Rural Skills Trust 	<p>Strategy: Policy COR6</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Devon Biosphere Reserve Sustainable Development Strategy (2008-2012)
PLAN		
Plan for the future impacts of climate change, particularly as a result of sea level rise, allowing natural processes to take place wherever possible whilst adapting farming practices to respond to future changes. Plan for opportunities to expand wetland habitats to strengthen species and habitat resilience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South West Nature Map 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shoreline Management Plan (SMP2 currently at consultation stage) • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR2 • Devon Structure Plan: Policy CO5 • Taw Torridge Estuary Management Plan (2010, currently draft): Policies C1, C2, C8; Objectives CCI, CC2, CC6 • North Devon Biosphere Reserve Sustainable Development Strategy (2008-2012)
Plan for the future expansion of Braunton, incorporating new development into its landscape setting and providing green infrastructure links to routes such as the Tarka Trail and SW Coast Path. Ensure new development and associated land uses do not encroach into the valued landscapes of Braunton Great Field and Marsh.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South West Nature Map 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR3, COR5 and COR17 • Devon Structure Plan: Policy TO6 • Taw Torridge Estuary Management Plan (2010, currently draft): Policies C5, E4 • North Devon Biosphere Reserve Sustainable Development Strategy (2008-

4B: MARINE LEVELS & COASTAL PLAINS

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
		2012)
<p>Seek to integrate development at Chivenor Airfield, barracks and industrial estate into its open estuary setting, managing and extending coastal grasslands and grazing marshes around its fringes, penetrating as green corridors between gaps in development. Seek to restore redundant brownfield land and buildings to open coastal habitats to build resilience to future sea level rise (particularly on the fringes of the estuary).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South West Nature Map • Environmental Stewardship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shoreline Management Plan (SMP2 currently at consultation stage) • Taw Torridge Estuary Management Plan (2010, currently draft): Policies C5, E4 • North Devon Biosphere Reserve Sustainable Development Strategy (2008-2012)

4C: COASTAL SLOPES & COMBES WITH SETTLEMENT**PART I: DESCRIPTION**

CONSITUENT LDUs: 382, 383, 384, 386, 387, 388, 397, 403, 532, 576, 578, 579, 580, 581, 583, 852, 853

SUMMARY OF LOCATION

This LCT comprises the distinctive coastal combes of North Devon, which carve through the landform on their way to the sea. These combes include linear settlements in their valley bottoms and at their coastal mouths, including Combe Martin, Croyde and Woolacombe.

4C: COASTAL SLOPES & COMBES WITH SETTLEMENT

KEY CHARACTERISTICS FOR THIS LCT WITHIN NORTH DEVON & TORRIDGE

- 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.



4C: COASTAL SLOPES & COMBES WITH SETTLEMENT**PART 2: EVALUATION****SUMMARY OF SPECIAL QUALITIES**

- Strong medieval strip field systems around Combe Martin.
- Linear settlements contained within the landscape, some with farmsteads in village centres.
- Industrial heritage, including stone-built harbours, lime kilns and mining remains.
- Traditional vernacular of cob, Morte slate, thatch, whitewash and stone.
- Edwardian and Victorian seaside influence.

**FORCES FOR CHANGE****PAST / CURRENT FORCES FOR CHANGE AFFECTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER**

- The popularity of the area as a tourism destination is a key force for change – with an influx in traffic and people into the landscape during holiday periods.
- Modern tourism-related development and land uses including chalets, caravan parks, camp sites, car parks, holiday apartments and hotels often in prominent locations.
- Planting of conifers affecting the nature conservation interest of the combes' ancient oak woodlands, particularly in the Sterridge and Borough Valleys.
- Field enlargement and loss of traditional stone-faced hedges in favour of fencing, as a result of modern farming practices, particularly on higher combe slopes.
- Lack of or varying levels of management of traditional Devon hedges, with some sections overgrown and their banks in a poor state of repair whilst others are intensively flailed.
- Views to telecommunications masts on prominent hill summits (often in the adjacent 5C Downland LCT), eroding perceptions of tranquillity – e.g. Ora Hill.
- Erosion and recreation pressure close to the coastal resorts, including along the South West Coast Path.
- Extensive spread of post-war and recent development outside the

4C: COASTAL SLOPES & COMBES WITH SETTLEMENT

settlements' historic cores. Views to other development outside the AONB possible from some ridgelines/coastal locations (e.g. to Ilfracombe, Northam and Westward Ho!).



FORCES FOR CHANGE

FUTURE FORCES FOR CHANGE AFFECTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

- Further growth in popularity of the area for recreation and tourism, eroding the landscape's high levels of tranquillity and leading to increased demand for facilities (including through farm diversifications / conversions), infrastructure and higher traffic levels on rural roads.
- Decline in rural skills as young people move away from the area (due to a lack of affordable housing) resulting in an ageing farm workforce, with consequential impacts on the management of landscape features such as Devon hedges, woodlands and traditional buildings.
- Further planting of conifers affecting the nature conservation interest of the combes' ancient oak woodlands.
- Change in woodland / tree species composition as new pests/diseases spread as result of climate change (particularly phytophthora pathogens) and species intolerant of water level extremes die back.
- Demand for both on-shore and off-shore wind farms – e.g. proposals for the Atlantic Array off-shore windfarm in the Bristol Channel which would be visible from the higher land and coastal sections of the north-facing combes.
- Demand for domestic and community-scale renewable energy installations such as solar panels, small wind turbines and ground-source heat pumps – leading to incremental change to traditional buildings.
- Development pressure and increase in the number of 'hobby farms' due to the popularity of the area as a place to live / retire to.

4C: COASTAL SLOPES & COMBES WITH SETTLEMENT

PART 3: LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

OVERALL STRATEGY: To protect the distinctive linear and contained settlement pattern of the combes, enhancing traditional vernacular building styles and the setting of development within the landscape. The area's popularity as a tourism destination is managed to both provide further sustainable recreational opportunities whilst ensuring landscape character managed and strengthened. Medieval field patterns are divided by an intact network of Devon hedges, semi-natural habitats are managed and extended and landscape is prepared for the future impacts of climate change.

Landscape and planning guidelines

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
PROTECT		
Protect the north-eastern combes' role as part of the setting to Exmoor National Park.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the most prominent skylines on the upper combe slopes Identify important views and view points to and from the National Park. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AONB Management Plan: Objective; LHI, Policy AI. North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6. Devon's Structure Plan: Policies CO1, CO2 and CO3. Guidance in development management planning to avoid siting vertical structures on hill summits within this LCT, and on other hill summits visible from this landscape (e.g. the North Devon Downs).
Protect the contained form of the combes' settlements, resisting any further linear spread or coalescence with smaller villages or hamlets within the combes. Ensure the stone church towers of Combe Martin and Berrynarbor are	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conservation Area Management Plans / Appraisals Avoid siting tall buildings or structures on the same skylines as local church 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AONB Management plan: Policies AI and H2 North Devon & Torridge Joint Core

4C: COASTAL SLOPES & COMBES WITH SETTLEMENT

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
protected as local landmark features.	towers.	<p>Strategy: Policy COR3, COR4, COR6.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devon's Structure Plan: Policies CO6 and CO7. • Consider producing a Design Guide as a SPD to the LDF. • Prepare design guidance focused on the quality of development and the special attributes of the landscape (e.g. lighting design guidance to preserve dark night skies). • Lobby / review the 28 day rule for temporary tourism-related land uses.
<p>Protect the landscape's traditional building styles and materials, particularly cob, Morte slate, thatch, whitewash and stone. Any new development or extensions should utilise the same materials and building styles wherever possible (whilst seeking to incorporate sustainable and low carbon building construction and design).</p> <p>Protect and, where required, sensitively restore other features of the local vernacular including stone walls and white wooden finger posts, respecting local variations in styles and materials.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conservation Area Management Plans / Appraisals • CORDIALE Interreg bid (focusing on Combe Martin) • Devon Rural Skills Trust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider formulating a Design Guide as a SPD in the forthcoming LDF. • North Devon Sustainable Energy Action Plan • AONB Management Plan: Objectives LH1 and LH2; Policies A1, G1 and G4. • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policies COR1, COR6 and COR8. • Devon Structure Plan: Policies CO7 and CO8. • Devon CC Environmental Review of permitted highway development

4C: COASTAL SLOPES & COMBES WITH SETTLEMENT

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
		proposals.
<p>Protect the landscape's network of winding rural lanes, resisting unsympathetic highways improvements (e.g. hedgerow/woodland cutting) or signage. Promote sustainable transport options to reduce traffic levels during busy holiday periods.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Devon Green Lanes and Veins Project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AONB Management Plan: Objectives F1, F3, TH1, TH2, TH3; Policies H1, H2 North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policies COR5 and COR6. Devon's Structure Plan: Policies CO1 and TO6. Develop a policy for protecting the character of rural lanes in the forthcoming LDF. DCC to roll out a highways protocol / best practice guide on roadside management for rural areas. Devon CC Environmental Review of permitted highway development proposals.
<p>Protect and sensitively manage historic features within the landscape, including medieval strip fields, limekilns, silver mines and other mineral workings on the edge of Exmoor National Park, the castle at Newbury, and Whitestone standing stone (including through grazing at appropriate levels and recreation management). Provide sensitively sited interpretation to enhance public understanding of the landscape's cultural and industrial heritage.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Stewardship Conservation Area Management Plans / Appraisals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AONB Management plan: Objective LH1, ART4, CC3; Policies A1 and F2. North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6. Devon's Structure Plan: Policies CO1 and CO7
MANAGE		

4C: COASTAL SLOPES & COMBES WITH SETTLEMENT

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
Manage and enhance the combes' ancient oak woodlands through traditional techniques including coppicing. Control access by livestock, promoting natural regeneration to enhance longevity whilst using extensive grazing to promote the species diversity of woodland ground flora. Explore opportunities for community utilisation of coppice residues as a low-carbon fuel source.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • England Woodland Grant Scheme • Devon BAP • South West Woodlands Renaissance scheme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AONB Management Plan: Objectives FL1, FL2 and G5; Policies A1, C1 and E2. • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6, COR7.
Manage and extend areas of wet woodland and meadows through appropriate grazing and traditional land management regimes – both to enhance their wildlife value and functions in flood prevention.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • Devon BAP • South West Nature Map 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AONB Management Plan: Objectives FL2; Policies C1 and E2 • Devon's Structure Plan: Policies CO9 and CO13 • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6
<p>Manage species-rich Devon hedgebanks through the regular coppicing of hedgerow trees and re-laying of gappy sections, strengthening irregular medieval field patterns. Replace lost lengths and lines of fencing, respecting traditional bank and stone-facing styles and materials, particularly in locations at right angles to slopes to help reduce soil erosion and run-off into watercourses.</p> <p>Replace lost or over-mature hedgerow trees (particularly wind-sculpted specimens on higher ground) as important landscape features.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • Devon BAP • Devon Hedge Group • Devon Rural Skills Trust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AONB Management Plan: Policy A1, • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6 • Devon's Structure Plan: Policy CO1
Manage and re-link valued mosaics of unimproved grassland (including Culm and maritime grasslands), heath and scrub including through livestock grazing at appropriate levels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • Devon BAP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6 • Strengthen and promote links between

4C: COASTAL SLOPES & COMBES WITH SETTLEMENT

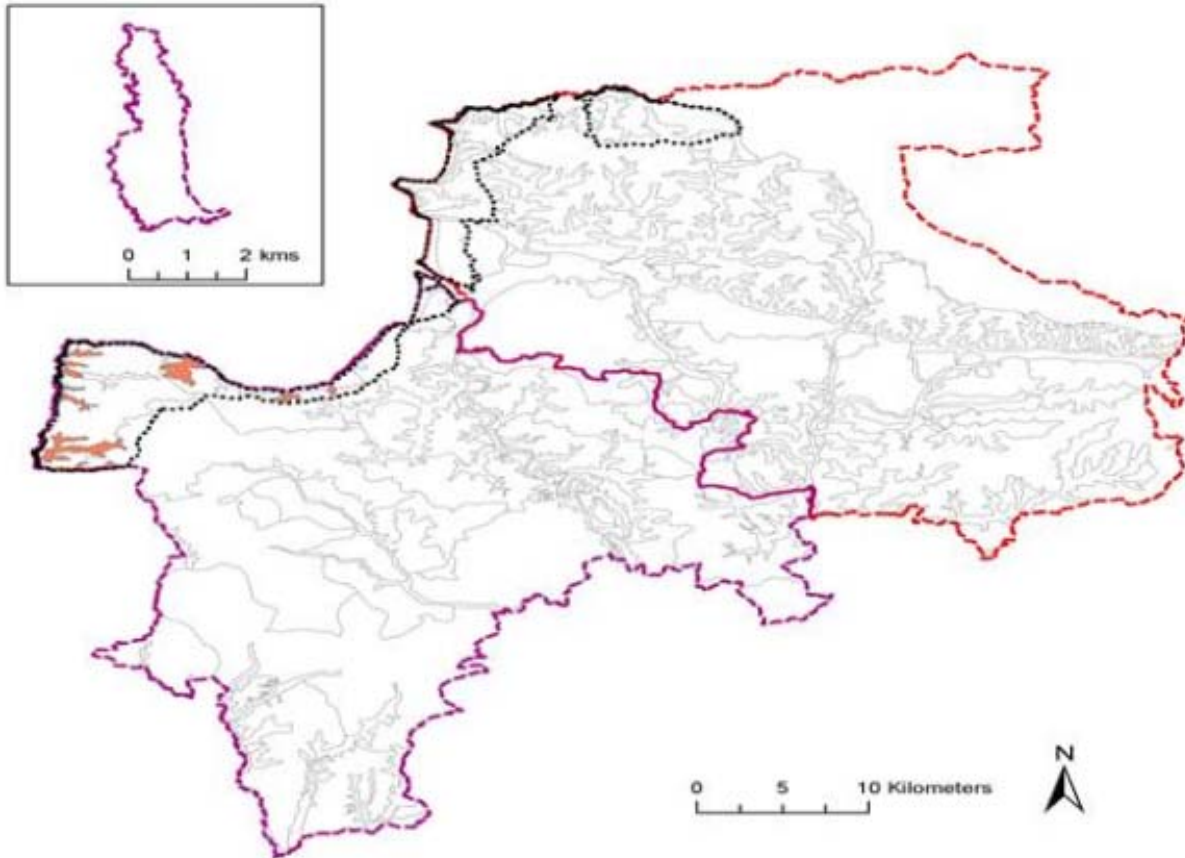
Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
Support farmers to continue to farm these 'marginal' areas as an integral part of their farming system and protect them from alternative land uses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Devon Food Links South West Nature Map 	local markets and produce from the area
PLAN		
Create, extend and link woodland and wetland habitats to enhance the water storage capacity of the landscape (reducing future incidences of downstream flooding) and improve water quality through reducing soil erosion and agricultural run-off. The natural regeneration of woodland should be encouraged and new planting [using climate-hardy species] undertaken to link fragmented sites.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Stewardship Devon BAP South West Nature Map 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6 AONB Management Plan: Objective FL2 and EQ5; Policies B3 and E2 Devon's Structure Plan: Policy CO13
Plan for the creation of green infrastructure links to/from the landscape's coastal resorts and the South West Coast Path, to facilitate more recreational opportunities, reduce the use of the private car and enhance the natural setting of development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Stewardship Devon BAP South West Nature Map Consider the use of 'zoning' and promote less sensitive sites for tourism (e.g. inland). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Green Infrastructure Strategy AONB Management plan: Objectives BG5, ART1, ART3; Policies FI, F3, G2, HI. Devon's Structure Plan: Policy CO1, CO6 and TO6. North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policies COR5 and COR17
Plan for the future effects of climate change along the coast, allowing natural processes to take place as much as possible, whilst ensuring local people are involved in decision-making relating to future landscapes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> South West Nature Map 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shoreline Management Plan (SMP2 currently in consultation phase). North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR2 Devon Structure Plan: Policy CO5 AONB Management Plan: Objectives;

4C: COASTAL SLOPES & COMBES WITH SETTLEMENT

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
		EQ3, CO1, CO3, CC4, Policies A2, C1, D1, D5, K2, L1

LANDSCAPE TYPE:
4D: COASTAL SLOPES & COMBES

PART I: DESCRIPTION



CONSITUENT LDUs: 404, 405, 684, 686, 688, 689, 690, 691, 692, 693, 694, 842

SUMMARY OF LOCATION

This LCT comprises the peaceful coastal combes carving through the AONB landscape in Torridge District.

KEY CHARACTERISTICS FOR THIS LCT WITHIN NORTH DEVON & TORRIDGE

- Narrow, steep-sided valley landforms stretching inland from the coast, lined by fast-flowing streams.
- Sandstone bedrock geology of the Crackington (and Bude) formations.
- Spectacular views to the sea and dramatic coastal cliffs afforded through gaps in tree cover, and as the combes open out towards the coast.
- Woodland is a significant feature of most combes, occurring both along the streamline and on valley sides, with semi-natural oak woodland predominating.
- Varying field patterns – elongated medieval or post-medieval field patterns generally characterise the wider valley bottoms, often enclosed by post-and-wire fencing and the surrounding woodland, whilst the edges of modern or medieval fields overlap onto the upper slopes from adjacent areas, often bounded by thick Devon hedges.
- Rough pasture predominates along the valley bottoms, with rough grazing land also occurring on the valley sides in between woodland. Both pasture and arable fields occasionally overlap onto the upper slopes.
- Rich variety of semi-natural habitats, including ancient oak-dominated woodland, wet woodland, unimproved grassland (including Culm grasslands), and internationally-important areas of maritime scrub, grassland and heath towards the coast.
- Features such as stone-built mills, lime kilns and quays reflect the area's industrial past (e.g. Mouth Mill, Bucks Mills and Docton Mill).
- Very lightly settled, with small groups of dwellings and historic hamlets of local stone and whitewash with slate and sometimes thatched roofs, often sited at stream crossing points.
- Low levels of access, with minor roads generally crossing valleys and only occasionally along them, whilst footpaths and bridleways provide snake alongside streams.
- High levels of tranquillity – often the only sounds to be heard are from birdsong, the fast-flowing water of the combe streams, and the distant roar of the sea.



PART 2: EVALUATION

SUMMARY OF SPECIAL QUALITIES

- Secluded, intimate and small-scale landscapes.
- Contrast between sheltered woodlands and open vistas framed by the sea.
- Ancient woodland and rich biodiversity shaped by salt-laden winds.
- Historic fishing village at Bucks Mills.
- 'Olde worlde' village charm and a strong historic sense of place.



FORCES FOR CHANGE

PAST / CURRENT FORCES FOR CHANGE AFFECTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

- Recreation and tourism pressures around Bucks Mills and more accessible lengths of the South West Coast Path, with associated increase in traffic levels on rural roads and demand for facilities such as car parking and signage.
- Post-war agricultural intensification leading to a spread of arable and improved pasture at the expense of semi-natural habitats and wetlands.
- Field enlargement and loss of traditional stone-faced hedges in favour of fencing, as a result of modern farming practices.
- Some sections of gappy or remnant Devon hedgebanks, often replaced by fencing.
- Declining levels of woodland management leading to a spread of invasive species and scrub (such as rhododendron, turkey oak and brambles).
- 20th century planting of conifers on former ancient woodland sites.
- Occasional modern farm buildings and houses but generally settlements retain their historic character.
- Tranquillity broken in some combes by forestry operations and pheasant shoots.
- Views to ridgeline development at Westward Ho! from the coastal reaches of north-facing combes

4D: COASTAL SLOPES & COMBES**FORCES FOR CHANGE****FUTURE FORCES FOR CHANGE AFFECTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER**

- Ongoing growth in the popularity of the area for recreation and tourism, eroding the landscape's high levels of tranquillity and leading to increased demand for facilities (including through farm diversifications / conversions), infrastructure and higher traffic levels on rural roads.
- Decline in rural skills as young people move away from the area (due to a lack of affordable housing) resulting in an ageing farm workforce, with consequential impacts on the management of landscape features such as Devon hedges, woodlands and traditional buildings.
- Continued planting of conifers, affecting the nature conservation value of the landscape's internationally important oak woodlands.
- Change in woodland / tree species composition as new pests/diseases spread as result of climate change (particularly phytophthora pathogens) and species intolerant of water level extremes die back.
- Sea level rise and coastal erosion as a result of climate change, leading to the 'squeeze' of coastal habitats and potential erosion of sections of the South West Coast Path.
- Expansion in the growth of bioenergy crops such as Miscanthus and Short Rotation Coppice as a result of market demand for 'green' energy and fuel sources, out of keeping with current cropping and woodland patterns.
- Changes in crops and land use as a consequence of climate change and response to changing markets (e.g. a future drive for higher levels of domestic food production leading to a further spread of arable land).

- Demand for both on-shore and off-shore wind farms – e.g. proposals for the Atlantic Array off-shore windfarm in the Bristol Channel which could be visible from the higher land and coastal sections of the north-facing combes.
- Demand for domestic and community-scale renewable energy installations such as solar panels, small wind turbines and ground-source heat pumps – leading to incremental change to traditional buildings.



PART 3: LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

OVERALL STRATEGY: To protect the secretive and historic character of the coastal combes, with characteristic glimpses of the sea and surrounding coastline. Features relating to past industry are protected and sympathetically restored, and ancient woodlands are actively managed and re-created where they have been replaced over the last century by conifer plantations. Opportunities are sought to re-link and enlarge semi-natural habitats (to strengthen climate change resilience), surrounded by a working farmed landscape of fields enclosed by an intact network of Devon hedges.

Landscape and planning guidelines

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
PROTECT		
Protect the combes' characteristic sense of seclusion and remoteness, ensuring limited new development is contained within existing settlement limits and any new farm buildings are integrated into their landscape setting (e.g. through woodland planting).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conservation Area Management Plans / Appraisals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AONB Management plan: Policies A1 and H2 North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR3, COR4, COR6. Devon's Structure Plan: Policies CO6 and CO7. Consider producing a Design Guide as a SPD to the LDF. Prepare design guidance focused on the quality of development and the special attributes of the landscape (e.g. lighting design guidance to preserve dark night skies).
Protect important views from the combes, frequently characterised by glimpses of the sea and the wider coastline.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify important views and viewpoints both to and from the combes (and identify why people think they are important). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AONB Management Plan: Objectives EQ2 and CO4; Policies B2 and D5. Devon Structure Plan: policies CO3, CO4 and CO5.

