

PART THREE

KEY SETTLEMENTS

KEY SETTLEMENTS

INTRODUCTION

The following pages present the findings of a more detailed analysis of the character and sensitivities of the landscape surrounding a number of key settlements. These comprise the District's main local service centres, with the addition of Ducklington (because of its proximity to Witney) and Milton-under-Wychwood, as a secondary local centre within the AONB. The ten key settlements are:

- Bampton
- Burford
- Carterton
- **Charlbury**
- Chipping Norton
- Ducklington
- Eynsham
- Milton-under-Wychwood
- Witney
- Woodstock

For each Settlement, the landscape around its immediate fringes is divided into sectors which are described in turn under the following headings:

- landscape characteristics - a summary of the main features which characterise the landscape surrounding the settlement;
- visual characteristics - a summary of the degree to which the landscape is open or enclosed by landform or vegetation and exposed to views;
- key landscape sensitivities and considerations - a summary of the key factors that affect landscape quality and may influence its ability to accommodate change.

The accompanying maps identify a number of key features, briefly explained below.

Landmark - visually prominent and distinctive landscape features, such as church spires, which **are important to** the character of the settlement. It is particularly important to maintain views of these features.

Hard urban edge - where development forms a stark and visually prominent 'edge' to the settlement. This type of edge is often characteristic of more recent, higher density development which is regimented and lacking in variety and form, bounded by fences rather than hedgerows with a poor landscape structure within the built area. The edges require 'softening' and 'breaking up' (eg. through planting) to help integrate development within the landscape.

Strong landscape edges - where landscape features, typically landform (valleys or ridges) and belts of vegetation (hedgerows, trees, woods etc.) form a strong boundary and help to define the physical or 'natural' setting of the settlement. Where the landscape edge to a settlement is weak (eg. with few trees and fences replacing hedgerows) the creation of a strong, defensible landscape edge is beneficial, creating a distinct but 'soft' boundary between 'town' and country.

Stronger/weaker landscape structure - the condition and 'intactness' of the structural components of the landscape (eg hedgerows, trees, woods, field patterns, walls etc.) affect landscape quality and visual sensitivity. Where these elements are strong, the landscape is often more attractive and in 'good health' and views may be restricted. Where they are weak or absent, the landscape may lack the diversity and quality of other areas but is likely to be visually sensitive and exposed to views. A combination of these factors will influence its overall sensitivity to change.

Open views - particularly open views across the surrounding landscape, both inwards and outwards from the settlement. The arrows indicate particularly prominent and visually sensitive areas or important views to be maintained.

Key areas - the division of the surrounding landscape into sectors which **may have** characteristics in common. The outwards boundary of these sectors is arbitrary and simply marks the general distance away from the settlement over which the analysis was undertaken.

KEY SETTLEMENT BAMPTON

(CHARACTER AREA: 10)

A: BAMPTON NORTH

Landscape characteristics

- mixture of open, rolling vale farmland and semi enclosed flat vale farmland following Shill Brook;
- east of the A4095, gently rolling farmland, weak landscape structure;
- large scale, predominantly arable in rectilinear pattern;
- urban/rural boundary quite distinct;
- west of A4095, smaller scale, mostly arable, stronger landscape structure;
- soft rural edge merges with urban edge;

Visual characteristics

- rolling topography and intervening vegetation masks urban edge east of A4095;
- urban edge also partially softened by vegetation;
- important views of town on approach including church spire;
- attractive rural edge to the town east of A4095.

Key sensitivities and considerations

- need to maintain quality of rural edge north of the town;
- important to consider silhouette of town viewed from the north; very sensitive to change;
- need to strengthen landscape structure west of A4095.

B: BAMPTON EAST

Landscape characteristics

- mostly, open, rolling vale farmland and a small area of open flat vale farmland in the north east adjoining a similarly large area of semi enclosed flat vale farmland south of the 64449;
- predominantly large rectilinear arable fields;
- open in character;
- weak landscape structure, few trees, gappy hedgerows and fences;
- very clearly defined edge between rural and urban;

Visual characteristics

- generally high intervisibility north of the B4449, open views and prominent skylines viewed from the urban edge;
- views out from urban edge very open but generally unspoilt;
- harsh urban edge along the eastern boundary of Bampton, prominent buildings, road lighting etc;
- urban edge slightly scruffy appearance in places;
- church spire an important landmark.

Key sensitivities and considerations

- need to soften appearance of the eastern edge of Bampton;
- need to strengthen landscape structure particularly in the open vale landscapes;
- need to resist any further urbanisation of road corridor outside the urban area;
- special attention should be given to strengthening landscape edges.

C: BAMPTON SOUTH

Landscape characteristics

- mixture of open, flat vale farmland west of Buckland Road and semi-enclosed flat vale farmland to the east;
- triangular area of land at Calais Farm is mostly small scale pasture;
- low-lying, good hedgerow structure, mostly attractive but scruffy in places, few urban influences;
- soft rural edge merges with urban edge
- large open area south has a fringe of well vegetated small scale pasture north of Shill Brook but is predominantly large scale open arable fields;
- weak landscape structure, few trees, gappy hedgerows;
- detracting presence of 'urban' uses, recreation ground, car parking, sewage works, radio station.

Visual characteristics

- high intervisibility across open area
- prominent intrusive urban elements such as recreation floodlighting, radio masts, sewage works ;
- poor approach into Bampton on Buckland Road due to ribbon development and other urban influences;
- urban edge north of Shill Brook softened by vegetation;
- important views of town on approach including church spire.

Key sensitivities and considerations

- need to resist further urbanisation of countryside south of Bampton;
- need to strengthen structure of open landscapes;
- need to integrate existing uses within a stronger landscape structure;
- need to improve approach to Bampton along Buckland Road.

