

Area of LDU within AONB: 35.9 hectares

% of LDU within AONB: 67%



Date surveyed: 26 February 2010

Survey points: SS446318, SS442316, SS443316

Summary of landscape character

This LDU forms a section of intertidal mudflats lying between the coastal headland of Appledore and Northam to the east / south-east, and coastal marshes and sand dunes of Northam Burrows Country Park to the west. The landscape sits on the southern fringes of the Taw & Torridge Estuary. Mainly consisting of mudflats subject to tidal inundation, the fringes of the area grade into a rocky foreshore with patches of saltmarsh and sand banks. The landscape evokes a sense of wildness and exposure, although the close proximity of development at Northam, Appledore and Westward Ho! detract from its unspoilt character.

LANDSCAPE DESCRIPTION

LANDFORM / TOPOGRAPHY

Landform description	Flat expanse of coastal mudflats and other intertidal habitats buffering the Taw and Torridge Estuary.
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LAND USE AND PATTERNS

Agriculture	<i>Main agricultural land use</i>	<i>Other agricultural land use(s)</i>	
	N/A	N/A	
Field patterns and boundaries	<i>Field patterns and origins</i>	<i>Size (note variations)</i>	<i>Boundary type / description</i>
	N/A	N/A	N/A
Other land uses (e.g. recreation)	N/A		

WOODLAND AND SEMI-NATURAL HABITATS

Trees / woodland	<i>Size and distribution within landscape</i>	<i>Type and species(broadleaved / conifer)</i>
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cover	N/A		N/A
Semi-natural habitats	<i>Description and location within landscape</i>		
	This LDU lies within the Taw-Torridge Estuary SSSI, nationally important for its intertidal habitats of mudflats, sandbanks and saltmarshes which support overwintering and migratory populations of wading birds (including curlew, golden plover, oyster catcher and redshank). The landscape's rocky outcrops and stones provide a substrate for algal growth and beds of mussels, whilst patches of saltmarsh support diverse plant communities. Appledore Tidal Flats is also a county RIGS (Regionally Important Geological Site).		
SETTLEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT			
Settlement pattern	<i>Settlement size, type, density and relationship to landscape</i>		
	There is no settlement or development within this LDU.		
Transport pattern (including Public Rights of Way)	<i>Road pattern, character and relationship to settlement / landscape</i>		
	There are no transport routes within this LDU.		
Local vernacular styles and materials	<i>Predominant traditional building materials</i>	<i>Any local variations</i>	<i>Other built features reflecting vernacular</i>
	N/A	N/A	N/A
Modern development styles / materials	There is no development or settlement within this coastal landscape. The close proximity of the settlements of Appledore, Northam and Westward Ho! are influential in views – with the white/pale colourwashed houses standing out prominently against the surrounding ridgelines.		
HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT			
Key historic features visible in the landscape	<i>Description</i>		
	There are no historic features visible in the landscape.		
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>
	The open mudflats, sitting behind the wide expanse of the Taw & Torridge Estuary, afford 360° views across the surrounding landscape and seascape. Northerly views are defined by Saunton Sands and Braunton Burrows, with the white building of the Saunton Sands Hotel standing out in the distance. Views to telecommunications masts sitting	358 (Braunton Burrows) 360 (Saunton Sands) 088 (Braunton Marsh) 398 (Braunton Great Field)	358 360 088 398 382 403

	<p>above Long Lane (LDU 403) are also recognisable features in the landscape. Expansive views are allowed along the undeveloped coast to the far south-west – including to Hartland Point in clear conditions.</p> <p>Views to the east, south and south-west are defined by the white/bright colourwashed housing of Appledore, Northam and Westward Ho!, with the square tower of Northam Church a prominent landmark feature.</p> <p>The LDU has a strong visual and ecological relationship with the marshes and sand dunes of Northam Burrows (including the Royal North Devon Golf Club), lying immediately adjacent to the west.</p>	<p>382 (ridgeline/cliff above Saunton)</p> <p>403 (elevated ridge/downland including Saunton Down & Long Lane)</p> <p>364 (Northam Burrows)</p> <p>835/836 (Westward Ho!)</p> <p>693 (Clovelly coast)</p> <p>694 (Hartland Point)</p>	<p>364</p> <p>836</p> <p>693</p> <p>694</p>
<p>Perceptual qualities (description)</p>	<p>This is a peaceful coastal landscape with a strong sense of wildness – untouched by humans. Feelings of remoteness are, however, affected by the prominent views of nearby development at Appledore, Northam and Westward Ho!.</p>		

LANDSCAPE DESIGNATIONS

Designation	Number	% of LDU land area that is within the AONB
NATURE CONSERVATION		
SSSI	1	100%

UK BAP PRIORITY HABITATS

UK BAP Priority Habitat	Area (ha)	% of LDU land area that is within the AONB
Coastal and floodplain grazing marsh	0.03	0.09%
Mudflats	29.73	82.87%

KEY FACTORS INFLUENCING LANDSCAPE CONDITION

Perceptual qualities	This is a peaceful coastal landscape with a strong sense of wildness – untouched by humans. Feelings of remoteness are, however, affected by the prominent views of nearby development at Appledore, Northam and Westward Ho!. Views of masts and other industrial structures also intrude into skyline views – for example on Long Lane on the northern horizon (LDU 403) and structures relating to the sewage works at Instow to the east.
Views	See above.
Land use	N/A
Field patterns	N/A
Field boundaries	N/A
Trees and woodland	N/A
Semi-natural habitats	The SSSI land (primarily mudflats) in this LDU is currently assessed as in favourable condition by Natural England. It is under threat from future sea level rise which may cause a loss of habitats to the sea.
Settlement and development	No issues within the LDU itself. Surrounding development is prominent in views.
Local vernacular	N/A