4D: COASTAL SLOPES & COMBES

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
<p>Protect the landscape's traditional building styles and materials, particularly local stone and whitewash with slate and sometimes thatched roofs. Any new development or extensions should utilise the same materials and building styles wherever possible (whilst seeking to incorporate sustainable and low carbon building construction and design).</p> <p>Protect and, where required, sensitively restore other features of the local vernacular including stone bridges.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conservation Area Management Plans / Appraisals • Devon Rural Skills Trust • National Trust Estate Management Plans (Peppercombe Valley and parts of Bucks Mills valley) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider formulating a Design Guide as a SPD in the forthcoming LDF. • North Devon Sustainable Energy Action Plan • AONB Management Plan: Objectives LH1 and LH2; Policies A1, G1 and G4. • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policies COR1, COR6 and COR8. • Devon Structure Plan: Policies CO7 and CO8.
<p>Protect the landscape's network of winding rural lanes, resisting unsympathetic highways improvements (e.g. hedgerow/woodland cutting) or signage. Promote sustainable transport options to reduce traffic levels to destinations such as Bucks Mills and Clovelly during busy holiday periods.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Devon Green Lanes and Veins Project • Encourage the Highways Authority to respect the special character of the landscape's rural lanes. • National Trust Estate Management Plans (Peppercombe Valley and parts of Bucks Mills valley) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AONB Management plan: Objectives F1, F3, TH1, TH2, TH3; Policies H1, H2 • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policies COR5 and COR6. • Devon's Structure Plan: Policies CO1 and TO6. • Develop a policy for protecting the character of rural lanes in the forthcoming LDF. • DCC to roll out a highways protocol / best practice guide on roadside management for rural areas. • Devon CC Environmental Review of permitted highway development proposals.
<p>Protect and, where appropriate sensitively restore industrial heritage features within the landscape, particularly stone-built mills, lime kilns and quays. Where appropriate, provide low-</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • Conservation Area Management Plans / Appraisals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AONB Management plan: Objective LH1, ART4, CC3; Policies A1 and F2. • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy:

4D: COASTAL SLOPES & COMBES

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
key interpretation to enhance public understanding of the landscape's cultural heritage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Trust Estate Management Plans (Peppercombe Valley and parts of Bucks Mills valley) 	<p>Policy COR6.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Devon's Structure Plan: Policies CO1 and CO7
MANAGE		
Manage and enhance the combes' ancient oak woodlands through traditional techniques such as coppicing and a programme of invasive species removal. Control access by livestock, promoting natural regeneration to enhance longevity whilst using extensive grazing to promote the species diversity of woodland ground flora. Explore opportunities for community utilisation of coppice residues as a low-carbon fuel source.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Stewardship England Woodland Grant Scheme Devon BAP South West Woodlands Renaissance scheme Devon Rural Skills Trust National Trust Estate Management Plans (Peppercombe Valley and parts of Bucks Mills valley) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AONB Management Plan: Objectives FL1, FL2 and G5; Policies A1, C1 and E2. North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6, COR7.
Manage and extend areas of wet woodland and wet meadows through appropriate grazing and traditional land management regimes – both to enhance their wildlife value and functions in flood prevention.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Stewardship Devon BAP South West Nature Map National Trust Estate Management Plans (Peppercombe Valley and parts of Bucks Mills valley) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AONB Management Plan: Objectives FL2; Policies C1 and E2 Devon's Structure Plan: Policies CO9 and CO13 North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6
Manage Devon hedgebanks through the regular coppicing of hedgerow trees and re-laying of gappy sections, strengthening irregular medieval field patterns. Replace lost lengths and lines of fencing, respecting traditional bank and stone-facing styles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Stewardship Devon BAP Devon Hedge Group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AONB Management Plan: Policy A1, North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6

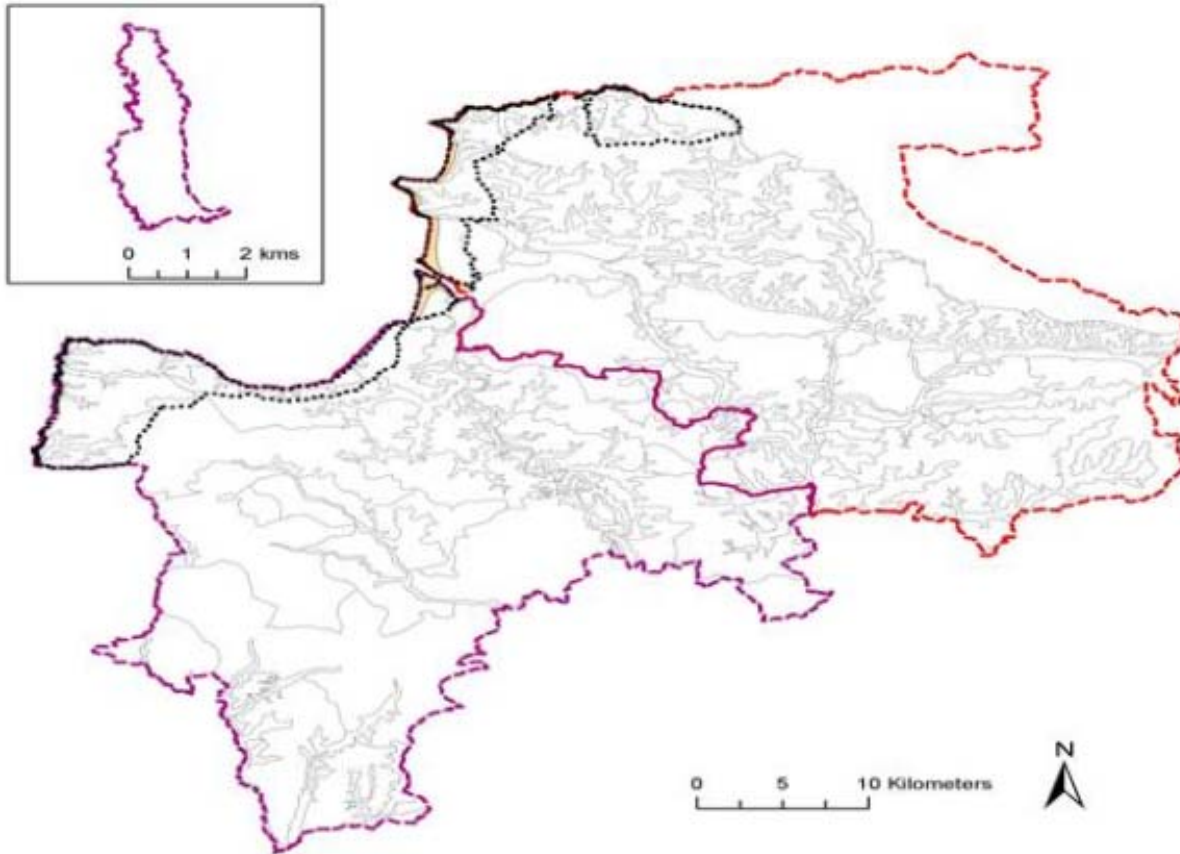
4D: COASTAL SLOPES & COMBES

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
<p>and materials, particularly in locations at right angles to slopes to help reduce soil erosion and run-off into watercourses.</p> <p>Replace lost or over-mature hedgerow trees (particularly wind-sculpted specimens on higher ground) as important landscape features.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devon Rural Skills Trust • National Trust Estate Management Plans (Peppercombe Valley and parts of Bucks Mills valley) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devon's Structure Plan: Policy CO1
<p>Manage and re-link valued mosaics of unimproved grassland (including Culm and maritime grasslands), heath and scrub including through livestock grazing at appropriate levels. Support farmers to continue to farm these 'marginal' areas as an integral part of their farming system and protect them from alternative land uses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • Devon BAP • Devon Food Links • National Trust Estate Management Plans (Peppercombe Valley and parts of Bucks Mills valley) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6 • Strengthen and promote links between local markets and produce from the area
PLAN		
<p>Plan for the restoration of conifer plantations on ancient woodland sites to broadleaved woodlands (incorporating climate-hardy species) and other semi-natural habitats such as Culm grasslands and heath, particularly to account for habitat / species migration due to future climate change.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • The Working Wetlands project (Devon Wildlife Trust) • Devon BAP • Forest Design Plans • National Trust Estate Management Plans (Peppercombe Valley and parts of Bucks Mills valley) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AONB Management Plan: Objective FL2; Policies E2, E3, F1 • Devon Structure Plan: Policy CO1 • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6
<p>Plan for the future effects of climate change along the coast, allowing natural processes to take place as much as possible whilst ensuring local people are involved in decision-making relating to their future landscapes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South West Nature Map • National Trust Estate Management Plans (Peppercombe Valley and parts of Bucks Mills valley) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR2 • Devon Structure Plan: Policy CO5

4D: COASTAL SLOPES & COMBES

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
	Mills valley)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• AONB Management Plan: Objectives; EQ3, CO1, CO3, CC4, Policies A2, C1, D1, D5, K2, L1• Shoreline Management Plan (SMP2 currently in consultation phase).

PART I: DESCRIPTION



CONSITUENT LDUs: 358, 360, 361, 362, 364, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 397, 579, 836

SUMMARY OF LOCATION

This LCT covers the broad sandy beaches of Woolacombe, Croyde, Saunton and Westward Ho! – much of the area lying within the North Devon Coast AONB and with a westerly, Atlantic aspect.

4E: EXTENSIVE INTER-TIDAL SANDS

KEY CHARACTERISTICS FOR THIS LCT WITHIN NORTH DEVON & TORRIDGE

- 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.



PART 2: EVALUATION

SUMMARY OF SPECIAL QUALITIES

- Open space and wide panoramas out to sea.
- Wildlife – including feeding grounds for wading birds.
- Largely unspoilt despite the close proximity to areas of modern development.
- Opportunities for recreation and enjoyment, including surfing, water sports, fishing and family relaxation.



FORCES FOR CHANGE

PAST / CURRENT FORCES FOR CHANGE AFFECTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

- Popularity of the coast as a holiday destination since Victorian times, resulting in the expansion of seaside resorts and the development of holiday parks, caravan sites and car parks in prominent locations often visible from the beaches.
- Light and noise pollution, as well as visual intrusion, from nearby development at Appledore and Northam as well as the adjacent coastal resorts of Woolacombe, Croyde and Westward Ho!
- Saunton Sands affected by sounds from military training on the adjacent sand dunes of Braunton Burrows.
- Telecommunications masts forming prominent skyline features on distant downland hill summits (LCT 5C).
- Sand and gravel extraction at Crow Point (5,000 tonnes per year, now ceased), decreasing the feature's ability to protect the foreshore from coastal erosion (by acting as a supply of sediment to Saunton Sands).
- Coastal processes leading to the migration of the protective cobble ridge backing Westward Ho! beach, augmented due to the effects of climate change.

4E: EXTENSIVE INTER-TIDAL SANDS**FORCES FOR CHANGE****FUTURE FORCES FOR CHANGE AFFECTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER**

- Further growth in popularity of the area and the surrounding coast for recreation and tourism, impacting on levels of tranquillity and leading to further demand for facilities and infrastructure and resulting in higher traffic levels.
- Future development pressure within and on the edge of the nearby coastal resorts and settlements due to the area's popularity as a place to live and spend holidays.
- Sea level rise and coastal erosion as a result of climate change, leading to a gradual retreat of the coastline and potential loss of valued habitats and coastal archaeology,
- Realignment of the cobble ridge backing Westward Ho! beach potentially leading to the loss of adjacent sand dune habitats.
- Increasing demand for on-shore and off-shore renewables, particularly wind farms and tidal devices, to harness the power of the Atlantic winds and tidal currents.



PART 3: LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

OVERALL STRATEGY: To protect the open, undeveloped character of the wide sandy beaches, with long-ranging views along the coastline, out to sea and inland. The ‘wild’ and remote qualities of the beaches remain intact, whilst important wildlife networks are managed and strengthened as part of the wider North Devon Biosphere Reserve. The landscape is prepared for changes as a result of enhanced coastal erosion and sea level rise, whilst becoming an exemplar of sustainable recreation and tourism.

Landscape and planning guidelines

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
PROTECT		
Protect the open, undeveloped character of the beaches and important long-ranging views along the surrounding coast, out to sea and inland.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify important views and viewpoints both from and to the landscape (and identify why people think they are important). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AONB Management Plan: Objectives; LHI, EQ2 and CO4; Policies A1, B2 G1 and D5. North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policies COR6 and COR8. Devon's Structure Plan: Policies CO1, CO2, CO3 and CO6 Undertake a seascape assessment to help inform the sensitive siting of future development along the coast (following the emerging Natural England guidance). Lobby / review the 28 day rule for temporary tourism-related land uses.
Protect the ‘wild’ qualities of the beaches and their wider coastal setting, encouraging sustainable tourism and recreation throughout the year to support the local economy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider the use of ‘zoning’ and promote less sensitive sites for tourism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AONB Management Plan: Objectives LHI, CCI; Policies A1, F3, H1, J4

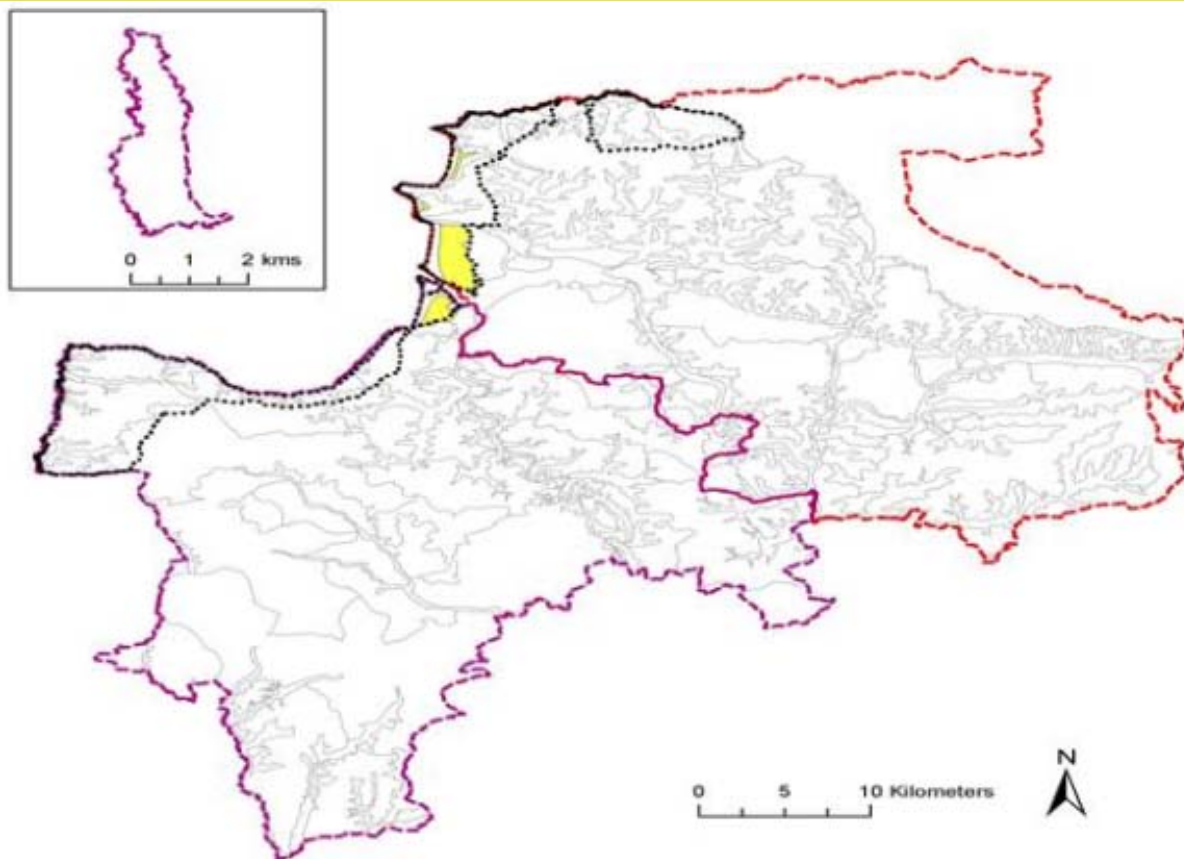
4E: EXTENSIVE INTER-TIDAL SANDS

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
	(e.g. inland). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Devon's Structure Plan: Policy TO6 North Devon Sustainable Energy Action Plan North Devon Biosphere Reserve Sustainable Development Strategy (2008-12)
MANAGE		
Manage the beaches' important habitats as part of the wider coastal ecosystem of the North Devon Biosphere Reserve.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> South West Nature Map Devon BAP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Devon Biosphere Reserve Sustainable Development Strategy (2008-12) AONB Management Plan: Objectives CO3, FL1; Policies C1, D3, E1 and E3. Devon's Structure Plan: Policy CO9 North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6
PLAN		
Plan for the future impacts of climate change, particularly as a result of sea level rise and coastal erosion, allowing natural processes to take place wherever possible whilst ensuring that local communities are involved in making decisions about their future landscape,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> South West Nature Map 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shoreline Management Plan (SMP2 currently at consultation stage) North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR2 Devon's Structure Plan: Policy CO5 AONB Management Plan: Objectives; EQ3, CO1, CO3, CC4, Policies A2, C1,

4E: EXTENSIVE INTER-TIDAL SANDS

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
		DI, D5, K2, LI

PART I: DESCRIPTION



CONSITUENT LDUs: 358, 388, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 397, 399, 579, 836, 839

SUMMARY OF LOCATION

This LCT comprises the sand dunes of Woolacombe Warren, Croyde Burrows, Braunton Burrows and Northam Burrows. The majority of this LCT falls within the North Devon AONB.

KEY CHARACTERISTICS FOR THIS LCT WITHIN NORTH DEVON & TORRIDGE

- 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.



PART 2: EVALUATION

SUMMARY OF SPECIAL QUALITIES



FORCES FOR CHANGE

PAST / CURRENT FORCES FOR CHANGE AFFECTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

- Popularity of the coast as a holiday destination since Victorian times, resulting in the expansion of seaside resorts and the development of holiday parks, hotels, caravan sites and car parks in prominent locations often close to the dunes.
- Light and noise pollution, as well as visual intrusion, from nearby development at Appledore and Northam as well as the adjacent coastal resorts of Woolacombe, Croyde and Westward Ho!
- The wild and tranquil qualities of Braunton Burrows sometimes broken by its long-standing use for military training.
- Recreational land uses on the sand dunes, including golf courses on Braunton and Northam Burrows.
- Erosion of some paths and tracks across the dunes, particularly those leading through to the adjacent popular beaches (including via lengths of the SW Coast Path and Tarka Trail).
- Popularity of Northam Burrows as a Country Park, with facilities including surfaced roads, car parks and signage giving it a suburban feel on the doorstep of extensive development at Northam, Appledore and Westward Ho!
- Decline in grazing levels in some locations on Braunton Burrows, Northam Burrows and Woolacombe Warren leading to an encroachment of scrub (SSSI land on Braunton and Northam Burrows is

currently assessed as in unfavourable condition).

- Overgrazing by commoners' livestock in the summer months on Northam Burrows leading to a decline in sward diversity in some locations (also contributing to the SSSI's unfavourable condition).
- Sand and gravel extraction at Crow Point (5,000 tonnes per year, now ceased), decreasing the feature's ability to protect the foreshore.
- Coastal processes leading to the migration of the protective cobble ridge in front of Northam Burrows, augmented due to the effects sea level rise and higher levels of coastal erosion.
- Telecommunications masts forming prominent skyline features on distant downland hill summits (LCT 5C).



FORCES FOR CHANGE

FUTURE FORCES FOR CHANGE AFFECTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

- Further growth in popularity of the area and the surrounding coast for recreation and tourism, impacting on levels of tranquillity and leading to further demand for facilities and infrastructure within and close to the dunes.
- Future development pressure within and on the edge of the nearby coastal resorts and settlements due to the area's ever-increasing popularity as a place to live and spend holidays.
- Sea level rise and coastal erosion as a result of climate change, leading to a gradual retreat of the coastline and erosion of the sand dunes to the old cliff base. The dunes' protective functions for coastal flooding might also be compromised.
- Realignment of the cobble ridge backing Westward Ho! beach potentially leading to the loss of parts of the sand dunes and engineered protection measures required for the recycling tip.
- Increasing demand for on-shore and off-shore renewables, particularly wind farms and tidal devices, to harness the power of the Atlantic winds and tidal currents.

PART 3: LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

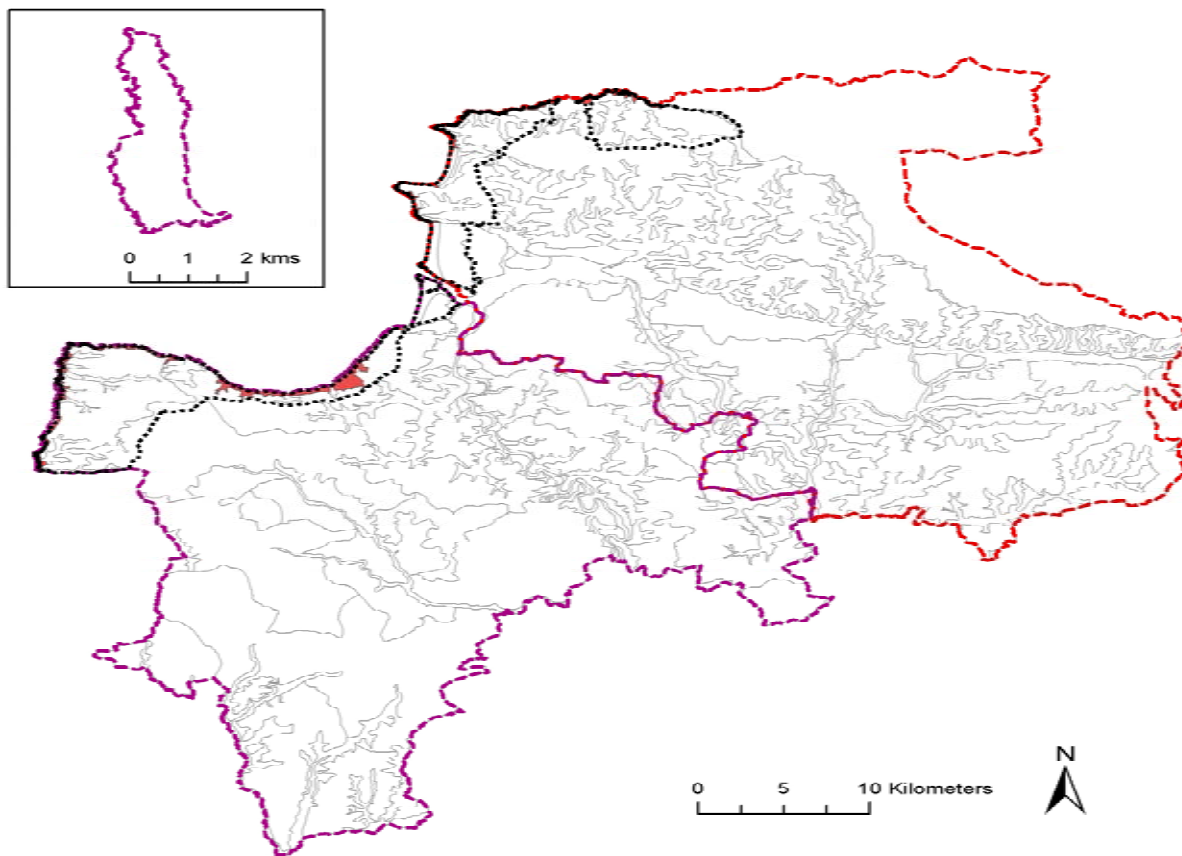
OVERALL STRATEGY: To protect the open, wilderness qualities of the sand dunes, with long-ranging views along the coastline, out to sea and inland. The international importance of the sand dune habitats is managed and enhanced through a continuation of traditional livestock grazing, and opportunities are sought to implement and promote measures to ensure that the AONB coastline is an exemplar of sustainable tourism. The landscape is prepared for the impacts of enhanced coastal erosion and sea level rise, with habitats and species given the space to evolve and move in response to the changes that lie ahead.

Landscape and planning guidelines

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
PROTECT		
Protect the open character of the sand dunes and important long-ranging views along the surrounding coast, out to sea and inland.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify important views and view points (and identify why people think they are important). National Trust Estate Management Plans (for Woolacombe Warren) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AONB Management Plan: Objectives; LHI, EQ2 and CO4; Policies A1, B2 G1 and D5. North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policies COR6 and COR8. Devon's Structure Plan: Policies CO1, CO2, CO3 and CO6 Undertake a seascape assessment to help inform the sensitive siting of future development along the coast (following the emerging Natural England guidance). Lobby / review the 28 day rule for temporary tourism-related land uses.
Protect the wilderness qualities of the sand dunes and their wider coastal setting, encouraging sustainable tourism and recreation throughout the year to support the local economy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider the use of 'zoning' and promote less sensitive sites for tourism (e.g. inland). Develop further sustainable transport 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AONB Management Plan: Objectives LHI, CCI; Policies A1, F3, H1, J4 Devon's Structure Plan: Policy TO6

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
	initiatives, including park-and-ride. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Trust Estate Management Plans (for Woolacombe Warren) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Devon Sustainable Energy Action Plan North Devon Biosphere Reserve Sustainable Development Strategy (2008-12)
MANAGE		
Manage the sand dunes' national and international importance for biodiversity, including as part of the wider North Devon Biosphere Reserve. Support continued livestock grazing on the dunes and salt marshes at Northam at appropriate levels, combined with a programme of scrub clearance to enhance the diversity of the landscape's rare dune grasslands and flowers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> South West Nature Map Environmental Stewardship Devon BAP National Trust Estate Management Plans (for Woolacombe Warren) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AONB Management Plan: Objectives CO3, FL1; Policies C1, D3, E1 and E3. Devon's Structure Plan: Policy CO9 North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6 North Devon Biosphere Reserve Sustainable Development Strategy (2008-12) Strengthen and promote links between local markets and produce from the area
PLAN		
Plan for the future impacts of climate change, particularly as a result of sea level rise and coastal erosion, allowing natural processes to take place wherever possible whilst ensuring that local communities are involved in making decisions about their future landscape.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> South West Nature Map National Trust Estate Management Plans (for Woolacombe Warren) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shoreline Management Plan (SMP2 currently at consultation stage) North Devon Biosphere Reserve Sustainable Development Strategy (2008-12) AONB Management Plan: Objectives; EQ3, CC4, Policies A2, D1, K2, L1 North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR2 Devon's Structure Plan: Policy CO5

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
<p>Explore and implement opportunities for managed realignment and habitat creation to make space for coastal squeeze and species migration in light of future sea level rise.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South West Nature Map • Devon BAP • Environmental Stewardship • National Trust Estate Management Plans (for Woolacombe Warren) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR2 • Devon's Structure Plan: Policy CO5 • AONB Management Plan: Objectives; EQ3, CO1, CO3, CC4, Policies A2, C1, D1, D5, K2, L1 • Shoreline Management Plan (SMP2 currently at consultation stage) • North Devon Biosphere Reserve Sustainable Development Strategy (2008-12)

PART I: DESCRIPTION

CONSITUENT LDUs: 389, 397, 403, 404, 405, 532, 578, 579, 580, 581, 583, 684, 686, 688, 689, 690, 691, 692, 693, 694, 835, 836, 842, 852, 853

SUMMARY OF LOCATION

The Cliffs LCT covers the entire length of the coast, broken only by the Taw-Torridge Estuary and the presence of sandy beaches and sand dunes backing Bideford/Barnstaple Bay. All of the cliffs fall within the North Devon Coast AONB.

KEY CHARACTERISTICS FOR THIS LCT WITHIN NORTH DEVON & TORRIDGE

- 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 hedgelines.
- 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.



PART 2: EVALUATION**SUMMARY OF 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, quays, lime kilns and lighthouses).
- Access and enjoyment of the cliff top via the South West Coast Path.

**FORCES FOR CHANGE****PAST / CURRENT FORCES FOR CHANGE AFFECTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER**

- Post-war Intensification of agriculture spurred on by CAP-related subsidies in the 1970s, leading to field enlargement and a spread of intensive arable cultivation along some farmland backing the cliffs.
- Scrub encroachment due to a localised decline in grazing levels, particularly affecting coastal heathlands, maritime grasslands and archaeological features.
- Spread of invasive species, conifer planting and a decline in traditional management of cliff-side woodlands along the Clovelly coast (current unfavourable condition assessment by Natural England).
- Growth in tourism and recreation impacting on perceptions of tranquillity and remoteness – including visitors to nearby holiday resorts, the South West Coast Path and attractions such as the historic village of Clovelly (300,000 visitors per year).
- Views to modern development at Westward Ho!, Woolacombe, Ilfracombe and Hele as well as caravan sites, holiday chalets, car parks and other tourism-related development scattered across the open coastal landscape.
- Noise intrusion from the Lundy helicopter station on the Hartland Coast.
- Vertical structures standing out on the skyline including telecommunications masts and the white-domed radar station at

Hartland Point.

- Demand for on-shore and off-shore wind turbines and other renewable energy developments, along with the cumulative effects of individual domestic and small scale turbines within or adjacent to this LCT.
- Repeated landslides and unstable sections of cliff (which will become more prevalent due to sea level rise / increased coastal erosion) affecting archaeological features, cliff-side properties and historic fishing villages such as Clovelly and Bucks Mills.

