

Character Area Summary 5: Doverow Zone

An open area within the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, with steep hills, a wooded plateau and some agricultural land. Easily accessed from Stonehouse by a network of footpaths including the Cotswold Way. Exceptional views.

Used for agriculture, walking, recreation.

(a) Character Summary

Doverow Hill is an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty which rises to 469ft on the edge of the town boundary and is a strongly undulating hill with some steep valleys and a relatively flat 6 acre wooded plateau on top with some steep sided dips from when the hill was used for quarrying and for making bricks. It is popular with locals for walking, dog walking, photography, tobogganing when it snows and for socialising.



(b) Land uses

Doverow Hill is a mixture of arable farmland, grazing land, vineyards and orchards. It is popular for walking including long distance walkers on the Cotswold Way, dog walking, photography (including commercial photography) and playing games, including tobogganing when it snows and using rope swings on some of the larger trees. Doverow Wood is a popular meeting place for young people who hold parties there in summer. People sometimes camp on the hill.

(c) Settlement Pattern

There are some isolated farm buildings, including farmhouses and barns on the approach to Doverow Hill and some stables for horses near the railway line. There is also a farmhouse and farm buildings beyond Doverow Hill near Far Westrip.

(d) Landscape Description

Doverow Hill is a beautiful sight from almost anywhere in Stonehouse, is easily accessible by numerous footpaths, it consists of woodland, lowland meadow and grassland which undulates with some steep sides.

(e) Roads, streets, routes

There is one narrow road and bridge over the railway line which provides access to Doverow Hill. There are several tracks and a number of footpaths, public and otherwise, including the Cotswold Way which criss-cross the hill. Most of the route ways are winding and quite narrow.



(f) Buildings, landmarks and Details

There are some isolated farm buildings, including farmhouses and barns on the approach to Doverow Hill and some stables for horses near the railway line. There is also a farmhouse and farm buildings beyond Doverow Hill near Far Westrip.

There are some power wires criss crossing the hill.

(i) Significant and Landmark buildings:

Grade II Listed buildings:

Railway Boundary Marker

(ii) Significant buildings and structures, not listed:

(iii) Predominant building types:

Farms

(iv) Predominant Materials:

Stone and brick

(v) Details:

(g) Key views

There are sweeping views across to Selsley Common, Cam Long Down and the Cotswold escarpment, the River Severn and the Severn Bridge, the Forest of Dean, the Malvern Hills and the valleys of Stroud.



Buildings: Selsley Church, Ebley Mill, Dairycrest,

Natural features: River Severn, May Hill, Malvern Hills, Standish Woods and Haresfield Beacon, River Severn

Structures: Severn Bridges, M5 motorway.

(h) Open spaces

The landscape is large, open and in places is exposed.

Doverow Hill Key Wildlife Site covering an area of meadow and grassland, including Verney Fields, and woodland.

i) Green and natural features

Doverow Hill is a mixture of arable farmland, grazing land, vineyards and orchards, it also consists of woodland, lowland meadow and grassland.



j) Conclusions

Positive features and special qualities:



The views of Doverow Hill are especially loved by residents of Stonehouse, the historic nature of the landscape which was quarried to make the Stonehouse brick which some local buildings consist of to this day. There are sweeping views across to Selsley Common and the Cotswold escarpment, the River Severn and the Severn Bridge, the Forest of Dean, the Malvern Hills and the valleys of Stroud.

Doverow Hill is a fantastic vantage point which creates a feeling of being on top of the world. The views are breathtaking and highly scenic, they regularly appear in local pictorial calendars. The overall feeling is of space and tranquility. Normal rural smells and sounds associated with arable and dairy farming.

A strong sense of the countryside right on the edge of the town with far reaching views of the surrounding Cotswold AONB and Cotswold escarpment. Intimate mix of the small settlements in a rural farmland setting.



Negative features:

Noise from traffic on the main road and the dominance of the white Dairycrest building on the otherwise scenic landscape. Also littering from recreational use of Doverow Wood.

Aspirations for area:

Conservation:

Protect and enhance:

Natural and historic environment

Views

Footpaths

Opportunities: Enhancement, Additions

Opportunities for local Woodland management group with volunteers.

More seating for walkers.

Upgrading of styles.