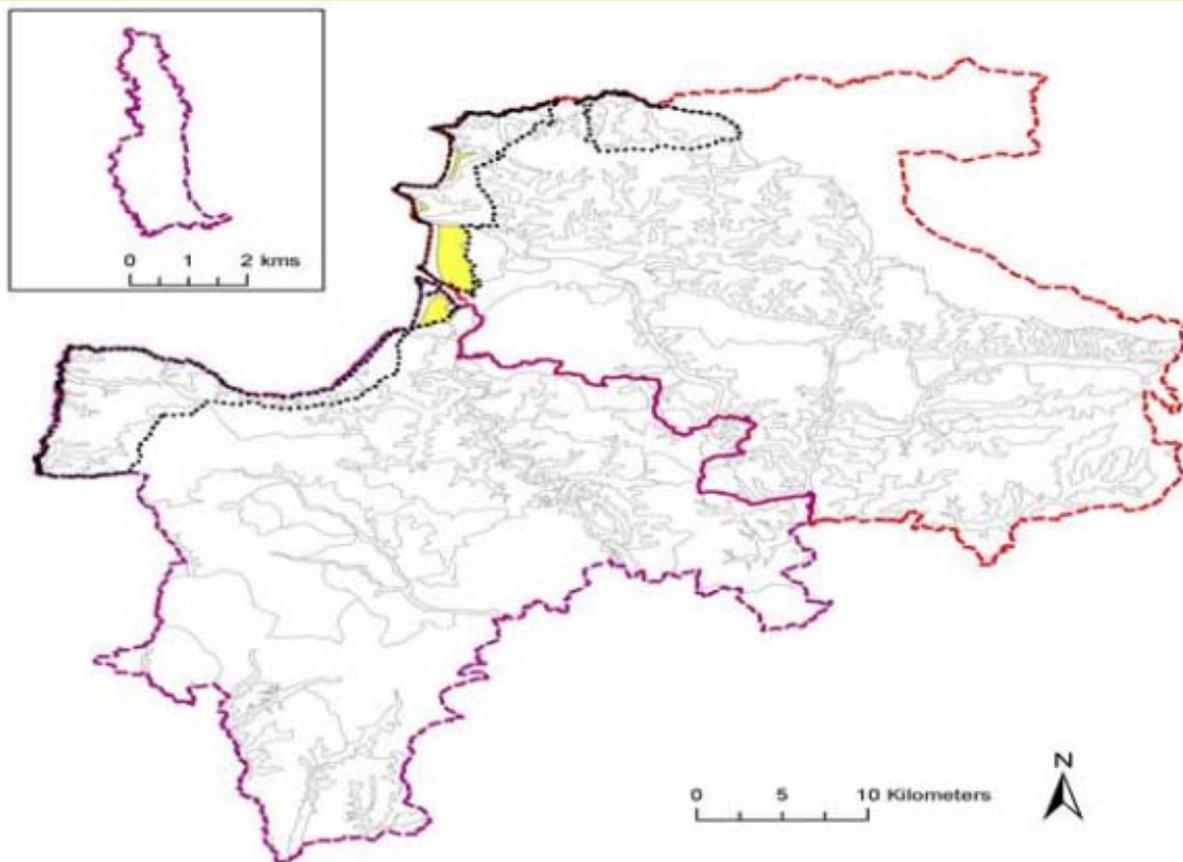


PART I: DESCRIPTION



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

- Wilderness, tranquillity and natural qualities.
- Open views
- Valuable and unique habitats as part of the UNESCO Biosphere Reserve.
- Freedom to roam and find space away from other people.



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; LH1, 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 LH1, 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
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> initiatives, including park-and-ride. 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		
<p>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.</p>	<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		
<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 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)