D: BAMPTON WEST AND SHILL BROOK

Landscape characteristics

- ribbon of semi-enclosed floodplain pasture following Shill Brook. Further west semi-enclosed flat farmland and more open flat farmland beyond;
- western edge of Bampton dominated by the attractive composition of floodplain, mature willow and the church;
- rural edge penetrates into the heart of the town, very soft and pastoral;
- semi-enclosed, strong landscape structure;
- further west more open, large arable fields and a weaker landscape structure; fewer trees and hedgerows.



View of the western edge of Bampton

Visual characteristics

- generally low intervisibility due to mature vegetation and small scale landscape;
- high intervisibility further west;
- attractive approach into the town from the west;
- important high quality views of the church and pastoral edge of the town from the west, extremely sensitive to change;
- equally attractive views out from the urban edge along Shill Brook.

Key sensitivities and considerations

- need to resist any change to the rural character along the western fringe of the town;
- need to maintain strong landscape character particularly in the floodplain;
- need to maintain the quality of the approach from the west;
- important to avoid any change which might interfere with important views.

KEY SETTLEMENT BURFORD

(CHARACTER AREAS: 8,9)

A: NORTH OF BURFORD

Landscape characteristics

- semi-enclosed valley floor farmland;
- highly distinctive and attractive flat valley floor, predominantly pasture;
- low lying, riparian character;
- mature willows, strong landscape structure;
- distinct boundary between edge of town and valley floor.

Visual characteristics

- moderate intervisibility, distant views limited by topography and intervening vegetation;
- good views along the valley floor;
- classic pastoral view from approach on A424 - composition of valley floor, Cotswold stone bridge, buildings and church nestling in the valley;
- mature vegetation - soft urban edge;
- **A361** corridor through Fulbrook - too urban in character;
- important elevated views over Burford and the valley from Fulbrook and Westhall Hill;
- traffic on A40 visible on the skyline.



View of Burford from Fulbrook

Key sensitivities and considerations

- classic view of Burford - very sensitive to change;
- need to maintain strong landscape structure;
- approach on both A424 and A361 already urban in character in places - need to resist increased urbanisation such as kerbs, signage, lighting etc., particularly through Fulbrook;
- need to maintain strategic gap between Fulbrook and Burford.

B: EAST OF BURFORD

Landscape characteristics

- semi-enclosed valley side farmland;
- north-facing valley side, steep in places
- medium scale rectilinear fields, predominantly arable;
- good hedgerow structure but open character in parts;
- distinct boundary between urban area and open land.

Visual characteristics

- moderate to high intervisibility, distant views along and across the valley;
- valleyside/urban edge very visible from Fulbrook;
- classic distant view of the church spire approaching Burford on the A40;
- urban edge harsh in places, particularly viewed from A40 entering Burford and on Witney Street;
- urban silhouette from valley floor harsh in places;
- high quality views out over the valley from the urban edge;
- Traffic on A40 visible on the skyline.

Key sensitivities and considerations

- urban edge needs softening;
- any changes to the urban edge would be highly visible from a number of key vantage points;
- need to strengthen landscape structure on valley sides, particularly close to the **A40**.

C: SOUTH OF BURFORD

Landscape characteristics

- open limestone wolds farmland and amenity landscape;
- south of the **A40** - elevated open farmland, weak landscape structure;
- rural character affected by presence of garden centre/ nursery, golf course, large houses on the **64020** and Burford School;
- rural character similarly affected by busy **A40**;
- boundary between urban area and open land complicated by the uses described above;
- mature vegetation helps soften edges.

Visual characteristics

- high intervisibility on open farmland - very limited visibility within edge uses described above;
- **A40** follows ridgeline which is highly visible over a wide area;
- classic views of Burford from the **A40** eastern approach and long distance views across the valley;
- **A40** character very urbanised between Burford Garden Centre and Burford School.
- **A361** approach affected by suburban character of golf course.

Key sensitivities and considerations

- need to resist any further urbanisation of the **A40** corridor - any changes would be highly visible - opportunity to make improvements to Witney Street - avenue trees?;
- **need to strengthen landscape structure** particularly on open farmland - repair walls etc;
- need to soften landscape edge at Garden Centre - screen car parking etc and soften edge west of Burford School;

- need to strengthen landscape structure on the urban edge.

D: WEST OF BURFORD

Landscape characteristics

- open limestone wolds farmland and semi-enclosed valley side farmland;
- either side of the **A40** - elevated open farmland, weak landscape structure;
- predominantly arable, large scale;
- break in slope - smaller scale fields, good hedgerows, still open in character;
- area around the Priory well-wooded and enclosed;
- low key recreation ground and playing fields act as a buffer on urban edge;
- boundary between urban area and open land partly complicated by the uses described above;
- mature vegetation helps soften edges;
- Priory Wood a key landscape feature on the western edge of the town;
- rural fringe attractive and unspoilt

Visual characteristics

- high intervisibility on open farmland immediately west of the town;
- important views of Burford from the **A40** western approach and long distance views across the valley;
- urban edge quite soft;
- distant views of western edge from the north limited by Priory Wood.

Key sensitivities and considerations

- need *to* strengthen landscape structure particularly on open farmland - repair walls etc;
- need to maintain and enhance landscape structure at the urban edge;
- low key recreation areas important as a buffer.

KEY SETTLEMENT CARTERTON

(CHARACTER AREA: 9)

A NORTH OF CARTERTON

landscape characteristics

- open limestone wolds farmland and rural fringe landscapes;
- mostly large-scale, gently rolling farmland mostly arable;
- large rectilinear fields, weak landscape structure;
- plateau location;
- land forms an important buffer between Carterton and Shilton;
- part of area allocated for development;
- small area of rural fringe including 'horsiculture';
- small area of recreational land;
- urban/rural edge untidy and 'straggly'.

Visual characteristics

- high intervisibility over most of the area to the north, views limited within fringe area, hidden pockets of land;
- ridgeline east of Shilton carrying the B4020 - very sensitive to landscape change;
- urban edge softened by vegetation but scruffy appearance;
- intrusive features such as floodlighting.

