

CULM GARDEN VILLAGE, CULLOMPTON, DEVON

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT APPRAISAL

ON BEHALF OF LIGHTWOOD LAND LTD

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1. INTRODUCTION

Terms of reference

- 1.1. Pegasus Environment, part of the Pegasus Group, has been instructed by Lightwood Land Ltd, to undertake an appraisal of landscape and visual impacts in relation to the proposed development of a new settlement of around 5,000 homes to east of Cullompton at Junction 28 of the M5 Devon (referred to as 'the site').
- 1.2. The report has been prepared to support the examination of Mid Devon District Council's Local Plan; the preparation of the Greater Exeter Strategic Plan; and the master planning of Culm Garden Village.
- 1.3. This appraisal of landscape and visual impacts (LVA) has been undertaken to determine the various landscape and visual constraints and opportunities regarding the wider site area and its context, how these might serve to influence the potential for development in respect of a strategic masterplan, and to influence an inherent landscape strategy as part of that masterplan.

Site overview

- 1.4. The site is located immediately to the east of Cullompton (east of the M5) and approximately 19km to the north of Exeter. The wider site area comprises an extensive area of mixed agricultural land that extends broadly between the M5 corridor to the west, local roads of Long Moor and Long Drag to the north, Horn Road to the east and a combination of local roads and field boundaries to the south; The A373 Honiton Road crosses the site linking Cullompton and the M5 to Honiton, approximately 14km to the south-east.
- 1.5. Additional information and a more detailed description on the physical components, landscape character and visual amenity of the site and study area are set out in later sections of this LVA.
- 1.6. This LVA initially refers to a 'wider site area' and separately the broad 'study area' for the purposes of the appraisal process (refer to **Figure 1, Site Location and Study Area**). Later sections of this LVA refer to a 'refined site area' which addresses the areas of the site that are considered for inclusion in the development framework options.

2. APPROACH

Overview

2.1. The approach and methodology used for this LVA considers best practice guidance, as set out in the following documents:

- Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (2013) Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, 3rd Edition;
- Natural England (2014) An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment; and
- Landscape Institute Advice Note 1/11 Photography and Photomontages Guidance.

2.2. Reference has also been made to additional sources of data and information; these are referred to in the relevant sections of the baseline information. A series of drawings have also been produced as part of this LVA and are included as **Figures 1 to 10**.

2.3. Principles and good practice for undertaking landscape and visual impact assessment are set out in the Landscape Institute (LI) and the Institute of Environmental Management (IEMA) Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition (2013)¹.

Landscape Institute Garden City Principles

2.4. The Landscape Institute has responded to the Government's call for new Garden Cities with a briefing paper that sets out five key principles for landscape-led garden cities, as summarised in the following table.

Table 1: Landscape Institute Key Principles for Garden Cities²

Principle	Overview
1: Start with the landscape	The vision for any new garden city must first and foremost be informed by an understanding of the characteristics unique to its specific location; its local landscape character. These include natural factors, such as landform, hydrology, biodiversity, geology, soils and climate, and human influences such as historic and current land use and the perceptions of the local community. A vision and masterplan that works with, rather than against, these factors will root garden cities firmly in their landscape context and provide a strong sense of local character to which people can relate.

¹ Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 3rd Edition (April, 2013)

² The Landscape Institute, Briefing, A new generation of garden cities: a future inspired by landscape

<p>2: Work within the landscape</p>	<p>Garden cities must respond positively to the opportunities provided by their environment. Layout, form, open spaces, architecture and choice of materials must reflect landscape context and help create a distinctive character and a sense of identity for the new communities. Designing with nature, through a green infrastructure approach, will deliver a whole host of benefits, such as reducing the risk of flooding, enabling wildlife to flourish, cleansing air and water, providing space to grow food and making new garden cities more liveable. A green infrastructure approach will also make garden cities more resilient to a changing climate and capable of mitigating and adapting to its effects.</p>
<p>3: Develop a positive relationship between town and country</p>	<p>Setting the limits of built development from the outset will prevent future suburban sprawl; new garden cities must avoid development on the best and most versatile agricultural land in the interest of future food and farming. The surrounding rural areas must supply space for leisure activities and the secure production of local food, renewable energy and building materials, soils to capture carbon and conserve water, trees and plants to cool the air and improve air quality, and access to open countryside to allow local communities to engage with nature.</p>
<p>4: Build a place worth living...for life</p>	<p>Garden cities must provide a 'home for life'. They must be designed to be adaptable, dynamic, exciting and beautiful places that delight residents, workers and visitors. They must be resilient in the face of changing weather patterns and flexible enough to respond to the depletion of natural resources and demographic and lifestyle changes over time. A wide diversity of compact self-contained neighbourhoods designed around urban village centres, providing a variety of energy efficient house types and tenures, will encourage individuals and families to settle and stay, building distinctive identities for local communities over time. Garden Cities must be great places to grow up in, to learn and work in, and for people to live in for the rest of their lives.</p>
<p>5: Create vibrant places</p>	<p>Garden cities must have landscape at their heart and be teeming with wildlife. A generous and well maintained network of public realm that serves multiple purposes for meeting, relaxing, growing food and social interaction, will help build civic pride and enjoyment. Parks and outdoor facilities, as well as access to nature, will encourage healthy lifestyles and community wellbeing. Reserving land for low carbon energy production and recycling, water and flood risk management and prioritising pedestrian and cycle movement, as well as excluding cars in places, will underpin the provision of sustainable, attractive and popular places to live</p>

2.5. The Institute believes that new generation of garden cities must demonstrate the very best in landscape planning and design, from the outset of their development. By adopting a landscape-led approach it states that change in the landscape is not to be feared, and that communities will make the most precious land resources; this has been considered throughout the process of this LVA.

Level of assessment

- 2.6. The third edition of the Guidelines for Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA3) was published in April 2013. This guidance acknowledges that landscape and visual impact assessment (LVIA) (or appraisal) can be carried out either as a standalone assessment or as part of a broader EIA. The GLVIA3 note that the overall principles and core steps in the process are the same but that there are specific procedures in EIA with which an LVIA must comply.
- 2.7. This report has been prepared as a preliminary appraisal of landscape and visual impacts (LVA). The LVA addresses matters of individual resources, character areas and representative viewpoints. The LVA considers sensitivity of receptors (both landscape and visual), the nature of impacts and professional judgements on the consequential likely effects. This process informs judgements on a landscape mitigation strategy which will avoid, reduce or remedy adverse impacts.
- 2.8. The overall approach to the identification, evaluation and assessment of landscape and visual effects is summarised as follows:
- determining the scope of the appraisal;
 - collating baseline information for landscape and visual receptors, including completing desk study research and undertaking field based survey work;
 - review the proposal and identify the nature and duration of likely impacts;
 - the considered appraisal of likely impacts against the baseline information; and
 - the identification of measures to avoid or remedy impacts and incorporation of these measures into the design of the masterplan as an integrated landscape strategy.
- 2.9. Landscape features and elements provide the physical environment for flora and fauna and the associated importance of biodiversity assets. This LVA does not consider the value, susceptibility or importance on ecology and biodiversity, nor does it consider impacts from an ecological stance.
- 2.10. Heritage assets such as Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas all contribute to the overall present day landscape character, context and setting of an area. These aspects have been given consideration in the LVA in terms of physical landscape resources (for example trees and hedgerows) and also landscape character. However, this LVA does not address the historic significance, importance or potential impacts on heritage assets and designations; these assets are assessed in the context of

landscape and visual matters only. Heritage matters are addressed separately in an 'Archaeology and Built Heritage Statement' (Pegasus Group, July 2017)

Collating baseline information

- 2.11. Information has been collated using a process of desk study and field survey in order to capture a comprehensive description of the baseline position for landscape and visual receptors. The desk study includes reference to published landscape character studies.
- 2.12. Field survey work was completed during June 2017. A series of illustrative and representative photographs were taken during the field work. These photographs were taken with a digital camera with a 50mm lens (equivalent focal length) at approximately 1.8 metres in height. These are presented as a series of viewpoints and have been used to inform the LVA (included as **Figure 5, Viewpoint Photographs 1 to 30**).

Consideration of effects

- 2.13. Having established the relevant baseline position, the appraisal process then establishes landscape and visual receptors, specifically in response to the nature of the proposed development and identifies constraints and opportunities relevant to the study area. The appraisal then considers the nature of potential impacts and consequently, how these can inform an iterative approach to design.

4. LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL BASELINE

- 4.1. The following section describes the individual components of the physical landscape that are present in the study area. These have been described to establish an understanding of the specific landscape baseline, including individual elements and more distinctive features which together contribute to landscape character.

