

Area of LDU within AONB: 4139.35 hectares

% of LDU within AONB: 100%



Date surveyed: 5 March 2010

Survey points: SS220202, SS226214, SS251225, SS259245, SS271224, SS235246, SS237233, SS243254, SS248263, SS285248, SS244270

Summary of landscape character

An expansive, gently undulating elevated coastal landscape that forms the majority of the south-western part of the AONB. The area is comprised of a distinct patchwork of medium-to-large pasture (and some arable) fields, which are bounded by hedgebanks topped with intensively flailed hedges and few hedgerow trees. Scattered woodlands occur in valleys and around settlement, while large farm buildings, the church at Stoke and Hartland radar form prominent ridgeline features. Perceptions of tranquillity are high throughout the majority of this deeply rural landscape.

LANDSCAPE DESCRIPTION

LANDFORM / TOPOGRAPHY

Landform description	An expansive, gently undulating elevated coastal landscape composed of broad ridgelines that are sporadically intersected by wooded coastal combes.
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LAND USE AND PATTERNS

Agriculture	<i>Main agricultural land use</i>	<i>Other agricultural land use(s)</i>	
	Pasture	Arable is a notable feature throughout. Milford Common is a small area of Registered Common Land on the west coast.	
Field patterns and boundaries	<i>Field patterns and origins</i>	<i>Size (note variations)</i>	<i>Boundary type / description</i>
	Regular modern fields created out of previous medieval enclosure predominate, with localised patterns of curving	Predominately medium to large, with the largest fields	Predominantly Devon hedgebanks topped with mixed-species (especially thorn)

	boundaries representing medieval strip enclosures around some settlements e.g. Mildford, Hardistworthy, Pattard, Tosberry and Hartland. Post-medieval enclosure is scattered throughout, noticeably around Hartland, while medieval patterns survive predominantly along the west side of the LDU.	occurring south of Stoke and around Exmansworthy, and localised areas of much smaller, linear fields surrounding several settlements (including Milford, Pattard, Edistone and Tosberry).	hedges, which are generally intensively failed and create a sharp landscape geometry. Hedgebanks are also occasionally stone-faced.
Other land uses (e.g. recreation)	N/A		

WOODLAND AND SEMI-NATURAL HABITATS

Trees / woodland cover	<i>Size and distribution within landscape</i>	<i>Type and species(broadleaved / conifer)</i>
	Predominately a treeless landscape, woodland is found surrounding settlement and lining valleys. Small copses occur sporadically (e.g. Fatacott Cross), while larger blocks form extensions of wooded coastal combes such as in the east at Oldpark Wood and along valleys in the west.	Woodland is predominantly broadleaved and occasionally ancient (e.g. Oldpark Wood). Individual stands of Scots pine occur around settlements, while there is some conifer planting on the LDU boundary at Yapham Farm.
Semi-natural habitats	<i>Description and location within landscape</i>	
	Semi-natural habitat is largely limited to the hedgebanks and hedgerows of this farmland-dominated landscape, though a number of small County Wildlife Sites cover patches of semi-natural woodland (e.g. Oldpark Wood in the north-east and Docton Wood in the south-west) and grasslands (e.g. Culm grassland at Belgberry, coastal grassland at Kernstone and semi-improved coastal grassland and scrub in the south-west tip at Strawberry Water). Internationally important maritime cliff and slope habitat (part of the Marsland to Clovelly Coast SSSI/SAC) occurs along the coastline, occasionally crossing the boundary into this LDU.	

SETTLEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

Settlement pattern	<i>Settlement size, type, density and relationship to landscape</i>
	A dispersed settlement pattern of small nucleated hamlets and scattered farmsteads nestled into valley sides just below the ridgeline, often highly visible and forming prominent features throughout the landscape. Hartland village lies in the centre and is the largest settlement within this

