CA38: Bude Basin

**Key Landscape Characteristics**

- Gently undulating basin with underlying shales and sandstones stretching inland from coast with incised valleys to the south.
- Straight coastline of low, unstable cliffs and long sandy beaches.
- Major tourism centre on the coast centred on Bude with commercialised beaches and caravan/campsites.
- Inland areas of improved grassland and pasture and arable occuring within a medium scale field pattern.
- Woodland generally restricted to small stream valleys with large mixed coniferous plantation to the south.
- Modern building associated with Bude and Stratton has a strong visual influence.
- Vernacular architecture of white painted cottages with thatch roofs.

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Landscape Sensitivity Assessment for Wind Turbines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Lower sensitivity</th>
<th>Higher sensitivity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Landform and scale</td>
<td>This LCA forms a large scale undulating basin - located between the Irish Sea on the west and rising gently to the surrounding areas of the Culm Plateau (CA37) providing a catchment for River Neet and its many small valleys and feeder streams. The coastline is distinctively straight with low cliffs interspersed with a number of sandy beaches.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Land cover pattern and presence of human scale features</td>
<td>This LCA is dominated by a pattern of medium scale fields (of medieval origins) with sinuous, often irregular boundaries. There are patches of some larger more modern rectilinear fields (east of Stibb, and near Whalesborough near the coast and around Newmill inland in the south). Landcover pattern varies although predominantly pastoral (including improved grassland and pasture on valley floors and some patches of arable land), in addition there are some areas of woodland on the valley bottoms becoming more extensive on the steeper and narrower valley sides to the south and north. Extensive reed beds are located along the coast in the lower Neet Valley. Human scale features include holiday campsites and caravan parks, occasional thatch cottages, Cornish hedges, groups of mature trees associated with scattered farmsteads and humped-backed bridges.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tracks/transport pattern</td>
<td>Contains existing roads and vehicular tracks including the A39, A3073 and A3072. There are some restrictions in terms of some ancient lanes and humpback bridges (associated with a dismantled railway route through the area).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Skylines</td>
<td>Although the LCA description does not refer specifically to skylines, it notes the church towers of the medieval villages including such as Marhamchurch, Launcells Barton and Stratton as distinctive features of the landscape. The adjacent LCA37 (Western Culm Plateau) has more prominent skylines than this LCA.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Perceptual qualities</td>
<td>This coastal lowland is relatively settled, particularly concentrated around Bude and Stratton. Developed areas and human influence are associated with areas along the busy route of the A39. However, the smaller valleys in the south of the LCA show fewer signs of human intervention and are more tranquil as a result.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Historic landscape character</td>
<td>Cornwall Council’s HLC Sensitivity Mapping for wind turbines assesses the HLC type of ‘Medieval Farmland’, which makes up a significant proportion of the LCA (predominantly in the north), as of ‘moderate-high’ vulnerability to wind turbines. Areas of ‘20th Century Farmland’ (Amalgamations of Anciently Enclosed Land) are assessed as of ‘low-moderate’ vulnerability. Areas of ‘Post-medieval Enclosed Land’ (Intakes) occurring in three main patches throughout the LCA, are assessed as of ‘moderate’ vulnerability. Small areas of ‘Coastal Rough Ground’ are assessed as of ‘high’ vulnerability and areas of ‘Plantations and Scrub’ located mostly along the many small stream valleys are assessed as of ‘low’ vulnerability to wind turbines.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Distinctive landscape features</td>
<td>The LCA describes the medium scale field pattern with hedgerows, woodland in valleys to the south, coastal heath in patches, the marshes in the River Neet and the church towers of the medieval villages as distinctive features of this landscape. Some of these could be affected by wind energy development.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Scenic quality</td>
<td>Part of the coastal edge in the north falls within the Hartland (Morwenstowe and Kilkhampton) part of the Cornwall AONB and part of the coastal edge in the south</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Criteria | Lower sensitivity | Higher sensitivity
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falls within the Pentire Point to Widemouth part of the Cornwall AONB (16% of the LCA is AONB). Part is also defined as Heritage Coast. Qualities of the Hartland (Morwenstowe and Kilkhampton) part of the AONB that may particularly be affected by wind energy development are the sense of grand scale, the skylines of Morwenstow Church and Hawker’s Hut as distinctive features, and the narrow lanes that weave up and down the steep valley sides. Qualities of the Pentire Point to Widemouth part of the Cornwall AONB that may particularly be affected by wind energy development are the ‘unspoilt’ nature of the cliffs, and the network of narrow lanes and hedges. The remainder of the coastal strip falls within the Bude Coast AGLV - special qualities include the open character of the coastal strip. A portion of the north-eastern edge falls within the Gooseham - Launcells AGLV - special qualities include the hedges and woodland within the valleys. A sizable portion of the south-east of the LCA falls within the Week St. Mary AGLV - special qualities include the sinuous hedges, ‘lumpy’ nature of the topography, and the native trees and woodlands in the valley bottom.

