

Appendix A

Results of desk-based scoping exercise

Table 1.1 Scoping exercise for Local Landscape Designation in South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse

Landscape Character Area (LCA)	Within National Landscape designation	Local distinctiveness and sense of place	Landscape Quality	Scenic quality and perceptual aspects	Natural and Cultural qualities	Recreational value	Association	Take forward as Area of Search	Summary of reasoning
LCA 1A Wessex Downs Open Chalk Escarpment and Upper Slopes	Yes	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Area within National Landscape – no assessment required
LCA 1B Aston Upthorpe Downs Open Chalk Escarpment and Upper Slopes	Yes	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Area within National Landscape – no assessment required
LCA 2A Chiltern Wooded Chalk Escarpment	Yes	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Area within National Landscape – no assessment required
LCA 3A Wessex Downs Open Chalk Dipslope	Yes	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Area within National Landscape – no assessment required

<p>LCA 4A Chiltern Fringe Wooded Chalk Plateau and Valleys</p>	<p>Partially</p>							<p>Yes</p>	<p>The landscape plateaus, dissected by an irregular pattern of shallow small-scale valleys to create an undulating landscape. There is good coverage of woodland, with large amounts of beech woodland common, much of which is ancient woodland. A loose mosaic of mainly intensive arable fields and woodland, comparatively open but with some hedgerows.</p> <p>A rural landscape, although suburbanising influences include the busy A4155, A4074 and A4130 which cross the area, and suburban land uses on the edges of Caversham and Henley-on-Thames, including golf clubs and educational facilities. Electricity pylons run north of Caversham and are locally intrusive in views.</p> <p>Remnant commons and heaths have a mosaic of open areas, scrub, acid grassland and woodland. Woodland blocks, including ancient woodlands, are ecologically valued. Small historic villages and hamlets, often around commons and heaths, provide time-depth. Small parkland estates provide a distinctive sense of place and a more formal landscape. Public rights of way, including the promoted Chiltern Way, provide recreational access across the area.</p> <p>Only a small area lies outside of the National Landscape. Although the landscape condition is in places degraded by proximity to suburban influences and land uses, there are enough positive attributes to take forward.</p>
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LCA 5A Chiltern Wooded Chalk Ridges and Valleys	Yes	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		Area within National Landscape – no assessment required
LCA 6A Wessex Downs Chalk Escarpment Footslopes	Yes - Except small part south of Wantage	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		Area within National Landscape – no assessment required
LCA 6B Chiltern Chalk Escarpment Footslopes	Partially							Yes	<p>A shelf of rolling large-scale open arable farmland, occupying landform that falls from the foot of the scarp in the east towards lower lying vale and river valleys landscapes to the west and south. Small watercourses flow north from chalk springs towards the River Thames, and form a focus for rural settlement, including the historic 'spring-line villages', such as Ewelme, Watlington, Shirburn and Lewknor. Ancient woodland near Britwell Salome is in good condition. Chinnor is the largest settlement and has expanded in recent years. The new settlement edges have not yet integrated into the landscape. Some reinforcement of hedgerows with post and wire fencing.</p> <p>An open and exposed landscape with long and panoramic views. The chalk escarpment of the Chilterns provides a strong backdrop. Red kites are often seen in the skies above. It has a rural and unspoilt character, although the major roads the M40, A40, A4130 and A4074 are visual and aural detractors in the</p>

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									<p>landscape. Large-scale farm buildings are also prominent features in the open landscape.</p> <p>Parkland landscapes are found across the landscape, including the Registered Park and Garden at Shirburn Castle. Limited semi-natural habitats. Small linear belts, clumps and blocks of Priority Habitat deciduous woodland and tree cover are scattered across the area. The majority of the villages are covered by Conservation Areas and have a strong local vernacular. The whole countryside below the Chilterns is patterned by the intersection of transverse and parallel routes, visible in the existing lattice work of footpaths and bridleways. The Ridgeway, Oxfordshire Way, Chiltern Way and Swan's Way cross through this area. The whole countryside below the Chilterns is patterned by the intersection of transverse and parallel routes, visible in the existing lattice work of footpaths and bridleways.</p> <p>This is a continuation of the landscape character of the adjacent Chilterns National Landscape. Consider continuing into LCA 9F to the west.</p>

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LCA 7A Faringdon Ridge Hilltops	No							Yes	<p>A low ridge with gently undulating landform, albeit with some steeper slopes around watercourses and localised high points, such as Badbury Hill, Folly Hill and Onetree Hill. A rural, relatively tranquil, farmland landscape, with an intact network of hedgerows and mature hedgerow trees. the hedgerows vary, with some having gaps or being intensively managed and species poor, whilst others are more intact and feature mature trees.</p> <p>Significant woodland cover restricts views in places and results in a sense of isolation and intimacy. Elsewhere low hedges, relatively limited woodland and/or raised vantage points allows long distance views, including from roads and PRoW. The area forms part of the wider northern setting to the North Wessex Downs National Landscape, with a high level of intervisibility in the south of the LCA. Wind turbines at Westmill are prominent in views to and from the National Landscape. This is predominantly a rural, relatively tranquil, farmland landscape. Wooded areas in particular provide a strong sense of remoteness and tranquillity. Areas close to larger settlements, such as Faringdon and Shrivenham, and the well-trafficked A420 are influenced by human activity.</p> <p>There are dispersed blocks of woodland across the landscape, including significant areas of ancient woodland, particularly to the north. Areas of fens, calcareous grass and ancient woodland</p>

