

**Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
Historic Routeways Characterisation
Pilot Study**



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Summary

Historic Characterisation is an archaeological method used to define and map the historic and archaeological dimension of an area, place or landscape. The aim of this pilot project is to develop a method to allow the AONB partnership to characterise the distinctive, historic dimension of the routeways of the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB. This will allow the AONB partnership to better conserve and enhance the historic, archaeological and cultural aspects of these routeways within their distinctive landscape setting.

Historic Routeway Characterisation is a relatively new concept and the AONB has undertaken this pilot study of the wooded chalk downland of the Cranborne Chase to investigate the potential of this technique for revealing information about the routeways of the AONB. This pilot complements work which has been undertaken in the Chilterns (Green and Kid 2009) and forthcoming work planned for the Hoo Peninsula in Kent (Herring 2010).

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An Introduction to Historic Routeways

When we use the term 'routeways', what we are actually describing are the routes that we use to move through the landscape. We choose to use the quickest route, the most economical in terms of resources or energy or the most picturesque. We choose to travel large distances between places and regions to access economic markets, to explore, and to visit acquaintances. As the relative importance of places and markets shift, so does the relative importance of different routes. We also use routeways to access our local surroundings. We use them to navigate the cities, towns and villages in which we live; the fields and woodlands surrounding those settlements; and to access resources such as food, fuel and raw materials. Sometimes we use routes for health to take exercise, clear our minds and to get some fresh air. We also use routeways for the transportation of goods and of animals. Our choice of route is constrained by where we have permission to go, by the topography in front of us and the condition of the routeways themselves.

The routes, therefore, that we choose to take through the landscape not only have a functional and economic component, but symbolic and aesthetic aspects as well.

These factors were the same in the past. The major shift that has occurred in the last century has been the increased dominance of the car and lorry (with a brief dominance of the railways in the century before) whereas for millennia before these journeys were undertaken on foot, on horse back, and using horse drawn transportation (water borne transportation is a less important element in the AONB than elsewhere, due to the shallow and variable flow rates on the chalk streams).

Routeways are an understudied and underappreciated component of the historic landscape. This is partly due to their linear nature. They are not easily encapsulated by the point based Historic Environment Records although their individual components may be captured. Similarly, the newer evidence base of Historic Landscape Characterisation and its 'area' approach often fails to capture the nuances of the historic network of routeways.

In modern day terms, what we are discussing in terms of the AONB are the historic character of the network of public roads, private roads and tracks, permissive access routes, footpaths, bridleways and un-metalled byways and railway lines. Plus extinct routeways which are none the less still legible in the landscape, such as the former line of Roman Roads.

The character of these routeways is defined by their surfacing, width, form, boundaries, related features (such as milestones), relationship to settlements and surrounding land, and of course their time depth (Roman Roads being transformed into droveways, turnpikes then modern highways). Historic Routeways are not only important in their own right but due also to their contribution to the wider historic character of the landscape.

Routeways are notoriously difficult to date, the origins of routeways can be traced backwards through time using modern and Historic Ordnance survey maps, enclosure maps and awards, and tithe maps. The first accurate county scale maps date to the 18th century and include Andrew's and Dury's 1773 map for Wiltshire and Bowen's 1748 map of Dorset. The process becomes increasingly time consuming tracing routes back before this point as individual historic estate and parish maps have to be consulted. The exception being Ogilby's road routes, in his Britannia Road Atlas of 1675, at least one of which crosses the AONB.

Roads, tracks and paths of early origin can begin to be identified by using a combination of evidence including:

- Parish and estate maps
- References to Saxon Charters
- The relationship to historic boundaries such as county and parish boundaries
- Relationship to archaeological features.

This is however an expensive and time consuming process.

Historic Routeways in the AONB: An Introduction

There are over 1500 km² of rights of way in the AONB and the majority of these routeways are shown on the earliest available maps and are of some antiquity.

There main characteristics are: -

- Long distance routes which tend to run east west across the AONB. These follow sinuous routes following local topography and include modern roads as well as ancient drove ways now constituting unpaved byways.
- There is only one major north-south route through the AONB on its western side, the A350; this is accompanied in the southern half of the AONB between Blandford Forum and Shaftesbury by a parallel minor road which follows the top of the escarpment.
- The imposition of major modern highway structure is minimal and is restricted to the route of the A350 and A303
- The majority of roads are minor, often twisted and narrow, with steep inclines when they climb onto the downland. With the exception of downland areas they are often hedged.
- Many of the bridleways, footpaths and tracks are associated with green lanes and sunken Holloways. This is especially the case through the Vale of Wardour where there is a dense network of irregular footpaths.
- The only planned network of straight roads, paths and tracks corresponds to the line of former Roman Roads
- Sinuous networks of roads, tracks and paths run through the bottoms of the Chalk Valleys of the AONB. They are often associated with fords and medieval bridges. These contrast with the straighter systems of perpendicular tracks, bridleways and sometimes road which connect the valley bottoms to the downland above. These often connect with the long distance drove ways. They can be sunken and often associated with earthworks of alternative routes created by the movement of people and animals when these routes were in greater use and tended to become eroded.
- Paths and tracks across the downland tend to be straighter and longer. These often represent the survival of one main route, of a series of former tracks which snaked unrestrained across the downland but leading to the same destination. These would have gone out of use when the downland was enclosed, the surviving route often following the edge of field boundaries.
- The same pattern can often be observed in areas of former common land in the AONB where the surviving right of way but represents one of many former closely related tracks crossing the common land. These often funnel into access points in adjoining land especially Woodland. This is especially true of the Wooded Chalk Downland.

See *Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs Historic Environment Action Plans Theme 10: Routeways in the Landscape (Rouse 2010a)* for more information

Introducing the Historic Routeways Characterisation

Background to Historic Routeways Characterisation

The fact that routeways are an understudied and underappreciated component of the historic landscape is partly due to their complexity. Any study of a stretch of routeway can very easily become very detailed. Herring (2010) has outlined the components that an analysis of an individual routeway might reasonably encompass: -

- Recording and describing its present form
- Study of material clues to earlier forms
- Analysis of former functions and relationships with other routeways and features
- Establishment of origins and sequence of subsequent changes
- Recording and analysing the politic, social, economic, and spiritual components of a routeway and its significance.

It is however unrealistic to undertake such detailed study of all routeways over the entire 981 square kilometres of the AONB. In addition the amount of detailed material created during such an endeavour would be such to hamper overview and synthesis. In order to counteract these problems several pilots (Green and Kidd 2009; Herring 2010) have sought to develop methods derived from historic landscape characterisation which allow a network of routeways to be rapidly characterised and which also allow the rapid creation of a framework of historic and landscape understanding.

If this framework of understanding is to be successful there is a requirement that any method adopted considers all routeways, and is able to recognise that a routeway may change its status, function or alignment through time.

Any historic characterisation of routeways must therefore encompass the dual themes of present day historic landscape character and chronology or time depth.

In order for the methodology to be rapid it must rely on evidence bases which can be quickly and easily consulted and which cover the whole area under discussion. This means that the primary evidence used is likely to be either secondary historical sources, such as studies of drove roads in a region, or mapped based and in digital form, such as the 6 inch historical ordnance survey maps. It is unlikely that any method will be able to consult more detailed sources such as parish and estate maps.

This means that the approaches which the new historic routeway characterisation are adopting focus less on the origin of a particular road, track and path and more on its form, function, relative chronology and interconnections.

Historic routeways characterisation, as a concept, is based on several key principles derived from historic landscape characterisation (Clark et.al. 2004). These are:

- Present not past: it is present-day routeways that are the main object of Study

- Routeways as history not geography: the most important characteristic of a routeway is its time-depth; change and earlier routeways exist in the present landscape
- All aspects of routeways, no matter how modern, are treated as part of overall routeway character, not just 'special' areas
- Characterisation of routeways is a matter of interpretation not record, perception not facts; understand 'routeway' as an idea, not purely as an objective thing
- Routeways are and always have been dynamic: management of change, not preservation is the aim
- The process of characterisation should be transparent, with clearly articulated records of data sources and methods used
- Historic routeway maps and text should be easy to understand, jargon free and easily accessible to users

Background to the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB work on historic landscape character and historic routeways

In 2008 the AONB completed a Historic Landscape Characterisation of the AONB landscape. Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) is an archaeological method used to define and map the historic and archaeological dimension of the present day landscape. The aim of the project was to characterise the distinctive, historic dimension of today's environment and will allowed the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty to better conserve and enhance the historic, archaeological and cultural features within their distinctive landscape setting (Rouse 2008). Although this dataset and report looked at the theme of communication in the landscape, it mostly failed to engage with the character of routeways due to their linear nature which is not easily picked up in the 'area' based approach used in Historic Landscape Characterisation methodology.

This failure was partly addressed by the creation of Historic Environment Action Plans for the AONB Landscape, funded by English Heritage, between 2009 and 2010. 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 identified 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

Each area statement includes a section on historic routeways which describe their key characteristics across twelve geographically distinct historic landscape character areas (Rouse 2010b; 2010c). This was accompanied by a theme statement describing the key historic characteristics of routeways across the AONB as a whole (Rouse 2010a).

In addition the AONB has also focused its attention on demonstrating how the AONB wide Historic Landscape Characterisation and Historic Environment Action Plans can be used to provide a deeper understanding of the archaeological and historical aspects of rural roads across the landscape of the AONB. It therefore completed an appraisal of the historic and archaeological characteristics of the B3081. The B3081 is a rural road running across the AONB between Shaftesbury and Sixpenny Handley. This study included description and mapping of the historic characteristics

of the routeway itself and the characteristics of the wider historic landscape in which it sits (Rouse 2010d).

