

## 4.04 *Wonston Downs Landscape Character Area*

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Near Stoke Charity



### **Key Characteristics**

- Gently sloping and undulating topography, forming a relatively low-lying area of downland (50-110m OD).
- Well-drained upper chalk geology, with minor deposits of clay with flints.
- Arable farmland predominates within the area, consisting of medium to large fields, many with straight boundaries enclosed by formal agreement in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries, followed by 20<sup>th</sup> Century boundary loss. These field patterns also include an area of regular ladder fields south of Sutton Scotney.
- The habitats and species of greatest importance in this character area are associated with the arable farmland, including the stone curlew.
- Woodland within the landscape character area is sparse and largely consists of 19<sup>th</sup> Century plantation and shelterbelts, except for Bazeley Copse which is semi-natural ancient woodland, typically consisting mainly of oak, ash, hazel and field maple.
- The remnant downland at Worthy Down, south west of South Wonston is diverse calcareous grassland, supporting a distinctive vegetation community.
- A visually open and expansive landscape with long, panoramic views over the downs. Key views are towards Winchester and over the Dever Valley.
- The South Wonston water tower is a key landmark within the character area.
- A widely spaced network of straight roads, lanes and tracks providing access to the farms, together with a limited rights of way system and public access. Some busy routes pass through the area, including the Andover Road and the A34, originally Roman roads, and the railway.
- The area itself is relatively sparsely populated; the main settlement being South Wonston. However, the influence of Winchester and Kings Worthy to the south and the intrusion of the main roads create a more populated feel.
- South Wonston has a strong linear structure originating from the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, when the local farmland was sold for development in one-acre plots. Other settlements consist mainly of farmsteads and associated cottages.
- The most notable historic features of this character area are the drove roads, which predominantly run in an east west direction and connected Salisbury with Alresford and Alton, for moving animals and more latterly as a route for gypsy hop-pickers. Also, numerous pre-historic barrows are characteristic of the area.

### **Landscape Types within the Area**

Open Arable (Exposed) Open Arable

### **Settlement Types within the Area**

20<sup>th</sup> / 21<sup>st</sup> Century

### **Location and Boundaries**

The Wonston Downs Landscape Character Area is located to the north of the Winchester and encompasses a large area of the upper chalk downs.

Its northern boundary abuts the Dever Valley Landscape Character Area, where the arable landscape abruptly changes to the distinctly riverine well-treed landscape of the river valley. This northern boundary then follows the District boundary with Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council. The western boundary follows the Andover Road to the outskirts of Winchester, to the south. The southern boundary is defined by the built up of Winchester. The eastern edge of the Landscape Character Area is defined by

the boundary of Kings Worthy and further north by the clay-influenced landscape of the Stratton Woodlands Landscape Character Area.

### **Formative Influences**

The landscape is strongly influenced by the geology of soft Upper Chalk, giving rise to a gently sloping but very open landscape, with a central east-west ridge referred to as Worthy Down. Other more minor ridges include Down Farm ridge and Barton Farm ridge. To the north of Worthy Down the landscape gently falls to the River Dever. To the south of Worthy Down the landscape is more undulating but generally falls in height towards the River Itchen.

The landscape was originally wooded but extensively cleared in prehistoric times for arable agriculture and grazing. There is evidence of prehistoric activity in the area, including the long barrow to the east of South Wonston and the site of a Roman building to the west of Kings Worthy. During medieval times the area would have consisted of large areas of calcareous grassland managed as open sheep pasture with relatively few trees and hedges. During the late 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries parliamentary enclosure had a strong influence on the landscape, creating medium to large fields with straight surveyed boundaries. During the late 20<sup>th</sup> Century, hedgerow loss and the intensification of arable production has resulted in areas of larger and more exposed fields. Much of the hedgerow network is intact, and these hedgerows enclose a regular pattern of large fields, echoing the network of typically straight roads, lanes and tracks e.g. to the south of Stoke Charity.

### **Landscape & Settlement Description**

The landscape is strongly influenced by the gently sloping but very open landform, giving rise to long and expansive views from high points within the character area, for example on Worthy Down.

The character area almost entirely comprises arable landscape with very little tree/woodland cover. Where woodland occurs it consists predominantly of 19<sup>th</sup> Century shelterbelts. Where these are less frequent the landscape has a distinctly exposed feel to it, for example on Worthy Down. Bazeley Copse is the only surviving semi-natural ancient woodland in the character area. There is also a remnant but important area of calcareous grassland at Worthy Down to the west of South Wonston.

Hedgerows are generally low, heavily trimmed and often fragmented, but are usually higher along roads. They consist largely of blackthorn, with few hedgerow trees. In more diverse hedges, wild plum, spindle and wayfaring tree are also present. Shelterbelts, containing beech or coniferous species, are often associated with drove roads and tracks, a typical example is at Wallers Ash. Given the lack of hedges in this area, these belts provide important movement corridors, shelter and food for many species.

The verge along Andover Road supports remnants of calcareous grassland, including common knapweed,

lady's bedstraw, and burnet saxifrage. The largest remaining block of this community in the Wonston Downs Landscape Character Area occurs on Worthy Down. In addition to the species mentioned, yellow oat-grass, devil's-bit scabious and dropwort are distinctive components of this community. This area is also potentially very rich in invertebrates.

Although there is a long history of settlement within the area, the village of South Wonston, the main settlement in the area, did not establish itself until the turn of the last Century. It originated as a stopping over place for gypsies on the drove road between the hopfields at Alton and Salisbury. At the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century the farmland was divided and sold in one-acre plots, thus the linear plot pattern of the village was introduced. The arrival of the Royal Flying Corps during the 1<sup>st</sup> World War encouraged further settlement in the area at Worthy Down Camp when Worthy Down was used as an airfield. The majority of buildings within the character area are 20<sup>th</sup> Century, consisting of single and two storey dwellings, utilising modern mass-produced building materials.

Routes within the character area are influenced by Roman occupation and are generally straight and direct and, apart from the main through route, still maintain a rural character, with high hedges and without verges or kerbs.

### **Key Issues**

- Intrusive modern large scale farm buildings
- Use of non-indigenous species within shelterbelts
- Reduction of biodiversity through intensive agricultural practices
- Pollution of River Dever and Itchen from agricultural chemicals
- Degradation of remaining semi-natural grassland at Worthy Down due to under-grazing.
- Degradation of grassland on roadside verges during road works or through regular mis-management.
- Potential for recreation of calcareous grassland on agricultural land

### **Landscape Strategies**

- Conserve the large and generally regular field pattern and wide panoramic views.
- Restore biodiversity throughout the extensive areas of intensive arable farming, for example by returning some areas to calcareous downland, and planting indigenous species in shelterbelts.
- Conserve the structure and condition of the hedgerows and isolated woodlands and trees, which contribute to the biodiversity and character of the landscape, through the use of indigenous tree and shrub species and appropriate management.
- Conserve and enhance the isolated areas of

ecological importance through appropriate management plans, in particular Worthy Down chalk grassland and Bazeley Copse ancient woodland and the surrounding land.

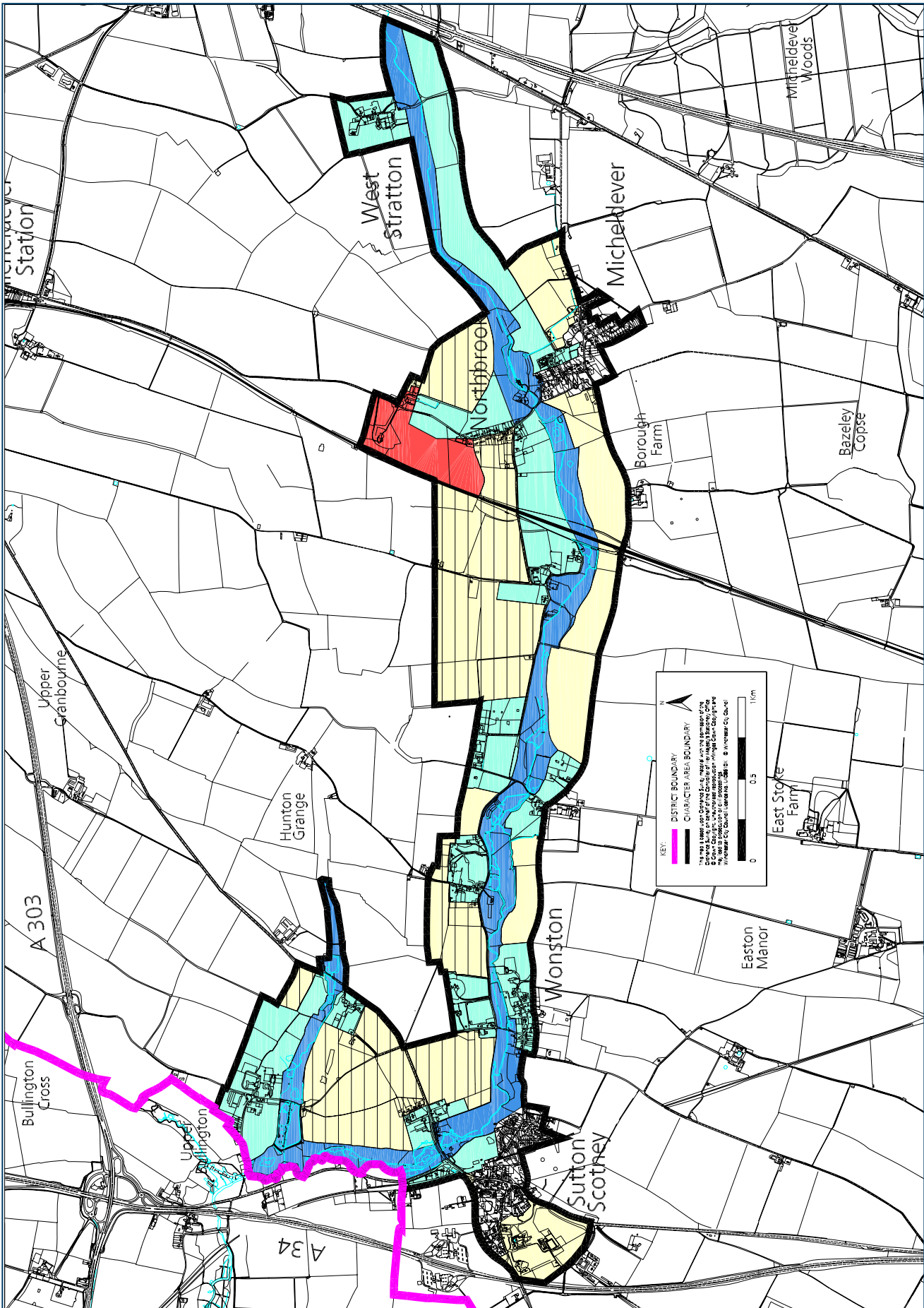
- Encourage environmentally and economically sustainable agricultural practices, to minimise use of fertiliser, for example, which could lead to the pollution of watercourses and the chalk aquifer.
- Restore and enhance the biodiversity of arable farmland, by encouraging the retention of conservation headlands, wildlife strips and grass strips around fields, and the increased use of spring sown arable crops and retention of winter fallow fields, in particular to encourage arable fields and restore populations of declining farmland birds.
- Restore areas of arable farmland to permanent chalk grassland, to achieve major biodiversity benefits.
- Manage semi-natural roadside verges to maximise biodiversity.
- Conserve the historic drove roads
- Conserve archaeological sites and their settings, from damage by ploughing
- Monitor presence of distinctive key species in semi-natural grassland and farmland birds to measure success of biodiversity strategy.

