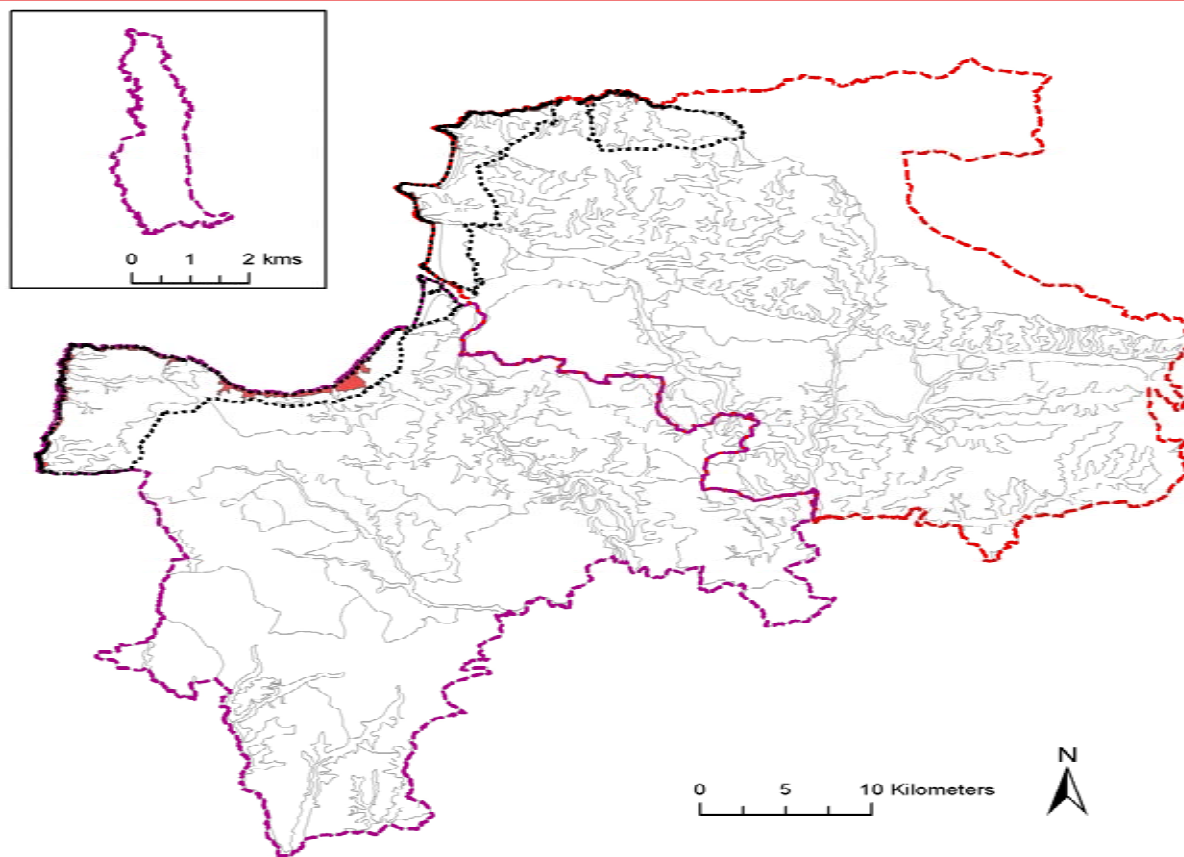


**PART I: DESCRIPTION**

**CONSTITUENT LDUs: 389, 397, 403, 404, 405, 532, 578, 579, 580, 581, 583, 684, 686, 688, 689, 690, 691, 692, 693, 694, 835, 836, 842, 852, 853**

**SUMMARY OF LOCATION**

The Cliffs LCT covers the entire length of the coast, broken only by the Taw-Torridge Estuary and the presence of sandy beaches and sand dunes backing Bideford/Barnstaple Bay. All of the cliffs fall within the North Devon Coast AONB.

