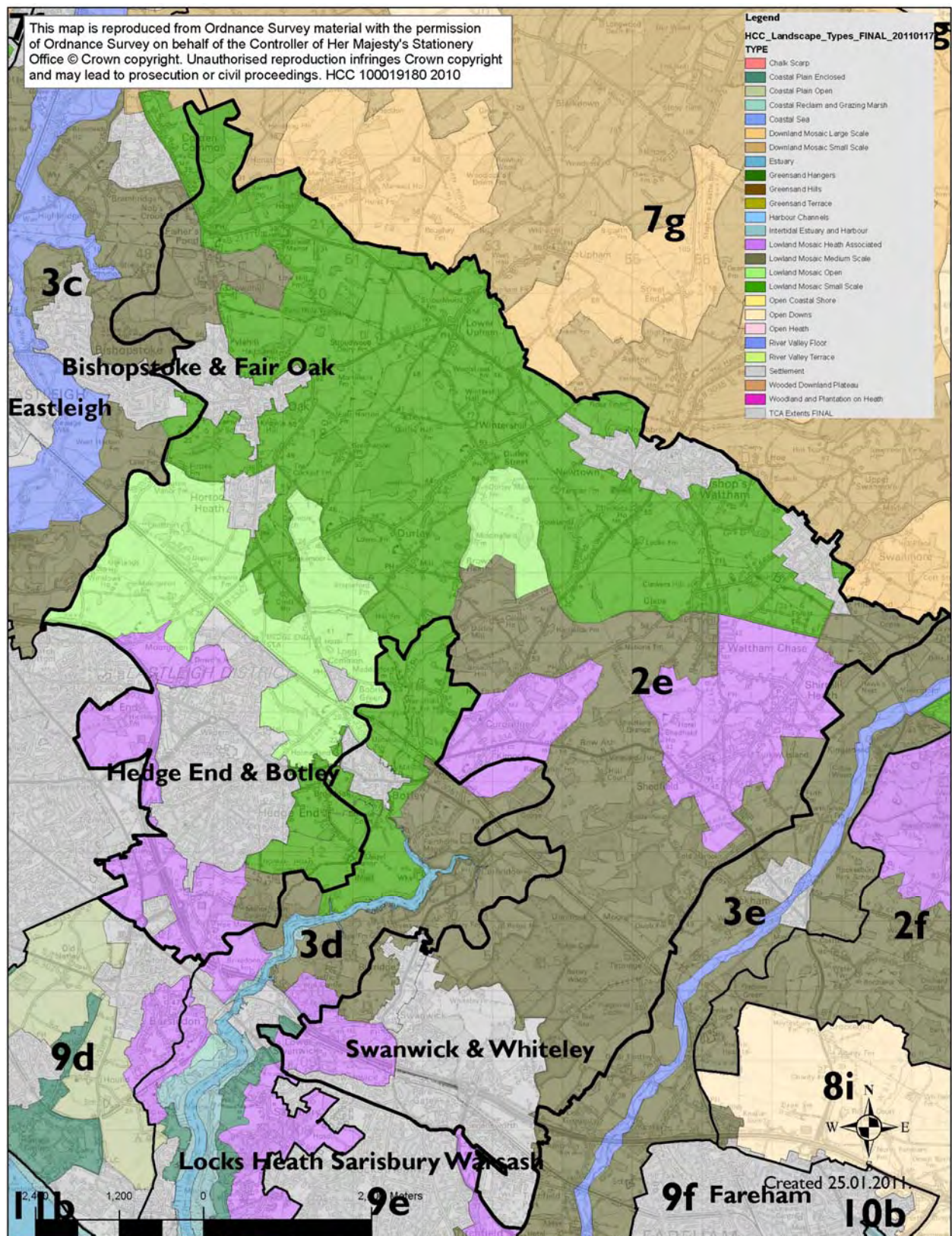




FOREST OF BERE WEST



Hampshire
County Council

I.0 Location and Boundaries

I.1 This character area encompasses the lowlands of the Hampshire Basin, bounded by higher chalk of the Hampshire Downs to the north and Portsdown Hill and the Coastal Plain in the south west and south east respectively. Whilst the Meon Valley forms the western boundary the east is drawn on the County boundary. The LCA in Hampshire narrows and joins almost exactly with the Funtington to Highdown Farmlands in West Sussex. The Forest of Bere East shares some of its characteristics with its W Sussex counterpart close to the border north of Westbourne but is essentially different.



I.2 Component County Landscape Types:

Lowland Mosaic Medium Scale Wooded, Lowland mosaic Small Scale Wooded, Significant sized settlement

I.3 Composition of Borough/District LCAs:

Winchester CC:

Whiteley Woodlands
Shedfield Heathlands
Durley Claylands

Fareham BC:

Burridge/Swanwick/Whiteley
North Sarisbury Fringe
Titchfield Corridor

Eastleigh

Botley Farmlands and Woodlands
M27 Corridor
Horton Heath Undulating Farmland
Oaklands Woodland and Parkland
Knowle Hill Farmland and Woodland
Bishopstoke – Fair Oak Woodland and Farmland
Stroundwood Levels

There are strong similarities with the County landscape types and the Winchester assessment. There are some similarities with the Fareham assessment and a strong association with the Eastleigh woodland based character areas and the extent of the County Lowland Mosaic Medium Scale.

I.4 Associations with JCAs and Natural Areas:

NCA 128: South Hampshire Lowlands

NA 75: South Coast Plain and Hampshire Lowlands

2.0 Key Characteristics

- A low lying landscape with shallow undulations, predominantly south sloping.
- Varied geology with permanently saturated heavy clays in the central and southern parts and locally higher sandy outcrops which are more undulating

resulting in agriculturally poor soils – conversely rich alluvial especially around tributaries of the Hamble are very high grade..

- Locally popular accessible woodland areas.
- Permanent pasture, plantations woodland and small holdings with secluded, heavily wooded, often ancient origin but replanted, away from the major towns.
- This area is strongly associated with the Royal Forest of Bere, a hunting reserve that retains wooded and to a lesser extent, open commons, assart field and woodland patterns.
- Hedgerows often low but with individual spreading mature oaks, sometimes of ancient origin or lines of oak with no ‘understory’ hedge and occasionally isolated field specimens.
- Extensive C.20th development, including urban expansion and infilling of common-edge settlements.
- Historically, mixed settlement pattern of very low density, tending towards nucleation along streams and around heath scattered throughout the area.
- Rich biodiversity, including woodland, heathland, grassland and wetland sites.