FUTURE FORCES FOR CHANGE AFFECTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

- Further growth in popularity of the area for recreation and tourism, eroding the landscape's high levels of tranquillity and leading to increased demand for visitor facilities, holiday accommodation and more traffic on the road network.
- Change in woodland / tree species composition as new pests/diseases spread (particularly phytophthora pathogens) and species intolerant of water level extremes die back.
- Changes in crops and land use as a consequence of climate change and response to changing markets (e.g. a drive for higher levels of UK food production, new markets for bioenergy crops).
- Impacts of climate change on characteristic habitats and tree distribution, including an increased prevalence of pests and diseases.
- Sea level rise and more rapid coastal erosion as a result of climate change, leading to unstable sections of cliffs, more frequent landslides, coastal flooding and the 'squeeze' of coastal habitats.

- Continuing demand for both on-shore and off-shore wind farms and other renewable energy developments,
- Development pressure in nearby settlements and resorts due to the ever-increasing popularity of the area as a place to live / retire to.



PART 3: LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

OVERALL STRATEGY: To protect the wild, exposed and generally unsettled character of the coastal cliffs, ensuring that new development does not detract from these valued attributes. The landscape's spectacular geology, cultural heritage and unique habitats are celebrated and appropriately managed to meet the future challenges presented by climate change. People can continue to enjoy unrivalled access to the coast whilst appreciating and understanding its dynamic nature.

Landscape and planning guidelines

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
PROTECT		
<p>Protect the open and largely undeveloped character of the cliffs, avoiding the siting of new development and vertical structures on prominent skylines.</p> <p>Protect the character of the landscape's expansive sea views (including to Lundy Island, South Wales and across the AONB coastline).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify important views and viewpoints (both onshore and offshore) and identify why people think they are important. National Trust Estate Management Plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AONB Management Plan: Objectives EQ1, EQ2 and CO4; Policies B2 and D5. North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policies COR6 and COR8. Devon's Structure Plan: Policies CO1, CO2, CO3 and CO6 Shoreline Management Plan policies (SMP2 currently in consultation phase) Guidance in development management planning to avoid the siting of vertical structures and large buildings on open skylines within this LCT. Consider undertaking a seascape assessment to help guide future off-shore development away from the most sensitive locations (using the emerging Natural England guidance).

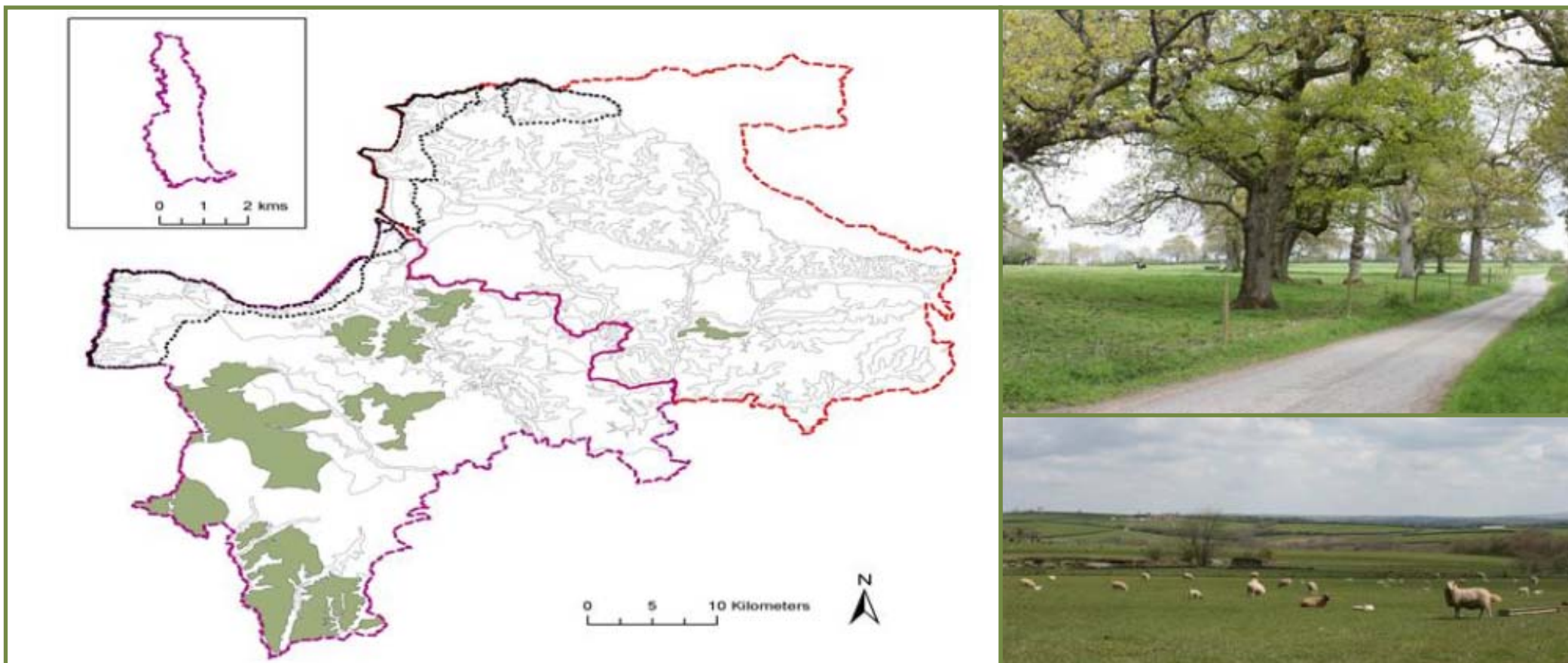
Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
<p>Protect the landscape's wild and highly tranquil qualities by promoting sustainable tourism and recreation which benefits the local economy throughout the year.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider the use of 'zoning' and promote less sensitive sites for tourism (e.g. inland). Develop further sustainable transport initiatives, including park-and-ride. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AONB Management Plan: Objectives EQ1 and TH3; Policies B1 and H2. Devon's Structure Plan: Policy TO6 North Devon Sustainable Energy Action Plan North Devon Biosphere Reserve Sustainable Development Strategy (2008-12) North Devon Biosphere Reserve Sustainable Development Strategy (2008-12)
<p>Protect, sensitively manage and, where appropriate, restore the landscape's important archaeological heritage including prominent Iron Age hillforts, limekilns and quarries along the shore, as well as the lighthouses at Hartland and Bull Points.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Stewardship National Trust Estate Management Plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AONB Management Plan: Objective LHI, ART4, CC3; Policies A1 and F2. North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6. Devon's Structure Plan: Policies CO1 and CO7
<p>Protect and sensitively interpret the coastline's outstanding geological and geomorphologic features, ensuring rock exposures are visible in coastal quarries and awareness is raised of the dynamic nature of the coast.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Stewardship National Trust Estate Management Plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AONB Management Plan: Objective B2; Policies C3 and C4. North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6. Devon's Structure Plan: Policy CO1
<p>Protect the historic character of the area's fishing villages and groups of cottages at combe mouths, ensuring that limited new development or property extensions incorporate the local vernacular building styles of whitewash and exposed local stone wherever possible (whilst seeking to incorporate sustainable and low carbon building construction and design).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CORDIALE Interreg project (South West Protected Landscapes Forum) National Trust Estate Management Plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AONB Management Plan: Objectives LHI and LH2; Policies A1, G1 and G4. North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policies COR1, COR6 and COR8. Devon Structure Plan: Policies CO7 and

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
		CO8.Prepare landscape-specific design guidance to support the LDF. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Devon Sustainable Energy Action Plan
MANAGE		
Manage the valued coastal woodlands of the Clovelly coast and coastal combes, controlling invasive species and moving towards a restructuring of areas of conifer planting to broadleaves. New planting should consider species of greater resilience to a changing climate. Traditional woodland management (including coppicing) should be revived, with wood promoted as a sustainable energy source for local communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • England Woodland Grant Scheme • Environmental Stewardship • South West Woodland Renaissance • Devon BAP • National Trust Estate Management Plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AONB Management Plan: Objectives FL1, FL2 and G5; Policies A1, C1 and E2. • AONB Management Plan: Policy A1, • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6, COR7.
Manage and restore the network of stone-faced hedgebanks enclosing rough grazing land, replacing lengths of post-and-wire fencing to strengthen field patterns. Ensure the creation of new lengths of hedgebank replicates traditional styles of construction such as the patterns of stone facing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • Devon Hedge Group • Devon BAP • National Trust Estate Management Plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AONB Management Plan: Objectives FL1; Policies A1, C1, E1 • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6 • Devon's Structure Plan: Policy CO1
Manage nationally important coastal habitats, including coastal heath and maritime grasslands, through supporting a continuation of extensive grazing at appropriate levels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • Devon Food Links • Devon BAP • National Trust Estate Management Plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AONB Management Plan: Objectives CO3, FL1; Policies C1, D3, E1 and E3. • Devon's Structure Plan: Policy CO9 • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6 • Strengthen and promote links between local markets and produce from the area.

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
PLAN		
<p>Plan for the impacts of a changing climate on the coastline, allowing natural processes to take place whilst considering how habitats and the SW Coast Path can be expanded or relocated to account for coastal squeeze.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Environmental Stewardship• Devon BAP• South West Nature Map• National Trust Estate Management Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• AONB Management Plan: Objectives; EQ3, CO1, CO3, CC4, Policies A2, C1, D1, D5, K2, L1• Shoreline Management Plan policies (SMP 2 currently in consultation phase)

5A: INLAND ELEVATED UNDULATING LAND

PART I: DESCRIPTION



CONSTITUENT LDUs: 351, 456, 611, 665, 666, 675, 676, 678, 681, 686, 687, 705, 734, 738, 740, 741, 742, 743, 745, 793, 817, 837, 876

SUMMARY OF LOCATION

The Inland Elevated Farmland LCT covers areas of high and gently undulating farmland, mainly in Torridge District with a small patch south-west of South Molton across in North Devon. Many of the hill summits enable long views across the surrounding landscapes and beyond, including to Dartmoor National Park.

5A: INLAND ELEVATED UNDULATING LAND

KEY CHARACTERISTICS FOR THIS LCT WITHIN NORTH DEVON & TORRIDGE

- 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.



5A: INLAND ELEVATED UNDULATING LAND

PART 2: EVALUATION

SUMMARY OF SPECIAL QUALITIES

- Long views from elevated ridgelines.
- Patchwork of fields and hedges.
- Working, rural landscape.
- Valued Culm grassland and wetland habitats providing texture to the landscape.
- Quiet, relaxed and tranquil.



FORCES FOR CHANGE

PAST / CURRENT FORCES FOR CHANGE AFFECTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

- Post-war Intensification of agriculture spurred on by CAP-related subsidies in the 1970s, leading to field enlargement, the conversion of pasture to arable and hedgerow removal / damage.
- Intensification of agriculture and demand for productive farmland leading to the drainage of wetlands and Culm grasslands – leaving behind a fragmented habitat resource.
- Remaining areas of ‘marginal’ unimproved grasslands and Culm frequently left undergrazed, leading to scrub/tree succession.
- Agricultural intensification and a decline in the agricultural economy leading to an amalgamation of smaller farms into larger, industrial-scale units.
- Lack of hedgerow management, with sections replaced or gapped up with post-and-wire fencing whilst others are intensively flailed (some evidence of new hedgerow tree planting observed in the field).
- 20th century planting of conifer plantations within the open landscape and a decline in levels of woodland management (e.g. coppicing) for the area’s broadleaved woodlands.
- Increase in visitor, farm and industrial traffic on the rural road network.
- Rising house prices and a lack of affordable housing – forcing young people out of the area and leading to an ageing farming population.

5A: INLAND ELEVATED UNDULATING LAND

- Growth in tourism and recreation, including camping/caravan sites in prominent locations. Nearby reservoirs (Upper & Tamar Lakes and Roadford Lake) are popular visitor and recreation facilities.
- Spread of suburban influences and land uses on the fringes of the main settlements, including land put down to 'hobby' farming and pony paddocks.
- Linear spread of housing outside some settlements' historic cores and infill development within, often prominent on ridgelines (e.g. St Giles-on-the-Heath).
- Industrial development (including a biogas plant) on the edge of Holsworthy.
- Installation of prominent pylon lines crossing through the landscape.
- Noise and visual intrusion of main roads dissecting the landscape, including the A388,
- Demand for commercial scale wind turbines on the open ridgelines, with a small wind farm already present in the landscape near Bradworthy.



FORCES FOR CHANGE

FUTURE FORCES FOR CHANGE AFFECTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

- Changes in crops and land use as a consequence of climate change and response to changing markets (e.g. for more UK-based food production and alternative crops such as Miscanthus).
- Change in woodland / tree species composition as new pests/diseases spread as a result of climate change (particularly phytophthora pathogens) and species intolerant of water level extremes die back.
- Individual hedgerow trees (key landscape features) may become more susceptible to damage from the increasing frequency and magnitude of storm events.
- Increasing demand for commercial wind farms, as well as domestic scale turbines taking advantage of the wind resource on the high open ridges.
- Emerging demand for large-scale photovoltaic developments, capitalising on the solar radiation levels of slopes with a southerly aspect.
- Demand for domestic and community-scale renewable energy installations such as solar panels, small wind turbines and ground-source heat pumps, resulting in incremental changes to the built vernacular.
- Further growth in the popularity of the wider area for recreation and tourism, eroding the landscape's high levels of tranquillity and leading to increased demand for facilities (including farm conversions and more camping/caravan sites), related infrastructure and increased traffic levels.
- Development pressure (housing, commercial and industrial) in and around the main settlements responding to a rise in the resident population.

5A: INLAND ELEVATED UNDULATING LAND

PART 3: LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

OVERALL STRATEGY: To protect the landscape's important role in agriculture whilst strengthening and expanding fragmented areas of semi-natural habitat, the hedge network and woodlands. Open ridgelines and long-ranging views are protected through the careful siting of new development, whilst valued cultural features from Bronze Age barrows to linhays stand out as recognisable features in the landscape. New development is integrated into its landscape setting with Green Infrastructure links provided to enhance sustainable recreational opportunities.

Landscape and planning guidelines

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
PROTECT		
Protect the landscape's strong sense of tranquillity and remoteness and long-ranging views (including to Dartmoor National Park), avoiding the location of new development on prominent, open ridgelines,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the most prominent skylines in the area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR 4 and COR6. Devon Structure Plan: Policies CO1, CO3 and CO16. Consider adopting a development management policy stating that any new development in the area should avoid the most prominent open skylines.
Protect the landscape's variety of traditional building styles, including white-washed and exposed stone, often with red brick detailing, and slate or thatch as roofing materials. Any new development should utilise the same materials and building styles wherever possible (whilst seeking to incorporate sustainable and low carbon building construction and design). Characteristic landscape features such as white wooden finger posts, sandstone bridges and linhays should be retained and kept in a good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conservation Area Appraisals / Management Plans Devon Rural Skills Trust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policies COR1, COR6 and COR8. Devon Structure Plan: Policies CO1 and CO7. Consider formulating a Design Guide as a SPD in the forthcoming LDF. DCC to roll out a highways protocol / best

5A: INLAND ELEVATED UNDULATING LAND

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
state of repair.		<p>practice guide on roadside management for rural areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devon CC Environmental Review of permitted highway development proposals.
Protect the landscape's pattern of dispersed farmsteads and nucleated villages on ridgetops. Resist the further spread of new development outside historic cores, including along roads.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conservation Area Appraisals / Management Plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR3 and COR4
Protect and appropriately manage the rich cultural heritage of the area, including Bronze Age bowl barrows on ridgetops, Iron Age hillforts and enclosures, the Roman marching camp at Higher Kingdon and the remains of the 13th century Frithelstock Priory. This should include grazing at appropriate levels and recreation management.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6 • Devon's Structure Plan: Policies CO7 and CO8.
Protect the farming and land management traditions of the area, continuing to support local farmers to extensively graze remaining areas of Culm grassland, fen, meadow and mire as integral parts of their farming systems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • The Working Wetlands project (Devon Wildlife Trust) • Devon Food Links 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share best practice between farmers working in areas of Culm grassland (e.g. through demonstration events). • Strengthen and promote links between local markets and produce from the area (e.g. Ruby red beef raised on Culm grassland). • Ensure management prescriptions provide a balance between wildlife needs and those of local farmers so agriculture remains viable.
MANAGE		
Manage the area's conifer plantations, wet woodlands and small farm woods for sustainable timber production and to enhance their wildlife interest, undertaking new planting to create green links to surrounding semi-natural habitats. Explore the potential for the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • England Woodland Grant Scheme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policies COR6, COR7 and COR17

5A: INLAND ELEVATED UNDULATING LAND

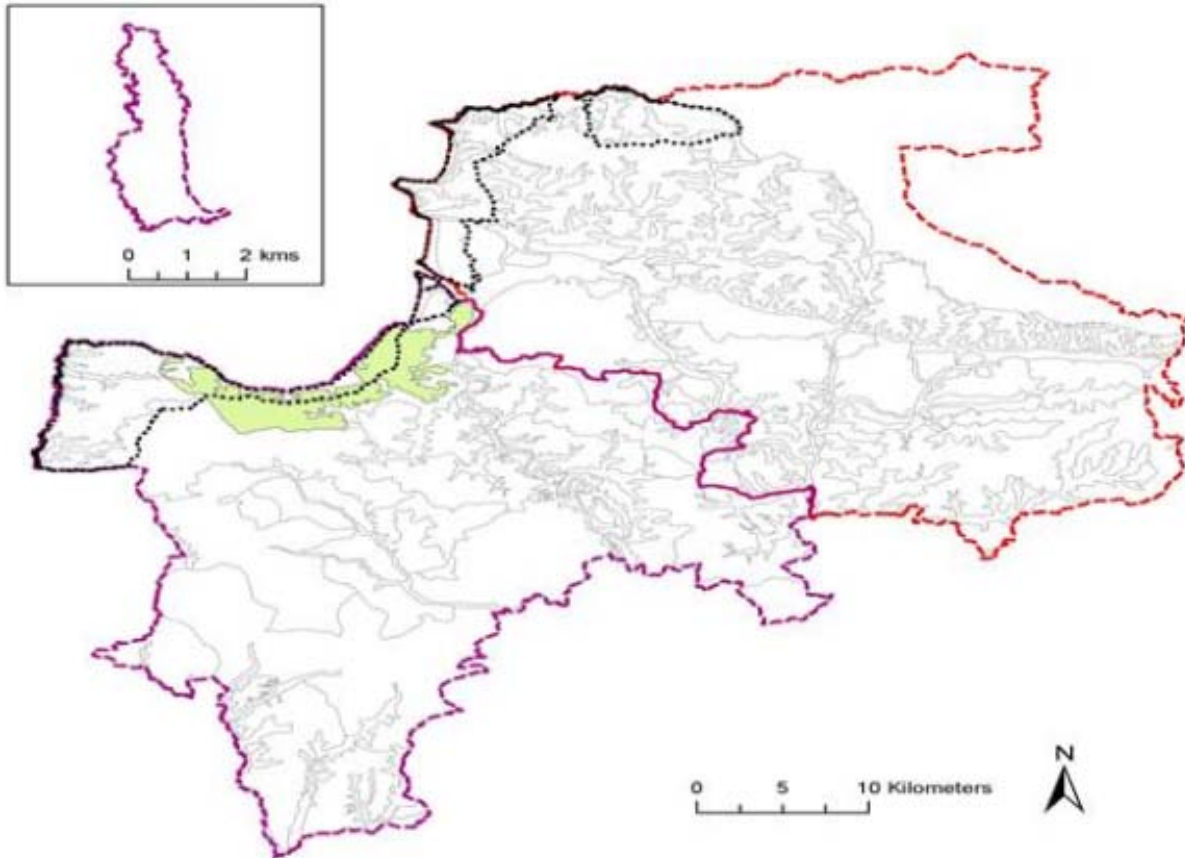
Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
community use of woodfuel as a sustainable energy source.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South West Woodland Renaissance • Devon BAP • Green Infrastructure Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devon's Structure Plan: Policies CO9, TO6 and TO5.
Manage the landscape's varied Devon hedgebanks and avenues of trees, reflecting local variations in styles and species composition. Reinstate coppicing and hedge laying to neglected sections, planting new trees where specimens are over-mature (consider using climate-hardy species to ensure longevity). Reinstate lost and gappy sections, particularly at right angles to slopes, to strengthen field patterns and reduce soil erosion / run off into adjacent watercourses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • Devon BAP • Devon Hedge Group • Devon Rural Skills Trust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devon Structure Plan: Policy CO9
PLAN		
Plan for the expansion of fragmented Culm grassland sites to create an intact green network, where conditions allow (e.g. considering underlying geology / soils).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • Devon BAP • The Working Wetlands project (Devon Wildlife Trust) • South West Nature Map 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6
Plan for the long-term restoration of the more prominent conifer plantations to open habitats (where their role in timber production has ceased), including re-creating Culm grasslands and other semi-natural habitats within open rides and on areas of wet ground.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • The Working Wetlands project (Devon Wildlife Trust) • Devon BAP • Forest Design Plans • South West Nature Map 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6

5A: INLAND ELEVATED UNDULATING LAND

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
Plan for a network of green spaces and green infrastructure links to support future population growth in nearby settlements (including Holsworthy, South Molton and Bideford); integrating development into the landscape and providing local spaces for access and recreation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• South West Nature Map	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policies COR5 and COR17.• Devon's Structure Plan: Policy TO6.• Green Infrastructure Strategy

LANDSCAPE TYPE:
5B: COASTAL UNDULATING FARMLAND

PART I: DESCRIPTION



CONSITUENT LDUs: 361, 364, 404, 665, 684, 686, 693, 835, 836, 837, 838, 839, 840, 841, 842, 843

SUMMARY OF LOCATION

This LCT covers the rolling farmland backing the coast between Windbury Point and the western fringes of Bideford and Westward Ho!. It extends beyond the AONB boundary into Torridge District.

5B: COASTAL UNDULATING FARMLAND**KEY CHARACTERISTICS FOR THIS LCT WITHIN NORTH DEVON & TORRIDGE**

- Strongly rolling landscape with prominent ridges and hilltops, influenced by the close proximity of the sea.
- Underlying geology of mudstones and siltstones with bands of more resistant sandstone creating the undulating landform.
- Pervading maritime influence with long coastal views, including westwards towards Clovelly and eastwards to development at Bideford, Westward Ho! and the north-west peninsula (including Baggy Point).
- Linear bands of broadleaved woodland, occasional small mixed woods and blocks of conifer plantation combined with a strong network of hedges resulting in a well-treed appearance.
- Strong pattern of regular medium-large fields of post-medieval and modern origin, interspersed with significant areas of smaller curving or medieval strip fields (e.g. around Cranford, Woolsery, Horns Cross and Rickard's Down).
- Fields bounded by mixed species Devon hedges with flower-rich banks and some sections of stone facing. The use of hawthorn, hazel, elm and/or beech is locally characteristic. Patches of gorse reinforce a sense of exposure.
- Predominantly pastoral land use, with occasional arable fields and patches of rough grazing land.
- Nature conservation interest mainly provided by the area's network of woodlands and hedges, with isolated sites of Culm grassland, unimproved species-rich grassland and scrub interspersed within the farmland. Coastal locations include patches of maritime grassland, wet flushes and bracken scrub.
- Historic features include prehistoric defensive sites at Godborough Castle, Clovelly Dykes and on the eastern slopes above Buck's Mill, as well as medieval defences and an 18th century castle at Kenwith.
- Traditional built vernacular of whitewashed and cream cob/render cottages, with some buildings of exposed local stone with red brick detailing. Recent housing, including cream/white bungalows, is a feature of some villages.
- Dispersed settlement pattern of scattered farmsteads and nucleated villages/hamlets at road crossing points.
- Settlement and farms linked by a network of rural roads enclosed by high hedgebanks. The main A39 cuts through the area.
- The urban areas of Bideford, Northam and Westward Ho! have a significant influence in the east, including urban fringe land uses such as horse keeping and a heliport. Holiday parks and caravan sites feature in the landscape, though these are largely well screened by woodland and topography.



PART 2: EVALUATION**SUMMARY OF SPECIAL QUALITIES**

- Open, uninterrupted sea views.
- Strong field patterns (including medieval fields) with frequent crooked hedgerow trees.
- Productive, rolling farmland – a working landscape.
- Peace, tranquillity and low levels of development.

**FORCES FOR CHANGE****PAST / CURRENT FORCES FOR CHANGE AFFECTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER**

- Post-war Intensification of agriculture spurred on by CAP-related subsidies in the 1970s, leading to field enlargement, the conversion of pasture to arable and hedgerow removal / damage.
- Agricultural intensification and a decline in the agricultural economy leading to an amalgamation of smaller farms into larger, industrial-scale units.
- Lack of hedgerow management, with sections replaced or gapped up with post-and-wire fencing and some old hedgebanks lying derelict.
- 20th century planting of conifer plantations within the open landscape and a decline in levels of woodland management (e.g. coppicing) for the area's broadleaved woodlands.
- Increase in visitor, farm and industrial traffic on the rural road network – particularly the main A39 which dissects the area.
- Development pressure on the fringes of Bideford and Westward Ho!, with eastward views from the LCT dominated by recent ridgeline development.
- Rising house prices and a lack of affordable housing – forcing young people out of the area and leading to an ageing farming population.
- Growth in tourism and recreation since Victorian times, with associated demand for visitor facilities and infrastructure including car parks, signage, and caravan/camping sites such as Bideford Bay Holiday Park.
- Spread of suburban influences and land uses on the fringes of the main

5B: COASTAL UNDULATING FARMLAND

PAST / CURRENT FORCES FOR CHANGE AFFECTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER (Continued)

- settlements, including land put down to 'hobby' farming, pony paddocks and a heliport (outside Westward Ho!).
- Expansion of villages outside their historic cores, including prominent white/cream bungalows which stand out in the landscape.
- Installation of prominent pylon lines crossing through the landscape.
- Demand for on-shore and off-shore wind farms (including the cumulative effects of individual domestic and small scale turbines such as at Greycliff Farm).



