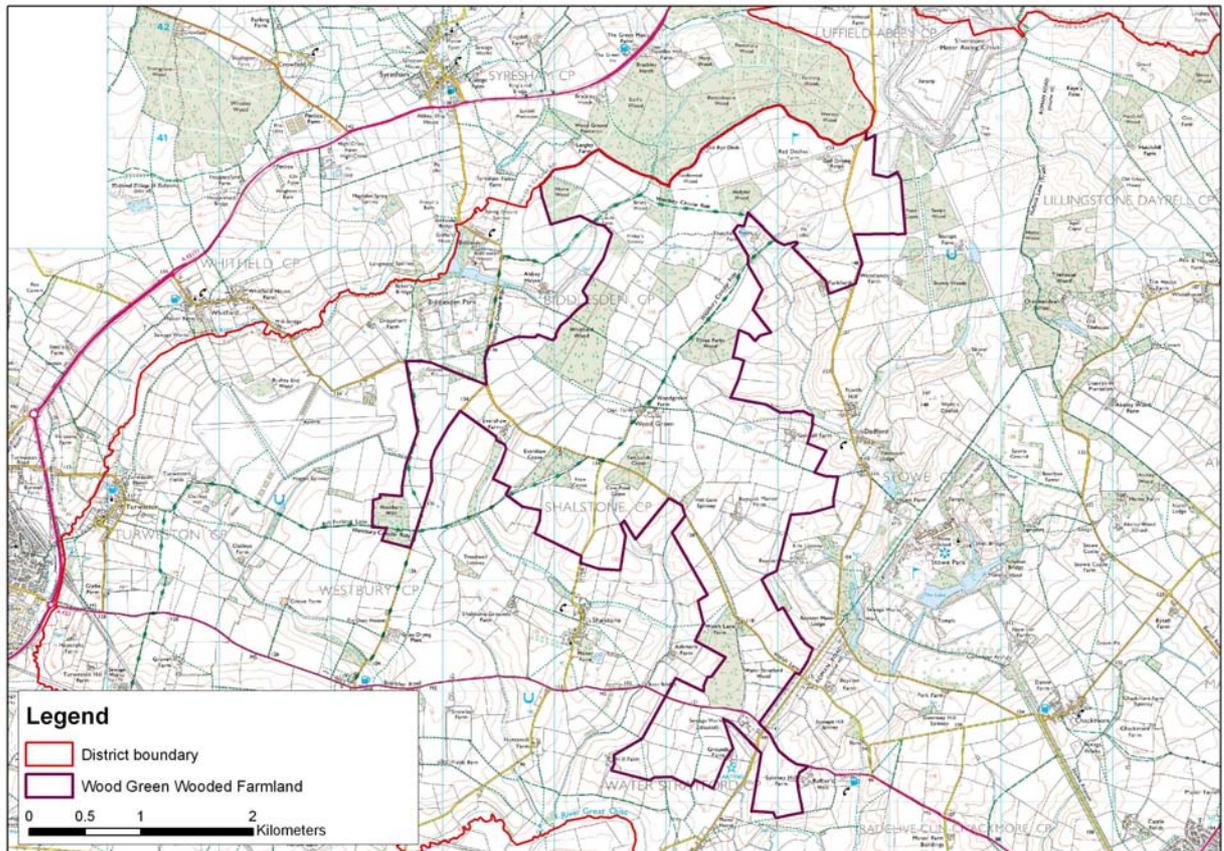
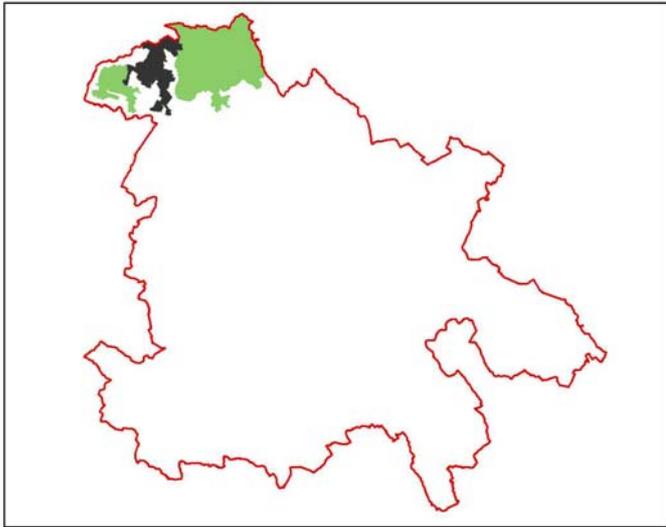


