

Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB
Historic Landscape Characterisation Project

HISTORIC LANDSCAPE TYPE DESCRIPTION:

TYPE 9 INLAND COMMUNICATION



ENGLISH HERITAGE

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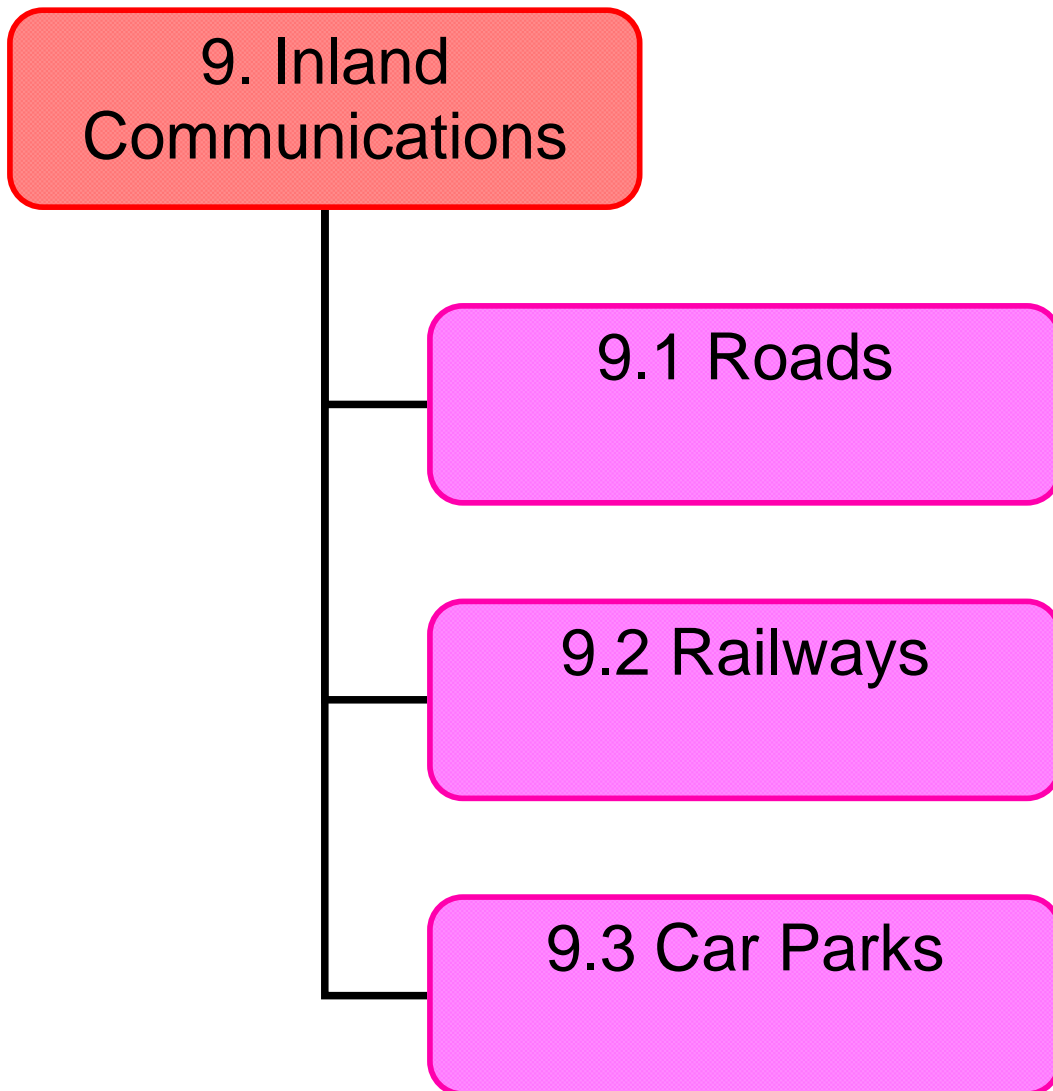
Roads, Railways and Route Ways in the AONB: An Introduction

“The coming of the Railway revolutionized the life of the Chase in many ways but it was not a physical presence as the horsedrawn coach had been. It brought paradoxically a greater stillness to the heartland of the Chase as the tollgates were abandoned and the coaching inns closed their doors.”

