

North Wessex Downs AONB

Historic Landscape Characterisation



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North Wessex Downs AONB Historic Landscape Characterisation

Section 1: Introducing the North Wessex Downs AONB Historic Landscape Characterisation Dataset

Version 1

Summary

A brief introduction to the North Wessex Downs AONB Historic Landscape Characterisation

Created by Wyvern Heritage and Landscape Consultancy April 2012

1.1 Introducing Historic Landscape Characterisation

HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISATION (HLC) is an archaeological method used to define and map the historic and archaeological dimension of the present day landscape. It forms part of a National Programme developed by English Heritage in the early nineties and is continually evolving with ongoing development and changes in methodology, technology and application.

HLC is concerned with the totality of the landscape, providing a broad overview of the complexity of the historic environment in a given area. It is concerned with mapping the commonplace and locally distinctive and identifying time depth in the landscape.

Mapping and Geographical Information Systems (GIS) plays a central role in both the creation of the HLC dataset and in the presentation of the results

1.2 The Guiding Principles of Historic Landscape Characterisation

All Historic Landscape Characterisation Projects undertaken are underpinned by a series of guiding principles: -

- **Present not past:** it is the present-day landscape that is the main object of study
- **Landscape as history not geography:** the most important characteristic of landscape is its time-depth; change and earlier landscapes exist in the present landscape
- **Landscape not sites:** HLC-based research and understanding are concerned with area not point data
- **All aspects of the landscape**, no matter how modern, are treated as part of landscape character, **not just 'special' areas**
- Semi-natural and living features (woodland, land cover, hedges etc.) are as much a part of landscape character as archaeological features; **human landscape – bio-diversity is a cultural phenomenon**
- Characterisation of landscape is a matter of **interpretation not record, perception not facts**; understand 'landscape' as **an idea**, not purely as an objective thing
- **People's views:** it is important to consider collective and public perceptions of landscape alongside more expert views
- Landscape is and always has 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
- HLC maps and text should be easy to understand, **jargon free** and **easily accessible** to users
- HLC results should be **integrated** into other environmental and heritage management records e.g. Sites and Monument Records (SMRs) or Historic Environment Records (HERs)

It is also crucial that this project has a clear definition of what is meant by landscape.

This project defines Landscape as: -

"an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors."

1.3 Introducing the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

This is a nationally designated landscape covering 1730 sq km (the third largest AONB nationally with a population of only 125,000 people. It is surrounded by significant urban centres or Reading, Newbury, Basingstoke, Andover, Swindon and Didcot. It encompasses 173 parishes and straddles the boundaries of two counties (Hampshire, Oxfordshire), three unitary authorities (Wiltshire Council, Swindon Borough Council, West Berkshire Council) and four district councils (Test Valley, Basingstoke and Deane, South Oxfordshire, Vale of White Horse).

1.4 Background to the North Wessex Downs Historic Landscape Characterisation

The North Wessex Downs Historic Landscape Characterisation dataset was completed in 2006 by Melissa Conway. The original dataset was created for the area of the North Wessex Downs AONB and the whole of the district of Wessex Berkshire. The dataset has been subsequently cut to the AONB boundary and the maps and historic landscape descriptions in this report relate to the AONB only.

1.4 The Aims of the CCWWD AONB Historic Landscape Characterisation

The main aims of the Historic Landscape Characterisation are to help the North Wessex Downs AONB to:

- Better understand the historic elements of the whole landscape of the AONB
- Raise awareness and understanding of the unique cultural heritage of the area amongst local people, visitors and the wider population
- Provide a tool for managing the historic environment and the integrated management of the landscape as a whole
- Inform planning decisions
- Provide a framework for policy making and research agendas
- Enhance the county based SMR/HERs

The HLC can be used to:

- add to the information about the landscape held by the AONB
- raise awareness of the special nature of the area
- develop a sense of identity for the AONB
- inform planning decision making and minimise the adverse environmental impact of new development
- offer integrated management advice
- feed into the AONB Management Plan

1.5 About the North Wessex Downs AONB Historic Landscape Characterisation

The North Wessex Downs AONB Historic Landscape Characterisation consists of two elements

1. A GIS dataset
2. Historic Landscape Type descriptions (see Section 3 of this document)

The HLC dataset was created using a desk-based programme of GIS mapping and analysis which draws on a wide variety of data sources. These included modern maps, historic maps, aerial photographs, place name studies, SMR data and local archaeological and historical knowledge and research.

These sources were used to identify and group archaeological, historic and other environmental attributes attached to land parcels. This allowed the creation of multiple and hierarchical historic landscape types each with their own distinct and recognisable character. The distribution of these types can be mapped in GIS and are supported by written descriptions.

This HLC used modern and historic mapping, aerial photography and archaeological and environmental information to assess how each land parcel has evolved (Conway: pers.comm). Areas of similar evolution are assessed together and mapped as polygons in the GIS with the attributes related in an internal database. Information in the database is split into three sections: current land use; earlier land use; and information about the polygon (land parcel) itself. See Section 4 for more information on how to use the HLC dataset.

Twelve broad character groups were identified and 50 plus Historic Landscape Types. In relation to past Historic Landscape Types the North Wessex Downs AONB HLC adopts an approach which uses a system of multiple previous land types, recorded along with their source, and period of origin.

The North Wiltshire Downs AONB & West Berkshire HLC also incorporates an element of settlement character analysis, for example separating the suburban or village edge from the historic core.

North Wessex Downs AONB Historic Landscape Characterisation

Section 2: Present Day Historic Landscape Character Map

Version 2

Summary

The Historic Landscape Characterisation dataset can be used to create a whole range of maps displaying information on the Historic Landscape Character of the North Wessex Downs AONB. This map shows the dominant Historic Landscape Character in the present day landscape of the AONB. This is normally the map that is used for primary display purposes in reports, and for promotion

**HLC Dataset Created by Melissa Conway August 2006, updated December 2007
HLC Dataset updated and Present Day HLC Map created by
Wyvern Heritage and Landscape Consultancy April 2012**

North Wessex Downs Historic Landscape Characterisation
Present day Historic Landscape Character

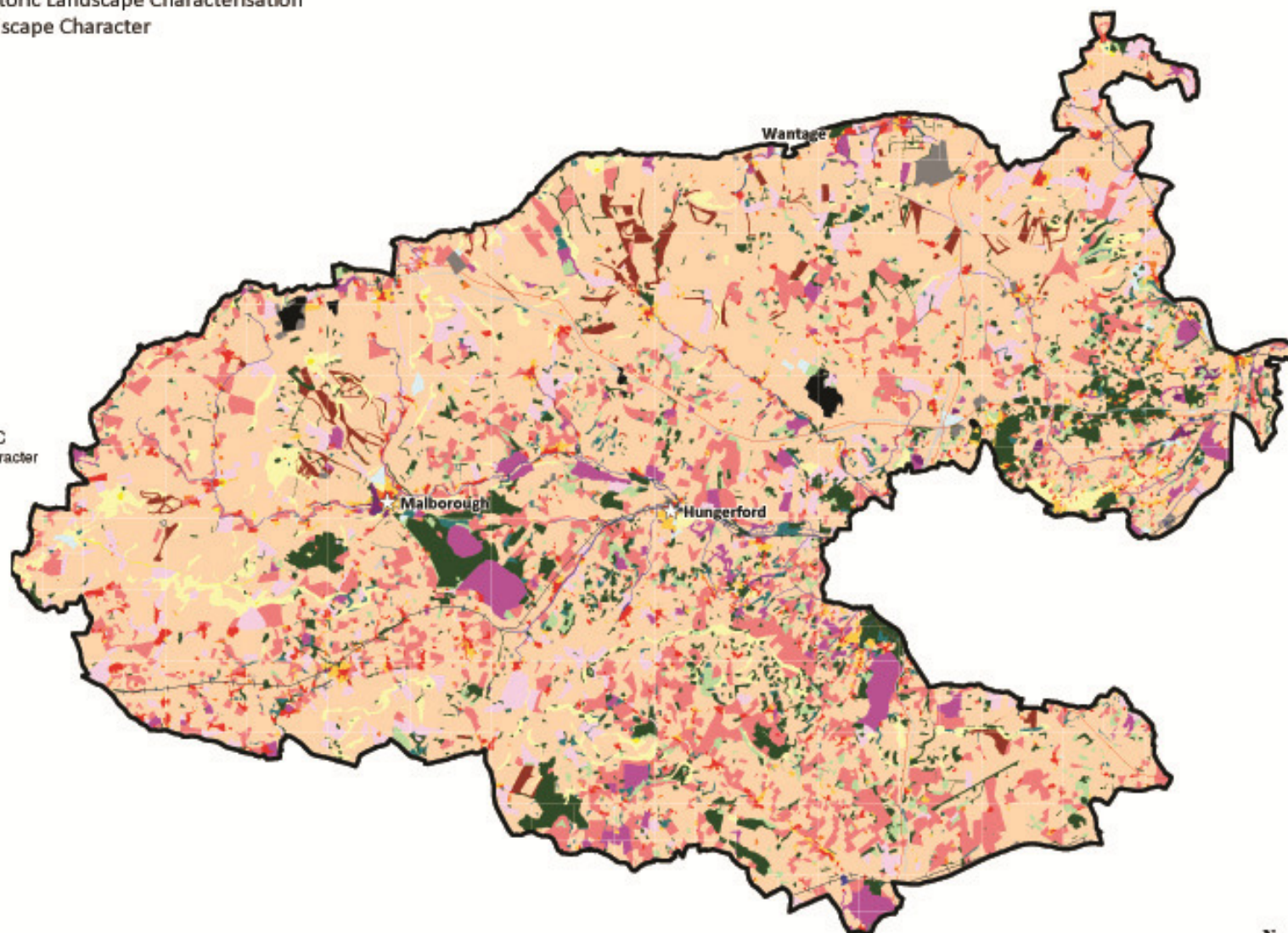
North Wessex Downs AONB HLC
Present Day Historic Landscape Character

- Pre 1700 Enclosure
- 1700 to 1900 Enclosure
- Post 1900 Enclosure
- Other enclosure
- Pre 1700 Open Land
- Pre 1600 Woodland
- 1600 to 1800 Woodland
- Post 1800 Woodland
- Pre 1700 Settlement
- 1700 to 1900 Settlement
- Post 1900 Settlement
- Other Settlement
- Post 1700 Designed Landscape
- Pre 1750 communications
- Post 1750 communications
- Post 1800 Civic
- Post 1800 Industry
- Post 1800 Recreation
- Pre 1900 Water
- Post 1800 Water
- Post 1900 Military
- Archaeology

 AONB Boundary

 Main Towns

 Railway Line



0 5 10
kilometres

N


North Wessex Downs AONB Historic Landscape Characterisation

Section 3: Description of Historic Landscape Types

Version 2

Summary

This section describes each individual Historic Landscape Type identified in the North Wessex Downs AONB Historic Landscape Characterisation dataset

**Description of HLT Types Version 1 Created by Melissa Conway August 2006, updated December 2007
Description of HLT Types Version 2 Created by Wyvern Heritage and Landscape Consultancy April 2012**

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Enclosures and Farming

Enclosed land and fields in the North Wessex Downs AONB.

Sub Group	Type	HLT No.	Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous Traces (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of AONB Area
Pre 1700 Enclosure	assarted enclosure	7	911	0.52%	Scarce	2057	2968	1.70%
	enclosed meadows	81	697	0.40%	Scarce	601	1299	0.74%
	pre 18 th Century irregular fields	3	8878	5.08%	Occasional	32310	41188	23.57%
	pre 18 th Century regular fields	53	9227	5.28%	Occasional	25750	34977	20.02%
	pre 18 th Century sinuous fields	15	108	0.06%	Rare	438	545	0.31%
1700 to 1900 Enclosure	19 th Century replanned fields	69	308	0.18%	Scarce	371	678	0.39%
	parliamentary enclosures	1	4993	2.86%	Uncommon	27301	32294	18.48%
	post-parliamentary enclosures	4	2788	1.60%	Uncommon	7587	10375	5.94%
	water meadow	35				1158	1158	0.66%
Post 1900 Enclosure	amalgamated fields	5	23015	13.17%	Frequent		23014	13.17%
	market gardens	47	57	0.03%	Rare		57	0.03%
	new field	44	14162	8.11%	Occasional		14162	8.11%
	paddocks	11	3728	2.13%	Uncommon	35	3762	2.15%
	reorganised fields	6	65317	37.38%	Abundant		65316	37.38%
	restored land	37	64	0.04%	Rare		63	0.04%
	wasteland	68	8	0.00%	Very Rare		7	0.00%
Other enclosure	allotment gardens	77	16	0.01%	Very Rare	31	46	0.03%
	gallops	12	1909	1.09%	Uncommon		1909	1.09%
	orchards	70	29	0.02%	Rare	49	78	0.04%
	studs & stables	9	190	0.11%	Scarce	62	252	0.14%

Pre 1700 Enclosure

Assarted Enclosures HLT 7

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of AONB Area
911	0.52%	Scarce	2057	2968	1.70%

Description: Fields created by the enclosure and clearance of woodland or common heath, mostly medieval in origin. They are typified by small irregular fields with hedged boundaries sited on the edge of commons and former commons or interspersed with woodland. These fields are thought to be a sign of the expansion of private farmland into shared woodland and common in the 13th century, necessitated by existing farmland becoming insufficient to support a rising population. There is concentrated in historically well-wooded areas or with many commons. Many are on present/former common fringes along with contemporary and related common-edge settlements (i.e. around Bucklebury Common).

Assarts have only been identified as such in the HLC data where assarting is the most likely origin for a field, as a type they are also morphologically very similar to **Pre-18th Century irregular enclosures**. It is likely, therefore, that **Assarts** are under-represented in the HLC data and their distribution and numbers should be regarded as representative but not definitive.

Period: Pre 18th Century

Factors influencing change: mechanisation of agriculture, decline in agriculture creating redundant land, spread of paddocks, housing expansion, scrub regeneration, woodland planting.

Biodiversity potential: high, also due to location amongst woods and commons, part of habitat and corridors? May have ancient woodland species surviving in hedgerows.

Archaeological potential: TBC

Management: check paddockisation and formal and informal (e.g. using them for garden sprawl) settlement growth where border settlements. Preserve hedgerows.

Research: TBC

“Quality of Life” potential: high?

