

A landscape photograph showing rolling green hills under a cloudy sky. The foreground is a grassy field, and the background features distant hills and a valley. The sky is filled with large, white, fluffy clouds, with some darker patches of blue visible.

Defining the special qualities of local landscape designations in Aylesbury Vale District

Final Draft Report

Prepared by LUC

October 2015

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Planning & EIA
Design
Landscape Planning
Landscape Management
Ecology
Mapping & Visualisation

LUC LONDON
43 Chalton Street
London NW1 1JD
T 020 7383 5784
F 020 7383 4798
london@landuse.co.uk

Offices also in:
Bristol
Glasgow
Edinburgh



FS 566056
EMS 566057

Land Use Consultants Ltd
Registered in England
Registered number: 2549296
Registered Office:
43 Chalton Street
London NW1 1JD

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 LUC was commissioned by Aylesbury Vale District Council (AVDC) to provide evidence on the special qualities and values of locally designated landscapes within the district - the Areas of Attractive Landscape (AAL) and Local Landscape Areas (LLAs), to enhance the Council's landscape evidence base and to inform the Local Plan. The work aims to identify the special character and qualities of these areas to augment information in the landscape character assessment.
- 1.2 The purpose of this study is to provide further information on the special qualities of the existing designated landscapes (AALs and LLAs); it does not review the existing AAL and LLA boundaries.
- 1.3 Local landscape designations can play an important role in protecting and enhancing landscapes which are of particular value in the context of the local authority area. Information on the local landscape designations may therefore be useful for a number of purposes:
- To provide a baseline against which to assess the impact of a proposed development on the landscape by comparing the characteristics of the proposal against the area's special qualities;
 - to inform sensitive siting and design of new development both in development control and for prospective developers;
 - to communicate the distinctive characteristics of Aylesbury Vale as part of baseline data for future landscape studies;
 - to inform policies for the future development and management of Aylesbury Vale.

Natural and Cultural Heritage Designations

- 1.4 Local landscape designations are a material consideration in development control. Many of the areas identified as local landscape designations also contain other statutory and non statutory designations which often contribute to the special landscape quality of the area: examples of these are listed in **Table 1.1**.

Table 1.1: Natural/ Cultural Heritage Designations in Aylesbury Vale

Hierarchy/ status	Type of Designation		
	Natural Heritage	Cultural Heritage	Landscape
National	Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	Scheduled Monument	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)
	Special Area of Conservation	Listed Building	
	Ancient Woodland	Registered Park and Garden (RP&G)	
Local	Biological Notification Site (BNS)	Conservation Area	Area of Attractive Landscape
	Local Geological Site		Local Landscape Area
	Local Nature Reserve (LNR)		
	Local Wildlife Site (LWS)		

Current Policy context

- 1.6 The European Landscape Convention recognises that all landscapes are of value whether they are designated or not. It also states the importance of Landscape Protection, which it defines as:
- “measures to preserve the present character and quality of a landscape which is greatly valued on account of its distinctive natural or cultural configuration. Such protection must be active and involve upkeep measures to preserve significant features of a landscape”.*
- 1.7 The NPPF states that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by “protecting and enhancing valued landscapes” (paragraph 109). Paragraph 113 of the NPPF says that *“local planning authorities should set criteria based policies against which proposals for any development on or affecting protected wildlife or geodiversity sites or landscape areas will be judged”.*
- 1.8 The Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan is currently being prepared. Until the new Local Plan is adopted, planning policies for local landscape designations (AALs and LLAs) consist of saved policies from the previous Aylesbury Vale District Local Plan (AVDLP). In 2007 the Council saved Policy RA8 of the Aylesbury Vale District Local Plan Adopted 2004 (AVDLP). Policy RA8 aims to protect landscape features and qualities of the AALs and LLAs, which are also defined on the AVDLP proposals map. An extract of this policy and its accompanying explanation is provided in **Appendix 1**.

Aylesbury Vale’s Valued Landscapes

- 1.9 The landscape character and value of all Aylesbury Vale’s landscapes is described in the **Aylesbury Vale Landscape Character Assessment**¹ (including the Areas of Sensitive Landscape (ASL)² study). The Landscape Character Assessment divides Aylesbury Vale into a number of Landscape Character Types (LCTs) and within these, more detailed descriptions of Landscape Character Areas (LCAs). This approach recognises that all landscapes have character and are of value.
- 1.10 Aylesbury Vale is characterised by low lying vales and clay plateaus, interrupted by distinctive low hills and ridges. Around the edges of the district a number of small but locally prominent landscape features form a backdrop to views, including the marked chalk scarp of the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and its foothills along the southeast boundary; the greensand ridge at Great Brickhill which stretches east into Bedfordshire; and part of Whittlewood Forest in the northeast of the district that stretches north into South Northamptonshire.
- 1.11 All of Aylesbury Vale’s landscapes are of value. Some landscapes are also recognised as being of particular importance and for this reason Buckinghamshire County Council identified some areas of the county (the county has since divided into districts of which one is Aylesbury Vale District) as Areas of Attractive Landscape (AALs) or Local Landscape Areas (LLAs). Part of the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) also falls within Aylesbury Vale; this is not covered by this report.

The Chilterns AONB

- 1.12 The Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) was originally designated in 1965. AONBs are a national landscape designation and this area is therefore not within the scope of this study. The special qualities of the Chilterns have been identified as³: *“the steep chalk escarpment with areas of flower rich downland woodlands, commons, tranquil valleys, the network of ancient routes, villages with their brick and flint houses, chalk streams and a rich historic environment of hillforts and chalk figures.”* Whether the special characteristics or features of the AONB occur within the local landscape designations is likely to be an important part of their valued landscape, and therefore, where similarities occur, these are noted within the assessment. The Chilterns

¹ Aylesbury Vale Landscape Character Assessment, Jacobs, 2008

² Aylesbury Vale: Areas of Sensitive Landscape, Jacobs, 2008

³ http://www.chilternsaonb.org/uploads/files/ConservationBoard/ManagementPlan/Management%20Plan%202014-19/chilterns_management_plan_2014-19_final.pdf

Conservation Board has prepared a Position Statement on 'Development affecting the setting of the Chilterns AONB' which should be referred to where relevant.

Areas of Attractive Landscape & Local Landscape Areas

- 1.13 Reasons for the designation of Aylesbury Vale's AALs and LLAs are noted in Aylesbury Vale's Adopted Local Plan⁴ (AVDLP, 2004) including Policy RA8, its accompanying text and further information on each of the designations within in its Appendix 5. Extracts from Appendix 5 of the AVDLP are provided in **Appendix 1** of this report. It does not include reasons for how the specific boundaries were drawn or a detailed methodology used to identify them.

Areas of Attractive Landscape (AAL)

- 1.14 Areas of Attractive Landscape are recorded in a document entitled 'Areas of Attractive Landscape' produced in 1979 by Buckinghamshire County Council⁵. Within the document, it states that the AALs accord generally with previously defined Areas of Great Landscape Value, first identified in the early 1950s. The 1979 report described them as follows:
- "An Area of Attractive Landscape (AAL) is a locally defined area under the 1971 Town and Country Planning Act which, whilst not extensive enough or of such outstanding natural beauty as to merit national recognition under the 1949 National Parks and Access to the countryside Act, is of sufficient county-wide value as to justify the application of the same planning restrictions on development as apply to the Chilterns AONB in the county structure plan."* (para. 11)
- 1.15 The broad method for the identification of the areas is included in the 1979 report. It states that the *"starting point for selecting the areas shown on the maps is the character of the landscape today"*. Following this, two broad criteria were used: *"that the area has a special quality and that it is large enough to warrant identification at the county wide scale."*
- 1.16 Boundaries were generally defined by ground forms or visual boundaries (paragraph 15), *"such as the bottom of hills or the limits to a view from a river valley... Wherever possible, permanent features such as roads, railways or streams are used. Where such features are not available, woodland, hedgerows or fences are used... In some cases the selection of a suitable boundary has resulted in the area defined being drawn more widely than is strictly justified on landscape grounds; but it is considered important that a clear and easily identified boundary should be established wherever possible and that the boundary should include the whole of the area to which the Structure Plan landscape policy should apply"*. The areas are not intended to include urban towns and villages. There is no further detail on the methodology used to define the areas.
- 1.17 The AALs were also identified in the County Structure Plan⁶ as having "county-wide landscape value"⁷, and have been carried forward within the Adopted AVDLP (2004)⁸ which states: *"these important landscape areas demand a high level of protection, but not quite so rigorous as in the nationally important Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty."* The boundaries of the current AAL areas have changed slightly from the initial boundaries.
- 1.18 The six AALs within the district are illustrated on **Figure 1** and shown in the context of Aylesbury Vale's Landscape Character Areas in **Figure 2**. They are:
- **Stowe**
 - **Quinton-Wing Hills**
 - **Brill-Winchendon Hills**
 - **the Brickhills**

⁴ Adopted Aylesbury Vale District Local Plan, 2004

⁵ An extract of the 1979 document is included in Appendix 4 of the Jacobs report (Aylesbury Vale: Areas of Sensitive Landscape, Jacobs, 2008)

⁶ Adopted Buckingham County Structure Plan, 1991-2011

⁷ Refer to Appendix 1 for further details

⁸ Refer to Appendix 1 for further details

- **Ivinghoe/Edlesborough**
- **Halton/Wendover**

Local Landscape Areas (LLA)

- 1.19 Local Landscape Areas were first identified by AVDC in the Rural Areas Local Plan, adopted 1995. They were identified as *“areas of distinctive quality at the District rather than County level. They are areas that make a special contribution to the appearance and the character of the landscape within Aylesbury Vale.”* These areas have been carried forward within the Adopted AVDLP (2004)⁹, and the accompanying Chapter text from the Rural Areas Local Plan has been carried forward into Appendix 5 of the AVDLP (see **Appendix 1** for an extract, including brief descriptions of each of the areas).
- 1.20 There are six LLAs, illustrated on **Figure 1** and shown in the context of Aylesbury Vale’s Landscape Character Areas in **Figure 2**:
- **Westend Hill/Southend Hill, Cheddington**
 - **Great Ouse Valley (East)**
 - **Great Ouse Valley (West)**
 - **the Whaddon-Nash Valley**
 - **Poundon Hill**
 - **Halton**

Relationship to the Landscape Character Assessment (LCA)

- 1.21 The Aylesbury Vale Landscape Character Assessment sets out the character of the borough, which forms a context and background as to why some landscapes may have particular value attached to them and acts as the basis for assessing the rarity/ typicality of landscape areas. It is the framework within which the local landscape designations sit.
- 1.22 The AALs and LLAs sit within the framework of the Aylesbury Vale Landscape Character Assessment – illustrated on **Figure 2**. The AALs generally relate to areas of higher ground, and two of the areas adjoin the Chilterns AONB. The LLAs include areas of lower ground such as valley landforms.
- 1.23 Though evidence for why the boundaries were drawn as they are is not available, the areas nevertheless show continuity with the LCTs and LCAs in the Aylesbury Vale Landscape Character Assessment which shows a reasoned justification for their boundaries. The Jacobs report describes the similarities in paragraphs 3.10- 3.22 of the areas of sensitive landscape report, set out in **Table 1.2**.

Table 1.2 Correlation between AAL and LLA boundaries and LCTS – from Jacobs¹⁰

	Areas of Attractive Landscape	Relationship to LCTs
1	Stowe	There is a general correlation with the LCT 01 Wooded Ridge and parts of LCT 02 Incised Valleys that cut deeply into it, however the western part of LCT 01 is not included. Twelve LCAs are included in whole (3No.) or in part.
2	Brickhills	There is a strong relationship with LCT 06 Greensand Ridge (whole area) and the bulk of the Ousel Valley within LCT 05 Shallow Valleys. Small areas of LCT 04 Undulating Clay Plateau are included to the west of the Ousel valley. Six LCAs are included in whole (3No.) or in part.
3	Quainton - Wing	This large AAL includes parts of five LCTs. The AAL relates principally

⁹ Refer to Appendix 1 for further details

¹⁰ Aylesbury Vale: Areas of Sensitive Landscape, Jacobs, 2008

	Hills	to higher ground running east-west to the north of Aylesbury and fully encompasses three areas of LCT 09 Low Hills and Ridges where the coincidence of boundaries is strong. Centrally the AAL also includes significant areas of intervening lower landscapes of LCT 08 Vale which is also included in the east and on the southern margins. Two small areas of LCT 05 Shallow Valleys occur, one being located between the two areas of LCT 09. Finally in the west a small area of LCT 07 Wooded Rolling Lowlands occurs between two areas of LCT 09. Sixteen LCAs are included in whole (2No.) or in part.
4	Brill – Winchendon Hills	This is the largest AAL which centres on several areas of LCT 09 Low Hills and Ridges to the west of Aylesbury but also includes intervening areas of LCT 05 Shallow Valleys and in the west a part of LCT 07 Wooded Rolling Lowlands. Very small areas of LCT 08 Vale are included on the margins. Fifteen LCAs are included in whole (4No.) or in part.
5	Ivinghoe	The AAL comprises three discrete areas adjoining the Chiltern AONB. LCT 10 Chalk Foothills predominates with small areas of LCT 08 Vale occurring within two of the areas. Three LCAs are included in part. There is a strong relationship between these areas and a single LCA in that the AAL covers those parts of the LCA that are not included within the adjacent AONB.
6	Halton/Wendover	The smallest of the AALs occurs in two discrete areas adjoining the AONB both within LCT 10 Chalk Foothills. The bulk of one of the areas is included within the urban area of Wendover as defined for the purposes of the LSCA. Two LCAs are included in part.
Local Landscape Areas		
7	Great Ouse Valley West	The LLA includes the Great Ouse west of Buckingham and is centred on LCT 02 Incised Valleys but includes to the north areas of LCT 01 Wooded Ridge and to the south areas of LCT 04 Undulating Plateau. Seven LCAs are included in part.
8	Great Ouse Valley East	The LLA includes the Great Ouse east of Buckingham and comprises all of LCT03 Valley Bottom and to the south a parallel part of LCT 04 Undulating Clay Plateau and smaller areas of LCT 05 Shallow Valleys. The northern boundary of the LLA follows the LCT boundary. Four LCAs are included in whole (1No.) or in part.
9	Whaddon Nash Valley	The LLA includes parts of four LCAs all within LCT 04 Undulating Clay Plateau, but the bulk lies within one LCA representing circa 60% of its area and with a good correlation to the boundaries of its western extent.
10	Poundon Hill	This LLA occurs wholly within a single LCA of LCT 07 Wooded Rolling Lowlands, but its boundaries do not correspond to that of the LCA (except on the District boundary.)
11	Westend Hill – Southend Hill	The LLA comprises the bulk of a single LCA within LCT 10 Chalk Foothills which occurs as an outlier surrounded by LCT 08 Vale. There is therefore a strong correlation between the LLA and the boundaries of the LSCA.
12	Halton	The smallest of the LLAs adjoins the AONB and is wholly within one LCA within LCT 10 Chalk Foothills. It is contiguous with one of the areas of the Halton/Wendover AAL.

2 Methodology

Guidance

2.1 This study to define the special qualities and values of Aylesbury Vale’s locally designated landscapes has been undertaken with reference to existing guidance on landscape value and landscape character. There is no published guidance in England for undertaking studies on landscape designations. However, the guidance for Scotland has been consulted in addition to guidance on landscape character and landscape assessment. The following publications have been consulted:

- Natural England, 2014. *An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment*.
- Landscape Institute and IEMA, 2013, *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 3rd Edition* (GLVIA).
- SNH and Historic Scotland, 2006. *Guidance on Local Landscape Designations*.

Criteria

2.2 The guidance documents were used to draw up a list of factors which are generally agreed to influence landscape value (particularly Box 5.1 in GLVIA and the criteria in pages 17-19 of the SNH document). The list of factors was then developed into a set of criteria for this study. The criteria aim to bring together key information for each of the AAL and LLA areas to establish what the particularly valued attributes in each area are, and why. They are listed in **Table 2.1**.

