

Appendix 6

Historical Context Site Locations

This Appendix gives the OS map references of the historical features highlighted in the historical context section, giving the Sites & Monuments Record (SMR) monument number where appropriate. The OS map references are approximate, reflecting the large areas of the sites.

| Site | SMR Monument No. | OS Map reference |
|--|--|-------------------------|
| Sulis Manor area | MBN1792 | ST 735 612 |
| Bathampton Down area | MBN1714, 1733 | ST 774 650, ST 773 656 |
| Southstoke Roman villa | MBN4723 | ST 75 61 |
| Upper Langridge Farm, Charlcombe | MBN1676 | ST 735 686 |
| Lansdown Roman Camp | MBN1651 | ST 714 689 |
| Vernham Wood & Hoggen Coppice area | MBN1786, 1789, 1790 | ST 731 618 |
| Newton St Loe villa | MBN1661 | ST 712 655 |
| Potentially Roman quarries around Bathampton Down slopes | <i>Zone 32 of the Archaeology in the City of Bath SPG 2004</i> | |
| Bathampton Down inclined plane | MBN2332 | ST 778 654 |
| Hampton Down tramway | MBN3425 | ST 777 654 |
| Mount Pleasant Quarry | MBN3433 | ST 768 622 |
| St Winifred's Quarry | MBN3434 | ST 768 622 |
| Sham Castle and Fir Forest | MBN2682 | ST 766 649 |

Extract from **Cherishing Outdoor Places: A Landscape Strategy for Bath 1993**

PART 1 Introduction and Summary

Bath's Special Landscape

Bath's rich and varied landscape is the product of its history. The natural setting to Bath - its geology and climate - has shaped the city's topography over thousands of years. Bath sits within the River Avon valley as it cuts through the southern end of the Cotswold Hills and where it is joined by a number of tributaries. The location of the hot springs within the river valley attracted early settlers. Throughout history the presence of the springs and the valley setting have contributed to the impact of the city on its surroundings.

The characteristic hilly, and often steep, topography of Bath, has both restricted and determined the pattern of development within the city. As a result it has provided Bath with its superb wooded skyline and allowed the retention of important greenspaces to penetrate deep within the built-up area. Many of these bring high quality rural landscapes right into the heart of the city.

The topography has also provided unique architectural opportunities. There are fine views across the River Avon valley from the hillsides and these have inspired architects to develop the high quality architecture of the crescents and terraces which characterise 18th century development in Bath and for which the city is so well renowned.

Throughout the city, buildings are viewed set within, or against, a backcloth of trees. Our forefathers planted exotic tree species within the city at the time of great explorations and plant collecting. Many of these were coniferous and evergreen and survive today as important features in the city's landscape.

From many city centre streets, views are channelled towards the fields and woodlands of the rural skyline. Many of the important Georgian buildings take advantage of these views. New landscapes were often created in association with the terraces and crescents to enhance the enjoyment of their views further. Many of these have been conserved as important townscape features within the city.

Bath's landscape is therefore part cause and partly an effect of the historical development of the city. It has been the interaction between the built and natural environment throughout history and their influence upon one another, which has created the unique composition of Bath.

The inscription of the City of Bath on the List of World Heritage Sites (1987) means that whole city has been recognised as being of outstanding universal value and thereby worthy of special protection. This accolade recognises Bath as a city of international importance for its contribution to the art of urban design, for its architectural quality, its Roman remains, its Georgian town centre and its historic associations. The City Council believes that the special quality of Bath lies not only in the fine architectural facades of its built environment but also in the urban and landscape spaces that they enclose and its setting amidst the high quality landscape of the southern Cotswold Hills.

The city has a wealth of greenery and open spaces, and this provides many different opportunities for leisure activities, learning, relaxation and the simple enjoyment of outdoor places. It also provides a home for a wide variety of plant and animal life. The biological diversity of the landscape is important and is a natural resource on which all life depends.

The landscape provides a natural beauty, which is an integral part of the city's special character and appearance and has the ability to soften the harshness of people's activities and a capacity to improve the quality of all our lives.

Extracts from Rural Landscapes of Bath and North East Somerset:
A Landscape Character Assessment 2003

Area 6: Hinton Blewett and Newton St Loe Plateau Lands

Summary of Landscape Character

- Undulating open valley and plateau landscape
- Well trimmed hedges
- Narrow enclosed lanes/green lanes
- Rounded hills as at Farmborough Common, Priest Barrow, Nap Hill, The Sleight and Mearns Hill
- Tree lined Cam, Newton, Conygre and Corston Brooks
- Extensive areas of arable farmland
- Newton Park and other historic parks
- Small batches and other evidence of past coal mining
- Walls within and at edges of villages and hamlets
- Villages generally located within valleys
- Traditional buildings constructed of Oolitic or Lias Limestone and many houses rendered or painted
- Wansdyke - well preserved at Englishcombe
- Stantonbury Hill
- Priston Mill
- Earthworks of Culverhay Castle at Englishcombe



For detailed Character Area map see Appendix 3

Context

Introduction

7.6.1 This is the second largest character area covering nearly 64sq km. It has a varied character marked by an undulating, much eroded Oolitic and Lias Limestone plateau with tributary valleys of the River Avon and a number of notable rounded hills. The area extends in a south-west to north-east band across the centre of the area from Hinton Blewett in the south-west to the edge of Bath in the north-east. The boundaries are defined by the edge of the plateau before it falls away except for the eastern boundary which abuts the edge of Bath and a small part of the Cotswolds Plateaux and Valleys character area. It borders the character areas of Chew Valley, Avon Valley and Cam and Wellow Brook Valleys to the west, north and south respectively as well as the smaller Hollow Marsh and Farrington Gurney Farmlands character areas.

Geology, Soils and Drainage

7.6.2 The most characteristic geological formation is Lias Limestone which occupies two main areas from Hinton Blewett to Red Hill and the area north of a line from Barrow Vale and Farmborough through Stanton Prior to Newton Park. It also occurs as bands from Timsbury to Priston. Lias Clay occupies much of the remaining area where it abuts the Lias Limestone. Mercia Mudstones also occur particularly towards the west of the area and there is a band of Supra-Pennant Measures from Clutton to High Littleton.

7.6.3 Oolitic Limestone outcrops towards the east of the area near Wilmington and from Tunley to the edge of Bath. There are also a number of more isolated outcrops of Oolitic Limestone forming distinctive rounded hills such as at Stantonbury Hill and Winsbury Hill.

7.6.4 There are notable areas of Fuller's Earth which is a clay found between the top of the Inferior Oolite and the base of the Great Oolite or Forest Marble. It was extracted commercially in Englishcombe parish.

7.6.5 In the south and south east of the area there are coal measures which are sufficiently near the surface for coal mining to have taken place at Clutton, High Littleton, Timsbury and Tunley.

7.6.6 The principal soils associated with the Lias and Oolitic Limestone and Lias Clay are shallow well-drained calcareous clays and clay loams. They typically support both cereals and grassland. Other soil types are represented relating to changes in the geology. Reddish fine loamy or clayey soils are found over the Mercia Mudstones to the west of the area. Silty soils are found along a band following the Conygre and Newton Brooks. There is a band of clayey and fine loamy soils over clay along a narrow band over the Supra-Pennant Measures.

Principal Planning Designations

7.6.7 The whole of the rural area is within the Bristol/Bath Green Belt. A very small part of the Bristol-Avon Community Forest extends into the area to the south of Saltford.

Description

7.6.8 Landform and Drainage Pattern
This area comprises an undulating mainly Lias and in part Oolitic Limestone plateau. It is at its highest towards the south and south-west where it reaches 200m and at its lowest towards the north and north-east at 80-100m. The plateau generally rises quite sharply from the surrounding



16 Towards Newton Brook Valley

valleys and lower-lying land. Exceptions occur at the northern edge of the plateau, which rises gently out of the River Avon Valley, and the eastern corner, which is almost level with the southern end of the Cotswold plateau.

7.6.9 Although this is undoubtedly a plateau in terms of overall landform, it has been very heavily eroded to form a complex undulating plateau and valley landscape with some very notable conical or rounded hills protruding out of the plateau. Extensive, exposed, flat plateau tops are not really characteristic and it therefore contrasts quite strongly with the Cotswold plateau.

7.6.10 The area divides very roughly into two landform patterns. In the west around Clutton, High Littleton, Farmborough and Timsbury the landform is very undulating and has the majority of the distinctive rounded hills as at Farmborough Common, Priest Barrow, Nap Hill, The Sleight and Mearns Hill. In the east the incised valleys of the Conygre, Newton and Corston Brooks within the area and the Cam Valley immediately outside the area, give rise to two particularly distinctive wide ridge lines. The most northerly is at Wilmington and the southerly ridge is between Tunley and Longhouse.

7.6.11 The area has two main drainage systems. The Cam Brook and tributaries originate to the west passing through the Mercia mudstones before continuing their easterly course in the Cam and Wellow Brook Valleys character area. The Newton, Conygre and Corston Brooks and their tributaries originate to the west and follow a generally north-easterly course to join the River Avon west of Bath. They generally pass through the Lias Clay.

Land-use

7.6.12 Much of the arable land in the area is found within this character area, such as around Corston, Wilmington and Englishcombe, forming a patchwork within areas of grassland. Generally the arable land is on the flatter or gently sloping plateau land whilst the grassland is on the more undulating, steeply sloping land.

7.6.13 Most of the villages have characteristic areas of horse paddock around them, often fenced or sub-divided by white tape.

7.6.14 There are several areas of parkland and estate farms, which have given rise to distinct landscapes. Newton St Loe, Englishcombe and Kingwell Hall are examples. At Newton St Loe, Newton Park is a grade II registered park designed by Capability Brown. There is a management plan in place here to restore the landscape.



17 Newton Park College

7.6.15 There is very little landscape evidence remaining of the previous mining activities around Clutton, Temple Cloud, High Littleton and Timsbury. There are a few small batches at Clutton, east of Radford Hill and at Greyfields, High Littleton.

Fields, Boundaries and Trees

7.6.16 Field hedges are mostly regularly trimmed, except in some of the steeper valley areas. Many are 'well-treed' except for the more exposed plateau tops such as south of Corston and around Hinton Blewett. The condition of hedges and hedgerow trees is very variable with particularly poor hedges around arable fields. There were no survey points where particularly good hedgerow management was noted and only two recently planted hedges were noted, both suffering from poor establishment management. The area features a variety of field sizes, medium predominating, with large fields on plateaux or gentler slopes and smaller fields on steeper slopes and around some villages. Most fields are irregular in shape and pattern. This is often associated with late medieval enclosure of the open field system and in more recent times with amalgamation of smaller fields to form more easily worked units.



18 Kilkenny Lane

7.6.17 Fencing is not common except around settlements. Walls are typically found around the edges and within villages and hamlets, for example at Stanton Prior. Nearby at Wilmington there is a walled field boundary, the

only one in the parish of Priston, which marks the Manorial boundary between Wilmington and Priston. This is doubly unusual in that it contains megaliths suggesting it was already a boundary in pre-historic times.

7.6.18 Specimen trees in fields are an occasional rather than frequent feature. Newton Park has some fine specimens and there are avenues at Clutton and Timsbury. Some villages and the grounds of large old properties are particularly 'well-treed' with large specimens. Newton St Loe, Englishcombe and Timsbury are good examples.

7.6.19 This is not a particularly well-wooded character area. A historical survey of Priston suggests that there was much more extensive woodland in the parish in medieval times and it is likely that the same is true throughout much of the character area. Now the only extensive woodland areas are Greyfield Wood to the west of High Littleton and Stantonbury Hill Wood. Smaller woodland areas, tree belts and copses are scattered throughout the area but do not predominate in the landscape except around the historic park of Newton Park. There are also trees beside the main watercourses. This is much more a landscape of fields and field boundaries with a generally open character except in valleys where views are generally limited by landform and vegetation.