These documents were however based on available information and comprehensive information on the morphology, function and chronology for every routeway in the AONB remained lacking.

The Historic Environment Action Plan project officer therefore decided to undertake a pilot study of part of the AONB landscape to see if the newly emerging Historic Routeways Characterisation methodologies could be used to provide this additional information in a rapid and cost effective manner.

Introduction to the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs Historic Routeways Characterisation Pilot Study

The AONB has undertaken a pilot historic routeway characterisation covering approximately 100 square kilometres of the AONB. This area was chosen due to the density of routeways present, the fact that a historic study of one road in the area had already been undertaken (Rouse 2010d) and that the area encompassed the proposed area of Landscape Partnership area bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund.

The study aimed to characterise all present day routeways in this landscape including roads, tracks, and paths as well as extinct routeways which still have an impact on the historic character of the area, for example the former line of Roman Roads which can still be traced in the landscape.

The Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs Historic Routeways Characterisation identified the following components of each routeway in the pilot area:

- Length
- Morphology
- Modern Character
- Character between AD 1700 and 1900
- Character previous to AD 1700

The Pilot Study Area and its Characteristics

Introducing the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB

The Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty is a landscape of national significance. The AONB covers an area of 983 square kilometres, and falls within four counties: Dorset, Hampshire, Somerset and Wiltshire. It forms part of the extensive belt of chalkland which stretches across southern England and abuts the Dorset AONB.

The Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs was designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) in 1981 and confirmed in October 1983 under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. It is clear from the Act, subsequent government sponsored reports, and the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 that natural beauty includes wildlife, scientific, and cultural heritage. It is also recognised that in relation to their landscape characteristics and quality, National

Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty are equally important aspects of the nation's heritage and environmental capital. The primary purpose of the AONB is to conserve and enhance natural beauty.

The AONB covers the administration areas of nine Local Authorities: three county councils – Dorset, Hampshire, Somerset; and five district councils – East Dorset, North Dorset, New Forest, Mendip and South Somerset; and one unitary authority – Wiltshire.

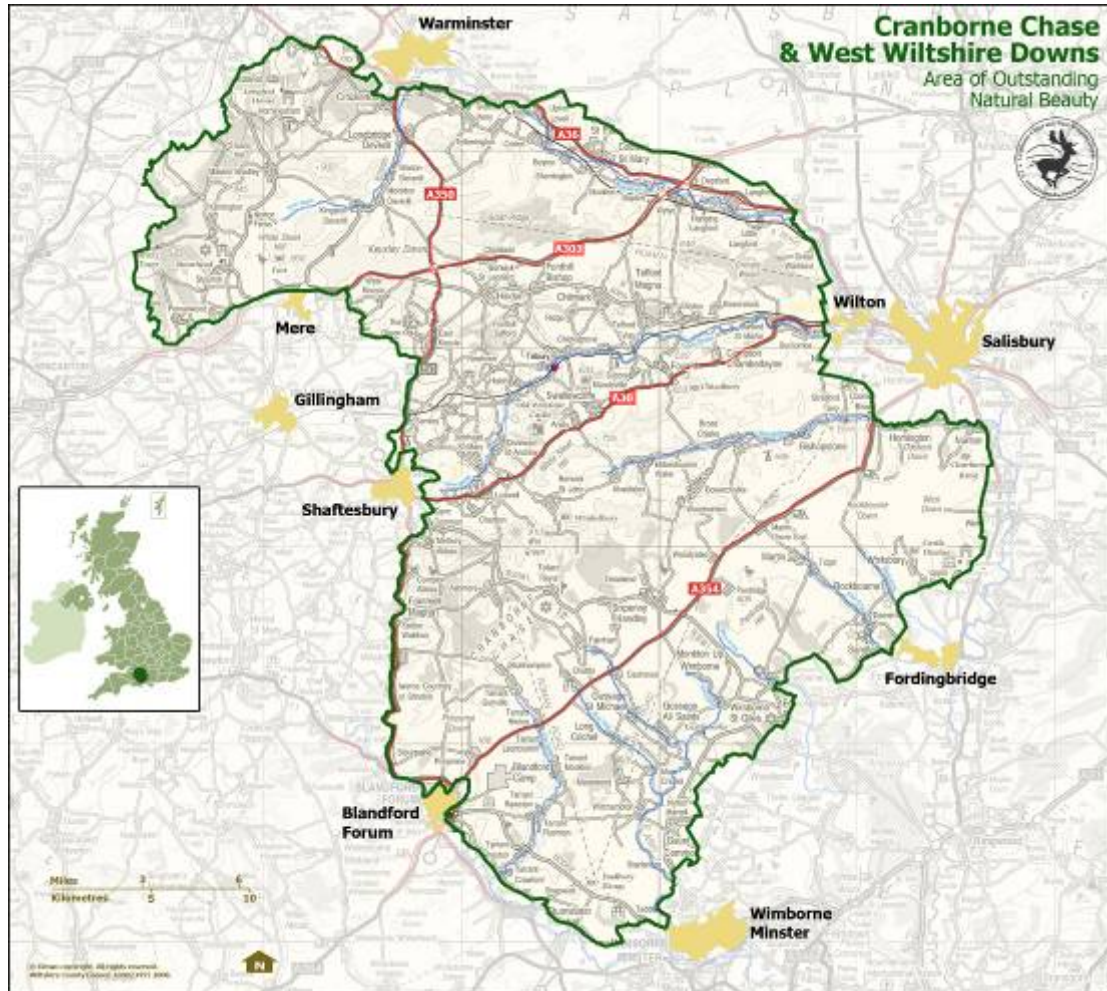


Figure One: Location of the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB

Location of the Pilot Area

The pilot area chosen cover approximately 100 square kilometres. The area forms a triangle between the market towns of Shaftesbury and Blandford Forum at the Northern and southern tips respectively and the A354 near Knighton Wood at the Eastern tip. Larger villages contained within the area include Tollard Royal, Ashmore, Iwerne Minster and Melbury Abbas.

The area straddles the Dorset, Hampshire and Wiltshire border. Local Authorities encompassed by the area are the unitary authority of Wiltshire Council, North Dorset District Council and Dorset County Council and a small area of Hampshire County Council and New Forest District Council. The area is entirely within the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

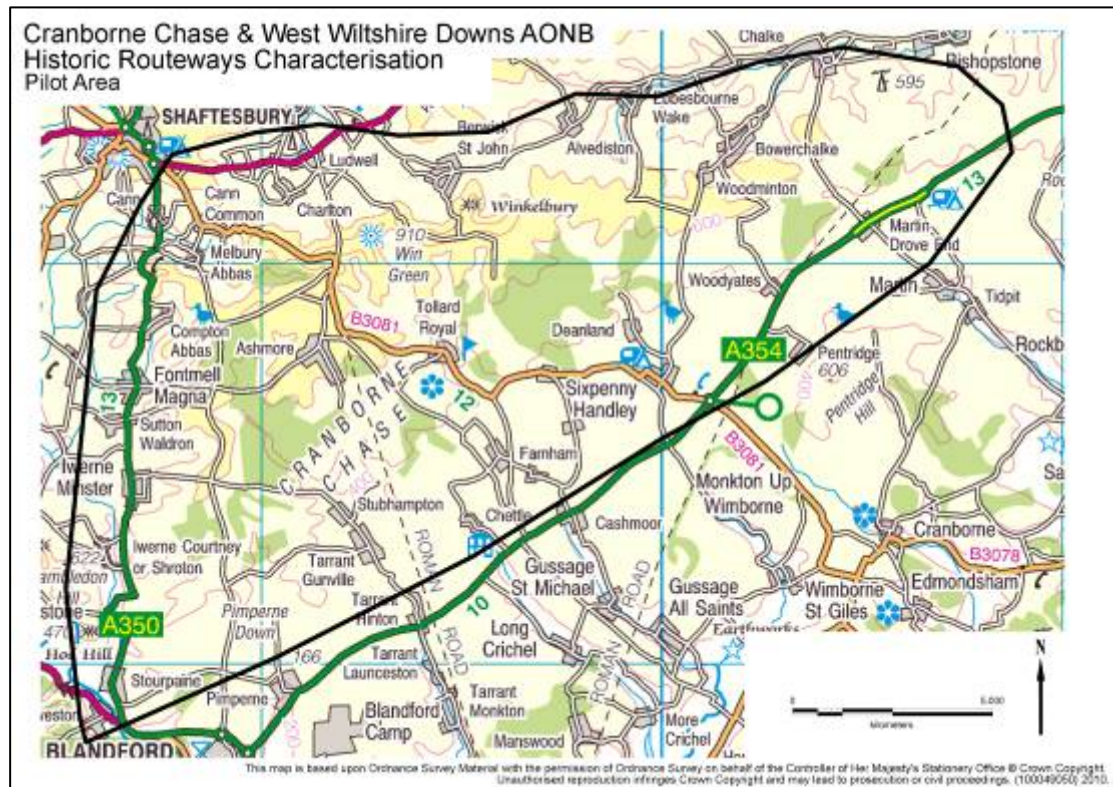


Figure Two: Location of the Historic Routeways Characterisation Pilot Study Area

Landscape Character of the Pilot Area

The pilot area is comprised of two distinct but interrelated landscape character areas (Land Use Consultants 2003). The first which covers the majority of this landscape is the Cranborne Chase Wooded Chalk Downland Character Area (3A). This is one of the most remarkable landscapes of the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB due to its strong landscape character, wealth of historic features, rich archaeological heritage, high biodiversity and range of cultural interests. It is distinguished by its woodland cover. It forms a downland mosaic of woodland, grassland and arable land that wraps around the steeply undulating landscape of upstanding chalk ridges and deeply incised combes. The chalk grassland and extensive ancient woodland provide important nature conservation habitats.

