

The background of the entire page is a landscape photograph. It shows a wide, green valley with a dirt path leading from the foreground into the distance. The sky is overcast and grey. In the far distance, a town or village is visible. The overall tone is natural and scenic.

LUC

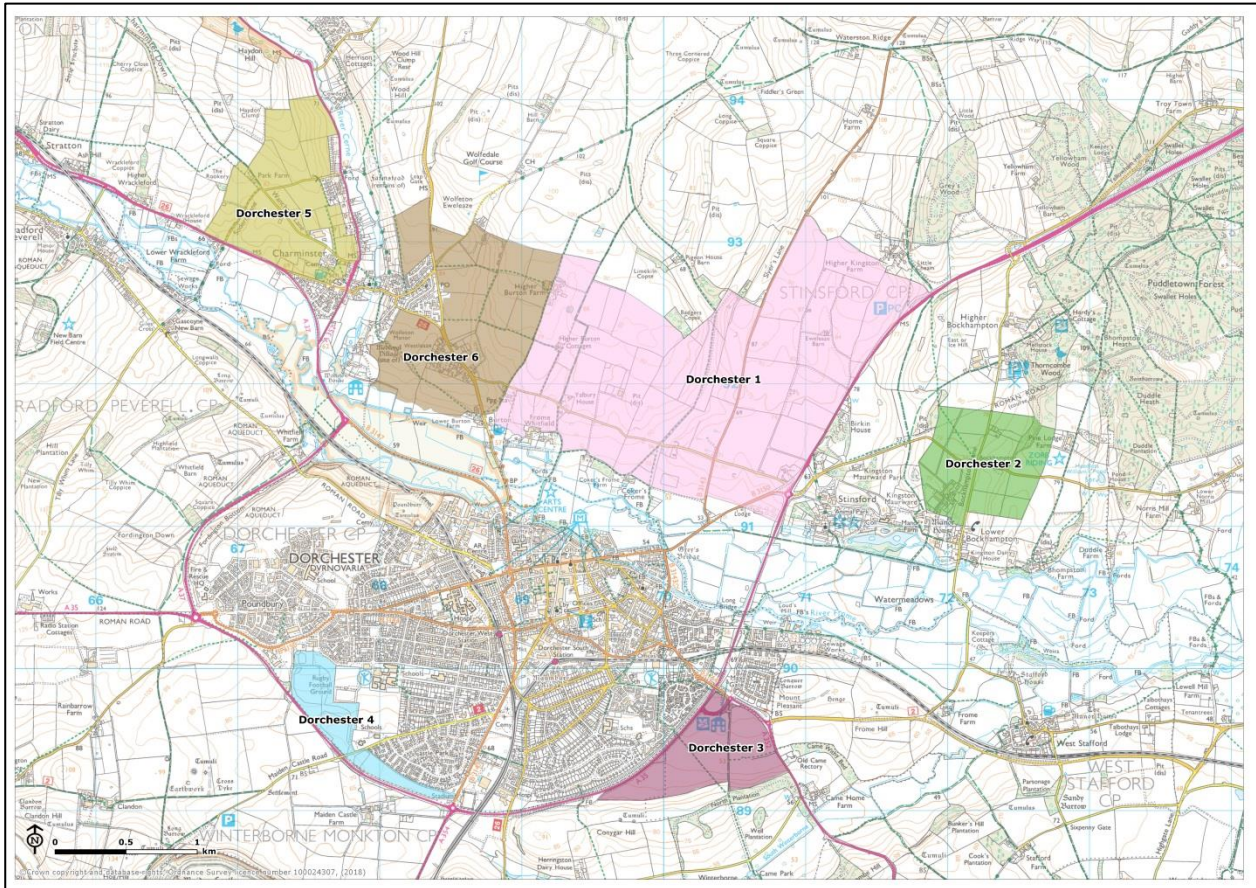
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West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Strategic Landscape and Heritage Study

Stage 2 Assessment: Dorchester

Prepared by LUC
July 2018

Dorchester



Representative photographs of the settlement



South-west Dorchester and Poundbury as viewed from Maiden Castle



The northern edge of Dorchester with churches and the Poundbury development visible on the skyline

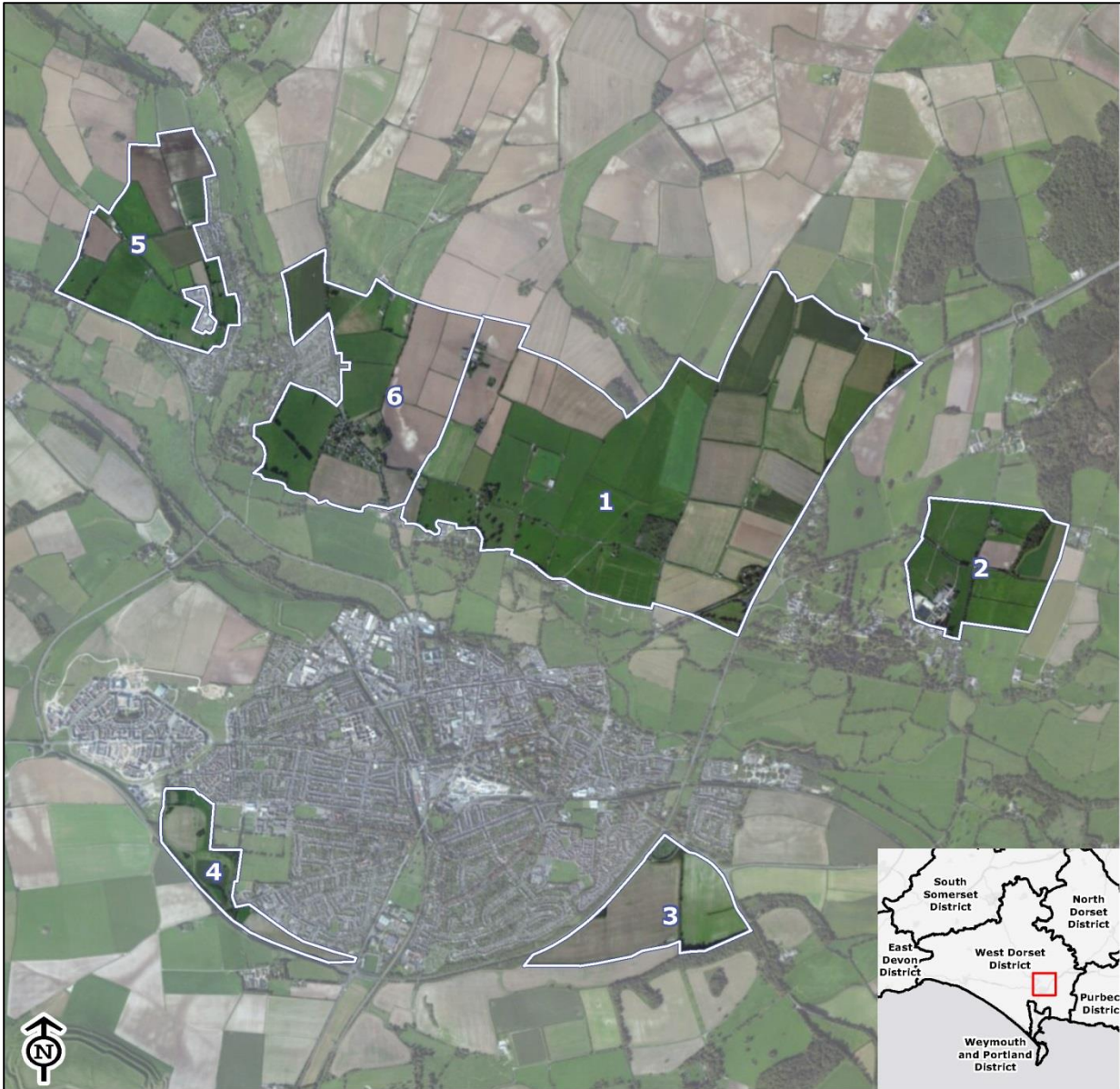
Location and description

Dorchester is a historic market town located adjacent to the River Frome, approximately 8 miles from the coast. Poundbury forms an extension to the west of the town. The village of Charminster is located one mile to the north of Dorchester.

The area has a long history of occupation dating back to the Neolithic and Bronze Ages as evidenced by the internationally significant remains in the surrounding area, including the remains of a Neolithic causewayed enclosure underlying the Iron Age hillfort of Maiden Castle, and the Mount Pleasant ritual and funerary complex. With its origins in the Roman period, Dorchester has been the county town of Dorset since 1305. The historic core of the town is located on an area of higher ground above the River Frome. The settlement is nestled into the Frome river valley, surrounded by chalk valley slopes and the Ridgeway to the south, which create a picturesque rural backdrop to the town.

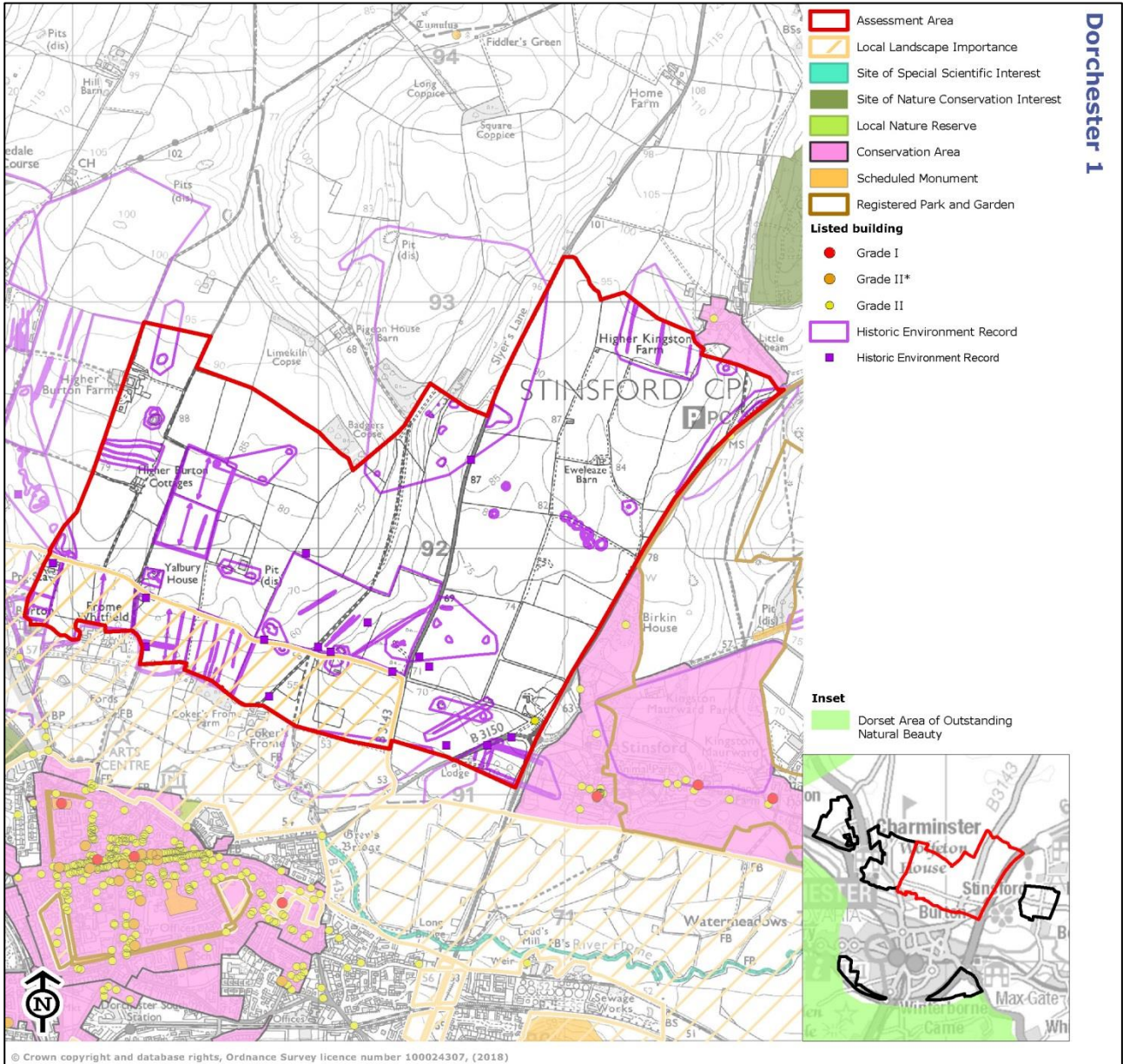
Aerial context

DORCHESTER



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Assessment area: Dorchester 1



