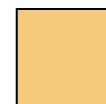


## LANDSCAPE CHARACTER TYPE:

### Downland Mosaic Large Scale

Found throughout the Hampshire Downs, but most extensive in mid and north Hampshire.



#### SIMILAR AND ASSOCIATED TYPES HAMPSHIRE DISTRICT AND BOROUGH LEVEL ASSESSMENTS

<b>Basingstoke:</b>	<b>Primary association:</b> Semi Enclosed Chalk and Clay Farmland, Enclosed Chalk and Clay Farmland large Scale. <b>Secondary association:</b> Open Arable, Parkland and Estate Farmland
<b>East Hampshire</b>	Downland Mosaic Open
<b>Eastleigh</b>	n/a
<b>Fareham</b>	n/a
<b>Gosport</b>	n/a
<b>Hart</b>	Enclosed Arable Farmland
<b>Havant</b>	n/a
<b>New Forest</b>	n/a
<b>Rushmoor</b>	n/a
<b>Test Valley</b>	Enclosed Chalk and Clay Woodland (where woodlands are large and extensive)
<b>Winchester</b>	<b>Primary association:</b> Chalk and Clay Farmland <b>Secondary association:</b> Scarp Downland Grassland and some Chalk and Clay Woodland

#### SIMILAR AND ASSOCIATED TYPES IN NEIGHBOURING AUTHORITY ASSESSMENTS

<b>Dorset</b>	
<b>West Berkshire</b>	
<b>West Sussex</b>	
<b>Wiltshire</b>	

## KEY IDENTIFYING CHARACTERISTICS AND BOUNDARY DEFINITIONS

- A Downs landscape which has moderately heavy soils and more clay soil content than in Open Downs landscapes.
- Can have mini scarps which are individually identified in some local assessments.
- Large scale character influenced by rolling topography, medium to large size fields, fewer wooded hedges than the small scale type and can have large woodland blocks.
- Large blocks of ancient woodland and varied height hedgerow network which contrasts with areas of more open predominantly arable fields.
- Deeply rural quiet landscapes with sense of space and expansiveness uninterrupted by development the large woodland blocks add to the sense ruralness and of an undeveloped landscape.
- Low density road and lane network where this type occurs in mid and west Hampshire –higher density further east.
- A mosaic of land uses and management; arable dominated but also with permanent pasture, sites managed for biodiversity objectives, public access, woodland and field margins managed for game.
- Association with open access areas under CRow Act on small scarps, downland and woodland.
- Generally the archaeological evidence suggests these are peripheral landscapes to farmed and settled areas pre Roman with the odd exception as in the South East Hampshire Downs.
- Greater proportion of regular pattern late enclosure medium to large fields than the Downland Mosaic Small Scale landscapes apart from East Hampshire.
- Possible association with historic parks and garden and large estates.
- Mixed age of farmsteads with a higher proportion of 17<sup>th</sup> C / medieval than the Open Downs but not as high as the Small Scale Downland type.
- Constantly changing views with panoramas from high points across undulating downs to river valleys and more constrained along dry valleys.

## PHYSICAL

### **GEOLOGY, LANDFORM, ELEVATION:**

**Bedrock and Superficial Geology:** Almost exclusively Upper and Middle Chalk formation, the key members often have marl beds or marly chalk, such as Newhaven Chalk, and Lewes Nodular formation. There are often patches of clay with flint superficial deposits, where these areas are more extensive, District and Borough assessments may have identified them as separate types.

There are clay-with-flints deposits on the surface of the chalk. Its distribution is far less extensive and generally shallower than found in the Wooded Downland type. Its distribution is concentrated on the lower slopes of the southern facing slopes of downland adjoining the lowland mosaic landscapes of southern Hampshire.

**Landform and Elevation:** This landscape type is strongly associated with more frequently undulating areas than other downland types, such as the ridges and dry valleys that run north south off the main central ridge of the South Downs. The series of small dry valleys are also known as coombes. Elevation is very variable. ‘Mini’ scarps are characteristic especially in the South Downs and north west Hampshire.