Sensitivity: high

Pre 1700 Enclosure

Enclosed Meadows HLT 81

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of AONB Area
81	697	0.40%	Scarce	601	1299

Description: Sinuous fields on low-lying ground in valley bottoms, usually next to the course of a river or stream. These were probably originally for hay cultivation but are now mainly grazing and are likely to be medieval or early post medieval in origin. Like Early Enclosures, they represent an important component of the medieval and early post-medieval farming landscape. Enclosed meadows are rare as they are only found in very specific locations by watercourses. They are found mainly adjacent to the Pang and the Enborne and in the lower reaches of the Kennet (east of Newbury). Other examples can be found around Hungerford on the Kennet.

Period: Pre 18th Century

Factors influencing change: mechanisation of agriculture, woodland regeneration where grazing has ceased.

Capacity to absorb change: low

Biodiversity potential: high

Archaeological potential: TBC

Management: maintain grazing and boundaries

Research: TBC

“Quality of Life” potential: high (Check RoW network) pleasant river/streamside locations.

Sensitivity: high

Pre 1700 Enclosure

Pre 18th Century Irregular Fields HLT 3

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of AONB Area
8878	5.08%	Occasional	32310	41188	23.57%

Description: These are typified by irregularly-shaped, small to medium sized fields with boundaries composed mainly of hedges. They are representative of the later medieval/early post-medieval methods of farming in the district and are some of the oldest features in our landscape that remain in use. The majority of early enclosures have few traces of previous land-uses indicating that these areas have been dominated by enclosed farming systems from at least the medieval period. In a number of cases, however, many of these fields show traces of having been created from open fields. These indicate an early privatisation of the medieval communal farming systems that had supported many parishes.

Period: Pre 18th Century

Factors influencing change: mechanisation of agriculture, decline in agriculture creating redundant land, spread of paddocks, housing expansion, scrub regeneration, woodland planting.

Capacity to absorb change: variable, generally low.

Biodiversity potential: generally good, hedges

Archaeological potential: TBC

Management: TBC, hedgerow conservation,

Research: TBC

“Quality of Life” potential: TBC, probably high as, when well-preserved, creates an intimate countryside, sense of place and well-served by footpaths and bridleways.

Sensitivity: high

Pre 1700 Enclosure

Pre 18th Century Regular Fields HLT 53

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of AONB Area
9227	5.28%	Occasional	25750	34977	20.02%

Description: typified by regularly-shaped, small to medium sized fields with boundaries composed mainly of hedges. Like HLC Types **Pre 18th Century Sinuous Fields** and **Pre 18th Century Irregular Fields** they are medieval or early post-medieval in date but have a greater degree of regularity in their form than either of these types, this is likely to be because these fields are the result of phases of planned, but undocumented, enclosure. The majority of these fields have been enclosed from land formerly under communal usage, most has been enclosed from open-field arable though several examples of enclosure from commons and downland also exist.

Period: Pre 18th Century

Factors influencing change: mechanisation of agriculture, decline in agriculture creating redundant land, spread of paddocks, housing expansion, scrub regeneration, woodland planting.

Capacity to absorb change: variable, dependant on kind of change

Biodiversity potential: TBC

Archaeological potential: TBC

Management: TBC, hedgerow conservation

Research: TBC

“Quality of Life” potential: high? Good RoW network?

Sensitivity: high

Pre 1700 Enclosure

Pre 18th Century Sinuous Fields HLT 15

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of AONB Area
108	0.06%	Rare	438	545.	0.31%

Description: a sinuous form of early enclosures, usually bounded by hedges, which are similar in origin to HLC type **Pre 18th Century Irregular Fields**. The shape of these enclosures reflects a preceeding open field regime, their sinuous boundaries preserving the pattern of strips within the common fields. It is likely that these fields were formed through piecemeal enclosure of these strips. This type has a very limited distribution.

Period: Pre 18th Century

Factors influencing change: mechanisation of agriculture, decline in agriculture creating redundant land, spread of paddocks, housing expansion, scrub regeneration, woodland planting. Housing spread is the most likely and serious threat to this type. A large proportion of this type has already been used for the expansion of this settlement.

Capacity to absorb change: low. Due to the scarcity of this type little change could accommodated.

Biodiversity potential: Potential high

Archaeological potential:

Management: TBC, Hedgerow conservation

Research:

“Quality of Life” potential:

Sensitivity: high

1700 to 1900 Enclosure

19th Century Re-planned Fields HLT 69

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous Traces (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of AONB Area
308	0.18%	Scarce	371	678	0.39%

Description: fields created through the wholesale re-organisation of existing agricultural units during the 19th Century. The creation of this type seems to be driven by two forces (not mutually exclusive) a rationalisation of agricultural holdings and large estates improving the agricultural setting to their parks. The best example of the latter is at Englefield where land to the north, south and east of the Park, along with its roads, was remodelled along with roads to focus on and frame the approach to the park itself. They are relatively uncommon in the district and the only concentration is at Englefield.

Period: 19th C

Factors influencing change: agricultural change leading to holding rationalisation.

Capacity to absorb change: TBC

Biodiversity potential: TBC

Archaeological potential: TBC

Management: TBC

Research: TBC

“Quality of Life” potential: TBC

Sensitivity: medium – high

1700 to 1900 Enclosure

Parliamentary Enclosures HLT 1

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous Traces (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of AONB Area
4993	2.86%	Uncommon	27301	32294	18.48%

Description: fields created by formal enclosure by act of parliament (in West Berkshire between 1738 and 1858). The fields created by this process are usually regular in shape with straight boundaries and the boundaries are usually hedged and/or fenced. Enclosure by Act of Parliament was employed when no local agreement could be attained on how to divide the open fields or common grazing amongst local landowners/holders. The east of the area was already very heavily enclosed by the time of the Enclosure Acts so the process brought about less of a total transformation of the landscape than has been seen in other counties. As much of the landscape was enclosed by this time, the **Parliamentary Enclosures** in are somewhat less regular and regimented than observed in other areas since they were slotting into niches amongst well-defined fieldscapes. **Parliamentary Enclosures** are found in pockets across the district; in the Downland parishes (with the exception of Brightwalton, Catmore, Leckhampstead and Peasemore) and along the Lambourn Valley, along the Kennet Valley, adjacent to the Enborne and the Hampshire border, and along the Thames. Parliamentary enclosure was responsible for the enclosure of the majority of the common meadows, common grazing and heaths. It is notable that although considerable amounts of open-field were enclosed through this process, much more had already been enclosed informally by the 18th Century.

Period: 18th - 19th C

Factors influencing change: mechanisation of agriculture, decline in agriculture creating redundant land, spread of paddocks, housing expansion, scrub regeneration, woodland planting. Many are located on Downs, expansion of horse-training industry leading to paddockisation of many examples of this type.

Capacity to absorb change: TBC

Biodiversity potential: TBC

Archaeological potential: TBC

Management: TBC

Research: TBC

"Quality of Life" potential: TBC

Sensitivity: high

1700 to 1900 Enclosure

Post- Parliamentary Enclosures HLT 4

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous Traces (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of AONB Area
2788	1.60%	Uncommon	7587	10375	5.94%

Description: fields created in the later 19th Century, usually through private enclosure of parkland, woods, commons, downland and some remaining areas of open-field arable. The majority of fields of this type are morphologically similar to **Parliamentary Enclosures**, some are more irregular in shape often reflecting the land that they have been enclosed from (i.e. sinuous fields from grubbing woodland or enclosure on downs).

Period: 19th Century

Trajectory of change: 74% lost/altered

Factors influencing change: agricultural modernisation leading to field reorganisation, housing growth.

Capacity to absorb change: TBC

Biodiversity potential: TBC

Archaeological potential: TBC

Management: TBC

Research: TBC

“Quality of Life” potential: TBC

Sensitivity: medium – high

1700 to 1900 Enclosure

Water Meadows (previous type only)

HLT 35

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous Traces (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of AONB Area
			1158	1158	0.66%

Description: Utilised sophisticated water management systems (leats, sluices, ridges) to flood meadows during winter months to prevent ground freezing and so ensure an early growth of spring grass for grazing animals (mostly sheep and lambs). They are comprised of enclosed fields (morphology very variable as are sited next to rivers on low-lying ground) with channels and sluices to ensure stable water flow over the meadow. Though rare nationally, large tracts of water meadows are found in the AONB, most are found along the Lambourn and the Kennet (west of Newbury), there are also several examples along the Pang. East of Newbury there are few water meadows and they seem to be replaced along this stretch of the Kennet by **enclosed meadows** and **common meadows**. There are no active water meadows in the district and many have been converted to other uses, either through active measures (arable fields, plantations) or neglect (scrub, rough grazing). Despite this, water meadows are not entirely destroyed and there are many instances where earthworks of the system (channels and ridges) still survive in the midst of these new land uses and could be restored or enhanced.

Period: 18th – 19th Century

Trajectory of change: no examples are active in the landscape.

Factors influencing change: not a regime utilised by modern agriculture also lack of water in area to maintain them in their working format.

Capacity to absorb change: low

Biodiversity potential: high
Archaeological potential: TBC

Management: TBC

Research: TBC

“Quality of Life” potential: high

Sensitivity: high, but only survive within other land-uses.

Post 1900 Enclosure

Amalgamated Fields HLT 5

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of AONB Area
23015	13.17%	Frequent		23014	13.17%

Description: modern fields formed through the consolidation of existing, historic, enclosures into larger holdings, usually to enable more efficient, mechanised arable agriculture. They are widely distributed, but are commonest on the downs and immediately away from the valley floors, significant amounts are, however, found in the Kennet Valley between Thatcham and Theale. These enclosures are created by the removal of boundaries between fields and are also often known as prairie fields (large open arable expanses where many boundaries, hedges and woods have been ripped out and the only surviving historic feature is the occasional farm or ruined barn). Many of the examples are true prairie fields, especially those on the downs, however significant numbers are also found that do not fit the prairie field pattern – many are in-use as pasture and/or remain small to medium sized units following boundary removal – so it was felt that **Amalgamated Fields** was a more appropriate term to use for this type. There is usually some trace of the prior field-system visible in these modernised fields. The numbers of field boundaries lost in the creation of each of these examples is recorded in the database.

Period: mid 20th C – present

Factors influencing change: TBC, may continue to increase in more prime agricultural areas if mechanised agriculture and agro-business continues to dominate. However, likelihood of CAP reform and development of Countryside Stewardship payments for hedgerow maintenance/reinstatement and growing recognition of importance of sustainability in agriculture may cause halt or reverse in this trend.

Capacity to absorb change: TBC

Biodiversity potential: TBC

Archaeological potential: TBC

Management: No intrinsic management issues for the type, however importance of maintaining/enhancing any extant historic features (hedgerows) inherited from prior land-use and not causing any more denudation to them.

Research: TBC

“Quality of Life” potential: TBC

Sensitivity: variable, due to survival of traces (stubs of hedgerows, hedgerow trees, intact external boundary) of prior field systems within them. See District Sensitivity assessment.

Post 1900 Enclosure

Reorganised Fields HLT6

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of AONB Area
65317	37.38%	Abundant		65316	37.38%

Description: modern fields formed through the consolidation of existing, historic, enclosures into more regular holdings, usually to enable more efficient, mechanised arable agriculture. Although also driven by modern agriculture's need for larger and more conveniently shaped fields these are different to **Amalgamated Fields** as they are formed not simply through boundary removal. This type is usually created through a mixture of boundary removal and realignment of existing fields. The commonest origin of this type is where irregular boundaries of historic fields are straightened and more regularly-shaped fields are created in their place. There is usually some trace of the prior field-system visible in these modernised fields. Like **Amalgamated Fields** they are found in both arable and pasture usage and in a wide array of sizes. Reorganised fields are fairly evenly distributed but are more widespread in the arable sections of the district, especially the downs. This type is now the commonest land-use in the district and it is fair to say that it and the other types that reflect 20th century agricultural regimes dominates our countryside.

Period: mid 20th C – present

Factors influencing change: may continue to increase in more prime agricultural areas if mechanised agriculture and agro-business continues to dominate. However, likelihood of CAP reform and development of Countryside Stewardship payments for hedgerow maintenance or reinstatement and growing recognition of importance of sustainability in agriculture may cause a reverse in this trend.

Capacity to absorb change: TBC

Biodiversity potential: TBC

Archaeological potential: TBC

Management: No intrinsic management issues for the type, however importance of maintaining/enhancing any extant historic features (hedgerows) inherited from prior land-use and not causing any more denudation to them.

Research: TBC

“Quality of Life” potential: TBC

Sensitivity: variable due to survival of traces (stubs of hedgerows, hedgerow trees, intact external boundary) of prior field systems within them.

Post 1900 Enclosure

New Fields HLT 44

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of AONB Area
14162	8.11%	Occasional		14162	8.11%

Description: fields (usually arable) created in the later 20th Century through enclosure of land not previously part of the farmed landscape. These fields are usually regular in shape and have straight boundaries. The majority of these fields have been created due to the expansion of agriculture onto downland areas, traditionally used as grazing, that had escaped historic enclosure. Many **New Fields** have also been created on areas previously used as water meadows and significant numbers have also been created through the removal of woodland. The majority of **New Fields** are found on the Downs and adjacent to the district's rivers, scattered examples are found elsewhere.

Period: mid 20th C – present

Factors influencing change: TBC

Capacity to absorb change: TBC

Biodiversity potential: TBC

Archaeological potential: TBC

Management: No intrinsic management issues for the type, however importance of maintaining/enhancing any extant historic features (wood boundaries, water meadow earthworks) inherited from prior land-use and not causing any more denudation to them.

Research: TBC

“Quality of Life” potential: TBC

Sensitivity: variable, due to survival of traces of earlier land-uses within them (water meadow earthworks, trees, wood boundaries).

Post 1900 Enclosure

Restored Land HLT 37

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of AONB Area
64	0.04%	Rare		63	0.04%

Description: areas in-filled and re-instated following gravel extraction. Most areas have been restored as fields, however some have been restored to grassland or have been planted with trees. The nature of the restoration is stored in the database under MORPHOLOGY.

Period: mid 20th Century – present

Factors influencing change:

Capacity to absorb change:

Biodiversity potential:

Archaeological potential:

Management:

Research:

“Quality of Life” potential:

Sensitivity: low

Post 1900 Enclosure

Market Garden HLT 47

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of AONB Area
57	0.03%	Rare		57	0.03%

Description: nurseries and market gardens for horticultural production. Very rare and found scattered across the AONB.