Representative photographs



Landscape sensitivity assessment

Landscape character context				
<p>This assessment area falls within the Cerne and Piddle Valleys and Chalk Downland Landscape Character Areas, with lower slopes designated for their local landscape importance. It comprises medium-scale fields of mixed farmland sloping up from the River Frome north of Dorchester. In the west, the area is bound by a footpath leading to Higher Burton Farm, whilst the A35 forms the eastern boundary.</p>				
Assessment criterion	Description			Sensitivity score
Physical character (including topography and scale)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sloping land rising to the north of the River Frome, reaching a maximum of 90 metres AOD. The land also slopes up from the A35 (which marks the area's eastern boundary). There is a dry valley running north/south through the centre of the area. Medium-scale fields, although the sloping topography, well-trimmed hedges and general lack of tree/woodland creates an open character. 			M-H
Natural character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hedgerows with trees divide the fields, although these have been replaced by post and wire fencing in some places. Close to Frome Whitfield, there are a number of mature in-field trees. Land use comprises mixed improved pasture and arable farmland. There is a small area of deciduous woodland and scrub located near the junction of the B3143 and the minor rural lane in the south of the area. 			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 enclosures in this area are planned and regular post-medieval fields. An estate character (grazed wood pasture) is associated with the fields near Frome Whitfield. Two milestones along the A35 are Grade II listed. The area is adjacent to Stinsford Conservation Area (east) and Higher Kingston Conservation Area (north). It is also intervisible with Dorchester Conservation Area, with the tower of St Peter's Church (Grade I) and spire of All Saint's Church (Grade II*) forming important landmarks, and longer views to the Hardy Monument and Maiden Castle in the distance. 			M-H
Form, density and setting of existing development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unsettled apart from scattered farms and dwellings. The area is separated from the existing urban edge of Dorchester by the River Frome and its naturalistic floodplain, although visual connections between this landscape and the town (including the Conservation Area and historic buildings on the skyline) are strong. Its sloping topography and highly rural character provides natural containment and an important setting to Dorchester. 			H
Views and visual character including skylines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An open landscape, with expansive, undeveloped skylines, although some screening is provided by thick hedges. Open views south characterised by the historic core of Dorchester, Poundbury and the AONB-designated hills and ridges beyond. These are afforded from the lower Frome valley slopes and higher ground in the north. 			M-H
Perceptual and experiential qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unsettled and rural – settlement is limited to isolated farms and dwellings. The landscape can generally be described as tranquil, although traffic on adjacent busy roads including the A35, and rural roads within, can detract from this quality. 			M
Overall assessment of landscape sensitivity				
L	L-M	M	M-H	H
<p>The prominent sloping landform, sense of openness and unsettled character, strong intervisibility with Dorchester (with skylines marked by historic buildings within its Conservation Area), views to the AONB beyond the town, and role as a natural containment and rural setting to the town result in an overall moderate-high landscape sensitivity. Sensitivity is reduced slightly (from the 'high' rating) by the lack of historic field patterns and limited naturalistic features within the landscape itself.</p>				

Heritage sensitivity assessment

Dorset Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) context

The historic character of the area is largely created by the post-medieval enclosure landscape. Much of the southern portion of the area is characterised by planned enclosures, defined by extant hedgerows creating a relatively regular, rhythmic landscape structure.

Description and significance of heritage assets present

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

Designated assets within the assessment area:

- Grade II-Listed milestone [NHLE: 1154863]
High importance
- Dorchester Conservation Area
High importance
- Stinsford Conservation Area
High importance

Non-designated assets within the assessment area:

- Stinsford barrow group; putative Bronze Age linear cemetery with outliers [MDO20434-8; MDO205424]
Medium-High importance
- Cropmark of possible prehistoric enclosure [MDO20523]
Uncertain importance
- Field boundaries; cropmark medieval strip field boundaries [MDO20984]
Low importance
- Cropmark field system with ridge and furrow [various]
Low importance
- Strip lynchets [MDO2487]
Low importance
- Drainage system; water meadow [MDO20527]: very small portion of system within study area
Low importance
- Chalk pits [various]
Negligible importance
- Field boundaries; medieval/post-medieval cropmark field boundaries [MDO20467]
Low importance
- Frome Whitfield House and designed landscape [unrecorded]
Low importance
Country House with partially intact home farm complex, small designed landscape and lodge houses

Likely susceptibility to physical change as a result of development

Being within the corridor of a minor road, bypassed by a roundabout linking the A35, B3150 and the unnumbered road bisecting Kingston Maurward Park to the east, physical change to the Listed milestone is unlikely.

Development in the south-western portion of the assessment area would potentially result in the loss of the northern part of the Frome Whitfield House designed landscape.

The non-designated archaeological assets within the assessment area are all highly susceptible to physical change, being principally sub-surface remains in the form of features cut into the subsoil.

While the majority of features are of low significance and relate to post-medieval land use, the Stinsford barrow group should be treated with caution. In-depth assessment of the significance of these assets, and their potential relationship to contemporary assets in the wider landscape, is likely to be required. Relatively recent aerial photographs (2005; 2002) indicate that the fields within which the assets lie have been used for outdoor pig husbandry. Natural behaviour of free-range pigs can give rise to extensive

damage to sub-surface archaeological remains through digging/rooting for edible material and the creation of wallows. (In addition to the potential for damage from temporary fencing and structures). It is therefore recommended that pre-consent geophysical and field evaluation work is required to ensure that the extent and preservation of the remains is properly understood and can be taken into account in any planning decisions.

Likely susceptibility to setting change as a result of development

Designated assets with the potential to experience setting change:

Higher Kingston

- Kingston House (Grade II Listed) [NHLE: 1323622]
- Higher Kingston Conservation Area

Stinsford

- Grade II* Registered Park and Garden, Kingston Maurward (northern extent, southern portion screened by intervening development and topography)
 - Steeply rising ground of East or Ice Hill (as named on 1:25,000 OS map) within RPG increases susceptibility to visual intrusion from new development – although the extent to which this would give rise to effects to the asset's significance is arguable. The portion of the RPG with the potential to experience setting change is well outside the core area of the designed landscape and, although views across open agricultural land make a contribution to aesthetic and historical value by placing the designed landscape in its wider 18th/19th century landscape context, it is somewhat peripheral to the main elements of RPG's significance, suggesting a lower order of effect is likely.
- Birkin House (Grade II Listed) [NHLE: 1323651]
 - Victorian country house, built 1874 in the classical style. Small park surrounding shown as separate from Kingston Maurward designed landscape on historical mapping
 - Asset is heavily screened from the assessment area, but development in that area would result in loss of rural context and some measure of change to its wider setting.
- Stinsford Farm house (Grade II-Listed) [NHLE: 1119857]
- Stinsford Conservation Area
 - As for Kingston Maurward park, development in the assessment area could give rise to setting change, with a measure of visual intrusion from views from higher ground (e.g. from the public rights of way through the northern portion of Kingston Maurward park). Change to wider setting of Birkin House (as above) would also change the setting of that portion of the Conservation Area.
- Milestone (Grade II-Listed) [NHLE: 1154863]

The extensive group of Listed Buildings around the Church of St. Michael and Stinsford House, Kingston Maurward House and manor do not appear to be intervisible with the area due to intervening topography, reducing their susceptibility to setting change.

Dorchester

- Dorchester Conservation Area
 - Views of the historic core of Dorchester from the rising ground within the assessment area provide an important opportunity to appreciate the settlement in its landscape setting. The CA, and urban core's, location on a relatively prominent area of higher ground between the floodplain of the River Frome and the downland to the south, visible – along with the top of Maiden Castle and the Hardy Monument on Brack Down – behind the town skyline, with Fordington Down rising to the southwest. These relationships are important in terms of understanding the strategic location of the Roman fort and town, and the functional relationships between the town and the route of the aqueduct from Fordington Down.
 - The panoramic view of the town across the foreground of the water meadows lining the floodplain of the River Frome, with Maiden Castle, the downs and Hardy Monument in the background, help to place Dorchester within its quintessentially 'Wessex' setting. To the east, the spire of Stinsford Church (the 'Mellstock Church' of Hardy's novels) is clearly visible, enabling the important associations of the real landscape and places with Hardy's fictionalised literary landscapes.
- Poundbury Camp, Scheduled Monument (NHLE: 1013337)
 - The Poundbury Camp late Neolithic and Bronze Age settlement, and Iron Age multivallate hillfort is a monument of national importance, providing a detailed understanding of more than 4,000 years of

human activity and occupation.

Its location on a major chalk bluff overlooking the Frome floodplain is, despite lacking the height and exposure – or physical size – of other major Dorset hillforts, nevertheless highly strategic and easily appreciable in the contemporary landscape. The ability to understand the asset in its landscape context, both in terms of dominating its rural hinterland (i.e. the assessment area) and its relationship to Roman Durnovaria, makes an important contribution to its significance. These relationships can currently be appreciated from within the asset itself in view out across the assessment area, and back towards the asset from the public roads and rights of way crossing the assessment area. The setting of the asset is already heavily pressurised by the immediately adjacent Poundbury developments – which interrupt much of the intervisibility between the asset and Maiden Castle and will erase virtually all of the asset’s rural setting in the circuit of views from south through to west (views to the south and east being dominated by Dorchester). This means that the remaining rural setting is particularly sensitive and inappropriately positioned or scaled development could result in extensive harm to this element of setting.

