

South East Strategic Reservoir Option Preliminary Environmental Information Report

Appendix 9.1 - Project-level Landscape Character Assessment

Date: October 2025

Contents

1	Land	Landscape Character Assessment		
	1.1	Introduction	1	
	1.2	Approach	1	
	1.3	Methodology	2	
	1.4	Guidance	2	
	1.5	Desk study	3	
	1.6	Field survey	3	
	1.7	Classification and description	3	
	1.8	Changes to landscape character area boundaries	4	
	1.9	Study area and LCAs scoped in and out of the project-level character assessment	5	
2	Over	Overview of landscape character of the study area		
	2.2	Landscape context	7	
	2.3	Landscape designations	16	
	2.4	Landscape character of the Site	17	
	2.5	Published landscape character assessments	17	
3	Proje	Project-level landscape character assessment		
	3.1	LCA 1A: Wessex Downs Open Chalk Escarpment and Upper Slopes	21	
	3.2	LCA 6A: Wessex Downs Chalk Escarpment Footslopes	24	
	3.3	LCA 9B: Wantage to Didcot Vale Edge Slopes	27	
	3.4	LCA 9C: Milton Hill to Didcot Vale Edge Slopes	30	
	3.5	LCA 10A: Sinodun Lower Vale Hills	34	
	3.6	LCA 12B: Western Middle Vale	37	
	3.7	LCA 13A: Ock Lower Vale	40	
	3.8	LCA 13B Abingdon – Didcot Lower Vale	44	
	3.9	LCA 13C: East Thames Lower Vale	48	
	3.10	LCA 8A: Faringdon to Frilford Ridge Slope	52	
	3.11	LCA 7D: Oxford South Ridge Hilltops	55	
	3.12	LCA 14D: Abingdon to Kennington Thames Lower Valley	59	
	3.13	LCA 8B: Frilford to Sandford Ridge Slope	63	
	3.14	LCA 8C: Cumnor to Abingdon Ridge Slope	67	
	3.15	Townscape Character Area 01: Abingdon	70	
	3.16	Townscape Character Area 02: Didcot	72	
	3.17	Townscape Character Area 03: Wantage	74	
	3.18	Townscape Character Area 04: Grove	76	

4	Landscape receptors and their sensitivity	78
Refer	ences	84
List	of tables	
Toblo	1.1 Droiget level LCAs' variance from published LCAs	1
	e 1.1 Project-level LCAs' variance from published LCAs	
	4.1 Landscape Receptors considered in the preliminary assessment and their sensitivity	
rable	4.1 Landscape Receptors considered in the preliminary assessment and their sensitivity	. 19
List	of Plates	
Plate	1 Geology	7
	2 Topography	
	3 Hydrology	
	4 Biodiversity	
	5 Features of landcover within the study area	
	6 Designated heritage assets	
	7 Main settlements	
	8 Movement and connectivity	
	9 Location of the National Landscape	
	10 National Character Areas	
	11 Plan showing location and extents of LCA 1A	
	12 View north across the Vale from the Ridgeway of the North Wessex Downs	
	13 View from the Ridgeway towards the Harwell Science and Innovation Campus, and along the PRoW	
	14 Plan showing location and extents of LCA 6A	
	15 View across the landscape near East Lockinge	
	16 House at Hendred Estate, small business units within traditional buildings at East Lockinge and view	
	through the character area	. 26
Plate	17 Plan showing location and extents of LCA 9B	
	18 View to the vale from the The Vale Way north of West Hendred	
	19 Building at Lains Barn, Railway Bridge over Ardington Lane and wide view over the vale from the A41	
	Grove Park Drive junction	
Plate	20 Plan showing location and extents of LCA 9C	
	21 View north from Featherbed Lane	
	22 View from the A417 west of Harwell Village towards orchard and windbreak tree lines; barn at Harwel	
	Village; view through the area; looking east towards Didcot from Milton Hill	
Plate	23 Plan showing location and extents of LCA 10A	
	24 View north towards the River Thames from Wittenham Clumps	
Plate	25 Views towards Wittenham Clumps	. 36
	26 Plan showing location and extents of LCA 12B	
	27 View towards the National Landscape; buildings and village settings	
	28 Plan showing location and extents of LCA 13A	
	29 Nissen huts at Steventon Storage Depot; view north from Ardington Lane; silos and towers at	
	Willowbrook Farm (bottom left); view across the vale landscape	41
Plate	30 Plan showing location and extents of LCA 13B	. 44
Plate	31 View southwest from the Thames Path across the River Thames	45

Plate 32 View along Culham Cut; View towards Culham Village from the Thames Path (top right); view sou	th
across waterbody from Abingdon Marina; Thatched cottages at Drayton	47
Plate 33 Plan showing location and extents of LCA 13C	48
Plate 34 View north from Long Wittenham	49
Plate 35 Long distance views to Wittenham Clumps; thatched houses at Clifton Hamden; The Thames Pat	
National Trail; Thameside	
Plate 36 Plan showing location and extents of LCA 8A	52
Plate 37 View across the landscape east of Kingston Bagpuize	53
Plate 38 Pigs within fields west of Frilford; Housing expansion at Kingston Bagpuize; Ribboned retail adjace	
the A415; orchards at Woodhouse Fruit Farm	54
Plate 39 Plan showing location and extents of LCA 7D	55
Plate 40 View south across the landscape near Burcot Farm	
Plate 41 Local hedged lane; Nuneham Courtenay; St Peter's Church; Cottage at Marsh Baldon	58
Plate 42 Plan showing location and extents of LCA 14D	
Plate 43 Thatched cottage at Radley	61
Plate 44 Radley Lakes; View east towards the River Thames corridor; pylons crossing the landscape near	
Radley; Hedgerow and ditch near Radley	62
Plate 45 Plan showing location and extents of LCA 8B	63
Plate 46 Thatched houses at Tubney	65
Plate 47 Tubney Golf Course; fields and woodland; wooded edge of Farringdon Road; building at Cothill	66
Plate 48 Plan showing location and extents of LCA 8C	67
Plate 49 Abingdon Airfield	68
Plate 50 Landscape near Wootton	68
Plate 51 Plan showing location and extents of Townscape Character Area 01	70
Plate 52 Edge to the River Thames at Abingdon	71
Plate 53 Plan showing location and extents of Townscape Character Area 02	72
Plate 54 Didcot Railway Station; Didcot historic core; All Saints Parish Church	73
Plate 55 Plan showing location and extents of Townscape Character Area 03	74
Plate 56 Terrace within Wantage; view from Wantage Market Placeto St Oeter's & St Paul's Church; view	
towards the Ridgeway within the North Wessex Downs National Landscape from the urban exter	nsion
on the southern edge of Wantage	75
Plate 57 Plan showing location and extents of Townscape Character Area 04	76
Plate 58 Grove historic core: plantation east of Station Poad, Grove	77

1 Landscape Character Assessment

1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 This appendix presents the project-level landscape character assessment. It sets out the baseline character of the landscape within the study area, drawing from the published landscape character assessments. The project-level landscape character areas (LCAs) identified within this study are the landscape receptors for the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA).
- 1.1.2 Landscape character is defined by the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA3) (Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA), 2013) as "a distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse."
- 1.1.3 The purpose of the landscape character assessment is:
 - To define the receptors for the assessment of effects on landscape character in the LVIA
 - To describe and understand the landscape baseline of the study area as a basis for assessing effects
 - To inform the design, by:
 - Drawing out the valued features and highlighting key sensitivities to inform the design approach and detailed design for the Project
 - Identifying existing opportunities to enhance the landscape
 - Compiling baseline information on character to inform the Project's landscape strategy and design vision
 - Identifying precedents, landscape features and local vernacular from the wider landscape to inspire and inform the design of the Project.

1.2 Approach

- 1.2.2 A proportionate approach has been adopted for defining project-level LCAs, focussing on the landscapes that would potentially be significantly affected by the Project. The project-level LCAs are based on the LCAs in the South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse district Landscape Character Assessment (LUC, 2024), drawing on the National Character Area Profiles (Natural England, 2014) and the North Wessex Downs AONB Integrated Landscape Character Assessment (LUC, 2002) as relevant.
- 1.2.3 The district Landscape Character Assessment (LUC, 2024) is considered appropriate as a basis because it is a comprehensive and recent document which covers the whole study area. It has recently undergone public consultation and therefore the LCAs are considered to have been robustly defined. The scale of the LCAs in relation to the size and scale of the Site (i.e. the location of the Project) is considered appropriate, and the LCAs are considered to reasonably reflect the distinct character across the study area.
- 1.2.4 In some cases the project-level LCAs are unchanged from the district LCAs in both their extent and descriptions. In other cases the district LCAs have been altered in order to

make them more relevant to the Project and study area. Where the boundaries of the district LCA have been altered, this has been clearly stated within the introduction of each project-level LCA. Alterations to the district LCA have been made in the following ways:

- The National Character Area Profiles (Natural England, 2014) and the North Wessex Downs AONB Integrated Landscape Character Assessment (LUC, 2002) have been drawn on as relevant
- Boundaries of the LCAs have been adjusted to align with the Project study area where relevant
- Boundaries of two of the LCAs have been adjusted to better reflect the character of the landscape at a site-specific level
- Descriptions, key characteristics and valued features of the LCAs have been amended to remove references to elements not within the study area, or to add in site-specific observations identified during field work
- A section on relevant detractors within each of the LCAs has been added to provide a basis for identifying opportunities for enhancement within the Project design
- Design guidance has been added to identify potential opportunities for mitigation and enhancement to be considered as part of the iterative design process
- Settlements within the study area have been included within the relevant project-level LCA or, for larger settlements, as separate townscape character areas (TCAs).

1.3 Methodology

- 1.3.1 The requirement for a project-level landscape character assessment was discussed and agreed in July 2023 with landscape stakeholders through the Landscape and Visual Technical Liaison Group (TLG), comprising Natural England, North Wessex Downs National Landscape, the Environment Agency, South Oxfordshire District Council, Vale of White Horse District Council and Oxfordshire County Council. Site work and desk studies to support this assessment were initially undertaken in October 2023 and a project-level landscape character assessment was first prepared in December 2023 and was used to inform, from a landscape perspective: options appraisals, the development of design principles, on-going masterplanning, consideration of mitigation requirements and enhancement opportunities, and the EIA Scoping Report. The initial assessment acknowledged the anticipated joint South Oxfordshire District Council and Vale of White Horse District Council Landscape Character Assessment, which was subsequently published in September 2024, and the need for future updates to the project-level landscape character assessment.
- 1.3.2 The project-level landscape character assessment has subsequently been updated for the purpose of this PEI Report, informed by and aligned with the 2024 South Oxfordshire District Council and Vale of White Horse District Council Landscape Character Assessment, whilst also responding to feedback from the Landscape and Visual TLG, including the need to expand the area of coverage further east and west, add areas of urban settlement, and simplify / rationalise some of the area definitions to avoid repetition.

1.4 Guidance

1.4.1 The method for undertaking the project-level landscape character assessment follows guidance by Natural England. The key documents are listed below:

- An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment, Natural England (2014)
- Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA3), Landscape Institute and IEMA (2013)

1.5 Desk study

- 1.5.1 The first stage of the study involved developing a full understanding of the study area through reviewing the relevant published landscape character assessments and other relevant studies. These included:
 - National Character Area profiles (Natural England, 2014)
 - North Wessex Downs AONB Integrated Landscape Character Assessment (LUC, 2002)
 - South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Landscape Character Assessment
 - Tranquillity Assessment for South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse (LUC, 2024)
 - Lighting Design Guidance for South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse (Vale of White Horse District Council and South Oxfordshire District Council, 2024)
 - Dark Skies/ Light Impact Assessment Methodology Report for South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse (LUC, 2024)
- 1.5.2 The boundaries of the LCAs defined within the district landscape character assessment were reviewed alongside desktop survey of baseline data such as geology, topography, hydrology, land use, settlement, agricultural classification, historic landscape characterisation, biodiversity, aerial and OS base mapping. Any suggested refinements to the district LCA boundaries were noted to be verified in the field.

1.6 Field survey

- 1.6.1 Field surveys were carried out in February to April 2025. The field surveys focussed on obtaining perceptual aspects of character (such as tranquillity, movement, scenic qualities and noise), verifying desk study and recording valued features and negative qualities. The boundaries of the district landscape character assessment were reviewed to capture any changes since the previous assessment or refined so they are relevant to the Project.
- 1.6.2 Field survey observations were recorded with reference to previous assessments and field survey sheets, and through photographic record.

1.7 Classification and description

1.7.1 This stage involved finalising the boundaries of the LCAs and their names. Boundary lines represent a zone of transition from one landscape to another, and character rarely changes abruptly. Some of the published district LCA boundaries were amended to reflect site-specific features and characteristics, and to incorporate the settlements. Where boundaries of the project-level LCAs have been altered from the district LCAs, this has been noted in the accompanying text, and is explained further under Section 1.8 below. LCA names have not been amended at this stage in order to retain a consistency with the district landscape character assessment evidence base with which stakeholders are already familiar.

1.7.2 Key characteristics and valued features were recorded, based on the district LCAs but refined as needed to ensure all information contained in the project-level LCA is relevant to the Project and can be used as a basis for assessment in the LVIA. Detractors and design guidance were noted based on desktop study and field survey findings.

1.8 Changes to landscape character area boundaries

- 1.8.1 As noted above, some adjustments to the boundaries of project-level LCAs have been made, relative to the published district LCA boundaries. These have been due to three key considerations, i.e. the need to truncate some areas to align with our study area, the need to incorporate or add settlements where they had been excluded, and the need to make some refinements from our site-based assessment. Regarding the settlements, the approach taken has been to treat the four towns (Abingdon, Didcot, Wantage and Grove) as separate areas (due to their size and distinctiveness), but to incorporate the villages into the adjacent character area with which they have the strongest relationship.
- 1.8.2 Table 1.1 below summarises where changes have been made relative to the boundaries of the published LCAs.

Table 1.1 Project-level LCAs' variance from published LCAs

LCA reference no. and name		Variance from South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse LCAs (2024)
LCA 1A	Wessex Downs Open Chalk Escarpment and Upper Slopes	The eastern and western boundaries have been altered to extend only to the limits of the study area.
LCA 6A	Wessex Downs Chalk Escarpment Footslopes	The northern boundary has been altered to include the settlement of East Hendred, and the southern boundary altered to include Harwell Science and Innovation Park and to extend only to the limits of the study area.
LCA 7D	Oxford South Ridge Hilltops	The eastern boundary has been altered to extend only to the limits of the study area.
LCA 8A	Faringdon to Frilford Ridge Slope	The boundary has been altered to include the settlement of Kingston Bagpuize, and the eastern boundary curtailed to the limits of the study area.
LCA 8B	Frilford to Sandford Ridge Slope	The southern boundary has been altered to include the settlement of Marcham.
LCA 8C	Cumnor to Abingdon Ridge Slope	The western boundary has been altered to include the settlement of Wootton.
LCA 9B	Wantage to Didcot Vale Edge Slopes	There is no change to the boundary of this character area.
LCA 9C	Milton Hill to Didcot Vale Edge Slopes	The southern boundary has been altered to include the settlement of Harwell.
LCA 10A	Sinodun Lower Vale Hills	The eastern boundary has been altered to extend only to the limits of the study area.

LCA reference no. and name		Variance from South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse LCAs (2024)
LCA 12B	Western Middle Vale	The western boundary has been altered to include the settlement of Stanford in the Vale and curtailed to the limits of the study area. The eastern boundary has been amended to follow the A338 road (though including all of the settlement of East Hanney), to more closely reflect the character observed on site, with the landscape around the railway line being incorporated into LCA 13A
LCA 13A	Ock Lower Vale	The western boundary has been altered to follow the A338 (though excluding the settlement of East Hanney), to more closely reflect the character observed on site. Likewise, the southern boundary has been extended to include the landscape either side of the railway line. The eastern boundary has been amended to include the settlement of Steventon.
LCA 13B	Abingdon – Didcot Lower Vale	The western boundary has been altered to include the settlement of Drayton, and the southern boundary to include the settlements of Sutton Courtenay and Milton.
LCA 13C	East Thames Lower Vale	The eastern boundary has been altered to extend only to the limits of the study area.
LCA 14D	Abingdon to Kennington Thames Lower Valley	The northern boundary has been altered to include the settlement of Radley and the northeastern corner curtailed slightly to the limits of the study area.
TCA 01	Abingdon	New areas - not included within the Landscape Character Assessment for South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse
TCA 02	Didcot	
TCA 03	Wantage	
TCA 04	Grove	

1.9 Study area and LCAs scoped in and out of the project-level character assessment

- 1.9.1 The study area for the landscape character assessment is defined as a 10km radius from the toe of the proposed reservoir embankment; it is the same as for the LVIA and is described in more detail in Chapter 9: Landscape and visual, Section 9.4. An overview of scoped in project-level landscape character areas is provided in Figure 9.16: Landscape receptors.
- 1.9.2 Within the study area, several LCAs would have no, or extremely limited, intervisibility with the Project due to topography or intervening vegetation or built form, as illustrated on the zone of theoretical visibility (ZTV) Figures 9.4 9.10 of the PEI Report. In such cases, significant effects on the character of these areas would be very unlikely. In line with a proportionate approach to assessment, these LCAs have been scoped out and are therefore not presented within the project-level landscape character assessment.

1.9.3 A table showing the LCAs scoped out is presented below in Table 1.2, alongside an explanation for their exclusion. The project-level LCAs contained in the assessment are shown on Figure 9.3: Landscape character areas, of the PEI Report.

Table 1.2 LCAs scoped out of the project-level character assessment

LCA	Name	Justification
1B	Aston Upthorpe Downs Open Chalk Escarpment and Upper Slopes	Beyond Harwell and Harwell Campus. Extremely limited to no intervisibility due to landform, as illustrated by the ZTV and confirmed during field survey.
3A	Wessex Downs Open Chalk Dipslope	Extremely limited intervisibility due to landform, as illustrated by the ZTV and confirmed during field survey. Although the ZTV indicates small areas of intervisibility at Chain Hill, field survey confirmed intervening vegetation and built form restrict views The character of the Ridgeway is covered in LCA 1A.
7B	Oxford West Ridge Hilltops	Beyond Abingdon and extremely limited intervisibility due to landform, as illustrated by the ZTV and confirmed during field survey.
9A	Western Vale Edge Slopes	Beyond Wantage and extremely limited intervisibility due to landform, as illustrated by the ZTV and confirmed during field survey.
9D	East of Didcot Vale Edge Slopes	Beyond Didcot, Harwell and A34 and extremely limited intervisibility due to landform, as illustrated by the ZTV and confirmed during field survey.
9G	Northern Vale Edge Slopes	Beyond Corallian Limestone Ridge and extremely limited intervisibility due to landform, as illustrated by the ZTV and confirmed during field survey.
11B	Western Upper Vale	Beyond Wantage and extremely limited intervisibility due to landform, as illustrated by the ZTV and confirmed during field survey.
12A	Thames Middle Vale	Beyond Corallian Limestone Ridge and extremely limited intervisibility due to landform, as illustrated by the ZTV and confirmed during field survey.
13D	South Thames Lower Vale	Beyond Didcot and extremely limited intervisibility due to landform, as illustrated by the ZTV and confirmed during field survey.
14C	Botley to Kennington Thames River Valley	Beyond Abingdon and extremely limited intervisibility due to landform, as illustrated by the ZTV and confirmed during field survey.

