



www.landuse.co.uk

Strategic Landscape and Heritage Study for North Dorset Area

Stage 2 Assessment

Final report
Prepared by LUC for Dorset Council
October 2019



Front cover photo: View from the footpath to the north of Newton, back towards Newton, Sturminster Newton.

Project Title: Strategic Landscape and Heritage Study for North Dorset Area

Client: Dorset Council

Version	Date	Version Details	Prepared by	Checked by	Approved by
1.0	19/04/2019	Draft Stage 2 Report	Maria Grant Michelle Statton Isabelle King Rosie Brady	Steven Orr Maria Grant	Kate Ahern
2.0	06/06/2019	Stage 2 Report	Maria Grant Isabelle King Michelle Statton	Steven Orr	Kate Ahern
3.0	08/10/2019	Final Stage 2 Reports incorporating client comments	Maria Grant Michelle Statton	Maria Grant	Kate Ahern



www.landuse.co.uk

Strategic Landscape and Heritage Study for North Dorset Area

Stage 2 Assessment

Final report
Prepared by LUC for Dorset Council
October 2019

Planning & EIA
Design
Landscape Planning
Landscape Management
Ecology
GIS & Visualisation

LUC BRISTOL
12th Floor Colston Tower
Colston Street Bristol
BS1 4XE
T +44 (0)117 929 1997
bristol@landuse.co.uk

Offices also in:
Edinburgh
Glasgow
Lancaster
London
Manchester



FS 566056 EMS 566057

Land Use Consultants Ltd
Registered in England
Registered number: 2549296
Registered Office:
43 Chalton Street
London NW1 1JD
LUC uses 100% recycled paper

Contents

1	Introduction	6
	Purpose of the Strategic Landscape and Heritage Sensitivity Study	6
	Limitations of study	9
	Policy context	9
	Overview of landscape and heritage context in North Dorset	16
	Structure of this report	16
2	Methodology	19
	Areas of Search: Stage 2 Assessment Methodology	19
	Stage 1: Desk-based assessment	19
	Stage 2: Field verification	28
	Stage 3: Reporting	28
3	Results	32
	Overall Landscape and Heritage Sensitivity Assessment results of the land surrounding the four main towns and Stalbridge	32
	Appendix 1	44
	Links to other documents/evidence	44

1 Introduction



1 Introduction

- 1.1 This report presents the results of the second stage of the landscape and heritage sensitivity assessment. It follows on from the Stage 1 Report, which conducted a high-level scoping exercise of the areas of search around the four main towns and Stalbridge that were included in the North Dorset Joint Local Plan Review Issues and Options Consultation document (Nov 2017), based on a consideration of landscape and heritage constraints to development.
- 1.2 In the **Stage 1 Report**, the **'conclusions' section for each** settlement sets out which areas were taken through to Stage 2 and those which were excluded on the basis of landscape and heritage constraints, or other grounds (e.g. planning constraints not related to landscape or heritage).

Purpose of the Strategic Landscape and Heritage Sensitivity Study

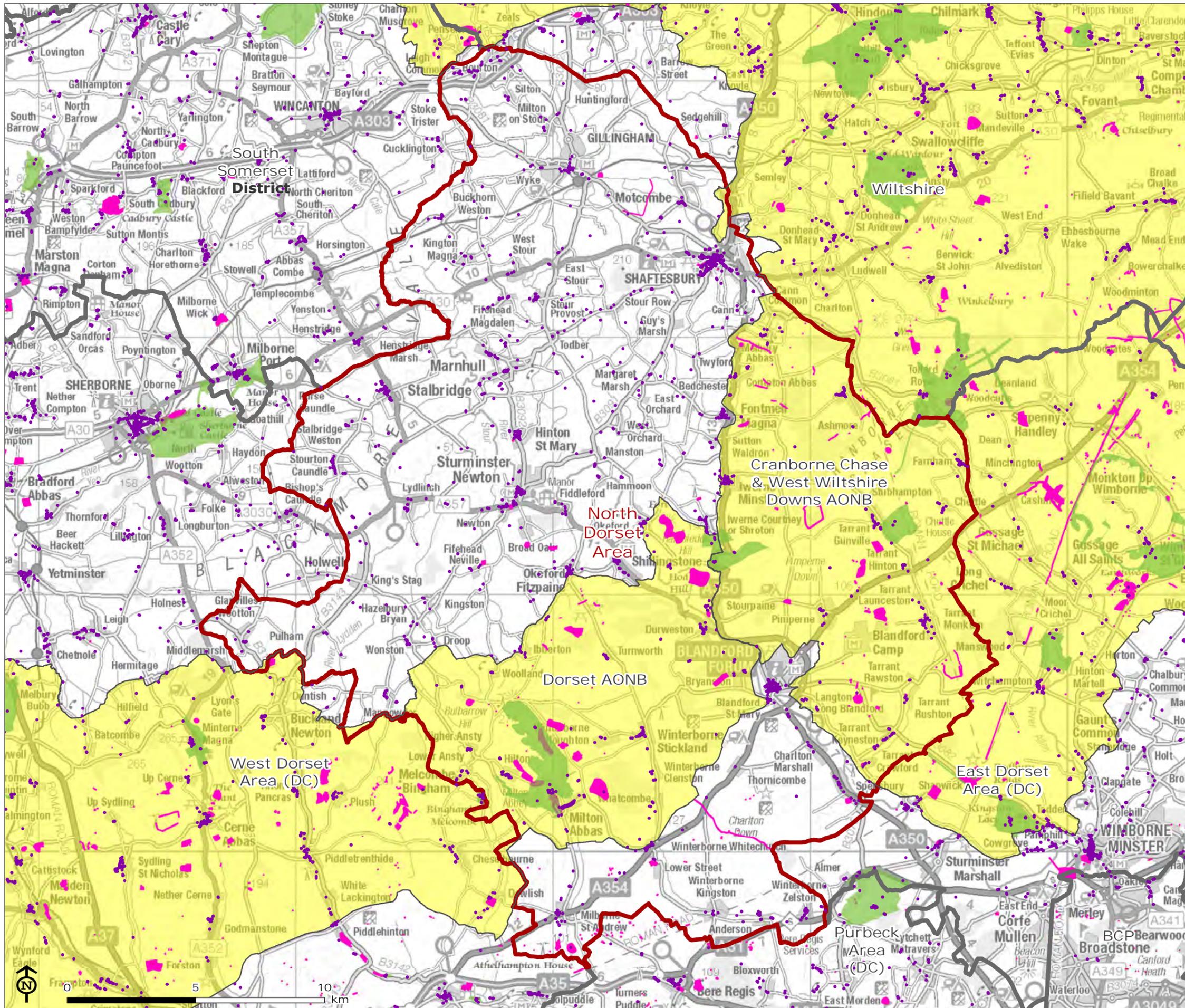
- 1.3 The Dorset Council Local Plan¹ will need to accommodate a significant amount of new growth in an area that is characterised by its high quality landscape and rich variety of natural and built heritage features. Development could have differing degrees of impact on these assets. This study provides robust and up-to-date evidence to feed into the local plan to help inform the scale, form and location of future development to minimise harm to the landscape, heritage assets and the historic character and setting of the settlements within the North Dorset area. Figure 1.1 provides an overview of the study area in the context of the main landscape and heritage designations.
- 1.4 The overall aim of this study was to appraise the sensitivity of land at the four main towns² within the North Dorset area (Blandford [Forum and St Mary], Gillingham, Shaftesbury and Sturminster Newton) and Stalbridge to the effects of development. The assessment is only concerned with potential impacts on the landscape and historic environment.
- 1.5 The outputs of this work will be used by the local planning authority to:
 - Identify land where development would have least impact on areas of landscape value or heritage significance.
 - Help in refining broad growth areas and inform the evaluation of potential development locations.
 - Help establish site options for consideration through the sustainability appraisal process and for future consultation and more detailed study.
- 1.6 As previously noted, a number of areas were excluded from the Stage 2 assessment following the high-level scoping exercise completed during Stage 1 of this project. The assessment areas for Stage 2 of the study are shown in Figure 1.2 and within each of the five individual settlement reports.
- 1.7 This document also contains the methodology for the landscape and heritage sensitivity assessment of the 18 larger villages² within the North Dorset area. The location of these villages is displayed in Figure 1.3.

¹ On 1/4/19 North Dorset District Council became part of Dorset Council, the decision being made on 25/6/19 to discontinue work on the North Dorset Local Plan Review with all existing work carried out on the review to be used where possible to shape the new Dorset Council Local Plan.

² As defined under Policy 2 of the North Dorset Local Plan Part 1

Strategic Landscape and Heritage Study for North Dorset Area

Figure 1.1: North Dorset Study Area



- North Dorset Study Area
- Neighbouring Local Authority
- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Scheduled Monument
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Listed Buildings

DC - Dorset Council
 BCP - BCP Council (Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole)

Map Scale @A3: 1:145,000



Strategic Landscape and Heritage Study for North Dorset Area

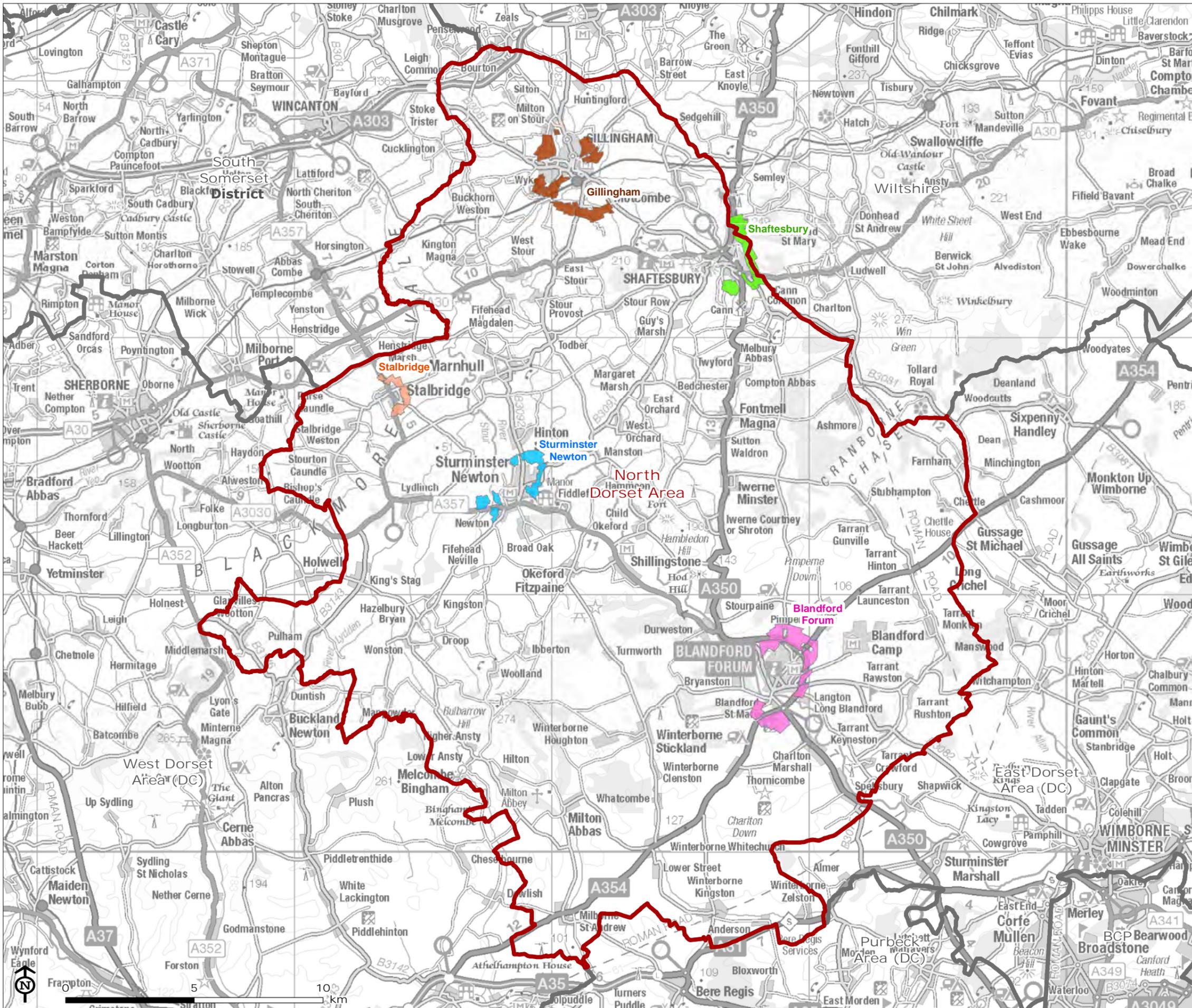


Figure 1.2: Stage 2 Assessment Areas

- North Dorset Study Area
- Neighbouring Local Authority
- Blandford Forum
- Gillingham
- Shaftesbury
- Stalbridge
- Sturminster Newton

DC - Dorset Council
 BCP - BCP Council (Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole)
 Map Scale @A3: 1:145,000



Limitations of study

- 1.10 This is a strategic level study; it does not replace detailed landscape and visual appraisals or impact assessments. Additionally, it is not an assessment of the landscape and heritage sensitivity of a given area to a specific proposal. Rather, it assesses each assessment area for landscape and heritage **sensitivity to the 'principle' of built development, without knowing the specific size, configuration or exact location** (as this would be detailed at the planning application level).
- 1.11 There may be variations in landscape/heritage sensitivity within a given area. Variations in sensitivity have been identified within the detailed sensitivity profiles, however all development proposals within the areas assessed as part of this study will need to be assessed on their own merits by the local planning authority.

