



Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty



Historic Environment Action Plans

Theme 11: Settlement in
the Landscape










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 Theme Statements

Fourteen distinct Historic Landscape Themes have been identified in the AONB. These were chosen by the HEAP Steering group as representing the topics which best encapsulate the historic character of the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB.

The theme descriptions aim to provide an overview of each theme 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 themes 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 Themes'.

Introduction to Theme 11: Settlement in the Landscape

“I was, therefore, somewhat filled with curiosity to see this Steeple Langford again; and indeed, it was the recollection of this village that made me take a ride into Wiltshire this summer.”

William Cobbett 1826

The aim is to provide an overview of the key archaeological and historic characteristics of the built heritage and settlements of the AONB and to focus on evidence of physical surviving remains in today's landscape.

From grand houses, Medieval halls and churches to historic farmsteads and estate cottages, the distinctive style of the built environment is an intrinsic part of what makes this living landscape special.



Ashmore

Summary of Key Characteristics

- Rich vernacular architecture using local building materials including flint, brick, greensand, Tisbury and Chilmark stone, timber-framing, etc and local thatching and roofing styles.
- Diverse range of settlement plans including nucleated villages, linear, irregular, dispersed and on the edge of common land with distinct geographical distributions.
- Location of settlements linked to landform and local climate.
- Overarching influence of 'estate' style in some places. This varies in scale from isolated buildings, groups of cottages at the edge of settlements and entire villages.
- Later Prehistoric settlement often at the centre of extensive field systems.
- Clusters of Romano-British settlement along the West Wiltshire Downs, through the wooded downland of the Cranborne Chase and in the vicinity of Badbury Rings. Scattered evidence for higher status buildings including at least two Roman Villas.
- Anglo-Saxon charters suggest that many of the modern settlements within the AONB have Early Medieval origin.
- Large number of shrunken and deserted Medieval villages
- Majority of settlements with surviving Medieval plan at their core.
- Several planned Medieval villages, including Hindon and Steeple Langford.
- Large churches at the centre of villages often with Medieval building fabric, often heavily modified in the 19th century.
- Large complexes of farm buildings located both in isolated positions and on the edge of settlements.
- Manor houses and Medieval halls representing the original 'Demense' often at the core of the original village.
- Large historic country houses of several main phases associated with a wide range of ancillary buildings. Often with complex history of development and rebuilding. These are often separate from the main settlement.
- New 19th century settlements and hamlets situated as satellite villages.
- Settlements small in scale with some having undergone infilling in the 20th Century e.g. Dinton, and Pimperne.



Linkages to other Historic Landscape Character Statements

This statement forms one of 14 AONB wide Historic Landscape Character Theme descriptions. These are accompanied by a series of 12 Historic Landscape Character Area descriptions which cover the whole of the AONB. These documents together build up a picture of the key characteristics of the Historic Environment of the AONB at a landscape scale. These statements combined inform the Historic Environment Action Plans created for the AONB landscape.

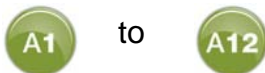
Other Themes of particular relevance to this theme are:



Theme 2: Farms and Farming in the AONB

Theme 14: Historic Features of Local Value

All the Historic Landscape Character Areas are of relevance to this theme.



History and Context

The Mesolithic records of Wiltshire and Dorset are relatively rich with a mixture of minor artefact find spots and a small number of significant assemblages. These finds demonstrate that there was a substantial presence in the landscape throughout the Mesolithic (8000-4000 BC).

For much of the Neolithic (4000 BC to 2500 BC) and indeed the Early Bronze Age (2500-1500 BC) evidence for settlement and sedentism (living permanently in one place) is lacking. Evidence for settlement on the chalk lands of Wessex is insubstantial, consisting of flint scatters, pits, hearths and stake holes, suggesting varying degrees of mobility and longevity.

The Bronze Age in the AONB is also characterised by a shift to sedentism (permanent living in one location) marked by large scale cultivation and clearly defined settlements. By the Middle Bronze Age (1500 BC) the landscape of the AONB was defined and bounded by extensive field systems, centred around settlements.

This pattern continues and is elaborated on in the Iron Age (700 BC to AD 43). Excavations have revealed a pattern of different settlement types (enclosed, unenclosed), and sizes (single and multiple dwelling), with the classic pattern of round house associated with ancillary dwellings. The settlements are set within large scale field systems.

There is some evidence for a smooth transition to Roman rule (AD 43 to AD 400) suggested by the continuation of the Late Iron Age Settlement on the West Wiltshire Downs right through until the 4th century AD. New settlement forms are introduced however, including villa sites set within extensive rural estates.



There is a lack of identified Early Medieval (AD 400 to AD 1066) settlement until pottery makes a reappearance in the 10th Century.

Medieval (AD 1066 to AD 1485) settlement in general is represented by the distribution of manor houses such as Woodyates, modern settlement with Medieval centres and deserted Medieval villages, for example, those located along the Tarrant Valley.

The modern settlement pattern seen today in the AONB was largely established by the Post Medieval period (AD 1485 to 1900), although further expansion onto downland areas occurred in the 18th and 19th centuries. Several new satellite villages were also created in the 19th century.

New 20th century settlement has largely consisted of the infilling of existing settlement and expansion on the edge of the larger villages in the AONB.

Key Secondary Sources

A discussion of mobility during the Neolithic period is available from an unpublished PhD thesis by Field (2004) held at the University of Reading entitled *Use of Land in Central Southern England during the Neolithic and Bronze Age*.

The evolution of settlement on the Cranborne Chase is described in Martin Greens book *A Landscape Revealed 10'000 years on a Chalkland Farm* (2000) published by Tempus.

There have been several excavation reports of Iron Age Settlements including those by Clay of Fifield and Swallowcliffe Down in the *Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Magazine* 1924 vol 42: 457-96 and 1925 vol 43 59-23 respectively; Wainwright's excavations of Berwick Down (1968) in *The Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society* vol 34: 102-47 and his report (1979) *Gussage All Saints An Iron Age Settlement* as a stand alone report by the Department of the Environment; and Hawkes' excavation at Longbridge Cow Down is published in the *Oxford Journal of Archaeology* 13: 49-69. Harding's excavation at Pimperne was published by the University of Edinburgh 1993 as *An Iron Age Settlement in Dorset – Excavation and Reconstruction* D W Harding, I M Blake, and P J Reynolds. The Late Iron Age sites of the AONB is discussed by Mark Corney in a paper on 'The Romano-British nucleated Settlements of Wiltshire in *Roman Wiltshire and After* (2001) published by the Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Museum.