2 Overview of landscape character of the study area

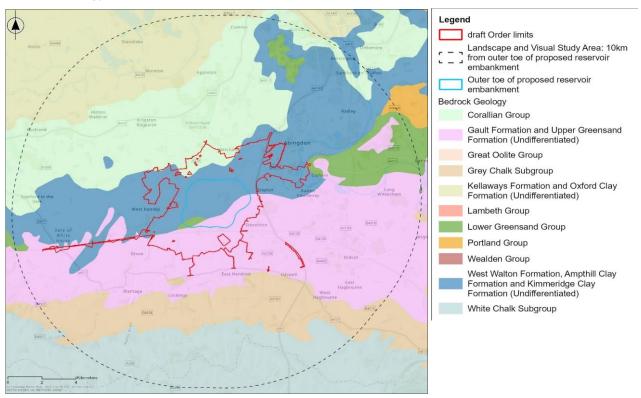
2.1.1 This section provides an overview of the physical, cultural and perceptual qualities of the study area, followed by a description of the designated landscapes, and lastly an overview of the LCAs in the published landscape character assessments within the study area (refer to paragraph 1.5.1). Refer to Figure 9.1 for an overview of the study area and the key features within it.

2.2 Landscape context

Geology

A band of clay stretches broadly east-west through the study area, resulting in a distinct low-lying, flat vale. A pronounced limestone ridge to north, known as the Corallian Limestone Ridge or Midvale Ridge defines the landscape to the north of the study area. The chalk to the south forms a dramatic scarp slope, rising to the rolling chalk downs of the North Wessex Downs National Landscape. Mineral extraction pits (sand and gravel) are a feature of the wider landscape, forming lakes between Abingdon and Didcot. The National Character Areas located within the study area are influenced by these three defining geological elements, and are shown in Plate 1. Further detail is provided within Chapter 10: Geology and soils and Figures 10.2 Superficial geology and 10.3 Bedrock geology.

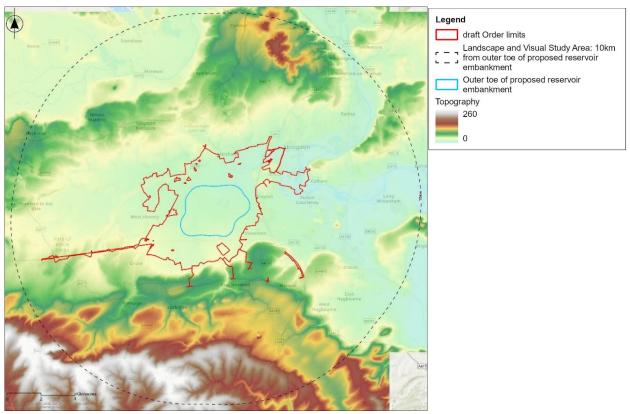
Plate 1 Geology



Topography

- 2.2.2 The topography of the Landscape and visual study area reflects the underlying geology and is illustrated in Plate 2. The low-lying, flat river valley and floodplain landscape of the clay vale is part of the Vale of White Horse. The Site sits in a relatively flat, shallow 'bowl' created by surrounding higher ground of the limestone ridge and the gently rising vale landscapes to the south, west and east.
- 2.2.3 To the north, gentle slopes of the limestone ridge form a high point at Pickett's Heath (164m) and Folly Hill (136m), forming a distinctive, often wooded, horizon. To the south, the land is gently undulating and rises gradually to the footslopes and then the scarp slope and ridgeline of the North Wessex Downs National Landscape.

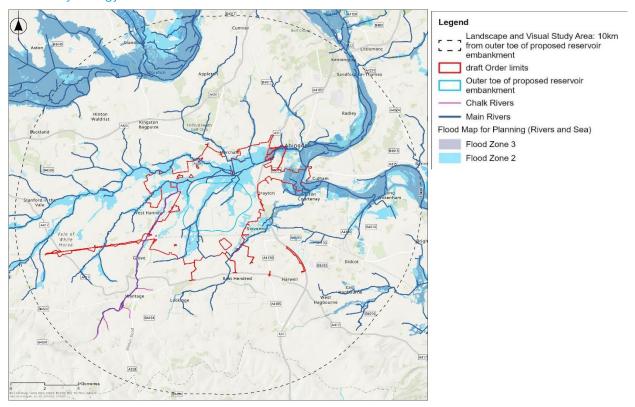
Plate 2 Topography



Hydrology

2.2.4 The study area is dominated by watercourses including the River Thames and its tributaries, forming a dense network of ditches, brooks and rivers. Plate 3 illustrates the key watercourses and flood zones within the study area. The floodplain of the River Ock (which flows east into the River Thames at Abingdon) is a key feature in the north of the Site. Flooding within the vale and surrounding settlements is a key issue in the local area. Watercourses that supply the Ock are sourced from the limestone ridge (north) and the spring lines on the North Wessex Downs escarpment. A series of ditches artificially drain agricultural fields. Many watercourses and their floodplains have been modified, including channel drains, for arable use and physical barriers such as weirs. Letcombe Brook is a chalk stream flowing south from the North Wessex Downs. Further detail is provided within Chapter 5: Water environment.

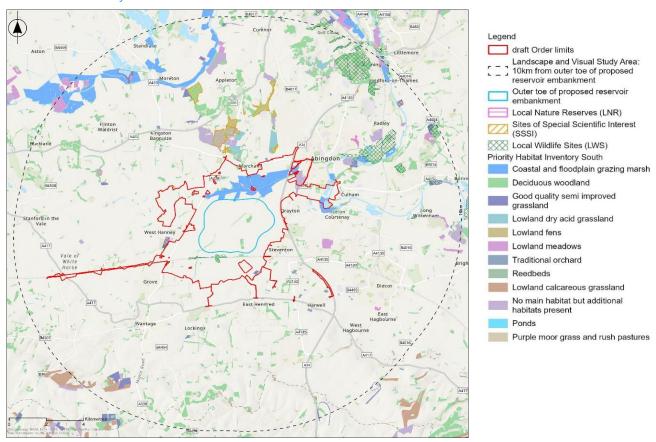
Plate 3 Hydrology



Biodiversity

- 2.2.5 Chapter 5: Water environment, Chapter 6: Aquatic ecology and Chapter 7: Terrestrial ecology provide further detail regarding the biodiversity within the area, including designations. An overview of key designations and habitats within the study area is shown on Plate 4. Key biodiversity influences on landscape character include a number of sites of special scientific interest (SSSI) and special areas of conservation (SAC) encompassing a group of fens to the north of the Site including Cothill Fen SSSI. Marcham salt spring local wildlife site (LWS), north of the Site, includes the remains of a rare inland salt spring. Hackpen Warren and Gramp's Hill Downs SSSI and SAC is designated for its unimproved chalk grassland reflecting the underlying chalk geology. Within and close to the Site there are small areas designated for ponds and woodland habitat (The Cuttings and Hutchins Copse) and traditional meadow (Cowslip Meadows). Floodplain grazing marsh is a key priority habitat within the north of the Site. Deciduous woodland habitats are relatively fragmented, and there are some potential small areas of wood pasture and parkland.
- 2.2.6 The Oxfordshire local nature recovery strategy (LNRS) illustrates the importance of the watercourses in the study area as corridors of connectivity, and the opportunity for enhancing these areas for future biodiversity gains. Overall habitat connectivity across the floodplains is fragmented, with large gaps absent of any identified core habitat.

Plate 4 Biodiversity



Landcover and vegetation

2.2.7 Landcover and vegetation within the study area is shown on Plate 5. This includes Natural England's Provisional Land Classification for the agricultural land within the study area and shows the land within the draft Order Limits predominantly being categorised as either Grade 3 Good to Moderate quality agricultural land or Grade 4 Poor quality agricultural land of woodland, some of which are designated as Ancient Woodland, are located primarily to the north of the study area on the higher ground of the Corallian Limestone Ridge as well as within pockets of higher elevation at the southern fringes of Oxford. Within the lower lying floodplains woodland areas are fragmented and smaller in scale, occurring frequently along watercourses. Within the vale, canopy cover is mostly comprised of hedgerows, public green spaces in proximity to settlements, scattered copses among arable fields and the route of the former canal corridor. Vegetation is influenced by the area's underlying geology and soils, and further detail is provided in Chapter 10: Geology and soils.

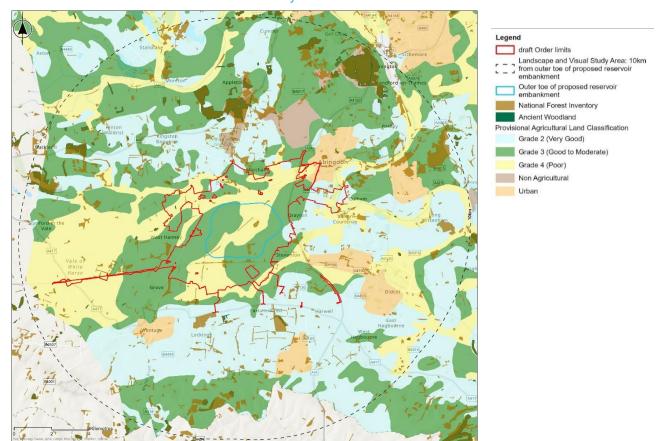


Plate 5 Features of landcover within the study area

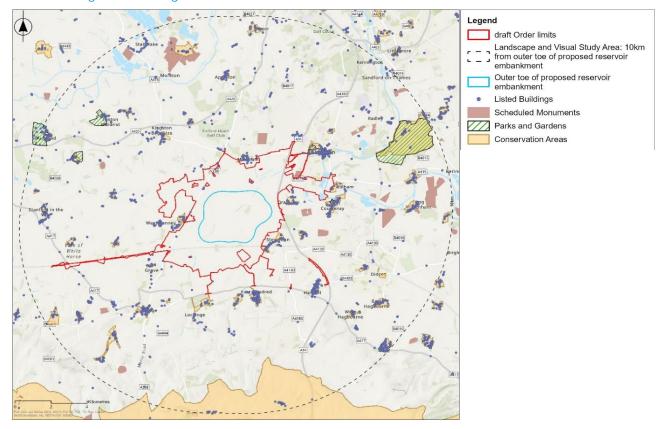
Heritage and historic landscape character

- 2.2.8 Chapter 8: Historic environment provides a baseline description of the historic environment within the area, including designated assets; the key designated heritage assets of relevance to landscape character are shown on Plate 6. Many of the surrounding settlements have conservation areas to protect the historic cores. Clusters of listed buildings are found within the conservation areas, and occasionally individual buildings which are often listed mill buildings or farm buildings.
- 2.2.9 The Oxfordshire Historic Landscape Characterisation (Oxfordshire County Council, 2017) shows the changes in the landscape over time. In the 18th century there was a concentration of open field systems and rough ground in the vicinity of the Site (these would have been former common land), extending to the north along the River Thames and Corallian Limestone Ridge, and to the south to the North Wessex Downs foot slopes. In the west of the study area the landscape was characterised by piecemeal enclosure, within small and irregular fields, as well as occasional fields of more formal planned enclosure (the Vale of White Horse was the location of some of the earliest Parliamentary enclosures), within rectilinear fields with predominantly straight boundaries. An area of marsh towards the south of the Site indicates the wet nature of the land. Scattered pockets of woodland were found on the slopes of the limestone ridge. A consistent pattern of villages and farmsteads were found dotted around the landscape, many of which still survive today.
- 2.2.10 From the 19th century there was further enclosure of the open fields, including within the vicinity of the Site, as piecemeal and planned enclosure. Fields also began to become amalgamated, with much of the western part of the study area characterized by prairie or

amalgamated enclosure and reorganized enclosure. Occasional areas of open field systems and rough ground remained in the vicinity of the Site and on the chalk escarpment within the south of the study area (within the North Wessex Downs). During this period new straight roads were introduced with wide grass verges; the Wilts and Berks Canal linked the River Thames at Abingdon to the Kennet and Avon Canal; and the arrival of the railway in 1839 had a powerful impact and boosted other industries.

2.2.11 In the 21st century most of the agricultural landscape changed to prairie or amalgamated enclosures, with fields reorganised and field boundaries removed to suit modern farming requirements, creating large fields. There were minimal areas of new woodland planting. Rural settlements and their historic cores survive as some of the oldest parts of the Oxfordshire landscape.

Plate 6 Designated heritage assets

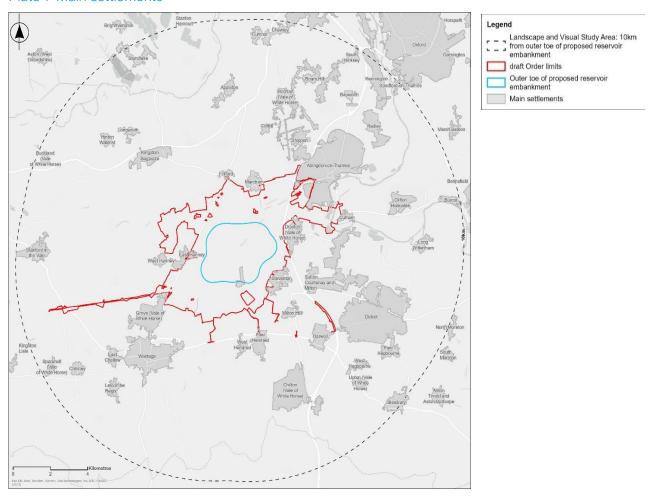


Land use and settlement

2.2.12 Main settlements in the study area are shown on Plate 7. Refer to Figure 9.1: Landscape and visual study area for an overview of the other main features in the study area. Overall, the Site and wider study area have a rural character, albeit with locally urbanising features including busy roads, the Great Western Rail Main Line railway, and built development. Abingdon is the nearest main settlement, with other settlements nearby including Didcot, Milton, Steventon, Grove and Wantage, and the outskirts of Oxford in the northeast of the study area. Numerous smaller settlements are generally well integrated into the landscape, including East and West Hanney, Marcham, Rowstock, Kingston Bagpuize and villages within the North Wessex Downs including East and West Hendred, Ardington, East and West Ginge. The science campus at Harwell is a distinct area of development within the National Landscape in the south of the study area. Solar farms are a relatively common

feature within the vale landscape and are generally well integrated visually. Didcot Power Station, overhead power lines and light industry at Milton introduce more urbanising features. The North Wessex Downs National Landscape in the south of the study area includes the popular Ridgeway National Trail. Further detail is provided within Chapter 15: Socio-economics and communities.

Plate 7 Main settlements



Movement and connectivity

- 2.2.13 Plate 8 provides an overview of the key roads and trails within the study area. The A34 runs along the eastern part of the Site, which is a relatively fast road and has an impact locally on character and tranquillity. Likewise, the railway within the south of the Site provides a distinct infrastructure corridor through the landscape. The A338 to the west of the Site and the A415 to the north of the Site provide connectivity between the main settlements.
- 2.2.14 A network of public rights of way (PRoW) and bridleways radiate from the settlements, providing access to the rural countryside. The Thames Path National Trail runs along the east bank of the River Thames and the Ridgeway National Trail is an ancient trackway which extends along the chalk downs within the North Wessex Downs National Landscape. Other key recreational routes in the study area include the Oxford Green Belt Way and the Vale Way, which are partly accommodated on sections of the towpath of the restored Wiltshire and Berkshire Canal. National Cycle Network Routes 5 and 544, in the eastern

and southern parts of the study area respectively, join at Didcot. Further detail is provided within Chapter 12: Traffic and transport.

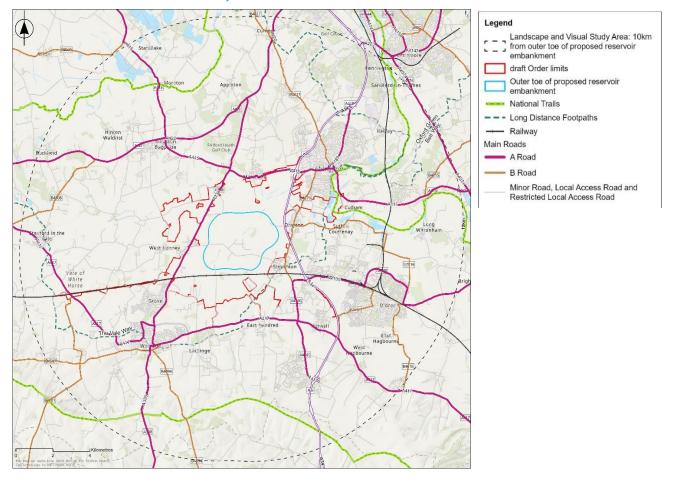


Plate 8 Movement and connectivity

Tranquillity

- 2.2.15 The Tranquillity Assessment for South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse (LUC, 2024) assesses, describes and maps relative levels of tranquillity across the districts. The study describes tranquillity as relating to 'audible (e.g. birdsong, natural sounds, moving water) and visual (e.g. stars and perceived wildness) peace' qualities. Tranquillity can be impacted by changes in noise, visual intrusion and light pollution.
- 2.2.16 Within the Site tranquillity ranges from Zone 1 (areas of high tranquillity) to Zone 5 (areas of very low/no tranquillity). Lower levels of tranquillity are associated with the surrounding settlements (notably Abingdon, Marcham, Drayton, Milton, Didcot, Steventon and Grove), and the main roads including the A34. The core of the Site falls mostly within Zone 2 (area of some tranquillity) with some small patches in Zone 1.
- 2.2.17 The highest levels of tranquillity within the study area are associated with the generally undeveloped North Wessex Downs National Landscape in the south of the study area, with large parts of the area around the Ridgeway falling within Zone 1. Levels of tranquillity in this area are also affected to some extent by roads and settlements, notably Harwell Campus, Wantage and the A417, with these areas falling within Zone 4 (area of low tranquillity) and Zone 5. There are also areas of high tranquillity in the Corallian Limestone Ridge in the north of the study area.

