

South Bucks District Landscape Character Assessment

Prepared for
Buckinghamshire County Council and
South Bucks District Council
by
Land Use Consultants
October 2011



South Bucks
District Council



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43 Chalton Street
London NW1 1JD
Tel: 020 7383 5784
Fax: 020 7383 4798
london@landuse.co.uk

14 Great George Street
Bristol BS1 5RH
Tel: 0117 929 1997
Fax: 0117 929 1998
bristol@landuse.co.uk

37 Otago Street
Glasgow G12 8JJ
Tel: 0141 334 9595
Fax: 0141 334 7789
glasgow@landuse.co.uk

28 Stafford Street
Edinburgh EH3 7BD
Tel: 0131 202 1616
edinburgh@landuse.co.uk

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Acknowledgements

Land Use Consultants (LUC) prepared a Landscape Character Assessment of South Bucks District on behalf of Buckinghamshire County Council and South Bucks 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 South Bucks District lies in the south of Buckinghamshire County (refer to **Figure I.1**). It adjoins Chiltern District and Wycombe District to the north and north west respectively. To the east it borders the London Borough of Hillingdon with Slough and Windsor and Maidenhead lying to the south and south west.
- 1.3 South Bucks is predominately underlain by London Clay, with river terrace deposits, alluvium and gravel deposits. The landscape is a mix of lowland plains, terraces and plateaus, with the Alder Bourne Valley and the lower Misbourne Valley demonstrating the most distinctive topographical change. The Thames Valley floodplain comprises a stretch along the southern boundary with landform gently rising north from Slough. The shallow Colne Valley forms the eastern boundary of the District with water bodies associated with former gravel extraction.
- 1.4 There is a strong wooded character across the middle of the District with significant blocks of ancient woodland (e.g. Burnham Beeches) and woodland which has established more recently on former common land. Within this wooded area, several important historic parks and gardens are located including Cliveden. Small areas of heathland are also an important character, including Stoke Common. There is a strong sense of naturalness and tranquillity in this part of the District. Much of the District is farmland with a mix of arable pasture, rough grazing and paddock. In the east towards London there is a stronger urban character with a denser network of roads, railways, pylons and settlement. Gerrards Cross, Beaconsfield, Burnham, Farnham Common, Denham Green, Iver, Iver Heath and Stoke Poges are the most significant settlements within South Bucks.

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.5 The South Bucks District Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) has been prepared on behalf of Buckinghamshire County Council and South Bucks District Council. This assessment has been carried out in parallel with assessments for Chiltern and Wycombe Districts 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.
- 1.6 The character assessment has been carried out to provide a greater understanding of the landscape character of South Bucks District which can be used to influence and inform policy and planning and management actions from the outset.

STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT




1.7 The remainder of this report is structured as follows:

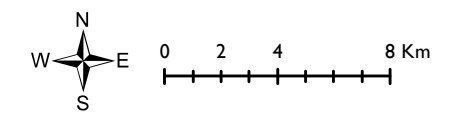
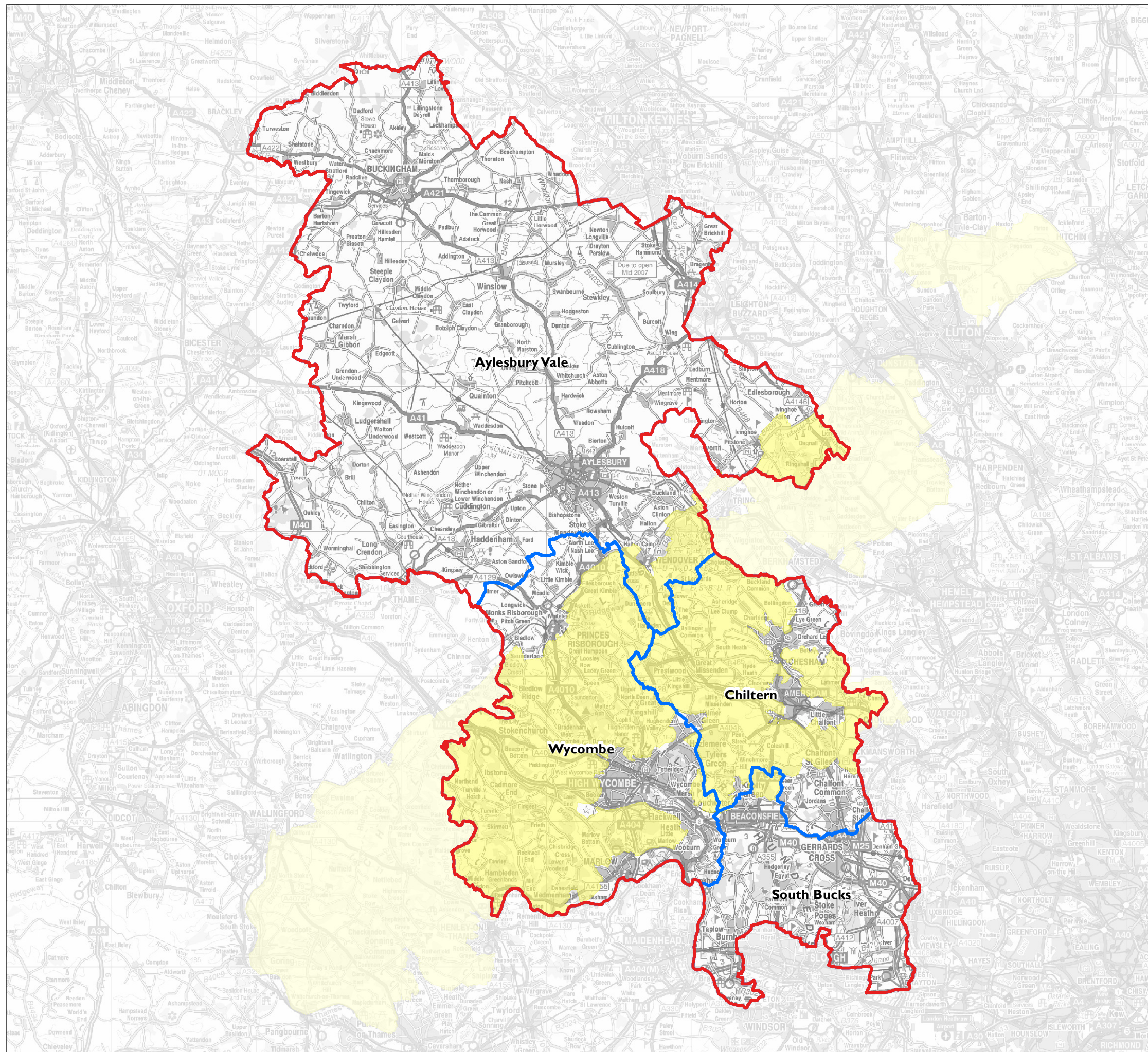
- **Chapter 2 Assessment Methodology:** Summarises the approach for undertaking the study.
- **Chapter 3 The Character of the South Bucks District Landscape:** Provides a summary of each landscape type and a description and evaluation for each character area, following a standard format.

1.8 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



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