Policy context

The European Landscape Convention

- 1.12 The European Landscape Convention (ELC) came into force in the UK in March 2007. It establishes the need to recognise landscape in law; to develop landscape policies dedicated to the protection, management and planning of landscapes; and to establish procedures for the participation of the general public and other stakeholders in the creation and implementation of landscape policies.
- 1.13 **The ELC definition of 'landscape' recognises** that all landscape has value, be they ordinary, degraded or outstanding:

"Landscape means an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors"

International historic environment context

- 1.14 The framework through which the historic environment is understood is codified through a series of international charters, agreed under the auspices of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) through its formal associate NGO, the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS). Broadly, the charters and other agreed doctrinal texts formalise a shared understanding of the key principles and procedures to be followed in the conservation of heritage assets and places. Key texts that influence national approaches to conservation include:
- Venice Charter (1964): provides the original international framework for the conservation and restoration of historic buildings.
 - **Burra Charter (1979): introduced the concept of 'cultural significance'** – including the meaning of places to people and communities – and the need for a precautionary approach in conservation practice.
 - Nara Document on Authenticity (1994): set out the concepts of cultural diversity and heritage diversity, and reinforced the universality of the importance of cultural heritage to all peoples. It also established the concepts of heritage values and authenticity.
 - **Xi'an Declaration on the Conservation of the Setting of Heritage Structures, Sites and Areas (2005): formalised the concept of the setting of heritage assets.**
- 1.15 The core principles of these documents have been adopted as part of national planning policy over decades, supplemented by guidance provided by Historic England and its predecessor bodies.

National planning policy context

Landscape

- 1.16 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), was amended in February 2019 and contains a number of policies which refer to the consideration of landscape in planning decisions.
- 1.17 Paragraph 20 states that:
"Strategic policies should set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and quality of **development, and make sufficient provision for: ...d) conservation and enhancement** of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure, and planning measures to address climate change mitigation and adaptation."
- 1.18 Paragraph 170 states that:
"Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by: a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan); b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other **benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;...**"
- 1.19 The importance of the designated landscapes is referenced within paragraph 172 which states that:
"Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues... The scale and extent of development within these designated areas should be limited. Planning permission should be refused for major development other than in exceptional circumstances, and where it can be demonstrated that the development is in the public interest. Consideration of such applications should include an assessment of: a) the need for the development, including in terms of any national considerations, and the impact of permitting it, or refusing it, upon the local economy; b) the cost of, and scope for, developing outside the designated area, or meeting the need for it in some other way; and c) any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated."

Historic Environment

- 1.20 The NPPF provides extensive guidance for local planning authorities (LPA) on understanding and conserving their historic environment through development plans (para. 184-185) and in development management decisions (para. 189-202).
- 1.21 The framework seeks to ensure that local **plans set out a 'positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment', highlighting the need for recognition of the irreplaceable nature of heritage assets, and the need to conserve assets in a manner appropriate to their significance.**
- 1.22 When considering development proposals, paragraph 190 of the NPPF states that:
"Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this assessment into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, **to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.**"
- 1.23 In determining the significance of an impact on a heritage asset, paragraphs 193-194 state that:
"When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated **heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's** conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.
Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing

justification. Substantial harm to or loss of: 56 a) grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional; b) assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional⁶³.”

1.24 Non-designated assets are also recognised in the NPPF with paragraph 194 footnote 63 stating that:

“Non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest, which are demonstrably of equivalent significance to scheduled monuments, should be considered subject to the policies for designated heritage assets.”

Definitions (as per Annex 2 of the NPPF)

- *Archaeological Interest* is defined as: “There will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point.”
- *Conservation* is defined as: “The process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance.”
- *Designated Heritage Assets* comprise: “A World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation.”
- *Heritage Assets* are as: “A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).”
- *Historic environment* is defined as: “All aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscaped and planted or managed flora.”
- *Significance* is defined as: “The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. This interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting.’ A fuller understanding of the concept of heritage significance, and the process required to understand the contribution made by relevant heritage values, is established in Historic England (2008) ‘Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment’.”
- *Setting* is defined as: “The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance, or may be neutral.”

Dorset AONB

1.25 Areas of outstanding natural beauty (AONBs) are nationally important protected landscapes. The Dorset AONB, designated in 1959, is one of 46 AONBs in England, Scotland and Wales. Covering 1,129 square kilometres, approximately 42% of the county, it is the fifth largest AONB in the UK and stretches from Lyme Regis in the west, along the coast to Poole Harbour in the east, and north to Blandford Forum. AONBs are designated for the fine quality of their landscape, which does not simply refer to the visual appearance of the landscape, but includes flora, fauna, geological/physiographical features, man-made, historic and cultural associations and our sensory perceptions of it.

1.26 Special qualities of the AONB include the contrasting and complex geology which gives rise to chalk downland, limestone country, greensand ridges and clay vales, creating a unique sequence of landscapes with outstanding scenic qualities. An integral part of these landscapes is the sense of tranquillity and remoteness derived from its undeveloped rural character. Within this overall context, there are numerous individual landmarks, such as hilltop earthworks and monuments that help to contribute an individuality and sense of place at a local scale. These landmarks are

comprised of some of the finest visible archaeological remains in the country, such as Iron Age Hill forts at Hambledon and Hod Hill.

- 1.27 Over the centuries, the AONB landscapes have inspired poets, authors, scientists and artists, many of whom have left a rich legacy of cultural associations. The best known of these is Thomas Hardy, but other literary figures inspired by the area include William Barnes, Jane Austen, John Fowles and Kenneth Allsop. Notable artists associated with Dorset include Turner, Constable, Paul Nash and Gustav Holst.
- 1.28 In 2019 the AONB Partnership formally adopted the 'Dorset AONB Management Plan 2019-2024'. The primary purpose of this document is to ensure the conservation and enhancement of the **AONB's natural beauty** and with regards to planning it aims to ensure that "the high quality of the **Dorset AONB's landscapes must be conserved and enhanced**. To achieve this, the national importance of the AONB needs to be recognised and reinforced, thereby ensuring that changes within the AONB meet the highest standards of sustainability, design and quality." To ensure this the management plan sets out four objectives:
1. The AONB and its setting is conserved and enhanced by good planning and development;
 2. Landscape assessment & monitoring is effective and supports good decision making;
 3. Necessary development is supported; and,
 4. Development which has negative effects on the natural beauty of the AONB, its special qualities, ecosystem flows and natural processes is avoided.
- 1.29 In relation to the four objectives, a total of 18 policies are identified for reflection in local and neighbourhood plans. Those most relevant to this study and highlighted as being delivered through local plan policy are presented in Table 1.1 below.

Table 1.1: Relevant Dorset AONB Management Policies

Management Policy
C1b: The conservation, enhancement and creation/restoration of appropriate landscape features such as landmarks, artworks, boundary features, tree clumps etc, will be regarded favourably. There should be a net gain in terms of the landscape and its constituent elements.
C1c: High quality design, materials and standards of workmanship are required of developments within the AONB. Good design and material use does not have to be a cost burden, however where this requirement affects development viability, consideration will be given to the balance between the public benefits of a proposal and the significance of its landscape and visual effects. When the landscape and visual effects of a development cannot be fully addressed through primary design measures, appropriate and robust secondary mitigation measures that can be delivered, enforced and maintained will be required.
C1h: The landward and seaward setting of the AONB will be planned and managed in a manner that conserves and enhances the character and appearance of the AONB. Views into and out of the AONB and nonvisual effects, such as noise and wider environmental impacts, will be appropriately assessed.
C2a: Proposals affecting the AONB will be assessed to a high standard.
C2b: Landscape and seascape character assessment will be used to consider the effects of proposals on the character and appearance of the AONB
C2c: Local and Neighbourhood Plans must be supported by a robust landscape evidence base
C2d: The key test of a proposal against the statutory purpose of the AONB will be its ability to demonstrate that the proposed change would conserve and enhance landscape and scenic beauty
C2e: The conservation and enhancement of the AONB's special qualities will be a significant consideration in the planning balance.
C2f: Proposals that are harmful to the character and appearance of the area will not be permitted unless there are benefits that clearly outweigh the significant protection afforded to the conservation and enhancement of the AONB. Where impacts cannot be mitigated,

Management Policy
planning gain and compensatory measures will be considered.
C2g: Changes in landscape condition will be monitored and assessed to inform appropriate action.
C3b: Support affordable housing within appropriate rural exception sites that meet proven local need. Good, locally-sensitive design should be pursued.
C3c: Support restoration of traditional barns, buildings and other structures that maintains or enhances landscape character quality, ensuring diversification benefits are not outweighed by adverse effects on the environment.
C3d: Support well designed projects that reduce the impact of traffic in the AONB.
C4a: Remove existing and avoid creating new features which are detrimental to landscape character, tranquillity, and the AONB's special qualities.
C4b: Require the use of previously developed land where this will limit the expansion of built development into sensitive undeveloped countryside
C4c: Protect and where possible enhance the quality of views into, within and out of the AONB.
C4d: Protect the pattern of landscape features, including settlements, that underpin local identity.
C4e: Avoid and reduce cumulative effects that erode landscape character and quality.
C4f: Avoid large scale and/or high density housing and employment development at settlement edges when such development weakens the character and appearance of the countryside.

- 1.30 There is a presumption against major development in AONBs, except in exceptional circumstances, as set out in paragraph 172 of the NPPF.

Cranborne Chase & West Wiltshire Downs AONB

- 1.31 The Cranborne Chase & West Wiltshire Downs AONB was designated in 1981 and covers over 981 square kilometres. The AONB extends across the four counties of Wiltshire, Dorset, Hampshire and Somerset. The most southerly point of the AONB is to the north of Wimborne Minster and the area extends north to the settlement of Warminster.
- 1.32 The Cranborne Chase & West Wiltshire Downs AONB is part of an extensive chalkland belt which passes through southern central England. In addition to the chalk downland belt, the landscape includes escarpments, valleys, greensand terraces and clay vales, which represent the diverse geology of the area.
- 1.33 The AONB contains numerous features from various periods of history, including hilltop earthworks and monuments, ancient field systems and designed parkland estates. In Norman times, Cranborne Chase was used as a royal hunting area and was protected by forest law within the area. This has resulted in the landscape retaining much of its woodland to the present day. The AONB contains a range of ecologically important habitats, including ancient woodland, chalk rivers and chalk grassland amongst the mixed arable and pastoral farmland. The area is outstandingly rural, contributing to its tranquillity, remoteness and dark night skies. There are panoramic views across adjacent countryside from elevated land.
- 1.34 Similarly to the Dorset AONB, the evocative landscape of Cranborne Chase has influenced a range of artists and writers including Thomas Hardy, Desmond Hawkins, Cecil Beaton, Lucien Freud and Elisabeth Frink.
- 1.35 In 2019, the latest management plan (Cranborne Chase & West Wiltshire Downs AONB Management Plan 2019-24) was adopted. This document seeks to guide and inform decision making within the AONB and to ensure its special qualities are protected. The Management Plan identifies a number of objectives, including three landscape based objectives:

- The landscape character, tranquillity and special qualities of the AONB are fully understood by policy makers and land managers;
- The landscape character, tranquillity and special qualities of the AONB and its setting is conserved and enhanced; and,
- Understand the rate and degree of landscape change within the AONB.

1.36 The policies within the management plan most relevant to this study and highlighted as being delivered through local plan policy are presented in Table 1.2 below.

Table 1.2: Relevant Cranborne Chase & West Wiltshire Downs AONB Management Policies

Management Policy
LAN4: Ensure the conservation and enhancement of the landscape character, tranquillity and special qualities of the AONB and its setting, particularly those that are sensitive to change.
LAN5: Encourage, support and analyse research on landscape issues affecting the AONB and its surroundings to inform policy formulation and the consequent action required.
LAN6: Determine the factors that contribute to, or detract from, tranquillity to ensure that policies will more effectively conserve and enhance levels of tranquillity.
HE3: Promote the Historic Landscape Characterisation and related Historic Landscape Character Areas and Themes descriptions as a tool for managing the historic and cultural environment of the AONB, providing a framework for policy-making, planning decisions, research agendas and positive action.
HE7: The AONB will normally only support 'enabling development' that seeks to secure the conservation or restoration of an historic feature if it is not at the expense of another historic feature or the setting of that historic feature or another.
HE9: In relation to additions/alterations to the built heritage or nearby structures, support Local Planning Authority Conservation Officers in seeking the highest standards of design and materials.
PT2: Encourage, and contribute to, coherent and consistent formulation and implementation of planning policies, including across Local Authority boundaries, to ensure they take full account of the local distinctiveness, character, and quality of the AONB and its setting.
PT3: Strongly advocate at national levels for initiatives to ensure AONBs are statutory consultees on all planning and transportation matters affecting their area and its setting.
PT4: Encourage, support and inspire local communities to prepare and adopt Neighbourhood Plans and other similar initiatives, such as Village Design Statements, that respect the special landscapes of the AONB and the objectives of this Management Plan.
PT8: Seek to achieve net landscape enhancements and biodiversity gain through partner Local Planning Authority policies and Development Management processes.
PT11: The AONB planning protocol continues to be used by local planning authorities to ensure that the AONB Partnership is consulted on all development and land use change proposals that meet the criteria or may have a significant impact and/or effect on the characteristics, special qualities, or setting of the AONB including views into and out of the AONB.
PT14: Development proposals in the AONB or its setting should demonstrate how they have taken account of the AONB Management Plan objectives and policies.
PT15: Local Planning Authority partners ensure that where new development is permitted, it complements the special qualities of the AONB and takes full account of the area's setting and context through the consideration of appropriate Landscape Character Assessments and sensitivity and design studies.
PT22: Encourage the identification of affordable housing sites in Neighbourhood Plans where that is consistent with the primary purposes of the AONB designation and takes full account of the

Management Policy

local distinctiveness, character, and qualities of the locality.