2.2.18 Tranquillity data is provided on Figure 9.13: CPRE tranquillity mapping. This is based on data from 2007 from the Council for Protection of Rural England (CPRE), and not the 2024 South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse data referred to above, as this could not be made available for reproduction. However, the patterns of tranquillity remain essentially the same between the two data sources.

Dark skies

- 2.2.19 The Dark Skies Assessment for South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse (LUC, 2024) and the Lighting Design Guidance for South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse (2004) describe, map and provide guidance on relative levels of darkness of the night sky across the districts.
- 2.2.20 The Dark Skies and Light Pollution map shows that urban areas have the highest levels of night lights, particularly within Didcot, Milton, Abingdon and Harwell Campus (16-32 Nano Watts/cm2/sr), with the settlement edges and other smaller settlements/ areas of development having a medium level of night lights (1-8 Nano Watts/cm2/sr) including Steventon, Drayton, Grove and industrial uses within the existing Site.
- 2.2.21 The area within the central and western part of the Site has the darkest ranking of skies (<0.25 Nano Watts/cm2/sr). East Hanney is a 'dark sky village', as set out in the East Hanney Draft Neighbourhood Plan 2021 to 2031 (Vale of White Horse District Council, 2024) and has limited street lighting to reduce light pollution.
- 2.2.22 The Corallian Limestone Ridge also has low levels of night lights, with the second lowest ranking (0.5 1 Nano Watts/cm2/sr) except for the areas around the settlements of Marcham and Kingston Bagpuize.
- 2.2.23 Except for the area around Harwell Campus, the National landscape and its immediate setting within the south of the study area falls within the darkest ranking of skies (<0.25 Nano Watts/cm2/sr). The North Wessex Downs AONB Position Statement on Dark Skies and Artificial Light (North Wessex Downs AONB Council of Partners, 2021) highlights the importance of dark skies to the beauty, tranquillity and sense of remoteness of a place, noting that the North Wessex Downs has areas as dark as any in the country.
- 2.2.24 The relative levels of darkness as described above are also shown in Figure 9.12: Dark skies and light pollution. This figure has been produced using data from 2016 from CPRE, and not the 2024 South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse data referred to above, as this could not be made available for reproduction. However the pattern of darkness remains essentially the same between the two data sources.
- 2.2.25 The darkness levels have been mapped into Environmental Zones E1 to E4 by Hoare Lea, presented in Figure 6.1 of the Dark Skies Assessment for South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse (LUC, 2024). Most of the study area falls within Zone E1 (natural dark zone), with the urban areas of Abingdon, Milton, Didcot, Harwell Campus, Wantage and Grove falling within Zone E3 (suburban medium district brightness zone) and other settlements including Steventon, Drayton, Marcham and Kingston Bagpuize falling within Zone E2 (rural low district brightness zone). The rest of the landscape and smaller settlements including East and West Hanney and the villages within the National Landscape all fall within Zone E1. The Lighting Design Guidance (Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire District Councils, 2024) provides guidance for appropriate lighting within the area.

2.2.26 The Dark Skies of the North Wessex Downs: A Guide to Good External Lighting (North Wessex Downs AONB, 2021) also includes a map of light control zones for the area within the National Landscape. The darkest part of the National Landscape is defined as E0 – Dark Sky Zone. Very small parts of Zone E0 fall within the extreme south of the study area around Letcombe Bassett and Farnborough. The remaining National Landscape away from rural settlements and economic hubs is defined as E1 (rest of AONB) with the exception of Harwell Campus which is E2 (rural settlements and economic hubs).

2.3 Landscape designations

North Wessex Downs National Landscape The North Wessex Downs National Landscape is shown on Plate 9 below. It is located approximately 2.5km from the proposed reservoir embankment toe at its nearest point. A detailed description of the baseline of the National Landscape is provided in Appendix 9.2: Preliminary assessment of effects on the North Wessex Downs National Landscape. Also refer to Figure 9.6: Landscape designations and key constraints, of the PEI Report.

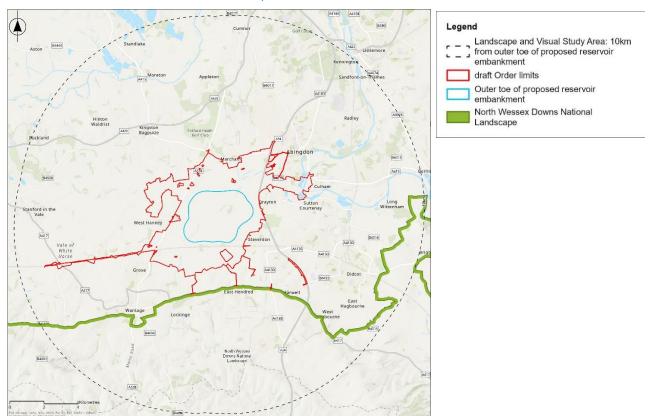


Plate 9 Location of the National Landscape

Local landscape designations

- 2.3.2 Four local landscape designations are found within the study area, as described within the Local Landscape Designation Review of South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse (LUC, 2024).
 - Appleford to Long Wittenham is located in the east of the study area. Situated within the vale and encompassing part of the setting to the North Wessex Downs National

- Landscape around the Wittenham Clumps, it contains riparian woodland habitats, floodplain grazing marsh, areas of tranquillity as well as areas of recreation.
- Northern Thames Valley is located in the north of the study area, to the northern side of the Corallian Limestone Ridge. It is characterized by a strong sense of place, with parkland and estate landscapes with limited modern distractions. Ancient woodland, hedgerows and wetland habitat provide natural character.
- West Oxford Hills is located in the north of the study area on the outskirts of Oxford. There are prominent strategic views from the distinctive ridge landform. A mosaic of ancient woodland, wood pasture, floodplain grazing marsh and grassland characterize the natural landscape, with limited development in a tranquil and rural landscape.
- West of Wantage is located in the southwest of the study area. It encompasses the foot slopes in the setting of the North Wessex Downs National Landscape, characterized by rolling topography with long views to the vale. Scattered woodland and parkland setting includes numerous spring fed streams which incise the slopes and flow to the River Ock.
- 2.4 Landscape character of the SiteThe Site is within an area of the relatively flat and open clay vale lowland farmland, interspersed by small woodland blocks, hedgerows and linear lines of trees which are often associated with other linear features such as watercourses, PRoWs, roads and the Great Western Rail (GWR) Main Line. The landscape is sparsely settled, with just a few scattered properties that are generally located along the Steventon Road and Hanney Road, between East Hanney village to the west and Steventon village to the east. Three large solar farms: Landmead, Goose Willow and Steventon Solar Farms are located within the Site. To the south, an industrial estate, including storage units, is located between Hanney Road and the GWR Main Line. To the west are the villages of East and West Hanney. The Childrey Brook, Cow Common Brook and River Brook are features within the north of the Site, beyond which is Marcham village. The A34 and Steventon are located to the east of the Site; to the northeast is the River Thames to the south of Abingdon and north of Drayton village.

2.5 Published landscape character assessments

National Character Areas

2.5.1 Natural England has described each of England's 159 National Character Areas (NCA) within its online character area profiles. Each NCA has a descriptive profile setting out information on landscape character, analysis of landscape attributes and opportunities, changes in the landscape and statements of environmental opportunity. NCAs within the study area are summarized below and illustrated on Plate 10.

Legend

draft Order limits

Landscape and Visual Study Area: 10km from outer toe of proposed reservoir embankment

Outer toe of proposed reservoir embankment

National Character Area

Berkshire and Marlborough Downs

Midvale Ridge

Upper Thames Clay Vales

Part of Part

Plate 10 National Character Areas

NCA 108 Upper Thames Clay Vales

2.5.2 The Upper Thames Clay Vales is a broad belt of gently undulating lowland clay farmland. It is dominated by watercourses, including the River Thames and its tributaries, and there are lakes associated with mineral extraction areas. Watercourses and lakes provide important areas for wildlife and recreation. There are a number of major transport routes and patches of intensive industrial influence, including Didcot Power Station. There is little woodland cover, but hedgerows and mature field and hedgerow trees are a feature, and many watercourses are fringed with willow or poplar. Important habitats include lowland meadow, wetlands, and wet grassland.

NCA 109 Midvale Ridge

2.5.3 The Midvale Ridge is a band of low-lying limestone hills, surrounded by the flat lands of the Oxfordshire clay vales, giving extensive views across the surrounding countryside. A predominantly agricultural area, Oxford is the only town lying within the study area, otherwise the settlement pattern is characterised by small, nucleated villages along the top of the ridge. The unusual geology gives rise to habitats that are uncommon in the south of England such as calcareous flushes and fens, calcareous heath and calcareous grassland. These in turn support a variety of rare plants and invertebrates. The NCA is more wooded in character than the surrounding areas, with about a third of it designated as ancient woodland.

NCA 116 Berkshire and Marlborough Downs

2.5.4 The Berkshire and Marlborough Downs is characterised by rolling chalk hills, vast arable fields and sparse settlement. There are extensive views from the escarpment, punctuated by landmarks including chalk-cut horse figures (outside of the study area), beech clumps

and ancient monuments. Historic routeways including the Ridgeway National Trail provide public access across the landscape. The natural beauty and special scenic qualities of the area lead to the majority of the area being included in the North Wessex Downs National Landscape.

Regional character areas

Oxfordshire Wildlife & Landscape Study

- 2.5.5 The Oxfordshire Wildlife & Landscape Study (OWLS) (Oxfordshire County Council, 2004) divides the county into 24 landscape character types (LCTs), which are subdivided into constituent LCAs. The following LCTs are relevant to the Project:
 - Alluvial Lowlands
 - Chalk Downland and Slopes
 - Clay Vale
 - Farmland Hills
 - Lowland Village Farmlands
 - River Meadowlands
 - Rolling Farmland
 - Wooded Estatelands
 - Wooded Estate Slopes and Valley Sides.

North Wessex Downs National Landscape

- The North Wessex Downs AONB Integrated Landscape Character Assessment (LUC, 2.5.6 2002) defines landscape character types within the National Landscape that have 'a distinct and relatively homogenous character with similar physical and cultural attributes, including geology, landform, land cover, and historical evolution.' The LCTs have been subdivided into LCAs that are 'discrete geographical areas' with 'a distinct and recognisable local identity'. The following North Wessex Downs LCAs are relevant to the Project:
 - Downs Plain and Scarp: 5C Hendred Plain
 - Downs Plain and Scarp: 5F Liddington Letcombe Open Scarp
 - Downs Plain and Scarp: 5D Moreton Plain.

Local character areas

South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Landscape Character Assessment

- 2.5.7 This landscape character assessment covers both of the South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils and supersedes the published landscape character assessments for the individual districts. The following LCAs are relevant to the Project:
 - 1A Wessex Downs Open Chalk Escarpment and Upper Slopes
 - 6A Wessex Downs Chalk Escarpment Footslopes
 - 7D Oxford South Ridge Hilltops
 - 8A Faringdon to Frilford Ridge Slope
 - 8B Frilford to Sandford Ridge Slope
 - 8C Cumnor to Abingdon Ridge Slope

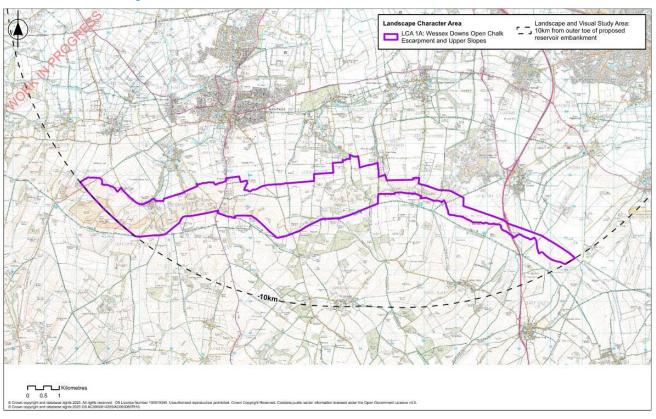
Appendix 9.1 - Project-level Landscape Character Assessment Classification - Public Page 19 of 85

- 9B Wantage to Didcot Vale Edge Slopes
- 9C Milton Hill to Didcot Vale Edge Slopes
- 10A Sinodun Lower Vale Hills
- 12B Western Middle Vale
- 13A Ock Lower Vale
- 13B Abingdon-Didcot Lower Vale
- 13C East Thames Lower Vale
- 14D Abingdon to Kennington Thames Lower Valley.

3 **Project-level landscape character assessment**

3.1 LCA 1A: Wessex Downs Open Chalk Escarpment and Upper Slopes

Plate 11 Plan showing location and extents of LCA 1A



Description

3.1.1 The location and extents of LCA 1A are shown on Plate 11 and views from and within the LCA are shown in Plate 12 and Plate 13. The eastern and western boundaries of the LCA have been altered from the district LCA to extend only to the limits of the study area. The LCA comprises a narrow, north-facing scarp slope defined by the steep topography which transitions to gentler foothill slopes to the north, and by a transition to the scarp top with rolling elevated downland to the south. The character area is entirely within the North Wessex Downs National Landscape. The area includes part of the distinctive Devil's Punchbowl valley, on the edge of the study area near Letcombe Bassett. There is a sense of remoteness within the area, emphasised by altitude and the occasional long views towards the vale and its blend of vegetation and interspersed built infrastructure.

Key characteristics

 A narrow, north facing chalk scarp slope, with complex landform of steep local ridges and spurs forming distinctive dry coombes that mark the start of spring-fed watercourses which flow north down the footslopes.

- Remnant chalk grassland and scattered woodland and occasional woodland 'hangers,' some identified as Ancient Woodland. Contrast between the rolling large-scale arable fields on the lower slopes and the steeper slopes used as grazed pasture.
- Several narrow rural lanes and PRoW running north-south, perpendicular
 to the scarp. These are often sunken and enclosed by hedge banks. Recreational
 access includes the Ridgeway National Trail running east west along its summit.
- Open landscape with intermittent patches of woodland, providing panoramic views from vantage points at the top of the ridge over the vale to the north with views toward its layers of trees and vegetation and built infrastructure and the Corallian Limestone Ridge beyond, and with intermittent open views across downland to the south.
- The scarp forms a recognizable backdrop in views south from the lower lying vale, with distinctiveness increasing south of the Swindon-Didcot railway line.
- A highly rural and tranquil landscape, with only the north-south running A338 in the centre and A34 in the east as locally detracting features.
- Good experience of dark night skies.

Settlement characteristics

 Very little settlement, limited to the Conservation Area of Letcombe Bassett.

Plate 12 View north across the Vale from the Ridgeway of the North Wessex Downs



Valued qualities

- The complex sloping topography of the scarp, with local ridges and spurs forming
 distinctive dry combes and other depressions. is a recognizable feature from the lower
 areas of the Vale, and the dramatic recognizable horizon is highlighted as one of the
 special qualities of the North Wessex Downs National Landscape.
- Public access including open access land and PRoW, both travelling up the sides of the slope and connecting with the Ridgeway National Trail running east-west along the ridge summit.
- Very limited human habitation or settlement, which creates a keen sense of remoteness and tranquillity, locally tempered by long views towards infrastructure within the vale
- Panoramic views north across the vale from the top of the ridge, and to the adjacent downland to the south, interspersed by pockets and stretches of woodland and shaws.
- Forms a prominent north-facing backdrop in views from the surrounding landscape and an immediate setting to a number of small villages located along the spring line at the foot of the scarp.
- Prehistoric and historic features along the scarp are distinctive and sometimes imposing features in views. These include the famous prehistoric Uffington White Horse

chalk figure, Iron Age Uffington Castle, Handwell Hillfort, sections of Grim's Ditch and a number of barrow features. These are all designated as Scheduled Monuments.

Plate 13 View from the Ridgeway towards the Harwell Science and Innovation Campus, and along the PRoW





Detractors

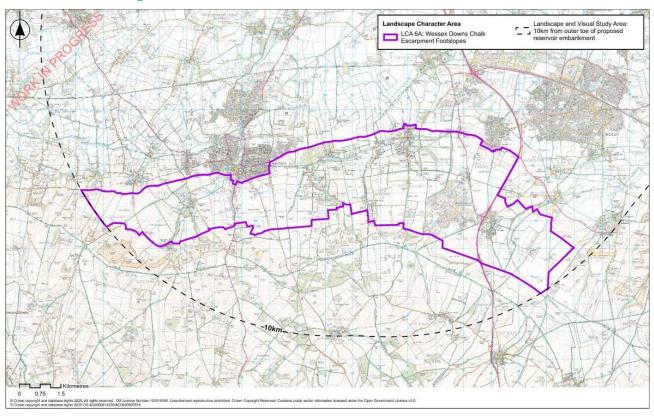
- Built infrastructure, including the A34 road running north-south, settlements including Wantage, and commercial development on the footslopes and within the vale to the north, the Harwell Campus detracts from its sense of remoteness.
- Intervisibility between the National Landscape and the detracting built features within the vale

Project Specific Design Guidance

- Consider the appearance of the Project within the long views from the ridge, ensuring that the proposals do not detract from the quality of views across the vale
- Consider the role of the character area as an undeveloped backdrop to views back from the vale providing views south from the scheme and consideration of planting locations to screen existing detracting influences within the vale.
- Protect the long views from the National Landscape through the integration of the new features, including the embankment within its landscape setting, the use of muted colours for built features promoted by Design Guides and the use of local vernacular materials and a sensitive lighting strategy.

3.2 LCA 6A: Wessex Downs Chalk Escarpment Footslopes

Plate 14 Plan showing location and extents of LCA 6A



Description

3.2.1 The location and extents of LCA 6A are shown on Plate 14 and views within the LCA are shown in Plate 15 and Plate 16. The boundary of the LCA has been altered from the district LCA boundary to include the settlements of East Hendred and the Harwell Science and Innovation Park, and have been curtailed to the study area. The Wessex Downs Chalk Escarpment Footslopes comprises the distinctive rolling landscape that descends from the foot of the escarpment of the North Wessex Downs, forming a ledge between the higher chalk escarpment to the south and the lower vale edges. Whilst there are occasional glimpses of the distant Corallian Limestone Ridge to the north, there is a sense of enclosure and 'other world' within this area, and a sense of remoteness. The rolling landscape, combined with the defined historical vernacular of the buildings, interspersed churches, historical features and the streams which cut through the landform in places combine to create a rural, characterful, tranquil environment. The character area is located entirely within the North Wessex Downs National Landscape.

