4.8 Greensand and Chalk Terrace (Type G)

Key Characteristics

- Flat aprons of land from which the dramatic chalk escarpments and hills rise.
- Dominated by predominantly arable fields, with Parliamentary enclosure visible within field pattern.
- Mixed field pattern, comprising a combination of large and smaller scale fields, with a visible intact hedgerow network.
- Landscape underlain by Upper Greensand geology giving rise to rich brown earth soils that have a high agricultural value.
- Mixed woodland runs in discontinuous belts along the base of the chalk escarpment.
- Settlement pattern is sparse and dispersed, consisting of scattered farmsteads and occasional small villages.

Summary of Visual Character

The distinctive landform of this landscape character type forms level terraces lying between the greensand hills and chalk escarpments and flat platforms between Greensand Hills and Chalk Downland/Chalk Downland Edge. Landscape within the type is underlain by Upper Greensand Geology with small pockets and belts of chalk, and Lower Chalk marking the terraces at the base of the chalk escarpment. Arable fields give way to mixed woodland along at the junction with the scarps. Generally the landform is flat, but becomes more undulating in close proximity to the River Wylye. A patchwork of intensive arable farmland, pasture and small woodland blocks and shelterbelts covers the area. The presence of isolated Bronze Age round barrows close to the River Wylye reflects suggests that the landscape at the base of the chalk escarpment was settled from an early date. Settlement pattern is scattered and relatively sparse, consisting predominantly of isolated farmsteads with occasional nucleated villages. Farmhouses are generally of stone with recent additions of modern farm buildings and chert, greensand and red brick are the most common building materials, with clay tiles and thatch characterising the roofs.

Character Areas

G1. Bratton and Edington Greensand and Chalk Terrace
G2. Westbury Greensand and Chalk Terrace
G3. Upton Scudamore Greensand and Chalk Terrace
G4. Cley Hill Greensand and Chalk Terrace
G5. Heytesbury Greensand and Chalk Terrace
G6. Warminster Greensand and Chalk Terrace
G7. Longbridge Deverill Greensand and Chalk Terrace
G1 : BRATTON AND EDINGTON GREENSAND AND CHALK TERRACE

Location and Boundaries

Located towards eastern edge of West Wiltshire District and to the east of Westbury, Bratton and Edington Greensand and Chalk Terrace landscape character area embraces the edge of the higher (Salisbury Plain) Chalk Downland Landscape to the south.

Key Characteristics

- Topography slopes gradually upwards in a southerly direction, to meet the dramatic slopes (which are wooded in places) of the Chalk Downland Edge
- Underlying geology of Upper Greensand and very small pockets of chalk, giving rise to rich brown earth soils
- Series of small ponds, situated in close proximity to the villages
- Farmland is dominated by small, predominantly arable fields, with a relatively regular field pattern
- Field boundaries are demarcated by mature hedgerows, which are generally intact.
- Settlement follows the lower line of the escarpment and is focused on the three villages of Edington, Bratton and Coulston
- Dramatic views to rising chalk backdrop, which is peppered with patches of mature woodland and coniferous belts
- The B3098, running roughly east west through the area, is busy at peak commuting times and impacts on the tranquillity of the area
- Network of minor rural roads cross the area and connect villages.

Summary of Visual Character

Topography within this area slopes gradually upwards in a southerly direction, to meet the dramatic slopes (which are wooded in places) of the Chalk Downland Edge. This apron of landscape is underlain by Upper Greensand geology with very small pockets of chalk, giving rise to rich brown earth soils. Rivers and stream corridors are not an apparent feature of this landscape, however, a series of small ponds, situated in close proximity to the villages are a characteristic feature. Farmland along this linear, and relatively thin, tract of landscape, is dominated by small, predominantly arable fields, with a relatively regular field pattern. Field boundaries are demarcated by mature hedgerows, which are generally intact. Settlement pattern consists of three nucleated villages, Edington, Bratton and Coulston, clustered at the base of the Chalk Downland. Within these settlements, there is a strong sense of enclosure, as a result of the dominant rising chalk backdrop, which is peppered with patches of mature woodland and coniferous belts, some of which were planted as game coverts. Edington, Bratton and Coulston have an intimate character, exhibiting several distinctive and attractive traditional/ historic buildings, with features such as thatch roofs and timber frames. Edington church,
(a) Edington: St. Mary, St. Katherine and All Saints Church sits on the edge of the terrace with the Fish Ponds beyond

(b) The terrace between Edington and Bratton
described by Pevsner\textsuperscript{57} as ‘so varied in its skyline and so freely embattled that it looks like a fortified mansion, and the solemn lines of the downs rising immediately south are the perfect foil’, provides a clearly recognisable landmark within views to the area from adjacent landscape character areas. Dramatic views can be gained from this area, to the steeply rising backdrop of the Chalk escarpments.

