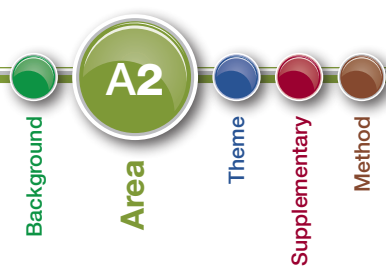




Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty



Historic Environment Action Plans

Area 2: Sutton Veny,
Cold Kitchen Hill and Zeals Knoll





This document forms part of a suite of documents which together comprise the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB Historic Environment Action Plans.

The HEAPs provide a summary of the key characteristics of the historic environment of the AONB at a landscape scale, they then set out the significance, condition and forces for change affecting the historic fabric and character of this special landscape and identify proactive actions to conserve and enhance these special characteristics. These summaries are divided into two groups:

1. Summaries of the historic environment of the AONB by area
2. Summaries of the historic environment of the AONB by theme

These core documents are accompanied by documents which provide background information, supplementary information and detail on the methodologies used to create these documents.

A series of icons help you navigate this suite of documents:



Background - Provides an introduction to the AONB Historic Environment Action Plans and provides background information on the history and archaeology of the landscape **(B1 to B10)**



Area - Summarises key characteristics of discrete geographical areas within the AONB, they then set out the significance, condition and forces for change affecting the historic fabric and character of each area and identify proactive actions to conserve and enhance its characteristics **(A1 to A12)**



Theme - Summarises key characteristics of historic environment themes, each document then sets out the significance, condition and forces for change affecting the historic fabric and character of each theme and identify proactive actions to conserve and enhance its characteristics **(T1 to T14)**



Supplementary - A series of documents which explore supplementary issues of relevance to the Historic Environment Action Plans **(S1 to S2)**

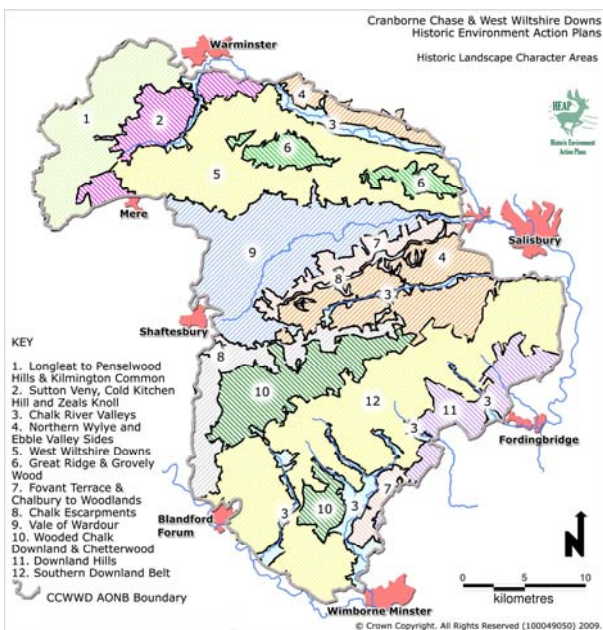


Method - Introduces the methodology behind the production of the Historic Environment Action Plans **(M1 to M3)**

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Introducing the Historic Landscape Character Areas



Twelve distinct Historic Landscape Character Areas have been identified in the AONB. The attributes used to identify the Historic Landscape Character Areas was based on information in the AONB Historic Landscape Characterisation. The HLC provided two key pieces of information:

1. The present day historic landscape character present in the AONB.
2. The surviving evidence of the historical development of the area.

The following descriptions aim to provide an overview of each area

which encapsulates the main features of the Historic Environment present and include both the archaeological and historical, the very old and the more recent.



The process through which the Historic Landscape Character Areas were identified, and mapped, and the sources of information used to create these descriptions is documented in the methodological statement 'Creating and Describing Historic Character Areas'.

Location, Geology, Land Use and Topography

HLCA 2 is comprised of three discrete areas in the northwest of the AONB. The majority of the area is formed of the same Greensand terrace upon which Kilmington

Common sits. This is a largely arable landscape with limited tree cover. The exception is formed by the higher ground of Bidcombe and Brimscombe Hills which are outlying hills of the western escarpment of the West Wiltshire Downs and as such is dominated by chalk. These outliers reformed by steep undulated hill sides rising out of the terrace cut by chalk combs. This Historic Landscape Character Area sits next to the continuation of the greensand terrace (see Area 1) and also abuts the West Wiltshire Downs (see Area 5). Its northern side are located both sides of upper reaches of the Wylie or Deverill Valley (see Area 3).