Key characteristics

- A shelf of large-scale rolling open arable farmland, falling from the foot of the scarp to the south, towards the lower-lying vale landscapes to the north.
- Interspersed villages and clusters of farm and estate buildings are defined by their historic character and building materials, with clusters of listed buildings.

- Watercourses add character, flowing north from chalk springs towards the Rivers Ock and Thames and form the focus for the historic 'spring-line villages' which include Ardington and East Hendred. Many are covered by Conservation Area status.
- Vegetation is concentrated along the watercourses, with small woodland copses and shaws, and planting associated with small estates and parklands at Ardington and East Hendred.
- Straight narrow roads and lanes cross the foot slopes from north to south, and PRoW connect the small settlements and provide recreational access to the area.
- Certain locations offer panoramic, long-distance views across the footslopes and the lower lying vale to the north, with landform and vegetation defining the sense of enclosure in other areas. The scarp to the south forms a strong, characterful backdrop.





Settlement characteristics

- There is a pattern of regularly spaced small historic villages and hamlets located along streams, referred to locally as 'spring-line villages'. Settlements including East Hendred, West Hendred, Ardington, West Lockinge and East Lockinge have medieval cores marked by Conservation Areas and clusters of Listed Buildings. Letcombe Regis is a Conservation Area in the west of the study area. These contribute to the time-depth of the area, with the surrounding landscape providing a rural setting.
- Estate villages have a particular unity of character, notably the Lockinge Estate.
- A distinctive historic vernacular to buildings including thatch, brick and stone.
- Harwell Science and Innovation Campus, contemporary built form contained in part by topography and vegetated edges.

Valued qualities

- Located entirely within the North Wessex Downs National Landscape, and displaying many of the special qualities including chalk streams, arable habitats, medieval settlements with historic buildings, country houses and landscape gardens and extensive PRoW.
- Along with the Corallian Limestone Ridge, the Wessex Downs are recognizable features from the lower areas of the vale, broadly enclosing and emphasizing it's expansive and flat character.
- Spring-fed chalk streams run north through the foothills, with riparian vegetation creating a strong sense of place. The organic pattern of the streams and riparian vegetation contrasts with the more linear nature of hedgerows in the area.
- A rolling landscape, which is prominent below the Downs scarp in views from the lower-lying vale, provides a rural backdrop to settlements in the north.
- Tree cover, particularly associated with parklands, combined with undulating topography, provides some areas of enclosure in an otherwise open landscape.
- Smaller parcels of land, including paddocks and orchards, provide cultural and biodiversity value, historic character and greater texture and visual interest on settlement edges, contrasting with the wider large-scale arable farmland.
- Public access including PRoW, connecting with the Ridgeway National Trail running east-west along the ridge summit.
- Remnant estate and parklands associated with small manor houses provide historic value and landscape diversity.
- Pattern of regularly spaced small historic villages and hamlets located along streams, with medieval cores marked by Conservation Areas and clusters of Listed Buildings, which contributes to the time-depth of the area; the open landscape provides a rural setting for these.
- A rural, relatively tranquil area, with a sense of exposure on the open slopes
- Panoramic long views across the foothills and north towards the lower lying vales, from elevated PRoW connecting the small villages.

Plate 16 House at Hendred Estate, small business units within traditional buildings at East Lockinge and view through the character area







Detractors

- The busy A338 and A34 cross through the landscape and create noise and movement in certain areas of what is otherwise a tranquil and rural landscape.
- Views of Wantage, including recent housing development on the north-eastern fringe, and Harwell Campus, reduce the sense of remoteness in some edge areas.

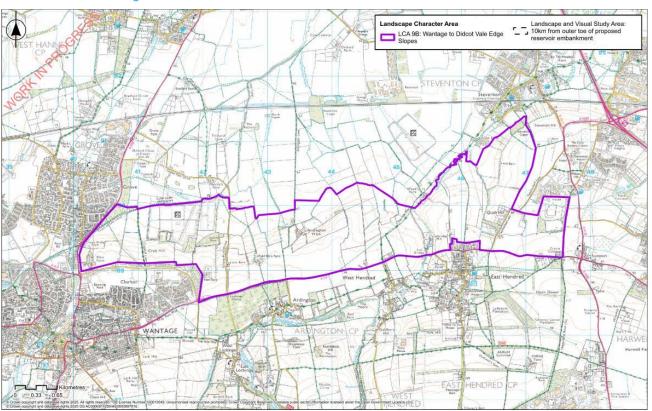
 Pylons which cross the northeast corner of the LCA near East Hendred temper the sense of remoteness locally.

Project specific design guidance

 Consider the long views north from the National Landscape, through the integration of the new features including the proposed embankment within its landscape setting, the use of muted colours for built features promoted by Design Guides and use of local vernacular materials and a sensitive lighting strategy.

3.3 LCA 9B: Wantage to Didcot Vale Edge Slopes

Plate 17 Plan showing location and extents of LCA 9B



Description

3.3.1 The location and extents of LCA 9B are shown on Plate 17 and views from and within the LCA are shown in Plate 18 and Plate 19. The area is located between Wantage, Grove and Milton Hill and forms a transition between the low-lying Western Middle Vale to the north and the higher Wessex Downs Chalk Escarpment Footslopes to the south. The sloping land, formed on Upper Greensand bedrock, creates a relatively narrow belt of land. It is bordered to the south by the busy A417 road, which defines the edge of the North Wessex Downs National Landscape located to its southern side. The landform generally falls towards the vale to the north and on its southern edges wide panoramas can be seen across the vale. Several PRoW cross the area, including a section of The Vale Way and whilst it is characterful and rural in nature, with its sweeping panoramas south towards the Downs, there is a sense of transition between the character areas within the National

- Landscape located further to the south, and the visible human and more urban elements to the north.
- 3.3.2 There is significant new house building on the northeastern edge of Wantage around which a new ring road circles, providing views towards the vale beyond, glimpsed from the publicly accessible wooded green edge of the new settlement area.

Plate 18 View to the vale from the The Vale Way north of West Hendred



Key characteristics

- An east-west band of north sloping land that includes spring fed streams continuing their journey north towards the rivers Ock and Thames.
- Land use is chiefly arable farmland, with relatively large, flat, open fields.
- Fields have an open exposed character and the A417, along with the rising landform provides a sense of containment to the south.
- The landscape is moderately wooded with dispersed woodland blocks. Towards the east it becomes increasingly more wooded with several tree belts and plantations.
- A network of PRoW provides recreational access to the landscape. Generally these are orientated north-south and provide links between the Ridgeway long-distance path located on the ridge of the North Wessex Downs and the vale further north.
- Much of these upper vale edge slopes provide expansive views north across the vale to the Corallian Limestone Ridge beyond and form part of the backdrop when viewed back south from the vale. Further west the area becomes more enclosed by landform and tree belts. There is a solar farm located here.
- The landscape is part of the setting to the North Wessex Downs National Landscape and these combined areas provide a distinctive backdrop when seen from the vale.

Settlement characteristics

- There are no settlements located within this LCA. Tree cover around the adjacent settlements including East Hendred and Wantage, provides a screening function that limits their urbanising influence which otherwise might be more prominent in views both from the vale and the higher downs.
- Occasional historic buildings are interspersed through the landscape, including Lains Barn and the cluster of buildings at Ardington Wick.

Valued qualities

• The landscape retains a rural character with limited urbanising influence due to the gaps between settlements, and the screening role of tree cover and landform.

- Intervisibility with the vale to the north contributes to the rural character of both the vale edge slopes and the vale itself.
- The open character of much of the area affords long views north towards the Corallian Limestone Ridge.
- Streams with associated valley landforms and riparian vegetation add landscape and ecological diversity.
- The slopes of Steventon Hill provide a distinctive elevated setting to the south of Steventon Village and parts of its Conservation Area.
- At the west of the area, the slopes of Crab Hill provide a visual separation between Grove and the allocated Crab Hill urban extension on the northeast edge of Wantage.

Plate 19 Building at Lains Barn, Railway Bridge over Ardington Lane and wide view over the vale from the A417 – Grove Park Drive junction.







Detractors

- The audible, busy and fast moving A417 road at the south of the area intrudes on the sense of tranquillity that could be gained from this area.
- At its northern edges, intervisibility with the vale and its more urbanised features including the A34, the railway line, solar farms and silo towers prevent a wholly rural character.

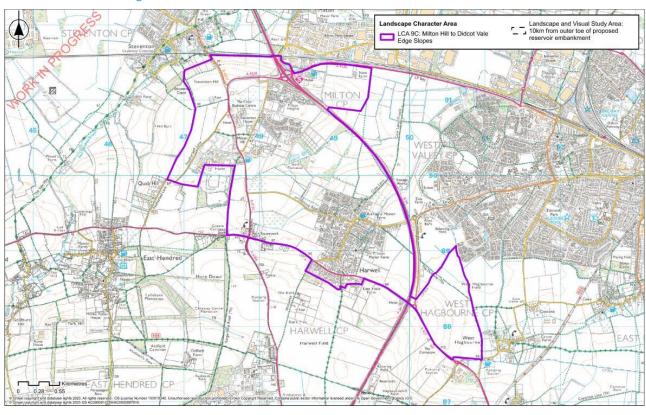
Project specific design guidance

Consider the long views north through the integration of any new features including the
proposed embankment within its landscape setting, the use of muted colours for built
features promoted by Design Guides and use of local vernacular materials and a
sensitive lighting strategy.

Page **29** of **85**

3.4 LCA 9C: Milton Hill to Didcot Vale Edge Slopes

Plate 20 Plan showing location and extents of LCA 9C



Description

3.4.1 The location and extents of LCA 9C are shown on Plate 20 and views from and within the LCA are shown in Plate 21 and Plate 22. The boundary of the LCA has been altered from the district LCA to include the settlement of Harwell. The area comprises the north and north-east facing slopes located between Milton Hill in the east, West Hagbourne in the west, the Great Western Main Line railway in the north and the A417 in the south. It forms a transition between the urban areas of Milton and Didcot to the north and east, and the chalk escarpment foot slopes in the south and includes the dispersed settlement of Milton Hill and the village of Harwell. The urban features of Didcot are clearly visible from the roads and fields in the east of the area and this, combined with the main roads and other built features divert from any real pastoral or rural identity. Distinctive lines of trees are repeated through the landscape and are visible from some distance, though in the main the area feels quite contained. Orchards provide character and an historic reference.

Plate 21 View north from Featherbed Lane



Key characteristics

- An area of north and north-east facing sloping land incised by small streams and ditches.
- Arable farmland dominates, in medium-sized fields, with larger fields to the south-east around West Hagbourne. Fields around Milton Hill are typically smaller and include grassland, orchards and smaller-scale animal husbandry.
- There are large areas of traditional orchard throughout the area, with distinct lines of trees clearly visible— acting as windbreaks within the landscape. Some fields lack any clear boundary other than the tall tree lines.
- A mixed landscape including areas which are moderately wooded, enclosed and visually contained by dispersed woodland blocks and tree lined field and road edges, contrasting with a wider, more open landscape with clear intervisibility with surrounding urban features.
- A network of PRoW provides recreational access to the landscape, linking between the Downs to the south and vale to the north.
- Any sense of rural tranquillity is reduced by the busy road network including the A34 / A4130 interchange at Milton Hill which creates significant traffic noise.
- Trees and hedges provide visual containment on the flatter high ground, although recent residential expansion at Milton Heights and Harwell is also noticeable.
- The upper vale-edge slopes provide expansive views northwards across the vale to the ridge beyond, but the landform limits views to the south. In reply, the slopes form a backdrop and horizon for nearby land on the vale floor.

Page **31** of **85**

Plate 22 View from the A417 west of Harwell Village towards orchard and windbreak tree lines; barn at Harwell Village; view through the area; looking east towards Didcot from Milton Hill.









Settlement characteristics

- Settlement comprises scattered farmsteads and the villages of Harwell, Rowstock, Milton Hill and Milton Heights which include significant commercial and residential development.
- The built and industrial features of Didcot are visible in wider, more open views and the edges of nearby villages and built-up areas can be seen within the landscape.
- Milton Hill has little historic core and is without a recognisable centre. Much of its building use is commercial and business.
- Harwell has a distinct historic village core which forms the Harwell Conservation Area.
 It includes varied and distinctive building vernaculars including black timber and thatch barns, timber-framed houses and imposing brick built detached properties.

Valued qualities

- The tree cover around settlement edges provides screening that assists in limiting the influence of villages and the surrounding larger towns, which would otherwise have more prominence to areas of the vale and the higher downs.
- The open farmland provides a sense of separation between Didcot, Harwell and the development at Milton Heights. The landscape forms a setting to the Conservation Areas at Harwell, West Hagbourne, and Steventon.
- The visible remnant areas of orchard around Milton Hill and to the north of Harwell provide links to historic land uses, contributing to historic landscape character, providing texture and visual interest and a prominent landscape element.

- The undeveloped areas of the vale edge slopes contribute to the wider rural context and setting of the vale below.
- The openness of the vale edge slopes provides intervisibility with the Corallian Limestone Ridge to the north from the open higher ground west of Harwell.
- Interspersed streams and their associated riparian vegetation add landscape and ecological diversity.
- Whilst the area forms part of the northern setting to the North Wessex Downs National Landscape, tree cover and topography limit the intervisibility between the adjacent National Landscape and this character area.
- PRoW provide links between the Downs to the south and vale to the north.

Detractors

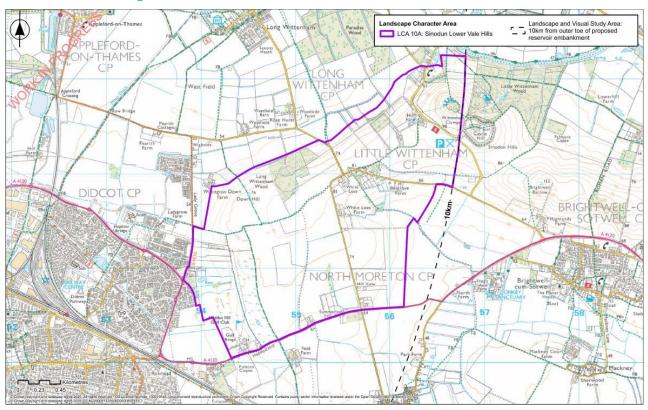
- The landscape in this area feels fragmented in parts, from the business park at Milton Hill and its lack of a village core, to the nearby small, slightly ramshackle fields and land use, which are without defining rural qualities or characteristics.
- Other industrial / agricultural buildings are interspersed in the landscape.
- The visible urban features at Didcot blur the eastern boundaries of the area.

Project specific design guidance

- Use the pattern of woodland blocks and tree lines as a reference to create visual links with new planting in the southeast of the Site and create connectivity with the broader landscape.
- Consider opportunities to introduce additional PRoW connectivity between the Site and the settlements within the character area and beyond into the vale to create greater cohesion with the surrounding area.

3.5 LCA 10A: Sinodun Lower Vale Hills

Plate 23 Plan showing location and extents of LCA 10A



Description

3.5.1 The location and extents of LCA 10A are shown on Plate 23 and views from and within the LCA are shown in Plate 24 and Plate 25. Chalk outliers of the North Wessex Downs escarpment, surrounded by lower-lying clay vales and located to the north-east of Didcot, the distinctive tree-capped Wittenham Clumps (Sinodun Hills) are prominent in views from the vales and the higher ground of the North Wessex Downs, the Chilterns and the Corallian Limestone Ridge, rising distinctively above the lower-lying East Thames Lower Vale to the north and the Southern Thames Vale to the south. They in turn offer panoramic views of the River Thames meandering across the lower vale. The LCA is located almost entirely within the North Wessex Downs National Landscape.

Key characteristics

- An isolated chalk ridge outlier of the North Wessex Downs which includes the distinctive and prominent rounded hills of the Sinodun Hills, commonly referred to as Wittenham Clumps.
- Views from the hills are far reaching, providing a broad visual panorama of the River Thames and the surrounding and varied visual infrastructure of urban and rural features. The relative isolated surroundings of the hills' raised location create a sense of detachment from the busy and varied wider features.
- The surrounding large-scale intensive arable farmland dominates the remaining area, though areas of open grassland, meadow and traditional orchard provide contrast in places.

- Beech trees on the hills the Wittenham Clumps form a distinctive landmark and prominent feature on the skyline and which are clearly visible from the wider surrounding landscape.
- Deciduous woodland also occurs in scattered blocks and belts around farms, and in larger blocks at Long Wittenham Wood and Little Wittenham Wood.
- A predominantly open landscape with extensive views from higher ground, including south towards the Wessex Downs scarp.
- A rural and peaceful landscape with limited modern development. Nearby main roads introduce some visual and audible detractors to the south.

Plate 24 View north towards the River Thames from Wittenham Clumps



- The dispersed, sparse settlement pattern consists of a few stone-built scattered farmsteads on the lower slopes that contribute to the rural, agricultural character.
- A long history of settlement in the area with features dating from prehistoric (Iron Age and Bronze Age) as well as Roman periods.

Plate 25 Views towards Wittenham Clumps





Valued qualities

- Located almost entirely within the North Wessex Downs National Landscape, the area displays several of its special qualities including Ancient Woodland, chalk grasslands, arable habitats, prehistoric monuments, sparse settlement pattern and extensive PRoW.
- Wittenham Clumps form a distinctive landmark in views from the surrounding lowerlying vales. The hills are also nationally and internationally valued for their Ancient Woodland and grasslands, reflected in SAC and SSSI designations.
- Long-ranging, panoramic views, especially from the elevated land, provide a distinctive sense of place and tranquillity. Round Hill is identified as a 'viewpoint' on Ordnance Survey maps.
- Recreational value of the network of PRoW, including access to the Sinodun Hills and Brightwell Barrow.
- Away from the fringes of Didcot and Brightwell there are also dark night skies. Over 90% of this landscape is categorised as being within the darkest band in the Dark Skies Assessment for South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse.
- Historic assets including prehistoric earthworks and an Iron Age hillfort create timedepth.
- Areas of open grassland, meadows and orchards contrast with the intensively managed arable land, providing texture and visual interest to the landscape.

Detractors

- Remnant tall industrial features at the former Didcot Power Station are often a dominant feature in views to the west.
- Greens, fairways and buildings associated with Hadden Hill Golf club have a localised detracting influence on landscape character towards the edge of Didcot.