An overview of Roman archaeology in Dorset is provided by Bill Putman's *Roman Dorset* (2007) published by Tempus. The Roman Archaeology of Wiltshire is discussed in *Roman Wiltshire and After: Papers in Honour of Ken Annable* (2001) edited by P. Ellis and published by the Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Society.

The evidence for the Early Medieval period in Dorset is discussed in a small book in the Discover Dorset series by David Hinton entitled *Saxons & Vikings* (1998). The evidence for the transition from Roman to Saxon influence is looked at in a series of papers in *Roman Wiltshire and After* (see above).

The main source of detail on the wider settlement pattern 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, Hampshire and Somerset 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> .

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

Rolland Gant's book *Dorset Villages* (1980), published by Robert Hale London, provides a useful potted history of the villages in this area of Dorset.

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

The Wiltshire Geology Group has produced a useful overview of Wiltshire building stone
<http://www.wiltshiregeologygroup.org.uk/projects/buildingstones/buildingstones.php>

East Dorset District Council have produced a district wide design guide published in 1997 <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/index.jsp?articleid=325228>



Cottages in Hindon

Landscape Scale Characteristics and Components

1. Prehistoric Settlement

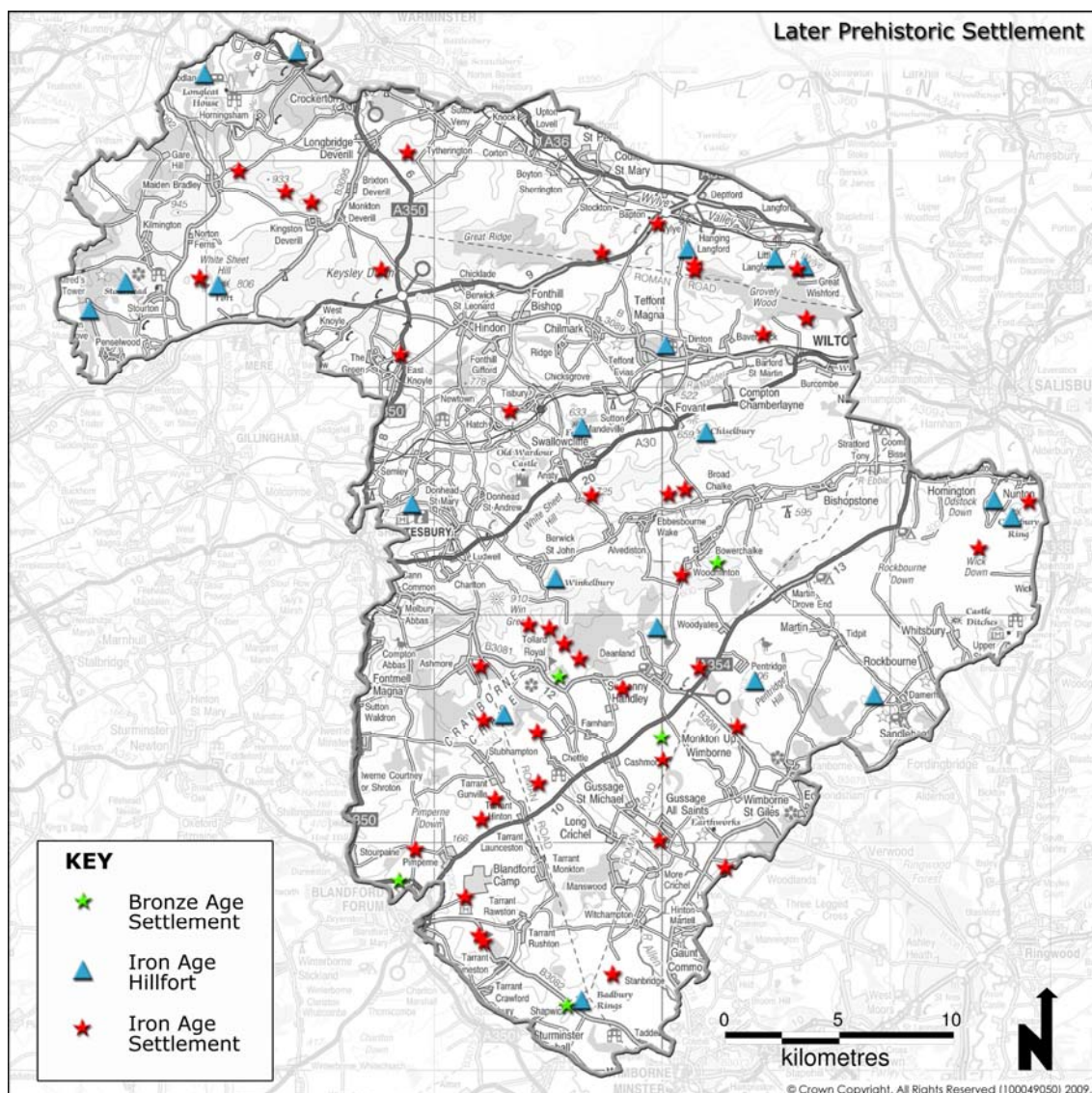


Figure One: Later Prehistoric Settlement in the AONB

Background

In the Mesolithic, Neolithic and early Bronze Age populations appear to have been nomadic in this area meaning that evidence for people living in the landscape is restricted to flint scatters, shallow pits and hearths.

The evidence for later prehistoric settlement consists of small groups of farmsteads, featuring round houses and other buildings set within extensive patterns of field settlements located on the West Wiltshire Downs and across the southern downland belt. Isolated examples of Iron Age settlement are also known in the north-western



corner of the AONB, for example on higher ground in the vicinity of Bidcombe Hill and on lower slopes on the northern side of the Ebble Valley.

Landscape Scale Impact

There is a strikingly consistent distribution of Mesolithic flints concentrated on patches of clay-with-flints in the north of the Chase with other sites in the Reading Beds and round the headwaters of the River Allen further south.