### **Built Form strategies**

- Enhance views within the area through careful siting and use of appropriate materials for modern farm buildings.
- Conserve the historic rural character of lanes, footpaths and drove roads throughout the area by resisting any road improvements which would threaten these features.
- Retain the linear and compact form of South Wonston and integrate its edges where it is open to the landscape, by planting with indigenous tree and hedge planting.
- Conserve the sparse scattered pattern of rural farm settlement.
- Conserve and promote the use of traditional garden boundaries such as non-coniferous hedging.

## **Key Designations**

- **Conservation Areas**  
None
- **Scheduled Ancient Monuments**  
Earthwork 810m NW of Larkwhistle Farm (Mon. No. 161HA)  
Long barrow 1km S of Larkwhistle Farm (Mon. No 12093)  
Worthy Down ditch (Mon. No 162 HA)  
Settlement W of West Stoke Farm (Mon. No 513HA)  
Long barrow 500 NW of Sanctuary Farm (Mon. No 12112)  
Long barrow 500m SW of Sanctuary Farm (Mon. No 12082)  
Long barrow 400m S of Sanctuary Farm (Mon. No 12092)  
Iron Age field system, banjo enclosure and RB villa 500m E of Woodham Farm (Mon. No 12049)  
Settlement site W of Bazeley Copse (Mon. No 525HA)
- **SSSI's**  
None
- **SINC's**  
Bazeley Copse, Wallers Ash Railway Tunnel, The Gallops, Worthy Down, Worthy Grove Kingsworthy Cutting
- **Parks listed in the Hampshire Register of Historic Parks and Gardens**  
None



## 4.05 Dever Valley Landscape Character Area

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River Dever, Wonston



### Key Characteristics

- Distinctive enclosed valley topography, with sloping valley sides and relatively narrow valley floor, located in a chalk downland setting.
- Alluvium and valley sand and gravel along valley floor, with loamy soil and upper chalk on valley sides and beyond.
- Meandering watercourse in narrow, often braided channels, with associated ponds, watercress beds and ephemeral headwaters.
- Valley floor generally consists of small pasture fields, with occasional remnants of historic water meadows and a high proportion of woodland.
- Arable fields along upper valley sides, contiguous with surrounding arable downs.
- A number of small historic parks and associated houses on the south-facing valley side at the western end of the Landscape Character Area. These are particularly associated with pasture and ornamental tree species.
- The rivers rise in chalk with clear spring water supporting rich aquatic flora and fauna. Rich and diverse habitats along floodplains including fen/carr/swamp/reedbed, and unimproved neutral grassland/fen.
- Open river valley landscape with views out over open arable landscape and views of the river from the valley sides, including either the watercourse or its associated vegetation.
- Valley-side lanes to north and south of river with regular cross-valley lanes. Footpaths connect settlements.
- A well-treed railway embankment bisects the character area, carrying regular trains between London & Southampton.
- Remote, tranquil character to the centre of the character area, although this is reduced by the A34 at its western end and the A33 and M3 at its western end
- A relatively high concentration of small villages along the southern valley side, having developed at river crossing points, often Anglo-Saxon in origin. Some, such as Wonston have developed in a linear form, while others such as Sutton Scotney are nucleated. All villages retain a rural historic character
- Scattered hamlets, historic parks and their associated farms are characteristic along the northern valley side.

### Landscape Types within the Area

River Valley Side  
River Valley Floor  
Open Arable  
Open Arable (Exposed)  
Historic Parkland

### Settlement Types within the Area

Chalk River Valley

### Location and Boundaries

The Dever Valley Landscape Character Area is located to the north of Winchester, and follows the course of the River Dever in an east-west direction. It includes both the valley floor and surrounding visual envelope of the valley. To both the north and south it is bounded by open arable downlands. At its eastern end, the A33 coincides with the source of the river, forming its boundary, while at the west, the river itself forms part of the Winchester District boundary with Test Valley and thus the western end of the character area.

## Formative Influences

The predominant influence on the area, is the River Dever, which has formed a relatively narrow river valley through the surrounding chalk downland. The permeability of the chalk has also allowed the river to form meanders and braided channels along its length, although generally the valley follows a fairly straight east-west route until it changes course at Sutton Scotney, and heads north, before continuing west and flowing into the River Test. As well as influencing the topography of the area, the river flood plain also provides a distinct diversity of flora and fauna, with numerous riparian and valley floor habitats.

Due to its sheltered position and clear, shallow source of water, the valley has a long history of settlement. The majority of the numerous villages and hamlets generally developed at river crossing points and are often Anglo-Saxon in origin. The continued occupancy of the valley had been promoted by its agricultural importance, providing a suitable location for corn mills, grazing meadows (including water meadows), watercress beds and trout fishing. By the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, the river valley location was also becoming a favoured place of residence by the landed gentry and contains three historic parks at its western end. As the downs are now mostly in arable production, the meadows in the valley are no longer needed to provide additional fodder for livestock. In many cases they have now become over-grown with scrub and secondary woodland, or have been planted with poplars or willow.

## Landscape & Settlement Description

The area is characterised by the relatively narrow, chalk valley and associated tributary of the River Test, the River Dever. The river channel itself is also relatively narrow and shallow and generally little more than a stream in places. In other parts it has been widened to form watercress beds (Hunton), and fish ponds (Norton Manor and Stoke Charity). There is also evidence of post-medieval water meadows, although these are no longer traditionally managed.

The river valleys are generally typified by agricultural use, with pasture and scattered areas of wet woodland on the valley bottom and arable fields on the valley sides, leading up to the arable downland of the surrounding area. There are no areas of ancient woodland present, although the valley bottom is now well treed in places, predominantly consisting of wet woodlands of alder, willow, ash and poplar together with overgrown hedgerows of hawthorn and hazel, for example. Areas of wet grassland and tall swamp vegetation are also characteristic of the area. Consequently there is a wide range of flora and fauna in the area. Important species likely to use the river and its associated habitats include Atlantic salmon, brown trout, water rail, otters, water voles and kingfishers. The RSPB is monitoring declining farmland birds in this area.

On the valley sides, the arable farmland is open and generally lacks trees, but is defined by clipped hedgerows predominantly consisting of hawthorn and blackthorn, typical of recent enclosure. In places however, these hedges have been removed or become fragmented. These fields would originally have been chalk downland associated with sheep rearing, but were probably enclosed by formal agreement in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries. Historic parks are also characteristic of the valley sides, at the western end of the character area. Generally these retain their ornamental tree species and historic character, although this has been eroded in parts, through additional recent development and construction of horse jumps for example.

There is a relatively large concentration of small villages and hamlets in the area, in comparison to the surrounding sparsely populated downland. The settlements of Upper Bullington, Wonston, Hunton, Stoke Charity, Weston Colley, Northbrook and West Stratton form a distinctive linear pattern along the valley. Many are designated as conservation areas, and all have generally retained their historic, traditional character, with very little recent expansion. Some, such as Hunton have even reduced in size since Victorian times. Sutton Scotney and Micheldever have developed a more nucleated structure, accommodating some additional development in recent years. The main settlements are characterised by a small church, often dating back to the 12<sup>th</sup> or 13<sup>th</sup> Century or earlier.

Many buildings are constructed using vernacular materials and construction methods. A high proportion of the buildings in the area are timber-framed with brick infill, often with a white colour-wash, as seen at Micheldever. Also typical are red brick, wattle and daub, rendered & colourwashed cob, flint, slate, clay tiles and long straw and combed wheat reed thatch.

