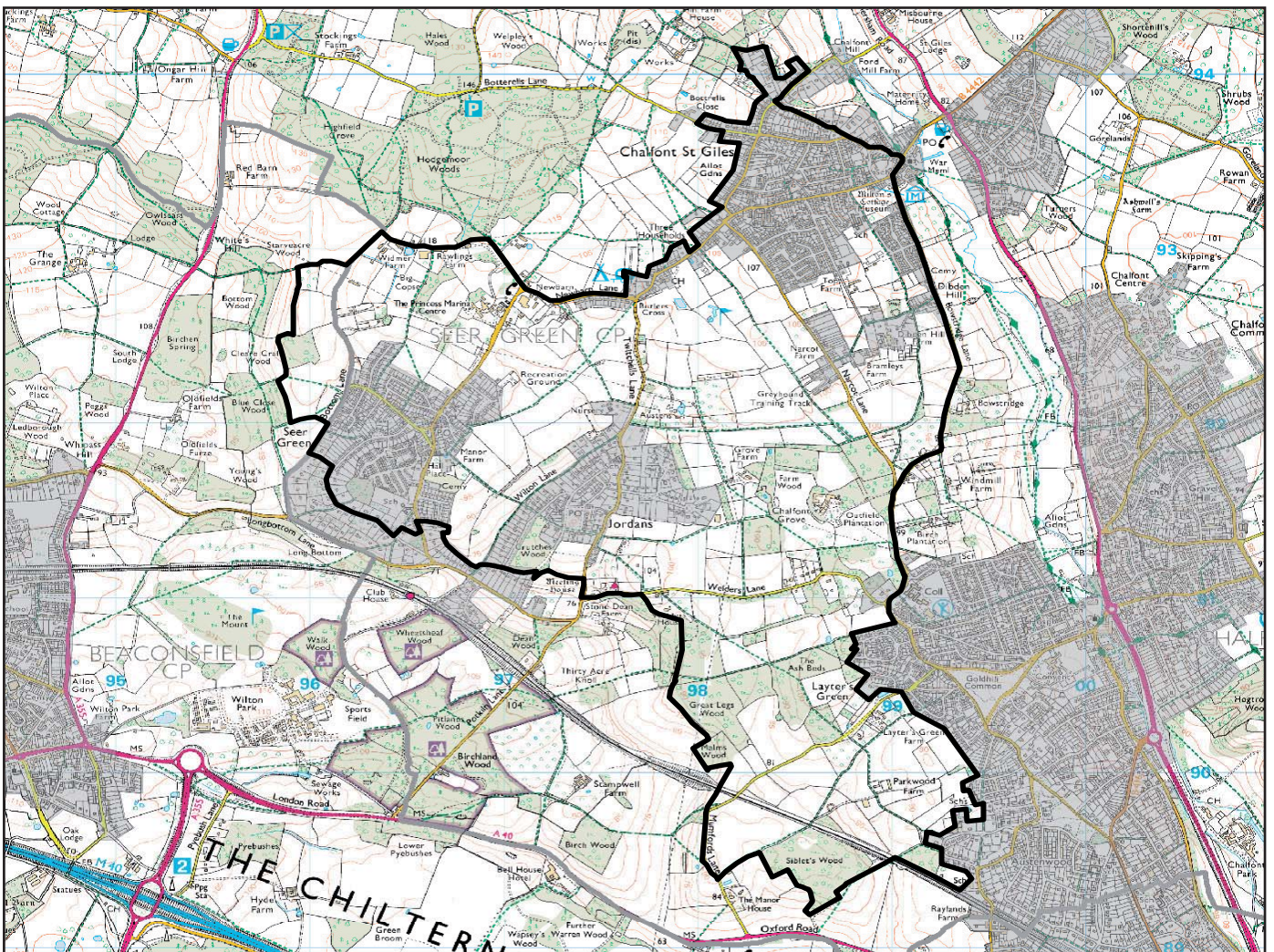
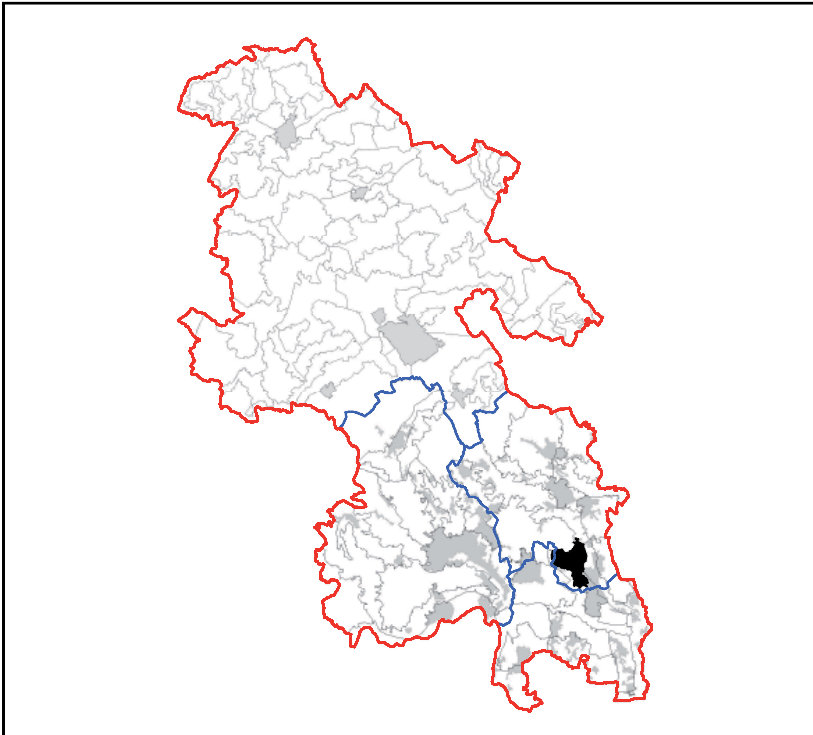


