

WEST OXFORDSHIRE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

WITNEY LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT 2007

APPENDIX A
WOLA/AHLC ASSESSMENT SUMMARY TABLES

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TABLE A AREA A: WOLA/AHLC ASSESSMENT SUMMARY	
WOLA ASSESSMENT	AHLC ASSESSMENT
Landscape characteristics	
Open valley-side farmland and open limestone wolds farmland	Unchanged
Typically weak landscape structure, large fields, few trees, open and exposed	Unchanged
North facing sloping valley sides up to 6%	Unchanged
Distinct urban edge	Assuming that this meant a hard urban edge, planting has grown to soften the majority of the housing south of the B4047, and the Springfield Park area is well screened from the surrounding landscape. Housing on the higher ground in north west Witney presents a hard edge across the valley.
Visual characteristics	
High intervisibility, elevated views and prominent skylines viewed from the north	Prominent skylines apply to this assessment's Area H, rather than Area A. Other assessments unchanged.
Hard urban edge on B4047, prominent buildings, lighting and structures	Urban edge along B4047 now substantially softened by planting, apart from Tower Hill, which will in time be partially softened. Prominent structures and lighting further west in Area H.
Important views across the Windrush Valley	Unchanged, views to AONB.
Key sensitivities and considerations	
Valley sides are an important natural component of the valley landscape	Unchanged, part of coherent valley landscape between Witney and Burford.
Open landscapes with weak structures on the edge of settlements are very visually exposed and vulnerable to change	Unchanged, particularly where the site is strongly sloping, making screening from views on higher ground difficult to achieve. Views from higher ground to north, including AONB, particularly sensitive.
Special attention should be given to strengthening landscape edges	Gradually being achieved in B4047 area.

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TABLE B AREA B: WOLA/AHLC ASSESSMENT SUMMARY	
WOLA ASSESSMENT	AHLC ASSESSMENT
Landscape characteristics	
Semi enclosed valley floor farmland	Unchanged
Enclosed valley floor, predominantly pasture, low-lying, riparian character, wet and prone to flooding	Unchanged
Willow-lined ditches and groups of mature trees	Unchanged
Soft urban edge	While this is true to the south, the housing along Crawley Road is dominant and presents a hard edge in the east of the area.
Visual characteristics	
Low intervisibility within the valley, but more distant views down onto the valley floor	Some long views along valley as well as across from higher ground.
Valley sides form skyline from valley floor	Unchanged
Views largely unspoilt by urban influences	Suburbanising influences such as fencing and conifer planting especially at eastern end
Built form on valley sides screened by mature vegetation	While this is generally true to the south, the housing along Crawley Road is dominant and presents a hard edge in the east of the area.
Mill buildings important local landmark	Early Mill chimney, retained within housing area, and Crawley mill chimney landmarks at either end of area
Key sensitivities and considerations	
Valley sides and valley floor are an important natural component of the valley landscape	Unchanged, part of coherent valley landscape between Witney and Burford.
Unspoilt landscapes particularly vulnerable to change	Unchanged, particularly given proximity to town and intensive grazing use
Special attention should be given to maintaining strong landscape edges	Important to maintain soft edge to south, improve northern edge where possible

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TABLE C1 AREA C1: WOLA/AHLC ASSESSMENT SUMMARY	
WOLA ASSESSMENT	AHLC ASSESSMENT
Landscape characteristics	
Semi-enclosed valley-side farmland	Would place it more in open valley side category. Strong promontory feature on valley side.
Valley-sides with stronger hedgerow structure, more trees and a mixture of pasture and arable farmland	Slightly better hedgerow structure than south of valley, but still largely smooth open valley side
South-facing sloping valley sides up to 8%.	Unchanged
Groups of mature trees	Trees mainly along road and Milking Lane, otherwise few. Inappropriate conifer screens
Soft urban edge	Some development on West Witney ridge prominent on skyline in distance, also closer views of often hard edge of north west Witney housing
Visual characteristics	
Distant views down onto the valley floor	Unchanged
Valley sides form skyline from valley floor	Unchanged
Views largely unspoilt by urban influences	Some development on West Witney ridge prominent on skyline in distance, also closer views of often hard edge of north west Witney housing. Suburbanising influences: conifer planting
Built form on valley sides screened by mature vegetation	True of Springfield Park area, but not north west Witney.
Mill buildings important local landmark	Early's Mill chimney, retained within housing area, and Crawley Mill chimney landmarks at either end of area
Key sensitivities and considerations	
Valley sides and valley floor are an important natural component of the valley landscape;	Unchanged, part of coherent valley landscape between Witney and Burford.
Unspoilt landscapes particularly vulnerable to change;	Already evidence of vulnerability in suburbanising influences
Special attention should be given to maintaining strong landscape edges.	Important to maintain soft edge to south, gradually improving as planting matures. Improve hard Crawley Road edge where possible.

