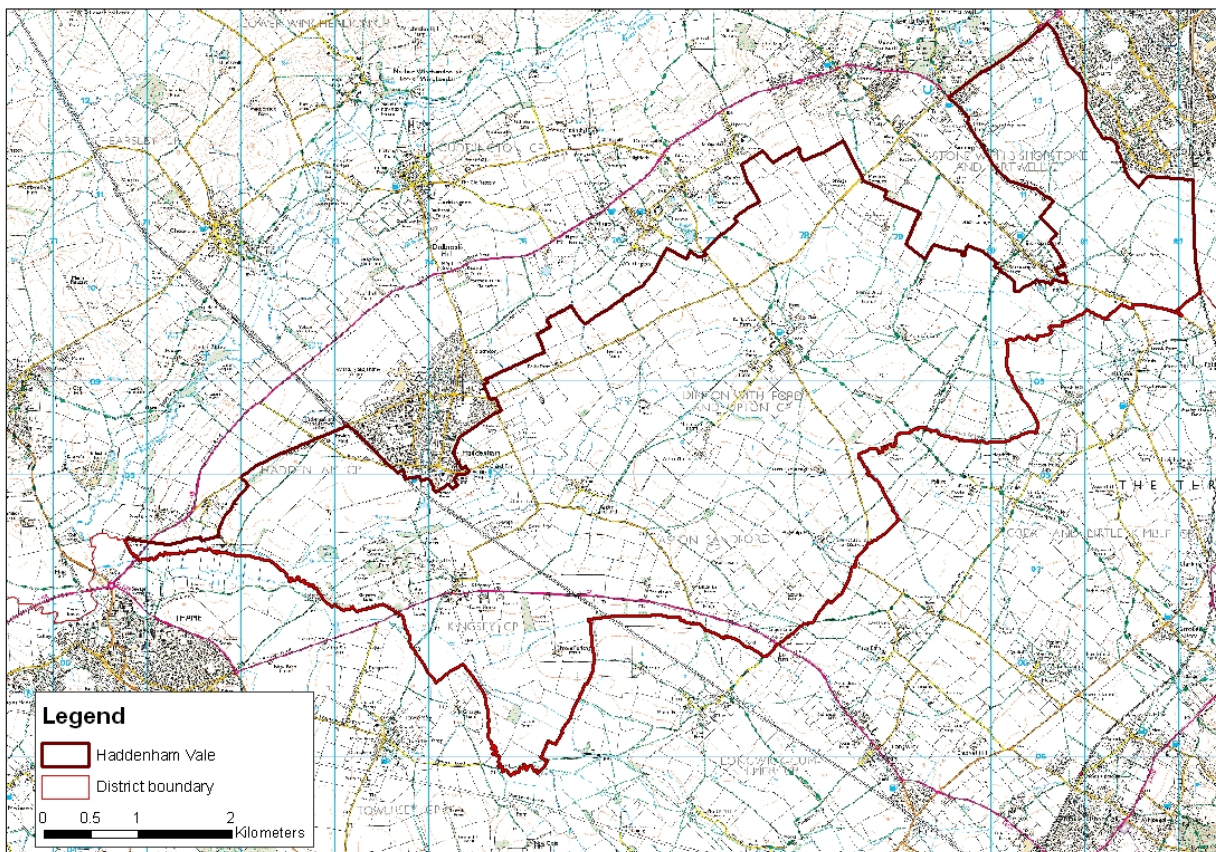
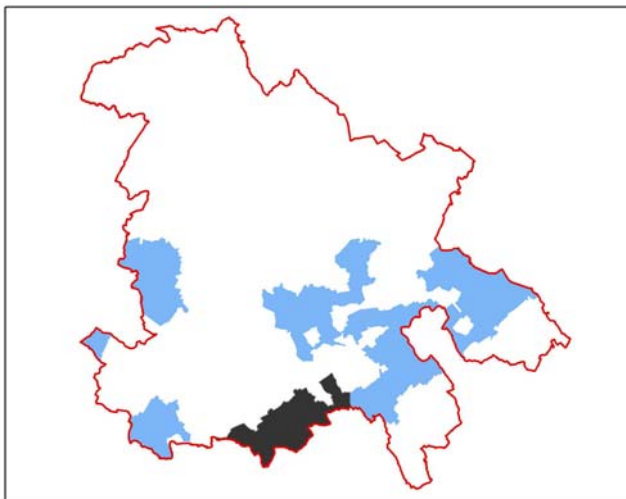


LCA 8.9 Haddenham Vale

Landscape Character Type: LCT 8 Vale



LCA 8.9 Haddenham Vale (LCT 8)