Location Map

AREA TWO

War Graves at Sutton Veny
© Copyright Trish Steel

Zeals Knoll
© Copyright Phil Williams

Pasture under Bidcombe Hill
© Copyright Andrew Smith

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Summary

Summary of Key Characteristics

- *Cluster of nationally important Prehistoric sites in the vicinity of Sutton Veny.*
- *Pockets of older land use including unimproved chalk grassland for example at Bidcombe Hill.*
- *Dispersed settlement of isolated pre 1800 and 19th century farmsteads with the exception of Sutton Veny. Local building material is commonly Chert greensand and red brick.*
- *Regular 18th and 19th century enclosure obscuring traces of earlier field boundaries.*
- *Iron Age and Romano British shrine on Cold Kitchen Hill. Unfortunately this was poorly excavated in the early 20th century, although spectacular finds were recovered.*
- *Veteran woodland of Southleigh and Eastleigh Woods.*

Summary of Statement of Significance

- *Coherent pattern of parliamentary enclosure*
- *Important pockets of earlier land uses including veteran woodland and open chalk downland*
- *Surviving archaeological earthworks provide important historical and evidential value.*
- *Significant historical value of traces of military camps.*

Summary of Forces for Change

- *Changes in Agriculture and Farming*
- *Changes in Climate*
- *Changes in Land Holdings in the AONB*
- *Changes in Natural Environment*
- *Changes in Settlement and Development Infrastructure*

Summary of State of the Historic Environment

- *Robust historic legacy of patterns of parliamentary enclosure*
- *More fragile areas of earlier land uses including open chalk downland.*
- *Loss or damage to archaeology through ploughing and scrub encroachment*
- *Lack of information on historic farmsteads*
- *Significant gaps in our knowledge of woodland archaeology*




Summary of Historic Environment Actions

- *ACTION 1: Provide an AONB wide synthesis of the distinctive character of historic settlements.*
- *ACTION 3: Identify and record components of historic highways*
- *ACTION 5: Reduce unintended/accidental damage to buried archaeology or extant monuments*
- *ACTION 6: Gain AONB wide coverage of mapping and interpretation of archaeological features from aerial photographs*
- *ACTION 10: Gain greater understanding of historic farm buildings and farmsteads*
- *ACTION 11: Enhance appreciation of the Prehistoric archaeology of the area*
- *ACTION 12: Widen knowledge of ways and means of maintaining historic farm buildings*
- *ACTION 14: Increase understanding of extensive woodland not part of former Medieval hunting areas*
- *ACTION 15: Increase understanding of Medieval landscape elements of the AONB by academics, teachers and public.*
- *ACTION 17: Improve management of historic boundaries and ensure they are retained*
- *ACTION 18: Identify key characteristics of hundreds and associated beneficial management*





Linkages to other Historic Landscape Character Statements

This statement forms one of 12 Historic Landscape Character Area statements which cover the whole of the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. These are accompanied by AONB wide Historic Landscape Character Theme statements. These documents together build up a picture of the key characteristics of the Historic Environment of the AONB at a landscape scale.

Other Historic Landscape Character Areas (HLCA) adjacent to this area are:

-  Area 1: Longleat to Penselwood Hills and Kilmington Common
-  Area 3: Chalk River Valleys
-  Area 5: West Wiltshire Downs

Historic Landscape Character Themes (HLCT) of particular relevance to this area are:

-  Theme 3: Fields in the Landscape
-  Theme 8: Landscapes of Prehistory
-  Theme 9: Open Land
-  Theme 11: Settlement in the Landscape

History and Context


The area has been a focus of Prehistoric activity including the higher ground of Cold Kitchen and Brimscombe Hills.


In the Medieval period the area was part of the Medieval hunting forest of Selwood at its greatest extent and at this point imposed stringent restrictions on the activities of landowners in the area. During the Medieval period it was split into a series of individual manors and was strongly influenced by powerful monastic landowners, including the Abbots of Glastonbury. This influence was curtailed with the dissolution of the monasteries. This allowed the Thynnes, of Longleat to become major landowners in the north of the area whilst the south became fragmented between local gentry.

The area as it appears today is dominated by the impact of 19th century enclosure. Enclosure is the process “by which land that has formerly been owned and exploited collectively is divided into separate parcels, each owner exchanging rights in part of it” (Sandell 1971: 1). These Parliamentary enclosures consolidated strips in the open fields into more compact units, and enclosed much of the remaining pasture commons or wastes. Parliamentary enclosures usually provided commoners with some other land in compensation for the loss of common rights, although often of poor quality and limited extent.

