



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 Conservation 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/

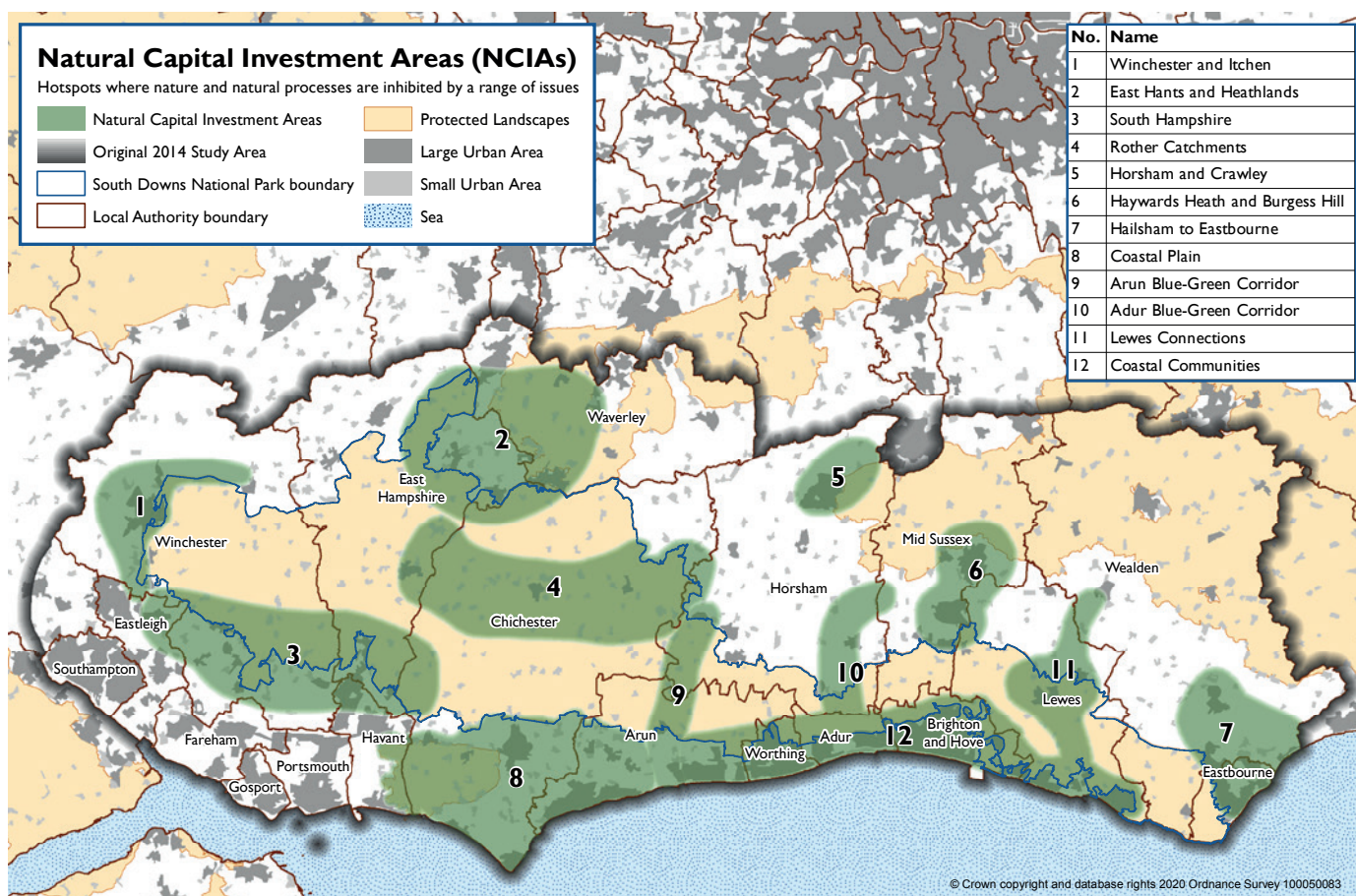
PANN as one of these strategic areas in need of action – NCIA 1 Winchester and the River Itchen. (See Figure 2).

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.eversite.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 (including heritage 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.