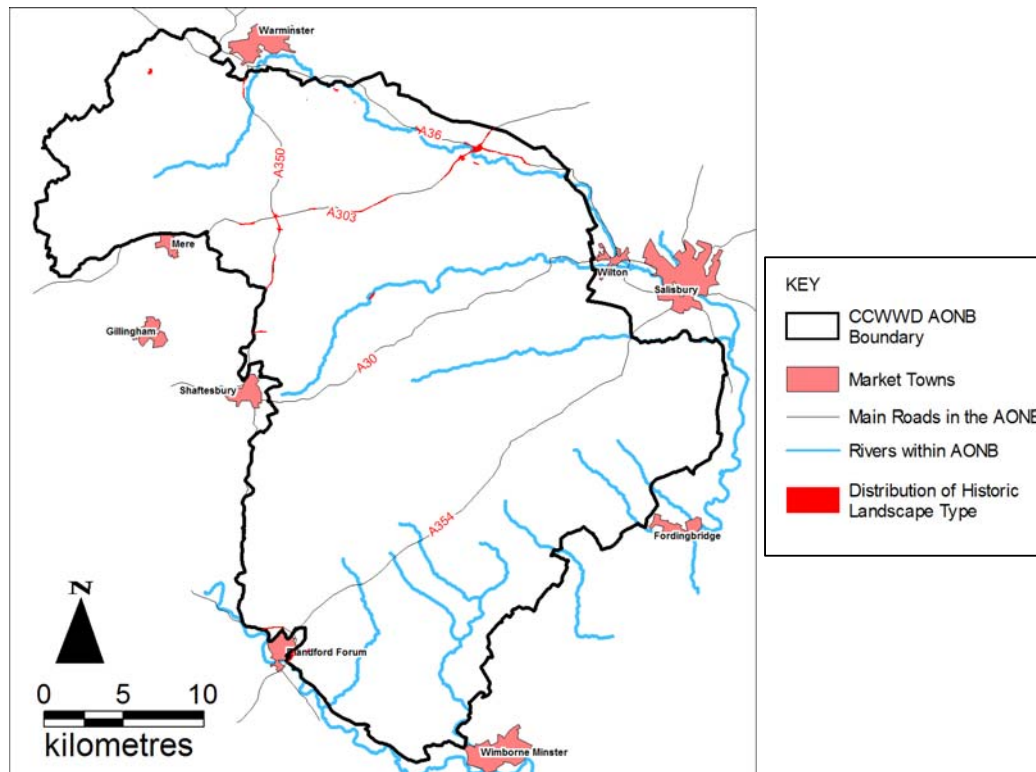
(From Hawkins, D. (1980) Cranborne Chase. London: Victor Gollancz Ltd. Pg 102)

The communication network of the AONB forms a major part its historic character of as well as a living and working part of the countryside. In addition, the modern communication network forms a crucial medium through which people first experience the landscape itself. Historically the river valleys of the AONB were fairly isolated, with the major networks of roads following higher ground and the chalk downland. Unlike some areas of chalk landscape in the country the Roman Roads do not underlie the modern road network; instead the historic droveways and carriage roads snaked across the AONB from east to west. These routes were in different locations from the main roads of today, with the exception of the A354 which follows the Great Western Turnpike and a section of the A303 which follows the Northern Ox Drove. Not to be confused with the other Ox Drove in the AONB, also running from east to west, but passing by Wyn Green to the south of the Vale of Wardour. It was not until the 20th century that a major north-south route became a feature of the AONB. The turnpike roads were a major feature of this landscape in the 17th and 18th century. However, the coming of the railways in the 19th century meant that many of the settlements which were found along their length, such as Hindon, lost their former importance, while other settlements, such as Tisbury, rose in importance. The rural nature of the AONB means that the area has largely escaped the need for major new road infrastructure associated both with the roads themselves and also with the car parks related to tourist attractions and retail complexes. That is with the exception of the junction between the A36 and A303, which is a noticeable feature in the HLC dataset.





Type 9 Inland Communications



Introduction

Inland communications refers to the transport network present in the AONB and includes roads, rail links and other infrastructure, such as car parking. The Historic Landscape Characterisation Project has split the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB into individual parcels of lands, one of the weaknesses of this approach is that it is not able to record linear routes in the landscape. The project has recorded areas where there has been larger scale provision of infrastructure in the landscape with, for example, the construction of major road junctions or the construction of railway stations.

Some routeways can be seen implicitly in the dataset. This is the case, for example, with the Roman Road running between Sarum and Badbury Rings. At its southern extent the course of the Roman Road marks a clear boundary with different histories of land uses occurring on either side.