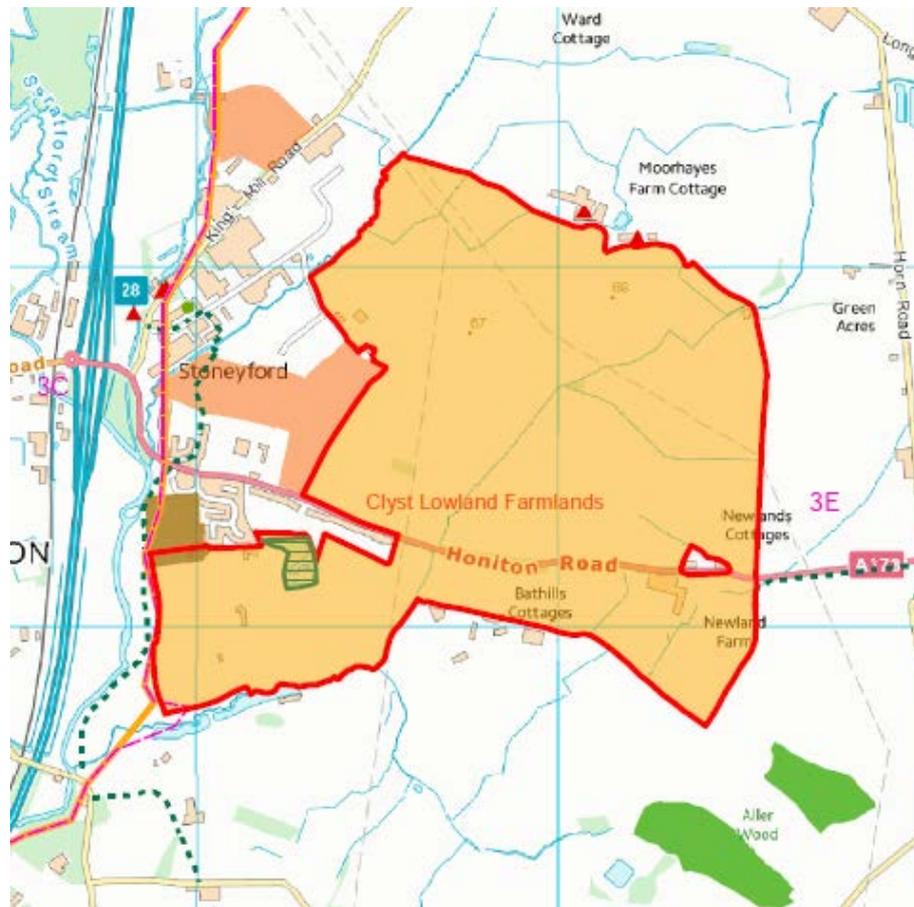
Landscape policy background

Evidence base to the Local Plan Review

- 4.2. The evidence base to the Local Plan Review includes a 'landscape and visual appraisal' of the Strategic Site Options³ for the District (prepared by Peter Brett Associates) as well as several other evidence studies related to landscape and visual matters.
- 4.3. The PBA landscape and visual appraisal was prepared for the strategic site options, including an area defined as 'East Cullompton' (Options Policy CU11); the study also aimed to support the Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment for the Local Plan Review. The section of the PBA study relevant to 'East Cullompton' is included in the appendices (**Appendix A**).
- 4.4. The site area for 'East Cullompton' that is considered in the PBA study is smaller than that considered by this LVA; the PBA site being limited to the central and core parts of the wider site area (refer to **Plate 1**).

³ Peter Brett Associates LLP on behalf of Mid Devon District Council, Strategic Site Options, Mid Devon – Landscape and Visual Appraisal, (September, 2014)

Plate1: Extract from Figure L6 of PBA study showing site boundary



4.5. Having established an overview of the landscape and visual baseline, the PBA study sets out an overview of 'sensitivity' to residential development, noting features such as linear woodland belts (and associated watercourses) and how these set thresholds in the landscape. Specific sensitive features are noted as:

- Hedgerow networks, including some which are aligned with watercourses, and field trees;
- The more open character of the eastern part of the site which is less influenced by development; and
- Views to the Blackdown Hills from Honiton Road, travelling east.

4.6. The PBA study goes on to state that:

4.7. *"4.16.2 - In landscape and visual terms, the least sensitive part of the site is the south-west corner, owing to its partly developed context, its enclosed character and its limited visibility. The eastern part has fewer development opportunities as it is beyond a clear threshold in the landscape, the linear woodland along the watercourse, the woodland*

strip and the end of development on Honiton Road, and therefore has the strong impression of being in open countryside, even though much of it cannot be seen beyond the Honiton Road corridor."

4.8. The PBA study also considers development opportunities in; parts of the site close to the Kingsmill Industrial Estate and Stoneyford, with potential to extend further east (subject to consideration of potential visibility from the Blackdown Hills AONB) and south of Honiton Road where development would be less constrained.

4.9. The observations of the PBA study are considered as part of this LVA.

Physical landscape resources

Designations

4.10. The wider site area does not include specific landscape planning designations.

4.11. However, there are several other environmental designations on and/or near the wider site area which have some relevance to landscape and visual matters (refer to **Figure 2, Landscape Planning Designations**). These include:

- Ancient Woodland – adjacent to the south-eastern edge of the site, two areas of ancient re-planted woodland that together form 'Aller Wood';
- Conservation Area – at the centre of Cullompton;
- Listed Buildings - including at Stoneyford (north), Moorhayes and Aller and numerous throughout the wider landscape, including through the centre of Cullompton, to the west, and Kentisbeare, to the east;
- Scheduled Monuments – limited to the Roman sites on the western side of Cullompton; and
- Common Land – outside of the wider site area to the south-east, at Kentis Moor.

4.12. None of these are considered to form overriding constraints to the development potential in the wider site area.

Watercourses and features

4.13. In the wider landscape the Rivers Ken and Culm are fed by numerous tributaries and together these sit within a broad floodplain between the settlements of Cullompton and Willand, extending into the landscape to the east of the M5 corridor (refer to **Figure 5, Drainage and Water Features**).

- 4.14. A number of small scale streams, brooks and drainage channels cross the wider site area. There are two more prominent watercourses that run on a broad north-east to south-west alignment; these include the River Ken which is located close to the north-western edge of the wider site area and to the north of Stoneyford and a second stream that is located broadly between the eastern edge of Stoneyford and Horn Road. Several smaller scale ponds and reservoirs are also scattered across the wider site area, including at Moorhayes and at various points to the south of Honiton Road.

Topography and landform

- 4.15. In the landscape surrounding Cullompton, topography is influenced by the transition between the context of the Culm valley and the rolling hills and ridgelines associated with the foothills of the Blackdown Hills (refer to **Figure 6, Topographical Analysis**). To the north-east of Cullompton, the River Culm initially flows through a narrower valley at Uffculme before passing to the south of Willand and into a wider floodplain that ranges between c. +54-60m AOD; this part of the floodplain extends around the north-eastern edge of Cullompton and Stoneyford before the landform begins to rise up to a series of undulating hills and localised ridgelines at between c. +58-68m AOD. Low, localised ridgelines are present immediately north of Stoneyford and also to the south of Tiverton Road, at Upton and Lower Upton; these are distinctive components in the landscape. Further east, and in the wider landscape, the landform continues to rise from between c. +70-80m AOD close to Aller and Bradfield, up to heights of c. +275-285m on the fringes of the Backdown Hill at locations, such as Blackborough. This area is characterised by a more complex series of interlocking hills with some small scale, and relatively steep sided localised valleys (such as at Kentisbeare).
- 4.16. The wider site area can very broadly be defined in three distinct areas of landform. Firstly, the lower lying areas associated with the extended floodplain of the River Culm. These lie between c. +59m AOD to the north-east of the Kingsmill Industrial Estate at Long Moor, rising to c. +70m AOD on the eastern edge at Horn Road; the floodplain also extends to the south-east of Stoneyford at c. +54m AOD. Secondly is the anonymous, low ridgeline that sits across and to the north of Stoneyford, rising from the floodplain, rising to levels between c. +64m and +67m AOD. Lastly is the surrounding hills and ridgeline that influence the fringes of the wider site area and begin to form a degree of enclosure; these areas extend around the north, east and western edges of the wider site area and rise to form a series of undulating hills between c. +76m and +84m AOD.

Land uses

- 4.17. Land use across the study area is strongly defined by the mixed agricultural mosaic that characterises much of the landscape. Variations at a broader scale are largely limited to the various patterns of settlement with some urban fringe development of industrial estates. The M5 corridor is a notable land use in itself. Some smaller scale variations across the wider landscape include small land estates, developed for recreational uses and small scale airfields.
- 4.18. In terms of the wider site area, land use reflects that of the wider context and comprises is dominated by agricultural uses. The current land use of the site is largely pastoral but includes some arable enclosures; these have partly been intensified through hedgerow removal. The built form associated with the agricultural uses also varies, with some larger scale complexes present in the landscape. Kingsmill Industrial Estate represents a larger area of commercial and industrial development, located immediately adjacent to the western boundary of the wider site area. A larger scale plant nursery was present on the southern edge of Stoneyford, however this is currently under redevelopment as residential.

Green infrastructure and vegetation patterns

- 4.19. The landscape is characterised by the pattern and scale of hedgerow field boundaries that enclosure the agricultural land uses. The majority of hedgerows across the area are continuous and dense; this is particularly the case for many of the local roads and lanes where Devon hedge banks add to the depth and density of vegetation along these routes. Larger scale woodland blocks are present but less frequent with green infrastructure connections reliant on linear vegetation along watercourses and the network of hedgerows in general. Tree and woodland cover increases further east, associated with the slopes and hills of the Blackdown Hills AONB.
- 4.20. The wider site area reflects the characteristics of the wider vegetation patterns with the landscape being characterised by a series of small to medium scale fields enclosed by hedgerows (refer to **Figure 8, Green Infrastructure Network**). Mature hedgerow trees are also present. Woodland cover on site is limited to some smaller scale tree belts and small copses however these are infrequent. There is also a correlation between linear tree belts and watercourses with the stream and brook corridors being lined with mature vegetation. Notwithstanding the lack of more substantial areas of tree and woodland cover, the field pattern and linear tree belts combine with the variations in landform to create layers of screening; together these compartmentalise the landscape often

foreshortening or screening views between areas and influencing the sense of scale and enclosure.

Development and settlement patterns

- 4.21. Development and settlement patterns are closely aligned with the course of the River Culm with three main settlements in the study area situated along the valley, including Uffculme, Willand and Cullompton. Each of these form a concentrated pattern of settlement on the lower slopes and sides of the river valley (refer to **Figure 9, Development Patterns**). Willand and Cullompton are also strongly associated with the corridor of the M5 which passes directly adjacent to these settlement areas; at Cullompton the M5 separates the 'suburb' of Stoneyford from the main part of the town. Kentisbeare is a smaller village, located further from the main corridor of the River Culm, but still situated in a localised valley. The small hamlet of Blackborough is located on higher ground on the fringe of the AONB. Further afield, larger towns are present at Tiverton, to the north-west, and Honiton, to the south-east. Outside of the main towns and villages, the settlement pattern is defined by individual farmsteads and properties, sometimes clustered into small groups (such as at Aller, Moorhayes and Higher Kingsford), but otherwise scattered relatively frequently across the wider landscape.
- 4.22. In the wider site area, Cullompton is located immediately adjacent to the western parts of the site, but separated by the corridor of the M5. The extended urban area of Stoneyford includes industrial and residential areas that are situated adjacent to the wider site area; residential properties extend west as ribbon development along the Honiton Road (A373). The settlement pattern across the wider site area reflects the scattered but frequent individual properties and farmsteads. In general, development patterns tend to stay off the higher ground. Overhead power lines cross the landscape, passing through the centre of the wider site area between the northern edge of Stoneyford (and the Kingsmill Industrial Estate) across the Honiton Road and leading south toward Mutterton and Five Cross Way.

