APPENDIX F

Dorset CC Historic Landscape Character Report

2.4 Summary of method

The Dorset HLC project assembled and integrated information on present land use, land cover, physiography (land form, geology and soils) and visible evidence of human history in the landscape, the built and the semi-natural environment. Analysis of this information was structured by the grouping of historic and other environmental *attributes* in a classification of generic *HLC Types* of distinct and recognisable common character.

The distribution of *HLC Types* was mapped using the County Council GIS, linked to an Access database, and supported by written descriptions of *HLC Types* and the historical processes that they represent. Polygons were defined on the basis of the most modern digital map available, representing the landscape's present, visible form as shaped by past land use in particular. An *attribute*-led approach was adopted, whereby HLC types were defined through analysis of the ways in which certain simple attributes, such as field size and boundary type, occur either singly or in combination.

Each polygon was defined on the basis that all areas within it possess characteristics that can be assigned to the same broad type, share a common set of attributes, and can be interpreted as having the same previous landscape character. So all areas within a polygon can be assigned the same broad, current and previous landscape character. The whole area must have the same overall pattern (regular, irregular or none) and the same dominant boundary morphology. The whole area must have the same historic character type, that is exhibit the same sequence of types, throughout its history. The creation of polygons which crossed parish boundaries was avoided. As a general rule, no polygons smaller than 1ha were created, though some exceptions were made in the case of settlement where areas of growth may be identified within and on the fringes of a settlement.

Historic Landscape Character types are defined through analysis of the attribute data, rather than being pre-determined at the outset. The broad HLC type is a statement of the modern land use. Types are intended to be descriptive rather than interpretive, with focus on attributes to make them as value free as possible, though in most cases, a degree of interpretation is conveyed by the allocation of type and its 'label', *industrial* for example.

Each broad type was subdivided into more detailed types, again defined on the basis of morphology and description, rather than interpretation. However, as can be seen from the detailed project design (Appendix 2), certain detailed character types to which probable origins/interpretation could be applied were anticipated. These anticipated types were not allowed to constrain the characterisation; the process was one of continuous consideration and revision, and changes were made as understanding of the overall nature of the characterisation improved. For example, it proved not to be possible to identify from the modern maps areas of orchard sufficiently large to be considered for mapping and characterisation in their own right, and orchard was not used as a broad HLC type. Areas of extant archaeology were re-allocated to recreation/ornamental or enclosed, as a current type; this type was used to describe past use.

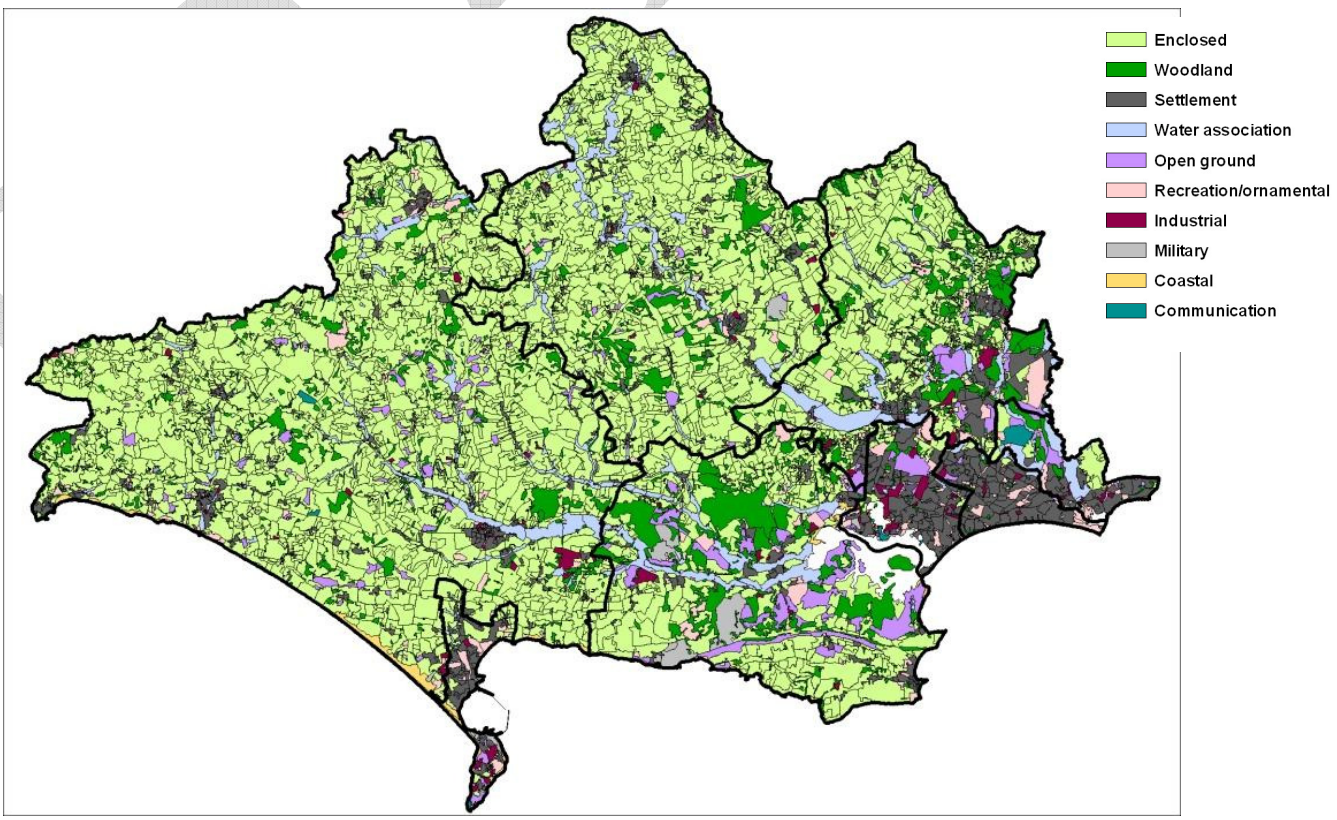
The following broad Historic Landscape Character groups were identified:

Coastal	An area that has attributes of a coastal area
Communications	Man-made areas or routes used for travel and associated facilities
Enclosed	An area surrounded by a boundary
Industrial	An area of industrial activity past or present
Military	An area used or once used by the military
Recreation/ornamental	An area used for recreation and/or cultural importance
Settlement	An area of permanent habitation; towns, villages and urban areas
Unenclosed	An area which is not enclosed
Water association	An area associated with water.
Woodland	An area defined as woodland.

Core sources were early (first and second edition) and modern Ordnance Survey maps and vertical aerial photographs. During project planning and in the early (pilot project and development of detailed methodology) stages of the project it was anticipated that OS MasterMap would be available by the time that characterisation began in earnest. For various technical reasons, however, it was not available at the start of the project and for some considerable time. Consequently, mapping was more time consuming and done in a rather more rudimentary way than might otherwise have been achieved, and the end result to some degree compromised in terms of versatility and interrogability of the dataset. Aerial photograpy was used to clarify mapping done from Ordnance Survey maps. To ensure consistency of approach, only sources covering the whole county were used. In general, the characterisation was carried out without reference to existing interpretive material – the Dorset Historic Environment Record, or lists of Scheduled Monuments, for example.

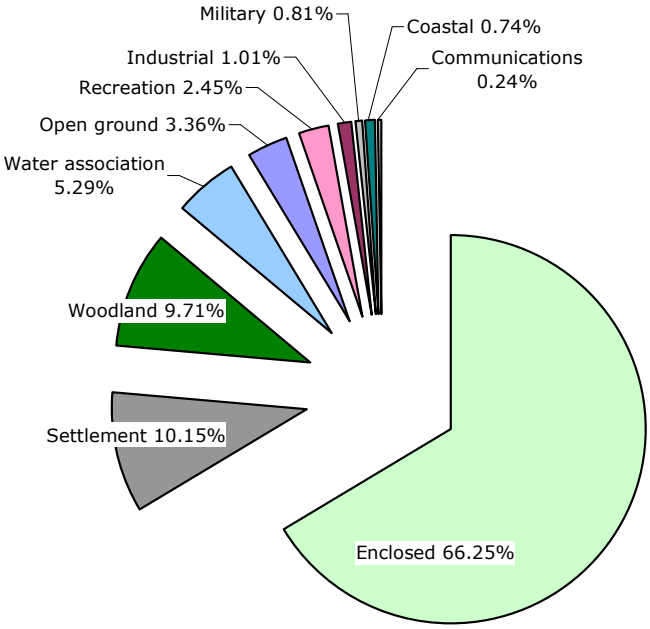
Information about the attributes of polygons was used to ascribe a basic interpretation to each polygon. Consideration of early map layers allowed this to be combined with information on past uses to create a 'time depth' for some polygons.

The historic landscape characterisation of Dorset: broad character types



Consideration of the broad historic landscape types gives an overview of land use across the county and provides a starting point for more detailed analysis of Dorset's historic landscape.

As might be anticipated, the still predominantly agricultural nature of the county is reflected in the predominance of **enclosed** land (approximately 67% by area), and other rural character types such as **woodland** (10%) and unenclosed or **open ground** (4%). Only 11% by area of Dorset is covered by broad types which relate to a built-up landscape, particularly **settlement** (10% by area). Again, as might be anticipated, these are concentrated in the Poole/Bournemouth and, to a lesser extent, the Dorchester/Weymouth areas.



Detailed Historic Landscape Character Types

Group	Historic Landscape Character Types		
Enclosed	• Assarts • Modern fields • Open field • Paddocks and closes • Parliamentary enclosure • Piecemeal	• Planned clearance • Planned enclosure • Squatter • Strip fields • Other amorphous • Other regular	
Woodland	• Coniferous • Coppice • Deciduous • Mixed • Plantation, coniferous	• Plantation, deciduous • Plantation, mixed • Scrub • Osier bed • Other	
Settlement	• Complex • Dispersed • Estate • Grid layout • Linear	• Urban • Historic core • Municipal facility • School, public • School, municipal	• Nucleated • Country house • Other
Unenclosed	• Common • Downland • Heath	• Open fields • Pasture • Rough ground	• Scrub • Other
Industrial	• Factory • Industrial estate • Quarry, mineral • Quarry sand/gravel	• Quarry, stone • Spoil • Other	
Water association	• Lake • Open water • Reservoir • Withy bed	• Sewerage works • Valley floor • Watercress beds • Watermeadows	
Recreation/ornamental	• Camping site • Deer park • Garden • Golf course • Municipal park	• Nature reserve • Playing field • Racecourse • Recreation ground	• Seaside • Sports field • Theme park • Other
Coastal	• Beach • Cliff/undercliff • Dunes • Sand	• Lagoon • Mudflats • Shingle	
Communications	• Airfield • Harbour • Railway station	• Railway yard • Other	
Military	• Barracks • Depot	• Range • Other	

In this section, each type is described under the following headings:

Description.
A brief description of the type.

Identifying characteristics.
Description of the key attributes, and combinations of attributes, which enable us to identify an area as a particular type. In some cases there is also discussion of what particular activities in the past are likely to have created these attributes.

Postulated period of origin.
Most likely period of origin for each type, as conventionally understood. Local factors and processes of enclosure may cause variation. Closer landscape analysis and consideration of documentary sources in particular would be needed to achieve a more precise understanding of the date of origin of individual areas.

Principal historical processes and evidence for time depth.
Description of those attributes and combinations of attributes that enable us to draw broad conclusions about the origins of a particular type, and the processes affecting it subsequently.

Interaction with other types.
Discussion of those types with which the type being considered is commonly found, or from which it is most likely to have been derived, or with which it is most likely to be confused.

Distribution.
The distribution of each type across the county, and in relation to particular geologies and topography where appropriate.

Rarity.
Occurrence of particular types is described according to degree of rarity/prevalence based on total area covered as a percentage of the area of the county as a whole. As follows[1]:

Less than 0.01%	Very rare
Between 0.01% and 0.1%	Rare
Between 0.1% and 1%	Scarce
Between 1% and 5%	Uncommon
Between 5% and 10%	Occasional
Between 10% and 20%	Frequent
Between 20% and 30%	Common
Between 30% and 40%	Very common
Over 40%	Abundant

In some instances, such as the *industrial* group of types, the significance of such indicators is limited, particularly if we are seeking to draw inferences about importance and wider landscape value.

Contribution to the present landscape.
Discussion of the features of each type which make it distinct within the present landscape, and the extent to which each contributes to the overall landscape character. Where possible, the contribution of the type to other aspects of the landscape such as biodiversity, and landscape-derived concepts such as sense of place and wider quality of life are also considered.

Change.

[1] Using ranks defined in the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB Historic Landscape Characterisation.

Factors influencing change and where possible the 'trajectory' of change within each type. In this context change is likely to be loss of those characteristics which enable us to define an area as a particular type, chiefly through removal, alteration or creation of field boundaries. It is patently easier to assess change in an historic landscape character type which has more numerous and recognisable attributes, so this exercise is very likely to be skewed towards identifying change in the more 'characterful' types. Even so, it provides a rudimentary way of understanding how change may manifest itself as far as the historic character of an area is concerned, of identifying areas of particularly rapid change, and analysing the impact of different activities and the extent to which they constitute threats to historic landscape character.

Each loss entails an equivalent transformation of historic landscape character to another type, albeit one of less age and very probably of less significance. Thus it is possible for what might be regarded as the more degraded historic landscape types to increase. An apparent increase in one of the more historically authentic types, such as *Open fields*, must be regarded as spurious; at the very least, it is something for further investigation.

Where possible, this trajectory of change is assessed as:

Increasing	Increasing
Less than 5% change	Stable
Between 5% and 20% change	Slow decline
Between 20% and 50% change	Rapid decline
More than 50% change	Critical decline
No surviving examples[2]	Extinct

This assessment is based largely on consideration of maps, so it is essentially a consideration of change in the type during the twentieth century.

The degree to which the type can absorb change is also considered, but this is based on extrapolation of limited and relatively isolated instances to the type as a whole, and consequently tends to be rather subjective. Specific land use proposals will require individual assessment.

Archaeological potential.
A simple indicator of the general correlation of archaeological sites and historic buildings with the type. This discussion concentrates on elements of the historic environment which are in some way associated with, or the probable presence of which may be inferred from the occurrence of a particular type in a particular topographic location.

Where possible, the potential for survival of below-ground archaeological remains is discussed. In general this potential will be greater in areas of undisturbed pasture, and less in areas of arable. This is not to say that areas of arable are without interest. Arable is in a sense less opaque than pasture, by offering opportunities for recognition of below-ground archaeology through assessment of surface remains by fieldwalking, or examination and interpretation of aerial photographs. The archaeology itself may be less well preserved, particularly in the plough zone.

