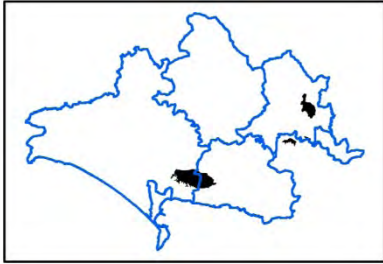






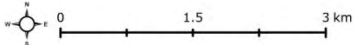
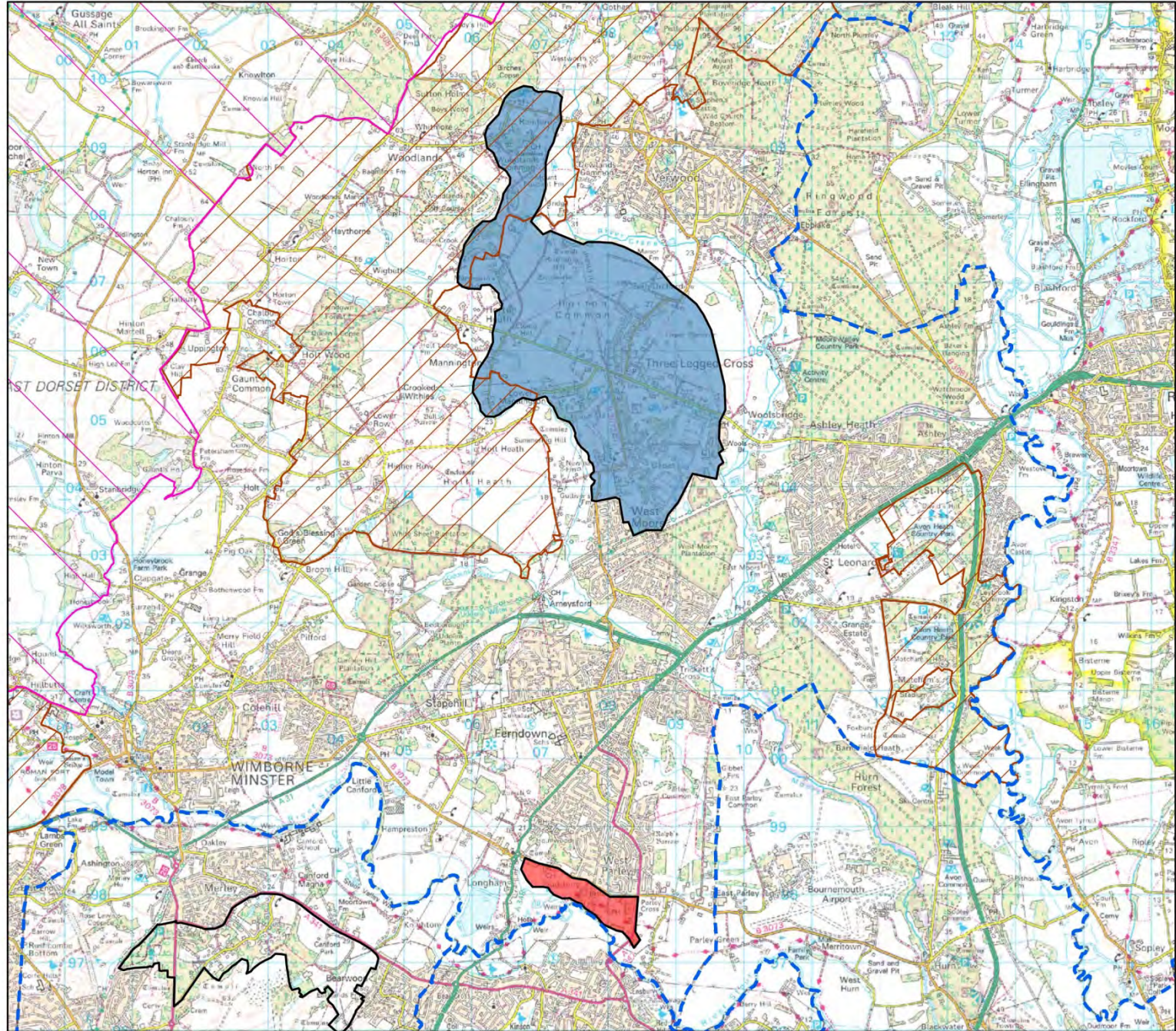


Landscape character type: Heath/Farmland Mosaic



-  District boundary
-  AONB
-  Area of Great Landscape Value
- Dorset Landscape Character Type**
-  4. Heath/Farmland Mosaic
- East Dorset Landscape Character Area**
-  4A - Dudsbury Ridge
-  4B - Horton Common - Three Legged Cross



Heath/Farmland Mosaic LCT overview

This LCT occurs in four isolated locations within Purbeck, East Dorset and Poole, and is described as being *"a transitional area between the chalk landscapes, river valleys and other heathland landscape types"*. In East Dorset there are two LCAs: a small area of higher ground alongside the Stour river valley and a larger area centred on Three Legged Cross.

Heath/Farmland Mosaic LCT characteristics by susceptibility criteria

Scale and complexity of landform:

"Generally flat landform, which drains to the adjacent river basins."

"There are a number of important elevated areas such as at ... Dudsbury Hill"

Scale and complexity of land use and field pattern:

"...mixed farmed area interspersed with a mosaic of heathland and scrub which all combine to create a patchwork landscape. The farmed landscape does include some intensive estate managed farmland where the medium sized fields have dense hedges and some important hedgerow trees and small copses."

"plantations and tree belts across the area also form key features and do help to soften urban edges and uses in places"

The most extensive areas of heathland are in the Purbeck and West Dorset districts, but there are also sizeable fragments in East Dorset.

Visual exposure:

There are a number of open and more elevated areas with views across the wider landscape. The Heath/Farmland LCAs within East Dorset do not adjoin any significantly higher ground, but there is some exposure associated with the higher ground within the LCT.

Development and activity:

"...impacted on by transport corridors, mineral extraction, other urban developments, such as recreational /leisure/retail centres and urban fringe land uses which all fragment the area creating a disjointed perception particularly in the east of the county where the urban edges abut the landscape."

Heath/Farmland Mosaic LCT value characteristics

This LCT is for the most part undesignated in landscape terms, but small parts of the Horton Common – Three Legged Cross LCA lie within the Woodlands AGLV.

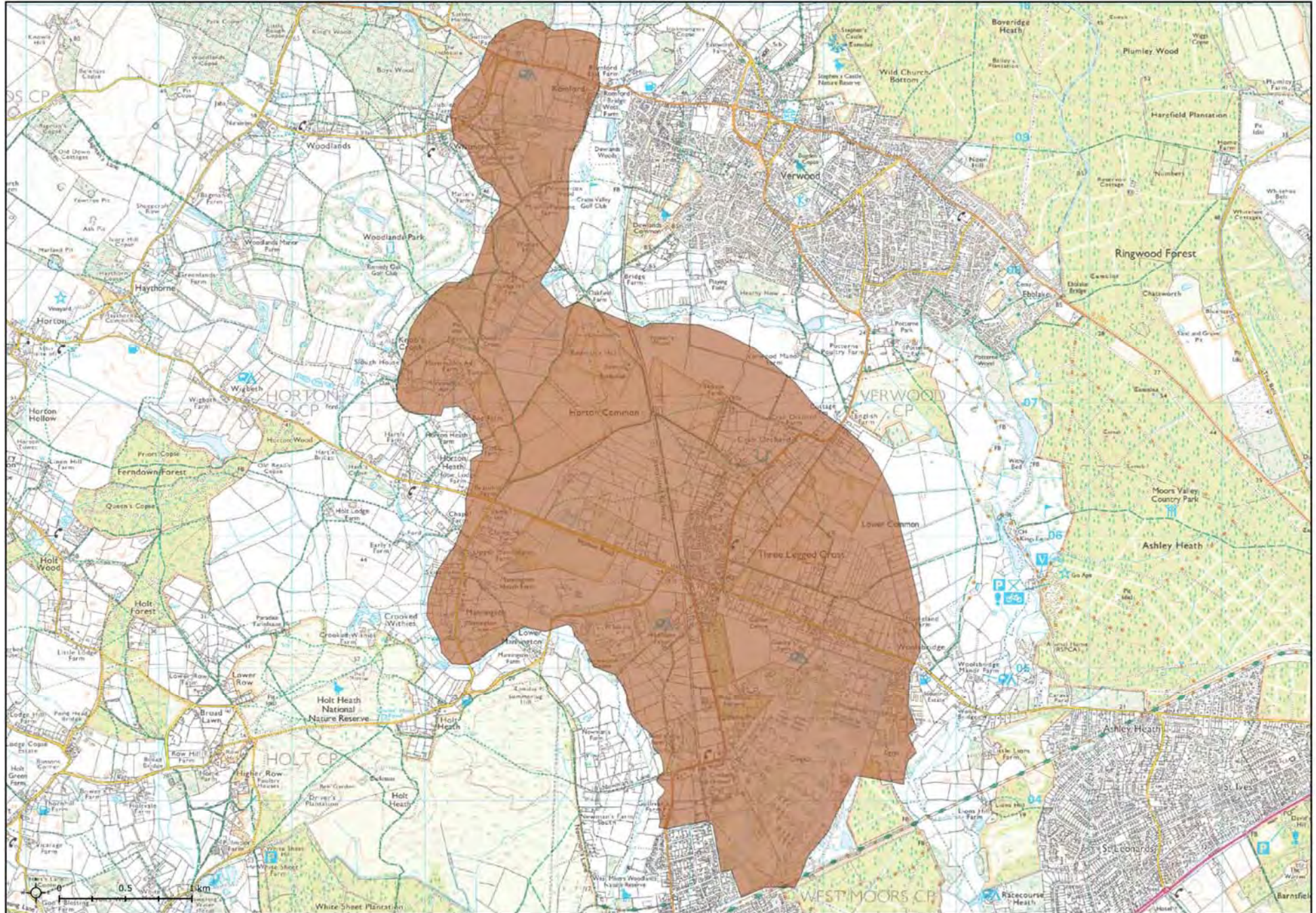
The overall management objective for the LCT, to *"reduce heathland fragmentation, control and enhance urban fringe uses and hard edges, manage and enhance all existing tree belts and promote informal recreation"*, reflects the landscape value of remaining heathlands, and potential recreational value, but also suggests that value has been lost through built development.

"There are a number of important elevated areas such as at Dudsbury Hill ... which form key local landscape features"

Heath/Farmland Mosaic LCT sensitivity to wind energy	Heath/Farmland Mosaic LCT sensitivity to solar PV energy
<p>There is little similarity between the two areas of Heath/Farmland Mosaic in East Dorset, other than that the degree of development and activity reduce sensitivity in one respect but also increase sensitivity to larger developments which could appear out of scale with the settled landscape. Remnant heathlands will typically be more sensitive than cultivated landscapes, and where visual exposure is low and there is not a strong sense of a homogeneous landscape character sensitivity to development is reduced.</p>	<p>There is little similarity between the two areas of Heath/Farmland Mosaic in East Dorset, other than that the degree of development and activity reduce sensitivity in one respect but increase sensitivity to larger developments which could appear out of scale with the settled landscape. Remnant heathlands, and to an extent areas which still retain some potential for reversion to heathland, will be sensitive to development but where there are areas of level ground, a patchwork of land uses and good screening hedges and trees the sensitivity to development is relatively low.</p>

Landscape character area: Horton Wood Common – Three Legged Cross

Area: 1237 hectares



Horton Common – Three Legged Cross LCA characteristics by susceptibility criteria

Scale and complexity of landform:

“Undulating land rising towards the north”

Scale and complexity of land use and field pattern:

“...contains both remnant open as well as farmed heath”

“Agriculture is a mixture of marginal farming, horticulture and pasture. Farms are set within an irregular mosaic of heath and scrub, with woodland clumps and roadside trees contributing to the area’s character.”

Field sizes vary considerably, from large open arable fields to small, contained pastures, but most are geometric in form.

Visual exposure:

There is not a strong visual interrelationship between this LCA and its surroundings. Woodlands on higher ground to the east (Ringwood Forest) and west (the Woodlands – Colehill LCA) form a fairly flat, distant horizon in views, with pylon lines typically forming an intrusive element, and there is little intervisibility between the LCA and adjacent lower river terrace, river valley and heathland areas.

Development and activity:

“[The area contains] two significant developments; one being the housing area centred upon Three Legged Cross the other the MoD Petroleum Depot at West Moors”

“Ribbon development ... Small scale industrial uses at the urban fringe”

A number of pylon lines cross the LCA.

Horton Common – Three Legged Cross LCA value characteristics

The majority of the LCA is undesignated in landscape terms but the northern tip of the area, between Romford and Monmouth’s Ash, and a small area around the village of Mannington, form part of the eastern edge of the Woodlands AGLV.

Redman’s Hill, a distinctive landform at the northern end of Horton Common, is noted as a key feature, but the other elements noted as key features are all modern developments which detract from landscape value: Three Legged Cross developments, Woolsbridge Industrial Estate and the West Moors MoD Petroleum site.

There are a number of open access commons in the LCA.

Horton Common – Three Legged Cross LCA sensitivity to wind energy

		Turbine height (m)			
		≤35	≤65	≤99	>99
Cluster size	1	LM	M	MH	H
	2-4	M	MH	H	H
	>4		H	H	H

Horton Common – Three Legged Cross LCA sensitivity to solar PV energy

		Development size (ha)
	≤1	L
	≤10	LM
	≤30	M
	>30	H

Horton Common – Three Legged Cross LCA sensitivity to wind energy

Sensitivity to the introduction of single turbines less than 35m high is **low-moderate**. Sensitivity to 2-4 turbines of this height or a single turbine up to 65m high is **moderate**. Sensitivity to 2-4 turbines 35-65m high or to single turbines 66-99m high is **moderate-high**. Sensitivity to larger scales of wind energy development is **high**.

The characteristics of the LCA with regard to topography and development/activity suggest a relatively low level of sensitivity to wind energy development but the small scale of most of this well-settled, well-treed landscape increases sensitivity to larger developments. Visually the extent of tree cover will limit sensitivity to smaller turbines, and in longer views larger turbines will typically appear against a backdrop of distant trees, but locally the extent of settlement will elevate sensitivity to large scale schemes. Large turbines would also appear as a backdrop to views from the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB to the west.

Sensitivity could be higher where:

- Location is Open Access land;
- Location is on the western fringe of the LCA, within the area designated by East Dorset District as the Woodlands AGLV;
- Location is prominent in views from the Cranborne Chase & West Wiltshire Downs AONB.

Horton Common – Three Legged Cross LCA sensitivity to solar PV energy

Sensitivity to the introduction of solar PV developments of less than 1 hectare is **low**, sensitivity to developments of up to 10 hectares is **low-moderate**, sensitivity to developments up to 30 hectares is **moderate** and sensitivity to larger developments is **high**.

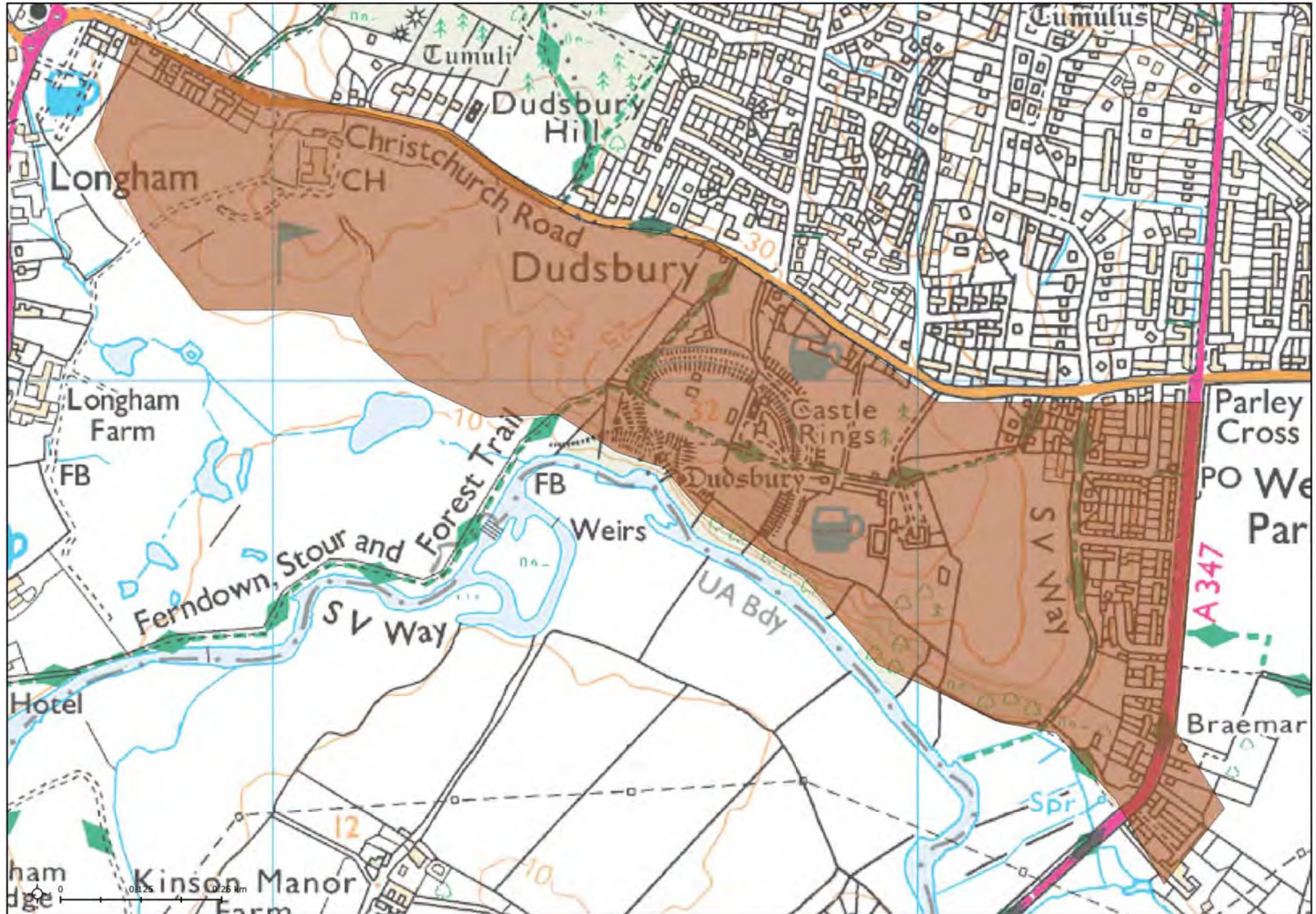
This LCA has seen significant development in modern times, so whilst there are still remnant heathlands which would be of higher sensitivity the fields which have been 'improved' for agricultural use would be less sensitive. Fields are typically geometric, and the patchwork pattern of land use and extent of tree cover also reduces sensitivity. Very large developments would be out of scale with the field pattern.

Sensitivity could be higher where:

- Location is Open Access land;
- Location is on rough pasture or, in particular, heathland;
- Location is on the western fringe of the LCA, within the area designated by East Dorset District as the Woodlands AGLV.

Landscape character area: Dudsbury Ridge

Area: 71 hectares



Dudsbury Ridge LCA characteristics by susceptibility criteria

Scale and complexity of landform:
"...a ridge of high ground close to the river ... The land slopes steeply to the river..."

Scale and complexity of land use and field pattern:
 Much of the area is occupied by two features: The wooded hilltop with an iron age fort and Dudsbury Golf Club. There are horse-grazed pastures to the east of the hill fort and housing development on the lower slopes.
"...soils and land use prior to the development of the golf course suggest this character area is a remnant of the heath/farm character type"
"significant woodland planting around Dudsbury Camp"

Visual exposure:
"...there are extensive views from Christchurch Road and from the Golf Course southwards to the Bournemouth conurbation. These views are curtailed to the east by significant woodland planting around Dudsbury Camp."

Development and activity:
"...forms a narrow band between the recent urban developments at Ferndown and West Parley to the north and the River Stour."

Dudsbury Ridge LCA value characteristics

"The earthworks of Dudsbury Camp are a Scheduled Ancient Monument... forms a prominent, historic feature alongside the river."

Dudsbury Ridge LCA sensitivity to wind energy

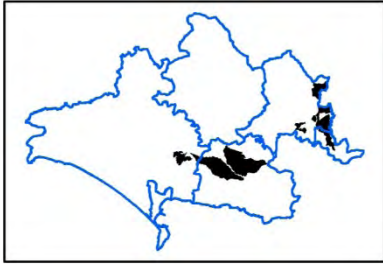
Dudsbury Ridge LCA sensitivity to solar PV energy








		Turbine height (m)			
		≤35	≤65	≤99	>99
Cluster size	1	H	H	H	H
	2-4	H	H	H	H
	>4		H	H	H

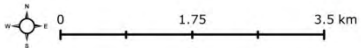
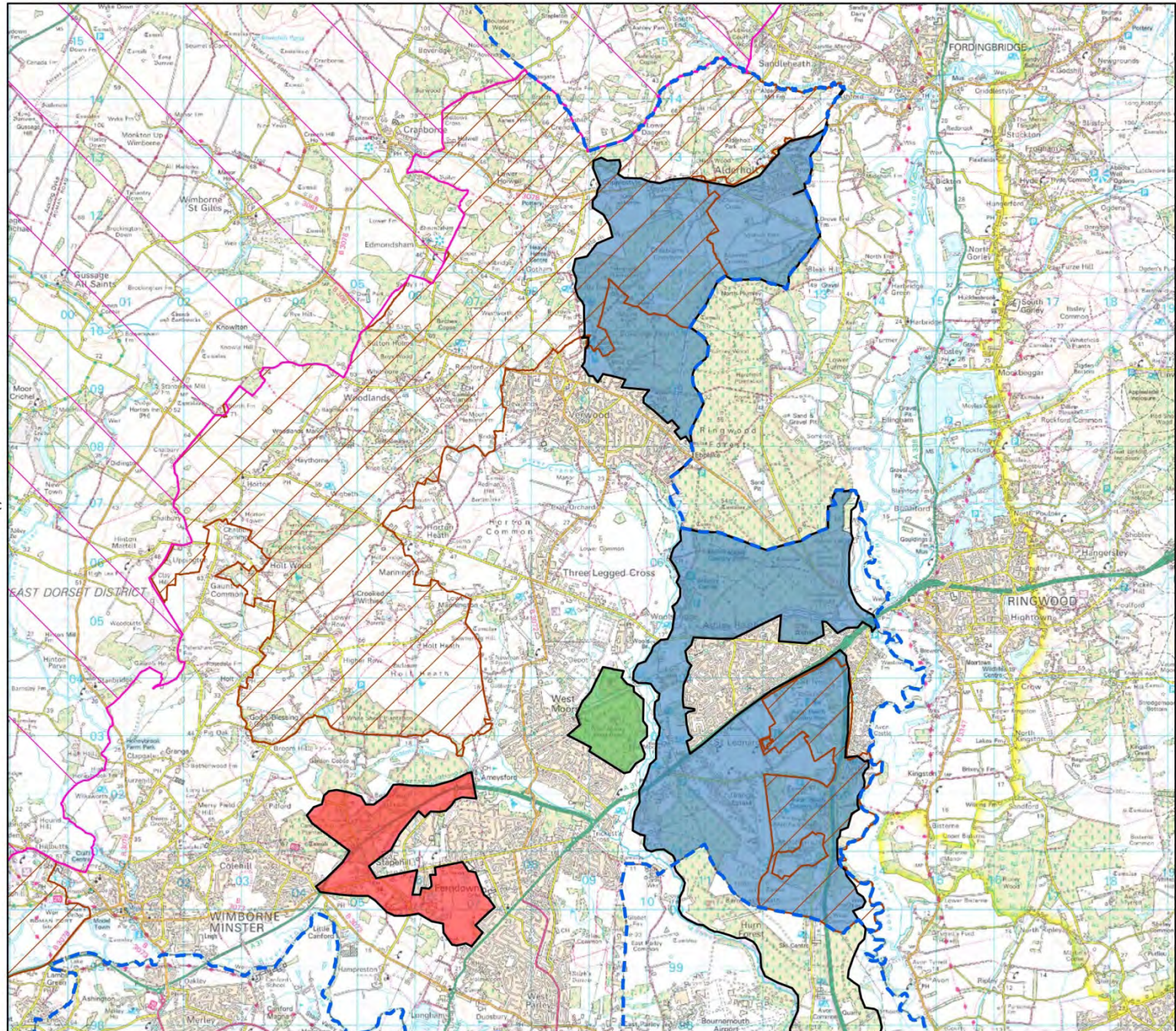
Development size (ha)	≤1	H
	≤10	H
	≤30	H
	>30	H

Dudsbury Ridge LCA sensitivity to wind energy	Dudsbury Ridge LCA sensitivity to solar PV energy
<p>Sensitivity to all scales of wind energy development is high.</p> <p>At 32m AOD Dudsbury Hill is not a prominent feature in the wider landscape, but in the context of its immediate surroundings, including the Stour valley pastures, river terraces and adjacent urban edges, it is a distinctive wooded hill and so attracts a high level of visual sensitivity. The Iron Age camp is hidden by trees but the surrounding landscape can still be considered to form part of its setting, so modern development in close proximity would be sensitive. The recreational use of the golf course and the built development within and adjoining the LCA give the landscape a human scale which also elevates sensitivity to wind turbines.</p>	<p>Sensitivity to all scales of solar PV development is high.</p> <p>At 32m AOD Dudsbury Hill is not a prominent feature in the wider landscape, but in the context of its immediate surroundings, including the Stour valley pastures, river terraces and adjacent urban edges, it is a distinctive wooded hill. The Iron Age camp is hidden by trees but the surrounding landscape can still be considered to form part of its setting, so modern development in close proximity would be sensitive. Although there is little visual exposure to its surroundings, due to strong boundary hedgerows and trees and lack of higher ground, the recreational use and open and irregular character of the golf course landscape would be sensitive to solar PV development.</p> <p>The pastures to the east of the hill are either irregular in form, where adjoining the woodland, or are adjoining residential development. As rough pastures they have a greater sensitivity than improved, intensively grazed land, and the Ferndown, Stour and Forest Trail also crosses the area, adding to its recreational value.</p>

Landscape character type: Heath/Forest Mosaic



-  District boundary
-  AONB
-  Area of Great Landscape Value
- Dorset Landscape Character Type**
-  3. Heath/Forest Mosaic
- East Dorset Landscape Character Area**
-  3A - Ferndown Forest - Stapehill
-  3B - Ringwood-Hurn Forest/Heath Mosaic
-  3C - West Moors Forest/Heath Mosaic



Heath/Forest Mosaic LCT overview

This landscape type forms a transitional landscape between the chalk landscapes, river valleys and other heathland landscape types and generally occurs on elevated plateaus or ridges intersected by the rivers Avon and Moors. They are areas of predominantly poor, sandy soils, comprising a mosaic of heathland, forest and scrub, often with extensive stands of conifer plantations. This LCT is represented by three LCAs within East Dorset. Ringwood-Hurn Forest/Heath Mosaic is an extensive area which lies to the west of the Avon Valley, extending from Alderholt in the north (including parts of Ringwood Forest) to Hurn Forest to the south. Its south-western boundary follows the Moors River Valley LCA and its southern boundary is formed by the District Boundary with Christchurch, although the landscape type continues south to St Catherine's Hill. West Moors Forest/Heath Mosaic is a much smaller area, largely flat, located to the west of the River Moors, comprised almost entirely of forest plantation, predominantly Corsican and Scots Pine, with small pockets of birch woodland. Ferndown Forest – Stapehill Forest/Heath Mosaic encompasses the western extent of Ferndown Forest, an area of heathland to the southwest of Ferndown and fragmented areas of farmland fringing Ferndown to the west.