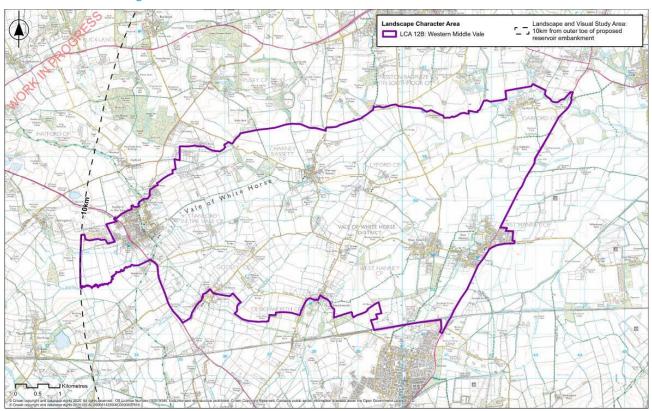
• The A4130 main road borders the south of area and introduces some visual and aural disruption.

Project specific design guidance

 Use the elevated slopes around Long Wittenham Wood as a design reference for slope gradients and planting pattern on the proposed embankments. The concentration of tree planting on top of Wittenham Clumps is a distinctive and unique feature and therefore it is not necessarily desirable to replicate this; however, ensure its distinctiveness as a feature is respected and retained within the vale.

3.6 LCA 12B: Western Middle Vale

Plate 26 Plan showing location and extents of LCA 12B



Description

3.6.1 The location and extents of LCA 12B are shown on Plate 26 and views from and within the LCA area shown in Plate 27. The western boundary of the LCA has been altered from the district LCA to include the settlement of Stanford in the Vale and curtailed to the limits of the study area. The eastern boundary of the LCA has been amended to follow the A338 (though including all of the settlement of East Hanney), to more closely reflect the character observed on site, with the landscape around the railway line being incorporated into LCA13A. The character area is located between Stanford in the Vale in the west and the A338 road running between Frilford and Grove. It comprises an area of low-lying farmland which is part of a wider vale landscape that extends to the east and west. It is broadly enclosed by the rising Corallian Limestone Ridge to the north and the hills rising to

the chalk escarpment to the south and this broad sense of enclosure is emphasised by the flat topography and the wide views north and south towards these raised landform features. There is a distinctly rural, settled character with attractive historic villages set within a pastoral landscape of farmland and meadows.

Plate 27 View towards the National Landscape; buildings and village settings









Key characteristics

- Flat to gently undulating, low-lying farmland associated with the River Ock valley interspersed with scattered settlements rich in traditional buildings built in the local vernacular.
- A pattern of small to medium-sized waterside meadows and pasture, with arable fields of varying size away from the river.
- Boundary vegetation varies from degraded hedgerows with broken tree lines, through intact low clipped hedges along fields and roads, to hedges with mature hedgerow trees, which are located predominantly along water courses and ditches.
- Vegetation and woodland frequently shorten views, although there is a wider intervisibility north towards the Corallian Limestone Ridge and south to the North Wessex Downs.
- The flat to gently undulating topography of the vale helps in creating an overall rural and attractive landscape, with little intervisibility from the surrounding larger settlements.
- The character area forms a significant part of the wider setting to the north of the North Wessex Downs National Landscape, with intervisibility from vantage points within the Downs.

- The traditional settlement pattern of historic, nucleated villages including Garford, Charney Bassett, Lyford, Goosey, Denchworth, West Hanney and East Hanney are generally well-integrated into the landscape. This combined with the open, rural nature of the landscape contribute to areas that provide a sense of tranquillity.
- The villages include many Listed Buildings and designated Conservation Areas, with buildings that are distinctively historic. Thatch and timber building materials are prevalent. Many villages have a core such as a green or stream and new housing seeks to echo the historic styles and vernacular.
- The East Hanney Neighbourhood Plan (May, 2024) and West Hanney Neighbourhood Development Plan (July, 2021) provide detail on village character, views and vistas and the value of green gaps between villages to avoid coalescence.
- East Hanney is divided by the A338, with much of its newer development to the east of the road, and its historic core set back from the road to the west.

Valued qualities

- Vegetation cover provides a sense of enclosure in places, that contrasts with areas with wide intervisibility with the higher ground of the Corallian Limestone Ridge to the north, and the North Wessex Downs to the south.
- Small watercourses and their associated riparian vegetation provide biodiversity value, ecological connectivity across the farmed landscape and into settlements, and contribute positively to the landscape.
- PRoW provide recreational value and enables access to and an appreciation of the rural landscape.
- The area forms part of the wider rural setting of the North Wessex Downs National Landscape.

Detractors

- Industrial units located near Lyford.
- Fast moving traffic on the A338 road on the eastern boundary of the area.
- Views across flat landscape towards pylons in adjacent areas.

Project Specific Design Guidance

- Maintain the overall rural character of the LCA.
- Use planting and appropriate locally sourced materials to integrate any new development into the landscape.
- Enhance the valued recreational use of the landscape and create opportunities for additional linked PRoW to enhance appreciation of views and landscape character.
- Consider recommendations within the East Hanney Neighbourhood Plan (East Hanney Parish Council, 2024) including those regarding valued views and vistas. Ensure sensitive design of features that would introduce lighting, noise and traffic movement as far as practicable, in order to limit the impact on the setting of East Hanney Conservation Area.
- Retain the pastoral character along watercourses, echoing the smaller-scale field patterns and creating areas of floodplain grazing marsh and riparian vegetation.

Classification - Public Page 39 of 85

- Retain, as far as practicable, existing woodland, trees and hedgerows that are in good condition and which contribute to the rural character of the area.
- Consider extending the existing woodland belt along the railway and/or planting new copses within fields.
- Propose tree planting, including willow, along new watercourse diversions and ditches. Reflect meandering patterns in the design of new watercourse diversions and ditches.

3.7 LCA 13A: Ock Lower Vale

Plate 28 Plan showing location and extents of LCA 13A

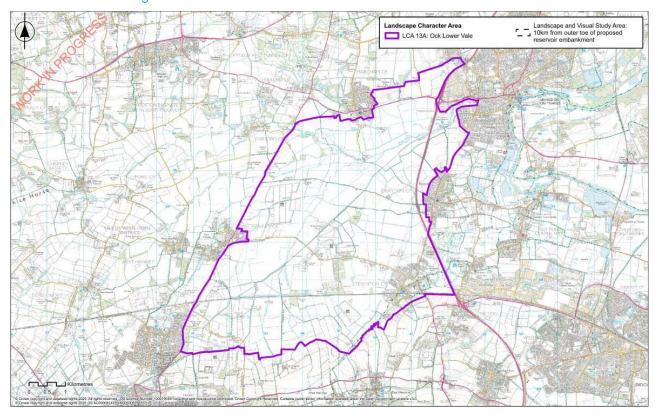


Plate 29 Nissen huts at Steventon Storage Depot; view north from Ardington Lane; silos and towers at Willowbrook Farm (bottom left); view across the vale landscape









Description

- 3.7.1 The location and extents of LCA 13A are shown on Plate 28 and views within the LCA are shown in Plate 29. The western boundary of the LCA has been altered from the district LCA to follow the A338 (though excluding the settlement of East Hanney), to more closely reflect the character observed on site. Likewise, the southern boundary has been extended to include the landscape either side of the railway line. The eastern boundary has been amended to include the settlement of Steventon.
- 3.7.2 Located to the south-west of Abingdon-on-Thames, the LCA comprises low-lying land associated with the River Ock and its floodplain. The relatively flat, shallow 'bowl' landform is contained by the surrounding higher ground of the wooded limestone ridge to the north, with the gently rising vale landscapes continuing to the south, west and east. To the east of the A338 road the landscape becomes less characterful, with only occasional ribbon settlements in the form of isolated farms and properties mainly located on the fast-moving Steventon Hanney Road. The flat, seemingly endless landscape in the south of the area, is a fabric of uneven shaped fields, interspersed with built features that include silo towers, solar farms, a small airfield and the mesh fencing and Nissen Huts of the Steventon Storage Depot and these features detract from the area having a defined character and sense of place. There are several PRoW, often overgrown and appearing little used in the more remote areas away from the village settlements. In the west and north of the area features soften and take on a more characterful and settled nature, in particular where the willow lined route of the River Ock corridor and the Childrey and Nor Brooks visibly wind through the landscape. There are occasional individual historic buildings at Marcham Mill and Venn Mill House and the uneven field pattern is interspersed with small areas of woodland. The area to the south of the railway line is generally agricultural in nature with a

few scattered farms and clusters of buildings. As the land rises to the south views start to open north across the vale and its character takes on more of a peaceful, rural character.

Key characteristics

- Distinctively flat, low-lying landform with very little topographic variation. The River Ock flows through the area towards the River Thames, fed by a number of smaller streams and brooks.
- A predominantly arable landscape of large-scale irregular-shaped fields bounded by a network of ditches or low and gappy hedgerows; some smaller-scale pastoral fields adjacent to the River Ock.
- Woodland cover is limited to small scattered mixed deciduous woodland copses and coniferous plantations, often associated with farmsteads. These combine with mature trees and riparian vegetation along the meandering watercourses, resulting in a greater sense of woodland cover.
- Semi-natural habitats include a large area of floodplain grazing marsh associated with pastures along the River Ock.
- A well-connected network of PRoW crosses the landscape, linking settlements in adjacent character areas; there is more limited access to the north.
- Open to semi-enclosed views are afforded across much of the landscape, although in some areas higher hedgerows, mature trees, and woodland copses and plantations limit views. Distant intervisibility with the North Wessex Downs National Landscape to the south and the Corallian Limestone Ridge to the north provides wooded horizons to most views.
- There is a sense of remoteness in the core floodplain, by virtue of the lack of settlement and limited public access. Proximity to main roads the flat landscape and interspersed industrial and land use features reduces tranquillity, with solar farms and a large warehouse complex being more modern features in the south.
- A moderately wooded landscape, with occasional scattered small blocks of woodland, and more substantial belts of trees along the Great Western Main Line railway. Trees and vegetation define the route of the disbanded Wilts and Berks Canal, and distinctive riparian vegetation grows along the River Ock.

Settlement characteristics

- Sparse settlement pattern that includes the village of Steventon in the southeast of the area and other scattered farmhouses with limited road access.
- Steventon contains several traditional buildings and has a Conservation Area centered
 around its village green and historic core. Steventon Neighbourhood Development Plan
 (Steventon Parish Council, 2023) provides detail on village character, views and vistas
 and the value of green gaps between villages to avoid coalescence. The village green,
 orchard remnants, allotments and intermittent local vernacular of brick, stone and
 thatch contribute to its Conservation Area and provide an attractive edge to the area.
- The presence locally of mill buildings and the former Wilts and Berks canal reflects the industrial heritage of the area.

Valued qualities

- The pastoral character along the River Ock and other watercourses with smaller-scale pastoral fields, riparian vegetation and floodplain grazing marsh contribute positively to the landscape.
- Recreational access to the landscape via a network of local PRoW, including the promoted Vale Way, and along the partially restored Wilts and Berks Canal.
- Historic mill buildings associated with the river contribute to the time-depth and historic character to the area.
- Open views across the landscape and intervisibility with the elevated North Wessex Downs National Landscape to the south, and the Corallian Limestone Ridge to the north.
- Hedgerows, riparian woodland along watercourses and scattered woodland copses result in a greater sense of woodland cover, providing some visual screening and structure to the landscape.
- Sparsely settled landscape with a rural character and sense of remoteness, particularly in the south and centre.
- Provides a physical gap and sense of separation between settlements on the edges of the Lower Vale, including between Abingdon, Drayton and Steventon, and between East and West Hanney.

Detractors

- The fast-moving A34, A338 and Steventon Hanney roads.
- The monotonous and little used landscape and PRoW system for much of the central area combined with light industrial built features create an unsettling character.
- The Great Western Railway Line, including its overhead electrification infrastructure, along with the presence of settlement edges, the distant presence of chimneys at Didcot Power Station, Drayton Substation, pylons, solar farms and other business and light industrial land uses limits an overall sense of tranquillity and remoteness.
- The more unusual features of the mesh fencing and Nissen Huts of the Steventon Storage Depot, combined with the raised embankment of the railway line and the visible silo towers at Willowbrook Farm contribute to the eastern extents of the area being less pastoral and of a more unsettling character.

Project specific design guidance

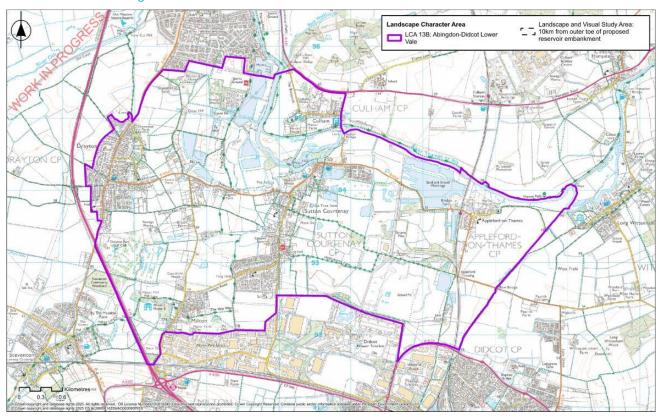
- Consider the long-distance views towards the North Wessex Downs National Landscape and the Corallian Limestone Ridge through design of framed views and planting of copses rather than large blocks of woodland.
- Maintain and enhance the valued recreational use of the landscape, increasing connectivity to enhance views and existing landscape character.
- Find opportunities to enhance and create new riparian character along watercourses with meadows and riparian vegetation. Reflect meandering watercourse patterns and propose individual waterside trees.
- Use woodland to reduce landscape monotony, to create enhanced spaces and frame distinctive views north and south to the ridges.
- Create green infrastructure corridors to provide ecological and visual interconnectivity through the area.

Classification - Public Page **43** of **85**

- Consider the setting of the historic Marcham village, incorporating relevant findings from the Neighbourhood Plan once published.
- Consider options to retain or relocate the ancient crack willow tree. Where removal is unavoidable, the intact dead wood hulks should be relocated to a nearby woodland area to decompose naturally, and cuttings should be taken and planted within the mitigating design.
- Consider options to incorporate planting within the reservoir water surface, such as floating islands.
- Reflect the characteristic pattern of wide grass verges, ditches, hedgerows and mature
 oak and sycamore trees at regular intervals along new foot and cycleways where
 appropriate.
- Look at opportunities to create new woodland to link with the Steventon community woodland in the east.
- Keep the alignment of the Site access road close to the A34 highway corridor to reduce the effect of traffic and highway infrastructure on the landscape.
- Consider reducing the barrier effect of the A34 for users of the PRoW network, by introducing a new crossing. Remove detracting features, such as Steventon Storage Depot, and propose new characteristics features, such as woodland blocks to enhance the landscape character and woodland belts along the railway to provide screening.

3.8 LCA 13B Abingdon – Didcot Lower Vale

Plate 30 Plan showing location and extents of LCA 13B



Description

- The location and extents of LCA 13B are shown on Plate 30 and views within the LCA are 3.8.1 shown on Plate 31 and Plate 32. The boundary of the LCA has been altered from the district LCA to include the settlements of Drayton, Sutton Courtenay and Milton. The LCA comprises a low-lying area of land located to the south of Abingdon-on-Thames. The area forms part of the River Thames floodplain extending between Abingdon and Didcot. The River Thames defines the northern boundary for much of the area, while the vale continues to the east and west. Much of the area is peppered with waterbodies resulting from historic gravel extraction and these have settled and established into the landscape, often with robust wooded edges reducing visibility to the waterbodies within. The larger settlements of Sutton Courtenay and Drayton have distinctive historic cores with varied traditional building materials including more unusual features. Small scale manor houses and their associated parklands are found at Milton, Sutton Courtenay and Culham and the settlements are also covered by Conservation Areas and contain several Listed Buildings. Sutton Courtenay Manor is a Registered Park and Garden however a parkland character remains at Milton and Culham. The strong local vernacular remains despite the modern extensions to the villages.
- 3.8.2 Whilst modern land use has altered the landscape over time, areas adjacent to the River Thames and Culham Cut and their associated floodplains, provide a calm, pastoral setting with a sense of historic depth. The distinctive riparian trees, passing small boats and filtered glimpses of the adjacent settlement features at Culham and Abingdon combine to provide a sense of peace and tranquillity.





Key characteristics

A flat, low-lying floodplain landscape associated with the River Thames.

- Tree cover along watercourses, woodland belts along the A34, scattered deciduous woodlands, and broad tree belts and thick hedgerows along agricultural field boundaries create a partially wooded landscape; other semi-natural habitats include distinctive areas of floodplain grazing marsh along the rivers.
- The floodplains have an irregular pattern of pastoral fields, while larger-scale often open arable fields feature on higher ground to the south and south-west. Field boundaries vary, but the majority are well-vegetated with low, thick hedges and mature trees.
- A settled landscape featuring villages, ribbon development along the road corridors, and a railway in the east. Settlements tend to be well-integrated by woodland cover.
- Current and former gravel extraction sites have altered the landscape, though maturing vegetation is assisting in restoring tranquillity and rurality.
- Strong public access via a network of PRoW, including the Thames Path National Trail and the Vale Way long-distance path.
- Views of the adjacent urban edges of Abingdon and Didcot.
- Whilst parts of the area are strongly influenced by development and the adjacent urban areas at Didcot and Abingdon, there are areas of tranquillity along the River Thames where tree cover provides containment.

- Historic villages at Drayton, Sutton Courtenay and Milton contain clusters of Listed Buildings and have designated Conservation Areas.
- Small scale manor houses and their associated parklands are found at Milton, Sutton Courtenay and Culham and the settlements are also covered by Conservation Areas and contain several Listed Buildings.
- The larger settlements of Sutton Courtenay and Drayton, whilst including much mid-20th century housing, have distinctive historic cores with varied traditional building materials including thatch, brick and timber frame.

Valued qualities

- The pastoral character along watercourses including the River Thames and Culham Cut due to the smaller-scale irregular field pattern along the floodplain, riparian vegetation, deciduous woodland, floodplain grazing marsh, lowland meadows and glimpsed settlement features which all contribute positively to the landscape character and provide ecological value.
- Regenerated areas of scrub and woodland habitat continue to improve the character of former gravel extraction sites.
- The sense of tranquillity experienced along the river and floodplain, in contrast to the busy suburban edge of Abingdon.
- Tree cover around settlement edges and along watercourses, with broad tree belts and thick hedgerows along agricultural field boundaries create a well-wooded character, integrates settlement edges and provides some visual screening.
- Provides an immediate setting to settlements, including the historic estate at Culham, Sutton Courtenay and Milton, containing clusters of Listed Buildings and covered by Conservation Area designations.

