The background image shows a scenic view of a village in Shaftesbury, Dorset. In the foreground, a cobblestone street leads up a hillside. On the left, a row of stone buildings with red brick accents and tiled roofs is visible. In the middle ground, a white building with a thatched roof stands out. The background features a wide valley with green fields, scattered trees, and rolling hills under a cloudy sky.

LUC

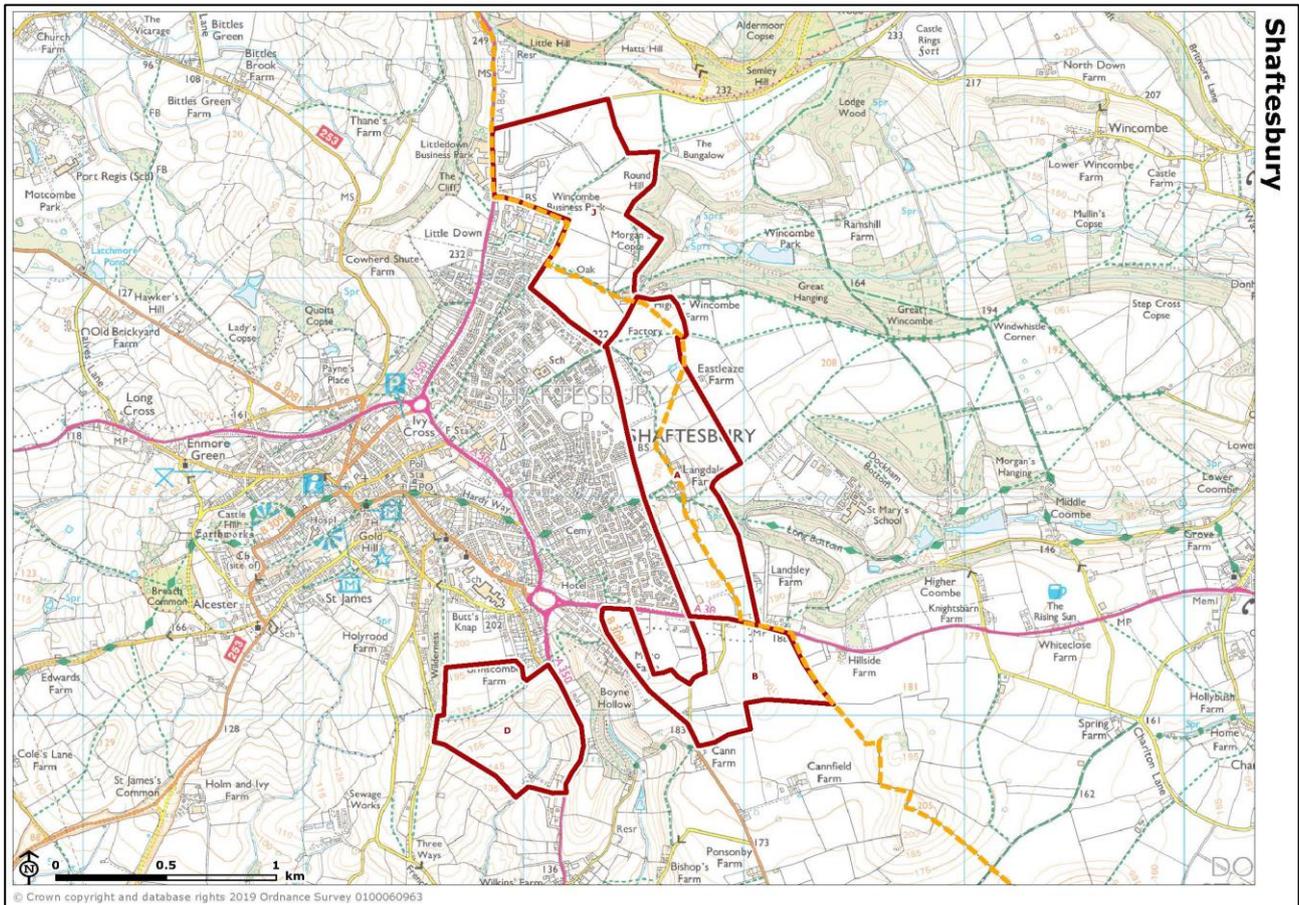
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North Dorset Strategic Landscape and Heritage Study

Stage 2 Assessment: Shaftesbury

Final Report
Prepared by LUC for Dorset Council
October 2019

Shaftesbury



Representative photographs of the settlement



View south-east over St James Street towards French Mill Lane



View south-west towards St James Church and St Johns Hill

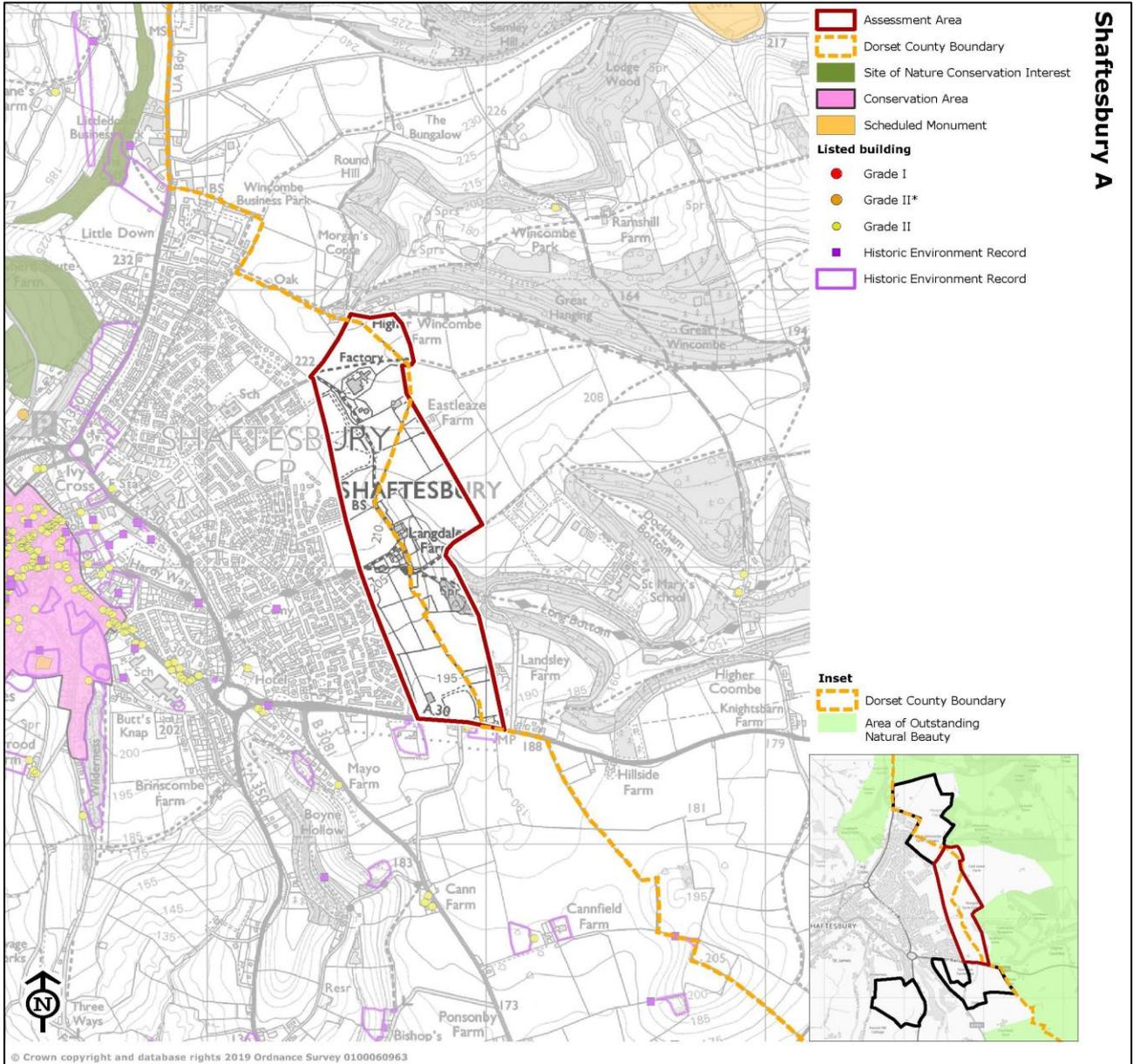
Location and description

Shaftesbury is a historic town located adjacent to the Wiltshire boundary and directly west of Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB. The town is located on high ground, with views extending north, west and south over Blackmore Vale. Most of the existing settlement in the west of Shaftesbury is located on the hill slopes, while settlement in the east is located on flatter ground. This characteristic market town still retains many of its historic features, although there is also a large amount of housing from the 20th century.

