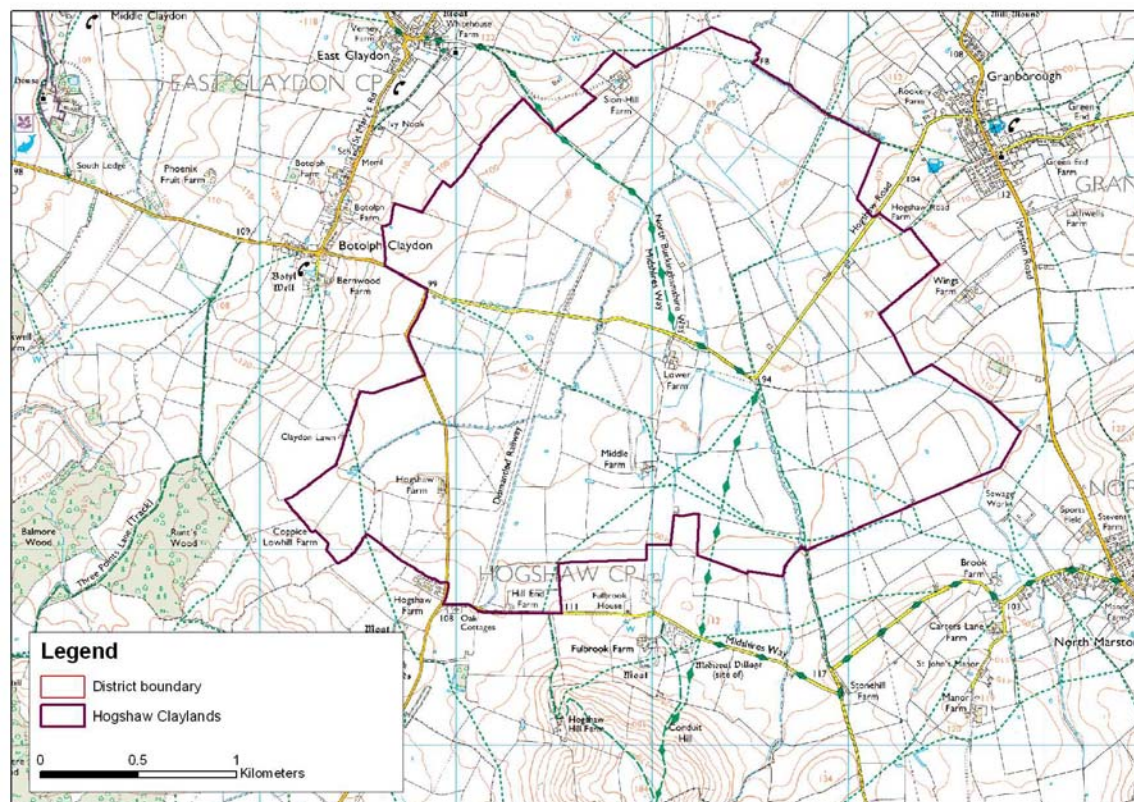
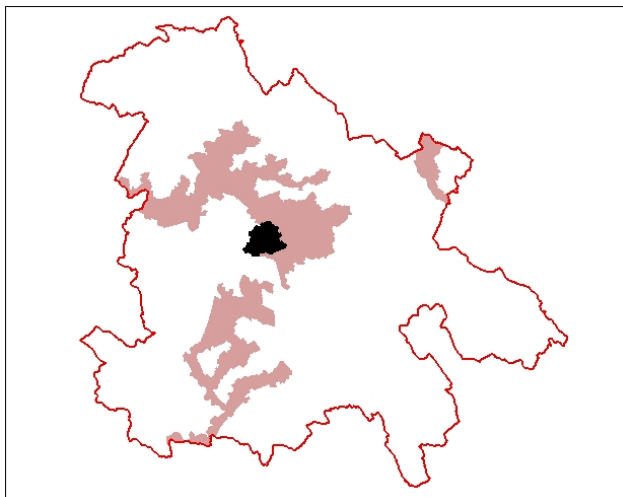


LCA 5.7 Hogshaw Claylands

Landscape Character Type: LCT 5 Shallow Valleys



LCA 5.7 Hogshaw Claylands (LCT 5)

Key Characteristics

- Gently sloping bowl of low ground
- Mixed agriculture with more pasture
- Good hedgerow pattern
- Meandering streams

Distinctive Features

- Mature oaks in hedgerows
- Small plantations of poplar planted in a grid
- Disused railway line
- Views up to surrounding high ground
- Ponds in fields
- Good bridleway and footpath network
- Ridge and Furrow
- Roman road

Intrusive Elements

- Pylon lines particularly in the north of the area

Location The Hogshaw area is close to the centre of the district to the southwest of Winslow.

Landscape character A gently sloping bowl of low ground in mixed agricultural use. There is very little settlement and access is via narrow lanes and a good network of Public Rights of Way. Hedgerows are good and often have mature oak trees. The main meandering watercourses tend to have trees and shrubs along their banks. Small plantations of mature poplars in a grid are a feature of the area. Views tend to focus on the surrounding higher ground. The two pylon lines through the area are visually intrusive. There is an electricity grid sub-station just to the north of the area, within Claydon Valley LCA 5.6, which these lines join. The sub-station and other pylon lines are visually intrusive in the very north of the area. The area is quiet but not wild or remote.

Geology Predominantly an area of calcareous mudstone (Weymouth Member with a transition to West Walton formation in the south). Alluvium deposits in the valley bottom.

Topography This is a small shallow valley area surrounded on the east, south and west by distinctly higher ground. The ground falls gently away from the higher ground to the lowest area in the north. Elevation from 105m to 90m AOD.

Hydrology There are no major watercourses and a series of minor streams and ditches drain the area. The main tributaries have a meandering course but many of the smaller tributaries are straight and follow field boundaries. There is a scattering of ponds throughout.

Land use and settlement This is a mixed agricultural landscape with a slight tendency towards grassland. There are also small areas of woodland and scrub.

There is very little settlement within the area just a scattering of farms some with large barns. A disused railway line passes north-south through the area.

Tree cover The woodlands are small with a notable plantation of mature poplars in a grid next to a lane. The tree cover within hedgerows is generally better adjacent to roads where there are frequent mature oak trees. Elsewhere the tree cover is good adjacent to streamlines and there is scrub along the disused railway track. There are dead elms in some hedgerows.

Biodiversity The principle habitats of the Hogshaw Claylands are a mix of arable and grassland habitat. The grassland is mostly improved however, some unimproved is present throughout.

The agricultural habitats are relieved by a few fragments of woodland habitat - both broadleaved and coniferous are present the most significant area being associated with the line of the disused railway where scrub also occurs. The broad habitat types of rivers and streams and standing open water are well represented by the streams and the ponds across the area.

Historic environment The historic landscape of Hogshaw is composed of a mixture of fields types; the greatest extent is made up of pre 18th century regular enclosures and is likely a product of the improvements

LCA 5.7 Hogshaw Claylands (LCT 5)

made by such families as the Verneys at Middle Claydon. The eastern side of the area landscape is made up of parliamentary enclosure fields of Granborough enclosed in 1796. The other types are the changes to field boundaries in the 19th century and presence of 20th century enclosures for pony paddocks. The landscape has no historic settlements of note, only isolated historic farmsteads of Lower & Middle Farm.

The most notable archaeological features are ridge and furrow earthworks and the Roman road linking Fleet Marston to Thornborough, which for part of its route follows Carter's Lane. A Roman settlement is recorded on this road. The route was later used by the medieval highway from Aylesbury to Buckingham. The landscape is also bisected by the disused Aylesbury to Buckingham railway.

The landscape is traversed by promoted footpaths from the Bernwood Jubilee Way.

Designations

Archaeological Notification Areas – 11 No.
BNS – 2 No.

LCA 5.7 Hogshaw Claylands (LCT 5)



Views in the area tend to look across the flat landscape and focus up to the surrounding higher ground.



The hedges are generally strong and clipped; pylon lines have a negative visual impact in many views.

LCA 5.7 Hogshaw Claylands (LCT 5)

Summary of Condition/Sensitivity Analysis

Condition	Moderate
Pattern of elements:	Unified
Visual detractors:	Few
Visual unity:	Strongly unified
Cultural integrity:	Variable
Ecological integrity:	Weak
Functional integrity:	Weak
Sensitivity	Moderate
Distinctiveness:	Distinct
Continuity:	Historic
Sense of place:	Moderate
Landform:	Apparent
Tree cover:	Intermittent
Visibility:	Moderate
Guidelines	Conserve and Enhance

Condition

The condition of the landscape is moderate. It has a unified pattern of elements with a strong hedgerow pattern and little settlement and only minor roads. There are considered to be few visual detractors across the area as a whole but the impact of the pylon lines running through the area is significant although the rural integrity of the landscape is maintained. The cultural integrity is variable, there is some good surviving examples of ridge and furrow in the landscape and the hedgerow pattern, is in good condition but the condition of the hedgerow trees is generally mature or over mature. Ecological integrity is weak due to suboptimal connectivity and the low area of designated sites and habitats of District significance present compared to other parts of the District. Overall the functional integrity is considered to be weak.

Sensitivity

The area has a distinct landscape character with a good sense of historic continuity. This gives the area a moderate sense of place. The landform is apparent and the tree cover intermittent with very little in the way of woodland. This produces an area with a moderate level of visibility. Overall the combination of a moderate sense of place and a moderate visibility combine to create a landscape which is considered to be of moderate sensitivity.



The landform is generally flat or very gently sloping. The hedgerow pattern is strong but tree cover in hedgerows is very variable.

LCA 5.7 Hogshaw Claylands (LCT 5)

Landscape Guidelines Conserve and Enhance

The landscape guidelines for the Hogshaw Claylands are as follows:

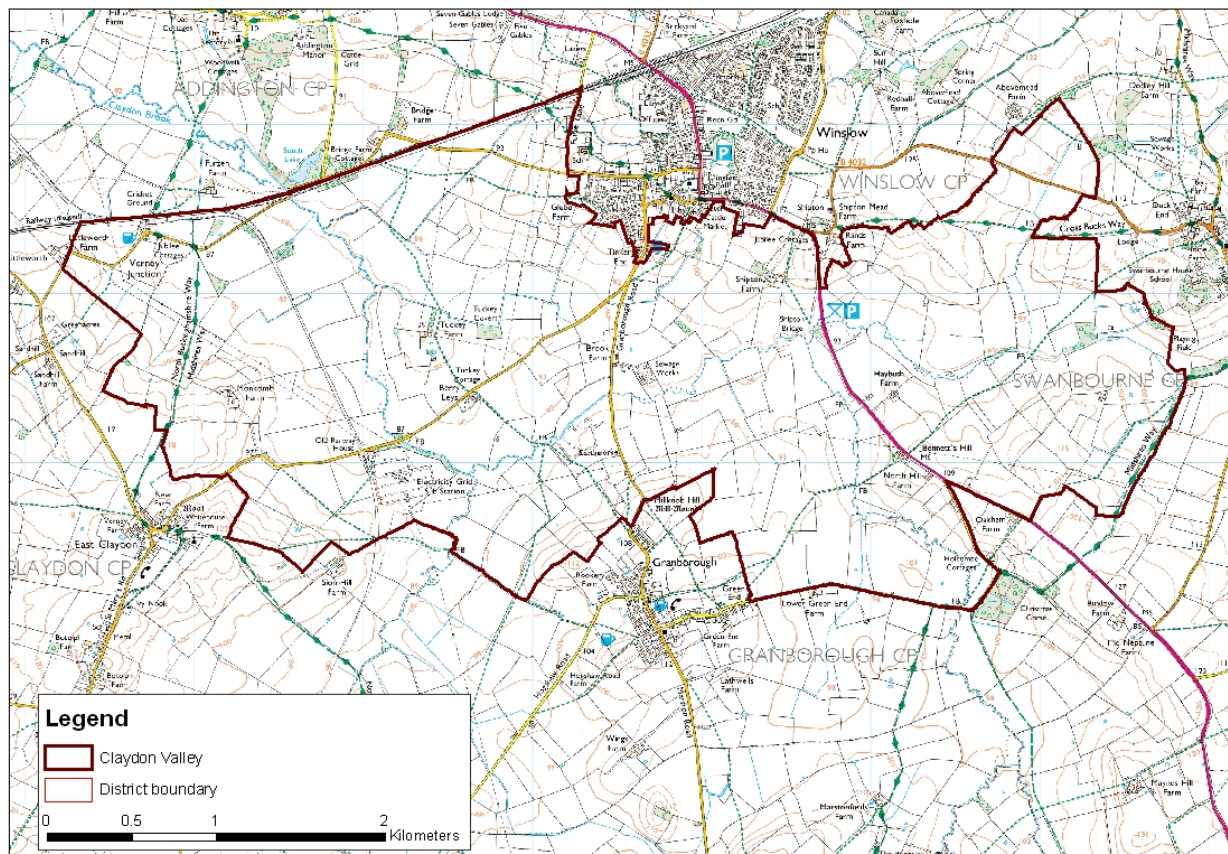
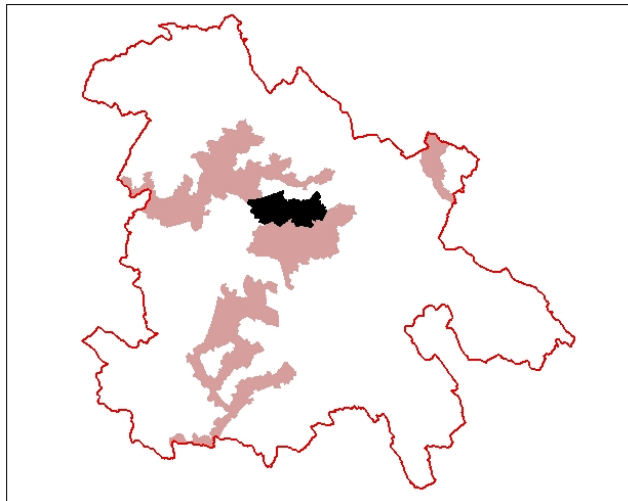
- Encourage the retention and strengthening of the historic hedgerow pattern by infilling gaps and establishing new hedgerow trees. Oaks are a feature of hedgerows in this area.
- Encourage the management of hedgerows through traditional cutting regimes.
- Promote the management and conservation of vegetation adjacent to the meandering watercourses including the pollarding of willow.
- Encourage the management of existing woodland and promote the establishment of new woodland particularly where it will reduce the visual impact of pylon lines.
- Maintain the condition and extent of unimproved and semi-improved grassland wherever possible. Encourage good management practices.
- Improve the management of historic meadows and pastures.
- Close to watercourses promote the use of permanent pasture, with low stocking density and flooding regimes to promote biodiversity and landscape enhancement.
- Encourage the restoration and management of ponds and the area around them to provide a succession of habitats from open water through to mature trees.
- Where possible link ponds to adjacent hedgerows with grassland.
- Enhance connectivity of habitats.
- Identify key views to surrounding higher from publicly accessible land and promote the preservation and enhancement of these views.
- Encourage the preservation of Ridge and Furrow by maintaining grassland.