Table 2.1: Criteria for defining the special qualities of the local landscape designations

Criteria and rationale	Factors to consider	Evidence base
<p>Distinctiveness</p> <p>The importance of the area’s landscape character in contributing to local distinctiveness/sense of place</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coherent landscape character conferring a recognisable sense of place • Distinct landform or topography forming a discrete and recognisable area • Rare/ unique landscape type or landscape features/ elements in the local context • Typicality - characteristics or landscape elements are strongly representative or distinctive of Aylesbury Vale East’s landscape • Strong character linked to particular natural/ cultural associations e.g. art/ literature 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LCA • Field survey • Heritage designations (e.g. Conservation Areas) • HLCA
<p>Perceptual character</p> <p>Special experiential qualities of the landscape</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tranquillity, relative remoteness and lack of intrusion • Strong sensory impacts including movement, colour and texture • Special perceptual qualities may be the result of e.g. the level of enclosure/ scale, combinations of elements or contrasts of features 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LCA • Field survey • OS maps

<p>Landscape and scenic quality</p> <p>Particular scenic and aesthetic qualities and the contribution of the area to important landscape and visual qualities associated with the local landscape</p> <p>The physical state and condition of the landscape</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong visual character with memorable, important or distinctive views • An intact landscape with characteristic elements in good condition • Absence of incongruous elements or incongruous features not visually intrusive • Dramatic features, visual contrasts or a special combination or pattern of landscape elements/ features that create high aesthetic quality or sense of place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LCA • Field survey
<p>Natural character</p> <p>Special natural characteristics/ designations which add value to the landscape</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong character linked to natural factors • Strong degree of naturalness contributing to landscape quality - habitats/land cover 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural heritage/ wildlife designations (e.g. SSSI, RIGS, SBI) • Field survey
<p>Cultural character</p> <p>Special cultural characteristics/ designations which add value to the landscape</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong character linked to cultural factors – which contribute to understanding of its historic character and wider cultural record e.g. archaeology, built heritage • A landscape with particular associations for example with representation in art, music, literature, language or folklore 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HLCA • Cultural heritage designations (e.g. Conservation Area, listed buildings) • Field survey • Register of Parks and Gardens
<p>Function</p> <p>Particular or special role of the area in the local landscape context</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special function as a setting to designated landscapes or cultural/ natural features • Visual backdrop • Open gap • Aspects of the landscape which hold particularly special value for recreation and amenity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LCA • Field survey • OS maps

Method

- 2.3 The first stage of assessment consisted of desk study of information for each area using a GIS database and existing studies, including the information shown in **Table 2.1** such as the Aylesbury Vale Landscape Character Assessment (LCA), the Aylesbury Vale Historic Landscape Character Assessment (HLCA) report and OS maps, as well as information on the natural and cultural designations listed in **Table 1.1**.
- 2.4 The information gathered from the first stage was supported by field survey, for which information was recorded on field survey forms and accompanied by a photographic record. Following this, a draft report was prepared for review and consultation with key stakeholders.

Stakeholder Consultation

- 2.5 A Stakeholder Workshop was held on the 13th August 2015 at Aylesbury Vale District Council offices. The purpose of the workshop was to

- Share the AAL and LLA evidence base from the work in draft form on what makes the landscape valuable that it may be desirable to have local landscape designation;
 - Understand perceptions of what stakeholders value as important/special (or not) about the landscape in Aylesbury Vale currently designated as AAL and LLA.
- 2.6 Following the workshop, the attendees and other invited stakeholders who were unable to attend, were issued with the draft report for review and comment. Comments from the workshop and the additional consultation were compiled into a Stakeholder Workshop Note, provided in **Appendix 2**.
- 2.7 The information from the workshop was used to refine and augment the study for production of the final draft report, adding important local detail and consolidating the final recommendations on local landscape designations. The final draft report underwent public consultation.

Structure of the assessments

- 2.8 Special Qualities for each of the AALs and LLAs are set out in the following pages. The AALs are listed first, followed by the LLAs.
- 2.9 Each of the AALs/ LLAs are set out as follows:
- Annotated photographs of the area, illustrating examples of valued characteristics and features of the area;
 - A map showing the boundary of the designated area, including an inset map showing its location in the district. The maps also show key landscape features such as woodlands, national trails and water courses;
 - A statement of significance for the area, which aims to encapsulate its special character and give a 'flavour' for its overall value and distinctiveness;
 - A list of Special Qualities, summarising what is valued about the area and why;
 - A summary table of the extent of the area, a short description and relationship to the landscape character assessment;
 - A 'summary description' table with an appraisal of the area's key characteristics, qualities and valued features against each of the criteria. This supplements information in the list of special qualities.
 - Management Guidelines, adapted from the various landscape character assessments, which provide an indication of landscape management opportunities for each area.

Recommendations

- 2.10 The final section of the report contains a conclusion on the relative value of each of the areas. The purpose of this section is to provide an overall judgement on whether each area is worthy of designation. Judgements were made in relation to the criteria used for assessment; in particular, whether the area contains a large number of valued attributes and characteristics and whether the valued attributes and characteristics were judged to be of particular importance that they warrant extra protection of a landscape designation.

Limitations of the study

- 2.11 A boundary review of the existing designations has not been undertaken, nor has a review of other potential areas that may be worthy of designation. These aspects were outside the scope of the study. Nevertheless, concluding judgements have been made as to whether the areas defined as AALs and LLAs are considered to be of particular value worthy of designation.
- 2.12 It should be noted that boundaries of designations are not provided as definitive lines, but indications of areas of higher landscape value supported by a description of what makes a particular area special. There may be areas within a designated landscape that are of less value, as well as areas outside of the defined AALs and LLAs that are of greater value.
- 2.13 Use of this study in relation to a specific site should consider whether or not the site in question displays the special qualities or any of the criteria in the summary description. The location of a

particular site within an AAL or LLA does not preclude development within the area, however, further assessment should be undertaken at a detailed level to judge whether or not the special qualities or valued characteristics or features may be harmed as a result of development.

Information references

- 2.14 A range of information was consulted to provide evidence for the study, including data which was input into a GIS database, and published documents shown in **Table 2.1** such as the Aylesbury Vale Landscape Character Assessment (LCA), the Aylesbury Vale Historic Landscape Character Assessment (HLCA) report and OS maps. A list of information sources referred to is provided in **Table 1.1**.

Table 2.2 Information used to inform the study

Natural Heritage	Cultural Heritage	Landscape
Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) – (GIS database from AVDC)	Scheduled Monument listings (English Heritage website)	Chilterns AONB Management Plan
Special Area of Conservation (GIS database from AVDC)	Listed Building listings (English Heritage website)	Chilterns Conservation Board – Position Statement – Development affecting the setting of the Chilterns AONB
Ancient Woodland (GIS database from AVDC)	Registered Park and Garden (RP&G) listings (English Heritage website)	Previous AAL/ LLA descriptions from past policy (provided in Appendix 1)
Biological Notification Site (GIS database from AVDC)	Conservation Area Appraisals	Aylesbury Vale Landscape Character Assessment
Local Geological Site (GIS database from AVDC)	Aylesbury Vale Historic Landscape Character Assessment	Buckinghamshire Green Infrastructure Strategy
Local Nature Reserve (LNR) (GIS database from AVDC)		Tranquillity data (GIS database, CPRE)
Local Wildlife Site (LWS) (GIS database from AVDC)		
Nature Improvement Areas		
Biodiversity Opportunity Areas		

3 Local Landscape Designations: Descriptions

3.1 Descriptions of each of the local landscape designations are set out in the following pages. Each local landscape designation is accompanied by a map showing the boundary of the local landscape designation, illustrative photographs, a statement of significance and a table of supporting information relating to the criteria in **Table 2.1**.

	Page
Areas of Attractive Landscape (AALs)	
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Local Landscape Areas (LLAs)	
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11 Westend Hill/Southend Hill	54
12 Halton	56

1. Stowe

The picturesque lake and vista to the Gothic Temple at Stowe Grade I Registered Park and Garden



The gently rolling countryside of the Dadford Valley from Dadford Road



The medieval Grade I listed Church of St Mary in Lillingstone Lovell



1. Stowe

Statement of Significance

The local landscape designation of Stowe contains the peaceful and picturesque, gently rolling agricultural landscape in and around the internationally important landscape park and gardens of Grade I Stowe Registered Park and Garden, an 18th century designed landscape and recognised as one of Britain's finest Historic Parks and Gardens. Blocks of ancient woodland, the remnants of the medieval Whittlewood Forest, and other parklands in the area contain great cultural and natural value, as well as rich visual texture and provide a wooded backcloth to the landscape. A landscape of streams, parklands and small villages of local materials with focal points of medieval church towers, mature oak trees and with occasional long views from vantage points.

Special Qualities of Stowe

- Internationally important 18th century designed landscape of Stowe listed Grade I within the Historic England Register of Parks and Gardens, and recognised as one of Britain's finest Historic Parks and Gardens.
 - Sense of tranquillity and remoteness created by the intactness of the rural landscape with a lack of intrusion from major roads and infrastructure. The network of quiet lanes is frequented by horse riders, walkers, cyclists and farm-workers.
 - The sense of timelessness as a result of intact historic field patterns, irregular woodland edges and meandering lanes with rough grass verges.
 - High quality scenic landscape typical of Buckinghamshire. A coherent landscape that provides a picturesque setting to Stowe and cultural setting for other parkland landscapes in the area such as Biddlesden. A colourful rhythm of gently rolling fields interposed by trees and scattered woodland which is sparsely populated.
 - Distinctive views and vistas within, out of and into Stowe from elevated vantage points, of monuments and long straight tree-lined avenues, which extend the influence of Stowe in the wider landscape beyond the boundaries of the Registered Park and Garden.
 - Small attractive villages scattered across the landscape in a dispersed settlement pattern, allowing the rural countryside to dominate. Medieval churches and buildings of local materials such as limestone provide local landmarks.
 - The strong influence of woodlands, many of which are ancient and which once formed part of the former royal hunting forest of Whittlewood Forest, also providing a sense of enclosure in some areas. A wooded backcloth extending north into Northamptonshire provides a setting for the landscape.
 - A rich ecological network with many priority habitats including woodlands with rich biodiversity value, extensive wood pasture and parkland and a strong pre-18th century hedgerow network.
-

Summary information for Stowe

Extent of area	The Grade I listed parkland of Stowe and rolling farmland to the east and west, extending to Biddlesden Park and Shalstone village in the west and following the district boundary to the north and east. To the south the area extends to the A422. Also includes the villages of Chackmore, Dadford, Lillingstone Lovell, Lillingstone Dayrell and part of Leckhampstead.
Description	A rural and tranquil landscape in and around the Grade I Registered Park and Garden of Stowe, ancient woodlands which once formed part of the former royal hunting forest of Whittlewood Forest, strong hedgerows with mature oak trees.
Landscape character context (Aylesbury Vale Landscape Character Assessment)	LCT 1 Wooded Ridge (1.2 Forest High Ground; 1.3 Wood Green Wooded Farmland; 1.4 Stowe Registered Parkland; 1.5 Lillingstone Wet Farmland; half of 1.7 Maids Moreton Plateau; 1.1 Silverstone Race Track -small part; 1.6 Oatley's Plateau -small part). LCT 02 Incised Valleys (2.3 Dadford Valley; 2.1; Westbury-Biddlesden Great Ouse Valley; 2.4 Stowe Park Approaches; 2.2 Shalstone Valley -half of; 2.6 Barrett's End Open Farmland -small part; 2.7 Upper Great Ouse Valley -small part.

Criteria	Summary description
Distinctiveness	A large area with coherent character on limestone plateau, surrounding the important historic parkland of Stowe. The surrounding rolling agricultural fields and dispersed villages with scattered woodland are typical of a rural Buckinghamshire landscape. Some distinctive views into and out of the Stowe parkland. The hedgerow pattern creates a sense of unity, in combination with a low level of settlement, a colourful rhythm of arable and pastoral fields, and mature oak trees.
Perceptual character	Remote, tranquil and sense of timelessness as a result of a lack of settlement and lack of major roads. Sense of a landscape that hasn't changed for centuries, including ancient field patterns, irregular woodland edges and meandering lanes with rough grass verges. The rolling fields provide a soft and comforting texture, a sense of enclosure within the incised valleys where views are contained by woodland, and openness from elevated vantage points, occasionally providing distant views across the landscape.
Landscape and scenic quality	Stowe Grade I Registered Park and Garden is a landscape of particularly high quality, with pleasure grounds, dramatic designed vistas, views out to the surrounding landscape, listed monuments and ornamental buildings with iconographic themes, large mature trees (cedar of Lebanon, Holm oak and limes), avenues, woodlands and lakes. Stowe Woods form the northern boundary and contain a network of historic rides. The influence of Stowe extends out to the surrounding landscape with more distant views of monuments (e.g. of the Wolfe Obelisk from Dadford Road). The scenic parkland character is reinforced by the presence of other parkland landscapes of Tilehouse, Lillingstone House, Biddlesden and Shalstone Manor. Strong rural scenic quality of gently rolling countryside interspersed with small villages with medieval churches. Woodland extends into Northamptonshire, provided a backdrop to the landscape. More distant views across the landscape are noted in the Conservation Area Appraisals for Stowe, Lillingstone Lovell, Chackmore and Shalstone e.g. towards Lillingstone Dayrell and from Bycell Road.
Natural character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A sense of wildlife, including the noise and movement of birds and insects. • Broadleaved and mixed ancient woodlands - remnants of

	<p>Whittlewood Forest.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biodiversity and ecological integrity related to the mixed/ broadleaved woodland blocks and Stowe Avenue (some are Local Wildlife Sites and Biological Notification Sites), and a strong hedgerow and stream network. • Varied habitats of veteran trees, narrow lakes and parkland associated with Stowe Park and other parklands of neutral grassland and woodland e.g. Biddlesden Park and Old Tilehouse Park. • Lowland meadows priority habitats, fen and extensive areas of wood pasture and parkland.
Cultural character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stowe Grade I Registered Park and Garden is an 18th century designed landscape managed by the National Trust and recognised as one of Britain's finest Historic Parks and Gardens. Features include the parkland, designed vistas with listed monuments as focal points and iconographic cultural references. The park reflects the work of the foremost architects and garden designers of the time (e.g. Charles Bridgeman, Sir John Vanbrugh, James Gibbs, William Kent and Lancelot Brown). Stowe was supremely influential on the English landscape garden during the 18th century¹¹. • Once part of the medieval Whittlewood Royal Hunting Forest; a concentration of deserted shrunken medieval settlements and an extensive dispersed Roman settlement pattern in the eastern side of the LCT. Historic continuity across the area, with evidence of historic field patterns across most of it. • Stowe Conservation Area and a concentration of Grade I and II listed buildings. Shalstone, Chackmore and Lillingstone Lovell Conservation Areas in good condition containing buildings and stone walls of attractive local materials, churches and trees. • Historic settlement pattern.
Function	<p>Public rights of way including the Sandstone Trail. The open landscape and wooded backdrop provides a rural and tranquil setting for Stowe designed parkland. Public access to Stowe House and Gardens. The network of quiet lanes and minor rural roads is frequented by horse riders, walkers, cyclists, slow-moving farm vehicles and farmers moving livestock on foot.</p> <p>The landscape provides a strong setting to the Conservation Areas, including Buckingham to the south.</p>

Guidelines for landscape management in the area, based on guidelines from the relevant landscape character areas

Guidelines for landscape management in the area

- **Protect the existing woodland and encourage further tree planting including native woodland planting, which should reflect historic field patterns.**
- **Encourage management of hedgerows through traditional cutting regimes.**
- **Promote the establishment of new hedgerow trees to improve the age diversity – oaks are the most typical trees in this area.**
- **Encourage good management of the unimproved and semi-improved grassland.**
- **Support and promote the identity of the medieval hunting forest of Whittlewood with new planting, access and interpretation.**
- **Encourage the retention and strengthening of the existing hedgerow pattern**
- **Preserve the distinctive dispersed settlement pattern of the area and rich historic environment.**

¹¹ <http://list.historicengland.org.uk/resultsingle.aspx?uid=1000198>

2. Brickhills

Grade II listed lock adjacent to the road bridge at Three Locks, on the Grand Union Canal



Panoramic view from Great Brickhills Conservation Area across the landscape of the Vale of Aylesbury to the distant hills



View from Bragenham Lane, looking south over the River Ouzel and Grand Union Canal, marked out by swathes of trees and vegetation, to the rising valley slopes of the Brickhills on the opposite side, and the Grade II listed Broad Oak Farmhouse behind the railway line



2. Brickhills

Statement of Significance

The Brickhills are the western extent of the greensand ridge which stretches into and across Bedfordshire; a distinct landform with wooded scarp slopes and interspersed agricultural areas and heathland, that fall down to the enclosed valley of the River Ouzel and Grand Union Canal. Open and panoramic views from the hilltops across the landscape of the Vale of Aylesbury to the Quanton Wing hills, contrast with the intimate environment and enclosed views within the valley floor. Strong natural value is indicated by numerous ecological designations including heathland. Areas of woodland provide strong ecological and visual appeal as well as opportunity for public recreation at Rushmere Country Park. Strong historic continuity provides a rich and varied environment.