**SOILS TYPES:**

**Typical soil type pattern:** Soil type 581d – plateau drift and clay with flints predominates across this type. 571m - flinty and chalk drift deposits occur in dry valley bottoms and the lower valley sides. These soils are more prevalent in this type than the small scale downland type but not as complete coverage as in the Wooded Downland. Thinner calcareous soils - 343h, are far less extensive than the clay and flint drift soils.

**FUNCTIONS:**

**Hydrological function:** These types consistently overly major groundwater vulnerability zones. Although this landscape type does coincide with source protection zones, they are typically grade 3 or 4 (lesser importance) due in part to the presence clay surface horizon soils.

**Food and Biomass:** Predominantly grade 3 soils where woodland is not present, rising to grade 2 in some of the siltier and lighter soils in dry valleys. The deeper clay soils are considered to have predominantly moderate with some high capacity for this function.

**Biodiversity potential:** Two key habitats potential types are ancient woodland reversion and chalk grassland opportunity, the latter particularly in the steeper landscapes of the South Downs.

**LANDCOVER AND LAND USE PATTERN:**

Woodland blocks tend to be larger and more contiguous and there are fewer tall and bushy hedgerows than found in the Downland Mosaic Small Scale type. 20<sup>th</sup> century coniferous tree stand planting is characteristic but not extensive. The field pattern is regular and medium to large fields. Fields over 15ha are abundant. Around hamlets and villages – field size can be reduced, but the overall sense is of a large scale landscape. The arable to improved grassland ratio is similar to the small scale downland type.

**HYDROLOGY:**

Like most of the downland areas the soils are comparatively free draining, with high permeability and moderate storage capacity. Often few streams but includes the heads of valleys which feed the major chalk streams in Hampshire.

**EXPERIENTIAL****ACCESS AND TRANSPORT ROUTES:**

Low density transport network. Typically, indirect roads, winding lanes. Lightly trafficked with steep hedgerow banks. Accessible woodland is a significant addition to access opportunities in this landscape type and difference with other downland types

**TRANQUILLITY:**

Deeply rural and quiet farmed landscapes with little development.

**BIODIVERSITY (leave to Biod. specialist)**

The Downland Mosaic Large Scale landscape character type is an agricultural landscape, mainly comprising land under arable cultivation with associated improved grassland.

The proportion of these agricultural habitats varies; arable land tends to dominate, with improved grassland exists mainly around the periphery and occasional patches of semi-improved and unimproved calcareous grassland associated. Arable land tends to be species poor but can support a range of species: agricultural weed flora in Hampshire can be species rich. Chalk grassland represents one of the richest wildlife habitats in Britain and supports nationally rare species including the stone curlew, burnt tip orchid and the silver spotted skipper butterfly.

Woodland cover is variable. In places, such as Harewood Forest, woodland cover is dense, elsewhere; woodland comprises smaller blocks and strips. Woodland character also varies, with broadleaved woodland and plantations, mixed woodland and limited amounts of coniferous plantation. There are patches of active coppice with standards which tend to be associated with broadleaved woodlands: Hazel coppice with oak and ash standards was a widespread habitat relating from the historical production of wattle sheep hurdling. Hazel coppice woodlands provide habitats which support rich flora and butterfly populations if the coppice is active and regularly cut. There are also areas of parkland trees scattered over grassland which can represent areas where timber cropping and livestock grazing are undertaken concurrently. These wood pastures are often species rich. There is some ancient and semi-natural woodland in the Downland Mosaic Large Scale landscape character type, comprising broadleaved woodland, active coppice and parkland.

Hedgerows define field boundaries. The network is generally well defined and quite dense within the Downland Mosaic Large Scale landscape character type in comparison with the Open Downs. However, in places hedgerows have been removed and the network is ill defined; hedgerows provide important corridors for species movement through the agricultural landscape and where they have broken down, species movement can be compromised. There are opportunities to enhance and restore the hedgerow network in the Downland Mosaic Large Scale landscape character type. There is potential for chalk grassland habitat creation in this landscape. Potential is generally modest, however, in places it is locally high. Where this LCT exists in the north east of the county, there are some small patches where heathland habitat creation could occur. Potential is low but still significant given the calcareous character of this type.