Older land uses are attested to by disperse pre 1800 farmsteads associated with historic farm buildings with important local vernacular styles, and the surviving areas of open chalk downland represent an outlying trace of what until the 19th century was a large belt of open chalk grassland stretching across the West Wiltshire Downs.

Military conflict from 1914 to 1918 brought the first experience of total war to the area, a pattern repeated in World War Two. This is represented in this landscape by the remains of former military camps.

 See *Background Paper 2* for an overview of the archaeology and history of the AONB by time period.

 See *Background Paper 6* for an overview of the key historical figures associated with the AONB.

B7

See *Background Paper 7* for an overview of Major historical events trends and fashions and their impact on the AONB.

Key Secondary Sources

The main source of detail on the historic landscape is the AONB Historic Landscape Characterisation report available from www.historiclandscape.co.uk

The main archaeological record for the area is the county based Historic Environment Record in Dorset and the Sites and Monuments Record in Wiltshire.

Information on the listed buildings in the area is available from English Heritage's Listed Buildings Online <http://lbonline.english-heritage.org.uk>

Information on historic farm buildings in the area is only available at the scale of National Character Area as part of English Heritages preliminary characterisation of historic farmsteads.

The Wiltshire Community Website pages on the Wiltshire Council Website provide a wealth of information on the parishes in the area. This is complemented by descriptions of parishes in the Victoria County History of Wiltshire which are organised by Hundred.

Nearly all parishes in the AONB have had parish histories created for them and these are available from the relevant county reference library.

Information on the woodland in the area can be found in the AONB booklet 'A landscape view of trees and woodland' (2010).

Wiltshire Parliamentary enclosure is discussed in *Abstracts of Wiltshire Inclosure Awards* published by the Wiltshire Record Society in 1971.

B10

A full list of References is provided in *Background Paper 10*.

Landscape Scale Characteristics and Components

Ancient Boundaries and Land Ownership

- Ancient parishes in this area are irregular in shape, more square than the surrounding parishes. These are important historic boundaries.
- The area cuts across several different historic hundreds the boundaries of which probably coincide with ancient parish boundaries.
- Strong influence of the monastic and royal estates in the Medieval period.

T1

See '*Ancient Boundaries and Landownership*' for more information on this theme

Farms and Farming in the Landscape

- There are a few Pre 1800 farmsteads in the area mostly on the edge of historic settlements. These were infilled with dispersed farmsteads in the 19th century.
- Historically a mixed pattern of farming reflected by the general pattern of farmsteads, including threshing barns, cattle housing, cart yards and stables, occurring on most farms. Many farms have L shaped plans
- Introduction of more intensive arable production into the west of the area with new Parliamentary enclosure in the 19th century.

T2

See *'Farms and Farming'* for more information on this theme.

Fields in the Landscape

- Prehistoric and Romano-British field systems in the vicinity of Cold Kitchen Hill and Bidcombe Down and undated linear boundaries running along the escarpment edge.
- The area is dominated by 19th century enclosure which in many instances has obscured traces of earlier land use.
- The north of the area is dominated by very regular planned 19th century enclosure while fields in the centre of the area are larger more irregular in form often driven by topography. Those in the southern area are regular medium sized parliamentary enclosure which contrasts with the area to the west.

T3

See *'Fields in the Landscape'* for more information on this theme.

Historic Parks and Gardens in the Landscape

- Deer park in the vicinity of Southleigh Woods.

T4

See *'Historic Parks and Gardens in the Landscape'* for more information on this theme.

Hunting Landscapes

- The area is within the Medieval hunting forest of Selwood. The special laws governing this area overarched the pattern of historic landownership in the Medieval period.

T5

See *'Hunting Landscapes'* for more information on this theme.

Industry in the Landscape

- There is a large industrial estate to the west of Sutton Veny.

T6

See *'Industry in the Landscape'* for more information on this theme.

Landscapes of Militarism, Commemoration and Defence

- There was a World War One camp and a hutted military hospital of more than 1200 beds at Sutton Veny. A railway ran from Heytesbury to serve these camps. This history is represented by Sutton Veny Churchyard which contains 168 First World War burials, 167 of them in a plot at the north west corner of the church. Many of these are ANZAC graves. The names of 142 Australians and 2 sisters are recorded in the Australian Chapel in St John's Church and are interred in the churchyard. There is a yearly memorial service held on the Sunday closest to the Anzac Day.
- Military presence during the second world war resulted in a substantial number of buildings and huts remaining today. This includes at the former site of one camp at Longbridge Deverill Trading Estate. A second camp was built in Best Lane in Sutton Veny where a few nissen huts are still present.