PT23: When considering proposals for housing development in the AONB, LPA partners will give emphasis to affordable housing, and will treat the AONB as a rural area (NPPF Para 63) where the **government's restriction on the requirement** to provide affordable housing does not apply.

PT24: Work with local authority partners to ensure that the replacement of existing dwellings in the AONB and its setting are only supported where all the following criteria are met:

- i. the replacement dwelling is not materially larger than the one it replaces;
- ii. the proposed dwelling does not materially impact on the special qualities of the AONB, especially through its height or bulk;
- iii. the proposed development will not generate the need for additional ancillary development including storage, parking and hard surfacing; and
- iv. the proposed permanent dwelling does not replace a temporary structure or one where the residential use has been abandoned

PT25: Work with local authority partners to ensure that the replacement of existing permanent buildings in the AONB and its setting are only supported where all the following criteria are met:

- i. the replacement building is not materially larger than the one it replaces;
- ii. the replacement building is in the same use as the one it replaces;
- iii. the proposed building does not materially impact on the special qualities of the AONB, especially through its height or bulk; and
- iv. the proposed development will not generate the need for additional ancillary development including storage, parking and hard surfacing;

PT26: Work with local authority partners to ensure that within the AONB and its setting, extensions to existing

permanent buildings are only supported where:

- i. the proposed extension does not materially impact on the special qualities of the AONB, especially through its height or bulk;
- ii. the size and scale of the proposed extension is not disproportionate to the existing building; and
- iii. the proposed development will not generate the need for additional ancillary development including storage, parking and hard surfacing; and
- iv. The size and scale of any garage or outbuilding within the curtilage of a dwelling in the AONB and its setting must be proportionate to the dwelling.

PT27:

- a) AONB partner organisations utilise a consistent approach to the design, provision and maintenance of highways and associated features through joint implementation of the **'Conserving and Enhancing the setting of the AONB Rural Road Network'** highways guidance.
- b) Major road schemes need to avoid physical and visual impacts on the AONB and its setting, mitigate impacts that cannot be avoided, provide landscape and biodiversity enhancements, and provide compensation for residual and unquantified impacts.

PT28: Promote and help develop an integrated system, whereby roads, railways, public transport and Rights of Way networks are more accessible and interconnect, minimising the impact of traffic on the AONB and encouraging a safer and more attractive environment for walking, cycling and horse riding

SRC8: Work with partners to increase the provision of affordable housing in and around the AONB where that is consistent with the primary purposes of AONB designation.

Overview of landscape and heritage context in North Dorset

- 1.37 Significant parts of the North Dorset area are within nationally designated landscapes; the Dorset AONB covers the south-western part of the area while the Cranborne Chase & West Wiltshire Downs AONB covers the east of the area. The AONBs are characterised by undulating downland and converge to the north of Blandford Forum.
- 1.38 The area supports a variety of semi-natural habitats including ancient woodlands, calcareous grasslands and meadows. The River Stour is a prominent feature of the North Dorset area which meanders from the north to the south-east through the area. The Winterborne, Lodden and Divelish Rivers also cross the landscape.
- 1.39 The North Dorset area has a strong rural character, with settlements typically situated at the foot of escarpments, along ridgelines or at river crossing points. Settlement is predominantly in the form of small scattered villages and hamlets. Many settlements are historic in origin (containing designated conservation areas) with a variety of vernacular building styles and materials. High levels of tranquillity and dark night skies are experienced across the area, particularly away from busy trunk roads.
- 1.40 The North Dorset area contains a wealth of heritage assets from various periods of history, including many nationally significant features. These include 157 scheduled monuments, eight registered parks and gardens and 1984 listed buildings, of which 49 are grade I and 86 are grade II*. The historic occupation of the landscape is evidenced by numerous prehistoric earthworks, the earliest of which are typically funerary, while later examples include the iconic Iron Age hillforts at Hambledon Hill and Hod Hill. The latter site also evidences Roman occupation and is just one of many that attest activity during this period in the North Dorset area. During the Anglo-Saxon period settlements such as Gillingham and Shaftesbury were established, as were several abbeys including at Shaftesbury and Milton Abbas. There is a particularly rich medieval landscape including religious sites, deer parks, deserted medieval settlements and significant agricultural features surviving, due to the unusually long-lived pattern of historic land use. As well as natural and built heritage, the landscape also has strong cultural associations with writers and artists, including Thomas Hardy who was born and spent most of his life in Dorset.
- 1.41 While these qualities and characteristics of the area represent the things which people value most about these landscapes, they also present significant constraints in terms of development.

Structure of this report

- 1.42 This stage 2 report is structured as follows:
- Chapter 2 provides detailed methodology of:
 - How the Stage 2 element of the study, in relation to the four main towns and Stalbridge, was undertaken, using a criteria-based assessment.
 - The assessment of key sensitivities surrounding the 18 larger villages.
 - Chapter 3 sets out the overall landscape and heritage sensitivity results for the four main towns and Stalbridge.
 - Appendix 1 provides links to other background information and relevant guidance documents.
- 1.43 This report was produced following an initial stage 1 report in relation to the four main towns and Stalbridge, which forms a separate document.
- 1.44 There are five individual reports for each of the four main towns and Stalbridge included in the study, which provide detailed assessments on landscape and heritage sensitivity for each of the assessment areas.
- 1.45 There is also an individual report setting out the methodology and findings of the assessment of key sensitivities surrounding the larger villages which was undertaken alongside the Stage 2 Assessment.

2 Methodology



2 Methodology

Areas of Search: Stage 2 Assessment Methodology

- 2.1 As mentioned in the introductory section, the purpose of this study is to inform the Dorset Council Local Plan³ in respect of the North Dorset area. The first stage in this study was to undertake a high-level review in relation to landscape and heritage constraints of the areas of search around the four main towns and Stalbridge which formed the development location options in the North Dorset Local Plan Review Issues and Options Consultation document (Nov 2017). The findings of this part of the study are contained within the separate Stage 1 Report.
- 2.2 The aim of the project was to develop a proportionate method to help decision-making at this stage of the Local Plan Review process to guide the general location and design of future development, noting the need of the districts for to accommodate housing and associated land for employment and infrastructure. It is a strategic-level study undertaken at a scale of 1:25,000. More detailed LVIA and heritage assessments will be required on a site by site basis in relation to the development of any specific site and to inform master plans.
- 2.3 The guidelines provided in this report are intended to provide strategic guidance and do not indicate that development is appropriate in any particular location. Any new development should also follow principles of good/sustainable design, consider relationships to setting and incorporate appropriate elements of green infrastructure.

Stage 1: Desk-based assessment

Evidence gathering

- 2.4 All relevant documents and available GIS data were compiled and reviewed to form the starting point and overall context for the study. The Dorset Landscape Character Assessment formed a key source for the landscape sensitivity assessment. A full list of sources used for the landscape sensitivity assessment is included in Appendix 2.
- 2.5 For the purposes of the Historic Environment assessment the following sources were consulted:
 - Historic England (HE) designated asset datasets:
 - Listed Buildings;
 - Scheduled Monuments; and
 - Registered Parks and Gardens⁴.
 - Historic Environment Record (HER) data for Dorset, as well as Somerset and Wiltshire⁵;
 - Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) data for Dorset⁶, as well as Somerset and Exmoor, and Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB⁷;
 - Relevant local authority data for conservation areas and locally listed buildings, where available;
 - The Dorset Historic Towns Surveys; and

³ On 1/4/19 North Dorset District Council became part of Dorset Council, the decision being made on 25/6/19 to discontinue work on the North Dorset Local Plan Review with all existing work carried out on the review to be used where possible to shape the new Dorset Council Local Plan.

⁴ NB – all HE designation data was reviewed but no World Heritage Sites or Registered Battlefields are located within the area of study.

⁵ Where these areas adjoined the assessment areas.

⁶ Provided by Dorset HER.

⁷ Both datasets were obtained from the Archaeological Data Service (ADS) website.

- Digital historical mapping.

Historic Environment Limitations

- 2.6 The study has utilised a range of sources on the **area's historic environment**. Much of this is necessarily secondary information compiled from a variety of sources (e.g. Historic Environment Record (HER) data and the Dorset Historic Towns Surveys). It has been assumed that this information is reasonably accurate unless otherwise stated.
- 2.7 The study provides a strategic assessment of the risk of harm to heritage assets arising from development within the study area. As detailed proposals for the sites are not available, the study cannot draw conclusive statements regarding the significance of the potential impacts or definitive levels of harm. Detailed assessments would need to be undertaken as part of any subsequent planning applications and, if necessary, accompanying environmental impact assessments (if the decision is taken to proceed with the allocation of these sites for development).

Refine assessment area boundaries

- 2.8 Following the stage 1 assessment, the areas of search selected for more detailed study were considered in their landscape and historic environment context, with appropriate boundaries drawn to reflect landscape character and the presence/setting of heritage assets (including a consideration of how the land in question contributes to the character and significance of adjacent settlement). Wherever possible, **these were 'nested'** within the available landscape character assessment framework. If this was not possible (i.e. due to differences in scale), assessment areas were defined using local landscape character and existing boundary features in the landscape, i.e. tracing physical features such as field boundaries, roads/railways, watercourses, woodland edges, etc. The outer extent of the boundaries was broadly based on the extent of the areas of search analysed during the first stage of the project.
- 2.9 To ensure a truly integrated landscape and heritage sensitivity assessment, both aspects have used the same spatial framework – with individual assessments undertaken for each component heritage asset to feed into the overall judgements for the assessment area.

Landscape sensitivity assessment methodology

Background and definitions

- 2.10 There is currently no prescribed method for assessing landscape sensitivity. However, the *Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland Topic Paper 6: Techniques and Criteria for Judging Capacity and Sensitivity* (Scottish Natural Heritage and the former Countryside Agency, 2004) is a discussion paper on landscape sensitivity and capacity and has **informed LUC's approach over the years**, along with experience of undertaking similar studies.
- 2.11 Paragraph 4.2 of Topic Paper 6 states that:
- 'Judging landscape character sensitivity requires professional judgement about the degree to which the landscape in question is robust, in that it is able to accommodate change without adverse impacts on character. This involves making decisions about whether or not significant characteristic elements of the landscape will be liable to loss... and whether important aesthetic aspects of character will be liable to change'.***
- 2.12 In this study the following definition of sensitivity has been used, which is based on the principles set out in Topic Paper 6. It is also compliant with the third edition of the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA 3, 2013) as well as definitions used in other landscape sensitivity studies of this type:

Landscape sensitivity is the relative extent to which the character and quality of an area (including its visual attributes) is likely to change.

A criteria-based assessment

- 2.13 In line with the recommendations in Topic Paper 6 and the NPPF, the landscape sensitivity assessment is based on an assessment of landscape character using carefully defined criteria. Criteria selection is based on the attributes of the landscape most likely to be affected by

development, and considers both 'landscape' and 'visual' aspects of sensitivity⁸. The criteria used by this study are defined in Table 2.2, providing examples of the types of landscape character or features that could indicate low or high sensitivity against each.

Making an overall judgement on levels of landscape sensitivity

- 2.14 A five-point rating from 'low' to 'high' landscape sensitivity is used to illustrate overall levels of landscape sensitivity – i.e. how susceptible the character and quality of the landscape would be to change. These definitions are shown in the Table 2.1 below.

Table 2.1: The five-point scale of landscape sensitivity

Sensitivity judgement	Definition
High	The key characteristics and qualities of the landscape are highly sensitive to change.
Moderate-high	The key characteristics and qualities of the landscape are sensitive to change.
Moderate	Some of the key characteristics and qualities of the landscape are sensitive to change.
Low-moderate	Few of the key characteristics and qualities of the landscape are sensitive to change.
Low	The key characteristics and qualities of the landscape are robust and are unlikely to be subject to change.

⁸ Note that in assessing visual sensitivity we considered the visual character of the landscape. A study of visual receptors was not part of this study and will be required at the site level for an LVIA.

Table 2.2: Landscape sensitivity assessment criteria and scoring

The individual criteria are set out below. Note that no scoring of criteria is undertaken and the overall rating is based on professional judgement. In some cases one criterion alone may be sufficient to result in a judgement of high sensitivity but more often it is the interaction of factors.