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									<p>provide surviving examples of rare semi-natural habitats. Historically significant sites include two Iron Age hillforts at Badbury Camp and Little Coxwell Camp and the Registered Park and Garden of Buscot House. Small villages are covered by Conservation Areas and contain a number of listed buildings. The Grade II listed Faringdon Folly Tower is a distinctive local landmark, on Faringdon Hill to the east of the town. Strong access on public rights of way throughout the area, including the D'Arcy Dalton Way and The Vale Way Long Distance Paths.</p> <p>The hills form locally distinctive landmarks. The landscape has a strong historic character and intact rural quality. Consider whether to extend north to Thames valley / wider Buscot estate.</p>
LCA 7B Oxford West Ridge Hilltops	No							Yes	<p>Part of a limestone ridge that rises above the Thames Valley to the north and east, including locally distinctive high points such as Wytham Hill, Hurst Hill, Pickett's Heath and Boars Hill, and a golf course at Hinksey Heights. The busy A420 defines the south-eastern edge of the LCA, beyond which lies the larger settlement of Botley and South Hinksey; this, along with a line of pylons crossing the centre of the LCA, detracts somewhat from the rural character.</p> <p>The wooded slopes in the east of the LCA provide a backdrop to the west of Wytham The tree cover generally restricts views and creates a sense of intimacy, and away from human influences</p>

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									<p>there is a keen sense of peace and tranquillity. There are also distinctive long-range views of the spires and rooftops of Oxford to the east; the Downs forms a distant horizon to the south.</p> <p>Higher ground includes extensive areas of woodland which are predominantly identified as ancient woodland, including Bagley Wood and Wytham Great Wood. Wytham Woods is also designated as a SSSI. There are a few Grade II listed buildings within the area, including Youlbury House, Foxcombe Hall, Templeton College and Chilswell Farm. There is an extensive network of PRow including the Oxford Greenbelt Way; access is more limited to the north, although there are a number of permissive paths within Wytham Woods. View from Hinksey Hill towards Oxford painted by Turner in 'Dreaming Spires'.</p> <p>Consider extension north into Thames Valley.</p>
LCA 7C Oxford East Ridge Hilltops	No							Yes	<p>Distinctive limestone and sandstone ridge, with an undulating landform of valleys and hills. Arable areas typically feature a large-scale rectilinear field pattern defined by tightly clipped or gappy hedgerows. Medium to small-scale fields tend to have a stronger structure of hedgerows and trees. The telecommunications masts at Beckley are visible from a wide area, and pylons and overhead power lines are apparent in views across the south of the LCA. There is also some localised</p>

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									<p>influence from settlement edges and from traffic along the busy A40, B4027 and B480 which run through the area.</p> <p>The landform and woodlands tend to create a sense of enclosure and reduces views across the area. Some longer views are available from hillsides and higher ground; notable viewpoints include Shotover Hill and Beckley Hill. There is a more open and exposed character on ridges and higher ground, with dominant sky and long views, particularly where large-scale arable farming dominates. It has a predominantly rural character with few detracting influences.</p> <p>Scattered blocks of woodland, many of which (particularly to the north) are ancient woodland. Some of these, as well as some former extraction sites, are designated as SSSIs and contain important habitats including deciduous woodland, calcareous fen and limestone grassland. The landscape is drained by a network of watercourses forming tributaries of the Cherwell or Tame, or the Thames to the south-west Shotover Registered Park and Garden has a well-managed parkland character with formal features such as avenues and free-standing mature trees in pasture, clumps and blocks of woodland, exotic tree species, formal structures and boundary features. The historic clustered settlement form is retained in some villages (such as Woodeaton, Elsfield and Stanton St John), marked by the presence of several listed buildings and Conservation Area</p>

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									designations; however, modern expansion of other villages has resulted in a more linear or sprawling form, particularly at Wheatley. A number of public rights of way, including the Oxford Greenbelt Way and the Oxfordshire Way promoted paths. The southern slopes of Shotover Hill are also managed as a Country Park.
LCA 7D Oxford South Ridge Hilltops	No							No	<p>A limestone ridge that forms a prominent spur of higher ground Nuneham Courtenay RPG. Predominantly large-scale rectilinear arable fields, defined by drainage ditches or low hedgerows with few hedgerow trees; some smaller scale pasture fields with more intact and species rich hedgerows associated with settlements and to the north of the LCA around Nineveh Farm.</p> <p>Predominantly rural character but some localised intrusion of main roads, overhead power lines and built development; areas of comparative inaccessibility in particular create a rural and remote character. The views are generally reduced by landform and tree cover resulting in an enclosed and intimate landscape; some longer views available from hillsides and higher ground.</p> <p>A relatively well wooded landscape, with numerous scattered woodland blocks and significant stands of deciduous and coniferous woodland at Nuneham Courtenay Park. Two small blocks of ancient woodland to the east of Nuneham Courtenay Grade I Registered Park and Garden, designed by 'Capability' Brown for Lord Harcourt, comprises an extensive area of 18th</p>

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									<p>century parkland and associated estate landscape in the centre of the plateau. The LCA features a network of public rights of way, including the Oxford Greenbelt Way and Shakespeare's Way.</p> <p>Although the LCA contains some important landscape features, particularly centred around Nuneham Courtenay, it is less distinctive than other LCAs within the type.</p>
LCA 8A Faringdon to Frilford Ridge Slope	No							No	<p>Features several minor watercourses flowing from the ridge-top in the north towards the River Ock to the south. It forms a low ridge that protrudes above the clay and alluvial landscapes associated with the River Thames to the north and the River Ock to the south. The landform is rolling and falls generally from north to south; whilst the north-facing slopes of the ridge are relatively steep (into LCT9), the south-facing slopes within this LCT are gentler and form a transition to the vale landscapes to the south. The hedgerows are generally intact.</p> <p>A rural area, with the rolling topography and tree cover providing a sense of enclosure and generally limiting long-distance views. This aids a sense of peace and tranquillity; however, a variety of human influences, including pylons, settlement and roads, locally limit the sense of tranquillity and remoteness. The south-facing slopes provide a backdrop to views from the vales to the south, and are part of the wider, albeit more distant, northern setting to the North Wessex Downs National Landscape; views</p>

