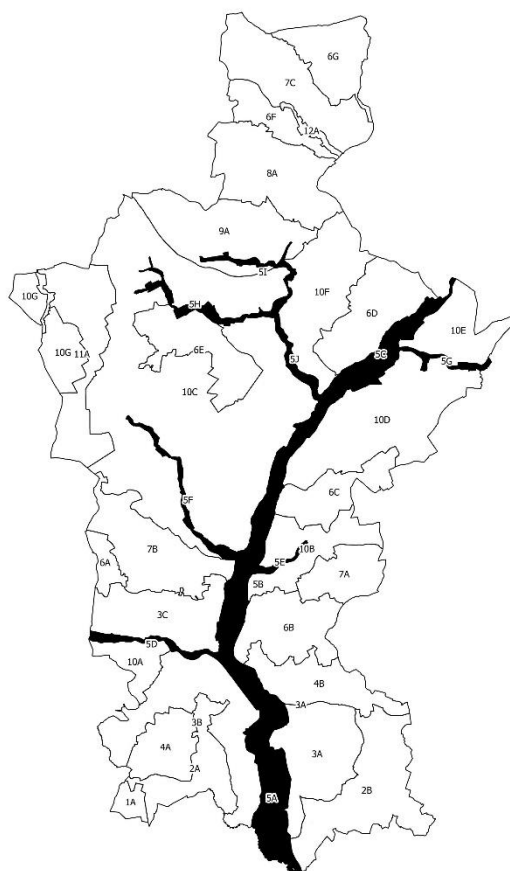


LCT5 River Valley Floor

General Description

- 5.1. The River Valley Floor Landscape Character Type is a prominent feature of the Test Valley Borough landscape, linking many of the other landscapes. The river valleys which extend through the Test Valley fall into two principal categories; the wider flat-bottomed valleys of the main river systems and the narrower valleys with steeper sides which contain either tributaries of the main river system or bournes/winterbournes. The valleys are predominantly under pasture, with characteristic waterside tree species such as willow and alder aligning individual watercourses with areas of meadow grassland, reedbeds, marshlands and other wetland habitats.
- 5.2. The settlement pattern originally consisting of mainly nucleated villages and hamlets, which since the 18th century have expanded along their approach roads to become more linear in form.



Location

- 5.3. This Landscape Character Type includes the River Test which flows into Southampton Water (divided into three reaches) and six of its tributaries (Pillhill Brook, River Anton, River Dever, Wallop Brook, King's Somborne

Brook and the River Dun). The River Valley Floor covers the valley bottom, with the valley sides lying within the adjacent Landscape Character Types (predominantly LCTs 3 and 10). The transition is marked by river terraces along the River Test and a change in slope at the edge of the valley floor.

Physical Influences

- 5.4. **Geology and soils:** The underlying geology consists of river deposits of alluvium with side areas of river terrace gravel deposits, deposited over the solid geology of chalk or sands, clays and gravels.

Landform: Valley with a flat floodplain of varying width.

Drainage: Characterised by a single channel or a multiple braided system of streams and seasonal winterbournes.

Biodiversity and Vegetation Pattern

- 5.5. The River Valley Floor is a characteristically flat low-lying area. This type is typically pastoral bordering the river, often with wet swampy areas. There are frequent copses dominated by Willow, Poplar and Alder and often river banks are fringed by standard trees. The hedgerows have a much looser structure than other farmland areas and more use is made of water meadow ditches as wet hedges. This type is one of the most ecologically diverse in the Borough with a variety of wetland habitats, unimproved grasslands and carr woodlands.

Notable habitats

- Chalk streams
- Unimproved calcareous grasslands
- Semi-improved grasslands

Historical Influences

- 5.6. The river valleys have in recent times offered fertile and freely drained soils with access to a generally continuous supply of fresh water. However, throughout much of the prehistoric period the river valleys were often dominated by dense forests with movement only possible via either the ridge ways or along the river network. Little survives of early human activity which is

often buried beneath considerable deposits of alluvium or destroyed by the continuous cutting and recutting of the river channel.

- 5.7. The most prominent feature throughout this landscape is the numerous surviving systems of post-medieval water meadows interspersed by stands of valley floor woodland, rough grazing and what are termed 'miscellaneous valley floor enclosure'. The water meadows (reputedly developed by Rowland Vaughn in the later sixteenth century) were a system whereby the growing season could be extended and two crops of grass could be grown instead of a single one.
- 5.8. The water meadows fall into two distinct categories; bedwork and catchwork systems. The bedwork system (Types 2 and 4) are generally found in wide open valley floors where extensive blocks of water meadow could be constructed and supplied by a complex series of sluices, leats and drains. The catchwork system (Types 1 and 3) tended to occupy narrower valley floors and sides, which were fed often by a single leat and relied on gravity to move the water to (and from) the fields. This pattern of bedworks on the River Test and catchworks on the tributaries is largely repeated throughout the Test Valley Borough.

Settlement Pattern

- 5.9. Chalk and Clay River Valley Settlement Types are predominantly associated with this landscape character type. The settlement types are generally linear in plan and are located upon valley floors as the focus of a network of valley floor and side roads. Smaller settlements tend to occupy a single riverbank while larger examples can span river channels to occupy both banks. Such settlements can often retain one or more bridges which are either medieval in date or are early medieval structures with medieval precursors. River valley settlements often retain a historic core of sixteenth and seventeenth century date and possibly building of an earlier date including early medieval churches and manorial complexes.

Communication Network

- 5.10. The principal feature of the communication networks within the river valleys is that they tend to align themselves with the main channel and only cross infrequently at fording or bridging points. The Test Way public right of way is a 44 mile walking route which follows the valley bottom, linking Inkpen (to the north, in Berkshire) with Eling Tide Mill in the south. The Monarch's Way and Clarendon Way also cross the Landscape Character Type. A series of main roads extends along the valley floor of the River Test with short spur roads extending at right angles to these main routes.

Key Natural and Cultural Landscape Issues

- 5.11. Key natural and cultural landscape issues are as follows:
- Maintenance of water quality and flows and prevention of pollution of water bodies from diffuse pollution, run off and aquaculture ventures (fish farms, water cress beds)
 - Impact of development and increasing traffic within the valley floor leading to loss of remoteness and tranquillity
 - Increasing pressure for recreation
 - Loss of unimproved mesotrophic grassland to arable or through application of fertilisers
 - Development of scrub through changes in land management
 - Increased silt loading through erosion of previously permanent pasture
 - Manicured river banks for commercial fisheries causing loss of aquatic habitat
 - Further loss of original nucleated settlement form to linear development
 - Increased need for water abstraction potentially leading to wet grasslands and woodlands drying out causing a reduction in biodiversity
 - Potential for increasing biodiversity through sensitive land management
 - Presence of expanses of historically significant early/late post-medieval water meadow earthworks surviving within the valley floor.

Land Management Guidelines

5.12. All of the Borough wide land management guidelines in the introduction apply to this Landscape Character Type. Land management guidelines specific to this Landscape Character Type are:

5.13. **Landscape Distinctiveness**

- Safeguard the distinctive valley floor wetland character
- Maintain the characteristic water channels and drainage ditches, mill streams and pools
- Maintain the contrast of a pastoral valley with the open arable valley sides
- Reinforce intimate and tranquil pastoral field and woodland pattern

5.14. **Agriculture**

- Encourage management of traditional water meadows and reintroduce management of farmland as seasonally wet pastures where appropriate
- Resist change from pasture to arable
- Encourage reversion of arable fields to pasture
- Discourage merging of remaining smaller fields

5.15. **Hedgerows**

- Maintain hedgerow field boundaries
- Restore hedgerows and encourage replanting of former hedgerow lines
- Encourage restoration of field boundaries with local native species
- Encourage traditional methods of hedge management
- Where suitable, encourage the use of hedgerows as field boundaries for horse paddocks instead of timber post and rail fencing
- Encourage the use of hedgerows as garden boundaries within settlements instead of solid timber fences which urbanise the area
- Avoid use of non-native hedgerow species outside settlements and where possible replace with native species

5.16. **Woodland and Trees**

- Conserve valley floor wet woodland and promote good woodland management
- Encourage the retention of hedgerow trees and individual specimens in the landscape

- Encourage, where appropriate, new areas of woodland planting to mitigate visual detractors

5.17. **Biodiversity**

- Conserve, enhance and manage riparian and associated habitats using traditional methods where possible
- Protect the water environment from the effects of pollution, soil erosion, construction projects and urbanisation
- Encourage agricultural management that will protect and enhance remnant unimproved grasslands and riparian habitats
- Seek opportunities for river restoration, wetland creation and ditch reinstatement
- Maintain and where possible restore the natural profile of the banksides of the river, tributaries and pools
- Explore appropriate opportunities for biodiversity enhancements during any works to protect and enhance the historic water meadow systems within the historic landscape

5.18. **Historic Landscapes**

- Protect the landscape setting and remnants of historic features
- Protect the surviving water meadow systems, mills, weirs and leats including the earthworks and their structural remains
- Encourage maintenance of historic features including water meadows systems
- Protect the setting of historic settlements including the uninterrupted views of church spires and key buildings within and across the valley floor

5.19. **Urban and Settlement Fringe**

- Protect and enhance the important green spaces around and within the settlement fringe and their contribution to green infrastructure, links with the wider countryside, nature conservation and the setting of settlement
- Avoid highway improvements which will urbanise the urban fringe and settlements and erode the existing rural character
- Avoid new types of and poor-quality boundary treatment (i.e. high close boarded fencing) which will urbanise the area and impact on the open rural landscape character and views across and within settlements

- Avoid overly dominant signage in the undeveloped rural landscape
- Avoid the extension of gardens and domestic curtilage which will erode the undeveloped landscape character of the undeveloped rural valley floor
- Avoid the poor design of horse paddocks and stabling. Field stables should be sited to avoid visual intrusion, with field boundaries carefully located to avoid the loss of the simple landscape character of pasture and meadow grassland

Land Use and Development Guidelines

5.20. All of the Borough wide land use and development guidelines in the introduction apply to this Landscape Character Type. Specific to this Landscape Character Type are:

5.21. Built Development

- Ensure development conserves the existing settlement forms
- Resist development within the settlement-free character of the valley floor
- Resist further linear expansion (ribbon development) and infill along valley floor and approach roads and avoid loss of separate identity of existing settlements through coalescence and homogeneous design
- Avoid overdevelopment and redevelopment of existing housing plots which will have an urbanising impact on the rural character of the area with urban features i.e. large gateways and urban style fencing (high close boarded timber fencing) and urban style non-native planting
- Light pollution to be minimised within this predominantly dark area
- Where new development can be integrated into the landscape, careful siting, design, consideration of scale and massing, protection and enhancement of historic landscape character, use of sensitive materials and landscape mitigation should be used to minimise the impact on the landscape character and views and to enhance the sense of place and local distinctiveness

5.22. Infrastructure

- Avoid overhead visually intrusive power lines and individual masts and seek opportunities to place existing power lines underground. Also avoid visually intrusive power lines along the ridges and valley sides within adjacent LCAs
- Encourage measures to reduce the impact of existing roads

- Avoid suburbanisation arising from introduction of overly engineered highway measures, which conflict with the predominant rural character. i.e. wide visibility splays, highway kerbs, new signage etc
- Avoid loss of landscape features due to highway improvements (widening, visibility splays etc), i.e. loss of the characteristic humpback bridges, widening and straightening of the winding single carriageways as found on the valley floor
- Protect and enhance the character of the valley side roads, where possible reducing their visual prominence alongside protecting views across the valley from them

5.23. Mineral Extraction

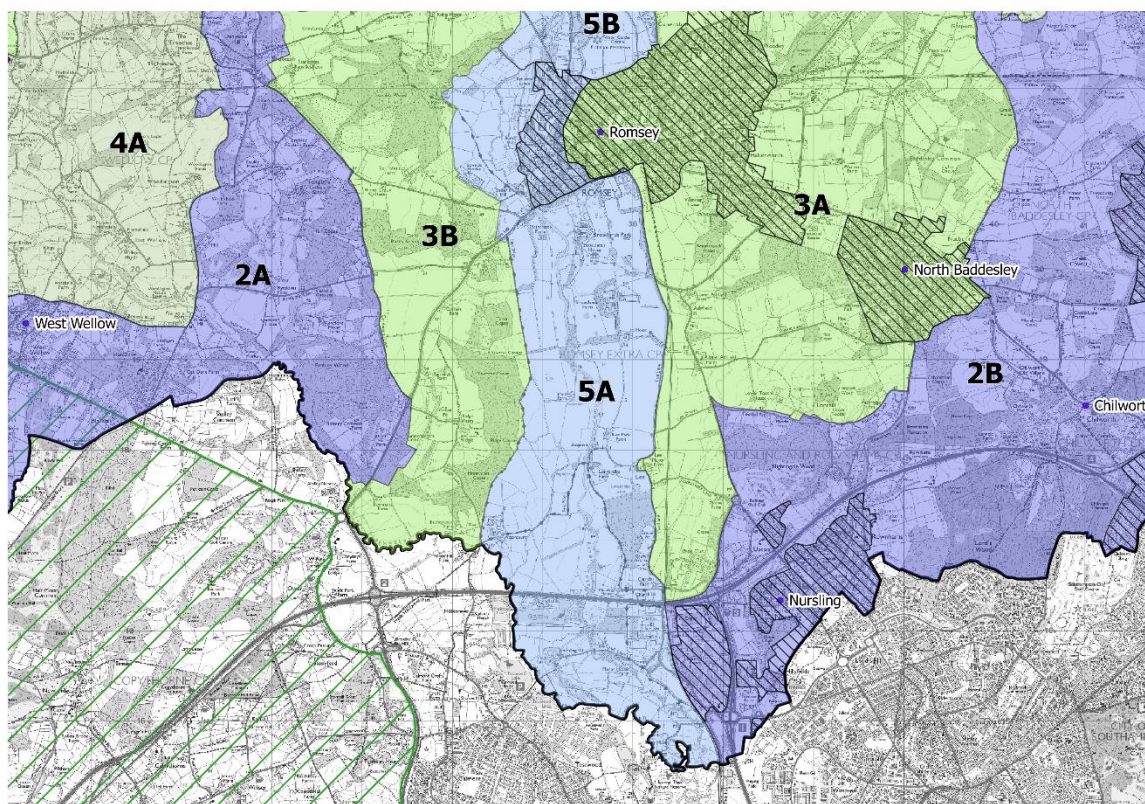
- Avoid mineral extraction within the open landscape
- Restoration should include a landform which is sympathetic to the landscape character of the valley floor
- Native planting should include measures to restore the hedgerow pattern and include new woodlands (where suitable) to further enhance the area
- All measures undertaken (access, road widening, signage etc) to facilitate extraction should be removed as part of the final restoration
- Reinstatement should be to a rural land use. Many types of industrial after use will not be appropriate to the rural setting

5.24. Recreation, Tourism and Access

- Seek opportunities for additional access to the river for the public without compromising the quiet rural character of the river valley or damage to the wet marshland character
- Maintain the existing network of footpaths and Public Rights of Way
- Maintain the quiet single carriageways, soft roadside verges and narrow humpedback bridges found within the valley floor, promote as multi recreational routes
- All facilities designed to increase public access, must be integrated into the landscape, careful siting, design, consideration of scale and massing, protection and enhancement of historic landscape character, use of sensitive materials

- Encourage fish farms to be more natural and sympathetic in keeping with the natural landscape character of the river valley with particular attention to design of the lakes and plant species selection for the landscaped areas. Care should be taken to avoid visually intrusive car parking areas, water edges and any other service provisions required (i.e. poor-quality signage, sheds etc) which would be out of character with the undeveloped valley floor. Additionally, avoid any other urbanising measures which will also erode the natural rural character of the area

LCA5A Lower Test Floodplain



New Forest National Park area indicated with green line hatch.

General Description

- 5A.1. The Lower Test Floodplain is a complex meandering and braided river system, with slow moving water and a well-developed aquatic plant and animal communities fed by a constant fresh supply of clear spring water. The valley floor is broad and open framed by the enclosed wooded landscape of LCT3.
- 5A.2. This is a wide area of flood plain with a strong tidal influence, from Southampton and Totton, north to Romsey, while its southern edge is formed by the River Blackwater. The lower reaches are typified by low-lying reedbeds that are regularly inundated at the tidal peak. Above Totton the floodplain is predominantly in agriculture with small fields used for pasture and crops.

Testwood and Broadlands Lakes are of great importance in the area particularly for overwintering waders and ducks.

Location

- 5A.3. The Lower Test Valley Floor covers the stretch of the river from the southern boundary of Test Valley to the railway line north west of Romsey.

Local Physical Influences

- 5A.4. **Geology and Soils:** Alluvium with River Terrace Deposits along the eastern fringes south of Romsey.

Landform: A flat landscape with steeper valley sides to the west.

Drainage: Broad river plain dominated by the River Test. The River Blackwater bounds the character area along its southern boundary. Numerous ditches and streams in the southern part of the area, with several lakes formed out of former gravel workings, as at Broadlands.

Local Biodiversity and Vegetation Pattern

- 5A.5. The area has an important flora and fauna particularly in regard to its aquatic and associated habitats. The River Test SSSI is the key ecological feature running through the LCA, and this supports nationally-important chalk stream aquatic and riparian habitats and associated species such as otter, water vole, and notable aquatic invertebrates as well as supporting a high diversity and number of foraging bats. The main river is well connected to an extensive network of side channels, some of which form part of the SSSI, while others still have much ecological value.
- 5A.6. Many of the wet meadows along the valley have been left as pasture as they are less suitable for cropping, due to the low-lying flood plain and its high-water table. These are generally neutral in character, and may be less agriculturally improved. Consequently they will support a higher botanical diversity. Such meadows are becoming increasingly rare due to agricultural pressures.

