



Keeping Kennet Special



Kennet Landscape Conservation Strategy

May 2005

Planning Services



Development Control & Conservation



Forward Planning & Transportation



Building Control & Property Management

FOREWORD

In 1998 the Council commissioned a Landscape Character Assessment of the District. The Landscape Character Assessment identified eleven different landscape character areas within the District. The Kennet Landscape Conservation Strategy provides detailed information of the landscape enhancement priorities for each of the different character areas in Kennet. It also supports and provides further detail in relation to the interpretation and implementation of the landscape quality and character policies contained in the Kennet Local Plan 2011, which was adopted in April 2004.

An extensive and targeted consultation process was carried out, following the Council's and Countryside Agency guidance, in which the general public and those bodies listed below were asked for comments. The final draft of the Landscape Conservation Strategy was considered by the Planning Policies Executive Committee on 11th November 2004, where it was adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance to the Kennet Local Plan 2011, subject to the amendments resulting from the consultation.

The following bodies were consulted on the guidance:

Parish and Town Councils, adjoining local authorities, Wiltshire County Council, The Countryside Agency, Defence Estates, Defence Estates (SW), Government Office for the South West, English Heritage, English Nature, Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group, Forestry Commission, The Environment Agency, Devizes/Marlborough Friends of the Earth, Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Society, Farming and Rural Conservation Agency, Wiltshire Wildlife Trust, Country Landowners Association, Great Western Community Forest, Kennet Group CPRE, RSPB, The National Trust, Carter Jonas, DPDS Consulting Group, Avebury World Heritage Site, Devizes Community Area Partnership, Marlborough Area Development Trust, North Wessex Downs AONB, DEFRA SW (Recreation & Landscape Division), The Landscape Institute.

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1 INTRODUCTION

The landscape of the Kennet District is one of its most distinctive features and greatest assets. There is constant pressure for change in the countryside, whether it be from residential and business development, changing agricultural practices, equestrian development, woodland planting, and other landuse changes. To provide guidance on the conservation and enhancement of the landscape in response to these pressures, the Council has produced the Landscape Conservation Strategy as Supplementary Planning Guidance to the Local Plan.

This guidance document is intended to provide:

- i) detailed information on the enhancement priorities for the landscapes character areas identified in the Kennet District Landscape Assessment (Atlantic Consultants January 1999),
- ii) supplementary guidance on the implementation of Local Plan Policies relating to landscape character and quality,
- iii) guidance on the Council's policies relating to Trees and Development.

The Local Plan policies to which this document relates are contained in Appendix 1. The Kennet District Landscape Assessment, which forms the technical document informing this guidance is contained in Appendix 2, under separate cover.

The aims of this document are:

- To provide a comprehensive targeting strategy for the Council's Landscape Conservation Grants.
- To provide guidance for determining responses to consultations on grant applications received by external bodies, eg. Forestry Commission England Woodland Grant Schemes.
- To provide guidance on how the Council will assess the impact of development proposals in the countryside, with the emphasis on landscape conservation and enhancement.
- To provide guidance for use in the preparation of environmental statements in relation to planning applications and Circular 18/84 consultations.
- To provide a source of information for use by external organisations, such as the Forestry Commission, when drawing up strategies for woodland planting, etc.
- To provide guidance on how the Council will assess the effect of development proposals in relation to trees.

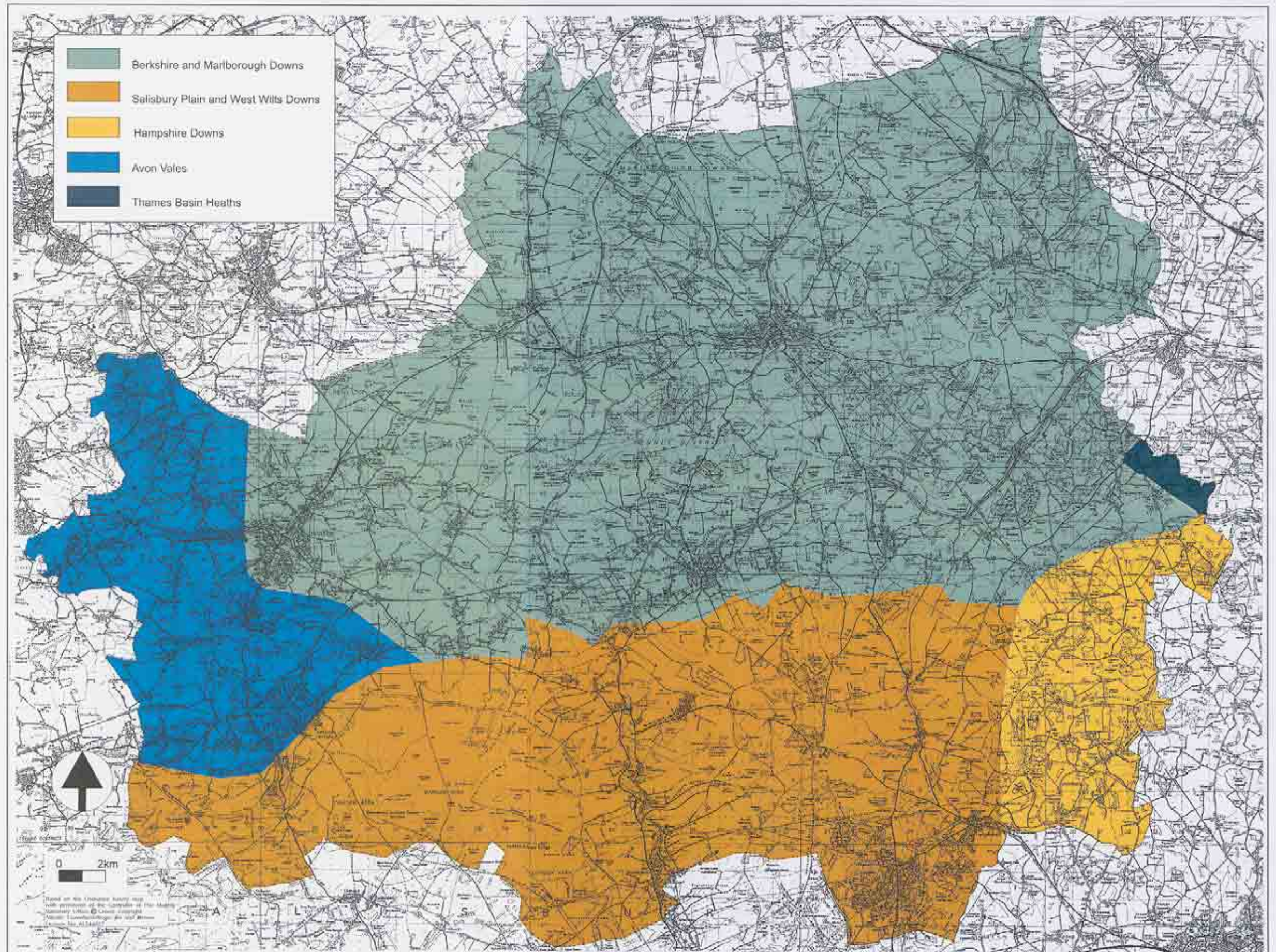
The Kennet District Landscape Conservation Strategy ties together the conclusions of the Kennet District Landscape Assessment with the Natural Resources proposals contained in Chapter 5 of the Local Plan, providing a comprehensive strategy for their implementation through development control, grant aid, and woodland creation and management. A bibliography of other relevant documents and strategies which have been used in the preparation of this Strategy, or are likely to be of interest, is located at the end of the document.

Of particular importance in the production and implementation of the Strategy are the following documents:

Avebury World Heritage Site Management Plan, North Wessex Downs AONB Management Plan, Salisbury Plain Integrated Land Management Plan, Wiltshire Biodiversity Action Plan.

In producing the Landscape Conservation Strategy the Council has concentrated on the current landscape and environmental condition. However, it is aware of the probable need to revise parts of the guidance as and when the potential impacts of climate change become known.

This guidance is intended as a working document and as such will be regularly reviewed.



2 THE STRATEGY

This Strategy should be used in all cases where the conservation and/or enhancement of the landscape is an issue. The following are the general principles which under-pin the enhancement strategy.

- Management or enhancement should aim to reinforce or restore the local landscape vernacular, i.e. those characteristics which contribute to local distinctiveness.
- In general, intervention should aim to restore diversity and structure to the landscape (eg. through hedgerow and tree planting, habitat creation, etc.)
- The more intact examples of landscape types described within the Assessment, along with historical maps and records, can be used as a guide to the most appropriate form of enhancement.
- New planting and habitat creation should also reflect the ecological character of the local area to reinforce local distinctiveness and maximise wildlife benefits.
- Intervention should take account of the historic landscape and archaeological record, and should not involve schemes which are either historically inappropriate, or which may be damaging to important below ground remains.
- Particular attention should be given to the mitigation of intrusive features or influences which detract from the rural character of the landscape (eg. hard urban edges, unsightly buildings or structures, poorly managed or degraded land on the fringes of settlements, insensitive highway improvements, etc.)
- Special attention should also be given to the enhancement of settlement fringes and road corridors to reduce their impact and to provide a clear definition between built areas and open countryside.
- Strong landscape frameworks should form an integral part of any development framework.

In order to implement the Strategy a number of mechanisms are available to the Council, most are purely voluntary, but others have a legal basis through the development control process. The Strategy will be implemented through:

- grants and incentive schemes operated by the Council and other statutory bodies.
- the work of countryside management services.
- the work of voluntary bodies and community groups involved in local environmental or

landscape projects.

- the activities of farmers and other landowners.
- the application of Local Plan policies when considering development proposals; and
- the development control process (eg. use of landscape conditions, legal agreements and planning obligations).

A landscape Enhancement Strategy framework for the District is shown in figure3. This classifies the District into three enhancement or intervention levels as follow:

Conserve - Landscapes of high scenic quality, with a strong sense of place are generally unspoilt, have an intact structure and are generally in good condition. They may also contain rare or uncommon landscape types and areas of ecological and cultural significance. These landscapes may require management to maintain their quality and condition but no significant intervention.

Strengthen - Landscapes with attractive qualities and where character, structure and sense of place are comparatively strong. These landscapes are important to conserve but would benefit from some modest enhancement to strengthen character, structure, and to reinforce local distinctiveness.

Repair - Landscapes which have been more substantially weakened by intensive farming, Dutch elm disease and non agricultural activity. These landscapes require more significant intervention to repair landscape structure and features and may require mitigation of detracting land uses or features.

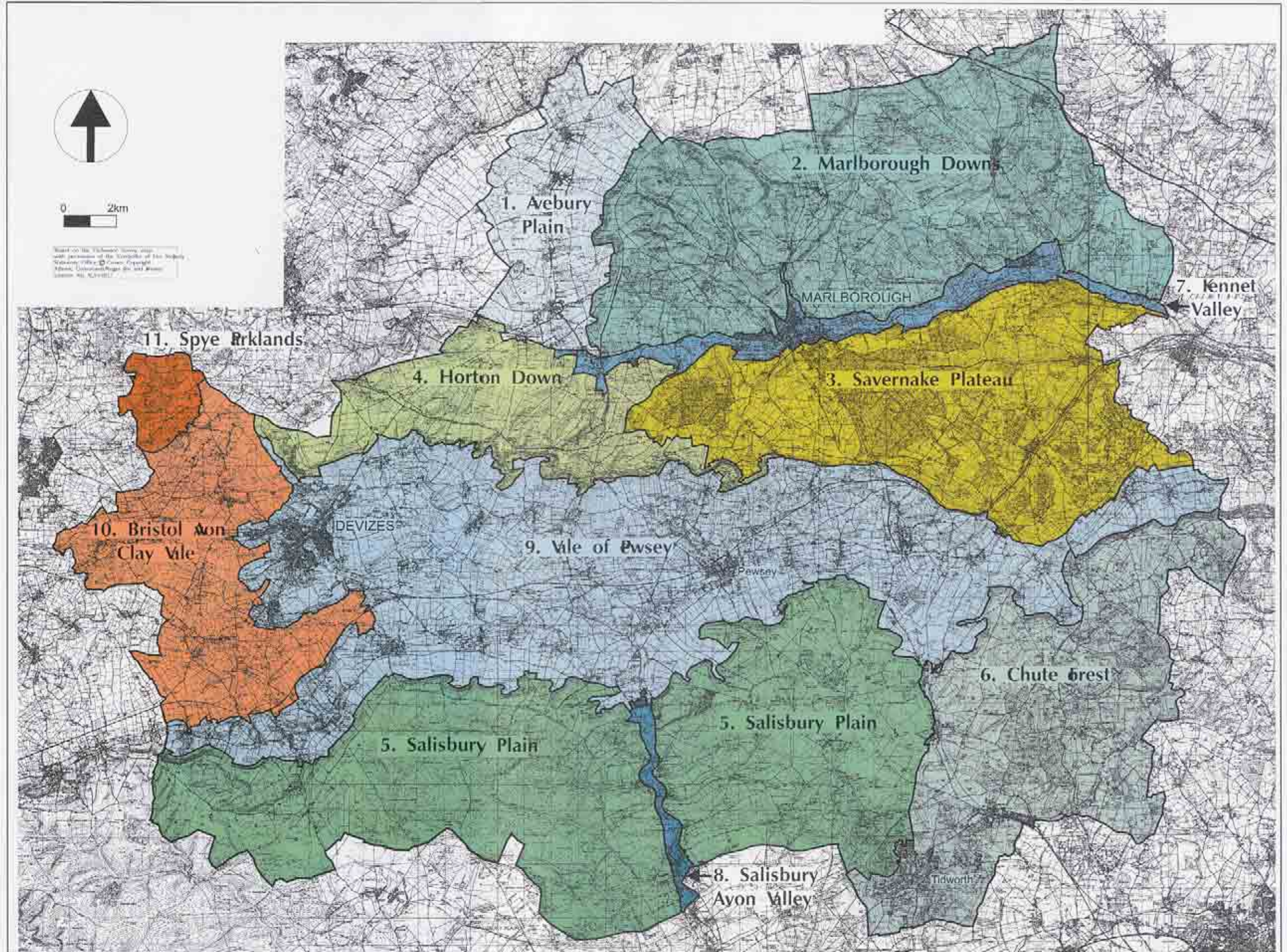
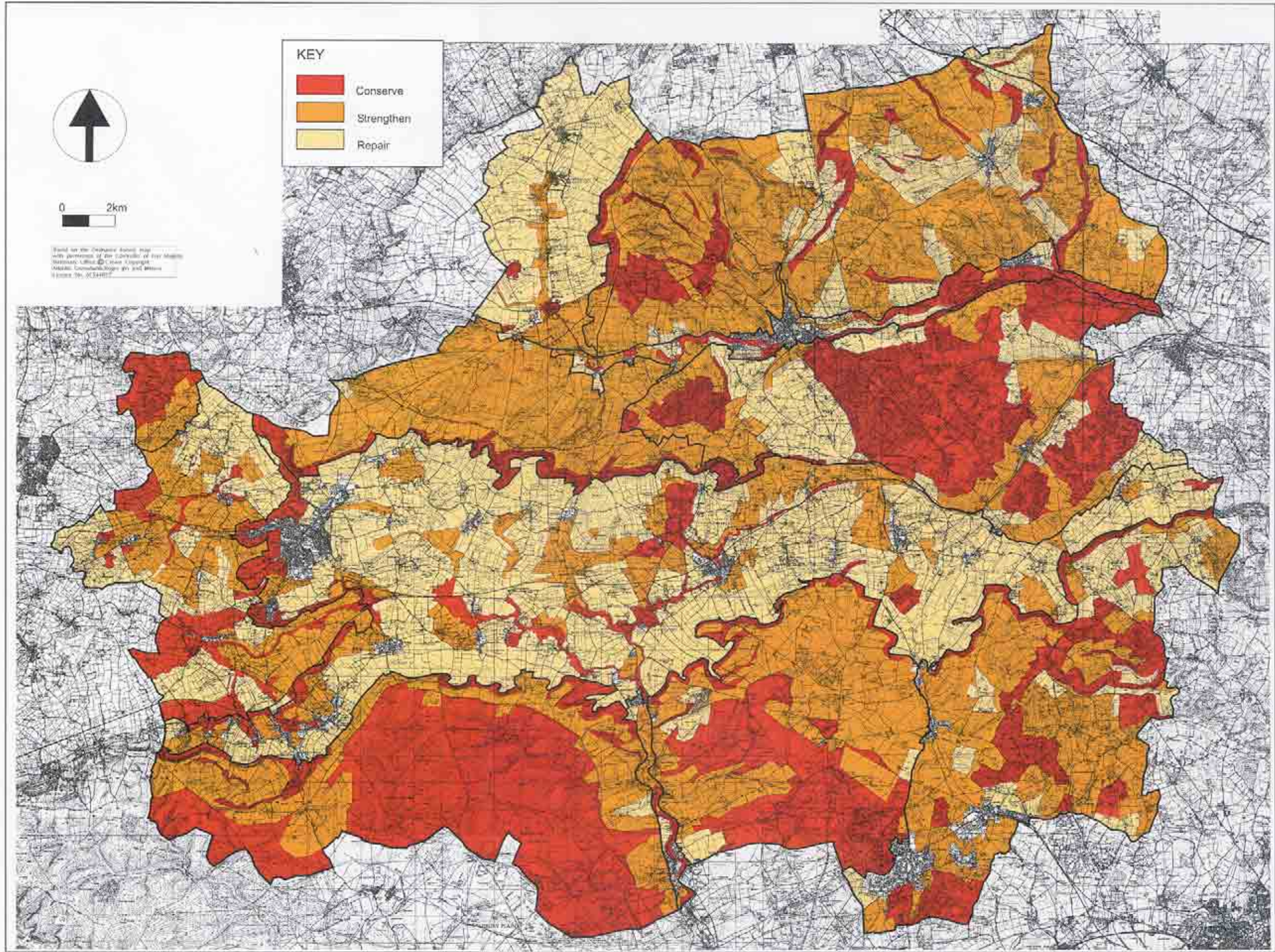


