



DRAFT

East Winchester Landscape Conversation

A stakeholder plan for landscape restoration

June 2021

'The city of Wintoncester, that fine old city, aforetime capital of Wessex lay amidst its convex and concave downlands in all the brightness and warmth of a July morning... the streams in the meadows were low ... behind the city swept the rotund upland of St Catherine's Hill; farther off, landscape beyond landscape, till the horizon was lost in the radiance of the sun hanging above it'.

Extracts from chapter 59 of Thomas Hardy's 'Tess of D'Urbervilles', 1891

Produced on behalf of the East Winchester Study Stakeholder group by the South Downs National Park Authority, South Downs Centre, North Street, Midhurst, West Sussex, GU29 9DH

Additional GIS mapping since 2017 provided by South Coast GIS at the SDNPA

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PREFACE

ABOUT THIS REPORT

This study would not have been possible without the generous support and contributions made from a wide range of stakeholders, consultees and members of the public. Also the invaluable support of the consortium of Lepus Consulting Ltd, Alison Farmer Associates and Resources 4 Change who between them provided the expertise and knowledge to undertake the desktop work, the workshops and stakeholder engagement and to create the Forward Plan and the web based story map.

The concept for the study came from earlier work by the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA or the Authority) on the Green Infrastructure Framework for the South Downs National Park (SDNP or the National Park) and the surrounding areas. Called the People and Nature Network¹ (PANN) this identified 12 areas which are hotspots for environmental action within and surrounding

the National Park. The most westerly part of the National Park – the East Winchester study area is one of these so-called Natural Capital Investment Areas (NCIAs).

The East Winchester Study is one of two pilots which the Authority commissioned in 2019 to test different approaches to methods of stakeholder engagement which is focussed around a particular landscape restoration type.

At the heart of the project lies the aim to prepare a forward plan which is conceived with local stakeholders as the decision makers. This is their plan which the project helped to coalesce and take shape. This approach is strongly connected to recommendations in the Glover Review² and the key objectives of the 25 yr Environment Plan³ and is also set out in the South Downs Partnership Management Plan 2020-25 (Priority 9.2 *'to support community led initiatives which enhance the towns villages and landscapes of the National Park.'*⁴).

-
- 1 PANN: southdowns.gov.uk/national-park-authority/our-work/partnership-management/people-and-nature-network-pann/
 - 2 gov.uk/government/publications/designated-landscapes-national-parks-and-aonbs-2018-review
 - 3 gov.uk/government/publications/25-year-environment-plan – Objective no 6 Enhancing Beauty, heritage and engagement with the natural environment
 - 4 southdowns.gov.uk/partnership-management-plan/

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- Hampshire and the Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust
- Hampshire County Council, representatives from Highways, Environment, Countryside (PROW) and Tourism
- Itchen Stoke Parish Council
- Itchen Valley Parish Council
- Natural England
- Owslebury Parish Council
- Public Health England
- South Downs National Park Authority staff and members
- South Downs Partnership
- South Downs National Park Trust
- Southern Water
- Titchborne Parish Council
- Twyford Parish Council
- Winchester City Council, representatives from Environment, Tourism, Planning and Communities and Leisure.
- Winchester College
- Winchester Downs Farm Cluster representatives
- Winchester Science Centre

ACRONYMS USED IN THE REPORT

| | |
|--------|--|
| ANGst | Accessible Natural Greenspace Study |
| AOD | Above Ordnance Datum |
| AONB | Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty |
| BNG | Biodiversity Net Gain |
| BOA | Biodiversity Opportunity Area |
| BPS | Basic Payment Scheme |
| CSFO | Catchment Sensitive Farming Officer |
| DEFRA | Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs |
| EIA | Environmental Impact Assessment |
| ELM | Environmental Land Management |
| G&BI | Green and Blue Infrastructure |
| GI | Green Infrastructure |
| HBIC | Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre |
| HE | Highways England |
| HIOWWT | Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust |
| HRA | Habitats Regulations Assessment |
| LCA | Landscape Character Area |
| LLCA | Local Landscape Character Assessment |

| | |
|-------|--|
| LNR | Local Nature Reserve |
| LWS | Local Wildlife Site |
| MAGIC | Multi Agency Geographic Information on the Countryside |
| NCIA | Natural Capital Improvement Areas |
| NCN | National Cycle Network |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organisation |
| NIA | Nature Improvement Area |
| NMU | Non-Motorised User |
| NNR | National Nature Reserve |
| NPA | National Park Authority |
| NPPF | National Planning Policy Framework |
| PMP | Partnership Management Plan |
| PPG | Planning Practice Guidance |
| PRoW | Public Right of Way |
| PSDNP | Proposed South Downs National Park |

INTRODUCTION

A GUIDE TO THIS REPORT

This report explains the methodology for the East Winchester Landscape Conversation. A location plan and map of the project area is included in Figure 1.

The project has delivered a wide range of desk based evidence, together with the findings from the stakeholder engagement. This report summarises this evidence with the more detailed results, maps and descriptions in the Appendices to the report.

- Chapter 1 sets out the background information for the study;
- Chapter 2 looks at the desktop evidence for the study area;
- Chapter 3 explains the stakeholder engagement methodology and a summary of the issues raised during pop up consultations and online questionnaire (Citizens Panel) and the workshops;
- Chapter 5 provides an analysis and themed categorisation of the issues which are drawn from the evidence;
- Chapter 6 Sets out the Forward Plan for the East Winchester Landscape;
- Chapter 7 Sets out the conclusions of the study and next steps

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To follow.

THE STAKEHOLDERS' 2050 VISION FOR THE EAST WINCHESTER DOWNS

A National Park landscape that is locally distinctive and nationally important, where the M3 sits within a robust restored and resilient landscape which links Winchester and the Downs.

The only noises are the sounds of nature and occasional conversations between people who may be working, visiting or living in the area.

High quality farming production will flourish while people regularly visit on foot, bicycle or horseback

to use the expanded network of access routes and natural spaces.

The Itchen Valley will include stable populations of beavers, otters, salmon and trout due to the success of the efforts to improve its water quality.

The fragments of chalk downland will have been made bigger and join up to form a robust ecological network.

Together, these elements will combine to form a resilient landscape for the future.

Winchester 2019

FIGURE 1: LOCATION MAP FOR THE EAST WINCHESTER LANDSCAPE CONVERSATION STUDY



THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This project was initiated by the South Downs National Park Authority to work collectively with partners and stakeholders to look at how to protect and enhance the landscape of the east of Winchester area for the long term. The emphasis is on finding ways to do this which reflect the needs of local people who interact with it, either through work, living or recreation.

In particular this study seeks to identify and work with the wide range of stakeholders in the area to;

- Discuss and agree ways to restore natural functions of the landscape in ways which achieve multiple benefits for people, the economy and nature;
- Find innovative ways to reveal restore and interpret the inherent historic and cultural features of this landscape; and
- Consider how to improve the management of access to the landscape taking all viewpoints and needs into account.
- Understand the range of impacts on the landscape from the local perspective, building on the high-level information of the area set out in the PANN;

The importance of engaging with local stakeholders at the earliest stage in these processes is recognised in the PANN and highlighted as an essential aspect of project development. This approach coupled with detailed desktop research and GIS mapping will provide a robust baseline of research for the East Winchester project going forward. Local people, businesses, landowners and others are key to developing joined up people-based projects and actions which will help create a sense of guardianship and to help the landscape in its widest sense to heal.

SCOPE OF THE PROJECT:

The study area is taken firstly from the People and Nature Network⁵, Natural Capital Investment Area (NCIA) 1, Winchester and the River Itchen.(see Figure 2). This area focusses on the urban fringe of Winchester as it meets the western extent of the SDNP at the River Itchen corridor. The study area

boundary is shown in Figure 1 and this was devised in discussion with the SDNPA Western Area rangers team. The boundary was not set in stone and where relevant issues were raised which are beyond the boundary these have been included.

Stakeholders were invited to join in with the study from a range of perspectives and involvement in this area of the SDNP. The initial list of potential stakeholders was prepared by SDNPA staff who work in/ have knowledge of the area. However this was not exhaustive and there are opportunities for further detailed engagement with other groups (particularly more targeted engagement with local residents of Winchester) during the development of projects which have been identified in the forward plan.

The study is the start of a continuing conversation between many groups, organisations and individual stakeholders who have an interest in the area. It is not a detailed delivery plan and there is further work needed to organically develop the recommendations and project ideas which are suggested in the Forward Plan.

SDNPA recognises that there are many other organisations and existing initiatives throughout the area and beyond. It is not the purpose of this study to swallow up or change these existing projects and initiatives, but to work alongside and complement them through joining resources and coordinating the approaches where this is appropriate and desirable.

These items are scoped out of the study –

- Detailed individual project planning and feasibility,
- Funding and costs for the recommendations,
- Any permissions required or specific liaison with the relevant authority(ies),
- Land owner permissions,
- Consensus about how individual projects should/ could proceed,

The high level strategy set out in the PANN recognises that in each of the NCIA's and across the PANN area, further detailed research and evidence may be needed to develop the thinking around projects and practical implementation plans⁶.

5 **People And Nature Network (PANN) – South Downs National Park Authority**

6 **Ref Figure 1 page 11 in the PANN Evidence report**

KEY STAGES FOR THE PROJECT

- Establish the (desk based) baseline information on relevant issues including landscape character and quality, ecological value and connectivity, ecosystem service and function, historic environment and archaeology, to be used in the analysis process.
- Identify key stakeholders and devise a programme of engagement.
- Identify the stakeholder and consultee priorities through workshops and consultation events.
- Undertake analysis and discussion with the stakeholder groups and consultees to agree key issues and priorities for action.
- Preparation of an Forward Plan for short term (quick wins), medium term and long-term projects and interventions.
- Preparation of published material, webpages and an interactive storymap
- The project legacy – what happens next

A copy of the full brief can be found in Appendix A.

FINAL OUTPUTS

These are the outputs for the Study:

- i. Records including maps and transcripts of the Stakeholder engagement
- ii. Desktop research and Local Landscape Character Assessment for the study area
- iii. Summary results and conclusions of the stakeholder engagement
- iv. Vision for the Area
- v. Forward Plan for Landscape restoration
- vi. Set of 5 principles to guide future initiatives
- vii. Report and Appendices
- viii. Web page

ORGANISATIONAL ROLES

- SDNPA: Project coordinator and management, appointment and liaison with the consortium consultants and liaison between stakeholders. Arranging the workshops, co-drafting this report and providing project steer throughout.
- Lepus Consulting Ltd: Lead consultant on the consortium, key expertise for landscape ecology.
- Alison Farmer Associates: Consortium member, key expertise for landscape character and heritage.
- Resources 4 Change: Consortium member, key expertise for evaluation, research and community engagement.



CHAPTER 1: BACKGROUND

THE SOUTH DOWNS PARTNERSHIP MANAGEMENT PLAN

The South Downs National Park is a nationally protected landscape described in the South Downs Partnership Management Plan 2020-25 (SDPMP) as *'covering over 1600km² of England's most valued lowland landscapes shaped over millennia by the people who have lived and worked here.'* The SDPMP seeks to ensure that by 2050 the South Downs lowland landscape and heritage will have been *'conserved and greatly enhanced and that opportunities will exist for everyone to discover, enjoy understand and value the National Park and its special qualities'*.⁷

The SDPMP sets out 10 key outcomes which will be delivered by 21 priority work streams. The East Winchester Landscape Conversation sits within Outcome 1 – Landscape and Natural Beauty, and within priority actions '1.1 Protect Landscape

Character' and 1.2 'Create Green Infrastructure'. For further information please refer to the SDPMP⁷

THE PEOPLE AND NATURE NETWORK

Between 2015 and 2020 the SDNPA developed a sub-regional approach for Green Infrastructure (GI) called the People and Nature Network⁸ (PANN). The PANN area covers all of the districts and boroughs of Hampshire, West Sussex and East Sussex and the unitary authority of Brighton and Hove City Council, which all overlap with the boundary of the SDNP.

The PANN identifies 12 key areas throughout the SDNP and the surrounding authority areas which are 'environmental hotspots'. Known as Natural Capital Investment Areas (NCIAs) these areas need detailed and coordinated action to restore natural services and address a wide range of environmental issues. The western extent of the SDNP and its interface with Winchester City is confirmed in the

⁷ southdowns.gov.uk/partnership-management-plan/

⁸ southdowns.gov.uk/national-park-authority/our-work/partnership-management/people-and-nature-network-pann/the-people-and-nature-network-pann/

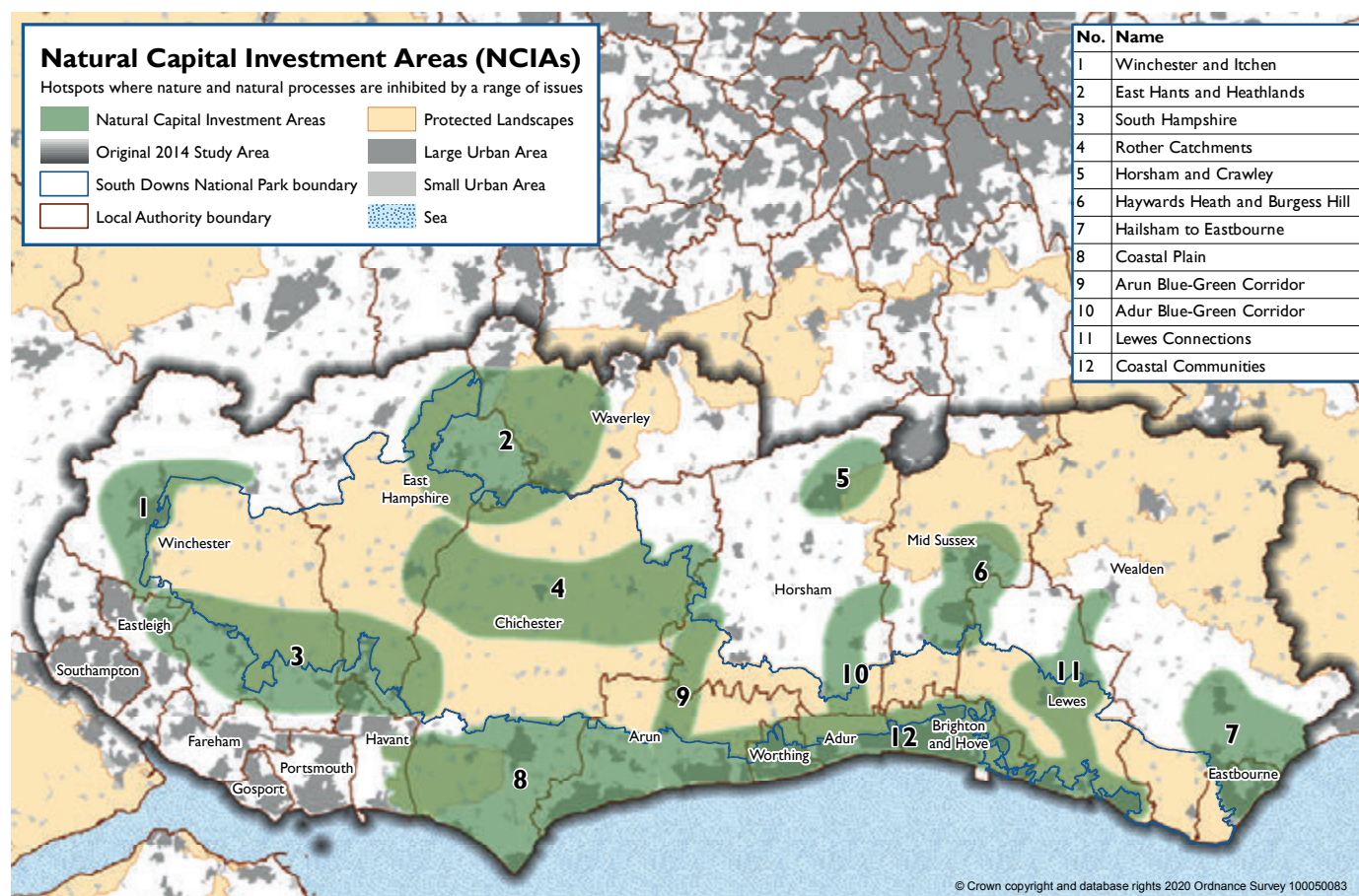
PANN as one of these strategic areas in need of action – NCIA 1 Winchester and the River Itchen. (See Figure 2).

KEY ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES FOR THE EAST WINCHESTER NCIA

The East Winchester NCIA was identified as an NCIA for the following interlinked issues;

- The M3 forms a barrier through the National Park, separating the City of Winchester and St Catherine's Hill from the downlands that rise up from the Itchen Valley towards the rest of the SDNP to the east;
- There is a fragmented Public Rights of Way (PRoW) network beyond the river Itchen corridor. East of Winchester has some of the lowest provision for PRoW in the SDNP, which causes a range of issues for public access to the SDNP from centres of population;
- Impacts on scenic and experiential qualities, noise and air quality, from major infrastructure including M3, A31, A272 and Eastleigh Airport (flight path);
- River Itchen Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC) is in 'recovering condition'⁹ and very vulnerable to water quality issues, and nutrient spikes from surrounding land use and development;
- Winchester city being increasingly vulnerable to flooding from the River Itchen caused by extreme weather patterns due to climate change;
- Heritage sites are isolated by the road network.
- Under provision of natural greenspace¹⁰ to the east of the city (and in the SDNP).
- Significant recreational pressure on vulnerable, internationally recognized wildlife sites (St Catherine's Hill SSSI and the River Itchen SSSI/ SAC).

FIGURE 2: MAP FROM THE PANN SHOWING THE NATURAL CAPITAL INVESTMENT AREAS



⁹ <http://adlib.eversysite.co.uk/adlib/defra/content.aspx?id=2RRVTHNXTS.8K7Y142X5NBIU>

¹⁰ southdowns.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Access-Network-ANGS-Study-Non-Technical-Summary.pdf

WINCHESTER AND ITS LANDSCAPE SETTING

The western boundary of the South Downs National Park (SDNP) sits within the urban edge of Winchester and includes the river Itchen valley as it runs into the centre of the city. The river valley is a dominant greenspace running through the city to the north and south and marks the western edge of the Open Downland landscape character type to the east. This area of the SDNP is famed for its high-quality chalk downland and extensive panoramic viewpoints such as St Catherine's Hill SSSI and Magdalen Hill Down. The downland is a landscape of big skies and rolling chalk hills with far reaching views over to both the North Wessex Downs and the Isle of Wight. The River Itchen is often described as the most beautiful chalk stream in Europe and it is also internationally designated for its ecology. The setting of the city shares many similarities with the setting of Lewes at the far eastern end of the SDNP – both are nestled within the downland along a river valley and both have the strong visual connections with the surrounding rising land as a result. *Further detailed information on the history and setting of Winchester is available from Winchester City Council's study – Winchester City and its setting*¹¹

THE PRESSURES ON THE LANDSCAPE & THE DRIVERS FOR THE STUDY

The need for economic growth in Winchester and the wider south east creates pressure for development and land use change, particularly around the towns and larger settlements, including major infrastructure, strategic housing allocations and peri urban services (depots, warehousing).

In Winchester's case the location of the M3 on its eastern side within the SDNP acts as both a barrier to new development, and a squeeze for development to 'jump' – meaning that there is pressure for development on greenfield land both in the setting of, and within the SDNP. This could lead over time to long term and cumulative impacts which erode the quality of the landscape and make it vulnerable to larger scale change.

The M3 provides a strategic road link to other parts of the country and is often heavily congested.

The pressure for road improvements to relieve congestion is coupled with the need for easily accessible transport infrastructure (e.g. highway depots & work stations, distribution and storage for materials, equipment and machinery) close to the M3.

The rural landscape is facing increasing pressure through changing agricultural/food production methods and new products which can change the character of the landscape, and affect wildlife and nature.

The closure/ amalgamation/diversification of farms which changes rural demographics and alters the scale of farming and land management,

Increasing levels of traffic on rural roads, rat running and speeding traffic on rural roads which affects tranquillity, character and deters other users whilst increasing pressure for urban style highway solutions which prioritise motor vehicles.

Antisocial and inappropriate behaviour increasing pressure on land owners and others including fly tipping, rural crime, visitors lighting fires and BBQs, loose dogs causing problems for livestock and wildlife, illegal camping, toileting, litter, trespass.

Increasing /changing recreational pressures and needs which can unintentionally affect highly sensitive sites for wildlife, archaeology and landscape.

These changes in the landscape can affect its character, and over time, the National Park qualities for which this part of the SDNP was designated are in danger of being eroded.

EXISTING INITIATIVES, STRATEGIES, RESEARCH, AND PARTNERSHIPS IN THE STUDY AREA

This section identifies other local, initiatives in the study area which stakeholders could connect with, or refer to for further background information. There may also be opportunities for collaboration and where joint objectives could expand the funding and delivery options for future projects through innovative and entrepreneurial funding packages – so-called blended finance.

¹¹ Winchester City and its Setting – Winchester City Council

THE TEST & ITCHEN CATCHMENT PARTNERSHIP¹².

The aim of this Partnership is to protect and enhance the health of the Test and Itchen catchments for the future. (The River Itchen catchment is within the study area) The River Test and River Itchen are two of the most famous '**chalk streams**' in the world. Chalk streams are a globally rare type of river, famed for their crystal-clear water which supports a wide range of plants and animals. More than half of the world's chalk streams are found in southern England.

WATERCRESS AND WINTERBOURNES HERITAGE LOTTERY FUND PROJECT

This is a five-year project led by the Hampshire and IOW Wildlife Trust¹³ It is a Landscape Partnership Scheme which brings together local communities and 16 organisations to restore and celebrate seven special chalk streams which feed into the Test and Itchen Catchments (including the Cheriton Stream within this project area.)

