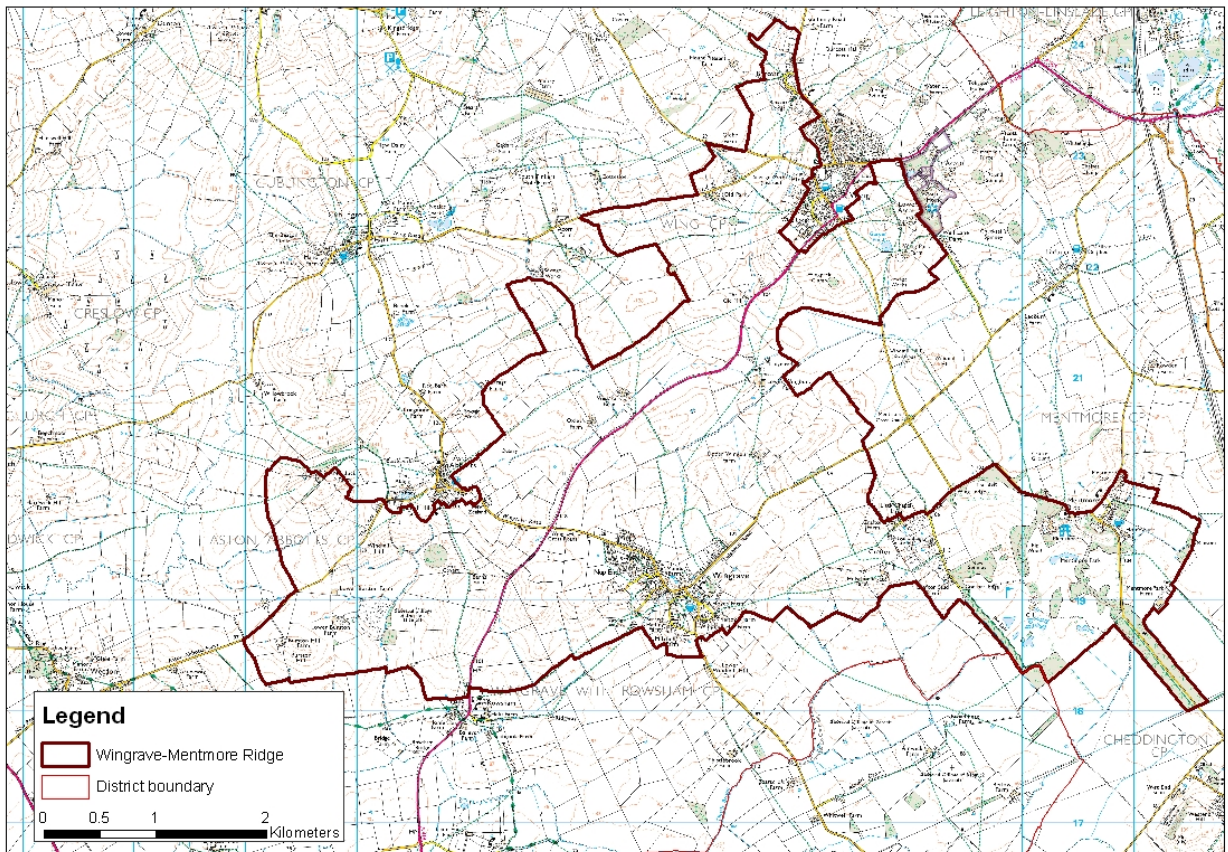
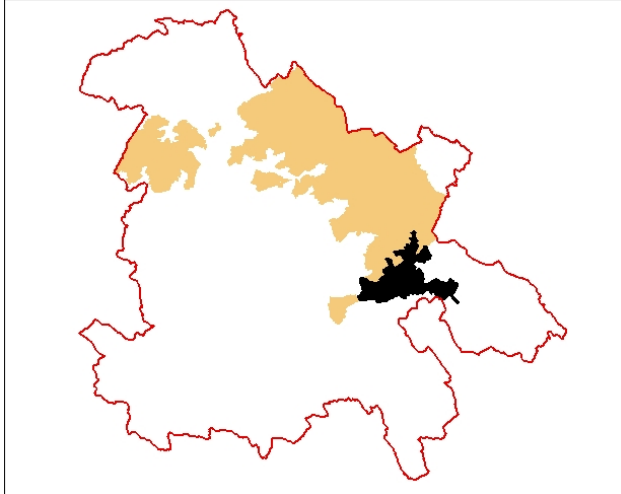