FIGURE 2



3 LANDSCAPE ENHANCEMENT BY CHARACTER AREA

This section provides a brief description of the main characteristics of each of the eleven Landscape Character Areas and details priorities for landscape enhancement for each area. For a full description of the landscape character and guidelines for management and development, the reader should refer to the Kennet District Landscape Assessment, found at Appendix 2.

The information from the Landscape Assessment has been supplemented by other relevant documents such as the Avebury World Heritage Site Management Plan and the Integrated Land Management Plan for Salisbury Plain.

Further information can also be found in the North Wessex Downs AONB Landscape Character Assessment and Management Plan.

1. Avebury Plain

The Avebury Plain is located on a lower chalk plateau extending from Silbury Hill to Broad Hinton, with the scarp slope of the Marlborough Downs to the east and the clay vale of northern Wiltshire to the west. The area is characterised by large arable fields below the scarp slope and to the north west of Avebury, and by enclosed pasture and arable fields forming the settings



Avebury Henge and Stone Circle

of the settlements of Winterbourne Monkton, Winterbourne Bassett and Broad Hinton. The winterbourne upper reaches of the River Kennet flow in a south westerly direction through the Avebury Plain.

The area is best known for its spectacular archaeological remains on which the Avebury World Heritage Site designation is based. Avebury Henge, Stone Circle and Avenue and Windmill Hill are all within the Avebury Plain character area. These monuments have exerted considerable influence over the land use and landscape for almost 5000 years.

The area has suffered from the insensitive intensification of agriculture, which has led to the removal of many hedges and to the formation of large arable fields. The majority of the area is

within the 'repair' category for the purposes of the landscape strategy.

Enhancement Priorities

- Retain areas of permanent pasture and unimproved grassland particularly within areas of archaeological value, and manage to prevent the encroachment of scrub.
- Regulate grazing, animal access, and recreational pressure on archaeological sites to prevent damage to monuments.
- Within the corridor of the River Kennet, reinstate hedges and introduce new tree planting along watercourses and in lines and groups along the floodplain using typical riparian species such as willow and alder.
- Improve landscape structure along the corridor of the A4361 in order to mitigate adverse impacts on the surrounding landscape and retain mature boundary trees and replant as necessary, particularly to replace dead or diseased elms.
- Maintain and enhance the pattern of smaller fields, hedges and hedgerow trees around Avebury village.
- Contribute to the landscape conservation and enhancement objectives of the Avebury World Heritage Site Management Plan published by English Heritage.

2. Marlborough Downs

The Marlborough Downs forms an area of high chalk uplands with a distinct scarp slope to the north and west and the valley of the River Kennet to the south. The chalk plateau forms an expansive landscape of open rolling downland, mostly under intensive arable farming but with areas of remnant chalk grassland on the steeper slopes. It is dissected by deep, dry valleys and the valleys of the Rivers Og and Aldbourne, which flow through the area from north to south as winterbourne streams. Racing stables and extensive gallops form another distinctive feature of the area.



Fyfield Down Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

The dominant middle and upper chalk of the Marlborough Downs is liberally covered with the distinctive sarsen stones (grey wethers), which are particularly prevalent on the Fyfield Down SSSI.

To the east of the Marlborough Downs, where clay with flints over-lies the chalk, large blocks of woodland punctuate the farmland mosaic.



The Ridgeway at Hackpen

The main settlements are largely confined to the sheltered valleys, the biggest being Aldbourne, but others including Baydon, Upper Upham, and the now abandoned settlement of Snap, are set on the high downland. The high downland has a long history of human habitation, which is borne out by the distinctive hilltop round barrows and the Ridgeway which follows a scarp top route along the Marlborough Downs.

Large parts of the area have suffered from agricultural intensification, particularly with the conversion of chalk grassland to arable. The intrusion and potential adverse impacts of gallops associated with the racing industry is also important in the context of change on the high chalk downland. The high downland areas of the Marlborough Downs are generally in the 'strengthen' category for the purposes of the landscape strategy, with many of the valleys being in the 'repair' category, due to agricultural intensification and drainage. The scarp slopes and unimproved grassland are in the 'conserve' category.

Enhancement Priorities

- Retain areas of unimproved chalk grassland and pasture and manage to prevent scrub encroachment and to encourage species diversity through appropriate grazing or mowing regimes.
- Encourage removal of any inappropriate planted belts of trees and woodlands, but retain isolated groups of trees where these form distinctive landscape features.
- Discourage the intrusion of further signage, tracks or fencing in areas of open chalk upland landscape, and site essential features as discretely as possible to minimise visual intrusion.
- Encourage the removal of telegraph poles and other intrusive features from archaeologically sensitive areas particularly where they break the skyline.

- Encourage the removal of tree clumps from tumuli and their relocation to archaeologically less sensitive sites.
- Manage gallops to favour chalk grassland species and minimise use of intrusive fencing or signs.
- Protect above ground archaeological features from damage by vehicles or trampling, preferably by discreetly located posts (pallisading) rather than planting or fencing.
- Encourage management of existing woodlands to maximise landscape and wildlife value, including the reintroduction of traditional coppice management and diversification of uniform plantations to favour native broadleaf species.
- Plant large blocks and belts of native broadleaf woodland on arable or cultivated land within the eastern part of the Marlborough Downs, to link with existing woodlands and to restore or reinforce the typical mosaic of woodland and farmland. Encourage arable reversion to woodland.
- Follow the traditional pattern of shelterbelt planting to soften the impact of prominent buildings or structures in more exposed parts of the chalk uplands.
- Retain and manage areas of valley floor permanent pasture, wet grassland and meadows, including riparian vegetation, and discourage further ploughing and field enlargement.
- Manage open downland to control scrub invasion.
- Encourage traditional practices of willow pollarding and ditch management.
- Encourage the use of locally appropriate planting character and native species within golf course landscapes, e.g. avoiding the use of conifers on chalk, and encourage less intensive management of fairways and roughs to encourage more diverse grassland swards.
- Prevention of animal damage to archaeological sites.
- Contribute to the landscape conservation and enhancement objectives of the Avebury World Heritage Site Management Plan published by English Heritage.

3. Savernake Plateau

The Savernake Plateau forms the southern part of the chalk block of the Marlborough Downs, and is separated from the previous area (Area 2) by the River Kennet. The southern boundary is defined by the dramatic scarp slope which overlooks and defines the northern edge of the Vale of Pewsey.

The Savernake Plateau is characterised by its extensive woodland cover and a strong landscape structure. This has developed as a direct result of

the underlying geology, where a thick layer of clay with flints overlies the chalk. In the river valleys this tends to merge into floodplains with alluvial deposits.



Tottenham Park

This Savernake Plateau contains large expanses of ancient semi-natural forest, most notably Savernake Forest. Additionally, the landscape is characterised by a mosaic of farmland and woodland blocks, giving it an intimate and enclosed character, a typical 'assarted' landscape, which contrasts with the wide open spaces of the open downland to the north and west. Designed parkland and large estates, notably Tottenham Park and Littlecote, feature strongly in the Savernake Plateau landscape.

Overall the land falls gently from west to east, with the scarp slopes and river valleys becoming less prominent towards the eastern boundary of the area. The area contains relatively few areas of open downland, and those which do exist are primarily located on the flanks of the river valleys. These areas tend to be in arable use and demonstrate a hedgerow structure with a large number of hedgerow trees and scattered woodland blocks and copses. This more intensively farmed land tends to be found towards the east of the area, between Ramsbury and Shalbourne, and to the west of Savernake, between Marlborough and Wootton Rivers.

The valley of the River Dun, through which the Kennet & Avon Canal and the main railway to the south west of England run, forms a significant feature of the eastern part of the area.

The settlement pattern tends towards valley floor settlements such as Froxfield and Great Bedwyn, with some exceptions, most notably Chisbury. There are large numbers of Scheduled

Ancient Monuments including many tumuli, the Wansdyke, and Roman villa remains.

The area has suffered from the intensification of agriculture and forestry, which has led to the conversion of pasture into arable farmland and the planting of coniferous plantations. The majority of the area falls within the 'conserve' category, although the more intensively farmed land to the west of Savernake and in the general vicinity of Froxfield and the Bedwyns, falls into the 'strengthen' and 'repair' categories

Enhancement priorities

- Encourage management of existing woodlands to maximise landscape and wildlife value, including the re-introduction of traditional coppice management and diversification of uniform plantations to favour native broadleaf species.
- Plant blocks and belts of native broadleaved woodland, on arable or cultivated land and within estate farmland, to link with existing woodlands and to restore or reinforce a mosaic of woodland and farmland.
- Maintain and where necessary restore features of historic parkland at Tottenham and Littlecote Parks, including distinctive elements such as permanent pasture, parkland trees, avenues, woods, copses, boundary walls and structures.
- Retain mature boundary trees and roadside avenues and replant as necessary, particularly to replace dead or diseased elms.
- Encourage the restoration of wood pasture.

4. Horton Down

Horton Down is an area of high chalk downland located to the west of the Savernake Plateau and between the Avebury Plain to the north and the Vale of Pewsey to the south. The rolling landscape occupies a ridge of Upper and Middle chalk, with the highest land in the County along the southern ridge. The land drops steeply in a dramatic scarp slope into the Vale of Pewsey, with a much more gentle dip slope, and a series of steep sided dry valleys towards the River Kennet and Avebury Plain to the north. In places strip lynchets are features of the scarp slopes and sporadic tree groups and woodlands break the sky line of the high ridges.



Scarp slopes above Huish

The area is dominated by intensive arable farmland, with few hedges or boundary distinctions. There are few hedgerows or trees, which has led to a prairie-like appearance over much of the area, with wide views and extreme openness. Permanent pasture is still a feature of the scarp slopes, valley sides and the highest downland, in particular the Pewsey Downs National Nature Reserve. There is some limited woodland and scrub growth on the steepest parts of the scarp slope, in particular below Roundway Down.

This large area of downland contains no settlements and only three isolated farms. However, evidence suggests that the downland was widely occupied in the pre-Roman period and that this was a time of major deforestation. There are numerous tumuli across the area and hillforts are found at a number of prominent locations. The prehistoric Ridgeway and the early Saxon Wansdyke, which formed a territorial boundary, both cross the Horton Down area and form highly significant visual features.

The Horton Down landscape has been the subject of significant agricultural intensification, resulting in the loss of much of the permanent pasture which was so characteristic of the downland. Tree loss has not been an issue in this area since most of the deforestation took place in prehistoric times. The downland has remained unenclosed. The majority of the Horton Down area is within the 'strengthen' category for the purposes of the landscape strategy, with the scarp

slopes and unimproved grassland being in the 'conserve' category.

Enhancement Priorities

- Retain areas of unimproved chalk grassland and pasture, and manage to prevent scrub encroachment and to encourage species diversity through appropriate grazing or mowing regimes.
- Encourage the Enhancement of semi-improved chalk grassland by appropriate grazing, mowing regimes and scrub management.
- Encourage arable reversion of scarp slopes to flower-rich grassland using seed mixes or local provenance.
- Retain the open character and long views of chalk uplands. Discourage tree or hedgerow planting in areas of traditionally unenclosed chalk downland.
- Encourage the removal of any inappropriate planted belts of trees and woodlands, but retain isolated groups of trees where these form distinctive landscape features.
- Manage gallops to favour chalk grassland species and minimise the use of intrusive fencing or signs.
- Follow the traditional pattern of linear shelterbelt planting to soften the impact of prominent buildings, structures or roads in more exposed parts of the chalk uplands.
- Prevent animal damage to archaeological sites.

