



# Brixham Urban Fringe Landscape Study

September 2011



Report prepared by Enderby Associates for South Devon AONB Unit and Torbay Council.

Aerial photographs by Roger D. Smith ABIPP, Gosport.



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Whilst we acknowledge the assistance of other people and organisations, this report represents the views of Enderby Associates alone.

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Enderby Associates Ltd.  
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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### Background to the study

- 1.1 Brixham is the southern-most of the three major towns forming Torbay in South Devon. Brixham (with Paignton and Torquay) is part of Torbay Unitary Authority which is the planning authority for the area. Brixham is located close to the district boundary with South Hams District, a predominantly rural area which lies to the south and west of Torbay. It is also fringed by the South Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), a protected landscape of national value, which forms a crescent around the town. The primary purpose of AONB designation is the conservation of natural beauty. This confers certain statutory responsibilities upon the local authority to take account of the purposes of AONBs when undertaking their work.
- 1.2 Brixham, like much of Torbay, has experienced significant growth over the last 50 years. Tourism has helped to diversify the economy of the town which was heavily reliant on commercial sea fishing, although the industry is still of major importance to the town. During the early 1950's a number of holiday camps were established by companies such as Pontins to the south east of Brixham in what subsequently became part of the AONB, and these helped to drive tourism development and the local economy through the latter part of the 20th century. However, changing holiday trends have meant that the 50 year old chalet parks are no longer as popular as they once were and are consequently suffering from a lack of investment.
- 1.3 Although the further expansion of the town has been constrained largely by the AONB designation, there is ongoing pressure for growth throughout Torbay and consideration needs to be given to the ways in which Brixham might continue to develop, whilst respecting the landscape of the AONB. Development and growth can also generate opportunities for improvement which need to be explored.
- 1.4 This study has therefore been commissioned to consider the landscape of the Brixham urban fringe and how the pressures for growth might be considered alongside the primary purpose of AONB designation.

### The Brief and purposes of the study

- 1.5 The Brief for the study, which has been commissioned by the South Devon AONB Unit working closely with Torbay Council and Torbay Coast & Countryside Trust, includes the following:
  - Provision of an evidence base that will inform the emerging Local Development Framework Core Strategy;
  - To identify opportunities for repairing and strengthening landscape character;
  - To identify the optimum functions and purposes that could be provided by land compartments (their "ecosystem services");
  - To identify opportunities for securing enhancements through the development system (by conditions to planning permissions, through Section 106 agreements and developer contributions);
  - Provision of design and land management guidance appropriate to the locality (covering – for example – boundary treatments, planting, pasture management, lighting);

- To identify the critical environmental capital of the locality and make recommendations for conserving, maintaining and enhancing the integrity of the various designations;
  - To identify opportunities for improving connections between Brixham and the countryside and coastline of the study area, and improve the management of the rural-urban interface;
  - Background research, (including interviews with key stakeholders in the area), was also part of the brief.
- 1.6 The extent of the study area is shown on Figure 1 below, and covers that part of the South Devon AONB which lies within the Torbay Unitary Authority area. This area has been extended slightly to cover a small area of countryside immediately to the south of the town which is not subject to AONB designation but is relevant to the study.



Figure 1: Location and context of study area

**Key issues for the study**

- 1.7 The study focuses primarily on environmental issues but also takes account of the wider issues which affect the town and its economic prosperity. Many of these are related to the location of the town which has limited and often congested access, due to its coastal location at the end of a peninsula with the limited and relatively isolated terrestrial hinterland of the Kingswear peninsula to the south. These geographic factors, combined with the steep topography and AONB designation have constrained the growth of the town which, in turn, has had an impact on jobs, economic prosperity and tourism related development.
- 1.8 These physical characteristics are however also part of the special character of Brixham. The geography, landscape and environmental assets make the town unique and create a place of distinctiveness. Growth and change can present both threats and opportunities for enhancing the AONB and consideration needs to be given to how the Local Development Framework and associated Neighbourhood Plan can secure a better long term sustainable future for Brixham while also protecting and enhancing the area's character and landscape.
- 1.9 The National Nature Reserve and Special Area of Conservation designations at Berry Head bring very particular requirements for the management of the landscape; as do the Greater Horseshoe Bats (a European protected species) which live in caves at Berry Head and rely on access to land around the town and further afield for feeding.
- 1.10 Finally, the economic viability of traditional farming is of considerable importance. Unless crop or livestock farming continues, the landscape is liable to change as a result of new land uses such as the introduction of horse grazing (with accompanying stables, etc.), new golf courses or 'land improvement' (land filling). There has been some abandonment of land within the study area due, in part, to a combination of the economics of livestock farming, vandalism and the 'hope value' of development stimulated by the need for new housing.

## 2. APPROACH TO THE STUDY

### Relationship to the Torbay Landscape Character Assessment

- 2.1 This study seeks to build on the Torbay Landscape Character Assessment (undertaken by Enderby Associates in 2009), which included the Brixham area. This provides a range of background material covering the evolution and character of the Torbay landscape, and subdivides the district into a series of Landscape Character Types, Landscape Character Areas, and more detailed individual Areas of Local Character. This document is available from the Torbay Council Website (<http://www.torbay.gov.uk/index/environment-planning/strategicplanning/ldf/ldfresearch/landscapecharacterassessment.html>) and provides considerable background material which should be read in association with this study.
- 2.2 A more detailed knowledge of the study area has been built up through further detailed survey work and analysis of the Brixham urban fringe landscape. This has covered the condition and current management of the land as well as consideration of the urban edge conditions. This process has involved a detailed analysis of a series of landscape compartments and identifying their key attributes and vulnerability to change.

### Interviews

- 2.3 An important part of the study brief included consultation with local people and organisations to discuss the study area and the various key issues referred to above. Interviews were undertaken individually using a prepared structure, with an understanding that no comments would be attributed directly to individuals.
- 2.4 Details of the 23 people who were interviewed, and all of the comments which were received are listed in Appendix1 (contained in a separate document).
- 2.5 There were a number of consistent themes resulting from these discussions; representative examples are included below:
- There has been some slight decline in the nature of the landscape around the edges of town.
  - Farming is still managing the land effectively in most cases although there are some small derelict areas.
  - Tourism needs to go up market and make the most of the marine heritage.
  - Whilst there is pressure for housing growth, there doesn't seem to be any job growth which clearly leads to either larger numbers of commuters, more unemployment, or more retired people. Housing without jobs is not a good idea.
  - A minibus link to Berry Head would help people with disabilities and the elderly. It would be worth doing a trial during the peak season.
  - The relationship of the town with the AONB is likely to be fraught and a continuing source of conflict and problems.
  - Leisure and recreation uses appropriate for the AONB include walking and quality holiday parks making the most of the heritage market sector.
  - The AONB needs to maintain the existing landscape character and features e.g. the heritage at Brixham.
  - Only activists are aware of the significance of Berry Head for nature conservation; local people generally are not.

- Farming is now leaving the small fields in the urban fringe particularly to the south of Brixham.
- The town and AONB need to work together; however Brixham and Torbay are quite different and have different problems to most of South Hams. Clearly appropriate tourism and marketing of the AONB landscape could be beneficial if suitably controlled.

### **Workshop**

- 2.6 A workshop was organised during the study as a way of testing the emerging thoughts and ideas, and to obtain feedback from local stakeholders. This was attended by 16 people and took place at Lupton House within the study area on 8th November 2010. At this event the consultants briefed the participants about the study and gave feedback on findings and emerging ideas. Two groups then considered each of a total of seven areas which the consultants had identified as having either different character or management issues. After considering the particular strengths and weaknesses of the areas and making comments on these, the workshops considered and reviewed a range of potential new ideas and initiatives. These have been developed further and incorporated within the report. The notes of the workshop are attached as Appendix 2.

### 3. CONTEXT OF THE STUDY AREA

#### History

- 3.1 There is strong evidence of human occupation around Brixham from early prehistoric times. At Windmill Hill Cave (also known as Brixham Cavern) in the 19th century rich faunal remains were revealed in layers with worked flints dated to the Middle Palaeolithic (130,000-35,000BC). The discovery was of international significance for the two, found together in cave earth deposits sealed by stalagmite floors, provided the first scientific proof of the contemporaneity of early man in Britain with extinct animal species. Ash Hole Cavern was used as a rock shelter in the Neolithic and Bronze ages (4000-800BC). The continuous occupation of the limestone plateau of Churston has also been established from the Neolithic to the Iron Age (800BC-AD50) from the thousands of flints collected in the last 50 years. Berry Head was the site of an Iron Age promontory fort though the ditch and ramparts were destroyed in the creation of the later fort.
- 3.2 The Devon Historic Landscape Characterisation project (2001-06) has mapped the patterns of field systems and land use throughout the County; it has identified and dated field boundaries, and individual field types. Many are of considerable antiquity, while the parish boundaries in particular reflect land holding patterns and ecclesiastical organization that is pre-Conquest. South of Brixham there are even survivals of unenclosed medieval strip fields.



**Figure 2: Curving strip field boundaries, typical of unenclosed medieval strip fields, on steep land south of Brixham.**

- 3.3 Brixham owes its growth to the maritime location; fishing, from medieval times, was always, and remains important. Later, from the mid 17th century to the end of the Napoleonic wars in 1815, its importance was as a naval haven and supply base. During the 19th century fishing and a small ship building industry was re-established and remained prominent until the recession that followed the First World War. The arrival of the railway in 1868 made Billingsgate market only seven hours away from the landing of the catch. The arrival of the railway also boosted the fledgling tourism industry and provided a source of prosperity

during the temporary decline of fishing in the early 20th century. Modern Brixham now incorporates the two villages of Lower Brixham and Higher Brixham, or Fishtown and Cowtown, which had separate identities before the expansion triggered by the arrival of the railway.

- 3.4 Fortifications to protect the port and the Torbay anchorage were first mooted, and locations mapped during Tudor times; however no fort (such as that at Dartmouth) was subsequently built. Guns were issued to defend against Jacobite landings in 1745, but it is not known where they were located. Batteries were first set up in 1779 on Berry Head, Hardy's Head, Castle Battery (above Ash Hole Cavern), and above Fishbourne Cove in the vicinity of the Battery Gardens. Berry Head's major fortifications (Forts 1 and 3) with heavy stone ramparts and embrasured walls date from the Napoleonic period at the end of the 18th century. An extensive Second World War emergency coastal battery was established at Battery Gardens in 1940 on the site of a Victorian volunteer practice gun.
- 3.5 Tourism growth continued from the arrival of the railway in 1865 and has contributed to the diversification of the economy as the fishing and support industries have changed. A number of holiday camps were constructed on the cliffs above the town, with one of the first being the Landscope Camp in the early 1930's followed by the Dolphin Camp which was built in 1938, and subsequently occupied by Canadian troops during part of the Second World War before being purchased by Pontins. The St. Mary's Bay Camp appears to have been built in the 1950's, and is now part of the Riviera Bay Holiday Park. The Wall Park Camp was built in the 1950's and run by Pontins who owned many of the camps in the area in the 1960's. There has since been a complex chain of ownership changes for these sites. Only one of the two camps at Fishcove, the Hoseasons Brixham Holiday Park, is still in business. The adjoining Torbay Holiday Chalets development now lies empty. The John Fowler South Bay Holiday Camp on St. Mary's Road also dates from the 1950's. The campsite at Upton Manor Farm opposite is more recent and is limited to seasonal use by tents and motor homes.

### **Planning policy background**

- 3.6 The Local Development Framework consists of a portfolio of documents including various evidence documents which now include the Torbay Landscape Character Assessment. These contribute to the Core Strategy which will be part of the Local Development Framework and which will set out the broad aims and objectives for sustainable development in Torbay over the next 20 years. It will outline how the Council will deliver strategic and spatial outcomes including improved infrastructure, improved economic performance, reduced levels of deprivation, a reduced carbon "footprint" and an improved environment. The Council considers that in order to deliver these outcomes, some development is required and it is currently anticipated that growth of around 10,000 jobs and 10,000 homes across Torbay could be proposed in the draft Core Strategy.
- 3.7 The current Local Plan was adopted in 2004 and forms the framework for development control until the Core Strategy is adopted. This can be inspected on the Torbay Council web site ([www.torbay.gov.uk/local\\_plan](http://www.torbay.gov.uk/local_plan)). In line with government guidance it includes policies for the protection of the southern part of the area which falls within the South Devon Area of Outstanding Natural

Beauty (AONB). The relevant Local Plan policies which currently cover the study area include:

- LS – Landscape strategy
- L1 - Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty; restricting development in AONBs
- L3 - Coastal Preservation Area; restricting development in Coastal Preservation Area
- L4 - Countryside Zone; restricting development in the Countryside Zone
- EP12 - Coastal Protection Zone; restricting development in the Coastal Protection Zone.

- 3.8 The national policy framework regarding the planning status of AONBs is available in the Government's Planning Policy Statement 7 '*Sustainable Development in Rural Areas*' (which can be accessed at <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/pps7>). The policy direction is further reflected in the government's "Planning for Growth" publication which supports development but not at the cost of the nation's primary environmental assets such as AONBs.

### **Greenspace Strategy**

- 3.9 The Torbay Greenspace Strategy, which was prepared in 2007 and is adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document for the Local Development Framework, was produced in two parts. The first part is the strategy and identifies appropriate green-space standards and areas with a shortfall of space. Part two, the action plan, sets out general recommendations. Part one of the strategy indicates that there is a shortfall of publicly accessible green-space running through the centre of Brixham and that a potential solution would be to provide additional greenspace in the area between Lupton and the town.

### **Shoreline Management Plan**

- 3.10 The coast between Durlston Head near Swanage and Rame Head near Plymouth, which includes the study area, is covered by a Shoreline Management Plan which is produced by the South Devon and Dorset Coastal Authorities Group. Shoreline management plans seek to assess the risks associated with coastal processes. They aim to help reduce erosion and coastal flooding risks to people, property and the historic and natural environment. The current draft '*technically feasible options to test*' document, (November 2008) indicates that the option for all of the study area is '*No Active Intervention*'.

### **Protected landscape designations**

- 3.11 The South Devon AONB designation order was confirmed in August 1960. The total area is 337 square kilometres of which some six square kilometres are located in Torbay close to Brixham.
- 3.12 AONB designation has the primary purpose of the conservation of natural beauty and confers certain statutory responsibilities upon public bodies to have regard for the purposes of AONBs when undertaking their work. This purpose is enshrined in national legislation and all tiers of planning policy, including the Local Plan. The definition of natural beauty also includes fauna and flora so the conservation of biodiversity is also a part of the primary purpose of designation. This purpose is therefore a key factor influencing the development of the Brixham urban fringe strategy.

3.13 National guidance requires that:

*'in pursuing the primary objective of designation, account should be taken of the need to safeguard agriculture, forestry, other rural industries and of the economic and social needs of local communities'.*

3.14 Whilst recreation is not an objective of designation for AONBs, they:

*'should be used to meet the demands for recreation as far as this is consistent with the conservation of natural beauty and the needs of agriculture, forestry and other users'*

3.15 It is now some 50 years since the designation of the AONB, aimed at protecting the landscape of South Devon. In the first instance the designation was unable to prevent development on the north western fringe of Brixham which spilt over into the designated area. Consequently the boundary now runs through the middle of a housing estate which undermines the credibility of the designation and compromises the character of the adjoining landscape. It is however understood that Natural England would be unwilling to adjust the AONB boundary line here because of the resource implications of the review process.

3.16 During this period the further outward growth of Brixham and Churston has been constrained by the AONB designation; however there is ongoing pressure for growth throughout Torbay and consideration needs to be given to the ways in which Brixham might continue to develop, whilst respecting the AONB designation. Figure 1 shows the study area and the parts of Torbay which are designated as AONB.

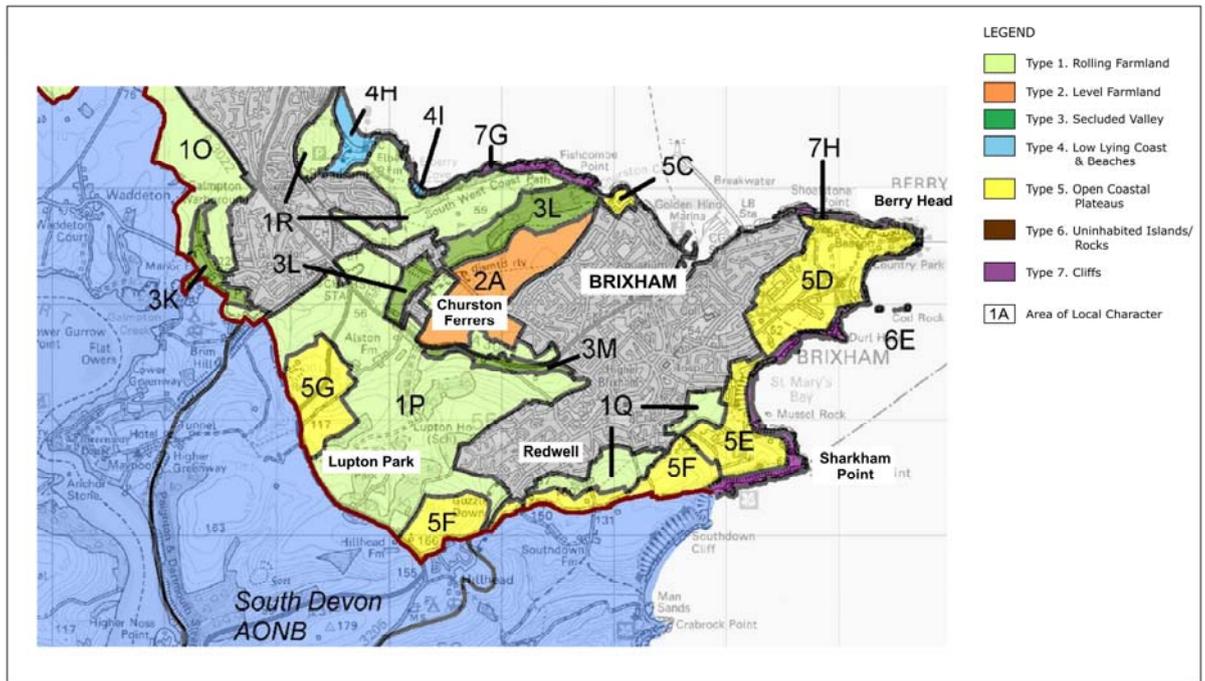
3.17 In addition to the AONB designation, coastal land to the south of Brixham (within South Hams) is also subject to designation as Heritage Coast. This is however outside of the study area.

3.18 One of the duties of the South Devon AONB Unit is to work with local authorities in the preparation of a statutory AONB Management Plan. The current South Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan was published in April 2009 and covers the five year period 2009 to 2014. This is the second statutory Management Plan for the AONB. The Management Plan has two elements: Part 1 – The Strategy; and Part 2 - The Delivery Plan. The Delivery Plan is revised and updated on an annual basis.

3.19 The Plan provides analysis of the AONB landscape and heritage, as well as a series of themed visions and policies for the protection of the landscape and heritage of the area. It has also identified a series of 'forces for change' within the planning and development section which are relevant to this study. Copies of the strategy and delivery plans are available from the South Devon AONB web site.

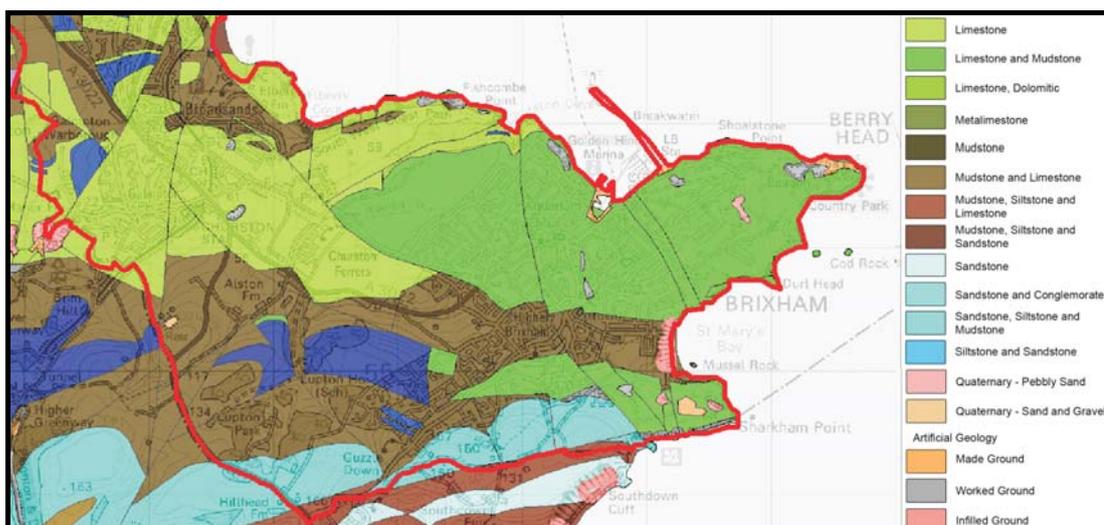
### **Landscape**

3.20 The evolution of the landscape of the study area is described in detail in the Torbay Landscape Character Assessment. At the district level the study area included five different landscape types, which were subdivided into a total of thirteen individual Areas of Local Character. These areas are shown on Figure 3.



**Figure 3: Areas of Local Character from the Torbay Landscape Character Assessment.**

- 3.21 Landscape character is often closely linked to bedrock geology and topography. The area around Brixham has a complex geology which is shown on Figure 4, consisting of three broadly parallel strata which run roughly east to west. Berry Head limestone was exceptionally pure and used extensively for building. This harder material forms the cliffs at Berry Head and Sharkham Point. Softer mudstone runs through to St Mary's Bay from the west and creates a series of landslips in these cliffs. Finally Devon sandstone forms the backdrop to the south of the town.
- 3.22 The rich geological heritage of the Torbay coast has led to the creation of the English Riviera Geopark covering the whole of the Torbay coastline. Geoparks are supported by UNESCO through the European Geopark Network (EGN). The designation aims to protect geo-diversity and to promote geological heritage to the general public as well as to support sustainable economic development of the area, primarily through the development of geological tourism.



**Figure 4: Extract from geology mapping.**

- 3.23 The northern and central part of the study area is a relatively level limestone plateau lying at approximately 50 metres Above Ordnance Datum. Watercourses have cut narrow steep sided valleys into the plateau, including the Higher Brixham valley which runs down through the town to the harbour, and the Churston valley which runs through The Grove to Churston Cove.