Heath/Forest Mosaic LCT characteristics by susceptibility criteria

Scale and complexity of landform:

"It has a varied landform from undulating in the west with steeper slopes in the east of the county. It is generally formed on elevated plateaus or ridges cut by the rivers Avon, Moors, Sherford, Piddle and Frome."

Scale and complexity of land use and field pattern:

"An extensive and expansive landscape"

"It is characterised by a patchwork landscape of heath, forest and scrub on sandy soil with extensive blocks of conifer plantation and areas of regenerating birch woodland to create a distinctive mosaic. The conifer plantations blanket former heathland sites often in extensive stands with their margins often creating striking 'sharp edges' but can help to soften urban development."

Visual exposure:

"Important open vistas from key viewpoints."

There are a number of key viewpoints with important open views across the wider landscape"

Development and activity:

"The urban influences of housing, military and industrial development impact significantly on the area, which is well used and popular for informal recreation... Urban fringe pony/horse paddocks and its associated 'clutter' create more localised but still significant impacts. In the east of the county the fringes of the conurbation butt hard up to the edges of this landscape to create harsh edges in places."

Heath/Forest Mosaic LCT value characteristics

Parts of the Ringwood-Hurn Forest LCA are included in the Woodlands and Avon Valley AGLVs but the majority of the LCT is undesignated in landscape terms.

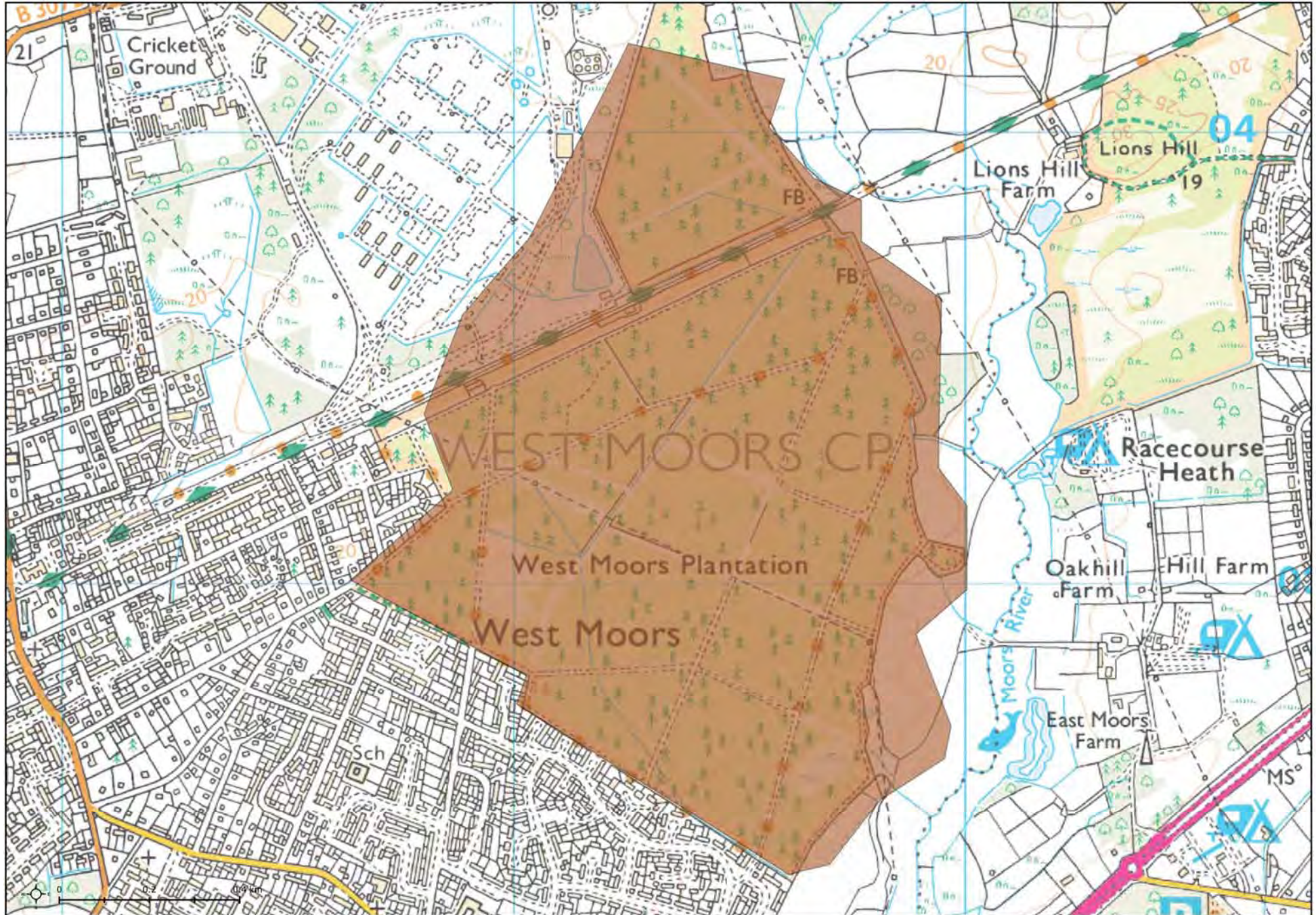
There are a number of important recreational sites, including Avon Heath and Moors Valley Country Park, and other areas of open access are valued locally for recreation.

The overall management objective for the LCT is to *"The overall management objectives for the Heath/Forest Mosaic Landscape Type should be to improve and enhance the hard geometric edges to conifer plantations, continue to vary landscape and forestry operations to create diversity and multi-functional mosaic landscapes and enhance the ecological value of heathland. Key features that need to be conserved and enhanced include skyline trees and trees which help to soften urban development, the designated sites of nature conservation and cultural heritage interest and the heathland areas to reduce fragmentation."*

Heath/Forest Mosaic LCT sensitivity to wind energy	Heath/Forest Mosaic LCT sensitivity to solar PV energy
<p>Generally elevated with varied land forms and some prominent ridges and hills, this type is generally of higher sensitivity in terms of the scale and complexity of landform. Where landform variation is flatter, less elevated, and less prominent in views from surrounding areas, sensitivity is lower. Where there is greater complexity and small scale mosaic of land cover and historic landuse pattern, the LCT is highly sensitive. However where there are extensive areas of forest plantations, sensitivity is lower.</p> <p>Scenic value is high in areas where there are open and long views across heathland due to the distinctive colours, textures, and where expansive views are afforded from elevated viewpoints. AGLV designations reflect the scenic value of some areas. However, views across many parts of these areas are very contained by coniferous trees.</p> <p>There areas form long, forested and wooded skylines in views from adjacent areas, and where these are simple, with little variation in terms of topography and cover, sensitivity in terms of visual exposure is lower. Where prominent land marks or features are present on the skyline, or where there is greater variation sensitivity may be higher.</p>	<p>On areas with subtle variations in landform, a complex and diverse mosaic of open heath, grassland, regenerating birch/pine wood, and historic landuse pattern, sensitive will be high to this form of development. Solar PV development would form a strong contrast to the distinctive colours and textures of the heathland and birch woodland and scrub.</p> <p>Where solar PV development has the potential to be visible on elevated hill slopes, or where it would interrupt skylines a greater degree of sensitivity is associated with those areas. Forest and woodland could be used to contain views locally, which would be particularly important in relation to areas overlooked by more elevated ground where wider views are available, as these vantage points are of high sensitivity.</p>

Landscape character area: West Moors Forest/Heath Mosaic

Area: 153 hectares



West Moors LCA characteristics by susceptibility criteria

<p>Scale and complexity of landform:</p> <p>The topography of the area is simple, flat and low-lying with very little variation.</p>	<p>Scale and complexity of land use and field pattern:</p> <p>The area itself is small, but of simple composition, being comprised almost entirely of forest plantation, predominantly Corsican and Scots Pine, with small pockets of birch woodland, scrub and remnant heathland.</p>
<p>Visual exposure:</p> <p>Low-lying and flat, the area is only visible from areas immediately adjacent to it, including residential areas to the west and the Moors River Valley to the east, from which the forest across the site forms a simple, continuous skyline in views west.</p>	<p>Development and activity:</p> <p>The area used for commercial forestry and is crossed by an overhead power line. In addition the north of the area is influenced by the West Moors Petroleum Depot complex, with layers of fencing and areas of hard standing visible from the railway that runs along the northern boundary. Within the area, due to the enclosed nature of the area, there is some degree of seclusion and tranquillity.</p>

West Moors LCA value characteristics

The LCA is not designated at a national or local level although the entire area is open access and is likely to be valued locally as a recreational resource. A trail follows the disused railway line to the north is promoted as the Castleman Trailway, although there is a limited visual relationship with the character area beyond the northern peripheries of the LCA.

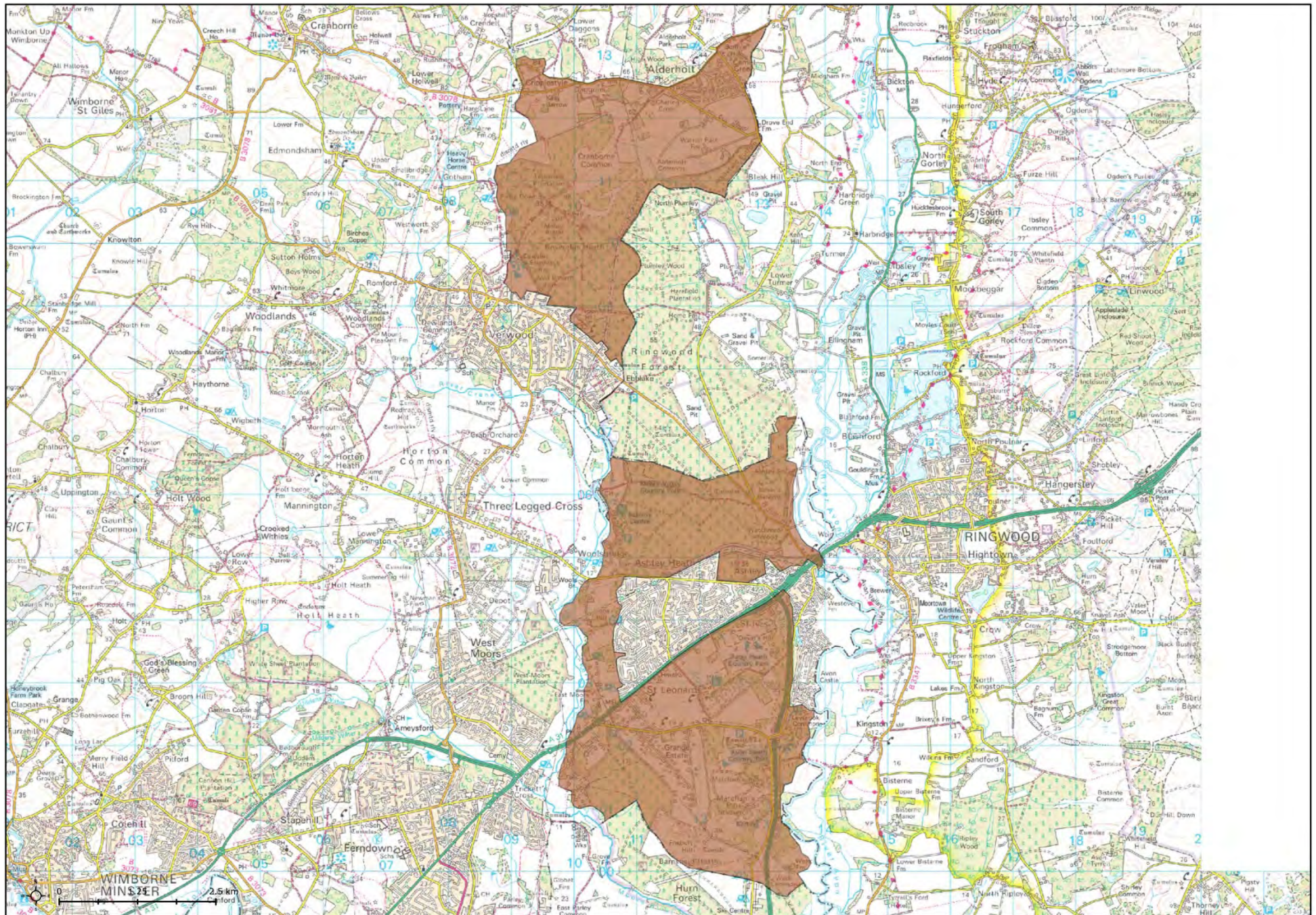
West Moors LCA sensitivity to wind energy	West Moors LCA sensitivity to solar PV energy
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<p>Turbine height (m)</p> <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <tr> <td></td> <td>≤35</td> <td>≤65</td> <td>≤99</td> <td>>99</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1</td> <td style="background-color: yellow;">L</td> <td style="background-color: orange;">LM</td> <td style="background-color: red;">M</td> <td style="background-color: darkred;">H</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2-4</td> <td style="background-color: yellow;">LM</td> <td style="background-color: orange;">M</td> <td style="background-color: red;">MH</td> <td style="background-color: darkred;">H</td> </tr> <tr> <td>>4</td> <td></td> <td style="background-color: red;">MH</td> <td style="background-color: darkred;">H</td> <td style="background-color: darkred;">H</td> </tr> </table> <p style="text-align: left; margin-left: 20px;">Cluster size</p>		≤35	≤65	≤99	>99	1	L	LM	M	H	2-4	LM	M	MH	H	>4		MH	H	H	<p>Development size (ha)</p> <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <tr> <td>≤1</td> <td style="background-color: yellow;">M</td> </tr> <tr> <td>≤10</td> <td style="background-color: red;">MH</td> </tr> <tr> <td>≤30</td> <td style="background-color: darkred;">H</td> </tr> <tr> <td>>30</td> <td style="background-color: darkred;">H</td> </tr> </table> <p style="text-align: left; margin-left: 20px;">Development size (ha)</p>	≤1	M	≤10	MH	≤30	H	>30	H
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2-4	LM	M	MH	H																									
>4		MH	H	H																									
≤1	M																												
≤10	MH																												
≤30	H																												
>30	H																												

West Moors LCA sensitivity to wind energy	West Moors LCA sensitivity to solar PV energy
<p>Sensitivity to the introduction of single turbines less than 35m high is low and sensitivity to 2-4 turbines of this height is low-moderate. Sensitivity to all other scales of wind energy development is moderate or high.</p> <p>The simple topography and land cover of the area indicates that it would be of a lower sensitivity over all to smaller scale, single or small groups of wind turbines.</p> <p>The introduction of turbines could affect the setting of the more intimate river valley to the east, for which the LCA forms a wooded and forested backdrop and skyline. Larger scale and the larger groups of turbines are likely to affect the scale of the landscape (and due to the size of the area there are likely to be other technical constraints that would limit this scale of development).</p> <p>Sensitivity is likely to be higher where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A turbine affects views from the settlement to the west; • Location of turbines affects the setting of the river valley to the east; • There are localised areas of remnant heathland. 	<p>Sensitivity to the introduction of solar PV developments of less than 1 hectare is moderate, sensitivity developments of 1-10 hectares is moderate-high and sensitivity to all other scales of solar PV energy development is high.</p> <p>Whilst the simplicity and extent of commercial forest on the site suggests that the LCA overall is of lower sensitivity, the value attached to the area locally as an area of open access increases the sensitivity of the LCA overall. The extent of forest and woodland across the area offers scope for containing views of this form of development, although consideration should be given to the fact that most of these trees were planted as crops and will at some point in time be felled. Policies for heathland restoration mean that some cleared areas are likely not to be replanted.</p> <p>Sensitivity is likely to be higher where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location is on the edge of the LCA adjacent to the Moors River valley or residential areas; • Trees which would visually contain development are likely to be felled in the lifetime of the development (reference should be made to Forest Design Plans).

Landscape character area: Ringwood-Hurn Forest/Heath Mosaic

Area: 2921 hectares



Ringwood – Hurn LCA characteristics by susceptibility criteria

Scale and complexity of landform:

Varied landform with steep slopes to the east which drop down towards the Avon Valley. The western parts of the LCA are generally lower lying and less topographically varied with a gradual transition towards the Moor River valley.

Scale and complexity of land use and field pattern:

"The areas of woodland also make a significant contribution to the area's character and identity. Ridgetop trees are also important landscape features, for example, the ridgetop belts of conifers."

"The large swathes of woodland help to unify the land and although much of the woodland is comparatively recent, as a result of afforestation of open heathland,"

The LCA contains substantial, albeit fragmented, areas of heathland. These areas are of greater complexity, comprising a small scale, distinctive mosaic of land cover and historic landuse pattern.

Visual exposure:

From hills to the east, such as the Tumuli south of Boundary Lane (within the Avon Heath Country Park) there are open and long views across large expanses of forest and woodland or over tracts of heathland. The elevated south-eastern extent of the LCA forms a prominent backdrop to the Avon valley.

Much of the area, particularly lower lying western areas, is visually contained by the extensive woodland and forest.

Development and activity:

"The areas of woodland also make a significant contribution to the area's character and identity. Ridgetop trees are also important landscape features, for example, the ridgetop belts of conifers."

Despite the proximity of large roads such as the A338 and settlements at Ashley Heath and Verwood, the character assessment judges that *"the area has an empty, wild character."*

Ringwood - Hurn LCA value characteristics

The south-eastern part of the area, centred on Avon Heath Country Park, is designated at a local level as part of the Avon Valley AGLV. The remainder of the LCA is not designated at a national or local level although the large parts of the areas are open access and valued as a recreational resource. Moors Valley Country Park is particularly well used for formal and informal recreation.

Ringwood - Hurn LCA sensitivity to wind energy

		Turbine height (m)			
		≤35	≤65	≤99	>99
Cluster size	1	LM	M	MH	H
	2-4	M	MH	MH	H
	>4		H	H	H

Ringwood - Hurn LCA sensitivity to solar PV energy

		Development size (ha)
	≤1	LM
	≤10	MH
	≤30	H
	>30	H

Ringwood - Hurn Heaths LCA sensitivity to wind energy

Sensitivity to the introduction of single turbines less than 35m high is **low-moderate** and sensitivity to 2-4 turbines of this height is **moderate**. Sensitivity to single turbines of less than 65m is **moderate**, but in relation to increasing numbers of this scale of turbine the area is **moderate-high** or **high**. Sensitivity to all other scales of wind energy development is **moderate-high** or **high**.

This is a large LCA with variety in terms of land form and land cover across the area and correspondingly sensitivity may be higher or lower within the area depending on whether sensitive features or characteristics occur locally. Areas of more intact heathlands and where there is topographic variation or distinctive hills and ridges, will be highly sensitive to all scales of wind energy development.

Sensitivity is likely to be higher where:

- Area is heavily used for recreation;
- There are areas of heathland, scrub and woodland mosaic where there is a perception of wildness;
- There is more pronounced topographic variation.

Ringwood - Hurn LCA sensitivity to solar PV energy

Sensitivity to the introduction of solar PV developments of less than 1 hectare is **low-moderate**, sensitivity to developments of 1-10 hectares is **moderate-high** and sensitivity to all other scales of solar PV energy development is **high**.

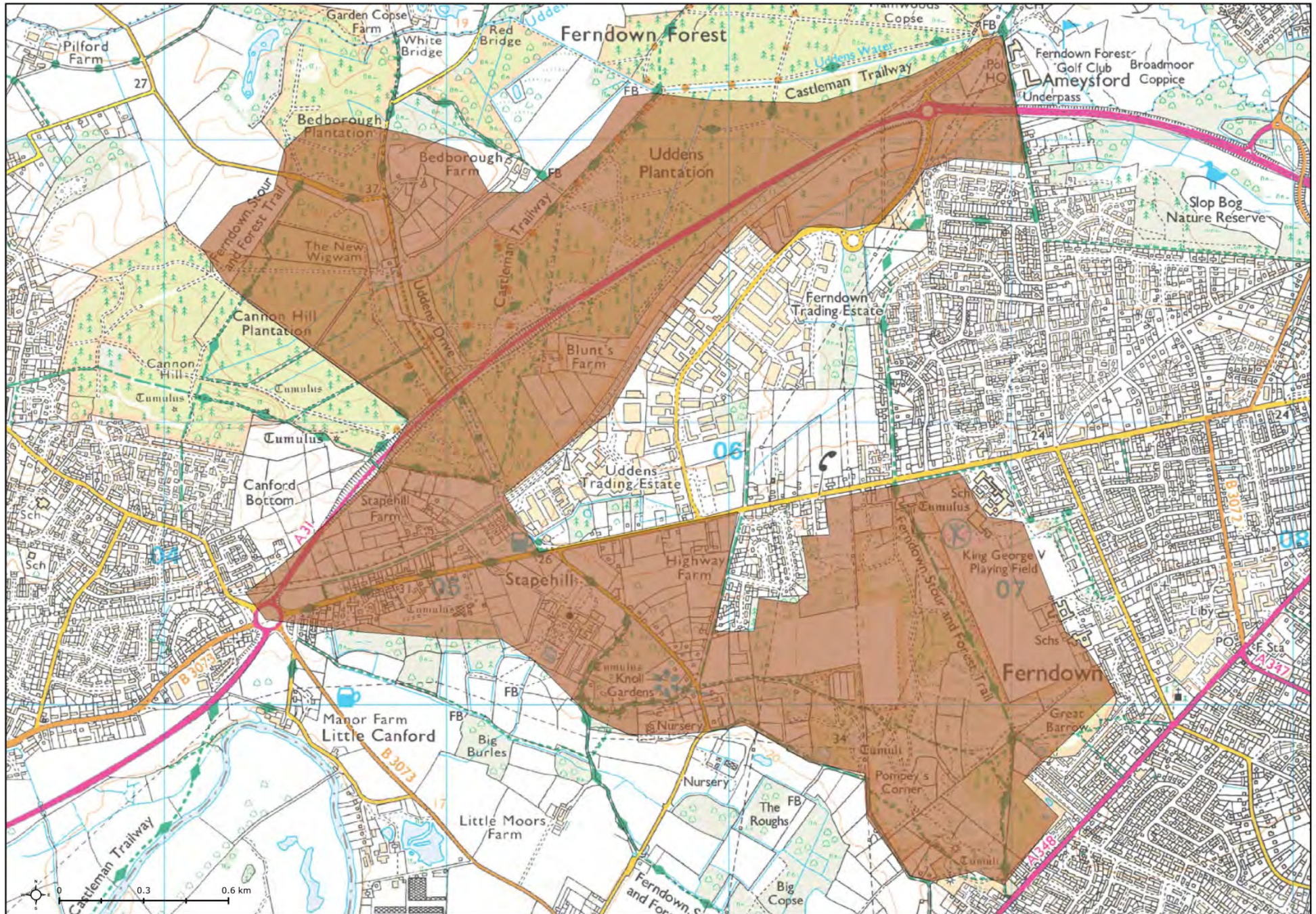
The extent of forest and woodland across the area offers scope for containing views of this form of development, although consideration should be given to the fact that most of these trees were planted as crops and will at some point in time be felled. Policies for heathland restoration mean that some cleared areas are likely not to be replanted. In areas where there is a simple composition of land cover comprising extensive areas of commercial forest, or where there is existing fragmentation and degradation towards the fringes of settlements, sensitivity is lower. Areas of intact heathlands, or a greater complexity in the mosaic of heathland, scrub and woodland, will be highly sensitive to all scales of Solar PV development. Similarly, where there is topographic variation, and elevated areas form the back drop to lower-lying river valleys, sensitivity will be high to all scales of this development type.