5. Salisbury Plain

Salisbury Plain forms a vast expanse of unimproved chalk grassland which is almost unique in northern Europe. It was cleared of woodland in prehistoric times and is now best described as an ancient landscape. This area comprises a major chalk block running across the south of the Kennet District. It is well defined by the scarp slope often including strip lynchettes, rising along the southern edge of the Vale of Pewsey, and forms the southern boundary of the District extending from Chute Forest in the east to the District boundary in the west. Salisbury Plain is bisected by the valley of the River Avon running from north to south which



Arable land on the edge of Salisbury Plain

forms a separate landscape character area.

The geology of Salisbury Plain is dominated by upper chalk, giving way to middle chalk along the scarp above the Vale of Pewsey. The topography is typical of the upland chalk; a gently rolling landscape dissected by dry valleys predominately running north to south down the dip slope, finally entering the river valleys of the Salisbury Avon and Till. On the northern fringes of Salisbury Plain the valleys tend to run south to north to either join with the upper reaches of the Salisbury Avon in the Vale of Pewsey or the Bristol Avon to the west.



Sidbury Hill

Salisbury Plain is dominated by extensive areas of unimproved grassland, which are surrounded by intensively farmed arable land. Large parts of the area are unenclosed and treeless, giving Salisbury Plain a unique, very remote character, with extensive views across the southern half of Wiltshire. The presence of the military ranges on Salisbury Plain is undoubtedly the biggest influence in terms of both visual landscape and the audible presence of military training. The Larkhill and Westdown artillery ranges are particularly untamed and inaccessible, forming one of most isolated areas in England.

The grassland is punctuated by woodlands, often coniferous, planted for military training. In other areas, in particular the artillery ranges, where 'live' firing has prevented access for many years a mixture of rough grassland and scrub, comprising primarily hawthorn and gorse, dominates. Outside the live firing areas the grassland is criss-crossed by chalk and limestone tracks which are used by the army, particularly for use by tracked vehicles.

Around the periphery of the military ranges arable land dominates, mostly in the ownership of the M.o.D., and this takes in the area up to the scarp slope, particularly on the eastern section of the Plain, along the Salisbury Avon valley sides, and the route of the A360. Towards the western end of the area the military ranges reach the scarp slope and in some areas spill over it.

Everleigh is the only settlement on Salisbury Plain in Kennet, but there are airfields at Netheravon and Upavon (Trenchard Lines), which also has a golf course. The historic landscape and

archaeology of Salisbury Plain are particularly well preserved, as are the flora and fauna of the grassland, resulting in its designation as a Site of Special Scientific Interest, a Special Protection Area for birds and a Special Area of Conservation.

The majority of Salisbury Plain falls within the 'conserve' or 'strengthen' categories for the purposes of the landscape strategy and is also covered by the local designation of Special Landscape Area.

Enhancement Priorities

- Encourage reversion of arable land to grassland, particularly along the northern scarp.
- Retain open character of chalk uplands and long views, and discourage tree or hedgerow planting in areas of traditionally unenclosed chalk downland.
- Encourage the removal of scrub where this threatens areas of chalk grassland and manage other areas of dense scrub to prevent succession into woodland.
- Encourage the removal of any inappropriate planted belts of trees and woodlands (eg. non-native species, isolated features not associated with farms, etc.), but retain isolated groups of native trees where they form distinctive landscape features but do not threaten ecological interest.
- Discourage the intrusion of further signage, structures, tracks or fencing in areas of open chalk upland landscape and site essential features as discreetly as possible to minimise visual intrusion.
- Avoid the disturbance of sensitive grasslands through the use of vehicles and allow areas of bare ground to recolonise naturally.
- Protect above ground archaeological features from damage by vehicles, trampling or military activity, preferably by discreet pallsading rather than planting.
- Prevent animal damage to archaeological sites.
- Avoid tree planting where it may have an adverse physical impact on both upstanding earthworks and below ground archaeological remains. The treeless nature of Salisbury Plain is largely the result of prehistoric woodland clearance, and as such should be considered an ancient landscape.
- Arable cultivation of the Plain has been very restricted. Any increase in ploughing should be resisted.
- The use of specific tank routes and tracks should be encouraged to minimise the damage to

archaeological, ecological and landscape resources.

- Where historically and ecologically appropriate, encourage the replanting and extension of hedgerows and the planting of hedgerow trees using native species.

- Strengthen the landscape structure and quality of the boundaries around airfields and military bases to reduce the impact of intrusive structure, fencing and land uses. However, consideration must be given to the historic importance of the interisibility between Upavon and Netheravon airfields.

- Encourage the use of locally appropriate planting character and native species within golf course landscapes and encourage the less intensive management of fairways and roughs to encourage a more diverse grassland sward.

6. Chute Forest

To the east of Salisbury Plain and divided from it by the Bourne Valley, Chute Forest is a large block of chalk upland which supports extensive areas of woodland and a network of hedgerows and trees. This is primarily due to the extensive deposits of clay with flints over the chalk, which give it an appearance similar to that of the Hampshire Downs, rather than the wide open spaces of Salisbury Plain.



Lower Chute

The rolling, wooded downland is dissected by a number of dry valleys creating a much more intimate landscape than the wide open spaces of the other chalk downlands of the District.

To the north of Chute Forest the area terminates in the dramatic scarp slope of Ham Hill, and to the east continues into the Berkshire and Hampshire Downs. To the south and south east the land slopes gently into Hampshire and towards the valley of the River Test.

Arable land is found on the high chalk, particularly near to the scarp and along the top of the Bourne valley, but the area is predominantly a mosaic of pasture and woodland with a well established hedgerow structure. The military presence in the south west corner of the area is significant and associated with the settlements of Ludgershall and Tidworth, the latter of which is a major army garrison. The roofs of the tank hangers at Perham Down are prominent features

from the high downland, as are the HT power lines crossing the area south of Upper Chute. Along with light spill from Andover and Tidworth, they are visually intrusive features in the landscape.

The remnants of the Royal Forest of Chute Forest dominate the eastern section of the area, where the landscape exhibits a typical assarted character (ie fields and settlements forming clearings cut out of the surrounding forests). Typical of this area are the twin villages of Lower Chute and Chute Cadley. There is a very low degree of intervisibility in this area and the forest combines with parkland areas to create a very attractive landscape. Close by, at Chute Lodge hamlet, the forest has been cleared to give more extensive views both to the south and north.

The higher chalk areas, where the dominance of the woodland is less pronounced, are characterised by settlements high on the downland such as Buttermere and Upper Chute. Along the Bourne Valley the settlements of Collingbourne Ducis and Collingbourne Kingston and the military garrison of Tidworth and its associated designed parkland, follow the fertile soils of the river valley.

The historic landscape shows a broad range of settlement from neolithic forest clearance, through Roman occupation (typically seen at Chute Causeway), to the medieval occupation when Ludgershall Castle was built and the Chute Forest settlements were formed. The field systems are generally post-medieval in origin.

The variations in the Chute Forest landscape and landuse result in a patch work of 'conserve', 'strengthen' or 'repair' strategies for the area, with a predominance of landscapes which fall into the 'strengthen' category.

Enhancement Priorities

- Encourage management of existing woodlands to maximise landscape and wildlife value, including the reintroduction of traditional coppice management and diversification of uniform plantations in favour of native broadleaf species.
- Plant large blocks and belts of native broadleaved woodland on arable or cultivated land, to link with existing woodlands and to restore or reinforce a mosaic of woodland and farmland.
- Conserve and enhance the woodland matrix as representative of an historic landscape and

recognising its importance as a former 'Royal Forest'.

- Maintain existing roadside hedgerows and trees, including avenues, and replace where these have been removed or weakened through neglect.
- Retain and manage areas of valley floor permanent pasture, wet grassland and meadows along the Bourne Valley, and discourage further ploughing and field enlargement.
- Encourage traditional practices of willow pollarding and ditch management along the Bourne Valley.
- On the more open floodplain areas, introduce new tree planting along watercourses and in lines and groups within the valley floor using typical riparian species, eg. willow and alder.
- Reinstate and restore wet meadows, wetland and riverine habitats.
- Maintain and where necessary restore parkland landscapes, including distinctive elements such as parkland trees, avenues, woods, copses, boundary walls and structures.
- Plant new blocks and belts of broadleaved woodland within estate farmland to reinforce and maintain an enclosed mature wooded character.
- Strengthen landscape structure and the quality of boundaries around military areas to reduce the impact of intrusive structures, fencing and landuses.
- Relict railway cuttings and embankments on the Andover to Marlborough railway are of historic importance in the development of the area and their value should be considered in respect of proposals which may affect their survival.
- Establish strong landscape structure to accommodate existing or new development on the fringes of urban areas and settlements.

7. Kennet Valley

The Kennet Valley cuts a swathe through the Marlborough Downs from Avebury in the west to Chilton Foliat on the eastern boundary of the district. It is characterised by a narrow strip of flood plain running through a fairly shallow valley, which becomes progressively steeper sided towards the east of the District.



Axford Priory

This area has an intimate, pastoral character, with a strong sense of enclosure provided by the valley sides. The valley floor is of gravel and

alluvium and the valley sides are of middle and upper chalk. The rich soils of the valley have resulted in a network of water meadows and landuse is dominated by permanent pasture, although landscape structure is varied by a strong hedgerow structure and plantings of poplar as well as willows and other riparian species. The valley sides are a mixture of arable land, pasture and woodland, with woodland becoming more dominant towards the east.

There are a string of settlements along the Kennet Valley, with Marlborough being the dominant town, and a number of thriving villages and hamlets both to the west and east.

The watercourse itself changes dramatically throughout the Kennet Valley. To the west of Lockeridge the River Kennet is a winterbourne, with water flows restricted to the late winter, spring and early summer, when the water table is at its highest. To the east of Marlborough the Kennet becomes a substantial river flowing through the lush water meadows towards the District boundary.

The Kennet Valley contains many historic remains, the most dramatic being Silbury Hill at the western end of the area, but also including large numbers of tumuli and the site of the Roman town of Cunetio at Mildenhall. Historic Parks and Gardens are found at Ramsbury Manor and Marlborough College and there are many designated statutory and non-statutory sites of nature conservation interest, including the River Kennet itself, east of Marlborough.

The attractive landscape of the Kennet Valley and its unspoilt riparian nature means that the majority of the area is in the 'conserve' category from the point of view of the landscape strategy.

Enhancement Priorities

- Retain and manage areas of valley floor permanent pasture, wet grassland and meadows, including riparian vegetation, and discourage further ploughing and field enlargement.
- Encourage traditional practices of willow pollarding and ditch management.
- Introduce new water course tree planting and groups and lines of riparian species such as willow and alder along the valley floor.
- Retain the tranquil, intimate and unspoilt qualities of the river corridor and improve landscape structure and land management on the fringes of settlements and along main roads, to mitigate adverse impacts on river corridor landscapes.

- Encourage repair, replanting and extension of hedgerow network in areas where remnant structure remains, and historic evidence dictates, using species typical to the locality. Discourage further hedgerow removal.
- Seek to reverse the damaging effects of low flows and poor water quality.
- Reinststate and restore wet meadows, wetland and riverine habitats.
- Encourage the management of existing woodlands in the river corridor to maximise landscape and wildlife value. Such management practices as the reintroduction of coppice regimes and diversification using native broadleaf species are applicable.
- Plant large blocks and belts of native broadleaved woodland on arable or cultivated land on the valley sides to restore or reinforce the mosaic of woodland and farmland .
- Maintain and where necessary restore parkland landscapes, including distinctive elements such as parkland trees, avenues, woods, copses, etc.
- Encourage less intensive farming practices on arable land, improved grasslands along valley sides and encourage the introduction of natural vegetation cover in field headlands and margins.

8. Salisbury Avon Valley

The valley of the Salisbury Avon cuts through Salisbury Plain from north to south, from Upavon on the southern edge of the Vale of Pewsey to Netheravon on the District boundary to the south. The river valley is cut through the upper and middle chalk of Salisbury Plain to form a valley floor of alluvium and valley gravels. The valley is steep sided and narrow and the River Avon meanders along the valley floor.



The Salisbury Avon at Enford

The valley floor is dominated by pasture, often in conjunction with remnant water meadows, ditches and streams, with a landscape structure created by hedgerows, willows, alder and introduced poplar. There are sporadic settlements along the length of the valley often concentrated just above the flood plain of the river. Enford, a group of hamlets centred around a river crossing, is a prime example. To the south Netheravon has grown considerably larger than the other settlements as a result of the MoD activity associated with Netheravon Airfield.

The landscape of the Salisbury Avon valley is essentially post mediaeval resulting from the extensive water meadow network, the locations and layout of the villages, and the network of hedges and copses. The structure has been somewhat weakened towards the northern end of the valley, but still retains its essentially pastoral, riparian character.

The Salisbury Avon Valley falls within the Salisbury Plain Special Landscape Area, a small part of the valley around Netheravon is within an Environmentally Sensitive Area and the River Avon itself is designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest and Special Area of Conservation.

For the purposes of the landscape enhancement strategy the northern half of the valley is primarily within the 'strengthen' category and the southern half is in the 'conserve' category.

Enhancement Priorities

- Retain and manage areas of valley floor permanent pasture, wet grassland and meadows, including riparian vegetation, and discourage further ploughing and field enlargement.
- Encourage traditional practices of willow pollarding and ditch management.
- In the more open floodplain areas introduce new planting along watercourses and in rows and groups within the valley floor using typical riparian species such as willow and alder.
- Retain tranquil, intimate and unspoilt qualities of the river corridor and improve landscape structure and land management on the fringes of settlements and along main roads, to mitigate adverse impacts on the river corridor landscape.
- Reinststate and restore wet meadows, wetland and riverine habitats.
- Encourage repair, replanting and extension of hedgerow network and development of hedgerow trees in areas where a remnant structure remains, using native species typical of the locality, and discourage further hedgerow removal and replacement by fencing.
- Seek to reverse damaging effects of low flows and poor water quality.

9. Vale of Pewsey

The Vale of Pewsey is a broad valley which separates the two chalk blocks of the Marlborough Downs to the north and Salisbury Plain to the south both of which are visible from across the Vale. This landscape area encompasses the predominantly greensand vale running from the County boundary to the east, through the head waters of the Salisbury Avon in the broad central section, to the greensand ridge between Salisbury Plain and the Bristol Avon Clay Vale which adjoins the District boundary to the west.



Huish

The Vale of Pewsey is dominated by intensive agriculture, which is nowhere more prevalent than on the transition between the lower chalk and the upper greensand beneath the scarp slopes of the surrounding chalk masses. In these parts of the Vale arable farming in large hedgeless fields dominates.