LCA 20.1 ST GILES UNDULATING FARMLAND



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KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- Undulating, transitional topography gently rising between the Alder Bourne Valley and Lower Misbourne Valley towards the higher rolling farmland to the north.
- Predominately pasture grassland and rough grazing with some paddock and arable. Field sizes are typically medium, and defined by hedgerows, with some post and wire fencing.
- Small woodland blocks often form the backdrop to fields and provide enclosure in the south of the area. The network of hedgerows with hedgerow trees connecting pockets of woodland are important ecological resource.
- The villages of Jordans, Seer Green, and Chalfont St Giles are situated within the area, with a mix of modern and traditional character. Jordans is a notable centre of Quakerism and the poet John Milton resided in Chalfont St Giles.
- A variety of field patterns, with contrasting geometric 20th century enclosure, and sinuous pre 18th century co-axial enclosures.
- Winding rural roads and lanes often enclosed by tall hedgerows and trees connect settlements. Local footpaths run along field boundaries and through woodland, some continuing into adjacent valleys. A golf course is located in the north of the area.
- Varying degrees of enclosure, contrasting between enclosed, rural roads dense woodland edges, and open fields. Occasional long views are possible, but often contained along roads and by tree cover.
- The landscape has retained a small scale and rural character between settlement particularly in the south where woodland and enclosed lanes occur.

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DESCRIPTION

Location and Boundaries: The *St Giles Undulating Farmland* character area lies predominantly within Chiltern District with a small area extending into South Bucks. It forms the transitional landscape gently rising between the valleys of the Alder Bourne to the south and east and Misbourne to the west. It is distinguished from the higher, larger scale, rolling farmland landscape to the north.

Landscape Character: Undulating farmland, forming the transitional landscape above the Alderbourne and Lower Misbourne Valley rising gently to meet the rolling farmland landscape to the north. Fields of pastoral grassland divided by hedgerows and hedgerow trees with some paddock and occasional arable. Pockets of woodland in the south create a more enclosed character. A variety of field patterns with pre 18th century irregular and co-axial enclosures and smaller 20th century enclosures on settlement edges. The settlements of Jordans, Seer Green, and Chalfont St Giles are located within the area, with a mix of modern and traditional character. Their built edges filter into the landscape integrated with trees and hedgerows. The planned settlement of Jordans is a notable centre for Quakerism and the poet John Milton resided in Chalfont St Giles, adding to the historic interest and time depth of the area. Red brick is characteristic used in modern and historic buildings. The landscape between settlements has retained a small scale and rural character connected by rural lanes often enclosed by tree and hedgerows.

Geology: Underlain by Thames River Terrace Deposits with narrow swathes of Upper Chalk associated with the Alder Bourne Valley in the east. Freely draining slightly acid loamy soils dominate the area.

Topography/Landform: Transitional, undulating, lowland topography, gently rising in the north to meet the higher ground of the *Penn Rolling Farmland* character. Topographic variation ranges from approximately 80m to 115m.

Hydrology: Hydrological features are relatively sparse and inconspicuous, with some scattered ponds in farmland and woodland or associated with the golf course.

Land Use and Settlement: The area is predominately pasture and rough grazing with some paddocks. Field sizes are typically medium, defined by hedgerows with hedgerow trees of varying density and some post and wire fencing. There are a few interspersed arable fields in the south and north east of the area. Small woodland blocks occur forming the backdrop to fields and sometimes creating sinuous field boundaries.