Key sensitivities and considerations

- need to strengthen landscape edge;
- need to improve overall landscape quality and ensure that new development on allocated land strengthens the landscape edge and maintains buffer between Carterton and Shilton.

B: EAST OF CARTERTON

Landscape characteristics

- open limestone wolds farmland, rural fringe farmland and airfield;
- mostly large-scale, gently rolling farmland mostly arable;
- large rectilinear fields, weak landscape structure;
- plateau location;
- small area of rural fringe including 'horsiculture';
- large part of the area allocated for development..
- urban rural edge quite distinct except along the Carterton Road corridor where urban edge is more 'straggly';
- perimeter buildings, structure and boundary treatment of Brize Norton Airfield adversely affect the landscape gap separating Carterton and Brize Norton village.

Visual characteristics

- high intervisibility, extensive, uninterrupted views across open land;
- views out over countryside to the north largely unspoilt by urban influences;
- views east in and out of Carterton dominated by intrusive presence of airfield;
- prominent urban edge to Carterton, highly visible on the skyline;
- dreary urban character of approach road from the east, numerous intrusive urban elements.



View of urban edge of Carterton approaching from the east

Key sensitivities and considerations

- need to substantially raise environmental quality throughout the whole area and ensure that new development strengthens landscape edges;
- need to soften existing harsh urban edges and to improve the landscape quality of the main approach into Carterton from the east;
- need to strengthen landscape structure of farmland, more hedgerows/stone walls and more hedgerow trees;
- need to maintain strategic gap between Carterton and Brize Norton village.

C BLACK BOURTON (LAND SOUTH OF BRIZE NORTON AIRFIELD)

Landscape characteristics

- semi-enclosed flat vale farmland;
- mostly flat arable land with strong landscape structure of willow-lined ditches, hedgerows; and occasional woodland blocks;
- attractive smaller scale character around Black Bourton;
- occasional intrusive elements such as mushroom farm, sewage works and the airfield.

Visual characteristics

- low to moderate intervisibility over most of the area to the south, views filtered by intervening vegetation;
- scruffy appearance to edge of airfield;
- intrusive features such as security fencing and large buildings and structures.

Key sensitivities and considerations

- need to maintain strong landscape structure to assist in containment of intrusive elements;
- need to maintain attractive landscape character around Black Bourton;
- **need to improve landscape edge to the airfield.**

D: WEST OF CARTERTON

Landscape characteristics

- enclosed, minor valley and open limestone wolds farmland,
- attractive, steep, well-vegetated minor valley immediately to the west of Carterton, provides a very strong landscape edge;
- open, elevated, large scale rectilinear fields beyond the valley to the west;
- strong landscape edge reinforced by topography;
- rural character largely unaffected by urban influences.

Visual characteristics

- generally high intervisibility except in the river valley where views in and out are limited by topography and intervening vegetation;
- urban edge strongly silhouetted in views from the west and very sensitive to change;
- mature vegetation generally softens urban edge;
- **good** unspoilt views out from urban edge;
- **good** landscape approach from the west along B4020.

Key sensitivities and considerations

- minor valley an important landscape resource and sensitive to change;
- western edge of Carterton sensitive to change - particularly sensitive skyline;
- need to maintain landscape strength along western fringe and particularly within the minor valley.

KEY SETTLEMENT CHARLBURY

(CHARACTER AREA: 6)

A: NORTH AND WEST OF CHARLBURY

Landscape characteristics

- enclosed, minor valley, semi-enclosed valley-side farmland, and semi-enclosed limestone wolds farmland;
- all the landscapes described are small to medium scale with a strong landscape structure;
- attractive mosaic of small-scale, irregular-shaped fields with thick hedgerows;
- important contribution to the setting of the town;
- small scale valley intimate character - acts as a strong landscape edge to the urban area;
- steep valley sides up to **10%**;
- largely unspoilt by urban influences.

Visual characteristics

- low to moderate intervisibility, with thick hedgerows and hedgerow trees limiting views;
- urban edge of Charlbury prominent above the valley - view partially softened by backdrop of vegetation;
- attractive views **out** from the urban edge across the valley.

Key sensitivities and considerations

- northern edge to Charlbury prominent and sensitive to change;
- attractive small scale valley particularly sensitive.

B: NORTH AND EAST OF CHARLBURY

Landscape characteristics

- open limestone wolds farmland and semi-enclosed limestone wolds farmland;
- mixture of medium to large scale open, elevated farmland with a weak landscape structure in places and medium scale farmland with thick hedgerows and hedgerow trees;
- predominantly arable;
- largely unspoilt, but some rural fringe activities including quarrying, horseculture;
- good landscape structure generally, slightly weaker in open areas.

Visual characteristics

- open areas, high intervisibility, elevated views over Charlbury to Wychwood Forest;
- moderate intervisibility within the valley (Clarke's Bottom), high intervisibility **on** more open farmland higher up the valley sides;
- **open** land quite prominent;
- very few intrusive buildings or structures, quarry well-hidden, other rural fringe uses visible but not especially prominent

Key sensitivities and considerations

- need to strengthen landscape structure in open areas;
- elevated **areas** very prominent any changes are likely to be highly visible;
- need to maintain distant views across the valley.

C: EAST OF CHARLBURY

Landscape characteristics

- minor valley and semi-enclosed, large-scale limestone wolds farmland;
- attractive, medium scale farmland with strong landscape structure, mixture of pasture and arable;
- thick hedgerows and small woodland blocks;
- rising ground behind Charlbury dissected by steep sided minor valley ;
- boundary between urban edge and countryside blurred by topography, individual properties set in woodland and new housing;
- important to the setting of Charlbury and a strong landscape edge;
- southern boundary more distinct;
- very few urban influences on surrounding land.