Historic Environment

- Bratton Castle, on the escarpment above Bratton is a prominent mound and originally an Iron Age bivallate defensive structure
- There are several buildings of 18\textsuperscript{th} century or earlier origin within Bratton including: the Church of St James (14\textsuperscript{th}-15\textsuperscript{th} century); the Baptist Chapel (1734); Bratton House (1715) and Court House (1656)\textsuperscript{58}
- In Edington, St Mary, St Katherine and All Saints Church is highly important and dates back to the 14\textsuperscript{th} century
- The remains of a medieval priory in the grounds of the Monastery Gardens, the Fish Ponds and a medieval detached house, The Priory, are also of note.

Biodiversity

Small arable fields dominate this character area. A number of ponds in the area, together with the network of hedgerow field boundaries and the linear belts of woodland (game coverts) are valuable nature conservation elements. The area has no statutory nature conservation designations, with the exception of a couple of small sections of the adjacent Bratton Downs SSSI. However there are protected verges on the north side of the B3098 near Edington.

Evaluation

Current Condition

The dominance of intensive arable farming throughout the area has led to a gradual loss of biodiversity and cultural value. Although the hedgerow network is generally intact, in places, hedgerows have been lost and replaced with post and wire fencing. Buildings within settlements and settlement edges are generally in good condition.

Inherent Landscape Sensitivities

- Surviving hedgerow network
- Open views to dramatic Chalk Downland Edge (which is wooded in places)
- Intact and distinctive nature of historic and vernacular buildings within villages
- Rural character of series of minor roads connecting settlements.

Key Landscape Changes

- Loss and decline of arable field boundaries (hedgerows), which has lead to a loss of intact field pattern
- Potential visually intrusive development at the edges of Edington and Bratton, which would be particularly visible along the southern edge, as the ground rises to meet Chalk Downland Edge
- Visual and noise intrusion associated with the railway corridor within adjacent character area to the north
- Increasing commuter traffic along the B3098.

\textsuperscript{57} The Buildings of England: Wiltshire, (Pevsner/ Cherry), 1975.
Management Strategy and Objectives

The overall strategy for the area is to conserve the generally intact landscape and settlement pattern, with small villages nestling at the bottom of the Chalk Downland and also to enhance/repair the existing hedgerow network using species that reflect local landscape character. Specific management objectives are to:

- Seek to resist any development that would affect the open views across the terrace to the chalk uplands
- Conserve and enhance the current field pattern and hedgerows with careful management and restoration (where necessary) with species appropriate to local landscape character
- Conserve the existing small-scale settlement pattern and avoid larger developments that would be out of scale and character within the existing situation
- Promote appropriate management of the woodland clumps in the area
- Seek to encourage ecological management of the arable fields by keeping an unploughed margin around the fields to promote wildlife.
G2 : WESTBURY GREENSAND AND CHALK TERRACE

Location and Boundaries

Located through the centre of West Wiltshire District and directly to the east and south west of Westbury, Westbury Greensand and Chalk Terrace landscape character area hugs the western edge of the higher (Salisbury Plain) Chalk Downland Landscape to the east. It is accessible via Bratton Road, the B3098 from the east, the B3099 from the north west and is bisected by the Warminster Road (A350).

Key Characteristics

- Topography slopes gradually upwards in a south easterly direction (forming a terrace) to meet the dramatic slopes (which are wooded in places) of the Chalk Downland Edge to the south and east
- Landscape is underlain by Upper Greensand geology giving rise to rich brown earth soils
- Several springs and the streams linking to the Biss Brook permeate the landscape
- Farmland is dominated by a medium to large-scale pattern of predominantly arable fields, with field boundaries delineated by hedgerows
- Settlement pattern is sparse, with occasional isolated farmsteads visible
- Occasional minor roads and footpaths cut upwards (at right angles to the road corridors), across adjacent Chalk Downland edge, leading to areas of Higher Chalk Downland
- Westbury White Horse is a visible landmark within views eastwards, and contributes to a strongly recognisable sense of place.

