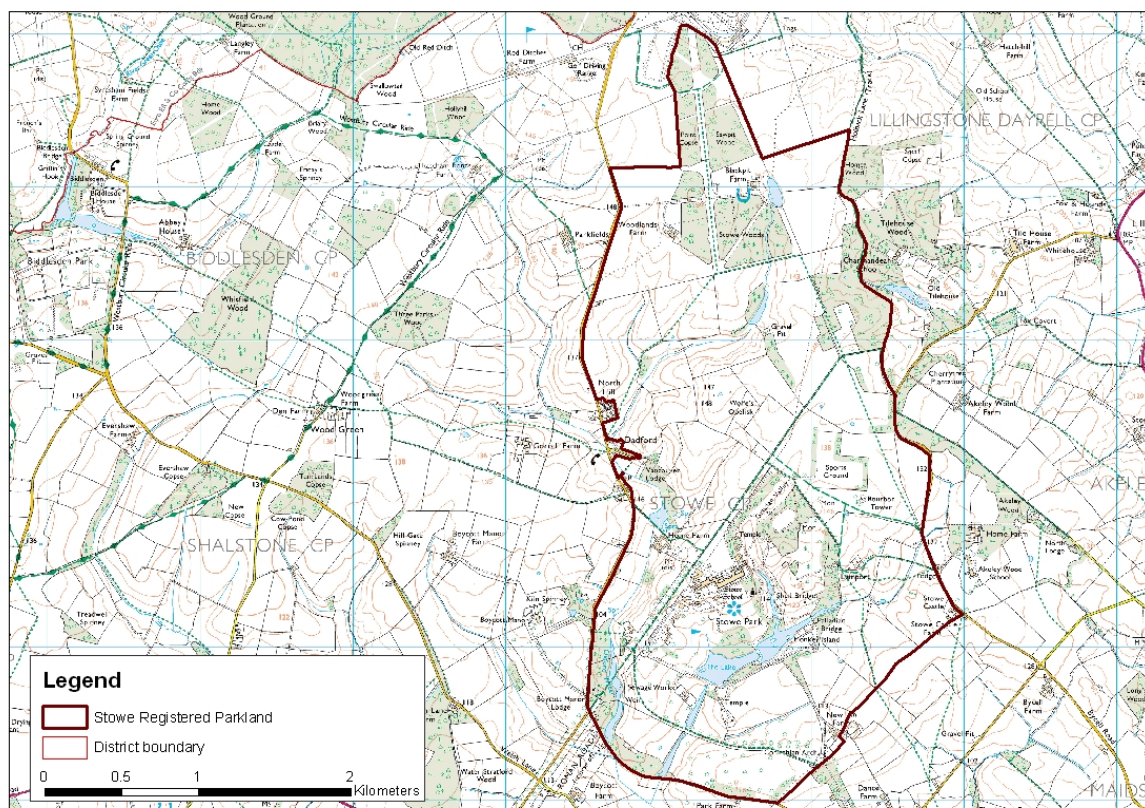
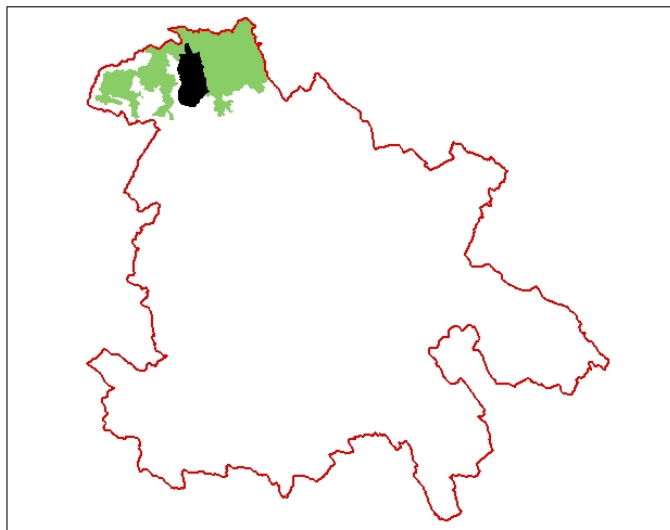