Period: 20th C – present

Factors influencing change:

Capacity to absorb change:

Biodiversity potential:

Archaeological potential:

Management:

Research:

“Quality of Life” potential:

Sensitivity: low

Post 1900 Enclosure

Paddocks HLT 11

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of AONB Area
3728	2.13%	Uncommon	35	3762	2.15%

Description: small fields for keeping of horses and ponies, usually created by the sub-division of existing fields. A significant amount of **Paddocks** are an essential element of the AONBs racing industry and are located adjacent to the many **Studs and Stables** (9) on the Downs. Paddocks have also become widespread in the area as a whole, with concentrations along the Pang and the Kennet, but these have been established on a more ad-hoc basis. Many of these are sited next to settlements and are used to accommodate pet or hobby ponies. These types of paddocks can have an erosive affect as they blur the boundary between settlement and countryside and suburbanise the area around towns and villages.

Period: 20th C – present

Factors influencing change:

Capacity to absorb change:

Biodiversity potential:

Archaeological potential:

Management:

Research:

“Quality of Life” potential:

Sensitivity: low-medium

Post 1900 Enclosure

Wasteland HLT 68

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of AONB Area
8	0.00%	Very Rare		7	0.00%

Description: areas of derelict or waste ground with no obvious current land-use. In most instances Wasteland appears to be a transitional land-use and only areas of long-term dereliction have been mapped under this category.

There are few examples in the district

Period: mid 20th Century – present

Factors influencing change:

Capacity to absorb change:

Biodiversity potential:

Archaeological potential:

Management:

Research:

“Quality of Life” potential:

Sensitivity: low

Other Enclosure

Allotments HLT 77

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of AONB Area
16	0.01%	Very Rare	31	46	0.03%

Description: areas of land divided into small plots and rented for growing vegetables, some also support animal rearing (e.g. chickens). Some allotments date from the 19th Century and have their roots in “Poor Allotments” created by some Parliamentary Enclosure Acts to account for the loss of access to common resources by very minor tenants or peasants caused through enclosure. The majority of the AONB’s allotments are 20th Century in origin and reflect the development of allotments as a means for urban dwellers to grow their own food. This was promoted by the government during the World Wars as a means of supplementing diets and remaining healthy despite commercial food shortage and rationing. Allotments very rare, reflecting the overall low levels of urbanisation in the area, and are located within established settlements. The greatest number are in Newbury.

Period: 19th C – present

Factors influencing change:

Capacity to absorb change:

Biodiversity potential:

Archaeological potential:

Management:

Research:

“Quality of Life” potential:

Sensitivity: medium-high

Other Enclosure

Gallops HLT 12

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of AONB Area
1909	1.09%	Uncommon		1909	1.09%

Description: grassed runs for training horses on. These are characterised by long, often sinuous, strips of grass which are sometimes demarked by white rails. They are found only on the Downs where the racing industry is concentrated. Gallops are an iconic component of the district's Downland landscape. Probably under-recorded by the HLC dataset as some examples are too small to be mapped by the project, though the distribution is accurate.

Period: 19th C – present

Factors influencing change:

Capacity to absorb change:

Biodiversity potential:

Archaeological potential:

Management:

Research:

“Quality of Life” potential:

Sensitivity: medium

Other Enclosure

Orchards HLT 70

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of AONB Area
29	0.02%	Rare	49	78	0.04%

Description: plantations of fruit trees for commercial fruit growing. This type may be under-represented in the data as some examples may have been too small to be mapped by the project methodology.

Period: prehistoric – present

Trajectory of change: decreasing, none mapped as a current type, size limitations of survey or reflection of actual situation.

Factors influencing change:

Capacity to absorb change:

Biodiversity potential:

Archaeological potential:

Management:

Research:

“Quality of Life” potential: high

Sensitivity: n/a, not found as a current type.

Other Enclosure

Studs and Stables HLT 9

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of AONB Area
190	0.11%	Scarce	62	252	0.14%

Description: an essential element of the AONBs racing industry and are located adjacent to the many Paddocks (11) on the Downs

Period: Post 1800 – present

Factors influencing change:

Capacity to absorb change:

Biodiversity potential:

Archaeological potential:

Management:

Research:

“Quality of Life” potential:

Sensitivity: Low

Settlement

Settlement in the North Wessex Downs AONB

Sub Group	Type	HLT No.	Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of Area of AONB
Pre 1700 Settlement	historic settlement	39	4062.628	2.33%	Uncommon	98.022	4160.65	2.38%
1700 to 1900 Settlement	18 - 19thC settlement	41	536.502	0.31%	Scarce	12.174	548.676	0.31%
	workhouse/asylum	73		0.00%	N/A	10.325	10.325	0.01%
Post 1900 Settlement	interwar settlement	42	37.876	0.02%	Rare		37.876	0.02%
	recent settlement growth	43	2683.153	1.54%	Uncommon		2683.153	1.54%
Other Settlement	cemetery	36	7.662	0.00%	Very Rare	1158.472	1166.134	0.67%
	religious community	71	23.331	0.01%	Very Rare		23.331	0.01%

Pre 1700 Settlement

Historic Settlement Core 39

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of Area of AONB
4062.628	2.33%	Uncommon	98.022	4160.65	2.38%

Description: all pre-18th Century settlement, identified using 18th century county maps. This type is mainly made up of extant medieval settlements and includes those of possible earlier origin (e.g. Saxon – Thatcham, Lambourn, Kintbury). Details on the nature of settlement are stored in the database field MORPHOLOGY.

The full list of morphology types found amongst this type are described below.

common edge settlement
hamlet/farm cluster
individual/isolated farm
interrupted/irregular row settlement
medieval planned town
nucleated regular row settlement
nucleated settlement cluster
other old settlement

Period: Pre 18th Century, mostly medieval in origin

Factors influencing change: need for more and denser housing can lead to erosion of settlement character. Reinterpretation of historic town centres as tourism destinations can cause theme-park effect.

Capacity to absorb change: medium. Historic settlements are adaptable to some change within them, most have been occupied and re-modelled over hundreds of years, and are clearly dynamic entities. Some are more adaptable than others and erosion of character in historic settlements can occur fairly easily either through uniting close, but dispersed, settlements through infilling or by the removal of historic features such as buildings and plot boundaries.

Biodiversity potential: TBC

Archaeological potential: TBC

Management: TBC

Research: TBC

“Quality of Life” potential: high, provide a sense of place and history that adds depth to life within them.

Sensitivity: medium-high

1700 to 1900 Settlement

18 – 19th Century Settlement HLT 41

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of Area of AONB
536.502	0.31%	Scarce	12.174	548.676	0.31%

Description: settlement dating to the 18th and 19th Centuries. Although not as numerous as **Historic Settlements** these also display a wide variety of forms; some are simply expansion of existing settlements whilst others are new foundations relating to changes in agriculture and communications. Many of the new settlements are farms established away from villages and located at the centre of holdings created through the enclosure of open fields and commons, and mark a break with the pattern established in the medieval period. There are also examples of settlements founded along the canal (Aldermaston Wharf).

The full list of morphology types found amongst this type are described below.

individual/isolated farm
common edge settlement
planned estate housing
rail/canalside settlement
settlement infill or fringe growth
housing (isolated)

Period: 18th - 19th C

Factors influencing change: as for Historic Settlement Core

Capacity to absorb change: as for Historic Settlement Core

Biodiversity potential: TBC

Archaeological potential: TBC

Management: TBC

Research: TBC

“Quality of Life” potential: as for Historic Settlement Core

Sensitivity: medium-high

1700 to 1900 Settlement

Workhouse/Asylum (Previous Type Only) HLT 73

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of Area of AONB
	0.00%	N/A	10.325	10.325	0.01%

Description: Victorian institutions for the housing of the poor or the mentally ill. No current examples but some have been recorded as a previous type where they have been re-developed or re-used and influence the subsequent land-use.

Period: 19th Century

Trajectory of change: n/a

Factors influencing change: n/a

Capacity to absorb change: n/a

Biodiversity potential: n/a

Archaeological potential: n/a

Management: n/a

Research: n/a

“Quality of Life” potential: n/a

Sensitivity: n/a

Post 1900 Settlement

Interwar Settlement

HLT42

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of Area of AONB
37.876	0.02%	Rare		37.876	0.02%

Description: early planned suburbs on the fringes of Newbury, characterised by rows of terraces (e.g. West Fields).

Period: early - mid 20th

Trajectory of change: TBC

Factors influencing change: TBC

Capacity to absorb change: TBC

Biodiversity potential: TBC

Archaeological potential: TBC

Management: TBC

Research: TBC

“Quality of Life” potential: TBC

Sensitivity: medium-high

Post 1900 Settlement

Recent Settlement Growth HLT 43

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of Area of AONB
1.54%	Uncommon		2683.153	1.54%	1.54%

Description: late 20th Century settlement, most examples of this type are housing of some sort. There is a small but significant number of farms that have been established over this period.

The full list of morphology types found amongst this type are described below.

individual/isolated farm
hamlet/farm cluster
military housing
housing (isolated)
housing (large developments)
settlement infill or fringe growth
static caravan park

Period: mid 20th C – present

Trajectory of change: TBC

Factors influencing change: TBC

Capacity to absorb change: TBC

Biodiversity potential: TBC

Archaeological potential: TBC

Management: TBC

Research: TBC

“Quality of Life” potential: TBC

Sensitivity: low

Other Settlement

Cemeteries HLT 36

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of Area of AONB
7.662	0.00%	Very Rare	1158.472	1166.134	0.67%

Description: municipal cemeteries not on previous church sites, mainly later 19th Century onwards. There are few examples, the majority are sited on the fringes of major settlements (examples at Hungerford, Thatcham, and Newbury) with one exception at Upper Lambourn.

Period: 19th C – present

Factors influencing change:

Capacity to absorb change: limited

Biodiversity potential: TBC

Archaeological potential: TBC

Management: TBC

Research: TBC

“Quality of Life” potential: TBC

Sensitivity: low-medium

Other Settlement

Religious Community HLT71

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of Area of AONB
23.331	0.01%	Very Rare		23.331	0.01%

Description: modern religious foundations, such as Douai Abbey.

Period: mid 20th Century – present

Factors influencing change: TBC

Capacity to absorb change: TBC

Biodiversity potential: TBC

Archaeological potential: TBC

Management: TBC

Research: TBC

“Quality of Life” potential: TBC

Sensitivity: Medium

Woodland

Woodland in the North Wessex Downs AONB

Sub Group	Type	HLT No.	Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of Area of AONB
Pre 1600 Woodland	ancient woodland	24	4118	2.36%	Uncommon	1310.084	5428	3.11%
1600 to 1800 Woodland	old secondary woodland	22	2244	1.28%	Uncommon	378.96	2623	1.50%
Post 1800 Woodland	plantation woodland	21	5012	2.87%	Uncommon	93.778	5106	2.92%
	recent secondary woodland	25	1226	0.70%	Scarce		1226	0.70%
	replanted ancient woodland	23	4143	2.37%	Uncommon		4143	2.37%
	tree nursery	80	16	0.01%	Very Rare		16	0.01%

Pre 1600 Woodland

Ancient Woodland HLT24

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of Area of AONB
4118	2.36%	Uncommon	1310.084	5428	3.11%

Description: The oldest surviving wooded areas in the district, characterised by species-rich broadleaf woodland. They have been identified through comparison of English Nature's Ancient Woodlands Inventory and historic mapping sources. English Nature defines **Ancient-Semi Natural Woodland** as land that has been continuously wooded since at least 1600 AD. Most have been exploited as an important and dynamic economic resource from at least the medieval period through coppicing and other woodland management. ASNW is almost entirely absent from the high Downs and the floor of the Kennet Valley, but is widely found elsewhere across the rest of the district.

Period: prehistoric – present

Factors influencing change: grubbing-up for agricultural land, housing, industrial development, etc. Has slowed recently due to more protection and recognition of its importance as an asset in its own right and for biodiversity, recreation, etc. Loss of woodmanship skills and active management leading to decline in woodland mix/quality/usefulness.

Capacity to absorb change: low, this is a system that has developed over many hundreds of years and is easily damaged through poor or insufficient management. It cannot be recreated.

Biodiversity potential: high, many plants (indicator species) exist only in these habitats.

Archaeological potential: TBC

Management: TBC

Research: TBC

“Quality of Life” potential: high, recreational opportunities, ecological and environmental benefits and possibility of using them to re-establish traditional industries (charcoal, withies and hurdles, timber) and create sustainable (in terms of employment and goods miles) sources for products.

Sensitivity: high

1600 to 1800 Woodland

Old Secondary Woodland HLT22

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of Area of AONB
2244	1.28%	Uncommon	378.96	2623	1.50%

Description: non-ancient woodlands in existence by the 19th Century; most have grown up on land that has, at some point, been used for other purposes. Many of these woodlands date back to the earliest mapping sources and are historic landscape features in their own right. Many have been subject to active management, such as coppicing, and have served as important resources. Most Secondary Woodland has come about through natural processes of woodland regeneration and colonisation however some examples of planted woods also exist. These are becoming commoner as the appreciation of broadleaf woodland grows, and such woods are seen as desirable things to create (especially community woodlands and the Woodland Grant Scheme).

Period: prehistoric – present

Factors influencing change: grubbing-up for agricultural land, housing, industrial development, etc. This process has slowed due to a recognition of importance of woodland as an asset in its own right and for biodiversity, recreation, etc. Loss of woodmanship skills and active management leading to decline in woodland mix/quality/usefulness.

Capacity to absorb change:

Biodiversity potential:

Archaeological potential:

Management:

Research:

“Quality of Life” potential: high

Sensitivity: variable

Post 1800 Woodland

Plantations HLT 21

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of Area of AONB
5012	2.87%	Uncommon	93.778	5106	2.92%

Description: blocks of trees, usually of a single species, planted mostly for forestry. Plantations are usually regular in shape and the larger examples have features such as fire-breaks and access tracks. The majority of plantations are of conifers although plantations of broadleaf species are also found. Most were created for commercial forestry to produce crops of trees. A significant number have also been established to provide cover for animals. In the 19th Century during the heyday of hunting numerous fox coverts were planted. More recently shelter belts for livestock have been created in many locations especially on the Downs. Some small plantations have been established for aesthetic reasons either to prettify the landscape or to screen houses or industrial sites. They are found all over the area but are most concentrated around the Pang (Yattendon Estates?) and adjacent to the Hampshire border between Mortimer and Aldermaston.