Aerial context



Assessment area: Shaftesbury A



Representative photographs



Landscape sensitivity assessment

Landscape character context				
<p>The part of the assessment area in the former North Dorset District falls within the Shaftesbury Greensand Ridges Landscape Character Area, whilst the areas within Wiltshire are part of the Donhead-Fovant Greensand Hills Landscape Character Area. The eastern boundary of the assessment area is shared with the edge of the Cranborne Chase & West Wiltshire Downs AONB. The area is situated directly to the east of Shaftesbury with the northern edge close to Higher Wincombe Farm and the southern edge marked by the A30.</p>				
Assessment criterion	Description			Sensitivity score
Physical character (including topography and scale)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gently sloping landform with elevation ranging from 230m AOD in the north to 190m AOD in the south. Mixed, small-scale fields are laid out in a geometric pattern. In more elevated areas, the land has an open, large-scale character. 			M
Natural character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a small area of deciduous woodland BAP priority habitat south of Langdale Farm. Land use is mixed arable, pastoral and equine fields, surrounded by well-established hedgerows containing mature trees. However, many hedgerows in the south have been replaced with fencing. 			L-M
Historic landscape character (<i>please see separate heritage assessment for asset-based information</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The HLC identifies the majority of fields to be planned enclosure of post-medieval to modern date. There is also a small area of possible post-medieval piecemeal enclosure. 			L-M
Form, density and setting of existing development ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The area is mostly undeveloped, although built features include dispersed agricultural and industrial structures. These include a large-scale dairy processing site in the north and smaller scale industrial sites around Langdale Farm and Mampitts Farm. The western boundary of the assessment area follows the eastern settlement edge of Shaftesbury, mostly consisting of modern residential estates. The assessment area provides an undeveloped backdrop to these properties. St. Mary's School is visible to the east of the assessment area. 			M
Views and visual character including skylines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Views to the south and south-east are long-reaching and look towards the elevated landscape of the Cranborne Chase & West Wiltshire Downs AONB. The assessment area is not visually prominent within the local landscape although it is overlooked from the AONB. Views to the north and east are generally undeveloped and include hedgerow trees which mark the skyline. A small-scale overhead line also crosses the area. The landscape is visible from the Hardy Way which crosses through the assessment area. 			M-H
Perceptual and experiential qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most of the area has a strongly rural and undeveloped character despite the proximity of development. Features such as the dairy processing factory (north) and the farm machinery sale ground (south) detract from rural perceptual qualities, with localised sound and visual disruption. 			M-H
Overall assessment of landscape sensitivity				
L	L-M	M	M-H	H
<p>The landscape sensitivity of the area is elevated by its largely rural and undeveloped character, its role in providing setting to properties in the east of Shaftesbury and its proximity to and intervisibility with the Cranborne Chase & West Wiltshire Downs AONB. Detractors include the dairy processing factory in the north which produces some localised sound pollution and a lack of designated heritage assets. Overall, the area has moderate-high landscape sensitivity.</p>				

¹ There are existing planning applications within the north (2/2014/1350/FUL) and directly to the west of (2/2016/0658/PAEIA) this assessment area. 2/2014/1350/FUL is for 191 dwellings, whilst 2/2016/0658/PAEIA is for 97 dwellings; both have been approved. Development may alter the character of this area and may subsequently impact on the sensitivity to residential development.

Heritage sensitivity assessment

Dorset Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) context

The HLC indicates that the majority of the assessment area comprises planned enclosure of post-medieval to modern date. The older enclosures have some time-depth and may contain hedgerows that qualify as historically important under the 1997 Hedgerow Regulations. The hedgerows that coincide with the county boundary may also qualify as important, as it is a historic boundary which may meet the criteria. If present, such hedgerows would be susceptible to physical change as a result of development. The historic landscape has some further value as it forms part of the setting of nearby heritage assets (discussed below).

Description and significance of heritage assets present

A definitive list of assets within each study area is provided at Appendix 1 in the Stage 2 methodology report. Only assets judged to be of a level of significance likely to influence the planning process are discussed below.

There are no designated assets within the assessment area.

Non-designated assets within the assessment area include:

- Former Parkland of Coombe House

Of more than local importance

Former parkland associated with Coombe House, now St Mary's School. The parkland – much of which was sold off in the 1920s - utilised existing woodland (some ancient) much of which survives today. Other parkland features that survive include the driveways, footpaths, walled garden and lawns to the rear of the house. These lie just beyond the assessment area.

Likely susceptibility to physical change as a result of development

Development of the assessment area would result in the physical loss of managed woodland adjoining one of the driveways leading through the parkland to Coombe House. This could result in setting change to the house – discussed below.

The HER indicates that a pipeline evaluation passed through the length of the assessment area; however, this appears to have proved negative in this area as there are no related finds or features recorded. Despite this, the undeveloped nature of the assessment area means that there is a potential for hitherto unknown archaeological remains within the assessment area. If present, such remains would be highly susceptible to physical loss e.g. truncation/total loss.

Likely susceptibility to setting change as a result of development

Designated assets with the potential to experience setting change:

- Wincombe Park – grade II listed building [1146083]

High importance

Early 19th century country house deriving significance from its aesthetic and historic (illustrative and associative) value. In terms of setting it has an important designed relationship with its wooded parkland, which features two lakes and expansive long-ranging views. Due to the orientation of the house and intervening topography and woodland there is no intervisibility between the assessment area and the house at present – but in the event of development there is the risk that built form could be visible above the tree-line as Wincombe Park house and its parkland occupy a dry valley below the assessment area. Development of the assessment area would place modern built development along the western edge of the parkland – a non-designated asset in its own right - and begin to erode its legibility as a country estate.

- Castle Rings Camp – scheduled monument [1005698]

High importance

A hillfort and cross dyke comprising a rare combination of multi-period archaeological remains that are of high evidential value, as reflected by its scheduled status. Located around 1.5km north-east of the assessment area, on a broad plateau called Tittle Path Hill overlooking the valleys of the River Nadder and two of its tributaries, the topographical siting of the assets is important in understanding their symbolic and strategic significance. Intervisibility between the assets and assessment area is limited by intervening

topography and vegetation. However, as the assessment area appears to have no meaningful relationship with the asset, nor disrupts any such meaningful relationships, its development would be unlikely to affect the heritage significance of the asset.

- New Lane Farmhouse including dwarf wall and railings [1261255] – grade II listed building

High importance

An early 19th century farmhouse deriving its heritage significance from a combination of aesthetic and historical (illustrative) values. It has been converted to residential use with a garden and driveway and has lost at least one of its historic outbuildings. The cottages to the west – now in separate ownership - may once have been associated with the farmhouse, but this is unclear. In addition to these buildings, the farmhouse would have also had a functional and historical relationship with its agricultural hinterland. The assessment area only makes a limited contribution to this agricultural setting as it is separated from the farm by the A30 and furthermore, the part lying directly opposite is in use for light industrial use, although it remains open and undeveloped. The building is also orientated away from the assessment area meaning that there is no intervisibility. Development could introduce built development into an open area that contributes in a limited way to the heritage significance of the asset resulting in harm, but towards the lower end of the scale.

