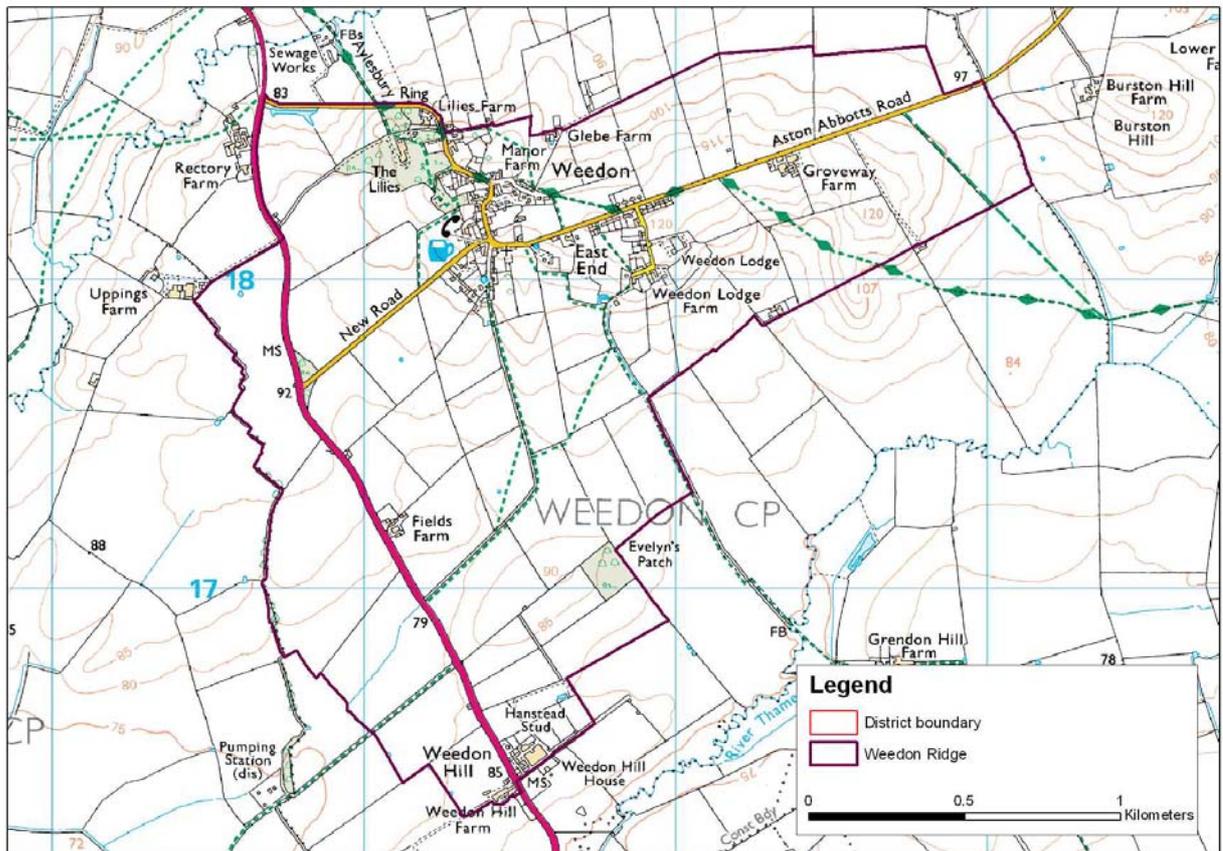
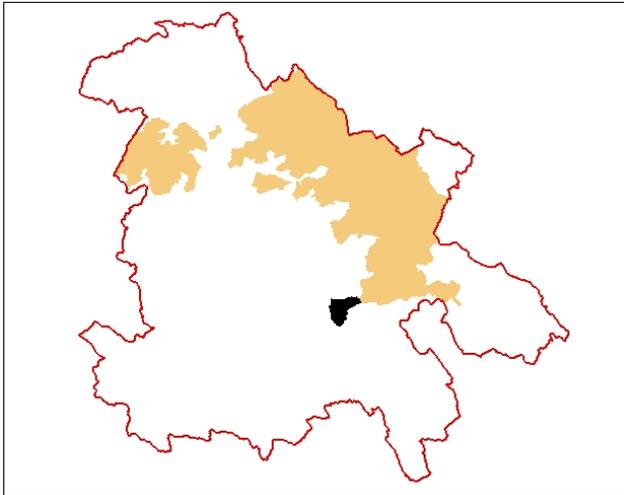


