

Binfield Heath

Parish Landscape Value Assessment

January 2023



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1. Introduction

- 1.1. Binfield Heath Parish Council appointed The terra firma Consultancy in November 2022 to undertake the Binfield Heath Parish Landscape Value Assessment. This Local Valued Landscape study assesses the entire Parish of Binfield Heath, including areas both within and lying outside of the Chilterns AONB.
- 1.2. This report should be read in conjunction with the Binfield Heath Parish Landscape Character Assessment, carried out by The terra firma Consultancy in March 2022, which identifies 7 Parish Landscape Character Areas (PLCAs) within Binfield Heath parish, see Figure 2 at Appendix 1. Together these reports will form part of the Neighbourhood Plan's evidence base to be used in plan-making and planning decisions.
- 1.3. The Landscape Institute's Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Revision 3, 2013 (GLVIA3) provides a summary of the range of factors that can help in the identification of valued landscapes set out in Box 5.1, see below. These factors are widely used when considering the value that can be attached to landscapes.

Extract from The Landscape Institute's Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA) (Revision 3, 2013)

Box 5.1

Range of factors that can help in the identification of valued landscapes

- **Landscape quality (condition):** A measure of the physical state of the landscape. It may include the extent to which typical character is represented in individual areas, the intactness of the landscape and the condition of individual elements.
- **Scenic quality:** The term used to describe landscapes that appeal primarily to the senses (primarily but not wholly the visual senses).
- **Rarity:** The presence of rare elements or features in the landscape or the presence of a rare Landscape Character Type.
- **Representativeness:** Whether the landscape contains a particular character and/or features or elements which are considered particularly important examples.
- **Conservation interests:** The presence of features of wildlife, earth science or archaeological or historical and cultural interest can add to the value of the landscape as well as having value in their own right.
- **Recreation value:** Evidence that the landscape is valued for recreational activity where experience of the landscape is important.
- **Perceptual aspects:** A landscape may be valued for its perceptual qualities, notably wildness and/or tranquillity.
- **Associations:** Some landscapes are associated with particular people, such as artists or writers, or events in history that contribute to perceptions of the natural beauty of the area.

Based on Swanwick and Land Use Consultants (2002)

- 1.4. The Landscape Institute (LI) Technical Guidance Note 02/21: Assessing Landscape Value Outside National Designations, provides information and guidance on making judgements about the value of a landscape (outside national landscape designations) in the context of the UK Town and Country Planning system, and is intended to be complementary to GLVIA3. The document sets out a list of factors in Table 1 that could be considered when identifying landscape value, (see Figure 1, Appendix 1), which broadly presents the same factors as Box 5.1 from GLVIA3. A summary of these factors is listed below:
 - Natural heritage - Landscape with clear evidence of ecological, geological, geomorphological or physiographic interest which contribute positively to the landscape;
 - Cultural heritage - Landscape with clear evidence of archaeological, historical or cultural interest which contribute positively to the landscape;
 - Landscape condition - Landscape which is in a good physical state both with regard to individual elements and overall landscape structure;
 - Associations - Landscape which is connected with notable people, events and the arts;

- Distinctiveness - Landscape that has a strong sense of identity;
 - Recreational - Landscape offering recreational opportunities where experience of landscape is important;
 - Perceptual (Scenic) - Landscape that appeals to the senses, primarily the visual sense;
 - Perceptual (Wildness and tranquillity) - Landscape with a strong perceptual value notably wildness, tranquillity and/or dark skies;
 - Functional - Landscape which performs a clearly identifiable and valuable function, particularly in the healthy functioning of the landscape.
- 1.5. The main differences in the list of factors set out in Table 1 of the LI Technical Guidance Note 02/21, when compared with those listed in Box 5.1 of The Landscape Institute's guidelines (GLVIA3), are noted as being:
- 'Conservation interests' is separated into natural heritage and cultural heritage factors;
 - The term 'landscape condition' is used in place of 'landscape quality (condition)';
 - 'Rarity' and 'representativeness' are combined into a newly-named factor 'distinctiveness';
 - A new factor, 'function' is included which addresses the value attached to landscapes which perform a clearly identifiable and valuable function.
- 1.6. This assessment draws on the Binfield Heath Parish Landscape Character Assessment produced in March 2022, also produced by The terra firma Consultancy Ltd. The Binfield Heath Parish Landscape Character Assessment identifies 7 separate Parish Landscape Character Areas (PLCA), which are shown in Figure 2, at Appendix 1. The relationship between these PLCAs and the boundary of the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is illustrated in Figure 3, at Appendix 1.
- 1.7. The factors against which the Binfield Heath PLCA have been assessed for landscape value in this report are set out below:
- Landscape Condition;
 - AONB / Setting of AONB / Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV), (see paragraph 1.9 below for explanation of AGLV);
 - Perceptual (Scenic);
 - Distinctiveness;
 - Natural Heritage;
 - Cultural Heritage;
 - Recreational;
 - Perceptual (Wildness and tranquillity);
 - Associations;
 - Functional.
- 1.8. The South Oxfordshire Landscape Character Assessment, 2017 has informed both the Binfield Heath Parish Landscape Character Assessment, March 2022, and this report, the Binfield Heath Parish Landscape Value Assessment. The South Oxfordshire Landscape Character Assessment, 2017 is an update of the previous 1998 study, and is written considering the latest and best guidance for conducting a landscape character assessment. The previous landscape assessment for South Oxfordshire (1998) is referenced in the Kidmore End Local Valued Landscape Assessment, 2020, and in this Binfield Heath Parish Landscape Value Assessment, although it is not readily available to view and / or available online.
- 1.9. The archived South Oxfordshire District Council Rural Areas Local Plan, adopted July 1992, is referenced within this report. Although this is not readily available to view and / or available online, an extract is included at Figure 4, Appendix 1. The Rural Areas Local Plan, 1992 included Policy C8: Areas of Great Landscape Value, which covered land within Binfield Heath Parish, assessed as part of this report. Figure 4 illustrates the extent of the

AGLV identified in the The Rural Areas Local Plan, 1992. The Rural Areas Local Plan, 1992 states that the area of the AGLV that runs southwards from the Chilterns AONB to the River Thames is *'the area which the Council considered should have been included within the AONB'*. The Local Plan notes that *'The area is the dipslope of the Chilterns and much of it is indistinguishable from the landscapes within the AONB'*. This historic AGLV designation is considered to have relevance to this Binfield Heath value assessment, as:

- anecdotally the landscape has changed very little since the inclusion of Policy C8: Areas of Great Landscape Value in the Rural Areas Local Plan, 1992, with Binfield Heath remaining exceptionally well-wooded throughout (both inside the current AONB and in other areas of the parish); and
- Policy C8: Areas of Great Landscape Value was abandoned as a result of Countryside Commission advice at the time, (not because the landscape was not of sufficient quality to justify the designation). Government guidance was that 'all landscapes matter' and Councils were encouraged to drop their local landscape designations in favour of landscape character assessments. This has turned full circle and councils are again looking to identify local valued landscapes, as South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC) is now doing.

1.10. The relationship between the Binfield Heath PLCAs and the previously identified AGLV is dealt with under the criteria 'AONB / Setting of AONB / AGLV' which is one of the factors used to assess landscape value within the parish.

1.11. Chilterns AONB / Setting of the Chilterns AONB

1.11.1. The north and western part of Binfield Heath Parish lies within the Chilterns AONB. The special qualities of the Chilterns AONB include:

- Panoramic views from and across the escarpment interwoven with intimate dipslope valleys and rolling fields;
- Nationally important concentrations of chalk grassland, extremely diverse in flora and fauna, and home to some scarce and threatened species;
- Significant ancient hedgerows, hedgerow and field trees, orchards and parkland;
- Relative tranquillity and peace, relatively dark skies, of great value to human and wildlife health; unspoilt countryside, secret corners and a surprising sense of remoteness;
- One of the most wooded landscapes in England, 56% of the woodland is Ancient, including the Chilterns Beech Wood Special Area of Conservation; significant box, juniper and beech yew woods; many veteran trees and relict wood pasture;
- Nine precious chalk streams, a globally scarce habitat and home to some of the UK's most endangered species;
- An extensive and diverse archaeological landscape, including ancient parish boundaries, medieval field patterns and iron age hillforts;
- A dramatic chalk escarpment;
- Over 2000ha of common land, heaths and greens, rich in wildlife and cultural heritage;
- A dense network of 2000km of rights of way, including the Ridgeway and the Thames Path National Trails;
- An industrial heritage around wood-working, furniture making, chalk quarrying, brick making, and food production with windmills and watercress beds;
- Distinctive buildings made from local brick, flint and clay tiles; attractive villages, many notable individual buildings and follies including stately homes;
- Numerous ancient routeways and sunken lanes.

