

## **Landscape and Visual Appraisal Volume 3**

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## **Landscape and Visual Appraisal**

This document sets out the broad landscape and visual issues relating to the potential/proposed allocation sites.

The landscape assessment work is based on a desk study of each site (including OS map data, aerial photography and designation data), and site visits to confirm the key landscape issues.

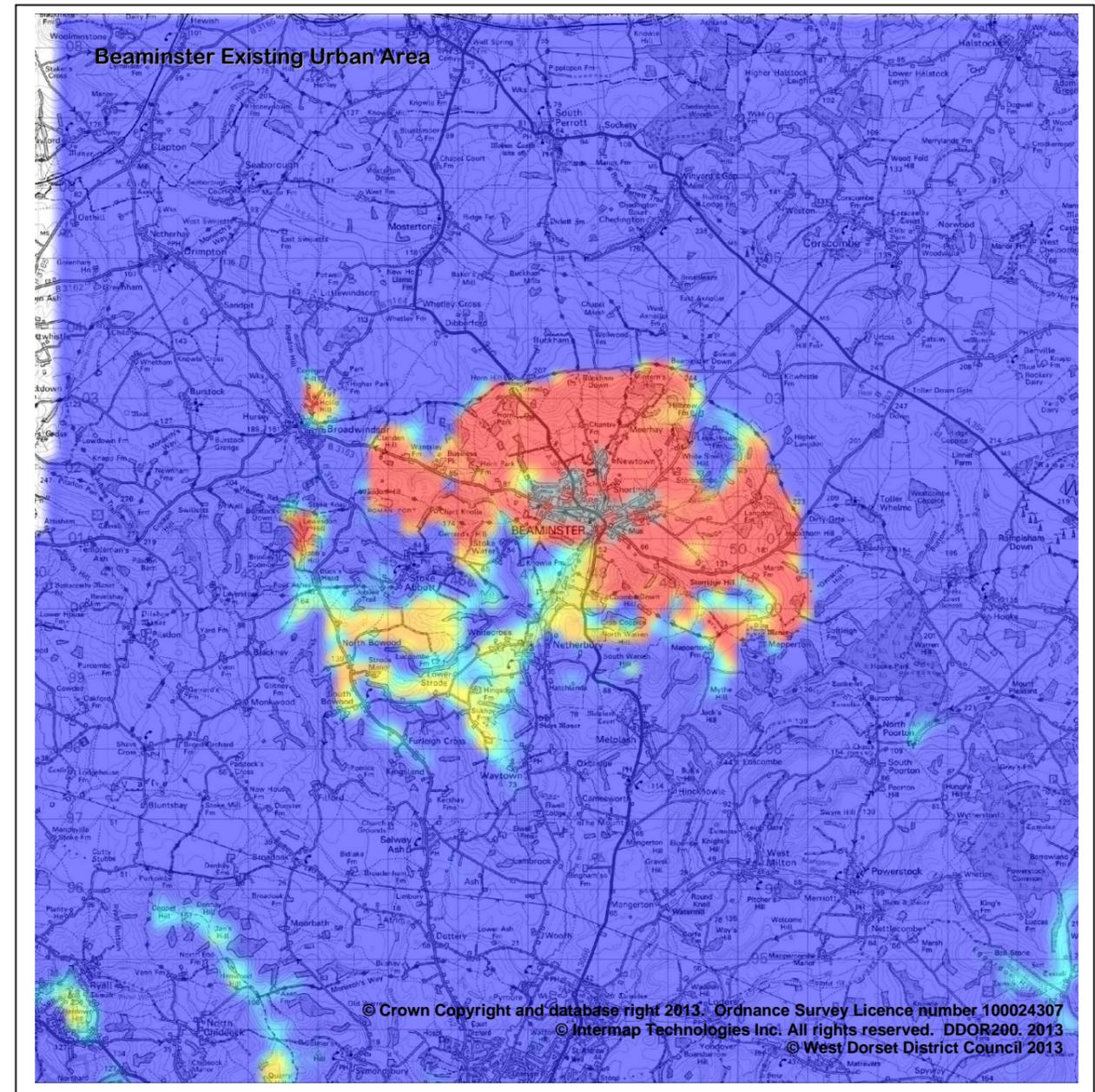
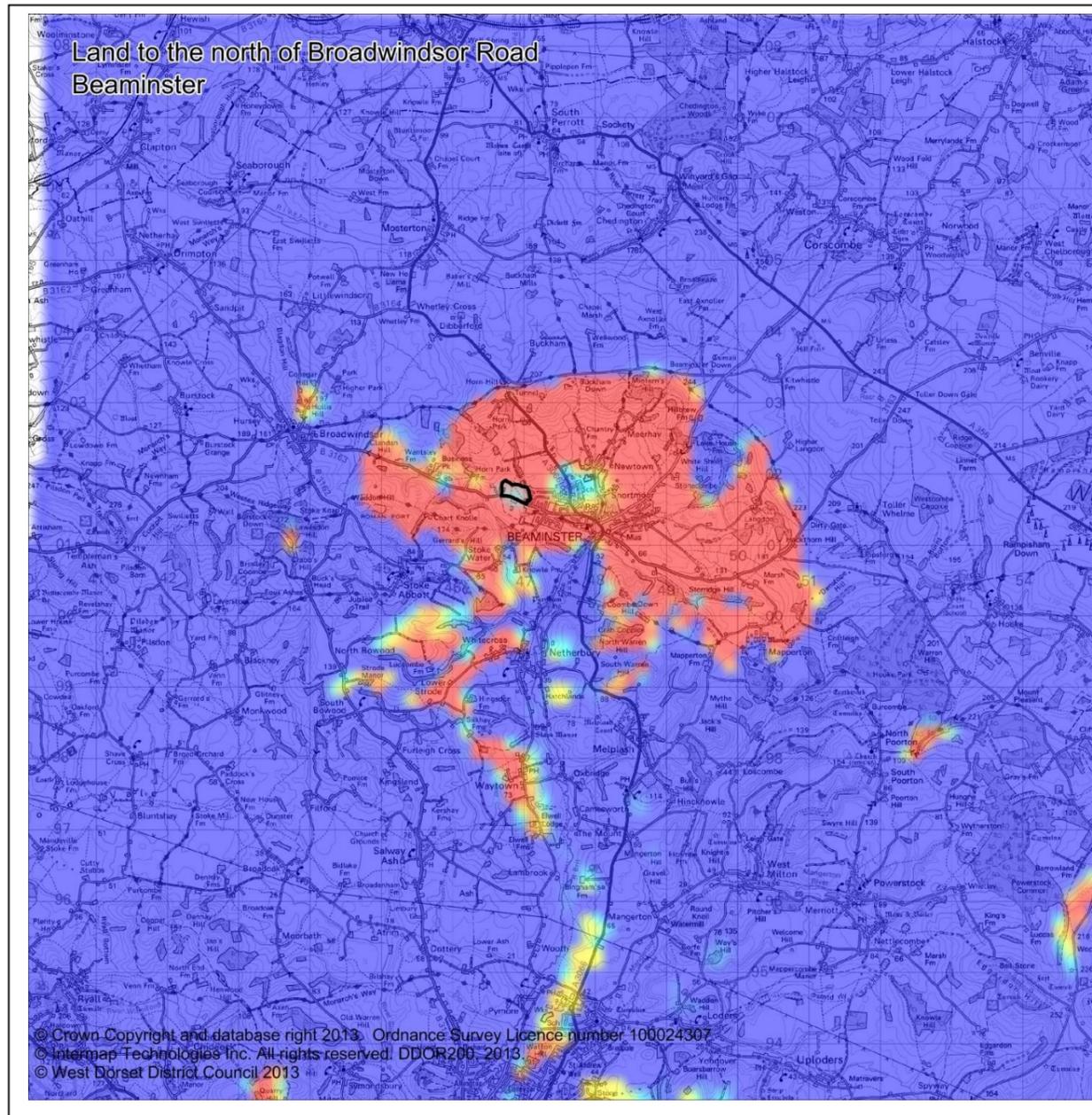
The visual assessment work for each site is based on a Theoretical Zone of Visual Influence (TZVI). The TZVI is calculated using a digital terrain model on a 5m grid with a 0.7m vertical accuracy. A proposed development height of 2 storeys (8m) has been used to determine the potential extent of visibility. It is based on topography alone, and does not take into account vegetation, built form, or other features present in the landscape. It is therefore a "first sieve" visual mapping exercise, which allows a simple check of the likely visibility of development at a site.