- 5A.7. A large area to the south of the LCA forms part of the Solent and Southampton Water SPA and SSSI, and is particularly important for fen, saltmarsh and wet meadow habitats and important assemblages of overwintering birds.
- 5A.8. Other notable habitats include areas of wet carr woodland, which with hedgerows, link to patches of ancient and semi-natural woodland and provide an important resource, including in supporting a robust ecological network.
- 5A.9. The table below identifies the broad habitats for LCA5A.

Broad habitat type	Area of habitat (Hectares)	Percentage of the LCA (%)
Arable and horticulture	391.29	33.40
Boundary and linear features	33.19	2.83
Broadleaved, mixed, and yew woodland	96.43	8.23
Built-up areas and gardens	80.81	6.90
Coniferous woodland	3.86	0.33
Fen, marsh and swamp	16.31	1.39
Improved grassland	334.73	28.57
Inland rock	1.38	0.12
Littoral Sediment	2.41	0.21
Neutral grassland	118.18	10.09
Rivers and streams	20.99	1.79
Standing open water and canals	26.87	2.29
Unidentified habitat	29.68	2.53
Unidentified water	15.46	1.32
Total	1171.61	

Local Historical Influences

- 5A.10. The river within these lower reaches was and continues to be navigable by small to medium river craft and must have provided a valuable transport route to and from the coast. The main roads within the valley floor extend along either side of the river with several main crossing points present throughout the LCA.
- 5A.11. The banks of the river within this LCA are dominated by miscellaneous valley floor enclosures with some limited bedwork water meadow systems on its eastern banks close to the first river terrace point. During the mid-19th century, the widespread agricultural depression, poor weather conditions,

increased mechanisation and the development of affordable fertilisers started the decline of the water meadow. The water meadow was originally an efficient method of dramatically increasing the productivity of marginal land and after abandonment large areas returned to this marginal agricultural status. This often precipitated a process of gradual decay rather than dramatic and purposeful destruction and so various elements of water meadows survive within this area of the River Test.

- 5A.12. Immediately to the south of Romsey is the Broadlands Estate, the family home of the Mountbatten family. This estate is a discrete element within the surrounding historic landscape and represents the post 1810 development of a designed parkland landscape.

Designations

- 5A.13. Designations that lie wholly or in part within this Landscape Character Area comprise:

5A.14. **Nature Conservation**

SAC

- Solent Maritime - Unimproved grassland, running water and marginal vegetation

SPA and Ramsar site

- Solent and Southampton Water
SSSI

- Lower Test Valley - Unimproved grassland and some woodland and reedbed
- River Test - Running water and marginal vegetation including woodland and unimproved grassland

SINC

- 11 SINCs, including agriculturally unimproved grassland, wetlands, and ancient semi-natural woodland

5A.15. **Historic**

Conservation Areas

- Romsey

Listed Buildings

- Broadlands House Grade I Listed Building. Also, there are a number of Grade II listed buildings and structures within the grounds
 - Middle Bridge is Grade I listed. Other notable Grade II listings are concentrated within the western edge of Romsey and isolated farmsteads and water mills
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Broadlands Park Registered as Grade II* on the Historic England Register of Historic Parks and Gardens.

Settlement Pattern

- 5A.16. Settlements within the floodplain of the River Test are generally located at bridging or fording points across the river channel. In these areas the benefits of location for trade, river control and transport purposes outweigh the problems caused by excessive damp and periodic flooding. The only settlement located at least partially within this LCA is Romsey which in places extends out onto the lower lying valley floor of the River Test.
- 5A.17. Very few farms occupy the valley floor of this character area and are instead generally located upon the first river terrace.
- 5A.18. Generally, the roads within this LCA follow the river on both sides of the valley just above the floodplain and are typically perched upon the gravel shelf itself. Additionally, there are roads which cross the valley floor, and in some cases then continue up the valley sides, these were originally the Drove Roads. The Test Way passes through this character area.

Local Settlements

- 5A.19. Local Settlements and their corresponding Settlement Type (see Appendix 2 for more information):
- Nursling: Heath Associated Settlement Type
 - Romsey: Clay River Valley Settlement Type

Remoteness and Tranquillity

5A.20. To the north, due to the lack of development, the Test River Valley Floor offers a prevailing sense of naturalness, tranquillity and solitude. However further to the south there is still a strong sense of remoteness between Romsey and the M27; although closer to the M27 the traffic noise becomes more dominant.

Key Valued characteristics

5A.21. Key valued characteristics of LCA5A are as follows:

- Multi braided water channels of clear spring water with even flows all year
- Areas of unimproved grassland and marshland
- Surviving remains of bedwork water meadows upon the floodplain
- On the western edge of Romsey, the River Test and associated tributaries are visible within the landscape from public roads, footpaths and public open spaces providing a strong riverine landscape character for this area of Romsey
- The western edge of Romsey is also characterised by a low density of development with single carriageways with soft verges, low humpback bridges and pockets of open landscape (i.e. small pasture fields and public open spaces) which provides a semi-rural village character.
- South of Romsey there is a strong rural character around the hamlet of Lee with a lack of development on the valley floor which also continues down to the M27
- Surviving traditional farmsteads, often with listed buildings exist on the edge of this LCA and floodplain
- Lee Road is characterised by thick hedgerows and trees
- Key views from the western edge of Romsey include views further to the west of the undeveloped valley sides, which provides a connection to undeveloped surrounding rural landscape
- Lower section of this LCA is characterised by a wide flat floodplain with a strong tidal influence. Lower reaches are also typified by low lying reedbeds and marshes that are regularly inundated at the tidal peak

- South of the M27 a patchwork of small fields with intermittent hedgerows and irregular shaped woodlands subtly changes to an estuarine landscape in contrasting texture and colour
- Broadlands, a 19th century parkland which includes landscape grounds and associated historic features defines southern edge of Romsey
- Open elevated views from M27 across the undeveloped landscape of the floodplain which starkly contrasts with the adjacent urban form
- Intermittent and framed views of properties on western side of Romsey
- Traditional styles of built form include brick walls with clay tile roofs, clay tile hanging and white render
- Test Way provides access to the Test

Key Detractors

5A.22. Key detractors of LCA5A are as follows:

- The visual impact of overhead power lines within a largely development free valley floor
- Traffic noise from the M27
- Influence of urban fringe uses at Nursling, south of the M27
- Ribbon development along the A3090/A27 approaching Romsey from the west
- To the south within vicinity of the M27, light industrial uses dilute rural character
- Further to the south, development on the valley sides (within adjacent LCAs) are visible and can detract from development free character of the valley floor
- Overflow car parking on roadside verges degrades the rural character of the area
- Concentrated areas of horsiculture with post and rail fencing, field stables etc on western edge of Romsey
- Industrial land uses, associated traffic and suburban influences of light, large scale sheds, signage, highway improvements (widening of entrances, increased road markings etc) and damage to road verges
- Increased noise within the rural landscape from increased traffic on highways
- Lack of public access to River Test south of Romsey

Local Natural and Cultural Landscape Issues:

5A.23. Local natural and cultural landscape issues for LCA 5A are as follows:

- Agricultural rationalisation and future development on the valley floors may threaten the survival of water meadow earthworks on marginal land
- Threat of flooding and impact of fluctuation in tidal patterns as a result of climatic change
- Sensitivity to changes in the landform and riverine habitats, e.g. from flood defence projects, along the principal river channels including the River Test
- Visual intrusion and impact on the adjacent rural character from development in the adjoining urban area and the M27
- Expansion of farmsteads and conversion of farm buildings to residential
- Loss of pasture areas for domestic and garden use, causing change in landscape character and loss of biodiversity
- Modernisation and development of sewage works potentially causing visual intrusion and dilution of undeveloped rural character within the River Test valley
- Expansion of facilities for fish farms with the cumulative impact of small-scale incremental change (e.g. signage, fencing, kerbing of rural lanes) on the remaining remote qualities of areas within the River Test valley
- Future potential demand for mineral extraction of sharp sand and gravel
- Solar and other renewable energy development eroding the rural character of the area

Landscape Strategy and Guidelines

5A.24. Landscape Strategy and Guidelines for LCA5A Lower Test Valley Floodplain are as follows:

- The Lower Test Floodplain is a fragile landscape, important as part of the River Test chalk stream SSSI and for its extant historic features. It is, however, at risk from urban fringe development, especially in the south, and changes to its biodiversity, including resulting from agricultural rationalisation. The overall strategy is therefore to conserve and enhance the undisturbed

floodplain and create new riverine landscapes for the Lower Test Floodplain and to protect and enhance the key valued characteristics.

Land Management

5A.25. All of the Borough wide and Landscape Character Type land management guidelines apply to this Landscape Character Area. Specific to this Landscape Character Area are as follows:

5A.26. **Landscape Distinctiveness**

- Conserve the wide-open floodplain character and areas which are largely development free
- Maintain the close and intimate relationship with the River Test and its tributaries within the western edge of Romsey

5A.27. **Woodland and Trees**

- Management of the pollards and lines of poplar, which characterise some sections of the valley floor
- Encourage where appropriate new areas of wet woodland planting to mitigate the visual impact of the M27 and other visual detractors

5A.28. **Biodiversity**

- Conserve, enhance and manage riparian and associated wet habitats along the River Test and its side channels, as guided by Natural England's SSSI condition assessment

5A.29. **Historic Landscapes**

- Protect landscape setting of Broadlands Park and its relationship with the river
- Encourage the restoration of parkland features

5A.30. **Urban Fringe**

- Avoid deterioration in the urban fringe landscape of Romsey arising from poor design, intrusive development and the dominance of horsiculture
- Avoid highway improvements which will urbanise the area and erode the existing rural character
- Avoid boundary treatment within the western edge of Romsey which will urbanise the area and impact on the existing inter-visibility across the area
- Avoid dominant signage (for both existing land uses and new developments)

Land Use and Development

5A.31. All of the Borough wide and Landscape Character Type land use and development guidelines apply to this Landscape Character Area. Specific to this Landscape Character Area are as follows:

5A.32. Built Development

- Avoid infilling of undeveloped land on the western edge of Romsey
- Improve the visual and acoustic containment of the M27
- Avoid overhead visually intrusive power lines and individual masts and seek opportunities to place existing power lines underground. Also reduce the cumulative impacts with other intrusive features

5A.33. Infrastructure

- Avoid increased suburbanisation arising from introduction of highway measures, which conflict with the predominantly rural character

5A.34. Recreation, Tourism and Access

- Establish new public access links from Romsey across the valley floor further to the west and linking to potentially the Test Way
- Manage the recreation of the lakes for fishing to retain their rural quality, avoid overdevelopment of facilities and infrastructure which will create a more urban and artificial landscape



Romsey: open setting of the River Test



Views out to the west from Romsey to undeveloped valley sides provide a rural context to Romsey



South of Romsey, tree lined roads



An occasional house in a largely undeveloped agricultural landscape, south of Romsey

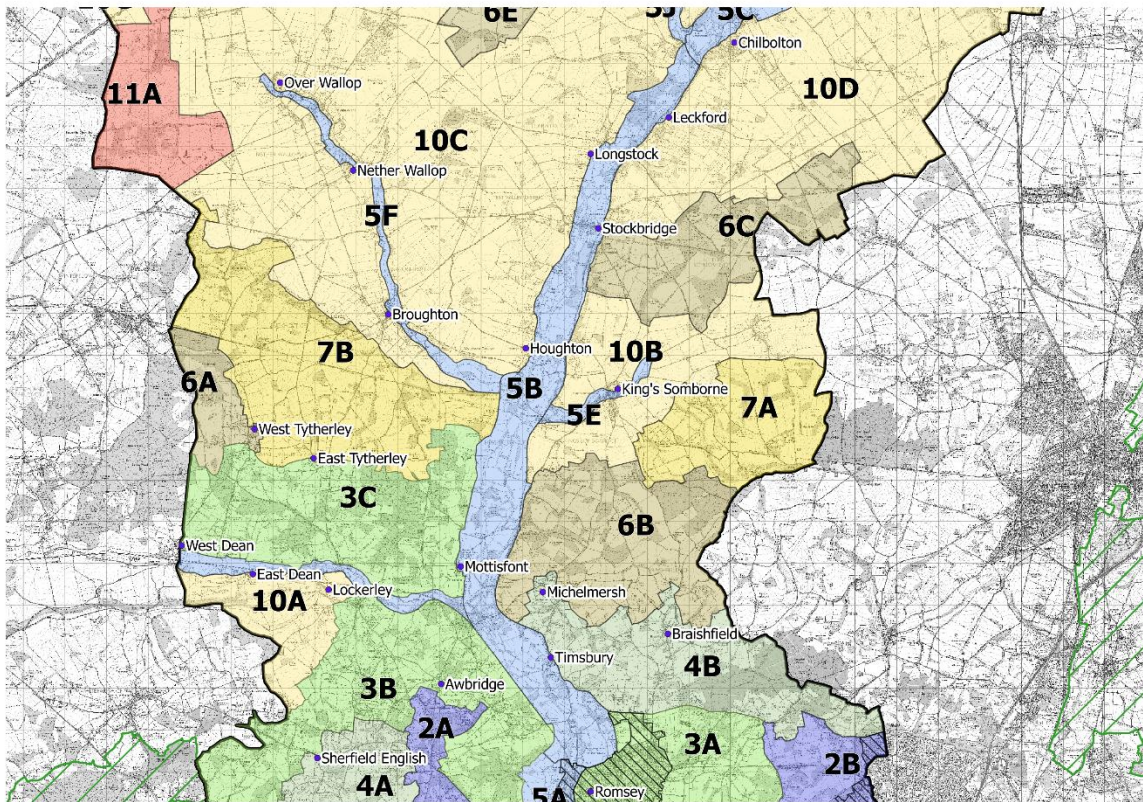


South of The M27, small fields bounded by hedgerows



Further south of the M27 open expanses of reeds beds

LCA5B Middle Test Valley Floor



General Description

- 5B.1. The middle stretch of the River Test forms a flat valley floor, narrower than the Lower Test Floodplain and contained by valley terraces and the shoulders of the chalk hills. It is a strongly pastoral and tranquil landscape with many remnants of past traditional agricultural practices such as water meadows and commons.
- 5B.2. Its settlements are generally small and even. Stockbridge is well contained on the valley floor, retaining its historical form. Other forms of development are limited. The Test Way (sometimes within a wooded corridor), Monarch's Way and Clarendon Way public footpaths pass through the Landscape Character Area.

Location

- 5B.3. Middle Test Valley Floor covers the stretch of the river from the north west of Romsey to Fullerton.

Local Physical Influences

- 5B.4. **Geology and Soils:** Alluvium with strips of River Terrace Deposits at the edge of the valley.

Landform: Flat valley bottom with adjacent valley sides steeper to the east, north of Michelmersh. From King's Somborne northwards, the broad slopes of the chalk downlands to the east and west enclose the valley.

Drainage: Broad valley dominated by the River Test (including its confluence with the River Dun, the King's Somborne river and the Wallop Brook), which is braided into several streams, some of which have engineered profile in the south of the area. Lakes, formed from former gravel pits, lie at Timsbury and Houghton.

Local Biodiversity and Vegetation Pattern

- 5B.5. The area has an important flora and fauna particularly in regard to its aquatic and associated habitats. The River Test SSSI is the key ecological feature running through the LCA, and this supports nationally-important chalk stream aquatic and riparian habitats and associated species such as otter, water vole, and notable aquatic invertebrates as well as supporting a high diversity and number of foraging bats. The main river is well connected to an extensive network side channels, some of which form part of the SSSI, while others still have much ecological value.
- 5B.6. Many of the wet meadows along the valley have been left as pasture as they are less suitable for cropping, due to the low-lying flood plain and its high water table. These are generally neutral in character, and may be less agriculturally improved. Consequently they will support a higher botanical diversity. Such meadows are becoming increasingly rare due to agricultural pressures.

5B.7. This area also supports the internationally-important Southern Damselfly.

5B.8. The table below identifies the broad habitat types for LCA5B.

Broad habitat type	Area of habitat (Hectares)	Percentage of the LCA (%)
Arable and horticulture	96.00	5.14
Boundary and linear features	35.11	1.88
Broadleaved, mixed, and yew woodland	298.24	15.95
Built-up areas and gardens	78.78	4.21
Calcareous grassland	0.02	0.01
Coniferous woodland	2.93	0.16
Fen, marsh and swamp	145.49	7.78
Improved grassland	892.78	47.76
Inland rock	4.94	0.26
Neutral grassland	92.33	4.94
Rivers and streams	11.23	0.60
Standing open water and canals	10.78	0.58
Unidentified habitat	57.20	3.06
Unidentified water	143.60	7.68
Total	1869.45	

Local Historical Influences

5B.9. This area of the River Test valley was dominated by a patchwork of water meadow systems during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Today the remains of these systems, their associated structures, earthworks and enclosure boundaries survive in varying degrees of completeness. The water meadow resulted in a dramatic restructuring of the valley floor landscape and indeed prompted the removal of much earlier valley floor enclosure and common land. Today, the common land of Stockbridge Common survives and is owned and managed by the National Trust. Within this portion of the river all types of water meadow are to be found and there may well be early eighteenth century examples surviving across the flood plain.

5B.10. Early presumably medieval roads extend up along the valley following the contours of the first river terrace. These cross the valley at fording and bridging points and here settlements have developed to take advantage of this (i.e. Kimbridge, Mottisfont, Horsebridge, Houghton, Longstock and in particular Stockbridge). The main route however extended north south along

the valley floor heading from Romsey north to Stockbridge and Andover. Further up the valley slopes of this LCA the historic character reflects the nature of the surrounding landscape away from the valley. In the south this is one of smaller assarted fields and informal enclosure while to the north on the chalk geology later parliamentary field systems dominate. These historic forms extend down onto both sides of the valley slope.

