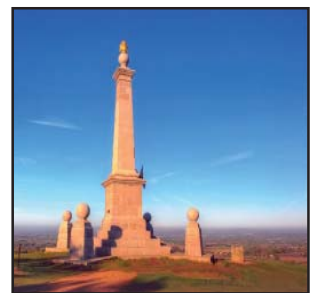


Wycombe District Landscape Character Assessment

Prepared for Buckinghamshire County Council
and Wycombe District Council

by
Land Use Consultants
October 2011



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Acknowledgements

Land Use Consultants (LUC) prepared Landscape Character Assessment of Wycombe District on behalf of Buckinghamshire County Council and Wycombe District Council, which was guided throughout by David Green (Buckinghamshire County Council). We are grateful for the guidance provided by the Steering Group of:

- David Green & Sandy Kidd (Buckinghamshire County Council)
- Niki Huijer (Wycombe District Council)
- David Waker (Chiltern District Council)
- Simon Gray & Ian Motuel (South Bucks District Council)
- Bettina Kirkham & Neil Jackson (Chilterns Conservation Board)

In addition, consultation was undertaken with a range of local stakeholders through a participatory workshop held on 2nd February 2011, and their contribution is gratefully acknowledged. We also recognise that to achieve a consistent landscape character assessment for the whole County, the format and structure of the character area and landscape type descriptions reflects that set out by Jacobs for the Aylesbury Vale Landscape Character Assessment produced in 2008.

Land Use Consultants team consisted of Kate Ahern (Principal), Kate Milner (Project Manager), Hannah Leach (Landscape Architect) and Graham Savage (GIS Consultant).

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Buckinghamshire County comprises the Districts of Aylesbury Vale, Chiltern, Wycombe and South Bucks. The County has a rich and varied landscape including the expansive flat clay vale in the north, prominent chalk escarpment, undulating dip slope cut by river valleys and the Thames and Colne Valleys in the south. The Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), recognised as a landscape of national importance, extends across the middle of the County predominantly in the Districts of Chiltern and Wycombe.
- 1.2 Wycombe District lies in the south west of Buckinghamshire County (refer to **Figure 1.1**). It adjoins Aylesbury Vale District to the north and Chiltern District and South Bucks District to the east. It borders Windsor and Maidenhead and Wokingham to the south and South Oxfordshire to the east.
- 1.3 The topography has a strong influence over the landscape, with a steep chalk escarpment in the north, overlooking the Vale of Aylesbury, and the gentler sloping chalk 'dip slope' which falls away to the south east of the escarpment. The dip slope is dissected by steep-sided valleys which have eroded the chalk, namely the Wye Valley, the Hughenden Valley and the Hambleton Valley. Valleys are typically ephemeral with some 'winterbourne' sections. The valleys are secluded and tranquil landscapes with historic villages (e.g Hambleton) and parkland (e.g Hughenden Park and West Wycombe)
- 1.4 Woodland is characteristic, a particular feature of the chalk escarpment in the north and along valley tops, with extensive areas of ancient woodland and a dominance of beech. The landscape is distinctly rural and peaceful in character, dominated by agricultural land use with dispersed villages and farmsteads. High Wycombe, Princes Risborough and Marlow are principal towns within the District.
- 1.5 A significant proportion of Wycombe District lies within the Chilterns AONB recognising the highly scenic quality of the landscape. To the south of the AONB the Thames floodplain is its own unique landscape with gravel pit lakes and rich archaeology.

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT




- 1.6 The Wycombe Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) has been prepared on behalf of Buckinghamshire County Council and Wycombe District. This assessment has been carried out in parallel with assessments for Chiltern and South Bucks and uses a format consistent with the existing Aylesbury Vale Landscape Character Assessment produced in May 2008. The aim being to provide an integrated Landscape Character Assessment for the entire County of Buckinghamshire.
- 1.7 The character assessment has been carried out to provide a greater understanding of the landscape character of Wycombe District which can be used to influence and inform policy and planning and management actions from the outset.