3.0 Physical Characteristics and Land use

3.1 The topography is predominantly gently undulating, but is more steep and varied around the fringes where sand and gravel outcrops. The land gradually rises from the centre of the character area to the east, west and north, and falls away to the south. Soils are seasonally to permanently waterlogged and predominantly heavy clays. However the mixed geology and topography creates some lighter silty soils with better drainage of high to very high agricultural quality particularly around the tributaries of the upper reaches of the Hamble.

3.2 There are three dominant bedrock geology formations which run in east- west bands. From north to south they are Lambeth Group (sandy clay which runs along the boundary with the chalk). London clay and Wittering formation (sand). There are a few areas of head and river terrace deposits. Where the Lowland Mosaic Heath Associated occurs this coincides with locally elevated sand and gravel outcrops, such as Shedfield, Shirrell heath and adjacent to West End. There are numerous localised ridges and hills shown in local place names (e.g. Ridge Copse and Thistle Ridge Farm).

3.3 Land use is very mixed, with a relatively high proportion of pasture and rough grassland. Farm holdings are predominantly small in size¹⁴. The area is rich in semi natural ancient woodland, and irregular edge, blocky shaped woodland is a particularly defining characteristic – especially in the core Forest area – defined by the Lowland Mosaic Medium Scale Wooded landscape. Field edges (especially on opposite sides from tracks and lanes) are frequently formed from these woodland blocks. Magnificent spreading and sometimes ancient oak trees are a feature of hedgerows, which often have low clipped interconnecting hedges. These hedgerows are most typical in the Lowland Mosaic Small Scale Wooded landscape which contains relatively small fields. There are occasional market gardening and nurseries. Urban fringe uses are more pervasive than in the Forest of Bere East, and typically include golf courses, small retail and commercial areas, horse paddocks, high voltage power lines and scattered housing in medium sized plots.

- 3.4 The great majority of the character area falls within the upper and mid parts of the Hamble catchment. Land in the far east drains to the Meon and west of Horton Heath and Fair oak is part of the Itchen catchment. There is a dense network of chalk springs and small streams which flow south into the Hamble. Field boundary ditches are frequent features. The main tributary flows from Bishops Waltham to Botley. The landscape is less low lying and generally better drained than the Forest of Bere East. There are a few areas of standing water and ponds, especially along the spring line where land falls away from the chalk to the north and meets the lower lying clayey soils of this landscape.

4.0 Experiential/Perceptual Characteristics

- 4.1 Views are predominantly short and often with a wooded backdrop. Outside the Lowland Mosaic Medium Scale landscape housing and development is frequently in the field of view. Within the character area locally elevated land such as Curdridge, Shirrell Heath, Winterhill and Swanmore have occasional long views to the coastal plain in the south. From a distance these areas appear wooded.

- 4.2 Lanes and roads are either very straight (where they are or were associated with commons such as new Road between Swanmore and Waltham Chase), or winding and twisting. The Lowland Mosaic Medium Scale landscape has an extremely low density road network and remains relatively remote. The centre of this area is traversed by the south coast railway line. The M27 on the southern side broadly separates this character area from the development along the south coast. Junctions off the motorway which lead into the character area are often heavily trafficked.

- 4.3 There is a dense rights of way network (particularly outside the Lowland Mosaic Medium Scale Wooded landscape) supplemented by commons and countryside service sites, particularly in the Lowland Mosaic Heath Associated landscape. This brings accessible land close to settlements. Despite this the Countryside Access plan highlights that town-countryside links are poor²⁷. There are few multi user routes and they are in poor condition in relation to other landscapes in Hampshire²⁷. The Pilgrim's Trail is the only long distance trail in the character area. The landscape is a popular local destination but does not have a particular draw to those from further afield.

- 4.4 This landscape is full of contrasts. The well wooded core Forest of Bere area is intimate, remote and secluded, but its peripheral landscapes have more development and urbanising influences. These are greatest in the western and southern parts of the character area, e.g the M27 and feeder road network, edge of town development, high voltage power lines and horse paddocks.

5.0 Biodiversity Character

- 5.1 Improved grassland comprises a considerable part of this landscape character area, with neutral/ undefined semi-improved and unimproved grasslands occurring throughout the area in small to medium sized patches alongside the productive agricultural land and woodland. Woodland varies; there are small patches throughout the area, with some larger woodland mosaics comprising different types of woodland. Smaller patches are often broadleaved and there is also forestry scrub associated with some woodlands.

- 5.2 This landscape contains four SSSIs which vary in composition. Botley Wood and Everetts and Mushes Copse SSSI comprises predominantly conifer plantations established in the 1960s or before. Despite coniferisation it is of exceptional importance for its rich insect populations, dependent upon the woodland clearings, broad herb-rich rides with abundant nectar sources and relict stands of semi-natural deciduous woodland. Much of the coniferous forest was planted into former coppice-with-standards woodland, though the western section was mainly planted into wet species-rich pastureland, remnants of which are still visible along the wider rides. Moorgreen Meadows SSSI is a neutral meadows and alder wood flanking a small tributary of the River Hamble. The meadows lie on alluvium and clay with thin deposits of peat. The sward comprises at least 17 co-dominant herbs and grasses and is of exceptional scientific importance for its populations of marsh orchids. The Moors, Bishop's Waltham SSSI supports a species-rich and ecologically diverse flora including many local or rare plants confined to unimproved, damp meadows. It is probably the richest site of its kind in the Hampshire Basin and is also a LNR. It lies near the junction of the Chalk and Reading Beds and is fed by a series of springs which may yield water of differing base status since the vegetation of the meadows exhibits an interesting juxtaposition of acid and basic elements. Waltham Chase Meadow SSSI comprises a group of unimproved neutral hay meadows. Collectively they represent one of the best examples in the county of dry neutral unimproved pasture. The flora is rich and includes a number of species now scarce such as green-winged orchid, adder's-tongue, callous fruited, water-dropwort, pepper-saxifrage, southern marsh orchid and cowslip. The rich and varied flora supports a rich invertebrate fauna, including, for example, 20 species of butterfly.
- 5.3 The Forest of Bere BOA and Hamble Catchment BOA both exist in this landscape character area. The Forest of Bere BOA contains a high concentration of ancient woodlands, wooded common, wood pasture and unimproved grassland and is of particular importance for small-leaved lime woods. The Hamble Catchment BOA covers habitats associated with the River Hamble including a variety of woodland and grassland types.
- 5.4 There are nearly 200 SINCs within this landscape character area. The majority are designated for their ancient and semi-natural woodland resource, although a significant number are designated for their unimproved grassland resource.
- 6.0 Historic Character**
- 6.1 Archaeology**
- 6.1.1 In common with the wider lowland and coastal belt along the south of Hampshire, there is a distribution of Mesolithic material through this area. Although mostly artefacts, there are also sites, particularly associated with river valleys, including the Hamble.
- 6.1.2 There is no evidence of Neolithic burials or settlements in this area. However Neolithic artefacts found across the area suggest the area was exploited, possibly by the communities on the chalk to the north. This pattern appears to have continued into the Bronze Age, although there are Bronze Age burial mounds in this area.
- 6.1.3 There is an Iron Age hillfort on the high ground to the southern edge, one of three along this high ground. An Iron Age settlement has recently been discovered close

by, but settlement generally tends to be associated with the valleys. The presence of the hillfort suggests that landscape was utilised and controlled, but the absence of settlement, enclosures and field systems suggests this was not intensive exploitation.