	part of the AONB, while Stoke is also a major hamlet within the area.		
Transport pattern (including Public Rights of Way)	<i>Road pattern, character and relationship to settlement / landscape</i>		
	Rural lanes running over ridges and across valleys connect the dispersed settlement within the area, forming a fairly comprehensive network with numerous crossroads and triangular patterns. Roads are enclosed by hedgebanks with flailed hedges, often with wide verges, while old black-and-white wooden road signs with metal letters are also a distinctive feature. Public rights of way are limited throughout the area.		
Local vernacular styles and materials	<i>Predominant traditional building materials</i>	<i>Any local variations</i>	<i>Other built features reflecting vernacular</i>
	Whitewash walls with grey slate tile roofs, with red-brick or white-render chimney stacks, and black painted window frames (e.g. at Brownsam Farm).	Some use of thatch as a roofing material (e.g. at Stoke) Exposed stone walls with grey tile roofs are also a common occurrence.	The medieval stone church at Stoke (St Nectan's), plus stone walls within villages (e.g. at Stoke).
Modern development styles / materials	Creamy-yellow render walls (with grey tile roofs) are a common feature on modern houses/renovations and bungalows throughout the area, while large modern farm buildings are prevalent (and often highly conspicuous) at most farmsteads (e.g. Blegberry Farm). Hartland village has a large range of modern styles, including houses with white weather-boarded walls. A combination of whitewash and exposed stone also occurs on some walls as a modern take on traditional vernacular (with the white render 'peeled' back to reveal the stone building material behind).		
HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT			
Key historic features visible in the landscape	<i>Description</i>		
	Prominent ruined tower near the coast by Stoke (known locally as the Pleasure House folly), along with the village's highly-visible medieval Church (St Nectan's). Windbury Head camp on the north-eastern edge and Embury Beacon camp in the south-west are important Iron Age hillforts, while the Victorian gardens at Clovelly Court add another historical dimension.		
VIEWS & PERCEPTUAL QUALITIES			
Views	<i>Key views / landmark features</i>	<i>Intervisibility with LDUs</i>	
		<i>From this LDU</i>	<i>To this LDU</i>
	Expansive views across the area are afforded from ridgetops, although views from lanes are restricted by tell hedgebanks/hedges - gaps and gates in the boundaries allow	694 (coastline in west and north) 693 (small strip	694 693 688, 692, 691, 690

	<p>sporadic views.</p> <p>Large modern farm buildings are prominent features on most ridges, especially towards the north (e.g. Blegberry Farm, Berry Farm).</p> <p>The white-domed RAF radar at Hartland Point is a significant visual intrusion, visible from long distances away.</p> <p>Lundy is an important feature visible from much of the area out to sea in the north-west, while the tall medieval church tower at Stoke is a distinctive feature in much of the west (as is the ruined tower further west by the coast).</p>	<p>of coast in east)</p> <p>688, 692, 691, 690 (wooded combes along western coast)</p> <p>404 (wooded combe in north-east)</p> <p>405 (small LDU to south)</p> <p>686 (large inland plateau)</p>	<p>404</p> <p>405</p> <p>686</p>
<p>Perceptual qualities (description)</p>	<p>Perceptions of tranquillity are strong throughout much of this deeply-rural, farmed landscape, while feelings of enclosure are provided along the road network due to the surrounding hedgebanks/hedgerows, with often expansive glimpses of the open landscape through gaps and field gates or when descending down slopes.</p>		

LANDSCAPE DESIGNATIONS

Designation	Number	% of LDU land area that is within the AONB
NATURE CONSERVATION		
SAC	1	2%
SSSI	1	2.03%
County Wildlife Sites	10	2.52%
HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT		
Scheduled Monuments	4	0.06%
Listed Buildings	77 (71 grade II, 6 grade II*)	

UK BAP PRIORITY HABITATS

UK BAP Priority Habitat	Area (ha)	% of LDU land area that is within the AONB
Lowland beech and yew woodland	5.66	0.14%
Lowland heathland	21.86	0.53%
Maritime cliff and slope	37.22	0.9%
Purple moor grass and rush pasture	7.45	0.18%
Traditional Orchards	0.95	0.02%
Upland oakwoods	27.67	0.67%
Wet woodland	5.66	0.14%

KEY FACTORS INFLUENCING LANDSCAPE CONDITION

Perceptual qualities	Levels of tranquillity remain predominately high throughout the area, though may be affected in the north-west by the Lundy helicopter and along the more well-used roads to Hartland and to Hartland Point.
Views	The white-domed radar at Hartland Point is a conspicuous presence in many views, and forms a discordant feature within the landscape. The larger modern farm buildings are also highly visible and can also detract from views (e.g. Welsford Farm, Blegberry Farm).
Land use	Farming is predominantly intensive, with a notable arable presence. Conifer planting at Yapham Farm is an incongruous feature on the LDU boundary near the north-east.
Field patterns	Modern enlarged fields occur throughout much of the area, though there remain a variety of localised historic patterns.
Field boundaries	Hedgerows are predominantly intensively flailed throughout, creating a distinctive patchwork geometry in the landscape, but also reducing value as a wildlife habitat.
Trees and woodland	Few hedgerow trees occur. Some of the larger localised woodlands are covered by County Wildlife Site designation, suggesting favourable management in these areas.
Semi-natural habitats	Few semi-natural habitats occur in the intensive agricultural landscape. The larger broadleaved woodlands form extensions to wooded coastal combes and provide important habitat networks, while the few other sites are small and (away from the coast) isolated (i.e. Culm grassland at Blegberry).
Settlement and development	Settlements are predominantly small farms and hamlets, though large modern farm buildings occur throughout, while there is evidence of older buildings being restored (e.g. Welsford Farm).
Local vernacular	Modern/restored cream-render houses occur throughout existing settlement patterns, while the larger village of Hartland has a variety of housing types and styles not

	always in-keeping with the local vernacular (e.g. modern brick bungalows and conservatory extensions).
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