Landscape and Visual Sensitivity Assessment Criteria				
<i>Physical character (including topography and scale)</i>				
<p>This considers the shape and scale of the landform, landscape pattern and landscape elements in relation to the scale of potential development. Smooth, gently undulating or flat landforms are likely to be less sensitive to development than a landscape with a dramatic landform, distinct landform features or incised valleys with prominent slopes. This is because developments may mask distinctive topographical features which contribute to landscape character.</p> <p>This criterion considers how developments fit with the scale of the landform (understanding the scale of the development proposed is important when applying this criterion). Larger-scale, simple landforms are likely to be less sensitive to larger-scale developments than smaller-scale, enclosed landforms (where large-scale developments could appear out of scale with the underlying landform). Conversely, smaller developments may be able to be screened within enclosed landforms, therefore reducing landscape sensitivity. Existing small-scale features in the landscape in the form of existing buildings or trees will influence the scale of development that can be accommodated in the landscape.</p>				
Low sensitivity	Low-moderate sensitivity	Moderate sensitivity	Moderate-high sensitivity	High sensitivity
<i>e.g. the landscape has smooth, gently undulating or featureless landform with uniform landscape pattern and low density of overlying landscape features.</i>		<i>e.g. the landscape has an undulating landform and some distinct landform features; it is overlain by a mixture of small-scale and larger-scale field patterns and a moderate density of small-scale landscape features.</i>		<i>e.g. the landscape has a dramatic landform or distinct landform features that contribute positively to landscape character; the area has a high density of small-scale landscape features and is overlain by a small-scale field pattern.</i>
<i>Natural character</i>				
<p>This criterion considers the natural qualities of the landscape in terms of coverage of semi-natural habitats and valued natural features (e.g. trees, hedgerows) which could be vulnerable to loss from development. Areas with frequent natural features (including large areas of nationally or internationally designated habitats) result in increased sensitivity to development, while landscapes with limited natural features (including intensively farmed areas or areas with high levels of existing development) will be less sensitive.</p>				
Low sensitivity	Low-moderate sensitivity	Moderate sensitivity	Moderate-high sensitivity	High sensitivity
<i>e.g. much of the landscape is intensively farmed or developed with little semi-natural habitat coverage and few valued natural features.</i>		<i>e.g. there are areas of valued semi-natural habitats and features found in parts of the landscape, whilst other parts are intensively farmed or developed.</i>		<i>e.g. large areas of the landscape are nationally or internationally designated for their nature conservation interest; there is a frequent occurrence of valued natural features across the landscape.</i>

Landscape and Visual Sensitivity Assessment Criteria

Historic landscape character

This considers the extent to which the landscape has 'time-depth' (a sense of being an historic landscape, with reference to the historic landscape characterisation) and/or the presence of heritage assets that are important to landscape character (i.e. conservation areas, scheduled monuments, listed buildings, archaeological features and remains or other features listed in the landscape character assessment).

Landscapes with small-scale, more irregular field patterns of historic origin are likely to be more sensitive to the introduction of modern development than landscapes with large, regular-scale field patterns because of the risk of losing characteristic landscape patterns.

Low sensitivity	Low-moderate sensitivity	Moderate sensitivity	Moderate-high sensitivity	High sensitivity
<i>e.g. a landscape with relatively few historic features important to the character of the area and little time-depth (i.e. large intensively farmed fields).</i>		<i>e.g. a landscape with some visible historic features of importance to character, and a variety of time-depths.</i>		<i>e.g. landscape with a high density of historic features important to the character of the area and great time-depth (i.e. piecemeal enclosure with irregular boundaries, ridge and furrow)</i>

Form, density and setting of existing settlement

This considers the overall settlement form and character of existing settlement and considers whether development in the landscape would be in accordance with the general pattern, setting and form of current development. It also relates to the landscape pattern associated with existing settlement edges (where relevant), for example if it is well integrated by woodland cover or open and exposed to form a 'hard edge' to the adjoining landscape.

This criterion also considers the extent to which the landscape contributes to the identity and distinctiveness of settlements, by way of its character and/or scenic quality, for example by providing an attractive backdrop/setting, or playing an important part in views from a settlement. This also considers the extent to which the area contributes to a perceived gap between settlements (the loss of which would increase coalescence).

Low sensitivity	Low-moderate sensitivity	Moderate sensitivity	Moderate-high sensitivity	High sensitivity
<i>e.g. the area does not contribute positively to the setting of the settlement or play a separation role. Development in the assessment area would have a good relationship with the existing settlement form/pattern, and could provide the opportunity to improve an existing settlement edge.</i>		<i>e.g. the area provides some contribution to the setting of the settlement by providing, or plays some part in views from the settlement, or plays a role in the perception of a gap between settlements. Development in the assessment area may be slightly at odds with the settlement form/pattern, and may adversely affect the existing edge to some extent.</i>		<i>e.g. the area provides an attractive backdrop/setting to the settlement, plays an important part in views from the settlement, or forms an important part in the perception of a gap between settlements. Development in the assessment area would have a poor relationship with the existing settlement form/pattern, and would adversely affect an existing settlement edge (which may be historic or distinctive).</i>

Landscape and Visual Sensitivity Assessment Criteria

Views and visual character including skylines

This considers the visual prominence of the assessment area, reflecting the extent of openness or enclosure in the landscape (due to landform or land cover), and the degree of intervisibility with the surrounding landscape (i.e. the extent to which potential development would be visible).

Visually prominent landscapes are likely to be more sensitive to development than those which are not so visually prominent. Landscapes which are visually prominent and intervisible with adjacent landscapes (both urban and rural) are likely to be more sensitive to development than those which are more hidden or less widely visible.

It also considers the skyline character of the area including whether it forms a visually distinctive skyline or an important undeveloped skyline. Prominent and distinctive and/or undeveloped skylines, or skylines with important landmark features, are likely to be more sensitive to development because new buildings/structures may detract from these skylines as features in the landscape. Important landmark features on the skyline might include historic features or monuments.

Low sensitivity	Low-moderate sensitivity	Moderate sensitivity	Moderate-high sensitivity	High sensitivity
<i>e.g. the area is enclosed/visually contained and/or has a low degree of visibility from surrounding landscapes and the area does not form a visually distinctive or important undeveloped skyline</i>		<i>e.g. the area is semi-enclosed or has some enclosed and some open areas. It is likely to have some inter-visibility with surrounding landscapes, and may have some visually distinctive or undeveloped skylines within the area.</i>		<i>e.g. the area is open and/or has a high degree of visibility from surrounding landscapes, and/or the area forms a visually distinctive skyline or an important undeveloped skyline.</i>

Perceptual and experiential qualities

This considers qualities such as the rural character of the landscape (traditional land uses with few modern human influences), sense of remoteness or tranquillity. Landscapes that are relatively remote or tranquil (due to freedom from human activity and disturbance and having a perceived naturalness or a traditional rural feel with few modern human influences) tend to increase levels of sensitivity to development compared to landscapes that contain signs of modern development. High scenic value and dark night skies also add to sensitivity in relation to this criterion. This is because development will introduce new and uncharacteristic features which may detract from a sense of tranquillity and or remoteness/naturalness.

Low sensitivity	Low-moderate sensitivity	Moderate sensitivity	Moderate-high sensitivity	High sensitivity
<i>e.g. the area is significantly influenced by development human activity, where new development would not be out of character.</i>		<i>e.g. a landscape with some sense of rural character, but with some modern elements and human influences.</i>		<i>e.g. a tranquil or highly rural landscape, lacking strong intrusive Elements. A landscape of high scenic value with dark skies and a high perceived degree of rural character and naturalness with few modern human influences.</i>

Historic England Guidance

- 2.15 Historic England has published a number of relevant guidance documents that should be taken into account when assessing the historic environment.

Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment (2008)

- 2.16 The primary aim of the Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance is to support the quality of decision-making, and create a clear, transparent and sustainable management regime for all aspects of the historic environment. To do this the document sets out six conservation principles to be used as a tool to aid analysis. **Of these six principles number 3 'Understanding the significance of places is vital' is inherently linked to the NPPF, and articulates an approach to assessing significance of heritage assets based on their evidential, historical, aesthetic and communal values, and balancing these with the contribution made by their setting and wider cultural context. Having first understood and addressed the values that make up the significance of a place, the document sets out how then to manage impacts on significance.**

Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment (2015)

- 2.17 Historic England published its Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment in April 2015. The guidance is intended to assist those implementing historic environment policy, and provides information on the importance of understanding and assessing the significance of any heritage asset likely to be affected by development proposals, and the contribution (if any) that setting makes to that significance. It states that this understanding is important in the conception and design of a successful development, and in enabling local planning authorities to make decisions in line with legal requirements, the requirements of the development plan and those of the NPPF.

- 2.18 The note provides guidance on three aspects of significance: its nature, extent and level, and advocates a structured approach to assessing development proposals likely to affect the significance of heritage assets.

Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (2017)

- 2.19 **This document sets out Historic England's guidance on managing change** within the settings of heritage assets, including archaeological remains and historic buildings, sites, areas, and landscapes. The setting of an asset is an important element in its heritage value and the document states that an assessment of the impact of a proposed development should identify **whether the development would be acceptable in terms of the degree of harm to an asset's setting**. This document defines setting as the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Elements of a setting can make positive or negative contributions to the value of an asset and affect the ways in which it is experienced.

Historic environment assessment methodology

Desk-based assessment

- 2.20 A desk-based assessment (DBA) was undertaken focusing on the assessment areas. Work was carried out following the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) *Standard and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk Based Assessment* (2017). Due to the nature of the study, namely responding to the potential for development, rather than a specific development proposal, the DBA work omits some aspects to be expected in a full CIfA S&G⁹-compliant DBA.
- 2.21 In addition, Historic England guidance *The Setting of Heritage Assets: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3* (GPA3) has been followed in understanding the contribution of setting to the significance of assets and impacts thereon. Similarly, *The Historic Environment and Site Allocations in Local Plans: Historic England Advice Note 3* has informed the methodology.
- 2.22 The DBA provides an understanding of the historic environment of the assessment area and identification of heritage assets in the area which may be susceptible to effects due to setting

⁹ Standard and Guidance.

change. This underpins the subsequent appraisal of issues associated with potential development of the area. Judgements on archaeological potential are provided, based on available HER data.

Asset significance

2.23 Following identification of the heritage assets susceptible to potential development of the assessment area, an appraisal of their heritage significance was prepared. This is articulated in accordance with Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance (Historic England, 2008) and the NPPF, and includes a consideration of the role of setting in this significance. Assets are given level of significance, in line with environmental impact assessment practice¹⁰. Levels are as follows:

- High – assets of national or international importance or demonstrable equivalence;
- Medium – assets of importance to regional understanding;
- Low – assets of importance to local understanding;
- Negligible – assets of no importance; and
- Uncertain – assets for which there is insufficient evidence to ascribe a level of importance.

Potential effects

2.24 The risk of harm to the significance of heritage assets, should the assessment area be developed, was then appraised. This focused on effects to the significance of the asset in line with the NPPF and considers:

- a. The significance of the asset.
- b. The likely effect of the potential development upon the asset.

2.25 Assessment of effects related to setting change follows the stages set out in Historic England guidance GPA3, taking note of recent planning case law.

2.26 A summary of how risk is defined is provided in Table 2.3. Professional judgement has been used to inform the final decision regarding the degree of harm.

Table 2.3: Definition of Potential Effect to Historic Environment receptors

Potential Effect	Definition
High	Asset is of high or medium significance and the magnitude of the impact is likely to be of such a scale that the significance of the heritage asset would be substantially harmed.
Moderate-high	Asset is of high or medium significance and the magnitude of the potential impact will be of such a scale that the significance of the asset would be harmed but not substantially.
Moderate	Asset is of low significance and the impact will be of such a scale that the significance of the asset would be substantially harmed.
Low-moderate	Asset is of low significance but the scale of the impact will be of such a scale that the significance of the asset would be harmed but not substantially.
Low	Asset is of high, medium or low significance and the potential impact will be of such a minimal scale that the significance of the asset will not be harmed.

In-combination effects

2.27 In addition to assessing the potential effect to individual heritage assets, an assessment was also undertaken of the potential impact of proposed development on the local historic environment. This considered:

- Potential effect on group value of assets;

¹⁰ Gov. UK (2019) Guidance: Environmental Impact Assessment. Online, available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/environmental-impact-assessment>

- Combined impact of individual effects from one proposed development on a particular receptor; and
- Effects from several developments – including committed development – which when considered together could give rise to significant cumulative effects.

2.28 Potential cumulative effects are reported using a similar scale as per Table 2.3 this judgement is based on professional opinion.

Desk-based landscape and historic environment assessments

2.29 All available information was interrogated to give an indication of the landscape and heritage sensitivity of each assessment area, using the criteria based approach set out above.

2.30 The historic environment and landscape assessments were **undertaken separately by the team's** specialists, with their findings collated into a standardised profile to present the information holistically in order to better understand the sensitivity of a given assessment area.

Stage 2: Field verification

2.31 A structured process of field survey verification was undertaken by both landscape and historic environment experts in order to test and refine the outputs from the desk study. Each assessment area was visited in turn to record information and take photographs. The field survey was undertaken from roads and public rights of way to gain an understanding of landscape character sensitivity. There was no access to private land.

Landscape

2.32 The landscape assessment fieldwork focused in particular on the relationships between the assessment areas and adjoining settlement, landscape settings and wider views, and articulation of special qualities relating to the Dorset AONB and the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB, the condition of individual landscape features, and perceptual qualities (i.e. levels of tranquillity). It also noted any important features within each area that would be sensitive to change and examined potential opportunities for landscape and green infrastructure.