Sensitivity is likely to be higher where:

- Location is at the edge of the LCA adjacent to the Avon River valley;
- Location is within heavily used recreational area;
- Trees which would visually contain development are likely to be felled in the lifetime of the development (reference should be made to Forest Design Plans).

Landscape character area: Ferndown Forest – Stapehill Forest/Heath Mosaic

Area: 414 hectares



Ferndown Forest – Stapehill Forest/Heath Mosaic LCA characteristics by susceptibility criteria

Scale and complexity of landform:

The area comprises predominantly gently undulating landforms with more pronounced slopes to the east which drop down towards the Stour River Valley.

The western parts of the LCA are generally lower lying and less topographically varied with a gradual transition towards the Moor River valley.

Scale and complexity of land use and field pattern:

“With the presence of Colehill and Uddens Plantations in Ferndown Forest much of this character area reflects that of the larger areas of forested heaths noted to the north and east”

Landcover within the area is very mixed, including heath and remnant heath, scrub, woodland, enclosed farmland and large areas of forest plantations. The scale is generally small and much of the area is fragmented by roads and infill development.

Visual exposure:

“The elevated position of Colehill Plantation provides a significant backdrop to the built up area of Colehill in the views from the Stour Valley to the south and east.”

Other areas are more contained, such as the area of heathland to the southeast (Ferndown Common) with limited intervisibility with the wider landscape or adjacent developed areas.

Development and activity:

Parts of the area to the east are *“influenced by the Wimborne Road, the residential developments at Stapehill and the industrial estates at Ferndown to the north and east”*.

Perception of intrusion by development within the common is however limited.

Ferndown Forest – Stapehill Forest/Heath Mosaic LCA value characteristics

Although not designated, many parts of this LCA are publically accessible as areas of open access and used for informal recreation. In areas of where fragmented heathland is present and where there is limited intrusion by development, the landscape is likely to be locally valued as a unique landscape and for the perceived quality of tranquillity.

Ferndown Forest – Stapehill Forest/Heath Mosaic LCA sensitivity to wind energy

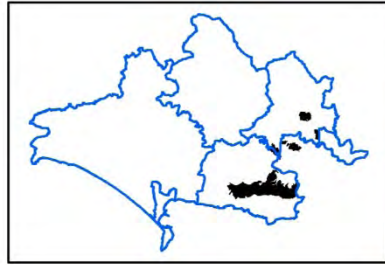
		Turbine height (m)			
		≤35	≤65	≤99	>99
Cluster size	1	LM	M	MH	H
	2-4	M	MH	MH	H
	>4		H	H	H








Ferndown Forest – Stapehill Forest/Heath Mosaic LCA sensitivity to solar PV energy

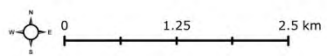
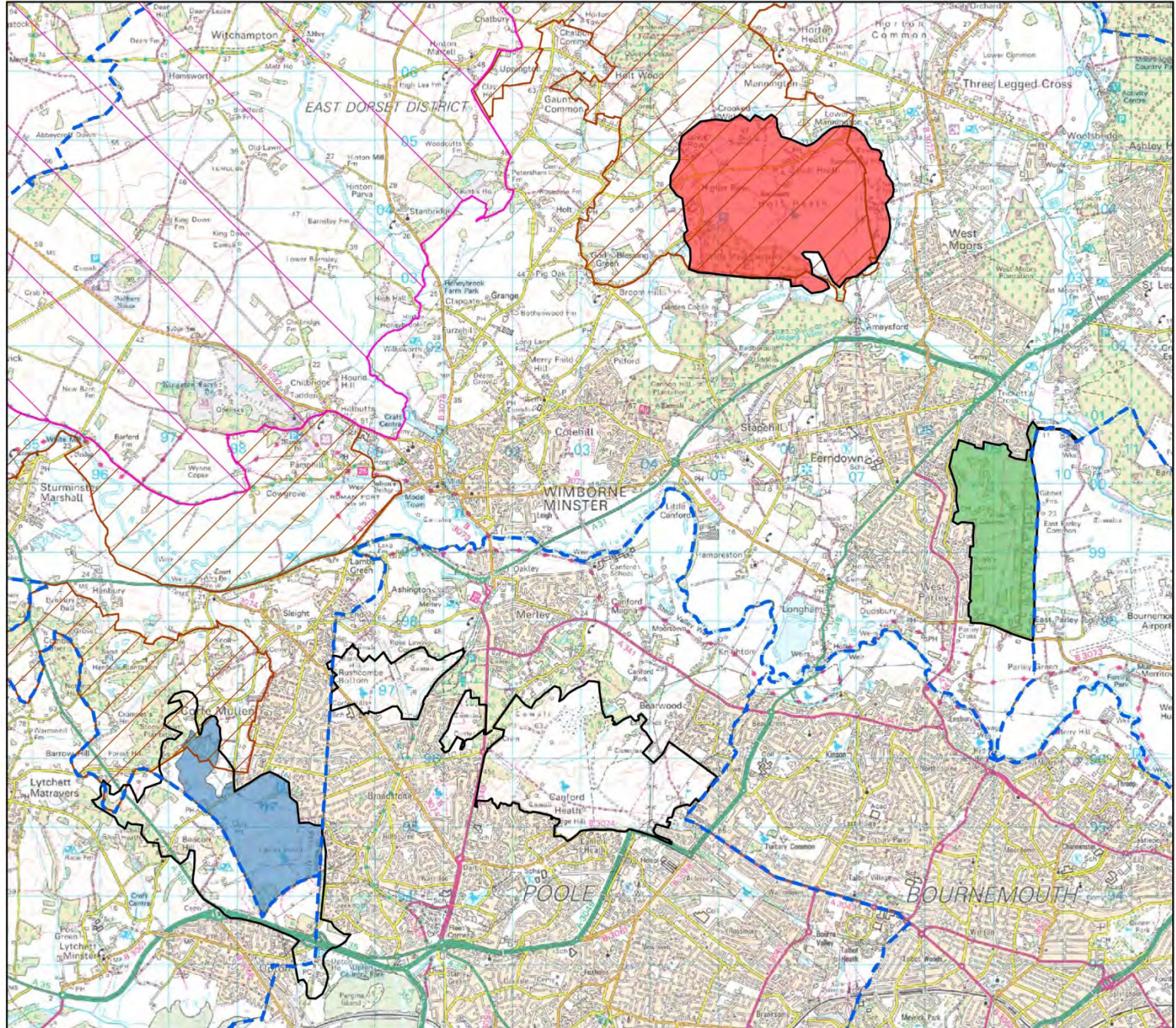
		Development size (ha)
	≤1	LM
	≤10	MH
	≤30	H
	>30	H

Ferndown Forest – Stapehill Forest/Heath Mosaic LCA sensitivity to wind energy	Ferndown Forest – Stapehill Forest/Heath Mosaic LCA sensitivity to solar PV energy
<p>Sensitivity to the introduction of single turbines less than 35m high is low-moderate and sensitivity to 2-4 turbines of this height is moderate. Sensitivity is moderate in relation to single turbines of 35-65m, moderate-high to 2-4 turbines of this height and high to more than 4. Sensitivity to up to 4 turbines of 66-99m is moderate-high and sensitivity to all other scales of wind energy development is high.</p> <p>The character of the landscape within this LCA is very varied, particularly in terms of landcover. Across the area sensitivity varies depending on whether sensitive features or characteristics occur locally. Areas of more intact heathlands and where there is topographic variation or distinctive hills and ridges, will be highly sensitive to all scales of wind energy development. The visually contained nature of the southern and eastern parts of the area is of lower sensitivity in terms of their visual exposure. Areas which are more fragmented and influenced by existing development and infrastructure are of lower sensitivity.</p> <p>Sensitivity is likely to be higher where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas are heavily used for recreation; • There are areas of heathland, scrub and woodland mosaic where there is a perception of tranquillity; • There is more pronounced topographic variation. 	<p>Sensitivity to the introduction of solar PV developments of less than 1 hectare is low-moderate, sensitivity to developments of 1-10 hectares is moderate-high and sensitivity to all other scales of solar PV energy development is high.</p> <p>The extent of forest and woodland across the area offers scope for containing views of this form of development, although consideration should be given to the fact that most of these trees were planted as crops and will at some point in time be felled. Policies for heathland restoration mean that some cleared areas are likely not to be replanted. In areas where there is a simple composition of land cover comprising extensive areas of commercial forest, or where there is existing fragmentation and degradation towards the fringes of settlements, sensitivity is lower. Areas of intact heathlands, or a greater complexity in the mosaic of heathland, scrub and woodland, will be highly sensitive to all scales of solar PV development. Similarly, where there is topographic variation, and elevated areas form the back drop to settlements and lower-lying areas, sensitivity will be high to all scales of this development type.</p> <p>Sensitivity is likely to be higher where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area is heavily used for recreation; • There are areas of heathland, scrub and woodland mosaic where there is a perception of tranquillity; • There is more pronounced topographic variation; • Trees which would visually contain development are likely to be felled in the lifetime of the development (reference should be made to Forest Design Plans).

Landscape character type: Lowland Heathland



-  District boundary
-  AONB
-  Area of Great Landscape Value
- Dorset Landscape Character Type**
-  9. Lowland Heathland
- East Dorset Landscape Character Area**
-  9A - Holt Heath
-  9B - Upton Heath
-  9C - West Parley Heath



Lowland Heathland LCT overview

This LCT is represented by three LCAs within East Dorset. Holt Heath and West Parley Heath LCAs comprises relatively small and isolated areas of heathland and remnant heathland to the north of Ferndown and adjacent to the east of Ferndown and to the north of Upton respectively. Within East Dorset these areas of heathland are generally elevated from the surrounding landscape and gently undulating, with some more pronounced hills and ridges occurring locally affording long and often distinctive views across predominantly open and undeveloped landscapes.

Upton Heath, which lies partly within the Purbeck District, extends to Poor Common in the north west and is bounded to the north and east by the urban development of Corfe Mullen and Broadstone. At County-level the definition of the Lowland Heath LCT in the northern part of the Upton Heath LCA, around Poor Common, covers a wider area than the District-level definition of the LCA, going into areas which at District-level are defined as part of the Morden-Lytchett Farmland/Woodland Mosaic. For locations within this area, reference should be made to the assessments for both the Upton Heath LCA (Lowland Heathland LCT) and the Morden-Lytchett LCA (Rolling Wooded Pasture LCT).

Lowland Heathlands LCT characteristics by susceptibility criteria

Scale and complexity of landform:

"An undulating lowland landform with a distinctive open, exposed and uniform character."

Scale and complexity of land use and field pattern:

"A complex, diverse and often fragmented mosaic of heather carpets, grassland, birch/pine wood and scrub, which combine to create a blend of textures and colours"

Visual exposure:

"Wide, expansive and open views especially from elevated areas."

Development and activity:

"Heavily influenced by urban development and associated pressures"

"A fragile landscape easily damaged by human activities e.g. fire and motorcycles".

"Modern development, including significant conifer plantations, mineral extraction, planned farms, golf courses, roads and other urban fringe development has fragmented the remaining heathland patches"

Lowland Heathlands LCT value characteristics

Holt Heath is designated locally as part of the Woodlands AGLV. The northern tip of Upton Heath is part of the Corfe Mullen AGLV.

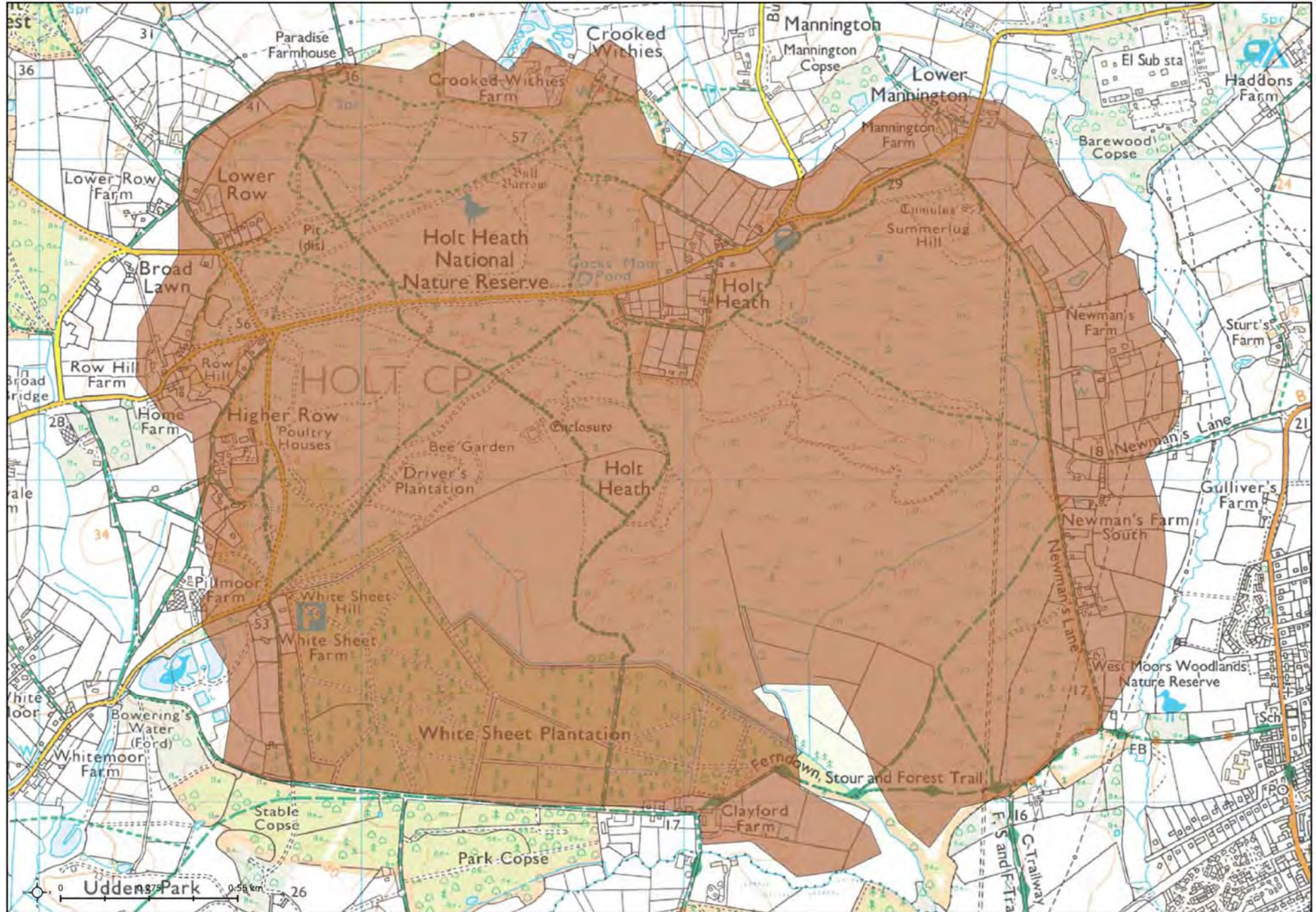
"The wild and exposed appearance and feel of the open heathlands has been well documented in Thomas Hardy's writings. There are numerous landmarks and distinctive open areas of heath such as Hartland Moor, Studland, Middlebere, Povington, Winfrith, Canford and Holt Heaths"

The overall management objective for the LCT is to *"conserve and enhance existing heathland habitats and restore important former heathland sites"*.

Lowland Heathlands LCT sensitivity to wind energy	Lowland Heathlands LCT sensitivity to solar PV energy
<p>Generally flat, slightly elevated from surrounding landscapes and with subtle variations in landform, this type is generally of lower sensitivity in terms of the scale and complexity of landform, although where landform variation is more pronounced and where the area forms open, ridgelines in views from surrounding areas, sensitivity is higher.</p> <p>However, the complexity and small scale mosaic of land cover and historic land use pattern makes this a sensitive LCT. Scenic value is generally high due to the distinctive colours, textures and expansive views often afforded from within the heathlands, particularly in association with wide views over Poole Harbour and where very limited development is visible from within the area. This value is reflected in AGLV designations for the heathland areas least affected by modern development.</p>	<p>The subtle variations in landform, complex and diverse mosaic of open expansive dry and wet heath, grassland, regenerating birch/pine wood and wooded scrubby heath and historic land use pattern is highly sensitive to this form of development, despite intrusion and fragmentation by modern development.</p> <p>Within this open and expansive landscape solar PV development has the potential to be highly visible, although localised areas of woodland and scrub could be used to contain views locally. Solar PV development would form a strong contrast to the distinctive colours and textures of the heathland and the intricate mosaics of land cover found within these areas.</p>

Landscape character area: Holt Heath

Area: 632 hectares



Holt Heath LCA characteristics by susceptibility criteria

Scale and complexity of landform:

"Undulating elevated terrain"

"The landform slopes down fairly gently towards the east and south, but on the north and west sides the slopes are significantly steeper."

Scale and complexity of land use and field pattern:

"The area comprises mostly dry heath, but there are also substantial areas of wet heath, especially in the east where willow and birch are characteristic."

In common with other areas of heathland in Dorset the area comprises a complex mosaic of heather, grassland, wood and scrub, which combine to create a blend of textures and colours.

Visual exposure:

"Its open, largely tree-less character affords panoramic, long-distance views: those to the Isle of Wight and the coast being of particular note."

To the south, where the open heathland gives way to the White Sheet Plantation, views are more contained. The area is not easily visible from surrounding landscape, due to the presence of coniferous forest to the south and west and the well woodland character of the surrounding farmland. In views from the wider area it reads as being part of the extensive layers of forest and woodland which characterises many of the views across East Dorset.

Development and activity:

"Prominent overhead power lines pass across the northern part of the heath and along its south-eastern boundary."

With the exception of these features and the road which crosses the north of the area, it is undeveloped and retains perceptual qualities of wildness and remoteness.

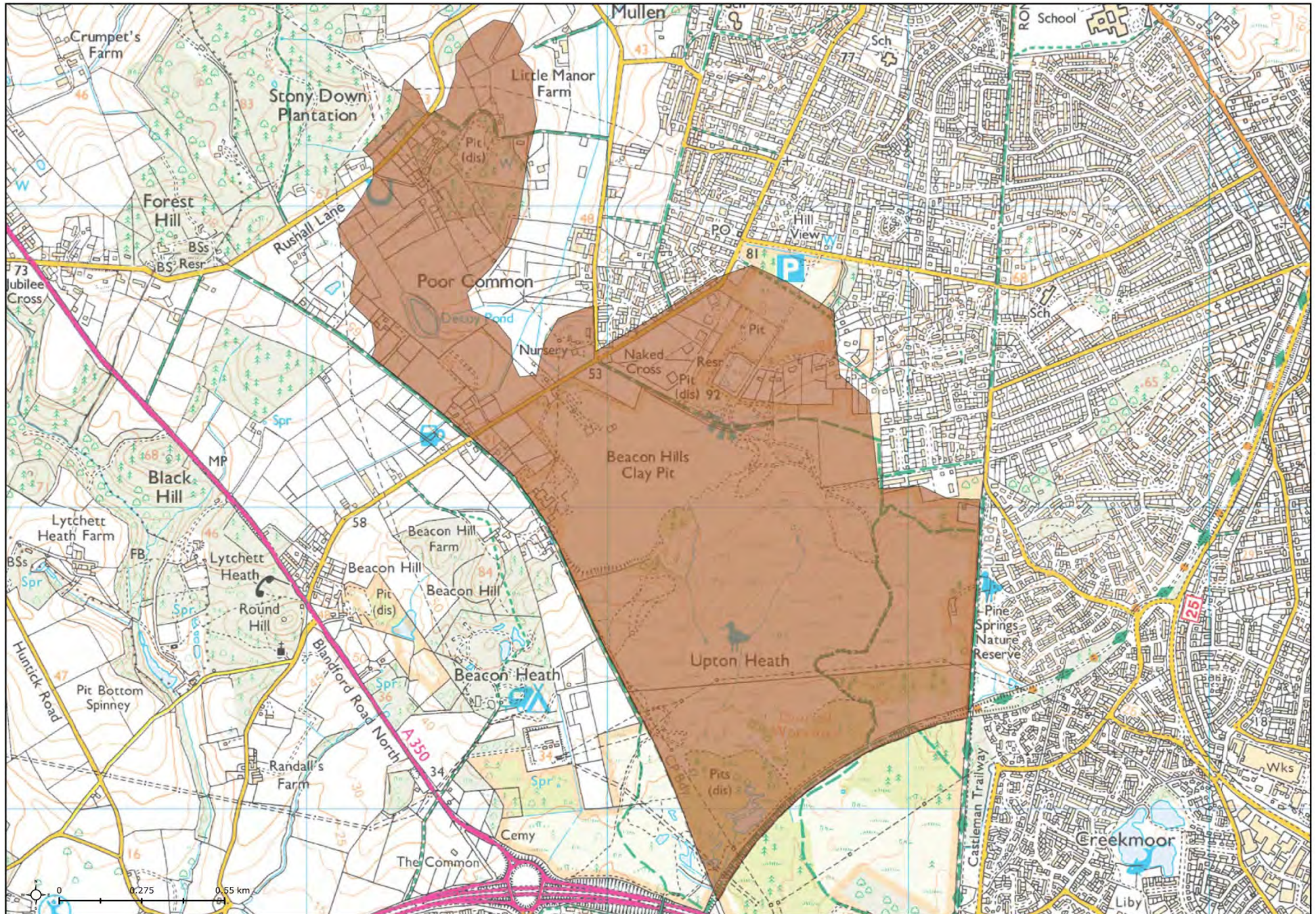
Holt Heath LCA value characteristics

The area is not designated for its landscape value at a national level but forms part of the Woodlands AGLV. The area is managed as a National Nature Reserve and is well used for passive recreation, with a well-established network of informal paths and tracks. It represents a unique and rare landscape character type and is valued for its tranquil and scenic qualities.

Holt Heath LCA sensitivity to wind energy					Holt Heath LCA sensitivity to solar PV energy																																
<p style="text-align: center;">Turbine height (m)</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td></td> <td>≤35</td> <td>≤65</td> <td>≤99</td> <td>>99</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cluster size</td> <td>1</td> <td>MH</td> <td>H</td> <td>H</td> <td>H</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>2-4</td> <td>MH</td> <td>H</td> <td>H</td> <td>H</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>>4</td> <td></td> <td>H</td> <td>H</td> <td>H</td> </tr> </table>						≤35	≤65	≤99	>99	Cluster size	1	MH	H	H	H		2-4	MH	H	H	H		>4		H	H	H	<p style="text-align: center;">Development size (ha)</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>≤1</td> <td>MH</td> </tr> <tr> <td>≤10</td> <td>H</td> </tr> <tr> <td>≤30</td> <td>H</td> </tr> <tr> <td>>30</td> <td>H</td> </tr> </table>		≤1	MH	≤10	H	≤30	H	>30	H
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<p>Sensitivity to the introduction of up to 4 turbines of this height is moderate-high. Sensitivity to all other scales of wind energy development is high.</p> <p>The introduction of turbines within this landscape could potentially adversely affect the open, undeveloped and wild qualities of the area. The area contains few vertical elements - pine trees are fairly dispersed - so there is a perception of openness and expansiveness which could be diminished by large turbines. There may be locations at the fringes of the area where single or small groups of smaller turbines could be accommodated without diminishing the sense of scale.</p>					<p>Sensitivity to solar PV developments of less than 1 hectare is moderate-high and sensitivity to the introduction of all other scales of solar PV development is high.</p> <p>The limited extent of tree cover and vegetation across most of the area limits the potential for views of even small scale development of this type to be contained. In areas to the south where there is a simple composition of land cover comprising extensive areas of commercial forest, sensitivity is lower, but areas of intact heathlands, or where there is a greater complexity in the mosaic of heathland and scrub, will be highly sensitive to all scales of solar PV development.</p> <p>Sensitivity is likely to be higher where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is topographical variation, in the north of the LCA. 																																

