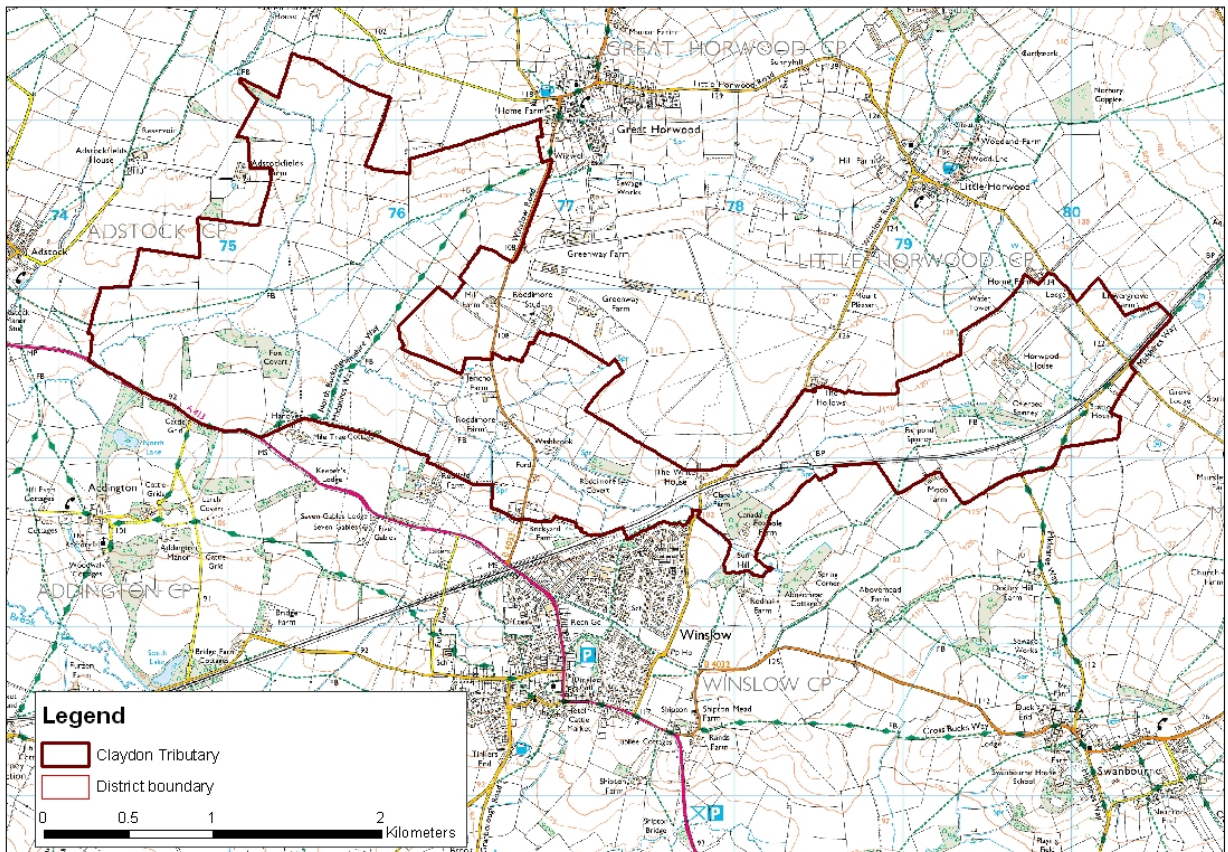
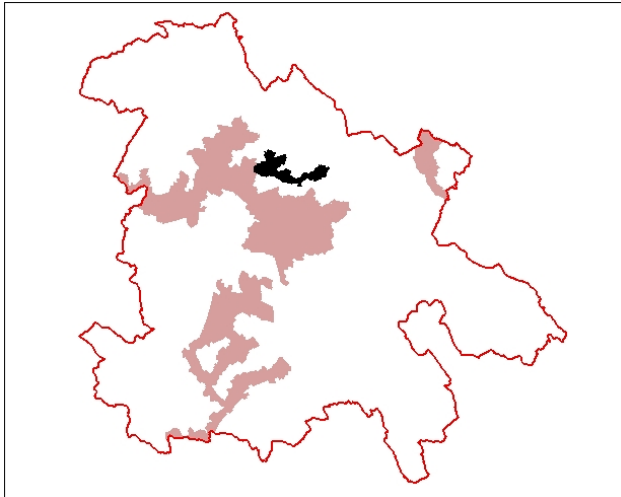


LCA 5.5 Claydon Tributary

Landscape Character Type: LCT 5 Shallow Valleys



LCA 5.5 Claydon Tributary (LCT 5)

Key Characteristics

- Shallow stream valleys with constant gentle slopes
- Meandering streams with trees and shrubs along their banks
- Higher up the valleys fields are generally smaller of pasture or mixed farming
- Lower parts of the valley and drier slopes contain larger arable fields
- Hedgerows generally good with variable tree cover
- Tree and scrub vegetation on the embankments of the disused railway

Distinctive Features

- Areas of reeds and rushes close to the valley bottom
- Small wet woodlands in the valley bottom
- Pollarded willows adjacent to water course
- Remnants of designed parkland (woodlands) to the north of Addington
- Parkland around Horwood House
- Neutral grassland
- Disused railway line
- Swanbourne old station and platform

Intrusive Elements

- Pylon line crossing the Roddimore valley
- Traffic on lanes

Location The area lies to the north of Winslow and the A413 extending as far as Great Horwood, the valley sides determining the other boundaries.