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									<p>are also available from high points over the vale landscapes to the south.</p> <p>The area features significant blocks of ancient woodland, including one designated as a SSSI. Time depth is provided by remnant areas of Medieval fieldscapes; by several nucleated villages and hamlets containing listed buildings and Conservation Area designations; by scattered large country houses and farmsteads including those with historic parklands at Pusey House and Buckland House. Recreational access is provided by the Vale Way and a golf course.</p> <p>The LCA contains valued landscape features including heritage and semi-natural assets, however it is not particularly distinctive and in some areas land use change has negatively impacted the condition and rural character of the landscape. It is adjacent to two LLD areas of search (LCA 9E and 7B) – boundaries may extend into this LCA.</p>
LCA 8B Frilford to Sandford Ridge Slope								No	<p>A low ridge with minor watercourses flowing towards the River Ock to the south. Significant ancient woodlands and nationally rare calcareous fen and acid grassland which creates a distinctive sense of place.</p> <p>A rural landscape, with topography and tree cover providing enclosure. Human influences include electricity pylons, the A4210, presence of a large golf course, and proximity to</p>

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									<p>settlement edges locally reduces the tranquillity and rurality. The slopes provide a distant backdrop to the vale and the North Wessex Downs National Landscape.</p> <p>Recreational access is more limited than in other areas within the LCT, although a number of nature reserves provide recreational opportunities.</p> <p>The LCA contains valued landscape features, particularly semi-natural habitats, which provides some distinction. However, it is a small area impacted by busy roads and proximity to larger settlements.</p>
LCA 8C Cumnor to Abingdon Ridge Slope								No	<p>A low ridge sloping gently to the south, with occasional small blocks of woodland. Land use is generally large-scale arable farmland, with some paddocks and pasture on the edges of Wootton and Cumnor.</p> <p>Abingdon Airfield to the east consists of a large open area, with significant areas of grassland, lengths of runway, hardstanding, hangers and associated buildings; boundaries feature security fencing and perimeter warning notices. This locally limits the sense of tranquillity and remoteness and reduces the landscape quality of the LCA.</p> <p>Good recreational access along public rights of way, including the Oxford Greenbelt Way.</p>

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									Although there are some aspects of rural character, particularly in the north, the landscape is not distinctive enough to be taken forward.
LCA 9A Western Vale Edge Slopes	Partially							Yes	<p>A band of relatively steep, north facing slopes, with numerous spring-fed streams with associated riparian vegetation and settlement pattern of small, nucleated villages and hamlets, frequently located near the source of spring fed streams below the scarp. This forms a distinctive sense of place.</p> <p>The majority of the settlement have historic cores dating back to the medieval period. They contain clusters of listed buildings and are covered by Conservation Area designations. Open farmland forms gaps between each settlement helping to retain their individual identities.</p> <p>The landscape forms part of the immediate northern setting to the North Wessex Downs National Landscape, with the scarp forming a backdrop to the south on the LCA.</p> <p>Land use of relatively large arable fields, which continue north onto the gentler topography of the Vale, although smaller pastoral fields are also common and often located within the vicinity of villages. However, vegetation along the boundaries of larger arable fields tends to be less intact than elsewhere on the footslopes.</p>

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									<p>A predominantly rural area; some human influence from villages and the B4507 reduces the sense of remoteness and tranquillity. Gaps in tree cover allow panoramic views north across the slopes towards the lower-lying vale.</p> <p>Small, dispersed blocks of woodland scattered along the footslopes, including areas of ancient woodland, riparian woodland along watercourses, and other small tree groups and trees along field boundaries. Estates and parklands associated with the settlements, such as the Grade II Compton Beauchamp Registered Park and Garden, provide historic value and landscape diversity. A network of public rights of way provides recreational access to the landscape, including the d'Arcy Dalton Way; generally provide north-south links between the vale and the downs.</p> <p>This LCA forms extension of character from North Wessex Downs National Landscape. Explore areas to the north which have intervisibility and relationship with the Uffington white horse.</p>
LCA 9B Wantage to Didcot Vale Edge Slopes	No							No	An east-west band of north sloping land; featuring spring fed streams (Hendred Brook), and scattered settlement. Moderately wooded landscape in the east with predominantly large, open arable fields to the west.

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									<p>Much of the area is rural and relatively tranquil, with limited settlement internally and landform and tree cover filtering views of the larger settlements. Large open arable fields with some smaller fields in the east, where field boundaries are prominently low-clipped and are often gappy. Some fields lack any clear boundary feature, locally reducing landscape condition.</p> <p>North-facing, open slopes provide panoramic views across the vale to the north. Forms part of the northern setting to the North Wessex Downs National Landscape, though this relationship is limited by tree cover and topography. Land east of Wantage and Grove retains a rural character, with limited urbanising influence.</p> <p>Streams with associated valley landforms and riparian vegetation, such as East Hendred Brook, add landscape and ecological diversity. Public rights of way provide north-south access across the area but there is little east-west connectivity.</p> <p>Although parts of the area form a continuation of character of the North Wessex Downs National Landscape, the landscape is not distinctive enough to be taken forward.</p>
LCA 9C Milton Hill to Didcot Vale Edge Slopes	No							No.	<p>North and north-east facing slopes, incised by small streams and ditches is in use for arable cropping. Dispersed woodland blocks provide some landscape features, although there are limited semi-natural habitats.</p>

