

PURBECK



Conserving Purbeck's Character



Thriving communities in balance with the natural environment

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Wareham Common. Cover: East Holme

Part 1 - Introduction

This document has been prepared for the areas of Purbeck outside the AONB. For areas within the AONB the complementary document, **Conserving Character: Landscape Character Assessment and Management Guidance for the Dorset AONB** should be referred to. To find out which document to use, refer to table below:

Landscape Character Type	Landscape Character Area	AONB	Non-AONB	Settlements
Chalk Ridge/ Escarpment	Purbeck Ridge	✓		
	South Dorset Escarpment	✓		Durdle Door
Clay Valley	Corfe Valley	✓		Corfe Castle, Swanage
	Kimmeridge Coast	✓		Kimmeridge
Open Chalk Downland	Chaldon Downs	✓		East Chaldon
	South Dorset Downs	✓		Winfrith Newburgh, South Wool
	Puddletown/Affpuddle Downs		✓	Briantspuddle, Affpuddle
	North Bere Regis Downs		✓	Bere Regis
	South Bere Regis Downs		✓	
	Bloxworth/Charborough Downs		✓	Bloxworth
Limestone Plateau	Purbeck Plateau	✓		Worth Matravers
Wooded Pasture	Lulworth Wooded Pasture	✓		East Lulworth
	Rempstone Wooded Pasture	✓		
	Morden/Lytchett Rolling Wooded Farmland		✓	Lytchett Matravers, The Mordens
Lowland Heath	South Purbeck Heaths	✓		Stoborough, Studland
Lowland Heath/ Forest Mosaic	Crossways/Winfrith Lowland Farmland & Heath		✓	
	Bovington/Affpuddle Heath/Forest		✓	Bovington, Wareham
	North Wareham Heath/Forest		✓	Sandford, North Wareham
	Upton Heath		✓	Upton
Coastal Marshland	Upton Bay Marsh		✓	Upton
Valley Pasture	Lower Frome Valley Pasture	✓		
	Mid-Frome Valley Pasture		✓	Moreton, Wool, Bovington
	Mid-Piddle Valley Pasture		✓	
	Sherford Valley Pasture		✓	Lytchett Minster, Upton
	Lower Piddle Valley Pasture		✓	Wareham
Ridge and Vale	Osmington Ridge and Vale	✓		





1.1 The Nature of Purbeck

Purbeck is a very special place with a unique identity. The landscapes and the built environment contribute greatly towards the character of the area. Many of the building materials used are from local sources; put together using traditional construction techniques. The natural vegetation that occurs in the landscape consists of plants that thrive in the local conditions. Large areas of the landscape have been sculpted by activities that have been undertaken for centuries, such as quarrying for Purbeck Stone and clay, sand and gravel extraction and farming. Evidence of Purbeck's rich historical background can be seen all over the district in the form of historic buildings, ancient landscapes and monuments. This heritage, along with the outstanding character of the natural environment, is irreplaceable. The district is covered by a number of environmental designations such as AONB (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty), Heritage Coast, Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Conservation Areas as well as Listed Buildings and tree preservation orders. These are all intended to protect this unique character. The district also

possesses a wealth of ecological interest, as recognised by the numerous European, national, regional and local designations. The AONB is a nationally important protected landscape and covers 57% (24,312ha) of Purbeck district. However, the areas outside the AONB have their own richness and diversity that can equal that of the AONB, and it is these areas that are the focus of this document.

1.2 Landscape Character Assessment: What is it?

This document is a tool to inform decision-making: "Landscape Character Assessment is the tool that is used to help us to understand, and articulate, the character of the landscape. It helps us identify the features that give a locality its 'sense of place' and pinpoints what makes it different from neighbouring areas." (Landscape Character Assessment: Guidance for England and Scotland, The Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage, 2002) Landscape Character Assessment provides a structured framework for describing an area in a systematic way. Through understanding and mapping what

is present and what is distinct in the landscape, future management and development can be guided to conserve and enhance local character, and even change it if appropriate. Landscape Character Assessment can be used in many other situations, for example, in devising indicators to gauge countryside change, in helping local people prepare Village Design Statements, Parish Plans and Market Town Health checks and in devising environmental improvement strategies for places undergoing regeneration.

The purpose of this assessment is to provide practical, readily accessible information and guidance which can contribute to the conservation and enhancement of the special characteristics of the District. It identifies the unique character areas and associated characteristic features. It provides the evidence base for emerging landscape policies for non-AONB areas in the Local Development Framework. It can be used to help determine planning applications and in the future as the basis for more specific Supplementary Planning Documents.

1.3 Who should use this Assessment?

It is intended to be used by the following audiences and associated purposes:

- Residents and community groups in developing community plans;
- Local businesses, farmers and landowners in performing land and landscape management;
- Developers, architects, planners and designers in taking into account planning, management and design considerations;
- Local planning authorities in developing Planning Policy and determination of planning applications;
- Highway engineers in developing highway schemes;
- Elected members and officers of local and parish councils in formulating responses to development proposals;
- Public utilities in performing works;
- Countryside management organisations in delivering landscape scale projects.

1.4

How does the Non-AONB Landscape Character Assessment differ from the AONB document?

Contents	AONB document	Non-AONB document
Introduction to character area	Description	Summary of context
List of key characteristics	Yes	Yes
Description details	Land shape and structure, soils and vegetation, settlement and land cover, historical influences, visual character & perceptions	Yes, but shorter than AONB document and not divided into sections
Evaluation	Strength of character and condition	Condition
Landscape management guidelines for landscape type	Yes	Taken from AONB document
Management guidelines for character area	No	Yes

1.5

Links to Planning Policy

Regional Guidance

The Regional Spatial Strategy Proposed Changes (July 2008) states that “The distinctive qualities and features of the South West’s landscape character areas will be sustained and enhanced by Local Planning Authorities undertaking assessments of landscape character at a strategic level and in partnership with adjoining authorities (where landscape character areas cross administrative boundaries) in order to identify priority areas for the maintenance, enhancement

and/or restoration of that character and provide an appropriate policy framework in Local Development Documents for each area.”

Local Development Framework

Purbeck is in the process of preparing its Core Strategy. References to landscape will appear in Development Plan Documents and any Supplementary Planning Documents.

1.6

Links to the Development Control Process

This guidance provides advice on particular landscape qualities and can be used in conjunction with other guidance as available. It is not intended to provide detailed design considerations, and work at a local level may need to take place to help the broad objectives as set out in this document.

1.7

Methodology

The process of mapping and describing landscape character has followed the ‘Landscape Character Assessment: Guidance for England and Scotland’ (Countryside Agency, 2002). The key steps of this process are as follows: Desk Study, Field Survey, Classification and Description, Making Judgements, Consultation, and Monitoring. The Desk Study was primarily carried out by Diacono Associates and it was at this stage that the ‘building blocks’ of the landscape, the Landscape Description Units (LDU) were identified and mapped. The Field Survey was started in late summer 2006. At all stages it was undertaken by Chartered Members of the Landscape Institute and in consultation with the Dorset AONB team. In order to ensure consistency of approach a standard field survey sheet was devised (see Appendix 4). The classification and description involved the identification of landscape character areas of recognisable and consistent character. This process included the analysis of existing assessments such as West Dorset Landscape Character Assessment (2000) and Dorset County Council Landscape Assessment





(1993) as well as the Joint Character Map of the England (1996) and the 1997 Natural Area profiles by English Nature (now Natural England). Analysis of GIS layers and consultation with the Dorset AONB was undertaken. Some further field verification was also required. Each area was described in a relatively value free and objective way and its key characteristics identified.

Landscape character assessment is a relatively value free and objective process and can be used as a consistent evidence base for policy development. Making judgements is the next stage normally undertaken and is based on the results of the characterisation process and used to inform future decision making for each area.

1.8 Consultation and Monitoring

A Dorset wide stakeholder event on landscape character assessment was held in Wimborne on 16 June 2006 to provide an opportunity to introduce the principles of Landscape Character Assessment and focus on the needs of organisations involved in planning and land management in Dorset. A cross section of

stakeholders involved in Purbeck's Local Development Framework attended a workshop held in Wareham on 11 December 2006. Comments were incorporated into the document sent out for consultation in March 2007. Comments received on this consultation document have been incorporated into both this document and the AONB Landscape Character Assessment.

This work establishes a baseline against which changes in the landscape can be monitored. At this stage no budget has been identified for follow up work or a repeat of the Assessment. However, regular review of both planning documents and the AONB Management Plan will be required and may afford an opportunity for comparative research.

1.9 Definition of Terms

The following terms are not necessarily included within this document, but were used to inform this study:

Joint Character Areas (JCAs)

At a national level, the character of the English countryside has been described and mapped into 159 character areas. These are

commonly referred to as 'Joint Character Areas' through a joint project between the Countryside Agency and English Nature (now Natural England). Four Joint Character Areas are wholly or partly within the District.

Landscape Character Types (LCTs)

Landscape types are landscapes with broadly similar patterns of geology, soils, vegetation, land use, settlement and field patterns. Landscapes belonging to a particular type - for example "Lowland Heathland" - may be found in many different places.

Landscape Character Areas (LCAs)

Character areas are unique areas - geographically discrete examples of a particular landscape type. For example 'North Bere Regis Downs' is a character area belonging to the 'Open Chalk Upland' type. A Landscape Character Area's key characteristics are those aspects of character which give an area its distinct sense of place. It can include key features of importance, which are those elements of the landscape of particular prominence or those which catch the eye such as tumuli and old gravel pits. Each Landscape Character Area is

based on one or more Landscape Description Units.

Landscape Description Units (LDUs)

These are the 'building blocks' of the landscape. Each Landscape Description Unit has its own associated database on geology, soils, ecology, physiography, settlement pattern, landuse and cover, and these are used as the basis for each Landscape Character Area.

Land Cover Parcels (LCPs)

These are used to assess condition, more often at a more detailed level than the Landscape Description Units.

Strategic Nature Areas

The aim of Strategic Nature Areas is to identify the best areas to conserve, create and connect wildlife habitats at a landscape scale. As with the Landscape Character Assessment, the concept is a tool to inform decision-making. As this Landscape Character Appraisal contains recommendations on management of landscape and guidelines for development, it is important that these tie in where possible with the Strategic Nature Areas (Appendix 2).

1.9 Contact

For any questions about or comments on this document, please contact:

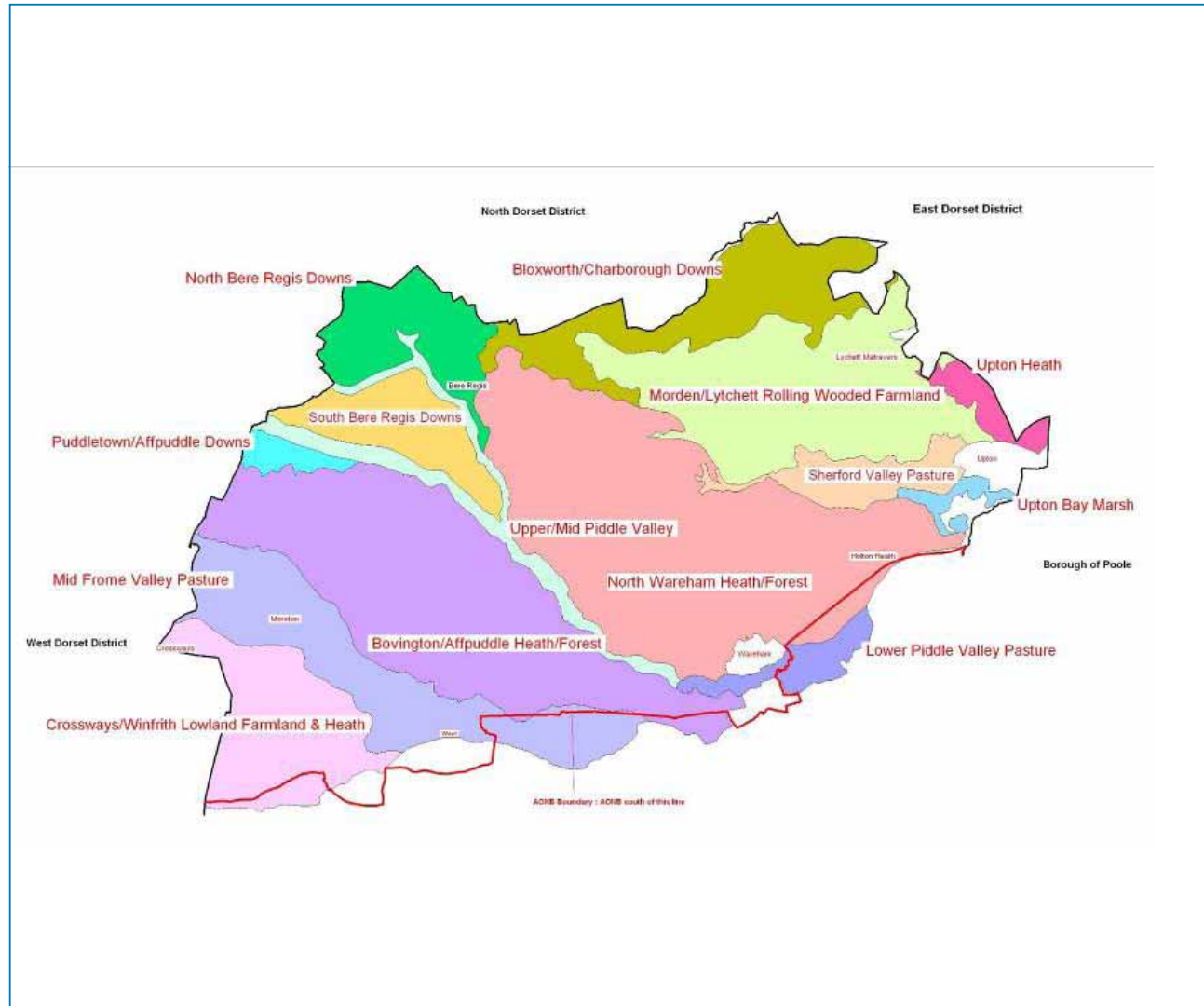
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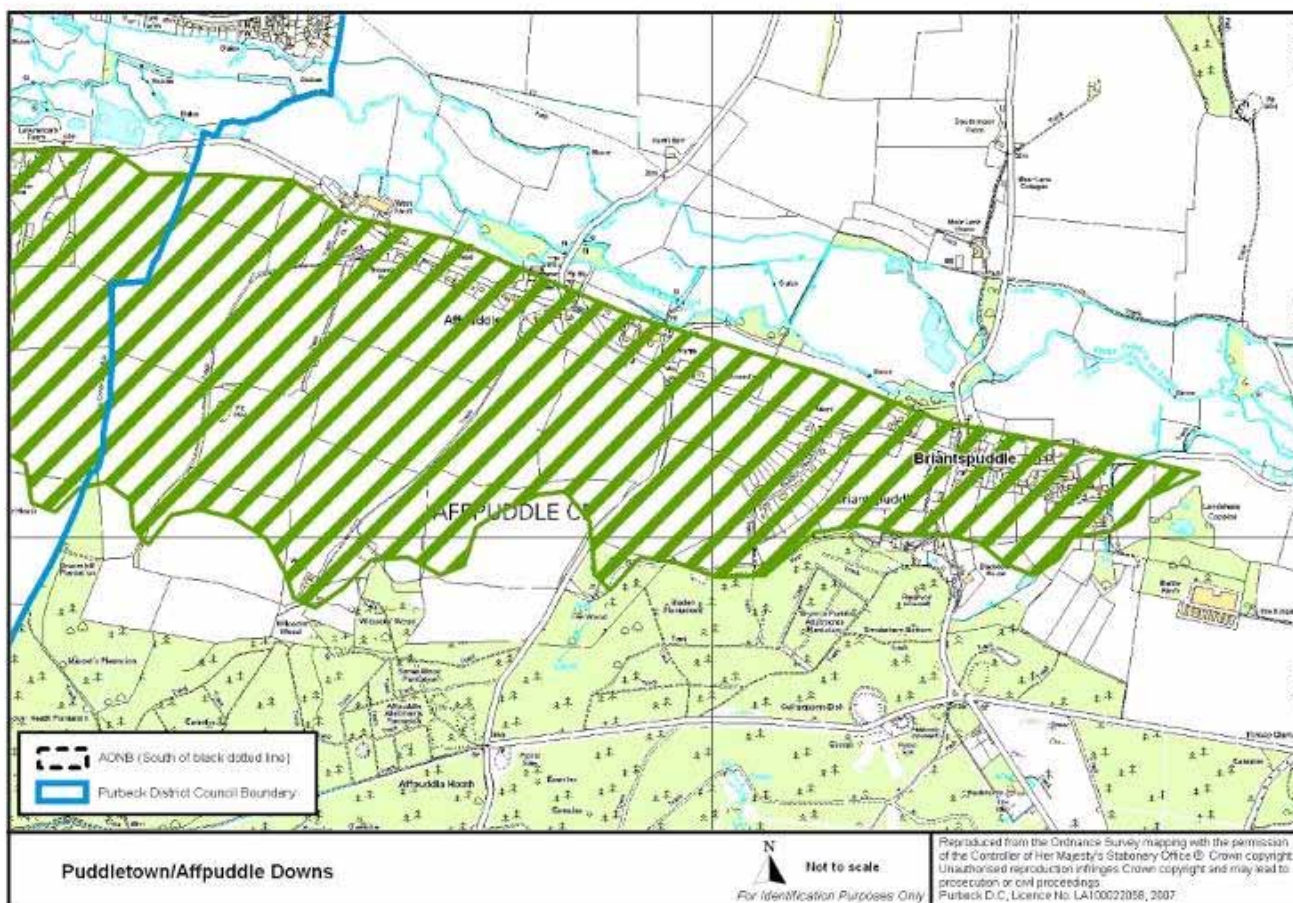
This work has been produced with the assistance and guidance of Tony Harris (Dorset County Council), Doug Harman, (Dorset AONB) and Emma Webb (Purbeck District Council).

