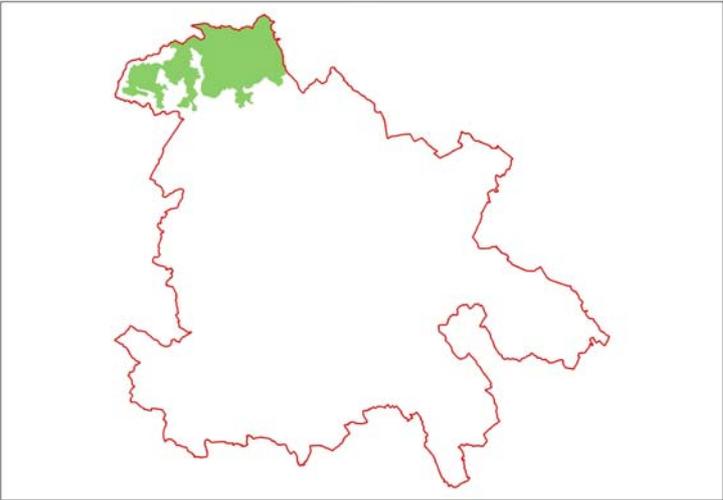


LCT 1 Wooded Ridge



Constituent LCAs

- LCA 1.1 Silverstone Race Track
- LCA 1.2 Forest High Ground
- LCA 1.3 Wood Green Wooded Farmland
- LCA 1.4 Stowe Registered Parkland
- LCA 1.5 Lillingstone Wet Farmland
- LCA 1.6 Oatleys Plateau
- LCA 1.7 Maids Moreton Plateau



View from the north of Stowe parkland looking towards Silverstone which is screened by woodland.

LCT 1 Wooded Ridge

Key Characteristics

- Gently sloping high ground incised by streams
- Margins incised by small valleys
- Gently undulating landscape
- Elevation range 110M to 150M AOD
- Mixed land use of arable, pasture and woodland
- Medium sized fields
- Strong hedgerow pattern
- Large blocks of woodland
- High density of woodland cover
- Low density of settlement
- Large areas highly sensitive historic landscape
- Remote and tranquil character
- Prairie fields to the northeast and west of Stowe parkland

Distinctive Features

- Ancient woodland remnants of Whittlewood Forest
- Stowe parkland, gardens, avenues, lakes and distinctive architectural features
- Hedgerow trees – notably oak
- Silverstone motor racing circuit
- Views often enclosed by woodland
- Dispersed settlement pattern at Leckhampstead and Lillingstone Dayrell
- Long distance views to south

General Description

Accords generally with CA 91 Yardley-Whittlewood Ridge identified by the Character of England Map and with LCT RCA identified by the National Landscape Typology.

The Wooded Ridge is located to the north of Buckingham and the valley of the river Ouse and extends northwards and eastwards across the district (and county boundary) into Northamptonshire and Milton Keynes. The ridge is broad and generally without dramatic or pronounced landforms and comprises in geological terms Cornbrash overlain locally by Boulder Clays. The edges of the plateau are marked by a series of small, stream cut, incised valleys – see LCT 2 Incised Valleys. The Wooded Ridge is of a similar character and geology to LCT 4 Undulating Clay Plateau but is identified as a separate LCT on account of the high level of woodland cover and lower density and more dispersed settlement pattern.

Whilst many woods are a mix of conifer and broad-leaved trees there are also remnants of ancient woodland. Biodiversity interest predominantly relates to the scattered woodland areas, and for which the more ecologically interesting have been designated as County Wildlife Sites. These woods include Akely Wood, Tilehouse wood, Home Wood, Hatch-Hill Wood, Sawpit Wood, Stowe Woods, The Spinney and Leckhampstead Wood in the east of the area with Evershaw Copse, Three Parks Wood and Whitfield Wood in the west. Additional notable ecological interest comes from the presence of Foxcote Reservoir, a SSSI with particular importance to over-wintering wildfowl, and the varied habitats of veteran trees, narrow lakes and parkland associated with Stowe Park.

Once part of the medieval Whittlewood Royal Hunting Forest the area retains strong historic associations with several areas of ancient woodland and a dispersed, little settled landscape. The large areas of early enclosure are also well reflected in the strong hedgerows with frequent oak trees. Stowe is an 18th century designed landscape and recognised as one of Britain's finest Historic Parks and Gardens. A high proportion of this area is identified as historic landscape of the highest sensitivity. The eastern side of the LCT was studied by the Whittlewood Project. It contains a concentration of deserted and shrunken medieval settlements as well as an extensive dispersed Roman settlement pattern.

Generally the Wooded Ridge is a high quality landscape with good woodland cover and strong hedgerows with oak trees. Views within the area are often contained by woodland, which with the lack of settlement and generally quiet roads creates a remote, generally tranquil character. Stowe parkland is designed to create impressive views and vistas and is an area of particularly high landscape quality. Features of the designed parkland including the surrounding woodland and obelisks have an impact on the wider landscape. In the east and west hedgerow removal has created prairie fields that significantly reduce the intrinsic landscape quality of the area. Silverstone motor racing circuit is set within a modern landscape with associated car parks roads and lighting. Its visual impact is limited by containing woodland.

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Aylesbury Vale Landscape Character Assessment

Quiet lanes meander through the area, often bounded by strong hedgerows with mature oak. There is very little settlement on the western side and on the eastern side only small dispersed villages. The open nature of the village with fields between houses and views out to the countryside is an integral part of the character of the area. Housing in most villages is of local vernacular with a combination of limestone, timber frame and brick.