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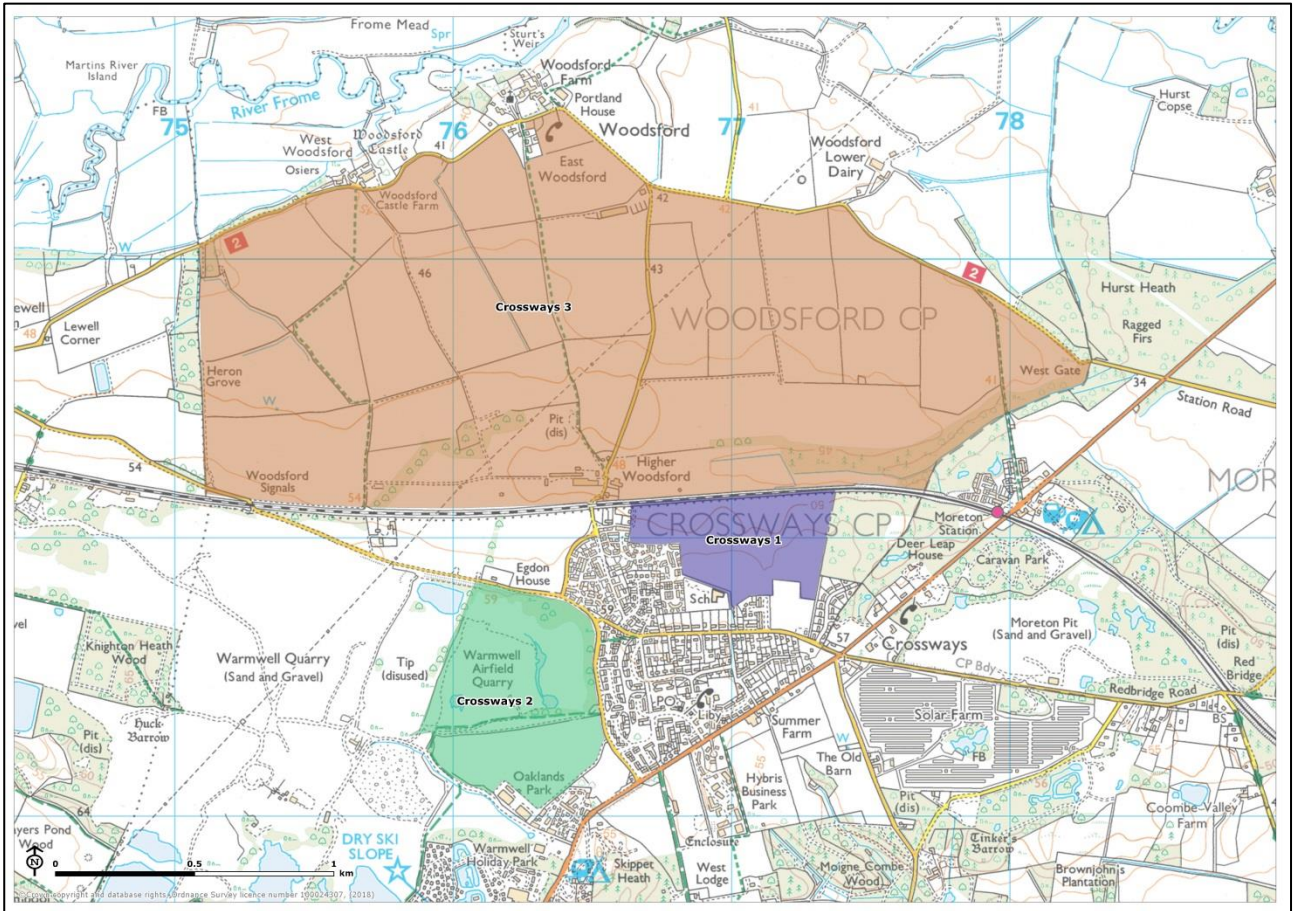
West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Strategic Landscape and Heritage Study