- 6.1.4 Roman evidence is limited, despite the presence of two Roman roads. There is a significant association between the deep clays and Roman kilns in the area, which may suggest managed woodland. The distribution of Roman villas tends to be in the valleys and the chalk, but there is one villa site in the lowland mosaic. One interpretation is a Roman hunting estate with industrial activity, utilising the different aspects of extensive woodland. The woodland character is reflected in the forest status of the area subsequently and within the historic landscape character of the present landscape.

6.2 **Historic Landscape**

- 6.2.1 The character area represents the approximate extent of the Forest of Bere – Portchester, West of the Meon which was given Royal Hunting status following the Norman invasion at the end of the 11th century. Waltham Chase came under the ownership of the Bishopric of Winchester.

- 6.2.2 The core Forest of Bere landscape was heavily wooded with rough grassland, marshy areas and heath. The land was managed by verderers who enforced forest law, primarily for deer hunting, timber and coppice. Woodland was assarted to leave numerous blocky irregular shaped copses with fields in between. Piecemeal enclosure of fields and woodland occurred to create a predominantly irregular pattern and size of fields with ditches and banks. Copses, shaws and remnant oaks (which were less suitable for timber) formed the field boundaries. The area has escaped large scale woodland loss, instead undergoing further piecemeal assarting and creation of more a more regular field pattern. Some of the woodland areas have been subject to replanting with conifer plantation in the late C. 19th. Modern development has been sparse apart from the development of Whiteley village in the mid 1990s.

- 6.2.3 The Lowland Mosaic Heath Associated landscapes are associated with open and wooded commons. The two largest open commons were Netley and Waltham Chase. Following disafforestation the character of these areas changed dramatically, with parliamentary enclosure in the mid 18th century producing a regular pattern of small fields with straight boundaries. Field sizes increased with distance from settlement. These areas have been the most intensively developed, due to the local brick industry and horticultural economy. Development on Netley Common and at Hedge End has resulted in a small gap between settlements. Waltham Chase, and commons at Shedfield and Shirrell Heath have gradually been infilled by development and fields subdivided for building plots, pony paddocks and nurseries.

- 6.2.4 Lowland mosaic landscapes to the north and west represent where the landscape was more extensively cleared and informally enclosed for pasture. Typically, pre-parliamentary enclosure of this landscape created a pattern of irregular shaped small fields, with a mix of open land and assart woodland in between. By the time the Forest of Bere was disbanded in 1810 much of the Lowland Mosaic Small Scale landscape had already been the subject of informal enclosure. Areas of Lowland Mosaic Open landscape usually have regular, straight boundary fields, typical of

formal and parliamentary enclosure, as Fair Oak and Hedge End enclosure maps show²⁶. This area has become increasingly developed and expansion of settlements within such as Bishops Waltham, Hedge End and Bishopstoke and the spread of Southampton have lead to field boundary alterations and loss.

- 6.2.5 Deer parks existed at Marwell, and Bishops Waltham. Other historic parks include Stoke Park, Bishops Waltham Palace and House and Botley Grange. There are also a number of mid nineteenth century parks.

6.3 **Built Environment**

- 6.3.1 Up until the mid C. 19th the settlement pattern of the character area was low density dispersed. There are frequent place name reminders of the hunting history associated with the landscape Durley – deer wood or deer clearing Waltham Chase – Chase hunting ground outside the Royal Forest. The town of Bishops Waltham originated as a springline settlement. It was an early local market centre and retains its strong medieval grid plan of streets. Botley, at the head of the tidal section of the Hamble obtained market charter in 1267. It has grander buildings and townscape than Bishops Waltham. Both towns have concentrations of timber framed buildings.
- 6.3.2 There is a significant if low density distribution of farmsteads of medieval and 17th century origin associated with the Lowland Mosaic Small Scale landscape types. The western and northern parts of the character area experienced a substantial growth in farmsteads in the 19th century associated with market gardening. Further farmsteads were established as a result of the mid 19th century enclosure of the rest of the core Forest of Bere landscape. Small holding size and varying agricultural soil quality created an uneven and often closely spaced pattern of farms, which continued well into the 20th century. Today the core Forest of Bere remains a low density, sparsely populated area.
- 6.3.3 The establishment of the railway connections to the south coast and London fuelled the development of the local brick industry in the north and southwest of the character area while market gardening and horticulture on the better soils served the London market. Development expanded rapidly from Southampton and around the commons. Common edge settlements are a particular feature. Detached often double fronted, Victorian and Edwardian cottages and villas strung out along the main road network from settlements are particularly characteristic. They are often of red brick with blue/grey headers and clay tiled roofs, set back from the road in medium to large plots. Later infill development was piecemeal and of very varied architecture styles, often larger size than their older neighbours.
- 6.3.4 Much of the character area has seen huge increases in development in the mid-late C.20th. In addition to the infilling of common edge settlement, the settlements closest to Southampton had extensive housing estate extensions such as Bishopstoke, Fair Oak and Hedge End. The late C.20th saw incursion immediately north of the M27 and east of the Hamble into the sparsely populated core Forest of Bere area in the form of Solent Business Park and Whitely village.

EVALUATION

7.0 Forces for Change

1. New large scale urban extensions.
2. Farm conversion to residential and loss of traditional land management practices.
3. Pressure for urban fringe use related activities.
4. Enabling greater access opportunities for local people.
5. Climate change impacts on semi natural habitats.
6. Forestry and woodland management change.