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									<p>Considerable residential, commercial and infrastructure development, particularly associated with Milton Heights and the edges of Steventon, Didcot and Harwell reduce the landscape quality and sense of tranquillity.</p> <p>Conservation Areas cover large parts of the surrounding settlements, and the LCA provides a backdrop to these historic settlements. There are no listed buildings or noted historic features within the LCA.</p> <p>The slopes provide expansive views northwards to the ridge beyond and form a backdrop to the vale.</p> <p>This landscape has few distinctive features and is heavily influenced by residential, commercial and infrastructure development.</p>
LCA 9D East of Didcot Vale Edge Slopes	Partially							No.	<p>The majority of the LCA lies within the North Wessex Downs National Landscape. Outside of this, the land is gently rolling, transitioning between the chalk escarpment to the south and the lower-lying vale landscapes to the north. The landscape pattern is predominantly large open arable fields interspersed with small streams and ditches. Some lengths of intact landscape structure are provided by hedges, trees and woods. It is a sparsely wooded landscape, intensive arable farmland in large-scale fields.</p>

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									<p>Limited tree and woodland cover results in an open landscape, with long views across the fields. The Downs scarp provides a strong backdrop to the south, and there are some glimpsed views of the wooded Corallian Limestone Ridge to the north. Proximity to Didcot and Blewbury and the A417 reduce tranquillity locally, although there is a rural character away from these detracting features.</p> <p>Upton is the only settlement, a small, nucleated village containing a number of Grade II listed buildings. There is a recreational access on public rights of way, including a section of cycle route on the dismantled railway.</p> <p>The landscape is small, and while has some characteristics of the North Wessex Downs National Landscape, is not distinctive enough to be taken forward.</p>
LCA 9E Ewelme to South Stoke Vale Edge Slopes	Partially							No.	The majority of the landscape is within the Chilterns National Landscape. The land outside of this designation are in close proximity to the RAF Benson airbase, which reduces landscape condition and tranquillity.
LCA 9F Eastern Vale Edge Slopes	No							Yes	Gently rolling landscape with some small local hills which add topographic interest. Parkland and estates are frequent features, with characteristic tree avenues, estate fencing and mature individual trees standing in pasture. Small-scale nucleated historic villages have grown around the estates, many with listed

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									<p>buildings and a strong vernacular of brick and flint. Large-scale rectilinear fields are bounded by a mix of species-rich hedgerows and arable field margins, with some mature hedgerow trees. Small, isolated areas of woodland are a frequent feature across the landscape. A rural and generally undeveloped landscape with few detracting influences, including a lack of vertical features in views.</p> <p>Expansive views are possible across the lower lying vale, and the distinct wooded scarp of the Chilterns forms a prominent backdrop. There are also glimpsed views north towards to the north of the wooded Corallian Limestone Ridge. The M40 in the north-east is audibly detracting, although it is generally hidden from view by vegetation. Occasional low flying aircraft noise is heard from the nearby RAF bases at Benson and Chalgrove.</p> <p>A lattice work of public rights of way, including numerous holloways and ancient tracks, connect the vale to the north-west with the Chalk escarpment to the south-east. This includes Turner's Green Lane and Stoney Lane. The Oxfordshire Way Long Distance Path runs through the east of the area.</p> <p>The landscape forms part of a continuation in character of the Chilterns National Landscape and should be taken forward.</p>

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LCA 9G Northern Vale Edge Slopes	No							Yes	<p>Historic small villages at the top of the slope towards the ridgetop have time depth, with many covered by Conservation Area. Parkland estates contain significant areas of grassland, plantations, tree lines, groups of trees and lakes. Hinton Manor and Buckland House are Registered Parks and Gardens. The landscape has a highly rural character, with strong public rights of way and limited modern distractions or developments. The landscape is defined by the relatively steep slopes transitioning from the Thames vale in the north to the gentle slopes of the Corallian Limestone Ridge to the south. Land use consists of arable fields, with small woodland blocks, a pattern of small settlements and occasional parklands. Many of the woodlands are recorded as ancient woodland, although some have been replanted with conifers. Fields are bound by a strong network of hedgerows with occasional hedgerow trees.</p> <p>A relatively open landscape, with views looking across the Thames vale to the north, and wooded Wytham Hill on the horizon. The North Wessex Downs form the horizon in views to the south. The views are sometimes filtered by tree cover, providing areas of enclosure. A rural, and relatively tranquil landscape, with few detracting features or obtrusive developments. However, pylon routes run through the east and north of the area, and the A420 in the east is an audible detractor.</p>

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									<p>Recreational routes include the Oxford Greenbelt Way Long Distance Path and Thames Path National Trail.</p> <p>The landscape forms a distinctive setting to the River Thames to the north, and links between the slopes and river valley should be explored.</p>
LCA 10A Sinodun Lower Vale Hills	No	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		Area within National Landscape – no assessment required
LCA 11A Thames Upper Vale								No	<p>A gently undulating landform rising gradually to the south and east, allowing open views to the wooded limestone ridge to the south and east. Large-scale arable fields have varied hedgerows, with some low and clipped, gappy, or removed. Scattered small woodland blocks and copses provide variety within the landscape, while wet meadows also contribute to the ecological value.</p> <p>A rural, agricultural landscape with a predominantly peaceful and tranquil character. Areas close to the A417 are influenced by traffic.</p> <p>The sparse settlement pattern of occasional small hamlets and scattered farmsteads is centred around the medieval hamlet of Buscot. It contains a significant number of Listed Buildings within its Conservation Area. Recreational access to the landscape is</p>