Mature roadside poplar plantation is a local feature. Note locally discontinuous clipped hedgerow.

LCA 5.6 Claydon Valley

Landscape Character Type: LCT 5 Shallow Valleys



LCA 5.6 Claydon Valley (LCT 5)

Key Characteristics

- Shallow valley
- Meandering brook on flat valley bottom
- Lack of settlement apart from isolated farms on slightly higher ground above flood plain
- Strong irregular field pattern
- Predominantly small and medium fields
- Mixed farming - greater area of pasture but large arable fields are visually dominant

Distinctive Features

- Biggin Grange archaeological earthworks
- Good mix of tree and shrub vegetation adjacent to brook
- Narrow bridge and ford crossing brook to north of Granborough
- Disused railway line with trees and shrubs
- Tuckey Covert
- Unimproved grassland

Intrusive Elements

- Pylon lines radiating from sub-station northwest of Granborough
- Traffic on A413
- Small sewage works

Location The shallow valley lies immediately to the south of Winslow. The northern boundary is defined by the southern edge of the town and the ridge of higher ground either side. The southern extent is marked by the higher ground of East Claydon, Granborough and Bennett's Hill. To the east the valley dissipates into a more undulating low clayland and to the west the confluences of the Claydon and Padbury Brooks.

Landscape character The shallow valley has a strong agricultural character notable for its lack of settlement and locally strong field pattern. The area has very small blocks of woodland and variable tree cover in hedgerows. There are good views across the valley from the upper valley sides.

Geology Mudstones of the Middle (Stewartby) and Upper (Weymouth) Formations of the Oxford Clay and of the West Walton Formation, overlain occasionally by alluvium and river terrace deposits.

Topography The top of the valley sides to the north and south are approximately 110 – 120m AOD. These slope down fairly steeply at first and then flatten out giving a wide, very gently sloping area either side of the brook. There are several tributary streams coming into the valley.

Hydrology The Claydon Brook and its tributaries drain a wide area to the north and south of Winslow. LCA 5.6 is distinguished from the rest of the catchment by having the main section of the brook in a distinct valley, which is defined by higher ground to the north and south. To the south several tributaries breach the high ground.

The majority of the streams and the brook retain their meandering courses although some sections appear to have been artificially straightened. Straight ditches follow the field boundaries and there are a few scattered ponds, most notably near Tuckey Farm.

Land use and settlement Agriculture predominates and is mixed varying from very small fields of pasture to large arable fields where hedgerows have been removed. Elsewhere the hedgerow pattern is strong with well established mature hedgerows.

The area is notable for its lack of settlement. There are no villages within the valley; the only settlements are isolated farms on slightly higher ground close to the valley floor and a few cottages.

Five pylon lines radiate from the electricity sub-station to the west of Granborough beyond the boundary. Some cross the LCA, others are visible from it and in combination have a significant negative visual impact.

LCA 5.6 Claydon Valley (LCT 5)

Tree cover There are no major woodlands but small dispersed pockets or coverts occur on the valley sides. The banks of the brook and tributary have a higher level of tree cover including many unmanaged willows in places forming small linear areas of wet woodland. There is also good tree and scrub cover along the disused railway line. Trees within hedgerows are variable tending to be most evident on the higher valley sides. Patches of significant young elm regeneration suggest this was once a significant tree locally.

Biodiversity The area contains a high proportion of arable habitat although large areas of grassland are also present throughout. Most of the grassland is improved but unimproved areas can be found largely in the southern half. A block of neutral grassland – a broad habitat type, and of unimproved grassland can also be found in the northwest.

Fragments of woodland are generally small and do not form a significant area of habitat within this area. Woodland is largely restricted to the northern half of the area and is broadleaved in nature – a broad habitat type.

Another broad habitat type is found in the aquatic habitats provided by brook and streams, which thread through the agricultural habitats and in conjunction with the hedgerows and woodlands provide good habitat connectivity. Small areas of standing water habitat are also present as ponds.

Historic environment The landscape of the area is mostly comprises early parliamentary enclosure fields dating to 1767. There is a cluster of regular and irregular pre 18th century enclosures on the western fringe concentrated mainly close to the boundary with East Claydon. Small pockets of flood meadow land are dispersed along the bottom of the Claydon valley and its southern tributary. The area is predominantly parliamentary enclosure land and dispersed areas of other 19th century enclosure. There are four parcels of prairie landscape spread over the area and notably a large electricity grid sub-station located on the southern boundary of the LCA.

The area contains no historic buildings of note although the landscape does form a part of the setting for Winslow Hall, it's south facing aspect commands views across this landscape. The archaeology of the area comprises some surviving ridge and furrow which is found in patches across the area. The most significant site is the earthworks of what is believed to be Biggin Moated Grange, a medieval manorial site dating to the medieval/post medieval period.

The landscape has a good amenity value with several promoted rights of way running through the area.

Designations

Conservation Area at Winslow

Archaeological Notification Areas – 6 No.

BNS – 2 No.

LCA 5.6 Claydon Valley (LCT 5)



Claydon Valley seen from the edge of Granborough.



The western end of the valley includes pylons converging on the electricity sub-station visible to the left.

LCA 5.6 Claydon Valley (LCT 5)

Summary of Condition/Sensitivity Analysis

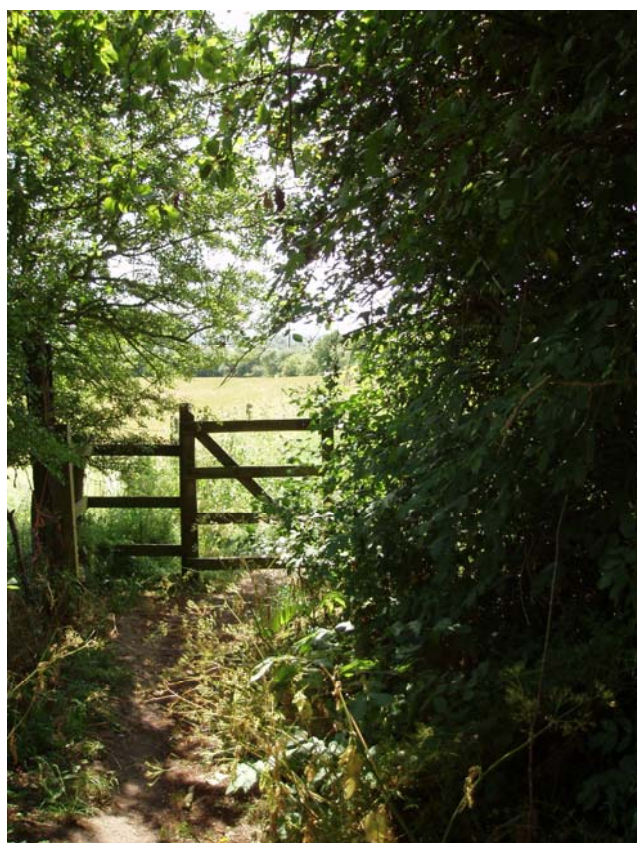
Condition	Good
Pattern of elements:	Coherent
Visual detractors:	Few
Visual unity:	Unified
Cultural integrity:	Variable
Ecological integrity:	Moderate
Functional integrity:	Coherent
Sensitivity	Moderate
Distinctiveness:	Distinct
Continuity:	Historic
Sense of place:	Moderate
Landform:	Apparent
Tree cover:	Intermittent
Visibility:	Moderate
Guidelines	Conserve and Reinforce

Condition

Generally the condition of the landscape is considered to be good. The hedgerow pattern remains largely intact although in places hedges have been removed to create large arable fields. Good strong high hedgerows are particularly evident on the slopes below Winslow. The general pattern is considered to be coherent. Five pylon lines radiating out of the electricity sub-station northwest of Granborough are the most significant detracting feature of the area. As the most significant impact of the pylons is localised, there are generally considered to be few detracting features. The cultural integrity is considered to be variable containing early parliamentary enclosure and a few sensitive locations. Ecological integrity is moderate due to good connectivity and the areas of designated sites and habitats of District significance. Overall the functional integrity is coherent.

Sensitivity

The area has a distinctive character stemming from the landform and strong hedgerow pattern, with detailed interest focused on the vegetation beside the watercourse and narrow bridge crossings. Overall the sense of place is moderate. The landform is apparent but not dominant. The tree cover is variable in hedgerows. Interest is focused on the trees either side of watercourses and the associated small wet woodlands. Visibility is variable depending on location and is rated as moderate. Overall the moderate sense of character combined with the moderate visibility give the landscape a moderate sensitivity.



Footpath close to the southern edge of Winslow.