1.11.2. Regarding the setting of the Chilterns AONB, The Chilterns Conservation Board Position Statement 'Development Affecting the Setting of the Chilterns AONB', notes that:

- *'although it does not have a defined geographical boundary, the setting of the Chilterns AONB is the area within which development and land management proposals, by virtue of their nature, size, scale, siting,*

materials or design could be considered to have an impact, either positive or negative, on the natural beauty and special qualities of the Chilterns AONB'.

It continues to state that:

- *'The setting of the Chilterns AONB does not have a geographical border. The location, scale, materials or design of a proposed development or land management activity will determine whether it affects the natural beauty and special qualities of the AONB. A very large development may have an impact even if some considerable distance from the AONB boundary. However, the distance away from the AONB will be a material factor in forming a decision on any proposals, in that the further away a development is from the AONB boundary the more the impact is likely to be reduced', and*
- *'Adverse impacts might not be visual. The special qualities of the Chilterns AONB include tranquillity. A development which is noisy may well impact adversely on tranquillity even if not visible from the AONB'.*

- 1.11.3. The Chilterns AONB / Setting of the Chilterns AONB is included in the list of factors against which the landscape value of PLCA are assessed in this report.

2. Assessment of Landscape Value

- 2.1. An assessment of the landscape value of each of the Parish Landscape Character Areas (PLCA1 to 7), as identified in the Binfield Heath Parish Landscape Character Assessment, is set out below.

2.2. PLCA1: Crowsley Parkland

Landscape Condition

- 2.2.1. PLCA1 lies within SODC Landscape Character Assessment for the Local Plan 2033: LCA 10: Chilterns Plateau with Valleys, and is made up entirely of LCT 15: Parkland and estate farmland. It is noted in the Kidmore End Local Valued Landscape Assessment, 2020, that:
- In the previous 1998 version of the SODC Landscape Character Assessment, LCA 10 had a landscape strategy of 'Conserve'; a key indicator that the landscape is valued, defined in the SOLCA as applying:
'where the landscape is of particularly high scenic quality, is unspoilt, retains a strong, intact landscape structure and sense of place, and often contains areas or features of ecological or cultural heritage significance. In these landscapes, conservation is an overwhelming priority in order to maintain landscape character and quality'.
- 2.2.2. PLCA1 is assessed as having a strong and distinct parkland character, with parkland features noted, including, estate fencing, landmark and historic buildings, veteran trees, woodland and avenues. The character area is considered to have a strong landscape structure with limited detracting features.
- 2.2.3. Crowsley Park house and parkland is showing some signs of decline, as noted in the key characteristics of LCT15: Parkland and estate farmland, in the South Oxfordshire Landscape Character Assessment.

The Chilterns AONB / Setting of the Chilterns AONB / AGLV

- 2.2.4. PLCA1 lies entirely within the Chilterns AONB.
- 2.2.5. PLCA1 shares many characteristics with PLCA2, 3 and 4, to the south and east, which all lie within the AONB, and are influenced by the parkland landscapes of Crowsley Park and Coppid Hall. PLCA1 displays landscape characteristics in line with the special qualities of the AONB, including: significant ancient hedgerows, hedgerow and field trees, orchards and parkland; relative tranquillity and peace; wooded landscape; a network of PRoW and ancient routeways including the Chiltern Way and distinctive buildings, including stately homes.

Perceptual (Scenic)

- 2.2.6. PLCA1 largely comprises Crowsley Park estate landscape, a distinctive and attractive landscape, which extends into adjoining PLCA2, 3 and 4. Intervisibility is restricted by the densely wooded landscape and sunken lanes,

characteristic of both PLCA1 and the AONB. Visual continuity is maintained from parkland in the southern and eastern part of the character area to that surrounding Coppid Hall and Crowsley Park Farm to the southeast and south, respectively. Distant views are restricted from this largely enclosed and well wooded landscape.

- 2.2.7. PLCA1 contains Crowsley Park House and surrounding parkland, which can be appreciated when walking on the Chiltern Way, and footpath crossing the parkland to the east. Parkland landscapes can be viewed from Sonning Common Road and Devil's Hill, which run along the boundaries of the PLCA. The mix of woodland, pasture and managed estate landscapes visibly continues across Devil's Hill to the west and the boundary of the parish to the north.

Distinctiveness

- 2.2.8. PLCA1 Crowsley Parkland has a strong sense of place, comprising a recognisable parkland character with distinctive listed buildings, forming a relatively rare/ unique landscape type.
- 2.2.9. PLCA1 is representative of LCA 10: Chilterns Plateau with Valleys, LCT 15: Parkland and estate farmland, having: a distinctive parkland landscape with formal features; rural and unspoilt character; and generally enclosed character with woodland.

Natural Heritage

- 2.2.10. Much of PLCA1 has been identified as priority landscapes, including deciduous woodland, lowland dry acid grassland and wood pasture and parkland, as set out on the Priority Habitat Inventory.

Cultural Heritage

- 2.2.11. There is a strong sense of history relating to Crowsley Park House and the surrounding parkland landscape.
- 2.2.12. The Oxfordshire Historic Landscape Character (HLC) shows the entirety of PLCA1 classified as 'Ornamental-Parkland / Designed Landscape'.

Recreational

- 2.2.13. Although much of the woodland and parkland within PLCA1 is publicly inaccessible, the Chiltern Way and an additional public footpath cross parkland adjacent to Crowsley Park House. The open nature of the parkland landscape provides extensive views across the eastern and southern part of the PLCA.

Perceptual (Wildness and tranquillity)

- 2.2.14. PLCA1 has a strong landscape pattern of parkland, including pasture and woodland which continues to some extent in the surrounding landscape and PLCAs. It has a rural, tranquil character, with few detractors.

Associations

- 2.2.15. Cultural associations within PLCA1 include: the Crowsley Park BBC receiving station, in the northwestern corner of the PLCA; and Crowsley Park's connections with Arthur Conan Doyle and The Hound of the Baskervilles.

Functional

- 2.2.16. PLCA1 lies within the Chilterns AONB, and, as such, has a strong physical and functional link with this national landscape designation.

2.3. PLCA2: Crowsley semi-enclosed dipslope

Landscape Condition

- 2.3.1. PLCA2 lies within SODC Landscape Character Assessment for the Local Plan 2033: LCA 10: Chilterns Plateau with Valleys, and is made up wholly of LCT 16: Semi-enclosed dipslope. It is noted in the Kidmore End Local Valued Landscape Assessment, 2020, that:

- In the previous 1998 version of the SODC Landscape Character Assessment, LCA 10 had a landscape strategy of 'Conserve'; a key indicator that the landscape is valued, defined in the SOLCA as applying:

'where the landscape is of particularly high scenic quality, is unspoilt, retains a strong, intact landscape structure and sense of place, and often contains areas or features of ecological or cultural heritage significance. In these landscapes, conservation is an overwhelming priority in order to maintain landscape character and quality'.

- 2.3.2. PLCA2 is influenced by the adjoining parkland landscapes of Crowsley Park and Coppid Hall. It is assessed as having a strong open and rolling farmland landscape character with blocks of woodland and trimmed hedgerows and hedgerow trees providing some sense of enclosure. Scattered farms and historic dwellings contribute to the historic character of the character area. A number of detracting features are present but have limited influence on the PLCA.

The Chilterns AONB / Setting of the Chilterns AONB / AGLV

- 2.3.3. PLCA2 lies entirely within the Chilterns AONB.
- 2.3.4. PLCA2 shares many characteristics with PLCA1, and 3 to the north and east, which all lie within the AONB, and are influenced by the parkland landscapes of Crowsley Park and Coppid Hall. PLCA2 displays landscape characteristics in line with the special qualities of the AONB, including: significant ancient hedgerows, hedgerow and field trees; relative tranquillity and peace; wooded landscape; a network of PRoW and ancient routeways including the Chiltern Way and distinctive buildings made from local brick, flint and clay tiles.

Perceptual (Scenic)

- 2.3.5. PLCA2 comprises a mix of enclosed pasture and rolling arable farmland with distant views to the south and east contained by wooded horizons. A number of listed buildings are located on wooded lanes. Intervisibility with PLCA3 to the southeast, with woodland, field boundaries and roadside vegetation containing views to the north and west.
- 2.3.6. Views across the northern part of PLCA 2 from the Chiltern Way are largely confined to the well vegetated lanes and listed properties, with some views opening out across farmland to the south surrounding Morgan's Wood. Some detractors including pylons / sewage treatment works on edge of Sonning Common in views to the southwest.

Distinctiveness

- 2.3.7. Although much of PLCA2 comprises pasture and rolling arable land, the enclosed lanes and Chiltern Way, listed buildings and Crowsley Grange give a historic character, linked with, and providing a setting for Crowsley Park to the north.
- 2.3.8. PLCA2 is representative of LCA 10: Chilterns Plateau with Valleys, LCT 16: Semi-enclosed dip slope: dominated by arable cultivation on more level ground; a strong structure of woods and hedgerows providing visual containment; a distinctive pattern of winding rural roads and irregular field boundaries typical of 'ancient countryside'; and a generally rural and unspoilt character.