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									<p>provided via a number of PRow including the D'Arcy Dalton Way Long Distance footpath.</p> <p>While the landscape contains important semi-natural and historic features and has a mostly intact rural character, some parts of the landscape are not in good condition and the area is not particularly distinctive. Consider the area between Buscot and Eaton Hastings for its connection to Buscot House and Thames floodplain (including relationship with West Oxfordshire).</p>
LCA 11B Western Upper Vale	No							No	<p>A gently undulating landscape associated with the River Ock. The meandering course of the River Ock and its tributaries, marked by riparian vegetation, contributes to the landscape structure and sense of place. A varying network of hedgerows enclose fields, with mature hedgerow trees in places, and gappy or removed hedgerows elsewhere.</p> <p>Distinctive views to rising ground to the north and south, including the Corallian Limestone Ridge nearby to the north, and the North Wessex Downs National Landscape on the horizon to the south. A rural and generally peaceful landscape, particularly along the meandering watercourses of the Ock and its tributaries. Areas close to larger settlements, the A420 and railway line on embankments are influenced by human activity.</p> <p>Important semi-natural habitats include deciduous woodland, neutral grassland and fen habitat at Fernham Meadows SSSI.</p>

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									<p>Small copses of ancient woodland are scattered across the farmed landscape. Historic settlements are often focused on small greens of common land, and many have Conservation Areas.</p> <p>Rural lanes and a network of public rights of way including the D'Arcy Dalton and Vale Way Long Distance footpaths enable recreational access to the landscape.</p> <p>The landscape has numerous important features including semi-natural habitats, historic villages, and a strong rural character. However, transport and energy infrastructure are detracting features, and the landscape is not particularly distinctive.</p>
LCA 11C Eastern Upper Vale	No							No	<p>A low, gently rolling topography featuring a network of small unnamed watercourses. Land use is predominantly intensive arable cultivation within a pattern of large-scale rectilinear fields, with scattered small woodland blocks and linear belts. Hedgerows are in variable condition; some closely clipped, some gappy, and others are species-rich. The highly managed fairways and putting greens associated with Oxfordshire Golf Course have limited visual influence as planting around the site provides significant screening.</p> <p>Predominantly rural character; some localised disruption from overhead power lines and the M40, A40, A329 and A418. There are expansive views from elevated and open parts of the</p>

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									<p>character area, with long distance-views to the Chilterns National Landscape to the east.</p> <p>Historic parkland at Rycote, and small historic villages with Conservation Areas provide time-depth. Recreational access is via a network of public rights of way, including the Oxfordshire Way, and a large area of open access land at Tetsworth Common.</p> <p>The landscape is not particularly distinctive in the local context. Although it contains some valued and important landscape features, the presence of transport and energy form considerable detractors.</p>
LCA 12A Thames Middle Vale	No							Yes	<p>Flat, low-lying landscape associated with the River Thames, with views to the south backdropped by the wooded Corallian limestone ridge. Boat moorings, occasional stone bridges, and dense riparian vegetation including willow, contribute to the sense of place along the River Thames. Pasture fields generally have greater intact boundary vegetation including some mature trees, whilst the larger, more open, arable fields tend to have low clipped hedges which are degraded. Pylons, the A415 and agricultural structures form locally detractive features, but the sparsely settled, rural area has a general sense of peace and tranquillity.</p>

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									<p>Important wetland and grassland habitats along and adjacent to the river. Woodland is limited to dispersed small blocks and broad tree belts between fields, some of which are recorded as ancient woodland. Previous settlement of the floodplain is evidenced by a number of Scheduled Monuments, which combined with the historic bridges across the Thames add time-depth. Public rights of way cross the area and connect to the Thames Path National Trail.</p> <p>This is a distinctive landscape with strong links south towards the Corallian limestone ridge. It should be taken forward in conjunction with LCA 9G.</p>
LCA 12B Western Middle Vale	No							No	<p>Gently undulating, low-lying farmland associated with the valley of the River Ock. The notable presence of settlement, transport, utilities and business/light industrial land uses limits the sense of tranquillity and remoteness. The landscape forms a significant part of the wider setting to the north of the North Wessex Downs National Landscape, with the area visible in the distance from vantage points within the Downs. Boundary vegetation varies from degraded hedgerows with broken tree lines, through intact low clipped hedges along fields and roads, to hedges with mature hedgerow trees (predominantly along water courses and ditches). There is a large solar farm located to the west of Steventon, although its visibility from within the vale is limited.</p>

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									<p>A moderately wooded landscape, with occasional scattered small blocks of woodland, and linear vegetation along the railway, canal and River Ock. Settlement comprises scattered but relatively frequent nucleated villages, all of which have Conservation Areas containing clusters of listed buildings. There is a well-connected network of public rights of way across most of the area, including footpaths, bridleways and byways. The Vale Way promoted route runs through the west.</p> <p>The landscape is not particularly distinctive, and the condition of landscape features is degraded in places. The landscape has a rural character although this is adversely impacted by settlement expansion and transport and industrial infrastructure.</p>
LCA 12C Eastern Middle Vale	No							No	<p>A low-lying, gently rolling landform featuring a network of small watercourses with associated valley landforms. Hedgerow boundaries are variable, with clipped hawthorn hedges, substantial lengths of gappy and degraded hedgerows; field boundaries comprise open ditches and fences in places. It has a predominantly rural character with some localised intrusion from solar farms and airfields at Benson and Chalgrove.</p> <p>The open character of much of the landscape enables long distance views towards the Chilterns National Landscape.</p> <p>Calcareous fen and carr habitats at Spartum Fen SSSI provide important habitats and visual texture to the landscape. It is a</p>