LCA 5.6 Claydon Valley (LCT 5)

Landscape Guidelines Conserve and Reinforce

Guidelines for the Claydon Valley are as follows:

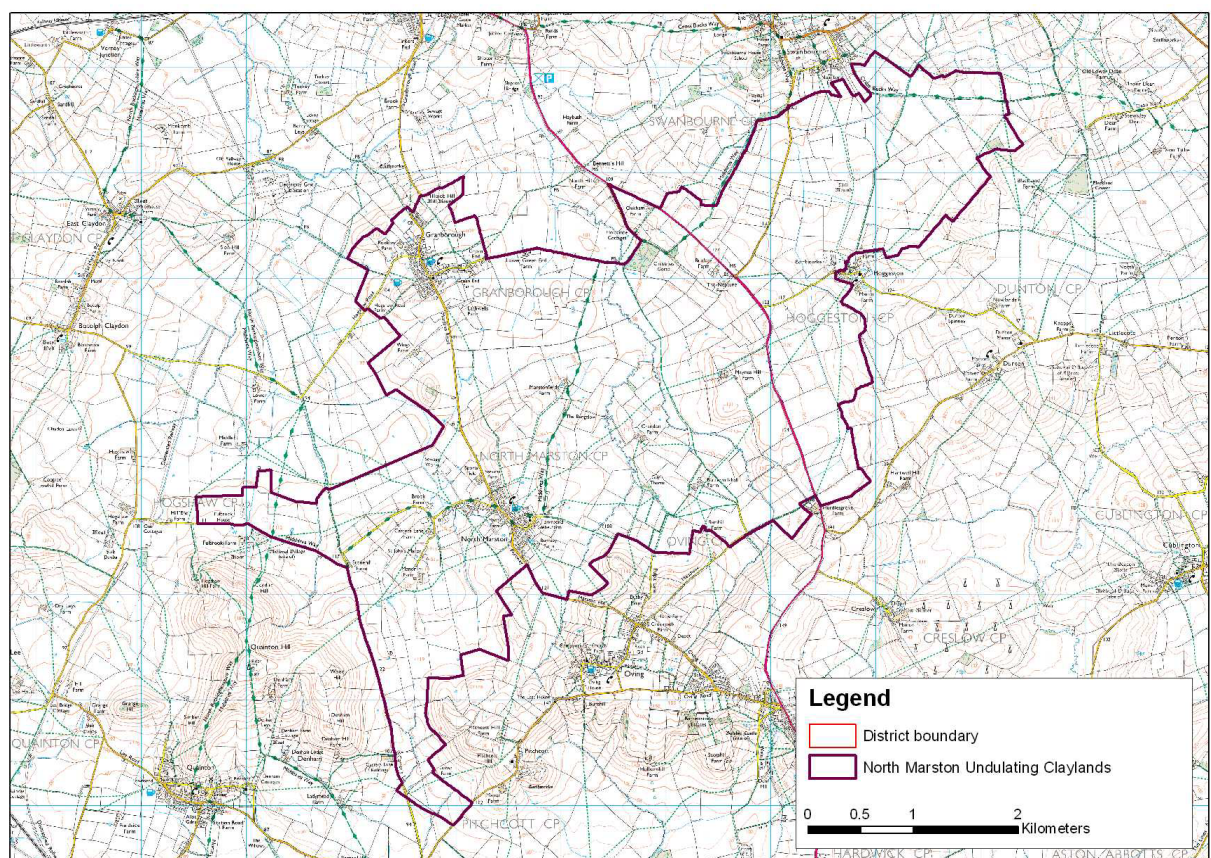
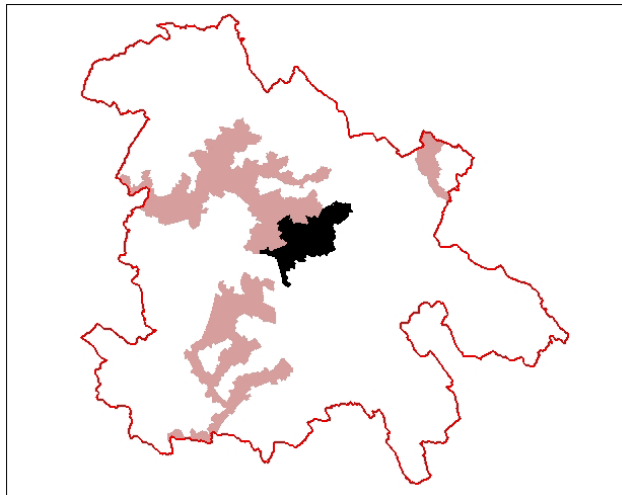
- Conserve the pattern of smaller field and woodland parcels.
- Conserve agricultural land use on suburban fringes and discourage inappropriate use.
- Encourage the retention and strengthening of the historic hedgerow pattern by infilling gaps and establishing new hedgerow trees.
- Encourage the management of hedgerows through traditional cutting regimes.
- Promote the management and conservation of vegetation adjacent to the meandering watercourses including the pollarding of willow.
- Encourage the management of existing woodland and consider promoting the establishment of new woodland particularly where it will reduce the visual impact of pylon lines.
- Maintain the condition and extent of unimproved and semi-improved grassland wherever possible. Encourage good management practices.
- Close to watercourses promote the use of permanent pasture, with low stocking density and flooding regimes to promote biodiversity and landscape enhancement.
- Maintain and enhance connectivity.
- Encourage the restoration and management of ponds and the area around them to provide a succession of habitats from open water through to mature trees.
- Identify key views to surrounding higher ground from publicly accessible land and promote the preservation and enhancement of these views.
- Encourage the preservation of historic earthworks and ridge and furrow by maintaining a continuous grass sward.



The narrow bridge over the Claydon Brook on the Granborough Road midway between Granborough and Winslow.

LCA 5.8 North Marston Undulating Claylands

Landscape Character Type: LCT 5 Shallow Valleys



LCA 5.8 North Marston Undulating Claylands (LCT 5)

Key Characteristics

- Undulating landform
- Small hills and ridges
- Meandering streams
- Predominantly pastoral
- Settlement on high ground
- Good hedgerow pattern
- Ridge and furrow

Distinctive Features

- Minor roads and gated road
- Ponds
- Willows and poplars
- Historic earthworks
- Neutral grassland

Intrusive Elements

- Pylon lines
- Traffic on A413 has a localised impact

Location Close to the centre of the district between Winslow and Aylesbury, the A413 passes north-south through the area.

Landscape character An undulating landscape between the hills of Quainton, Oving and Dunton to the south and the Claydon Valley LCA 5.6 to the north. The area drains from the south to the north with several meandering streams with adjacent flat ground. Small hills and ridges are a feature of the area. The settlement tends to focus on areas of higher ground with the villages of North Marston and Granborough being notable for their strong historic character. It generally has a good hedgerow network over this lively landform. Pasture is the dominant land use. Although well settled in comparison to other areas within LCT 5 Shallow Valleys it remains quiet with minor lanes and gated roads enhancing a sense of remoteness in some areas. The only visual intrusion comes from pylon lines and localised impact of the A413 on high ground. Views are often enclosed by the undulating landform or focus on the higher ground of the ridge to the south.

Geology An extensive area of calcareous mudstone (West Walton Formation). Small pocket of Kimmeridge clay and glacial till along the line of the A413 corridor.

Topography An undulating character created by streamlines cutting into higher ground. There are a number of small distinct hills and ridges.

It extends to the south to the area of lower ground between Quainton Hill LCA 9.2 and Pitchcott-Whitchurch Ridge LCA 9.3. The highest ground in this LCA is about 135m AOD and the lowest in the north about 100m AOD.

Hydrology There are no major watercourses but small meandering streams are a feature particularly through the centre. Ponds are relatively common both within villages and fields.

Land use and settlement This is a predominantly pastoral landscape with about one fifth of the area arable including some areas of prairie fields and new enclosure. The settlement is concentrated on higher ground.

Tree cover The area has a low level of tree cover with a few small woodlands. The hedgerows have a moderate amount of trees, which tend to be oak in the higher ground to the south and more ash in the north. Willow and poplar are notable in wetter areas and adjacent to streams and ponds.

Biodiversity Grassland habitats dominate – much is improved, but some is unimproved or neutral. One block of neutral grassland a broad habitat type, is associated with the watercourse that bisects the LCA, and a second is found on the northern boundary, two smaller blocks are also present in the north. An area of the priority habitat type lowland meadow is located in the centre of the LCA and forms Wet Stock Meadows CWS. This is a hay meadow rich in wild flowers and with a pond.

The other habitats are arable which is more prevalent in the northeast; broadleaved woodland - small fragments of which are present throughout; and the aquatic habitats of the numerous ponds and the stream network.

LCA 5.8 North Marston Undulating Claylands (LCT 5)

A CWS has been designated at Stonehill Lane where the hedgerows are species rich and include field maple and dogwood.

Historic environment The historic landscape of this area is largely composed of the characteristic rectilinear parliamentary enclosure fields, laid out for the parishes of Granborough and North Marston in 1796 and 1780 respectively. There are also some fossilised strips fields close to the village of North Marston.

The settlement pattern of the area is mostly nucleated forms, typified by the settlements of Granborough and North Marston. Both villages contain important listed buildings. North Marston's conservation area contains the very fine perpendicular church of St Mary's which is a Grade 1 listed building.

The predominance of grassland in this area has resulted in the preservation of archaeological earthworks; the most evident feature is the abundance of ridge and furrow, relicts of a communally farmed pre-enclosure landscape. Particularly fine examples of ridge and furrow can be found at Granborough and North Marston. The latter is on the English Heritage list as one of the best examples to be found in England. There are also well preserved deserted medieval settlement earthworks at Hogshaw, which is classified as a scheduled ancient monument and also good examples at Granborough and Hoggston. The landscape also has the earlier feature of Carter's Lane Roman road which runs along the western boundary of the area as well as a few Roman findspots.

The area has a high amenity value the Swan Way promoted as a recreational footpath. North Marston in particular contains a plethora of Rights of Way radiating from the village. This unusual density of footpaths may be attributable to the village's past as a place of medieval pilgrimage to the healing well of John Schorne.

Designations

Conservation Area at North Marston
Scheduled Ancient Monument - Hogshaw
Archaeological Notification Areas – 32 No.
CWS – 2 No.
BNS – 6 No.

LCA 5.8 North Marston Undulating Claylands (LCT 5)



This is a predominantly pastoral landscape with a good hedgerow pattern; willow and poplar trees tend to be focused on the lower ground adjacent to watercourses.



Oak trees are a feature of hedgerows in the south of the area. Pylon lines are the main visual detractor in a generally harmonious pastoral landscape.

LCA 5.8 North Marston Undulating Claylands (LCT 5)

Summary of Condition/Sensitivity Analysis

Condition	Good
Pattern of elements:	Unified
Visual detractors:	Few
Visual unity:	Strongly unified
Cultural integrity:	Good
Ecological integrity:	Weak
Functional integrity:	Coherent

Sensitivity	Moderate
Distinctiveness:	Distinct
Continuity:	Historic
Sense of place:	Moderate
Landform:	Apparent
Tree cover:	Intermittent
Visibility:	Moderate

Guidelines	Conserve and Reinforce
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Condition

This landscape is generally in a good condition it has a strong hedgerow pattern over an undulating landscape there is little in the way of interruption or fragmentation. There are few visual detractors and their impact tends to be fairly localised. The landscape is strongly unified. The cultural integrity is considered to be good it has attractive historic settlement with a well preserved landscape of parliamentary enclosures and nationally important ridge and furrow although the age structure of the trees is generally mature or over mature. Ecological integrity is weak due to suboptimal connectivity and the low area of designated sites and habitats of District significance present compared to other parts of the District. The area has a coherent functional integrity.

Sensitivity

The landscape has a distinct character with a good sense of historic continuity, particularly around the historic settlements. This gives the area a moderate sense of place. The landform is apparent with small hills and ridges within a gently sloping valley landscape. The tree cover is intermittent with low clipped hedgerows and fairly widely spaced hedgerow trees. This gives the area a moderate visibility. Overall the sensitivity of this landscape is considered to be moderate.



Hedgerow trees are an important feature of the landscape character of this area many trees appear to be in decline being mature or over mature.