Clearly, below-ground archaeological remains may survive in any location, but in some instances it is possible to draw some broad conclusions about likely survival from the nature of the type and by consideration of what we already know about it from the Historic Environment Record; it is easier to be more specific on this point for the less widely-distributed types, since they tend to be more narrowly-defined and to occur in association with particular geologies and topographies. Features which survive as earthworks may preserve remains of earlier date beneath. As well as below-ground archaeology, some types have particular associations with certain buildings and structures. In some instances the potential is drawn from occurrence in a

[2] Identifiable at the coarse scale used for the HLC.

particular location – river valleys and potential for survival of palaeoenvironmental remains, for example. On the basis of these considerations, the archaeological potential of each type is rated as:

High = numerous monuments covering a wide range of monument types, with strong group associations and good preservation.
Moderate = a moderate range of monument types with limited group associations and varied preservation.
Low = few monuments, and a limited range of monument types with few group associations and poor preservation.
Degraded = archaeological potential largely destroyed.

This is a very broad generalisation, and individual sites will vary and require specific assessment.

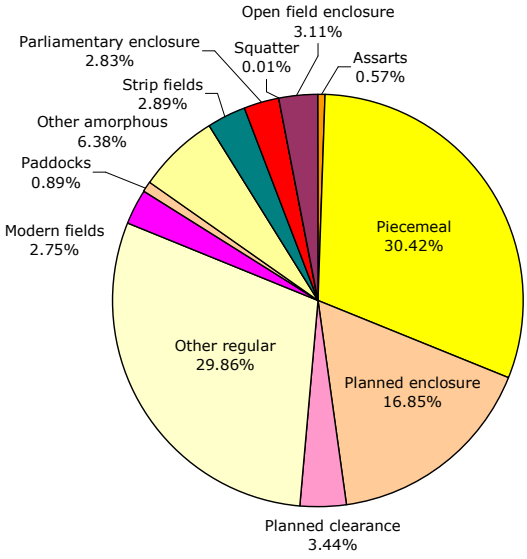
The particular research issues relating to each type are also discussed, and related to the South West Archaeological Research Framework (Webster, 2008) where possible.

Sensitivity.
Consideration of what is likely to be most special and sensitive about this type, and how more or less sensitive examples may be recognised. Based on current knowledge and broad generalisations about the nature of each type and its archaeological potential. Local factors will affect this very broad generalisation, so individual sites will require specific assessment.

Management.
A very general consideration of the possible adverse/beneficial management regimes affecting the type, and the optimum management regime for it. Based only on consideration of the historic environment aspects of the type, and so leaving aside many powerful influencing factors such as natural environment designations.

Broad HLC group: Enclosed land

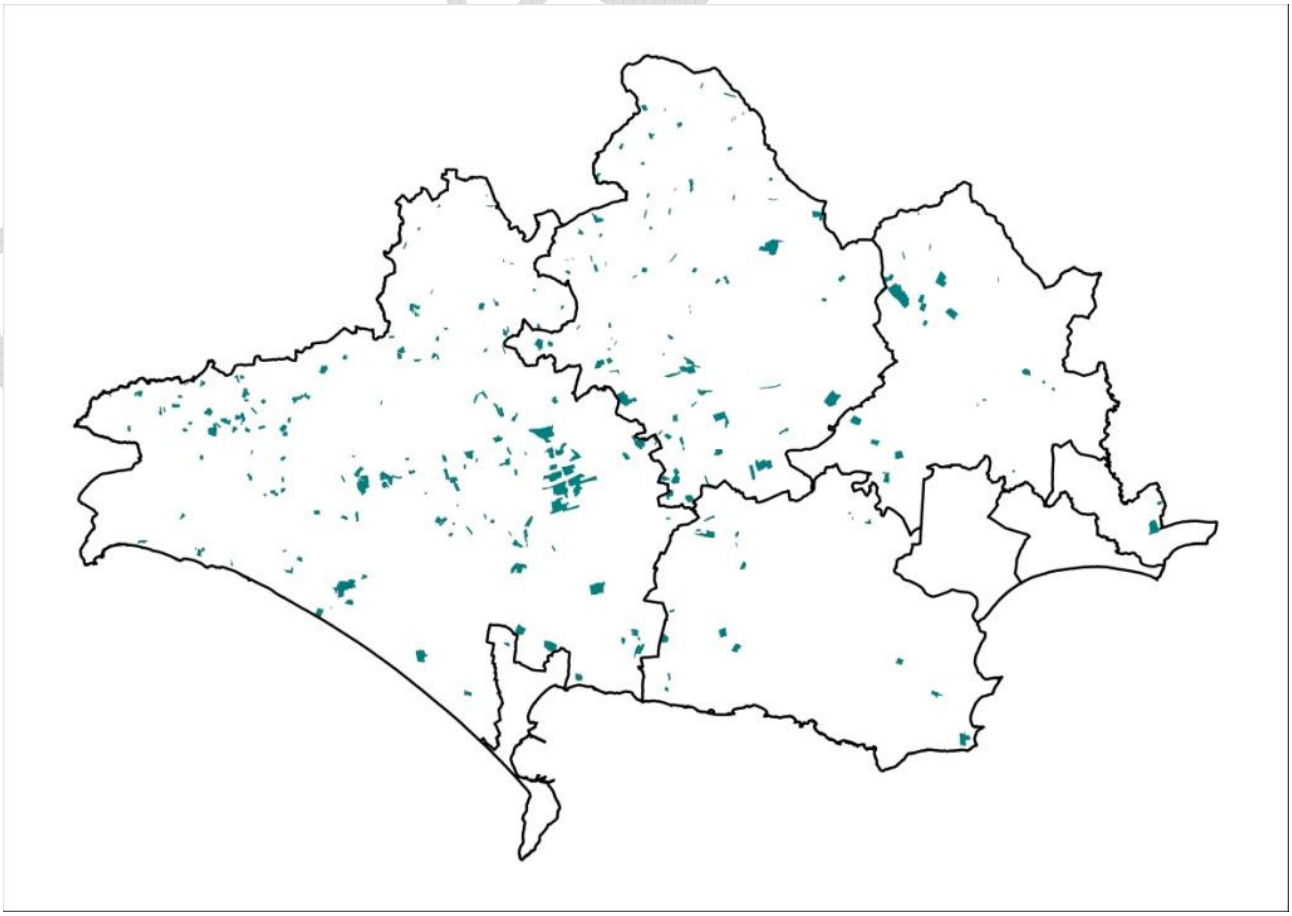
As might be expected in a county that is still predominantly rural in character, enclosed land is the most extensive HLC type in Dorset. It covers over 67% by area of the county (1811.78 km^2).



Consideration of the morphology of individual fields, and patterns within groups of fields, allows us to draw some conclusions about their probable period of origin and the processes which led to their current form. The first assessment made is of the degree of regularity of the field pattern. Regularity is taken to be evidence of adherence to some pre-conceived geometry, and thus to indicate planning. Lack of regularity is taken as an indicator of an unplanned, piecemeal approach to enclosure. Interpretation of the various types of enclosed land, particularly as to probable period of origin, is based on the premise that early historic field systems are irregular and asymmetrical with relatively small fields, and that more recent enclosure is more likely to be planned on a larger scale, and so tend to be regular, with straight boundaries, and larger field size.

These coarse indicators may be affected by various factors such as the local topography, where fields may be curtailed by slopes or the presence of water courses, or other land uses such as the edge of a piece of woodland. Less easy to identify within the constraints of HLC are the rather more nebulous factors such as the influence of particular landowners or tenants. Further analysis, combined with documentary research, would be required to understand these nuances.

Enclosed: *Strip fields*



Description: Elongated fields of medieval origin. The remains of areas farmed communally in strips.

Postulated period of origin: Medieval (AD 1066 – 1539)
Post-medieval (AD 1540 – 1800)

Rarity: Uncommon

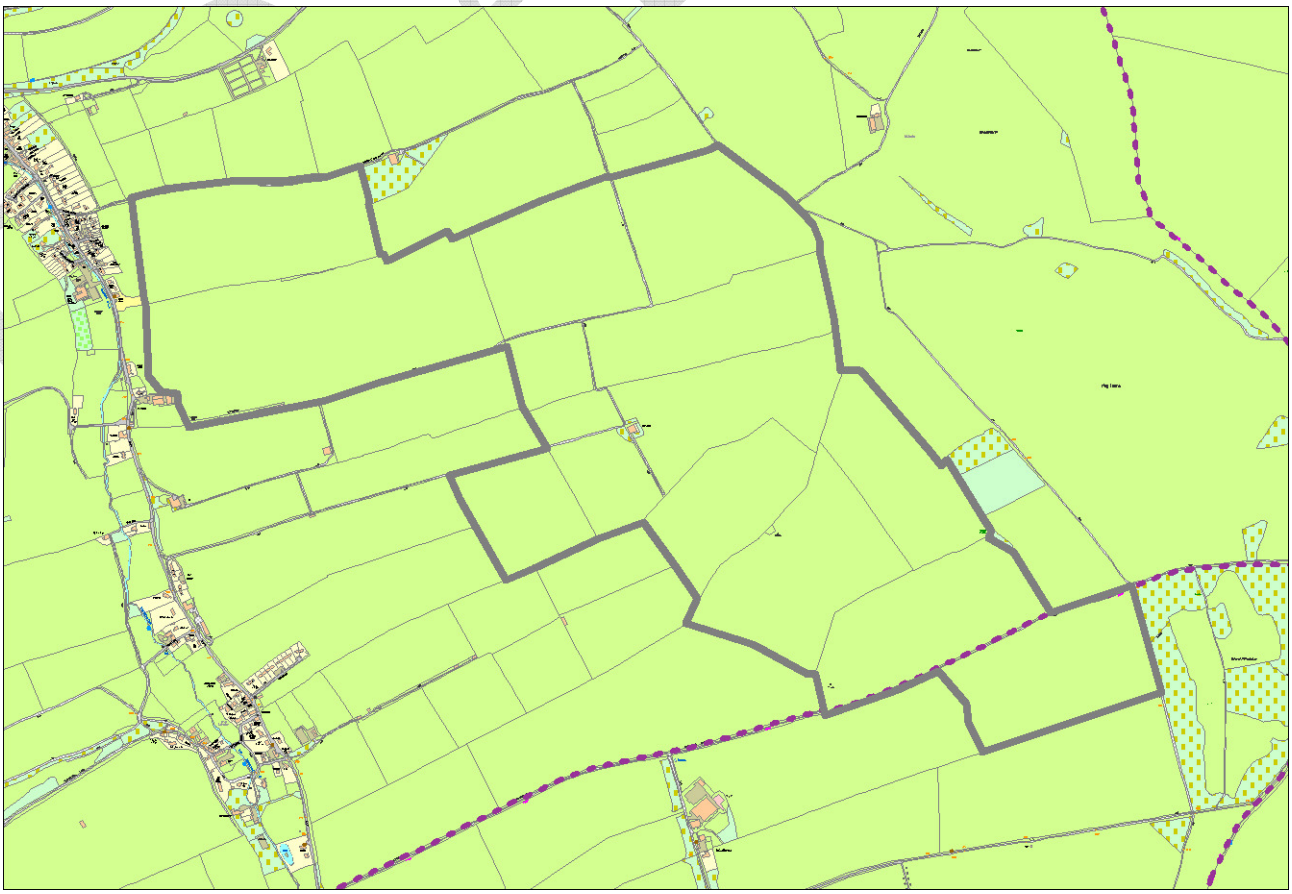
Capacity to absorb change: Low

Archaeological potential: High

Sensitivity: High

Identifying characteristics: Elongated rectangular fields which are at least twice as long as they are wide, in the form of long thin enclosures with parallel curving field boundaries which directly reproduce the shape of former cultivation strips. The form of former open field divisions is indicated by the presence of reverse S-shaped (known as *aratral*) curves, and/or dog-legs. Fields may contain traces of surviving ridge and furrow in the form of earthworks or cropmarks, though this is rare in Dorset, or strip lynchets. Place names, particularly field

names, and map or documentary evidence may indicate areas of open fields, providing corroborating evidence.



Principal historical processes and evidence for time depth: S-shaped curves are indicative of medieval ploughing techniques, and the presence of both S-shaped curves (or part of such a curve) in combination with parallel boundaries is taken as direct evidence of fields having originated through enclosure of medieval open fields, with small groups of strips being enclosed in almost unaltered form, even perhaps by less co-ordinated use of strips allowing the natural development of boundaries in the form of hedgerows between them. The occurrence of these attributes in concentration allows areas of former open fields to be identified clearly, and indicates that they have been subject to almost no reorganisation, either at the time of enclosure or subsequently.

This suggests either that enclosure occurred relatively early (in the late medieval or early post-medieval periods) on a very small scale, and in a fairly casual way, or that the areas of strip fields were simply 'by-passed' by enclosure, retaining their form and developing boundaries with the passage of time, perhaps with a degree of formalisation at a later stage.

Interaction with other types: Areas of former strip fields may be found close to historic settlements. They are likely to be in some way associated with areas of formerly open ground, once downland or pasture, reflecting the complementary relationship between medieval open fields and associated downs.

Areas which have a high proportion of field boundaries with S-shaped curves and dog-legs, but without the same pattern of regular, elongated fields with parallel boundaries, and where strips appear to have been enclosed in small, discrete blocks, may be categorised as *Open field enclosure*. Both types originate from areas of former open fields farmed in strips, but *Strip fields* retain the 'fossilised' pattern of the original strips to a greater degree. The original open field structure is still strongly evident in areas categorised as *Open field enclosure*, but has

been subject to greater change either through the initial process of enclosure or subsequent reorganisation.

Where small areas of strip fields are found with bands of *piecemeal enclosure, assarts,* or *amorphous* fields, they may indicate small-scale encroachment into woodland or waste, around a small settlement.

Distribution: Scattered across the county, but with a particularly prominent linear concentration along the Piddle valley in particular. There are similar, but not quite so distinct or contiguous, concentrations along the Devil's Brook, the Milborne Brook, and the North Winterborne, Tarrant and Gussage valleys; this reflects the distribution of medieval settlements along these valleys.

A scatter of smaller, more dispersed blocks of land identified as *strip fields* can be seen in the western and northern parts of the county. This may reflect the nature of the original open fields in these areas, the generally more dispersed nature of historic settlement, and different processes of enclosure; there is a greater concentration of irregular fields in these areas.

Rarity: 52.29 km^2 is recorded as fields created through enclosure of strip fields. This is 2.89% of enclosed land and 1.95% of the county as a whole. This type can therefore be categorised as *Uncommon* (between 1% and 5% of the county).