Towards the centre of the Vale of Pewsey the land is almost flat with a much more complete hedgerow structure, with hedgerow trees and blocks of semi-natural woodland, particularly in the River Avon catchment. The arable dominance is lost as the land becomes wetter towards the alluvial deposits of the river catchment. To the east of Pewsey and around the Lavingtons the enclosure is at its strongest, but across the Vale as a whole the hedgerow structure is best described as 'weak'.

The parkland estates, particularly in the Oare and Stowell areas to the north of Pewsey, are particularly attractive features, with a much more complete, and in many cases recently restored, hedgerow structure. Mature hedgerow trees, copses, and winding country lanes with steep banks create an intimate and visually pleasing landscape.

Other features of the Vale of Pewsey include the Kennet & Avon Canal and the main London to West Country railway, both of which run in parallel from east to west along the centre of the Vale. Additionally, the high tension power lines running east to west along the Vale are a major visual intrusion. The intensive production of salad crops in the River Avon catchment makes use of the

high quality agricultural soils, and despite the visually intrusive use of polythene mulch, a major effort is being made to restore hedgerows and field margins in this area.

The Vale of Pewsey has been the agricultural hub of eastern Wiltshire for hundreds of years. The village of Pewsey lies at the centre of the Vale and surrounding it are the largest concentration of villages, hamlets and farms in the District. No less than thirty settlements lie within this landscape character area, including the town of Devizes on the western fringe. Worthy of particular mention are the spring line villages which form a linear row at the base of the scarp slope to Salisbury Plain. Road links through the Vale are slow and largely follow the field and parish boundaries, unlike the fast rail link to London and the south west.

The landscape of the Vale of Pewsey is largely a product of the Enclosure Acts of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, although, as described above, much of the hedgerow structure at the base of the scarp slopes has been removed with the intensification of agriculture.

Although the majority of the Vale of Pewsey landscape area lies within the North Wessex Downs AONB the landscape has been significantly weakened by agricultural intensification, it therefore largely falls within the 'repair' category for the purposes of the enhancement strategy.

Enhancement Priorities

- Retain and manage areas of permanent pasture, wet grassland and meadows and discourage further ploughing and field enlargement within the Vale floor.
- Encourage traditional practices of willow pollarding and ditch management.
- In the more open vale floor areas, introduce new tree planting along watercourses and in rows and groups using typical riparian species such as willow and alder.
- Reinststate and restore wet meadows, wetland and riverine habitats.
- Encourage repair, replanting and widespread extension of hedgerow network and development of mature hedgerow trees, using native species typical of this locality.
- Maintain existing roadside hedgerows and trees, including avenues, and replace where these have been removed or weakened through neglect or Dutch Elm Disease.
- Encourage management of existing woodland cover to maximise landscape and wildlife value, including the reintroduction of traditional coppice management and diversification of uniform plantations in favour of native broadleaf species.

- Confine new planting of woodland blocks and belts to areas where they are most appropriate (e.g. lower-lying floodplain areas and along the greensand scarps and valleys on the western most fringes of the Vale and where it does not adversely affect the ecological resource) using native species typical of the locality.
- Encourage less intensive farming practices on more open arable and improved grassland on the fringes of the Vale and encourage the introduction of natural vegetation cover in field headlands and margins.
- Restore and maintain traditional features of the Kennet & Avon Canal landscapes, e.g. bridges, locks and other structures, and retain the tranquil, unspoilt and natural qualities of the canal corridor.
- Improve landscape structure and land management on the fringes of settlements and along main roads, to mitigate adverse impacts on the landscape.
- Maintain and where necessary restore parkland landscapes, including distinctive elements such as parkland trees, avenues, woods, copses, boundary walls and structures.
- Establish strong landscape structure to absorb existing or new development on the fringes of urban areas and settlements.
- Encourage better boundary maintenance and management of land in horse-grazed pastures, allotments, etc.
- Encourage new tree planting, and where appropriate, less intensive management of playing fields and recreation grounds to provide diversity and improve landscape and ecological value.

10. Bristol Avon Clay Vale

To the west of the District the land drops away from the greensand of the Pewsey Vale in a greensand scarp into the Bristol Avon Clay Vale. The Vale forms part of a much larger landscape area which covers much of lowland west Wiltshire. Although topographically almost flat, with a few gentle undulations, it is a complex geological mix of lower greensand, Kimmeridge and Oxford clays, gault, Portland Beds and Calcareous grit. Along the routes



Semington Brook in flood

of the many streams which cross the Vale alluvium and river gravels are found.

The Bristol Avon Clay Vale forms part of the catchment of the Bristol Avon, with a major tributary, the Semington Brook, crossing the Vale from its source on the edge of Salisbury Plain at West Lavington.



Intensive Horticulture at Bromham

The area is dominated by a strong structure of hedgerows and trees. Field sizes are variable, being small, primarily pasture, to the south and west, and towards the eastern edge. An exception to this enclosed character is found on the lighter greensand soils to the north of the area around Bromham, which are characterised by market gardening and wind blown soils in a hedge-less environment.

As seen in the Vale of Pewsey the hedgerow pattern is largely a result of post-medieval enclosures. The hedgerow structure gives a feeling of enclosure, with low intervisibility, which becomes less pronounced as the hedgerow structure weakens towards the north of the area. There are a number of small settlements throughout the area but these are generally located on the higher undulations in the ground, notably at Worton, Seend, Poulshot, Rowde and Bromham. The Kennet and Avon canal and the main London to West Country railway both cross the Vale, but are at this stage a number of miles apart.

The Bristol Avon Clay Vale is not covered by any national or local landscape designations. However, the intact hedgerow structure in large parts of the area means that for the purposes of the Landscape Strategy large sections fall within the 'conserve' and 'strengthen' categories. Where more intensive cultivation has taken place and the hedgerow structure has been lost the area falls within the 'repair' category.

Enhancement Priorities

- Retain and manage areas of permanent pasture, wet grassland and meadows, and discourage further ploughing and field enlargement within the vale floor.
- Retain well-preserved examples of ridge and furrow as an important component in the

landscape character of the area.

- Encourage traditional practices of willow pollarding and ditch management.
- In more open valley floor areas, introduce new tree planting along watercourses and in rows and groups using typical riparian species such as willow and alder.
- Encourage repair, replanting, widespread extension of hedgerow network, and development of hedgerow trees using typical native species such as ash and oak.
- In particular encourage the replacement of landscape structure within the horticultural landscapes around Bromham.
- Maintain existing roadside hedgerows and trees and replace where these have been weakened through neglect or Dutch Elm Disease.
- Maintain and where necessary restore features of parkland landscapes, including distinctive elements such as parkland trees, avenues, woods, copses, boundary walls and structures.
- Encourage woodland management to maximise landscape and wildlife value, including the reintroduction of traditional coppice management and diversification of uniform plantations to favour native broadleaf species.
- Restore and maintain traditional features of the Kennet and Avon Canal landscape, e.g. bridges, locks and other structure, and retain tranquil, unspoilt and 'natural' qualities of the canal corridor.
- Improve landscape structure and land management around the fringes of settlements and along main roads to mitigate adverse impacts on the landscape.
- Encourage better boundary maintenance (e.g. repair of fences and planting of hedgerows and trees) and management of land in horse-grazed pastures and other fringe land uses such as allotments.

11. Spye Parklands

The Spye Parklands forms a small Landscape Character Area in the north western corner of the District, which extends into a larger area beyond the District boundaries. The area is dominated by the woodland of Spye Park and the surrounding estate farmland. The geology of lower greensand overlain by calcareous grit and Oxford clay gives rise to acidic sandy soils. The topography of the area is a



Veteran Trees at Spye Park

complex mixture of steep sided small valleys, small hills and a sandy plateau. At the District boundary the ground drops steeply away into the Bristol Avon Clay Vale.

The combination of the topography of the area and the extensive woodlands creates an area of low intervisibility and, particularly in Chittoe, an intimate and secret landscape. Towards the edges of the Spye Parklands there are extensive views in all directions.

Unlike any other parts of the District, the combination of clay and sand has allowed the development of small areas of heathland on the sand and damp woodland on the heavier clays. This unique character is one of the primary reasons for the Spye Parklands forming its own character area.

In terms of settlements Chittoe falls within the area and the estate villages of Sandy Lane and Bowden Hill are partially within the District.

The landscape of the area generally dates back to the eighteenth and nineteenth century designed parklands. The Spye Parklands also fall within a Special Landscape Area and large parts of it are Sites of Nature Conservation Importance or SSSI. For the purposes of the landscape strategy the whole of this landscape area falls within the 'conserve' and 'strengthen' categories.

Enhancement Priorities

- Encourage the repair and widespread extension of the hedgerow network and development of mature hedgerow trees using native species typical of the locality.
- Maintain existing roadside hedges and trees and replace where weakened through neglect and Dutch Elm Disease.
- Maintain and where appropriate restore parkland features, including distinctive elements such as parkland trees, avenues, woods, copses, boundary walls and structures.
- Encourage the management of existing woodland cover to maximise landscape wildlife and historic value, including the reintroduction of traditional coppice management and diversification of uniform plantations to favour native broadleaf species.
- Encourage the expansion of indigenous species woodland.

4 PLANNING CONTROL AND THE LANDSCAPE

Introduction

Resulting from the Kennet District Landscape Assessment the Council has adopted six clear objectives for protecting the landscape. These have been fundamental in preparing this Strategy and Local Plan Landscape policies. The Council's objectives are:

- To safeguard areas of national landscape importance(AONB) from damaging change.
- To safeguard areas of special landscape quality in the District context from damaging change.
- To guide development in the countryside in a way which does not unacceptably damage local character and which can enhance the distinctive character of land and built environment across the whole countryside.
- To protect the landscape setting and special character of settlements.
- To prevent urban sprawl and coalescence of settlements.
- To protect important green space resources within and on the edge of settlements.

These Council objectives, the general principles for enhancement in the Landscape Conservation Strategy, and the landscape and land management policies of the Kennet Local Plan (see Appendix 1 for relevant policies) will primarily be implemented through the development control process. The Landscape Assessment (included at Appendix 2) provides an overview of landscape interests in the District. The Local Plan provides the policy context for protecting those interests, and the Landscape Conservation Strategy identifies specific priorities for each Landscape Character Area. Each document supports and reinforces the objectives of the others and should not be used in isolation. It is the role of the development control process to ensure that each is applied consistently and appropriately if landscape interests within the District are to be safeguarded and enhanced.

It is not the purpose of the Landscape Conservation Strategy to detail, for example, how a landscape scheme should be submitted for a particular site, that is dealt with in other publications. It is the purpose of the Landscape Conservation Strategy to ensure that the potential detrimental visual and landscape impacts of development proposals can be properly assessed and minimised.

Policy and Implementation

Planning applications and Environmental Impact Assessments will be expected to follow the principles laid down on page 3 of this document. The principles by which the Landscape Conservation Strategy will be implemented through the planning system for each Landscape Character Area, are detailed below.

A large part of the District is designated as either an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) or Special Landscape Area (SLA). These areas have their own Local Plan policies for the protection of the landscape (see Appendix 1). However, the Council is also committed to the protection of the landscape character of all its landscapes, whether covered by landscape quality designations or not. The landscape character area strategies detailed below show how the Council will expect to see policies for the protection of landscape character and quality implemented for each of the eleven local Landscape Character Areas. It is against these requirements that the visual and landscape impacts of development applications in the countryside will be considered.

Where applicable reference will be made to the relevant AONB management plan policies in the consideration of applications affecting the character and appearance of AONB landscapes.

The guidance also gives the basis for the preparation of planning briefs (paragraph 1.19) for the development of allocated sites, as required by Policy PD1 of the Local Plan. (see adopted Kennet Local Plan).

In conjunction with the Landscape Assessment this guidance seeks to inform on the protection of the landscape through the development control process. Therefore, in conjunction with Local Plan Policy NR6, and supporting text paragraph 5.25, the reader should refer to the detailed information on landscape character, quality and sensitivity contained in the Landscape Assessment, and the implementation principles detailed below.

Under certain circumstances planning applications and Section 18/84 consultations must be supported by an Environmental Statement (Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulations 1999). Part of the process requires that a landscape and visual impact assessment is undertaken, which may involve detailed visual impact

mitigation proposals. The Landscape Assessment should be used in conjunction with the Landscape Conservation Strategy in assessing the landscape character, quality and sensitivity of the site, and mitigation of adverse visual and landscape impacts.

Landscape Conservation Strategy - implementation principles

Avebury Plain

Development within this area is likely to consist of small scale development associated with the existing built form outside the Avebury World Heritage Site. The integration of this into the landscape by the sensitive use of native tree and shrub species around the site periphery, will be a requirement. The construction of farm buildings can often be the most obtrusive developments in the landscape. Where possible new farm buildings will be located with existing buildings and make use of topographic features to ameliorate their impact. New planting will be required around farm buildings and will normally take the form of traditional shelterbelt planting. The use of bunding to screen development and dry balancing ponds is to be resisted.



Winterbourne Bassett

There is pressure for the locating of telecommunication masts in the Avebury Plain. These should ideally be located so that they are outside the Avebury World Heritage Site and where they do not visually impact upon it. Outside the World Heritage Site they should not break the skyline from public viewpoints and will normally be located within tree groups or amongst groups of buildings.

Marlborough Downs

Much of this area is inaccessible downland devoid of settlement, and where most types of development would be out of character and unacceptable. Perhaps the biggest threat to the visual integrity of the area is from telecommunication masts. Where these are essential they should be sited so that they do not break the skyline from all primary view points and that they are located within or adjacent to mature tree clumps. Hedge planting using native species will usually be required around all telecommunication compounds. Telecommunication masts should be located outside the Avebury World Heritage Site and where they do not visually impact upon it.



Marlborough Downs North of Marlborough

Where development essential to the rural economy can be justified, it will be sensitively sited to make use of existing topographical features and woodland plantings, with additional new planting to further mitigate visual impact. Additionally, it should as far as possible be located within the existing built form. Where development is permitted on the fringes of settlements it will be sensitively located to ensure that there is minimal harm to the character and visual integrity of the landscape and that it is suitably landscaped using native species. New development will also ensure that it does not encroach on the sensitive landscapes and habitats of the valleys of the Rivers Og and Aldbourne.

Savernake Plateau

This area contains large tracts of woodland of considerable landscape and ecological significance. It is essentially rural in character and only small-scale development required for the rural economy is acceptable outside the settlements. It will be sensitively designed and where possible integrated into existing developments. Landscape planting using native species will be introduced to mitigate the impact of all new developments bordering or visually affecting the countryside. Developments within the woodland areas, particularly those covered by nature conservation designations, or affecting registered historic parks and gardens, will have to demonstrate that they do not have an adverse impact on the landscape or ecological resource of the area.



Savernake Plateau near Chisbury

Telecommunications masts should not break the skyline from primary view points and will generally be located within or adjacent to woodland blocks. Native species hedge planting will be required around telecommunications compounds.