Access

- 4.23. The landscape around Cullompton is accessed by a network of minor roads however is not well served by public rights of way (PROW) (refer to **Figure 4, Viewpoint Locations and PROW and Figure 9, Development Patterns**). To the west of the town, public bridleways form short links along former tracks; several public footpaths are situated within and to the east of the town, passing through public open space to the west of the M5. East of the M1 there are several short public footpath links around Kentisbeare and,

to the south, a more connected series of routes between Kentis Moor and Plymtree; otherwise there is very little access to this part of the landscape via the PROW network. Further east, across the rising landform and foothills of the Blackdown Hills, the PROW network becomes more frequent with a series of shorter routes forming connections between the hamlets, roads and woodlands.

- 4.24. Few PROW cross the wider site area. At Stoneyford, a short public footpath connects Honiton Road to King's Mill Road (a section of this passing through the industrial estate). Also to the western edge of the wider site area, a public footpath is located immediately adjacent to the boundary of the wider site area (but located outside of the boundary), connecting Honiton Road at Stoneyford to Old Hill at Upton. On the eastern edge of the wider site area, immediately south of Honiton Road, a public bridleway connects Aller (at Horn Cross) to Newland Farm (the bridleway running parallel and directly adjacent to the highway corridor).

Presence of views and landmark features

- 4.25. Establishing the specific nature of these views provides an understanding of the context of representative viewpoints and the nature of views in terms of distance, angle of view, and seasonal constraints associated with specific visual receptors. Representative visual receptors include (refer to **Figure 4, Viewpoint Locations and PROW** and **Figure LVA 5, Viewpoint Photographs 1 to 30**):

- Recreational receptors, including the network of PROW, which are limited across the wider site area but more prevalent further to the east;
- Users on the local road network across and surrounding the wider site area; and
- Residential receptors including (but not limited to) the settlement areas of Cullompton, Stoneyford and the individual properties scattered across the wider site area.

- 4.26. Given the size of the wider site area, the nature of views to, from and within the wider site area varies considerably; this is also the case for the presence and visibility of landmark features. Tree and woodland cover across the wider site area and in the broader landscape of the study area combine with variations in topography and landform also serve to promote or restrict views (refer to **Figure 6, Topographical Analysis and Figure 7, Green Infrastructure Network**).

- 4.27. There are a number of visual considerations relevant to the wider site area and its context. These include:

- From within the river valley, particularly the area immediately east of Cullompton, views to the wider landscape are screened by the combined influence of the low lying, flat landform and vegetation structure along the river corridor. Built form at the settlement edges add to this screening. However, there are some incidental views to localised high points that form features in the landscape, such as the prominent hilltop at Upton;
- From the Honiton Road, passing through Stoneyford to the east, the route crosses a localised high point. From this relatively elevated vantage point there are direct views to the east, toward the Blackdown Hills;
- From a number of locations throughout the wider site area, where longer distance views are available, the Blackdown Hills often form a backdrop across the panorama;
- Localised high ground at Week Farm and Upton are prominent in the landscape in the wider site area and on the edge, views are often restricted to foreshortened short and medium distance views due to the variations of landform combined with the layering of vegetation cross the field patterns;
- At the eastern edge of the study area, from the higher slopes of the Blackdown Hills there are extensive panoramas across the wider landscape, however the rolling landform across the lowland plains and the upper and lower farmed slopes creates hilltops, ridgelines and valleys whereby extensive areas can quickly become screened, for example the settlement of Kentisbeare is not overly prominent due to its position in a localised valley.

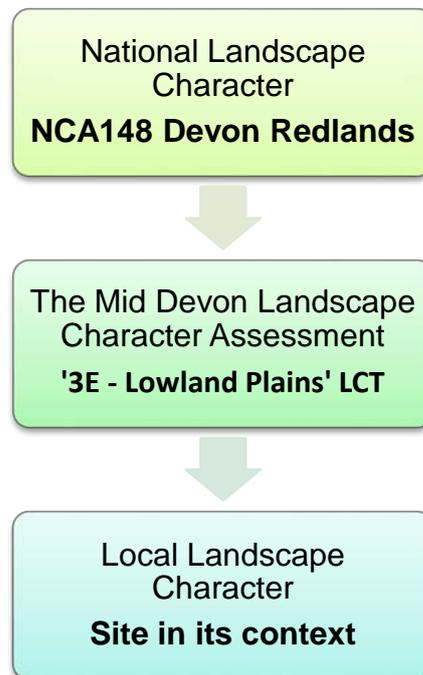
4.28. The extent of views and visibility from the wider site area is variable and subject to the combined effect of landform and vegetation cover, as previously described.

Landscape character

4.29. Reference has been made to published guidance on landscape character for the area. The wider site area is located in the following landscape character types/areas (refer to **Figure 3, Landscape Character**):

- National level – NCA 148 Devon Redlands; and
- District level – Mid Devon Landscape Character Assessment, '3E - Lowland Plains' Landscape Character Type (LCT).

Plate 2: Summary of landscape character hierarchy



4.30. The following sections set out a summary of the characteristics relevant to the site and study area.

National landscape character

4.31. At a national level, the site is situated within the National Character Area (NCA) 148, Devon Redlands⁴. Where relevant to the site and its landscape context, the key characteristics of NCA 148 relevant to the study area are summarised as follows:

- Hilly landscape of villages, hamlets, farmsteads, hedgebanks and winding sunken lanes, rising in height towards the fringes of the NCA. Steep-sided but flat-bottomed river valleys cut through the hills, opening onto wide flood plains which are important for wintering wildfowl nearer the coast;
- Red soils derived from the Permo-Triassic sandstone and red-tinged cob buildings give the name to this NCA;
- Large woodlands confined mainly to steep valley sides. In upper valleys small, broadleaved woodlands and copses give a strong sense of enclosure...;
- Mixed farming predominates, but as the land rises in the transitional areas towards Dartmoor and Exmoor pasture becomes widespread. Fields tend to be small and

⁴ Natural England, National Character Area 148: Devon Redlands (NE425 - 25 March 2013)

irregular with dense hedgerows on top of earthbanks in the transitional areas, while there is a larger, more open field pattern elsewhere; and

- Significant urban development around the estuaries and along the coast. The motorway and trunk road network linking Devon and Cornwall with the rest of the country cuts through the landscape, exposing the red sandstone. It converges around Exeter, a historic city and now a key regional centre.

4.32. The NCA guidance includes 'statements of environmental opportunity' (SEOs). These bring together environmental information for the character area and set out guidance and recommendations for actions to target the conservation and enhancement of the natural environment.

4.33. SEOs from NCA 148 Devon Redlands that are relevant to the site and the landscape surrounding Cullompton include:

- SEO 2: Manage, enhance and where necessary protect the diversity of land use and activity which gives the Devon Redlands its distinctive character. Increase the connectivity of key habitats for the benefit of landscape, biodiversity and ecosystem services.
- SEO 3: Protect and manage the distinctive character of the landscape, the natural beauty, scenic quality, historic environment and geological features. Enhance recreational resources, access to nature and heritage assets, particularly along the coast, to ensure public benefit and enjoyment.
- SEO 4: Plan and manage for a strong landscape framework to support and integrate the expansion of Exeter, Exmouth, Teignmouth, Tiverton, Crediton and Cullompton, and the road and rail network throughout the area. Conserve and enhance the existing character, form and pattern of the area's historic settlement, from single farmsteads to larger villages.

4.34. At the regional level the key characteristics which define the NCA represent a large scale and diverse area. However, such characteristics are present to a greater or lesser degree across the study area.

4.35. To complete a more detailed appraisal of potential landscape and visual issues, reference has been made to the published landscape character assessment prepared at a finer grain and more local scale.

District landscape character

- 4.36. At the district level, the landscape character of the study area is described in detail in the 'Mid Devon Landscape Character Assessment'⁵ (LCA); the LCA sets out a description of the different landscape character areas and types which are present across the district and sets out guidance for its future development and landscape management.
- 4.37. The wider site area is located in an area defined as the '3E - Lowland Plains' landscape character type (LCT). The LCT extends across a large area of landscape to the north, east and south-east of Cullompton but is also present in other parts of the District (including areas to the north of Bampton and large areas to the east and west of Crediton). To the west and north the wider site area is situated adjacent to '3C – Sparsely Settled Farmed Valley Floors' LCT.
- 4.38. The key characteristics, set out in the published LCA and relevant to the wider site area are summarised in the following table.

Table 2: Summary of the relevant high level landscape character types

LCT 3E Lowland Plains	LCT 3C Sparsely Settled Farmed Valley Floors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gently rolling middle ground to lowland with smooth, rounded hilltops that have concave lower and convex upper slopes; • Primarily managed as arable farmland with some areas of improved grassland. Mixed farming is the main agrarian pattern...; • An agrarian landscape with medium to large scale field patterns; • Fields are divided by hedgerows and hedgebanks, with the hedges forming spines along the rolling hills, with rib-like hedges crossing the convex slopes down into the valleys...; • Hedgerow trees are infrequent within the type. Individual trees within amalgamated fields indicate the positions of lost hedges; • Copses and discrete woodlands are characteristic. In some areas the fields are defined by hedgerow trees with isolated clumps of trees on hillsides or ridge lines; • Whilst there are a number of outlying, regularly distributed farms and villages, hamlets and small groups of houses, this is generally a sparsely populated area; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low-lying flood plains of the lower reaches and broader parts of the river valleys. A medium to small scale landscape, characterised by relatively narrow strips of gently sloping or level land with a smooth surface topography; • Some streams diverge, and the split channels create wetland, and a number of water bodies; • The woodland patterns tend to be sinuous, with small-scale scattered deciduous stands. Tree cover along the riverbanks creates a sense of spatial enclosure...; • This is a pastoral landscape with locally improved grasslands within a mosaic of generally grazed and rough meadows...; • This landscape experiences greater levels of enclosure due to woodland and the rising landform. Hedges and hedgerow trees further reduce the level of visibility particularly on the narrower sections. Where the valleys broaden towards the south, the levels of visibility and available views increase and the landscape has a more open and exposed character;