**Overall sensitivity assessment**

Although the large scale of the undulating catchment basin, relatively simple landcover pattern and strong human influence in parts could indicate lower levels of sensitivity to wind energy development, the presence of medium scale fields (of medieval origins), the relatively high scenic quality (particularly on the coast), presence of ancient lanes and landmark church towers increase levels of sensitivity. Overall this LCA is considered to have a moderate sensitivity to wind energy development outside the AONB and moderate-high within the AONB.

The undeveloped coastal edge and its immediate hinterland would be particularly sensitive.

**Sensitivities to different turbine heights**

- **Very small: 18-25m**
- **Small: 26-60m**
- **Medium: 61-99m**
- **Large: 100-150m**

The size of the undulations and size of the fields mean this landscape would be particularly sensitive to turbines within the ‘large’ category. The smaller scale landscapes of the feeder stream valleys in the east and south of the LCA would also be particularly sensitive to turbines within the ‘medium’ category. The undeveloped coastal edge would be sensitive to the development of any turbines.

**Sensitivities to different cluster sizes and distribution**

- **Single turbine**
- **Small (<5 turbines)**
- **Medium (6-10)**
- **Large (11-25)**
- **Very large (>25)**

The size of the undulations and size of the fields mean that this LCA would be particularly sensitive to ‘medium’, ‘large’ and ‘very large’ clusters of turbines. The small-scale wooded valleys of the upper Neet River (in the north of the LCA) and Millook Haven (in the south of the LCA) would also be sensitive to ‘small’ turbine clusters. The undeveloped coastal edge would be sensitive to the development of any turbines.

**Landscape strategy and Guidance for Wind Turbines**

**Landscape strategy**

The landscape strategy is for a landscape with occasional single turbines or small clusters of turbines located inland away from the coastal edge and comprising turbines that may be up ‘medium’ size (turbine and cluster size should relate to landscape scale which varies within the LCA), and no wind energy developments along the undeveloped coastal edge or its immediate hinterland.
Elsewhere in the AONB a **landscape without wind energy development** (except for occasional very small scale single turbines linked to existing buildings eg farm buildings). There may be more than one wind energy development in the LCA, but they should be clearly separated so that, although each wind energy development influences the perception of the landscape at close proximity, collectively they do not have a defining influence on the overall experience of the landscape.

### Siting Guidance

See Annex 2 of the Technical Report for generic siting and design guidance. In addition, the following guidance should apply to any wind energy developments within this LCA:

- Avoid locating wind energy developments along the undeveloped coastal edge.
- Consider locating wind turbines in association with existing businesses and industries on brownfield sites on the edge of the larger settlements.
- Avoid damage and alterations to the small-scale rural road network including the humpback bridges.
- Consider views from local viewpoints and popular routes (e.g. the South West Coastal Path and Compass Point) when considering the siting and design of wind energy development in the landscape – ensure development does not adversely affect experience of travelling this path or visiting this point, and if development will be visible aim for a balanced composition as viewed from these sensitive areas.
- Ensure wind energy development does not dominate, or prevent the understanding and appreciation of, historic landmarks on the skyline, including church towers of the medieval villages including such as Marhamchurch, Launcells Barton and Stratton.
- Avoid siting turbines within the HLC Type ‘Coastal Rough Ground’ - assessed by Cornwall Council as being highly vulnerable to wind energy development.
- Ensure wind energy development (including ancillary features) does not adversely affect the medium scale field pattern with hedgerows, woodland in valleys to the south, coastal heath, marshes in the River Neet, or church towers of the medieval villages as distinctive features of this landscape.
- Protect the factors which contribute to the scenic quality of the Hartland (Morwenstoew and Kilkhampton) part of the Cornwall AONB (particularly the sense of grand scale, the skylines of Morwenstow Church and Hawker’s Hut, and the narrow lanes that weave up and down the steep valley sides) – ensure choice of site and scale of development does not detract from these.
- Protect the factors which contribute to the scenic quality of the Pentire Point to Widemouth part of the Cornwall AONB (particularly the 'unspoilt' nature of the cliffs, and the network of narrow lanes and hedges) – ensure choice of site and scale of development does not detract from these.
- Protect the factors which contribute to the scenic quality of the Bude Coast AGLV (particularly the open character of the coastal strip) – ensure choice of site and scale of development does not detract from these.
- Protect the factors which contribute to the scenic quality of the Gooseham - Launcells AGLV (particularly the hedges and woodland within the valleys) – ensure choice of site and scale of development does not detract from these.
- Protect the factors which contribute to the scenic quality of the Week St. Mary AGLV (particularly the sinuous hedges, 'lumpy' nature of the topography, the native trees and woodlands in the valley bottom) – ensure choice of site and scale of development does not detract from these.
Criteria for Assessing Landscape Sensitivity to Solar PV Development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
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<th></th>
<th>Higher sensitivity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Landform</td>
<td>This LCA forms a large scale undulating basin with some hidden areas as well as some visible slopes – land rises gently to the surrounding areas of the Culm Plateau (CA37) providing a catchment for River Neet and its many small valleys and feeder streams. The coastline is distinctively straight with low cliffs interspersed with a number of sandy beaches.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sense of openness / enclosure</td>
<td>This landscape has contrasting levels of enclosure with the coast being mostly open and exposed to the Irish Sea, with sparse tree cover. Inland the undulating topography formed by the rivers and feeder streams of the catchment basin produce both open hill tops and sheltered valleys.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Field pattern and scale</td>
<td>This LCA is dominated by a medium scale field pattern (of medieval origins) with sinuous, often irregular boundaries. There are patches of some larger more modern rectilinear fields (east of Stibb, and near Whalesborough near the coast and north of Newmill inland).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Landcover</td>
<td>Predominantly agricultural land with a mixture of improved grassland/pasture (a significant amount of which is permanent pasture on valley floors) and arable land. There are also areas of woodland along the valleys and extensive reed beds along the low-lying coastal areas of the Neet valley. The coastal edge supports a narrow strip of heathland and scrub.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Perceptual qualities</td>
<td>This coastal lowland is relatively settled, particularly around Bude and Stratton. Developed areas and human influence are associated with the busy A39. The smaller valleys in the south of the LCA show less signs of human intervention and are more tranquil as a result.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Historic landscape character</td>
<td>Cornwall Council’s HLC Sensitivity Mapping for solar PV installations assesses the HLC type of ‘Medieval Farmland’, which makes up a significant proportion of the LCA (predominantly in the north), as of ‘moderate-high’ vulnerability to solar PV development. Areas of ‘20th Century Farmland’ (Amalgamations of AEL) are assessed as of ‘low-moderate’ vulnerability. Areas of ‘Post-medieval Enclosed Land’ (Intakes) occurring in three main patches throughout the LCA, are assessed as of ‘moderate’ vulnerability and small areas of ‘Coastal Rough Ground’ are assessed as of ‘high’ vulnerability to solar PV development. The study did not assess the vulnerability of the ‘Plantations and Scrub’ HLC Type to solar PV installations.</td>
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<td>Distinctive landscape features</td>
<td>The LCA describes the medium scale field pattern with hedgerows, woodland in valleys to the south, coastal heath in patches, the marshes in the River Neet and the church towers of the medieval villages as distinctive features of this landscape. Some of these could be affected by solar PV development.</td>
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<td>Scenic quality</td>
<td>Part of the coastal edge in the north falls within the Hartland (Morwenstowe and Kilkhampton) part of the Cornwall AONB and part of the coastal edge in the south falls within the Pentire Point to Widemouth part of the Cornwall AONB (16% of the LCA is AONB). Part is also defined as Heritage Coast. Qualities of the Hartland (Morwenstowe and Kilkhampton) part of the AONB that may particularly be affected by solar PV development are the coastal heathland,</td>
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### Criteria