PART 2 Landscape Character Areas for the Non-AONB



1. Puddletown / Affpuddle Downs

Key settlements: Briantspuddle, Affpuddle



Key characteristics

- Chalk valley side sloping down to river.
- Open rolling arable landscape with some distinctive folds.
- Distinctive settlement pattern, form and materials.
- Narrow tree/hedge lined lanes linking the villages.
- Open views across Piddle valley.
- Planted ridgeline creates distinctive backdrop to area.
- The buildings grouped adjacent to the war memorial in Bladen Valley create a distinctive local feature.

Landscape Character

The eastern end of a wider character area to the west, comprising an open rolling chalk valley side, sloping down to the River Piddle valley with its alluvial flood meadows. There are some distinctive folds in the landform around Affpuddle which contributes to landscape character. The wooded plantation along the ridgeline to the south defines the area and provides a backdrop and the valley floor to the north provides the areas northern edge. It opens out into the wider Piddle valley to the west towards Burtleston. There are some open views west and north across the valley. The relatively large regularly shaped fields are characteristic of a 'planned enclosure' landscape and are bounded by some thick hedgerows and trees but most hedges are thin, low and in decline. There are some important groups of trees around the settlement edges and the narrow hedge lined lanes link the villages along the lower valley side. There is a distinctive building style and form to the settlements which are located at the river crossing points.

Landscape Condition

An intact landscape in an apparently good condition created by the distinctive settlement and road pattern and the close and harmonious relationship this has with the surrounding landscape. The link between the valley floor and sloping valley sides contribute to this condition and integrity. However the decline in condition of hedgerows and their lack of perceived management in the intensively farmed areas together with the presence of horse paddocks near the settlement edges detract from overall condition. Culturally this is part of an important river valley landscape.

Condition: Good to Moderate.

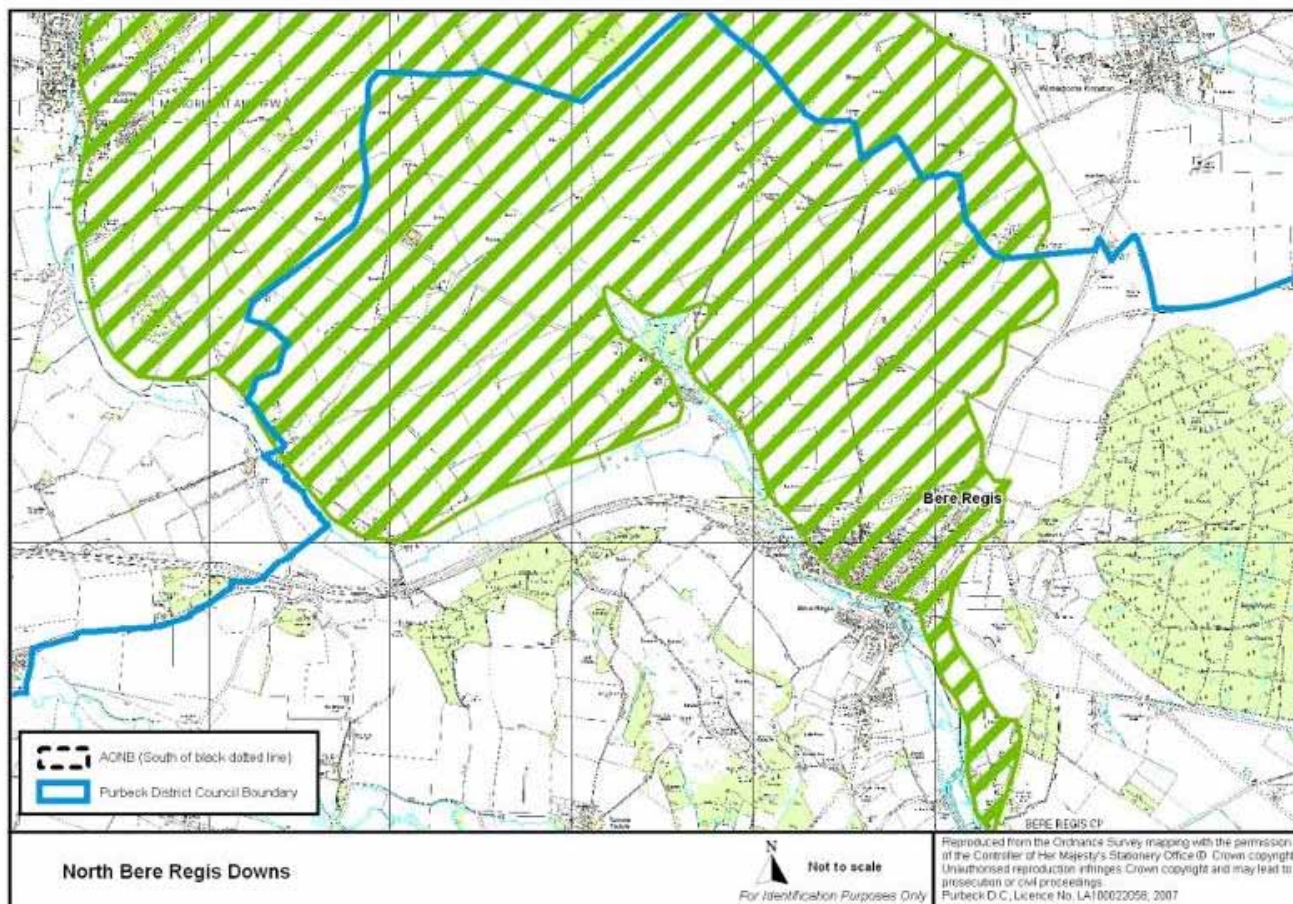
Landscape Management and Development Objectives

- Promote appropriate management of arable farmland to create a wildlife-rich habitat supporting farmland birds. This will include retaining areas of fallow land and maintaining an unploughed margin around fields plus management of hedgerows.
- Restore and enhance old hazel coppice stands
- Encourage phased restoration of chalk heathland habitats through conifer fellings
- Promote the planting of small oak, ash and hazel broadleaved woodlands on gentle slopes to increase landscape diversity
- Ensure new agricultural dwellings and barns enhance the local character and are sited away from open views and skylines.
- Reduce impact of 'horsiculture'.
- Conserve and enhance natural and built environment features.
- Promote Agri-Environment schemes especially for arable field margins, hedgerows, hedgerow trees & woodland management.
- Carry out Village Design Statement for Affpuddle and Briantspuddle



2. North Bere Regis Downs

Key settlements: Bere Regis



Key characteristics

- A large scale, broad and expansive open landscape.
- Open views across wide areas to horizons.
- Thin and weak hedges with occasional hedgerow trees.
- Large geometric arable fields cultivated up to hedgerow edges.
- Straight rural lanes bounded by thin and low hedges.
- Bere Down is a local landmark feature.
- Numerous barrows, tumuli, drove roads and other historic environment features.

Landscape Character

The area is characterised by its open, broad and rolling landform, distinctive of chalk upland landscapes. It is a unified and expansive landscape with open views only limited in places by the shape of the land. The area is an intensively farmed arable landscape with large geometric shaped fields separated by thin, weak and straight hedges with few trees and little overall biodiversity interest. There are two SNCIs and numerous barrows and tumuli, many scheduled as ancient monuments, illustrating the historic environment importance of the area. The few isolated farms are located off straight rural lanes and tracks and are often the only locations for tree groups. Bere Regis is bypassed by the A35 trunk road, which creates a visual impact in the southern part of the area. The area is well served by public rights of way which are often based on ancient track ways and drove roads, including the Jubilee Trail over Bere Down. These historic tracks and Bere Down itself are all important local landmarks.

Landscape Condition

The integrity of this landscape is weak, primarily due to the fragmentation of hedgerows and their declining condition. This is due to them becoming redundant agriculturally and they are therefore not managed in an appropriate way. There is no apparent management of other features such as trees and historic features such as barrows and tumuli. The cultural integrity of the landscape is partially kept intact by the retention of the historic drove roads as public rights of way.

Condition: Moderate to Poor.

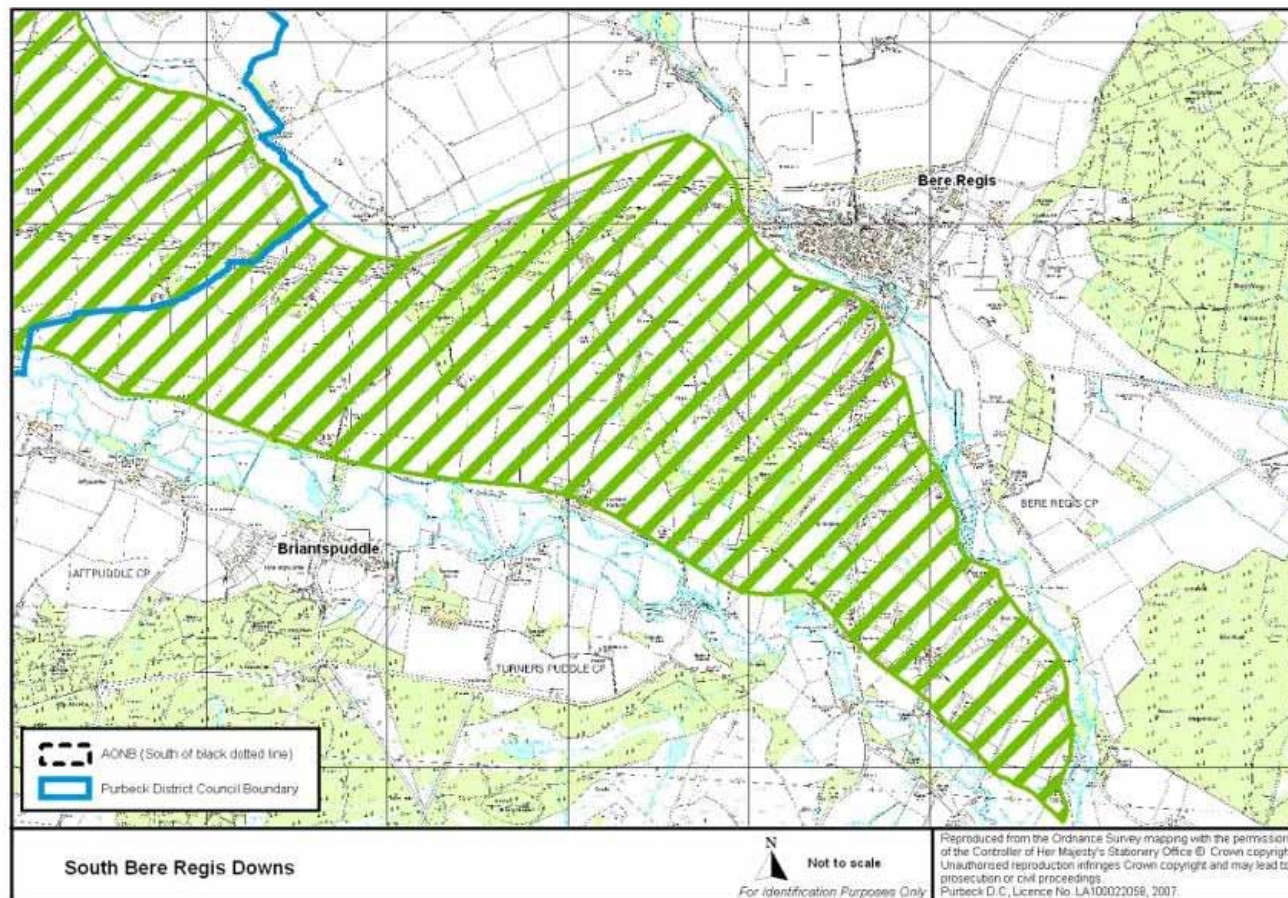
Landscape Management and Development Objectives

- Promote restoration of heathland in areas identified through Strategic Nature Maps
- Promote appropriate management of arable farmland to create a wildlife-rich habitat supporting farmland birds. This will include retaining areas of fallow land and maintaining an unploughed margin around fields plus management of hedgerows.
- Restore and enhance old hazel coppice stands
- Encourage phased restoration of chalk heathland habitats through conifer fellings
- Promote the planting of small oak, ash and hazel broadleaved woodlands on gentle slopes to increase landscape diversity
- Ensure new agricultural dwellings and barns enhance the local character and are sited away from open views and skylines.
- Promote Agri-Environment schemes, in particular for arable margins
- Protect archaeological features such as barrows/tumuli.
- Promote replanting of hedgerows and hedgerow trees.
- Retain historic drove roads
- Carry out Village Design Statement for Bere Regis



3. South Bere Regis Downs

Key settlements: Bere Regis



Key characteristics

- Black Hill and Damer Hill form a local landmark of historic, wildlife and amenity value.
- The elevated dense woodland/ plantation at Kite Hill plantation and Piddle/Shitterton Woods are characteristic features.
- Open rolling arable fields with lanes lined with thick hedgerows.
- An extensive network of public rights of way and trails.
- Low lying pastoral landscape associated with the Frome valley.
- Some hard urban edges of Bere Regis are evident from certain locations and impact on local view points.