Stage 2 Assessment: Crossways

Prepared by LUC
July 2018



Crossways



Representative photographs of the settlement



Location and description

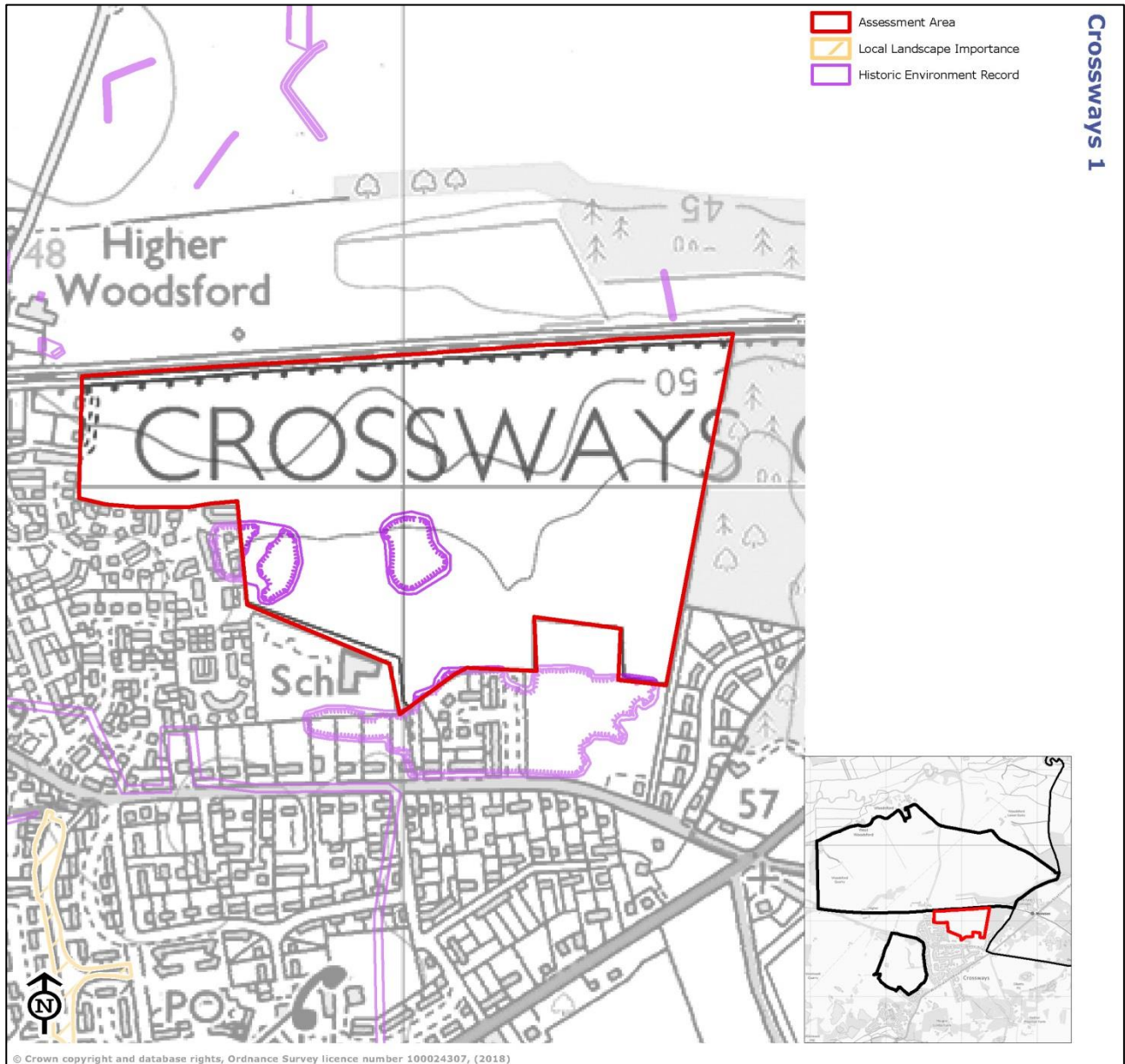
Crossways is found next to Purbeck District (located adjacent to the east). Prior to the 1930s, there was no coherent settlement and dwellings were limited to scattered farms and houses. In the 1930s an RAF airfield was constructed where the village is now located. The airfield was used extensively during World War Two. The village was expanded significantly in the 1970's due to a need for housing in the area.