#### **Critical Environmental Capital**

- 3.24 The study area has a considerable environmental value which contributes to the sensitivity of the designated landscape. This includes high nature conservation, cultural heritage and recreation values. The inter-relationship of these factors helps to provide an enhanced overall landscape value which is recognised by the AONB designation. Each of these facets, which contribute to the overall landscape value, is part of the critical environmental capital of the area. These are natural resources which cannot be substituted and, once damaged, cannot be replaced. This study seeks to identify the ways in which the environmental capital of the area has been damaged, and how it could be safeguarded in order to both prevent further damage and to identify whether there are ways in which past damage can be ameliorated.
- 3.25 Drawing 1 (Environmental designations and constraints), contained at the rear of this report, shows the features which are the subject of international, national, regional or local designations or have been identified as 'critical environmental capital' in the study area. Further details regarding these features are included within the environmental analysis section of this study. Proposals for the protection and reinstatement or enhancement of these features and the overall environmental value of the area are included in subsequent sections of the report.
- 3.26 The particular area which is of paramount importance due to its high overall environmental value is the section of coast between Berry Head and Sharkham Point. At present this area is under pressure as a result of proposals to redevelop or enlarge the existing holiday camps. It is clear that this area has lost some of its considerable environmental value as a result of the construction of the Wall Park, Riviera Bay (formerly St. Mary's Bay) and Landscope Holiday Camps. The construction of housing between the hospital and St. Mary's Bay

has also had a negative impact by restricting walkers to an overgrown narrow coastal strip. The Riviera Bay Holiday Park is located in a position where it restricts the coastal path to a very narrow corridor of some 2-5 metres in width, which is bounded by concrete block walls or poor quality buildings. It is therefore possible to identify the whole of the currently undeveloped section of AONB between and including Berry Head and Sharkham Point as an area of critical environmental value which needs to be restored as well as conserved. Within this zone, any redevelopment proposals for existing sites should take full advantage of opportunities for repairing and enhancing the landscape qualities of the AONB.

### **Nature conservation**

3.27 Parts of the study area are of major nature conservation significance, particularly the coastal strip between Berry Head and Sharkham Point which is a Special Area of Conservation (a European designation reflecting the international importance of the site) and a National Nature Reserve, and therefore subject to a high degree of protection. The important habitats and rare species include:

- The Greater and Lesser Horseshoe Bats which are both nationally rare species and protected by European legislation and use roost and hibernation sites in caves and tunnels at Berry Head.
- The limestone grassland found on Durl Head, Berry Head, Fishcombe Point and Sharkham Point, which helps support a range of important species.
- The colonies of Guillemots and other seabirds which over-winter in Torbay nest on the offshore rocks and steep cliff areas adjoining Berry Head, where they are surrounded by waters of a marine Special Area of Conservation.
- The Cirl Bunting, a nationally rare bird which occurs in South Devon. This bird needs a habitat of small scale fields and mixed farming, and has responded to appropriate management such as in the areas under the control of Torbay Coast and Countryside Trust at Berry Head.
- A large winter population of Divers and Grebes which use the area between Brixham Harbour and Broadsands.
- The Small Blue Butterfly's main food plant which is Kidney Vetch which can occur within the limestone grassland areas. There is one site where this butterfly occurs, although other areas which may be suitable are being brought under appropriate management, including Berry Head.
- Geological conservation designations including Sites of Special Scientific Interest and County geological sites, including Brixham Cavern, Berry Head to Sharkham Point and Churston Cove.

3.28 As a result of the European Special Area of Conservation designation and the rarity of the Greater Horseshoe Bats in particular, Natural England has issued guidance to South Devon local authorities regarding the status and statutory duties to protect this species under the Habitats Directive. This is attached as an Appendix 3 to the report. There is a requirement for any development projects which might affect the bats to be the subject of an appropriate assessment, even if the project is remote from the hibernation or roost site. As a result of a radio tracking exercise Natural England has identified a 'sustenance area' for the Berry Head Greater Horseshoe bats, covering the area which they use for feeding. Mapping of this area is included within the Natural England report. The Council has a statutory duty to take account of the requirements of this species in all planning decisions and it is of particular relevance to the

ongoing management of land in the urban fringe and any proposed development and land use change in the study area.

- 3.29 There is a range of other wildlife habitats in the study area which are subject to local designations. These help support the Greater Horseshoe Bats and a range of other species. These are identified on Drawing 1 (Environmental designations and constraints) located at the rear of this document.

### **Agriculture and land use**

- 3.30 The undeveloped parts of the study area consist predominantly of pasture land. The exceptions are the swathe of land between Churston and Brixham, which is in arable use, and the area north of Churston, which is part of the Churston Golf Course. The steeper land, particularly in the Churston valley, consists of woodland (The Grove), and there are large blocks of mixed woodland in Lupton Park. Most of the pasture land is grazed, either by beef or dairy herd followers, although some of the areas abutting Brixham are now grazed by horses. Two blocks of land in the Upper Brixham valley, and at Redwell, are now apparently ungrazed. Conservation grazing is being re-introduced to Berry Head by the Torbay Coast and Countryside Trust, to help maintain the wildlife value of the National Nature Reserve. The land use mapping (Drawing 2) shows current land uses and highlights areas where grazing appears to have been abandoned.



**Figure 5: Area of ungrazed land adjoining Mathill road.**

### Land ownership

- 3.31 The land within the study area includes two areas of traditionally managed estate which were formerly part of one land holding. These are the Lupton Estate (which is owned by a resident landlord), and the Churston Barony (which is managed on behalf of an absentee landowner). Other significant landowners within the study area include two local families, Churston Golf Course, and Torbay Council. The Torbay Coast and Countryside Trust was set up to hold and manage land from Torbay Council on a lease which is due to revert in 2065.

### The urban edge

- 3.32 The interface between the town and the surrounding countryside mostly follows the lines of former hedgerow field boundaries which pre-dated the expansion of the town. These have generally remained as the boundaries between each new development and the open countryside. Many of the properties which border the urban edge are bungalows. In many cases these are occupied by people who value views out of the rear of their properties and have made sure that the hedgerow boundaries are kept well trimmed and that trees are prevented from becoming established. This has perpetuated a stark edge between the built up area and the adjoining countryside. The photograph below shows how the closely trimmed and tree-free boundary contributes to the stark edge and detracts from the character of the adjoining countryside.



**Figure 6: Buildings abutting the AONB are often highly visible.**

- 3.33 Drawing 3 (Landscape Analysis) includes the urban edge conditions and highlights where this problem occurs.

### Torbay Green Infrastructure Delivery Plan

- 3.34 Torbay Council has worked in partnership with Torbay Coast and Countryside Trust and Natural England to prepare a Torbay Green Infrastructure Delivery Plan which was produced earlier in 2011 and provides part of the evidence base for the Torbay Core Strategy. It also identifies green infrastructure planning and delivery mechanisms to guide development in the growth areas and foster partnerships working towards a sustainable Torbay. Liaison has taken place to ensure that this Brixham urban fringe study is compatible with the Green Infrastructure Plan, in order that this study and the consultations which were carried out as part of this study could be reflected in the relevant Action Area in the Torbay Green Infrastructure Plan that covers the urban fringe. The plan is available on the Torbay Coast and Countryside Trust Web site ([www.countryside-trust.org.uk](http://www.countryside-trust.org.uk)).

## 4. PRESSURES FOR LAND USE CHANGE

### Housing growth

- 4.1 The Brixham Design Statement and associated community survey identified a range of needs and opportunities for the town. These included affordable housing provision, new employment opportunities and improved transport and access, as well as protecting environmental assets. The key issue therefore is how Brixham is able to respond to these requirements.
- 4.2 As one of the three principal towns of Torbay, there has been a presumption that Brixham would need to accommodate a proportion of the housing which was allocated to Torbay initially as part of the draft South West Regional Spatial Strategy. A Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment of Torbay indicated that just under 7,000 homes could be provided within the built up area. It also considered sites across the study area. The green field sites around Brixham were generally considered unsuitable for development, in many cases due to the AONB designation; other factors were accessibility and sustainability, other landscape/visual considerations, and nature conservation. The redevelopment of holiday parks for housing was identified as having some potential, but only following a fundamental review of other areas of policy such as tourism and landscape. The economic value of the holiday parks was also noted, and that they are protected from redevelopment for other uses in the current Local Plan (under Policy TU10).

### Commerce and regeneration

- 4.3 Brixham's two main industries are fishing and tourism. There are a number of small employment estates located around the town; however these tend to provide services to local people rather than 'export' services beyond Torbay. Marine services associated with the fishing industry and marina are also important while AstraZeneca provides a high tech facility employing some 80 people. A survey of local people undertaken by the Town Council identified a requirement for small industrial units and craft workshops in the town. Current regeneration projects proposed for the town ('The New English Riviera - Action Framework Plan', prepared by the Torbay Development Agency) include the construction of a new fish market and associated offices restaurants and employment space adjoining the Harbour. A new supermarket and associated multi storey car park are planned for the town centre car park, and there are also plans for an additional harbour breakwater and marina.

### Transport and access

- 4.4 Road access into Brixham from the primary road network is difficult, and this is perceived to be a major problem restricting the vitality of the town. The railway line from Paignton to Brixham was closed in 1963; parts of the route remain intact, and could provide a cycleway into the town. A report by the Association of Train Operating Companies has recently suggested that part of this route could be reinstated as far as Churston, using part of the line used by the Paignton and Dartmouth Steam Railway. Churston is the location for the Brixham park and ride site which was established on a temporary basis three years ago and has recently been made permanently available through the main holiday months from April to October. The park and ride site also has the

potential to become a cycle hire base for people wishing to cycle the area, or the starting point for walking tours.

- 4.5 Ferry services operate between Torquay and Brixham harbours throughout the year. There is a regular bus service throughout the Torbay area linking to Brixham. The South West Coast Path follows the coast through the study area with several other rights of way linking into the urban area. At present there is a short section of cycleway beside the main A3022 between Churston and Brixham which needs to cross the road, but passes Lupton. In addition, a number of the lanes to the south of the town are relatively car free and appear to be suitable for cycling.

### **Agriculture and changing farming practices**

- 4.6 Livestock farming has become less viable during the last 50 years, particularly on small holdings, with small fields and difficult terrain. Consequently in areas close to an urban population, where there is a demand for livery or horse stabling this use has become more commonplace. This is the case in certain parts of the study area, predominantly to the south of the town. The landscape changes as a result with the construction of stables, parking spaces, new fences and the arrival of other horse related paraphernalia.
- 4.7 The alternatives to horse grazing can however also cause a negative change to the landscape, with either abandonment or different forms of diversification enterprises such as car boot sales taking over the roadside fields close to the town. Parts of the study area are affected by all of these different issues.
- 4.8 The AONB Management Plan has identified the overall pattern of agriculture in the AONB area, and the ways in which environmental stewardship and cross compliance requirements, among others, are making farming practices more sustainable. It has also identified the decline in the number of medium sized mixed family farms, which were once the core type of holding in this area. These have been replaced by either larger arable holdings, or small 'lifestyle' or 'hobby' farms often with horses, rather than cattle or sheep, which threaten the future of conservation grazing. Traditional management skills are being lost and there is both a skills shortage and a shortage of seasonal and skilled workers. Whilst there have been notable environmental successes through the old Countryside Stewardship Scheme, there is concern that the transfer, uptake and success rate of the current Higher Level Stewardship Scheme is such that there is likely to be an overall drop in the area under long term management agreement giving farmers less incentive to maintain their commitment to traditional landscape and habitat management.
- 4.9 Many local people can recall the large area of orchard which once occupied land around Churston Court, which has been allowed to decline in recent years.
- 4.10 Climate change may lead to an increased risk of soil and surface water run-off, erosion and widespread low level agricultural water pollution, although farmers are now subject to more stringent rules in relation to the management of farm wastes.
- 4.11 Concern regarding the provenance and health of food has raised the profile of food production to the wider public which has helped to support organic farming

and farmers markets. These can now provide a valuable local outlet for some producers.

- 4.12 The proportion of woodland within the study area is atypical, being higher than in the AONB as a whole which has a relatively small proportion of woodlands, and which are generally poorly managed. The major woodland blocks within the study area are therefore unusual in that they are generally subject to management either by Torbay Coast and Countryside Trust or the Lupton Estate.
- 4.13 The uncertain future and profitability of food production have encouraged a number of landowners to diversify their businesses, to convert traditional buildings to offer business space or tourist accommodation, or to provide caravan, camping or car boot sale sites. Whilst this can help to maintain the profitability and continuation of a farm business there can be negative impacts on the landscape or tranquillity of the AONB if these changes are undertaken in an unsympathetic manner.

#### **Tourism and recreation developments**

- 4.14 Torbay has suffered a drop in the number of visitors during the last five years with a reduction in the amount of spend and duration of visits. Torbay is still Devon's premier resort, but the week long stay is becoming less common. The Torbay Tourism Strategy has identified various strengths and weaknesses and potential directions for development of tourism in the bay and specifically in Brixham. These include:

##### Strengths:

- Colourful quaint harbour;
- Fresh seafood;
- Location on the 'Geopark gateway'.

##### Weaknesses:

- Fragmented marketing;
- Poor transport access;
- Insufficient parking;
- Shortage of high quality modern serviced and self catering accommodation.

- 4.15 Brixham has an established tourism trade which helps support the facilities in the town. Whilst this is largely seasonal and has traditionally been based primarily on self-catering accommodation in holiday chalets or static caravans, it is clear that the market has been changing. In response, some established holiday camp and chalet sites have recently been the subject of development proposals, either involving investment in upgrading the quality of facilities on offer or seeking conversion to other uses.
- 4.16 Existing Local Plan policies which cover the redevelopment of existing tourism facilities include policy H13 'Residential caravans in the countryside', which restricts the intensification or the creation of caravan sites; Policy TU9 permits refurbishment of holiday accommodation subject to certain criteria; and Policy TU10 seeks to protect existing holiday uses from loss by redevelopment to other uses.
- 4.17 The interviews with local stakeholders suggested that the closure of Wall Park has had a knock on effect on the economy of the town.

- 4.18 The tourism strategy for the town envisages that the new fish market and associated restaurants will help the town's revitalisation using the marine heritage as an attraction. A number of regeneration projects have been proposed, including areas around the harbour, the town centre, the fishmarket and public realm sites, although none of these projects lies within the study area.
- 4.19 Opportunities identified in the tourism strategy include the marketing of:
- Better quality boutique hotels
  - Quality self catering accommodation and inns with rooms.
  - Vibrant harbour-side activities
  - Seafood and restaurants
  - Arts and crafts
  - Walking, exploring and marine heritage as part of the Global Geopark gateway.
- 4.20 Future tourism trends for Brixham which might impact positively on the study area are therefore a likely move to upgrade accommodation, possibly at the holiday camps, and increased marketing and uptake of the potential that the study area offers for walking and related activities associated with exploration of the natural beauty and heritage of the area.

#### **Recreational facilities and potential change**

- 4.21 Interviews with local councillors have identified a lack of sports pitches, play areas and open spaces in the area, which was confirmed by discussions with Council officers. It is understood that the rugby and football clubs require more junior pitches to enable more teams to be run; however the existing sites are constrained and there are no level spaces available in the town.
- 4.22 Although the Local Plan allocated land for additional sports pitches adjoining the Wall Park site, the planning application for Wall Park proposes this area as grazing habitat instead.
- 4.23 Brixham is fortunate to have a well managed National Nature Reserve (NNR) at Berry Head which is one of the town's main heritage assets and a significant tourist attraction. The NNR has recently received Heritage Lottery Funding to upgrade visitor facilities and enable improved management of people, the archaeology, and wildlife under a conservation management plan. The reserve includes a section of the South West Coast Path which links through to Brixham and is particularly well used by local people.



**Figure 7: Entrance to the car park at Berry Head NNR**

- 4.24 Recreational facilities available for local people can also help to attract tourists. These include the golf course and pitch and putt courses at Churston and Elberry, the open air seawater pool at Shoalstone, and the sailing and canoeing facilities associated with the harbour and marina. Brixham has cricket, football and rugby clubs, the former having recently moved to a purpose built ground on the northern fringe of the town abutting The Grove, after the sale of their pitch in the town for housing development.
- 4.25 There have been a number of initiatives which have raised the public profile of the need to eat healthily and the health benefits of exercise. These have encouraged people to exercise in the countryside by cycling, horse riding or walking. It is anticipated that there will be a continuing increase in the demand for footpath and cycle use. At present the study area contains six sections of public footpath, totalling approximately 3.6 kilometres and some 9 kilometres of the South West Coast path. There are permissive access routes through the Lupton Estate which have been dedicated as part of an inheritance tax undertaking. There are no official bridleways or cycle-ways (apart from the section beside the A3022) although strategic cycle routes are identified in the Local Plan (Policy T3). Cycle access to and from Brixham and Paignton is poor.

#### **A potential green tourism package**

- 4.26 The fringes of Brixham contain a number of sites which could form part of a package of heritage themed attractions, including the forts, quarrying, geological and nature conservation interest at Berry Head, as well as the wider Geopark. There is also Lupton House and the associated garden and parkland, the nature conservation interest of The Grove and the World War II gun emplacements in Battery Gardens. Many of these locations are linked by the South West Coast Path which continues along the coast to Kingswear from Sharkham Point, and northwards to Paignton. Brixham is also strategically positioned to provide services and accommodation for 'green' tourists wishing to access the coast and countryside of the Kingswear peninsula to the south, acting as a green tourism gateway to a wider area of protected AONB landscape which includes the National Trust estate at Coleton Fishacre and other Trust land at Man Sands.

## 5. DETAILED ANALYSIS OF THE STUDY AREA.

### Map analysis of the study area

- 5.1 A series of drawings have been prepared to illustrate the various facets of the landscape and other related factors. This series of drawings is listed below and included in the Drawings section at the end of this report.

Drawing 1- Environmental designations and constraints.

Drawing 2- Land use.

Drawing 3- Landscape analysis.

Drawing 4- Landscape character types and areas of local character.

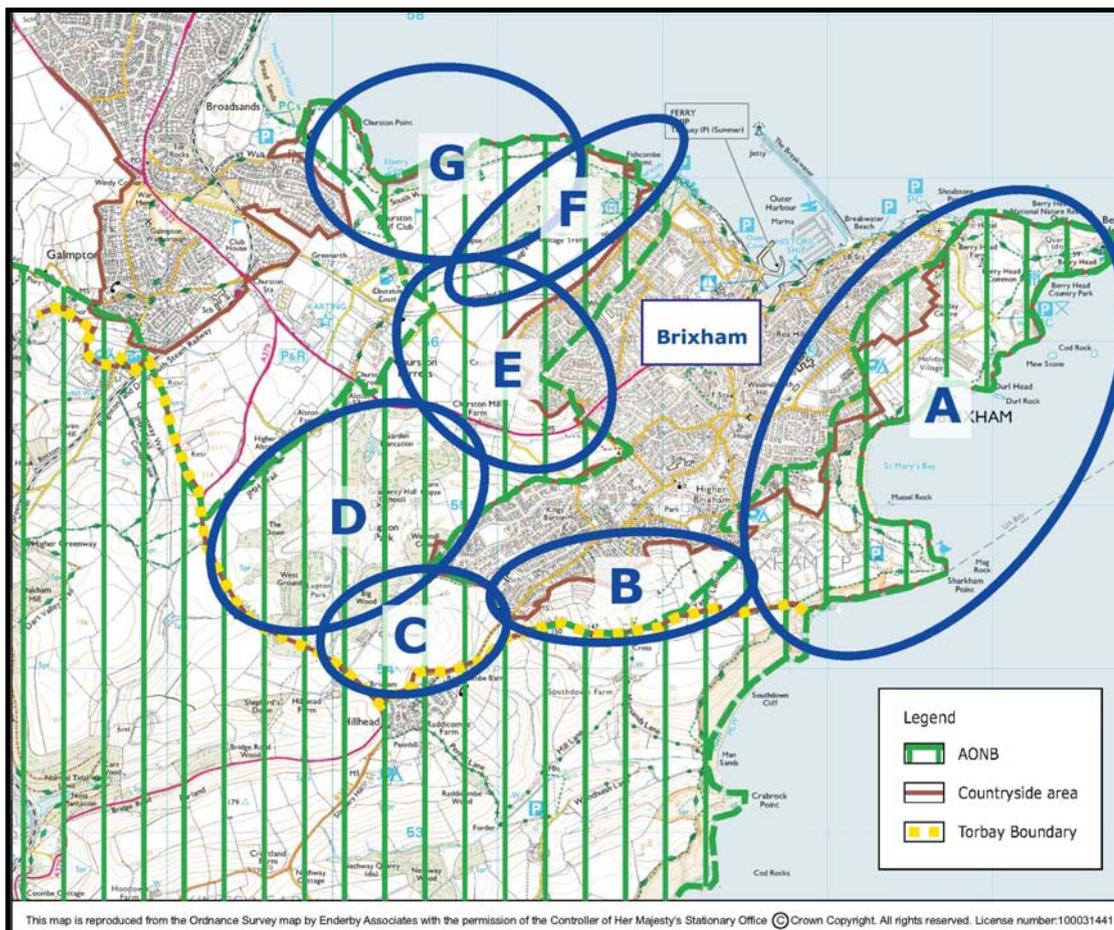
Drawing 5- Principle recreation facilities.

Drawing 6- Rights of Way network.

Drawing 7- Ecological potential.

### Subdivision of the study area

- 5.2 For the purposes of analysing the landscape, land use and management the study area has been divided into seven different sub areas, as shown on Figure 8 below.



**Figure 8: The seven sub areas**

The areas are:

A - Berry Head to Sharkham Point

- B - Redwell/Southdown
- C - Guzzle Down
- D - Lupton Park
- E - Churston Ferrers
- F - The Grove
- G - Elberry Farm and the golf courses

5.3 The key strengths and weaknesses of each area are summarised in Table 1 below.

**Table 1: Principle landscape strengths and weaknesses**

<i>Location</i>	<i>Strengths</i>	<i>Weaknesses</i>
<i>Berry Head to Sharkham Point</i>	Fine views out to sea & along coast. Cultural heritage. Natural heritage including Geopark. Proximity to town. Potential to further promote heritage tourism. Footpath links and coastal path. Access to beach at St Mary's Bay. Management by the TCCT. Holiday accommodation. Established informal recreation.	Excessive visitor pressure at peak times. Vulnerability of Greater Horseshoe Bats. Difficult access by road. Quality & visual intrusion of holiday parks. Sharkham Point overgrown & under-managed which discourages use. 'Horsiculture' taking over as holdings become fragmented and less viable. Intrusive hilltop housing. Management of pasture and farmland. Poor experience for coastal path users. Fragmented.
<i>Redwell/Southdown</i>	Views over Torbay. Intact historic landscape structure. Green hills setting enclosing Brixham. Public access and sunken lanes.	'Horsiculture' taking over as holdings become fragmented and less viable. Not subject to AONB designation. Historic field pattern overgrown. Exposed - changes would be highly visible.
<i>Guzzle Down</i>	Views over Torbay. Green fields contribute to setting of Torbay.	Drainage run off contributes to flooding in the Brixham stream. Subject to urban fringe pressure. Lack of access.
<i>Lupton</i>	Major green area next to Brixham. Sympathetic agriculture under CSS. Some views over Torbay. Ancient woodland and historic park with access through undertaking. Listed house leased by Community Trust. Part of green gateway to Brixham with greater access potential. Strong sense of place and hidden landscape.	High cost of Lupton House restoration. Additional funds required for garden restoration. Mixture of different funding and implementation mechanisms means that work programmes need to be co-ordinated to prevent damage to setting of house.
<i>Churston Ferrers</i>	Relic orchard area. Part designated Conservation Area with residual historic village character. Listed Churston Court. Site of Prehistoric fields.	Unsympathetic agriculture. Subject to urban fringe pressures. Poor urban/rural interface. Fragile gap between edge of Paignton and village. Orchard being allowed to decline.