Designations

5B.11. Designations that lie wholly or in part within this Landscape Character Area comprise:

5B.12. **Nature Conservation**

SSSI

- River Test - Running water, marginal vegetation and adjacent habitats including woodland, unimproved grassland and reedbeds
- Stockbridge Fen
- Stockbridge Common Marsh

SINC

- 17 SINCs, including agriculturally unimproved grassland, wet grassland and fen, ancient semi-natural woodlands and sites which support notable species

5B.13. **Historic**

Conservation Areas

- Stockbridge
- Mottisfont
- Houghton and Bossington
- Leckford
- Longstock

Scheduled Monuments

- John of Gaunt's Deer Park Pale
- Site of deserted Bossington Village, Bossington

Listed buildings

- There is a cluster of Listed buildings at Mottisfont, including Mottisfont Abbey House (Grade I) and the Church of St Andrew (Grade I)

- Other Grade II listed buildings can be found within the historic settlement cores of the conservation areas in particular (e.g. Stockbridge and Longstock), isolated water mills and valley side farmsteads
Registered Parks and Gardens
- Mottisfont Abbey: Listed as Grade II on the Historic England Register of Historic Parks and Gardens
- Houghton Lodge: Listed as Grade II* on the Historic England Register of Historic Parks and Gardens

Settlement Pattern

- 5B.14. Settlements within the floodplain of the River Test are generally located at bridging or fording points across the river channel. In these areas the benefits of location for trade, river control and transport purposes outweigh the problems caused by excessive damp and periodic flooding. Such settlements as at Stockbridge tend to be linear in nature, strung out across both river banks but generally remain close to the bridges or fording point rather than extending up the valley side and away from the river.
- 5B.15. Settlements were originally small nucleated villages traditionally perched on the gravel shelf just above the valley bottom or along the valley sides. However recent development has created a more linear form along the valley sides, for example at Timsbury. Stockbridge is the principal settlement within this LCA and is located on the valley floor.
- 5B.16. Very few farms occupy the valley floor of this character area and are instead generally located upon or above the first river terrace.
- 5B.17. Generally, the roads within this LCA follow the river on both sides of the valley just above the floodplain and are typically perched upon the gravel shelf itself. Additionally, there are a number of roads which cross the valley floor, and in some cases then continue up the valley sides these were originally the Drove Roads. The Test Way passes through this character area.

Local Settlements

5B.18. Local Settlements and their corresponding Settlement Type (see Appendix 2 for more information):

- Stockbridge: Chalk River Valley Settlement Type
- Timsbury: Chalk River Valley Settlement Type
- Mottisfont: Estate Village Settlement Type
- Houghton: Chalk River Valley Settlement Type
- Horsebridge: Chalk River Valley Settlement Type
- Longstock: Chalk River Valley Settlement Type
- Leckford: Chalk River Valley Settlement Type

Remoteness and Tranquillity

5B.19. Due to the lack of development, the River Test Valley Floor offers a prevailing sense of naturalness, tranquillity and solitude.

Key Valued Characteristics

5B.20. Key valued characteristics of LCA 5B are as follows:

- Multi braided water channels of clear spring water with even flows all year
- Valley floor dominated by pasture, rough grassland and small woodlands
- Variable density of trees alongside the river providing areas of enclosure as well as semi openness
- Frequent patches of broadleaved woodland including carr woodland with alder and willow
- Linear settlements located on first river terrace on the valley sides with road system that follow the gravel terraces which define the transition from valley floor to valley sides
- Traditional styles of built form include brick walls with thatch or clay tile roofs, and white render or chalk cob walls. Larger older properties in Stockbridge include stone detailing
- Settlements have a strong rural character with mainly hedgerows and low walls as property and garden boundaries creating inter-visibility through the settlements

- A predominantly undeveloped valley floor, except for the distinctive historic settlement of Stockbridge which provides a bridging point over the River Test
- As a part of the River Test valley system, this area is of particular local importance and the area most often referred to for its tranquillity and scenic, pastoral and cultural interest. Of particular note are Romsey, Mottisfont, Stockbridge, the Mayfly pub at Leckford and Leckford Gardens, the trout fishing and water birds, and the clean river and streams
- The occasional single historic property within a simple open natural setting is located on the valley floor and acts as a focal feature
- Test Way (located on redundant railway line), sometimes within a wooded corridor, provides access along valley side
- Undeveloped valley sides enhance remote rural character of this LCA
- Large country houses on valley side with designed grounds partly on valley floor including areas of parkland i.e. Bossington and park pales
- Mottisfont a largely mid to late 20th century garden, although with 18th century origins and 19th century additions, with formal features designed by Geoffrey Jellicoe and Norah Lindsay, which surrounds an 18th century house formed from the buildings of a 13th century priory
- Surviving common land within braided streams of the River Test, including Stockbridge Marsh
- Surviving remains of bedwork water meadows upon the floodplain
- Limited number of crossing points with narrow single rural lanes with no kerbs and small humped-back bridges
- Limited views across area, with strong sense of isolation and enclosure
- A landscape with a strong remote small scale undeveloped rural character

Key Detractors

5B.21. Key detractors of LCA5B are as follows:

- Gravel extraction and poor-quality restoration creating an artificial landform and landscape, as well as visible within adjacent LCAs
- There is a general perception of a lack of opportunity to access the countryside. Even the Test Way, which passes through the area, is not perceived as providing access to the river.

- Visual impact of car parking within the centre of Stockbridge
- Fish farms and sewage works creating artificial pools and landforms
- The visibility of pylons within the valley floor and along the ridgelines of the valley sides within adjacent LCAs
- Facilities for tourism urbanising the area including large scale car parks
- Infill development to the north and south of the historic core of Stockbridge changing historic linear urban form to a more nucleated form
- Ribbon and infill development from the original nucleated settlements
- Spread of equestrian activity, with sub-division of open areas of grassland with visually intrusive fencing and field stables
- Poor quality boundary treatment with the use of close boarded fencing within settlements eroding the inter-visibility which would have existed across these areas

Local Natural and Cultural Landscape Issues

5B.22. Local natural and cultural landscape issues for LCA5B are as follows:

- Agricultural rationalisation may threaten the survival of water meadow earthworks remaining on marginal land
- Sensitivity to changes in the landform and riverine habitats, e.g. from flood defence projects, along the principal river channels including the Test
- Visual and noise impact from the volume of local traffic on a quiet rural landscape
- Sensitivity to change of the historic medieval character of the settlement of Stockbridge
- Overdevelopment of valley sides (adjacent LCAs) including the introduction of solar and renewable energy development eroding the rural character of the valley floor
- Loss of pasture for domestic curtilage with the associated domestication of landscape
- The planting of non-native plant species to countryside boundaries
- Loss and erosion of undeveloped areas of the valley floor for extensions for existing facilities (including recreation areas) including car park and service areas

- Increased horsiculture with the loss of character of fields of meadow grassland
- Future potential demand for mineral extraction of sharp sand and gravel

Landscape Strategy and Guidelines

5B.23. Landscape Strategy and Guidelines for LCA5B Middle Test Valley Floor are as follows:

- The Middle Test Valley Floor remains strongly pastoral, undisturbed by modern development. The area also retains a high level of tranquillity. This LCA contains an important part of the River Test chalk stream SSSI and with nationally significant water meadows. The overall strategy is to conserve the small scale traditional character of Middle Test Valley Floor and to protect and enhance the key valued characteristics.

Land Management

5B.24. All of the Borough wide and Landscape Character Type land management guidelines apply to this Landscape Character Area. Specific to this Landscape Character Area are as follows:

5B.25. Landscape Distinctiveness

- Maintain the area as largely traffic free and maintain the simple single winding carriageways across the valley floor
- Maintain the characteristic braiding of the river channels, ditches and pools across the valley floor
- Maintain the riparian vegetation pattern of woodland, wet woodland, scrub, marshland and small pastoral meadows
- Maintain the largely development free stretches of the valley floor

5B.26. Woodland and Trees

- Manage the pollards and lines of poplar, which characterise some sections of the valley floor

5B.27. Biodiversity

- Conserve, enhance and manage riparian and associated habitats along the River Test and side channels as guided by Natural England's SSSI condition assessment, with particular emphasis on habitats for southern damselfly.

- Encourage fish farms to be more natural and sympathetic in keeping with the natural landscape character of the River Test valley with particular attention to design and plant species selection. Avoid over manicured water edges planted with non-native amenity grass mixes.

5B.28. Historic Landscapes

- Promote the survival of the historic character of the settlements along the River Test
- Protect the setting of adjacent (within adjacent LCAs) Registered Parks and Gardens and designed landscapes of value including Marsh Court and Mottisfont
- Promote the survival and setting of designed historic landscapes including Scheduled Monuments within the valley floor

5B.29. Urban Fringe and settlements

- Avoid deterioration in the urban fringe landscape around Romsey arising from poor design and intrusive development
- Improve management of the landscape around Romsey and other settlements

Land Use and Development

5B.30. All of the Borough wide and Landscape Character Type land use and development guidelines apply to this Landscape Character Area. Specific to this Landscape Character Area are as follows:

5B.31. Recreation, Tourism and Access

- With regard to the increased number of fish farms, care should be taken to avoid visually intrusive car parking areas and any other service provisions required (i.e. poor-quality signage, sheds etc) which would be out of character with the undeveloped valley floor. Additionally, avoid any urbanising measures which will also erode the natural rural character of the area



Stockbridge from Common Marsh



Common Marsh outside Stockbridge



Development free valley sides



The well-used Test Way

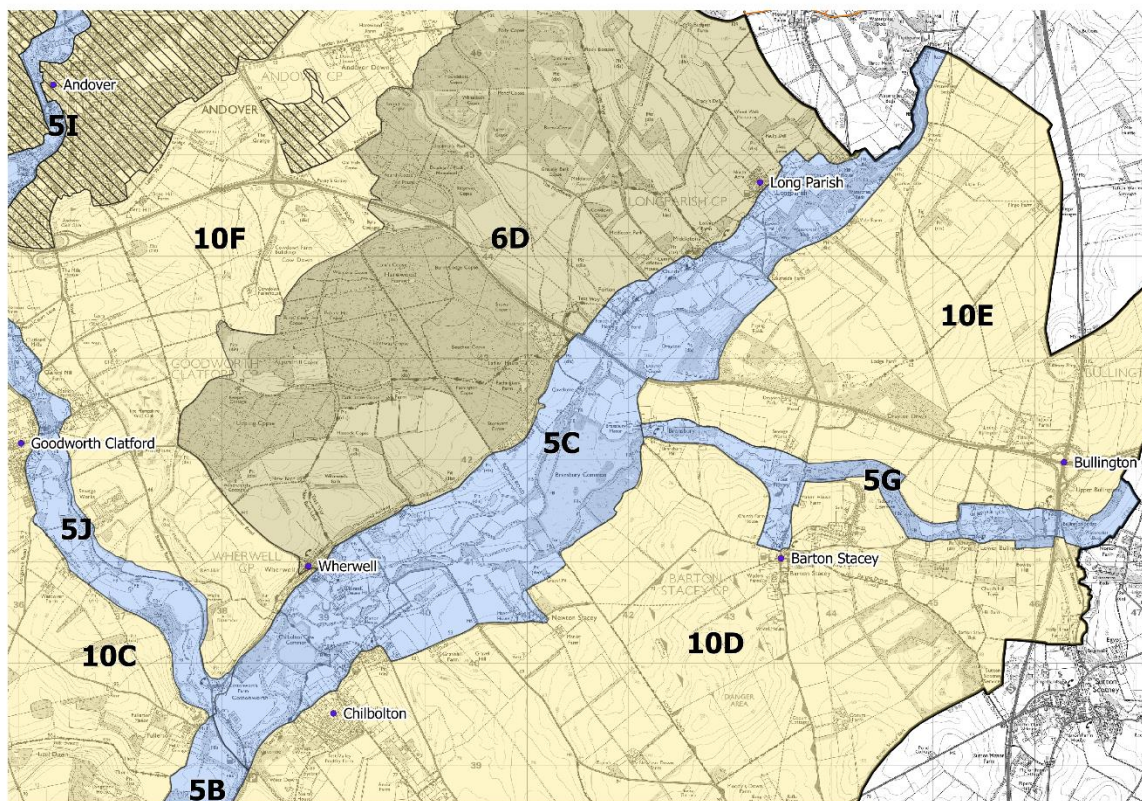


Contrasting texture of the vegetation within the Test Valley with the adjacent smooth arable landscape



Open expanses of clear water with the adjacent rough texture of marshland

LCA5C Upper Test Valley Floor



General Description

- 5C.1. The Upper Test Valley Floor is a complex meandering and braided river system, with relatively slow moving water. The valley floor varies in width, narrowing at its upper end beyond Middleton.
- 5C.2. The area is dominated by pastoral agriculture with frequent patches of woodland, contrasting with the open areas of arable fields which rise from the valley floor onto the downland within LCT10. It has a strong sense of seclusion and tranquillity, undisturbed by modern development, except where it is crossed by the A303.

Location

- 5C.3. The Upper Test Valley Floor follows the river from Fullerton to the Borough boundary, north east of Middleton.

Local Physical Influences

- 5C.4. **Geology and Soils:** Alluvium with River Terrace Deposits along the valley edge.

Landform: Flat valley with shallower valley side slopes to the north.

Drainage: River valley dominated by the braided River Test, with its confluence with the River Anton and the River Dever.

Local Biodiversity and Vegetation Pattern

- 5C.5. The area has an important flora and fauna particularly in regard to its aquatic and associated habitats. The River Test SSSI is the key ecological feature running through the LCA, and this supports nationally-important chalk stream aquatic and riparian habitats and associated species such as otter, water vole, and notable aquatic invertebrates as well as supporting a high diversity and number of foraging bats. The main river is well connected to an extensive network side channels, some of which form part of the SSSI, while others still have much ecological value.
- 5C.6. Many of the wet meadows along the valley have been left as pasture as they are less suitable for cropping, due to the low-lying flood plain and its high water table. These are generally neutral in character, and may be less agriculturally improved. Consequently they will support a higher botanical diversity. Such meadows are becoming increasingly rare due to agricultural pressures.
- 5C.7. A further notable feature of the LCA is Bransbury Common, a large area of wetter fen, marsh and purple moor grass / rush pasture central to the LCA, which is designated as a SSSI.
- 5C.8. Other notable habitats include areas of wet carr woodland, which with hedgerows, link to patches of ancient and semi-natural woodland and provide an important resource.

5C.9. The table below identifies the broad habitat types for LCA5C.

Broad habitat type	Area of habitat (Hectares)	Percentage of the LCA (%)
Acid grassland	1.14	0.13
Arable and horticulture	124.45	14.24
Boundary and linear features	16.11	1.84
Bracken	1.03	0.12
Broadleaved, mixed, and yew woodland	151.37	17.32
Built-up areas and gardens	44.00	5.04
Calcareous grassland	2.79	0.32
Coniferous woodland	0.27	0.03
Fen, marsh and swamp	70.28	8.04
Improved grassland	338.90	38.79
Inland rock	0.24	0.03
Neutral grassland	37.83	4.33
Rivers and streams	3.80	0.43
Standing open water and canals	1.35	0.15
Unidentified habitat	26.53	3.04
Unidentified water	53.67	6.14
Total	873.77	

Local Historical Influences

5C.10. This character area generally incorporates the upper reaches of the River Test and demonstrate the extent to which the complex bedwork water meadow systems were employed to improve the grass crop during the later 18th and early 19th centuries. Also present within this character area are some catchwork water meadows. These systems differ from bedwork meadows in that gravity is used to transport water to the meadows. Therefore catchworks can generally be found upon either the sides of larger river valleys or located within smaller, steeper valleys. These areas of water meadow are interspersed with what are referred to as 'miscellaneous valley floor enclosures' which may in fact be the heavily denuded remains of other water meadows since largely destroyed. The construction of the water meadows destroyed much of the open common and valley floor enclosures which had previously occupied the river valley. In some places these do survive, as at Bransbury and Chilbolton Commons, however, these landscape elements are increasingly rare within the historic environment of the valley floor.

- 5C.11. During the mid-19th century, the widespread agricultural depression, poor weather conditions, changes in agricultural practices, including increased mechanisation and the development of affordable fertilisers, started the decline of the water meadow. The water meadow was originally an efficient method of dramatically increasing the productivity of marginal land and after abandonment large areas returned to this marginal agricultural status. This often precipitated a process of gradual decay rather than dramatic and purposeful destruction and so various elements of water meadows survive within this area of the River Test.
- 5C.12. Water meadows extend the full length of this character area while some limited parliamentary field enclosure occupies the northern bank of the River Test to the north east of Wherwell.
- 5C.13. A Roman road is known to extend through this area although the only evidence for its presence is possibly retained fossilised within the south western field boundary of Bransbury Common.

Designations

- 5C.14. Designations that lie wholly or in part within this Landscape Character Area comprise:

5C.15. **Nature Conservation**

SSSI

- Bransbury Common - Reedbeds, unimproved neutral grassland and some broadleaved woodland
 - River Test - Running water, marginal vegetation and adjacent habitats including woodland, unimproved grassland and reedbeds
 - Chilbolton Common - Unimproved neutral grassland, marshy grassland, reedbed and some broadleaved woodland
 - East Aston Common - Broadleaved semi-natural woodland and reedbeds
- SINC
- 6 SINCs, including agriculturally unimproved grassland, semi-improved grassland, wet grassland and fen

5C.16. **Historic**

Conservation Areas

- Chilbolton
- Longparish
- Wherwell

Scheduled Monuments

- The Andyke, Bransbury

Listed buildings

- Listed buildings are concentrated within the historic cores of Middleton (including the Grade I listed St Nicholas Church), Longparish, Forton, Wherwell and Chilbolton (including Grade I listed St Mary's Church), as well as isolated farmsteads and mills

Settlement Pattern

5C.17. Several historic settlements occupy the valley floor within this upper portion of the River Test. Wherwell retains evidence of the Anglo-Saxon nunnery founded reputedly by King Alfred during the 9th century. Longparish to the north east consists of four historic cores each containing 16th and 17th century buildings and structures.

5C.18. Settlements were originally small nucleated villages traditionally perched on the gravel shelf just above the valley bottom or along the valley sides although limited expansion during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries has resulted in some linear development along the road network.

5C.19. Very few farms occupy the valley floor of this character area and are instead generally located upon the first river terrace.