Non-designated assets with the potential to experience setting change:

- Coombe House (now St Mary’s School) and former parkland, Shaftesbury

Low importance

A late 19th century country house set in wooded parkland, some of which classifies as ancient woodland. Following the sale of much of its parkland in the late 1920s, the house became a hotel and subsequently, St Mary’s School for Girls, which it remains today. The house derives its heritage significance primarily from a combination of its aesthetic and historical (illustrative and associative) values; it also has some communal value through its use as a school. The use of Coombe House as a school has resulted in infill building around the main house, disrupting its spatial relationship with other historic buildings that (from review of maps/aerial imagery) appear to survive , as well as with its former parkland much of which remains legible in terms of managed woodland and layout. As such, the asset may still be appreciated and understood as a former country house with parkland. Development of the assessment area would result in the physical loss of part of the former parkland and introduce built development up to the walled garden and former main lawn of the house (now playing fields). Significant intervisibility between the house and development is unlikely due to intervening development and vegetation, but the legibility of the house and former parkland as a country estate would be harmed.

- Higher Wincombe Farm, Donhead St Mary [MWI64988]

Low importance

This non-designated 19th century farmstead derives its heritage significance from a combination of aesthetic and historical (illustrative) values. It comprises an L-plan regular courtyard with agricultural buildings on three sides; of these there has been some partial loss and the barn has been converted to residential use. The farmhouse is set away from the yard. The farm complex lies to the north of the assessment area and there is currently very limited/no intervisibility due to intervening vegetation. Development of the assessment area could affect the legibility of the site’s historical development and function by removing most of its agricultural setting.

Overall assessment of sensitivity of heritage assets to change within the area

L	L-M	M	M-H	H
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The overall sensitivity of this assessment area is **moderate**. This is derived primarily from the potential risk of setting change to a number of designated and non-designated assets. In the event of development, there could be potential affects to the designated New Lane Farmhouse albeit of less than substantial nature and towards the lower end of the spectrum. Similar levels of harm could arise through the physical loss of managed woodland associated with the non-designated Coombe House (St Mary’s School) and its parkland. Development could also affect the setting of these assets, as well as that of Higher Wincombe Farm and the parkland belonging to the grade II listed Wincombe Park.

Summary of key sensitivities and guidelines for sustainable development

Summary of key sensitivities

The following provides a summary of the key landscape and heritage sensitivities within the assessment area:

- Location partly within the nationally valued landscape of Cranborne Chase & West Wiltshire Downs AONB.
- Well-established network of hedgerows with many mature hedgerow trees, which act as important wildlife corridors.
- Area of BAP priority habitat deciduous woodlands in the south.
- Undeveloped agricultural land providing a rural setting to existing settlement.
- Potential for historically important hedgerows that would be susceptible to physical change/total loss.
- Potential for hitherto unknown archaeological remains that would be susceptible to physical change/total loss.
- Risk of physical effects to the non-designated Coombe House (now St Mary's School) designed landscape which may in turn affect the legibility of Coombe House.
- Risk of setting change to the grade II listed New Lane Farmhouse and non-designated assets including Higher Wincombe Farm and Wincombe Park.

Guidelines

The assessment area is adjacent to the Cranborne Chase & West Wiltshire Downs AONB, a nationally designated landscape where there is a presumption against major development. Any development may have an impact on the character and special qualities of the AONB. Therefore, the guidance below should be closely followed.

Any new development should:

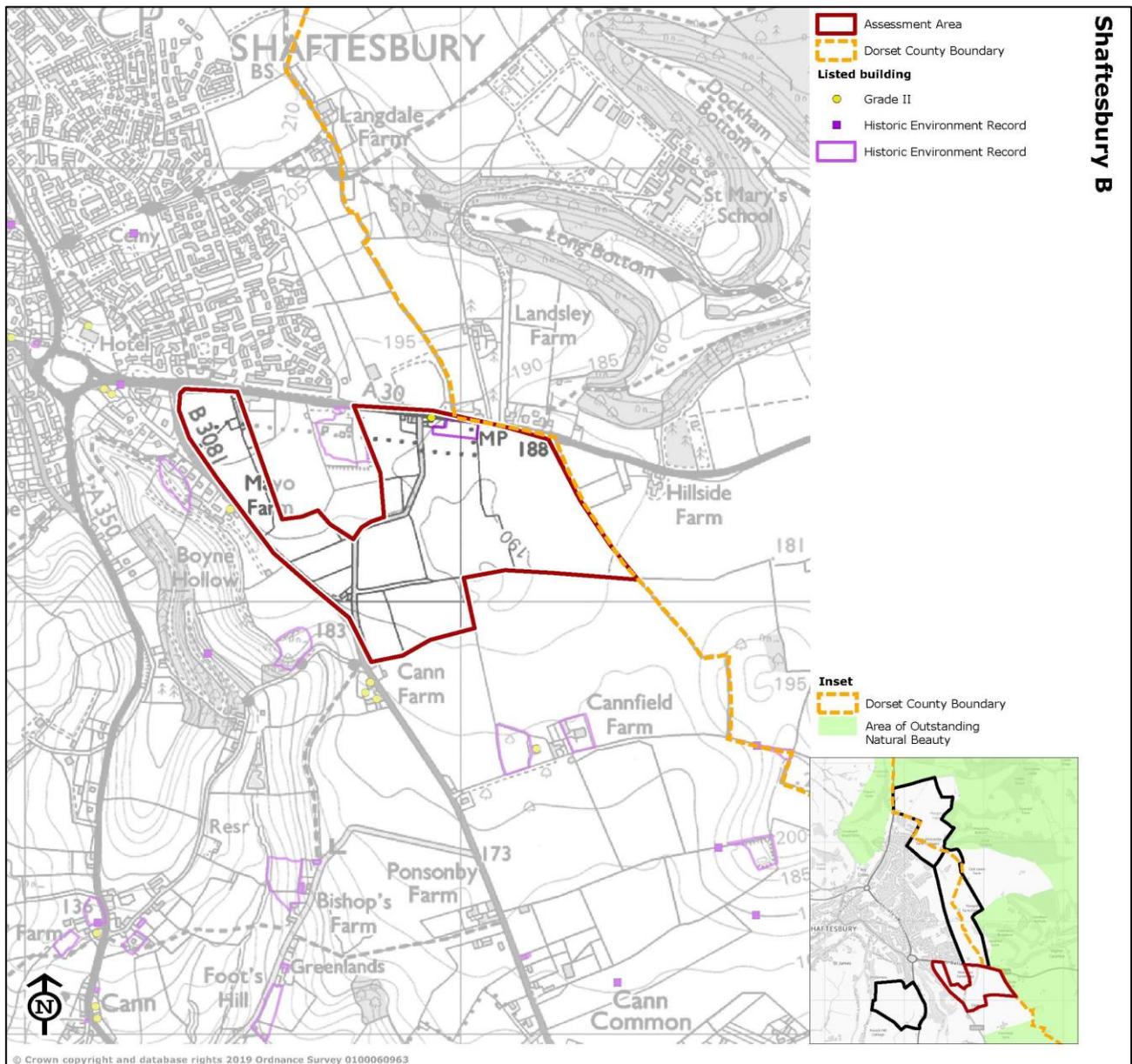
- Protect and conserve the areas of BAP priority habitat deciduous woodlands and hedgerows with mature trees which contribute to the natural character of the landscape.
- Ensure any new development does not adversely affect the special qualities of the Cranborne Chase & West Wiltshire Downs AONB including: the tranquil unspoilt qualities of the area, wide expansive skies, rich land use history, local vernacular building styles or strong sense of place.²
- Retain the remaining rural characteristics and the undeveloped setting the landscape provides to existing suburban development on the settlement edge.
- Ensure that historically important hedgerows, if present, should be retained³ and integrated into the development to provide time-depth/a sense of place.
- Further identify and evaluate the archaeological potential of the assessment area, although previous investigations suggest that it may be low. As such, a programme of archaeological works including desk-based research, field evaluation, and potentially mitigation, is likely to be required.⁴
- Seek to conserve and enhance the setting of Coombe House and its parkland by ensuring that built development does not interfere with the integrity or legibility of its historic parkland.
- Seek to conserve the rural settings of the grade II New Lane and non-designated Higher Wincombe Farm and Wincombe Park.