Crossways is set amongst a number of sand and gravel quarries, areas of arable farmland and blocks of woodland.

Aerial context



Assessment area: Crossways 1



Representative photographs



Landscape sensitivity assessment

Landscape character context				
<p>This assessment area falls within the Crossways Gravel Plateau Landscape Character Area.</p> <p>It comprises farmland immediately fringing the north-eastern settlement edge, adjacent to the railway line.</p>				
Assessment criterion	Description	Sensitivity score		
Physical character (including topography and scale)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Slightly sloping (to the north) landform, between 50 and 55m AOD. Broad, large scale landscape, with the sense of scale emphasised by the low hedgerows. The area comprises on large field. 	L		
Natural character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The area comprises a large arable field, contained by fences and low hedgerows. Linear mature deciduous woodland buffers the railway line along the northern boundary. A large area of mixed woodland lies immediately adjacent to the east. 	L-M		
Historic landscape character (<i>please see separate heritage assessment for asset-based information</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The HLC indicates that the field pattern is of post-war (modern) origin. This area does not contain nor provide a setting to any designated heritage assets. 	L		
Form, density and setting of existing development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The area is unsettled and surrounded by open wooded countryside to the north and east. It lies immediately adjacent to the north-eastern edge of Crossways, comprising a recent housing estate which overlooks the landscape. 	M		
Views and visual character including skylines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The assessment area is not visually prominent in the wider landscape due to its low lying topography and absence of skyline features. Open character enables long views out of the area (particularly beyond the Frome Valley to the north), featuring ridgelines defined by plantations including Pullington Heath, Bryants Puddle Heath and Moreton Plantation. A pylon line appears on the skyline in north-westerly views. The landscape is directly overlooked by housing and a school. 	L-M		
Perceptual and experiential qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undeveloped, rural and strongly agricultural although strongly associated with the existing urban edge. Negatively impacted by intermittent noise from the adjacent railway line, contrasting with birdsong. 	M		
Overall assessment of landscape sensitivity				
L	L-M	M	M-H	H
<p>The low visual prominence of this intensively farmed landscape, absence of valued or distinctive landscape features, connection to the 20th century settlement edge and railway infrastructure lowers sensitivity. Its rural, undeveloped character and role as a backdrop to Crossways increases landscape sensitivity to low-moderate overall.</p>				

Heritage sensitivity assessment

Crossways Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) context

The historic character of the area is comprised of post-war enclosure, defined by straight and angular fields.

Description and significance of heritage assets present

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

There are no designated assets within the assessment area.

Non-designated assets within the assessment area include:

- Two medieval to post-medieval quarry pits [MDO31839 and MDO31837]

Low importance

Likely susceptibility to physical change as a result of development

One of the quarry pits would be highly susceptible to physical change as a result of truncation/ removal. The second quarry pit sits on the edge of the assessment area and has already been partially built over; as such, it is of lower susceptibility to change.

Likely susceptibility to setting change as a result of development

No designated assets with the potential to experience setting change have been identified.

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

L	L-M	M	M-H	H
Non-designated quarry pits will be susceptible to physical change, but in areas subject to extractive activity any potential earlier archaeological deposits will have been truncated/ removed. As such, the heritage sensitivity of the area is low.				

