

Area of LDU within AONB: 1333.1 hectares

% of LDU within AONB: 12%



Date surveyed: 3 March 2010

Survey points: SS259179, SS246178, SS242181, SS265211, SS266200, SS282226

Summary of landscape character

Forming the north-western edge of a much larger LDU, this arc of land falls within the inland boundary of the AONB (formed by the A39), running up from Hollacombe in the south around to Higher Clovelly in the north-east. The area is an open, exposed landscape of smoothly undulating ridges and summits, with large areas of open moorland surrounded by medium or large pasture/arable fields characterising the main, southern part (representing past moorland enclosure). Distinctive views to Lundy are afforded from summits throughout the area. A remote, exposed and even 'wild' landscape characterises the large area around Bursdon Moor, which provides striking contrast to the rest of the AONB's pasture-dominated farmland, whilst a scarcity of settlement throughout reinforces perceptions of remoteness within the area.

LANDSCAPE DESCRIPTION

LANDFORM / TOPOGRAPHY

Landform description	Gently undulating ridges and summits that form part of a much larger inland landscape.
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LAND USE AND PATTERNS

Agriculture	<i>Main agricultural land use</i>	<i>Other agricultural land use(s)</i>	
	Pasture, with arable fields predominating in the north-east, and north and south of Bursdon Moor.	Extensive grazing on common land (around Bursdon Moor).	
Field patterns and boundaries	<i>Field patterns and origins</i>	<i>Size (note variations)</i>	<i>Boundary type / description</i>
	Regular modern field patterns predominate, especially in the north (created out of previous	Predominantly medium to large, with some	Predominantly Devon hedgebanks topped with thorny, flailed

	open moorland or medieval/post-medieval enclosures). Notable sinuous boundaries reflecting medieval enclosure of strip fields occur around some farmsteads e.g. Lower Deptford and Holliwell, with regular fields of post-medieval enclosure scattered throughout the main southern part of the LDU. Linear fields are a feature of Tosberry Moor.	areas of smaller fields around farmsteads (e.g. Holiwell). Unenclosed common land on Bursdon Moor.	hedges. Occasional wind-sculpted hedgerow trees occur, while hedgerows are gappy in places (e.g. north-east of Bursdon Moor).
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Other land uses (e.g. recreation)	N/A		
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WOODLAND AND SEMI-NATURAL HABITATS

Trees / woodland cover	<i>Size and distribution within landscape</i>	<i>Type and species(broadleaved / conifer)</i>
	Woodland cover is generally sparse and restricted to settlements and outgrown hedgerows. There is an area of woodland/shrub on the slopes of Hendon Moor, and smaller patches of woodland in the north-east.	Presence of conifers around Hendon Moor (and significantly adjacent to the A39 outside the AONB), backed by shrubby woodland to the north. Elsewhere woodland is predominantly broadleaved (oak, beech, hawthorn etc), including the copses in the north-east.

Semi-natural habitats	<i>Description and location within landscape</i>
	Bursdon Moor is an internationally-important area of lowland heathland and Culm grassland that covers around 10% of this LDU (covered by both SAC and SSSI designation). Lowland heath and Culm grasslands also occur in much more fragmented patches elsewhere in the area, including Tosberry Moor to the north, Hendon Moor to the south, and in the south to the west of Hollacombe Farm. Some of these are County Wildlife Sites (e.g. Meddon Cross and Henbury Moor), a designation that also covers the ancient semi-natural broadleaved woodland that extends out from the coast in the very north-east (Hobby Drive Wood).

SETTLEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

Settlement pattern	<i>Settlement size, type, density and relationship to landscape</i>
	A sparsely settled area, with a concentration of farmsteads in the south-west (south and west of Hendon Moor and Bursdon Moor), as well as in the north-east around Higher Clovelly (including the hamlet of Higher Sierra).

Transport pattern	<i>Road pattern, character and relationship to settlement / landscape</i>
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(including Public Rights of Way)	The A39 forms the east/south boundary of the area, from which runs few linear roads or lanes stretching out to settlement in the west/north, the sporadic density reflecting that of the area's settlement pattern. The road through Bursdon Moor is highly distinctive given that it is open and unbounded by hedgebanks or hedgerows, unlike almost all of the other rural lanes within the AONB.		
Local vernacular styles and materials	<i>Predominant traditional building materials</i>	<i>Any local variations</i>	<i>Other built features reflecting vernacular</i>
	Whitewash with grey slate roofs.	Exposed stone e.g. at Upcott.	N/A
Modern development styles / materials	Creamy-yellow render on modern buildings / restorations.		