Summary of Visual Character

Topography within this area slopes gradually upwards in a south easterly direction (forming a terrace) to meet the dramatic slopes (which are wooded in places) of the Chalk Downland Edge to the south and east. Immediately to the east of Westbury, a distinct hill is visible. Landscape within the area is underlain by Upper Greensand and narrow belts of chalk geology giving rise to rich brown earth soils. Several springs, such as Bridewell Springs and Wellhead Springs, permeate the area, flowing down from the Upper Chalk Downland. Within the southern half of the area, the upper, narrow corridor of the Biss Brook creates a meandering landscape feature, which runs adjacent to a railway corridor as it heads northwards towards Westbury and Dilton Marsh. Farmland is dominated by a medium to large-scale pattern of predominantly arable fields, with field boundaries delineated by hedgerows in varying condition. Settlement pattern is sparse, with occasional isolated farmsteads visible. Due to proximity to Westbury, however, views to the urban edge are often harsh in the western half of the area. The A350 is the main north south route through the district, and the B3098 running through the east of the area is very busy at peak commuter times; both impact on the tranquillity of the area. Occasional minor roads and footpaths cut upwards (at right angles to the road corridors), across adjacent Chalk Downland edge, leading to areas of Higher Chalk Downland. Sporadic patches of woodland cover the slopes. Dramatic views can be gained from this area, to the steeply rising backdrop of the Chalk
(a) Gently sloping large-scale arable fields, looking north from Upton Scudamore

(b) Looking across the terrace towards south east Westbury
escarpments. The Westbury White Horse is a visible landmark within views eastwards, and contributes to a strongly recognisable sense of place.

**Historic Environment**

- Few prehistoric earthworks in contrast to the surrounding chalk landscapes, which could be due to the continuity and intensity of arable cultivation
- Dominated by arable field of Parliamentary enclosure, of the late 18th/early 19th century, which are characterised by large rectangular fields.

**Biodiversity**

The landscape in this area is predominantly arable farmland. Apart from the network of hedgerows delineating the fields, a number of chalk-fed streams (including Biss Brook) run through the area and a few woodland patches are visible.

**Evaluation**

**Current Condition**

The dominance of intensive arable farming throughout the area has led to a gradual loss of biodiversity and cultural value. Although the hedgerow network is generally intact, in places, hedgerows have been lost and replaced with post and wire fencing.

**Inherent Landscape Sensitivities**

- Surviving hedgerow network
- Open views to dramatic Chalk Downland Edge (which is wooded in places)
- Open views to Westbury White Horse as a dramatic landscape feature
- Rural character of series of minor roads connecting settlements-
- Strong sense of tranquillity throughout the character area.

**Key Landscape Changes**

- Loss and decline of arable field boundaries (hedgerows), which has lead to a loss of intact field pattern
- Potential visually intrusive development at the edges of Westbury which would be particularly visible along the eastern edge, as the ground rises to meet Chalk Downland Edge
- Visual and noise intrusion associated with the railway corridor within adjacent character areas
- Increased visitor and parking pressure on minor rural roads, with visitors to the White Horse.

**Management Strategy and Objectives**

The overall strategy for the area is to conserve the existing landscape pattern and dramatic open views to the adjacent Chalk Downland Edge and enhance the landscape setting of Westbury. Specific management objectives are to:

- Seek to resist any development that would affect the open views across the terrace to the chalk uplands
- Conserve open views to the Westbury White Horse as a distinctive landmark
- Conserve and enhance the current field pattern and hedgerows with careful management and restoration (where necessary) with species appropriate to local landscape character
- Conserve the existing sparse settlement pattern and avoid larger developments that would be out of scale and character within the existing situation
• Promote appropriate management of the woodland clumps in the area
• Seek to encourage ecological management of the arable fields by keeping an unploughed margin around the fields to promote wildlife
• Conserve and enhance the landscape setting of Westbury
• Conserve and manage the setting of earthworks/archaeological sites within the area.
G3 : UPTON SCUDAMORE GREENSAND AND CHALK TERRACE

Location and Boundaries

Situated in between the towns of Westbury and Warminster, this area of Greensand and Chalk Terrace stretches from the A36 Warminster-Bath road in the north, has a western boundary with the eastern and northern edges of Clear Wood and Norridge Wood respectively, and includes much of the area north east of the B3414. The chalk downs from the Salisbury Plain form its boundary in the east.