THE WINCHESTER DOWNS FARM CLUSTER

The farm cluster initiative facilitates how farmers and landowners can join up to collaborate and work together to achieve conservation on a wider scale than their individual landholdings. This approach has been spearheaded nationally by Natural England and the¹⁴ Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust and actively encourages the landowners and farmers to develop their own conservation priorities. The Winchester Downs Farm Cluster area is shown below and comprises a group of landowners and farmers working together to achieve landscape, habitat and biodiversity benefits on a scale that could not be done by working alone. Working with the Cluster facilitator, the group have prepared an Operational Management Plan (OMP) and will be using special funding called the Facilitation Fund to support farmer lead projects and training. The aim of which are to deliver Environmental benefits in an economically viable farming model. This approach

The Winchester cluster has decided that Landscape, Soil and Community Engagement are their high level priorities with the more detailed strategic actions as follows;

- Landscape
 - i. Habitat restoration and connectivity – linking areas of nationally important chalk grassland; floodplain meadow restoration, hedgerow restoration and management, ponds, woodlands
 - ii. Farmland bird recovery – improving conditions for priority species such as lapwing, grey partridge and barn owl;
- Soil
 - i. Regenerative Agriculture and Climate Change – is the overarching mechanism and theme that bring all the elements of the Cluster together. If members manage soil as well as possible with a Regenerative mind-set, the Cluster will deliver objectives across board; cleaner air, water, reduced chemical inputs and Carbon emissions, more biodiverse landscapes, and better connections with local communities.
 - ii. To do this the group works closely with the Farm Carbon Toolkit, South West Farm Consultants, NE Catchment Sensitive Farming Officer, and water companies to identify ways to improve the farmed environment and our natural resources.
- Community
 - i. Better understanding and communication by informing people about how farmers care for the landscape whilst producing quality food.

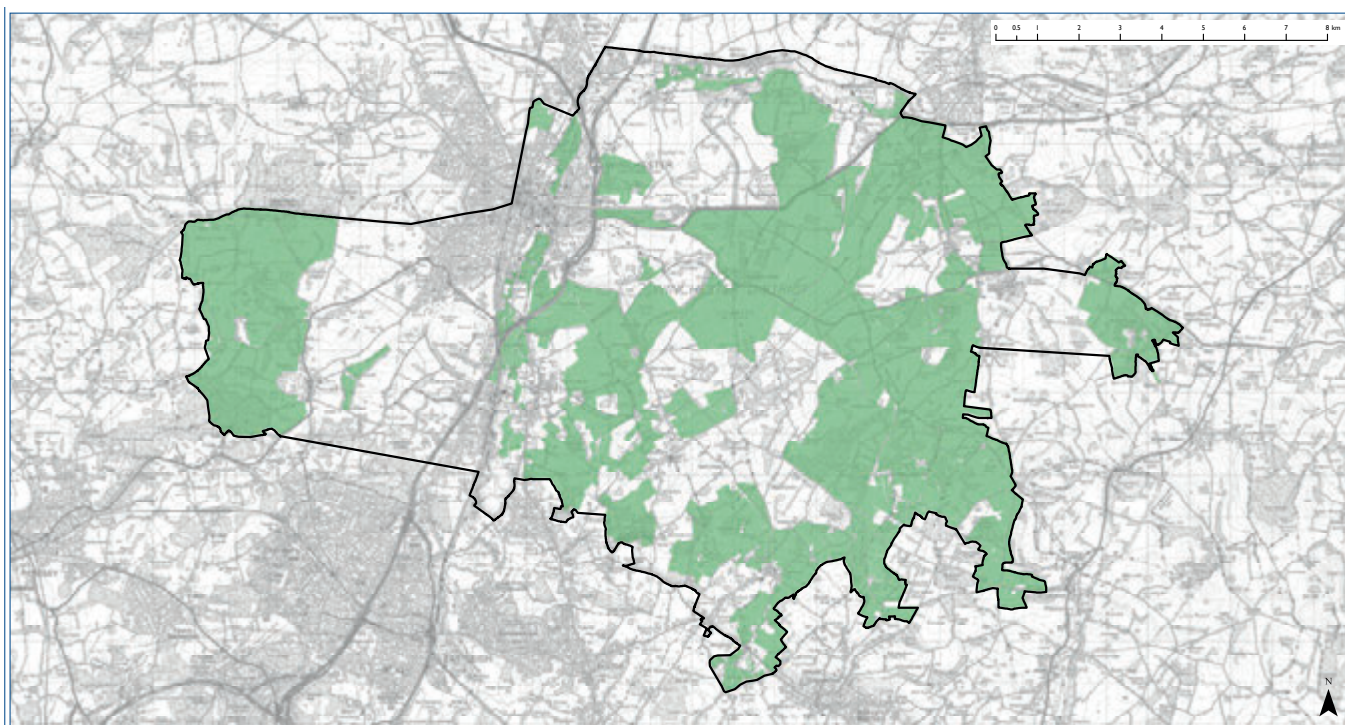
These priorities align well with the overall findings and priorities for this study. (see chapter 4 onwards)

¹² ticp.org.uk/

¹³ hiwwt.org.uk/watercress-and-winterbournes

¹⁴ farmerclusters.com/

FIGURE 3 MAP TO SHOW THE EXTENT OF THE WINCHESTER DOWNS FARM CLUSTER



WINNALL PLANNING FRAMEWORK¹⁵

Winnall is in close proximity to the M3 and the SDNP. It is a less affluent area of Winchester City and the planning framework sets out measures which seek to improve the environment of the Winnall for people and nature. Winchester City Council produced this document in 2015 in partnership with Hampshire County Council to consider a range of issues connected with the public realm in Winnall, from traffic and parking to community buildings, housing and green spaces. Reference to this document is included because Winnall is alongside the study area and it is envisaged that the connectivity between the SDNP and Winchester would be geographically related to Winnall. One of the gateway sites identified in this study (Dykes Farm) is within Winnall (off Easton Lane) and this would provide a significant gateway from Winchester into the SDNP.

WINCHESTER GREEN AND BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE (G&BI) STUDY 2020

Winchester City Council have produced a Green and Blue Infrastructure (GBI) Scoping Story Map to look at the subject range and priorities for Green Infrastructure in the City Council area.¹⁶ The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)¹⁷ defines Green Infrastructure as '*a network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities*'. The Winchester GBI Story Map area overlaps with the study area and also is within the higher level PANN area (Figure 2). As the GBI strategy develops there will be opportunities for joint working with the various stakeholders on a range of interconnected and shared issues, which may extend well beyond the study area.

NITRATE NEUTRALITY

The Solent is an internationally important area for wildlife. Nitrate enrichment is causing excessive growth of green algae (a process called

¹⁵ winchester.gov.uk/planning-policy/winchester-district-local-plan-2011-2036-adopted/evidence-base/planning-frameworks/winnall-planning-framework

¹⁶ arcgis.com/apps/MapJournal/index.html?appid=2a1d08fa5da346b983dfe85b8b9cf0f9#

¹⁷ gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2

eutrophication) which is having a detrimental impact upon protected habitats and bird species. It is caused by high levels of nitrogen from human activity and agricultural sources in the catchment water. Following the European Court of Justice decision (the Dutch Ruling 2018) Natural England have determined that all development within the Solent Catchment must have a neutral effect on nitrate levels. Winchester City Council adopted a position statement about Nitrate Neutrality (NN) in January 2020¹⁸ and this covers the study area as part of the Itchen Catchment. The relevance for this study is where developers are achieving so called 'nitrate neutrality' by off-setting the nitrate impacts from housing development through arable conversion to pasture and woodland. The change of land use results in a reduction in fertilizer applications which achieves the legally required 'neutrality'. This approach could be a delivery mechanism for projects in the study area particularly where multiple public benefits can be delivered through partnerships. Hampshire and the Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust for example are developing a nature based solution approach for NN¹⁹ and advocate for a betterment beyond neutrality.

NEW ENVIRONMENT LAND MANAGEMENT SCHEME

A new system of agri environment payments is currently being integrated in the UK (June 2021). The new Environmental Land management (ELM) system was first set out in the government's 25 yr Environment Plan²⁰ and seeks to reward land owners and farmers for providing actions that contribute to:

- clean and plentiful water
- clean air
- protection from and mitigation of environmental hazards
- mitigation of and adaptation to climate change
- thriving plants and wildlife
- beauty, heritage and engagement

Working collaboratively with farmers and land managers at both an individual farm and landscape scale, the new Environmental Land Management (ELM)²¹ scheme could provide a key mechanism towards achieving many of the possible improvements to landscape character and function that are described in later sections of the document.

'The core aim of ELM should be to deliver environmental benefits, paying farmers, foresters and other land managers for interventions and actions that improve and enhance our environment, or for maintaining current land management practices that secure environmental public goods'.

ELM is a three tier scheme which is being developed through a series of trials in partnership with farmers and land owners;

- Sustainable Farming Initiative (SFI) will be a broadly accessible entry level tier to incentivise simple farming and forestry management at an individual farm scale.
- Local Nature Recovery (LNR) will provide support to deliver locally targeted environmental outcomes, many of which are likely to require collaborations between farmers and land managers.
- Landscape Recovery (LR) will focus on the delivery of landscape scale land-use change projects over and above outcomes that are delivered through SFI and LNR.

The priorities for the new agri-environment scheme, those of the study and the priorities for the farm cluster all align well and there should be ample opportunity to engage with the three approaches set out above, as both stand-alone measures, and as part of wider collaborations.

18 winchester.gov.uk/planning/wcc-position-statement-on-nitrate-neutral-development

19 hiwwt.org.uk/reducing-nitrates-solent

20 gov.uk/government/publications/25-year-environment-plan

21 gov.uk/government/publications/environmental-land-management-schemes-overview/environmental-land-management-scheme-overview and https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/986879/farming-changing.pdf



CHAPTER 2: SUMMARY OF THE DESKTOP EVIDENCE

INTRODUCTION TO THE EVIDENCE

This chapter summarises the technical evidence gathered by the consortium during 2019-2020 and is based on a combination of desktop and fieldwork from site visits during 2019. The evidence gathered reflects the purposes of the South Downs National Park²² and the objectives for the project. It also responds to national policy drivers around Natural Beauty, nature and climate change²³. This desktop evidence will be used together with the stakeholder engagement process to build a picture of the strategic options and priorities for the study area.

LANDSCAPE

The European Landscape Convention (to which the UK is a signatory outside of Brexit) states that- *Landscape is the product of 'the action and interaction of natural and human factors'*²⁴ (see

Figure 4). It is this interplay of components which the process of landscape character assessment seeks to identify by mapping areas of shared characteristics and features. The process of landscape character assessment creates landscape character areas and descriptions of the features and characteristics which make each area distinct from others.

22 southdowns.gov.uk/national-park-authority/our-work/about/purposes-duty/

23 gov.uk/government/publications/25-year-environment-plan

24 coe.int/en/web/landscape/home

FIGURE 4: THE COMPONENTS OF LANDSCAPE

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER OF THE EAST WINCHESTER AREA.

The landscape of the South Downs National Park is described in the South Downs Integrated Landscape Character Assessment²⁵ (SDILCA) which was

updated in 2020. This is the baseline parkwide landscape evidence for the National Park and the further work undertaken as part of this study all nests within the areas identified within the SDILCA. Full SDILCA descriptions of the landscape character areas are available on the link below.

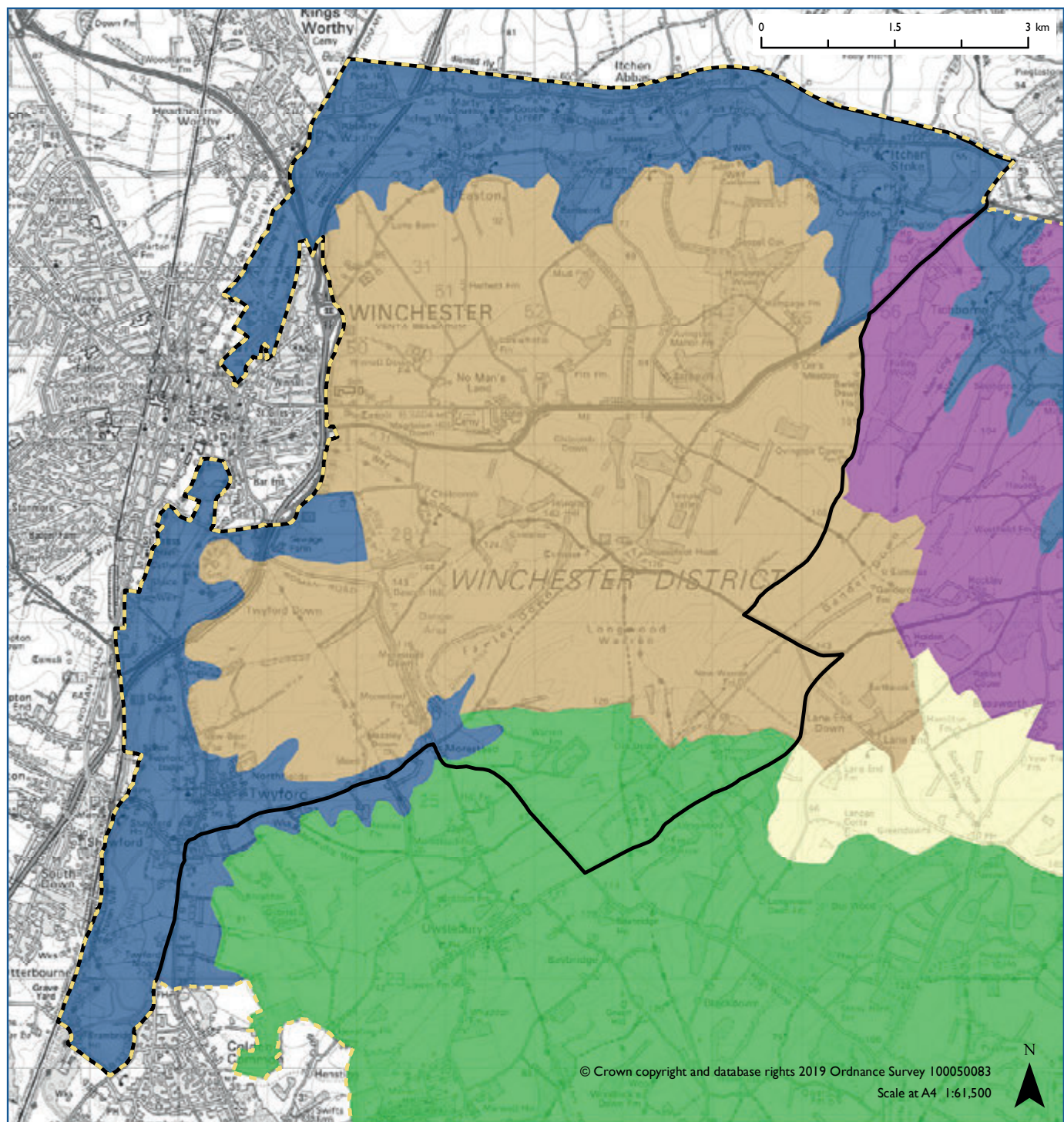
TABLE 1: LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA SUMMARY DESCRIPTIONS

| LCA Name | Headline |
|--|--|
| East Winchester Open Downland | Open rolling upland chalk landscape of rolling downs reaching 176m at Cheesefoot Head. (See Figure 5 for distribution of the Open Downland areas.) |
| Itchen Valley | The clear, chalk river flows in a relatively narrow floodplain in the upper reaches with a wider floodplain south of Winchester. Pasture and paddocks occur on the valley floor. |
| South Winchester Downland Mosaic (Enclosed). | Large scale rolling landform characteristic of the chalk dip-slope, dissected by dry valleys, with a localised secondary escarpment running between Twyford and Droxford |

The location of the SDILCA character areas are shown on Figure 5 (overleaf)

²⁵ <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/collections/b6120985f1184c3bb3d1c5df317478b2>

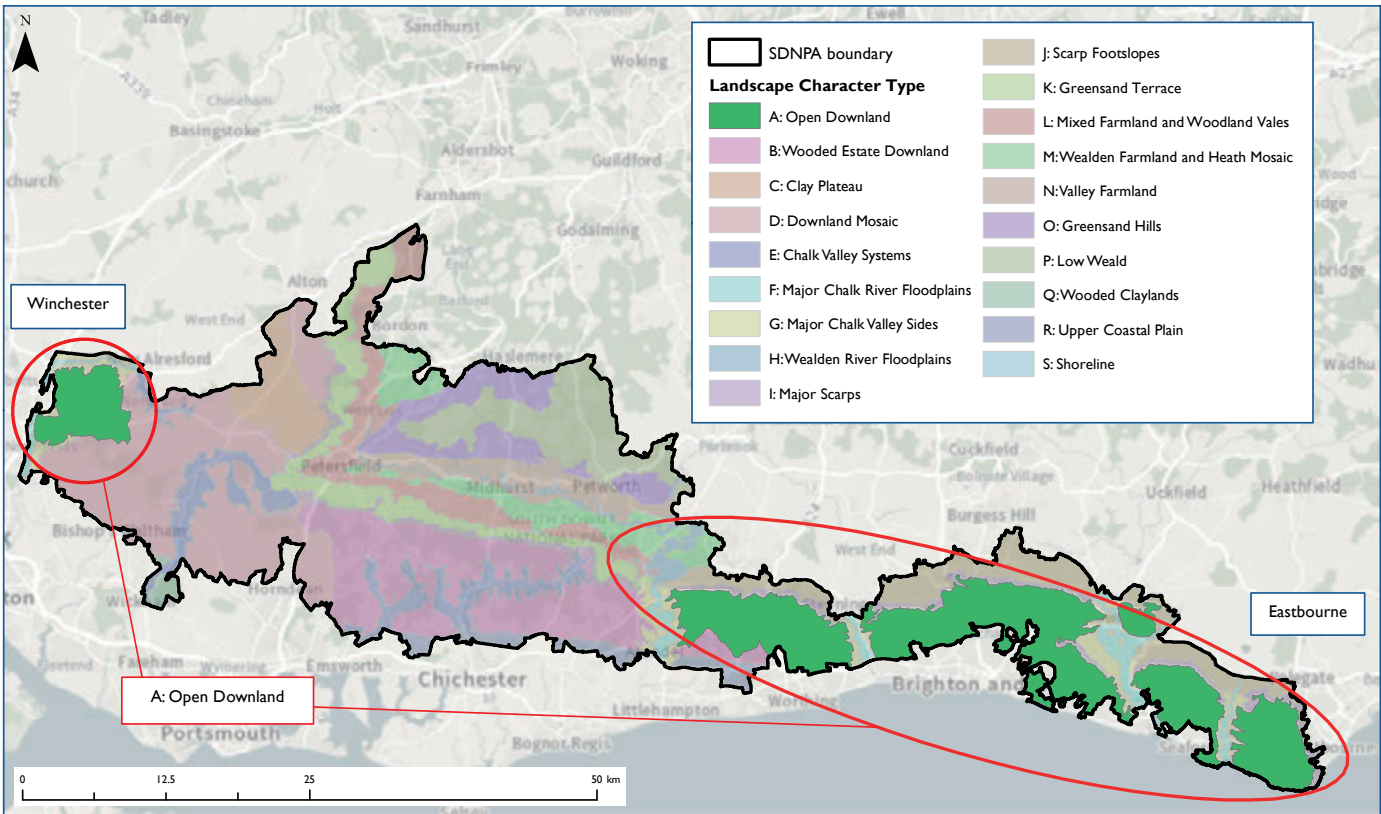
FIGURE 5 SOUTH DOWNS LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREAS



- Study Area**
- SDNPA boundary**
- South Downs Integrated Landscape Character Assessment ***
- A5 : East Winchester Open Downs
 - D1a : South Winchester Downland Mosaic (Enclosed)
 - D1b : South Winchester Downland Mosaic (Open)
 - D3a : Bramdean and Cheriton Mosaic (Enclosed)
 - E4 : Itchen Valley

*Source: South Downs National Park Authority (2011)

FIGURE 6: MAP OF SDNP SHOWING THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE OPEN DOWNLAND LANDSCAPE TYPE.



The East Winchester Open Downland character area is an outlier of the larger and more widely recognised Open Downland at the far eastern end of the National Park. Figure 6 above shows this relationship.

LOCAL LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

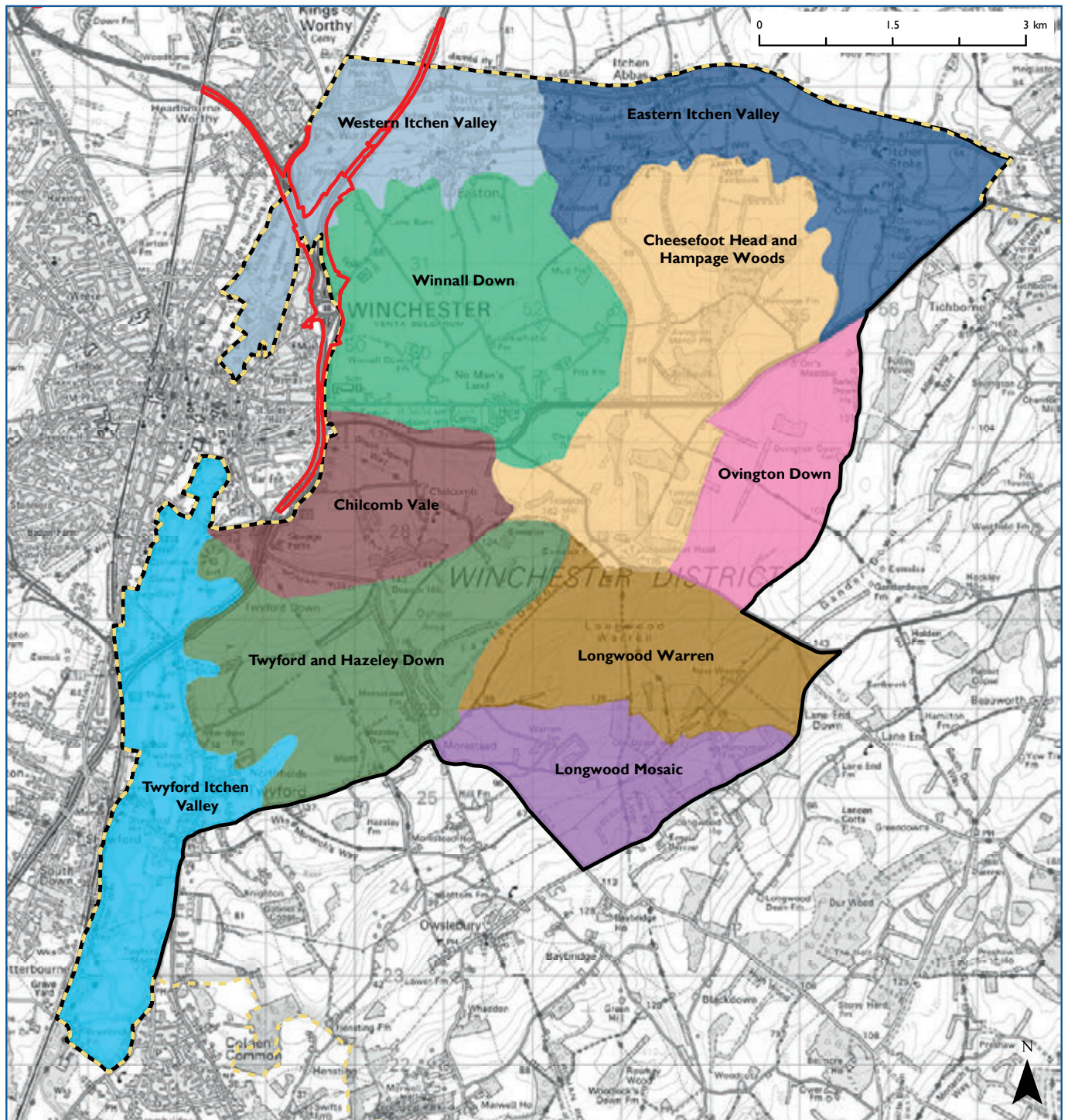
A local landscape character assessment was undertaken to provide a high level of detail on landscape character by describing the landscape in smaller units than the larger SDILCA character areas (but fully nested within them). This exercise was undertaken by the study team at the start of the project and reference to the local character types is made throughout the report.