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

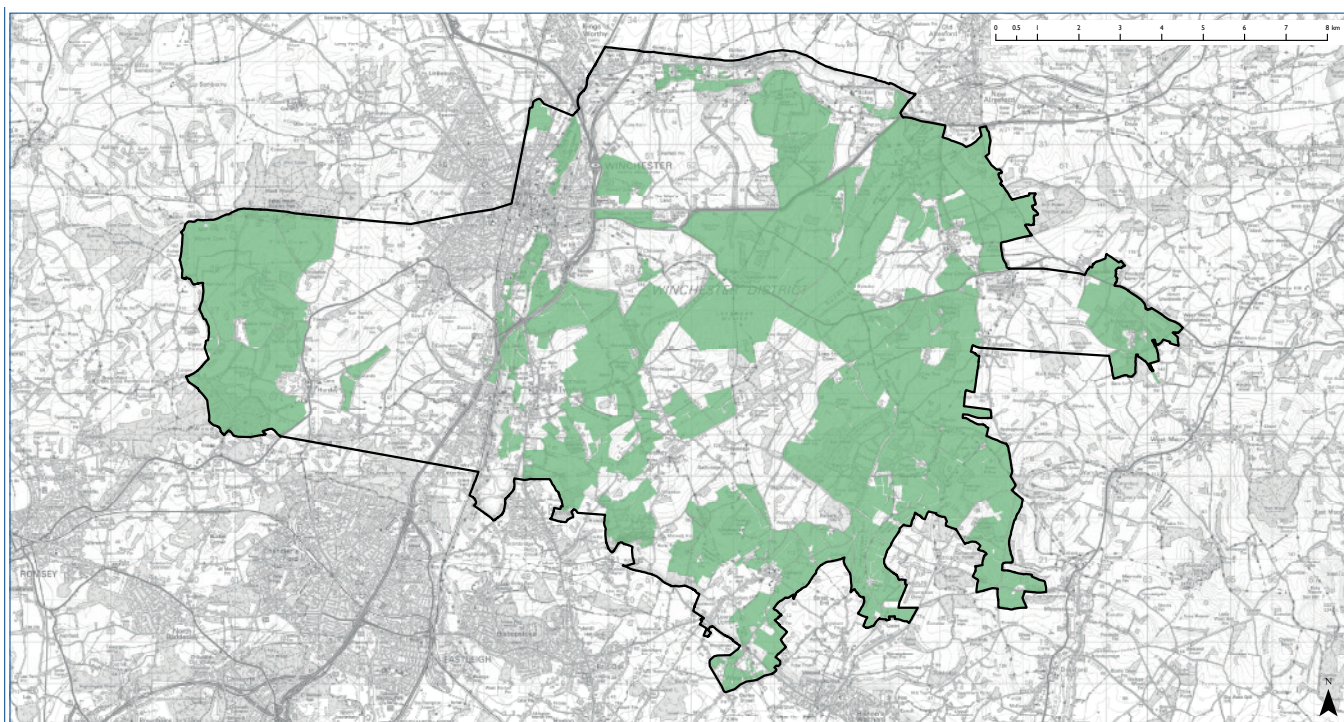
- i. Better understanding and communication by informing people about how farmers care for the landscape whilst producing quality food.