Period: 19th C – present

Factors influencing change: TBC

Capacity to absorb change: TBC

Biodiversity potential: TBC

Archaeological potential: TBC

Management: TBC

Research: TBC

“Quality of Life” potential: TBC, opportunities for “forest” recreation, i.e. mountain biking, walks

Sensitivity: variable

Post 1800 Woodland

Recent Secondary Woodland 25

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of Area of AONB
1226	0.70%	Scarce		1226	0.70%

Description: non-ancient woodlands that have developed through woodland regeneration and colonisation since the start of the 20th century. These are becoming commoner as the appreciation of broadleaf woodland grows, and such woods are seen as desirable things to create (especially community woodlands and the Woodland Grant Scheme).

Period: prehistoric – present

Factors influencing change: grubbing-up for agricultural land, housing, industrial development, etc. This process has slowed due to a recognition of importance of woodland as an asset in its own right and for biodiversity, recreation, etc. Loss of woodmanship skills and active management leading to decline in woodland mix/quality/usefulness.

Capacity to absorb change: TBC

Biodiversity potential: TBC

Archaeological potential: TBC

Management: TBC

Research: TBC

“Quality of Life” potential: high

Sensitivity: variable

Post 1800 Woodland

Replanted Ancient-Semi Natural Woodland

HLT 23

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of Area of AONB
4143	2.37%	Uncommon		4143	2.37%

Description: Defined by English Nature as ancient woodland sites where the original native tree cover has been felled and replaced by planting. Plantation is usually of conifers and carried out with more mechanised forestry practices, it has taken place from the late 19th Century onwards. The extent and boundary of a woodland usually remains the same but the planted species replace the broadleaf trees characteristic of ASNW. Features characteristic of modern forestry practices such as fire breaks and access tracks (usually rectilinear) may also be introduced into the wood during replanting. Numerous examples of RASNW are found in those areas where Ancient Woodland is distributed and the type is commonest in the Pang Valley and its watersheds.

Period: 19th C – present

Factors influencing change: unlikely that significant amounts of extra RASNW will be created, due to the recognition of limitations of forestry and usefulness of managed broadleaf woodland for biodiversity and also its economic usefulness.

Capacity to absorb change:

Biodiversity potential:

Archaeological potential:

Management: Prevent further damage to surviving bits of ASNW cover/trees surviving within these types, maintain woodbanks. Increasingly replant as broadleaf as current coniferous crops mature and are harvested?

Research: TBC

“Quality of Life” potential: TBC

Sensitivity: TBC

Post 1800 Woodland

Tree Nurseries HLT 80

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of Area of AONB
16	0.01%	Very Rare		16	0.01%

Description: areas for the growth of young trees for sale or transplantation elsewhere. Several examples in Savernake forest in NWD HLC dataset.

Period: mid 20th C – present

Factors influencing change: TBC

Capacity to absorb change: TBC

Biodiversity potential: TBC

Archaeological potential: TBC

Management: TBC

Research: TBC

“Quality of Life” potential: TBC

Sensitivity:

Open Land

Open Land in the North Wessex Downs AONB

Sub Group	Type	HLT No.	Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of Area of AONB
Pre 1700 Open Land	commons & greens	14	664	0.38%	Scarce	2051	2715	1.55%
	downland	65	4960	2.84%	Uncommon	26864	31824	18.21%
	heath	49		0.00%	N/A	869	869	0.50%
	marsh	45	4	0.00%	Very Rare	150	153	0.09%
	meadow	61	29	0.02%	Rare	783	812	0.46%
	open field	66		0.00%	N/A	74126	74126	42.42%
	rough grazing	13	95	0.05%	Rare		95	0.05%

Pre 1700 Open Land

Commons & Greens HLT14

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of Area of AONB
664	0.38%	Scarce	2051	2715	1.55%

Description: open areas established in/by Medieval period and used for grazing, as a fuel source and for the location of certain industries (kilns, etc.). The majority of the districts commons were extensive irregularly-shaped tracts of heath unsuited to agricultural production, e.g. Greenham and Crookham commons and Bucklebury Common. There are some examples of smaller village greens, these are very varied in form. Over the later medieval and post-medieval periods many of the district's commons have been a focus for settlement for those eager to exploit the resources of the common and many small "common-edge" settlements were established on their fringes. Large tracts of commons were enclosed through Parliamentary Enclosure, many were subsequently found to be ill-suited for agriculture and are now the sites of plantations. A significant amount has also been lost to woodland uses either through neglect and natural regeneration (fringes of Greenham Common lying outside the USAF base extent) or through formal commercial plantation (hermitage, Ashampstead). Commons are mostly sited in the south and central parts of the district and concentrate on the gravelly upper valley slopes and watersheds, particularly those around the Kennet, Pang, Winterbourn, and that between the Enborne – Kennet and the Foudry Brook.

Period: medieval

Factors influencing change: still threatened by neglect leading to woodland regeneration, however further large-scale formal appropriation of commons for other uses is unlikely due to legal protections and the protest and dissent aroused by such proposals.

Capacity to absorb change: low

Biodiversity potential: high

Archaeological potential: untapped resource or are they actually a hole in settlement activity? remains of industry likely to be found?

Management: grazing paramount to prevent scrub regrowth and woodland regeneration.
Research: TBC

"Quality of Life" potential: high, recreational, educational, feeling of land "ownership".

Sensitivity: high

Pre 1700 Open Land

Downland HLT65

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of Area of AONB
4960	2.84%	Uncommon	26864	31824	18.21%

Description: open areas of close-cropped chalk grassland, used as grazing for animals, mostly sheep. Formerly much more extensive and used as part of the common grazing regime that operated in many Downs parishes in the medieval period. Large swathes of common Downland were enclosed during parliamentary enclosure. Significant tracts of the district's downland have also been lost recently through the expansion of arable and the creation of New Fields out of what had been surviving open Downland in the later twentieth century. Some downland has been lost in recent years through woodland regeneration due to insufficient grazing. Today very little downland survives and it is found only on steep scarps where arable agriculture is impractical or uneconomic.

Period: prehistoric – present

Factors influencing change: expansion of arable agriculture, woodland regeneration where insufficient management through grazing exists.

Capacity to absorb change:

Biodiversity potential: high

Archaeological potential:

Management: suitable grazing (sheep) to ensure the close cropped grass cover characteristic of Downland is maintained and prevent woodland regeneration. Resist temptation to establish Downland due to environmental importance in areas that have not been Downland.

Research:

“Quality of Life” potential:

Sensitivity: high

Pre 1700 Open Land

Heath (Previous Type Only) HLT 49

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of Area of AONB
	0.00%	N/A	869	869	0.50%

Description: scrubby land outside agricultural usage, frequently used as common grazing. Identified where depicted/labelled as such on historic mapping.

Period: prehistoric – present

Factors influencing change:

Capacity to absorb change:

Biodiversity potential:

Archaeological potential:

Management:

Research:

“Quality of Life” potential:

Sensitivity: n/a

Pre 1700 Open Land

Marsh HLT45

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of Area of AONB
4	0.00%	Very Rare	150	153	0.09%

Description: wet, boggy areas unsuited for use as pasture or fields, identified where depicted/labelled as such on historic mapping.

Period: prehistoric – present

Factors influencing change: TBC

Capacity to absorb change: TBC

Biodiversity potential: TBC

Archaeological potential: TBC

Management: TBC

Research: TBC

“Quality of Life” potential: TBC

Sensitivity: medium

Pre 1700 Open Land

Meadow HLT 61

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of Area of AONB
29	0.02%	Rare	783	812	0.46%

Description: a type of common land, riverside meadow originally used for both grazing and for the growth of hay for livestock feed. Identified where depicted/labelled as such on historic mapping. The majority of meadows were on the Kennet with a handful of examples from the Lambourn and the Thames.

Period: prehistoric – present

Factors influencing change: TBC

Capacity to absorb change: low

Biodiversity potential: high

Archaeological potential: TBC

Management: TBC

Research: TBC

“Quality of Life” potential: high

Sensitivity: high

Pre 1700 Open Land

Open Field (Previous Type Only) HLT66

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of Area of AONB
	0.00%	N/A	74126	74126	42.42%

Description: Large, usually unhedged, arable fields divided into strips and worked communally. The origin of the open field farming system is contested, however it seems to be broadly medieval in date and to have developed either in the late Saxon or early post-conquest period. The adoption of this system seems to be linked with nucleated village settlement. There are no current examples of this type in the district, all examples recorded are previous types. Most of the open fields recorded were enclosed either through early piecemeal enclosures (32% of recorded became **Irregular pre-18th Century enclosures**, 19% **Regular pre-18th Century enclosures**) or were enclosed by **Parliamentary Enclosures** (40%). The few remaining examples were enclosed during the late 19th/early 20th Century. Open fields were mainly found in the Downs parishes, in the Kennet and Thames Valley and intermittently along the lower slopes of the Kennet Valley.

Period: medieval

Factors influencing change:

Capacity to absorb change:

Biodiversity potential:

Archaeological potential:

Management:

Research:

“Quality of Life” potential:

Sensitivity: n/a

Pre 1700 Open Land

Rough Grazing HLT 13

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of Area of AONB
95	0.05%	Rare		95	0.05%

Description: areas of unclear land-use where some kind of grassed cover (usually very rough) is present but the area is not formally designated as a common of any kind and there appears to be no other over-arching land-use.

Period: prehistoric – present

Factors influencing change: TBC

Capacity to absorb change: low

Biodiversity potential: high

Archaeological potential: TBC

Management: TBC

Research: TBC

“Quality of Life” potential: high

Sensitivity: Low

Industrial and Commercial

Industrial and Commercial Land in the North Wessex Downs AONB

Sub Group	Type	HLT No.	Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of Area of AONB
Post 1800 Industry	business parks	59	353	0.20%	Scarce		353	0.20%
	industrial area	18	219	0.13%	Scarce	33	252	0.14%
	industrial farming concern	10	172	0.10%	Rare	3	175	0.10%
	landfill	38	36	0.02%	Rare		36	0.02%
	mineral extraction	19	111	0.06%	Rare	152	263	0.15%
	retail complexes	79	3	0.00%	Very Rare		3	0.00%

Post 1800 Industry

Business Parks HLT 59

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of Area of AONB
353	0.20%	Scarce		353	0.20%

Description: areas devoted entirely to office complexes and constructed solely for this purpose. They often possess large swathes of car parks and are set in landscaped grounds, e.g. Vodafone Park and developments at Theale.

Period: 20th C – present

Factors influencing change: TBC

Capacity to absorb change: TBC

Biodiversity potential: TBC

Archaeological potential: TBC

Management: TBC

Research: TBC

“Quality of Life” potential: TBC

Sensitivity: low

Post 1800 Industry

Industrial Area HLT 18

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of Area of AONB
219	0.13%	Scarce	33	252	0.14%

Description: industrial sites dating to from the 19th Century onwards. There is little heavy industry in the district, therefore the majority of sites are of recent light industry and industrial estates, more historic industries, such as pottery kilns, have also been recorded as a previous type under this heading. The distribution of current industrial areas is concentrated on the district's population centres and/or transport network, most are found adjacent to the A4 and railway through the Kennet Valley (especially around Newbury and Thatcham) or are located near the A34 or M4. Historic industries (pottery kilns, etc.) are less common but more widely distributed across the district, several are focussed on commons (e.g. kilns at Hermitage). The HLC dataset is not a definitive record of all industrial areas (especially historic Industrial areas) as the methodology only maps items larger than one hectare in size and will not, therefore, pick up all examples of this type,

Period: 19th C – present

Factors influencing change: TBC

Capacity to absorb change: TBC

Biodiversity potential: TBC

Archaeological potential: TBC

Management: TBC

Research: TBC

“Quality of Life” potential: TBC

Sensitivity: Low

Post 1800 Industry

Industrial Farming Concern HLT 10

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of Area of AONB
172	0.10%	Rare	3	175	0.10%

Description: sheds and infrastructure associated with poultry farms, fish farms and piggeries. Not common in the district and concentrated in the Upper Lambourn valley and the Pang Valley, scattered examples elsewhere.

Period: 20th C – present

Factors influencing change: industrialisation of farming

Capacity to absorb change: TBC

Biodiversity potential: TBC

Archaeological potential: TBC

Management: TBC

Research: TBC

“Quality of Life” potential: TBC

Sensitivity: low

Post 1800 Industry

Landfill HLT 38

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of Area of AONB
36	0.02%	Rare		36	0.02%

Description: areas of refuse dumping and landfill. Rare within the AONB

Period: mid 20th C – present

Factors influencing change: TBC

Capacity to absorb change: TBC

Biodiversity potential: TBC

Archaeological potential: TBC

Management: TBC

Research: TBC

“Quality of Life” potential: TBC

Sensitivity: low

Post 1800 Industry

Mineral Extraction HLT 19

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of Area of AONB
111	0.06%	Rare	152	263	0.15%

Description: areas of gravel extraction, distribution is associated with the presence of workable gravel deposits. Mineral extraction is most common in the Kennet Valley east of Newbury, although no extraction has been recorded to the west of Newbury. A few scattered examples of this type are also found in the Pang Valley and around Hermitage and Chieveley.

Period: 19th C – present

Factors influencing change: will probably increase as gravel is still an important commodity for the construction industry but do enough quality gravel deposits that are worth working remain. Kennet Valley east of Newbury will eventually be worked out, presumably significant deposits exist to its west but these lie in the AONB therefore obtaining quarrying permission will be more difficult to obtain and implement.

Capacity to absorb change: TBC

Biodiversity potential: TBC

Archaeological potential: TBC

Management: TBC

Research: TBC

“Quality of Life” potential: TBC

Sensitivity: low-medium

Post 1800 Industry

Retail Complexes HLT 79

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of Area of AONB
3	0.00%	Very Rare		3	0.00%

Description: out-of-town shopping areas, ranging from large (Newbury Retail Park) to smaller scale operations (garden centre on edge of Hungerford).

Period: mid 20th C – present

Factors influencing change: TBC

Capacity to absorb change: TBC

Biodiversity potential: TBC

Archaeological potential: TBC

Management: TBC

Research: TBC

“Quality of Life” potential: TBC

Sensitivity: low

Civic

Civic Land in the North Wessex Downs AONB

Sub Group	Type	HLT No.	Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of Area of AONB
Post 1800 Civic	hospital	72	52	0.03%	Rare	3	55	0.03%
	schools & colleges	26	292	0.17%	Scarce	8	300	0.17%
	utilities	27	38	0.02%	Rare		38	0.02%

Post 1800 Civic

Hospital HLT 72

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of Area of AONB
52	0.03%	Rare	3	55	0.03%

Description: institutions for the care of the sick, and their grounds, that are distinct at a landscape scale.