See 'Landscapes of Militarism, Commemoration & Defence' for more information on this theme.

Landscapes of Prehistory

- The known archaeological record dominated by Prehistoric archaeology and undated features including the enclosure of Robin Hoods Bower in Southleigh Woods.
- Cluster of prehistoric sites in the vicinity of Sutton Veny including a henge, long barrow and round barrows.
- There are Neolithic long barrows on Cold Kitchen Hill and the escarpment edge is crossed by cross dykes.
- Both Cold Kitchen Hill and Bidcombe Hill feature clusters of Bronze Age round barrows.
- Iron Age and Romano-British shrine on Cold Kitchen Hill badly effected by early excavations.



See 'Landscapes of Prehistory' for more information on this theme.

Late 20th Century activity in the Landscape

- Not Applicable

Open Land

- The higher ground of Cold Kitchen and Brimscombe Hill represents a pocket of older land use with veteran woodland and semi-enclosed chalk grassland on the steep escarpment edges and the hill tops combined with some recently enclosed 20th century fields. These represent the remnants of a much greater area of downland which existed prior to the 19th century.



See 'Open Land' for more information on this theme.

Routeways in the Landscape

- Much less dense network of routeways than in the surrounding area.
- Crisscrossed by a network of bridleways and very few roads.
- Area crossed by a Roman Road and several turnpikes in the north.



See 'Routeways in the Landscape' for more information on this theme.

Settlement in the Landscape

- There is one known Iron Age settlement on higher ground in the vicinity of Bidcombe Hill.
- The deserted Medieval village of Hill Deverill is on the edge of the area above the upper reaches of the Wylve River.
- The present day settlement pattern is of dispersed farms with one village in the northwest.
- The only settlement in the area is isolated pre 1800 and 19th century farmsteads, with the exception of Sutton Veny in the far north east of the area.
- Sutton Veny is a pre 1800 settlement focused on the cross roads and the church to the south, which has undergone some infilling in the 19th century and 20th century.
- Local building material is commonly Chert greensand and red brick.
- Sutton Veny is a Conservation Area.
- Notable buildings are associated with the village of Sutton Veny, and include a Grade II* manor house.



See 'Settlement in the Landscape' for more information on this theme.

Water in the Landscape

- The area contains the upper reaches of the Wylve river, the line of which has, influenced the morphology of the surrounding fields.



See 'Water in the Landscape' for more information on this theme.

Woodland and Trees in the Landscape

- The northeast is dominated by the veteran woodland of Southleigh and Eastleigh Wood.
- There is another area of woodland, considered to be of veteran origin, at Bidcombe Hill.
- The other woodlands are of post 1750 origin and are very dispersed and small in scale. This reflects the fact that the area had previously been open downland.



See 'Woods and Trees in the Landscape' for more information about this theme'

Statement of Significance

Introduction

The area is fairly significant both in terms of the coherence of the historic landscape character, the evidence for time depth in the landscape, and the presence of Prehistoric earthworks. There is a medium density of scheduled ancient monuments and the area has a fairly strong historic and evidential value. Surviving blocks of open grassland are significant both as a historic landscape type and due to the archaeological earthworks they contain.

Coherence, Local Distinctiveness, Rarity, and Time Depth

The historic landscape character of this area is extremely coherent; this includes regular, planned 19th century enclosure. The parliamentary landscape is more visually coherent here compared with other areas in the AONB and have obscured earlier traces of land uses.

This contrasts with pockets of rarer open chalk downland on the higher ground and area associated with other older landscape types, including veteran woodland. In this area Prehistoric and later earthworks are visible in the landscape especially in the form of round barrows.

Typical surviving components of the area

- Extant Prehistoric monuments.
- Prehistoric and Romano-British field systems surviving in places as earthworks.
- Medieval deer park.
- Pockets of veteran woodland and semi-enclosed chalk grassland on higher ground.
- Regular planned 19th century enclosure.
- Evidence for First World War camps.
- The only settlement in the area is isolated pre 1800 and 19th century farmsteads, with the exception of one village associated with historic buildings.

Nationally Protected Heritage



See *Background Paper 8 'Designated Heritage Assets' in the AONB for an introduction to nationally designated heritage.*

There are a medium number of Scheduled Ancient Monuments (28) compared with other areas, though this number is quite high in relation to the size of the area. There are no SAMs in the southern part of the area. The SAMs comprise linear boundaries, strip lynchets and cross dykes on the edge of Brimcombe Hills and other Prehistoric sites including round barrows.

There are 45 listed buildings in the area. These cluster in the historic settlements and are associated with the historic estates. There are 3 Grade II* listed buildings comprising one church and two manor houses.