## Key Issues

- Fragmentation and neglect of hedgerows and wet woodlands
- The decline in active management of the meadows is of significance to those species which rely on animal dung for their invertebrate prey, such as the stone curlew
- Under-management of historic parkland trees
- Loss of parkland pasture
- Pollution of river water from agricultural chemicals and silt run-off
- Continued flow of river
- Protection of historic character of settlements
- Protection of open views
- Development of prominent large agricultural buildings
- Lack of permanent grass field margins

## Landscape Strategies

- Conserve and restore the loose structure of trees and woodland in the area, through appropriate management, such as thinning, coppicing and replanting. Replanting should use locally indigenous species, such as ash, willow and poplar on the valley floor, and oak and beech on the valley side. This would also be an area suitable for the reintroduction of native black poplar, *Populus nigra*.
- Restore the field network through appropriate management and replanting of hedgerows. Replanting should use locally indigenous species such as hawthorn, blackthorn and hazel.
- Encourage the retention and traditional management of watercress beds, to ensure that they remain a characteristic feature of this area.
- Conserve the predominantly remote and quiet rural character of the parts of the area away from the A34 and A33.
- Conserve the varied nature of views throughout the area including semi-enclosed views of the river as well as long views out to the surrounding downs.
- Conserve and restore the landscape and built features of the historic landscape as appropriate, in particular through continued replacement tree planting and the restoration of pasture.
- Conserve the rich bio-diversity associated with the clear spring water.
- Restore and appropriately manage areas of neutral and calcareous grassland/wetland, to enhance biodiversity.
- Encourage environmentally and economically sustainable agricultural practices, to minimise chemical fertiliser and soil run-off for example, which could lead to the pollution of the River Dever and the chalk aquifer.
- Restore and enhance the biodiversity of arable farmland, by encouraging the retention of conservation headlands, wildlife strips and grass strips around fields, and the increased use of spring sown arable crops and retention of winter fallow fields.
- Restore areas of arable farmland to permanent chalk grassland, which could achieve significant biodiversity gains.
- Restore the use of the valley for livestock farming to provide the mixed farming necessary for many species.
- Improve opportunities for public access to the riverside for activities such as walking and fishing.
- Conserve the open and glimpsed views into and out of the valley through appropriate vegetation planting and clearance.

## Built Form Strategies

- Resist road improvements which would threaten the historic narrow valley-side and cross-valley rural lanes which characterise this area.
- Conserve and respect the traditional forms and scales of settlement in this area which are generally small, linear and strongly relate to the river and valley.
- Promote the use of local building materials such as red brick, white colour-washed brick, flint, clay tiles and thatch, in any new development.
- Promote the use of traditional garden and parkland boundaries such as brick and flint walls, palisade fencing, and non-coniferous hedging in any new development.
- Integrate new development with the surrounding treed landscape, through the use of native planting and careful siting.
- Carefully position and screen new agricultural buildings to avoid visual intrusion.

## Key Designations

### ● Conservation Areas

Micheldever  
Sutton Scotney  
Wonston  
Hunton  
Stoke Charity

### ● Scheduled Ancient Monuments

None

### ● SSSIs

River Test

### ● SINCs

Old House Meadow

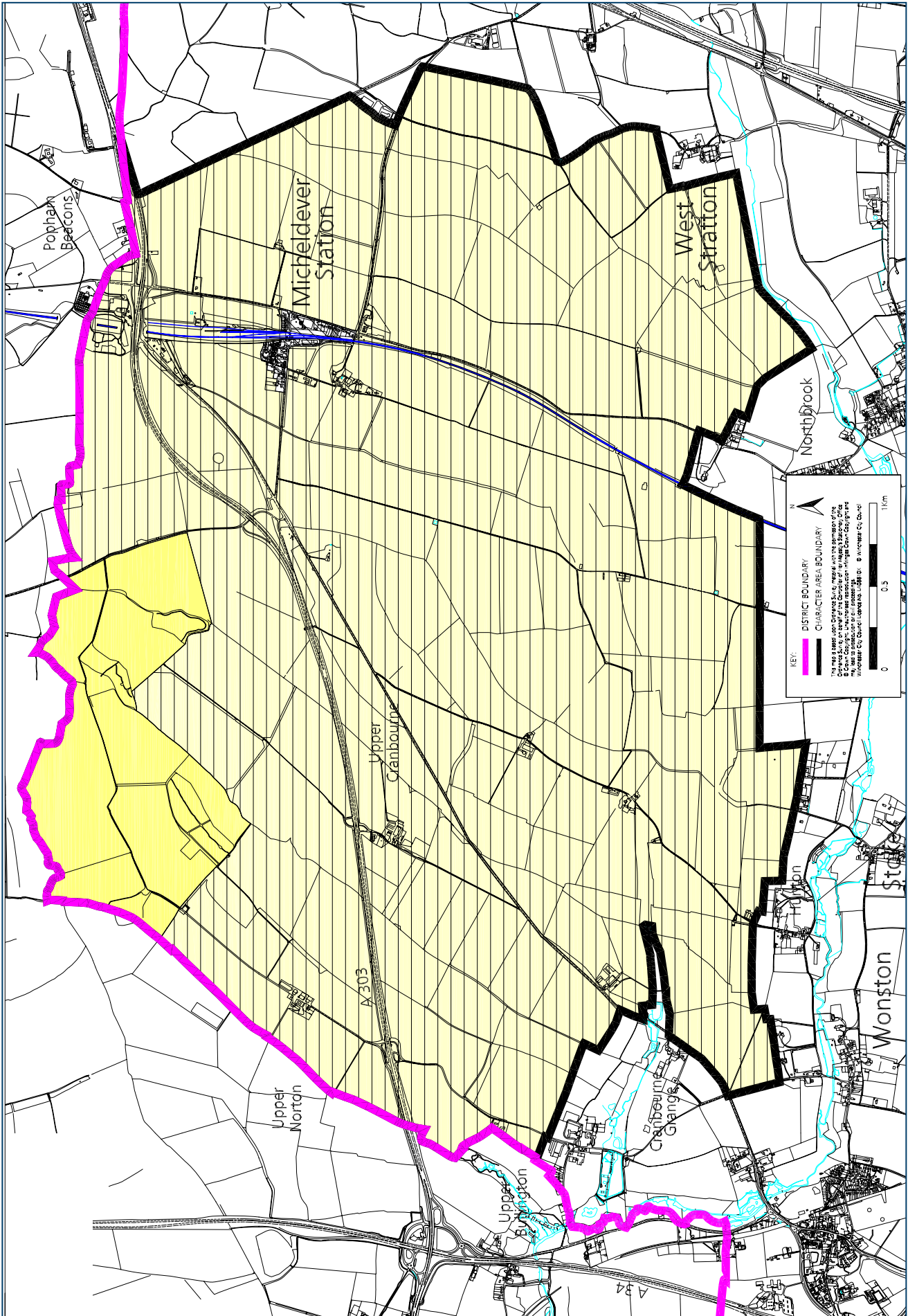
### ● Parks listed in the Hampshire Register of Historic Parks and Gardens

Norton Manor (site 1425) Post 1810 Park (early 20th century)

Northbrook House (site 1551) Post 1810 Park

Sutton Manor (site 1424)





## 4.06. North Dever Downs Landscape Character Area

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Upper Cranbourne Farm



### Key Characteristics

- Rolling, relatively low lying, chalk downland, rising from levels of 80 m in the south to 140 m OD to the north.
- Well-drained open farmland with dry valleys, forming part of the catchment basin of the River Dever to the south.
- Predominantly arable farmland together with some cattle and pig pasture farms. Historically an area of sheep rearing.
- Small number of small assorted semi-natural ancient woodlands to the north.
- Good populations of declining farmland birds
- Rare arable weeds and calcareous grassland plants on Micheldever Spoil Heaps and railway embankment
- Relatively large fields with straight, surveyed boundaries predominantly associated with enclosure by formal agreements in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries followed by further boundary loss through 20<sup>th</sup> Century field rationalisation. Includes examples of 'ladder fields' extending from the Dever up onto the chalk. Evidence of pre-historic field systems to north.
- Strong field boundaries, with tall, thick hedges and a relatively high proportion of hedgerow trees, giving a degree of visual enclosure.
- Long panoramic views of open farmland, contained by distant woodland to the east and north.
- A well spaced network of straight minor rural roads and lanes, together with the A303 trunk road.
- Historic drove roads running in a north-south direction, often lined with yew trees.
- Well-treed railway embankment running in a north-south direction, carrying regular trains between London and Southampton, which provides an important ecological habitat and a visually prominent feature within the area.
- Remote, rural character, although the A303 and railway detract from this to the north of the area.
- Sparsely settled, with one small village, Micheldever Station and scattered farms.
- Evidence of a long history of settlement, including the site of an Iron Age camp at Norsebury Ring, Bronze Age tumuli and Celtic field systems.

### Landscape Types within the Area

Open Arable  
Chalk & Clay (Farmland)

### Settlement Types within the Area

Victorian Railway

### Location and Boundaries

The North Dever Downs Landscape Character Area stretches between the River Dever and the northern boundary of the district, where it abuts the area administered by Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council. Its western boundary is also formed by a district boundary, that of Test Valley District Council. To the east, the boundary of the character area is

formed by the distinct change in geology and land use formed by the clay of the Stratton Woodlands Landscape Character Area.

### Formative Influences

The geology of the area consists entirely of Upper Chalk, together with some areas of loamy soil. The permeable nature of this geology has resulted in an undulating well-drained topography, associated with dry valleys and the absence of a surface drainage network.

The formation of the present landscape was probably initiated as long ago as the early prehistoric period, when most of the original forest cover was probably cleared for arable agriculture and grazing. There is

much evidence of prehistoric activity in the area including Stone Age and Bronze Age barrows and an Iron Age hillfort, all to the immediate north of the Dever Valley, as well as Iron Age Celtic field systems to the north of the character area.