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Period: 19th C - present

Factors influencing change: TBC

Capacity to absorb change: TBC

Biodiversity potential: TBC

Archaeological potential: TBC

Management: TBC

Research: TBC

“Quality of Life” potential: High

Sensitivity: medium

Post 1800 Civic

Schools and Colleges HLT 26

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of Area of AONB
292	0.17%	Scarce	8	300	0.17%

Description: educational institutions, and their grounds, that are distinct at a landscape scale. This type encompasses mainstream Local Authority establishments, private schools such as St. Gabriel's and Bradfield School, and professional training campuses such as the Thames Valley Police Training College at Sulhamstead.

Period: 19th C - present

Factors influencing change: TBC

Capacity to absorb change: TBC

Biodiversity potential: TBC

Archaeological potential: TBC

Management: TBC

Research: TBC

"Quality of Life" potential: TBC

Sensitivity: low-medium

Post 1800 Civic

Utilities HLT 27

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of Area of AONB
38	0.02%	Rare		38	0.02%

Description: utilities installations that are distinct at a landscape scale, mainly sewage works and other water treatment facilities. Not all such facilities will be mapped by the HLC methodology as many, especially electricity sub-stations, are smaller than one hectare.

Period: 19th C – present

Factors influencing change: TBC

Capacity to absorb change: TBC

Biodiversity potential: TBC

Archaeological potential: TBC

Management: TBC

Research: TBC

“Quality of Life” potential: TBC

Sensitivity: low

Military

Military Land in the North Wessex Downs AONB

Sub Group	Type	HLT No.	Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of Area of AONB
Post 1900 Military	military establishment	34	500.225	0.29%	Scarce	1611.407	2111.632	1.21%

Post 1900 Military

Military Establishment HLT 34

c	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of Area of AONB
500.225	0.29%	Scarce	1611.407	2111.632	1.21%

Description: 20th Century Military bases, includes airfields and other installations such as AWE Aldermaston and associated off-site infrastructure (bunkers and storage).

Period: 20th Century – present

Factors influencing change: following the end of the Cold War and rationalising of military operations nationally many sites have been decommissioned or are being scaled back.

Capacity to absorb change: TBC

Biodiversity potential: TBC

Archaeological potential: TBC

Management: TBC

Research: TBC

“Quality of Life” potential: TBC

Sensitivity: low-medium

Parkland and Designed

Parkland and Designed Landscapes in the North Wessex Downs AONB

Sub Group	Type	HLT No.	Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of Area of AONB
Pre 1700 Parkland	Deer Park	60				1600	1600	0.92%
Post 1700 Designed Landscape	designed landscape	20	4823	2.76%	Uncommon	1597	6420	3.67%

Pre 1700 Parkland

Deer Park (previous type only) HLT 60

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of Area of AONB
			1600	1600	0.92%

Description: A preserve for the keeping and hunting of deer, usually demarked by an external earthen bank and ditch, or park pale, to prevent deer escaping and deter poaching.

Period: medieval

Factors influencing change: TBC

Capacity to absorb change: TBC

Biodiversity potential: TBC

Archaeological potential: TBC

Management: TBC

Research: TBC

“Quality of Life” potential:

Sensitivity:

Post 1700 Designed Landscape

Designed Landscape HLT 20

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of Area of AONB
4823	2.76%	Uncommon	1597	6420	3.67%

Description: formal and informal parklands around country houses. These range from the great parks associated with large grand houses, such as Basildon Park, to the smaller park gardens of larger landowners and the minor gentry, such as Chaddleworth House and Frilsham Rectory. The majority of the d parks are in the Kennet Valley, significant numbers of designed landscapes are also found in the lower reaches of the Pang and Lambourn Valley and adjacent to the Thames.

Period: 18th – 19th Century

Factors influencing change: conversion of park lawns to arable, housing developments, parks are increasingly being taken over for business and hotel use – Benham Valence and Elcot Park.

Capacity to absorb change: TBC

Biodiversity potential: TBC

Archaeological potential: TBC

Management: TBC

Research: TBC

“Quality of Life” potential: TBC

Sensitivity medium-high

Recreation

Recreational Land in the North Wessex Downs AONB

Sub Group	Type	HLT No.	Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of Area of AONB
Post 1800 Recreation	golf course	29	362	0.21%	Scarce		362	0.21%
	other leisure facilities	78	152	0.09%	Rare		152	0.09%
	parks & sports facilities	28	240	0.14%	Scarce		240	0.14%

Post 1800 Recreation

Golf Course HLT 29

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of AONB Area
362	0.21%	Scarce		362	0.21%

Description: formal areas for playing golf, area mapped will include clubhouses and associated infrastructure and any new tree planting and water features created as part of the course. Some have been created on the sites of designed landscapes and preserve many of their features by utilising them as elements of the course (Donnington Grove). The majority are located in the hinterlands of Reading and the Newbury-Thatcham conurbation reflecting golf's role as a pastime of urbanites. The only exception is the course near Chaddleworth, which seems to have been constructed for/by service personnel based at the adjacent RAF Welford.

Period: 19th Century – present

Factors influencing change: TBC

Capacity to absorb change: TBC

Biodiversity potential: TBC

Archaeological potential: TBC

Management: TBC

Research: TBC

“Quality of Life” potential:

Sensitivity: low, higher where preserve features of previous land-use, especially those of Designed Landscapes.

Post 1800 Recreation

Other Leisure Facilities HLT 78

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of AONB Area
152	0.09%	Rare		152	0.09%

Description: a diverse type containing all other leisure facilities (such as marinas, shooting schools, animal parks and fishing sites) not covered by the above types. The majority are very recent developments.

Period: mid 20th Century – present

Factors influencing change: TBC

Capacity to absorb change: TBC

Biodiversity potential: TBC

Archaeological potential: TBC

Management: TBC

Research: TBC

“Quality of Life” potential:

Sensitivity: low-medium

Post 1800 Recreation

Parks and Sports Facilities HLT 28

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of AONB Area
240	0.14%	Scarce		240	0.14%

Description: areas for recreational usage, encompasses both sports fields and leisure centres and public parks.

Period: 20th Century – present

Factors influencing change: TBC

Capacity to absorb change: TBC

Biodiversity potential: TBC

Archaeological potential: TBC

Management: TBC

Research: TBC

“Quality of Life” potential: high, enable exercise and recreation and some have strong aesthetic appeal.

Sensitivity: medium-high

Communications

Communications in the North Wessex Downs AONB

Sub Group	Type	HLT No.	Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of Area of AONB
Pre 1750 communications	ridgeway	74	53	0.03%	Rare		53	0.03%
Post 1750 communications	airfield	33	17	0.01%	Very Rare		17	0.01%
	canal & rail corridor	48	106	0.06%	Rare		106	0.06%
	major roads	31	676	0.39%	Scarce	85	760	0.44%
	railway	32	58	0.03%	Rare		58	0.03%

Pre 1750 communications

Ridgeway HLT 74

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of Area of AONB
53	0.03%	Rare		53	0.03%

Description: Ancient Droeway

Period: prehistoric – present

Factors influencing change:

Capacity to absorb change:

Biodiversity potential:

Archaeological potential:

Management:

Research:

“Quality of Life” potential:

Sensitivity: medium – high

Post 1750 communications

Airfields HLT 33

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of Area of AONB
33	17	0.01%	Very Rare		17

Description: Civil airfields, mostly private landing strips, military airfields are recorded under **Military Establishment**.

Period: 20th Century – present

Factors influencing change:

Capacity to absorb change:

Biodiversity potential:

Archaeological potential:

Management:

Research:

“Quality of Life” potential:

Sensitivity: n/a

Post 1750 communications

Canal and Rail Corridor HLT 48

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of Area of AONB
106	0.06%	Rare		106	0.06%

Description: areas of the Kennet Valley where the railway and canal run adjacent and parallel to each other creating a wide transport corridor.

Period: 18th – 19th Century

Factors influencing change:

Capacity to absorb change:

Biodiversity potential:

Archaeological potential:

Management:

Research:

“Quality of Life” potential:

Sensitivity: low-medium

Post 1750 communications

Major Roads HLT 31

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of Area of AONB
676	0.39%	Scarce	85	760	0.44%

Description: one on the only linear features recorded, these are the motorway and major dual-carriageway trunk roads of the district. They have been recorded as they are large enough to be a landscape feature in their own right and as their construction causes disruption to the landscape and usually leads to differential development on either side of the routeway. The road and any associated service areas and embankments and cuttings are mapped under this heading.

Period: 20th Century – present

Factors influencing change:

Capacity to absorb change:

Biodiversity potential:

Archaeological potential:

Management:

Research:

“Quality of Life” potential:

Sensitivity: low

Post 1750 communications

Railway HLT 32

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of Area of AONB
32	58	0.03%	Rare		58

Description: railways and associated features large enough to occur at a landscape scale.

Period: 19th Century – present

Factors influencing change:

Capacity to absorb change:

Biodiversity potential:

Archaeological potential:

Management:

Research:

“Quality of Life” potential:

Sensitivity: low-medium

Water and Water Management

Water and Water Management in the North Wessex Downs AONB

Sub Group	Type	HLT No.	Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of Area of AONB
Pre 1900 Water	natural water area	8	6	0.00%	Very Rare		6	0.00%
	spring	82	6	0.00%	Very Rare	1	8	0.00%
Post 1800 Water	flooded gravel pits	67	8	0.00%	Very Rare		8	0.00%
	reservoir	16	14	0.01%	Very Rare		14	0.01%
	watercress bed	17	25	0.01%	Very Rare	1	27	0.02%

Pre 1900 Water

Natural Water Area HLT 8

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of Area of AONB
6	0.00%	Very Rare		6	0.00%

Description: natural water bodies that are extensive enough (longer than 200m and consistently wider than 50 -100m) to be mapped. Few natural water bodies in the area are of this size and only a handful exist in the dataset, for example the Kennet at Chilton Foliat and Wilton Water near Burbage.

Period: undated – prehistoric.

Factors influencing change:

Capacity to absorb change:

Biodiversity potential: high

Archaeological potential: varied

Management:

Research: n/a

“Quality of Life” potential: high

Sensitivity: high

Pre 1900 Water

Spring HLT 82

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of Area of AONB
6	0.00%	Very Rare	1	8	0.00%

Description: areas of depressed ground from which a spring issues, these are mapped only when they exceed one hectare. There are only three in the data and all are on the springline on the downs scarp south of Wantage.

Period: undated – prehistoric.

Factors influencing change:

Capacity to absorb change:

Biodiversity potential: high

Archaeological potential:

Management:

Research:

“Quality of Life” potential:

Sensitivity:

Post 1900 Water

Flooded Gravel Pits HLT 67

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of Area of AONB
8	0.00%	Very Rare		8	0.00%

Description: man-made water areas created from flooding gravel workings. These are often now in use as recreational areas, mainly as lakes for fishing clubs.

Period: mid 20th Century – present

Factors influencing change:

Capacity to absorb change:

Biodiversity potential:

Archaeological potential:

Management:

Research: n/a

“Quality of Life” potential:

Sensitivity: low – medium

Post 1900 Water

Reservoirs HLT 16

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of Area of AONB
14	0.01%	Very Rare		14	0.01%

Description: any man-made water bodies (not flooded gravel as they were made as pits not water bodies), also includes covered reservoirs. Not common in the district.

Period: 19th Century – present

Factors influencing change:

Capacity to absorb change:

Biodiversity potential:

Archaeological potential:

Management:

Research: n/a

“Quality of Life” potential:

Sensitivity: low

Post 1900 Water

Watercress Beds HLT 17

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of Area of AONB
25	0.01%	Very Rare	1	27	0.02%

Description: shallow artificial tanks or beds used solely for the growth of watercress.

Period: 19th Century – present

Factors influencing change:

Capacity to absorb change:

Biodiversity potential:

Archaeological potential:

Management:

Research: n/a

“Quality of Life” potential:

Sensitivity: low

Archaeology

Archaeology in the North Wessex Downs AONB

Sub Group	Type	HLT No.	Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of Area of AONB
Archaeology	Managed Cultural Asset	58	139	0.08%	Rare			0.08%
Pre 1600 Archaeology Site	ancient field system	63		0.00%	N/A	873	873	0.50%
	fortified site	52		0.00%	N/A	222	222	0.13%
	linear earthworks	54		0.00%	N/A	47	47	0.03%
	livestock enclosure	56		0.00%	N/A	7	7	0.00%
	lynchets	64		0.00%	N/A	22	22	0.01%
	ritual/funerary site	50		0.00%	N/A	143	143	0.08%
	medieval settlement	57		0.00%	N/A	248	248	0.14%

Archaeology

Managed Cultural Asset HLT 58

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of Area of AONB
139	0.08%	Rare			0.08%

Description: Archaeological and historic sites whose main function is as a visitor attraction and/or where there is no other over-arching modern land-use. Examples include Donnington Castle.

Period: 20th Century – present

Factors influencing change:

Capacity to absorb change:

Biodiversity potential:

Archaeological potential:

Management:

Research:

“Quality of Life” potential:

Sensitivity: high

Pre 1600 Archaeology Site

Ancient Field System (Previous Type Only) HLT 63

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of Area of AONB
	0.00%	N/A	873	873	0.50%

Description: earthworks and cropmarks of complexes of fields which appear to form a coherent system, used only as a previous type. These are hard to date morphologically but seem to be broadly Late Bronze Age to Roman in date on the basis of excavated examples. Numerous examples of ancient field systems are documented, as cropmarks, across the district but they are only mapped in the HLC dataset where they influence the layout of the Current HLC Type. Where Ancient Field System is found as a previous type, a landscape of considerable antiquity is present.

Period: Later Prehistoric – Roman

Factors influencing change: deep ploughing, scrub growth on downland.

Capacity to absorb change: low

Biodiversity potential: Variable and not a function of the type itself; low where underlie industrialised landscapes but higher where large tracts exist on surviving downland.

Archaeological potential: Variable. Those that survive above ground, earthwork examples on downland, or are preserved as elements of later land organisation (e.g. as a parish boundary) have a higher potential than those known only from cropmarks. Large numbers of cropmarked examples have been shown, on excavation, to retain little in the way of deposits with scant information to be gained from them to elucidate the actual form, function and date of the features represented.

Management: TBC

Research: assumptions about these features and the apparent Anglo-Saxon dislocation of land-use can be explored/challenged through study of pre-medieval field-systems.

“Quality of Life” potential: TBC

Sensitivity: Variable.