FORCES FOR CHANGE

FUTURE FORCES FOR CHANGE AFFECTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

- Further growth in popularity of the area for recreation and tourism, eroding the landscape's high levels of tranquillity and leading to increased demand for facilities (including farm conversions and more camping/caravan sites), infrastructure and higher traffic levels.
- Changes in crops and land use as a consequence of climate change and response to changing markets (e.g. for more UK-based food production and alternative crops such as Miscanthus).
- Change in woodland / tree species composition as new pests/diseases spread as a result of climate change (particularly phytophthora pathogens) and species intolerant of water level extremes die back.
- Individual hedgerow trees (key landscape features) may become more susceptible to damage from the increasing frequency and magnitude of storm events.
- Ongoing demand for both on-shore and off-shore wind farms, as well as domestic scale turbines taking advantage of the landscape's wind resource. Emerging demand for large-scale photovoltaic developments, capitalising on the solar radiation levels of slopes with a southerly aspect.
- Demand for domestic and community-scale renewable energy installations such as solar panels, small wind turbines and ground-source heat pumps, resulting in incremental changes to the built vernacular.
- Development pressure in nearby settlements and resorts due to the ever-increasing popularity of the area as a place to live / retire to.

PART 3: LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

OVERALL STRATEGY: To protect the area's role as a working agricultural landscape with open sea views providing a distinctive sense of place. High levels of tranquillity and dark night skies are protected through the careful siting of new development, whilst Green Infrastructure links are provided to nearby settlements to strengthen recreational opportunities, re-link habitats and reduce traffic on rural roads. The landscape's mosaic of medieval fields is reinforced through a well-managed and intact hedgerow network, and patches of habitat and woodland within the farmland and along the coast are expanded and joined up to produce a climate-resilient wildlife refuge.

Landscape and planning guidelines

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
PROTECT		
Protect the landscape's open vistas and important sea views, avoiding the location of new development and vertical structures on prominent skylines both within and in sight of this LCT.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify important views and viewpoints (both onshore and offshore) and identify why people think they are important. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AONB Management Plan: Objectives EQ1, EQ2 and CO4; Policies B2 and D5. North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR 4 and COR6. Devon Structure Plan: Policies CO1, CO3 and CO16. Shoreline Management Plan policies (SMP2 currently in consultation phase) Guidance in development management planning to avoid the siting of new development on open skylines. Consider undertaking a seascape assessment to help guide future off-shore development away from the most sensitive locations (using

5B: COASTAL UNDULATING FARMLAND

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
		the emerging Natural England guidance).
Protect the landscape's high levels of tranquillity and dark night skies through the control and management of development, including highways.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AONB Management Plan: Objectives LH2, EQ1 and TH3; Policies A1, B1, G5 and H2 • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policies COR4, COR5, COR6, and COR8 • Devon Structure Plan: Policies CO6 and CO16. • Prepare design guidance focused on the quality of development and the special attributes of the landscape (e.g. lighting design guidance to preserve dark night skies). • Develop a policy for protecting the character of rural lanes in the forthcoming LDF. • DCC to roll out a highways protocol / best practice guide on roadside management for rural areas. • Devon CC Environmental Review of permitted highway development proposals.
Protect and appropriately manage the landscape's archaeological heritage including prehistoric defensive sites at Godborough Castle, Clovelly Dykes and on the eastern slopes above Buck's Mill, as well as medieval defences and an 18th century castle at Kenwith. This should include livestock grazing at appropriate levels and managing recreation pressure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • National Trust Estate Management Plans (the Trust own some land within this LCT) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AONB Management Plan: Objective LH1, ART4, CC3; Policies A1 and F2. • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6 • Devon's Structure Plan: Policies CO7 and CO8
Protect the dispersed settlement pattern of the area,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conservation Area Management Plans / 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AONB Management Plan: Objectives, LH1

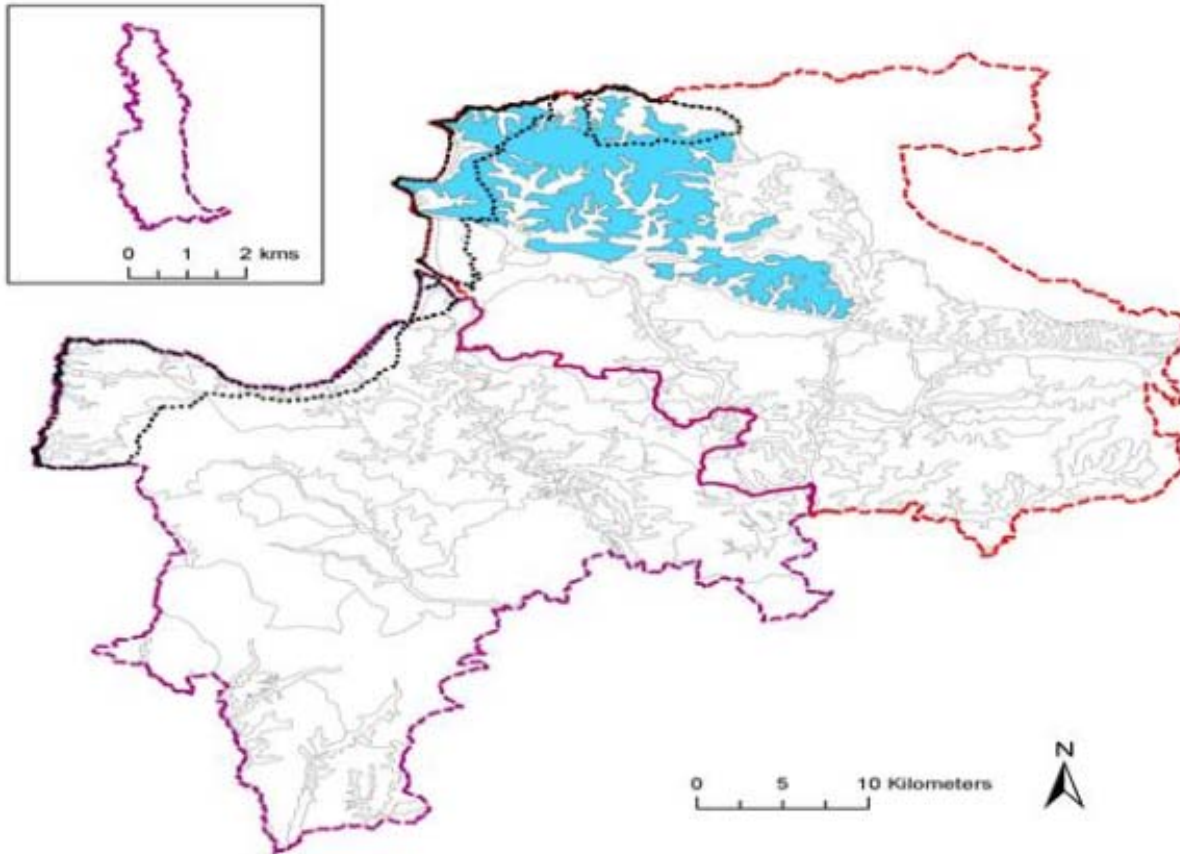
5B: COASTAL UNDULATING FARMLAND

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
<p>encouraging the sensitive location of new development (including farm buildings and tourism facilities) away from open skylines. Ensure that any new development incorporates local vernacular building styles of whitewash, cream cob/render and exposed local stone with red brick detailing wherever possible (whilst seeking to incorporate sustainable and low carbon building construction and design).</p> <p>Characteristic features such as white wooden finger posts and traditional linhays should be retained and kept in a good state of repair.</p>	<p>Appraisals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devon Rural Skills Trust • CORDIALE Interreg bid (South West Protected Landscapes Forum) • National Trust Estate Management Plans (the Trust own some land within this LCT) 	<p>and LH2; Policies A1, A4, G1 and G4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policies COR4, COR6 and COR8 • Devon Structure Plan: Policies CO1 and CO7 • Prepare landscape-specific design guidance to support the LDF. • Devon CC Environmental Review of permitted highway development proposals.
MANAGE		
<p>Manage the landscape's valued woodlands, controlling invasive species and moving towards a predominance of broadleaves over conifers to enhance their wildlife interest. New planting should consider species of greater resilience to a changing climate. Traditional woodland management (including coppicing) should be revived, with wood promoted as a sustainable energy source for local communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • England Woodland Grant Scheme • Environmental Stewardship • South West Woodland Renaissance • South West Nature Map • Devon BAP • National Trust Estate Management Plans (the Trust own some land within this LCT) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AONB Management Plan: Objectives FL1, FL2 and G5; Policy E2. • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6. • Devon Structure Plan: Policy CO9
<p>Manage and protect the landscape's network of hedgebanks and characteristic wind-sculpted hedgerow trees, replanting ageing or diseased specimens (with climate hardy species) to ensure the future survival of these characteristic features. Replace gappy sections and lengths of fencing to reinforce important field patterns. New hedgebank construction should reflect local variations (e.g. choice of species, height/width of</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • Devon BAP • Devon Hedge Group • National Trust Estate Management Plans (the Trust own some land within this LCT) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AONB Management Plan: Objectives FL1; Policy E1 • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6 • Devon Structure Plan: Policy CO9

5B: COASTAL UNDULATING FARMLAND

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
bank and patterns of stone-facing).		
Manage and re-link fragmented patches of semi-natural habitat within the farmed landscape (including through extensive grazing), such as Culm grassland, unimproved species-rich grassland and scrub. Patches of maritime grassland, wet flushes and bracken along the coast should also be managed as part of a wider ecological network – strengthened to build resilience to climate change. Farmers should be supported to utilise these ‘marginal’ areas as integral parts of their farming system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • Devon Food Links • Devon BAP • National Trust Estate Management Plans (the Trust own some land within this LCT) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AONB Management Plan: Objectives FL1; Policies E1 and E3. • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy: COR6. • Devon’s Structure Plan: Policy CO5 • Strengthen and promote links between local markets and produce from the area.
PLAN		
Plan for the impacts of a changing climate on the coastline, allowing natural processes to take place whilst considering how habitats and the SW Coast Path can be expanded or relocated to account for coastal squeeze (see previous ‘manage’ guideline).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • SW Nature Map • Devon BAP • National Trust Estate Management Plans (the Trust own some land within this LCT) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AONB Management Plan: Objectives; EQ3, CO1, CO3, CC4, Policies A2, C1, D1, D5, K2, L1 • Shoreline Management Plan policies (SMP 2 currently in consultation phase) • Shoreline Management Plan policies (SMP 2 currently under consultation)
Plan for the increasing tourism demands and expansion of nearby settlements (particularly Westward Ho! and Bideford), through the development of a network of Green Infrastructure links to the landscape (with benefits to both biodiversity and recreation whilst encouraging access the area by means other than the private car).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South West Nature Map 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AONB Management Plan: Objectives BG5; Policies C1, C2 and C4 • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policies COR2, COR4, COR5, COR8 and COR17 • Devon Structure Plan: Policies CO6, CO9, TO6. • Green Infrastructure Strategy

PART I: DESCRIPTION



CONSITUENT LDUs: 358, 88, 387, 388, 390, 393, 396, 398, 399, 401, 402, 403, 452, 453, 525, 526, 527, 528, 529, 532, 533, 535, 538, 539, 541, 542, 545, 546, 567, 572, 576, 578, 579, 580, 581, 848, 849, 850, 851, 852, 853

SUMMARY OF LOCATION

This LCT covers the North Devon Downs, including the elevated ridges between Combe Martin, Berrynarbor and Ilfracombe. It comprises an area of high open farmland with broad, rounded ridges slowly dropping in altitude towards Barnstaple and the Taw-Torridge Estuary. The northern part of the LCT is characterised by frequent coastal views.

KEY CHARACTERISTICS FOR THIS LCT WITHIN NORTH DEVON & TORRIDGE

- 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.



PART 2: EVALUATION

SUMMARY OF SPECIAL QUALITIES

- Dramatic and far-reaching views.
- Smooth rolling skylines, often only broken by protruding square church towers.
- Valued wildlife habitat within the farmland and associated with the hedge network.
- Large square fields.
- Small communities.



FORCES FOR CHANGE

PAST / CURRENT FORCES FOR CHANGE AFFECTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

- Post-war intensification of agriculture spurred on by CAP-related subsidies in the 1970s, leading to field amalgamation and the conversion of unimproved grasslands to intensive pasture and arable.
- Agricultural intensification and a decline in the agricultural economy leading to an amalgamation of smaller farms into larger, industrial-scale units.
- Spread of 'hobby farming' and equine enterprises.
- Varying levels of hedgerow management, with long lengths replaced or gapped up with post-and-wire fencing whilst others are intensively flailed or neglected (due to a lack of subsidies to support hedge management outside protected sites, and fencing being viewed as more cost-effective and stock-proof).
- Growth in the popularity of the seaside resorts of Ilfracombe, Woolacombe and Croyde, leading to significant settlement expansion and encroachment into the surrounding landscape.
- Spread of tourism-related development and land uses into the landscape – particularly holiday parks with bright white chalets/static caravans and camp sites.
- Modern expansion of some villages with recent housing incorporating a range of vernacular styles, e.g. West Down.
- Development of the Mullacott Cross Industrial Estate within the LCT with current expansion proposals. Pale green clad buildings stand out in the landscape.

PAST / CURRENT FORCES FOR CHANGE AFFECTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER (Continued)

- Rising house prices and a lack of affordable housing – forcing young people out of the area and leading to an ageing farming population.
- Past development policies favouring ‘key settlements’, leaving small rural communities without key services.
- Increase in visitor, farm and industrial traffic on the rural road network – particularly the main A39 and A361 roads which cross through the landscape.
- Views to modern development around the Taw-Torridge Estuary (Barnstaple, South Molton, Braunton, Northam, Westward Ho!)
- Demand for on-shore and off-shore wind farms – including recent approval for 22x110 metre turbines on Fullabrook Down and the proposal for the large *Atlantic Array* off-shore windfarm in the Bristol Channel (which would be visible from some downland summits).



FORCES FOR CHANGE

FUTURE FORCES FOR CHANGE AFFECTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

- Further growth in popularity of the area for recreation and tourism, leading to further demand for facilities (including farm conversions and more camping/caravan sites), infrastructure and higher traffic levels.
- Changes in crops and land use as a consequence of climate change and response to changing markets (e.g. for more UK-based food production and alternative crops such as Miscanthus or SRC).
- Individual hedgerow trees and isolated tree clumps (key landscape features) may become more susceptible to damage from the increasing frequency and magnitude of storm events.
- Increased prevalence of pests and diseases as a result of climate change (particularly phytophthora pathogens), threatening the survival of characteristic hedgerow trees and tree clumps, as well as valued specimens within parkland estates.
- Ongoing demand for both on-shore and off-shore wind farms and other renewable energy developments such as solar farms (proposals already in the pipeline), as well as domestic scale turbines taking advantage of the landscape's wind resource.
- Cumulative effects of different scales and designs of wind turbines in the landscape.
- Emerging demand for large-scale photovoltaic developments, capitalising on the solar radiation levels of slopes with a southerly aspect.
- Demand for domestic and community-scale renewable energy installations such as solar panels, small wind turbines and ground-source heat pumps, resulting in incremental changes to the historic built vernacular.

FUTURE FORCES FOR CHANGE AFFECTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER (Continued)

- Development pressure in nearby settlements and resorts due to the ever-increasing popularity of the area as a place to live – population increase leading to more demand for affordable housing, services and infrastructure.



PART 3: LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

OVERALL STRATEGY: The flowing skylines and open views provided from the Downs are protected from new development, preserving the landscape's high levels of tranquillity. The importance of the area for farming is combined with its potential for new wildlife refuges, with fragmented habitats re-linked, the hedge network restored, and environmentally sensitive farming methods pursued. The landscape's close proximity to the popular North Devon coast is capitalised upon, with Green Infrastructure links created from expanding settlements and holiday resorts to take the pressure away from the coastal hotspots. The small communities of the Downs become exemplars of sustainable development, with sensitively designed facilities and infrastructure provided to serve the needs of the 21st century and ensure self-sufficiency.

Landscape and planning guidelines

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
PROTECT		
Protect the landscape's far-reaching views (including to the coast and Exmoor National Park) and flowing open skylines, avoiding the location of new development on downland hill summits. Ensure local church towers remain landmark features on skylines.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify important views and viewpoints (both onshore and offshore) and identify why people think they are important. Protect square church towers as local landmark features by avoiding the location of further vertical structures on the same skyline. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AONB Management Plan: Objectives EQ1, EQ2 and CO4; Policies B2 and D5. North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR 4 and COR6. Devon Structure Plan: Policies CO1, CO3 and CO16. Shoreline Management Plan policies Guidance in development management planning to avoid the siting of new development on open skylines. Consider undertaking a seascape assessment to help guide future off-shore development away from the most

LANDSCAPE TYPE:
5C: DOWNLAND

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
		sensitive locations (using the emerging Natural England guidance).
Protect the landscape's high levels of tranquillity and dark night skies through the control and management of development, including highways.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AONB Management Plan: Objectives LH2, EQ1 and TH3; Policies A1, B1, G5 and H2 • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policies COR4, COR5, COR6 ,and COR8 • Devon Structure Plan: Policies CO6 and CO16. • Prepare design guidance focused on the quality of development and the special attributes of the landscape (e.g. lighting design guidance to preserve dark night skies).
<p>Protect the sparse settlement pattern of farmsteads and nucleated villages/hamlets nestled in valleys and landform dips. Ensure that any new development incorporates local vernacular building styles of cream and whitewashed cob/render, exposed local stone with slate roofs and some local use of thatch wherever possible (whilst seeking to incorporate sustainable and low carbon building construction and design).</p> <p>Characteristic features such as white wooden finger posts should be retained and kept in a good state of repair.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CORDIALE Interreg bid (South West Protected Landscapes Forum) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AONB Management Plan: Objectives, LH1 and LH2; Policies A1, A4, G1 and G4 • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policies COR4, COR6 and COR8 • Devon Structure Plan: Policies CO1 and CO7 • Prepare landscape-specific design guidance to support the LDF. • Devon CC Environmental Review of

LANDSCAPE TYPE:
5C: DOWNLAND

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
		permitted highway development proposals.
Protect and appropriately manage the landscape's archaeological heritage including prehistoric burial sites, ancient hilltop enclosures and historic quarries. This should include livestock grazing at appropriate levels and managing recreation pressure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Stewardship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AONB Management Plan: Objective LHI, ART4, CC3; Policies AI and F2. North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6 Devon's Structure Plan: Policies CO7 and CO8
Protect and manage the landscape's parkland estates at Saunton Court and Youlston Park, ensuring that the location of any new development does not affect their setting or designed views.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Stewardship Estate Management Plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AONB Management Plan: Objectives LHI, ART4, CC3; Policies AI and F2. North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6. Devon Structure Plan: Policy CO7 and CO8.
MANAGE		
Manage and protect the landscape's small farm woodlands, beech clumps and pine shelterbelts as characteristic features within the open landscape. Traditional woodland management (including coppicing) should be revived, with wood promoted as a sustainable energy source for local communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> England Woodland Grant Scheme Environmental Stewardship South West Woodland Renaissance South West Nature Map Devon BAP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AONB Management Plan: Objectives FLI, FL2 and G5; Policy E2. North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6. Devon Structure Plan: Policy CO9
Manage and protect the landscape's network of beech-dominated hedgebanks and characteristic wind-sculpted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Stewardship Devon BAP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AONB Management Plan: Objectives FLI; Policy EI

LANDSCAPE TYPE:
5C: DOWNLAND

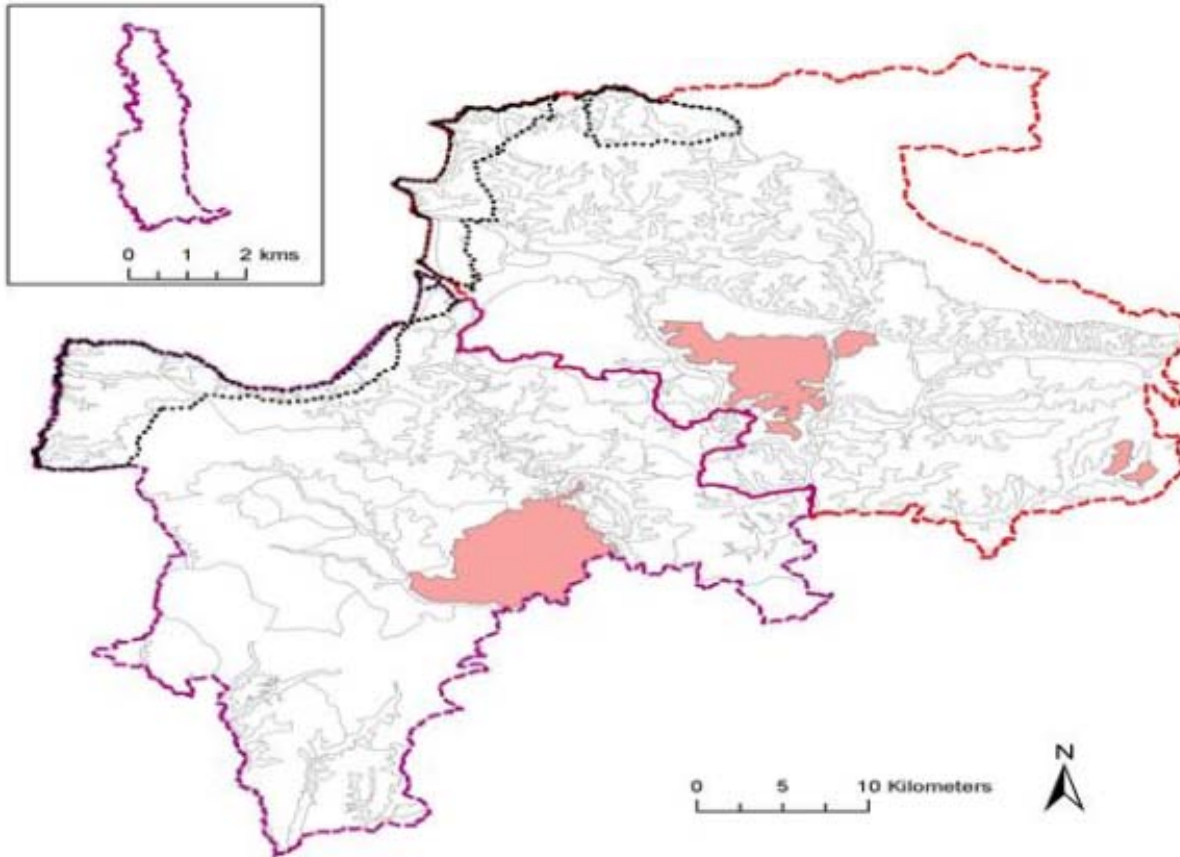
Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
hedgerow trees, replanting ageing or diseased specimens (with climate hardy species) to ensure the future survival of these characteristic features. Replace gappy sections and lengths of fencing to reinforce square field patterns. New hedgebank construction should reflect local variations (e.g. choice of species, height/width of bank and patterns of stone-facing).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devon Hedge Group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6 • Devon Structure Plan: Policy CO9
Manage and enhance the wildlife interest of agricultural fields by encouraging the creation of uncultivated field margins, grass buffer strips around intensively farmed fields and other wildlife-friendly farming methods. These measures will also help reduce diffuse pollution into adjacent water courses draining from the downland.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • Devon BAP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AONB Management Plan: Objectives FLI; Policy C1, E1, E3 • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6 • Devon Structure Plan: Policy CO9
Manage and re-link fragmented patches of species-rich grassland and rush pasture within the farmed landscape. Support farmers to extensively graze these areas as integral parts of their farming systems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • South West Nature Map • Devon Food Links • Devon BAP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AONB Management Plan: Objectives FLI; Policies C1, E1 and E3. • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6 • Devon Structure Plan: Policy CO9. • Strengthen and promote links between local markets and produce from the area.
PLAN		
Plan for the increasing tourism demands and expansion of nearby resorts (particularly Ilfracombe, Woolacombe and Croyde), through the development of a network of Green Infrastructure links to the landscape. This will serve to create opportunities for sustainable access and recreation away from the busy coastline of North Devon.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AONB Management Plan: Objectives BG5; Policies C1, C2 and C4 • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policies COR2, COR4, COR5, COR8 and COR17

LANDSCAPE TYPE:
5C: DOWNLAND

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devon Structure Plan: Policies CO6, CO9, TO6. • Green Infrastructure Strategy
<p>Plan for population increase and development pressure within the LCT's small villages and hamlets, with new sustainable development appropriately linked to facilities and infrastructure to serve the needs of local communities (see also the 'Protect' guidelines for new development).</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AONB Management Plan: Objectives, LHI and LH2; Policies A1, A4, G1 and G4 • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policies COR4, COR6 and COR8 • Devon Structure Plan: Policies CO1 and CO7

LANDSCAPE TYPE:
5D: ESTATE WOODED FARMLAND

PART I: DESCRIPTION



CONSITUENT LDUs: 370, 374, 456, 552, 600, 609, 679, 682, 683, 686, 705, 812, 817, 825, 837, 875

SUMMARY OF LOCATION

This LCT covers the distinctive estate farmlands and woodlands of North Devon and Torridge – concentrated on the main estates in the southern halves of the two districts.

KEY CHARACTERISTICS FOR THIS LCT WITHIN NORTH DEVON & TORRIDGE

- 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.



PART 2: EVALUATION

SUMMARY OF SPECIAL QUALITIES

- Large specimen trees within parkland and open farmland.
- Strong coherence in building styles.
- A managed, working landscape.
- Large areas of woodland, including ancient.
- A strong sense of history and culture.