### **Interpretation of TZVIs**

An area of red indicates the area of highest visibility of the assessed site (i.e. the majority of the site will theoretically be visible), reducing through orange, to yellow and light blue, where only a part of the site may be visible. Deep blue indicates areas from which views of the site are not possible. In practice, the areas shown to have views of the site will be significantly reduced by the presence of vegetation and built form in the landscape and townscape setting.

It is important to note that the smaller the site being assessed, the more red is likely to be apparent; based on the fact that it will be easier to see the whole of a small site, rather than seeing the whole of an existing urban area in one view. When considering larger sites therefore, the area shown as potentially having views (red to light blue) of a site is a more important consideration than the actual colour indicated.

**As this is the first stage in assessing the principal impacts of development, detailed Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment work would be required for the future masterplanning of the sites, including determining the provision of strategic planting and areas of open/green space.**



**Key landscape characteristics (within the AONB)**

The site area is predominantly flat agricultural fields, rising gently to the north. The existing western boundary of the town is currently softened by the treed river channel which provides an element of visual containment. The site is relatively open and exposed in contrast, with hedgerows and little tree cover. A large building complex lies to the south.

**Key views of the site and interpretation of TZVIs**

The site is viewed directly from the west against the backdrop of the built up area of the town and the 'industrial' western edge in particular. Wider views are likely from the surrounding "bowl" in which Beaminster sits, with notable vantage points including Buckham Down and rights of way on the twisting slopes north and north west of Beaminster, and Gerrard's Hill to the south west.

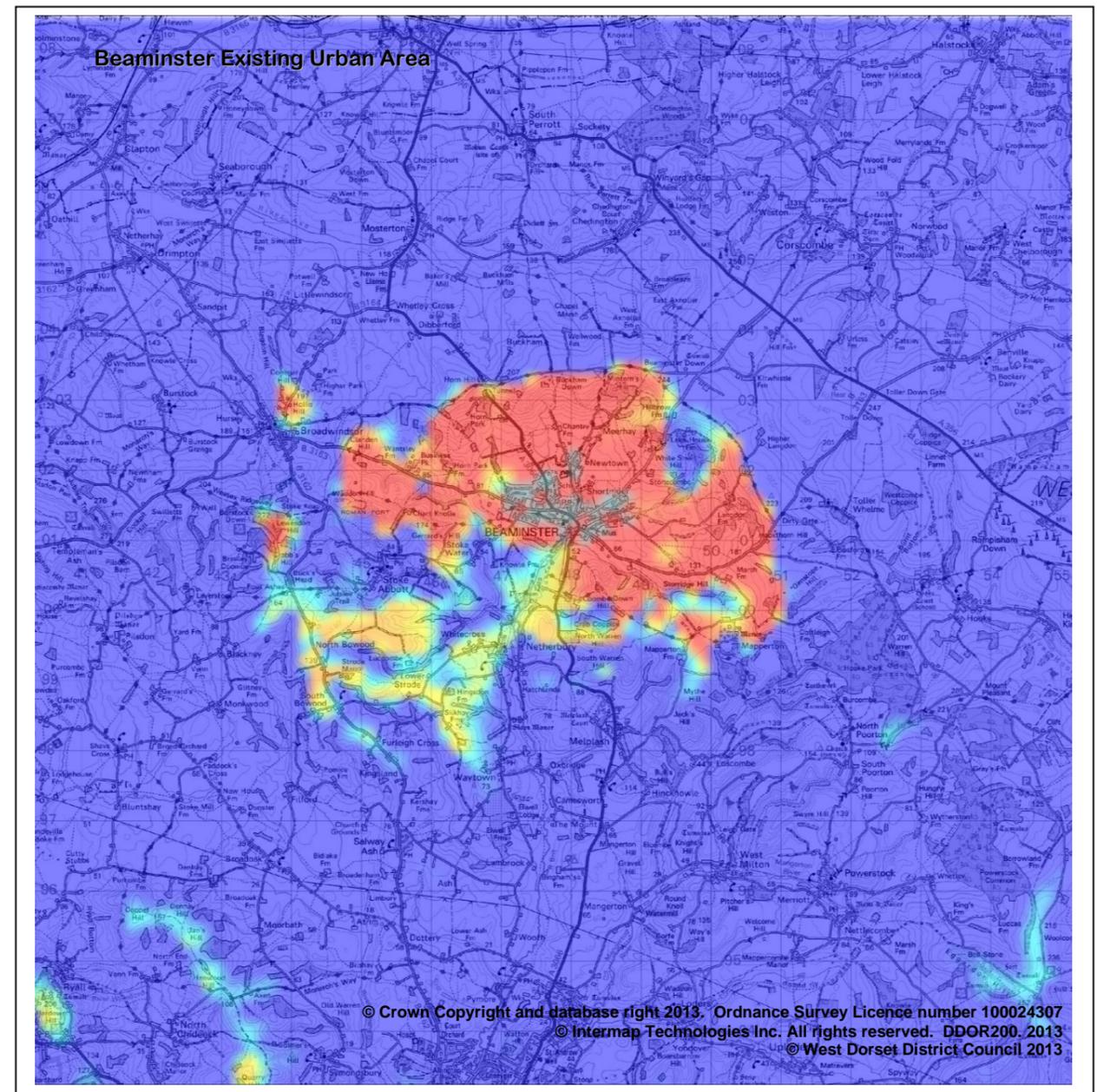
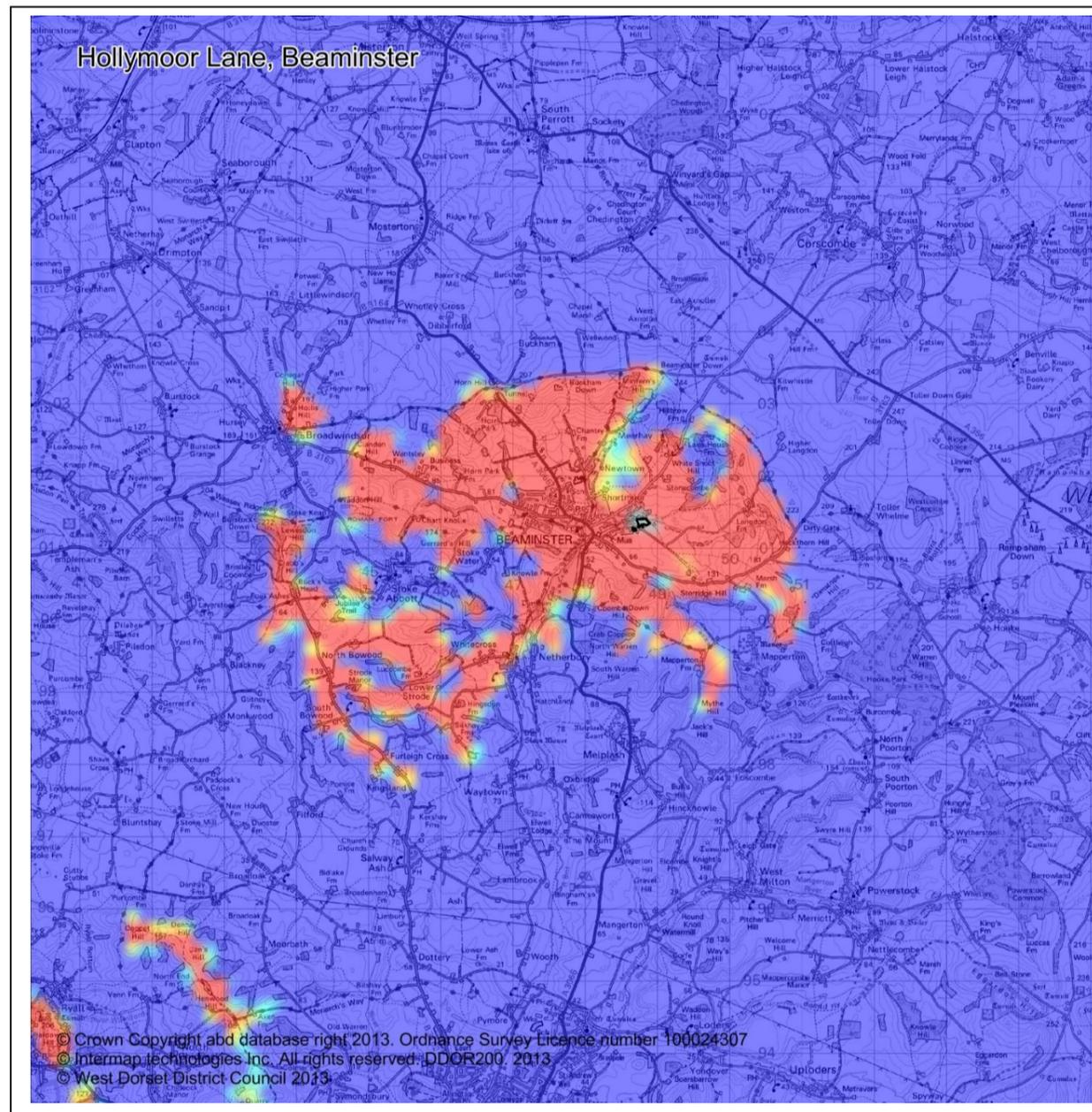
The above TZVIs demonstrate the potential for views of the site from the south (notably the ridgeline west of at Waytown, which would view the site without seeing it alongside the existing urban form at Beaminster. This is as a result of the elevated nature of the north portions of the site. The remainder of the site would be seen in close association with the existing urban fabric of Beaminster.