Key Characteristics

- Flat to gently undulating farmland with extensive views on the chalk downland
- Settlement pattern consists of the village of Upton Scudamore, several hamlets and farm buildings
- The elevated position of Upton Scudamore
- Strong sense of tranquillity, away from transport routes
- Distinct pattern of medium and large sized mainly regular shaped fields enclosed by hedgerows with mature trees.

Summary of Visual Character

Farmland, mainly arable, is the dominant land use in this generally rural area. The field pattern consists of mainly medium and large sized, mostly regular fields, often enclosed by hedgerows, in varying condition, with hedgerow trees. Landscape is underlain by areas of chalk and bands of Greensand. Clumps of woodland, shelterbelts, hedgerows and mature trees in Thoulstone Park an unused golf course – give the north western part of the area a more wooded feel, creating a contrast with the openness in the rest of the area. The golf course within Thoulstone Park closed in 2002 but fairways are still occasionally trimmed. Settlements are sparse and include Upton Scudamore as the only village and few scattered farms. Views from Upton Scudamore, which is situated on a chalk mound rising from the greensand terrace, are extensive in all directions apart from the east. The chalk escarpments in the east are visible throughout the area. The A350, the Wessex Main Line and the B3414 cut through the area, the former two connecting Westbury and Warminster. Despite the presence of these main transport corridors, and the proximity of the A36, there are some tranquil areas away from these routes. Other routes in the area include a number of rural roads, footpaths and bridleways.

Historic Environment

- At the enclosure of the parish in 1807 the village of ‘Upton’ consisted chiefly of about ten farmhouses, the Angel Inn, the rectory, and a few cottages. Manor and Temple Farmhouses are two 17\textsuperscript{th} century residences which remain today\textsuperscript{59}

(a) Extensive views across the flat farmland

(b) Upton Scudamore sits on a mound rising above the Greensand Terrace
• Conserve and enhance the current pattern of fields with hedgerow boundaries by careful management and encouraging planting to restore any gaps in the hedges
• Maintain the peaceful nature of the area by discouraging any major developments that would cause visual intrusion and/or noise pollution
• Encourage ecological management of the arable fields by keeping an unploughed margin around the fields to promote wildlife.
G4 : CLEY HILL GREENSAND AND CHALK TERRACE

Location and Boundaries
This area of greensand and chalk terrace is situated between Warminster in the south east, includes Cley Hill and its surrounds as far as the A362, in the south, extends to the edge of Chapmanslade in the north west, and to the A36/ Norridge Wood and Clear Wood northern boundary/ B3414 in the north east.

Key Characteristics
- Cley Hill, a rounded chalk knoll, as a distinctive landmark
- Flat to gently undulating wooded farmland
- Extensive views of the chalk downland edge in the east, especially from Cley Hill
- Largely undeveloped with settlement consisting of a few hamlets and farmsteads.
- Strong sense of tranquillity
- Distinct pattern of medium sized mainly regular shaped fields enclosed by hedgerows with mature trees
- Two significant blocks of woodland – Norridge Wood and Clear Wood.

Summary of Visual Character
Cley Hill, a chalk knoll in the south of the area, provides extensive panoramic views over surrounding areas. Woodland areas dominate this largely undeveloped area of gently undulating chalk which is crossed by thin belts of greensand. The openness of the farmland is in strong contrast with the small scale of the ancient woodland and provides extensive views, in places framed by woodland, on the greensand hills of adjacent areas in the north, south and west, and the chalk downland edge in the east. The field pattern consists of medium sized, generally regular fields, often enclosed by mainly intact hedgerows, with hedgerow trees. With its scarcity of settlements there is a strong sense of peacefulness in the area, despite main roads. A network of footpaths connects the scattering of hamlets and farmsteads.

Historic Environment
- A continuity in landscape use is seen on Cley Hill, where a large univallate hillfort, two bowl barrows, two flights of medieval strip lynchets and a cross dyke are located on the steep sides of the Middle and Upper Chalk outlier of Salisbury Plain.

63 http://www.magic.gov.uk/website/magic/
(a) Looking towards western Warminster from Cley Hill

(b) The landmark Cley Hill chalk knoll

(c) Looking towards Cley Hill from the north of the character area, near Summerstead Farm
• Ancient, semi-natural and ancient replanted woodland to the north west of Warminster, at Trussenhaynes, Clear Wood and Norridge Wood.\(^64\)
• General absence of prehistoric earthworks in contrast to the surrounding chalk landscapes, which could be due to the continuity and intensity of arable cultivation.
• Dominated by arable fields of Parliamentary enclosure, of the late 18\(^{th}\)/early 19\(^{th}\) century, which are characterised by large rectangular fields.
• Around some settlements and farmsteads, fields are smaller and less regular indicating an earlier process of enclosure.