Visual characteristics

- low to moderate intervisibility with thick hedgerows and hedgerow trees limiting views;
- urban edge very soft - except where new housing has been built ;
- mature landscape forms an important backdrop to town;
- views out from urban edge limited by vegetation and topography;
- good views across the Evenlode Valley from Charlbury where vegetation permits and from more open land on the southern boundary;
- attractive green approach into Charlbury on the B4437.

Key sensitivities and considerations

- need to maintain strong landscape structure on **eastern and southern boundary**;
- small scale valley important local landscape feature - vulnerable to change;
- any changes on higher ground likely to be prominent and likely to affect sensitive skyline;
- need to maintain green approach from **84437**.

D: WEST OF CHARLBURY

landscape characteristics

- semi-enclosed valley floor farmland semi-enclosed valley-side farmland;
- Evenlode Valley forms a strong landscape edge to Charlbury;
- attractive valley side and valley floor with strong landscape structure;
- mixture of small scale pasture, arable and parkland with mature trees;
- very few detracting influences - sewage works largely hidden - industrial units hidden by the station;
- mostly gardens forming the boundary of the urban area.

Visual characteristics

- medium intervisibility - views limited by intervening vegetation and topography;
- important views across and along the valley in both directions;
- properties at Dyers Hill quite prominent;
- important local landmarks such as the church;
- silhouette of town very important when viewed from the valley floor and from elevated ground on the other side of the valley;
- urban edge very soft - except in a small area around Wesley Barrell and new houses;
- elevated western approach from B4437 - views very important.



View of Charlbury from the west on the B4437

Key sensitivities and considerations

- valley floor and valley sides important landscape types and sensitive to change;
- need to maintain strong landscape structure and attractive pastoral character on valley sides;
- need to maintain mature landscape structure within urban fabric;
- Dyers Hill area very sensitive to change;
- need to soften urban edge around Wesley Barrell and new housing;
- need to maintain quality of the approach on 64437 from the west

KEY SETTLEMENT CHIPPING NORTON

(CHARACTER AREAS: 1,3)

A: WEST OF CHIPPING NORTON

Landscape characteristics

- semi-enclosed valleys and ridges ;
- steep valley sides, 10%-6% north and south facing;
- important contribution to the setting of the town;
- small scale pasture, strong landscape structure and strong landscape edge;
- attractive mosaic of small-scale irregular-shaped fields with thick hedgerows;
- mix of uses in valley bottom set within a mature landscape structure;
- back gardens, small fields and vegetation within the urban envelope blur the edge between the urban area and open land.

Visual characteristics

- moderate to high intervisibility within the valley, good views in all directions;
- attractive silhouette of the town seen from the north;
- Bliss Mill a major landmark and 'eyecatcher';
- soft urban edge;
- very few intrusive buildings or structures.

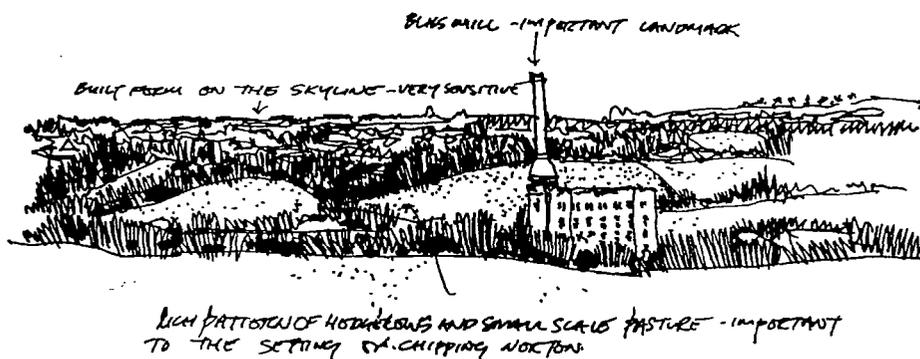
Key sensitivities and considerations

- skyline very sensitive to change;
- landscape pattern of valley very distinctive and vulnerable to change;
- valley side landscape integral to the quality of the views, any changes are likely to be highly visible.

B: NORTH WEST OF CHIPPING NORTON

Landscape characteristics

- semi-enclosed valleys and ridges;
- steep valley sides, 10%-6% north and south facing;
- important contribution to the setting of the town and a strong landscape edge;
- mixture of well wooded small scale pasture in the valley and larger scale more open arable farmland higher up on the northern slopes;
- parkland characteristics next to A44;
- strong landscape structure, slightly weaker in open areas;
- recreational uses in valley bottom;
- well-vegetated urban edge.



Sketch illustrating view from the north west

Visual characteristics

- avenue trees on both sides of **A44** important feature on the approach into town from the north west;
- moderate intervisibility within the valley, high intervisibility on more open farmland higher up the valley sides;
- good elevated views;
- attractive silhouette of the town seen from the north west;
- soft urban edge;
- very few intrusive buildings or structures.

Key sensitivities and considerations

- woodland very important component of the setting of the town;
- skyline very sensitive to change;
- landscape pattern of valley very distinctive and vulnerable to change;
- valley side landscape integral to the quality of the views, any changes are likely to be highly visible.

C: NORTH OF CHIPPING NORTON

Landscape characteristics

- semi-enclosed limestone wolds farmland and parkland landscapes
- steep sided valley with formal parkland on the northern slope and medium scale arable fields on the southern slope;
- very strong landscape structure with mature woodland blocks and avenues;
- important to the setting of Chipping Norton and Over Norton;
- largely flat, medium scale farmland with a strong structure of woodland blocks, shelterbelts and hedgerows;
- valley-sides with stronger hedgerow structure, more trees and a mixture of pasture and arable farmland;
- south-facing sloping valley sides up to **8%**.
- enclosed valley floor, predominantly pasture, low-lying, riparian character, wet and prone to flooding;
- willow-lined ditches and groups of mature trees;
- soft urban edge.