Landscape character area: Upton Heath

Area: 247 hectares

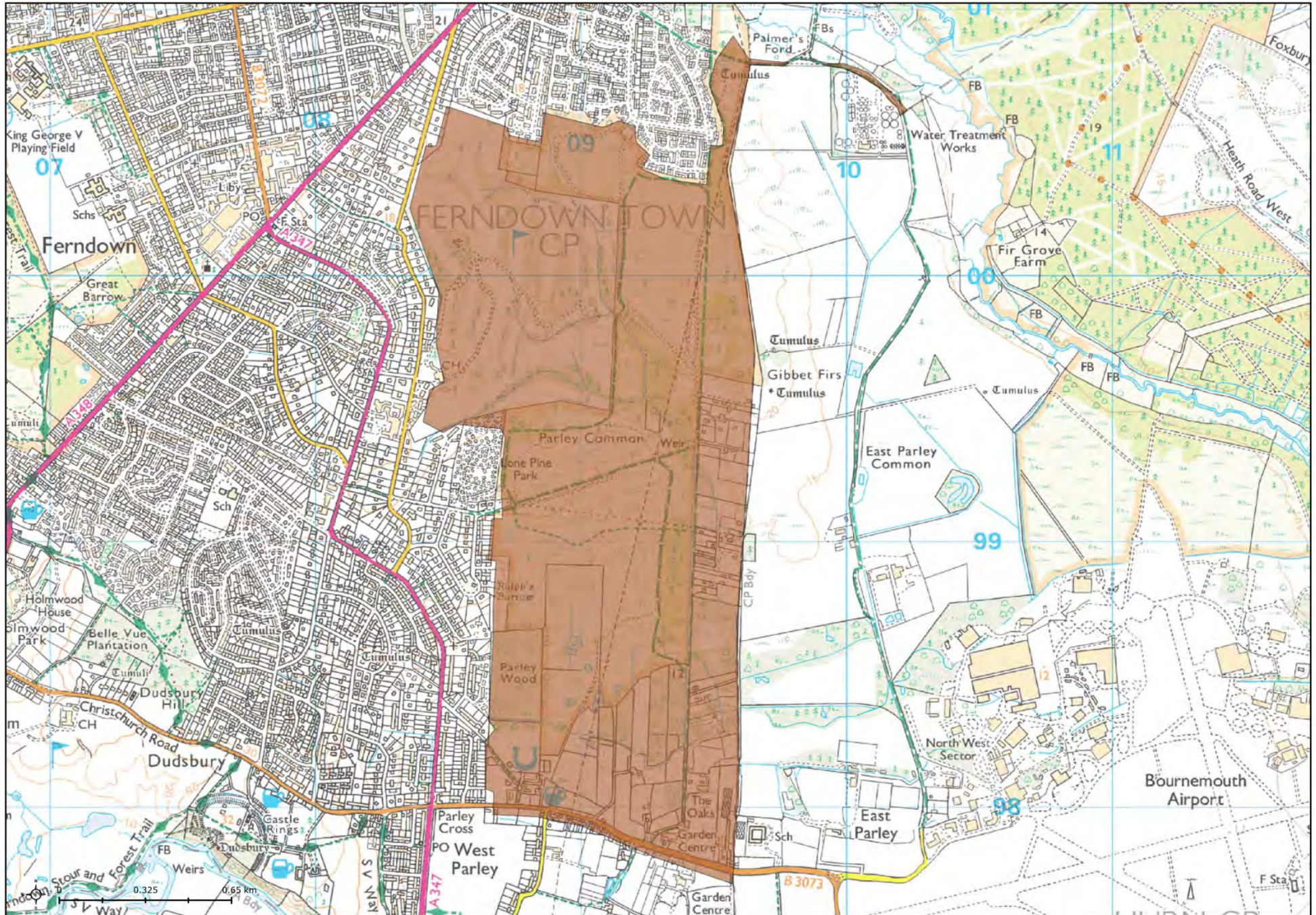


Upton Heath LCA characteristics by susceptibility criteria	
<p>Scale and complexity of landform:</p> <p><i>“Undulating elevated terrain”</i></p> <p><i>“From the viewpoint on a cap of Plateau Gravel at Beacon Hill the land falls to the south and west in a series of gentle folds.”</i></p>	<p>Scale and complexity of land use and field pattern:</p> <p><i>“Exposed, open landscape”</i></p> <p><i>“Mosaic of heath, scrub and woodland”</i></p> <p><i>“High ecological value”</i></p>
<p>Visual Exposure:</p> <p>From Hill View, the viewpoint located to the east of the Beacon Hills Clay Pits, extensive scenic views south over Poole Harbour to the Purbeck hills area available. Beacon Hill and the low ridge that extends eastwards from this towards Corfe Mullen forms a distinctive pine and wood-topped skyline from a wide area to the south, particular from Holes Bay and Canford Heath. Part of this skyline is broken by the presence of the former workings, but is otherwise largely undeveloped.</p>	<p>Development and activity:</p> <p><i>“The heath area is fragmented by blocks of trees and scrub and by informal tracks. Large areas to the south and north west have, in the past, been the subject to sand and clay working and used for waste disposal... The area is also crossed by a high voltage overhead electricity line that serves a major sub-station sited at the western edge of the heath.”</i></p>
Upton Heath LCA value characteristics	
<p>Upton Heath itself is not designated nationally or at a local level, but the northern tip of the LCA, to the east of Stoney Down, is part of the Woodlands AGLV.</p> <p>Parts of the LCA are accessible as areas of open access and the southern and eastern areas are an important recreational resource for local settlements, valued in particular for the extensive and scenic views available from the ridge top.</p>	

Upton Heath LCA sensitivity to wind energy					Upton Heath LCA sensitivity to solar PV energy																																
<p style="text-align: center;">Turbine height (m)</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td></td> <td>≤35</td> <td>≤65</td> <td>≤99</td> <td>>99</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cluster size</td> <td>1</td> <td>MH</td> <td>MH</td> <td>H</td> <td>H</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>2-4</td> <td>MH</td> <td>MH</td> <td>H</td> <td>H</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>>4</td> <td></td> <td>H</td> <td>H</td> <td>H</td> </tr> </table>						≤35	≤65	≤99	>99	Cluster size	1	MH	MH	H	H		2-4	MH	MH	H	H		>4		H	H	H	<p style="text-align: center;">Development size (ha)</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>≤1</td> <td>MH</td> </tr> <tr> <td>≤10</td> <td>H</td> </tr> <tr> <td>≤30</td> <td>H</td> </tr> <tr> <td>>30</td> <td>H</td> </tr> </table>		≤1	MH	≤10	H	≤30	H	>30	H
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Upton Heath LCA sensitivity to wind energy					Upton Heath LCA sensitivity to solar PV energy																																
<p>Sensitivity to the introduction of up to 4 turbines less than 65m high is moderate-high. Sensitivity to all other scales of wind energy development is high.</p> <p>There may be some locations where wind turbines could have a unifying effect on an area of degraded landscape, but careful consideration would need to be given to specific site conditions so as to avoid exacerbating issues of landscape clutter, particularly where skyline views might be affected.</p> <p>The tree-topped ridgeline, and in particular Beacon Hill, is a feature on an important and largely undeveloped skyline which forms a back-drop to the wider Poole basin and Poole Harbour. There may be lower-lying locations within the LCA where turbines could be accommodated without interrupting this skyline. Where land cover has been significantly modified and comprises agricultural land and areas of commercial forest, sensitivity is lower.</p> <p>Sensitivity is likely to be higher where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development has the potential to interrupt the tree cover which extends across the ridgeline in views from the wider areas to the south, around Holes Bay and Poole Harbour; • Development is on or close to remnant heathland; • Development could reduce recreational value of the area. 					<p>Sensitivity to the introduction of solar PV development of less than 1 hectare is moderate-high and sensitivity to all other scales of development is high.</p> <p>The extent of forest and woodland across localised parts of the lower-lying parts of this area has the potential to contain views of small scale development of this type, although as the southern parts of the area are largely overlooked by Beacon Hill, scope to screen this form of development may be limited here. In areas where land cover has been significantly modified and comprises agricultural land and areas of commercial forest, sensitivity is lower. Areas of intact heathlands, or a greater complexity in the mosaic of heathland, scrub and woodland, will be highly sensitive to all scales of solar PV development.</p> <p>Sensitivity is likely to be higher where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location is on a more steeply sloping area, or the distinctive wooded ridge-top; • There are more intact areas of heathland, scrub and woodland mosaic; • Development has the potential to interrupt the tree cover which extends across the ridgeline in views from the wider areas to the south, around Holes Bay and Poole Harbour; • Development could reduce recreational value of the area. 																																

Landscape character area: West Parley Heath

Area: 279 hectares



West Parley Heath LCA characteristics by susceptibility criteria

Scale and complexity of landform:

"Undulating terrain rising to the north"

Simple, gently undulating landform, broader and more elevated in the north with a gentle slope dropping down towards the river valley to the east. The southern parts of the LCA are generally lower lying and less topographically varied.

Scale and complexity of land use and field pattern:

"Sections of heath are open and exposed"

The pattern of landcover is predominantly of a medium scale. The LCA contains some areas of heathland, although parts are fragmented by enclosed fields and paddocks to the south and east and the golf course to the northwest. These areas are of heathland, comprising a small scale, distinctive mosaic of land cover of heather, stands of birch trees, gorse and scrub, contrast from the surrounding fields and paddocks in their complexity, colours and texture.

Visual exposure:

The southern parts of the area are more visually contained by woodland at Parley Wood, and by mature hedgerow trees enclosing the fields to the south. The more elevated northern area is more open, with some views available from the adjacent river valley to the eastern edge.

Development and activity:

"The area has been subject to urban encroachment and afforestation by both commercial plantations and natural regeneration. The character of the area is influenced by the adjacent urban developments and particularly in terms of noise, by the nearby airport".

The area is crossed by a large overhead power line from the north to the south.

West Parley Heath LCA value characteristics

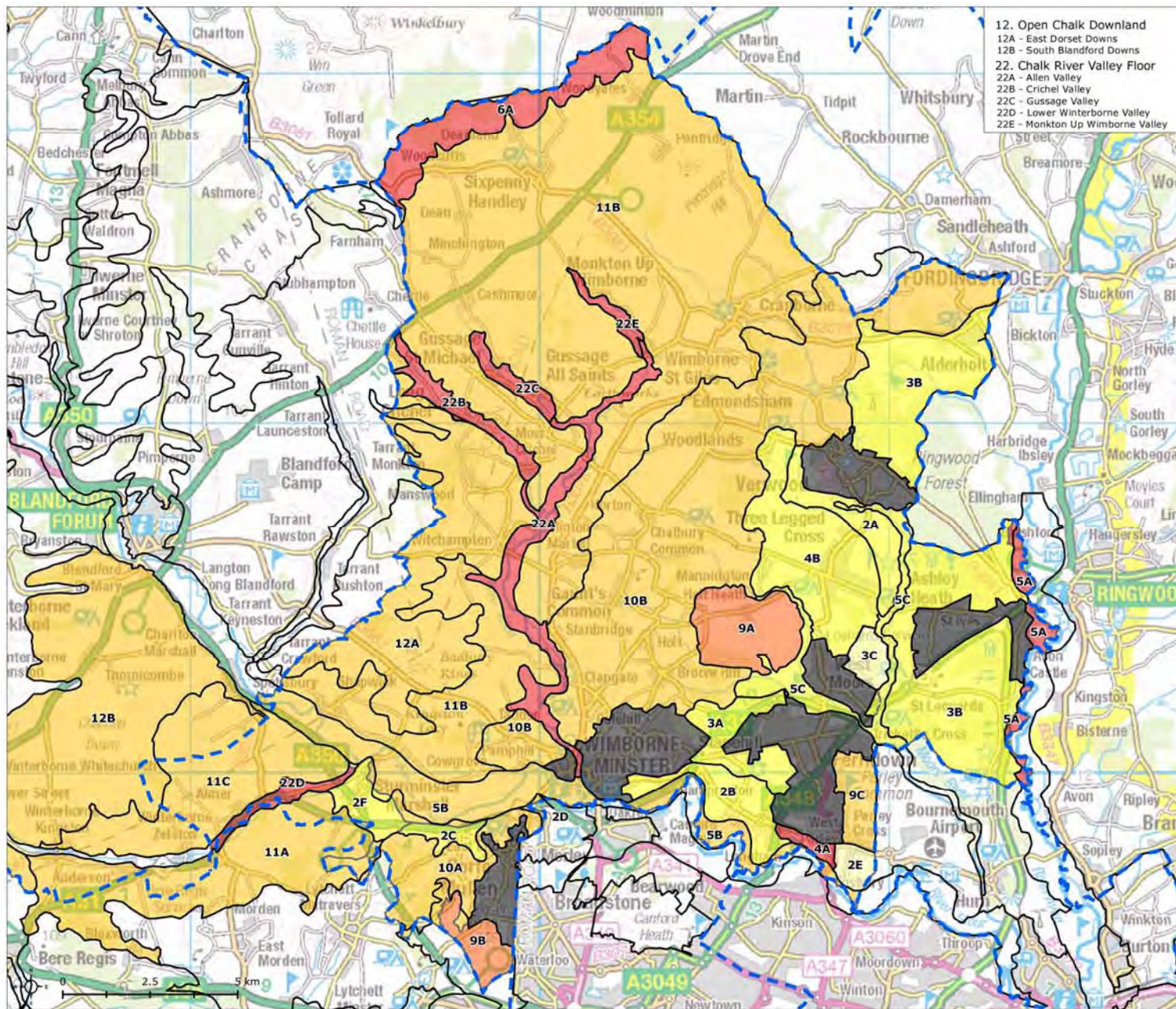
This area is not designated on a national or local level, although as an open access it forms an important recreational resource for the settlement to the west. The more intact areas of heathland are a unique and rare landscape valued for its tranquil and scenic qualities.

West Parley Heath LCA sensitivity to wind energy		West Parley Heath LCA sensitivity to solar PV energy																																						
<p style="text-align: center;">Turbine height (m)</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td></td> <td>≤35</td> <td>≤65</td> <td>≤99</td> <td>>99</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cluster size</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>M</td> <td>M</td> <td>MH</td> <td>H</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2-4</td> <td>M</td> <td>MH</td> <td>MH</td> <td>H</td> </tr> <tr> <td>>4</td> <td></td> <td>H</td> <td>H</td> <td>H</td> </tr> </table>			≤35	≤65	≤99	>99	Cluster size					1	M	M	MH	H	2-4	M	MH	MH	H	>4		H	H	H	<p style="text-align: center;">Development size (ha)</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td></td> <td>≤1</td> <td>M</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>≤10</td> <td>MH</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>≤30</td> <td>H</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>>30</td> <td>H</td> </tr> </table>			≤1	M		≤10	MH		≤30	H		>30	H
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West Parley Heath LCA sensitivity to wind energy		West Parley Heath LCA sensitivity to solar PV energy																																						
<p>Sensitivity to the introduction of single turbines less than 65m, or 2-4 turbines of less than 35m height, is moderate. Sensitivity to 2-4 turbines of 35-65m or up to 4 turbines 66-99m high is moderate-high. Sensitivity to all other scales of wind energy development is high.</p> <p>Within this LCA there is a variety of land cover and sensitivity may be higher or lower within the area depending on whether sensitive features or characteristics occur locally. Areas to the west within the golf course are disturbed and are of relatively lower sensitivity in terms of land cover and pattern. Areas of more intact heathlands and where there is topographic variation and sloping terrain will be highly sensitive to all scales of wind energy development. The existing presence of overhead power lines across this area has the potential to give rise to cumulative landscape and visual effects, which increases the sensitivity of the area.</p> <p>Sensitivity is likely to be higher where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas are used for informal recreation; • There are areas of heathland, scrub and woodland mosaic where there is a perception of wildness; • There is more pronounced topographic variation. 		<p>Sensitivity to the introduction of solar PV developments of less than 1 hectare is moderate, sensitivity to developments of 1-10 hectares is moderate-high and sensitivity to all other scales of solar PV energy development is high.</p> <p>The landform of the area is simple and gently undulating and the area is generally open and of a medium scale, indicating a moderate sensitivity to solar PV development. Trees and woodland across the southern and western parts of the area offer some limited scope for containing views of this form of development and where there is existing fragmentation and degradation towards the fringes of settlements sensitivity is generally lower. There is a degree of inter-visibility with the lower-lying river valley to the east and development within the eastern parts of this area could intrude on views from this area.</p> <p>In areas where land cover comprises more intact areas of heathland, or a greater complexity in the mosaic of heathland, scrub and woodland, will be highly sensitive to all scales of solar PV development.</p> <p>Sensitivity is likely to be higher where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are more intact areas of heathland, scrub and woodland mosaic where there is a perception of wildness; • Where there is greater topographic variation, including slopes which are visible from the river valley to the east. 																																						

8 Wind Energy Sensitivity Summary

- 8.1 The maps shown in **Figures 15 – 25** illustrate the sensitivity ratings set out in **Section 7**, with a separate map for each combination of turbine height category and cluster size category.
- 8.2 In summary it can be stated that East Dorset District has a generally high level of sensitivity to wind energy development. In every part of the District sensitivity to the largest turbine size category – over 99m to tip – is judged to be ‘high’, and with the exception of several ‘medium-high’ ratings there are no locations where sensitivity to turbines over 65m is not also assessed as ‘high’. Sensitivity to developments of more than 4 turbines is also high in almost all cases.
- 8.3 For smaller scales of development, sensitivity ratings show a general pattern of higher sensitivity to the north and west of the District and lower sensitivity to the south and east. To a large extent this reflects the high quality and value associated with the chalk landscapes that dominate the northern and western parts of the District, with almost half of the land area falling within the nationally designated Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB. This is in line with Natural England’s view that the presence of landscapes with statutory protection (i.e. National Parks and AONBs) will substantially reduce the degree to which wind energy development can be accommodated¹³.
- 8.4 A number of the ‘special qualities’ of the AONB, notably its remote, tranquil and historic rural character, the open, undulating downs with strong, uncluttered skylines and the intimate chalk river valley settlements, could be diminished by wind energy development.
- 8.5 To the south and east, landscapes are more varied. Terraces associated with the lower reaches of the river valleys that originate in the chalk uplands, and area of former lowland heath, have a more developed and less remote character, less distinctive topography and consequently in most cases a lower level of sensitivity. There are, however, more sensitive landscapes associated with remaining lowland heathlands, wooded pastures on higher ground, and river valleys that retain a traditional, pastoral character. AGLV designations reflect areas outside of the AONB that are considered to have a high level of landscape value; in several cases these are landscapes which can be considered to form part of the setting of the AONB.
- 8.6 Sensitivity to the smallest category of turbine size – 15-35m to tip – is lower in all but the most distinctive (chalk escarpments) or contained (chalk river valley) landscapes, although it is still no lower than ‘moderate’ across any of the chalk landscapes. Where a landscape is valued for its open, uncluttered character, as is the case in the chalk downs, a small, fast-moving turbine can in some locations have an effect on the perceptual qualities of that landscape that belies its size.
- 8.7 Whilst this sensitivity assessment provides an initial indication of the relative landscape sensitivities of different areas to wind energy development, it should not be interpreted as a definitive statement on the suitability of a certain location for a particular development proposal. It is not a replacement for detailed studies on specific siting and design, and all developments will need to be assessed on their individual merits.
- 8.8 This assessment does not consider cumulative impact of wind energy developments, other than within the guidance notes in **Section 10** below, and it is important to note that, however low the sensitivity rating for an individual turbine or cluster, the cumulative effect of a proliferation of turbines can be significant, regardless of turbine size. Cumulative assessment of any specific wind energy proposal on landscape character and qualities will be a key aspect of the development process.

¹³ As set out in the 2010 report *Making Space for Renewable Energy: Natural England’s Approach to Assessing On-Shore Wind Energy Development* (Catalogue Code: NE254), table 2, page 11.



East Dorset Landscape Sensitivity Assessment

Figure 15
Sensitivity - Single Turbine
- 15-35 Metres to Blade Tip

- District boundaries
 - LCT boundaries
 - LCA boundaries
- Sensitivity**
- High
 - Moderate-high
 - Moderate
 - Moderate-low
 - Low
 - Urban
- Landscape Character Types and Areas**
- 2. River Terrace**
 - 2A - Dewlands-Rushmoor River Terrace
 - 2B - Hampreston River Terrace
 - 2C - Henbury - Corfe, Morden-Lytchett farmland/woodland mosaic
 - 2D - Merley Ridge - Canford River Terrace
 - 2E - Parley River Terrace
 - 2F - Sturminster Marshall River Terrace
 - 3. Heath/Forest Mosaic**
 - 3A - Ferndown Forest - Staphell
 - 3B - Ringwood-Hurn Forest/Heath Mosaic
 - 3C - West Moors Forest/Heath Mosaic
 - 4. Heath/Farmland Mosaic**
 - 4A - Dudsbury Ridge
 - 4B - Horton Common - Three Legged Cross
 - 5. Valley Pasture**
 - 5A - Lower Avon Valley
 - 5B - Lower Stour Valley
 - 5C - Moors River Valley
 - 6. Wooded Chalk Downland**
 - 6A - Chase Woods
 - 9. Lowland Heathland**
 - 9A - Holt Heath
 - 9B - Upton Heath
 - 9C - West Parley Heath
 - 10. Rolling Wooded Pasture**
 - 10A - Henbury - Corfe, Morden-Lytchett farmland/woodland mosaic
 - 10B - Woodlands-Colehill & Hillbutts farmland/woodland mosaic
 - 11. Chalk Valley & Downland**
 - 11A - Bloxworth/Charmborough Downs
 - 11B - East Dorset Downs
 - 11C - South Blandford Downs

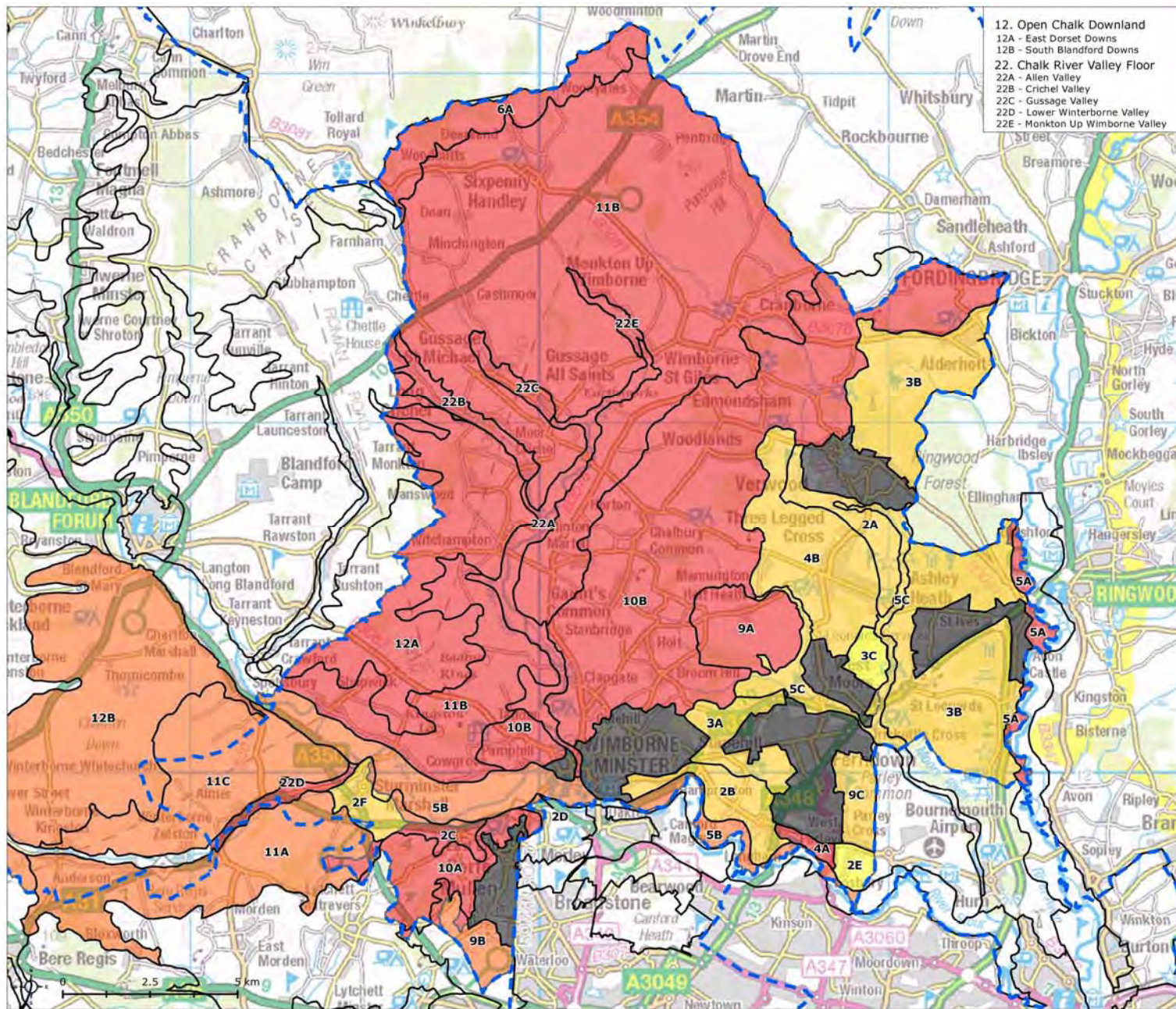


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Source: East Dorset District Council