Summary of key sensitivities and guidance for sustainable development

Summary of key sensitivities

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

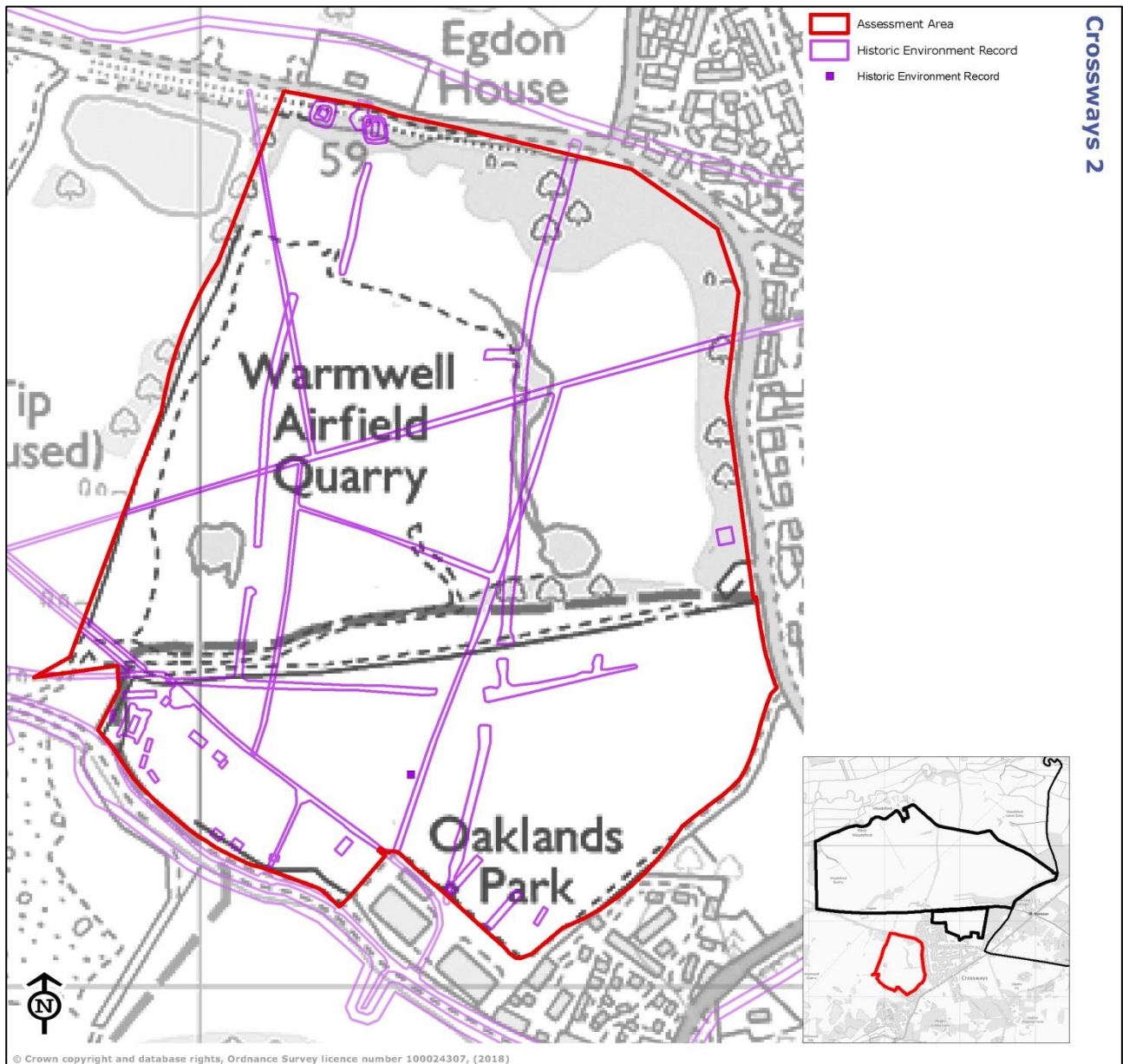
- The open landscape with visual connections to the surrounding countryside (including wooded ridgelines beyond the Frome Valley).
- Its role as a rural, agricultural setting to modern development and setting to the north-east of Crossways, opening out into the wider countryside.
- Low hedgerows and bands of woodland providing habitat and naturalistic interest in an intensively farmed landscape.

Guidance for sustainable development

Any new development should:

- Be closely integrated and linked to the existing modern housing estate to the south and south-west of the area, replicating the form, layout and vernacular architecture of this development (which comprises a mix of sympathetic local building styles, including the use of render, thatch and flint).
- Protect the open views to the more distant wooded ridgelines beyond the Frome Valley to the north and north-east.
- Utilise the screening effects of the surrounding topography, existing/new woodland and hedgerow/ tree planting using locally prevalent species to incorporate development into the landscape (and enhance habitat linkages).
- Preserve the role the landscape plays as a rural, agricultural edge and containment to Crossways.