LCA 4.14 Wingrave - Mentmore Ridge

Landscape Character Type: LCT 4 Undulating Clay Plateau



LCA 4.14 Wingrave-Mentmore Ridge (LCT 4)

Key Characteristics

- Shallow ridge with settlement
- Wide valley between the ridge and the clay plateau
- Aston Abbots-Wingrave watershed drains into Ouzel and Thame catchments
- Large arable fields in valley bottom
- Smaller paddocks and pastureland on steeper upper slopes
- Long distance views over the Vale and the Ouzel Valley
- Parliamentary and earlier fields

Distinctive Features

- House and parkland at Mentmore
- Historic earthworks
- Incised valley west of Wing-Burcott
- Distinctive circular woodland coverts
- Mature tree cover along highway network between Aston Abbots and Wingrave
- Ornamental highway trees with historic connections
- Rothschild influence
- Low levels of ecological interest

Intrusive Elements

- Traffic on A418
- Pylons
- Golf course at Mentmore

Location To the south of the village of Wing a ridge which runs between the villages of Wingrave to Mentmore. It also extends northward to include the valley to the west of Wing and Burcott.

Landscape character A shallow ridge which extends south from the plateau landscape to the north and is defined by the Vale landscape to the south. The ridge is also defined to the north by a wide local valley. The village of Wingrave sits on the ridge. There are long distance views over the Vale landscape to the south and in particular from the southern edge of Wingrave. Mentmore House and parkland sits on the eastern end of the ridge. At Mentmore there are long distance views towards Ascott House and the southern edge of Wing and eastwards over the Ouzel Valley. Medieval earthworks feature at Crafton.

The local valley to the west of Wing and its associated tributaries have shaped the landform into a rolling landscape of small grazing parcels enclosed by mature hedges. Mature tree cover follows the course of the stream. The incised nature of the landform combined with the mature hedgerows and tree cover introduce a sense of great tranquillity. This contrasts with the more open landscape of arable fields contained by the shallow valley to the north of Wingrave.

Geology An area of transition between the ridge of Gault clay in the south and the southern edge of the glacial till to the north. The eroded edge of the glacial till contains smaller local exposures of Kimmeridge clay. The valley between the two formations and to the west of Wing has been filled with head deposits.

Topography The upper part of the ridge at Wingrave is at a level of over 130m AOD falling to a level of 127m AOD at Mentmore. The valley to the north falls to a range of levels between 90 – 100m AOD rising in the north to a level of approximately 120m AOD at its interface with the clay plateau.

Hydrology Wingrave lies on the watershed between the various streams and ditches to the north which feed the Ouzel catchment and the streams and tributaries which run south to the River Thame. The largest water course is the stream to the west of Wing and Burcott which runs off the clay plateau to the north.

Land use and settlement An area of mixed farmland use. Arable areas are concentrated within the valley bottom with grassland on the steeper slopes especially between Aston Abbots – Wingrave and in the valley west of Wing. Wet meadows are found in the upper valley. There is parkland and a golf course at Mentmore.

Tree cover There is a higher concentration of woodland and tree cover over the ridge landscape to the south. This dissipates into a more open arable landscape in the valley between the ridge and Wing. There are also notable groups of mature hedgerow trees in the valley to the west of Wing and Burcott. The predominant species are oak and ash. There are circular woodland features at Wing Park and at Fox Covert; the latter belies its sporting origins. Extensive mature woodland at Mentmore including the noted avenue along the southern approach.

Biodiversity The habitat mix is predominantly of grassland and arable but broadleaved woodland is also present in small parcels, the highest density of these being in the east within the area of parkland at Mentmore. The

LCA 4.14 Wingrave-Mentmore Ridge (LCT 4)

grassland tends to be clustered at the extremities of the LCA, whilst arable land is in the centre.

Grassland is mostly improved, although small unimproved fields are also present in the east and west. The three CWS all located in the north of the area near Wing, are all grassland sites. Priority habitat types are restricted to the wet woodland at Mentmore associated with the avenue whilst broad habitat types are more widespread relating to the broadleaved woodland, the numerous ponds and lakes and the streams.