East Dorset Landscape Sensitivity Assessment

Figure 16
Sensitivity - Single Turbine
- 36-65 Metres to Blade Tip

District boundaries
 LCT boundaries
 LCA boundaries

Sensitivity

- High
- Moderate-high
- Moderate
- Moderate-low
- Low
- Urban

Landscape Character Types and Areas

- 2. River Terrace**
 - 2A - Dewlands-Rushmoor River Terrace
 - 2B - Hampreston River Terrace
 - 2C - Henbury - Corfe, Morden-Lytchett farmland/woodland mosaic
 - 2D - Merley Ridge - Canford River Terrace
 - 2E - Parley River Terrace
 - 2F - Sturminster Marshall River Terrace
- 3. Heath/Forest Mosaic**
 - 3A - Ferndown Forest - Stapehill
 - 3B - Ringwood-Hurn Forest/Heath Mosaic
 - 3C - West Moors Forest/Heath Mosaic
- 4. Heath/Farmland Mosaic**
 - 4A - Dudsbury Ridge
 - 4B - Horton Common - Three Legged Cross
- 5. Valley Pasture**
 - 5A - Lower Avon Valley
 - 5B - Lower Stour Valley
 - 5C - Moors River Valley
- 6. Wooded Chalk Downland**
 - 6A - Chase Woods
- 9. Lowland Heathland**
 - 9A - Holt Heath
 - 9B - Upton Heath
 - 9C - West Parley Heath
- 10. Rolling Wooded Pasture**
 - 10A - Henbury - Corfe, Morden-Lytchett farmland/woodland mosaic
 - 10B - Woodlands-Colehill & Hillbutts farmland/woodland mosaic
- 11. Chalk Valley & Downland**
 - 11A - Bloxworthy/Charnborough Downs
 - 11B - East Dorset Downs
 - 11C - South Blandford Downs

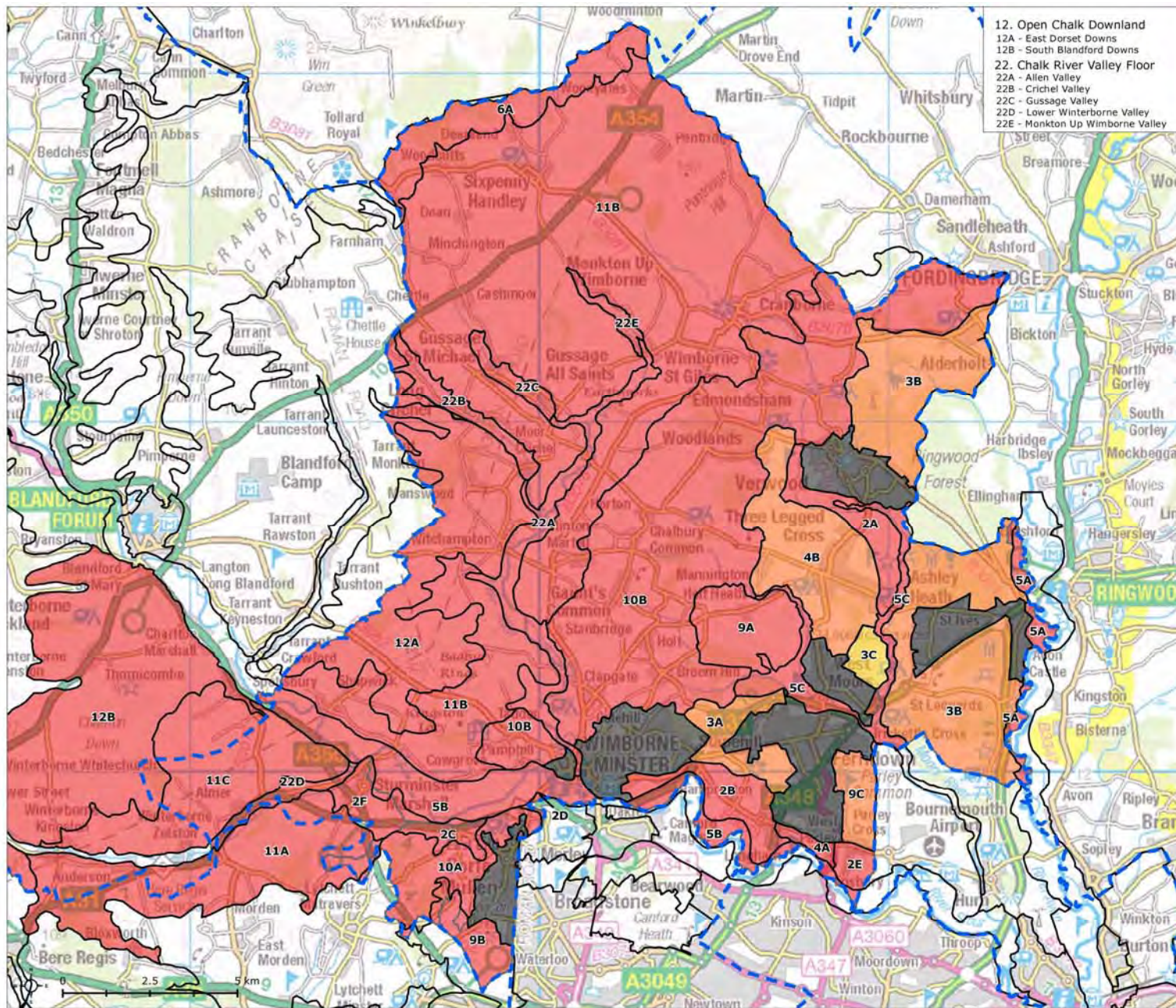
Map Scale @ A4: 1:155,000



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East Dorset Landscape Sensitivity Assessment

Figure 17
Sensitivity - Single Turbine
- 66-99 Metres to Blade Tip

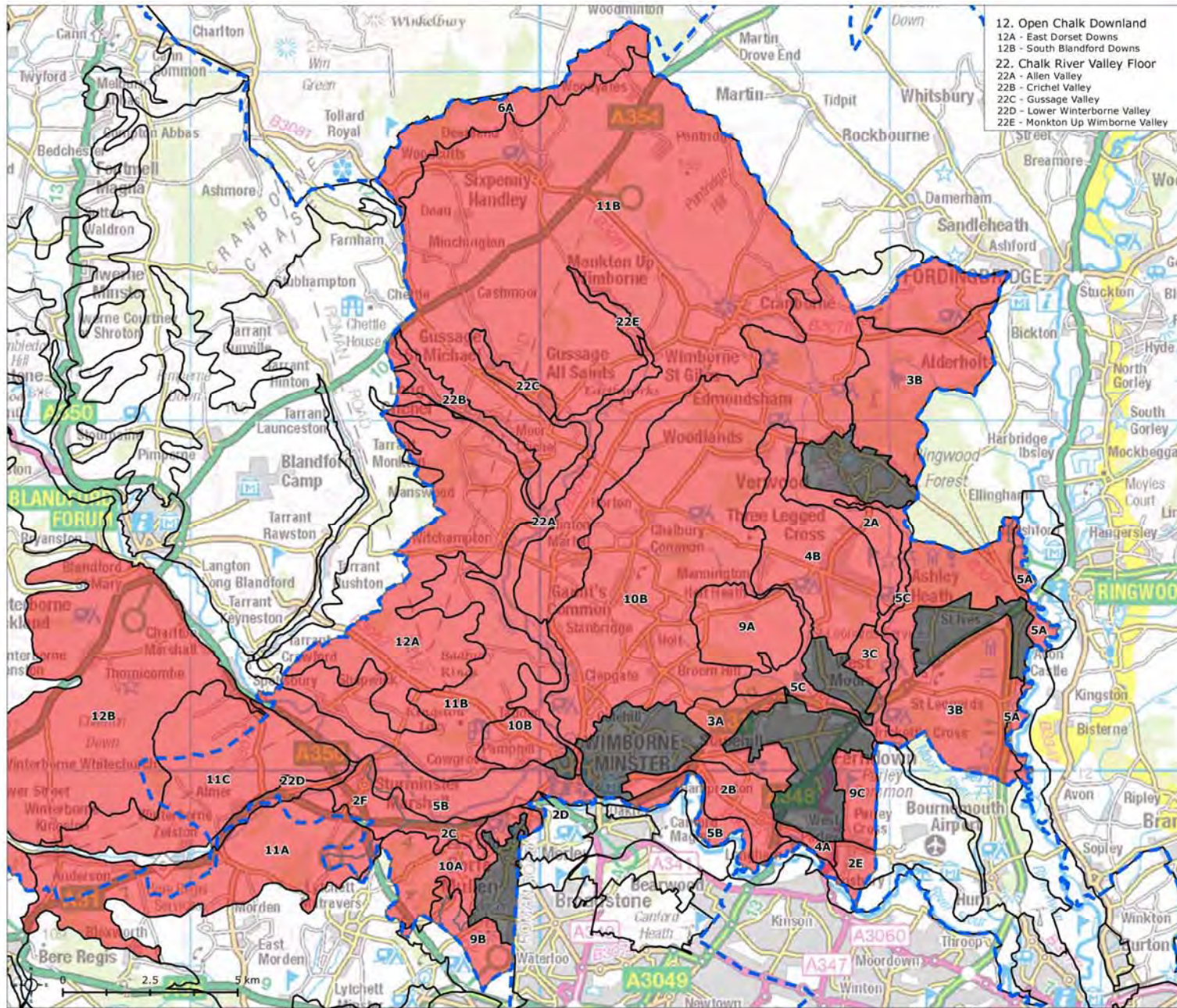
- District boundaries
 - LCT boundaries
 - LCA boundaries
- Sensitivity**
- High
 - Moderate-high
 - Moderate
 - Moderate-low
 - Urban
- Landscape Character Types and Areas**
- 2. River Terrace**
 - 2A - Dewlands-Rushmoor River Terrace
 - 2B - Hampreston River Terrace
 - 2C - Henbury - Corfe, Morden-Lytchett farmland/woodland mosaic
 - 2D - Merley Ridge - Canford River Terrace
 - 2E - Parley River Terrace
 - 2F - Sturminster Marshall River Terrace
 - 3. Heath/Forest Mosaic**
 - 3A - Ferndown Forest - Stapehill
 - 3B - Ringwood-Hurn Forest/Heath Mosaic
 - 3C - West Moors Forest/Heath Mosaic
 - 4. Heath/Farmland Mosaic**
 - 4A - Dudsbury Ridge
 - 4B - Horton Common - Three Legged Cross
 - 5. Valley Pasture**
 - 5A - Lower Avon Valley
 - 5B - Lower Stour Valley
 - 5C - Moors River Valley
 - 6. Wooded Chalk Downland**
 - 6A - Chase Woods
 - 9. Lowland Heathland**
 - 9A - Holt Heath
 - 9B - Upton Heath
 - 9C - West Parley Heath
 - 10. Rolling Wooded Pasture**
 - 10A - Henbury - Corfe, Morden-Lytchett farmland/woodland mosaic
 - 10B - Woodlands-Colehill & Hillbutts farmland/woodland mosaic
 - 11. Chalk Valley & Downland**
 - 11A - Bloxworthy/Charnborough Downs
 - 11B - East Dorset Downs
 - 11C - South Blandford Downs
- Map Scale @ A4: 1:155,000**

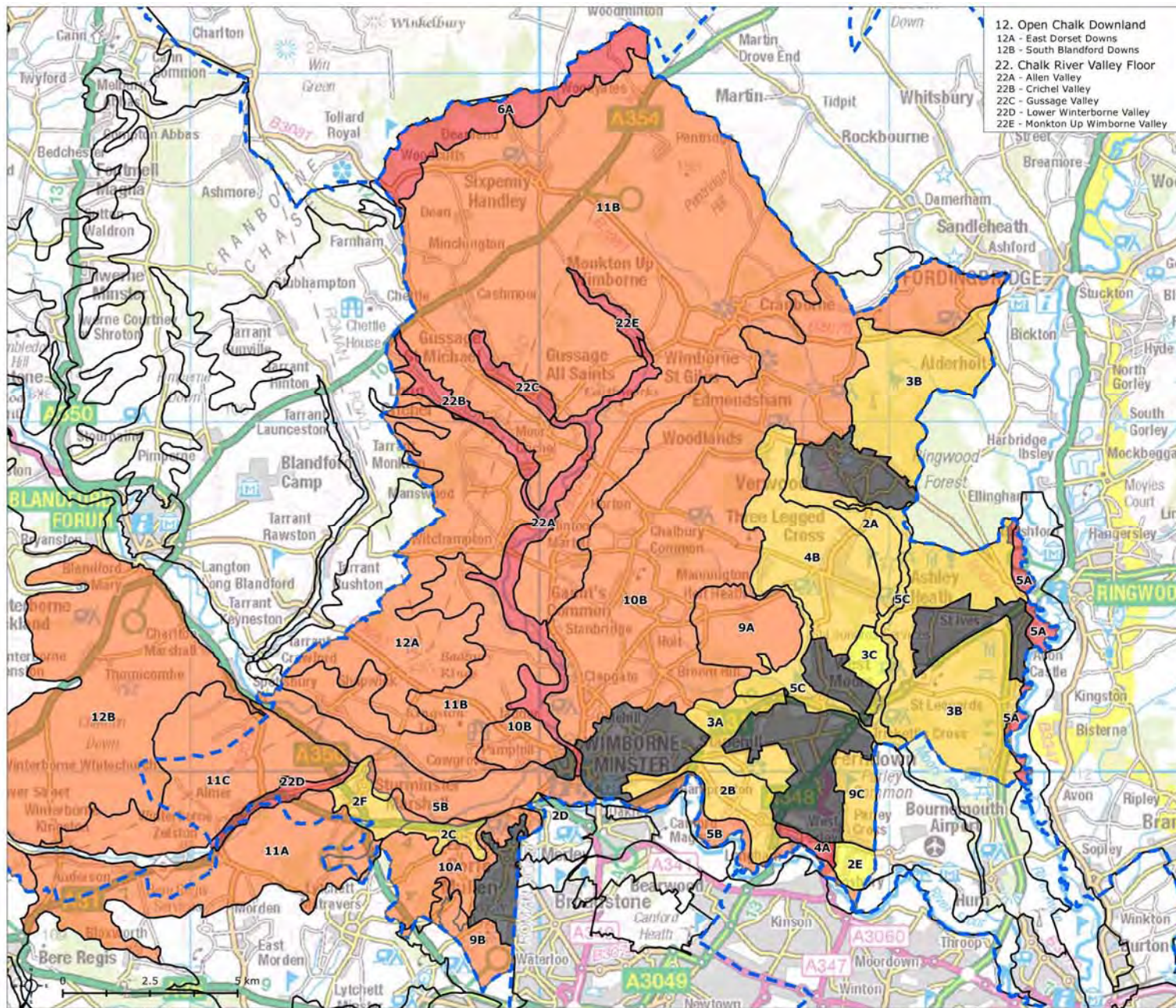
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East Dorset Landscape Sensitivity Assessment

Figure 19
Sensitivity - 2-4 Turbines - 15-35 Metres to Blade Tip

District boundaries
 LCT boundaries
 LCA boundaries

Sensitivity

- High
- Moderate-high
- Moderate
- Moderate-low
- Low
- Urban

Landscape Character Types and Areas

- 2. River Terrace**
 - 2A - Dewlands-Rushmoor River Terrace
 - 2B - Hampreston River Terrace
 - 2C - Henbury - Corfe, Morden-Lytchett farmland/woodland mosaic
 - 2D - Merley Ridge - Canford River Terrace
 - 2E - Parley River Terrace
 - 2F - Sturminster Marshall River Terrace
- 3. Heath/Forest Mosaic**
 - 3A - Ferndown Forest - Stapehill
 - 3B - Ringwood-Hurn Forest/Heath Mosaic
 - 3C - West Moors Forest/Heath Mosaic
- 4. Heath/Farmland Mosaic**
 - 4A - Dudsbury Ridge
 - 4B - Horton Common - Three Legged Cross
- 5. Valley Pasture**
 - 5A - Lower Avon Valley
 - 5B - Lower Stour Valley
 - 5C - Moors River Valley
- 6. Wooded Chalk Downland**
 - 6A - Chase Woods
- 9. Lowland Heathland**
 - 9A - Holt Heath
 - 9B - Upton Heath
 - 9C - West Parley Heath
- 10. Rolling Wooded Pasture**
 - 10A - Henbury - Corfe, Morden-Lytchett farmland/woodland mosaic
 - 10B - Woodlands-Colehill & Hillbutts farmland/woodland mosaic
- 11. Chalk Valley & Downland**
 - 11A - Bloxworth/Charnborough Downs
 - 11B - East Dorset Downs
 - 11C - South Blandford Downs

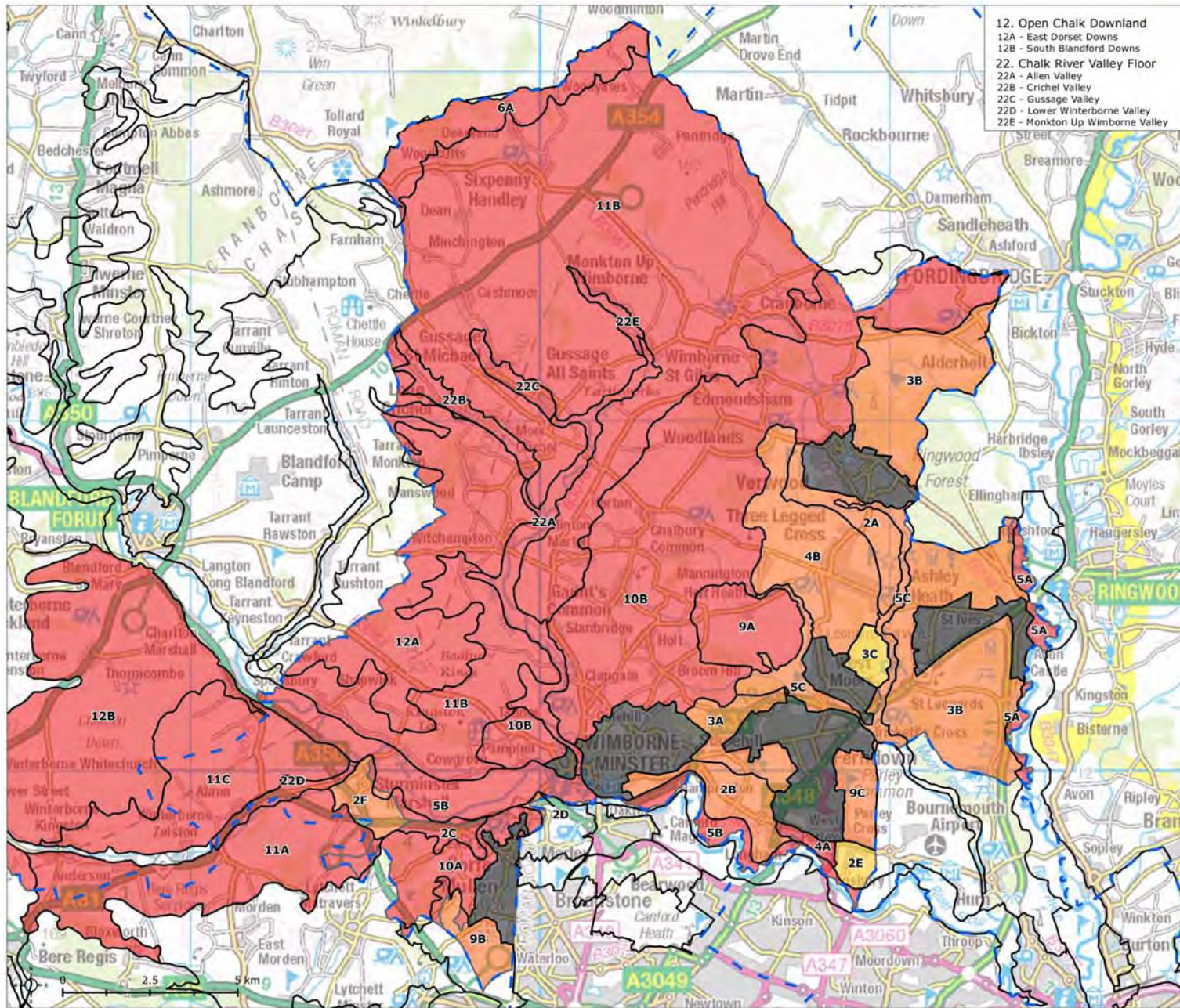
Map Scale @ A4: 1:155,000



Source: East Dorset District Council

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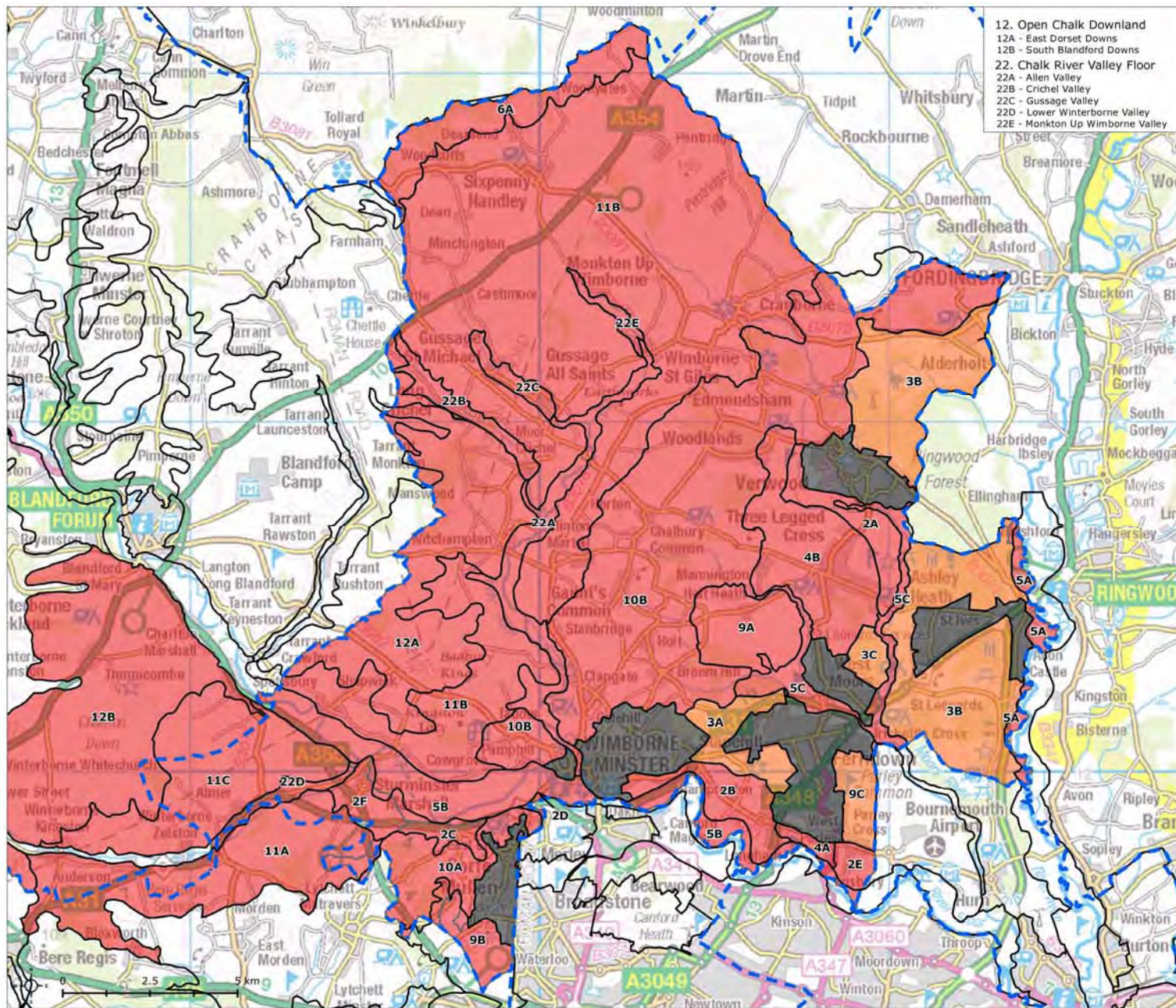
LUC LDN 5864-01_027_East_Dorset_Context_Sensitivity_BA 12/03/2014