<p><i>The Grove</i></p>	<p>Natural heritage value of ancient woodland.                  Managed by TCCT.                  Beach at Churston Cove.                  Secluded character but close to Brixham.                  Footpaths and links to South West Coast Path.                  Containment of Brixham in wider views.</p>	<p>Subject to urban fringe pressure.                  Invasive sycamores; larches dying.                  Difficult maintenance access for vehicles.</p>
<p><i>Elberry and golf courses</i></p>	<p>Beach at Elberry Cove.                  Historic bathhouse.                  Golf courses for recreation.                  Footpaths and links to South West Coast Path.                  Natural heritage of Marrison Wood which screens golf course and contributes to setting of Torbay.</p>	<p>Subject to urban fringe and development pressures.                  Proposal for new golf clubhouse in AONB.</p>

5.4 Each of these areas, which have been broadly based on the landscape character types identified in the Torbay Landscape Character Assessment, has been further divided into a total of 25 individual compartments for further analysis and the development of recommendations. Figure 9 shows the boundaries of each of the compartments. The detailed compartment-based analysis sheets form the next section of the report; a series of annotated aerial photos also illustrate the compartment boundaries.

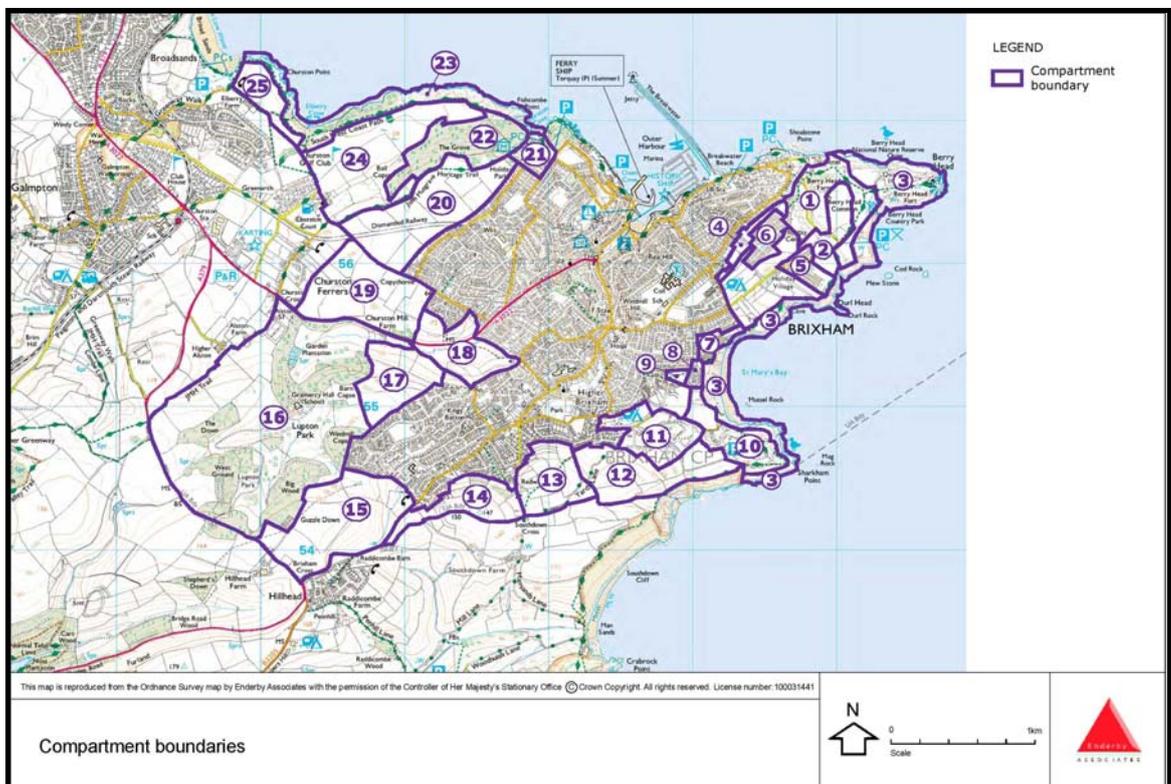


Figure 9: Landscape compartment boundaries

## 6. LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS OF COMPARTMENTS

- 6.1 This section provides a summary analysis of each of the landscape compartments defined across the study area, and identifies key issues relating to each.
- 6.2 Each of the compartments is identified on the aerial photographs. A key to abbreviations used in the analysis tables below is located at the end of this section.
- 6.3 Items in the analysis tables that are applicable to the compartment are shown shaded.



Figure 10: Location of compartments 1-4

**Landscape compartment 1: Berry Head scrub and woodland areas.**

Landscape Character (Torbay LCA): Type 5 Open Coastal Plateau  
 Area of Landscape Character (AoLC): 5D Berry Head



Woodland area



Entrance to upper walled garden



Open scrub above the quarry looking south



Denser scrub to the west of Fort no 2

**Description**

This area of scrub and woodland lies at an elevation of some 50m. above sea level and is generally set back slightly from the cliff edges around Berry Head. It includes woodland (primarily Sycamore) which has colonised the northern side of the former Berry Head Common, and scrub which has encroached over the limestone grassland during the last 50 years, since grazing has stopped. This compartment includes an area of walled land at Berry Head Farm, and an area of former MOD land which once held a series of storage tanks.

**Designations / specific features of interest**

**Comments**

	AONB	CZ	SAM	Reg Park/ garden	HER	
<b>Landscape and Cultural Heritage</b>						
<b>Biodiversity</b>	SAC	NNR	SSSI	LNR	Gt Hshoe bat zone	
<b>Historic field pattern</b>	Medieval enclosures based on strip fields	Medieval enclosures	Post-medieval enclosures	Barton fields	Modern enclosures adapting medieval fields	Former orchards

**Key urban fringe landscape characteristics****Comments**

<b>Land use</b>	Wood-land	Scrub	Grass-land	Recreational facilities	Tourism facilities	Horse /pony field	Arable	Abandoned	Woodland, scrub & occasional grazing & tourism/recreation; as NNR
<b>Vegetation condition</b>	Well managed			Average			Poor		Programme of grazing being introduced to help control scrub
<b>Field boundary condition</b>	Well managed			Average			Poor		
<b>Landscape vulnerability to change</b>	High			Medium			Low		This location is highly visible
<b>Tranquillity</b>	High			Medium			Low		
<b>Accessibility</b>	High			Medium			Low		
<b>Nature of urban edge /condition</b>	Prominent		Apparent but partially integrated		Discrete		Screened		

**Urban fringe/ compartment management strategy:**

AoLC landscape management strategy, taken from Torbay LCA: Enhance.

Recommended Compartment landscape management strategy: Enhance.

**Key issues****Forces for change within/on edge of AONB:**

- Holiday chalet development proposed in the former storage tank area.

**Poor land management/scrubbing up/abandonment.**

- Grassland needs to be grazed and this is being re-introduced as part of the HLF project to Berry Head National Nature Reserve.
- The former MoD storage tank area does not appear to be managed and has a developing Japanese knotweed problem.

**Existing visual intrusion**

- The existing radar station needs to continue to be screened by scrub/woodland.

**Horse paddocks**

- Current grazing by cattle is intended for Berry Head NNR, other areas do not appear to be grazed by horses.

**Heavy visitor pressure**

- Footpaths and the access road through the woodland are heavily worn as a result of visitor pressure.

**Current management intention (if known)**

Management plan for NNR suggests phased enhancement of woodland, retention of some scrub and restoration of limestone grassland and provision of bat sustenance.

**Key initiatives and implementation mechanisms****Proposed alternative management:**

- A change of emphasis to encourage heritage tourists through appropriate marketing.
- Spreading of tourism pressures to wider area of AONB, through communication and marketing, improvement of paths, cycle linkages and minibus links, as part of NNR management plan process.

**Potential landscape enhancements:**

Reduce area and prominence of car parking; maintain screening of radar installation through retention of scrub.

**Development/design considerations:**

This area of woodland, scrub and grassland lies within the AONB and Countryside Zone and forms an important buffer between the edge of Brixham, NNR, and open coastline. As such this landscape is very sensitive to change and its function would be seriously compromised by any new built development.

**Other potential projects:**

Improve and repair paths.

Walled gardens would be suitable location for future community allotments and this use would also be compatible with the AONB designation.

## Landscape compartment 2: Berry Head grassland areas.

Landscape Character (Torbay LCA): Type 5 Open Coastal Plateau

Area of Landscape Character (AoLC): 5D Berry Head



Grassland area belonging to Landscope



Masonry stile on the SWC Path near Landscope



Horse paddocks are moving into this area



Traditional walled field boundaries need maintenance

### Description

This is a corridor of grassland which extends along the top of the cliffs between Berry Head and the Riviera Bay camp, (which restricts the corridor). It varies in width between a maximum of 400 metres and a minimum of 100 metres, until it ends at the camp. There are various developments and areas of scrub which intrude into the corridor, such as the Wall Park and Landscope camps and various isolated residential properties. Much of the area was common land until the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

**Designations / specific features of interest**

**Comments**

<b>Landscape and Cultural Heritage</b>	AONB	CZ	SAM	Reg Park/ garden	HER	
<b>Biodiversity</b>	SAC	NNR	SSSI	LNR	Gt Hshoe bat zone	Part is within the NNR/ SAC
<b>Historic field pattern</b>	Medieval enclosures based on strip fields	Medieval enclosures	Post- medieval enclosures	Barton fields	Modern enclosures adapting medieval fields	Former orchards

**Key urban fringe landscape characteristics**

**Comments**

<b>Land use</b>	Wood- land	Scrub	Grass- land	Recreati- onal facilities	Tourism facilities	Horse /pony field	Arable	Aban- doned	Grass which is occasionally grazed or mown; some horse fields and caravans
<b>Vegetation condition</b>	Well managed			Average			Poor		Programme of grazing being introduced to help bat sustenance
<b>Field boundary condition</b>	Well managed			Average			Poor		
<b>Landscape vulnerability to change</b>	High			Medium			Low		This location is highly visible
<b>Tranquillity</b>	High			Medium			Low		
<b>Accessibility</b>	High			Medium			Low		Difficult access for vehicles due to narrowness of lane east of Landscape
<b>Nature of urban edge/condition</b>	Prominent		Apparent but partially integrated		Discrete		Screened		Edges of Landscape camp are highly visible and this will increase once permitted extension takes place

**Urban fringe/ compartment management strategy:**

AoLC landscape management strategy, taken from Torbay LCA: Enhance.

Recommended Compartment landscape management strategy: Enhance.

**Key issues**

**Existing visual intrusion**

- Proposed extension of Landscape will have negative visual impact on adjoining areas.

**Horse paddocks**

- Extension of current small area of horse paddocks will have negative visual impact.

**Key initiatives and implementation mechanisms****Proposed alternative management:**

Much of area will be placed under management of TCCT if development of Wall Park proceeds.

**Potential landscape enhancements:**

- Hedgerow restoration is proposed for Wall Park owned land.
- Landscope needs major hedgerow and tree planting to mitigate visual impacts resulting from the permitted extension.
- Tree planting required in hedgerows generally.

**Development/design considerations:**

Principle of any new development of holiday accommodation being 'drawn back' from the AONB should apply to give overall net environmental benefit.

**Other potential projects:**

Minibus trial during summer season to reduce vehicle numbers and improve accessibility by public transport and for people with reduced mobility.

### Landscape compartment 3: Berry Head to Sharkham cliffs

Landscape Character (Torbay LCA): Type 7 Cliffs

Area of Landscape Character (AoLC): 7H Berry Head to Sharkham



Seating area overlooking Torbay would benefit from refurbishment



Berry Head from the south



The quarry at the foot of Berry Head



Berry Head fort and interpretation centre/cafe



Cliffs below Landscope camp



St Mary's Bay and Sharkham from the north



The Riviera Bay camp sits right against the cliff edge.



Sharkham Point from above St Marys Bay.



The section of cliff between Landscope and Berry Head.



The South West Coast path is heavily eroded.

**Description**

This section of cliff is the major part of the SAC, and covers Berry Head quarry and the cliffs generally below the South West Coast Path between Berry Head and Sharkham Point. The area is important for a variety of reasons; the SAC designation as a result of the unimproved grassland, the seabird nest sites, and the home for the protected bats; the cultural heritage associated with Berry Head and the forts; the landscape and geological significance of the cliffs, and spectacular coastal views along the coast and from the South West Coast Path.

**Designations / specific features of interest**

**Comments**

	AONB	CZ	SAM	Reg Park/ garden	HER	
<b>Landscape and Cultural Heritage</b>						
<b>Biodiversity</b>	SAC	NNR	SSSI	LNR	Gt Hshoe bat zone	The caves which house the bats are located under Berry Head
<b>Historic field pattern</b>	Medieval enclosures based on strip fields	Medieval enclosures	Post-medieval enclosures	Barton fields	Modern enclosures adapting medieval fields	

**Key urban fringe landscape characteristics**

**Comments**

<b>Land use</b>	Wood-land	Scrub	Grass-land	Recreational facilities	Tourism facilities	Horse /pony field	Arable	Abandoned	S W Coast Path; grazing is being re-introduced to parts of the area by TCCT.
<b>Vegetation condition</b>	Well managed			Average		Poor		Programme of grazing being introduced to help control scrub	
<b>Field boundary condition</b>	Well managed			Average		Poor			
<b>Landscape vulnerability to change</b>	High			Medium		Low		This location is highly visible	
<b>Tranquillity</b>	High			Medium		Low		Limited by high levels of use in high season	
<b>Accessibility</b>	High			Medium		Low			
<b>Nature of urban edge/condition</b>	Prominent		Apparent but partially integrated		Discrete		Screened		Apart from the sections adjoining Landscope and Riviera/ St Marys Bay camps

**Urban fringe/ compartment management strategy:**

AoLC landscape management strategy, taken from Torbay LCA: Conserve.  
 Recommended Compartment landscape management strategy: Enhance.

**Key issues**

**Forces for change within /on edge of AONB:**

- Proposed redevelopment of Riviera/ St Marys Bay.

**Poor land management/scrubbing up/abandonment**

- TCCT are working on packaging of grazing parcels to enable grazing of grassland and prevention of further scrubbing up.

**Existing visual intrusion**

- The Riviera Bay camp is particularly visible and intrusive when seen from Sharkham Point and adjacent SWCP.

**Heavy visitor pressure**

There is a relatively high level of visitor pressure at Berry Head during the high season, and along the SWCP. Options for spreading the pressure include enhancement of facilities and access to Sharkham Point, and improvements to the SWCP, particularly the sections which access St Mary's Bay.

**Current management intention (if known)**

There is a SSSI management agreement in place; the latest assessment indicates that certain parts are in unfavourable condition but recovering. Otherwise vegetation is in favourable condition.

**Key initiatives and implementation mechanisms**

Proposed alternative management:

Need to control Japanese knotweed at Sharkham Point.

**Potential landscape enhancements:**

Pushing back of scrub and widening of SWCP corridor

**Development/design considerations:**

Proposals for Riviera / St Mary's Bay should seek to draw development back from cliff edge for both landscape, and nature conservation reasons as well as future structural risks due to cliff erosion and climate change.

**Other potential projects:**

Improvement of access to St Mary's Bay from Sharkham Point.

Potential café/ interpretation centre at Sharkham Point for SWCP walkers and Geopark

Improve surface of SWCP.

### Landscape compartment 4: Wall Park Road

Landscape Character (Torbay LCA): Type 5 Open Coastal Plateau.  
 Area of Landscape Character (AoLC): 5D Berry Head.



The area is located between Wall Park Road and the holiday camp.



The eastern-most field is used for horse grazing.

#### Description

This area lies between the town and the Wall Park holiday camp. It is located within the AONB area and includes sports fields and allotments as well as paddocks grazed by horses.

#### Designations / specific features of interest

#### Comments

<b>Landscape and Cultural Heritage</b>	AONB	CZ	SAM	Reg Park/ garden	HER	
<b>Biodiversity</b>	SAC	NNR	SSSI	LNR	Gt Hshoe bat zone	
<b>Historic field pattern</b>	Medieval enclosures based on strip fields	Medieval enclosures	Post-medieval enclosures	Barton fields	Modern enclosures adapting medieval fields	Relic post medieval field system defines the boundaries of the area.

#### Key urban fringe landscape characteristics

#### Comments

<b>Land use</b>	Wood-land	Scrub	Grass-land	Recreati- onal facilities	Tourism facilities	Horse /pony field	Arable	Aban- doned	Parts belong to the Wall Park camp and were used for recreation
<b>Vegetation condition</b>	Well managed			Average			Poor		Amenity grassland
<b>Field boundary condition</b>	Well managed			Average			Poor		
<b>Landscape vulnerability to change</b>	High			Medium			Low		
<b>Tranquillity</b>	High			Medium			Low		
<b>Accessibility</b>	High			Medium			Low		
<b>Nature of urban edge/condition</b>	Prominent		Apparent but partially integrated		Discrete		Screened		

**Urban fringe/ compartment management strategy:**

AoLC landscape management strategy, taken from Torbay LCA: Enhance.  
Recommended Compartment landscape management strategy: Enhance.

**Key issues****Forces for change within /on edge of AONB:**

- At the time of writing, some of this compartment is included in redevelopment proposals for the adjoining Wall Park holiday site.

**Existing visual intrusion**

This area provides some visual separation of the town and AONB particularly to the south west where the football pitch and allotments have hedging which screens the edge of the town from the AONB.

**Current management intention (if known)**

- Some development proposed as part of current Wall Park redevelopment proposals. Intentions for other areas not known.

**Key initiatives and implementation mechanisms****Development/design considerations:**

Incorporation of any of the land within redevelopment proposals in this area should be on the basis that it would facilitate the 'drawing back' of development from the exposed coastal edge. Any development proposals for this compartment should seek to deliver a clear enhancement to the area. The retention of the allotments is important.



Figure 11: Location of compartments 5-6

**Landscape compartment 5: Landscope**

Landscape Character (Torbay LCA): Type 5 Open Coastal Plateau

Area of Landscape Character (AoLC): 5D Berry Head



Mobile homes are highly visible from the SW Coast Path, and other parts of the AONB.



The entrance to the Landscope Holiday Camp.

The car park opposite the main entrance

## Description

This area of holiday camp also includes chalets to the west of Gillard Road. This area of development is more highly visible than the area to the east of the road which is partially hidden by vegetation including sizeable evergreen *Cupressus macrocarpa* trees.

## Designations / specific features of interest

## Comments

<b>Landscape and Cultural Heritage</b>	AONB	CZ	SAM	Reg Park/ garden	HER	
<b>Biodiversity</b>	SAC	NNR	SSSI	LNR	Gt Hshoe bat zone	
<b>Historic field pattern</b>	Medieval enclosures based on strip fields	Medieval enclosures	Post- medieval enclosures	Barton fields	Modern enclosures adapting medieval fields	

## Key urban fringe landscape characteristics

## Comments

<b>Land use</b>	Wood- land	Scrub	Grass- land	Recreati- onal facilities	Tourism facilities	Horse /pony field	Arable	Aban- doned	Woodland, scrub & occasional grazing & tourism /recreation;
<b>Vegetation condition</b>	Well managed			Average			Poor		Amenity grassland closely mown.
<b>Field boundary condition</b>	Well managed			Average			Poor		Boundary walls facing the road are well maintained; chain link fence facing the SWCP is unattractive.
<b>Landscape vulnerability to change</b>	High			Medium			Low		This location is highly visible next to both the SWCP and Gillard Road, with the part of the camp to the west of the road particularly sensitive.
<b>Tranquillity</b>	High			Medium			Low		
<b>Accessibility</b>	High			Medium			Low		
<b>Nature of urban edge/condition</b>	Prominent		Apparent but partially integrated		Discrete		Screened		Western section prominent from road

## Urban fringe/ compartment management strategy:

AoLC landscape management strategy, taken from Torbay LCA: Enhance

Recommended Compartment landscape management strategy: Enhance

## Key issues

### Forces for change within /on edge of AONB:

- Expansion of the site has already been permitted, increasing visitor pressure.

### Existing visual intrusion

- The western section is particularly visible.

### Heavy visitor pressure

- Visitors feed out onto Gillard Road and the SWCP.

**Current management intention (if known)**

Increase in density and expansion of the existing accommodation beyond the currently screened areas (as per approved planning application).

**Key initiatives and implementation mechanisms****Development/design considerations:**

Significant quantities of new tree and shrub planting around the perimeter of the site are required to screen the existing and new caravans from the road and the SWCP.

**Landscape compartment 6: Wall Park Camp**

Landscape Character (Torbay LCA): Type 5 Open Coastal Plateau  
 Area of Landscape Character (AoLC): 5D Berry Head



Wall Park in the 1980's



The camp is located completely within the AONB

**Description**

At the time of writing, this area of holiday chalets is subject to redevelopment proposals. The camp has spread over a number of former field boundaries but these are still visible consisting of lines of relict trees among the chalets.

**Designations / specific features of interest**

**Comments**

<b>Landscape and Cultural Heritage</b>	AONB	CZ	SAM	Reg Park/ garden	HER	
<b>Biodiversity</b>	SAC	NNR	SSSI	LNR	Gt Hshoe bat zone	
<b>Historic field pattern</b>	Medieval enclosures based on strip fields	Medieval enclosures	Post-medieval enclosures	Barton fields	Modern enclosures adapting medieval fields	Former post medieval field pattern.

**Key urban fringe landscape characteristics**

**Comments**

<b>Land use</b>	Wood-land	Scrub	Grass-land	Recreational facilities	Tourism facilities	Horse /pony field	Arable	Abandoned	Former Pontins holiday camp
<b>Vegetation condition</b>	Well managed			Average		Poor		Planned replacement of trees needed.	
<b>Field boundary condition</b>	Well managed			Average		Poor		Relict boundary trees are located within the site	
<b>Landscape vulnerability to change</b>	High			Medium		Low		Camp intrudes into important Berry Head to Sharkham coastal corridor. Redevelopment should include drawing back from the AONB core.	
<b>Tranquillity</b>	High			Medium		Low			
<b>Accessibility</b>	High			Medium		Low			

<b>Nature of urban edge/condition</b>	Prominent	Apparent but partially integrated	Discrete	Screened	
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**Urban fringe/ compartment management strategy:**

AOLC landscape management strategy, taken from Torbay LCA: Enhance.  
Recommended Compartment landscape management strategy: Enhance.

**Key issues**

**Forces for change within /on edge of AONB:**

- Proposal to redevelop the site.

**Existing visual intrusion**

- The current predominantly single storey buildings are partially screened by existing hedgerows.

**Current management intention (if known)**

- Redevelopment currently proposed.

