

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.

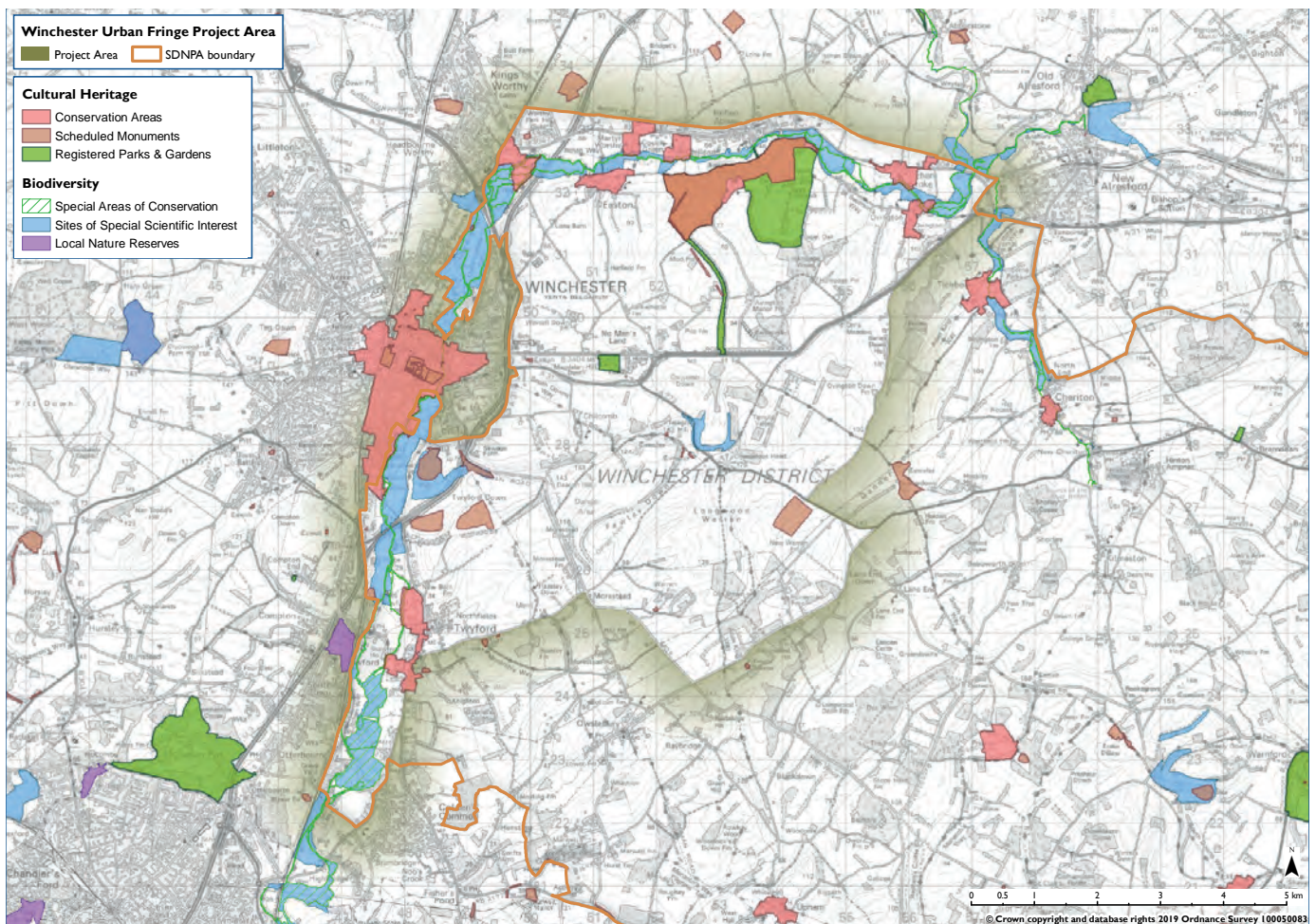
The Itchen Valley will include stable populations of beavers, otters, salmon and trout due to the success of the efforts to improve its water quality.

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 (SDNPA) 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),
- Specific land owner permissions pending further project development. NB Landowners are a key stakeholder group for the overall study,
- 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.

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.

⁶ Ref Figure 1 page 11 in the PANN Evidence report