Special Qualities of Brickhills

- The distinct landform of the greensand ridge that extends eastwards into Bedfordshire, including the prominent wooded scarp.
 - Spectacular panoramic views from the high ground – e.g. from Great Brickhill village, over the surrounding countryside across the Ouzel valley, and the Vale of Aylesbury towards the Aylesbury hills give a sense of connection to the surrounding vale landscape and are generally unaffected by intrusive features.
 - Mature trees and areas of woodland have a strong natural character and visual value and are a key feature of the area.
 - Tranquillity and the picturesque rural landscape of woodlands and interspersed agricultural fields, with a lack of intrusion from development or major roads.
 - Coherent landscape, with a strong and unified landscape pattern - woodland cover on the scarp, rolling landform, and the valley of the River Ouzel and Grand Union Canal connected by a strong field pattern, creating a strong sense of place.
 - Historic landscape character of the canal and river corridor including historic flood meadows, bridges and locks, and the sense of enclosure and intimacy created by lush vegetation.
 - Rich natural character influenced by the large number of linked features including heathland, woodland, grassland and wetland.
 - Strong historic character e.g. within the Conservation Area of Great Brickhill, with characterful historic buildings including the church of St Mary and buildings of local sandstone that sit harmoniously in the picturesque landscape setting.
 - A strong recreational value, particularly of the canal and river corridor and Rushmere Country Park, providing a place to walk and enjoy the woodlands for communities in Milton Keynes and Leighton Buzzard.
 - Views across the landscape both within the area and of the wider landscape, e.g. from the road going into Stoke Hammond from the north to Stoke Hammond church, and the public right of way adjacent to the railway line.
 - The perception of openness, providing a sense of separation or 'gap' between the neighbouring settlements of Milton Keynes and Leighton Buzzard.
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Summary information for Brickhills

Extent of area	The greensand ridge within Buckinghamshire, and its western slopes (the greensand ridge mostly occurs in Bedfordshire to the east and also extends north into Milton Keynes Borough), extending down to the River Ouzel and Grand Union Canal in the west.
Description	The Brickhills are the western end of the greensand ridge located mostly in Bedfordshire, consisting of wooded slopes with interspersed agricultural areas and some heathland. It also includes the floor of the Ouzel Valley and Grand Union Canal.
Landscape character context (Aylesbury Vale Landscape Character Assessment)	LCT 06: Greensand Ridge (6.1 Brickhills Scarp; 6.2 Stockgrove Wooded Slopes). LCT 05: Shallow Valleys (5.2 Ouzel Valley; 5.3 Ouzel Valley Lower Slopes) LCT 04: Undulating Clay Plateau (4.11 Mursley-Soulbury Claylands – very small part)

Criteria	Summary description
Distinctiveness	Prominent scarp rising from the valley of the river Ouzel; contrasts with the flatter clay landscape surrounding it. Coherent landscape, with a strong and unified landscape pattern of extensive woodland cover on the scarp and surrounding rolling landform, and the valley of the River Ouzel and Grand Union Canal connected by strong field pattern creates a strong sense of place. Continuity to the south into Central Bedfordshire Greensand Ridge/ Ouzel Valley.
Perceptual character	Tranquil, rolling countryside of smooth arable and pastoral hills and woodland. A transition between the ridge and valley, with a rich mosaic and patchwork of different landscape types and contrasts with the enclosed wooded areas and steep winding lanes and the quiet and enclosed canal and river corridors. A lack of intrusion from development, especially tall structures or major roads.
Landscape and scenic quality	Long distance spectacular views from open vantage points on the scarp (e.g. from Ivy Lane and Great Brickhill village to the west) over the surrounding countryside across the Ouzel valley, and the Vale of Aylesbury towards the Aylesbury hills and to Milton Keynes to the north; refer to the Conservation Area Appraisal for Great Brickhill. The wooded scarp slopes have strong visual character, particularly when viewed from the west and north west from Milton Keynes. Small scale and picturesque setting for the recreation routes that pass through (cycle path and national trail). The hills provide a backdrop to villages.
Natural character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas of semi-natural, mixed and coniferous woodland, and lowland mixed deciduous woodland priority habitat, including ancient woodland (e.g. Duncombe Wood, Oak Wood) and ancient coppice woodland in Rushmere Country Park. • Part of Kings and Bakers Wood & Heath SSSI (partly within Bedfordshire) – rich in floral and faunal diversity. • Large areas of neutral and acidic grassland priority habitat. • Pockets of heathland – especially around Rammamere. • Large number of Local Wildlife Sites/ Biological Notification Sites including woodlands, wetlands and grasslands. • Aquatic habitats and a small area of fen. • Part of the Greensand Ridge Nature Improvement Area
Cultural character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historic settlement with distinctive sandstone buildings. • Great Brickhill Conservation Area and listed buildings – associations of the village with the manufacture of pottery and tiles in the medieval period. • Small deserted medieval settlement at Bragenham Farm.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historic flood meadows and sites of prehistoric and Roman occupation along the valley; listed bridge and locks on the Grand Union Canal. • Listed buildings associated with Stockgrove Park.
Function	<p>Recreational value of the canal. Half of Rushmere Country park (the other part is within Bedfordshire) – a tranquil parkland and woodland with facilities, country walks and sense of isolation. A number of national trails – Milton Keynes Boundary Walk, Grand Union Canal Walk, Greensand Ridge Walk and cycle routes.</p> <p>Provides a high quality rural landscape and ‘gap’ function between Milton Keynes and Leighton Buzzard/ Heath and Reach, alongside the part of the landscape within Bedfordshire. Provides a landscape setting to Milton Keynes.</p> <p>Provides a strong setting to Great Brickhill Conservation Area.</p>

Guidelines for landscape management in the area, based on guidelines from the relevant landscape character areas

Guidelines for landscape management in the area¹²

- Retain and strengthen natural habitats, particularly the pockets of heathland and woodland.
- Retain the strong landscape pattern e.g. through maintenance of hedgerows delineating the historic field pattern, particularly in the areas of the greatest arable intensification on the mid-slopes.
- Promote information and understanding about the historic importance and appropriate management of historic woodland features such as irregular edges, assarts, banks and ditches.
- Promote the retention of the character of minor roads by the management of hedgerows and verges and limiting urbanising elements such as signage and kerbing.
- Encourage the protection and management of views from publicly accessible land.
- Ensure that the open views across the area to the ridge landform are retained.
- Enhance the environment along the route of the old Roman Road (Watling Street) e.g. for recreation.
- Ensure development is sensitively designed and does not intrude on key views within the landscape (e.g. from Rushmere Country Park).
- Consider encouraging the establishment of small areas of woodland and trees to reduce the impact of intrusive elements particularly to enhance views from recreational routes along canal and river.
- Encourage the establishment of buffer zones of semi-natural vegetation along watercourses in arable areas

¹² Management guidelines are taken from the relevant Landscape Character Assessment areas (Jacobs, 2008) and amended/ enhanced where appropriate.

3. Quainton-Wing Hills

Looking south across the hills from a high vantage point on the plateau in the east of the area on Lines Road, west of Aston Abbots, with the woodland of Fox Covert on the left



17th – early 18th century timber framed Grade II listed building with thatched roof in Aston Abbots



3. Quainton - Wing Hills

Statement of Significance

Undulating hills and ridges with distant panoramic views across the strongly rural and picturesque landscape, including to the Vale of Aylesbury to the south. Together with the Brill-Winchendon Hills they form a series of low, generally open limestone hills with hilltop settlements, between the foot of the Chilterns escarpment and the dip slope of the Cotswolds. The prominent hills form a backdrop to many views in the district. Nucleated villages create texture, a sense of history, variety and rhythm. The strong sense of history is present in the many Conservation Areas, Scheduled Monuments and landscape features such as ridge and furrow and irregular enclosed fields.

Special Qualities of Quainton - Wing Hills

- Distinctive landform of low, generally open limestone hills and ridges, enhanced by field boundaries which accentuate the shape of the undulating landform.
- Nucleated historic villages, often on hilltops, arranged consistently throughout the landscape and connected by a strong network of rural roads and footpaths. Landmark church towers provide focal points amongst the rhythm of hills and undulations. The landscape provides a strong setting to the many villages and Conservation Areas both within the area and in views from outside the area.
- The windmill at Quainton provides a recognisable landmark from Quainton Hill, and an interesting element in the foreground of views across the Vale of Aylesbury.
- Spectacular panoramic views from frequent vantage points, providing picturesque views across the undulating rural and agricultural landscape – e.g. the plateau landscape in the east of the area, of the Chilterns from Wingrave and from many of the villages.
- Strong sense of rural tranquillity, openness and a coherent landscape character. A lack of intrusion from developments that are out of character, gives prominence to the landscape character and landform, a sense of unity of agricultural land use and visual character of scattered hilltop villages.
- Cultural features providing a sense of history - many Conservation Areas, Scheduled Monuments and landscape features such as ridge and furrow and irregular enclosed fields impart a strong sense of time depth to the landscape.
- Public rights of way and road network which enable views of and appreciation of the landscape.
- The importance of the hills in views from other areas of the district, providing a backdrop and sense of enclosure to Aylesbury Vale.
- Remaining ancient woodland in the west of the area that was once part of the medieval hunting forest of Bernwood, irregular and assart fields.

Summary information for Quainton - Wing Hills

Extent of area	The series of hills and ridges, from Finemere/ Balmore Woods in the west to Mentmore Park in the east and including the villages of Pitchcott, Oving, Whitchurch, Creslow, Dunton, Weedon, Cublington, Aston Abbots, Wingrave, Crafton, Mentmore, and Ascott. It is defined by the foot of the slopes to the south and the more pronounced hills to the north and the higher quality landscape south of the former Wing aerodrome.
Description	A large area of undulating hills and ridges spanning east – west and populated with a series of small villages.
Landscape character context (Aylesbury Vale Landscape Character Assessment)	LCT 09: Low Hills and Ridges (9.1 Finemere Hill; 9.2 Quainton Hill; 9.3 Pitchcott Whitchurch ridge) LCT 08: Vale (8.2 Kingsbridge valley; 8.5 Northern Vale -small parts; 8.3 Ouzel Valley Catchment – small part; 8.6 Hulcott Vale – small part). LCT 04: Undulating Clay Plateau (4.14 Wingrave – Mentmore Ridge); 4.13 Cublington-Wing Plateau; 4.15 (Weedon Ridge). LCT 05: Shallow Valleys (5.8 North Marston undulating claylands – small part); 5.9 Westcott Claylands – small part). LCT 07: Wooded Rolling Lowlands (7.4 Kingswood Wooded Farmland – small part)

Criteria	Summary description
Distinctiveness	Distinctive band of low, generally open limestone hills, ridges and plateau to the north of Aylesbury Vale. Strong character and sense of place as a result of the coherent character of the landform, consistent land use of agricultural fields (pastoral and arable) and the scattering of attractive villages.
Perceptual character	Strong sense of rural tranquillity, openness and sense of the dominance of landscape. The dominance of landscape and sense of openness – particularly on the plateau in the east of the area, provides opportunities to appreciate the landscape from roads and public rights of way. Frequent attractive views of the undulating hills from the many vantage points. Views to the Vale of Aylesbury to the south from vantage points and many of the villages perched on the ridge– e.g. Quainton Hill, Wingrave, Aston Abbots – with the landscape providing an attractive setting to villages. Wheat fields provide attractive tones of yellowy-orangey colour in summer that glints in the sunshine.
Landscape and scenic quality	High scenic quality of the undulating hills and ridges from within the area and within views from outside the area (e.g. Middle Claydon Conservation Area; refer to other relevant Conservation Area Appraisals for specific views). Spectacular and panoramic views – e.g. to the south east towards the Chilterns from Wingrave and the Brill-Winchendon Hills – refer to relevant Conservation Appraisals for more details on views. Some very old and characterful historic buildings – e.g. in Aston Abbots, Whitchurch and Oving. Picturesque villages present a smaller scale, and the landscape is usually visible from vantage points within them (e.g. from Wingrave). Church towers are local landmarks. Mature trees and hedgerows nestle buildings and structures into the landscape.
Natural character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ancient woodlands, with a particular concentration in the west of the area – many of which are also SSSI/ LWS • Grassland LWS e.g. Cublington Motte and Blackgrove Meadows neutral grassland Biological Notification Site. • Wetland LWS e.g. Monument Field • Ecological value of farmlands and parklands including two

	Biological Notification Sites at Ascott House grounds and Creslow Manor Farm
Cultural character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong sense of history – remaining ancient woodland in the west of the area that was once part of the medieval hunting forest of Bernwood, irregular and assart fields • Ascott House and Mentmore Towers Registered Park and Garden (II*) • Large number of Scheduled Monuments, concentrated within the medieval villages – e.g. Crafton, Cublington, Ascott, Bolbec Castle at Whitchurch, sites of Medieval villages of Burston and Denham Lodge. • Large number of Conservation Areas – Crafton, Aston Abbots, Cublington, Weedon, Whitchurch, Oving, containing characterful listed buildings, many of them timber framed • Earthworks of well preserved ridge and furrow e.g. North Marston, and at Quainton Hill are amongst the finest surviving examples to be found in England.
Function	Good network of public rights of way including long distance trails – e.g. the Bernwood Jubilee Way, North Buckinghamshire Way, Outer Aylesbury Ring, Matthew’s Way

Guidelines for landscape management in the area, based on guidelines from the relevant landscape character areas

Guidelines for landscape management¹³
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain and improve condition of existing hedgerows through traditional cutting regimes. • Maintain the condition and extent of woodland using traditional techniques to create and manage a wide diversity of habitats. • Promote connectivity of habitats, particularly the calcareous grassland and woodland. • Maintain the distinctive pattern of historic routeways. • Support and promote recreational access by footpaths and bridleways – e.g. to Finemere Hill. • Promote information and understanding about the historic importance and appropriate management of historic woodland features such as irregular edges, assarts, banks and ditches. • Maintain the sparsely settled remote character of the landscape. • Retain and enhance views from publicly accessible land. • Ensure the preservation of archaeological earthworks and ridge and furrow by maintaining grassland.

¹³ Management guidelines are taken from the relevant Landscape Character Assessment areas (Jacobs, 2008)

4. Brill-Winchendon Hills

Chearsley village green



Brill windmill is a local landmark. From here there are spectacular panoramic views across the rural landscape



Golden wheat fields and rising valley slopes north of the Conservation Area of Cuddington



4. Brill – Winchendon Hills

Statement of Significance

The Brill-Winchendon Hills comprises the area of undulating hills and ridges west of Aylesbury, with magnificent panoramic views across the strongly scenic and rural landscape. Together with the Quainton-Wing Hills they form a series of low, generally open limestone hills with hilltop settlements, between the foot of the Chilterns escarpment and the dip slope of the Cotswolds. There is a strong sense of history, with a concentration of Registered Parks and Gardens associated with the Rothschild family in the north east of the area around Waddesdon, and a large number of Conservation Areas and Scheduled Monuments. Small historic villages are dispersed across the landscape, often elevated, with views to the surrounding landscape.

Special Qualities of Brill – Winchendon Hills

- A distinctive, coherent and intact landscape of high scenic quality provided by open rural hills and undulations and a strong settlement pattern of small nucleated villages on hilltops and dispersed isolated farms.
- Strong wooded parkland character in the north of the area as a result of a number of Registered Parks and Gardens of Waddesdon (Grade I), Wotton House (II*), Eythrope (II) and Hartwell House (II*). The estates in the north east have cultural associations with the Rothschild family.
- Landmark features, many of which are listed, relate to the landscape including church towers and the Brill windmill. The roofline of Waddesdon Manor is one of the key visual landmarks in the district due to its commanding hilltop position.
- Fine and exhilarating long distance and panoramic views across rural countryside from many vantage points at crests of inclines.
- Quiet and tranquil with a lack of intrusion from large development or major roads, and some remote areas. Sense of dominance of the landscape and seasonal colours of agricultural fields. Picturesque river valley landscape of the Thames.
- Number of Conservation Areas reflecting the historic value of a number of the attractive villages and listed historic buildings of natural materials which add great texture, richness, variety and interest to the landscape. The landscape provides a strong setting to the many villages and Conservation Areas.
- Strong ecological integrity across the landscape, with designated sites linked through areas of woodland and hedgerows.
- Concentration of features of cultural historical value which provides a strong sense of history and sense of place, including a number of Scheduled Monuments. Notable preserved examples of earlier enclosed fields around Brill.
- Provides a backdrop and sense of enclosure to the Vale of Aylesbury to the north and the small valley of the Thames in the south of the area.