Key Characteristics

- Flat vale landscape
- Backdrop of Chilterns
- Meandering network of streams
- Meadows
- Parliamentary enclosure
- Large scale open arable fields
- Smaller grazing parcels associated with streams and wet ditches
- Sparse settlement pattern of dispersed farmsteads
- Low level of woodland cover but with higher concentration of shelter belts, parkland and woodland coverts in the west
- Mature, often pollarded black poplar along streams and ditches
- Tranquillity

Distinctive Features

- Thatched cottages at Sedrup
- Tythrop Parkland
- Deserted Settlement earthworks
- Moated sites
- Ridge and furrow
- Tributaries of river Thame

Intrusive Elements

- Urban edge of Aylesbury marked by pylon lines
- Suburban edge of Haddenham
- Short length of overhead electric line carried by pylons to west of Longwick
- Unscreened agricultural buildings
- Marylebone to Birmingham railway crosses the area on embankment

Location The area lies south west of Aylesbury covering a broad swathe of land between the A418 Ridge and the lower slopes of the Chilterns. The south western boundary is defined by the network of streams and tributaries to the east of Thame flowing off the chalk escarpment to join the river Thame north of the town. To the north east the area abuts the suburban edge of Aylesbury.

Landscape character This relatively large low lying area spreads out from the foothills of the Chiltern escarpment making a marked contrast with the chalk hills. The escarpment is a constant factor in many views which otherwise have an uncontained and remote feel due to the limited topography and the lack of settlement, woodland and infrastructure.

Geology The underlying Gault clay, locally with head deposits has resulted in poor drainage and wet soils.

Topography Low lying and locally flat vale landscape merging into the gentle rise of lower slopes of the A418 ridge to the northwest and the undulating lower slopes of the Chilterns to the southeast. The level of the land varies very little, 70 to 90m AOD is the difference between the tops and bottoms of the shallow valleys that are cut by minor streams. An extension of the A418 Ridge LCA 9.9 runs between Stone and Bishopstone. This physically and visually separates a smaller part of the Haddenham Vale from the core of the area to the south west. Although the smaller area drains in a different direction the level of the land remains consistent with the rest of the Vale.

Hydrology A gently meandering stream flows from the Bishopstone ridge towards its confluence with the Cuttle Brook south of Haddenham. The area between the Bishopstone ridge and Aylesbury drains northwards through a gap between the edge of the A418 Ridge and the suburban fringe of Aylesbury. The Chilterns provide numerous springs which feed the network of streams that cross the area. There are also numerous ponds and former moated properties.

Land use and settlement The area is predominantly given over to arable use with pastoral land adjacent to streams. The field sizes are generally large where arable land use prevails but smaller irregular paddocks typify the grasslands.

Settlement is sparse with the exception of the large and compact village of Haddenham. Ford village occupies a central location, elsewhere there are hamlets and numerous farmsteads dispersed throughout the area. There is a heritage of sporting activities such as shooting and fox hunting reflected in place names.

Tree cover Small pockets of woodland and shelter belts are well dispersed, Foxhill Covert being one of the largest. There are pockets of scrub and larger trees following streams including black poplar common to the area. At the Manor of Aston Sandford there are extensive wooded grounds.

South of Haddenham lies the parkland of Tythrop Park. The park sits on slightly higher ground at the confluence of two streams. In general terms the pattern of woodland cover shows a general increase westwards in the extent and number of coverts and woodland copses. Hedgerow trees are notable on the shallow valley sides between the Bishopstone ridge and Aylesbury.

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Biodiversity There is a mix of arable and grassland habitats throughout whilst most of the latter is improved there are some unimproved areas.

Priority habitat types are restricted to the small parkland at Tythrop Park in the southwest. Broad habitat types are more common place but individually small in area. They are well distributed through the area in the form of; several small fragments of broadleaved woodland and one larger one in the north which all provide valuable cover; the tributaries of the river Thame; and the open standing water of numerous ponds. One of the woodlands, Small Wood to the east of Aston Sandford is designated as a CWS – the wood includes a number of ancient woodland indicator species and is dominated by tall mature hawthorn.

The Hewdon Meadows CWS comprises brookside meadows that not only support a good variety of flowers and grasses, but are very important to both breeding and over wintering birds. An arable area to the southwest of Haddenham is designated as a BNS also for wintering bird interest.

Historic environment There is a concentration of pre 18th century fields surrounding the Bishopstone ridge and covering the area between the villages of Dinton and Ford. The area is predominantly 18-19th century Parliamentary enclosure land with a concentration of 19th century enclosures in the southern corner, east of Kingsey. There is parkland at Tythrop Park. There is also a concentration of prairie fields around the southern edge of Haddenham.