⁵ Mid Devon District Council, Mid Devon Landscape Character Assessment (October 2011)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The landscape is dotted with large-scale farmsteads which tend to be located on the rolling sides of the land, above the valley floor. Villages tend to be located either near to valley crossing points or on the higher ground; • Modern steel framed farm buildings are sited alongside the more traditional farm building style of cob and thatch; • Views are highly variable. The landscape is semi-open with some long extensive views afforded from on top of hilltops. Where hedges are high views are mostly framed or confined with glimpses into and out only present from field gate openings; • Roads are straight or very gently winding in nature and characterised by narrow routes that are lined with traditional hedgebanks; and • The landscape typically has short vistas terminated by a backdrop of curving hills with occasional long views from prominent locations, giving rise to a patchwork of irregular shaped fields with green pastures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ...There are some public rights of way, however this is an inherently inaccessible and isolated landscape; • Settlements within this landscape tend to have developed over time by spreading up onto higher land away from the rivers, rather than along their banks...; • There are a number of prominent land uses adjacent to the river such as paper and feed mills at Thorverton, Cullompton and Uffculme...; • Villages and hamlets are also characteristically found alongside the rivers; • Transport routes through this landscape are highly visible. Characteristically roads follow the valley floor edge, above the risk of flood. Some of the minor roads have stonewalls or hedges separating the valley from the valley sides and there are many stone bridges crossing the rivers; and • The mainline train from Penzance to London runs through the Culm Valley....
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4.39. The LCA includes an evaluation of ‘special qualities’; those considered relevant, and which can inform a masterplan for the site, include:

Table 3: Summary of relevant special qualities for the LCT

LCT 3E Lowland Plains	LCT 3C Sparsely Settled Farmed Valley Floors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intact orchards once prevalent within the landscape are a valued asset; • Wide open spaces with great landscape views; • Roads follow land contours and complement natural features for instance running alongside the valley floor, around hills and between field patterns; and • Valued hedgerows with mature hardwood trees in hedgebanks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High number of locally valued features present such as the meadows, bridges and weirs with ancient settlements and traditionally a long industrial history; • Changes due to seasonal flooding which give rise to valued wet meadows and associated wildlife such as deer; • Historic Culm valley railway with mills and dairy; • Trees and woodlands trace the watercourse’s sinuous patterns, creating a sense of enclosure.

4.40. The benefit of the more local level assessment of the Mid Devon LCA over the broader NCA guidance (from Natural England) is that it undertakes the assessment of landscape character at a more detailed level. Therefore, the finer grain of analysis accounts for the context of the wider site area and considers it in a more specifically defined area of

character. The characteristics and guidance can be used to inform proposals for development.

5. LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL ANALYSIS

Development proposals

- 5.1. The proposal will deliver a sustainable residentially led development, implemented as a new Garden Settlement in the landscape to the east of Cullompton.
- 5.2. To form judgements on the capacity of any given landscape to accommodate specific types of development (without an undue degree of landscape and visual impact) it is necessary to understand the nature and characteristics of the type of development proposed.
- 5.3. This section considers the type of development proposed and the nature of the impacts that are likely to occur; thereafter it draws the landscape and visual baseline information together and summarises the key constraints and opportunities in the existing landscape.

Likely causes of impact

- 5.4. Landscapes have a degree of intrinsic sensitivity, however different landscapes contain a range of components that will respond differently, subject to the type of the development that is being proposed. To inform the analysis of impacts, judgements should be made regarding the nature of changes which arise specifically from the type of development being considered.
- 5.5. The following section sets out the likely causes of impacts which would occur in relation to the specific type of development proposed (i.e. a residentially led masterplan).
- 5.6. Temporary impacts during construction will occur due to site clearance and accommodation works (including vegetation clearance where required), construction activity, construction compounds, earthworks and early phase infrastructure.
- 5.7. Permanent impacts relate to the built form of residential development, incorporating highways infrastructure, and likely to extend over a series of phases in the longer term. Other built aspects of a masterplan (including educational facilities or local centres) will also give rise to impacts. Other, positive impacts, will relate to formal areas of open space outside of the wider green infrastructure network (such as the community green and/or sports pitches) and to mitigation integrated into the proposed development (i.e. green infrastructure and strategic landscaping), including retained trees, hedgerows, open space provision, SUDs and attenuation areas and new planting.

Constraints and opportunities

5.8. In the context of the likely impacts the analysis of constraints and opportunities are considered based on the criteria for existing 'landscape features' and the criteria for 'visual sensitivity' of the wider site area. These are set out in the following tables

Table 4: Landscape and visual analysis

Landscape considerations	Analysis of constraints and opportunities
Landform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • superficially complex landform widened section of Culm valley and interactions of this with adjacent hills, including rising foot-slopes of the Blackdown Hills AONB to the east • on a simplified level, themes of landform/topography include a widened floodplain of the Rivers Culm and Ken, steeper sloping ground to the west of the M5, with a 'long and low' localised ridgeline sitting as an anomaly on site and within the extended floodplain • foothills to the east of the floodplain rising to between c. 70m and 100m + AOD, includes eastern parts of the site and increasing their prominence from locations to the east • opportunity to utilise landform to promote views from with the development to the wider landscape, including the Blackdown Hills to the east
Watercourses/features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • main watercourses/drainage, reflecting the landform with main rivers running through the core, narrower sections of the valley and floodplain • numerous other streams/drainage channels flow from the higher ground converging with the rivers • connections between the watercourse/drainage network and the green infrastructure network • opportunity to utilise seasonal floodplains for landscape and ecological diversity as part of the green infrastructure network
Green infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • comprised largely of field boundary hedgerows, hedgerow trees and linear belts of trees/woodland • linear green infrastructure is naturally occurring, extending along some field boundaries and watercourses but also more artificially along highway corridors (motorway) • copses/blocks of woodland tend to be more limited but are present adjacent to the south-eastern edge of the site • more extensive woodland is present on the higher ground of the Blackdown Hills AONB • themes of green infrastructure show some areas are more densely connected and continuous, but other parts have 'gaps/breaks' in the green infrastructure network; enhancing these to create key green infrastructure links/connections can be used to inform the development and landscape strategy • opportunity to reinstate orchard planting which was previously prevalent across the character type

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> retain valued hedgerows and hedgebanks, including creating new hedgebanks to reflect character as part of the design
Development patterns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> settlement edge of Cullompton currently well defined by the Culm valley and the M5 motorway corridor some development breaching this pattern to the east but focussed more on industrial/commercial areas distinct separation to the village of Willand to the north other settlement across the area is limited to individual properties/farmsteads scattered across the wider landscape (including infrequent listed buildings) and connected by the pattern of local roads; as a consequence there are no obvious 'hubs' of existing settlement to build around in terms of destination
Access and recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> there is no, or very limited public access to the wider site area in terms of public rights of way as with settlement pattern, with no key recreational routes or intersections between them; as such there are no obvious hubs around which to form routes and/or destinations opportunities exist to create hubs/nodes on site that then connect in to nearby settlements of Bradfield, Kentisbeare and Dulford; at these points the PROW network becomes more extensive, and links to routes in the Blackdown Hills AONB, access/movement hierarchies across the wider site area can be guided by this
Openness to public views	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> limited public views due to lack of access via PROW network; public views from the road network tends to be constrained by roadside vegetation but some intermediate distance views exist opportunities for promoting views from more elevated vantage points, particularly toward the Blackdown Hills AONB to the east.
Openness to private views	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> settlement edge of Cullompton is relatively well contained by green infrastructure and vegetation with limited views eastwards into the wider site area east of the M5, at Stoneyford, the linear development backs onto the wider site area (to the north and south) and there will be direct views across these parts individual properties are scattered throughout the area and views will be available from these to a greater or lesser degree subject to the immediate context of screening vegetation around the properties; for the majority, views are likely to be to the immediate context only with longer distance views screened by the layers of green infrastructure and changes in landform
Relationship with existing urban area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> there are direct relationships between with existing urban fringes in parts of the wider site area, including at the Kingsmill Industrial Estate and residential areas off the Honiton Road whilst the corridor of the River Culm creates separation between Cullompton and the wider site area, the urbanising influence of the M5 corridor, railway and extended settlement area of Stoneyford creates a sense of connection in the western parts of the wider site area there are several local roads and associated road junctions which pass through the wider site area

Scope to mitigate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• as a greenfield location, there will be an inevitable degree of landscape and visual impact and it is necessary to avoid and reduce this wherever possible• there is extensive scope to mitigate landscape and visual impact, much of which relates to the scale of the proposals in themselves• these include: a landscape led approach to shaping the masterplan, avoiding impacts by guiding development away from the most sensitive receptors; and, use of the existing green infrastructure network to guide development and to create a framework for strategic scale landscape proposals
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5.9. Based on the landscape and visual analysis, and the constraints identified, it is considered that there are two important issues in respect of the strategic development potential where landscape and visual matters are concerned: firstly, the need to identify the extent of an approximate 'development envelope'; and secondly, the need to establish a robust and enduring green infrastructure framework, including a network of open spaces, to balance with that.

5.10. These two aspects have largely defined the preliminary development and landscape strategy.

6. PRELIMINARY DEVELOPMENT AND LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

Overview

- 6.1. The preliminary development and landscape strategy for the site has considered landscape components, landscape character and visual amenity.
- 6.2. This has drawn on the preliminary landscape and visual appraisal and the early identification of constraints and opportunities. It has also drawn on the opportunities and constraints identified for the study area and therefore addresses the context of the surrounding area.
- 6.3. This approach is considered consistent with the Garden City principles which puts the landscape context and green infrastructure at the heart of the planning and design of new settlements. This closely identifies with an approach focused on the following:
- Ensure that landscape provides a framework for new development;
 - Applying an overarching green infrastructure strategy at the outset;
 - Considering the relationship between town and country; and (as part of the planning process); and
 - Inclusion of new communities as stakeholders.
- 6.4. This process informs the location, scale and extent of proposed development parcels from a landscape and visual perspective. These can then retain an inherent reference to landscape and green infrastructure which defines development envelopes for master planning. The approach ensures that potential landscape and visual impacts and effects are understood and variously captured (where beneficial), avoided or minimised and demonstrates how the estate can deliver a robust and defensible new settlement in a manner which responds to the local landscape context. It is acknowledged that there are other drivers affecting master planning e.g. heritage, transport, place-making and that an overall view of the optimum development option needs to be taken.