There are no registered park and gardens.

There is one Conservation Area at Sutton Veny.

Archaeological Fieldwork in the AONB



See Background Paper 3 'History of Archaeological Discovery in the AONB' for more information on this topic.

The Roman temple on Cold Kitchen Hill was excavated by Nan Kevill, between 1925 to 1926. This excavation recorded no information on stratigraphy, features or the locations of the spectacular finds recovered.

Evidential Value

There has been no systematic study of archaeological fieldwork in this area. Where information is available the county Historical Environment Records, amongst other sources, indicate features including:

- Archaeological sites such as:
 - Several Neolithic long Barrows.
 - Neolithic Henge near Southleigh wood.
 - The remains of ploughed out round barrows and extant round barrows, clustering around Cold Kitchen and Brimcombe Hills
 - Iron Age and Romano-British settlements.
 - Excavated Romano-British temple on Cold Kitchen Hill.
 - A group of Medieval pillow mounds.
 - Farmsteads of Medieval origins surviving as earthworks.
 - Earthwork enclosures of unknown date including Robin Hoods Bower
 - Undated large scale field systems existing both as crop marks and as earthworks.
 - Undated linear banks existing both as crop marks and as earthworks and clustering around Cold Kitchen and Brimcombe Hills.

In general archaeological sites associated with Cold Kitchen and Brimscombe Hills, and Southleigh Woods, survive as earthworks while sites in the rest of the area are under plough, visible only as crop marks.

- Forty seven recorded find spots including Prehistoric finds associated with Cold kitchen Hill.
- Ancient boundaries between Medieval estates and parishes.
- Living archaeology associated with ancient woodlands, ancient boundaries and Medieval deer parks including veteran trees and ancient pollards.
- A rich architectural history associated with the village of Sutton Veny and its vicinity including:
 - Historic manor houses.

- Historic farm buildings and outbuildings including aisled barns, stables and dove cotes.
- Medieval churches and churchyard monuments.

The key to the unique historic landscape of the area is the juxtaposition between the regular parliamentary enclosure with dispersed farmsteads across the greensand terrace and the unimproved chalk grassland on the higher ground. The areas of chalk grassland have helped to preserve other ancient historic landscape characteristics, discussed in typical surviving components. For example, large scale Prehistoric field systems. The ancient woodlands of Southleigh and Eastleigh were once part of the ancient Selwood Forest.

Historical Value

Illustrative Value

Prehistoric monuments and field systems existing as visible earthworks.

The modern picture of regular grid like fields can be used to illustrate the enclosure of land through Parliamentary acts and informal enclosure. This contrasts with the remnants of open landscapes on Brimscombe Hill which show patterns of older land use before enclosure.

The visible pattern of land holdings can be used to show the post 1918 break up pattern of land holdings in this area.

The remains of Kitchener's new armies' camp in the Wylde Valleys and the lasting legacy of war graves and memorials provide a visible link to the First World War.

Associative Value

Sutton Veny is remembered for the influx of First World War soldiers to the area. This is commemorated by the 169 Australian Soldiers buried in St Johns Church and the Anzac service held there every year.

The poet Siegfried Sassoon lived in Heystesbury House just to the north of the area and this connection is commemorated on the Sutton Veny website.

Aesthetic Value

The aesthetic value of the landscape is derived from the homogenous blocks of Parliamentary fields and their landscape juxtaposition with the visible presence of time depth on Cold Kitchen and Brimscombe Hills. The historic settlement of Sutton Veny is very picturesque, featuring a concentration of historic buildings.

Communal Value

Sutton Veny provides the centre for a thriving local community and the community website includes recollections of life in the village.

State of the Historic Environment

Introduction

The coherence of this landscape is derived from the defining influence of Parliamentary enclosure, which means that this area has a fairly robust historic landscape character that has seen little recent alteration. This has however obscured earlier land traces, areas of veteran woodland and open downland where they survive consists of a fragile and important component of the landscape. There is a lack of information on the extent of archaeological sites in woodland, and on the character of historic farmsteads, which needs to be addressed.

Current Knowledge

With the exception of Cold Kitchen the other known important archaeological and historical sites and features in the area have only been subject to limited study.

There are significant gaps in our knowledge and understanding of this area:

- The extent of archaeological sites concealed within the areas of veteran woodland.
- There has not been a systematic assessment of aerial photographs of the area and it is therefore likely that other features remain to be discovered.
- Building records for the area are sparse, especially in relation to the character of historic farmsteads.

The AONB Historic Landscape Characterisation has revealed the character of the wider historic landscape, but further information is required on the history and development of the landscape prior to the creation of 19th century enclosure.