**Biodiversity**

This area is dominated by a mixture of farmland and ancient woodland. The ancient woodlands (Norridge Wood, Clear Wood and a smaller tract in the west of the area), are of great biodiversity value, and are recognised as County Wildlife Sites. The network of hedgerows with hedgerow trees has a corridor purpose and provides nesting opportunities for birds. Cley Hill SSSI is dominated by rough chalk grassland, and the chalk knoll also boasts six different species of orchid.

**Evaluation**

**Current Condition**

As a feature, Cley Hill and the field boundaries, mainly hedgerows, generally appear to be intact. The condition of the ancient woodlands is perceived to be good. The A36/A350 cutting through the landscape slightly disturbs the landscape pattern.

**Inherent Landscape Sensitivities**

• Cley Hill with its ecological and archaeological features.
• Peaceful, rural nature of the area.
• The extensive views on the chalk downland edge and the neighbouring greensand hills.
• Areas of ecological value, in particular the ancient woodland and the network of hedgerows.
• The remaining traditional field pattern.

**Key Landscape Changes**

• Agricultural intensification could threaten to damage the current field pattern with the hedgerow boundaries.
• Management change in the ancient woodlands.
• Visual intrusion and noise pollution from the A36/A350.
• Increasing visitor pressure on Cley Hill.

**Management Strategy and Objectives**

The overall strategy is to maintain the historic and nature conservation value of Cley Hill and conserve the peaceful undeveloped nature of the area with its contrast between ancient woodland and open farmland, with the distinct pattern of mostly regular fields bounded by hedgerows with mature trees. Specific management objectives are to:

• Resist any development that would affect the open views across the terrace to the neighbouring greensand hills and chalk uplands.
• Conserve and enhance the current pattern of fields with hedgerows by appropriate environmental land management and encouraging planting to repair any gaps in the hedges.

\(^64\) http://www.magic.gov.uk/website/magic/
• Maintain the peaceful nature of the area by discouraging any major developments that would cause visual intrusion and/or noise pollution
• Promote appropriate management of the ancient woodland in the area, consider restoring traditional practices, such as coppicing, where possible
• Encourage ecological management of the arable fields by keeping an unploughed margin around the fields to promote wildlife
• Promote sustainable management of recreation, particularly in relation to Cley Hill.
**G5 : HEYTESBURY GREENSAND AND CHALK TERRACE**

**Location and Boundaries**

Located to the east of Warminster, Heytesbury Greensand and Chalk Terrace provides a platform between the higher Chalk Downland to the north and the corridor of the Wyley river to the west. Chalk Downland Edge overlooks the area on three sides. The area is generally inaccessible via main roads, with only one minor road leading to the area.

**Key Characteristics**

- Somewhat isolated terrace of Upper Greensand, which is surrounded on three sides by Chalk Downland Edge
- Parkland appearance predominates to the north of Heytesbury House
- Patches of mixed woodland on marly chalk with mature single trees a feature
- Hedgerows visible in places
- Open views to chalk downland edge in north of area
- Relatively strong sense of tranquillity throughout the area, despite proximity to A36 and to military training areas on Salisbury Plain to the north.

**Summary of Visual Character**

This area of flat, to gently sloping landscape forms a somewhat isolated terrace, which is surrounded to the north and south by areas of Chalk Downland Edge. Landscape is predominantly underlain by Upper Greensand geology, giving rise to rich brown earth soils. The area to the north and east of Heytesbury House has a parkland appearance, which defines the landscape character of this area. Patches of mixed woodland and mature single trees are very evident and hedgerows are visible in places. A watercourse runs north/south through the area. There are no settlements within this small area, which is generally inaccessible, other than via one minor rural road. A strong sense of enclosure is provided by surrounding areas of Chalk Downland Edge, and higher Chalk Downland (Salisbury Plain) to the north and east. Overall, there is a relatively strong sense of tranquillity throughout the area, despite proximity to the A36 and to military training areas on Salisbury Plain to the north.