Settlement and Communications

7.6.20 There are two principal roads. The A37 and A39 pass north/south through the area connecting Bristol and Bath to Wells. The A367 connecting Radstock and Bath runs along the southern boundary for a short section to the east of the area. There is a good network of minor roads, which are often narrow and hedge lined connecting villages, hamlets and isolated farms. Narrow hedge lined 'green lanes' are also a particular feature of the area and are often sunken as for example around Englishcombe.

7.6.21 The principal villages include Hinton Blewett, Clutton, High Littleton, Temple Cloud, Timsbury, Farmborough, Marksbury, Priston, Englishcombe and Newton St Loe. Each to a greater or lesser degree forms the hub of a number of roads, tracks and paths. The settlements are generally located within valleys and dips and are either nucleated around a village centre as at Clutton and Newton St Loe or are linear in form as at Hinton Blewett and Temple Cloud. More rarely as at Timsbury and Marksbury settlement is located on the plateau.



19 Edge of Priston

7.6.22 Most of the settlements have a core of old stone-built buildings with modern buildings and small housing estates added towards the edges. This occurs at Clutton, Temple Cloud and Timsbury. The villages and hamlets generally fit sensitively into their setting, typically with old Lias or Oolitic Limestone buildings and more rarely sandstone and often roofed with clay tiles. There are also many rendered houses often white and occasionally cream in colour. Modern barns, often of pre-formed steel, are visible from many viewpoints and fit less harmoniously where positioned in exposed areas.

Landscape Characteristics

7.6.23 The open undulating nature of the landscape gives rise to many extensive views often framed through field openings. The Cotswold Hills and the landmark of Kelston Round Hill, the edge of Bath and the wooded Avon and Cam Brook Valleys are generally visible across much of the area. Within the area there are numerous small rounded hills such as Stantonbury Hill, Winsbury Hill, Barrow Hill, Farmborough Common, Priest Barrow, Mearns Hill, The Sleight, Amesbury Hill, Nap Hill, the hill north of Priston, the hill south of Whistling Copse and Duncorn Hill. These are important landmarks within the area. The varied topography gives rise to interesting light and shading effects emphasising the characteristic landform.

7.6.24 There are a number of historical features of interest within the area. Stantonbury Hillfort, a Scheduled Monument is dominant in the north east of the area and the Wansdyke crosses the area from Stantonbury Hill to Odd Down. This nationally important and enigmatic linear earthwork is clearly visible in sections such as at Englishcombe and Stantonbury Hill. The earthworks of the

late medieval Culverhay Castle also survive at Englishcombe and at Priston there is a well-preserved mill. Early Ordnance Survey maps also show a number of quarries and lime-kilns and at Clutton Hill a brick-works and gravel pit. Coal mining has also left its mark, particularly in the centre of the area around Temple Cloud and Clutton.

Landscape Change and Condition

7.6.25 The area generally appears to be well cared for although it has experienced considerable change resulting from field enlargement and hedge removal. This reflects the widespread use of the land for growing arable crops. Often the irregular field outlines are the remaining evidence of the medieval enclosure of the open field system, as for example to the south-east of White Cross. In some cases the amalgamation of fields and new hedge planting can obscure the historical field pattern as for example to the north of Stantonbury Hill. The impact of amalgamation of smaller fields is particularly evident along the valleys such as beside the Newton Brook.

7.6.26 Trees both within estate fields and within hedgerows are characteristic of the area. Many of these have been lost through agricultural 'improvement' and the effects of Dutch elm disease. Remaining trees have typically reached maturity and in some cases are in decline. In places hedges have also become 'gappy' as a consequence of no longer being required to contain stock.

7.6.27 Post-war development has had a significant impact on views. Housing development at the edges of settlements is often prominent within views and lacks the organic and well-integrated characteristic of the original settlement. New large farm barns are also often prominent in views because of a combination of their size, design, prominent location and colour.

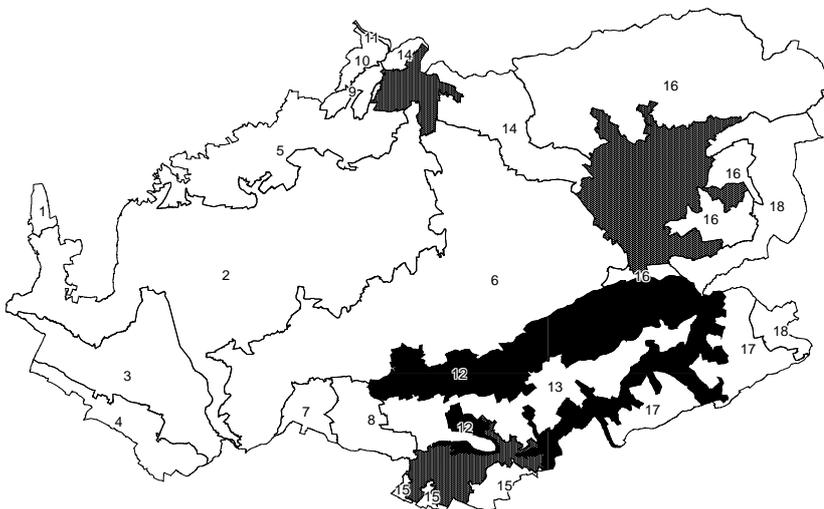
7.6.28 In common with much of the area there has been a dramatic loss of orchards. Around many of the settlements where there once may have been orchards there are now horse paddocks. Typically they stand out because of characteristic elements such as shelters, highly visible fencing and overgrazed or weedy surfaces.

7.6.29 Significant new tree planting has taken place in recent years which will in time form significant features in the landscape.

Area 12: Cam and Wellow Brook Valleys

Summary of Landscape Character

- Moderately wide and steep river valleys, striking landform
- Undulating valley sides
- Freely meandering brooks across the floodplains
- Arable and pastoral land cover in roughly equal measure
- Small or medium size irregular fields
- Building materials traditionally Oolitic Limestone to the east of the area and Lias Limestone towards the west with red clay tiles or slate
- Frequent woods, large and small, especially at the top of slopes
- Hedges, clipped and unclipped, are very common with frequent hedgerow trees
- Thick lines of trees follow both the brooks
- Roads follow valley floor and others rise up valley sides connecting to farms and settlements
- Small villages in the valleys
- Farms and isolated houses on the slopes
- A well-preserved section of the Fosse Way Roman road
- Disused railway, line of the Somersetshire Coal Canal and batches provide evidence of the past importance of the area for coal mining
- Pill-boxes and tank traps near Shoscombe Vale and Stony Littleton provide evidence of second world war anti-tank defences
- Valley has intimate enclosed character provided by topography, trees within hedges and tree belts along brook and field boundaries
- Open upper slopes
- Generally has a quiet and peaceful quality away from major road corridors



Context

Location of Area

7.12.1 The Cam and Wellow Brook Valleys is one of the larger character areas at approximately 30sq km. It consists of the river valleys of the Cam and Wellow Brooks, which run from west to east. They are separated by the Paulton and Peasedown St John Ridge character area. The brooks merge at Midford to become the Midford Brook. This then flows into the Avon at Monkton Combe near the Dundas Aqueduct, within the Bathford and Limpley Stoke character area. The Wellow Valley section starts to the north of Midsomer Norton with Welton Vale and Clandown Bottom and re-emerges to the east of the built up area of Radstock while the Cam Valley section starts further west to the north of Paulton. The higher ground of the Hinton Blewett and Newton St Loe Plateau Lands and Cotswolds Plateaux and Valleys character areas are found to the north and the Hinton Charterhouse and Baggridge Plateaux character area is to the south. The boundaries of the area generally follow the top of the valley sides before they level off or merge with the adjoining plateau landscape.

Geology, Soils and Drainage

7.12.2 The underlying geology is principally from the Jurassic period. Oolitic and Lias Limestone occurs at the top of the valley sides. Midford Sands are found locally below this in the Combe Hay to Midford area. Lias Clay and Limestone and clay and shales of the Penarth Group are found generally on the valley sides. Fuller's Earth occurs locally between the Inferior and Great Oolite and was mined commercially at Wellow, South Stoke, Combe Hay and Dunkerton. Older outcrops of the Triassic period particularly Mercia Mudstones are found along the upper reaches of each brook. There is a narrow band of more recent alluvium alongside the brooks.

7.12.3 The soils above the Upper Lias and Inferior Oolitic Limestones are thin brashy calcareous clays. They

support short term or permanent pasture, though on the more gentle slopes some arable is found. In the base of the valleys the soils are slowly permeable silts and loams. These can be waterlogged and support mainly permanent pasture.

Major Planning Designations

7.12.4 The eastern part including Combe Hay and Wellow lies within the Cotswold AONB. The Bristol/Bath Green Belt extends further west towards Peasedown St John and beyond around to the north of the village.



31 Upper Radford

Description

Landform and Drainage Pattern

7.12.5 The valleys are both moderately steep and wide. The Oolitic Limestone has generally given rise to steeper upper slopes and the Lias Clays to the more gentle slopes. The sides of the valleys are rounded and undulating through both erosion and occasional slippage due to the softer clays. Many springs issue from the valley sides. The resultant streams are often lined with trees. The junction of the valley sides with the base is usually gentle and rounded and the valley floors are narrow but flat with the brooks meandering freely across their flood plain. The brooks are quite deep in places and they frequently have steep sides, which was taken advantage of in making anti-tank defences along the Wellow Brook in 1940. The valleys range in height from the lowest point near Midford at 30m to high points of 146m north of Dunkerton and 156m north of Combe Hay.



30 View across Wellow Brook Valley

Land-uses

7.12.6 The land-use is a mixture of arable and short term and permanent pasture. There is generally an equal proportion of arable to pasture. The arable tends to be in localised blocks on the more gentle slopes where soil conditions are better. Conversely the pasture is on the steeper slopes and poorer soils.

Fields, Boundaries and Trees

7.12.7 Fields are of small and medium size and irregularly shaped, larger ones located on higher less steep slopes are more regular in shape. Hedges are the dominant boundary and these may be low and clipped or tall and quite mature. Added to this are frequent hedgerow trees, belts of trees and, most significantly, thick lines of trees that follow the brooks for much of their length. This tree pattern produces an enclosing effect within much of the valleys.

7.12.8 There is a significant amount of woodland especially on the steeper slopes such as Underdown, Cleaves and Hang Woods, which are registered as ancient semi-natural woodland. The woods sometimes extend down to the valley bottom. The woodlands are either deciduous or mixed plantations and they vary considerably in size from less than 0.5ha. to Cleaves Wood at over 20ha. They are varied in form from small and regular to large and irregular or compact and linear. The old coal batches are generally covered in mixed plantations with much sycamore and Scots pine.

Settlement and Communications

7.12.9 The settlement pattern is quite dense and diverse. Villages generally follow the valley floors. Camerton, Dunkerton, Combe Hay and Midford are located in the Cam Valley and Shoscombe, Stony Littleton and Wellow are located in the Wellow Valley. The village of South Stoke is a notable exception located on the upper slopes of the Cam Valley and it extends beyond the character area boundary to the plateau forming the southern outlier of the Cotswold Plateau and Valleys Character Area. Mills and their associated features are also an important part of the landscape. There are also smaller hamlets and individual farms and houses that are more isolated and generally higher up the slopes. The urban areas of Midsomer Norton and Radstock are adjoining and are widely visible from the character area. Though they are outside the area of the landscape assessment they are closely connected with this area. They developed along the valleys where coal was mined and the valleys accommodated the associated works and railways, which serviced the coal mines. The predominant building material of this area is Oolitic or white Lias Limestone, mainly to the east and west of the area

respectively, with a small number of properties in a rendered finish. Limestone walls within and at the edge of settlements are characteristic. Roofs are predominantly red clay tiles with some slate, and fewer with concrete tiles, usually on more modern buildings. The traditional farm buildings are of Oolitic or white Lias Limestone, and the modern ones noted are constructed in asbestos or concrete.



