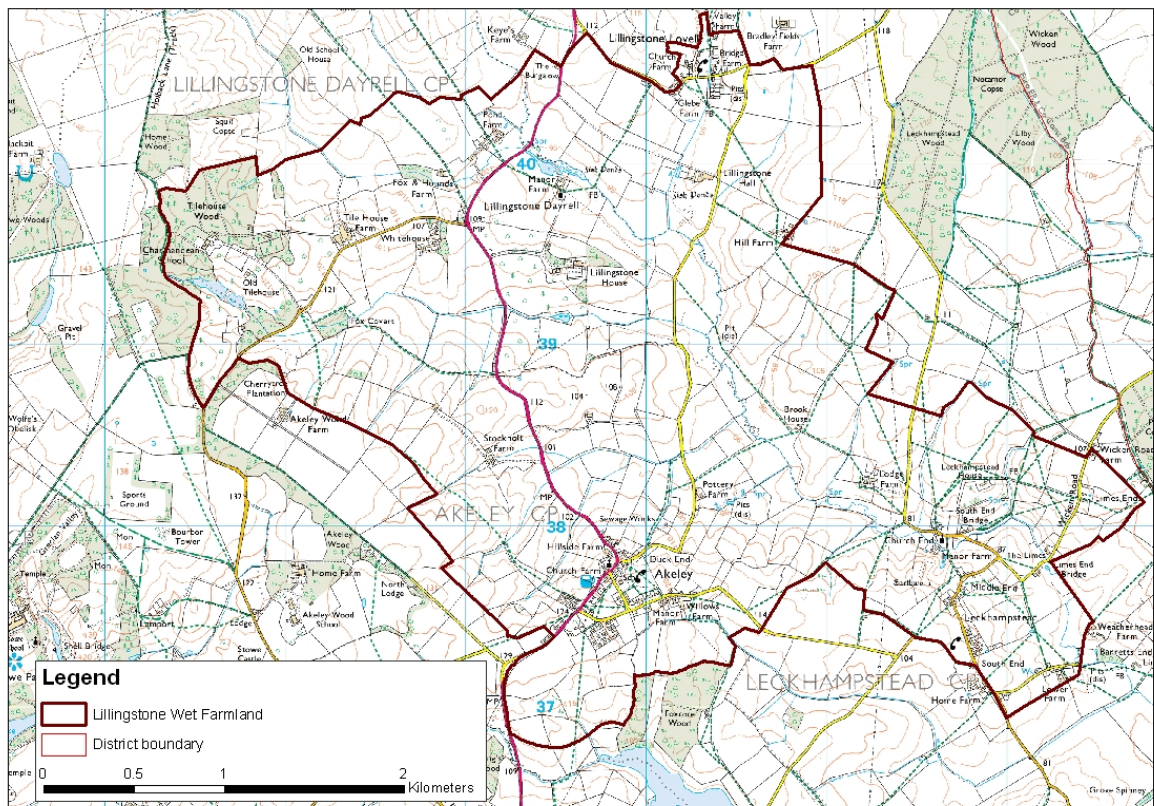
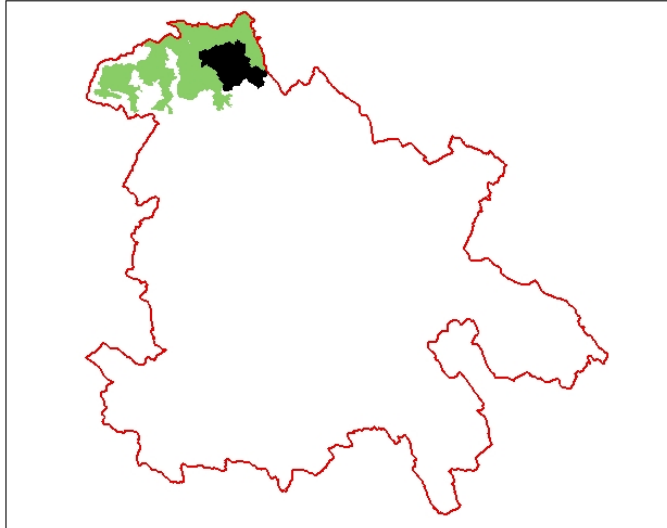