Principal Historical Processes

The creation of linear lines in the landscape can be traced into the prehistoric period in the AONB with the creation of features such as the Ackling Dyke and the Dorset Cursus. Historically, since the post medieval period, the communication routes across the AONB have run east to west, many of these were ancient drove ways such as the Ox Drove. The route of the A354 came into being in the 18th century as the Great Western Turnpike road and there was another major turnpike in the northern half of the AONB running through Hindon, which ran between London and Exeter. The importance of these routes waned in the 19th century with the coming of

the railways, which increased the importance of villages such as Tisbury. In the 20th century new highways have come to dominate the transportation network in the AONB with the A350, and A303 being especially busy, and important routes

Typical Historical/Archaeological Components

The HLC has recorded infrastructure associated with communication routes in the AONB, this includes road junctions, car parks, railway stations, sidings and yards.



© Countryside Agency Photo: Nick Smith 02-4876

Rarity

This type occurs rarely in the HLC dataset but transportation routes are a major feature of the historic character of the AONB.

Survival

The main transportation routes in the AONB today are the five A roads and two train lines. These follow different courses to the main routes used before the 19th century.

Degree of surviving coherence of the historic landscape components

This type would be very recognisable in the landscape, although the evidence for disused railways or ancient track ways may not be so easily appreciated.

Past interaction with other types

The type is associated with the settlements that it links. In some cases, as with the railways or the eastern stretch of the A303, new routes were imposed on the landscape, regardless of previous land uses.

Evidence for time-depth

None of this type preserves traces for previous land uses.

Contribution to the present landscape character

The communication network is a major feature of the historic character of the AONB, and provides the method through which most people appreciate the landscape of the AONB. In some areas these features have a negative impact on landscape character, for example, at the junction of major roads.

Key Statistics

Total Area: 138.82 hectares, 0.14% of the AONB

No. of Polygons:	This Subtype is comprised of 20 polygons, 0.45% of the total number of polygons digitised.
Av. Polygon Size:	Each polygon averages 6.91 hectares in size.
Occurrence:	Rare.
Previous Coverage:	138.82 hectares, 0.14% of AONB was Inland Communications at the point when this type was at its most prevalent.
Total Recorded Coverage:	The total recorded coverage of this type is 141 hectares, 0.14% of the AONB.

Constituent Types

[9.1 Roads](#)

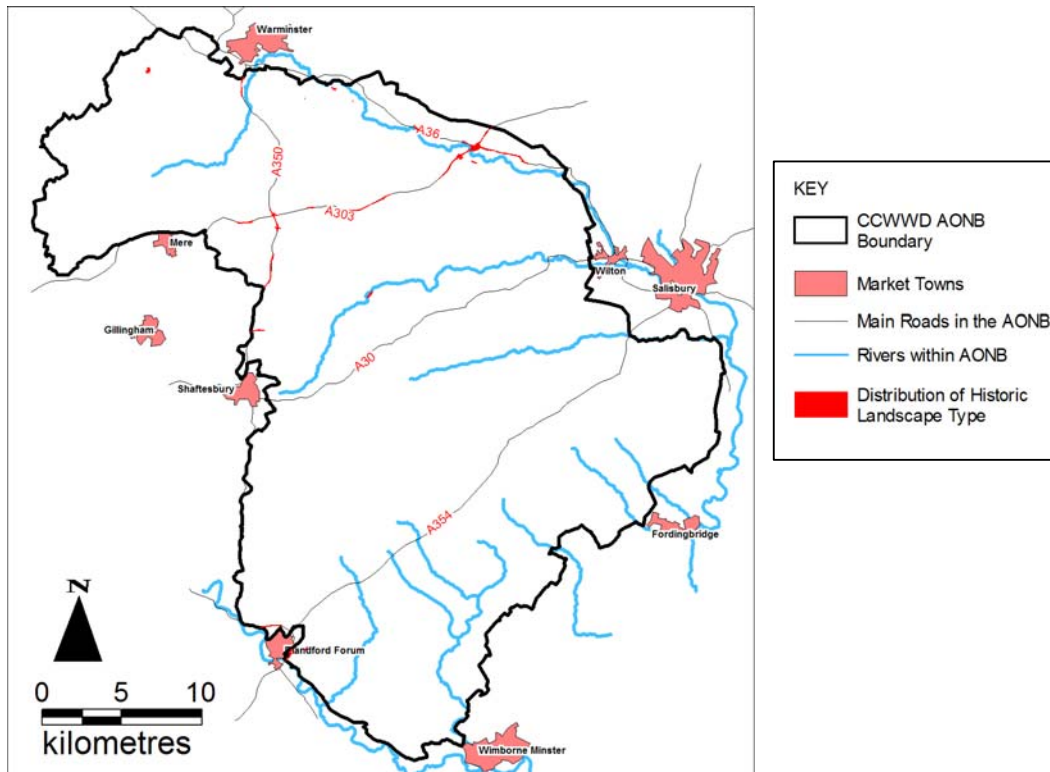
[9.2 Railways](#)