Horton Down

This is a large area which is essentially rural and agricultural in nature. It has an open, remote and inaccessible character in which built development would not normally be acceptable. Minor developments, in association with existing farms, may be acceptable, but only where they can demonstrate that they have regard for the topography of the site and can be adequately mitigated by existing buildings and appropriately designed shelterbelts of native tree species.



The Wansdyke above Stanton St. Bernard

Other than at the existing police transmitter site, telecommunications, or any other structures which break the skyline or visually intrude into the rural landscape, are not desirable in this area.

Salisbury Plain

Salisbury Plain has a wild and inaccessible character, with large areas covered by international nature conservation designations. The extensive intervisibility over many miles and the use of the area as military ranges means that development potential is severely restricted. There is scope for small-scale agricultural development associated with existing agricultural holdings, provided that their impact is mitigated by location adjacent to existing buildings, having regard for the topography of the area and using shelter belt planting of traditional native species.



Tank Crossing on Salisbury Plain

Development for military purposes should primarily be carried out in association with existing military installations, or where necessary to protect the ecological interest of the area. Major military infrastructure changes on the Area Training Estate Salisbury Plain (ATESP) will normally require an Environmental Statement and the Council will expect to be consulted throughout the design and implementation process. As Salisbury Plain is largely devoid of tree cover, any developments which cannot be accommodated at existing installations must be mitigated by making use of the topographical features of the land. Planting is very often not an acceptable option on ATESP, and in itself can cause harm to the character of the very sensitive landscape. The very exposed nature of the Plain means that communications masts are likely to be very prominent; where essential they should be located so that their impact is mitigated by existing military installations or woodland.

Chute Forest

The area is essentially of rural, agricultural character, but with some significant military installations in the Tidworth and Ludgershall areas. Development will have to have regard to the topography and existing built features of the area to ensure that they do not assume an unacceptable visual prominence. Landscape planting using native species trees and hedges will be required to mitigate the impact of new development. The integrity of planned landscapes of estates and parkland will be respected and development associated with these sensitively designed to ensure that it does not adversely impact on the vistas and important features of the parkland.



Recently Rebuilt Chute Manor, Upper Chute

Larger developments associated with Tidworth and Ludgershall will respect the topography of the area and be located to minimise the adverse impact on parkland settings and the wider landscapes of the Chute Forest and Salisbury Plain Landscape Character Areas. All new development must be integrated into the landscape by using well designed landscape buffer plantings, primarily comprising indigenous species, and should make use, where possible, of existing tree belts and topographic features to mitigate the impact of the development.

Applications for residential development, which through Local Plan policies are acceptable in the countryside, will be expected to be submitted with fully detailed landscape schemes which will ensure adequate mitigation of visual and landscape impacts from the surrounding countryside.

Telecommunications masts are potentially obtrusive features of the open arable landscapes and should only be located where they do not break the unbroken skyline of scarp slopes and hills. They should also be located amongst or adjacent to existing tree groups or buildings with native species hedging planted around the compounds.

Kennet Valley

The tranquil, pastoral nature of the Kennet Valley must be retained. New development being restricted to small-scale sensitively designed projects within the existing built form. Development proposals should also respect the importance of the valley floor river corridor and include planting proposals using indigenous species to mitigate the visual impact of the development. The important ecological features of the Kennet Valley must not be adversely affected by development proposals. Development required for agricultural or forestry purposes will, where possible, be located amongst existing buildings and have due regard to the topography of the area. Planting of indigenous native species will be required to mitigate the impact of the development.



River Kennet and Water Meadows at Axford

Salisbury Avon Valley

As with the Kennet Valley, the tranquil, pastoral and intimate character of the Salisbury Avon Valley must be retained. The valley floor provides a rare ecological and landscape resource in which development is unsuitable. Small-scale sensitively-designed developments within the existing built form may be acceptable, but should include landscape planting proposals using indigenous species to integrate proposals into the wider landscape and enhance the hedgerow structure. They should not impinge on the River Avon or the remnant water-meadow network.



Enford Church and Water Meadows

Agricultural developments, or other development necessary for the rural economy, should be integrated with existing similar developments, also having regard for the topography of the area, and landscaped using indigenous tree belts and shrub planting. Development necessary for MoD training purposes should also follow the principles of maintaining the landscape and ecological

resource of the valley.

Vale of Pewsey

The Vale of Pewsey has an essentially rural, agricultural character, and this character must be retained. Development possibilities are restricted, with sensitively designed residential development located within and bordering existing settlements. It is essential that, in particular, the spring-line villages do not coalesce and therefore strong landscape buffers, using indigenous woodland species in combination open space and shrub and hedge



Hedgerow Trees and Power Lines near Patney

planting, will be required where development on the periphery of a settlement is deemed acceptable. This will ensure that the integrity of the individual settlements is retained, at the same time as integrating new development into the landscape and softening the hard edges of the built environment. Similar principles will guide the landscape design of residential/non-agricultural development across the Vale and bordering Pewsey and Devizes.

Agricultural development, or development which is essential for the rural economy, must respect the topography of the area and be located in association with existing buildings. It will be landscaped using the planting of indigenous tree and hedge species. Development which is not contained within existing farm buildings, or which compromises the integrity of the sensitive landscape, will not be acceptable. This is particularly pertinent in the more open landscapes around the periphery of the Vale, whether at the base of the chalk scarp slopes to the north and south, or the top of the greensand scarps to the west.

Development which detrimentally impacts on the ecologically sensitive areas of the River Avon catchment, or the parkland landscapes of the Vale, is not desirable even with the mitigation measures detailed above.

Although, the Vale is relatively low lying there is still pressure for telecommunication masts. Where possible these will be located on existing structures such as pylons or buildings, or otherwise amongst, or adjacent to, tree groups, ensuring that they do not break the skyline from

principal viewpoints and that any ground equipment is adequately screened using native hedging species.

Bristol Avon Clay Vale

The area has an essentially rural, agricultural character within which only small-scale, sensitively-designed development associated with existing settlements can be effectively accommodated. It will be necessary to ensure that all new development is adequately integrated into the wider landscape by the sensitive use of native tree and shrub species for peripheral planting, where possible tying into existing hedgerow systems. Development in the ecologically scarce areas such as remnant pastures and meadows will not be normally acceptable, and development in parkland areas will respect the design of the area and be rendered visually unobtrusive by the use of topographical features and indigenous tree and shrub planting.



Crookwood, Potterne

Buildings for agricultural and equestrian usage should, as far as possible, be integrated into existing groups of agricultural buildings, making use of existing trees and hedgerows to ameliorate their impact. New planting will comprise indigenous species planted as hedgerows and woodland blocks to connect in with the existing hedgerow structure. In the sandy soil areas around Bromham new development will be expected to contribute to the restoration of the landscape through appropriate tree and hedge planting schemes.

Spye Parklands

The whole of this area is essentially of rural, parkland character with severely limited development potential. Any new development should be limited to small-scale, sensitively designed projects, within the existing built form. The retention of the parkland landscapes and the high ecological value of much of the area will be respected and considered in all development. New development will be expected to include landscape design using primarily indigenous species to integrate it into the high quality landscape of the area. Sensitive locating of all new building so that it does not interfere with planned vistas; views, and the integrity of the landscape will be expected.



Chittoe

Renewable Energy Proposals

The pressure for the development of renewable energy sources and in particular wind turbines is increasing with the move away from a reliance on fossil fuels for electricity generation. Local Plan Policy NR19 details the general requirements which will have to be satisfied prior to planning permission being granted. In order to guide this process, where applicable, the Council will require applications for wind turbines to be accompanied by an Environmental Statement. The same will be a requirement for biomass energy production or other sustainable energy production facilities. For the most part these projects fall under Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact assessment)(England and Wales) Regulations 1999, which means that the Council will offer a Screening Opinion based on site sensitivity and the requirements of the Regulations prior to requesting an Environmental Statement. The ES is a particularly useful tool in helping to weigh up the potential environmental gain from the facility against possible harm to the landscape quality and character, ecology, archaeology and environmental conditions in the affected areas.

The Council may ask for an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) to be carried out, leading to the production of an Environmental Statement (ES), for wind turbine development of two or more turbines or where the hub height of any one turbine or any other structure exceeds 15 metres.

The Council will determine the need for carrying out an EIA based on the selection criteria for screening contained in Schedule 3 of the Regulations.

Much of the high ground of the Kennet District, where wind speeds are likely to be at their highest, is located in the North Wessex Downs AONB. The potential pressure for wind turbine development in the AONB which could affect very sensitive landscapes, led to the commissioning of a sensitivity study by the North Wessex Downs AONB Council of Partners. This study identifies the landscape sensitivity of landscape character areas and details the landscape constraints to wind turbine development of different scales in terms of the potential impacts on landscape character, visual sensitivity, and the senses of remoteness and tranquillity. The Council will use this study when formulating its decisions, and potential developers will be urged to make use of it.

Additionally, the Council will have regard for AONB Management Plan policies PP2 and SRE6 relating to 'Meeting Local Needs' and 'Community-led renewable energy schemes' respectively, in taking its decisions.

It should be remembered that wind turbine development outside the AONB can affect the character and quality of the landscape within the AONB, and that the landscapes outside the AONB can also be extremely sensitive to wind turbine development. Therefore, the principles guiding the constraints to the locating of wind turbines in the AONB will be used across the District.

5 LANDSCAPE CONSERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT - GRANT AID

This section of the Landscape Strategy deals with landscape conservation and enhancement grant aid. It deals with national grant schemes and more particularly with the Council's own Landscape Conservation Grant Scheme for which a targeting strategy has been produced. Closely allied to the landscape of the District is its biodiversity, therefore the targets set by the Wiltshire Biodiversity Action Plan have been included in this section. This is particularly pertinent to Kennet's Landscape Conservation Grant Strategy, which now includes grant targeting aimed specifically at helping to achieve the County's biodiversity targets.

Primary Sources of National Grant Funding for Landscape and Nature Conservation

Environmental Stewardship Scheme - this scheme replaces Countryside Stewardship and many agricultural subsidies as from early 2005. It forms the primary environmental grant offered to farmers, and is administered by DEFRA. The Scheme is split into two sections; an Entry Level Scheme, which aims to encourage a large number of farmers to deliver simple yet effective environmental management; and a Higher Level Scheme, which applies more rigorous environmental management measures and is based on Countryside Stewardship and Environmentally Sensitive Areas. The Entry Level Scheme primarily targets the following: diffuse pollution, loss of biodiversity, loss of landscape character, and damage to the historic environment. The Higher Level Scheme has the following objectives: wildlife conservation, protection of the historic environment, maintenance and enhancement of landscape quality and character, promoting public access and understanding, and resource protection. There are two secondary objectives: flood management and genetic conservation.

England Woodland Grant Scheme - this is the main grant used for woodland planting and the management of existing woodlands, and is the primary countryside grant offered, not only within the District, but also nationally. The grant is available for new plantings in excess of 0.25 hectare and covers woodland planting and management for both conservation and commercial purposes. Supplements are available as a top-up to the basic Woodland Grant for a number of targeted project types. The Forestry Commission, through the England Woodland Grant Scheme, supports the national biodiversity targets and is particularly targeting an increase in the area of semi-natural woodland across the country. The Kennet District Woodland Strategy, contained in the following section of this document, details the

District-wide priorities and constraints on woodland planting and management. The England Woodland Grant Scheme is operated wholly by the Forestry Commission in consultation with local authorities and other interested parties.

Landscape Conservation Grants

Kennet's Landscape Conservation Grant Scheme is the primary source of local funding for landscape and nature conservation projects which fall outside the remit of the national grant schemes. The scheme had its origins in a combined Countryside Commission and local authority tree planting grant which ran from the 1970s until the early 1990s. When the Countryside Commission pulled out of the scheme in the early 1990s, Kennet carried on running the scheme without outside funding. The scope of the grant was increased to cover a wide range of landscape conservation measures and grant targeting was widened to cover the whole District.

The Landscape Conservation Strategy, using the Kennet District Landscape Assessment and the Wiltshire biodiversity targets, redefines in a structured way the targeting of the Landscape Conservation Grant Scheme. In addition the landscape objectives from the Avebury World Heritage Site Management Plan have been addressed, as have the needs of the Royal Society for the Protection of Bird's target species as part of the Farmland Bird Campaign. The RSPB target species are: linnet, corn bunting, skylark, song thrush, tree sparrow, stone curlew, turtle dove, reed bunting, bullfinch and grey partridge. All have suffered severe declines over the last 25 years, which the Landscape Conservation Grant Scheme can help to reverse.

Based on the eleven landscape character areas defined in the Landscape Assessment, and feeding in the biodiversity targets, the following pages detail the strategy which will ensure that the grants available are targeted to fulfil the conservation and enhancement requirements for each particular area. With a few exceptions, such as the restoration of parkland landscapes, planting funded by the Landscape Conservation Grant Scheme will use native species indigenous to the area and will be expected to follow prescribed guidelines for planting and management. It should be noted that under certain circumstances a Land Drainage Consent from the Environment Agency may be required for riparian planting.

In conjunction with the targeting strategy the Council produces an occasional range of leaflets giving detailed information on project types such as pond restoration, hedge and tree planting.

The Landscape Conservation Grant Scheme is run and administered solely by Kennet District Council. Grant forms and advice are available from the Council's Landscape and Countryside or Arboricultural Officers.

6 LANDSCAPE CONSERVATION GRANT TARGETING PRIORITIES

Grant Rates:

Priority	% grant
Very high	50
High	40
medium	30
low	20

Landscape Conservation Grant proposals which conserve or enhance the biodiversity of all notified SNCIs, or areas given a statutory nature conservation designation, will receive grant aid as a high priority ie 40%, unless a higher grant rate is applicable, in which case the higher rate will be offered. Consultation with the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust will be carried out prior to making a grant offer on these sites. Grant aid for small nature conservation projects, such as bird nest boxes and bat boxes, will be available throughout the District when applied for in conjunction with at least one of the priorities detailed below.

In all areas the removal and replacement of dead and dying elms will attract a grant rate equivalent to high priority ie 40%.