FORCES FOR CHANGE

PAST / CURRENT FORCES FOR CHANGE AFFECTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

- Landscapes have benefited from consistent management over the centuries by the same handful of estates.
- Post-war Intensification of agriculture spurred on by CAP-related subsidies in the 1970s, leading to an expansion agricultural land uses and an increase in areas under intensive dairying and arable cultivation.
- Agricultural intensification and a decline in the agricultural economy leading to an amalgamation of smaller farms into larger units – including large dairy enterprises (e.g. around Sheepwash).
- Loss and replacement of Devon banks with fencing to facilitate intensive agricultural production.
- 20th century planting of large conifer plantations within the landscape, including on sites of former ancient woodland or wood pasture.
- Lack of new planting / replacement of specimen trees (existing trees are getting old and in some instances dying).
- Increase in tourism and recreation levels – the landscape includes golf courses, part of the Tarka Trail and several camping / caravan sites.
- Prominent pylon lines crossing through the landscape, including around East Stowford, diluting the landscape's historic character.
- Ball clay workings (dating back to the 19th century) and a landfill site on Marland Moor.

5D: ESTATE WOODED FARMLAND

PAST / CURRENT FORCES FOR CHANGE AFFECTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER (Continued)

- Spread of alternative agricultural land uses including pony keeping and alpaca farming.

FUTURE FORCES FOR CHANGE AFFECTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

- Increase in UK-based tourism with associated demands for new attractions (e.g. golf courses) and infrastructure, as well as an increase in traffic levels on rural roads, car parking, recreational pressures and farm conversions.
- Potential change in ownership of parkland estates, leading to a gradual change in their character and patterns of management.
- Demand for increased levels of domestic food and timber production leading to a further intensification of agriculture and expansion of plantations.
- A changing climate resulting in an increase of pests/disease affecting the composition and distribution of ancient and estate woodlands (e.g. Sudden Oak Death).
- Individual parkland and in-field trees may become more susceptible to damage from the increasing frequency and magnitude of storm events, as well as intense summer drought conditions.
- Increased prevalence of pests and diseases as a result of climate change (particularly phytophthora pathogens), threatening the survival of ancient woodland and veteran trees.
- Expansion in the growth of bioenergy crops such as Miscanthus and Short Rotation Coppice as a result of market demand for 'green' energy and fuel sources.

- Emerging demand for large-scale photovoltaic developments, capitalising on the solar radiation levels of slopes with a southerly aspect.
- Development pressure between Landkey and the South Molton roundabout.
- Demand for domestic and community-scale renewable energy installations such as solar panels, small wind turbines and ground-source heat pumps, gradually eroding the historic fabric of the landscape's settlements.



PART 3: LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

OVERALL STRATEGY: To protect the unique character and identity of the estate landscape, ensuring that its special sense of place flourishes into the 21st century. Ancient and parkland woodlands are managed for wildlife and to produce timber and woodfuel, linking to a rich farmed landscape enclosed by a strong network of wildflower-rich Devon banks. New low-carbon development reinforces and replicates the local vernacular, integrated into its landscape setting and providing green links into the surrounding countryside.

Landscape and planning guidelines

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
PROTECT		
<p>Protect the landscape's distinctive pattern of nucleated historic hamlets and villages focused around crossroads or stream crossing points. Any new development should be located within existing settlement limits, avoiding linear spread along roads.</p> <p>Square stone church towers should be protected as local landmark features in many views.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify important views and viewpoints (both to and from the landscape) and identify why people think they are important. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR 4 and COR6. Devon Structure Plan: Policies CO1, CO3 and CO16.
<p>Protect in a good state of repair the traditional local vernacular of whitewash and cream cob/render cottages with slate or thatched roofs, as well as some buildings of local stone. Limited new development should utilise the same materials and building styles wherever possible (whilst seeking to incorporate sustainable and low carbon building construction and design).</p> <p>Characteristic features such as linhays, stone bridges, estate railings and white painted finger posts should be retained and, where appropriate, restored.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conservation Area appraisals / management plans Estate Management Plans Devon Rural Skills Trust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policies COR1, COR6 and COR8. Devon Structure Plan: Policies CO1 and CO7. Consider formulating a Design Guide as a SPD in the forthcoming LDF. Devon CC Environmental Review of permitted highway development

5D: ESTATE WOODED FARMLAND

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
		proposals.
Protect and reinforce the distinctive character and identity of the landscape's parkland estates, supporting a continuation of management styles and traditions into the 21 st century.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Stewardship Estate Management Plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6. Devon Structure Plan: Policy CO7 and CO8.
Protect and appropriately manage the landscape's rich archaeological heritage including Bronze Age bowl barrows, the Iron Age hillfort of Berry Castle, and the medieval Durpley Castle. This should include livestock grazing at appropriate levels and managing recreation pressure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Stewardship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6 Devon's Structure Plan: Policies CO7 and CO8.
Protect the landscape's network of winding rural roads bounded by flower-rich Devon banks, resisting unsympathetic highways improvements or signage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Devon Green Lanes and Veins Project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6 Develop a policy for protecting the character of rural lanes in the forthcoming LDF. DCC to roll out a highways protocol / best practice guide on roadside management for rural areas. Devon CC Environmental Review of permitted highway development proposals.
MANAGE		
Sensitively manage the landscape's remaining ancient and veteran trees, including through traditional pollarding where appropriate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> England Woodland Grant Scheme Environmental Stewardship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6

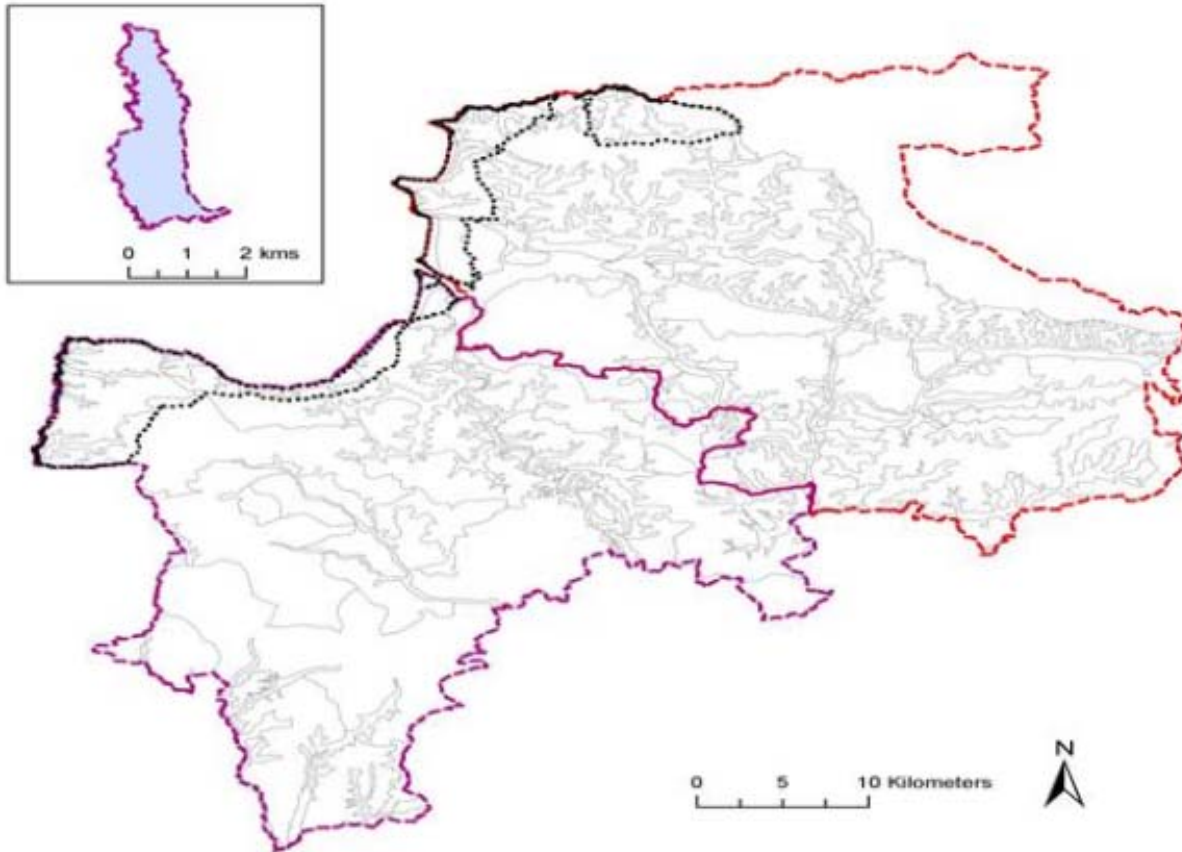
5D: ESTATE WOODED FARMLAND

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devon BAP • Estate Management Plans 	
Manage and enhance the area's ancient and estate woodlands through traditional techniques including coppicing. Control access by livestock and deer, promoting natural regeneration to enhance longevity whilst using extensive grazing to promote the species diversity of woodland ground flora. Explore opportunities for community utilisation of coppice residues as a low-carbon fuel source.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • England Woodland Grant Scheme • Devon BAP • South West Woodlands Renaissance scheme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policies COR6, COR7. • Devon Structure Plan: Policy CO9
Manage and re-link fragmented patches of Culm grassland, valley mire, rush pasture and unimproved meadows. Support farmers to extensively graze these areas as integral parts of their farming systems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • Devon BAP • Working Wetlands Project (Devon Wildlife Trust) • South West Nature Map 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6 • Devon Structure Plan: Policy CO9
Manage the network of wildflower-rich Devon banks, reflecting local variations in styles and species composition. Reinstate coppicing and hedge laying to neglected sections, planting new trees where specimens are over-mature (consider using climate-hardy species to ensure longevity). Restore lost and gappy sections, particularly at right angles to slopes, to strengthen field patterns and reduce soil erosion / run off into adjacent watercourses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • Devon BAP • Devon Hedge Group • Devon Rural Skills Trust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6 • Devon Structure Plan: Policy CO9
PLAN		
Plan for the planting of the next generation of veteran trees, choosing climate resilient species to ensure longevity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • England Woodland Grant Scheme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6

5D: ESTATE WOODED FARMLAND

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • Estate Management Plans 	
<p>Plan for the long-term restoration of conifer plantations to open habitats and broadleaved woodlands (where their role in timber production has ceased), including re-creating Culm grasslands and other semi-natural habitats within open rides and on areas of wet ground. Retain some conifer plantations as recreational spaces, especially where they are accessible from rights of way (e.g. the Tarka Trail).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • The Working Wetlands project (Devon Wildlife Trust) • Devon BAP • Forest Design Plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6
<p>Restore and manage areas of relict traditional orchards and explore opportunities for the creation of new ones, including community orchards to promote local food and drink production.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Stewardship • Devon BAP • Devon Food Links • South West Nature Map 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6 • Devon Structure Plan: Policy CO9 • Strengthen and promote links between local markets and produce from the area
<p>Plan for the future expansion of local settlements, integrating new development into its landscape framework through the provision of a surrounding network of green spaces, wildlife habitats and recreational routes.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policies COR5 and COR17. • Devon's Structure Plan: Policy TO6. • Green Infrastructure Strategy

PART I: DESCRIPTION



SUMMARY OF LOCATION

This LCT covers Lundy Island, which lies 11 miles off the North Devon coast in the Bristol Channel. It falls entirely within Torridge District.

KEY CHARACTERISTICS FOR THIS LCT WITHIN NORTH DEVON & TORRIDGE

- A flat-topped island formed primarily of Tertiary granite, with Devonian slates revealed along the south-east peninsular. Intrusions by vertical dykes reveal the island's volcanic past.
- Island forms an important seascape feature visible from all along the North Devon coast. Lundy's church tower and old lighthouse form prominent vertical elements rising up from the plateau.
- Spectacular cliffs reaching over 100 metres; the west coast battered by the waves and winds of the Atlantic resulting in a rugged, exposed coastline with features including the Devil's Limekiln sea cave, whilst the eastern side of the island is more sheltered with vegetated slopes and secluded rocky coves.
- Long views to the South Wales and North Devon coasts, with the lighthouse at Hartland Point forming a distinctive landmark feature on the horizon. In clear conditions views stretch as far as Woolacombe Down, Baggy Point and Saunton Down.
- Brown podzol soils giving rise to impoverished, acidic conditions across the island.

Exposed west coast and plateau defined by an absence of tree cover. Stunted stands of oak, sycamore and rhododendron associated with the valley and sheltered south-east coast.

Northern half of the plateau characterised by unenclosed heath and acid grassland, whilst in-bye farmland in the centre and south of the island is enclosed within grey granite stone walls forming square fields.

Open grazing by feral Soay sheep, goats, Lundy ponies and Sika deer, with sheep-grazed pasture and some cultivation within the enclosed farmland. The island is also grazed by a large population of rabbits left as a legacy from the medieval period.

PART 2: EVALUATION

SUMMARY OF SPECIAL QUALITIES

- Remote and undeveloped – a ‘sanctuary’ away from the mainland.
- Strong sense of isolation, self-sufficiency and spirituality.
- Marine Reserve reflecting uniqueness of the island’s wildlife (including sea birds).
- A jewel in the view over Bideford Bay and the full length of the North Devon coast.



FORCES FOR CHANGE

PAST / CURRENT FORCES FOR CHANGE AFFECTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

- Production-related subsidies introduced through the CAP in the 1970s, leading to overgrazing on the island by domestic sheep (at one time approximately 850 sheep were grazed).
- Change in agricultural policies and the island’s participation in Countryside Stewardship Scheme bringing sheep numbers down over the last decade (SSSI currently assessed as in unfavourable recovering condition by Natural England).
- Incidences of overgrazing by feral goats, sika deer and Soay sheep – controlled by a selective culling programme introduced in the last decade.
- Explosion in rabbit numbers also leading to significant areas of overgrazing (including damage to Lundy Cabbage plants) and archaeological damage. In 2004 the population was estimated at 25,000 (equivalent to a grazing pressure of 4,000 sheep). Numbers controlled by disease outbreaks and culling.
- Use of fencing around some fields rather than traditional Lundy granite stone walls.
- Visitor pressure (up to 20,000 visitors per year) leading to erosion on some of the more popular walking routes.
- Spread of rhododendron, particularly along the east coast, affecting the island’s unique biodiversity. A clearance programme aims to eradicate the species from the island by 2012.

LANDSCAPE TYPE: 6: OFFSHORE ISLANDS

PAST / CURRENT FORCES FOR CHANGE AFFECTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER (Continued)

- New access road constructed from the Landing Beach as a result of cliff erosion threatening the previous road. This has introduced a prominent man-made feature to the south-eastern coastline.
- Arrival of visitors by helicopter impacting on levels of tranquillity.



FORCES FOR CHANGE

FUTURE FORCES FOR CHANGE AFFECTING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

- Increase in UK-based holidays leading to the potential for higher visitor numbers to the island.
- Uncertain levels of support for agriculture, potentially causing the island's SSSI to move from an overgrazed to an undergrazed situation (already reported by Natural England in their latest condition assessment).
- Impacts of climate change on the distribution of the island's unique habitats and species, including an increased prevalence of pests, diseases and invasive species.
- Sea level rise and more rapid coastal erosion as a result of climate change, leading to unstable sections of cliffs, more frequent landslides, the 'squeeze' of coastal habitats and potential loss of cliff-top archaeology.
- Demand for off-shore renewables, particularly wind farms and tidal devices. The proposed location for the *Atlantic Array* off-shore wind farm (some 250 turbines) is just north of Lundy and would dominate northward views from the island.



PART 3: LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

OVERALL STRATEGY: To protect the wild, exposed and generally unsettled character of the coastal cliffs, ensuring that new development does not detract from these valued attributes. The landscape's spectacular geology, cultural heritage and unique habitats are celebrated and appropriately managed to meet the future challenges presented by climate change. People can continue to enjoy unrivalled access to the coast whilst appreciating and understanding its dynamic nature.

Landscape and planning guidelines

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
PROTECT		
<p>Protect the largely undeveloped, open and isolated character of Lundy, with expansive views across the open sea to the North Devon and South Wales coasts.</p> <p>Ensure the island retains its role as the 'jewel in the crown' of maritime views from the North Devon coast and elevated areas inland, with Old Light and St Helena's church tower standing out as landmark features.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify important views and viewpoints both to and from Lundy Island (onshore and offshore) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR 4 and COR6. Devon Structure Plan: Policies CO1, CO3 and CO16. Consider undertaking a seascape assessment to help guide future off-shore development away from the most sensitive locations.
<p>Protect the characteristic vernacular of buildings constructed from grey Lundy granite, ensuring building repairs and restorations are sympathetically undertaken using the same materials and building styles wherever possible. Keep visitor signage and infrastructure to a minimum to preserve the island's 'wilderness' and 'timeless' experience.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Stewardship Devon Rural Skills Trust National Trust Estate Management Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policies COR1, COR6 and COR8. Devon Structure Plan: Policies CO1 and CO7.
<p>Protect, sensitively manage and, where appropriate, restore the landscape's rich and varied archaeological heritage dating</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Stewardship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6

LANDSCAPE TYPE:
6: OFFSHORE ISLANDS

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
back to the Bronze Age, including through carefully monitoring grazing and access levels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Trust Estate Management Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Devon's Structure Plan: Policies CO7 and CO8.
MANAGE		
Manage the island's nationally important heathland, maritime grassland and wetland habitats and unique species (such as the Lundy Cabbage); ensuring grazing levels by domestic, feral and wild animals are controlled at appropriate levels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Stewardship Devon BAP National Trust Estate Management Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6 Devon Structure Plan: Policy CO9.
Manage and, where required, restore the distinctive granite stone wall field boundaries around Lundy's in-by land, seeking to reinstate lengths where fencing is currently used for stock proofing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Stewardship Devon Rural Skills Trust National Trust Estate Management Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6 Devon Structure Plan: Policy CO9.
Manage nationally important coastal habitats, including coastal heath and maritime grasslands, through supporting a continuation of extensive grazing at appropriate levels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Stewardship Devon BAP National Trust Estate Management Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6 Devon Structure Plan: Policy CO9.
Manage characteristic areas of stunted woodland in the Millcombe Valley and along parts of the east coast, continuing to control invasive species such as rhododendron and protecting sensitive areas from grazing damage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Stewardship England Woodland Grant Scheme Devon BAP National Trust Estate Management Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6 Devon Structure Plan: Policy CO9
Support the agricultural management of the island, ensuring that the menu at the Tavern continues to strongly feature Lundy produce as an important source of income (particularly lamb, rabbit and venison).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Stewardship Devon Food Links National Trust Estate Management Plan 	

LANDSCAPE TYPE:
6: OFFSHORE ISLANDS

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
PLAN		
<p>Plan for the impacts of a changing climate on the island's coastline, allowing natural processes to take place wherever practical. Use existing interpretation spaces (in the Rocket Shed and Beach Hut) to explain how the impacts of climate change, both its effects and mitigation measures, are likely to affect Lundy Island and its surrounding seascape.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Trust Estate Management Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Devon & Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR2 Devon Structure Plan: Policy CO9 Shoreline Management Plan policies (SMP 2 currently in consultation phase)

Appendix I

Workshop Reports

Summary report from the Torridge District workshop, held on Wednesday 21 July 2010

This is a summary of the break-out group discussions undertaken at the workshop held to inform the North Devon & Torridge Joint Landscape Character Assessment, which took place on 21 July 2010 at the Caddsdow Business Support Centre in Bideford. This workshop focused on Torridge district, and was attended by a range of representatives from different organisations with an interest in landscape issues, including parish councils. The overall workshop aims were to involve local stakeholders and communities in identifying what they particularly value about the different landscapes of Torridge, as well as to brainstorm ideas for 'landscape guidelines' to take forward work to protect, manage and plan the future landscapes of the district⁶. A list of workshop attendees is included at the end of this report.

EXERCISE 1- IDENTIFYING SPECIAL QUALITIES

The group as a whole was asked to use post-it notes to write down what individuals thought were the 'special qualities' they most associated with the ten Landscape Character Types (LCTs) identified for Torridge. Bold text indicates those statements which summarise the most popular attributes to feed into the second exercise.

1B: Coastal Open Plateau

Undeveloped skylines
Tranquil
Wild and windswept
Dark skies
Old black and white wooden road finger posts
Opportunity for arable farming with less environmental cost than elsewhere
Large square fields
Space and freedom
Wind pruned hedgerows
Level important for sense of space – gives views of changes in farming practice and human intervention
Open uncluttered views of the sea, smooth uninterrupted sweeping skylines.
Openness, sense of space
Small hamlets
Open views, windswept (a positive attribute)
Space, vista, skyline
Late summer meadows, knapweed, butterflies
Long, open views – undeveloped skylines, tranquillity, Devon banks and lanes, views to Lundy

⁶ The workshop specifically sought to meet the objectives of the European Landscape Convention – to develop landscape policies dedicated to the protection, management and planning of landscapes; and to establish procedures for the participation of the general public and other stakeholders in the creation and implementation of landscape policies.

Space, views, wild winds
Vistas, wildlife (hawks), inaccessible
Space, views
Sea views, coastal walks, keep it natural

1D: Inland Elevated Undulating Land

Unimproved grassland and wetlands
40ft drove roads
Won't know what we've got till it's gone! The drive for tourists' money also brings its own destruction
Culm grassland attractive and designation needs extending
Wind turbines for the community (not for private consumers), hedges, culm, soft beauty – easy on the eyes
Working landscape, views
Vistas, small fields, turbine-less
Working landscape
Culm grassland, subtle beauty
Hedges, fields; recognise the natural beauty of the area
Undulating open landscape, views spoilt by wind turbine development, beautiful wooded valleys
Views; clumps of woodland; wind turbines look good here! See birds better
Views are highlighted in these slips, but these are threatened by wind turbines
Views, scenery, fields, rural, beautiful, quiet, relaxed
Rolling landscape, patchwork of fields, tranquillity

1F: Farmed Lowland Moorland and Culm

Remoteness
Specific biodiversity to Devon landscape; distinctive hedgebanks with unique ecology; uninterrupted rural views; tranquil
Working landscape with pockets of designated sites (culm)
Culm – great variety, wet/dry, smooth, tussocky, mosaic, expanse; fragmentation of culm is negative
Cider
Tranquillity, hedges, trees, wildlife – what's left of them!
Flat wet land surrounded by wildlife rich hedges
Sedge warblers, reed buntings
Woodland
Extraordinary character
Lapwings & golden plovers
Wildlife diversity, low-impact farming
Big villages (Winkleigh, Hartland, Dolton)
Water retention; biodiversity (IF farmed for conservation)
Wasteland
Unique culm grassland, birds, wild flowers, butterflies, protected (hopefully)
Animals and wildlife
Small field patterns with open grazing around
Pockets of culm, Devon Reds

Copses
Curlews, orchids, cotton grass, snipe
Sub-Eocene wave-cut platform
Culm grassland; wildlife value, wild feel in winter, visually attractive in summer
Hedges
Jas Ravilious (20 th century photographer of rural and farming life in Devon)
Relatively small fields, wildlife, hedges
Mosaic
Traditional grazing
<i>Comments on classification:</i> Culm is high moorland, not lowland surely? Surely farmed lowland moorland should be separate designation from culm?