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

Frome Whitfield

- Frome Whitfield House, Frome Whitfield designed landscape and North Lodge
Development within the southern part of the assessment area would remove the northern part of this small designed landscape, resulting in harm to the designed landscape itself and the setting of Frome Whitfield House and lodge due to the removal of functionally and historically connected land, in addition to visual intrusion and the loss of rural setting that contributes to the understanding of the assets as being part of an estate landscape.

Dorchester

- The extensive system of water meadows lining the Frome’s floodplain can be considered to be heritage assets of at least local importance. While they make an important contribution to the setting of Dorchester, their setting relates both to the town, but also most strongly to the rural area to the north – and to the farms that created them. Development in the assessment area would not threaten them physically, but could potentially degrade or eliminate this functional and historical relationship.

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

L	L-M	M	M-H	H
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Designated assets, most notably Dorchester Conservation Area and Poundbury Camp SM, and also Kingston Maurward RPG and Stinsford Conservation Area, are sensitive to setting change. The extent of potential effects and the number of important assets likely to be affected – along with the relative lack of opportunity to avoid setting change – results in a **high** degree of sensitivity.

Potential loss of part of the Frome Whitfield designed landscape could result in substantial harm to a locally important, non-designated asset.

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 landform rising up from the Frome Valley to form a natural, undeveloped setting to northern Dorchester.
- The mature hedgerow and in-field trees forming important landscape elements within the farmland (with specimen trees evoking an estate character around Frome Whitfield).
- The setting the landscape provides to Dorchester Conservation Area, with landmark historic buildings featuring in views from the area (including the Grade I St Peter's Church and Grade II* All Saints Church).
- Value of views from the assessment area in understanding and appreciating the history and development of Dorchester – from prehistoric origins of Poundbury Camp, and its relationships with assets in the wider landscape, through the co-location of the Roman fort and town, to the Hardy connections between Stinford, Dorchester itself and the Hardy Monument in longer distance views.
- The long views which include heritage assets within the surrounding countryside, including Maiden Castle, the Hardy Monument and St. Michael's Church, Stinford, and the AONB-designated hills and ridges south of Dorchester.
- The contribution of the area to the setting of designated heritage assets – providing an intact 18th-19th century rural hinterland to Birkin House, Kingston Maurward Registered Park and Garden and the Dorchester, Higher Kingston and Stinford Conservation Areas.
- The assessment area (along with Dorchester 6) represents the surviving extent of Poundbury Camp's (SM) rural setting, aiding understanding of the asset's location in the landscape and its relationship to contemporaneous and later monuments.
- In-situ Bronze Age archaeological assets to the south of Eweleaze Barn of potentially regional or greater importance.
- The lack of development within the landscape, with settlement limited to occasional farms and dwellings.
- Strong rural character with important relative levels of tranquillity away from busy roads.
- The recognised landscape value of the lower slopes above the Frome, as reflected in its designation as part of a wider area of Local Landscape Importance.

Guidance for sustainable development

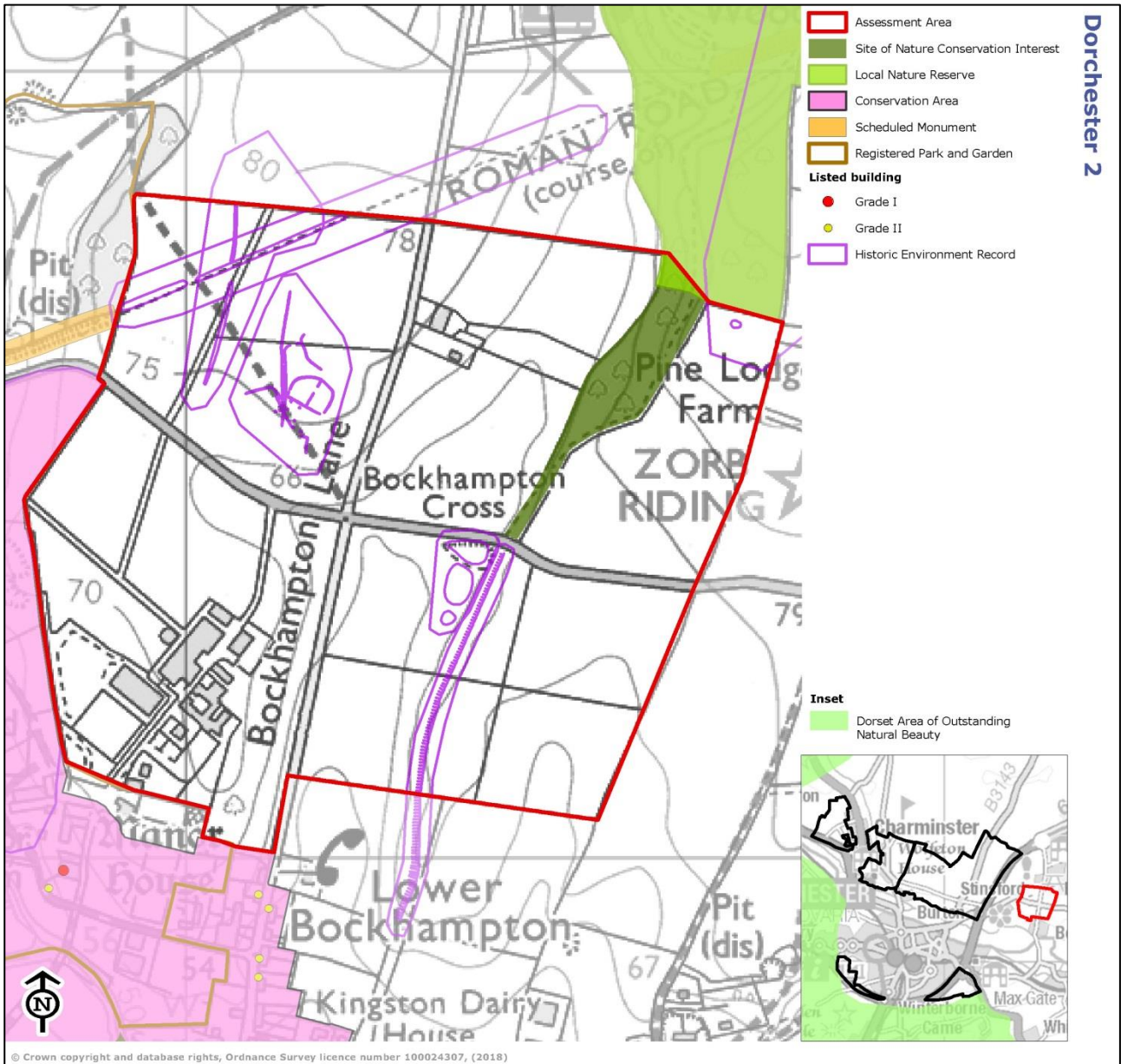
Any new development should:

- Protect the rural, agricultural setting the area provides to northern Dorchester – rising up from the Frome Valley to create natural containment of the town.
- Be informed by a comprehensive heritage impact assessment, which provides an appropriate understanding of the significance of affected heritage assets, including the contribution of setting to that significance, and the likely effects of development. The outcomes of this assessment should be reflected in the design process, and inform an appropriate mitigation strategy.
- Avoid siting development on the more open, visible slopes, including those rising up from the Frome Valley (designated as part of a wider area of Local Landscape Importance), and elevated land in the north of the assessment area.
- Utilise areas of rolling topography and dips in the landform to help screen limited new development within the landscape but avoid locations with channelled views to Dorchester.
- Retain existing natural features including hedgerows and mature trees, which contribute to the structure of the landscape and provide an important habitat network within agricultural land.
- Consider the potential for development to fit within existing landscape structure, which could be enhanced to reduce the extent and severity of setting change to heritage assets.
- Take advantage of the screening effects of existing hedgerows, protecting existing features and enhancing ecological connections within and around any new development (through new

hedgerow and tree planting using locally prevalent, climate resilient species).

- Conserve the setting and integrity of nearby valued heritage assets, including Kingston Maurward Registered Park and Garden, Poundbury Camp and Stinsford Conservation Area.
- Preserve the long views from this landscape, across Dorchester (including its Conservation Area with landmark Grade I and II* listed church towers marking the skyline) to the AONB-designated hills and ridges beyond.
- Respect and seek to conserve surrounding rural character and high levels of tranquillity in the siting and design of any new development.

Assessment area: Dorchester 2



Representative photographs



Landscape sensitivity assessment

Landscape character context				
This assessment area falls within the Cerne and Piddle Valleys and Chalk Downland and Puddletown Forest and Clyffe House Landscape Character Areas. It comprises undulating land to the north of Lower Bockhampton and to the east of Kingston Maurward and Stinsford.				
Assessment criterion	Description			Sensitivity score
Physical character (including topography and scale)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undulating land to the north of the Frome river valley, lying mostly between 60 metres and 80 metres AOD. Fields are generally small-medium scale and vegetation provides a sense of enclosure, although some parts are more open due to low-cut hedgerows defining intensively farmed fields. 			M
Natural character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avenues of mature trees as a legacy of the adjacent parkland estate are located along roads. Fields divided by low-cut hedgerows. In the north-east of the assessment area, Thorncombe Wood is an area of semi-natural ancient woodland, designated as a SNCI. 			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 fields within this area are a mixture of post-medieval and modern enclosures. The landscape is strongly associated with the adjacent Grade II* Registered Parkland of Kingston Maurward. It is adjacent to and provides an immediate setting to Stinsford Conservation Area, including part of Lower Bockhampton village (with a number of Grade II Listed Buildings). The course of a Roman Road crosses through the north-western corner (some lengths outside the area are designated as Scheduled Monuments). 			M-H
Form, density and setting of existing development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sparsely settled with occasional farm buildings – there is a large, modern farm complex in the south-west of the area. The small historic village of Lower Bockhampton lies adjacent to the south, an estate feel evidenced by a tree avenue bordering the road in/out of the village to the north. 			M-H
Views and visual character including skylines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This landscape is generally not prominent within the wider area, although some of the more steeply sloping areas are locally prominent. Views are generally enclosed by topography and vegetation, although there are occasional glimpses of the wider landscape including the distant hills/ridges of the Dorset AONB. Skylines are mostly undeveloped, and often characterised by mature trees punctuating the skyline. 			M
Perceptual and experiential qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generally rural and tranquil, due to the limited modern development within the area and lack of intrusive features. A sense of being far removed from the urban environment can be experienced, despite the relative proximity of Dorchester. 			M-H
Overall assessment of landscape sensitivity				
L	L-M	M	M-H	H
Areas of open character, presence of locally valued ancient woodland linking to a strong hedgerow network, character influence of the adjacent Grade II* Kingston Maurward Registered Park & Garden, role as the rural setting to Lower Bockhampton Conservation Area and unsettled, tranquil character result in an overall moderate-high landscape sensitivity. Sensitivity is reduced slightly (from the 'high' rating) by areas of visual containment and intensively farmed, modern fields.				

Heritage sensitivity assessment

Dorset Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) context

The assessment area is composed partly of planned enclosures of likely 18th-19th century date associated with the Kingston Maurward estate and Pine Lodge Farm. The western portion of the area is formed of post-medieval piecemeal enclosures, with a less regular character.