Despite the importance of Selwood Forest in defining the historic character of this area key aspects of the hunting legacy are either unknown or poorly understood.

Existing Levels of Protection and Heritage at Risk

Four of the Scheduled Ancient Monuments in the area are at high risk. The SAMs in this area are under threat from scrub and tree growth, and ploughing (English Heritage at Risk Register 2009). This is indicative of the risk to the wider known archaeological record.

None of the Conservation Areas in the area have appraisals.

Loss and Condition

Over the last 150 years there has been considerable boundary gain through the imposition of a regular grid of fields on the landscape in the north of the area, these fields have been further modified in the 20th century through the removal of field boundaries. These have obscured traces of earlier land uses. This process had lead to an increase in ploughed land and in the last century an increased intensification of production with a potential impact on buried archaeology.

Pockets of pre 1800 fields survive in the north of the area but these have undergone modification in the 18th and 19th century.

In part these fields enclosed areas of chalk downland which have now shrunk to a quarter of their former size but it is possible in the lower areas that these fields enclosed former areas of open fields, wastes and commons or early enclosure, but these needs further study.

Naturally archaeological earthworks survive best on remnant areas of chalk grassland but some archaeological earthworks also survive on the lower ground, where fields are not under plough.

The main area of woodland around Southleigh and Eastleigh Wood have seen little addition or shrinkage over the last 100 years. There have however been shifts in the composition of woodland in the area with the introduction of greater numbers of conifers and a resultant loss of historic woodland character.

The landscape has undergone infilling of settlement over the last 200 years. The state of the wider built heritage in the area is unknown, but as many of the known listed features are within the Conservation Area of Sutton Veny, and are in active management as residential buildings, it can be postulated that the condition of most buildings is good. The main risk being to any redundant farm buildings and features with high maintenance costs, such as churches and monuments.



See Background Paper 4 for an overview of the change in land use patterns in the AONB.

Coherence

The most coherent feature of this landscape is the pattern of 19th century Parliamentary enclosure and the associated 19th century farmsteads. The areas of veteran woodland in the north of the area are fairly coherent. The historic features of the built environment associated with the historic settlement of Sutton Veny are highly visible. However important archaeological sites and features in the area are not so easily appreciated, being visible only as crop marks or hidden in woodland, with the exception of the archaeological earthworks on the surviving areas of open chalk downland.

Forces for Change

Overview of the sensitivities of the landscape area to change

The Greensand Terrace does not have a strong landform, is open and exposed and has few man-made features, thus most forms of development would contribute to the erosion of its sense of tranquility. The sensitivity of this area lies in its sense of openness and the uniformity of its land cover, which evokes a simple, uncluttered character. The sensitivity of this landscape to change is moderately-high.

The higher ground of Bidcombe and Brimscombe Hill is much more prominent. The experience of openness and the magnitude of landscape are exaggerated by the simplicity of its land cover and are highly sensitive to change.

For more information see “Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB Landscape Sensitivity Study 2007”.

Overview of forces for change operating on the historic environment

Theme 1: Agriculture and Farming

- Increased positive management of elements of the historic environment by landowners until 2013 as an increasing number of farmers enter agri-environment schemes for a 10 year period. Maintenance of current levels of agri-environment scheme monies would increase the numbers of land holdings undertaking positive management of historic environment assets. However the likely possibility of reduced levels of agri-environment money post 2013 could have a major impact on the positive management of archaeological sites and the wider historic landscape in the future.
- Archaeological monuments already under the plough will continue to be ploughed for the foreseeable future. New crops and further intensification may increase damage to buried archaeology, and change the appearance of the landscape, and result in further removal of field boundaries.
- Changes in stocking densities and grazing regimes have the potential to rapidly affect the appearance of this historic landscape. Small scale historic field patterns beyond downland areas could see changes in management and be merged. In addition archaeological monuments on surviving grassland need carefully planned grazing regimes if they are to remain free of scrub.
- Major changes to the way in which fields are managed and used, increased mechanisation has the potential to lead to the need for larger agricultural buildings served by larger machinery, increased redundancy, and conversion of historic farm buildings.

Theme 2: Climate Change

- New biomass crops may pose a risk to buried archaeology or radically change the appearance of the wider historic landscape character.
- Some micro-renewables might be suitable to fit on historic buildings.
- Energy saving measures could detract from the historic character and fabric of buildings.

Theme 4: Land Holdings in the AONB

- Erosion in the historic patterns of land holdings resulting from farm amalgamation and diversification and the further intensification of agriculture. Decrease in profitability of small land holdings could lead to neglect of small or marginal areas of the AONB. This would lead to the loss of key elements in the historic landscape, including fields, field boundaries, parish boundaries and trackways.