Natural Heritage

- 2.3.9. Morgan's Wood has been identified as a deciduous woodland priority landscape, as set out on the Priority Habitat Inventory, and is designated as ancient woodland.

Cultural Heritage

- 2.3.10. There is a strong sense of history linking numerous listed buildings in PLCA2, including Crowsley Farmhouse and Frieze Farm, to Crowsley Park House and the surrounding parkland landscape.
- 2.3.11. The Oxfordshire Historic Landscape Character (HLC) shows the northern and eastern part of PLCA2 classified as 'Ancient Enclosure'.

Recreational

- 2.3.12. A number of public footpaths, including The Chiltern Way, cross PLCA2, linking Crowsley Park with the built up areas of Sonning Common and Caversham to the southwest.

Perceptual (Wildness and tranquillity)

- 2.3.13. The enclosed lanes and listed properties in the northern part of PLCA2 give a rural and tranquil character to the area. Limited detractors on the southwestern edge of the area including pylons adjacent to Sonning Common, and traffic noise.

Associations

- 2.3.14. Cultural associations within PLCA2 are limited to historic links with Crowsley Park to the north.

Functional

- 2.3.15. PLCA2 lies within the Chilterns AONB, and, despite a number of perceptual detractors to the southwest, has a strong physical and functional link with this national landscape designation, providing a setting to historic Crowsley Park to the north.

2.4. PLCA3: Crowsley open dipslope

Landscape Condition

- 2.4.1. PLCA3 lies within SODC Landscape Character Assessment for the Local Plan 2033: LCA 10: Chilterns Plateau with Valleys, and is made up wholly of LCT 11: Open dipslope. It is noted in the Kidmore End Local Valued Landscape Assessment, 2020, that:

- In the previous 1998 version of the SODC Landscape Character Assessment, LCA 10 had a landscape strategy of 'Conserve'; a key indicator that the landscape is valued, defined in the SOLCA as applying:

'where the landscape is of particularly high scenic quality, is unspoilt, retains a strong, intact landscape structure and sense of place, and often contains areas or features of ecological or cultural heritage significance. In these landscapes, conservation is an overwhelming priority in order to maintain landscape character and quality'.

- 2.4.2. PLCA3 is influenced by the adjoining parkland landscapes of Crowsley Park and Coppid Hall. It is assessed as having an open, rolling farmland landscape character with strong hedgerows and hedgerow trees. Surrounding woodland provides some sense of enclosure. No dwellings lie within the PLCA.

The Chilterns AONB / Setting of the Chilterns AONB / AGLV

- 2.4.3. PLCA3 lies entirely within the Chilterns AONB.
- 2.4.4. PLCA3 shares many characteristics with PLCA2 to the west. They both lie within the AONB, with PLCA3 displaying landscape characteristics in line with the special qualities of the AONB, including: hedgerow and field trees; relative tranquillity and peace; wooded landscape; and a network of PRoW.

Perceptual (Scenic)

- 2.4.5. PLCA3 comprises predominantly rolling arable farmland with views across the PLCA, looking southeast. Distant views contained by wooded horizons. Intervisibility with PLCA2 to the southwest, and PLCA4 to the east, with woodland blocks to the south and at Wild Orchard providing containment.

Distinctiveness

- 2.4.6. The open rolling arable landscape, contained by surrounding woodland, provides a largely rural and tranquil character, similar to adjacent PLCA2, both of which are located within the AONB.
- 2.4.7. PLCA3 is representative of LCA 10: Chilterns Plateau with Valleys, LCT 11: Open dipslope: dominated by large scale, open arable cultivation on gently sloping ground; with long distance views contained by neighbouring woodland.

Natural Heritage

- 2.4.8. A block of woodland on the southern edge of the PLCA has been identified as a deciduous woodland priority landscape, as set out on the Priority Habitat Inventory.

Cultural Heritage

- 2.4.9. Cultural heritage within PLCA3, is limited to adjoining Coppid Hall and Crowsley Park, to the east and north.
- 2.4.10. The Oxfordshire Historic Landscape Character (HLC) shows areas of 'Prairie/Amalgamated Enclosure' and 'Ancient Enclosure' within the PLCA.

Recreational

- 2.4.11. This PLCA is largely publicly inaccessible. A public footpath runs along the western boundary of PLCA3 linking Crowsley Park with the built up areas of Sonning Common and Caversham to the southwest.

Perceptual (Wildness and tranquillity)

- 2.4.12. PLCA3 has a rural and tranquil character with no streetlights and no residential properties.

Associations

- 2.4.13. Cultural associations within PLCA3 are limited to historic links with adjoining Crowsley Park and listed Crowsley Park Farmhouse.

Functional

- 2.4.14. PLCA3 lies within the Chilterns AONB, and, despite a number of perceptual detractors to the southwest, has a strong physical and functional link with this national landscape designation, providing a setting to historic Crowsley Park to the north.

2.5. PLCA4: Binfield Heath wooded dipslope north

Landscape Condition

- 2.5.1. PLCA4 lies within SODC Landscape Character Assessment for the Local Plan 2033: LCA 10: Chilterns Plateau with Valleys, and is made up wholly of LCT 23: Wooded dipslope. It is noted in the Kidmore End Local Valued Landscape Assessment, 2020, that:

- In the previous 1998 version of the SODC Landscape Character Assessment, LCA 10 had a landscape strategy of 'Conserve'; a key indicator that the landscape is valued, defined in the SOLCA as applying:

'where the landscape is of particularly high scenic quality, is unspoilt, retains a strong, intact landscape structure and sense of place, and often contains areas or features of ecological or cultural heritage significance. In these landscapes, conservation is an overwhelming priority in order to maintain landscape character and quality'.

- 2.5.2. PLCA4 is noted as having a parkland character to the south, with parkland features including, estate fencing, parkland trees, woodland and historic buildings present. The character area is considered to have a strong landscape structure with a complex pattern of woodland and landform. Some modern buildings and associated suburbanising features, as well as works yard on Kiln Lane, although overall these have a limited influence on the PLCA.

The Chilterns AONB / Setting of the Chilterns AONB / AGLV

- 2.5.3. PLCA4 lies entirely within the Chilterns AONB.
- 2.5.4. PLCA4 shares many characteristics with PLCA3 to the west. They both lie within the AONB, with PLCA4 displaying landscape characteristics in line with the special qualities of the AONB, including: hedgerow and field trees; relative tranquillity and peace; wooded landscape; sunken lanes; locally distinctive buildings, and a network of PRoW.

Perceptual (Scenic)

- 2.5.5. PLCA4 comprises a heavily wooded, predominantly rolling arable farmland landscape. Views across the PLCA are generally contained by wooded horizons, both within and surrounding the PLCA. Some intervisibility with PLCA3 to the southwest, and PLCA6 to the southeast, with long views northwards towards Harpsden and southeast towards Shipplake. Woodland blocks at Crowsley Park Woods and The Common provide containment from PLCAs 1 and 5.

- 2.5.6. The small rural settlement, Bottle & Glass, is located at the junction of Harpsden Road and Common Lane. A number of listed properties are scattered throughout the PLCA.

Distinctiveness

- 2.5.7. The rolling arable landscape, contained by woodland within and surrounding the PLCA, provides a largely rural and tranquil character, similar to adjoining PLCA3, (located within the AONB), and the northern and western part of PLCA6, (outside of the AONB).
- 2.5.8. PLCA4 is representative of LCA 10: Chilterns Plateau with Valleys, LCT 23: Wooded dipslope, with: extensive blocks of woodland creating an intimate and enclosed mosaic of wooded farmland; a heavily wooded character; a distinctive pattern of winding rural roads and scattered rural settlements, typical of 'ancient countryside'; a generally rural and unspoilt character with only localised suburbanising influences around the fringes of settlements; and low intervisibility.

Natural Heritage

- 2.5.9. Substantial areas of woodland within PLCA4 have been identified as a deciduous woodland priority landscape, as set out on the Priority Habitat Inventory. Two small areas of traditional orchard priority landscape are located to the east of Bottle & Glass, and on Emmer Green Road.
- 2.5.10. A number of Ancient Woodlands within PLCA4 include Crowsley Park Woods, Shiplake Woods and the eastern part of Wild Orchard.

Cultural Heritage

- 2.5.11. Coppid Hall is located within the Phillimore Estate at the western end of PLCA4, to the southeast of Crowsley Park. Listed buildings within the PLCA include, a number of barns at Barn Grounds; residential dwellings on Harpsden Road and Common Lane, and The Bottle & Glass PH. Bones Lane, part of the Chiltern Way that runs alongside the Bottle & Glass, is an ancient packhorse route. Historic links with the brick and tile making industry established in the 16th century. A brick-making operation at the eastern end of Kiln Lane, established in 1869, closed early in the 20th century.
- 2.5.12. The Oxfordshire Historic Landscape Character (HLC) shows: areas of 'Ancient Enclosure' in the east of the PLCA and north of Comp Farm; areas of 'Piecemeal Enclosure', 'Reorganised Enclosure' and 'Planned Enclosure'; the immediate surroundings and outbuildings of Coppid Hall are classed as 'Rural Country House' and the wider estate as 'Parkland'; with areas of Common edge settlement located around the Bottle & Glass and on Kiln Lane, and Comp Farm is categorised as a 'Rural Farmstead'.

