

SITE

Name: Blackdown Rings

Parish: Loddiswell

Local Authority: South Hams

National Grid Ref: SX 719 521

OS Sheets: 1:50k 202 1:10k SX75SW, **GS** 1:50k 249

Locality Description: Sign-posted off the California Cross to Loddiswell road at Coldharbour Cross.

Nature and Status of Site: An amenity area with a small quarry, Iron Age banked enclosure with a Norman motte and bailey and a panoramic viewpoint southwards across the South Hams. There is an information board for the historic remains. The land on the slopes below the hill fort is of considerable wildlife interest. A County Geological Site (www.devonrigs.org.uk).

Summary of Geological / Geomorphological Interest: The site provides a fine viewpoint showing the broad geological features of the South Hams. In addition it demonstrates the lithology of the Staddon Grit which is rarely exposed inland. The viewpoint reveals regional and local structural features, some of which are clearly aligned, and the deeply cut valley of the River Avon. The ancient rocks of the Start Complex are visible in the distance. The rocks present at the site are Staddon Grits, a well known local rock type. They are a quartzitic sandstone with veins, and are well exposed as a commemorative stone at the entrance and within a small quarry in the south west corner of the site.

Safety Considerations: No specific points of note.

Educational Age Groups: Primary, Secondary, College/6th Form, University.

Parking and Access: Blackdown Rings is signposted from the Loddiswell road. There is a small car park on site with direct access to the viewpoint and other features. There is not a direct bus service to the site but there are regular buses from Kingsbridge to California Cross (with a 2000m walk). The nearest train station is Ivybridge however this is not within walking distance of the site. For timetable details, visit www.traveline.org.uk.

Site Owner: The Arundell Charity, Loddiswell, who allows permissive access to the site.

References:

Usser. W.A.E, 1912 The geology of the country around Ivybridge and Modbury London, HMSO.

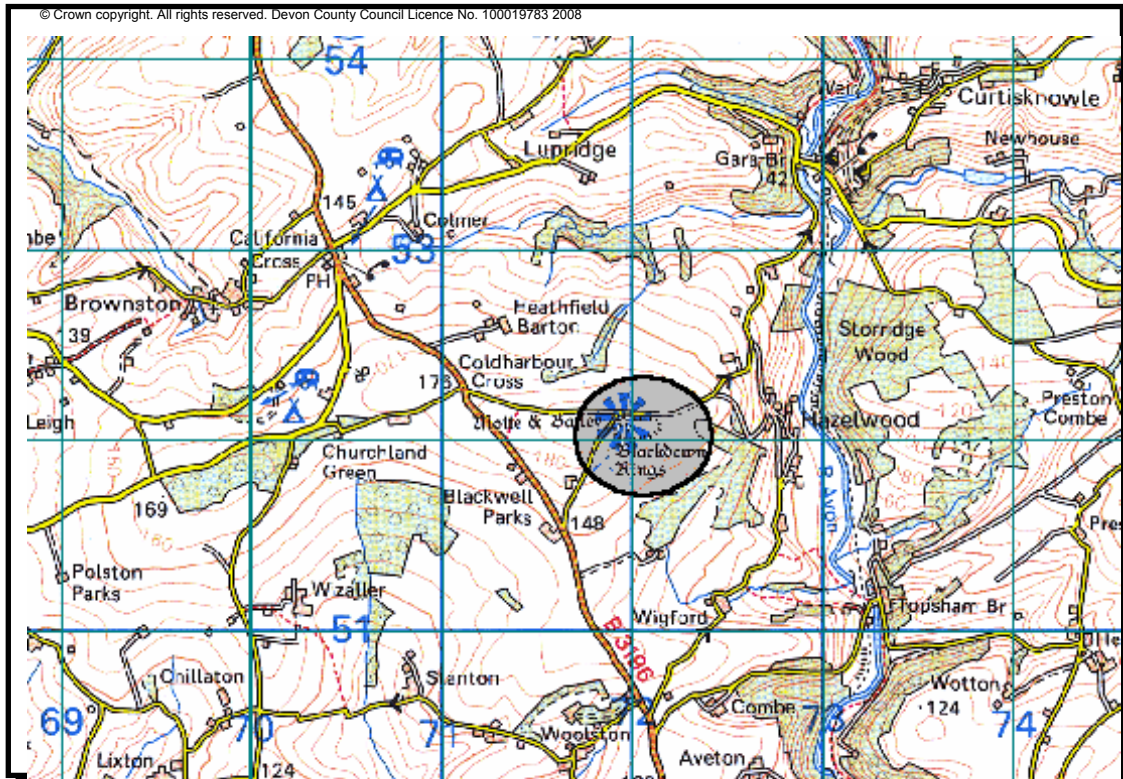
Taylor, R T & Grainger, P Report on the Assessment of County Geological Sites in the South Hams. *ERC Report 96/25* (Earth Resources Centre, University of Exeter, 1996)

