

Area of LDU within AONB: 62.5 hectares

% of LDU within AONB: 100%



Date surveyed: 4 March 2010

Survey points: SS246267, SS230267, SS229266

**Summary of landscape character**

A very small coastal combe stretching inland from the west coast just below Hartland Point. Steep-sided and relatively open in the west with a scrubby coastal character, the valley bottom narrows further east and the slopes widen, leaving a thin woodland strip that traces the course of the stream and is surrounded by pasture and some arable on the upper slopes. The LDU is remote and devoid of settlement apart from Blagdon Farm in the north-western tip, resulting in high levels of tranquillity throughout (though access is limited).

**LANDSCAPE DESCRIPTION**

**LANDFORM / TOPOGRAPHY**

<b>Landform description</b>	A coastal combe that becomes less distinct further east – steep sides flatten out as the valley bottom narrows.
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**LAND USE AND PATTERNS**

<b>Agriculture</b>	<i>Main agricultural land use</i>	<i>Other agricultural land use(s)</i>	
	Pasture, with rough pasture on steeper slopes.	Encroachment of arable fields onto the upper slopes (notably on the southern slope in the centre of the LDU).	
<b>Field patterns and boundaries</b>	<i>Field patterns and origins</i>	<i>Size (note variations)</i>	<i>Boundary type / description</i>
	The fields overlapping onto the upper slopes in the centre and east represent probable medieval enclosures of strip fields, the valley-bottom pasture in the east reflects post-medieval enclosure, while the large area of pasture in the	Predominantly medium or large.	Devon hedgebanks with hedges and some lengths of post-and-wire fencing (e.g. in the west), or sinuous woodland boundaries either side of the

	centre represents modern expansion. Open, unenclosed grazing land remains in the west.		stream.
<b>Other land uses (e.g. recreation)</b>	N/A		
<b>WOODLAND AND SEMI-NATURAL HABITATS</b>			
<b>Trees / woodland cover</b>	<i>Size and distribution within landscape</i>		<i>Type and species(broadleaved / conifer)</i>
	Woodland occurs in a thin continuous strip following the course of the stream and along tracks, with occasional thicker patches in the east and west where scrub begins to dominate.		Predominantly broadleaved woodland.
<b>Semi-natural habitats</b>	<i>Description and location within landscape</i>		
	Heathy vegetation and gorse scrub on the western slopes (parts are covered by the Marsland to Clovelly Coast SSSI and SAC), with a line of wet broadleaved woodland throughout. Some unimproved pasture on steeper slopes.		
<b>SETTLEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT</b>			
<b>Settlement pattern</b>	<i>Settlement size, type, density and relationship to landscape</i>		
	Devoid of settlement apart from Blagdon Farm at the combe's north-western tip.		
<b>Transport pattern (including Public Rights of Way)</b>	<i>Road pattern, character and relationship to settlement / landscape</i>		
	Just one road crosses the LDU in the very eastern tip at Shamley Bridge, while a bridleway crosses the combe in the west connecting Blagdon Farm to the south. Public rights of way run west to the coast from this track either side of the stream, though otherwise the combe is largely inaccessible.		
<b>Local vernacular styles and materials</b>	<i>Predominant traditional building materials</i>	<i>Any local variations</i>	<i>Other built features reflecting vernacular</i>
	Exposed local stone farm buildings and slate tile roofs at Blagdon Farm.	N/A	N/A
<b>Modern development styles / materials</b>	Large farm buildings at Blagdon Farm. (A mobile home sits just outside the LDU in the mouth of the combe, next to the coast).		
<b>HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT</b>			
<b>Key historic features</b>	<i>Description</i>		

<b>visible in the landscape</b>	N/A		
<b>VIEWS / PERCEPTUAL QUALITIES</b>			
<b>Views</b>	<i>Key views / landmark features</i>	<i>Intervisibility with LDUs</i>	
		<i>From this LDU</i>	<i>To this LDU</i>
	Views are afforded from footpaths in the west to the coast and also back up the valley to woodland and scrub-covered slopes. Views from the road and bridleway are restricted by woodland.	<b>694</b> (coast) <b>684</b> (surrounding elevated land)	<b>694</b> <b>684</b>
<b>Perceptual qualities (description)</b>	An LDU devoid of settlement and vehicular access, resulting in high levels of tranquillity and remoteness throughout.		

## LANDSCAPE DESIGNATIONS

Designation	Number	% of LDU land area that is within the AONB
<b>NATURE CONSERVATION</b>		
SAC	1	8.49%
SSSI	1	8.55%

## UK BAP PRIORITY HABITATS

UK BAP Priority Habitat	Area (ha)	% of LDU land area that is within the AONB
Lowland heathland	5.2	8.33%
Maritime cliff and slope	5.2	8.33%

## KEY FACTORS INFLUENCING LANDSCAPE CONDITION

Perceptual qualities	Given the remoteness of the LDU and the lack of access, tranquillity remains very high throughout.
Views	A mobile home is a slightly incongruous feature in the combe mouth just outside the LDU to the west (affecting views out to the coast).
Land use	Spread of arable farming onto the upper slopes is a notable feature in the centre of the area.
Field patterns	Evidence of field enlargement of medieval enclosures on the central slopes.
Field boundaries	Largely un-assessed due to limited access, though post-and-wire fencing is used in the west in front of remnant hedgebanks with gappy hedges.
Trees and woodland	Largely un-assessed, though a lack of designation and presence of ivy and bramble suggests a lack of sustained management.
Semi-natural habitats	Extensive grazing and scrub management required where appropriate in the west to maintain unimproved grass, scrub and heath habitats. The riparian strip is very thin in the centre of the LDU, reinforcing the importance of maintaining the ecological woodland corridor.
Settlement and development	Large modern farm buildings occur within the north-western tip of the LDU as part of Blagdon Farm, but are largely contained by woodland and have little impact on the overall area. A mobile home is a detracting feature sitting within the combe mouth by the coast (but outside the LDU).
Local vernacular	As above.