LCA 1.4 Stowe Registered Parkland

Landscape Character Type: LCT 1 Wooded Ridge



LCA 1.4 Stowe Registered Parkland (LCT 1)

Key Characteristics

- Designated Historic Park and Garden
- Designed parkland
- High ground and valley landforms
- Artificial ornamental lakes
- Designed views and vistas
- Large areas of woodland

Distinctive Features

- Stowe Park
- Landmark trees
- Mansion, temples and monuments
- Large water bodies
- Swamp

Intrusive Elements

- Athletics track
- Sports and floodlighting
- Golf course
- National Trust car park

Location To the north of Buckingham the area is connected by the Stowe Grand Avenue. The avenue is located within LCA 2.4 Stowe Park Approaches, which lies between the parkland and the town. The boundaries coincide with the English Heritage Registered Historic Park and Garden. (See note below.)

Landscape character Stowe is recognised as one of Britain's finest historic parks and gardens - it is managed by the National Trust. Stowe's 750 acres (300 hectares) contain extensive gardens around the house and parkland. What we see today is primarily the result of 18th century design creating one of Europe's most influential landscape gardens. The Stowe grounds have been visited for two hundred years.

The main gardens are extensive and divided into several different characters each with monuments appropriate to the character of the area. The more extensive parkland to the south and north incorporates fields of pasture with designed views and vistas. There are a number of avenues extending out into surrounding countryside. To the south of the house there is also a deer park, which is being restored.

The ongoing restoration and management are ensuring that not only the core area close to the house will be preserved but also the wider landscape setting including outlying features such as Wolfe's Obelisk. Visually the return of these areas to parkland with trees rather than arable farming is very significant.

Geology Glacial till covered by scattered undifferentiated glacial deposits.

Topography The underlying landform varies from gently sloping high ground of elevation up to 155m AOD to incised valley tributaries of the Great Ouse at around 100m AOD. This range in height and landform is a major feature of Stowe.

Hydrology The design of the park and gardens involved flooding sections of the stream draining down into the Great Ouse to create nine lakes. These vary in size but are a key feature of both the park and gardens.

Land use and settlement In the extensive core garden area the grassland, trees and lakes are predominantly designed for aesthetic enjoyment and recreation. Today this includes cricket pitches, an athletics track and golf course. The surrounding more extensive parkland is also designed but the landscape is predominantly used for pasture and woodland. Originally the parkland would have been for hunting and riding, today bridleways and footpaths give access to an area that contains pasture, woodland and a deer park.

The settlement pattern is totally dictated by the designed parkland - there are no villages with the area. Stowe School (a public boarding school) occupy the house and other adjacent buildings and playing fields. In addition to the school there are several houses in the grounds as well as some dwellings within the monuments.

Public access to the parks and gardens enables thousands of people

LCA 1.4 Stowe Registered Parkland (LCT 1)

to visit annually.

Tree cover The area has a high level of tree cover associated with the woodlands and the numerous individual trees within the park and garden. Many of the trees within the garden are very large with notable examples of cedar of Lebanon, Holm oak and lime. The original parkland around the gardens is being restored with avenues and parkland trees being replanted. Land that was in arable is being restored to grazing beneath parkland trees. This has a significant impact on the landscape setting of some of the outlying monuments. Avenues are a major part of the designed landscape and several extend out beyond this LCA into adjacent areas.

Biodiversity The area is dominated by parkland which is particularly prevalent in the south. Grassland is mainly improved, although some neutral and unimproved pasture is sparsely dotted around the area. Other habitat includes arable land, although only a small area is present relative to the surrounding character areas. Small amounts of broadleaved woodland and large water bodies are scattered throughout. In the north of the LCA there is a large block of woodland divided by wide rides which includes Stowe Wood and Sawpit Woods that are both CWSs. A small fragment of swamp occurs in the south.

The diversity of habitat is very marked and there is an exceptionally large area of priority habitat types compared to the rest of the District.