There are dense concentrations of Neolithic and Early Bronze Age flint scatters on the open chalk downland, and on the greensand terraces in the AONB. On the Cranborne Chase Middle and Late Neolithic lithics are concentrated on the clay with flints to the north of the Dorset Cursus and nearby later monuments.

Archaeological evidence for Middle and Late Bronze Age settlements is primarily found on the Wooded Chalk Downlands of the AONB and across the Southern Downland Belt. Iron Age settlement is concentrated on the open chalk downland of the West Wiltshire Downs and southern downland belt and the Wooded Chalk Downland of the Cranborne Chase, with a few isolated examples in the Vale of Wardour.

Notable patterns of Iron Age settlements are associated with the higher ground along the spine of the West Wiltshire Downs, which was a focus for settlement during the Iron Age and Romano-British period. This legacy is still visible in a series of impressive earthwork including banjo enclosures and field systems. The southern downland valley is also associated with Iron Age settlement, including the site at Gussage All Saints.

2. Roman Settlement

Background

Evidence for Roman settlement in the AONB is extremely rural in character with no Roman urban centres being present. The importance of this rural area increased in the later Roman period as the southwest region as a whole prospered. There are several Roman Villas within the AONB which would have formed the centre of farming 'estates'. The Roman Villas themselves are comprised of distinctive rectangular stone buildings often associated with mosaics, under floor heating (hypercaust), and ancillary buildings including bath houses, and are often situated within extensive field systems.

Landscape Scale Impact

Two villas within the AONB have been excavated. The first at Rockbourne (often referred to as 'West Park Villa') was discovered in 1942, and was subject to a series of excavations between 1956 and 1978. The second at Tarrant Hinton demonstrated a long and complex history with pottery ranging from the 6th century BC to the mid first century AD, with a standard courtyard villa emerging in the 3rd and 4th century AD. A further series of high status buildings have been excavated by the East Dorset Antiquarian Society at Minchington near Sixpenny Handley. There have been a number of significant investigations of non-villa rural sites, notably in the heartland of Cranborne Chase and in the Wylde Valley. However the chronologies, transition and context of non-villas settlement are still problematic, as the majority of sites are only known through field survey.



Rockbourne Roman Villa

3. Early Medieval Settlement

Background

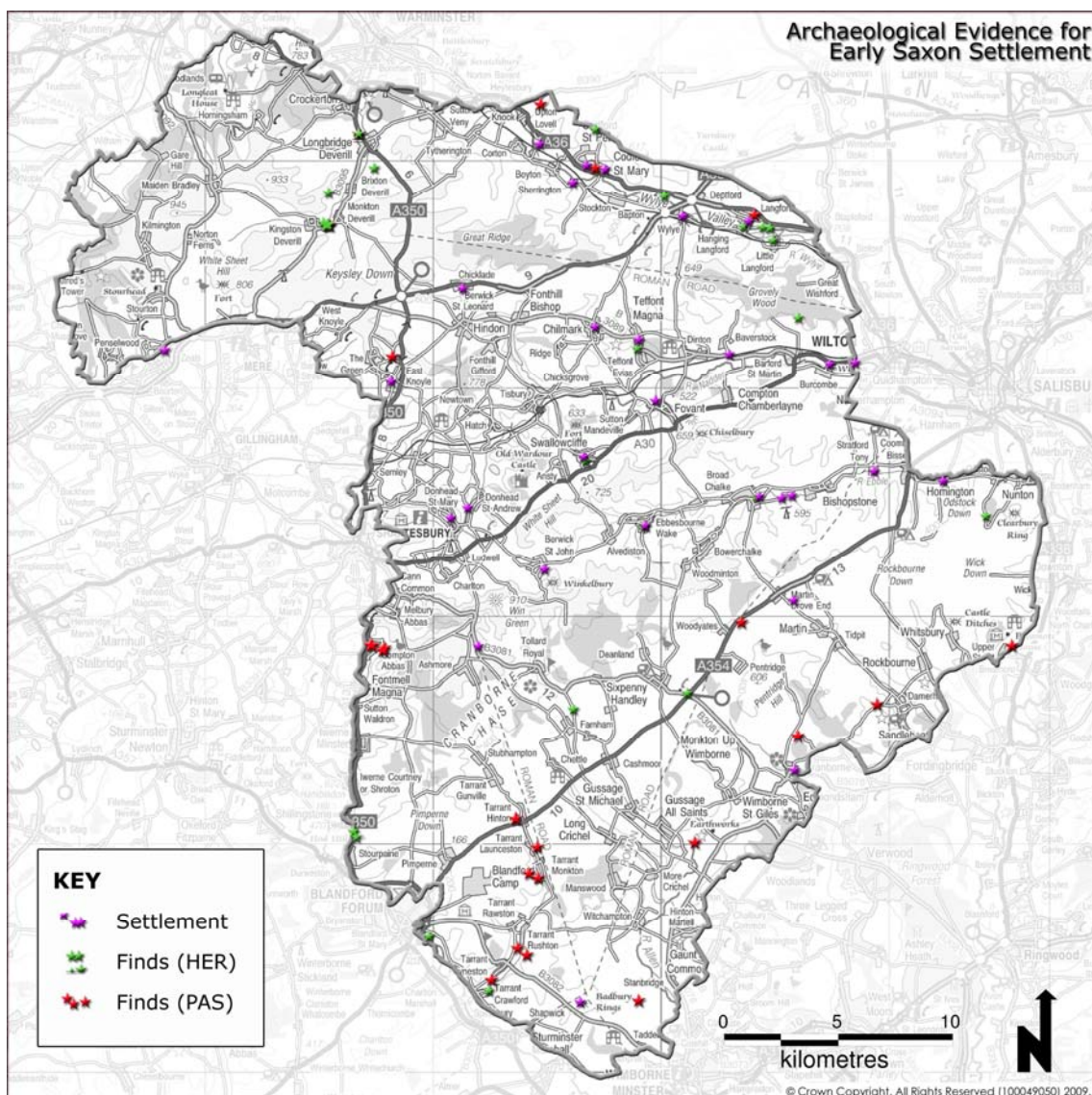
Most Romano-British farms and hamlets were abandoned in the 4th century AD. The locations of potential former settlements dating to the Early Medieval period are mainly indicated by burials and stray finds, enhanced by information from place names and scatters of pot sherds. Many of the present day settlements of the AONB have place names which indicate a Saxon origin.