Contribution to the present landscape: Areas of former strip fields are often situated on the fringes of historic settlement, and their distinctive character can make a strong contribution to the immediate setting of a village, with consequent impact on the character of the settlement itself. Groups of parallel boundaries create a rhythmic pattern which imparts a strong and appealing visual character to the landscape. Hedgerows tend to be of mixed quality and variable for accommodating wildlife.

This type is a distinct component of the landscape in which it sits, and generally very easily-recognised by the trained eye. Larger areas have a particular coherence, particularly when associated with historic settlements, tracks and areas of downland. This type can easily be explained to and understood by the layman.

Overall, this type can make a significant contribution to sense of place and quality of life.

Change: Factors influencing change include removal of field boundaries and amalgamation into larger fields, and straightening of field boundaries to create more manageable units. Proximity to settlement leads to encroachment through piecemeal development, gradual assimilation into gardens, and creation of paddocks.

The capacity of this type to absorb change is very limited, since its character is derived almost entirely from the form and proportions of the fields of which it is composed. In some respects the occasional loss of field boundaries may be regarded as having a less serious impact if the curving character of the fields is retained overall. Indeed, it might be argued that this change is not undesirable, since it tends to revert to a more historically 'authentic' open field landscape. It may well be preferable to creation of straight field boundaries. Even so, gradual attrition through consolidation of strips must be regarded as incompatible with retention of character, and so undesirable.

Consideration of loss and gain of field boundaries enables us to make a crude assessment of the extent to which this type is being reduced in coherence or distorted. xxx of the field boundaries shown on the early (1880s) map layer have been lost, and xxx gained. It is a moot point whether this is a meaningful indicator in the case of strip fields.

It is to be anticipated that the decline in pastoral, particularly dairy, farming will lead to increased change of this type, and perhaps acceleration in the rate of change. Similarly,

increased demand for housing in and around historic settlements is likely to lead to the loss or blurring of the crucial interface between areas of settlement and associated areas of strip fields and ancillary features.

Archaeological potential: Survival of below-ground archaeology depends upon past land use and agricultural regimes since enclosure. It is likely to be greater in areas that have remained relatively undisturbed as permanent pasture.

Ridge and furrow, or medieval settlement remains, may be preserved in fields of this type particularly in areas adjacent to historic settlement. These areas of relatively small fields are unlikely to have been subjected to large-scale deep ploughing. Consequently, although these remains may have been reduced to below-ground archaeology in places, it is very likely that they will survive as earthworks.

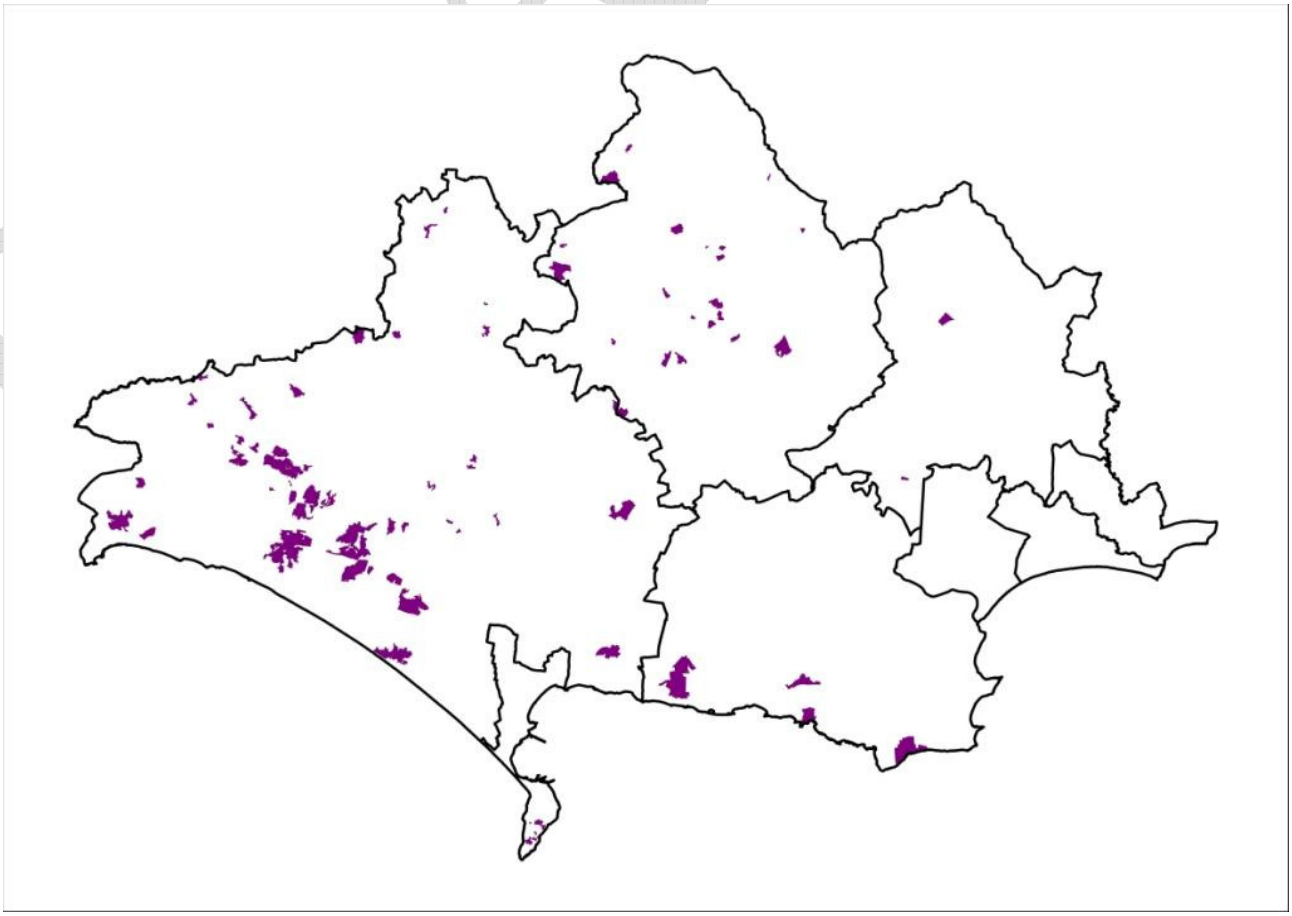
Documentary research is needed to understand the correlation between open fields, field names, and the extent to which this is reflected in the HLC results. Further work is needed to understand the fine detail of enclosure, and what factors influenced the form and survival of strip fields in particular localities. It may be that the type of strip fields varied across the county, which is divided between the central and eastern 'provinces'; further analysis of strip size and conformation would be needed before this can be understood. Until quite recently it had been supposed, on the basis of evidence of records from field observations, that little ridge and furrow survived (if, indeed, it had been present) in Dorset. However, the National Mapping Programme project associated with the Dorset Coast and Countryside AONB's South Dorset Ridgeway Project has identified many areas of ridge and furrow, in places still surviving as earthworks. Further work is needed to understand the occurrence, distribution, and factors affecting survival of ridge and furrow in Dorset.

Some aspects of the layout of medieval open fields in relation to settlement and as components of manors and parishes may have been influenced by earlier settlement, land divisions, territorial boundaries, and so forth. The extent to which earlier field systems and boundaries can be detected within the present field pattern, perhaps even preserved within it, is not known. Local study has enabled fieldworkers to postulate prehistoric, Romano-British or early medieval origins for some field boundaries, but work has been limited to very small areas. In one or two instances this may have been confirmed by small-scale excavation. A more extensive landscape analysis is called for.

Sensitivity: High. This type is distinctive and has limited capacity to absorb change, being susceptible to gradual loss of character through small-scale alteration. Larger areas, particularly those with 'group value' through association with good documentation and settlement remains or farmsteads, should probably be regarded as more significant. However, the extent of any local variation is not at present understood, and smaller areas may acquire greater significance if research is carried out. The connection between historic settlements and adjacent areas of former fields, with associated trackways, is important; these areas are particularly sensitive.

Management: Retention of the overall sinuous pattern of fields is desirable. In modern fields this character is drawn largely from curving, parallel, field boundaries, generally in the form of hedgerows. Though these hedgerows may not be contemporary with the original strip fields, they are now the most obvious manifestation of the character of this type and their loss can have a dramatic effect. Arable farming, which may necessitate removal or straightening of field boundaries to accommodate modern machinery and create viable land parcels, is thus more damaging to this type in the sense that it can bring about more profound change more quickly. A lack of hedgerow management can bring about loss and, conversely, re-planting on a straighter line can also reduce character.

Enclosed: *open field enclosure*



Description: Areas which were open fields in the medieval period and have now been enclosed.

Postulated period of origin: Medieval (AD 1066 – 1539)
Post-medieval (AD 1540 – 1800)

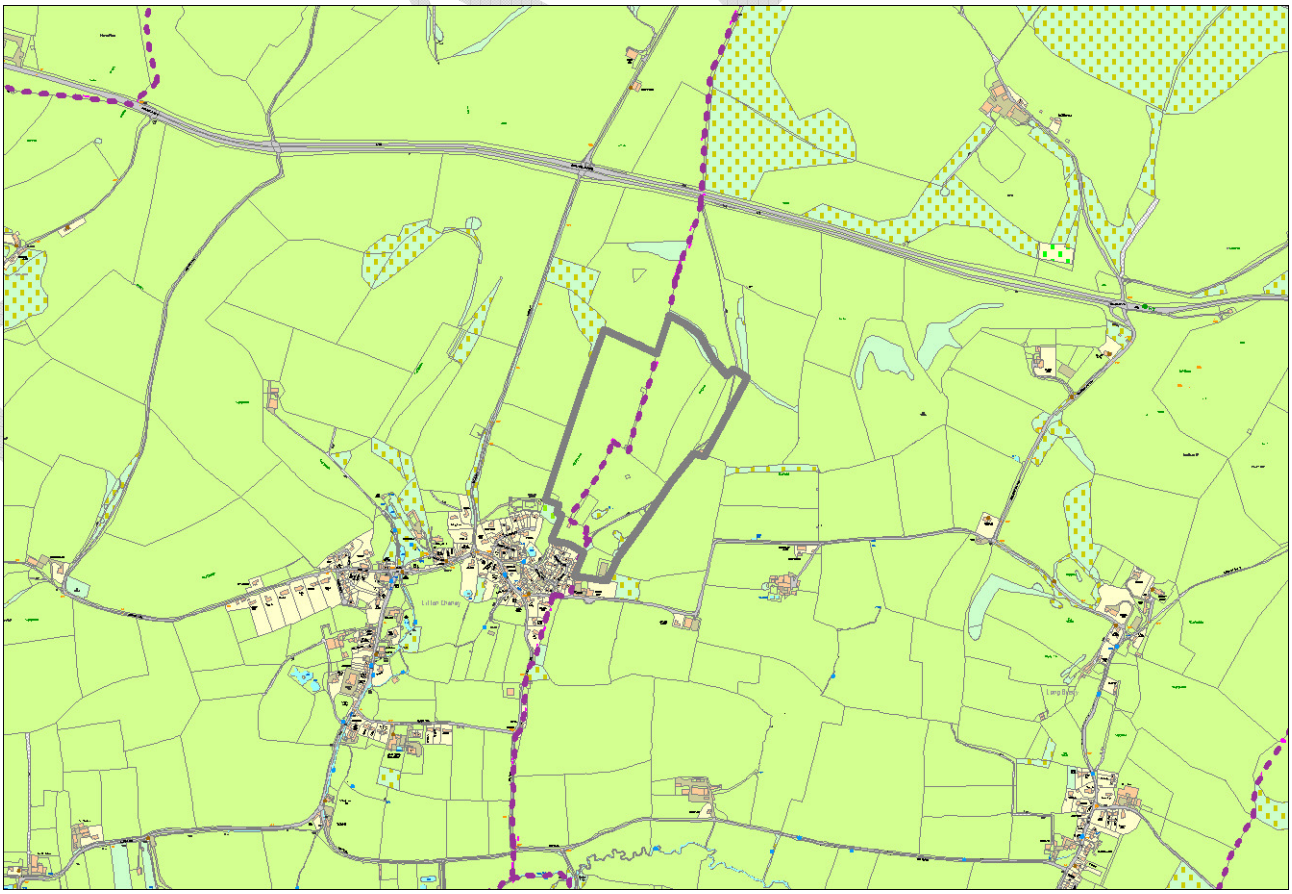
Rarity: Uncommon

Capacity to absorb change: Low

Archaeological potential: High

Sensitivity: High

Identifying characteristics: Identifying characteristics include field boundaries which echo the form of former open field divisions indicated by the presence of reversed S-shaped (known as *aratral*) curves and/or dog-legs. Not necessarily all fields within a polygon will display these characteristics, and it may be possible to see where former strips have been enclosed in discrete blocks. Fields may contain traces of surviving ridge and furrow in the form of earthworks or cropmarks, though this is rare in Dorset, or strip lynchets. Place names, particularly field names, and map or documentary evidence may indicate areas of open fields, and thus provide corroborating evidence.



Principal historical processes and evidence for time depth: S-shaped curves are indicative of medieval ploughing techniques, and the presence of both S-shaped curves (or part of such a curve) and dog-legs in boundaries is taken evidence of fields having originated through enclosure of medieval open fields. The prevalence of these attributes allows areas of former open fields to be identified clearly, and indicates that they have been subject to relatively little reorganisation, either at the time of enclosure or subsequently. This suggests that enclosure took place relatively early – in the late medieval or early post-medieval periods - and quite informally on a small scale, perhaps as a consequence of local agreement, or through the actions of an individual landowner or tenant.

Where small areas of strip fields are found with bands of *piecemeal enclosure, assarts,* or *amorphous* fields, they may indicate small-scale encroachment into woodland or waste, around a small settlement.

The distinctive terraces of strip lynchets occur on slopes in locations that must have been rather unsuitable for arable cultivation, and they are generally interpreted as evidence of expansion owing to population growth and economic pressure in the fourteenth century in particular, and subsequent contraction. Areas such as these may well have reverted to pastoral use for some time, with enclosure taking place after a considerable interval; this cannot be determined on morphological evidence, but examination of documentary sources may enable us to come to a more definite understanding of the process of enclosure in particular areas.

It is difficult to be certain of the latest period at which enclosure of this sort might have taken place, since in Dorset some open field systems remained in use (with the exception of Portland) for a long time. The open fields of Stratton, for example, are said to have operated as such until the early twentieth century. In this instance the area of former open fields of Stratton have been categorised as *Planned enclosure* of probable post-medieval date since this is what their morphology dictates, using the coarse indicators of HLC.

Interaction with other types: This type tends to be situated in the vicinity of settlements with historic cores, reflecting the general proximity of medieval open fields to the settlement which they served. It may occur in the vicinity of areas of *Strip field enclosure* and surviving open areas of *Strip fields*.