The 10 areas are briefly described in the following list on Table 2 overleaf and shown on Figure 7 with detailed descriptions provided in Appendix B.

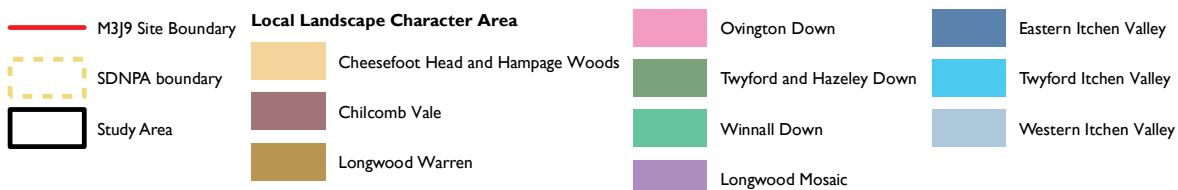
TABLE 2 LOCAL LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREAS SUMMARY DESCRIPTIONS

| Local Landscape Character Area name | Headline |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Western Itchen Valley | This area is located to the north and east of the M3. It includes the valley floor and the downland which define the valley sides. |
| Eastern Itchen Valley | Itchen Valley to the north east of Winchester – a typical chalk river valley landscape, with a distinct wide and flat valley floor enclosed by raising valley sides. |
| Winnall Down | Open rolling downland including Winnall Down and Magdalen Hill Down. The western slopes of this land form an important setting to the city of Winchester. |
| Cheesefoot Head and Hampage Woods | The highest part of the study area at Cheesefoot Head which rises to c. 176m AOD offering panoramic views across the study area and beyond. It has a strong rolling character with distinctive knolls of higher land and ancient semi-natural woodland. |
| Ovington Down | Northwest of Cheesefoot Head, comprising predominantly north facing rolling chalk slopes forming the wider setting of the Itchen Valley. |
| Twyford Itchen Valley | The linear Itchen Valley south of Winchester between adjacent settlements of Twyford and Northfield to the east and Shawford and Otterbourne to the west. |
| Chilcomb Vale | A discrete vale which includes the slopes of Magdalen Hill Down and Deacon Hill and also includes the northern side of St Catherine's Hill where it faces onto the Vale with views across the city. |
| Twyford and Hazeley Down | Elevated downland extending to the western side of the M3 corridor. This area includes the distinctive hillfort of St Catherine's Hill, which sits in a commanding position above the Itchen Valley. |
| Longwood Warren | An open landscape with wide reaching panoramic views across rolling farmland. Land use is predominantly arable within large fields with limited enclosure (hedges, fences, woodland). |
| Longwood Mosaic | Southern part of the study on gently undulating land which is well structured with noTable areas of (Ancient)woodland copses and plantations, wooded and hedged fields, often associated with the Longwood Estate and parkland. |

FIGURE 7: EAST WINCHESTER LOCAL CHARACTER ASSESSMENT MAP OF CHARACTER AREAS



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Scale at A4 1:61,500



LANDSCAPE FUNCTIONS – ANALYSIS OF ECOSYSTEM SERVICES FOR THE STUDY AREA

Ecosystem services are the things that nature and natural processes provide including clean water, fresh air, food, fuel decomposition, nutrient cycling, photosynthesis, carbon storage, spiritual and cultural sustenance, thermal regulation, pollination;

TABLE 3 ECOSYSTEM SERVICES ECOSERVE GIS HEADLINES

| Ecosystem service | Ecoserve GIS Headline |
|------------------------------|--|
| Air Purification | The highest demand for this service is adjacent to the M3 corridor due to the effects of traffic on air quality. |
| Carbon Storage/sequestration | The need to improve capacity for carbon storage applies consistently across the project area. |
| Local Climate Regulation | Due to the presence of vulnerable habitats, there is a need to increase capacity for the landscape to provide this service round St Catherine's Hill and at Abbots Barton. |
| Noise Regulation | The corridor between Shawford and Twford would benefit from measures to address noise, and also along the B3047 to the north of the project area |
| Pollination | There is a consistent need for this service across the study area. Useful to combine any approach which habitat connectivity mapping to achieve greatest benefit. |
| Water Purification | High demand for water purification areas are occurring where a change of management or land use would be beneficial, eg No Mans Land, Chilcomb Vale, Winnall Down Copse. |

EcoServ-GIS, which provides an analysis of ecosystem services and the degree to which natural features can supply them has been developed by

the Wildlife Trusts. It maps where ecosystem services are provided by nature and compares the levels of demand (need) for each ecosystem service and the capacity of the landscape to deliver that service.

Ecosystems services were mapped using Ecoserve and the results are summarised in Table 3 below (left). The more detailed results and mapping are included in the Appendix I.

BIODIVERSITY

The presence and condition of biodiversity in the study area has been established following a review of existing datasets including the following:

- Nature on the Map;
- Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC)²⁶; and,
- National Biodiversity Network (NBN)²⁷.

The search revealed several internationally and nationally designated sites such as Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar sites), Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), National Nature Reserves (NNRs), Local Nature Reserves (LNRs), ancient woodlands, priority habitats and Local Wildlife Sites (LWS).

Ecological connectivity and species data was obtained from Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre (HBIC). Information on ecological enhancement initiatives was also sourced such as information on the River Itchen SSSI Restoration Project²⁸ and Biodiversity Opportunity Areas (BOAs).

The study area includes several priority habitat types although many are isolated and poorly connected. The main priority habitats are lowland calcareous grassland, lowland mixed deciduous woodland, hedgerows and floodplain grazing marsh along the River Itchen. The habitats are fragmented by roads, arable fields and less frequently, improved pasture. Hedgerows and woodland belts help connect habitats whilst some of the largest arable fields represent landscapes of lower overall biodiversity value. The opportunity for habitat restoration is high

26 Nature on the Map (2018) MAGIC. Available at: natureonthemap.naturalengland.org.uk/MagicMap.aspx [Date Accessed: 28/01/19]

27 NBN (2018) NBN Atlas. Available at: <https://nbnatlas.org/> [Date Accessed: 28/01/19]

28 Test and Itchen River Restoration Strategy (2013) Atkins Available at <https://secure.toolkitfiles.co.uk/clients/23271/sitedata/files/Strategy.pdf> [Accessed on 23/10/19]

following the Lawton principles²⁹, with a further focus on connectivity for habitats to enhance wildlife networks across the downs.

Maps for Biodiversity aspects are included in Volume 1 Appendix iii.

CULTURAL HERITAGE

Baseline evidence on cultural heritage has come from reference to designated heritage assets such as scheduled monuments, listed buildings and conservation areas and from the Historic Environment Record³⁰ and Historic Landscape Characterisation. Maps showing the location and distribution of these heritage assets and assessments are included in Appendix I (Baseline Maps)

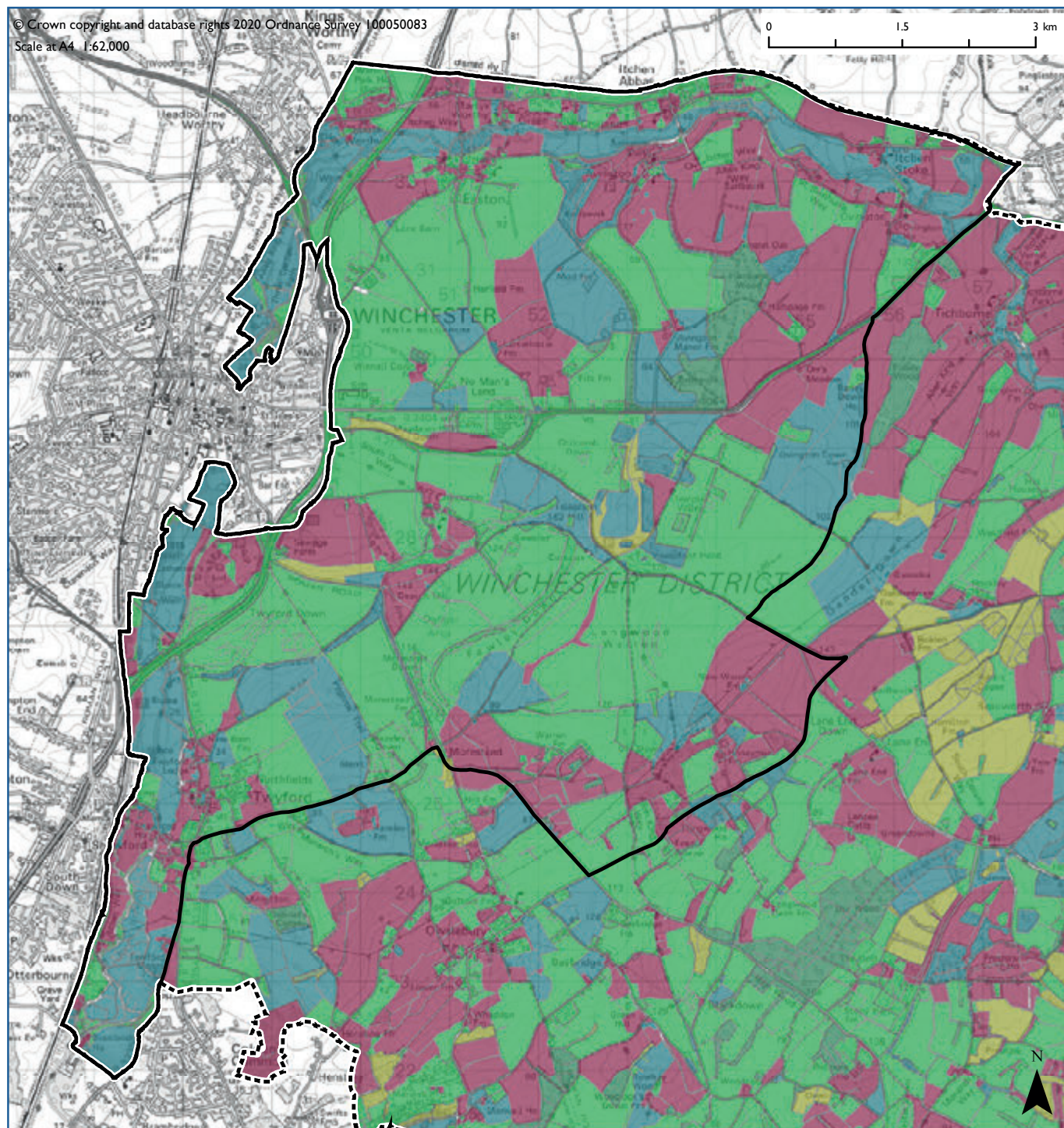
The landscape of the study area contains a rich and diverse assemblage of heritage assets from prehistoric sites to more recent 18th and 19th century enclosure patterns. There are a noTable number of prehistoric and later earthworks, long barrows, and round barrows, suggesting the area was intensively exploited during the Bronze Age. In the Iron Age, there is clear evidence of settlement focused on St Catherine's Hill with the creation of the hill fort and trading settlement of the Celtic Belgae tribe. The entre of Venta Belgarium was developed by the Romans between AD43 and AD407 with Winchester as a major town with all routes converging on it. These routes remain fossilized in the landscape to this day. The later (post Roman) pattern of Anglo Saxon and Medieval villages in the Itchen Valley and establishment of remnant drove roads for moving livestock between areas of grazing, are also still legible in the form of settlement pattern and rural lanes/tracks. Remnant downland helps reinforce an understanding of this former pastoral landscape, while extant churches and other religious sites and pilgrim routes which converge on Winchester, add further meaning and significance. The development of extensive areas of water meadows in the Itchen Valley between the 17th and 19th centuries along with a pattern of later 18th and 19th enclosure on the downland has given rise to the present-day land uses and patterns seen across much of the area.

Seen collectively, the layering of historic elements provides a strong sense of historical continuity in the landscape. The relationship and legibility between historic features from similar periods or from different periods is often good and contributes to the enjoyment and understanding of the downland landscape. Some features such as St Catherine's Hill Fort are particularly dramatic and arresting. The landscape holds in it connections to the past and this creates a strong perception of intactness and time depth to many places. This process of layering is clearly set out in the Historic Landscape Characterisation maps included in the Appendices and Figure 8 which shows an excerpt of this mapping below. where the underlying framework of pre medieval landscape, is shown overlain with more recent land use change.

29 <https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130402170324/http://archive.defra.gov.uk/environment/biodiversity/documents/201009space-for-nature.pdf>

30 This contains some sites which whilst not designated heritage assets may be equivalent to in terms of their value and significance.

FIGURE 8: HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER BY PERIOD



- SDNP boundary
 Project boundary
- Historic Landscape Character**
- 20th Century (AD 1914 - Present)
 - Early modern (AD 1800 - AD 1913)
 - Early post-medieval (AD 1500 - AD 1599)
 - Late post-medieval (AD 1600 - AD 1799)
 - Medieval (AD 1066 - AD 1499)

Please refer to Appendix I for more information about Heritage in the Study area

ACCESS AND RECREATION

This area of Hampshire around the western end of the South Downs National Park has a range of long distance trails which reflect historic routes in some cases. Waymarked routes from Winchester include some of the highest quality walking experiences in the county and England. The South Downs Way National Trail, which starts/ends in Winchester is the only National Trail which is wholly within a protected landscape. The Pilgrims' Trail follows a route dating from medieval times when pilgrims visited Winchester Cathedral from the country, and abroad, to worship at the shrine of St Swithun, a former teacher of the young Alfred the Great. ³¹.

However, despite the presence of these high profile routes the study area records one of the lowest Public Rights of Way (PROW) densities in the SDNP of only 0.5-1 km length per square km (see PANN Plan 32) ³². This limits the accessibility of the network and means that users are all on a few routes. This can cause a range of issues for the environment where the routes pass through sensitive habitats and the number of users can impact on the enjoyment of the SDNP. Few circular routes exist to the east of Winchester, where a circular route is possible the quality of the experience is variable, and acts as a deterrent for the immediate access to the SDNP for Winchester residents.

Winnall Moors is a large nature reserve run by the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust in the River Itchen valley. There is linear access via both the St Swithuns Way & The Itchen Way along the valley sides but the wider reserve is not accessible and there is limited connectivity to circular routes. The reserve is not open for access in order to manage the effects of disturbance from dogs and people on sensitive ecological receptors such as waterfowl and also to prevent physical and ecological damage to the river banks

Open access resource provision in the study area includes priority habitat chalk downland in 3 locations -St Catherine's Hillfort, to the south of Winchester and well connected to the city along the river valley. Magdalen Hill Down and Deacon Hill on the east side of the city are both reached over the M3 so less well connected.

Lack of accessible natural greenspace in the study area is highlighted in the SDNPA Access Network and Accessible Natural Greenspace Study (ANG 2014) ³³. The ANG approach ³⁴ sets a range of distance standards for the scale and proximity of natural greenspace to where people live. The standards are specifically targeted at natural space to reflect the health and well being benefits to people from being in a natural environment. The more recent 'nature on the doorstep' ³⁵ approach seeks also to address the social equality aspects of accessible nature.

ANG recommends that everyone should have an accessible natural greenspace:

- of at least 2 hectares in size, no more than 300 metres (5 minutes' walk) from home;
- at least one accessible 20 hectare site within two kilometres of home;
- one accessible 100 hectare site within five kilometres of home; and
- one accessible 500 hectare site within ten kilometres of home.

The Winchester study area is the largest area of the National Park that fails to meet ANG criteria at the 300m and 2km zones. This factor combined with the low density of PROW means that the accessibility of the study area is below the rest of the National Park. Whilst there are no national standards for PROW density improving the level of provision in the study area would be a logical aspiration, to complement further strategic provision of natural greenspace.

Please refer to Appendix I Baseline Maps for more information about access and recreation research in the Study area.

31 countryfile.com/go-outdoors/walks/st-catherines-hill-hampshire/ [Date accessed: 04-04- 2019]

32 southdowns.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/PANN-AER-Theme-5-Recreation-and-Access.pdf

33 southdowns.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Access-Network-ANGS-Study-Main-Report.pdf

34 <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/65021>

35 gov.uk/government/publications/natural-england-building-partnerships-for-natures-recovery/building-partnerships-for-natures-recovery



CHAPTER 3: WORKING WITH STAKEHOLDERS

"It's not about winning an argument but about creating a better outcome".

The Environment Council, 2001

INTRODUCTION TO THE ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

This section sets out how the stakeholder and public engagement was structured.

The engagement processes gathered both experiences of people on the ground who know the landscape well and also wider consultation with the public whose engagement with the landscape is less clearly defined.

The processes material and transcripts from the engagement work is included in Appendices C-H.

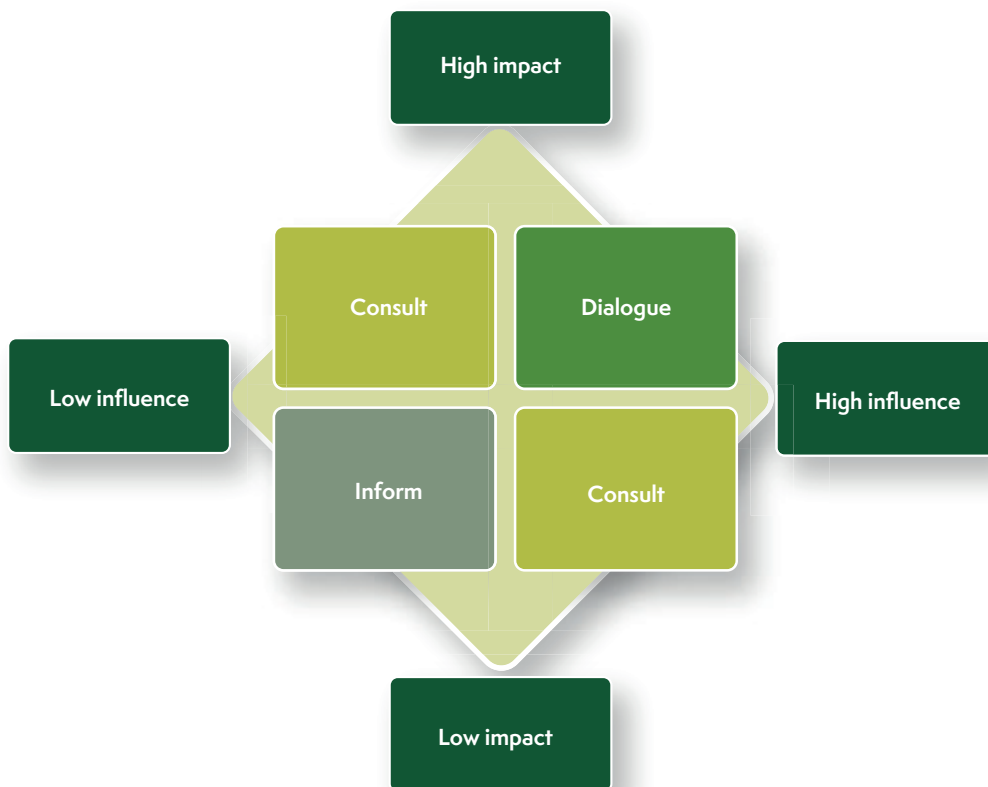
IDENTIFYING STAKEHOLDERS AND PARTNERS

Resources 4 Change worked with the SDNPA to generate a long list of potential stakeholders. This list was refined by using a Stakeholder Engagement matrix based on:

- **Impact** = the degree to which stakeholders will be impacted by the results/implementation of the project.
- **Influence** = the degree of influence that stakeholders have over the results / implementation of the project.

The stakeholder engagement matrix is used to identify the most appropriate way to engage with a range of stakeholder types and is the first step in designing an engagement strategy.