LCA 4.15 Weedon Ridge

Landscape Character Type: LCT4 Underlying Clay Plateau



LCA 4.15 Weedon Ridge (LCT 4)

Key Characteristics

- Distinctive east-west lying ridge
- Low density settlement on ridge top
- Arable use on lower shallower slopes with pasture on the steeper upper slopes
- Parliamentary enclosure fields

Distinctive Features

- Mature trees including conifers
- Parkland at The Lillies
- Abandoned gates to The Lillies on A413
- Range of vernacular buildings at Weedon
- Fox Covert Evelyn's Patch

Intrusive Elements

- Traffic on A413

Location To the north east of Aylesbury and incorporates the village of Weedon. The A413 Buckingham Road broadly defines the western extent of the ridge. The Thames valley forms the southern boundary to the area.

Landscape character Small well defined area comprising a single small ridge rising strongly above the vale landscape to the south, west and north and topped by the village of Weedon. In some views the ridge appears as an outlier of the high ground to the east from which is physically separated but linked by the Aston Abbots Road between the two settlements.

Geology Grey mudstone of the Kimmeridge Clay Formation overlain by Head and glacio-fluvial deposits. The highest parts are locally outcrops of Gault Clay and Portland Formation.

Topography The village sits on top of a ridge which rises to a level of 120m AOD above sea level, 45m AOD above the River Thames to the south and 40m above the level of the stream to the north. The ridge runs broadly east to west and falls to a low spot some 1.5km to the east of the village.

Hydrology Occasional ditches running off the southern slopes of the ridge into the River Thames catchment. There are several ponds within and to the south of the village.

Land use and settlement Mixed farming surrounds the village with arable in larger fields on the lower slopes and pastoral land in medium sized fields occupying the upper slopes. Small paddocks are found adjacent to the village edge.

The settlement comprises small groups of houses clustered around a winding lane. A distinguishing feature is the long straight alignment of the parliamentary enclosure roads which connect the village to the wider road network. This has encouraged some local small-scale ribbon development on the eastern fringe of the settlement.

The land between the A413 and the village, to the north of New Road is utilised as the County Showground. This is a temporary annual event, which requires the large open field to be managed as grassland.

Tree cover The large property at The Lillies, on the northern fringe of the village, sits within an extensive woodland setting. There is a woodland copse on the southern end of the area and a small copse at the junction of New Road with the A413. There are a small number of distinctive groups of mature trees other than the woodland areas. Along the A413 there are evenly spaced mature oaks on the village side of the highway accompanied by the occasional mature pine. There are also lengths of ditch that supports mature black poplar.

Biodiversity Weedon Ridge is an uneven mix of arable and grassland - all of the grassland is improved. Hence the bulk of the area is of limited interest however there is a scattering of small fragments of broadleaved woodland in the western half. Good connectivity is provided by the hedgerow network within the farmland and with the village of Weedon. The gardens and grounds of larger houses in the village with many mature trees suggest potential for biodiversity interest.

Historic landscape The area is predominantly made up of well preserved parliamentary enclosure fields created in 1802, these fields extend into the

LCA 4.15 Weedon Ridge (LCT 4)

Vale landscape to the south. There are also some 19th century enclosures on the western fringes. Another distinctive component of the landscape is the 19th century park and garden of The Lillies, which has a much earlier origins before the Rothschilds rebuilt it in 1870. The evidence for the Rothschild's association with this landscape can also be seen in the distinctive fox covert, known as Evelyn's Patch; this was named after Evelyn de Rothschild in the 19th century.