Landscape character A small valley draining from the higher claylands to the east and north down to the Claydon Brook in the west, which has a strong landscape pattern defined by hedgerows. Away from the roads and close to the valley bottom there is sometimes a remote hidden character. Views are generally contained within the valley.

Geology Alluvium and glaciofluvial deposits overlying mudstone formations of the Oxford Clay from west to east - Lower (Peterborough), Middle (Stewartby) and Upper (Weymouth). In the east this gives way to the West Walton Formation.

Topography A series of small valleys draining from the higher ground of the claylands to the north and east join to become one shallow valley. The change in level is from around 125m AOD in the east to about 85m AOD to the north of Addington.

Hydrology A series of tributary streams take water from this area and the adjacent higher claylands down to the Claydon Brook. The streams have largely retained their meandering courses with only short sections to the north of Addington appearing to have been straightened. There are seven spring lines on the slopes of the Roddimore valley. A number of farms have small ponds and Horwood House has several small water features.

Land use and settlement Agriculture in the upper valley tends to be in small and medium fields of mixed farming with good continuous hedgerows. Down valley the fields become larger and more often in arable with poorer hedgerows.

There are no villages. Farms are dispersed along the valley sides and there are a few houses beside the three minor roads that cross the area. The disused railway line on embankment with good tree and shrub cover is an important feature within the Roddimore valley. Swanbourne Station and house remain along with sections of track. Remnants of parkland around Horwood House are also visible.

Tree cover The area is not well wooded but there are sections where woodland cover is more significant. To the north of Addington there are several small woodlands clustered together probably originally part of the designed parkland around Addington Manor. The Roddimore valley is more wooded than elsewhere with several small wet woodlands with poplars, alders and willow.

The other notable areas of tree cover are along the banks of the meandering streams and the railway embankments. The tree cover within hedgerows is variable tending to be strongest in the Roddimore valley.

LCA 5.5 Claydon Tributary (LCT 5)

Biodiversity This is an agricultural area and the bulk of the habitat is either arable or grassland. The arable is situated mainly in the west, whilst grassland is found to the east, a large block of which is neutral grassland - a broad habitat type and designated as BNS.

Small areas of broadleaved woodland, a further broad habitat type are scattered throughout. The presence of numerous streams adds aquatic habitats and in the valley bottoms diversity is increased by wet woodlands and areas of rushes and reeds.

Locally habitat potential is increased by the presence of parkland and the disused railway line. There is strong habitat connectivity due to the streams and the good hedgerow network.

Historic environment Archaeological remains are limited, although Roman settlement is indicated by finds and there are some fields of ridge and furrow. A large area of the LCA north west of Winslow is both regular and irregular pre 18th century enclosure land. Horwood House, a 20th century mansion, is set in parkland in the east of the LCA. There are two fragments of flood meadows adjacent to the course of the stream. 18th-19th century parliamentary enclosure land covers the largest portion of the area, in particular that land between Winslow and Horwood House and also some fields on the northern boundary stretching between Adstock and Great Horwood. There are small fragments of prairie field landscape in the lower part of the valley north of the A413 and several small copses of secondary woodland plantation. The area is traversed by the disused Oxford -Bletchley branch railway built in 1850; Swanbourne Station House remains a local landmark.

Designations

Archaeological Notification Areas – 2 No.
BNS – 3 No.

LCA 5.5 Claydon Tributary (LCT 5)



View of valley floor and streamside vegetation, near Hill Farm.



View of wet woodland from the disused railway, north of Swanbourne Station.

LCA 5.5 Claydon Tributary (LCT 5)

Summary of Condition/Sensitivity Analysis

Condition	Good
Pattern of elements:	Coherent
Visual detractors:	Few
Visual unity:	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
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Condition

Generally the landscape is in good condition. The pattern of hedgerows remains strong, although in areas of agricultural intensification the pattern is diluted by both the larger size of the fields and the weaker hedgerows. Woodland cover is very localised but the trees along the banks of the meandering streams are important. Overall the pattern of elements is considered to be coherent. There are few detracting features and their impact is localised. The cultural integrity is considered to be variable reflecting the survival of historic field patterns and parkland but relatively low. Ecological integrity is moderate due to good connectivity and the areas of designated sites and habitats of District significance. Overall the functional integrity is considered to be coherent.

Sensitivity

The landscape is distinctive and the field pattern and meandering streams with trees and shrubs on their banks express the historic continuity of the area. Overall the sense of place is moderate. The landform is not particularly strong but gives a sense of enclosure and transition from the higher claylands to the north and east and the streams and vales to the south and east. The tree cover is variable, views being generally contained within the valley. Overall the strength of character combined with the moderate visibility give a landscape of moderate sensitivity.



Footpath through woodland to the south of Horwood House.

LCA 5.5 Claydon Tributary (LCT 5)

Landscape Guidelines Conserve and Reinforce

Guidelines for the Claydon Tributary are as follows:

- Encourage the retention and strengthening of the historic hedgerow pattern by infilling gaps and establishing new hedgerow trees. Oak and ash trees are a feature of hedgerows in this area.
- 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 willow.
- Encourage local woodland management schemes of wet woodland close to the valley bottom.
- Maintain the condition and extent of neutral grassland wherever possible. Encourage good management practices.
- 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.
- Encourage survey, management and restoration of parkland associated with Horwood House.