East Dorset Landscape Sensitivity Assessment

Figure 20

Sensitivity - 2-4 Turbines - 36-65 Metres to Blade Tip



East Dorset Landscape Sensitivity Assessment

Figure 21
Sensitivity - 2-4 Turbines - 66-99 Metres to Blade Tip

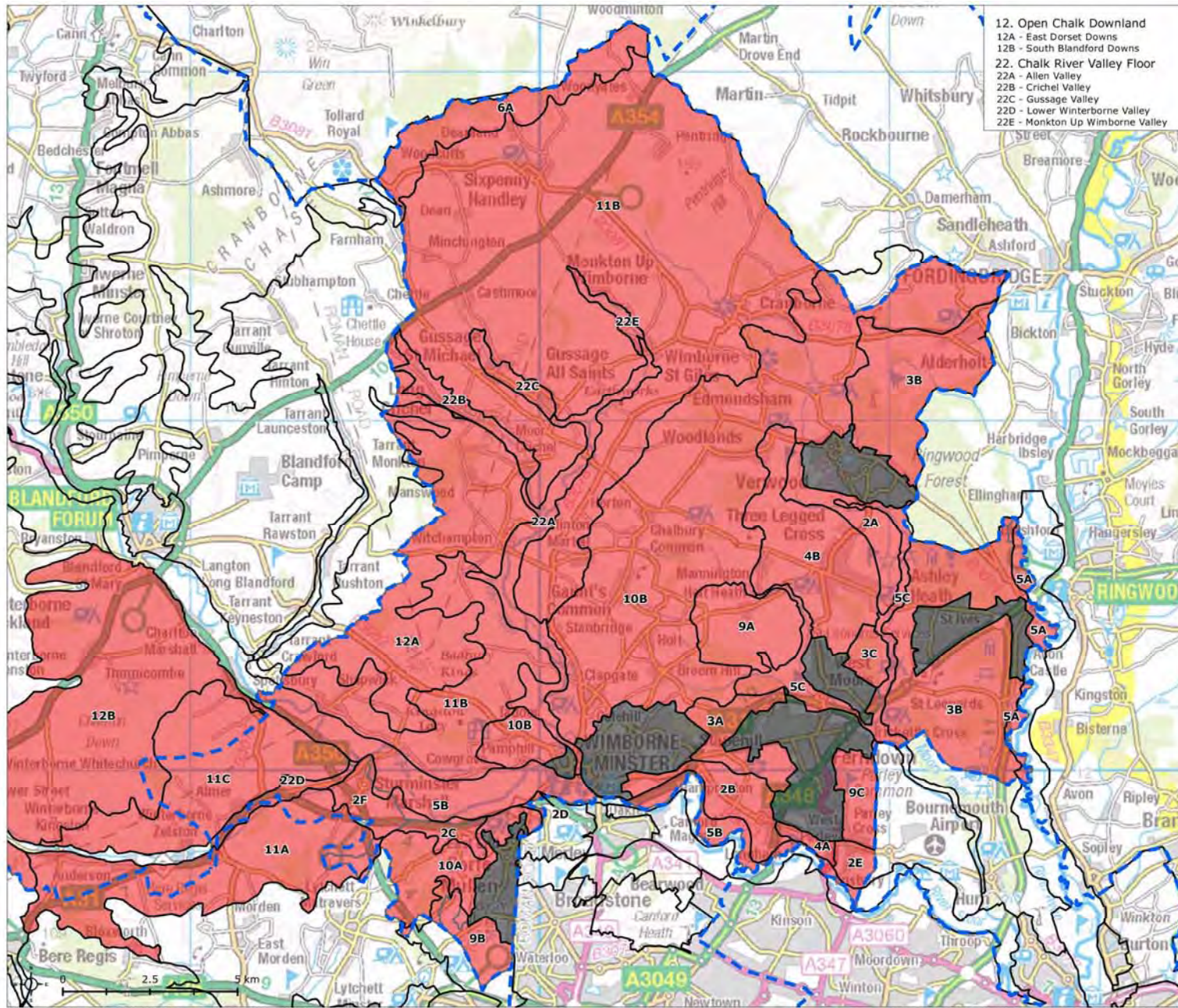
- District boundaries
 - LCT boundaries
 - LCA boundaries
- Sensitivity**
- High
 - Moderate-high
 - Moderate
 - Moderate-low
 - Low
 - Urban
- Landscape Character Types and Areas**
- 2. River Terrace**
 - 2A - Dewlands-Rushmoor River Terrace
 - 2B - Hampreston River Terrace
 - 2C - Henbury - Corfe, Morden-Lytchett farmland/woodland mosaic
 - 2D - Merley Ridge - Canford River Terrace
 - 2E - Parley River Terrace
 - 2F - Sturminster Marshall River Terrace
 - 3. Heath/Forest Mosaic**
 - 3A - Ferndown Forest - Stapehill
 - 3B - Ringwood-Hurn Forest/Heath Mosaic
 - 3C - West Moors Forest/Heath Mosaic
 - 4. Heath/Farmland Mosaic**
 - 4A - Dudsbury Ridge
 - 4B - Horton Common - Three Legged Cross
 - 5. Valley Pasture**
 - 5A - Lower Avon Valley
 - 5B - Lower Stour Valley
 - 5C - Moors River Valley
 - 6. Wooded Chalk Downland**
 - 6A - Chase Woods
 - 9. Lowland Heathland**
 - 9A - Holt Heath
 - 9B - Upton Heath
 - 9C - West Parley Heath
 - 10. Rolling Wooded Pasture**
 - 10A - Henbury - Corfe, Morden-Lytchett farmland/woodland mosaic
 - 10B - Woodlands-Colehill & Hillbutts farmland/woodland mosaic
 - 11. Chalk Valley & Downland**
 - 11A - Bloxworth/Charnborough Downs
 - 11B - East Dorset Downs
 - 11C - South Blandford Downs
- Map Scale @ A4: 1:155,000**

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Source: East Dorset District Council

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East Dorset Landscape Sensitivity Assessment

Figure 22
Sensitivity - 2-4 Turbines - 100 Metres or More to Blade Tip

- District boundaries
 - LCT boundaries
 - LCA boundaries
- Sensitivity**
- High
 - Moderate-high
 - Moderate
 - Moderate-low
 - Low
 - Urban
- Landscape Character Types and Areas**
2. River Terrace
 - 2A - Dewlands-Rushmoor River Terrace
 - 2B - Hampreston River Terrace
 - 2C - Henbury - Corfe, Morden-Lytchett farmland/woodland mosaic
 - 2D - Merley Ridge - Canford River Terrace
 - 2E - Parley River Terrace
 - 2F - Sturminster Marshall River Terrace
 3. Heath/Forest Mosaic
 - 3A - Ferndown Forest - Stapehill
 - 3B - Ringwood-Hurn Forest/Heath Mosaic
 - 3C - West Moors Forest/Heath Mosaic
 4. Heath/Farmland Mosaic
 - 4A - Dudsbury Ridge
 - 4B - Horton Common - Three Legged Cross
 5. Valley Pasture
 - 5A - Lower Avon Valley
 - 5B - Lower Stour Valley
 - 5C - Moors River Valley
 6. Wooded Chalk Downland
 - 6A - Chase Woods
 9. Lowland Heathland
 - 9A - Holt Heath
 - 9B - Upton Heath
 - 9C - West Parley Heath
 10. Rolling Wooded Pasture
 - 10A - Henbury - Corfe, Morden-Lytchett farmland/woodland mosaic
 - 10B - Woodlands-Colehill & Hillbutts farmland/woodland mosaic
 11. Chalk Valley & Downland
 - 11A - Bloxworth/Charnborough Downs
 - 11B - East Dorset Downs
 - 11C - South Blandford Downs

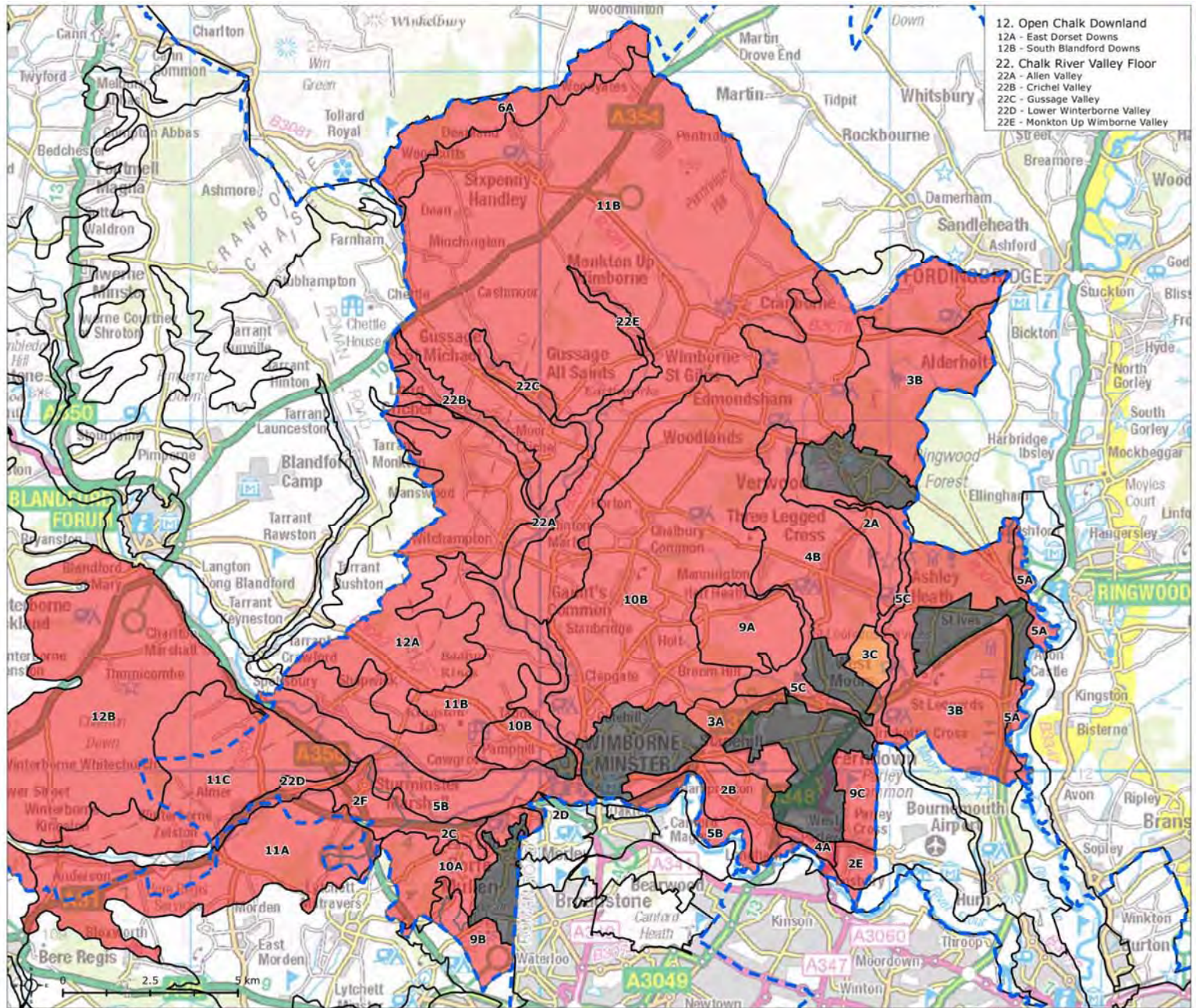
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East Dorset Landscape Sensitivity Assessment

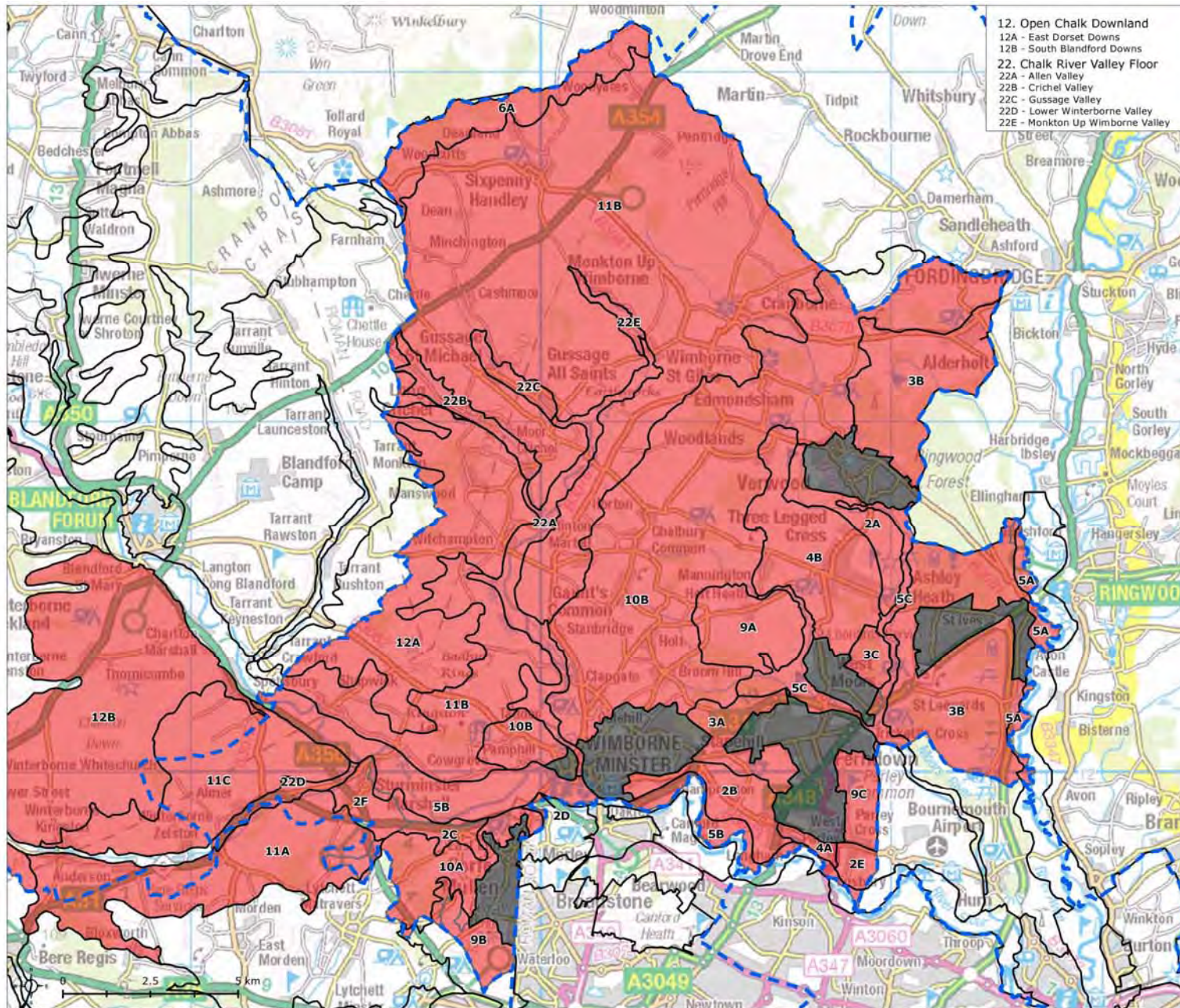
Figure 23
Sensitivity - 5 or More Turbines - 36-65 Metres to Blade Tip

- District boundaries
 - LCT boundaries
 - LCA boundaries
- Sensitivity**
- High
 - Moderate-high
 - Moderate
 - Moderate-low
 - Low
 - Urban
- Landscape Character Types and Areas**
- 2. River Terrace**
 - 2A - Dewlands-Rushmoor River Terrace
 - 2B - Hampreston River Terrace
 - 2C - Henbury - Corfe, Morden-Lytchett farmland/woodland mosaic
 - 2D - Merley Ridge - Canford River Terrace
 - 2E - Parley River Terrace
 - 2F - Sturminster Marshall River Terrace
 - 3. Heath/Forest Mosaic**
 - 3A - Ferndown Forest - Stapehill
 - 3B - Ringwood-Hurn Forest/Heath Mosaic
 - 3C - West Moors Forest/Heath Mosaic
 - 4. Heath/Farmland Mosaic**
 - 4A - Duddsbury Ridge
 - 4B - Horton Common - Three Legged Cross
 - 5. Valley Pasture**
 - 5A - Lower Avon Valley
 - 5B - Lower Stour Valley
 - 5C - Moors River Valley
 - 6. Wooded Chalk Downland**
 - 6A - Chase Woods
 - 9. Lowland Heathland**
 - 9A - Holt Heath
 - 9B - Upton Heath
 - 9C - West Parley Heath
 - 10. Rolling Wooded Pasture**
 - 10A - Henbury - Corfe, Morden-Lytchett farmland/woodland mosaic
 - 10B - Woodlands-Colehill & Hillbutts farmland/woodland mosaic
 - 11. Chalk Valley & Downland**
 - 11A - Bloxworth/Charnborough Downs
 - 11B - East Dorset Downs
 - 11C - South Blandford Downs
- Map Scale @ A4: 1:155,000**

LUC

Sources: East Dorset District Council

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East Dorset Landscape Sensitivity Assessment

Figure 24
Sensitivity - 5 or More Turbines - 66-99 Metres to Blade Tip

- District boundaries
 - LCT boundaries
 - LCA boundaries
- Sensitivity**
- High
 - Moderate-high
 - Moderate
 - Moderate-low
 - Low
 - Urban
- Landscape Character Types and Areas**
2. River Terrace
 - 2A - Dewlands-Rushmoor River Terrace
 - 2B - Hampreston River Terrace
 - 2C - Henbury - Corfe, Morden-Lytchett farmland/woodland mosaic
 - 2D - Merley Ridge - Canford River Terrace
 - 2E - Parley River Terrace
 - 2F - Sturminster Marshall River Terrace
 3. Heath/Forest Mosaic
 - 3A - Ferndown Forest - Stapehill
 - 3B - Ringwood-Hurn Forest/Heath Mosaic
 - 3C - West Moors Forest/Heath Mosaic
 4. Heath/Farmland Mosaic
 - 4A - Dudsbury Ridge
 - 4B - Horton Common - Three Legged Cross
 5. Valley Pasture
 - 5A - Lower Avon Valley
 - 5B - Lower Stour Valley
 - 5C - Moors River Valley
 6. Wooded Chalk Downland
 - 6A - Chase Woods
 9. Lowland Heathland
 - 9A - Holt Heath
 - 9B - Upton Heath
 - 9C - West Parley Heath
 10. Rolling Wooded Pasture
 - 10A - Henbury - Corfe, Morden-Lytchett farmland/woodland mosaic
 - 10B - Woodlands-Colehill & Hillbutts farmland/woodland mosaic
 11. Chalk Valley & Downland
 - 11A - Bloxworthy/Charnborough Downs
 - 11B - East Dorset Downs
 - 11C - South Blandford Downs

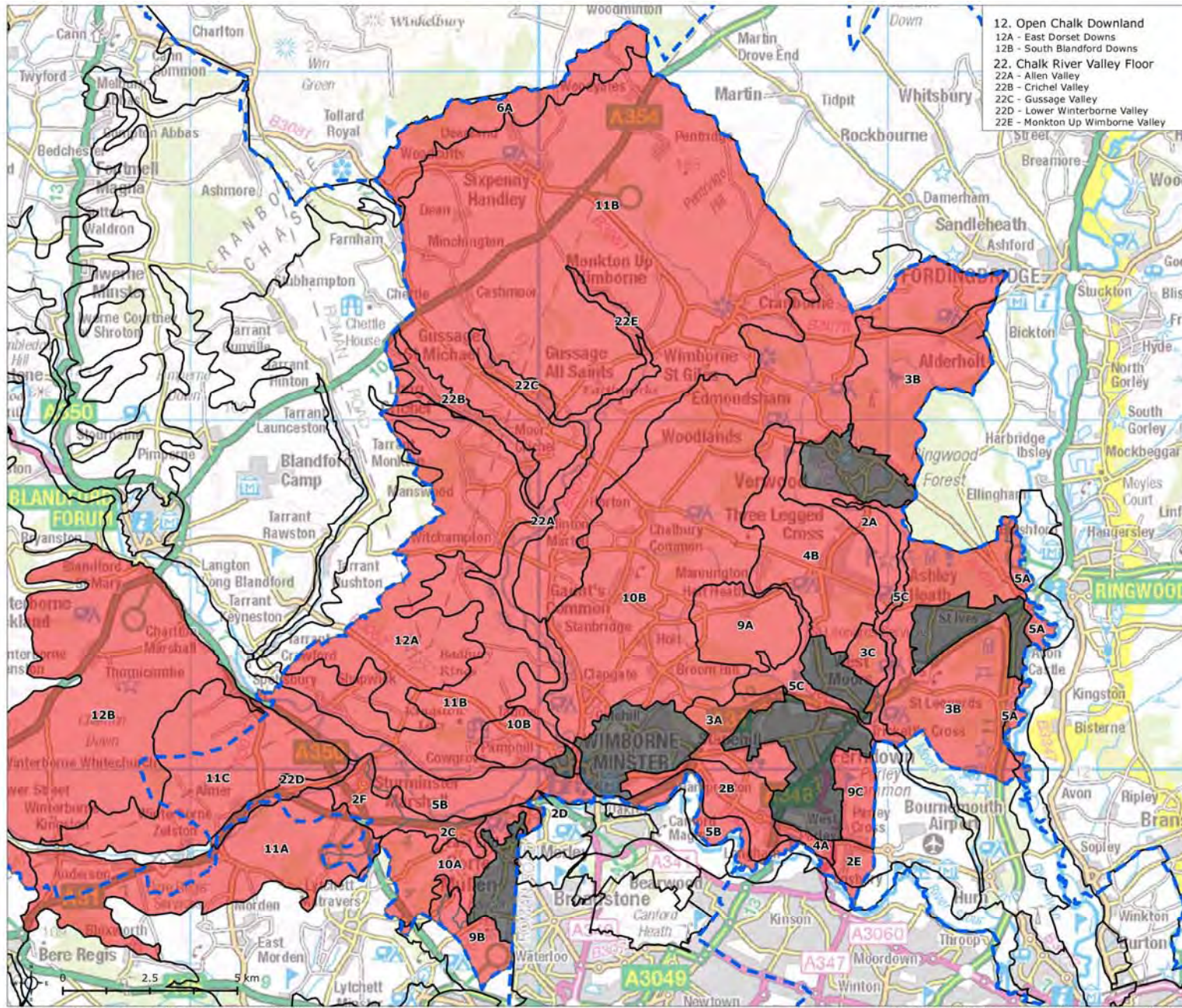
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East Dorset Landscape Sensitivity Assessment

Figure 25
Sensitivity - 5 or More Turbines - 100 Metres or More to Blade Tip

- District boundaries
 - LCT boundaries
 - LCA boundaries
- Sensitivity**
- High
 - Moderate-high
 - Moderate
 - Moderate-low
 - Low
 - Urban

- Landscape Character Types and Areas**
2. River Terrace
 - 2A - Dewlands-Rushmoor River Terrace
 - 2B - Ham Preston River Terrace
 - 2C - Henbury - Corfe, Morden-Lytchett farmland/woodland mosaic
 - 2D - Merley Ridge - Canford River Terrace
 - 2E - Parley River Terrace
 - 2F - Sturminster Marshall River Terrace
 3. Heath/Forest Mosaic
 - 3A - Ferndown Forest - Stapehill
 - 3B - Ringwood-Hurn Forest/Heath Mosaic
 - 3C - West Moors Forest/Heath Mosaic
 4. Heath/Farmland Mosaic
 - 4A - Duddsbury Ridge
 - 4B - Horton Common - Three Legged Cross
 5. Valley Pasture
 - 5A - Lower Avon Valley
 - 5B - Lower Stour Valley
 - 5C - Moors River Valley
 6. Wooded Chalk Downland
 - 6A - Chase Woods
 9. Lowland Heathland
 - 9A - Holt Heath
 - 9B - Upton Heath
 - 9C - West Parley Heath
 10. Rolling Wooded Pasture
 - 10A - Henbury - Corfe, Morden-Lytchett farmland/woodland mosaic
 - 10B - Woodlands-Colehill & Hillbutts farmland/woodland mosaic
 11. Chalk Valley & Downland
 - 11A - Blowworth/Chamberough Downs
 - 11B - East Dorset Downs
 - 11C - South Blandford Downs

