North Inishowen Farmland and Coast LCA is a diverse and varied landscape area that extends west from the northeast Atlantic coast of Inishowen towards the sheltered estuary of Trawbreaga Bay. The area stands alone within the Inishowen peninsula in part due to the expanse of fertile agricultural land containing a variety of farm types and features, historic stone bound field patterns along the coast, surviving clachans, and easily accessible and diverse coastline. There is a long history of settlement and particularly monastic settlement within this LCA and there are many important features and structures that remain in the landscape including the iconic Cloncha Church and St. Buadan’s Cross.

**Landscape Character types**
Seascape Character Units

Map/list Seascape units

Seascape units 2, Kinnagoe Bay, and 3 Inishowen Sea Cliff Coast overlap along the coast of this LCA

Key characteristics uses: The edge of this LCA is characterised by a hard, rocky exposed coastline open to the sea with high mountainous bog punctuated by agricultural river valleys flowing to the sea with mainly agricultural, maritime and tourism related uses.

Coastal edge: High and low vegetated sea cliffs, extensive low rocky outcrops interspersed with stone, shingle and sand beaches.

Visibility: Varying degrees of visibility to the open sea are mainly obtained from river valley areas.

Special features significant buildings, landmarks, biodiversity and cultural features: Culdaff (Blue Flag) beach, old clachan settlement and farming practices remain in the landscape.

Land Form and Land Cover

- Underlying and varied tapestry of geology comprising of schist, quartzite, limestone and shale bedrock informing a generally undulating and rolling landscape.
- This Landscape Character area is predominantly agricultural with isolated upland bog, peat areas and pockets of coniferous plantations. The west of this LCA contains the large sheltered intertidal area of Trawbreaga Bay whilst the north-eastern Atlantic coast has a mostly rocky coast and a large dune system and beach at Culdaff.
- A number of rivers and streams traverse this area, including Culdaff River that flows out to the ocean at Culdaff.
- Carrowmenagh and Ballymagaraghy are archetypal clachans located within the east of this LCA, quite near to the coast and within an area characterized by stone bound fields.

Settlements

- There are 5 discernible settlements within this LCA including Carndonagh, the principle market town serving the wider north Inishowen area, Culdaff, a coastal village functioning as a holiday focus on the north eastern coast, Gleneely, a small rural village and the clachans of Carrowmenagh and Ballymagaraghy.
History, Culture and Heritage

- Rich archaeological heritage throughout this LCA that has a number of Recorded Monuments.
- Important vernacular and imposed built heritage including 10 RPS structures and 133 on the NIAH.
- Ballymagaraghy and Carrowmenagh are important exemplars of traditional clachans within a historic ‘rundale’ rural landscape.
- Substantial legacy of megalithic, pre-Christian and early Christian settlement within this LCA as evidenced by the many surviving archaeological structures including the Carndonagh crosses, remains of Bocan Stone circle and the Temple of Deen among others.
- Upland is primarily blanket bog, hand cut for centuries for fuel, as well as potential upland summer grazing (Booleying). Good farmland has been improved in the valley slopes and includes a patchwork of straight-sided rectilinear fields reminiscent of richer lands to the south. This was a productive area of strategic value given Inishowen’s distinct political history.

Access and Recreation

- A network of County and Regional roads is laced throughout this area affording excellent accessibility and penetration into the LCA.
- Fishing boats and leisure craft use the pier at Bunagee, outside Culdaff.
- The Wild Atlantic Way cuts through this LCA

Biodiversity

- Ecologically important landscape containing 281.7ha of Natura 2000 (SAC and SPA) and 268.6 pNHA as well as the important biodiversity links of the riverine corridors.
- Trawbreaga bay is a large sheltered estuary and is designated as an SPA.
- Culdaff beach is within an SAC, pNHA and a SPA buffer and is designated as a ‘Blue Flag’ beach.
- Patchwork of small to medium sized agricultural fields generally bounded by deciduous hedgerow and trees, save areas along the coast.

Forces for change

- Tourism related holiday home developments in both the rural landscape and within Culdaff.
- Proposed improvement works at Bunagee pier.
- Potential for further development of Sailing and water based tourism activities at Culdaff.
- Renewable energy development.
- Afforestation on higher ground.
- Telecommunications and infrastructural development
- Coastal erosion
- Further suburban developments within the hinterland of Carndonagh.
- Protection of aquifer at Carndonagh.