## LCA 1.5 Lillingstone Wet Farmland

### Landscape Character Type: LCT 1 Wooded Ridge



## LCA 1.5 Lillingstone Wet Farmland (LCT 1)

### Key Characteristics

- Undulating landform
- Meandering streams
- Winding lanes
- Scattered houses and farms
- Mostly pre-18<sup>th</sup> century field patterns

### Distinctive Features

- Parkland with small lakes
- Historic settlements
- Medieval churches
- Meadows
- Wet grassy areas
- Neutral grassland

### Intrusive Elements

- Pylon Line
- A 413

**Location** Located to the north of Buckingham, to the north it bounds the higher ground of LCA 1.2 Forest High Ground, while to the south it falls to the lower ground of the Grand Ouse tributaries within LCT 2 Incised Valleys. The A 413 cuts north south through the area.

**Landscape character** A low intensity agricultural landscape which retains strong historic associations. The undulating landform creates an interesting landscape, which is predominantly pastoral with a strong hedgerow pattern. The intrinsic landscape character of the area is dramatically weakened and the cohesion reduced where the hedgerow pattern has been lost, particularly in the west where there are areas of prairie farming.

The area is generally quiet away from the A413. Views are often short distance and enclosed by hedgerows and landform. The interesting historic buildings in the area are often the focus of views.

**Geology** Glacial till with forest marble (mudstones and limestone beds) in incised valleys.

**Topography** Streams have eroded the higher ground to create an undulating landform with several minor valleys cut by a central stream running northwest to southeast and its tributaries. The landform varies in height within the range 90-130m AOD.

**Hydrology** The streams are predominantly meandering in course although on the western side an arable area appears to be associated with straightened streamlines. Both Old Tile House and Lillingstone House have small lakes in their grounds. There is another small lake and two areas of ancient fishponds close to Lillingstone Dayrell Church and Lillingstone Hall. There are several springs.

**Land use and settlement** This is a mixed agricultural landscape with a predominance toward pasture. Although more settled than adjacent areas the dispersed nature of the settlement with houses interspersed with pasture tends to strengthen the historic character. Akeley is the only village that has substantial areas of new development including a small industrial area although its visual impact is very limited. Elsewhere most buildings are vernacular, often limestone. The Lillingstones and Leckhampstead are notable for their dispersed open character.

**Tree cover** The area has a fairly low level of woodland cover. The highest concentration of woodland is in the northwest corner in the parkland around Tilehouse, with other small woods scattered thinly across the area. Tree cover within hedgerows is variable being strongest in the pastoral areas adjacent to streams and settlements.

**Biodiversity** There is a good range of habitat. Three pockets of parkland are found within the area, two large ones in the centre and west, and a smaller one in the east. The remaining agricultural land is a mix of arable and grassland. The grassland is largely improved but relatively large areas of neutral grassland – a broad habitat of District significance, can be found in the west and a small area in the south. Unimproved grassland is also present largely in the far north and far south.

A small area of ancient woodland and CWS is present at Tilehouse Wood in the west including an area of lowland mixed deciduous woodland – a priority habitat type. The woodland is predominantly oak with hazel coppice and some beech, Scots pine and spruce, and adjoins a lake. Elsewhere

## LCA 1.5 Lillingstone Wet Farmland (LCT 1)

woodland habitats are limited to a few scattered and small fragments of broadleaved woodland.

Watercourses and a network of hedgerows provide good connectivity between habitats.