Description and significance of heritage assets present

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

Designated assets within the assessment area:

- Scheduled Roman Road (very small part) [NHLE: 1002691]

High importance

Non-designated assets within the assessment area:

- Kingston Maurward Park: World War Two camp (very small part) [MDO20540]
Low importance
- Thorncombe Farm, prehistoric settlement [MDO20549]
Low-medium importance
- Thorncombe Farm, Roman Road [MDO20550]
Medium importance
- Thorncombe Farm, field boundaries [MDO20548, MDO20553, MDO20548]
Low importance
- Bockhampton Cross, chalk pits [MDO20551]
Low importance

Likely susceptibility to physical change as a result of development

All assets identified within the area relate to buried archaeology, and should therefore be assumed to be of high susceptibility to physical change. With the exception of the very small Scheduled section of Roman road, it is not anticipated that archaeological assets are of a level of significance to comprise an absolute constraint on development.

Development within the assessment area could, however, result in the harm to or loss of a number of assets and would therefore require extensive archaeological investigation.

Likely susceptibility to setting change as a result of development

Designated assets with the potential to experience setting change:

Stinsford

- Grade II* Registered Park and Garden, Kingston Maurward (land parcel abuts eastern boundary of RPG)
 - Setting already somewhat compromised by industrial-scale agricultural buildings / agricultural college directly adjacent to RPG boundary
 - Assessment area contributes to the wider setting of the RPG, providing agricultural context for the estate core – however, relationships are somewhat damaged by agricultural college infrastructure
- Stinsford Conservation Area
 - As above.
 - Also encompasses the village of Lower Bockhampton, the north end of which is adjacent to the assessment area. Development up to this boundary could be visually dominant due to steeply-sloping topography from west to east.
 - Regularly-spaced trees lining Bockhampton Lane are a valuable element of historic landscape character

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

L	L-M	M	M-H	H
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Designated assets, most notably Kingston Maurward RPG and Stinsford Conservation Area, are sensitive to setting change – sensitivity only reduced from high to **moderate-high** as the area itself makes an important, but not critical, contribution to the assets’ significance.

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:

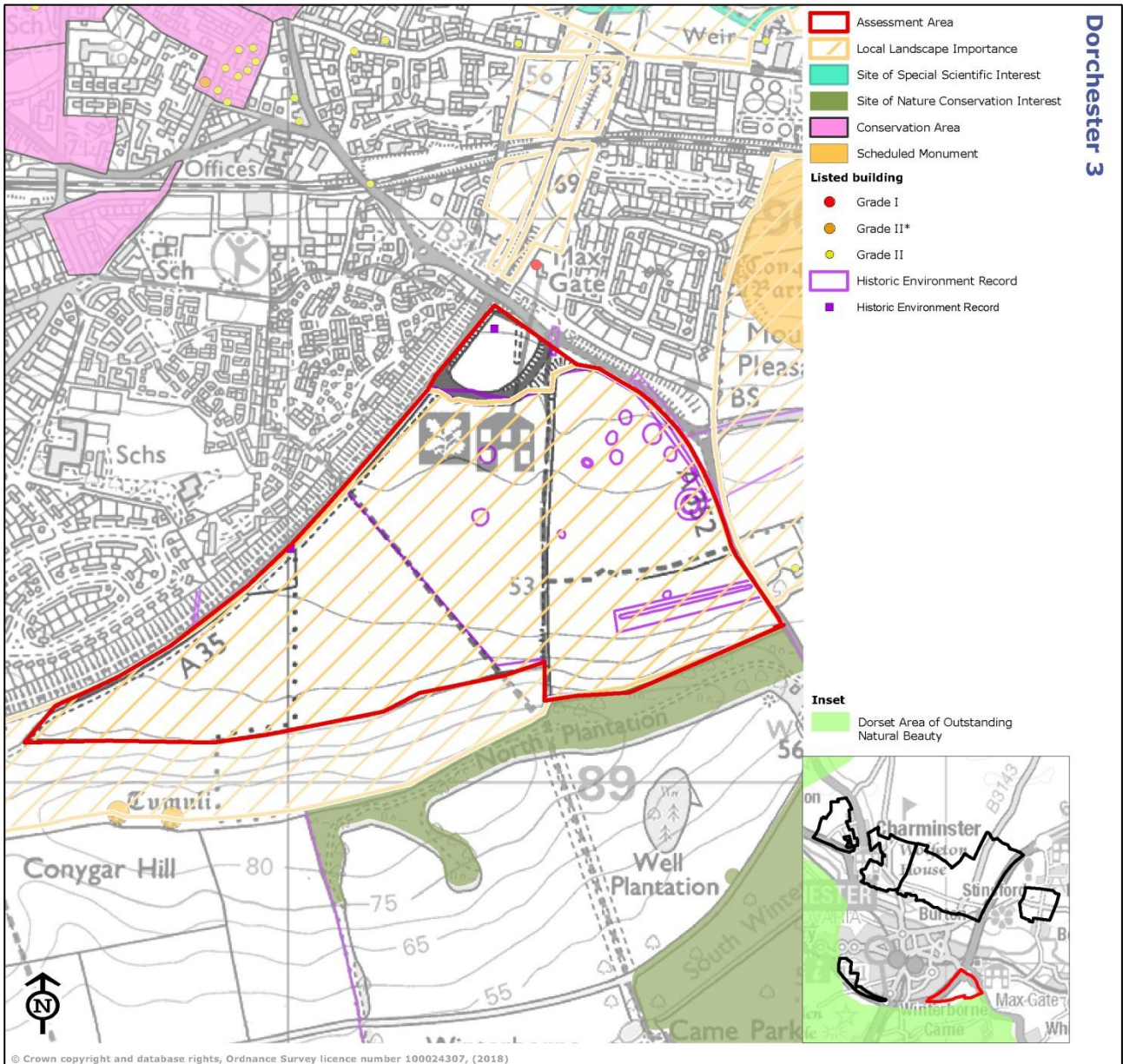
- Undeveloped skylines, often marked by mature trees/woodland.
- Frequent areas of woodland (including ancient woodland at Thorncombe Wood SNCI), hedgerow and in-field trees and avenues, which contribute to the scenic character of the landscape.
- Glimpses through gaps in vegetation and from more elevated locations to the wider landscape, including the distant hills and ridges of the Dorset AONB.
- The adjacent Grade II* Registered Park and Garden of Kingston Maurward, with an estate character evident within the assessment area.
- The setting that the landscape provides to the historic village of Lower Bockhampton (part of Stinsford Conservation Area) and its component Listed Buildings.
- The sparsely settled character, with settlement limited to isolated farms.
- High levels of tranquillity and strong rural character due to limited modern development in the area.

Guidance for sustainable development

Any new development should:

- Avoid siting development immediately to the north of Lower Bockhampton (which is in Stinsford Conservation Area). This area could easily be dominated visually by development on the steeply-sloping land to the west of Bockhampton Lane.
- Avoid locations on more open, visible slopes as well as elevated undeveloped skyline locations marked by woodland or trees.
- Utilise areas of rolling topography, dips in the landform and existing/new hedgerow, tree and woodland planting (using locally prevalent, climate-resilient species) to help screen limited new development within the landscape.
- Protect the rural, agricultural setting the area provides the historic settlement of Lower Bockhampton (part of Stinsford Conservation Area), including its component Listed Buildings.
- Conserve the setting of Kingston Maurward Grade II* Registered Park and Garden to the west, and preserve elements of estate character, including tree avenues, within the assessment area.
- Preserve the long views attained from parts of this landscape, including to the AONB-designated hills and ridges to the south of Dorchester.
- Conserve the rural, strongly agricultural character of the landscape with important levels of tranquillity.

Assessment area: Dorchester 3



Representative photographs



Landscape sensitivity assessment

Landscape character context				
<p>This assessment area falls within the Dorchester Downs Landscape Character Area. It is also within the 'Land south of Dorchester' Area of Local Landscape Importance and is adjacent to the Dorset AONB. It comprises large scale arable fields directly to the south of Dorchester which slope up towards Conygar Hill (to the south, outside of the assessment area). The A35 and A352 separate the land from the urban area.</p>				
Assessment criterion	Description			Sensitivity score
Physical character (including topography and scale)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The lower slopes of a ridgeline to the south of Dorchester, which gently rise to a maximum of 75 metres AOD. The large fields and low hedgerows create a large-scale, open landscape. Small-scale landscape elements include in-field and hedgerow trees and the adjacent mixed woodland of North Plantation, forming the southern skyline. 			L-M
Natural character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The arable fields are divided by low hedgerows with some hedgerow trees. Occasional in field-trees also create natural features in the intensively farmed landscape. The prominent ridgeline woodland at North Plantation (forming the southern boundary) contributes to the natural character of the wider landscape; designated as SNCI. 			L-M
Historic landscape character (<i>please see separate heritage assessment for asset-based information</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two bowl barrows are visible on the skyline to the south (outside of the assessment zone) Adjacent to the Grade I listed building of Max Gate, (owned by the National Trust) – the home of Thomas Hardy. The HLC indicates that the fields within this area are of modern origin. Came Park lies immediately south of the assessment area, contributing an estate character to the wider landscape. 			M
Form, density and setting of existing development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is no development with this area – the land is under intensive arable production and used for allotments. This area provides an undeveloped rural setting to existing development in Dorchester (which is contained by the A35). 			M
Views and visual character including skylines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This area is not overly visually prominent, although it is overlooked by adjacent high ground. There are views over Dorchester from higher elevations, featuring Maiden Castle and Hardy Monument beyond on western skylines. Characterised by open, undeveloped skylines, with occasional trees forming features on the skyline. The North Plantation woodland on the southern boundary of the area also contributes to the wooded skylines. 			M
Perceptual and experiential qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This area is rural and undeveloped, although it is strongly affected by traffic noise from the A35 and A352. It has an open and expansive quality due to the low hedgerows and lack of tree cover. 			M
Overall assessment of landscape sensitivity				
L	L-M	M	M-H	H
<p>The nearby important heritage features, undeveloped character, setting and containment provided to existing settlement limits and sense of openness and exposure with views over Dorchester raise landscape sensitivity in this area. Sensitivity is reduced by the relatively simple landform, limited naturalistic features, modern field patterns and disturbance from adjacent major roads. On balance, this area is assessed as being of moderate landscape sensitivity.</p>				

Heritage sensitivity assessment

Dorset Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) context

The historic landscape of the area comprises piecemeal enclosures of post-medieval date. It is characterised by very large fields, sloping from south to north and bounded by the A35.

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 heritage assets within the area.

Non-designated heritage assets:

- Possible round barrow or hut-circle, of likely later prehistoric date [MDO20825]
Uncertain/Low-Medium importance
- Numerous features relating to chalk extraction and post-medieval land use
Low importance

Likely susceptibility to physical change as a result of development

As buried archaeological assets, the identified non-designated assets in the assessment area are inherently highly susceptible to physical effects of development – potentially giving rise to substantial harm or total loss.