The chalk escarpments and ridges to the north and west of the Wooded Chalk Downland form the second Landscape Character Area (1A and 1C). These mark a sharp transition between the chalk and adjoining geology outside the pilot area. These are amongst the most dramatic elements of this chalk landscape. They are large scale landscapes where repeating patterns of rounded spurs and deep combes cast strong shadows in strong sunlight. The crucial interrelationship of these two landscape character areas is demonstrated by the pattern of ancient parish boundaries which form thin slices across the landscape incorporating wooded downland, open downland and escarpment. Hanging woodland and sunken lanes are also features of the steep, enclosing chalk combes.

Within the area, settlements are located mainly at the foot of the scarp – being sited along the springline and dip slope stream valleys. On the downland itself, there is typically low density, scattered settlement of individual farmsteads with the occasional downland village, hamlet or medieval hunting lodge. Nevertheless there are the central settlements of Tollard Royal and Ashmore; the latter on very high ground grouped around the ancient pond and the former in a steep sided valley within the chalk. The buildings below the western scarp are more domestic in scale although there are, of course, a few more substantial ones associated with the manor or leading tenant farmers, or linked with the church. In the wooded downland the farmsteads are more extensive living and working buildings whilst the workers' cottages are fairly basic but with quite large gardens for vegetable production.

One of the most distinguishing landscape feature of the Chase remains its woodland cover which is present in the form of large woods, shelter belts, copses and clumps creating a series of enclosed spaces or 'rooms' surrounded by trees. One of the largest blocks of semi-natural broadleaved woodland in Southern England is found here. For centuries these were the focus of underwood trades such as charcoal burning and hurdle making.

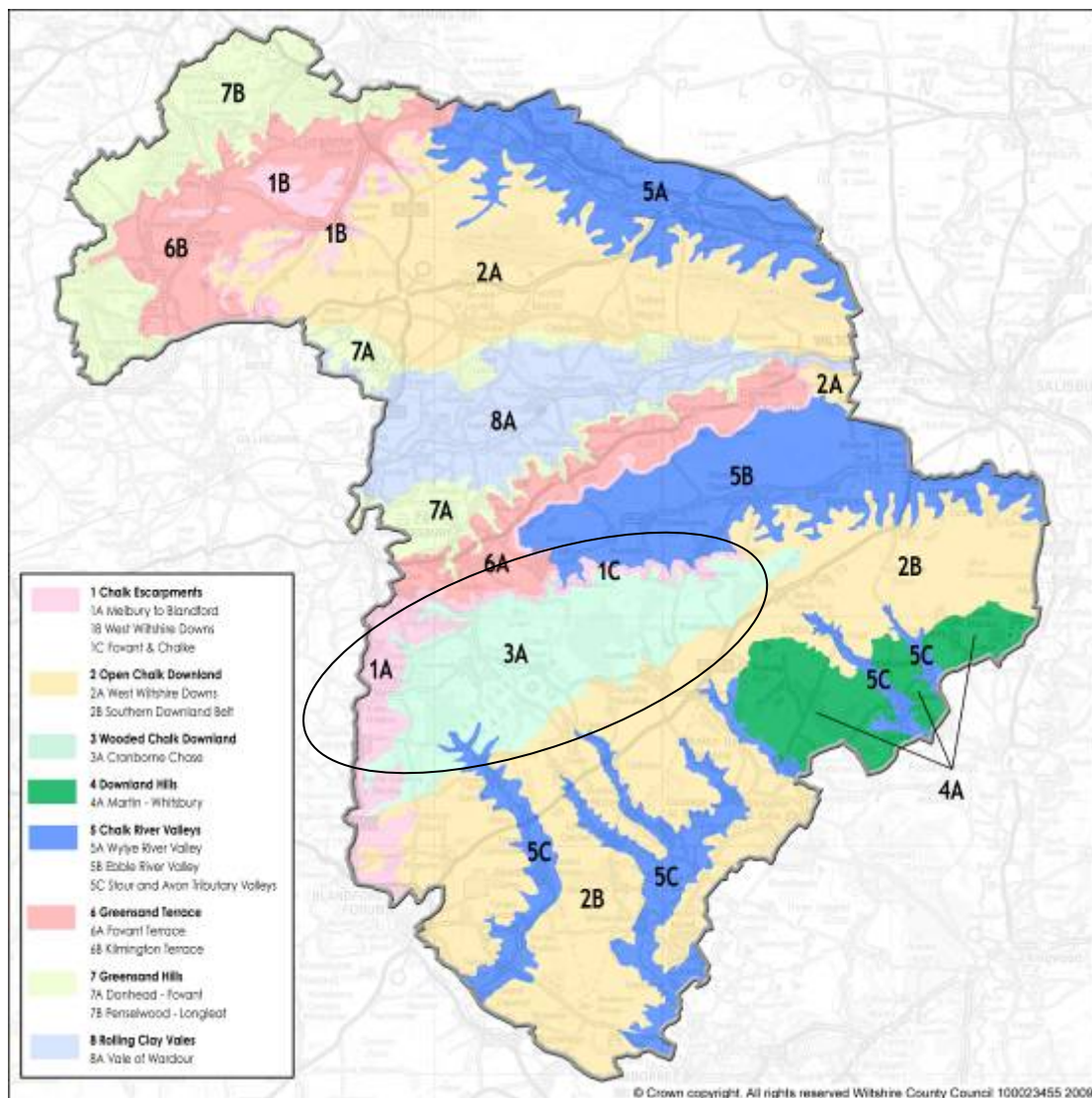


Figure Three: AONB Landscape Character Assessment with the pilot area marked

Key Historic Characteristics of the Area

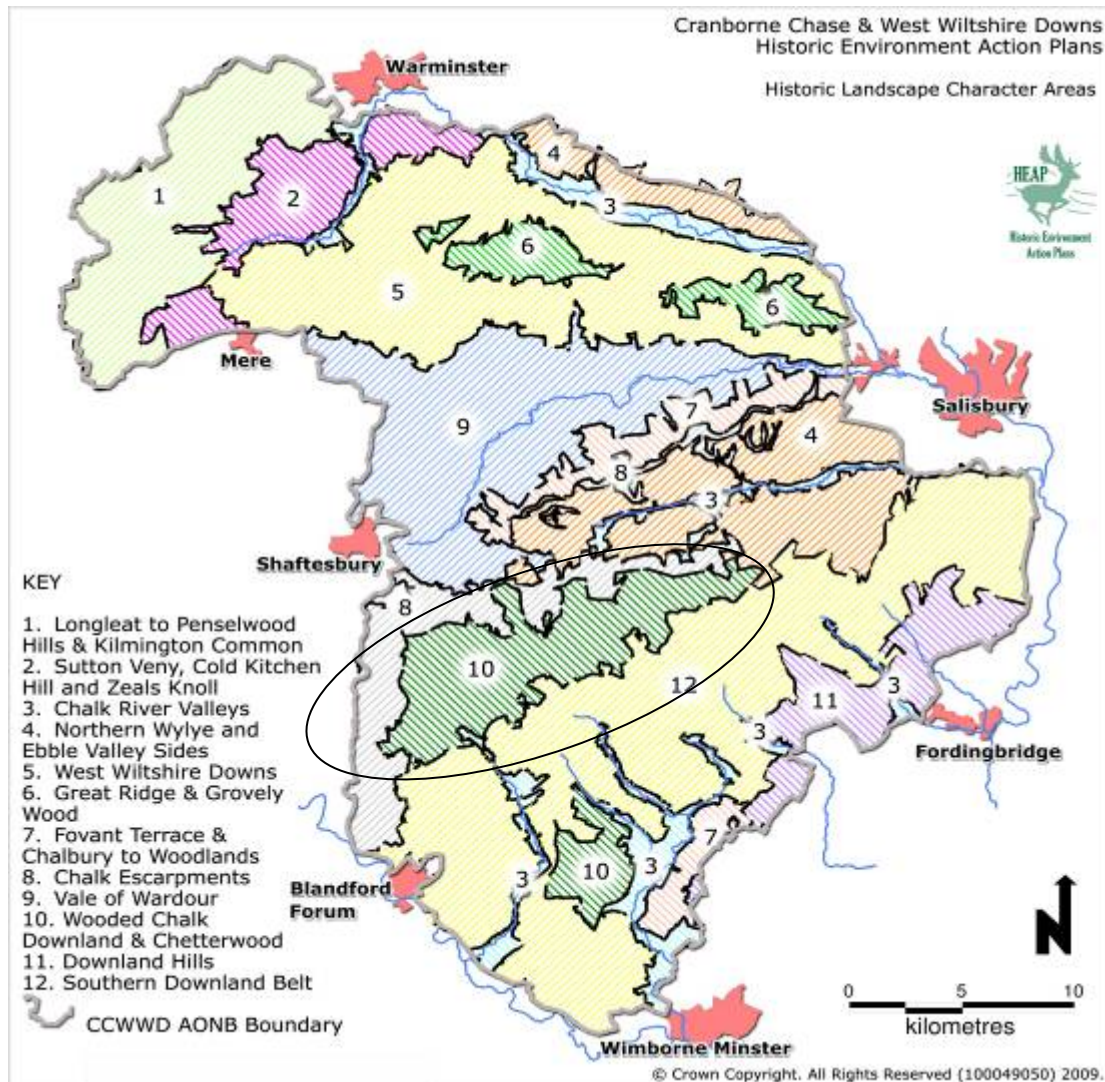


Figure Four: Historic Landscape Character Areas with pilot area marked

The pilot area is comprised of two distinct but interrelated historic landscape character areas (Rouse 2010b; 2010c). The first which covers the majority of this landscape is Area 10 Cranborne Chase Wooded Chalk Downland. This is comprised of the following key characteristics: -

- The Cranborne Chase wooded chalk downland forms the inner boundary of the Cranborne Chase hunting area, which was divided into a series of walks. Chetterwood is an outlying 'walk'. There is a strong discernable landscape legacy from this history.
- The area HAS veteran woodland at its core and is associated with ancient assarts and enclosures.
- Roman roads cross the area, and there is an ancient network of historic routeways.
- There are remnants of open downland in the north of area.
- The ancient shire boundary (Wiltshire and Dorset) crosses the area.
- The area is associated with nationally important designed landscapes.