Classification - Public Page **46** of **85**

- Historic features representing a range of time depths, including prehistoric settlement sites, medieval field patterns, and historic manor houses with associated designed grounds.
- Recreational access to the landscape via a network of PRoW, including the Thames
 Path National Trail, National Cycle Network Route 5, and Oxford Greenbelt Way longdistance footpath.
- Open landscape forms gaps between settlements, helping to retain the individual identities of Drayton, Sutton Courtenay, Culham and Appleford.
- Land east of Appleford is more open and rural and is included within the Appleford to Long Wittenham Local Landscape Designation.

Plate 32 View along Culham Cut; View towards Culham Village from the Thames Path (top right); view south across waterbody from Abingdon Marina; Thatched cottages at Drayton









Detractors

- Pylons and associated cables cross the landscape from the south of Drayton towards the River Thames and northwards towards Abingdon and are detracting features above the skyline.
- Mainline railway line to the east with large-scale overhead electrification infrastructure
- Some road noise in areas.
- Didcot Power Station and the adjacent industrial areas north of Didcot are visible in some locations.

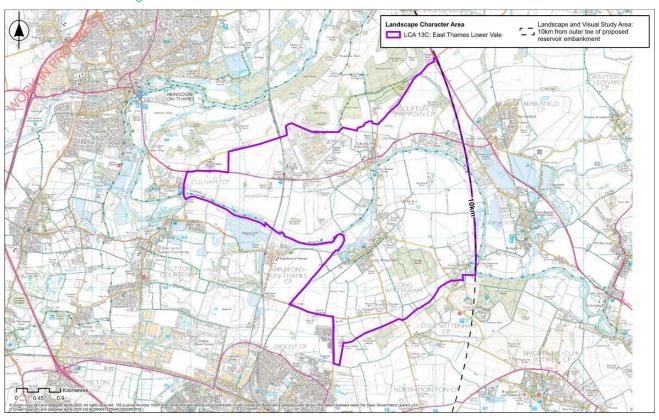
• Localised modern land uses including a sewage treatment works and sports grounds.

Project specific design guidance

- Retain the pastoral character along the River Thames and Culham Cut.
- Consider materials that are in keeping with the local vernacular including brick, tile and timber.
- Consider tree and scrub belts that retain the sense of tranquillity along the river, whilst providing ecological continuity to strengthen landscape character.
- Maintain the valued and contained recreational use of the landscape and river and consider opportunities to introduce additional PRoW that maintain landscape character.
- Use trees and woodland to integrate development into the landscape whilst being cognisant of riparian views to settlements and riparian features including bridges and churches
- Maintain the rural character of the landscape which provides a setting to and forms a gap between settlements including the more historic villages.
- Ensure sensitive design of the intake and outfall structures to seek to conserve the relative sense of tranquillity and remoteness along the River Thames, and the visual amenity of the Thames Path National Trail to the east of the river.

3.9 LCA 13C: East Thames Lower Vale

Plate 33 Plan showing location and extents of LCA 13C



Description

3.9.1 The location and extents of LCA 13C are shown on Plate 33 and views within and from the LCA are shown on Plate 34 and Plate 35. The eastern boundary of the LCA has been altered from the district LCA to extend only to the limits of the study area. The East Thames Lower Vale comprises low-lying land that rises gently as it extends eastwards from the settled floodplain south of Abingdon. Small areas, located alongside the River Thames in the southeastern edge of the area fall within the North Wessex Downs National Landscape. The area has many contrasting land uses including the more pastoral, riparian settings of the River Thames and larger fields and roads, historic and more modern settlement styles and waterbodies formed from historic gravel extraction.

Key characteristics

- A flat, low-lying landscape associated with the River Thames and River Thame and several of their small tributaries; underlain by clay and alluvium near the river channels but better-drained gravel terraces elsewhere.
- The land use is predominantly arable, although there are some areas of smaller-scale pasture that are generally concentrated on the wetter, poorly draining land adjacent to the river.
- Former gravel quarries have been filled in as lakes, giving Dorchester (a settlement beyond the study area) the appearance of sitting on an island. Many have naturalised edges and connected commercial enterprises.
- Widespread semi-natural habitats, which include extensive floodplain grazing marsh, lowland meadows, lowland fens and semi-improved grassland.
- Sparsely wooded, enabling long views across the landscape towards the surrounding hills. However, riparian woodland along the rivers and other small pockets of woodland result in a local sense of enclosure.
- A dense network of PRoW enables recreational access to the landscape, including the Thames Path National Trail.
- An overall rural character with distinctive views south towards the Wittenham Clumps.





- The settlements of Little Wittenham, Long Wittenham and Clifton Hampden have Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas; located close to watercourses, they are situated on terrace gravels, which have been favoured for settlement since prehistoric times due to the lighter, more workable soils, accessible water supply, and slight elevation above the most flood-prone areas.
- The local vernacular, seen within many of the small villages includes timber framing and thatched roofs with occasional examples of cob walling.
- There are historic bridges across the River Thames at Shillingford and Clifton Hampden.

Plate 35 Long distance views to Wittenham Clumps; thatched houses at Clifton Hamden; The Thames Path National Trail; Thameside









Valued qualities

- Little Wittenham village and fields near the Thames north of the village, and also the floodplain fields west of Shillingford between the Thames and Wittenham Clumps, are designated as part of the North Wessex Downs National Landscape. This largely reflects their strong visual relationship with Wittenham Clumps, one of the key recreational viewpoints in the National Landscape.
- The wider character area forms part of the rural, northern setting of the National Landscape, having some intervisibility with the designated area, particularly Wittenham Clumps.
- Riparian woodland cover along the rivers results in a pastoral character and a greater sense of enclosure.

- The presence of widespread semi-natural habitats, including small pockets of Ancient Woodland and priority habitat floodplain grazing marsh, lowland meadows, lowland fens, semi-improved grassland and deciduous woodland; these features provide ecological value and contribute positively to the landscape.
- Species rich hedgerows provide ecological corridors and landscape structure within the farmed landscape.
- Locally distinctive pattern of tree-lined roads.
- Recreational access to the landscape via a network of PRoW, including the Thames Path National Trail. Water-based recreation along the River Thames.
- The open landscape forms gaps between the settlements, helping to retain their individual identities.
- Provides a rural setting to settlements with their distinctive local vernacular and Conservation Areas.
- Sense of time-depth also due to the presence of ancient settlement sites designated as Scheduled Monuments.
- An overall rural character and sense of tranquillity in areas away from modern intrusion
- The value of the area centered on the loop of the River Thames between Dorchester and Appleford is demonstrated by its inclusion within the Appleford to Long Wittenham Local Landscape Designation.

Detractors

- Many of the wider, flat agricultural areas are crisscrossed by pylons and cables.
- There is some intrusion of 20th-century built form at Culham Science Centre.
- Busy transport corridors such as the A4074, A329 and A4130 cross the area.

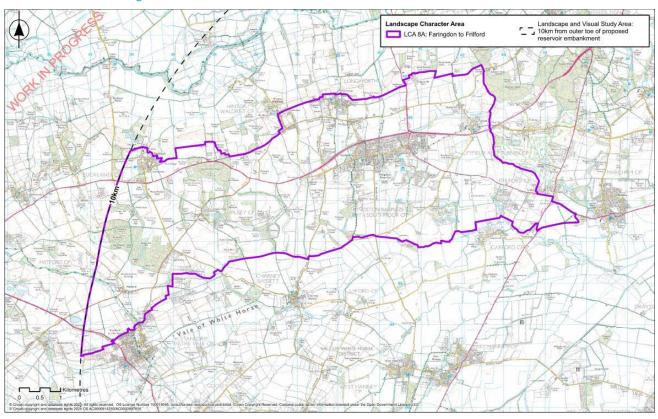
Project specific design guidance

The landscape defined by the Appleford to Long Wittenham Local Landscape
Designation provides a good precedent for the landscape design within the wetland
areas of the Site.

Appendix 9.1 - Project-level Landscape Character Assessment Classification - Public

3.10 LCA 8A: Faringdon to Frilford Ridge Slope

Plate 36 Plan showing location and extents of LCA 8A



Description

3.10.1 The location and extents of LCA 8A are shown on Plate 36 and views within the LCA are shown on Plate 37 and Plate 38. The boundary of the LCA has been altered from the district LCA to include the settlement of Kingston Bagpuize, and the eastern boundary has been curtailed to the limits of the study area. This LCA comprises a gently sloping ridge, forming part of the Corallian Limestone Ridge, that rises above the vale to the south. The area is less wooded than the other ridge slopes to the east, being more a mosaic of large agricultural fields and land use, settlements and other built form, and small blocks of broadleaf woodland. Pig farms are a distinctive and recognisable feature alongside roads, with their white shelters clearly visible from some distance on the gently sloping ridge sides. Commercial enterprises are ribboned along main roads with associated infrastructure of play areas, signage and road frontages. There are remnant areas of orchard and these, along with occasional traditional buildings, settlement cores and estates and gardens, provide an historic visual depth to the area despite its fragmented land uses. Whilst views can be gained south across the vale, woodland blocks visually enclose the area in some locations, and its linearity is emphasised by regular intervisibility east and west across the fields and travelling along the main roads. However, to the east of the area, wider views and a more open landscape provide long views south towards the Downs, with PRoW interconnecting throughout the area connecting the small settlements of Hatford, Stanford in the Vale, Pusey and Buckland.

Key characteristics

- A low ridge that slopes gently to the south; features several minor watercourses flowing from the ridge-top in the north towards the River Ock to the south.
- Generally well-vegetated with occasional small blocks of woodland, frequent dense boundary hedges and trees, and riparian woodland along meandering watercourses. Many of the woodlands are of ancient origin.
- Relatively large-scale arable farmland, with some pasture and paddocks close to settlements.
- Time-depth provided by remnant areas of medieval fieldscapes; several historic, nucleated villages and hamlets, scattered large country houses and farmsteads.
- Historic parklands associated with Pusey House and Buckland House.
- Recreational access provided by an extensive network of PRoW, including the Vale Way long-distance path.
- A rural area, with the rolling topography and tree cover providing a sense of enclosure, generally limiting long-distance views and aiding a sense of peace and tranquillity.
- Human influences, including electricity pylons on the eastern edge of the area, traffic
 on the A420 and proximity to the larger settlements of Faringdon and Kingston
 Bagpuize, locally limit the sense of tranquillity and remoteness.
- The south-facing slopes provide a backdrop to views from the vales to the south, and are part of the wider, albeit more distant, northern setting to the North Wessex Downs National Landscape. Views are also available from more open high points over the vale landscapes to the north.

Plate 37 View across the landscape east of Kingston Bagpuize



Settlement characteristics

• The area is characterised by many nucleated villages and hamlets, scattered country houses and farmsteads and historic parklands associated with Pusey House and Buckland House. Many include historic traditional houses and all combined to provide an historic time depth to balance the commercial enterprises in the east of the area.

- Many of the settlements have Conservation Areas, including Buckland, Pusey, Kingston Bagpuize, Longworth, Hinton Waldrist and Fyfield.
- New housing is extending from the edges of Kingston Bagpuize.
- The undulating landform and woodland help separate the surrounding settlements from each other, helping to retain their distinctive identities.

Plate 38 Pigs within fields west of Frilford; Housing expansion at Kingston Bagpuize; Ribboned retail adjacent to the A415; orchards at Woodhouse Fruit Farm









Valued qualities

- Blocks of woodland, including ancient woodland, provide ecological value and contribute positively to the landscape.
- Meandering watercourses and associated riparian woodland add landscape and ecological diversity.
- Time depth and historic character provided by remnant areas of medieval fieldscapes such as around Hatford and Buckland.
- The rural landscape, with a relatively intact network of hedgerows and mature hedgerow trees.
- Provides a rural setting to historic villages and hamlets, including those with Listed Buildings and Conservation Area designations, and a sense of separation between the settlements that helps to retain their distinctive identities.

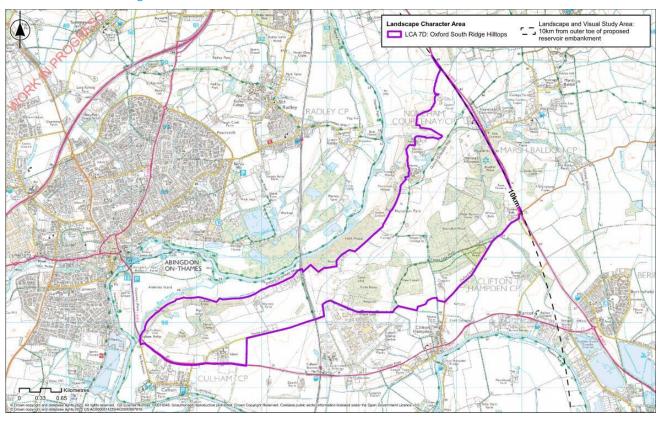
- Recreational value of the extensive network of PRoW, including the Vale Way longdistance path.
- The undulating landform and woodland cover provides enclosure and a sense of peace and tranquillity, some views south over vales available from more open high points.
- Forms part of the wider northern setting to the North Wessex Downs National Landscape which is visible in distant views south and provides a rural backdrop and skyline in views from the low-lying vale to the south.
- The northern fringe of the area also provides a backdrop and skyline in views from the Thames Valley to the north. The value of this role is recognised in its inclusion within the Northern Thames Valley Local Landscape Designation.

Detractors

- Ribbon commercial development along main roads, each with their own signage and features, combine to create a homogeneous character in contrast with other historic local features including orchards and buildings.
- The large white pig shelters are visible for some distance for long stretches beside roads.
- Pylons and busy roads limit the sense of tranquillity and remoteness in much of the area.

3.11 LCA 7D: Oxford South Ridge Hilltops

Plate 39 Plan showing location and extents of LCA 7D



Description

The location and extents of LCA 7D are shown on Plate 39 and views from and within the 3.11.1 LCA are shown on Plate 40 and Plate 41. The eastern boundary of the LCA has been altered from the district LCA to extend only to the limits of the study area. Located to the south of Oxford and east of Abingdon the character area comprises a prominent ridge of higher ground that rises above the valley and vale landscapes associated with the River Thames to the west and south and Baldon Brook to the east. The area comprises a distinctive mosaic of woodland, fields and settlements and generally feels quite enclosed, however when the landscape opens there is expansive intervisibility towards the Downs to the south. A rich right of way network crosses through the area including the Oxford Greenbelt Way, and Thame Lane as well as other smaller rights of way. Harcourt Arboretum and Nuneham Courtenay and Nuneham Courtenay Grade I Registered Park and Garden are both located within the area. Just outside the study area the village of Nuneham Courtenay, straddled either side of the busy A4074 road is distinctive with its matching historic cottages, and the village of Marsh Baldon with its large village green and blossoming hedgerows feels contained, quiet and untouched by the busier elements of its nearby setting.

Key characteristics

- A limestone ridge that forms a prominent spur of higher ground. A rolling plateau landform ranging from around 80m 100m AOD. The valley sides fall steeply to the west but grades more gently to the south and east.
- A relatively well wooded landscape, with numerous scattered, large woodland blocks and significant stands of deciduous and coniferous woodland at Nuneham Courtenay Park.
- Predominantly large-scale rectilinear arable fields, defined by drainage ditches or low hedgerows with few hedgerow trees; some smaller-scale pasture fields with more intact and species rich hedgerows associated with settlements.
- Nuneham Courtenay Grade I Registered Park and Garden, designed by 'Capability'
 Brown for Lord Harcourt, comprises an extensive area of 18th century parkland and
 associated estate landscape in the centre of the plateau.
- Low density settlement pattern comprising scattered farmsteads and small villages at Nuneham Courtenay and Marsh Baldon; both villages are covered by Conservation Areas, with that at Nuneham Courtenay also covering the wider associated parkland.
- A good network of PRoW allows access across the landscape, including the Oxford Greenbelt Way.
- Predominantly rural character; in particular, areas of comparative inaccessibility create
 a rural and remote character, particularly in the south. Some localised intrusion of main
 roads, overhead power lines and built development.
- Views generally reduced by landform and tree cover resulting in an enclosed and intimate landscape; some longer views available from hillsides and higher ground.

Plate 40 View south across the landscape near Burcot Farm



- The area has a sparse historic settlement pattern of scattered farmsteads and hamlets
- Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings in Nuneham Courtenay and Marsh Baldon provide historic character and time-depth; the open landscape provides a rural setting to these, directly abutting the historic core in places and retaining their individual identities.
- Traditional building materials include thatch, stone and brick which feel directly connected with their landscape setting including village greens and densely edged country lanes.
- A scattering of historic buildings including farms, cottages and lodges can be found throughout the area.

Plate 41 Local hedged lane; Nuneham Courtenay; St Peter's Church; Cottage at Marsh Baldon









Valued qualities

- Distinctive steeply rising spur of higher ground rising above the River Thames, which contrasts with the surrounding lower-lying river valley and vale landscapes to the west, south and east.
- Woodland cover with significant stands of deciduous and coniferous woodland, provide a distinctive landscape pattern.
- Semi-natural habitats such as calcareous fen, acid and limestone grassland, Ancient Woodland and lowland meadows provide ecological value and contribute positively to the landscape.
- Surviving smaller-scale pasture fields with relatively intact and species rich hedgerows associated with settlements and to the north around Nineveh Farm contrast with the predominant more open large-scale rectilinear arable fields.
- Remnant areas of orchards to the north of Marsh Baldon provide links to historic land uses, contribute to historic landscape character, and provide texture and visual interest to the landscape.
- Nuneham Courtenay Registered Park and Garden provides time-depth and historic landscape character and creates a distinct sense of place and parkland character.
- Recreational value of PRoW, including the Oxford Greenbelt Way.

 A predominantly rural character, with a sense of enclosure and intimacy due to landform and woodland cover; some longer outward views available from hillsides and higher ground.

Detractors

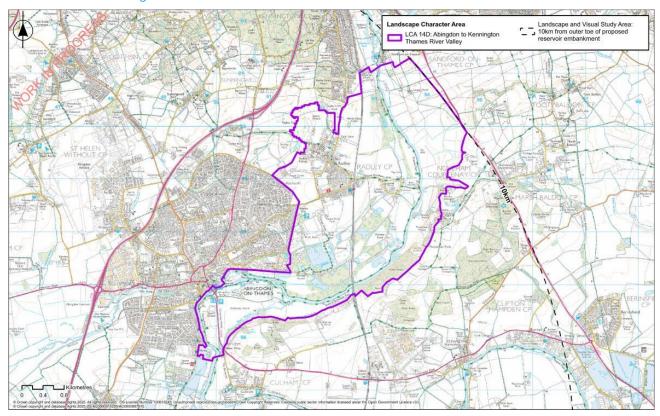
- Electricity pylons are a strong visual detractor in this landscape, particularly
 in the south-west, where there are views to the industrial estate on Abingdon's
 southern edge.
- The fast moving and busy A4074 detracts from the distinctive architecture at Nuneham Courtenay.