**Conclusion & Suggested Mitigation**

Development could be sensitively accommodated at this site without significant landscape and visual impacts, subject to the following mitigation measures:

- Avoiding development on the higher ground towards the north of the site would limit wider views from the south, and dense planting on this edge would provide a vegetated backdrop to new development.
- Open areas within the site should be created to preserve the character and appearance of key public footpath links to the surrounding countryside.
- Early strategic planting to the north and west would be necessary to reduce the landscape and visual impacts of development, and provide visual containment of the site and the town beyond. With small woodlands forming a key characteristic of the area, substantial areas of planting could be sensitively accommodated.
- Any external lighting schemes would need to be sensitively designed to preserve rural character of the adjacent countryside.

**Land to the north of Broadwindsor Road, Beaminster**



**Key landscape characteristics (within the AONB)**

The northern site area is partly surrounded by mature vegetation, including hedgerows on hedgebanks, and streamside trees and shrubs. A mature hedgerow on a bank runs from north to south alongside the public footpath, bisecting the site into two halves. The site slopes down towards stream on northern boundary. The small area of land to the south of Hollymoor Lane relatively flat, and is visually contained by existing development to the north east, and west, but is open to the south east. The existing native vegetation helps give the sites a rural character, however, the domestic boundaries have detracted from this character in parts.

**Key views of the site and interpretation of TZVIs**

There are views towards the site from dwellings on the northern side of the stream valley, and those abutting the site. The road and footpath approaches to the sites would also have clear close proximity views of the site. Wider views are likely from the surrounding “bowl” in which Beaminster sits, with notable vantage points including Buckham Down and rights of way on the twisting slopes north and north west of Beaminster, and Gerrard’s Hill to the west.

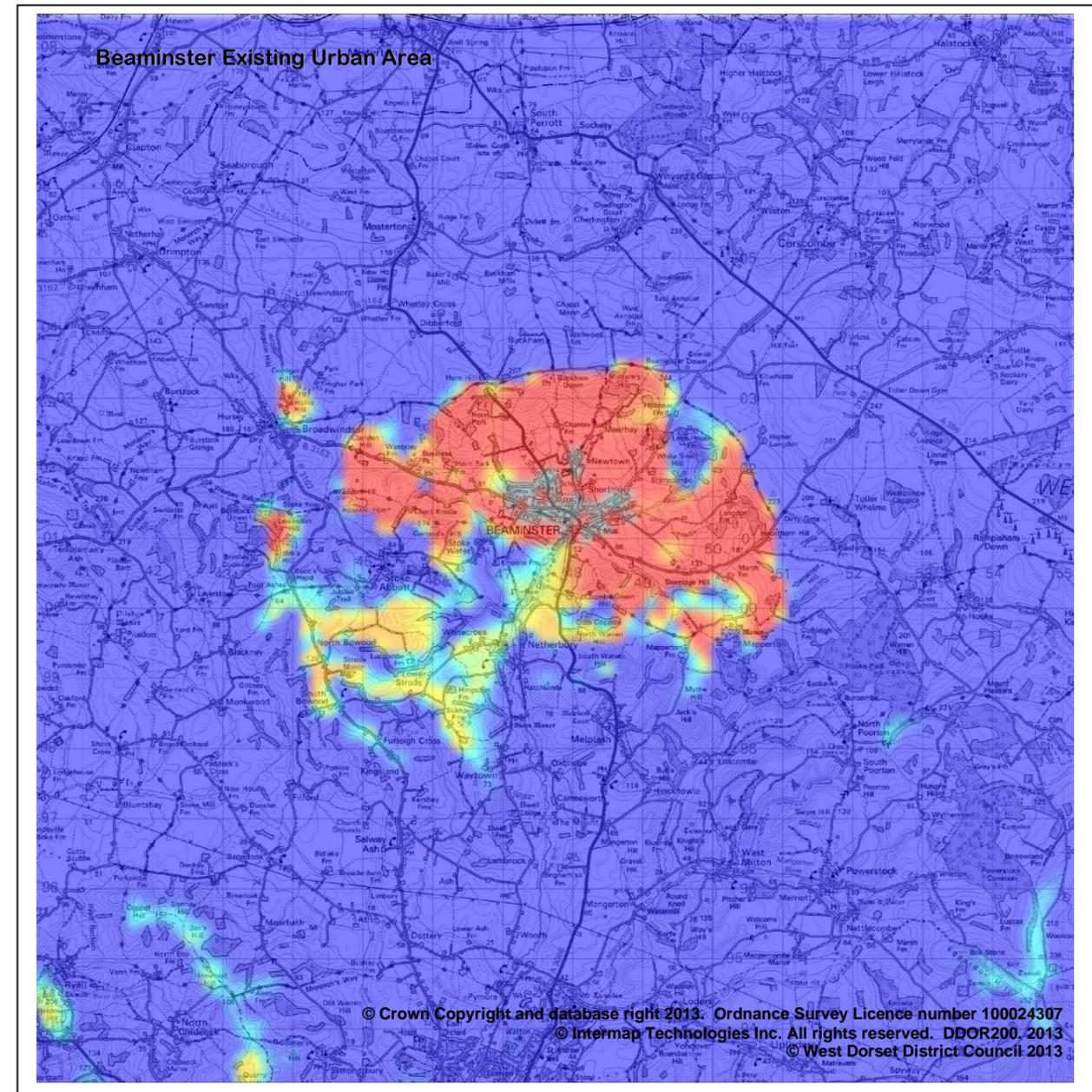
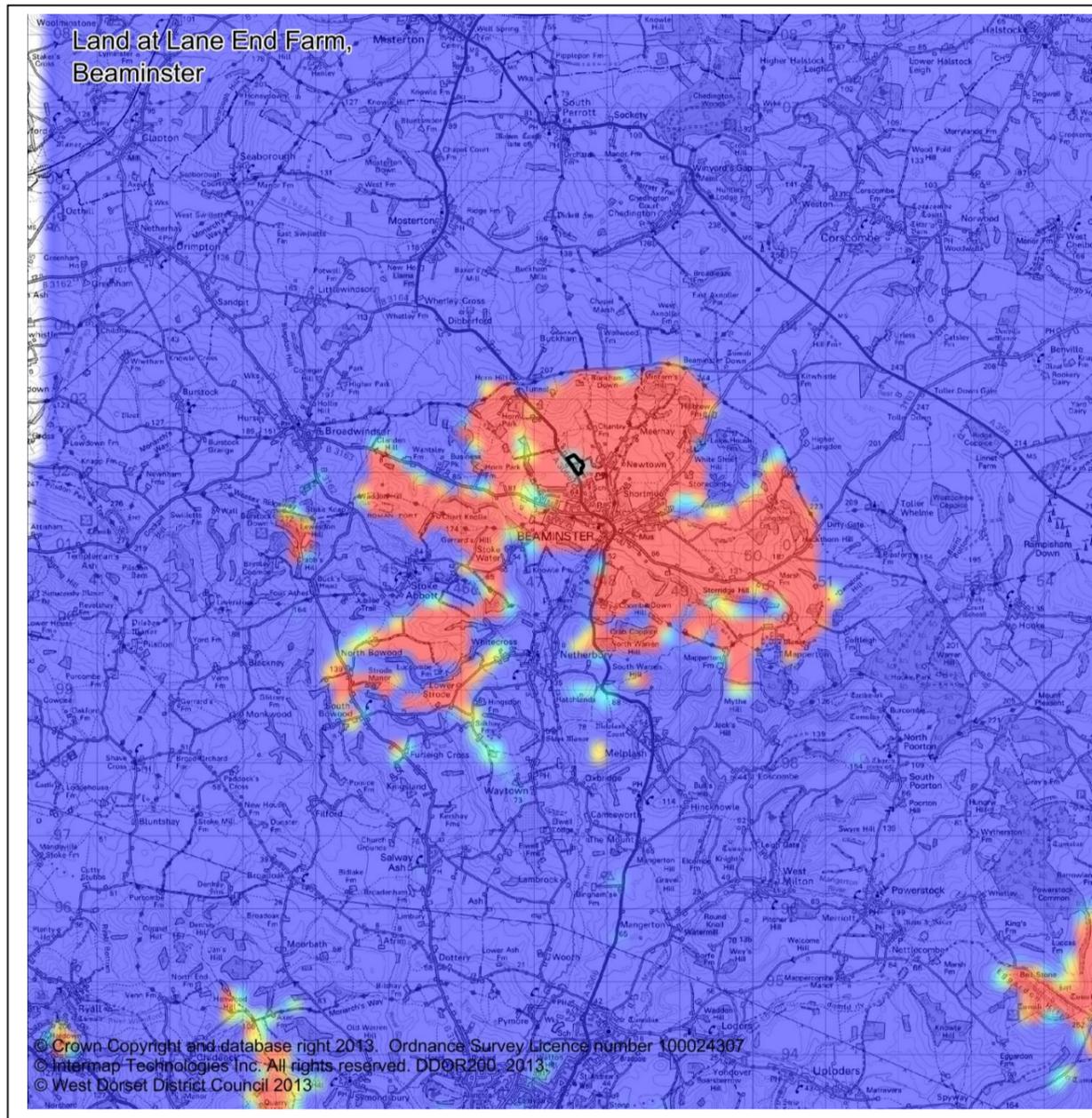
As this is a small site, the TZVI appears predominantly red in comparison to the adjacent mapping for the urban area of Beaminster (the whole of the smaller site is more likely to be visible in a view than the whole of Beaminster). The above TZVIs demonstrate that although views of the site would be available from the surrounding landscape, the site would be seen in close association with the existing urban fabric of Beaminster.