[9.3 Car Parks](#)

Parent Type

None

Type 9.1 Roads



Introduction

The Historic Landscape Characterisation did not record the routes of major roads in the AONB but did record where these routes had a major impact in a particular place, for example, where there were stretches of dual carriageway or major road junctions. The dataset does not reflect how busy an individual road is.

Distribution

The HLC has recorded stretches of the A36 (Salisbury to Warminster), A303 (Mere to Winterborne Stoke) and A350 (Blandford Forum to Warminster).

Principal Historical Processes

The development of the A36, A303 and A350 occurred in the second half of the 20th century with the engineering of the highways in question.

Typical Historical/Archaeological Components

This type is comprised of engineered junctions and stretches of dual carriageway.

Rarity

Roads and highways are a crucial element of the AONB, though their occurrence in the HLC dataset is rare.

Survival

Roads represent a major component of the engineered infrastructure present in the AONB.

Degree of surviving coherence of the historic landscape components

This type would be very recognisable in the landscape, the junction between the A36 and A303 has a large scale landscape impact.



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Past interaction with other types

The type is associated with the settlements which it serves.

Evidence for time-depth

None of this type preserves traces of previous land uses.

Contribution to the present landscape character

The transportation network is a major feature of the historic character of the AONB, and provides the method through which most people appreciate the landscape of the AONB.

Key Statistics

Total Area:	118.92 hectares, 0.12% of the AONB
No. of Polygons:	This Subtype is comprised of 13 polygons, 0.29% of the total number of polygons digitised.
Av. Polygon Size:	Each polygon averages 39.64 hectares in size.
Occurrence:	Rare.
Previous Coverage:	118.92 hectares, 0.12% of AONB was Roads at the point when this type was at its most prevalent.
Total Recorded Coverage:	The total recorded coverage of this type is 118.92 hectares, 0.12% of the AONB.

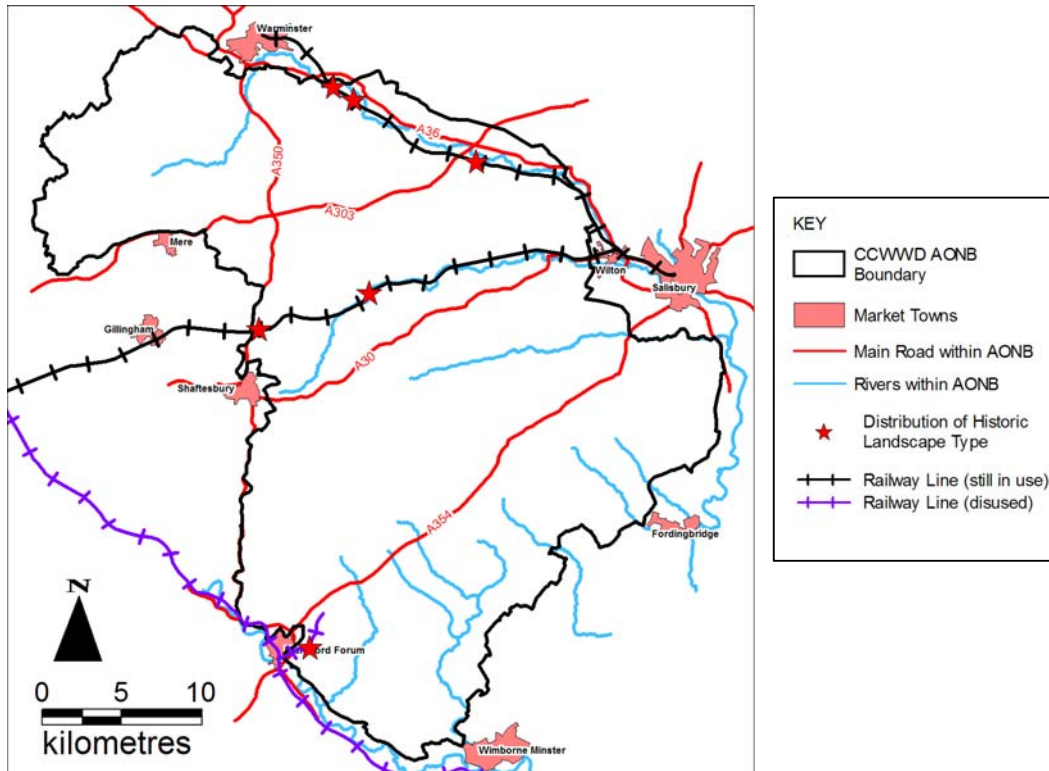
Constituent Types

None

Parent Type

[9. Inland Communications](#)