Project specific design guidance

• The slopes and planting, including that around Culham Hill provide a good precedent for the landscape design of the embankment slopes.

3.12 LCA 14D: Abingdon to Kennington Thames Lower Valley

Plate 42 Plan showing location and extents of LCA 14D



Description

3.12.1 The location and extents of LCA 14D are shown on Plate 42 and views within the LCA are shown in Plate 43 and Plate 44. The northern boundary of the LCA has been altered from the district LCA to include the settlement of Radley. The LCA is located south of Kennington and east of Abingdon-on-Thames and covers the River Thames and its

floodplain, including flooded former quarry pits. It includes considerable areas of woodland, including steep wooded slopes in the south-east which are part of Nuneham Courtenay Registered Park and Garden. The wooded ridges to the east and west provide containment. Whilst the central area is defined by the River Thames on its broad arc around the eastern edge of Abingdon, its wooded banks sometimes enclosing its route with only a hint of its presence being felt from the area's road network. The weeping willows growing at Lower Radley, located just west of the river are the only visual clue to there being a nearby river. The Thames Path National Trail at times provides broad views west across the landscape and occasional glimpses of the Wessex Downs and provides a striking and very pleasant right of way through the area, which is often enlivened by the movement and colour of boats navigating the river. The flat arable landscape is edged by distinctive lines of trees, and the wooded interior does much to screen the concrete suppliers located centrally near Radley Lakes, the formal gravel workings that are now established as an area of ecological and recreational value. The remaining areas are peppered with paddocks, further waterbodies, agricultural fields and woodland belts and shaws. The vegetation growing along the river and through the floodplain, combined with limited settlement and road networks combine to create a sense of enclosure, peace and relative tranquillity in the area

Key characteristics

- Flat low-lying floodplain landscape of the River Thames, enclosed by limestone ridges to the west and east.
- Riparian woodland and vegetation along the River Thames often hide it from view within the landscape.
- Former mineral extraction has altered the landscape. Radley Lakes Nature Reserve, formed of flooded former gravel pits, supports a variety of flora and fauna, and several small areas of lowland meadow and floodplain grazing marsh are also a distinctive feature of the floodplain.
- Small-scale pasture fields line the river, with larger-scale arable fields and small areas of horticulture away from the river. Boundary vegetation varies: there are some shelterbelts and strong hedgerows but other areas with limited boundary vegetation.
- Abingdon lies on the lower valley side to the south-west, and Kennington sits on higher ground to the north-west. The village of Radley and adjacent college also lie on the western valley side.
- Localised detractors include quarrying activities, electricity pylon routes, roads on the fringes of the valley and the Cherwell Valley railway line, but few roads pass through the lower valley area, creating some sense of rural remoteness especially where vegetation adds visual enclosure.
- Good levels of public access, with the Thames Path National Trail following the river, and the Oxford Greenbelt Way passing to the east of Radley. Water-based recreation along the River Thames is common.
- Vegetation along the riverbank creates an enclosed character, with the River Thames often not visible. From more open areas views are available across the landscape with the rising limestone ridges to the east and west providing a wooded backdrop.

Plate 43 Thatched cottage at Radley



- The only settlement in the lower valley is Radley, which contains a number of Listed Buildings, along with isolated historic farmsteads.
- Wick Hall, a Grade II* Listed Building, retains a surrounding parkland character, with distinctive estate features of drive, avenue and fencing visible from the eastern edge of Abingdon.
- At the western edge of the area, the 15th century bridge stands and is designated as a Scheduled Monument.

Plate 44 Radley Lakes; View east towards the River Thames corridor; pylons crossing the landscape near Radley; Hedgerow and ditch near Radley









Valued qualities

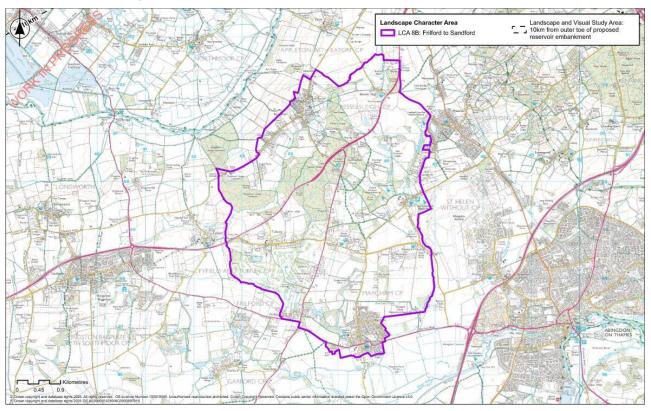
- Functional floodplain landscape, with riparian woodland and wetland habitats providing ecological value and contributing positively to the landscape.
- A rural and agricultural character, with a mixture of pasture, arable and horticultural land uses.
- Prehistoric and Iron Age settlements and burial mounds, designated as Scheduled Monuments, provide time-depth; the open landscape provides a setting to these features.
- Strong recreational access focused on the River Thames.
- Provides an open rural riverside setting to the settlements of Radley, Abingdon and Kennington, including the Conservation Area at Abingdon.
- The landscape is important in retaining the sense of separation between settlements, particularly between Radley and Abingdon where the gap is quite narrow.
- Views are available across the landscape from more open areas, with the rising limestone ridges to the east and west often visible as a wooded backdrop.
- Vegetation along the river and floodplain, and limited settlement and road networks, create a sense of enclosure, peace and relative tranquillity in the lower valley floor area.

Detractors

- Pylons crisscross the area, particularly in the north and are visually intrusive within the otherwise rural setting.
- Farm detritus including tyres and other features can be seen at village edges.
- The access road to Radley Lakes is shared with the concrete suppliers and can be busy with loud and visually intrusive lorry movements.
- Quarrying activities.
- Roads on the fringes of the valley and the Cherwell Valley railway line.

3.13 LCA 8B: Frilford to Sandford Ridge Slope

Plate 45 Plan showing location and extents of LCA 8B



Description

3.13.1 The location and extents of LCA 8B are shown on Plate 45 and views within the LCA are shown on Plate 46 and Plate 47. The southern boundary of the LCA has been altered from the district LCA to include the settlement of Marcham. This LCA comprises a gently sloping ridge that rises above the vales to the south, and forms part of the Corallian Limestone Ridge. It is characterised by its large areas of woodland, within which settlements are clustered including the unusual, linear village of Tubney, where its ribbons streetscape is punctuated by traditionally built timber, brick, stone and thatched houses. The high hedgerows and neat, well-maintained gardens and regular spacing of properties have an Alpine air, with the tall pines growing in and amongst the well-tended properties. The area feels deeply enclosed with little sense of the vale to the south. A substantial golf course is located south of Tubney, its seemingly expansive greens stretching for some distance

along the A338 road. The eastern edge of the area is more open with wider intervisibility south though there are few opening through its wooded eastern edge that provide intervisibility with the adjacent airfield.

Key characteristics

- A low ridge that slopes gently to the south; features minor watercourses flowing from the ridge-top in the north towards the River Ock to the south.
- Significant tree cover including large Ancient Woodlands, frequent dense boundary hedges and mature trees, and riparian woodland along meandering watercourses.
- Features nationally rare habitats including calcareous fen, acid grassland and heathland across several sites designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest, creating an unusual heathland character.
- Relatively large-scale arable and pastoral farmland, with some areas of estate land and smaller-scale parcels of land/paddocks on the edges of settlements.
- There is a more limited public access on PRoW. A number of nature reserves are popular for recreation.
- A rural area, with the rolling topography and tree cover providing a sense of enclosure and generally limiting long-distance views and aiding a sense of peace and tranquillity.
- Woodlands provide a backdrop to longer views from the North Wessex Downs National Landscape, and from some more open locations in the vale, but slopes are not steep enough for the area to be prominent.
- Rare, nationally important, semi-natural habitats, including Ancient Woodland and significant areas of valley fen, wet woodland, and wet fen meadow habitats, provide ecological value and contribute positively to the landscape.
- Meandering Sanford Brook and associated riparian woodland adds landscape and ecological diversity and forms a wooded settlement edge to Wootton.
- The rural landscape, with limited development, a relatively intact network of hedgerows, and mature hedgerow trees.
- The undulating landform and woodland cover provide enclosure and a sense of peace and tranquillity, with some views south over vales available from more open high points.
- Forms part of the wider northern setting to the North Wessex Downs National Landscape which is visible in distant views north from the National Landscape. Provides a rural backdrop and skyline in views from the low-lying Vale to the south.
- A small area on the northern edge of the ridge, near Appleton, also forms a backdrop to views from the Thames Valley, and is included within the Northern Thames Valley Local Landscape Designation.

Plate 46 Thatched houses at Tubney



- Ribbon villages often within a wooded setting.
- Traditional building materials of thatched roof, stone, brick and timber.
- A more limited settlement pattern, concentrated in the historic villages of Appleton and Marcham. Low density development is found along the local road network formed generally of large detached properties within wooded settings.
- The historic character of Appleton with its designated Conservation Area, Cothill and Tubney with characterful buildings and features and the historic low-density traditional housing along local roads provides time depth.
- The linear village of Tubney is punctuated by traditionally built timber, brick, stone and thatched houses.

Plate 47 Tubney Golf Course; fields and woodland; wooded edge of Farringdon Road; building at Cothill







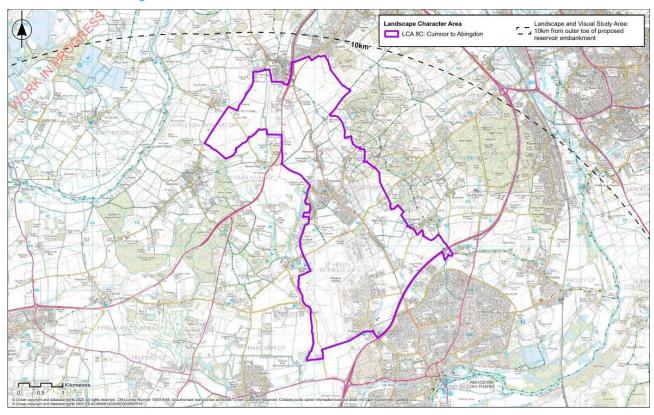


Detractors

 The busy and fast moving A420 road, and the area's proximity to the edges of larger settlements such as Marcham and Appleton, locally limit the sense of tranquillity and remoteness.

3.14 LCA 8C: Cumnor to Abingdon Ridge Slope

Plate 48 Plan showing location and extents of LCA 8C



Description

3.14.1 The location and extents of LCA 8C are shown on Plate 48 and views within the LCA are shown on Plate 49 and Plate 50. The western boundary of the LCA has been altered from the district LCA to include the settlement of Wootton. This LCA comprises a gently sloping ridge that rises above the vales to the south. There is intervisibility with the rising slopes to the east, near Wooton. South of Wooton, areas connect visually with the vale and the Wessex Downs to the south, whilst areas further north can feel more enclosed. The Airfield and its features of grassed runways and infrastructure, contributes to much of the character of this southern area and from its northern edge of the airfield, there is extensive panoramic visibility south across the vale towards the Downs, with the flat extents of the Vale emphasised by the rising topography of the ridge slopes and features clearly visible including the Wittenham Clumps, Didcot Power Station and other human influences scattered throughout the Vale. Despite the topographical change of this area from the vale, and its land use and features, it feels more connected with the landscape to the south than other Ridge Slope areas.

Key characteristics

- A low ridge that slopes gently to the south towards the River Ock floodplain.
- Generally well-vegetated with occasional small blocks of woodland, frequent dense boundary hedges and trees.
- Relatively large-scale arable farmland, with pasture and paddocks on the edges of Wootton and Cumnor.

- Settlement is concentrated on the rural roads leading out of Wootton.
- Abingdon airfield forms a significant area in the south, with grassland, runways, hard standing and large hangers. Boundaries feature security fencing.
- Recreational access is provided by a good network of PRoW, including the Oxford Greenbelt Way.
- A rural area, with the rolling topography and tree cover providing a sense of enclosure and generally limiting long-distance views and aiding a sense of peace and tranquillity.
 There are some longer views to the wooded high ground around Boars Hill.

Plate 49 Abingdon Airfield



- Settlement is generally concentrated on the rural roads leading out of Wootton.
- Wooton is generally an area of mixed 20th century housing, with some views south from its southern edge however a cluster of more historic, often stone built buildings, including St Peter's Church are located along and near Wootton Village road.

Plate 50 Landscape near Wootton







Valued qualities

 Meandering watercourses and associated riparian woodland add landscape and ecological diversity.

- Away from settlement edges the landscape retains a rural character, with a relatively intact network of hedgerows and mature hedgerow trees helping to retain some tranquillity and wooded higher ground to the east providing a scenic backdrop.
- The landscape provides a rural setting to Cumnor (including its Conservation Area), Botley, Wootton, and Abingdon. Open countryside is playing an important role in maintaining a sense of separation between settlements that helps to retain their distinct identities.
- Recreational value of the network of PRoW, which is strongest in the area east of Wootton and between Wootton and Cumnor (where it includes the Oxford Greenbelt Way).
- Some long views south over the vale to the North Wessex Downs National Landscape.

- Pylons crossing the area north of Wooton.
- Varying features that include the A34 road, Didcot Power Station and the Silo towers at Willowbrook Farm.

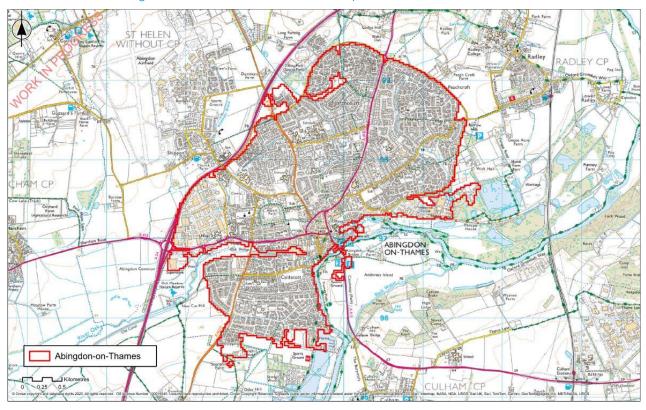
Project specific design guidance

- Consider long views north from the vale, considering the role of the area as a historic, natural and topographical backdrop. Consider locally important vistas as detailed in Policy within the Wootton and St Helen Without Neighbourhood Plan (Wootton and St Helen Without Parish Councils, 2019).
- Consider opportunities to link into, enhance and increase PRoW between the vale and areas to the north, in particular with consideration for future uses including proposed housing at Dalton Barracks.
- Consider long views from the ridge through integrating new features such as the embankment within its landscape setting, the use of muted colours and local vernacular materials and a sensitive lighting strategy.

Appendix 9.1 - Project-level Landscape Character Assessment Classification - Public Page **69** of **85**

3.15 Townscape Character Area 01: Abingdon

Plate 51 Plan showing location and extents of Townscape Character Area 01



Description

3.15.1 The location and extents of Townscape Character Area 01 are shown on Plate 51 and a view within the LCA is shown on Plate 52. Abingdon is a market town located 5 miles south of Oxford on the River Thames. It has a visible historic core and identity as an agricultural and wool trading centre. Its historic character is emphasised by its river facing location, and blend of historic buildings and water meadows adjacent to the River Thames.

Key Characteristics

- River Thames side location, with a mix of historic buildings providing hints to its past as a centre of wool and agriculture.
- Boats moored on the waterfront and passing along the River Thames.
- A traditional central marketplace that has mostly retained its historic character.
- Much new housing and modern infrastructure have expanded the town towards neighbouring settlements including Shippon and Caldecott.

Plate 52 Edge to the River Thames at Abingdon



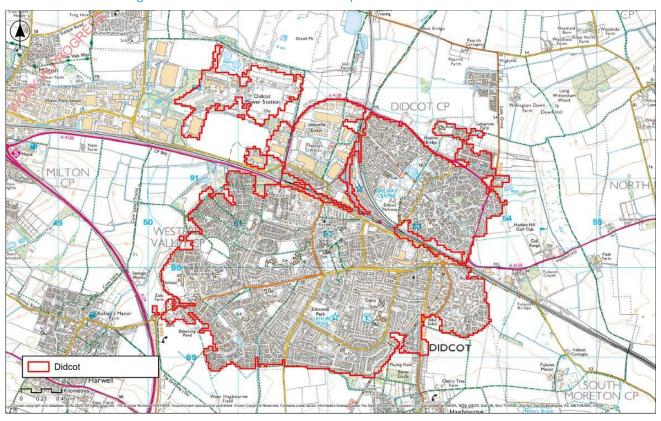
• Inevitable housing pressures and urban infrastructure have expanded the town from its original historic core. Whilst this is retained, its edges have become blurred and generic, particularly on its northwestern edge.

Project specific design guidance

 Opportunities to create links between the vale and town through improved cycle routes and PRoW.

3.16 Townscape Character Area 02: Didcot

Plate 53 Plan showing location and extents of Townscape Character Area 02



Description

3.16.1 The location and extents of Townscape Character Area 02 are shown on Plate 53 and views within the LCA are shown on Plate 54. Didcot has a significant pre and Roman history, however its original historic core has largely been consumed by 20th century expansion as a result of its position on the Great Western Railway which greatly assisted its expansion. Didcot is part of the Science Vale Enterprise Zone with many science and technology campuses located nearby and Didcot is seen as a growth area with plans for increased housing and infrastructure. In 2015 the town gained Garden Town status that provides funding for sustainable and environmental development.