- The Chase is also firmly associated with the legacy of the archaeologist Pitt Rivers.
- There is a coherent pattern of ownership through the centuries
- There is a low density pattern of scattered individual farmsteads and nucleated settlements
- There is a high density of upstanding and known buried archaeological remains including prehistoric sites

The chalk escarpments and ridges to the north and west of the Wooded Chalk Downland form the second Historic Landscape Character Area 8: Chalk Escarpments. The key historic and archaeological features of this area are:

- A notable feature is their steep sloping topography. They are primarily formed of semi-enclosed chalk grassland.
- The Melbury to Blandford escarpments is less steep in some locations and is wider and demonstrates a greater range of historic landscape types.
- The north-south escarpment is sparsely settled. The settlement focus is along the lower undulating slopes of the escarpment and forms a series of nucleated pre 1800 settlements.
- Veteran woodland is located within the combes of the escarpment and plantations are often situated along their crests.
- Ancient routeways run across the edge of the escarpments. These are connected to the wider landscape by parallel droveways and bridleways.
- The known archaeological record is dominated by prehistoric archaeology including Bronze Age round barrows and Iron Age hillforts.

Historic Landscape Character of the Pilot Area

The present day historic landscape is characterised by a landscape of veteran woodland interspersed with ancient enclosure and assarts, the remnants of formerly great swathes of open grazed downland and semi enclosed escarpments and the more recent imposition of 19th Century enclosure on former common land and rough grazing (Rouse 2008). There is a juxtapositioning of somewhat fragmented areas of unimproved chalk grassland, ancient woodland and important remnants of a historic landscape that has disappeared elsewhere.

The area is also within the inner bounds of the Cranborne Chase which was not disenfranchised until 1829, the impact of the special laws which gave the Lord of the Chase control over all aspects of the landscapes management has been immeasurable. This is combined with the fact that the historic borderland, where the ancient shire boundaries of Dorset, Hampshire and Wiltshire coincide runs through the centre of the area. These two factors has led to the survival of a wealth of archaeological sites including important Prehistoric, Roman and Saxon features, and key habitats, noticeably ancient woodland and lowland calcareous grassland. Evidence of the Medieval royal hunting grounds survive as park pale, wood banks, place name evidence, deer parks and in the large areas of surviving managed woodland. The forest included the villages of Tollard Royal where King John stayed when he hunted on the Chase, and Ashmore, thought to be the only village in Dorset dating to pre Roman times. The fact that the special laws which governed activity in the Chase, were not dissolved until 1829, has also preserved many traces of special Medieval and Post Medieval activity in the landscape including Medieval Deer Parks, and later Landscape Parks such as Rushmore.

There are therefore a number of important designed historic landscapes and nationally registered parklands within, and adjoining, the area including Stepleton, Larmer Tree Gardens, and Rushmore Park. The influence of the Chase is also reflected in the presence of deer parks, either still readable in this palimpsest or in place names, such as 'Park Farm', 'Park Cottage', and 'Keeper's Lodge'.

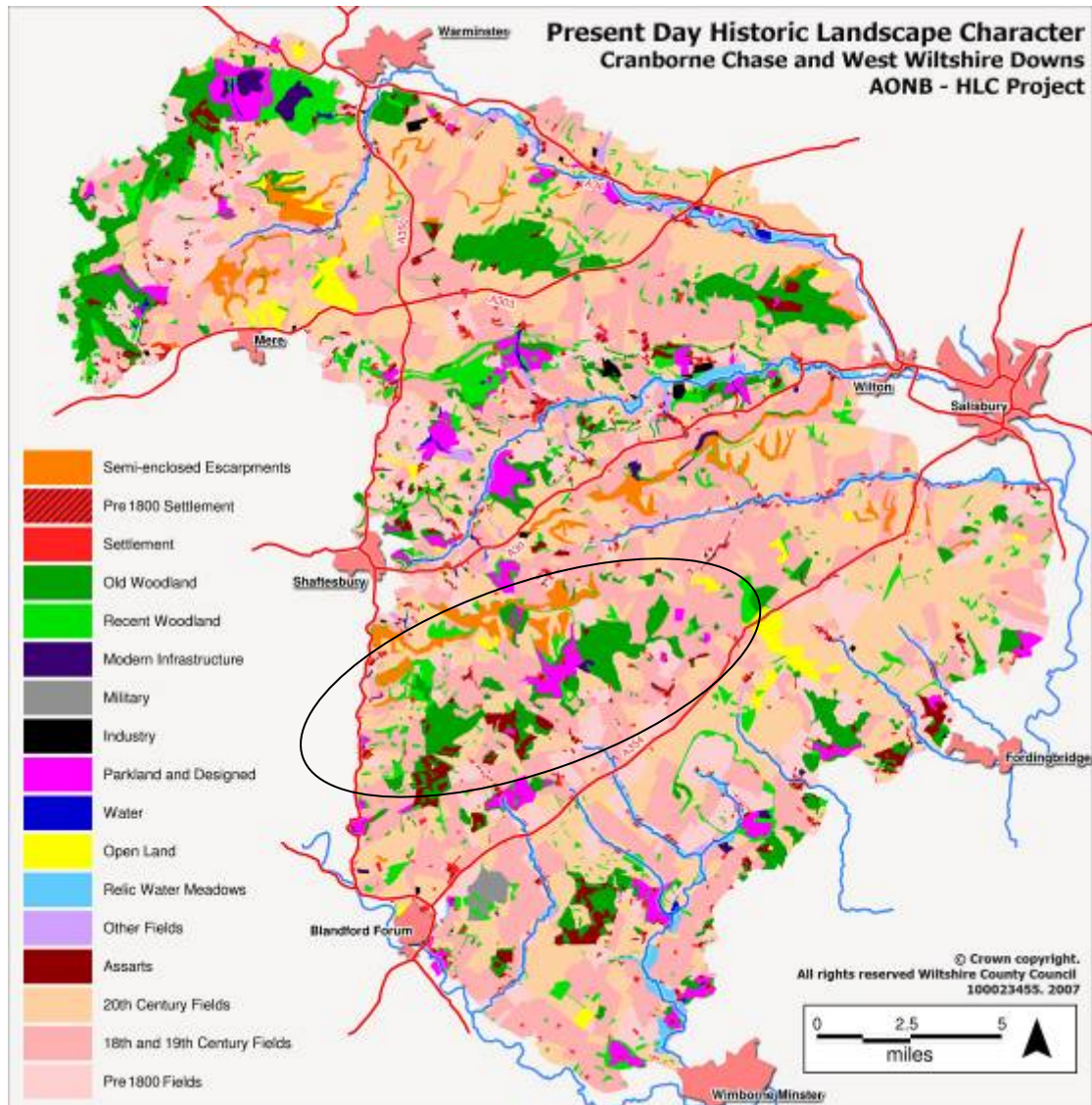


Figure Five: Historic Landscape Character Areas with plot area marked

Character of the Routeways in the Area

The pattern and diversity of Rights of Way within the area is one of the landscapes most important and distinctive features and is fundamental to the character of the area. Many of the Rights of Way are of immense historic importance, originating as long distance routes across the upstanding freely draining chalk. This includes the Ox Drove which runs along the northern edge of the area, an ancient Drove way with at least Saxon origins. There are also significant areas of open access land on the chalk downland. The elevated nature of this landscape ultimately offers a number of breathtaking viewpoints – Win Green for example which, on a clear day, offers views to the coastline and Isle of Wight.

Historic Character of the Routeways in the Area

- The area is associated with an irregular system of north south routeways. These funnel into key access routes, or pinch points, into the chase woodlands. These are at least Saxon in origin providing key crossing points on the shire boundary and are associated with indicative place names such as Bloody Shard Gate. This pattern has been infilled by modern permissive paths and Rights of Way along the county boundary and older 19th century enclosure roads running east west. The woods are crisscrossed by a network of more recent forestry tracks
- There wooded chalk downland has only 3 north south roads across the area.
- A Roman Road runs north-east to south-west along the SE boundary of the area but it is only legible in the northern half of the area area.
- The area is crossed by a north-south turnpike but no milestones are known to be associated with this route.
- The area is bounded to the north by the ancient droveway known as the Ox Drove.
- The Melbury to Winkelbury escarpment also has an ancient droveway along its length – the Ox Drove. This is joined at right angles by footpaths and bridleways from the clay vale to the north, and paths leading into the wooded downland of the heart of the Chase to the south.
- In contrast the north south Melbury to Blandford escarpment is bounded by two modern roads, both former turnpikes, running between Blandford and Salisbury. One on the higher ground to the east and one on the valley floor to the south. These are joined by east west parallel roads, tracks and footpaths. These are much more numerous than on the other escarpments.

See Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs Historic Environment Action Plans Area 8: Chalk Escarpments and Area 10: Wooded Chalk Downland and Chetterwood (Rouse 2010b; 2010c).

Information Sources

The primary sources used for the pilot historic routeways characterisation were:

- **Modern Map Sources**

- MasterMap 2010**

- The Ordnance Survey MasterMap provides the base map to which all others are compared, when used in conjunction with Aerial Photographs it provides information on the morphology of the routeway.