**Conclusion & Suggested Mitigation**

Development could be sensitively accommodated at this site without significant landscape and visual impacts, subject to the following mitigation measures:

- Retention of the existing vegetation would be key to ensuring the successful integration of the site into the landscape, to include strengthening the boundary planting with native trees and shrubs.
- Open areas within the site should be created to preserve the character and appearance of public footpath links to the surrounding countryside.
- The form and character, including appearance and scale of development should take cues from the adjacent rural settlement edge, resulting in a well-associated urban extension.
- A sensitive southern and south eastern boundary to the southern site area would need to be created, most suitable being a hedgerow with frequent native tree planting.

**Land off Hollymoor Lane, Beaminster**



**Key landscape characteristics (within the AONB)**

The site comprises agricultural fields bounded and crossed by hedgerows with some tree cover. The site level rises to the north away from the town, with a slight downhill gradient running west to east where a stream runs along the boundary of the site. The northern half of the site is slightly more elevated and exposed. The site and its surroundings retain a rural character, as developments along the A3066 to the north of this site are relatively discrete and set back from the road at a lower level, and behind roadside hedges.

**Key views of the site and interpretation of TZVIs**

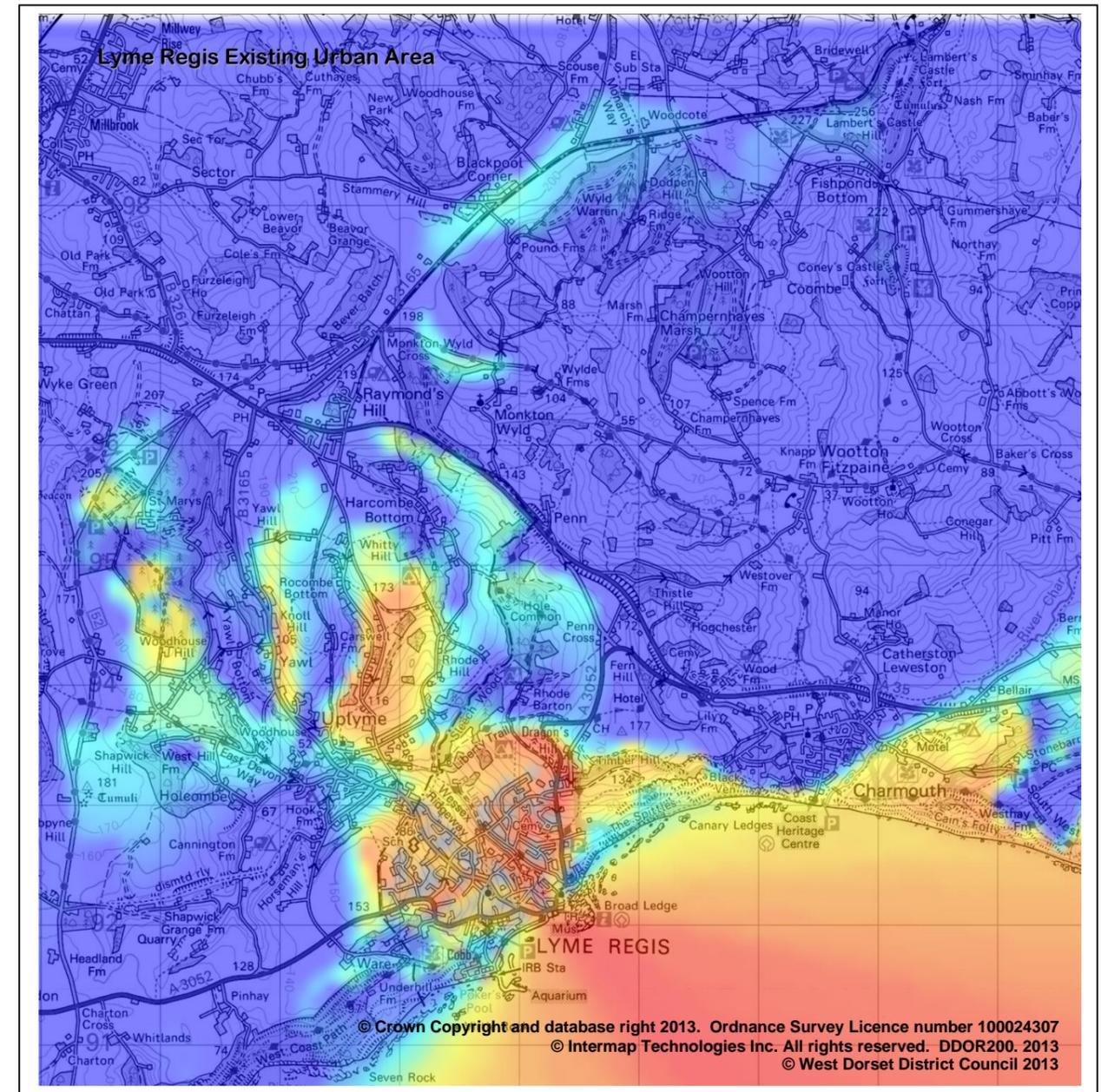
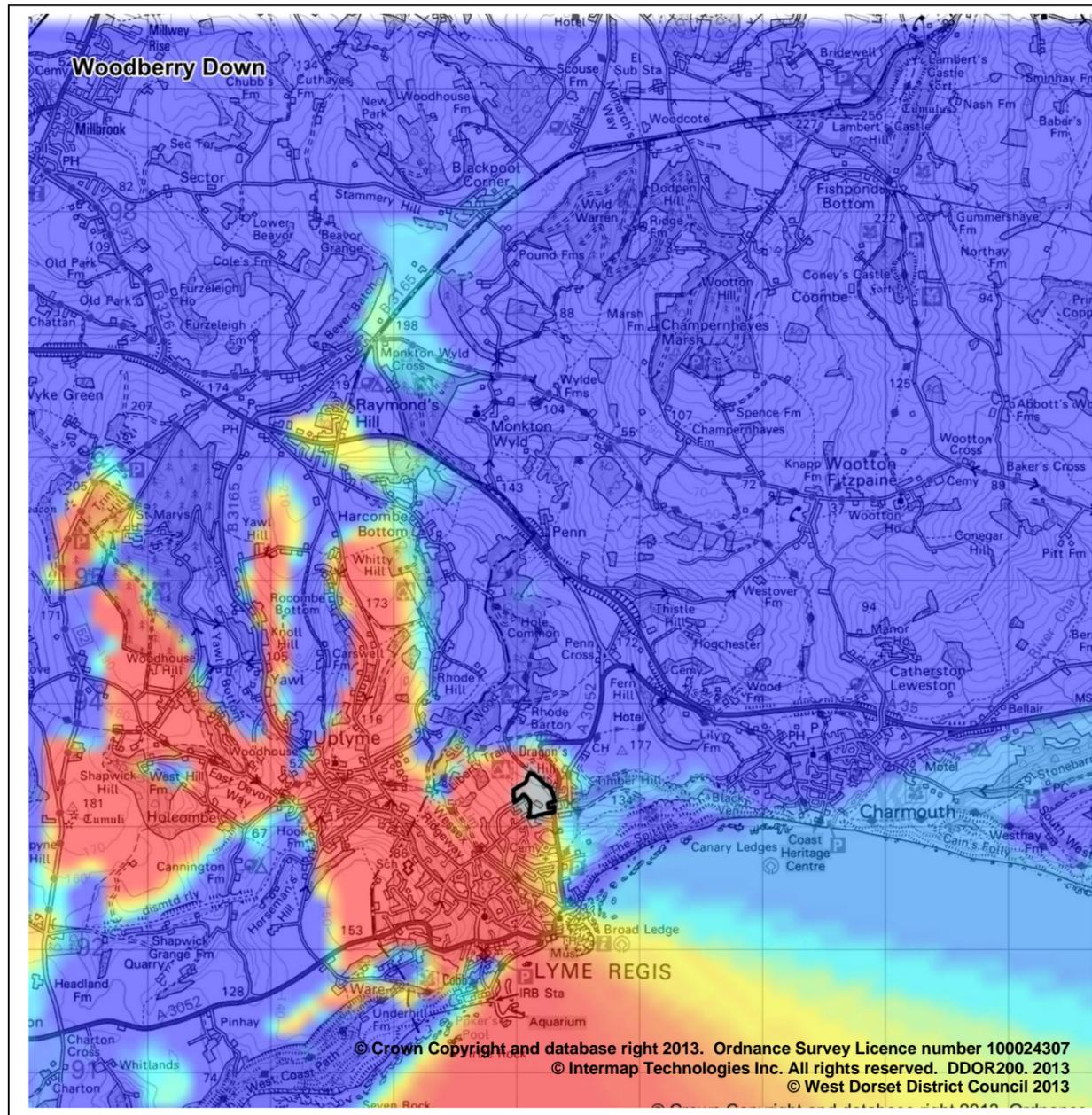
Close proximity views of the site are available from the bridleway passing east – west through the site area. Wider views are likely to be available from the elevated ground from a number of directions, notable vantage points locally including Buckham Down, Gerrard’s Hill, and rights of way on the twisting slopes north and north west of Beaminster. Although the site would be viewed with the town of Beaminster close by, the relative isolation and rural character of the site could result in significant landscape and visual impacts if large-scale development were to be proposed.