**Historic Environment**

- General absence of prehistoric earthworks in contrast to the surrounding chalk landscapes, which could be due to the continuity and intensity of arable cultivation
- Heytesbury House is a Grade II listed country house, which dates back to 18th century.
(a) Parkland landscape with mature trees adjacent to Heytesbury House

(b) The northern end of the character area – showing the edge of Heytesbury plantation
Little is known about the layout of the fields of ‘Upton’ before the 16th century. The total extent of the arable at that time was probably not greatly different from that at the enclosure of the parish in 1805, when it covered the open hollow between Upton Cow Down and the Warminster boundary and extended westward to surround the crofts of the village and join the lands of the holdings in Norridge and Thoulstone. The dearth of streams in the area has always made meadow land scarce and no commonable meadows seem to have existed; what little meadow there was lay in small enclosures about the village or near the Biss.

The bowl barrow 500m south of Upton Scudamore and the bowl barrow south of Biss Farm, Upton Scudamore give a clear indication of the extent to which the area was settled during the Bronze Age period.

Around some settlements and farmsteads fields are smaller and less regular indicating an earlier process of enclosure.

Biodiversity

This character area is dominated mainly arable farmland. Scattered field trees and some small woodland blocks and shelterbelts in and around Thoulstone Park, together with the network of hedgerows with trees, function as wildlife corridors and provide nesting opportunities for birds.

Evaluation

Current Condition

Most of the traditional field pattern remains with field boundaries – mainly hedgerows – mostly intact. The buildings in Upton Scudamore appear to be in generally good condition. The landscape pattern however is slightly disturbed by the communication corridors – A36 and A350 – cutting across the area. Thoulstone Park golf club closed in 2002 but the fairways are still occasionally trimmed.

Inherent Landscape Sensitivities

- Open, rural and peaceful nature of the area
- The extensive views in the chalk downland
- Areas of ecological value including Thoulstone Park with its field trees, small woodland blocks and shelterbelts
- The remaining traditional field pattern with the network of hedgerows.

Key Landscape Changes

- Agricultural intensification could threaten to destroy the current field pattern with the hedgerow boundaries
- Visual intrusion and noise pollution from the A36 and the A350

Management Strategy and Objectives

The management strategy is to conserve the open rural nature of the area with its patchwork of fields bounded by hedgerows with mature trees and other characteristic elements such as the woodland clumps and settlement pattern. Specific management objectives are to:

- Resist any development that would affect the open views across the terrace to the chalk downland

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Biodiversity

The elements of nature conservation value in this greensand terrace area include the hedgerow network demarcating the fields, the patches of woodland (to the north of Heytesbury House) and the chalk-fed stream.

Evaluation

Current Condition

The dominance of intensive arable farming throughout the area has led to a gradual loss of biodiversity and cultural value. Although the hedgerow network is generally intact, in places, hedgerows have been lost.

Inherent Landscape Sensitivities

- Single mature tree specimens
- Surviving hedgerow network
- Open views to dramatic Chalk Downland Edge (which is wooded in places)
- Generally rural and somewhat isolated character
- Strong sense of tranquillity to the north of the character area.

Key Landscape Changes

- Loss of mature trees and the impacts of felling and replanting
- Change from grazing use
- Visual and noise intrusion associated with the A36 road corridor within adjacent character area to the south.

Management Strategy and Objectives

The overall strategy for the area is to conserve the existing landscape pattern and dramatic open views to the adjacent Chalk Downland Edge. Specific management objectives are to:

- Resist any development that would affect the open views across the terrace to the chalk uplands
- Conserve and enhance the current field pattern and hedgerows with careful management and restoration (where necessary) with species appropriate to local landscape character
- Conserve the existing sparse settlement pattern and avoid larger developments that would be out of scale and character within the existing situation
- Promote appropriate management of the woodland clumps in the area
- Encourage ecological management of the arable fields by keeping an unploughed margin around the fields to promote wildlife
- Conserve and manage the setting of earthworks/ archaeological sites within the area.
G6 : WARMINSTER GREENSAND AND CHALK TERRACE

Location and Boundaries

Situated directly adjacent and to the east of Warminster, this area of Greensand and Chalk Terrace is crossed by a main railway line and accessible via the B3414 and several minor roads leading north-eastwards across the area.

Key Characteristics

- Gently downward sloping topography from Chalk Downland Edge to the north east towards Warminster and the valley of the Wylye River to the south
- Landscape is influenced by Upper Greensand, giving rise to rich brown earth soils
- Land use is mixed, with a combination of large arable fields and smaller patches of pasture and rough grassland visible
- Warminster Training Centre introduces a strong built, human element to the character of the area
- Settlement pattern is dominated by proximity to Warminster to the west
- Occasional isolated farmsteads scattered throughout the character area
- Sense of tranquillity disturbed by proximity to main railway corridor, Warminster’s urban edge and B3414 road corridor
- Prehistoric visible earthworks.