- Rectified Vertical Aerial Photographs**

- Coverage: All*

- These are used in conjunction with the OS MasterMap and provide additional detail on land use and land cover.

- Ordnance Survey 1:25000 (paper only)**

- Coverage: All*

- These were used as a visual check during the project to provide overview as the detail on MasterMap was scrutinized.

- GIS dataset of Definitive Map of Rights of Way**

- Coverge: All*

These were used to identify the modern function of each routeway

- **Historic Map Sources**

There are four series of historic Ordnance Survey 6" maps available to this project as digital datasets scanning the year 1840 to 1940. The primary source used was this project was the original **First County Survey Maps 1843-1893 (6":1 mile maps)**.

**Ordnance Survey 2" Surveyor's Draft
(1800 – 1820)**

Coverage: All

These were available on CD-ROM and provide the most detailed scale map of the AONB from this period. The accuracy and the level of detail depicted vary between each map, as they were created by different surveyors. Five maps cover the AONB; these are centred on Warminster, Frome, Shaftesbury, Berwick St John, and Cranborne respectively.

**Historic County Maps
(Approx 1750 -1840)**

Coverage: All

These date from the early 18th Century to the mid 19th Century. The most important are as follows: -

Andrew's and Dury's 1773 Map of Wiltshire

Bowen 1748 Map of County of Dorset

Smith 1801 Map of County of Dorset Divided into Hundreds and Liberties

Taylor 1759 – Map of Hampshire

Milne 1791 – Map of Hampshire

Christopher Greenwood – Map of Hampshire 1826

- **Secondary Sources**

There are a series of useful secondary written sources available including overviews of toll roads in the AONB and droveways.

The GIS Mastermap dataset was used as the template from which each routeway was traced.

Methodology

The creation of the dataset for the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB pilot Historic Routeways Characterisation was undertaken using MapInfo 10.5 GIS and with reference to key electronic and digital datasets (see above).

Stage One: Identification of Routeway Segments

The first step in creating the dataset was to split the historic network of routeways into a series of individual segments with shared characteristics. Each segment had to retain the following characteristics along its length:

- Morphology
- Present day character e.g. bridleway, minor road

- Historic Landscape Character – each segment must share the same layered history of historic evolution.

This meant that:

- If a routeway stopped being straight and become sinuous it was recorded as two separate segments.
- If a routeway stopped being a footpath and become as bridleway it was recorded as two separate segments.
- If a routeway changed historic character along its length it was recorded as two separate segments.

The segments identified were digitised from the MasterMap data.

Stage Two: Recording of Attributes

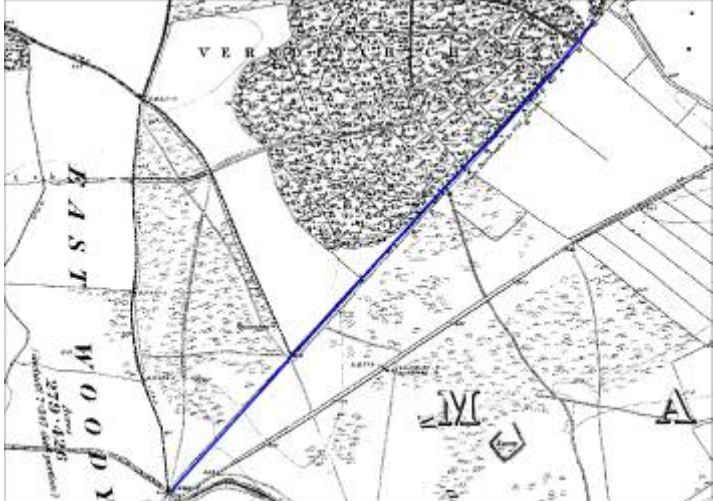
Each of the segments was associated with a field in a data table internal to the GIS system.

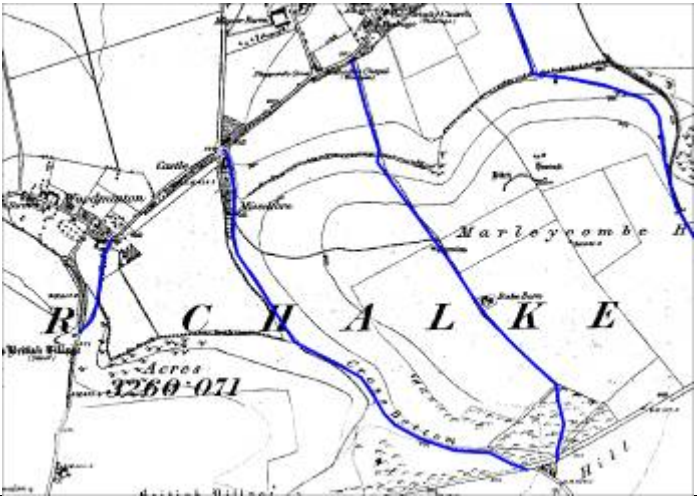
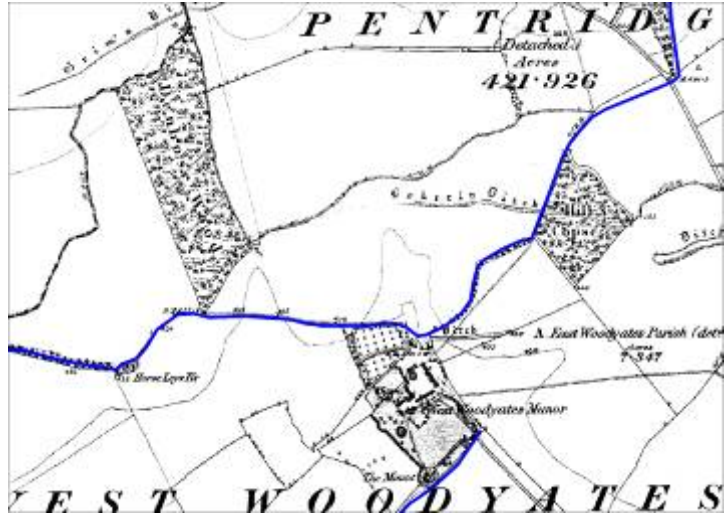

The next stage was to record relevant data for each routeway segment:

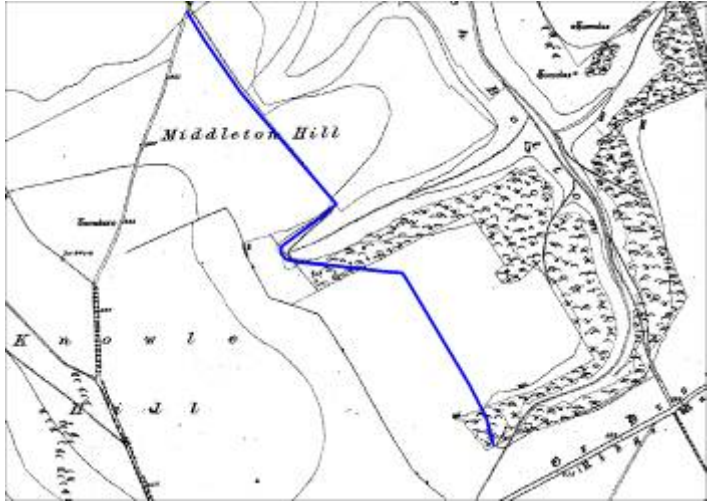

- Identification Number – The unique number for each segment
- Digitiser – the identity of the individual creating the segment
- Date – The date on which the segment was created
- Length – Length of segment in kilometres
- Notes – Free text box for any observations about the routeway

Stage Three: Identifying Routeway Morphology

The segment was allocated to one of seven day linear morphological types

Linear Morphology	Example
<p><u>Straight</u></p> <p>Ruler Straight Roads which generally indicate planning</p>	

Linear Morphology	Example
<p><u>Sinuuous</u></p> <p>Intermediate between straight and winding. Following a certain direction but are not rular straight, containing minor and slightly curving bends.</p>	
<p><u>Winding</u></p> <p>Routeways that twist and turn to conform to topography and other features. May indicate a long established route.</p>	
<p><u>Curving</u></p> <p>Routeways that arc in a curve in a more or less regular fashion</p>	

Linear Morphology	Example
<p><u>Zig-Zag</u></p> <p>Routeways with a series of fairly straight segments with abrupt change in direction. Often following the edges of rectangular fields.</p>	
<p><u>Sinuuous Zig-Zag</u></p> <p>Routeways with a series of sinuous segments with abrupt change in direction. Often following the edges of semi-irregular fields.</p>	

Stage Four: Identifying the Present Day Character of a Routeway

The next step was to identify the present day character of the routeway by assigning each segment to one of seven modern character types

Present Day Type	Description
Major Road	A tarmaced public road classified as an A, would also include dual carriageways and motorways though there are none in the pilot area.
Minor Road	A tarmaced public road classified as a minor road.

Present Day Type	Description
Byway	A public byway including both restricted byways and those open to all traffic. These tend to be chalk tracks in the AONB.
Bridleway	A public bridleway
Footpath	A public footpath
Permissive Path	A path where permissive access has been granted by the landowner
Track	A private track or road, both surfaced and unsurfaced. Commonly in the AONB these form agricultural access roads, forestry tracks or private roads giving access to properties.
Does Not Exist	Assigned where the segment of routeway is not in use in the present day.

In addition the segment was also assigned one of two options which indicated its present day function.

Present Day Function	Description
National	Where the segment of routeway forms part of a wider route across the landscape connecting villages with towns and cities or provides a purposefully created route across the area. This includes main roads and national paths.
Local	Where the segment provides access between places locally.