LCA 5.8 North Marston Undulating Claylands (LCT 5)

Landscape Guidelines Conserve and Reinforce

The landscape guidelines for the North Marston Undulating Claylands are as follows:

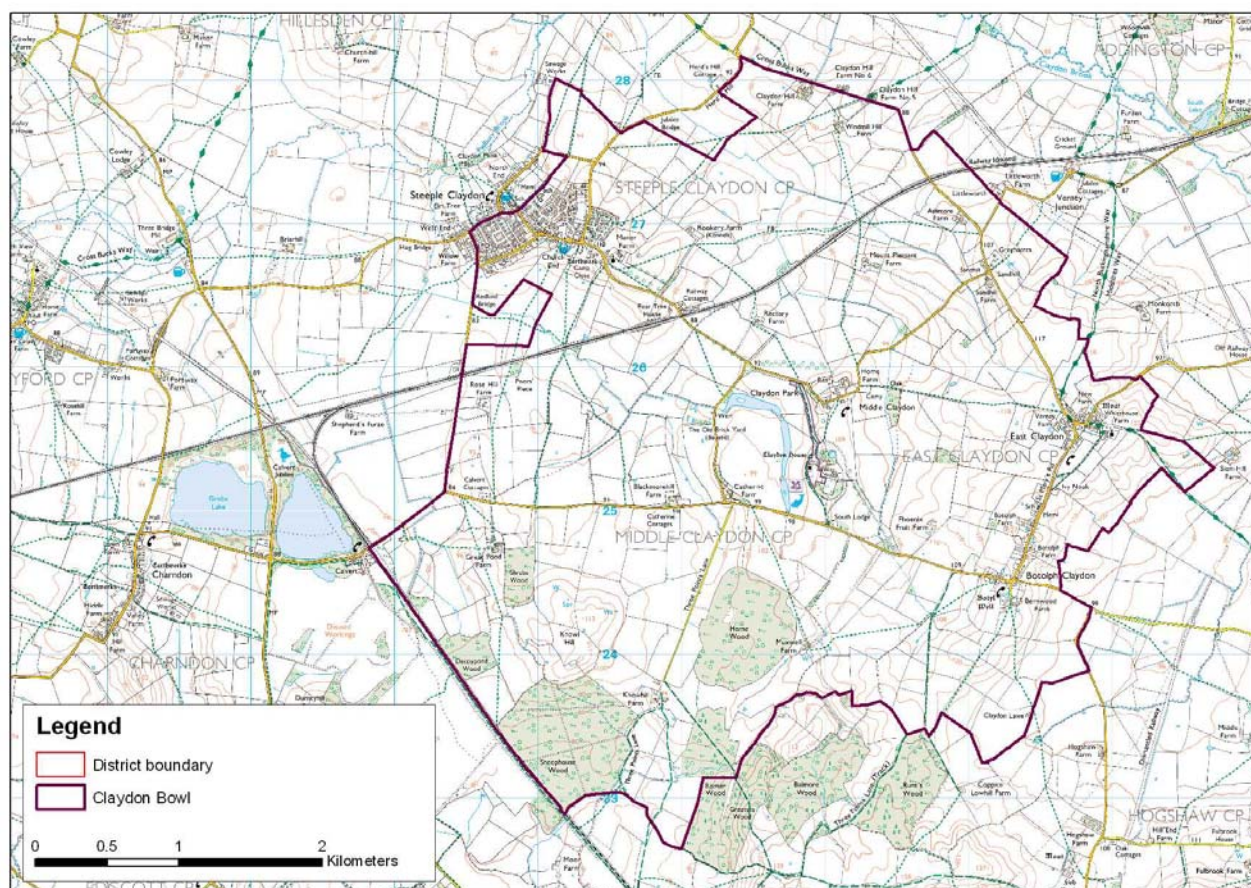
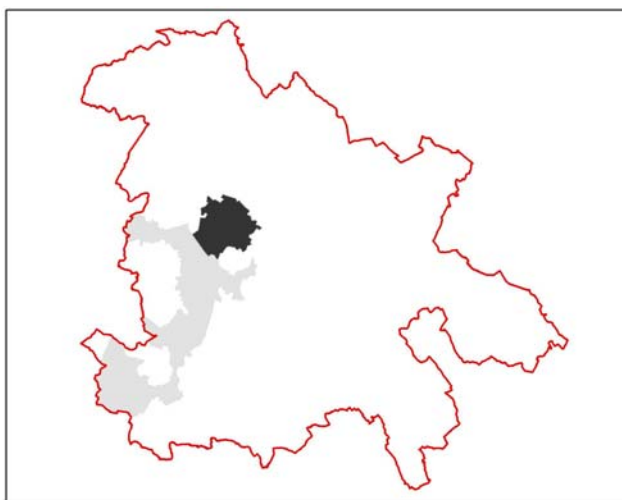
- Encourage the retention and strengthening of the historic hedgerow pattern by infilling gaps and establishing new hedgerow trees. Oak and ash trees are a feature of hedgerows in this area.
- Encourage the management of hedgerows through traditional cutting regimes.
- Promote the management and conservation of vegetation adjacent to the meandering watercourses including the pollarding of willow.
- Maintain the condition and extent of woodland.
- Maintain the condition and extent of neutral, unimproved and semi-improved grassland wherever possible. Encourage good management practices.
- Close to watercourses promote the use of permanent pasture, with low stocking density and flooding regimes to promote biodiversity and landscape enhancement.
- Encourage the restoration and management of ponds and the area around them to provide a succession of habitats from open water through to mature trees.
- Promote the conservation and interpretation of rich historic environment.
- Where possible link ponds to adjacent hedgerows with grassland.
- Enhance connectivity of habitats.
- Identify key views to surrounding higher ground from publicly accessible land and promote the preservation and enhancement of these views.
- Encourage the preservation of historic earthworks and ridge and furrow by maintaining a continuous grass sward.
- Maintain the historically open landscape by discouraging the planting of new woodlands and sub-division of fields.
- Conserve the distinctive historic character and form of the village and its settings, especially the green and fossilised strips associated with North Marston.



In the northeast views focus up to the surrounding higher ground of LCT 4 Undulating Clay Plateau. Ash becomes more frequent than oak as a hedgerow tree.

LCA 7.3 Claydon Bowl

Landscape Character Type: LCT 7 Wooded Rolling Lowlands



LCA 7.3 Claydon Bowl (LCT 7)

Key Characteristics

- Bowl with high ground around the edge
- Gently sloping ground
- Moderate level of woodland cover
- Mixed farming with slightly more arable
- Small straight lanes
- Settlement on high ground
- Claydon House and parkland
-

Distinctive Features

- Ridge top villages
- Ponds in villages
- Vernacular buildings
- Traditional farm buildings
- Views to ridges and woodland to the south
- Plantation of mature poplars in grids
- St Michael's Church Steeple Claydon
- Large blocks of broadleaved woodland
- Parkland

Intrusive Elements

- Possible glimpses of landfill operations at Calvert

Location This area lies on the western side of the district south of Buckingham. Claydon House (National Trust) lies at its centre.

Landscape character A bowl with high ground on the edge and a gently undulating centre sloping from east to west. This is a transitional area between the wooded farmland in the south and Twyford Vale in the north. It is a lively and visually rich area with historic settlements running along the ridges and Claydon Park in the centre of the bowl. The influence of estate management goes beyond the parkland. There is generally more settlement and activity than in the surrounding low ground. The landscape character is that of a cohesive agricultural landscape with attractive historic settlements in prominent locations. The house and parkland with lakes lie at the centre of the area. The surrounding woodland and gateway are visible from the wider landscape. Views within the area tend to focus on the parkland, woodland on the southern edge and villages on the ridge.

Geology A complex area of transition, covered by three broad geological formations. Peterborough bituminous mudstones in the north, overlain locally by glacial till, Weymouth calcareous mudstones also overlain by an area of glacial till and an area of Stewartby calcareous mudstone across the middle of the LCA.

Topography The landform in this area has a ridge of higher ground around most of the edge and slopes towards lower ground in the centre. There are two gaps in the surrounding high ground where streams drain out to the northwest.

Hydrology There are no major watercourses. Streams drain the area from high ground on the edges to the northwest. The streams and ditches tend to be straight and follow field boundaries. On the high ground several wells are marked and one spring. Ponds are a notable feature of the ridge top villages of Botolph Claydon and East Claydon. The designed parkland around Claydon House includes a sinuous lake along the small, shallow valley to the west of the house.

Land use and settlement This is a mixed agricultural landscape with a slight predominance towards arable farming. The area has more woodland than most of the surrounding area. Settlements along the ridge to the north are a feature of the area and they have retained their historic character. Vernacular houses many with timber frames and thatch roofs, and historic farm buildings and ponds are common in the villages. Claydon House and parkland is a National Trust property the house and terrace has fine views over parkland to the west and south.

Tree cover Almost a tenth of this area is woodland, which is significantly more than the lower areas to the east and north. The woodland is mainly concentrated on the southern edge and around Claydon House; Sheephouse Wood, Shrubs Wood and Home Wood are amongst several ancient woodlands. There are also small plantations of poplar planted in a grid. The tree cover within hedgerows is fairly good with some fine oak trees.

Biodiversity Claydon Bowl has a high proportion of arable land distributed throughout. There is also grassland almost half of which is unimproved, with a small amount of the broad habitat type neutral grassland, notably in the central part.

The main biodiversity interest in the area lies within the parkland at Claydon

LCA 7.3 Claydon Bowl (LCT 7)

House with its open water body, and in the woodlands. Both key and broad habitat types are present - lowland mixed deciduous and wet woodlands, and broad leaved deciduous woodland respectively.

Some of the woodlands, particularly in the south are relatively large. They include in close proximity Sheephouse Wood SSSI and the CWSs at Home Wood, Shrubs Wood and Decoypond Wood. The former includes the wet woodland. Relic hazel coppice is present, there has been replanting and the woods include rides, they are also part of a wider group of woodland extending into LCA 9.1.

Historic environment The most prominent historic landscape feature is the nationally important Claydon House and Parkland which is also registered as a conservation area. This is the historic seat of the Verney family and was originally a 16th century manor house, though the current house is an 18th century adaptation. The gardens were landscaped in the 18th century and have ornamental bridge, pavilions and lodges. The design of the parkland has had an influence on the surrounding landscape. In particular the ancient woodland of Home Wood and Romer Wood to the south of the park, forms a setting for the house as they contain a number of woodland rides aligned to the house, one in particular to the centre of the house. The remaining landscape is composed of woodland assarts and pre 18th century fields believed to have been laid out in the 17th century. To the south and east of Claydon Park parts of the historic landscape pattern have been lost to more recent enclosure and prairie farming.

The built environment is dominated by Claydon House, which is a Grade I listed building and the 14th century church of All Saints within the grounds of the manor house. In addition to the historic park, the settlement pattern of the area is mostly composed of 'nucleated' forms including the villages of Botolph, Steeple, and East Claydon, each village contains a number of listed buildings including St Michael's church at Steeple Claydon which is a prominent landmark. The village of Boltoph Claydon has been designated a conservation area, and contains a number of attractive timber 'box' framed buildings. There are also a handful of isolated farmsteads in the area some such as Muxwell Farm and Knowhill Farm are associated the Claydon House.

There are relatively few archaeological sites known within the area; the most prominent are the village earthworks at Middle Claydon. There are records of the remains former medieval village was levelled in the 18th century to make way for these gardens. There is also a duck decoy pond hidden away in Decoypond Wood. The disused Oxford-Bletchley railway and the Great Central railway cross the area.

The area has a high amenity value, despite Claydon House being occupied by the Verney family; it is in the custodianship of the National Trust and open to the public. The Rights of Way and the surrounding landscape is also promoted in the Bernwood Jubilee Way guide books. Iconic views of the steeple of the church at Steeple Claydon are characteristic.

Designations

Conservation Areas at Botolph Claydon and Claydon Park (Middle Claydon)
EHRHP&G at Claydon Middle Claydon

Archaeological Notification Areas – 8 No.

SSSI: Sheephouse Wood

CWS – 4 No.

BNS – 2 No.

LCA 7.3 Claydon Bowl (LCT 7)



This area has a mixed land use with a slight predominance of arable coverts are scattered across the area.



The hedgerow pattern is generally intact particularly in areas of pasture but in some places the hedges are gappy or have few hedgerow trees.

LCA 7.3 Claydon Bowl (LCT 7)

Summary of Condition/Sensitivity Analysis

Condition	Very Good
Pattern of elements:	Unified
Visual detractors:	Few
Visual unity:	Strongly unified
Cultural integrity:	Good
Ecological integrity:	Moderate
Functional integrity:	Very strong

Sensitivity	Moderate
Distinctiveness:	Distinct
Continuity:	Historic
Sense of place:	Moderate
Landform:	Apparent
Tree cover:	Intermittent
Visibility:	Moderate

Guidelines	Conserve and Reinforce
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Condition

The landscape is generally in a very good condition. It is a harmonious landscape unified by a good hedgerow pattern and a higher level of woodland cover than in most of the surrounding landscape. There are few visual detractors, although the landfill operations at Calvert are just beyond the high ground on the south western side and can sometimes be seen close to this boundary. The landscape is considered to be strongly unified. The cultural integrity of the area is good with strong historic association given by Claydon House, parkland and estate along with the historic villages, good hedgerow pattern and good woodland cover. Ecological integrity is moderate due to relatively large areas of designated sites and broad habitats of District significance and good connectivity. Overall the functional integrity is considered to be very strong.

Sensitivity

The landscape of this area has a distinct character and strong sense of historic continuity giving the area a moderate sense of place. The landform is apparent and the tree cover is considered to be intermittent due to the variation between some well wooded areas and other parts of intensively managed fields with few hedgerow trees. This combines to give a moderate sense of visibility. Overall the sensitivity of the landscape is considered to be moderate.



Ponds, vernacular houses and traditional farm buildings are distinctive features of the ridge top villages.