**Key initiatives and implementation mechanisms**

**Potential landscape enhancements:**

- Dense buffer/ screen planting to the edge of the AONB.

**Development/design considerations:**

This development intrudes into the important open coastal landscape between Berry Head and Sharkham Point and any redevelopment proposals should consider 'drawing back' the line of built development further from the coastal edge. The design of built form, lighting, external works etc, should aim to enhance the open plateau landscape character of this area.



Figure 12: Location of compartments 7-11

**Landscape compartments 7 and 8: Riviera Bay Holiday Park**

Landscape Character (Torbay LCA): Type 5 Open Coastal Plateau.  
 Area of Landscape Character (AoLC): 5E Sharkham Point.



The Riviera Bay Park from the SWCP



Accommodation at Riviera Bay holiday park adjoining the SWCP



The Riviera Bay Park from the SWC Path.



A footpath leads through Riviera Bay Park to the SWC Path & St Mary's Bay.

**Description**

This area of holiday camp is located immediately above the northern half of the St Mary's Bay cliffs. It comprises two camps, (the former St Marys Bay Camp and the Riviera Bay camp) which have recently been brought under the same management and are now named the Riviera Bay Holiday Park. The site is located adjacent to the South West Coast Path and is highly visible from the coast to the south. Part of the site is located on relatively unstable strata, (mudstones etc), which gave the area the name of Mud Hill.

**Designations / specific features of interest**

**Comments**

<b>Landscape and Cultural Heritage</b>	AONB	CZ	SAM	Reg Park/ garden	HER	
<b>Biodiversity</b>	SAC	NNR	SSSI	LNR	Gt Hshoe bat zone	
<b>Historic field pattern</b>	Medieval enclosures based on strip fields	Medieval enclosures	Post- medieval enclosures	Barton fields	Modern enclosures adapting medieval fields	Former orchards

**Key urban fringe landscape characteristics**

**Comments**

<b>Land use</b>	Wood- land	Scrub	Grass- land	Recreati- onal facilities	Tourism facilities	Horse /pony field	Arable	Aban- doned	Trees at the rear of the site are highly visible from the surrounding area.
<b>Vegetation condition</b>	Well managed			Average			Poor		Predominantly amenity grass land, some mature trees to the car park at the rear of Riviera Bay
<b>Field boundary condition</b>	Well managed			Average			Poor		Relict field boundary to the fringes of the holiday park

<b>Landscape vulnerability to change</b>	High	Medium	Low within developed site but high in relation to wider context	Developed landscape but this location is highly visible from the AONB to the south & the SWCP, areas that are very sensitive to changes within site
<b>Tranquillity</b>	High	Medium	Low	
<b>Accessibility</b>	High	Medium	Low	
<b>Nature of urban edge/condition</b>	Prominent	Apparent but partially integrated	Discrete	Screened

**Urban fringe/ compartment management strategy:**

AoLC landscape management strategy, taken from Torbay LCA: Enhance.  
 Recommended compartment landscape management strategy: Enhance.

**Key issues**

**Forces for change within /on edge of AONB:**

- Proposed redevelopment.

**Existing visual intrusion**

- The Riviera Bay Holiday Park is particularly intrusive and visible from Sharkham Point.

**Current management intention (if known)**

- Proposed redevelopment details not known.

**Key initiatives and implementation mechanisms**

**Potential landscape enhancements:**

- Establish new trees to provide for succession to rear of the holiday park.

**Development/design considerations:**

This holiday camp area restricts the Berry Head to Sharkham coastal corridor. This is both visually significant, and important for the Greater Horseshoe bats which need to cross this area to access their main feeding areas. Any redevelopment proposals should include drawing back from the cliffs and opening up the coastal corridor, and the planting of hedgerows to fringe the west side of the corridor to form a buffer to the AONB. The coastal corridor should be widened to a minimum of 50 metres to match the grain of the field boundary pattern in surrounding areas.

### Landscape compartment 9: Wishing Field

Landscape Character (Torbay LCA): Type 1 Rolling Farmland.  
 Area of Landscape Character (AoLC): 1Q South Brixham fringes.



Looking across Wishing Field from the east.

#### Description

This area of open space has recently been allocated village green status which is likely to prevent the area being developed. It is a small area of land which is bounded on two sides by housing and the third by the Riviera Bay Holiday Park.

#### Designations / specific features of interest

#### Comments

<b>Landscape and Cultural Heritage</b>	AONB	CZ	SAM	Reg Park/ garden	HER	Village Green
<b>Biodiversity</b>	SAC	NNR	SSSI	LNR	Gt Hshoe bat zone	
<b>Historic field pattern</b>	Medieval enclosures based on strip fields	Medieval enclosures	Post- medieval enclosures	Barton fields	Modern enclosures adapting medieval fields	

#### Key urban fringe landscape characteristics

#### Comments

<b>Land use</b>	Wood- land	Scrub	Grass- land	Recreati- onal facilities	Tourism facilities	Horse /pony field	Arable	Aban- doned	The area appears to be unmanaged at present apart from well used footpaths crossing the area.
<b>Vegetation condition</b>	Well managed			Average			Poor		Grassland becoming rank
<b>Field boundary condition</b>	Well managed			Average			Poor		Boundary to St. Mary's Bay is a breeze block wall
<b>Landscape vulnerability to change</b>	High			Medium			Low		A popular and strategically important area of open space
<b>Tranquillity</b>	High			Medium			Low		
<b>Accessibility</b>	High			Medium			Low		
<b>Nature of urban edge/condition</b>	Prominent		Apparent but partially integrated		Discrete		Screened		Sharkham village is particularly visible

**Urban fringe/compartment management strategy:**

AoLC landscape management strategy, taken from Torbay LCA: Enhance.  
Recommended Compartment landscape management strategy: Enhance.

**Key issues****Poor land management/scrubbing up/abandonment**

- Torbay Council or Brixham Town Council need to enter into a management agreement to help maintain this area in the future.

**Current management intention (if known)**

- Given the past history it is unlikely that the owners will wish to spend money managing the area.

**Key initiatives and implementation mechanisms****Proposed alternative management:**

- The area could offer some habitat value if sensitively managed.
- There is demand for informal/wild play areas for local children.

**Potential landscape enhancements:**

- Replacement of boundary to Riviera Bay Holiday Park with a more sympathetic alternative.

**Development/design considerations:**

There needs to be some co-ordination of the design and uses of this area and the adjoining developments at Sharkham village and St Mary's Bay.

### Landscape compartment 10: Dolphin Field and Sharkham Point

Landscape Character (Torbay LCA): Type 5 Open Coastal Plateau.

Area of Landscape Character (AoLC): 5E Sharkham Point.



Looking to highly visible Sharkham Village from Sharkham Point.



Overgrown and unmanaged Dolphin Field.



Looking South along the Coast towards Man. Sands.



Sharkham Point from the SWCP above St. Mary's Bay.



The overgrown car park and Japanese Knotweed at Sharkham Point.

**Description**

Dolphin Field is the coastal strip of land which was a part of the former derelict Dolphin holiday camp which has been recently redeveloped. The redevelopment of the area has enabled this land to be handed over to TCCT who also control the adjoining Sharkham Point. Sharkham was an area of iron ore workings until the 1930's supplying the local paint industry before becoming the site of the town tip. The land is now largely clear of the evidence of these past uses. TCCT are currently planning to add Dolphin Field to the Sharkham grazing management regime, although there has been some difficulty with this as a result of difficult ground and problems with dogs and dog walkers. Sharkham Point is part of the SSSI and SAC.

**Designations / specific features of interest** **Comments**

<b>Landscape and Cultural Heritage</b>	AONB	CZ	SAM	Reg Park/ garden	HER	
<b>Biodiversity</b>	SAC	NNR	SSSI	LNR	Gt Hshoe bat zone	
<b>Historic field pattern</b>	Medieval enclosures based on strip fields	Medieval enclosures	Post-medieval enclosures	Barton fields	Modern enclosures adapting medieval fields	Former iron workings/ tip.

**Key urban fringe landscape characteristics** **Comments**

<b>Land use</b>	Wood-land	Scrub	Grass-land	Recreati- onal facilities	Tourism facilities	Horse /pony field	Arable	Aban- doned	Woodland, scrub & botanically diverse grassland in some areas.
<b>Vegetation condition</b>	Well managed			Average			Poor		Programme of grazing being introduced to help control scrub
<b>Field boundary condition</b>	Well managed			Average			Poor		Boundaries are generally overgrown
<b>Landscape vulnerability to change</b>	High			Medium			Low		Areas are highly visible from SWCP across bay.
<b>Tranquillity</b>	High			Medium			Low		At present the area is relatively tranquil due to the difficult access.
<b>Accessibility</b>	High			Medium			Low		Vehicular access is relatively difficult; pedestrian access is also slightly difficult except along the SWCP.
<b>Nature of urban edge/condition</b>	Prominent		Apparent but partially integrated		Discrete		Screened		Sharkham Village buildings are tall and located on high ground.

**Urban fringe/ compartment management strategy:**

AoLC landscape management strategy, taken from Torbay LCA: Enhance  
 Recommended Compartment landscape management strategy: Enhance

**Key issues****Poor land management/scrubbing up/abandonment.**

- TCCT are seeking to establish a grazing regime for both Dolphin Field and Sharkham Point.
- Unattractive, poorly surveilled car park.
- Sustained eradication programme is required for the Japanese knotweed.

**Existing visual intrusion**

- Tree planting around the Sharkham village is desirable to help screen the buildings from the AONB and coastline.
- Poor visual qualities of car park; rampant knotweed creates sense of unmanaged area.

**Opportunities to balance and increase visitor numbers.**

The visitor pressure at Berry Head is very high during the high season, which can detract from the visitor experience and places pressure on facilities. Sharkham Point provides a potential alternative to reduce some of this pressure if suitably improved and marketed.

Visitor centre/Geopark centre linking to the Kingswear peninsula

**Current management intention (if known)**

Management of habitats is subject of a SSSI management agreement.

**Key initiatives and implementation mechanisms****Potential landscape enhancements:**

- Scrub and knotweed control.
- Footpath repairs and resurfacing, particularly to beach in St Mary's Bay and SWCP.
- Sitting areas and picnic benches.
- Improved signage and interpretation.

**Development/design considerations.**

Area needs to be made more accessible (e.g. simple cutting back of the hedges approaching the car park and reducing the height of the scrub to make the area more welcoming).

If finances permit, construction of an interpretation centre /café (and toilets) for Sharkham and Geopark visitors and users of the beach at St Mary's Bay would also act as an introduction to the 'Gateway to Kingswear' walks south to Man Sands and the National Trust's Coletton Estate.

**Landscape compartment 11: John Fowler’s/South Bay Camp & Upton Manor Farm.**

Landscape Character (Torbay LCA): Type 5 Open Coastal Plateau.  
 Area of Landscape Character (AoLC): 5E Sharkham Point.



These two areas are visible from high points in the town.



The right of way crossing the Fowler site.



The entrance to South Bay from St Mary’s Road.



The eastern side of the South Bay site

**Description**

This area of land on the southern side of Brixham is divided by the St Mary’s Bay road and has the Upton Manor Farm camping field on one side, closest to the town, and the John Fowler South Bay Holiday camp to the south. The former is generally more steeply sloping and visible from the town, the latter contains static caravans, with a permanent infrastructure of access roads, administrative buildings, restaurants and indoor swimming pool.

**Designations / specific features of interest**

**Comments**

<b>Landscape and Cultural Heritage</b>	AONB	CZ	SAM	Reg Park/ garden	HER	
<b>Biodiversity</b>	SAC	NNR	SSSI	LNR	Gt Hshoe bat zone	
<b>Historic field pattern</b>	Medieval enclosures based on strip fields	Medieval enclosures	Post- medieval enclosures	Barton fields	Modern enclosures adapting medieval fields	Boundary loss of 25-49% identified in DHLC study

**Key urban fringe landscape characteristics****Comments**

Land use	Wood-land	Scrub	Grass-land	Recreational facilities	Tourism facilities	Horse /pony field	Arable	Abandoned	Camping or static caravans
<b>Vegetation condition</b>	Well managed			Average			Poor		Amenity grass is closely managed.
<b>Field boundary condition</b>	Well managed			Average			Poor		Hedges have been removed and those remaining are kept short
<b>Landscape vulnerability to change</b>	High: Upton Manor Farm camping ground.			Medium: South Bay Camp			Low		The camp ground is more visible from the town. The South Bay caravans are partially screened by trees and low hedges.
<b>Tranquillity</b>	High			Medium			Low		
<b>Accessibility</b>	High			Medium			Low		
<b>Nature of urban edge/condition</b>	Prominent		Apparent but partially integrated		Discrete		Screened		

**Urban fringe/ compartment management strategy:**

AoLC landscape management strategy, taken from Torbay LCA: Enhance.  
Recommended Compartment landscape management strategy: Enhance.

**Key issues****Forces for change within/on edge of AONB:**

- Pressure for development
- Only a small part of South Bay Camp might be considered previously developed land.

**Existing visual intrusion**

- The single storey static caravans are partially screened but the taller permanent facilities buildings are highly visible.

**Current management intention (if known)**

Not known.

**Key initiatives and implementation mechanisms****Potential landscape enhancements:**

A reduction in the number of static caravans, combined with tree planting to assimilate the area into the landscape of the AONB would be desirable.  
Thickening and allowing the hedgerows to grow up would also be desirable.

**Development/design considerations:**

These sites are not suitable for development; in the event that the existing uses are no longer viable the site should revert to greenfield uses.



**Figure 13: Location of compartments 12-14**

**Landscape compartment 12: National Trust land**

Landscape Character (Torbay LCA): Type 5 Open Coastal Plateau.  
 Area of Landscape Character (AoLC): 5F Brixham Heights.



Views south and west from Sharkham Point

**Description**

This area of grassland is owned by the National Trust as the northern most section of the Coleton estate. It helps to protect the setting of the Heritage Coast which extends south into the Kingswear peninsula. It acts as an important buffer separating the South Bay Camp from the Heritage Coast.

**Designations / specific features of interest****Comments**

<b>Landscape and Cultural Heritage</b>	AONB	CZ	SAM	Reg Park/ garden	HER	
<b>Biodiversity</b>	SAC	NNR	SSSI	LNR	Gt Hshoe bat zone	
<b>Historic field pattern</b>	Medieval enclosures based on strip fields	Medieval enclosures	Post- medieval enclosures	Barton fields	Modern enclosures adapting medieval fields	

**Key urban fringe landscape characteristics****Comments**

<b>Land use</b>	Wood- land	Scrub	Grass- land	Recreati- onal facilities	Tourism facilities	Horse /pony field	Arable	Aban- doned	Woodland, scrub & occasional grazing & tourism /recreation.
<b>Vegetation condition</b>	Well managed			Average			Poor		Programme of grazing being introduced to help control scrub
<b>Field boundary condition</b>	Well managed			Average			Poor		
<b>Landscape vulnerability to change</b>	High			Medium			Low		This location is highly visible and an intrinsic part of the coastal scenery
<b>Tranquillity</b>	High			Medium			Low		
<b>Accessibility</b>	High			Medium			Low		
<b>Nature of urban edge/condition</b>	Prominent		Apparent but partially integrated		Discrete		Screened		

**Urban fringe/ compartment management strategy:**

AoLC landscape management strategy, taken from Torbay LCA: Enhance  
Recommended Compartment landscape management strategy: Conserve.

**Key issues****Grazing**

- Ongoing difficulties identifying suitable tenant farmers/graziers.

**Current management intention (if known)**

- Management as part of National Trust estate.

**Key initiatives and implementation mechanisms****Proposed alternative management:**

None

**Potential landscape enhancements:**

- Hedgerow restoration

**Development/design considerations:**

NA.

**Landscape compartment 13 and 14: Redwells and Southdown**

Landscape Character (Torbay LCA): Type 5 Open Coastal Plateau.

Area of Landscape Character (AoLC): 5F Brixham Heights.



Predominantly steep land on a north facing hillside overlooking the town.



The Redwells and Southdown areas are visible across the town. The area is mainly grazed by horses.

**Description**

This strip of hilltop and hillside encloses the southern side of the town. The hillside is relatively steep and this topography has prevented development spreading up the hillside. The green hills contribute to the setting of Brixham and green backdrop to Torbay and are consequently of high visual importance. The small steep fields are difficult to farm profitably and have been let for horse grazing or abandoned.

**Designations / specific features of interest**

**Comments**

	Designations / specific features of interest					Comments
<b>Landscape and Cultural Heritage</b>	AONB	CZ	SAM	Reg Park/ garden	HER	A part of this area is located outside of the AONB
<b>Biodiversity</b>	SAC	NNR	SSSI	LNR	Gt Hshoe bat zone	
<b>Historic field pattern</b>	Medieval enclosures based on strip fields	Medieval enclosures	Post-medieval enclosures	Barton fields	Modern enclosures adapting medieval fields	A classic medieval boundary pattern is being lost due to neglect.

**Key urban fringe landscape characteristics****Comments**

<b>Land use</b>	Wood-land	Scrub	Grass-land	Recreati-onal facilities	Tourism facilities	Horse /pony field	Arable	Aban-doned	Some of the narrow strip fields are now reverting to woodland
<b>Vegetation condition</b>	Well managed			Average			Poor		Horse grazing
<b>Field boundary condition</b>	Well managed			Average			Poor		Many are also in poor condition
<b>Landscape vulnerability to change</b>	High			Medium			Low		This location is highly visible from across Torbay as well as contributing to the setting of the town.
<b>Tranquillity</b>	High			Medium			Low		
<b>Accessibility</b>	High			Medium			Low		Narrow lanes are difficult to access, but act as rights of way.
<b>Nature of urban edge/condition</b>	Prominent		Apparent but partially integrated		Discrete		Screened		

**Urban fringe/ compartment management strategy:**

AoLC landscape management strategy, taken from Torbay LCA: Enhance  
 Recommended Compartment landscape management strategy: Enhance

**Key issues****Poor land management/scrubbing up/abandonment**

- The narrow strip fields are/have scrubbed up

**Horse paddocks**

- Considerable horse related clutter on the level areas near Chaileycroft and Yards Lanes.

**Current management intention (if known)**

- Management is currently focussed on provision for horses.

**Key initiatives and implementation mechanisms****Proposed alternative management:**

- Area needs to be brought into an environmental conservation management regime such as environmental stewardship. Some grazing by cattle is desirable to maintain a better sward. Gapping up and restoration of hedgerows would benefit bats and is also desirable.

**Potential landscape enhancements:**

- Reinstatement of lost hedgerows and removal / control of horse related clutter through use of guidelines and Article 4 directions.

**Development/design considerations:**

- This area is totally unsuitable for any form of development

**Other potential projects:**

- The lanes could feature in a round Brixham cycle route and cycle links into the Kingswear peninsula, Lupton and Guzzle Down.



**Figure 14: Location of compartment 15**

**Landscape compartment 15: Guzzle Down**

Landscape Character (Torbay LCA): Type 5 Open Coastal Plateau.  
Area of Landscape Character (AoLC): 5F Brixham Heights.



Elevation allows views across town to the sea.



Guzzle Down from Summercourt Park



Guzzle Down from the south



Valley flows through the town to the harbour

**Description**

Guzzle Down is the southern most part of the study area adjoining Hillhead at the junction of the main road routes from Brixham and Paignton to Kingswear. It is an area of undulating land with an elevation of between 90 and 160 metres AOD. It is predominantly grassland but subject to arable rotations.

**Designations / specific features of interest**

**Comments**

<b>Landscape and Cultural Heritage</b>	AONB	CZ	SAM	Reg Park/ garden	HER	
<b>Biodiversity</b>	SAC	NNR	SSSI	LNR	Gt Hshoe bat zone	
<b>Historic field pattern</b>	Medieval enclosures based on strip fields	Medieval enclosures	Post- medieval enclosures	Barton fields	Modern enclosures adapting medieval fields	High level of loss has been identified by DHLC study

**Key urban fringe landscape characteristics**

**Comments**

<b>Land use</b>	Wood- land	Scrub	Grass- land	Recreati- onal facilities	Tourism facilities	Horse /pony field	Arable	Aban- doned	All under active agriculture
<b>Vegetation condition</b>	Well managed			Average			Poor		Improved grassland/ley/ arable
<b>Field boundary condition</b>	Well managed			Average			Poor		Hedgerows maintained within agricultural regime
<b>Landscape vulnerability to change</b>	High			Medium			Low		This location is highly visible and contributes to the setting of Torbay
<b>Tranquillity</b>	High			Medium			Low		
<b>Accessibility</b>	High			Medium			Low		Easily accessible by road, less so by foot.
<b>Nature of urban edge/condition</b>	Prominent		Apparent but partially integrated		Discrete		Screened		

**Urban fringe/ compartment management strategy:**

AoLC landscape management strategy, taken from Torbay LCA: Enhance.  
Recommended Compartment landscape management strategy: Enhance.

**Key issues****Forces for change within /on edge of AONB:**

- Viability of agriculture needs to be maintained.

**Current management intention (if known)**

- Land understood to be part of Lupton estate which is traditionally managed. Risk of change appears to be low.

**Key initiatives and implementation mechanisms****Proposed alternative management:**

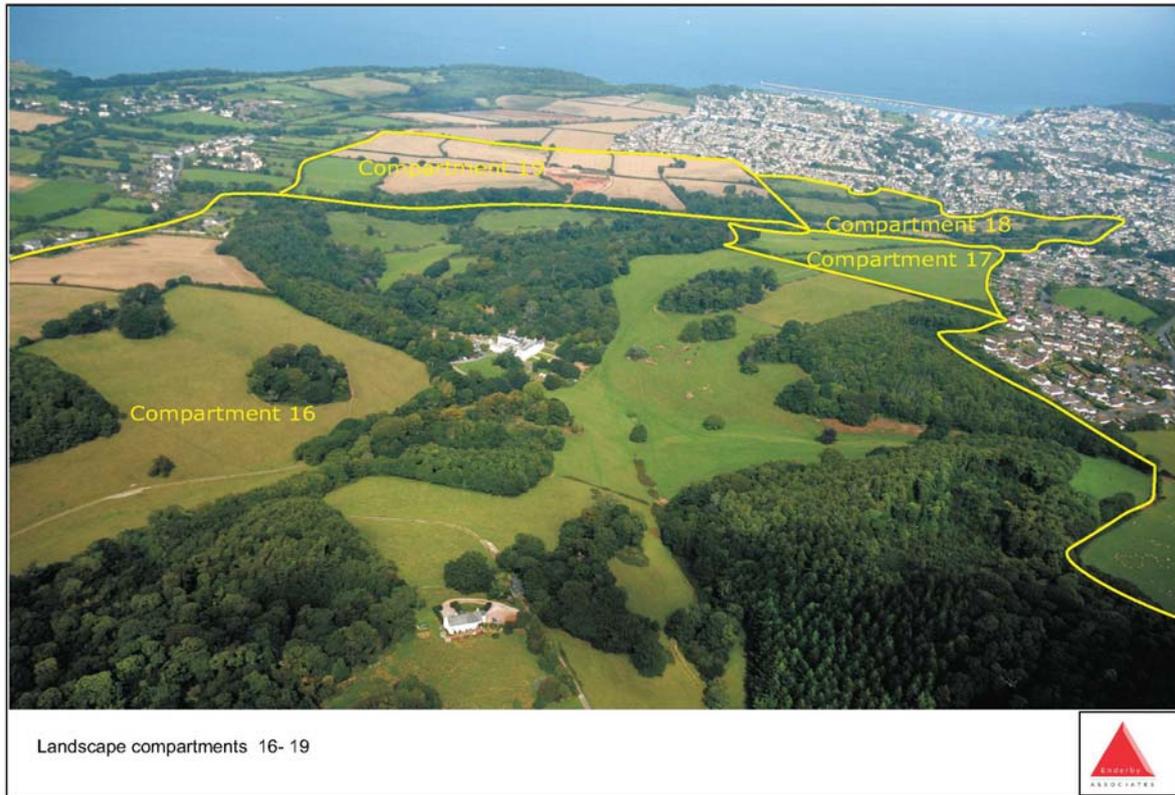
- Potential need for limited flood storage wetland to lower part of the area to reduce flood risk in the town.