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TABLE C2 AREA C2: WOLA/AHLC ASSESSMENT SUMMARY	
WOLA ASSESSMENT	AHLC ASSESSMENT
Landscape characteristics	
Semi enclosed limestone wolds farmland	Semi enclosed limestone wolds farmland (large scale)
Attractive mixture of strong hedgerows, hedgerow trees and limestone walls	This is more characteristic of Area C3.
Medium scale rectilinear fields, mixture of pasture and arable	Unchanged: parliamentary enclosure landscape
Gently undulating topography	Unchanged, part of plateau
Well-defined urban edge, fairly strong landscape edge	Strong landscape edge by primary school, but not elsewhere along north western edge.
Visual characteristics	
Moderate intervisibility, views from public roads filtered by intervening hedgerows	Some long views across valley to south, and back from south to this area.
Urban area partially silhouetted on the skyline and sensitive to change	Unchanged
Urban edge largely softened by vegetation	Strong landscape edge by primary school, but not elsewhere along north western edge.
Key sensitivities and considerations	
High quality landscape edge - vulnerable to change	Moderate quality edge, some suburbanising influences, vulnerable to change
Important rural approach into Witney from the north, vulnerable to change	Unchanged, particularly given scattered buildings along B4022 between Witney and modern edge of Hailey.
Special attention should be given to maintaining strong landscape edges	Improve north western edge where possible
Resist urbanisation between Hailey and Witney	Unchanged, this area is already under threat from scattered development in gap, and suburbanising effect of rugby club, in particular lighting.

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TABLE C3 AREA C3: WOLA/AHLC ASSESSMENT SUMMARY	
WOLA ASSESSMENT	AHLC ASSESSMENT
Landscape characteristics	
Semi enclosed limestone wolds farmland;	Semi enclosed limestone wolds farmland (small scale)
Attractive mixture of strong hedgerows, hedgerow trees and limestone walls;	Unchanged, also small woods.
Medium scale rectilinear fields, mixture of pasture and arable;	Irregular fields with sinuous boundaries, small-large scale.
Gently undulating topography;	Small scale valleys strong landscape feature
Well-defined urban edge, fairly strong landscape edge.	Landscape edge not strong, but visual influence of current urban edge limited as set low in landscape
Visual characteristics	
Moderate intervisibility, views from public roads filtered by intervening hedgerows;	Unchanged on views from public roads, but high intervisibility from higher ground within area, which includes public rights of way.
Urban area partially silhouetted on the skyline and sensitive to change:	Housing areas to south low in landscape, not on skyline. Middlefield Farm complex and school on skyline.
Urban edge largely softened by vegetation.	Not softened by vegetation, but road approaches to town generally soft
Key sensitivities and considerations	
High quality landscape edge - vulnerable to change;	Unchanged, high intrinsic landscape quality.
Important rural approach into Witney from the north, vulnerable to change;	Unchanged
Special attention should be given to maintaining strong landscape edges;	Unchanged, also important to maintain soft edges along road approaches
Resist urbanisation between Hailey and Witney.	Unchanged, ill defined gap due to dispersed settlement pattern

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TABLE C4 AREA C4: WOLA/AHLC ASSESSMENT SUMMARY	
WOLA ASSESSMENT	AHLC ASSESSMENT
Landscape characteristics	
Semi enclosed limestone wolds farmland and open rolling farmland;	Semi enclosed limestone wolds farmland
Mixture of strong hedgerows, hedgerow trees;	In Area D1, but not this area, apart from narrow field alongside New Yatt Road
Gently rolling topography; area north of Madley Brook mostly flat; area south of Madley Brook more rolling	Unchanged
Medium scale rectilinear fields, mostly arable with some horticultural uses	Unchanged, though horticultural area now built up (Madley Park)
Gently undulating topography	Flat plateau
Cogges Wood an important local feature	Unchanged
Large part of the area allocated for future development	Area now built, part of new urban edge being softened by maturing planting
Visual characteristics	
Moderate intervisibility, largely unspoilt views out from the urban edge	Low-moderate
Hard urban edge in places	Unchanged. Both Early Road and western edge of NE Witney area present hard edge
Approach on A4095 affected by urban influences	Urban edge moved further north with NE Witney development. New woodland at northern end reducing urban influence for A4095, though visual influence of Early Road area still strong
Ridgeline on New Yatt Road quite prominent	Unchanged, blocks views west from this area
Key sensitivities and considerations	
Need to resist any further 'urbanisation' on New Yatt Road and A4095	Unchanged
Need to strengthen landscape structure along the urban edge	Unchanged, western edge of NE Witney hard near site entrance
Need to strengthen landscape edge particularly between land allocated for development and Cogges Wood	Planting associated with new housing area has strengthened landscape edge between development and Cogges Wood