During medieval times, the area consisted of large areas of calcareous grassland, managed as open sheep pasture with relatively few trees and hedges. This is shown by the presence of 'ladder' fields extending up from the Dever, with straight 'rungs' that would have been formed by early post-medieval enclosure. From post medieval times, further enclosure would have taken place, some associated with the assarting of the woodland to the north of the area, and the majority by the enclosure of open fields, by formal agreement and parliamentary acts, predominantly in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries. Throughout this time, the land would have remained as calcareous grassland, used for grazing sheep.

The 20<sup>th</sup> Century saw major changes to the landscape of the area, as farming became predominantly arable. In the latter half of the century, increasing mechanisation meant that this was accompanied by field rationalisation, with the consequent loss of hedgerows and increase in field sizes.

### **Landscape & Settlement Description**

This is an area with a strong rural character, with a gently rolling landform to the south that becomes slightly more undulating to the north. The area is almost entirely given over to arable agriculture. Micheldever Spoil Heaps SSSI supports particularly diverse flora. The area also contains occasional areas of pasture, small game spinneys and coniferous plantations and to the north of the area there are also some small pieces of assarted semi-natural ancient woodland. The area also benefits from small areas of calcareous grassland generally in narrow strips along roads and between fields. The open landscape is also supporting good populations of declining farmland birds such as stone curlews, and this is being monitored by the RSPB.

The rolling nature of the topography and the large field sizes allows for long, open panoramic views. However, the North Dever Downs character area is far less exposed than other local areas of downland. Fields are generally enclosed by strong boundaries consisting of tall hedges and numerous hedgerow trees. To the centre of the area, a railway embankment also forms a strong wooded visual boundary. Similarly, to the far east, the boundary of Black Wood, in the Stratton Woodlands Landscape Character Area provides an important enclosing element. Although there are no historic parks in the area, it does benefit from an avenue of lime trees on Larkwhistle Farm Road, possibly planted in association with Stratton Park.

The rural, remote character of the area is also due to its limited amount of settlement. Micheldever Station is the only village in the area and, although forming a stop on the London-Southampton rail route, it is little

more than a hamlet. The village developed in conjunction with the railway station and is generally Victorian in character. Buildings there are constructed mainly of brick and slate, although some flint is also seen. The only other settlement consists of several scattered farms and farm workers cottages to the west of the area.

Despite its lack of settlement and rural character, the tranquillity of the area is unfortunately reduced by the presence of the A303, which bisects its northern part. This dual carriageway also has a visual presence, forming embankments and cuttings and forcing minor lanes under bridges. Regular trains passing through the character area also reduce its tranquillity and feeling of remoteness.

### **Key Issues**

- Continuing improvements to habitats for declining farmland birds
- Impact of any proposed hedgerow / woodland planting on declining farmland birds to be considered
- Potential pollution of aquifer and River Test and River Dever from agricultural chemicals
- Visual impact of coniferous plantations
- Noise pollution from A303
- Visually intrusive farm buildings, agri-chemical plans and rail depot storage buildings
- Protection of archaeological remains, especially tumuli, ancient field systems, barrows and Norsebury Ring hill fort
- Development of prominent large agricultural buildings
- Potential for significant biodiversity gains from arable reversion to permanent pasture.

### **Landscape Strategies**

- Conserve and restore the structure and condition of ancient woodlands, through appropriate traditional woodland management, such as thinning, coppicing, replanting, ride and edge management and the removal of alien species.
- Conserve and enhance the existing hedgerow network to maximise biodiversity, restore ecological networks and provide visual enclosure. The impacts of any proposed new hedgerow planting on declining farmland birds should be discussed with the RSPB prior to provision of grants.
- Conserve and enhance areas of mature trees through appropriate management and replanting as appropriate. These include the avenue of lime trees along Larkwhistle Farm Road, and the wooded railway embankment.

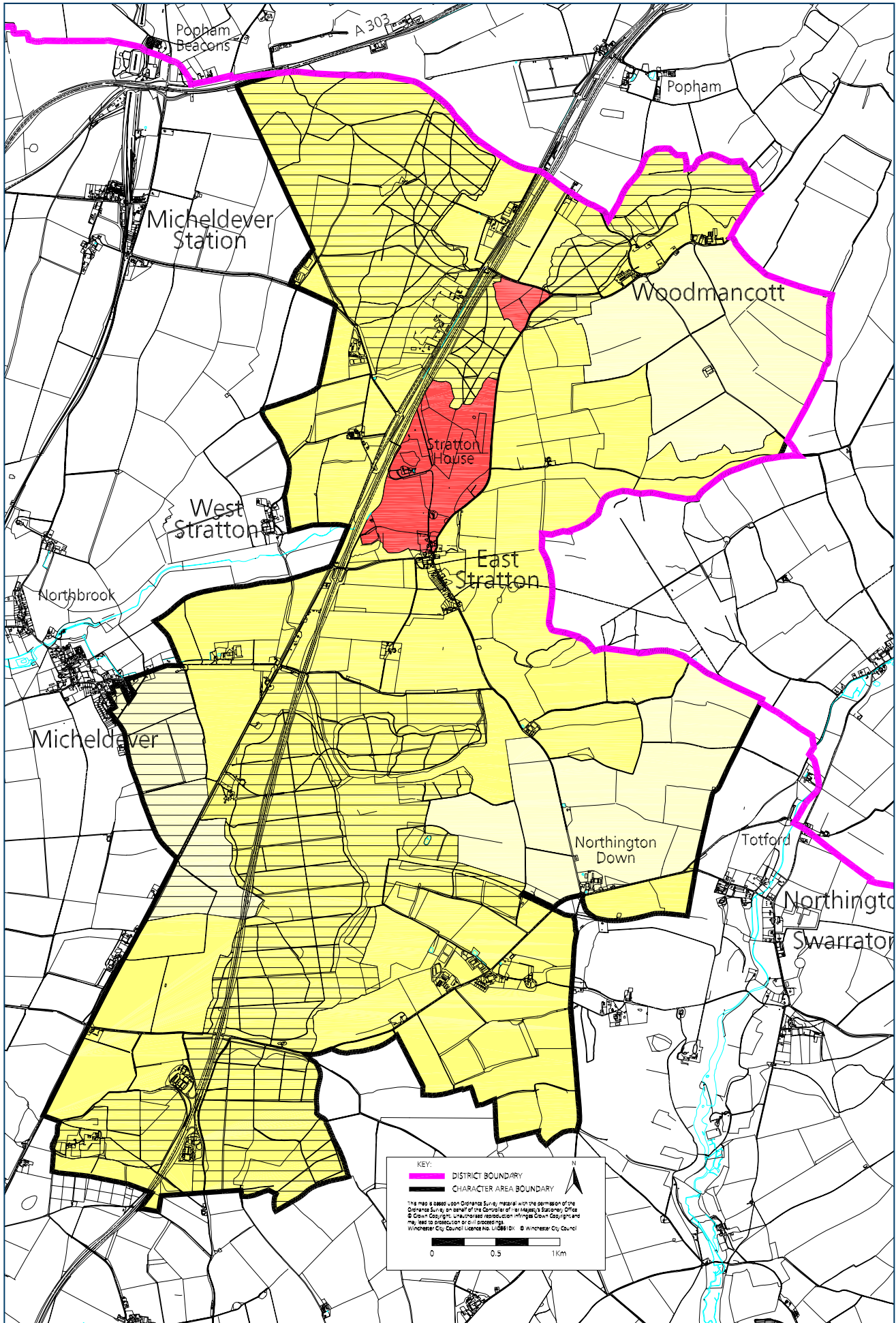
- Protect the setting and routes of historic drove roads and replant specimen yew and pine trees along their length as they become over-mature.
- Restore and enhance the biodiversity of arable farmland, by encouraging the retention of conservation headlands, wildlife strips and grass strips around fields, and the increased use of spring sown arable crops and retention of winter fallow fields, to sustain important arable weed flora and seed-eating birds, and especially halt the rapid decline of the stone curlew.
- Encourage environmentally and economically sustainable agricultural practices, to minimise fertiliser and soil run-off for example, which could lead to the pollution of the River Dever and River Test SSSI and the chalk aquifer, and to sustain important arable weed flora and seed-eating birds, and especially halt the rapid decline of the stone curlew.
- Seek opportunities for the restoration of arable farmland to permanent chalk grassland
- Conserve the open panoramic views throughout the area
- Protect from ploughing and enhance the setting of, prehistoric sites such as Norsebury Ring, through improved agricultural practices for example.

### **Built Form Strategies**

- Conserve and respect the visually remote character of the area through sensitive location and design of new development.
- Conserve and promote the use of local building materials such as red brick, flint and slate in any new development.
- Integrate new development into its rural setting with appropriately located indigenous planting.
- Carefully position new agricultural buildings to avoid prominent locations
- Resist road improvements which would threaten the narrow and rural character of the lanes in this area.