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

Key historic features visible in the landscape	<i>Description</i>
	Clovelly Dyke in the north east is an important historic enclosure of concentric ring ditches (possibly an Iron Age hillfort), though it is not visible from the road and lies on private land, while there is also a wealth of archaeological features around Bursdon Moor, including extensive barrow cemeteries and a ring cairn.

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>
	Lundy island forms an important landmark to the north-west from ridges and summits throughout the area. From Bursdon Moor, Summerwell Moor Plantation is a prominent feature outside the AONB boundary to the east. Views in the south and west are afforded over the wooded combes, whilst from the north-eastern summit the coast east of Clovelly can be glimpsed. Bradworthy wind turbines and Dartmoor can also be seen on the southern horizon.	684 (large coastal area to north west) 688 (wooded combe in west) 405 (small inland area to west) 689 (wooded combe in south) 693 (coast in north east tip)	684 688 405 689 693
Perceptual qualities (description)	A remote, exposed and even 'wild' landscape characterises the large area around Bursdon Moor, which provides striking contrast to the rest of the AONB's pasture-dominated farmland. A scarcity of settlement throughout reinforces perceptions of remoteness within the area, though the A39 forming the eastern/southern boundary can affect otherwise high levels of tranquillity.		

LANDSCAPE DESIGNATIONS

Designation	Number	% of LDU land area that is within the AONB
NATURE CONSERVATION		
SAC	3 (2 of these represent only marginal areas overlapping from adjacent LDUs)	10.14%
SSSI	3 (as above)	10.14%
County Wildlife Sites	7	2.73%
HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT		
Scheduled Monuments	13	1.08%
Listed Buildings	10 (grade II)	

UK BAP PRIORITY HABITATS

UK BAP Priority Habitat	Area (ha)	% of LDU land area that is within the AONB
Lowland heathland	120.28	9.02%
Maritime cliff and slope	1.63	0.12%
Purple moor grass and rush pasture	34.29	2.57%
Traditional Orchards	1.53	0.11%
Upland oakwoods	0.95	0.07%
Wet woodland	2.94	0.22%

KEY FACTORS INFLUENCING LANDSCAPE CONDITION

Perceptual qualities	The proximity of the A39 can affect perceptions of tranquillity, either directly through noise or by impacting upon views (including through large road signs).
Views	The passage of cars along the A39 can interrupt views to the east and south, while the radar at Hartland Point is an unusual presence in views out to Lundy to the north-west.
Land use	Intensive arable farming is widespread within the area, limiting the extent of open moorland to the designated Bursdon Moor. Past conifer plantation within Hendon Moor has further fragmented the heathland landscape.
Field patterns	Modern fields have been enlarged from previous medieval patterns or through the enclosure of former areas of open moorland.
Field boundaries	Hedgerows can be gappy or absent (e.g. fields surrounding Bursdon & Hendon Moor), or intensively flailed in places.
Trees and woodland	Past conifer plantation at Hendon Moor has led to the fragmentation of semi-natural habitats, though County Wildlife Site designation in the north-eastern part of the site suggests favourable management.
Semi-natural habitats	Bursdon Moor SSSI is predominately in favourable condition (with any unfavourable areas classed as recovering). Other areas of heathland and culm grassland habitat in the south of the area, however, are fragmented due to agricultural intensification.
Settlement and development	Settlement is sporadic and largely composed of farmsteads, though modern industrial farm buildings often have an impact upon the open landscape (e.g. at Baxworthy Farm), with occasional traditional stone buildings in need of repair e.g. at Hollacombe Farm.
Local vernacular	Modern creamy-yellow render buildings occur in contrast with more traditional styles of whitewash or exposed stone.

COMMENTS ON LDU / LCT BOUNDARIES

The AONB could consider reclassifying this area as a new LDU, separate from the much larger area that extends inland beyond the AONB boundary. This would make it a much more manageable unit to work with in terms of giving planning advice for the protected landscape.