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TABLE D1 AREA D1: WOLA/AHLC ASSESSMENT SUMMARY	
WOLA ASSESSMENT	AHLC ASSESSMENT
Landscape characteristics	
Semi enclosed limestone wolds farmland and open rolling farmland	Semi enclosed limestone wolds, some small scale
Mixture of strong hedgerows, hedgerow trees	Unchanged
Gently rolling topography; area north of Madley Brook mostly flat; area south of Madley Brook more rolling	Unchanged – area east of Madley Brook pronounced ridge
Medium scale rectilinear fields, mostly arable with some horticultural uses	True of flatter land now built on – Area D1 mostly varied size very irregular fields
Gently undulating topography	Undulating valley side, strong ridge
Cogges Wood an important local feature	Unchanged
Large part of the area allocated for future development	Area now built, urban edge being softened by maturing planting
Visual characteristics	
Moderate intervisibility, largely unspoilt views out from the urban edge	High intervisibility form D1, which is on the higher ground. Unspoilt views remain from new urban edge
Hard urban edge in places	New urban edge being softened by maturing planting
Approach on A4095 affected by urban influences	Urban edge moved further north with NE Witney development. New woodland at northern end reducing urban influence for A4095, though visual influence of Early Road area still strong
Ridgeline on New Yatt Road quite prominent	True of C4, but eastern Madley Brook ridge a much more dominant feature preventing views east
Key sensitivities and considerations	
Need to resist any further 'urbanisation' on New Yatt Road and A4095	Unchanged, though New Yatt road reference not relevant to Area D1
Need to strengthen landscape structure along the urban edge	Planting associated with new housing area has strengthened landscape structure in D1 area
Need to strengthen landscape edge particularly between land allocated for development and Cogges Wood	Planting associated with new housing area has strengthened landscape edge between development and Cogges Wood

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TABLE D2 AREA D2: WOLA/AHLC ASSESSMENT SUMMARY	
WOLA ASSESSMENT	AHLC ASSESSMENT
Landscape characteristics	
Open rolling farmland	Unchanged
Rounded hill, predominantly pasture	Some arable also
Important buffer zone between the urban edge and the A40	Unchanged in extreme west of area where A40 close to town and in less cut. As A40 runs north east through ridge in deep cutting it has little relationship with the town
Partly denuded, open in character, locally weak structure	Hedges in poor condition, but underlying structure strong
Landform defines the boundary between urban and rural	Unchanged, plus forms backdrop to town and encloses it
Visual characteristics	
High intervisibility, prominent landform	Unchanged
Urban edge harsh in places, a characteristic reinforced by the perimeter road	Largely soft
Cogges Hill an important landmark feature on the south east approach into Witney	Unchanged, and even more important as leaving town and travelling east on A40
Key sensitivities and considerations	
Landform extremely sensitive to change	Unchanged, part of prominent ridge enclosing town
Landform important landmark on approach in to Witney	Unchanged, even more important as leaving town
Need for landscape improvement including strengthening of hedgerows and softening of urban edge	Unchanged on strengthening hedgerows, urban edge already quite soft

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TABLE E AREA E: WOLA/AHLC ASSESSMENT SUMMARY	
WOLA ASSESSMENT	AHLC ASSESSMENT
Landscape characteristics	
Open rolling farmland	Unchanged
Rounded hill, predominantly pasture	Also arable
Important buffer zone between the urban edge and the A40	Marks change in landscape from Windrush valley to Eynsham vale
Partly denuded, open in character, locally weak structure	Very open to north of A40
Landform defines the boundary between urban and rural	Marks change in landscape from Windrush valley to Eynsham vale, no connection with town
Visual characteristics	
High intervisibility, prominent landform	Unchanged
Urban edge harsh in places, a characteristic reinforced by the perimeter road	N/A
Cogges Hill an important landmark feature on the south east approach into Witney	Cogges Hill and entire ridge stretching north east
Key sensitivities and considerations	
Landform extremely sensitive to change	Unchanged, part of prominent ridge enclosing town
Landform important landmark on approach in to Witney	Unchanged
Need for landscape improvement including strengthening of hedgerows and softening of urban edge	Urban edge not relevant, otherwise unchanged