Plate 54 Didcot Railway Station; Didcot historic core; All Saints Parish Church







Key Characteristics

- An historic core around All Saints Parish Church, parts of which date back to the 12th century.
- Extensive 20th and 21st century housing, including a significant development set around the distinctive oval-shaped boundary park.
- Intervisibility and connectivity at its edges towards the North Wessex Downs and across the vale from elevated sections.
- A busy railway station and railway centre focused on its history on the Great Western Railway

Detractors

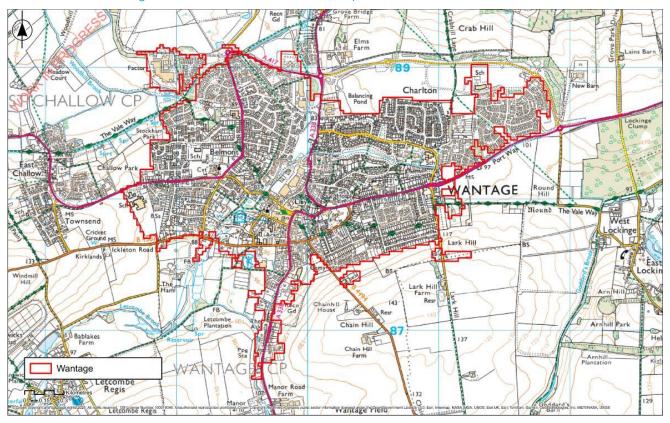
 Much of the town has lost its core identity through housing expansion and infrastructure.

Project specific design principles

- Consideration of views into the vale from the western edge of the town.
- Opportunities for physical links with the areas of newer housing, elevated by landform on the town's western edge.

3.17 Townscape Character Area 03: Wantage

Plate 55 Plan showing location and extents of Townscape Character Area 03



Description

3.17.1 The location and extents of Townscape Character Area 03 are shown on Plate 55 and views from and within the LCA are shown on Plate 56. Wantage is an historic town located at the foot of the North Wessex Downs and remains just detached from the neighbouring town of Grove to the north. It has a large market square which includes a statue to King Alfred the Great who was born nearby at a Royal palace. It is famous in popular culture as the place where Thomas Hardy based his fictional town of Alfredstone in Jude the Obscure. Most of its historic core remains despite housing expansion on its edges and much is being developed with a vernacular of local materials. Its southeast corner in particular has a significant area of new housing including Crab Hill, a new urban extension including rights of way links centred along King Alfred Way with wide visual connectivity with the National Landscape and the Vale to the north.

Key Characteristics

- An historic core, still very much its defining character and influence.
- A substantial conservation area at its centre with many listed buildings.
- Links in literary and historic culture.
- Significant housing expansion with urban extensions to its eastern and southern edge.
- Views south to the National Landscape and north into the vale from elevated areas to its eastern edge.
- Historic route of the Wilts and Berks Canal nearby.

Plate 56 Terrace within Wantage; view from Wantage Market Placeto St Oeter's & St Paul's Church; view towards the Ridgeway within the North Wessex Downs National Landscape from the urban extension on the southern edge of Wantage







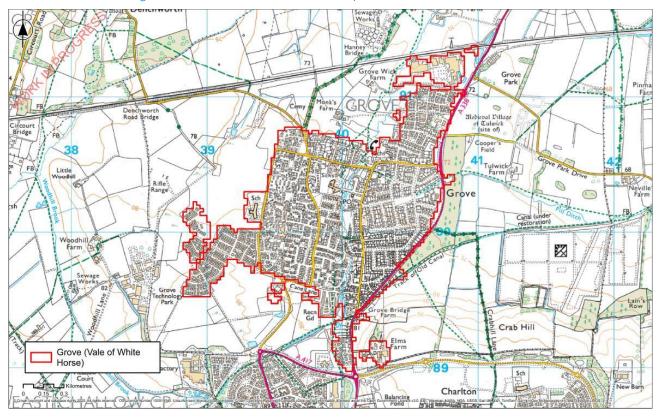
 Some small scale industrial and housing development at its edge that is not in accord with its strong historic character.

Project specific design principles

 Consideration of visual links from the vale, particularly in the new area of housing at Crab Hill with its elevated views north into the vale.

3.18 Townscape Character Area 04: Grove

Plate 57 Plan showing location and extents of Townscape Character Area 04



Description

3.18.1 The location and extents of Townscape Character Area 04 are shown on Plate 57 and views within the LCA are shown on Plate 58. Grove is a large village directly north of Wantage, with its historic development much marked by the route of the Wilts and Berks Canal. The development of the Great Western Railway and the opening of Wantage Station at its southern edge increased its development and population, though this station has now closed. An historic village core remains, though much of the village's expansion is 20th century and new housing. A large and distinctive area of planted woodland, with neatly lined broadleaf trees, provides a distinctive feature as you pass along the eastern edge of the village.

Key Characteristics

- A large village, with an historic centre including a Conservation Area centred around
 The Green and which include a number of Listed Buildings.
- Distinctive areas of broadleaf planting along its eastern edge provide a visual barrier to the landscape beyond, making the village feels enclosed on this edge.
- New housing extends outwards from the historic centre.
- There is a significant right of way network from the village into the surrounding landscape.

Plate 58 Grove historic core; plantation east of Station Road, Grove





- The railway bridge creates a degree of separation from areas further north in the vale.
- The mix of architectural styles creates a disjointed sense of place.

Project specific design principles

- Consider opportunities to create or enhance links into the existing right of way network between the village and the vale.
- Expansion and restoration of the Wilts and Berks canal and consideration of Grove's history on its route.
- 3.18.2 The table below combines the judgements of value and susceptibility to provide an assessment of sensitivity for each individual project-level character area.

4 Landscape receptors and their sensitivity

- 4.1.1 Table 4.1 identifies each of the landscape receptors selected for the preliminary assessment within the PEI Report, comprising the project-level landscape character areas, nationally designated landscapes (i.e. the North Wessex Downs National Landscape), and locally designated landscapes.
- 4.1.2 For each receptor the table provides the 'Area IDs', which correspond to the identifiers on Figure 9.16: Landscape receptors. It also lists any viewpoints which may be considered relevant to each receptor i.e. those which are either within the defined area of the receptor or considered sufficiently close to it to still help inform the assessment of effects upon that receptor. The table also states the sensitivity values for each receptor, including their overall sensitivity, but also their value and susceptibility; this is in accordance with the methodology in Chapter 9: Landscape and visual, (paragraphs 9.4.35 to 9.4.38), which sets out the criteria associated with each of the ratings. Sensitivity judgements are summarised in the penultimate column using the following abbreviations:
 - VH (Very High)
 - H (High)
 - M (Medium or Moderate)
 - L (Low)
- 4.1.3 The final column in Table 4.1 provides a brief commentary explaining the sensitivity judgements.

Table 4.1 Landscape Receptors considered in the preliminary assessment and their sensitivity

Receptor Name	Area ID	Associated Viewpoints	Sensitivity (inc. Value and Susceptibility)	Sensitivity Commentary		
Project-level landsca	Project-level landscape character areas					
LCA 1A: North Wessex Downs Scarp	EIA- 177	VP1, VP2, VP3, VP4, VP5, VP6, VP7	Value: VH Susceptibility: VH Sensitivity: VH	Very high value as the landscape is within the North Wessex Downs National Landscape. Very high susceptibility as it is scenic, highly visible, undeveloped, and forms a distinctive backdrop. Overall very high sensitivity as a result.		
LCA 6A: North Wessex Downs Foot Slopes	EIA- 178	VP8, VP9, VP10, VP11, VP54	Value: VH Susceptibility: H Sensitivity: VH	Very high value as the landscape is designated, historically rich, and perceptually tranquil. High susceptibility due to the landform, scenic qualities and mixture of openness and enclosure. Overall very high sensitivity as a result.		
LCA 7D: Oxford South Ridge Hilltops	EIA- 179	-	Value: H Susceptibility: H Sensitivity: H	High value due to the historic and rural character. High susceptibility as its features and setting limit its ability to absorb change. Overall high sensitivity as a result.		
LCA 8A: Faringdon to Frilford Slope	EIA- 180	VP37, VP38, VP55	Value: M Susceptibility: M Sensitivity: M	Medium value as the landscape is rural with some historic value, though it is affected by detractors. Medium susceptibility as the landform, historic features and backdrop the area provides are balanced by the areas of woodland providing enclosure and the influence of human development affecting perceptual and scenic qualities. Overall medium sensitivity as a result.		
LCA 8B: Frilford to Sandford Ridge Slope	EIA- 181	VP34, VP56	Value: M Susceptibility: M Sensitivity: M	Medium value due to the nature conservation designations, reduced by human influences affecting perceptual qualities. Medium susceptibility due to the landform, woodland and semi-natural habitats. Overall medium sensitivity as a result.		

Receptor Name	Area ID	Associated Viewpoints	Sensitivity (inc. Value and Susceptibility)	Sensitivity Commentary
LCA 8C: Cumnor to Abingdon Ridge Slope	EIA- 182	VP35	Value: M Susceptibility: M Sensitivity: M	Medium value as the landscape is rural with some ecological and recreational value, although detractors affect sense of tranquillity. Medium susceptibility as it retains some capacity for change. Overall medium sensitivity as a result.
LCA 9B: Wantage to Didcot Vale Edge Slopes	EIA- 183	VP10, VP11, VP12, VP14, VP16	Value: H Susceptibility: H Sensitivity: H	High value due to the landscape's role in the setting of the National Landscape, the historic character and rural qualities. High susceptibility due to the sloping landform and rural character. Overall high sensitivity as a result.
LCA 9C: Milton Hill to Didcot Vale Edge Slopes	EIA- 184	VP16	Value: M Susceptibility: M Sensitivity: M	Medium value as the landscape is fragmented but retains some cultural and scenic value. Medium susceptibility as it has partial sensitivity to change. Overall medium sensitivity as a result.
LCA 10A: Sinodun Lower Vale Hills	EIA- 185	VP22	Value: VH Susceptibility: VH Sensitivity: VH	Very high value as the landscape is within the National Landscape, perceptually strong, and ecologically rich. Very high susceptibility as it is a distinctive landscape with physical, perceptual and historic sensitivities. Overall, very high sensitivity as a result.
LCA 12B: Western Middle Vale	EIA- 186	VP39, VP40, VP42, VP43, VP44, VP45, VP46, VP47, VP48, VP49, VP50, VP51, VP52	Value: H Susceptibility: M Sensitivity: M	High value as the landscape is rural, with some valued features, and forms part of the wider setting of the National Landscape although there are some detractors affecting its perceptual qualities. Medium susceptibility as it has mixed ability to accommodate change. Overall medium sensitivity as a result.
LCA 13A: Ock Lower Vale	EIA- 187	VP13, VP15, VP18, VP19, VP20, VP29, VP33, VP41, VP49, VP53, VP57	Value: M Susceptibility: M Sensitivity: M	Medium value as the landscape is rural, with some valued features, and forms part of the wider setting of the National Landscape although there are numerous detractors affecting its perceptual and scenic quality. Medium susceptibility as it has mixed ability to accommodate change. Overall medium sensitivity as a result.

Receptor Name	Area ID	Associated Viewpoints	Sensitivity (inc. Value and Susceptibility)	Sensitivity Commentary
LCA 13B Abingdon – Didcot Lower Vale	EIA- 188	VP21, VP23, VP24, VP25, VP26, VP27, VP28, VP31	Value: M Susceptibility: M Sensitivity: M	Medum value due to the perceptually tranquil character in places, alongside the influence of nearby infrastructure. Medium susceptibility due to the historic character, tranquillity and visual sensitivity, alongside the presence of on-going gravel extraction and influence of infrastructure. Overall medium sensitivity as a result.
LCA 13C: East Thames Lower Vale	EIA- 189	VP23	Value: VH Susceptibility: M Sensitivity: H	Very high value as parts of the landscape are designated at the national and local level. Medium susceptibility as though its seminatural habitats and intervisibility with the North Wessex Downs are sensitive features, this is reduced by the flat landform and human influences affecting perceptual qualities. Overall high sensitivity as a result.
LCA 14D: Abingdon to Kennington Thames Lower Valley	EIA- 540	VP26	Value: H Susceptibility: M Sensitivity: H	High value as the landscape is tranquil, with strong sense of place, historic, recreational value and ecological value in the wetland landscapes. Medium susceptibility as it is tranquil by the River Thames, though affected by settlement edges such as Abingdon, whilst enclosure by vegetation also limits susceptibility. Overall high sensitivity as a result.
Townscape Character Area 01: Abingdon	EIA- 244	VP32	Value: H Susceptibility: M Sensitivity: H	High value as the town has a strong historic identity. Medium susceptibility as whilst the historic features and riverside setting are sensitive, the town is continually undergoing change. Overall high sensitivity as a result.
Townscape Character Area 02: Didcot	EIA- 245	VP17	Value: M Susceptibility: L Sensitivity: M	Medium value as the town has some historic character although sense of place is fragmented. Low susceptibility due to the urban influences within the town which is constantly undergoing change, and the limited historic character. Overall medium sensitivity as a result.

Receptor Name	Area ID	Associated Viewpoints	Sensitivity (inc. Value and Susceptibility)	Sensitivity Commentary
Townscape Character Area 03: Wantage	EIA- 246	VP12	Value: H Susceptibility: M Sensitivity: H	High value as the town has a strong historic core and a visual connection with the North Wessex Downs. Medium susceptibility as the town is continually undergoing change. Overall high sensitivity as a result.
Townscape Character Area 04: Grove	EIA- 295	-	Value: M Susceptibility: M Sensitivity: M	Medium value as the town has some historic character although sense of place is fragmented. Medium susceptibility due to the historic core, balanced by areas of modern development. Overall medium sensitivity as a result.
Nationally designated	d landso	capes		
North Wessex Downs National Landscape	EIA- 194	VP1, VP2, VP3, VP4, VP5, VP6, VP7, VP8, VP9	Value: VH Susceptibility: VH Sensitivity: VH	Very high value as the North Wessex Downs National Landscape is a designated landscape of national importance. Very high susceptibility as it has dramatic landform, semi-natural landcover, historic features, high degree of tranquillity and distinctive skyline. Overall very high sensitivity as a result.
Locally designated la	andscap	es (LLD)		
Appleford to Long Wittenham LLD	EIA- 195	-	Value: H Susceptibility: H Sensitivity: H	High value as the landscape is identified as having importance at the local authority level. High susceptibility due to the scenic qualities and relationship with the North Wessex Downs National Landscape, though reduced slightly due to the flat landform and enclosure. Overall high sensitivity as a result.
Northern Thames Valley LLD	EIA- 196	-	Value: H Susceptibility: VH Sensitivity: VH	High value as the landscape is identified as having importance at the local authority level. Very high susceptibility due to the scenic qualities, historic character and open views. Overall very high sensitivity as a result.
West Oxford Hills LLD	EIA- 197	-	Value: H Susceptibility: VH Sensitivity: H	High value as the landscape is identified as having importance at the local authority level. Very high susceptibility due to the scenic qualities and distinctive ridge landform. Overall high sensitivity as a result.

Receptor Name	Area ID	Associated Viewpoints	Sensitivity (inc. Value and Susceptibility)	Sensitivity Commentary
West of Wantage LLD	EIA- 198	-	Value: H Susceptibility: H Sensitivity: H	High value as the landscape is identified as having importance at the local authority level. High susceptibility due to the scenic qualities, sense of tranquillity and strong visual relationship with surrounding landscapes including the North Wessex Downs. Overall high sensitivity as a result.

References

It should be noted that the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) has recently rebranded as the Institute of Sustainability and Environmental Professionals (ISEP). Guidance that was historically published by IEMA is still referenced under that institute name.

East Hanney Parish Council (2024). East Hanney Draft Neighbourhood Plan 2021 to 2031. Accessed June 2025. https://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2024/05/East-Hanney-Made-Version.pdf

Landscape Institute and IEMA (2013). Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, 3rd Edition (GLVIA3). Oxon: Routledge.

Landscape Institute (2024). Notes and Clarifications on aspects of the 3rd Edition Guidelines on Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA3). Accessed June 2025.

https://www.landscapeinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/LITGN-2024-01-GLVIA3-NC Aug-2024.pdf

Land Use Consultants (LUC) (2002). North Wessex Downs AONB Integrated Landscape Character Assessment. Accessed June 2025. https://www.northwessexdowns.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Landscape-Character-Assessment-Full-report1.pdf

LUC (2024). Dark Skies/ Light Impact Assessment Methodology Report for South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse. Accessed June 2025. https://south-ox-and-vale-landscape-evidence-base.co.uk/Dark-Skies/report/

LUC (2024). Landscape Character Assessment for South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse. Accessed June 2025. https://www.southandvale.gov.uk/app/uploads/sites/2/2025/06/CD6.1- Landscape-Character-Assessment-Main-Report-Final-250dpi-1-1.pdf

LUC (2024). Local Landscape Designation Review of South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse. Accessed June 2025. https://www.southandvale.gov.uk/app/uploads/2024/12/NHL16-Local-Landscape-Designation-Review.pdf

LUC (2024). Tranquillity Assessment for South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse. Accessed June 2025. https://south-ox-and-vale-landscape-evidence-base.co.uk/Tranquillity/report/

Natural England (2014). An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment. Accessed June 2025. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/691_184/landscape-character-assessment.pdf

Natural England (2014). National Character Area Profiles. Accessed June 2025. https://nationalcharacterareas.co.uk/

North Wessex Downs AONB Council of Partners (2019). The North Wessex Downs AONB Position Statement on Setting, paragraph 17. Accessed June 2025.

https://www.northwessexdowns.org.uk/wp-

content/uploads/2021/11/Setting Position Statement 2019 Final.pdf

North Wessex Downs AONB (2021). The Dark Skies of the North Wessex Downs: A Guide to Good External Lighting. Accessed June 2025. https://www.northwessexdowns.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Lighting Guide 07-05 MEDRES.pdf

Oxfordshire County Council (2017). The Oxfordshire Historic Landscape Characterisation. Accessed June 2025. https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/environment-and-planning/archaeology/landscape-characterisation

Oxfordshire County Council (2017). The Oxfordshire Wildlife & Landscape Study (OWLS). Accessed June 2025. https://owls.oxfordshire.gov.uk/wps/wcm/connect/occ/OWLS/Home/

Steventon Parish Council (2023). Steventon Neighbourhood Development Plan. Accessed June 2025. https://www.southandvale.gov.uk/app/uploads/sites/3/2024/10/Steventon-Parish-Neighbourhood-Development-Plan-.pdf

Vale of White Horse District Council and South Oxfordshire District Council (2024). Lighting Design Guidance for South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse. Accessed June 2025. https://www.southandvale.gov.uk/app/uploads/2024/09/South-Vale-Lighting-Design-Guidance.pdf

West Hanney Parish Council (2021). West Hanney Neighbourhood Development Plan. Accessed June 2025. https://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2021/07/West-Hanney-NP-referendum-version-July-2021.pdf

Wootton and St Helen Without Parish Councils (2019). Wootton and St Helen Without Neighbourhood Plan. Accessed June 2025 https://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2022/05/WSHSNP-Made-Version-single-pages-Nov19.pdf