Summary of Visual Character

Topography within the area slopes gently downwards in a south westerly direction from the Chalk Downland Edge to the north east towards Warminster and the valley of the Wylye River to the south. The landscape is underlain by Chalk geology, though influenced by Upper Greensand, giving rise to rich brown earth soils. The land use is mixed, with a combination of large arable fields and smaller patches of pasture and rough grassland visible. Within the northern corner of the area (in close proximity to adjacent Chalk Downland Edge), the simple form and arrangement of accommodation and administration buildings within Warminster Training Centre introduce a strong built, human element to the character of the area. Striking contrast is visible against a backdrop of relatively wooded Chalk Downland Edge. Mature hedgerows, often containing several hedgerow trees, delineate field boundaries, where present. Settlement pattern is dominated by proximity to Warminster to the west. Clear views towards the urban edge, which is visually harsh in places, are visible from the surrounding landscape. Occasional isolated farmsteads are also scattered throughout the character area. The railway corridor, running across the centre of the area, and the commercial unit development spreading eastwards from Warminster, disturb the rural character of this area. To the east of Warminster (just to the north of the Wylye valley), Bishopstrow House, with its associated landscaped parkland, including belts of woodland, provides a recognisable landscape feature. Sense of
(a) Arable fields close to Bishopstrow Farm

(b) Looking north across the arable fields to Middle Hill, with the railway line traversing the area

(c) Looking across the edge of the MOD estate with Arn Hill Down in the background, and Cley Hill more distant
tranquillity within the area is disturbed by proximity to main railway corridor, Warminster’s urban edge and B3414 road corridor.

**Historic Environment**

- The bowl barrows to the east and north of Bishopstrow House and the King Barrow: a long barrow 100m north of Bishopstrow House combined, give an indication of how settlement of the area continued between the 5th and 2nd millennia BC.
- The motte and double ringwork east of Bishopstrow Farm, which includes an earthwork castle comprising a motte, a double ringwork and associated features and it is suggested that the castle was a short-lived fortification erected during the Anarchy.
- Dominated by arable field of Parliamentary enclosure, of the late 18th/ early 19th century, which are characterised by large rectangular fields.

**Biodiversity**

The landscape in this area is predominantly farmland, mainly arable with patches of pasture and rough grassland. East of Warminster there are several woodland belts, associated with Bishopstrow House. The hedgerow field boundaries with deciduous mature trees serve as wildlife corridors and provide nesting opportunities for birds. The area includes a very small section of the adjacent Salisbury Plain SSSI.

**Evaluation**

**Current Condition**

The dominance of intensive arable farming throughout the area has led to a gradual loss of biodiversity and cultural value. Although the hedgerow network is generally intact, in places, hedgerows have been lost.

**Inherent Landscape Sensitivities**

- Surviving hedgerow network
- Open views to dramatic Chalk Downland Edge (which is wooded in places)
- Prehistoric visible earthworks.

**Key Landscape Changes**

- Loss and decline of arable field boundaries (hedgerows), which has lead to a loss of intact field pattern
- Potential visually intrusive development at the edges of Warminster
- Visual and noise intrusion associated with the B3414 road corridor and railway corridor.

**Management Strategy and Objectives**

The overall strategy for the area is to conserve the existing landscape pattern and dramatic open views to the adjacent Chalk Downland Edge and enhance the landscape setting of Warminster to the west. Specific management objectives are to:

- Resist any development that would affect the open views across the terrace to the chalk uplands

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• Conserve and enhance the current field pattern and hedgerows with careful management and
  restoration (where necessary) with species appropriate to local landscape character
• Promote appropriate management of the woodland clumps in the area
• Encourage ecological management of the arable fields by keeping an unploughed margin around
  the fields to promote wildlife
• Conserve and manage the setting of earthworks/archaeological sites within the area
• Conserve and enhance the features of this area as part of the landscape setting of Warminster
• Screen visually intrusive large developments along the railway corridor, extending eastwards from
  Warminster.
**G7 : LONGBRIDGE DEVERILL GREENSAND AND CHALK TERRACE**

**Location and Boundaries**

The Longbridge Deverill character area consists of two separate areas and is located within the north western part of the Cranborne Chase AONB. It is bound along its western edge by the district boundary and along its eastern edge by the Wylye Chalk River Floodplain, with the chalk escarpments rising up from the terrace in the south.