32 Combe Hay

7.12.10 The principal road is the A367 Bath to Radstock road that crosses the Cam Brook Valley. There is a road that links all the valley bottom villages in each valley but they do not connect at Midford, the road east from Wellow runs up the slope and to Hinton Charterhouse. Other roads connect the valley road to the surrounding higher villages and these usually run straight up the valley sides in deep-set cuttings resulting in characteristic sunken lanes and old hedge banks. With tall hedges on either side these minor roads are very enclosed and concealed. Part of the disused railway line is now part of the long distance footpath, the Limestone Link. This route runs the entire length of the Cam Valley to Midford. The intimate character of the landscape and the many features of interest make this area a popular area for walking, riding and cycling.

Landscape Characteristics

7.12.11 The Cam and Wellow brooks are the key features of the area. They are both relatively small rivers that are deeply set into the valley floor with high banks. They meander freely and are generally lined with alder and willow trees. Oak and ash are also often present. Views are mostly contained within the valley by the taller hedges, the trees lining the brooks and the undulating landform. The upper slopes are generally quite open, giving views of the strong valley landform while in places, such as the Combe Hay area, the wooded skyline is an important characteristic.

7.12.12 The field pattern reflects medieval settlement with the brook sides having early or pre-medieval

characteristics and the upper slope of a later and post medieval one. Earthworks around All Saint's Church, Dunkerton are an example of a shrunken medieval village which has survived within later enclosed land and good examples of medieval fields can be seen around Radford. There is a well-preserved section of the Fosse Way Roman road through Dunkerton parish. The dominant features however are the remnants of the coal mining industry from the 18th-20th centuries. In both valleys there are frequent shafts and batches together with the remains of the railway and tram lines that connected the mines to the Avon Valley. Remains of the Somersetshire Coal Canal are also significant reminders of this coal mining history. Midford Aqueduct at Midford is a powerful architectural survival of this canal that is still a significant feature today. Stone mining and Fuller's Earth extraction were also carried out in the Southstoke/Midford area and an example of a 19th century Fuller's Earth processing plant survives in Combe Hay parish, near Odd Down. The villages along the valleys housed the workers in coal mining and associated employment. The line of the Wellow Brook was part of Stop Line Green; an anti-tank defence line set up to protect Bristol during the Second World War. There are the remains of pill-boxes and tank traps near Shoscombe Vale and Stony Littleton constructed as part of this defence.

7.12.13 The valley generally has a peaceful, tranquil quality. This is disturbed along the major road corridors such as the A367.



33 Stile and Gate at Writhlington

Landscape Change and Condition

7.12.14 The most dramatic change of the past 100 years has been due to the end of coal mining in the area. Once quite industrial areas have gradually reverted back to a

more rural and wilder state. This is particularly apparent along the railway lines where thickets of sycamore and blackthorn scrub have developed in many places.

7.12.15 There has been relatively little in the way of more recent development but changes in agricultural practice have left a less manicured landscape. Consequently the condition of the landscape may be regarded as rather unkempt in places but this has given it a wilder and more 'natural' quality. There is occasional evidence of work being carried out to enhance the long-term health of the hedges such as hedge-laying carried out at Upper Radford.

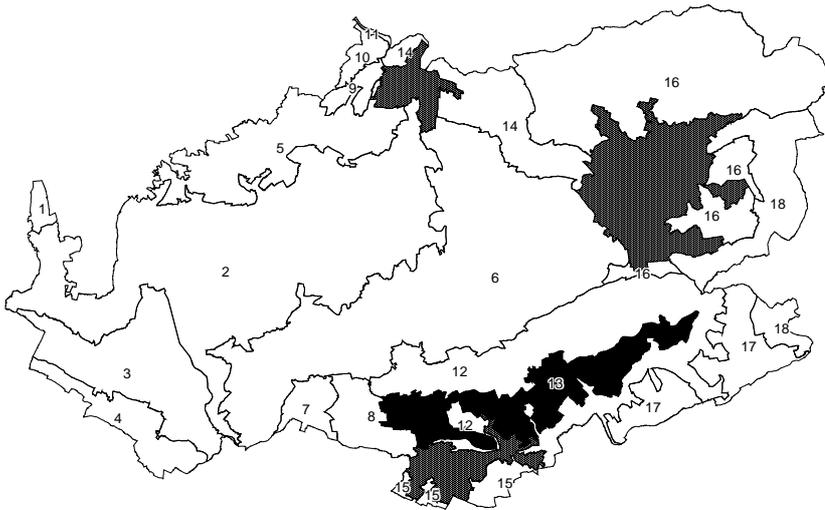
7.12.16 Where arable farming is more intense the landscape is more open and managed but nowhere is the landscape in poor condition. There has been significant hedgerow removal in many parts of the area but most noticeably on the upper northern slopes of the Cam Valley and where arable farming is mostly practised. Where this has occurred on the upper slopes of the valleys it has effectively opened up the landscape giving wide views across and along the valleys. A much more enclosed and intimate landscape is experienced on the lower slopes and valley floors where there are plenty of trees and hedges. However even on the valley floors there has been some amalgamation of smaller pastoral fields. On the steeper more wooded slopes the fields and hedges are much as they were in 1884.

7.12.17 The impact of Dutch elm disease has also had a significant effect in reducing the number of hedgerow trees and giving some hedgerows a rather unkempt look due to the number of dead or dying elm suckers. The amount of woodland cover however has generally increased, with many woods being larger than in 1884 and with some new ones developing partly as a result of changes in management of the land. There has been a large reduction in the amount of orchard. Wellow in particular had extensive areas under orchard. Some, near to the village centre have been built upon while many further away and on farms have been grubbed up.

Area 13: Paulton and Peasedown St John Ridge

Summary of Landscape Character

- A fairly flat limestone plateau/ridge with gentle undulations
- Shallow well-drained clay soils on higher ground
- Most farmland is arable with more grassland in the western part
- Open landscape with wide views to surrounding areas
- Fields usually enclosed by low clipped hedges
- Unclipped hedges though less common are found more towards the west of the area
- Large fields that are regular in shape
- Infrequent small woodlands that are often regularly shaped
- Woodland on batches often containing a proportion of coniferous trees
- Small roads that run along the ridge or straight across it
- Fosse Way runs diagonally across the ridge
- Large prominent villages of Peasedown St John and Paulton with coal mining history
- 20th century expansion of Peasedown St John and Paulton widely visible
- 19th century farms often with prominent modern buildings



Context

Location of Area

7.13.1 The Paulton and Peasedown St John Ridge character area is nearly 17 sq km in area. It includes Paulton at the western end, Peasedown St John near the middle and Upper and Middle Twinhoe at the eastern end. It is about 2 km across at its widest point near Peasedown St John. It is a limestone ridge that separates the Cam and Wellow Brook Valleys character area and also abuts the Farrington Gurney Farmlands character area at the western end. The boundary is typically defined as the top of the adjoining valley sides.

Geology, Soils and Drainage

7.13.2 Geologically the area can be divided into two. To the east of Peasedown St John greater Oolitic Limestone forms the capping layer giving way to bands of limestone and Fuller's Earth on the lower slopes. Below the Fuller's Earth there is a band of inferior Oolitic Limestone which comes to the surface on the edge of the ridge. To the west of Peasedown St John the capping geology consists of inferior Oolitic Limestone which is above upper Lias Clay followed by Lias Limestones and clays and shales of the Penarth Group.

7.13.3 The soils are generally shallow, well-drained, calcareous brashy clays. Where the Fuller's Earth and Lias Clays are found they are more slowly draining and thicker though still calcareous in nature with patches of brashy material. On both soil types cereal crops and permanent or short-term pasture is common.

7.13.4 Principal Planning Designations

The extreme eastern section is within the Cotswold AONB eastwards from Bath Hill between Wellow and Combe Hay.

The Bristol/Bath Green Belt includes the eastern part of the area eastwards from Peasedown St John.

Description

Landform and Drainage Pattern

7.13.5 This is a simple landscape that consists of a relatively flat plateau with shallow undulations. It ranges in height from about 100 m to high points of 164 m at Camerton Farm and 168 m at White Ox Mead Knoll. The area is above the spring line of the ridge and so open water is absent. However there are springs along the edges of the area and most farms have a well.

Land-uses

7.13.6 The land is mainly used for arable crops but in the western part up to half the area is grassland.

Fields, Boundaries and Trees

7.13.7 Hedges are the most common boundary though in places fences have replaced them. The hedges are usually low and well clipped. In the western half there are also characteristically unclipped and taller hedges. Where stock is farmed the hedges are generally supplemented with post and wire fences. Trees in the hedgerows are common but not abundant and are mostly oak or ash. The fields are medium to large and regular in shape reflecting the field pattern of late medieval times. There are infrequent woodlands that are usually less than one hectare in size. These are also regular in shape and fit easily with the grain and texture of this landscape. The woodlands are mostly broadleaf consisting of mainly oak and ash, with a proportion of sycamore. Many woods have a small conifer element but this is not universal. The batches at Camerton, Braysdown and Tying have a higher proportion of conifers in common



34 *Fields East of Paulton*

with many of the other batches in the area.

Settlement and Communications

7.13.8 Peasedown St John, the largest settlement, is located in a prominent position near the centre of the area. It is quite visible from much of the surrounding areas. Likewise Paulton occupies a prominent location at the western end. Clandown at the edge of Radstock adjoining the area is sited at the head of a small valley. All three are former mining settlements established in the 19th century. The expansion of these settlements in the 20th century has made them stand out prominently in the landscape. The regular size, form, 'newness' in colour and the lack of mature tree cover mean that the housing development on the south side of Peasedown St John stands out from the rest of the village and its surrounding countryside. Although Paulton has a mining history, printing has been the predominant industry since the beginning of the 20th century. The works are on the north side of the village and the large buildings dominate the surrounding urban and rural areas.



35 View towards Peasedown St John

7.13.9 There are scattered individual farmsteads located across the area. These tend to be of typical 19th century design using mostly local materials and so harmonise well with the landscape. However many of them have large modern out buildings and barns that have a high impact due to their size, material and functional design.

7.13.10 The roads are few and narrow. They generally run either along the line of the ridge or straight across it. In either case they are often sunken into the ground or enclosed by hedges on either side giving a 'closed in' feeling to them. The exception to this is the A367 Radstock to Bath road, which cuts diagonally across the plateau. Part follows the Roman Fosse Way which has been a major route way leading south from Bath for hundreds of years.

Landscape Characteristics

7.13.11 This is an open landscape often with a windswept character. Long views over the valleys on either side to the surrounding hills are typical. There is rarely a sense of enclosure as woodlands are not common and the hedges

are mostly low and well clipped. The sky is an important feature of the views and the few tall elements such as pylons, telecommunication towers and floodlights are consequently highly visible.

7.13.12 The A367 is a major feature adding movement and noise to this landscape. Away from this busy road it is tranquil, typified by the spring and summer sounds of skylarks. Other detractors include a covered reservoir north of Clandown, a landfill site beside Bath Old Road north of Tynning and large modern barns and associated unnatural earthworks. There are dark night skies in those areas away from the larger settlements.



35 Fields South of Peasedown St John

7.13.13 There is considerable archaeological evidence to show that this plateau has been settled for thousands of years. There are Neolithic flint finds that date from the 5th century BC. There are Bronze-age burial mounds near Camerton, the site of a Roman settlement near Clandown and the site of a Roman villa near White Ox Mead Knoll.