² Cranborne Chase AONB (2019), Cranborne Chase AONB Management Plan; 2019-2024.

³ In order to remove such a hedgerow an owner must serve notice on the local planning authority who then decides if it is 'important' and if so it is whether it should be retained.

⁴ Typically, mitigation would involve either targeted excavation or an archaeological watching brief, but for high value remains (even those not designated) preservation in-situ would be required. All investigation should be informed and approved by the local authority's archaeological advisor.

Assessment area: Shaftesbury B



Representative photographs



Landscape sensitivity assessment

Landscape character context				
<p>This assessment area falls within the Shaftesbury Greensand Ridges Landscape Character Area. It is adjacent to the Cranborne Chase & West Wiltshire Downs AONB. The assessment area comprises the land between Salisbury Road (A30) and Higher Blandford Road.</p>				
Assessment criterion	Description			Sensitivity score
Physical character (including topography and scale)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relatively flat, elevated topography with height of the land ranging between 185m and 195m AOD. Fields are small to medium sized and irregular in shape. Field boundaries are defined by relatively low-cut hedgerows, creating the perception of a more open, large-scale area. 			M
Natural character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land use is mixed arable and pasture agriculture, enclosed by low-cut hedgerows containing some mature trees. Fields within the assessment area are predominantly arable with some small areas used for pasture and equestrian use. 			L-M
Historic landscape character (<i>please see separate heritage assessment for asset-based information</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is one grade II listed farmhouse building in the north of the area on the A30. The HLC identifies most fields to be planned or regular enclosure of post-medieval date, although fields in the far south are identified to be other regular 19th century enclosure. 			L-M
Form, density and setting of existing development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The assessment area is primarily undeveloped, except for isolated residential properties along New Lane. The area is separated from existing settlement by the A30 and B3081, with the roads containing the existing development. The area provides rural setting for some residential properties along the A30 and the B3081. 			M-H
Views and visual character including skylines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The relatively low-cut hedgerows enable long-distance views to the south and east towards the Cranborne Chase & West Wiltshire Downs AONB. Mature hedgerow trees, residential properties on the settlement edge and a small-scale overhead power line mark the skyline. Topographical features such as hills to the south of the assessment area including Melbury Hill are prominent. The settlement edge to the north and north-west is visually prominent from much of the assessment area. 			M-H
Perceptual and experiential qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The area has a rural and isolated feel in the south, although in the north there is more association with existing settlement. Traffic along the A30 is visible and vehicles on the A30 and B3081 produce notable traffic noise. 			M
Overall assessment of landscape sensitivity				
L	L-M	M	M-H	H
<p>Landscape sensitivity is increased by the rural setting the area provides to existing settlement, open character with extensive undeveloped views to the south (including views to the AONB), frequent hedgerows with mature trees and the rural and isolated perceptual qualities of this area. Landscape sensitivity is reduced by the relatively flat topography and lack of designated habitats. Overall the assessment area has moderate-high landscape sensitivity.</p>				

Heritage sensitivity assessment

Dorset Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) context

The HLC data shows that the majority of the assessment area comprises planned or regular enclosure of post-medieval date, but there is a small area of paddocks and closes, to the west, that were enclosed in the 19th century. The older enclosures have some time-depth and may contain hedgerows that qualify as historically important under the 1997 Hedgerow Regulations. If present, such hedgerows are typically regarded as low value heritage assets that would be susceptible to physical change. The historic landscape has some further value as it forms part of the setting of nearby heritage assets (discussed below).

Description and significance of heritage assets present

A definitive list of assets within each study area is provided at Appendix 1 in the Stage 2 methodology report. Only assets judged to be of a level of significance likely to influence the planning process are discussed below.

Designated assets within the assessment area:

- New Lane Farmhouse including dwarf wall and railings – grade II listed building [1261255]

High importance

Non-designated assets within the assessment area:

- Site of former orchard associated with New Lane Farmhouse [MDO28037]

Negligible importance

Likely susceptibility to physical change as a result of development

New Lane Farmhouse and its outbuildings would be susceptible to physical change or total loss. However, it is assumed that this would be unlikely as, in accordance with Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, special regard must be given by the decision maker to the desirability of preserving a listed building and its setting.

The only HER record within the assessment area pertains to New Lane Farmhouse's former orchard. This is of little archaeological (evidential) interest in itself, but tree rooting may have caused damage to any hitherto unknown archaeological deposits, if present.

There is evidence of multi-period activity in the wider area, which in tandem with the largely undeveloped nature of the assessment area means that there is some potential for hitherto unknown archaeological remains within the assessment area. Any such remains would be highly susceptible to truncation or total loss.

Likely susceptibility to setting change as a result of development

Designated assets with the potential to experience setting change:

- New Lane Farmhouse including dwarf wall and railings – grade II listed building [1261255]

High importance

This early 19th century farmhouse derives its heritage significance from a combination of its aesthetic and historical (illustrative) values. It has been converted to residential use with a garden and driveway and has lost at least one of its historic outbuildings. Those that remain may be curtilage listed. Cottages to the west (on the opposite side of New Lane) may have once also been associated with the farmhouse, but this is unclear. In addition to these buildings, the farmhouse would have also had a functional and historical relationship with its agricultural hinterland. Loss of its associated buildings or agricultural hinterland, or change to its relationship with either, would result in harm to its heritage significance.

- Cann Farmhouse [1110323], Stables [1172348] and Barn and outbuilding [1110324] – grade II listed buildings

High importance

A mid-19th century farmhouse and associated outbuildings set out in a regular courtyard plan. The heritage significance of these assets is derived from a combination of their aesthetic and historical (illustrative) values. The stable block has been converted into residential use, but otherwise the farm's setting remains

relatively intact. The assessment area lies to the north-east on the opposite side of the B3081. It includes agricultural land that has a historic and functional relationship with Cann Farm, however, the legibility of this is diminished due to intervening vegetation and built development, and the orientation and layout of Cann Farm buildings. As such, its development would be unlikely to meaningfully affect the legibility of the farm but would put pressure on its remaining agricultural setting.

- Mayo Cottage – grade II listed building [1110322]

High importance

This early 19th century cottage derives its heritage significance from a combination of its aesthetic and historical (illustrative) values. It appears to be a former worker’s cottage belonging to Mayo Farm, which comprises a number of historic buildings (albeit in modified form/layout and with new additions). The cottage has an important functional and historical relationship with the surviving historical buildings, and also the surrounding agricultural landscape, although this is not extensive as it is located at the end of a row of modern development along the B3081. The assessment area lies directly opposite the asset on the opposite side of the B3081 with limited intervisibility between the two at present – as there is an intervening hedgerow. Development within it would further envelope the cottage – and the farm which may be considered to be a non-designated asset – in built development, further eroding the legibility of their rural origins.

- Cannfield Farm – grade II listed building [1305175]

High importance

This early to mid-19th century farmhouse derives its heritage significance from a combination of its aesthetic and historic (illustrative) values. In terms of setting it has key historical and functional relationships with the surrounding agricultural land and the road leading to it; it does not appear to retain any of its historic outbuildings. Development of the assessment area would not harm the heritage significance of the asset, but would place pressure on the remaining agricultural land surrounding the farm.