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

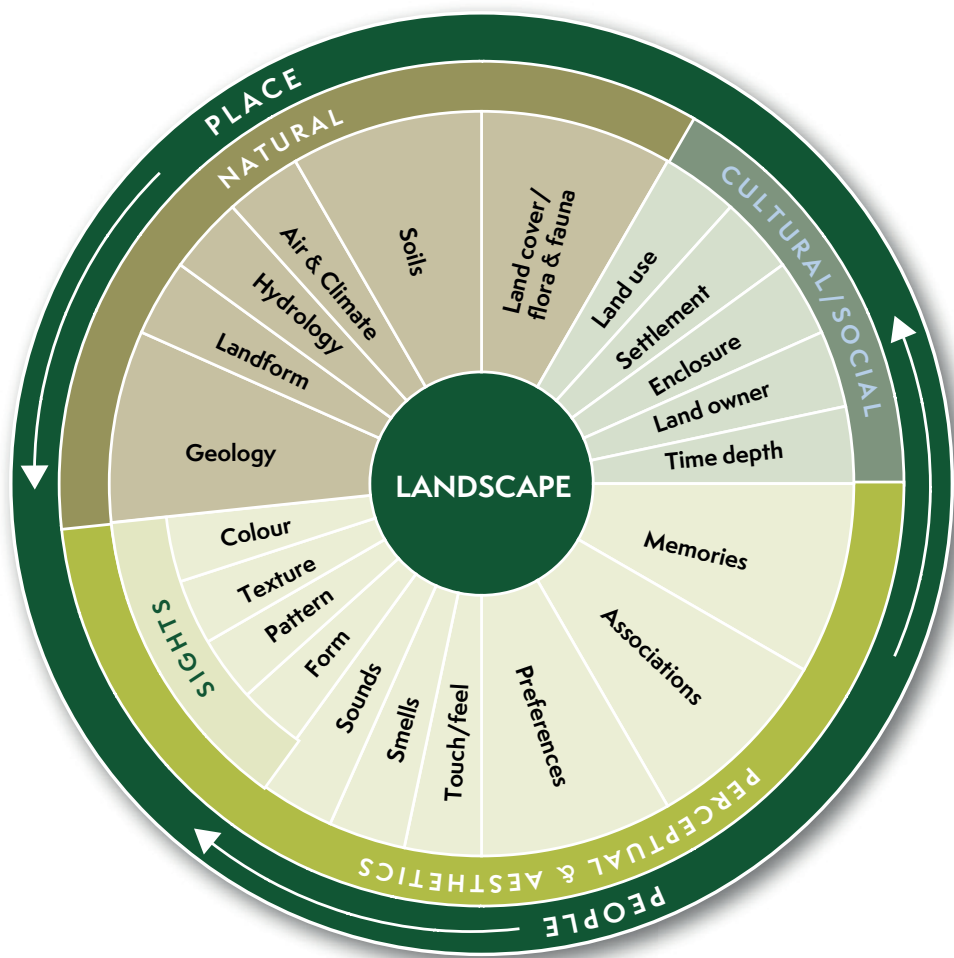
Figure 4). It is this interplay of components which the process of landscape character assessment seeks to identify by mapping areas of shared characteristics and features. The process of landscape character assessment creates landscape character areas and descriptions of the features and characteristics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