<table>
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<tr>
<td>valleys clothed in broadleaved woodland, ‘culm’ grassland, and the irregular field pattern. Qualities of the Pentire Point to Widemouth part of the Cornwall AONB that may particularly be affected by solar PV development are the wooded valleys, coastal heath, green pastoral fields, and strong field pattern (including Medieval open strip fields). The remainder of the coastal strip falls within the Bude Coast AGLV - special qualities include the open character of the coastal strip. A portion of the north-eastern edge falls within the Gooseham - Launcells AGLV - special qualities include the hedges and woodland within the valleys. A sizable portion of the south-east of the LCA falls within the Week St. Mary AGLV - special qualities include the sinuous hedges, ‘lumpy’ nature of the topography, and the native trees and woodlands in the valley bottom.</td>
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### Overall sensitivity assessment

Although the LCA includes some low-lying areas, some arable cropping and considerable human influence which could indicate a lower sensitivity to solar PV development, the open character (particularly of the upper slopes and coastal edge), the predominantly pastoral character, medieval field patterns and relatively high scenic quality (particularly along the coast) increase levels of sensitivity. Overall this landscape is considered to have a moderate sensitivity to solar PV outside the AONB and moderate-high within the AONB.

The open and undeveloped coastline and its immediate hinterland would be would be particularly sensitive to solar PV development.

### Sensitivities to different sizes of solar PV development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size</th>
<th>Sensitivity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very small: &lt; 1 ha</td>
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<tr>
<td>Small: &gt;1 to 5 ha</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium: &gt;5 to 10 ha</td>
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<tr>
<td>Large: &gt;10 to 15 ha</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The size of the undulations (including small scale stream valleys) and predominantly medium scale, irregular medieval field patterns mean that this LCA would be particularly sensitive to solar PV developments within the ‘large’ size range.

The open and undeveloped coastline would be sensitive to the development of any scale of solar PV development.

### Landscape strategy and Guidance for Solar PV Development

#### Landscape strategy

The landscape strategy is for a landscape with occasional solar PV developments (up to and including medium size) on lower slopes and folds in the landscape, with no solar PV development along the open and undeveloped coastal edge/slopes or its immediate hinterland. Elsewhere within the AONB a landscape without solar PV development (except for very occasional very small scale well sited developments. There may be several solar PV developments in the LCA, but these should be clearly separated so that, although each PV development influences the perception of the landscape at close proximity, collectively they do not have a defining influence on the overall experience of the landscape.

#### Siting Guidance

See Annex 3 of the Technical Report for generic siting and design guidance. In addition, the following guidance should apply to any solar PV developments within this LCA:

- Avoid locating development on the undeveloped open coastal edge or on coastal slopes, where PV panels would be particularly visible.
- Locate PV development in sheltered folds in the landscape where it will be less visible and have less of an influence on landscape character.
- Use existing landscape features, such as woodlands, tree belts and high Cornish

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CA38: Bude Basin
hedges to screen development and ensure that any additional screening provided is in character with the landscape.

- Avoid locating solar PV development on valley floors which tend to be open and have significant areas of permanent pasture or marshes.
- Avoid siting solar PV development within the HLC Zone of ‘Rough Ground’, assessed by Cornwall Council as being particularly vulnerable to solar PV development.
- Consider views from local viewpoints and popular routes (e.g. the South West Coastal Path or Compass Point) when considering the siting and design of solar PV development in the landscape - avoid locating solar PV development where it would be directly overlooked at close quarters.
- Ensure solar PV development does not adversely affect the strong field pattern, woodland in valleys to the south, coastal heath, or marshes in the River Neet as distinctive features of this landscape.
- Protect the factors which contribute to the scenic quality of the Hartland (Morwenstow and Kilkhampton) part of the Cornwall AONB (particularly the coastal heathland, valleys clothed in broadleaved woodland, 'culm' grassland, and the irregular field pattern) – ensure choice of site and scale of development does not detract from these.
- Protect the factors which contribute to the scenic quality of the Pentire Point to Widemouth part of the Cornwall AONB (particularly the wooded valleys, coastal heath, green pastoral fields, and strong field pattern (including Medieval open strip fields) – ensure choice of site and scale of development does not detract from these.
- Protect the factors which contribute to the scenic quality of the Bude Coast AGLV (particularly the open character of the coastal strip) – ensure choice of site and scale of development does not detract from these.
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- Protect the factors which contribute to the scenic quality of the Week St. Mary AGLV (particularly the sinuous hedges, ‘lumpy’ nature of the topography, the native trees and woodlands in the valley bottom) – ensure choice of site and scale of development does not detract from these.