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Landscape Character

The area is a spur of mainly chalk high ground divided and bounded by the River Piddle valley to the south and Bere Stream valley to the east. The A35 corridor defines the northern edge of the area and does create an audible impact in particular on the character area. The prominent elongated whale back landform of Black Hill, Damer Hill and the high ground associated with Kite Hill plantation and Piddle/Shitterton Woods provides a distinctive feature, especially when combined with their woods and plantations.

Piddle/Shitterton Woods are semi natural and mixed broadleaved woodland and are designated SNCIs. Black Hill and Damer Hill form an elevated ridge of Reading Beds and London Clay, overlain in part by plateau gravels.

The mix of heath, plantation and scrub landcover on the sandy soils of these hills add to the areas unique character in an otherwise chalk landscape. These hills are well used and accessible areas of open space close to Bere Regis with the Jubilee Trail passing over Black Hill. Black Hill Heath is a designated SSSI for its wildlife and geological interest primarily as an outlier of sandy

heathland and also has several tumuli which are scheduled ancient monuments. It also forms part of the Dorset Heathlands SPA and Dorset Heath SAC.

There are undulating and rolling arable geometric fields on the chalk around the fringes of the high ground with thick hedges and small copses. The eastern end of the area is influenced by the urban edges of Bere Regis, which is the only settlement in the area apart from the fringes of Turners Puddle. In places this hard edge impacts on views from well-used footpaths. The low lying fields in the east form part of the Frome meadows pasture and contrast with the elevated nature of the rest of the area.

Landscape Condition

Overall this landscape is intact due partly to the reasonable condition and continuity of thick hedgerows which interconnect the significant blocks of mixed woodland. The designated areas of woodland and heath appear to be in management and there is evidence of agri-environment scheme management such as arable margins. Both these forms of management contribute to the landscape condition. Elements which detract from condition are the A35, hard urban edges to parts of Bere Regis and some

Landscape Management and Development Objectives

prominent intrusive agricultural buildings.

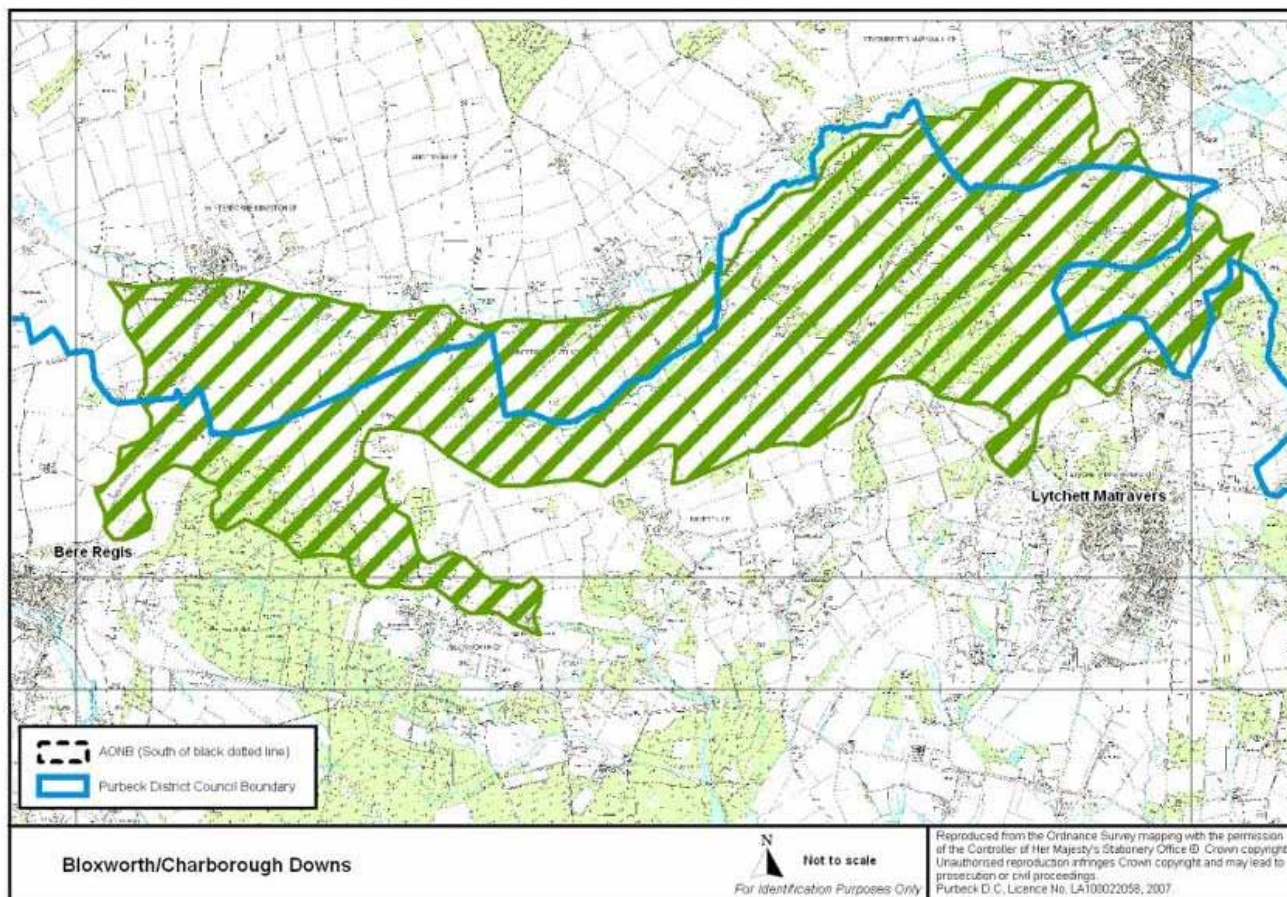
Condition: Good to Moderate

- Promote restoration of heathland in areas identified through Strategic Nature Maps.
- Promote appropriate management of arable farmland to create a wildlife-rich habitat supporting farmland birds. This will include retaining areas of fallow land and maintaining an unploughed margin around fields plus management of hedgerows.
- Restore and enhance old hazel coppice stands.
- Encourage phased restoration of chalk heathland habitats through conifer fellings.
- Promote the planting of small oak, ash and hazel broadleaved woodlands on gentle slopes to increase landscape diversity.
- Ensure new agricultural dwellings and barns enhance the local character and are sited away from open views and skylines.
- Promote Agri-Environment schemes particularly for tree and hedgerow management.
- Maintain mosaic of land cover on Black and Damer Hills. Consider the need for a comprehensive Landscape/Access management plan.
- Integrate woodland management for key woodland blocks.
- Improve the integration of some large scale agricultural buildings by appropriate planting.
- Integrate existing and any future urban edges of Bere Regis by appropriate site selection, design and planting.



4. Bloxworth / Charborough Downs

Key settlements: Bloxworth



Key characteristics

- The open and rolling expansive chalk landscapes with hedgeline lanes.
- The estate parkland landscape of Charborough Park.
- Individual mature parkland trees.
- Old estate lodges, gateposts and walls abutting lanes are key features in parts of this area.
- Charborough Park Tower is a distinctive local landmark.
- Interconnected and enclosing woodland blocks along high ground.
- Open views from elevated positions.
- Plantation woodland blocks such as Bere Wood.

Landscape Character

This is a varied character area, but largely dominated by open chalk upland which gradually slopes down to the Winterborne valley along its northern fringes. The rolling intensively farmed regular sized large fields are subdivided by thin and weak hedgerows with the occasional hedgerow tree characteristic of a 'planned enclosure' landscape. There are a few barrows, some of which are scheduled ancient monuments. The eastern part of the area is characterised by the undulating and sweeping estate landscape of Charborough Park which has important individual 'parkland' trees in open fields where game management and horse gallops are evident. Charborough Park Tower is a key local landmark. This is a well managed, designed estate landscape with its deer park and distinctive blocks of interconnected woodland along the elevated ridges. These help to enclose the landscape and contrast to the less wooded and open landscapes to the west. One of these woods, Highwood, is a semi natural and plantation woodland designated as SNCI. There are open views across the Winterborne Valley from the elevated positions. The area has few settlements, just a few isolated farmsteads. The A31

cuts through its north edges, creating in particular an audible impact on the character area. The area is reasonably well served by public rights of way. The western end of the area is semi-enclosed by Bere Wood, a large and imposing plantation of mainly conifer woodland designated as SNCI.

Landscape Condition

It is an intensively farmed landscape where the hedgerows are generally in decline as they no longer have an agricultural function and therefore become fragmented and weak. The large woodland blocks, however, do seem to be managed, perhaps for game. Arable margins in places in the east are also managed for this reason. Culturally the estate landscape and its associated features contribute to the condition and quality of the area. The A31 detracts from condition.

Condition: Good to Moderate.

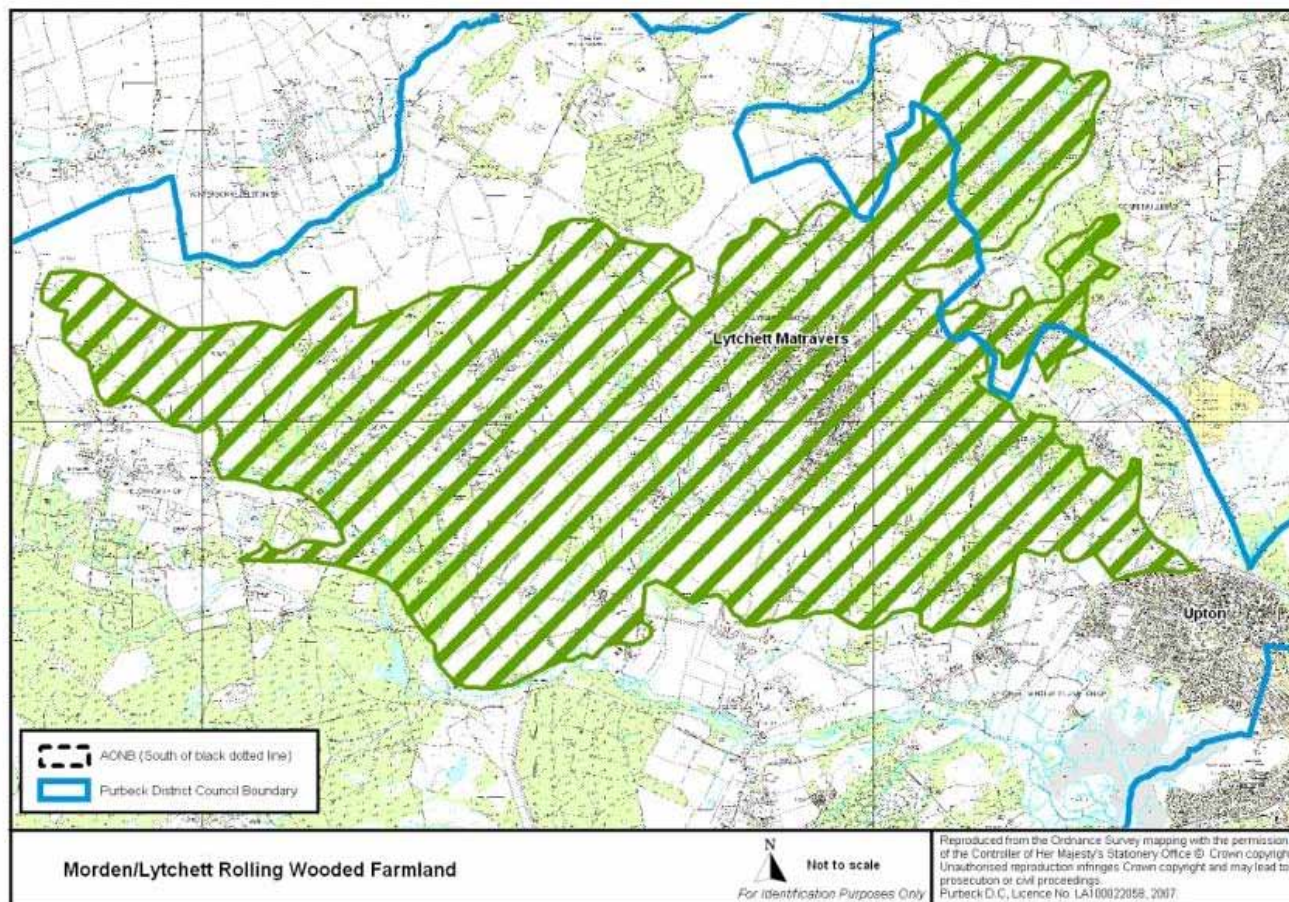
Landscape Management and Development Objectives

- Promote appropriate management of arable farmland to create a wildlife-rich habitat supporting farmland birds. This will include retaining areas of fallow land and maintaining an unploughed margin around fields plus management of hedgerows.
- Restore and enhance old hazel coppice stands
- Encourage phased restoration of chalk heathland habitats through conifer fellings
- Promote the planting of small oak, ash and hazel broadleaved woodlands on gentle slopes to increase landscape diversity
- Ensure new agricultural dwellings and barns enhance the local character and are sited away from open views and skylines.
- Continued parkland/estate management of Charborough Park to conserve/enhance built features such as walls & towers as well as woodland, parkland tree and gallop management.
- Promote Agri-Environment schemes in particular for tree and hedgerow management and arable margins.
- Explore opportunities for increasing recreational use via permissive rights of way.
- Encourage/promote rural lane management e.g. maintenance of grass verges and hedgerow tree tagging.



5. Morden / Lytchett Rolling Wooded Farmland

Key settlements:
Lytchett Matravers, East Morden, West Morden



Key characteristics

- Narrow densely hedged rural winding lanes lined with hedgerow trees.
- Open views from elevated points.
- Harmonious link between the natural and traditional built environment.
- The network of interconnected hedges and woodland blocks.
- The folded intimate valley landforms around Lytchett Matravers.
- The settlements of East and West Morden are both key local features.
- East Morden church is a key feature.
- The estate landscape and school grounds at Lytchett Minster.

Landscape Character

The area is an undulating and rolling farmland landscape with some characteristic narrow valleys and folds which create a distinctive landform. The area rises to the chalk landscapes in the north and falls to the Sherford River in the south. It forms a transitional area between the chalk landscapes and the lower lying acidic soil landscapes to the south and is a varied, interesting and largely intact landscape. The interlocking blocks of woodland together with the dense hedgerows, hedgerow trees and relatively small fields create a well wooded/treed landscape. Large plantations dominate the landscape in the south west and north east of the area and many of the woods are designated as SNCIs. The farming is mixed with arable more open fields in the west towards the chalk and a more pastoral landscape to the east of the area with corresponding thicker hedges and more hedgerow trees. There are open and impressive views from elevated areas to distant horizons such as over to Poole Harbour, Lytchett Bay and to the Purbeck Hills.