As this is a small site, the TZVI appears predominantly red in comparison to the adjacent mapping for the urban area of Beaminster (the whole of the smaller site is more likely to be visible in a view than the whole of Beaminster). The above TZVIs demonstrate that although views of the site would be available from the surrounding landscape, the site would be seen alongside the existing urban fabric of Beaminster.

**Conclusion & Suggested Mitigation**

Development could be sensitively accommodated at this site without significant landscape and visual impacts, subject to the following mitigation measures:

- Siting, scale, density and appearance of development at this site would be key to ensure the retention of the rural character of the northern approach to Beaminster. Any new development should be of limited scale, rural/agricultural in character and set back from the road approach, preferably associated with the existing farm complex buildings.
- Substantial screen planting would be necessary to reduce the landscape and visual impacts of development.



**Key landscape characteristics (within the AONB)**

The site is comprised of sloping grassland fields, which form part of an elevated landscape setting to the settlement at Lyme Regis. Development to the south west and the caravan park to the north east form conspicuous built elements in the landscape. A number of important landscape features are present, including dense and bushy hedgerows, and a significant tree presence. This high level of tree and woodland planting on the slopes in this area offer opportunities for substantial new areas of screening planting.

**Key views of the site and interpretation of TZVIs**

Public rights of way pass through and border the site, offering clear short-range views both within and beyond the site. Medium distance views from within the western area of Lyme Regis as it rises up the opposite side of the Lim Valley are likely to be available in between existing built form. In these views, the site would form a small extension to an existing substantial built area.