Landscape Conservation Grant Targeting Priorities (including Biodiversity Targets)

Avebury Plain

	<i>Priority</i>	<i>%grant</i>		<i>Priority</i>	<i>%grant</i>
· Hedgerow planting	<i>high</i>	<i>40</i>	· Wetland restoration		
· Hedgerow management	<i>high</i>	<i>40</i>	and riparian tree		
· Small tree planting			planting	<i>medium</i>	<i>30</i>
schemes	<i>high</i>	<i>40</i>	· Arable margin		
· Riverside pollarding	<i>v.high</i>	<i>50</i>	planting	<i>medium</i>	<i>30</i>
· Pond restoration	<i>medium</i>	<i>30</i>	· Expansion of grassland		
· Pond construction	<i>low</i>	<i>20</i>	areas around		
			Windmill Hill	<i>medium</i>	<i>30</i>

Marlborough Downs

	<i>Priority %grant</i>			<i>Priority %grant</i>	
· Coppicing/ ancient woodland management	<i>medium</i>	<i>30</i>	· Control of scrub invasion/mature scrub management	<i>high</i>	<i>40</i>
· Shelter belt planting	<i>medium</i>	<i>30</i>	· Willow pollarding	<i>v.high</i>	<i>50</i>
· Wildlife corridors/hedges between woodland blocks	<i>medium</i>	<i>30</i>	· Riparian management	<i>medium</i>	<i>30</i>
			· Pond restoration	<i>medium</i>	<i>30</i>
			· Beech clump replacement	<i>v.high</i>	<i>50</i>
			· Stone curlew habitat creation	<i>v.high</i>	<i>40</i>

Savernake Plateau

	<i>Priority %grant</i>			<i>Priority %grant</i>	
· Riparian management in the Dun valley	<i>high</i>	<i>40</i>	· Hedgerow management	<i>high</i>	<i>40</i>
· Coppicing/ancient woodland management	<i>high</i>	<i>40</i>	· Hedgerow planting including hedgerow trees	<i>high</i>	<i>40</i>
· Planting of belts of native broadleaved woodland	<i>medium</i>	<i>30</i>	· Pond restoration	<i>medium</i>	<i>30</i>
			· Parkland restoration *	<i>high</i>	<i>40</i>

*veteran tree management, wood pasture recreation, avenue and parkland tree replanting and management

Horton Down

	<i>Priority % grant</i>		<i>Priority % grant</i>	
Control of scrub invasion/mature scrub management	<i>high</i>	<i>40</i>	Planting and management of shelterbelts	<i>medium 30</i>
Scarp slope management for grazing	<i>high</i>	<i>40</i>	Dew Pond restoration	<i>medium 30</i>
Arable field margins particularly adjacent to scarp slope	<i>medium</i>	<i>30</i>	Stone curlew habitat creation	<i>v.high 50</i>

Salisbury Plain

	<i>Priority % grant</i>		<i>Priority % grant</i>	
Replanting/ management of remnant hedgerow structure	<i>medium</i>	<i>30</i>	Dew pond restoration	<i>high 40</i>
Stone curlew habitat creation	<i>v.high</i>	<i>50</i>	Control of scrub/woodland invasion onto grassland	<i>high 40</i>

Chute Forest

	<i>Priority % grant</i>		<i>Priority % grant</i>	
Chalk scarp grassland improvement	<i>high</i>	<i>40</i>	Arable margin planting	<i>medium 30</i>
Willow pollarding and riparian management	<i>high</i>	<i>40</i>	Hedgerow management and replanting	<i>medium 30</i>
Semi-natural woodland management	<i>high</i>	<i>40</i>	Stone curlew habitat creation	<i>v.high 50</i>
Veteran tree management	<i>v.high</i>	<i>50</i>		

Kennet Valley

	<i>Priority % grant</i>		<i>Priority % grant</i>	
· Willow pollarding and native black poplar management	<i>v.high</i>	<i>50</i>	· Planting of native riparian tree species along watercourses	<i>high 40</i>
· Valley floor grassland/pasture management	<i>high</i>	<i>40</i>	· Planting of native tree groups/copses on the valley floor	<i>medium 30</i>
· Scarp grassland management with appropriate scrub levels	<i>medium</i>	<i>30</i>	· Reinstatement of mechanisms for increasing water levels	<i>medium 30</i>
· Hedgerow management and replanting	<i>medium</i>	<i>30</i>	· Pond restoration	<i>high 40</i>
			· Pond creation	<i>low 20</i>
			· Arable field margins	<i>low 20</i>

Salisbury Avon Valley

	<i>Priority % grant</i>		<i>Priority % grant</i>	
· Willow pollarding and native black poplar management	<i>v.high</i>	<i>50</i>	· Planting of native tree groups and copses on the valley floor	<i>medium 30</i>
· Valley floor grassland/pasture management	<i>high</i>	<i>40</i>	· Reinstatement of mechanisms for increasing water levels	<i>medium 30</i>
· Hedgerow planting and management	<i>medium</i>	<i>30</i>	· Pond restoration	<i>high 40</i>
· Planting of native riparian tree species along watercourses	<i>high</i>	<i>40</i>	· Pond creation	<i>low 20</i>

Vale of Pewsey

	<i>Priority % grant</i>			<i>Priority % grant</i>	
· Willow pollarding	<i>high</i>	<i>40</i>	· Hedgerow replanting and management	<i>v.high</i>	<i>50</i>
· Valley floor grassland restoration	<i>medium</i>	<i>30</i>	· Hedgerow tree planting	<i>v.high</i>	<i>50</i>
· Riparian feature restoration	<i>high</i>	<i>40</i>	· Pond restoration	<i>medium</i>	<i>30</i>
· Riparian tree planting along/adjacent to water courses	<i>high</i>	<i>40</i>	· Ditch and watercourse management	<i>medium</i>	<i>30</i>
			· Arable field margins	<i>high</i>	<i>40</i>
			· Parkland restoration*	<i>high</i>	<i>40</i>

*Wood pasture management, veteran, parkland tree and avenue management

Avon Clay Vale

	<i>Priority % grant</i>			<i>Priority % grant</i>	
· Willow pollarding	<i>v.high</i>	<i>50</i>	· Pond restoration	<i>medium</i>	<i>30</i>
· Riparian tree planting	<i>high</i>	<i>40</i>	· Copse management and restoration	<i>medium</i>	<i>30</i>
· Hedgerow planting and restoration	<i>high</i>	<i>40</i>	· Small tree planting schemes	<i>medium</i>	<i>30</i>
· Hedgerow tree planting	<i>high</i>	<i>40</i>	· Parkland restoration*	<i>high</i>	<i>40</i>

*Veteran and parkland tree management

Spye Parklands

	<i>Priority % grant</i>			<i>Priority % grant</i>	
· Pond restoration	<i>medium</i>	<i>30</i>	· Hedgerow planting and hedgerow tree planting	<i>high</i>	<i>40</i>
· Small areas of woodland management	<i>high</i>	<i>40</i>	· Parkland restoration*	<i>high</i>	<i>40</i>
· Hedgerow restoration and management	<i>high</i>	<i>40</i>			

*Veteran tree management, parkland tree and avenue management

7 THE KENNET DISTRICT WOODLAND STRATEGY

Introduction

The Kennet District Woodland Strategy is based on the Government's commitment to a re-expansion of woodland cover across England. It is tied closely to the Forestry Commission's England Forestry Strategy 'A New Focus for England's Woodlands', and seeks to identify how and where woodland expansion can be undertaken within the Kennet District in terms compatible with the conclusions of the Landscape Assessment.

The majority of woodland planting is undertaken with grant aid from through Forestry Commission's England Woodland Grant Scheme, although small planting schemes and individual trees are often grant aided under other schemes such as the Council's own Landscape Conservation Grants. The England Woodland Grant Scheme is a flexible grant and supplements are offered to meet identified targets. The England Forestry Strategy priorities for woodland creation at a national level are detailed below:

- The creation of larger woodlands, where they can bring greater benefits.
- The creation of woodlands in the urban fringe.
- The restoration of former industrial land.
- Reversing the fragmentation of ancient woodland.

The Council will work with the Forestry Commission to help to achieve these aims in a structured manner compatible with the landscape of the Kennet District.

As the England Forestry Strategy is implemented the Government is looking to achieve the following results:

- An increase in the role of forestry in the rural economy.
- An increase in the areas of woodland created on derelict and former industrial land as well as a reduction in the cost of creating this woodland.
- An increase in the area of woodlands available for access.
- An increase in the area of semi-natural and native woodland together with a reduction in the fragmentation of ancient semi-natural woodland.

- An increase in the resources available for forestry and woodland through new partnerships between the public, private and voluntary sectors.
- An increase in integrated action across Government to implement the Strategy.
- An increase in people's involvement with England's woods and forests and a better understanding of the benefits which they bring.

For further information see England Forestry Strategy 'A New Focus for England's Woodland' published by the Forestry Commission 1999

The Strategy

The Council is committed to an increase in the overall woodland cover of the Kennet District. Much of the intrinsic value of the District's landscape is dependant on the retention of wide open spaces and long views. It is therefore prudent that a woodland strategy should respect the landscape and historic value of the District and is therefore based on the eleven primary landscape character areas identified in the Landscape Assessment.

Woodland Usage and Ownership

Whilst the Woodland Strategy is primarily concerned with the implementation of the England Forest Strategy in terms of the landscape of the Kennet District, woodland is rarely planted and managed for its own sake. Diverse woodland usage is found throughout the District, with timber production, recreational shooting and the troop training, being of particular importance. These uses generally recognise and promote the landscape and nature conservation value of the woodland. Where possible public access, particularly on foot, should also be promoted as a priority.

Woodland ownership and management within the Kennet District is split between the public and private sectors. Forest Enterprise own and/or manage large tracts of woodland at Savernake Forest, Collingbourne Woods, West Woods and Spye Park. The MoD own woodlands on Salisbury Plain and surrounding areas, and much of the woodland through the Vale of Pewsey, to the eastern end of the Marlborough Downs and in Chute Forest is in the ownership of large estates and farms.

Woodland Management

The management of existing woodland to maximise landscape and wildlife value using traditional techniques and replanting using native broadleaf species is advocated. Grant aid for traditional management techniques, such as for coppice management is available through Forestry Commission England Woodland Grant Scheme supplements, and Landscape Conservation Grants. Woodland management including coppicing, thinning, felling and restocking should be carried out on a rotational basis in order to conserve and enhance the nature conservation, landscape value and economic benefits of the woodland, the diversity of habitat and the age structure. The aim should be to provide sustainable woodland with diverse habitats and age structure.

Ancient Woodlands

A survey of ancient woodlands in Wiltshire has been undertaken, which provides comprehensive data which, in conjunction with ecological surveys of individual ancient semi-natural woodland, can be used in the formation of appropriate management plans. The restoration of priority ancient woodland sites through the removal of conifers and the management and protection of veteran trees and wood pasture is a priority, and will often be undertaken in conjunction with parkland restorations. Grant aid is available through the England Woodland Grant Scheme and the Council's Landscape Conservation Grant scheme.

Dutch Elm Disease

Dutch Elm Disease is the most significant tree disease within the District and has major implications on the landscape as whole rows of young hedgerow trees are decimated. In some cases replacement of dead elms can be dealt with as part of a England Woodland Grant Scheme application, but where this is not applicable Landscape Conservation Grant aid of 40% of costs for the removal and replacement of the trees is available.

New Planting

Whilst there is a general presumption in favour of the planting of native broadleaf tree species, there are significant areas within the District where forestry forms an important part of the local

economy and the planting and harvesting of coniferous tree crops is accepted. In addition nurse crop conifers are often planted to provide shelter and optimum growing conditions, as well as an early economic return in woodlands which are ultimately to mature as mixed broadleaf plantings. Close to population centres the planting of community woodlands, with full public access, is encouraged and attracts a supplement under the England Woodland Grant Scheme. Enhanced and new access to existing woodlands is also to be encouraged.

At present there is no significant pressure to plant large areas of short rotation coppice, or biomass, within the District, and the Forestry Commission is not targeting its production as a priority for grant aid, although it does fall within the realms of the England Woodland Grant Scheme. However, should the demand for this product increase the location of plantations should be closely controlled so that it does not impinge on ecologically sensitive areas, or areas where it will have a high and detrimental visual impact.

Woodland Strategies for the Landscape Character Areas

Detailed below are the woodland strategies for each landscape area. However, it should be noted that the replacement of dead/dying elms is considered to be a priority across the District.

Avebury Plain

The Avebury Plain contains a distinctive mix of open, rolling arable landscapes and more intimate pastoral countryside. The importance of the archaeological landscape within the Avebury Plain cannot be under-estimated. The area does not contain any large woodland areas, although small groups, watercourse and hedgerow trees are important, as are limited plantings around the settlements. Of particular significance is the formal woodland planting in the grounds of Avebury Manor.

Tree planting in the Avebury Plain should be confined to small copses and woodlands on the valley floor, where the landscape structure will permit, which is primarily to the northern end of the area, around Broad Hinton and Uffcott. This area falls within the Great Western Community Forest and planting grants in this area may be supplemented with a Locational Supplement which is in addition to the standard England Woodland Grant Scheme payment. Hedgerow and watercourse tree planting should be encouraged. Native species should be used throughout and combined with native shrub species to give a suitable woodland structure.

Planting on the scarp slopes and in any areas which will affect the settings of the important archaeological features should be discouraged.

Marlborough Downs

The Marlborough Downs combines a mixture of landscape types and topographical variety, with a wide variety of vegetation cover, particularly when moving from west to east. The highest proportion of tree cover is found to the east of the area, whereas the western end is dominated by intensive agriculture and unimproved grasslands.



Beech Clump at East Leaze Farm, Aldbourne

The enhancement strategy recommends the removal of inappropriate tree planting namely, on scarp slopes, from archaeological sites (eg tumuli), copses and belts in inappropriate locations and comprising inappropriate species. This primarily applies to the western end of the area. There should be active support for the removal of the visually obtrusive plantings on the scarp slopes above Avebury and the Winterbournes, although there is a general presumption that any woodland removed will be replaced in a more suitable location.

The characteristic beech clumps found on the tumuli above Avebury have long been the subject of controversy. In conjunction with English Heritage and the National Trust, the Council is promoting the relocation of these clumps from the tumuli to adjacent, archaeologically less sensitive areas. A strategy of new planting, followed by the removal of the existing clumps when the new ones are sufficiently established is proposed.

The eastern part of the Marlborough Downs can accept large areas of tree planting on arable or cultivated land, where it will enhance the mosaic of woodland and farmland. Much of the woodland in this part of the Marlborough Downs is semi-natural and is used primarily for shooting and nature conservation, with secondary timber and coppice hazel production. New planting should seek to increase the areas of semi-natural woodland and decrease the fragmentation of the ancient semi-natural woodland areas, thus contributing to Government targets in this area. The planting of shelterbelts to soften the impact of prominent buildings in the

landscape is also recommended. These should be designed with an uneven edge and shrub elements to break up the classic shelterbelt straight lines.

There should be a presumption in favour of the formation of mature, native broad leaved woodland, although the planting of conifer nurse crops is useful to provide an early financial return and shelter for the slower growing broadleaf species.

The northern parishes of the Marlborough Downs fall partially within the Great Western Community Forest, and whilst there are limited opportunities for tree planting within this part of the area, supplementary grant aid may be available for schemes in the upper valley of the River Og, which comply with the Forest Plan.