Landscape Change and Condition

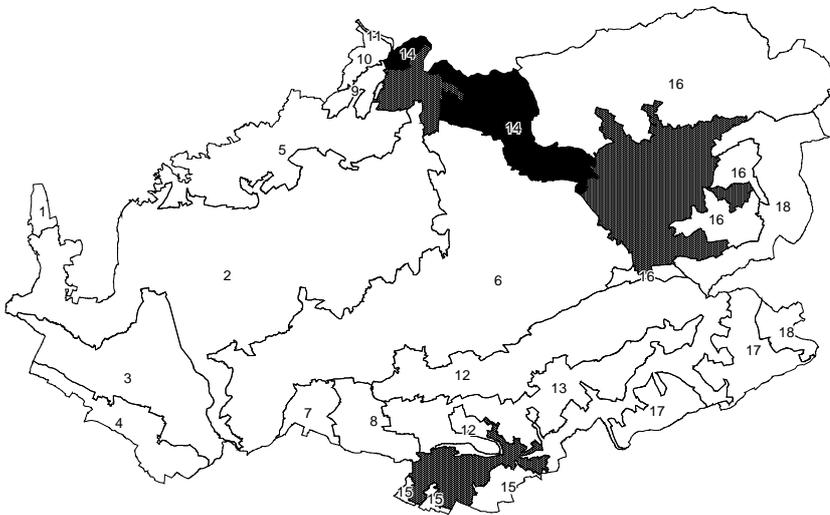
7.13.14 Agriculturally there have been significant post-war changes resulting in the amalgamation of fields particularly within the areas favourable to arable use. There has also been a reduction in the number of trees within hedgerows with a resultant opening up of the character of the higher areas. Historically the blight and hectic activity associated with coal mining in this area in the 19th and early 20th centuries has now largely been greened over. In the latter half of the 20th century the most evident changes to this landscape have increasingly come from development pressure. Development is evident by the encroachment into the landscape of features such as pylons and other overhead wires as well as telecommunication towers. In addition flood lighting is seen around Clandown. In this flat landscape where tall vertical objects are proportionately more noticeable this has had a significant effect upon the character of the area. The recent by-pass and housing at Peasedown St John have significantly affected the landscape around the village by extending the built-up area and changing the

character of the interface between the built-up area and the countryside. The realigned A367 road and the associated noise attenuation bund has resulted in a strong barrier between the settlement and the surrounding landscape. Land to the south-east is designated as employment land. This will result in significant changes along the southern boundary of the village.

Area 14: Avon Valley

Summary of Landscape Character

- Meandering tree lined River Avon
- Wide open valley with a generally flat valley floor
- Generally steeply sloping valley sides often with undulating lower slopes
- Generally clayey soils but also well-drained loamy soils on the river gravels
- Patchwork of arable and grassland
- Land use for sports pitches, 'horsiculture', light industry and utilities within and bordering the area
- Prominent railway line and A4 Bristol to Bath road
- Line of disused railway line now the well-used tree-lined Bristol and Bath Railway Path'
- Generally small to medium sized fields enclosed by fences and hedges
- Walls generally found nearer farms and dwellings
- Several small woods
- Prominent settlements within and adjoining the area
- Traditional building materials include Oolitic and Lias Limestone with clay tile roofs
- Landmarks include the Cadbury factory at Keynsham and Kelston Round Hill
- Much of area has noise from road traffic and passing trains
- Seasonal flooding



Context

Introduction

7.14.1 The Avon Valley character area is approximately 12sq km in area. It comprises the meandering River Avon, its valley floor and the lower valley slopes especially where they are significantly influenced by the presence of the railway and major road which are so prominent in the valley. It extends from the western edge of Bath to the area boundary north of Keynsham where the Cadbury factory complex at Somerdale separates off a smaller area to the west. The area is bounded by the Cotswold Plateaux and Valleys character area to the east and the Hinton Blewett and Newton St Loe Plateau Lands to the south as well as shorter sections of other areas west of Keynsham.

Geology, Soils and Drainage

7.14.2 Drift deposits are an important component of the surface geology throughout the area with alluvium typically found through the floodplain as well as smaller outcrops of river gravel and head. There are also a variety of solid formations including Pennant Sandstone in the area of Corston, Lias Limestone from Saltford to Kelston Park with visible outcrops for example at Mead Lane, Saltford and Lias Clay from Keynsham to Kelston to the north of the limestone.



37 Rock outcrop at Mead Lane, Saltford

7.14.3 Soils are generally clayey in nature ranging from being well-drained in the limestone areas to being slowly permeable or at risk of flooding such as beside the Avon. There are also some well-drained fine loamy soils found over the river gravels, for example to the east of Keynsham.

Principal Planning Designations

7.14.4 The northern part falls within the Cotswold AONB with the boundary following the River Avon. The southern part following a line along the River Avon, around the edge of Corston, along the A4 and along the western edge of Keynsham falls within the Forest of Avon community forest. The whole of the rural area is also within the Bristol/Bath Green Belt.

Description

Landform and Drainage Pattern

7.14.5 The landscape consists primarily of the meandering River Avon and its wide valley with a generally flat or gently sloping valley floor. Here the land is low-lying rarely exceeding 50m in height. The valley sides where they are included range from moderately steeply sloping around Corston, Newton St Loe and Kelston to gently sloping as for example between Keynsham and Saltford. The lower slopes are often undulating. The main line railway has had a significant effect on the topography. Where it runs across the flood plain it has been raised up in places on steeply sloping embankments with other sections at grade or in cutting. It has the effect of isolating parts of the flood plain landscape from the River Avon.

Land-uses

7.14.6 Land-use within the area is varied, often giving a patchwork of arable and grassland. Arable fields are found particularly north of Saltford and around Corston to the edge of Bath. There is also some horticultural use north east of Keynsham. The reasonably level land close to urban areas favours the use of the land for sports pitches such as near to the edge of Keynsham and Corston. There is also 'horsiculture' in places particularly to the north of Saltford and significant areas are in light industrial or business use, including a substantial sewage works at Saltford Mead.

Fields, Boundaries and Trees

7.14.7 The field boundaries are particularly varied. Fences are used extensively. Hedges are also characteristic and varied across the area with both clipped and unclipped hedges, some with and some without trees. Walls tend to be localised and mostly associated with farm buildings. In areas of intensive horse grazing visually discordant white tape is used to divide fields.

7.14.8 Fields are generally medium in size, with some small and occasionally large fields, and are typically angular in shape. Historically much of the area was enclosed during the later Middle Ages from the earlier open fields. Of particular note are the areas of rich, wet grassland beside the River Avon such as at Keynsham Hams and north of Newton St Loe, which were enclosed in the medieval period as areas of meadowland, providing early seasonal growth of grass.

7.14.9 Much of the area has few trees but the landscape is punctuated by a number of scattered small woods. Tennant's Wood and Kelston Park Wood are of particular note. They are both registered as ancient semi-natural

woodland. There are trees lining the River Avon and also beside the Bristol and Bath Railway Path and beside the main line railway. During the 1990's there was considerable woodland planting under the aegis of the Community Forest to the east of Keynsham. Development of this community resource is ongoing.

Settlements and Communications

7.14.10 The Avon Valley is an important transport corridor. The river was at one time an important means of transport and is now primarily used for recreational purposes. The A4 Bristol to Bath road passes through the corridor with connections to each side of the valley. The Bristol to London mainline railway also runs through the valley.

7.14.11 The area is bounded by Keynsham and Bath. Keynsham is widely visible from within the area, whereas Bath tends to be less prominent because of the topography of the city. Saltford is the main settlement within the area. It is located on the south-western slopes of the Avon Valley and is visible across much of the character area. The historical centre of the village is around the church on the north-east side. There has been subsequent 19th century development towards the river and the bulk of the village is 20th century. Corston is the only other village and is also located on the south-western slopes of the valley. The southern part around the church is the historical centre. The village expanded to the north in the 19th century and has two small areas of 20th century development on the northern side. Other settlement includes a group of houses at Durley Park and ribbon development between Saltford and Keynsham. There are also isolated farms and properties above the floodplain. Traditional building materials include

Oolitic and Lias Limestone often with red clay tiled roofs. More recently brick and rendered houses with brown concrete roofs have been built on the edges of Keynsham and at Saltford.

Landscape Characteristics

7.14.12 The landscape has a generally open character with views across the wide valley floor to the valley sides and the hills and plateaux beyond. Kelston Round Hill and Lansdown for example can appear very dramatic under certain conditions such as when under low cloud. Occasionally longer views are restricted by adjoining settlements, tall hedges, trees or the railway on embankment.



39 West Side of Saltford

7.14.13 The flat open nature of the landscape gives prominence to features that otherwise might be lost in a more enclosed landscape. Goal posts and buildings associated with the sports fields are often major components of the view. Likewise large mature trees and groups of trees, often including willow and poplar, are also important elements of many views. The course of the river edged by trees is a particularly important feature throughout the area. Seasonal flooding can have a pronounced effect on the character across the flood plain.



38 Kelston Mill and Weir near Saltford

7.14.14 Development at the edges of the settlements is often a major component of views especially around and between Keynsham and Saltford. The Cadbury factory at Keynsham with its prominent red brick construction is an important landmark from many views. Likewise the Kelston Round Hill on the Cotswold ridge to the north east with its group of trees is another important landmark.

7.14.15 The noise from both road traffic and trains is apparent across much of the area reinforcing the importance of the valley as a transport corridor.

Landscape Change and Condition

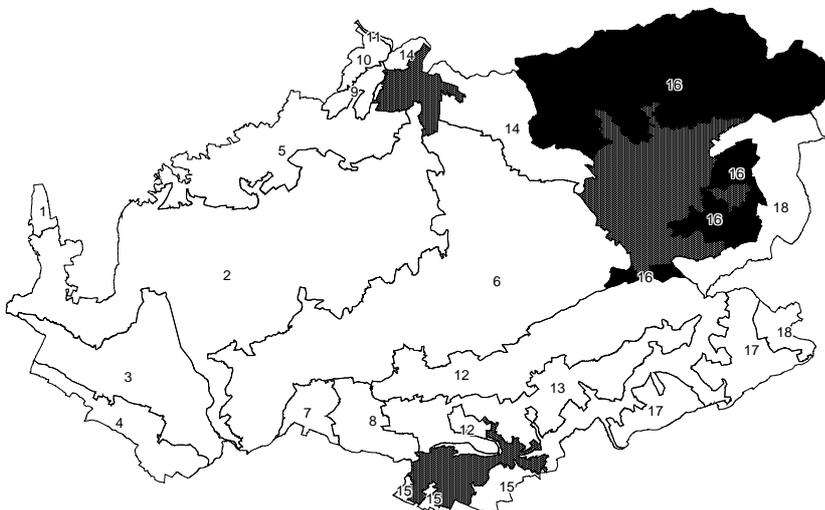
7.14.16 There have been agricultural changes locally leading to amalgamation of fields as well as a reduction in the number of hedgerow trees. Most recent changes have come about as a result of urban fringe pressures. This is indicated by the presence of utility works, sports pitches and locally the use of fields as horse paddocks.

7.14.17 Phytophthora disease has resulted in dead and dying alders beside the river and is having a significant impact on many views along this river valley landscape.

Area 16: Cotswolds Plateaux and Valleys

Summary of Landscape Character

- Steep west-facing scarp with outcrops of Oolitic Limestone
- Open high Oolitic Limestone plateaux enclosed by dry stone walls and few trees
- Fields on valley sides enclosed by often untrimmed hedges with trees
- Thin well-drained loam soils on plateaux and deeper slowly permeable clayey soils on lower valley sides and floor
- Arable and pastoral farmland on plateaux
- Pasture and woodland on valley sides
- Narrow steeply sided valleys that cut into the plateaux
- Larger fields on plateaux and smaller more irregular fields on valley sides
- Villages and isolated farms follow foot of slopes close to the spring lines
- Warm coloured Oolitic Limestone buildings and walls
- Straight roads on the plateaux
- Narrow sunken winding lanes along the valley sides
- Broadleaf woods along scarp and upper slopes
- Open landscape on plateaux and more enclosed and intimate landscape within valleys
- Many historical and archaeological features including the late prehistoric site at Solsbury Hill, the Fosse Way Roman road at Bannerdown and Second World War airfield at Charmy Down
- Many locally well-known landmarks and beauty spots and Cotswolds Way national trail



For detailed Character Area map see Appendix 3

Context

Introduction

7.16.1 This character area is one of the larger ones at 41.6sq km and is located at the north-eastern side of the area. It comprises the southernmost part of the Cotswolds, a much-celebrated landscape that is recognised both nationally and internationally. It is divided into four separate parts by the presence of the Avon Valley which cuts through the area, and the City of Bath which has developed up onto parts of the Cotswold plateau and along the valleys over the centuries.