**Potential landscape enhancements:**

- Restoration of hedgerows possibly as part of environmental stewardship package.
- Screening of the housing edge adjoining Guzzle Down.

**Development/design considerations:**

- Consider whether potential for northern boundary to accommodate a 'round Brixham' footpath or cycle route linking to permissive access in Lupton Park and Chaileycroft Lane.



**Figure 15: Location of compartments 16-19**

**Landscape compartment 16: Lupton Park**

Landscape Character (Torbay LCA): Type 1 Rolling Farmland.  
 Area of Landscape Character (AoLC): 1P South Galmpton and Lupton.



The higher section of park from the east



The lower section of park (Lupton Valley) from the north

**Description**

The Lupton estate is located to the west of Brixham adjoining the main road routes into the town and to Kingswear. Much of the land is included on the historic gardens and parklands register, and some of the woodland is included on the Ancient Woodland register, although these may be more recent plantations. The estate land is either grassland or woodland, with some designed landscape elements. The historic parkland is the subject of an inheritance tax undertaking which includes permissive footpaths which link the two main roads to the north and south. Lupton House has recently been leased by a community trust who are restoring the

historic (grade 2\* listed) house which has been various hotels and schools since the Yarde-Buller family vacated it during the Second World War. Representatives of the community trust have been engaged with the study.

### Designations / specific features of interest Comments

<b>Landscape and Cultural Heritage</b>	AONB	CZ	SAM	Reg Park/ garden	HER	Includes Italianate garden next to house, and walled orchard area.
<b>Biodiversity</b>	SAC	NNR	SSSI	LNR	Gt Hshoe bat zone	
<b>Historic field pattern</b>	Medieval enclosures based on strip fields	Medieval enclosures	Post-medieval enclosures	Barton fields	Modern enclosures adapting medieval fields	

### Key urban fringe landscape characteristics Comments

<b>Land use</b>	Woodland	Scrub	Grassland	Recreational facilities	Tourism facilities	Horse /pony field	Arable	Abandoned	Lupton House is developing as a community and conference venue. Other tourist/ recreational / community facilities would be feasible.
<b>Vegetation condition</b>	Well managed			Average			Poor		Gardens around house are overgrown. Parkland is actively grazed and woodlands are being managed with new planting taking place.
<b>Field boundary condition</b>	Well managed			Average			Poor		
<b>Landscape vulnerability to change</b>	High			Medium			Low		The parkland landscape must remain intact. Attractive parkland setting for the house.
<b>Tranquillity</b>	High			Medium			Low		
<b>Accessibility</b>	High			Medium			Low		There is regular bus access to the bottom of the drive, as well as road access
<b>Nature of urban edge/condition</b>	Prominent		Apparent but partially integrated		Discrete		Screened		

### Urban fringe/ compartment management strategy:

AoLC landscape management strategy, taken from Torbay LCA: Conserve.  
Recommended Compartment landscape management strategy: Conserve.

**Key issues****Forces for change within /on edge of AONB:**

- The tax status of the land which is also subject to environmentally benign management through environmental stewardship means that the parkland is well protected.
- The house and surrounding area are also being protected and restored in an appropriate way.
- Lack of resources may hinder the restoration / improvement works.

**The potential benefits to the area and visitor pressure**

The community trust at Lupton House offers enormous potential to help revitalise the area. The house can act as a focus for a host of new community based initiatives which are compatible with the landscape and heritage value of the area. Managing the success of these could present problems such as a need for more parking, coach access, fitting into the setting of the park and house. Funding is likely to be a constraint.

**Current management intention (if known)**

- The land is the subject of environmentally benign management through the IHT undertaking and ES schemes.
- Management strategies for the house and garden are developing.

**Key initiatives and implementation mechanisms****Proposed alternative management:**

N/A

**Potential landscape enhancements:**

- Conservation and restoration of existing features e.g. restoration of orchards and water gardens.

**Development/design considerations:**

There is potential for a range of projects to be funded by planning contribution / CIL

**Other potential projects:**

Food hub, environmental and cultural courses, allotments / community supported agriculture. (Subject to land ownership/tenancy arrangements).

**Landscape compartment 17: Lupton–Summercourt Way**

Landscape Character (Torbay LCA): Type 1 Rolling Farmland.  
 Area of Landscape Character (AoLC): 1P South Galmpton and Lupton.



The fields abutting Summercourt way from the north

**Description**

This area of sloping land abutting the town is within the ownership of the Lupton estate but outside of the historic parkland and IHT undertaking area. It slopes towards Torbay and is visible from the north. It is an area of improved/ley grassland under active agricultural management.

**Designations / specific features of interest**

**Comments**

<b>Landscape and Cultural Heritage</b>	AONB	CZ	SAM	Reg Park/ garden	HER	
<b>Biodiversity</b>	SAC	NNR	SSSI	LNR	Gt Hshoe bat zone	
<b>Historic field pattern</b>	Medieval enclosures based on strip fields	Medieval enclosures	Post- medieval enclosures	Barton fields	Modern enclosures adapting medieval fields	Some field boundary loss identified by DHLC study

**Key urban fringe landscape characteristics**

**Comments**

<b>Land use</b>	Wood- land	Scrub	Grass- land	Recreati onal facilities	Tourism facilities	Horse /pony field	Arable	Aban- doned	
<b>Vegetation condition</b>	Well managed			Average			Poor		
<b>Field boundary condition</b>	Well managed			Average			Poor		
<b>Landscape vulnerability to change</b>	High			Medium			Low		This location is highly visible from the approaches to the town.
<b>Tranquillity</b>	High			Medium			Low		
<b>Accessibility</b>	High			Medium			Low		
<b>Nature of urban edge/condition</b>	Prominent		Apparent but partially integrated	Discrete			Screened		

**Urban fringe/ compartment management strategy:**

AoLC landscape management strategy, taken from Torbay LCA: Enhance  
 Recommended Compartment landscape management strategy: Enhance

**Key issues****Forces for change within /on edge of AONB:**

- Potential pressure of development extending from Summercourt Way.

**Existing visual intrusion**

- The edge of the residential area at Summercourt Way needs to be screened.

**Current management intention (if known)**

We understand that land is to be brought into HLS tier of Environmental Stewardship.

**Key initiatives and implementation mechanisms****Proposed alternative management:**

N/A

**Potential landscape enhancements:**

- Planting to the edge of the adjoining housing.
- Hedgerow restoration.

**Development/design considerations:**

This land is unsuitable for development, due to its high level of visibility from the main approach to Brixham and the contribution it makes to the setting and containment of the town.

**Landscape compartment 18: Lupton/Brixham Valley**

Landscape Character (Torbay LCA): Type 3 Secluded Valley.  
 Area of Landscape Character (AoLC): 3M Lupton Valley.



This lower lying area has been abandoned.



The same area looking east.



Land abutting Mathill road also appears to have been abandoned.



This waste land is on the gateway into the town.

**Description**

This area includes land to the north and south of the main A3022 as it enters Brixham. It is therefore the main gateway for the town. Land to the south of the road appears to have been largely abandoned, particularly the field abutting the A3022 which carries the Lupton Stream. This inevitably creates a poor impression on the approach.

**Designations / specific features of interest**

**Comments**

	AONB	CZ	SAM	Reg Park/ garden	HER	
<b>Landscape and Cultural Heritage</b>						
<b>Biodiversity</b>	SAC	NNR	SSSI	LNR	Gt Hshoe bat zone	
<b>Historic field pattern</b>	Medieval enclosures based on strip fields	Medieval enclosures	Post-medieval enclosures	Barton fields	Modern enclosures adapting medieval fields	Former orchards

**Key urban fringe landscape characteristics****Comments**

<b>Land use</b>	Wood-land	Scrub	Grass-land	Recreational facilities	Tourism facilities	Horse /pony field	Arable	Abandoned	Some areas seem to have been abandoned for some time.
<b>Vegetation condition</b>	Well managed			Average		Poor		Programme of grazing needs to be re-introduced	
<b>Field boundary condition</b>	Well managed			Average		Poor			
<b>Landscape vulnerability to change</b>	High			Medium		Low		The land is highly visible.	
<b>Tranquillity</b>	High			Medium		Low			
<b>Accessibility</b>	High			Medium		Low			
<b>Nature of urban edge /condition</b>	Prominent		Apparent but partially integrated		Discrete		Screened		

**Urban fringe/ compartment management strategy:**

AoLC landscape management strategy, taken from Torbay LCA: Enhance.

Recommended Compartment landscape management strategy: Restore.

**Key issues****Forces for change within /on edge of AONB:**

- Abandonment may be part of a strategy to seek development next to the town.

**Poor land management/scrubbing up/abandonment**

- Land may be unmanaged due to difficulties finding graziers, remoteness from larger holding and cost of stock proof fencing.

**Current management intention (if known)**

Currently appears to be unmanaged.

**Key initiatives and implementation mechanisms****Proposed alternative management:**

- Seek to restore stock-proof boundaries possibly through aid from a landscape restoration fund prior to entry into ELS/ HLS.
- May need assistance from TCCT to carry out grazing.
- Community woodland.

**Potential landscape enhancements:**

- Hedgerow restoration.
- Vegetation management within the Lupton valley area such as coppicing of willow trees to restore riverside character.
- Tree planting to act as visual buffer to main road.

**Development/design considerations:**

These areas are generally unsuitable for development due to the prominence of the site from the approach to the town.

**Other potential projects:**

- Potential for allotments in discrete corner of the area.
- Potential for attractive riverside path or off-road cycleway link to Lupton.
- Potential for community supported agriculture to take over management of the area if landowner agreeable.

**Landscape compartment 19: Churston Ferrers**

Landscape Character (Torbay LCA): Type 2 Level farmland.  
 Area of Landscape Character (AoLC): 2A Brixham/ Churston Farmland.



Includes land on the left to the east of the A3022



This is subject to a land filling operation



A haul road created for the land filling.



Narrow lane to the south of Churston.

**Description**

This area is relatively flat and open arable farmland which is subject to a programme of land improvement through tipping of shellfish waste and inert landfill. A number of haul roads have been created to enable tipping to proceed. This has had a negative landscape impact. The land is subject to an agricultural tenancy and managed on behalf of an overseas client by a local land agent.

**Designations / specific features of interest**

**Comments**

<b>Landscape and Cultural Heritage</b>	AONB	CZ	SAM	Reg Park/ garden	HER	Former iron age occupation evidence is being destroyed by tipping. Rescue archaeology occurring
<b>Biodiversity</b>	SAC	NNR	SSSI	LNR	Gt Hshoe bat zone	

<b>Historic field pattern</b>	Medieval enclosures based on strip fields	Medieval enclosures		Barton fields		High level of boundary loss identified by DHLC study
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**Key urban fringe landscape characteristics****Comments**

<b>Land use</b>	Wood-land	Scrub	Grass-land	Recreational facilities	Tourism facilities	Horse /pony field	Arable	Abandoned	Predominantly arable rotation
<b>Vegetation condition</b>	Well managed			Average			Poor		Mainly arable apart from woodland strip and one grass ley field
<b>Field boundary condition</b>	Well managed			Average			Poor		Some damage due to haul road
<b>Landscape vulnerability to change</b>	High			Medium			Low		This location is highly visible and part of the policy area preventing the coalescence of Churston and Brixham
<b>Tranquillity</b>	High			Medium			Low		
<b>Accessibility</b>	High			Medium			Low		
<b>Nature of urban edge /condition</b>	Prominent		Apparent but partially integrated		Discrete		Screened		Housing fronting Copythorne Road is highly visible

**Urban fringe/ compartment management strategy:**

AoLC landscape management strategy, taken from Torbay LCA: Restore.  
Recommended Compartment landscape management strategy: Restore.

**Key issues****Forces for change within /on edge of AONB:**

- Land filling operation is raising land levels, damaging roads and hedgerows and visible from the main approach to the town.
- Car boot sale adjoining A3022.

**Existing visual intrusion**

- The housing along Copythorne Road.

**Current management intention (if known)**

Ongoing agricultural management with phased filling to 'improve' land.

**Key initiatives and implementation mechanisms****Proposed alternative management:**

- More environmentally benign agricultural regime under HLS.

**Potential landscape enhancements:**

- Hedgerow restoration, which could help integrate the urban edge and countryside.

**Development/design considerations:**

Cessation of further land filling operations is desirable.

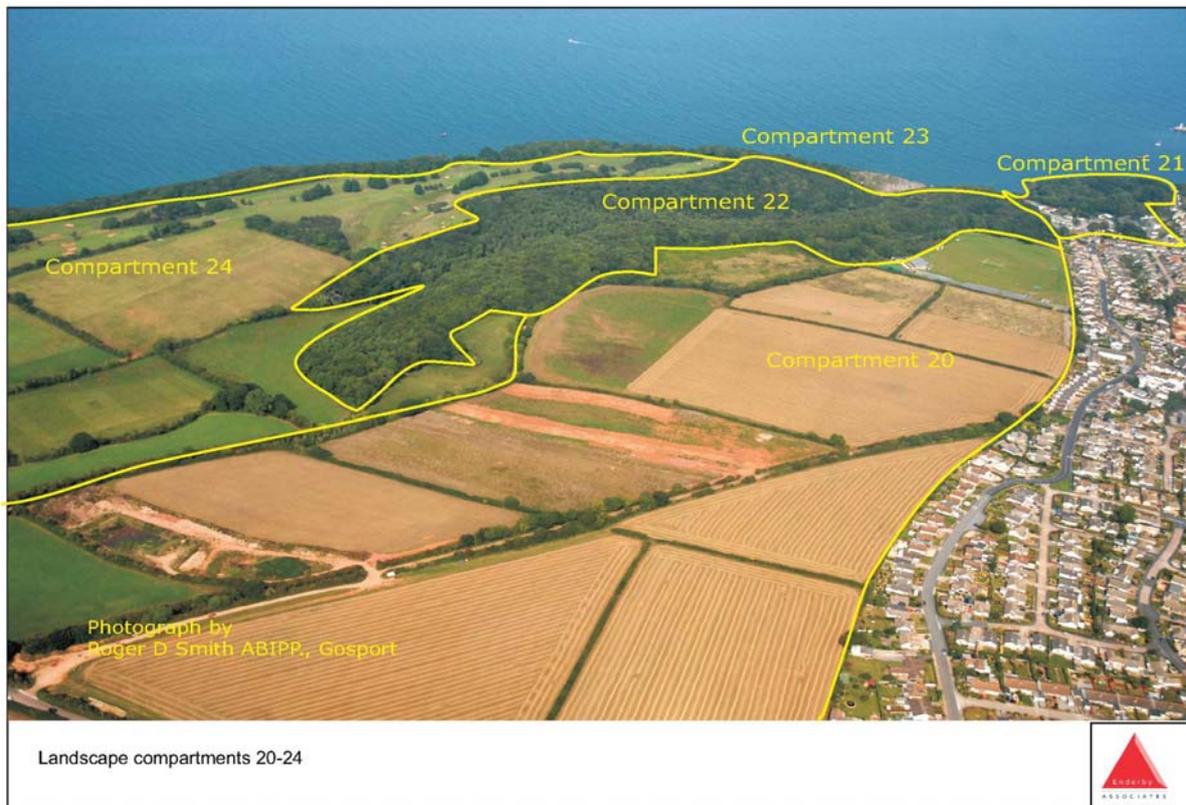


Figure 16: Location of compartments 20-24

**Landscape compartment 20: Churston - America Lane to North Boundary Road**



New cricket ground due to displacement by housing



Highly visible housing on North Boundary Road

**Description**

This area of land is part of the Churston Barony estate which aims to maintain it as a viable block of arable land. There are relatively few hedgerows, although there is a strip of former railway land which is a significant feature. This has been used for haul roads as part of a programme of land improvement through tipping of shellfish waste and inert landfill. This process is damaging the remaining hedgerows.

**Designations / specific features of interest****Comments**

<b>Landscape and Cultural Heritage</b>	AONB	CZ	SAM	Reg Park/ garden	HER	
<b>Biodiversity</b>	SAC	NNR	SSSI	LNR	Gt Hshoe bat zone	
<b>Historic field pattern</b>	Medieval enclosures based on strip fields	Medieval enclosures	Post- medieval enclosures	Barton fields	Modern enclosures adapting medieval fields	Former orchards

**Key urban fringe landscape characteristics****Comments**

<b>Land use</b>	Wood- land	Scrub	Grass- land	Recreati- onal facilities	Tourism facilities	Horse /pony field	Arable	Aban- doned	
<b>Vegetation condition</b>	Well managed			Average			Poor		
<b>Field boundary condition</b>	Well managed			Average			Poor		
<b>Landscape vulnerability to change</b>	High			Medium			Low		This location is highly visible due to the open landscape.
<b>Tranquillity</b>	High			Medium			Low		
<b>Accessibility</b>	High			Medium			Low		
<b>Nature of urban edge/condition</b>	Prominent		Apparent but partially integrated		Discrete		Screened		North Boundary Road

**Urban fringe/ compartment management strategy:**

AoLC landscape management strategy, taken from Torbay LCA: Enhance.

Recommended Compartment landscape management strategy: Enhance.

**Key issues****Forces for change within /on edge of AONB:**

- Land filling operation is raising land level and damaging roads and hedges.
- Building of new cricket ground and clubhouse with car parking and access road has had localised negative impact on AONB.

**Existing visual intrusion**

- The housing along North Boundary Road forms a stark edge with housing located in the edge of the AONB.

**Current management intention (if known)**

Ongoing agricultural management with phased filling to 'improve' land.

**Key initiatives and implementation mechanisms****Proposed alternative management:**

- More environmentally benign agricultural regime under HLS.

**Potential landscape enhancements:**

- Hedgerow restoration.
- Tree planting along the North Boundary Road boundary.

**Development/design considerations:**

Cessation of further land-filling operations is desirable.

### Landscape compartment 21: Hoseasons holiday camp & Torbay Holiday Chalets site

Landscape Character (Torbay LCA): Type 5 Open Coastal Plateau.  
 Area of Landscape Character (AoLC): 5C Battery Gardens.



The derelict site of Torbay holiday chalets



Hoseasons Brixham holiday camp

#### Description

This area of holiday chalets and parkland is located within the AONB. The Torbay holiday chalet site is currently derelict; the Hoseasons holiday camp is active. The first of these two sites is located between Battery Gardens and Grove Wood, and is at a 'gateway' to Brixham from both America Lane and the SWC path. This site is also next to Fishcombe Cove. The Hoseasons site is set further back from the sea, is discretely located and adjoins housing on two sides. Adjoining Battery Gardens is the site of a former World War 2 coastal battery which is owned and managed as a park by Torbay Council.

#### Designations / specific features of interest

#### Comments

<b>Landscape and Cultural Heritage</b>	AONB	CZ	SAM	Reg Park/ garden	HER	
<b>Biodiversity</b>	SAC	NNR	SSSI	LNR	Gt Hshoe bat zone	NA
<b>Historic field pattern</b>	Medieval enclosures based on strip fields	Medieval enclosures	Post- medieval enclosures	Barton fields	Modern enclosures adapting medieval fields	NA

#### Key urban fringe landscape characteristics

#### Comments

<b>Land use</b>	Wood- land	Scrub	Grass- land	Recreati- onal facilities	Tourism facilities	Horse /pony field	Arable	Aban- doned	
<b>Vegetation condition</b>	Well managed			Average			Poor		A number of trees which help to integrate the urban edge
<b>Field boundary condition</b>	Well managed			Average			Poor		NA
<b>Landscape vulnerability to change</b>	High			Medium			Low		The Hoseasons site is discrete. The former Torbay Chalets is next to a popular beach.
<b>Tranquillity</b>	High			Medium			Low		

<b>Accessibility</b>	High			Low	
<b>Nature of urban edge/condition</b>	Prominent		Discrete	Screened	The trees need to be protected.

**Urban fringe/ compartment management strategy:**

AoLC landscape management strategy, taken from Torbay LCA: Enhance.  
Recommended Compartment landscape management strategy: Enhance.

**Key issues**

**Forces for change within /on edge of AONB:**

- Redevelopment for housing would be unfortunate given location next to beach and holiday / hotel potential, particularly as this area is within the AONB.

**Poor land management/scrubbing up/abandonment**

- Abandoned derelict site has negative effect on whole area and the South West Coast Path which adjoins the derelict area.

**Existing visual intrusion**

- The derelict chalets

**Current management intention (if known)**

N/A.

**Key initiatives and implementation mechanisms**

- Planning system initiatives.

**Potential landscape enhancements:**

- Sensitive design of any redevelopment to reflect the attractive coastal and AONB location and position as Brixham 'gateway' to the SW Coast Path.

**Development/design considerations:**

Incorporate improved route for SWCP and cycleway into any redevelopment of the Torbay chalets site.

**Landscape compartment 22: The Grove**

Landscape Character (Torbay LCA): Type 3 Secluded Valley.  
 Area of Landscape Character (AoLC): 3L Churston and the Grove.



Sculptures in The Grove.



An aerial view, American Lane to the left of view.

**Description**

This area of mixed woodland, containing sycamore and larch as well as a range of other native species, follows a valley which leads down to the coast at Churston Cove. Access to this area is via American Lane and through the holiday camps in compartment 21. The area is managed by TCCT who have had difficulty with vehicular access along America Lane.