Assessment area: Crossways 2



Representative photographs



Landscape sensitivity assessment

Landscape character context				
<p>This assessment area falls within the Crossways Gravel Plateau Landscape Character Area. It comprises the former Warmwell Airfield Quarry and agricultural land fringing the western edge of Crossways.</p>				
Assessment criterion	Description			Sensitivity score
Physical character (including topography and scale)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flat, large scale and open landscape at around 59m AOD. Over half is dominated by the former Warmwell Airfield Quarry; the southern part is a large field. 			L-M
Natural character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Northern half is the former Warmwell Airfield Quarry, now regenerating with wetlands, open water, broadleaved woodland, scrub and acid grassland. Southern half of the area is an open arable field, with hedgerows, scrub and trees around its periphery. 			M
Historic landscape character (<i>please see separate heritage assessment for asset-based information</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The HLC indicates that both the quarry and the arable field are modern (post-war) in origin. This area does not include nor provide a setting to any heritage assets. 			L
Form, density and setting of existing development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oaklands Park retirement village (bungalows) lies to the south, with some views into the assessment area. Derelict industrial buildings occupy the south-west corner of the landscape, screened from the adjacent track by tree cover. The east and north-eastern boundary is formed by a road, beyond which is housing. Mature, dense tree cover fringing the road limits intervisibility. 			M
Views and visual character including skylines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The area's flat topography and tree cover around its periphery limits its visibility in the wider area. There are no views into or out from the former quarry due to dense vegetation and lack of public access. It forms an open, agricultural backdrop to development in the south, with filtered views from housing in the east. Within the area, views to the surrounding open, flat landscape are afforded where tree cover allows, although the views are not particularly distinctive. 			L-M
Perceptual and experiential qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An undeveloped, rural landscape opening out to wider countryside. Naturalistic and 'hidden' qualities associated with the former quarry, enhanced by birdsong. 			M
Overall assessment of landscape sensitivity				
L	L-M	M	M-H	H
<p>The low visual prominence of this landscape (due to topography and vegetation screening), absence of heritage assets, modern origin of the intensively farmed fields and presence of adjacent 20th century development lowers sensitivity. However, the locally valued grassland, scrub, wetland and woodland habitats associated with the former quarry, role of the area as a rural edge to Crossways (forming a backdrop to views from development to the south) and relationship with the wider countryside increases landscape sensitivity to low-moderate overall.</p>				

Heritage sensitivity assessment

Crossways Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) context

The historic character of the area is comprised of post-war enclosure, defined by straight and angular fields, and modern industrial sand and gravel quarrying.

Description and significance of heritage assets present

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

There are no designated assets within the assessment area.

Non-designated assets within the assessment area include:

- Warmwell Military Airfield [MDO31842]
Low importance
- Findspot of a late Neolithic to Bronze Age flint scatter [MDO3495]
Negligible importance

Likely susceptibility to physical change as a result of development

- Most of RAF Warmwell is now a quarry and extractive activity will have removed any associated archaeological remains. If areas that have not been quarried survive they would be highly susceptible to physical change.
- The flint scatter will have been removed at the time of discovery and, as such, is not susceptible to physical change. However, there is the potential for associated buried archaeological remains to survive if the area has not been subject to extractive activity, as is suggested by review of Google historical aerial imagery and the Environment Agency Landfill data.

Likely susceptibility to setting change as a result of development

No designated assets with the potential to experience setting change have been identified.

There are two scheduled monuments in the wider area – Huck Barrow [1003219] to the west and an Earthwork in Bowley’s Plantation [1002772] to the SE. However, their setting is greatly changed from how it was originally and there is unlikely to be any intervisibility between the enclosure and the development due to intervening tree cover. There may be a visual intrusion on the barrow’s wider setting, but as the intervening area is a large working quarry the change would be negligible.

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

L	L-M	M	M-H	H
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In areas that have not been subject to extraction, e.g. the southern half of Crossways 2, there is the potential for non-designated assets to be highly susceptible to physical change. In areas subject to extractive activity any potential earlier archaeological deposits will have been truncated/ removed. The overall heritage sensitivity is therefore low.