5C.20. Generally, the roads within this LCA, follow the river on both sides of the valley just above the floodplain and are typically perched upon the gravel shelf itself. Additionally, there are a number of roads which cross the valley floor, and in some cases then continue up the valley sides, these were originally the Drove Roads. The Test Way passes through this character area.

Local Settlements

5C.21. Local Settlements and their corresponding Settlement Type (see Appendix 2 for more information):

- Longparish: Chalk River Valley Settlement Type
- Wherwell: Chalk River Valley Settlement Type
- Chilbolton: Chalk River Valley Settlement Type

Remoteness and Tranquillity

5C.22. Due to the lack of development, the Landscape Character Area offers a prevailing sense of naturalness, tranquillity and solitude.

Key Valued Characteristics

5C.23. Key valued characteristics of LCA5C are as follows:

- Multi braided water channels of clear spring water with even flows all year
- Narrow, flat valley floor enclosed within rising valley sides creating a strong sense of intimacy and tranquillity
- Intimate pastoral with small scale water meadow landscape
- Frequent patches of broadleaved woodland including carr woodland with alder and willow
- Remote rural character, with valley floor devoid of settlements
- Occasional close views of River Test from adjacent road creates intimate relationship with river. Also views from parallel valley roads across valley floor also maintains the awareness of the river valley where the change in vegetation, and texture is particularly apparent against adjacent LCAs
- Fords as river crossings, however sometimes unusable for vehicles
- Well treed character of valley side roads
- Simple character of cross valley roads with unmade edges and grass verges with key discreet Humpback bridges
- Occasional traditional building acts as focal feature, framed within natural landscape of the valley floor
- Settlements have a strong rural character with mainly hedgerows and low walls used as property and garden boundaries creating inter-visibility through the settlements

- As a part of the River Test valley system, this area is of particular local importance and the area most often referred to for its tranquillity and scenic and pastoral interest. Of particular note is the public access to the waterside via the pubs and villages that line the river.
- The older buildings are commonly timber, cob and thatch, with brick and flint. Both tiled and slate roofs are used. Boundary walls are often brick and flint, or chalk cob with thatch or tile capping.
- Open setting and views of St Nicholas Church spire at Middleton
- Open drainage ditches within Chilbolton adds to its river valley context
- A mix of vegetation types adjacent the river providing areas of enclosure as well as openness
- Dispersed linear settlements, including Wherwell, Chilbolton and Longparish, located on the first river terrace on the adjacent valley sides. The village of Wherwell (a small part of which lies within LCA5C), is a popular attraction and is considered particularly scenic.
- Road system that follows gravel terraces which define the transition from valley floor to valley sides
- Surviving common land enclosed by the braided streams of the River Test and River Dever as at Chilbolton Common and Bransbury Common
- Surviving remains of catchwork water meadows upon the floodplain.
- Test Way, sometimes within a wooded corridor, provides access along the valley

Key Detractors

5C.24. Key detractors of LCA5C are as follows:

- Visual and noise intrusion from the A303
- Amalgamation of fields with loss of field boundaries and replaced with arable fields
- Extension of domestic curtilage (gardens) causing loss of undeveloped valley floor riparian landscape
- Urban treatment of property boundaries, including gateways, degrading the rural quality of the area
- Disused chalk pits perceived as wasteland

- New large farm buildings visible on predominantly development free valley sides within adjacent LCAs
- Loss of some of the valley floor pastures, with their grazing cattle, into arable use and horse paddocks with post and rail fencing, field stables and other equestrian structures
- Creation of artificial lakes and ponds from areas of marshland for fishing, with lake sides and large-scale buildings which are visually out of character within the predominantly undeveloped valley floor.
- Overdevelopment of farmsteads, mills and detached properties with elaborate gateways reflecting a more enhanced urban character
- Engineered bank edges, rather than the typical loose natural water's edge
- There is a general perception of a lack of opportunity to access the countryside. Even the Test Way, which passes through the area, is not perceived as providing access to the river which is seen as for a privileged few.

Local Natural and Cultural Landscape Issues

5C.25. Local natural and cultural landscape issues for LCA 5C are as follows:

- Agricultural rationalisation may threaten the survival of water meadow earthworks surviving upon marginal land
- Sensitivity to changes in the landform and riverine habitats, e.g. from flood defence projects, along the principal river channels including the Test
- Possibility of future changes to land use within the valley floor threatening the survival of water meadow earthworks
- Visual and noise impact from A303(T)
- Loss of pasture and undeveloped valley floor for domestic and garden use, causing change in landscape character and loss of biodiversity
- Spread of equestrian activity into grass meadows
- New large detached properties away from settlements
- Popularity of fishing and access to fishing areas
- This area is sensitive to the impact of changes on the surrounding undeveloped valley sides within adjacent character areas, especially the visibility of solar panels and large modern agricultural sheds on the skyline

- Future potential demand for mineral extraction of sharp sand and gravel

Landscape Strategy and Guidelines

5C.26. Landscape Strategy and Guidelines for LCA5C Upper Test Valley Floor are as follows:

- The Upper Test Valley Floor is a particularly intimate landscape, with important historic and ecological features forming an important part of the River Test chalk stream SSSI and containing nationally significant water meadows. The overall strategy is to conserve the remote small scale pastoral character of Upper Test Valley Floor and to protect and enhance the key valued characteristics.

Land Management

5C.27. All of the Borough wide and Landscape Character Type land management guidelines apply to this Landscape Character Area. Specific to this Landscape Character Area are as follows:

5C.28. Landscape Distinctiveness

- Maintain the largely development free stretches of the valley floor and its riparian vegetation pattern

5C.29. Woodland and Trees

- Management of the pollards and lines of poplar, which characterise some sections of the valley floor
- Where appropriate encourage new areas of woodland planting to mitigate visual detractors in particular the A303(T) although without losing all of the views from the road itself

5C.30. Biodiversity

- Conserve, enhance and manage riparian and associated habitats along the River Test and side channels as guided by Natural England's SSSI condition assessment

5C.31. Historic Landscapes

- Protect the setting of historic settlements including the uninterrupted views of church spires (Middleton church) and key buildings across the valley floor

Land Use and Development

5C.32. All of the Borough wide and LCT land use and development guidelines apply to this character area. Specific to this character area are as follows:

5C.33. Built Development

- Conserve the existing settlement form and settlement free character of the valley floor

5C.34. Infrastructure

- Avoid increased suburbanisation arising from introduction of highway measures, which conflict with the predominant rural character
- Improve the visual and acoustic containment of the A303



The occasional building can provide a focal feature within the mainly undeveloped valley floor



Simple thatched properties hug the valley sides



Open ditches, a feature of the village of Chilbolton



Middleton Church spire visible across the valley floor

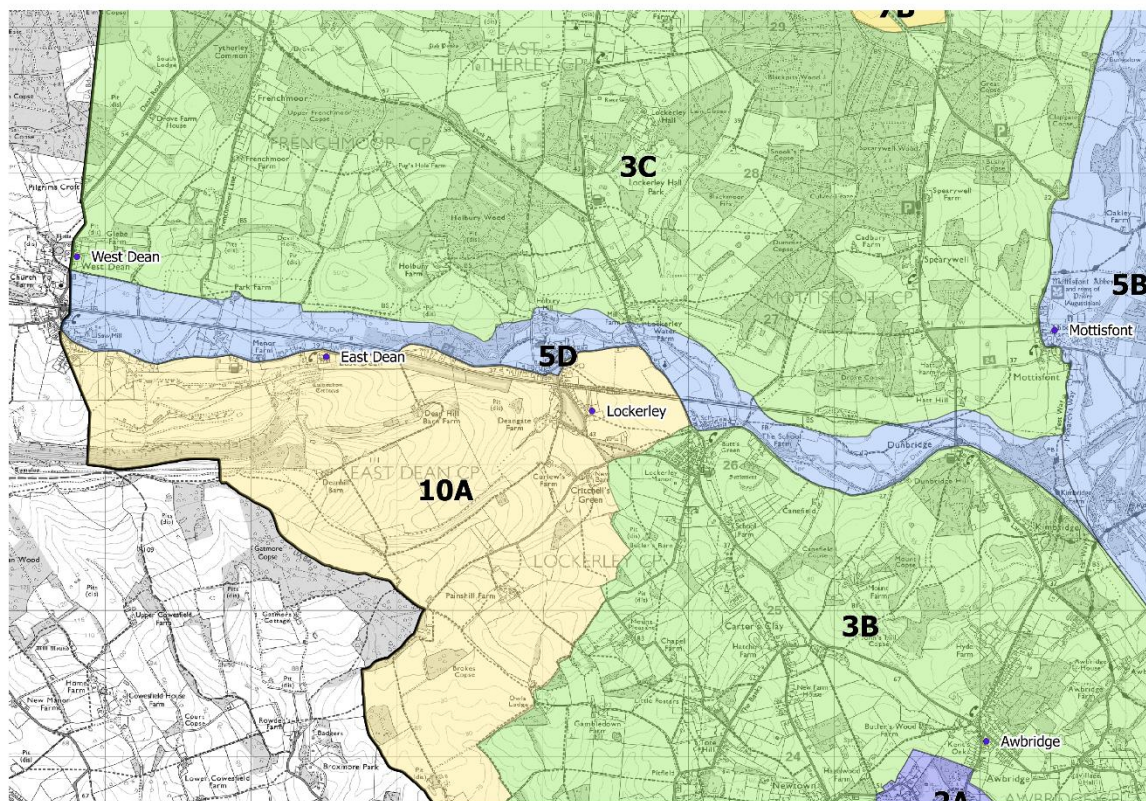


Simple fords as crossing points



Well-treed valley roads

LCA5D Dun River Valley Floor



General Description

- 5D.1. The secluded Dun River Valley Floor meanders across a small scale pastoral landscape before joining the River Test, east of Dunbridge. This predominantly enclosed river valley landscape contrasts with the predominantly enclosed arable farmland to the north (LCA 3C) and south (LCA 3B and LCA 10A). A number of woodland copses occupy the valley floor providing complete enclosure to the River Dun, in contrast to the adjacent areas of the more open pastoral landscape found on the valley floor.

Location

- 5D.2. Dun River Valley Floor follows the River Dun from West Dean into the River Test.

Local Physical Influences

- 5D.3. **Geology and Soils:** Alluvium with an intrusion of River Valley Deposits.

Landform: Broad valley narrowing westwards, with the adjacent valley sides steeper to the south.

Drainage: Meandering watercourse of the River Dun, fed by streams and ditches, with a line of springs where the adjacent valley sides meet the valley floor. A small lake at Lockerley. Feeding into the River Test to the east.

Local Biodiversity and Vegetation Pattern

5D.4. The River Dun flows through this narrow LCA, and this chalk stream is key to much of the local biodiversity interest. Either side of the river are extensive areas of flood meadow, many of which are neutral grassland and designated as SINCs, such as Holbury Farm Watermeadows, Old Canal Meadows and at Lockerley Water Farm.

5D.5. There are a number of areas of broadleaved woodland along the river valley with pockets of wet woodland.

5D.6. The table below identifies the broad habitat types for LCA5D.

Broad habitat type	Area of habitat (Hectares)	Percentage of the LCA (%)
Arable and horticulture	26.48	11.44
Boundary and linear features	12.44	5.37
Broadleaved, mixed, and yew woodland	30.16	13.03
Built-up areas and gardens	23.35	10.09
Coniferous woodland	1.07	0.46
Fen, marsh and swamp	1.41	0.61
Improved grassland	67.41	29.13
Neutral grassland	51.54	22.27
Rivers and streams	0.61	0.26
Standing open water and canals	1.98	0.85
Unidentified habitat	3.18	1.37
Unidentified water	11.81	5.10
Total	231.42	

Local Historical Influences

5D.7. A mixture of miscellaneous valley floor enclosures, occasional stands of valley floor woodland and areas of marsh and rough grazing dominate this Landscape Character Area. Only two water meadows are identified within this area and both surviving elements occur towards the eastern end of this

narrow river valley. A catchwork water meadow (Type 1) is present occupying the northern slope while a larger bedwork water meadow (Type 4) extends across the valley floor as it widens out to meet the main valley of the River Test to the east at East Dean.

- 5D.8. A single medieval moated site survives at the western end of the valley floor along the borders of the Borough. This is associated with a 'Manor Farm' immediately to the north, away from the valley floor. This may represent a conscious move away from damp and wet environment on the valley floor to higher ground nearby while retaining the historic connections with a manorial centre.

Designations

- 5D.9. Designations that lie wholly or in part within this Landscape Character Area comprise:

5D.10. **Nature Conservation**

SINC

- 13 SINC, including agriculturally unimproved grassland, wet grassland and fen, and sites which support notable species

5D.11. **Historic**

Conservation Areas

- West Dean

Schedule Monument

- Roman Villa, north east of railway station, West Dean

Listed buildings

- Found within the historic core of valley side settlements as well as farmsteads and mills

Settlement Pattern

- 5D.12. Dunbridge is the only settlement which is located within this Landscape Character Area in its entirety although the largely later post medieval elements of Lockerley do extend into the valley of the River Dun. The settlement of Dunbridge, as the name suggests occupies a bridging point

across the river and is largely a late eighteenth and nineteenth century construct which took advantage of the bridge and the presence of the railway. As such it is largely a nucleated village with later nineteenth and twentieth century extensions along the main roads.

5D.13. Very few farms occupy the valley floor of this character area and are instead generally located upon the first river terrace.

5D.14. There is only a road on the southern side of the river just above the floodplain and typically perched upon a gravel shelf. Additionally, there are a number of roads which cross the valley floor, and in some cases then continue up the valley sides, these were originally the Drove Roads.

5D.15. A railway line transacts the valley and is also accompanied by overhead pylons at the eastern end.

Local Settlements

5D.16. Local Settlements and their corresponding Settlement Type (see Appendix 2 for more information):

- Dunbridge: Clay River Valley Settlement Type
- Lockerley: Scattered Clay Lowland Settlement Type

Remoteness and Tranquillity

5D.17. A generally secluded and tranquil valley which is slightly disturbed by the railway line.

Key Valued Characteristics

5D.18. Key valued characteristics of LCA5D are as follows:

- Meandering river along broad shallow valley floor, a few crossing points with predominantly single carriageways, un-engineered roadside, soft grass verges and humpback bridges
- Intimate valley floor dominated by small scale pasture and well-developed hedgerow pattern creating a strong rural character

- A mix of vegetation types adjacent the river providing areas of enclosure as well as openness
- Small copses and groups of willow and alder
- Only two water meadow systems survive at the eastern end of the valley floor. The rarity of water meadows makes these valued characteristics.
- Remote rural character, with the valley floor largely devoid of settlements, with northern side devoid of valley side road
- Butt's Green (Lockerley) on valley floor edge, an open area of grass surrounded by a low density of properties framed by mature trees
- Open grass area in the centre of West Dean, where the River Dun is the central feature, with a low density of buildings and mature trees around edge
- Church spire, south of Lockerley Water Farm visible above tree line when approaching from the west
- Traditional building styles include brick walls, many painted white, and clay tile roofs, clay tile hanging and thatch roofs. Boundary walls may be rendered or painted with clay tile copings
- Good public access across valley floor with a network of Public Rights of Way providing links to adjacent areas to the north and south, but not so much to the River Dun

Key Detractors

5D.19. Key detractors of LCA5D are as follows:

- Railway line prominent when on raised embankment
- Overhead power lines and the sub-station are visible west of Dunbridge
- Linear roadside development, including semi industrial between East Dean and west of Lockerley, which degrades character rural of area
- Loss of pastoral and riparian valley floor character to domestic gardens with engineered riverside banks
- Ex Ministry of Defence (MOD) development (Dean Hill Park) visible to the south
- Trout fishing farm with loss of natural valley floor landscape to a more manicured landscape

Local Natural and Cultural Landscape Issues

5D.20. Local natural and cultural landscape issues for LCA5D are as follows:

- Risks to water quality through pollution of the river and its tributaries
- Closure of the MOD Munitions Depot at Dean Hill (LCA 10A) and the visual effect of the change of use on the rural landscape character of the surrounding area
- Future potential demand for mineral extraction of sharp sand and gravel

Landscape Strategy and Guidelines for LCA5D

5D.21. Landscape Strategy and Guidelines for LCA5D Dun River Valley Floor are as follows:

- The Dun River Valley Floor is important for a number of unimproved grassland habitats and its wooded small-scale landscape pattern. The overall strategy is therefore to conserve extant historic landscape features and enhance the small scale wooded and grassland character of Dun River Valley Floor and to protect and enhance the key valued characteristics.