Landscape Scale Impact

In the northwest corner of the AONB the settlement at Penselwood is given historically an 8th century origin. There is archaeological evidence for early Medieval settlement in:

- the vicinity of Zeals.
- the lower end of the Wylde Valley with clusters of find spots along its length.
- the vicinity of Compton Abbas
- along the Ebbel Valley
- along the Tarrant consisting of clusters of Early Medieval find spots recorded by the Portable Antiquity Scheme
- on the edges of the Vale of Wardour

There is a wealth of Saxon place names including Sixpenny Handley and Tisbury.



Evidence for Saxon Settlement

4. Medieval Settlement

Background

Many of the villages in the AONB have at their core historic buildings with Medieval origins, including manor houses and churches. This pattern is supplemented by archaeological evidence for shrunken and deserted Medieval villages, and abandoned farmsteads.

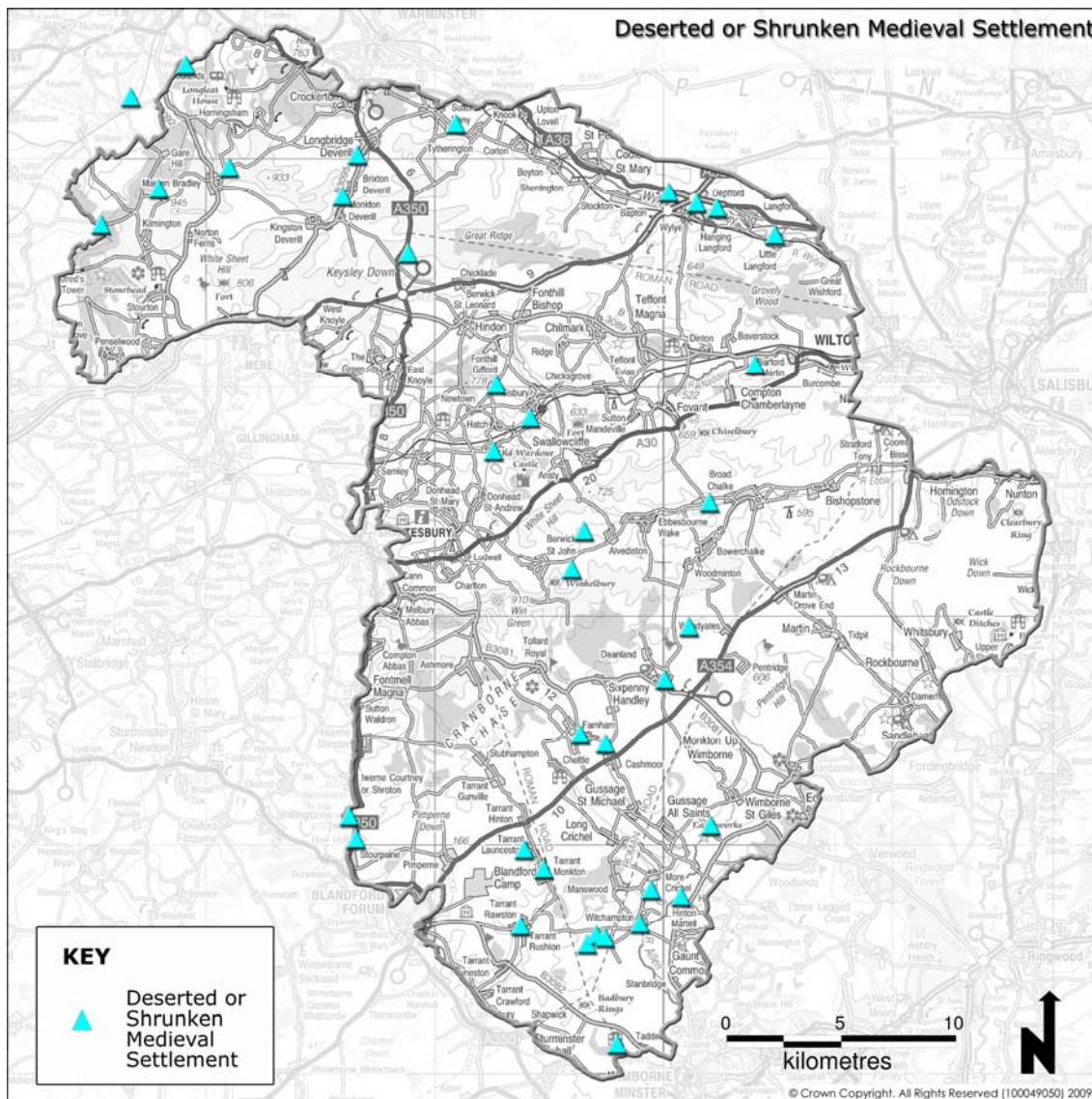


Figure Three: Deserted or Shrunken Medieval Settlement

Landscape Scale Impact

Deserted and shrunken Medieval settlements in the AONB are concentrated:

- either side of the woodland belt running between Longleat and Penselwood
- along the Wylde River
- along the Tarrant Valley
- in the Vale of Wardour
- at the head of the Ebble Valley.
- to the south of Chetterwood
- the northern edge of the Southern Downland Belt

In certain areas in the AONB the known archaeological record is dominated by Medieval and Post Medieval sites, including shrunken and deserted settlements, farmstead and buildings. This includes:

- the chalk river valleys in the AONB especially the Wylde and the Tarrant
- in the Vale of Wardour which cluster around Tisbury
- Wooded Downland Hills around Cranborne.

The majority of the main villages in the AONB have at their core buildings with surviving Medieval fabric and their layout is often still influenced by the position of the Saxon/Medieval Church and Medieval manor house.

Hindon is a special case being a deliberate planned Medieval town, forming a distinctive plan with regular spaced burbage plots still visible in the layout of the village.