In areas which have been subject to relatively little reorganisation, fields are long and thin, considerably longer than they are wide, and boundaries are parallel; in this case, where a coherent block survives, the fields may be categorised as *Strip field enclosure*, and there is likely to be considerable overlap between these two types. Where former common fields have been subject to a greater degree of re-organisation, either at the time of enclosure or subsequently, they may well categorised as *piecemeal enclosure*.

Distribution: Scattered across the county but conspicuously absent from the chalk and areas of poorer soils around Poole Harbour. A broad band of larger blocks crosses the southern part of West Dorset and Purbeck, coinciding with a gap in the distribution of *Strip fields*. Smaller blocks are scattered across the western and northern parts of the county.

Rarity: 56.43 km^2 is recorded as fields having been created by enclosure of former open fields. This is 3.11% of enclosed land and 2.1% of the county as a whole. This type can therefore be categorised as *Uncommon* (between 1% and 5.0% of the county).

Contribution to the present landscape: Areas of former open fields are often situated on the fringes of historic settlement. Sometimes less distinct than *strip fields*, they nevertheless have a clear character and can make a significant contribution to the immediate setting of a village, with consequent impact on the character of the settlement itself. Parallel boundaries, and sometimes earthworks, create a subtle pattern which imparts a strong and appealing visual character to the landscape. Where groups of strips have been enclosed in large fields, the earthworks of strip lynchets may come to the fore; with a profound, looming quality on the more prominent slopes. Hedgerows tend to be of mixed quality and variable for accommodating wildlife.

This type is a distinct component of the landscape in which it sits, and generally easily-recognised by the trained eye. Larger areas have a particular coherence, particularly when incorporating strip lynchets, or where they are associated with historic settlements, tracks and areas of downland. This type can easily be explained to and understood by the layman.

Overall, this type can make a significant contribution to sense of place and quality of life.

Change: Factors influencing change in this type include removal of hedgerows and rationalisation of field boundaries. Equally, the sub-division of fields can bring about a loss of coherence. In sloping areas, strip lynchets may be flattened, particularly through ploughing. The capacity of this type to absorb change is low.

Archaeological potential: Ridge and furrow may be preserved in fields of this type. We might also expect to find the remains of former settlements or farmsteads, particularly in areas adjacent to historic settlement. Though these remains may have been reduced to below-ground archaeology in places, it is very likely that they will survive as earthworks. Survival of below-ground archaeology is likely to be greater in areas that have remained relatively undisturbed as permanent pasture.

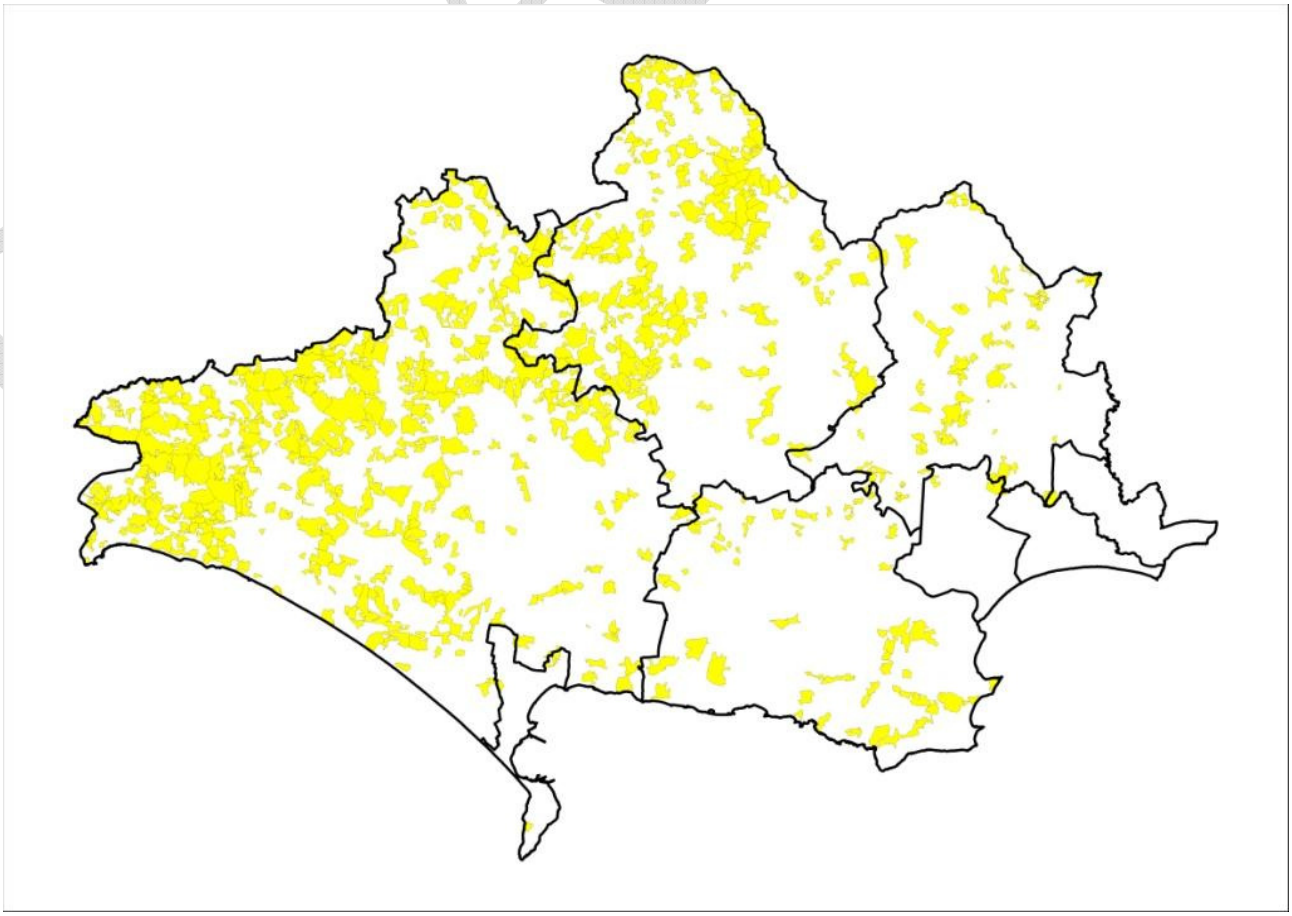
Documentary research is needed to understand the correlation between open fields, field names, and the extent to which this is reflected in the HLC results. Further work is needed to understand the fine detail of enclosure, what factors influenced the form and survival of strip fields in particular localities, and whether closer analysis of the present field morphology can be linked to the processes of enclosure and subsequent modification.

Some aspects of the layout of medieval open fields in relation to settlement and as components of manors and parishes may have been influenced by earlier settlement, land divisions, territorial boundaries, and so forth. The extent to which earlier field systems and boundaries can be detected within the present field pattern, perhaps even preserved within it, is not known. Local study has enabled fieldworkers to postulate a prehistoric, Romano-British or early medieval origins for some field boundaries, but work has been limited to very small areas. In one or two instances this may have been confirmed by small-scale excavation. A more extensive landscape analysis is called for.

Sensitivity: High. This type is distinctive and has limited capacity to absorb change, being susceptible to gradual loss of character through small-scale alteration. Larger areas, particularly those with 'group value' through association with good documentation and settlement remains or farmsteads, should probably be regarded as more significant. However, the extent of any local variation is not at present understood, and smaller areas may acquire greater significance if research is carried out. The connection between historic settlements and adjacent areas of former fields, with associated trackways, is important; these areas are particularly sensitive.

Management: Retention of the overall sinuous pattern of fields is desirable. In modern fields this character is drawn largely from curving, parallel, field boundaries, generally in the form of hedgerows. Though these hedgerows may not be contemporary with the original strip fields, they are now the most obvious manifestation of the character of this type and their loss can have a dramatic effect. Arable farming, which may necessitate removal or straightening of field boundaries to accommodate modern machinery and create viable land parcels, is thus more damaging to this type in the sense that it can bring about more profound change more quickly. It is certainly more damaging to any earthworks within the fields. A lack of hedgerow management can bring about loss and, conversely, re-planting on a straighter line can also reduce character.

Enclosed: *piecemeal enclosure*



Description: The gradual unplanned expansion of fields.

Postulated period of origin: Medieval (AD 1066 – 1539)
Post-medieval (AD 1540 – 1800)

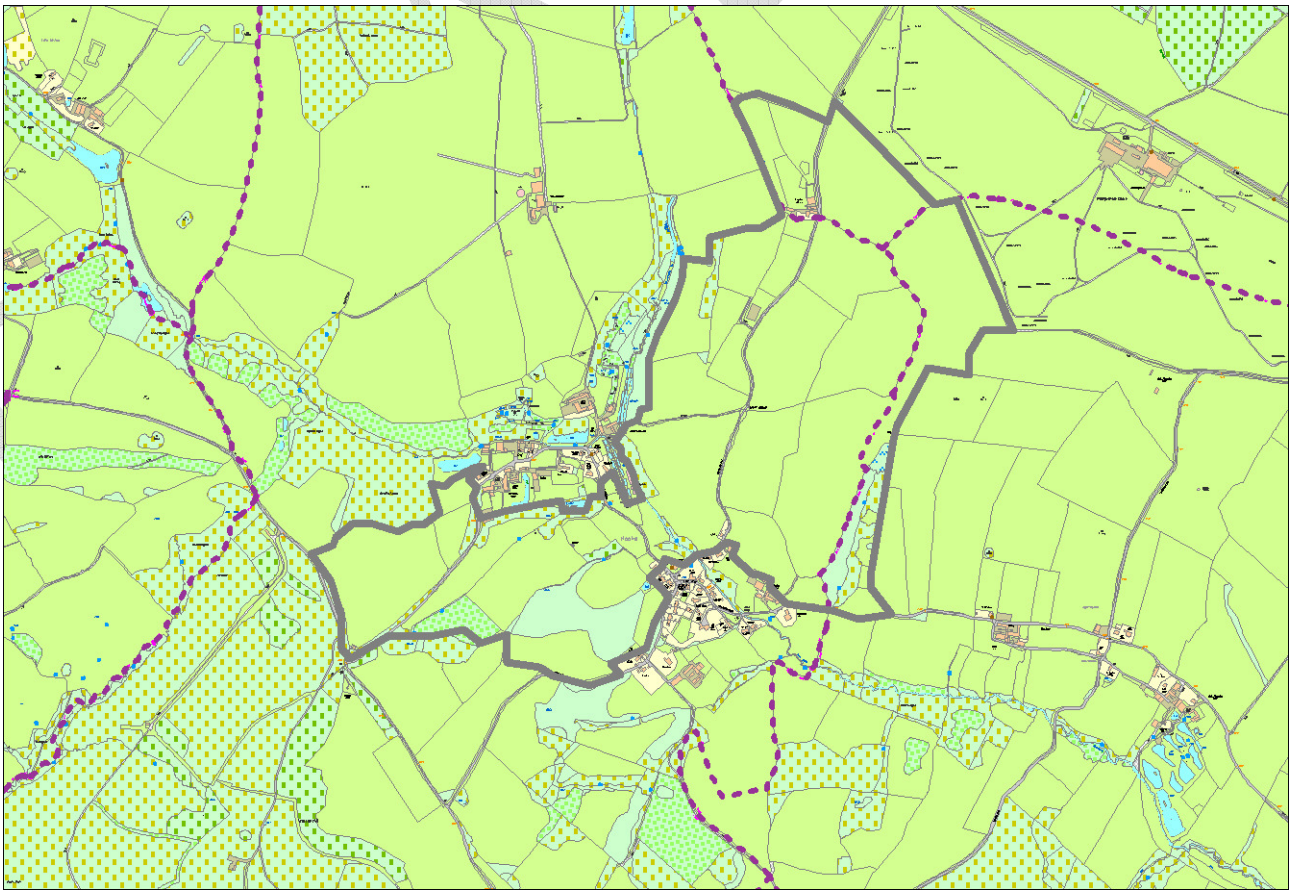
Rarity: Common

Capacity to absorb change: Moderate

Archaeological potential: Moderate

Sensitivity: High

Identifying characteristics: Small to medium-sized irregular fields with boundaries incorporating some reverse S-shaped curves and dog legs are interpreted as being the product of piecemeal enclosure of areas of medieval open fields by means of informal, verbal agreements. This origin may be further indicated by the fields being longer along one axis, reflecting enclosure of a number of open field strips. This simple scenario may be complicated by subsequent episode(s) of re-organisation or modification; prevalence of boundaries incorporating indicative features such as reverse S-shaped curves and dog legs, and the occurrence of parallel boundaries may be used as coarse indicators of the degree to which re-organisation has taken place.



Principal historical processes and evidence for time depth: Likely to owe their origin to gradual enclosure by local arrangement, generally from the later medieval period onwards, between farmers who wished to consolidate their holdings, or by a single small landowner or tenant. This type may also include small-scale and informal enclosure of areas which were not formerly open fields, but perhaps were adjacent to them – the fringes of downland, areas of common, or small pieces of woodland. In places, more regular elements hint at the superimposition of a degree of planning, with the original piecemeal enclosure having been modified by more recent boundary changes, additions or regularisation. For example, long common boundaries which clearly derive from former open field divisions but with the areas between them sub-divided into regularly-sized fields, often with very straight boundaries. Equally, this pattern might result from relatively organised enclosure confined to a single farm or limited area.

It is difficult to ascribe a clear date to piecemeal enclosure. Though the criteria for identification of this type include the occasional occurrence of indicators (such as S-curves) of former open fields, it may take in a wider range of former types. In some cases the former type may be identified or inferred from proximity to other current types, but it is not always clear. Piecemeal enclosure may have occurred at different times and for different reasons in different places. The overall impression is of small-scale enclosure over a relatively long period. Irregularity and small field size would tend to indicate an earlier date; medieval or early post-medieval rather than industrial or modern.

Interaction with other types: This type may have developed from a range of former types, and may be close to areas that have retained their former character. For example, areas of piecemeal enclosure of former strip fields may be found close to areas that are still *strip fields* or *open field enclosure*, and close to historic settlements. This type may also be associated with areas of former open ground, such as *downland* or *common*.

This type may be associated with woodland and areas of *planned clearance* of woodland origin, particularly in the smaller-scale and more mixed landscape of the western and northern parts of the county. Areas of *piecemeal enclosure* with *assarts,* or *amorphous* fields and small areas of *strip fields* suggest small-scale encroachment into woodland or waste from a small settlement or farmstead.

In the eastern part of the county this type is found with *heath* and *planned clearance*, since small fields created through the relatively unplanned small-scale clearance and enclosure of heathland may well have been categorised as *piecemeal enclosure*. Where their nature and origin is less distinct, these fields may have been categorised as *amorphous*. In this part of the county such clearance and enclosure was often associated with small-scale industry, sometimes combined with small-scale farming activity. The scale at which the HLC has been carried out means that the former industrial character of some of these areas has not been brought out.