Landscape Condition

The landscape elements (hedgerows, hedgerow trees and woodland) are generally intact in the central parts of the area but are in decline towards the north west as hedges in particular, become redundant agriculturally. The number and frequency of small scale horse paddocks, associated 'clutter' and selective grazing does not contribute to landscape condition at the urban fringes. Newer development and the rural lane network generally integrates satisfactorily apart from in selected places to the south and east of Lytchett Matravers and the northern edges of Lytchett Minster. Suburban features such as lighting, pavements, highways, and signage detract from condition at settlement edges. There is some evidence of hedgerow and woodland management but fragmentation of habitat is an issue in parts of the more intensively farmed areas.

Condition: Moderate to Good.

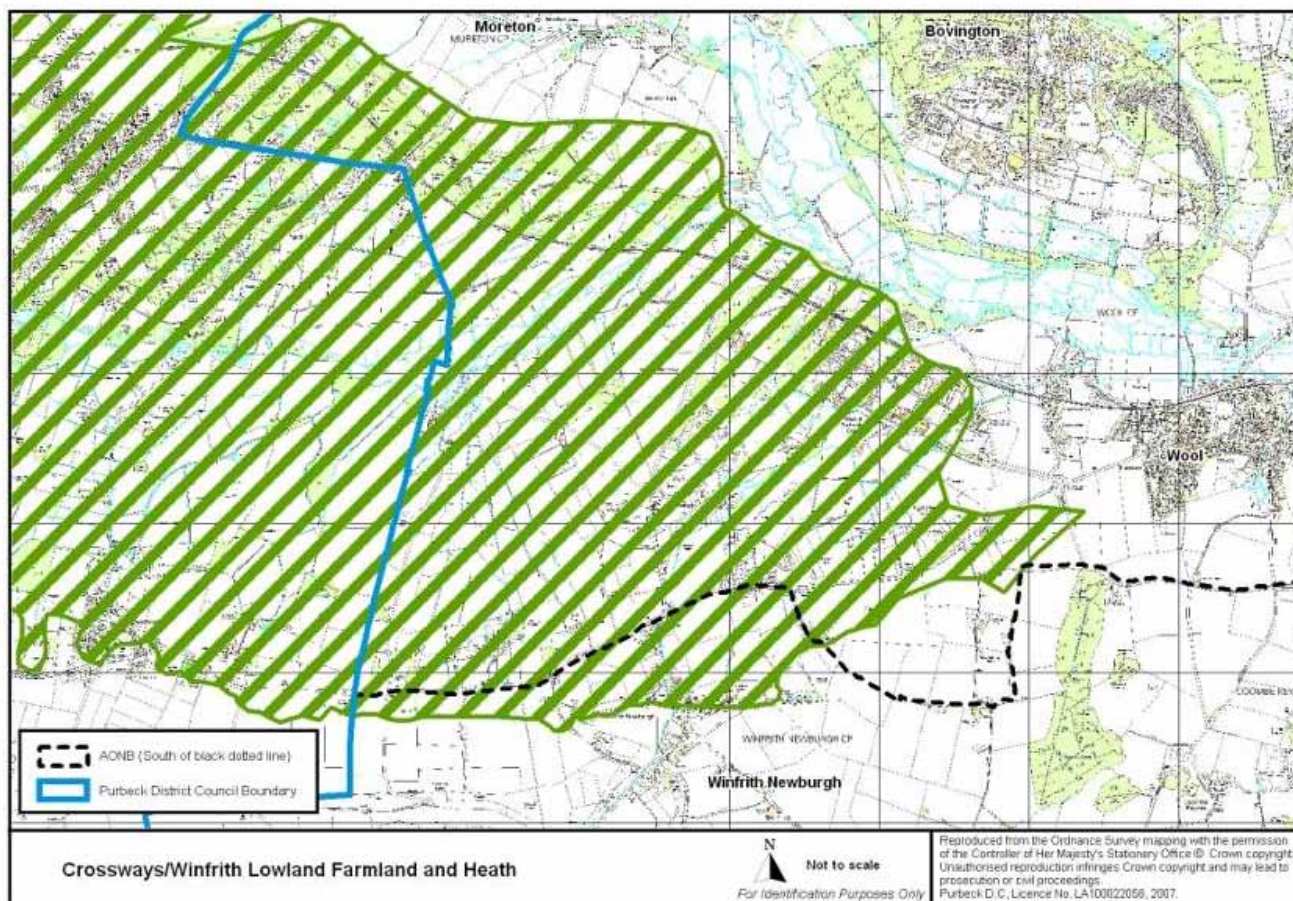
Landscape Management and Development Objectives

- Encourage/promote tree and woodland management.
- Manage 'horsiculture'.
- Conserve and enhance built environment features.
- Promote and enhance recreational trails.
- Encourage/promote Agri-Environment schemes especially for arable field margins, hedgerow and woodland management e.g. to diversify coniferous plantations.
- Encourage/promote rural lane management e.g. maintenance of grass verges and hedgerow tree tagging.
- Consider increasing the recreational opportunities within coniferous plantations.
- Carry out Village Design Statement for Lytchett Matravers and the Mordens



6. Crossways / Winfrith Lowland Farmland and Heath

Key settlements:
Winfrith Technology Centre, Tadnoll



Key characteristics

- Open expansive heathland areas with wide views
- Dense hedgerows and small copses
- Conifer plantations form the northern backdrop to the area
- Flat pastoral farmed landscape in the west
- Estate farmed landscape in the north at Moreton Park
- Straight lanes with thick hedges
- Winfrith Technology Centre creates a significant negative impact
- Fir Hill obelisk is a distinctive feature
- Tadnoll hamlet is a distinctive part of the area

Cut text please

Landscape Character

This is a generally flat farmed landscape sandwiched between the alluvial soils of the Frome valley and the chalk uplands. It has some distinctive elevated areas, from the rising land in the south east up onto the chalk, the undulating Winfrith Heath with Whitcombe and Blacknoll Hills as key features, and the northern ridgeline dominated by plantation woodland at West Wood in the Moreton Park estate. The farmland is mixed with pastoral farming to the west and arable in pockets across the area and especially to the north in Moreton Park. There are also areas of marginal farming and 'horsiculture', for example in the Redbridge area. This part of the area has an urban fringe feel partly due to former and current mineral extraction activities.

The medium sized fields have dense hedges with some important hedgerow trees and small copses creating a distinctive pattern across the farmed areas. The area is dominated visually and physically by Winfrith Technology Centre on the edge of the heath, despite retained geometric blocks of conifers. The A352 also creates a physical and visual impact on the character area. The lanes are straight and lined by thick hedgerows and

there are a few isolated farms and groups of agricultural buildings.

Winfrith and Tadnoll Nature Reserves are designated as SPA and SSSI for their wet and dry heathland habitats especially and they also have a number of tumuli and barrows designated as scheduled ancient monuments. The site of the medieval village of West Burton near Wool is also a scheduled ancient monument.

The area around Tadnoll hamlet with its narrow winding lanes, wetland, small copses and streams, creates an intimate and distinctive feature within the wider area. The area is well used as a recreation resource and the Jubilee Trail passes through the area at Moreton Park, passing the distinctive obelisk on Fir Hill.

Landscape Condition

This is a varied area with mixed condition but overall its integrity is maintained by the distinctive pattern of hedgerows/trees and small copses interspersed by, plantation woodland, wetland areas and elevated areas of heath. The condition of the landscape in the estate farmland/wooded areas and in heathland areas appears to be good, with evidence of appropriate management which has and still does contribute to the cultural

Landscape Management and Development Objectives

condition of these areas. The designated areas of heath are in a favourable condition. The urban influence of the Technology Centre, the main road, 'horsiculture' paddocks and the gravel extraction uses in the urban fringe all detract from overall condition.

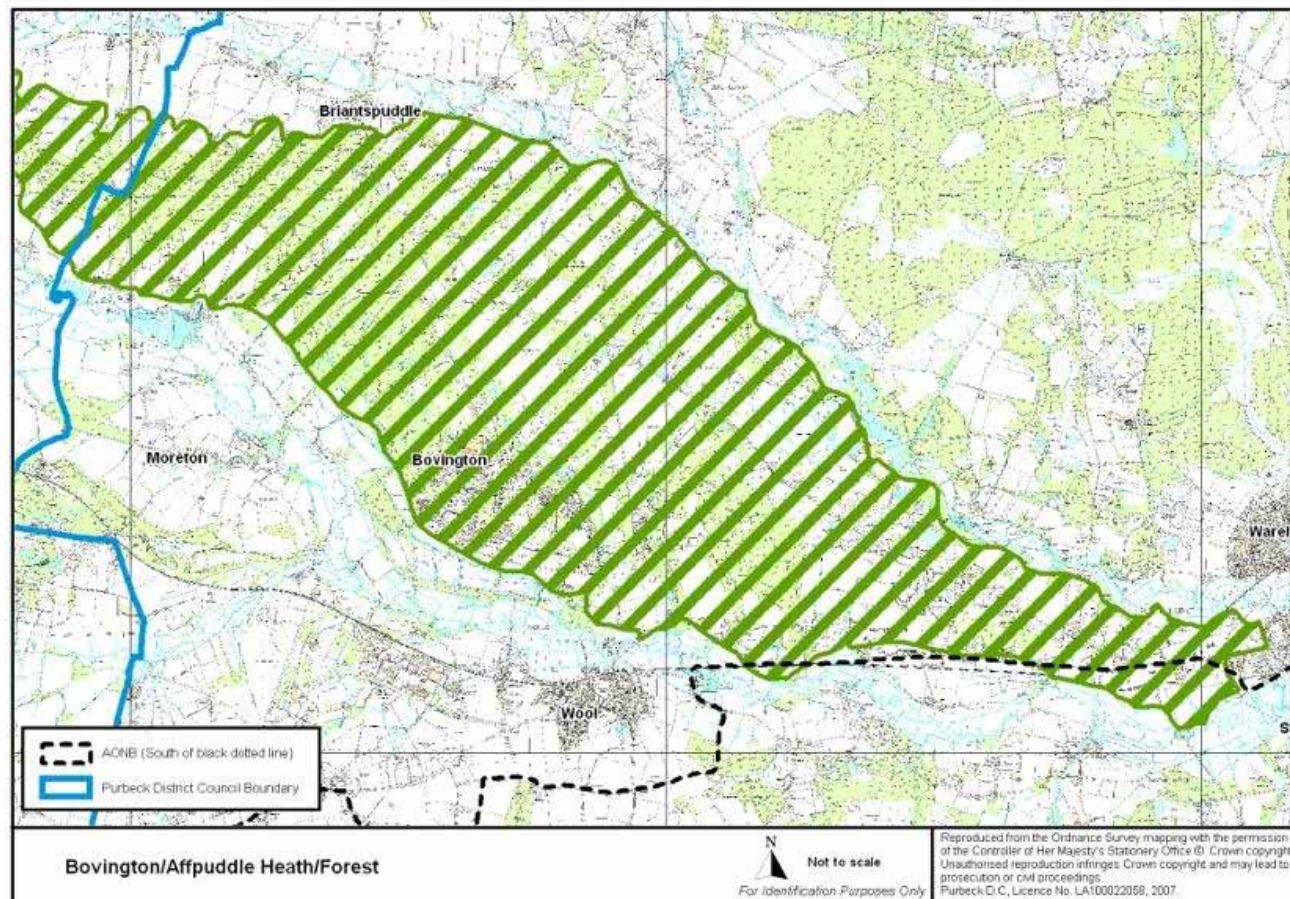
Condition: Good to Moderate.

- Promote restoration of heathland in areas identified through Strategic Nature Maps
- Encourage/promote Agri-Environment schemes especially for arable field margins, hedgerows, hedgerow trees, ditch & woodland management.
- Continued parkland/estate management of Moreton Park to conserve/enhance built features such as the obelisk, estate dwellings as well as woodland and tree management.
- Continue to carry out heathland management and explore opportunities for heathland restoration to increase its extent.
- Extend, manage and 'soften' edges of conifer belts around Winfrith Technology Centre.
- Promote recreational opportunities within conifer belts.
- Enhance setting of mineral workings.
- Improve urban fringe landscapes.



7. Bovington / Affpuddle Heath / Forest

Key settlements:
Wareham, Throop, Bovington,



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Key characteristics

- The patchwork of heath, scrub, plantation and farmland.
- Large scale blocks of conifer plantation create hard edges but act as screening and landscape features in places.
- Open expansive heathland with wide views.
- Open views from elevated positions across the area.
- Recreational use and conservation management a key feature across the area.
- There are localised industrial/urban and military use impacts in the area.
- Straight and fast roads often lined with plantation wood/forest
- Bounded by the Piddle and Frome valleys.
- Acts as a buffer between the two valleys particularly at its eastern end.

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- The wooded ridgeline to the north is a key feature.

Landscape Character

This is an undulating landscape of heathland, conifer plantation and farmland based on acidic and impoverished soils and dominated by Bovington and the Camp. It is divided by the valleys of the Piddle and Frome and framed in the north by the elevated and wooded ridgeline associated with Affpuddle Forest. At its far eastern end it forms a distinctive elevated plateau/ridge on which Wareham is strategically located between the river valleys. Its distinctive character is created by the broad scale patchwork of dense plantation forest, open heath, scrub and farmland. The heath is in itself a mix of regenerating scrub, birch and individual or small groups of pine. Much of the area is designated as SPA, SSSI and/or SNCI for its heathland habitat value on the sandy/acidic soils and some as woodland habitat. Higher Hyde Heath nature reserve is an important feature.

There are a significant number of scheduled ancient monuments including a group of tumuli associated with the northern ridgeline. The arable farming is generally found along the margins of the area abutting

forestry and especially along the Frome valley and into the chalk landscapes to the north. The dense blocks of coniferous plantation create bold features and strong geometric edges but do help to screen intrusive urban and military uses. The military activity and use based at Bovington does create an impact across a large part of the area. Current and former mineral extraction activities influence the appearance and after use of significant parts of the south and eastern side of the area in particular. Modern day reclamation of these sites has and will continue to provide landscape, biodiversity and amenity benefits. Traffic generation from these sites is an ongoing issue.

The whole area is well used as a recreation resource despite the heavy military presence. There are several forest trails and picnic areas, for example at Culpeppers Dish. Three of Dorset's major visitor attractions are in the area: Bovington Tank Museum, Monkey World and Clouds Hill.

Landscape Condition

The integrity of this area has been adversely affected by past military use and mineral extraction activities, contributing to an unfavourable condition in parts of

Landscape Management and Development Objectives

the designated areas and elsewhere. However, there are still large areas which are intact, in good condition and being managed in a multi functional way to minimise heathland fragmentation. Fringe areas of estate farmland appear to be well managed with generally intact landscape elements such as hedgerows and woodland blocks. Its ecological and cultural importance is significant and the area forms a key part of the lowland heath basin with opportunities to expand this habitat. The impacts of urban development at the fringes of the area detract from overall condition.