Savernake Plateau

The Savernake Plateau contains large expanses of ancient semi-natural woodland and also significant plantations of non-native coniferous species, particularly in Savernake Forest and its outlying woodlands. The rest of the area contains a mosaic of farmland and woodland. Agricultural land tends to be intensively farmed and designed parkland features strongly in the area.



Ancient Semi-natural Woodland at Clench Common

Enhancement of the Savernake Plateau should be largely based on the management of the existing woodlands and new plantings. New planting should take the form of areas of native trees on cultivated land, linking existing woodland and reinforcing the mosaic of woodland and farmland, taking account of natural boundaries in order to enhance the landscape. The continued felling and replanting of coniferous plantations within the Savernake area will remain as an economic priority, but the hard edges and boundaries of these woodland areas should always be softened by the planting of a native broadleaf tree and shrub mix.

The restoration and replanting of designed parkland features such as copses, woods, avenues and specimen trees is also a priority. Boundary and hedgerow tree planting using native species is also a priority.

Horton Down

The Horton Down landscape area is dominated by high chalk downland which is primarily under intensive agriculture. There are few hedgerows and trees and the scarp slopes and highest hilltops tend to be dominated by unimproved permanent pasture.

Opportunities for woodland planting in the Horton Down Area are very limited and inappropriately planted groups and shelterbelts should be removed and replanted in more suitable locations. However, the planting of shelterbelts to soften the impact of prominent buildings and roads is considered acceptable.

The management of prominent woodland features, such as the scarp slope beneath Roundway Down, for landscape and wildlife purposes is to be encouraged.

Salisbury Plain

The chalk downland of Salisbury Plain is dominated by vast tracts of unimproved grassland which form the military ranges. The grassland is punctuated by woodlands, predominantly broadleaf/conifer mixes, but with some pure conifer stands, planted in the 1950s and 60s for military training purposes. The bleak, treeless appearance of Salisbury Plain is one of its characteristic features, therefore opportunities for new tree planting will be limited.

The removal of inappropriate tree belts and woodland, particularly where they have an impact on the wildlife and landscape value of unimproved grasslands, should be encouraged. However, in line with Forestry Commission guidance, where woodland is removed for nature conservation purposes, there is a presumption that it will be replaced in less ecologically sensitive areas, so that the overall tree cover of the area is maintained. It is also essential that replanting undertaken as part of this policy should not compromise the landscape character of the Plain and in some cases may be most effectively implemented by planting in adjoining landscape character areas, where woodland planting is a more desirable part of the landscape strategy.

There are semi-natural woodland areas on Salisbury Plain and these should be managed in a manner to enhance their landscape and wildlife value. Tree planting should be confined to that absolutely necessary for military training purposes and should primarily comprise native species.

All new planting should be confined to previously cultivated land or improved grassland. Woodland design should take particular care to follow the topography of the land, and be of a scale in keeping with the area.

Chute Forest

To the east of Salisbury Plain and divided from it by the Bourne Valley, Chute Forest forms a large block of chalk upland which is characterised by extensive areas of woodland and a network of hedgerows and trees. The rolling wooded downland is dissected by dry valleys creating a more intimate landscape than the wide open spaces of Salisbury Plain.

Chute Forest is one of the landscape character areas in Kennet which can absorb significant amounts of tree planting. Large blocks of native broadleaf woodland, which can be planted with conifer nurse crops, can be planted on arable or cultivated land, to link with existing woodlands, with the aim of restoring and reinforcing the mosaic of woodland and farmland. The estate farmlands within Chute Forest are also capable of absorbing substantial amounts of woodland to restore and maintain their enclosed, mature wooded character. However, there are a number of designed landscapes within the Chute Forest area, which have considerable significance within the area, and will obviously affect the scale and nature of any new planting. Features such as vistas, buildings, veteran trees, avenues, etc. should all be respected when putting forward proposals for new planting in areas of designed landscape.

The management and maintenance of the existing semi-natural woodland areas, including such regimes as coppicing, thinning, tree management and replanting, should be considered a priority to conserve the biodiversity and landscape structure of the area. Uniform plantations should be managed to provide a diversification of species and age range.

Kennet Valley

The Kennet Valley cuts a swathe through the chalk downland of the Marlborough Downs from Avebury in the west to the District boundary at Chilton Foliat in the east. The Kennet Valley contains many historic and archaeological remains and three historic parks. The valley sides are a mixture of farmland and semi-natural woodland which becomes more prevalent towards the eastern end of the valley.

The management of the existing trees and woodlands is considered to be a priority in the Kennet Valley, particularly the management of riparian trees including the pollarding of willows. Management measures to conserve the biodiversity and landscape importance of the semi-natural woodlands are also of considerable importance.

The diversification of single species plantations should be encouraged, particularly in cases where poplar plantations on the valley floor are felled. The replanting should include riparian species such as willow and phytophora free alder. The planting of poplar plantations in the water meadows on the valley floor is to be discouraged. The planting of native riparian species along watercourses, where appropriate, should be encouraged.

On the valley sides the planting of large blocks of broadleaf woodland on arable or cultivated land to reinforce the mosaic of woodland and farmland should be promoted. Planting on semi-natural grassland will not be acceptable.

The restoration and where necessary replanting of designed parklands including parkland trees, avenues, woods, copses, etc, is to be encouraged.

Salisbury Avon Valley

The Salisbury Avon cuts through Salisbury Plain from the Vale of Pewsey to the north and beyond the District boundary to the south. In terms of the Kennet landscape the valley is steep sided and narrow, the river meandering through the alluvial beds on the valley floor. The valley floor is dominated by remnant water meadows, with permanent pasture and the Salisbury Plain military ranges stretching out onto the downland to the east and west.

The opportunities for woodland planting in the Salisbury Avon Valley are limited and along the valley floor should be confined to the development of small copses and groups of primarily riparian species along watercourses, and hedgerow trees planted in conjunction with the strengthening of hedgerows.

The diversification of single species plantations, which occur on several parts of the valley floor should be encouraged, particularly in cases where poplar plantations on the valley floor are felled. The replanting should include riparian species such as willow and phytophora free alder.

The planting of poplar plantations on the valley floor is to be discouraged. In certain areas it may be appropriate to remove poplar plantations without replanting where ecological considerations associated with the River Avon dictate.

The management and maintenance of existing trees and woodlands is a priority in the Salisbury Avon Valley, to conserve and enhance the biodiversity and landscape value of the area. The pollarding of watercourse willows is of particular importance.

The planting of large woodland blocks on either the valley floor or the valley sides is not appropriate in this area.

Vale of Pewsey

The Vale of Pewsey is a broad valley separating the chalk downland blocks of Salisbury Plain and the Marlborough Downs. It is characterised by intensive agriculture, particularly on the boundary between the lower chalk and greensand at the base of the scarp slopes. Towards the centre of the Vale the flat land has a much more complete hedgerow structure, with hedgerow trees and semi-natural woodland, particularly in the River Avon catchment. The Vale also contains parkland estates with a designed planting of trees, avenues, and woodland forming mature landscapes with near complete hedgerow structures.

Woodland planting in the Vale of Pewsey must be carefully controlled to retain the essentially agricultural landscape of the area. However, new woodland planting can be accommodated in the more low lying, floodplain parts of the Vale and on the greensand scarps at the western end of the area, using native species typical of the locality. Other woodland planting, using native broadleaf species, should be used to mitigate the effects of built environment fringes, on the wider landscape.

Hedgerow and roadside trees should be managed and, where necessary, replanted as part of a programme of restoration and replanting of hedgerows throughout the area. The Pewsey Vale has also seen a massive loss of elm trees and the replacement of these trees, which are particularly prevalent in hedgerows should be an urgent priority, building on the existing hedgerow trees. The most appropriate grant aid for this is the Landscape Conservation Grant scheme. Adjacent to watercourses the management of willow pollards is to be encouraged,

along with the replanting where necessary.

The management and, where necessary, restoration of parkland landscapes will often involve woodland, avenue and tree management, and replanting, which are priorities in the Vale of Pewsey.

Bristol Avon Clay Vale

The Bristol Avon Clay Vale forms a geologically complex area to the west of the District. It is dominated by a strong structure of hedgerows and trees, enclosing permanent pastures, although this weakens considerably towards the sandy soils around Bromham.

In terms of woodland planting small copses and groups of trees can be easily accommodated into the landscape structure, although the scope for large scale planting is somewhat limited. New tree planting along hedgerows, roads and water-courses should be encouraged and will form an important component in any hedgerow management plans, to reverse the decline in hedgerow trees, particularly elm, in the area. Across the area the traditional riparian and lowland tree species are dominant, with willow and alder being the favoured riparian species and oak, field maple and ash dominating the drier land.

The establishment of woodland blocks and smaller tree groups, to mitigate the effects of sporadic settlement development into the countryside, is of importance to retain the intimate, pastoral character of the area.

Existing woodlands and trees should be managed to maximise ecological and landscape value. The diversification of the limited single species woodlands and the reintroduction of coppice management should be undertaken. The management of willow pollards along watercourses should be a priority in the clay vale.

There are limited areas of parkland landscape within the Bristol Avon Clay Vale, but where these do occur, the parkland trees, avenues and woodland should be managed and restored as necessary to conserve their landscape value.

Spye Parklands

The Spye Parklands forms a small landscape area in the north western corner District, which extends significantly beyond its boundaries. It is topographically a complex area, with wooded slopes and steep sided valleys and acidic sandy soils. There are extensive areas of woodland and small but important areas of heathland within the area, creating a unique landscape and ecologically distinct area within the District.

The majority of the Spye Parklands is wooded and thus woodland management and the diversification of existing single stand woodlands must be a priority. The restoration and management of parkland features whether they are individual trees, avenues or woodland should also be a priority.

Hedgerow structure is generally good but the addition of further hedgerow and roadside trees, particularly oak and ash would help to further enhance the landscape.

8 TREES AND FORESTRY

Tree Protection on Development Sites

The policy had two main purposes. Firstly to draw the attention of applicants and other prospective developers to the need to consider the impact of development proposals on trees and the importance which the Council will give trees which are, or should be, protected by a Tree Preservation Order or which are within a designated Conservation Area, and secondly to draw attention to the provisions of BS5387 British Standard Guide for Trees in Relation to Construction and the way this will be taken into consideration by the Council with respect to trees to be retained within development sites.

The Council's policy will, of course, operate without prejudice to the advice offered by the Secretary of State for the Environment with respect to Trees and Forestry with particular reference to DoE Circular 36/78.

The terms of the policy are as follows:

It will be the normal practice of the Council to have regard to the provisions of BS5387 British Standard Guide for Trees in Relation to Construction when considering the need for protection of trees on sites subject to development proposals or proposals for the planting of trees on such sites. In addition the Council will have regard to the following particular matters in such cases:

- a) The Council may request that any application for the redevelopment of land or buildings or the extension of existing buildings be accompanied by a plan, or plans, showing the accurately plotted location of any existing trees on the site. Such a plan will be required if the site lies within a designated Conservation Area or includes trees subject to a Tree Preservation Order.
- b) The plans under a) should also give information about the existing ground levels, the species of each tree, the extent of its crown and the diameter of the trunk. Individual trees should be categorised under the following headings;

- Healthy trees with no major defects and a life expectancy of at least 20 years.
 - Landmark trees as designated using the criteria detailed in the following section.
 - Healthy trees with small or easily remedied defects, or a short life expectancy, or only suitable for retention in groups.
 - Trees which have reached full maturity, or trees with significant defects or deformities, which might be kept in groups or for a limited period.
 - Trees which are not suitable for retention in any case.
- c) Applicants may seek the advice of the Council's officers prior to the submission of a formal planning application as to whether the Council will be likely to require the retention of any existing trees on the site. Where trees are covered by a Tree Preservation Order or the site is within a designated Conservation Area the assumption will be that the existing trees be retained whenever possible.
- d) The design of any site layout will be expected to take account of the need to retain and protect existing trees on a site. As a general rule the design of a site should, as far as is possible, provide that existing trees are located on areas which will, ultimately, become part of a public open space rather than within, for example, private gardens.
- e) The layout should provide that no principle buildings are proposed within two metres of the outside edge of the crown of an existing tree unless it is proposed that that particular tree should not be retained. This requirement may be varied to a distance representing half the height of the tree in the case of trees with tall, thin crowns. If any walls, secondary buildings or other ancillary works are proposed to be carried out any closer to the tree than the specified building distance then the submitted plans should show details of the means by which the construction will protect the trees, normally following the British Standard Guide for Trees in Relation to Construction.
- f) Where the excavation of trenches closer than the minimum distance is unavoidable they should be dug by hand and care should be taken that no major roots are severed. The

Council will expect the layout to make necessary arrangements for the use of as few trenches as possible on a site by sharing of routes for several services.

- g) In order to secure proper protection for trees on sites subject to development the Council will, when considering an application for planning permission, give consideration to the making of a Tree Preservation Order in appropriate cases where trees are not already so protected.
- h) In granting planning permission the Council will normally require, by condition, that trees to be retained on the site should be surrounded by protective fencing, at a point no closer to the tree than the edge of the crown. Such fences will be required to be retained in place until the development works have been completed.
- i) The Council will also require by condition that, inter alia, there should be no disturbance to the ground within the protective fence, that drainage should not be impeded, that no materials be stored within it and that no fires should be lit within it.
- j) In addition to measures required for the protection of trees within the development site the Council will normally require the submission of proposals for additional landscaping of the site and will normally impose conditions relating to the approval and implementation of such proposals and to the future maintenance of such landscaping. The Council will also give consideration to the further protection of any additional planting by the making of a Tree Preservation Order in appropriate cases.
- k) This policy for the protection of trees on development sites will normally be applied to individual trees which have a trunk diameter of at least 75mm, measured at a point 1.5 metres above ground level. Where trees have a group, as opposed to an individual, value consideration will be given to the smaller specimens.

Landmark Trees

The Council refers to large very prominent trees on development sites as 'Landmark Trees'. These are normally very prominent, large individual trees, or sometimes small groups, which in themselves provide an exceptional part of the landscape setting of the site. These trees are landscape features in their own right and rather than being subsumed into the general setting of the development, deserve their own setting, with all close-by development work being subservient to them. Apart from their visual impact they can also be veteran trees, as defined by English Nature. These are trees which by virtue of their great age and size are of biological, aesthetic and cultural interest. They often contain dead wood and non-structural defects, as well as non-life threatening fungal infections, but are nonetheless healthy and of enormous ecological importance.