### **Key Designations**

- **Conservation Areas**  
None
- **Scheduled Ancient Monuments**  
Long barrow, 250m NE of Upper Cranbourne Farm (Mon. No. 12104)  
Norsebury Ring Camp (Mon No. 34140)
- **SSSI's**  
Micheldever Spoil Heaps
- **SINCs**  
Upper Cranbourne and Hunton Down Farms; Micheldever Oil Terminal; Freefolk Beech Brake; Cranbourne Wood; Norton Wood; Norton Copse; Blind End Copse
- **Parks listed in the Hampshire Register of Historic Parks & Gardens**  
None
- **Local Nature Reserves**  
Micheldever Spoil Heaps



## 4.07. Stratton Woodlands Landscape Character Area



Edge of Stratton Park



### Key Characteristics

- Strong presence of assorted woodland cover, associated with clay deposits. These include Micheldever Wood (replanted ancient woodland, formerly part of Pamber Forest) Black Wood, Itchen Wood, Dodsley Wood, Rownest Wood, Shroner Wood (ancient semi-natural and replanted woodland), College Wood, Embley Wood, Biddles Wood and part of Thorny Down Wood.
- High biodiversity value of woodland; especially associated with ancient woodland. Part of Micheldever Wood is a wildlife reserve.
- Medium to large assorted fields, that are predominantly used for arable production, are particularly found in the north-east of the character area.
- Variety of topography (altitudes range from 80-145m OD).
- Variety of enclosure from heavily wooded to fairly exposed.
- Visually very rural, but M3 noise affects perception of tranquillity.
- Rural roads are generally quite narrow, one exception being the avenue at Cowdown.
- Archaeological remains, including barrows and Iron Age settlement
- Presence of the extended (12<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> Century) historic deer park at Stratton Park and its influence on the formation of East Stratton, which was partially relocated to make way for the estate.
- East Stratton is a good example of an 'estate' village, with many Grade II Listed buildings.
- Woodmancott is an isolated settlement with a small business park based on converted traditional farm buildings.
- Characteristic buildings include 19<sup>th</sup> Century brick and thatch estate cottages and 17<sup>th</sup> Century timber framed thatched cottages within East Stratton, together with a flint church with clay tile roof. The majority of other dwellings are brick with clay tiles.

### Landscape Types within the Area

Open Arable (Exposed) Chalk and Clay (Farmland)

Chalk and Clay (Woodland) Historic Parkland

### Settlement Types within the Area

Estate Village

### Location and Boundaries

The Stratton Woodlands Landscape Character Area is situated in the north-east corner of the district and both its northern and eastern boundaries are formed by the boundary of Basingstoke and Dean Borough Council. The southern boundary of the character area is defined by the edge of Itchen Wood where the topography and farmland is increasingly influenced by the chalk downlands to the north of the River Itchen (North Itchen Downs Landscape Character Area). The

woodland enclosing Northington Grange and the steep valley sides of the upper reaches of the Itchen Valley define the south-eastern boundary of the character area.

To the west of the character the clay soils have given rise to areas of continuous woodland and areas of farmland characterised by well treed, largely unmanaged, boundaries. The main woodlands include Black Wood in the North, Micheldever Wood and Itchen Wood further south, which provide a clearly identifiable edge to the western boundary of the character area.

### Formative Influences

There is a wide variety in the landscape of the character area, derived mainly from the varied topography underlying geology, combining chalk with overlying clay soils, and the diverse topography of the

area. The presence of large areas of clay is reflected by the predominance of woodland including Black Wood to the north and Micheldever Wood to the south. It contains large areas of beech and oak planted about 60 years ago. This large woodland complex of Micheldever and Itchen Woods has prehistoric settlements and field systems within it, demonstrating that much of the woodland is Roman or post-Roman regeneration, which has then been assarted. There is also evidence of post 1800 assarting at the north-east end of Micheldever Wood.

There is a long history of settlement in the area, particularly associated with Stratton Park that dates back to around AD900. Associated with the park is the village of East Stratton which has developed over four centuries. This once extended further north into Stratton Park, but was partially demolished to make way for the park improvements in about 1850.

### **Landscape and Settlement Description**

To the eastern edge of the landscape character area, mainly on areas of high ground, the influence of the upper chalk gives rise to more open areas with large arable fields, with clipped and fragmented hedgerows and few hedgerow trees. In places this open landscape directly abuts the woodlands, while in other places there is a more gradual transition.

The sense of enclosure varies enormously, from the low-lying enclosed woodland areas to the fairly high areas of the exposed arable fields. However, the unifying feature of this character area is the presence of woodland both locally and as a backdrop to longer or wider views. In particular, in views west from Lone Farm over the character area, the woodland appears as a major component of the character area. These woodlands vary in character including ancient woodland particularly renowned for bluebell cover in the spring, such as Rownest Wood and Shroner Wood, as well as more recent plantations. The edges of much of this woodland have been assarted to provide agricultural fields.

Stratton Woodlands is predominantly rural in character. East Stratton is the only village within the character area, which lies fairly centrally with Micheldever Wood to the South and Embley Wood to the North. East Stratton is closely associated with Stratton Park. It has a north/south linear pattern with the park situated to the northern end. It contains a number of 19<sup>th</sup> Century brick and thatch estate cottages and some 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Century timber framed buildings. Other buildings in the character area include scattered farmhouses and associated workers cottages and yards, typically brick with clay tiles.

Historically a deer park, Stratton Park is located on the valley gravel and sands of the dry upper reaches of the Dever Valley. The park has fallen into decline, with the loss of the main house and the neglect of the mature parkland trees.

Routes within the character area are typically fairly straight and direct, but rural and narrow in character, with clipped hedges and no kerb lines or pavements. The presence of the A33 and M3 roads however, which run adjacent to and through the western edge of Micheldever and Itchen Woods, has resulted in a loss of tranquillity in the western parts of the character area. The northbound Motorway Service Area at Shroner Wood also provides some added noise and light pollution.

### **Key Issues**

- Influence of the M3 on tranquillity
- Decline of Stratton Parkland
- Potential for restoration of non-native plantations in ancient woodland sites to native woodland, thereby increasing biodiversity
- Potential for improved management of existing hedgerows and for planting new hedges to improve network in open arable areas, providing there is no adverse impact on important populations of declining farmland birds.

### **Landscape Strategies**

- Conserve the generally high degree of enclosure and seclusion created by the numerous woodlands and hedgerows within chalk and clay areas.
- Restore and enhance the biodiversity of arable farmland, by encouraging the retention of conservation headlands, wildlife strips and grass strips around fields, and the increased use of spring sown arable crops and retention of winter fallow fields.
- Encourage hedgerow infill and hedgerow tree planting on open arable areas, providing there is no adverse impact on declining farmland birds. Take advice from RSPB before giving grants for hedgerow planting to avoid potential adverse effects on declining farmland birds.
- Conserve and restore the structure and condition of the woodlands and hedgerows, which contributes to the bio-diversity and character of the landscape, through appropriate management such as thinning, coppicing, replanting, ride and edge management and the removal of alien species. Replanting should use locally indigenous species, including oak, beech, hazel, ash and field maple.
- Conserve and improve public access to the woodlands.
- Encourage take up of Forest Authority grants for the restoration of non-native plantations on ancient woodland sites to native trees and shrubs.
- Conserve the character of various archaeological sites within the woodland and historic field patterns
- Restore Stratton Park, using an appropriate strategy.

### **Built Form Strategies**

- Conserve the rural character and pattern of East Stratton and Woodmancott.
- Conserve the form and character of other isolated dwellings associated with farm complexes
- New development should respect the traditional built form and materials typical of the character area.
- Respect the small-scale nature of existing dwellings.
- Enhance the rural character of the area through appropriate garden boundaries avoiding high brick walls and fences, which are not characteristic of the area.
- Conserve the rural character of the lanes and tracks.

### **Key Designations**

- **Conservation areas**

East Stratton

- **Scheduled Ancient Monuments**

Iron Age settlement (Mon. No. 512 HA)

Micheldever Wood round barrows and earthworks in Micheldever and Itchen Woods (Mon. No, 588 HA)