Distribution: Widespread across the county, but generally not on the chalk, with concentrations in the western and northern parts of the county, and less dense, concentrations at the edges of areas of former downland, on the northern fringes of Poole Harbour and into the eastern part of the county.

Rarity: 551.15 km^2 are recorded as fields created through piecemeal enclosure. This is 30.42% of enclosed land and 20.53% of the county as a whole. This type can therefore be categorised as *Common* (between 20% and 30% of the county). However, particular local associations may come in to play.

Contribution to the present landscape: Patterns of small to medium-sized fields with irregular boundaries, sometimes with distinctive curves and dog-legs, and occasionally with groups of parallel boundaries.

Hedgerows associated with this type may be older and more substantial and, in areas of smaller field size, strongly inter-connected. This would tend to give these areas a greater potential for biodiversity.

This type is a distinct component of the landscape in which it sits, and generally very easily-recognised by the trained eye. Though not as strongly distinct as types with more distinguishing attributes such as *strip fields*, this type can easily be explained to and understood by the layman.

Change: Factors influencing change in this type include changes in agricultural practice, particularly changes which bring about removal of hedgerows and an increase in field size. Absence of hedgerow management, or short-term, mechanised hedgerow management (for economic reasons, or owing to a lack of skills) tends to bring about a general loss of condition, and concomitant weakening of the hedgerows. Equally, over-attentive management and 'rationalisation' brings increased regularity. In particular, straightening of boundaries to facilitate modern farming practice brings about a gradual loss of character. Built development, particularly in areas adjacent to settlement, is a significant cause of change, and is a particularly intense factor in the eastern part of the county and areas adjacent to Poole and Bournemouth.

This type is widespread, and so its capacity to absorb change is likely to vary depending on local circumstances. However, since it is composed of generally small fields with boundaries that are not straight, the most significant change takes the form of hedgerow removal or straightening of field boundaries. Larger areas may be more able to absorb these changes on a small-scale, while still retaining their 'grain'.

Consideration of loss and gain of field boundaries enables us to make a crude assessment of the extent to which this type has been reorganised. xxx of the field boundaries shown on the

early (1880s) map layer have been lost, and xxx gained. Larger blocks with larger fields are possibly more likely to have been created through systematic reorganisation of *piecemeal enclosure*.

Archaeological potential: May be associated with ridge and furrow, and the remains of medieval settlements and farmsteads. Potential for survival of earthworks and below-ground archaeological remains is likely to be higher in areas of pasture, and less high in areas of arable.

Further research is required to understand the date and origin of specific areas of piecemeal enclosure, and the processes and timescale of enclosure. For example, examination of historic maps and documents may make it possible to identify named individuals associated with particular farms and episodes of enclosure. Areas of particular interest may be those where piecemeal enclosure is found near small areas of strip fields, and perhaps in clusters with *assarts* or *amorphous* fields. Such clusters may indicate a farmstead or hamlet; this may be clarified by more refined characterisation of specific areas, and put into context by analysis of aerial photographs, documentary research and fieldwork.

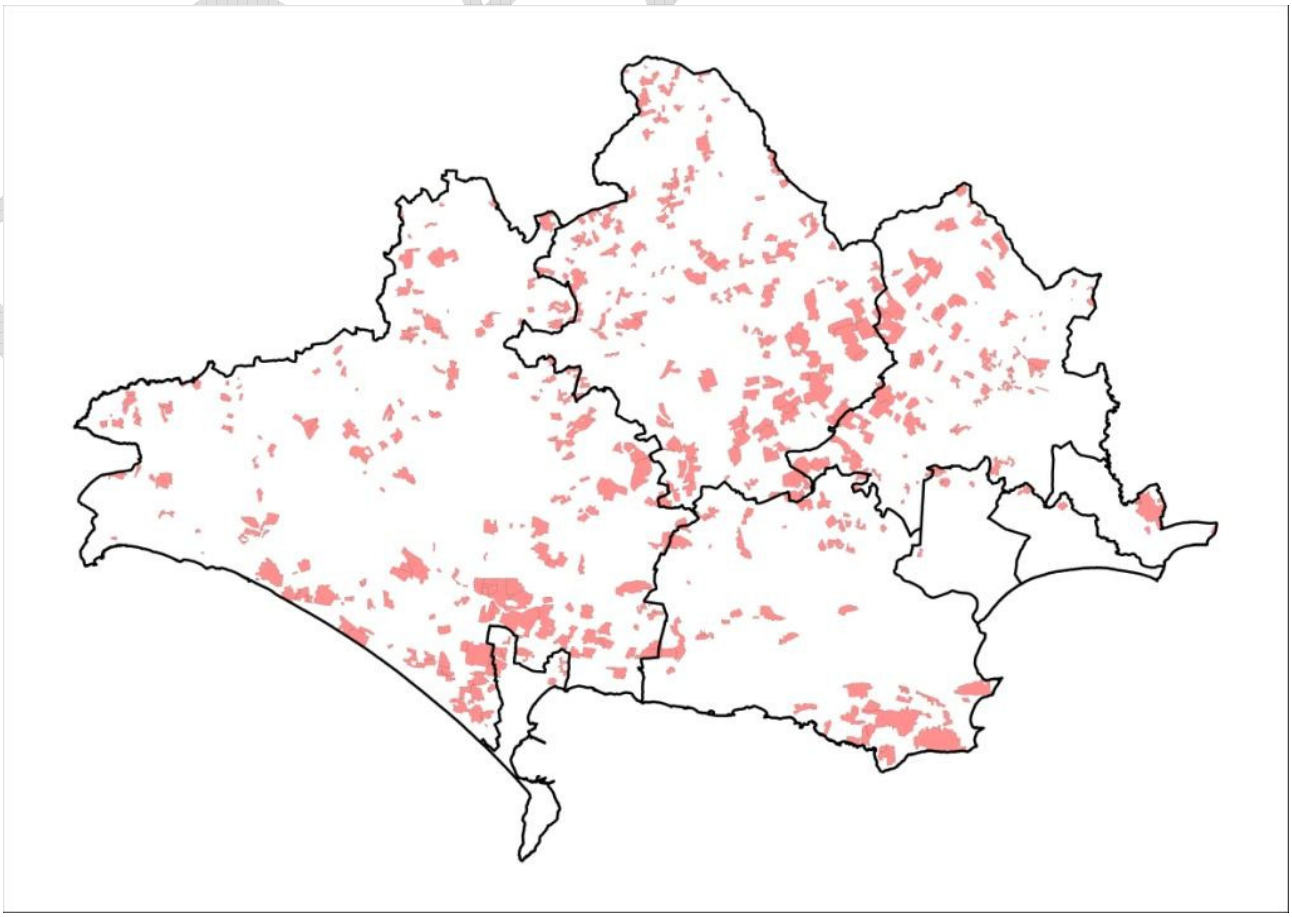
More fine-grained characterisation may throw some light on the squatter and small-scale industrial activity, particularly on the fringes of heathland around Poole Harbour and the eastern part of the county.

The extent to which earlier field systems and boundaries can be detected within the present field pattern, perhaps even preserved within it, is not known. Local study has enabled fieldworkers to postulate a prehistoric, Romano-British or early medieval origins for some field boundaries, but work has been limited to very small areas. In one or two instances this may have been confirmed by small-scale excavation. A more extensive landscape analysis is called for.

Sensitivity: High. This type is distinctive and has limited capacity to absorb change, being susceptible to gradual loss of character through small-scale alteration. Larger areas, particularly those with 'group value' through association with good documentation and settlement remains or farmsteads, or industrial activity should probably be regarded as more significant. However, the extent of any local variation is not at present understood, and smaller areas may acquire greater significance if research is carried out. Smaller areas are likely to have considerable local value.

Management: Preserving the generally irregular field pattern is desirable. This will be achieved by retaining field boundaries to keep the form and shape of fields, and good maintenance of hedgerows, which are the most obvious manifestation of the character of this type. A lack of hedgerow management can bring about loss and, conversely, re-planting on a straighter line can also reduce character. Arable farming, which may necessitate removal or straightening of field boundaries to accommodate modern machinery and create viable land parcels, is thus more damaging to this type in the sense that it can bring about more profound change more quickly. It is certainly more damaging to any earthworks within the fields. Field boundaries in the form of earthwork banks should be treated with particular care. Where archaeological remains survive as earthworks within fields, there should be a presumption in favour of their preservation through being kept as pasture.

Enclosed: *planned enclosure*



Description: Regular field layout with predominantly straight boundaries and regularly-sized fields, giving a rectilinear planned appearance.

Postulated period of origin: Post-medieval (AD 1540 – 1800)

Rarity: Frequent

Capacity to absorb change: Moderate

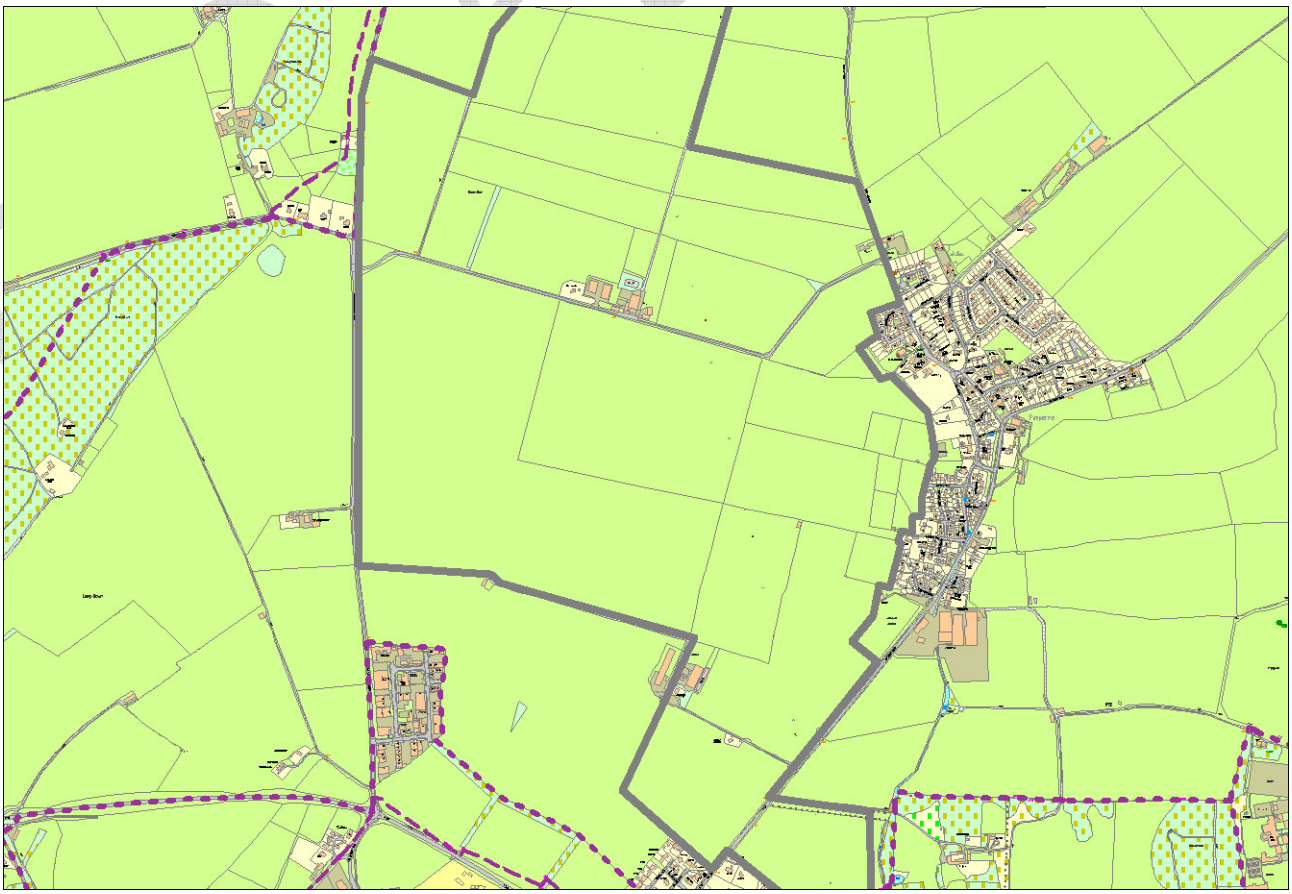
Archaeological potential: High

Sensitivity: Moderate

Identifying characteristics: Very regular fields with straight boundaries. The straight boundaries are taken to indicate the application of a relatively high level of surveying, but the absence of 'ruler-straight' boundaries (regarded as being characteristic of parliamentary enclosure) is interpreted as indicating planned enclosure but without the formality of an Act of Parliament.

This distinction is based on the premise that fields created through planned enclosure, though morphologically similar to fields created through parliamentary enclosure, were not laid out with the same precision. It is not clear to what extent this would have been the case in Dorset,

particularly without further research, and there may well be considerable overlap between the two types.



Principal historical processes and evidence for time depth: Very regular fields with straight boundaries are taken to be indicative of surveying, and thus of planned private enclosure by formal or informal agreement of landowners, or by the action of a single powerful tenant or landowner. This type of enclosure is generally taken to pre-date parliamentary enclosure. Parliamentary enclosure in Dorset appears to have been relatively limited, and generally confined to peripheral areas; the implication being that most enclosure of former open fields had already taken place. It could also be, of course, that the need for formal enclosure via an Act of parliament was not felt in Dorset.

Planned private enclosure of wastes and open fields will be identifiable particularly in areas where the extent of parliamentary enclosure is already known.

Larger areas of *planned enclosure* may have been created through enclosure of downland. Smaller areas may have been created by reorganisation, perhaps amalgamation, of fields enclosed at an earlier time in a less regular way.

Interaction with other types: It is likely that many of these fields categorised as *planned enclosure* were created through enclosure of areas of former open fields. However, this cannot be demonstrated from the attributes of this type, since only 4.44% exhibit any indicators (S-curve or dog-leg boundaries) and these are single examples affecting external boundaries, which might perhaps be interpreted as a shared boundary. For example, a large block of land categorised as *planned enclosure* situated to the south west of Dorchester is known to have been part of the former open field around the town (Fordington Field) and a relatively late enclosure. These fields have undergone such 'regularisation' that their original character cannot be distinguished from their attributes alone; this soon becomes apparent when early maps and documentary sources are considered.

Most of the larger blocks of *planned enclosure* are in locations which suggest that they may have been created by enclosure of downland. This type may be associated with areas of surviving downland, and other types indicating a high degree of planning, such as *parliamentary enclosure*.