Figure 9 shows the relationship between the degree of impact /influence a stakeholder has and the type of engagement which would be used:

FIGURE 9: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INFLUENCE, IMPACT AND ENGAGEMENT

DECIDING ON THE TYPE OF ENGAGEMENT FOR STAKEHOLDER TYPES

The stakeholder list was then categorised by National Park Authority officers working with Resources for Change to produce a comprehensive list of stakeholders and the type of engagement which would be most effective for them – see Figure 10 overleaf:

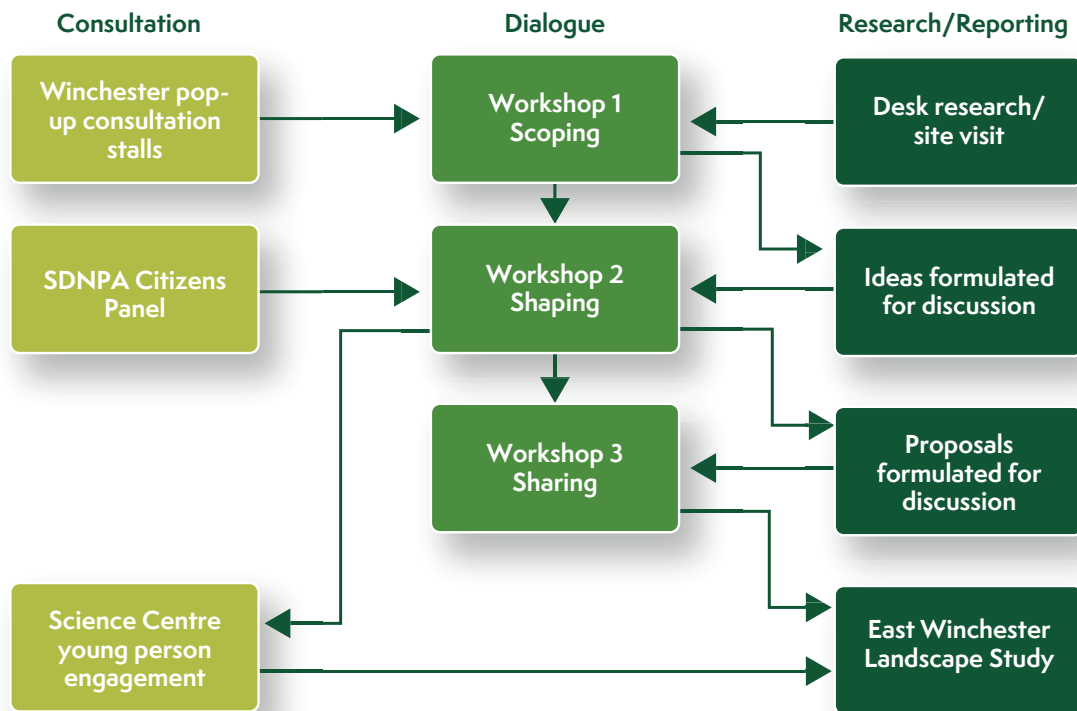
FIGURE 10: THE ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

| Type of engagement by stakeholder groups | |
|--|---|
| Lower influence | Higher influence |
| Consult | Dialogue |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents in East Winchester. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landowners / Farmers Conservation Non-Governmental Organisations with an interest in the area Local Access fora Other recreational / outdoor groups Local Authorities inc. Parish Councils SDNPA Officers with local knowledge SDNPA Members local or with special interest in the area |
| Inform | Consult |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools Youth Groups Visitors / Tourists Wider Winchester residents | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statutory Agencies Southern Water Local residents east of M3 Local Businesses Civic / Heritage Societies |

CONSULTING WITH STAKEHOLDERS

For the different categories of stakeholders identified above a process of engagement was devised and consisted of the following activities: (see Figure 11 below and detailed descriptions to follow);

- Three stakeholder workshops (May, July and October 2019)
- Winchester Town centre pop-up consultation stalls (April 2019)
- An online Citizens Panel consultation (June 2019)
- Young people's engagement event (September 2019) hosted at the Winchester Science Centre.

FIGURE 11: DIAGRAM SHOWING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE DIFFERENT ENGAGEMENT METHODS FOR THE STUDY

DESCRIPTION OF THE DIFFERENT ENGAGEMENT METHODS

SDNPA CITIZENS PANEL

The SDNPA run a Citizens Panel³⁶, enabling them to seek feedback on topical issues on a regular basis from a wide range of people with an interest in the South Downs National Park. In spring 2019 the local panel members (selected by postcode) were invited to take part in a survey related to the Winchester area. They were then asked a series of questions related to the East Winchester Landscape Study. Being an online rather than a street-based survey, it was possible to explore issues in greater depth, covering a range of topics such as;

- (i) Why do people visit the park and what activities do they undertake?
- (ii) What barriers exist to accessing the park?
- (iii) How might connections to the study area be improved?

- (iv) Where do Panel members like to visit?
- (v) Which factors are important when out in the landscape?
- (iii) Has the landscape changed much?
- (iv) What factors affect enjoyment of the Park in the study area?

CITY CENTRE POP-UP CONSULTATION STALLS

Pop-up consultation stalls were held in Winchester City to engage with a wide range of members of the public in the city and to understand where they go to visit the countryside and why they choose those destinations (see photo in Figure 12 below).

Pop-up consultation stalls were run at the following locations in Winchester on 16th and 17th April 2019, during the school Easter Holidays:

- Winchester Railway Station;
- Winchester Leisure Centre; and
- Winchester High Street Market.

36 southdowns.gov.uk/volunteering/Citizens-panel-2/

The methodology for the pop-up consultation stalls is presented in Appendix D.

FIGURE 12: POP-UP CONSULTATION IN WINCHESTER APRIL 2019



YOUNG PERSONS’ CONSULTATION EVENT

The young persons’ consultation event was carried out at the Winchester Science Centre in the October half-term 2019 to find out about their experiences of being in the countryside, what they like to do there, whether they like more time outdoors and what kind of places do they like to visit. The results could then be compared with the landscape of the study area to see how it performs against these preferences.

THE THREE WORKSHOPS

Three workshops were hosted between spring and summer 2019 to which key stakeholders were invited. Each workshop was structured to follow a logical progression through the work stages of the study in parallel with the desktop and field work and other engagement work by the consultants. This enabled each part of the study process to feedback and inform the consideration of the issues, ideas and formulation of possible solutions. The workshop topics are set out in Table 4 below

TABLE 4: THE TOPICS FOR THE 3 ENGAGEMENT WORKSHOPS

| | |
|--|--|
| Workshop 1 May 2019 Landscape Framework | Test the Local Character Assessment as a framework for the study |
| | Present and consider the results of the community pop-up consultation. |
| | Discuss the issues /opportunities in the study area. |
| Workshop 2 July 2019 Vision & Aims Development | Present and consider the results of the Citizens Panel. |
| | Look at the analysis of the issues and consultation results so far. |
| | Discuss the vision for the area and what it might be in 2050. |
| Workshop 3 October 2019 Forward Planning | Evaluate the initiatives. |
| | Present and consider the Forward Plan |
| | Think about next steps. |

RUNNING THE WORKSHOPS

The approach at each workshop was to create an environment where people could openly share their opinions and ideas. The workshops were designed and facilitated by the consultant team to be open and participative with the rules of the workshop set out at the beginning of each session. Figure 13 below sets out the structure and purpose of each of the three workshops and the discussion topics.

The agenda for each workshop was structured to create a range of short sessions including small break out groups, discussion and plenary sessions, and presentations. This format enabled all those present to have an input and kept the workshops from being dominated by long winded discussions.

SHARING INFORMATION – ‘THE WHOLE LANDSCAPE IN THE ROOM’

With this approach, stakeholders get to hear and understand the sometimes-differing views of other users of that landscape. They get the opportunity to consider how the solution to one issue might impact upon another, and to better understand the

connections between all aspects of the landscape for both people and nature. In considering issues in the round there is also potential for join up and cross sector information sharing which can create new and innovative approaches. The principle of the workshop process was to have the *‘the whole landscape in the room.’*

During the workshops stakeholders worked together to co-create a vision for the landscape and a series of initiatives that will help deliver that shared vision. In the space of three workshops it was not be possible to create consensus around everything, but rather aim to achieve broad support for the ‘direction of travel’ and a shared understanding of how initiatives within the emerging Forward Plan could be developed.

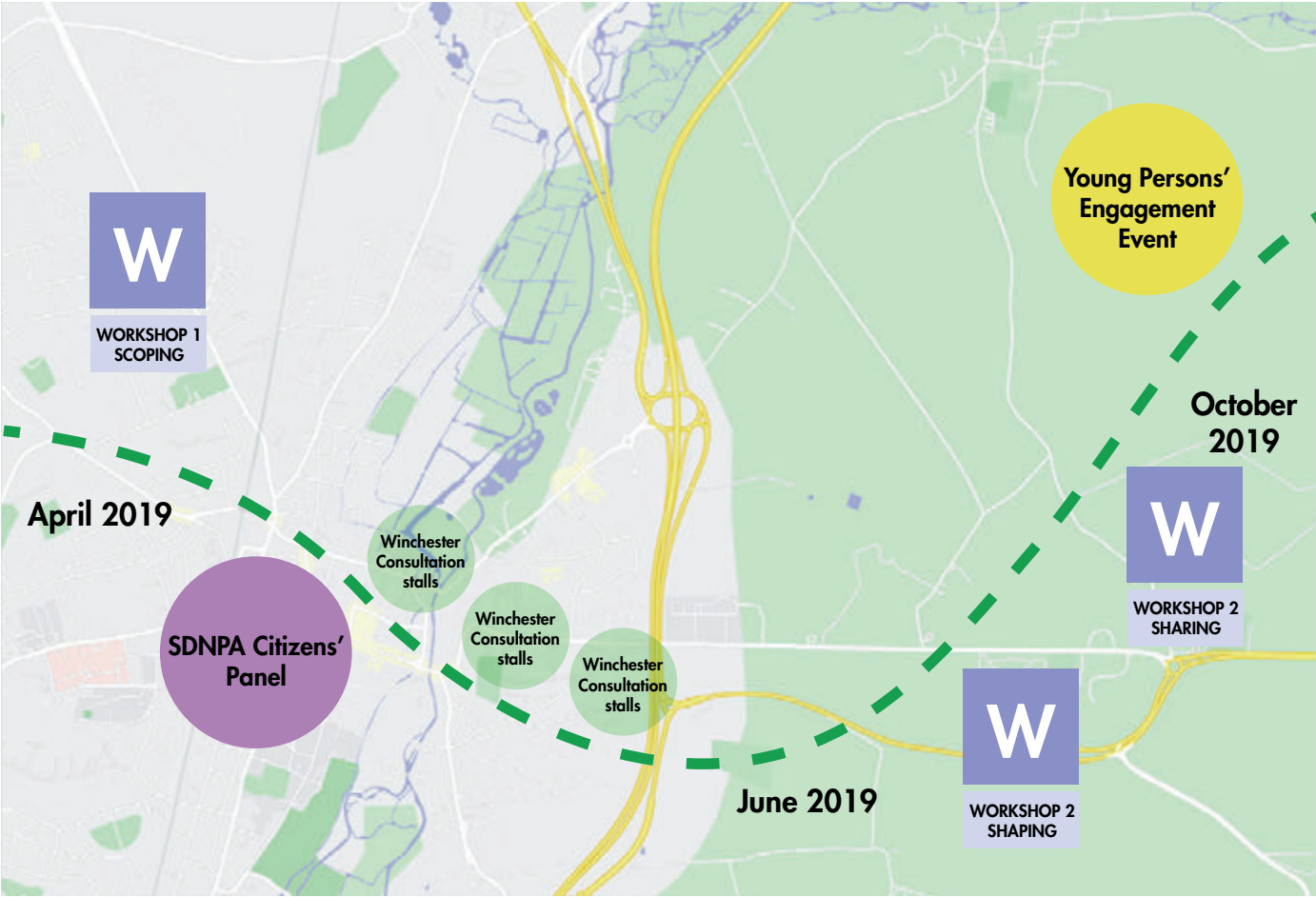
The output from each workshop was written up as a ‘transcript report’ (Appendix C-H), which was shared with those present. Information from the workshops has been also transcribed onto various maps – also included in Appendices C-H.

To sum up – the sequence of engagement throughout the project is shown in Figure 14.

FIGURE 13: THE STRUCTURE OF THE THREE WORKSHOPS FOR THE LANDSCAPE CONVERSATION



FIGURE 14: THE SEQUENCE OF STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES





CHAPTER 4: THE FINDINGS OF THE STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

A WIDE RANGE OF ISSUES

This chapter explores the issues that were raised during the different strands of the stakeholder consultation process via the pop up consultation stalls in Winchester, the Citizens Panel, the young person's event at the Winchester Science Centre, and the three workshops.

THE SDNPA CITIZENS PANEL

The SDNPA Citizens Panel provided views and information from 105 people. Most people were either visitors or residents living in or nearby the study area. Details of all the comments raised and recorded can be explored further in Table 5 below and Appendices C-H

A summary of the main findings are as follows and in Table 5 below:

Why do you visit this part of the South Downs National Park ?

- Panel members mostly visited for a walk or to enjoy the views.
- Accessing open spaces, engaging with nature and tranquility were the top three most important factors when out in the landscape.

What do you think about changes in the landscape over time?

- 26% claimed changes in the landscape had been solely negative, whilst 64% had experienced both positive and negative effects. Only 5% felt that purely positive effects had arisen through change in the landscape.

Panel members were offered a list of possible impacts on the landscape and asked to choose which ones they felt were the most important.

- The top four factors which have a high negative impact on the study area are: Road and traffic noise, new development, antisocial driving and lack of access to public space.

TABLE 5: STAKEHOLDER RESPONSES TO ISSUES IN THE CITIZENS PANEL QUESTIONNAIRE.

| Factor | High Impact | Low Impact |
|--|-------------|------------|
| Road/ traffic noise | 34% | 4% |
| Lack of footpaths | 16% | 14% |
| Availability of cycle paths | 12% | 21% |
| Availability of bridleways | 9% | 20% |
| Quality of signposting | 14% | 10% |
| Existence of new building developments | 34% | 7% |
| Quality of underpasses or bridges | 5% | 23% |
| Access to public open space | 25% | 13% |
| Lack of car parking | 16% | 9% |
| Cost of car parking | 15% | 15% |
| Multiple user of paths | 10% | 18% |
| Antisocial driving | 31% | 9% |
| Large events & attractions | 14% | 20% |

RESULTS FROM THE POP-UP CONSULTATION STALLS IN WINCHESTER CITY CENTRE

HEADLINES

The Downs seem to be foreign lands to the people of Winchester. They know of them, look at them and appreciate them as a backdrop to the city but they do not interact with them. The city tends to look west, not east.

Poor access out of the city is a key issue and suggestions were made for encouraging more use of the downs – these included providing circular walks, connecting viewpoints and providing the chance to experience wildlife.

THE PARTICIPANTS

Of the 273 people spoken to, 64% lived in Winchester. There was a representation across genders and age ranges although older people were better represented, largely suspected because they possibly have more time to stop and engage.

The involvement in the study area was seen largely as a 'neighbour' with views of the landscape. Smaller numbers of people had a direct involvement in the area either by driving through it, visiting, or working in it.

FAVOURITE PLACES

Many people spent quite a lot of time looking at the map of the study area but less than 25% of them were able to identify a favourite place. Discussion with them suggested that this is because they didn't visit the area. For those who were able to identify a location, the river valley was important to many of them. With regard to downland areas, Cheesefoot Head, Magdalen Hill Down and St Catherine's Hill were the key locations. Away from the project area (not shown on the map at the consultation) the most often mentioned location was Farley Mount Country Park (a Forestry Commission site) to the west of the city away from the study area.

EXPERIENCING THE LANDSCAPE

Most respondents stated that a walk with views would be their preferred landscape experience. Cycling / mountain biking also featured strongly. 'Watching wildlife' was also popular – this relates to the opportunity to experience wildlife while doing other things such as walking (rather than specifically sitting in a bird hide or something similar). 'Views and wildlife' are most important but also heritage sites, villages and cultural aspects are also important.

BARRIERS TO THE SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK

Several barriers were identified. 'Poor access' and a 'lack of information' are seen as particularly important, 'confidence' was also raised with specific comments about the conduct of the military area and the private nature of much of the land. Poor access seems to relate largely to the routes out of Winchester with busy roads, antisocial behaviour and low quality routes being highlighted in the comments as key issues. If people were able to use the current access routes to go onto the Downs, then there seemed to be a lack of knowledge about where they could go and what they could do when they were there. Poor signage and the lack of circular walks was often identified as issues in this respect.

IMPROVING CONNECTIONS

Not surprisingly for people who are keen on walking, the most important way to improve the connections between Winchester and the South Downs would be through the provision of more and better footpaths and cycle ways for those keen on cycling. 'Better Signage and Road bridges and underpasses support this enabling people to start from the city and follow a route into the Downs. It is interesting that car-based access 'roads' and 'car parks' do not feature strongly in these results as comments from people alluded to the fact they don't want more cars. There is real interest in improving access for people with a range of abilities. Paths that are designed for mobility scooters, wheelchairs and buggies and had plenty of benches and access to toilets was seen as important.

RESULTS FROM THE YOUNG PERSONS' ENGAGEMENT EVENT

HEADLINES

In all, 321 young people took part, ranging in age from under 5 to 18yrs old, with slightly more girls than boys taking part. A significant number of visitors to the Science Centre appear to travel quite a distance, 48% of those who took part were from outside Hampshire, so the results should be seen as general rather than specifically relevant to the landscape east of Winchester.

The engagement was framed as about 'being outdoors' rather than 'in the landscape' to try to find out where young people like to go and what they liked to do. The results were as follows:

- 79% felt that they should spend more time outdoors.
- The favourite place they liked to go 'outdoors' was the coast.
- In respect of South Downs National Park type landscapes, they preferred visiting woodlands and river valleys to open hills and fields. (Pictures of the different places to help the young people decide were used. The questions & pictures used are shown in Appendix E).
- When asked what they liked doing 'outdoors', bike riding and playing with friends came out top, with camping and watching wildlife as the

next popular. This suggests that young people want to get 'hands on'.

- When asked what they would be doing if they were not at the Science Centre, seeing friends scored highly, followed by staying indoors (it was poor weather on they day) and going to the cinema. Of the outdoor activities listed, getting muddy and climbing trees were the most popular alternatives to the Science Centre (again 'hands on' experiences).

There was positive feedback from parents regarding the content of the engagement, with the amount of time young people spending outdoors being considered important. Parents would welcome an increase of initiatives and activities to help support this.

THE WORKSHOPS

The three workshops held were each attended by approximately 40-50 people representing a range of stakeholders from landowners to statutory bodies and local residents and businesses. The workshops started in the morning and ran through to lunch which was provided for attendees to encourage conversations and networking to continue after the event. A seating plan wasn't used for the workshop sessions, to allow attendees to mix randomly.

Full transcripts of each of the Workshops, agendas and other material including maps are included in Appendix F, G and H.

Workshop 1: Scoping of the landscape challenges and opportunities

Workshop 1 was structured around four themed sessions as identified below. These operated on a rotational basis with four groups so that all stakeholders could contribute to each theme.

- '*Getting Out There*' considered access and recreation matters;
- '*Connecting to History*' focused on archaeology and other aspects of cultural heritage.
- '*Landscape Experience*' considered aspects of landscape character, natural beauty, distinctiveness and land management matters; and
- '*Making Space for Nature*' looked at biodiversity and nature conservation issues.

Full details of all the comments raised in each workshop can be explored in Appendix F. Figure

15 presents a breakdown of comments as attributed to common topics within the sub-group's specialist subject matter. Where there is apparent overlap between the subgroups in terms of the issues raised these are nuanced from the themed perspective.

The most frequently raised topics for each of the themed groups were:

- *'Getting Out There'* – Access and recreation, the ability to access the study area either easily or the lack of adequate access.
- *'Connecting to History'* – Information, signage and communications.
- *'Landscape Experience'* – Land management; (also the second ranked issued for the *'Connecting to History'* and *'Making Space for Nature'* sub-groups); and
- *'Making Space for Nature'* – Information, signage and communications.

Figure 15 shows the range of main topics which were raised during each of the themed sessions; To collate the range of issues raised by stakeholders during the four themed sessions, the comments and discussions were considered collectively and then categorised – leading to the following seven strategic issues;

- Infrastructure and development;
- Information and communication.
- Access and recreation.
- Land management.
- Landscape ecology and Heritage assets.
- So)cial issues; and
- Climate change and pollution.

Figure 16 shows the total percentage results of comments received according to the grouped topics. The issues raised are presented sequentially according to total number of comments received in relation to that subject. These topics are considered during the next two workshops.