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									<p>moderately wooded landscape with several small blocks of woodland, including some surviving ancient woodland. The historic sparse settlement pattern of nucleated villages survives, with clusters of listed buildings and Conservation Areas. Upstanding features at Ascott Park (including gate piers and stone walls) also contribute to the historic character of the landscape. Public rights of way are relatively sparse, especially in the north. The Shakespeare's Way long distance footpath runs across the area from Brookhampton to Chalgrove.</p> <p>The landscape is not locally distinctive and although it has some important semi-natural and heritage features, landscape condition is degraded in some areas.</p>
LCA 12D Oxford Middle Vale	No							No	<p>A low-lying rolling landscape sitting slightly elevated above the River Thames to the west. A predominantly large-scale open arable landscape with angular fields bounded by a distinctive network of drainage ditches with few trees, low gappy hedges, or fences. A large electricity substation is located within the character area and is partially screened by trees at Stanford Brake; however, pylons are still visible above the vegetation and are visually detractive in views across the landscape.</p> <p>The landscape is strongly influenced by proximity to the southern edge of Oxford with the presence of a large electricity sub-station and associated pylons, as well as views to industrial buildings. Views south and west to the slopes of the limestone</p>

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									<p>ridge which rises to present a sense of containment to the landscape.</p> <p>Occasional small pockets and copses of deciduous woodland occur along field boundaries. occasional small traditional orchards, typically associated with farms. Recreational access is via a network of public rights of way including Shakespeare's Way long distance footpath.</p> <p>The low-lying landscape is not locally distinctive compared to the adjacent hills to the east. Although there are some valued landscape features, the landscape is impacted by urban fringe land uses and its proximity to Oxford.</p>
LCA 12E Thame Middle Vale	No							No	<p>A low-lying, gently undulating landscape crossed by smaller watercourses, that slopes gently northwards towards the River Thame. Villages, stone walls and churches in Corallian limestone characterise the built form across much of the landscape. Boundaries are often defined by a weak structure of tightly clipped or gappy hedgerows, with few hedgerow trees. In some parts of the area, fields are bound by species-rich hedgerows.</p> <p>Limited sense of tranquillity due to the sight and sound of traffic on the A418 and the M40 to the west; Thame also introduces visual and aural disruption to the landscape. A solar farm north of Towersey introduces modern infrastructure to the character</p>

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									<p>area. It has an open, denuded and exposed character, with high intervisibility due to the low lying and relatively flat landform, and limited tree and vegetation cover.</p> <p>Important semi-natural habits include floodplain grazing marsh and deciduous woodland. Scattered villages line the A418, including the historic settlements of Waterstock and Thame which, along with Moreton, feature Conservation Area designations and clusters of listed buildings. An extensive network of public rights of way enables recreational access to the landscape, including the Thame Valley Way and Oxfordshire Way.</p> <p>The landscape is not particularly distinctive. Although it contains important semi-natural habitats and heritage assets and provides recreational resource, the landscape is adversely impacted by transport corridors and energy infrastructure.</p>
LCA 12F Studley Middle Vale	No							No	<p>A relatively low-lying and undulating landscape located south of the River Thame. The local vernacular features the use Corallian Limestone, and red tiles or thatch as roofing materials creating a sense of unity across the built form within the landscape. Woodlands are distinctive landscape features providing structure, visual distinctiveness and height in parts of the landscape that are otherwise low or gently undulating. It has a predominantly rural character, with some localised intrusion of</p>

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									<p>main roads (including M40/A40), overhead power lines, and built development.</p> <p>There is an intimate, semi-enclosed and pastoral character, with woodland and roadside vegetation limiting intervisibility and providing a sense of enclosure and remoteness. Some longer views are possible from hillsides and higher ground across lower-lying vales. It has an overall rural character particularly across the north of the LCA; some localised intrusion of main roads (including M40/A40), overhead power lines, and built development.</p> <p>Otmoor Nature Reserve is designated for its important wetland habitats. A well-wooded landscape including significant areas of ancient woodland; mixed broadleaf and coniferous plantations are often in angular blocks, many designated as SSSI. Beckley Park Registered Park and Garden (Grade II* listed) provides time-depth.</p> <p>Public rights of way including the Oxfordshire Way provide a good level of access; Open Access land at Bernwood Forest provides further recreational opportunities.</p> <p>Although the landscape contains important semi-natural habitats and heritage assets and provides recreational resource, the landscape is not particularly distinctive and is adversely impacted by transport corridors and energy infrastructure. The</p>

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									adjacent hills to the west form an area of search – boundaries may extend into the western part of the LCA.
LCA 12G Cherwell Middle Vale	No							No	<p>Distinctively flat, flow-lying landform with very little topographic variation. The River Ock flows through the area towards the River Thames, fed by a number of smaller streams and brooks. The A40 and equestrian land uses reduce the landscape quality and rurality.</p> <p>The sparse settlement pattern combined with the agricultural land use, relatively limited road access and absence of modern development, results in a strongly rural character. Views across the landscape are generally screened or heavily filtered by mature hedgerow vegetation and woodland. Pylons introduce prominent vertical features that are prominent in views across the low-lying landscape.</p> <p>There are good levels of recreational access to landscape via a number of public rights of way, including the Oxford Greenbelt Way long distance footpath.</p>

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									Although the landscape retains a rural quality, the condition is impacted by suburban land uses and energy and transport infrastructure. The landscape is not very distinctive.
LCA 13A Ock Lower Vale	No							No	<p>Distinctively flat, flow-lying landform with very little topographic variation, focussed on the River Ock. A predominantly arable landscape of large-scale irregular-shaped fields bounded by a network of ditches or low and gappy hedgerows. Pasture fields lie adjacent to the River Ock.</p> <p>The flat, low-lying topography creates open to semi-enclosed views, with occasionally long views south to the North Wessex Downs National Landscape. Some areas of higher hedgerows, mature trees, and woodland copses and plantations limit views.</p>