LCA 7.3 Claydon Bowl (LCT 7)

Landscape Guidelines Conserve and Reinforce

The landscape guidelines for the Claydon Bowl are as follows:

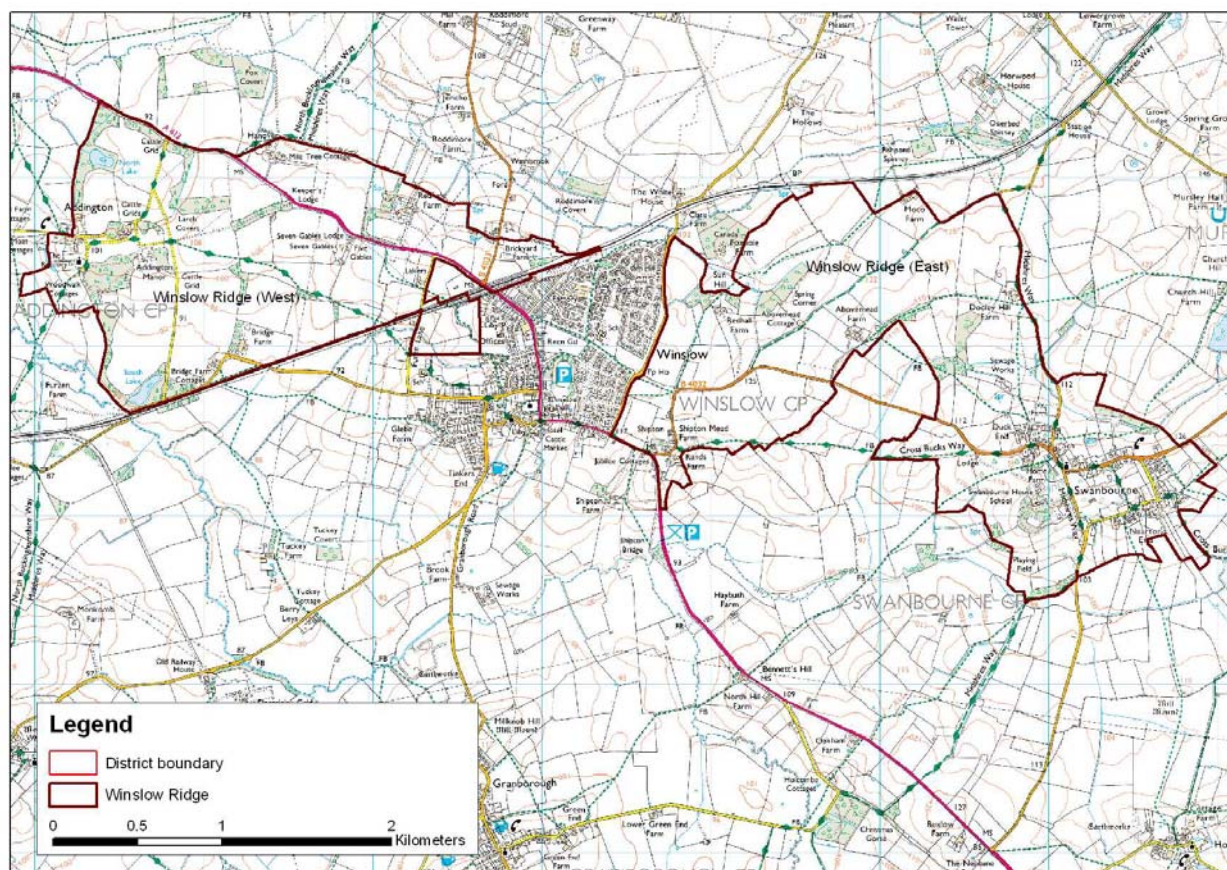
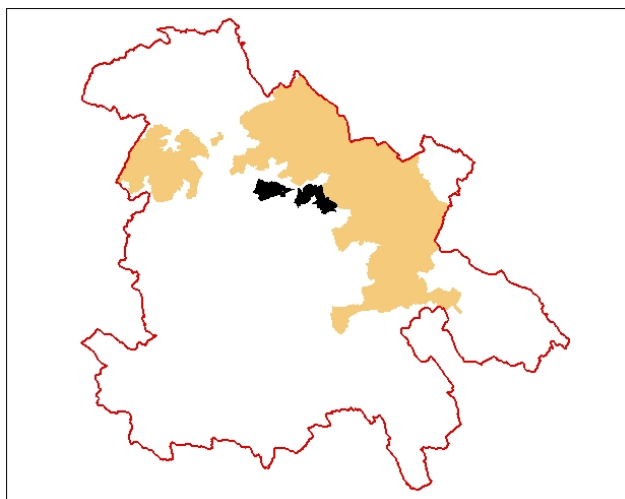
- Encourage the retention and strengthening of the historic hedgerow pattern by infilling gaps and establishing new hedgerow trees. Oak and ash trees are a feature of hedgerows in this area.
- Maintain and improve the condition of existing hedgerows through traditional cutting regimes.
- Promote the management and conservation of vegetation adjacent to watercourses including the pollarding of willow.
- Maintain the condition and extent of existing woodland and promote the establishment of new woodland.
- Maintain the condition and extent of unimproved and semi-improved grassland. Encourage good management practices.
- Promote the connectivity of habitats, particularly woodland.
- Maintain extent of parkland and broadleaved woodland.
- New housing and alterations to existing housing should be designed to reflect the traditional character of the area and use locally traditional materials.
- Survey, maintain and restore features of Claydon estate which extend into the surrounding agricultural area.
- Promote the conservation and interpretation of rich historic environment.
- Identify key views to Claydon house and parkland and ridge top villages from publicly accessible land and promote the preservation and enhancement of these views.



The house and the historic landscapes at Claydon are a feature seen from the highway to the south.

LCA 4.12 Winslow Ridge

Landscape Character Type: LCT 4 Undulating Clay Plateau



LCA 4.12 Winslow Ridge (LCT 4)

Key Characteristics

- Small gently sloping ridge
- Mixed farming with a good field pattern and strong hedgerows
- Scattered farms with small barns, sometimes timber
- Small woods often adjacent to farms
- Attractive historic settlements
- Sharp transition between Winslow and countryside with few urban fringe uses

Distinctive Features

- Woodlands as part of designed parkland around Addington
- Tall mature ornamental trees around farms and settlement including Scots pine and redwood
- Vernacular buildings some with thatched roofs at Winslow and Swanbourne
- Ridge and furrow and fossilised strips around Swanbourne
- Disused railway line
- Landmark mature oak and ash trees along roads
- Footpaths and off-road cycle route
- Trees and scrub on railway cutting embankments
- Scattered broadleaved woodland throughout

Intrusive Elements

- Pylon line
- Small areas of pony paddocks with fencing
- Traffic on busy roads

Location The ridge runs from east to west. At the centre is the small town of Winslow, whilst the eastern end is marked by the village of Swanbourne and to the west by the village of Addington. The A413 runs along a section of the ridge to the west of Winslow and the B4032 follows it to the east of the town.

Landscape character The landscape retains a strong balanced and well structured agricultural character despite its close proximity to Winslow. Busy roads bounded by strong hedgerows often with landmark trees are a feature of the area.

Geology Head deposits over mudstones. The western section is underlain by the lower, middle and upper formations of the Oxford Clay whereas the West Walton Formation underlies the eastern section.

Topography A small ridge extending out from the higher claylands in the east sloping down towards the vale and Claydon Brook in the west. The eastern end of the ridge is at a height of about 120m AOD whilst at the western extremity it has dropped to around 90m AOD and peters out into the river valley.

Hydrology The only stream - a meandering tributary of the Claydon Brook is found in a few fields to the west of Winslow. There are also a couple of springs on the edges of the area. The parkland around Addington contains two small lakes.

Land use and settlement This area is more settled than most of the surrounding countryside. It contains the town of Winslow and the unexpanded villages of Swanbourne and Addington. Busy roads radiate out of Winslow.

The field pattern is predominantly small to medium sized in a fairly irregular pattern. The use of the fields is mixed with more pasture on the edges of Winslow. Farms are less dispersed than is typical elsewhere in this part of the Aylesbury Vale and tend to be set back some distance from roads. Most farms have adjacent small woodlands. There is an equestrian centre at Addington Manor.

Tree cover The tree cover is higher than in most of the surrounding landscape. The hedgerow quality varies but is generally strong. Some are unmanaged forming tall strong hedges occasionally reaching the height of mature trees whilst others are regularly clipped and contain mature oak and ash. Small copses have been allowed to develop in some field corners. Woodland is generally in the form of very small blocks often adjacent to farms. The largest woodlands form part of the designed parkland around Addington Manor.

Biodiversity The Winslow Ridge is dominated by grassland habitat which is mostly improved although in the west there is a very small area of neutral grassland. This is a broad habitat type as is the much more frequently found broadleaved woodland present in small blocks throughout both parts of the ridge. Priority habitat types are restricted to a small area of eutrophic standing water of the South Lake at Addington in the west ridge, and the parkland at Swanbourne in the east ridge. Elsewhere standing water is limited. Habitat connectivity is good due to the strong hedgerow system.

Arable land is much less prevalent compared to other parts of the

LCA 4.12 Winslow Ridge (LCT 4)

District and is found mainly in the eastern ridge.

Historic environment There is little evidence for pre-medieval occupation. The main focus of archaeological interest is in the historic town of Winslow and at Shipton where a Saxon cemetery and medieval hamlet is recorded. The A413, called the Portway in 1599, shows signs of an early medieval diversion to link into Winslow High Street leaving a relict lane running west to join the B4032 north of Shipton. Swanbourne has a conservation area with stone and timber-framed brick infilled vernacular houses surrounded by fields of ridge and furrow and fossilised strip fields. The historic landscape in this area is a mix of parliamentary enclosure and pre 18th century enclosure which is mainly in the west. The parliamentary enclosure at Shipton was unusually early (1745) and has a more irregular layout than normal probably reflecting the pre-existing pattern of open field furlongs. The parkland around Addington and Swanbourne is a major feature of the area. A sizeable amount in the centre of Winslow is considered a historic settlement although there is substantial new development around it. There is an area of pre 18th century meadow to the north of Swanbourne. This area is also associated with the Whaddon Chase hunt, and the larger woodlands such as Canada near Foxhole Farm and Spring Corner were utilised as fox coverts. The area has retained its historic field pattern well with little recent enclosure or prairie farming.

Designations

Conservation Areas at Swanbourne (2), Shipton
Archaeological Notification Areas – 9 No.
BNS – 4 No.

LCA 4.12 Winslow Ridge (LCT 4)



View of Abovemead Farm and adjacent small woodland.



Sharp transition between countryside and residential areas on the edge of Winslow.

LCA 4.12 Winslow Ridge (LCT 4)

Summary of Condition/Sensitivity Analysis

Condition	Very Good
Pattern of elements:	Limited
Visual detractors:	Few
Visual unity:	Strongly unified
Cultural integrity:	Good
Ecological integrity:	Strong
Functional integrity:	Very good

Sensitivity	Moderate
Distinctiveness:	Distinct
Continuity:	Historic
Sense of place:	Moderate
Landform:	Apparent
Tree cover:	Intermittent
Visibility:	Moderate

Guidelines	Conserve and Reinforce
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Condition

Generally a landscape in very good condition. The hedgerow pattern is variable but with local sections of mature hedgerows largely unmanaged. The pattern of elements remains limited in scope but with few detracting features. Overall the visual unity of the area is unified due in part to the distribution of woodland cover, which is comparatively high around Addington and throughout the area there are very small woodlands often close to farms. Notably the quality of the landscape around Winslow is good showing few signs of neglect or deterioration. The cultural integrity is considered good due to the strong field pattern with small to medium and fairly irregular fields and attractive historic settlements. Ecological integrity is strong due to good connectivity and relatively large areas of designated sites and

habitats of District significance. Within the context of a landscape which is not intensively managed, the functional integrity of the landscape is considered to be very good.

Sensitivity

The landscape is of distinctive character and good quality in a comparatively settled agricultural area. Overall the sense of place is considered to be moderate with local evidence of historic continuity. The landform is apparent and towards the edges of the area there are views out over the surrounding lower ground. The tree cover is variable but with intermittent copses. Woodland cover is strongest around Addington. Mature trees in clipped hedgerows are a feature of the area with some landmark trees. Visibility is variable depending on the location and is rated as moderate. Overall the moderate strength of character combined with the moderate visibility gives the landscape a moderate degree of sensitivity.