**Designations / specific features of interest**

**Comments**

<b>Landscape and Cultural Heritage</b>	AONB	CZ	SAM	Reg Park/ garden	HER	Former lime kilns in wood
<b>Biodiversity</b>	SAC	NNR	SSSI	LNR	Gt Hshoe bat zone	
<b>Historic field pattern</b>	Medieval enclosures based on strip fields	Medieval enclosures	Post-medieval enclosures	Barton fields	Modern enclosures adapting medieval fields	NA

**Key urban fringe landscape characteristics**

**Comments**

Land use	Wood-land	Scrub	Grass-land	Recreational facilities	Tourism facilities	Horse /pony field	Arable	Abandoned	
<b>Vegetation condition</b>	Well managed			Average			Poor		Woodland is changing as the larches are suffering disease.
<b>Field boundary condition</b>	Well managed			Average			Poor		Walls being restored by volunteers
<b>Landscape vulnerability to change</b>	High			Medium			Low		
<b>Tranquillity</b>	High			Medium			Low		
<b>Accessibility</b>	High			Medium			Low		Footpath routes accessible from SW Coast Path

<b>Nature of urban edge/condition</b>	Prominent	Apparent but partially integrated		Screened	
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**Urban fringe/ compartment management strategy:**

AoLC landscape management strategy, taken from Torbay LCA: Enhance.

Recommended Compartment landscape management strategy: Enhance.

**Key issues**

**Public and management access:**

- Management access is in the process of being negotiated with the owners of American Lane.
- This may also include public cycle access along lane
- Public access into The Grove is popular via well-used right of way through adjoining chalet sites. SWCP skirts northern coastal edge.

**Current management intention (if known)**

Management being undertaken by TCCT.

**Key initiatives and implementation mechanisms**

Proposed alternative management:

- N/A; additional funding for management may be required and available through planning contributions.

**Potential landscape enhancements:**

- Phased replacement of alien tree species with native species, diversification of age structure and creation of clearings.

**Development/design considerations:**

- Improvement of links into wood from Brixham.
- Provision of wild play opportunities for Brixham children.
- Additional interpretation facilities possible.



**Figure 17: Location of compartments 22-25**

**Landscape compartment 23: Marridge Wood to Fishcombe Cove.**

Landscape Character (Torbay LCA): Type 7 Cliffs.

Area of Landscape Character (AoLC): 7G Broadlands to Brixham.



Fishcombe Cove



Churston Cove



Marridge Wood from Elberry



Marridge Wood from Torbay

**Description**

This area of coastal woodland is a unique feature of Torbay, a major 2 kilometre long wooded edge to the coast, visible across Torbay, which also provides the setting for the SWC Path in this sector. The woodland extends from Elberry Cove in the west to Fishcombe Point and Churston Cove in the east, linking two of the more attractive and least accessible beaches of Torbay.

**Designations / specific features of interest**

**Comments**

<b>Landscape and Cultural Heritage</b>	AONB	CZ	SAM	Reg Park/ garden	HER	Ruined Lime kilns
<b>Biodiversity</b>	SAC	NNR	SSSI	LNR	Gt Hshoe bat zone	
<b>Historic field pattern</b>	Medieval enclosures based on strip fields	Medieval enclosures	Post-medieval enclosures	Barton fields	Modern enclosures adapting medieval fields	NA

**Key urban fringe landscape characteristics**

**Comments**

<b>Land use</b>	Wood-land	Scrub	Grass-land	Recreational facilities	Tourism facilities	Horse /pony field	Arable	Abandoned	SWC path
<b>Vegetation condition</b>	Well managed			Average			Poor		Woodland unmanaged due to difficulties with access.
<b>Field boundary condition</b>	Well managed			Average			Poor		NA
<b>Landscape vulnerability to change</b>	High			Medium			Low		This location is highly visible across Torbay and screens Brixham beyond
<b>Tranquillity</b>	High			Medium			Low		
<b>Accessibility</b>	High			Medium			Low		Only accessible on foot via SWC Path or boat.
<b>Nature of urban edge/condition</b>	Prominent		Apparent but partially integrated	Discrete			Screened		

**Urban fringe/ compartment management strategy:**

AoLC landscape management strategy, taken from Torbay LCA: Conserve.  
 Recommended Compartment landscape management strategy: Conserve.

**Key issues****Woodland management**

- Difficult access; only possible to extract timber by boat.

**South West Coast Path**

- The path is difficult in places; repairs to surface and steps would be desirable.

**Heavy visitor pressure**

- South West Coast Path is well used and TCCT has management agreement to maintain it.

**Current management intention (if known)**

- Management by TCCT.

**Key initiatives and implementation mechanisms****Proposed alternative management:**

N/A

**Potential landscape enhancements:**

- Improvements to surfacing of path
- Creation of woodland clearings where feasible to create viewpoints out.

**Development/design considerations**

- Planning contributions could contribute to management.
- Potential to negotiate access through Golf Course as part of any planning agreement.

**Landscape compartment 24: Churston Golf Course**

Landscape Character (Torbay LCA): Type 1 Rolling farmland.  
 Area of Landscape Character (AoLC): 1R Broadsands and North Churston.



Churston golf course; the path forms the AONB boundary.



Small paddocks adjoin the golf course

**Description**

The eastern-most part of the golf course is located within the AONB. There are also additional blocks of land which are either practice grounds or separately owned but adjoining the course. There is also an area of derelict barns and farmhouse with associated orchard in Churston village. A footpath crosses the course and forms the AONB boundary. In general, this use is broadly compatible with AONB designation.

**Designations / specific features of interest**

**Comments**

<b>Landscape and Cultural Heritage</b>	AONB	CZ	SAM	Reg Park/ garden	HER	
<b>Biodiversity</b>	SAC	NNR	SSSI	LNR	Gt Hshoe bat zone	
<b>Historic field pattern</b>	Medieval enclosures based on strip fields	Medieval enclosures	Post- medieval enclosures	Barton fields	Modern enclosures adapting medieval fields	Existing orchards

**Key urban fringe landscape characteristics**

**Comments**

<b>Land use</b>	Wood- land	Scrub	Grass- land	Recreati- onal facilities	Tourism facilities	Horse /pony field	Arable	Aban- doned	Woodland and scrub fringe the course which is well established. Paddocks associated with Churston Court farm buildings plus relict orchard.
<b>Vegetation condition</b>	Well managed			Average		Poor		Regular mowing of course required. Orchard has declined	
<b>Field boundary condition</b>	Well managed			Average		Poor			

<b>Landscape vulnerability to change</b>	High		Medium	Low	This location is screened from Torbay by Marring Wood
<b>Tranquillity</b>	High		Medium	Low	
<b>Accessibility</b>	High		Medium	Low	
<b>Nature of urban edge/condition</b>	Prominent	Apparent but partially integrated	Discrete	Screened	

**Urban fringe/ compartment management strategy:**

AoLC landscape management strategy, taken from Torbay LCA: Enhance.

Recommended Compartment landscape management strategy: Enhance.

**Key issues**

**Forces for change within/on edge of AONB:**

- Possible relocation of clubhouse and a new vehicular access into the AONB proposed as part of the redevelopment of the existing clubhouse site outside the AONB.

**Land management**

- Course could be managed in a more wildlife friendly manner.
- Orchard management could be improved.

**Current management intention (if known)**

Ongoing management for golf. Churston Court Farm buildings have received consent for conversion.

**Key initiatives and implementation mechanisms**

Proposed alternative management:

- Encourage golf course to manage rough areas for wildlife.
- Seek to bring farmland under HLS and restore orchard.
- Ensure that native tree and shrub species are used within course.

**Potential landscape enhancements:**

- Restoration of hedgerows on non golf land.

**Development/design considerations:**

Potential for golf related activities to make use of existing building group at Churston Court Farm. Lighting and parking need to be carefully designed and controlled.

Provision of maintenance access to Marring Woods could be part of any planning agreement.

**Landscape compartment 25: Elberry Golf Course and Cove**

Landscape Character (Torbay LCA): Type 1 Rolling farmland.  
 Area of Landscape Character (AoLC): 1R Broadsands and North Churston.



Land between Elberry golf course and Cove



Elberry Cove with the historic bath house.



Elberry golf course

**Description**

This area is the northern most part of the study area. It includes a municipal golf/pitch and putt course and land under agricultural management through a tenancy with TCCT. It also includes a section of coast, the South West Coast Path and Elberry Cove.

**Designations / specific features of interest**

**Comments**

Landscape and Cultural Heritage	AONB	CZ	SAM	Reg Park/ garden	HER	Former Lord Churston's bath house
Biodiversity	SAC	NNR	SSSI	LNR	Gt Hshoe bat zone	
Historic field pattern	Medieval enclosures based on strip fields	Medieval enclosures	Post-medieval enclosures	Barton fields	Modern enclosures adapting medieval fields	DHLC study has identified high level of boundary loss

**Key urban fringe landscape characteristics**

**Comments**

Land use	Wood-land	Scrub	Grass-land	Recreational facilities	Tourism facilities	Horse /pony field	Arable	Abandoned	Comments
<b>Vegetation condition</b>	Well managed			Average			Poor		Scrub fringes the golf course and cove
<b>Field boundary condition</b>	Well managed			Average			Poor		Golf course is close mown amenity grass; there is no rough grassland.
<b>Field boundary condition</b>	Well managed			Average			Poor		Field boundaries abutting the AONB boundary
<b>Landscape vulnerability to change</b>	High			Medium			Low		This location is highly visible both locally and across Torbay
<b>Tranquillity</b>	High			Medium			Low		
<b>Accessibility</b>	High			Medium			Low		Accessible from Broadsands.
<b>Nature of urban edge/condition</b>	Prominent		Apparent but partially integrated		Discrete		Screened		

**Urban fringe/ compartment management strategy:**

AoLC landscape management strategy, taken from Torbay LCA: Enhance.

Recommended Compartment landscape management strategy: Enhance.

**Key issues**

**Land management**

- Management of golf course could be more environmentally friendly to benefit wildlife.

**Horse paddocks**

- Horse grazing of other land needs to be controlled to resist horse related clutter.

**Current management intention (if known)**

Golf course is managed by Torbay Council.

**Key initiatives and implementation mechanisms**

**Proposed alternative management:**

- More wildlife friendly management of golf course.

**Potential landscape enhancements:**

- Native tree planting on golf course.

**Development/design considerations:**

N/A. This area is unsuitable for development.

**List of abbreviations used in compartment analysis**

AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
CPZ	Coastal Protection Zone
CZ	Countryside Zone
DHLC	Devon Historic Landscape Characterisation
HER	Historic Environment Record
HLF	Heritage Lottery Fund
HLS	Higher Level Stewardship
LCA	Landscape Character Assessment
LNR	Local Nature Reserve
NNR	National Nature Reserve
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SAM	Scheduled Ancient Monument
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
SWCP	South West Coast Path
TCCT	Torbay Coast and Countryside Trust

## 7. LANDSCAPE VISION AND OBJECTIVES.

- 7.1 This section of the report considers how the purposes of AONB designation (discussed in section 3) have contributed to the development of the vision and a series of objectives for the Brixham urban fringe. These have subsequently been used to develop the overall strategy plan for the area which follows.
- 7.2 The landscape character assessment of Torbay and the more detailed work included within this study helps to indicate ways in which the natural beauty of the AONB landscape can be protected and conserved to meet the requirements of AONB designation. One of the themes running through the remainder of the report is the opportunity which Brixham's location and green assets present for the development of a range of green tourism and recreational initiatives which can be complementary to the protected landscape. The AONB around the fringes of Brixham can provide a range of recreational, habitat and tourism functions which are compatible with the protected landscape designation. This 'multi-functional' landscape can provide more than just food production and include the enhancement of biodiversity through appropriate land management and connecting habitats, and making provision for healthy living through the provision of leisure, recreation and education opportunities in the immediate countryside. The economic and social needs of the area can be achieved in ways which are either landscape neutral or help to maintain and enhance the local landscape through supporting heritage tourism, wood and bio-fuels production and the production of local food.
- 7.3 Whilst the town is (mostly) beyond the AONB boundary there is clearly a strong relationship between the town and its hinterland which:
- defines its attractive setting and contributes to its identity, character and perception;
  - helps to define the town as a distinct settlement that is separate from Paignton and Torquay;
  - contains an attractive and varied coastal environment that is quite accessible from the town (in some parts more than others);
  - provides a connection to the coastal scenery extending away into the very rural Kingswear peninsula within the South Hams.
- 7.4 The study has therefore considered the urban fringe in the context of the relationship to the town, contributing to its economic vitality and the well being of local people, as well as its role as part of a protected landscape. This wider holistic approach to landscape related issues is also being followed by the Torbay Green Infrastructure Delivery Plan, currently being prepared by the Torbay Coast and Countryside Trust. This reflects the proposals for the Brixham Urban Fringe which are outlined in this report and will become part of the evidence base for the Local Development Framework.

### **A landscape vision and objectives.**

- 7.5 The vision for the area defined in Table 2 below has been developed following interviews, meetings and a seminar involving local stakeholders. It has drawn together various strands of local opinion and the potential of the area identified as a result of the survey and analysis work which has been undertaken on the landscape of the area. It also takes account of the vision included within the South Devon AONB Management Plan which is identified on the AONB web site.

**Table 2: A Vision for the future of the Brixham landscape**

<p><b>A vibrant healthy multi-functional landscape, in which:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The natural and cultural heritage and environmental functions of the area are protected and enhanced for current and future generations.</li> <li>• Food production, tourism, work and recreation co-exist and generate mutual benefits for the well-being of the local community and visitors.</li> <li>• People are inspired by the landscape and natural and cultural heritage of the coast and countryside and have a range of opportunities to enjoy and experience it.</li> </ul>
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7.6 In order to achieve the vision a more detailed set of objectives has been developed which set out general targets for the urban fringe. These are structured in accordance with five key topics, which reflect the purposes of the AONB. These are:

- Natural and cultural heritage
- Landscape restoration
- Community
- Recreation and leisure
- Local vitality.

Detailed objectives for each topic are set out in Table 3 below.

**Table 3: Overall objectives for the Brixham Urban Fringe landscape.**

<p><b>Natural and cultural heritage objectives:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The natural heritage of the area should be conserved and enhanced by the reinstatement and repair of distinctive landscape features and habitats.</li> <li>2. The environmental infrastructure of the area should be protected, enhanced, conserved and supported by the addition of open spaces and reinforcement of green corridors.</li> <li>3. The cultural heritage of the area should be protected, respected and made accessible by interpretation.</li> </ol> <p><b>Landscape restoration objectives:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Rural character should be restored through the identification and reinstatement of key landscape features which contribute to landscape character.</li> <li>5. The traditional landscape pattern should be restored by the screening or removal of alien features from the local landscape.</li> </ol> <p><b>Community objectives:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. Local people and visitors should be made more aware of the natural and cultural heritage of the area and encouraged to take pride in their local environment.</li> <li>7. Local communities should be better connected to the countryside to develop a stronger sense of place. Local people should be given opportunities</li> </ol>
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to re-engage with local food production to improve health and well being.

**Recreation and leisure objectives:**

8. Sufficient recreation and sporting facilities should be provided for local people and visitors to maintain a healthy lifestyle, whilst protecting other environmental resources.

9. Local people and visitors should be encouraged to make use of attractive rural and coastal situations for recreation and sport.

10. The coastal strip should be protected as a long distance footpath and wildlife corridor and defined as Heritage Coast linking to the Kingswear peninsula.

**Local vitality objectives:**

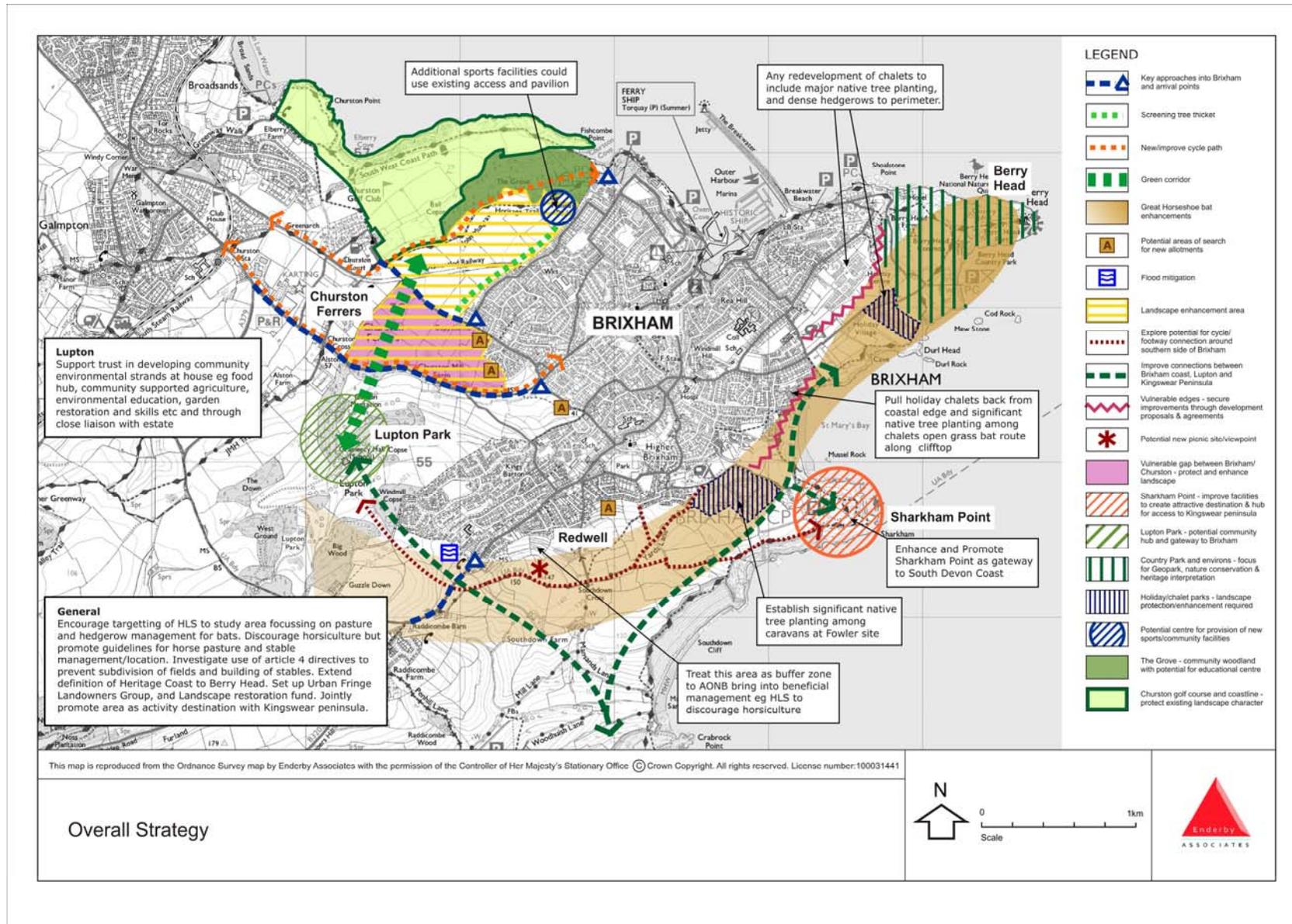
11. Food and timber production should be encouraged to take place in an efficient and sustainable way whilst maintaining and enhancing the landscape.

12. The environment should be enhanced to become a valued, sustainable tourism resource.

7.7 Specific proposals and projects which will help to achieve the vision and which complement these general objectives have been developed and are shown in the overall strategy drawing which follows. These are then described in subsequent chapters covering:

- Mechanisms for improving land management.
- Achieving improvements through development and the planning system.
- A landscape strategy.

7.8 In relation to the overall strategy drawing, it is important to stress that the illustrated locations of proposals are indicative only, as no approaches have been made to landowners regarding potential projects.



## 8. MECHANISMS FOR IMPROVING LAND MANAGEMENT

### The targeting of beneficial management

- 8.1 The Lupton Estate and land controlled by the Torbay Coast and Countryside Trust at Berry Head is already the subject of beneficial management through existing rural incentive schemes including Countryside Stewardship and Higher Level Stewardship schemes, forestry incentives, and the Wildlife Enhancement Scheme. It is however desirable to target other parts of the study area with appropriate beneficial management schemes. Concentrated targeting of this area with Higher Level Stewardship is one option. Natural England has indicated that schemes which come forward within the study area could be targeted if funds are available (although Higher Level Stewardship budgets have recently been cut by 30%).
- 8.2 Whilst the study area is not currently part of a Higher Level Stewardship target area, there are a number of functions, priority habitat types and species present in the study area which should assist in meeting the scheme objectives. These include:
- Greater Horseshoe bats;
  - Limestone grassland and traditional orchards;
  - Cirl bunting;
  - Recreational access improvements.
- 8.3 The adoption of this urban fringe strategy will also help to define the suitability of the area for targeted funding.
- 8.4 If it is not possible to achieve beneficial management through Higher Level Stewardship, the alternative is to establish a local scheme either through a Heritage Lottery Fund Landscape Partnership Scheme, or with local community action and local funding via planning contributions. These potential options are explored further in the following chapters.
- 8.5 The Torbay area is very fortunate to have a very well established and proven way of holding and managing land for community and wider benefit through the Torbay Coast and Countryside Trust. The Trust's remit and focus are highly appropriate and beneficial to the potential for wider joined-up management of the urban fringe around the town. It also provides access to grants that may not otherwise be available to smaller landowners or the Council. The Trust already manages a number of key areas such as the Berry Head Country Park and The Grove and there is great potential for its influence to be extended to other areas around the town. This may be by:
- taking on land transferred to them as part of a package of mitigation measures provided as part of development;
  - taking on long term leases of additional land where existing landowners may have little interest in the land, or are having difficulty due to urban fringe pressures, or where land is uneconomic due to scale or separation from a larger agricultural unit.

## 9. ACHIEVING IMPROVEMENTS THROUGH DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING

### Redevelopment within the AONB urban fringe

9.1 It is apparent from the analysis stages that the interface of the town and the AONB is complex. In some places the AONB boundary is neatly defined by the developed edge; in other areas large scale developments which would normally not now be permitted within an AONB exist and are at odds with the primary purpose of landscape protection. The nature of any redevelopment of such sites needs to be very carefully controlled to ensure that it is as compatible as possible with the primary purpose of the AONB – that is landscape protection. In most, if not all cases, redevelopment is likely to present opportunities for enhancement of the AONB and creating a more sympathetic interface between the development/urban edge and the outlying undeveloped AONB landscape. These opportunities might include:

- drawing back development from prominent coastal edges;
- restricting the height of new development;
- retaining and supplementing important vegetation that assists in assimilating development;
- reducing the impact of lighting or other forms of suburban intrusion;
- enhancing tranquillity;
- removal of eyesores or intrusive development.

9.3 Other benefits may also be achieved, such as:

- improvements to biodiversity through the linkage of wildlife corridors;
- appropriate management of land for bat sustenance within key locations;
- creating/enhancing green connections on bat flight corridors;
- creation of footpath/cycle linkages;
- way-marking and route improvement.

9.4 It is undoubtedly the case that the redevelopment of sites within/along the edge of the AONB may lead to an increase or change in the nature of recreational demand and it is only right that development that benefits from such a unique location should contribute towards the ongoing costs of managing the very landscape that contributes to the overall attractiveness and value of such development. Mechanisms exist for achieving this via Section 106 agreements and other initiatives; these are discussed further in the following chapter.