Recreational

- 2.5.13. Although the southern part of the PLCA is largely publicly inaccessible, a number of public footpaths cross the northern and eastern part of PLCA4, with the Chiltern Way following Bones Lane through the Bottle & Glass settlement.

Perceptual (Wildness and tranquillity)

- 2.5.14. PLCA4 has a largely rural and tranquil character with no streetlights and a moderate number of residential properties associated with Kiln Lane, Bottle & Glass and Coppid Hall.

Associations

- 2.5.15. Cultural associations within PLCA4 include those related to Coppid Hall and adjoining Crowsley Park.

Functional

- 2.5.16. PLCA4 lies within the Chilterns AONB, and has a strong physical and functional link with this national landscape designation. Providing a setting to historic Crowsley Park to the west, the PLCA has much in common with adjoining PLCAs 5 and 6, encompassing the former common land at Binfield Heath and settlement focussed on Dunsden Way, Kiln Lane and Shiplake Row.

2.6. PLCA5: Binfield Heath wooded dipslope south

Landscape Condition

- 2.6.1. PLCA 5 lies within SODC Landscape Character Assessment for the Local Plan 2033: LCA 10: Chilterns Plateau with Valleys, and is made up wholly of LCT 23: Wooded dipslope. It is noted in the Kidmore End Local Valued Landscape Assessment, 2020, that:
- In the previous 1998 version of the SODC Landscape Character Assessment, LCA 10 had a landscape strategy of 'Conserve'; a key indicator that the landscape is valued, defined in the SOLCA as applying:
'where the landscape is of particularly high scenic quality, is unspoilt, retains a strong, intact landscape structure and sense of place, and often contains areas or features of ecological or cultural heritage significance. In these landscapes, conservation is an overwhelming priority in order to maintain landscape character and quality'.
- 2.6.2. PLCA5 is noted as having elements characteristic of an estate landscape, forming part of the extensive Phillimore Estate. It has a well wooded character with mixed species woodland showing evidence of plantation and ornamental tree planting; previous common land used for grazing and bracken-gathering; as well as areas of historic common-edge settlement.
- 2.6.3. The wooded area of former common land in PLCA5 at Binfield Heath is in need of regeneration / management, with areas dominated by invasive ornamental species.

The Chilterns AONB / Setting of the Chilterns AONB / AGLV

- 2.6.4. PLCA5 adjoins the boundary of, but lies outside of the Chilterns AONB.
- 2.6.5. PLCA5 has strong landscape links with, and forms an important part of the landscape setting of the current Chilterns AONB which adjoins the PLCA to the northwest and northeast. PLCA5 shares many landscape characteristics and special qualities with the AONB, in particular: the special quality of common land, heaths and greens - evident in the extensive area of wooded heathland at Binfield Heath; as well as the wooded characteristics of the AONB.
- 2.6.6. The South Oxfordshire District Council Rural Areas Local Plan, July 1992, identified AGLV which encompass land within Binfield Heath Parish located outside of the Chilterns AONB. PLCA5 lies within the area historically designated as an AGLV, see Figure 4. It is noted in the 1992 Local Plan that much of the area of the AGLV which covers PLCA5 'is indistinguishable from the landscapes within the AONB'.

(Perceptual) Scenic

- 2.6.7. PLCA5 contains the wooded heath of Binfield Heath, which provides an attractive wooded quality which can be appreciated when travelling along the Emmer Green and Sonning Common Roads. Pasture surrounded by woodland and managed grassland within PLCA5 can be viewed from Gravel Road, with views across open arable land outside of the Chilterns AONB to the south. Distant views towards the Thames Valley and Reading to the south and east are restricted from this largely enclosed and well wooded landscape.
- 2.6.8. Intervisibility with the AONB is restricted by the dense wooded nature of the Emmer Green and Sonning Common Roads, characteristic of both PLCA5 and the AONB. Visual continuity is maintained from pasture in the western part of the character area to parkland surrounding Coppid Hall to the north. This mosaic of pasture, plantation and deciduous woodland, plus managed estate landscapes visibly continues across Sonning Common and Emmer Green Road, with no distinct visual boundary between the AONB and PLCA5.
- 2.6.9. The area has a strong rural character with a general absence of visually intrusive elements and no detracting urban fringe uses within the area or visible from the area. This area provides an attractive setting to the nearby settlements of Binfield Heath. Sharing many characteristics with the adjacent AONB, there are only a small number of clustered, common-edge properties within the PLCA.

Distinctiveness

- 2.6.10. The enclosed wooded nature of the former old heath provides an attractive and distinctive backdrop to the settlements of Binfield Heath and has much in common with the wooded landscapes of the AONB immediately to the north and west of PLCA5.
- 2.6.11. In many aspects PLCA5 is representative of LCA 10: Chilterns Plateau with Valleys, and LCT 23: Wooded dipslope, having: a heavily wooded character; a distinctive pattern of winding rural roads and scattered rural settlement, typical of 'ancient countryside'; a generally rural and unspoilt character with only localised suburbanising influences around the fringes of settlements; and low intervisibility. Many of these qualities are shared with the AONB, immediately to the north of this PLCA.

Natural Heritage

- 2.6.12. Much of the woodland in PLCA5 has been identified as deciduous woodland priority habitat, as set out on the Priority Habitat Inventory.

Cultural Heritage

- 2.6.13. There is a strong sense of history in relation to PLCA5 which is the former common land of the old heath. The heath is thought to have been the meeting place of the Binfield hundred one of the Saxon administrative divisions of the Oxfordshire. Two historically important roads, following Emmer Green Road and Sonning Common Road crossing near to Coppid Hall, at the northern corner of the PLCA.
- 2.6.14. The Oxfordshire Historic Landscape Character (HLC) shows PLCA5 classified as a mix of 'Planned Enclosure', Woodland- Plantation and 'Secondary Woodland', with an area of 'Common edge settlement on the edge of Binfield Heath'. Similar areas of 'Secondary Woodland' and 'Planned Enclosure' are found in the adjacent AONB to the north of Sonning Common Road.

Recreational

- 2.6.15. An open grassed area at the centre of PLCA 5, is accessed via a tree lined avenue / private track from Gravel Road, and forms part of Binfield Heath Polo Club.
- 2.6.16. PLCA5 is largely publicly inaccessible, surrounded by rural roads and only crossed in the western corner by a public bridleway following Thanksgiving Lane.

Perceptual (Wildness and tranquillity)

- 2.6.17. PLCA5 has a strong landscape pattern of wooded former heath, pasture and recreational landscapes which reflect the AONB landscape immediately to the north of the PLCA. It has a rural, tranquil character, with few detractors.

Associations

- 2.6.18. No cultural associations with PLCA5 are known.

Functional

- 2.6.19. PLCA5 forms a part of the immediate setting of the AONB, adjoining its boundary along Emmer Green Road and Sonning Common Road to the northwest and northeast, respectively.

2.7. PLCA6: Holmwood semi-enclosed dipslope

Landscape Condition

- 2.7.1. PLCA6 lies within SODC Landscape Character Assessment for the Local Plan 2033: LCA 10: Chilterns Plateau with Valleys, and is made up of LCT 16: Semi-enclosed dipslope. It is noted in the Kidmore End Local Valued Landscape Assessment, 2020, that:

- In the previous 1998 version of the SODC Landscape Character Assessment, LCA 10 had a landscape strategy of 'Conserve'; a key indicator that the landscape is valued, defined in the SOLCA as applying:

'where the landscape is of particularly high scenic quality, is unspoilt, retains a strong, intact landscape structure and sense of place, and often contains areas or features of ecological or cultural heritage significance. In these landscapes, conservation is an overwhelming priority in order to maintain landscape character and quality'.

- 2.7.2. PLCA6 is noted as being a gently sloping landscape of open, arable fields, within a strong structure of woods and hedgerows, which provides visual containment. The character area has a largely rural and unspoilt character, with many historic buildings, but also some suburbanising influences within rural settlements and along roads.

The Chilterns AONB / Setting of the Chilterns AONB / AGLV

- 2.7.3. PLCA6 partially adjoins the boundary of, but lies outside of the Chilterns AONB.
- 2.7.4. PLCA6 forms an important part of the landscape setting of the current Chilterns AONB which adjoins the PLCA to the north and west. PLCA6 shares many landscape characteristics with adjoining PLCA4, which lies within the Chilterns AONB, including open farmland within a complex pattern of woodland and landform. Numerous historic buildings are located within a number of small scattered rural settlements. Some detracting, suburbanising features, including examples of discordant modern development and pockets of commercial activity have a limited influence on the PLCA.
- 2.7.5. The South Oxfordshire District Council Rural Areas Local Plan, July 1992, identified AGLV which encompass land within Binfield Heath Parish located outside of the Chilterns AONB. PLCA6 lies within the area historically designated as an AGLV, see Figure 4. It is noted in the 1992 Local Plan that much of the area of the AGLV which covers PLCA6 'is indistinguishable from the landscapes within the AONB'.