3A: Upper Farmed and Wooded Slopes

Vistas, picturesque settlements/villages, tranquillity
Sunken lanes and Devon hedgebanks, distinctive cobb and thatch and whitewashed buildings
Stooks of thatching straw
Areas give vantage points to get overview of where you are in the landscape. Development better away from high levels. Traditional landmarks (churches) give orientation
Pastoral
Dark nights (milky way)
Views out
Uninterrupted vistas, hedgerows
Mazzards (cherry orchards)
Starlit nights (best skies in UK)
Quiet/peaceful place to live, safe environment, active farming
The way it's been farmed
Copses and woodlands
Little or no light pollution, balance between working farms and 'picturesque'
Lack of light pollution, spaciousness, views, changing seasons
Dramatic views
A common misconception of suburbia is that landscape needs organising
Fields and field boundaries
June hedgerows
Unkempt feel (unmanaged)
Intimate, varied, changing views
Open, rolling hills
Open countryside, rural impact, peaceful, beautiful, isolation, relaxed
Breakup of landscape by woods, vistas, narrow lanes with species-rich hedgebanks
Undulating landscape , should have an uninterrupted vista, peaceful countryside, important managed woodland

3C: Sparsely Settled Farmed Valley Floors

Natural river form and riparian vegetation with associated wildlife.
Wetland marsh for specific wildlife and flora , areas for recreation and relaxation, tranquil, unspoilt by development
Flood plains, peace and tranquillity, wildlife (not controlled or introduced)
Historical detail – old barns/bridges/mills, marshy ground mixed with grassland, wooded streams and ponds hidden by trees, fascinating footpaths
Rain soakaway, wild flowers
Biodiversity/habitats and connectivity
Private peaceful areas
Conservation, wild flowers, vegetation and birds etc. Natural
To be preserved and not trodden all over by open access
Flood storage areas
Water retention – particularly if beavers brought back. Fluvial marshlands for butterflies and flora. Biodiversity if farmed sensitively. Great environmental potential as above, particularly upper Torridge in Bradworthy/Woolsery area.
Important flood plain areas, important areas for wildlife
Wooded valley, flood plain
Messy footpaths
Beware those who have not learned what to interfere with and what to leave alone
Flood plain environment and ecosystems
Living, working landscape
Marsh marigold, fallen trees, ferns and moss, bogs on woodland floors
Flood plains, free from development (hopefully), historical landscape, flowing water, openness
Clear streams, habitats
The way it's been farmed

3G: River Valley Slopes and Combes

Sense of enclosure, aesthetic
Tranquillity, sanctity, wildlife (true)
Middle Torridge Valley: deeply incised river, woodland , hidden, seen best at slow walking pace.
Natural woodland
Broadleaved woodland , Tarka Trail – access and recreation
Access to water, tranquil environment, habitat to specific wildlife , geographically interesting
Intimate small woods with footpaths, mixed land pattern – bog/scrub etc, woods on the slopes – herons/hawks/martins
Habitat connectivity
Combes leading to sea views
Variety, lack of development
Wooded secluded areas for undisturbed wildlife (keep dogs out)
Peace by the river, kingfishers and otters , steep hills, changing views
Tranquillity, wildlife
Riparian corridors important for wildlife, good walks for locals

3H: Secluded Valleys

Potential for wildlife corridors to link moorlands to coastal flats
Woodland, rich pattern of water/hedgerows/small fields/woodland
Magical feel, peace, streams, woodland and coppice, intimate landscape
Farmed valley floors
Wooded slopes
Otters
Tranquillity, peace
Broadleaved woodland on slopes and vegetation/trees along rivers; river quality and wildlife
AONB, healthy watercourses, active farming
Secret, hidden, private, streams, rivers, woods, wildlife
Important habitats (for locals and wildlife)
Dawn chorus
Wet woods, unmanaged secret places
Seclusion, quietness, biodiversity, carbon sinks (woodland and peat), water retention (reduces flooding) – more so if beavers introduced.
Peace and tranquillity, genuine wildlife (not introduced), tourism can spoil what they will come for
Seclusion, 'timeless'
AONB; beautiful unspoilt landscape, subject to stricter development control, wooded landscape with indigenous species, abundance of wildlife
Hidden; secretive

4A: Coastal Scarp Slopes and Combes

Intimate, small-scale, 'safe' feeling, contrasts between sheltering woodland and open/framed vistas
Seclusion and enclosure, glimpses of the sea, secret places and hidden gems (e.g. sheds at Welcombe, clifftop woodland clearings)
Broad-leaved woodlands
History, stories, sense of adventure
Inaccessibility, lack of disturbance, biodiversity, unique flora or salt wind effects
Ancient woodland and flora, important water features in the landscape
Ancient broad-leaved woodland
Intimate
Unimpeded views out to sea – no clutter
Woodland – small, windblown trees
Sense of enclosure important, sensitive to development
SAC potential for wildlife movement
Wild, service trees
Old trees, biodiversity, lovely walks, wildlife, interesting geology
Linkages between upland and valley floors, 'traditional' lifestyles (farming)
Brownsham Estate – secluded, intimate, bluebells
Hartland Abbey – Medieval monastic farmed landscape underlying a later parkland
Tranquil
Intimate, small scale, sensitivity
Amazing 'intact' fishing villages of Clovelly and Bucks Mills

Field boundaries and pattern
“Olde Worlde” village charm
Thatched cottages
Long views along the coast to undeveloped north Devon downs

4D: Cliffs

Largely undeveloped
Awesome feel, against ocean, seabirds nesting, geological interest, views of sea and shore and beach.
Dramatic landforms
Spectacular geological formations, stunning vista, rugged, unique wildlife habitat
Iconic, national asset
Secure areas for wildlife
Wild, exposed
‘The power of nature’, views, wildlife
Views, atmosphere
Extensive coastal views
Dramatic landscape, unique part of Torridge, peaceful
Protection for wildlife – flora and fauna.
Access to cliff top – SWC path, cliff geology, archaeology – quays, lighthouse, lime kilns
Varied geology
This is the money landscape; while other areas are vital this is the photogenic bit for tourists.
Dramatic, views, seabirds (off Hartland Point)
Moving backdrop of wind and waves
Uncluttered sea views
Exceptionally wild but also accessible through South West Coast Path
Adders
Open, wide panorama
Unique landscapes, beautiful views, rock formations, geology

4E: Coastal Sand Dunes

Protection for wildlife – flora and fauna
Wild, biodiverse
Unsettled and wild
Heart of Henry Williamson’s ‘Two Rivers’
Other worldly feel, plants and wildlife, secret ponds, remoteness
Internationally important for biodiversity
Access to coast, views out over undeveloped skyline
Dynamic and moving
Wildlife
Unique landscape, specific biodiversity, windswept and wild, areas for enjoyment by locals and tourists for recreation

4F: Extensive Intertidal Sands

Protection for wildlife – flora and fauna
Undeveloped
Birds
Wildlife
Surfing, water sports, family relaxation and enjoyment, fishing, coastal ecology
Space and panoramas
Hidden archaeology and geology
Birds, views, beauty, not very accessible to man
Albert Goodwin RWS – famous landscape painter
Vistas, textures, stones and rocks, sea birds and waders, pools and their wildlife

Lundy Island

Never visited it! It's a jewel in the view over Bideford Bay from all around the coast. Lundy comes and goes with the weather
Escape from mainland – spiritual
Natural reserves, birdlife, wildlife
Marine Reserve – wildlife, all at sea
Marine Reserve, feel of remoteness, cliffs, weird church, good pub, caves, wildlife – seals, puffins, interesting stone walls/buildings
Uniqueness, marine conservation zone
Peaceful, no traffic, low impact from development, unique wildlife habitat, remote and tranquil
Natural, isolated, undeveloped, sanctuary
Remoteness, low population, inaccessibility, few motors, self sufficiency?
Time capsule
Cliffs
Remote, open, undeveloped
The isolation is important in human terms. Only here can you grasp how dependent we are on 'stuff' – daily papers, TV and packaged food
Granite
Marine Reserve, Special island landscape, high cliffs, wildlife
Peaceful, isolation
Isolation, tranquillity, superb natural environment

ND1: Coastal Undulating Farmland

Wooded hedgerows
Sided hedgerow trees
Field boundaries/hedgerows and irregular field patterns, views to the sea
Wide open un-interrupted views, peaceful, defined field boundaries, low level development, woodland ecology and natural habitat
Pattern of fields and distinctive shapes are important here
Hedges, sea views, openness, cliffs, geology, plants, birds
Gently rolling farmland
Productive farmland, excellent views
Vistas, hedges, field patterns, gulls circling tractors, starlings massing

Access to sea views via SW Coast path, peace and quiet
Views out to sea
Crooked tree forms
We've got to farm for food somewhere so let's do it here , but still retain North Devon's landscape and field patterns
Views to sea
Working landscape
Varied farming landscape, unexpected coastal views, hedges
Open views, defined field boundaries
Open views towards the sea, tranquillity, big skies

ND4: Estate Wooded Farmland

This landscape is underestimated as we assume it is safe under estate control so left alone in policy terms. Beware market forces! Changes in ownership will erode this character (<i>force for change</i>)
Local income and employment , woodland views, clean air.
Parkland – individual trees
Clumps of trees, hedges, interesting old trees
Specimen trees
Trees, wildlife, workplace
Woodland, views, country lanes with flowers etc, bees (hopefully), ancient trees , footpaths, agricultural employment
History, a true cultural landscape, specimen trees
Resource management (sustainability)
Carbon sinks (but not if the wood is subsequently burned), biodiversity (if mixed woodland with rides and clearings)
Distinctive parkland feel – individual; distinctive trees in open fields, lack of hedges or field boundaries along some lanes, strong coherence in building styles related to estates
Working environment
Specimen trees, hedges

EXERCISE 2: BRAINSTORMING FORCES FOR CHANGE & LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

The whole group was split into three different focus groups, looking at the 'top 3- 5' special qualities identified in the first exercise for the Landscape Character Types. Each group discussed the issues or 'forces for change' affecting the special qualities (including future issues e.g. climate change) and discussed ideas for the development of landscape guidelines.

To be compliant with the European Landscape Convention (ELC), the guidelines in the Landscape Character Assessment report will be organised under the following categories:

- **protect:** measures to preserve the present character and quality of the landscape which will be greatly valued on account of its distinctive natural or

cultural configuration (*i.e. conserve current aspects of landscape importance and strengthen their resilience*)

- **manage:** change steered to improve landscape character, with an emphasis on the regular upkeep of the landscape and its evolution (*i.e. manage, maintain and enhance valued attributes to strengthen landscape character*).
- **plan:** the process by which new landscapes are created – including to radically reshape damaged landscapes (*e.g. large-scale habitat creation, Green Infrastructure planning, restoration of mineral sites*).

Taken from Article I of the European Landscape Convention (Council of Europe), March 2004

The following tables summarise the results from these discussions, with guidelines formulated from the workshop discussions.

1B: Coastal Open Plateau

Special quality	Forces for change affecting special quality		Suggested delivery mechanisms
Space, open views	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development on the skyline (e.g. large farm buildings) - Demand for both on and off-shore wind turbines - Cumulative effects of small scale turbines (including domestic) 	<u>Protect</u> open and undeveloped skylines from large scale buildings and structures (including offshore development).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Design guidance for agricultural buildings
Tranquillity, undeveloped, dark night skies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development and associated infrastructure, particularly associated with Hartland 	<u>Protect</u> the area's tranquillity and dark night skies through the control and management of development, including highways.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Guidance focused on the quality of development (e.g. lighting design guidance to preserve dark night skies)
Wildlife	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Visitor pressure - Intensification of agriculture - Scale of farming – damage to and removal of hedgebanks - Impacts of climate change on tree species 	<p><u>Plan</u> for the replanting of characteristic woodlands associated with settlement in sheltered locations off the open plateau.</p> <p><u>Protect</u> and <u>manage</u> hedgerows and characteristic dwarf hedgerow trees, and <u>plan</u> for the future perpetuation of these distinctive features, strengthening resilience to climate</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - HLS targeting - England Woodland Grant Scheme - South West Woodland Renaissance

Special quality	Forces for change affecting special quality	Suggested guideline(s)	Suggested delivery mechanisms
		change.	
Windswept, wild	As for tranquillity	As for tranquillity	
Culture, tradition, localism	- Lack of affordable housing – locals being forced to leave the area.	<u>Protect</u> the historic character of the area and <u>plan</u> for the sensitive location of farm buildings that respect the local characteristic clustering of agricultural buildings.	CORDIALE Interreg bid (SW Protected Landscapes Forum) – implementing ELC at the community-level

1F Farmed Lowland Moorland and Culm Grassland

Special quality	Forces for change affecting special quality		Suggested delivery mechanisms
Culm grasslands and associated wildlife (including wetland birds)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tensions between SAC/SSSI designations and local interests, including farming practice - Common Land legislative requirements for management regimes to be put in place - Past drainage / inappropriate management and neglect - 20th century afforestation and future drive for further UK timber production (FC policy) - Climate change impacts – future drought conditions threatening wetlands 	<p><u>Manage</u> areas of Culm grassland through appropriate grazing and burning regimes whilst <u>protecting</u> their high wildlife importance.</p> <p><u>Plan</u> for the expansion of fragmented Culm grassland sites to create an intact green network (including the restoration of the habitat within woodland rides/clearings).</p> <p><u>Manage</u> the area's existing plantations for sustainable timber production and wildlife interest, creating new green links to surrounding semi-natural habitats.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SAC and SSSI designations already in place to protect the wildlife interest of the grasslands. - Environmental Stewardship - The <i>Working Wetlands</i> project (DWT) - Ensure management prescriptions provide a balance between wildlife needs and those of local farmers so agriculture remains viable. - England Woodland Grant Scheme
Traditional management regimes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Uncertainty over future levels of subsidy to support farming on agriculturally unproductive land 	<p><u>Manage</u> areas of Culm grassland through continuing to support local farmers graze the land as an integral</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Environmental Stewardship - The <i>Working Wetlands</i>

Special quality	Forces for change affecting special quality	Suggested guideline(s)	Suggested delivery mechanisms
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tensions between SAC/SSSI designations and local interests, including farming practice (i.e. requirements to only graze Culm for 6 months of the year) - Common Land legislative requirements for management regimes to be put in place 	part of their agricultural practice.	<p>project (DWT) – Hollow Moor and Torridge/Tamar headwaters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure management prescriptions provide a balance between wildlife needs and those of local farmers so agriculture remains viable.
Tranquillity and remoteness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increasing levels of tourism and access - Development associated with Holsworthy - Wind turbines (already in landscape) and cumulative impacts of future demand for turbine development - Population growth and associated need for supporting infrastructure and facilities 	<p><u>Protect</u> the landscape's sense of tranquillity and remoteness through avoiding the location of new development on prominent, open skylines.</p> <p><u>Plan</u> for a network of green spaces and green infrastructure links to support future population growth in existing settlements whilst integrating development into the landscape and providing local spaces for access and recreation.</p>	

3A Upper Farmed & Wooded Valley Slopes

Special quality	Forces for change affecting special quality		Suggested delivery mechanisms
Open rolling landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Afforestation - Loss of hedgerows - Future pressure for the development of wind turbines 	NONE SUGGESTED	
Tranquillity and dark night skies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Farm intensification and industrialisation - Gentrification – small-holdings, equine enterprises and second homes - Street lighting - Future pressure for the development of wind turbines 	NONE SUGGESTED	
Field boundaries – Devon banks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Past hedgerow removal - Farms getting bigger (and smaller – hobby farms) 	NONE SUGGESTED	Affordable housing policies to ensure places to live for farmers / land managers
Picturesque villages and the use of thatch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gentrification – small-holdings, equine enterprises and second homes 	NONE SUGGESTED	

3C Sparsely Settled Valley Floors

Special quality	Forces for change affecting special quality		Suggested delivery mechanisms
Unspoilt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recreational pressure (particularly ramblers) 	<u>Protect</u> the unspoilt character of the valley landscapes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consider limiting public access to some valley sections (e.g. preventing access along anglers' paths)
Valued floodplain landscapes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Flood meadows being ploughed - Bankside erosion (though often not noticeable) 	<u>Manage</u> levels of public access to ensure minimal disturbance to sensitive floodplain habitats.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consider limiting public access to some valley sections (e.g. preventing access along anglers' paths)
Riparian habitats and woodlands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Agricultural run-off affecting water quality (including from adjacent maize fields) - Flood meadows being ploughed - Loss of biodiversity - Decline in salmon stocks 	<u>Manage and protect</u> riparian wildlife and water quality by retaining flood meadows and allowing their seasonal inundation, ensuring an intact and well-managed hedgerow network to reduce soil erosion(particularly at right-angles to slopes), and encouraging low-input farming.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Environmental Stewardship

3G River Valley Slopes and Combes

Special quality	Forces for change affecting special quality		Suggested delivery mechanisms
Wildlife, including birds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Loss of habitats - No predator control (e.g. mink) - Future effects of climate change 	<u>Manage</u> wildlife habitats and <u>plan</u> for the creation of new habitat networks and corridors to strengthen resilience to climate change.	
Tranquillity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Access and tourism - Sounds of chainsaws 	<u>Protect</u> the landscape's high levels of peace and tranquillity.	
Broadleaved woodlands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Disease - Lack of management - Damage by deer - Wood monoculture 	<p><u>Manage</u> broadleaved woodlands through sensitive coppicing where appropriate, to stimulate new woodland growth and enhance woodland ground flora.</p> <p><u>Plan</u> for the emergence of new markets to stimulate woodland management – e.g. woodfuel for community renewable energy projects and sustainable hardwood production. Ensure a balance is retained between woodland cover and the intimate mosaic of other land uses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community co-operatives established for wood products – including biomass - South West Woodland Renaissance (funding) - England Woodland Grant Scheme

3H: Secluded Valleys

Special quality	Forces for change affecting special quality		Suggested delivery mechanisms
Unspoilt, secluded, secretive, hidden character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tourism and associated development, including holiday parks - Powerlines (e.g. the Duntz valley) - Roadford Reservoir 	<u>Protect</u> the secluded and unspoilt character of the valleys by keeping development away from the most tranquil and visible locations.	
Broadleaved woodlands and coppice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of traditional woodland management - New woodland planting (positive) - Future opportunities for new markets for woodland products – particularly woodfuel and hardwood timber. 	<p><u>Manage</u> broadleaved woodlands through sensitive coppicing where appropriate, to stimulate new woodland growth and enhance woodland ground flora.</p> <p><u>Plan</u> for the emergence of new markets to stimulate woodland management – e.g. woodfuel for community renewable energy projects and sustainable hardwood production. Ensure a balance is retained between woodland cover and the intimate mosaic of other land uses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community co-operatives established for wood products – including biomass - South West Woodland Renaissance (funding) - England Woodland Grant Scheme
Native wildlife	- Beaver reintroduction (SW Water and DWT initiative) affecting valley/river ecology (but could have	As per broadleaved woodlands (no other suggestions)	As above (no other suggestions)

Special quality	Forces for change affecting special quality	Suggested guideline(s)	Suggested delivery mechanisms
	positive effects for flood control in light of climate change)		
Rich pattern of water / hedges / small fields / woodland	- Woodland planting	<u>Manage and protect</u> the rich landscape mosaic of small fields, hedges and woodlands.	

4D: Cliffs

Special quality	Forces for change affecting special quality		Suggested delivery mechanisms
Undeveloped, peaceful	- Increasing levels of recreation and tourism – future open access to the coast (Marine & Coastal Access Bill) - Erosion of cliffs	<u>Protect</u> the undeveloped, peaceful nature of the LCT by managing visitor pressure and controlling new development in adjacent LCTs	Management of car parks & SWCP
Dramatic landforms, geology	-Future open access to the coast – need to manage car parking and use of the SW Coast Path -Sea level rise and coastal erosion	<u>Plan</u> for the natural retreat of the cliff edge due to coastal erosion, including the future realignment of the SW Coast Path.	
Views	- Development e.g. Westward Ho!	<u>Protect</u> dramatic open views out to sea and along the coastline	

Special quality	Forces for change affecting special quality	Suggested guideline(s)	Suggested delivery mechanisms
Wild, exposed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Visitor and recreation pressure - Development outside the AONB 	<u>Protect</u> the 'wildness' of the LCT by appropriately managing visitor pressures	
Wildlife	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Farming within the combes - SAC designation reflecting importance 	<u>Protect</u> wildlife by appropriately managing visitor pressures, as well as managing farming in adjacent combes	

.4E: Coastal Sand Dunes & 4F: Extensive Intertidal Sands

Special quality	Forces for change affecting special quality		Suggested delivery mechanisms
Unsettled, wild, windswept	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Visitor and recreation pressure 	<u>Protect</u> the unsettled, wild nature of the LCT by managing visitor pressure and controlling new development in adjacent LCTs.	
Biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coastal erosion and sea level rise - Visitor and recreation pressure 	<u>Protect</u> biodiversity by appropriately managing visitor pressures	
Open panoramas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development outside the AONB e.g. Westward Ho! 	<u>Protect</u> open panoramas	

4A: Coastal Scarp Slopes & Combes

Special quality	Forces for change affecting special quality		Suggested delivery mechanisms
Ancient woodland, wildlife	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Climate change (need to provide room for new woodland development) - Development pressure - Visitor / recreation pressure 	<u>Protect</u> and sensitively manage ancient woodlands to enhance their wildlife interest, encouraging expansion to build resilience to climate change	Woodland grant schemes & education
Intimacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development pressure - Visitor / recreation pressure 	<u>Protect</u> the intimate character of the LCT.	
Tranquillity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development pressure - Visitor / recreation pressure 	<u>Protect</u> the tranquillity of the area by deterring large scale development.	
History		<u>Protect</u> the historic elements of the LCT.	

ND1: Coastal Undulating Farmland

Special quality	Forces for change affecting special quality		Suggested delivery mechanisms
Long views	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pressure for the development of wind turbines 	<u>Protect</u> long views along the coast and out to sea by resisting shoreline	-Identify important views

Special quality	Forces for change affecting special quality		Suggested delivery mechanisms
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development pressure - Demand for leisure 	development in prominent locations.	
Field patterns and Devon hedges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Farm intensification and industrialisation - Hedgerow removal contributing to an increase in soil erosion 	<u>Manage</u> hedgerows to protect and strengthen the landscape's field patterns.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Environmental Stewardship
Working landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Traffic (tourism and industry) - Industrialisation 	<u>Manage and protect</u> farming traditions in the area to ensure it remains a working landscape.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Environmental Stewardship - Support traditional farming as opposed to hobby farming
Peace and tranquillity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase in tourism - Increase in traffic levels - Development pressure 	<u>Protect</u> the landscape's high levels of peace and tranquillity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduce weight limits on rural roads. - Limit Sat-Nav use in the area to reduce heavy vehicle use on rural lanes. - Introduce gated lanes.

ND4: Estate Wooded Farmland

Special quality	Forces for change affecting special quality		Suggested delivery mechanisms
Parkland, ancient and veteran trees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of new planting / replacement of specimen trees (existing trees are getting old and dying) - Future management decisions by estate owners 	<p><u>Manage and protect</u> important parkland and veteran trees, including through sensitive pollarding and coppicing where appropriate and their protection from deer / livestock damage.</p> <p><u>Plan</u> for the planting of a new stock of parkland trees, choosing species that are most likely to survive in a changing climate.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - England Woodland Grant Scheme - Environmental Stewardship - Partnership working with estate owners / managers
Strong, coherent character and sense of place (e.g. consistent building styles)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Landscapes have clear character due to the management regimes of 3 or 4 estate families - Future management decisions by estate owners 	<u>Protect and manage</u> the area's estate landscapes with their strong sense of place and identity.	
A working landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Past loss of other areas of estate land in this part of Devon – therefore important to protect and consistently manage remaining areas - Future management decisions by estate owners 	<u>Plan</u> for the emergence of new markets to stimulate the management of the estates – e.g. the sustainable management and expansion of estate plantations for hardwood production (choosing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community co-operatives established for wood products – including biomass - South West Woodland Renaissance (funding)

Special quality	Forces for change affecting special quality	Suggested guideline(s)	Suggested delivery mechanisms
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Uncertain future economic conditions – could be potential to tap into future markets (e.g. timber production). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> climate hardy species). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - England Woodland Grant Scheme

Workshop Attendees

Name	Organisation
Peter Howard	Landscape Research Group
Stephen Hobbs	Hartland Digital Archive
Martin Beagley	Torridge DC
Hewitt	Buckland Brewer Parish Council
R Turner	Woolfardisworthy Parish Council
Richard Osborne	Northam Town Council
Barry Edwards	Northam TC
John Warden	Broadwoodwidge Parish Council
Chris Durton	Broadwoodwidge Parish Council
Clare Gurton	n/a
David Lansen	Torridge District Council
Andrew Austen	N Devon Council
Garry Jennings	Parkham Parish Conservation Assoc
Melanie Hinde	Devon County Council
Peter Hanes	Northam Town Council
M Cox	Torridge DC
Paul Winter	Torridge DC
Dave Edgcombe	North Devon AONB
Sarah Chappell	Torridge DC
Barb Francis	Torridge DC
Tom Hynes	North Devon Coast and Countryside Service

Name	Organisation
Chris Hassall	CPRE / Littleham / Landcross Parish Council
Bill Broadbent	Devon Wildlife Trust
J Bradbeer	Woolfardisworthy Parish Council
Pete Leaver	David Wilson Partnership
Cllr Woodard	Broadwoodwidge Parish Council
Cllr Darbek	Broadwoodwidge Parish Council
Cllr Millman	Milton Damerel Parish Council
Linda Blanchard	North Devon AONB
John Hawkins	Westhay Farm & Hartland Peninsular Association
A F Hawkins	Westhay Farm & Hartland Peninsular Association
S. Colquhoun	Environment Agency

Summary report from the North Devon District workshop, held on Monday 26 July 2010

This is a summary of the break-out group discussions undertaken at the workshop held to inform the North Devon & Torridge Joint Landscape Character Assessment, which took place on 26 July 2010 at North Devon Library in Barnstaple. This workshop focused on North Devon district, and was attended by a range of representatives from different organisations with an interest in landscape issues, including parish councils. The overall workshop aims were to involve local stakeholders and communities in identifying what they particularly value about the different landscapes of North Devon, as well as to brainstorm ideas for 'landscape guidelines' to take forward work to protect, manage and plan the future landscapes of the district⁷. A list of workshop attendees is included at the end of this report.

EXERCISE 1- IDENTIFYING SPECIAL QUALITIES

The group as a whole was asked to use post-it notes to write down what individuals thought were the 'special qualities' they most associated with the ten Landscape Character Types (LCTs) identified for North Devon. Bold text indicates those statements which summarise the most popular attributes to feed into the second exercise.

IF: Farmed Lowland Moorland & Culm Grassland

Wet grassland/mires (culm) – especially characteristic in winter months – dead grasses.
Isolated farms & farmsteads , unimproved grassland/rough pasture (culm)
Essential for the natural environment – birds, insects, butterflies etc
Provides the essential patchwork character of the landscape – needs balanced agriculture to maintain it.
Wet grassland – culm – very distinctive
Small contained enclosures with traditional thick Devon banks
Culm grassland habitat

2C: Steep Open Slopes

Encroaching scrub
Feeling of naturalness
Amazing views
Coastal views, lack of trees giving an open, windswept, exposed character
Recreation
Unmanaged
Remnant coastal heath
Windy narrow slopes
Superb beach sand dune development, dramatic headlands and 'Combe' valley – considerable National Trust land

⁷ The workshop specifically sought to meet the objectives of the European Landscape Convention – to develop landscape policies dedicated to the protection, management and planning of landscapes; and to establish procedures for the participation of the general public and other stakeholders in the creation and implementation of landscape policies.

Exciting and different. Balance between lively coastal watersports and 'remote' feel of coastal heath and headlands.
Largely undeveloped
Punctuated by buildings – good and bad
Circular walks – signed paths, fenced and open grazing
Locally distinct field boundaries

2D: Moorland Edge Slopes

Hedges, traditional buildings
Intricate field patterns and mature hedges
Expansive views out over to Exmoor
Large, open field pattern; beech hedges
Compensate for loss of set-aside and leave areas around hedges clear
Moorland – chance to see deer etc
Main unique attribute – culm grass
A feeling of transition from one landscape type to another – i.e. entering Exmoor
Tranquillity, sense of isolation, forms part of setting of National Park, views across North Devon, little signs of man's influence
Remoteness
Views to Exmoor – strong relationship; moorland influence in vegetation – gorse – different feel to landscape types adjacent (Exmoor and valleys)
Buildings using nature and locally sourced materials
Views – ability to 'spy' landmarks on the horizon – 'Molland Clump'
The harmony of man and nature – accessible, visible, scenic beauty, tranquil, peaceful
Views, open landscapes, richness and variety of wildlife habitat, protected villages
Narrow lanes without concrete verges or night lighting – tranquil and rural
Picturesque villages – rural character, individual designs, no housing estates
Of landscape value
Beech hedges and stone hedgebanks

3A: Upper Farmed and Wooded Slopes

Amenity woodland/ 'clump' plantings
Woods and copses
Ancient wooded valleys, evocative of North Devon
Like shaggy hedges and small gateways. Concerned about over hedge trimming and widening of gateways for bigger machines.
Narrow lanes – no concrete verges or night lighting, tranquil and rural
Narrow sunken lanes, rich hedgerow wildlife
Worked landscape activity – provides setting to villages and vice versa
Steep, deep valleys
Provide that essential contrast within the landscape which can be very appealing.
South Molton should be recognised as urban, separate from 3A
Screen large agriculture buildings with trees
Openness
Defined field pattern
Stone and cob lincays, agricultural buildings, isolated, built into field boundaries, hill top copses
Farm groups in valleys
Hill top settlements break up the upper farmed area – and can be very attractive

(with church towers)
Landscape value – woods need protecting

3C: Sparsely Settled Farmed Valley Floors

Nature, trees along natural rivers
Habitat around rivers and streams
Tranquillity, sense of isolation, unchanged for centuries, intimate landscape, sparse population
Natural, flood plain, diverse habitats
Views and vistas provide relief and openness
Essentially, maintain the size and 'footprint' of settlements, balance of farmed and 'set aside'

3F: Settled Valley Floors

Valley floors provide the richest agricultural land. Watercourse and grazed pasture where flooding occurs are necessary
Soft land uses that withstand flooding, and some historic 'mistakes' that need flood protection.
Vast amount of flora and fauna
Essential habitat for all wildlife under threat.