KEY QUALITIES AND EFFECTS OF FORCES

7.1 <i>Remnant islands of Forest landscapes, former large commons such as Netley and Waltham Chase and assarts fringed with 19th century enclosures resulting in a well wooded landscape with thick hedges and mature oaks, particularly in the north.</i>	
FORCES FOR CHANGE:	CONSEQUENCES
1.3.4.6	Threats: Further loss of farmland and in particular hedge and hedgerow oaks. Development within or adjoining former remaining open forest landscapes.
	Opportunities: Support and influence objectives in existing and new Forest Design plans such as Whiteley pastures which look to recreate, conserve and enhance mosaic of Forest landscapes. Influence agri-environment schemes in relation to characteristic hedges and impacts e.g. run off onto adjoining woodland sites.
7.2 <i>Mixed traditional settlement pattern of nucleated spring line settlements, common heath edge and dispersed 19th century farmsteads.</i>	
FORCES FOR CHANGE:	CONSEQUENCES
1.2.3	Threats: Change from rural to suburban character extending further into the character area and in particular adjoining ancient woodland and heathy sites. Incremental small scale development of common edge settlement, particularly along main routes increasing the overall sense of unbroken development.
	Opportunities: Influence LDF policy related to this quality (Winchester, Eastleigh, Fareham councils) – in particular MDAs/SDAs (Hedge End and Whiteley) and SHLAA sites that are considered for housing allocation /reserve sites.

7.3

History of low intensity farming and exploitation, and consequently a high proportion of semi natural habitats, including ancient woodland, wet woodland, wooded common, damp unimproved grassland, heath, acid soil habitats and hedges.

FORCES FOR CHANGE:**CONSEQUENCES**

All

Threats:

Further loss of unimproved grassland to agricultural improvement.
Increasing abstraction from Hamble and Meon tributaries which have an effect on the surface and ground water levels in damp/wet habitats.
Changes in salinity to upper reaches of the Hamble, due to unrestricted change from saline to freshwater.

Opportunities:

Target agri-environment schemes and other grant funding sources towards conservation and enhancement of this key quality.
Influence River Catchment Flood plans of the Hamble, Meon and Itchen.
Support BOA target habitats for conservation, habitat linking, creation, reversion opportunities for lowland woodland, unimproved grassland, heath and damp habitats.

7.4

Very local countryside to large centres of population, including commons and Forestry Commission managed sites.

FORCES FOR CHANGE:**CONSEQUENCES**

2.3.4.6

Threats:

Over formalisation of semi-natural areas to provide recreation facilities.
Increasing access opportunities can introduce greater likelihood of conflict through misuse (e.g. fly tipping trespassing) on local farmland.

Opportunities:

Support CAP objectives; including off road links between countryside sites and improve connections north/south in relation to severance by M27.
Influence green infrastructure policy for this part of the PUSH area.

Area 8: Knowle Hill Farmland and Woodland



Description

- 4.118 This landscape character area exhibits a mosaic landscape set on a ridge and undulating valley side. It falls from a high point on Knowle Hill, now part of a public park, towards the borough boundary in the east and towards lower lying land at Horton Heath in the southwest. Field sizes vary considerably and the land has a mixture of arable pasture and amenity uses, adding to the patchwork effect. There are small copses and deciduous woodlands with an enclosed and intricate character.
- 4.119 Along the western and southern edges, the settlements of Fair Oak and Horton Heath are prominent creating a strongly defined boundary. There is a quite rapid transition through parkland fragments like The Cock Pit Farm to a truly rural landscape southeast of this area, on the edge of the borough and beyond.
- 4.120 Along Knowle Lane there is poorly screened industrial development on both sides of the lane and a landfill site on a former sand pit adjoining the golf course to the east. Frequent farmsteads and small plots occupy the rest of the lane, forming a band threading through a landscape of larger fields. The high ground west of Knowle Lane around the top of Knowle Hill forms a well wooded landmark, with very long views to the south and west from the high ground.

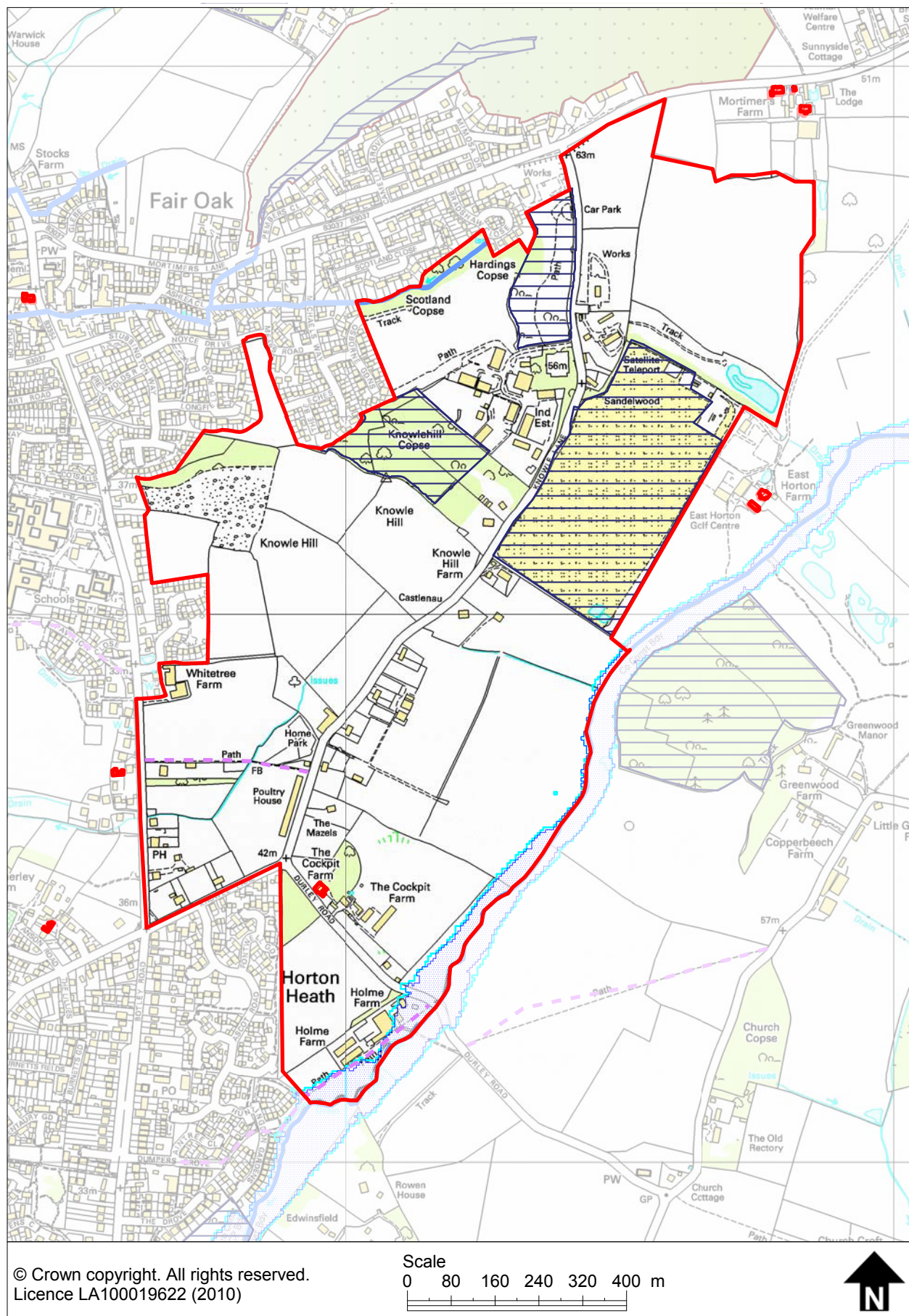
Historic Features

- 4.121 One listed building can be found in the landscape character area, along Durley Road, however it does not significantly influence the character of the landscape.



