

Dunster



Natural Factors - The village of Dunster nestles at the northern end of the Avill valley, within a dramatic natural landscape of farmed floodplain, steeply wooded slopes and prominent small hills. Set within Landscape Character Type (E) Farmed and Settled Vale, sandwiched between (H) Plantation (with Heathland) Hills immediately to north and south of the settlement.

Cultural Factors - Mediaeval settlement with striking castle, tower, park and gardens, historic buildings, street pattern, burgage plots and orchards.

Aesthetic Factors – Compact mediaeval core with Georgian influences, largely inward looking. Relatively little modern development, comprising bungalows near Gallox Bridge and occasional Arts and Crafts/Victorian villas. A dramatic surrounding landscape of hills and mounds, providing interplay of composed views. Red sandstone, high walls, cobbled pavements, gardens and specimen trees play an important part in defining character.

Landscape Sensitivity - MODERATE

The striking landform and strong character of settlement provide good structure for integration of new elements.

Visual Character Sensitivity - MODERATE

Dunster is mainly seen from footpaths and access land to the east and west and from the A396 to the south. This southern approach is important, as the historic village is seen in its dramatic landscape setting. To the north the highway infrastructure detracts from historic character. Dunster is very well visited by tourists. From within the settlement the wooded slopes and tower of Conygar to the north and the castle to the south provide a backdrop.

Landscape/Settlement Value - HIGH

The character of Dunster contributes very significantly to the character and cultural heritage of Exmoor National Park. It is very well visited and photographed. It is a Conservation Area with numerous Listed Buildings and historic features.



The areas of landscape sensitivity shown on this map are intended to inform the capacity of the settlement to accommodate new development in landscape terms - these areas do not indicate that development is necessarily suitable or unsuitable as other material considerations will need to be evaluated in relation to any development proposals that may come forward - including risk of flooding, impacts on heritage assets and protected species, access and other highway considerations.

Land with low sensitivity to development.

Land with moderate sensitivity to development.

Land with high sensitivity to development.