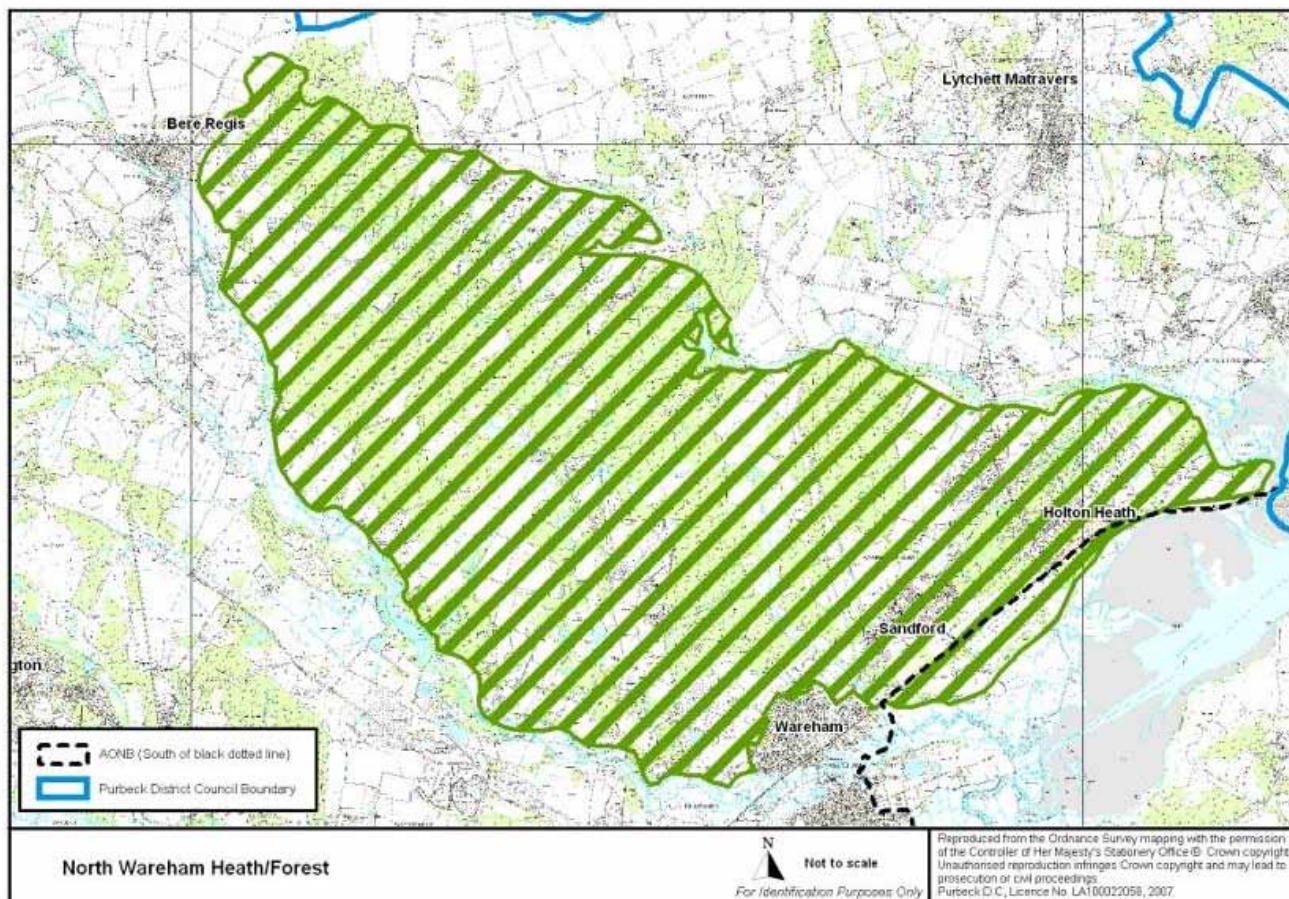
Condition: Good to Moderate.

- Promote restoration of heathland in areas identified through Strategic Nature Maps
- Continued variation in forestry and landscape operations to create diversity and improve public edges.
- Increase opportunities for access and recreation.
- Retain skyline trees.
- Improve/enhance hard/geometric edges to conifer plantations.
- Encourage/promote Agri-Environment schemes especially for arable field margins, hedgerows, hedgerow trees & woodland
- Improve integration of golf centre.
- Carry out and implement a comprehensive Bovington Camp Landscape enhancement scheme.
- Carry out Village Design Statement for Bovington.



8. North Wareham Heath / Forest

Key settlements: North Wareham, Bere Regis



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Key characteristics

- An undulating, open and expansive heathland landscape
- Bounded by Piddle Valley along its western and southern edges and the fringes of Poole Harbour along its eastern side
- Unspoilt across much of the area with patchwork of heath, forestry, scrub and farmland
- Conifer plantations create hard edges but act as screening and landscape features
- Recreational use and conservation management a key feature across the area
- Urban/industrial impacts along the south east parts of the area
- Straight and fast roads often lined with plantation wood/forest
- Morden Bog is a distinctive and open landscape feature
- Woolsbarrow Fort and Woodbury Hill (both scheduled ancient

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monuments) are key local landmarks

- The area around Keyworth Farm forms a locally distinctive parkland landscape

Landscape Character

The area is an expansive, undulating and rolling landscape formed of large areas of uniform heathland based on acidic and impoverished soils. This creates an open and unspoilt landscape across much of the area. These open areas are surrounded by a patchwork landscape of conifer plantation, scrub, woodland, farmland, mineral extraction, industrial use and urban edges. The conifer plantations dominate and create strong geometric edges but also help to screen urban and industrial uses such as existing and proposed mineral workings. The heathland area's character is created by the mix of species together with the regenerating birch woodland around the edges and individual pine amongst the heath. Large areas are designated SPA, SSSI and SNCI, mainly for their important heathland habitat on the sandy/acidic soils.

Morden Bog is a National Nature Reserve and a distinctive low lying open wetland within the wider character area. Holton Heath nature reserve is sandwiched between the rail line and the industrial estate. There are a significant number of

barrows, tumuli and some hill forts designated as scheduled ancient monuments. Arable farming occurs around the fringes especially to the north west and north east and in parts along the River Piddle valley and are often areas of cleared heath. There are marginal farmed areas and patches of 'horsiculture' across the area.

The urban, industrial and commercial land uses at Sandford and Holton Heath create a negative landscape and visual impact across parts of the south east of the character area. There is also a long and continuing influence caused by mineral extraction in the area which has shaped the landscape and its use, particularly in the south of the area. Modern day reclamation of these sites has and will continue to provide biodiversity, landscape and amenity benefits. Traffic generation from these sites is an ongoing issue. The roads are straight and fast, and the forests in particular form an important and well used recreational resource with many parking/picnic sites. The Wareham Forest Way passes through the area. The acidic and impoverished soils gradually improve northwards towards the wooded farmland and chalk character areas. The area around Holton Lee, and to the south east of the railway line – around Keyworth Farm - is of a very different character. There is a distinct parkland feel. The trees grade from

Landscape Management and Development Objectives

being mainly coniferous to being mainly deciduous species, with many individual parkland trees in evidence (with characteristic flat bottomed/grazed outline).

Landscape Condition

It is a largely intact landscape comprising a mixed patchwork of conifer plantation, scrub and woodland which contributes to the overall integrity of the area. It is generally managed as a multi functional landscape. There are detractors from condition such as the weak, fragile hedgerows in arable areas, the significant pressures from the urban fringe uses, visitor pressure, industrial/commercial use and the dominance in places caused by the hard edges to plantations. Its ecological and cultural condition is generally good or favourable and the area forms a key part of the lowland heath basin with opportunities to expand this habitat.

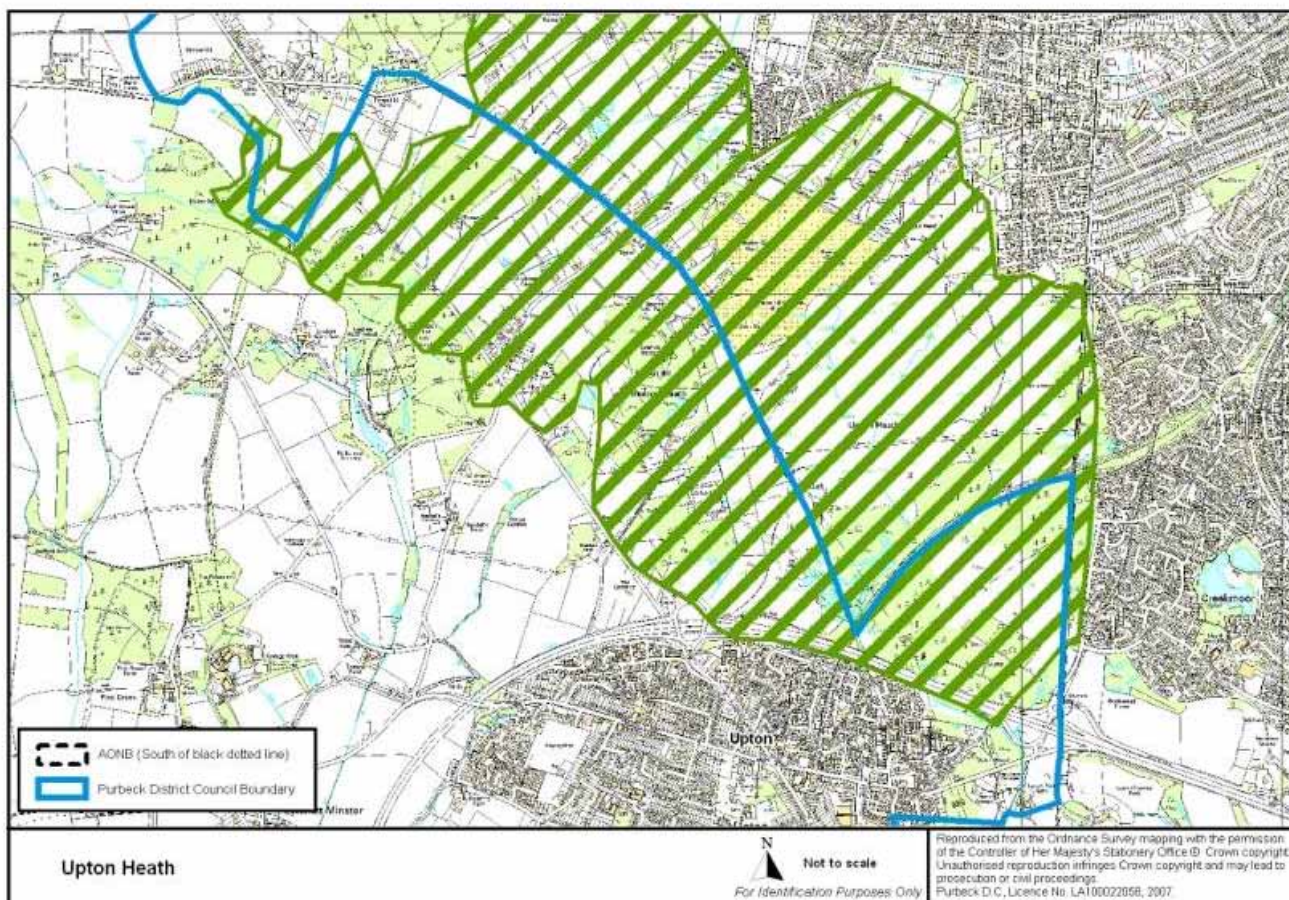
Condition: Good to Moderate.

- Promote restoration of heathland in areas identified through a Strategic Nature Maps
- Improve/enhance hard/geometric edges to conifer plantations.
- Continue to enhance forestry operations to add diversity.
- Continue to promote and manage recreational use of the forest/ heathland areas.
- Retain/enhance conifer blocks as landscape features and for screening value in selected locations.
- Manage urban fringe edges to minimise impacts.
- Prepare and implement a Holton Heath Landscape enhancement scheme.
- Control unauthorised uses/tipping.
- Carry out Village Design Statement for Sandford



9. Upton Heath

Key settlements: Upton



Key characteristics

- A fragmented mosaic of undulating heath, scrub, woodland/plantation and marginal farming.
- Part of the larger Upton Heath nature reserve.
- Woodland/plantation blocks around the area are characteristic features.
- Beacon Hill is a locally distinctive feature.
- Urban features (roads, settlement edges, pylons) are visually and physically intrusive and sever and define the area.
- Open views from highpoints.
- Marginal farming paddocks and 'horsiculture' are detracting features.

Landscape Character

This is a rolling urban fringe landscape typical of the SE Dorset urban heathland associated with the areas acidic soils and gravels. It is comprised of open heath and a fragmented mosaic of scrub (gorse/bramble), pine/birch woodland and marginal farming/ 'horsiculture'. The southern part of the area, being SPA and SSSI and part of the wider Upton Heath nature reserve, is ore open heathland with areas of regenerating birch and pine breaking up the undulating heath. This area is heavily bisected by informal paths eroded into the heath cover and is defined by the hard edges of Creekmoor/ Broadstone to the east, the A35 and pton to the south and the A350 to the west. It merges with Beacon Heath to the north; an area with a disjointed patchwork of ormer heath with marginal farmland, old clay workings, some leisure uses and random development along the Corfe Mullen road. he northern end of the area is defined and framed by blocks of conifer plantation and other woodland. Beacon Hill is a planted feature of local importance. These woodland blocks and those against the urban edges create important landscape features and help screen unsightly urban uses. Being close to a large urban

population, the area is very heavily used and there are signs of misuse and erosion. There are some open views over the area from highpoints whilst other views are framed by the landform and land use.

Landscape Condition

The integrity of this landscape has been has been severely compromised by urban fringe pressures and development. It is fragmented, and the non-heathland landcover areas are in a poor condition due to marginalised farming/horsiculture and development pressure. The remaining heathland is reasonably intact as a feature and is linked to the rest of Upton Heath to the east. However, it is still in an unfavourable condition due to lack of management, fires, motorbike/cycle erosion and under-grazing.

Condition: Poor to Moderate.