Historic environment

2.33 Initial impressions on likely potential impacts on known archaeological remains, archaeological potential and effects related to the setting change were tested in the field. This included assessing how the development site can be viewed from key assets. It also included photography to illustrate any key points.

2.34 The historic environment assessment fieldwork primarily considered:

- Heritage assets within the site, their susceptibility to physical impacts and setting change;
- Relationships between heritage assets within the site and in the surrounding environs;
- Heritage assets outside the site boundary that could experience setting change; and
- Potential for change to wider historic landscape character.

Stage 3: Reporting

2.35 There are a number of outputs for this project as follows:

- Stage 1 Report – Presents the results of a high-level scoping exercise of areas of search around the four main towns and Stalbridge included in the Issues and Options Consultation document, based on a consideration of landscape and heritage constraints to development.
- Stage 2 Report (this document) – Sets out the purpose, policy context and methodology of the Stage 2 element, in relation to the four main towns and Stalbridge, of the study. It also contains the profiles assessing the key landscape and heritage sensitivities of land surrounding the 18 larger villages.

- Five individual town reports. These contain the detailed landscape and heritage sensitivity proformas produced during the Stage 2 element of this study for the four main towns and Stalbridge. All of the individual town reports were produced in draft in April 2019, for consideration by Dorset Council (and Parish Councils). The reports were also circulated to stakeholders for comment. Comments received were accounted for in the final versions of these reports.
- Key sensitivities of the larger villages - A report setting out the methodology and findings of the assessment of key sensitivities surrounding the larger villages which was undertaken alongside the Stage 2 Assessment.

2.36 Each of the individual town reports is structured as follows:

- An overview of the town in terms of its landscape and historic environment context and setting;
- A map and aerial photograph showing the boundaries of the assessment areas identified for the settlement;
- Landscape sensitivity assessment for each assessment area, comprising:
 - Detailed map of the site, with landscape designations and recorded heritage assets.
 - Representative photographs.
 - Overall description of site location (in settlement and landscape context) and landscape character context – i.e. which landscape character area(s) the assessment area falls within.
 - Criteria-based landscape sensitivity assessment, with a description and score given against each assessment criterion (See Table 2.2).
 - Overall assessment of landscape sensitivity including the five-point scale rating.
- Historic environment sensitivity assessment for the same assessment area, including:
 - Historic landscape character (HLC) context.
 - Heritage assets/groups of heritage assets present within the site, with a strategic consideration of their significance and likely susceptibility to physical change and/or setting change.
 - Heritage assets/groups of heritage assets with the potential to experience setting change, with a strategic consideration of their significance and likely susceptibility to change
 - Overall assessment of heritage sensitivity including the five-point scale rating.
- Valued landscape features/attributes – considering national and local designations present, importance for public access/recreation (e.g. rights of way/access land), settlement setting, functional use, perceptual attributes etc.
- Guidance for sustainable development, including opportunities for landscape and green infrastructure enhancements, and mitigation of impacts from development.

3 Results



3 Results

Overall Landscape and Heritage Sensitivity Assessment results of the land surrounding the four main towns and Stalbridge

3.1 Table 3.1 provides a summary of the overall judgement scores for each of the assessment areas for sensitivity in terms of both landscape and heritage. These scores are also shown in mapped format at Figures 3.1 to 3.10.

Please note that the overall judgement scores should always be interpreted in conjunction with the information contained in the detailed profiles within each of the reports for the five main towns.

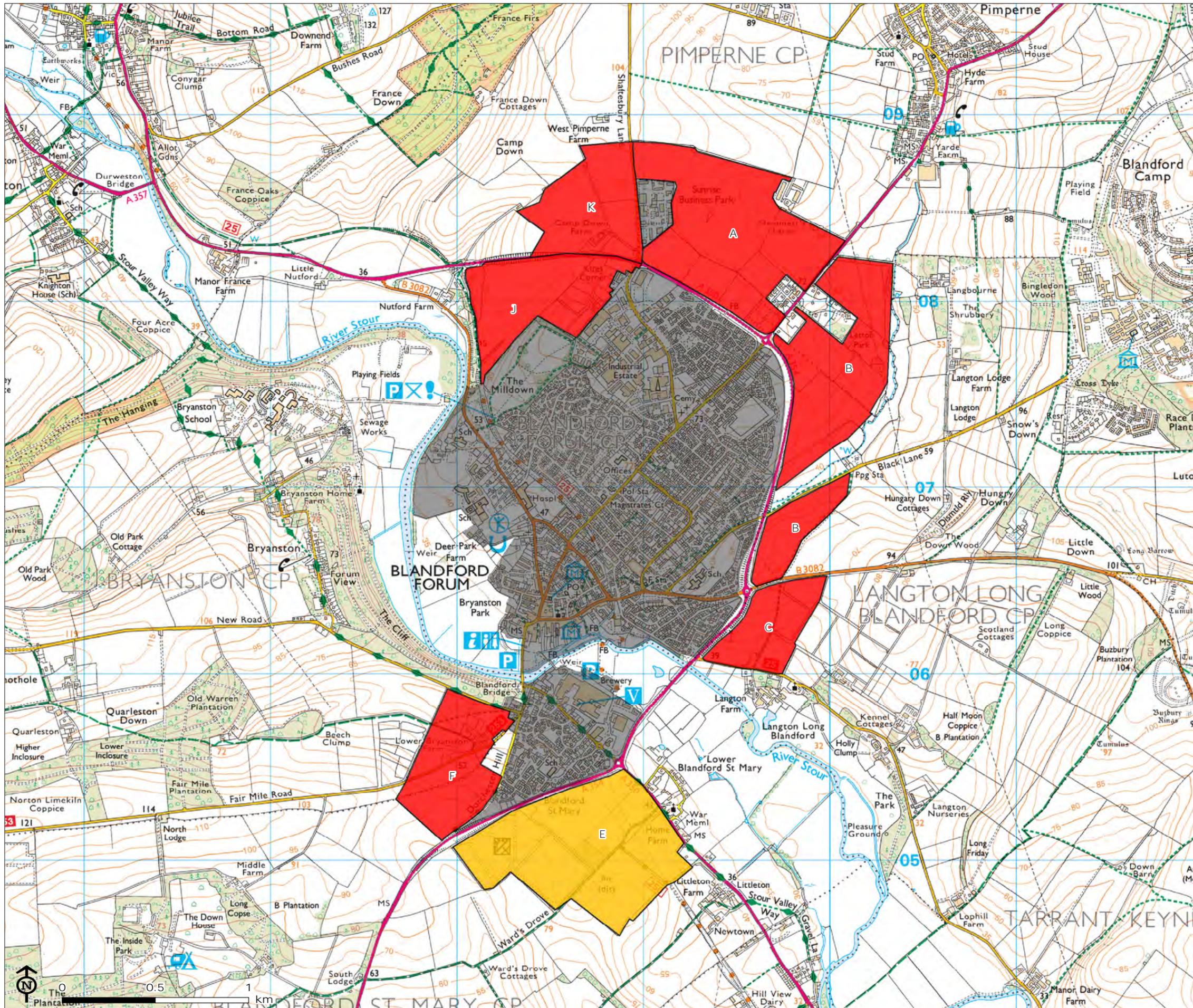
Table 3.1: Overall landscape and heritage sensitivity scores of the land surrounding the four main towns and Stalbridge

Settlement	Assessment Area	Overall Landscape Sensitivity Score	Overall Heritage Sensitivity Score
Blandford Forum	A	M-H	L-M
	B	M-H	M
	C	M-H	M-H
	E	M	M-H
	F	M-H	M-H
	J	M-H	M
	K	M-H	M
Gillingham	A	M-H	M
	B	M	M
	E	M-H	M
	F	M-H	M-H
	G	M	M
	H	M	H
	I	M-H	H
	J	M-H	M-H
Shaftesbury	A	M-H	M
	B	M-H	M-H

Settlement	Assessment Area	Overall Landscape Sensitivity Score	Overall Heritage Sensitivity Score
	D	H	M
	J	M	L-M
Stalbridge	A	M-H	H
	B	M	L
	C	M	L-M
Sturminster Newton	A	M	L-M
	B	M-H	H
	E	M	L-M
	F	M-H	H
	I	M-H	L-M

Strategic Landscape and Heritage Study for North Dorset Area

Figure 3.1: Overall Landscape Sensitivity - Blandford Forum



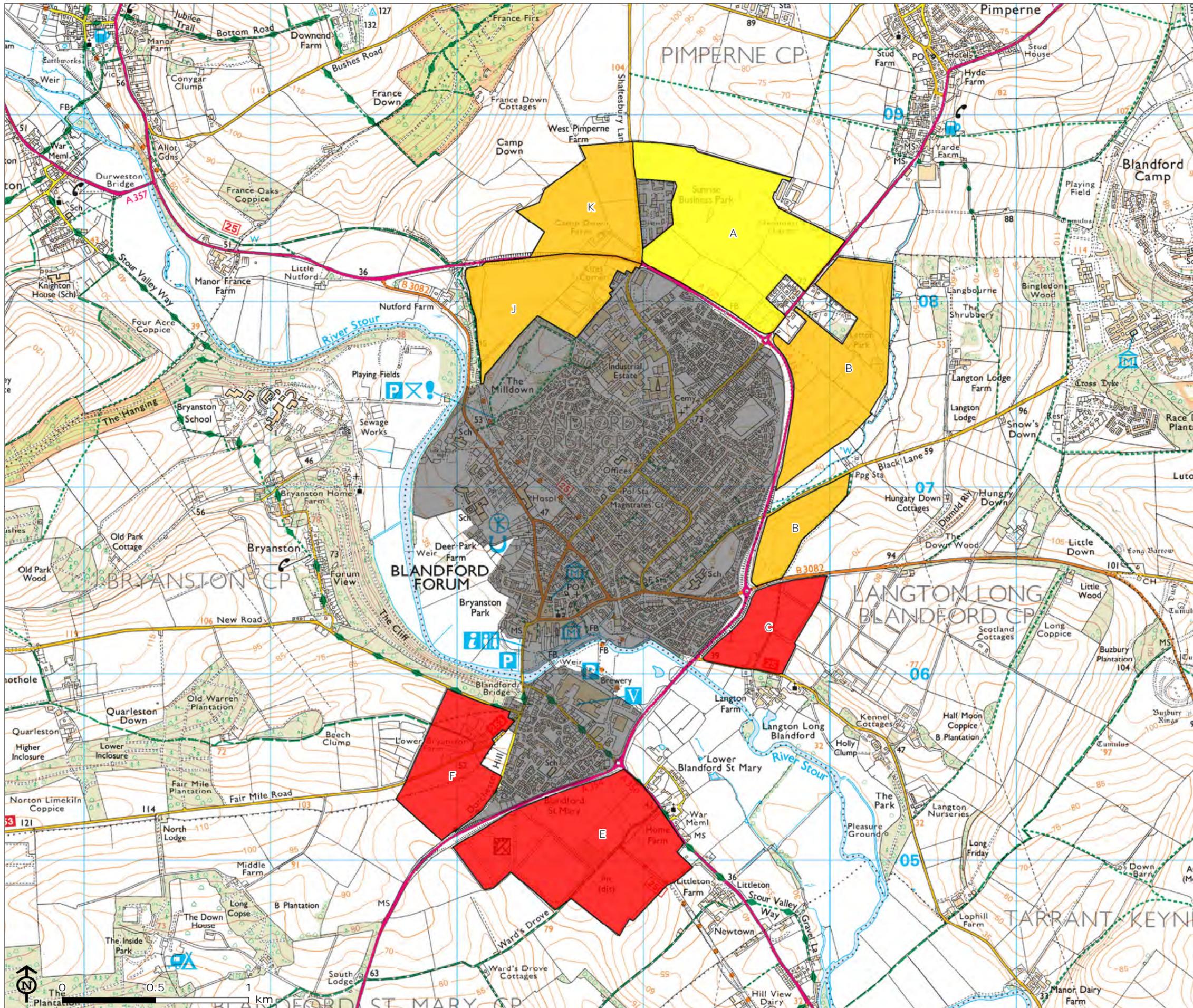
- Settlement
- Landscape Sensitivity**
- Low
- Low-Moderate
- Moderate
- Moderate-High
- High

NOTE ON INTERPRETATION:
 This map shows the overall sensitivity of each assessment area. It must be interpreted alongside the supporting information contained in the detailed assessment area profiles in the supporting reports, which may indicate areas or features of higher or lower sensitivity within each assessment area.
 Map Scale @A3: 1:20,000