**KEY CHARACTERISTICS FOR THIS LCT WITHIN NORTH DEVON & TORRIDGE**

- A largely undeveloped coastline of steep rocky or vegetated cliffs of varying heights, often punctuated by dramatic features such as waterfalls, rocky coves and features such as stacks and sea arches.
- Distinctive and internationally renowned exposed rock stratifications often clearly visible (sandstone along much of the Hartland and Clovelly peninsulas; with a more complex north coast with thick bands of contorted Morte slate).
- Extensive and dramatic views, reaching out to sea (often to Lundy), along the coastline and inland over ridgelines.
- Predominantly treeless, although several north-facing stretches along the Clovelly coast are characterised by significant mature oak-dominated woodlands clinging to the cliff tops.
- Minor combes draining to the sea often lined by ancient sessile oak woodland of high nature conservation interest. These provide shelter and contrast to the open cliffs.
- Rough grazing land on sloping cliff tops, with field boundaries of post-and-wire fencing or stone-faced hedgebanks.
- Rich in semi-natural habitats, including mosaics of maritime grassland, heath and scrub of national and international importance along the cliff tops and sloping faces. The cliffs support important breeding colonies of seabirds.
- Notable historic features including several Iron Age hillforts in commanding cliff-top positions, remnants of the area's industrial past including limekilns and quarries along the shore, and the lighthouses at Hartland and Bull Points.
- Settlement mainly limited to small fishing villages and clusters of cottages at the mouths of combes, with traditional whitewash or exposed stone vernacular. The historic estate village of Clovelly is a popular visitor destination.
- The northern coastline surrounding Croyde, Woolacombe, Ilfracombe and Combe Martin includes tourism-related development with some recent development spreading along the coast.
- A 'wild' and remote landscape with high levels of tranquillity. Access is largely restricted to the South West Coast Path and rights of way within combes.



## PART 2: EVALUATION

### SUMMARY OF SPECIAL QUALITIES

- Wild, exposed and dramatic landscape with expansive coastal views.
- Unique scenery, including spectacular geological formations and rugged coastal landforms.
- Important wildlife habitats and archaeological features (including cliff castles, quays, lime kilns and lighthouses).
- Access and enjoyment of the cliff top via the South West Coast Path.



### 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 and a spread of intensive arable cultivation along some farmland backing the cliffs.
- Scrub encroachment due to a localised decline in grazing levels, particularly affecting coastal heathlands, maritime grasslands and archaeological features.
- Spread of invasive species, conifer planting and a decline in traditional management of cliff-side woodlands along the Clovelly coast (current unfavourable condition assessment by Natural England).
- Growth in tourism and recreation impacting on perceptions of tranquillity and remoteness – including visitors to nearby holiday resorts, the South West Coast Path and attractions such as the historic village of Clovelly (300,000 visitors per year).
- Views to modern development at Westward Ho!, Woolacombe, Ilfracombe and Hele as well as caravan sites, holiday chalets, car parks and other tourism-related development scattered across the open coastal landscape.
- Noise intrusion from the Lundy helicopter station on the Hartland Coast.
- Vertical structures standing out on the skyline including telecommunications masts and the white-domed radar station at



Hartland Point.

- Demand for on-shore and off-shore wind turbines and other renewable energy developments, along with the cumulative effects of individual domestic and small scale turbines within or adjacent to this LCT.
- Repeated landslides and unstable sections of cliff (which will become more prevalent due to sea level rise / increased coastal erosion) affecting archaeological features, cliff-side properties and historic fishing villages such as Clovelly and Bucks Mills.

**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 visitor facilities, holiday accommodation and more traffic on the road network.
- Change in woodland / tree species composition as new pests/diseases spread (particularly phytophthora pathogens) and species intolerant of water level extremes die back.
- Changes in crops and land use as a consequence of climate change and response to changing markets (e.g. a drive for higher levels of UK food production, new markets for bioenergy crops).
- Impacts of climate change on characteristic habitats and tree distribution, including an increased prevalence of pests and diseases.
- Sea level rise and more rapid coastal erosion as a result of climate change, leading to unstable sections of cliffs, more frequent landslides, coastal flooding and the 'squeeze' of coastal habitats.

- Continuing demand for both on-shore and off-shore wind farms and other renewable energy developments,
- 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 wild, exposed and generally unsettled character of the coastal cliffs, ensuring that new development does not detract from these valued attributes. The landscape’s spectacular geology, cultural heritage and unique habitats are celebrated and appropriately managed to meet the future challenges presented by climate change. People can continue to enjoy unrivalled access to the coast whilst appreciating and understanding its dynamic nature.

### Landscape and planning guidelines

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
<b>PROTECT</b>		
<p>Protect the open and largely undeveloped character of the cliffs, avoiding the siting of new development and vertical structures on prominent skylines.</p> <p>Protect the character of the landscape’s expansive sea views (including to Lundy Island, South Wales and across the AONB coastline).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify important views and viewpoints (both onshore and offshore) and identify why people think they are important.</li> <li>National Trust Estate Management Plans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AONB Management Plan: Objectives EQ1, EQ2 and CO4; Policies B2 and D5.</li> <li>North Devon &amp; Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policies COR6 and COR8.</li> <li>Devon’s Structure Plan: Policies CO1, CO2, CO3 and CO6</li> <li>Shoreline Management Plan policies (SMP2 currently in consultation phase)</li> <li>Guidance in development management planning to avoid the siting of vertical structures and large buildings on open skylines within this LCT.</li> <li>Consider undertaking a seascape assessment to help guide future off-shore development away from the most sensitive locations (using the emerging Natural England guidance).</li> </ul>