Plantations with Heathland Hills

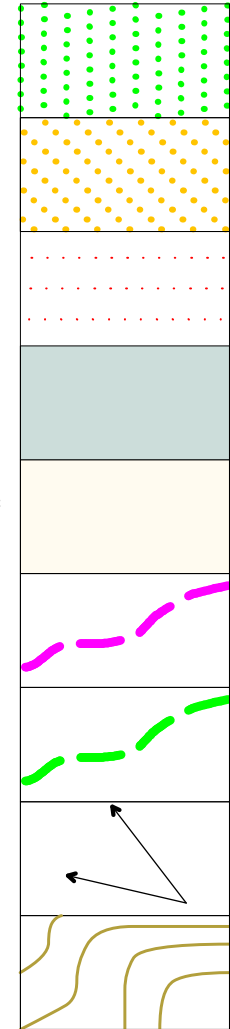
Farmed and Settled Vale

Major vehicular access routes

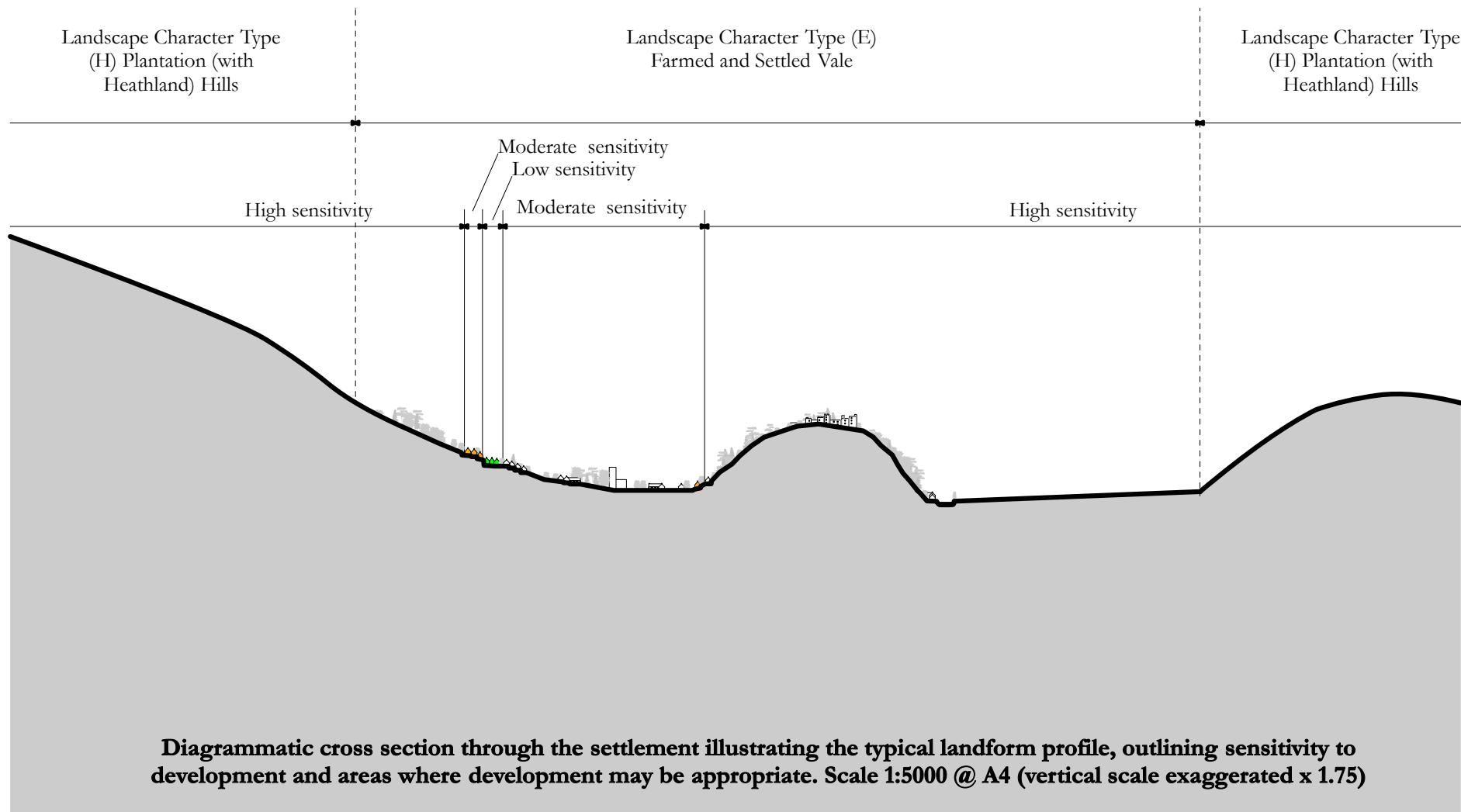
Exmoor National Park Boundary

Significant view points

Contours



Dunster Plan.
Scale 1:5000 @A4



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Land with Low Sensitivity to Development.

There are number of small parcels of land within Dunster that have a low sensitivity to development. Although much of Dunster is on a slope and visually exposed, there is capacity within areas that are bordered by existing development and which are well hidden from the wider landscape and from significant pedestrian and vehicular routes within the settlement. Appropriate development would be in the form of small-scale terraces and courtyard.

Land with Moderate Sensitivity to Development.

Land with moderate sensitivity to development exists within the existing settlement at Dunster. These areas are in visually prominent locations and would require sensitive treatment.

Appropriate development would be small-scale terraced units, with a slightly lower density to the appropriate developmnet for areas of Low Sensitivity outlined above. Tree/shrub planting would be required to break up the building mass, and consideration would need to be given to the building character, the roof materials and its overall silhouette. Planting should reference orchards, cottage gardens. Building design to be of the highest quality referencing Dunster High Street and the Castle, however the results should produce buildings that go unnoticed.

Land with High Sensitivity to Development.

The setting of Dunster and the conservation of its character as a compact historic settlement is considered significant. Land surrounding the existing settlement is considered to have high sensitivity to development.

