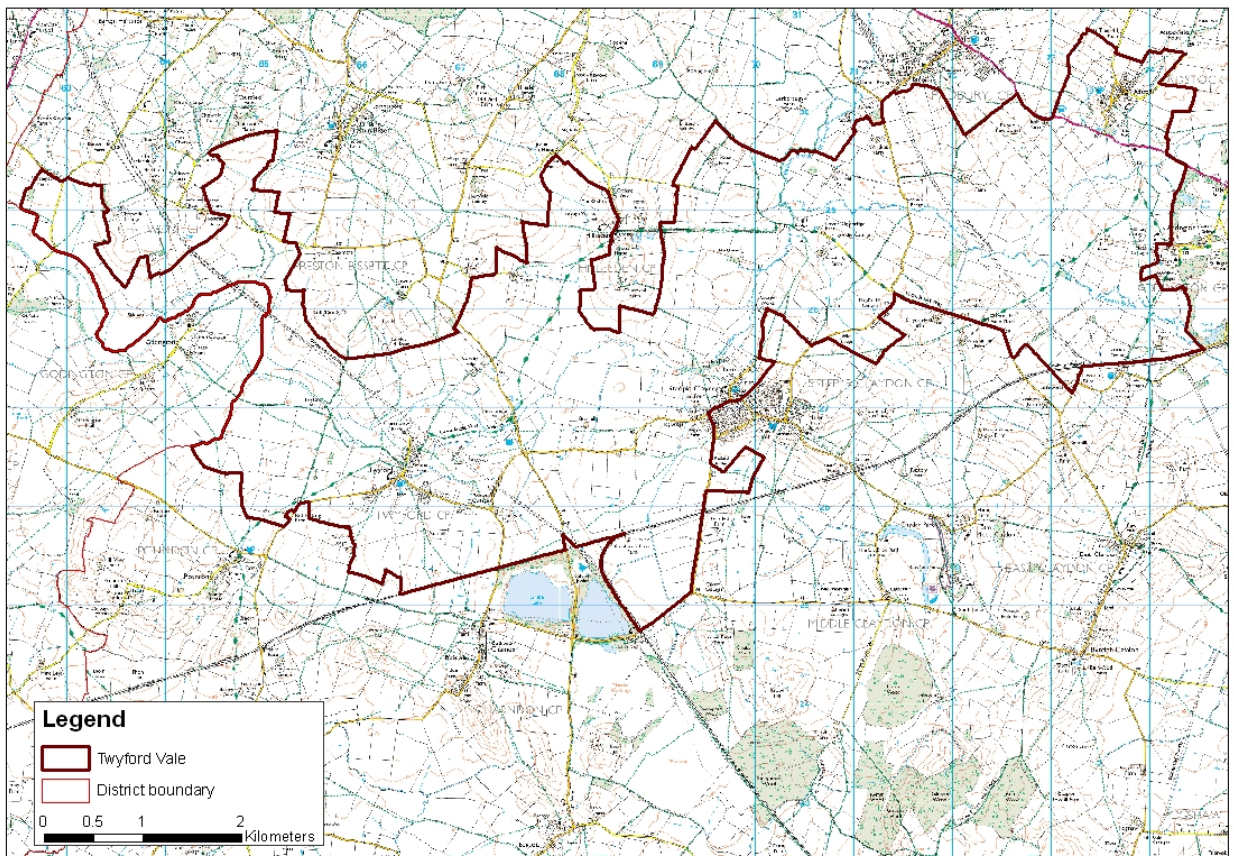
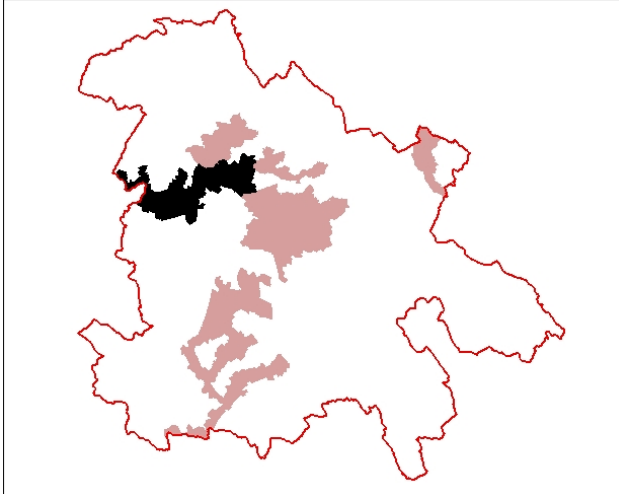