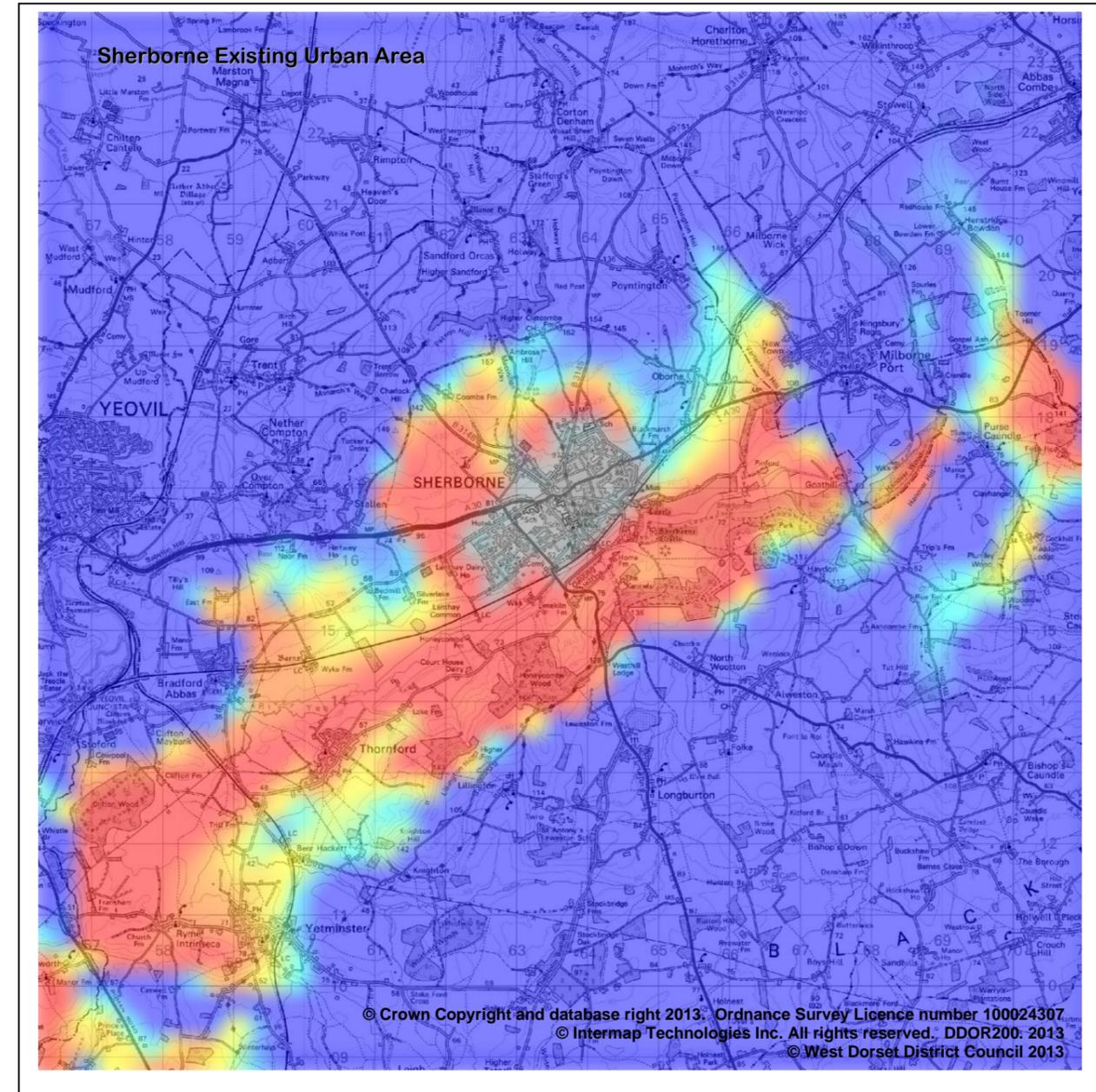
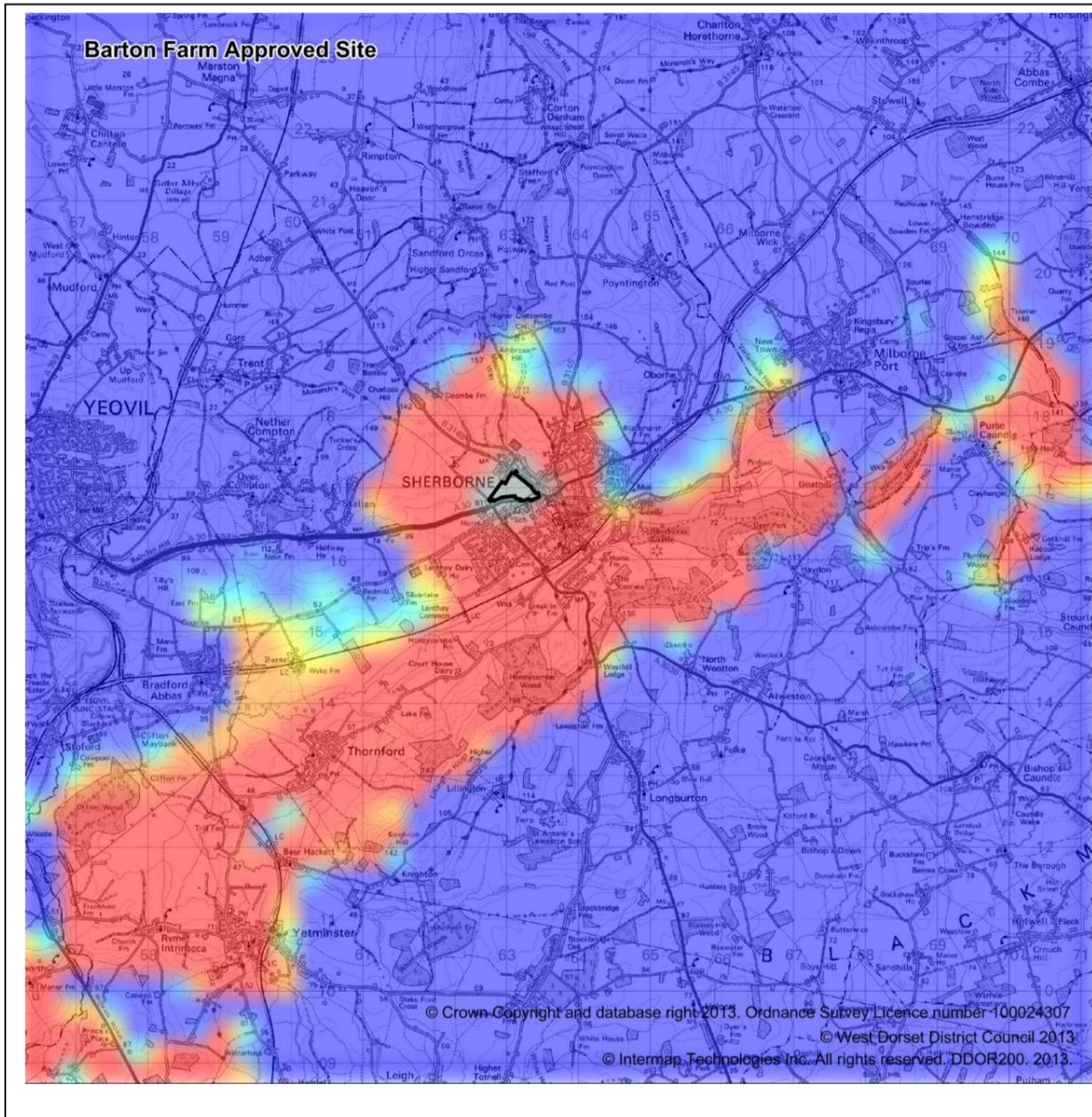
As this is a small site, the TZVI appears predominantly red in comparison to the adjacent mapping for the urban area of Lyme Regis (the whole of the smaller site is more likely to be visible in a view than the whole of Lyme Regis). However, the above TZVIs demonstrate the potential for views of the site from the high ground to the west around Holcombe, which would view the site without seeing it alongside the existing urban form at Lyme Regis. This is as a result of the elevated nature of the north eastern portions of the site. The remainder of the site would be seen alongside the existing urban fabric of Lyme Regis.

**Conclusion & Suggested Mitigation**

Development could be sensitively accommodated at this site without significant landscape and visual impacts, subject to the following mitigation measures:

- Avoiding development on the highest ground towards the north east of the site, and on the open and exposed south western extents would limit significant wider visibility.
- Open areas within the site should be created preserve the key public footpath links to the surrounding countryside, and provide a positive character along them.
- Substantial strategic planting and open spaces around the site should effectively enclose development, and preserve landscape setting of Lyme Regis to the north east of the site. Early implementation of this planting would be necessary.
- The form and character, including appearance and scale of development should take cues from the adjacent settlement edge to create in a well-associated urban extension.

**Land at Woodberry Down, Lyme Regis**



**Key landscape characteristics**

The site is comprised of gently sloping agricultural fields, crossed by hedgerows, and bordered by existing development at Sherborne to the north, east and south. The north western boundary is more open, formed by Sheeplands Lane. The site lies on the lower slopes of the broadly sloping hills which form the south facing valley side of the River Yeo.

**Key views of the site and interpretation of TZVIs**

Dwellings on Marston Lane and off the A30 to the south of the site would have clear views across the site area. The north western and western road approaches to the site are also likely to view the site as the gateway to development at Sherborne. Wider views are likely from the elevated landscape on the southern valley side of the River Yeo, on the southern approach to the town, and on the high ground stretching towards Thornford. In these wider views, the site appears well below the green strip of land that forms the northern landscape setting of Sherborne.