The settlements of Jordans, Seer Green, and Chalfont St Giles are located within the area, with a mix of modern and traditional character. Settlement edges tend to filter

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into the landscape integrated by trees and hedgerows. The western edge of Chalfont Peter is concealed by woodland cover in the south of the area. The village of Jordans is a planned village designed by Fred Rowntree in 1916 and was established as a community exclusive to Quakers which would protect the surroundings of the Meeting House (a brick building dating from 1688). Seer Green has an historic core with brick and flint church and village green with much 1920/30s development and also more recent development. Individual farmsteads and small clusters of properties are also scattered throughout the area Red brick used in both modern and historic buildings is notable, with some white render.

Rural roads connect the settlements and a network of local footpaths run through fields and woodland, some continuing down into adjacent valleys. A railway line cuts through the south and the area is crossed by pylons. A golf course (Oaklands Park) lies on the southern edge of Chalfont St Giles.

Tree Cover: Broadleaved, mixed, and yew woodland occurs in small blocks, notably in to the south. Some areas of ancient replanted and semi natural woodland occur on the southern and eastern edge of the area (e.g. Sibley's Wood, Malms Wood, Great Legs Wood). Hedgerow trees contribute to tree cover, thickening hedgerow boundaries.

Perceptual/ Experiential Landscape: A landscape of varying degrees of enclosure. Fields of open farmland, particularly in the north, contrast with pockets of woodland and rural roads lined by trees and hedgerows enclosed by trees and hedges. Occasional long views are possible but views are often across fields to wooded backdrops or contained along roads by tree cover. The landscape between settlements has retained a small scale and rural character particularly in the south - a mosaic of undulating farmland interspersed with woodland in the south and connected by rural roads. The village of Jordans attracts visitors, notable as a centre for Quakerism it is also the burial place of William Penn, founder of the Province of Pennsylvania and home to a 17th century farm, barn believed to be constructed from timbers from the Mayflower. John Milton's Cottage is located in Chalfont St Giles, this was the English poet's refuge from London's plague in 1665 and where he completed Paradise Lost, one of his best known poems.

Biodiversity: Wealders Lane is a Green lane local wildlife site where dense hedgerows and hedgerow trees form a green tunnel along the lane. The area is predominantly improved grassland and the network of hedgerows with hedgerow trees and pockets of woodland are important ecological resource.

Historic Environment: A variety of field patterns with pre 18th century irregular and co-axial enclosures and smaller 20th century enclosures on settlement edges. A small areas of parkland occurs at Chalfont Grove. Milton's Cottage a Grade II Registered Historic Park and Garden Grade II is within this area. It is a late 19th/early 20th century terraced garden of a timber-framed cottage, with adjacent field. Two co-axial fields containing Roman finds and Neolithic/Early Bronze Age flints occur to the south of Welders Lane.

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Designations:

- Archaeological Notification Sites: 3No.
- Conservation Areas: Jordans and Chalfont St Giles
- Biological Notification Sites: 8No.
- Local Wildlife Sites: 1No.
- English Heritage Registered Parks and Gardens: Milton's Cottage Grade II

EVALUATION

Landscape and Visual Sensitivities

Potential landscape and visual sensitivities are:

- The hedgerow and hedgerow tree network connecting to pockets of woodland, which provides visual unity and an important wildlife corridor.
- Small pockets of woodland including some ancient which provide enclosure particularly in the south of the area.
- The local roads which have retained a rural character often enclosed by hedgerows and trees (e.g. Wealders Lane).
- The remaining pre 18th century irregular and co-axial enclosures and fields which contain Roman archaeology and Neolithic/Early Bronze Age flints.
- The historic character of villages and their historic and literary connections (the Mayflower Barn in Jordans and Milton's Cottageuse in Chalfont St Giles).

Strategy/ Vision: Conserve and enhance *St Giles Undulating Farmland* as a small scale farmland landscape with pockets of woodland and a strong network of hedgerows with hedgerow trees.

Landscape Guidelines:

- Conserve and enhance the network of hedgerows, and hedgerow trees. Gap up hedgerows and seek to plant hedgerow trees to replace those reaching senescence.
- Conserve and manage the small areas of woodland to improve biodiversity value. Maintain connections between woodlands and hedgerows to provide wildlife corridors.
- Promote appropriate management of arable farmland and rough grazing, to help generate a wildlife rich habitat, and visually attractive landscape.
- Maintain the rural character of roads; avoid road widening or introduction of urbanising features.
- Conserve the historic field patterns (pre 18th century irregular and co-axial enclosures) and avoid further divisions or expansions.
- Conserve historic character/cores of villages. Ensure that new buildings and development is sensitively integrated into the landscape through careful siting.

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Small winding rural roads and lanes often enclosed by tall hedgerows and trees.



Seer Green Holy Trinity Church Grade II Listed Building, with knapped flint and stone dressings.
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Varying degrees of enclosure with open farmland enclosed by pockets of woodland.

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