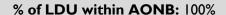
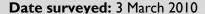
LDU: 405 LCT: IB

Area of LDU within AONB: 247.4 hectares









Survey Points: SS217177, SS223178, SS227180, SS229180, SS234179, SS228183

Summary of landscape character

A relatively small, gently undulating coastal plateau near Welcombe contained between two wooded combes in the south of the AONB, stretching out to coastal cliffs in the west. Medium-to-large sized pasture fields comprise the predominant land cover, though there is also a notable arable presence, while ridgeline villages, hamlets and farmsteads form prominent features within the open landscape. Though largely an open landscape, the concentration of settlement inland can lead to a more sheltered perception, while tranquillity is generally high throughout.

LANDSCAPE DESCRIPTION

LANDFORM / TOPOGRAPHY				
Landform description	Gently undulating coastal plateaux, comprised in the main of two broad ridges that roll down into the surrounding combes.			
LAND USE AND PATTERNS				
Agriculture	Main agricultural land use	Other agricultural	land use(s)	
	Pasture	Arable		
Field patterns and boundaries	Field patterns and origins	Size (note variations)	Boundary type / description	
	Regular modern fields expanded from earlier medieval enclosures predominate throughout, though some medieval patterns remain in the north-west, along with a distinct collection of large regular fields in the north-	Generally medium to large, with some smaller fields around settlements e.g. Welcombe.	Predominantly Devon hedgebanks topped with mixed, thorny hedges. Mainly intensively flailed, hedgerows are also often bushy or occasionally grown out into lines of mature trees e.g. the	

	western tip probably laid out between 15 th and 18 th	fields northeast of Mead.		
	centuries (known in Cornwall as Barton Fields).	Hedgebanks/hedgerows are gappy or absent near the coast, where failing post-and-wire forms an untidy boundary.		
Other land uses (e.g. recreation)	N/A			
W	OODLAND AND SEMI-NATUR	RAL HABITATS		
Trees / woodland	Size and distribution within landscape	Type and species(broadleaved / conifer)		
	Woodland cover is generally limited to settlements and occasional outgrown hedgerows, though the Welcombe Millenium Wood is a new area of woodland established in 2000 in a field surrounding the town hall in the centre of the LDU.	Woodland is predominantly broadleaved (including oak and beech), with distinctive individual stands of Scots Pine scattered around settlement (especially prominent in winter). Rhododendron is also encroaching in places.		
	The concentration of settlement and the surrounding wooded combes can lend the area a greater perception of woodland than actually occurs.			
Semi-natural habitats	Description and location within landscape			
	Scattered patches of unimproved grassland occur around settlements (e.g. below the chalets at Darracott), while the wooded combe to the south (outside the LDU) has SAC and SSSI designations, a very small part of which overlaps onto the south-west of the area where around 3ha of lowland heathland occurs.			
SETTLEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT				
Settlement pattern	Settlement size, type, density and relationship to landscape			
	Small nucleated hamlets (e.g. Mead, Darracott and those comprising Welcome) and scattered farmsteads occur at a relatively high density, sitting just below ridgelines and prominent in the open landscape. Historical in origin and character (with a thatched pub at Darracott and a medieval church at Welcombe), modern development is also a general feature (with wooden holiday chalets at Darracott, modern yellow-render bungalows and large modern farm buildings throughout).			
Transport pattern (including Public	Road pattern, character and relationsh			
Rights of Way) A relatively dense network of rural lanes enclosed by hedgebank most of the LDU, connecting hamlets and farmsteads to the eas				

	and descending down into the wooded combe to the north.				
Local vernacular styles and materials	Predominant traditional Any local variations building materials		Other built features reflecting vernacular		
	White render with grey slate roofs (or occasional thatch e.g. pub at Darracott), sometimes with black window frames and red brick or white render chimney stacks.	Exposed sto buildings ar prominent feature, esp Welcombe	e also a traditional pecially at	the m Necta	sed stone walls and nedieval church (St an's) at Welcombe ibute to the ional vernacular.
Modern development styles / materials	Creamy-yellow render occurs on bungalows and modern houses/renovations throughout, while large modern farm buildings are a feature at most farmsteads. The wooden chalets at Darracott are a unusual contrast.				
	HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT				
Key historic features	St. Nectan's Well and the church relate to the Irish missionary who is associated with this area of the North Devon coast. VIEWS & PERCEPTUAL QUALITIES				
visible in the landscape				issionary who is	
Views	Key views / landmark features Intervisibilit		y with LDUs		
			From this LL	DU	To this LDU
There are coastal views from the western edge of the LDU (which are otherwise generally absent),		689 (comb		689 688	
	with views down into the surrounding combes from the		688 (comb the north)	e to	694
	LDU boundary. Settlement is	ment is	694 (weste	ern	686
	prominent throughout often viewed across rid	ges and	coastline)		684
	over combes, with disti		686 (inland	j	
	landscape that include p (e.g. at Mead) and the r stone church at Welco	nedieval	684 (coast plateau nor		
Perceptual qualities (description)	Exposed and windswept near the coast, the concentration of settlement (with woodland) inland leads to a more sheltered perception, even though it is still a predominantly open landscape. Given the small scale of settlement, perceptions of tranquillity are generally high throughout.				

LANDSCAPE DESIGNATIONS

Designation	Number	% of LDU land area that is within the AONB
NATURE CONSERVATION		
SAC	I	1.27%
SSSI	I	1.27%
County Wildlife Sites	3	0.12%
HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT		
Listed Buildings	I0 (I grade II* and 9 grade II)	

UK BAP PRIORITY HABITATS

UK BAP Priority Habitat	Area (ha)	% of LDU land area that is within the AONB
Lowland heathland	2.7	1.09%
Maritime cliff and slope	0.87	0.35%
Purple moor grass and rush pasture	0.03	0.01%

KEY FACTORS INFLUENCING LANDSCAPE CONDITION

Perceptual qualities Views	An unkempt, desolate quality occurs on the western edge due to neglected fencing and bare fields along the windswept coast. Perceptions of tranquillity are mildly affected by the presence of modern buildings within the area (e.g. chalets at Darracott). Modern creamy-yellow rendered houses can detract from views of villages (e.g. those below the church at Welcombe), as do the holiday chalets at Darracott and occasionally the larger farm buildings.
Land use	While still predominantly under pasture, the spread of arable land is a notable feature within the landscape, with bare winter fields often prominent (e.g. south of Welcombe and near the coast).
Field patterns	Fields patterns are predominantly modern, and have been further diluted in places (i.e. the west) with the spread of post-and-wire fencing.
Field boundaries	Gappy or missing to the west of Mead (with replacement post-and-wire), hedgerows are otherwise often intensively flailed or bushy in places, and occasionally grown out into tree-lines (e.g. northeast of Mead).
Trees and woodland	Woodland is generally around settlement and can lack traditional management, with scrubby areas of bramble occurring (e.g. at Darracott). Outgrown hedgerow trees also occur (e.g. northeast of Mead), while the new planting at Welcombe will eventually grow into a prominent woodland (with ongoing management required).
Semi-natural habitats	Patches of unimproved grassland occur in a few isolated locations (e.g. below the chalets at Darracott), while a very small area of lowland heathland associated with the southern combe falls within the LDU. Hedgerows that are less intensively managed will provide a richer habitat.
Settlement and development	Settlement is generally historic, although modern development occurs in much of it, including the holiday chalets at Darracott and modern yellow rendered houses

	throughout.
Local vernacular	Wooden holiday chalets (at Darracott), modern yellow-render houses and large modern farm buildings impact on the traditional character of the local vernacular.