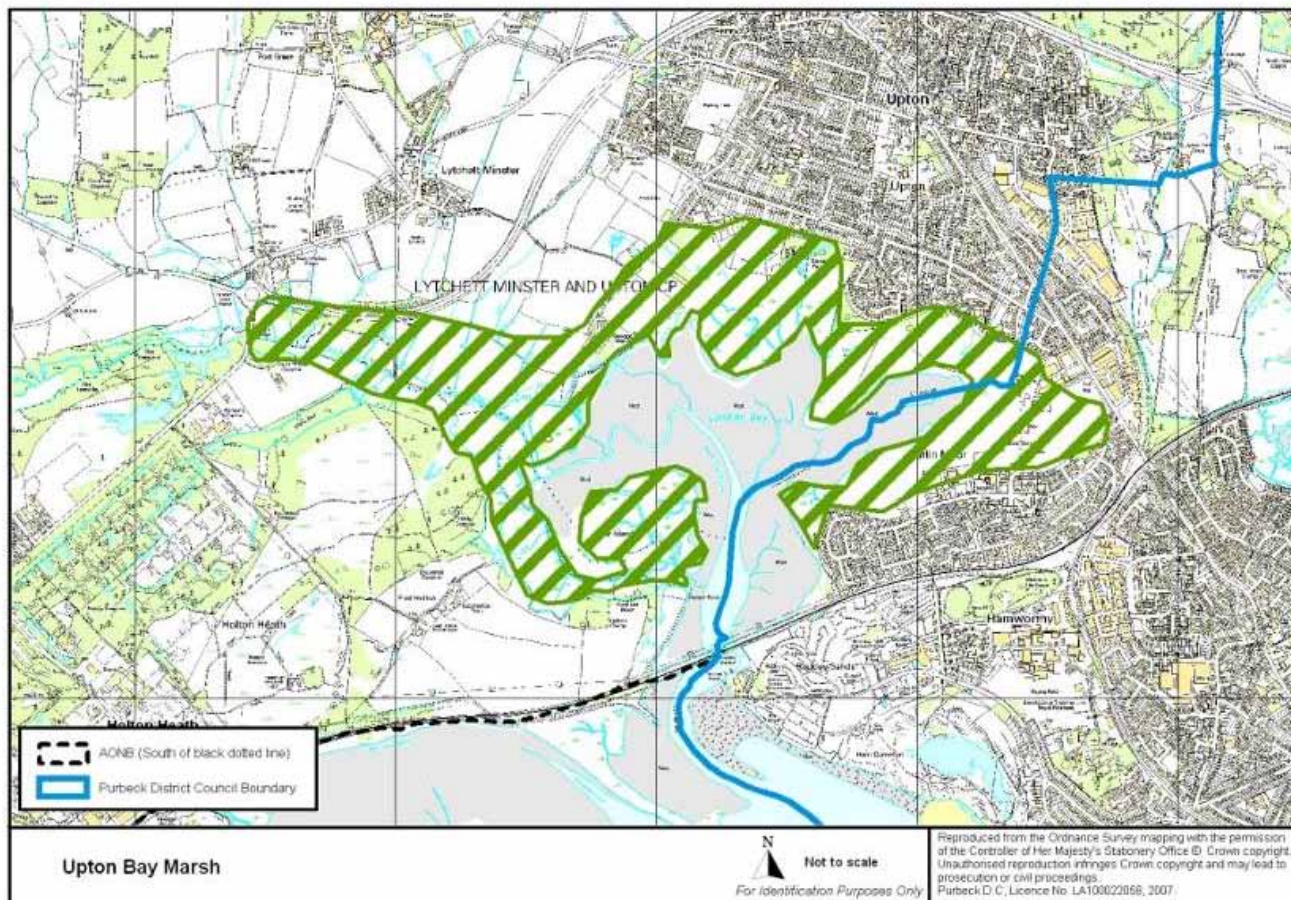
Landscape Management and Development Objectives

- Promote restoration of heathland in areas identified through Strategic Nature Maps
- Prepare and implement an Urban Fringe landscape enhancement scheme based on Beacon Hill and the SSSI.
- Increase access arrangements away from the SSSI.
- Promote, manage and control recreational opportunities in the area.
- Promote and encourage woodland management.
- Control/manage tipping, misuse and erosion.
- Increase community involvement in use of area.
- Carry out Village Design Statement for Upton



10. Upton Bay Marsh

Key settlements: Upton



Key characteristics

- A flat and expansive marsh, mudflats and meadow landscape.
- Open, undeveloped and windswept character.
- Developing scrub woodland along the urban fringes.
- Distinctive hard urban edges to Upton and Turlin Moor.
- Wetland and meadow wildlife habitats.
- Deeply incised and sinuous shoreline.

Landscape Character

The area is a flat, windswept and expansive waterside landscape of alluvial marsh, stretches of mudflats and meadow at the northern end of Poole harbour. The shoreline along the waters edge is characteristically deeply incised and sinuous as it follows numerous channels and inlets. There is a strong and distinctive urban edge to the area softened in places by extensive scrub woodland. This is regenerating from the marshland as the land gradually rises towards Upton and it provides an important landscape feature and buffer for the urban edges. There are signs of typical urban fringe pressure on the landscape such as fly tipping which detract from the areas character. The Sherford River drains into Lytchett Bay in the west of the area and the Sherford River Character Area merges at the A351 bridge. The meadows and farmland to the north form a transition with the Morden/Lytchett Rolling Wooded Farmland Character Area. There is a more abrupt edge to the south west adjacent to the heathland character area. Large parts of the marsh land are designated as SPA and/or SSSI and some of the wet meadows and ditches as SNCI. There are few other trees in the landscape apart from those associated with

the urban edges and there are a few hedged fields to the west. The area is well used by the adjacent urban population and apart from the impact of the urban edges of Upton and Turlin Moor and a sewage works; there are no other built environmental features.

Landscape Condition

This is generally an intact landscape despite some typical urban fringe pressures and uses. The lack of fragmentation is due to the consistent and extensive coverage of marsh/mudflats, meadow and extensive scrub woodland. Ecologically the area is significant due to the various wildlife designations and is in a favourable condition because of appropriate management. This contributes to overall condition. In places the hard urban edges detract from the condition of the area.

Condition: Good to Moderate.

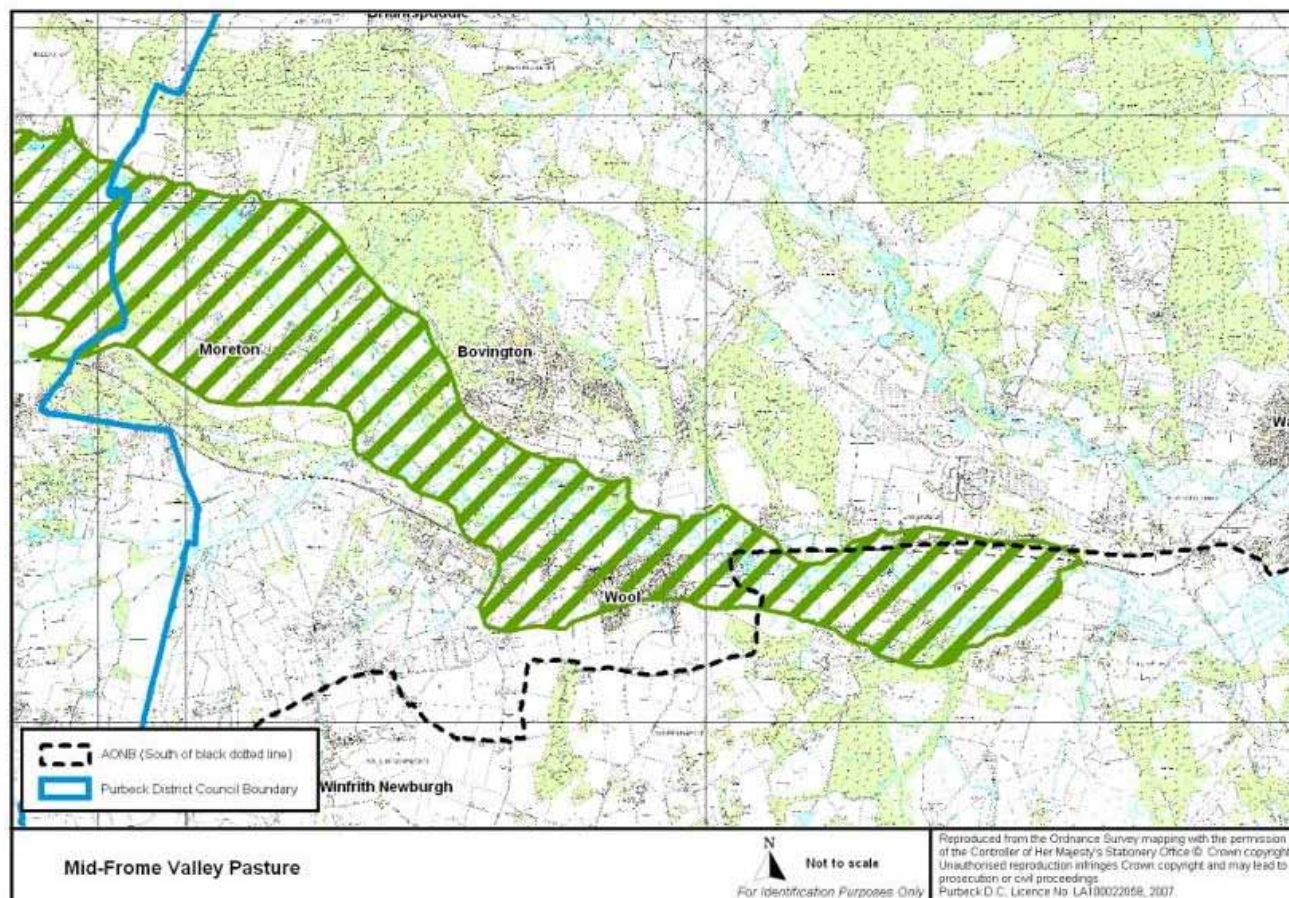
Landscape Management and Development Objectives

- Prepare and implement an Upton Urban Fringe Landscape Management plan.
- Control/manage tipping and misuse.
- Conserve/manage woodland fringes.
- Promote marshland management.
- Enhance entrance features/barriers.
- Interpret ongoing and future enhancements and landscape management.
- Carry out Village Design Statement for Upton and Turlin Moor



11. Mid-Frome Valley Pasture

Key Settlements: Moreton, Wool, Bovington



Key characteristics

- A flat, wide river valley flood meadow landscape with a meandering river channel.
- The variety of wetland habitats are characteristic landscape and wildlife features.
- Margins of trees along the water courses.
- Woodland define the edges of the valley in places.
- Grazed small fields abutting the river.
- Improved large arable fields on the margins subdivide the integrity of floodplain.
- Lanes link settlements along valley floor.
- Estate farmland and buildings at Moreton Park.
- Old water meadow field patterns and associated ditches.
- The historic setting of Wool Bridge and Woolbridge Manor

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Landscape Character

This is a wider alluvial valley than the Upper/Mid Piddle Valley, sandwiched between two slightly elevated areas of heath/scrub/farmland. The flat flood plain accommodates the meandering Frome and its many associated wet ditches, small tributaries and channels. Margins of trees associated with these wetland elements create important landscape features and a distinctive pattern. The slightly elevated land to the north and south on the valley sides is largely arable farmland with medium sized regularly shaped fields which are cultivated hard up to blocks of fringing woodland. This contrasts with the rough grazed land and smaller fields abutting the river and creates a subdivision of the flood plain. A significant narrow belt of remnant woodland along the northern side of the flood plain area is designated as ancient woodland. A significant number of semi natural woodland areas, conifer plantations and wet ditches are designated as SNCI. The Frome itself and its associated wet meadows are designated as SSSIs. The old flood meadow systems and field patterns are of key historic environment importance and contribute to the setting of the settlements in the valley.

There are a number of important scheduled ancient monuments in the area such as Wool Bridge and Binden Abbey. Access along the valley is reasonable and there are important informal recreational areas such as at the Frome crossing at Moreton. The A352 and the rail line create a significant physical and visual impact as they cross the southern part of this

character area. Roads follow the valley floor linking the settlements of Moreton, Wool and East Stoke which are the main settlements of influence in the area and the main crossings points of the Frome. The parkland landscape estate of Moreton Park is an important local feature.

Landscape Condition

In general this is an intact landscape whose integrity is enhanced by the grazed flood plain meadows and the unifying presence of the river, its many tributaries and associated trees, woods and other vegetation. It has significant ecological value and culturally the importance of the flood meadows, estate landscape and the other built historic features all contribute to its overall condition. There is no landscape management evident across the area and is the reason why the River Frome SSSI is in an unfavourable condition. The estate landscape at Moreton is well managed with evidence of both woodland and tree management. Urban fringe pressures and urban development uses detract from condition particularly to the south east of the area. The intensively farmed nature of the landscape around Wool contributes to its open character but its hedges and hedgerow trees are in decline as they become redundant agriculturally. This decline will contribute to fragmentation of the landscape as no management is evident. The groups of trees around the settlement do contribute to overall condition and the historic environment features in the area contribute to its cultural integrity.

Landscape Management and Development Objectives

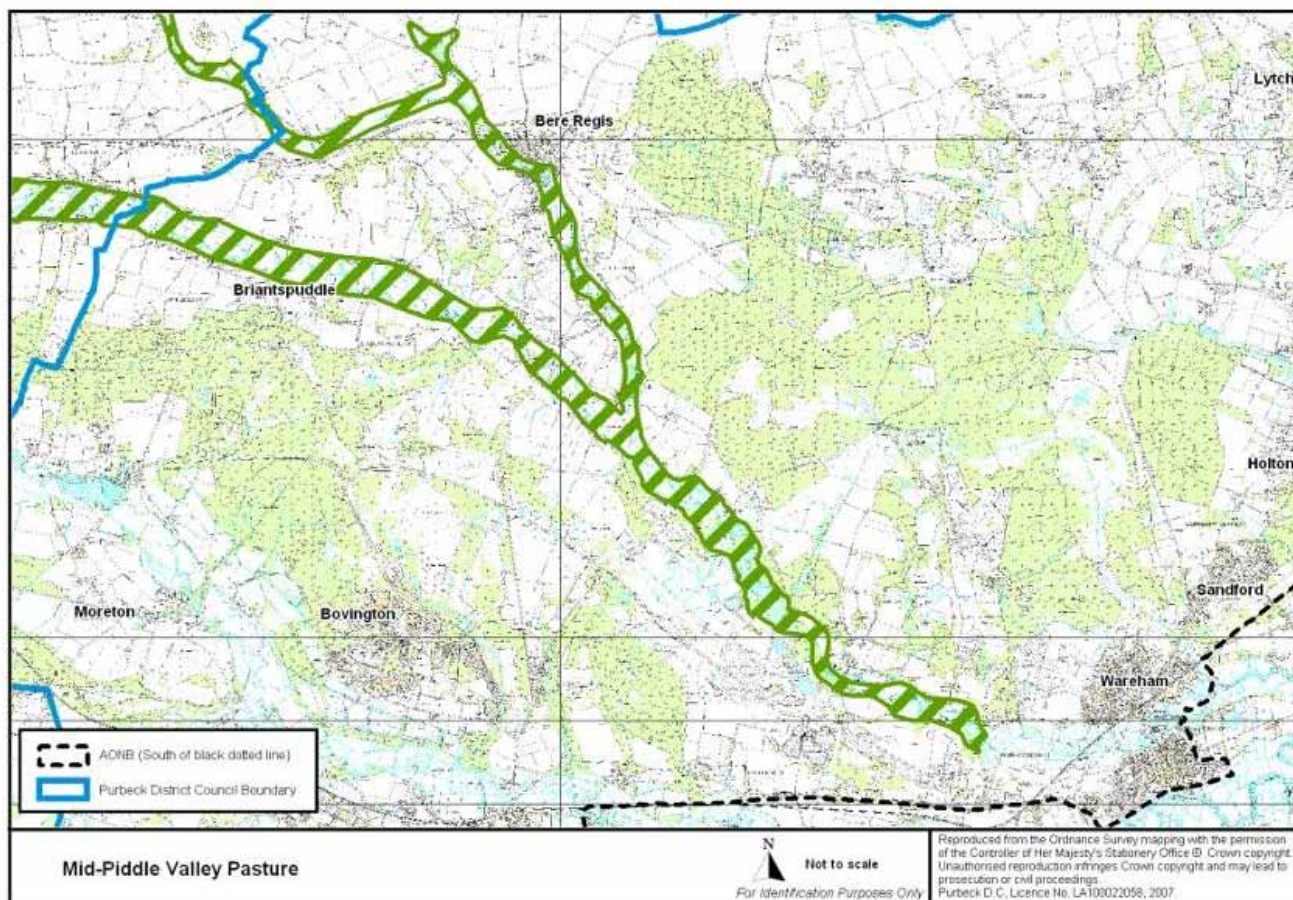
Condition: Good to Moderate.