7.16.2 By far the largest part of the area lies to the north of the City. It extends up to and far beyond the northern boundary of the area and runs from Swineford in the west to Shockerwick in the east. The southern and western boundary runs along the base of the scarp slope down to the River Avon or to the edge of the built up area of Bath.



42 *Fields near Shockerwick*

7.16.3 There are also three much smaller outlying parts to the area at the southern and eastern edge of Bath which border the Cam and Wellow Brook Valleys character area and the Bathford and Limpley Stoke Valley character area respectively.

7.16.4 The landscape comprises a series of Oolitic Limestone plateau areas divided by steep sided valleys and a scarp slope down to the River Avon. It has an intimate relationship with the city of Bath and much of the distinctive character of the city is derived from this relationship. The city is built in the valleys and on the downs of the Cotswolds and so this area would be more continuous were it not for the built up area.

Geology, Soils and Drainage

7.16.5 The plateau tops are formed from the Greater Oolitic Limestone. This is the celebrated honey coloured limestone used in the local buildings and for much of Bath itself. The formations include Bath Oolite, Twinhoe Beds and Combe Down Oolite which form the flat tops of the downs. Below this lies the Fuller's Earth beds that have

been important economically in the area. Fuller's Earth was mined in Combe Hay parish, near Odd Down and at South Stoke. These beds are in turn underlain by the Lower Oolitic Limestones and then the Midford Sands and Lias Clay that locally form the base of the scarp and the bottom of the valleys.

7.16.6 The soils over the Greater Oolitic Limestone are thin, brashy fine loams. They are freely draining and calcareous. The Fuller's Earth support shallow clayey soils that are still alkaline and brashy but are less well drained. On the scarp face above the Midford Sands and Inferior Oolitic Limestone a thin brashy calcareous clay is found that supports short term and permanent pasture, these slopes tend also to be very uneven from slippage. In the base of the valleys on the Lias Clays the soils are slowly permeable silty and loam soils. These can be waterlogged in places.

Principal Planning Designations

7.16.7 Most of the area is within the Cotswold AONB except for a small part near Odd Down and the whole of the undeveloped area is within the Bristol/Bath Green Belt.

Description

Landform and Drainage Pattern

7.16.8 The Cotswolds rise abruptly from the Avon Valley and comprise three distinct elements. They are firstly the west facing scarp, then the steep sided river valleys and finally the plateau tops or Downs as they are known locally. The scarp rises from 15m by the River Avon at Swineford to high points of 218m at Kelston Round Hill, 236m at Bath racecourse, 212m at Charmy Down and 204m at Bathampton Down. The plateau is relatively flat and level, generally above 180m. The river valleys steeply dissect the plateau as their streams flow to the Avon. Each valley has in turn steeply sided tributary valleys forming a complicated indented valley landform. There are frequent springs along the valley sides and scarp face at the junction of the porous limestone with the Fuller's Earth and Lias Clays below.

Land-uses

7.16.9 Land use is predominantly pastoral on the steeper slopes and a mixture of short-term pasture and arable on the flat plateau tops. There are also several areas of historic parkland including Kelston Park designed in 1768 by Capability Brown, Widcombe Manor largely laid out in 1727 at the time of rebuilding the manor and Prior Park where Pope was involved in the design and modifications in the 1730s / early 1740s and Capability Brown in the early 1760s.

Fields, Boundaries and Trees

7.16.10 The fields are small and medium and quite irregular on the steeper valley sides and scarp slopes which is typical of the piecemeal clearance of wooded landscape that occurred from the Bronze Age through to Saxon times. The fields on the plateau areas by contrast are larger and more regular resulting from the gradual enclosure of common land and the development of large estates during the 16th to 18th centuries. The fields on the steeper slopes are usually enclosed by hedges which are often untrimmed and 'gappy' and occasionally are enclosed by walls. The plateau areas are distinguished by the long lines of dry-stone walls.

7.16.11 Woodlands are an important feature of this landscape and are most common on the steeper slopes especially on the upper slopes. These woodlands are quite variable in size, ranging from small clumps to large woodlands many hectares in size. Most are irregular in shape. They are mainly broadleaf and beech is common. There are frequent lines of trees, sometimes these are of Scots pine. Individual trees such as ash trees are more common in the hedge lines of the valley slopes. The relative lack of individual trees on the plateau areas reinforces the very open nature of the landscape.



43 *Batheaston*

Settlement and Communications

7.16.12 The settlement pattern and form is dictated by the landform. The villages run along the valley sides frequently close to the spring line. Other settlements are isolated farms and hamlets that are evenly spread along the slopes closely associated with the springs. The plateau areas have no natural water bodies and consequently settlements here are much less common. One of the major unifying elements of this landscape is the use of the local Oolitic Limestone in buildings and walls. The traditional building style has many features that are also very characteristic. These include steep-sided roofs using limestone tiles and the detailing around windows and doors designed to shed water away from the stonework are typical of the 'Cotswold style'.

7.16.13 The roads are divided between two types. The larger roads across the plateaux, for example the A46, The Fosse Way and Lansdown Road, tend to be straight, wide and open. By contrast the smaller lanes that connect the villages tend to be winding and narrow and are typically sunken, enclosed by high hedgebanks. The straighter roads are either Roman in origin as is the case of the Fosse Way or date from the 18th and 19th century enclosure of the plateau areas and consequently reflect the regular layout of this part of the landscape. The winding lanes developed with the villages and the clearance of woodland and so in places could date back to prehistoric times. There are numerous well-used public rights of way including the Limestone Link, part of the Cotswold Way National Trail and the Bath Skyline Walk to the east of Bath. This reflects the importance of the area for casual recreation.

Landscape Characteristics

7.16.14 There are expansive views over the wider countryside and over the city of Bath from the plateaux and the scarp that give an open exposed character while the smaller valleys are more enclosed and can feel quite cut off from surrounding areas. The overall character area is unified by the common occurrence of the broadleaf woodlands, the frequent dry stone walls and the building style in the local Oolitic Limestone.

7.16.15 The presence of historic and prehistoric monuments and features are an integral part of the character of this landscape. There are many Bronze Age burial mounds in the area, particularly on Lansdown, Charmy Down and Banner Down. The area also contains some of the most impressive prehistoric and Romano-British earthwork monuments in the District. The Scheduled Monuments of Solsbury Hill Fort and Little Down Camp are two of the most visible and influential of these. The Fosse Way Roman road links Bath and Cirencester. The valley slopes were enclosed in the late medieval times and are characterised by smaller more regular outlines with frequent 'dog leg' angles where adjoining strips meet. The steeper slopes were also enclosed in the later medieval period but here they have a more distinctive form due to the 'strip lynchets' and other methods used to reclaim productive land on such gradients. Many of these earthworks are still visible today and in some locations such as Bathampton Down and Charmy Down the earthwork remains of prehistoric or Romano-British field systems and enclosures are clearly visible. The plateau tops were enclosed in the 18th and 19th centuries by Parliamentary Enclosure Acts. These tend to have large rectilinear fields bounded by stone walls. Many of the lanes and roads though straight are remnants from an earlier landscape and may be old drove roads. A large memorial marks the civil war battlefield site on Lansdown. There are historic parks and estates from

the 18th century such as Kelston Park, St Catherine's Court and Prior Park. More recently there is the now disused airfield on Charmy Down, a remnant from the Second World War.

7.16.16 There are a number of locally well-known landmarks, beauty spots and features and places of interest some of which are listed below:

Kelston Round Hill – a landmark viewed from miles around to the south, east and west

Beckford's Tower – A folly built in 1827 on the Lansdown Ridge and a prominent landmark

Kelston Park – The mansion at Kelston Park is a prominent landmark in the Avon Valley, jutting out on a lower level plateau into the valley

Solsbury Hill Fort, a Scheduled Monument – Late prehistoric hill fort east of Swainswick

Lansdown Race Course – on the Lansdown ridge

Prospect Stile – Well known viewpoint on the western edge of the Lansdown plateau

Battlefields Monument – Civil war monument at northern end of Lansdown plateau

Charmy Down – prominent disused airfield. Bathampton telecommunication mast Sham Castle on the edge of Bathampton Down

St Catherine's Court – Historic house and garden in the St Catherine's Valley, itself a well-known beauty spot

Prior Park – National Trust Historic Garden.

Landscape Change and Condition

7.16.19 Planning controls in the latter part of the 20th century such as the AONB designation and Green Belt status of the area have been effective in maintaining the distinct character of the area. In addition the high profile nationally has led to enhanced upkeep of the landscape features. Grants for walling and hedgerow maintenance can be seen to have had some localised effect. Pressures from built development have been more localised such as the provision of park and ride on Lansdown and the spread of housing from Bath. Increasingly aspirations for enlargement of the University of Bath result in pressures for further development. The widely visible Batheaston bypass has had a significant impact on the landscape and intrudes into the setting of this edge of Bath. Other development such as telecom towers have also affected some views. The generally good condition of the landscape reflects the value placed upon it.

7.16.20 New tree planting has taken place in some areas in recent years which will contribute to the distinct wooded character of some of the area.

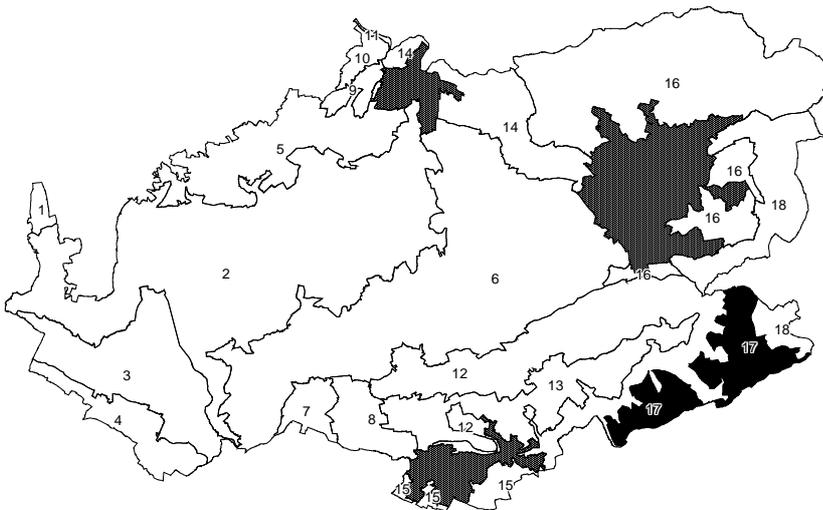


44 Lyncombe Vale from Perrymead

Area 17: Hinton Charterhouse and Baggridge Plateaux

Summary of Landscape Character

- Undulating Oolitic Limestone plateau mostly above 100 m.
- Generally clayey soils with thinner stony light coloured free-draining soils on the limestone
- Mixture of pasture and arable land
- Open landscape with wide views to surrounding areas
- Medium or large fields that are regular and angular in shape
- Fields surrounded by hedges or occasionally walls
- Small woodlands
- Tree belts and frequent hedgerow trees
- Fairly straight roads
- Small village of Hinton Charterhouse and hamlet of Pipehouse that harmonise well with landscape
- 19th century farms often with prominent modern buildings
- Features include water tower at Pipehouse and 2nd world war defences at Hog Wood
- 18th century parkland with specimen trees at Hinton House



Context

Location of Area

7.17.1 This character area is 11.4sq km in size and is located at the south-eastern corner of the area. It consists of a gently undulating limestone plateau. The boundaries are located where the edge of the plateau meets the steeper slopes of the surrounding valleys. The Norton Brook Valley, which is part of the Cam and Wellow Brook Valleys character area, divides the area into two parts. The area is bordered by the Cam and Wellow Brook Valleys character area to the north and the Bathford and Limpley Stoke Valley character area to the east. The southern edge follows the area boundary.

Geology, Soils and Drainage

7.17.2 The geology of the character area consists of the upper portions of the Great Oolite series. The highest points consist of Cornbrash, a loose, brown limestone rock that contains many shell fossils. Below this and covering the majority of the area is a layer of Forest Marble. This is a brown clay with conspicuous cream coloured limestone that consists of large amounts of shell detritus. Below the Forest Marble is the Great Oolite, which forms the fringes of the plateau.