Pre 1600 Archaeology Site

Fortified Site (previous type only) **HLT 52**

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of Area of AONB
	0.00%	N/A	222	222	0.13%

Description: defensive enclosures bounded by one or more substantial banks, ramparts and ditches, e.g. Walbury Hill. **Fortified Sites** are found only as a previous type and are recorded where they cover at least one hectare and have an impact on the form of the Current HLC type. The distribution of **Fortified Sites** shown by the HLC data, therefore, is not definitive. Further information **Fortified Sites** can be gained from the West Berkshire HER.

Period: prehistoric

Factors influencing change:

Capacity to absorb change:

Biodiversity potential:

Archaeological potential: High

Management:

Research:

“Quality of Life” potential:

Sensitivity: high

Pre 1600 Archaeology Site

Linear Earthworks (previous type only) HLT 54

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of Area of AONB
	0.00%	N/A	47	47	0.03%

Description: linear earthworks, such as the Wansdyke, that have an impact at landscape scale. None mapped in West Berkshire, all mapped examples come from the AONB HLC dataset. **Linear Earthworks** are found only as a previous type and are recorded where they cover at least one hectare and have an impact on the form of the Current HLC type. The distribution of **Linear Earthworks** shown by the HLC data, therefore, is not definitive. Further information about the distribution of **Linear Earthworks** can be gained from the West Berkshire HER.

Period: prehistoric – early medieval

Factors influencing change:

Capacity to absorb change:

Biodiversity potential:

Archaeological potential: High

Management:

Research:

“Quality of Life” potential:

Sensitivity: high

Pre 1600 Archaeology Site

Livestock Enclosure (previous type only) HLT 56

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of Area of AONB
	0.00%	N/A	7	7	0.00%

Description: Prehistoric enclosure

Period: prehistoric

Factors influencing change:

Capacity to absorb change:

Biodiversity potential:

Archaeological potential: High

Management:

Research:

“Quality of Life” potential:

Sensitivity: high

Pre 1600 Archaeology Site

Lynchets (Previous Type Only)

HLT 64

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of Area of AONB
	0.00%	N/A	22	22	0.01%

Description: Earthwork banks formed by ploughing on a slope, probably medieval in date. Lynchets visible on scarp slopes are thought to be indicative of an expansion of cultivation onto less-suitable land in the medieval period. Lynchets are found only as a previous type and are recorded where they cover at least one hectare and have an impact on the form of the Current HLC type. The distribution of lynchets shown by the HLC data, therefore, is not definitive. Further information about the distribution of Lynchets can be gained from the West Berkshire HER.

Period: prehistoric to medieval

Factors influencing change:

Capacity to absorb change:

Biodiversity potential:

Archaeological potential: High

Management:

Research:

“Quality of Life” potential:

Sensitivity: high

Pre 1600 Archaeology Site

Ritual/funerary Site (previous type only) HLT 50

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of Area of AONB
	0.00%	N/A	143	143	0.08%

Description: prehistoric and roman ritual and/or funerary sites. **Ritual/funerary Sites** are found only as a previous type and are recorded where they cover at least one hectare and have an impact on the form of the Current HLC type. The distribution of **Ritual/funerary Sites** shown by the HLC data, therefore, is not definitive. Further information about the distribution of **Ritual/funerary Sites** can be gained from the West Berkshire HER.

Period: prehistoric

Trajectory of change:

Factors influencing change:

Capacity to absorb change:

Biodiversity potential:

Archaeological potential: High

Management:

Research:

“Quality of Life” potential:

Sensitivity: n/a

Pre 1600 Archaeology Site

Medieval Settlement HLT 57

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of Area of AONB
	0.00%	N/A	248	248	0.14%

Description: archaeological remains of medieval settlement, these are recorded in the HLC dataset where they have an influence on the layout of subsequent land-use. This type is usually represented by manorial earthworks (e.g. moats) or the earthwork remains of deserted or shrunken villages. **Medieval Settlement** is found only as a previous type and is recorded where it covers at least one hectare and has an impact on the form of the Current HLC type. The distribution of **Medieval Settlement** shown by the HLC data, therefore, is not definitive. Further information about the distribution of **Medieval Settlement** can be gained from the West Berkshire HER.

Period: Medieval

Trajectory of change:

Factors influencing change:

Capacity to absorb change:

Biodiversity potential:

Archaeological potential: High

Management:

Research:

“Quality of Life” potential:

Sensitivity: n/a

Other

Other Land in the North Wessex Downs AONB

Sub Group	Type	HLT No.	Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of Area of AONB
Mixed Land Use	mixed land-use	76		0.00%	N/A	2638.52	2638.52	1.51%

Other

Mixed Land-use (Previous Type Only) HLT 76

Current (ha)	% of AONB Area	Occurrence Today	Previous (Ha)	Total Coverage (Ha)	% of Area of AONB
	0.00%	N/A	2638.52	2638.52	1.51%

Description: used as a previous type for areas of recent land-use (such as reorganised fields or recent settlement growth) where the prior land-use was comprised of several, differing, HLC Types.

Period: n/a

Trajectory of change:

Factors influencing change:

Capacity to absorb change:

Biodiversity potential:

Archaeological potential:

Management:

Research:

“Quality of Life” potential:

Sensitivity: n/a

North Wessex Downs AONB Historic Landscape Characterisation

Section 4: User Guide

Version 1

Summary

This section gives an overview of the aims of the North Wessex Downs AONB and West Berkshire Historic Landscape Characterisation Project, its methodology and guidance on the use of the HLC dataset. The project covers the overlapping areas of the North Wessex Downs AONB and West Berkshire District. Historic Landscape Characterisation is a national initiative of English Heritage that provides an over-arching view of the whole historic landscape. It is an archaeological method which defines and maps the historic dimension of the present day landscape as a GIS dataset and aims to facilitate better understanding and management of this resource. This is a permanent but renewable dataset of information on many facets of the landscape that can be used to provide information for a variety of planning, conservation, research and management-led applications

Created by Melissa Conway August 2006, updated December 2007

North Wessex Downs AONB Historic Landscape Characterisation Project: A User Guide

1.0 What is Historic Landscape Characterisation?

Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) is a way of analysing and recording how several millennia of human interaction with the land has produced the rural landscape we experience today. The method was pioneered in Cornwall in the 1990s and is now one of English Heritage's key programmes. It is recognised as a means for understanding and managing the entire landscape and not just the archaeological sites and buildings traditionally protected by scheduling or listing. HLC treats the landscape like an archaeological site and explores the multi-layered and multi-phased nature of the world around us, through maps, aerial photographs and other sources. It picks apart its components, features of widely differing usage and periods of origin like woodlands, field systems and industrial estates, and then maps and stores information about them in a GIS dataset. This end-product can be used by landscape managers, planners, farmers, archaeologists, local historians and anyone else interested in their surroundings.

The area covered by the North Wessex Downs & West Berkshire (NWD & WB) HLC project comprises the overlapping areas of the North Wessex Downs AONB and West Berkshire Unitary Authority. It spans all of West Berkshire, a large portion of Wiltshire, part of Swindon Borough Council and smaller areas within south Oxfordshire and north Hampshire (Figure 1). The dataset has subsequently been cut to the AONB boundary.



Figure 1 – Project Coverage

The project was undertaken due to the complementary needs of the North Wessex Downs AONB and the West Berkshire Archaeology Service to better understand this landscape. In preparing its Management

Plan, the North Wessex Downs AONB Team identified that a lack of understanding of their landscape, particularly its cultural depth, presented a considerable threat to effective and sympathetic management of the area (NWD 2004). The West Berkshire Archaeology Service also felt that an enhanced understanding of the district's landscape would enable them to provide better advice on the historic environment by putting known sites into context and by deepening understanding of the rural settlement pattern. The Project was carried out by a project officer working within the West Berkshire Archaeology Service between 2004 – 6 assisted by support from the AONB team, English Heritage and the environmental, archaeological and GIS officers of the other constituent local authorities.

2.0 Project Methodology and Resources

HLC uses modern and historic mapping, aerial photography and archaeological and environmental information to assess how each land parcel has evolved to its current state. This is done by firstly looking at the nature of land-cover, i.e. is it fields or woods, then looking at the morphology of the parcels of land, including size and shape and boundary form. Traces of earlier land-uses that influence the layout of current land-use are also noted. Following this process, an assessment of the origin of the land-use can be made. Areas of like evolution are grouped together and mapped as polygons in a GIS coverage and their attributes recorded in an allied database. This methodology can only map what remains within the landscape today and does not try to reconstruct past landscapes which survive patchily, for example prehistoric ritual landscapes, or those which no longer have physical, above ground, traces. The cut off point below which a land-use was considered too small to be mapped was set at one hectare.

As the project covered a variety of administrative areas and historic counties, sources were not consistent across the area. Datasets that covered the whole project area formed the core sources;

- modern Ordnance Survey mapping
- historic Ordnance Survey mapping (epochs 1 - 4)
- digital aerial photographs
- SMR and HER data
- 18th Century county maps and
- the Natural England Ancient Woodlands Inventory and Common Land Register.

The effects of parliamentary enclosure on the landscape were also mapped and enclosure records covering the area held by the Hampshire, Berkshire and Wiltshire and Swindon Record Offices were consulted. A full list of sources used is contained in Appendix 2.

Mapping and recording was carried out using a combination of ESRI's ArcView 3.3 and ArcGIS 9 packages. Areas of the same characteristics were manually digitised off-screen as polygons into an ESRI *shapefile* and the information about each stored in the allied ESRI database file.

Database structure

The database records attributes in three sections:

- information about the current land-use (coloured blue in the following examples).
- information about earlier land-uses evident within the mapped area (coloured green). Where multiple previous land-uses have been identified this set of fields is repeated for each land-use and are ordered from most recent to oldest in the database (PRV1_ fields most recent, then PRV_2 fields, then PRV_3).
- information about the polygon itself (coloured pink).

Field Name	Field Type	Description	Required
ID	Numeric	ID number for HLC polygon	Y
CODE_TYPE	Numeric	coded value for current land-use – term for full land-use type name contained in CURRENT_TY	Y
BROAD_TYPE	Text	broad HLC type of polygon, e.g. <i>enclosures, civic, industrial, woodland</i> , etc.	Y
CURRENT_TY	Text	HLC type of polygon, e.g. <i>ancient woodland, modern settlement</i> , etc.	Y
PERIOD	Text	broad period of land-use origin – <i>prehistoric, medieval, 20th Century</i> .	Y
MOD_SOURCE	Text	coded value for source used to identify land-use type	Y
SOURCE_NAM	Text	source from which current land-use identified	Y
SOURCE_DAT	Text	date of source used	Y
MORPH_PATN	Text	dominant morphology pattern of polygon, e.g. curvilinear boundaries, nucleated settlement. Recorded for broad HLC types <i>enclosures, woodland</i> and <i>settlement</i> and not where inappropriate, e.g. <i>Utilities</i> .	Y
MPH_INT_BD	Text	dominant boundary type within a polygon where it contains multiple land parcels, e.g. <i>straight, curving, sinuous</i> .	Y
BNDRY_LOSS	Numeric	number of field boundaries lost in amalgamation of fields	N
BNDRY_GAIN	Numeric	number of field boundaries gained in division of fields	N
NO_OF_FIEL	Numeric	number of fields contained within polygon	N
NAME	Text	name of town, village or farm	N
STATUS	Text	whether the land-use of the polygon is current, values <i>active</i> or <i>inactive</i> , mainly used for army bases and quarries.	N
PREV1_TYP	Numeric	coded value for most recent previous land-use (term for full land-use type name contained in PRV1_TYPE)	N
PRV1_TYPE	Text	most recent previous HLC type of polygon	N
PRV1_PERIO	Text	broad period of land-use origin	N
SOURCE_1	Text	coded value for source used to identify land-use type	N
SOURCE1_NAM	Text	source from which current land-use identified	N
SOURCE1_DA	Text	date of source used	N
CONFIDENCE	Text	how solid the interpretation of a polygon is, four values; <i>cert, prob, poss, unsure</i>	Y
DIGITISER	Text	name of polygon creator	Y
DIGIT_DATE	Date	date of polygon creation	Y
HECTARES	Numeric	area of polygon	Y

The following example shows how this works in practice. The villages of Shalbourne and Ham (Wiltshire) were surrounded by open fields farmed in common in the medieval period. By the end of the 18th Century parts of these had been enclosed by agreement and encroachment into smaller fields owned and farmed by private individuals. The remaining areas of open field were enclosed into private fields under the process of Parliamentary enclosure in the early 19th Century. Figure 2.1.1 shows two areas comprising parliamentary fields enclosed from open fields.

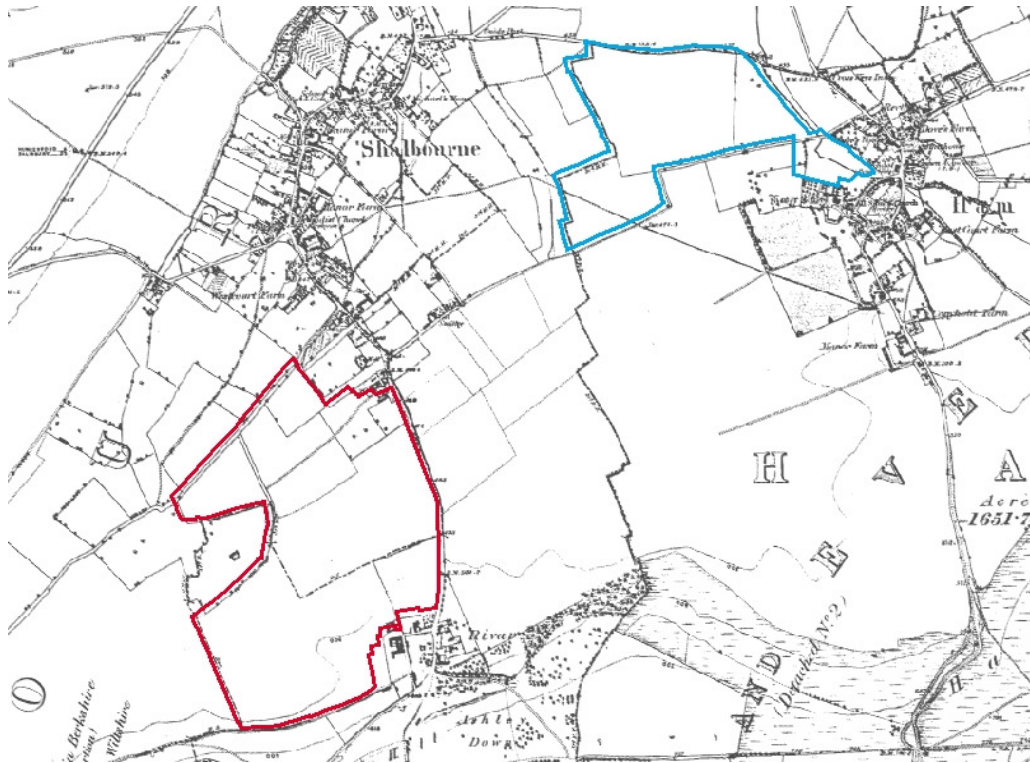


Figure 2.1.1: parliamentary enclosure fields in Shalbourne and Ham (OS 1st ed)

In recent years the boundaries of the fields in the red area have been ripped out and amalgamated into a single large field, whilst those in the blue area have remained unaltered (Figure 2.1.2).