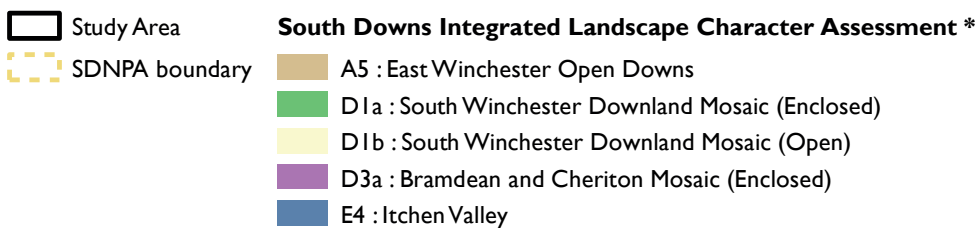
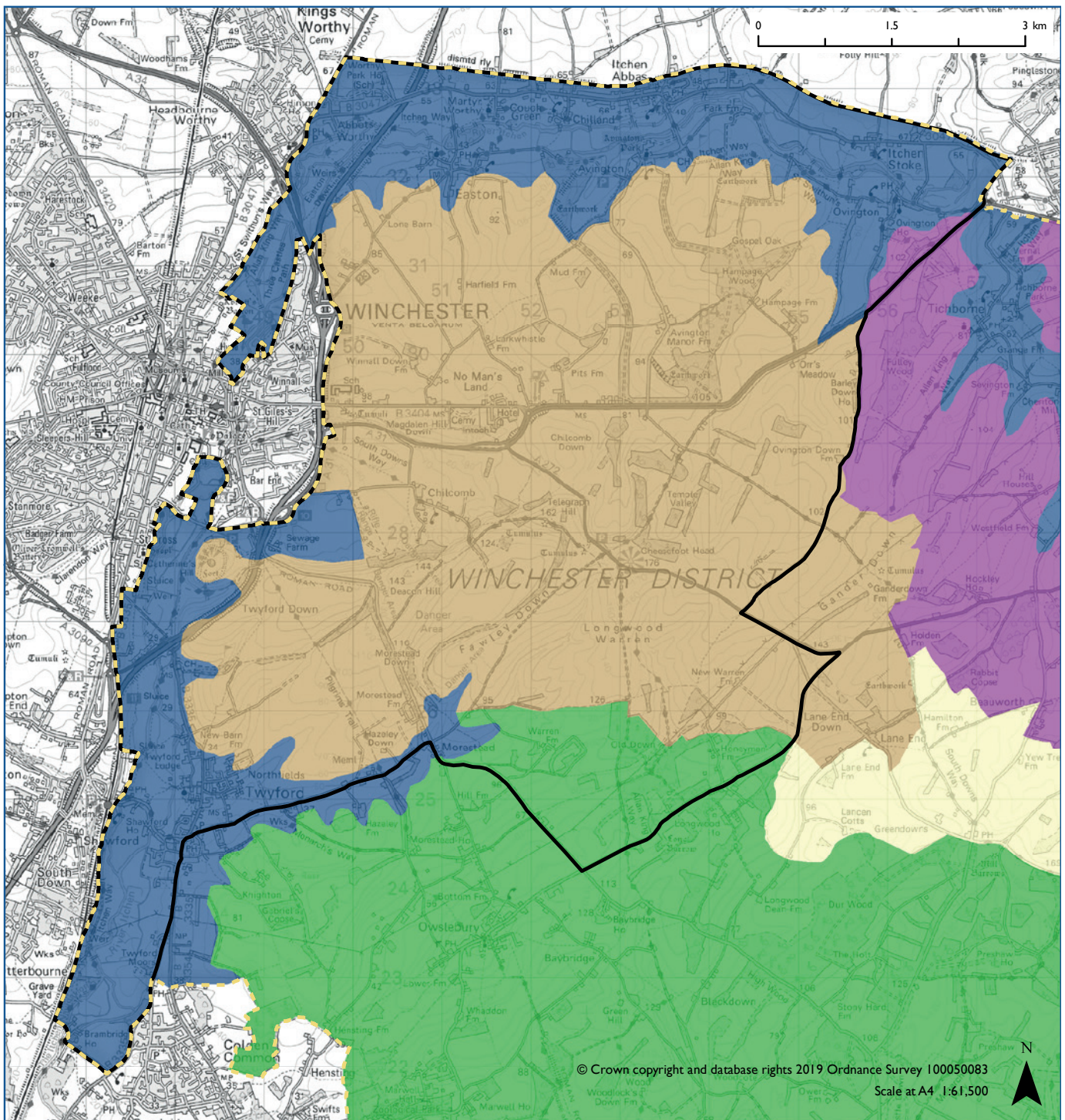
updated in 2020. This is the baseline parkwide landscape evidence for the National Park and the further work undertaken as part of this study all nests within the areas identified within the SDILCA. Full SDILCA descriptions of the landscape character areas are available on the link below.

TABLE 1: LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA SUMMARY DESCRIPTIONS