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
<p>Protect the landscape’s wild and highly tranquil qualities by promoting sustainable tourism and recreation which benefits the local economy throughout the year.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider the use of ‘zoning’ and promote less sensitive sites for tourism (e.g. inland).</li> <li>Develop further sustainable transport initiatives, including park-and-ride.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AONB Management Plan: Objectives EQ1 and TH3; Policies B1 and H2.</li> <li>Devon’s Structure Plan: Policy TO6</li> <li>North Devon Sustainable Energy Action Plan</li> <li>North Devon Biosphere Reserve Sustainable Development Strategy (2008-12)</li> <li>North Devon Biosphere Reserve Sustainable Development Strategy (2008-12)</li> </ul>
<p>Protect, sensitively manage and, where appropriate, restore the landscape’s important archaeological heritage including prominent Iron Age hillforts, limekilns and quarries along the shore, as well as the lighthouses at Hartland and Bull Points.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Environmental Stewardship</li> <li>National Trust Estate Management Plans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AONB Management Plan: Objective LH1, ART4, CC3; Policies A1 and F2.</li> <li>North Devon &amp; Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6.</li> <li>Devon’s Structure Plan: Policies CO1 and CO7</li> </ul>
<p>Protect and sensitively interpret the coastline’s outstanding geological and geomorphologic features, ensuring rock exposures are visible in coastal quarries and awareness is raised of the dynamic nature of the coast.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Environmental Stewardship</li> <li>National Trust Estate Management Plans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AONB Management Plan: Objective B2; Policies C3 and C4.</li> <li>North Devon &amp; Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6.</li> <li>Devon’s Structure Plan: Policy CO1</li> </ul>
<p>Protect the historic character of the area’s fishing villages and groups of cottages at combe mouths, ensuring that limited new development or property extensions incorporate the local vernacular building styles of whitewash and exposed local stone wherever possible (whilst seeking to incorporate sustainable and low carbon building construction and design).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CORDIALE Interreg project (South West Protected Landscapes Forum)</li> <li>National Trust Estate Management Plans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AONB Management Plan: Objectives LH1 and LH2; Policies A1, G1 and G4.</li> <li>North Devon &amp; Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policies COR1, COR6 and COR8.</li> <li>Devon Structure Plan: Policies CO7 and</li> </ul>

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
		<p>CO8.Prepare landscape-specific design guidance to support the LDF.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• North Devon Sustainable Energy Action Plan</li> </ul>
<b>MANAGE</b>		
<p>Manage the valued coastal woodlands of the Clovelly coast and coastal combes, controlling invasive species and moving towards a restructuring of areas of conifer planting to broadleaves. 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"> <li>• England Woodland Grant Scheme</li> <li>• Environmental Stewardship</li> <li>• South West Woodland Renaissance</li> <li>• Devon BAP</li> <li>• National Trust Estate Management Plans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AONB Management Plan: Objectives FL1, FL2 and G5; Policies A1, C1 and E2.</li> <li>• AONB Management Plan: Policy A1,</li> <li>• North Devon &amp; Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6, COR7.</li> </ul>
<p>Manage and restore the network of stone-faced hedgebanks enclosing rough grazing land, replacing lengths of post-and-wire fencing to strengthen field patterns. Ensure the creation of new lengths of hedgebank replicates traditional styles of construction such as the patterns of stone facing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environmental Stewardship</li> <li>• Devon Hedge Group</li> <li>• Devon BAP</li> <li>• National Trust Estate Management Plans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AONB Management Plan: Objectives FL1; Policies A1, C1, E1</li> <li>• North Devon &amp; Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6</li> <li>• Devon’s Structure Plan: Policy CO1</li> </ul>
<p>Manage nationally important coastal habitats, including coastal heath and maritime grasslands, through supporting a continuation of extensive grazing at appropriate levels.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environmental Stewardship</li> <li>• Devon Food Links</li> <li>• Devon BAP</li> <li>• National Trust Estate Management Plans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AONB Management Plan: Objectives CO3, FL1; Policies C1, D3, E1 and E3.</li> <li>• Devon’s Structure Plan: Policy CO9</li> <li>• North Devon &amp; Torridge Joint Core Strategy: Policy COR6</li> <li>• Strengthen and promote links between local markets and produce from the area.</li> </ul>

Guideline	Identified delivery mechanisms (e.g. links to specific projects, Initiatives and policies)	Planning policy links and delivery recommendations
<b>PLAN</b>		
<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.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environmental Stewardship</li> <li>• Devon BAP</li> <li>• South West Nature Map</li> <li>• National Trust Estate Management Plans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AONB Management Plan: Objectives; EQ3, CO1, CO3, CC4, Policies A2, C1, D1, D5, K2, L1</li> <li>• Shoreline Management Plan policies (SMP 2 currently in consultation phase)</li> </ul>