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Examples of the characteristics that reinforce character and local identity and provide models that could be referenced in future development.



(above and below) Buildings abutting the highway with no visible curtilage. Elevations that work with changing ground-levels and relate to a small scale.



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Examples of the characteristics that weaken character.



(Left and right) Weak boundaries, orientated at an angle to the highway, open curtilage, elevated ground floor level and suburban planting.

Dunster

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Landscape Character Sensitivity (based on LCA & verified in the field)

| | | | | |
|---|--|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|---|
| Natural Factors | Rivers | Cliff | Coast | Landscape Character Types. Set within (E) Farmed and Settled Vale, sandwiched between (H) Plantation (with Heathland) Hills immediately to north and south of the settlement. |
| | Slopes | Scrub | Stream | |
| | Moorland | Woodland | Pond/wetland | |
| | Unimproved grassland | Hedges | Bracken | |
| Landform | Plateau | River Valley | Harbour | Dramatic landform + castle |
| | Rolling | Combe | Other | |
| Cultural Factors | Parkland | Gardens | Veteran trees | Farmed parkland Burgage plots. |
| | Prominent Archaeology | Designed landscapes | Farmland | |
| | Orchards | Specimen trees | Distinct enclosure patterns | |
| Settlement type | Hamlet | Village | Local rural centre | Small. |
| Quality / Condition | Low | Moderate | High | |
| Aesthetic factors (Pattern, shape, scale, form enclosure) | Large scale | Small scale | Enclosed | Dramatic views in and out. Extremes of flat and undulating. |
| | Planned | Organic | Open | |
| | Nucleated | Fragmented | Linear | |
| | Outward-looking | Inward-looking | Other | |
| Position | Hill top | Valley | Coast | |
| | On side of hill | River side | Aspect (describe) | |
| Settlement setting | Landscape dominates | Settlement nestles in landscape | Settlement dominates landscape | |
| Settlement edge (How does the settlement abut the landscape?) | Abrupt change to agriculture S / E /W | Transition gardens | Transition wild North | Much equestrian landuse at fringe of settlement. |
| | | North | Poor transition North | |
| Animation | Quiet | Busy | Neither quiet nor busy | |
| Design Elements and Materials (Describe) | Devonian red sandstone, render predominantly slate and clay pantile roofs, with some thatch. Pitched cobbled streets. Bay windows. Medieval core, close abutted small scale, high walls, and Victorian fringe to north. Late 20 th century infill especially to south and west. | | | |
| Overall Landscape Character Sensitivity | Low | Moderate | High | A landscape of strong and distinct character holding a diverse though well unified settlement. |

| Visual Sensitivity | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|--|
| General visibility | Low (Hidden from most view points) | Moderate (Partially seen in open country) | High (Seen in open country from most view points) | |
| Mitigation potential | High | Moderate | Low | Varies – greater mitigation potential on lower land. |
| Presence of tourist | Low | Moderate | High | |
| Sensitivity of the receiving landscape | Low | Moderate | High | |
| Overall Visual Sensitivity | Low | Moderate | High | |
| Landscape Value | | | | |
| Presence of historic / landmark buildings. | None | Some | Many | |
| Designed Landscapes | No | | Yes | Nearby. |
| Important trees | None/Few | Some | Many | |
| Cultural identity / associations | Weak | Moderate | Strong | |
| Tourism value | Low | Moderate | High | |
| Tranquillity | Not tranquil | Noted for its tranquillity | Extremely tranquil. | |
| Remoteness | Not remote | | Remote | |
| Wildness | Urban | Rural | Wild | |
| Scenic beauty | Low | Moderate | High | |
| Significance to National Park character Does the settlement enhance the landscape? | Low significance | Significant | Very significant | |
| Wildlife value | Low | Some | High | |
| Other (describe) | Residential appeal - High | | | |
| Overall landscape value | Low | Moderate | High | |
| Overall Capacity | High | Moderate | Low | |
| Total number of units | –Capacity within areas of low sensitivity: 14 units. –Capacity within areas of moderate sensitivity: 7 units. | | | |