The possible barrow or hut-circle, although individually potentially unlikely to represent a major constraint to development, should be treated with caution given the potential for a relationship with the Mount Pleasant complex (e.g. as an outlying funerary monument – part of a wider distribution of Bronze Age barrows in the vicinity).

Likely susceptibility to setting change as a result of development

Designated assets:

- Mount Pleasant complex: henge enclosure, Conquer Barrow and barrow cemetery; Scheduled Monument [NHLE: 1002463]
High importance
 - The Mount Pleasant henge sits on the highest point of the west-east axis of Alington Ridge, and is a prominent landscape feature (albeit without upstanding remains). The ability to read and appreciate the landform from the monument, the Alington Ridge and the ridge of Conygar Hill is important in understanding the relationship of Neolithic and Bronze Age ritual and funerary monuments' to each other and the physical landscape.
- Two bowl barrows on Conygar Hill; Scheduled Monument [NHLE: 1017270]
High importance
 - The location of barrows on prominent ridgelines is a key feature of the prehistoric landscapes of Wessex. While no definitive relationship between the barrows and the Mount Pleasant complex is currently known, it is highly likely that the Neolithic elements of the area (the henge monument) were visible in a cleared area of landscape – therefore the Conygar Hill monuments would likely have been constructed with a least a passing relationship to that asset (given the insertion of Bronze Age burial mounds within the henge, and the linear cemetery to the southeast) and more contemporary features.
- Max Gate (Grade I Listed Building) [NHLE: 1110618]
High importance
 - Home of Thomas Hardy, which he – a trained and award-winning, architect – designed himself and was his family home until his death in 1928.
 - Red brick Queen Anne revival style
 - In the care of the National Trust.
 - Very heavily screened by intervening vegetation, potentially reducing susceptibility. However, the site represents the last remaining link to the rural landscape in which the house was built.

- Significance of asset drawn largely from the association with Hardy (as both an internationally important literary figure and the architect of the house), with setting making a subordinate contribution. However, the relationship of the house to its rural context – given the importance of the Wessex landscape in Hardy’s writing – could be argued to be critical.
- Old Came Rectory (Grade II Listed Building) [NHLE: 1154279]
 - High importance**
 - Home of William Barnes, scholar, poet, schoolmaster and rector of Winterborne Came from 1862 to 1886.
 - Early 19th century cob cottage with thatch roof.
 - Some limited screening by intervening vegetation, potentially reducing susceptibility. However, the site represents the last remaining link to the rural landscape in which the house was built.
 - Setting makes an important contribution to the significance of the asset, as Barnes’ pastoral poetry drew its inspiration from Dorset’s rural landscapes and the rural idyll provided by his home was part of that inspiration – and a factor that drew other important literary figures, including Hardy, to Old Came Rectory.
- Came Lodge (Grade II Listed Building) [NHLE: 1119220]
 - High importance**
 - Early 19th century stone and slate lodge to Came Park.
 - Shares a functional and historical relationship with Came House to the southeast and Came Park.
 - Screened from the development area by intervening topography and vegetation (e.g. North Plantation).

Non-designated assets:

- Came Park designed landscape
 - Medium importance**
 - Designed landscape park connected to Came House, Winterborne Came. The majority of the parkland lies on the south side of the ridge of Conygar Hill, but North Plantation – which straddles the ridge – is directly adjacent to the assessment area. This area of parkland appears to be highly valued locally and is a strong feature in the landscape. Development could reduce its legibility in views from the north and east.

Overall assessment of sensitivity of the area’s heritage assets

L	L-M	M	M-H	H
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The settings of the two Scheduled Monuments – particularly the potential for functional/symbolic interactions – mean that there is considerable sensitivity to change that could compromise this element of significance or reduce their prominence in the landscape.

Max Gate, although heavily screened, could be viewed as being highly sensitive to setting change as – although there is limited visibility (more extensive views may be available from upper floors) – the area is the only surviving element of the house’s rural context. The significance of the asset is most strongly derived from its historical/associative value through its links to the internationally important Hardy legacy, and its aesthetic value as a fine example of his work as an architect and of the Queen Anne Revival style. Given Hardy’s literary and personal relationship to the ‘Wessex’ landscape, however, setting could be argued to make a more important contribution to significance.

Old Came Rectory still retains much its rural setting, from which it derives significance not only historically but also as result of its association William Barnes, a renowned 19th century poet who primarily wrote about pastoral life in Dorset. The house has further associative value as Barnes was a mentor to Thomas Hardy, who frequently visited him at the rectory – along with other late 19th century literary luminaries, including Tennyson and Palgrave. It was also rented by the British First World War poets Siegfried Sassoon and Edmund Blunden. Development within the assessment area would significantly reduce the rural setting of the asset and the legibility of its historical relationship with Max Gate. Such was Hardy’s respect and affection for Barnes – some 40 years his senior – that his choice of site for his home was influenced by the opportunity to be close to his mentor.

Development could be located in such a way to conserve any potential relationship and maintain the sense of scale of these heritage assets and the Conygar Hill ridge.

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 undeveloped, rural character of the landscape, which forms a backdrop to existing development within Dorchester.
- Natural features including tracts of broadleaved woodland and hedgerows, which form part of the wider habitat network within the landscape.
- Historic estate character continuing from Came Park to the south (including the visually prominent North Plantation which forms the southern assessment area boundary).
- Potential relationships between Conygar Hill barrows and the Mount Pleasant complex crossing the area are particularly sensitive.
- Although the Grade I listed Max Gate (the home of Thomas Hardy) is very well screened partly by mature trees within its gardens and partly by more recent plantings, potentially connected with roads improvements, the importance of Hardy and his indivisible relationship with the Dorchester area and the local landscape – the Wessex of his novels – could be perceived as increasing the value of the remaining rural context surrounding the house.
- Old Came Rectory, although partially screened – much like Max Gate – draws part of its significance from its relationship with the open, rural landscape because of its association with William Barnes (an important 19th century pastoral poet and inspiration and mentor to Hardy) and his literary works. It also has a historical and associative relationship with Max Gate which could be eroded by development.
- The open skylines, with occasional trees forming natural features and marked by North Plantation forming the ridgeline to the south.
- Long views west from elevated areas towards Maiden Castle and Hardy Monument beyond.
- The location of the area within the 'Land south of Dorchester' area of Local Landscape Importance and adjacent to the Dorset AONB.

Guidance for sustainable development

Any new development should:

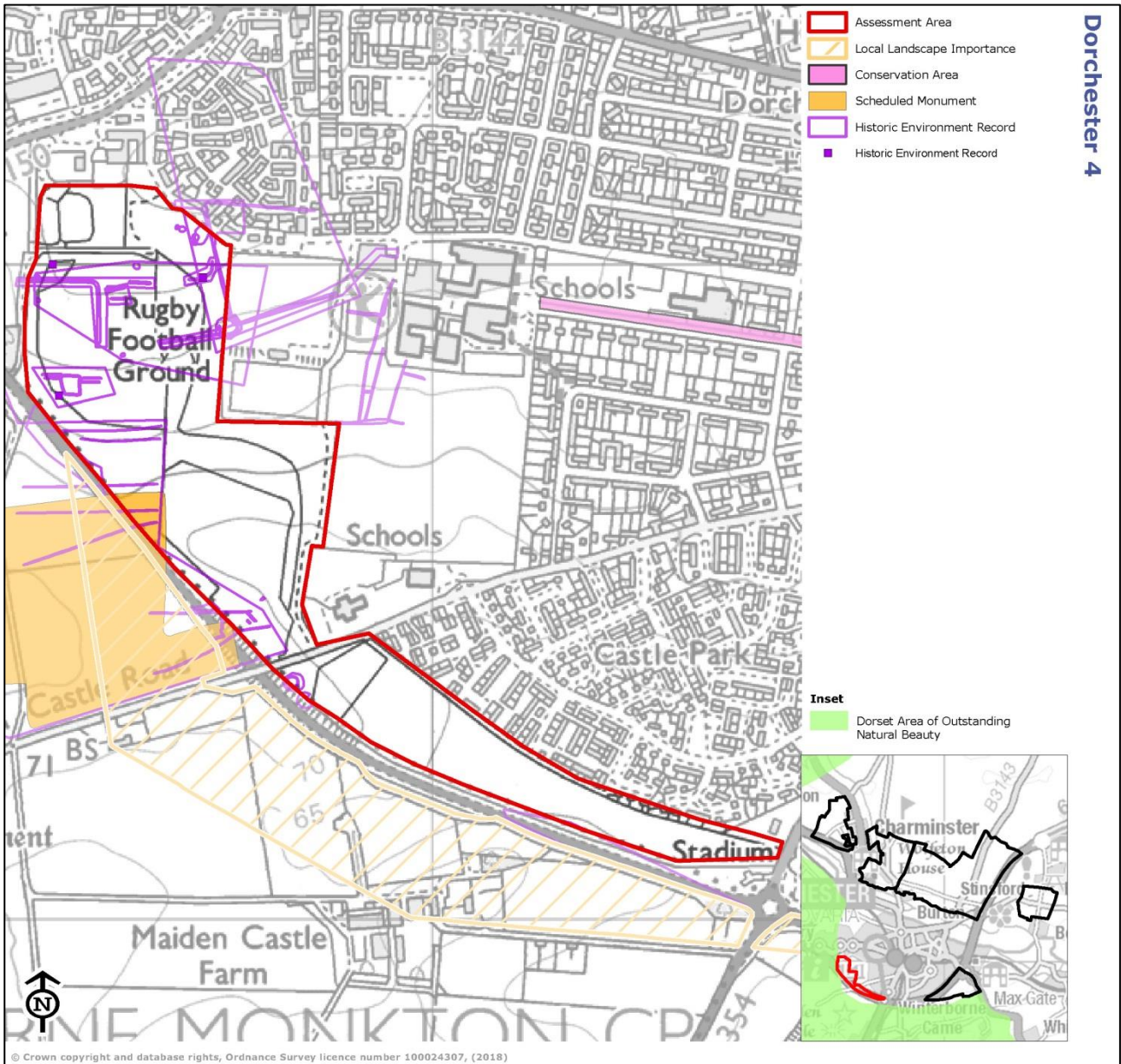
- Be limited to flat locations immediately fringing the A35 (away from the setting of Max Gate, Old Came Rectory and Came Park) to provide a connection to the existing settlement edge and preserve the undeveloped character of the remainder of the landscape, as well as its role as containment to Dorchester.
- Be restricted to the flatter land adjacent to the A35 also to maintain the sense of scale created by Conygar Hill, and to conserve the setting of the Scheduled barrows on its ridge.
- Utilise the screening effects of existing hedgerows, woodland and in-field trees, incorporating new, connected lengths as boundaries around or within any new development (using locally prevalent species in keeping with the estate character of the wider landscape).
- Aim to develop a definitive understanding of the role of setting to the significance of Max Gate (this should include inspection of views from within the house – particularly rooms used by Hardy for writing), and ensure that this is reflected in design solutions. This should also include developing a detailed understanding of the historical and design relationships with Old Came Rectory.
- Retain the legibility of North Plantation of Came Park as an important historic landscape feature.
- Protect long views west towards Maiden Castle and Hardy Monument featuring on the distant

skyline.