Non-designated assets with the potential to experience setting change:

- Boyne Villa

Low importance

Evident on the First Edition OS map this country villa derives its heritage significance from a combination of its aesthetic and historical (illustrative) values. The rural setting of this asset contributes to its legibility as a higher status home, albeit not in a deliberately designed manner. Lying at the south-west corner of the assessment area it would lose some of its rural setting in the event of development; this would have a low effect on its legibility.

- Mayo Farm

Low importance

The farm associated with the grade II listed Mayo Cottage and has a historic and functional relationship with the surrounding agricultural landscape. It has been modified but retains some of its historic buildings and form and has a relationship historically with the listed cottage, which would have housed workers employed on the farm. This is discussed in more detail under the Mayo Cottage description (above).

Overall assessment of sensitivity of heritage assets to change within the area

L	L-M	M	M-H	H
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If development were to result in the loss of the grade II listed New Lane Farm or, if curtilage listed, any of its outbuildings, the effect would be high. However, it is assumed that it and any curtilage listed buildings would be retained. On this basis, New Lane Farm remains the key sensitivity of the assessment area but only in relation to setting change, which could arise through the loss or modification of its relationship with its historic outbuildings and agricultural hinterland. Other designated assets - the grade II listed Mayo Cottage and Cann Farm (including farmhouse, stables, barn and outbuilding) – and the non-designated Boyne Villa could be at risk of lower-level harm resulting from setting change. There is also a potential for physical effects to historically important hedgerows, or hitherto unknown archaeological remains. Overall, the area has **moderate-high** sensitivity.

Summary of key sensitivities and guidelines for sustainable development

Summary of key sensitivities

The following provides a summary of the key landscape and heritage sensitivities within the assessment area:

- Undeveloped rural character, providing setting for the adjacent existing settlement.
- Hedgerow boundaries which include some mature hedgerow trees.
- Extensive views particularly to the south, which extend towards distinctive topographical features such as Melbury Hill and the Cranborne Chase & West Wiltshire Downs AONB.
- Rural and isolated perceptual qualities.
- Potential for historically important hedgerows that would be susceptible to physical change/total loss.
- Potential for hitherto unknown archaeological remains that would be susceptible to physical change/total loss.
- Risk of harm to the setting of the grade II listed New Lane Farmhouse.
- Risk of setting change to the grade II listed Mayo Cottage and non-designated Mayo Farm and Boyne Villa.

Guidelines

This area is adjacent to the Cranborne Chase & West Wiltshire Downs AONB, a nationally designated landscape where there is a presumption against major development. Any development may have an impact on the character and special qualities of the AONB. Therefore, the guidance below should be closely followed.

Any new development should:

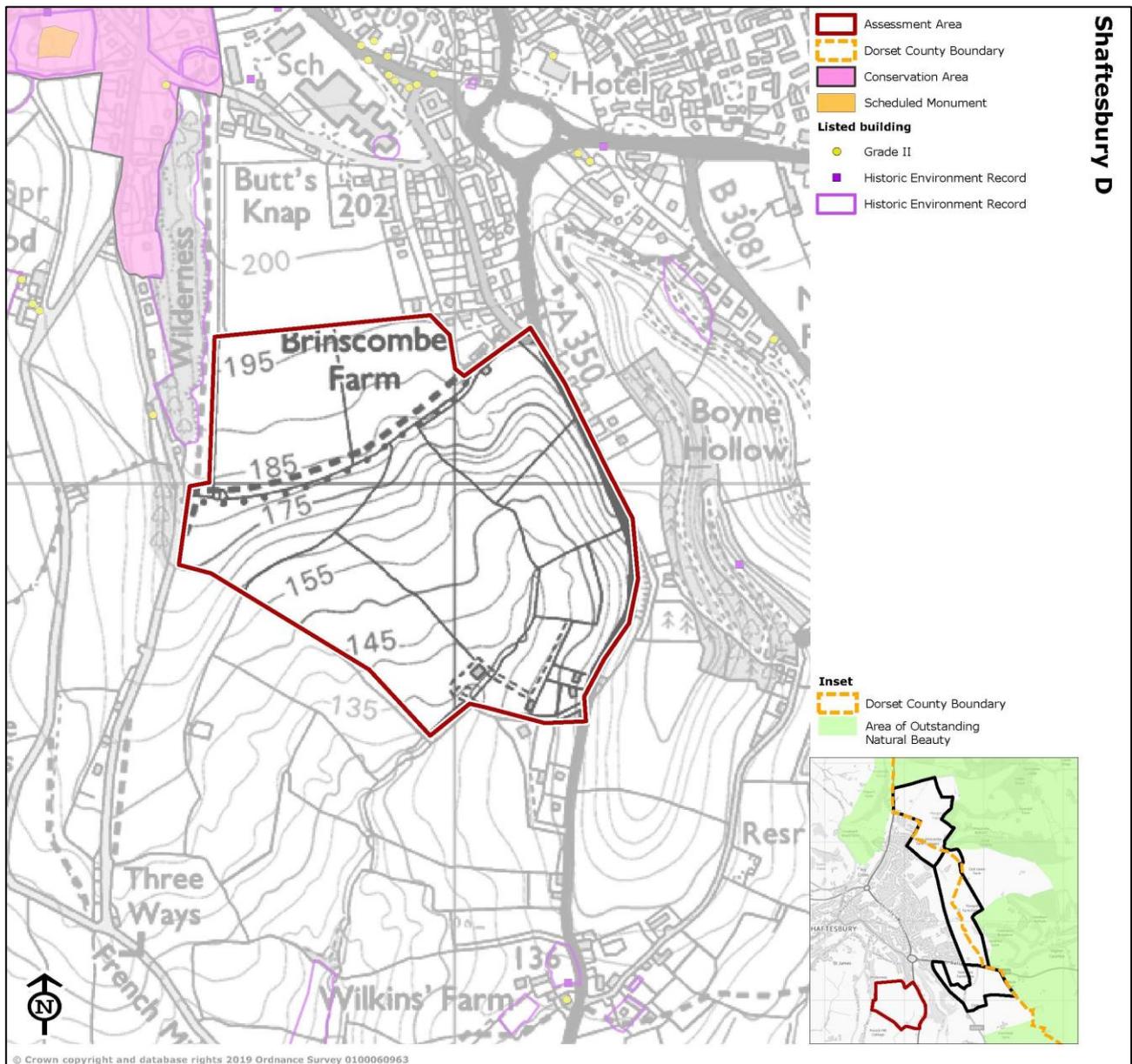
- Protect and conserve hedgerow boundaries and mature trees which contribute to the natural character and structure of the landscape.
- Ensure it does not adversely affect the special qualities of the Cranborne Chase & West Wiltshire Downs AONB including: the tranquil unspoilt qualities of the area, wide expansive skies, rich land use history, local vernacular building styles or strong sense of place.⁵
- Ensure that it does not screen or detract from important views to the south.
- Seek to retain any hedgerows that qualify as historically important⁶ in order to help create a sense of place.
- Further investigate and characterise the archaeological potential of the assessment area via desk-based research and, if necessary field evaluation, to inform an appropriate mitigation strategy.⁷
- Retain New Lane Farmhouse and seek to preserve its setting by maintaining its relationships with its historical outbuildings and agricultural hinterland.
- Seek to preserve the setting elements of the grade II listed Mayo Cottage and non-designated Mayo Farm and Boyne Villa that contribute to the heritage significance e.g. their agricultural/rural hinterland.

⁵ Cranborne Chase AONB (2019), Cranborne Chase AONB Management Plan; 2019-2024.

⁶ In order to remove such a hedgerow an owner must serve notice on the local planning authority who then decides if it is 'important' and if so it is whether it should be retained.

⁷ Typically, mitigation would involve either targeted excavation or an archaeological watching brief, but for high value remains (even those not designated) preservation in-situ would be required. All investigation should be informed and approved by the local authority's archaeological advisor.