3G: River Valley Slopes and Combes

Mature trees along country lanes forming 'tunnels'
Woodland habitat contributes to diversity of wildlife corridor along river valley.
Flood zones, winter drama
Rain – run-off
At West Worlington a chance to see geography in action as ox-bow lake forms
Restrict areas of cattle grazing etc on river banks
Protect floodplain
Prevent excess fresh water tapping
Enhance and protect hedgerows as vital eco-spheres

3H: Secluded Valleys

Woodland birds
Haven for wildlife (in valleys by streams)
Linear settlements within narrow valleys
Wildlife havens – no public access
Native woodland , intimate, enclosed, ancient green lanes
Tranquillity, isolation, feeling of being unchanged for centuries , sparsely populated
Wildlife
Farming and countryside activities

3J: Upland River Valleys

Flood plains
Historic stone bridges, narrow lanes , natural quality of rivers
Tranquillity, isolation
Totally escapes

Part of the setting of the National Park
Views across North Devon
Little sign of man's influence

4B: Coastal Slopes and Combes with Settlement

To be protected from excessive development
Should medieval field system be noted around Combe Martin
Thatched cottages
Often defined by strong planted edges and variety of species
Local vernacular buildings – cob, thatch, slate, whitewash, stone
Built up area contained within landscape and not visible from a distance (apart from the sea)
Linear settlements – narrow valleys, morte slate, farmsteads within village centres
Localised difference at Combe Martin, strong industrial influence overlays medieval field system
Linear settlement
Historic interest around fishing villages – harbours and limekilns
Steep, wooded slopes
Distinctive hedgebanks – stone faced
Edwardian and Victorian seaside influence
Long/distant views to the coast

4C: Estuaries

Long views
Access to the waterfront along flood defences
AONB and SSSI – vital biosphere areas to be protected and managed rigorously
Taw and Torridge Estuary only one available to overwintering birds
Openness
Birdlife, cyclepaths, variety from tidal flows
Open feeling/expansive views
Managed recreation. No build! Unique habitats for flora and fauna
Wildlife and birds
Evidence of quays and lime kilns, wide open character between ridges
Water birds

4D: Cliffs

Views
Coast path
Breeding birds
Freedom to explore, discovery and experience
Extensive views along coast and inland
Cliff edge footpath – continuous, great views
Wildlife habitats, unique coastline are why Devon is a major tourist attraction, views
Erosion, safety, geological, inaccessible, coast path views, rock-climbing
Secluded coves
Total contrast from the North coastal path and the South meeting at the point

Walks
Provide spectacular coastal scenery – where accessible
Cliff castles – Hillsborough, and other historic defences
Views of South Wales
Rugged coastline and hidden coves
Stunning coastal views , cliffs with distinct geology and varied form

4E: Extensive Intertidal Sands

Largely undeveloped
Feeding areas for waders etc
Wide open panoramas out to sea
Open vast expanse of sand
Contrasts with season/weather – wild, alien, windswept, then busy, lively, crowded.
Unspoilt by modern development nearby

4F: Coastal Dunes

Open views, wildlife habitats , dune system should be protected
Ability to find space away from other people. Feeling of remoteness even when in use by others
A great sense of ‘naturalness’
Braunton Burrows: Intimate landscape? Mix of extensive and limited views
Element of leisure activities
Valuable biodiversity
Undulating sand dunes – UNESCO Biosphere Reserve
Balance of access and protection – e.g. encourage tourist access but control parking, pathways and erosion (and safety)
Unfettered public access – roam rather than follow paths
Wilderness, tranquillity, lack of built features – naturalness
Wilderness
Flora and fauna
Our World Heritage Site – unique habitat, harsh beauty

ND2: Coastal and Inland Rolling Downland

Lanes too small for large heavy traffic – agricultural and industrial
Hedges should be preserved for wildlife habitat
Dramatic views
Small communities
Extensive open views
Extensive views
Patchwork of green, far reaching views
Gently rolling hills
Large, square field patterns
Flora and fauna
Smooth flowing skylines , more sensitive where church spires are the only buildings that break them
Peaceful but also active
Wildlife habitat

ND3: Estate Wooded Hills & Ridges

Ridgeback hills
Parkland and wood pasture (Filleigh)
Old/veteran trees
Long views including to Lundy from Yarde Cross (652337), and across valley in line with ancient trackway to Tavistock. Plus views from Codden Hill (360 degree) if this ancient land.
This also includes quarry areas at Venn and Codden (south slopes) these can be sever (also Swimbridge) unless screened or managed (Landkey).
Of landscape value – flora, fauna, wildlife
Sense of peace
Landkey: Ancient trackways (harepaths), hedgerows and streams make up a lion outline from which Landkey derives its name (Domesday book exon). Was Lon-de-key
Parkland trees, narrow winding lanes along ancient boundaries
Single track roads offering criss-cross network between major roads
Views from Codden Hill – best in North Devon
Managed and formal

ND4: Estate Wooded Farmland

Ancient woodland and rights of way
Narrow Devon lanes, parkland trees, village settlements
Parkland with individual large trees
Secluded valleys with old wooded areas
Pastoral landscape of parkland trees (deciduous), some lanes without hedgerows – evocative country estates
Farmland, birds
Important because they often provide the larger areas of woodland as opposed to Spinneys Copse: valley sides of ancient woodland
Narrow lanes, no concrete verges or street lights, tranquil and rural
Ancient trees and managed landscapes – wonderful wildlife resource. Unchanged rural settlements
Age and durability, single trees act as landmarks
Veteran/hedgerow trees, parkland planting
Avoidance of ‘over farming’ and over grazing and deterioration of soil by fertilisers, pesticides, chemicals etc.

ND5: Marshland/Low-lying Farmland

Historic landscape
Ditches and stone walls
Wetlands, open landscape, Braunton Marsh
Peaceful and tranquil, transition between land/estuary/sea, traditional, pastoral
Bygone era
Habitat for biodiversity, and rich bird habitat
Shoreline Management Plan – relevant to Braunton Marshes (Horse Island??).
Water levels still apparently falling – various theories
Braunton Great Field
The jewel in North Devon’s crown – our unique and proud World Heritage Site – to be valued, protected and advertised!

Disappearing rapidly, historic important site
Medieval field system west of Braunton
Ancient farmland
Protection vital to preserve unique qualities
Links to history – wide green space
Unenclosed
Needs protecting
Traditional ways of farming and animal housing
Landsheds and furlongs
An obviously historic landscape

EXERCISE 2: BRAINSTORMING FORCES FOR CHANGE & LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

The whole group was split into three different focus groups, looking at the 'top 3- 5' special qualities identified in the first exercise for the Landscape Character Types. Each group discussed the issues or 'forces for change' affecting the special qualities (including future issues e.g. climate change) and discussed ideas for the development of landscape guidelines.

To be compliant with the European Landscape Convention (ELC), the guidelines in the Landscape Character Assessment report will be organised under the following categories:

- **protect:** measures to preserve the present character and quality of the landscape which will be greatly valued on account of its distinctive natural or cultural configuration (*i.e. conserve current aspects of landscape importance and strengthen their resilience*)
- **manage:** change steered to improve landscape character, with an emphasis on the regular upkeep of the landscape and its evolution (*i.e. manage, maintain and enhance valued attributes to strengthen landscape character*).
- **plan:** the process by which new landscapes are created – including to radically reshape damaged landscapes (*e.g. large-scale habitat creation, Green Infrastructure planning, restoration of mineral sites*).

Taken from Article I of the European Landscape Convention (Council of Europe), March 2004

The following tables summarise the results from these discussions, with guidelines formulated from the workshop discussions.

1F Farmed Lowland Moorland and Culm Grassland

Special quality	Forces for change affecting special quality	Suggested guideline(s)	Suggested delivery mechanisms
Culm grasslands and associated wildlife (including wetland birds)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Past drainage / inappropriate management and neglect -Climate change impacts – future drought conditions potentially threatening wetlands -Changing economies of farming (both past and future) – future drive for food production -Agri-environment schemes too rigid / not tailored enough to local conditions (e.g. reduced stocking rates) 	<p><u>Manage</u> areas of Culm grassland through appropriate grazing and burning regimes whilst <u>protecting</u> their high wildlife importance. Share best practice between farmers farming in areas of Culm grassland.</p> <p><u>Plan</u> for the expansion of fragmented Culm grassland sites to create an intact green network, where conditions allow (e.g. underlying geology / soils).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sharing best practice and holding training events with farmers in areas of Culm (e.g. Lower Ash Farm) -Environmental Stewardship -The <i>Working Wetlands</i> project (DWT) - Ensure management prescriptions provide a balance between wildlife needs and those of local farmers so agriculture remains viable.

Valleys: 3G River Valley Slopes and Combes, 3H: Secluded Valleys, 3J: Upland River Valleys

Special quality	Forces for change affecting special quality		Suggested delivery mechanisms
Wildlife havens, particularly associated with woodlands	- Tree / woodland removal from along roads, for highway safety reasons.	<u>Manage</u> the valleys' important semi-natural woodlands, re-introducing coppice management including along roadsides to enhance biodiversity and provide a low-carbon fuel source for local communities. .	Engage with community/ volunteer and landowners to encourage coppice management, also to explore potential for a local woodfuel supply.
Narrow lanes/ green lanes and stone bridges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Heavy modern farm traffic and suppliers – too large for the road network - Vehicular damage to roadside hedges and woodland. - Hedge and tree removal for highway safety – sections often left overgrown otherwise (responsibility of the landowner). 	<u>Protect</u> the landscape's network of unmetalled narrow rural roads and green lanes, undertaking sensitive management of roadside trees, hedges and woodland (including through coppicing)	<p>As above</p> <p>DCC to roll out a Highway Protocol / best practice on roadside management to areas outside the protected landscapes.</p>
Tranquillity / isolation	- Heavy traffic on rural roads	None suggested	None suggested

Coastal LCTs: 4A: Coastal Scarp Slopes & Combes, 4C: Estuaries, 4D: Cliffs, .4E: Coastal Sand Dunes, 4F: Extensive Intertidal Sands, Low-lying farmland/marsh and Braunton Great Field

Special quality	Forces for change affecting special quality	Suggested guideline(s)	Suggested delivery mechanisms
Nature / wildlife / naturalness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Climate change adaptation -Future movement of sand dunes (need for a strategy for movement/migration) - Impact of recreation and military uses -Development pressure (flat land along coast desirable to build on) 	<p><u>Plan</u> for climate change adaptation. allowing habitat migration where feasible.</p> <p><u>Protect</u> the most sensitive parts of the coast from development pressure.</p> <p><u>Manage</u> levels of access and recreation, seeking a balance between these uses and conservation needs (e.g. through the use of zoning).</p>	<p>Shoreline Management Plan</p> <p>Identify areas suitable for future habitat migration (undeveloped sites)</p> <p>Coastal Development Document and Policy within the LDF</p> <p>Use local stakeholder input to inform NE priorities for landscape management.</p> <p>HLS and EWGS</p> <p>CORDALE Interreg bid (focus on Combe Martin)</p> <p>Estuary Management Plan (at consultation phase)</p> <p>Marine Management</p>

Special quality	Forces for change affecting special quality		Suggested delivery mechanisms
			Organisation (MMO)
Long, scenic views	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Offshore wind turbines – e.g. Atlantic Array 	<p><u>Protect</u> important coastal and sea views.</p> <p><u>Plan</u> for future renewable energy developments in the area, ensuring that landscape protection and key views are considered as high priorities for any proposals.</p>	<p>Lobby for the extension of the AONB boundary around the Caen Valley</p> <p>Exercise to prioritise key views in terms of what is valued / tourism</p> <p>North Devon Sustainable Energy Action Plan</p> <p>Seascape Assessment for offshore wind</p>
Heritage assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development around Braunton Great Field eroding traditional field systems and important landscape features - 'Horseyculture' encroaching into the countryside - Spread of hobby farming and rising cost of land - Tourism land uses replacing 	<p><u>Protect</u> the silver mining heritage associated with the landscape around Combe Martin, <u>planning</u> for the promotion of sustainable tourism opportunities to the area and other heritage sites in the landscape.</p> <p><u>Protect</u> the heritage assets of the landscape, reflecting and incorporating elements into new</p>	<p>Complete Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans for heritage areas/sites.</p>

Special quality	Forces for change affecting special quality	Suggested guideline(s)	Suggested delivery mechanisms
	<p>agriculture</p> <p>- Climate change and sea level rise threatening Horsea Island and Brauton Marsh</p>	<p>development.</p> <p><u>Manage and protect</u> heritage assets for future generations.</p>	
<p>Opportunities for access and recreation</p>	<p>- Benefit to the economy – but should be spread across the district</p>	<p><u>Manage</u> levels of access and recreation, seeking a balance between these uses and conservation needs (e.g. through the use of zoning).</p>	<p>Promote less sensitive areas (e.g. inland) for tourism</p> <p>Development of Access Management Plans</p> <p>Integrated Transport Initiatives</p> <p>AONB scheme to reduce car use by visitors – ‘Explore the Coast’ (leaving car at B&B)</p> <p>‘Golden Coast’ park and ride</p>

Special quality	Forces for change affecting special quality	Suggested guideline(s)	Suggested delivery mechanisms
Secluded / intimate / peaceful	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Light pollution from nearby development - Cars and traffic - Recreation and tourism – impacts of the '28 day rule' Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 – relating to camping, shooting, scrambling etc. - Popularity of the coast for surfing 	<u>Protect</u> the secluded, intimate and peaceful qualities associated with the coast, exploring opportunities to <u>manage</u> recreational uses, reduce traffic levels and encourage sustainable energy / transport use.	<p>North Devon Sustainable Energy Action Plan</p> <p>AONB scheme to reduce car use by visitors – 'Explore the Coast' (leaving car at B&B)</p> <p>Low energy use initiatives</p> <p>Sustainable travel for local villages – e.g. park and ride</p> <p>Review/lobby on 28 day rule</p> <p>Improve rail transport links and destinations</p>

ND2: Coastal and Inland Rolling Downland

Special quality	Forces for change affecting special quality	Suggested guideline(s)	Suggested delivery mechanisms
Flowing skylines punctuated by church towers (particularly important viewed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Demand for wind turbines – already approval for 22x140m turbines at Fullabrook. Will be very visible across district and AONB. 	<u>Protect</u> the landscape's flowing open skylines and key views of square church towers by managing and controlling development on	

Special quality	Forces for change affecting special quality		Suggested delivery mechanisms
from estuary)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Another proposal for 3x100m turbines at Shelfin. - Cumulative effects of different scales and styles of turbine, including domestic. - Future demand for 'energy farms' e.g. solar. Already proposals in the pipeline. However if Severn Barrage goes ahead, this demand may be removed. - Views of development in the south and into Torridge district. - Development of Mullacott Cross industrial estate – proposals to expand. Current cladding (pale green) prominent in the landscape. - Impacts of development limited as historic settlements located below the skyline. 	downland summits.	
Wildlife, flora and fauna, including farmland habitats and	- Important intact farmland habitats with hares, skylarks, buzzards and deer – livestock grazing very	<u>Manage</u> the farmed downland landscape through supporting a continuation in livestock farming and	Environmental Stewardship

Special quality	Forces for change affecting special quality	Suggested guideline(s)	Suggested delivery mechanisms
single windblown trees	<p>important</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Impacts of future changes to farming – market forces, climate change (energy crops, SRC) - Tightly flailed hedges 	<p>encouraging wildlife-friendly farming methods.</p> <p><u>Protect</u> single windblown trees as valued landscape features, and <u>plan</u> for the replacement of old specimens, including through planting a new stock of hedgerow and field corner trees.</p>	
Square fields and important beech hedge boundaries (19 th century downland reclamation and spread of beech from Exmoor)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Past hedgerow loss and field amalgamation - Varying levels of management – some hedges intensively flailed, some replaced by fencing, others neglected. - Changes in farm management and economies – larger farms don't have the time to undertake sensitive hedge management – fencing cheaper and more stockproof. - Lack of subsidies to support hedge management (HLS focused on protected sites, ELS too broad). 	<p><u>Manage</u> and restore the landscape's important network of hedges to strengthen square field patterns and reinforce traditional skills.</p>	<p>Engage with voluntary groups (e.g. BTCV) to undertake hedge laying projects in the area</p> <p>Environmental Stewardship</p>

Special quality	Forces for change affecting special quality	Suggested guideline(s)	Suggested delivery mechanisms
Small communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development pressure - Past development policies favouring 'key settlements', leading to small communities left without services or affordable housing. - When built, affordable housing is often cheaply constructed and unsympathetic to building traditions and landscape setting. 	<p><u>Manage</u> and <u>plan</u> for the future sustainability of rural settlements, with limited new development integrated into its landscape setting (below ridge tops), replicating local building styles and materials wherever possible. New development should be appropriately linked to facilities and infrastructure to serve the needs of local communities.</p>	Design Guide setting out principles for new development in the landscape (Conservation Areas focused on historic cores)

ND3: Estate Wooded Hills & Ridges

Special quality	Forces for change affecting special quality	Suggested guideline(s)	Suggested delivery mechanisms
Veteran trees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Castle Hill estate is in Stewardship and EWGS (positive) - Some remnant estate land not under management. - Future climate change impacts – e.g. increased pests/disease (e.g. Sudden Oak Death). 	<p>Sensitively <u>manage</u> the landscape's remaining ancient and veteran trees, including through traditional pollarding where appropriate.</p> <p><u>Plan</u> for the planting of the next generation of veteran trees, choosing climate resilient species to ensure longevity.</p>	<p>Environmental Stewardship</p> <p>EWGS</p>

Special quality	Forces for change affecting special quality	Suggested guideline(s)	Suggested delivery mechanisms
Long views, including from Codden Hill and 'designed views'.	- Future development pressure between Landkey and the South Molton roundabout impacting on northward views.	<u>Protect</u> important views to and from the hills and designed parkland landscapes.	Identify important views and viewpoints.
Wildlife habitats	- Past loss of lowland heathland on Codden Hill – some remaining - Scrub encroachment on south facing slope - Past quarrying activity	<u>Plan</u> for the expansion of lowland heath on Codden Hill, managed through appropriate grazing and burning levels, with remnant sites re-linked to form an intact habitat network. <u>Plan</u> for potential habitat recreation in disused quarry sites, whilst <u>protecting</u> important geological outcrops revealed in rock faces.	Environmental Stewardship
Ancient trackways	- Survived well – no routes are used as rat runs so character is being retained.	<u>Protect</u> the landscape's ancient trackways and network of quiet rural lanes, resisting unsympathetic highways improvements or signage.	
Peace and tranquillity	- Visual and noise intrusion from the A361 North Devon Link Road - Future development pressure between Landkey and the South Molton roundabout (eventual	<u>Plan</u> for the future expansion of local settlements, integrating new development into its landscape framework through the provision of a surrounding network of green spaces, wildlife habitats and	Green Infrastructure Strategy (DCC)

Special quality	Forces for change affecting special quality	Suggested guideline(s)	Suggested delivery mechanisms
	coalescence between Barnstaple and Landkey).	recreational routes.	

Workshop Attendees

Name	Organisation
Sheelagh Darling	Marwood Parish Council
Micky Darling	Marwood Parish Council
Bob Barfoot	CPRE North Devon
Sue Jerrard	Bittadon Parish Meeting
Robert Domleo	Atherington Parish Council
David Gravell	Landkey Parish Council
John Cole	Goodleigh Parish Council
Linda Blanchard	North Devon AONB
Derrick Spear	Coast & Countryside Alliance
Dave Edgcombe	North Devon AONB
Melanie Hinde	Devon County Council
Craig Dixon	Devon County Council
Mark Pine	Shirwell Parish Council
Paul Winter	Torridge District Council
Cathy Karniewicz	Goodleigh Parish Council
Jean Watkins	North Devon District Council
K Biney	North Devon District Council
Mark Alcock	North Devon District Council
Sally Hocking	Mortehoe Parish
Cllr Ricky Knight	Barnstaple Town Council
Andrew Jones	North Devon District Council

Appendix 2

Devon Menu of Landscape Character Types

DEVON LANDSCAPE CHARACTER TYPES (LCTs) SUMMARY LIST AND KEY CHARACTERISTICS

Revised 8 November 2010

Summary List of 37 Devon LCTs

LCT 1: PLATEAUX AND RIDGES

- LCT 1A: Open inland planned plateaux**
- LCT 1B: Open coastal plateaux**
- LCT 1C: Pebblebed heaths**
- LCT 1D: Estate wooded ridges and hilltops (new– ND3 from N D & T joint LCA)**
- LCT 1E: Wooded ridges and hilltops**
- LCT 1F: Farmed lowland moorland and Culm grassland**
- LCT 1G: Open inland plateaux**
- LCT 1H: Forested plateau**
- LCT 1J: Farmed and forested plateau**
- LCT 1K: Unsettled high upland moorland**
- LCT 1L: Upland moorland with tors**

LCT 2: SCARP SLOPES

- LCT 2A: Steep wooded scarp slopes**
- LCT 2B (formerly 2E): Steep wooded and settled scarp slopes**
- LCT 2C (formerly 2G): Steep open slopes**
- LCT 2D: Moorland edge slopes**

LCT 3: VALLEYS

- LCT 3A: Upper farmed and wooded valley slopes**
- LCT 3B: Lower rolling farmed and settled valley slopes**
- LCT 3C (formerly 4A): Sparsely settled farmed valley floors**
- LCT 3D (formerly 3J): Upland river valleys**
- LCT 3E (formerly 4D): Lowland plains**
- LCT 3F (formerly 4G): Settled valley floors**
- LCT 3G (formerly 2C): River valley slopes and combes**
- LCT 3H: Secluded valleys**

LCT 4: COASTS

- LCT 4A (formerly 4C): Estuaries**
- LCT 4B (originally 4B then 3D): Marine levels**
- LCT 4C (formerly 2F): Coastal slopes and combes with settlement**
- LCT 4D: (originally 2B): Coastal slopes and combes**
- LCT 4E: Extensive inter-tidal sands**
- LCT 4F: Dunes**
- LCT 4G: Low lying coast and beach**
- LCT 4H (formerly 5): Cliffs**

LCT 5: ROLLING HILLS

LCT 5A (formerly ID): Inland elevated undulating land
LCT 5B (new ND1 from N D & T joint LCA): Coastal undulating farmland
LCT 5C (new- ND2 from N D & T joint LCA): Downland
LCT 5D (new -ND4 from N D & T joint LCA): Estate wooded farmland

LCT 6: OFFSHORE ISLANDS

LCT 7: MAIN CITIES AND TOWNS

LCT 1: PLATEAUX AND RIDGES

LCT 1A: Open inland planned plateaux (East Devon AONB, Blackdown Hills AONB, Tamar Valley AONB and WDBC)

- High open flat plateau
- Rectangular field pattern of medium to large scale
- Predominantly pastoral farming on heavy soils
- Well trimmed hedges on narrow earth banks
- Sparsely scattered boundary trees, usually beech with oak towards plateau edge
- Very uniform appearance
- Beech, oak and hazel are the dominant species
- Occasional copses and small conifer plantations punctuate the open farmland
- Long straight roads in centre, with narrow winding minor roads towards the edge
- Isolated farmsteads and clusters of buildings at crossroads; 20th century settlement associated with airfields
- Extensive views often blocked by woodland on boundary
- Series of linked narrow plateaux with gently sloping sides
- Regular well-maintained low-trimmed hedges on narrow earth banks
- Open farmland punctuated by narrow copses and double hedges along roads, with some beech clumps
- Linear pattern of scattered small-scale settlement along roads and clustered at crossroads

LCT 1B Open coastal plateaux (EDDC and East Devon AONB AONB, SHDC and South Devon AONB, North Devon AONB, and Torridge DC)

- High, open plateaux, dissected or separated by combes and river valleys
- Windblown vegetation
- Regular medium to large field pattern
- Stone boundary walls, dense low hedges (often elm) with occasional hedgerow oaks
- Mixed land use, mainly pastoral or arable
- Little woodland or limited deciduous woodland
- Few roads but many rights of way
- Very low or low settlement density

- Influence of geology on landform and/or soil colour
- Extensive views along coast

LCT IC: Pebblebed heaths (EDDC and East Devon AONB)

- High, level to gently undulating open plateaux
- Extensive lowland heath, conifer plantations and some beech woods
- Mix of unenclosed heath and conifer plantations
- Mix of major and minor roads
- Mainly unsettled
- Distinctive geology influences vegetation and land use
- Extensive recreational and biodiversity use
- Panoramic views

LCT ID: Estate wooded hills and ridges (N Devon DC)

- Distinct ridges dissected by a series of streams contrasting with surrounding undulating land, with summits affording spectacular panoramic views.
- Large bands of broadleaved beech and oak woodland across ridges and along stream valleys, with blocks of conifer plantation and secondary woodland on hill slopes. Estate woodland with veteran trees around historic designed landscapes.
- Traditional orchards around historic bartons.
- Predominantly pastoral character. Hill slopes and summits provide rough grazing land, with wood pasture and parkland around historic estates..
- Mixture of curving small-medium scale medieval fields and more regular larger enclosures of recent origin, bounded by mixed species hedges. 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, rush pasture and neutral grasslands, historic wood pasture, ancient trees, and rich broadleaved woodlands and damp meadows..
- Historic Grade I or II* mansion(s) set in ornamental historic parkland estate with nationally important features including fishpond, ice house and deer fencing. Historic quarries are landscape features. .
- Elsewhere, nucleated hamlets and farmsteads nestled at the base of slopes.
- Strong traditional vernacular associated with with a particular estate.
- Strong sense of tranquillity and history with little modern development.