Type 9.2 Railways



Introduction

The HLC is based on polygons so the path of the railways in the AONB is not explicitly recorded, except where the line has a larger scale landscape impact in a particular area, through the provision of dedicated infrastructure. This includes sidings, station houses, signal boxes and yards, railway cottages and junctions.

Distribution

Railway infrastructure has been recorded along the two surviving railway lines in the AONB between Warminster and Salisbury, and Salisbury and Gillingham. The remnants of a cutting have also been recorded on the short lived Blandford Camp line.

Principal Historical Processes

Three railways were built across the AONB in the 19th century: -

1. Westbury to Salisbury Branch of the Great Western Railway commencing with an Act of Parliament in 1845 and completed in 1856. This line is still open today.
2. Salisbury & Yeovil Railway was begun in 1856 with support from the London and South Western Railway and was finished in 1860. This line is still open today

3. Somerset and Dorset Railway begun in 1871 and finished in 1874. This line was finally closed in the 1960s. Part of the line brushes the edge of the AONB in the region of Blandford, but no part of this has been recorded in the dataset.

The creation of the railways in the 19th century had a major impact on the settlements of the AONB, with, for example, the lessening of the importance of Hindon with the dwindling of the London Exeter coach road, and the rise in the importance of Tisbury.

The fourth major railway in the AONB was the short-lived Blandford Camp line, a branch railway to take personnel to the camp from Blandford Forum during the First World War. In use for only a year the HLC dataset has recorded evidence for a small cutting marking the former use of this land.

The fifth railway in the AONB was also constructed during the first world war and ran to the military camps at Fovant.

Finally there were three short lengths of track used for military purposes in the 20th century off of the Salisbury & Yeovil Railway. The first running south from Dinton was dismantled by the 1940s, the second at Hams Cross, to the east of Tisbury, was used as an ammunition depot at RAF Chilmark, but is now disused.

Typical Historical/Archaeological Components

Typical features include the station buildings at Tisbury, relic station buildings, disused railway sidings and yards, and cuttings.

Rarity

This type has been recorded rarely in the AONB but the two surviving railway lines form important communication routes across the AONB. These routes can only be accessed within the AONB at Tisbury due to the closure of other stages.

Survival

The two surviving railways still operate full services and provide important transport links between London, the South Coast, Wales and the South-west.

Degree of surviving coherence of the historic landscape components

This type would be very recognisable in the landscape, although the relic elements, such as sidings and yards, may be obscured by tree and scrub growth or be now used for other purposes.



© Countryside Agency - Photographer Nick Smith 02-8103

Past interaction with other types

Railways were imposed across the landscape depending on topography and cut across existing fields and field boundaries. They did, however, stimulate the growth of settlements along their length.

Evidence for time-depth

None of the areas recorded that are associated with railway infrastructure preserve traces of previous land uses.

Contribution to the present landscape character

The railways lines provide many people with key views of the AONB along the River Nadder and River Wylye.

Key Statistics

Total Area:	14.26 hectares, 0.01% of the AONB.
No. of Polygons:	This Subtype is comprised of 6 polygons, 0.13% of the total number of polygons digitised.
Av. Polygon Size:	Each polygon averages 2.37 hectares in size.
Occurrence:	Rare.
Previous Coverage:	16.78 hectares, 0.02 % of AONB was Railways at the point when this type was at its most prevalent.
Total Recorded Coverage:	The total recorded coverage of this type is 16.78 hectares, 0.02 % of the AONB.