Land Management

5D.22. All of the Borough wide and Landscape Character Type land management guidelines apply to this Landscape Character Area. Specific to this Landscape Character Area are as follows:

5D.23. **Landscape Distinctiveness**

- Maintain the characteristic meandering channel, drainage ditches, mill streams and pools of the River Dun river valley
- Maintain the contrast of a pastoral valley with the open arable valley sides

5D.24. **Woodland and Trees**

- Management of the pollards and lines of poplar, which characterise some sections of the valley floor
- Encourage where appropriate new areas of woodland planting to mitigate the visual impact of the existing railway line, overhead pylons and substation

5D.25. **Biodiversity**

- Explore measures to revert existing lower-diversity pasture in the floodplain to higher-diversity meadows

5D.26. **Historic Landscapes**

- Protect the landscape setting of the medieval moated site at the western end of the valley floor

Land Use and Development

5D.27. All of the Borough wide and Landscape Character Type land use and development guidelines apply to this Landscape Character Area. Specific to this Landscape Character Area are as follows:

5D.28. **Built Development**

- Maintain the low density of buildings and mature trees around the greens
- Avoid additional large-scale buildings which are out of scale and character along the valley side road

5D.29. **Infrastructure**

- Maintain and improve planting adjacent to the railway to reduce visual dominance
- Reduce visibility of substation with planting which will also be in keeping with the character of the surrounding vegetation pattern



Intermittent development around Butt's Green framed by large trees



Single carriageways and humped-back bridges provide access across valley floor



Natural marshland on valley floor



Original ford with footbridge over River Dun

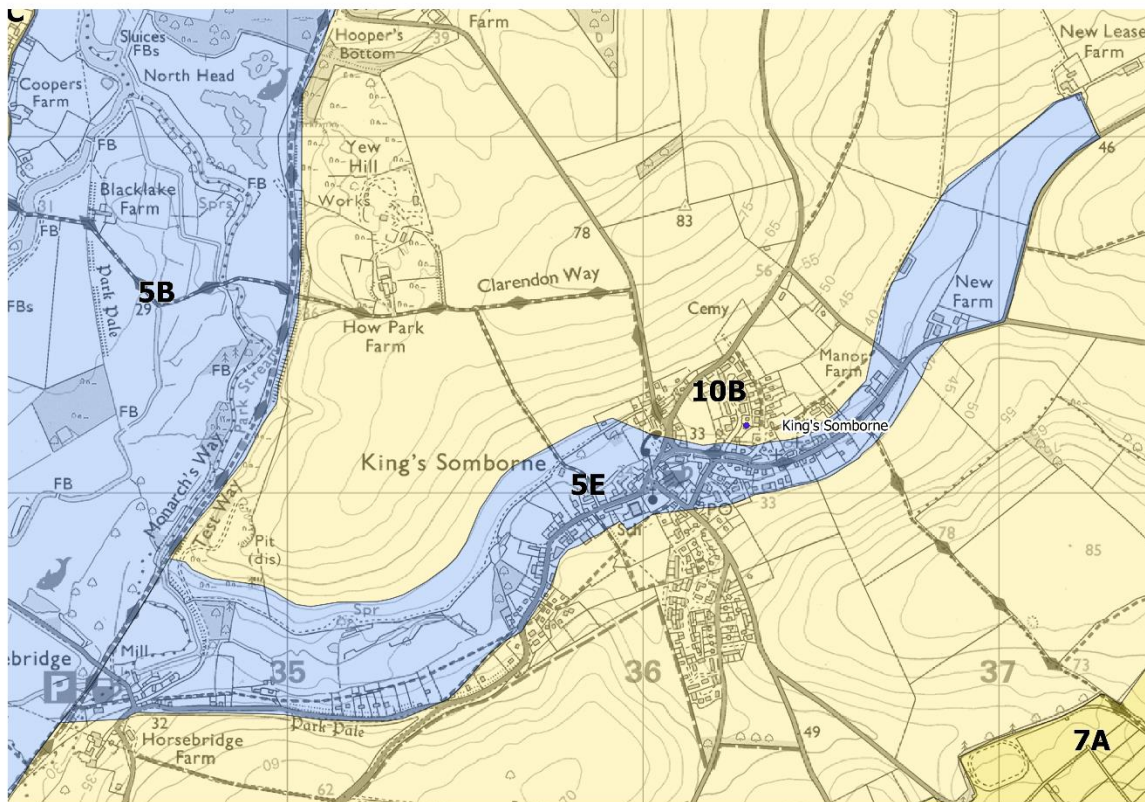


River Dun in open pasture



Open green at West Dean where River Dun is central feature

LCA5E King's Somborne River Valley Floor



General Description

- 5E.1. King's Somborne River Valley Floor is a narrow valley containing a small tributary joining the River Test at Horsebridge and with a relatively steep gradient making it prone to swift rises in water levels.
- 5E.2. The tributary is a winterbourne which starts life in Crawley and follows the road in the valley. In wetter years the bourne flows across the agricultural land from Little Somborne to New Lease Farm. From New Lease Farm it runs a reasonably straight course across open fields, with only the occasional adjacent shrub or tree. Descending into the settlement of King's Somborne, it aligns the main street. Leaving King's Somborne it then forms a distinctive tree lined feature, connecting small woodland copses while meandering across long linear pasture fields.
- 5E.3. The area is crossed by the Clarendon Way

Location

- 5E.4. King's Somborne River Valley Floor runs up from the River Test, through King's Somborne to New Lease Farm, contrasting sharply with the adjacent landscape character of the Open Chalklands valley sides.

Local Physical Influences

- 5E.5. **Geology and Soils:** Alluvium below King's Somborne with clays, silt, sand and gravel up stream.

Landform: A 'V' shaped river valley between the rising slopes of the chalk downlands.

Drainage: A small watercourse, partly braided west of King's Somborne.

Local Biodiversity and Vegetation Pattern

- 5E.6. Much of the upper reaches of this winterbourne chalk stream valley are improved farmland or village settlement, of lower ecological interest, although the winterbourne sections of the watercourse are likely to support a particularly niche characteristic habitats and species due to the ephemeral nature of the stream here.
- 5E.7. Further downstream nearer the River Test is a large area of water meadow with pockets of wet woodland, designated as the Kings Somborne Watermeadow SINC.
- 5E.8. The table below identifies the broad habitat types for LCA5E.

Broad habitat type	Area of habitat (Hectares)	Percentage of the LCA (%)
Arable and horticulture	10.85	12.42
Boundary and linear features	4.25	4.87
Broadleaved, mixed, and yew woodland	5.00	5.73
Built-up areas and gardens	19.88	22.76
Fen, marsh and swamp	0.87	0.99
Improved grassland	40.93	46.85
Neutral grassland	0.06	0.07
Rivers and streams	0.71	0.82
Unidentified habitat	3.16	3.62
Unidentified water	1.63	1.87
Total	87.37	

Local Historical Influences

- 5E.9. The sides of the river valley have been extensively cultivated during the 19th and 20th centuries and so evidence of earlier field systems has largely been removed by the construction of parliamentary field systems to the north and east. To the south an expanse of open prairie fields dominate the landscape (probably associated with Compton Manor) which has removed evidence of earlier field systems in this area.
- 5E.10. The remains of a park pale or medieval boundary bank flanks the river valley on its southern side and which possibly belongs to a precursor manorial site of Compton Manor to the south.

Designations

- 5E.11. Designations that lie wholly or in part within this Landscape Character Area comprise:

5E.12. **Nature Conservation**

SSSI

- River Test - Running water, marginal vegetation and adjacent habitats including marshy grassland and broadleaved woodland

SINC

- 1 SINC, including agriculturally unimproved grassland and wetlands

5E.13. **Historic**

Conservation Areas

- King's Somborne

Scheduled Monuments

- John of Gaunt's Palace
- Park Pale – north of Horsebridge Road, King's Somborne
- Andover-Redbridge Canal, Chalk Hill Lock, Horsebridge

Listed Buildings

- Clusters of listed buildings in and around King's Somborne and Horsebridge

Settlement Pattern

- 5E.14. King's Somborne with its historic core is located part way up the valley while later 19th century development has extended down the valley towards Horsebridge (another smaller settlement which dates largely to the 19th century).
- 5E.15. This valley occupied almost exclusively by 19th century parliamentary field systems. As such the farmsteads, while focused around the settlement at King's Somborne do lie within territories which extend away from the settlement and onto the surrounding uplands.
- 5E.16. King's Somborne is a nucleated settlement, which has a linear tail of development to the west. This area of linear development follows the tributary along the edge of the valley floor on the higher gravels.
- 5E.17. Roads converge on King's Somborne, with one road following the valley floor just above the flood plain up to New Lease Farm. This road then continues further into LCA10B along the old line of gravel deposits.

Local Settlements

- 5E.18. Local Settlements and their corresponding Settlement Type (see Appendix 2 for more information):
- King's Somborne: Chalk Downland: Dry Valley Settlement Type

Remoteness and Tranquillity

- 5E.19. Part of King's Somborne River Valley Floor is busy with road crossing points centred on King's Somborne. However, a greater level of tranquillity exists in the lower and higher reaches away from the village.

Key Valued Characteristics

- 5E.20. Key valued characteristics of LCA5E are as follows:
- Lower valley floor dominated by pasture creating a strong rural character and rural context to King's Somborne

- North west of King's Somborne, a seasonal bourne is visible within a 'v' shape valley, with a seasonal ford crossing
- The stream in the centre of the village has a natural form with mainly un-engineered, often clay banks
- Views between properties within King's Somborne to undeveloped valley sides enhances rural context of village
- The centre of King's Somborne is set around the open channel of the stream, with small clusters of traditional buildings enhancing a traditional historic setting
- Small pasture fields are integrated within the layout of the village and form an important feature of the village. Also pasture fields within the valley on the perimeter of the village enhances its setting
- Traditional building styles include brick and flint, brick and chalk cob walls with thatch, clay tile and slate roofs. Timber frame buildings and timber cladding are occasionally to be found
- Remains of a medieval park boundary (Scheduled Monument) along the southern extent of the valley floor
- Extensive 19th and 20th century field systems flank the valley floor
- Public Rights of Way provide some access, with links into the surrounding footpath network, including the Clarendon Way which passes through the village and provides valued views across the village to open undeveloped farmland forming the rural context of the village

Key Detractors

5E.21. Key detractors of LCA5E are as follows:

- Busy roads intrude into the southern valley side
- Ongoing erosion of historic features. i.e. park pale along southern boundary
- Ribbon housing development away from historic core along the valley floor, detracts from original compact village form
- Loss of valley floor undeveloped pasture to domestic curtilage (gardens) with the introduction of non-native plants and garden designed features

Local Natural and Cultural Landscape Issues

5E.22. Local natural and cultural landscape issues for LCA5E are as follows:

- Visual and noise impact from the volume of local traffic on a quiet rural landscape
- Risks to water quality through pollution of the river and its tributaries
- Loss of pasture to arable use
- Loss and erosion, damage of historic/archaeological features/earthworks i.e. park pale on Horsebridge Road
- This character of the village is particularly vulnerable to the potential changes on the surrounding steep valley slopes of adjacent LCAs (character areas)
- Future potential demand for mineral extraction of sharp sand and gravel within area at junction with the Test River Valley
- Overgrown Andover to Redbridge Canal

Landscape Strategy and Guidelines

5E.23. Landscape Strategy and Guidelines for LCA5E King's Somborne River Valley Floor are as follows:

- The King's Somborne River Valley Floor is noted as the river setting to King's Somborne within an open arable landscape. The overall strategy is therefore to enhance and restore the small scale riverine character of King's Somborne River Valley Floor and to protect and enhance the key valued characteristics.

Land Management

5E.24. All of the Borough wide and Landscape Character Type land management guidelines apply to this Landscape Character Area. Specific to this Landscape Character Area are as follows:

5E.25. **Landscape Distinctiveness**

- Reinforce existing local features and restore small scale field pattern in upper reaches
- Retain levels of tranquillity in lower and upper reaches
- Maintain pasture fields and open areas within village

- Maintain the natural un-engineered channel character of the stream within the village
- Maintain the winterbourne in the upper reaches and resist any out of character engineered drainage

5E.26. **Hedgerows**

- Maintain the robust character of the hedgerow field boundaries around the periphery of King's Somborne

5E.27. **Woodland and Trees**

- Management of the pollards and lines of poplar, which characterise some sections of the valley floor

5E.28. **Historic Landscapes**

- Protect the historic setting of King's Somborne and the medieval deer park close by
- Protect the Park Pale Scheduled Monument along southern edge of King's Somborne from further erosion

Land Use and Development

5E.29. All of the Borough wide and Landscape Character Type land use and development guidelines apply to this Landscape Character Area. Specific to this Landscape Character Area are as follows:

5E.30. **Built Development**

- Retain the character of King's Somborne historic core settlement pattern

5E.31. **Infrastructure**

- Reduce, where possible, the volume of traffic going through village on the A3057 and encourage measures to reduce the impact of the other existing roads

5E.32. **Recreation, Tourism and Access**

- Maintain and enhance existing network of Public Rights of Way and further access to the lower reaches south of King's Somborne



Tight clusters of traditional buildings in the centre of King's Somborne with stream as central feature



Open undeveloped fields within village enhances rural character



Ford with winterborne at eastern end of village



North of the village, the winterborne is visible within open fields marked by a loose line of trees and scrub

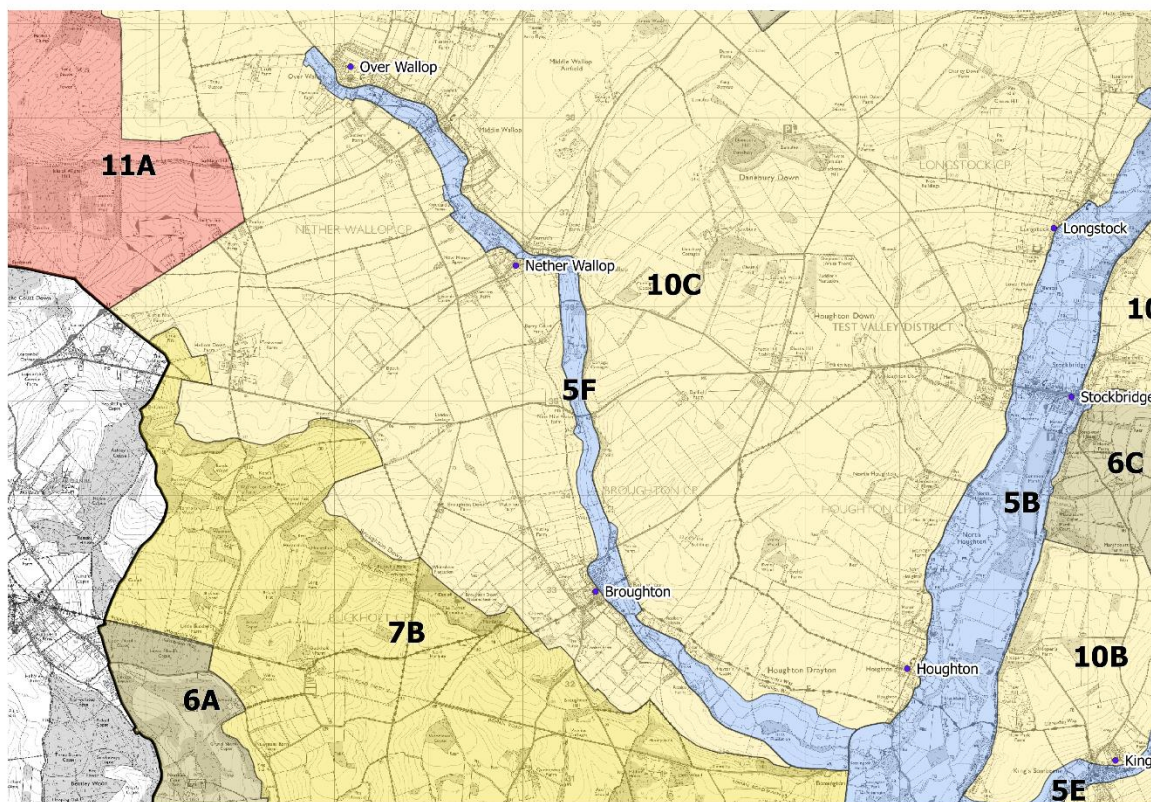


Undeveloped valley sides enhance rural village character



Small pasture fields along water course and provide rural setting for village

LCA5F Wallop Brook Valley Floor



General Description

- 5F.1. The Wallop Brook Valley Floor is a narrow valley with a relatively shallow gradient and a varied landscape character. Where the Wallop Brook joins the River Test, the valley floor is broader and undeveloped compared to higher up the valley where the valley is more 'V' shaped, populated and enclosed.
- 5F.2. The Wallop Brook Valley includes areas which are loosely populated with the linear settlements of Broughton, Nether Wallop, Middle Wallop and Over Wallop which contrasts with the undeveloped sections which are characterised by a small-scale patchwork of riverside meadows, pastures and woodland.

Location

- 5F.3. Wallop Brook Valley Floor follows the Wallop Brook from Over Wallop to where it joins the River Test at Bossington.

Local Physical Influences

5F.4. **Geology and Soils:** Alluvium.

Landform: Higher section comprise small and narrow 'V' shaped valley, then opening out at Broughton as the Wallop Brooks approaches its confluence with the River Test.

Drainage: Braided stream with numerous small ponds.

Local Biodiversity and Vegetation Pattern

5F.5. The upper part of the Wallop Brook, from its source in Over Wallop, down to just north of Broughton is designated as a SINC for its chalk stream habitats. Much of the remaining land cover is improved pasture and farmland, although there are pockets and strips of woodland.

5F.6. The downstream section of the LCA, as the valley evens out as it nears its confluence with the River Test, supports areas of wet meadow, fen and marsh, two areas of which are designated as Wallop Brook Meadows East and West SINC.

5F.7. The village of Broughton lies centrally within this linear LCA; there is a notably high density of bat roosts in Broughton, including several roosts of some significance, such as a number of serotine bat maternity roosts and appreciable numbers of myotis bats such as Natterer's and Brandt's bats. One of the few records for lesser horseshoe bats in the County is in Broughton, and there are regular recordings of barbastelle bats.

5F.8. The table below identifies the broad habitat types for LCA5F.

Broad habitat type	Area of habitat (Hectares)	Percentage of the LCA (%)
Arable and horticulture	55.18	20.85
Boundary and linear features	9.18	3.47
Broadleaved, mixed, and yew woodland	24.00	9.07
Built-up areas and gardens	35.61	13.46
Coniferous woodland	0.32	0.12
Fen, marsh and swamp	9.73	3.68
Improved grassland	106.31	40.17
Neutral grassland	1.94	0.73
Rivers and streams	0.01	0.01
Standing open water and canals	0.11	0.04
Unidentified habitat	12.54	4.74
Unidentified water	9.73	3.68
Total	264.66	

Local Historical Influences

5F.9. Catchwork water meadows (Type 1) extend along much of the Wallop Brook taking advantage of its relatively steep valley sides and lower valley floor gradient. They continue north to Nether Wallop but extend no further. Other miscellaneous valley floor enclosures occur along the Wallop Brook and extend through the village of Broughton.