7.17.3 The soils are typically light or mid-brown thin clay with considerable brashy limestone debris. Drainage can be impeded in places where the clay is thicker. Over the Oolitic Limestone the soils are very thin and stony with a matrix of fine or coarse loam. The quantity of stone makes them appear light in colour. These soils are freely draining.

Principal Planning Designations

7.17.4 The whole of the undeveloped area is within the Bristol/Bath Green Belt. The northern half of the eastern part, broadly the part north of Hinton Charterhouse, is within the Cotswold AONB.

Description

Landform and Drainage Pattern

7.17.5 This area comprises a gently undulating limestone plateau ranging in height from 70m to 150m. Most of the area is above 100m. There are no significant natural drainage features because of the flat nature of the landform and the porous geology.

Land-uses

7.17.6 The land cover consists of arable and pastoral fields, in roughly equal measure. The higher parts on the soils derived from the Cornbrash are ideal for growing

cereal crops as the name implies. At the time of survey there was some conspicuous extensive pig farming and there was plentiful evidence of pheasant rearing around Passage Wood.



45 Fields West of Hinton Charterhouse

7.17.7 There is 18th century parkland at Hinton House. There is also a small limestone quarry north of Pipehouse.

Fields, Boundaries and Trees

7.17.8 The fields are of medium and occasionally large size and these are generally regular or angular in shape. Hedges usually enclose these fields. Occasionally there are dry limestone walls, especially around the settlements or along the roads. There are several types of fencing such as post and rail and post and wire. This latter type is frequently used to divide larger fields for different uses or crops. The hedges are very varied. In places they are tall and unclipped and in others they are low and clipped or very rarely layed. A few hedges have been allowed to develop as belts of trees and these can give a misleading impression of there being more woodland than there really is. There are frequent mature trees in the hedges and some in the fields themselves. These are mostly oaks with a smaller number of ash, sycamore and occasionally beech. There are a few small woodlands generally between 2 and 5 ha. in size. Littleton Wood is an exception at approximately 20 ha. The woodlands consist of mixed deciduous and coniferous trees. They are regular in shape and generally reflect the field shapes.

Settlement and Communications

7.17.9 There are two significant settlements; the village of Hinton Charterhouse and the hamlet of Pipehouse. Both are typical rural settlements associated with agriculture. Hinton Charterhouse is at the hub of a number of roads. Both are set high on the plateau at the centre of farmland. There are also individual farms that are spread evenly across the plateau. Upper Baggridge Farm is of particular note positioned at the centre of a number of routes including a byway.

7.17.10 The settlements fit in well with the landscape. Buildings are generally constructed of Oolitic Limestone and roofs are usually red clay or brown concrete tiles. Domestic buildings are small and non-uniform in shape, clustered tightly together. Limestone walls usually mark their boundaries. Within settlements mature trees are common and this strengthens the harmony with the landscape. Some buildings have rendered walls and these tend to stand out. The large modern barns that are usually constructed from concrete block and sheet steel cladding are also very prominent.

7.17.11 The principal road is the A36 Bath to Warminster road towards the east of the area. There are also a number of secondary and minor roads as well as a network of byways and footpaths. Roads are often straight and run across the plateau linking villages and properties. Where roads rise up onto the plateau they usually follow the more gentle slopes but occasionally the roads are steep as for example at Hassage Hill, Baggridge Hill and Hinton Hill.

Landscape Characteristics

7.17.12 It is an expansive landscape that is generally very open. There are some wonderful views both to distant surrounding hills including the Westbury White Horse at Westbury on the Wiltshire Downs and more locally into the Cam and Wellow Valleys. Hedgerow trees and the taller hedges and walls provide an element of enclosure in places and especially around Pipehouse which has a much more enclosed feel than the rest of the plateau.

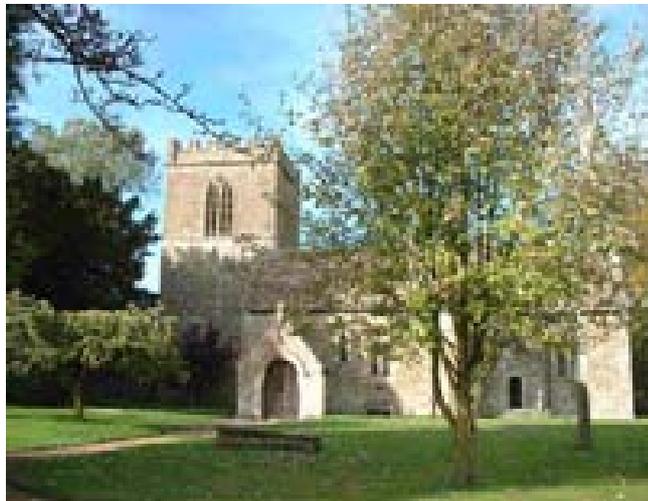


46 Pipehouse

7.17.13 The main landmarks are the villages and farms scattered throughout the area and the water tower at Pipehouse. In Hog Wood near Pipehouse there are a number of pill boxes, anti-tank and infantry trenches dating from 1940 which were built as part of the outer defence line for Bristol against the threat of invasion. The specimen trees in the parkland of Hinton House and the Priory remains are also notable features.

7.17.14 There are several significant archaeological remains that verify the long history of settlement and use of this area. The Stony Littleton Neolithic Long Barrow, various Bronze Age round barrows on Midford Hill and a scheduled length of Roman Road to the south of Pipehouse are the

earliest features in a landscape dominated largely by later periods. The Scheduled Monument of Hinton Priory represents the remains of a rare Carthusian priory and both Baggeridge and Peipards Farms are associated with deserted medieval settlements, the latter associated with the village of Woodwick. Hinton House and the diverted toll road to the north are visible examples of planned landscapes.



47 St John the Baptist's Church, Hinton Charterhouse

Landscape Change and Condition

7.17.15 The condition of the walls, hedges and woodlands is generally declining due to lack of appropriate management. The hedges, although commonly clipped, are frequently 'gappy' and stock proofing, where required, is achieved through post and wire fencing. Woodland cover has increased slightly since 1881 and some areas of recent new tree planting will strengthen this trend. There has however been a dramatic reduction in the number of orchards.

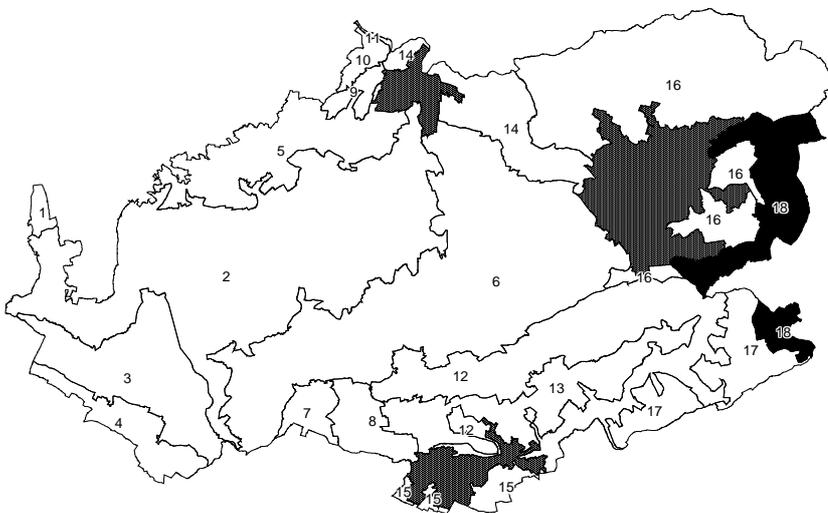
7.17.16 Field sizes have been increased by the removal of walls and hedges. New farm buildings tend to be large and functional in design and are built of modern materials rather than the traditional stone. Consequently they tend to stand out as discordant elements in this landscape especially where they are isolated from other farm buildings.

7.17.17 Other structures are beginning to have a larger impact on the landscape; these include various electricity and telecommunication pylons and the water tower near Pipehouse.

Area 18: Bathford and Limpley Stoke Valley

Summary of Landscape Character

- Broad open valley of the River Avon in places dramatic and gorge-like
- Narrower Frome River and Midford and By Brook Valleys
- Steep generally wooded valley sides
- Meandering course of Rivers Avon, Frome and the Midford and By Brooks edged with groups of alder and willow
- Important transport corridors
- Settlements on valley sides
- Extensive views across and along the valleys
- Views contained by ridges and woodland each side of the valleys
- Generally hedged field boundaries, some clipped and some unclipped
- Several fields enclosed by walls
- Impressive houses and smaller farmhouses usually of characteristic golden Oolitic Limestone on valley sides in wooded or parkland setting
- Distinctive canal architecture including Dundas Aqueduct and bridges
- Mill buildings and associated features such as mill races
- Second World War pill boxes
- Brown's Folly



For detailed Character Area map see Appendix 3

Context

Location of Area

7.18.1 The character area covers nearly 15sq km. It consists of the valley floor and the steep and often well-wooded slopes of the Rivers Frome and Avon and the Midford and By Brooks. It is generally bounded by hills and plateaux and, in the context of this assessment, also by development and the area boundary. It follows the Avon Valley east of Bath from the edge of Batheaston to the north around to the Midford Brook Valley near Monkton Combe to the south. It includes a branch westwards along the Midford Brook and Horsecombe Brook Valleys and eastwards along the By Brook Valley at Bathford. The River Avon continues southwards beyond the area boundary into West Wiltshire. The character area also has an isolated section to the south incorporating part of the River Frome Valley.

Geology, Soils and Drainage

7.18.2 The sides of the rivers and brooks contain drift geology of alluvium, gravel and occasionally head such as below Warleigh Lodge Farm. Typically the valley sides consist of Fuller's Earth and Lias Clays which are overlain with Oolitic Limestone on the high ground. Landslips are a feature throughout the valleys resulting from limestone above unstable clays.

7.18.3 The main soils are calcareous clayey soils typically used for grazing and occasionally for arable use. Fine well-drained calcareous loamy soils occur over the limestone towards the boundaries of the area and typically support a more diverse range of agricultural uses. Well-drained soils are also found towards the north of the area in the vicinity of the Bathampton Meadows.

Principal Planning Designations

7.18.4 All the area falls within the Cotswold AONB except at the two extremes; the Bathampton meadows at the northern end and the Farleigh Plain and Iford plantation at the southern end are outside the AONB. All the undeveloped part also falls within the Bristol/Bath Green Belt.

Description

Landform and Drainage Pattern

7.18.5 The River Avon occupies a comparatively broad but steep sided valley. The steepness of the valley sides in relation to the breadth of the valley gives a dramatic almost gorge-like feel to the landform in places. The River Frome and Midford and By Brooks by contrast occupy narrow valleys

also with steep sides. The floor of each valley is generally flat or gently sloping, gradually increasing in steepness higher up the valley sides. The present form of the Avon Valley with its markedly undulating side slopes has to a large extent resulted from the instability of the Oolitic Limestone over clay leading to landslips along the section east of Bath.



48 Bathford Viewed from across the Avon Valley

Land-uses

7.18.6 The land is principally used for grazing. Only part is in arable use such as to the south of Bathford. There are sports pitches north of Bathampton and along the By Brook and Midford Brook Valleys. There are also areas of parkland with mature specimen trees at Claverton Manor, now the American Museum, and at Warleigh Manor, now converted to smaller housing units.

Fields, Boundaries and Trees

7.18.7 Much of the field pattern throughout the valleys reflect relatively modern adjustment of earlier enclosures. There are however areas of medieval enclosure of rich wet grassland such as alongside the River Frome and By Brook and alongside the River Avon between Claverton and Bathford. There is evidence of late medieval enclosure of steep sided cultivation in some areas such as below Warleigh Wood. The medium sized fields are generally enclosed by hedgerows; some are well trimmed and others are tall and unclipped. The hedges often contain mature oaks and other trees. Walls are also present but are less common.