Constituent Types

None

Parent Type

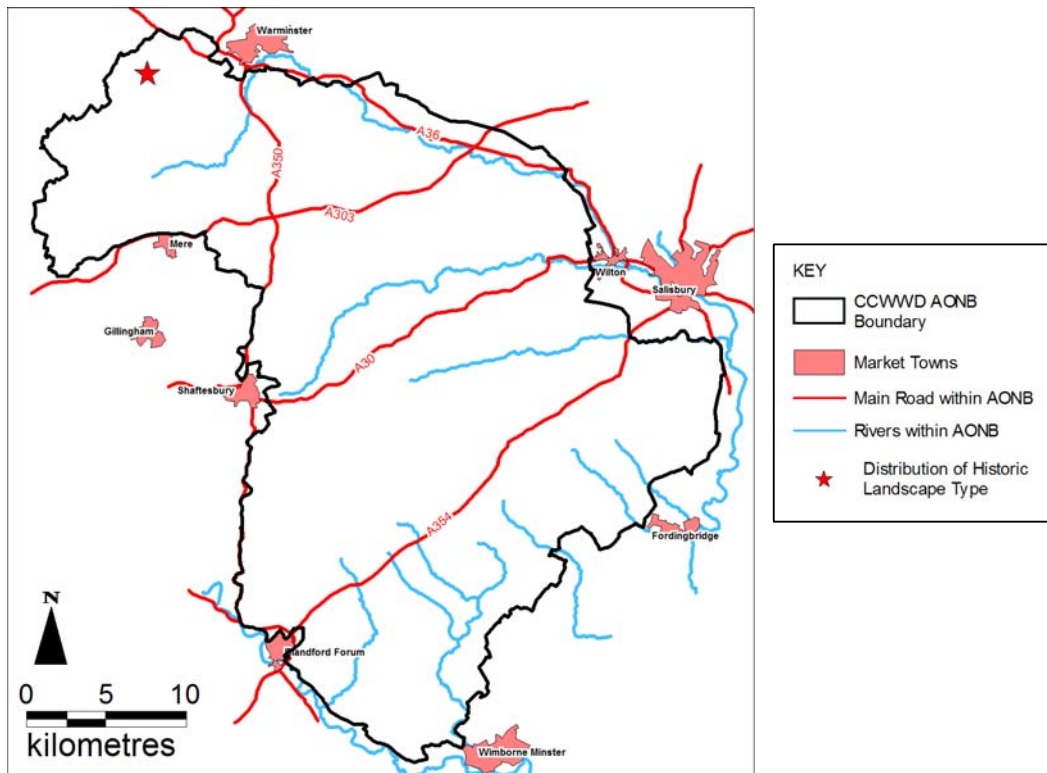
[9. Inland Communications](#)

Suggested Sources

Awdry (1990) Encyclopaedia of British Railway Companies. Patrick Stephens Ltd.

Thomas, D (1981) Regional History of the Railways of Great Britain Volume 1. The West County. David & Charles Ltd.

Type 9.3 Car Park



Introduction

Areas set aside for the parking of cars. This does not represent every car park in the AONB, just those that are large enough to be considered separately from the buildings with which they are associated.

Distribution

Only one car park has been recorded in the AONB associated with the complex of tourist attractions at Longleat Estate. This car park covers over 5 hectares of hard standing.

Principal Historical Processes

Car parks are obviously a 20th century phenomenon. The AONB as a very rural area lacks attractions or retail complexes which attract large numbers of people, which explains why only one large car park has been recorded in the AONB.

Typical Historical/Archaeological Components

Car parks are associated with large flat areas of hard standing, often associated with dedicated lighting.

Rarity

This type occurs rarely in the AONB and has a low impact on the landscape.

Survival

Dedicated car parking spaces are directly linked to people's reliance on cars to visit places on the AONB.

Degree of surviving coherence of the historic landscape components

This type would be very recognisable in the landscape; a number of smaller car parks exist in the AONB associated with other visitor attractions such as Stourhead or with settlements such as Tisbury.

Past interaction with other types

The type is associated with the tourist attractions it serves, including Longleat House, Park and Safari Park.

Evidence for time-depth

This type does not preserve traces of previous land uses.

Contribution to the present landscape character

This is the only example of a large car park recorded in the AONB and therefore has a small scale impact on landscape character.

Key Statistics

Total Area:	5.64 hectares, 0.01% of the AONB
No. of Polygons:	This Subtype is comprised of 1 polygons, 0.56% of the total number of polygons digitised.
Av. Polygon Size:	Each polygon averages 5.64 hectares in size.
Occurrence:	Rare.
Previous Coverage:	5.64 hectares, 0.01 % of AONB was Car Parks at the point when this type was at its most prevalent.
Total Recorded Coverage:	The total recorded coverage of this type is 5.64 hectares, 0.01 % of the AONB.

Constituent Types

None

Parent Type

[9. Inland Communications](#)