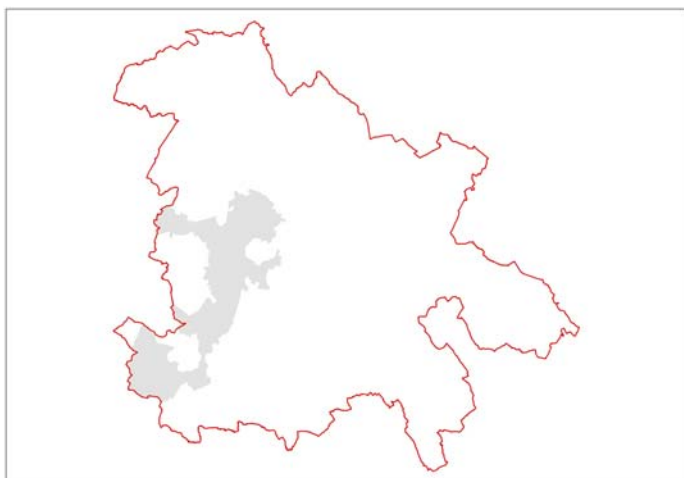


LCT 7 Wooded Rolling Lowlands



Constituent LCAs

- LCA 7.1 Poundon – Charndon Settled Hills
- LCA 7.2 Calvert Clay Pits
- LCA 7.3 Claydon Bowl
- LCA 7.4 Kingswood Wooded Farmland
- LCA 7.5 Bernwood Forest



View within Bernwood Forest (LCA 7.5) showing rolling landform, strong hedgerow pattern and woodland.

LCT 7 Wooded Rolling Lowlands

Key Characteristics

- Rolling and undulating ground
- Drains to lower ground on all sides
- Elevation range 60M to 130M AOD
- Mixed land use predominantly grassland in most areas
- Medium sized fields
- Generally strong hedgerow pattern
- Large blocks of ancient woodland
- High density of woodland cover
- Hedgerow trees notably mature oak
- Low density of settlement
- Associations with medieval hunting forest of Bernwood
- Remote and tranquil away from M40

Distinctive Features

- Registered historic parks and gardens
- Disused military airfield at Worminghall
- Views often enclosed by woodland
- Views across Marsh Gibbon Vale and up to Brill Hill
- Decoy pond at Boarstall
- Small areas of wet poorly drained soil associated with marshy vegetation.
- Views to the Chilterns escarpment from the south of the area
- Ridge and furrow
- Narrow meandering lanes
- Lakes at Calvert
- Moated sites

General Description

Accords generally with CA 108 Upper Thames Clay Vales identified by the Character of England Map and with LCT RCA identified by the National Landscape Typology.

The Wooded Rolling Lowlands is located along the western side of Aylesbury Vale and extends from south of the Twyford valley over the district boundary into Oxfordshire. The landform is undulating with a few notable small ridges and hills. In geological terms it comprises of predominantly Oxford Clays in the north but overlaps into Kimmeridge Clays in the south. The edge of the area is bounded to the west and south by LCT 8 Vale and to the south and east by LCT 5 Shallow Valleys.

Biodiversity interest predominantly relates to the woodland areas that remain from the former Bernwood Forest. Many of the extant woodlands are designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest. A complex of woodland known as Ham Home-cum-Hamgreen supports a large breeding colony of the nationally rare black hairstreak butterfly. To the north lies Grendon and Doddershall Woods and further north Sheephouse Wood, all SSSI's. These too support black hairstreak populations. Rushbeds Wood and the Shabbington Woods complex lie in the south of the area. Various other woodlands are designated as County Wildlife Sites. Unimproved meadows on the western side of Shabbington Woods support a herb-rich sward with a diverse invertebrate interest, especially butterflies.

A high proportion of the type is identified as historic landscape of the highest sensitivity this particularly relates to ancient woodland, parkland, assarts, fossilised strips and small areas of pre eighteenth century meadow. The woodland is mostly remnants of Bernwood medieval hunting forest. The areas of parkland at Claydon, Dorton Park and Wotton House are all registered parks and gardens and at Claydon particularly the influence of the historic estate can be seen in the landscape well beyond the present parkland boundary. The rest of the area retains a pattern of primarily pre eighteenth century enclosure. Historic settlement is thinly scattered across the area, concentrated in the north on the small ridgelines at Poundon and Claydon. Historic interest in the area also includes deserted and shrunken medieval settlements and Boarstall medieval settlement, gatehouse and duck decoy.

This is a complex and rich landscape where much visual interest is associated with woodland, parkland and a strong hedgerow pattern. The underlying landform enlivens these features. The remnants of the Bernwood and designed parkland along with the large areas of pre eighteenth century enclosure mean that the landscape has strong visual historic associations and a remote character - strengthened by the generally quiet meandering lanes and areas of low intensity farming with large numbers of oak trees, areas of scrub and wet grassland. This remote character tends to be weakest at the edges of the area

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Aylesbury Vale Landscape Character Assessment

particularly near the M40 in the south, which has had a dramatic impact; although the fact that it is mostly in cutting has helped to reduce its visual impact.