Figure 22. Former Landfill on Knowle Lane

Designations and Constraints



Key for Designation & Constraints:

	Character Area Boundary		Main River
	Area designated Ramsar, SPA* & SSSI Area		Floodzone 2
	SAC - Special Area of Conservation		Floodzone 3
	SSSI - Site of Special Scientific Interest		Right of Way
	SINC - Site of Important Nature Conservation		
	LNR - Local Nature Reserve		
	Historic Parks and Gardens		
	Conservation Area		
	Scheduled Ancient Monument		
	Listed Building		

*SPA - Special Protection Area

HCC Historic Landscape Types:

4.122 Historic landscapes types in this area are:

1.9 Small regular fields with straight boundaries (parliamentary type enclosure)

1.16 Small rectilinear fields with wavy boundaries

9.6 Post 1810 settlement (general)

11.2 Golf Course

12.2 Active and disused gravel workings

Ecological Features

4.123 This landscape character area incorporates several areas of land that have been designated as SINC. Some of this land is ancient semi-natural woodland and supports one or more 'notable species' (see appendix F). Knowle Park is designated a SINC due to the deficiency of other sites of nature conservation within the character area. It is currently undergoing improvements to provide improved habitats for species and increase its attractiveness to wildlife.

Key Characteristics

4.124 The key characteristics for this area are:

- Enclosed undulating valley landform and ridge
- Varied pattern of field sizes and cultivation
- Clusters of buildings and small fields along lanes
- Views across valley to wooded horizons north and east
- Urban influence in the western edge

Landscape Types

4.125 Landscape types as set out in the Hampshire County Council Integrated Character Assessment 2011 for this area are:

- Lowland Mosaic, Small Scale

Landscape Character Sensitivity

4.126 The landscape is predominantly rural, bounded by the urban edge of Fair Oak and Horton Heath. It has a varied landform and vegetation structure, and is attractive without being of particular distinctiveness. It has amenity value with much land being publicly accessible from Knowle Lane and the nearest residential areas. It has local wildlife value.



Figure 23. View from Knowle Hill panorama

Visual Sensitivity

4.127 The mosaic of developed land, woodland and mixture of field enclosure types limits intervisibility within the character area. The character is complicated further by the undulating landform and prominent woodland set on a ridge with views out.

Key Issues

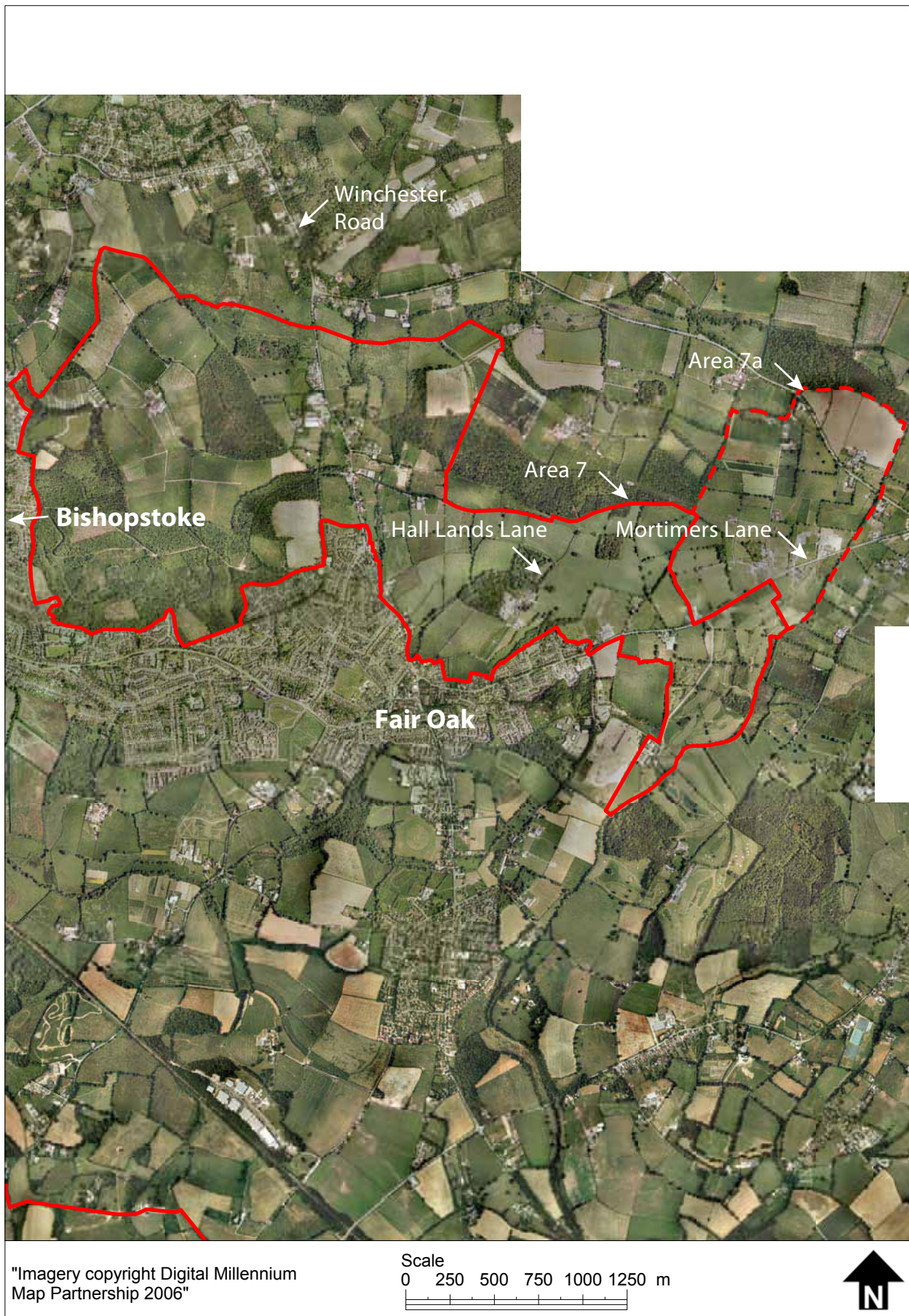
4.128 The key issues for this area are:

- Prominent industrial development in the highest point of the character area, increases pressure for further industrial uses
- Prominent urban edge of Fair Oak and Horton Heath
- Inconsistent management practices of woodland and farmland
- Development pressure on Knowle Lane and to the rear of Scotland Close



Figure 23. View from Knowle Hill panorama

Area 7: Bishopstoke- Fair Oak Woodland and Farmland



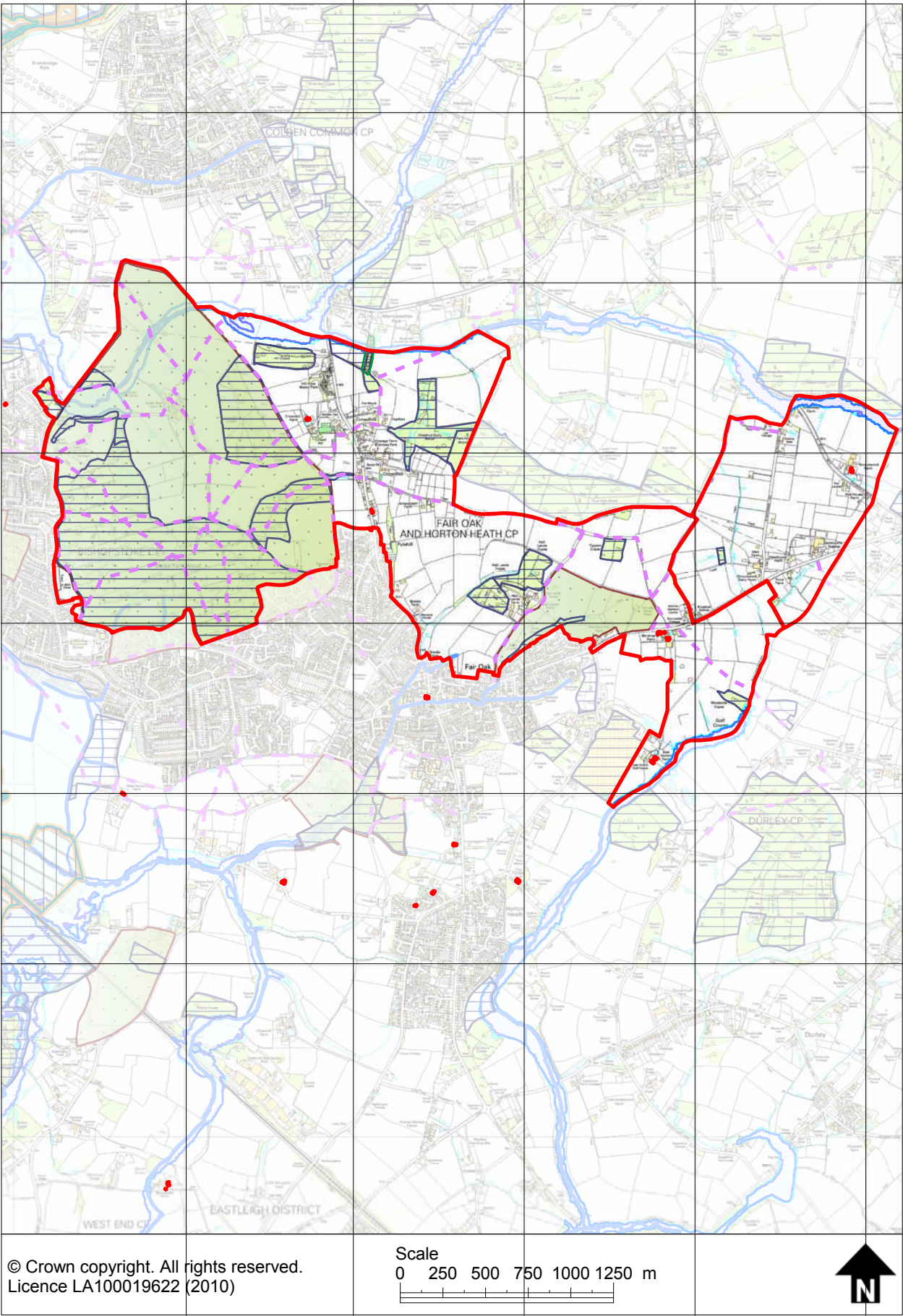
Description

- 4.99 The main unifying feature of this character area is the ridge that extends eastwards from the edge of the Itchen Valley, through Stoke Park Wood and Crowdhill/ Pylehill to Tippers Copse, where the land falls to the northeast. The full extent of the ridge cannot be seen from any one viewpoint. Settlement screens it in the south, and woodland and undulations in the landform screen views on the ridge itself and to the north. There are frequent woodlands and, in many parts, small fields with hedges and hedgerow trees. The overall impression is one of a wooded, rural landscape with views provided of substantial woodland blocks, particularly in the west of the area.
- 4.100 The B3354 Winchester Road crosses the area north-south. Settlements at Pylehill and Crowdhill have developed along the road, mainly to the west, and there is a distinctly urban fringe character. In the east the landscape character becomes more fragmented. There is a rather degraded parkland character around The Little Dower House, Mortimers Lane and the strong hedgerow pattern is disrupted by the golf course south of Mortimers Lane.
- 4.101 The majority of the western and southern boundaries of the character area are formed by the settlement edges of Bishopstoke and Fair Oak. The northern and eastern boundaries are less clearly defined, although in part are delineated by water courses.
- 4.102 In the north-east corner of the character area, as the land slopes away from the ridge, the former Stroud Wood Common is now an area of small rectilinear fields in pasture use forming a distinct sub-area, the Stroud Wood Pastures, (7a).



Figure 18. View south from Hallands Lane

Designations and Constraints



Key for Designation & Constraints:

	Character Area Boundary		Main River
	Area designated Ramsar, SPA* & SSSI Area		Floodzone 2
	SAC - Special Area of Conservation		Floodzone 3
	SSSI - Site of Special Scientific Interest		Right of Way
	SINC - Site of Important Nature Conservation		
	LNR - Local Nature Reserve		
	Historic Parks and Gardens		
	Conservation Area		
	Scheduled Ancient Monument		
	Listed Building		

*SPA - Special Protection Area

Historic Features

- 4.103 Stoke Park Woods in the west of the character area is included on the Hampshire Historic Parks and Gardens register. In addition, Fair Oak Park towards the southeast of the area has been proposed to be listed:
- 4.104 Fair Oak Park – “Proposed for listing – no information available.”
- 4.105 Stoke Park Woods - “Deer park referred to as Stoke Wood; used as a hunting ground by King John 1205; wood has changed little in size since medieval times; in park 1242 for Bishop of Winchester; woodland walks; managed by Forestry Commission.”
- 4.106 In the north of the character area near Winchester Road there is a Scheduled Monument:
- 4.107 Park Pale At Marwell, South Of Fisher’s Pond (Monument No. 20001).
- 4.108 There are a number of listed buildings scattered through the character area, although these have no significance contribution to the overall character of the area.