Planned Medieval Village of Hindon

5. Post Medieval Settlement Pattern

Background

There are distinctive geographical patterns to the historic distribution of settlement in the AONB (see figure 4). This is described below. The character and distribution of historic farm buildings is discussed in Theme 2: Farms and Farming in the AONB.

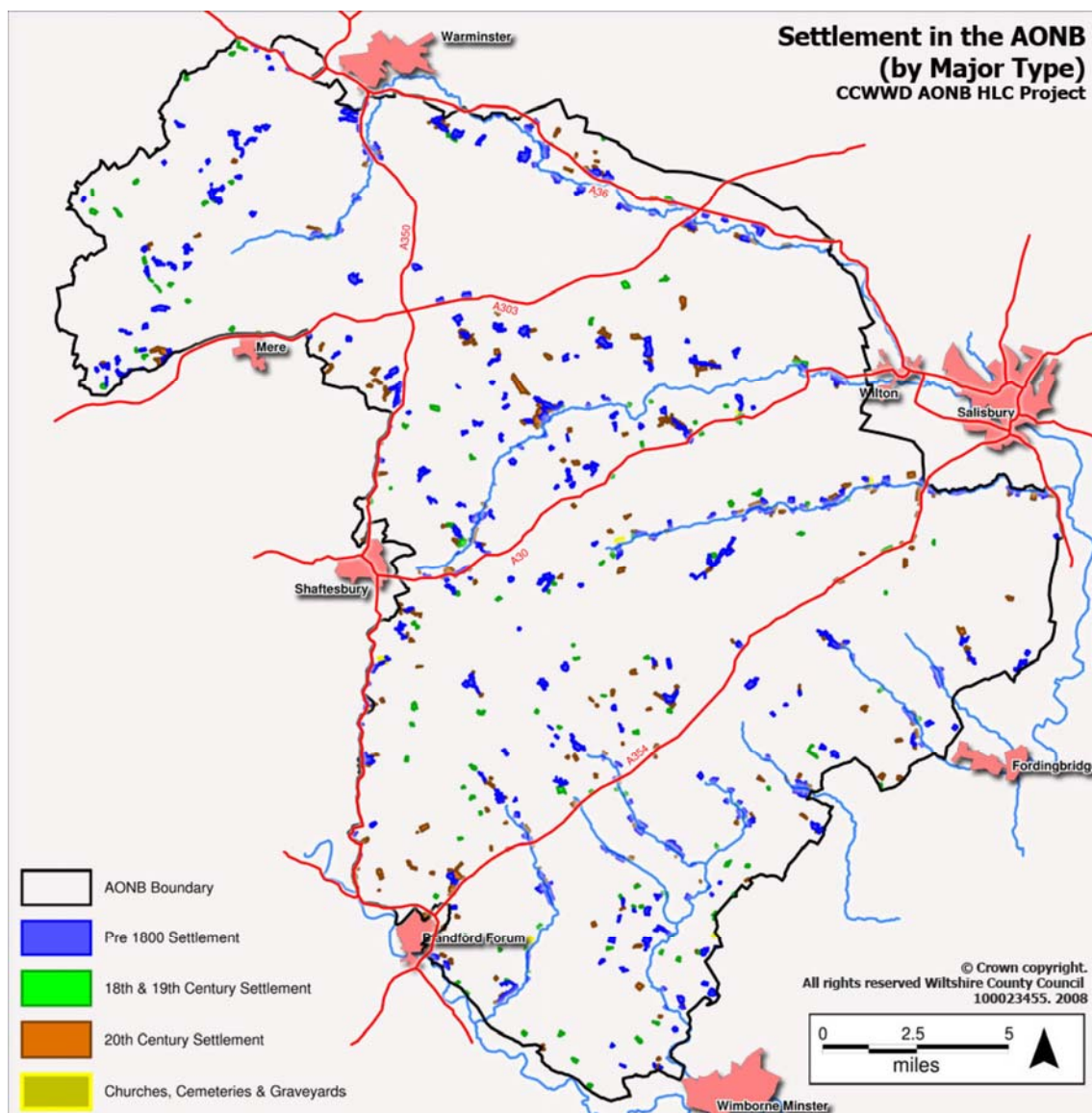


Figure Four: Age of present day settlement in the AONB

Landscape Scale Impact

Description of the historic distribution of settlement in the AONB by historic character area:

Area 1: Longleat to Penselwood Hills and Kilmington Common

There is a mixed historic settlement located on the edge of former common land at Kilmington and Horningsham. Dense nucleated dispersed pre 1750 settlement in the vicinity of Zeals, Crockerton, Selwood and around Longleat providing access to the higher ground. The house and parkland at Longleat is separated from nearby settlement while, in contrast, the village of Stourhead is more intimately related to Stourhead. There has been infilling of existing settlements, notably Maiden Bradley in the 20th century.


Kilmington

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

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.

Area 3: Chalk River Valleys

The chalk river valleys have a high density of settlement along their lengths, and the historic form of these settlements is a key attribute of these areas. There is a patchwork of pre 1800 nucleated and linear villages preserving a Medieval distribution pattern of settlement, some of which has now shrunk to single farm complexes. The nucleated villages tend to be centred on manor houses and parish churches. In particular:

- The Wylde Valley is characterised by a high density of villages, both linear and nuclear in form, either side of the river.
- The Ebble Valley is characterised by a similarly dense pattern of hamlets and villages at close intervals, often with manor houses at their core. These are not as large as those in the Wylde Valley. Settlement has a linear form and several settlements extend up the valley sides.
- The settlements in the southern AONB chalk river valleys are linear with the exception of the Allen Valley where the settlement pattern is more dispersed around the edges of the river valley especially on the edge of Chetterwood and



Crichel Park. The linear settlement of Wimborne St Giles in the Allen Valley is formed of two parallel lanes either side of the stream.

- The Wylde and Ebbel Valleys have seen the greatest infilling of settlement in the 19th and 20th centuries. The north end of the Tarrant Valley has also undergone infilling.

Area 4: Northern Wylde and Ebbel Valley Sides

Settlement is extremely scarce with isolated 20th century farms and downland barns.