Strategic Landscape and Heritage Study for North Dorset Area

Figure 3.2: Overall Heritage Sensitivity - Blandford Forum



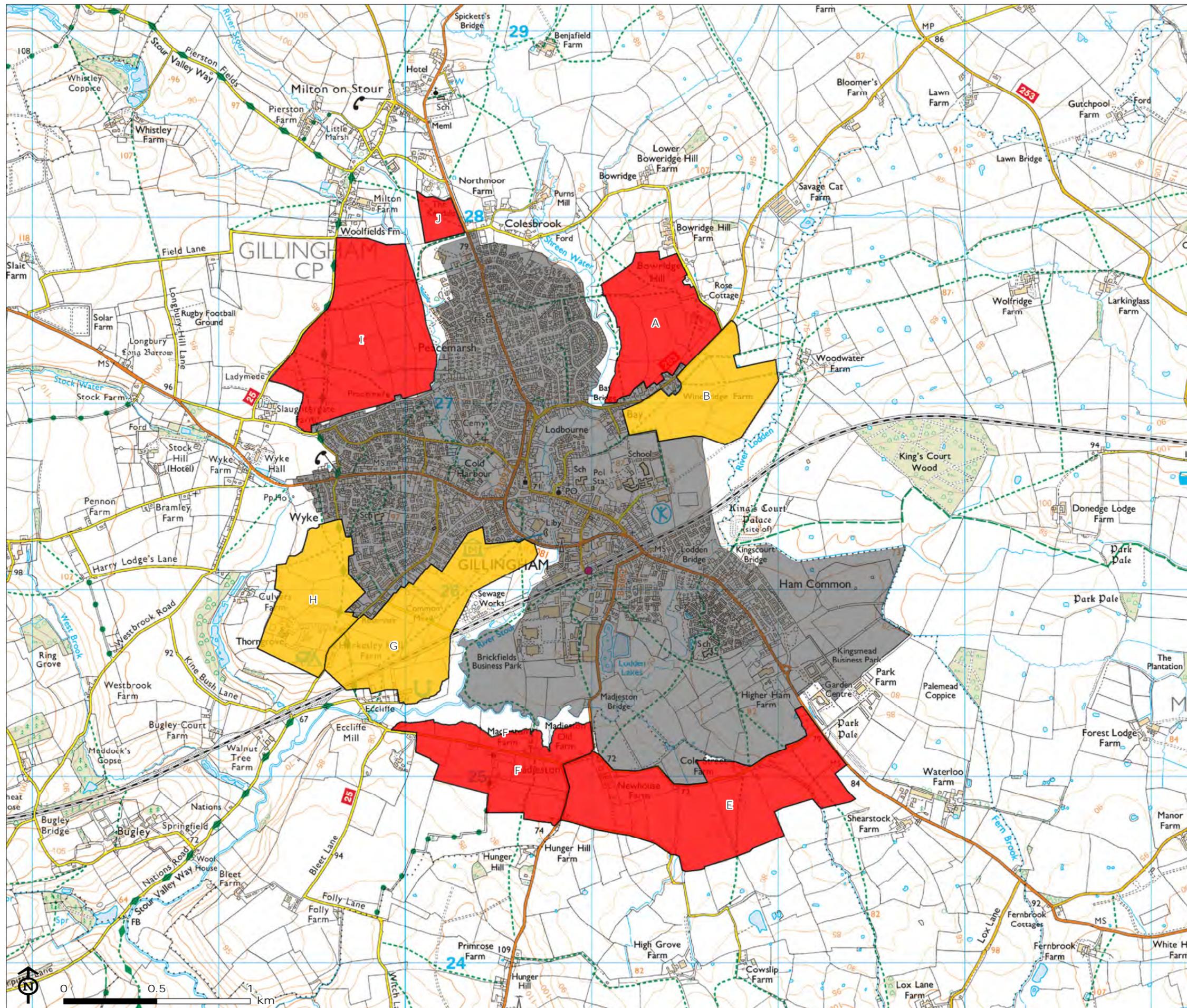
- Settlement
- Heritage Sensitivity
- Low
- Low-Moderate
- Moderate
- Moderate-High
- High

NOTE ON INTERPRETATION:
 This map shows the overall sensitivity of each assessment area. It must be interpreted alongside the supporting information contained in the detailed assessment area profiles in the supporting reports, which may indicate areas or features of higher or lower sensitivity within each assessment area.
 Map Scale @A3: 1:20,000



Strategic Landscape and Heritage Study for North Dorset Area

Figure 3.3: Overall Landscape Sensitivity - Gillingham



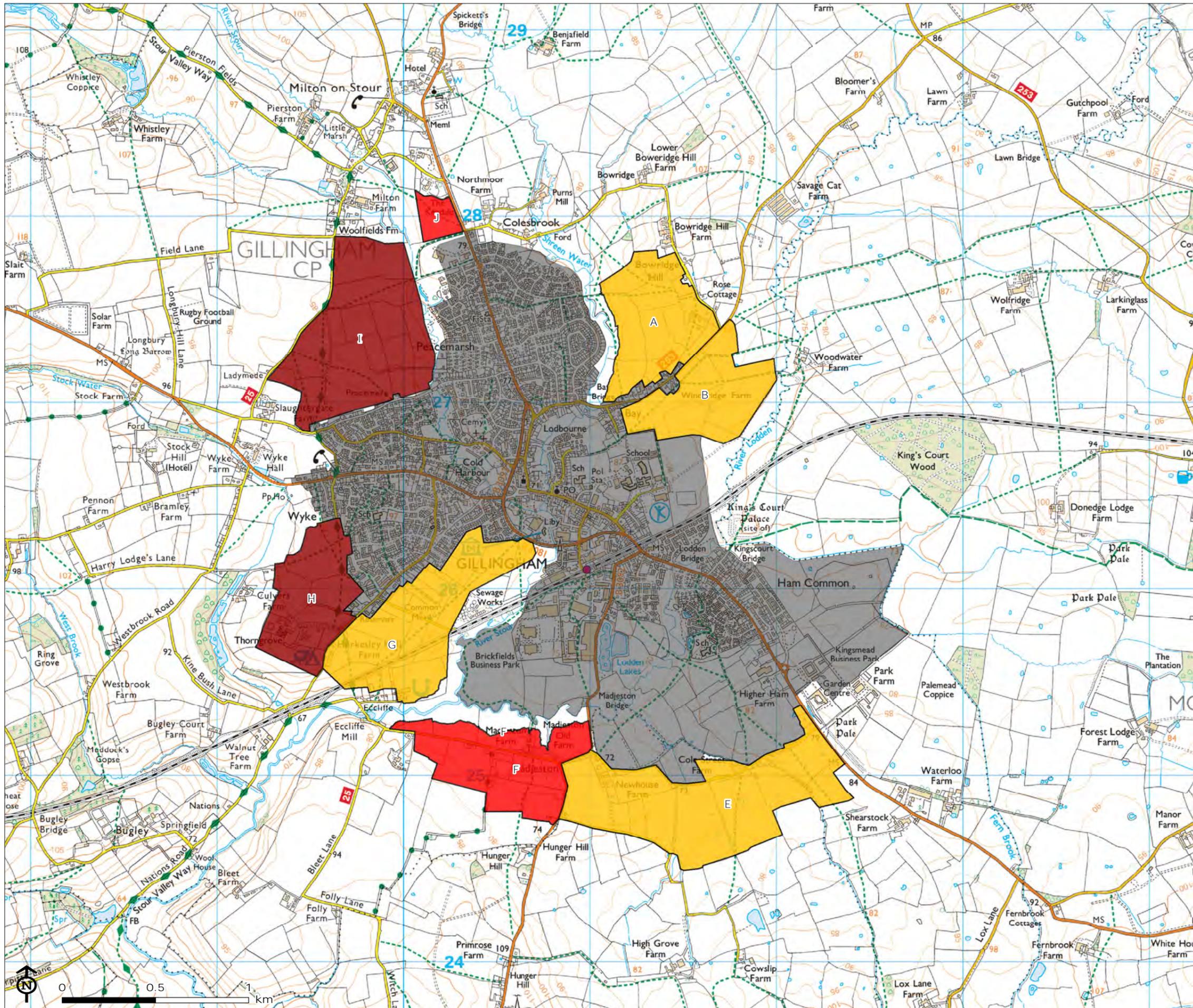
- Settlement
- Landscape Sensitivity**
- Low
- Low-Moderate
- Moderate
- Moderate-High
- High

NOTE ON INTERPRETATION:
 This map shows the overall sensitivity of each assessment area. It must be interpreted alongside the supporting information contained in the detailed assessment area profiles in the supporting reports, which may indicate areas of higher or lower sensitivity within each assessment area.
 Map Scale @A3: 1:20,000



Strategic Landscape and Heritage Study for North Dorset Area

Figure 3.4: Overall Heritage Sensitivity - Gillingham



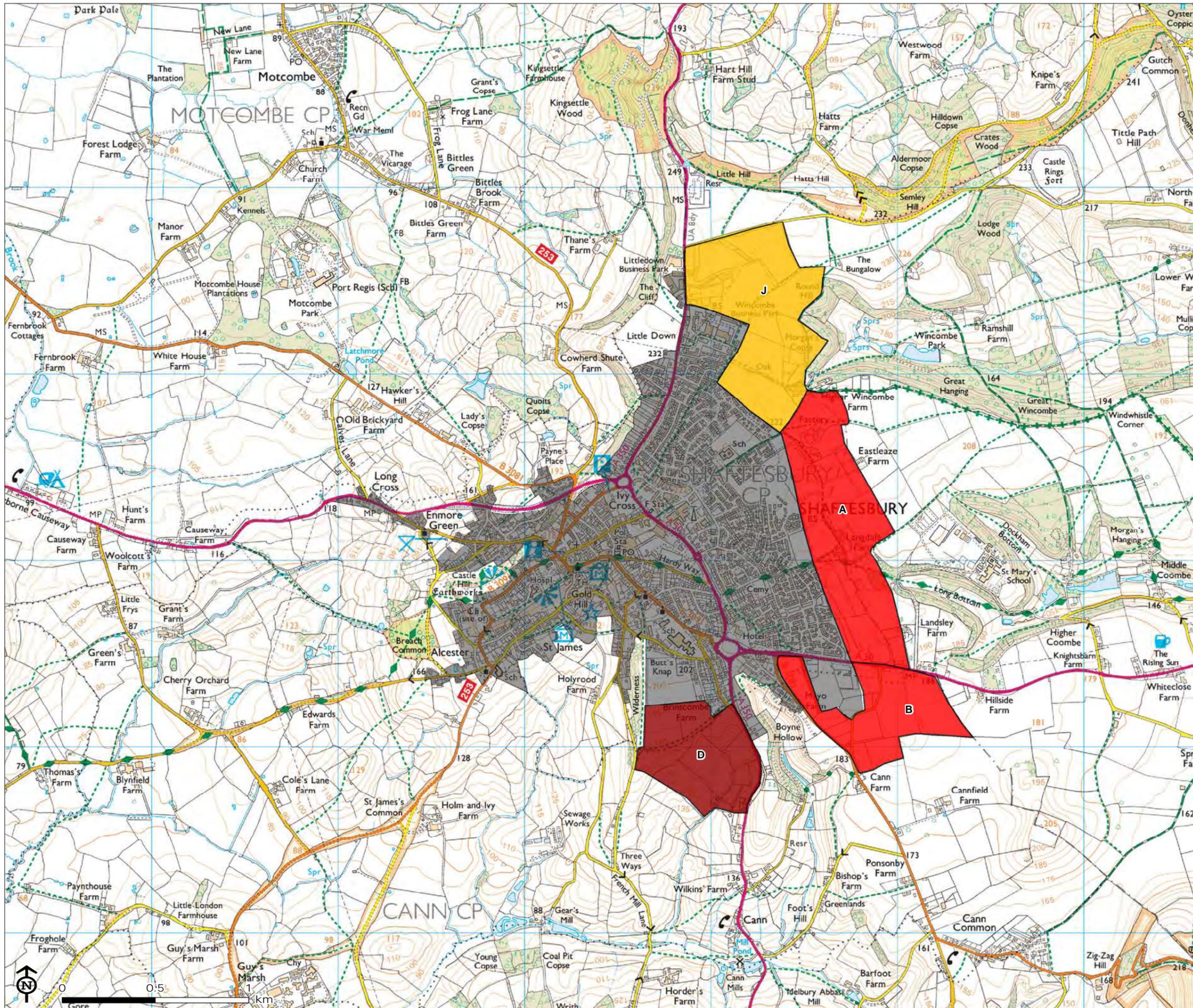
- Settlement
- Heritage Sensitivity
- Low
- Low-Moderate
- Moderate
- Moderate-High
- High

NOTE ON INTERPRETATION:
 This map shows the overall sensitivity of each assessment area. It must be interpreted alongside the supporting information contained in the detailed assessment area profiles in the supporting reports, which may indicate areas of higher or lower sensitivity within each assessment area.
 Map Scale @A3: 1:20,000



