

The Landscapes of the AONB



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What is Landscape?

Landscape is more than just topography and ground cover; it includes the interactions of generations of people who have lived, worked, or visited; the cultural as well as physical attributes; and the living wildlife, the aesthetic, and the productive aspects.



Landscapes are more than three dimensional, they change daily and seasonally, they respond to the weather, some have a greater proportion of hard and constructed elements whilst in others the soft and semi-natural predominate.

Why Characterise Landscapes?

We need to have LCAs to help us know and understand our landscapes in order to:

- meet our duties to conserve and enhance them
- influence sustainable landscape management
- better design & integrate essential development
- Comply with PPS7, para 24

Landscape Character Assessments

Level

Scale

Terminology

National

Broad
Overview

National [Joint]
Character Areas

County/
District/AONB

Readily
recognisable

Landscape
Character Types
- named Landscape
Character Areas

Locality/Site

Detailed

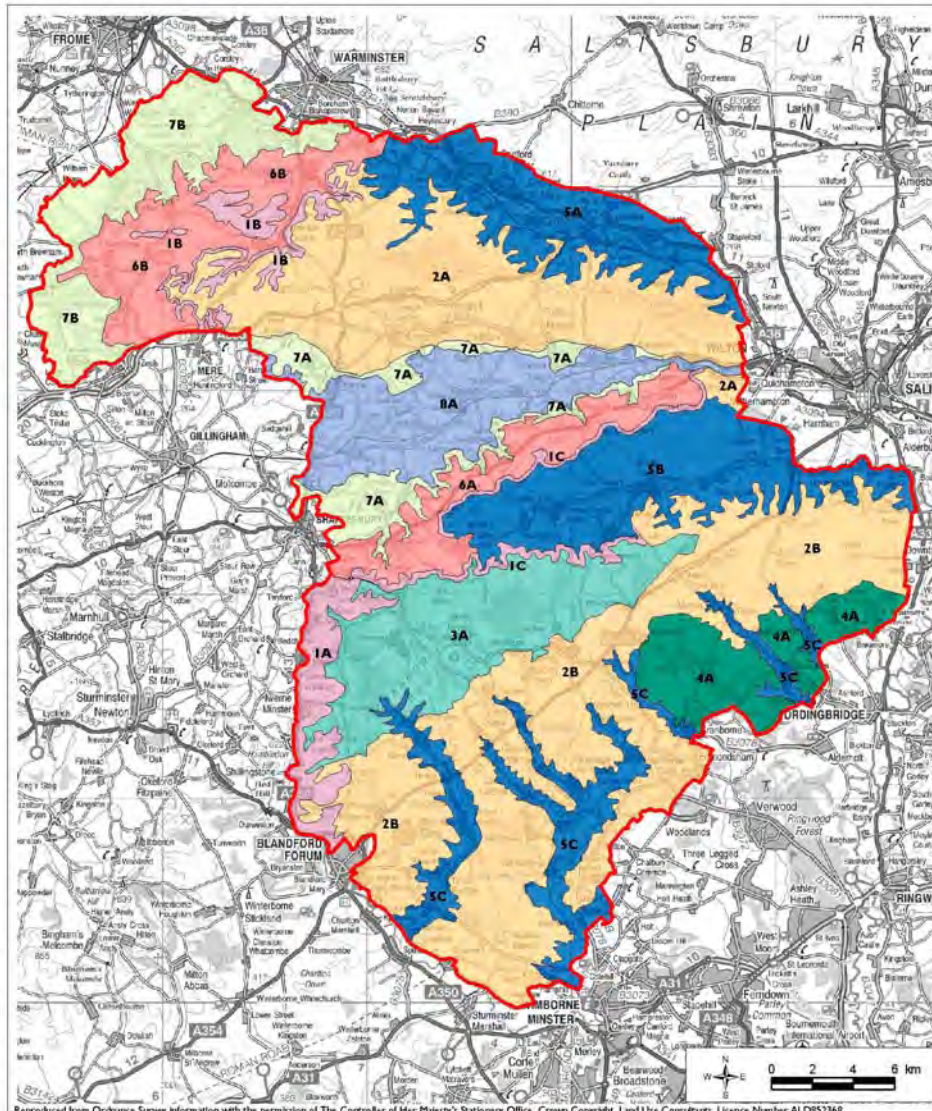
Landscape
Character Areas,
Local Landscape
Context

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER TYPES AND AREAS

CCWWD AONB:

8 Landscape Types

15 Landscape Areas



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CRANBORNE CHASE AND WEST WILTSHIRE DOWNS AONB LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

Figure 8.1: Landscape Character Areas

Key

- | | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| AONB boundary | 2 Open Chalk Downland | 6 Greensand Terrace |
| 1 Chalk Escarpments | 2A West Wiltshire Downs | 6A Fovant Terrace |
| 1A Melbury to Blandford | 2B Southern Downland Belt | 6B Kilmington Terrace |
| 1B West Wiltshire Downs | 3 Wooded Chalk Downland | 7 Greensand Hills |
| 1C Fovant and Chalke | 3A Cranborne Chase | 7A Donhead - Fovant |
| 5 Chalk River Valleys | 4 Downland Hills | 7B Penselwood - Longleat |
| 5A Wylve River Valley | 4A Martin - Whitsbury | 8 Rolling Clay Vales |
| 5B Ebble River Valley | 5C Stour and Avon Tributary Valleys | 8A Vale of Wardour |

Nbs- Digitised data is held by the AONB Management Unit on GIS

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Chalk Escarpments: LC Type 1

I. CHALK ESCARPMENTS



LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREAS

1A Melbury to Blandford

1B West Wiltshire Downs

1C Fovant and Chalke



Arable cultivation is often found on shallower slopes at the foot of the steep wooded scarp face.