Designations

5F.10. Designations that lie wholly or in part within this Landscape Character Area comprise:

5F.11. Nature Conservation

SINC

- 3 SINCS, including open freshwater, wetlands, agriculturally unimproved grassland, and a site which support notable species

5F.12. Historic

Conservation Areas

- Broughton
- Nether Wallop
- Middle Wallop
- Over Wallop

Listed buildings

- Listed buildings are concentrated within the historic cores of Broughton, Nether Wallop (including the Grade I listed St Andrew's Church), Middle Wallop and Over Wallop as well as a number of crossing points across Wallop Brook

Settlement Pattern

- 5F.13. Wallop Brook Valley Floor extends through several historic settlement cores; Broughton, Nether Wallop, Middle Wallop and Over Wallop. Each of these historic settlements during the 19th century have expanded along the valley and up onto the surrounding downland.
- 5F.14. The Wallop villages have expanded towards each other along the valley though the three historic cores remain distinct. Broughton has also expanded along the west of Wallop Brook with ribbon development also extending further to the south east linking the once separate farmsteads within the settlement.
- 5F.15. The few farmsteads which occupy areas close to or on the valley floor often face each other across the Wallop Brook. In these instances, access to water is important in the siting of farmsteads and their fields which extend one way back from the river valley.

Local Settlements and Features of Built Form

- 5F.16. Local Settlements and their corresponding Settlement Type (see Appendix 2 for more information):
- Broughton: Chalk River Valley Settlement Type
 - Middle Wallop: Chalk River Valley Settlement Type
 - Nether Wallop: Chalk River Valley Settlement Type
 - Over Wallop: Chalk River Valley Settlement Type

Remoteness and Tranquillity

- 5F.17. Intimate, enclosed and tranquil character generally unspoilt but with some localised intrusion of roads and sub-urbanising influences.

Key Valued Characteristics

5F.18. Key valued characteristics of LCA5F are as follows:

- Predominantly undeveloped sections of the river valley characterised by a patchwork of rich riverside meadows and pastures, scrub and carr woodland, poplar, alder and pollarded willow lined ditches and watercourses, water meadows and wetland habitats
- These undeveloped river valley areas, contrast with the adjacent open arable landscape on the enclosing valley sides
- Catchwork water meadows are to be found along the length of the Wallop Brook and extend up to just south of Nether Wallop
- Historic cores of Broughton, Nether Wallop, Middle Wallop and Over Wallop characterised by traditional buildings, chalk walls with thatch and tiled roofs and copings. The chalk walls with thatch and tiled copings are a much valued feature of the valley.
- Settlements characterised by single carriageways with soft road side verges (and lack of pavements) enhances relaxed rural character and use of roads as walkways
- Also, within the settlements, the simple hedgerow property boundaries allow inter-visibility throughout enhancing their rural character
- Church at Nether Wallop important entrance feature to village
- There is one valley road, predominantly aligning along northern side of valley, with good views across valley and to Wallop Brook
- Crossing roads are characterised by single carriageways, low key humpback bridges and the occasional ford.
- The valley floor at Broughton in contrast retains several miscellaneous valley floor enclosures, which run through the heart of the village
- Access to Wallop Brook within settlements and at crossing points, including fords
- The old chalk pits close to the cottages are a distinctive feature of the valley

Key Detractors

5F.19. Key detractors of LCA5F are as follows:

- Expansion of Broughton and the Wallops, creating linear development and moving up the valley sides with localised suburbanising influences
- Parallel Public Rights of Way align the valley sides, however little access to Wallop Brook except within the settlements where roads cross the valley floor
- Expansion of properties within settlements creating a more urban character with elaborate gates and urban boundary fencing (high close boarded fencing), in particular in Broughton
- Loss of undeveloped water meadows and undeveloped valley floor to domestic curtilage i.e. manicured gardens and tennis courts
- Spread of equestrian activity into water meadows, causing loss of simple landscape character
- Visible large agricultural buildings on valley sides intruding on undeveloped skyline
- Visible overhead pylons at valley junction with the River Test valley

Local Natural and Cultural Landscape Issues

5F.20. Local natural and cultural landscape issues for LCA5F are as follows:

- Visual and noise impact from the volume of local traffic on a quiet rural landscape
- Risks to water quality through pollution of the river and its tributaries
- Loss of pasture to arable use, loss of marshland to improved pasture
- This area is particularly vulnerable to the impact of changes on the surrounding valley slopes of adjacent LCAs (character areas)
- Expansion of properties within settlements urbanising the settlement character
- Future potential demand for mineral extraction of sharp sand and gravel within area at junction with the Test River Valley

Landscape Strategy and Guidelines

5F.21. Landscape Strategy and Guidelines for LCA5F Wallop Brook Valley Floor are as follows:

- The Wallop Brook Valley Floor contains nationally rare water meadows and considerable extant remains of its historic landscape within a rich landscape pattern. The overall strategy is therefore to conserve and enhance the small-scale water meadow and historic character of the Wallop Brook Valley Floor and to protect and enhance the key valued characteristics.

Land Management

5F.22. All of the Borough wide and Landscape Character Type land management guidelines apply to this Landscape Character Area. Specific to this Landscape Character Area are as follows:

5F.23. Landscape Distinctiveness

- Maintain the intimate pastoral landscape pattern, which is also a feature which continues through the settlements
- Maintain the distinctive historic cores of each settlement and maintain the settlements of Over Wallop, Middle Wallop and Nether Wallop as three distinctive and separate settlements
- Maintain the views of the Wallop Brook from adjacent public places

5F.24. Biodiversity

- Conserve, enhance and manage riparian and associated wetter habitats, with particular reference to enhancing the habitats for the local bat population as well as water meadows and chalk stream characteristics
- Explore measures to enhance the botanical and structural diversity of grasslands associated with the Wallop Brook, particularly around Broughton, to enhance the foraging opportunities for bats
- Explore measures to improve the biodiversity value of the downstream elements of the Wallop Brook between Broughton and the River Test

5F.25. Historic Landscapes

- Maintain valley floor enclosures that run through the heart of the village of Broughton
- Protect the setting of historic buildings, in particular the open setting of the churches

Land Use and Development

5F.26. All of the Borough wide and Landscape Character Type land use and development guidelines apply to this Landscape Character Area. Specific to this Landscape Character Area are as follows:

5F.27. Built Development

- Avoid further development up onto valley sides out of the villages which will intrude into the skyline and degrade the rural character and setting of these settlements
- Avoid loss of separate identity of existing settlements of Over Wallop, Middle Wallop and Nether Wallop including through coalescence and homogeneous design
- Maintain the existing relationship of open spaces adjacent to the Wallop Brook throughout the settlements with their simple design and landscape features



Wallop Brook in open pasture with pollarded willows



Ford crossing in Broughton



Wallop Brook visible from road



Wallop Brook in pastoral landscape with arable valley sides

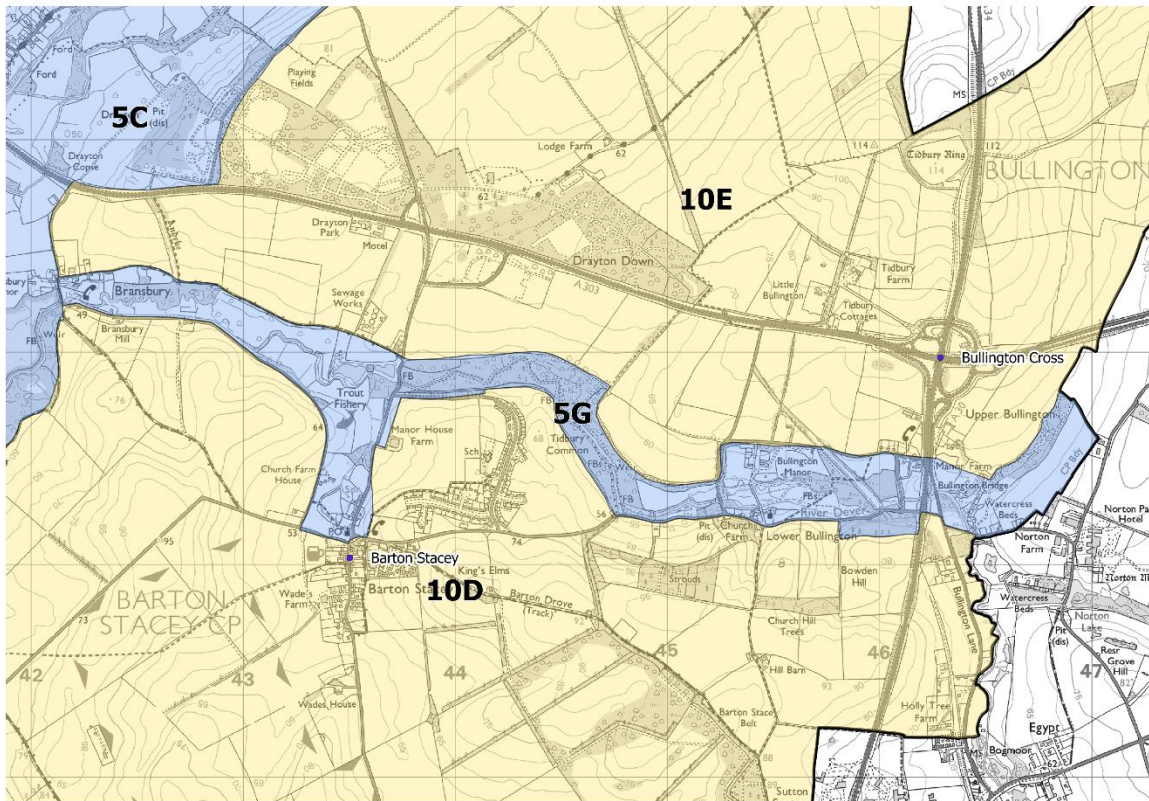


Valley floor enclosures provide a rural setting for properties within Broughton



Simple brick humpback bridges and timber pedestrian crossings

LCA 5G River Dever Valley Floor



General Description

- 5G.1. The River Dever Valley Floor is a relatively narrow valley set within the sloping sides of the adjacent open arable LCA10D and LCA10E, creating a confined valley floor with a strong sense of enclosure. The River Dever meanders over the valley floor where drainage ditches and pools are features on either side. The valley floor is also well wooded with a limited area of small-scale pasture.
- 5G.2. A relatively unspoilt landscape, with few human influences, except for the intrusion from the A34 corridor to the east.

Location

- 5G.3. River Dever Valley Floor follows the River Dever from the eastern boundary of the Borough at Lower Bullington, to where it joins the River Test at Bransbury.

Local Physical Influences

5G.4. **Geology and soils:** Alluvium, River Terrace Deposits.

Landform: A small shallow valley flanked by the broad slopes of the chalk downlands.

Drainage: Meandering small watercourse upstream from Bransbury.

Local Biodiversity and Vegetation Pattern

5G.5. The river valley is extensively wooded with broadleaved trees dominating, with the River Dever being a key ecological feature running through the LCA. The area has an important flora and fauna particularly in regard to its aquatic and associated habitats. The River Dever forms part of the wider River Test SSSI. This supports nationally-important chalk stream aquatic and riparian habitats and associated species such as otter, water vole, and notable aquatic invertebrates as well as supporting a high diversity and number of foraging bats. Part of the SSSI includes a large area of neutral grassland, near Lower Bullington Cross.

5G.6. The open grassland fields are generally improved pasture.

5G.7. The table below identifies the broad habitat types for LCA5G.

Broad habitat type	Area of habitat (Hectares)	Percentage of the LCA (%)
Arable and horticulture	13.40	8.90
Boundary and linear features	4.62	3.07
Bracken	1.39	0.92
Broadleaved, mixed, and yew woodland	55.68	36.97
Built-up areas and gardens	5.58	3.71
Calcareous grassland	0.10	0.07
Coniferous woodland	5.02	3.33
Fen, marsh and swamp	0.37	0.25
Improved grassland	47.79	31.73
Neutral grassland	0.01	0.01
Standing open water and canals	0.04	0.02
Unidentified habitat	5.84	3.88
Unidentified water	10.76	7.14
Total	150.61	

Local Historical Influences

- 5G.8. Along the length of the river there are small areas of evidence of the bedwork water meadow systems (Type 4). Also flanking the valley floor and within the confines of this character area the valley sides are occupied by expanses of 19th century parliamentary field systems.
- 5G.9. A now dismantled railway line once extended across the valley floor immediately to the west of Bullington; the earthen bank which carried the line across the valley floor survives within an area of woodland. Just to the east of this crossing point the A34 also spans the river valley.

Designations

- 5G.10. Designations that lie wholly or in part within this Landscape Character Area comprise:

5G.11. **Nature Conservation**

SSSI

- River Test - Running water, marginal vegetation and adjacent habitats including unimproved grassland and broadleaved woodland

5G.12. **Historic**

Conservation Areas

- Barton Stacey

Listed Buildings

- Listed Buildings are concentrated within the historic core of Bransbury, Lower Bullington and Upper Bullington.

Settlement Pattern

- 5G.13. The River Dever Valley Floor LCA contains the dispersed settlement of Lower Bullington. This settlement spans the river and retains an early historic focus around the church and Church Farm in Lower Bullington and across the river at Bullington Manor. Other settlements (Bransbury) appear to be very dispersed and relate to later post-medieval development of the valley floor. Additionally, part of the northern edge of Barton Stacey is also included within

this LCA, with the rest of this settlement extending up the valley side into LCA 10D.

5G.14. Very few farms occupy the valley floor of this character area and are instead generally located upon the first river terrace.

5G.15. The road network is confined to the valley sides, except where it crosses the river. However, these roads are well hedged or enclosed by woodland which reduces their impact on the river valley.

Local Settlements

5G.16. Local Settlements and their corresponding Settlement Type (see Appendix 2 for more information):

- Bransbury: Chalk River Valley Settlement Type
- Upper Bullington: Chalk River Valley Settlement Type
- Barton Stacey: Chalk Downland: Dry Valley Settlement Type

Remoteness and Tranquillity

5G.17. An intimate and enclosed landscape, although the A34 and the minor road which runs along the southern edge of the area, affect the levels of tranquillity.

Key Valued Characteristics

5G.18. Key valued characteristics of LCA 5G are as follows:

- Small scale valley floor dominated by woodland and pasture creating a strong sense of enclosure, contrasting with the open arable valley sides
- Mosaic of carr woodland and pasture with dense hedgerow structure
- Occasional water meadow – rare feature
- The varied perceptual experience along the River Dever; the valley floor of marshland (rough texture) with parallel and more open fields of pasture set slightly higher on drier land, and occasional enclosed woodland
- Predominantly undeveloped valley floor, except for a number of properties and the dispersed historic settlements of Bransbury and Lower Bullington

- Roads across valley floor simple in character and predominantly single carriageways with soft verges and humpback bridges
- Valley roads are narrow single carriageways characterised by robust hedgerows and single mature trees
- Church at Lower Bullington provides village entrance feature, characteristically set on the first gravel terrace up from valley floor.
- Traditional building style includes brick or brick and flint walls with clay tile and slate roofs.
- Intimate relationship with river, with the road running close to the river bank at a number of places in particular at Bransbury
- Disused railway viaduct provides a striking structure which crosses the river at a number of points

Key Detractors

5G.19. Key detractors of LCA5G are as follows:

- Visual and noise intrusion from the A34 at the eastern end
- Extension of gardens resulting in the loss of pastoral valley landscape
- New buildings on the valley floor intruding into the undeveloped valley floor landscape
- Fishing, with the loss of marshland to amenity grass river banks and artificial lakes. Also, the impact of car parking areas and signage on the rural landscape character
- Spread of equestrian activity into simple areas of pasture with over use of post and rail fencing and visually intrusive location of field stables

Local Natural and Cultural Landscape Issues

5G.20. Local natural and cultural landscape issues for LCA5G are as follows:

- Further visual and acoustic impact of A34
- Risks to water quality through pollution of the river and its tributaries
- Loss of pasture to arable use, loss of marshland to improved pasture and trout fishing
- Loss, erosion and damage of historic/archaeological features/earthworks

- This area is particularly vulnerable to the impact of changes on the surrounding valley slopes of adjacent LCAs (character areas)
- Future potential demand for mineral extraction of sharp sand and gravel

Landscape Strategy and Guidelines

5G.21. Landscape Strategy and Guidelines for LCA5G the River Dever Valley Floor are as follows:

- The River Dever Valley Floor is valued for its quiet seclusion in contrast to the surrounding open arable landscape. The overall strategy is therefore to conserve the small-scale pastoral and wooded character of the River Dever Valley Floor and to protect and enhance the key valued characteristics.