- Ensure any new development does not adversely affect the special qualities of Dorset AONB which lies adjacent to the south, including uninterrupted panoramic views, a sense of tranquillity and remoteness, dark night skies, undeveloped rural character and a rich historic and built heritage¹.

¹ Taken from the Statement of Significance within the Dorset AONB Management Plan 2014-2019

Assessment area: Dorchester 4



Representative photographs



Landscape sensitivity assessment

Landscape character context				
<p>This assessment area falls within the Dorchester Downs Landscape Character Area. It comprises sports fields and school grounds adjacent to the urban edge of Dorchester. The Dorset AONB lies adjacent to the west and south. The A35 forms the southern and western boundary.</p>				
Assessment criterion	Description	Sensitivity score		
Physical character (including topography and scale)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gently undulating land between 65 metres and 90 metres AOD, with a distinctive hummocky landform in the western portion. A medium scale landscape, with regular fields. The use of fencing for boundaries creates an open character, with enclosure provided by lines of trees on the periphery. 	L-M		
Natural character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mixture of recreational land uses and rough grassland. Avenues of young trees are located along footpaths and adjacent to the A35, providing naturalistic character. There are several small areas of semi-natural grassland adjacent to the A35. 	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 enclosures within this area are of modern origin. A small part of this area is located within the wider Scheduled Monument comprising settlement remains north of Maiden Castle. Maiden Castle Scheduled Monument dominates views south from elevated land in the western parcel and forms a backdrop to the area, with a prominent bowl barrow (Scheduled Monument) adjacent. 	M		
Form, density and setting of existing development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This area is closely associated with the existing urban edges to the north and east, although it does not make a strong contribution to the setting of the existing development (the land to the south of the A35 is more important in this regard). This area does not contain any existing development. 	L-M		
Views and visual character including skylines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Range of visual prominence, with higher elevations in the west inter-visible with Maiden Castle (within the Dorset AONB), the Poundbury development and nearby housing. Views in to and out from the eastern portion of the area are screened by tree planting alongside the A35, but it is directly overlooked by housing. Skylines are mostly open and occasionally punctuated by trees. 	M		
Perceptual and experiential qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Although undeveloped, the area has a suburban character due to the influences of adjacent urban development. Traffic noise from the A35 can have a negative impact on the perceptual qualities of the landscape. 	L-M		
Overall assessment of landscape sensitivity				
L	L-M	M	M-H	H
<p>The nationally important heritage assets within and adjacent to this area and undeveloped character raise sensitivity in this area. Sensitivity is reduced by the lack of historic field patterns and naturalistic features, close association with existing settlement and the suburban character of the landscape. This area has overall low-moderate landscape sensitivity.</p>				

Heritage sensitivity assessment

Dorset Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) context

The majority of the area is classified in the HLC as relatively recent (post-1914) planned enclosures. However, recent aerial photography suggests that recreational use has potentially expanded into the area since its interpretation.

The area is bounded by the Dorchester Bypass A35, which is a significant presence.

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.

The area contains a small part of a very extensive later prehistoric, and potentially Roman/Romano-British, field system.

Part of this asset is Scheduled as 'Settlement remains N of Maiden Castle' [NHLE: 1002409], but it is part of a much larger intact archaeological landscape stretching at least 2km to the west and with likely relationships to extensive later prehistoric field systems on Fordington Down, to the northwest, and with the Maiden Castle hillfort to the south – which dominates the local landscape.

This should be considered an asset of **high importance**.

The area also contains extensive non-designated archaeological remains including:

- Possible barrow/ring-ditch [MDO18021]
- Barrow cemetery [MDO18024] – partially excavated in construction of bypass
- Later prehistoric round houses [MDO18454; MDO18454]
- Barrow [MDO25140]
- Enclosures [MDO25146]

Assets are part of a wider archaeological landscape, and are therefore of at least medium importance.

Likely susceptibility to physical change as a result of development

The archaeological remains within the area are inherently highly susceptible to physical change, potentially resulting in substantial harm or total loss of significance.

Works to the Scheduled area would not normally be permitted, and preservation in situ is likely to be required – although the extent to which this part of the asset has been lost to the construction of the A35 needs to be fully understood.

It is likely that extensive archaeological investigations, building on those undertaken in advance of construction of the A35, will be required to fully understand in situ remains and inform an appropriate mitigation strategy.

Likely susceptibility to setting change as a result of development

The area lies at some distance from designated assets likely to be susceptible to setting change as a consequence of development. Nevertheless, development has the potential to generate setting change, particularly to Maiden Castle and the scheduled settlement remains directly adjacent to the assessment area. The A35 is a very strong presence in the landscape, but the green space between it and the current settlement edge is helpful in reducing its visual prominence (although road noise is also a component of its influence).

Overall assessment of sensitivity of the area's heritage assets

L

L-M

M

M-H

H

Area contains a range of archaeological assets, some of which are nationally important. They are all highly susceptible to physical change and will require detailed investigation to fully understand their relationships, significance and the need for either preservation in situ or appropriate mitigation.

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 frequent trees and small blocks of deciduous woodland which contribute to natural character and soften the edges of existing urban development.
- The undeveloped character of the landscape and its role as a transition into the open countryside to the south of the A35, softening the urban edge of south-west Dorchester.
- The Scheduled settlement remains north of Maiden Castle, some of which extends into the landscape.
- Views of and setting provided to valued heritage assets, including Maiden Castle.
- The location of the area adjacent to the Dorset AONB, with views to and from the protected landscape characterising the elevated 'hummocks' in the western portion of the assessment area.

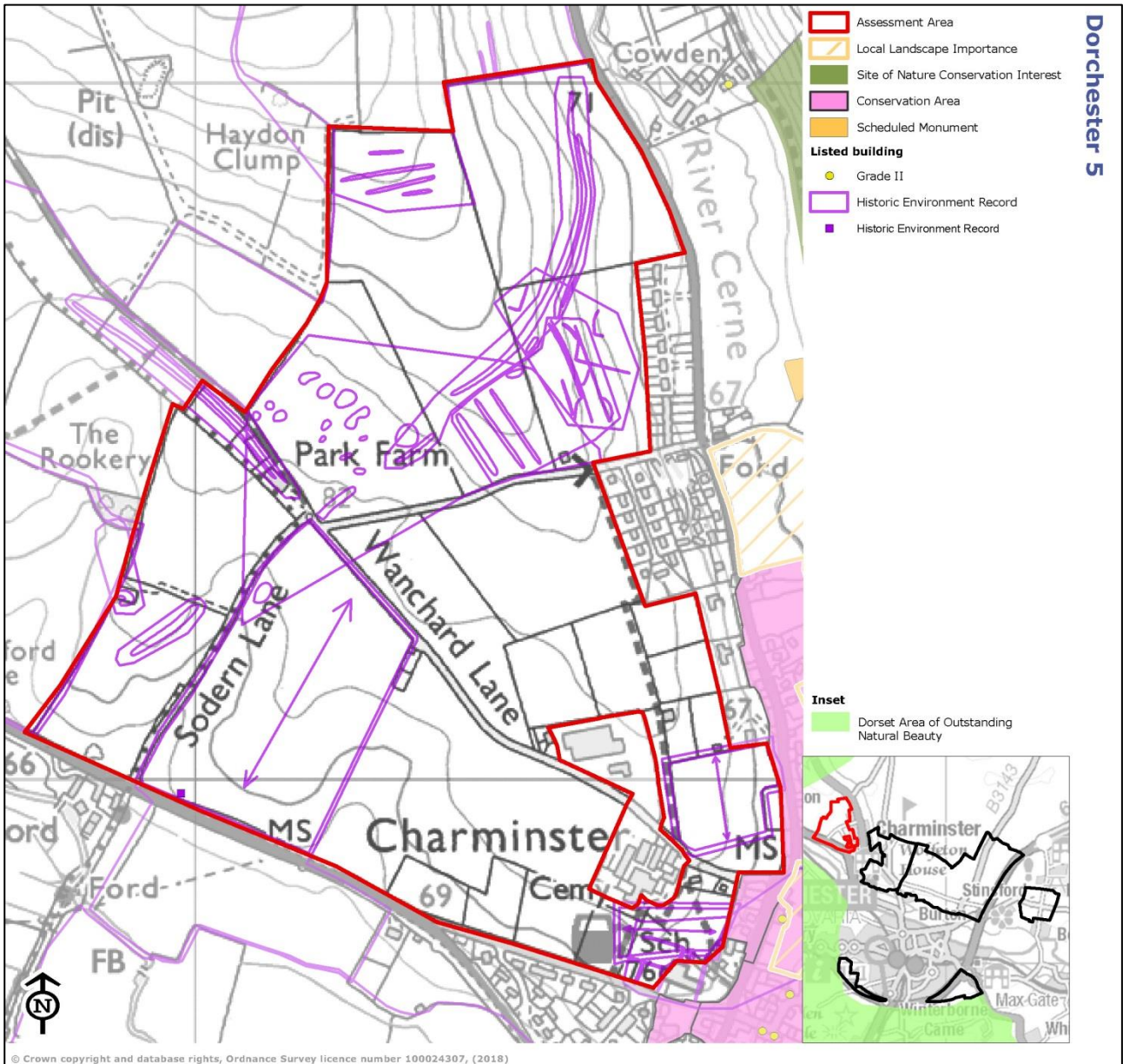
Guidance for sustainable development

Any new development should:

- Be designed to 'sit down' in the landscape and minimise visual prominence through positioning on the lower-lying portions of the assessment area in the east and below the distinctive elevated mounds in the west (which are inter-visible with Maiden Castle and the Dorset AONB).
- Protect the wider role of the landscape in softening the transition between the urban edge of south-west Dorchester and the open, nationally designated landscape beyond the A35 to the south.
- Optimise the use of existing screening by both trees and topography, particularly in views to and from Maiden Castle and the Dorset AONB.
- Be designed to avoid physical effects on nationally important archaeology, and preserve remains in situ.
- Ensure any new development does not adversely affect the special qualities of Dorset AONB which lies adjacent to the south, including uninterrupted panoramic views, a sense of tranquillity and remoteness, dark night skies, undeveloped rural character and a rich historic and built heritage².