FIGURE 16: STAKEHOLDER RANKING FOR EACH OF THE SEVEN STRATEGIC ISSUES RAISED DURING WORKSHOP 1

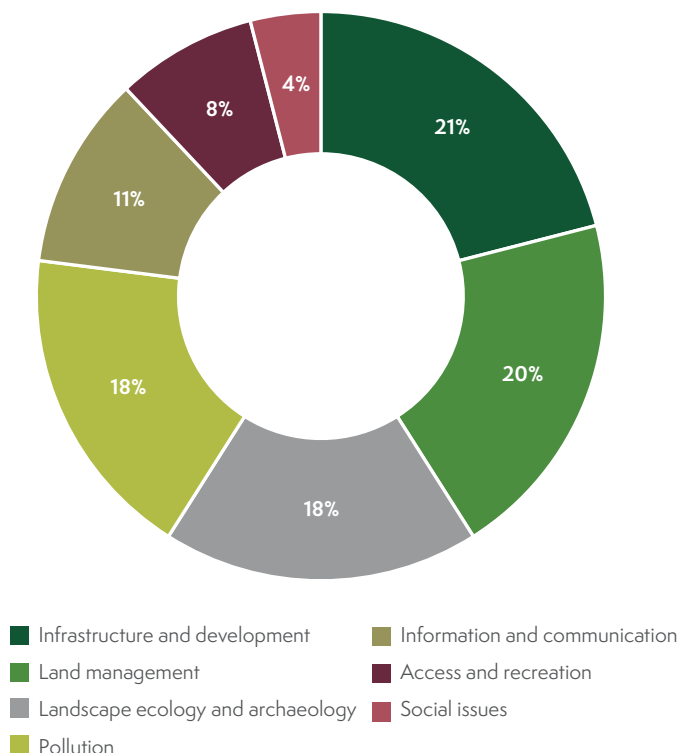
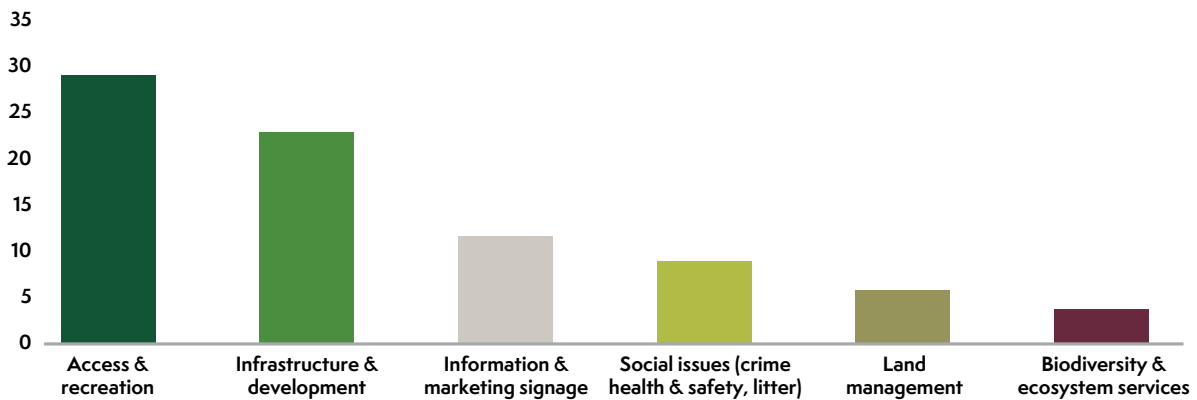
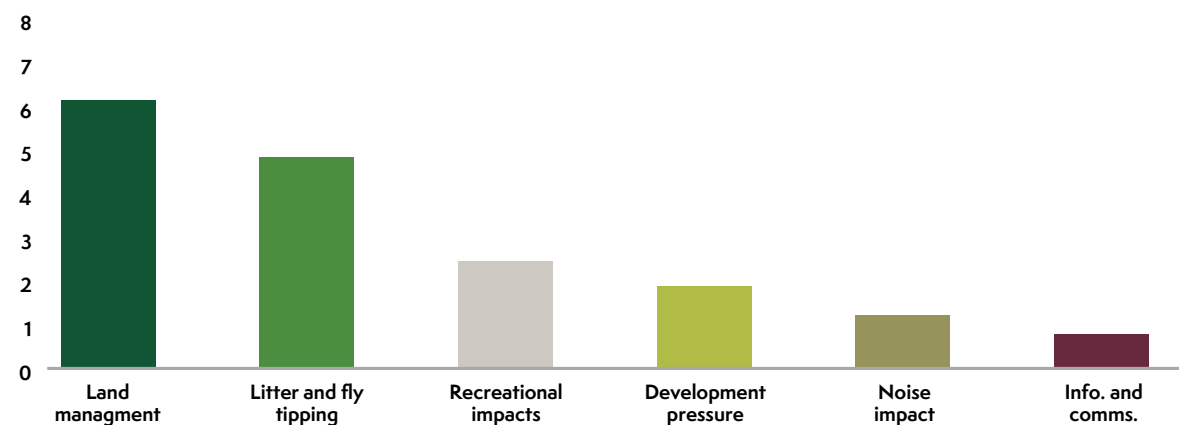
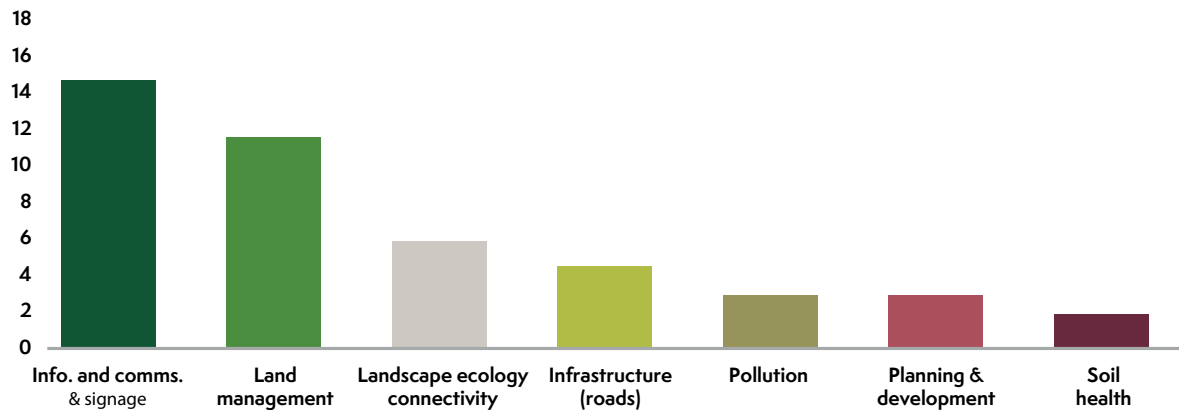


FIGURE 15: ISSUES RAISED DURING WORKSHOP 1**Issues raised during workshop 1: Getting out there****Issues raised during workshop 1: Connecting to history****Issues raised during workshop 1: Landscape experience****Issues raised during workshop 1: Making space for nature**

WORKSHOP 2: SHAPING THE VISION AND IDEAS FOR THE FUTURE OF THE LANDSCAPE.

The stakeholders were asked to unlock their imaginations and to visualise what the landscape could be like. For this activity, the stakeholders were put into five working groups each with a range of stakeholder types as it was important that the groups did not become echo chambers.³⁷

The first task was for stakeholders to imagine themselves in the landscape in 2050 and address the following questions:

- What is going on in the landscape?
- What does it look and feel like?

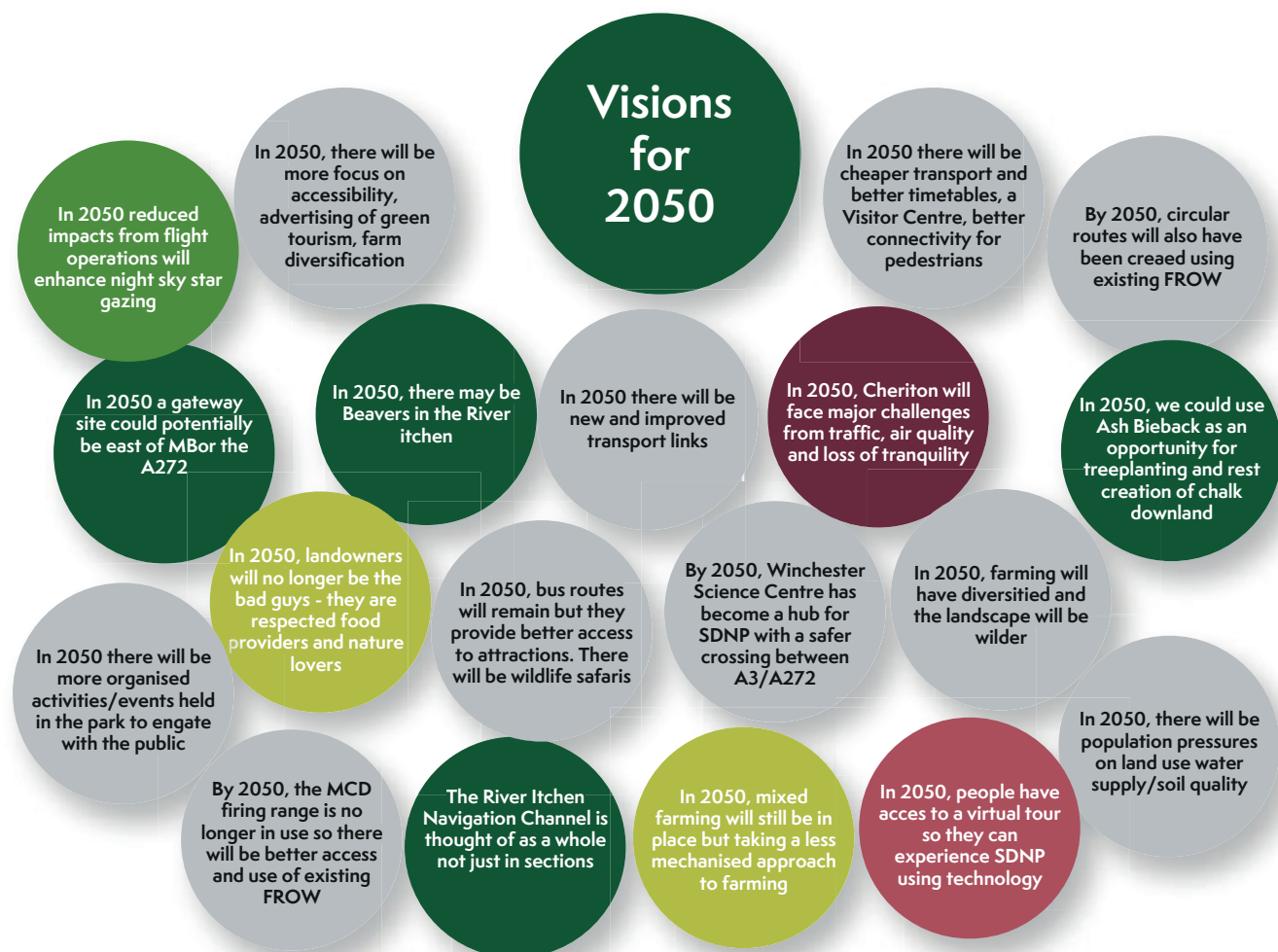
- What facilities are present that help you enjoy the area?

The subsequent task invited the stakeholders to think about the landscape they had described to answer the following questions:

- What was done differently to achieve this? (from what was done in 2019)
- Who was involved?
- What were the major challenges that we had to overcome?

Figure 17 shows some of the statements from this part of Workshop 2 and captures a range of the ideas about the imagined landscape in 2050.

FIGURE 17: C OF IDEAS FOR THE VISION EXERCISE – WORKSHOP 2



³⁷ an environment in which a person encounters only beliefs or opinions that coincide with their own, so that their existing views are reinforced and alternative ideas are not considered

The ideas for the vision for 2050 were varied and aspirational and the overall vision (below) was condensed and refined from these ideas;

The Vision for the East Winchester Landscape

'A National Park landscape that is locally distinctive and nationally important, where the M3 sits within a robust, restored and resilient landscape which links Winchester and the Downs.

The only noises are the sounds of nature and occasional conversations between people who may be working, visiting or living in the area.

High quality farming production will flourish while people regularly visit on foot, bicycle or horseback to use the expanded network of access routes and natural spaces.

The Itchen Valley will include stable populations of beavers, otters, salmon and trout due to the success of the efforts to improve its water quality.

The fragments of chalk downland will have been made bigger and join up to form a robust ecological network. Together, these elements will combine to form a resilient landscape for the future'.

The third task of the workshop was to invite ideas from the groups about particular actions that would be useful or necessary to achieve the visions. Many ideas came forward and they have been used to help inform the recommendations in Chapter 4 and the Forward Plan in Chapter 5.

All of the suggested actions which came out of this session can be viewed in Appendix H.

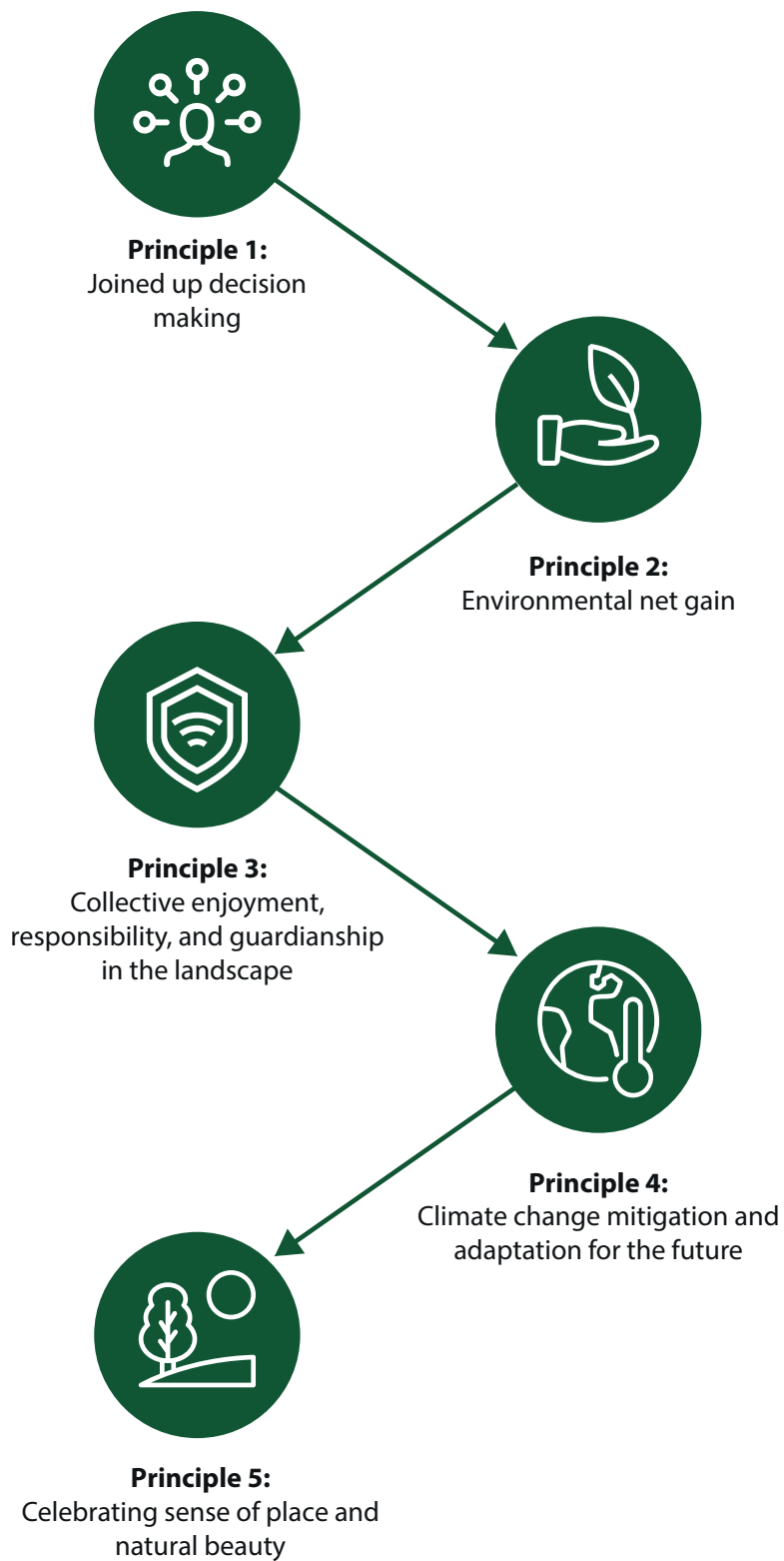
WORKSHOP 3: SHARING AND TESTING THE EMERGING PROPOSALS.

In advance of Workshop 3, the study team had pre-prepared a draft framework of five principles for delivering aspects of the visioning exercise that were established in Workshop 2.

Working in groups, stakeholders provided comments on the proposed five draft principles and discussed a range of project initiatives that could be delivered through the study area.

The agreed five overarching Principles for the study area can be seen in Figure 18.

FIGURE 18: THE FIVE PRINCIPLES FOR PROJECT DELIVERY



Principle 1: Joined up decision making.

There is a perception that organisations may operate independently in the study area. Initiatives are fragmented, and decisions can be made in isolation. The Winchester Downs Farm Cluster demonstrates the effectiveness of farmers and land owners working together to achieve wide scale beneficial change. Other initiatives for the area could be undertaken in collaboration across sectors and with a range of stakeholders to achieve delivery in partnership. 'The total is greater than the sum of the parts'.

Principle 2: Environmental net gain

Many habitats³⁸ in the study area are fragmented and suffer adverse effects from land use change. Future management initiatives should deliver net environmental gain, maximising ecosystems services, restoring and creating habitats as part of a nature recovery network,³⁹ to achieve multiple benefits to people and nature. To achieve this principle appropriate land management will be needed including support for low intensity, mixed farming and the re-introduction of animals on a more frequent basis to aid habitat establishment and maximise biodiversity gain. Linked to this will be the need to consider how grazing partnerships could be established to work alongside and in rotation with arable production. There is a need for legalised mobile or small local abattoirs to enable economically viable livestock keeping for farmers. In addition to the improvement to animal welfare that this would bring, it would possibly encourage the return to livestock keeping as part of a mixed farming operation.

Principle 3: Collective enjoyment, responsibility, and guardianship in the landscape

Research has shown that people feel disconnected from the National Park both physically and in terms of a sense of belonging. Initiatives should seek to provide opportunities for public engagement and education. For example, new gateways could be provided from Winchester and a new visitor hub established from which the wider area can be explored. All gateways and a potential visitor hub would require a range of/different levels of facilities, information, and sustainable transport interchanges. Communities also need a shared ownership in any facilities which are provided. New destinations should be linked to others to form a network of experiences and choices where people can actively engage with the environment.

Principle 4: Climate change mitigation and adaptation for the future

To respond to increasing temperatures and changes in weather patterns, both of which have knock on effects on agriculture and biodiversity, there needs to be a shift in actions and decision making by individuals and corporations alike. Increased take up of sustainable modes of transportation, recycling, energy conservation, sustainable management and net environmental gain should be key priorities. All land use, business and development activity in the study area should strive to be carbon neutral through a process of reduction and offsetting/compensation. Initiatives could be based on the SDNP Climate Change Adaptation Plan⁴⁰, particularly including opportunities to raise awareness and understanding or could be developed working with Winchester Climate Change Action Group (WINACC)⁴¹. Nature Based Solutions⁴² to climate change mitigation are likely to be an important delivery mechanism going forwards and delivers multiple benefits for both people and nature.

Principle 5: Celebrating sense of place and natural beauty

Research has shown that change, be it land management or development, can result in an erosion of the special qualities of the study area including its rich cultural history, distinctive character, and key views.

All initiatives should seek to conserve and enhance the beauty of the area ensuring sensory rich experiences working with and keeping alive the inherent character of the local landscape. The depth of cultural and natural heritage held in this landscape should be better expressed and celebrated through new research, improved engagement, and accessible information.

The principles are a framework to guide all projects and activities in the study area to ensure that initiatives achieve multiple benefits for people and nature and that working across sectors the greatest benefits can be achieved. They are taken forward to inform the next stage of the work, shaping the results into a planned approach.

38 Priority habitats for the downland areas include, chalk grassland, beech woodland and hedgerows. Priority habitats for the valleys are wet woodland, meadows and parkland. Initiatives must be based on an understanding of geology, history and sustainable soil and water management.

39 The Hampshire Ecological Network On behalf of the Local Nature Partnership Version 3 March 2020

40 SDNPA (2015) Climate Change Adaptation Plan. Available at: southdowns.gov.uk/sdnpa-climate-change-adaptation-plan/ [Date Accessed: 30/01/20]

41 Winchester climate change action group www.winacc.org.uk

42 naturebasedsolutionsinitiative.org/what-are-nature-based-solutions/

THE LANDSCAPE ZONES

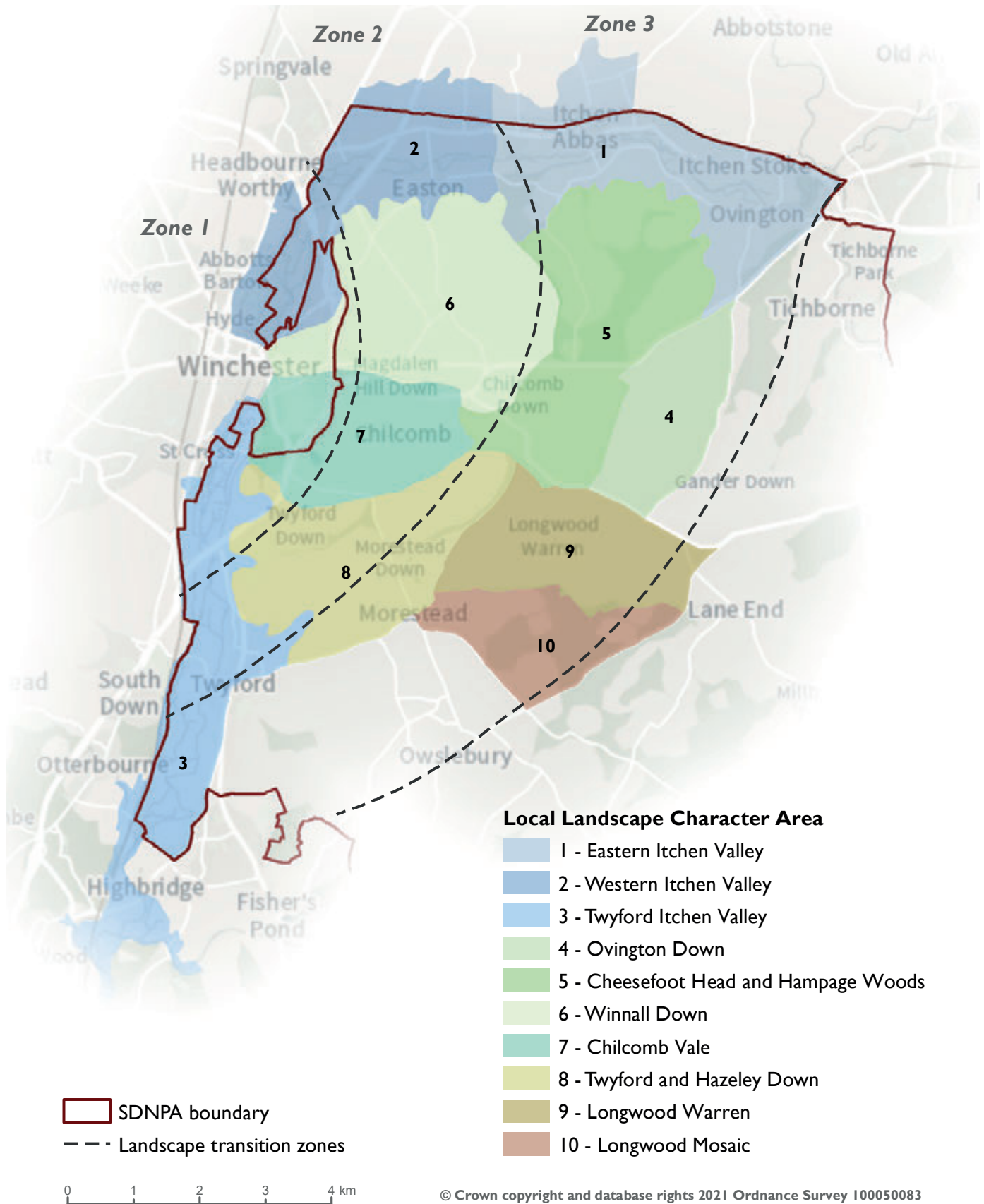
During the course of the project, feedback from stakeholders and research has shown that issues and opportunities in the study area vary spatially and across the transitioning landscape from Winchester and its urban fringe in the west, towards the increasingly rural areas of the SDNP in the eastern part of the study area.