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									<p>There is a sense of tranquillity and remoteness in the north, by virtue of the lack of settlement and limited public access. Solar farms, a large warehouse complex, and proximity to main roads (including the A34) introduce detractive features in the south.</p> <p>Semi-natural habitats relate to small angular or linear mixed deciduous woodland and coniferous plantations, and riparian vegetation. Historic mill buildings along the river reflects the industrial heritage of the area. A well-connected network of public rights of way cross the landscape, linking settlements in adjacent character areas; more limited access to the north.</p> <p>Although the landscape forms a relatively distinct setting to the River Ock, there are numerous detracting features in the south. There are few semi-natural and heritage assets in the landscape.</p>

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LCA 13B Abingdon-Didcot Lower Vale	No							No	<p>A flat, low-lying floodplain landscape associated with the River Thames and River Ock. A relatively developed landscape featuring several settlements and intervening ribbon development, road and rail corridors, and several current and former gravel extraction sites.</p> <p>There is a limited sense of tranquillity, due to the development within the area as well as the surrounding urban areas of Abingdon and Didcot. Some pockets of tranquillity along the Thames gives a degree of peace and tranquillity.</p> <p>Semi-natural habitats include scattered deciduous woodlands and riparian vegetation cover, as well as distinctive areas of floodplain grazing marsh. Historic villages have Conservation Areas and clusters of listed buildings. There is a good level of public access via a network of public rights of way, including the Thames Path National Trail and the Vale Way long distance path.</p> <p>Although there are important semi-natural and heritage features, significant areas of the landscape are adversely impacted by their proximity to development, mineral extraction and transport infrastructure.</p>
LCA 13C East Thames Lower Vale	Partially							Partially	<p>A flat, low-lying landscape associated with the River Thames and River Thame and several of their small tributaries. The landscape has a strong degree of coherence with the River</p>

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									<p>Thames, which provides a strong unifying influence. An overall rural character with some intrusion of 20th century built form around Berinsfield, including recent solar farm development, and Culham Science Centre. Ongoing and former mineral extraction locally reduces the landscape condition. Busy transport corridors such as the A4074, A329 and A4130 cross the area, reducing tranquillity and rurality.</p> <p>Limited woodland allows long views across the landscape towards the surrounding hills. However, riparian woodland along the rivers and other small pockets of woodland result in greater sense of enclosure.</p> <p>Widespread floodplain habitats, which include extensive floodplain grazing marsh lowland meadows, lowland fens and semi-improved grassland. Historic settlement pattern located close to watercourses, many of which retain a substantial number of Listed Buildings and have Conservation Areas. Public rights of way including Shakespeare's Way long distance footpath and Thames Path National Trail provide recreational access.</p> <p>The west of the LCA has a high level of continuity with the North Wessex Downs National Landscape to the south, and contains important semi-natural habitats and heritage features, unified by the River Thames corridor.</p>

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LCA 13D South Thames Lower Vale	Partially							No	<p>A low lying, gently undulating landform associated with the floodplain of the River Thames; features several small watercourses that feed the Thames. In some places such as around Cholsey, hedgerow field boundaries are fragmented or missing, reinforcing the open character and expansive views.</p> <p>Limited tree cover enables high intervisibility and extensive open views, including south towards the chalk escarpment of the North Wessex Downs and to the edge of the Chilterns National Landscapes. It has a predominantly rural, tranquil, character, although busy transport corridors, railway infrastructure and electricity pylons are visual and aural detractors in the landscape.</p> <p>Priority habitats include lowland calcareous grassland, floodplain grazing marsh, deciduous woodland, and several small pockets of traditional orchards, concentrated around farmsteads. Settlement pattern of small, nucleated villages, many of which have Conservation Areas and clusters of Listed Buildings. The Saxon settlement site and castle at Wallingford, provide evidence of a long history of settlement. It has a well-connected network of PProW which enables recreational access to the landscape.</p> <p>The majority of the LCA forms part of the North Wessex Downs National Landscape. The areas outside this designation are</p>

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									impacted by their proximity to the urban edges of Didcot and Wallingford, transport and energy infrastructure.
LCA 14A Farmoor Reservoir Lower Valley	No							No	<p>Wooded hills to the north and south create a backdrop to the reservoir, which is an extensive manmade structure within the landscape. Outside of the reservoir the River Thames is lined by riparian vegetation, while arable fields lie to the east, with relatively intact hedgerows.</p> <p>A generally rural area, although impacted by noise from the B4017, the A420 to the east and B4044 to the north. Electricity pylon routes are a detracting feature within the landscape.</p> <p>Settlements are limited to the 20th century village of Farmoor in the north-west and scattered historic farmsteads elsewhere. There are good levels of recreational access, including the Thames Path National Trail along the river, and the Oxford Greenbelt Way Long Distance Path; the reservoir is also a well-used recreational resource, including for sailing and fishing.</p> <p>It is a well-used landscape for recreation, with the fields to the east providing a setting to the wooded hills to the north and south. However, there are a number of detracting features, and the landscape is visually contained by the surrounding hills.</p>
LCA 14B Eynsham to	No							Yes	Distinctive River Thames floodplain with steep valley sides rising towards Wytham Hill. Pasture fields dominate the landscape,