Summary information for Brill – Winchendon Hills

Extent of area	The elevated landscape and slopes of the limestone hills stretching from the village of Boarstall in the west to Hartwell House in the east, including the villages of Boarstall, Brill, Dorton, Wotton Underwood, Chilton, Long Crendon, Chearsley, Cuddington, Nether Windendon, Ashendon and Upper Winchendon; and the Registered Parks and Gardens of Wotton House, Waddesdon Manor, Eythrope and Hartwell House.
Description	A series of hills and ridges interspersed with valleys including the River Thames including a number of Registered Parks and Gardens and Conservation Areas.
Landscape character context (Aylesbury Vale Landscape Character Assessment)	LCT 09: Low Hills and Ridges (9.5 Brill and Muswell Hill; 9.6 Ashendon Ridge; 9.8 Chilton Ridge; 9.7 Chearsley Ridge; 9.4 Waddesdon – Eythrope Ridge; 9.10 Hartwell House and Golf Course; 9.9 A418 Ridge - northern part). LCT 05: Shallow Valleys (5.10 Crawley Narrow Valley; 5.11 (Thame Valley; 5.9 Westcott Claylands). LCT 07: Wooded Rolling Lowlands (7.5 Bernwood Forest – part of).

Criteria	Summary description
Distinctiveness	A distinctive and coherent, intact landscape of rural hills and undulations with distinctive individual hills including Waddesdon Hill, settlements along the tops of ridges and dispersed isolated farmsteads. Areas of parkland with mature trees and woods, enclosed valleys with church towers as prominent features. Strong sense of place.
Perceptual character	Fine and exhilarating long distance and panoramic views across rural countryside from many vantage points at crests of inclines – notable viewpoint at Brill windmill. Sense of dominance of the landscape and being enveloped by the smooth hills and wispy straw coloured grass. The dominance of landscape and sense of openness – provides an enhanced sense of the weather moving across the landscape. Quiet and tranquil, remote character in places such as the tops of hills or within woodland, and beautiful seasonal colours and strong influence of passing clouds and changing weather.
Landscape and scenic quality	High scenic quality with spectacular views in all directions across fields of pasture with hedgerows and mature trees and woodland in the background and of distinctive hills – e.g. Brill and Muswell Hills and Chilton Ridge, from the lower slopes. Picturesque villages (e.g. Brill, Long Crendon and Chilton) from which there are glimpses of the landscape beyond. Strong landscape pattern of pre 18 th century enclosure fields and hedgerows. Dispersed farms – historic settlement pattern and nucleated villages. Smaller pastoral fields and mature pollarded willows within the Thame Valley provide scenic beauty alongside the meandering river; churches provide focal points and historic mills and bridges and a range of habitats create a rich and lively landscape with an enclosed character. Refer to the relevant Conservation Area Appraisals for further detail on specific views.
Natural character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong ecological integrity – designated sites linked through areas of woodland and hedgerows, and the River Thames in the south. • Biodiversity value of parklands of Waddesdon and Eythrope and farmlands indicated by the presence of extensive Biological Notification Sites and LWS at Wotton Underwood. • Some areas of ancient woodland – concentrated in the west of the area within the area that was once the core of the medieval hunting forest of Bernwood. Many are also designated local

	<p>wildlife sites.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brill Common Local Wildlife Site – acid grassland and calcareous grassland; ridge and furrow grazing pasture Local Wildlife Site near Cuddington.
Cultural character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historically part of Bernwood Forest from the 10th century – many of the villages have long histories – e.g. Brill – may have grown on the site of a prehistoric hillfort; Boarstall contains a rare surviving medieval tower and earthworks and was an important medieval pottery production centre • Concentration of features of cultural historical value which provides a strong sense of history and sense of place. Cultural associations in the north east of the area with the Rothschild family estates. • Registered Parks and Gardens of Waddesdon (Grade I), Wotton House (II*), Eythrope (II) and Hartwell House (II*). Designed parkland at Boarstall and Dorton Park; Chilton Park Farm is the location of a 16th century deer park. • Conservation Areas: Brill, Wotton Underwood, Ashended, Chilton, Long Crendon. Localised character of fine brick houses in Brill reflect the village's association with brick pits; limestone characteristic of other historic buildings e.g. Ashendon church. • Number of Scheduled Monuments including medieval villages (e.g. within the grounds of Wotton Park; Boarstall and at Eythrope), Notley Abbey – the remnant of the former medieval Augustinian priory, earthworks – e.g. at Brill. • Strong irregular field pattern – e.g. around Long Crendon • Brill windmill is a key visual landmark. • Notable preserved examples of earlier enclosed fields around Brill.
Function	<p>Public access and interpretation at Brill windmill.</p> <p>Public access to Waddesdon Manor – owned and managed by the National Trust.</p> <p>Number of rights of way – Bernwood Jubilee Way, Outer Aylesbury Ring, Midshires Way.</p> <p>Provides enclosure and a backdrop to the Vale of Aylesbury to the north and to the smaller Thame valley in the south of the area.</p>

Guidelines for landscape management in the area, based on guidelines from the relevant landscape character areas

Guidelines for landscape management¹⁴

- Encourage the management and strengthening of hedgerows particularly in areas where intensive farming has resulted in the amalgamation of fields – e.g. in the Chearsley Ridge area.
- Promote good woodland management aiming to create and maintain a wide diversity of habitats.
- Encourage public access to woodland with education and new access agreements.
- Promote information and understanding about the historic importance of woodland and associated features such as banks and ditches.
- Identify key viewpoints from publicly accessible locations and promote the retention and enhancement of these views.
- Maintain and improve connectivity of habitats, particularly the condition of existing hedgerows around Brill Common and Chinkwell Wood.
- Follow existing patterns of woodland for any new woodland planting – e.g. around Waddesdon- Eythrope concentrate on the upper slopes (refer to the LCA).
- Promote the management and conservation of vegetation adjacent to the meandering watercourses including the pollarding of willows.

¹⁴ Management guidelines are taken from the relevant Landscape Character Assessment areas (Jacobs, 2008) and amended/ enhanced where appropriate.

- **Close to watercourses promote the use of permanent pasture, with low stocking density and flooding regimes to promote biodiversity and landscape enhancement.**
- **South of Long Crendon investigate opportunities to promote new woodland planting on valley sides to enhance valley character and reduce visual impact of main roads and industrial estate.**

5. Ivinghoe

Grade II* listed Pitstone windmill (in the western part of the area)



View across the Ivinghoe Foothills landscape towards the Church of St Mary in Edlesborough, from Gallows Hill, within the Chilterns AONB (in the eastern part of the area)



The golf course at Ivinghoe (in the central part of the area)



5. Ivinghoe

Statement of Significance

Ivinghoe comprises three small areas of landscape at the lower escarpment of the Chilterns AONB foothills, with open and undulating landform and rural scenic qualities. The areas provide an attractive foreground to and accentuate the distinctive steep scarp of the nationally designated Chilterns landscape as the land rises from the Vale to the heights of Pitstone Hill and Ivinghoe Beacon. It also provides an important role in the setting of and views from the AONB, particularly within views from popular viewpoints at Pitstone Hill and Ivinghoe Beacon.

Special Qualities of Ivinghoe

- Picturesque landscape, most cohesive in the eastern section of the area, of rural gently rounded chalk hills that have strong visual and topographical links with the adjacent Chilterns AONB.
- Lack of development and intrusion provides a general perception of undeveloped character, providing an open setting to the Chilterns AONB. The landform is dominant, with church towers creating landmarks and settlements dispersed and surrounded by rural countryside.
- Spectacular, panoramic and open views out from the Chilterns AONB across the landscape which forms a middle ground of views e.g. from Ivinghoe Beacon (a key viewpoint) across to the Vale of Aylesbury, from Pitstone Hill and The Ridgeway national trail. Views out from the Chilterns are an important part of the experience of the landscape from the AONB. The landscape also forms a strong setting for views from the north and west of the areas towards the AONB slopes.
- Pitstone windmill (Grade II* listed) – one of the oldest windmills in Britain, said to date from the 17th century provides a vivid visual link back to the past. Its distinctive outline is prominent as it stands isolated in the middle of an arable field.
- Churches of St Mary in Pitstone and Edlesborough - both Grade I listed medieval churches.
- A rural landscape setting to the village and Conservation Area of Ivinghoe which helps to visually connect the village with the wider rural landscape and reinforce its character as a former agricultural community. The open character also creates a backdrop to views of the village from the Grand Union Canal to the north west.
- The open character of the landscape area allows views across the landscape towards the Chilterns e.g. from the village of Ivinghoe, including glimpsed views from the centre of the village and panoramic views from the edges, where Pitstone Windmill is seen against the backdrop of the Chiltern Hills.

Summary information for Ivinghoe

Extent of area	Ivinghoe comprises three areas, separated by intervening parts of the Chilterns AONB. The western area around Pitstone extends from St Mary's Church at Church End (south of the village and Conservation Area of Ivinghoe); the central area includes the golf course at Ivinghoe and adjacent open fields at the base of the Chiltern Hills; and the eastern area includes the landscape and church to the south of Edlesborough.
Description	The undulating landscape adjoining the slopes of the Chilterns AONB comprising agricultural fields and two churches which are within the villages of Pitstone and Edlesborough.
Landscape character context (Aylesbury Vale Landscape Character Assessment)	LCT 10: Chalk Foothills (10.2 Ivinghoe Foothills; 10.3 Marsworth and Pitstone Chalk Quarries) LCT 08: Vale (8.4 Pitstone-Edlesborough Slopes – very small part)

Criteria	Summary description
Distinctiveness	A sense of cohesion and unity with the adjacent Chilterns AONB – the rounded chalk hills provide continuation and are visually connected to the Chilterns although divided by a road. Provide a foreground to and accentuate the Chilterns slopes within the AONB. Distinctive landmarks including the two churches and Pitstone windmill are strong features in open landscape settings and seen from or in front of the Chiltern Hills.
Perceptual character	Some sense of quietness and a sense of texture from the open wheat fields and occasional woodland. Lack of development and intrusion provides a general perception of undeveloped character, providing an open setting to the Chilterns AONB. Views out across the landscape from the Chilterns are an important part of the experience of the landscape from the AONB and are beautiful and inspiring in their own right, particularly after making a long climb to reach a high viewpoint.
Landscape and scenic quality	Some strong built landscape features including St Mary's Church and Edlesborough Church – form important landmarks in more distant views, including their open settings; and the windmill at Pitstone, with open views into this area from the B488 Stocks Road. The eastern section provides an important role in the middle ground of views from Gallows Hill- an attractive landscape, church and tree/hedgerow boundaries which provide the transition to the flatter landscape beyond. Spectacular, panoramic and open views out from the Chilterns AONB across the landscape which forms a middle ground of views e.g. from Ivinghoe Beacon (a key viewpoint) across to the Vale of Aylesbury, from Pitstone Hill and The Ridgeway national trail. The landscape also forms a strong setting for views from the north and west of the areas towards the AONB slopes.
Natural character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A small area of ancient woodland (Pitstone section) and small fragment of calcareous grassland (Pitstone section).
Cultural character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medieval moated site south east of Pitstone, a Scheduled Monument thought to mark the site of Pitstone Manor, believed to be in occupation in 1086. Buried archaeological features. • Roman and Saxon settlement indicated by finds at Church End. • Churches of St Mary in Pitstone and Edlesborough - both Grade I listed medieval churches. • Pitstone windmill (Grade II* listed) – one of the oldest windmills in Britain¹⁵, said to date from the 17th century.

¹⁵ <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/pitstone-windmill/>

Function	Public access to Pitstone Windmill, owned and managed by the National Trust. The area south of Edlesborough partly provides a gap between settlement of Edlesborough and edge of the Chilterns. Setting to the Chilterns AONB including open views from Ivinghoe Beacon, a key viewpoint and Gallows Hill. Setting to the village and Conservation Area of Ivinghoe
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Guidelines for landscape management in the area, based on guidelines from the relevant landscape character areas

Guidelines for landscape management¹⁶

- Encourage the planting of new woodland to screen the edges of new development at the former cement works site to the west of the western part of the area.
- Preserve the character of narrow winding lanes.
- Consider the establishment of new woodlands especially where they will provide mitigation for visually intrusive elements.
- Encourage arable reversion or minimum cultivation to protect buried archaeological remains.
- Refer to the Chilterns AONB Position Statement on Development affecting the setting of the AONB.

¹⁶ Management guidelines are taken from the relevant Landscape Character Assessment areas (Jacobs, 2008) and amended/ enhanced as appropriate.

6. Halton/ Wendover

Mansion Hill Lodge, a late 19th century half timbered two storey lodge, looking across the road to the main entrance to Halton House (within the boundary of the Chilterns AONB)



Grade II* listed Parish Church of St Mary



6. Halton/Wendover

Statement of Significance

Halton/ Wendover comprises the lower slopes of the escarpment of the Chilterns adjacent to the AONB containing part of Halton House Registered Park and Garden that lies outside of the AONB and the southern part of Wendover village, forming a natural crossing point between two large hills of the Chiltern Ridge which wraps around it from east to west. Large blocks of woodland around Halton result in the merging of the landscapes of the vale and the wooded scarp of the Chilterns, providing a wooded setting to the designated landscape.

Special Qualities of Halton/Wendover

- House and Gardens at Halton House Grade II Registered Park and Garden, as described in the English Heritage listing.
 - Natural value of the areas of woodland, providing habitats for numerous species.
 - Visual continuity between the areas of woodland and the wooded slopes of the Chilterns AONB escarpment, providing a leafy, wooded and impressive setting at the base of the Chilterns landscape and creating a smooth transition to the flatter landscape of Aylesbury Vale.
 - Panoramic views of the landscape and to the Chilterns Hills (e.g. from the southern and western side of Wendover), providing visual connections between the town and its agricultural surroundings and Chilterns AONB.
 - A contained and quiet character, which is relatively dark at night and enhanced locally by prevailing weather and light conditions under tree canopies or misty conditions. Built form is tightly knit, and a sense of enclosure is continued with trees and lined avenues including the approach to Halton House.
 - Recreational value of the Ridgeway National Trail and open landscape, including picturesque landscape elements along the Ridgeway walk through the southern part of Wendover, and the Grand Union Canal Walk.
 - Historic buildings including the Grade II* listed Parish Church of St Mary and Grade II Wendover House School
-

Summary information for Halton/Wendover

Extent of area	Two areas: the area around Halton House is part of the Halton House Grade II Registered Park and Garden – this abuts the Chilterns AONB at its north-eastern and south-eastern boundaries, and its north-western boundary is formed by the Grand Union Canal. The south-eastern boundary is formed by the B4009 and Halton AAL is located adjacent to the south-east. The western boundary is broadly the same as the Registered Park and Garden. The area around Wendover comprises the southern-most part of the village and Conservation Area of Wendover, adjacent to the boundary of the Chilterns AONB to the east, west and south.
Description	Part of Halton House Grade II Registered Park and Garden (now used as an RAF officers' mess); and the lower slopes of the Chilterns escarpment.
Landscape character context (Aylesbury Vale Landscape Character Assessment)	LCT 10: Chalk Foothills (10.4A Wendover Foothills East) The area to the south of Wendover is included within the urban area of Wendover.