Strategic Landscape and Heritage Study for North Dorset Area

Figure 3.5: Overall Landscape Sensitivity - Shaftesbury



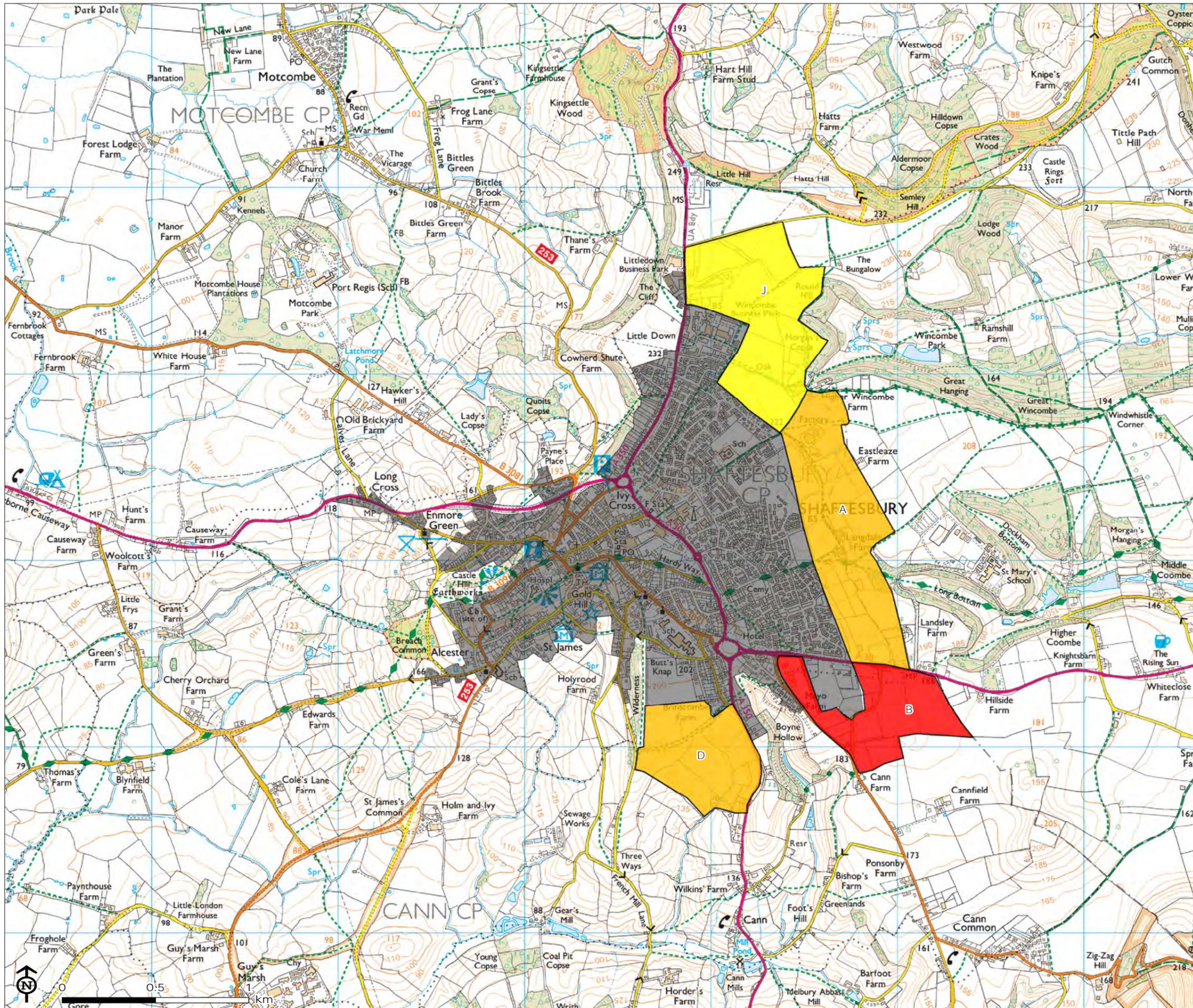
- Settlement
- Landscape Sensitivity**
- Low
- Low-Moderate
- Moderate
- Moderate-High
- High

NOTE ON INTERPRETATION:
 This map shows the overall sensitivity of each assessment area. It must be interpreted alongside the supporting information contained in the detailed assessment area profiles in the supporting reports, which may indicate areas or features of higher or lower sensitivity within each assessment area.
 Map Scale @A3: 1:20,000



Strategic Landscape and Heritage Study for North Dorset Area

Figure 3.6: Overall Heritage Sensitivity - Shaftesbury



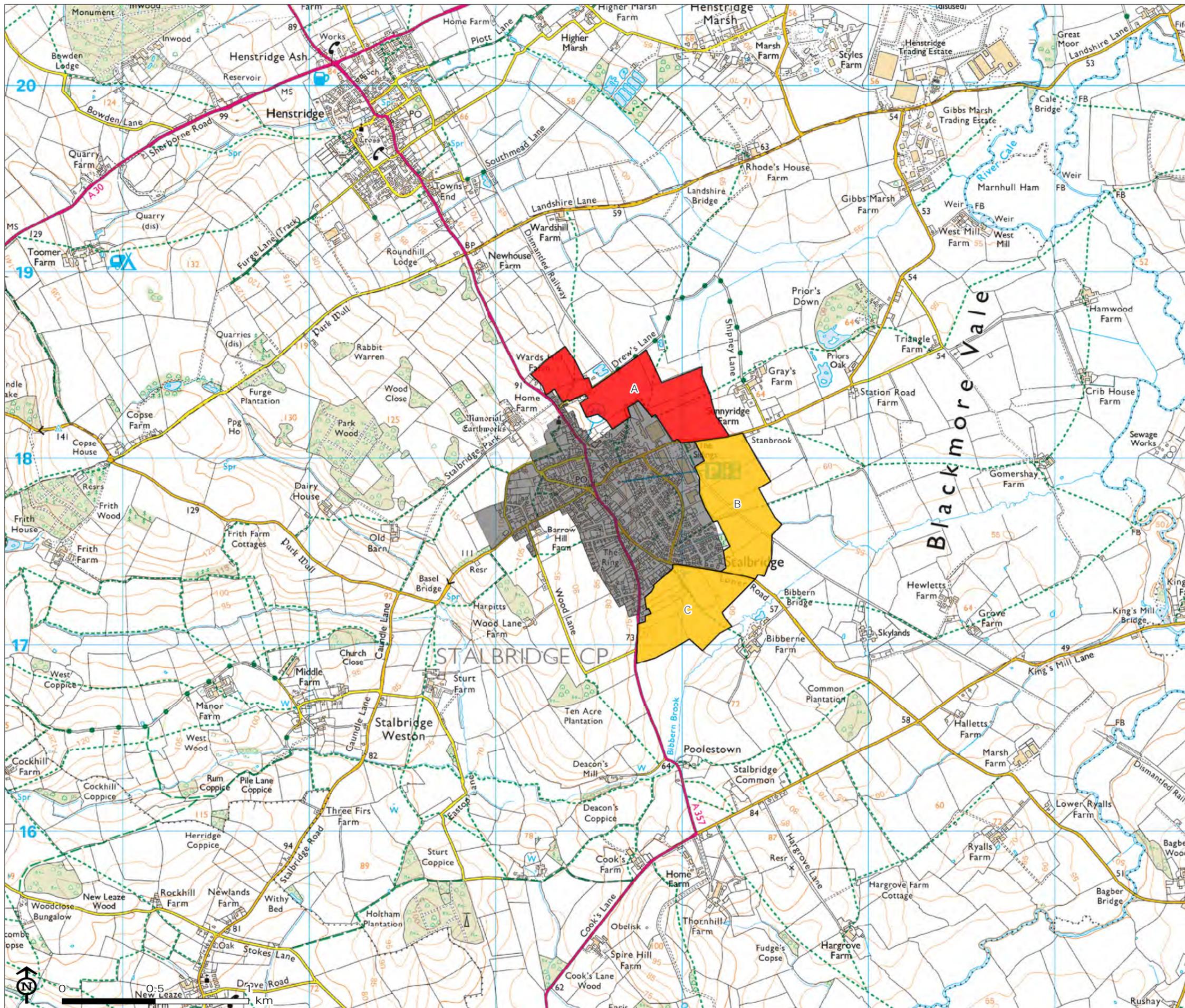
- Settlement
- Heritage Sensitivity
- Low
- Low-Moderate
- Moderate
- Moderate-High
- High

NOTE ON INTERPRETATION:
 This map shows the overall sensitivity of each assessment area. It must be interpreted alongside the supporting information contained in the detailed assessment area profiles in the supporting reports, which may indicate areas or features of higher or lower sensitivity within each assessment area.
 Map Scale @A3: 1:20,000



Strategic Landscape and Heritage Study for North Dorset Area

Figure 3.7: Overall Landscape Sensitivity - Stalbridge



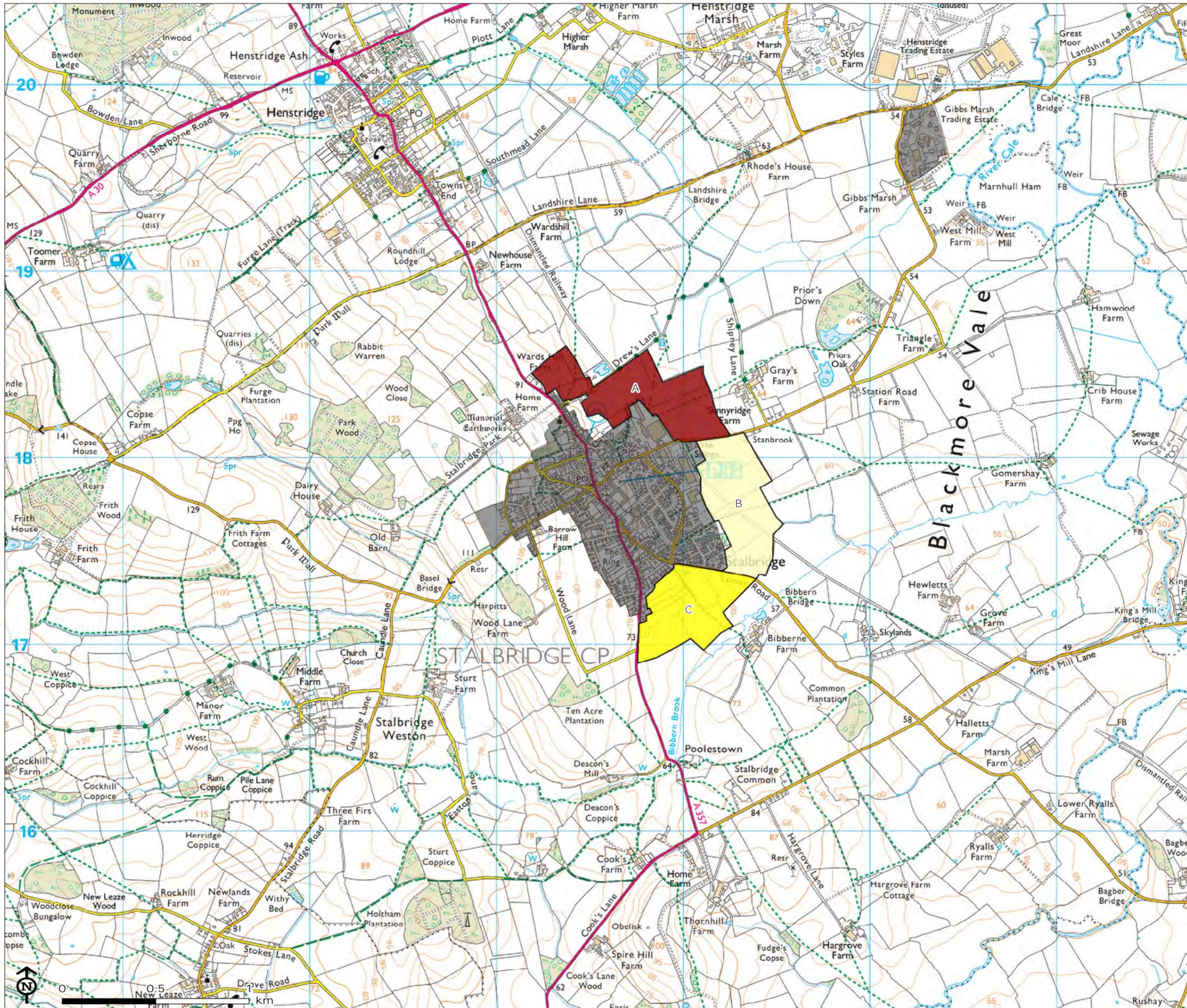
- Settlement
- Landscape Sensitivity**
- Low
- Low-Moderate
- Moderate
- Moderate-High
- High

NOTE ON INTERPRETATION:
 This map shows the overall sensitivity of each assessment area. It must be interpreted alongside the supporting information contained in the detailed assessment area profiles in the supporting reports, which may indicate areas or features of higher or lower sensitivity within each assessment area.
 Map Scale @A3: 1:20,000