The settlement pattern in this area is almost exclusively defined by the nucleated village of Weedon which contains a number of listed buildings mostly dating to the seventeenth or nineteenth centuries. There are a couple of exceptional examples including the Grade II* Eastgate House, which has fifteenth century fabric with a sixteenth to seventeenth century cross-wing and an 18th century barn extension. The distinctiveness of the village has afforded it conservation area status.

The recorded archaeological interest is modest, although there is an abandoned church site and shrunken village earthworks. The parkland of The Lillies also contains some interesting earthworks which could possibly relate to the former manor house of Weedon in the Vale. The place name Weedon suggests the presence of a pagan Saxon shrine.

The amenity value of the landscape is good with the promoted 'Aylesbury Ring' Right of Way running through the landscape. The area is also accommodates the annual county showground, in fields adjacent to The Lillies.

Designations

Conservation Areas at Weedon (2)
Archaeological Notification Areas – 3 No.
BNS – 3 No.

LCA 4.15 Weedon Ridge (LCT 4)



View of Bierton from New Road. The County Showground is on the left of the distinctive thick and well trimmed hedge.



Parkland trees and woodland at The Lillies.

LCA 4.15 Weedon Ridge (LCT 4)

Summary of Condition/Sensitivity Analysis

Condition	Moderate
Pattern of elements:	Unified
Visual Detractors:	Few
Visual unity:	Strongly unified
Cultural integrity:	Variable
Ecological integrity:	Weak
Functional integrity:	Weak

Sensitivity	High
Distinctiveness:	Distinct
Continuity:	Historic
Sense of place:	Moderate
Landform:	Dominant
Tree cover:	Intermittent
Visibility:	High

Guidelines	Conserve and Restore
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Condition

Generally the landscape is in moderate condition. The network of well defined hedges and the distribution of mature trees provide a unified pattern of elements that reinforce the visual unity of the area. There are few detracting features other than traffic on the A413. Cultural integrity has been modified to some extent, particularly at the interface between arable and pastoral use. Some new fencing has been used to contain grazing parcels. Ecological integrity is weak despite strong connectivity because of the small areas of habitats of District significance and limited number of designated sites. Overall the functional integrity is considered to be weak.

Sensitivity

The landscape is distinctive and the historic continuity is well expressed in the field pattern, the organic development of the settlement and the parkland setting to The Lilies. Overall the sense of place is moderate. Topography is an important aspect of the relationship of the village for its surroundings. There is a high degree of visibility with long distance views from the ridge over surrounding countryside. Overall the degree of sensitivity is considered to be high.



Locally distinctive group of mature oaks on the east side of the A413.

LCA 4.15 Weedon Ridge (LCT 4)

Landscape Guidelines Conserve and Restore

Guidelines for the Weedon Ridge are as follows:

- Conserve the historic field pattern and land use.
- Encourage the traditional management of stock proof hedging by utilising techniques such as laying of hedges.
- Encourage woodland management to preserve the long term survival of existing woodland copses.
- Protect existing mature hedgerow and highway trees. Ensure longer term continuity by encouraging the planting of new trees to replace mature specimens.
- Encourage landowners to improve ecological diversity by establishing and maintaining varied land maintenance regimes to benefit landscape and habitats.
- Maintain connectivity of habitats.
- New housing and alterations to existing housing should be designed to reflect the traditional character of the area and use locally traditional materials.
- Encourage the survey, management and conservation of historic parks and gardens.
- Encourage the preservation and enhancement of views from publicly accessible areas.
- Ensure the preservation of archaeological earthworks by maintaining grassland.



The lone pine on New Road with in the background the copse at the junction with the A413.