Preliminary development and landscape framework

- 6.5. The preliminary development and landscape strategy for a 'refined' site area has been informed by reference to the landscape and visual analysis (refer to **Figures 6 to 10**).

Overview

- 6.6. In the context of the wider landscape around Cullompton, the wider site area forms an extensive part of a broad transitional area between the valley and floodplain of the River

Culm and the higher ground, to the east, of the Blackdown Hills. Between these areas, the character of the landscape is defined by the complex interactions of topography as a series of low undulating hills and localised ridgelines gradually rise in elevation to form the foothills and steeper scarp slopes of the Blackdown Hills. Coupled with this is the consistent pattern of the mixed agricultural land uses across the study area and the framework of hedgerow field boundaries and frequent hedgerow tree belts/hedgerow trees. Together this creates a coherent sense of character but one that gradually changes in response to the rising topography.

- 6.7. There is a lack of access to the wider site area and its immediate context in the form of rights of way and recreational uses, although the local road network criss-crosses the area to enable some experience of the landscape, albeit in a more transitional capacity given the nature of the routes. The separation between main settlement areas and sparsity of any kind of clustered settlement pattern combined with the frequency of more isolated dwellings and farmsteads mean that there is little sense of destination across the wider site area.
- 6.8. Considerations of capacity in terms of different types of development reflect the proximity or otherwise to the larger settlement areas with western parts of the wider site area being located close to the urban edge of Cullompton, industrial estate and urbanising influence of the transport corridors; however, notwithstanding some strength of relationship with the urban edge, some such parts have less capacity for development due to their elevation, with localised hills and ridgelines not only reflecting local patterns of landscape character but also providing opportunities for longer distance views to the surrounding hills.
- 6.9. The outer extents of the wider site area retain some capacity for development by due to the strong framework of green infrastructure and containment by landform, however there is also a need to create a 'sensitive' and appropriate design response that creates an appropriate transition and landscaped edge between the 'refined site area' and the adjacent countryside; as such the fringes of the wider site area, particularly to the north, east and south east are considered to be less appropriate for development.
- 6.10. In summary, the wider site area comprises an extensive area of landscape between the valley and floodplains of the River Culm and the upper slopes and foothills of the Blackdown Hills. The landscape retains many positive aspects, including its coherence, its mosaic of land uses and the interest gained from the combined interactions of landform and green infrastructure. However, there are few defining characteristics that

elevate the landscape in general, urban influences detract from the western parts and there is a lack of access that would facilitate some form of recreational value.

General design considerations

- 6.11. General design considerations in relation to landscape and visual matters can be used to shape an appropriate design response in relation to local landscape character and visual amenity. These include:

Development envelope

- 6.12. The development envelope is the area identified within which the built form and infrastructure will sit; it is a constraint on the scale and spatial extents of the built elements of the masterplan.
- 6.13. The development envelope will be defined by a series of smaller parcels or development cells. Each will pay particular attention to landscape related constraints and opportunities such as the need to retain existing vegetation structure of hedgerows, hedgerow trees and tree/woodland belts.
- 6.14. Development cells will also reflect the landform of the site and presence of the localised valleys and ridgelines.
- 6.15. The development cells also have the opportunity to shape connectivity across the wider site area and its integration with the surrounding landscape context.
- 6.16. The masterplan will work with the existing scale and pattern of the local landscape character by creating a series of smaller development cells which together form the overall development envelope. These create a layout which retains the majority of existing green infrastructure, works within the capacity of the landscape and adds a natural permeability to the overall massing the wider development envelope.

Existing and proposed green infrastructure

- 6.17. Analysis of the existing green infrastructure network has identified a series of strategic green infrastructure links. In response to this analysis the development cells have been shaped by the existing field pattern, including their enclosure by hedgerows, tree belts and woodlands. This ensures that the existing vegetation, and the scale and pattern of the landscape, is integrated into the layout and that existing green infrastructure across the site is largely retained.

- 6.18. Retained green infrastructure will be reinforced and enhanced through additional landscaping and improved management; the aims of which will consider location, function and also biodiversity objectives. The approach includes consideration of 'stand offs' to woodlands, trees and hedgerows which will help to avoid potential impacts on the root protection zones of these elements, helping to ensure they are retained in the long term.
- 6.19. There will inevitably be some limited losses of vegetation across the site however, overall, these losses will be balanced through the strategy for retaining and enhancing vegetation and also by the extensive areas of new landscape planting implemented as part of the strategy for green infrastructure and open spaces.
- 6.20. This includes area proposed for substantial woodland planting, creating new connectivity between habitats (such as between and around the ancient woodland at Aller Wood as well as along watercourses)
- 6.21. The strategy for existing and proposed green infrastructure will provide an immediate landscape structure which mitigates potential landscape impacts and will help to reduce or eliminate visual impacts.

Public access

- 6.22. The wider site area is currently largely devoid of public access and therefore this aspect of the masterplan represents a substantial opportunity to create new connections through a range of different links. These will be focussed on promoting a variety of uses including walking and cycling and draws on potential destinations in the wider landscape.

Landscape and detailed design

- 6.23. The detailed design stages can be tailored to include a high quality landscape scheme, including both public open space and private green space.
- 6.24. Areas of private garden space and the internal street scene have the capacity to include street and garden trees, as will parts of the public realm in educational, retail and commercial areas of the masterplan. Over time these will contribute to the green infrastructure framework across the site, enhancing the character and integration of the site with the surrounding landscape context.
- 6.25. All proposed landscape mitigation will be subject to a high quality detailed landscape scheme that will ensure that the functions of the landscape components are delivered; this will also reflect positively on the design quality of the proposed development as a

whole. At detailed design the selection of species for trees and woodland will refer to native species and as well as those present in the context of the local landscape character.

7. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

7.1. This landscape and visual appraisal (LVA) has been prepared to determine the constraints and opportunities in respect of a potential garden community on land to the east of Cullompton. The LVA has addressed the following landscape resources and visual receptors:

- Landscape character, including physical landscape features and elements; and
- Views and visual amenity experienced by residents, recreational users (including visitors and tourists) and road users.

7.2. The LVA has determined the landscape and visual constraints and opportunities regarding the wider site area and its landscape context. The analysis will influence the assessment of the development potential of the wider site area, to inform master planning and the definition of a refined site area.

7.3. The wider site area comprises an extensive area of landscape between the valley and floodplains of the River Culm and the upper slopes and foothills of the Blackdown Hills. The landscape retains many positive aspects, including its coherence, its mosaic of land uses and the interest gained from the combined interactions of landform and green infrastructure. However, there are few defining characteristics that elevate the landscape in general, urban influences detract from the western parts and there is a lack of access that would facilitate some form of recreational value.

7.4. The LVA aims to influence the inherent landscape strategy as part of a masterplan in order that the options can responded to landscape issues and define compartmentalised development cells that work to the scale and pattern of the local landscape character whilst contributing to an overall masterplan for the refined site area.

7.5. The proposed layout and high level treatment of green infrastructure (including retention of vegetation on site and around the boundaries) also responds to the landscape constraints and opportunities identified by the appraisal process.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Extract from Peter Brett Associates report on 'East Cullompton'

4 East Cullompton

4.1 Site Location and Description

4.1.1 The site lies east of Cullompton and east of the settlement at Stoneyford, on land that is both arable and grazed; in the south-west corner there is an area of disused glasshouses and former nurseries. The A373 Honiton Road bisects the site, with the larger portion of the site lying to the north. There is residential and commercial development along the Honiton Road at the western edge of the site, and Kingsmill Industrial Estate lies adjacent to the north-western corner of the site. The M5 motorway separates the site and its setting to the east, from the centre of and much of Cullompton to the west.

4.2 Designations

4.2.1 The landscape planning context for the site is set out on **Figure L6: Landscape Planning and Character**.

4.2.2 There are listed buildings immediately north of the site at Moorhayes Farm. There is a County Wildlife Site in the south-west of the site, south of the residential development along Honiton Road.

4.2.3 The site is not covered by any landscape designations. The Blackdown Hills AONB lies about 2 km to the east of the site.

4.3 Landscape Related Planning Policy

4.3.1 Overarching landscape policy within the adopted and emerging Local Plans is described in section 1.4. The Interim Sustainability Appraisal for the Local Plan Review considers the East Cullompton Option (Policy CU11). It identifies the following relevant Sustainability Objectives followed by a commentary which has been summarised for this appraisal.

4.3.2 Sustainability Objectives:

A – Protection of the Natural Environment:

- 1 ha unclassified wildlife site close to the western edge of the site;
- *“Criteria within the policy seek mitigation measures through environmental protection and enhancement and provision of 50 ha of strategic green infrastructure comprising a mix of public open space, sports pitches, allotments and natural habitats, a positive effect.”*; and
- Would need a full Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment if site is put through.

4.3.3 The Green Infrastructure Assessment (GIA) gives a GI score of 6 for the Cullompton catchment area and identifies two Strategic Nature Areas – both designated as coastal and floodplain grazing marsh. County Wildlife Sites take up 29 hectares (above average in comparison to other catchments).

4.3.4 The GIA states that: *“amounts of small-scale public open space and allotments are reasonably high compared to other catchments”,* however *“while the overall amount of GI is about average, the population density in the Cullompton catchment area is relatively high, so GI per head of population is low.”*

4.3.5 It suggests that the low provision may be addressed by the development of the North West Cullompton urban extension, as the site allocation includes 28 hectares of GI, *“including public*

parkland, open space, landscaping, potential Local Nature Reserve and an extension to the cemetery”. Specifically the GIA suggests that: “Some of the site may remain in active farming use, as food production is a recognised function of GI. The public open space element must include 0.7 hectares of equipped children’s play area, 2.8 hectares of sports pitches and 0.7 hectares of allotments.”

- 4.3.6 The inclusion of additional land at Northwest Cullompton and new evidence underlying the Local Plan Review may result in changes to the amount of GI required for that development, and any allocation of the East Cullompton site would include additional requirements for GI.

