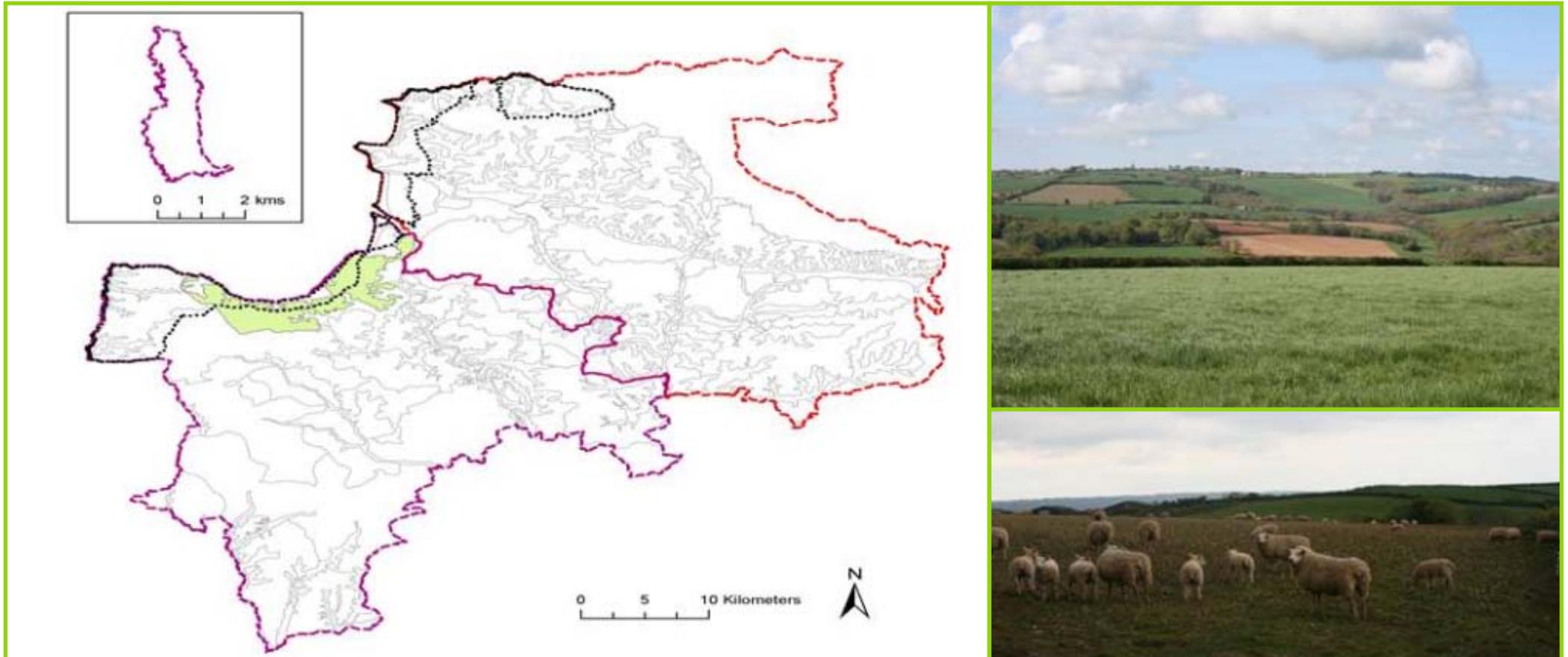


LANDSCAPE TYPE:
5B: COASTAL UNDULATING FARMLAND

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 Torrridge 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 hedgebank 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		
<p>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.</p>	<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

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Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
<p>Protect the landscape’s high levels of tranquillity and dark night skies through the control and management of development, including highways.</p>		<p>the emerging Natural England guidance).</p> <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.
<p>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.</p>	<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
<p>Protect the dispersed settlement pattern of the area,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conservation Area Management Plans / 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AONB Management Plan: Objectives, LH1

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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

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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).		
<p>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.</p>	<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		
<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 (see previous ‘manage’ guideline).</p>	<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)
<p>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).</p>	<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