Small timber building.

LCA 4.12 Winslow Ridge (LCT 4)

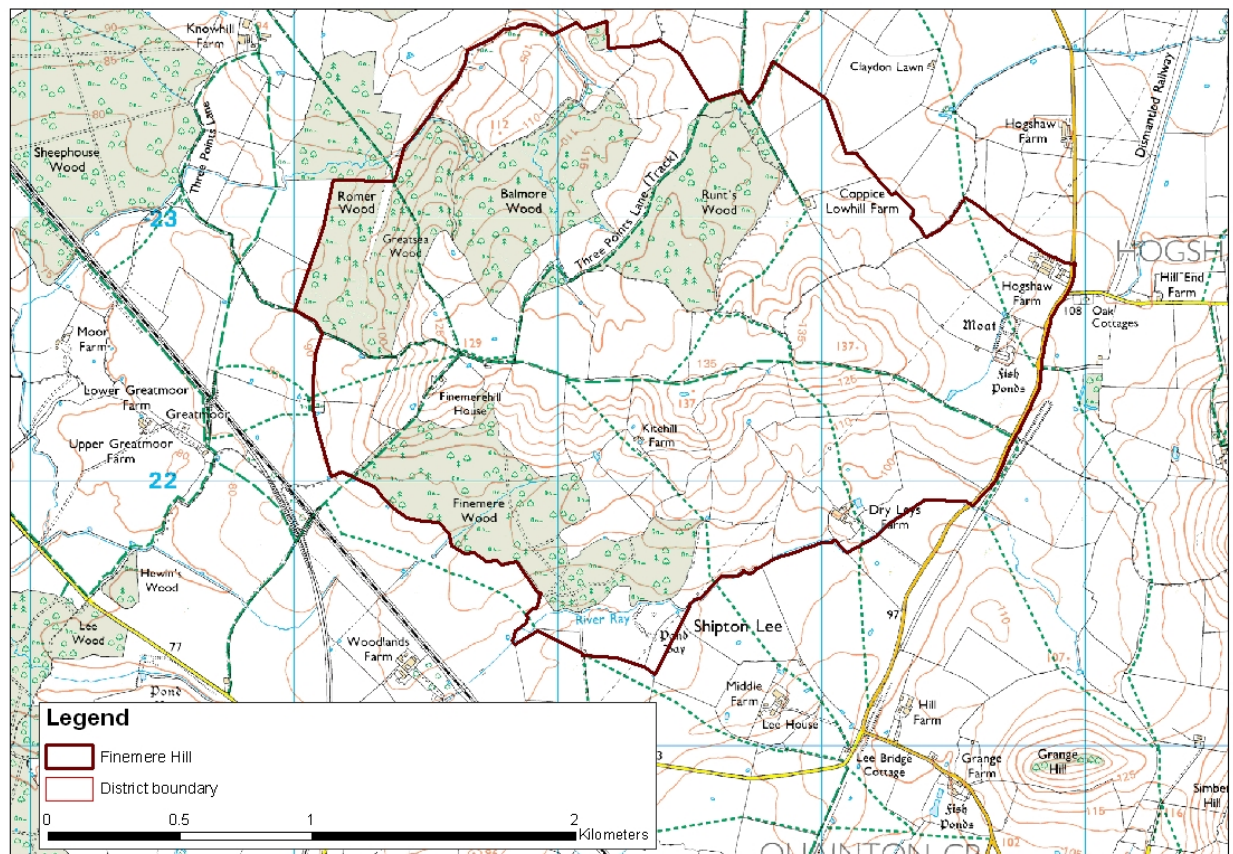
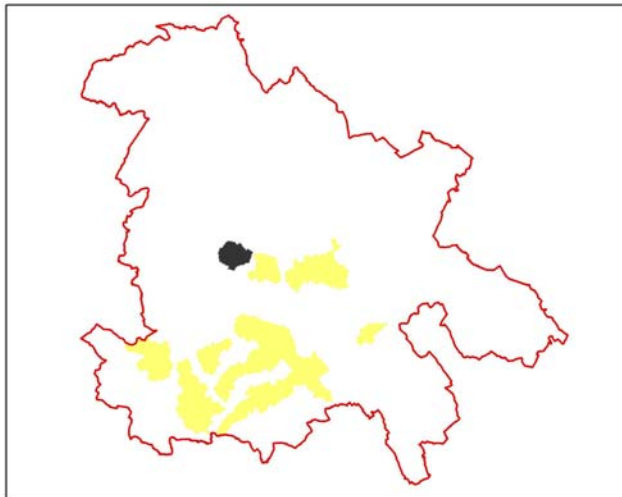
Landscape Guidelines Conserve and Reinforce

Guidelines for the Winslow Ridge are as follows:

- Conserve agricultural land use on suburban fringes and discourage inappropriate use.
- Conserve the pattern of irregular shaped fields and mature hedgerows.
- Encourage the establishment of new hedgerow trees where hedgerows are clipped.
- Encourage management of small woodlands adjacent to farms.
- Maintain connectivity of habitats and aim to increase connectivity of woodlands where possible.
- Encourage the conservation of older agricultural buildings
- Recognise the significance of the ridge and furrow and fossilised strips at Swanbourne in relation to the conservation area.
- Encourage the survey, management and conservation of Historic Parks and Gardens.

LCA 9.1 Finemere Hill

Landscape Character Type: LCT 9 Wooded Rolling Lowlands



LCA 9.1 Finemere Hill (LCT 9)

Key Characteristics

- Hill with steep sides particularly to the south
- Very high level of woodland cover
- Source of several streams including the river Ray
- Predominantly grassland, half of which is unimproved
- Good Rights of Way network following distinctive historic tracks
- Ancient woodland with probable assarts.

Distinctive Features

- Views from the top of hill
- Views of Waddesdon Manor parkland
- Finemerehill House
- Woodland flora
- Ponds on top of hill
- Medieval moat, fishponds and ridge and furrow
- Large blocks of woodland
- Calcareous grassland
- Watershed

Intrusive Elements

- Pylon line
- Small area of prairie farming

Location A small hill on the western side of the district to the southwest of Winslow and north of the A41.

Landscape character A hill, which is most distinct where it rises from lower ground to the south, and is notable for its very high density of woodland cover, the majority of which is ancient woodland. The majority of the rest of the area retains a pre 18th century enclosure pattern and has good strong hedgerows around small irregular fields. Although in places the hedgerow pattern has been lost or the hedgerows are very fragmented. The only settlement in the area is a few scattered farms and Finemere Hill house close to the top of the hill and a local landmark. There is no road access to the area but a good network of Public Rights of Way. The bridleway along the top of the hill affords panoramic views. The area has great visual appeal this largely relates to the landform, high level of woodland cover and long distance views. In some locations particularly on the top of the hill or within woodland there is a remote and wild character.

Geology Weymouth calcareous mudstone in the west and West Walton calcareous mudstone in the east. The area is covered with a cap of till and glacial deposits.

Topography The hill has strong steep slopes on the southern side but the surrounding land on the other sides is higher so the hill landform is less steeply. This is particularly evident in views from the north within Claydon Bowl LCA 7.3. There is a small flat ridge along the top of the hill. The elevation ranges from around 135m to 85m AOD.

Hydrology There are no major watercourses within the area. Several streams arise from the steep sides. The stream on the south of the hill is the source of the river Ray. The top of the hill marks the change in water catchments between water that falls to the south and the river Thames and then the Thames and precipitation that falls to the north and drains into the Great Ouse and out to the Wash. There are several ponds including some on top of the hill.

Land use and settlement Besides the large area of woodland this is a mixed agricultural landscape with more grassland and about half of this is unimproved. The area has no villages but a scattering of farms most of these are on the lower slopes but Kitehill Farm and Finemerehill House are situated close to the top of the hill on its more dramatic southern side. Finemerehill House is a feature in views from below being a small brick house with tall chimneys, situated at the top of steep slopes surrounded by woodland. There are no roads through the area but a network of footpaths and bridleways crosses it. The bridleway across the ridge top has exhilarating panoramic views across lower ground, with Waddesdon Manor woodland being a key feature in these views.

Tree cover The area has a very high level of woodland cover at about 40% most of this is broadleaved but about a quarter is coniferous. The woodland is predominantly on the western end of the hill. Finemere Wood has rich ground flora and is a Wildlife Trust Reserve managed as oak standards with coppice. Much of the woodland is ancient in origin.

The tree cover within hedgerows is generally good although the eastern side has an area with few hedgerow trees.

LCA 9.1 Finemere Hill (LCT 9)

Biodiversity Almost one third of Finemere Hill is covered in woodland habitats, both broadleaved and coniferous, which is distributed mainly in the western half and includes all three priority and broad habitat types found within the District. Finemere Wood is an SSSI and the designation corresponds to the area of ancient woodland. The nearby woodlands of Runts Wood, Balmore Wood, Greatsea Wood and Romer Wood are all designated as CWSs and are also ancient woodlands displaying a range of habitat and species. Further ancient woodlands are present close by within LCA 7.3 Claydon Bowl making this an important concentration of woodland habitat within the District.

The rest of the habitat is comprised largely of grassland grouped in blocks to the northwest, to the east and a central block, whilst arable land is grouped centrally. The grassland includes calcareous and unimproved pasture, with calcareous grassland restricted to the south.

With the exception of standing water, there is little other natural habitat.

Historic environment This area was part of the medieval hunting forest of Bernwood. This would have been a mixed agricultural landscape of woodland rough grazing land shared out between nearby settlements and arable open fields. The historical connection with Bernwood Forest is emphasised by the large surviving blocks of ancient woodland, which makes up a quarter of the landscape. Woodlands such as Finemere Wood, has lost a proportion of its broadleaf character through coniferous replanting. The other significant characteristic of landscape is the irregular shaped fields, some of which are assarts, created as a result of woodland clearance in medieval period. It is likely historically this area was influenced by land improvement by the Verneys at Middle Claydon. About 80% of this area is likely to represent woodland and enclosure that is pre 18th century in origin. There are small areas of later enclosure and secondary woodland and some recent enclosure and prairie farming on the north side.

There are no nucleated settlements - the historic settlement pattern is one of isolated farmsteads. The only listed building is the 19th century Finemerehill House. In terms of the archaeological dimension the area contains some well preserved ridge and furrow, fishponds and also contains the earthworks of a moated site and church at Hogshaw Farm which originated as a preceptory of the Knights Hospitaller. St. John's Church was destroyed in the English Civil War.

The area has a high amenity value, there are numerous rights of way which follow the distinctive pattern historic routes winding into the centre of this area and are actively promoted through the Bernwood Jubilee Way guides.

Designations

Scheduled Ancient Monuments: Moated site NW of St Leonards Church,
Moated Site

Archaeological Notification Areas – 6 No.

SSSI: Finemere Wood

CWS – 4 No.

LCA 9.1 Finemere Hill (LCT 9)



View looking up to Finemere Hill from the south, Finemerehill House is just visible on the left hand side.



The southern side of the ridge is predominantly woodland and pasture with dramatic views to woodland of the Waddesdon Manor parkland and the Chiltern escarpment on the horizon.

LCA 9.1 Finemere Hill (LCT 9)

Summary of Condition/Sensitivity Analysis

Condition	Very Good
Pattern of elements:	Unified
Visual detractors:	Few
Visual unity:	Strongly unified
Cultural integrity:	Good
Ecological integrity:	Moderate
Functional integrity:	Strong

Sensitivity	High
Distinctiveness:	Distinct
Continuity:	Historic
Sense of place:	Moderate
Landform:	Dominant
Tree cover:	Intermittent
Visibility:	High

Guidelines	Conserve
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Condition

The landscape of this area is generally in a very good condition there is a unified pattern of woodland and hedgerows across the strong landform. The only real visual detractors are the pylon line on the eastern side and the small areas of prairie farming which fragment the sense of unity. Overall the landscape is considered to be strongly unified. The cultural integrity is good with a good sense of history from the hedgerow pattern, ancient woodland and archaeological interest. The sense of historic continuity is enhanced by the lack of roads but good historically-based rights of way network. Additionally woodland that is being managed with the traditional method of coppice with standards gives strong historic associations. Ecological integrity is moderate because of the areas of designated sites and broad habitats of District

significance present relative to the rest of the District, and because connectivity is not at a maximum. The good cultural integrity and moderate ecological integrity combine to give the area a strong functional integrity.