Assessment area: Shaftesbury D



Representative photographs



Landscape sensitivity assessment

Landscape character context				
This assessment area falls within the Shaftesbury Greensand Ridges Landscaper Character Area and a small part of the North Blackmore Rolling Vales Landscape Character Area in the south. This area comprises land between the A350 and French Mill Lane.				
Assessment criterion	Description			Sensitivity score
Physical character (including topography and scale)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Steeply sloping topography ranging in elevation from 135m to 195m AOD. A small stream carves the valley in the south of the assessment area. Fields are small to medium in size. 			H
Natural character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fields are mainly pastoral with some horse paddocks. Fields are divided by hedgerows with mature trees. There are also a number of mature in-field trees. There is a small pond and stream at the bottom of the valley which are likely to be of ecological value. 			L-M
Historic landscape character (<i>please see separate heritage assessment for asset-based information</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The assessment area is close to Shaftesbury Conservation Area (located to the north-west), although woodland between the assessment area and the conservation area limits intervisibility. The HLC identifies field patterns as regular enclosed fields of post-medieval origin. 			L-M
Form, density and setting of existing development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The assessment area is unsettled, with structures limited to a few scattered residential buildings in the south. Existing settlement in Shaftesbury is located on higher ground and rarely extends down slopes. The undeveloped slopes of the assessment area contribute to the hilltop setting of Shaftesbury in views from the wider landscape. 			M-H
Views and visual character including skylines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skylines are undeveloped and marked by hedgerow trees and clumps of woodland. Views from the higher ground in the north and west (including from the footpath running east to west) are long-reaching. These overlook the undeveloped valley to the south, and extend to the Cranborne Chase & West Wiltshire Downs AONB, including the landmark feature of Melbury Hill to the south. There is limited visibility of properties on the settlement edge to the north from the assessment area. 			M-H
Perceptual and experiential qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The area is rural and removed with the valley having a secluded and tranquil character. The enclosed valley landform gives the area an intimate feel, which could be perceived as remote and isolated from existing settlement in Shaftesbury. There is localised traffic noise from the A350. 			M-H
Overall assessment of landscape sensitivity				
L	L-M	M	M-H	H
Sensitive characteristics of the assessment area include its steep, stream valley topography with extended views to the south. The area is largely undeveloped with a small-moderate scale irregular field pattern divided by ecologically important hedgerows. It is isolated from existing development with high levels of tranquillity. Overall, the assessment area has high landscape sensitivity. The land to the north of the public footpath has a flatter landform and is more visually enclosed, reducing landscape sensitivity in this localised part of the assessment area.				

Heritage sensitivity assessment

Dorset Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) context

The HLC data states that the majority of the assessment area comprises regular enclosed fields of post-medieval date with a small area of medieval piecemeal enclosure in the south-eastern corner. This fieldscape is therefore of mixed time-depth and may feature hedgerows that qualify as historically important as per the 1997 Hedgerow Regulations. If present, such hedgerows are typically considered to be of low value and would be susceptible to physical change. The historic landscape has some further value as it forms part of the setting of nearby heritage assets (discussed below).

Description and significance of heritage assets present

A definitive list of assets within each study area is provided at Appendix 1 in the Stage 2 methodology report. Only assets judged to be of a level of significance likely to influence the planning process are discussed below.

There are no designated assets within the assessment area.

There are no non-designated assets within the assessment area.

Likely susceptibility to physical change as a result of development

Whilst there are no archaeological assets recorded within the assessment area an absence of evidence is not the same as evidence of absence, and there is evidence of multi-period activity in the wider area, which in tandem with the undeveloped nature of the assessment area, suggests a potential for hitherto unknown archaeological remains. If present, such remains would be highly susceptible to truncation or total loss.

Likely susceptibility to setting change as a result of development

Designated assets with the potential to experience setting change:

- Shaftesbury Conservation Area

High importance

Shaftesbury Conservation Area takes in the historic core of this settlement. It is focused around the scheduled remains of the Abbey and the associated Saxon burh, located on a prominent defensible greensand spur and includes a large number of mainly vernacular historic buildings, most of which date from the 17th to 19th centuries. At its closest, the conservation area lies approximately 130m north-west of the assessment area, along French Mill Lane, one of the rural approaches to the settlement. This part of the conservation area has a semi-rural feel, with low density development and glimpsed views out towards open countryside from within its boundaries. Development could change this by part urbanising one of the approaches. From the main part of the conservation area there are wide-ranging views, including towards the assessment area. However, intervening topography and woodland provide screening to the lower and flatter parts of the assessment area. On the hill slope the introduction of intervisible built development could challenge the legibility of the historic settlement and its origins.

- Stone House – grade II listed building [1324770]

High importance

A late 18th to early 19th century house (formerly known as Southeast Cottages) deriving significance from a combination of its aesthetic and historical illustrative values. The asset has no known relationship with the assessment area and would be unaffected by its development.

Non-designated assets with the potential to experience setting change:

- Hawkesdene Farm

Low importance

This 18th-19th century farm – now converted to residential use – derives its heritage significance from a combination of aesthetic and historical illustrative values. This former outlying farmstead now lies on the settlement fringe approximately 350m to the north of the assessment area. In terms of setting, the layout and form of the farmstead appears to have been modified and its rural hinterland has been lost to Shaftesbury School and College. Development of the assessment area is unlikely to meaningfully affect the farms heritage significance.

- Brinscombe Farm

Low importance

This 18th-19th century farm derives its heritage significance from a combination of aesthetic and historic illustrative values. Although formerly outlying, this farmstead now lies on the settlement fringe immediately east of the assessment area. In terms of setting, the layout and form of the farmstead appears to have been modified and its rural hinterland has been reduced by modern development along Lower Blandford Road and Hawkesdene, which now abuts the farm to the north and east. Development of the assessment area would effectively remove all of its remaining agricultural land, encircling the asset in modern development and reducing its legibility.

Overall assessment of sensitivity of heritage assets to change within the area

L	L-M	M	M-H	H
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The overall sensitivity of this assessment area is judged to be **moderate**. This derives from the potential for setting change to Shaftesbury Conservation Area and the non-designated Brinscombe Farm. There is also a potential for historically important hedgerows and hitherto unknown archaeological remains that would be susceptible to physical change.

Summary of key sensitivities and guidelines for sustainable development

Summary of key sensitivities

The following provides a summary of the key landscape and heritage sensitivities within the assessment area:

- The steep stream valley landform encloses the area and creates an intimate and isolated landscape character.
- Interconnected hedgerow network with frequent mature hedgerow trees.
- Largely unsettled character, which is isolated from much of the existing settlement and the rest of Shaftesbury.
- Long-distance views overlooking the lower topography of the valley to the south.
- Undeveloped skylines with landscape features such as hills to the south, are prominent in views and include Melbury Hill, the top of which, Melbury Beacon is a scheduled monument.
- Tranquil and remote perceptual qualities.
- Potential for historically important hedgerows that would be susceptible to physical change/total loss.
- Potential for hitherto unknown archaeological remains that would be susceptible to physical change/total loss.
- Risk of setting harm to Shaftesbury Conservation Area, albeit at the lower end of less than substantial harm.
- Risk of setting harm to the non-designated Brinscombe Farm.