9.5 Torbay Local Plan Policy L1 which relates to landscape protection refers to the protection of sites abutting the AONB, and reflects the need to establish what may be referred to as a 'buffer zone' abutting the AONB. The part of the study area to the south of Brixham which lies outside of the AONB boundary would be a suitable buffer zone, sitting between the town and AONB boundary, reflecting the need to protect this area of open hillside which forms the backdrop to the town and contributes to the wider setting of Torbay, and is visible from a wide area. This area also coincides with the Greater Horseshoe Bat sustenance area.

9.6 AONB designation came too late to prevent the establishment of the series of holiday camps on the cliff tops between Berry Head and Sharkham Point. The AONB boundary line was however drawn in the relevant position at that time to help protect the key areas of open cliff-top land. Whilst these developments do

not conform to the normal protected AONB landscape, they have clearly helped the tourism economy of the town, and local people are concerned that re-development of these sites for housing will remove this source of tourist income and cause a burden to local services.

- 9.7 In assessing holiday uses against the purposes of AONB designation, there is a strong argument that if the use is landscape neutral, then the holiday use is in part recreational and supporting the local economy, whereas housing is not. Each case will need to be determined on its merits; however it is arguable that an appropriate redesigned/developed tourism use is more compatible with designation than new housing in the AONB urban fringe as it can be seen to directly support the local economy where there is a high reliance on tourism.
- 9.8 The emerging Core Strategy presents an opportunity to take forward a positive strategy for the Brixham urban fringe, perhaps via a specific urban fringe policy, which will assist in guiding and shaping the way the fringe is to develop in the future and specifically the way in which existing developments within the AONB fringe will be expected to contribute to the achievement of the overall strategy and objectives for the area. This would logically dovetail with the wider Green Infrastructure Strategy which will cover the whole of Torbay and will also form another strand of the environmental management framework, (and could become a Supplementary Planning Document in the future).
- 9.9 The development management process will have a very strong part to play in the future of the urban fringe and the development of the Core Strategy will need to set out the framework within which applications will be dealt with. This urban fringe study highlights particular considerations that should be applied to the unique set of circumstances that exist around the town. With the upheaval and uncertainties that have occurred in the planning process following the 2010 election it is difficult at this time to see how the Core Strategy may have to evolve further. Further initiatives and potential delivery mechanisms are emerging from the Localism Bill which encourage the development of more locally based 'Neighbourhood' plans, prepared very closely with local communities who will have greater influence over the future direction of their area; in the case of Brixham it is possible that a town plan could emerge. Such a plan would offer a real opportunity for embedding and taking forward the aspirations of this urban fringe strategy in greater detail.

#### **Developer contributions**

- 9.10 The Brixham urban fringe provides opportunities for sensitive redevelopment or limited new development that is appropriate within an AONB to help provide environmental improvements. The nature of the development and the types of improvements which are sought as part of any development proposal need to be carefully balanced to ensure that the environmental and community benefits are both tangible and relevant to the area, and its designation as an AONB. There are many examples of successful community landscape benefits being provided through the planning system. The current system of developer contributions could be used to provide landscape and natural heritage benefits through the planning system for the study area, particularly if they are supported and endorsed by the local community and AONB unit. A well supported Brixham urban fringe strategy that sets out clear objectives and aspirations for short and longer term projects will help to justify and focus such contributions in a positive manner.

**Landscape enhancement through the Local Development Framework.**

- 9.11 The Torbay Local Development Framework Core Strategy is a means for 'orchestrating the necessary social, physical and green infrastructure required to ensure that sustainable communities are created' (PPS 12 Local Spatial Planning (2008), Annex G).
- 9.12 In order to secure adoption of the Core Strategy, the Council will need to have a delivery strategy, designed to deliver the policies in the Plan, and which includes evidence of community needs. It is therefore appropriate for the AONB Unit and Torbay Council to use the recommendations of this report as a contribution to the evidence base for the Local Development Framework. The means by which developers can make contributions take two forms:
- planning obligations related to specific site impacts, such as Section 106 Agreements and, potentially
  - the Community Infrastructure Levy, where, if adopted by the local authority, the charges can relate to achieving wider and more general community benefits as noted below.
- 9.13 Section 106 planning obligations take the form of legal agreements negotiated between local authorities and those with an interest in a piece of land with the intention to make development acceptable in planning terms. They may be used to help mitigate the specific impact of a development where it would generate additional needs e.g. on community infrastructure, including parks and recreation facilities.
- 9.14 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a new charge which local authorities will be empowered, but not required, to impose on most types of new development. CIL proposals allow for charging schedules to be drawn up which will cover the infrastructure requirements to deliver the policies in their Local Development Framework. These are likely to include standard charge formulae and proposals relating to new dwelling or numbers of bedroom for different types of infrastructure. In contrast to the system of planning obligations, the Community Infrastructure Levy therefore relates to the development of a wider area rather than to the immediate direct impact of individual developments, thereby opening up the opportunity for more holistic infrastructure planning and funding.

**Appropriate benefits**

- 9.15 In order for the community to support appropriate development it needs to be aware of the nature of the benefits which are likely to flow to the community as part of the process. Consultations both through a workshop, and a drop in exhibition hosted through the Green Infrastructure Delivery Plan have suggested that there is broad support for the proposals within this report.
- 9.16 The new Localism Bill gives a clear indication of the increased opportunities likely to be available for local communities to be involved in shaping and influencing the detail of some of these schemes. This is likely to be manifested through the evolution of neighbourhood plans which will provide a local context for implementing the strategic policies set out in the Core Strategy. The latter will include appropriate policy guidance relating to developer contributions and

potentially CIL to support delivery of schemes through both the development plan and development management processes.

- 9.17 The AONB designation requires that in making decisions relating to land use change, local authorities should:

*'have regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area'.*

- 9.18 In judging whether a proposed land use change will help achieve this purpose proposals should consider the impacts on local landscape character. Issues to be considered when assessing proposals for land management change or development have been considered as part of the study. This has led to the production of a set of design principles to illustrate ways in which land use changes in the study area can help to achieve the principles of conserving, strengthening or repairing landscape character. In future there should be an emphasis on actions to achieve positive landscape change, rather than the prevention of negative change. Consequently the guidance in Table 4 below is about how things can be done, rather than prevented.

**Table 4: General design principles for landscape enhancement.**

<p><b>General</b></p> <p>Environmental enhancement and restoration works (rather than simple mitigation) will be necessary to protect and enhance the existing environmental capital of the area which has been damaged and is under stress as a result of historic development and land use changes.</p> <p>Relevant enhancements to consider which will both benefit the key protected species as well as the landscape would include the following works to the AONB:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The reinstatement of lost hedgerows and hedgerow trees.</li> <li>• The removal of existing inappropriately sited, obtrusive or unsightly development.</li> <li>• The establishment of significant woodland and tree screens using appropriate native species, to screen/assimilate intrusive development.</li> <li>• A significant reduction in the amount of lighting, with fittings to project light downwards.</li> </ul> <p><b>Development Management</b></p> <p>In considering any proposed land use change it would be necessary to take account of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respect and work in harmony with the natural and cultural heritage resources which have been identified as critical environmental capital due to their local or national significance, particularly the AONB and SAC.</li> <li>• Protection and long term management of existing trees, particularly where they contribute to assimilating development. Consider undertaking full analysis of tree stock and protecting those which are of significant amenity value through Tree Preservation Orders.</li> <li>• Provide a significant reduction in the footprint of the development and provide additional green-space to help restore the environmental capital which has been lost as a result of past inappropriate development; explore whether the residue of land might be returned to a compatible countryside use such as agriculture which could be leased to the Torbay Coast and Countryside Trust and whether this should be funded for a period through the re-development. Consider whether it will also be necessary for covenants to be placed on the land to prevent future development.</li> <li>• Enhance the landscape character identified in the Torbay Landscape Character Assessment and follow the guidance included within Part 2 of that report.</li> <li>• Understand and minimise the effects of additional pressures on the landscape, natural or cultural heritage which may arise from development or land use changes; seek to offset these by securing funding contributions for off-site landscape, recreation and community infrastructure to mitigate the impacts of either additional visitors or residents.</li> <li>• Proposals for new recreational, community or sporting use within the urban fringe should exclude any form of building e.g. clubhouse, access road store or hard-standing, within the AONB area unless wider compensatory measures can more than offset the impact of such development. Where there are existing traditional buildings these might be converted or buildings located within the urban area adjoining the site might be used as an alternative to providing new buildings and access within the AONB.</li> <li>• Make creative use of outside spaces in and adjoining settlements to help achieve more efficient land use by adopting a multifunctional approach in which areas provide a range of 'ecosystem services' at once; for example combining the growth of crops, the provision of recreation and sustainable drainage to help deal with surface water drainage problems and alleviate flooding.</li> <li>• Balance the safety and access needs of local people and visitors with care for the environment and the quality of the landscape.</li> <li>• Provide adequate space, and opportunities to link with, the existing recreational networks.</li> <li>• Provide adequate buffer space to the adjoining designated land, land uses, and development.</li> <li>• Either incorporate or restore features that would enhance local character, or the historical, ecological or geological interest of the area.</li> <li>• Generally buildings should be low rise and finished with a material which is self coloured and landscape neutral (e.g. earth colours) and is unsuitable for being painted/ rendered</li> </ul>
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white in the future. Exterior lighting should be discouraged.

- Use local materials in a way which is sympathetic to local landscape character.
- Respect the local landscape geology, topography, drainage, and microclimate.
- Allocate space to achieve landscape solutions to help soften the impact of any land use change through the inclusion of native trees hedge and shrub planting.
- Draw development back from the coastal fringe wherever possible.

### **Redevelopment principles.**

9.19 The principle of 'pulling back' development from the coast has been implemented at the former Dolphin camp (now renamed 'Sharkham Village') and, whilst unfortunately this has not been achieved at Landscope, there is considerable support for this to take place throughout this area. Drawing back development in certain areas can realise particular benefits, such as:

- reducing landscape and visual impacts of development on the AONB beyond
- reducing fragmentation of land and related uses
- creating a more attractive environment for the South West Coast Path
- reducing impacts on both terrestrial and marine SACs
- reducing the night-time impact of lighting
- widening undeveloped and unlit land in areas important or potentially important for commuting bats, enhancing links to sustenance areas
- restoring/facilitating land management in more viable land parcels
- enhancing sense of place and the experience of remoteness and tranquillity
- providing/improving connections in the access network.

9.20 Development proposals affecting the edges of the town can also help with the incremental achievement of the longer term aims for the study area such as :

- reinstatement and creation of new hedgerows and wooded boundaries
- new path and cycle networks with better links around the town and into the Kingswear peninsula
- creating landscape buffer zones to the urban edges
- achieving recreational facilities compatible with the AONB
- other projects requiring developer contributions which might fund the creation of a Brixham urban fringe landscape restoration fund.

### **Planning policy for the AONB**

9.21 This report is not intended to set planning policy which is the role of the local authority. It is intended to provide landscape based guidance on ways in which the local authority can help to conserve and enhance the various areas of land which are subject to statutory environmental designations. These are likely to be brought forward into the statutory planning process through the updating of the AONB Management Plan, and the evidence base documents for the Local Development Framework.

9.22 The Torbay Green Infrastructure Strategy will also reflect the proposals which are outlined in this report and will also become part of the evidence base for the Local Development Framework.

## 10. FUTURE LANDSCAPE OPPORTUNITIES

### **Heritage tourism hub and gateway to the Kingswear peninsula**

- 10.1 There is an opportunity to use the mechanisms available through the AONB to help support the town economy and, vice versa, for the town to safeguard and nurture the landscape that is fundamentally important to it. There is a great opportunity for AONB organisations and Brixham Town Council and Torbay Council to jointly market the town as a heritage tourism hub and as a gateway to the South Devon coast. This will help to add to the vitality of the businesses in the town and surrounding area which can benefit from the potential revenues associated with outdoor pursuits, such as walking, canoeing, cycle hire, particularly if there is appropriate marketing and packaging of services and accommodation.

### **The Lupton opportunity**

- 10.2 The recent establishment of a community trust to lease Lupton House offers considerable potential for the development of a range of opportunities for the house and associated gardens. The location is both relatively accessible and central to the study area. Whilst there would need to be considerable discussion to develop ideas, there is certainly potential for the house to provide opportunities such as heritage related educational courses, to act as a 'food hub', and as a base for outdoor pursuits.

### **Heritage Coast definition.**

- 10.3 At present the area defined as the South Devon Heritage Coast (it is "defined" as there is no statutory designation process) extends along the South Hams coast southwards from Sharkham Point. This may have been a result of the presence of the holiday camps and other developments which impinged on the coastal strip when the area was defined in 1984.
- 10.4 The targets for Heritage Coasts are:
- The creation or retention of a strip of grassland or semi-natural vegetation along Heritage Coasts behind the beach or cliff edge, normally accommodating the coastal path or, where appropriate in the landscape, a field's width;
  - The removal or amelioration of eyesores identified in the Management Plan;
  - The protection and enhancement of landscape features identified in the Management Plan;
  - A continuous coast path along each Heritage Coast, and all rights of way in the Heritage Coast properly managed;
  - Litter clearance and collection to be related to the highest standards for amenity beaches, as set out in the Code of Practice issued by the Department of the Environment;
  - All intensively used beaches on Heritage Coasts to be designated as 'bathing beaches', complying with the European Community directive on bathing water quality.
- 10.5 All of these targets are also relevant to the coast between Sharkham Point and Berry Head which, as a designated Special Area for Conservation and Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, appear to meet the criteria for inclusion as Heritage Coast. Whilst the extension of the definition does not bring any additional funding, it would:

- help to raise the profile of this area;
- provide additional kudos and slightly raised planning status to this area;
- help with marketing of sustainable tourism initiatives;
- confirm the aims of the landscape protection and enhancement programmes which this report advocates.

### **A local land management scheme**

- 10.6 One of the principles which were discussed at the interviews and workshops was that those developments which increase pressures on the local landscape or wildlife habitats should also be responsible for providing mitigation works. These could be in the form of compensatory land, alternative access or facilities, or a financial contribution towards off-site landscape or habitat management. The study therefore proposes the establishment of a Brixham urban fringe landscape restoration fund. This could be jointly controlled by representatives of Brixham Town Council, Torbay Council and South Devon AONB unit. The level of contributions might be based on the principles set out in the Community Infrastructure Levy or other (as yet unknown) mechanisms that may arise from the Localism Bill. This proposed local scheme could use planning contributions to help fund small scale landscape infrastructure projects (such as hedgerow restoration and scrub clearance) and help to enable the reinstatement of grazing to areas which have been abandoned, where it might fund new fencing and water supplies to enable grazing to be reinstated and land to be brought back into management through agreements such as environmental stewardship.

### **Supporting the economy through education, access and green tourism**

- 10.7 The area has a range of valuable environmental assets which are located in close proximity to Brixham, a town with a rich cultural history. There is clearly considerable potential for the development of these assets as part of the strategy to regenerate the town and study area. Our recommendation is therefore that a joint committee is established to encourage and promote sustainable tourism initiatives making use of the environmental assets of the area. Brixham can be the gateway to the Kingswear peninsula and provide a range of facilities for active outdoor activities such as walkers, cyclists, sailors, canoers and divers. It can also provide accommodation, hire facilities, (e.g. cycles, binoculars, bat detectors, etc.) specialist courses (e.g. field studies) as well as more passive activities such as painting and heritage studies. The Geopark designation can help as part of the marketing, as might extension of the Heritage Coast definition to cover the missing section to Berry Head.
- 10.8 Facilities for visitors can also provide benefits for local people as well as other 'spin off' benefits such as local employment opportunities.
- 10.9 There is considerable potential offered by Lupton House. The house is well situated close to the centre of the study area to provide a hub for both sustainable tourism ventures and to provide a range of activities for local people. The trust is in the process of restoring the house and gardens for community uses. More details of the trust and house are available at the trust web site <http://www.discoverlupton.com/>.
- 10.10 Agriculture will continue to be the main use of land in the study area. However, there is potential for this to include community supported agriculture, possibly at Lupton if a suitable area and form of tenure could be identified. There is also

potential at Lupton for the development of the concept of a food hub which would provide opportunities for local growers to market their produce and learn new skills.

### Landscape restoration projects

10.11 A schedule of potential schemes (which might be assisted by developer contributions) has been developed on a landscape compartment basis and the list of schemes is included in Table 5 below. They have been separated into initial projects, which could be brought forward in the first two years, and longer term projects which might take up to five years or more to realise. The schemes also seek to embrace the relevant findings emerging from current work taking place on the preparation of the Torbay Green Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

**Table 5: Landscape restoration projects**

Area	Initial projects 0-2 years	Longer term projects 0-5 years
<b>Berry Head to Sharkham Point</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to engage local people with conservation related work.</li> <li>• Prepare scrub management plan for whole section of coast and associated open spaces liaising as appropriate with NE if designated.</li> <li>• Begin implementation of scrub management at Sharkham Point and Dolphins Field. Include within fencing and grazing programme to prevent scrub re-establishment.</li> <li>• Eradicate Japanese Knotweed at Sharkham car park and associated areas.</li> <li>• Upgrade and widen SW Coast Path corridor.</li> <li>• Upgrade surfacing and vehicular access to Sharkham, and improve sense of personal safety.</li> <li>• Trial circular minibus route during peak season.</li> <li>• Encourage landowners to improve hedge management.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cafe/toilets/interpretation centre for Sharkham Point/St. Mary's Bay.</li> <li>• Establishment of a series of circular walking and horse riding and mountain biking trails, including links to Coleton/Kingswear.</li> <li>• Marketing of 'Gateway to Kingswear' jointly with National Trust, Geopark, Brixham hotels, and English Riviera Tourist Board.</li> <li>• Improve access path to St. Mary's Bay from Sharkham and SW Coast Path.</li> <li>• Seek definition as extension of Heritage Coast.</li> <li>• Bring Dolphins Field under active management and grazing.</li> <li>• Negotiate improvements in horse pasture management and/or consider Article 4 directions.</li> <li>• Negotiate widening of coastal corridor with owners of holiday chalet and caravan developments.</li> </ul>
<b>South-down / Redwells</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore opportunities for management of historic field boundaries possibly with local volunteer groups.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify and instigate discussions with landowners regarding missing path links, and bringing land into HLS.</li> </ul>
<b>Guzzle Down</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instigate discussions with landowner regarding possible future cycle path links.</li> <li>• Negotiate hedgerow restoration plan as part of any HLS scheme.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore opportunities for flood storage in catchment above Higher Brixham.</li> </ul>
<b>Lupton</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instigate discussions with landowner regarding possible future cycle path links.</li> <li>• Instigate discussions with Community Trust regarding potential projects as part of Trust's funding bids.</li> <li>• Assist in identifying potential funding streams.</li> <li>• Bring orchard back under management as appropriate</li> <li>• Improve way-marking of paths.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop food hub concept and opportunities for heritage related courses /Field Studies centre.</li> <li>• Explore setting up allotments or community supported agriculture initiative.</li> <li>• Explore options for cycle hire hub linking to Park and Ride.</li> <li>• Explore opportunities for separate cycle route along Lupton Stream into Brixham.</li> <li>• Explore ways to bring land at Mathill</li> </ul>

		Road back into agriculture.
<b>Churston</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Negotiate upgrading of America Lane to cycle path and construction of links into Brixham by upgrading junction at Fishcombe Road, and Churston in association with Highway Authority.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Negotiate hedgerow restoration plan and small plantations to field boundaries as part of any HLS scheme.</li> <li>Negotiate restoration of orchard at Churston as part of any HLS scheme.</li> <li>Seek to involve tenant in food hub developments.</li> <li>Explore opportunities to downgrade lane east of village to cycle use only, linking to America Lane and Lupton.</li> </ul>
<b>The Grove</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhance footpaths within woods as part of any timber extraction works, and enhance links to Coastal Path.</li> <li>Enhance interpretation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Phased replanting with native broadleaves after removal of non native species.</li> </ul>
<b>Elberry and golf courses</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initiate plans to access Marridge Wood with small machines to improve surfacing.</li> <li>Negotiate hedgerow restoration plan as part of any HLS scheme.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek to minimise any damage to AONB if clubhouse development occurs and seek enhancements as part of mitigation/compensatory works.</li> </ul>

10.12 A number of these specific proposals are illustrated on the Overall Strategy map included earlier. An 'ecological potential' drawing follows the conclusions and shows locations where the creation of ecological corridors would be desirable.

## 11. CONCLUSIONS

- 11.1 This study has found that the AONB in the Brixham area remains an outstanding landscape, which is home to an exceptional range of flora, fauna and cultural heritage. There are outstanding coastal and inland walks, and beaches and cliffs located within a fine landscape located just a short walk from the town. The proximity to Brixham has been perceived as a threat to the landscape, with concerns that development or re-development can spoil the value of the AONB. This is undoubtedly possible and considerable co-ordinated efforts are now required to protect and enhance the designated landscape which has clearly suffered in recent years. There is particular concern over the narrow strip of land between Berry Head and Sharkham Point where the principle of drawing back any re-development of holiday accommodation should be followed. This is an area where particular efforts to achieve landscape enhancement and renewal are required.
- 11.2 In other areas, whilst there may be fewer current threats, the landscape has still suffered a process of incremental damage. It is therefore recommended that the projects, principles and enhancement measures listed in this report in Tables 4 and 5, are pursued. The process of landscape enhancement offers considerable potential for the development of a creative landscape synergy between the town and the surrounding countryside, building on the demand for outdoor activity, combining with the outstanding landscape, community, and recreational potential offered by Lupton House. We see the raised profile of the AONB designation and the direction provided by this report as a way for all of the interested parties such as Torbay Council as the planning authority, local town and parish councils, landowners and land users to work together to achieve these visions and aims for the area.