Summary of key sensitivities and guidance for sustainable development

Summary of key sensitivities

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

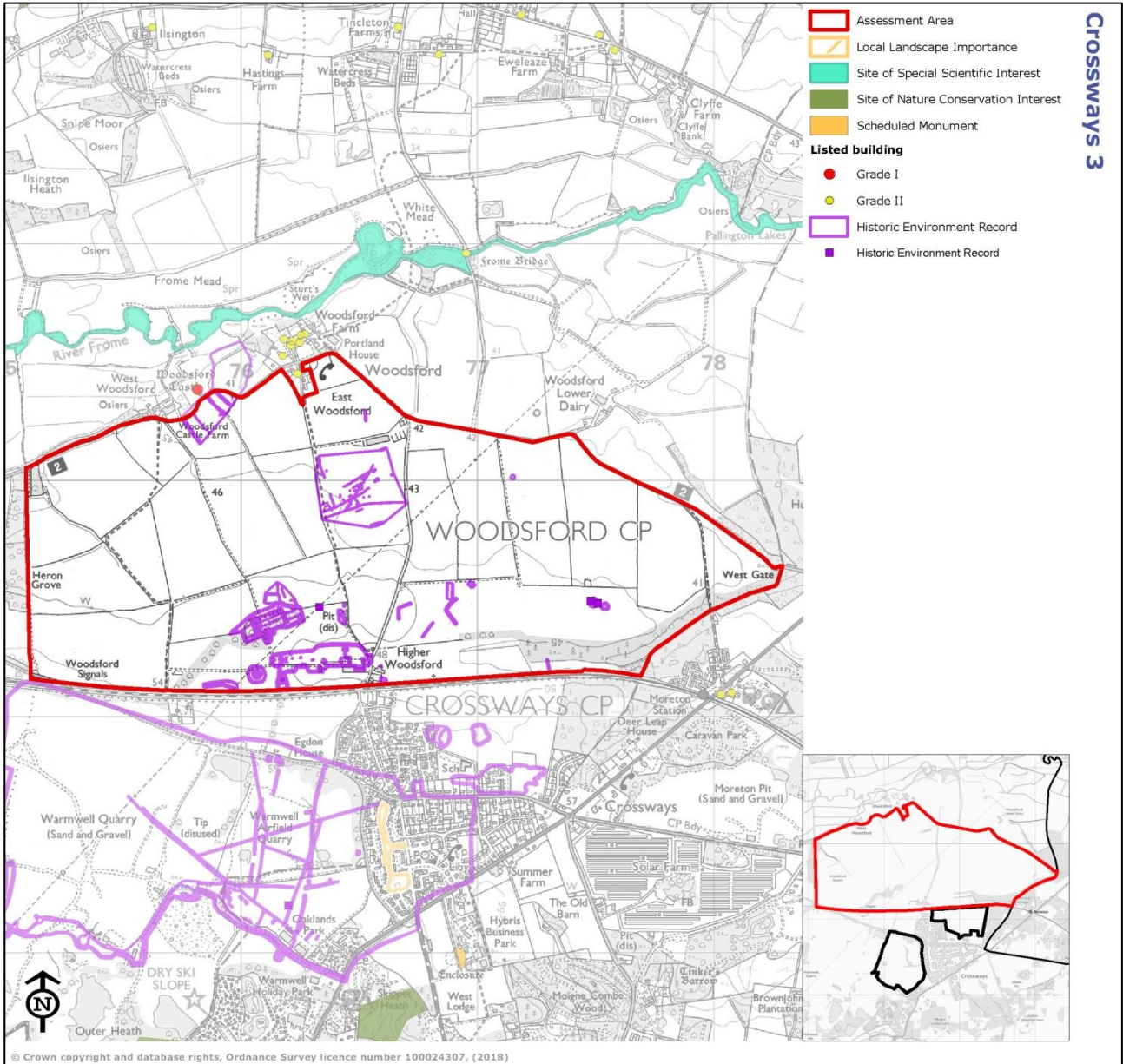
- The landscape's visual and character connections with the surrounding countryside and role as an immediate rural setting to the western edge of Crossways.
- Valued naturalistic habitats developing in the former quarry – wetlands, open water, grasslands, scrub and woodland.
- Its undeveloped character, overlooked by bungalow developments to the south and 20th century housing to the west (though visibility is limited by hedgerows and frequent trees along the area's boundaries).