Criteria	Summary description
Distinctiveness	The lower slopes of the escarpment of the Chilterns AONB as the landscape flattens out to become Aylesbury Vale. Large blocks of woodland around Halton result in the merging of the landscapes of the vale and the wooded scarp of the Chilterns. The hills of the AONB around Wendover, fall dramatically in places down to the Wendover/ Aylesbury 'levels'.
Perceptual character	The area feels like the gateway to the Chilterns, at the base of the hills within the valley. A leafy, wooded and impressive setting. The area around Wendover has a rural feel with thick hedges and trees lining streets, heavily treed fields, historic buildings and a stream, giving a feeling of seclusion.
Landscape and scenic quality	Views of Halton House and grounds which form part of the spectacular views from the Chiltern scarp within the AONB (the eastern part of the Registered Park and Garden) ¹⁷ . Picturesque landscape elements along the Ridgeway walk through the southern part of Wendover. Striking and panoramic views from the A413 London Road into the Vale of Aylesbury in the Wendover area. The Wendover Conservation Area Appraisal notes panoramic and long reaching views from south of Church Lane, to the Chilterns and west to the Chilterns from Wendover School close to the national trail which provide important links to the agricultural land which surrounds the town ¹⁸ .
Natural character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant blocks of woodland and trees merging with the wooded escarpment of the Chilterns AONB to the east. • The feeder stream for the Wendover Arm canal runs along church lane, contributing to character. • Biodiversity value indicated by the presence of Biological Notification Sites at Hampden Pond and St Mary's Churchyard in Wendover.
Cultural character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • House and Gardens at Halton House Grade II Registered Park and Garden, built by the Rothschild family. Halton House is a Grade II* listed building with surviving 19th century park and formal gardens designed for Alfred de Rothschild, now an RAF officers' mess. • Grade II* listed Parish Church of St Mary

¹⁷ <http://list.historicengland.org.uk/resultsingle.aspx?uid=1000601>

¹⁸ http://www.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk/sites/default/files/page_downloads/Wendover-2011-Adopted-Chap-1-12-App-1-3.pdf

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grade II Wendover House School • The Wendover area is included within the Wendover Conservation Area.
Function	<p>Grand Union Canal Walk long distance trail along the northern boundary of Halton House area.</p> <p>Recreational value of the Wendover area including The Ridgeway Chiltern Link long distance trail and large open spaces such as Rope Walk Meadow and Hampden Pond, used widely for recreation¹⁹.</p>

Guidelines for landscape management in the area, based on guidelines from the relevant landscape character areas

Guidelines for landscape management²⁰

- Encourage planting of new woodlands on the lower slopes.
- Reinforce the hedgerow network by planting new hedgerow trees.
- Maintain the condition and extent of calcareous, improved and semi-improved grassland -encourage traditional management by grazing.

¹⁹ As stated in the Conservation Appraisal

²⁰ Management guidelines are amended from the relevant Landscape Character Assessment areas (Jacobs, 2008)

7. Great Ouse Valley West

View of Buckingham church spire from Radclive



Attractive small villages such as this one in Water Stratford



The meandering river and pastoral farmland near Water Stratford



7. Great Ouse Valley West

Statement of Significance

The Great Ouse Valley West is a coherent, enclosed and narrow river valley landscape, with the river course meandering through a vegetated landscape and joining the three attractive historic villages of Westbury, Water Stratford and Radclive. Historic buildings and bridges adjacent to the river and historic field patterns provide a sense of history within this generally quiet and intimate landscape. The proximity of Stowe to the north adds interest, with striking views along the avenue.

Special Qualities of Great Ouse Valley West

- A coherent, enclosed and narrow river valley pastoral landscape with lush vegetation and a relatively strong tree and hedgerow network.
 - Views along the valley towards Buckingham in which the church tower is a focus.
 - Attractive historic villages by the river – Westbury, Water Stratford and Radclive, with historic vernacular buildings of local stone.
 - Cultural and historical interest of the largely intact pre 18th century enclosure and meadow field patterns close to the river mainly around Radclive and Water Stratford, historic narrow bridges and waterside buildings.
 - Intimate and enclosed character - in some areas away from the roads and golf course, the character is remote and hidden.
 - The avenue extending from Stowe Park and striking views along it.
 - Natural value of the river and woodland habitats associated with the line of the disused railway in the east of the area – a relatively strong connectivity between habitats as a result of the hedgerow network and riverside vegetation.
-

Summary information for Great Ouse Valley West

Extent of area	Great Ouse Valley West comprises the valley of the River Great Ouse west of Buckingham up to the district border with Cherwell and South Northamptonshire. The northern boundary is defined by the A422 and the southern boundary by the district boundary and field boundaries to the north of Tingewick. The villages of Radclive, Water Stratford and Westbury lie within the designation. Part of the northern boundary lies adjacent to the Stowe local landscape designation.
Description	The upper section of the meandering River Great Ouse and the surrounding floodplain and vegetated corridors.
Landscape character context (Aylesbury Vale Landscape Character Assessment)	LCT 02: Incised Valleys (2.7 Upper Great Ouse Valley; 2.2 Shalstone Valley – half; 2.1 Westbury-Biddlesden Great Ouse Valley – part of). LCT 01: Wooded Ridge (1.6 Oatley's Plateau – part of; 1.3 Wood Green Wooded Farmland – part of). LCT 04: Undulating Plateau (4.1 Tingewick Plateau – part of).

Criteria	Summary description
Distinctiveness	A small well defined river valley with steep valley sides and narrow flood plain characterised by the meandering Great Ouse and its tributaries marked by vegetation, and by well defined settlements and pastoral land use. Pattern of elements is unified
Perceptual character	Intimate character in places away from the roads and golf course. Most views are enclosed by vegetation or landform. The upper valley sides afford long distance views mainly to the south and west.
Landscape and scenic quality	There are some good views down the valley towards Buckingham in which the church tower is a focus. Small villages in valley floor with some stone houses. Views along Stowe avenue which extends into the area. Refer to the relevant Conservation Area Appraisals for specific views.
Natural character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural value of the Great Ouse and its tributary streams • Woodland habitats associated with the line of the disused railway in the east of the area (designated a Biological Notification Site). • Relatively strong connectivity between habitats as a result of the hedgerow network and riverside vegetation. • Meadow Local Wildlife Site (grassland) near Water Stratford and neutral grassland designated a Biological Notification Site at Buckingham Golf Course and Tingewick Mill.
Cultural character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some pre 18th century enclosure and meadow field patterns close to the river mainly around Radclive and Water Stratford. • Conservation Areas and listed buildings in the villages of Westbury, Radclive and Water Stratford; • The dismantled Banbury Verney Junction railway runs along the valley. • The road to Water Stratford follows the course of a Roman Road and is a continuation of the avenue to Stowe
Function	Recreational value of part of the Bernwood Jubilee Way long distance trail. Provides a setting and link to the town and Conservation Area of Buckingham.

Guidelines for landscape management in the area, based on guidelines from the relevant landscape character areas

Guidelines for landscape management²¹

- Conserve the historic field pattern and encourage hedgerow management to enable

²¹ Management guidelines are amended from the relevant Landscape Character Assessment areas (Jacobs, 2008)

new hedgerow trees to establish.

- **Encourage less intensive agricultural and golf course management adjacent to watercourses.**
- **Reinforce the existing field pattern where arable intensification has eroded hedgerows.**
- **Encourage local woodland management schemes of wet woodland close to valley bottom.**
- **Consider the use of tree planting to reinforce the visual screen on the urban edge.**
- **Maintain and enhance views to features of Stowe's designed parkland.**

8. Great Ouse Valley East

View from the northern valley side at the top of the road between the A422 and Thornborough, across the pastoral fields to the vegetated river corridor



Thornborough Bridge (Scheduled Monument), a stone bridge of medieval origins, probably in the location of a much earlier crossing



Thornborough Roman Barrows - two burial mounds nationally designated as Scheduled Monuments



8. Great Ouse Valley East

Statement of Significance

The Great Ouse Valley East is a small, shallow enclosed river valley with gently rolling sides. The river is marked out by lush bank side vegetation. An intimate, often enclosed, landscape adjacent to the river with some scenic views provides the setting for a number of intact historic features including the Thornborough Bridge and nearby Roman barrows, an intact medieval landscape pattern, weirs and historic riverside buildings.

Special Qualities of Great Ouse Valley East

- Sense of tranquillity within an intimate and enclosed landscape, owing to a lack of development and intrusions.
 - Strong landscape pattern, with a historic continuity including intact historic water meadows and strong historic field pattern adjacent to the river.
 - Weirs and historic buildings (limestone/ thatch) add visual interest adjacent to the river. The reservoir and remnants of the Buckingham Arm of the Grand Union Canal are attractive features close to the river.
 - Strong historic value of Thornborough Bridge (Scheduled Monument), a significant local feature - stone bridge of 14th century origins.
 - Important historic value of the Thornborough Roman Barrows - two burial mounds (Scheduled Monuments).
 - Natural value of the River Great Ouse and riverside vegetation, including the Buckingham Canal Nature Reserve.
 - Scenic combination of elements seen from, for example, the Ouse Valley Way, consisting of riverside and wetland trees, shrubs, grasses and reeds.
 - The Ouse Valley Way is an important recreational route allowing public enjoyment of the landscape with key views along its route such as from the eastern edge of Buckingham.
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Summary information for Great Ouse Valley East

Extent of area	Great Ouse Valley East comprises the River Great Ouse east of Buckingham. The A422 and the district boundary form the northern boundary and the southern boundary is defined by the A421 to Thornborough and then the minor road that runs via Thornton and Beachampton to the district boundary.
Description	The shallow valley of the Great Ouse, its associated floodplains and historic landscape.
Landscape character context (Aylesbury Vale Landscape Character Assessment)	LCT03: Valley Bottom (3.1 Lower Great Ouse Valley) LCT 04: Undulating Clay Plateau (4.4 Thornborough-Beachampton Great Ouse Tributaries – part of) LCT 05 Shallow Valleys (5.1 Padbury Valley – small part).

Criteria	Summary description
Distinctiveness	Coherent small, shallow river valley with gently sloping sides and floodplain. River is marked out by lush bank side vegetation, predominantly of willows lining the water course. Strong landscape pattern and distinct river valley character in contrast to the surrounding more open valley slopes.
Perceptual character	Intimate, often enclosed, landscape adjacent to the river. Very few roads and visual detractors within the area.
Landscape and scenic quality	Some scenic views with the riverside and wetland trees and grasses. Weirs and historic buildings (limestone/ thatch) add visual interest adjacent to the river. Some good views across the valley from the higher valley sides. Refer to Conservation Area Appraisals for relevant Conservation Areas (e.g. Thornborough).
Natural character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hyde Lane Reservoir and woodland Local Wildlife Site provides habitat for birds and plants. River Great Ouse - supports bird species e.g. kingfisher, and otter and much of it is designated a Biological Notification Site.
Cultural character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relatively intact pre- 18th century landscape meadows adjacent to the river with small irregular field pattern; medieval settlement pattern of nucleated villages – including part of the Thornborough Conservation Area and open fields. Roman settlements also lie along the valley and more sites are likely to remain undiscovered beneath alluvium and meadow grassland. Listed buildings including the Victorian Thornton College built around a medieval hall and the 14th century and Grade I listed St Michael's church. Thornborough Bridge (Scheduled Monument) is a significant local feature - stone bridge of medieval origins, probably in the location of a much earlier crossing. Two Roman barrows off the A421, listed Scheduled Monuments. The field containing the two barrows retains a clear pattern of cultivation earthworks (ridge and furrow ploughing), probably associated with the medieval village further to the north east²². Iron Age hillfort south east of Home Farm (Scheduled Monument). Remnants of the Buckingham Arm of the Grand Union Canal provides an interesting feature, with the adjacent national trail along the historic towpath.
Function	The valley is important for recreation and has a good network of footpaths including the Ouse Valley Way national trail which extends

²² <http://list.historicengland.org.uk/resultsingle.aspx?uid=1013959>

	between Buckingham and Milton Keynes, and transitions into a linear park at the Buckingham Canal Nature Reserve. Provides a setting and link to the town and Conservation Area of Buckingham
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Guidelines for landscape management in the area, based on guidelines from the relevant landscape character areas

Guidelines for landscape management²³

- Encourage less intensive agricultural management adjacent to watercourses.
- Preserve the historic meadows and archaeological remains beneath them.
- Encourage recreational access along the valley and the interpretation of historic features.
- Maintain and enhance habitat value and connectivity including grasslands.
- Improve the visitor facilities and historic interpretation at Thornborough Bridge.
- Conserve and enhance historic elements along the river and disused arm of the canal.

²³ Management guidelines are taken from the relevant Landscape Character Assessment areas (Jacobs, 2008) and amended or enhanced where appropriate.

9. Whaddon Nash Valley

A public footpath through College Wood, an extensive area of ancient woodland



View looking west into the landscape designation, from St Mary's Church, Whaddon



View from the east side of Whaddon Conservation Area, looking east into the remnants of Whaddon Park



9. Whaddon Nash Valley

Statement of Significance

The Whaddon - Nash Valley is an undulating landscape with valleys carved into it by tributaries of the River Great Ouse. A rural and ancient landscape containing remnants of the medieval forest of Whaddon Chase, its agricultural land use provides a historic tie to the farming history of the area. The landscape of fields and woodland provides an attractive setting for the villages and Conservation Areas of Whaddon and Nash and is prominent when viewed from the north. The area is rich in ecological landscape value including woodlands, fens and lowland meadows.

Special Qualities of Whaddon Nash Valley

- Historic, natural and rich visual value of the areas of ancient woodland which are remnants of the medieval hunting forest of Whaddon Chase.
- Predominantly rural and agricultural landscape, reflecting the farming history of the area and ties to the villages of Whaddon and Nash.
- A coherent character and pattern of elements in relatively good condition, with visual unity held together by the inter-relationship of steeper winding valleys, streams, woodlands and historic field parcels.
- Rich natural value of the extensive area of rare species rich valley fen habitat, designated a Local Wildlife Site as well as many native woodland sites, lowland meadows and wood-pasture and parkland near Whaddon.
- Provides an open and rural landscape setting to the Conservation Areas of Nash and Whaddon. The landscape allows extensive and long reaching views across the countryside, from many vantage points within the Conservation Areas and is important to the character of the villages.
- Rich layers of history present within the landscape including the Grade II listed Whaddon Hall and relicts of Whaddon Park, historic settlement pattern of isolated farms, historic field boundaries which preserve the lines of former woodlands and evidence of Roman occupation.
- The rural character and recreational value of green infrastructure in proximity to the urban fringe of the growth city of Milton Keynes.

Summary information for Whaddon Nash Valley

Extent of area	The area of undulating and incised landscape between (but excluding) the villages of Nash, to the west and Whaddon to the east.
Description	Undulating and incised landscape of ridges and valleys, with blocks of woodland
Landscape character context (Aylesbury Vale Landscape Character Assessment)	LCT 04: Undulating Clay Plateau (4.7 Whaddon Chase; 4.5 (Grove Farm Shallow Valley – small part; 4.8 Horwood Claylands – very small part).

Criteria	Summary description
Distinctiveness	Visual unity held together by the inter-relationship of winding valleys, woodland cover and small irregular shaped field parcels. A distinct clay plateau landform of undulating land with incised valleys.
Perceptual character	Lack of modern intrusion – secluded in areas.
Landscape and scenic quality	Coherent pattern of elements – e.g. the relationship of steeper valleys, streams, trees and woodland cover. Vantage points from the village and Conservation Area of Nash allow extensive views into the countryside, creating a feeling of openness ²⁴ . For example, there are a number of long reaching views from the High Street and glimpsed views between houses (refer to the Conservation Area Appraisal). Extensive views of the surrounding landscape can be gained from various vantage points in the village and Conservation Area of Whaddon, within and on the edges of the village, including views from the west across Whaddon Chase to the ridgeline beyond Nash, and north-westwards across the valley to beyond Beachampton, around the Church and from the North Buckinghamshire Way/ Midshires Way (refer to the Conservation Area Appraisal). The landscape plays an important role in the setting of the Conservation Area ²⁵ of Whaddon, particularly views to and from Whaddon Hall. There are also views across the landscape (such as from the national trail) to the edges of Whaddon and Nash due to its open character and an absence of tree cover. The landscape provides the foreground to long reaching views from Whaddon Hall to the landscape beyond Milton Keynes.
Natural character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rare species rich valley fen habitat north of College Wood, designated a Local Wildlife Site, supporting a wide variety of insects. • Heavily wooded. College Wood is an extensive area of ancient woodland, and Local Wildlife Site; smaller blocks of broadleaved, mixed and yew woodland; large areas of wet woodland priority habitats. • Neutral grassland including Barnhill Farm Fields Local Wildlife Site. • Lowland wood-pasture and parkland priority habitats near Whaddon.
Cultural character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Important historic associations with the 'Whaddon Chase', a medieval forest with extensive areas of open commons and woodland; relict features remain including College Wood ancient woodland. • The A421 follows the line of a minor Roman road and there is evidence for Roman occupation in the area e.g. possible windmill mound south of Whaddon.