Map Scale @ A4: 1:155,000

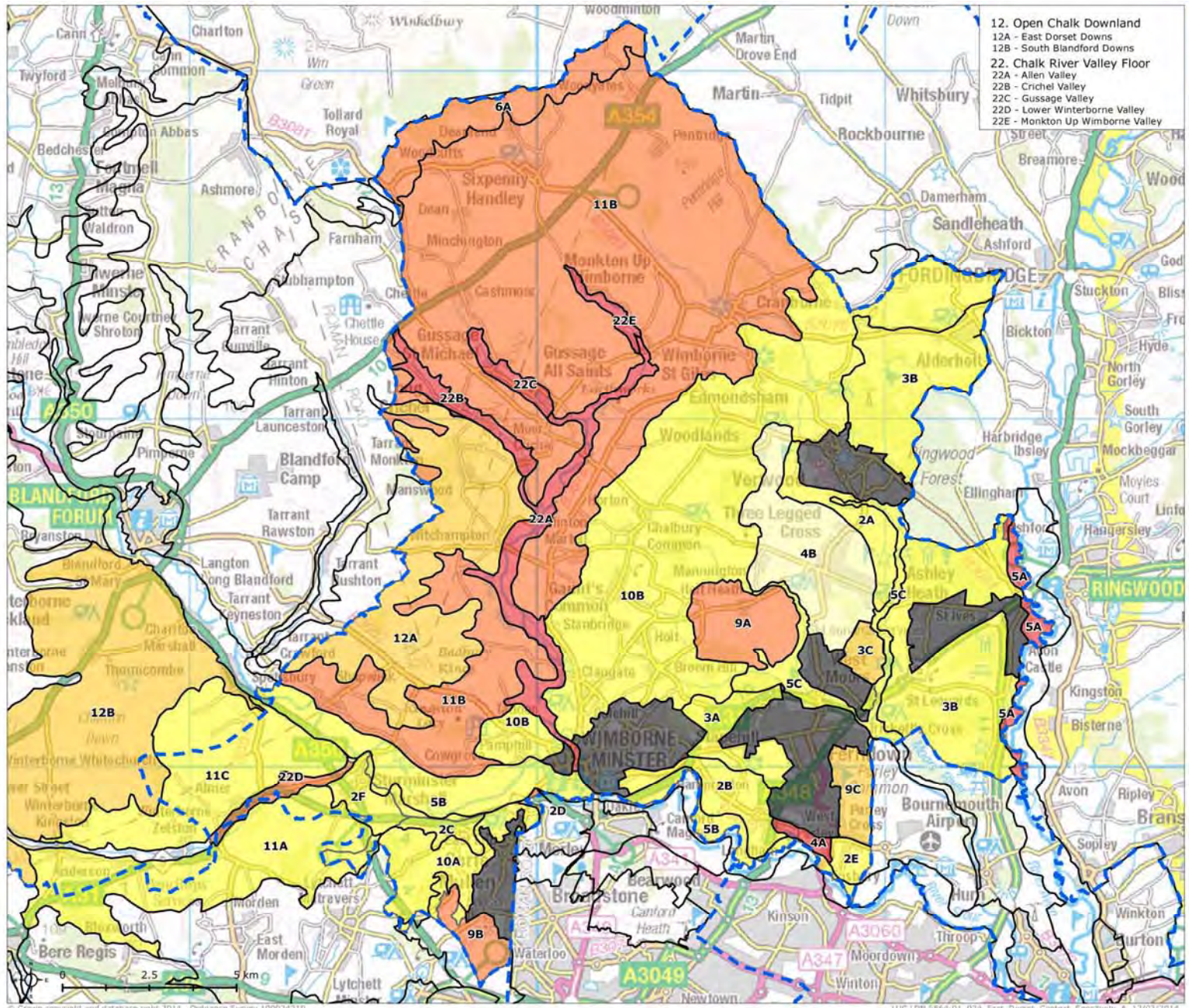
LUC

Source: East Dorset District Council

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9 Solar PV Energy Sensitivity Summary

- 9.1 The maps shown in **Figures 26 – 29** illustrate the sensitivity ratings set out in **Section 7**, with a separate map for each scale of solar PV development.
- 9.2 In summary it can be stated that East Dorset District has a generally high level of sensitivity to large-scale solar PV development. Scale of landform and landscape pattern are important considerations with regard to size of development, and where the scale of these elements is potentially large enough to be of lower sensitivity the quality and character of those landscapes is such that major solar schemes would be likely to have a significant adverse impact.
- 9.3 This is particularly the case in the chalk landscapes that have AONB designation 'a number of the 'special qualities' of the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB, notably its remote, tranquil and historic rural character, could be diminished by solar PV development. Where the chalk downs are closer to the broad river valleys such as the Stour, less remote from modern development and major roads and less undulating in character, sensitivity is reduced.
- 9.4 In chalk areas, sensitivity to small-scale solar PV is typically still relatively high because developments are likely to stand out in the open downland landscape, but in more enclosed landscapes to the south and east of the District, particularly where modern development has reduced any historic landscape character, there is lower sensitivity to developments which fit in with the scale of the landscape.
- 9.5 Solar development will usually result in a change in land use for the duration of its operation, (which planning approval usually limits to 25 years, so where the current land cover or land use is more valued, such as heathlands or traditional pastures in river valleys, there will be a higher level of sensitivity than is the case where land has been converted to arable or devalued through industrial activity (e.g. quarrying).
- 9.6 Whilst this sensitivity assessment provides an initial indication of the relative landscape sensitivities of different areas to solar PV energy development, it should not be interpreted as a definitive statement on the suitability of a certain location for a particular development proposal. It is not a replacement for detailed studies on specific siting and design, and all developments will need to be assessed on their individual merits.
- 9.7 This assessment does not consider cumulative impact of solar PV energy developments, other than within the guidance notes in **Section 11** below, and it is important to note that, however low the sensitivity rating for an individual development, the cumulative effect of a proliferation of schemes can be significant, regardless of size. Cumulative assessment of any specific solar PV energy proposal on landscape character and qualities will be a key aspect of the development process.



East Dorset Landscape Sensitivity Assessment

Figure 26
Sensitivity - Solar Farm - Up to 1 Hectare

- District boundaries
 - LCT boundaries
 - LCA boundaries
- Sensitivity**
- High
 - Moderate-high
 - Moderate
 - Moderate-low
 - Low
 - Urban

- Landscape Character Types and Areas**
2. River Terrace
 - 2A - Dewlands-Rushmoor River Terrace
 - 2B - Hampreston River Terrace
 - 2C - Henbury - Corfe, Morden-Lytchett farmland/woodland mosaic
 - 2D - Merley Ridge - Canford River Terrace
 - 2E - Parley River Terrace
 - 2F - Sturminster Marshall River Terrace
 3. Heath/Forest Mosaic
 - 3A - Ferndown Forest - Stapehill
 - 3B - Ringwood-Hurn Forest/Heath Mosaic
 - 3C - West Moors Forest/Heath Mosaic
 4. Heath/Farmland Mosaic
 - 4A - Duddsbury Ridge
 - 4B - Horton Common - Three Legged Cross
 5. Valley Pasture
 - 5A - Lower Avon Valley
 - 5B - Lower Stour Valley
 - 5C - Moors River Valley
 6. Wooded Chalk Downland
 - 6A - Chase Woods
 9. Lowland Heathland
 - 9A - Holt Heath
 - 9B - Upton Heath
 - 9C - West Parley Heath
 10. Rolling Wooded Pasture
 - 10A - Henbury - Corfe, Morden-Lytchett farmland/woodland mosaic
 - 10B - Woodlands-Colehill & Hillbutts farmland/woodland mosaic
 11. Chalk Valley & Downland
 - 11A - Bloxworth/Charnborough Downs
 - 11B - East Dorset Downs
 - 11C - South Blandford Downs

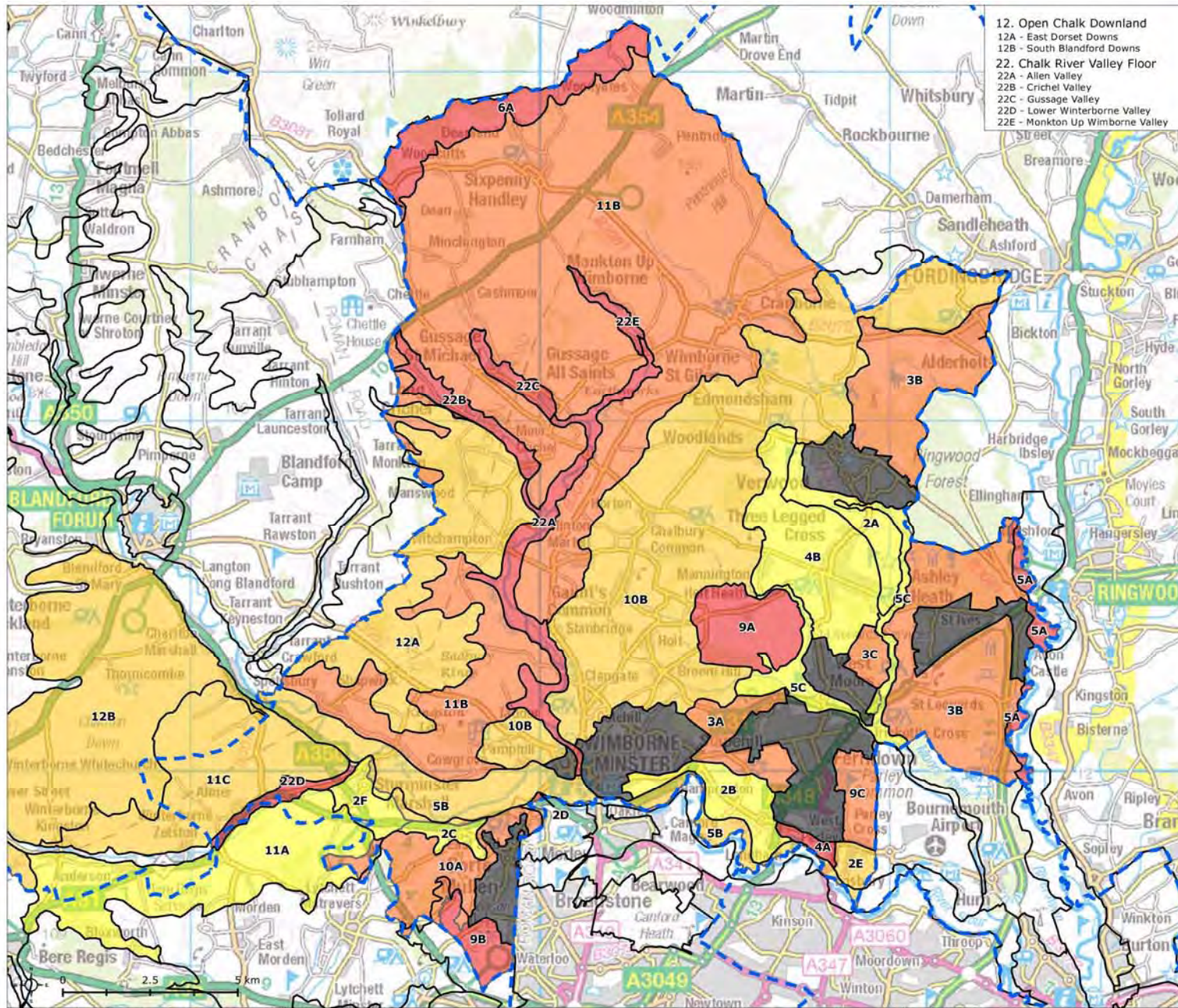
Map Scale @ A4: 1:155,000

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LUC LDN 5864-01_034_East_Dorset_Context_Sensitivity_A_12/03/2014

Source: East Dorset District Council



- 12. Open Chalk Downland
- 12A - East Dorset Downs
- 12B - South Blandford Downs
- 22. Chalk River Valley Floor
- 22A - Allen Valley
- 22B - Criche Valley
- 22C - Gussage Valley
- 22D - Lower Winterborne Valley
- 22E - Monkton Up Wimborne Valley

Figure 27

Sensitivity - Solar Farm - 1 to 10 Hectares

- District boundaries
- LCT boundaries
- LCA boundaries

Sensitivity

- High
- Moderate-high
- Moderate
- Moderate-low
- Urban

Landscape Character Types and Areas

- 2. River Terrace
 - 2A - Dewlands-Rushmoor River Terrace
 - 2B - Hampreston River Terrace
 - 2C - Henbury - Corfe, Morden-Lytchett farmland/woodland mosaic
 - 2D - Merley Ridge - Canford River Terrace
 - 2E - Parley River Terrace
 - 2F - Sturminster Marshall River Terrace
- 3. Heath/Forest Mosaic
 - 3A - Ferndown Forest - Stapehill
 - 3B - Ringwood-Hurn Forest/Heath Mosaic
 - 3C - West Moors Forest/Heath Mosaic
- 4. Heath/Farmland Mosaic
 - 4A - Duddsbury Ridge
 - 4B - Horton Common - Three Legged Cross
- 5. Valley Pasture
 - 5A - Lower Avon Valley
 - 5B - Lower Stour Valley
 - 5C - Moors River Valley
- 6. Wooded Chalk Downland
 - 6A - Chase Woods
- 9. Lowland Heathland
 - 9A - Holt Heath
 - 9B - Upton Heath
 - 9C - West Parley Heath
- 10. Rolling Wooded Pasture
 - 10A - Henbury - Corfe, Morden-Lytchett farmland/woodland mosaic
 - 10B - Woodlands-Colehill & Hillbutts farmland/woodland mosaic
- 11. Chalk Valley & Downland
 - 11A - Bloxworth/Charnborough Downs
 - 11B - East Dorset Downs
 - 11C - South Blandford Downs

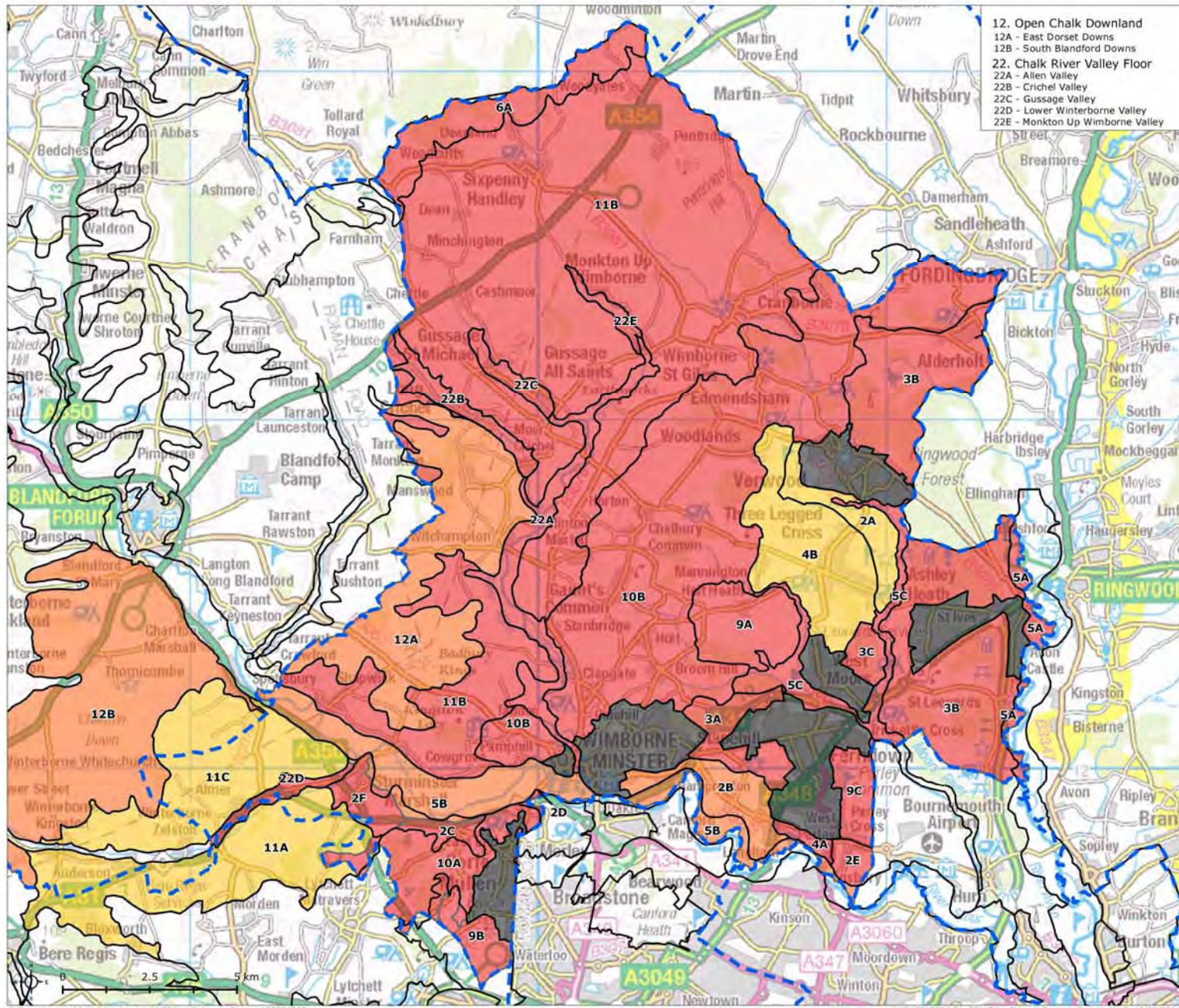
Map Scale @ A4: 1:155,000



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LUC LDH 5864_01_035_East_Dorset_Context_Sensitivity_B 12/03/2014



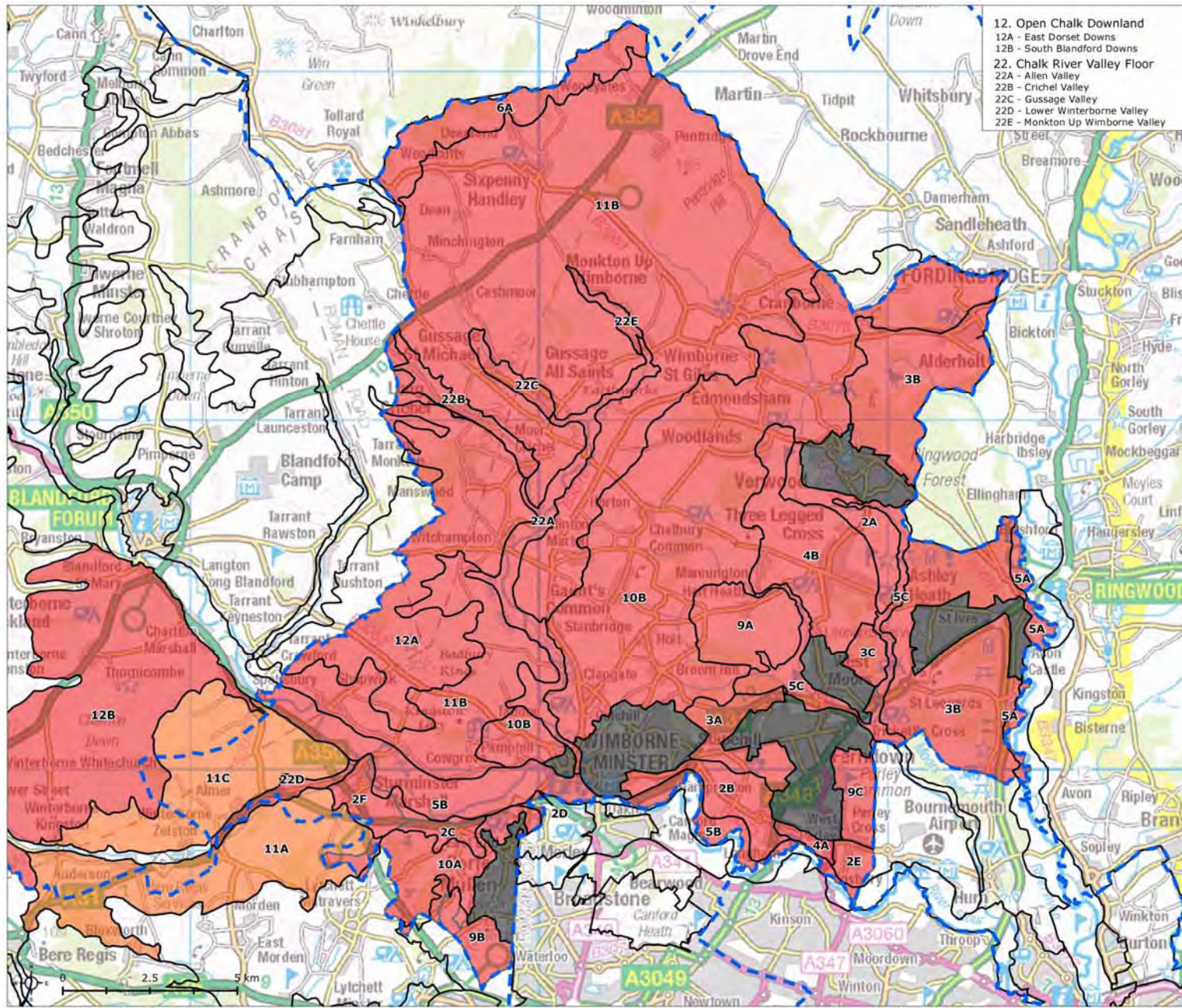
East Dorset Landscape Sensitivity Assessment

Figure 28
Sensitivity - Solar Farm - 10 to 30 Hectares

- District boundaries
 - LCT boundaries
 - LCA boundaries
- Sensitivity**
- High
 - Moderate-high
 - Moderate
 - Moderate-low
 - Low
 - Urban
- Landscape Character Types and Areas**
- 2. River Terrace**
 - 2A - Dewlands-Rushmoor River Terrace
 - 2B - Hampreston River Terrace
 - 2C - Henbury - Corfe, Morden-Lytchett farmland/woodland mosaic
 - 2D - Merley Ridge - Canford River Terrace
 - 2E - Parley River Terrace
 - 2F - Stumminster Marshall River Terrace
 - 3. Heath/Forest Mosaic**
 - 3A - Ferndown Forest - Stapehill
 - 3B - Ringwood-Hurn Forest/Heath Mosaic
 - 3C - West Moors Forest/Heath Mosaic
 - 4. Heath/Farmland Mosaic**
 - 4A - Dudsbury Ridge
 - 4B - Horton Common - Three Legged Cross
 - 5. Valley Pasture**
 - 5A - Lower Avon Valley
 - 5B - Lower Stour Valley
 - 5C - Moors River Valley
 - 6. Wooded Chalk Downland**
 - 6A - Chase Woods
 - 9. Lowland Heathland**
 - 9A - Holt Heath
 - 9B - Upton Heath
 - 9C - West Parley Heath
 - 10. Rolling Wooded Pasture**
 - 10A - Henbury - Corfe, Morden-Lytchett farmland/woodland mosaic
 - 10B - Woodlands-Colehill & Hillbutts farmland/woodland mosaic
 - 11. Chalk Valley & Downland**
 - 11A - Bloxworth/Charmborough Downs
 - 11B - East Dorset Downs
 - 11C - South Blandford Downs
- Map Scale @ A4: 1:155,000**

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Source: East Dorset District Council



East Dorset Landscape Sensitivity Assessment

Figure 29
Sensitivity - Solar Farm - Over 30 Hectares

- District boundaries
 - LCT boundaries
 - LCA boundaries
- Sensitivity**
- High
 - Moderate-high
 - Moderate
 - Moderate-low
 - Low
 - Urban
- Landscape Character Types and Areas**
- 2. River Terrace**
 - 2A - Dewlands-Rushmoor River Terrace
 - 2B - Hampreston River Terrace
 - 2C - Henbury - Corfe, Morden-Lytchett farmland/woodland mosaic
 - 2D - Merley Ridge - Canford River Terrace
 - 2E - Parley River Terrace
 - 2F - Sturminster Marshall River Terrace
 - 3. Heath/Forest Mosaic**
 - 3A - Ferndown Forest - Stapehill
 - 3B - Ringwood-Hurn Forest/Heath Mosaic
 - 3C - West Moors Forest/Heath Mosaic
 - 4. Heath/Farmland Mosaic**
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 - 9B - Upton Heath
 - 9C - West Parley Heath
 - 10. Rolling Wooded Pasture**
 - 10A - Henbury - Corfe, Morden-Lytchett farmland/woodland mosaic
 - 10B - Woodlands-Colehill & Hillbutts farmland/woodland mosaic
 - 11. Chalk Valley & Downland**
 - 11A - Blowworth/Chamberough Downs
 - 11B - East Dorset Downs
 - 11C - South Blandford Downs
- Map Scale @ A4: 1:155,000**

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Source: East Dorset District Council

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LUC LDH 5854-01_537_East_Dorset_Context_Sensitivity_D 12/03/2014

10 Wind Energy Development Guidelines

- 10.1 These guidelines relate to landscape sensitivity only, and do not address sensitivities relating to other areas of potential environmental impact or other non-landscape considerations which might affect the feasibility of wind energy development.
- 10.2 The guidelines are generic across the four local authority areas for which sensitivity assessment has been carried out – North Dorset, East Dorset, Purbeck and Christchurch – so not all comments will be relevant to all districts.