Visual characteristics

- low intervisibility, views down into the valley floor;
- valley sides form skyline from valley floor;
- views largely unspoilt by urban influences;
- built form on valley sides mostly screened by mature vegetation except for new housing.

Key sensitivities and considerations

- valley sides and valley floor are an important natural component of the valley landscape;
- unspoilt landscapes particularly vulnerable to change;
- special attention should be given to maintaining strong landscape edges.

D: NORTH EAST OF CHIPPING NORTON

Landscape characteristics

- semi-enclosed limestone wolds farmland;
- largely flat, medium scale farmland with a strong structure of woodland blocks, shelterbelts and hedgerows;
- predominantly arable
- smaller scale fields nearer to the town;
- helps form an attractive approach into the town on London Road, important to the setting of Chipping Norton;
- urban edge in the process of change ie new development on the old hospital site and employment site north of **Rockhill** Farm;

Visual characteristics

- low to moderate intervisibility;
- degree of enclosure provided by good woodland blocks and shelterbelts;
- changes to the urban edge only visible locally;
- avenue landscape very important to the quality of the approach and the setting of the town and visible from the north.

Key sensitivities and considerations

- parcel of land important to the setting of the town;
- landscape very sensitive to change, particularly along the ridgeline occupied by the A44;
- low intervisibility particularly in the smaller scale landscapes means that visible change is limited;
- need to maintain strong landscape structure;
- need to maintain the quality of the approach into the town.

E: EAST OF CHIPPING NORTON

Landscape characteristics

- open limestone wolds farmland;
- large-scale, rolling farmland mostly in arable cultivation;
- open, elevated hilltop character;
- weak hedgerow structure, few trees, fences replace hedgerows;
- rural edge slightly scruffy; pockets of derelict farmland, allotments etc,
- intrusive buildings and structures on the urban edge.

Visual characteristics

- generally high intervisibility due to open character and topography although intervening higher ground shields urban edge;
- boundary of the urban area straggly and indistinct due to peripheral uses such as playing fields allotments etc;
- softened by mature vegetation in places;
- prominent and intrusive buildings and structures such as water tower and industrial sheds;
- views out from the urban edge largely unspoilt.

Key sensitivities and considerations

- need to strengthen landscape structure of rural fringe and form a more distinct boundary;
- urban edge prominent in places and sensitive to change;

- need to improve urban silhouette - opportunity to consider more positive landmarks;
- need to improve the quality of the approach into the town on the B4026.

F: SOUTH OF CHIPPING NORTON

Landscape characteristics

- open limestone wolds farmland;
- large-scale, rolling farmland mostly in arable cultivation;
- open, elevated hilltop character;
- weak hedgerow structure, few trees, fences replace hedgerows;
- boundary between urban edge and open land very distinct;
- sports grounds, associated buildings and floodlighting on the urban edge and in open countryside.

Visual characteristics

- high intervisibility across open land;
- harsh urban edge of Chipping Norton forms the skyline to the north;
- views out from the urban edge largely unspoilt, sports ground at Greystones is partially screened by mature trees;
- rural character is adversely affected by floodlighting at night;
- degree of enclosure provided by good woodland **blocks** and shelterbelts;
- changes to the urban edge only visible locally;
- avenue landscape very important to the quality of the approach and the setting of the town;
- the higher ground occupied by the B4450 is visible from the north and sensitive to change.

Key sensitivities and considerations

- encourage more effective planting around existing sports grounds;
- need to strengthen landscape structure in **open areas**;
- need to strengthen landscape structure at the urban edge;
- urban edge very visible and sensitive to change;
- need to improve the quality of the approach into the town on the A361.

KEY SETTLEMENT DUCKLINGTON

(CHARACTER AREA: 12)

A: WEST OF DUCKLINGTON

landscape characteristics

- open, rolling vale farmland, semi-enclosed, rolling vale farmland;
- **A415** acts as a strong barrier dividing urban area from open countryside;
- land west of **A415** mostly medium to large scale farmland ;
 - a predominantly arable;
- mostly weak landscape structure - thicker hedgerows to the north and the south;
- farmland west of **A415** mostly free from urban influences - except motor homes;
- urban influences prominent west of roundabout - garage, sewage works etc.

Visual characteristics

- high intervisibility across open land;
- vegetation on road corridor filters views of urban edge;
- earth mounding between the urban edge and the road appears incongruous;
- views out from urban edge limited by vegetation and affected by presence of **A415**;
- **A40** on embankment acts as a strong visual barrier;
- prominent urban influences at roundabout..

Key sensitivities and considerations

- need to further soften road corridor and urban edge;
- need to strengthen landscape structure in open areas;
- need to resist any change which extends urban influences further west of the **A415** - particularly between the roundabout and the **A40**.

B: EAST OF DUCKLINGTON

Landscape characteristics

- semi-enclosed floodplain pasture;
- attractive low-lying riparian character, small scale pasture;
- thick hedgerows and mature willow;
- ditches and area of open water;
- prominent hotel and surrounding car parking and service areas;
- largely unspoilt, but some rural fringe activities including nearby gravel workings, horsiculture, and the presence of an electricity substation;
- boundary between urban edge of Ducklington and farmland quite soft;
- rural character of Church End important..

Visual characteristics

- medium to low intervisibility - views across flat, low-lying land filtered by intervening vegetation;
- urban edge of Ducklington softened by mature vegetation;
- some filtered views of **A40**;
- some views of power lines and electricity substation;
- views out from the urban edge limited by intervening vegetation.

