

**CRANBORNE CHASE AND WEST WILTSHIRE DOWNS
AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY**



“The Wild Downs and Hills”

...creating Historic Environment Action Plans for the AONB



Wednesday 15th July at Hindon Village Hall

Meeting from 10.00am to 12.30pm

Minutes of the Meeting

Present

Peter Herring
Andy Poore
Tim Yarnell
Cllr. George Russell
Helena Cave-Penney
Roger Griffin
Martin Papworth
Jocelyn Sage

John Gale
Julie Gardener
Mike Allen
Kae Neustadt
Chris Clarke
Ray Bird
Katherine Barker
Trevor Steptoe

Clive Whitborn
Linda Nunn
Emma Rouse
Richard Burden
Anne Carney
Jo Taylor

Apologies

Matt Pearson
Dawn Enright
Claire Pinder

Kevin Morris
Shane Gould
Bill Jenman

Ben Kerwood

1 Welcome

The group was welcomed and everyone was thanked for attending

2 Introductions

Everyone introduced themselves

3 Update on project progress

- Timetable – The project is running to schedule. The HEAP officer is currently working on Stage Two – Creating Historic Landscape Character Areas, this is due to be completed by the end of July
- Methodology – The AONB HEAP Project is designed to be a best practice

ACTION – The two methodology statements prepared so far were available to take away and also from www.historiclandscape.co.uk. All comments on these are welcomed.

4 Historic Landscape Character Areas

Broad landscape scale Historic Character Areas have been identified mapped and described. These will form the basis on which Historic Environment Action Plans will be created in combination with overarching theme descriptions. The Historic Character Areas have been created from the information available in the AONB wide Historic Landscape Characterisation. The process through which this was achieved is

described in the methodological statements described in point 2 above.

- Overview – The group was each given an A3 draft map of the 10 historic character areas across the AONB and asked to discuss whether the scope, scale, location and number of areas seemed feasible. This map is available from www.historiclandscape.co.uk. The general reaction to the areas was positive however concern was raised over the following:
 - Clarification was sought on how the Areas would integrate into AONB aims. ER said that the HEAPs would allow the AONB partnership to have a wider vision of the Historic Environment across the landscape which could more effectively feed into the primary purpose of conserving and enhancing natural beauty.
 - The area names were seen as unhelpful – these will be revised.
 - Several people raised the issue whether area 2 was distinct enough to separate from 1 and 5.
 - Some areas may need to be further subdivided e.g. Kingston Lacy and other parkland nested within 5A
 - ‘Woodland’ was discussed. Greater clarity is needed in its description and identification – especially with relation to historic management. It was suggested that Woodland should become one of the themes. Care is needed over the use of terminology especially in relation to ‘forest’ ie ancient hunting area.
 - Clarification was sought on whether the creation of these areas had been based on previous examples from elsewhere in the country. ER said that previous examples had been reviewed and critiqued prior to the formulation of a new methodology. Peter Herring outlined that English Heritage is funding this project to provide a working methodology which is widely applicable to other protected and rural areas. This project will feed into a guidance document on HEAPs on which he is currently working.
 - The relationship and differences between these areas and the AONB landscape character areas as described in the Landscape Character Assessment was discussed. Some people felt that a close synergy between the areas could be a useful tool as the LCA areas are already widely used and accepted. The alternative view is that the HEAP areas need to be robust and evidence based in their own right.
 - The relationship between the HEAP area and the overlying Joint Character Areas was raised. ER is to investigate this further.
 - The relationship between the ‘Chase’ as a clearly defined area and the Historic Character Areas was raised – and the relationship to the historic management of the landscape, and other forms of historical political boundaries. It was suggested that this should perhaps form one of the overarching themes.