Figure 2.1.2: current land-use in Shalbourne and Ham (1999 aerial photographs).

These two areas have similar influences on their evolution but the red area has been subject to much recent alteration. Both are recorded in the database as follows:

	red area	blue area
CODE_TYPE	5	1
BROAD_TYPE	enclosures	enclosures
CURRENT_TY	amalgamated fields	parliamentary enclosures
PERIOD	mid-20 th C – present	mid 18 th mid 19 th C
MOD_SOURCE	OS_m	im
SOURCE_NAM	modern Ordnance Survey map	inclosure map
SOURCE_DAT	c.2003	1738-1858
MORPH_PATN	irr	reg
MPH_INT_BD	n/a	str
BNDRY_LOSS	7	0
BNDRY_GAIN	0	0
NO_OF_FIEL	1	4
SETT_NAME	n/a	n/a
STATUS	n/a	n/a
ENC_ORIG	enclosed from open fields	enclosed from open fields
WOOD_ORIG	n/a	n/a
PREV1_TYP	1	66
PRV1_TYPE	Parliamentary enclosures	open field
PRV1_PERIO	mid-18 th – mid-19 th C	medieval
SOURCE_1	im	im
SOURCE1_NA	inclosure map	inclosure map
SOURCE1_DA	1738-1858	1738-1858
PREV2_TYP	66	
PREV2_TYP	open field	
PRV2_PERIO	medieval	
SOURCE_2	im	
SOURCE2_NA	inclosure map	
SOURCE2_DA	1738-1858	
CONFIDENCE	prob	prob
DIGITISER	M.Conway	M.Conway
DIGIT_DATE	24/08/2005	24/08/2005
HECTARES	49.39	23.96

3.0 Using the data

3.1 Displaying the data

The HLC data can be used in many ways, the simplest is as a thematic map. Maps can be prepared of several facets of the data by applying legends to the data fields within the GIS. The following figures show examples of maps created by applying legends to database fields.

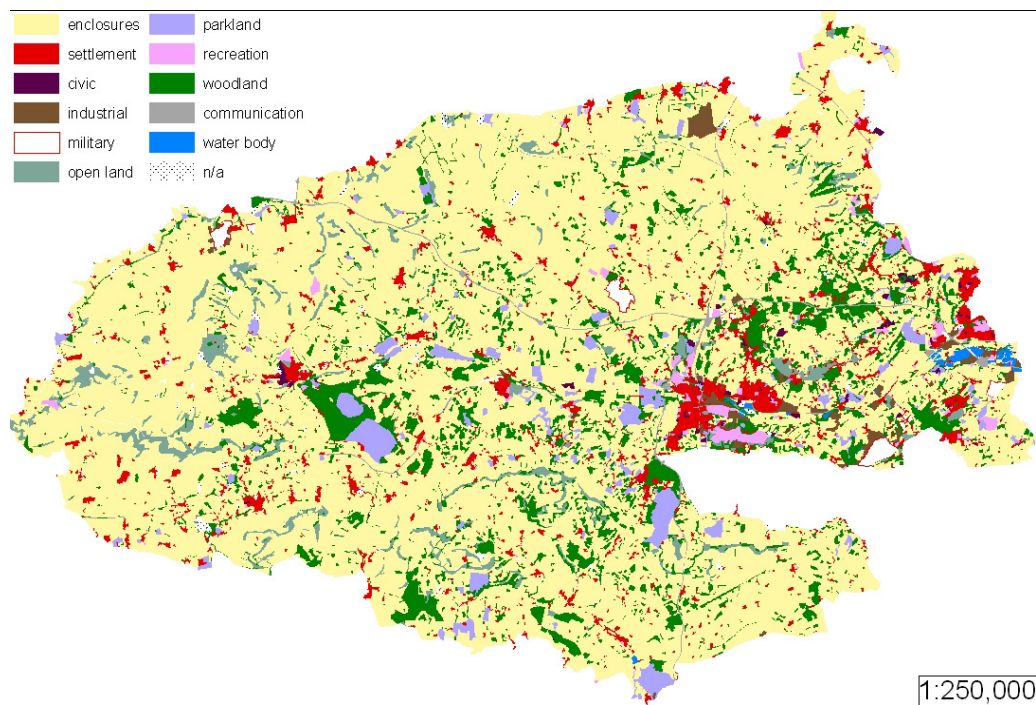


Figure3.1.1: HLC displayed as landscape groups using GROUP database field.

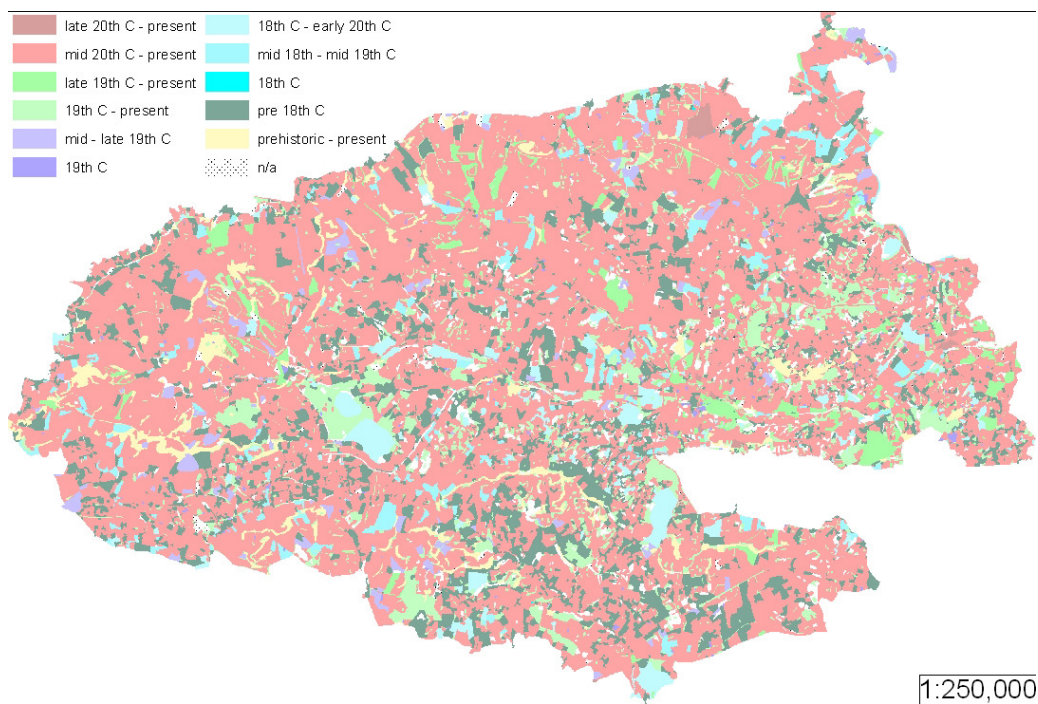


Figure3.1.2: HLC displayed by period of land-use origin using PERIOD database field.

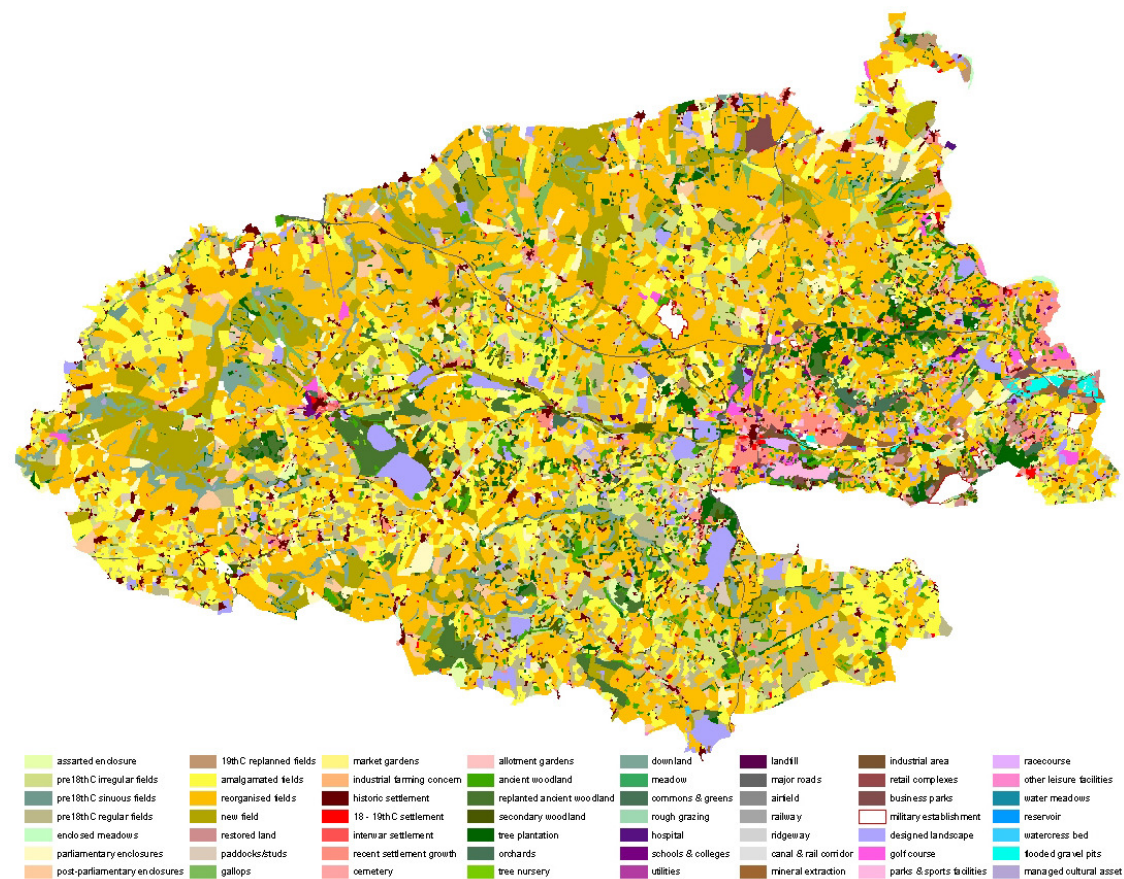


Figure 3.1.2: HLC data displayed by current land-use type using CURRENT_TY database field.

3.2 Querying the data

Thematic maps are a good way of initially visualising the data and provide a way into what is a quite complex dataset but they can explore only one layer of the data at a time. More meaningful questions can be answered by querying the dataset within the GIS. Analysing data with ESRI's Arc GIS package is done through use of SQL – the same querying language which underpins MS Access and other database applications – and it is therefore fairly easy to query data once the logic of the question has been thought through. The flat nature of the HLC database means that, in order to produce results for complex questions, several queries may need to be performed.

A simple query that might be performed with the HLC data is to locate all areas of common land (Figure 3.2.1).

- open the GIS package's querying utility (**select by attributes** in Arc GIS 9);
- search for all records that match the criteria "CURRENT_TY" = 'commons';

The records matching this criterion are highlighted.

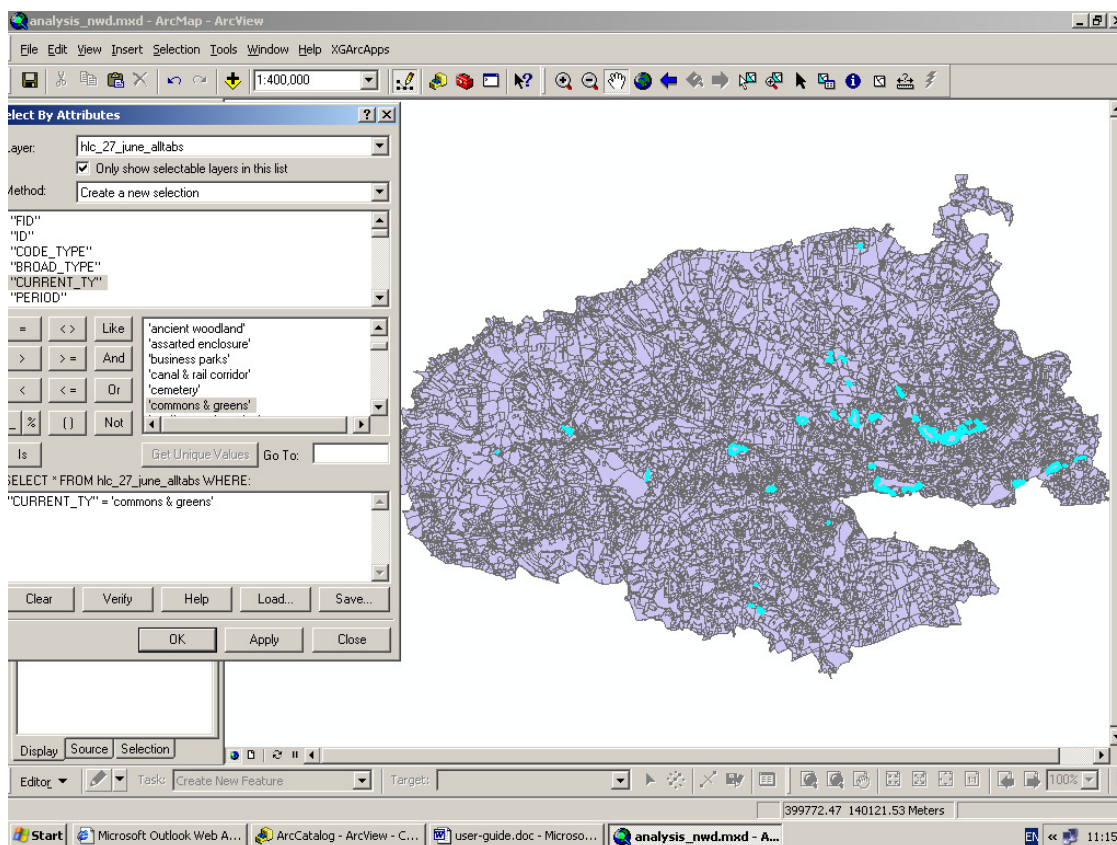


Figure 3.2.1: Query to locate commons

This query would not find areas of former common land that have been converted to other uses, for instance farming or tree plantation. To locate these areas a more complex query would be required. A previous land use type of commons could occur in any level of the database. A query would need to be executed on each previous land-use type field (PRV1_TYPE, PRV2_TYPE and PRV3_TYPE) to find all former commons.