49 *Drung (enclosed footway) above Monkton Combe*

7.18.8 The valley sides are typically well-wooded. Most of the larger areas of woodland are registered as ancient semi-natural woodland. As well as native woodland there are also characteristic parkland trees including copper beech and redwood trees as for example at Claverton Manor and Warleigh Manor. There is often also a transition to patchy scrub on the more gentle lower slopes.

Settlement and Communications

7.18.9 Throughout history the area has been important as a communication corridor. The Avon Valley contains not only the river, but also the Kennet and Avon Canal, the railway, the A4 Batheaston Bypass and the A36 Warminster Road, and a number of public footpaths all of which make use of the comparative convenience of the valley floor. The Kennet and Avon Canal was important for moving stone but is now important for recreation. The Somersetshire Coal Canal joined it at Dundas and a short remaining section can still be seen near the aqueduct. The Camerton branch of the railway once followed the Midford Brook Valley. This was made famous in the film 'The Titfield Thunderbolt'. The A36 was originally built in 1830 as a turnpike road by Macadam. The A363 Bradford Road climbs the eastern valley side. The Rivers Frome and Avon and the Midford and By Brooks were commercially important giving rise to a number of mills which constitute important features in the landscape. The area also contains a network of minor routes following the valley and rising up the valley sides. These are often narrow and enclosed by hedges.

7.18.10 The main settlements include Bathford, Claverton, Monkton Combe, Limpley Stoke and Freshford. They each occupy sloping ground on the sides of the valleys. There are also several farms and large properties, many of Georgian origin, which characteristically occupy strategic

positions on the upper slopes overlooking the valleys. Examples include Warleigh and Claverton Manors.

Landscape Characteristics

7.18.11 The landscape is open providing extensive views both along and across the valley. Views are contained or framed by the ridges and dense woodland on each side and wider views beyond the valley are rare. In places the valley sides are so steep and well-wooded that they give a dramatic and gorge-like feeling to the valley whilst the overall scale of the landscape maintains a sense of openness. The course of the rivers and brooks is marked by groups of willow and alder trees. Although the lower slopes and valley floor of the River Avon are occupied by busy main roads and the railway, much of the area has a remarkably tranquil quality. Similarly the River Frome and Midford and By Brook Valleys are all to a greater or lesser extent transport corridors, but taking less traffic they have a more tranquil character similar to the quieter parts of the Avon Valley.



50 *River Avon from the Dundas Aquaduct*

7.18.12 Impressive houses and smaller farm houses located on the valley sides, often nestled into woodland or within parkland on the upper slopes, are distinctive features within the landscape. The traditional building material is Oolitic Limestone with clay tile and sometimes slate roofs. Reconstituted stone is now widely used often with dark coloured concrete tile roofs.

7.18.13 There are distinctive structures associated with the canal, river and railway. The A36 viaduct and Dundas Aqueduct near Monkton Combe are particularly distinctive, as are the smaller bridge structures such as the one over the canal near Claverton. There are numerous other features such as Claverton Pumping Station built in 1813 to pump water from the river to the canal; mills or evidence of mills at Freshford, Bathford and Tucking Mill; Brown's Folly above Bathford and remnants of the Second World War defences known as the Outer Bristol Defences which pass through the area in the vicinity of Freshford Mill. The

most evident features of these defences are a series of pill boxes such as the one at Woodside near Freshford.

7.18.14 Significant detractors within the landscape include traffic on the A4 and A36, pylons, communication masts and some new development by virtue of its scale, location and/or design.



51 Iford Bridge

Landscape Change and Condition

7.18.15 The area is generally in good condition and maintains its distinct harmonious character. There are however signs of creeping changes which could have implications on the long term cohesiveness and health of the landscape. Since the 1st Edition OS map was surveyed hedges have often been taken out to enlarge fields as for example to the west of Bathford Hill. Remaining hedges have often become 'gappy' and there has been a reduction in the number of trees in the hedges and within the fields. The extent of woodland appears to be relatively constant though factors such as clear-felling and replanting and storm damage have influenced its appearance. Reduction in the areas that are grazed has resulted in some newer areas of woodland. More recently Phytophthora disease has resulted in dead and dying alders beside the river affecting many views.

7.18.16 Development in the form of new housing for example at Bathford and to a lesser extent at Monkton Combe; larger shed type buildings and associated car parking and lighting located on the valley floor such as at Manor Farm, Bathampton and Freshford Mill; and development on or close to the skyline, for example at the University of Bath have all had varying degrees of impact on the character and cohesion of the landscape.

7.18.17 In general the landscape appears to be in good health and relatively robust in maintaining its distinct character. The effect of a combination of the above changes has however resulted in degrading the character and

cohesion of the landscape in places. The valley with its river, canal and public rights of way network is an important area for recreation. This can influence landscape character through for example the demand for playing fields. Other pressures on the landscape include demands for utility structures such as masts and pylons.

The Upper Bristol Road Kelston / Bitton

Historic Commentary

The “Upper” Bristol Road appears to have roughly followed the course of the Roman Road (Via Julia) from Bath to the Severn at Sea Mills. The road was originally in a poor condition until the section from Swineford to Bath was improved by the Bath Turnpike Trust. Local traffic then increased, in particular the coal wagons from the Kingswood Coalfield and because of this visitors to Bath tended to avoid this road and preferred the slower wherry (ferry) service along the river.

The road from Bitton was popular for riding out and airing because of the fine views of the Avon Valley, Kelston Park and the hills of Newton St Loe. A link road was constructed by the Bath Turnpike Trust to connect the Upper and Lower Bristol roads (see “Kelston” by T Bonner, 1791) but the bridge crossing the river at Newbridge was narrow and steep and the link was not popular. The bridge was later rebuilt in 1731 by Ralph Allen’s foreman, Richard Jones, and became known as the New Bridge and in 1774 after a partial collapse, further improvements were made by J.L. McAdam in 1831. However 18th century visitors preferred the new more direct diversion along the present Newbridge Road which gave attractive views of Crescent Fields and Town Common, (now part of Royal Victoria Park and the Lower Common Allotments), to the north and riverside meadows to the south.

Katherine Plymley, returning from Bristol in 1794, wrote “It was dark before we reach’d Bath, the lamps, particularly in the Crescent and Lansdown Crescent, seen from the road had a beautiful effect”

Current View

The road to Bath from Bitton and Kelston is still pleasantly rural with views of the Cotswolds Scarp rising to the north and the Avon Valley and beyond to the south. Kelston Park still commands the valley but also the railway line and the busy Lower Bristol Road from Saltford. As the road enters the city, the high walls of Italianate villas overlooking the valley still line the road.

The views from the road change from Newbridge inwards to Bath as the city becomes built up. Victorian and later terraces crowd the road and further on the road descends following the stone walls of Locksbrook Cemetery. Entering Bath, old industrial sites still lie between the road and the river to the south including the redundant gas holders, now part of the proposed Western Riverside development. The road passes by the end of Park Lane, the Lower Common and Royal Victoria Park which if it were not for mature trees would still allow a view of Royal Crescent recognisable to the 18th century visitor before the road enters Queen Square.



K1 As the road passes Kelston Park views of the Avon Valley and the western fringe of the city can be seen and to the left (north) views of the Cotswolds scarp.



K2 The road narrows and twists as it approaches the junction with Pen Hill Road here walls and gardens of the villas lining the right hand (southern) edge of the road close the views to the south.



K3 Old Newbridge Hill used to be unpopular to travellers because of the narrow steep Newbridge crossing of the Avon which was avoided in favour of the route through Lower Weston



K4 View down past Locksbrook Cemetery with the derelict gas holders of Western Riverside concealing the distant view of the woods of Claverton Down.



K5 The view into the city with Lower Common on the left (north) and Marlborough Buildings in the distance.

Lansdown North into the City

Historic Commentary

The Old Gloucester Road (Lansdown Road) entered the City of Bath through the North Gate close to now where the Podium shopping centre is situated. The present Lansdown Road is thought to be on the line of the ancient Jurassic Way which was later adopted as a Roman road. During the 18th century the road was popular with visitors for riding out and taking the air on the open grassland with its pleasant views. Visitors and residents who enjoyed riding there complained when access to the open ground was restricted after the Downs were finally enclosed in the 1790s.

This historic route from Gloucester passes up over along the Cotswolds Scarp at Battlefields and across the flat open plateau of the Cotswolds. The road passed Beckford's Tower (1825-6 H Goodridge) with views to the north of rolling hills and to the south of the River Avon valley and the western edge of Bath. From the edge of the plateau the road went down a steep and in places narrow hill into the city. This part of the road was considered dangerous for coaches and horses and was the scene of a royal accident in 1703, when Queen Anne's horses were so exhausted that the carriage ran back into a ditch.

The hill descends past Georgian villas and turnings to Georgian terraces and crescents past Ainslie's Belvedere and the fine Belmont Terrace (1768-73) raised above road level by generous cellars and pavements.

Current Views

Lansdown Road still crosses the Lansdown plateau from Battlefields and the views would be familiar to the 18th century visitor apart from developments at the Race Course and scattered 20th century housing as the road approaches Bath. There are still panoramic open views of the city from Beckford's Tower and Cemetery of the Avon Valley to the south and of green fields which have now been enclosed with stone walls.

The entrance to the city from the north has been changed by the Ministry of Defence buildings at Ensleigh and modern housing. As Lansdown Road descends into the city it passes Kingswood School, the Georgian terraces and turnings into Lansdown Crescent and further down Camden Crescent. Below Lansdown Grove the modern Balance Street housing development (Dr Howard Stutchbury 1969-1973) has replaced artisan terraces. These views still frame the distant city, the Abbey and the green hills above Widcombe. Further down the hill before the road meets George Street and the London Road the views along Bennett Street to the Assembly Rooms are largely unchanged.

Images from north to south into the city.



L1 Flat plateau of the Cotswolds with the racecourse to the right (west). This view along lengths of the road has not altered much since the 18th century. Towards Bath the Lansdown Park and Ride and playing fields are partially concealed by generous roadside planting which obstructs open views to the south west and conceals much of post 18th century development.



L2 As the road leaves the plateau the historic view has been changed by the modern development of the Ministry of Defence complex at Ensleigh and suburban housing either side of the road. Descending from the Cotswolds plateau along Lansdown Road, there are views of the wooded grounds of Kingswood School (James Wilson 1850-2) and a fine avenue of lime trees.



L3 The road becomes steeper as it descends into the city and is lined with fine villas with leafy gardens. To the left is Lansdown Grove Hotel (1770), previously a house. In clear weather glimpses can be seen of the Abbey framed behind by Beechen Cliff and the lower slopes of Widcombe.



L4 The twist in the descending road passes Ainslie's Belvedere (initially 1760) and views open out into the city, in the middle distance the Abbey and beyond the wooded hills of the southern rim. Further down it narrows and is lined with fine terraces with generous raised pavements. In the distance Prior Park Mansion and grounds and Rainbow woods complete the view.



L5 As the Lansdown Road approaches the cross roads with the London Road (formerly the Oxford road) the view down into the heart of the city includes the Abbey and St Michael's without (present church 1834) with a background of green hills of Widcombe and Beechen Cliff.

Fosse Way into Batheaston and London Road

Historic Commentary

This road originally the Oxford Road is on the line of the Fosse Way from Colerne. This route was not popular for airing and riding out but visitors such as Richard Pococke who had an antiquarian interest in the Roman road used to ride out along the Fosse Way to Bannerdown. Bannerdown Common is still unenclosed and provides good views of the city. Following the Fosse Way into Bath the road descends into Batheaston and follows the river into Bath. Batheaston's main street is narrow and lined with modest 18th century and later period houses, shops and the George and Dragon Inn. The road would have included fine views of the Avon with a back cloth of Bathampton Down and Brown's Folly to the south and Little Solsbury Hill to the north. At Lambridge, the road met the junction of the new Gloucester Road, the present A46. This route into Bath, the present A4, then followed the river into the city and was lined with fine Georgian buildings and terraces including Grosvenor Place Hotel (façade by John Eveleigh 1791) west to the junction with Bathwick Street.