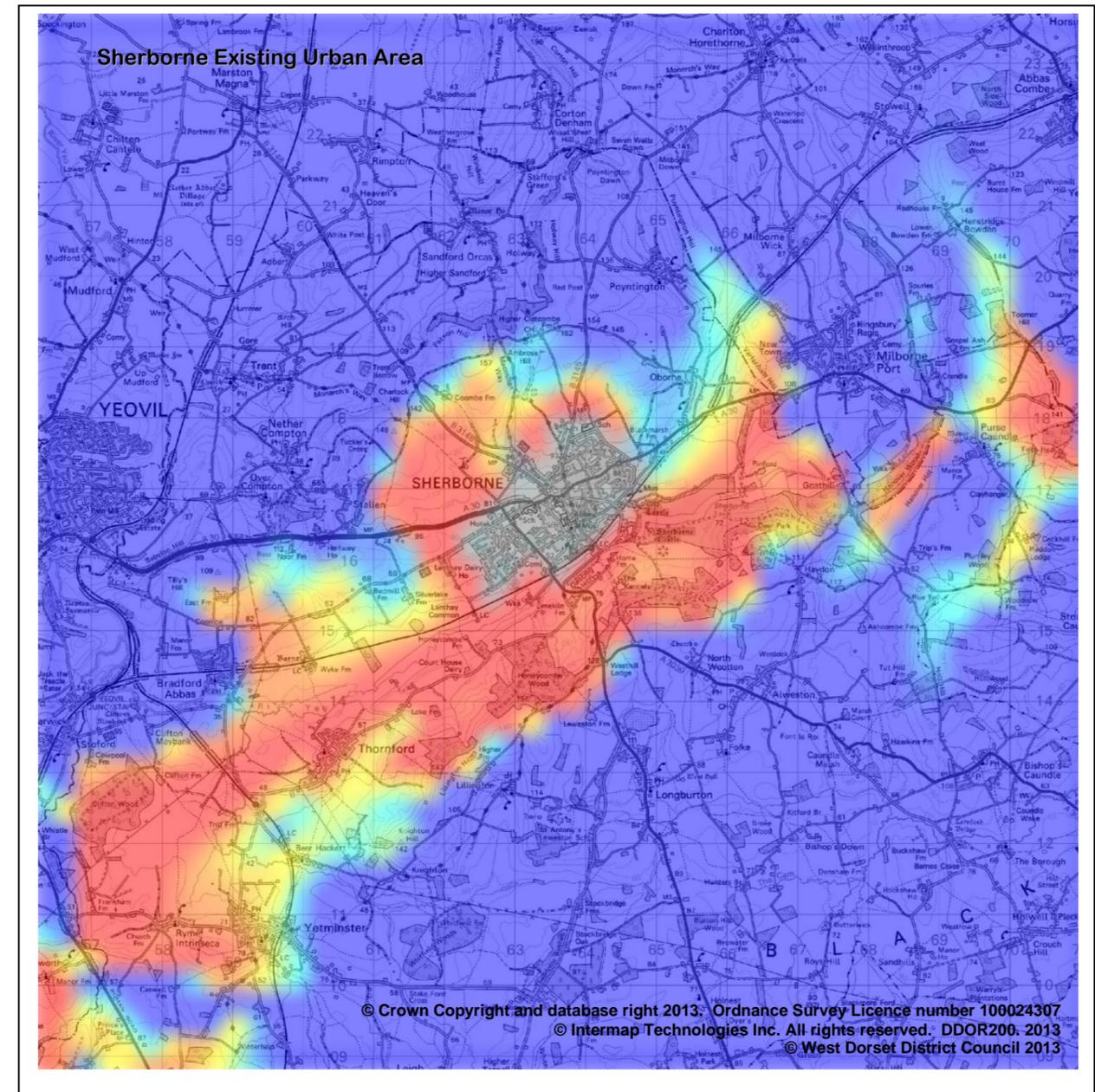
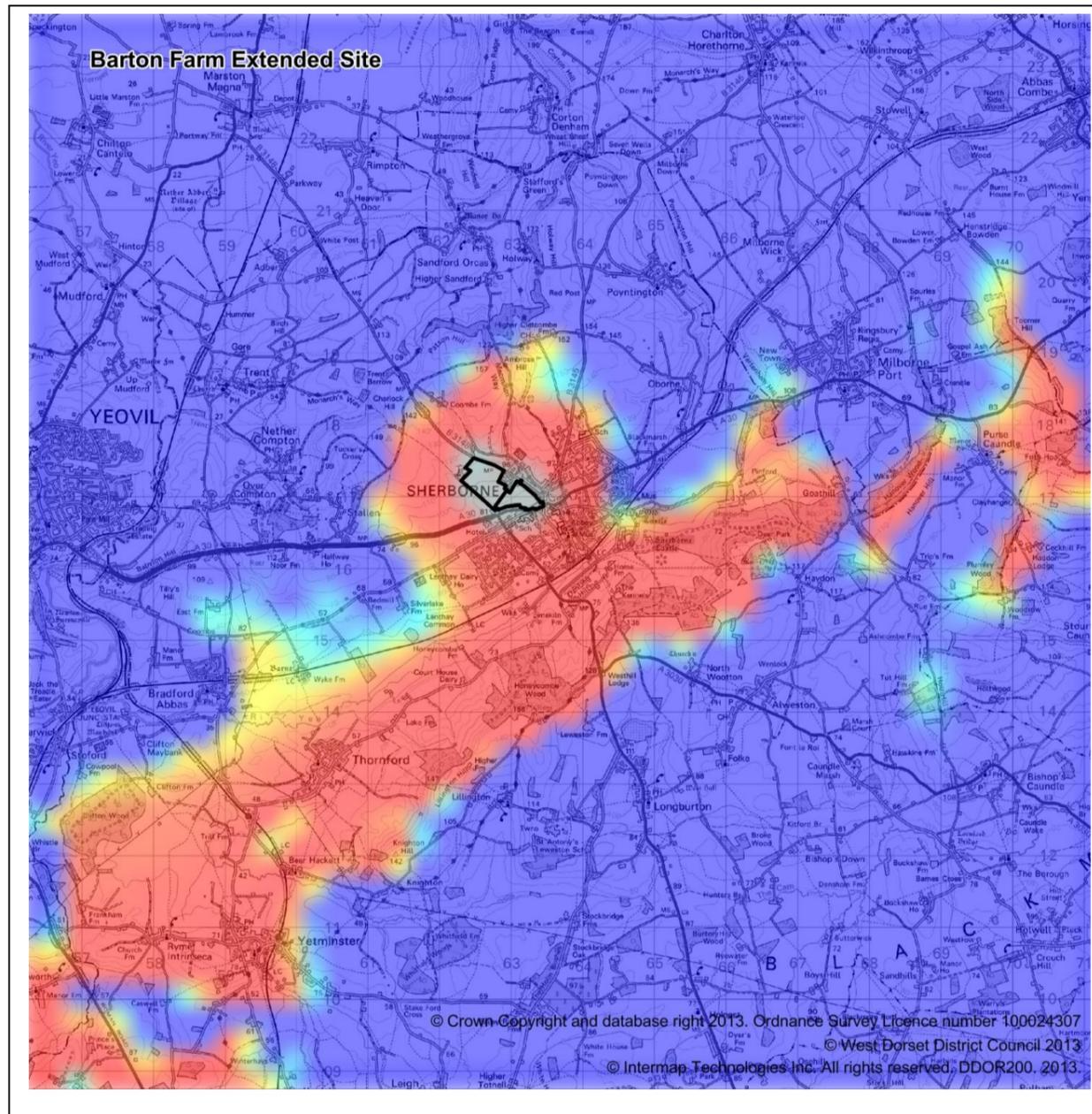
Within these views, adjacent development at Sherborne would form a substantial built context to the development. The above TZVIs demonstrate that development at the site would not substantially extend the area visually affected by development in and around Sherborne, and in the views discussed above, the site would be seen in close association with the existing urban fabric of the town.

**Conclusion & Suggested Mitigation**

Development could be sensitively accommodated at this site without significant landscape and visual impacts, subject to the following mitigation measures:

- Substantial planting would be required to the north and west of the site to offer visual containment of the site in the approaches to the town.
- Softening and screening planting and areas of open space should be used to mitigate the direct views from adjacent dwellings and rights of way.
- Open areas within the site should be created to continue the character of green spaces within built form present at Sherborne.
- The form and character, including appearance and scale of development should take cues from the adjacent settlement edge and the rural context to the north west.

**Land at Barton Farm, Sherborne**



**Key landscape characteristics**

The site is comprised of agricultural fields sloping gently to the south east, primarily bound by trimmed hedgerows with little tree cover. This site is rural in character, and forms an expansive and open area, rising gently into the slopes of the low hills above the town of Sherborne. There is limited definition to the north west and south west of the site; the fields forming part of a consistent green strip of land wrapping around the northern extents of the town.

**Key views of the site and interpretation of TZVIs**

Locally significant views are likely from the adjacent bridleway bordering the site to the south west, and adjacent roads approaching and bordering the site. Key wider views of the area would be available from the elevated southern approach to Sherborne on the A352 and the Macmillan Way, where the site begins to stretch up into the broadly sloping hills forming the opposite valley side of the River Yeo.