To explain and articulate this transition, three zones were identified and discussed during workshop 3. (see Figure 19). The zones describe the changes in character from Zone 1 characterised by urbanised and peri-urban influences, to Zone 2 which begins to reflect the transition between town and country, to Zone 3 which is the more rural countryside area. Some features, such as the South Downs Way National Trail and the landscape character type (East Winchester Open Downland) connect all

three Zones. The concept of the zones is included in the baseline evidence to the study as it clarifies spatially all of the other issues which are set out in the baseline evidence and later in the stakeholder engagement results.

The description of the zones is to aid understanding of the challenges that are faced in the landscape because of the striking and demonstrable change in character, issues and potential solutions from Zone 1 to Zone 3. The zones are integrated with the Local Landscape Character Areas (LLCA), however the change from one zone to the next should not be seen as a hard line but rather as a gradual transition and are not cast in stone – they are intended to assist and explain – not to dictate.

FIGURE 19: MAP SHOWING THE 3 LANDSCAPE TRANSITION ZONES FROM WORKSHOP 3



TRANSITIONAL LANDSCAPE ZONES – DESCRIPTIONS

ZONE 1 INNER ZONE: THE RIVER ITCHEN/WINCHESTER/M3 INTERFACE

This area comprises the Itchen Valley to the north and south of Winchester, Chilcomb Vale and Winnall Downs Local Character Areas. This landscape forms part of the historic setting of Winchester; the river valley has provided water and fertile soils for growing crops for centuries. It includes St Catherine's Hill, the iconic Iron Age hillfort in a commanding position overlooking the river valley, the city and the downs to the east. The landscape is crossed by ancient routeways which radiate out from the city, along the river valley, and over the Downs to the east. This is a highly sensitive landscape, which is vulnerable in ecological, archaeological character, visual and ecosystem terms. In addition, Winchester is poorly connected to the South Downs National Park due to severance caused by roads – the M3, A31, A34 and A272, and expanding development pressure along the M3 corridor. Research shows that some communities in Winchester feel poorly connected physically and emotionally to the National Park right on their doorstep. Habitats are fragmented, and the landscape is affected by noise and poor air quality. Water quality along the River Itchen is also an issue. Residents and communities in this zone are on the fringes of Winchester and identify with the city rather than the rural villages to the east.

ZONE 2 THE CENTRAL ZONE: THE EASTERN EDGE OF THE ITCHEN VALLEY, RURAL TRANSPORT CORRIDORS AND COMMUNITIES

This zone is characterized by the rural settlements, rural lanes and roads and agricultural land use. There is habitat fragmentation due to loss of chalk downland and woodland. The landscape is not dominated by roads in the same way that Zone 1 is, although 'rat running' and fast moving traffic affects perceived safety for other users and has a detrimental impact on the recreational enjoyment of the area. Access within this area is largely PRow based with only two areas of open access land at Magdalen Hill Down and Deacon Hill. The former is well used and is accessible from Winchester on foot or cycle on the top of the eastern Itchen Valley

side but has limited forward or circular connectivity. Deacon Hill is located where the topography is steeper and the access routes from Winchester are only through a network of peri urban uses and road crossings (M3, Morestead Road) which has a detrimental impact on how this site is experienced and is also a deterrent for potential users.

ZONE 3 THE OUTER ZONE – THE RURAL DOWNLAND, FARMING AND LAND MANAGEMENT

The landscape in this area comprises the highest land in the study area, affording spectacular panoramic views in all directions, including towards the Isle of Wight (33km) and North Wessex Downs (35km) from Cheesefoot Head. In this area, the landscape comprises the wooded downland to the south at Longwood Mosaic and Longwood Warren and the open downland around Ovington Down, with the Itchen Valley to the north. This is a more remote tranquil area with fewer destinations, but with some PRow which provide access through the countryside, although there are no public spaces to visit. Whilst this area is more remote than Zones 1 and 2, research showed that visitors to this zone are very varied in their understanding of the countryside and there are problems associated with the lack of public facilities, such as parking, open space and information provision.



CHAPTER 5: SHAPING THE RESULTS INTO A PLAN

INTRODUCTION

This chapter brings together the results from each part of the research process. The seven strategic topics (which were identified from the issues raised in Workshop 1) are taken in turn and their response and forward plan for each of them is developed. The evidence from both the desktop research phase and the stakeholder processes have been woven together and considered in terms of the seven topics from Workshop 1.

As a recap, these topics were produced from analysis of the four themed sessions in Workshop 1.

The seven strategic issues were identified in Workshop 1 as (See Figure 16);

- Infrastructure and Development;
- Information and Communication;
- Access and Recreation;
- Land Management;
- Landscape Ecology and Heritage assets;
- Social issues; and
- Climate Change and Pollution.

Each section identifies actions that are then taken into the Forward Plan (Chapter 6). All of the actions result from the engagement process and also reflect the parallel process of desktop and field based research, which have been undertaken in the study and endeavour to:

- Identify and respond to the project's primary objectives to restore landscape character and natural beauty;
- Include as many aspirations and views of the landscape conversation that are practical and possible;

For more details, see the results of Workshop 1 in Appendix F:



STRATEGIC ISSUE 1: INFRASTRUCTURE AND DEVELOPMENT



This issue was commented on the most by stakeholders, above all other issues. Stakeholders felt that new developments, together with impacts from the M3 and other roads seriously affect the quality of the landscape and their enjoyment of it.

The study area is within the eastern edge of Winchester city and as set out in the landscape transition zones (Figure 19), there is a profound change from the urban-rural landscape from Winchester and the SDNP. The M3 passes through the western edge of the SDNP on the eastern side of Winchester. Due to the excellent transport links, large depots and storage facilities have been developed alongside the road corridor. These developments add to the large-scale impacts of the road and expand its extent within the landscape at the interface between the city and the SDNP. To the west of the road corridor is the Winchester cityscape with domestic houses, businesses, shops, and parks. To the east of the road corridor lies the National Park. Stakeholders felt that the M3 is a physical and perceptual barrier and a noisy intrusion into the tranquillity of the countryside.

Recent landscape change such as; housing growth in relation to Winchester and surrounding villages,

transportation/highways developments and other peri-urban/peripheral development along and in close proximity to major transport routes and junctions has eroded landscape character in an incremental manner, so called – ‘death by a thousand cuts’. New developments are also in construction or on the horizon: new park and ride proposals, planned improvements to the M3 Junction 9, the Bar End Leisure Centre development, which without careful consideration of the relationship between the city and the downs could all add to this effect.

Issues which related to infrastructure and development were identified in 21% of the responses (See Figure 16); including noise impacts and loss of tranquillity due to traffic (especially on the M3), poor public transport links (particularly east to west) and increasing traffic levels throughout the study area.

These findings are supported by an analysis of noise regulation in EcoServ (Appendix I Baseline Maps) which revealed the greatest need for noise regulation to be within and around the M3 corridor and Winchester and that those ecosystems and habitats most likely to contribute to noise reduction

were woodland, scrub and grassland. The Winnall Planning Framework (2015⁴³) also draws attention to the need for street tree planting and urban greening which would also assist with noise regulation if considered in a strategic and planned manner.

The consideration and resolution of this strategic issue relies heavily on a coordinated and partnership approach between; the planning authorities, statutory authorities and planning applicants. In addition, a strategic approach to mitigation and enhancements for new development would provide a framework for contributions and targeted interventions and actions.

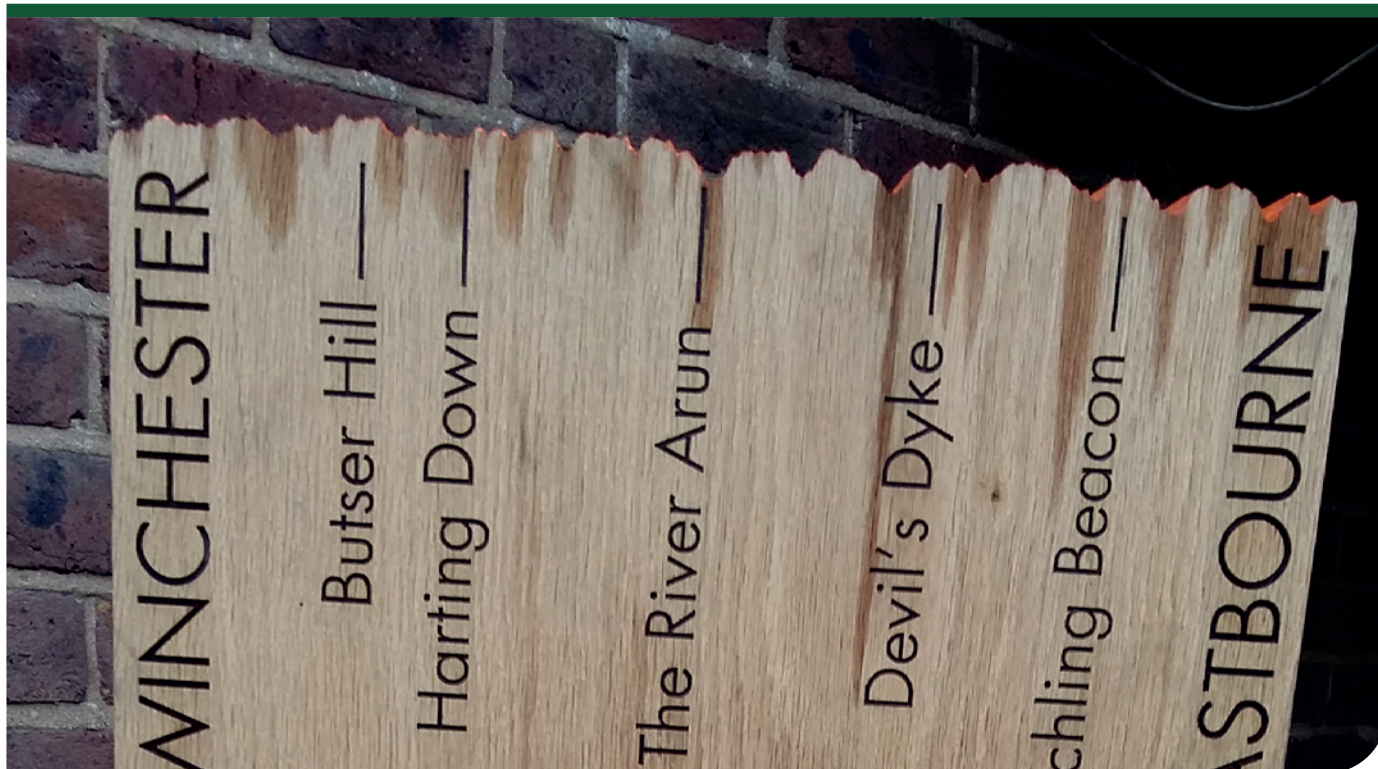
OPPORTUNITIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

| | |
|----------|--|
| 1 | Build a land bridge To reconnect the landscape and mitigate the adverse effects of visual and noise pollution associated with the M3. Ensure that the land bridge includes safe access for all non motorised transport. Connect habitats over the bridge. Information and communication. |
| 2 | Undertake a review of existing sustainable transport opportunities and plan for enhanced access to the South Downs National Park by non-motorised methods and electric vehicles. |
| 3 | Ensure that M3 Junction 9 project maximises the opportunities to contain noise and landscape harm and improves safe access across the M3. |
| 4 | Prepare a detailed map of Natural capital for environmental management solutions to assist in mitigating climate change (nature based solutions). |
| 5 | Prepare design codes for new development in and around the South Downs National Park which incorporate a strategic approach to nature based solutions, and include provision for nature on the doorstep. |

⁴³ winchester.gov.uk/planning-policy/winchester-district-local-plan-2011-2036-adopted/evidence-base/planning-frameworks/winnall-planning-framework



STRATEGIC ISSUE 2: INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION



Information and communication about the landscape was the second most important issue from the stakeholders with 20% of the responses. Stakeholders identified the need for more information to be made available for the public through the study area including information about access, directional signage, route signage, the countryside code, and interpretive information. They believed that it could be beneficial to have more information available and presented about the distinctive landscape and ecology of the study area. Figure 20 shows the location of existing information panels and facilities

The stakeholders also stated an overall desire to have greater stakeholder integration, involvement and communication around key decision making than already exist in the study area. It was felt that local communities, environmental bodies and landowners could liaise more frequently on a range of issues that affect the study area. An example given was the potential to connect land managers engaged in the Winchester Downs Farm Cluster with the Watercress and Winterbourne Landscape Partnership Scheme. Such a connection may assist with addressing issues relating to water quality and monitoring.

The need for a strategic approach to signage was also raised. It was felt that there is a range of sign quality and an inconsistency in the approach to signage. This manifests in a range of approaches. For example, some signs are all about welcoming the visitor and guiding them to trails or beauty spots whilst others are more direct and less welcoming since they are deterrents to fly tippers, inconsiderate parking and other antisocial behavior. It was felt that the mixed messaging was confusing for visitors and gave an impression of not being welcoming or that it was a landscape under siege.

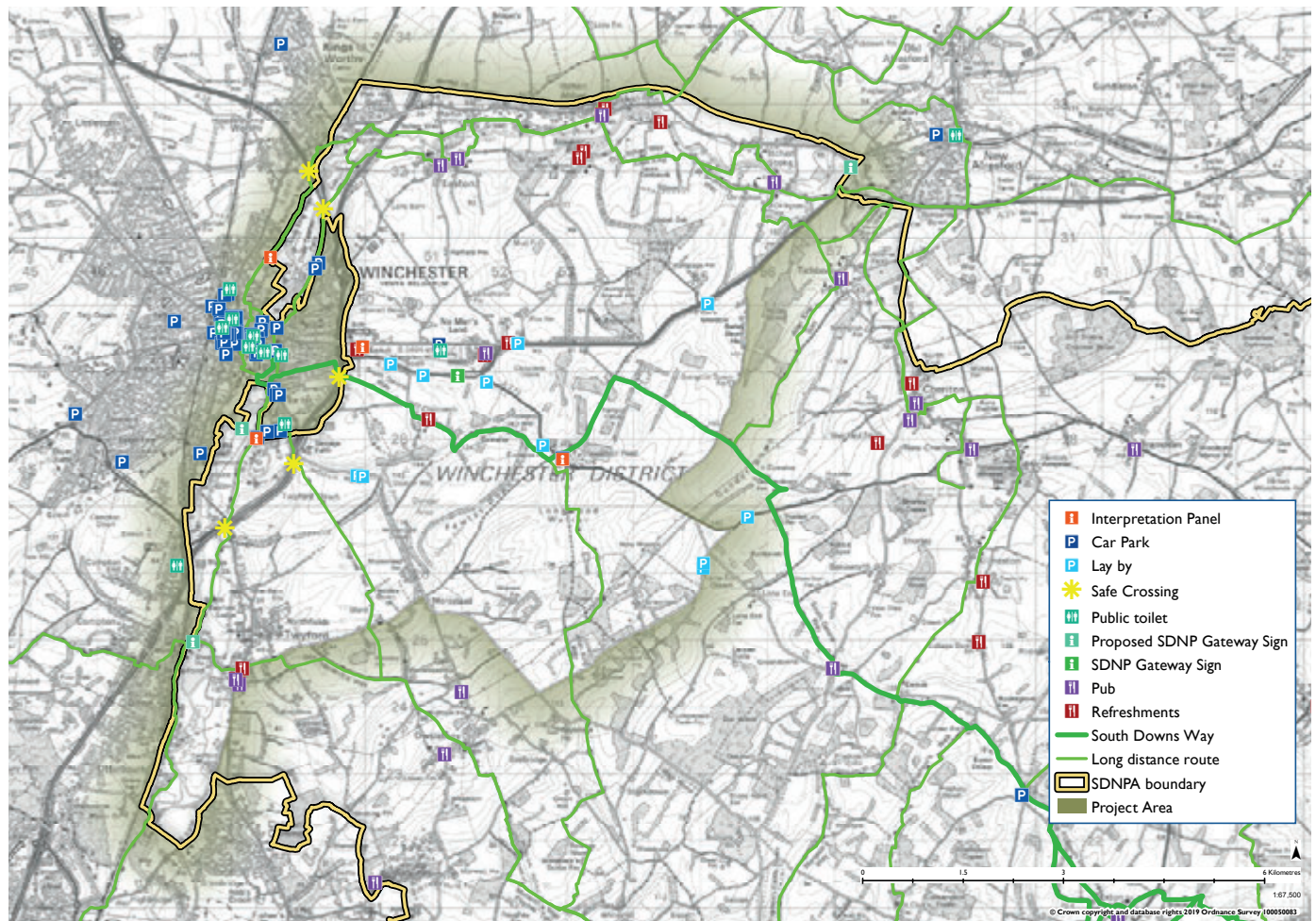
The lack of visitor facilities was discussed during the workshop sessions. The need for a range of visitor facilities in the landscape was strongly supported. The facilities identified ranged from the provision for new parking areas and enhancements at existing car parks, toilets/refreshments facilities, information hubs and the creation of a brand-new strategic gateway visitor centre somewhere on the edge of the National Park boundary. There was a consensus on the opportunities for enhanced information and communication associated with any scale of new facilities which fed back to the broader information and communication issues. Figure 20 (below) illustrates existing locations of facilities in the study area and further planning could take place around

the demand, availability and possible locations of existing and new facilities and their function.

Alongside the considerations around physical signage, stakeholders appreciated that there were also technological opportunities for expanding communication and messaging by developing, for example, a phone app, web pages and QR coding.

Specific examples of opportunities to improve information were cited in relation to increased interpretation for the Itchen Mill and along the river to raise awareness about such features and their local/national importance and for the internationally important River Itchen and its protection.

FIGURE 20: LOCATION OF EXISTING VISITOR FACILITIES AND INFORMATION



OPPORTUNITIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

| | |
|---|--|
| 1 | Create new gateway points on the urban edge marking the gateways to the National Park and provide information and low key facilities – eg, Twyford, Shawford and Dykes Farm, Winchester |
| 2 | Create a new central visitor hub building on the existing visitor destinations in the area – eg Science Centre (by agreement) or a new build on a key location at the edge of Winchester. Such a hub would provide facilities and information and a sustainable transport interchange |
| 3 | Prepare a communications strategy for the study area that will introduce a quality standard for signage, encourage consistent messages and include clear wording relating to the status of the landscape and land management |
| 4 | Design a phone app which provides information on the landscape and its management along key routes – eg Itchen valley. |
| 5 | Review the demand and supply of existing facilities and where issues are occurring in the landscape due to their shortage. |



STRATEGIC ISSUE 3: ACCESS AND RECREATION



Ranked as the third most important issue by stakeholders, access and recreation issues included:

- Reduced quality of recreational experience along routes which pass through the urban fringe.
- Limited options to access the National Park on foot from Winchester.
- Gaps in the cycle network with scope for joining existing routes and creating circular routes around Winchester which may extend into the study area and link to transport hubs.
- Lack of car parks leading to irresponsible parking on verges (this overlaps with the Infrastructure and Development Pressure strategic issue in that increased development will increase the demand for access to the SDNP and increased need for associated infrastructure like car parking).
- Wild camping in the National Park.
- Dogs which are not kept under close control having adverse impacts upon the wildlife and river quality.

Stakeholders were asked to identify on maps which places/areas were easiest to access and most popular to visit within the study area. Figure 21 (below) illustrates the distribution of these areas

along with identified key views. The following observations emerged:

- The most popular areas that stakeholders visited were along the river Itchen valley and some of these areas are also easily accessible by car. The popularity of the Itchen valley can lead to over-use which in turn can affect the sensitive wildlife habitats.
- Local, notable and loved viewpoints are from areas of elevated open chalk downland with a cluster within the Longwood Warren Local Character Area.
- Large swathes of the study area which form extensive areas of arable farmland were not identified by the stakeholder group as key destinations or areas to visit.

The Itchen Valley was identified as one of the most popular and highly valued landscapes to visit in the study area. Closer to Winchester a number of accessibility issues were noted including:

- The M3 is a significant barrier which limits walking/cycling access and entry points into the National Park both through the physical barrier, but also the detours needed to reach crossing

points over the M3 which pass through industrial areas and the Winchester ring road.

- The underpasses at Junction 9a of the M3, and those where the A34/A33 cross the Itchen Valley are dark, long, damp and enclosed. The surfacing is poor and uneven, and one of the underpasses has limited headroom. The experience of using them could deter many potential walkers and cyclists even though they provide off road access between Winchester and the National Park
- The lack of public information about where to go, what to do, how to get there and how to respect the landscape and its wildlife. Stakeholders identified a need for enhanced local information that encourages guardianship of the landscape and wildlife.

Perhaps most significantly, the pop up consultations in Winchester revealed that many people from the city travelled to Farley Mount (a Forestry Commission site to the west of Winchester) or to the New Forest National Park for countryside recreation rather than the South Downs National Park on their doorstep. The reasons given included that there was more to see and do at these locations, whereas the South Downs felt like unknown territory.

The access resource of the study area includes important areas of accessible natural greenspace such as Magdalen Hill Down and St Catherine's Hill close to the city. However, studies into accessible natural greenspace beyond the urban edge of the study area have shown that there is an under provision of access to natural greenspace sites that meet any of the criteria listed by Natural England⁴⁴. The lack of key natural greenspace destinations in this part of the South Downs National Park exacerbates the access and recreation issues experienced by stakeholders, visitors, together with the pressures on the landscape.

The PRoW network across the study area is very variable both in the connectivity of routes and also level of provision. The nationally important South Downs Way starts/ends in Winchester and this is a hugely important resource for access and recreation. Other long distance paths include; St

Swithun's Way, the Itchen Way, Pilgrims Trail and Allan King Way. Whilst these are great assets for the PRoW network they often have poor circular connectivity. Other footpaths and bridleways form a network to the south of the area, whilst north of the A31, the area called 'No Mans Land' is almost devoid of access opportunities other than by narrow lanes and the occasional footpath with poor circular connectivity.