Area 5: West Wiltshire Downs

In the post Roman period settlement shifted to the north into the Wylde Valley and southwards to sit in the southern dip slope of the downs at the head of the Nadder tributaries. Chilmark is an example of a village which follows this pattern. Present day settlement in the West Wiltshire Downs is a dispersed pattern of a few pre 1800 hamlets and farm complexes, with larger villages on its southern edge. There is no settlement on the western escarpment due to the steep topography, but this area is intimately related to settlement on the Kilmington terrace to the east.

Area 6: Great Ridge and Grovelly Woods

There is no settlement on Great Ridge. Grovelly Wood is associated with little settlement with the exception of isolated farms and lodges.

Area 7: Fovant Terrace and the area between Chalbury and Woodlands

Settlement is sparse on the Fovant Terrace with stone farm buildings and modern farms. The area between Chalbury to Woodlands is also devoid of major settlements. There are clusters of settlements at the crossroads with the turnpike road, for example at the Horton Inn.

Area 8: Chalk Escarpments

There is no settlement on the Fovant escarpment and Wyn Green Escarpment. The expansion into downland areas is characterised by the presence of a series of 19th century farms on the top of the escarpments. Only the Shaftesbury to Blandford escarpment is settled. The settlement focus is along the lower undulating slopes of the escarpment and forms a series of nucleated pre 1800 settlements.

Area 9: Vale of Wardour

There is a dense pattern of nucleated settlements with Medieval origins. This can be split into five main groupings

- Linear settlement below the Fovant Terrace, hidden in combes such as Ansty, Swallowcliffe and Fovant.
- Scattered and dispersed settlement through the Donheads.
- Settlement along the north of the area at the head of feeder valleys leading down to the Nadder, including Teffont Magna and Fonthill Bishop.

- The nucleated settlement of Tisbury with potentially Saxon roots. The original focus of settlement was the top of the high street and the Medieval manor to the east. This is surrounded by a network of nucleated hamlets.
- Pattern of common edge settlement in the area around Semley.

In the 19th century new settlement, with indicative names such as Newtown, infilled this pattern. The major focus of settlement growth in the 20th century has been focused on the village of Tisbury, which is the largest settlement in the AONB, and to a lesser extent Dinton.



Chalk stream near Teffont

Area 10: Wooded Chalk Downland of Cranborne Chase and Chetterwood

The wooded chalk downland of the Cranborne Chase is characterised by a low density pattern of scattered individual farmsteads and nucleated settlements. Some new settlements were created in the 19th century but there has been little 20th century addition. Chetterwood, in contrast, is associated with pre 1800 dispersed linear settlement in nucleated rows which was infilled with 19th century settlement.

Area 11: Downland Hills

There is generally a nucleated pattern of pre 1800 settlement which has been infilled in the 20th century. There are linear settlements on the northern edge of Whitsbury and Rockbourne. These are interspersed with isolated 19th and 20th century buildings.

Area 12: Southern Downland Belt

The Southern Downland Belt has a slightly denser settlement pattern but is still sparsely populated compared to other Historic Landscape Character Areas in the AONB. The settlement pattern is of scattered farm and nucleated settlements such as

Sixpenny Handley, especially along its northern side, and linear settlements, such as Martin, at the far end of the Winterbournes. These settlements have expanded in the 20th century. There has been an infilling of isolated farms and settlements in the 20th century. Settlement is still notably absent from the far south and east of the area.

6. Distribution of Traditional Building Materials

The historic buildings of the AONB are constructed of a variety of building materials including timber, brick, cob, flint, and stone. The distribution and use of these building materials depended on their local availability and cost.

6.1 Red Brick



Background

The earliest example of the use of brick in the AONB is at Abbey House, Witchampton, which dates from 1500. In the eighteenth and nineteenth-centuries brick was produced locally where there were deposits of clay. For example, in the 19th century there was a brick works at Dinton, in the Vale of Wardour. Brick making clay is a mix of sand and alumina and may contain chalk, lime, iron oxide or other materials. The character of the bricks used in the historic buildings of the AONB depended on the source of the clay and methods of handling and firing used. The variations of colour and texture which stemmed from these traditional brickworks are seldom achieved in the highly standardised, quality-controlled bricks of today. Bricks were initially only used on high status secular buildings but by the 18th century their use in cottages had become widespread. Even the earliest use of brick displayed how the material could be used



decoratively. Special effects were created using strongly contrasting brick, as seen on Abbey House, Witchampton (East Dorset Design Guide 1999). Until the common usage of Portland cement after the Second World War, most buildings were constructed using lime mortar. Traditional brickwork is also characterised by variations in bonding.

Landscape Scale Impact

Red brick is a common building material throughout the AONB. Brick is a notable component of buildings in the north west corner of the AONB between Penselwood and Longleat and as far east as Sutton Veny. It is also common along the chalk river valleys in the AONB and on the West Wiltshire Downs. It is used in the springline settlements running between Shaftesbury and Blandford. In the south of the AONB it is common but is combined with white render both across the Southern Downland Belt and in the Southern Downland Hills.

6.2 Limestone from the Purbeck Beds

Background

In the Vale of Wardour the Purbeck Beds contain white, fine-grained limestones, which have been used in buildings locally.

Landscape Scale Impact

Limestone from the Purbeck Beds is used for building in the Vale of Wardour and in the area between Penselwood and Longleat. It is overshadowed as a building material by both Chilmark and Hurdcott Stone.

6.3 Chilmark Stone

Background

In the Vale of Wardour, the upper part of the group, the Portland Stone Formation, has been quarried extensively for building since Medieval times. It is generally known as Chilmark Stone, though the main outcrop is around Tisbury, where it is known as Tisbury Stone. This Chilmark Member is distinguished by abundant oolites, less sand and lack of glauconite. At Chicks Grove quarry nearby around 20 metres of this Tisbury Member are still worked. This stone consists of paler, creamy white limestones (Wiltshire Geology Group 2010)

Landscape Scale Impact

The paler creamy white colour of this limestone has had a major impact on the character of the buildings in the Wylde Valley, the settlement on the open areas of the West Wiltshire Downs and throughout the Vale of Wardour.