Historic environment Deserted and shrunken medieval settlement earthworks are characteristic of this area, most notably at Crafton and Little Burston, and a motte castle on the edge of Wing. Views of and from Wing church are important. There are also prominent earthworks of a Tudor garden at Ascott, the site of the Dormer's Mansion ruined by 1720. There are conservation areas at Crafton, Mentmore and Wingrave. At Mentmore the distinctive feature is the Rothschild influence focused on the mansion designed by Sir Joseph Paxton, the estate village and designed landscape. At Crafton the Rothschild's stud farm occupied the site of an historic village whilst other estate buildings were constructed in Wingrave. Approximately half of the LCA covering the land between Wing, Aston Abbots and Wingrave is parliamentary enclosure land. Three smaller concentrations of pre 18th century enclosures, northeast of Wingrave and around the site of Burston and Crafton deserted medieval villages.

Designations

Conservation Areas - Mentmore, Wingrave (2), and Crafton

Scheduled Ancient Monuments: Castle Hill, Medieval Village of Burton, Ascott House Mansion & Formal Gardens

Archaeological Notification Areas – 16 No.

CWS – 3 No.

BNS – 4 No.

LCA 4.14 Wingrave-Mentmore Ridge (LCT 4)



Looking north from Wingrave over rolling farmland.



Looking northwest from Wingrave toward the Cublington to Wingrave Road.
The A418 runs in a shallow valley in the middle distance

LCA 4.14 Wingrave-Mentmore Ridge (LCT 4)

Summary of Condition/Sensitivity Analysis

Condition	Very good
Pattern of elements:	Coherent
Visual detractors:	Few
Visual unity:	Unified
Cultural integrity:	GoodModerate
Ecological integrity:	Strong
Functional integrity:	

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

Guidelines Conserve and Reinforce

Condition

Overall the condition of the landscape is considered to be very good. The pattern of elements is coherent. The area covers the shallow ridge that runs between Wingrave and Mentmore and the wide valley that sits to the north of Wingrave. There are few visual detractors, chief amongst these is the traffic on the A418. Cultural integrity is good due to the Rothschild influences on landscape and buildings at Wingrave and Mentmore, intact historic field patterns and strong archaeological interests. Ecological integrity is moderate due to reasonable connectivity and the areas of designated sites and habitats of District significance. Functional integrity remains strong.

Sensitivity

The area is identified as a distinctive landscape with good historic associations and sense of continuity. There is a moderate sense of place reflected in the intrinsic rural characteristics of the area. The degree of visibility is assessed as moderate and is underpinned by the variety of vistas from the ridge contrasting with the more contained views present in the valleys. Overall the degree of sensitivity remains moderate.



Mentmore Towers seen from the direction of Cheddington Station.

LCA 4.14 Wingrave-Mentmore Ridge (LCT 4)

Landscape Guidelines Conserve and Reinforce

The landscape guidelines for Wingrave-Mentmore Ridge are as follows:

- Encourage the restoration of the historic hedgerow pattern where it has been lost. To enhance the landscape character and strengthen the ecological diversity. Where necessary use historic maps to identify where hedgerows have been lost.
- Encourage the management of hedgerows through traditional cutting regimes.
- Maintain the existing extent and condition of woodland using traditional techniques to create and manage a wide diversity of habitats.
- Maintain the existing extent and condition of unimproved and semi-improved grassland. Encourage good management practices.
- Encourage landowners to improve ecological diversity by establishing and maintaining varied land maintenance regimes to benefit landscape and habitats.
- Promote connectivity of habitats.
- Encourage the conservation and interpretation of the areas rich historic environment.
- Ensure the preservation of archaeological earthworks by maintaining grassland.
- 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 minor roads by the management of hedgerows and verges and limiting urbanising elements such as signage and kerbing.
- Consider encouraging the planting of new woodland following historic landscape pattern to reduce visual impact of intrusive elements.
- Encourage the survey, management and conservation of Historic Parks and Gardens.
- Encourage the preservation and enhancement of views from publicly accessible areas and significant historic sites.



Gates to Mentmore Park.