Current Views

The road from Oxford and Colerne provides attractive views towards Box as it descends into Batheaston. Modern development has obscured the distant views as the road passes down through the upper parts of Batheaston and once in the valley the road turns west along Batheaston high street. Here there are views of the shops and houses closely lining this narrow road with glimpses of the river valley and hills to the north which are largely unchanged from the 18th century. The landscaping of the new Batheaston bypass which passes through the water meadows has been effective in hiding the road from Batheaston and Bathampton. This is not the case with the A46 as it passes north towards Swainswick through a hard concrete cutting. As the road enters Bath the street scene of terraces and fine villas would be still recognisable to the 18th century traveller.

Images



Lo1 The Fosse Way as it passes along the high wall near Ashwicke Hall before the descent into Batheaston



Lo2 The views open south across the valley with Bathampton Down in the background.



Lo3 The road turns right (west) at the bottom of this hill and passes the coaching inn of St George and the Dragon, views open up of the lower slopes of Bailbrook with the eastern edge of Bath in the distance. The middle distant views include the copper roofs of the Snow Hill housing development and in the far distance the post 18th century housing of Odd Down, Oldfield Park and Twerton Round Hill on the skyline.



Lo4 The road through Batheaston is narrow and lined with 18th century and later, artisan cottages and shops retaining an 18th century character .On the left (south) of the image is the wall of Batheaston House (1712) which was the home of the wealthy clothier Henry Walters. On the right (north) is a chapel elevated on the Batch. The Batheaston bypass has relieved the traffic through the narrow high street and this has improved the appearance and character of the village.



Lo5 The outskirts of Batheaston village near Bailbrook looking towards the Batheaston bypass roundabout.



Lo6 Entering Bath along the London Road with Kensington Place (Palmer 1795) on the left.



Lo7 As the road approaches the junction with Bathwick Street. To the right of the image, Thomas Street, an 18th century terrace, rises steeply up the slope towards Walcott and the King William public house is visible on the corner.

Brassknocker Road, Claverton Down Road and Widcombe Hill

Historical Commentary

The line of the road from the south, Bradford on Avon, Winchester and Portsmouth has improved from being a tortuous route from Westwood across the ancient bridge at Freshford to the present improved turnpike road. The present route from Bradford on Avon passes down Winsley Hill crosses the Kennet and Avon Canal, the River Avon and either climbs up Brassknocker Hill or passes along the modern (1833) Warminster Road around the base of Claverton Down, through Bathampton into the city. (see Bath from Bathampton T.F.Dicksee 1845)

The road up Brassknocker Hill passed the entrance to Combe Grove Manor and on the right a fine 18th century house previously the Brassknocker Inn and then The Crown. At the crest of the hill, the route split and the traveller could enter Bath by going east following the wall of the Prior's Park and from there through the unenclosed Claverton Down. Further along this route at the junction of Limekiln Lane stood a gallows where a highway man John Poulter was executed, a warning to all of the perils of travel. After crossing the Down (site of the Bath race meetings before they were moved to Lansdown in the 1780s) the road descended Widcombe Hill with fine views of the city including Pulteney Bridge, Bath Abbey, the Georgian centre of the city and the terraces and churches of Lansdown. At the bottom of Widcombe Hill the route passed Widcombe Crescent and then the road converged with Ralph Allen Drive at The White Hart public house. At this junction the road would have crossed over the tram way from the Combe Down stone mines which delivered stone to Ralph Allen's wharf by the river at Dolemeads before entering the city.

If the traveller had turned west at the summit of Brassknocker Hill they would have passed the walls of the enclosed Prior Park and through the stone mining village of Combe Down established by Ralph Allen for his workers. The route proceeded west and a choice of roads to enter down into the city.

Current View

As the road leaves Limpley Stoke and travels along the modern Warminster Road to the junction of Brassknocker Hill. The steeper winding climb up Brassknocker Hill from the south following the pre turnpike road has views back along the valley of the Dundas Aqueduct, the canal and the railway. At the summit of the hill descending down into the City from the eastern route across Claverton Down some modern development lines the road down Widcombe Hill but Macaulay Buildings (1819-30) and further down 18th century mansions and terraces still characterise the roadside view. The views from the road are still open and give one of the best views of the Georgian city and the modern developments of Oldfield Park, Widcombe and Twerton beyond.

The road running west towards Combe Down still has largely uninterrupted views out towards Salisbury Plain between the developments of the Wessex Water Headquarters, the modern Bath Clinic, Ralph Allen School. As the road passes through Combe Down village it meets modern housing and the artisan stone quarry workers cottages which line the road. To the south the old wall of the Prior's Park (now the grounds of a school in Ralph Allen's mansion) still stop views northwards. Further along this road it is built up with post 18th century development as it proceeded west to meet the old roads into the city at Entry Hill or the Old Wells Road.



W1 Looking back along the Avon Valley towards Limpley Stoke from Brassknocker Hill



W2 At the top of Brassknocker Hill, turning left following the original wall of the Prior's Park towards Combe Down village.



W3 Top of Widcombe Hill looking north towards the city.



W4 Macaulay Buildings



W5 Widcombe Hill looking north across meadows. In the background Snow Hill, Beacon Hill and Little Solsbury Hill with Kelston Round Hill in the distance.



W6 Cottages lining the narrow lower part of Widcombe Hill.



W5 Views of Widcombe and St Matthew's Church close to the junction with Ralph Allen Drive.

Upper Wellsway (Odd Down) and Wellsway (A367)

Historic Commentary

The Wells Road (now part of the A367) was the main route between the cathedral City of Wells and its diocese in Somerset. Most of the route followed the Roman Fosse Way, undeviating and straight as it ignored the hills and valleys into Bath. Parts of the route were heavily used by Collier's wagons from the Somerset coalfields and at Odd Down the Fuller's Earth works where the largest windmill of its kind at the time would have been a prominent land mark. This area had been enclosed by the 18th century in contrast to the Cotswolds scarp to the north. The road was not popular for outings and airings perhaps due to the industrial character of the countryside and the steepness of the hills.

The road had a number of coaching inns and near the cross roads at Noads Corner there was a gallows which reminded travellers of the dangers of highway robbery. Below the summit, as the road descended into Bath along the current Upper Bloomfield Road passing Bloomfield Crescent (formerly Cottage Crescent, Charles Harcourt Masters 1801) to Bear Flat, there were extensive stone mines and a fine view of Bath before later development screened it. At the bottom of the hill the Warminster Road (Entry Hill) joined the Wells Road at Bear Flat. The old road then entered Bath down Holloway (see *Aquae Sulis from the Top of Southern Hill* W Stukeley 1723) and (*A Southern Prospect of the City of Bath* Thomas Robins 1723). The road went past the Chapel of St Mary Magdalen (built for Prior Cantlow of Bath 1495 and which is Bath's only pre 16th century building). The Holloway district in the 18th century was the haunt of the Bath underclass who lived in crowded slums lining the road. The steep descent to the old crossing of the Avon at the St Lawrence's bridge with its oratory chapel and fortified gateway eventually became an obstacle to traffic and was later rebuilt in 1754.

Current View

The road passes up the steep hill from Radstock across the plateau and then winds down the steep hill to Bath. Until the road reaches Odd Down the views are rural looking across the Avon Valley to Bristol and the Welsh hills beyond. The visitor entering Bath down the Wellsway after 1803 would have had spectacular views of the city including the 18th century terraces on the northern slopes. The new Wellsway dual carriageway bypasses Holloway which has now been redeveloped with the new terraces of Calton Gardens.

The original route along the northern summit of Odd Down and at Noads Corner descended down Upper Bloomfield Road into the city through a mix of 18th century cottages, Victorian artisan cottages and modern housing. The road also still passes the end of Bloomfield Crescent (formerly Cottage Crescent). The road joins Bear Flat and enters the city on the modern route.



Wel 1 The Old Upper Bloomfield Road at the junction with Englishcombe Lane, the route from the south to Bear Flat and the city before the Wellsway was built



Wel2 This image shows the road near to the cross roads with Combe Hay Lane, known as The Burnt House, an historic landmark which probably referred back to the burnt remains of Odd Down House, now demolished, which is close to the Odd Down Park and Ride site. The views would have included distant views towards Bristol and Wales beyond.



Wel3 The road gently begins the descent into Bath to the west of the Entry Hill Golf course with distant views of the crest of Alexandra Park and Beechen Cliff School.



Wel4 The road descent becomes steeper as it approaches the junction with the old St Anthony Hill (Entry Hill) and is lined with Victorian and Edwardian villas and the old coaching inn The Bear on the small plateau of Bear Flat which was also the site of the ancient Holloway Fair.



Wel5 In the distance the views open out of the Georgian Terraces of Lansdown including Sion Hill and Royal Crescent and Kingswood School.. Pleasantly framed by trees and green spaces on the northern slopes of the city.



Wel6 This view from below the junction with the Old Warminster Road (Entry Hill) and Wells Road shows the city opening up below in the valley.



Wel7 The view from the junction of the Bear Flat and the modern Wellsway. The old route down Holloway winds down past St Mary Magdalen Chapel not visible on this image.

Saltford to Bath (A4)

Historic Commentary

The route followed from Bristol through Keynsham was preferred by travellers to the more scenic Upper Bristol Road as it avoided the traffic from the Kingswood Colliery. The road through the Avon Valley was popular for “riding out and airing”. The weary traveller would have been relieved and full of anticipation at the first glimpse of Kelston Manor on the skyline as the road approaches the city. The Globe Inn surrounded by the Newton Coal pits was also an important landmark and coaching stop on the approach to the city. The road then followed the river (see Twerton Near Bath J.C. Bourne) until climbing a steep hill as it passed through Twerton. This part of the route is now bypassed and cut off by the raised section of the GWR before the road enters the city outskirts (see View of Bath from the Lower Bristol Road J Spornberg 1801). Further into the city the route passed through the industrial area of Westmoreland lined by mills, industrial buildings and artisan’s cottages.

Current View

This was a significant route into Bath which avoided the steepest hills as it followed the river valley into the city centre. The view points from Saltford towards Bath are still dominated by the green Cotswolds Hills to the north and gentle hills to the south. Modern views of this approach to Bath are largely unchanged except for the encroaching residential estates at Whiteway and Odd Down, the traffic on the dual carriageway and the railway. Once over the historic Avon Bridge (Bath Trust 1824) the experience of entering Bath the road passes through a narrow valley lined with trees between the river to the north and the Carrs Hill woodland to the south now retained by the GWR elevated section. Further along, approaching Twerton from the west, the view has been changed by modern improved roads, retail and small industrial units, the formidable elevated railway line of the GWR, and Victorian suburban housing rising up the southern slopes.



LBR1 Descending the hill from Saltford, the valley opens up with the Cotswolds scarp to the left (north) and gently rolling hills to the right (south) Distance views of the Odd Down and Whiteway housing appear to the south and the modern buildings of University of Bath can be seen on the skyline.



LBR2 Along the flat river valley to the left (north) Kelston Manor and parkland is still a landmark along with the villas bordering the road to Bitton. (Not visible in this image.) This part of the Avon valley in the floodplain is principally agricultural and playing fields and except for the railway embankment presents a green rural approach to the city.



LBR3 The road passes into the previously industrial district of Bath, mills and small factories buildings line the route. The gas holders are landmarks and are part of the proposed Western Riverside redevelopment site. The road follows the river and to the right (south) Victorian and later period artisan housing dominate the view. To the left(north) the green hillsides and woodlands of the Cotswolds on the skyline form a backdrop to the terraces and crescents rising up from the city.



LBR4 The flat land between the steeper hills to the south and the river narrows and former industrial mills and factories line the route. The Bath Press building is visible on the right. The street scene is busy and traffic dominated but views of Georgian crescents and greenery of Royal Victoria Park can still be glimpsed to the left (north). As the valley corridor narrows views to the right (south) are limited by the wooded slopes of Beechen Cliff.

Map 11

Location of Road View Points

Bath World Heritage Site study

Scale 1:36000

Bath & North East Somerset Council
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