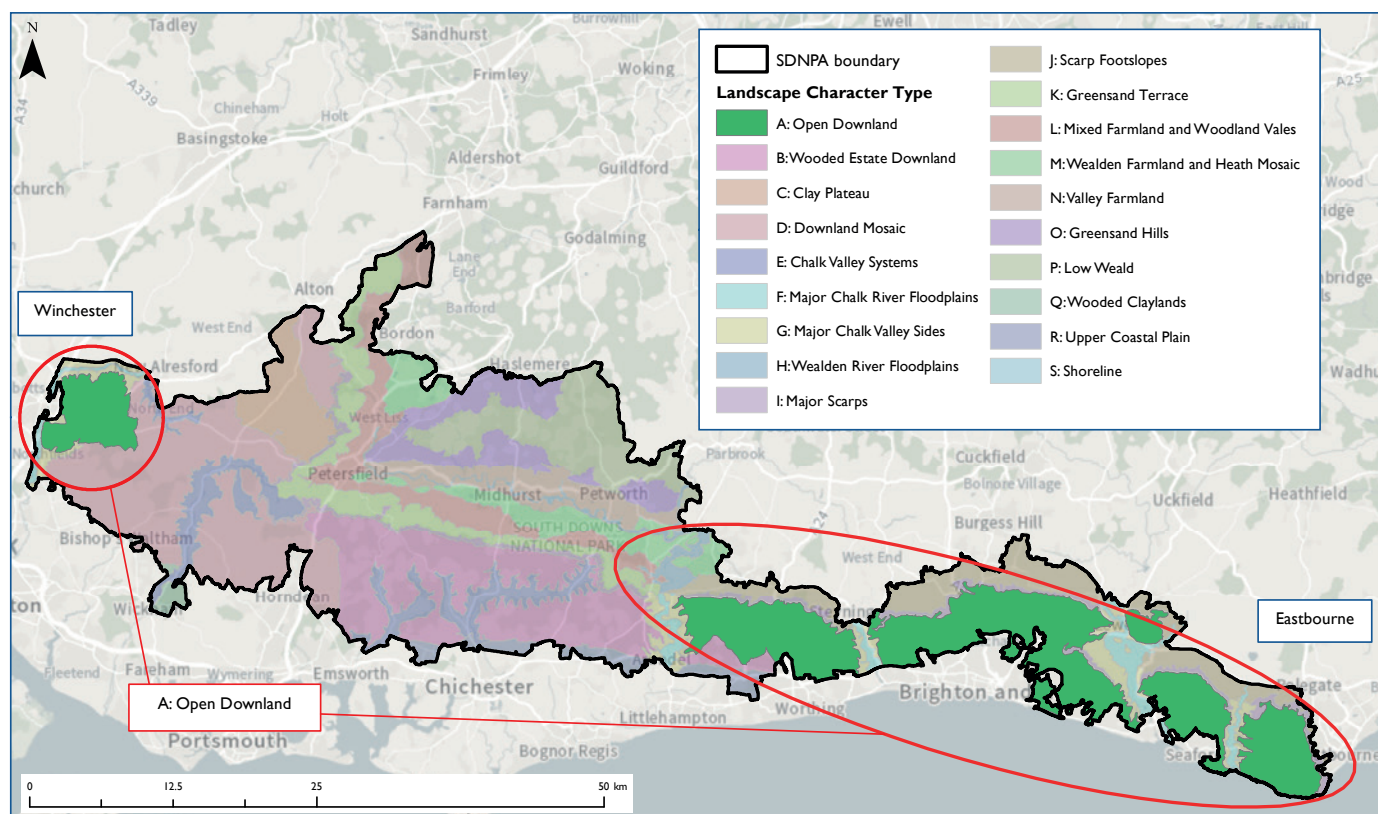
LCA Name	Headline
East Winchester Open Downland	Open rolling upland chalk landscape of rolling downs reaching 176m at Cheesefoot Head. (See Figure 5 for distribution of the Open Downland areas.)
Itchen Valley	The clear, chalk river flows in a relatively narrow floodplain in the upper reaches with a wider 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](https://storymaps.arcgis.com/collections/b6120985f1184c3bb3d1c5df317478b2)

FIGURE 5 SOUTH DOWNS LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREAS

*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. The landscape of Winchester is also described in the **Hampshire County Council Landscape Character Assessment** and the Winchester City Landscape character assessment (under review) from 2004.