**Key Characteristics**

- Gently undulating and shelving terrace of Upper Greensand
- The chalk escarpment to the south-east provides a dramatic backdrop to the terrace
- Brown earths support arable crop production
- Medium to large-scale field units reflect intensive farming of arable crops. Some smaller fields characterise remaining areas of, largely improved, pasture
- Absence of tree cover in some areas contributing to the sense of openness
- Presence of Bronze Age round barrows close to the River Wylye reflect the survival of remnant areas of pasture
- The course of the River Wylye
- Settlement is focused around the River Wylye (Longbridge Deverill and Hill Deverill in the west, and Sutton Veny and Tytherington in the east)
- Well served by transport routes with the main A350 running north/south and a number of secondary roads criss-crossing the terrace
- Sense of remoteness to the west of Longbridge Deverill.

**Summary of Visual Character**

This is an open, often treeless landscape dominated by arable crop production. The character of this landscape is well defined by its relationship with the adjacent Chalk Downland Edge landscape type forming a prominent backdrop. This is a simple landscape, appearing uncluttered and offering few distinguishing features apart from the River Wylye – the large-scale regular field units reinforcing the sense of openness. Settlement is a key feature; with some villages – Longbridge Deverill and Hill Deverill – clustered along the upper Wylye valley.

**Historic Environment**

- Isolated prehistoric earthworks, including a henge and round barrows
- Medieval settlements with surviving earthworks showing that some have contracted, such as Hill Deverill.
(a) Greensand Terrace to the west of Whitepits

(b) Looking down to the south east end of Sutton Veny with St. John the Evangelist church visible
Biodiversity

North of Longbridge Deverill, the River Wylye as a tributary of the Hampshire Avon, is classified as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC); south of the village it is locally designated as a County Wildlife Site. Occasional shelterbelts, the majority of which comprise relatively recent broadleaved plantation, occur throughout the character area, but these are generally of small extent. The farmland landscape, scattered trees, remnant hedges and shelterbelts provide valuable habitat for a range of typical farmland bird species. Only traces of ancient woodland remain.

Evaluation

Current Condition

This character area has retained its landform features and its intensively farmed character means there are few areas of underused or derelict land. The extent of arable farming has led to the loss of biodiversity and cultural value. For example, some sections of hedgerow have been lost or replaced with post and wire fencing. Settlement, however, is in good condition and is integrated through the consistent use of stone, brick, clay tiles and thatch. Overall landscape condition is judged to be moderate.

Inherent Landscape Sensitivities

- Open landscape with wide views to the stark Chalk escarpments
- Small woodland blocks and shelterbelts
- Medieval villages and stone built farmhouses
- Bronze Age remains near to the course of the Wylye.

Key Landscape Changes

- Loss and continued decline of hedgerow boundaries in places
- Loss of trees as landscape features
- Intensity and expansion of arable farming has reduced ecological value and resulted in the loss of archaeological features
- Loss of semi-natural woodland where the terrace meets the scarp
- Creation of new coniferous plantations on the terrace
- Diversification of farm businesses into secondary enterprises such as farm house accommodation or commercial activities
- Agri-environment schemes diverting unwanted arable land to environmental management
- Future pressure for linear expansion along the Wylye Valley may result in merging of villages and loss of settlement identity.

Management Objectives

The overall management strategy should conserve the open farmed character of the terrace with its distinct pattern of settlement and the contrast with the adjacent escarpment. Restoration of lost and/or declining features such as field boundaries and woodland rivers will improve condition, quality and visual integrity of the landscape as well as its ecological value. Specific management objectives are to:

- Improve the condition and character of hedgerow boundaries by thickening and replanting where lost and denuded to increase the distinctiveness of the field pattern
- Replace hedgerow trees where overmature and dying
- Conserve the open character of the terrace and retain the concentrated character of the settlement by resisting linear growth along transport routes such as has occurred between Longbridge Deverill
and Hill Deverill. Consider developing guidance for built development to ensure future development respects traditional settlement form

- Encourage new native woodland planting at the base of the slopes to mark the transition between the arable terrace and pastoral escarpment
- Consider opportunities for re-planting trees and woodland following the course of the River Wylye.
- Protect nature conservation value of the River Wylye.