Historic environment Stowe is an 18th century designed landscape. It is recognised as one of Britain's finest Historic Park and Gardens. The landscaped grounds cover 750 acres and contain some fine architectural features including over 40 listed temples and monuments. The creation of Stowe included work of the foremost architects and garden designers of the time including Vanbrugh, Bridgeman, Gibbs and Kent. The sweeping away of earlier formality to create the landscape we see today was largely the work of Lancelot 'Capability' Brown. The designed landscape was once even more extensive than today with rides, avenues and eye-catchers stretching to the horizons. The area is covered by the Whittlewood Project which aims to investigate the areas landscape history and archaeological interest particularly in relation to medieval settlement patterns. The grounds contain archaeological remains of the gardens as well as a Roman road and pottery kilns and of the medieval landscape, including what is thought to be the site of Stowe Village in the Elysian Fields. The medieval church is all that survives of the village.

Designations

Stowe Conservation Area
EHRHP&G at Stowe Park
Archaeological Notification Areas – 1 No.
CWS – 3 No.
BNS – 4 No.

Note The Stowe landscape straddles ground which would if defined by its landform, would be within both LCT1 Wooded Ridge and LCT 2 Incised Valleys. A separate LCA was considered to be appropriate as the designed nature of the landscape is the dominant visual element and restoration proposals will continue to strengthen this boundary.

LCA 1.4 Stowe Registered Parkland (LCT 1)



View north towards Wolfe's Obelisk – the area is being restored with new parkland trees.



James Gibb designed the Palladian Bridge.

LCA 1.4 Stowe Registered Parkland (LCT 1)

Summary of Condition/Sensitivity Analysis

Condition	Very good
Pattern of elements:	Unified
Visual detractors:	Few
Visual unity:	Strongly unified
Cultural integrity:	Good
Ecological integrity:	Strong
Functional integrity:	Very strong

Sensitivity	High
Distinctiveness:	Unique/rare
Continuity:	Historic
Sense of place:	Strong
Landform:	Apparent
Tree cover:	Intermittent
Visibility:	Moderate

Guidelines	Conserve
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Condition

The landscape is assessed as being in very good condition reflecting the fact that the landscape is unified by a strong design and woodland directing views. There is little in the way of visual detractors, those that do exist are minor and resulting from recreational and sports use of the parkland. They are generally well screened from wider views and their landscape impact tends to be localised. The landscape is considered to be strongly unified. The cultural integrity is good as a result of the strong historic associations with the designed parkland and the very visible well-preserved features of historic interest. Ecological integrity is strong due to strong connectivity and a relatively large area of priority habitat types and designated sites. The good cultural integrity and strong ecological integrity combine to give the area a very strong functional integrity.

Sensitivity

This landscape is considered to be unique being a well-preserved landscape of significant historic importance. It has a strong sense of historic continuity but is also being actively used for 21st century education, recreation sport and agriculture. The area has a strong sense of place. The landform is apparent and the tree cover is overall considered to be intermittent, which gives a moderate level of visibility although this varies from the enclosed valley landscape of parts of the gardens to the large vistas of the designed parkland. The combination of strong sense of place and moderate visibility combine to make this landscape of high sensitivity.



The south vista from the house - the principal axis of the garden since 1676. Once a formal garden the parterres were swept away in the 1740s by Lancelot 'Capability Brown'.

LCA 1.4 Stowe Registered Parkland (LCT 1)

Landscape Guidelines Conserve

The landscape guidelines for Stowe Registered Parkland are as follows:

- Support the work of the National Trust to conserve, maintain and restore the landscape of this LCA.
- Encourage car free access to the area particularly from Buckingham with routes accessible to the less mobile and safe routes for cyclists of all ages.
- Encourage the conservation and interpretation of features of historic and nature conservation interest.
- Maintain the existing extent and condition of parkland.
- Maintain the existing extent and condition of swamp.
- Encourage access to the countryside for all sections of the community.
- Identify key views from publicly accessible locations and promote the retention and enhancement of these views.
- Ensure the preservation of archaeological earthworks by maintaining grassland



One of two lake pavilions forming part of the south vista and attributed to Vanbrugh.