Land Management

5G.22. All of the Borough wide and Landscape Character Type land management guidelines apply to this Landscape Character Area. Specific to this Landscape Character Area are as follows:

5G.23. **Landscape Distinctiveness**

- Reinforce existing local features of value and restore small scale field pattern
- Retain extensive tracts of woodland
- Maintain the contrast of a pastoral and wooded valley within the open arable valley sides

5G.24. **Biodiversity**

- Conserve, enhance and manage mosaic of aquatic, riparian and associated wetter habitats along the valley floor
- Encourage management to reverse the decline in condition of the neutral grassland elements of the SSSI

5G.25. **Historic Landscapes**

- Protect the open setting of historic buildings especially Saint Michael and All Angels Church

Land Use and Development

5G.26. All of the Borough wide and Landscape Character Type land use and development guidelines apply to this Landscape Character Area. Specific to this Landscape Character Area are as follows:

5G.27. Built Development

- Limit development in order to conserve the existing settlement form and largely settlement-free character of the valley floor
- Protect the historic focus around the Church, Church Farm and Bullington Manor

5G.28. Infrastructure

- Encourage appropriate measures to reduce the visual and noise impact of the A34



Large stretches of Marshland discretely contain the River Dever



In some areas the road is close to the River Dever



River Dever set in an open pastoral landscape



Pasture fields on slightly higher ground align the marshy lower valley floor

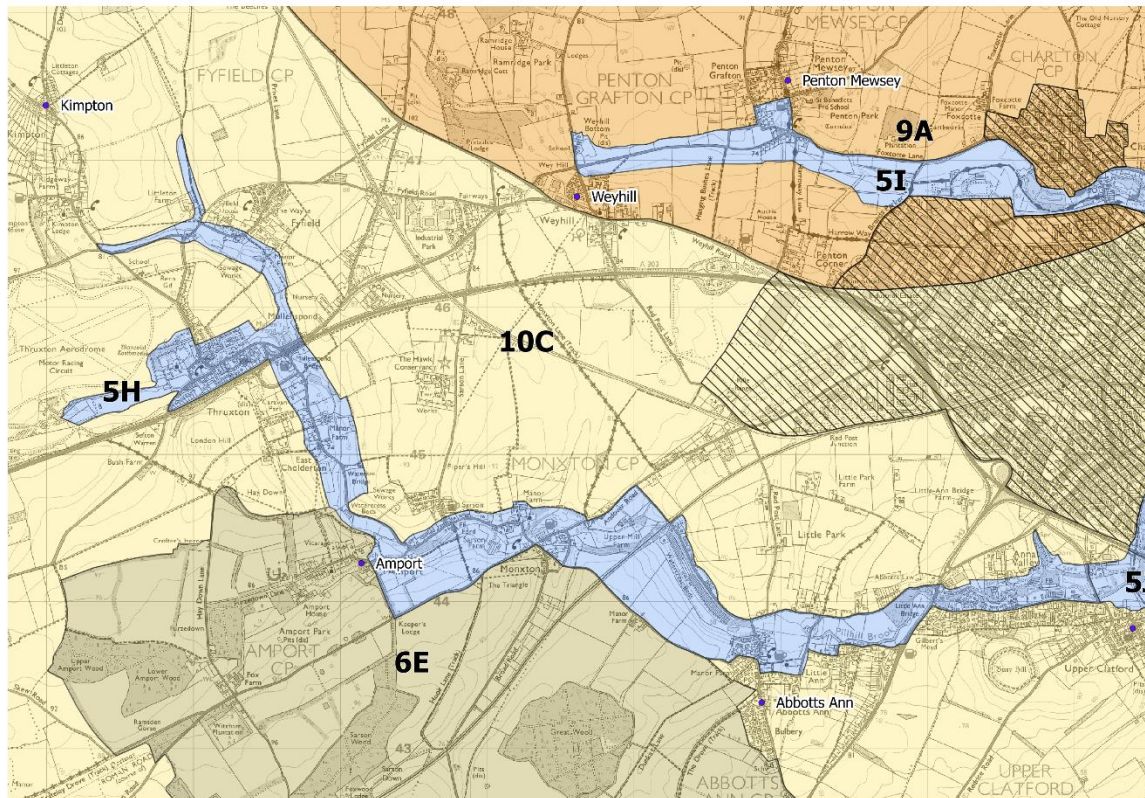


The redundant railway viaduct crosses the River Dever



Saint Michael and All Angels the Church

LCA 5H Pillhill Brook Valley Floor



General Description

- 5H.1. Pillhill Brook meanders through a relatively narrow valley, largely enclosed by the gentle but well-defined chalk sides of LCA10C; linking numerous villages and hamlets, before joining the River Anton at Upper Clatford.
- 5H.2. The landscape character changes distinctly along the length of the valley, from a small spring fed watercourse set within the open chalk landscape near Kimpton, to a more substantial stream flowing through water meadows, woodland and valley floor pasture to the east of the A343.

Location

- 5H.3. Pillhill Brook Valley Floor follows the Pillhill Brook from Kimpton and Fyfield to where it joins the River Anton at Upper Clatford.

Local Physical Influences

- 5H.4. **Geology and soils:** Alluvium along the watercourse with River Terrace Deposits or gravels to either side.

Landform: A shallow valley through broad chalk downland slopes.

Drainage: A small stream with ditches and several ponds.

Local Biodiversity and Vegetation Pattern

- 5H.5. The LCA is dominated by the Pillhill Brook flowing through it. Although not a designated feature, it is of local ecological interest and is known to support a range of species including otter and water vole. Two sections of the watercourse – Mullen’s Pond to the northwest and the Anna Valley Watercress Beds to the east are more ecologically important for their aquatic habitats.

- 5H.6. The majority of land along the valley is improved pasture, intensive arable or settlement. There are however notable pockets of woodland and small meadows.

- 5H.7. Overall, this LCA provides a useful more ecologically-rich seam running through the more expansive arable landscapes to the north and south.

- 5H.8. The table below identifies the broad habitat types for LCA5H.

Broad habitat type	Area of habitat (Hectares)	Percentage of the LCA (%)
Arable and horticulture	57.69	19.51
Boundary and linear features	15.12	5.11
Broadleaved, mixed, and yew woodland	31.51	10.65
Built-up areas and gardens	55.63	18.81
Calcareous grassland	0.28	0.09
Fen, marsh and swamp	1.65	0.56
Improved grassland	94.16	31.84
Inland rock	0.05	0.02
Neutral grassland	7.91	2.67
Standing open water and canals	0.64	0.22
Unidentified habitat	18.03	6.10
Unidentified water	13.11	4.43
Total	295.78	

Local Historical Influences

- 5H.9. The Pillhill Brook Valley Floor LCA contains some possible evidence of water meadow construction close to Fyfield. This general lack of evidence may be due in part to their destruction by later agricultural activities or that water meadows were simply not as widespread within the Pillhill Brook Valley Floor. Instead there are numerous watercress beds and it may be that this form of water management during the 18th and 19th centuries replaced water meadows as the dominant form of agricultural land use. Miscellaneous valley floor enclosures also occupy large areas of the Pillhill Brook Valley Floor.
- 5H.10. Between East Cholderton and Kimpton the valley floor is occupied almost exclusively by later 18th and 19th century parliamentary field systems and this is the same for the valley sides further down the valley.
- 5H.11. A line of a Roman Road extends across the valley and through the village of Monxton. The earthworks associated with its construction have long since disappeared although its course has been fossilised within the roads and tracks which cross the valley. To the north east of Monxton its alignment follows Andover Road while to the south west it survives partially within the line of Grateley Drove.

Designations

- 5H.12. Designations that lie wholly or in part within this Landscape Character Area comprise:
- 5H.13. **Nature Conservation**
- SINC
- 3 SINC, including open freshwater, other wetlands, semi-improved grasslands and sites which support notable species
- 5H.14. **Historic**
- Conservation Areas
- Abbots Ann
 - Amport and Monxton
 - East Cholderton

- Thruxton
 - Fyfield
 - Upper Clatford
- Scheduled Monuments
- Site of fortified manor, Thruxton
- Listed buildings
- Listed Buildings are mainly concentrated within the historic cores of Fyfield, Thruxton, East Cholderton, Amport and Monxton. Includes the Grade I listed St Marys Church in Abbots Ann and Grade I listed Church of St Peter and St Paul in Thruxton.

Settlement Pattern

- 5H.15. Settlements are located on the first river terrace, just up from the valley floor or flood plain, such as Little Ann and Upper Clatford. Later 19th century development has extended further onto the flood plains especially between Upper Clatford and Little Ann.
- 5H.16. Nucleated settlements such as Kimpton and Monxton lie close by with development since 1800 causing the amalgamation and creating a string of closely associated settlements adjacent to the river, with the only undeveloped areas remaining where roads actually leave the valley, as shown south of Fyfield.
- 5H.17. Very few farms occupy the valley floor of this character area and are instead generally located upon the first river terrace up until Amport. Further beyond Amport, farms begin to occupy the valley floor sitting within the 19th century parliamentary landscape.
- 5H.18. The road network criss-crosses the valley floor, with a large number of crossing points. There are only a few areas where the road leaves the river side.

Local Settlements

5H.19. Local Settlements and their corresponding Settlement Type (see Appendix 2 for more information):

- Abbots Ann: Chalk River Valley Settlement Type
- Amport: Chalk River Valley Settlement Type
- East Cholderton: Chalk River Valley Settlement Type
- Fyfield: Chalk River Valley Settlement Type
- Little Ann: Chalk River Valley Settlement Type
- Monxton: Chalk River Valley Settlement Type
- Thruxton: Clay Upland and Plateau Settlement Type
- Upper Clatford: Chalk River Valley Settlement Type

Remoteness and Tranquillity

5H.20. Due to the higher density of roads and settlements within this area, there are a limited number of areas with good levels of tranquillity and a sense of remoteness exist.

Key Valued Characteristics

5H.21. Key valued characteristics of LCA5H are as follows:

- Shallow valley, with a small scale intimate riparian landscape character
- Mixed vegetation character with predominantly undeveloped areas of woodland, scrub, pasture and marsh grassland
- Poplar, willow and alder lined watercourses
- Upper reaches contain a seasonal winterbourne set within a predominantly open pastoral landscape
- Middle reaches of Pillhill Brook characterised by riverside vegetation
- A high density of roads/lanes allowing views across valley floor to river and valley floor
- Some areas have good public access, by means of Public Rights of Way to Pillhill Brook
- Traditional buildings are commonly half-timbered and thatched, or brick and tile
- Small scale traditional watercress cultivation and associated beds

- Evidence of water meadows as at Fyfield and miscellaneous enclosures, watercress beds and the partial enclosure of land within parliamentary field systems
- Enclosure by landform and undeveloped valley sides (outside this LCA) creates areas of rural simplicity away from the close urban conurbation of Andover
- Settlements located at crossings points, i.e. Monxton and Abbots Ann
- Historic rural settlements with single carriageways and soft road verges, soft boundary treatment (i.e. hedgerows) allowing inter-visibility and humped back bridges
- An occasional traditional small property on valley floor creates attractive focal feature within traditional valley floor landscape
- The small open green at Amport, with traditional buildings around periphery orientates itself towards Pillhill Brook
- Frequent views to village churches adjacent river floodplain

Key Detractors

5H.22. Key detractors of LCA5H are as follows:

- Ribbon development extending out from originally nucleated settlements creating illusion of an area of high-density development
- There has been a loss of a traditional rural landscape character in some areas arising from suburbanising housing development as seen at Anna Valley
- Technological advancements with watercress production leading to industrial character with large sheds, poly tunnels and associated infrastructure starkly contrasts with unspoilt areas of river valley floor
- A high density of roads, with numerous crossing points creates busy landscape with few areas of tranquillity
- Loss of pasture to arable land
- Visual and acoustic intrusion from A303(T), A343, railway line and Monxton viaduct.
- Noise from motor racing circuit

- Loss of water meadows into domestic gardens and associated formal tree planting rather than a looser more natural style
- Large scale developments requiring highway improvements and sight lines eroding small scale hedged rural roads
- Visibility of overhead power lines and large-scale sheds/agricultural buildings aligning valley sides within adjacent LCA
- Horsiculture with post and rail fencing, field stables and other associated equipment encroaching into the simple character of the valley floor meadow landscape

Local Natural and Cultural Landscape Issues

5H.23. Local natural and cultural landscape issues for LCA5H are as follows:

- Impact of settlement development as a result of an overspill from Andover into the Anna Valley
- Visual and acoustic impact of A303, the A343 and the railway line
- Pressure for inclusion of water meadows into domestic gardens
- Risks to water quality through pollution of the river and its tributaries
- Pressure for change of use of disused watercress beds to unrelated river location industrial activities
- Pressure for holiday parks, including shepherd's huts and lodges etc
- Loss of pasture to arable use, loss of marshland to improved pasture
- Impact on setting of adjacent Grade II Registered Park and Garden – Amport Park (LCA 6E)
- This area is particularly vulnerable to the impact of changes on the surrounding valley slopes of adjacent LCA (character areas)
- Future potential demand for mineral extraction of sharp sand and gravel

Landscape Strategy and Guidelines

5H.24. Landscape Strategy and Guidelines for LCA5H Pillhill Brook Valley Floor are as follows:

- The Pillhill Brook Valley Floor is noted for its varied pattern of riverine landscapes which contrast with the adjacent open arable farmlands and separate the settlements along its course. The overall strategy is therefore to

enhance and restore the small scale riverine landscape features and maintain the separation and identity of the villages within the Pillhill Brook Valley Floor and to protect and enhance the key valued characteristics.

Land Management

5H.25. All of the Borough wide and Landscape Character Type land management guidelines apply to this Landscape Character Area. Specific to this Landscape Character Area are as follows:

5H.26. **Landscape Distinctiveness**

- Reinforce existing local features and restore small scale field pattern
- Retain undeveloped areas adjacent the river
- Retain and enhance the contrast with the adjacent chalk valley sides
- Restore and improve levels of tranquillity
- Enhance sense of place of crossing points of river

5H.27. **Agriculture**

- Maintain and encourage management of watercress beds
- Control the commercial production of watercress with infrastructure and facilities that do not erode the quiet simple landscape character of the river valley

5H.28. **Hedgerows**

- Encourage hedgerows as part of boundary features (rather than stand-alone steel fencing) for existing and proposed areas of watercress production

5H.29. **Woodland and Trees**

- Management of the pollards and lines of poplar, alder and willow within the valley floor

5H.30. **Biodiversity**

- Encourage agricultural management that will protect and enhance remnant unimproved grasslands and woodlands along the river corridor
- Seek opportunities for river restoration, wetland creation and ditch reinstatement to enhance the aquatic and riparian habitats along the Pillhill Brook

5H.31. **Historic Landscapes**

- Protect the greens and open landscapes within the historic cores of the villages
- Protect the setting of the adjacent Registered Park and Garden at Amport

Land Use and Development

5H.32. All of the Borough wide and Landscape Character Type land use and development guidelines apply to this Landscape Character Area. Specific to this Landscape Character Area are as follows:

5H.33. **Built Development**

- Restore and enhance local distinctiveness of individual settlements and avoid further amalgamation of settlements within the valley floor
- Encourage new planting to define urban edge of Andover

5H.34. **Infrastructure**

- Encourage measures to reduce the visual impact of the existing roads.
- Avoid use of valley floor for intrusive new infrastructure development.



Regular grid of watercress beds



Large open areas of marshland with poplars



Shallow 'V' shaped valley with Pillhill Brook and adjacent meadow grassland



Flat valley bottom with marshland and Pillhill Brook



Amport Village, a range of traditional buildings align village green, set against undeveloped valley sides

Location

- 5I.3. Upper River Anton Valley Floor follows the River Anton from its source at Knights Enham, and its tributary starting at Weyhill, to where these two watercourses converge at a lake east of Charlton and continues onto the confluence of the River Anton and Pillhill Brook below the A303.

Local Physical Influences

- 5I.4. **Geology and soils:** Alluvium as the valley passes through Andover, with Gravels further upstream.
Landform: A shallow valley.
Drainage: A small meandering watercourse with a number of lakes on former gravel pits to the north of the town.

Local Biodiversity and Vegetation Pattern

- 5I.5. This LCA is diverse and interesting in ecological terms. The central and southern section is bounded either side by high-density urban development as the River Anton flows through Andover. Large areas of the valley floor within the LCA that are not under residential, commercial or infrastructure development are devoted to more formal recreational uses associated with larger ponds and lakes, such as at Charlton Lakes, Anton Lakes, and Rooksbury Mill.
- 5I.6. Anton Lakes is a Local Nature Reserve and SINC and is an area of high biodiversity interest with a mosaic of habitats including aquatic and marshy areas, wet woodland, broadleaved woodland and chalk / neutral grassland. Areas of wet woodland and neutral grassland extend north from the LNR towards the northern edge of Andover.
- 5I.7. Further west, nearer the source of the River Anton and outside of Andover, the land is dominated by improved pasture, although there are pockets of more diverse habitats such as a small area of chalk grassland at the far western end of the LCA.

5I.8. Again, the biodiversity value of this LCA is increased by its high diversity set within areas of much lower interest and thus it is a key resource within the wider ecological network.

5I.9. The table below identifies the broad habitat types for LCA5I.

Broad habitat type	Area of habitat (Hectares)	Percentage of the LCA (%)
Arable and horticulture	17.82	8.32
Boundary and linear features	15.26	7.12
Bracken	0.47	0.22
Broadleaved, mixed, and yew woodland	30.67	14.31
Built-up areas and gardens	35.96	16.78
Calcareous grassland	0.91	0.42
Coniferous woodland	0.02	0.01
Fen, marsh and swamp	5.22	2.44
Improved grassland	57.66	26.90
Inland rock	0.01	0.01
Neutral grassland	10.01	4.67
Rivers and streams	0.85	0.40
Standing open water and canals	7.82	3.65
Unidentified habitat	23.39	10.91
Unidentified water	8.29	3.87
Total	214.36	

Local Historical Influences

5I.10. The Upper River Anton Valley Floor survives within a largely urban context and flows in part through the central portion of Andover. The small valley remains comparatively open for most of its course as it extends up to and through Andover. Originally, Andover was a nucleated settlement located on the eastern bank of the River Anton. During the 1800s the town developed outwards, however leaving the valley floor devoid of development. Further development within the north in the 1900s also avoided the valley floor, probably again due to seasonal flooding. There has been limited development within this LCA although some settlement has intruded onto the valley floor.

5I.11. This area contains several historic character types associated with valley floor activities including one area of bedwork water meadow (Type 4), a portion of other valley floor enclosures and some watercress beds.

- 5l.12. Two modern roads cross the valley floor from north to south linking the settlements to the northern of the valley floor with the main centre of Andover.

Designations

- 5l.13. Designations that lie wholly or in part within this Landscape Character Area comprise:

5l.14. **Nature Conservation**

- SINC
- 9 SINC's including open freshwater, wetlands, agriculturally unimproved grassland, semi-natural woodland and sites which support notable species

5l.15. **Historic**

Conservation Areas

- Penton Mewsey and Penton Grafton
- Andover

Listed buildings

- 5l.16. Listed Buildings are mainly concentrated within the historic core of Andover and Penton Mewsey, as well as a few individual old water mills

Settlement Pattern

- 5l.17. Elements of Knights Enham, Penton Mewsey, Penton Grafton, Charlton and Andover extend into this Landscape Character Area. However, settlement expansion onto the valley floor appears to have been limited.

- 5l.18. No farmsteads are located within this character area.

