

Area of LDU within AONB: 699.4 hectares

% of LDU within AONB: 11%



Date surveyed: 1 March 2010

Survey points: SS606443, SS581449, SS576447, SS579442, SS569458, SS575444

Summary of landscape character

An undulating ridgeline landscape defined by a long southern ridge bounded by the A3213 (also the AONB boundary) and a central ridge extending north between the combes of Berrynarbor and Combe Martin (ridges run predominantly east to west, but also north to south). Medium to large fields of rough sheep-grazed pasture predominate, bounded by hedgebanks with outgrown or heavily flailed hedges, with some arable fields further south and pockets of 'horsiculture' above Bodstone Barton. Settlement is limited to scattered farmsteads in the folds of the landform and the small hamlet of Henstridge, with local vernacular typified by slate roofs and walls of either exposed local stone or cream render. There are strong views to the sea and the coastline in the north where landform allows, with high levels of tranquillity away from the main road. This area represents only the northern tip of a much larger inland LDU. In the east, it forms the fringes of Exmoor National Park

LANDSCAPE DESCRIPTION

LANDFORM / TOPOGRAPHY

Landform description	An undulating ridgeline landform, with some small mounds of higher land e.g. Stoneditch Hill.
-----------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

LAND USE AND PATTERNS

Agriculture	<i>Main agricultural land use</i>		<i>Other agricultural land use(s)</i>	
		Rough pasture	Arable, plus localised horse-keeping	
Field patterns and boundaries	<i>Field patterns and origins</i>		<i>Size (note variations)</i>	<i>Boundary type / description</i>
	Regular fields predominate. The central ridge is characterised mainly by modern enclosure, with areas of medieval enclosure based		Varies, mainly medium to large with localised smaller fields.	Devon hedgebanks with hedgerows either grown out into tree lines (possibly acting as shelterbelts)

	on earlier strip fields around Henstridge. Along the A3123 a mix of patterns occurs representing modern enclosure, medieval and post-medieval enclosure, and 'Barton Field' enclosures.		or intensively flailed; some post-and-wire fencing supplementing hedgebanks, and some topped with gorse and wind-blown trees towards the coast.
Other land uses (e.g. recreation)	N/A		
WOODLAND AND SEMI-NATURAL HABITATS			
Trees / woodland cover	<i>Size and distribution within landscape</i>	<i>Type and species(broadleaved / conifer)</i>	
	Limited to outgrown hedgerows that occasionally create tree-lines, and some small lines of woodland associated with folds in the landscape (including an extension of ancient woodland in the south)	Deciduous woodland, with beech hedges. A small area of ancient semi-natural woodland crosses into the LDU from the adjacent combes.	
Semi-natural habitats	<i>Description and location within landscape</i>		
	Gorse scrub on higher summits and scrub occasionally on field edges. Higher Hodges County Wildlife Site covers an area of scrub and unimproved grassland habitat on the central ridge, while the edge of Bodstone Barton CWS also covers a small area of grassland/scrub further south. Both sites form extensions of semi-natural woodland habitat in the surrounding combes (LDU 580), whilst a small line of ancient woodland forms part of Henstridge and Indicknowle Woods CWS and stretches into the LDU to the south.		
SETTLEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT			
Settlement pattern	<i>Settlement size, type, density and relationship to landscape</i>		
	Sparsely settled, with a few isolated farmsteads within the folds of the landform and one small hamlet at Henstridge.		
Transport pattern (including Public Rights of Way)	<i>Road pattern, character and relationship to settlement / landscape</i>		
	The A3213 forms the southern LDU (and AONB) boundary, whilst a few winding radial lanes run north to the combes and the coast, often tightly enclosed by hedgebanks.		
Local vernacular styles and materials	<i>Predominant traditional building materials</i>	<i>Any local variations</i>	<i>Other built features reflecting vernacular</i>
	Cream render walls with slate roofs	Exposed local stone (slate) with slate tile roofs at Henstridge	Exposed stone walls at Henstridge
Modern development	Large modern farm sheds, plus occasional modern houses with ornamental walls of varying materials (though tending to match cream		

styles / materials	render vernacular)		
HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT			
Key historic features visible in the landscape	<i>Description</i>		
	A hilltop enclosure is situated by the A3213 in the very south-west of the LDU, north-east of Outer Narracott Farm, alongside several bowl barrows (tumuli). These are nationally designated as Scheduled Monuments.		
VIEWS / PERCEPTUAL QUALITIES			
Views	<i>Key views / landmark features</i>	<i>Intervisibility with LDUs</i>	
		<i>From this LDU</i>	<i>To this LDU</i>
	Seaward views are afforded from the ridgetops, with Little Hangman and Holstone Down prominent features to the north-east. Views are restricted in the south from the A3213 by hedgebanks.	580 (surrounding combe) 852 (ridge in west) 583 (coast) 575 (Great Hangman) 349 (Holdstone Down)	580 852 583 575 349
Perceptual qualities (description)	A predominantly tranquil landscape (away from the A3213), with a sense of elevation reinforced by long views to adjacent ridgelines.		

LANDSCAPE DESIGNATIONS

Designation	Number	% of LDU land area that is within the AONB
NATURE CONSERVATION		
County Wildlife Sites	7	1.93%
HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT		
Scheduled Monuments	5	0.87%
Listed Buildings	2 (grade II)	

UK BAP PRIORITY HABITATS

UK BAP Priority Habitat	Area (ha)	% of LDU land area that is within the AONB
Traditional Orchards	0.4	0.06%
Upland oakwoods	2.18	0.31%

KEY FACTORS INFLUENCING LANDSCAPE CONDITION

Perceptual qualities	Tranquillity is affected along the southern boundary by the A3213, where there is evidence of recent road-widening.
Views	Masts are prominent on the adjacent ridgeline (LDU 582) in views to the west. Telegraph wires run across the northern section.
Land use	Pony paddocks are a localised feature around some settlements, whilst arable fields occur towards the south (notably within the 'Barton Fields' south of Henstridge).
Field patterns	Field enlargement has occurred along the central ridge, evidenced by occasional remnant hedgebanks within fields.
Field boundaries	Hedges are intensively flailed in places throughout the LDU, and are occasionally gappy (especially further north).
Trees and woodland	There is limited woodland cover across the LDU, though the small area to the south is covered by County Wildlife Site designation, suggesting favourable management in this location.
Semi-natural habitats	The areas of grassland and scrub covered by County Wildlife Site designation form part of a wider network that extends into the adjacent combe, though smaller grassland/scrub habitats within the LDU tend to be patchy and fragmented.
Settlement and development	Road enhancement along the A3213 has eroded the traditional character.
Local vernacular	Large modern farm sheds are a feature of most farmsteads, often constructed of corrugated iron.