Chilmark stone cottages in Tisbury

6.4 Greensand

Background

The Upper Greensand is recognisable by the abundant small dark green grains of glauconite in the sandstone that give it a distinctive greenish grey colour. Hurdcott Stone is still quarried near Barford St Martin, 6 miles east of Tisbury. It has been widely used for building around Shaftesbury. The upper part here contains chert beds which have been used locally, e.g. at Stourhead.

Landscape Scale Impact

In the area around Sutton Veny, Stourton and Kilmington Common the local building material is commonly Chert greensand. Another area in the AONB where its use is notable is in the springline settlements running between Shaftesbury and Blandford.

6.5 Timber Framing

Background

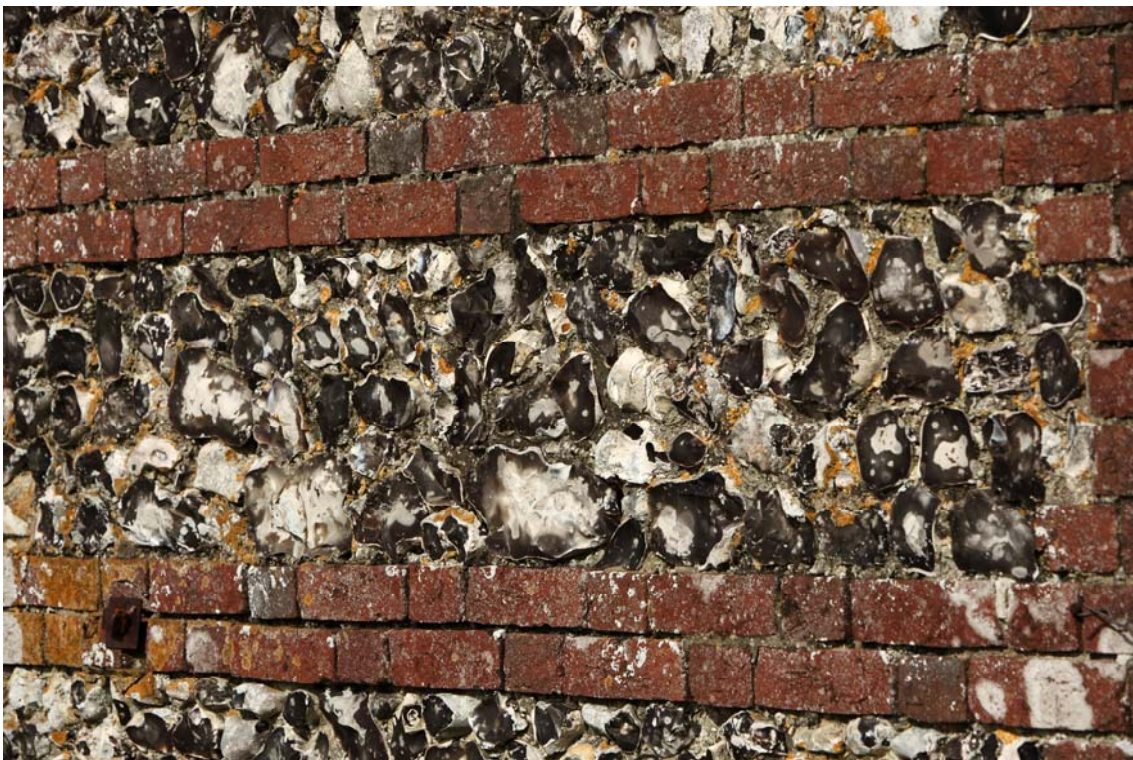
Timber framed buildings tend to occur in the AONB where there were plentiful supplies of oak. For example in East Dorset they are found in small numbers on the edges of the Eocene deposits, from Edmondsham to Pamphill (East Dorset Design Guide 1999). Brick 'nogging' has largely replaced the original wattle and daub panels between the timber frame, and today only fragments of this latter material exist, normally within internal partitions. Both panels and timbers were then lime washed. Surviving timber frame buildings, consist of square panels and straight braces, are mostly of

seventeenth-century origin, although a small number from the sixteenth-century may still be seen.

Landscape Scale Impact

Many of the cottages in the southern AONB chalk river valleys tend to be timber framed. Wooden framed thatched cottages are also common in the Vale of Wardour.

6.6 Knapped Flint with stone or red brick



Background

Flints are particularly common as nodules or bands in the Upper Chalk. They are resistant to weathering and can thus be used in walls as a protective outer layer. Flints can be used in their original nodular form, to give a wall of rough appearance, or can be split or “knapped” to give a smoother, glassy surface on the outward-facing side. In skilful hands, the flints can be knapped into rectangular blocks with a flat face, which can be laid in courses like bricks to produce a neat wall. Stone or brick courses were often incorporated in a flint wall to give it extra strength. Decorative effects have been achieved by alternating flint with bricks or stone. This can be seen in parts of the AONB where a chequered pattern of flint and stone has been produced; dressings are brick or limestone.

Landscape Scale Impact

The settlement on the open areas of the West Wiltshire Downs is commonly formed of red brick and flint. This combination is also seen through the Wooded Chalk Downland of the Cranborne Chase.



Stone and knapped flint is seen along the chalk river valleys of the AONB.

6.7 Cob

Background

In Chalk regions, chalk has traditionally been ground up and mixed with water into slurry with clay, plus chopped straw, horsehair or other binders like manure to make "cob". Sometimes, a chalk, mud and water slurry was poured between shuttering to make pugged walls. Wattle and daub involves daubing such a mixture onto a framework of wood. Plaster is applied on top to make it waterproof. Cob and pug, like wattle and daub, needed covering to protect them from the rain. Hence the quaint tiling or thatching which forms an attractive feature of some village walls. Stone or brick foundations were again necessary to avoid damp rising from below (Wiltshire Geology Group 2010).

Landscape Scale impact

In the Wylde locally distinctive features are high thatched cob walls. Cob is also common in the downland hills and across the Southern Downland Belt where it is combined with white render.



Cob walling

6.8 Clunch

Background

Chalk is not a satisfactory building stone but it has been used in the past in buildings. This stone is known as "clunch". It was usually necessary to have quoins of a harder stone or brick, while around windows and doors wooden beams, limestone or brick



dressings provided extra support. A foundation of less porous material (brick or stone) is therefore required, with a protective cover of brick or tile.