²⁴ http://www.aylesburyvale.gov.uk/sites/default/files/page_downloads/nash-complete-doc-updated-Jan-09.pdf

²⁵ http://www.aylesburyvale.gov.uk/sites/default/files/page_downloads/Updated-2009-Whaddon-complete-doc.pdf

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grade II listed Whaddon Hall, an early 19th century house built on the site of a former manor, overlooks relicts of Whaddon Park, now in agricultural use. • Part of Whaddon Conservation Area. • Irregular historic field pattern. Field boundaries preserve the lines of former woodlands and the Queen's Park – an oval shape to the south west of Whaddon. • Historic settlement pattern of isolated farms.
Function	<p>Important recreational value with footpaths and bridleways including the North Buckinghamshire Way/ Midshires Way national trail; and recreational value of College Wood open access land.</p> <p>The open agricultural landscape is important to the setting of the Conservation Areas of both Whaddon and Nash – where long distance views into and out of the villages, across large areas of farmland reflect the agricultural history of the areas.</p> <p>An important green infrastructure asset close to the growth city of Milton Keynes.</p>

Guidelines for landscape management in the area, based on guidelines from the relevant landscape character areas

Guidelines for landscape management²⁶

- **Maintain the existing extent and condition of neutral grassland, fen.**
- **Encourage landowners to improve ecological diversity through varied land maintenance regimes to benefit landscape and habitats.**
- **Encourage the conservation and interpretation of the areas rich historic environment.**
- **Ensure the preservation of archaeological earthworks by maintaining grassland.**
- **Encourage restoration and interpretation of the historic chase landscape and Whaddon Park.**
- **Maintain key views of and from Whaddon and Nash.**
- **Refer to Whaddon Chase Green Infrastructure Strategy.**

²⁶ Management guidelines are taken from from the relevant Landscape Character Assessment areas (Jacobs, 2008) and amended or enhanced where appropriate.

10. Poundon Hill

View of Poundon Hill from the south at Bicester Road



View from the top of Poundon Hill looking east towards the Quainton-Wing Hills



10. Poundon Hill

Statement of Significance

Poundon Hill is the highest and largest of the series of low hills that extend from the Oxfordshire boundary towards Edgcott. Although the site of a wireless station with its associated aerials and buildings, it remains a relatively prominent and distinctive landscape feature.

Special Qualities of Poundon Hill

- The relatively distinctive landform - the most elevated part of a low ridge across the surrounding lower farmland, making the hill a local feature.
 - The mast on top of the hill is a local landmark.
 - Long views to the surrounding rural countryside from the top of the hill.
 - Early 20th century mansion and designed landscape of Poundon house used by the Special Operations Executive during the Second World War for the development and cracking of codes and ciphers.
 - Medieval landscape - The area was once part of Bernwood Forest in the early 13th century and there are surviving irregular pre-18th century fields and evidence of ridge and furrow.
-

Summary information for Poundon Hill

Extent of area	The landform of Poundon Hill (excluding the village of Poundon).
Description	A low hill south of the village of Poundon.
Landscape character context (Aylesbury Vale Landscape Character Assessment)	LCT 07: Wooded Rolling Lowlands (7.1 Poundon – Charndon Settled Hills).

Criteria	Summary description
Distinctiveness	A relatively prominent low hill – a local feature, the most elevated part of a low ridge across the surrounding lower farmland. The mast on top of the hill is a local landmark.
Perceptual character	Long views out to the surrounding rural countryside of agricultural fields and to other low ridges, from the top of the hill.
Landscape and scenic quality	The hill is a relatively distinctive feature and backdrop to views.
Natural character	Grassland habitat
Cultural character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The area was once part of Bernwood Forest in the early 13th century • Ridge and furrow • Irregular pre-18th century fields • Early 20th century mansion and designed landscape of Poundon house used by the Special Operations Executive during the Second World War for the development and cracking of codes and ciphers.
Function	The hill is a relatively distinctive feature and backdrop to views.

Guidelines for landscape management in the area, based on guidelines from the relevant landscape character areas

Guidelines for landscape management ²⁷
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where the historic field pattern has been lost encourage replanting to restore landscape character, cultural integrity and biodiversity. • Retain and enhance views from publicly accessible land. • Encourage the preservation of historic earthworks and ridge and furrow by maintaining a continuous grass sward and do not allow bare patches of soil to develop.

²⁷ Management guidelines are taken from the relevant Landscape Character Assessment areas (Jacobs, 2008) and amended/ enhanced where appropriate.

11. Westend Hill – Southend Hill

View of Southend Hill from the Grand Union Canal public car park to the east



View of the hills from the Lower Icknield Way, to the south



View of the hills from the Long Marston Road – looking north



11. Westend Hill – Southend Hill

Statement of Significance

Westend and Southend Hills rise prominently out of the surrounding flat landscape, forming an interesting and distinctive feature. Prominent in many views from all directions, including the higher ground of the Chilterns and Quainton-Wing Hills, the railway line to the east and the village and Conservation Area of Ivinghoe, they constitute a locally recognisable feature which is also the setting for a hillfort Scheduled Monument on Southend Hill.

Special Qualities of Westend Hill – Southend Hill

- Pronounced chalk hills which form locally distinctive and prominent features within the surrounding flat landscape, and lend a sense of place to Cheddington.
 - Buried remains of a hillfort (designated Scheduled Monument) on Southend Hill; in the wider context this can be seen as part of a series of hillforts established along the Chiltern escarpment in the Late Bronze Age and Iron Age.
 - The open and undeveloped character, providing a landscape setting to the Scheduled Monument and forming a strong edge to the village of Cheddington.
 - Provides a visual backdrop to the popular recreational route along the Grand Union Canal – e.g. at Great Seabrook, and in views along the Grand Union Canal Walk national trail.
 - Long distance views from the public footpath along the tops of the hills over the surrounding flat vale landscape and the Chilterns.
 - Distinctive and noticeable rural feature in longer views such as from the centre of the village and Conservation Area of Ivinghoe.
-

Summary information for Westend Hill – Southend Hill

Extent of area	The area includes the landforms of the two hills, Westend Hill and Southend Hill south of the village of Cheddington and extending to the stream at the foot of the hills.
Description	Locally prominent hills south of Cheddington.
Landscape character context (Aylesbury Vale Landscape Character Assessment)	LCT 10: Chalk Foothills (10.1 Cheddington Hills).

Criteria	Summary description
Distinctiveness	Distinct landform of chalk hills, locally distinctive features relative to the surrounding flat landscape which lend a sense of place to Cheddington. Visible from many directions including from the train line and higher ground of the Chilterns and Quainton-Wing Hills.
Perceptual character	Seasonally colourful, with wheat fields glowing yellow in summer and contrasting sinuous blocks of woodland and individual trees.
Landscape and scenic quality	Attractive and distinctive landscape feature which provides a setting to the Grand Union Canal – e.g. at Great Seabrook. Adds visual interest, with glimpsed views of the hills from many directions. Long distance views from the tops of the hills over the surrounding flat vale landscape.
Natural character	Natural value of woodland.
Cultural character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buried remains of a Bronze Age/Iron Age hillfort (a Scheduled Monument). The hillfort is intervisible with the hillfort at Ivinghoe Beacon, which has been identified as having been occupied from the 6th century BC. In a wider context, the Southend Hill hillfort can be seen as part of a series of hillforts, of various forms, which were established along the Chiltern escarpment in the Late Bronze Age and Iron Age, comparison between which will provide valuable insights into the development of prehistoric society across the region.²⁸ Medieval cultivation terraces, a cropmark site and Roman finds.
Function	The open, undeveloped landscape forms a setting to the Scheduled Monument. The hills form a backdrop to views including from the Grand Union Canal, and define a strong edge to the western edge of Cheddington village.

Guidelines for landscape management in the area, based on guidelines from the relevant landscape character areas

Guidelines for landscape management ²⁹
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Screen the suburban edge of Cheddington and the development to the south. Conserve the open character of the hills - protect the hills and hillslopes from development that would harm the special character or qualities of the area. Conserve the historic value of the cultivation terraces. Identify key viewpoints from publicly accessible locations and promote the management and enhancement of these viewpoints. Encourage arable reversion or minimum cultivation to protect buried archaeological remains. Improve the ecological value of the landscape e.g. through changing agricultural practices, and maintaining/ improving the condition of calcareous, improved and semi-improved grassland wherever possible.

²⁸ <http://list.historicengland.org.uk/resultsingle.aspx?uid=1017517>

²⁹ Management guidelines are taken from the relevant Landscape Character Assessment areas (Jacobs, 2008) and amended/ enhanced where appropriate.

12. Halton

Statement of Significance

Halton LLA comprises Halton Camp, an RAF site located on the lower slopes of the Chilterns escarpment adjacent to and providing a setting to the Chilterns AONB. The landscape has a distinct character and shares some of the special qualities of the Chilterns landscape including chalk geology with an open, undulating topography and areas of woodland. There are substantial areas of woodland on the western boundary. Large parts of the area are open and undeveloped, and although built development predominates in some areas, the overall character is strongly related to the Chilterns.

Special Qualities of Halton

- Significant blocks of woodland – e.g. in the south of the LLA - merging with the wooded escarpment of the Chilterns AONB to the east and providing ecological and visual continuity between the Chilterns slopes and the wider landscape.
 - Strong military character, comprising a cultural history of military buildings – including some Grade II listed buildings of the Groves and Henderson Institutes. The Camp was designed as a base for the world's first independent air force immediately after the First World War, occupying an important place in the early development of British military air power.³⁰
 - A distinctive character, formed by the military buildings and strong perception of a wooded setting and backdrop, partly within the LLA and partly within the adjacent Chilterns AONB wooded scarp slope as the two landscapes blend together.
 - Occasional glimpsed views of the slopes of the Chilterns AONB e.g. along avenues from the B4009 on the western boundary.
 - A tranquil and dark landscape relative to the surrounding areas to the north and west, with a lack of intrusion from traffic. A strong sense of containment, unity and enclosure as a result of woodland, the sloping topography architectural styles and materials.
-

³⁰ <http://www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1393052>

Summary information for Halton

Extent of area	The RAF Halton complex between the B4009 and the Chilterns AONB which wraps around the northern and eastern boundaries.
Description	Airfield and training camp set within undulating chalk foothills and woodland.
Landscape character context (Aylesbury Vale Landscape Character Assessment)	LCT 10: Chalk Foothills (10.4A Wendover Foothills East)

Criteria	Summary description
Distinctiveness	The area shares some of the special qualities and key characteristics with the adjacent Chilterns AONB landscape including strong sense of woodland, its topography at the lower slopes of the AONB and the chalk geology.
Perceptual character	A tranquil and dark landscape relative to the surrounding areas to the north and west, with a lack of intrusion from traffic. A strong sense of containment, unity and enclosure as a result of woodland, the sloping topography architectural styles and materials. The perception of a 'log cabin at the foot of a mountain' is enhanced by local conditions such as summer tree spreads and misty drizzle.
Landscape and scenic quality	The landscape is perceived as a wooded area at the base of the Chilterns slopes, allowing long distance views over the top of it from within the AONB to the landscape beyond to Weston Turville and Aylesbury e.g. from Haddington Hill and Wendover Woods. The tree lined avenues within the area allow some glimpsed views (e.g. from the B4009) to the wooded slopes of the Chilterns.
Natural character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant blocks of woodland merging with the wooded escarpment of the Chilterns AONB to the east, including some lowland beech and yew priority habitat. • Local Wildlife Site on the chalk grassland at the eastern boundary.
Cultural character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong military character, comprising a cultural history of military buildings – including some Grade II listed buildings of the Groves and Henderson Institutes. • The Camp was designed as a base for the world's first independent air force immediately after the First World War, occupying an important place in the early development of British military air power. • Much of the area is little changed since 1922 with a strong unity and coherence of building styles and materials (brick) that sit well within in the wooded surrounds.
Function	The wooded landscape and relative tranquillity of the area is an important element of the setting of the Chilterns AONB, e.g. the wooded slopes are important to the setting of the Scheduled Monument within the AONB outside the area to the north east. The trees and woodland on the eastern boundary, as well as avenues and strong landform, have a strong sense of character in the setting of the adjacent Halton/ Wendover AAL and Registered Park and Garden.

Guidelines for landscape management in the area, based on guidelines from the relevant landscape character areas

Guidelines for landscape management
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reinforce tree and woodland planting, including tree-lined avenues where appropriate, in line with the character of the area. • Enhance the biodiversity value of the area e.g. chalk grassland and woodland ecology.

- **Retain the strongly wooded perceptual character of the site.**
- **Conserve and enhance visual links with the Chilterns AONB e.g. along existing avenues.**

4 Recommendations

- 4.1 The brief required LUC to consider if the areas are worthy of local landscape designation (this would either be as AAL and LLA or as a single 'local landscape designation') and policy protection as valued local landscapes in the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan.

Areas worthy of designation

- 4.2 There is evidence and a degree of justification for the designation of all of the areas previously identified as AALs and LLAs. The boundaries of the areas are generally clear on the ground, in relation to distinctive landforms and/ or the location of an area adjacent to the Chilterns AONB. Most of the areas are discrete and distinct landscapes, although the areas adjacent to the AONB are more fragmented. This study shows that all of the areas have valued landscape features or characteristics and some special qualities, although some landscapes are valued more than others.
- 4.3 There is an argument that by designating a large number or large proportion of the district as local landscape designations, it may de-value the most special areas that have been designated. Therefore **Table 4.1** gives an indication of the landscapes that are considered to be most highly valued and are worthy of local landscape designation, and those landscapes which are not so highly valued.
- 4.4 Most of the Areas of Attractive Landscape (AALs) have stronger special qualities and are relatively higher in landscape value in comparison to the Local Landscape Areas (LLAs), which are generally smaller scale locally valued features. The LLAs generally do not contain so many nationally significant natural or cultural designations, and they are typically less memorable or distinctive than the AALs. It may therefore be useful to retain the hierarchy of AALs and LLAs in order to distinguish the most valued landscapes from those that are not so greatly valued although still considered worthy of designation.
- 4.5 Our analysis in relation to whether each AAL and LLA area is considered to be worthy of designation is set out in **Table 4.1** below.