- Promote Agri-Environment schemes especially for arable field margins, hedgerows, hedgerow trees, woodland management and access enhancement.
- Maintain/enhance distinctive woods/trees along southern edge of Wool.
- Encourage/ promote the conservation and management of historic environment features.
- Encourage/promote comprehensive river catchment management plans and local management agreements e.g. to encourage grazing and reduce subdivision of flood plain.
- Promote and encourage tree (especially veteran trees), hedge and woodland management.
- Improve public access to river corridor e.g. via Agri-environment schemes.
- Conserve and enhance historic bridge crossings.
- Control, manage and monitor the impact of 'horsiculture'.
- Control impact of any future industrial use e.g. cress beds.
- Carry out Village Design Statement for Wool/East Burton and for Moreton.
- Manage 'horsiculture'.
- Conserve and enhance natural and built environment features.
- Continued parkland/estate management of Moreton Park to conserve/enhance built features such as obelisks as well as woodland and parkland trees.



12. Mid-Piddle Valley Pasture

Key settlements: Bere Regis, Briantspuddle



Key characteristics

- A flat relatively narrow valley floor with a meandering river channel and associated ditches and channels
- A pastoral grazed landscape of small fields
- A mosaic of trees and other vegetation associated with the river
- Area often framed and defined on the terraces by groups of trees/ woodland
- Crossed at 90 degrees by narrow lanes on old bridges
- Valley narrows and becomes less treed on the chalk
- An undeveloped and tranquil rural landscape

Landscape Character

This is a uniform, flat and largely pastoral river valley landscape on alluvial soils. It is defined by shallow river terraces along each side of the flood plain which confine the valley into a relatively narrow corridor. The Piddle meanders across the low lying grazed and generally small scale fields and has numerous small tributaries, ditches and channels. A mosaic of trees and other wetland vegetation follows the course of the river and these other wetland areas, to create a distinctive pattern. Woods and plantations on one or more sides of the river terrace frame and enclose the valley. There are a number of wet woods designated as SNCI. There are few open views of the valley due to the pattern of trees and woods. Narrow lanes cross the valley at 90 degrees often via historic bridges. There is the occasional rural dwelling positioned on the side of the valley overlooking the meadows. The lack of development and paths along the valley help to create an inaccessible and tranquil landscape. The valley narrows in its northern sections and becomes less treed as it crosses in to the chalk landscapes. It is in these upper areas of the valley that several distinctive and large scale commercial watercress beds are

located which create a significant impact on landscape.

Landscape Condition

A largely intact and tranquil landscape due partly to the general lack of development and the unifying function of the river, its tributaries, ditches, channels and associated trees, woods and other vegetation. The grazed fields along the river and the historic river crossings also contribute to this integrity. Intensive agricultural use in places close to the river margins and some dominant commercial use detract from this integrity. Ecologically the reasonable condition overall is due to the variety of wetland habitats. The cultural integrity of the flood meadows is significant and important.

Condition: Good to Moderate.

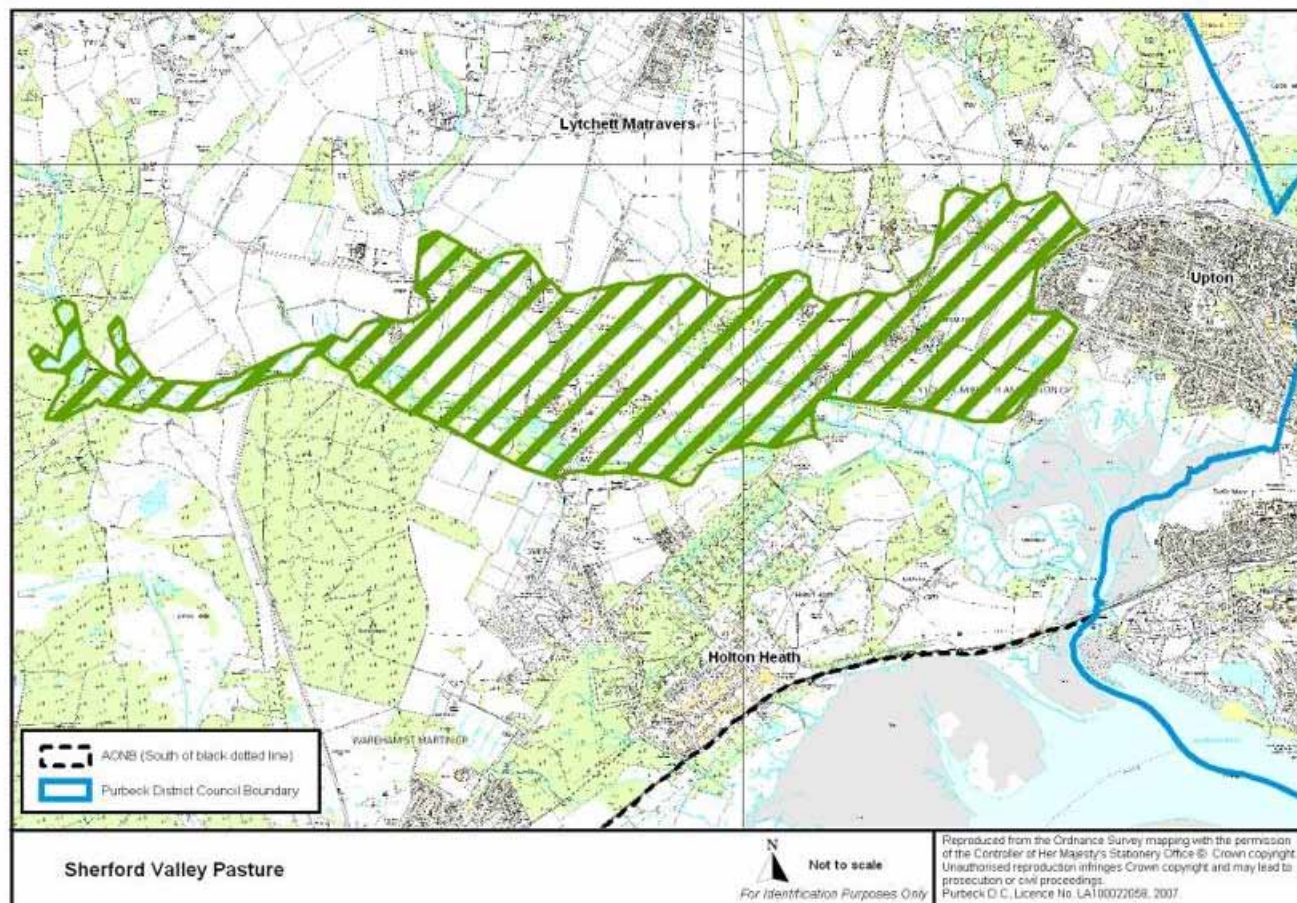
Landscape Management and Development Objectives

- Encourage/promote comprehensive river catchment management plans and local management agreements e.g. to encourage grazing.
- Promote and encourage tree and woodland management.
- Improve public access e.g. via Agri-environment schemes.
- Conserve and enhance historic bridge crossings.
- Control, manage and monitor the impact of 'horsiculture'



13. Sherford Valley Pasture

Key settlements: Upton, Lytchett Minster



Key characteristics

- A flat intensively farmed landscape.
- Well wooded river corridor with some significant mature trees.
- An inaccessible perception especially along the river corridor.
- Lytchett Minster is the main settlement with some characteristic parkland/estate features.
- Narrow hedge lined lanes.
- The group of buildings at the Sherford River crossing in Organford are key features.
- Farmer Palmers is a distinctive recreational feature.
- The A35 is a major visual and physical feature of influence.

Landscape Character

A largely flat intensively farmed landscape associated with the alluvial soils of the Sherford River valley and the other small streams draining into Upton Bay. It slopes gently north towards Lytchett Matravers and is bound on the south by the low lying heathland character area. There is a distinctive corridor of trees and woodland along the river with some important mature trees. A large section of this stream side woodland is designated as SNCI. There are few other woods apart from a few geometric blocks not associated with the stream. Arable fields are cropped right up to the edge of these woods. The far western side of the area is framed by conifer plantation within which are small lakes which form the source of the Sherford River and are designated SNCIs. The narrow lanes are lined with hedgerows of mixed quality and height.

Lytchett Minster is the main settlement which dominates the eastern side of the area and has some important parkland/estate features such as individual trees, avenues and buildings. The group of buildings at the Sherford River crossing in Organford are also of importance as some of the few locally distinctive rural buildings of merit in the area. The A35

creates a visual and physical impact across the whole area. There are few rights of way which exacerbate feelings of inaccessibility, especially along the river corridor.

Landscape Condition

The relatively intact corridor of woodland and trees associated with the river valley contributes to the integrity of this area despite the apparent lack of management. Elsewhere agricultural hedgerows are declining and are fragmented due to lack of appropriate management. Hedgerows and trees along rural lanes, however, appear to be in better condition. The importance of estate features such as avenue trees and woodland blocks contribute to the cultural condition of the landscape. The urban impacts caused by the road network, some poor edges to settlements and 'horsiculture' detract from quality and create fragmentation.

Condition: Poor to Moderate.

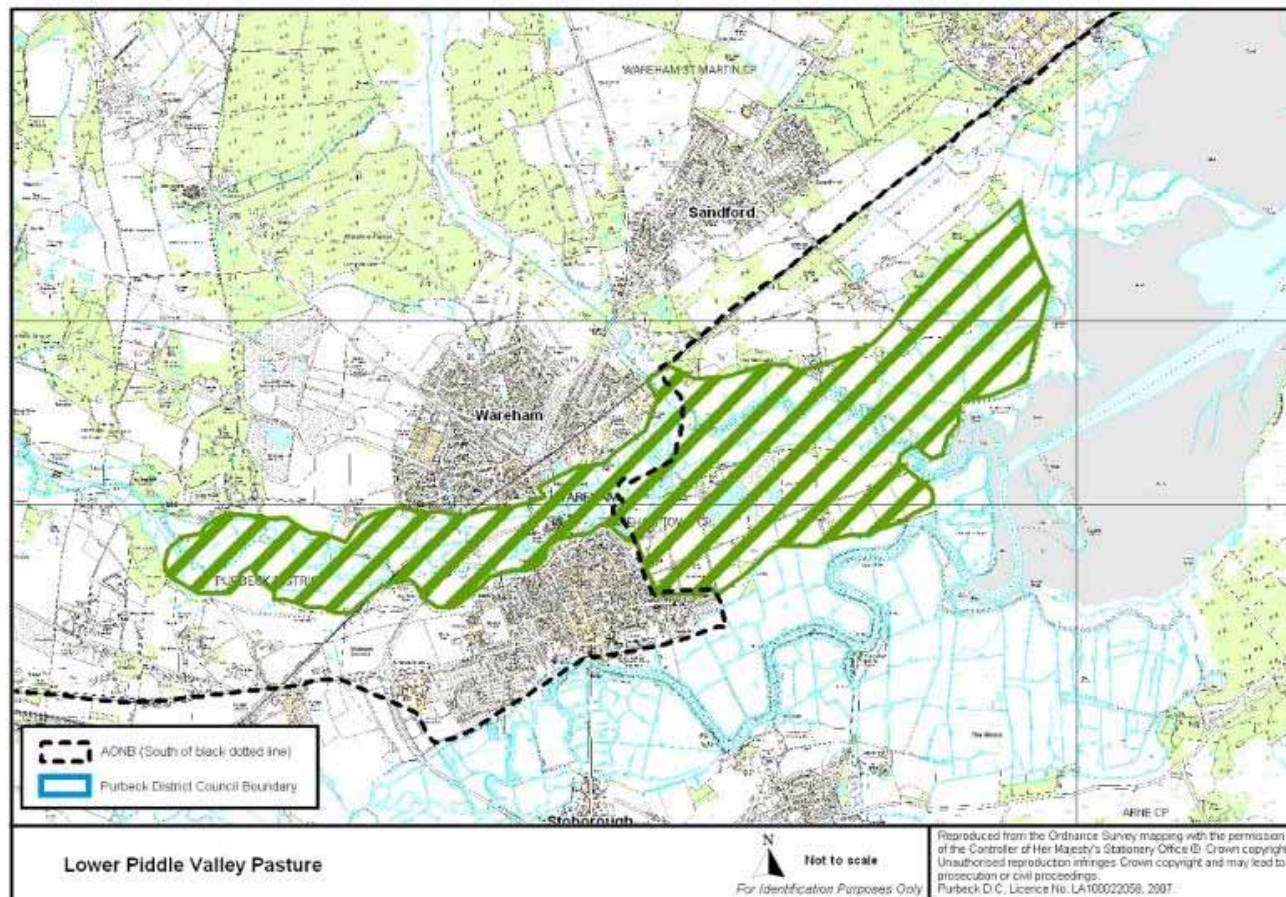
Landscape Management and Development Objectives

- Carry out Village Design Statement for Lytchett Minister (to include the Lees Estate)
- Manage 'horsiculture' and conserve and enhance natural and built environment features.
- Encourage/promote tree, hedge and woodland management.
- Enhance the local distinctiveness of the two road/river crossings via a highway improvement scheme.
- Undertake whole river valley enhancement scheme to include improved access to river corridor, improved recreational opportunities and to increase overall landscape and biodiversity interest.



14. Lower Piddle Valley Pasture

Key settlements: Wareham



Key characteristics

- Flat river valley flood meadow landscape.
- The meandering course of the River Piddle and its associated ditches and banks.
- Elevated river terraces and associated trees and scrub.
- Open pastoral expansive landscape with some views up the valley.
- The visually and physically intrusive transport corridors are major features.
- A largely undeveloped landscape used for informal recreation.
- A buffer between Wareham and Northport.

Landscape Character

This area is a distinctive flat river flood plain landscape, which separates the two urban areas of Wareham and Northport. These two urban areas are located on the elevated river terraces to the north and south of this character area and provide distinctive edges. The impressive steep ramparts of Wareham Town walls, a scheduled ancient monument, form part of the southern edge of this character area. The flood plain therefore acts as an important undeveloped buffer between these two urban areas. The meandering course of the River Piddle and its associated ditches and banks in the broad alluvial valley floor are important key features. It abuts a similar valley pasture character area to the south, that of the River Frome, with the original old town of Wareham strategically located on higher ground between the two. It is a pastoral landscape, seasonally grazed in the summer and often flooded in winter. The fields are enclosed by ditches and/or simple wire fences. There is a small area of 'horsiculture' paddocks with an unkempt appearance and a residential park which both detract from the area's character. There are few hedges and the tree/scrub cover is found mainly along the river terraces, which help in places to

soften and screen the urban edges. Some tree/scrub cover is also found along the rail and road embankments which both sever the area and dominate the landscape. Being close to the urban population with good access, the area is a well used and important public open space. Wareham Forest Way passes across the area. Large areas of the meadows are designated as a Ramsar site, being internationally important for wetland birds, as well as being a SSSI. Some of the wet ditches area designated as SNCI for their wetland habitat value.