Figure 19. View north from Stoke Park Woods panorama

HCC Historic Landscape Types:

4.109 Historic landscapes types in this area are:

- 1.6 Medium to large regular fields with wavy boundaries (late medieval to 17th/18th century enclosure)
- 1.9 Small regular fields with straight boundaries (parliamentary type enclosure)
- 1.16 Small rectilinear fields with wavy boundaries
- 4.1 Assart pre-1810 woodland
- 4.3 Other pre-1810 woodland
- 4.4 Replanted other pre-1810 woodland
- 4.5 19th century plantations (general)
- 7.7 Fishponds, hatchery complexes, natural ponds and lakes
- 9.6 Post 1810 Settlement
- 9.7 Village or hamlet 1810 extent

Ecological Features

- 4.110 Stoke Park has been identified as a priority area within the BAP. Large areas of woodland provide suitable habitats for many species associated with woodland cover. The Dormouse, badgers, Roe deer and a number of rare butterflies are known to live here. The area has a network of hedgerows that create green corridors through which woodland animals can move from woodland to woodland.
- 4.111 There are a number of sites of differing habitat types that have been designated as SINCs because of their nature conservation significance. The area has a network of hedgerows that creates green corridors through which woodland animals can move from woodland to woodland.



Figure 19. View north from Stoke Park Woods panorama

Key Characteristics

4.112 The key characteristics for this area are:

- Undulating ridge
- Frequent woodland blocks
- Rectilinear pattern of small fields with good hedgerow trees
- Small copses add to wooded character
- Views across rural landscape from the northern edge and to the south from woodland clearings
- Prominent roadside residential development
- Distinct sub-area with a very strong hedgerow pattern to the north east



Figure 20. Stoke Park Woods



Figure 21. View west from Stroudwood Lane panorama

Landscape Types

4.113 Landscape types as set out in the Hampshire County Council Integrated Character Assessment 2011 for this area are:

- Lowland Mosaic, Medium Scale
- Lowland Mosaic, Small Scale

Landscape Character Sensitivity

4.114 Overall it is an attractive landscape with Stoke Park Woods and the sub area (7a) providing distinctive features that have amenity and wildlife value.

4.115 Contained within the area is a very distinctive parkland landscape.

Visual Sensitivity

4.116 The area is predominantly rural, with woodlands, for the most part, shielding the development at the urban edge. It has an undulating landform, good vegetation cover, and often has wide views out. The significant woodland elements in this area can be seen from some distance away.

Key Issues

4.117 The key issues for this area are:

- The erosion of the rural character of Winchester Road through increased levels of residential development
- The number of ecological sites in the area which need to be interconnected
- The distinctively different character between area 7 and 7a



Figure 21. View west from Stroudwood Lane panorama

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER TYPE:

Lowland Mosaic Small Scale

Confined to central southern Hampshire, subtle differences to other lowland mosaic types.



SIMILAR AND ASSOCIATED TYPES HAMPSHIRE DISTRICT AND BOROUGH LEVEL ASSESSMENTS

Basingstoke:	Primary Associations: Mixed Farmland and Woodland, Mixed farmland and Woodland Small Scale. Secondary Associations: Enclosed Valley Sides, Enclosed Valley Floor Farmland, Small Scale Minor Valleys.
East Hampshire	Mixed Farmland and Woodland
Eastleigh	Farmsteads and Small Fields, Undulating Farmland, Golf Course.
Fareham	n/a
Gosport	n/a
Hart	Mixed Farmland and Woodland Large Scale (unsure why the difference in perception of scale).
Havant	n/a
New Forest	Ancient Forest Farmlands, Enclosed Farmland and Woodland.
Rushmoor	n/a
Test Valley	Mixed Farmland and Woodland Small Scale (some Mixed Farmland and Woodland Small Scale)
Winchester	Mixed Farmland and Woodland, Pasture on Clay, Mixed Farmland and Woodland Enclosed.

SIMILAR AND ASSOCIATED TYPES IN NEIGHBOURING AUTHORITY ASSESSMENTS

Dorset	
West Berkshire	
West Sussex	
Wiltshire	

KEY IDENTIFYING CHARACTERISTICS AND BOUNDARY DEFINITIONS

- Low lying silty clay, but not sandy soils, that are seasonally wet and waterlogged in parts but also with better drained areas.
- The soils support predominantly permanent pasture land use.
- Less marginal farmed areas than the lowland mosaic medium scale and lowland mosaic heath associated types.
- Often small enclosures, small areas of woodland and undulating topography which produces the sense of a small scale landscape.
- Associated mostly with small chalk fed streams apart from where they border the New Forest perambulation where they are more acidic.
- Generally, high to very high density of dispersed small farmsteads and hamlets and associated with nucleated spring line settlements in the south and north Hampshire lowlands.
- Small semi natural and ancient woodland copses and hedges of varying character.
- Frequently a high density of public rights of way and winding lanes.
- Varying periods and types of enclosure but generally small scale but has some of the earliest enclosures out of all the lowland mosaic types – perhaps indicating less marginal and richer soils.
- Particular association with hamlets and villages of medieval and Saxon origin often associated with wood and wood clearance.

PHYSICAL

GEOLOGY, LANDFORM, ELEVATION:

Bedrock and Superficial Geology: London clay and Wittering formations typically close to the surface with little alluvial and superficial deposits.

Landform and Elevation: Shallow and relatively flat, low lying stream valley bottom landscapes.

SOILS TYPES:

Typical soil type pattern: Clay soils, types 711g and better drained only slight seasonal waterlogging 712c.

FUNCTIONS:

Hydrological function: Minor groundwater vulnerability zones, no source protection zones.

Food and Biomass: Very mixed grade soils, from grade I to unclassified. The best soils tend to be associated with the narrow stream floodplains. Variable biomass potential due to the variability in soils.

Biodiversity potential: Very little habitat creation potential for chalk grassland, heath and ancient woodland reversion.

LANDCOVER AND LAND USE PATTERN:

Similar size of fields to Lowland Mosaic Small Scale Wooded, but with hardly any woodland cover. Hedged small field size (below 3 to 4 ha), generally well connected. Belts of mature trees are typical. Boundaries tend to be thickly wooded and treed. Dominated by improved grassland and pasture land use. Not associated with sand and gravel mineral extraction.