Table 4.1 Conclusion and overall judgement on whether the area is worthy of local landscape designation

Designated area		Is the area worthy of local landscape designation
Areas of Attractive Landscape (AALs)		
1	Stowe	Yes – this is clearly a highly valued and coherent landscape indicated by strong indicators of value in all criteria, many of which relate to significant landscape features such as Stowe designed landscape and Whittlewood Forest.
2	Brickhills	Yes – this is a highly valued and coherent landscape indicated by strong indicators of value in all criteria, many of which relate to very strongly significant landscape roles such as recreational function, distinctiveness and its associations with the wider Greensand Ridge.
3	Quinton-Wing Hills	Yes – this is a highly valued and coherent landscape indicated by strong indicators of value in all criteria, many of which relate to very strongly significant scenic and perceptual landscape characteristics and areas of particular

		cultural value.
4	Brill-Winchendon Hills	Yes– this is a highly valued and coherent landscape indicated by strong indicators of value in all criteria, many of which relate to very strongly significant scenic and perceptual landscape characteristics and features of particular natural and cultural value.
5	Ivinghoe	<p>Yes - the three separate areas are fragmented although they are unified by their topographical association with the landform of the Chilterns AONB and their importance in the setting of the Chilterns including views from and to the Chilterns Hills.</p> <p>Some of the area south of Pitstone and the Ivinghoe golf course area are more fragmented, and although they contain some notable natural and cultural features, they are relatively weaker in value in their own right compared with other local landscape designations in the district. However, these areas are important to the setting of the Chilterns and perform an important function in views both from and to the AONB as well as having some strong scenic qualities.</p> <p>This area could potentially be included within an AONB setting policy or even a designation rather than a local landscape designation. This should emphasise the importance of the landscape as a setting to the AONB. These landscapes should be given special consideration in relation to any proposed developments which may harm the character of the landscape and the AONB.</p>
6	Halton/Wendover	<p>No – these two areas are relatively small and fragmented, and are protected by other designations: Halton House Grade II Registered Park and Garden and Wendover Conservation Area.</p> <p>The scenic landscape qualities are not as strong and intact as in some of the other AALs and LLAs although there are valued perceptual qualities and the area provides a strong setting to the Chilterns AONB.</p> <p>The Wendover area was only included in the Conservation Area in 2011, and previously lay outside the designated Conservation Area. This may have been a reason for its designation as an AAL and it may therefore be considered unnecessary – as long as its special qualities are documented within the Conservation Area information.</p> <p>This area could potentially be included within an AONB setting policy or even a designation rather than a local landscape designation. This should emphasise the importance of the landscape as a setting to the AONB. These landscapes should be given special consideration in relation to any proposed developments which may harm the character of the landscape and the AONB.</p> <p>The area does nevertheless contain areas of valued landscape as noted in the special qualities and summary description box of this report.</p>

Local Landscape Areas (LLAs)		
7	Great Ouse Valley (West)	<p>No - although a scenic landscape with some notable special qualities, the landscape does not have as great a value or as many important special qualities as some of the other AALs or LLAs, particularly in relation to scenic qualities. The Conservation Areas are protected under the separate designation.</p> <p>Nevertheless, the area does contain some smaller areas of valued landscape as noted in the special qualities and summary description box of this report.</p>
8	Great Ouse Valley (East)	<p>Yes – This is a scenic river valley landscape with some notable special qualities which is highly locally valued for recreation and with some features of high cultural importance although they are not all as intact as some features in other AALs or LLAs. Although the scenic landscape qualities are not as such special value as some of the AALs, this landscape area is considered to be a valued landscape at the local level.</p>
9	Whaddon-Nash Valley	<p>Yes - A scenic landscape that provides a setting to Conservation Areas with some notable special qualities, particularly historic associations with Whaddon Chase and strong ecological integrity. The landscape does not have as strong a scenic landscape value as some of the other areas of the district e.g. the parkland landscapes are fragmented, nevertheless it is considered to be a valued landscape at the local level.</p> <p>The role the landscape plays in the setting and views from the Conservation Areas is recorded in the Conservation Area Appraisals – this should require that any applications for development give this landscape special consideration in relation to the sensitivity and potential landscape and visual effects.</p>
10	Poundon Hill	<p>No -Poundon Hill is a locally notable landscape feature with some long views to the surrounding countryside but in comparison to other local landscape designations in the district, the scenic or other special qualities are not as strong.</p> <p>Nevertheless, the area does contain some smaller areas of valued landscape as noted in the special qualities and summary description box of this report.</p>
11	Westend Hill/Southend Hill	<p>Yes – this is a locally distinctive feature and contains valued landscape character in relation to its landform and cultural character. The landscape does not have as strong a value as some of the other AALs e.g. its scenic qualities and views towards it contain some detracting development, nevertheless it is considered to be a valued landscape at the local level.</p>
12	Halton	<p>No – This is an interesting landscape with a distinct character and strong sense of military history. It is a valued landscape in respect of its importance as a setting</p>

		<p>to the Chilterns AONB and its links to its military history. However, its valued landscape qualities and characteristics are not as highly valued as the other AALs or LLAs.</p> <p>There are parts of this area where built development predominates and the natural slope has been disrupted by recontouring.</p> <p>Nevertheless, the area does contain some smaller areas of valued landscape as noted in the special qualities and summary description box of this report.</p>
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Using this report

- 4.6 It should be noted that the fact that landscapes have been previously designated is also an indicator that they are valued. The special qualities and features/ characteristics of value for each of the areas are also set out in this report and form an evidence base for assessing landscapes either within or close to certain areas.
- 4.7 It should also be noted that within all of the areas, whether considered within this study as being of relatively higher or lower value themselves, there will be smaller areas of higher and lower value. When using this report to judge landscape value for an individual site, the qualities and characteristics of the site itself should be assessed against the special qualities and summary criteria in this report to inform the judgement. This is in addition to other documents that may also be of relevance (such as Conservation Area Appraisals, the Chilterns AONB Management Plan, the Landscape Character Assessment and ecological information).

Protection of special qualities

- 4.8 It is recommended that a Policy/ Policies should be taken forward in the new Aylesbury Vale Local Plan to protect the character and value of all landscapes across the District, a potential designation for landscapes important to the setting of the Chilterns AONB, as well as specific special qualities and values relating to these particular Local Landscape Designations.

5 Appendices

Appendix 1 Background information on Aylesbury Vale's landscape designation policies

Extracts of policies relating to AALs and LLAs in previous local plans, directly quoted

Adopted Aylesbury Vale District Local Plan (AVDLP, 2004)

- 5.2 Policy RA8 *Development in Areas of Attractive Landscape and Local Landscape Areas* is a 'saved' policy from the AVDLP.

Policy RA.8

"The Proposals Map defines Areas of Attractive Landscape, identified in the County Structure Plan, and Local Landscape Areas, defined by the District Council, which have particular landscape features and qualities that are considered appropriate for particular protection. Development proposals in these areas should respect their landscape character. Development that adversely affects this character will not be permitted, unless appropriate mitigation measures can be secured. Where permission is granted the Council will impose conditions or seek planning obligations to ensure the mitigation of any harm caused to the landscape interest."

- 5.3 The text accompanying the policy is outlined in paragraphs 10.17 – 10.21 (p. 176) of the AVDLP:
Special Landscape Areas

"Parts of Aylesbury Vale have been identified as areas of special landscape: Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) designated by the Government; Areas of Attractive Landscape (AAL) identified by the County Structure Plan and the precise boundaries defined in the Local Plan; and Local Landscape Areas (LLA) designated in the Local Plan..."

...These SLAs all comprise landscape of distinctive quality. The Council will seek to protect the special character, appearance and enjoyment of these areas. Proposals for development within them will be judged against this objective. So, too, will development proposed beyond the boundaries but having a significant impact upon views to or from the SLAs."

- 5.4 Paragraphs 10.25 – 10.27 continue:

"Areas of Attractive Landscape (AALs) have been identified in the County Structure Plan. The Structure Plan requires that the precise boundaries are identified in the Local Plan. These important landscape areas demand a high level of protection, but not quite so rigorous as in the nationally important Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. These areas are described in Appendix 5.

Six of the AALs identified fall entirely or partly within the District. They are: - Stowe; Quainton-Wing Hills; Brill-Winchendon Hills; the Brickhills; Ivinghoe/Edlesborough; and Halton/Wendover. The Brill-Winchendon Hills AAL has been extended at Aylesbury to take account of the Coldharbour Farm/Fairford Leys development (see Proposals Map).

Local Landscape Areas (LLAs) are areas of distinctive quality at the District rather than the County level. They are areas that make a special contribution to the appearance and the character of the landscape within Aylesbury Vale. Six areas are identified on the Proposals Map and briefly

described in Appendix 5: Westend Hill/Southend Hill, Cheddington; Great Ouse Valley (East); Great Ouse Valley (West); the Whaddon-Nash Valley; Poundon Hill; and Halton."

Extract from Appendix 5: Areas of Attractive Landscape and Local Landscape Areas

"BACKGROUND

Parts of Aylesbury Vale have been identified as areas of special landscape: an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), Areas of Attractive Landscape and Local Landscape Areas. These designations highlight particularly important features of the countryside. The remaining countryside, although possessing less distinguishable features, has a soft and subtle charm which it is nonetheless important to protect.

The special landscape areas all comprise landscape of distinctive quality. Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty are designated by the Secretary of State for the Environment; Areas of Attractive Landscape are identified by the County Structure Plan, and they and Local Landscape Areas are designated in this Local Plan.

PPG7 "The Countryside – Environmental Quality and Economic and Social Development" notes in paragraph 4.1 that, "where special statutory designations apply, planning policies and development control decisions should take full account of the specific features or qualities which justified designation of the area, and sustain or further the purposes of that designation."

Further advice on non-statutory local countryside designations is given in paragraph 4.16 of PPG7. This notes that local designations carry less weight than national designations, and development plans should not apply the same policies to them. Local authorities should only maintain or extend local countryside designations where there is good reason to believe that normal planning policies cannot provide the necessary protection. They should ensure that they are soundly based on a formal assessment of the qualities of the countryside and state what it is that requires extra protection and why.

Areas of Attractive Landscape (AALs) have been identified in the County Structure Plan 1991 - 2011 adopted in March 1996 - Policy LS3 and paragraph 309. They are areas of distinctive quality landscape extensive enough within the County to justify the application of the same planning considerations as apply to the Chilterns AONB. The Structure Plan requires that the precise boundaries of AALs be defined in local plans.

The County Council in identifying AALs recognised that other areas of particular local significance could be defined at a later stage by District Councils in local plans – paragraph 310 in the adopted County Structure Plan. These areas have been designated as Local Landscape Areas (LLAs) in this Plan.

LLAs are areas of distinctive quality identified at the District level. They are areas that make a special contribution to the appearance and character of Aylesbury Vale.

The approach adopted to the designation of special landscape areas in this Plan is consistent with the approach adopted in the County Structure Plan and the other Districts in Buckinghamshire.

AREAS OF ATTRACTIVE LANDSCAPE

Stowe

The area north of Buckingham comprises a limestone plateau with scattered woodlands and open spaces set against a wooded back-cloth which stretches across the county boundary with Northamptonshire. Over time some of the woodland has been lost and it is important both to protect the existing woods and to encourage more tree-planting. The area includes the internationally renowned historic man-made parkland landscape of Stowe plus several other attractive areas of parkland. The remaining landscape of gently rolling fields and woodland is sparsely populated, with few small villages and scattered farmhouses, many of the older properties being stone-built. The network of quiet lanes and minor rural roads is frequented by horse riders, walkers, cyclists, slow-moving farm vehicles and farmers moving their livestock on foot. The area is broadly defined to the north by a woodland belt coincident with the County boundary and to the south by the A422 and the southern boundary of the scattered woods which determine its character.

Quinton-Wing Hills and Brill-Winchendon Hills

Between the foot of the Chilterns escarpment and the dip slope of the Cotswolds rise a series of low, generally open limestone hills, often with hilltop settlements such as Oving and Brill. These upland areas are divided into two distinct groups comprising the Quainton-Wing Hills and the Brill-Winchendon Hills.

The southern boundary of the Quainton-Wing Hills is broadly coincident with the foot of the slopes. The northern boundary follows the foot of the hills to the north of Dunton where, in recognition of the changing quality of the landscape to the north, a necessarily arbitrary line is taken across the ridge to the south of the former Wing aerodrome.

The southern boundary of the Brill-Winchendon Hills generally follows the foot of the hills, although extending southwards between Long Crendon and Aylesbury to include the valley of the River Thames, which, in this area, forms an integral part of the hill landscape. The northern boundary generally follows the foot of the hills, although also including the grounds of Wotton House.

Brickhills

The Brickhills in Buckinghamshire represent the western end of the low greensand hills located mostly in Bedfordshire. They straddle the boundary between Milton Keynes Borough and Aylesbury Vale District. The character of the defined area is based on woodland with interspersed agricultural areas and some heathland. It also includes the floor of the Ouzel Valley east of the Grand Union Canal which forms the immediate foreground to the Brickhills. In the area immediately bordering Bedfordshire an area west of the canal is included. This prominent and steeply sloping high ground is bordered in Bedfordshire by an Area of Great Landscape Value.

Ivinghoe

This area comprises relatively prominent areas of open and undulating land which comprise the lower escarpment of the Chilterns. The open rolling landscape serves to accentuate the steep scarp slope of the Chilterns AONB. It provides an attractive and distinctive foreground as the land rises from the Vale to the heights of Pitstone Hill and Ivinghoe Beacon.

Halton/Wendover

This area includes landscape at RAF Halton and south of Witchell at Wendover which is important in the context of its proximity to the Chilterns escarpment and probably would have been included in the AONB but for man's significant influence on the appearance of the lower slopes.

LOCAL LANDSCAPE AREAS

Westend Hill-Southend Hill, Cheddington

South-west of Cheddington within the generally flat landscape rise two isolated hills. These hills form an interesting and pleasant feature prominent from the higher ground of the Chilterns and Quainton-Wing Hills and constitute a significant local landscape feature.

Great Ouse Valley (West)

The Great Ouse valley west of Buckingham comprises a relatively enclosed and narrow valley. In part it straddles the administrative boundary between the Districts of Aylesbury Vale and Cherwell in Oxfordshire. Within Aylesbury Vale the northern boundary is defined by the A422 Buckingham to Brackley Road. The villages of Radclive, Water Stratford and Westbury lie within the LLA. Within Cherwell the valley has been included in an Area of High Landscape Value. Part of the northern boundary of the defined area abuts the Stowe AAL; whilst the AAL and LLA are closely related, they nonetheless have separately identifiable characters.

Great Ouse Valley (East)

East of Buckingham the Great Ouse retains its charm as an enclosed river valley with gently rolling sides. The A422 forms the northern boundary of the designation and the southern boundary is equally well defined by the A421 to Thornborough; and then the minor road that runs via Thornton and Beachampton to the County boundary. From Thornton the County boundary runs along the river.

Whaddon - Nash Valley

Between Whaddon and Nash, north of the A421, in part of the area known as Whaddon Chase, the north-facing slope from the higher ground in the south towards the River Great Ouse is cut by tributaries of the river. The result is a varied and secluded landscape. The high quality landscape provides an attractive setting for the villages of Whaddon and Nash and is prominent when viewed from the north.

Poundon Hill

Poundon Hill, located immediately to the west of the village of the same name and straddling the County boundary, is the highest and largest of the series of low hills that extend from the Oxfordshire boundary towards Edgcott. Although the site of a wireless station with its associated aerials and buildings, it remains a relatively prominent and distinctive landscape feature.

Halton

This area of the RAF Halton complex south of the B4009, forms part of the lower slope of the Chilterns escarpment which to the east is designated as an AONB or an AAL. There are parts of this area where built development predominates and the natural slope has been disrupted by recontouring. However, large parts of the site are open, undeveloped and retain the natural topography. There are substantial areas of woodland, on the western boundary and on the frontage to the B4009 in particular. The overall character is that of the Chilterns escarpment, affected but not overwhelmed by built development, and remains special and distinct."

Buckinghamshire County Structure Plan³¹

- 5.5 Policy LS3 *Areas of Attractive Landscape* from the Structure Plan is a saved policy³² from the Buckinghamshire Structure Plan:

Policy LS3

"Special attention will be paid to the protection and enhancement of the scenic beauty, nature conservation interest and amenity value of the following Areas of Attractive Landscape, whose precise boundaries will be defined in local Plans³³:

- a) the Ouse Valley downstream from Newport Pagnell;
- b) an area centred on Stowe, including the landscaped park;
- c) the Brickhills between Woburn Sands and Leighton Buzzard;
- d) the low hills between Quainton and Wing;
- e) the Brill – Winchendon Hills and the Thame Valley downstream from Aylesbury;
- ...j) small areas of the lower escarpment of the Chiltern Hills between Edlesborough and Pitstone and at Halton and Wendover.

- 5.6 The accompanying text (paragraph 309) states:

"Several parts of the county have been designated as Areas of Attractive Landscape in recognition of their county-wide landscape value."

³¹ Adopted Buckingham County Structure Plan, 1991-2011

³² Status of policies at 28 September 2007, from <http://www.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk/planning-policy/adopted-aylesbury-vale-district-local-plan/status-aylesbury-vale-district-local-plan-polic/>

³³ Only those areas which fall within Aylesbury Vale District are included in this report

Appendix 2 Stakeholder Workshop Note

Workshop: 'Defining the special qualities of local landscape designations in Aylesbury Vale District' 13th August 2015

Introduction

- 5.7 This note summarises the workshop held by Aylesbury Vale District Council (AVDC) and facilitated by LUC on 13th August 2015. The workshop was held at Aylesbury Vale District Council offices. The list of attendees is provided in **Table 5.4**.
- 5.8 The purpose of the workshop was to
- Share the AAL and LLA evidence base from the work in draft form carried out by LUC on what makes the landscape valuable that it may be desirable to have local landscape designation;
 - Understand perceptions of what stakeholders value as important/special (or not) about the landscape in Aylesbury Vale currently designated as AAL and LLA;
 - The information emerging from the workshop will be used to refine and augment the LUC evidence base adding important local detail and consolidating recommendations that LUC will ultimately make in their final report.