Guidance for sustainable development

Any new development should:

- Not be located within the former quarry site, which is now regenerating into a valued mosaic of habitats – important in the context of the surrounding intensively farmed landscape.
- Utilise the screening effects of existing trees, woodland and hedgerows – seeking to enhance habitat coverage and linkages in association with any new development (tree/hedgerow planting should utilise locally prevalent species).
- Avoid the most open, central parts of the assessment area away from existing development to the south and east. Site any new development close to the eastern and southern boundaries to link to existing housing, using consistent building styles/materials to the locality (as demonstrated in the recent housing development adjacent to Crossways 1).
- Protect the area's role as a rural edge to western Crossways and the containment it provides to the settlement.

Assessment area: Crossways 3



Representative photographs



Landscape sensitivity assessment

Landscape character context				
<p>This large assessment area falls within the Crossways Gravel Plateau and Frome and Piddle Valley Pasture Landscape Character Areas. It includes the active Woodsford Quarry which occupies much of the landscape in the west, surrounded by agricultural fields located between the northern edge of Crossways and the village of East Woodsford.</p>				
Assessment criterion	Description			Sensitivity score
Physical character (including topography and scale)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very gently undulating and open topography, ranging between 41m and 54m AOD. Land slopes up to the south of the area, with a wooded ridgeline defining the south-eastern edge. Large fields and sparse hedgerows emphasis a large-scale landscape, with occasional trees and woodland providing small-scale features. 			M
Natural character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Woodsford Quarry dominates the west of the area, although this is well screened from view due to topography. Elsewhere land use is intensive arable cultivation. There are strips of deciduous/mixed woodland and a strong hedgerow network amongst the farmland. 			L-M
Historic landscape character (<i>please see separate heritage assessment for asset-based information</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A regular pattern of post-medieval and modern fields. The Grade I Listed Woodsford Castle lies below the northern boundary of the area. A number of Grade II Listed Buildings are clustered within the small village of East Woodsford, immediately adjacent to the north of the landscape. 			L-M
Form, density and setting of existing development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unsettled, but with a number of farms, large modern farm buildings and quarry-related buildings. The landscape is on the immediate doorstep of East Woodsford, whose buildings are nestled within trees and woodland. The northern edge of Crossways is adjacent to the south, also well screened by trees. 			M
Views and visual character including skylines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low skylines often marked by trees, along with a prominent pylon line crossing through the centre of the landscape. Views in and out of the area are often limited by hedgerow/tree cover and bands of woodland along eastern and western boundaries. Elevated land at Higher Woodsford affords open views across the landscape, including to the wooded ridgeline behind the Frome Valley to the north (e.g. Puddletown Forest). Some houses in northern Crossways command expansive views across the landscape. 			L-M
Perceptual and experiential qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A strongly agricultural, rural landscape. While a large quarry occupies a significant portion of the area, its visual and audial effects tend to be minimised by landform and screening. The railway line to the south also introduces intermittent sound and movement into the landscape. 			M
Overall assessment of landscape sensitivity				
L	L-M	M	M-H	H
<p>The often low visual prominence of this landscape, influence of active quarrying, modern origin of the intensively farmed fields and presence of nearby housing and rail infrastructure lowers sensitivity.</p>				

However, the proximity of Listed Buildings at Woodsford Castle and the village of East Woodsford, naturalistic qualities provided by bands of woodland and hedgerows, views from housing in northern Crossways, glimpses of Puddletown Forest from elevated land in the south and role as a rural edge to Crossways (open to countryside on all sides) increases landscape sensitivity to **moderate** overall.

Heritage sensitivity assessment

Crossways Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) context

The historic character of the area is comprised of post-war enclosure, defined by straight and angular fields.

Description and significance of heritage assets present

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

There are no designated assets within the assessment area.