Local Settlements

- 5l.19. Local Settlements and their corresponding Settlement Type (see Appendix 2 for more information):

- Andover (Historic Core): Chalk River Valley Settlement Type
- Andover (Post-Medieval settlement): Chalk Downland: Hill Top Settlement Type
- Charlton: Chalk Down Land: Hill Top Settlement Type
- Penton Grafton: Estate Village Settlement Type
- Penton Mewsey: Estate Village Settlement Type

Remoteness and Tranquillity

- 5I.20. Most of this LCA is dominated by infrastructure and built development, which will have a large impact on any feeling of remoteness and tranquillity but the relative quiet and openness are a relief from the adjoining busy urban scene.

Key Valued Characteristics

- 5I.21. Key valued characteristics of LCA5I are as follows:
- Mixed riparian habitats including a number of lakes, small woodlands and unimproved pasture
 - Significant survival of valley floor enclosures, water meadows and watercress beds.
 - Abandoned watercress beds that have become vegetated and now support a varied range of flora and fauna
 - Upper section, characterised by the river (as a small stream) set in shallow 'v' shaped pastoral valley, with roads crossing typically single carriageways enclosed by hedgerows and mature trees. The crossing point within Penton Grafton includes a ford
 - An open setting for the river partially exists within Penton Grafton with an adjacent grassed paddock which contributes to the river's rural context
 - River crossing point in Charlton retains village landscape character with line of thatched cottages overlooking open setting leading down to the river
 - Within Andover, the open wetland landscape of this LCA starkly contrasts with the surrounding urban built form with colour, textures and sounds. The sound of birds can be heard above the traffic and other urban noises
 - A contrast to the 'busy' urban landscape, by providing access to open space for adjacent housing areas and an easy walking environment through Andover
 - Traditional building styles including brick or cob walls with thatch and clay tiled roofs as seen adjacent to the river within Charlton
 - Footpath links out of Andover to surrounding countryside to the north
 - Provision of recreation activities including fishing

Key Detractors

5I.22. Key detractors of LCA5I are as follows:

- Development pressures from Andover through settlement infill, and further development of transport and other infrastructure
- Horsiculture with associated visually intrusive fencing sub-dividing fields and other paraphernalia such as jumps and stables, replacing simple areas of meadow grassland
- Within Andover, this LCA is partly over shadowed as a road/route corridor with some urban style highway planting with maintenance which has diluted its river valley landscape character
- In some locations in Andover, adjacent land uses have historically turned their back on the river leading to poor quality edge treatment with no access.
- Intrusion from fly tipping, creates a wasteland character
- Sections of the river enclosed by high mesh fencing
- Visibility of overhead pylons
- Some sections of the river have an engineered river channel alignment as well as flood alleviation measures due to urban encroachment. This has resulted in a general degradation of its riparian character
- Visual and noise impacts of the A303 and other adjacent development.

Local Natural and Cultural Landscape Issues

5I.23. Local natural and cultural landscape issues for LCA5I are as follows:

- Development pressures from Andover through settlement infill, and further development of transport corridor and other infrastructure causing the draining of wetland areas, degradation of river banks and the natural channel profile resulting in the erosion of the River Anton natural chalk stream landscape character
- Pollution of the river and its tributaries through fertiliser and road run off
- Intrusion from fly tipping
- Visual and noise impacts of the A303 and other adjacent development.
- Pressure for recreation facilities
- Retaining undeveloped gap between western edge of Andover and Penton Mewsey including the setting of Penton Park

- Loss of pasture to arable use, loss of marshland to improved pasture
- The area is vulnerable to the impact of land uses on the surrounding valley slopes of adjacent LCA (character areas)
- Western end, future potential demand for mineral extraction of sharp sand and gravel

Landscape Strategy and Guidelines

5I.24. Landscape Strategy and Guidelines for LCA5I Upper River Anton Valley Floor are as follows:

- The Upper River Anton Valley Floor is important, not only for its wetland habitats including a water meadow, but also for its function as a linear green space through Andover. The overall strategy is therefore to enhance the river character and seek opportunities to create new riverside landscapes within the Upper River Anton Valley Floor and to protect and enhance the key valued characteristics.

Land Management

5I.25. All of the Borough wide and Landscape Character Type land management guidelines apply to this Landscape Character Area. Specific to this Landscape Character Area are as follows:

5I.26. Landscape Distinctiveness

- Enhance and restore the landscape setting of the valley floodplain
- Retain and improve links from adjacent areas of Andover to the existing river valley
- Seek where possible to restore levels of tranquillity and reduce over dominance of highway infrastructure
- Reinforce existing local features and enhance sense of place of river crossings
- Encourage 'riverside character planting' to enhance river character and the context of the River Anton

5I.27. Agriculture

- Encourage restoration of watercress beds

5I.28. Woodland and Trees

- Encourage riparian woodland planting to minimise the impact of intrusive development, whilst retaining the essential open wetland character

5I.29. Biodiversity

- Explore opportunities for localised river restoration and enhancement through the more urban areas of the LCA
- All new planting schemes, should select riparian plant species to enhance the River Anton context
- Manage the potential conflicts between biodiversity and high levels of local recreational use and explore opportunities for public engagement with biodiversity

5I.30. Historic Landscapes

- Protect the surviving water cress beds and associated features

Land Use and Development

5I.31. All of the Borough wide and Landscape Character Type land use and development guidelines apply to this Landscape Character Area. Specific to this Landscape Character Area are as follows:

5I.32. Built Development

- Maintain and further enhance the network of open spaces adjacent to the River Anton
- Enhance the adjacent urban edge, to these open areas and the river
- New adjacent development should also respond to local contours and with planting which creates an attractive soft edge with framed views of any new development

5I.33. Infrastructure

- Encourage measures to reduce the impact of the existing roads on adjacent open areas and the river
- Avoid use of valley floor for intrusive new infrastructure development



Penton Grafton: narrow rural road and traditional ford crossing



Within Andover, lakes provide recreation sites



River Anton retains its natural riparian character in the centre of Andover

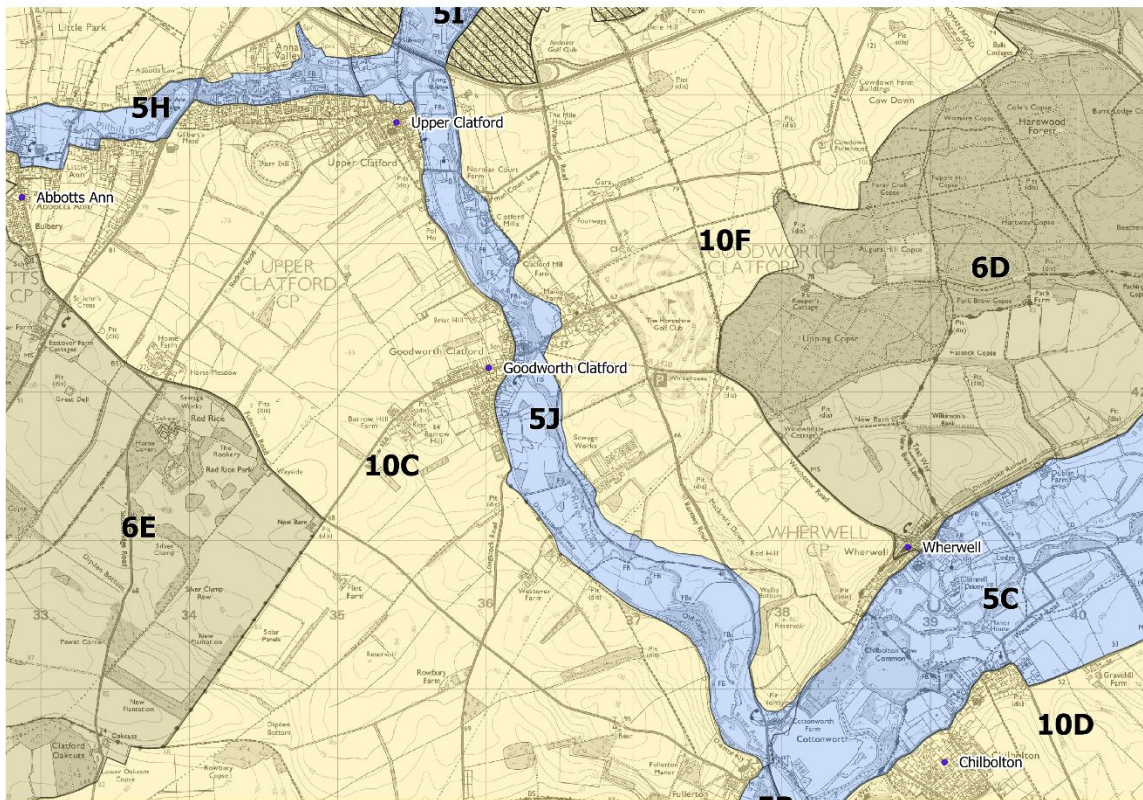


A park adjacent to the river enhances the open character of the river



Easy access to areas rich in biodiversity and wildlife all in the centre of Andover

LCA5J Lower River Anton Valley Floor



General Description

- 5J.1. The Lower River Anton Valley Floor is a relatively narrow valley that joins the River Test at Fullerton, through which the River Anton meanders and braids through woodland copses and well hedged fields. It has an intimate and pastoral character throughout, with some detractors causing local impact.
- 5J.2. Earthworks from the dismantled railway and old canal create a series of linear features along the southern edge.

Location

- 5J.3. The Lower River Anton Valley Floor follows the River Anton from its confluence with Pillhill Brook on the southern edge of Andover to where it joins the River Test at Cottonworth.

Local Physical Influences

- 5J.4. **Geology and soils:** Alluvium with Gravels to the south of Andover.
- Landform:** Flat valley bottom with adjacent broad slopes of the chalk Downlands.
- Drainage:** Braided stream with numerous small streams and ditches. The valley contains the confluence of the River Anton with Pillhill Brook and a number of ponds and lakes within former gravel pits.

Local Biodiversity and Vegetation Pattern

- 5J.5. The LCA is narrow, being confined within the river valley. The dominant biodiversity feature of the LCA is the lower stretch of the River Anton as it flows into the River Test. This stretch of the River Anton is designated as a SINC for its chalk stream habitats.
- 5J.6. There are important patches of biodiversity-rich neutral grassland within the LCA, including Church Meadow to the north of the LCA, which is designated as a SINC. There are also substantial batches and linear belts of woodland and trees. Outside of these areas and the settlements, the land is mainly improved pasture of lower ecological diversity, although does present floodplain grazing marsh habitat.
- 5J.7. In general, this LCA is rich in biodiversity with a mosaic of more valuable habitats present. The biodiversity value is increased through the linear and well-linked nature of the biodiversity features contributing to wider ecological networks.

5J.8. The table below identifies the broad habitat types for LCA5J.

Broad habitat type	Area of habitat (Hectares)	Percentage of the LCA (%)
Arable and horticulture	19.92	9.34
Boundary and linear features	3.76	1.76
Broadleaved, mixed, and yew woodland	44.23	20.74
Built-up areas and gardens	18.76	8.80
Calcareous grassland	0.08	0.04
Coniferous woodland	0.03	0.01
Fen, marsh and swamp	18.10	8.49
Improved grassland	76.53	35.89
Neutral grassland	9.82	4.61
Rivers and streams	2.01	0.94
Standing open water and canals	0.29	0.14
Unidentified habitat	4.25	1.99
Unidentified water	15.47	7.25
Total	213.26	

Local Historical Influences

5J.9. A series of bedwork water meadows (Type 4) extend through the valley of the River Anton and, combined with miscellaneous valley floor enclosures, form the major historic landscape of the valley floor. A single catchwork water meadow (Type 1) is present to the south of Upper Clatford. Extensive areas of 19th century parliamentary field systems flank the valley floor.

Designations

5J.10. Designations that lie wholly or in part within this Landscape Character Area comprise:

5J.11. Nature Conservation

SINC

- 3 SINCs, including agriculturally unimproved grassland and wetlands

5J.12. Historic

Conservation Areas

- Upper Clatford
- Goodworth Clatford

Listed buildings

- Listed Buildings are mainly concentrated within the historic cores and river crossing points of Goodworth Clatford and Upper Clatford

Settlement Pattern

- 5J.13. The settlements of Goodworth Clatford and Upper Clatford align the first river terrace along the valley side with their historic cores both focused upon the bridging points across the River Anton. Goodworth Clatford originally straddled the River Anton with historic elements to be found on both banks. There is little later development within the valley floor; however, the settlements have expanded along their approach roads, creating a more linear form dispersing up the valley sides.
- 5J.14. Very few farms occupy the valley floor of this character area and are generally located upon the first river terrace.
- 5J.15. The road network is predominantly confined to the southern valley side, starting at Goodworth Clatford. There are only two vehicular crossing points, these are located on the two settlements.

Local Settlements

- 5J.16. Local Settlements and their corresponding Settlement Type (see Appendix 2 for more information):
- Goodworth Clatford: Chalk River Valley Settlement Type
 - Upper Clatford: Chalk River Valley Settlement Type

Remoteness and Tranquillity

- 5J.17. Away from the A303 and settlements, this LCA is secluded and quiet. The northern end of the area is significantly affected by modern development but is vulnerable to further visual intrusion.

Key Valued Characteristics

- 5J.18. Key valued characteristics of LCA5J are as follows:
- Braided river, with the main tributary meandering across the valley floor
 - Open valley floor dominated by pasture creating a strong rural character
 - Land use predominantly pasture or meadow grassland

- Poplar, willow and alder lined watercourses
- Visible from adjacent LCA and seen as an area of contrast in texture, plants and overall landscape character
- Settlements centred on crossing points as at Goodworth Clatford, with historic village cores straddling the River Anton
- Crossing points have a simplistic rural character for example east of Upper Clatford the road includes a single carriageway, narrow humped back bridge. Another crossing point at Goodworth Clatford includes a ford and pedestrian bridge.
- Villages have a strong rural character, with hedgerows, low walls and railings used as property boundaries allowing an inter-visibility across the area
- Older properties are commonly half-timbered and thatched but the most widespread materials are brick and flint. Clay tiles and chalk cob are also common features.
- Open setting for All Saints Church within floodplain
- Survival of valley floor enclosures and water meadows, which are nationally rare features
- Tranquillity and a sense of remoteness, can be experienced on the Public Right of Way, north of the river
- Although this LCA is in close proximity to Andover it has a strong sense of a rural character which is very separate from the Andover's urban character

Key Detractors

5J.19. Key detractors of LCA5J are as follows:

- Detractors include the sewage works, the overhead pylons and the A303(T). The visual impact of the A303 is however partly mitigated by screen planting.
- Urban influences creeping into villages with loss of hedgerows as a traditional property boundary and being replaced with high close boarded fencing
- Small disused quarries taking on landscape character of wasteland
- Loss of undeveloped pasture and marsh within valley floor to domestic curtilage (gardens) with formalised tree and shrub planting and manicured lawns. Also including over engineered riversides
- Visual impact of solar panels

- Cumulative landscape impact of the waterworks, solar panels and oil and gas extraction sites (including outside the LCA but affecting it)

Local Natural and Cultural Landscape Issues

5J.20. Local natural and cultural landscape issues for LCA 5J are as follows:

- Valley floor housing developments associated with Andover and attached to Goodworth Clatford and Upper Clatford
- Risk of damage to surviving earthwork evidence for water meadow activity along the upper reaches of the River Anton
- Risks to water quality through pollution of the river and its tributaries
- Visual and acoustic impact of the A303
- Loss of pasture to arable use, loss of marshland to improved pasture
- This area is particularly vulnerable to the impact of changes on the surrounding valley slopes of adjacent LCA (character areas) including the installation of solar panels
- Future potential demand for mineral extraction of sharp sand and gravel

Landscape Strategy and Guidelines

5J.21. Landscape Strategy and Guidelines for LCA5J Lower River Anton Valley Floor are as follows:

- The Lower River Anton Valley Floor contains nationally rare water meadows and is noted for its strong pastoral character with scattered settlement. The overall strategy is therefore to conserve the intimate pasture and water meadow landscape and its contrast with the adjacent open arable farmlands and to protect and enhance the key valued characteristics.

Land Management

5J.22. All of the Borough wide and Landscape Character Type land management guidelines apply to this Landscape Character Area. Specific to this Landscape Character Area are as follows:

5J.23. Landscape Distinctiveness

- Maintain characteristic braided channels, drainage ditches, mill streams and pools
- Protect water meadows
- Maintain the contrast of a pastoral valley with the open valley sides
- Maintain the largely development free valley floor landscape character

5J.24. Woodland and Trees

- Management of the pollards and lines of poplar, alder and willow, which characterise some sections of the valley floor
- Encourage wet woodland planting to minimise the impact of intrusive development, whilst retaining the essential open wetland character

5J.25. Historic Landscapes

- Protect the historic cores of the settlements and the open setting of individual buildings such as All Saints Church within the undeveloped floodplain

Land Use and Development

5J.26. All of the Borough wide and Landscape Character Type land use and development guidelines apply to this Landscape Character Area. Specific to this Landscape Character Area are as follows:

5J.27. Built Development

- Restore and enhance local distinctiveness of individual settlements and the split settlement form which has developed across the valley floor
- Resist development outside settlements and along approach roads
- Resist development on the valley floor, so to maintain its development free landscape character
- Avoid the siting of solar panels on valley sides where they will be particularly visible from this LCA

- Reduce the individual and cumulative impact of the waterworks, solar panels and gas/oil extraction site on the landscape character of LCA5J. Avoid any structures which will further dilute the rural landscape character of this LCA.
- Avoid the siting of new structures within the existing waterworks (adjacent LCA 10F) which will be particularly visible from the adjacent Public Right of Way and will degrade the unspoilt character of this section of the River Anton Valley Floor character

5J.28. Infrastructure

- Maintain A303(T) highway planting as a screen/shield to the adjacent rural landscape character of this LCA



Lower section, the River Anton gently meanders across a predominantly open floodplain with contrasting arable valley sides



Valley floor church in open setting of rich meadow grassland



Rich textures and clear water



Low key narrow river crossing



Bright orange pollarded willows stand out in early spring



Natural alignment with riverside woodland