LCA 1.3 Wood Green Wooded Farmland

Landscape Character Type: LCT 1 Wooded Ridge



LCA 1.3 Wood Green Wooded Farmland (LCT 1)

Key Characteristics

- Ground slopes gently to the south
- Margins incised by small valleys
- Mixed agricultural landscape with significant woodland
- High level of woodland cover
- Medium sized fields
- Strong hedgerow pattern
- Oak in hedgerows
- Meandering lanes
- Very low density of settlement
- Remote tranquil character

Distinctive Features

- Gateway entrance to Stowe in far south
- Roads run through and beside woodland
- Large fragments of broadleaved woodland

Intrusive Elements

- Golf driving range
- Small industrial areas
- Telecommunications tower at Evershaw Copse.

Location In the north of the District and adjoining the boundary with Northamptonshire. It extends south to just beyond the A422, which passes through the southern most part of the area. The Stowe parkland lies immediately to the east and the more open landscape of LCA 1.6 Oatleys Plateau is to the west.

Landscape character A well wooded agricultural landscape, which retains a strong sense of place where the pre 18th century enclosure pattern remains in the form of strong hedgerows with mature oak trees. The often irregular hedgerow pattern, irregular edges to woodlands and meandering lanes with rough grass verges give a strong impression of a landscape which hasn't changed for centuries. The lack of settlement except for a few farms and the dispersed settlement of Wood Green along a no-through-road enhance the strong historic associations. This character is significantly weakened in areas where prairie farming has removed the original hedgerow pattern.

Views in the centre of the area are often short distance and contained by woodland whereas the edges of the area afford good long distance views. From the eastern fringe features of Stowe parkland are visible.

Geology Glacial till.

Topography An area of high ground, which continues to rise to the north within Northamptonshire and to the south slopes gently towards the Great Ouse valley. In places undulations in the surfaces are created where streams have eroded. The landform varies in height from 110-150m AOD.

Hydrology This sloping plateau area has the heads of several streamlines cutting in it from all sides except the north where it continues to rise. In several places the streams extend into the plateau area creating small valleys. There are a few ponds scattered across the area.

Land use and settlement This is a mixed agricultural landscape of predominantly arable farming particularly in the south. There is high level of woodland cover at about 10%. This area is notable for its lack of settlement having only one hamlet at Wood Green and a thin scattering of farms.

Tree cover Woodlands are scattered throughout this area and are an important feature giving a wooded landscape character. Where the hedgerow pattern remains strong mature oak trees are often a feature.

Biodiversity Throughout the area there are large groupings of blocks of arable fields and grassland. The grassland is almost entirely improved although diversity is provided by a few fields of unimproved pasture present in the south and the west and by small areas of standing water scattered throughout.

The woodland much of which is ancient woodland, contributes significantly to the biodiversity interest. A large proportion is coniferous plantation and high in comparison to the rest of Aylesbury Vale. Broadleaved woodland, including lowland mixed deciduous woodland is also present across the area. The ancient Three Parks Wood is a good example of the interest present - although in part replanted with conifers it retains areas of coppice and supports over 25 ancient woodland indicator species and the rare wood white butterfly.

The hedgerow network provides reasonable connectivity between habitats.

LCA 1.3 Wood Green Wooded Farmland (LCT 1)

Historic environment There is little recorded evidence for pre-medieval settlement. After the Norman Conquest this area became part of the former medieval hunting forest of Whittlewood until disafforestation before 1286. About a tenth of this area is identified as pre 18th century ancient woodland and assarts. The northern part of the area was formerly part of the Stowe designed landscape. There are a few scattered historic settlements; these tend to be on the boundary of the area with the adjacent lower ground. The majority of the area retains a pre 18th century enclosure pattern, mostly irregular although there are also two rare examples of sinuous enclosure. Approximately a third of the area has lost its original enclosure pattern to 20th century enclosure or prairie farming. There are several deserted medieval hamlets but no listed buildings or conservation areas.