Stage Five: Identifying the Historic Character of the Routeway

The next step was to identify the historic character of each segment of routeway. A historic landscape type was assigned to each segment for two time periods:

- AD 1700 to 1900
- Pre AD 1700

Obviously some historic routeway types are only relevant to one time period.

Historic Routeway Type	Description	Pre 1700	AD 1750-1900
Downland Track	Routeway across formerly open chalk downland often several sinuous tracks exist alongside each other in ribbon like form.	Yes	Yes
Droveyway	Pre modern routes long distance routes running across the landscape often following local topography on the edge of escarpments.	Yes	Yes
Enclosure Road	Surveyed roads created during the period of parliamentary enclosure in the 18 th and 19 th century, in the case of the pilot area representing where open common downland was enclosed by act of parliament.	No	Yes
Ornamental Drive	Planned roads or drives through historic parks, gardens and designed landscapes.	No	Yes
Field Track	Track providing access to fields often leading from a particular settlement, does not form part of a wider network.	Yes	Yes
Historic Access Road	Access road to property built before 1900	Yes	Yes
Historic Highway	Arterial roads pre 20 th century including medieval highways and regional routes.	No	Yes
Irregular Network	A network of tracks within woodland	Yes	Yes
Open Common Land Track	Originating as a road across an open common.	Yes	Yes
Railway	Line of railway in the case of the pilot area denotes disused line.	No	Yes

Historic Routeway Type	Description	Pre 1700	AD 1750-1900
Toll Road	Road which was turnpiked in the 18 th and 19 th centuries	No	Yes
Access Track to Droveaway	Linear and sinuous tracks perpendicular to droveaway, providing access to droveaway from downland and from lower ground in the chalk valleys.	Yes	Yes
Village Road	Road within a historic settlement	Yes	Yes
Woodland Access	Track providing access to fields often leading from a particular settlement, does not form part of a wider network.	No	Yes
Does Not Exist	Used where a routeway was not in use in a particular period	Yes	Yes
Unknown	Used where the function of a routeway before AD 1700 can not be easily determined.	Yes	No
Roman Road	Line of former roman road which can still be 'read' in the landscape	Yes	No

The Historic Character of the Routeways of the pilot study: Some initial observations

Routeways Overview

In total the pilot study characterised 325 kilometres of routeway across 100 square kilometres or approximately 10% of the AONB. The information was captured in approximately three days suggesting that the methodology will allow all the routeways of the AONB to be characterised within a reasonable timeframe. Even without further analysis mapping the routeways revealed strong patterns of routes including the distinctive pattern of east west and north south sinuous long distance routes on the western and northern edge of the area joined by perpendicular roads. The pattern of routeways in the centre of the area is denser and less easy to decipher.

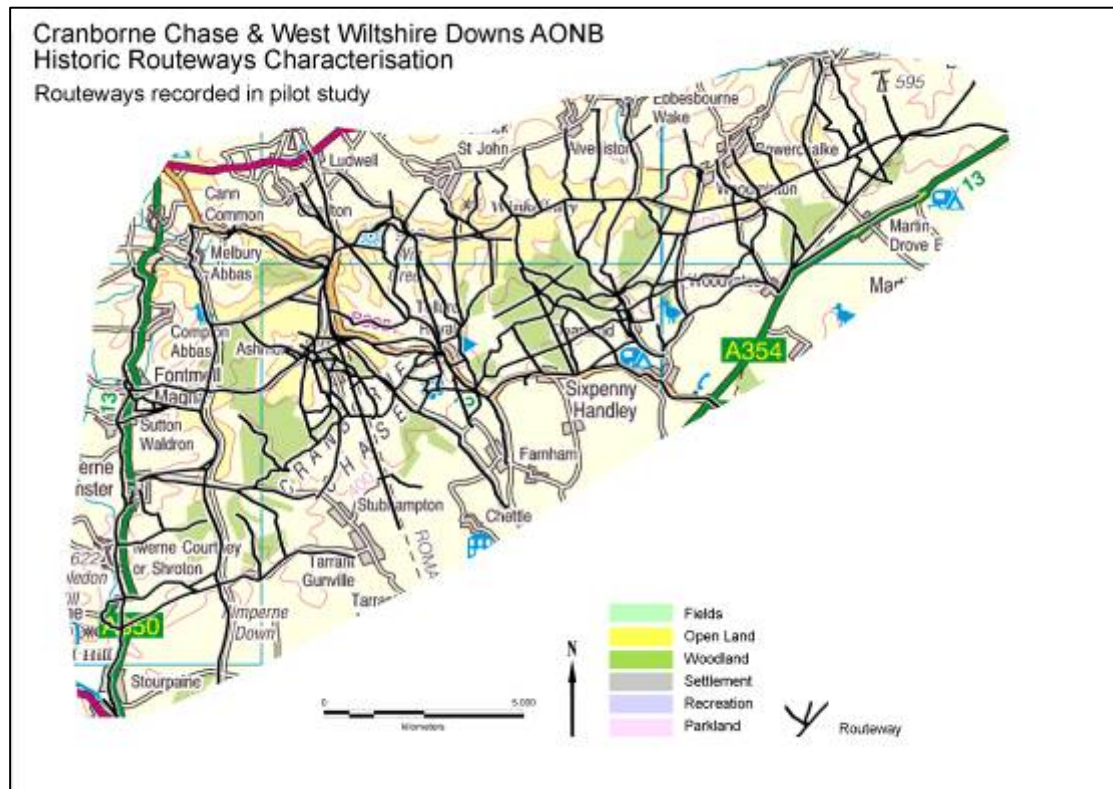


Figure Six: Routeways recorded in pilot study

Routeways Morphology

There are distinctive trends in the morphology of routeways in the pilot area. Long distance routes and the routes which feed into them tend to be sinuous or winding. Curving routes are rarer and seem to be influenced by topography or land use, for example the curving routeway which bends around the edge of Stonedown Wood. Straight routeways are associated with the former line of Roman roads, parliamentary enclosure roads and drives created through the Chase Woodlands in the 19th century by the Rushmore Estate.

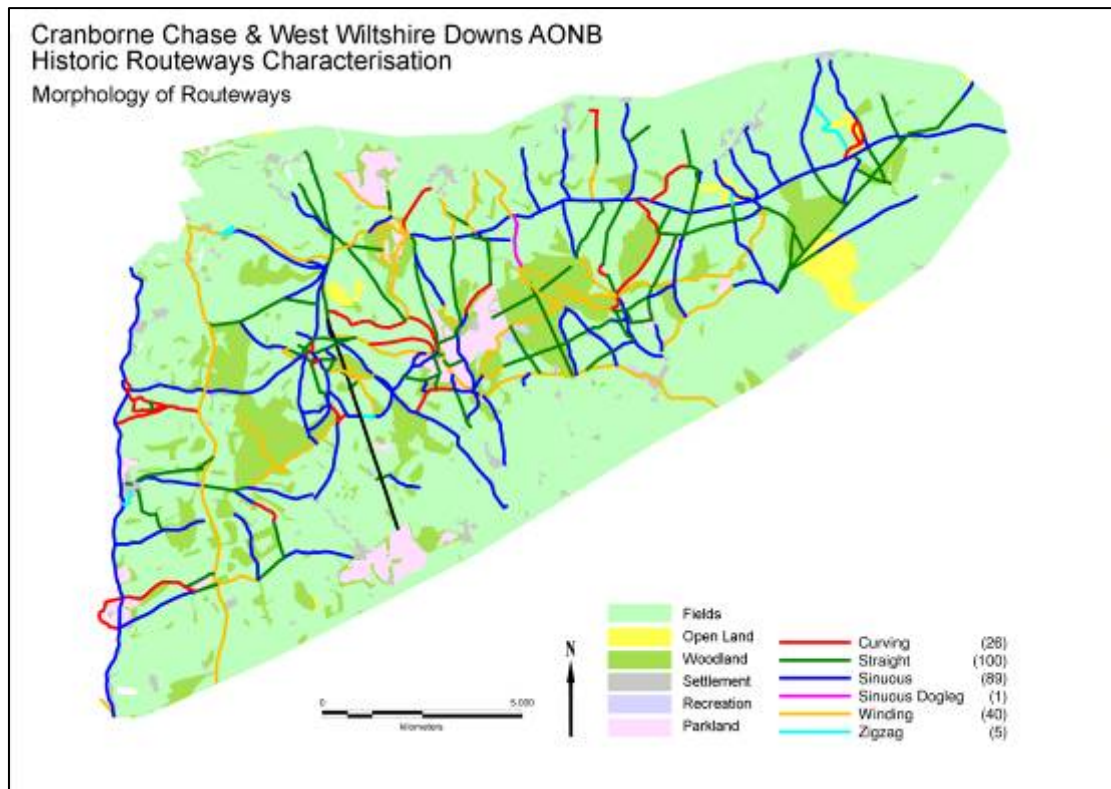


Figure Seven: Morphology of Routeways

Present day Character of Routeways

There are only two major roads in the area. The first is on the western boundary on the bottom of the chalk escarpment. This is mirrored by a parallel minor road running at the top of the escarpment connected by a series of perpendicular minor roads, bridleways and tracks. The second is on the south eastern side. Minor roads tend to run south north across the area avoiding the main areas of woodlands.

Other notable features include the Ox Drove running east-west along the northern edge of the area. This is comprised of a mixture of minor road, byway and bridleway.

The modern network of roads and Rights of Way in the core of the area is associated with an irregular system of footpaths and bridleway, many of which radiate from the Ox Drove road, the chase woodlands and Rushmore estate. A network of permissive routes has supplemented the Rights of Way in the vicinity of Rushmore Park.