The following conditions are to be used by the Council for designating 'Landmark Trees':

1. The tree must be protected by a Tree Preservation Order. In designating that Order it must have a visual impact rating, on the Council's method of calculation, of 9 or 10 out of 10.
2. The tree(s) must be in good condition and of high quality. There must be no significant disease or major structural defects present at the time when the TPO was made or when the tree was last inspected.
3. The tree(s) must be designated at either the allocation of a development site in the Local Plan; at the preliminary consultation stage, or as soon as possible once a planning application has been submitted.
4. The Council's Landscape and Countryside or Arboricultural Officers, in discussion with Development Control Officers, will carry out the designation of Landmark Trees. At that time the extent of the open space area around the tree will also be determined. It is envisaged that all Landmark Trees will be located in open space areas.
5. The extent of the setting of the tree will be determined in relation to its location on the site, the type of development proposed, the topography of the site, the species, size and age of the tree, and the presence of other trees.
6. Landmark Trees, like the imposition of TPOs, should not be used to prevent development, unless a site is not big enough to be developed without impinging on the setting of a tree.
7. The system of designation of Landmark Trees will be used sparingly to ensure that the process of enhanced protection does not become devalued.

NJUG Guidelines for installing and maintaining utility services close to trees

At its meeting on the 8th June 1995 the Planning & Development Committee resolved to adopt a policy in respect of the National Joint Utilities Group (NJUG) Guidelines for the Planning, Installation and Maintenance of Utility Services in Proximity to Trees.

The NJUG Guidelines for installing and maintaining utility services close to trees are detailed below.

Damage to Trees

1. Tree roots keep a tree healthy and upright. Most roots are found in the top 600mm of soil. They often grow out further than the tree's height. The majority of these roots are very fine, even close to a tree few will be thicker than a pencil. Most street tree roots grow under the pavement and into front gardens, but they can grow under the carriageway.

If tree roots are damaged, for example by trenching, the tree may fall or lose its vigour and decline.

2. Tree trunks can be easily damaged, so be careful when working near them. For example, don't lean paving slabs against trees; don't chain machinery to them or nail site notices to their trunks.

Protecting Roots

1. Establish a zone around each tree: the Precautionary Area. See Fig 1.

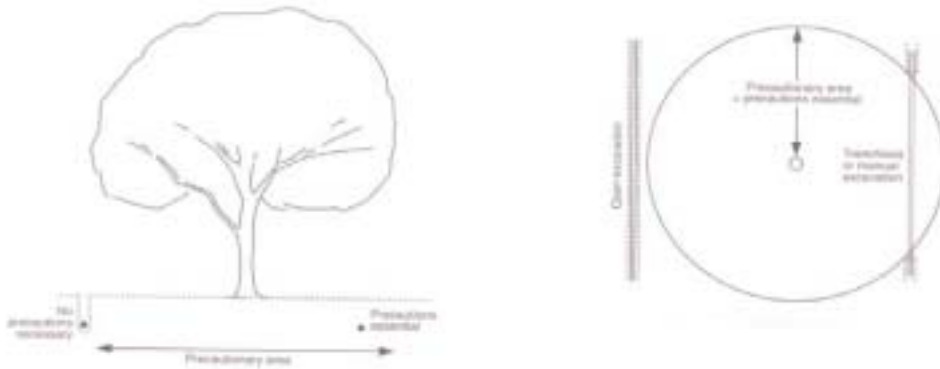


Fig 1. To determine the Precautionary Area, measure the girth of the tree at chest height. Multiply this by 4 and draw a circle of this radius from the centre of the tree.

2. IN THE PRECAUTIONARY AREA:

- Don't excavate with machinery. Use trenchless techniques where possible. Otherwise dig only by hand.
 - When hand digging carefully work around the roots, retaining as many as possible.
 - Don't cut roots over 25mm in diameter, unless the Council's Tree Officer agrees beforehand.
 - Prune roots which have been removed using a sharp tool, for example secateurs or handsaw.
 - Backfill the trench with an inert granular material and topsoil mix. Compact the backfill with care around the retained roots. On non-highway sites backfill only with excavated soil.
 - Don't repeatedly move/use heavy mechanical plant except on hard standing.
 - Don't store spoil or building material, including chemicals and fuels.
3. Frost can damage exposed roots. If trenches are to be left open overnight, cover the roots with dry sacking. Remember to remove sacking before backfilling.

Action in respect of Dangerous Trees

Section 23:Local Government

(Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976

At its meeting on the 19th January 1995, the Planning & Development Committee resolved to adopt a policy for its obligations under the provisions of Section 23 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 with regard to Dangerous Trees.

This particular part of the legislation gives the Council discretionary powers to enter land to carry out work to deal with dangerous trees, to require owners of dangerous trees to make them safe and to recover their expenses.

The Council may take action in the following instances:

- a) Where the Council receives notice from an owner of land on which a dangerous tree is situated requesting the Council to make the tree safe.
- b) Where the Council considers that a tree is in a condition as to present an immediate danger to persons or property.
- c) Where the Council receives a notice requesting it to make safe a dangerous trees on land belonging to someone other than the persons serving notice.
- d) Where the Council does not know the name and address of the owner or occupier of land on which a dangerous tree is situated and considers the imminence of the danger is such that any delay in taking action may cause damage to persons or property.

If it decides to act in any particular case the action open to the Council is by way of a notice served on the owner or occupier of the land on which the dangerous tree is situated, requesting that the necessary work to make the tree safe is carried out within a specified period, being not less than 21 days from the service of the notice.

If the person on whom the notice is served, having decided not to appeal against the notice, fails

to comply with its requirements then the Council may, itself, carry out the work required by the notice and subsequently seek to recover the costs from the person on whom the notice was served.

The recipient of the notice may, however, within 21 days of the service of the notice appeal against it to the County Court, citing one or more of the following grounds:

- That the person served with the notice is not the owner or occupier of the land.
- That the tree is not in the dangerous condition alleged in the notice.
- That there are other, less expensive ways of removing the danger than those specified in the notice.
- That it would be fairer to serve the notice on some other person who is an owner or occupier of the land.

A right of appeal is also given to anybody else who is an owner or occupier of the land but was not served with the notice. Such a person would, however, only be able to appeal on the second or third grounds specified.

Generally speaking the Council will not offer arboricultural advice, or inspect trees, unless the trees in question are covered by a Tree Preservation Order, are in a Conservation Area or are the subject of an application for grant aid. It does not provide a general tree advice service to the public.

The Council's Adopted Policy.

The Planning & Development Committee has adopted the following as its policy for dealing with requests to inspect trees.

The Council will only respond to the requests for inspections of trees on private property where:

- a) The tree is covered by a Tree Preservation Order.

- b) The tree is a mature specimen within a Conservation Area but not covered by a Tree Preservation Order.
- c) The tree is neither covered by a Tree Preservation Order nor is it a mature specimen within a Conservation Area, but it does pose a potential threat to the general public, whether it is from the danger of it falling onto public property such as a road or car park, or it is from the danger of its falling onto private property regularly used by the general public, such as a public house car park.

The Council will not respond to requests for works to trees, but it will suggest that a tree surgeon is used to carry out the inspections in all cases other than those set out above.

The Council will not respond to request for inspection of trees where there is a dispute between neighbours, unless the tree comes within one of the categories set out above, in which case the Council will make an impartial judgement on the condition of the tree, and only then when both parties are present.

If, in the opinion of the Council, a tree is found to be dangerous, and after the owner or occupier of the land on which the tree is situated has been informed and has not taken steps to remedy the situation within a specified period, the Council will consider taking formal action under the terms of Section 23 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.

If such action is taken and the Council carries out the required works it will seek to recover the costs of the work from the owner or occupier of the land on which the tree is situated.

Authority to implement this policy has been delegated to the Planning Services Manager, the Development Control & Conservation Team Leader, the Landscape & Countryside Officer and the Arboricultural Officer.

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National Joint Utilities Group - Guidelines for the Planning, Installation and Maintenance of Utility Services in Proximity to Tree - Publication Number 10-NJUG 1995

British Standard Guide for Trees in Relation to Construction - BS5837 - BSI 1991

APPENDIX 1
Replacement Local Plan Policies

APPENDIX 1

The following policies are contained in the Replacement Kennet Local Plan, These policies were subject to scrutiny at a Public Local Inquiry to commence in March 2002. After considering the Inspector's Report and undertaking any necessary modifications, the Council has amended the document to reflect any changes and adopt it as Supplementary Planning Guidance.

Policy PD1

DEVELOPMENT AND DESIGN

A. General Application

A high standard of design will be expected in new developments, extensions or alterations to existing buildings, changes of use and in proposals affecting the landscape and environment, to ensure that the character, appearance and environmental quality of the Kennet area is maintained or enhanced, and to promote safety and compatibility between adjoining land uses.

B. Considerations

In order to achieve high standards of design, all development proposals should adequately address the factors listed below, where they are relevant to the development under consideration:-

- 1) Sustainable design principles;
- 2) Scale, height, massing and density of development;
- 3) Relationship to townscape and landscape context and related ecology;
- 4) Layout, servicing and access arrangements, and road safety;
- 5) How the development contributes to the creation of a well used, attractive and safe public realm;
- 6) Landscape proposals;
- 7) Relationship to historic features;
- 8) Elevational treatment;
- 9) Building materials, colour and detailing; and
- 10) The impact on residential amenity, including that caused by reason of noise and disturbance.

Table NR1 : Regional Targets for Protecting Existing Habitats relevant to Kennet District.

Reedbeds	Maintain current 600 ha
Standing Open Water	Maintain current areas of open water
Rivers and Streams	Maintain 40000 km of linear resource
Urban Green Space	Full extent unknown
Species-Rich Hedges	Full extent unknown
Calcareous (Chalk) Grassland	Maintain current 25000 ha

Neutral Grassland	Maintain current 9000 ha
Ancient Woodland	Maintain current 3657 ha
Wood, Pasture and Parkland	Maintain current 11000 ha
Field Boundary Systems and Field Margins	Full extent unknown

Table NR2 : Restoration targets for the South West Region relevant to Kennet District.

Reedbeds	Create 600 ha of new reedbed by 2005	by Neutral Grassland	Restore 1800ha linking and buffering by 2010
Standing Open Water	Create 2000 new ponds by 2010	Ancient Woodland	Increase area of woodland by 10% by expanding existing habitat adjacent to or close to semi-natural woodlands by 2010
Rivers and Streams	Enhance value of rivers and streams in the SW	Wood, Pasture and Parkland	Create 5500ha of pasture and parkland (50% by 2000)
Urban Green Space	Provide wildlife greenspace within 300m of every home by 2020	Field Boundary Systems and Field Margins	Full extent unknown
favourable Species-Rich Hedges	Achieve management of species-rich hedges within any district: 50% by 2005		
Calcareous (Chalk) Grassland	Create and rehabilitate 4000ha by 2010		

Policy NR4**NATURE CONSERVATION OUTSIDE DESIGNATED SITES**

Where a proposal for development would adversely affect a feature which has local ecological importance as a wildlife habitat, or acts as a linear route or network of habitats, development will only be permitted where provision is made for the protection of the habitat within the development site (and for the management of the habitat where that can be shown to be necessary to maintain its previous value as a habitat). Where that is not possible, the development will only be permitted where provision is made for the replacement of the habitat lost with a similar area with similar wildlife habitat characteristics (and for the management of that area where that can be shown to be necessary to maintain its value as a replacement habitat).

Policy NR6**SUSTAINABILITY AND PROTECTION OF THE COUNTRYSIDE**

In the interests of promoting sustainable development and the protection of the countryside, development will be restricted to locations within the Limits of Development defined for the towns and villages as identified on the Proposals and Inset Maps unless

- a) the development is demonstrated to be of benefit either to the rural economy in the locality or to the social well-being of the rural community in the locality. (Any such development must comply with other relevant Policies including PD1 and NR7); *or*
- b) the development is permitted by other Policies of the Local Plan.

Policy NR7**PROTECTION OF THE LANDSCAPE**

Where development is acceptable in principle, through other policies of the Plan, outside the Limits of Development, the Council will seek to protect and enhance the character and quality of the environment and will not permit development which is likely to have a significant adverse effect upon the landscape. In particular, development proposals will be considered against their potential effects upon:-

- a) landscape character, quality and distinctive features; *and*
- b) views and visual amenity.

Policy NR8**AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY**

When considering applications for development within the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, as indicated on the Proposals Map and Inset Maps, particular regard will be given to the national recognition of the landscape quality of the area. Priority will be given to the conservation of the character and scenic quality of the landscape, generally restricting development to that essential to the rural economy or social well-being of the rural area or desirable for the enjoyment of its amenities, subject to the provisions of Policy NR7. Other proposals will not be permitted unless proven to be in the national interest and incapable of being accommodated outside the AONB, or in accordance with other policies of this Plan.

Policy NR9**SPECIAL LANDSCAPE AREAS**

The Council recognises the scenic quality of areas designated in the Structure Plan as Special Landscape Areas, as indicated on the Proposals Map and Inset Maps. The special quality of these areas will be safeguarded by the application of Policy NR7 to protect the local landscape character.

Policy NR10**LANDSCAPE SETTING OF DEVIZES AND MARLBOROUGH**

The Local Plan defines the Landscape Settings of Devizes and Marlborough, as shown on the Inset Maps. Planning permission will not be given for development of land within or adjoining the Landscape Setting of these towns if it would adversely affect the distinctive character or appearance of landscape features and uninterrupted views.

Policy NR11**RIVER CORRIDORS**

Within the River Corridors defined on the Proposals and Inset Maps, planning permission will not be granted for development which would adversely affect nature conservation interests. Where development is permitted within a River Corridor proposals should include measures for enhancing wildlife habitats where appropriate and feasible. In addition, development will not be permitted within a River Corridor if it significantly reduces the existing public amenity value of that corridor.

Policy NR12**PROTECTION OF HIGH QUALITY AGRICULTURAL LAND**

Development of the best and most versatile agricultural land (defined as land in grades 1, 2, and 3a of the Agricultural Land Classification) will not be permitted unless it has been demonstrated that there is a need for the development and there has been a proper assessment of the opportunities for locating the development on previously-developed sites or land within the boundaries of existing urban areas. Where development on agricultural land is unavoidable, poorer quality land must be used in preference to that of higher quality, except where other sustainability considerations indicate otherwise. Those considerations may include the importance of the land for biodiversity, the quality and character of the landscape, its amenity value or heritage interest, accessibility to infrastructure, workforce and markets, and the protection of natural resources, including soil quality.

Policy NR19**RENEWABLE ENERGY PROPOSALS**

Proposals for generating renewable energy from wind turbines and biomass will be permitted where they:-

- a) are appropriate to the character of the landscape in which they are to be located;
- b) do not result in a loss of amenity to nearby land uses, particularly in respect of noise, dust, smoke or smell; *and*
- c) will not result in damage to any site designated for its archaeological, historic or ecological value.

Proposals within the World Heritage Site or in locations that would affect the historic landscape setting of the World Heritage Site will not be permitted.

Provision should be made for the removal of apparatus and the reinstatement to an appropriate use, should the energy generating development cease.