² Taken from the Statement of Significance within the Dorset AONB Management Plan 2014-2019

Assessment area: Dorchester 5



Representative photographs



Landscape sensitivity assessment

Landscape character context				
This assessment area falls within the Cerne and Piddle Valleys and Chalk Downland Landscape Character Area. It comprises agricultural land rising towards Charminster Down/Haydon Hill, located between the A37 and the A352.				
Assessment criterion	Description			Sensitivity score
Physical character (including topography and scale)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rolling land rising up to 82m from Frome valley to the south and steeply up from the Cerne valley to the east. Mixed scale, with small historic paddocks (pasture) behind Charminster Conservation Area and larger scale fields elsewhere. Hedgerows, clumps of trees and farm buildings create small-scale landscape elements. 			M-H
Natural character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land use is a mixture of pasture and intensive arable land. Fields are divided by low cut hedgerows. Hedgerow trees and tree clumps form valued naturalistic features in the agricultural landscape. There are no designated habitats within this area. 			L-M
Historic landscape character (<i>please see separate heritage assessment for asset-based information</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The HLC indicates the enclosures are mostly post-medieval regular and 20th century amalgamated fields. This area is adjacent to and forms part of the setting of Charminster Conservation Area and several of its component Listed Buildings. It also forms part of the wider setting to Charlton Down Conservation Area located to the north. 			M
Form, density and setting of existing development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Largely undeveloped character, with occasional scattered farm buildings. A new development is being constructed in the south of the area off Wanchard Lane. The land rises up steeply behind 20th century housing spread along A532 north of Charminster. It plays an important role in separating the distinct settlements of Charminster and Charlton Down. 			M-H
Views and visual character including skylines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Views are varied with changes in topography and vegetation. Long views to AONB-designated land to the south (featuring the Poundbury development on the horizon) and east are possible from higher elevations. Skylines are generally expansive and open, particularly on higher ground, marked by hedges, tree clumps and tree lines. 			M-H
Perceptual and experiential qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This area feels removed from nearby settlement due to its undeveloped, agricultural character. Traffic noise from the A37 and A352 can detract from locally important levels of tranquillity. 			M-H
Overall assessment of landscape sensitivity				
L	L-M	M	M-H	H
The prominent slopes, setting the landscape provides to historic settlement cores, role of the landscape in separating distinct settlements, undeveloped character, sense of openness and exposure and long views result in an overall moderate-high landscape sensitivity. Sensitivity is reduced by the lack of historic field patterns and limited naturalistic features in the intensively farmed landscape.				

Heritage sensitivity assessment

Dorset Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) context

The assessment area is principally composed of regular enclosures of post-medieval date. The southern edge is recorded as being strip fields, but of post-War date (this may be a coding error as there is little to suggest intact strip fields in this location). The area also contains a cemetery and a small area of long-established allotment gardens (depicted on the 1st edition of the Ordnance Survey 25-inch map)

Description and significance of heritage assets present

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

Designated assets within the assessment area:

- No designated assets within the area.

Non-designated assets within the assessment area:

- Park Farm; lynchets, strip fields, field boundaries [MDO21040; MDO21041; MDO21042]
- Haydon Hill; strip field system [MDO21045]
- Ridge and furrow [MDO21065; MDO21038]
 - Assets relate to ploughed-down cultivation remains and are of **low importance**

Likely susceptibility to physical change as a result of development

All assets identified within the assessment area relate to buried archaeology, and should therefore be assumed to be of high susceptibility to physical change. Remains are not likely to be of a level of significance that would act as a constraint to development – but appropriate field investigation will be required given the likelihood of total loss.

Likely susceptibility to setting change as a result of development

Designated assets with the potential to experience setting change:

- Abuts a small part of the northern extremity of the Charminster Conservation Area
 - Development within this relatively steep part of the site that slopes down towards the CA likely to be visually intrusive/dominant and significantly change the perception and understanding of the CA in the landscape.
The village core currently has a strongly rural, semi-isolated feel which could be compromised by development rising above the village on the relatively steeply-sloping hillside.
- Potential for setting change to Scheduled medieval settlement/farmstead [NHLE: 1020183]
 - Functional relationships generally with cropmark strip fields immediately adjacent, but development on rising ground opposite the asset will further erode surviving rural setting
- Potential for setting change to Poundbury Camp Scheduled Monument
 - Development in the assessment area could substantially extend the influence of modern built development within the visual envelope of this asset. Its relationship to its rural hinterland is already under pressure and further losses could result in harm.

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

L	L-M	M	M-H	H
<p>Development within the assessment area could have an adverse effect on the setting of the Charminster Conservation Area, changing the character of the settlement and eroding its rural context – as well as potentially dominating views of the Conservation Area from Dorchester (e.g. from Poundbury Camp and the northern edge of the Dorchester Conservation Area).</p> <p>Setting change to the Scheduled medieval settlement/farmstead likely from development in fields to west of existing development extending north from Charminster, increasing visual domination of modern residential development and further eroding rural setting. Development over the crest of the hill and in the remainder of the assessment area is likely to avoid harm.</p>				

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:

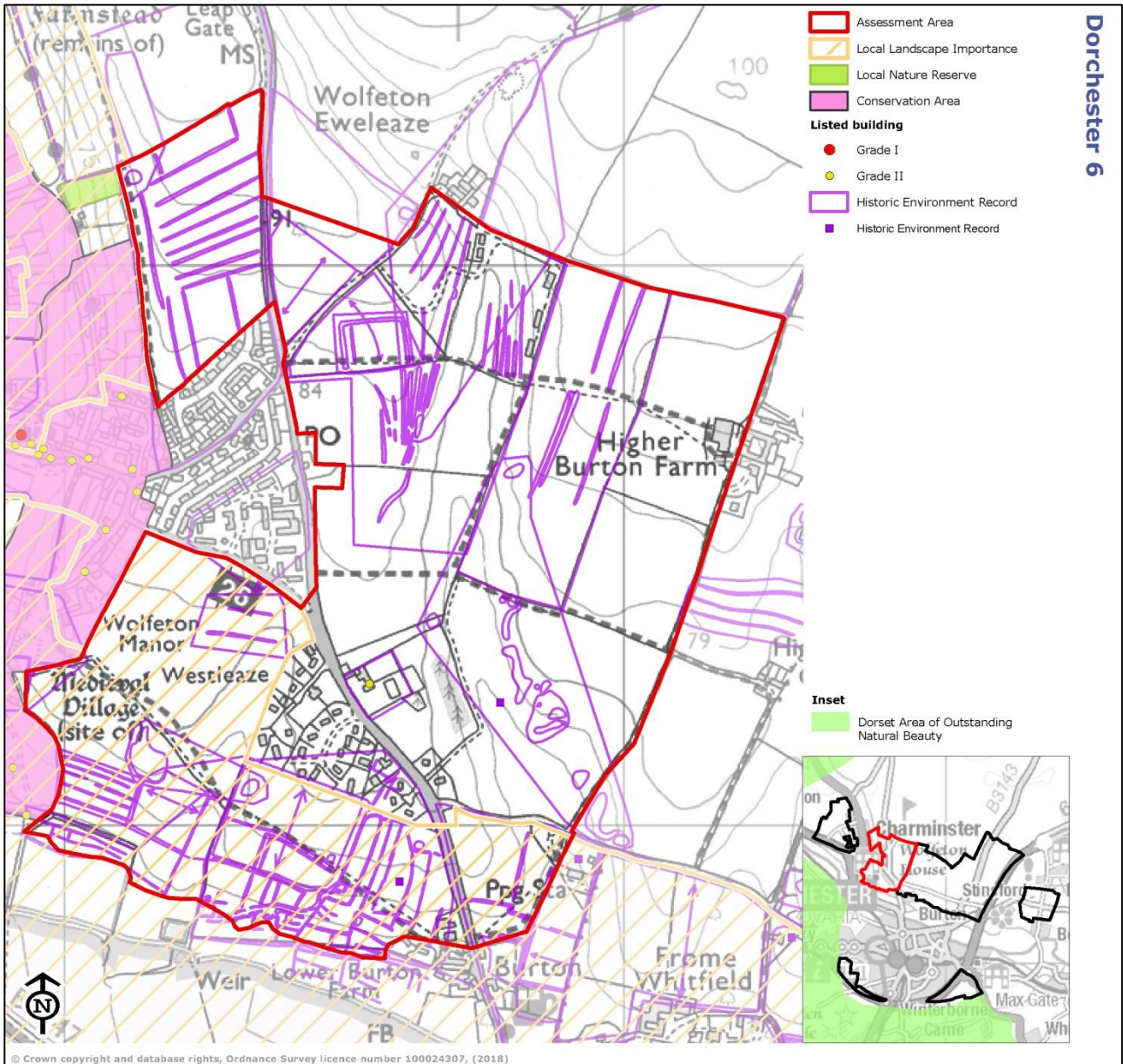
- Open, elevated hill summits and slopes, characterised by their undeveloped character marked by hedgerows, tree lines and tree clumps.
- Areas of visually prominent land, including the steep slopes rising behind 20th century housing north of Charminster and land sloping up from the Frome in the south.
- The rural backdrop and separation function the landscape provides to the settlements of Charminster and Charlton Down, including their Conservation Areas.
- Intervisibility with land across the Frome including the Dorset AONB and western Dorchester, including the Poundbury development which is distinguishable on the horizon.
- Views to valued heritage features including early prehistoric ritual and funerary monuments on nearby hills.
- The sparsely settled character of the landscape, with development limited to isolated farm buildings.
- High levels of tranquillity and strong rural character.

Guidance for sustainable development

Any new development should:

- Avoid locations on the more open, visible slopes rising up from the Cerne and Frome as well as elevated skyline locations marked by hedgerows and characteristic tree lines/clumps.
- Utilise areas of rolling topography and dips in the landform to help screen limited new development within the landscape.
- Wherever possible, link new development to the existing 20th century settlement edge of Charminster, ensuring landscaping and the use of characteristic hedgerow and tree planting softens and improves the transition to open countryside.
- Protect the rural, agricultural setting the area provides to the Conservation Areas at Charminster and Charlton Down and the role it plays in separating the two settlements.
- Retain existing natural features including hedgerows, lines of trees and tree clumps, which contribute to the structure of the landscape and provide an important habitat network within agricultural land.
- Preserve the long views from this landscape, across the Frome Valley to the AONB-designated hills and ridges beyond.
- Conserve the rural, strongly agricultural character of the landscape with important levels of tranquillity.