Theme 5: Natural Environment

- Closer dialogue between historic and natural environment interests should lead to the design of initiatives that have mutual benefit. A better understanding of long term historical change may suggest potential for more innovative schemes that could include some reversion of intensively used land.

Theme 7: Settlement and Infrastructure Development

- Re-use of historic farmsteads provides increased opportunities for maintaining these structures that contribute much to the historic landscape character of the AONB, as long as care is taken on the design of any conversions to retain original materials, openings and character. The creation of new farmyards with standardised farm buildings adjacent to the historic farmstead may lead to neglect of these historic assets or conversely to opportunities to ensure their future through well considered conversion.



For more information see supplementary document "Forces for change operating on the historic environment of the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB at a landscape scale and their past, current and future impacts".

Summary of Key Threats

- Loss or damage to unknown archaeological and historical features in woodlands through forestry work and scrub encroachment.
- Loss or damage to buried archaeology through ploughing.
- Potential loss of historic farm buildings not in active management.
- Lack of appreciation of the landscape scale legacy of Selwood Forest and the Medieval and earlier components of this landscape.
- Erosion of historic landscape character in key historic settlements lacking Conservation Area Appraisals.

Historic Environment Actions

See Background paper 9 for a full list of Historic Environment Actions and the stages identified in their implementation.

ACTION 1: Provide an AONB wide synthesis of the distinctive character of historic settlements.

The Threat and the Opportunity – Guiding change within the AONB's numerous historic villages is done best when there is an informed understanding of their particular development and character. Over half of the Conservation Areas in the AONB do not have a Conservation Area Appraisal, and there are only three Village Design Statements. Only one District has a design guide. This means that there is no easily available information source identifying the distinctive character of either individual settlements or the rural settlements of the AONB overall.

The Potential Mechanism – Characterisations of local settlements could be prepared to provide an accessible source of information on the historic characteristics of individual settlements and the range of characteristics found in the AONB's settlements as a whole to inform planning decisions and ensure that the distinctive character of the AONB settlements is conserved and enhanced.

ACTION 3: Identify and record components of historic highways

The Threat and the Opportunity - The historic highways of the AONB are an under appreciated component of the environment of the AONB and there is no coherent approach to their management and maintenance. The forms of the numerous routeways that thread through the AONB's countryside, and the lines they take, reveal much about their complex history. They are often the means by which people still move around and appreciate the Area's landscape, but like all other parts they are subject to change and the erosion of character and fabric can lead to a loss of historic meaning. Although individual historic features associated with ancient highways, such as milestones, are recorded, the way that these features relate to each other, and the setting of the historic highways, is often ignored. This action would increase understanding, appreciation and knowledge of historic highways and by doing so ensure that their key features are retained and appropriately managed. This action is intended to draw attention to the issues at the same time as realising the potential of routeways to enhance people's enjoyment of the AONB.

The Potential Mechanism - attention could be focused initially on the droveways of the AONB as these represent some of the oldest routeways and are served by a good Rights of Way network. One possible Mechanism could be through the creation of self-guided trails.

ACTION 5: Reduce unintended/accidental damage to buried archaeology or extant monuments

The Threat and the Opportunity - Approximately 55% of the agricultural land in the AONB is cultivated. One result of this activity is the unintended damage and loss of buried archaeology. This is especially damaging in the AONB due to the complex archaeological remains which survived into the 19th century, for example prehistoric settlements set within extensive field systems. This damage can be mitigated against through advice to land owners delivered, in part, through agri-environment schemes. Another area where advice can be of assistance is in increasing awareness and appreciation of more recent components of the historic landscape such as historic field boundaries (see Action 17).

The Potential Mechanism - Examples from other areas in the country suggest that advice to landowners aimed at reducing damage is most effectively delivered by specialist advisors. Many local authorities maintain a Historic Environment Countryside Advisor Service (HECAS) to maximise the gain for the historic environment from the various schemes designed to support the environment and rural economy (Higher and Entry Level Environmental Stewardship, Woodland Grant Schemes the AONB's own Sustainability funding, etc). A HECAS officer can be crucial in transforming the potential of these schemes into reality and in so doing help a range of agencies achieve their wider aims with regard to managing and enhancing the historic environment. In the CCWWD AONB it may be expected that a key role for a HECAS

would be to provide targeted agri-environment advice aimed at reducing damage and loss of buried archaeology through ploughing.