In Arc GIS this can be achieved by running the following query;

"PRV1_TYPE" = 'commons' OR "PRV2_TYPE" = 'commons' OR "PRV3_TYPE" = 'commons'

The results are shown in Figure 3.2.2 and illustrate that common land was previously much more extensive and widespread. Further things that could be explored from the result of this query are the proportions of common land remaining and lost (using the HECTARES field) and looking at the sorts of land-uses that have succeeded commons.

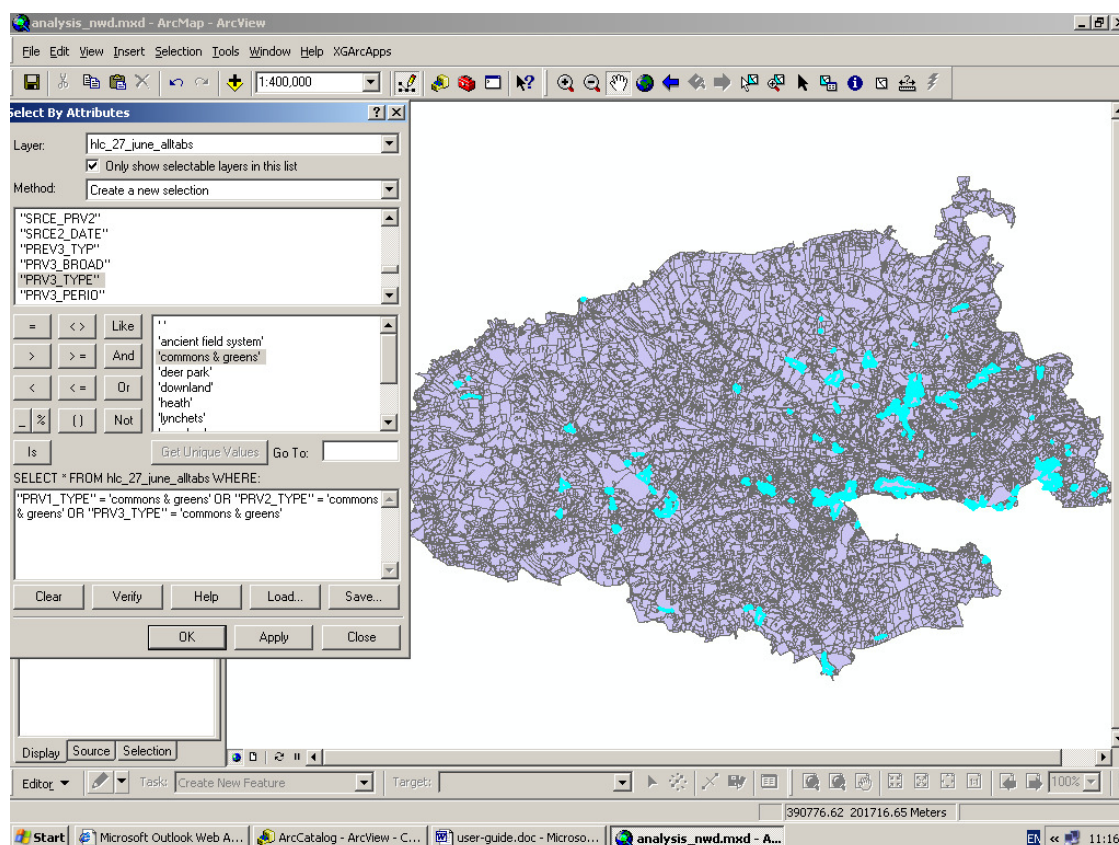


Figure 3.2.2: Query to locate former commons

HLC data can also be used to investigate the effects of recent agricultural trends on the landscape. Increasingly mechanised arable cultivation has led to an enlargement of fields on many farms, this has been either through simple boundary removal or through reorganisation and reshaping of holdings.

Areas where this has occurred can be located by querying the HLC data as follows;

"CURRENT_TY" = 'amalgamated fields' OR "CURRENT_TY" = 'reorganised fields'

The result of this query is shown in Figure 3.2.3 and demonstrates that much of the agricultural landscape has been heavily modified.

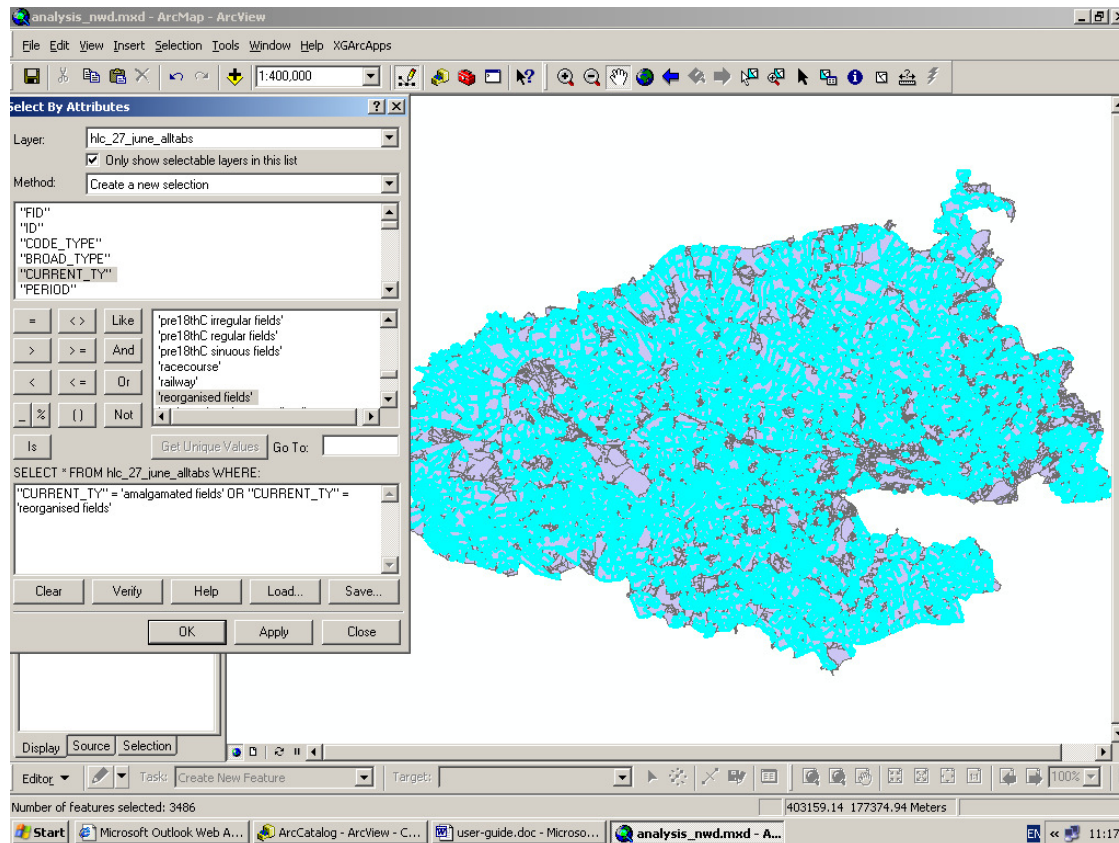


Figure 3.2.3: distribution of recently altered fields

Opportunities for landscape improvement, for example by hedge restoration, can be explored by identifying areas where earlier field systems show through this modern alteration. This can be done by refining this selection by selecting out those that have a previous land-use type of some form of 19th century or earlier fields, such as 'parliamentary enclosures', 'pre 18th century fields' or 'assarts'. Those areas that retain earlier historic features are shown in Figure 3.2.4. A large amount of seemingly modern fields can be demonstrated to retain elements of their earlier antecedents that could be enhanced by sympathetic management.

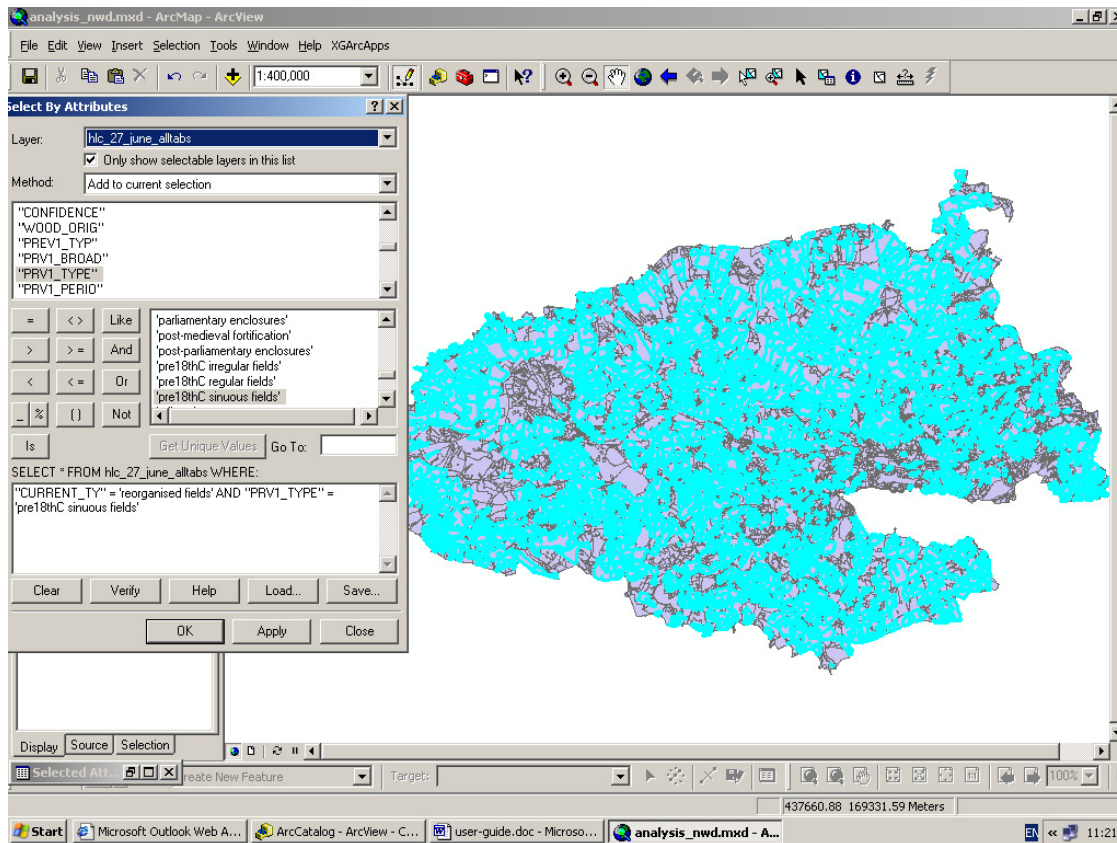


Figure 3.2.4: distribution of recently altered fields that retain features of earlier field systems

Appendices

Appendix 1: Abbreviations used in the text

AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
BRO	Berkshire Record Office
EH	English Heritage
GIS	Geographical Information System
HCC	Hampshire County Council
HCC AHBR	Hampshire County Council Archaeology and Historic Buildings Record
HER	Historic Environment Record
HLC	Historic Landscape Characterisation
HRO	Hampshire Record Office
NE	Natural England, formerly English Nature
NWD	North Wessex Downs
OA	Oxford Archaeology
OCC	Oxfordshire County Council
OS	Ordnance Survey
SBC	Swindon Borough Council
SMR	Sites and Monuments Record
SQL	Structured Query Language
WBC	West Berkshire Council
WBHS	West Berkshire Heritage Service
WCC	Wiltshire County Council
WSRO	Wiltshire and Swindon Record Office

Appendix 2: Sources used by the North Wessex Downs & West Berkshire HLC Project

Source	Format	Coverage & Description	Source
OS 1:25,000 Explorer maps	Paper	all of project area	Ordnance Survey
OS 1:50,000	Digital	all of project area	Ordnance Survey
OS 1:10,000	Digital	all of project area	Ordnance Survey
OS 1:1250 Landline	Digital	West Berkshire and Oxfordshire	Ordnance Survey
OS MasterMap	Digital	all of project area	Ordnance Survey
Historic Ordnance Survey mapping 1 st – 4 th epochs	Digital	all of project area. Mapping dates; Epoch 1 – 1877-1883 Epoch 2 – 1897-1900 Epoch 3 – 1912-1914 Epoch 4 – 1925-1938	WBC, HCC, EH
Historic Ordnance Survey mapping 5 th – 7 th epoch	Digital	West Berkshire only. Mapping dates; Epoch 5 – 1960-1961 Epoch 6 – 1970-1976 Epoch 7 – 1971-1993	WBC
Aerial Photographs	Digital	all of project area: varying dates and sources	WBC, HCC, WCC, OCC
Hampshire HLC data	Digital	All Hampshire, 1999	HCC & OA
SMR	Digital	all of project area, not supplied for Oxfordshire	WBC, HCC, WCC, OCC
Registered Parks and Gardens	Digital	all of project area	English Heritage
Ancient Woodlands Inventory	Digital	all of project area	Natural England
Common Land Register	Digital	all of project area	Natural England
NMP transcriptions	Digital	Lambourn Downs, West Berkshire	English Heritage
SMR AP transcriptions	Paper and Digital	partial coverage of W. Berkshire, Hampshire	WBC SMR, HCC AHBR
Rocque's Map of Berkshire 1761	Paper	W. Berkshire and Oxfordshire within the NWD AONB	WBHS
Andrews & Dury's Map of Wiltshire 1773	Paper	All Wiltshire	WSRO
Taylor's Map of Hampshire 1759	Paper	All Hampshire	HRO
Milne's Map of Hampshire 1791	Paper	All Hampshire	HRO
Enclosure awards	Digital and Paper	Historic paper maps, partial coverage, available from record office. Scans of Berkshire and Oxfordshire awards online at http://www.berkshireenclosure.org.uk/default.asp	BRO, WSRO, HRO