4.4 Published Landscape Character

- 4.4.1 The landscape character context for the site is set out on **Figure L6: Landscape Planning and Character**.
- 4.4.2 The site is within National Character Area 148: Devon Redlands, and within the Devon Character Area: Clyst Lowland Farmlands. In the Mid Devon Landscape Character Assessment, the site is within LCT 3E: Lowland Plains.
- 4.4.3 Key characteristics are set out below.

Table 4.1: Site Key Characteristics – East Cullompton

Relevant Key Characteristics	Notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gently rolling middle ground to lowland with smooth, rounded hilltops that have concave lower and convex upper slopes. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primarily managed as arable farmland with some areas of improved grassland. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An agrarian landscape with medium to large scale field patterns. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fields are divided by hedgerows and hedgebanks, with the hedges forming spines along the rolling hills, with rib-like hedges crossing the convex slopes down into the valleys. These hedges are distinctive in their regularity and simplicity. 	There is a varied pattern of hedges and hedgerows across the site. Running roughly north/south across the centre of the site is a significant length of hedgerow, as well as in the vicinity of the glass houses.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hedgerow trees are infrequent within the type. Individual trees within amalgamated fields indicate the positions of lost hedges. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Copses and discrete woodlands are characteristic. In some areas the fields are defined by hedgerow trees with isolated clumps of trees on hillsides or ridge lines. 	There are stands of trees associated with dwellings and glass houses.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whilst there are a number of outlying, regularly distributed farms and villages, hamlets and small groups of houses, this is generally a sparsely populated area. 	There is also development to the west along Tiverton Road.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some orchards, once typical of the area, remain and there are small areas of market gardening. 	There is no significant evidence of orchards but there is former market gardening in and adjacent to the south-west corner.

Relevant Key Characteristics	Notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Views are highly variable. The landscape is semi-open with some long extensive views afforded from on top of hilltops. Where hedges are high views are mostly framed or confined with glimpses into and out only present from field gate openings. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Roads are straight or very gently winding in nature and characterised by narrow routes that are lined with traditional hedgebanks. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The landscape typically has short vistas terminated by a backdrop of curving hills with occasional long views from prominent locations, giving rise to a patchwork of irregular shaped fields with green pastures. 	

4.5 Agricultural Land Classification

- 4.5.1 The western half of the site has an Agricultural Land Classification of mainly 3a, with some areas of 3b. An area of Grade 2 land is present to the south of Week Farm (**Appendix C**). Mapping does not cover the eastern half of the site.

4.6 Boundaries

- 4.6.1 Most of the site boundaries are remote from roads or footpaths, with the exception of a short length (approximately 400m) along the northern side of Honiton Road, where it runs opposite some of the dwellings along the road.
- 4.6.2 The northern boundary follows a private access track in the vicinity of Moorhayes Farm, which is partly lined with hedges and hedgerows.
- 4.6.3 From the north, the eastern boundary follows a narrow belt of woodland, a length of hedge and then across an open field to the Honiton Road. South of the Honiton Road, the eastern boundary follows the western boundary of the grounds of a dwelling, then a length of hedgerow.
- 4.6.4 The southern boundary follows hedgerows to the north of agricultural and residential buildings known as Bathills and Aller Barton, where it doglegs and follows hedgerows above a small valley.
- 4.6.5 The western boundary follows hedges as far as an area of disused glass houses, where it then heads east, largely along the rear of gardens off Honiton Road, then crossing Honiton Road to return westwards along a low fence and hedge. It then heads northwards again, following a zigzag course through Week Farm, and along the tree lined course of the River Ken, between the fields and the Kingsmill Industrial Estate.

4.7 Landform and Watercourses

- 4.7.1 The overall topography of the site consists of a gently sloping landform, with a series of subtle spurs emanating from a high point of just above 70m AOD north of the Honiton Road, opposite Newland Farm. Those spurs drop away north-westwards to the River Ken along part of the western boundary and to the flatter land off site beyond Moorhayes Farm. The land continues to rise beyond the eastern boundary towards the escarpment of the Blackdown Hills.

4.7.2 North of Honiton Road, a shallow valley with a stream runs southwards south of Moorhayes becoming much deeper and narrower as it passes beneath the Honiton Road. South of the Honiton Road, the valley continues on to the River Culm, with a distinctive spur occurring above the watercourse in the vicinity of East Culme House, at just above 60 AOD.

4.7.3 There is a complex system of watercourses across the whole of the site. These largely follow field boundaries and tend to be represented by the more heavily vegetated boundaries. There is a pond in the vicinity of East Culme House, and a linear pond at Newland Farm.

4.8 Significant Vegetation

4.8.1 The most significant vegetation on the site is associated with buildings such as south of Newland Farm and near East Culme House, and the county wildlife site. There is a narrow strip of woodland along the north side of Honiton Road between Stoneyford and Newland Farm, and a small block of woodland in the fields near Stoneyford. A strong hedgerow runs north/south across the site, following the valley described above; the combined landform and vegetation divide the site.

4.8.2 Throughout the site north of Honiton Road is a scattering of field trees, which are likely to be remnants of a more intricate pattern of hedged field boundaries.

4.8.3 There is also a pattern of closely trimmed hedges across the site, generally with few hedgerow trees.

4.9 Phase I Habitat Survey Classification

4.9.1 The Phase I habitat survey for the site (Devon Biodiversity Records Centre, June 2014) states:

“The site is relatively large and comprises a range of habitat types. Of the habitats present the hedgerows are considered to provide the greatest value for wildlife as they are mature, well connected and species-rich. Furthermore, the woodlands, whilst small are moderately species-rich, and are also well connected in the wider landscape through the hedgerow network. The hedgerows and woodlands add to the structural diversity of the area. If the site is subject to development it is recommended that the hedgerows and woodlands are retained where possible.”

4.9.2 An Unconfirmed Wildlife Site is present in the south west of the site consisting of two large ponds surrounded by mature trees and an area of under managed species-poor semi-improved grassland. This was previously designated as a County Wildlife Site.

4.9.3 Key habitats and species present or potentially present within the site are listed in **Table 4.2:**

Table 4.2: Key Species – East Cullompton

UK and Devon Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) habitats and species recorded on site	UK and Devon Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) species and protected species with potential to be supported by the site
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hedgerows (UK and Devon BAP) ▪ Lowland mixed deciduous woodland (UK BAP) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Otter (UK and Devon BAP) ▪ Bat species (including pipistrelle species, brown long-eared and greater horseshoe bat) ▪ Badger ▪ Dormouse (UK and Devon BAP) ▪ Hedgehog (UK BAP) ▪ Amphibian species ▪ Reptile species ▪ Nesting birds

4.9.4 The Phase I habitat survey map for the site is provided in **Appendix D**.

4.10 Visibility

- 4.10.1 There are no public rights of way across the site, apart from the Honiton Road which runs east to west across the site.
- 4.10.2 Visibility of the site from publicly accessible viewpoints is limited to Honiton Road and the surrounding lanes, which are at least one field depth from the site boundary (**Viewpoints E1 and E2**). These views are limited by topography, roadside vegetation and intervening hedgerows. In the vicinity of Stoneyford, existing development further limits views southwards.
- 4.10.3 Although there are direct views into the site from Honiton Road, these are limited to areas where there are field gates or no hedge, and then restricted by the rising ground and internal field boundaries (**Viewpoint E4**). From the surrounding lanes both north and south there is a complex network of intervening hedges and hedgerows that conceal the site; views tend to be obtained of the site boundaries by looking from field gates rather than continuous views when travelling along the lanes.
- 4.10.4 There is a footpath to the west of the site along the floor of the shallow Culm Valley, between the M5 and the site boundary. The site is about 5m above the footpath and beyond a hedge, so it is not visible (**Viewpoint E3**).
- 4.10.5 Viewpoints from the AONB are generally limited by intervening landform or hedgerows and by the largely wooded nature of the escarpment. Site work revealed very few views of the site from the AONB; where the site was visible, it was seen from the lower slopes of the escarpment at Blackbrook, some 5km to the east (**Viewpoint E5**). From that distance, the fields on the higher parts of the site are just visible.
- 4.10.6 From elevated viewpoints in the vicinity of North West Cullompton such as a gateway along Beacon Lane, nearly 3km away, the eastern parts of the site are just discernible (**Viewpoint N3**).

4.11 Relationship to Existing and Proposed Development

- 4.11.1 Although close to Kingsmill Industrial Estate and Stoneyford towards its western edge, much of the site is generally separated from existing development because of distance, topography and existing vegetation. The exception is in the south-western corner where there is development along the south of Honiton Road, adjacent to the site boundary, with recent housing at Culm Lea to the west of this, and disused glasshouses of the former Cummings Nursery beyond. There is a planning application for housing development on the site of the glasshouses (13/00859/MOUT).
- 4.11.2 The buildings at Week Farm straddle part of the western boundary, those of Newland Farm lie within the eastern part of the site, either side of Honiton Road. The buildings of Moorhayes Farm abut the northern boundary, and those of Aller Barton and Bathills abut the southern boundary. In the south-west corner, near East Culm House, there are glasshouses and buildings associated with horticulture.
- 4.11.3 The farm buildings are part of the normal pattern of development throughout the rural landscape. The development around Stoneyford, which is a mixture of residential, commercial and horticulture, with the industrial estate to the north, provides a developed context for the western part of the site, both when travelling along Honiton Road and in more distant views from the west. However, beyond the rather suburban ribbon of houses on the south of Honiton Road, at the eastern end of Stoneyford, there is a threshold into open countryside, with views across open countryside. Opposite the houses, the character of the site is very

much of open countryside, although views are limited because of topography. Further to the east and beyond the narrow belt of roadside woodland, development becomes more sporadic.

4.12 Positive Features

- 4.12.1 Apart from the open rural nature of much of the site, positive features include the network of hedgerows and hedgerows trees across the site, and the generally enclosed and apparently remote character of much of the site.

4.13 Negative Features

- 4.13.1 Negative features include the two runs of overhead power lines and their pylons, which enter the site in the north-west corner, with one run heading due south across the site and the other running in a roughly south-easterly direction.
- 4.13.2 There has been significant hedge removal north of the Honiton Road which has made those parts of the site seem bleak. The glasshouses and associated structures in the south-west are well contained and are on quite a modest scale compared with those to the north and off-site. These may progressively become derelict which would be detrimental to that part of the site, although planning permission has been granted for redevelopment of the site as housing.