The settlement pattern for the area is a dispersed consisting of an interrupted linear settlement at Aston Sandford and settlement clusters such as Ford, Kingsey and Sedrup. There are a handful of listed buildings, although Aston Sandford and Sedrup and small parts of Haddenham have been designated as a conservation area. Although the villages in this area show a sparsely populated landscape, the archaeology evidence indicates that the area was once more densely populated, the LCA contains several deserted nucleated settlements and moated sites including the settlement at Waldrige Manor and the deserted settlement of Moreton; these also survive as well preserved earthworks. Other notable archaeology in the area is the concentration of prehistoric finds to the west of Haddenham. The landscape is also bisected by the Bicester to Risborough railway opened in 1906, which is still in use.

The landscape has a moderate level of amenity with well preserved enclosures and serviced by several promoted Rights of Way including the Swan Way which passes through the villages and archaeological monuments to the west of the area.

Designations

Conservation Areas at Sedrup, Aston Sandford, Haddenham
Scheduled Ancient Monuments: Medieval Village of Moreton, Moated Site west of Ford village, Nucleated Medieval Settlement East of Waldrige Manor
Archaeological Notification Areas – 23 No.
CWS – 3 No.
BNS – 7 No.

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Typical view near Ford with remnant hedgerows, pollarded and hedgerow trees and the Chiltern Hills forming the visual horizon. The foreground field is ridge and furrow.



Cross vale view from the Bishopstone Ridge (Within LCA 9.9 A418 Ridge).

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Summary of Condition/Sensitivity Analysis

Condition	Good
Pattern of elements:	Coherent
Visual detractors:	Few
Visual unity:	Unified
Cultural integrity:	Variable
Ecological integrity:	Moderate
Functional integrity:	Coherent

Sensitivity	Moderate
Distinctiveness:	Distinct
Continuity:	Historic
Sense of place:	Moderate
Landform:	Insignificant
Tree cover:	Open
Visibility:	Moderate

Guidelines **Conserve and Reinforce**

Generally the landscape is in good condition. The pattern of hedgerows remains strong albeit that there are areas of arable intensification where hedges are gappy or removed. Woodland makes a limited contribution but mature trees reinforce the pattern of elements which remains coherent and there are few detracting features. The cultural integrity is variable as although the field pattern remains mainly intact with well preserved meadows and parliamentary enclosure there has been significant loss around Haddenham. There are also has some important archaeological sites but few historic buildings. Ecological integrity is moderate because of reasonable connectivity and the areas of habitats of District significance compared to the rest of the District. The functional integrity of the landscape is considered to be coherent.

Sensitivity

The landscape is distinctive in character and the historic associations are reasonably well expressed in the field patterns and drainage network. Overall the sense of place is considered to be moderate. The landform is fairly insignificant visually due to the low lying character. Tree cover is variable, changing in intensity as one moves from east to west across the area but the dispersed nature of the tree cover combined with the topography give a moderate degree of visibility. Overall the moderate sense of place combined with the moderate visibility give the landscape a moderate sensitivity.



Group of old hedgerow pollards typical of the Haddenham Vale.

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Landscape Guidelines Conserve and Reinforce

The landscape guidelines for Haddenham Vale are as follows:

- Conserve and reinforce the existing field pattern by supporting initiatives for management and re-planting of hedges and infilling of gaps.
- Encourage replacement planting of hedgerow trees, especially black poplar along wet ditches and streams.
- Encourage the planting of new blocks of woodland in the eastern part to reinforce landscape structure.
- Encourage the planting of local shelter belts to provide shelter and reinforce the pattern and distribution of tree cover.
- Maintain the condition and extent of woodland using traditional techniques.
- Maintain the condition and extent of areas of unimproved and semi-improved grassland. Promote good management practices.
- Encourage the management of hedgerows through traditional cutting regimes.
- Where arable farming occurs next to watercourses encourage the creation of buffer strips of grassland and bank side vegetation to provide more diverse habitats enhance the landscape and reduce impact of run off of herbicides, pesticides and fertilisers.
- Encourage the conservation of aquatic habitats and promote their extension and interconnectivity for biodiversity.
- Promote connectivity of habitats.
- Maintain extent of parkland.
- Encourage the conservation and interpretation of the areas historic environment.
- Encourage the conservation of the tranquil character of the area.
- Encourage the conservation and management of key views from publicly accessible land to the Chiltern escarpment.
- Encourage the preservation of archaeological monuments by maintaining a grass sward.



Group of mature parkland trees at Tythrop Park.