The stakeholders recognised these underlying factors concerning access and recreation and highlighted the following broad opportunities for improving the access and recreation 'offer' in the area. Examples were given to encourage more participation within the South Downs National Park for example; themed walks, stories in the landscape, sustainable transport provision and hubs' growing new tourism and farmshop businesses' developing new destinations' creating new gateways' creating circular walks from centres of population, landscape restoration of specific areas and improved signage and information.

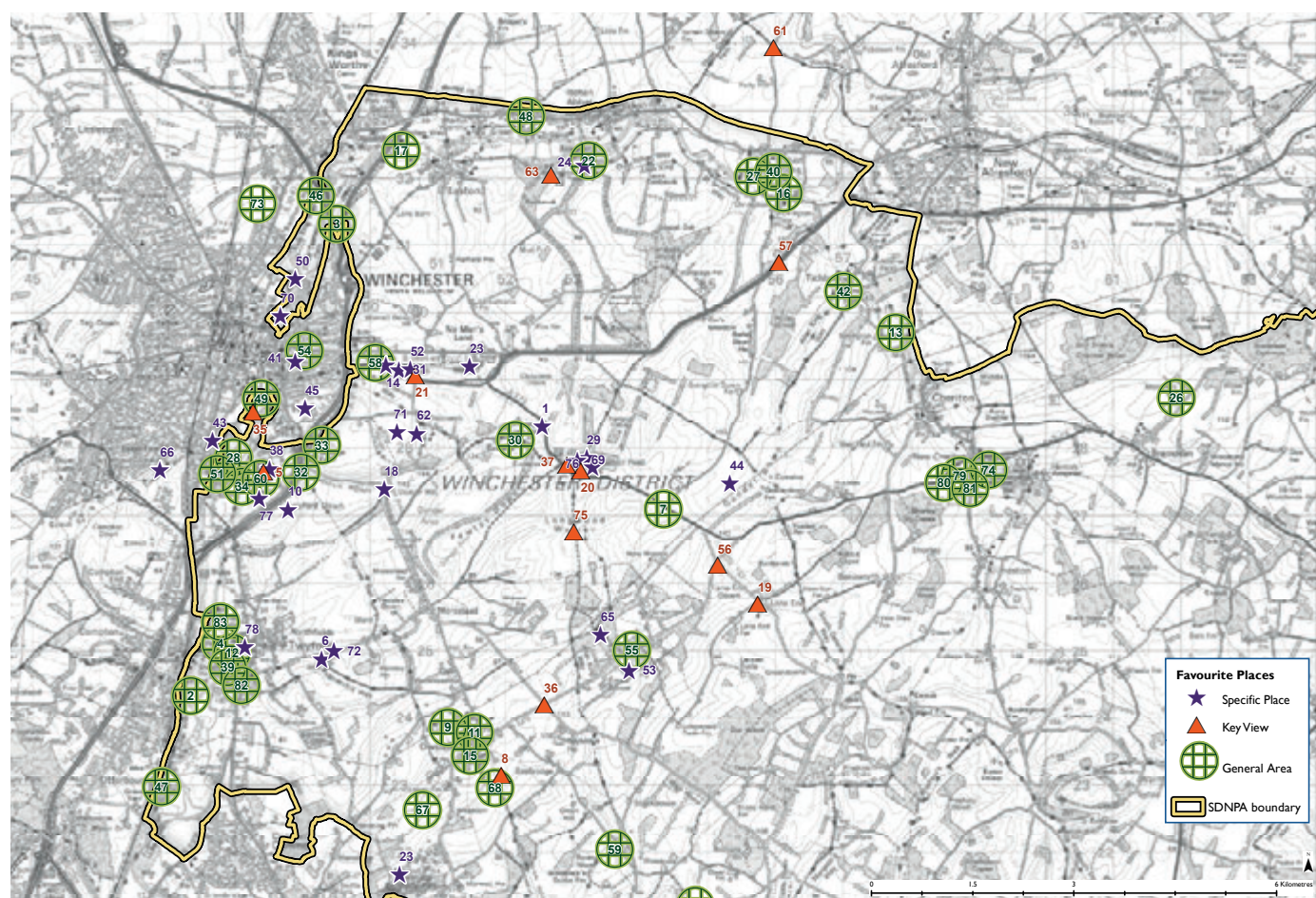
44 At least one two hectare site, no more than 300 metres (five minutes' walk) from home.

At least one accessible 20 hectare site within two kilometres of home.

One accessible 100 hectare site within five kilometres of home.

One accessible 500 hectare site within ten kilometres of home.

A minimum of one hectare of statutory Local Nature Reserves per thousand population.

FIGURE 21: FAVOURITE STAKEHOLDER DESTINATIONS AND VIEWPOINTS

OPPORTUNITIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

| | |
|----------|--|
| 1 | Targeted Access improvements; <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Seek opportunities to create circular routes – (this links to planning) Identify where improvements to the network would unlock it for a range of users including upgrading road under passes Look for new routes and connections into existing long distance routes Themed and guided walks |
| 2 | Embrace new technologies including virtual tours, phone app, QR codes, create virtual tours for less mobile visitors. |
| 3 | Connect farms and local pubs restaurants and cafes to establish a local network of producers and consumers, encouraging outlets to source and sell local produce and also helping local producers to orientate towards local value added sales. |
| 4 | Create new viewpoints , and destinations along existing routes – eg St Catherines Hill (northside restoration) and Cheesefoot Head and the Bowl on the South Downs Way. |
| 5 | Investigate and consider opportunities for a new visitor destination and additional visitor facilities. (overlap with Strategic Issue 1 & 2) |



STRATEGIC ISSUE 4: LAND MANAGEMENT



Land management issues discussed by the stakeholders included:

- Farming practices.
- Farm diversification and the possible secondary effects from this.
- Conservation land management.
- Incentives for farmers and landowners to provide environmental enhancements.
- Discouraging antisocial behaviour and crime.
- Raising the profile and local voice of farming and farmers.

All of the landscape character areas in the study area are farmed landscapes of one type or another (see Figure 7). For example, areas of chalk grassland have been created and are sustained by grazing animals. Their droppings feed a range of invertebrates and as the manure breaks down it helps the growth of microbes in the soil and the start of the food chain. Grazing within a mosaic of woods, hedges and water can produce real benefits to landscape ecology and hence character. Therefore, supporting the retention of grazing animals in the landscape is absolutely key to long term regeneration of soils, nature and natural beauty.

Additionally, in the west and north of the study area along the River Itchen and its catchment, flood risk management is another important consideration for land management, this is also an aspect of the Watercress and Winterbourns HLF Project run by the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust (linking with many other partners including the Environment Agency and Natural England).

The study area is covered by part of the Winchester Downs Farm Cluster. The South Downs National Park actively promotes the development of farm clusters as there is a wide range of landscape-scale benefits which can be achieved through farmers working together in this way across large tracts of land (see Figure 3). Covering approximately 44% of the study area, a significant number of landowners within its boundary are engaged with the Winchester Downs Farm Cluster, meaning that considerable knowledge and experience of land management through farming can be shared. The Winchester Downs Farm Cluster is already undertaking a range of different projects including: Soil Health and Farm Carbon, Looking at Regenerative Agriculture including cover cropping and working with Water Companies, habitat restoration and mapping, and farmland bird monitoring.

Other landowners can also achieve benefits to nature and landscape through conservation management practices. Hockley Golf Course⁴⁵ is a good example of voluntary conservation management within a formal golf course layout where careful management of the course roughs and fairways has increased their value as species rich chalk downland. Much of the site is a local wildlife site (LWS) and has two scheduled ancient monuments (SAM). The Golf Club markets the historic landscape in which the course sits and its location and land management features strongly in all promotional material.

Other Issues raised included:

- Lack of car parks causing accesses to farm property to be restricted with irresponsible parking.
- Connection to local farm produce from farm to fork.
- Investigation of Community Supported Agriculture⁴⁶.
- Farmers and landowners helping to ameliorate the effects of climate change through planting trees, providing natural flood management, soil retention and carbon capture.
- Understanding farming is a great way of making connections between landscape, food, and environment.
- Change of land use and farm diversification.

In 2024, a new Environmental Land Management scheme (ELM) replacing previous agri-environment schemes, will pay farmers for environmental services and benefits based on the principle of 'public money for public goods'. Aims of ELM include:

- Provide a complementary or alternative income stream within a farm business.
- Show how less fertile or 'un-productive' land, can add value to the economy, community and to nature if given the appropriate conservation land management (i.e. increase its natural capital value). This could also apply to local authority amenity greenspace outside the ELM process.

- Encourage protection and enhancement of key economic assets (including soils & water) and services (including pollination & air purification).
- Make the business of farming more sustainable, resilient, and profitable.

This is an approach echoed in the Glover Review⁴⁷ which states that:

"it is essential that farmers and land managers are meaningfully involved in the process of shaping ELM and this should be done through engagement in the [protected landscape] Management Plan".

In preparing for the significant changes coming to farming in the study area, a number of opportunities were identified by the stakeholders. These included:

- Promoting the Winchester Downs Farm Cluster to the people of Winchester.
- Facilitating wildlife safaris around farms.
- Increased diversification of farms where it is appropriate to do so.
- Optimising opportunities for farmers to help with climate change challenges – particularly water conservation and purification through creating new habitats in the right places.
- Making farmed landscapes 'wilder' and maximising biodiversity.
- Increasing the amount of land which is farmed Regeneratively or Organically.
- Exploring opportunities for community farming.
- Having stronger physical connections with local businesses and tourist attractions.

45 hockleygolfclub.com/hockley_heritage

46 <https://communitysupportedagriculture.org.uk/>

47 Julian Glover (2019) Landscapes Review. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/833726/landscapes-review-final-report.pdf [Date Accessed: 09/01/20]

OPPORTUNITIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

| | |
|---|--|
| 1 | Facilitate support for mixed farming look at grazing partnerships, mobile abattoirs and butchery services. |
| 2 | Seek opportunities to naturalise the wider Itchen catchment for flood management and biodiversity and also the river Itchen corridor within Winchester |
| 3 | Liaise with the farm cluster and all landowners over access management and maintenance funding for access routes. |
| 4 | Connect up the hedgerows and headlands on field boundaries between owners, reinstate historic boundaries with hedgerows where possible and create smaller field patterns, incorporate chalk downland reinstatement within strategic approaches for water purification, pollination and connectivity between habitats. |
| 5 | Recognise the farm cluster and it's value in any local decision making processes. |



STRATEGIC ISSUE 5: LANDSCAPE, ECOLOGY AND HERITAGE ASSETS



Stakeholders strongly believed that biodiversity and heritage qualities of the study area were special and make the landscape distinctive. Many comments related to the need to celebrate these factors. Similarly, the biodiversity and heritage resource need to be maintained, protected, and enhanced.

Consultation highlighted concerns regarding conflicts between access and biodiversity such as the impact of disturbance and erosion of the river banks by dogs in the River Itchen valley. Similarly, in relation to biodiversity, stakeholders identified concerns regarding the physical fragmentation of sites and habitats, damage caused by recreational pressure and a lack of a joined up approach to address these issues including a lack of advice to farmers.

Some of the many issues raised included the following:

- Lack of understanding around historic landscape (e.g. barrows and historic routes) and its importance and vulnerability.
- Loss of grazing animals from the landscape is likely to change the landscape & biodiversity – historically, this has always been a part of local farming.
- How to retain traditional skills and practices, including farming practices, language, and dialect.
- How to connect new developments into the historic landscape and bring it alive for new residents.
- Risks to the landscape from changes in farm practices (e.g. loss of grazing animals) and farm diversification. The landscape is shaped by farming.
- Loss of tranquillity across the area (e.g. more cars, more people, new development, 'rat running' put in single quotes and the indirect effects from new ventures (e.g. large events leave a legacy in the landscape – storage facilities and temporary measures which remain for lengthy periods of time).
- Recreational pressure damaging places such as St Catherine's Hill.
- The fundamental importance of soil health, to underpin all nature's functions
- Individuals and groups undertaking work around cultural heritage which is not joined up.
- Habitat restoration which joins up sites, big and small (e.g. road verges, gardens, amenity greenspace, parish conservation areas). Habitat fragmentation was recognised as having a negative effect on the biodiversity of

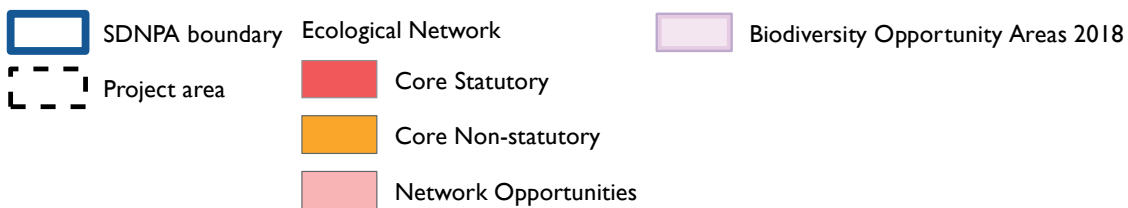
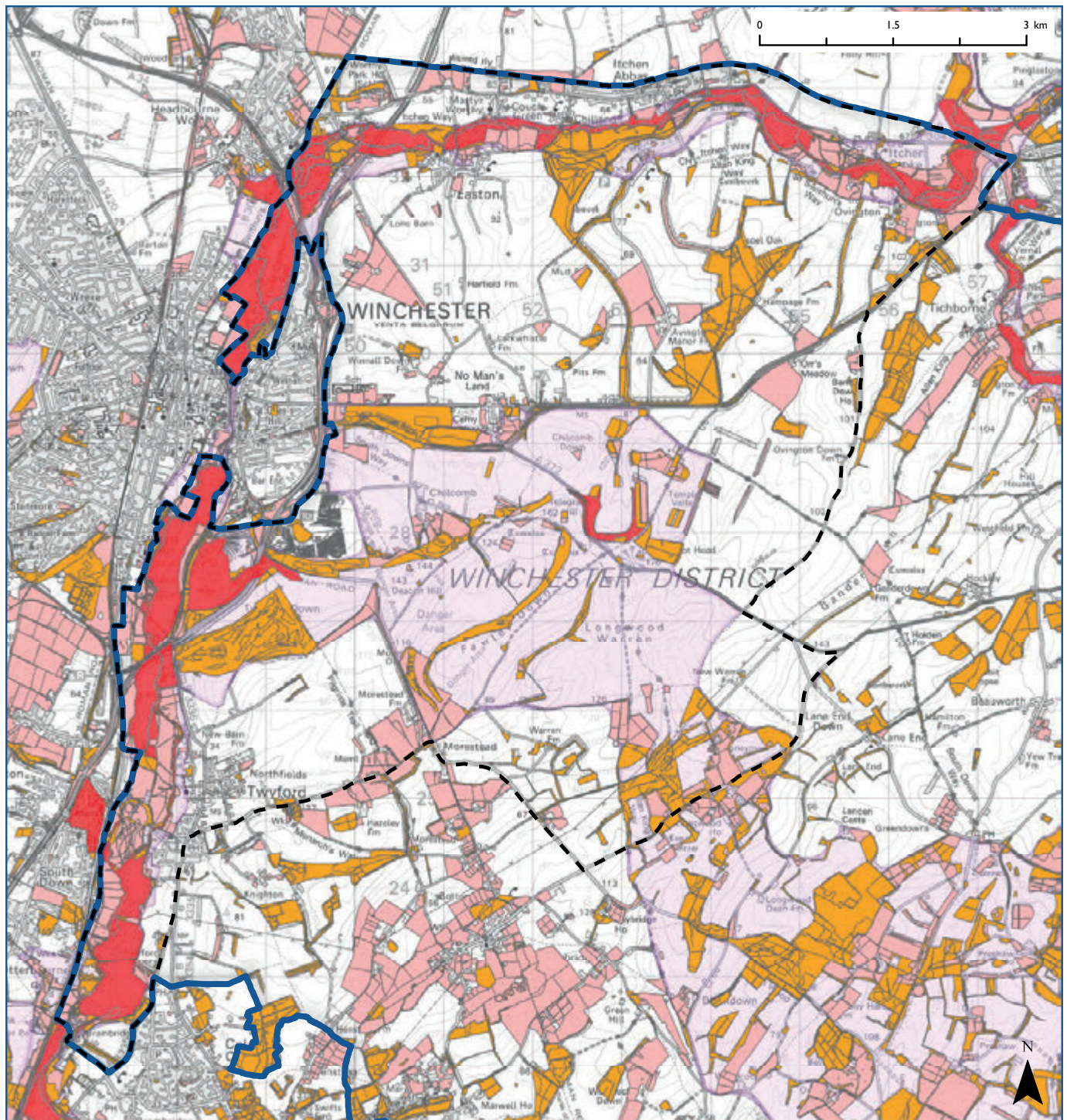
the study area, leading to isolated populations and loss of habitat resilience to the effects of climate change and intensive agriculture. Chalk downland distribution is a good example of how habitats are increasingly isolated as islands. There are a number of Chilcomb Vale Pollinator Connections which are being promoted to, and through, landowners with land on the east side of the valley including Magdalen Hill Down and Deacon Hill, across the MoD range and WCC sports ground. This approach could be a springboard for a wider extended pollinator network – possibly working with Beelines.⁴⁸

- How to integrate the planning system with a strategic approach to the landscape on issues including biodiversity, green infrastructure, traffic, key views between Winchester and the National Park

As a point of reference, opportunities to improve biodiversity within the area and potential for habitat creation have been identified through ecological network mapping prepared by Natural England and Hampshire County Council, see Figure 22 below.

OPPORTUNITIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | Target areas of known poor connectivity and low habitat value. Work with landowners and other stakeholders to create habitats and links between them |
| 2 | Create areas of new woodland and better manage the existing woodlands in the area. Use a woodland opportunity map Woodland opportunity mapping Climate Action (takeclimateaction.uk) combined with the HCC ecological connectivity mapping to identify areas where woodland could improve biodiversity. |
| 3 | Research new ways for monitoring biodiversity – eg citizen science, farmers using new technologies. Identify key indicators and track records to monitor trends. |
| 4 | Set up community heritage projects including improvements to interpretation and access. Look for ways to connect with local heritage organisations eg Winchester Museum. |
| 5 | Protect tranquillity to preserve the inherent qualities of the landscape , undertake studies on traffic and public transport to understand and anticipate future needs and trends. Develop an approach to deter rat running and promote rural lanes for recreation with the Highway Authority |
| 6 | Develop a ‘biodiversity is everywhere’ approach with local authorities, caretakers, house holders so that all land can contribute to a wider approach to habitat connectivity – gardens, road verges, amenity greenspace, with adjustments to management and maintenance. |
| 7 | Work with local planning teams to implement a strategic and cross boundary approach to the landscape which recognises and assists with addressing the recognised threats and risks to the landscape. |

FIGURE 22: HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL ECOLOGICAL NETWORK

Source: HCC



STRATEGIC ISSUE 6: SOCIAL ISSUES



Social issues formed 8% of the responses from stakeholders. Headline issues related to crime, dogs not kept under control, litter & fly-tipping and safety on rural roads (see Figure 16 and Appendix F.

The following key issues were raised:

- Addressing the issues in hotspots for antisocial activity by encouraging positive behaviour change.
- Minimising rural crime including rural car park targeting and considering the concern that improving access to the landscape may unintentionally increase crime levels.
- New 'wild' camping in the landscape (i.e. camping not in recognised campsites). This is often accompanied with making fire pits and litter being left behind – sometimes all of the camping equipment is abandoned.
- A lack of toilet facilities which can lead to hedgerows and woodland being used for this purpose instead.
- Litter and fly-tipping.
- A transport system which is geared around motor vehicles and not towards cycle or pedestrian access, which limits their use and reduces sustainable travel options.
- A lack of safe places to cross main roads especially the A272 and A31.
- A lack of public transport which limits accessibility for a range of potential visitor. Boomtown Festival was cited as introducing antisocial activities. Discussions relating to this event highlighted a lack of respect for boundaries in the countryside, general management of festival goers and lack of toilet facilities meaning that landowners and local residents are having to provide a general information service to festival goers (and other visitors).

OPPORTUNITIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

| | |
|----------|---|
| 1 | Develop a targeted and coordinated approach to positive behaviour change in the landscape around Winchester |
| 2 | Provide information about the location of key facilities in well used and known locations |
| 3 | Work with the highway authority and planning departments to identify key optimal main road crossing locations & seek funding through Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)/Department for Transport (DfT) |
| 4 | Explore digital ways of positively promoting the countryside code and encouraging responsible access to the countryside |
| 5 | Prepare a health impact assessment of the study area to understand the risks to health and safety and propose solutions |
| 6 | Fund targeted outdoor transport to increase accessibility and use of the landscape for recreation. Including accessibility for all, cycling friendly buses, walking back drop offs, drop off and pickups and service integration. |
| 7 | Explore ways to make use of rural lanes safer for non-motorised users – use of the verges for green pavements, through increased hedgerow and verge maintenance in key locations, ‘behind the hedge’ routes, speed limits and traffic management measures. |



STRATEGIC ISSUE 7: CLIMATE CHANGE AND POLLUTION



Pollution in the study area, noise and air in particular, were identified as an issue by 18% of the stakeholder responses. (see Figure 16).

The study area forms an important part of the chalk aquifer catchment for the River Itchen where the water quality and water flow have been subject to a research project undertaken by Portsmouth University on behalf of Salmon and Trout Conservation⁴⁹. This three year project has shown how phosphate levels adversely affect the ecology of Itchen's chalk streams, watercress beds and fish, and how sedimentation as a result of runoff disrupts freshwater invertebrates which are vital in maintaining its freshwater ecosystems.