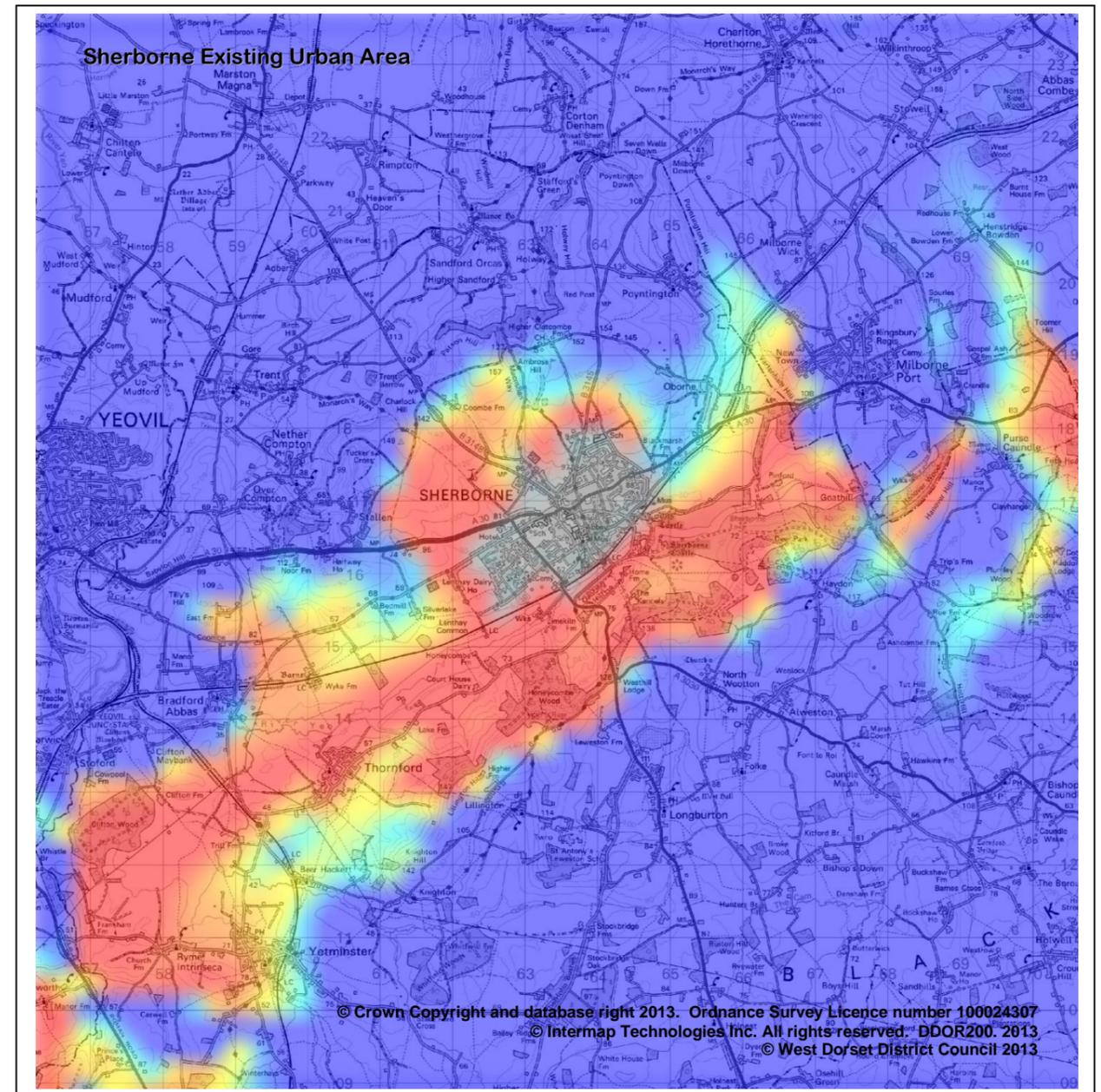
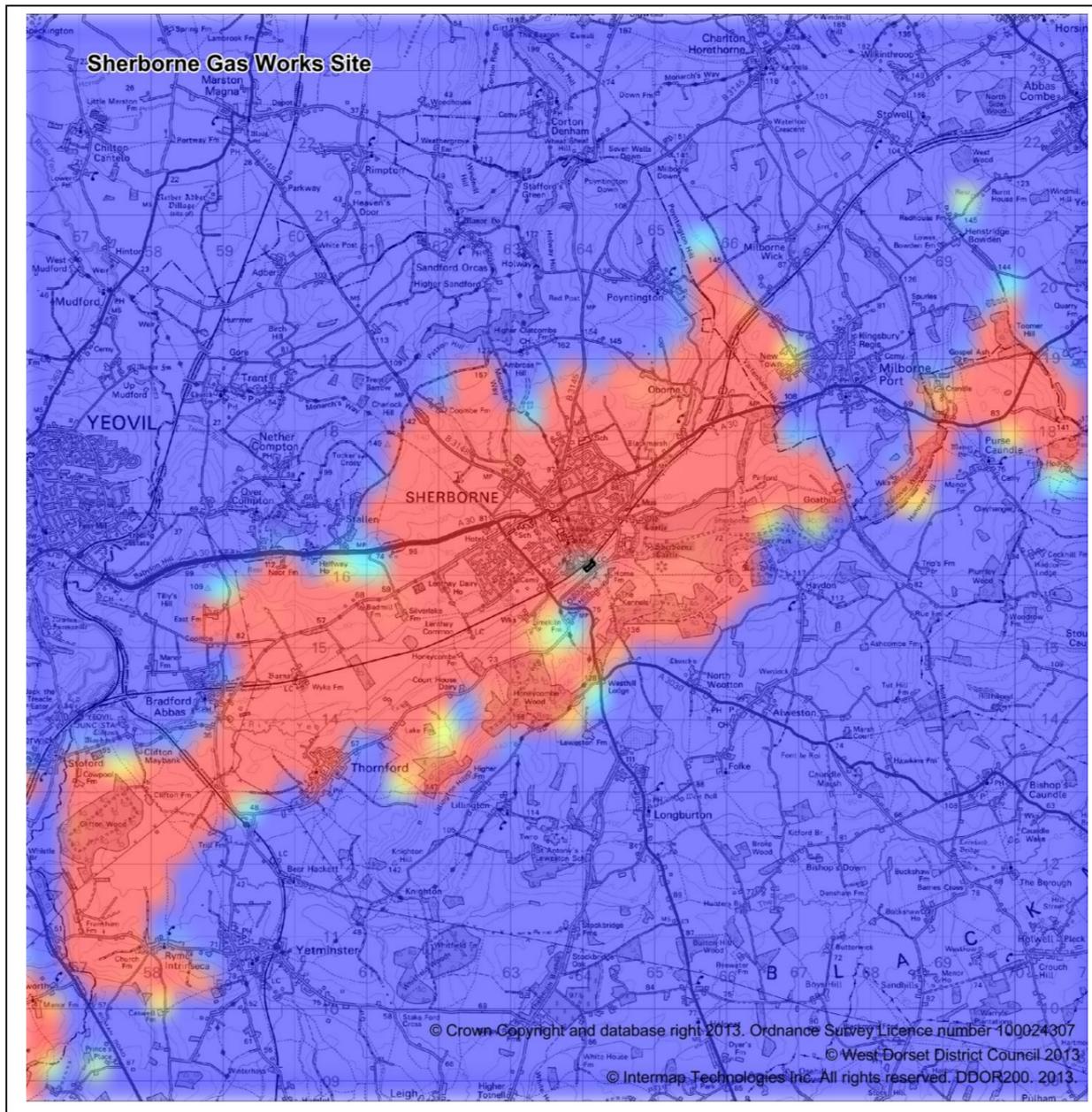
These, and views from the wider landscape on the southern side of the Yeo Valley are likely to view the site in association with development at the previous allocation site at Barton Farm. However, the site would form a substantial extension to the existing built form at Sherborne, reaching into the green strip of land to the north of the town. The above TZVIs demonstrate that development at the site would not substantially extend the area visually affected by development in and around Sherborne, however, the lack of definition and visual containment of the site to the north west and south west, and the encroachment of development onto the slopes of the low hills to the north of the town would result in adverse landscape impacts.

**Conclusion & Suggested Mitigation**

The extension of the urban form of Sherborne into the gently sloping and expansive landscape above the town is considered to result in potentially significant landscape and visual impacts. The following measures would reduce, but not fully mitigate these impacts:

- A large area of strategic planting and open space would be required to the north west and south west of the site, to preserve the northern landscape setting of Sherborne in wide views available from the south side of the Yeo Valley.
- Open areas within the site should be created to continue the character of green spaces within built form present at Sherborne.
- The form and character, including the appearance and scale of development should take cues from the edge of the town and the rural context to the north.

**Land at Barton Farm (extension), Sherborne**



**Key landscape characteristics**

The site lies on the urban edge of Sherborne, and has existing uses and buildings on site. Mature vegetation surrounds the majority of the site resulting in a well enclosed area. Adjacent to the site to the north east, the river valley is formed into a pleasant parkland pasture area.

**Key views of the site and interpretation of TZVIs**

Despite the large area of visibility indicated above, the site area is visually well enclosed by vegetation along the River Yeo, and surrounding built form within Sherborne. Local views would be available from the adjacent roads, with further visibility from the footpath crossing the river valley pasture to the north east of the site.

Built form at the site is viewed alongside the existing development in Sherborne, which rises to the north of the area. In wider elevated views of the town from the sides of the Yeo Valley, the site would form part of the existing urban form.

As this is a small site, the TZVI appears predominantly red in comparison to the adjacent mapping for the urban area of Sherborne (the whole of the smaller site is more likely to be visible in a view than the whole of Sherborne). However, site would be seen within the existing urban fabric of the town, and is therefore not considered to have significant visual impacts.

**Conclusion & Suggested Mitigation**

Development could be sensitively accommodated at this site without significant landscape and visual impacts, subject to the following mitigation measures:

- Retention of the existing mature vegetation surrounding the site would be key to the successful integration of new development into this area.
- High quality design and appearance of development should be used, which should take positive cues from the adjacent settlement edge.

**The former Gasworks site, Gas House Hill, Sherborne**