4.14 Sensitive Features and Characteristics

- 4.14.1 The network of hedgerows that follow some of the watercourses are distinctive and will need to be protected, as will the field trees throughout the site.
- 4.14.2 The eastern part of the site beyond Stoneyford has an open character and appears not to be influenced by development.
- 4.14.3 When using the Honiton Road travelling east, and there are views to the Blackdown Hills along the road corridor.

4.15 Site Specific Appraisal

- 4.15.1 **Figure L10:** Landscape and Visual Analysis, shows opportunities and constraints for the site, key features and the distinct areas within the site.
- 4.15.2 The site breaks down into four distinctive areas. The area north of the Honiton Road rises gently in a south-easterly direction towards a shallow spur in the vicinity of Newland Farm. As a result, much of the area is out of sight from Honiton Road. It consists mostly of large fields with, especially to the west, many field trees and relicts of removed hedges.
- 4.15.3 It is divided into two by a strong vegetation belt and change of topography, as a result of the valley feature described above. The western section has smaller fields and more trees (A), whilst the eastern section (B) is dominated by one large field with a smaller network of fields to the north.
- 4.15.4 To the south of Honiton Road, the western area consists of a more intricate network of irregular fields, glass houses, the grounds of East Culme House and the wildlife site. These are situated on a small spur between the Culm Valley to the west, and its tributary to the south. It is very enclosed and difficult to locate when looking from the adjacent lanes (C).
- 4.15.5 The eastern area is more open than the western, but as it falls away to the south from Honiton Road, the roadside hedges tend to screen the site. The boundaries with the land to the south are generally weak (D).

4.16 Sensitivity to Residential Development

- 4.16.1 The strong linear woodland along the watercourse running diagonally through the northern part of the site forms a strong threshold in the landscape, which coincides more or less with the end of development at Stoneyford, and the narrow woodland along the northern side of Honiton Road. There is a perception of open countryside beyond this threshold, both to the north and south, even if it is not possible to see very far into the site. The south west corner is very enclosed and closely related to development with little visibility into the area
- 4.16.2 In landscape and visual terms, the least sensitive part of the site is the south-west corner, owing to its partly developed context, its enclosed character and its limited visibility. The eastern part has fewer development opportunities as it is beyond a clear threshold in the landscape, the linear woodland along the watercourse, the woodland strip and the end of development on Honiton Road, and therefore has the strong impression of being in open countryside, even though much of it cannot be seen beyond the Honiton Road corridor.
- 4.16.3 To the west of the threshold, the site reads more as being part of the developed area, which would be reinforced by employment development between the Kingsmill Industrial Estate and the site.

4.17 Development Opportunities

- 4.17.1 North of Honiton Road, development would be phased from west to east, starting at the point nearest to the Kingsmill Industrial Estate and Stoneyford, with an intermediate threshold at the linear woodland. Extension of development beyond that boundary might be possible in the longer term, but would need to be subject to a more detailed assessment to determine the effect on the wider landscape and visibility from the AONB.
- 4.17.2 To the south of Honiton Road, development is less constrained and would be undertaken across much of the site.
- 4.17.3 The interface between the development to the north and south and Honiton Road will have to be carefully designed to avoid development becoming dominant in views from the road.

4.18 Landscape Changes in the Absence of Development on the Site

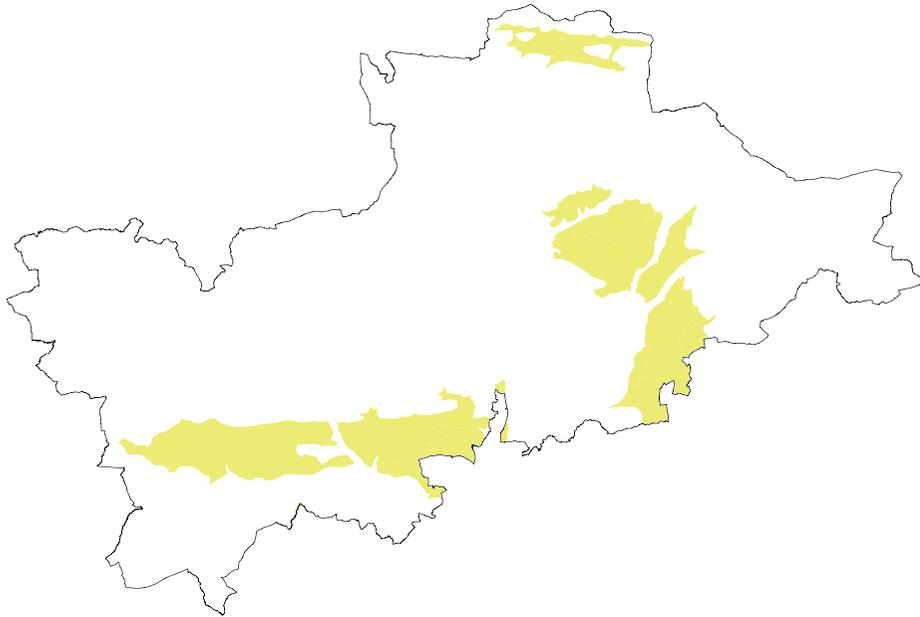
- 4.18.1 Potential future forces for change identified in the Mid Devon Character Assessment include an increased demand for food production leading to expansion of arable land, bigger fields (which has happened on the site) and loss of Devon banks. The other forces of change relate to different crops being grown and the need for farm diversification.

APPENDIX B

Extract from the Mid Devon LCA:

LCT 3E: Lowland Plains

LCT 3E Lowland Plains



Description

This landscape is typically present in the Crediton area and east of the River Culm. It has an open, low lying flat landscape and is a prosperous agricultural area.

Primarily managed as arable farmland with some areas of improved grassland. This is a traditional Devon landscape where the Redlands characteristics are superimposed on the rolling landform of the Culm giving great soil fertility.

There are some early but isolated settlements that harmonise with the landscape. Notable estates and manor houses within the area have important visual relationships to the broader landscape and designed vistas.



Key Characteristics

- Gently rolling middle ground to lowland with smooth, rounded hilltops that have concave lower and convex upper slopes.
- Primarily managed as arable farmland with some areas of improved grassland. Mixed farming is the main agrarian pattern, with ley grassland forming an important part of the rotation of crops including barley, wheat, cabbage, corn and oil seed rape.
- For the most part it is characterised by the Red Devon Sandstone giving great soil fertility for arable farming resulting in Grade 1 and Grade 2 agricultural land classification.
- An agrarian landscape with medium to large scale field patterns.
- Fields are divided by hedgerows and hedgebanks, with the hedges forming spines along the rolling hills, with rib-like hedges crossing the convex slopes down into the valleys. These hedges are distinctive in their regularity and simplicity.
- Hedgerow trees are infrequent within the type. Individual trees within amalgamated fields indicate the positions of lost hedges.
- Copses and discrete woodlands are characteristic. In some areas the fields are defined by hedgerow trees with isolated clumps of trees on hillsides or ridge lines. Posbury Clump, a hilltop group of trees, is particularly visually prominent, forming a local landmark.
- Whilst there are a number of outlying, regularly distributed farms and villages, hamlets and small groups of houses, this is generally a sparsely populated area.
- Some orchards, once typical of the area, remain and there are small areas of market gardening.
- The landscape is dotted with large-scale farmsteads which tend to be located on the rolling sides of the land, above the valley floor. Villages tend to be located either near to valley crossing points or on the higher ground. Modern steel framed farm buildings are sited alongside the more traditional farm building style of cob and thatch.
- The tree cover is enriched by parks around small manor houses. There are two notable estates at Crediton present within the landscape, Creedy Park and Shobrooke Park. To the east of the district there are two parklands including Bridwell Park and Bradfield House, Uffculme. These have a parkland and large-scale pastoral character created through the absence of hedges and are characterful of clump tree planting within extensive shelterbelts.
- Views are highly variable. The landscape is semi-open with some long extensive views afforded from on top of hilltops. Where hedges are high views are mostly framed or confined with glimpses into and out only present from field gate openings.
- Historic features include Cadbury Castle between and to the west of Thorverton and Tiverton, hill clumps and the parklands near Crediton, as well as historic village centres with conservation area status.
- Roads are straight or very gently winding in nature and characterised by narrow routes that are lined with traditional hedgebanks. Land is traditionally highly valued for agriculture, and very little waste in the form of verges and wide roads.
- The landscape typically has short vistas terminated by a backdrop of curving hills with occasional long views from prominent locations, giving rise to a patchwork of irregular shaped fields with green pastures.

Evaluation

Special Qualities

- The arable landscape provides an attractive textured patchwork with a strong sense of seasonal variety. Where the land is freshly ploughed the rich red soils, characteristic of the underlying sandstone are revealed, strongly contrasting with the verdant greens of the land cover.
- A highly fertile arable landscape which is valued for its contribution to the agrarian character and quality of Mid Devon.
- It is a landscape of mixed farming but, as the land rises to the Culm, pasture predominates and the red soils disappear. These fields are occasionally interspersed with ploughed yellow ochre soil of the Culm Measures or rich red soil from the red sandstone.
- Notable estates and manor houses within the area have important visual relationships to the broader landscape and designed vistas.
- Intact orchards once prevalent within the landscape are a valued asset.
- Wide open spaces with great landscape views.
- Historic interest with archaeology and celtic settlements.
- Roads follow land contours and complement natural features for instance running alongside the valley floor, around hills and between field patterns.
- Valued hedgerows with mature hardwood trees in hedgebanks.

Past Forces for Change

- A number of fields have undergone field amalgamation, and a significant number of hedges are perceived to be gappy and in poor condition, particularly where stock are no longer grazed and the overall farming patterns are no longer mixed with arable and pasture for livestock.
- Little new woodland planted.
- In places the simple patterns of the landscape have been disrupted through the inappropriate siting of modern agricultural buildings, particularly those used for poultry housing and the associated vertical tower feed-bins that accompany the single large, or many smaller metal framed sheds.
- In some areas, such as Shillingford Vale, large scale planting of short rotational coppice masks the inherent pastoral cultural patterns.
- The loss of traditional orchards has led to decline of species variety and of a valued asset.
- Development which does not maintain the existing settlement pattern of individual farmsteads or nucleated villages and their associated vernacular.
- Continued development pressure, particularly due to proximity of M5 corridor and link road within Culm Valley area.
- Decline in old tunnel-like Devon hedgerows that acted as important ecological corridors for wildlife such as dormice.
- Introduction of energy crops in the landscape such as 'Miscanthus' in response to increased market demand, responding to carbon reduction policies.
- Increased demand for UK food production leading to a further expansion of land under arable production, leading to field enlargement, loss of Devon banks and a decrease in water quality.

