

Area of LDU within AONB: 60.5 hectares % of LDU within AONB: 68%



Date surveyed: 25 February 2010

Survey points: SS472382, SS471380

Summary of landscape character

This is a gently sloping, pastoral landscape to the west of Braunton, bounded to the south by the B3231 Saunton to Braunton road. Settlement is restricted to small farmsteads surrounded by medium to small scale irregular fields including some pony paddocks. Long views to the south and south-west stretch as far as Braunton Burrows and Saunton Bay; Hartland Point is visible on distant horizons. There is a strong visual and physical relationship with the adjacent downland slopes above (LDU 526) to the north and west. The masts on Long Lane (within LDU 403) are a feature of skylines to the north.

LANDSCAPE DESCRIPTION

LANDFORM / TOPOGRAPHY / VIEWS			
Landform description	Gentle south-west facing slope rising up from the flat expanse of Braunton Marsh.		
LAND USE AND PATTERNS			
Agriculture	<i>Main agricultural land use</i>	<i>Other agricultural land use(s)</i>	
	Pasture	Some fields of arable cultivation. Pony paddocks are found on the northern slopes crossing the boundary with LDU 526.	
Field patterns and boundaries	<i>Field patterns and origins</i>	<i>Size (note variations)</i>	<i>Boundary type / description</i>
	A mixture of field patterns; regular, more recent enclosures on higher slopes and around East Saunton Farm, whilst the majority of the area comprises medieval	Medium scale – larger on upper slopes.	Hedgerows under varied levels of management, some areas of pony tape and post-and-wire fencing around pony

	fields with curving boundaries.		paddocks. High Devon hedgebanks enclose Broad Lane to the east.
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>
	Generally sparse tree cover, although some hedgerow trees and patches of linear woodland are found in the north following spring lines. Traditional orchards are a feature of East Saunton Farm.		Broadleaved Fruit (orchards)
Semi-natural habitats	<i>Description and location within landscape</i>		
	Patches of scrub and deciduous woodland following springs draining from the downland above. Traditional orchards at East Saunton Farm are valued habitats and cultural features within the farmed landscape.		
SETTLEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT			
Settlement pattern	<i>Settlement size, type, density and relationship to landscape</i>		
	Small nucleated farmsteads on lower slopes adjacent to the B3231 (Warren Farm and East Saunton Farm).		
Transport pattern	<i>Road pattern, character and relationship to settlement / landscape</i>		
	Bounded to the south by the B3231 with a narrow lane (Broad Lane) forming the eastern LDU boundary. A footpath links North Lobb (outside the LDU to the north) and East Saunton Farm in the south.		
Local vernacular styles and materials	<i>Predominant traditional building materials</i>	<i>Any local variations</i>	<i>Other built features reflecting vernacular</i>
	Farm buildings of mixed vernacular including cream render, red brick and traditional stone, with thatched and slate roofs.	N/A	N/A
Modern development styles / materials	Some modern farm buildings and the use of corrugated iron as a roofing material.		

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

Key historic features visible in the landscape	<i>Description</i>
	Traditional farmsteads contribute to historic landscape character and include several listed buildings.

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>
	Extensive southern views from higher slopes to Braunton Marsh, Braunton Burrows and the sea.	526 (adjacent upper hill slopes)	403 358
	Distant views include the settlements of Northam and Westward Ho! Hartland is visible on the south western skyline.	403 (rolling downland above)	088 835
	Masts at Long Lane to the north are prominent features on the ridgeline.	358 (Braunton Burrows) 088 (Braunton Marsh) 836, 835 (Northam and Westward Ho!) 693 (Clovelly Coast) 694 (Hartland Point)	836 684
Perceptual qualities (description)	This is a quiet and peaceful landscape as a result of its largely unsettled character and absence of roads.		

LANDSCAPE DESIGNATIONS

Designation	Number	% of LDU land area that is within the AONB
HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT		
Listed Buildings	8 (grade II)	

UK BAP PRIORITY HABITATS

UK BAP Priority Habitat	Area (ha)	% of LDU land area that is within the AONB
Traditional Orchards	0.62	1.02%

KEY FACTORS INFLUENCING LANDSCAPE CONDITION

Perceptual qualities	Tranquillity in the southern part of the LDU is affected by the busy B3231.
Views	<p>Pylons on Long Lane are prominent features on skylines to the north (LDU 403).</p> <p>Poly tunnels within Braunton Marsh (LDU 088) are visually dominant in views to the south.</p>
Land use	Pony paddocks, often closely grazed and bounded by bright white pony tape, detract from the traditional pastoral landscape character on the northern fringes of the LDU.
Field patterns	The upper slopes and land around East Saunton Farm are defined by more recent, regular fields which replaced previous medieval fields of a more irregular pattern.
Field boundaries	Largely well managed hedgerows although gappy and fragmented in places, particularly in the north, where they are sometimes supplemented by wire fencing and pony tape.
Trees and woodland	No evidence of woodland management observed in the field.
Semi-natural habitats	Grazed traditional orchards are important features of the farmland in the south. Patches of heathland and woodland provide biodiversity interest in the north, within a strongly farmed landscape.
Settlement and development	No issues noted in the field – this is a sparsely settled landscape.
Local vernacular	Modern barns and sheds constructed of corrugated iron detract from traditional vernacular styles, including East Saunton thatch.