Perceptual (Scenic)

- 2.7.6. PLCA6 forms part of the visual setting of the AONB where it adjoins the PLCA to the northeast. There is a visual continuity between PLCA6 and the surrounding AONB, particularly to the northeast, with views across undulating pasture to a wooded horizon from Kiln Lane. At the western corner of the PLCA, there are views westwards from Gravel Road and Emmer Green Road, across parkland landscape within the AONB. Intervisibility is limited in part by the undulating landform, layers of woodland and mature field boundary and road hedgerows which are typical of the AONB.
- 2.7.7. The eastern part of PLCA6 lies on southeast facing slopes with selected views towards the Thames Valley. There are views from surrounding roads and PRoW towards the wooded slopes of PLCA6 which form a visually attractive setting to the AONB. Development within Binfield Heath, at Gravel Road and Dunsden Way is largely contained in views from the east by blocks of woodland on the east facing slopes. Views to the historic property 'Holmwood' on Shiplake Row from locations to the east of the PLCA.
- 2.7.8. The area has a strong rural character despite containing the main settlement areas within Binfield Heath parish, and provides an attractive setting to settlements at the junction of Dunsden Way and Shiplake Row, eastern end of Shiplake Row, and on Gravel Road. A general absence of visually intrusive elements, with some abrupt edges between development and surrounding arable farmland, most noticeable at New Road, and Dunsden Way.

Distinctiveness

- 2.7.9. Many historic and listed buildings form distinctive features within PLCA6, located in scattered rural 'common edge' settlements within Binfield Heath.
- 2.7.10. The east facing slopes in the eastern part of PLCA6 are similar in visual character to the landscape of the AONB to the north of Kiln Lane. These undulating, well wooded slopes are crossed by numerous field boundary hedgerows, and are distinct from the expansive, low lying fields of the Thames Valley, beyond the parish to the east.
- 2.7.11. PLCA6 is largely representative of LCA 10 Chilterns Plateau and Valleys, LCT 16 Semi-enclosed dipslope, and much of the Study Area is similar to the landscape of the Chilterns AONB to the north. It shares many landscape characteristics and special qualities including its heavily wooded character; a distinctive pattern of winding rural roads and scattered rural settlements, typical of 'ancient countryside'; a generally rural and unspoilt character with

only localised suburbanising influences around the fringes of settlements; and low intervisibility.

Natural Heritage

- 2.7.12. Priority Habitats located within PLCA6 include: 'Deciduous Woodland' at Shiplake and Radbrook's Copse, Hampstead Farm and the eastern end of Shiplake Row; an area of 'Good quality semi-improved grassland' to the east of Shiplake Copse; a small area noted as 'Traditional Orchard' to the south of Keeps Well on Shiplake Row and within the grounds of Holmwood.
- 2.7.13. Three areas of ancient woodland are located within the eastern part of PLCA6 including Shiplake Copse, Woodwax Wood, and Radbrook's Copse.

Cultural Heritage

- 2.7.14. There is a strong sense of history with many listed and historic buildings on Dunsden Way, Shiplake Row and Gravel Road, set within surrounding farmland, including Keeps Well, and Holmwood, an early C18th Country House. Historic links with the brick and tile making industry established in the 16th century. A brick-making operation at the eastern end of Kiln Lane, established in 1869, closed early in the 20th century.
- 2.7.15. The Oxfordshire Historic Landscape Character (HLC) shows PLCA6 classified as a mix of Rural Hamlet surrounded by Woodland - Ancient, Plantation and Secondary Woodland, Prairie / Amalgamated and Reorganised Enclosures.

Recreational

- 2.7.16. Binfield Heath recreation ground, to the rear of the village shop, is accessed from Arch Hill and via a footpath from Dunsden Way. Keeps Well and Green Pond are located on a small green on Shiplake Row.
- 2.7.17. A good network of PRoW crosses PLCA6, including: a public byway following Kiln Lane on the northern boundary; as well as footpaths crossing the recreation area and between housing on Heathfield Avenue and Kiln Lane. A number of well-walked footpaths provide access to woodland and undulating slopes in the south of PLCA6 linking with PLCA7.

Perceptual (Wildness and tranquillity)

- 2.7.18. PLCA6 has a strong landscape pattern of woodland, arable land and rural settlements which reflects the AONB landscape to the north of the area. It has a rural, and in places, tranquil character with limited detractors, (mostly related to the abrupt settlement edges adjoining arable land to the east of New Road and Dunsden Way).

Associations

- 2.7.19. Possible association of Alfred Lord Tennyson with Holmwood and Shiplake Rise Farm on Shiplake Row. The poet Swinburne is also associated with Holmwood. He visited the property, which was owned by his father, to rest and write.
- 2.7.20. Numerous 'wells', 'springs', 'drains' and 'ponds' noted on maps. Keeps Well, the brick-built domed construction at Shiplake Rise next to Green Pond dates from 1724.

Functional

- 2.7.21. PLCA6 has strong landscape links with, and forms an important part of the landscape setting of the Chilterns AONB which adjoins the PLCA to the northeast and at the western corner. The Study Area shares many landscape characteristics and special qualities with the AONB: in particular 'wooded landscape', with many woodlands, including Shiplake Copse, Holmwood and Woodwax Wood in the PLCA; and 'industrial heritage' is evident at Kiln Lane, the site of historic brick works; 'distinctive buildings and attractive villages', include Holmwood, Binfield Heath Chapel and a number of listed buildings on Dunsden Way and Shiplake Row, within Binfield Heath. Keeps Lane, a narrow sunken lane with overhanging trees and byway open to all traffic runs from Shiplake Row down to the A4155. Shiplake Row, the main route out of the village to the south is also a sunken lane with dense arches of deciduous trees overhead.

2.8. PLCA7: Hampstead and Shiplake Rise open dipslope

Landscape Condition

- 2.8.1. PLCA7 lies entirely within LCA 11: Thames Valley and Fringes, and is made up of LCT 11: Open dipslope.
- 2.8.2. PLCA7 is noted as being a gently sloping landscape of largely open, arable fields. This character area has a largely rural and unspoilt character, with some historic buildings associated with Shiplake Row, with a short stretch of the A4155 on its southeastern boundary.

The Chilterns AONB / Setting of the Chilterns AONB / AGLV

- 2.8.3. PLCA7 lies outside of the Chilterns AONB.
- 2.8.4. PLCA7, along with the eastern slopes of PLCA6, forms an important part of the landscape setting of the current Chilterns AONB, located to the northwest. These southeast facing slopes form a transition between the Chilterns AONB to the northwest and the Thames Valley to the southeast. PLCA7 shares many landscape characteristics with the adjoining eastern slopes of PLCA6, open farmland within a complex pattern of woodland and landform.
- 2.8.5. The South Oxfordshire District Council Rural Areas Local Plan, July 1992, identified AGLV which encompass land within Binfield Heath Parish located outside of the Chilterns AONB. PLCA7 lies within the area historically designated as an AGLV, see Figure 4. It is noted in the 1992 Local Plan that much of the area of the AGLV which covers PLCA7 *'is indistinguishable from the landscapes within the AONB'*.
- 2.8.6. PLCA7 shares many key landscape characteristics with PLCA6 to the west, including: the undulating topography and open fields (arable), flanked by woodlands in the wider landscape, which form a largely rural and unspoilt character but with some 'suburbanising' influences of adjoining main roads (short stretch of A4155).

Perceptual (Scenic)

- 2.8.7. PLCA7 forms part of the visual setting of the AONB located to the northwest.
- 2.8.8. There are views from roads and PRoW, including the A4155, towards the slopes of PLCA 7 (and adjoining PLCA6 to the west), which form a visually attractive setting to the AONB beyond.
- 2.8.9. The area has a rural character despite the busy A4155 running along a short stretch of the boundary to the southeast. There is limited development, including historic properties at Shiplake Row and adjoining Hampstead Farm. This PLCA provides a setting to the rural settlement at Shiplake Row, with some views across open farmland to an abrupt edge between development and surrounding arable farmland, at Shiplake.

Distinctiveness

- 2.8.10. The east facing slopes of PLCA7 are similar in visual character to the adjoining landscape of the eastern slopes of PLCA6. These slopes are distinct when viewed from the low lying Thames valley to the east, providing a setting and transition to the AONB to the northwest.
- 2.8.11. PLCA7 is largely representative of LCA 11 Thames Valley and Fringes, LCT 11: Open dipslope, and shares many characteristics with the eastern slopes of PLCA6.

Natural Heritage

- 2.8.12. Priority Habitats located within PLCA7 include: the eastern edge of Shiplake Copse, an area of 'Deciduous Woodland'. This is also identified as an area of ancient woodland.