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Oxford Thames River Valley									<p>which are relatively large, grazed fields with significant gaps in boundary vegetation. The A34 dual carriageway is elevated above the floodplain and road traffic is visible through gaps in the roadside vegetation, with reduces tranquillity. Other human influences include the occasional views of settlement and the university field station.</p> <p>An open landscape with limited tree cover, which contrasts with the wooded Wytham Hill to the west. Views across the floodplain to the wooded hills are noted as important in the Wytham Conservation Area Appraisal.</p> <p>Semi-natural habitats including floodplain grazing marsh and Wytham Ditches and Flushes SSSI have ecological value. Settlement is limited to the historic village of Wytham, which is located on the Seacourt Stream/Wytham Stream and is covered by a Conservation Area. Public rights of way are limited internally, although the Thames Path National Trail follows the river, and the Oxford Greenbelt Way Long Distance Path passes between Wytham and the field station.</p> <p>The contrast between the steep wooded Wytham hill and flat floodplain provides a distinct sense of place, although proximity to Oxford and the A34 detract from the rural qualities of the landscape.</p>

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LCA 14C Botley to Kennington Thames River Valley								No	<p>Flat floodplain landscape of the River Thames, and its associated channels Hogacre Ditch, Hinksey Stream and Littlemore Brook. Electricity pylon routes, proximity to large settlements and the major transport infrastructure are all detracting features.</p> <p>Riparian woodland, hedgerows, small tree groups and plantations create a sense of significant tree cover. Views are generally obscured by layers of vegetation, which also hide the settlement edges of Kennington and Botley, as well as the A34 and railway line, although they are aural detractors.</p> <p>There are extensive areas of distinctive wetland habitats, including lowland meadows and floodplain grazing marsh, with many areas of pasture managed for conservation. Time-depth is provided by the small historic villages of Sandford-on-Thames and South Hinksey.</p> <p>Extensive recreational access including the Thames Path National Trail, Shakespeare's Way, National Cycling Route 5 and water-based recreation is on and in the Thames itself.</p> <p>Although the landscape has some rural qualities, locally important landscape features and is valued for recreation, it is significantly adversely impacted by its urban fringe location and major transport corridors.</p>

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LCA 14D Abingdon to Kennington Thames Lower Valley								No	<p>The River Thames and several flooded gravel pits are dominant features of the landscape; these are often fringed by riparian woodland. The rising ridge of Nuneham Courtenay forms a dramatic backdrop in views to the south-east. Blocks of woodland on the rising slopes of the Corallian limestone ridge also provide a backdrop to the west. Predominantly rural landscape with vegetation along the floodplain creating a sense of enclosure, peace and relative tranquillity; localised detractors include lines of electricity pylons and the busy A4074 in the east, current quarrying activities south of Radley, and the Cherwell Valley railway.</p> <p>Vegetation along the riverbank creates an enclosed character, with the River Thames often not visible. Radley Lakes nature reserve, a flooded former quarry, supports a variety of flora and fauna, and several small areas of lowland meadow and floodplain grazing marsh are also a distinctive feature of the floodplain. Settlement is limited to Lower Radley, although the urban centres of Abingdon-on-Thames and Kennington lie adjacent to the area. Scheduled Monuments demonstrate a rich time-depth in the landscape. Good levels of access, with the Thames Path National Trail following the river, and the Oxford Greenbelt Way which passes through the LCA east of Radley.</p> <p>While the landscape is quite distinctive as it follows the River Thames and contains some valued semi-natural and historic</p>

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									<p>features, it is adversely impacted by transport and energy development, and the proximity to urban development.</p>

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LCA 14E River Thame Lower Valley	No							No	<p>A valley landscape associated with the River Thame; several tributary streams drain into the Thame resulting in an undulating landform. Fields are bounded by species-rich hedgerows, although some have been removed or are very gappy.</p> <p>Largely open views, particularly across the valley, although some local areas of enclosure are provided by hedgerows, woodland blocks and the undulating topography. Predominantly rural with a generally tranquil and peaceful character; more suburban influences in the north due to the presence of the M40, A40, sewage works and Wheatley Services. Electricity pylon routes in the south are vertical features in many views.</p> <p>Riparian woodland and floodplain grazing marsh are distinctive features scattered along the course of the river; other tree and woodland cover is provided by small blocks of mixed woodland on the valley sides. Settlement is limited to occasional farmsteads, although the villages of Cuddesdon, Great Milton and Little Milton lie on higher ground defining the valley. There is a network of local PRow connects the surrounding villages, with a greater concentration crossing the river in the south.</p> <p>The landscape is not particularly distinctive in the local context and there are numerous detractors including transport routes and pylons.</p>

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LCA 14F Moulsford to Caversham Thames Lower Valley	Yes	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Area within National Landscape – no assessment required
LCA 14G Caversham to Henley Thames Lower Valley	No							Yes	<p>The low-lying River Thames floodplain, with gently rising valley sides extending north into the Chiltern hills provides a distinctive character. Underlying gravels have been extensively exploited, resulting in large, flooded gravel pits east of Caversham. Away from the river channel, farmland consists of large-scale arable fields which are often open or divided by drainage ditches or post and wire fences. Some areas of pasture have been subdivided for horse paddocks bounded by fences and drainage ditches.</p> <p>An open character along the river corridor, sometimes framed by bankside vegetation. Bankside vegetation, small areas of woodland and the rising slopes to the north create a more enclosed character with limited long-distance views. A generally rural landscape, although impacted by proximity to large urban areas, the busy A4155 and the railway.</p> <p>Scattered woodland and wetland habitats including riparian woodland and floodplain grazing marsh along the river course and small woodland blocks on the valley sides. This section of the Thames Valley includes a string of riverside towns and</p>

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									<p>settlements. Many of these can trace origins back to prehistoric, Roman and Saxon times.</p> <p>Recreational opportunities are provided by the Thames Path National Trail, the Chiltern Way, local network of public rights of way, the flooded gravel pits and the River Thames itself (including boating, rowing and fishing). However, much of the area has no public access.</p> <p>This landscape forms an extension of character of the Chilterns National Landscape to the north.</p>