LCA 5.4 Twyford Vale

Landscape Character Type: LCT 5 Shallow Valleys



LCA 5.4 Twyford Vale (LCT 5)

Key Characteristics

- Shallow gently sloping valley
- Meandering watercourses
- Meadows
- Good hedgerow pattern
- Predominantly pasture
- Parliamentary enclosure
- Predominantly pre 18th and 19th century enclosure
- Low density of settlement
- Very little woodland
- Good views across valley

Distinctive Features

- Pollarded willows
- Farms on slightly higher ground
- Abandoned railways
- Scrub along disused railway line
- Ridge and Furrow
- Twyford settlement earthworks
- High proportion of unimproved grassland

Intrusive Elements

- Pylon lines

Location The area lies between Buckingham and Winslow and extends to the county's western boundary.

Landscape character The shallow valley of the Claydon and Padbury Brooks and their confluence. The valley has gently sloping sides with areas towards the centre which seem almost flat. The farming is mixed with slightly more pasture particularly close to the rivers. The area has a low density of settlement. There are good views across the valley, which often focus on villages and church spires on the valley sides. There is little woodland and tree cover in hedgerows is variable. The strongest tree lines and the greatest visual interest is generally adjacent to the meandering watercourses, where pollarded willows are a feature. Remote and tranquil close to watercourses.

Geology An area of bituminous mudstone (Peterborough Member) with alluvium and river terrace deposits on the valley bottom. Exposure of Kellaway mudstone at the confluence of the Padbury Brook and the Claydon Brook.

Topography Very shallow valleys of the Claydon and Padbury Brooks and their confluence. Large very gently sloping valley floor bounded by gently sloping valley sides. Parts of the centre of the area are very flat and become more like a vale landscape. The highest ground is around 105m AOD and the lowest around 80m AOD.

Hydrology Watercourses are a major feature of this area the eastern side contains the Claydon Brook the catchment for which extends south to the watershed for LCA 9.1 Finemere Hill and the surrounding LCAs. The western side is drained by the Padbury Brook which has its source in Oxfordshire. The watercourses are fed by a large number of tributary streams and ditches. The course of the brooks is very meandering and often hidden from view by trees along the river banks. The area feeds into the Padbury Valley and from there into the Great Ouse east of Buckingham.

Land use and settlement A mixed agricultural landscape with a tendency towards more grassland particularly close to the river. The arable areas are mainly on the south facing slopes on the northern side. The area has a low density of settlement; the only villages are Twyford in the far west and Adstock in the east. The villages have retained a large number of vernacular buildings including white cottages with thatch roofs and brick and timber. There are a number of other settlements on the boundary of this area with adjacent higher ground. Farms are also generally away from the valley floor on the valley sides or promontories of slightly higher ground. There are large areas with little road access. There is however, quite a good network of footpaths particularly around Twyford. Footpaths also give access close to the confluence of the two rivers in the centre of the area.

Tree cover The area has a low level of woodland cover with only a few small blocks and field corners. There are some areas of new planting. The tree cover along the watercourses is generally good with willows and some pollarded willows.

Biodiversity The principle habitats are arable and grassland which are unevenly distributed. Many of the arable fields are found to the north whereas grassland is more prevalent in the south and close to the brooks.

LCA 5.4 Twyford Vale (LCT 5)

A relatively high proportion of the grassland is unimproved when compared to other parts of the District, and a few fragments of neutral grassland - a broad habitat type, are found in the far east and far west. An area of lowland meadow – priority habitat type, is also present in the western part

There is very little woodland habitat and what is present is mostly broadleaved.

Aquatic habitats are a common thread throughout this LCA associated with the two brooks and their tributaries and the ditches that drain into them. A number of ponds are also found in the western part to the south of the watercourse. The streams which are a broad habitat type, and the hedgerow network combine to provide a high degree of habitat connectivity.