LCT IE: Wooded ridges and hilltops (Teignbridge, EDDC, East Devon AONB and Blackdown Hills AONB and SHDC and South Devon AONB)

- Small hills and associated small ridges, or area of undulating small hills
- Irregular fields of variable size. some with spring-line mires
- Species-rich hedgebanks and tree rows, ancient woodland and great species diversity with oak and ash common as hedgerow trees

- Mixed woodland and some pasture; hilltop fields may be arable
- Sparsely settled
- Narrow enclosed winding lanes
- Limited views out
- High and frequently remote

LCT IF Farmed lowland moorland and Culm grassland (WDBC, Torridge DC, N Devon DC, Tamar Valley AONB and North Devon AONB)

- Flat to gently rolling moorland plateaux
- Mainly pastoral cultivation with prominent conifer plantations
- Notably regular field pattern with areas of unenclosed moorland heath or Culm grassland, and scrub
- Open and exposed
- Many shallow streams and rush-dominated roadside ditches indicative of impeded drainage
- Sparse settlement pattern of hamlets and isolated farms. Could contain some tourism and leisure uses and occasional isolated stone barns
- Sparse highway network of narrow straight lanes
- Hedgebanks with low hedges and a few roadside oaks and copses, in variable condition
- Crossroads marked by signposts
- Predominantly inland character, but could extend to coastal fringe

LCT IG Open inland plateaux (Teignbridge, WDBC and Tamar Valley AONB)

- Gently rolling plateaux
- Pastoral farmland with variable small-scale woodland cover and estate farmland plus minor other land uses
- Mainly broadleaved woodland, with some conifer plantations near boundaries and distinctive forestry management regime locally
- Many streams, wet rush pasture and ditches
- Hedgebanks with hedgerow trees
- Irregular medium-large scale field pattern
- Sparse pattern of dispersed hamlets, isolated farms, villages, historic settlements and crossroads settlements
- Dense network of narrow sinuous lanes with curved verges of variable width
- Open elevated long views over river valleys
- Exposed rock outcrops locally

LCT IH: Forested plateau (Teignbridge)

- Gently rolling elevated plateau;
- Large areas of conifer plantation and mixed woodland with relic heathland, which in some places dominates;
- Lanes on plateau relatively open and straight, often bordered by woodland on either side;
- Sparsely settled with isolated houses and farms along minor roads;
- Modern leisure and recreational development including car parks, picnic sites and trails;

- Panoramic views out but restricted to vantage points and gaps in woodland cover along the plateau edges;
- Prehistoric sites including cairns and hillforts.

LCT IJ: Farmed and forested plateau (Dartmoor)

- Gently undulating plateau rising above steep slopes
- Plateau core dominated by extensive conifer plantations associated with reservoirs
- Smaller patches of coniferous, mixed, wet woodland and heathy scrub fringe tributary streams and mires, linking to small farm woods and copses
- Predominantly pastoral medium scale medieval and post-medieval fields surrounding the plantations, with occasional larger and more regular arable fields and localised areas of horticulture. Smaller scale, more ancient irregular field patterns associated with hamlet fringes.
- Low cut mixed species hedgerows with hedgerow trees around the boundary, with fewer trees on exposed plateau. Some patches of gorse and bracken contribute to upland feel.
- Expansive views out from plateau edges contrasting with more enclosed and framed views within the plateau. Geological outcrops may provide panoramic elevated viewpoints.
- Settlement character confined to dispersed farms of granite, cob and slate on plateau edge with occasional larger hamlets of mixed building styles nestling within rolling landform.
- Extensive network of narrow winding lanes, in places passing through 'tunnels' formed by avenues of mature beech trees, often on banks.

LCT IK: Unsettled high upland moorland (Dartmoor)

- Large scale, upland plateaux with broad ridges, with occasional tors and rock outcrops along plateaux edges providing distinctive crumpled silhouettes contrasting with smooth uninterrupted skylines.
- Expansive panoramic views and an overwhelming sense of remoteness and exposure
- Large expanses of grass and heather moorland interspersed with bilberry, purple moor grass, gorse and bracken- extensively grazed by sheep, cattle and ponies
- Blanket bog and mixed valley mires over thick layers of peat supporting internationally important upland wildlife habitats
- Major water catchment, with extensive network of small streams and mires in shallow valleys radiating off plateaux tops, feeding larger watercourses draining the moor.
- Extensive remains of ancient settlements, cairns and boundaries, particularly associated with the Bronze Age.
- Features associated with mining heritage from medieval period
- Absence of settlement and intrusion with resultant high levels of tranquillity and dark night skies. Influenced in parts from military training use and associated modern buildings.
- Sparse network of rights of way often following ancient tracks.

LCT 1L: Upland moorland with tors (Dartmoor)

- Gently rolling, large scale landscape of smooth moorland slopes punctuated by granite tors and scatterings of granite boulders and clutter slopes along fringes.
- Strong sense of exposure and far reaching, often panoramic views. Tors form characteristic silhouettes on smooth, uninterrupted skylines.
- Large conifer plantations create dark blocks with hard edges, contrasting with the smooth, muted landscape backdrop.
- Patches of deciduous woodland are dominated by oak, ash and beech; generally limited to valley sides and around settlements.
- Mosaic of heathland vegetation over elevated areas and scattered, windswept trees.
- Free-roaming ponies, sheep and cattle strongly associated with moorland scene.
- Valley mires and blanket bogs thread through the rolling landscape before feeding into fast-flowing tributary streams occupying steep sided valleys off the moor.
- Strong pattern of 18th and 19th century 'newtakes' surround the moorland core, defined by a regular pattern of granite drystone walls and low hedgebanks enclosing rough grazing land.
- Numerous sites and features of high archaeological significance, including prehistoric monuments and ancient field boundary markings constructed from granite.
- Scattered former mineral workings and associated buildings dating from the medieval period onwards and 19th century quarries.
- Granite and slate predominate as local vernacular materials
- Small settlements clustered around bridging points or crossroads nestled into the folds of the landscape. Isolated farmsteads, often with colourwashed walls, are dotted across the moorland; commonly framed by trees providing shelter from the elements.
- Larger settlements often conspicuous in the landscape.
- Extensive, often ancient rights of way network. Open and straight roads cross the moorland contrasting with small, winding lanes traversing the lower slopes.
- Largely uninterrupted skylines. Telecom masts or other sizeable vertical element tend to stand out. .

LCT 2: SCARP SLOPES

LCT 2A: Steep wooded scarp slopes (Teignbridge, EDDC, East Devon AONB and Blackdown Hills AONB)

- A narrow band of steeply sloping land immediately below a plateau edge
- Mixed woodland and semi improved or unimproved pasture
- Pastoral cultivation, with small-scale irregular field pattern
- Lightly settled
- Narrow winding lanes with well treed banks
- Occasional long views out over adjoining valleys

- Many patches of semi-natural habitats, including spring-line mires and scrub

LCT 2B (formerly 2E): Steep wooded and settled scarp slopes (SHDC and South Devon AONB)

- A narrow band of steeply sloping land immediately below a plateau edge
- Unenclosed
- Well wooded
- Extensively settled, with converted buildings and much small scale 20th century dwellings
- Narrow winding lanes with well treed hedgebanks

LCT 2C (formerly 2G): Steep open slopes (WDBC and Tamar Valley AONB, N Devon AONB)

- Upper sloping hillside below a plateau edge
- Adjoining but not part of coastal cliffs
- Open pastoral farmland without woods or trees but with low hedges and hedgebanks
- Mix of pasture, rough grazing and low scrub
- Regular field pattern of variable size, giving an unenclosed appearance where very large
- Limited network of sinuous minor roads
- Small hamlets of vernacular style or extensive small-scale coastal settlement with much leisure-related development
- Medium to large scale, open but partly protected from exposure by headlands
- Extensive coastal views

LCT 2D Moorland edge slopes (Dartmoor, WDBC and Tamar Valley AONB, SHDC and South Devon AONB, N Devon DC)

- Sloping upland moorland edge
- Mix of open unenclosed moorland, pastoral farmland and rough grass
- Variable field sizes, often small
- Small areas of conifer plantation and mixed and amenity woodland
- Local dominance of beech as hedgerow and roadside tree
- Some artificial landform locally as result of mineral extraction
- Open, with long views
- Sparsely settled with farms and villages, sometimes influenced by adjacent urban edges.
- Limited road network
- Recreational use

LCT 3: VALLEYS

LCT 3A: Upper farmed and wooded valley slopes (Dartmoor, EDDC, East Devon AONB, Blackdown Hills AONB, SHDC and South Devon AONB, Teignbridge, Torbay, N Devon and Torridge DC)

- Undulating or rolling upper valley slopes

- Pastoral farmland, with a wooded appearance, and arable cultivation on lower slopes
- Small to medium size fields with irregular boundaries
- Deciduous woods and copses, especially on hilltops and upper slopes
- Very wide, usually low, species-rich hedges with many hedgerow trees
- Dispersed settlement pattern of isolated farms and small villages
- Very winding narrow lanes
- An intimate and intricate landscape with wider views often restricted by vegetation
- Frequently remote and tranquil with little modern development

LCT 3B: Lower rolling farmed and settled valley slopes (Teignbridge, EDDC, East Devon AONB , Blackdown Hills AONB, North Devon AONB, WDBC and Tamar Valley AONB, SHDC and South Devon AONB, Torbay)

- Gently rolling lower valley slopes
- Pastoral farmland, with a wooded appearance
- Variable field patterns and sizes with either wide, low boundaries and irregular patterns or small fields with medium to tall boundaries and a regular pattern.
- Many hedgerow trees, copses and streamside tree rows
- Settled, with varied settlement size, building ages and styles, sometimes with unity of materials in places through use of stone.
- Presence of leisure-related development often associated with coast
- Winding, often narrow sunken lanes with very tall earth banks. Main roads may dominate locally.
- Streams and ditches
- Some parts tranquil and intimate all year round, except near main transport routes.
- Enclosed and sheltered landscape and wider views often restricted by vegetation

LCT 3C (formerly 4A): Sparsely settled farmed valley floors (Teignbridge, EDDC and the Blackdown Hills AONB, WDBC and the Tamar Valley AONB, North Devon AONB, N Devon and Torridge DC, and SHDC and South Devon AONB)

- Open flat landform, often with distinct vegetated floodplain edge confined by valley sides
- Watercourses screened by riparian vegetation often with low floodbanks
- Hedges, not banks, generally on the boundary with rising land.
- Pastoral land use, with wet meadows and some arable, with variable field sizes
- Saltmarsh and reedbeds sometimes occur locally
- Sparsely settled
- Stone sometimes used for walls, bridges and quays.
- Network of narrow winding lanes, sometimes with major roads along boundaries
- Open internally, with views out screened by boundary vegetation

- Variable field pattern, with some areas apparently unenclosed
- Frequently tranquil with river views

LCT 3D (formerly 3J): Upland river valleys (Dartmoor, N Devon DC)

- Steep-sided river valleys radiating out from an upland core, and fed by a series of upland tributaries and mires..
- Open and exposed in upper reaches, becoming more enclosed and intimate in lower reaches.
- Valley floors fringed by wet woodland and often Rhôs pasture, whilst valley sides are cloaked in extensive areas of ancient semi-natural woodland dominated by sessile oak and beech of high nature conservation importance. Evidence of past woodland management, including coppicing.
- The valleys are varied and colourful, with broadleaved woodlands providing seasonal interest through a range of colours including autumnal reds and oranges, and blankets of bluebells, primroses and wild garlic in spring.
- Some valleys fringed by large areas of coniferous plantation.
- Rivers are fast flowing and quickly swell in size after rainfall.. Areas of white-water, small waterfalls and gushing torrents through rocky courses.
- Industrial heritage evident in some areas, including network of leats, or structures from past mineral extraction and peat working.
- Medieval granite stone bridges often form the historic focus for the location of hamlets, small villages and farmsteads with a unifying granite and slate local vernacular.
- Reservoirs are prominent features in some valleys.
- Small, narrow winding roads traverse steep valley sides, often enclosed by high hedgerows creating 'tunnels' through the landscape.
- Larger settlements along the lower reaches of the main rivers are traditional at their cores, include 20th century development displaying a mixture of vernacular styles and materials.

LCT 3E (formerly 4D): Lowland Plains (Teignbridge, WDBC, Tamar valley AONB, EDDC, SHDC & S Devon AONB, Torbay)

- Level to gently sloping or rolling plain
- Mixed farmland with other land uses, possibly extractive industry or commercial development.
- Orchards sometimes common
- Settlement pattern varies according to location, from sparsely to densely settled, with a mixed pattern of villages and hamlets
- Regular or irregular medium to large scale field pattern
- Local dominance of stone as building material, but great variety of materials and styles throughout
- Variable woodland pattern, sometimes with small discrete woodlands, large plantations, hilltop beech clumps or linear amenity planting.
- Roadside hedges. Hedgerow trees may be sparse or dominant
- Variable highway network from sparse to major roads
- Long views variable in quality, sometimes marred by pylons and communication masts
- Surprising feeling of remoteness in some parts

LCT 3F (formerly 4G): Settled valley floors (Teignbridge, EDDC, N Devon DC)

- Small river valley floor, tightly contained by steep valley sides
- Tree-lined river edges
- Sometimes distinct gradation through valley from urban land uses to rural water meadows
- Recreational and industrial land uses
- Sparsely settled with occasional small villages, farms and hamlets
- Major road sometimes along or across valley
- Views contained by woodland and trees on valley sides and floor
- Tranquil away from main roads
- Historic bridges and mills occasionally present

LCT 3G (formerly 2C) River valley slopes and combes (Teignbridge, WDBC and Tamar Valley AONB and SHDC and South Devon AONB, N Devon and Torridge DC)

- High slopes often forming undulating or rounded hillforms to either side of small narrow valleys, sometimes with exposed rock faces
- Pastoral cultivation in regular and irregular small to medium scale fields with hedgerows and localised market gardening
- Variable woodland. Broadleaved woodland found on lower slopes with scrub, often in discrete small woods or extending to water's edge. Conifer plantations sometimes extend over whole valley sides
- Scattering of hamlets or farmsteads, sometimes with large riverside settlement
- Sparse road network
- Ancient stone bridges
- Often extensive recreational use
- Extensive views over river valleys

LCT 3H: Secluded valley (Torbay, N Devon and Torridge DC)

- Steep valley landform with narrow valley floor in the lower reaches of each valley.
- A topography which helps to enclose and separate these areas from the wider landscape.
- Secluded character due to the enclosing topography and complex network of narrow sunken lanes enclosed by high hedge-banks which contain views across fields and out to the surrounding landscape.
- Complex and irregular small scale pattern of hedge-banks and lanes, which separate small woodlands, orchards and areas of permanent pasture.
- Lanes and fields are often damp and species rich with small streams, overhanging trees and small scale enclosure.

LCT 4: COAST

LCT 4A (formerly 4C): Estuaries (Teignbridge, EDDC and SHDC and South Devon AONB, N Devon and Torridge DC)

- Extensive, wide, shallow area of mudflats, sand banks, marshes or large sandy bays, inundated by salt water at high tide
- Estuary edge often defined by ridges, valley slopes, lowland headlands, cliffs and rock outcrops
- Degree of enclosure and shelter dependant upon scale
- Low accessibility but well used for water-related recreation
- Unsettled
- Major road crossings sometimes present
- Mainly tranquil except close to settlements and major roads
- Strong sensory characteristics: colour and texture of habitats, smell of mudflats, birdcalls, sight of sunlight reflecting off water

LCT 4B (originally 4B then 3D): Marine levels and coastal plains (Teignbridge, EDDC, East Devon AONB, WDBC and the Tamar Valley AONB, North Devon AONB and SHDC and South Devon AONB, N Devon DC)

- Flat land usually bordering an estuary or within a floodplain, based on alluvial or tidal deposits
- Vegetation influenced by coastal conditions with some hedges but limited tree cover.
- Agricultural land with little or no buildings although some land may have been reclaimed for other uses, such as recreation or transport.
- Proximity of roads and settlements in adjoining areas reduces tranquillity
- Flat, expansive landscape with 'big skies'.
- Land drainage regimes have a distinct influence on vegetation character, with local variations evident below the tidal limit (marine levels) and above (coastal plains), with transition marked by a distinct earth bank on the seaward side that may be a prominent feature in a flat landscape.
- Marine levels comprise mainly wet pastures, reclaimed grazing marsh enclosed by reed-fringed, often brackish, drainage ditches and streams providing habitats with high biodiversity value and strong sensory characteristics: colour and texture of habitats, smell of mudflats, birdcalls, sight of sunlight reflecting off ditches and pools along with seasonal inundation. Informal recreational use sometimes evident
- Coastal plains comprise arable fields with a notable absence of drainage ditches and historically significant field pattern.

LCT 4C (originally 2F, then 4B): Coastal slopes and combes with settlement (Teignbridge, WDBC and Tamar Valley AONB, N Devon DC)

- Steeply sloping narrow valley systems
- A mix of woodland and small to medium irregular fields with wide hedgebanks
- Pasture, with frequent wet pasture and horse paddocks
- Sometimes extensive linear settlement just above narrow, flat valley floor, with Victorian architecture and small-scale 20th century 'resort' development
- Sparse winding narrow lanes, with SWCP present along coastal edge and many other rights of way
- Coastal influence, even where sea views restricted by narrowcombe mouth

- Small scale, confined and sheltered valleys, exposed, open ridges and higher slopes.
- Lushly vegetated

LCT 4D (originally 2B, formerly 4A): Coastal slopes and combes (Teignbridge, EDDC and East Devon AONB and North Devon AONB, and SHDC and South Devon AONB, Torridge DC)

- Individual or multiple branching valleys that can range from narrow and steep including scarp slopes to more open shallow systems.
- Coastal influence in exposure, vegetation and extensive views
- Broadleaved woodland, dominant in places.
- Small areas of pasture or mixed cultivation and scrub with small to medium irregular field pattern marked by often low hedgebanks
- Extremely sparsely settled, old settlements in combes, with stone as dominant building material
- Extensive coastal rights of way with steep paths down to beaches
- Narrow winding roads and limited vehicle access to coast unless a main road follows the coast.
- Intimate, small-scale and enclosed in combes
- Tranquil and remote in areas with limited vehicle access, contrasting with less tranquillity where main roads and main settlements are in proximity.
- Coastal influence and sea views. High, open and exhilarating on top slopes, grading to intimate and enclosed in lower valley where views are restricted by narrowness of combe mouth

LCT 4E Extensive inter-tidal sands (North Devon AONB, N Devon and Torridge DC)

- Flat sandy beach
- Extensive recreational use
- Protected by pebble ridge, low rocks, cliffs or dune system
- Unenclosed, unsettled and without roads
- Good access but few footpaths
- Exposed
- Extensive views along coast

LCT 4F Dunes (Teignbridge, North Devon AONB, N Devon and Torridge DC)

- Sand dune systems forming dominant features in the local landscape
- Important biodiversity
- Recreational use evident
- Some rush-dominated pasture and coastal grassland
- Unenclosed
- Almost entirely unsettled, without roads but with tracks and footpaths
- Exposed along seaward edges but interior of dunes provides shelter
- Tranquil and remote in parts

LCT 4G: Low lying coast and beach (Torbay)

- Recreation land and associated urban furniture (seats, signs, litter bins) and other features of an urban landscape such as beach huts, cafés, amenity buildings, and hard sea defences.
- Proximity to the sea, which is often partially hidden from the hinterland by beach huts and sea defences. Some areas of windblown scrub, occasional tree groups and amenity planting of exotics in local amenity spaces.
- Low lying landform with some gentle valleys running down to the sea.
- Occasional areas of woodland and trees on higher ground obscure adjacent housing

LCT 4H (originally 5): Cliffs (East Devon AONB, N Devon AONB, S Devon AONB, Teignbridge, Torbay)

- Steeply sloping cliffs, near-vertical in places, sometimes heavily incised
- Narrow beaches, small stony coves or rocky foreshore at foot of cliffs
- Accessible only along cliff top paths or in some places along shore
- Unsettled or very sparsely settled on less steep slopes
- Scrub or coastal grassland on less steep landward slopes
- Variable geology, rock faces and visible geological features, sometimes with landslips evident
- Extensive views along coastline and out to sea
- Exposed and sometimes wild with dominant marine influence

LCT 5: UNDULATING AND ROLLING LAND

LCT 5A (formerly 1D): Inland elevated undulating land (Teignbridge, Dartmoor, WDBC and Tamar Valley AONB and SHDC and South Devon AONB, N Devon and Torridge DC)

- Gently rolling farmland with streams creating small, often steeply sloping valleys.
- Mixed pastoral and arable cultivation, in a small to medium regular or irregular pattern on slopes, with some arable cultivation on flatter areas
- Hedgebanks with few hedgerow trees. Oaks, pine, holly and beech may be locally distinctive
- Little woodland.
- Network of sinuous minor roads
- Sparse settlement pattern of long-established small stone nucleated villages and hamlets, with scattered isolated houses and farms
- High and open, with extensive views where hedgebanks permit
- Moorland edge character, indicated by prevalence of beech and gorse or patches of rough pasture

LCT 5B: Coastal undulating farmland (Torridge DC)

- Strongly rolling landscape with prominent ridges and hilltops, heavily influenced by underlying geology.
- Pervading maritime influence with long coastal views

- Linear bands of broadleaved woodland, occasional small mixed woods and blocks of conifer plantation combined with a strong network of hedges resulting in a well-treed appearance.
- Strong pattern of regular medium-large fields of post-medieval and modern origin, interspersed with significant areas of smaller curving or medieval strip fields
- Fields bounded by Devon hedges comprising often locally characteristic native species with flower-rich banks and some stone facing. Patches of gorse reinforce a sense of exposure.
- Predominantly pastoral land use, with occasional arable fields and patches of rough grazing land.
- Nature conservation interest mainly provided by the area's network of woodlands and hedges, with isolated sites of Culm grassland, unimproved species-rich grassland and scrub interspersed within the farmland. Coastal locations include patches of maritime grassland, wet flushes and bracken scrub.
- Historic features include defensive sites offering coastal lookout points
- Traditional built vernacular of whitewashed and cream cob/render cottages, with some buildings of exposed local stone with red brick detailing. Recent housing, including cream/white bungalows, is a feature of some villages.
- Dispersed settlement pattern of scattered farmsteads and nucleated villages/hamlets at road crossing points.
- Settlement and farms linked by a network of rural roads enclosed by high hedgebanks. Main road cuts through the area.
- Urban and recreational land uses feature in the landscape.

LCT 5C: Downland (N Devon AONB, N Devon DC)

- Rolling downland landscape with broad rounded ridges and hilltops.
- Hill summits afford expansive views across the landscape and beyond
- 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 – views of the coast convey a maritime influence to the areas of downland closer to the sea.
- Sparse woodland cover, limited to occasional blocks of coniferous plantations, small farm woods and wind-sculpted pine shelterbelts. Sporadic clumps and avenues of beech on prominent ridgelines.
- Mixture of medium-scale curving medieval fields and larger post-medieval and modern fields with dead-straight boundaries. Some areas of unenclosed downland.
- 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 stone-faced grassy banks.

- Square-cut beech hedgebanks can be locally distinctive towards adjacent moorland. 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, ancient hilltop enclosures, historic quarries and parkland estates.
- Strong local vernacular including cream and whitewashed cob/render, exposed local stone with slate roofs and some local use of thatch. High proportion of historically important buildings. Square stone church towers are characteristic landmarks.
- 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.
- Caravan and holiday parks, as well as other tourism-related land uses detract from traditional landscape character and quality, particularly in locations close to the coast.

LCT 5D: Estate wooded farmland (N Devon and Torridge DC)

- Rolling hills and ridges drained by frequent streams, brooks and springs creating an undulating topography
- Higher land affords long views across the landscape
- Predominantly pastoral farmland, particularly dairying, with areas of arable cultivation and some ancient wood pasture. Pony paddocks sometimes found around villages.
- 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).
- Nature conservation interest provided by grassland, ponds and valley mire, as well as bands of ancient semi-natural woodland lining minor valleys.
- Historic parkland, estates and manors influencing landscape character.
- Nationally important archaeological and historic sites contribute 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 Devon banks restricting views, crossing many streams on stone bridges. Crossroads marked by distinctive white finger posts.
- Strong sense of peace and tranquillity.

LCT 6: OFFSHORE ISLANDS (Torbay, SHDC, South Devon AONB, N Devon AONB and Torridge DC (Lundy))

LCT 6A:

- Small offshore island ,either inhabited or uninhabited
- Strong geological influence on island form, including cliffs and rocky foreshore
- Vegetation on larger islands is strongly influenced by maritime conditions and exposure to prevailing winds, with coastal grassland and scrub with sparse, stunted trees and no hedges
- Grazed pasture and scrub, divided by post-and-wire fences or stone walls
- Paths or tracks and open access land on larger islands; no highway network.

LCT 7: MAIN CITIES AND TOWNS (All)

- Large settlement over 200ha in area, where the landscape is dominated by built development;
- Varied landform, often masked by development and only apparent when particularly pronounced;
- Nucleated historic cores, frequently including and surrounded by 19th century development, with more recent 20th century and later development on fringes.

Appendix 3

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