LOCAL LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

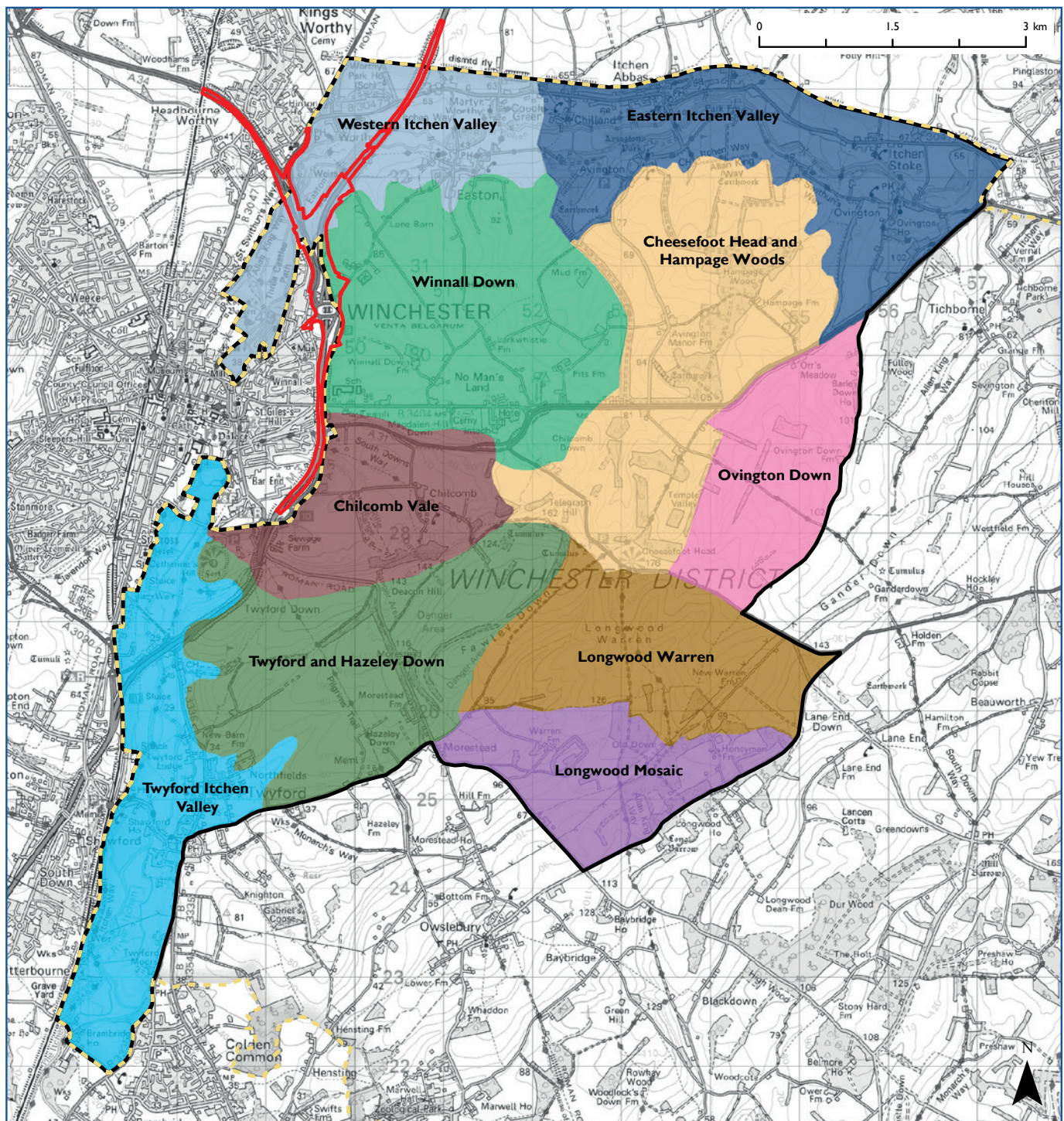
A local landscape character assessment was undertaken to provide a high level of detail on landscape character by describing the landscape in smaller units than the larger SDILCA character areas (but fully nested within them). This exercise was undertaken by the study team at the start of the project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

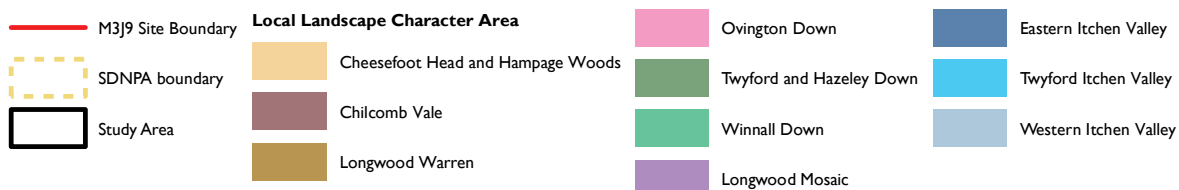
Local Landscape Character Area name	Headline
Western Itchen Valley	This area is located to the north and east of the M3. It includes the valley floor and the downland which define the valley sides.
Eastern Itchen Valley	Itchen Valley to the north east of Winchester – a typical chalk river valley landscape, with a distinct wide and flat valley floor enclosed by rising 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 Hampden 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. Postscript – Winchester City Council published its Biodiversity Action Plan in 2021.³⁰