Chalk Escarpments: Key Characteristics

- Dramatic chalk escarpments eroded into rounded spurs and deep combes.
- Underlying geology of Lower, Middle and Upper Chalk giving rise to the predominantly calcareous soils.
- Areas of unimproved chalk grassland of international importance on steeper slopes.
- Field systems on the lower slopes, including strip lynchets close to medieval villages sited along the springline.
- Improved pasture and arable fields occupy the shallower, more accessible, slopes where straight-sided fields represent late 18th/early 19th century Parliamentary inclosure.
- Hanging woodland and sunken lanes are features of the steep, enclosing chalk combes.
- Panoramic views over adjacent landscapes.

Landscape Character Areas

Whilst character types are generic, character areas are specific and have locality names

Areas are not sites; they are the context for sites

Remember the cultural heritage aspects of landscape as well as the topographic structure, artefacts and living features

Character Descriptions

Character descriptions should aim to create ‘mind pictures’, and focus on local distinctiveness and sense of place

Descriptions should be structured and ‘value neutral’

It is entirely appropriate to include human emotions and responses to landscapes – but after the objective description and analysis!

Chalk Escarpments: A Melbury to Blandford B West Wiltshire Downs C Fovant and Chalke



Ancient strip lynchets create strong landform patterns on the escarpment.



Steep slope with sharp transition and scrub developing on ancient permanent grassland



The Fovant Badges are key landmark features of the steep slopes. Note the farm on the Greensand Terrace below the slope.

Character Descriptions

Key Characteristics

Location and Boundaries

Summary of Visual Character

PHYSICAL INFLUENCES

- **Geology and Soils**
- **Landform and Hydrology**
- **Land Cover**
- **Ecological Character and Biodiversity**

Character Descriptions

HUMAN INFLUENCES

- Evidence of Past Social Structure
- Field Patterns, Boundaries and Predominant Date of Enclosure
- Land Use and Recreation
- Historic Development of Settlement and Relationship with the Landscape
- Settlement and Built Character
- Historic Environment

EVALUATION

- Strength of Character
- Current Condition
- Past and Present Change
- Possible Future Trends
- Management Objective

Area1A: MELBURY TO BLANDFORD CHALK ESCARPMENT Key Characteristics

- Dramatic chalk escarpment on the western edge of the AONB with rounded spurs and deep combes.
- Underlying geology of Lower, Middle and Upper Chalk giving rise to the predominantly calcareous soils.
- Areas of unimproved chalk grassland of international importance on steeper slopes interspersed with broken areas of scrub.
- Arable crop production and improved pasture on the shallower slopes.
- Hanging woodland and sunken lanes are features of the steep, enclosing chalk combes.

Area1A: MELBURY TO BLANDFORD CHALK ESCARPMENT Key Characteristics

- Beech copses, Scot's pine and hanging woodland enhance the sense of woodedness, increase enclosure and act as focal points.
- Elevated and uninterrupted landform, provides panoramic views over adjacent landscapes.
- Round barrows and cross-ridge dykes along the escarpment edge.
- Field systems on the lower slopes, including strip lynchets close to medieval villages sited along the springline.
- Straight-sided fields represent late 18th/early 19th century Parliamentary enclosure.

Open Chalk Downlands:

Areas: West Wiltshire Downs
Southern Downland Belt



Downland Hills:

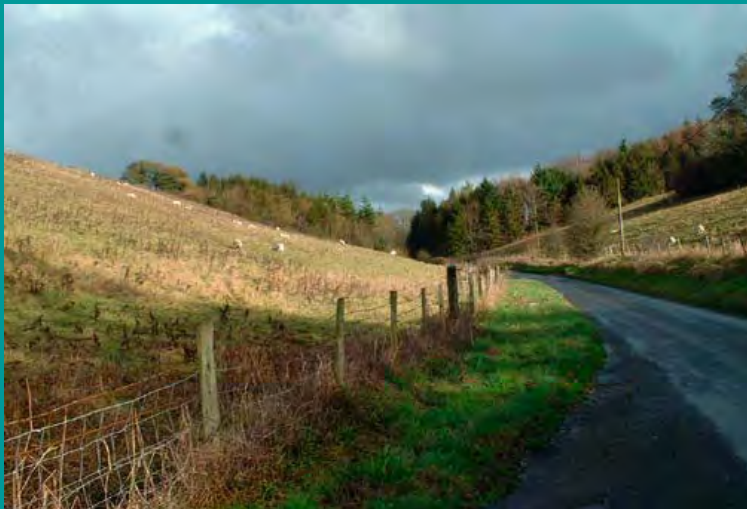
Area: Martin – Whitsbury Downland Hills



Wooded Chalk Downland:

Area:

Cranborne Chase



Chalk River Valleys

Areas: Wylde Chalk River Valley
Ebble Chalk River Valley
Stour & Avon Tributary Valleys



Greensand Terrace

Areas: Fovant Greensand Terrace
Kilmington Greensand Terrace



Greensand Hills

Areas: Donhead – Fovant Hills
Penselwood – Longleat Hills



Rolling Clay Vales

Area: Vale of Wardour