Landscape Scale Impact

There are some clunch walls in the Southern Downland Belt.

6.9 Clay Tiles

Background

Small, plain tiles represent the most common roofing material in the south of the AONB. More information is required on trends in the north. The earliest tiles, which were made in association with the local bricks, were known as 'peg-tiles'. These contained small holes through which oak or sweet chestnut pegs would be inserted in order to hang onto roofing laths. Increasingly, this traditional method of fixing is being replaced with galvanised nails. The external appearance of the roof, however, remains unchanged. The hand-made tiles produce a texture and richness of colour seldom found in the machine-made products that were to follow. Pantiles, Roman tiles and their derivations occur on isolated buildings but are not representative of roofing materials in the AONB (East Dorset Design Guide 1999).

Landscape Scale Impact

Clay tiles are common across the West Wiltshire Downs, Vale of Wardour and Wooded Chalk Downland.

6.10 Slate Roofs

Background

Welsh slate became a popular roofing material in villages with easy access to the railways. Many slate roofs have a lower pitch than tiled roofs, often with wider eaves. The material, in common with corrugated iron, is commonly used on mono-pitched roofs for single-storey extensions to thatched or tiled dwellings.

Landscape Scale Impact

Slate roofs are found in the northeast of the AONB between Longleat and Penselwood, on the West Wiltshire Downs, in the Wooded Chalk Downland of the AONB including a cluster of settlements near Sixpenny Handley: Deanland, New Town and Woodcutts.

6.12 Thatched roofs

Background

Long straw thatching technique was prevalent in the AONB until the turn of the twentieth-century. Changing agricultural practices resulted in the near extinction of this practice and the development instead of combed wheat thatching. Today, combed wheat thatching is a speciality of Devon and Dorset. Subtle variations of style form part



of the thatching tradition. In East Dorset roof coverings are thick and rounded, with smooth 'wrap-over' ridges and wide eaves (East Dorset Design Guide 1999). More information is needed on other styles in the AONB.

Traditionally, thatched roofs are repaired by adding successive layers of material, retaining sound older layers beneath. Over a period of time the thatch increases in thickness, which adds to the billowy character of many old cottage roofs.

Many cob and thatch cottages have been demolished on account of their poor condition, any defect in the roof would soon affect the condition of the cob walling beneath. Other thatched roofs, including their historic pole rafters, have been destroyed by fire. In the nineteenth-century, thatch was often replaced with clay tiles or Welsh slate as their availability widened; increasing the importance of any surviving thatch roofs.

Landscape Scale Impact

Thatch is common along the Wylde Valley and in the southern AONB chalk river valleys. Thatch is also common on the West Wiltshire Downs, Vale of Wardour, Wooded Chalk downland, throughout the Southern Downland Belt and in the Downland Hills.



Thatcher at work

6.12 Estate Style

Background

In some villages of the AONB the influence of large estates has had a notable impact on the character of the buildings. This includes regularity in the use of building materials, the provision of 'model' estate cottages, the use of estate colours on the eaves of buildings, or doors and a continuity of ownership leading to survival of historic features.

Landscape Scale Influence

Overarching influence of estate style can be seen in the villages of Stourton, Cranborne, Iwerne Minister, Fonthill Gifford, Fonthill Bishop, Tollard Royal, Corsley and Long Crichel.



Fonthill Bishop

7. Character of Conservation Areas

Background

There are 63 Conservation Areas in the AONB, all of which are villages. These range from planned Medieval settlements to nucleated settlement and common edge settlement

Landscape Scale Impact

The majority of Conservation Areas in the AONB are associated with the Vale of Wardour, Chalk River Valleys and Wooded Chalk Downland of the Cranborne Chase.

8. Character of Listed Buildings



King Alfred's Tower

Background

There are 2015 Listed Buildings in the AONB, 77 of which are Grade I and 106 Grade II*.

Landscape Scale Impact

Many of the Grade I buildings in the AONB are large country houses and the features associated with their parks and gardens, such as grottos. There are also a smaller number of churches with surviving Early Medieval and Saxon fabric.

Large numbers of the Grade II* buildings are churches, which contain important historic building fabrics and are comprised of important focal points surrounded by historic graveyards and boundary walls. The remaining secular buildings comprise a greater range of types including almshouses, barns and farmhouses.

The Grade II buildings are dominated by vernacular buildings such as cottages and farm houses.



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 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 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.

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Background	B1	Introducing the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB Historic Environment Action Plans
	B2	Description of the Archaeology of the AONB by Time Period
	B3	History of Archaeological Discovery
	B4	Land Use
	B5	Local Distinctiveness
	B6	People in the Landscape
	B7	Major Historical Events, Trends and Fashions
	B8	Designated Heritage Assets
	B9	Full List of Historic Environment Actions
	B10	References and Glossary
Area	A1	Longleat to Penselwood Hills and Kilmington Common
	A2	Sutton Veny, Cold Kitchen Hill and Zeals Knoll
	A3	Chalk River Valleys
	A4	Northern Wylde and Ebble Valley Sides
	A5	West Wiltshire Downs
	A6	Great Ridge and Grovely Woods
	A7	Fovant Terrace and the Area Between Chalbury and Woodlands
	A8	Chalk Escarpments
	A9	Vale of Wardour
	A10	Wooded Chalk Downland of the Cranborne Chase and Chetterwood
	A11	Downland Hills
	A12	Southern Downland Belt
Theme	T1	Ancient Boundaries and Land Ownership
	T2	Farms and Farming
	T3	Fields in the Landscape
	T4	Historic Parks and Gardens in the Landscape
	T5	Hunting Landscapes
	T6	Industry in the Landscape
	T7	Landscapes of Militarism, Commemoration & Defence
	T8	Landscapes of Prehistory
	T9	Open Land
	T10	Routeways in the Landscape
	T11	Settlement in the Landscape
	T12	Water in the Landscape
	T13	Woodland and Trees in the Landscape
	T14	Historic Features of Local Value
Supplementary	S1	Planning and Historic Landscape Character: A Guide for the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB
	S2	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
Method	M1	Creating Historic Environment Action Plans for Protected Landscapes
	M2	Creating and Describing Historic Environment Areas
	M3	Creating and Describing Historic Environment Theme

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.

