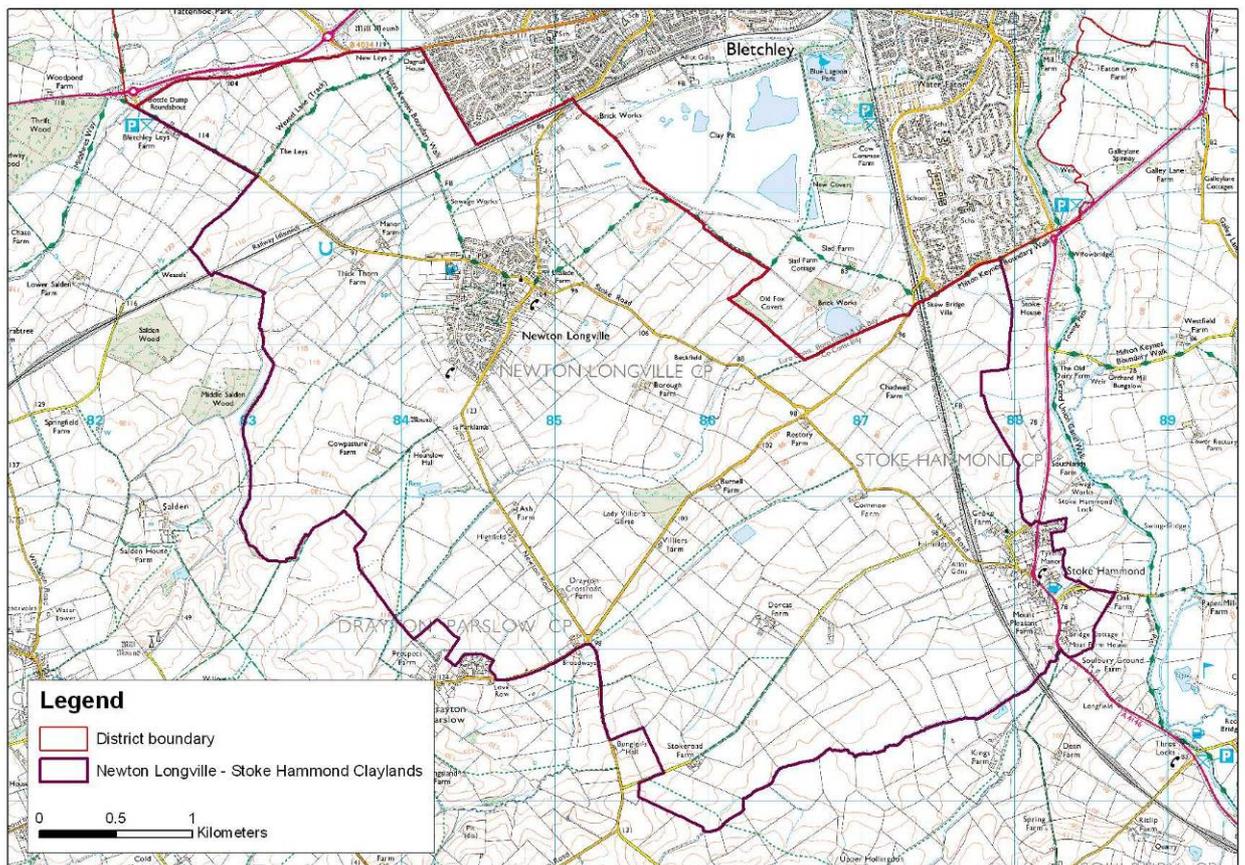
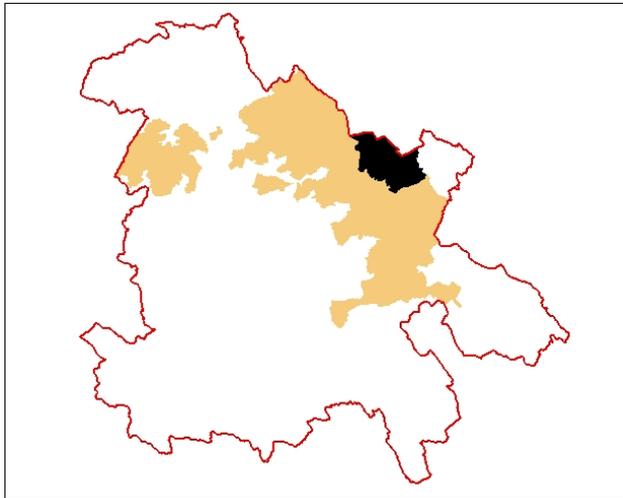


LCA 4.9 Newton Longville-Stoke Hammond Claylands

Landscape Character Type: LCT 4 Undulating Clay Plateau



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Key Characteristics

- Gently undulating to rolling landform
- Heavy clay soils with mixed agricultural use
- Nucleated settlement pattern
- Parliamentary enclosures with thorn hedges

Distinctive Features

- Pre-medieval archaeology
- Rectilinear field pattern
- Fossilised strip fields on west edge of village
- Clipped hedgerows with hedgerow trees
- Disused railway north west of Newton Longville

Intrusive Elements

- Suburban edge of Bletchley
- Former Brickworks site at Newton Longville
- Suburban fringe of Newton Longville
- Stoke Hammond Bypass
- West coast mainline railway

Location The land enclosing the villages of Newton Longville and Stoke Hammond which lie south of Bletchley. Stoke Hammond sits east of the west coast mainline railway straddling the existing A4146.

Landscape character Rolling clay farmland draining towards the River Ouzel catchment. Meandering streams and exposed ridges. Clipped hedges and general lack of tree cover, however, there are areas where hedgerow trees contribute to the overall character. Influenced by the suburban edge of Milton Keynes, the site of the former Brickworks between Newton Longville and Bletchley, now also providing access to the landfill operation which is mainly outside the District. The eastern fringe of the area is crossed by the west coast mainline railway and the new bypass to Stoke Hammond which runs parallel to the railway.