Sensitivity

This area has a distinct landscape character from the variety and quality of landscape features it also has a good sense of historic continuity giving it a moderate sense of place. The landform is a dominant feature in the character of the area. Although the area has a much higher level of woodland cover than in most of the surrounding countryside the tree cover is considered to be intermittent as there are large areas where the only cover is from fairly widely spaced hedgerow trees. This gives the area a high level of visibility. Overall the moderate sense of place and the high visibility combine to give a landscape of high sensitivity.



The northern side of the ridge has more arable farming amongst large areas of woodland.

LCA 9.1 Finemere Hill (LCT 9)

Landscape Guidelines Conserve

The landscape guidelines for Finemere Hill are as follows:

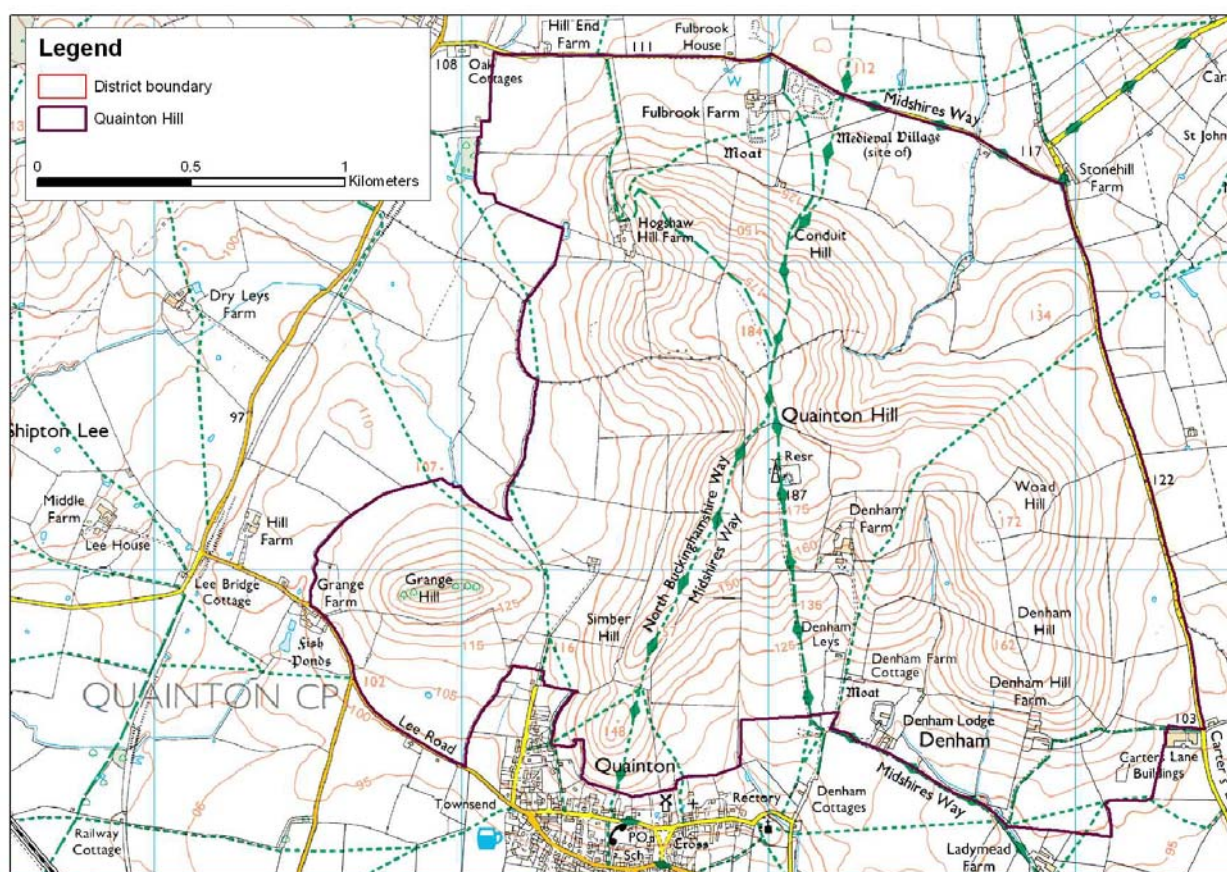
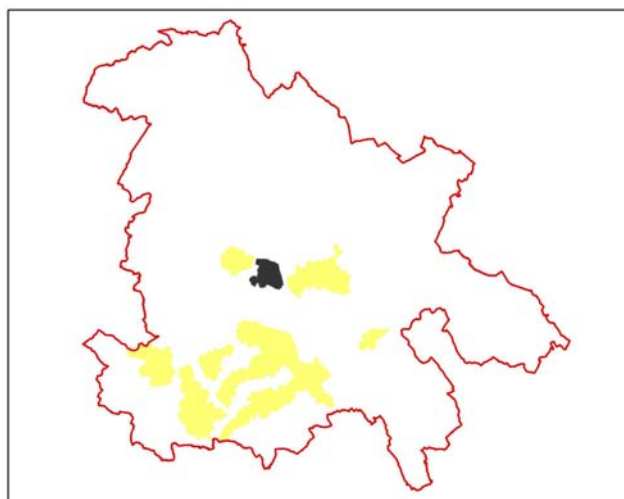
- Encourage the retention and strengthening of the existing historic hedgerow pattern with new hedgerow trees, predominantly oak.
- Encourage the restoration of the historic hedgerow pattern where it has been lost. To enhance the landscape character and strengthen connectivity of habitats. Where necessary use historic maps to identify where hedgerows have been lost.
- Maintain and improve condition of existing hedgerows through traditional cutting regimes.
- Maintain the condition and extent of woodland using traditional techniques to create and manage a wide diversity of habitats.
- Maintain the existing extent of the calcareous grassland.
- Promote connectivity of habitats, particularly the calcareous grassland and woodland.
- Maintain the distinctive pattern of historic routeways.
- Support and promote recreational access by footpaths and bridleways to the hill.
- Promote information and understanding about the historic importance and appropriate management of historic woodland features such as irregular edges, assarts, banks and ditches.
- Maintain the sparsely settled remote character of the landscape.
- Retain and enhance views from publicly accessible land.
- Ensure the preservation of archaeological earthworks by maintaining grassland.



The hill is well served by bridleways and footpaths.

LCA 9.2 Quainton Hill

Landscape Character Type: LCT 9 Low Hills and Ridges



LCA 9.2 Quainton Hill (LCT 9)

Key Characteristics

- Prominent network of hills
- Pastoral land use
- Long distance views over surrounding countryside
- Area is exposed in winter
- Incised steep sided valleys
- Narrow ridges and promontories
- Lack of woodland cover
- Ridge and furrow

Distinctive Features

- Streams draining off the hill
- Historic earthworks and former moated settlements
- Mature hedgerows and hedgerow trees
- Irregular shaped field pattern
- Dominance of grassland

Intrusive Elements

- Telecommunication masts
- Underground water storage infrastructure

Location The LCA comprises a distinctive and prominent group of smaller hills clustered around Quainton Hill.

Landscape character Directly north of the village of Quainton, slopes are steep and the predominant land use is grazing. The hill tops are exposed and are used for water storage (reservoir). The area is unsettled except for some local farmsteads however, Quainton village (not within the LCA) sits on lowest slopes of southern edge. There are long distance views over surrounding open countryside including to Waddesdon. Quainton Windmill, located within Quainton is a local landmark and in the foreground of views to the south. The area is popular with recreational walkers being on the route of the North Buck Way long distance footpath.

Geology Quainton Hill is made up of Kimmeridge clay capped by a layer of Portland stone and Whitchurch sand. The surrounding lower slopes are part of the wider calcareous mudstone formations.

Topography The highest point on Quainton Hill is noted at 187m AOD (Triangulation point). Grange Hill, Simber Hill, Woad Hill and Denham Hill are slightly lower. The land drops away on all sides to an average level of approximately 100m AOD along the southern edge and an average level of 110m AOD along the northern edge.

Hydrology The slopes of Quainton Hill have been eroded by small streams which drain in a variety of directions. There are also a number of small ponds dispersed over the sides of the hill. To the north at Fulbrook Farm and to the south at Denham Lodge are old moats. Both sites were spring fed by water from the hill. The top of Quainton Hill is occupied by an underground water storage reservoir.

Land use and settlement Predominantly pastoral land use. Dispersed farmsteads.

Tree cover No woodlands but oak and ash hedgerow trees.

Biodiversity The range of habitat at Quainton Hill is limited as it is almost exclusively grassland, about two thirds of which is improved but one third is unimproved. Aquatic habitats are limited to very small occurrences of standing water relating to the moated sites and a small number of minor streams. Hedgerows often tall and with trees, subdivide the landscape and provide additional habitat and biodiversity potential especially where linked to the streams.

There are no biodiversity designations and no priority habitat types are recorded.

Historic environment This landscape was part of Bernwood Forest in the early 13th century. Bernwood had been a hunting ground from the time of Edward the Confessor. Although today forests are synonymous with woodland, this part of Bernwood has historically been an open landscape of arable or pasture. The landscape contains a mixture of pre 18th century enclosure, parliamentary enclosure and 19th century enclosures. There are some prairie fields to the north east of the area as result of boundary loss. The landscape contains no substantial settlements; there are isolated farmsteads with listed buildings at Fulbrook Farm and Denham Lodge.

By contrast the area contains a wealth of archaeology. The most prominent

LCA 9.2 Quainton Hill (LCT 9)

are the earthworks of ridge and furrow that are found throughout the landscape; these are amongst the finest surviving examples to be found in England. Associated with these former open field earthworks are two deserted settlements, the first is located at Denham Lodge, although the present house dates to the 17th century, it was built on the site of the medieval manor house. There is a complex of features around it, including fishponds and house platforms to the north, a 16th century gatehouse on the south arm of the moat, and the brick walls of a deer park enclosure. The second site is to the north of the area at Fulbrook Farm where the earthworks of a former moated site can be seen. Another notable site in the area is the discovery of a cemetery at Woad Hill, the date of which is unknown. The landscape has a good amenity value with a number of publicised Rights of Way running through it including the Bernwood Jubilee Way.

Designations

Scheduled Ancient Monuments: Deserted Village, Deserted Village Denman Lodge

Archaeological Notification Areas – 8 No.

LCA 9.2 Quainton Hill (LCT 9)



Quainton Hill seen from the north.



Quainton Hill seen from the south.

LCA 9.2 Quainton Hill (LCT 9)

Summary of Condition/Sensitivity Analysis

Condition	Good
Pattern of elements:	Unified
Visual detractors:	Few
Visual unity:	Strongly unified
Cultural integrity:	Good/Weak
Ecological integrity:	Coherent
Functional integrity:	

Sensitivity	High
Distinctiveness:	Distinct
Continuity:	Historic
Sense of place:	Moderate
Landform:	Dominant
Tree cover:	Intermittent
Visibility:	High

Guidelines	Conserve
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Condition

The condition of the landscape is considered to be good. The irregular pattern of pastoral fields is supported by mature hedgerows over a distinctive steeply sloping landform. These factors support the assessment of a unified pattern of elements and contribute to a strong sense of visual unity. There are few visual detractors other than the telecommunications mast on top of the hill and the underground reservoir. Cultural integrity is good and there are a number of moated sites and earthworks and extensively well preserved ridge and furrow found throughout the area. Ecological integrity is considered to be weak due to sub-optimal connectivity and low areas of designated sites and habitats of District significance. Functional integrity is coherent.

Sensitivity

The dominance of the landform combined with the strong field pattern contributed to the area's distinctiveness. There is good historic continuity supported by the intrinsic rural character and lack of development pressure. Sense of place is considered to be moderate. Tree cover is a feature of the hedgerow network however it is not consistent and is considered to be intermittent. The elevation of the hill over the surrounding areas allows for high visibility and long distance views. Overall the sensitivity of the area is considered to be high.