**DRAWINGS**

The drawings listed below are provided on the following pages:

*Drawing 1 - Environmental designations and constraints.*

*Drawing 2 - Land Use.*

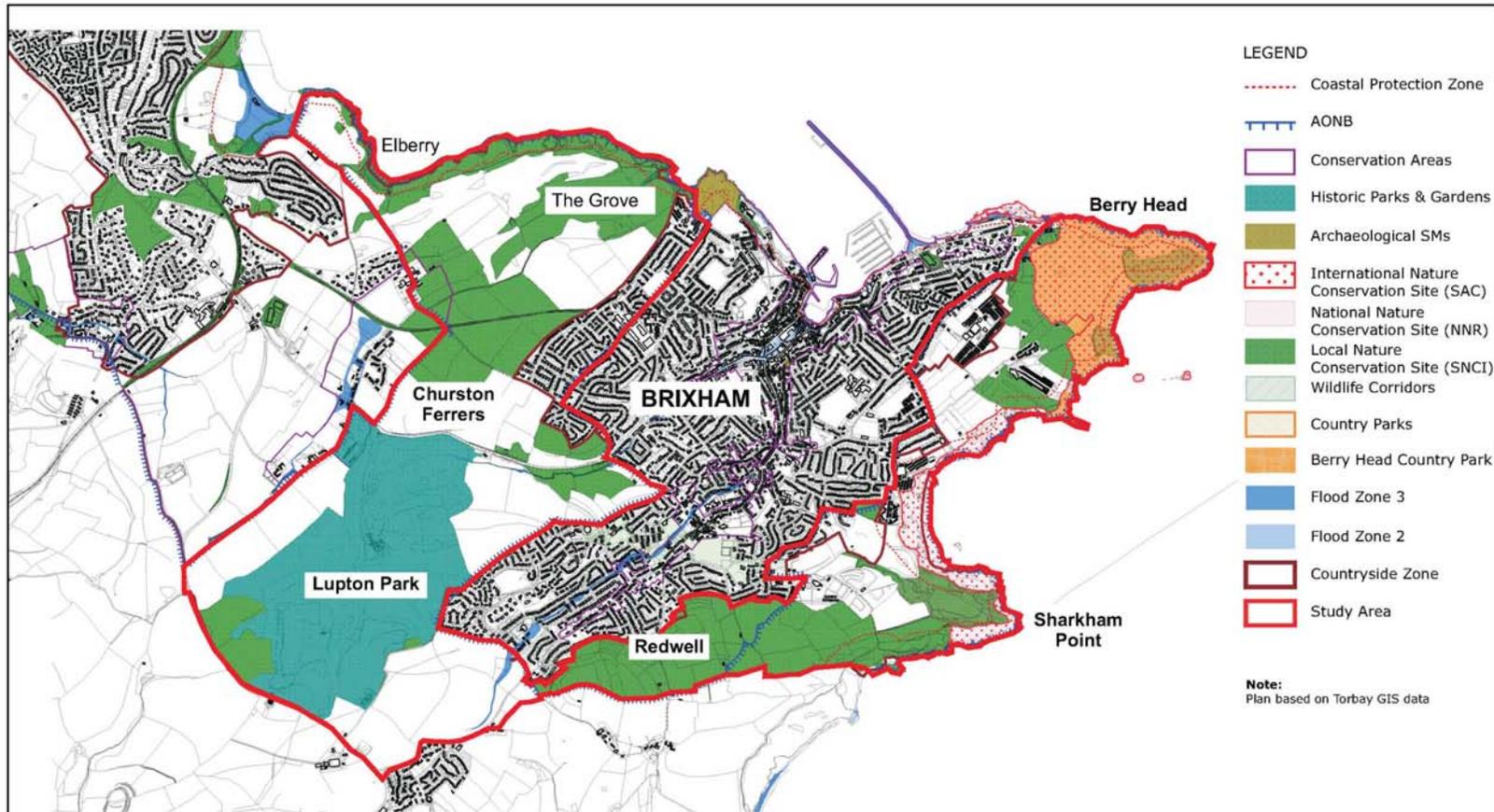
*Drawing 3 - Landscape analysis.*

*Drawing 4 - Landscape character types and areas of local character.*

*Drawing 5 - Principle recreation facilities.*

*Drawing 6 - Rights of Way network.*

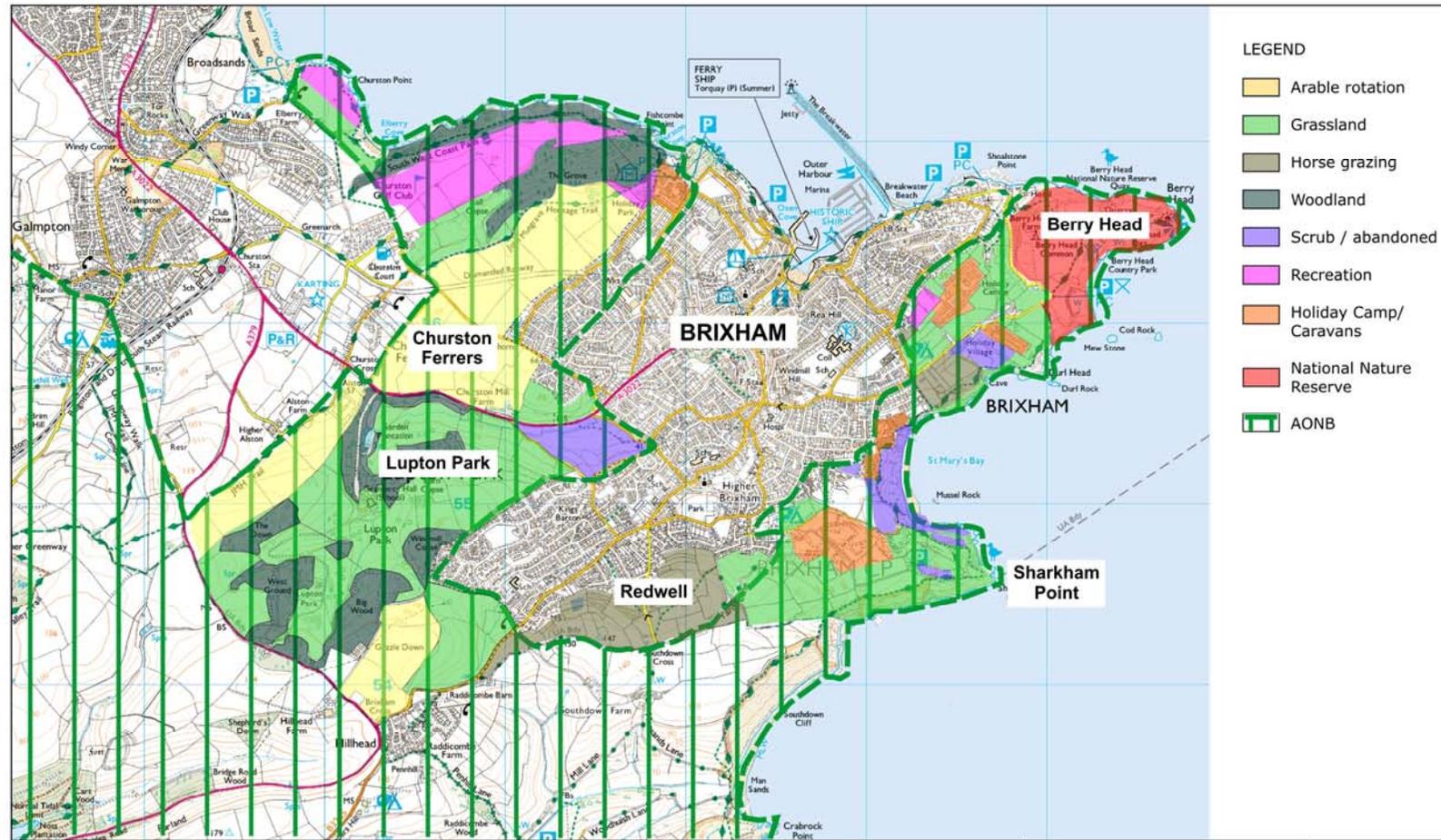
*Drawing 7 - Ecological potential.*



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Drawing 1: Environmental Designations and Constraints

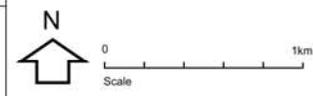


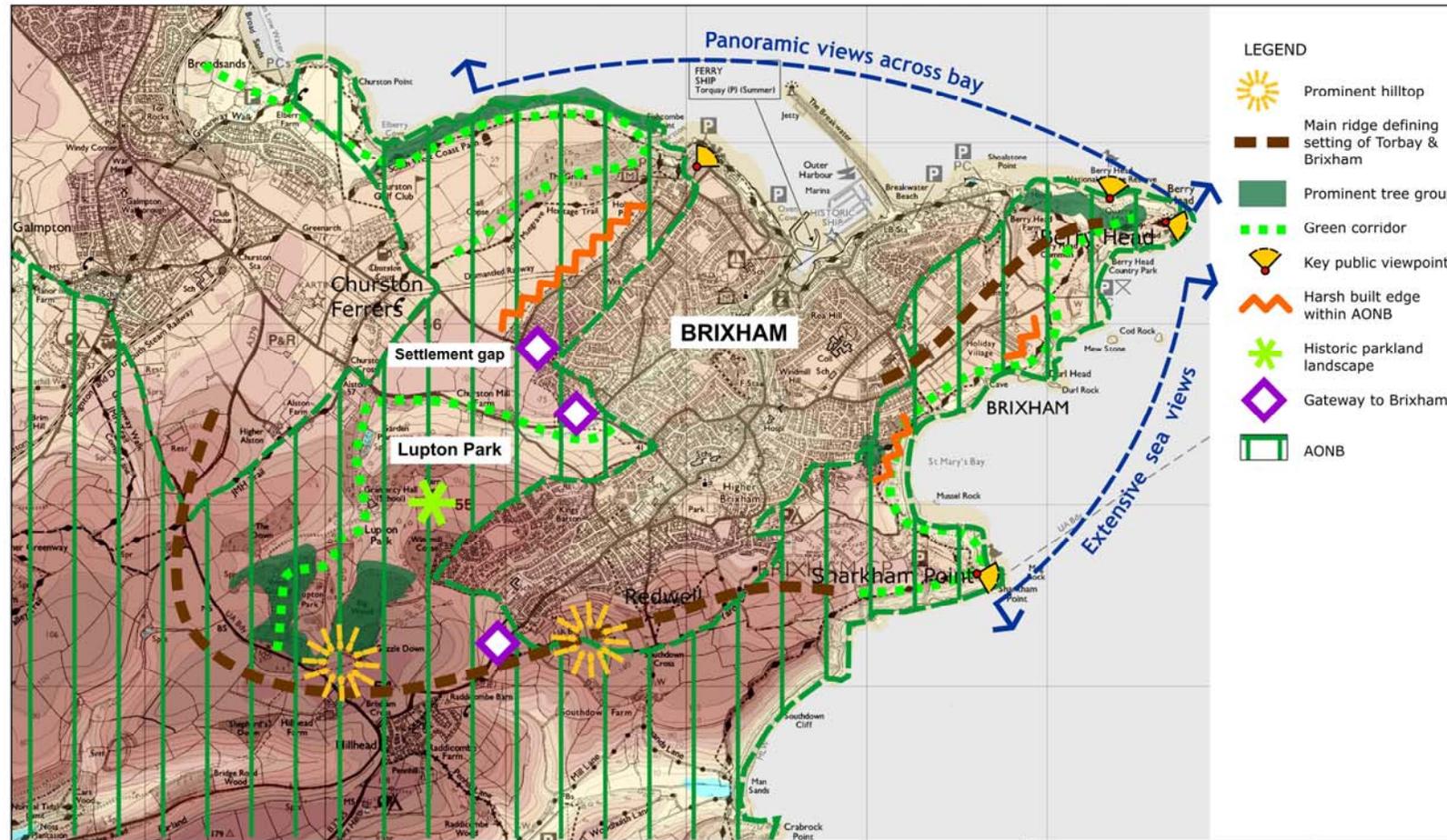


- LEGEND**
- Arable rotation
  - Grassland
  - Horse grazing
  - Woodland
  - Scrub / abandoned
  - Recreation
  - Holiday Camp/ Caravans
  - National Nature Reserve
  - AONB

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Drawing 2: Land Use

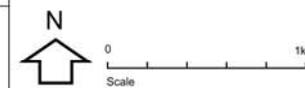


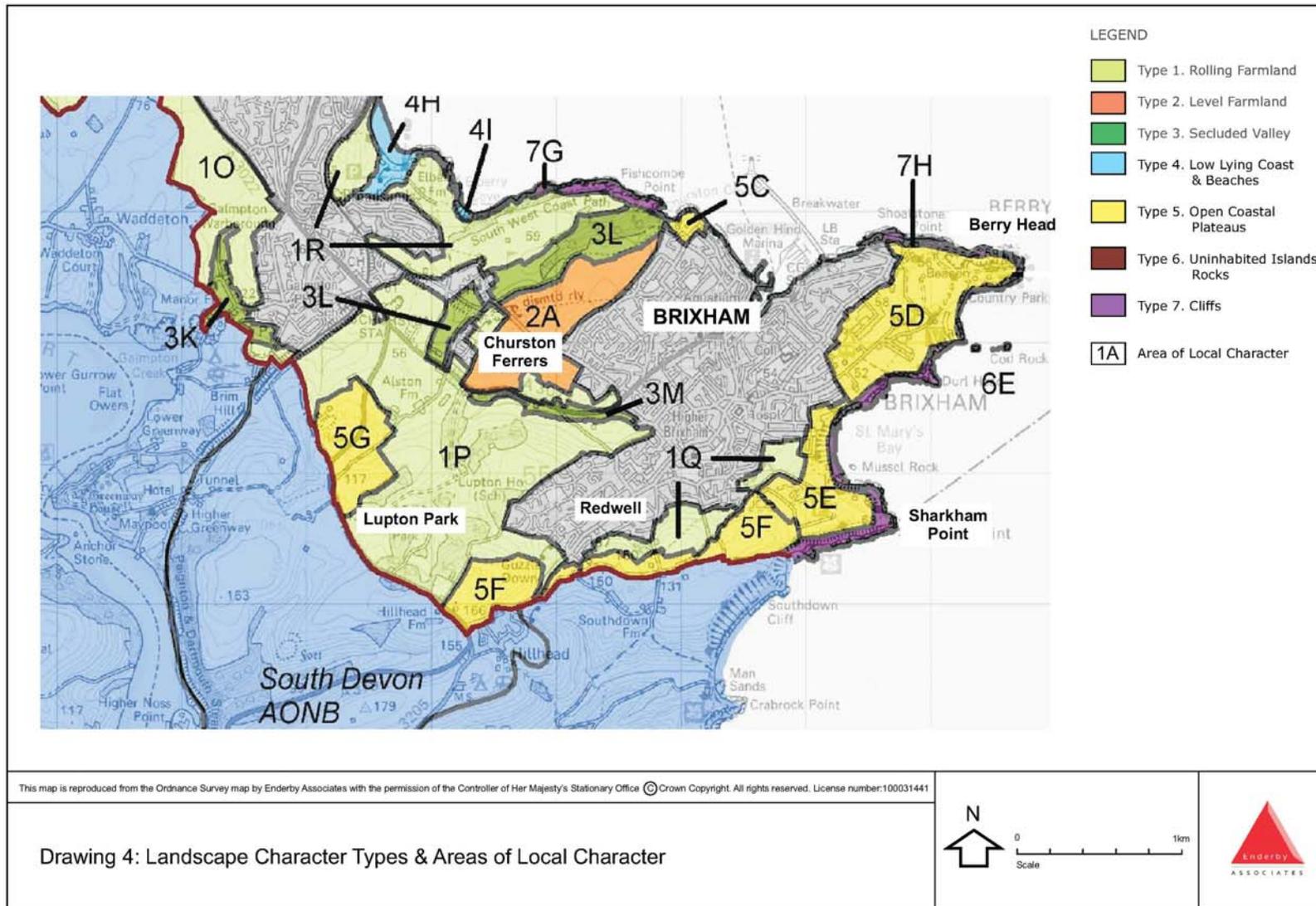


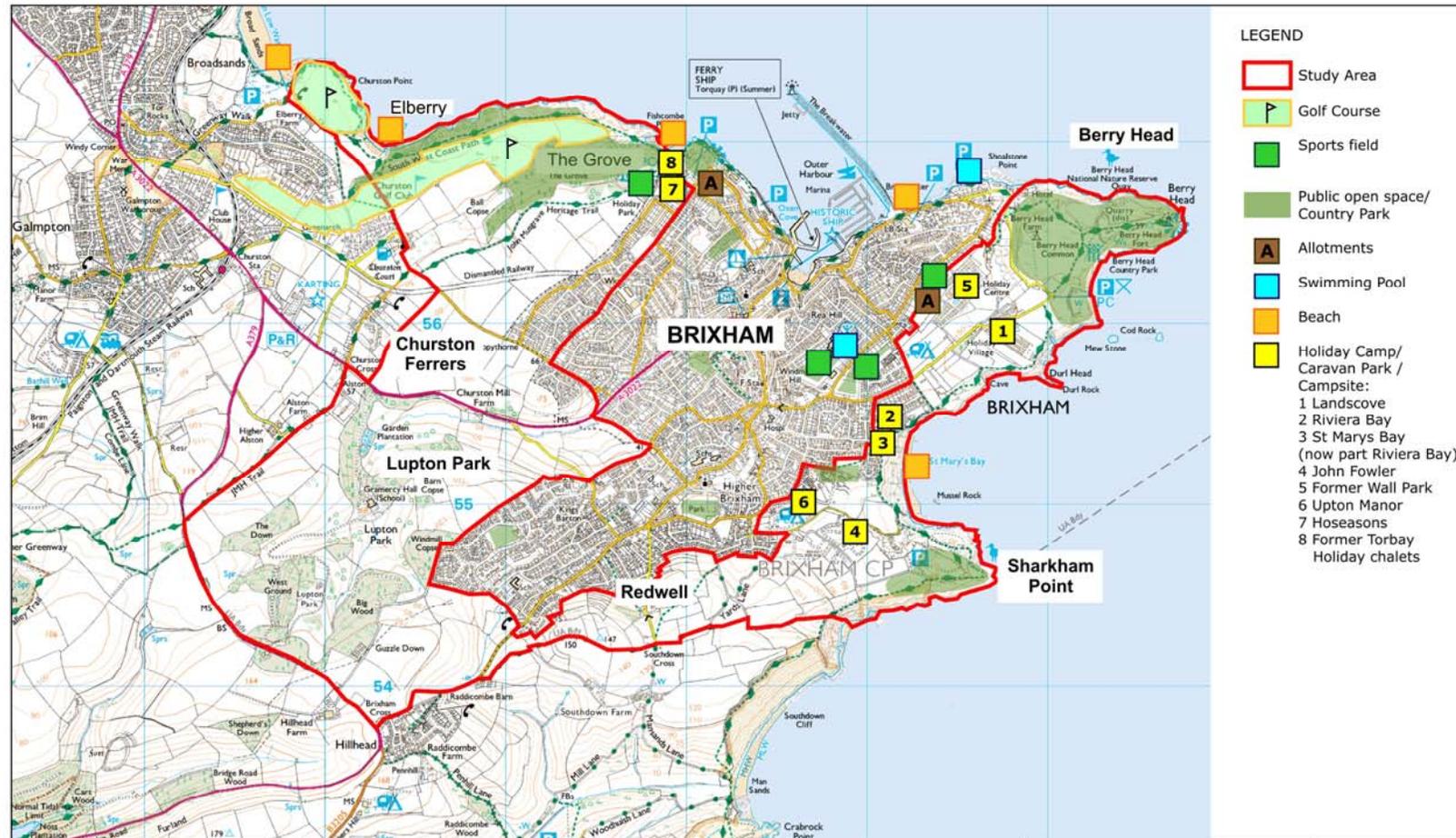
- LEGEND**
- Prominent hilltop
  - Main ridge defining setting of Torbay & Brixham
  - Prominent tree group
  - Green corridor
  - Key public viewpoint
  - Harsh built edge within AONB
  - Historic parkland landscape
  - Gateway to Brixham
  - AONB

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Drawing 3: Landscape Analysis

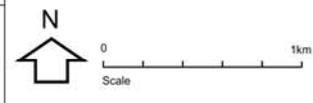


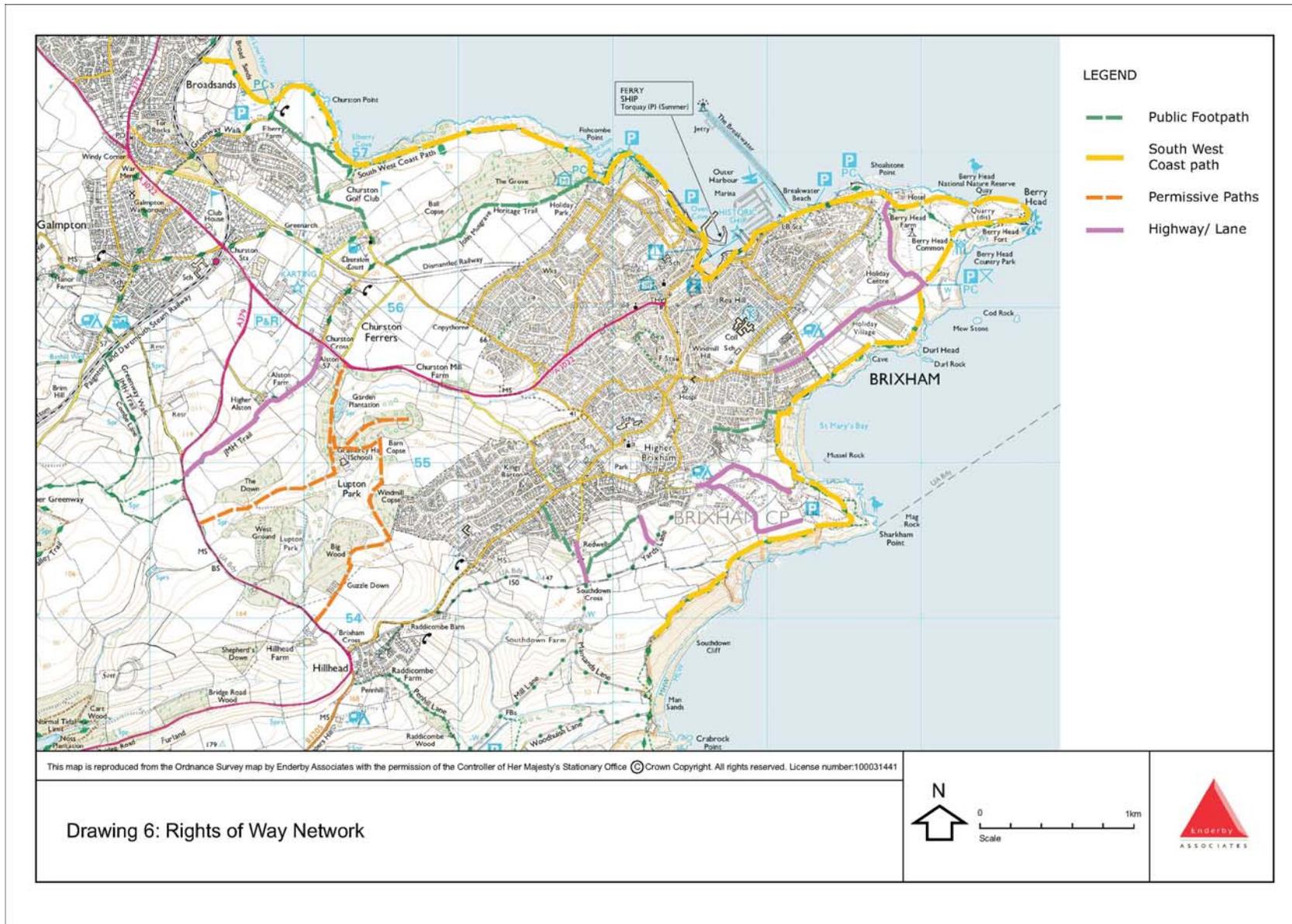




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Drawing 5: Principle recreation facilities (excluding public rights of way)







- LEGEND**
- Bat Flyway routes
  - SAC
  - Ancient Woodland
  - Woodland
  - Urban Open space
  - Land in benign management
  - Ecological corridor required
  - Land requiring appropriate management

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Drawing 7: Ecological potential