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 Record³¹ 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. The South Downs are part of a continuation of the prehistoric narrative that stretches into Wessex. Prehistoric occupation responded to and shaped this downland landscape which extended to Avebury and Stonehenge along with prehistoric routeways such as that now known as the Pilgrims Way. There are a 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 Belgae tribe. Venta Belgarum was developed by the Romans between AD70 and AD75 with Winchester as a major town with all routes converging on it creating trade routes for the widespread movement of goods. This would also have likely been the time that the lower lying parts of the town in the Itchen floodplain were probably drained and the river canalised (supporting trade, movement of goods, and also helping control water supply to the town). These routes remain fossilized in the landscape to this day. Use of the name 'Pilgrim's Way' is not evidenced before 1860 on maps. 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.

Flora, faunal and animal bone studies have shown that in the Roman period, cattle and sheep/goats were brought to the city in large numbers, where they were butchered and processed. This would have relied on good connectivity between the surrounding rural landscape and the urban centre. Toothwear analysis of butchered cattle and sheep in Roman towns show an established market for meat, with some levels of consistency in age at slaughter. The River Itchen could have been navigated by large vessels, and although archaeological remains don't point to local fishing activity such as catching fish and processing in the city, fish may have been arriving pre pickled, smoked or salted with the principle role of the Itchen river being as a goods 'super highway' for the supply of the city. Cattle and sheep may have been largely supplied by the importation of stock from rural settlements in the town's surrounding landscape, while supplies of pork and chicken may have relied on animals raised and butchered in the town itself. 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.

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

30 winchester.gov.uk/planning/landscape-countryside/biodiversity

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

There is good archaeological evidence for land use, with the caveat that it's based on small sample sizes mainly from within the city of Winchester and its immediate environs. Analysis of mollusc suggests that the middle Iron Age landscape appears to have been fully open and mainly comprising a probably grazed grassland, with arable activities probably within the wider surrounding area. In the early Roman period, there were variations in land patterns, with ploughsoil suggesting predominantly arable land use with short periods of fallow / pasture. By the late Roman period, pastoral activities increased. Sites excavated in the city suggest consumption of spelt and barley with little / no evidence of oats or rye. Peas were in plentiful supply, and peas were more frequently found in Hampshire while beans more frequently found in Oxford. The Domesday Book shows that landholdings in Hampshire in c 11th century were mainly split between the Crown, individual lords and the church.

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. There is an opportunity to use heritage to inform how climate change has impacted land use and how activities could help to paint a picture of a landscape that has significantly changed due to human and climate related factors.

More recently Morn Hill was used during the 2 world wars as a strategic transport camp for troops. The camps on both Morn Hill and Winnall Down were the largest military transit camps of the First World War and were the temporary home of thousands of men on the way to the Western front.