The hedged field boundary pattern, mostly of hawthorn and blackthorn with some elm, is well preserved. This contains rectilinear parliamentary enclosures of variable sizes, with notably small fields around the edge of Newton Longville. Elsewhere fields are generally medium to large in extent. The frequency of hedgerow trees is relatively good and in the absence of woodland cover they are a very important visual element.

Geology Glacial Till with Oxford Clay Formation. (This extends under the former brickworks site at Newton Longville). Smaller exposure of calcareous mudstone in the southern corner of the LCA.

Topography The landform which consist of a number of shallow valleys and intervening ridges has been determined by the drainage pattern. The ground drops from a level of approximately 130m AOD southwest of Newton Longville to 90m AOD at the boundary of the district adjacent to the former Newton Longville brickworks site.

Hydrology The area drains into the Ouzel catchment. The network of valleys drain from the Mursley to Stewkley watershed, and follow a series of broadly parallel streams running in a north eastern direction.

Land use and settlement Mixture of arable and pastoral land use. Settlement pattern in nucleated, with the village of Newton Longville being of substantial size and with some new development on its edges.

Tree cover Hedgerow trees are predominantly oak and ash. Willow scrub is found along streams and ditches.

Biodiversity The diversity of much of the habitat is relatively low as it is dominated by arable although a fair proportion of grassland is also present throughout. Most of the grassland is improved although some unimproved is present in the north and west.

In contrast a thin strip of lowland neutral meadow can be found in the south which is the only area of priority habitat type, whilst broad habitat types are restricted to the very little woodland habitat present scattered in relatively small fragments, and a number of ponds. The strong hedgerow pattern and the streams provide good habitat connectivity.

Historic landscape This area appears to contain buried evidence for prehistoric, Roman and Saxon occupation at a number of locations. The historic settlement pattern was of a single nucleated village set within open

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arable fields. The site of a possible small motte castle is recorded to the south of the village. The open fields were enclosed by Act of Parliament in 1798 creating today's pattern of regular surveyed hedges which cover most of the area. There are also fragments of pre 18th century enclosure land and rare fossilised strips, the latter occur adjacent to Newton Longville. The historic core of Newton Longville, now largely surrounded by modern development, is a conservation area containing a fine medieval church reflecting monastic interest, timber-framed and cruck houses. Stoke Hammond village in the extreme southeast of the area is also a conservation area. The northeast of the area has been affected by a modern brickworks and field boundaries have been lost to the southwest of the village. In the 19th century the area was traversed by the now disused Bletchley-Oxford railway and the still operational London-Birmingham railway.

Designations

Conservation Areas at Stoke Hammond (2), Newton Longville
Archaeological Notification Areas – 17 No.

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Construction of the Stoke Hammond Bypass, west of the mainline railway.



Rolling landform northwest of Newton Longville looking south east along Whaddon Road.

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Summary of Condition/Sensitivity Analysis	
Condition	Moderate
Pattern of elements:	Coherent
Visual detractors:	Some
Visual unity:	Coherent
Cultural integrity:	Variable
Ecological integrity:	Moderate
Functional integrity:	Coherent
Sensitivity	Low
Distinctiveness:	Distinct
Continuity:	Recent
Sense of place:	Weak
Landform:	Insignificant
Tree cover:	Open
Visibility:	Moderate
Guidelines	Enhance and Reinforce

Condition

Overall the condition of the landscape is considered to be moderate. There is scant woodland cover, however, trees are a feature of some hedgerows. There are some visual detractors including the fringe of the former brickworks at Newton Longville and the west coast mainline railway at Stoke Hammond. However, there is a sense of development pressure on the northern and eastern fringes of the area. The pattern of elements remain coherent albeit that the area exhibits loss of field pattern at its fringes where new highway development is eroding the cultural and functional integrity and where arable intensification is leading to loss of hedgerows. The settlements of Newton Longville and Stoke Hammond have expanded significantly as a result of new housing development. Ecological integrity is moderate

due to the levels of connectivity and occurrence of habitats of District significance. Overall the functional integrity is coherent.

Sensitivity

The area retains its local distinctiveness however, continuity is disrupted. Strength of character is considered to be weak. The degree of visibility is moderate as this varies with the undulating landform and the general lack of tree cover. Overall the degree of sensitivity remains low.



Weasels Lane (ancient trackway)

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Landscape Guidelines Enhance and Reinforce

The landscape guidelines for Newton Longville-Stoke Hammond Claylands are as follows:

- Promote management of hedgerows by traditional cutting regimes and the establishment of new hedgerow trees
- Maintain the existing condition and extent of unimproved and semi-improved grassland wherever possible. Encourage good management practices.
- Encourage the establishment of buffer zones of semi-natural vegetation along watercourses in arable areas to enhance biodiversity, interconnectivity and landscape quality.
- Promote connectivity of habitats.
- Conserve and enhance the distinctive character of settlements and individual buildings.
- New housing and alterations to existing housing should be designed to reflect the traditional character of the area and be consistent in the use of locally occurring traditional materials.
- Consider encouraging the establishment of new woodlands within the historic landscape pattern to provide some mitigation for the visually intrusive elements.
- Encourage landowners to improve ecological diversity by and maintaining varied land maintenance regimes to benefit landscape and habitats.
- Identify key views from publicly accessible locations and promote the management and enhancement of these viewpoints.
- Protect the fossilised strip fields alongside Newton Longville village.
- Encourage arable reversion on important archaeological sites under cultivation.



Shallow valley to south east of Newton Longville from Drayton Parslow Road.