Historic environment The hedgerow pattern in this area is predominantly the result of 18th and 19th century enclosure. There are some pre 18th century features including some sinuous enclosure, well preserved meadows, fossilised strips and settlement. There is also an avenue which extends into this area from the parkland around Hillesden House within LCA 4.2. There is a substantial block of modern prairie fields in the northern part of the area.

The built environment is dominated by the nucleated villages of Twyford and Adstock and the periphery of Steeple Claydon. The village of Adstock is designated as a conservation area and contains the notable Grade I listed building of St Cecilia.

The most apparent archaeology of the area is earthworks of ridge and furrow, concentrations of which can be found to the east of Twyford village and to the south of Adstock. Another site of prominence are the earthworks of the medieval village around Twyford church. Medieval house platforms, hollow-ways and a pond are also visible near the old vicarage, reflecting the bigger medieval village. The landscape also has the alignment of a Roman road to the east of the area which runs past the eastern side of Adstock village. The landscape is bisected by two dismantled railway lines, the Great Central Railway which runs diagonally south east past Twyford and the Winslow Grendon Underwood line in the south of the LCA running east to west.

The landscape has a good amenity value and it is served by several promoted Rights of Way, including the Bernwood Jubilee Way and Cross Bucks Way.

Designations

Conservation Area at St Cecilia Churchyard Adstock

Archaeological Notification Areas – 23 No.

BNS – 12 No.

LCA 5.4 Twyford Vale (LCT 5)



Close to the water course there is more pasture than arable and the tree cover tends to be higher.



Views up to villages on surrounding higher ground are a feature of this area.

LCA 5.4 Twyford Vale (LCT 5)

Summary of Condition/Sensitivity Analysis

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

| | |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| Sensitivity | Moderate |
| Distinctiveness: | Distinct |
| Continuity: | Historic |
| Sense of place: | Moderate |
| Landform: | Apparent |
| Tree cover: | Intermittent |
| Visibility: | Moderate |

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

Condition

The condition of this landscape is good. An historic hedgerow pattern and a low level of settlement unify it. The only visual detractor that has a wide visual impact is a pylon line in the east of the area. The area is therefore strongly unified. The cultural integrity is considered to be variable. The landscape contains some good examples of meadows fossilised strips and ridge and furrow although it has some loss of boundaries and is vulnerable to change in more intensive areas of arable farming. Ecological integrity is moderate due to strong connectivity and the large number and areas of designated sites and habitats of District significance. The functional integrity is considered to be coherent.

Sensitivity

The landscape is distinct and has a good sense of historic continuity emanating from the historic hedgerow pattern the meandering watercourses and the low level of settlement. This creates an area with a moderate sense of place. The landform is apparent and the tree cover intermittent reflecting the lack of woodland and the widely spaced hedgerow trees away from the watercourses. This gives the area a moderate visibility. Overall the moderate strength of place and the moderate visibility combine to give the area a moderate level of sensitivity.



At Twyford many of the older buildings and the church are built of limestone. There are good footpaths links out of the village from into the surrounding countryside.

LCA 5.4 Twyford Vale (LCT 5)

Landscape Guidelines Conserve and Reinforce

The landscape guidelines for the Twyford Vale are as follows:

- Encourage the retention and strengthening of the historic hedgerow pattern by infilling gaps and establishing new hedgerow trees.
- Encourage the management of hedgerows through traditional cutting regimes.
- Promote the management and conservation of vegetation adjacent to the meandering watercourses including the pollarding of willows.
- Maintain the condition and extent of unimproved and semi-improved grassland wherever possible. Encourage good management practices.
- Improve the management of historic meadows and pastures.
- Close to watercourses promote the use of permanent pasture, with low stocking density and flooding regimes to promote biodiversity and landscape enhancement.
- Maintain connectivity of habitats.
- New housing and alterations to existing housing should be designed to reflect the traditional character of the area and use locally traditional materials.
- Identify key views to surrounding higher ground from publicly accessible land and promote the preservation and enhancement of these views.
- Ensure the preservation of archaeological earthworks by maintaining grassland.



The rivers have generally retained their naturally meandering course.