The Rights of Way network reflect those routeways that were claimed at Registration. For example the former routes across the open downland used to be much more numerous. The understanding of this pattern is greatly enhanced by an understanding of the historic origins of these routeways

No new roads have been created in the AONB in the 20th century and compared to areas to the east the road network of the AONB remains very rural in character and remarkably unaltered since the turnpike era.

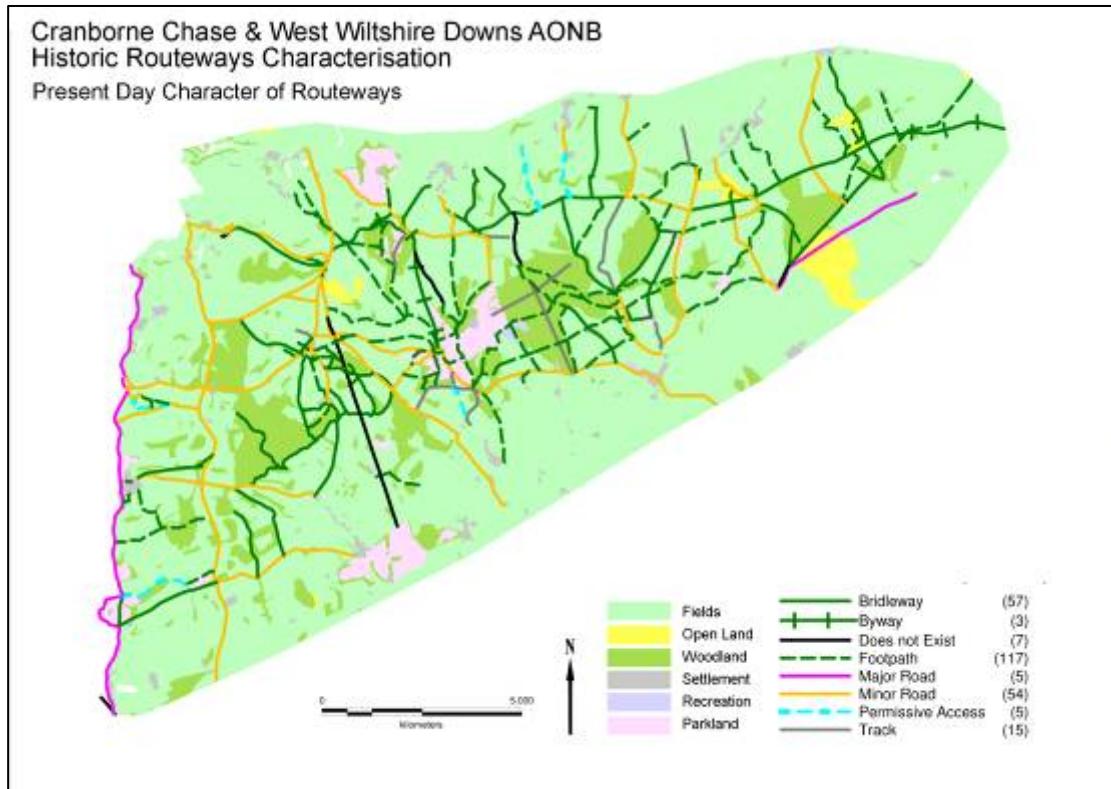


Figure Eight: Present day character of routeways

Historic Character of Routeways AD 1700 – 1900

Notable features of the AD1700-1900 character of the routeways in the plot area include several turnpikes or 'toll roads'. Turnpikes represent the first systematic system of 'made' roads across the country since the Roman Road. Created by Act of Parliament the turnpikes remain as fairly legible components of the historic network in this area. The Area is crossed by two separate branches of the Cranborne Chase and New Forest Turnpike which connect to the north of Rushmore and which still forms a well used road junction on the route to this day.

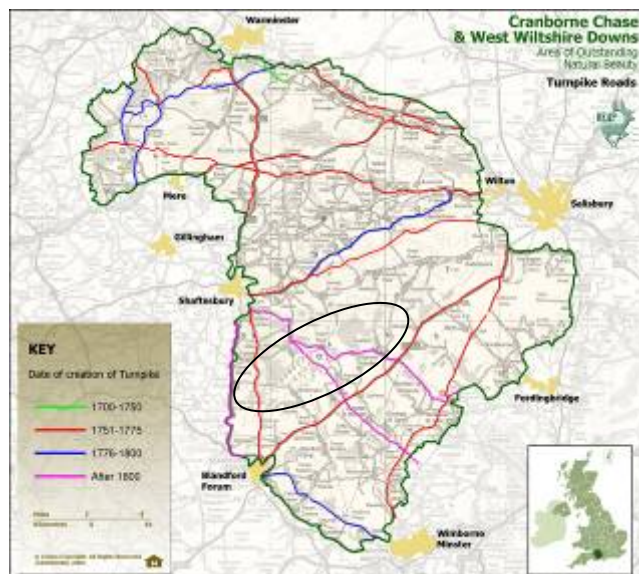


Figure Nine: Turnpike roads in the AONB

All turnpikes were created by Act of Parliament and the line of these road was set and fixed by the Turnpike Act. It was these same roads which were subsequently adopted by the County Council in 1878. The Act of Parliament also stipulated that turnpike trusts should maintain a network of milestones along their length and they were also associated with turnpike cottages at which the tolls were collected. However, unlike other roads in the AONB, these turnpikes are not associated with any recorded milestones or turnpike cottages. It is,

however, possible that milestones were not maintained for this particular route as its creation as a turnpike came at the end of the period where turnpikes were viable, as the coming of the railways to the AONB in the 1850s transformed the transportation network. However, some roads used alternatives to milestones such as the Salisbury Way, which used trees as mile markers. It is not outside the realms of possibility that unrecorded milestones exist along this route or that important ancient trees marked the route.

Other distinctive AD 1700 to 1900 features include the network of ornamental drives and avenues created in Rushmore Park and the adjacent Chase Woodlands which were created around Rushmore Park by General Pitt Rivers between 1880 and 1900.

On the western side of the area several straight linear routes were created between fields enclosed as part of the process of parliamentary enclosure between 1800 and 1900. These fields and the systems of roads they supported were created from wood coppice which was felled.

Several of the routeways crossed open common land during this period notable at Handley, Woodcutts and Ashmore commons to the south of the Chase woodlands. These represent the survival of once much more numerous routes across the commons.

Finally a small section of the disused Salisbury & Yeovil Railway has been captured at the far south-western tip of the area. This was begun in 1856 with support from the London and South Western Railway and was finished in 1860.

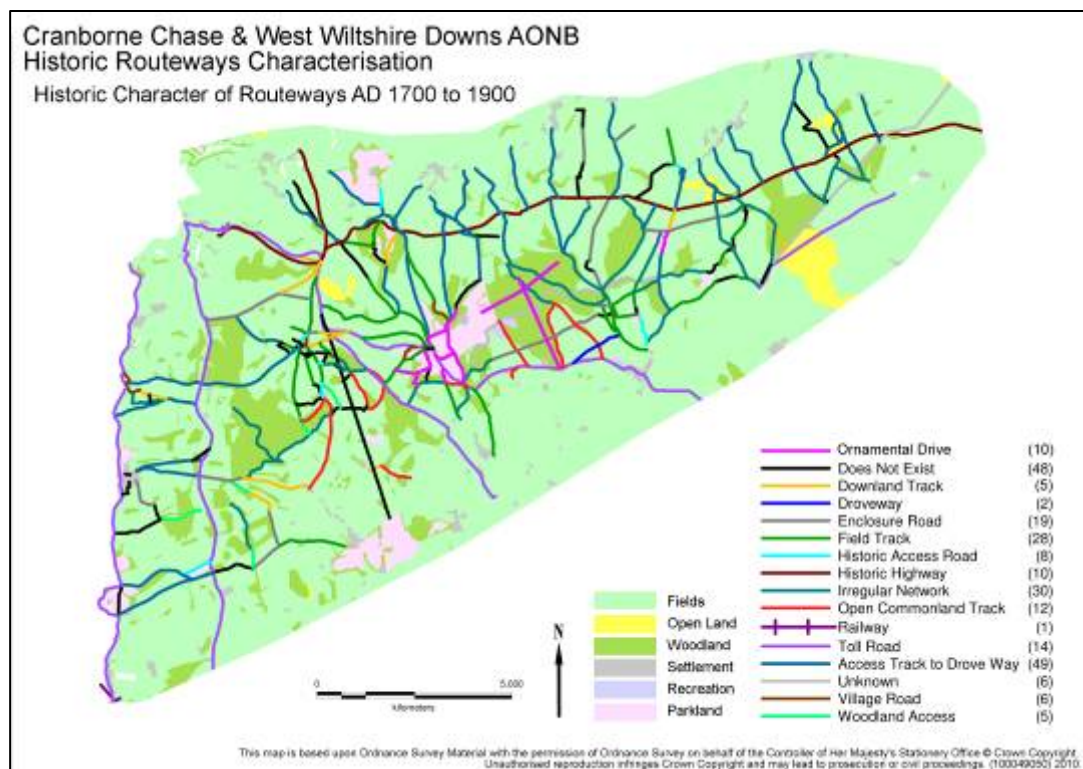
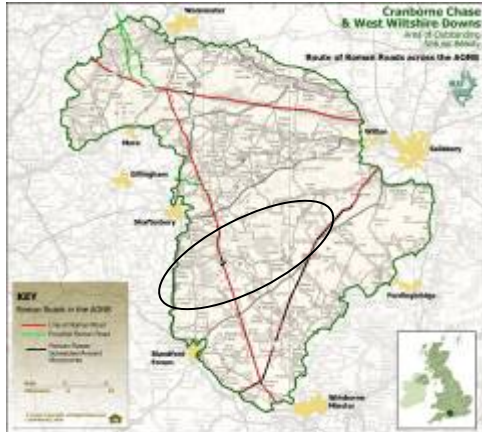


Figure Ten: Historic Character of Routeways in the pilot area AD1700 to AD 1900

Historic Character of Routeways Pre AD 1700



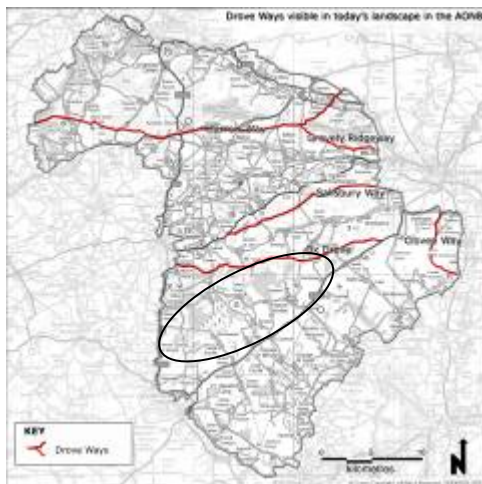
The first notable feature of the historic character of the pilot area dating to the pre AD 1700 is the line of the former Roman Roads. This marks the origin of 'Made' or surfaced roads in the area and marks the first time that there was a nationally coordinated programme of Road construction. These roads cut across existing land use and topography.