There are a total of 13 known non-designated assets within the assessment area, including:

- Three Bronze Age bowl barrows [MDO3435; MDO3436; and MDO38030]

Medium importance

- Cropmarks interpreted as prehistoric, Roman, medieval and post-medieval field boundaries, trackways/holloways and extractive pits [MDO30669; MDO32039; MDO32040; MDO30666; MDO32038, MDO32041; MDO37175 and MDO32042]

Low importance

- Modern remains associated with RAF Warmwell [MDO31843; MDO31844; and MDO31845].

Low importance

Likely susceptibility to physical change as a result of development

All of the non-designated assets would be highly susceptible to physical change as a result of development.

Likely susceptibility to setting change as a result of development

Designated assets with the potential to experience setting change include:

- Woodsford Castle Grade I Listed Building [1155314]

High Importance

- Woodsford Castle comprises one side of a 14th century quadrangular castle. The Castle would be highly susceptible to setting change as development would result in a visual intrusion which altered its wider rural landscape setting. The main views appear to be from the north of the building towards the River Frome, with those to the west and south being restricted by tree cover.

- Old School House Grade II Listed Building [1323648]

High Importance

- Woodsford House Grade II Listed Building [1119848]

High Importance

- Glebe Cottage Grade II Listed Building [115306]

High Importance

- Church of St John the Baptist Grade II Listed Building [1155283]

High Importance

- Unidentified Monument in the Churchyard Grade II Listed Building [1119847]

High Importance

- Woodsford House Grade II Listed Building [1303391]

High Importance

- Coach house and stable immediately east of Woodsford Manor Grade II Listed Building [1155353]

High Importance

- Barn 20m east of Woodsford Manor Grade II Listed Building [1323649]

High Importance

- This group of designated assets are clustered together on the northern edge of the development area. Their setting is somewhat enclosed with views to and from the wider rural landscape curtailed by dense vegetation and tree cover

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

L	L-M	M	M-H	H
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Non-designated assets within the development area are highly susceptible to physical change as a result of development. While the known assets suggest that the area has a good potential for further unknown archaeological remains, quarrying activity in the west of the area is likely to have compromised this resource.

There is a potential for setting impacts to a number of designated assets. Woodsford Castle is a particular concern. While it and the group of Grade II Listed Buildings in Woodsford are currently fairly well screened from the assessment area by vegetation, this effect would far less marked in the winter months – and is in any case transient and could readily be affected by development in its own right. Development up to the northern edge of the assessment area could readily result in harmful setting change to a number of assets. There is, however, good potential for these effects to be avoided / minimised by sensitive masterplanning and design – particularly given the size of the area.

Summary of key sensitivities and guidance for sustainable development

Summary of key sensitivities

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

- The landscape's visual and character connections with the surrounding countryside and role as an immediate rural setting to the northern Crossways and the historic village of East Woodsford.
- The proximity of the Grade I Listed Woodsford Castle and Listed Buildings within the historic village of East Woodsford.
- Largely undeveloped skylines marked by trees and woodland.
- Areas of relative tranquillity despite the presence of quarrying activity and the railway line.

Guidance for sustainable development

Any new development should:

- Take advantage of the low-lying, flat topography of much of the assessment area, avoiding the more sloping, higher land in the south (including the wooded south-easterly ridgeline) which forms a natural edge to the existing settlement limits and locally important skyline.
- Utilise the screening effects of existing trees, woodland and hedgerows – seeking to enhance habitat coverage and linkages in association with any new development (tree/hedgerow planting should utilise locally prevalent species).
- Use consistent building styles/materials to the locality (as demonstrated in the recent housing development adjacent to Crossways 1).
- Protect the setting of the Grade I Listed Woodsford Castle, just beyond the northern edge of the assessment area, along with Grade II Listed Buildings within East Woodsford village – ideally by avoiding development within the northern portion of the assessment area.
- Conserve open rural views from housing in northern Crossways, across the landscape to the wooded ridgelines beyond the Frome Valley (including Puddletown Forest).
- Protect the tranquil qualities of the landscape away from the quarry and railway line.

In combination effects on heritage assets

Significant in-combination effects are judged to be unlikely.