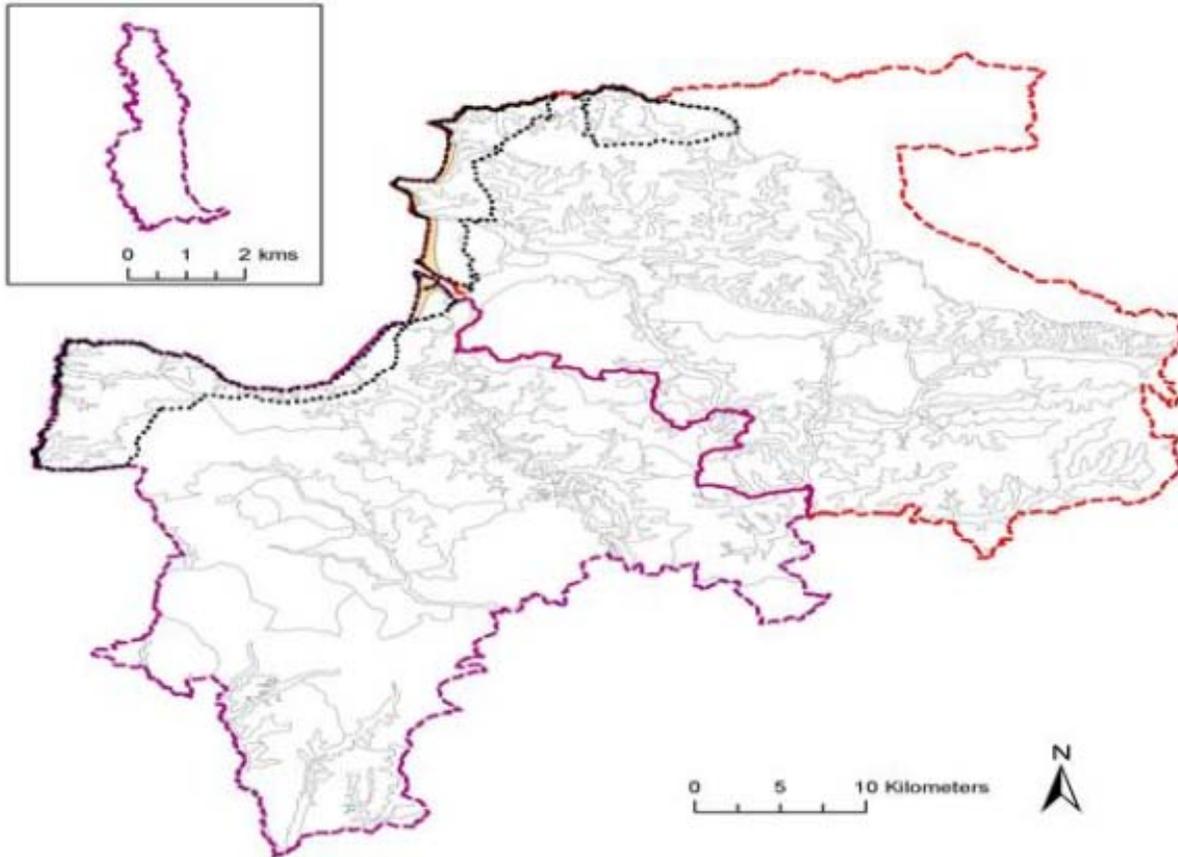


**LANDSCAPE TYPE:
4E: EXTENSIVE INTER-TIDAL SANDS**

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.

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.

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		
<p>Protect the open, undeveloped character of the beaches and important long-ranging views along the surrounding coast, out to sea and inland.</p>	<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.
<p>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.</p>	<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
	<p>(e.g. inland).</p> <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		
<p>Manage the beaches’ important habitats as part of the wider coastal ecosystem of the North Devon Biosphere Reserve.</p>	<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		
<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,</p>	<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