Key sensitivities and considerations

- need to maintain strength of landscape structure on valley floor;
- need to maintain soft urban edge - vegetation on the edge of the village particularly important;
- need to strengthen landscape structure between Ducklington and **A40**;
- need to soften urban edge around the hotel/roundabout

KEY SETTLEMENT EYNSHAM

(CHARACTER AREAS: 11, 12)

A: EAST OF EYNSHAM

Landscape characteristics

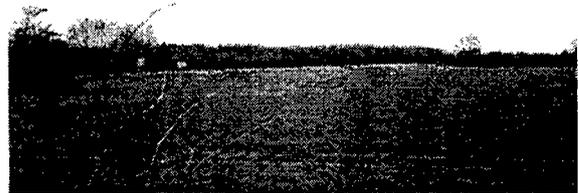
- mixture of semi enclosed flat vale farmland north of Cassington Road and semi-enclosed floodplain pasture to the south;
- very flat low lying good enclosure in places;
- medium scale mixture of arable and smaller scale pasture with thick hedgerows and hedgerow trees;
- urban/rural edge weak in places, some incursion by urban influences, particularly the link road, but also playing fields and 'horsiculture';

Visual characteristics

- moderate intervisibility, views limited by intervening vegetation;
- rural outlook from the link road largely unspoilt except for electricity pylons;
- industrial buildings fairly well screened;
- views out from urban edge affected by traffic on the link road;
- urban edge very well screened by planting north of Cassington Road,
- lighting very visible, particularly at roundabout;
- important views of Wytham Hill.

Key sensitivities and considerations

- need to resist further urbanisation of rural fringe;
- need to improve landscape structure particularly around playing fields and other urban elements;
- need to further reduce visual impact of the link road.



View of link road from Cassington Road showing backdrop of planting

B: SOUTH OF EYNSHAM

Landscape characteristics

- mostly semi-enclosed floodplain pasture with an ribbon of rural fringe land immediately south of urban edge;
- small scale pasture with thick hedgerows and mature willows;
- evidence of some hedgerow removal north of the link road;
- major urban influence of Oasis Park and industrial estate adversely affecting landscape quality in south west area
- urban/rural edge quite soft except the area around Oasis Park and industrial area.

Visual characteristics

- moderate to low intervisibility;
- attractive mixture of older buildings and mature trees on urban edge;
- attractive backdrop to southerly views out from the urban edge;
- major intrusive features industrial buildings, car parking etc slightly scruffy;
- poor approach from 84449.

Key sensitivities and considerations

- need to resist any further encroachment of urban influences onto rural fringe , particularly north of the link road;
- need to strengthen landscape structure and to absorb intrusive elements;
- need to make landscape improvements in key areas particularly around the industrial estate;
- urban edge quite sensitive to change.

C: WEST OF EYNSHAM

Landscape characteristics

- semi-enclosed, rolling vale farmland;
- type generally has strong structure of hedgerows, trees and occasional belts of woodland, mostly large fields under arable but some smaller-scale pattern and pasture;
- slightly weaker structure locally, some hedgerows neglected and gappy in places;
- urban/rural edge slightly 'straggly', a weak landscape edge in places, rural fringe mostly unspoilt but scruffy in places.

Visual characteristics

- moderate to high intervisibility, views limited by intervening topography and vegetation;
- rural outlook from urban edge largely unspoilt;
- urban edge quite soft;
- except new housing which is very visible and intrusive.

Key sensitivities and considerations

- need to avoid further intrusion on the urban edge;
- need to strengthen landscape structure in places particularly on the boundary of the urban area.

D: NORTH OF EYNSHAM

Landscape characteristics

- open rolling vale farmland
- mostly medium scale fields, predominantly arable;
- landscape structure weak in places - some hedgerows gappy in places;
- some mineral working further north;
- **A40** - a strong physical boundary separating area from Eynsham;
- relatively few urban influences.

Visual characteristics

- intervisibility generally moderate to high - some views limited by intervening topography;
- views south towards Eynsham screened by vegetation between **A40** and the urban edge;
- traffic on **A40** more prominent than the built form.

Key sensitivities and considerations

- need to strengthen landscape structure;
- need to increase screening of traffic on **A40**.

KEY SETTLEMENT MILTON-U-WYCHWOOD

(CHARACTER AREA: 5)

A: NORTH OF MILTON-UNDER-WYCHWOOD

Landscape characteristics

- semi-enclosed clay wolds farmland;
- mixture of medium to large scale farmland with a good hedgerow structure;
- predominantly arable, open in places ;
- few urban influences - except sewage works;
- strong wooded edge to the north;
- boundary between urban area quite 'straggly' and complicated by the dispersed nature of the settlement;
- no visible break between Shipton and Milton;
- landscape edge a bit weak in this area
- good mature trees and hedgerow trees scattered around the fringe of the settlement;
- cricket **field/recreation** ground important central feature in Milton.

Visual characteristics

- moderate to high intervisibility across open land - around Heath Farm for example;
- good distant views in most directions;
- views into and out of the urban edge filtered by mature vegetation.

Key sensitivities and considerations

- need to strengthen landscape structure to bind together the urban edge;
- need to resist any further changes which will make settlement more dispersed in character.

B: SOUTH OF MILTON-UNDER-WYCHWOOD

Landscape characteristics

- semi-enclosed clay wolds farmland;
- mixture of small scale pasture and medium scale arable;
- good hedgerow structure, mature hedgerow trees and small woodland blocks;
- boundary between urban area and countryside complicated by the dispersed nature of the settlement;
- strong landscape edge between Shipton Court and edge of Milton;
- largely unspoilt..

Visual characteristics

- medium to low intervisibility - views filtered by intervening vegetation;
- views in and out of the urban edge limited by intervening vegetation;
- urban edge a bit harsh in places;
- more distant views further west beyond woodland blocks towards Shipton Down;
- distant elevated views of southern edge of Milton from Shipton Down and Swinbrook Road;
- ridgeline at Shipton Down - important skyline.

Key sensitivities and considerations

- need to strengthen landscape structure to bind together the urban edge;
- need to soften urban edge in key places;
- open land on rising ground to the south particularly sensitive to change.