- The issue of scale was raised – clarification is needed over the scale at which the Historic Character Areas operate and what level of detail the descriptions should contain. They should supplement not obscure the underlying Historic Landscape Characterisation. It was asked whether the areas form an arbitrary framework. ER suggested that as the areas identified are based upon HLC then areas would have unique management issues warranting particular actions which vary between areas and therefore are more than simply arbitrary impositions.
- Descriptions – The group was then asked to focus on the summary descriptions. These were given to each person with more detailed maps and are also available from www.historiclandscape.co.uk. For the purposes of discussion the group was split into sub groups and asked to consider two or three of the areas and asked to consider:

1. Whether the summary descriptions captured the historic character and features of each area
2. Whether any features warranted further emphasis

The groups comments were captured on A1 flip charts and through general discussion. The main points raised were as follows:

- If an area is particularly archaeologically rich in terms of sites, the different site types may not be described where as in a less rich area, particular features may be highlighted e.g. the Long Barrows of the Wylve Area. This may lead to a false impression as Long Barrows elsewhere e.g. in the vicinity of the Cursus, may be equally important but not specifically mentioned.
- The relationship between areas needs to be highlighted in the text.
- The purpose of some of the information needs to be highlighted – why for example are the number of conservation areas particularly relevant.
- There needs to be greater clarity when using the term ‘dominant’. Does this actually mean locally significant.
- The scale of features, e.g. parks and gardens, are important.
- Designed Landscape need to be given greater emphasis.
- The phrase ‘known archaeology’ needs reconsideration – what about archaeological potential or areas which have been less well studied?
- Boundaries, crossing points and routeways require greater emphasis
- The railway was identified as a key feature that may require greater emphasis as it provides key views of the AONB.
- Field forms and boundaries need greater emphasis
- It should be highlighted whether an area has mixed history and topography or is more uniform.
- Military, industrial, 20th century features and orchards were all identified as key elements not adequately addressed in the descriptions.

- Other issues raised were:
 - the opportunities presented by Agri-Environment Schemes and especially Higher Level Schemes in delivering conservation and enhancement of the Historic Environment at the landscape scale. There was however some concern that the creation of the HEAPs and the description should not be predetermined by particular schemes.
 - the opportunities presented for education by the project

ACTION – Attendees asked to send further comments on the draft areas to Emma

ACTION – Emma to redraft areas, names and descriptions with reference to all comments received and re-circulate to the group. Attendees were asked to identify whether there were certain areas in which they were particularly interested in receiving the redrafts for.

5 Historic Landscape Themes

- There was discussion of a list of potential topics (these are summarised below)
- It was suggested that some form of distinction needs to be made between elements of a theme's description which relate to management and those that relate to research.
- Attendees were asked to identify one theme that they would like to see described, as a general indication of themes which are particularly crucial. The choices were fairly well spread but woodland and rural settlements emerged as two clear priorities.

ACTION - Peter Herring indicated that the themes were obviously of greater importance than when the project design was originally created. It was suggested that the AONB and EH would look at allocating more time to creating more theme statements than was originally envisaged. These will then be presented at the next steering group meeting.

6 Report from meeting with AONB, English Heritage and Local Authorities 110609

ER reported that a smaller technical group has also been established to look at ways in which the HEAP can feed into and inform the work that Local Authorities are already undertaking in conservation and heritage. Its first meeting was on the 11th June 2009 at Bristol. The minutes from this meeting are available from www.historiclandscape.co.uk. The next meeting will be held at Wednesday 18th November 2009 and all relevant local authority officers are invited to attend.

7 Potential HLF Landscape Partnership Bid

Anne Carney from the AONB outlined details of a potential Historic Landscape Partnership Bid encapsulating the area of Wooded Chalk Downland at the heart of Cranborne Chase and the Chalk Escarpments to the north and west. Attendees are asked to get in contact with Anne at the AONB office annecarney@cranbornechase.org.uk if they are interested in being more involved with this exciting project.

8 Next meeting

The next meeting will be in late autumn and ER will set a date. The focus of the meeting will be overarching themes.

SUMMARY OF POTENTIAL THEMES FOR WHICH DESCRIPTIONS COULD BE PREPARED