Question and Answer Session

Table 5.1 Questions and responses from the Q & A session following LUC's presentation

Question	Response
<p>Lucy Murfett</p> <p>Noting there aren't many AALs or LLAs near the Chilterns AONB therefore how would the setting of this landscape be conserved?</p> <p>Views from the Chilterns into Aylesbury Vale are important but thinly covered.</p>	<p>AVDC response: This can be picked up as a policy in the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan (VALP).</p> <p>LUC response: the designations adjacent to the Chilterns AONB are the Ivinghoe AAL, Halton/ Wendover AAL and Halton LLA.</p>
<p>Julie Scott</p> <p>Asks whether LUC looked at the boundaries during the field work?</p> <p>Question as to whether the work would be more robust and beneficial if the actual boundaries had been reviewed.</p> <p>Will the study explore whether the boundaries are a line or a transition zone?</p>	<p>AVDC response: The VALP can look at boundary revisions if the Council chooses the options of re-designating AALs and LLAs as locally valued landscapes.</p> <p>LUC response: assessment/ review of the boundaries was not part of the scope of the study.</p>
<p>Jonathan Bellars</p> <p>Will the lack of a boundary exercise weaken this piece of work?</p>	<p>If we had carried out a boundary review the study would be even more robust, but this would be a much larger piece of work. However, the study LUC has carried out is robust.</p>
<p>Jonathan Bellars</p> <p>Should we look at the option of realigning AALs/LLAs with the boundaries of the Landscape Character Areas? E.g. noting where the line is based on inaccuracy of the original thick crayon lines drawn in the 1950s?</p>	<p>AVDC response: This can be looked at through VALP assuming the Council votes to redesignate local landscapes as valued landscapes.</p> <p>LUC response: this is an additional exercise that can be carried out. We would suggest a desk based assessment</p>

	MK notes: for the Brickhills area the landscape character types of the Ouzel valley within Milton Keynes sit outside of the designation.	of boundaries to bring boundaries of the areas in line with the LCAs where they are close together.
Lucy Murfett	To be considered of value locally, it would be beneficial to consult local people to get validation of the areas and what we say is the 'value' they have in been protected.	AVDC response: Yes I see the point and agree the terms 'local' and 'valued' are in the NPPG without definition but important in the application of the NPPF on landscape. There would be a public consultation at the stage of consulting on VALP most likely to draft plan Spring 2015 where we will set out both our landscape policy and boundaries for the valued landscapes assuming the Council decides to take forward this as a policy option.
David Broadley	Have the area descriptions from the previous county structure plan been taken into account – e.g. Halton and Wendover statement reads <i>"...is important in the context of its proximity to the Chilterns escarpment and probably would have been included in the AONB but for man's significant influence on the appearance of the lower slopes"</i> . Ensure that the new descriptions are fleshed out with this kind of content.	Yes, the descriptions within Policy RA8 have been taken into account alongside the landscape character assessment. The Statements of Significance for each area will be checked against the previous descriptions to ensure the detail has been fully incorporated.
David Broadley	Asked the stakeholder group whether any of the adjacent authorities have retained local landscape designations.	Milton Keynes and Wycombe have retained designations; Bedfordshire has not and uses the landscape character assessment.
n/a	Question as to likelihood of local designations being allowed in the Local Plan.	Feeling that it is likely they will be allowed as the study has incorporated a criteria-based approach. The Inspector at the time of the previous plan (2003) was going to take out the policy on AALs/ LLAs but allowed it on the basis that a landscape character assessment would be carried out.
Jonathan Bellars	What if there are views from the AAL/ LLA onto other landscapes? Does development within the view affect the AAL/ LLA or not? This is something that often comes out at appeal.	Developments outside the designated landscape can affect the qualities/ values associated with that landscape. During any assessment of a specific proposal, the Council should have regard to the special qualities of the AAL/ LLA and consider whether the development proposal would adversely affect these.
David Broadley	Consider the 'county' or 'district' level of significance (relating to the AAL/ LLA status) of each of the areas during the workshop stage.	Do AVDC want LUC to make recommendations on whether to retain the distinctions between AALs/ LLAs as part of this study?
David Broadley	Noted that the County Structure Plan states that AALs should apply the same policy considerations as the AONB.	AVDC to consider this in the context of the VALP? JB comment: that designation of AONB is an issue of scale and therefore the AALs could be equally 'special' landscapes but not be large enough to warrant AONB

		status. Also noted that the current purposes/ reasons of AONBs are not the same as AALs, therefore different policy wording is likely to be required.
Lucy Murfett	What is the hierarchy of weight applied to protection of areas i.e. is it Chilterns AONB - AAL – LLA-then – Setting of AONB ? Where does the importance of the setting of the AONB come into the hierarchy? JB: AVDC have won and lost appeals due to the 'setting' of the AONB.	The issue of setting of the AONB may need to be addressed in the VALP and the AONB policies.
Julia Scott	Is change being considered? And what about whether or not there is potential for enhancement in any of the areas?	This report on special qualities of the AAL/LLAs is current at the time of writing. Future change to the AAL/LLAs will need to be taken account of through the planning process. Potential for enhancement has not formed part of the brief.

Workshop exercises

- 5.9 The workshop participants were split into two groups, with Table 1 discussing three areas in the east of the district, and Table 2 discussing three areas in the south of the district. Each table was provided with an A1 map of the three areas, an A1 map of the district showing all the AALs and LLAs, printed copies of the Special Qualities and write-ups for the three areas and a copy of the criteria used in the study.
- 5.10 Each table had 10 – 15 minutes to discuss each of the three areas, and were asked to consider the following:
- Do you agree with the Special Qualities?
 - Can you think of any additional special qualities?
 - Do any of the valued features or characteristics in adjacent districts apply to this area?
- 5.11 The discussions for each of the areas discussed are summarised in **Table 5.2** below.

Table 5.2: Summary of comments during the workshop exercises

Area	Comments	LUC's Comments/ actions
1 st table (east of AVDC)		
Great Ouse Valley East	There is overlap with the Milton Keynes LCA but no landscape designation in Milton Keynes.	LUC has checked Milton Keynes LCA and incorporated any relevant information.
	Solar farm close to Beachampton and to the north in South Northamptonshire.	Current/ future developments are not within the scope of the study.
	Has the proximity to the river influenced a particular field pattern?	LUC updated the report in respect of field patterns.
	Is there a strong transition between landscape types in this area?	LUC updated.
	Make reference to the landscape function – recreation route between Buckingham and	LUC updated.

	Milton Keynes (the Ouse Valley Way) and the transition into a linear park. National trails are indicators of sensitivity.	
	Are there any GI projects in the area? – e.g. for the Grand Union Canal – project to re-open the canal.	Future change/ developments are not within the scope of the study as it is a report on the current situation (baseline).
	Scenic views such as: include specific views, and state which views are important and why. The bullet point ‘some scenic views...’ Sounds weak. Supplement the last bullet point with ‘including along its length a number of key views...’ Include examples of key views – from the eastern edge of Buckingham.	This study is about special qualities, not specific views. Therefore it is best to avoid reference to specific views (unless there are designed views relevant to the special qualities of a particular landscape). LUC to reword the bullet point to include reference to the landscape when seen from the Ouse Valley Way.
Whaddon Nash Valley	Community GI Plan for Whaddon Chase – seeks to re-introduce woodland. Discussion about whether the ancient hunting forest was wooded or open.	LUC noted the historic significance of Whaddon Chase but other details are outside the scope of this study.
	Be more specific about views from Conservation Areas – provide some examples rather than an exhaustive list.	LUC consulted CA Appraisals for Whaddon and Nash. References to the relevant parts of the CAs have been included.
	Is there a view from the Mid Shire/ North Bucks Way?	Yes, LUC included.
	Why is woodland to the east not included within the boundary?	Revision to the boundaries was not included as part of the exercise. This could be considered as part of a desk based boundary review (additional piece of work) if AVDC would like it to be carried out.
Brickhills	Note: Greensand Nature Improvement Area	LUC will add this information into the summary.
	Note: Rushmere Country Park area	This is included.
	The area extends into Central Bedfordshire – larger scale and part of an extensive area.	This is included.
	Stakeholders: Greensand Trust; Canals & Rivers Trust	n/a
	Distinctive views from Milton Keynes. Brickhills provides a landscape setting to Milton Keynes and there are views of Milton Keynes from this area as well.	LUC included
	Transition between the ridge and valley. A very rich mosaic and patchwork of different landscape types. Continuity to the south into Central Bedfordshire Greensand Ridge/ Ouzel Valley.	LUC included
	Views out from Great Brickhill to the west.	This is included.
	Wind farm application to west at Dorcas Farm (appeal) – turned down at appeal.	Relates to current/ future change which is not within the

	Another application to the south of Newton Longville.	scope of the study.
	Recreational use – e.g. cycling	LUC included
	Lack of pylons or tall structures – would this increase its sensitivity? It also might decrease though.	LUC included reference.
	Boundary to north east of A4146 could change due to a very large application at Eaton Leys Farm.	Revision to the boundaries was not included as part of the exercise. This could be considered as part of a desk based boundary review (additional piece of work) if AVDC would like it to be carried out.
	Could the area extend west along the purple LCA? Potential additional area to include within the boundary.	Revision to the boundaries was not included as part of the exercise. This could be considered as part of a desk based boundary review (additional piece of work) if AVDC would like it to be carried out.
	Important view of church in Stoke Hammond.	LUC included.
	Are minerals an issue in AVDC? – e.g. there are lots of historical mineral extraction sites at Stockgrove (within Central Beds).	There is no reference to minerals in the LCA.
	Xscape building in Milton Keynes is visible.	Noted but not directly related to valued features.
2 nd table (south of AVDC)		
Ivinghoe	The area is very much in the setting of the Chilterns. There are open views from Ivinghoe Beacon (a key viewpoint) of the vale of Aylesbury. The views out from the Chilterns is an important part of the experience of the Chilterns landscape – beautiful and inspiring in their own right – particularly after making a long climb to reach a high viewpoint.	LUC included.
	The undeveloped character is important to the openness of views from the Chilterns.	LUC included.
	The Chilterns AONB has a position statement on setting. Discussion about whether it would be useful for the Chilterns AONB to identify zones important to the AONB or key points/ areas valuable to particular AONB viewpoints.	LUC will refer to the Chilterns position statement. Potential further additional work to identify setting of the AONB.
	Discussion about why the golf course area was included – what is special about this part?	Revision to the boundaries was not included as part of the exercise. This could be considered as part of a desk based boundary review (additional piece of work) if AVDC would like it to be carried out.
	Discussion about what makes these	Revision to the boundaries was

	particular areas of landscape worthy of designation in comparison to other areas within the setting of the Chilterns – looking at the contours it is likely to be the similarity of landform rather than a visual relationship.	not included as part of the exercise. This could be considered as part of a desk based boundary review (additional piece of work) if AVDC would like it to be carried out.
	Open views from the B488 Stocks Road into the Pitstone area.	LUC included.
	The Edlesborough area – does this help to define the edge of the settlement at Edlesborough?	Only appears to be partially the case, therefore not included.
Quainton	Panoramic views of the Chilterns from Wingrave	LUC included.
Halton (camp)	Lack of intrusion from traffic.	LUC included.
	Very contained, surrounded by woodland all around, which is dramatic in views.	LUC included.
	More of a contrast between the AONB and this area, than between the AONB and the adjacent Halton/ Wendover area.	LUC included.
	Would this area feature in a setting of the AONB? There is little visual relationship between the areas – but setting is more than just views. The area has other similarities including darkness (a lack of lighting and development).	Potential further additional work to identify setting of the AONB.
Halton/ Wendover	Striking and panoramic views from the A413 London Road into the Vale of Aylesbury in the Wendover area.	LUC included.
	Gateway area to the Chilterns.	LUC included.
	Wendover – hills of Chiltern district/ AONB fall dramatically in places down to the Wendover/ Aylesbury ‘levels’	LUC included.
	Northern Chiltern district has hilltop villages, woodlands, and undulating fields, with views in many directions – similar (?) to part of views from A413	LUC included.
	Leafy, wooded and impressive setting. Very wooded – continues seamlessly from the Chilterns into this area.	LUC included.

Other questions/ discussion topics

Table 5.3: Other general issues raised during the event

Buckinghamshire County Council	Have Nature Improvement Areas been considered	Greensand Ridge area has been noted.
Buckinghamshire County Council	Is there any scope for including landscape/ ecological enhancement projects?	The study focusses on the landscape baseline i.e. the special qualities and values. There may be scope for including general landscape opportunities within the Management Guidelines but not in

		detail. We would need to be given this information for it to be included.
Buckinghamshire County Council	Have Biodiversity Opportunity Areas been taken into account?	Biodiversity Opportunity Areas have been consulted and information has been used where relevant. However, since they are an indicator of opportunity rather than value, they have not been consistently listed.
Buckinghamshire County Council	Has anything from GI Strategies fed in to the study?	LUC has fed in relevant information relating to value from the Buckinghamshire GI Strategy for the appropriate areas.
Buckinghamshire County Council	Have Biological Notification Sites been considered as part of the project?	They have been consulted.
Jonathan Bellars	Question about special qualities: what makes <i>this</i> area special? Each special quality should be referenced back to the specific area.	LUC reviewed and amended where appropriate.
	Reference to Conservation Area reviews – provide examples of some particular views – e.g. from Thornborough	LUC reviewed and referenced CA Appraisals where appropriate.
Jonathan Bellars	It would be helpful to check for planning applications for AVDC/ the area around for major developments or renewables.	This report on special qualities of the AAL/LLAs is current at the time of writing. Future change to the AAL/LLAs will need to be taken account of through the planning process. Potential for enhancement has not formed part of the brief.
	Are these the right designations? Should there be more designations – e.g. the area that forms the setting to the AONB?	Revision to the boundaries was not included as part of the exercise. The setting of the AONB could potentially be covered in a policy in the VALP. Lucy: Wycombe have quite a good policy on the setting of the AONB.
Jonathan Bellars	There is tension in the area to the south of Aylesbury due to pressure for housing.	This study does not look at future change.
Jonathan Bellars	Keen not to draw a distinction between AALs and LLAs	Do AVDC want LUC to make recommendations on whether to retain the distinctions between AALs/ LLAs as part of this study?
	Have Neighbourhood Plans been taken into account?	This is a standalone study that can inform development plans/ neighbourhood plans.

Actions and further questions

- 5.12 Some general issues and questions which came up in a number of discussions at the workshop are summarised below.
- Many of the stakeholders mentioned issues of past/ current/ future change (e.g. new developments/ proposals as part of GI Strategies/ potential for landscape enhancement). It is not really possible to address this aspect as part of the study, which focusses on the landscape baseline and aspects of the landscape that are valued.
 - The setting of the Chilterns AONB was also raised as an issue that may be best addressed as part of a separate study/ policy for the setting of the Chilterns AONB.
 - The issue of boundary review was also raised a number of times. We suggest further discussion between AVDC and LUC as to whether it would be beneficial to undertake an additional exercise such as a desk based assessment of boundaries, incorporating bringing boundaries in line with the LCA boundaries where possible.
 - Views: whether designated landscapes would be affected by changes within other landscapes that are seen from them; and request to mention examples of specific views. We suggest that the 'Special Qualities' are reviewed to check that they contain information on the characteristics of views, where views are mentioned. Whether or not the views may be affected by a new development creating a change to the view can only be assessed on a case by case basis, considering whether or not the new development will alter the view to such an extent that it has an adverse impact on the special qualities of the designated landscape.
 - The question was raised a few times about the difference between the AALs (county significance) and LLAs (district) and whether they should be combined into 'designations' or retained as separate AALs/ LLAs. If AVDC wish to retain the separate designations it may be beneficial to explain them in greater detail in the study and address the issue of what is the hierarchy of weight applied to protection of areas based on Chilterns AONB - AAL – LLA- then – Setting of AONB.

Table 5.4 Workshop participants

ORGANISATION	NAME	DEPARTMENT
Buckinghamshire County Council	Sally Sharp	Spatial Planning
Buckinghamshire County Council	Ryan Clark	Ecology
Wycombe District Council	Nicola Huijer	Spatial Planning
Chiltern District Council	Simon Gray	
Milton Keynes Council	Marek Mackowiak	Planning
Central Bedfordshire Council	Julia Scott	Landscape Officer
South Bucks District Council	Simon Gray	
Chiltern Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Conservation Board	Lucy Murfett	Planning
Aylesbury Vale District Council	David Broadley	Forward Spatial Planning
Aylesbury Vale District Council	Jonathan Bellars	Landscape Officer
LUC	Kate Anderson	Landscape Architecture
LUC	Helen Kent	Planning