**Historic environment** The area is covered by the Whittlewood Project which aims to investigate the area's landscape history and archaeological interest particularly in relation to medieval settlement patterns. It is traversed by a minor Roman road and contains several Roman settlements. Heavily wooded in the late Saxon period, this area became part of the royal medieval hunting forest of Whittlewood but was disafforested before 1286. There are small areas of parkland, ancient woodland, meadow and common. Most of the landscape has a field pattern reflecting pre 18<sup>th</sup> Century enclosure, the majority of which is irregular, although there are also areas of regular parliamentary and 19<sup>th</sup> century enclosure. About one tenth of the area is now considered to be prairie fields where the original field pattern has been lost to twentieth century agricultural practice. Two areas of parkland at Tilehouse and Lillingstone House with associated woodland, lakes and parkland trees further enhance the historic landscape character. The historic settlement pattern has an unusually high degree of dispersion in hamlets and 'Ends' whilst there are extensive shrunken or deserted medieval settlements at Lillingstone Lovell, Lillingstone Dayrell and Leckhampstead. There is a conservation area at Lillingstone Lovell and fine medieval parish churches at Lillingstones and Leckhampstead.

**Designations**

Conservation Area at St Mary's Churchyard, Lillingstone Lovell  
Archaeological Notification Areas – 28 No.  
CWS – 3 No.  
BNS – 4 No.

## LCA 1.5 Lillingstone Wet Farmland (LCT 1)



Key characteristics of the area are the undulating landform, strong hedgerows and dispersed settlement pattern.

## LCA 1.5 Lillingstone Wet Farmland (LCT 1)

### Summary of Condition/Sensitivity Analysis

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

<b>Sensitivity</b>	<b>Moderate</b>
Distinctiveness:	Distinct
Continuity:	Historic
Sense of place:	Moderate
Landform:	Apparent
Tree cover:	Intermittent
Visibility:	Moderate

<b>Guidelines</b>	<b>Conserve and Reinforce</b>
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### Condition

The condition of the landscape is assessed as being very good. A strong hedgerow pattern and a dispersed level of settlement unify the landscape. There are few visual detractors giving the landscape a strongly unified character. The cultural integrity is considered to be good reflecting the historic pattern of settlement, the strong historic hedgerow pattern and archaeological interest. Ecological integrity is high due to good connectivity provided by a strong hedgerow and stream network and a relatively large area of broad habitats of District significance and a few designated sites. The combination of strong ecological integrity and good cultural integrity give the area a very strong rating for functional integrity.

### Sensitivity

The landscape is considered to have a distinct character and a good sense of historic continuity coming from the well-retained hedgerow pattern and the generally low level of settlement and peaceful slightly remote character to parts of the area. The sense of place is considered to be moderate. The landform is apparent and the tree cover intermittent being generally strongest adjacent to streams and settlement and in the northwest corner. This gives the area as a whole a moderate level of visibility. The moderate sense of place and the moderate visibility combine to give the area a moderate level of sensitivity.



Leckhampstead Church is built of limestone which is a distinctive feature of many buildings in the area.

## LCA 1.5 Lillingstone Wet Farmland (LCT 1)

### Landscape Guidelines Conserve and Reinforce

The landscape guidelines for the Lillingstone Wet Farmland are as follows:

- Encourage the retention and strengthening of the existing hedgerow pattern with new hedgerow trees.
- Maintain and improve the condition of existing hedgerows through traditional management regimes.
- Promote traditional woodland management techniques.
- Support and promote the identity of the medieval hunting forest of Whittlewood with new planting, access and interpretation.
- Promote the creation of new woodland and the restoration of the historic hedgerow pattern in the arable landscape.
- Maintain extent of unimproved and semi-improved grassland wherever possible. Encourage good management practice.
- Encourage the establishment of buffer strips of semi-natural vegetation along all water courses.
- Where possible ensure that watercourses are linked to the hedgerow pattern to enhance connectivity.
- Maintain the existing extent and condition of parkland, neutral grassland and lowland mixed deciduous woodland.
- Preserve the distinctive dispersed settlement pattern of the area and rich historic environment
- New housing and alterations to existing housing should be designed to reflect the traditional character of the area and use locally traditional materials.
- Promote the retention of the character of local minor roads by the management of hedgerows and verges and retain rural character by minimising urbanising elements such as signage and kerbing.
- Promote the survey, retention and restoration of historic parklands.
- Ensure the preservation of archaeological earthworks by maintaining grassland.



Vernacular buildings are a feature of the dispersed settlement of Leckhampstead.