Landscape Condition

This is a fragmented landscape due to the severance caused by the road and rail corridors. There are other detractors caused by poorly located development, 'horsiculture' paddocks and some hard urban edges, all of which detract from overall condition. Ecologically and culturally the remaining areas of water meadow and associated features provide some integrity and continuity with the rest of the valley floor contributing to condition. The SSSIs in the west of the area are in a favourable condition but generally unfavourable in the east.

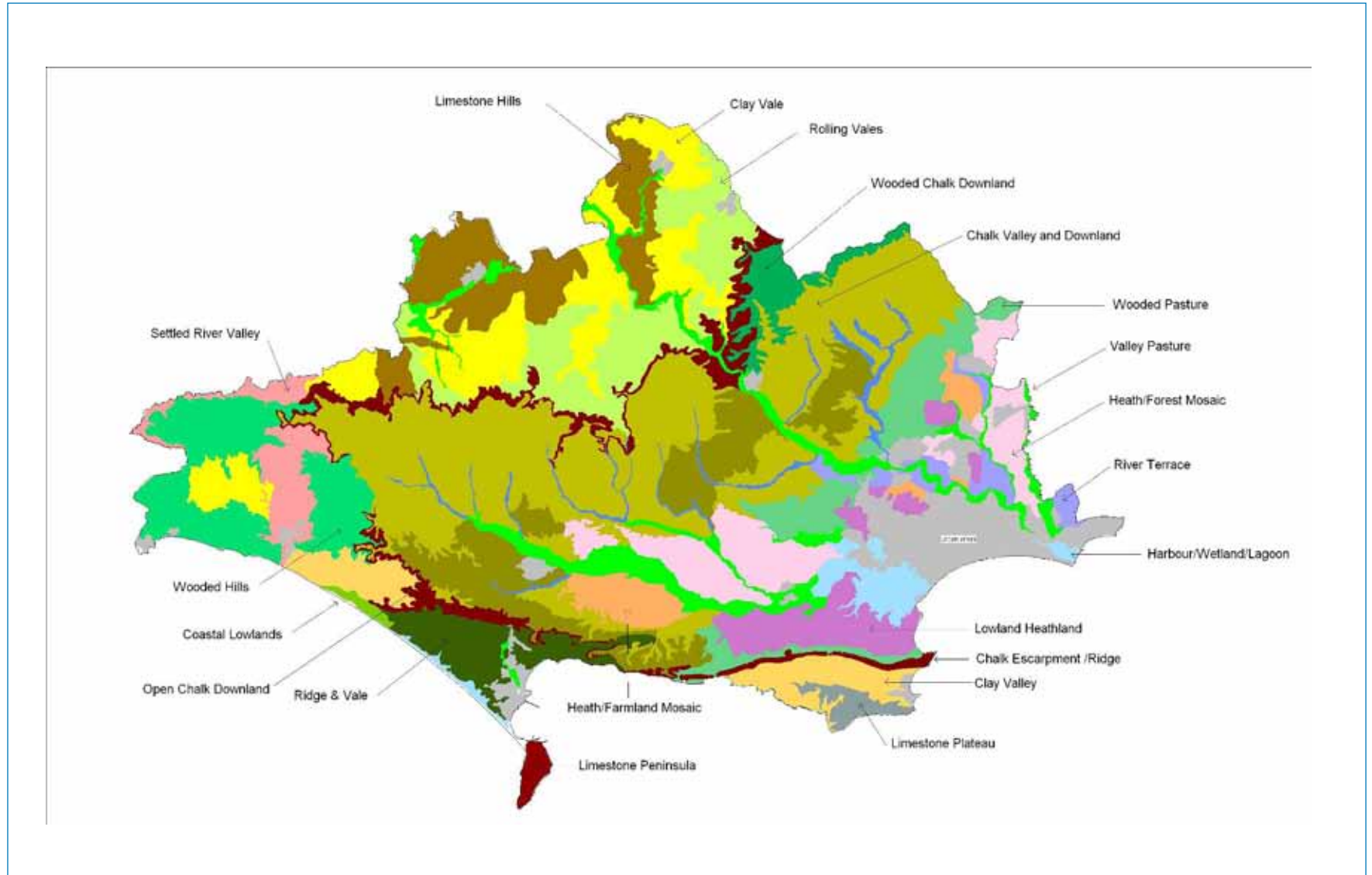
Condition: Moderate to Good.

Landscape Management and Development Objectives

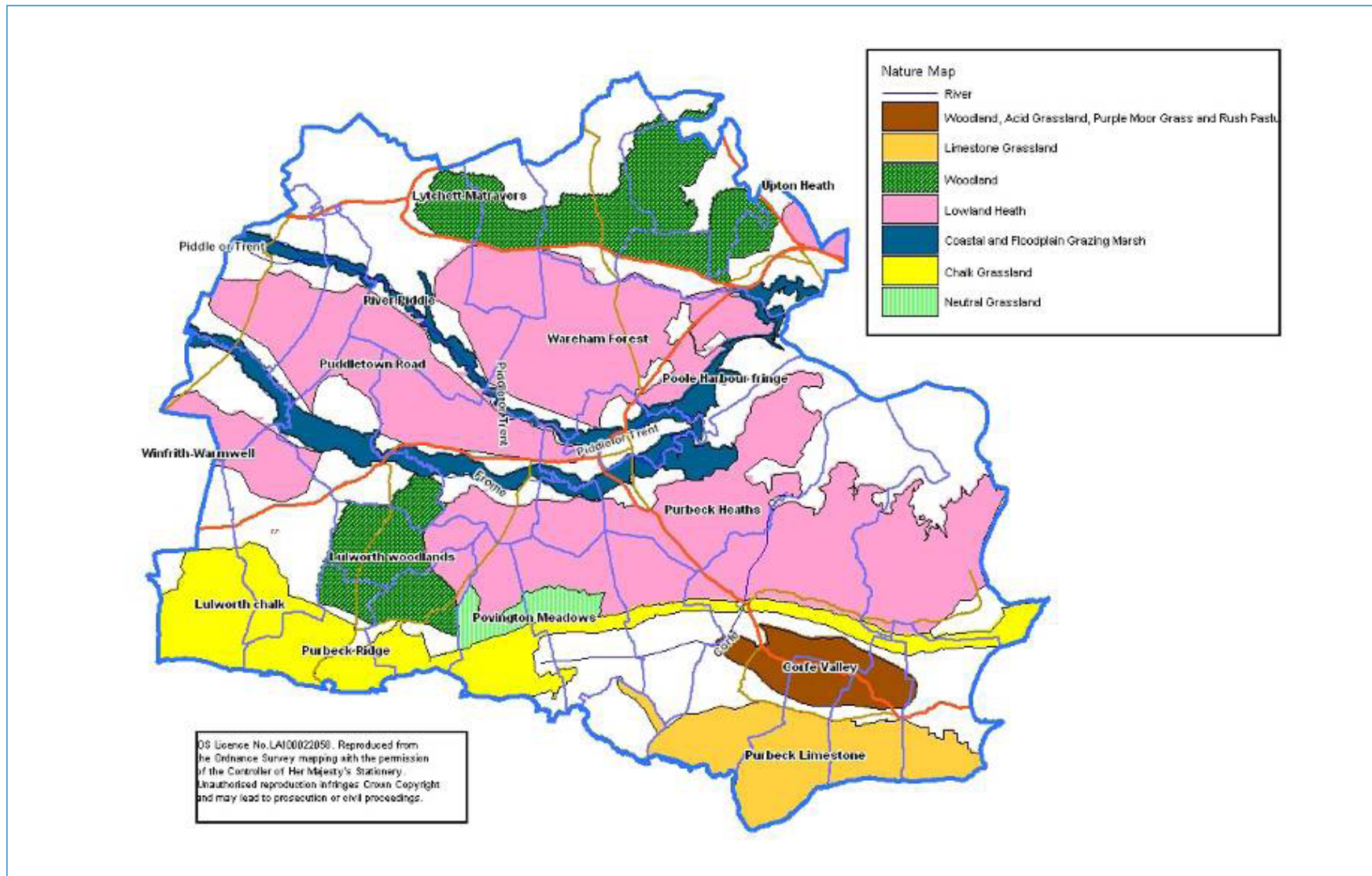
- Promote restoration of heathland in areas identified through Strategic Nature Maps
- Carry out a Wareham Meadows Landscape management plan (perhaps as part of a Village Design Statement/Parish plan).
- Enhance gates/fencing/public entrance points/hard landscape features.
- Boundary, ditch and meadow management to ensure continued grazing.
- Manage urban fringe woodland/scrub.
- Consider interpretation needs.
- Reduce the visual impact of road signage on the bypass.



Appendix 1 Landscape Character Types for Dorset



Appendix 2 Strategic Nature Areas for Purbeck



Appendix 3 Responses to Purbeck Landscape Character Assessment

Consultee	Comments relevant to non-AONB document	Landscape Officer's response
Natural England	Non-AONB suffers from not having section on landscape change	Add reference to landscape change in heathland areas
	Good quality hedgerows have never been a particular feature of chalk landscapes – need to avoid over-emphasis on hedgerow planting	Emphasise reference to restoration of heathland in relevant sections
	Objectives to restore coniferised ancient woods should be included	Include reference to this where relevant
	Area between Winfrith and Warmwell was heathland until recently – most of it now gone to poor quality farmland – this is not reflected in assessment	Add reference to landscape change in heathland areas
	No management objective to encourage re-establishment of heathland through agri-environment schemes for Winfrith/Crossways and Bovington/Affpuddle area	Emphasise reference to restoration of heathland in relevant sections
	Worrying objective to extend conifers around Winfrith Technology Centre – at odds with habitat conservation	This objective is about realising and stating the value existing conifers have in helping to integrate large scale built forms in an open landscape. For this reason their ongoing maintenance and management needs to be considered. This may involve some 'rounding off' at the edges to soften some of the hard edges as well as some small scale additional fringe planting to maximise its function as a key feature without impacting in any way on heathland.
Savills on behalf of Wool Partnership	Adopt as SPD	Consider at later date – an SPD is currently not in Purbeck's LDS
	Details on Landscape Design Units needed	Clarified in updated document
	Discrepancies in names	Discrepancies corrected
	Lack of definition of some terms	Clarified in updated document
	Include specific trees, shrubs, built forms and building materials	Too detailed for LCA level
	Boundary change proposed so that Wool forms part of "Wool and East Knighton Valley Side" character area	Landscape Officer has looked at the LDU typology details and the conclusion is that the Wool area is linked to the river pasture LDUs rather than those around it. The Wool LDU has a physiographic attribute as 'Fluvial Valley Bottom' as has the one to the north; the LDUs to the south and west are different and this was enough to tip the balance to include Wool in the Mid Frome Valley Pasture area.

Consultee	Comments relevant to non-AONB document	Landscape Officer's response
Hankinson Duckett on behalf of Ashvilla Estates Ltd	States that methodology appears to be common, but the character area descriptions appear to emerge from two quite different approaches	The methodology was common, but with different presentation and emphasis
	Suggests that non-AONB areas should include geology, topography, land cover, settlement pattern etc so that reader has basic building blocks of the landscape and can understand key characteristics and assessment of condition	Include more background and map of Landscape Description Units on Dorset For You website for non-AONB areas of Dorset.
	Discrepancies in names	Discrepancies corrected
	Lack of consistency in boundaries	Boundaries corrected to reflect comments
Goadsby on behalf of Persimmon Homes	Aspirations of LCA can be delivered through development of French's Farm, Upton	Comments noted
Goadsby on behalf of British Land Holdings Ltd	Aspirations of LCA can be delivered through employment development at Holton Heath Industrial Estate	Comments noted
	Lack of explanation of wording "create an impact" in Sandford and Holton Heath	The urban, industrial and commercial land uses at Sandford and Holton Heath create a negative landscape and visual impact across parts of the south east of the character area.
Wool Parish Plan Steering Group	Need to refer to Purbeck Keystone Project and restoration work at Eight-Acre Coppice LNR.	Individual projects are too detailed for the scope of the LCA
East Stoke Parish	Would like to see former extraction area restored to heathland and opened for public enjoyment	This is an issue for the Minerals Planning Section at Dorset County Council: planning conditions will be in place for restoration of the site following extraction.



Appendix 4 Sample Field Study



Purbeck District Council LCA

FIELD SURVEY - Landscape Description Units

Location:

Date: / /

Code:

Visual character - in what way do the following contribute to local character and sense of place?				
LANDFORM	Discrete	NATURAL FEATURES		Present
	Proximal			Widespread
	Apparent			Localised
	Integrative			Insignificant
TREE COVER	Discrete	SPECIES ASSOCIATIONS LINKED TO DESL STUDY DATA		Present
	Proximal			Widespread
	Apparent			Localised
	Integrative			Insignificant
FARM TYPE (Class)	Proximal	FIELD BOUNDARIES		Present
	Discrete	hedge/ho	stone walls	Discrete
	Variable	wood hedges	wet ditches	Variable
	Integrative	tree hedges	other	Insignificant
SETTLEMENT & BUILDINGS	Proximal	OTHER FEATURES		Present
	Discrete			Widespread
	Variable			Localised
	Integrative			Insignificant
Organisation of elements/Summary of overall character		Key Characteristics		
Scale: <i>intimate</i> <i>small</i> <i>medium</i> <i>large</i> Views: <i>filtered</i> <i>framed</i> <i>open</i> <i>exposed</i>				
Perception				

Photographs: see location plan for photo location points

Purbeck District Council LCA

FIELD SURVEY - Landcover parcels

Location	Date	Ref:
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Cultural integrity - how well is the cultural dimension of the landscape functioning as a self-sustaining resource?									
Code	Current land use		Field boundaries			Hedge/stream trees		Other trees	
			Type	Species	Condition	Species	Age/structure	Species	Age/structure
			Hedges	Tree	Good	None	Mixed age	Present	Mixed age
			Hedgebank	Flt	Poor	Shrubland	Overmature	Absent	Overmature
Landcover change (change from Desk/Study info, including built development)			Stone walls	Stone	Intact	Intact	Intact	Intact	Intact
Extent	Visual impact		Not done	Not done	Not done	Not done	Not done	Not done	Not done
Widespread	High								
Localised	Medium								
Insignificant	Low								

Ecological integrity - how well is the countryside functioning as a habitat for wildlife?							
Soils	Patch survival			Ecological corridors		Intensity of use (relating to land use)	
	Extent	Management		Condition		Impact	Trend
	Outstanding	Intensive		Intact		High	
	Widespread	Traditional		Degrading		Medium	
	Localised	Neglected		Fragmented		Low	
	None						

Impact of built development - how well does modern development respect local vernacular character and sense of place?											
Urban development			Road/rail corridors			Rural dwellings			Other built features		
Extent	Visual impact		Extent	Visual impact		Extent	Visual impact		Extent	Visual impact	
Widespread	High		Widespread	High		Widespread	High		Widespread	High	
Localised	Medium		Localised	Medium		Localised	Medium		Localised	Medium	
Insignificant	Low		Insignificant	Low		Insignificant	Low		Insignificant	Low	





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Designed by

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