C: WEST OF MILTON-UNDER-WYCHWOOD

Landscape characteristics

- semi-enclosed clay wolds farmland;
- mostly medium to large scale farmland with a good hedgerow structure;
- rolling topography;
- predominantly arable, open in places ;
- few urban influences ;
- boundary between urban area and countryside complicated by the dispersed nature of the settlement - slightly 'straggly';
- ribbon development extends this boundary on Bruern Road.

Visual characteristics

- moderate to high intervisibility across open land ;
- urban edge harsh in places;
- good distant views in most directions;
- ridgeline at Shipton Down -important skyline.

Key sensitivities and considerations

- need to soften the urban edge to form a more cohesive boundary
- need to strengthen landscape edge;
- need to resist any further changes which will **make settlement** more dispersed in character.

KEY SETTLEMENT WITNEY

(CHARACTER AREAS: 8,9,7,11)

A: NORTH WEST OF WITNEY

Landscape characteristics

- open valley-side farmland and open limestone wolds farmland;
- typically weak landscape structure, large fields, few trees, open and exposed;
- north facing sloping valley sides up to 6%.
- distinct urban edge.

Visual characteristics

- high intervisibility, elevated views and prominent skylines viewed from the north;
- hard urban edge on B4047, prominent buildings, lighting and structures;
- important views across the Windrush Valley.

Key sensitivities and considerations

- valley sides are an important natural component of the valley landscape;
- open landscapes with weak structures on the edge of settlements are very visually exposed and vulnerable to change;
- special attention should be given to strengthening landscape edges.

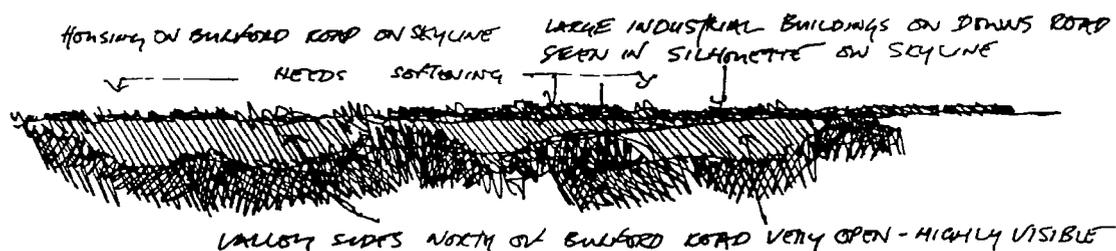
B: WINDRUSH VALLEY NORTH

Landscape characteristics

- semi-enclosed valley-side farmland, semi-enclosed valley floor farmland;
- valley-sides with stronger hedgerow structure, more trees and a mixture of pasture and arable farmland;
- south-facing sloping valley sides up to 8%.
- enclosed valley floor, predominantly pasture, low-lying, riparian character, wet and prone to flooding;
- willow-lined ditches and groups of mature trees;
- soft urban edge.

Visual characteristics

- low intervisibility within the valley, but more distant views down onto the valley floor;
- valley sides form skyline from valley floor;
- views largely unspoilt by urban influences;
- built form on valley sides screened by mature vegetation;
- mill buildings important local landmark.



Key sensitivities and considerations

- valley sides and valley floor are an important natural component of the valley landscape;
- 4 unspoilt landscapes particularly vulnerable to change;
- special attention should be given to maintaining strong landscape edges.

C: NORTH OF WITNEY

Landscape characteristics

- semi enclosed limestone wolds farmland;
- attractive mixture of strong hedgerows, hedgerow trees and limestone walls;
- medium scale rectilinear fields, mixture of pasture and arable;
- gently undulating topography;
- well-defined urban edge, fairly strong landscape edge.

Visual characteristics

- moderate intervisibility, views from public roads filtered by intervening hedgerows;
- 4 urban area partially silhouetted on the skyline and sensitive to change;
- urban edge largely softened by vegetation.

Key sensitivities and considerations

- high **quality** landscape edge - vulnerable to change;
- important rural approach into Witney from the north, vulnerable to change;
- special attention should be given to maintaining strong landscape edges;
- resist urbanisation between Hailey and Witney.

D: EAST OF WITNEY

Landscape characteristics

- semi enclosed limestone wolds farmland and open rolling farmland;
- 4 mixture of strong hedgerows, hedgerow trees;
- gently rolling topography;
- area north of Madley Brook mostly flat;
- area south of Madley Brook more rolling;
- medium scale rectilinear fields, mostly arable with some horticultural uses;
- gently undulating topography.
- Cogges Wood an important local feature;
- large part of the area allocated for future development.

Visual characteristics

- moderate intervisibility, largely unspoilt views out from the urban edge;
- hard urban edge in places;
- approach on **A4095** affected by urban influences.
- ridgeline on New Yatt Road quite prominent.

Key sensitivities and considerations

- need to resist any further 'urbanisation' on New Yatt Road and **A4095**;
- need to strengthen landscape structure along the urban edge;
- need to strengthen landscape edge particularly between land allocated for development and Cogges Wood.

E: SOUTH EAST OF WITNEY

Landscape characteristics

- open rolling farmland;
- rounded hill, predominantly pasture;
- important buffer zone between the urban edge and the A40;
- partly denuded, open in character, locally weak structure;
- landform defines the boundary between urban and rural.

Visual characteristics

- high intervisibility, prominent landform;
- urban edge harsh in places, a characteristic reinforced by the perimeter road;
- Cogges Hill an important landmark feature on the south east approach into Witney.

Key sensitivities and considerations

- landform extremely sensitive to change;
- landform important landmark on approach into Witney;
- need for landscape improvement *to* including strengthening of hedgerows and softening of urban edge.

F: COGGES/WINDRUSH VALLEY SOUTH

Landscape characteristics

- semi-enclosed floodplain pasture;
- permanent pasture with flat, low-lying, 'wet' riparian character;
- **prone to flooding; willow-lined ditches** and groups of mature trees provide soft boundary between urban/rural edge - strong landscape edge;
- area largely unspoilt apart from intrusive electricity pylons and views of A40;
- key recreational resource and green 'wedge' **into the heart of the town.**

Visual characteristics

- low intervisibility, largely unspoilt views out from the urban edge;
- urban edge well screened;
- intrusive electricity pylons and filtered views of A40;
- important views along the valley floor.