A number of BOAs cover this landscape character type:

- The South Downs BOA;
- the St Catherine's Hill to Cheesefoot Head BOA;
- Bere Ashley BOA; Broughton Downs BOA;
- Harewood Forest BOA and;
- Herriard Wooded Downland Plateau BOA
- Tidworth BOA

Tidworth BOA has opportunity for lowland calcareous grassland creation alone whilst all others identify opportunities for lowland calcareous grassland and lowland mixed deciduous woodland creation or enhancement. Harewood Forest BOA also presents opportunities to enhance rare arable plant populations whilst Herriard Wooded Downland Plateau also provides opportunities for lowland meadow creation.

## **HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT** *(leave to Historic. Specialist)*

### **ARCHAEOLOGY:**

There is only very light evidence of Mesolithic activity, although perhaps a little more evidence west of Basingstoke perhaps where the downland forms a link between the head of the Loddon and the head of the Test. In the Neolithic this downland type seems to be peripheral to the settled and farmed areas, although there is Neolithic evidence in the area north of Andover. There might also be a link south west of Basingstoke between the open downland and the rich Basingstoke basin at the head of the Loddon valley. The Bronze Age distribution of burial

mounds is weak and usually peripheral to another downland type or prominent topography. Evidence of settlement and farming is weak, although there does appear to be a settled Bronze Age landscape on the downland, east of the A3 (7H). In the Iron Age, there are several areas of downland which are peripheral to the north and west boundaries of east Hampshire where there is a raised incidence of banjo enclosures, possibly indicating a raised reliance on stock, and access of those stock to the non-intensively used land of east Hampshire. Settlements and field systems are sparser than in the other downland areas, except to the east of the A3, coincident with the area where Bronze Age settlement also seems to occur. A similar pattern can be traced in the Roman period. Increasingly, the areas were settled and farmed beyond the margins of the open down onto the mosaic downland types. In particular the areas west of Basingstoke emerge as a settled landscape and the area east of the A3 continued to have a higher rate of settlement. In places, Roman settlement appears co incident with the passage of a Roman road through this landscape type, and west of Basingstoke there was probably a north south Roman route running approximately through Overton, and west of the A3 a north south route heading up towards the Roman potteries. These missing roads may well explain parts of the distribution.

### **HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER**

Large 'island' blocks of pre 1800 woodland and assart woodland can often be found in association with parliamentary enclosures of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century. The assart fields or unenclosed downland tend to have been reorganised by formal and parliamentary enclosures. Consequently, fields tend to be regular in pattern with straight boundaries. There appears to be less early informal enclosures such as assart fields than occur in the Downland Mosaic Small Scale. The greater occurrence of formal enclosures here than in the small scale type suggests later enclosure of open downland enclosure / reorganisation of early enclosures and more remote areas from settlement. This association with formal and late enclosures does not hold for where the type occurs in East Hampshire. There is more widespread informal enclosure this side of the County. Here, medium to large parliamentary HLTs occur in the Open Downland landscape and late enclosure of remaining downland. There appears to be correlations between this downland type and the presences of historic parks and gardens.

### **HISTORIC BUILT ENVIRONMENT**

#### **Settlement types by form:**

Small scale nucleated settlement pattern – little large scale modern development and little 20<sup>th</sup> C urban development.

#### **Building materials and type;**

Brick and Flint with clay tile roofing.

### **VISIBILITY**

**Prominence:** Large woodland blocks and more treed character – makes the edges of this landscape type very prominent from the Open Downs.

**Enclosure:** Looser hedgerow network and fewer small woodlands and less undulating topography than the Downland Mosaic Small Scale type gives the perception of less enclosure.

**Public perceptions:** This type is associated with very rural and undeveloped areas in Hampshire. Quintessential Hampshire Downs.