Distribution: This type is scattered widely across the county, but with very clear concentrations of larger, often contiguous blocks on and adjacent to the chalk. Smaller, less densely-concentrated areas are scattered across the west and north of the county. There are several large areas in the centre and east of the county where this type does not occur.

Rarity: 305.25 km^2 is recorded as fields created through planned enclosure. This is 16.85% of enclosed land and 11.37% of the county as a whole. This type can therefore be categorised as *Frequent* (between 10% and 20% of the county).

Contribution to the present landscape: Considerable, particularly where large blocks survive. The regularity of the fields creates a strong and immediately apparent pattern in the landscape. The overall regularity of field size and shape can impart a certain blandness to the landscape. In this respect, therefore, it could be argued that this type is of greater significance when it is part of a varied landscape; where its regularity provides a counterpoint to less regular elements.

This type has a greater proportion of what are interpreted as later field boundaries, and these are generally felt to have a lower biodiversity value. Nevertheless, they may incorporate elements from earlier systems with hedgerows with greater value. Even relatively modern hedgerows may have a disproportionate significance by providing a source of food and corridors for movement in this relatively sparse arable landscape.

Change: Factors influencing change in this type include removal of field boundaries to create larger fields. Lack of maintenance of field boundaries, particularly hedgerows, may lead to gradual deterioration and loss. In areas near existing settlements infilling and expansion, and in places the creation of paddocks, cause significant change.

The capacity of this type to absorb change is moderate, since regular fields may be able to accommodate moderate change (in the form of removal of field boundaries) with less discernible impact on their 'grain' than areas of non-regular fields. Larger blocks of regular fields may be able to accommodate change without loss of overall character more easily than small blocks.

Archaeological potential: Survival of below-ground archaeology depends upon past land use and agricultural regimes since enclosure. It is likely to be greater in areas that have remained relatively undisturbed as permanent pasture.

Where planned enclosure has been of former downland or commons this may have included well-preserved prehistoric monuments such as round barrows and field systems with their associated enclosures; these features have often survived relatively unaffected in such areas, as the prevailing pastoral agriculture has for centuries had little impact on earthwork remains. Such monuments are likely to have survived after enclosure, where pastoral use continued. Even where there has been a change to arable farming, this may have occurred quite recently, and so have had relatively little effect as yet upon earthworks and below-ground archaeology. So we may expect to find relatively well preserved monuments, often part of an extensive group of associated features. Particularly good preservation may be found in places where ploughing, or simply the passage of time, has led to colluviation with colluvial deposits concealing and protecting archaeological remains.

In areas of former commons we may expect to find the remains of features associated with the management and exploitation of the commons themselves in relatively recent times. There

may be surviving vestiges of wood pasture. The smaller areas of planned enclosure away from the chalk are likely to have much more varied origins. For example, they may be the last and most organised of several phases of enclosure, and vestiges of these earlier stages of enclosure may be preserved within the landscape. More detailed field survey and analysis of documentary evidence would be needed to understand the development of particular areas.

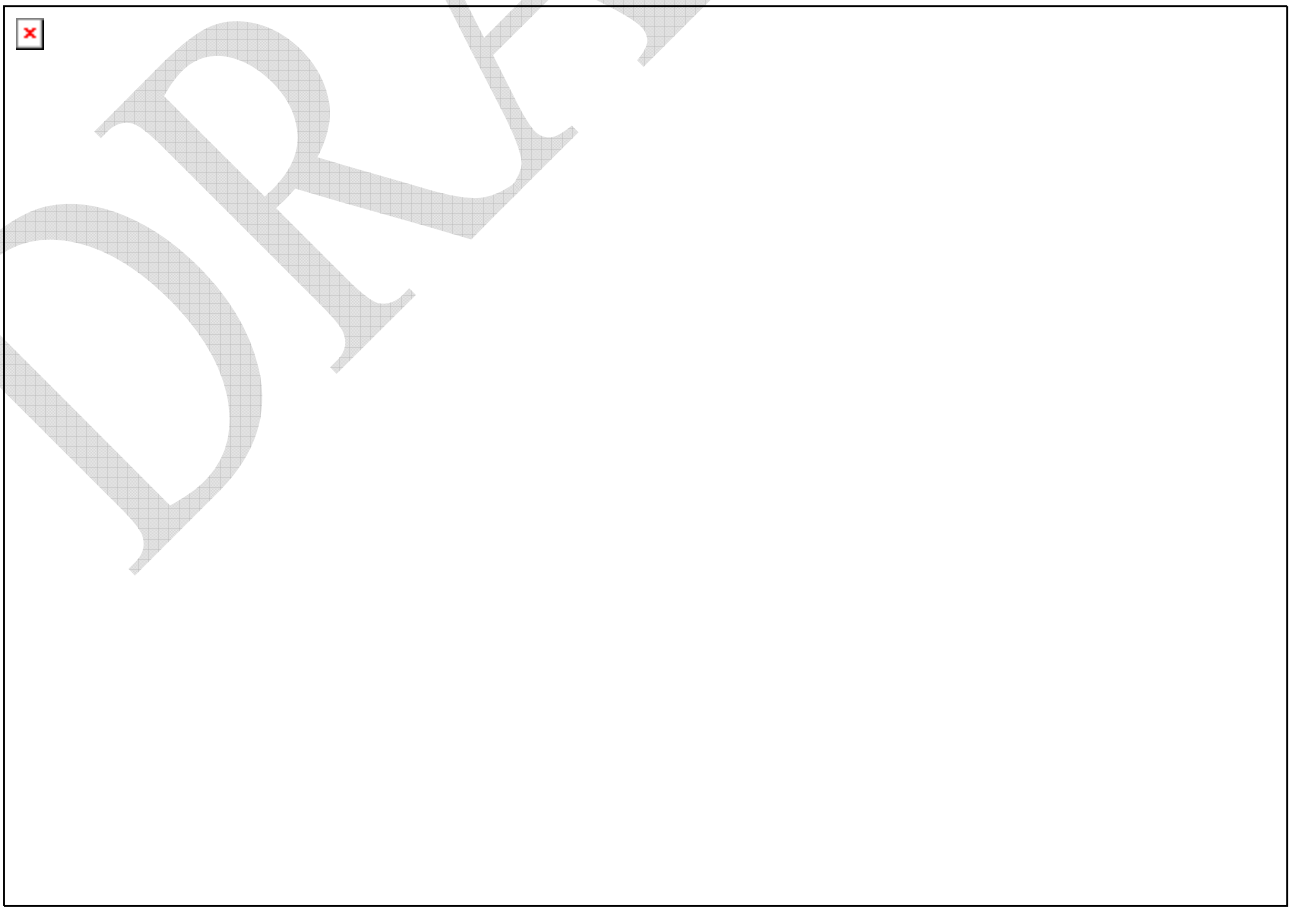
Topics for research include the origins and processes of enclosure of this type, overlap with parliamentary enclosure in particular, and the extent to which this can be clarified by closer examination of documentary sources and other factors. For example, whether variation in biodiversity of hedgerows shows any difference between or variation within areas of planned and parliamentary enclosure. Documentary research may make it possible to identify named individuals associated with particular farms and episodes of enclosure.

In areas of arable fieldwalking will identify surface scatters of material likely to indicate the presence of below-ground archaeological remains; the evidence gathered will also provide a means of assessing the impact of various agricultural regimes, particularly ploughing, on the archaeological resource.

Sensitivity: Moderate. The general character of this type is drawn from its regularity, and so it is probably more inherently resilient than less regular types. This regularity is distinctive, and larger areas should probably be regarded as more significant. However, this type has originated from a variety of earlier types. The extent of any local variation is not at present understood, and smaller areas may acquire greater significance if research is carried out.

Management: For this type to keep its historic character, it is essential to maintain the regularity of fields and straight field boundaries. Straight field boundaries are a key attribute of this type, but there may be local variation. Where irregular fields and boundaries occur, they should be regarded as key evidence for understanding the process of enclosure in that locality.

Enclosed: *other amorphous*



Description: Amorphous fields which do not fit into other categories.

Postulated period of origin: Medieval (AD 1066 – 1539)
Post-medieval (AD 1540 – 1800)

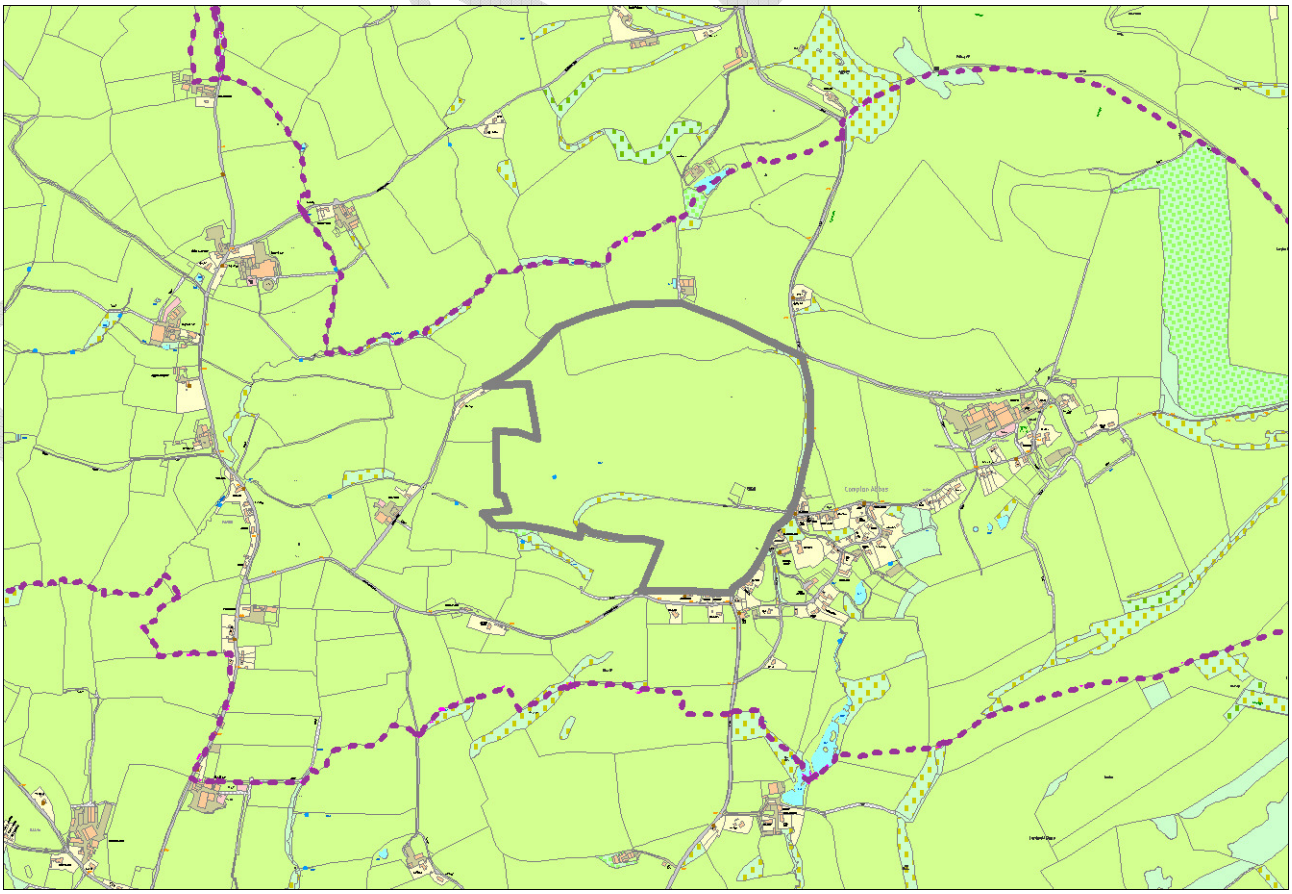
Rarity: Uncommon

Capacity to absorb change: Low

Archaeological potential: Moderate

Sensitivity: Moderate

Identifying characteristics: Fields of varying size and relatively irregular shape, with predominantly wavy boundaries. The proportions of the field and the characteristics of the field boundaries do not indicate any particular origin, for example the S-curves and dog legs characteristic of enclosure of former open fields. These fields appear in largely unaltered form on early Ordnance Survey maps.



Principal historical processes and evidence for time depth: The overall irregularity of this type suggests that their enclosure was not planned, and certainly not planned on a large scale, but it may include fields which have originated in a variety of ways. Some may be the product of relatively early enclosure in a non-regular fashion, or perhaps subject to later reorganisation which has had the effect of stripping the fields of distinguishing characteristics. This type may also include areas peripheral to quite modern fields created as a consequence of regular enclosure or sub-division of an earlier landscape, particularly if they are on higher ground, or adjacent to long-established boundaries, such as parish boundaries, or obstacles such as steep slopes.

Irregularity and small field size would tend to indicate an earlier date; medieval or early post-medieval rather than industrial or modern. The absence of indicators such as S-curves may have a different significance; this might be interpreted as evidence of surviving remnants of very early field systems, possibly prehistoric, though this origin is perhaps more likely in more remote and difficult locations such as slopes and higher ground.

Interaction with other types: This type may have originated from a variety of other types. It may be associated with areas of these types which have retained their character, or represent what are now relatively isolated fragments. For example, it is noticeable that fields categorised as *Other amorphous* tend to be found in areas where *Piecemeal enclosure* in particular does not occur. It may be that many of the areas described as *Other amorphous* might, with more evidence, have been categorised as *Piecemeal enclosure*. This type is most likely to have developed from other irregular types, rather than from regular types; through general degradation or by being at the margins of more regular enclosure at a later date.

Distribution: There is a broad scatter of this type in the central and eastern parts of the county, coinciding very roughly but by no means entirely with the chalk. There is a more dispersed scatter in the northern, western and southern parts of the county, and areas of this type in these areas are generally rather smaller. There are also distinct blanks in these areas.

Rarity: 115.55 km^2 are recorded as amorphous fields. This is 6.38% of enclosed land and 4.3% of the county as a whole. This type can therefore be categorised as *Uncommon* (between 1% and 5% of the county).

Contribution to the present landscape: Varied, depending on location, extent and association with other types. The irregular nature of this type means that it can have a quite distinct character, and thus in some locations make an appreciable contribution to landscape character, though without the distinction of attributes seen with other types such as dog-legs or robust hedgerows with occasional mature trees. Extensive areas of this type will have a moderately strong character. Elsewhere, 'pockets' of this type may provide a valuable visual contrast to generally regular field layout.

Change: Factors influencing change in this type include removal and straightening of field boundaries, which may be associated with change from pasture to arable farming. In some areas, notably in the vicinity of towns and villages, built development is a significant cause of change.