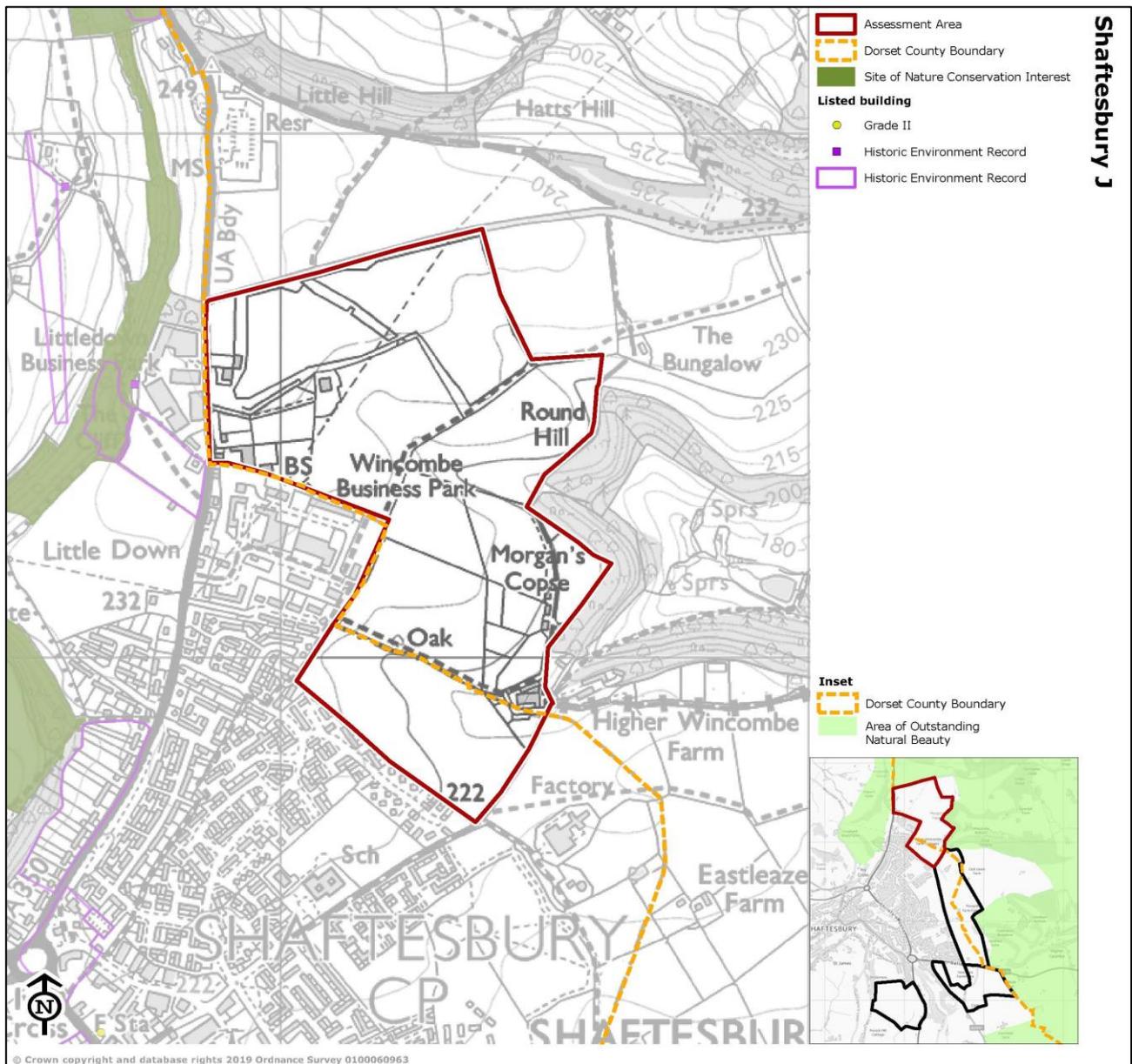
Guidelines

Any new development should:

- Avoid development on the highly visible sloping areas where development would be visually prominent and out of keeping with the existing settlement pattern.
- Protect the network of existing hedgerow boundaries and the mature trees which contribute to the natural character and structure of the landscape.
- Ensure it does not screen or detract from the views to the important topographic features to the south including parts of the Cranborne Chase & West Wiltshire Downs AONB.
- Preserve the isolated, rural and remote character of the assessment area.
- Seek to retain any hedgerows that qualify as historically important⁸ in order to help create a sense of place.
- Further investigate and characterise the archaeological potential of the assessment area via desk-based research and, if necessary field evaluation, to inform an appropriate mitigation strategy. Typically, mitigation would involve either targeted excavation or an archaeological watching brief, but for high value remains (even those not designated) preservation in-situ would be required. All investigation should be informed and approved by the local authority's archaeological advisor.
- Seek to avoid harm to Shaftesbury Conservation Area by ensuring that development is not sited on a neighbouring hill slope. A conservation area appraisal or management plan should be prepared to inform development proposals and decisions.
- Seek to preserve the elements of setting that contribute to the heritage significance of Brinscombe Farm, e.g. its rural hinterland.

⁸ In order to remove such a hedgerow an owner must serve notice on the local planning authority who then decides if it is 'important' and if so it is whether it should be retained.

Assessment area: Shaftesbury J



Representative photographs



Landscape sensitivity assessment

Landscape character context				
<p>The assessment area is located to the north-east of Shaftesbury, between the A350 and Higher Wincombe Farm. The area is mostly located within the county of Wiltshire and forms part of the Donhead-Fovant Greensand Hills Landscape Character Area. Parts of the assessment area in the former North Dorset District are within the Shaftesbury Greensand Ridges Landscape Character Area. This land abuts the Cranborne Chase & West Wiltshire Downs AONB to the west, north and east.</p>				
Assessment criterion	Description	Sensitivity score		
Physical character (including topography and scale)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gently sloping ground with elevation ranging between 225m and 245m AOD, with the higher ground in the north. Land cover is mostly medium-sized pasture fields; with low hedgerows giving the area an open character 	M		
Natural character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agriculture is mostly pasture divided by hedgerows. These are gappy in places and many have been removed. Adjacent woodland at Morgan's Copse includes ancient semi-natural woodland and BAP priority habitat deciduous woodland. Marginal parts of these woodlands cross into the area. 	L-M		
Historic landscape character (<i>please see separate heritage assessment for asset-based information</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The HLC identifies fields in the north to be semi-irregular planned enclosure of post-medieval origin, whilst fields in the south are thought to be irregular reorganised fields of modern origin. 	L-M		
Form, density and setting of existing development ⁹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The assessment area is undeveloped with structures limited to Higher Wincombe Farm in the south-east and a solar farm in the north-west corner. Littledown Business Park and Wincombe Business Park is located to the west and contains large warehouse buildings. The north of area is poorly connected to residential parts of Shaftesbury. Elevated parts of the assessment area provide undeveloped setting to suburban development on the eastern edge of Shaftesbury. 	M		
Views and visual character including skylines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Infrequent mature hedgerow trees and small-scale overhead lines characterise skylines. Residential parts of Shaftesbury and a communication tower are visible on skylines to the south of the area. There are long-distance views extending to the south including to the Cranborne Chase & West Wiltshire Downs AONB. As the area is surrounded by the AONB, there are views across the area from one part of the AONB to another. The solar farm is visually screened by hedgerows. 	M-H		
Perceptual and experiential qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The area has open agricultural perceptual qualities. The solar panels detract from the otherwise undeveloped landscape character, although they are relatively visually enclosed. Neighbouring business parks also detract from the rural character of the area. 	M		
Overall assessment of landscape sensitivity				
L	L-M	M	M-H	H
<p>Key sensitivities of the landscape include its gently sloping landform, adjacent areas of ancient BAP priority habitat deciduous woodlands, the undeveloped character of the area with a limited relationship to existing settlement and long-distance views towards the Cranborne Chase & West Wiltshire Downs AONB. The overall landscape sensitivity is reduced by features such as the solar farm in the north and the lack of designated or priority habitats within the assessment area. Overall, the assessment area has</p>				

⁹ There are two existing planning applications directly outside the south west (2/2018/1418/REM) and southeast (2/2014/1350/FUL) of this assessment area. 2/2018/1418/REM is for 170 dwellings, 2/2014/1350/FUL is for 191 dwellings; both applications have been approved. Development may alter the character of this area and may subsequently impact on the sensitivity to residential development.

moderate landscape sensitivity.