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TABLE F1 AREA F1: WOLA/AHLC ASSESSMENT SUMMARY	
WOLA ASSESSMENT	AHLC ASSESSMENT
Landscape characteristics	
Semi-enclosed floodplain pasture	Unchanged
permanent pasture with flat, low-lying, 'wet' riparian character	Unchanged, plus some arable
Prone to flooding; willow-lined ditches and groups of mature trees provide soft boundary between urban/rural edge - strong landscape edge	Unchanged generally, though weak in some places
Area largely unspoilt apart from intrusive electricity pylons and views of A40	Unchanged, though A40 generally well screened
Key recreational resource and green 'wedge' into the heart of the town	Unchanged
Visual characteristics	
Low intervisibility, largely unspoilt views out from the urban edge	Unchanged, but long views along valley
Urban edge well screened	Some housing and employment land poorly screened
Intrusive electricity pylons and filtered views of A40	Unchanged, plus suburbanising influence in south east, against Cogges housing
Important views along the valley floor	Unchanged, also to Cogges church, and in places across valley to Witney spire
Key sensitivities and considerations	
Floodplain farmland is a valuable landscape resource and is vulnerable to change	Unchanged
Need to safeguard floodplain character particularly in relation to the proposed Cogges Link road	Unchanged
Need to maintain strong landscape edge	Unchanged, and improve where necessary
Need to maintain views along valley floor	Unchanged

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TABLE F2 AREA F2: WOLA/AHLC ASSESSMENT SUMMARY	
WOLA ASSESSMENT	AHLC ASSESSMENT
Landscape characteristics	
Semi enclosed valley floor farmland (Area B)	Unchanged
Permanent pasture with flat, low-lying, 'wet' riparian character (Area F)	Largely arable
Willow-lined ditches and groups of mature trees (Areas B and F)	Tree and hedgeline ditches
Soft urban/strong landscape edge (Areas B and F), distinct urban/rural edge (Area G)	Largely soft urban edge
Visual characteristics	
Low intervisibility within the valley, but more distant views down onto the valley floor (Area B)	Generally unchanged, though some limited long views back towards town
Urban edge well screened (Area F)	Unchanged
Key sensitivities and considerations	
Unspoilt landscapes particularly vulnerable to change (Area B)	Unchanged, area around A40/A415 junction vulnerable
Need to maintain strong landscape edge (Area F)	Unchanged, and improve where necessary
-	Need to maintain settings of Witney and Ducklington as separate communities

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TABLE G AREA G: WOLA/AHLC ASSESSMENT SUMMARY	
WOLA ASSESSMENT	AHLC ASSESSMENT
Landscape characteristics	
Semi-enclosed limestone wolds farmland	Semi enclosed valley side farmland
Rolling valley form - Colwell Brook	Unchanged, with addition of valley to west
Mixture of small scale pasture and arable	Unchanged
Strong hedgerow structure and presence of hedgerow trees	Unchanged
Important buffer zone between urban edge and A40	Unchanged, plus important buffer between urban edge and wider countryside, and village of Curbridge
Distinct urban/rural edge	Generally unchanged, slightly blurred by scattered development along A4095 north of A40.
Visual characteristics	
Moderate intervisibility, views limited by intervening landform and vegetation	Long views out in places, very enclosed where views limited by intervening landform and vegetation
Soft urban edge	Unchanged
Views south from urban edge largely unspoilt, A40 mostly in cutting	Unchanged
Key sensitivities and considerations	
Need to maintain buffer zone	Unchanged.
Valley form distinctive local feature	Unchanged
Need to maintain southern aspect from urban edge	Unchanged
Need to maintain strong landscape edge	Unchanged

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TABLE H AREA H: WOLA/AHLC ASSESSMENT SUMMARY	
WOLA ASSESSMENT	AHLC ASSESSMENT
Landscape characteristics	
Open limestone wolds farmland	Unchanged
Large-scale, gently rolling farmland mostly arable	Unchanged
Large rectilinear fields, weak landscape structure	Unchanged
Plateau location	Unchanged, but gently sloping to south east
Large part of the area allocated for future development	This referred at the time to the employment land, not to the North Curbridge Development Area
Visual characteristics	
High intervisibility, extensive, uninterrupted views across open land	Very long views from higher ground to north and south. Long views back from higher ground to north. Views back from valley to south limited by topography and vegetation.
Prominent urban edge to Witney and prominent edge to employment land	Housing edge much softened by planting. Employment edge still very prominent in many views.
Characteristic further reinforced by urban character of Western Link Road	Impact of urban character of Deer Park road diluted by native planting to west.
Distant views to the south west from urban edge	Some views now blocked by young planting
Key sensitivities and considerations	
Need to improve landscape quality throughout the area	Generally unchanged, poor landscape structure, though substantial planting west of Deer Park road has improved quality of that area.
Need to strengthen landscape edge and provide an advanced landscape structure for future development	This referred at the time to the employment land, not to the North Curbridge Development Area. Unchanged.