The capacity of this type to absorb change is not clear, since it is likely to have originated in a number of ways from a variety of former types. It is also quite widespread, and so its capacity to absorb change is likely to vary depending on local circumstances. Its defining characteristic is irregularity, which in itself is distinctive and suggests that areas of this type would be susceptible to gradual loss of character through small-scale alteration such as hedgerow removal or straightening of field boundaries. Larger areas may be more able to absorb these changes on a small-scale, while still retaining their 'grain'.

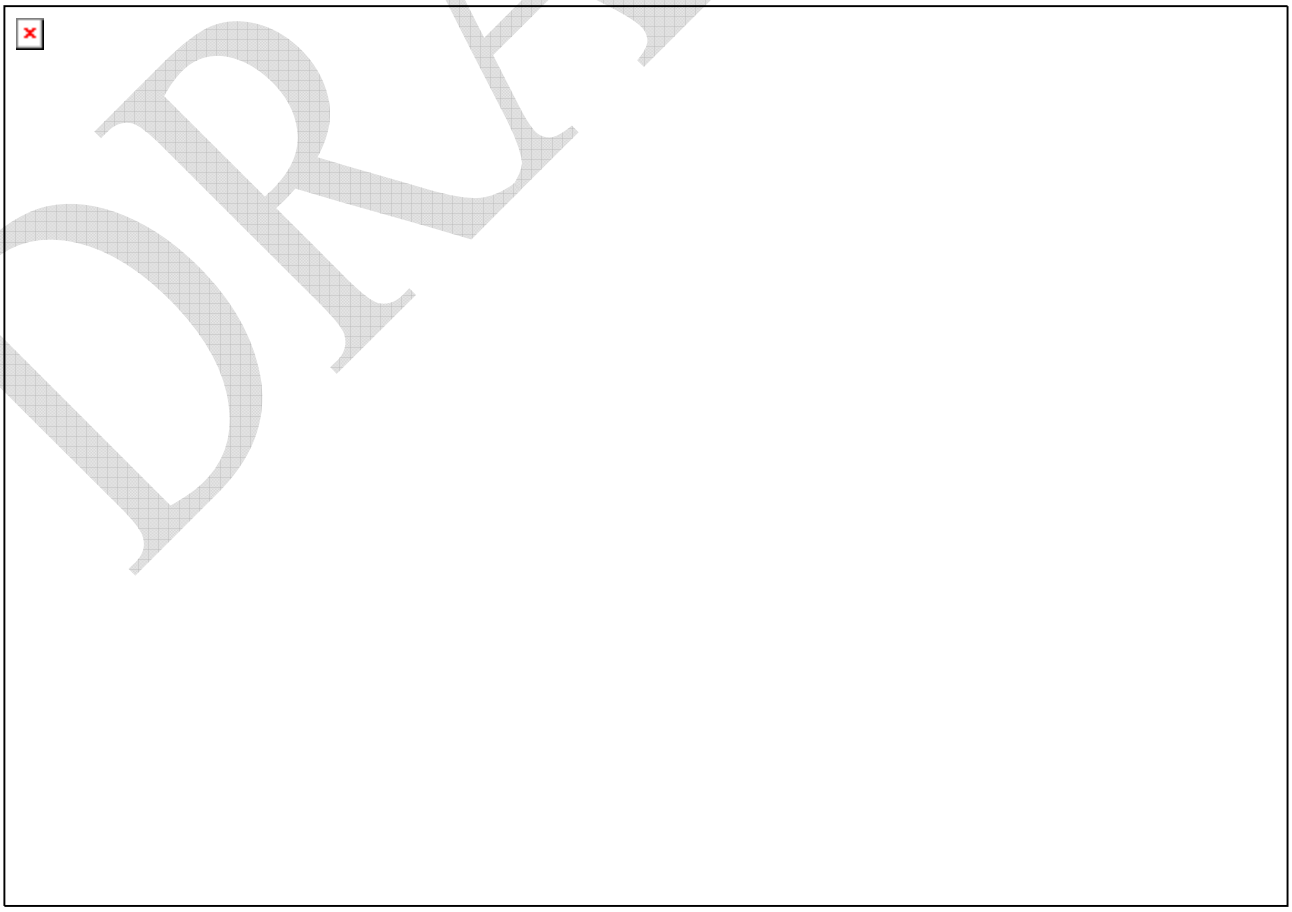
Archaeological potential: Since this type may have originated in a variety of ways from a number of different types, its archaeological potential will vary. Potential for survival of below-ground archaeology depends on earlier land use and the prevailing agriculture since enclosure, with pasture likely to have higher preservation than areas of arable. However, since irregularity is taken to indicate a probable earlier date than regularity, this type may have considerable potential for survival. For example, any surviving field boundary banks may be medieval or earlier in origin.

More detailed analysis may identify attributes and combinations of attributes which would enable the allocation of some of these areas to more specific historic landscape character types. Field survey and documentary research may enable the identification of the origins and probable date of particular areas of enclosure, and establish any links to individual landowners or activities such as small-scale industry.

Sensitivity: Larger areas, particularly those with 'group value' through association with good documentation and settlement remains or farmsteads, or industrial activity should probably be regarded as more significant. However, the extent of any local variation is not at present understood, and smaller areas may acquire greater significance if research is carried out. Smaller areas are likely to have considerable local value.

Management: Maintenance and retention of field boundaries is likely to be significant in maintaining the historic character of this type, though local circumstances may vary.

Enclosed: *other regular*



Description: Regular fields which do not fit into other categories. Usually have straight boundaries but are not completely symmetrical.

Postulated period of origin: Post-medieval (AD 1540 – 1800)
Industrial (AD 1801 – 1900)
Modern (AD 1901 – 2050)

Rarity: Common

Capacity to absorb change: Moderate

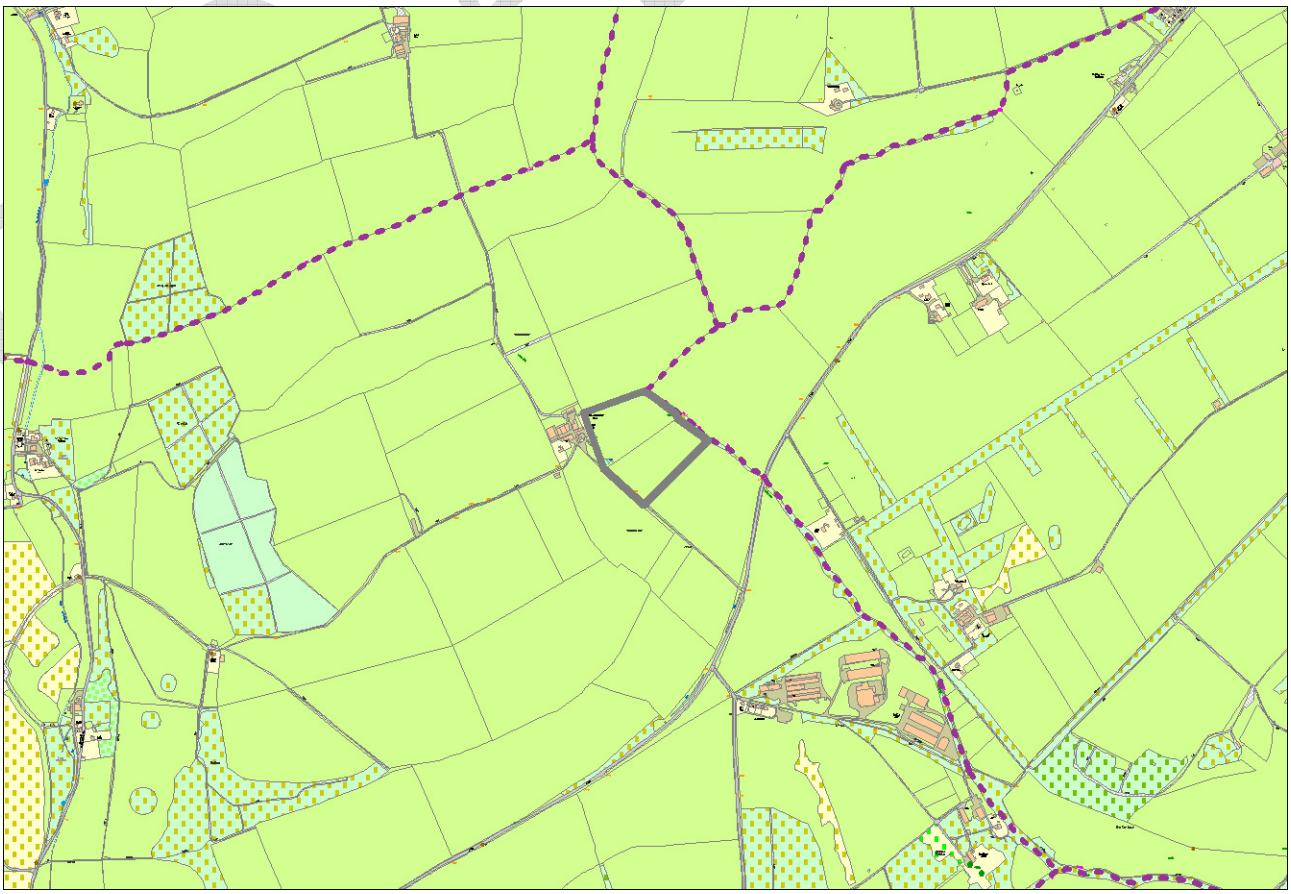
Archaeological potential: Moderate

Sensitivity: Moderate

Identifying characteristics: Fields of varying size and relatively regular shape, with predominantly straight boundaries. The proportions of the field and the characteristics of the field boundaries do not indicate any particular origin, for example the S-curves and dog legs characteristic of enclosure of former open fields.

The overall regularity of this type indicates a degree of planning, but it may include fields which have originated in a variety of ways. Some may be the product of relatively early enclosure in a regular fashion, or perhaps subject to later reorganisation which has had the effect of stripping the fields of distinguishing characteristics. Equally, this type may include

quite modern fields created as a consequence of sub-dividing an earlier landscape into smaller areas, often for use as paddocks for the accommodation of horses.



Principal historical processes and evidence for time depth: Likely to owe their origin to relatively formal enclosure, generally from the post-medieval period onwards. This type may represent, for example, concerted and relatively large scale enclosure through local agreement between neighbouring farmers, or by a single large landowner or tenant. This type may also include organised enclosure of areas which were not formerly open fields, but perhaps were adjacent to them – the fringes of downland, areas of common, or small pieces of woodland.

Regularity of fields is taken to indicate a greater degree of planning than irregularity. These fields may represent 'new' enclosure, or may affect areas which had already been enclosed on a smaller scale or in a less formal way. Elements such as very occasional dog-legs or a 'rogue' curving boundary may hint at that former type or the nature of the enclosure process. For example, the occasional survival of such indicators is more likely to result from a gradual process of enclosure, rather than a single large-scale episode.

It is difficult to ascribe a clear date to regular enclosure, since it may have occurred at different times and for different reasons in different places. In some cases the former type may be identified by the presence of residual attributes such as curves or inferred from proximity to other current types, but it is not always clear. Regularity and larger field size would tend to indicate a later date; post-medieval and industrial or modern, rather than medieval.

Interaction with other types: This type has similar characteristics to other regular types, such as *Enclosed, planned enclosure*. It consists of fields which are regular but without sufficiently distinct attributes or associations to be allocated to a more precisely-defined type with clear origin in a particular period. This type may have been created by enclosure of a variety of earlier types, or it may represent the remains of types of more distinct character

which have become fragmented and isolated through change in adjacent areas, or which have themselves become degraded through changes such as removal or straightening of field boundaries. There will be very considerable overlap with other regular types.

Distribution: Widespread over the whole of the rural county. There are larger and more contiguous blocks of this type in the central and southern parts of the county, with smaller more discrete blocks tending to be found in the west and north. There are apparent gaps in the areas around Poole Harbour, areas of former heathland in the east of the county, and elsewhere, where they appear to correspond to valley bottoms and lower lying areas in general.

Rarity: 541.02 km^2 are recorded as regular fields. This is 29.86% of enclosed land and 20.15% of the county as a whole. This type can therefore be categorised as *common* (between 20% and 30% of the county).

Contribution to the present landscape: Considerable, particularly where large blocks survive. The overall regularity of the fields creates an immediately-apparent pattern in the landscape, though this may have quite a bland effect. In this respect, therefore, it could be argued that this type is of greater significance when it is part of a varied landscape; where its regularity provides a counterpoint to less regular elements.

Field boundaries may be relatively modern, and so tend to have moderate biodiversity potential. This type has originated in a variety of ways and at different times, so some hedgerows may be relatively old with relatively varied component species. Some may incorporate elements from earlier systems with hedgerows with greater biodiversity potential.

Change: Factors influencing change in this type include removal of field boundaries.

The capacity of this type to absorb change is moderate, since regular fields may be able to accommodate moderate change (in the form of removal of field boundaries) with less discernible impact on their 'grain' than areas of non-regular fields. Larger blocks of regular fields may be able to accommodate change without loss of overall character more easily than small blocks.

This type is spread widely across the county and likely to have originated in a number of ways from a variety of former types. Consequently, the capacity of this type to absorb change is particularly likely to vary depending on local circumstances.