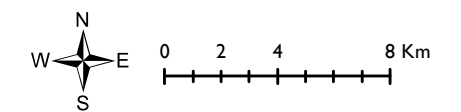
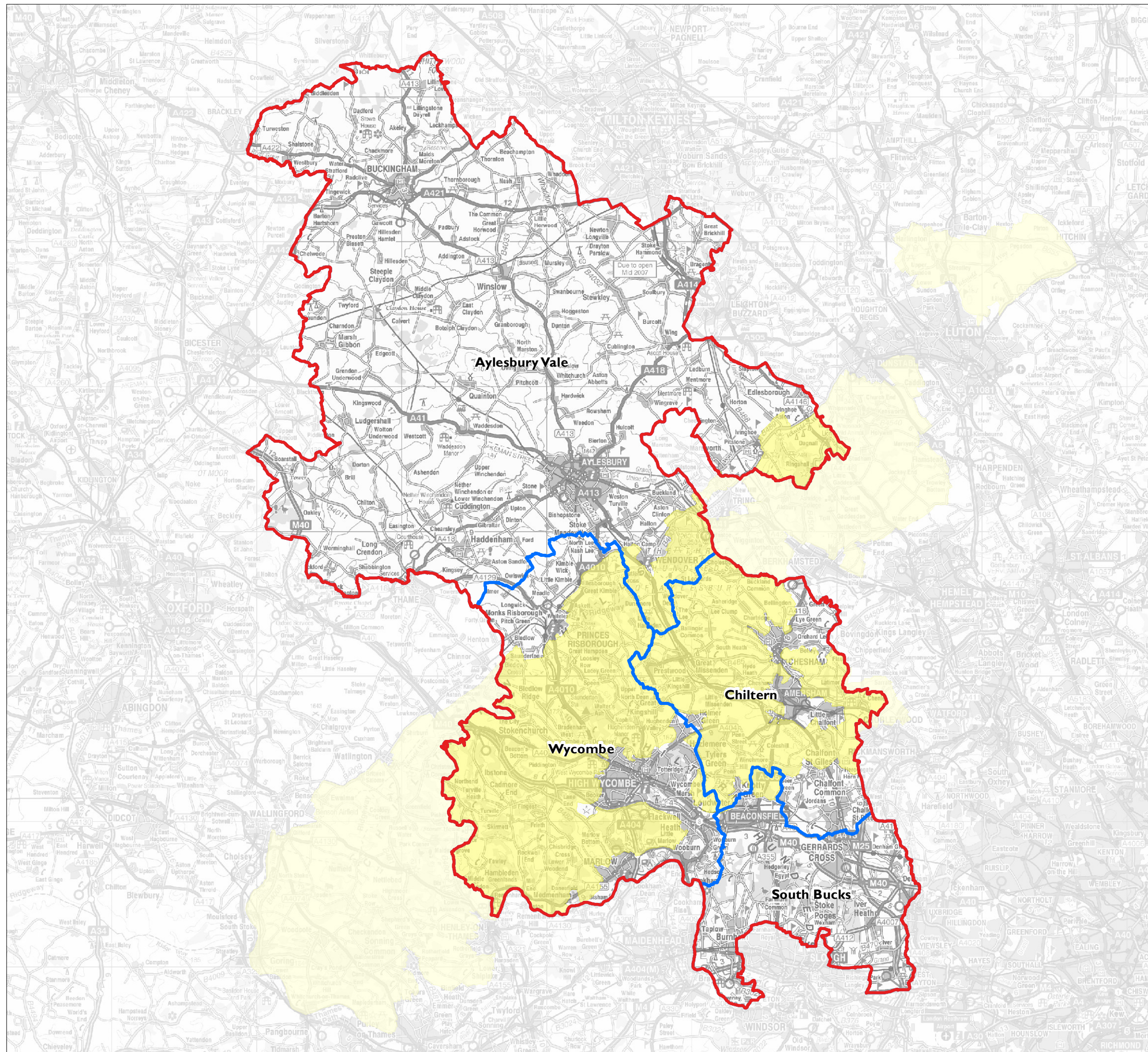
STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

- I.8 The remainder of this report is structured as follows:
- **Chapter 2 Assessment Methodology:** Summarises the approach for undertaking the study.
 - **Chapter 3 The Character of the Wycombe Landscape:** Provides a summary of each landscape type and a description and evaluation for each character area, following a standard format.
- I.9 In addition to this report, the main outputs have also been prepared as a GIS database.

Figure I.1: Location Plan

Key

-  Buckinghamshire County boundary
-  District boundaries
-  Chilterns AONB



Date: 16/08/2011