Cultural Heritage

- 2.8.13. The Oxfordshire Historic Landscape Character (HLC) shows PLCA7 classified as Prairie / Amalgamated and Reorganised Enclosures, as well as Ancient Woodland.

Recreational

- 2.8.14. A good network of PRoW cross / surround PLCA7, including: public footpaths linking Shiplake Row, Dunsden Way

and the A4155. A number of footpaths link with PLCA6 providing access to woodland and undulating slopes in the south of PLCA6. Keeps Lane, a narrow sunken lane with overhanging trees and a byway open to all traffic runs through PLCA7 linking PLCA6 to the north with the A4155 to the south.

Perceptual (Wildness and tranquillity)

- 2.8.15. PLCA7 has a rural character with detractors being abrupt settlement edges adjoining arable land at Shiplake to the northeast, and the busy A4155 road to the south.

Associations

- 2.8.16. There are no known associations.

Functional

- 2.8.17. PLCA7, along with PLCA6, forms an important part of the landscape setting of the Chilterns AONB which lies to the northwest of the PLCA. PLCAs 6 and 7, along with footslopes extending into the Thames Valley to the east, provide a setting for the AONB when viewed from the low lying River Thames valley.
- 2.8.18. Although there are no direct views to the AONB from PLCA7, largely due to the wooded nature of the area, these east facing slopes form a transitional landscape between the AONB and the River Thames valley, from where they are highly visible on the eastern edge of the AONB.

Appendix 1: Figures

Figure 1 - Extract from The Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 02/21: Assessing Landscape Value Outside National Designations: Table 1: Range of factors that can be considered when identifying landscape value

Figure 2 - Parish landscape character areas (PLCA) and boundary of the Chilterns AONB

Figure 3 - Parish boundary and Chilterns AONB and Landscape Character Areas and / Landscape Types, as identified in the SODC Landscape Character Assessment, 2017

Figure 4 - Extract from the South Oxfordshire District Council Rural Areas Local Plan, Adopted July 1992

Figure 5 - Glossary of Acronyms

Figure 1 - Extract from The Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 02/21: Assessing Landscape Value Outside National Designations:
Table 1: Range of factors that can be considered when identifying landscape value

2.4.4 As with Box 5.1 in GLVIA3, **Table 1** is not intended to be an exhaustive list of factors to be considered when determining the value of landscapes, but to provide a range of factors and indicators that could be considered. This TGN is intended to be complementary to GLVIA3.

Table 1: Range of factors that can be considered when identifying landscape value

Factor	Definition	Examples ¹¹ of indicators of landscape value	Examples of evidence ¹²
Natural heritage	Landscape with clear evidence of ecological, geological, geomorphological or physiographic interest which contribute positively to the landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presence of wildlife and habitats of ecological interest that contribute to sense of place Extent and survival of semi-natural habitat that is characteristic of the landscape type Presence of distinctive geological, geomorphological or pedological features Landscape which contains valued natural capital assets that contribute to ecosystem services, for example distinctive ecological communities and habitats that form the basis of ecological networks Landscape which makes an identified contribution to a nature recovery/ green infrastructure network 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landscape character assessment LANDMAP Geological Landscape and Landscape Habitats Aspects (in Wales) Ecological and geological designations SSSI citations and condition assessments Geological Conservation Review Habitat surveys Priority habitats Nature recovery networks/ nature pathways Habitat network opportunity mapping/ green infrastructure mapping Catchment management plans Ecosystem services assessment/ schemes Specialist ecological studies
Cultural heritage	Landscape with clear evidence of archaeological, historical or	Presence of historic landmark structures or designed landscape elements (e.g. follies,	Landscape character assessment

¹¹ These examples are not exhaustive.

¹² Evidence may be set out in development plans (or evidence that sits alongside development plans). Online mapping may also provide useful information (see 'useful data links' at the end of this TGN).

Factor	Definition	Examples ¹¹ of indicators of landscape value	Examples of evidence ¹²
	cultural interest which contribute positively to the landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> monuments, avenues, tree roundels) Presence of historic parks and gardens, and designed landscapes Landscape which contributes to the significance of heritage assets, for example forming the setting of heritage assets (especially if identified in specialist studies) Landscape which offers a dimension of time depth. This includes natural time depth, e.g. presence of features such as glaciers and peat bogs and cultural time depth e.g. presence of relic farmsteads, ruins, historic field patterns, historic rights of way (e.g. drove roads, salt ways, tracks associated with past industrial activity) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LANDMAP Historic Landscape and Cultural Landscape Services Aspect (in Wales) Historic environment and archaeological designations Conservation Area appraisals, Village Design Statements Historic maps Historic landscape character assessments¹³ Historic Land Use Assessment¹⁴ and Historic Area Assessments¹⁵ Place names Specialist heritage studies
Landscape condition	Landscape which is in a good physical state both with regard to individual elements and overall landscape structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good physical condition/ intactness of individual landscape elements (e.g. walls, parkland, trees) Good health of elements such as good water quality, good soil health Strong landscape structure (e.g. intact historic field patterns) Absence of detracting/ incongruous features (or features are present but have little influence) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landscape character assessment LANDMAP condition and trend questions (in Wales) Hedgerow/ tree surveys Observations about intactness/ condition made in the field by the assessor SSSI condition assessments Historic landscape character assessments/ map regression analysis
Associations	Landscape which is connected with notable people, events and the arts	Associations with well-known literature, poetry, art, TV/film and music that contribute to perceptions of the landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information about arts and science relating to a place Historical accounts, cultural traditions and folklore

¹³ Historic Landscape Characterisation has developed as a GIS mapping tool to capture how land use has changed and the 'time-depth' of the present-day landscape.

<https://historicengland.org.uk/research/methods/characterisation/historic-landscape-characterisation/>

¹⁴ Mapping of Scotland's Historic Landscape: <https://hmap.org.uk/>

¹⁵ <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/understanding-place-historic-area-assessments/>

Factor	Definition	Examples ¹¹ of indicators of landscape value	Examples of evidence ¹²
		Associations with science or other technical achievements Links to a notable historical event Associations with a famous person or people	Guidebooks/ published cultural trails LANDMAP Cultural Landscape Services aspect (in Wales)
Distinctiveness	Landscape that has a strong sense of identity	Landscape character that has a strong sense of place (showing strength of expression of landscape characteristics) Presence of distinctive features which are identified as being characteristic of a particular place Presence of rare or unusual features, especially those that help to confer a strong sense of place or identity Landscape which makes an important contribution to the character or identity of a settlement Settlement gateways/approaches which provides a clear sense of arrival and contribute to the character of the settlement (may be ancient/historic)	Landscape character assessment LANDMAP Visual & Sensory question 3 and 25, – Historic Landscape question 4 (in Wales) Guidebooks Observations about identity/ distinctiveness made in the field by the assessor
Recreational	Landscape offering recreational opportunities where experience of landscape is important	Presence of open access land, common land and public rights of way (particularly National Trails, long distance trails, Coastal Paths and Core Paths) where appreciation of landscape is a feature Areas with good accessibility that provide opportunities for outdoor recreation and spiritual experience/ inspiration Presence of town and village greens Other physical evidence of recreational use where experience of landscape is important Landscape that forms part of a view that is important to the	Definitive public rights of way mapping/ OS map data National Trails, long distance trails, Coastal Paths, Core Paths Open access land (including registered common land) Database of registered town or village greens Visitor surveys/ studies Observations about recreational use/ enjoyment made in the field by the assessor



Factor	Definition	Examples ¹¹ of indicators of landscape value	Examples of evidence ¹²
		enjoyment of a recreational activity	
Perceptual (Scenic)	Landscape that appeals to the senses, primarily the visual sense	Distinctive features, or distinctive combinations of features, such as dramatic or striking landform or harmonious combinations of land cover Strong aesthetic qualities such as scale, form, colour and texture Presence of natural lines in the landscape (e.g. natural ridgelines, woodland edges, river corridors, coastal edges) Visual diversity or contrasts which contributes to the appreciation of the landscape Memorable/ distinctive views and landmarks, or landscape which contributes to distinctive views and landmarks	Landscape character assessment LANDMAP Visual and Sensory scenic quality question 46 (in Wales) Protected views, views studies Areas frequently photographed or used in images used for tourism/ visitor/ promotional purposes, or views described or praised in literature Observations about scenic qualities made in the field by the assessor Conservation Area Appraisals Village Design Statements, or similar
Perceptual (Wildness and tranquillity)	Landscape with a strong perceptual value notably wildness, tranquillity and/or dark skies	High levels of tranquillity or perceptions of tranquillity, including perceived links to nature, dark skies, presence of wildlife/ birdsong and relative peace and quiet ¹⁶ Presence of wild land and perceptions of relative wildness (resulting from a high degree of perceived naturalness ¹⁷ , rugged or otherwise challenging terrain, remoteness from public mechanised access and lack of modern artefacts) Sense of particular remoteness, seclusion or openness Dark night skies	Tranquillity mapping and factors which contribute to and detract from tranquillity Dark Skies mapping Wildness mapping, and Wild Land Areas in Scotland Land cover mapping Field survey LANDMAP Visual and Sensory Aspect

¹⁶ More about tranquillity can be found in Landscape Institute Technical Information Note [01/2017](#) (Revised; Landscape Institute, 2017).