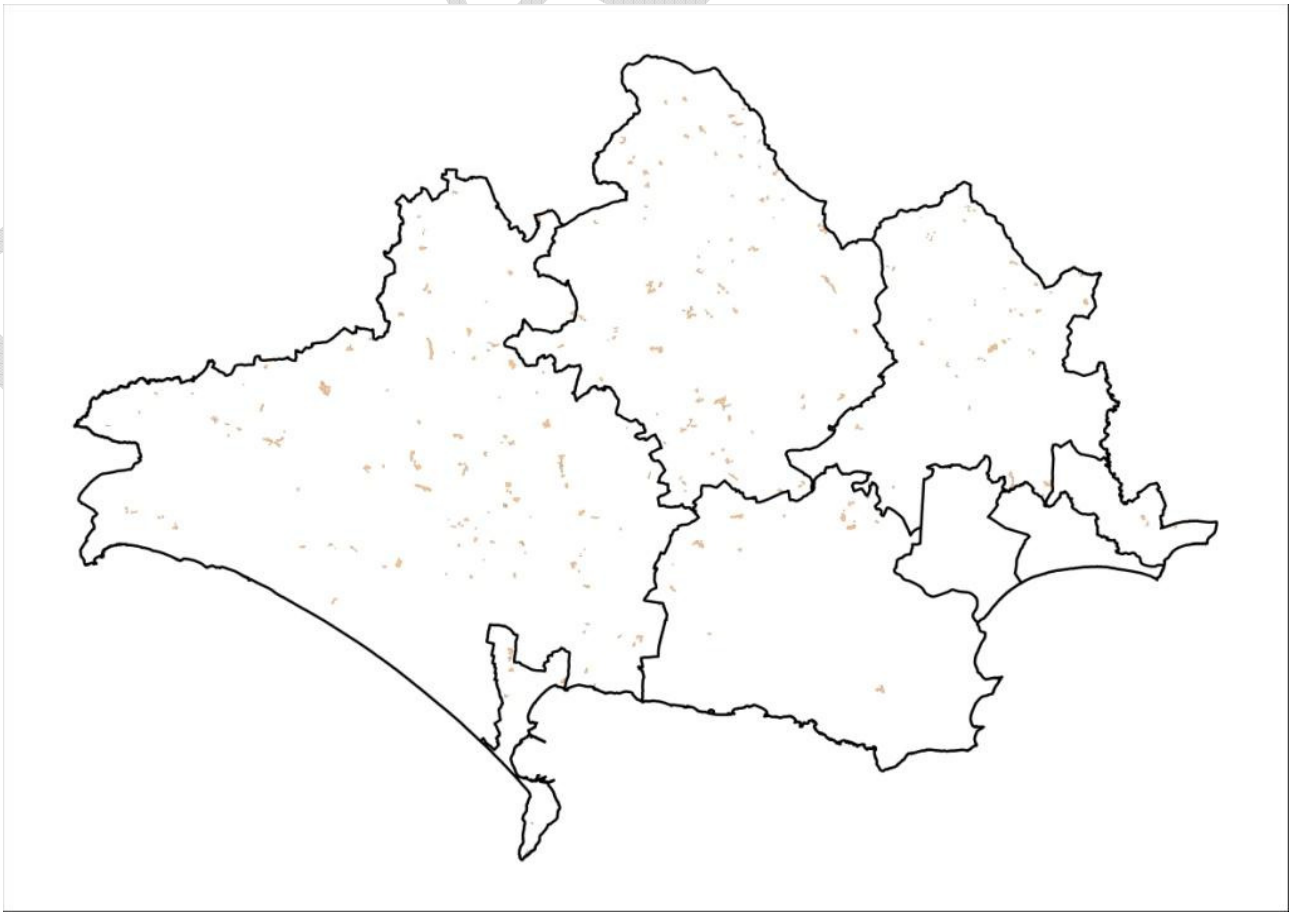
Archaeological potential: Since this type may have originated in a variety of ways from a number of different types, its archaeological potential will vary. Potential for survival of below-ground archaeology depends on earlier land use and the prevailing agriculture since enclosure, with pasture likely to have higher preservation than areas of arable.

Fields may incorporate elements of earlier enclosure. More refined characterisation and identification of morphological nuances by survey and documentary research may enable us to understand the varied origins and processes of enclosure of this type, and the extent to which relict field boundaries have been preserved within the present field boundaries.

Sensitivity: Moderate. The general character of this type is drawn from its regularity, and so it is probably more inherently resilient than less regular types. Larger areas, particularly those with 'group value' through association with good documentation and settlement remains or farmsteads, or industrial activity should probably be regarded as more significant. However, the extent of any local variation is not at present understood, and smaller areas may acquire greater significance if research is carried out. Smaller areas are likely to have considerable local value.

Management: Maintenance and retention of field boundaries is likely to be significant in maintaining the historic character of this type, though local circumstances may vary. Appropriate management for any surviving earthworks.

Enclosed: *paddocks/closes*



Description: Small regular or amorphous fields close to the settlement edge. Probably represent small meadows and paddocks.

Postulated period of origin: Medieval (AD 1066 – 1539)
Post-medieval (AD 1540 – 1800)
Modern (AD 1901 – 2050)

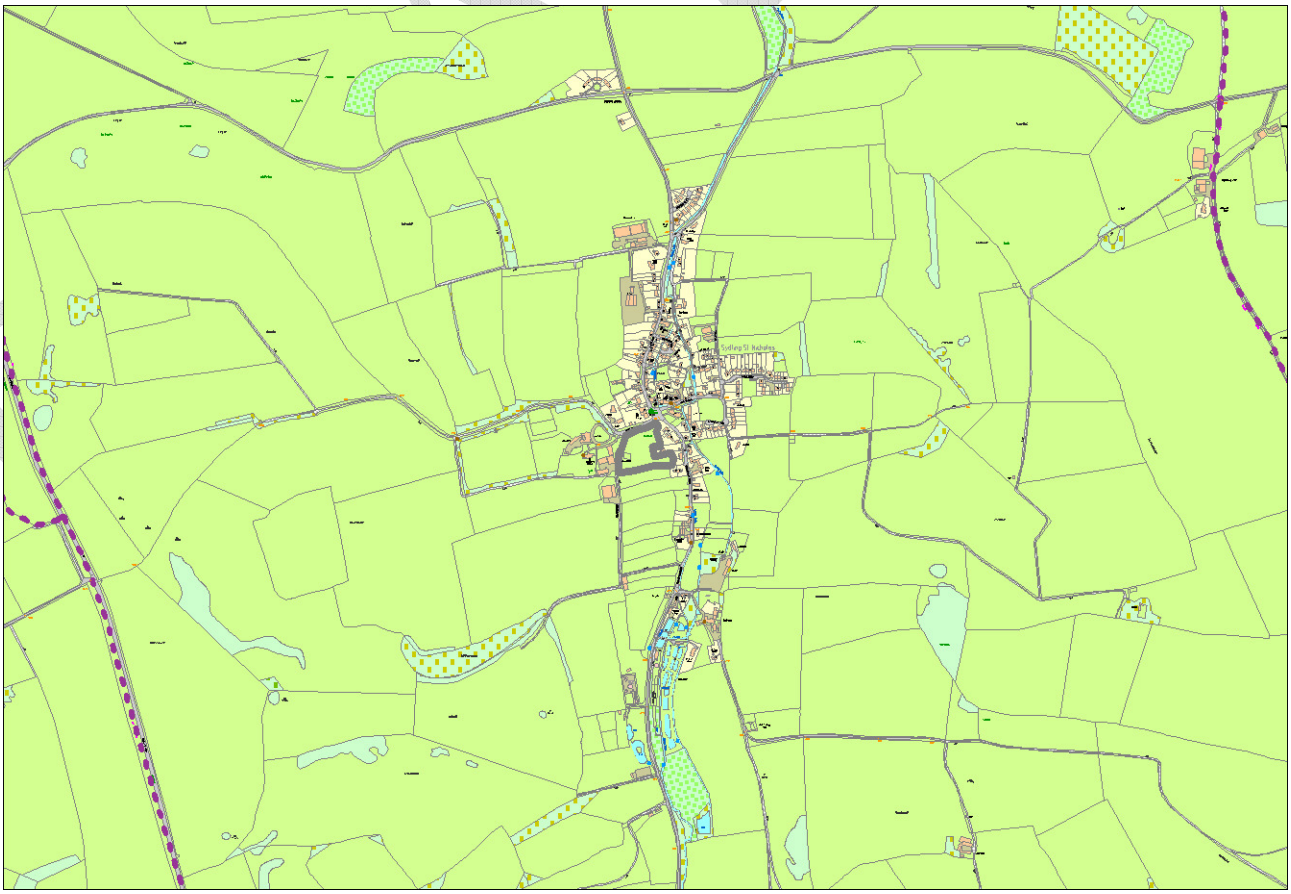
Rarity: Scarce

Capacity to absorb change: Low

Archaeological potential: High

Sensitivity: High

Identifying characteristics: Small meadows and paddocks distinguished by being located on the fringes of settlements. These fields may be irregular but more easily recognised when they take the form of rectangular, often square, enclosures. Field boundaries may exhibit curves, reflecting their origin through the enclosure of areas of former open fields. On occasion, where the field boundaries continue the line of, or are parallel with, boundaries within the historic core of a settlement, these may be interpreted as the remains of closes associated with the historic settlement. However, they are not easy to distinguish from more modern paddocks created for 'horseyculture', particularly at the scale at which the HLC was carried out; there may, in any case, be considerable overlap.



Principal historical processes and evidence for time depth: This type is likely to have been created firstly by the creation of small fields or closes out of open fields around historic settlements. This was generally part of more widespread enclosure of open fields, and occurred in the late medieval and post-medieval periods. More recently, a similar effect has been created by the formation of paddocks for livestock, predominantly horses, in the vicinity of settlements.

Interaction with other types: Situated close to areas of historic settlement, and often between historic settlements and their former open fields represented by types such as *Strip fields* and *Open field enclosure*. *Paddocks/closes* may be similar in appearance to these types derived from open fields, but are generally rather shorter in length than fossilised strips. Where historic settlements are situated in or near a valley bottom, this type may lie between historic settlement and areas of meadow in areas categorised as *Water association, valley bottom* or *Water association, water meadow*.

On the fringes of historic settlement there may be some overlap with areas of former or remnant orchard; a historic landscape type not featuring in this HLC, possibly due to the small size of any surviving orchards.

Distribution: Scattered across the northern, western and central parts of the county in relatively small and discrete blocks, generally adjacent to settlements. This type occurs much less frequently in the southern and eastern parts of the county.

Rarity: 16.07 km^2 are recorded as paddocks and closes. This is 0.89% of enclosed land and 0.6% of the county as a whole. This type can therefore be categorised as *Scarce* (between 0.1% and 1.0% of the county).

Contribution to the present landscape: Paddocks/closes formed in the medieval and post-medieval periods are likely to have been pasture for a long time and may consequently have a

species-rich flora. These fields often have mature trees within them as well as in their boundaries, and sometimes contain the remains of orchards of some age. The presence of *paddocks/closes on* the fringes of historic settlement creates a soft green edge to the village, making a more gradual transition from the historic settlement to areas of former open fields. This type makes a subtle but no less strong contribution to the immediate setting of a village, compared with areas where there is a direct change from settlement to areas of former open fields, with consequent impact on the character of the settlement itself. For example, there may be a greater sense of enclosure and seclusion in villages contained within a fringe of paddocks/closes, and fewer views in or out of the settlement.

Paddocks/closes of probable medieval or post-medieval origin often have quite mature and 'connected' hedgerows and contain a varied flora, and so tend to offer a good environment for wildlife, though constrained by proximity to settlement and their generally small size.

Many areas of this type, particularly those around settlements, have *orchard* as a previous type. Orchards were a common feature of the medieval landscape. In some parts of the county the creation and expansion of orchards was stimulated by the arrival of the railway, which enabled large-scale fruit production for wider market. Orchard is not recorded as a current historic landscape character type. This may be partly due to the scale at which HLC was carried out, with small areas of orchard being subsumed within larger areas categorised as another type. Even so, it is clear that there has been considerable loss of orchards.

This type is a distinct component of the landscape in which it sits, and generally very easily-recognised by the trained eye. It can easily be explained to and understood by the layman.

Overall, this type can make a significant contribution to sense of place and quality of life.

Change: Factors influencing change in this type include replacement of hedgerows with modern materials, and grubbing-up and non-replacement of trees, possibly orchards. Insertion of buildings such as stables, and conversion or sub-division of fields to accommodate stock, particularly horses, with increased wear. This problem is particularly acute where exercise areas have been created. Even temporary sub-division through the deployment of electric fences, for example, may cause localised problems with erosion. In some situations, particularly in areas where horses are kept, concentrated fertilization may bring about change or reduction in variety of flora.

In places, gardens have been extended into what were formerly small meadow-like closes, possibly orchards. Though the shape of the plot may have been retained, the insertion of garden buildings and structures such as swimming pools and planting in formal style of ornamental and generally non-native trees and shrubs brings a gradual loss of historic character. This type can be particularly susceptible to gradual encroachment by piecemeal housing development out from the settlement. This development often occurs along roads, leading to a loss of connection and coherence.

Overall, the capacity of this type to absorb change is low, since its character is derived largely from the size and shape of fields and boundaries around them. The historic character of this type owes much to the presence of mature trees and a meadow flora.

Archaeological potential: May incorporate older boundaries, in the form of boundary banks, which are likely to be at least medieval in origin. Areas of medieval settlement remains may be found, and traces of former open fields, perhaps in the form of ridge and furrow. In places, paddocks/closes may occupy areas of former backland associated with a historic settlement, and here we might expect to find evidence of domestic economy on the form of features such as rubbish pits and small-scale industrial activity.

Below-ground archaeological deposits in these areas will enable us to understand the origins and fluctuations in the location of medieval settlement, and the extent to which settlements of

medieval origin occupy locations used for settlement in earlier periods – prehistoric, Romano-British and, particularly, the extent to which modern settlements which we know to be at least medieval in origin may have developed from early medieval settlements or farmsteads.

Topics for research include the differences between nucleated and dispersed settlement types, and consideration of these in connection with the prevailing agriculture, land ownership, and numerous other aspects of the rural economy and social history in the medieval and post-medieval periods. One particular aspect of the rural economy worthy of further research is the extent to which areas of this type were used for orchards at some point in the past, and the origins and decline of orchards, and the identification of surviving orchards of particular historic value. The history and distribution of orchards and particular varieties of fruit, the survival of structures and buildings used for fruit growing and processing, and associations with named trees or trees with particular folkloric associations, are all of interest. The extent to which former use as an orchard can be identified from below-ground archaeology, and distinguished, for example, from ridge and furrow, has to be established.

Where paddocks/closes are situated on the valley floor, they may conceal below-ground archaeological remains containing features and materials relating to the management and exploitation of the river and associated flood plain in earlier periods. We might expect to find well-preserved organic material, including palaeoenvironmental evidence.

Sensitivity: High, but dependent upon origin. This type is distinctive and has limited capacity to absorb change, being susceptible to gradual loss of character through small-scale alteration. In places, this type may represent part of an historic settlement, and its interface with adjacent areas of former open fields; these areas are particularly sensitive. Compartments of similar overall appearance (at the scale at which HLC has been carried out) may have been created elsewhere by quite modern changes; in places the latter may overlie and be altering the former. These areas, too, are sensitive and subject to more acute change.

Management: Retention and good management of field boundaries is desirable. Though the fields themselves may vary in form, their generally small size is one of the key attributes of this type, and the removal or straightening of field boundaries would quickly lead to loss of historic character. Where trees are a feature of this type, their good management and retention and replacement is desirable. Restoration and reinstatement of areas of former orchard, for example, may protect this type from more damaging use.

New planting, particularly when it is close to historic villages and farms, may affect significant below-ground archaeological remains, and needs careful consideration. It should certainly reflect the original scale, character, variety etc of orchards on the site or in the vicinity.

In some instances it could be argued that change is desirable, particularly if this were to take the form of removal of or measures to ameliorate the impact of more recently-created horse paddocks, and insertions such as stables. Similarly, the gradual incorporation of paddocks/closes into gardens and encroachment of settlement through piecemeal development is largely incompatible with the historic character of this type.