- **SSSI's**

None

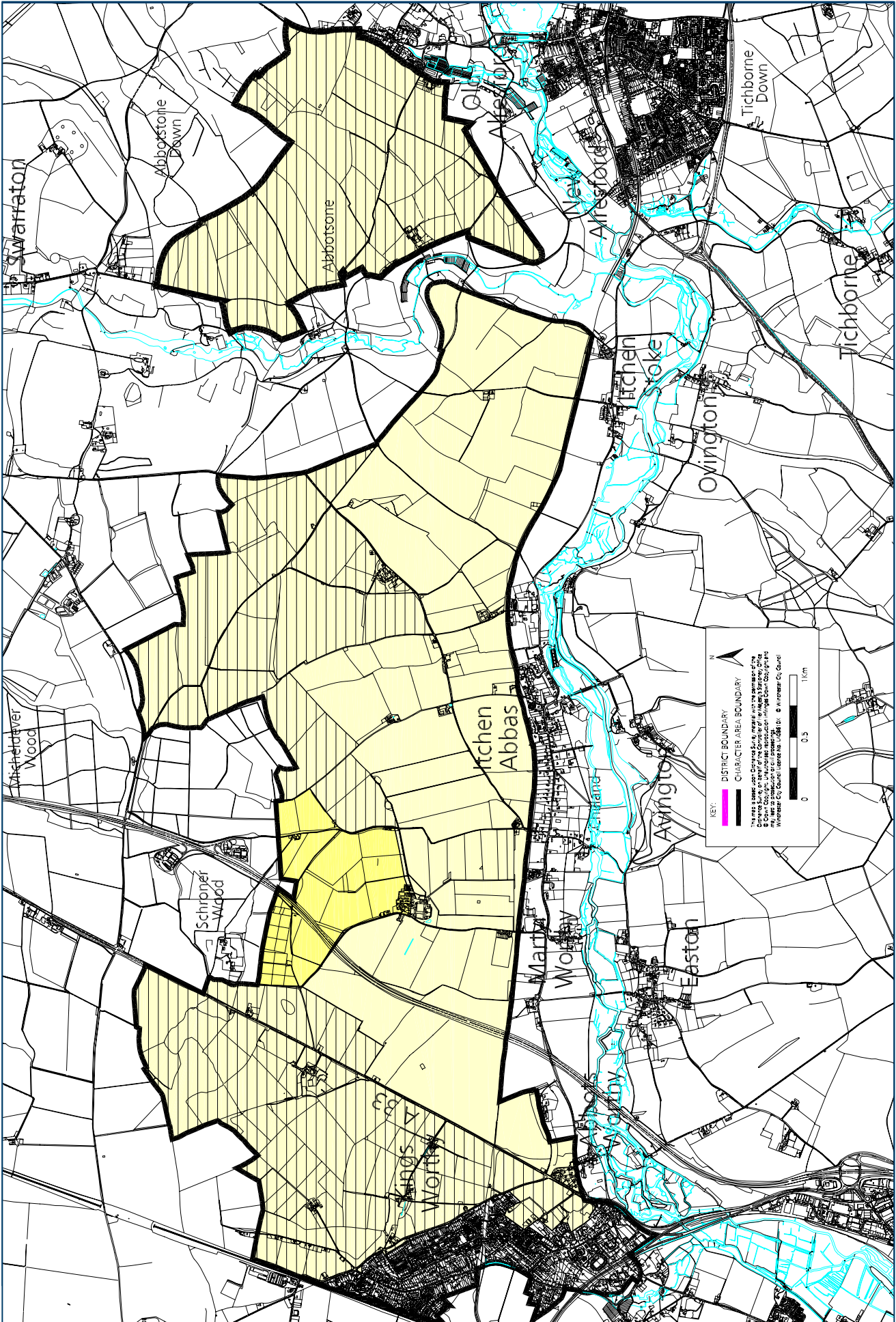
- **SINCs**

Black Wood; College Wood; Norn's Copse; Cow Down Copse; Duke's Copse; Totford Copse; Dodsley Wood; The Lawn, Micheldever; Dodsley and Lawn Copses; Folly Wood; Micheldever Wood; Mill Lane Copses; Hassocks Copse; Itchen Wood; Shroner Wood; College Wood.

- **Parks listed in the Hampshire Register of Historic Parks and Gardens**

Stratton Park (Site No. 1552, English Heritage Grade 11 Listed Park) 1660's Deer Park





## 4.08. North Itchen Downs Landscape Character Area

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From Bridgetts Lane, looking towards Winchester



### Key Characteristics

- Stretch of well-drained rolling chalk downland running in an east-west direction and forming the upper slopes of the northern side of the Itchen Valley between Winchester and Alresford.
- Medium and large regular fields with straight surveyed boundaries, enclosed during the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries by formal agreements, followed by further boundary loss through 20<sup>th</sup> Century field rationalisation. Predominantly arable, with some pasture to the west.
- Clipped, often-fragmented hedgerows with few hedgerow trees.
- Small, sparsely scattered areas of woodland, including some ancient semi-natural woodland.
- Open, often-exposed feel, giving panoramic views across the Itchen valley and beyond, from heights of up to 125m OD.
- Well distributed network of minor narrow lanes and drove roads together with a short stretch of the M3 motorway.
- Evidence of long history of settlement, with tumuli, and the sites of Iron Age settlements and a Roman Villa.
- Sparsely settled, containing just one main settlement, Kings Worthy, and scattered farms. Kings Worthy originated in association with the river but has expanded northwards into the downs.

### Landscape Types within the Area:

Chalk & Clay (Farmland) Open Arable (Exposed)  
Open Arable

### Settlement Types within the Area:

Chalk River Valley

### Location and Boundaries

The Landscape Character Area stretches from Kings Worthy to New Alresford. It is bounded by the lower valley sides of the River Itchen to its south and by the woods and heavily treed farmland of the Stratton Woodlands and Bighton Woodlands Landscape Character Areas to the north and east. The eastern end of the area is bisected by the Itchen Valley Landscape Character Area.

### Formative Influences

The geology of the area consists entirely of Upper Chalk, together with some small areas of overlying Clay with Flints and areas of loamy soil. The permeable nature of this geology has resulted in a rolling well-drained topography that falls generally from north to south, towards the Itchen Valley.

The formation of the present landscape was probably initiated as long ago as the early prehistoric period, when most of the original forest cover was probably cleared for arable agriculture and grazing. Evidence of prehistoric activity in the area includes Bronze Age barrows and Iron Age enclosures and settlement. There is also the site of a Roman villa in the area.

During medieval times, the area would have consisted of large areas of calcareous grassland, managed as open sheep pasture with relatively few trees and hedges. There is some evidence of early informal enclosure of these open field systems, although generally enclosure occurred by formal agreement in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries. The 20<sup>th</sup> Century saw major changes to the landscape of the area, as farming became predominantly arable. In the latter half of the century, increasing mechanisation meant that this was accompanied by field rationalisation, with the consequent loss of hedgerows and increase in field size.

### Landscape & Settlement Description

This is an area with a strong rural agricultural character, with a gently rolling landform, which slopes

down towards the Itchen Valley along its southern boundary. The area is almost entirely given over to arable agriculture. The main biodiversity potential lies in the arable weed flora (mid/north Hampshire is one of the richest arable weed areas in England) as well as a habitat for declining and vulnerable birds such as the corn bunting, tree sparrow and linnet.

The area also contains limited areas of pasture to the north of Kings Worthy and occasional shelter belts and small copses, some of which are ancient semi-natural woodland, namely Burnt Wood, Pavis Copse, and Rutherly Copse. This is generally not a well-treed area although it has a few hedgerow trees or tall hedgerows and old avenue planting.

The rolling nature of the topography and the large size of the fields allows for long, open panoramic views, particularly from the higher points to the north of the area towards Winchester and the Itchen Valley. In places, the elevated nature of the land combined with the lack of trees, give it an exposed feel.

Roads in this area are narrow and rural in character, forming a relatively sparse network, supplemented by a number of historic ox droves. Settlement is generally confined to a relatively dense pattern of farms. However, Kings Worthy to the west is a large village, the centre of which was originally associated with the River Itchen but is now cut off from it by the busy A33. The village has predominantly expanded in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, developing northwards up the 'Springvale' valley.

Despite the generally rural character and lack of settlement in this landscape character area, the tranquillity of the western half of the area is reduced by the presence of the A33 and the M3 motorway although, since it generally runs in a cutting, its visual impact is minimal. The southbound Motorway Service Area at Shroner Wood also provides some noise and light pollution. Elsewhere the area generally has a visually and aurally remote feel.

### Key Issues

- Impact of intensive agricultural practices on aquifer and water courses, arable weeds and declining farmland birds
- Hedgerow and woodland neglect during the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century
- Noise pollution from A33 and M3
- Intrusive farm buildings
- Protection of archaeological remains from ploughing
- Development of prominent large agricultural buildings
- Potential biodiversity benefits arising from restoration of arable land to chalk downland

### Landscape Strategies

- Conserve and restore the structure and condition of woodlands through appropriate management such as thinning, coppicing, replanting and removal of alien species.
- Encourage replanting of neglected hedgerows to connect habitats, whilst respecting the historic open downland character of the area. Take advice from RSPB regarding potential impacts on farmland birds before giving hedgerow planting grants.
- Encourage environmentally and economically sustainable agricultural practices, to minimise fertiliser and soil run-off, which could lead to the pollution of the River Itchen SSSI and the chalk aquifer, and to promote the growth of arable weeds in field margins and habitats for declining farmland birds.
- Conserve the open, unenclosed nature of the area
- Restore and enhance the biodiversity of arable farmland, by encouraging the retention of conservation headlands, wildlife strips and grass strips around fields, and the increased use of spring sown arable crops and retention of winter fallow fields, to sustain important arable weed flora and declining farmland birds
- Seek opportunities for the restoration of arable to chalk downland.
- Conserve the historic routes of the ox droves from agricultural change and development.
- Conserve the open panoramic views throughout the area through the appropriate management of hedgerows and avoiding inappropriately located woodland planting
- Conserve archaeological sites and their settings, from damage by ploughing
- Monitor declining farmland birds to measure success of biodiversity strategy