¹⁷ Relating to extensive semi-natural vegetation, presence of wildlife and presence of natural processes/ lack of human intervention.



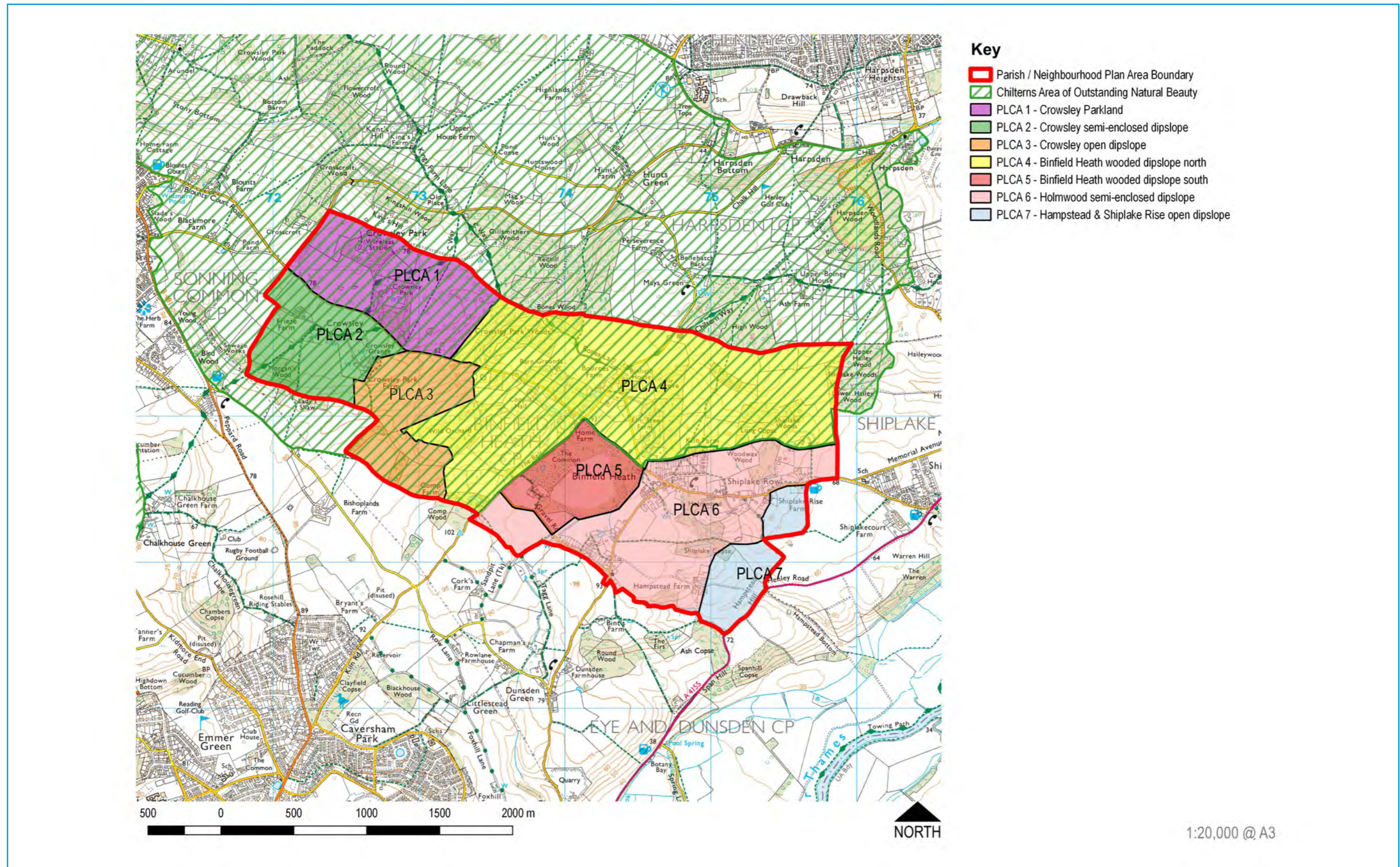
Factor	Definition	Examples ¹¹ of indicators of landscape value	Examples of evidence ¹²
		A general absence of intrusive or inharmonious development, land uses, transport and lighting	
Functional	Landscape which performs a clearly identifiable and valuable function, particularly in the healthy functioning of the landscape	<p>Landscapes and landscape elements that contribute to the healthy functioning of the landscape, e.g. natural hydrological systems/ floodplains, areas of undisturbed and healthy soils, areas that form carbon sinks such as peat bogs, woodlands and oceans, areas of diverse landcover (benefits pest regulation), pollinator-rich habitats such as wildflower meadows</p> <p>Areas that form an important part of a multifunctional Green Infrastructure network</p> <p>Landscapes and landscape elements that have strong physical or functional links with an adjacent national landscape designation, or are important to the appreciation of the designated landscape and its special qualities</p>	<p>Land cover and habitat maps</p> <p>Ecosystem services assessments and mapping (particularly supporting and regulating services)</p> <p>Green infrastructure studies/strategies</p> <p>Development and management plans for nationally-designated landscapes, Local Plans and SPDs</p> <p>Landscape character assessments</p>

The practical application of factors in coming to a judgement on landscape value

2.4.5 The following bullet points provide some advice on the practical application of the factors in **Table 1**:

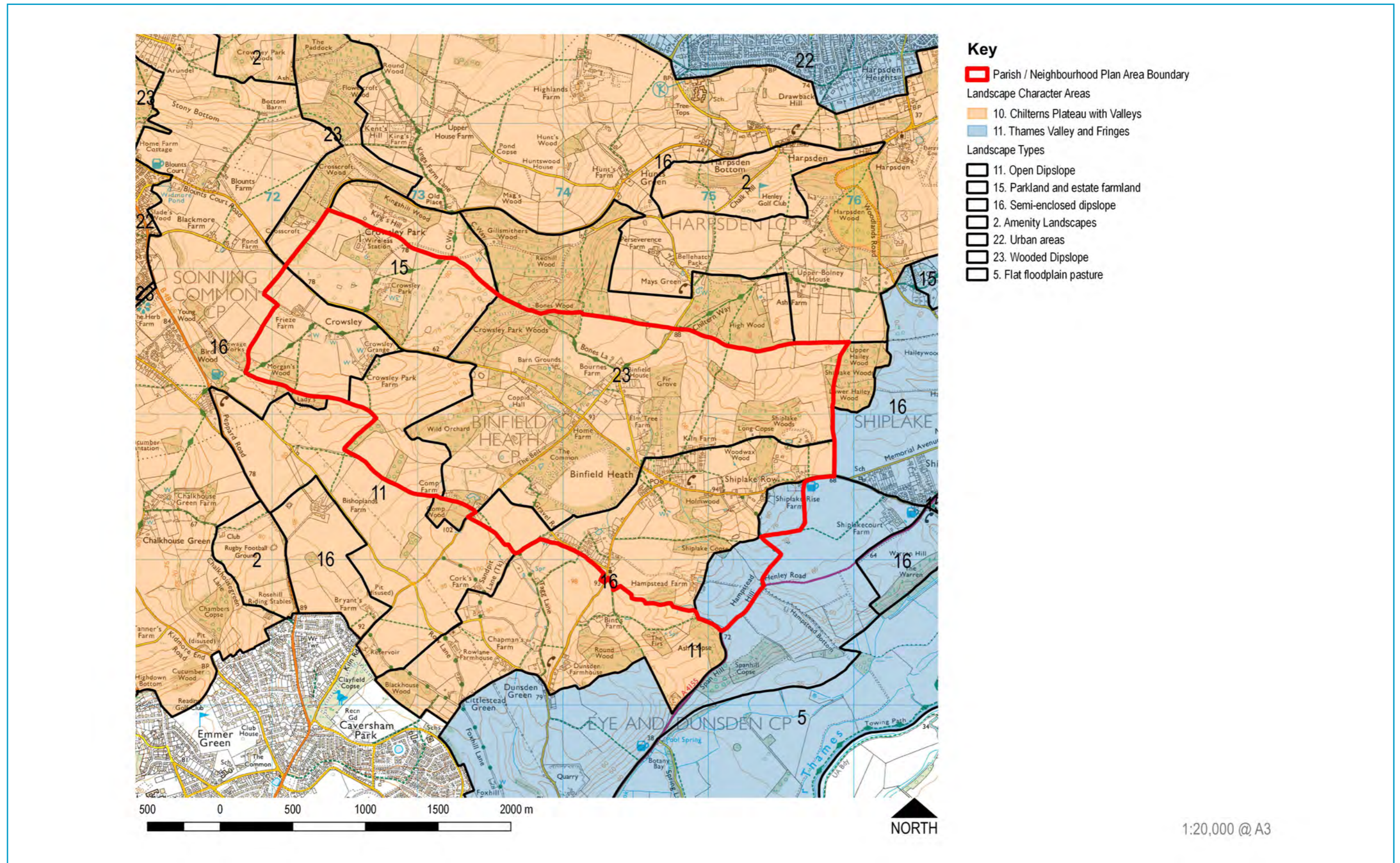
- *The factors to be considered are not fixed as they need to be appropriate to the particular project and location. It is recommended that the factors used to assess landscape value in a particular assessment are, where appropriate, discussed with the relevant planning authority or statutory consultees.*
- *The indicators of value should be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, taking into account what they contribute (positively or negatively) to a specific landscape. The relative importance to be attached to each indicator is likely to vary across different landscapes. Once evidence for each factor has been collated and assessed, it is important to step back and judge the overall ‘weight of evidence’ in coming to an overall judgement on landscape value.*
- *There are likely to be overlaps between the factors, as well as overlaps with other specialist studies for example in relation to natural and cultural factors. These overlaps should be acknowledged and considered when presenting conclusions on the overall value of the landscape.*
- *While condition/intactness of a landscape is one factor that can influence value, poor landscape management should not be a reason to deny a landscape a valued status if other factors indicate*

