

Area of LDU within AONB: 340.8 hectares

% of LDU within AONB: 54%



Date surveyed: 3-5 March 2010



Survey points: SS213177, SS221208, SS226235, SS225242, SS223248, SS227250, SS225254, SS228267, SS230274, SS249272, SS261274, SS274271

Summary of landscape character

A dramatic, undeveloped stretch of Heritage Coast of national and international importance, stretching from Marsland Mouth in the south-west of the AONB around to Windbury Point on the north-facing side east of Hartland Point. Exposed vertical or steeply-sloping cliffs with frequent landslips overlook a narrow wave-cut rock platform and recede into the distance, while waterfalls and other distinctive features punctuate the coastline. Maritime scrub, grassland and heath cling to the cliffs and soften the rock in places, with scrub more prevalent along the northern stretch where cliffs are also less sheer. Rough grassland dominates the clifftops, where the South West Coast Path provides access along the LDU's length.

LANDSCAPE DESCRIPTION

LANDFORM / TOPOGRAPHY

Landform description	Vertical or steeply-sloping jagged cliffs overlook a distinctive wave-cut rock platform (the cliffs east of Hartland are steeply-sloping rather than vertical). Of national and international importance for their geological and geomorphological interest, key geological sites occur along the west coast at Hartland Point, Hartland Quay and Welcombe Mouth, with dramatic landform features adding further drama and interest (e.g. St. Catherine's Tor). Old stream valleys to the north and south of Hartland Quay run parallel to the coast and are a good example of river capture.
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LAND USE AND PATTERNS

Agriculture	<i>Main agricultural land use</i>	<i>Other agricultural land use(s)</i>
	Rough grazing land (occurring predominantly along the inland)	N/A

	edge of the west coast).		
Field patterns and boundaries	<i>Field patterns and origins</i>	<i>Size (note variations)</i>	<i>Boundary type / description</i>
	N/A	N/A	Predominantly post-and-wire fencing
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>	
	Woodland only occurs in the two small coastal combes that are included within the LDU along the western edge. Thick scrub covers parts of the northern coastline.	Broadleaved, including a very small amount of ancient and semi-natural woodland extending into the northern combe.	
Semi-natural habitats	<i>Description and location within landscape</i>		
	The entire stretch of coastline is covered by the Marsland to Clovelly Coast SAC and SSSI (encompassing most of the LDU apart from the inland combes), including a rich mosaic of maritime grassland, heath and scrub habitat along the clifftops and cliff faces (which further support important wildlife communities such as lichens and seabirds).		

SETTLEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

Settlement pattern	<i>Settlement size, type, density and relationship to landscape</i>		
	The LDU is essentially devoid of settlement, apart from the hotel at Hartland Quay, Blackpool Mill at the mouth of Abbey River, and a mobile home at the mouth of the area's most northerly combe.		
Transport pattern (including Public Rights of Way)	<i>Road pattern, character and relationship to settlement / landscape</i>		
	The South West Coast Path runs along the entire length of coastline. There are no other access routes within the LDU.		
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 roof at Blackpool Mill, cream render at Hartland Quay Hotel	N/A	Whitewash lighthouse at Hartland Point
Modern development styles / materials	Mobile home south of Hartland Point.		

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

Key historic features visible in the landscape	<i>Description</i>		
	Embury Beacon Camp on the west coast and Winbury Head in the far north-east are both important hillforts on the inland LDU boundary overlooking the coast, whilst the Victorian-era lighthouse at Hartland Point is a defining feature of the coastline. The ruined tower known as the Pleasure House Folly sits on the Warren near Hartland Quay (just outside the LDU), and is a prominent feature along the coastline, while poet Ronald Duncan's hut overlooks the sea at Marsland Mouth.		
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>
	Views along the open west coast are extensive and often dramatic, with distinctive natural features including St. Catherine's Tor and Hartland Point and historic features including Hartland Point Lighthouse and Pleasure House folly, as well as impressive views out to Lundy Island, while the radar dome near Hartland Point is also prominent feature in many views. Views along the north-facing stretch of coast are restricted by scrub. The coastline itself is generally hidden from view from inland areas.	684 (inland elevated land) 689, 688, 692, 691, 690 (coastal combes)	684 689, 688, 692, 691, 690
Perceptual qualities (description)	The dramatic, undeveloped coastline conjures up strong senses of escapism and inspiration, especially the more exposed west-facing stretch; the north-facing coastline is more sheltered and offers less drama, but perhaps more tranquillity.		

LANDSCAPE DESIGNATIONS

Designation	Number	% of LDU land area that is within the AONB
NATURE CONSERVATION		
SAC	2	78.9%
SSSI	2	79.13%
County Wildlife Sites	2	1.25%
HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT		
Scheduled Monuments	2	0.82%
Listed Buildings	4 (grade II)	

UK BAP PRIORITY HABITATS

UK BAP Priority Habitat	Area (ha)	% of LDU land area that is within the AONB
Lowland heathland	260.92	76.55%
Maritime cliff and slope	261.26	76.65%
Upland oakwoods	1.7	0.50%

KEY FACTORS INFLUENCING LANDSCAPE CONDITION

Perceptual qualities	Noise intrusion occurs in the north as a result of the helicopter service between Hartland Point and Lundy (and occasionally RAF training), though this may add to the drama of a clifftop walk rather than detract from it.
Views	The white-domed radar station east of Hartland Point is a highly visible intrusion on the coastline (lying just outside the LDU boundary), whilst the nearby mast above the lighthouse forms an additional vertical intrusion.
Land use	N/A
Field patterns	N/A
Field boundaries	Post-and-wire fencing forms the main boundary along the coastline, but this is not intrusive in views.
Trees and woodland	Woodland within the two coastal combs was not accessible to field survey.
Semi-natural habitats	Natural England currently assesses the Marsland to Clovelly Coast SSSI to be in favourable (or unfavourable recovering) condition.
Settlement and development	Largely undeveloped, though any development on the clifftop (e.g. occasional masts) has significant impact.
Local vernacular	A modern mobile home is a conspicuous feature in the combe mouth south of Hartland Point, although its impact is localised.

COMMENTS ON LDU / LCT BOUNDARIES

The AONB could consider creating two additional LDUs for the coastal combes on the west coast, following the classification that has been completed for the North Devon & Torridge LCA (November 2010). These combes fall within the 4D Coastal Slopes and Combes LCT.