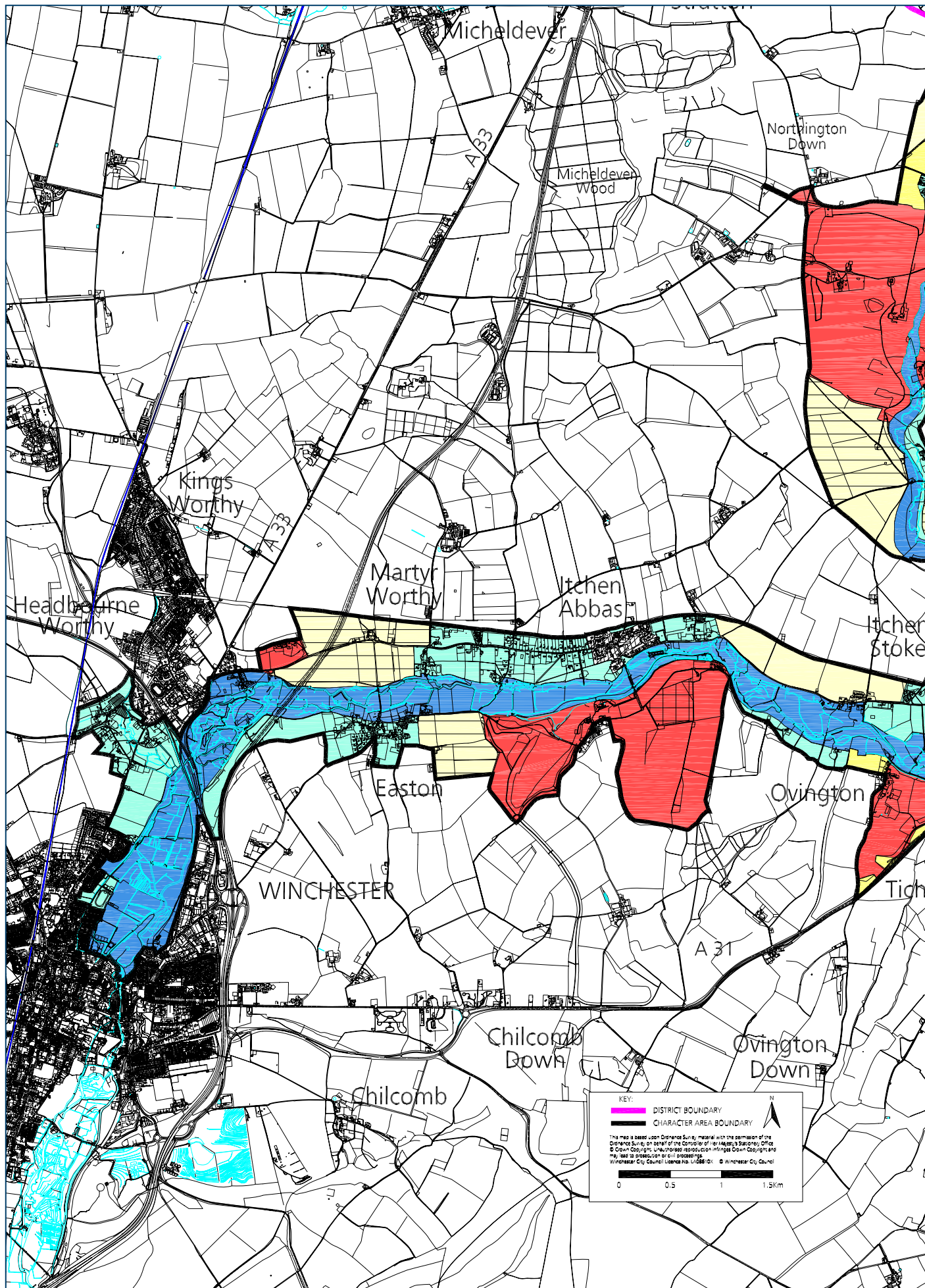
### Built Form Strategies

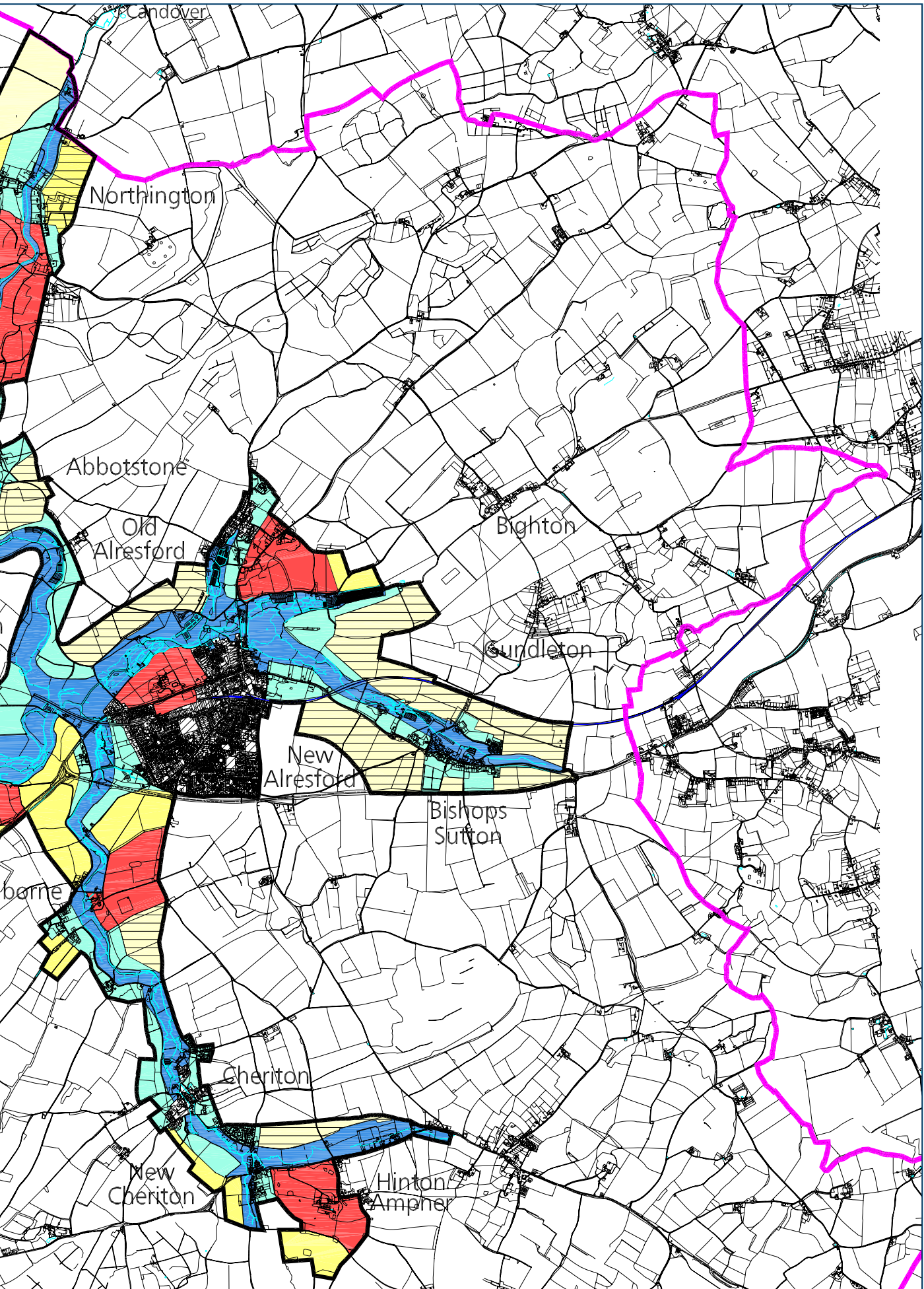
- Conserve the visually remote character settlement within the area by avoiding inappropriately located or prominent buildings.
- Integrate new development into the landscape with appropriate native planting.
- Minimise the impact of intrusive structures such as telecommunications masts and new agricultural buildings through sensitive siting and screening.
- Conserve the narrow, rural character of lanes

## Key Designations

- **Conservation Areas**  
Kings Worthy
- **Scheduled Ancient Monument**  
Anglo-Saxon cemetery in Worthy Park  
(Mon. No. 514 HA)  
  
Late Iron Age settlement N of Grace's Farm  
(Mon. No. 527 HA)  
  
Roman villa and earlier prehistoric settlement  
400m W of Lone Farm (Mon. No. 26705)  
  
Two round barrows 100m NE of Itchen Abbas  
Roman villa (Mon. No. 26704)  
  
Banjo type native settlement (Mon. No. 510 HA)
- **SSSI's**  
None
- **SINCs**  
Burnt Wood, Rutherely Copse
- **Parks listed in the Hampshire Register of  
Historic Parks and Gardens**  
None







## 4.09. Upper Itchen Valley Landscape Character Area



River Itchen near Cheriton Mill



### Key Characteristics

- Distinctive river valley topography with sloping valley sides and relatively narrow valley floor, located in a chalk downland setting.
- Alluvium and valley sand and gravel along valley bottoms with loamy soil and upper chalk on valley sides and beyond.
- Clear alkaline spring water in meandering narrow channels, which are often braided, together with associated lakes, ponds, mill chases, springs and ephemeral headwaters and supporting a thriving watercress industry.
- Valley floor generally consists of small pasture fields, with occasional remnants of historic water meadows. Valley sides generally consist of medium fields used for arable production following informal parliamentary type enclosure.
- A significant number of ornamental historic parks and associated houses, mostly dating from the 18<sup>th</sup> Century. These feature ornamental species including lime, horse chestnut and cedar.
- High biodiversity value, with habitats including the chalk river, fen/carr/swamp/reedbed, unimproved neutral grassland, calcareous grassland, standing open water, ephemeral headwaters and ancient semi-natural woodlands
- A number of long views across the river valley gained from the open valley sides, including the open flood plains in the upper reaches and more enclosed/settled valley floor nearer Winchester.
- Riverside routes such as the B3047 the B3046 and footpaths such as the Itchen Way. Also railway lines such as the disused railway line and the Watercress line. Also, regular connections between the river and adjacent downland via drove roads and lanes. Long distance footpaths follow the river and cut across the area.
- Numerous river crossings, via lanes, fords and footbridges.
- A long history of occupation, with numerous archaeological remains, including iron age lynchets, ancient tracks and the sites of an iron age settlement (Itchen Stoke) and three deserted medieval villages (Abbotstone, Northington and Swarraton)
- Remote feel away from the main roads.
- A high concentration of small villages often Anglo-Saxon in origin. These have developed at river crossing points and generally developed in a linear form along the valley side. Where topography has allowed, a few settlements such as New Alresford have also become more nucleated. Estate villages and Parkland, such as Tichborne and Avington, are also characteristic.
- Traditional building features & methods, including timber frames, brick, flint, wheat-reed thatch, slate and clay tiles.
- River-associated structures, including mills, dams and weirs.

### Landscape Types within the Area

River Valley Floor	River Valley Side
Open Arable	Open Arable (Exposed)
Chalk and Clay (Farmland)	Historic Parkland

### Settlement Types within the Area

Chalk River Valley

### Location and Boundaries

The Itchen Valley Landscape Character Area follows the headwaters of the Itchen in a south-north direction from New Cheriton to New Alresford via Tichborne, before turning in an east-west direction to the edge of Winchester. The character area also includes tributaries of the Itchen; the Candover Stream, which runs north-south from Swarraton to New Alresford, and the River Arle and its tributaries;



one running from Old Alresford to New Alresford and one from Bishop's Sutton to New Alresford.