HYDROLOGY:

These landscapes are located close to the bottom of local hydrological basins where there is good access to streams. The presence of small streams is a fundamental part of their character.

EXPERIENTIAL

ACCESS AND TRANSPORT ROUTES:

Moderate PRow network density (rural lanes, bridleways and footpaths.) emanating from settlements – typically less dense on the more waterlogged clay soils.

Generally minor road network which tends to be quite dense and comparable with the Lowland Mosaic Heath Associated LCTs. 'Doorstep' countryside for many local people – little or no open access land and commons.

TRANQUILLITY:

Not identified as being tranquil, but mapped as transitional areas between low and moderate tranquillity levels in the CPRE 2006 work.

CULTURAL ASSOCIATIONS:

BIODIVERSITY

The Lowland Mosaic Small Scale landscape character type is a wooded agricultural landscape comprising improved grassland and arable land with woodland, unimproved grassland and occasional heath associated habitats.

Hedgerows are of various form and typically have mature trees. Some may be of ancient origin and associated with woodland pre disafforestation. In places the network is relatively dense, however, this density is inconsistent within the type and some locations are relatively open and unenclosed. Arable land and grassland improved for agriculture can support bird species include curlew, corn bunting and grey partridge.

There is a substantial resource of unimproved or semi-improved grassland within the Lowland Mosaic Small Scale landscape character type. Such grasslands are most likely associated with grazing or hay meadows and provide an important resource of more biodiverse grasslands within this arable landscape: unimproved grasslands play a vital role in supporting farmland associated species and biodiversity. Most grassland is neutral; however, there is some acid grassland and occasional patches of base rich fen within this landscape.

Patches of heathland habitats exist within the Lowland Mosaic Small Scale landscape character type, including both wet and dry heaths – but to a much lesser extent than the heath associated lowland mosaic. Where this type fringes the new Forest and Wealden area, heathland habitats exist when tree growth has been suppressed, often historically, through grazing and clearance. Dry heath supports heather and bristle bent grass and usually exist on higher, better drained ground. Lower down, as drainage becomes impeded, the species mix alters and indicates a wet heath habitat. Species including purple moor grass and cross leaved heath indicate acid fen. Acid fens have a similar character to wet heath, although there tends to be less heather associated with fens.

Woodland varies, there is a significant amount of ancient and semi-natural woodland, along with mixed and coniferous plantations, new tree growth and some parkland/ trees scattered over grassland (wood pasture). Wood pasture can represent areas where timber cropping and livestock grazing have historically undertaken concurrently and are often species rich. There is active coppice with standards and active coppice without standards in this landscape. Hazel coppice with oak and ash standards is a widespread habitat in Hampshire relating from the

historical production of wattle sheep hurdling. Hazel coppice woodlands can support rich flora and butterfly populations if the coppice is active and regularly cut.

Two BOAs exist within this landscape character type:

- Rother Valley BOA identifies opportunities for lowland meadow, wet woodland, reedbed and lowland fen habitat creation and enhancement.
- Ampfield – Baddesley – Chilworth – Lordworth BOA identifies opportunities for lowland heath, lowland mixed deciduous woodland, lowland dry acid grassland, wet woodland and lowland meadow habitat creation and enhancement.

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

ARCHAEOLOGY

There is light evidence of exploitation during the Mesolithic and Neolithic. In the Bronze Age there is little evidence and no suggestion that this is a farmed or settled landscape, and there are few Bronze Age burial mounds except along the fringes of the Avon valley. Likewise in Iron Age there is little evidence of settlement, although there is some on the fringes of the Avon valley. However, where the river valleys cut through the bands of lowland mosaic there are several examples where the valley is marked by an Iron Age hill fort, such as at Buckland (Lymington), or Bulls Down Copse (Loddon). In the Roman period there are some Villa sites on the margins of these areas suggesting that exploitation, such as for woodland, hunting and quasi industrial activity such as pottery or tile production is making them slightly less marginal. There is a close correlation between lowland mosaic landscapes and pottery/tile production which may well reflect the availability of clay and fuel. In the medieval period assart landscapes, moats and deer parks, speak eloquently of the release of forest land to farming at this late stage in the evolution of the landscape.

HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

Landscapes which have a high proportion small scale field enclosures. They can be recent formal enclosures, with a previous use as common land or small scale informal enclosures or small field assarts with little remaining woodland. There are few copses and woodland although hedges may be well treed – compared with the Lowland Mosaic Small Scale Wooded. May include late enclosure of parts of commons which were heathy and open rather than wooded.

HISTORIC BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Settlement types by form:

There is frequently a high density of small dispersed hamlets and farmsteads associated with this type where it occurs in north and south Hampshire lowlands. The land has been typically more intensively farmed and managed than the medium scale and heath associated lowland mosaic types.

Building materials and type:

Traditionally local clay tile and brick were used. There also tends to be a higher proportion of pre 1750 and timber framed buildings than other lowland types.

VISIBILITY

Prominency: Locally low lying, intervisibility with other landscape types reduced because of the latter's relatively high presence of woodland.

Enclosure: Very enclosed intimate landscape, due to the small fields with high hedges and the higher surrounding land.

Public perceptions: Although close to large centres of population of central southern Hampshire, the landscape is still very rural and valued as local countryside, visible from often heavily trafficked rural roads.

Appendix EDP 4

Site Photographs/Representative Photoviewpoints (edp7852_d022b 01 February 2024 GYo/MMm)

Photoviewpoint EDP 1: Along Footpath HP/085/21/1

Photoviewpoint EDP 2: Meeting point of Footpath HP/085/17/1 and Mortimers Lane

Photoviewpoint EDP 3: Along Footpath HP/085/17/1 within East Horton Golf Course

Photoviewpoint EDP 4: Along Pembers Hill Drive

Photoviewpoint EDP 5: Along Knowle Lane

Photoviewpoint EDP 6: Along HP/069/17/3

Photoviewpoint EDP 7: Along PRow Footpath HP/235/21/2

Photoviewpoint EDP 8: Along Bridleway HP/085/23/1

Photoviewpoint EDP 9: Along Footpath HP/185/35b/1

Photoviewpoint EDP 10: Along Footpath HP/022/39/1

Photoviewpoint EDP 11: Along Footpath HP/069/24/1

Photoviewpoint EDP 12: No access to Footpath HP/026/1/1 due to construction activity

Photoviewpoint EDP 13: Along Itchen Way Promoted Route

Photoviewpoint EDP 14: Along Footpath HP/085/17/1, within field parcel adjacent to site

Photoviewpoint EDP 15: Along HP/054/22/2

Photoviewpoint EDP 16: Along HP/054/18/3