Figure 2 - Parish landscape character areas (PLCA) and boundary of the Chilterns AONB



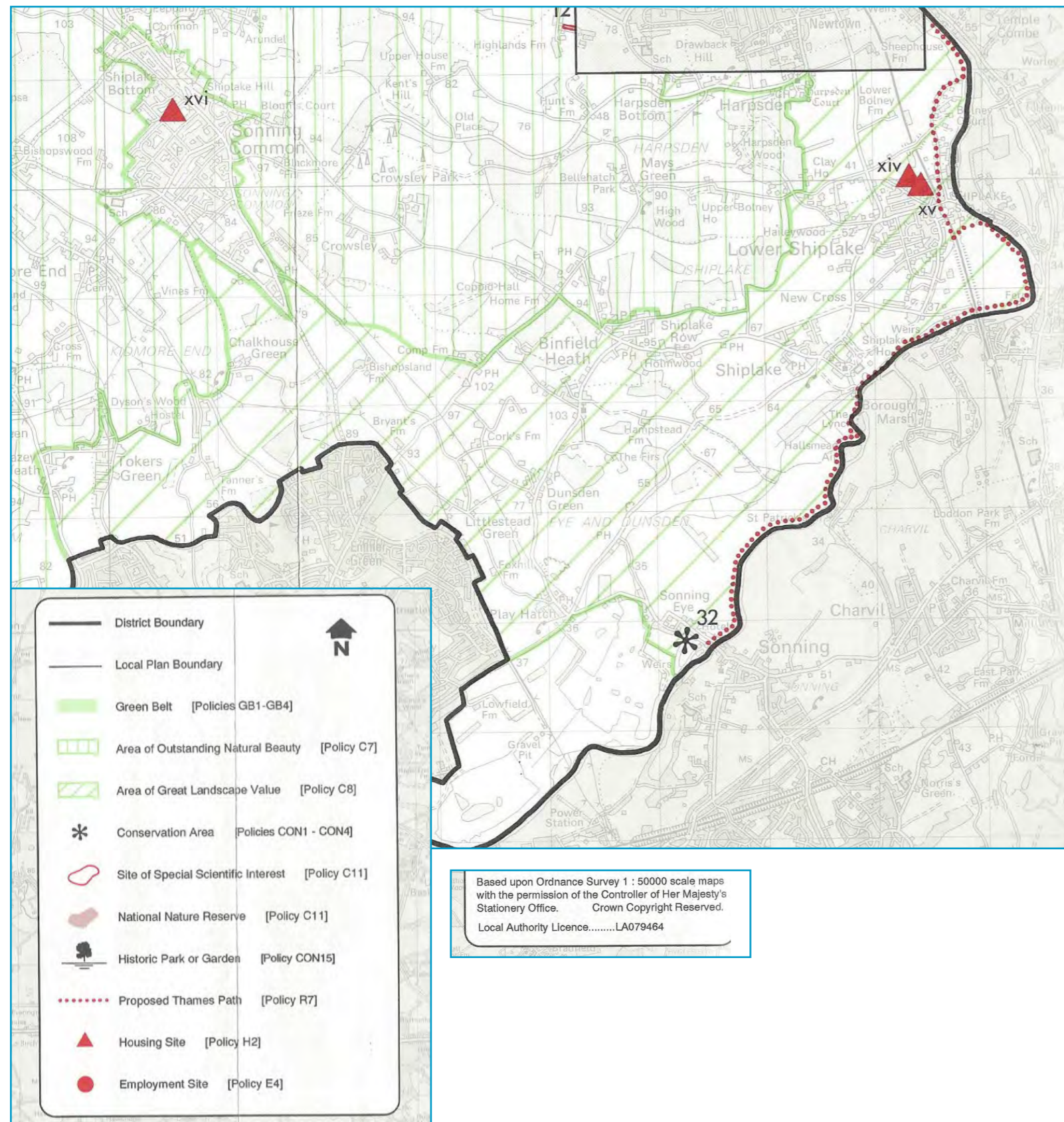
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Figure 3 - Parish boundary and Chilterns AONB and Landscape Character Areas and / Landscape Types, as identified in the SODC Landscape Character Assessment, 2017



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Figure 4 - Extract from the South Oxfordshire District Council Rural Areas Local Plan, Adopted July 1992



Areas of Great Landscape Value

C8 WITHIN AREAS OF GREAT LANDSCAPE VALUE, THE DISTRICT COUNCIL WILL SEEK TO CONSERVE AND ENHANCE THE QUALITY OF THE LANDSCAPE AND TO PROTECT IT FROM DEVELOPMENT WHICH IS LIKELY TO HAVE AN ADVERSE EFFECT ON ITS CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE. THE COUNCIL WILL EXERCISE ESPECIALLY CAREFUL CONTROL IN RELATION TO THE DESIGN AND SITING OF BUILDINGS AND THE USE OF LAND GENERALLY.

5.25 Extensive areas of Great Landscape Value were defined in Oxfordshire in the original County Development Plan of 1954. These were defined as "areas where, in the opinion of the Council, the beauty of the landscape and the building tradition of the locality combine to produce an area of outstanding amenity which ought to be the subject of especially careful control in relation to the design and siting of buildings and the use of the land generally". Many of the areas shown in the 1954 plan have since been designated Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

5.26 In the Structure Plan, the County Council proposes that, in addition to the special protection which is to be afforded to the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, particular care should be taken to control new development in a number of other areas regarded as being of high landscape value. In the area covered by this Local Plan the areas mentioned are:

- a) the Thames Valley, excluding the major built-up areas;
- b) the Thame Valley; and
- c) the Chilterns outside the AONB;

The County Council also suggests that local plans should define and protect special landscape features which are important to the local area.

5.27 Three broad Areas of Great Landscape Value are proposed in this Local Plan. The first area runs from the Thame Valley to the Chilterns escarpment. It is a continuation of the Area of Great Landscape Value defined in the Central Oxfordshire Local Plan. The area is very attractive gently undulating open countryside, with many quiet small villages, often built of local limestone. It is traversed by narrow hedge-lined lanes and has a character of remoteness. Its openness is noticeable from the higher ground of the Chilterns escarpment and the A329 running on the south eastern edge of the Oxford Heights which

afford many views across the area. It is of high amenity value and is worthy of Area of Great Landscape Value status.

5.28 The second area runs southwards from the Chilterns AONB to the River Thames and it is the area which the Council considered should have been included with the AONB. The area is the dip slope of the Chilterns and much of it is indistinguishable from the landscapes within the AONB. The areas where the dip slope meets the Thames floodplain are especially attractive. The proposed Area of Great Landscape Value extends from the AONB boundary to the boundary of the District, except for Sonning Common and the area of gravel working between Reading and Sonning Eye.

5.29 The third area is the Thames Valley, much of which is in the AONBs or Areas of Great Landscape Value described above. Additional areas included are between Long Wittenham and Little Wittenham, and between Wallingford and Cholsey. An area of very attractive countryside around Brightwell-cum-Sotwell and Mackney, which is almost enclosed by the North Wessex Downs AONB, is also included.

5.30 The boundaries of all the areas considered to be of Great Landscape Value are shown on the Proposals Map, and within them all development proposals will be carefully examined with regard to their effect on the landscape. The proposals are broadly consistent with the advice given in the Structure Plan and with the approach adopted by the District Councils in Oxfordshire. It is recognised, however, that the approach may be different from that adopted in adjoining Districts in Buckinghamshire and Berkshire.

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Figure 5 - Glossary of Acronyms

AONB - Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

AGLV - Area of Great Landscape Value

GLVIA - Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

LI - Landscape Institute

PLCA - Parish Landscape Character Area

SODC - South Oxfordshire District Council

SOLCA - South Oxfordshire Landscape Character Assessment