As well as including the valley floor, the Landscape Character Area also includes the areas of the valley sides generally making up the visual envelope of the river. The character area is bounded on all sides by open arable downland, with particularly strong boundaries distinguished by the disused railway line and watercress line to the north of the main channel of the Itchen, and the B3046 between New Alresford and Cheriton.

### **Formative Influences**

The predominant influence on the area is the River Itchen and its tributaries, which have formed a relatively narrow river valley through the surrounding chalk downland. The permeability of the chalk has also resulted in the formation of numerous meanders, braided channels, springs, ponds and lakes. As well as influencing the topography of the area, the river flood plain also provides a diversity of flora and fauna, with numerous habitats associated with the river channel, valley floor and valley sides.

Due to its sheltered position and clear, shallow source of water, the valley has a long history of settlement, dating back to the Iron Age. The majority of the numerous villages and hamlets developed in Anglo Saxon times, at suitable river crossing points. The continued occupancy of the valley had been promoted by its agricultural importance, providing energy for corn mills and fulling mills as well as a suitable location for water meadows, watercress beds and trout fishing. By the 18th Century, the river valley location was also becoming a favoured place of residence for the landed gentry and therefore has a significant number of large country houses and associated parkland.

### **Landscape & Settlement Description**

The area is characterised by a number of relatively narrow, meandering chalk river valleys, including the headwater of the River Itchen. The river channels themselves are also relatively narrow and shallow, generally little more than a stream in parts. There is much evidence of historic change to these channels. In places they have been widened and dammed, forming Old Alresford Pond (c1190) and ornamental lakes at Northington and Avington for example, as well as numerous watercress beds, located mainly around the town of New Alresford. There is also evidence within the landscape of the formation of mill chases, weirs and water meadows, although these are no longer traditionally managed.

The Itchen has been identified as a candidate Special Area for Conservation (cSAC) under the 1992 European Habitats Directive, as it is considered to be one of the best examples of a chalk river habitat in Europe. As such, it is protected by the 1994 Habitats Regulations, administered by Winchester City Council in respect of most planning applications. Three areas of the Itchen Valley also form part of the Itchen Valley

SSSI, representing former floated water meadows consisting of a mosaic of fen, carr and meadow on peat.

The river valleys are generally typified by agricultural uses, with pasture and scattered areas of wet woodland on the valley bottom and arable fields on the valley sides, leading up to the arable downland of the surrounding area. On the valley sides, oak, beech and ash are common, together with typical hedgerow species such as hawthorn. In places, hedgerows have been neglected and have become overgrown or fragmented. Ancient woodland is uncommon, and only found in association with historic parkland, with tree species along the river being predominantly alder, willow and poplar.

Large areas of the valley landscape are dominated by historic houses and parkland, including Hinton Ampner, Avington House, Tichborne House, Ovington House, Worthy Park House, Stoke Manor, Old Alresford House, Upton House, Northington Grange, Arlebury House, Lower Chilland House, Upper Chilland House and Martyr Worthy Manor House. These are generally associated with ornamental, mature tree species and some still have traditional pastures. Others however, have been converted to other uses, such as arable farmland or golf courses. In many instances, parkland trees are poorly managed and over-mature.

The Upper Itchen Valley Landscape Character Area is characterised by a long history of settlement, with evidence of Iron Age strip lynchets and a park enclosure possibly dating from Roman times. There is now a large concentration of small, linear settlements in the area. These tend to consist of a narrow lane leading from a river crossing point, up the valley side, with later linear extensions to the village along the valley sides. Examples include Abbotsstone, Abbots Worthy, Bishop's Sutton, Chilland, Easton, Itchen Abbas, Itchen Stoke, Martyr Worthy, Northington, Old Alresford, Ovington, and Swarraton. Two other villages, Tichborne and Avington, also linear in form, have developed in close conjunction with adjacent historic estates, with buildings tending to be more uniform in age and character.

All villages have retained their historic, traditional character, although many experienced some expansion in the 20th Century, most notably, Itchen Abbas and New Alresford. Many buildings are constructed using vernacular materials and construction methods, including red brick, colour-washed brick, flint, wattle and daub, slate, clay tiles and longstraw thatch. The only settlement to differ in this aspect is the historic core of New Alresford, which has a far higher proportion of colour-washed brick and render buildings and a far lower proportion of thatch.

## Key Issues

- Maintenance of the favourable conservation status of the Itchen cSAC
- Pollution of river water from agricultural chemicals
- Silt deposition in the river as a result of the ploughing of permanent pasture;
- Potential impacts of development on the cSAC
- Fragmentation and neglect of hedgerows and wet woodlands
- Agricultural improvement of pasture and water meadows
- Management of parkland features, including pasture, trees and lakes
- Pollution of river water from agricultural chemicals (including watercress farms)
- Artificial changes to river course
- Reduction in biodiversity through intensive agricultural practices
- Protection of historic character of settlements
- Protection of open views
- Development of large agricultural buildings on open valley sides
- Management of unimproved/semi-improved neutral and calcareous grassland
- Damage to trees and grassland by heavy vehicles

## Landscape Strategies

- Conserve the integrity of the cSAC by seeking advice from English Nature on all planning applications in this character area.
- Conserve and restore hedgerows and wet woodlands, through appropriate management such as coppicing, thinning, replanting and the removal of alien species, to retain the existing landscape pattern. Replanting should use locally indigenous species, such as ash, willow and poplar on the valley floor, and oak and beech on the valley side. This would also be an area suitable for the reintroduction of native black poplar, *Populus nigra*.
- Restore and enhance the biodiversity of arable farmland, by encouraging the retention of conservation headlands, wildlife strips and grass strips around fields, and the increased use of spring sown arable crops and retention of winter fallow fields.
- Conserve archaeological sites such as the deserted villages and ancient field systems, and their settings.
- Conserve and enhance the water meadows and areas of unimproved pasture.

- Encourage the retention and traditional management of watercress beds.
- Conserve the predominantly visually remote and quiet rural character of the area.
- Conserve the variety and rural nature of views throughout the area, including short, enclosed views of the river valley floor as well as long views to and from the surrounding downs.
- Conserve and restore the landscape and built features of historic parks through continued replacement tree planting, woodland management and the restoration of pasture and lakes.
- Conserve the rich bio-diversity associated with the clear spring water.
- Encourage environmentally and economically sustainable agricultural practices to minimise fertiliser and soil run-off, which could lead to the pollution of the River Itchen and the chalk aquifer.

## Built Form Strategies

- Conserve the small and linear pattern of settlements and respect the traditional form and scale of existing buildings.
- Conserve and promote the use of local building materials such as red brick, white colour-washed brick, flint, clay tiles and thatch in any new development.
- Conserve and promote the use of traditional garden and parkland boundaries such as brick and flint walls, palisade fencing, railings and non-coniferous hedging.
- Encourage the use of indigenous planting as appropriate, in order to integrate new development with surrounding landscape, particularly within the countryside.
- Retain the historic character of the narrow valley-side and cross-valley rural lanes, fords and footbridges by resisting any road improvements which would threaten these.
- Minimise the impact of intrusive structures such as telecommunications masts through sensitive siting.

## Key Designations

- **East Hampshire Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty**  
(Small part of this Landscape Character Area near Cheriton)
- **Conservation Areas**
  - River Itchen*  
Abbots Worthy            Avington  
Chilland                    Easton  
Itchen Stoke              Martyr Worthy  
Ovington
  - Cheriton Stream*  
Cheriton                    Tichborne
  - River Arle*  
New Alresford
- **Scheduled Ancient Monuments**
  - Site of St Gertrude's Chapel  
(Mon. No. 550 HA)
  - Anglo-Saxon cemetery in Worthy Park  
(Mon. No. 514 HA)
  - Alresford Drive earthworks, Avington  
(Mon. No. 169 HA)
  - Deserted village of Abbotstone  
(Mon. No. 339 HA)
  - Alresford Bridge  
(Mon. No. 129 HA)
  - The Grange  
(Mon. No. 487HA)
- **SSSIs**
  - River Itchen (Cheriton-Kings Worthy; Winchester Meadows; Winnall Moors)
  - Old Alresford Pond
- **candidate SACs**
  - River Itchen
- **SINCs**
  - Candover Valley Meadow; Abbotstone Fen; River Arle Meadows; Bishop's Sutton Stream; Itchen Stoke Water Meadow; Lower Abbotstone Valley; Itchen Meadow, Easton Lane; The Old Rectory Meadow, Easton; Easton Down; Itchen Stoke Water Meadow / Fen; Lodge Wood; Grange Park Wood; Ovington Park Wood; Ovington Churchyard; Itchen Meadows Chilland; Avington Lake and Woods; Beech Hill.
- **Parks listed in the Hampshire Register of Historic Parks and Gardens**
  - River Itchen*  
Itchen Abbas Manor (site 1542) Pre 1810 Park  
Avington Park (site 1543 English Heritage Grade 11\* Listed Park) Deer Park  
Martyr Worthy Manor House (site 1544)  
Worthy Park (site 1550) Deer Park  
Ovington House and Park (site 1545) Pre 1810 Park Late C18  
*Cheriton Stream*  
Tichborne Park (site 1578) Pre 1810 Park  
Hinton Ampner (site 1499) Pre 1810 Park  
*Candover Stream*  
Abbotstone (site 1538) Pre 1810) Park  
The Grange Northington (site 1553. English Heritage Grade 11 Listed Park) Pre 1810 Park,  
Old Alresford House (site 1559 English Heritage Grade 11 Listed Park) Pre 1810 Park  
Upton House & Park (site 1560) Pre 1810 Park  
*River Arle*  
Arlebury Park (site 1553) Pre 1810 park
- **Local Nature Reserves**
  - Winnall Moors, Winchester
- **Countryside Heritage Area**
  - Itchen Valley