Strategic Landscape and Heritage Study for North Dorset Area

Figure 3.8: Overall Heritage Sensitivity - Stalbridge



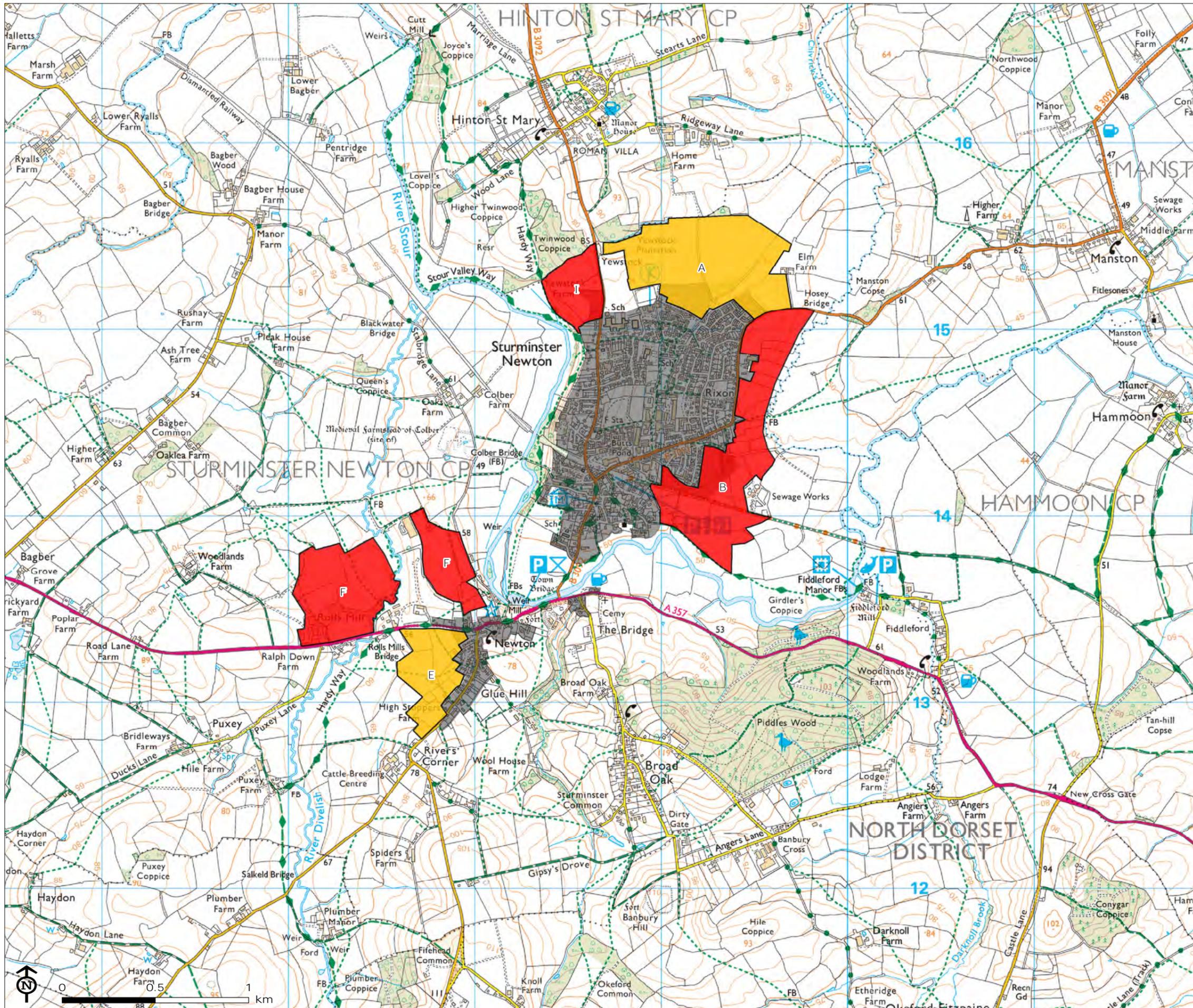
- Settlement
- Heritage Sensitivity
- Low
- Low-Moderate
- Moderate
- Moderate-High
- High

NOTE ON INTERPRETATION:
 This map shows the overall sensitivity of each assessment area. It must be interpreted alongside the supporting information contained in the detailed assessment area profiles in the supporting reports, which may indicate areas or features of higher or lower sensitivity within each assessment area.
 Map Scale @A3: 1:20,000



Strategic Landscape and Heritage Study for North Dorset Area

Figure 3.9: Overall Landscape Sensitivity - Sturminster Newton



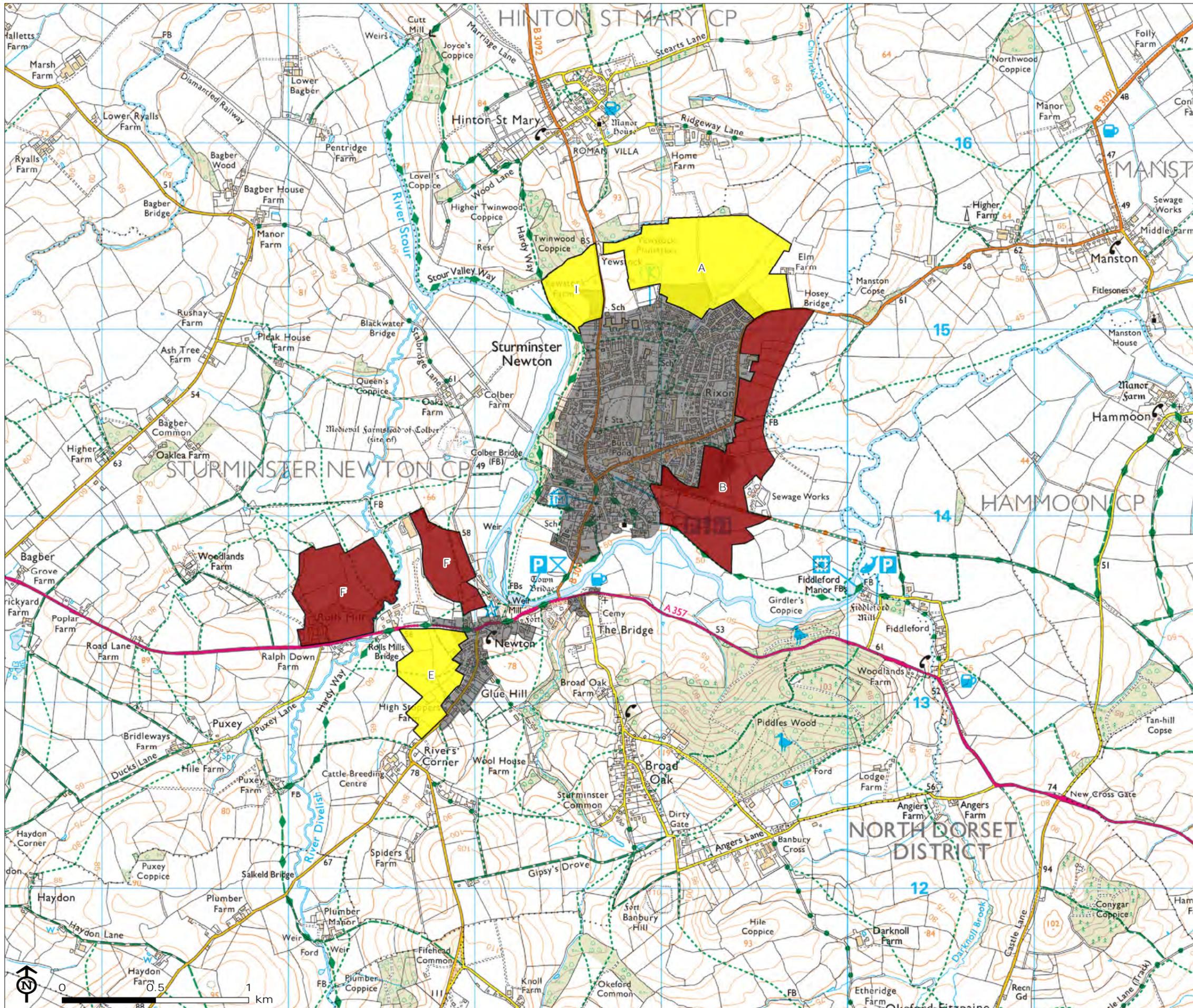
- Settlement
- Landscape Sensitivity**
- Low
- Low-Moderate
- Moderate
- Moderate-High
- High

NOTE ON INTERPRETATION:
 This map shows the overall sensitivity of each assessment area. It must be interpreted alongside the supporting information contained in the detailed assessment area profiles in the supporting reports, which may indicate areas or features of higher or lower sensitivity within each assessment area.
 Map Scale @A3: 1:20,000



Strategic Landscape and Heritage Study for North Dorset Area

Figure 3.10: Overall Heritage Sensitivity - Sturminster Newton



- Settlement
- Heritage Sensitivity
 - Low
 - Low-Moderate
 - Moderate
 - Moderate-High
 - High

NOTE ON INTERPRETATION:
 This map shows the overall sensitivity of each assessment area. It must be interpreted alongside the supporting information contained in the detailed assessment area profiles in the supporting reports, which may indicate areas or features of higher or lower sensitivity within each assessment area.
 Map Scale @A3: 1:20,000



Appendix 1

Links to other documents/evidence

This appendix lists other existing documents and evidence which have informed this report or provide additional evidence which can be used alongside the findings of this report:

- North Dorset, Local Plan Review Issues and Options Consultation (November 2017).
<https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/planning-buildings-land/planning-policy/north-dorset/local-plan-review/local-plan-review.aspx>
- North Dorset, Local Plan Review Issues and Options Sustainability Appraisal (November 2017).
<https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/planning-buildings-land/planning-policy/north-dorset/local-plan-review/local-plan-review.aspx>
- Conservation area appraisals <https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/planning-buildings-land/planning/planning-constraints/conservation-areas/north-dorset/conservation-areas-north-dorset.aspx> - identify the special architectural and historic interests of conservation areas, and ensure that their designation is effective in preserving their special interest.
- Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB Management Plan (2019-2024)
- Dorset AONB Management Plan (2019-2024)
- Dorset Landscape Character Assessment (2007), <https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/countryside-coast-parks/the-dorset-landscape/the-dorset-landscape.aspx>
- Historic Landscape Character Study, Dorset County Council and:
 - Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB (2017)
https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archives/view/cranborne_hlc_2017/;
 - Somerset and Exmoor (2013)
https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archives/view/cranborne_hlc_2017/
- Historic Urban Characterisation: Dorset Historic Towns Project
<https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/libraries-history-culture/local-history-heritage/historic-towns/historic-towns.aspx> – Forms part of the national programme surveying the archaeology, **topography and historic buildings of England’s historic towns and cities.**
- Historic Environment Record <https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/her> - Dorset County Council Provides comprehensive record of all aspects of the archaeological and built environment
- Dorset Explorer location information in and around Dorset - <https://explorer.geowessex.com/>
- GPA1 - Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 1 – The Historic Environment in Local Plans (March 2015) <https://content.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/gpa1-historic-environment-local-plans/gpa1.pdf/>
- GPA2 - Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2 – Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment (March 2015) <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/gpa2-managing-significance-in-decision-taking/gpa2/>
- GPA 3 - Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 - The Setting of Heritage Assets (March 2015) <https://content.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/gpa3-setting-of-heritage-assets/gpa3.pdf/>
- The Historic Environment and Site Allocations in Local Plans (HE Advice Note no.3)
<https://content.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/historic-environment-and-site-allocations-in-local-plans/heag074-he-and-site-allocation-local-plans.pdf/> – the 5 steps in this can be applied to this study to ensure that, for example, the essential design criteria/conditions that should be considered should the site be allocated, will be applied.
- North Dorset Landscape Character Area Assessment (2008)
<https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/planning-buildings-land/planning-policy/north-dorset/local-plan->

[part-1/submission/local-plan-evidence-base/pdfs/north-dorset-landscape-character-assessment.pdf](http://www.dorsetaonb.org.uk/our-work/landscapework/landscape-character-assessment.pdf)

- Dorset AONB Landscape Character Assessment (2008) <http://www.dorsetaonb.org.uk/our-work/landscapework/landscape-character>
- Landscape Institute Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA3) <https://www.landscapeinstitute.org/technical/glvia3-panel/>
- Natural England Topic Paper 6: Techniques and Criteria for Judging Capacity and Sensitivity <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5601625141936128?category=31019>
- Gillingham Neighbourhood Plan 2016-2031. Gillingham Town Council.
- Sturminster Newton Neighbourhood Plan 2016-2031. Sturminster Newton Town Council
- Shaftesbury Draft Neighbourhood Plan 2019-2031. Shaftesbury Town Council
- Blandford+ Neighbourhood Plan 2011 –2033 Submission Plan. Blandford Forum Town Council, Blandford St Mary Parish Council and Bryanston Parish Council

GIS information

Data used within the report, including data collated in the GIS database is shown in the table below.

Dataset	Owner
General	
OS Base Mapping: 25k, 50k	Dorset Council
Aerials	ESRI
Landscape and Geology	
Landscape Character Assessment	Dorset Council
AONB	Natural England
National Parks	Natural England
Local Geological Sites	Dorset Council
Heritage and Historic Landscape Character	
HER (for the whole of N Dorset)	Dorset Council
HLC (for the whole of N Dorset)	Dorset Council
Conservation Areas	Dorset Council
Locally Listed Buildings	Dorset Council
Buildings at Risk Register	Dorset Council
Historic Mapping (such as enclosure maps, 1st edition OS)	Dorset Council
Listed buildings	Historic England
Registered Parks and Gardens	Historic England
Scheduled Monuments	Historic England

Dataset	Owner
World Heritage Sites	Historic England
Biodiversity and woodland	
Local wildlife sites/Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation	Dorset Council
Local Nature reserves	Natural England
Sites of Special Scientific Interest	Natural England
Special Areas of Conservation	Natural England
Special Protection Areas	Natural England
Ramsar	Natural England
National Nature Reserves	Natural England
Priority Habitats	Natural England
Ancient Woodland	Natural England
National Forest Inventory	Natural England
Access and recreation	
Open Space	Dorset Council
Country Parks	Natural England
Open Access Land	Natural England
Registered Common Land	Natural England
National Trails	Natural England
Cycle Routes	Sustrans
Green Space	Ordnance Survey
Hydrology	
Flood zones 2 and 3	Environment Agency
Planning	
Settlement Boundaries	Dorset Council
Site Allocations	Dorset Council
Development Sites	Dorset Council
Other relevant planning designations e.g. green wedges	Dorset Council