Detailed Geology: The site lies towards the eastern end of a prominent ridge formed by the Lower Devonian Staddon Grits, which take their name from Staddon Heights in the west of the district. There is a panoramic view to south and east, with ENE - WSW ridges and some minor features aligned parallel to the regional structure. The deeply incised valley of the River Avon cuts through the ridges in the middle distance. In the far distance the high ground formed by the Start Complex can be seen in clear weather. Large boulders and blocks of foliated and intensely quartz-veined Staddon Grit, a quartzitic slightly micaceous sandstone, are scattered in the area of The Rings and a fine specimen has been set up as a commemorative stone at the entrance. A small quarry at the south-west corner of the site (indicated on the information board) contains further large boulders and a small exposure of Staddon Grit with a foliation dipping 80° south-east and striking 055° . It is possible that the quarry is old and related to the construction of the fortifications on the site.

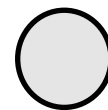
LOCATION PLAN

BLACKDOWN RINGS LODDISWELL, SOUTH HAMS

National Grid Ref: SX 719 521



Scale 1: 40,000



Site
locality

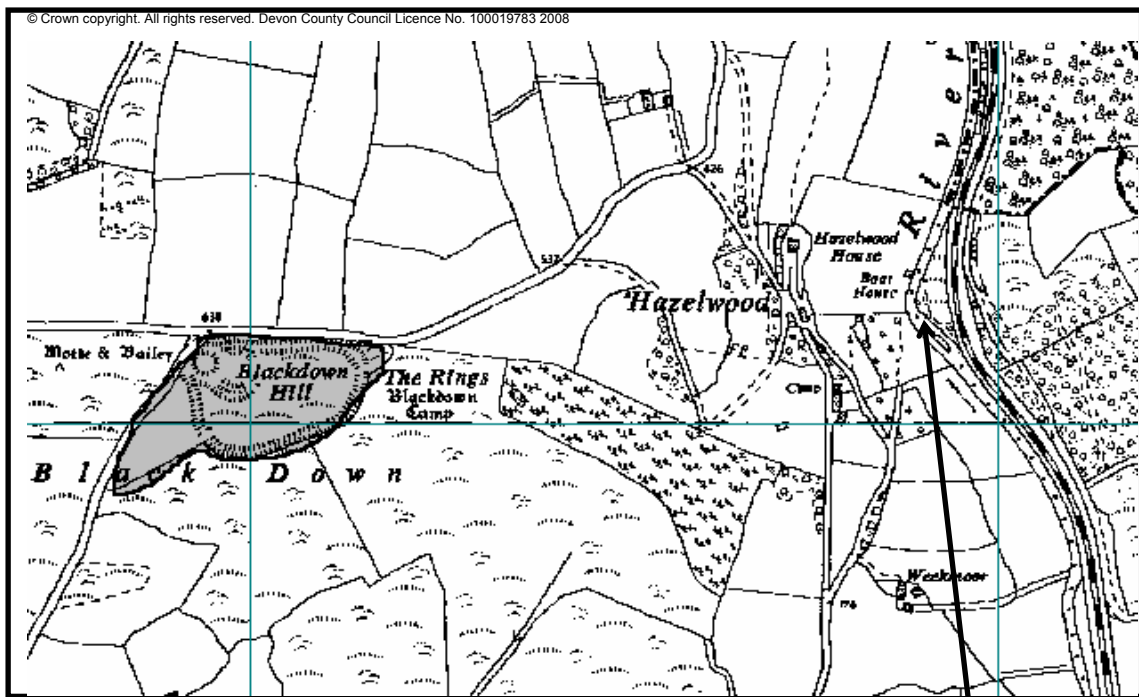
Parking and Access

- Blackdowns Rings is sign-posted from the California Cross to Loddiswell road at Coldharbour Cross. There is direct access and a small on-site car park.

SITE PLAN

BLACKDOWN RINGS LODDISWELL, SOUTH HAMS

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Approx. Extent of Site

Scale 1: 9,000

River Avon

Main Points of Interest:

- Excellent panoramic views to the south and east of the site across the South Hams.
- Rare, inland exposure of the Staddon Grit seen in a small quarry and used as a commemorative stone at site entrance.
- Iron Age Hill Fort with Norman motte and bailey provide historical interest.