Evaluation

Future Forces for Change

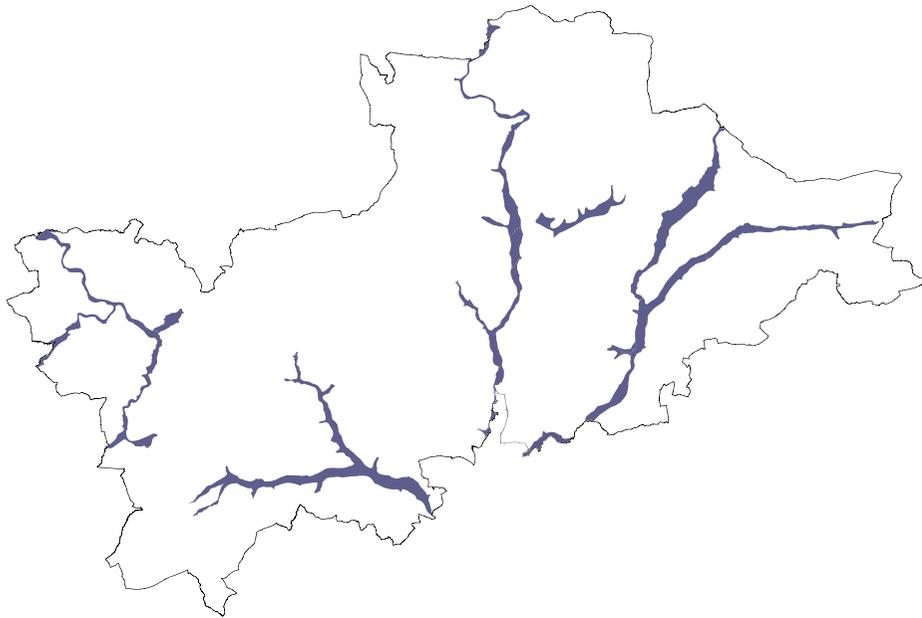
- Uncertain future for the agricultural economy – levels of future funding support and market prices for farmed products is unknown .
- Continued trend in hobby farming and equine enterprises potentially leading to a further dilution of traditional farming practices in the landscape.
- Climate change may lead to potential drying out of important valley bottom habitats including neutral grasslands, marsh, rush pasture and valley mire due to higher summer temperatures and lower rainfall.
- Increase in domestic tourism with associated demands for new facilities and infrastructure, as well as an increase in traffic levels, farm conversions and the siting of caravan/camping sites.
- Ongoing increase in commuting and visitor traffic requiring traffic management and road engineering works out of keeping with the character of the landscape's narrow rural lanes.
- If landscape degrades it becomes vulnerable to development.
- Climate change may lead to more frequent drought conditions leading to crop failures and reduced productivity of the farmed landscape.
- Climate change may lead to new crops more suited to higher summer temperatures such as sunflowers, navy beans, soya, lupins, borage, evening primrose and vineyards.
- Increased demand for UK food production leading to a further expansion of land under arable production – leading to field enlargement, loss of Devon banks and a decrease in water quality.
- Increased demand for wind turbines may have a dominant/negative impact on landscape in particular areas.
- Changes in farming including diversification, decrease in number of larger scale farms, with an increase in the number of non-farming activities and pressure for new dwellings for smaller farms or businesses.
- Increased demand for bio-energy crops, including short rotation coppice (as seen in Shillingford Vale) as well as a drive towards active woodland management to produce woodfuel as a low carbon fuel source.

APPENDIX C

Extract from the Mid Devon LCA

LCT 3C: Sparsely Settled Farmed Valley Floors LCT

LCT 3C Sparsely settled farmed valley floors



Description

This landscape consists of rivers or streams and related flat or gently sloping valley bottoms found within the low-lying areas of the District. This type extends over the valley floors of the Rivers Culm, Exe, Taw, Yeo, Creedy, Dart and Bathern. It also covers the low lying plains of the Grand Western Canal corridor.

Villages and hamlets are characteristically found alongside the rivers and there are a number of prominent landuses associated with the river, such as mills, fish farms and factories.

There is also a high number of locally valued features present such as meadows, bridges and weirs.



Key Characteristics

- Low-lying flood plains of the lower reaches and broader parts of the river valleys. A medium to small scale landscape, characterised by relatively narrow strips of gently sloping or level land with a smooth surface topography.
- This landscape has an inherently damp character. In places this damp character becomes wet, with sinuous rivers meandering across the plains. Some streams diverge, and the split channels create wetland, and a number of water bodies.
- The soils and surface geology strongly relate to the presence of the rivers, with alluvium and valley silts, gravels and sands.
- Towards the south of the district the landscape is agriculturally improved with extensive arable cultivation in fields of a larger scale due mainly to field amalgamation.
- The woodland patterns tend to be sinuous, with small-scale scattered deciduous stands. Tree cover along the riverbanks creates a sense of spatial enclosure, with species, including alder, ash, oak and hawthorn.
- This is a pastoral landscape with locally improved grasslands within a mosaic of generally grazed and rough meadows. The field vegetation tends to be mixed with marshy areas of rushes, which become more scattered on the drier, better-drained land.
- This landscape experiences greater levels of enclosure due to woodland and the rising landform. Hedges and hedgerow trees further reduce the level of visibility particularly on the narrower sections. Where the valleys broaden towards the south, the levels of visibility and available views increase and the landscape has a more open and exposed character.
- The hamlets and roadside cottages are linked by a network of winding lanes narrowly contained by high hedges on banks. Some are sunken lanes. There are some public rights of way, however this is an inherently inaccessible and isolated landscape.
- Settlements within this landscape tend to have developed over time by spreading up onto higher land away from the rivers, rather than along their banks. Historically building materials are stone and cob with thatched roofs which have often been replaced by either slate or tile.
- There are a number of prominent land uses adjacent to the river such as paper and feed mills at Thorverton, Cullompton and Uffculme, the textile factory, school and college at Tiverton, the fish farm at Exebridge and Upton as well as the mills and industrial estate at Fordton.
- Villages and hamlets are also characteristically found alongside the rivers. Where these ribbon developments and hamlets line the rivers, such as at Eggesford on the Taw, there are small-scale pastures that have a domesticated and garden character.
- Transport routes through this landscape are highly visible. Characteristically roads follow the valley floor edge, above the risk of flood. Some of the minor roads have stonewalls or hedges separating the valley from the valley sides and there are many stone bridges crossing the rivers.
- The mainline train from Penzance to London runs through the Culm Valley within the district and the Tarka line runs through the Taw valley from Bury Bridge. Bridges, weirs and stone-faced cuttings of historic railway interest, create consistent and repeated patterns throughout this type.

Evaluation

Special Qualities

- The river generally forms the boundary to fields, with its meandering and sinuous shape creating organic forms which contrast with the straight hedges elsewhere.
- This is a landscape that is often perceived to be both impressive and interesting. A strong sense of harmony is created through the repeated and regular field patterns and the river valleys are typically tranquil, being both still and silent away from roads.
- High number of locally valued features present such as the meadows, bridges and weirs with ancient settlements and traditionally a long industrial history.
- Both local people and tourists using the road (the A396 in particular), appreciate the tranquillity and isolation. The Exe Valley way and the Tarka Trail are important valued routes popular with local people and visitors for informal recreation such as walking, fishing, cycling, horse riding and trekking.
- Many cottages and farmsteads contain a number of impressive traditional farm buildings in the local dark red sandstone with slate roofs.
- Changes due to seasonal flooding which give rise to valued wet meadows and associated wildlife such as deer.
- Historic Culm valley railway with mills and dairy.
- Trees and woodlands trace the watercourse's sinuous patterns, creating a sense of enclosure.

Past forces for change

- Fences are often a new addition to the landscape, frequently found in the more agrarian areas, and form a non-characteristic feature that disrupts the traditional small to medium scale patterns.
- Unmanaged land, that looks unkempt, is sometimes a feature of the landscape often adjacent to well-managed yet rough pastoral and sometimes cultivated land forming contrasts.
- Traditional farm buildings can often be in a poor state of repair or converted to dwellings, some not very sympathetically to the original vernacular architecture.
- A line of large-scale high tensile pylons is present within Grand Western Canal corridor, which are highly visible from both within and far beyond the landscape adding visual discordancy.
- Historical field amalgamation has disrupted the inherently small to medium scale patterns.
- In sections of the Culm Valley, the M5 and mainline railway disrupt the tranquillity and inherent characteristics of the landscape to a high degree. These linear routes have fragmented and generally disrupted the field and landscape patterns.
- Peace and tranquillity occasionally interrupted by forestry operations, for instance the use of chainsaws.

Evaluation

Future forces for change

- Much of this landscape lies within the floodplain, which will be highly vulnerable to increased flooding occurrences due to climate change.
- Climate change may lead to potential drying out of important valley bottom habitats including neutral grasslands, wetlands, wet meadows, marsh, rush pasture and valley mire due to higher summer temperatures and lower rainfall, affecting their functions in reducing flood risk in the winter months.
- Development pressure from larger settlements leads to higher water supply demands, impacting on water levels and causing potential demand for reservoirs.
- Intensification of agriculture on more fertile valley pastures to meet rising food demands, leading to an increased risk of pollution and flooding.
- Increased autumn and winter precipitation levels lead to higher water and consequential increases in flood risk in their lower catchments.
- Historic features may fall into disrepair.
- Climate change may lead to longer growing season and enhanced growth rates of vegetation resulting in a further scrubbing up of hedgebanks and rough grazing land.
- Climate change may lead to a spread of non-native and alien species in response to a changing climate.
- Ongoing decline in management including coppicing, damage by deer and influx of invasive species affecting the biodiversity of the landscape's woodlands.
- Loss of traditional orchards along riversides in favour of timber plantations or productive farmland.

FIGURES