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

ACCESS AND RECREATION

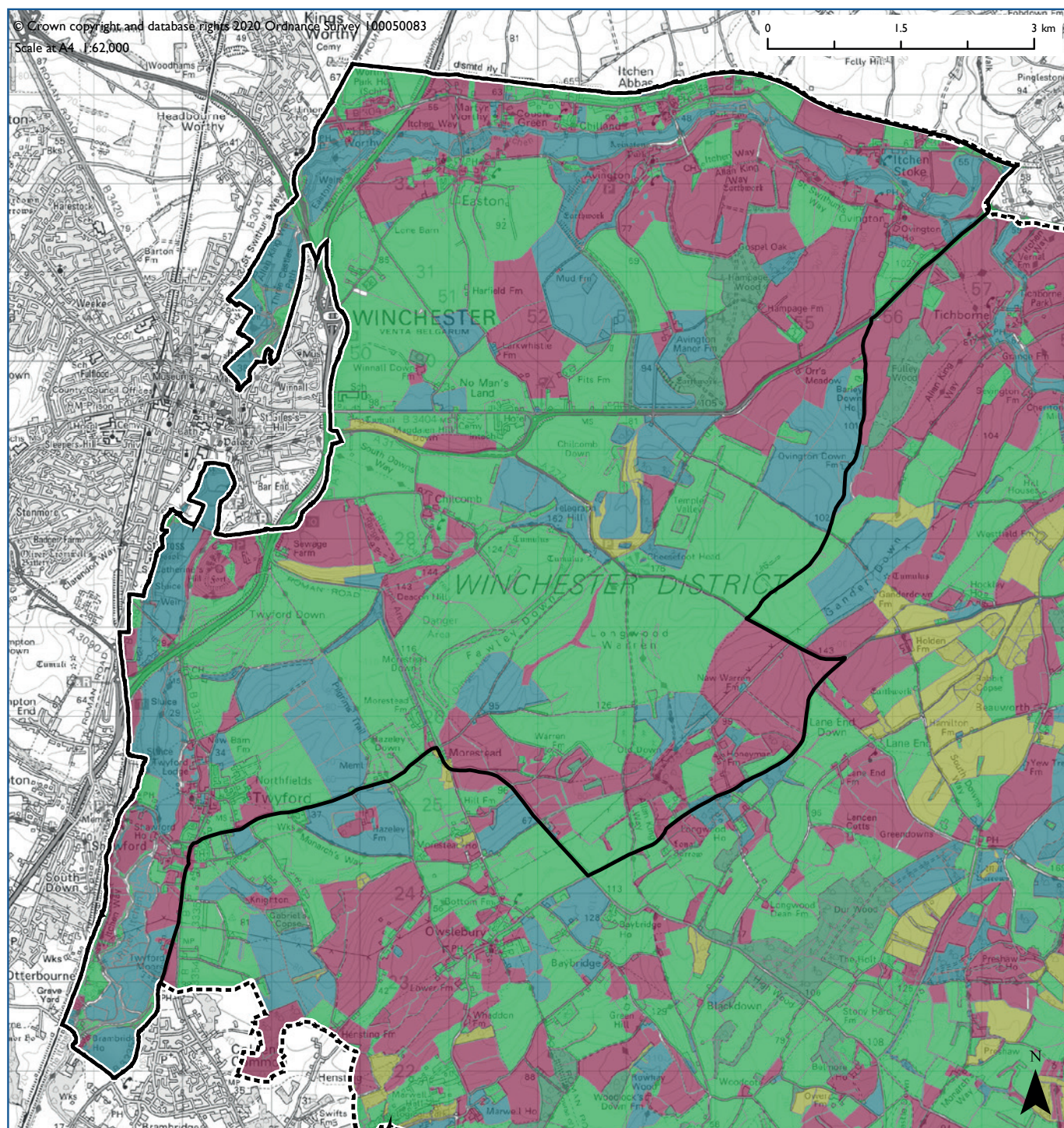
This area of Hampshire around the western end of the South Downs National Park has a range of long distance trails which reflect historic routes in some cases. Waymarked routes from Winchester include some of the highest quality walking experiences in the county and England. The South Downs Way National Trail, which starts/ends in Winchester is the only National Trail which is wholly within a protected landscape. The Pilgrims' Way probably originally followed an ancient prehistoric trackway skirting the southern edge of the north downs, based on finds evidence and connectivity to major settlements and trade routes. In medieval times 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. ³²

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 0.5-1km length per square km (see PANN Plan 32)³³. 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. Also some footpaths have been interrupted by major roads. But also that the South Downs Way crosses the M3, A272 and goes along roads out of Winchester.

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

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

FIGURE 8: HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER BY PERIOD



- | | | |
|--|------------------|---|
| | SDNP boundary | Historic Landscape Character |
| | Project boundary | 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) |

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)³⁴. The ANG approach³⁵ 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'³⁶ 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.

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

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

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