Designations

Archaeological Notification Areas – 10 No.

CWS – 3 No.

BNS – 3 No.

LCA 1.3 Wood Green Wooded Farmland (LCT 1)



In the north - arable landscape within good hedgerow structure.



Views from roads generally have a woodland backdrop, particularly in the north.

LCA 1.3 Wood Green Wooded Farmland (LCT 1)

Summary of Condition/Sensitivity Analysis

Condition	Good
Pattern of elements:	Unified
Visual detractors:	Few
Visual unity:	Strongly unified
Cultural integrity:	Variable
Ecological integrity:	Moderate
Functional integrity:	Coherent

Sensitivity	Moderate
Distinctiveness:	Unique/rare
Continuity:	Historic
Sense of place:	Strong
Landform:	Apparent
Tree cover:	Enclosed
Visibility:	Low

Guidelines	Conserve and Reinforce
-------------------	-------------------------------

Condition

The condition of this landscape is assessed to be good. The landscape is well unified by the historic hedgerow pattern and high level of woodland cover. There are few minor visual detractors and these tend to have a very localised visual impact. This is therefore a landscape with a strong sense of visual unity. The cultural integrity gains from a strong hedgerow pattern, high level of woodland cover and meandering lanes giving a sense of a landscape which has evolved slowly for centuries. However, the lack of a strong built or archaeological component or active promotion has resulted in an overall variable score. Ecological integrity is moderate despite a strong connectivity and a relatively large area of broad habitats of district significance. There are no Sites of Special Scientific Interest or priority habitat types. The intensity of farming is generally

considered to be moderate. Where there is more intensive arable farming and hedgerow removal the ecological integrity will be significantly weaker. The variable cultural integrity and the moderate ecological integrity combine to give the area a coherent functional integrity.

Sensitivity

The landscape is considered to have a rare character. This is due to the generally higher level of woodland cover in a sparsely settled landscape, which retains a strong sense of historic continuity. The sense of place is generally considered to be strong although this is weaker in parts particularly at the edges of the area and in areas of more intensive arable farming. The landform is apparent but not a dominant feature and with the high level of tree cover, the landscape as a whole considered to be enclosed giving a low level of visibility. Overall the landscape is assessed as being of moderate sensitivity.



A distinctive feature of the area is woodland and mature oak trees adjacent to roads.

LCA 1.3 Wood Green Wooded Farmland (LCT 1)

Landscape Guidelines Conserve and Reinforce

The landscape guidelines for the Wood Green Wooded Farmland are as follows:

- Maintain connectivity of habitats by encouraging the retention and strengthening of the existing historic hedgerow pattern with new hedgerow trees, predominantly oak.
- Encourage the restoration of the historic hedgerow pattern where it has been lost. To enhance the landscape character and strengthen the ecological diversity. Where necessary use historic maps to identify where hedgerows have been lost.
- Maintain and improve the condition of existing hedgerows through traditional cutting regimes.
- Maintain the existing extent of broadleaved woodlands, particularly the lowland mixed deciduous woodland.
- Achieve a favourable condition of broadleaved woodlands using traditional techniques to create and manage a wide diversity of habitats.
- Support and promote the identity of the medieval hunting forest of Whittlewood with new planting, access and interpretation.
- Encourage the establishment of new woodland and the replacement of coniferous woodland with locally occurring native species. The woodland should be appropriate in scale to the landscape character of the area and reflect the historic landscape pattern.
- Promote information and understanding about the historic importance and appropriate management of historic woodland features such as irregular edges, assarts, banks and ditches.
- Maintain the sparsely settled rural character of the landscape.
- Promote the retention of the character of minor roads by the management of hedgerows and verges and limiting urbanising elements such as signage and kerbing.
- Encourage the management and enhancement of views from publicly accessible land.
- Maintain the remote tranquil character of parts of the area.



This is a landscape with very little settlement - there are no villages.