Consideration of Landscape Characteristics

- 10.3 Consideration of the characteristics of the landscape in the vicinity of the site, but also in any area which either has an existing visual relationship with the site or from which the site will be visible, should be a fundamental and early step in the consideration of a location for wind energy development. Published District and County landscape character assessments (and, where applicable, documents associated with AONB designation) are a start point for this but more specific site assessment will be needed to identify the extent to which the typical characteristics identified in published assessments apply to the site in question.

Scale and Complexity of Landform

- In functional terms a wind turbine will operate more efficiently in a position which has higher wind speed, and there is also a case in terms of landscape and visual impact for locating a turbine in a position that makes functional sense. A turbine will typically appear less out of place if it is located in an open, exposed location than if it is located in a sheltered area.
- An exposed location could be a low but wide vale landform but is also likely to be a more elevated area. The scale of landform in which a wind development will best 'fit' depends on the scale of the proposed development, but in general terms the broader and flatter the landform the more suitable it will be for tall turbines or schemes with multiple turbines. Conversely a dramatic, distinctive landform, with sharp changes in elevation, will be a prominent landscape feature, and will typically be valued as a scenic landmark. Many such sites also have cultural heritage value – e.g. Iron Age hill forts.
- Whilst locating a turbine on a distinctive landform is very likely to be sensitive, the sense of scale that such features give to the landscape means that a small turbine situated on lower ground in the vicinity of a strong landform could appear relatively smaller, and consequently less intrusive (the turbine, 24.5m to tip, at West Melbury Farm, beneath Melbury Hill in North Dorset, is an example of this). There may however be a fine line between the landform diminishing the sense of scale of the turbine and, conversely, the turbine diminishing the sense of scale of the landform, to the detriment of landscape character.
- An undulating or sloping site will be more sensitive to multi-turbine schemes due to the discordant visual effect of having different turbine heights. In an undulating landscape a hilltop will be a more natural location for a single turbine than a valley or dip. A turbine blade appearing above the crest of a valley will have a more disruptive effect on views from higher ground, in which the valley form might not otherwise be perceptible (as is often the case with the narrow river valleys that cut into the chalk downs), than would be the case if it were located on high ground.
- A convex slope will also, particularly if it is wooded, help to reduce visibility of high ground from an adjacent valley.

Scale and Complexity of Land Use and Field Pattern

- A more open landscape is generally considered to be more suitable for wind energy than a more enclosed landscape, although the scale of the proposed development makes a big difference in this respect. The presence of high field boundary hedgerows and woodland blocks, forming a very localised horizon, can create an intimate landscape which would be compromised by the introduction of a disconnected, out-of-scale background feature. If the

proposed development is smaller, a well-treed landscape could have a positive screening effect, blocking views from sensitive receptors (e.g. settlements or important viewpoints).

- A simple landscape, with large areas of consistent, uniform vegetation and a regular structure, will generally be less sensitive to larger turbines than a more complex landscape with irregular patterns and smaller scale ('human' scale) features. However, consideration needs to be given as to whether the simplicity of the landscape creates a distinctiveness which gives the area a particular value that could be adversely affected by turbines (see **Valued Landscapes** below). The combination of landscape pattern and landform is important: a simple land cover is likely to be more sensitive when combined with a distinctive or varied landform than when set in a flatter area.
- Access routes for construction traffic need to be considered. Even if a development site has lower sensitivity there may be landscape effects associated with narrow access routes where roadside trees, hedges or verges have to be cleared or altered.
- A certain amount of vegetation is desirable even in a generally open landscape, to provide screening of the low-level ancillary features associated with wind development, such as access tracks, transformers and security fencing.
- Certain landscapes represent the survival of historic land use types, often with a strong connection with the natural environment, and as such contribute to local character and distinctiveness and should therefore be avoided when siting wind turbines. In Dorset the prime examples of this are lowland heaths, ancient woodlands, water meadows and unimproved pastures.
- There are also more localised survivals of field patterns, such as strip fields, which suggest medieval origins, and a number of sites with ridges and hummocks that represent the remains of abandoned settlements. These are similarly sensitive to modern development.

Visual Exposure

- Locations should be chosen to avoid significant changes in views from important viewpoints, scenic tourist routes and settlements, and in views towards important, scenic landmarks. Key viewpoints may be identified in County or District Landscape Character Assessments, AONB Management Plans, AGLV Supplementary Planning Guidance, Parish Action Plans, Town and Village Design Statements or other Settlement Appraisals.
- Turbines should not be located where they have a significant effect on the understanding or appreciation of historic monuments. Consideration should be given to visual relationships between historic landmarks which could be affected – e.g. views from one hill fort to another.
- Turbines will frequently have an effect on skyline views. A higher level of sensitivity will be attached to more distinctive or undeveloped skylines, or skylines featuring prominent landmarks from which the presence of a turbine could detract.

Development and Activity

- The relationship between level of development and activity and sensitivity to wind energy is not a straightforward one. At one end of the scale an area valued for its remoteness and wildness and absence of human intervention would be highly sensitive in landscape terms, but at the other extreme a wind turbine would be unlikely to fit comfortably into very settled landscape, with many human-scale features.
- In Dorset there are few locations which could be considered wild and untamed but there are areas valued for their historic, rural landscape character, lack of modern development and tranquillity. These will typically have high sensitivity but there may be locations where smaller scale turbines could be sited in association with farm complexes, particularly ones which feature large, modern barns.
- There are particular sensitivities associated with undeveloped coastlines. The Purbeck Heritage Coast, within the Dorset AONB, can be considered as undeveloped coast.
- In more developed landscapes there could be potential to minimise adverse impact by locating turbines in association with large scale built development, such as industrial complexes or business parks, which may already be focal points in the landscape, or on brownfield/reclaimed land.
- Pylons are intrusive features which detract from landscape character but the extent to which they make a landscape less sensitive to further development will depend on the extent to which the addition of turbines would add 'clutter' to views. If the arrangement of pylons is

fairly simple then adverse impact is more likely than would be the case if the area is crossed by more than one transmission line, or if other tall elements add complexity to the landscape.

Valued Landscapes

- 10.4 Consideration should be given to any particular value attributed to the landscape, either recognised by statutory (AONB) or non-statutory (AGLV) designation or noted in District and County landscape character assessments:
- Most landscapes have some degree of value to some people but the two AONBs that cover large parts of the County represent the areas which are afforded statutory recognition of landscape quality. It might be that when assessed under the individual headings above a location does not appear to have a particularly high sensitivity to wind energy development, but if any of the distinctive qualities and special characteristics identified in the AONB Management Plans would be affected by a scheme then sensitivity is increased.
 - An elevated level of sensitivity also applies to locations which form part of the setting of a designated landscape. This applies to AONBs and also the New Forest National Park, which in places is very close to the Dorset border.
 - Consideration should be given to any potential adverse effect on the character of the setting of a Listed Building or Conservation Area (where the setting is an important aspect of the value of the building/designated area), or on views to and from a Registered Park or Garden (in particular any 'designed views').
 - At a District level, East Dorset has designated Areas of Great Landscape Value (AGLVs) which, although they do not have statutory status, reflect a high level of sensitivity to changes which would have an adverse effect on landscape character.
 - Both County and District level assessments may make reference to landscape qualities which reflect a level of value attached to that landscape, such as tranquillity.

Site Design

- 10.5 Size and number of turbines are clearly the major factors that will affect the landscape sensitivity of a proposed development, but the design of individual turbines and ancillary elements can also have a significant impact, particularly in a relatively undeveloped location.

Turbine design considerations

- Different combinations of mast height and rotor blade diameter are available but from a visual point of view a ratio of close to 1:1 looks most balanced.
- All turbines on a site should be of the same dimensions and should rotate in the same direction and at the same speed.
- Small turbines commonly have faster blade rotation speeds. Faster moving blades tend to draw the eye more, and have a greater impact on an otherwise inactive scene, than slower moving blades, so consideration should be given to limiting speeds where location is exposed.
- Pale grey is the least intrusive colour for a turbine when viewed against a sky backdrop, but depending on the setting other shades, or graduated colouring (usually from green at the base through to light grey) may be effective.
- Use of advertising on turbines will increase landscape and visual impact.

Design considerations associated with ancillary scheme elements

- The creation of new tracks for access to turbines will add landscape impact, particularly if they are exposed to view and more so if they are out of character with the current pattern of roads and tracks. Where new tracks are needed they should as far as possible follow field edges, hedges/trees and contours.
- Although ongoing maintenance access will be needed, some surfaced areas required for construction could be removed/grassed over afterwards (e.g. crane pads).
- Earthworks and clearance of vegetation to facilitate access and construction should be minimised.

- The location of any ancillary buildings or structures, such as substation, control buildings and transformers should be as unexposed as possible, and in rural areas in particular should minimise urbanising features such as hard surfacing, fencing and lighting and should consider the local vernacular in terms of appearance.
- If aircraft warning lighting is required it should be infra-red, to minimise visual impact.
- Cables should be buried where possible. If overhead grid connections are required these will add impact, potentially introducing new linear landscape forms and adding visual 'clutter'.

Layout of Multiple Turbine Schemes

- Typically the cluster size that is feasible will be dictated by the scale of the landscape, with a smaller scale landscape being able to accommodate only a small cluster (if any). The more localised variation there is in landform or land cover the harder it will be to create a group of turbines that have a coherent appearance.
- The layout should consider the pattern and form of the landscape, so that it appears balanced with turbines being grouped rather than disparate. Typically this will mean spacing turbines evenly, so that an individual turbine(s) does not sit apart from the main group, but in some cases difference distances may suit better if it enables turbines to be located at consistent heights, when considered from key viewpoints.
- A linear arrangement may sometimes suit the terrain better than a cluster but consideration should be given to avoiding creating alignments in which turbines may appear 'stacked' in principal directions of view.
- Developments with more than one turbine will tend to have a greater impact if they span more than one landscape character area or, even if within one character area, there are distinct differences in setting – e.g. topography, field size or surrounding land use.

Land Use and Landscaping

- The presence of a wind turbine should not preclude continuation of agricultural land use and management of hedgerows and other landscape elements.
- Opportunities to enhance land use and management to strengthen positive aspects of landscape character (as noted in District and County assessments or observed on site) should be explored. This may include the strengthening of existing field boundaries, or introduction of new planting, to assist with screening of intrusive wind energy ancillary elements (such as access tracks and buildings).
- Synergies with habitat creation and biodiversity enhancement should be explored.
- A landscape management plan for the area surrounding a turbine, or cluster of turbines, would be a positive way of demonstrating that the landscape will be managed to provide benefits beyond those of energy generation.
- As a temporary development (usually permitted for 25 years), it will be important to demonstrate that on decommissioning the landscape can be restored to at least as good a condition as it was prior to the development taking place.

Minimising Cumulative Impact

- 10.6 The sensitivity assessment presented in this document makes no reference to the potential cumulative impact on landscape character resulting from wind energy developments. The cumulative addition of turbines to a landscape could on the one hand be seen as gradually reducing sensitivity to future schemes, as they become a more characteristic element of the landscape character, or on the other as increasing sensitivity by threatening valued aspects of character and decreasing robustness.
- 10.7 The question of how much wind development is too much cannot be answered by a landscape sensitivity assessment, because policy considerations beyond landscape character have a key influence on determining strategies for landscape capacity (see paragraph 1.11), but consideration of the following points can assist with minimising the effects of locating a new development in a landscape which already includes wind turbines:
- When assessing potential effects of a proposed scheme, reference should be made to the relationship between the proposal and i) any existing wind energy developments, but also ii)

any consented and iii) any proposed schemes, whether within the District or in a neighbouring District or County.

- The character of existing developments in relation to landscape should be considered. If there is a distinct pattern – e.g. developments are typically small single turbines attached to farm complexes – then continuation of this pattern is less likely to have a significant impact on landscape character than introduction of a new size/form of wind development in a different landscape context.
- The closer developments are to each other, and the more likely they are to be viewed in combination from the same viewpoint, the more important it is that they have some consistency of character (unless the existing development is poorly related to its environment). The presence of developments perceived as being of different scales, whether due to height or cluster size being different or due to the landscape setting being different, is likely to increase the level of cumulative impact. The introduction of turbines that, through their scale and relative position, have a distorting effect on perspective in a view will also have greater impact.
- In determining whether cumulative effects are likely to add significantly to any impacts resulting from a proposed development it is useful to identify the focal points that exist in the landscape at present, to identify whether there is any hierarchy amongst them, and to assess the extent to which the introduction of a new development will affect appreciation of these relationships.
- The location of key viewpoints will be important in determining whether a site will have a significant cumulative landscape impact relative to an existing scheme. In general it is better to avoid locations in which separate schemes will appear to coalesce, but there may be situations where this effect is preferable to introducing a more distinctly separate development.
- It is important to avoid creating any sense of turbines having an overbearing or oppressive effect on residential locations, or other valued receptor locations such as popular rights of way or, on a larger scale, a designated landscape area. Maximising distance from such locations is clearly important in this respect, but avoiding developing on sites that would give a sensitive location a feeling of being surrounded by turbines is also important.

11 Solar PV Energy Development Guidelines

- 11.1 These guidelines relate to landscape sensitivity only, and do not address sensitivities relating to other areas of potential environmental impact or other non-landscape considerations which might affect the feasibility of solar PV energy development.
- 11.2 The guidelines are generic across the four local authority areas for which sensitivity assessment has been carried out – North Dorset, East Dorset, Purbeck and Christchurch – so not all comments will be relevant to all districts.

Consideration of Landscape Characteristics

- 11.3 Consideration of the characteristics of the landscape in the vicinity of the site, but also in any area which either has an existing visual relationship with the site or from which the site will be visible, should be a fundamental and early step in the consideration of a location for solar PV energy development. Published District and County landscape character assessments (and, where applicable, documents associated with AONB or AGLV designation) are a start point for this but more specific site assessment will be needed to identify the extent to which the typical characteristics identified in published assessments apply to the site in question.

Scale and Complexity of Landform

- A flat, gently sloping or gently undulating site, either on lower ground or on a plateau, will be more suitable than a steep, sharply undulating site or an exposed upper slope.
- A development located in an area with a small-scale landform, with significant variations over the site or in its locality, will be more likely to stand out in the landscape than one located on a flatter site or an even slope.

Scale and Complexity of Land Use and Field Pattern

- A more enclosed landscape is generally considered to be more suitable for solar energy than a more open landscape, although the scale of the proposed development will be a key factor in determining the enclosure size that would be most appropriate. Ideally the solar farm should not dilute or distort the enclosure pattern, either by spanning multiple fields or subdividing a larger field to create an area of homogeneous land use that is a different size or shape to its surroundings.
- A patchwork landscape, with a variety of land uses, will be less sensitive than a more homogeneous land cover.
- A landscape in which geometric forms (e.g. field boundaries and woodland blocks) predominate will be less sensitive than a more irregular landscape, or one in which rounded forms predominate.
- Certain landscapes represent the survival of historic land use types, often with a strong connection with the natural environment, and as such contribute to local character and distinctiveness and should therefore be avoided when siting solar PV developments. In Dorset the prime examples of this are lowland heaths, ancient woodlands, water meadows and unimproved pastures.
- There are also more localised survivals of field patterns, such as strip fields, which suggest medieval origins, and a number of sites with ridges and hummocks that represent the remains of abandoned settlements. These are similarly sensitive to modern development.

Visual Exposure

- Locations should be chosen to avoid significant changes in views from important viewpoints, scenic tourist routes and settlements, and in views towards important, scenic landmarks. Key viewpoints may be identified in County or District Landscape Character Assessments, AONB Management Plans, AGLV Supplementary Planning Guidance, Parish Action Plans, Town and Village Design Statements or other Settlement Appraisals.

- Solar developments should not be located where they have a significant effect on the understanding or appreciation of historic monuments. Consideration should be given to visual relationships between historic landmarks which could be affected – e.g. views from one hill fort to another.

Development and Activity

- A landscape influenced by modern development, containing hard elements such as buildings, brownfield sites or horticulture (e.g. glasshouses or poly tunnels) will be less sensitive than a more natural or remote location.
- Intensively farmed, arable land is likely to be less sensitive than extensive pasture.
- There are particular sensitivities associated with undeveloped coastlines. The Purbeck Heritage Coast, within the Dorset AONB, can be considered as undeveloped coast.

Valued Landscapes

11.4 Consideration should be given to any particular value attributed to the landscape, either recognised by statutory (AONB) or non-statutory (AGLV) designation or noted in District and County landscape character assessments:

- Most landscapes have some degree of value to some people but the two AONBs that cover large parts of the County represent the areas which are afforded statutory recognition of landscape quality. It might be that when assessed under the individual headings above a location does not appear to have a particularly high sensitivity to solar PV energy development, but if any of the distinctive qualities and special characteristics identified in the AONB Management Plans would be affected by a scheme then sensitivity is increased.
- An elevated level of sensitivity also applies to locations which form part of the setting of a designated landscape. This applies to AONBs and also the New Forest National Park, which in places is very close to the Dorset border.
- Consideration should be given to any potential adverse effect on the character of the setting of a Listed Building or Conservation Area (where the setting is an important aspect of the value of the building / designated area), or on views to and from a Registered Park or Garden (in particular any 'designed views').
- At a District level, East Dorset has designated Areas of Great Landscape Value (AGLVs) which, although they do not have statutory status, reflect a high level of sensitivity to changes which would have an adverse effect on landscape character.
- Both County and District level assessments may make reference to landscape qualities which reflect a level of value attached to that landscape, such as tranquillity.

Site Design

11.5 The size of a solar farm is the major factor that will affect the landscape sensitivity of a proposed development, but the arrangement of panel arrays and ancillary elements can also have a significant impact, particularly in a relatively undeveloped location or where a site is overlooked by higher ground.

Layout considerations

- Developments will tend to have a greater impact if they span more than one landscape character area or, even if within one character area, there are distinct differences in setting – e.g. topography or field size.
- The appearance of a development will be quite different from the sides or back in comparison to the front, due to the visibility of supporting frames.
- The arrangement of panels should try and fit with the form and enclosure of the site; a straight edged layout will not sit comfortably in an irregular field. It will be much easier to achieve a more acceptable fit in a geometric landscape, given the shape of the individual panels, but the use of a curving or staggered arrangement of arrays could in some cases provide a better fit than a rectilinear layout.

- Within a field, spacing between panels should be consistent, without outlying or remote clusters.
- The removal of boundary vegetation within a site than spans multiple fields will typically have a negative landscape and visual impact (and is likely also to have adverse ecological effects). Panels should be set back from boundaries to maintain the legibility of field patterns (and also to assist with hedgerow management and potentially to provide habitat).
- Panels should not be positioned where they would be shaded by vegetation, if that would result in vegetation being cut back or removed.
- Panel heights should be kept as low as possible, to minimise visual impact.
- Pile-driven or screw-anchored bases are preferable to concrete foundations.

Design considerations associated with ancillary scheme elements

- The creation of new tracks for access to solar arrays will add landscape impact, particularly if they are exposed to view and more so if they are out of character with the current pattern of roads and tracks. Where new tracks are needed they should as far as possible follow field edges, hedges/trees and contours.
- Although ongoing maintenance access will be needed, consideration should be given as to whether some surfaced areas required for construction could be removed (e.g. perhaps using temporary trackway) and grassed over afterwards. Regular tracks between rows of arrays should be avoided.
- Earthworks and clearance of vegetation to facilitate access and construction should be minimised, although where it does not have a significant adverse effect on landscape character or views, landform remodelling, with appropriate ongoing management, may assist with screening a solar PV development.
- The location of any ancillary buildings or structures, such as substations, transformers and inverters should be as unexposed as possible, and in rural areas in particular should minimise urbanising features such as hard surfacing, fencing and lighting and should consider the local vernacular in terms of appearance. Existing buildings should be utilised where possible.
- Consideration should be given to using deer-stop type fencing in preference to welded mesh fencing, and to minimising its height (subject to insurance requirements). Likewise CCTV camera should not be mounted on unnecessarily high posts.
- Dark, recessive colours in non-reflective materials are generally considered less visually intrusive for panel frames, fencing and ancillary structures than bright colours and reflective materials.
- Cables should be buried where possible. If overhead grid connections are required these will add impact, potentially introducing new linear landscape forms and adding visual 'clutter'.
- The use of security lighting should be minimised, using passive infra-red (PIR) where possible and minimising any glare or light-spill.

Land Use and Landscaping

- Existing and new landscaping will be important in screening views of the site, but consideration must be given as to whether letting hedges grow higher, or planting new hedges or trees, would be out of keeping with local landscape character. Depending on landscape terrain and character, the use of other forms of screening, such as bunding or tall crops, may be beneficial.
- Fences should be set back from surrounding hedges, to reduce their apparent height when viewed from beyond the boundary.
- Efforts should be made to maintain land uses on the site that fit in with the character of the surrounding area. The space between and surrounding rows of solar arrays can be utilised productively, e.g. for grazing. The potential for heathland restoration should also be explored, where appropriate. Mulching of large areas, in particular the use of plastics to prevent weed growth, should be avoided.
- Maintaining a diversity of land cover types in an area will help to prevent solar PV arrays from having a dominating effect on landscape character.
- Opportunities to enhance land use and management to strengthen positive aspects of landscape character (as noted in District and County assessments or observed on site) should

be explored. Hedgerows can be managed to provide ecological benefit as well as screening, which may include the strengthening of existing field boundaries, or introduction of new planting.

- Synergies with habitat creation and biodiversity enhancement should be explored. Any new planting should use native, locally appropriate species.
- A landscape management plan for the site would be a positive way of demonstrating that the landscape will be managed to provide benefits beyond those of energy generation.
- As a temporary development (usually permitted for 25 years), it will be important to demonstrate that on decommissioning the landscape can be restored to at least as good a condition as it was prior to the development taking place.

Minimising Cumulative Impact

- 11.6 The sensitivity assessment presented in this document makes no reference to the potential cumulative impact on landscape character resulting from solar PV energy developments. The cumulative addition of solar farms to a landscape could on the one hand be seen as gradually reducing sensitivity to future schemes, as they become a more characteristic element of the landscape character, or on the other as increasing sensitivity by threatening valued aspects of character and decreasing robustness.
- 11.7 The question of how much solar development is too much cannot be answered by a landscape sensitivity assessment, because policy considerations beyond landscape character have a key influence on determining strategies for landscape capacity (see paragraph 1.11), but consideration of the following points can assist with minimising the effects of locating a new development in a landscape which already includes solar arrays:
- When assessing potential effects of a proposed scheme, reference should be made to the relationship between the proposal and i) any existing solar PV energy developments, but also ii) any consented and iii) any proposed schemes, whether within the District or in a neighbouring District or County.
 - The character of existing developments in relation to landscape should be considered. If there is a distinct pattern of development in a particular type of landscape then continuation of this consistent design response is likely to have less of an impact on character than the introduction of a different size/form of solar development.
 - The closer developments are to each other, and the more likely they are to be viewed in combination from the same viewpoint, the more important it is that they have some consistency of character (unless the existing development is poorly related to its environment). This is particularly the case where an existing development is being extended. The presence of developments perceived as being of different scales, whether due to the physical area covered or due to the landscape setting being different, is likely to increase the level of cumulative impact.
 - In determining whether cumulative effects are likely to add significantly to any impacts resulting from a proposed development it is useful to identify the focal points that exist in the landscape at present, to identify whether there is any hierarchy amongst them, and to assess the extent to which the introduction of a new development will affect appreciation of these relationships.
 - The location of key viewpoints will be important in determining whether a site will have a significant cumulative landscape impact relative to an existing scheme. In general it is better to avoid locations in which separate schemes will appear to coalesce, but there may be situations where this effect is preferable to introducing a more distinctly separate development.
 - It is important to avoid developing on sites that would give a sensitive location a feeling of being surrounded by solar PV developments.