Assessment area: Dorchester 6



Representative photographs



Landscape sensitivity assessment

Landscape character context					
This assessment area falls within the Cerne and Piddle Valleys and Chalk Downland Landscape Character Areas. The south of this area is within the 'Land south of Charminster, and Land north and east of Dorchester' Area of Local Landscape Importance. It comprises medium-scale fields of mixed use farmland to the north of Dorchester and the River Frome which slopes up in a northerly direction.					
Assessment criterion	Description			Sensitivity score	
Physical character (including topography and scale)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land rising up from the Frome floodplain to the south, reaching 91m AOD in the north of the assessment area. A dry valley runs north-south through the centre, creating a distinct dip in the open, gently rolling landform. Medium-scale fields, although the sloping topography, well-trimmed hedges or fences as boundaries and general lack of tree/woodland cover creates an open character. 			M-H	
Natural character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The primary landcover is intensively managed mixed arable and pastoral farmland. Well-trimmed hedgerows with some outgrown lengths and occasional hedgerow trees providing natural character. There are no designated habitats in this area. 			L-M	
Historic landscape character (<i>please see separate heritage assessment for asset-based information</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The HLC indicates that the enclosures within this area are of post-medieval and modern origin. Land forms a rural setting to Charminster Conservation Area which includes the Grade I listed Wolfeton House and Grade II* listed Riding House. Important contribution to the setting of Poundbury Camp It is also adjacent to the site of a medieval village. Grade II listed building within the area at Little Court. Open views south/south-east featuring Dorchester Conservation Area, including the landmark tower of the Church of St Peter (Grade I) and spire of All Saints Church (II*). 			M-H	
Form, density and setting of existing development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This landscape creates the rural edge to eastern Charminster, including a significant part of its Conservation Area. The area contains an area of low density modern development between Charminster and Lower Burton (Westleaze). It forms a large proportion of the gap between the distinct settlements of Charminster and Dorchester. 			M-H	
Views and visual character including skylines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Views are varied and dependant on the topography. Open, elevated areas afford long views south, featuring the Poundbury development and historic core of northern Dorchester. There are also long vistas across western Dorchester to the AONB-designated hills and ridges beyond. Hardy Monument is a distinctive skyline feature breaking the horizon. Skylines are smooth, open and undeveloped, with trees along roads and field boundaries forming occasional features. 			M-H	
Perceptual and experiential qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A strongly rural, farmed landscape with a sense of openness and exposure on higher ground. Important relative levels of tranquillity, broken by the sounds of traffic on the often busy roads cutting through the area. 			M	
Overall assessment of landscape sensitivity					
	L	L-M	M	M-H	H
The sloping visible landform, sense of openness and unsettled character, rural setting it provides to Charminster (including its Conservation Area), strong intervisibility with Dorchester and its Conservation Area, views to the AONB beyond the town, and the area's important separation function between the settlements of Dorchester and Charminster results in an overall moderate-high landscape sensitivity. Sensitivity is reduced slightly (from the 'high' rating) by its limited naturalistic features and intensively farmed character, areas of <i>more</i> 'hidden' landform and the impact of busy roads on tranquillity.					

Heritage sensitivity assessment

Dorset Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) context

The assessment area comprises mainly amorphous, relatively modern enclosures arising from amalgamation of previous (18th-19th century) field patterns. Around Higher Burton Farm, a series of planned rectilinear fields, of likely 18th century date, survives intact.

Description and significance of heritage assets present

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

Designated assets within the assessment area:

- Little Court, Grade II-Listed house, 1909 [NHLE: 1119132]
High importance

Non-designated assets within the assessment area:

- Medieval settlement remains, part of the hamlet of Burton [MDO21002; MDO762]
Medium importance
- Medieval ridge and furrow field systems [MDO765; MDO20992]
Low importance but also contribute to the setting and significance of Burton and Wolfeton villages
- Deserted medieval settlement of Wolfeton [MDO761]
Medium importance
- Gardens of Little Court [MDO37800]
(High importance as potentially curtilage listed)

Likely susceptibility to physical change as a result of development

It is unlikely that Little Court (GdII) will be physically harmed as a consequence of development.

As archaeological assets, the non-designated features listed above are inherently highly susceptible to physical change as a consequence of development. Development could result in total loss. While the assets individually may not be of a level of significance to necessitate preservation in situ, the extensive nature of the medieval settlement remains in the area – Wolfeton and Burton deserted villages and their connection to the manorial site at Wolfeton – potentially raises its importance and sensitivity to change. Extensive research and archaeological investigation would be required to confirm the aerial photographic evidence, characterise the extent of preservation and better understand the significance of assets to inform an appropriate mitigation strategy.

Likely susceptibility to setting change as a result of development

Designated assets with the potential to experience setting change:

- Wolfeton House, medieval-16th century courtyard manor house and gatehouse (GdI Listed) [NHLE: 1324021]
High importance – building complex of national significance
- Gatepiers and boundary walls to Wolfeton House (GdII) [NHLE: 1119101; 1154120]
High importance
Development is likely to give rise to setting change to Wolfeton House, removing both its rural setting and a suite of medieval archaeological remains that give context and meaning to the manorial site and later medieval/post-medieval built heritage, in addition to having likely functional and historical connections to the manor. While the asset is at least partially visually screened by intervening vegetation, harm to its significance is likely.
- The Riding House, late 16th century farmhouse(GdII*)
High importance
Asset is largely screened from the assessment area by intervening vegetation, and relationships may largely be with Wolfeton House and the relict strip fields to the west and north.
- Little Court, Grade II-Listed house [NHLE: 1119132]
High importance

Development could potentially entirely surround the asset, cutting it off from its rural setting. While its immediate setting is formed principally by the relatively extensive private gardens to the rear, and by the

irregular trapezoidal enclosure within which it and the two early-mid 20th century houses to the southeast share, the open rural landscape contributes to its significance, underlining its status as a country house.

- Charminster Conservation Area
High importance

Development on the western edge of the assessment area would abut the CA boundary and would divorce that part of the CA from its surviving rural context, in addition to bringing modern development right up to the known edges of the Wolfeton medieval village.

Development of the northern portion of the assessment area as currently drawn would introduce development to hillslopes overlooking the northern end of the CA which could visually dominate the area.

- Poundbury Camp multi-period settlement (at least Neolithic – Iron Age), and sections of Roman aqueduct serving 'Durnovaria' [Roman Dorchester] Scheduled Monument
High importance

Position of the asset on a chalk bluff overlooking the Frome valley gives commanding views over the valley and across the rural hinterland of the downs to the North. The asset is increasingly enclosed by modern development on its eastern and southern circuits – with further harm potentially derived from completion of northern part of the Poundbury masterplan (potential interruption of visual and functional relationships between the asset and remains on Fordington Down)

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

L	L-M	M	M-H	H
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Development within the southern portion of the assessment area would present considerable risk of harm to designated assets of the highest significance, by way of visual intrusion, loss of functionally connected land and functionally/historically connected archaeological remains. (In addition to the total loss of these assets.)

The extensive medieval/post-medieval field systems preserved in the northern portion of the assessment area are unlikely to constitute a significant constraint to development.

Development within the assessment area is likely to result in visual intrusion on setting of northern end of Charminster Conservation Area, as a consequence of rising ground and the potential for new development to appear dominant in views from and in combination with this part of the Conservation Area.

Development within the area is likely to give rise to harm to the setting of Poundbury Camp through loss of / intrusion into the rural agricultural setting that contributes to the understanding of the fort's location with regard to topographic features, and an appreciation of the rural hinterland that the asset is likely to have controlled.

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 landform rising up from the Frome Valley to form a rural, largely undeveloped setting to northern Dorchester and eastern Charminster.
- The setting that the landscape provides to important heritage features including Charminster Conservation Area, the Grade I listed Wolfeton House and Poundbury Camp.
- Extensive non-designated medieval archaeological remains linked to the significance of designated assets (and are important in their own right)
- The contribution that the area makes to the sense of separation between the distinct settlements of Charminster and Dorchester.
- Long views across the wider landscape from higher ground, including to Dorchester Conservation Area (with Listed churches on the skyline) and the hills and ridges of the AONB beyond – Hardy Monument forming a strongly recognisable landmark on the horizon.
- The recognised landscape value of the lower slopes above the Frome and south of Charminster, as reflected in its designation as part of a wider area of Local Landscape Importance.
- The strong rural and tranquil character of the landscape beyond busy roads.

Guidance for sustainable development

Any new development should:

- Protect the rural, agricultural setting the area provides to northern Dorchester and eastern Charminster and its function in providing separation between the two settlements.
- Avoid siting development on the more open, visible slopes, including those rising up from the Frome Valley (designated as part of a wider area of Local Landscape Importance) and elevated land in the north of the assessment area.
- Utilise areas of rolling topography and dips in the landform to help screen limited new development within the landscape, but avoid locations with channelled views to Dorchester.
- Wherever possible, link new development to the existing 20th century settlement edge of Charminster, ensuring landscaping and the use of characteristic hedgerow and tree planting softens and improves the transition to open countryside.
- Retain existing natural features including hedgerows and trees, which contribute to the structure of the landscape and provide an important habitat network within agricultural land.
- Preserve the long views from this landscape, across Dorchester (including its Conservation Area with landmark Grade I and II* listed church towers marking the skyline) to the AONB-designated hills and ridges beyond including Hardy Monument on Black Down.
- Respect and seek to conserve surrounding rural character and high levels of tranquillity in the siting and design of any new development
- Seek to follow existing settlement boundaries to ensure developed extent in views from Poundbury Camp and Dorchester is minimised, taking advantage of topography and existing landscape structure to avoid and minimise change.

Potential in-combination effects on heritage assets

Development within Dorchester 1, 6 and 5 would constitute a major change in the setting of both Dorchester as a historic settlement and a number of heritage assets that draw part of their significance from a relationship with the rural landscape to the north of the Frome valley. Of particular interest are:

Poundbury Camp, Scheduled Monument (multi-period settlement, enclosure, Bronze Age funerary monument and Roman aqueduct)

- Setting makes an important contribution to the significance of the asset in terms of its relationship to the surrounding landscape, including the legibility of the area as being located on a chalk bluff above the River Frome in an open, rural landscape. Development in Dorchester 1 and 6 could remove virtually all of the open agricultural landscape on the northern side of the Frome Valley, resulting in the almost complete enclosure of the asset's visual envelope with modern development (in combination with later phases of Poundbury to the south and west, which have/will substantially erode relationships to Fordington Down and the western sections of the Roman aqueduct).

Charminster Conservation Area

- Currently, the Conservation Area benefits from a largely rural setting that helps aid understanding and appreciation of its origins as a dispersed medieval settlement associated with the substantial manorial centre at Wolfeton House. Currently, the visual, function and historical links to the archaeological remains of medieval settlements at Wolfeton and Burton can be appreciated in the landscape, underpinning the significance of individual assets and reinforcing their value as a legible group.

Dorchester Conservation Area

- Views of the historic core of Dorchester from the rising ground within the assessment area provide an important opportunity to appreciate the settlement in its landscape setting. The CA, and urban core's, location on a relatively prominent area of higher ground between the floodplain of the River Frome and the downland to the south, visible – along with the top of Maiden Castle and the Hardy Monument on Brack Down – behind the town skyline, with Fordington Down rising to the southwest. These relationships are important in terms of understanding the strategic location of the Roman fort and town, and the functional relationships between the town and the route of the aqueduct from Fordington Down. The panoramic view of the town across the foreground of the water meadows lining the floodplain of the River Frome, with Maiden Castle, the downs and Hardy Monument in the background, help to place Dorchester within its quintessentially 'Wessex' setting. To the east, the spire of Stinsford Church (the 'Mellstock Church' of Hardy's novels) is clearly visible, enabling the important associations of the real landscape and places with Hardy's fictionalised literary landscapes.
- Development in Dorchester 1, 6 and 5 (or 1 and 6) would potentially result in significant setting change to the Conservation Area, arising from loss of both rural context and important views in which key elements of the town's history and development can be read – along with key functional and historical relationships. In addition, development in A and H would potentially result in substantial enclosure of the historic water meadows on the Frome floodplain by development, divorcing them from the farms to the north, with which they have functional and historical relationships.