Figure Eleven: Roman roads in the AONB

There are two major roman roads crossing the landscape of the area.

At the south eastern edge of the area lies the line of the Ackling Dyke, the Roman Road between Badbury Rings and Old Sarum. This is a highly legible feature in the landscape and is a Scheduled Ancient Monument along much of its length. The majority of Roman Roads in the AONB are no longer routeways in the landscape with the exception of Ackling Dyke which is either bridleway or footpath along its length.

The second Roman Road runs north south across the western side of the area running between Badbury Rings and Cold Kitchen Hill. The northern part of the B3081 north of Ashmore traces the course of this former Roman Road between and the route is continued down the minor road to Ludwell. However this heritage is much less legible in the landscape than the Ackling Dyke due in part to topography, and the lack of obvious continuation of the feature.

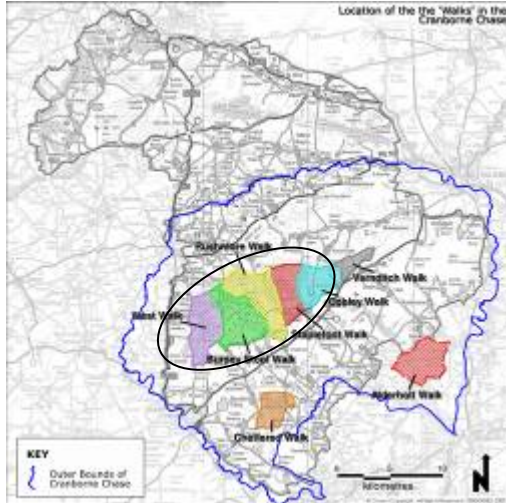


At a landscape scale the most visible elements of the network of tracks used in the Medieval period in the area is the east west routes which traverses the chalk to the north of the area known as the Ox Drove. This drove way runs between Shaftesbury and Salisbury.

Figure Twelve: Droveways in the AONB

It is very difficult to date droveways but It is possible that these ancient track ways across the chalk ridges of the AONB have considerable antiquity.

In today's landscape this route remains highly visible, the majority of its length being unsurfaced byways or bridleways and thus retaining much of its character. A less recognised element is the system of trackways which lead from the villages, valleys and terraces to meet this trackway and adjoins it at right angles. As with the Roman Roads which preceded them these long distance routeways were linked to key markets and represent trade routes along which animals could have be driven.



The direction of travel at this period across the area pre AD 1700 is very much east – west following the prevailing topography. It can be suggested that the inner bounds of the Medieval hunting area of the Chase formed a barrier to north - south travel across this area.

Figure Thirteen: Inner bounds of the Cranborne Chase

The restrictions on travel imposed by the medieval hunting rights of the Cranborne Chase seem to have influenced the position of the main thoroughfare south and east from Salisbury. This bypassed the Chase heading south via Cranborne to Wimborne (outside of the pilot area) and north via the Oxdrove (on the northern edge of the pilot area). The central section of the area is associated again the irregular system of north south routeways associated with the inner bounds of the Cranborne Chase. These funnel into access routes, or pinch points, into the Chase woodlands. These are at least Saxon in origin, providing key crossing points across the shire boundary. This pattern has been infilled by modern permissive paths and Rights of Ways along the county boundary and earlier 19th century roads created when the fields were enclosed running east west.

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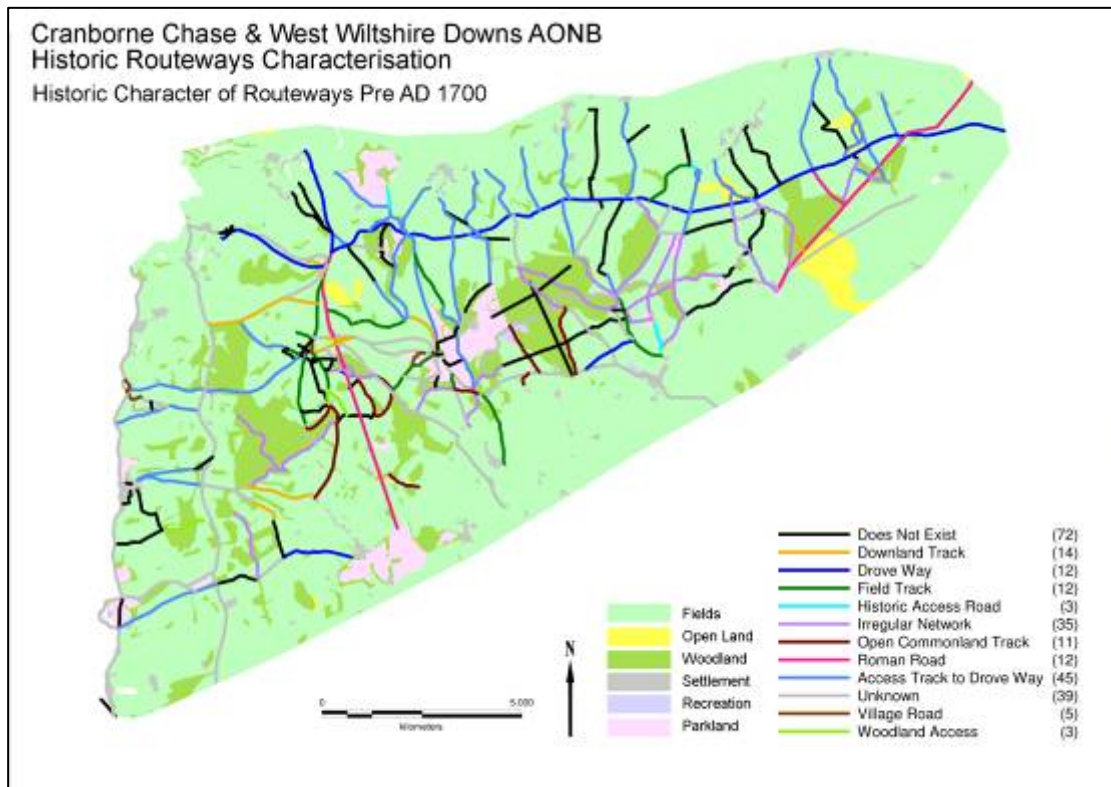


Figure Fourteen: Historic Character of Routeway Pre AD 1700.

The historic character of these routeways is also marked by routes which give access to fields. One example occurs to the South of the Chase woodlands a series of access paths lead southwards from a minor road, the B3081, lead into the former enclosed fieldscapes to the south. Another example is routes radiating into the

medieval strip fields surrounding Ashmore. Other routes provide access to woodlands from nearby villages.

Several of the routeways crossed open downland before AD 1700, most notably on the western edge of the area. These represent the survival of once much more numerous routes across the open chalk downland.

Relationship to wider Historic Landscape Characterisation

There is clearly a close relationship between wider historic landscape character and the character of the historic routeways which cross them. One obvious example is the network of routes across the chase woodlands and their relationship to how this woodland was managed in the past. Similar areas of distinctive enclosure such as Parliamentary enclosure are related to distinctive linear patterns of routeways while formerly open land are also associated with curving and sinuous patterns of routes.

Next Steps

The description of the historic character of the routeways captured by the pilot could be more comprehensively undertaken by creating a written description for each Historic Routeway Type identified. These descriptions could include sections on defining criteria, distribution, key statistics, principal historical processes, typical components, rarity, survival, degree of surviving coherence, past interaction with other types, evidence for time-depth, relationship to wider historic landscape character and contribution to present landscape character.

In addition the range of attribute recorded for each routeway segment could be extended to include features such as borders, topographic setting, associated furniture, administrative boundaries, place name evidence and associated historic landscape type.

Naturally this pilot should also be extended across the rest of the AONB and this could start by carrying out a study of part of the Vale of Wardour or a chalk river valley so the full range of Historic Routeway Types present in the AONB is fully understood.

Another direction which could be taken is to see if a time based relative hierarchy of routes can be determined following initial attempts made by the Chilterns pilot (Green & Kidd 2009).

Conclusions

This pilot project has characterised the distinctive, historic dimension of the routeways of the Wooded Chalk Downland of the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB. Historic Routeway Characterisation is a relatively new concept and this pilot study has demonstrated the potential of this technique for revealing information about the routeways of the AONB in a systematic, rapid and cost effective way.

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