Key sensitivities and considerations

- floodplain farmland is a valuable landscape resource and is vulnerable to change;
- need to safeguard floodplain character particularly in relation to the proposed Cogges Link road;
- need to maintain strong landscape edge;
- need to maintain views along valley floor.

G: SOUTH WEST OF WITNEY

Landscape characteristics

- semi-enclosed limestone wolds farmland;
- rolling valley form - Colwell Brook
- mixture of small scale pasture and arable;
- strong hedgerow structure and presence of hedgerow trees;
- important buffer zone between urban edge and A40;
- distinct urban/rural edge.

Visual characteristics

- moderate intervisibility, views limited by intervening landform and vegetation;
- soft urban edge ;
- views south from urban edge largely unspoilt, A40 **mostly in cutting.**

Key sensitivities and considerations

- need to maintain buffer zone;
- valley form distinctive local feature;
- need to maintain southern aspect from urban edge;
- need to maintain strong landscape edge.

H: WEST WITNEY

Landscape characteristics

- open limestone wolds farmland;
- large-scale, gently rolling farmland mostly arable;
- large rectilinear fields, weak landscape structure;
- plateau location;
- large part of the area allocated for future development.

Visual characteristics

- e high intervisibility, extensive, uninterrupted views across open land;
- e prominent urban edge to Witney and prominent edge to employment land;
- e characteristic further reinforced by urban character of Western Link Road
- distant views to the south west from urban edge.



View towards Downs Road Industrial area from the link road

Key sensitivities and considerations

- e need to improve landscape quality throughout the area;
- e need to strengthen landscape edge and provide an advanced landscape structure for future development.

KEY SETTLEMENT WOODSTOCK

(CHARACTER AREA: 4)

A: NORTH OF WOODSTOCK

Landscape characteristics

- semi-enclosed valley-side farmland and open limestone wolds farmland;
- Clyme Valley attractive, small scale, semi-enclosed, well vegetated;
- Valley divides Woodstock from Old Woodstock;
- north of Old Woodstock much larger scale open farmland, weak landscape structure, predominantly arable, few trees, weak hedgerow structure;
- distinct boundary between urban area and surrounding farmland;
- few urban influences on surrounding farmland.

Visual characteristics

- very limited intervisibility across the Clyme Valley, views filtered by mature willows;
- vegetation forms a strong landscape buffer to northern edge of Woodstock; soft edge between urban edge and valley sides;
- urban edge around Old Woodstock much harder, visible across open farmland to the **north** and east;
- views out from urban edge relatively unspoilt
- edge of Blenheim Estate a strong visible edge on approach from the north, glimpsed views into the grounds.

Key sensitivities and considerations

- Glyme Valley important local feature close to the town centre and sensitive to change;
- Important to maintain landscape **setting** of the Blenheim Estate;
- Any changes to the urban edge of Old Woodstock are likely to be highly visible;
- Urban edge between open farmland and Old Woodstock would benefit from softening;
- special attention should be given to 'greening' approach to Old Woodstock on **A44**.

B: EAST OF WOODSTOCK

Landscape characteristics

- open limestone wolds farmland;
- east of Old Woodstock large scale open farmland, weak landscape structure, predominantly arable, few trees, weak hedgerow structure;
- ribbon development, including new houses on Banbury Road, blur the boundary between urban area and open countryside;
- former railway line now a strong landscape feature;
- despite ribbon development rural edge is largely unspoilt;
- farm on the urban edge helps reinforce rural character.

Visual characteristics

- high intervisibility views across open farmland from Banbury Road;
- urban edge softened by mature vegetation;
- views largely unspoilt by urban influences;
- ribbon development benefits from a backdrop of vegetation along the line of the former railway;
- wall along Banbury Road a good local feature.

Key sensitivities and considerations

- any changes to the urban edge in this area are likely to be highly visible;
- **resist** any further urban growth along Banbury Road;
- strengthen landscape structure on open farmland;
- maintain and enhance the soft urban edges.

C: SOUTH OF WOODSTOCK

Landscape characteristics

- open limestone wolds farmland;
- very flat, medium to large scale farmland; open but with a good hedgerow structure;
- predominantly large rectilinear arable fields plus playing field attached to the school;
- distinct boundary between urban edge and farmland, less distinct around the school;
- farmland largely unspoilt by urban influences;
- area surrounding the school more urbanised including road character, fences, playing fields lighting etc.

Visual characteristics

- moderate intervisibility, views limited in a very flat landscape;
- distant views intercepted by intervening shelterbelts and small woodland blocks;
- thin vegetation on urban edge makes building silhouette prominent in places - inappropriate roofline reinforces this effect;
- character of A44 approach to Woodstock quite urban - lighting, signage etc;
- wooded character of the Blenheim Estate provides a strong landscape edge;
- views out from edge largely unspoilt although lighting on the A44 and other bits of urban clutter are visible south of Woodstock.



Silhouette of urban edge of Woodstock viewed from A44

Key sensitivities and considerations

- any changes to the urban edge are likely to be highly visible in places, particularly from the A44;
- need to strengthen landscape edge to the urban area;
- existing woodland blocks and shelterbelts play an important role both as local landscape features and as filters to views;
- need to preserve landscape character of A44 approach into Woodstock and resist any further urbanisation of road corridor;
- need to maintain strong hedgerow structure on open farmland.

D: WEST OF WOODSTOCK

Landscape characteristics

- formal parkland and designed landscapes
- Blenheim Estate is a Grade 1 historic park;
- at about 1000 ha, it occupies the entire area west of Woodstock;
- its landscape and visual characteristics are well documented and its current designation provides more than adequate protection to western edge of the town.