ACTION 6: Gain AONB wide coverage of mapping and interpretation of archaeological features from aerial photographs

The Threat and the Opportunity: The buried or surviving archaeology of the AONB has never been systematically recorded from crop marks or earthworks displayed in aerial photographs. This means that there is potential for important archaeological sites to be damaged or inappropriately managed because they have not yet been recognised.

The Potential Mechanism - A mapping project for the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB could fill gaps in knowledge of plough damage sites, uncover new sites (through crop marks, earthwork patterns etc.), and spatially link known buried archaeology. The aim of English Heritage's National Mapping Programme (NMP) is to enhance the understanding of past human settlement, by providing primary information and synthesis for all archaeological sites and landscapes visible on aerial photographs, or other airborne remote sensed data

ACTION 10: Gain greater understanding of historic farm buildings and farmsteads

The Threat and the Opportunity - Historic farm buildings and farm complexes are a key feature of the locally distinctive vernacular architecture of the AONB. There is, however, a lack of information on the location and character of historic farm buildings in the AONB, including their types, ages, typical components, materials, the ways buildings and spaces like yards work together within farmsteads, and the ways they have changed in the last few decades.

The Potential Mechanism - The national farmstead characterisation work championed by English Heritage could be built on to fill gaps in our knowledge of historic farm buildings and thereby help to ensure that they are properly conserved and enhanced in the future, or to ensure that any reuse is undertaken sensitively and on the basis of full understanding of the original form and function of the structures and spaces. One approach would be to:

- Collate existing information and make it accessible
- Undertake additional research & survey

ACTION 11: Enhance appreciation of the Prehistoric archaeology of the area

The Threat and the Opportunity - Although the Cranborne Chase is widely accepted in academic circles as containing internationally important complexes of Prehistoric archaeology, this is not widely appreciated by local people and visitors.

The Potential Mechanism - The lack of appreciation of the AONB's Prehistoric archaeology could be combated through the establishment of a series of self guided trails through which people could explore different aspects of the Prehistoric archaeology of the AONB.

ACTION 12: Widen knowledge of ways and means of maintaining historic farm buildings

The Threat and the Opportunity - The Historic Environment Action Plan Steering Group identified that although there had been some good examples of schemes which had reused historic farm buildings, while still maintaining their historic characteristics, these were not widely known.

The Potential Mechanism - Good examples of the maintenance and reuse of historic farm buildings could be celebrated and shared with Local Planning Authorities and land owners thereby helping to inspire the conservation and enhancement of other historic farm buildings and farmsteads.

ACTION 15: Increase understanding of Medieval landscape elements of the AONB by academics, teachers and public.

The Threat and the Opportunity - There is perceived to be a lack of appreciation of the Medieval components of the AONB's landscape: settlements, buildings, castles, fields, pastures, woodlands, roads, mills, hunting chase, parks, etc, all of which contribute greatly to the fabric and character of the AONB as it survives today.

The Potential Mechanism - The lack of appreciation of the Medieval components of the AONB landscape could be combated by a seminar and the creation of a research framework that encourages and sets out a range of achievable goals for further research in the area.

ACTION 17: Improve management of historic field boundaries and ensure they are retained

The Threat - The historic fieldscapes of the AONB are key characteristics of the AONB landscape which are not at present subjected to integrated and holistic management. There has consequently been loss and gradual removal of the historic patterns of pre 1800 boundaries, including the distinctive pattern of small curving irregular fields around the Donheads. Elsewhere older field boundaries have not been maintained and are either degrading or, if originally hedgerows are becoming overgrown.

The Potential Mechanism - This action would aim to halt the decline in the condition of particular field boundaries and the legibility of historic field patterns by providing training for agri-environment and other land management advisors. There is already much advice available on historic field boundary conservation (including implementation of the 1997 Hedgerow Regulations) and management, often generated via the HECAS officers mentioned under Action 5, but most of this is specific to the region's where it was generated. However, this material can be reviewed and tailored to suit the needs of the AONB once a clearer understanding has been gained of the character and needs of the field boundaries within the Area.

This material should then form the basis of training sessions for farmers and land managers working within the AONB. Involvement in such an initiative might be attractive to partners such as FWAG, the National Trust, Natural England and the local Wildlife Trusts.



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Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty



Historic Environment Action Plans

www.historiclandscape.co.uk

This document forms part of a suite of documents which together comprise the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB Historic Environment Action Plans, or HEAPs for short. The HEAPs provide a summary of the key characteristics of the historic environment of the AONB at a landscape scale, they then set out the significance, condition and forces for change affecting the historic fabric and character of this special landscape and identify proactive actions to conserve and enhance these special characteristics.



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