Other specific issues raised included:

- Untreated runoff from transport routes within catchments which adversely affects water courses.
- Nitrogen enrichment of habitats from air pollution caused by traffic, agricultural fertilizers and new development.
- Nitrate neutrality measures introduced during 2020 need a strategic landscape scale approach to address multiple issues and contribute to multiple benefits in the landscape.
- The importance of reducing pesticide use to achieve healthy natural soils which can also then provide significant levels of carbon sequestration as climate change mitigation.
- There are noTable changes to water courses in the study area due to extreme weather events resulting from climate changespace (e.g. wide variations in flow rates due to drought or sudden inundations due to rainfall which causes flooding and increase sediment runoff).
- Winterbourne watercourses which are characteristic of the chalk aquifer environment are often dry all year affecting the health and status of the water course.
- The condition of the soil and its nutrient levels within this largely arable agricultural landscape.
- Air quality along the major transport corridors such as the M3.

49 Using high-frequency phosphorus monitoring for water quality management: a case study of the upper River Itchen, UK. (2020) Gary R. Fones & Adil Bakir & Janina Gray & Lauren Mattingley & Nick Measham & Paul Knight & Michael J. Bowes & Richard Greenwood & Graham A. Mills, In Environmental Monitoring and Assessment.

NATURE BASED SOLUTIONS TO ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

The study area has the potential to address some of these issues through changes to land management and land use, such as the creation of new areas of chalk grassland and woodland which can assist with carbon sequestration, soil and water quality and address air pollution.

Using natural solutions for environmental issues can also contribute towards climate change mitigation through carbon sequestration as a secondary function (e.g. natural flood management, upper catchment tree planting, cover crop use, no plough farming and arable reversion).

OPPORTUNITIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | Work with Winchester City Council (WCC), Winchester Action on Climate Change (WinACC) (winacc.org.uk/), the Science Centre and others to develop climate change initiatives, taking into account the SDNP Climate change adaptation plan and specifically to quantify and evaluate relating to this study area. Examples would be tree planting for natural flood management, arable reversion for nitrate neutrality, |
| 2 | Establish a monitoring system for capturing and quantifying activities which mitigate the effects of climate change and pollution, including tree planting, natural flood management, soil regeneration and carbon capture, including the Farm Carbon Toolkit ⁵⁰ . |
| 3 | Develop a strategic approach to spatial planning for climate change which includes things like nitrate neutrality, carbon offsetting, water purification, air purification, soil regeneration so that land can provide multiple benefits from optimum locations |
| 4 | Work with Highways England and the highway authorities to find ways to filter and improve surface water run off from roads through natural three stage filtering – eg reed and willow beds |
| 5 | Make the River Itchen water quality a spatial targeting project – undertake research using GIS mapping to identify the most beneficial areas for changes to be made working with key partners like Southern Water and Natural England and the Catchment Sensitive Farming Officer (CSFO). |



CHAPTER 6: THE FORWARD PLAN

EAST WINCHESTER LANDSCAPE FORWARD PLAN

The evidence base (from the consultation and engagement work and desktop research), the vision, five key principles, and the seven strategic issues together with their opportunity statements have been used to prepare a suite of actions to shape the work which will help to deliver the vision for the East Winchester Landscape and to help address the issues that emerged from the landscape conversation. The landscape forward plan has set out details in relation to scope of the initiative, suggested partners for delivery and targets and key performance indicators.

FIGURE 23: THE ELEMENTS OF THE STUDY WHICH CONTRIBUTE TO THE FORWARD PLAN



PLAN

The Forward Plan is a reference document for the stakeholders both old and new to use to inform new projects and initiatives and to aid collaboration; to help them to be consistent with the ethos and findings of the project. It is not exhaustive and is of its time and place.

However, the Forward Plan is more than a 'starter for ten'. It has been prepared to set out important and ambitious actions that are required to overcome and reverse landscape degradation and improve

accessibility to the South Downs National Park. It requires careful and immediate consideration by the National Park Authority and hopefully by the stakeholders too so that the recommendations can become part of the day job and embedded into the psyche for planning, managing, living and working and playing in this part of the National Park. All of the actions will need resources which will be most successfully found through collaboration and partnership working.

TABLE 6: EAST WINCHESTER LANDSCAPE FORWARD PLAN: STRATEGIC ACTIONS

| Strategic Initiatives | Key partners | Targets & KPIs |
|---|--|---|
| S1 Set up an M3 task force responsible for delivering the green bridge and to deliver the package of measures identified by partnership working in 2019. See Appendix XX for more details. | SDNPA (lead) Highways Authority Landowners HCC WCC HIOWWT | Creation of a Green Bridge Patronage of Downs beyond the M3. Noise reduction either side of the M3; Improved air quality through Nature based solutions Quantity of new priority habitat created; |
| S2 Create a East Winchester landscape forum with the aim of connecting parties together in decision making and coordinating the implementation of opportunities and initiatives. The forum will also serve as an opportunity to share knowledge and experience. | SDNPA (lead) All stakeholders | Annual Forum Meeting. Quasi-formal set up with a 3 year rotating chairperson, supported by officer administration. Number of different stakeholders actively participating. |
| S3 Prepare a detailed green infrastructure map of critical natural capital and identify opportunities for habitat creation, especially chalk grassland and woodland, improved access and environmental management solutions to assist in mitigating the effects of climate change. | | Length of new access. Quantity of new open access. Increase in priority habitats. Nature based measures to address water quality, soil quality and natural flood management |
| S4 Prepare a communications strategy for the study area that will introduce a quality standard for signage, encourage consistent messages, and include clear wording relating to the status of the landscape and land management. | WCC (Tourism) HIOWWT SDNPA HCC (Economic dev) Farm Cluster | Task group Existing Baseline Brief Downloadable pdfs for standard signs for landowners (NFNP example) |
| S5 Establish a pilot programme with the Farm Cluster to prepare for the new ELM scheme, likely training requirements to support diversification and land management support to maximise biodiversity gain and access management in the longer term. | | |
| S6 Establish a programme to monitor activities which are prescribed to mitigate the effects of climate change. This should include tree planting, natural flood management. soil retention and carbon capture. | | Area of woodland planted Area of priority grassland habitat Area of wetland habitat CO2 sequestration by habitat |

| Suite Initiatives for S1 Infrastructure and Development M3 task force | Key partners | Targets & KPIs |
|---|---|------------------|
| <p>Improve the landscape corridor of the M3 through working at scale to achieve chalk grassland creation and native tree and hedge planting.</p> <p>Target new measures where they will provide most benefits for ecosystem services - like clean water, noise reduction, air pollution reduction, habitat connectivity.</p> <p>Undertake improvements to the A34/M3 rights of way underpasses to increase their accessibility and perception of personal safety.</p> <p>Develop an access, connectivity and interpretation strategy for the rights of way network around the M3 to address the severance caused by the road.</p> | <p>Landowners HCC WCC Winchester CTC (Cycling UK), Highways England project team, national team and designated funds team, Hampshire and IOW Wildlife Trust</p> | <p>Long term</p> |

| Suite Initiatives for S3 Green Infrastructure | Key partners | Targets & KPIs |
|--|--|--|
| <p>Prioritise sustainable transport with free parking and charging points for electric cars, electric bus park and ride service, cycle hire.</p> | <p>Landowners HCC WCC Winchester CTC (Cycling UK)</p> | <p>Long term</p> |
| <p>Creation of new public rights of way (bridleways, cycleways and footpaths) which connect to form a network and provide new opportunities to view the wider landscape,</p> | <p>SDNPA (lead) Farm clusters Access groups</p> | <p>Priority access routes to the SDNP identified.</p> |
| <p>Creation of new circular routes (bridleways, cycleways and footpaths) focusing on improving access from the urban area, and relieving recreational pressure on sensitive sites</p> | <p>SDNPA (lead) Farm clusters Access groups</p> | |
| <p>Review of parking. Creation of transport hubs – park and ride to the National Park. Creation of low key, small scale parking areas associated with publicised walks/views accessed using electric vehicles.</p> | <p>SDNPA (lead) Council highways depts</p> | |
| <p>Creation of new vistas and views as destinations along recreation routes. Enhance existing viewpoints, such as St Catherine's Hill and Cheesefoot Head.</p> | <p>Farm clusters Landowners HIOWWT</p> | <p>Area of scrub clearance Additional access secured</p> |
| <p>Improve east-west sustainable transport options across the National Park.</p> | <p>HCC WC</p> | |
| <p>Grassland verge initiative which seeks to improve biodiversity along the network of rural lanes throughout the area.</p> | <p>Farm clusters Landowners Plantlife Hampshire Highways Authority</p> | |

| Suite Initiatives for S3 Green Infrastructure | Key partners | Targets & KPIs |
|---|--|---|
| Work with landowners to target biodiversity enhancement in areas where biodiversity is known to be poor or poorly connected. Use existing habitat mapping to identify opportunity areas. | Farm cluster Landowners HIOWWT Natural England | New priority habitat Connectivity measure |
| Creation of new woodland and management of existing woodland connecting existing habitats. Appropriate locations for these habitats to be informed by landscape character and improvements to the ecological network. | Farm cluster Landowners HIOWWT Natural England | New woodland Management of existing Wooded landscape plan |
| Seek opportunities to increase the use of natural flood management techniques. Consider River Itchen and River Itchen Navigation Channel as river systems. To reduce the likelihood of potentially conflicting objectives this initiative should consider other existing plans and programmes, such as The Test and Itchen Restoration Strategy. | Environment Agency Natural England Landowners Farm clusters | |
| Creation of new gateway points on the urban edge marking the gateway to the National Park and providing information and low key facilities e.g. Twyford/Shawford and Dykes Farm, Winchester; and the Bespoke Biking Café at St Catherine's Hill. | Landowners Farm cluster Developer Local business | |
| Creation of a new central visitor hub on the existing visitor destinations in the area possible locations; e.g. Science Centre and city centre resources such as Winchester City Mill (National Trust) and the Tourist Centre. The new South Downs Visitor Hub would offer facilities and information and provide a location for a sustainable transport interchange. This hub should seek to be a destination from which the wider downs can be explored and where information on the downs is readily accessible. The location of this centre needs to be visually and physically connected to the landscape resource such that it can celebrate the special qualities of the wider area in a way which is tangible to the visitor and encourages engagement and exploration. | Landowners National Trust Science Centre Winchester TIC Landowners | |
| Link public engagement and educational activities through a Country Trust ⁵¹ bringing together parties, such as schools, clubs and youth groups, and visitor destinations such as the Science Centre and farms. For example, to provide experiences of tranquillity and dark night skies and in managing landscape for biodiversity | Hampshire Country Trust Science Centre Marwell Zoo Farm cluster Landowners | |

| Suite Initiatives for S3 Green Infrastructure | Key partners | Targets & KPIs |
|---|---|----------------|
| Integrate with existing health and wellbeing initiatives, such as Winchester Health Walks and social prescribing. | Ramblers Walking for Health Hampshire CHC | |
| Establishment of apps which provide information on the landscape and its management along key routes e.g. Itchen Mill and River Itchen. | | |
| Establishment of virtual tours for the less mobile | | |
| Connect farms and local pubs, restaurants and cafes and seek to establish a local produce charter which encourages outlets to source and sell local produce from farms within the area. | Farm clusters Restaurants and cafes village shops | |
| Establish rotating programme of farmer's markets and local crafts in each village/core destination within the area which celebrate the landscape and conservation work. | Farm clusters Landowners WCC (Tourism) SDNPA | |
| Creation of new satellite destinations focused on enjoyment of the landscape (farm safaris, farm shops, heritage sites, key views, woodlands, pubs) which are connected via existing and new footpath and cycle routes. | Farm clusters Landowners WCC (Tourism) SDNPA | |

| Suite Initiatives for S4 ELM Pilot | Key partners | Targets & KPIs |
|---|--|----------------------------|
| Integrate initiatives such as nitrate and carbon offsetting, developers with the emerging ELM and other payments through private arrangements which will support payment for public goods. | Farm cluster Landowners Defra | Ha under new agreement |
| Work with landowners to target biodiversity enhancement in areas where biodiversity is known to be poor or poorly connected. Use existing habitat mapping to identify target areas. | Farm clusters Landowners HIOWWT Natural England | New priority habitat areas |
| Creation of new woodland and management of existing woodland connecting existing habitats. Appropriate locations for these habitats to be informed by existing landscape character areas and to achieve improvements to the biodiversity network. | Farm clusters Landowners HIOWWT Natural England | Long term |

| Suite Initiatives for S4 ELM Pilot | Key partners | Targets & KPIs |
|---|--|----------------|
| Work with Winchester Downs farm cluster to undertake land management activity which delivers improved soil health, increased biodiversity and water quality in a way which conserves and enhances the special qualities of the different landscape areas e.g. the establishment of chalk grassland and animal grazing in areas of steep topography emphasising dry valleys. | Landowners Farm cluster SDNPA DEFRA/ NE | Long term |
| Develop infrastructure to support farmers in establishing mixed farming, including grazing partnerships and mobile abattoirs. | Landowners Farm clusters Defra Natural England | |
| In conjunction with existing plans and programmes, seek opportunities to increase the use of natural flood management techniques along the Itchen and the Navigations. Deculvert/decanalise river through Winchester to join up the water meadows. | Environment Agency Natural England Landowners Farm clusters | |
| Continue and expand the East Winchester Forum. Include new sectors of the community, particularly youth groups such as Scouts, Guides and Woodcraft Folk. Consider subgroups to focus on different initiatives and focusing on adapting to the future. | All existing Scouts Guides Woodcraft Folk Other youth groups | |
| Consider augmenting existing land app capability to include more information for landowners which provides information on the landscape and its management along key routes e.g. Itchen Mill and River Itchen. | | |
| Establishment of field information for public knowledge; develop an app which explains (with an updating facility for each location linked by satellite and farm) what is in each field, why and how it is being produced. | | |
| Connect farms and local pubs, restaurants and cafes and seek to establish a local produce charter which encourages outlets to source and sell local produce from farms within the area. | Farm clusters Restaurants and cafes village shops | |
| Champion local farmers as sustainable food producers and nature ambassadors. | Farm clusters Landowners | |
| Creation of new satellite destinations focused on enjoyment of the landscape (farm safaris, farm shops, heritage sites, key views, woodlands, pubs) which are connected via existing and new footpath and cycle routes. | Farm clusters Landowners | |
| Develop and support diversification initiatives such as sustainable tourism, including provision of visitor accommodation such as B&Bs and glamping. | Farm clusters Landowners & residents | |

| Suite Initiatives for S4 ELM Pilot | Key partners | Targets & KPIs |
|---|--------------|----------------|
| Identify training and support needs for landowners to assist with the administrative transition of ELM and be in a position to help deliver the strategic initiatives of the study area. | | |
| Facilitate mixed farming support for farmers by including grazing partnerships and mobile abattoirs. developing new destinations; necessary facilities for visitors; creating circular walks from centres of population; and, improved signage and information. Encourage smaller arable fields, maintenance of field boundaries and restoration of expansive open areas of chalk downland. | | |

| Suite Initiatives for S5 Communications Strategy | Key partners | Targets & KPIs |
|---|---|----------------|
| Consider how information can be better shared and targeted across the study area. | Landowners, WCC | |
| Establishment of community heritage projects enabling research and engagement with this rich archaeological landscape. Include improvements to interpretation and access. Seek opportunities to connect with work at Winchester Museum. | Winchester Museum HCC Farm clusters Landowners | |
| Link public engagement and educational activities through a Country Trust bringing together parties, such as schools, clubs and youth groups, and visitor destinations such as the Science Centre and farms. For example, to provide experiences of tranquillity and dark night skies and in managing landscape for the biodiversity. | Hampshire Country Trust Science Centre Marwell Zoo Farm clusters Landowners | |
| Seek to remove negative signage along access routes and improve positive signage. Include clear wording relating to the status of the landscape. | Landowners Farm clusters SDNP Comms | Short term |
| Establishment of apps which provide information about anything of importance to landowners and the people who visit the area especially e.g. recording anti-social issues. | | |

| Suite Initiatives for S6 Monitoring and response programme | Key partners | Targets & KPIs |
|--|---|----------------|
| Link public engagement and educational activities through a Country Trust bringing together parties, such as schools, clubs and youth groups, and visitor destinations such as the Science Centre and farms. For example, to provide experiences of tranquillity and dark night skies and in managing landscape for the biodiversity | Hampshire Country Trust Science Centre Marwell Zoo Farm clusters Landowners | |
| Establishment of apps which facilitate easy monitoring and reporting of information. | | |
| Seek opportunities for Citizen science projects to increase knowledge about and monitor biodiversity baseline. | HIOWWT Education institutions (colleges and universities) Farm clusters Landowners | |
| Work collaboratively with WCC, the Science Centre and others to develop climate change initiatives, taking account of the SDNP Climate Change Adaptation Plan, and specifically to identify actions relating to this study area. | WCC Science Centre Winchester Action for Climate Change Group | |

CONCLUSION

AFTER THE LANDSCAPE STUDY

This project has designed and utilised a collaborative process of engagement with stakeholders in the study area to hold a 'Landscape Conversation'. The evaluation results showed that stakeholders found the process was easy to contribute to and was also very worthwhile (see Figure 16). Participants were less confident that the plans that they had contributed to developing would be implemented.

Experience from other dialogue processes suggest that the response to the 'confidence' question is not unusual as this is about 'what happens next'. There is a recognition that implementing a landscape plan is a complex process with many interests and decision-makers. Confidence building will be an important early step in the development and implementation of the Forward Plan for the study area if the support of the stakeholders is to be maintained.

There are three further outcomes which have emerged from the stakeholder dialogue all of which could add value to the implementation of the Forward Plan for the study area:

- Development of **Human Capital**; defined as the increase of knowledge and skills required to contribute effectively to society. In the Landscape Conversation participants learnt more about the landscape, the views of other participants and different ways of working. There is an opportunity to further develop the knowledge and skills and empowerment of stakeholders to better support implementation through a continual engagement process;
- Creation of **Social Capital**; defined as connections and relationships that can potentially lead to greater co-operation and collaboration. Dialogue brings diverse interests together and helps people explore both differences and common ground. This was witnessed through this Landscape Conversation where people, brought together for the first time, identified common interests.

- **Solution Development**; during the consultation events a wide range of potential solutions were discussed, some of which will be taken forward in the study area's Forward Plan. Of importance here is that there will be a greater sense of ownership of the solutions because the people who might well be impacted by them have had a role in their development.

These three outcomes provide a potentially valuable resource for achieving environmental gain in the landscape east of Winchester; a 'Community of Interest' with the knowledge and skills to collaborate on a landscape scale.

LANDSCAPE AND ACCESSIBILITY

The project discovered two strategic and challenging questions that lie at the heart of this study:

- (1) Why is landscape integrity and distinctiveness becoming slowly degraded?
- (2) What makes this part of the SDNP less accessible than other areas of the National Park?

The stakeholder engagement process opened up dialogue around many diverse and interesting aspects. It revealed that stakeholders are knowledgeable and passionate about their countryside, their landscapes and culture. Overall, it can be concluded that stakeholders feel a decline in landscape quality is an issue for this part of the South Downs National Park with new development (houses) and infrastructure (roads) being held principally responsible alongside land management changes shaped by a current farm subsidy system which optimises production at the expense of the environment.

Accessibility discussions confirmed that there is a lack of access opportunities when compared with other areas of the South Downs National Park. In particular, the countryside to the centre and east of the study area is singularly deficient in large areas of accessible greenspace when compared with the rest of the National Park.

The M3 is a singularly negative force affecting a wide range of landscape and access factors including: tranquillity, noise, air quality, visual impact, habitats fragmentation and the desirability of access.

NEXT STEPS

Landscape quality is not just about it's appearance, it is also about how the landscape is functioning

- is it healthy or in decline?
- Are the habitats and species improving in number and quality?
- Are the waters clean
- is the air good to breathe and
- is the soil naturally regenerating?
- Are people able to enjoy and benefit from it's natural beauty.

These are big questions which the Landscape Conversation – this study – has opened up. It has identified an ambitious vision, key principles and seven strategic issues to prioritise actions which will drive forward delivery for reversing landscape fragmentation and improving accessibility for all. The South Downs National Park Authority is identified as needing to play an important leadership and facilitation role, working as ever, through the strong partnership spirit which defines the work of the National Park Authorities and through the dedication of the residents and stakeholders in the study area. This study is an important first step to a larger and longer process of achieving the vision for this important part of the national park.

The forward plan has recorded ideas and recommendations made during the workshops and in discussions with stakeholders. These are in outline and the development of these ideas into delivery processes will require more work by the stakeholders and statutory bodies.

The study was undertaken in 2019 /2020 and the public pressure to respond to the double climate and nature emergency in this country is increasing from many quarters. The long-awaited Environment Bill 2021 will confirm the production

of Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS) which are likely to be delivered by the County Councils and Unitary/Metropolitan Authorities. These strategies will shape a range of government delivery mechanisms from ELM through to the English Trees Action Plan 2021⁵² and the Nature for Climate fund⁵³. The Hampshire LNRS will also help to shape the interface between Winchester and the South Downs National Park and this study will feed into the priority setting for the strategy.

On the wider horizon the East Winchester Open Downland provides a potential chalk downland habitat link to the North Wessex Downs as part of the Big Chalk programme which seeks to coordinate nature and climate action across the protected chalk landscapes of the south of England. This could be a pivotal programme for the East Winchester area in re-establishing it's identity as part of the classic open downland of the South Downs National Park.

Stakeholders in the study area were positive about the engagement process and were pleased to be involved, however there was some doubt about the ability and resources for the National Park Authority to continue the work after the project finished. The feedback given by stakeholders at the end of Workshop 3 is photographed in Figure 4 below and it shows this concern clearly. The National Park Authority will need to carry out it's own prioritisation process following the study which reflects how increasingly limited resources are being stretched across the whole National Park. The National Park Authority believes that the work undertaken so far provides a good fit for current thinking on nature based solutions for a range of environmental issues, climate change and wide stakeholder engagement and that this will enable successful partnerships and funding to flow into the East Winchester Open Downland area.

52 gov.uk/government/publications/england-trees-action-plan-2021-to-2024

53 gov.uk/government/publications/ealart-23-march-2021-more-on-nature-for-climate-fund/ealart-23-march-2021-more-on-nature-for-climate-fund

FIGURE 24: PHOTOGRAPHS FROM THE THIRD WORKSHOP SHOWING THAT ATTENDEES FELT THE STAKEHOLDER PROCESS HAD BEEN WORTHWHILE BUT HAD DOUBTS ABOUT THE NEXT STEPS