Heritage sensitivity assessment

Dorset Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) context

The HLC indicates that the majority of the assessment area comprises planned enclosure of post-medieval to modern date with some reorganised piecemeal enclosure of post-medieval date adjacent to Wincombe Park. As such the historic landscape has some limited time-depth and a potential for hedgerows that may qualify as historically important.¹⁰ If present, such hedgerows would be susceptible to physical change as a result of development. The historic landscape has some further value as it forms part of the setting of nearby heritage assets (discussed below).

Description and significance of heritage assets present

A definitive list of assets within each study area is provided at Appendix 1 in the Stage 2 methodology report. Only assets judged to be of a level of significance likely to influence the planning process are discussed below.

There are no designated assets within the assessment area.

Non-designated assets within the assessment area:

- Undated ditches [MWI74320]
Low importance
- Field boundaries [MWI74319]
Low importance

Likely susceptibility to physical change as a result of development

The northern quarter of the assessment area has been subject to archaeological investigation revealing features interpreted as ditches and field boundaries, which are of low evidential value. These have been built over by a solar panel farm, but may continue beyond the investigated area. A further pipeline evaluation passing through the centre of the assessment area appears to have proved negative along this stretch as there are no related HER records indicating features or finds. This suggests a low archaeological potential but further investigation is still likely to be required given that any archaeology would be susceptible to truncation/total loss.

Likely susceptibility to setting change as a result of development

Designated assets with the potential to experience setting change:

- Thane's Farmhouse - grade II listed building [1110285]

High importance

Mid-18th century farmhouse with later alterations and additions, deriving its heritage significance from a combination of aesthetic and historic illustrative values. In terms of setting it has an important functional and historical relationship with its outbuildings and agricultural hinterland. Development of the assessment area – approximately 385m east - would not affect these relationships, or its heritage significance.

- Wincombe Park – grade II listed building [1146083]

High importance

Early 19th century country house deriving significance from its aesthetic and historic (illustrative and associative) value. In terms of setting it has an important designed relationship with its wooded parkland, which features two lakes and expansive long-ranging views. Due to the orientation of the house and intervening topography and woodland there is no intervisibility between the assessment area and the house at present – but in the event of development there is the risk that built form could be visible above the tree-line as Wincombe House and Park sits in a dry valley below the assessment area. Further to this, development of the assessment area would place modern built development adjacent to the western edge of the parkland – a non-designated asset in its own right - and begin to erode its legibility as a country estate.

¹⁰ As per the 1997 Hedgerow Regulations.

- Castle Rings Camp – scheduled monument [1005698]

High importance

A hillfort and cross dyke comprising a rare combination of multi-period archaeological remains that are of high evidential value, as reflected by its scheduled status. Located on a broad plateau called Tittle Path Hill overlooking the valleys of the River Nadder and two of its tributaries, the topographical siting of the camp is important in understanding the monument’s symbolic and strategic significance. Intervisibility between the asset and assessment area is limited by intervening topography and vegetation. However, as the assessment area has no meaningful relationship with the asset, nor disrupts any such meaningful relationships, its development would be unlikely to affect the heritage significance of the asset.

Non-designated assets with the potential to experience setting change:

- Higher Wincombe Farm, Donhead St Mary [MWI64988]

Low importance

This non-designated 19th century farmstead derives its heritage significance from a combination of aesthetic and historical (illustrative) values. It comprises an L-plan regular courtyard with agricultural buildings on three sides; of these there has been some partial loss and the barn has been converted to residential use. The farmhouse is set away from the yard. The farm complex lies to the east of the assessment area, immediately adjacent to Wincombe Park and is set back from the road behind trees. Although enclosed, with modern agricultural buildings further limiting intervisibility between the asset and assessment area, it retains a largely rural setting. Development of the assessment area would reduce the agricultural setting of the farm, diminishing its legibility as an outlying rural farmstead.

Overall assessment of sensitivity of heritage assets to change within the area

L	L-M	M	M-H	H
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The overall sensitivity of this assessment area is **low to moderate**. This derives primarily from the parkland belonging to the grade II listed Wincombe Park being susceptible to setting change. The non-designated Higher Wincombe Farm would similarly be vulnerable. There is also the risk of truncation or total loss of known archaeological assets of low importance. Any potential historically important hedgerows and/or hitherto unknown archaeological remains would be at similar risk.

Summary of key sensitivities and guidelines for sustainable development

Summary of key sensitivities

The following provides a summary of the key landscape and heritage sensitivities within the assessment area:

- Open and visually prominent sloping landform.
- BAP priority habitat deciduous woodlands and the network of hedgerows which contribute to natural character and the structure of the landscape.
- Undeveloped rural character, with a sense of isolation from existing residential development in Shaftesbury.
- Extensive undeveloped views to the south and east including parts of the Cranborne Chase & West Wiltshire Downs AONB.
- Potential for historically important hedgerows that would be susceptible to physical change/total loss.
- Potential for hitherto unknown archaeological remains that would be susceptible to physical change/total loss.
- Risk of setting harm to designated assets including Wincombe Park and the non-designated Higher Wincombe Farm.

Guidelines

The assessment area is adjacent to the Cranborne Chase & West Wiltshire Downs AONB, a nationally designated landscape where there is a presumption against major development. Any development may have an impact on the character and special qualities of the AONB. Therefore, the guidance below should be closely followed.

Any new development should:

- Avoid development of visually prominent slopes which would be out of character with the existing settlement pattern and isolated from existing settlement.
- Protect and conserve the existing BAP priority habitat deciduous woodlands and the network of hedgerows.
- Ensure it does not adversely affect the special qualities of the Cranborne Chase & West Wiltshire Downs AONB including: the tranquil unspoilt qualities of the area, wide expansive skies, rich land use history, local vernacular building styles or strong sense of place.¹¹
- Respect the rural setting provided to existing settlement on the eastern settlement edge of Shaftesbury.
- Retain undeveloped skylines and ensure it does not screen or detract from views, including views of the Cranborne Chase & West Wiltshire Downs AONB.
- Seek to conserve and enhance the setting of Wincombe Park, Higher Wincombe Farm and the associated parkland by ensuring that built development does not result in physical loss of historic parkland, nor erode the estate's rural setting.
- Ensure that historically important hedgerows, if present, could be retained and integrated into the development to provide time-depth/a sense of place.
- Further identify and evaluate the archaeological potential of the assessment area, although previous investigations suggest that this is probably low.

¹¹ Cranborne Chase AONB (2019), Cranborne Chase AONB Management Plan; 2019-2024.

Potential in-combination effects on heritage assets

Development of Assessment Areas A and J could potentially give rise to in-combination effects on the non-designated parkland belonging to the grade II listed Wincombe Park, by diminishing its rural setting and legibility. The significance of the non-designated Higher Wincombe Farm could be similarly affected.

Development of Assessment Areas A and B could potentially give rise to in-combination effects on the grade II listed New Lane Farmhouse, which if retained, could be fully enveloped by modern development resulting in complete loss of its agricultural setting and potentially related buildings, affecting its legibility as a rural farmhouse. Such harm would likely be significant.

Appendix 1: Historic environment assets within the assessment areas

Location*	Asset Type	Reference	Name	Grade
Shaftesbury B	Listed Building	1261255	New Lane Farmhouse including dwarf wall and railings	II
Shaftesbury B	Monument	MDO27981	Former quarry, near New Lane Farm, Shaftesbury	Non-designated
Shaftesbury B	Monument	MDO28037	Former orchard, New Lane Farm, Shaftesbury	Non-designated
Shaftesbury J	Monument	MWI74319	Field Boundary, Littledown	Non-designated
Shaftesbury J	Monument	MWI74320	Undated Ditches, Littledown	Non-designated

*No assets recorded by the NHLE or HER were identified within the Shaftesbury A or D assessment areas.