LCA 9.2 Quainton Hill (LCT 9)

Landscape Guidelines Conserve

The landscape guidelines for Quainton Hill are as follows:

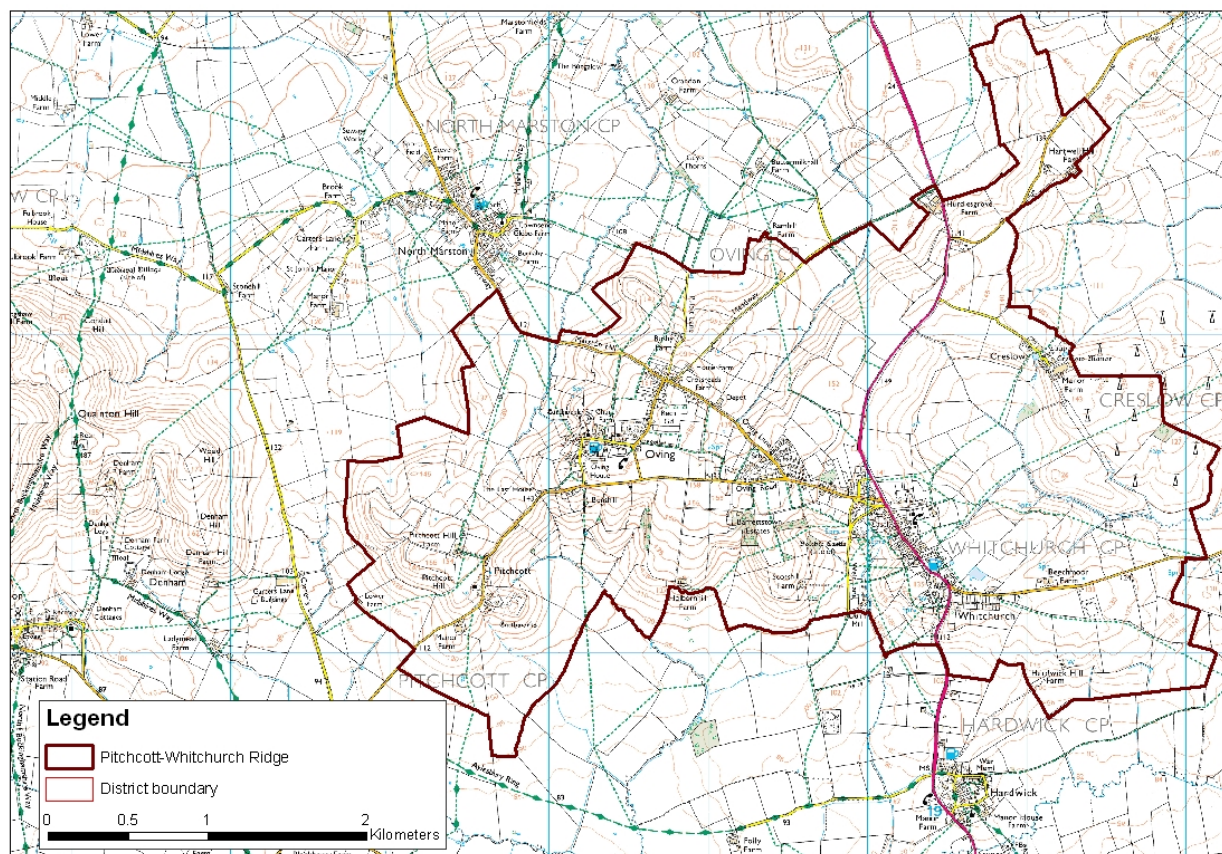
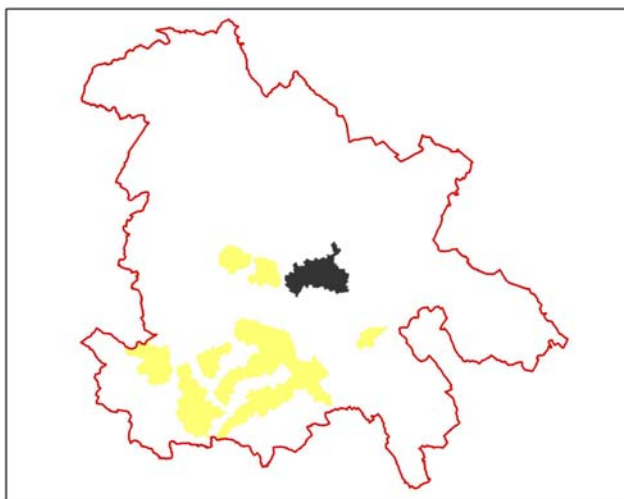
- Conserve the extensive network of hedgerows and tree cover.
- Strengthen the field pattern especially around the northern slopes of the hill by planting up gaps and encouraging development of hedgerow trees.
- Conserve existing pattern or irregular shaped fields.
- Improve the management of historic meadows and pastures where they have been 'poached' due to intensive stock pressure.
- Preserve the open character of the hill where it facilitates long distance views over the surrounding countryside.
- Preserve and manage the rights of way to facilitate pedestrian access to the hill and its importance as a link to the Midshires Way long distance path.
- Encourage the preservation of historic earthworks and ridge and furrow by maintaining a continuous grass sward.
- Maintain and improve connectivity.



The open grassland landscape of Grange Hill.

LCA 9.3 Pitchcott-Whitchurch Ridge

Landscape Character Type: LCT 9 Low Hills and Ridges



LCA 9.3 Pitchcott-Whitchurch Ridge (LCT 9)

Key Characteristics

- Broad ridge eroded by network of small streams
- Gently rolling landform with distinctive local promontories
- Predominantly pastoral land use
- Small fields enclosed by mature hedges
- Extensive settlement along top of ridge
- Long distance views over surrounding landscape

Distinctive Features

- Church towers
- Large area of arable land north of Whitchurch adjacent to A413 corridor
- Historic earthworks of Bolbec castle
- Mature woodland around earthworks to west of Whitchurch
- Limestone walls and thatched properties
- Timber framed buildings
- Thatched roofs
- Ridge and Furrow
- Creslow

Intrusive Elements

- Traffic on A413
- Horse paddocks

Location The ridge is located to the north of Aylesbury and the LCA includes the three settlements of Pitchcott, Oving and Whitchurch. It is crossed by the A413. To the south the ridge defines the northern extent of the Northern Vale LCA.

Landscape character This is an extensive prominent ridge with rolling landform, predominantly in pastoral land use where the settlement is concentrated on the ridge tops. Earthworks support evidence of earlier historic settlement. The overgrown hedges contain mature trees and eroded valleys draining off the ridge are distinctive features. There are distant views in all directions and the church towers are local landmarks. Some settlements have stone walls and thatched roofs but buildings are predominantly of brick and tile construction. There has been some local development with intensive land use as horse paddocks.

Geology The Pitchcott to Whitchurch Ridge is made up of Kimmeridge clay capped by Purbeck and Portland stone and Whitchurch sand. There is also, on the lower eastern slopes, a capping of glacial till and other glacial deposits.

Topography The landform is a prominent ridge. The highest ground levels at 150 – 160m AOD cover the central section of the ridge and extend from the village of Oving to the western edge of Whitchurch. Pitchcott at the western edge of the ridge sits at an elevation of between 130 -150m AOD whilst to the east, the south eastern edge of Whitchurch is also lower at circa 130m AOD.

Hydrology The area is a local watershed with streams draining to the north into the Claydon Brook catchment which flows in the river Ouse. Streams that flow south from the ridge and east from Whitchurch collect together to flow into the river Thames catchment.

Land use and settlement The predominant land use is grazing land but with a large area of arable land north of Whitchurch.

Tree cover Several blocks of broadleaved woodland are present west of Whitchurch. Species are predominantly oak and ash with some pine.

Biodiversity The area is largely grassland, but it also contains significant areas of arable habitat. Most of the grassland forms a continuous block with grassland in adjacent LCAs. It is mainly improved, but also present are improved grasslands and an area of the broad habitat type neutral grassland to the west of Whitchurch and the subject of site BNS designation.

Other habitats are restricted to a very small amount of broadleaved woodland scattered throughout the Pitchcott-Whitchurch Ridge and concentrated in the central part, and to the streams and ponds – all broad habitat types. Further habitat interest and biodiversity potential is provided by the mature tree cover associated with the settlements and by the hedgerows again often with mature trees.

Historic environment A complex area with a multi-layered history of enclosure. The LCA is covered by a mosaic of pre 18th century enclosure and subsequent 19th century and parliamentary enclosure in varying sized parcels covering the whole area. This also includes a scattering of 20th century enclosure land principally around the edges of the settlement. There are also some prairie fields north of Whitchurch adjacent to the A413 corridor.

The settlement pattern comprises the nucleated linear village of Whitchurch,

LCA 9.3 Pitchcott-Whitchurch Ridge (LCT 9)

the village of Oving and the hamlets of Pitchcott & Creslow. Both Whitchurch and Oving are designated as conservation areas and contain a high concentration of listed buildings many of them timber framed. Whitchurch contains a number of fine medieval buildings including 'The Old House' and 'Priory hotel' and also the 13th century church of St John the Evangelist. Also of note is the prominent 14th century cruck built house at Creslow, which is one of the oldest vernacular buildings in the county. In addition to the older historic buildings, Whitchurch has a late nineteenth century country house called 'the Firs' that was used during the war for experimental development of munitions and known as 'Churchill's Toyshop'.

Apart from the richness of the built environment, the landscape also contains a good concentration of archaeological sites, some of which are designated as scheduled ancient monuments. The most outstanding are the earthworks of Bolbec castle at Whitchurch, this is a motte and bailey castle thought to date to the 12th century. At Creslow there are the remains of a deserted medieval settlement, while there are shrunken village earthworks at Pitchcott. To the north of Oving church there are the earthworks of a defensive ring work which is thought to be a part of a medieval manor. The landscape also has some good surviving ridge and furrow; particularly fine examples are to be found in the parish of North Marston and around the settlements of Creslow and Pitchcott. Although there is a bias towards medieval and post medieval archaeology, there is some evidence for Roman occupation south of Pitchcott while at Oving there is evidence for Iron Age site north of the village,

This area has good amenity value, the heritage of Whitchurch is visibly promoted with a number of walks and illustrated information boards placed at various points in the village; Oving also has signage promoting the settlement's past. The landscape is served by a number of Rights of Way. When considering the nature of the topography at Whitchurch the elevation makes the church towers visible from a distance either side of the ridge.

Designations

Conservation Areas at Whitchurch, Oving (2)

Scheduled Ancient Monuments: Deserter Village, Bolebec Castle (2)

Archaeological Notification Areas – 12 No.

BNS – 4 No.

LCA 9.3 Pitchcott-Whitchurch Ridge (LCT 9)



Pastoral fields north of Oving village.



Redundant church at Pitchcott now a private dwelling.

LCA 9.3 Pitchcott-Whitchurch Ridge (LCT 9)

Summary of Condition/Sensitivity Analysis

Condition	Good
Pattern of elements:	Unified
Visual detractors:	Few
Visual unity:	Strongly Unified
Cultural integrity:	Good
Ecological integrity:	Weak
Functional integrity:	Coherent

Sensitivity	High
Distinctiveness:	Distinct
Continuity:	Historic
Sense of place:	Moderate
Landform:	Dominant
Tree cover:	Intermittent
Visibility:	High

Guidelines	Conserve
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Condition

Overall the condition of the landscape is considered to be good. The ridge represents the boundary between the Vale landscape to the south and the rolling landscape of shallow valleys and eroded clay plateau to the north. The general pattern of elements is considered to be unified. There are few visual detractors, notably these are mainly associated with small pockets of horse paddocks enclosed by post and rail fencing concentrated around the fringes of the main settlements. Cultural integrity is good as disruption of field pattern is minimal. The landscape also contains several historic settlements and some significant archaeological sites. Ecological integrity is weak due to poor connectivity and a lack of designated sites and habitats of District significance. Overall the functional integrity is very coherent.

Sensitivity

The area has a distinctive character deriving from the relationship of the ridge to the surrounding landform. There is a perception of historic continuity and the sense of place is considered to be moderate. The degree of visibility increases with the elevation of the ridge above the lower slopes to the north and the Vale to the south. Tree covers is intermittent. Overall the degree of sensitivity is considered to be high.



Recent development at the southern end of the Pitchcott Ridge.

LCA 9.3 Pitchcott-Whitchurch Ridge (LCT 9)

Landscape Guidelines Conserve

The landscape guidelines for Pitchcott-Whitchurch Ridge are as follows:

- Conserve the extensive network of hedgerows and tree cover.
- Strengthen the field pattern around the arable areas to the north by planting up gaps in hedgerows and encouraging the development of hedgerow trees.
- Promote good woodland management to conserve the extent of woodland cover.
- Maintain and improve connectivity.
- Protect the integrity and vernacular character of the settlements.
- Encourage planting around suburban fringes in relation to new development.
- Conserve the sites and wider setting to the Scheduled Ancient Monuments and other Archaeological Notification Sites.
- Encourage the preservation of historic earthworks and ridge and furrow by maintaining a continuous grass sward.



Whitchurch - Garden walls in the local Shelley Purbeck limestone .