

LCT8 Enclosed Clay Plateau Farmland

General Description

The Enclosed Clay Plateau Farmland is characterised by the large tracts of woodland and plantation, with both large open arable fields, located predominantly on the softer ridges of clay and flint, and well hedged arable fields with some pasture. Areas of parkland and estate farmland also provide diversity within the wider simple agricultural landscape.

Location

Enclosed Clay Plateau Farmland is found within one location within the Borough, north of Andover. It has much in common visually with LCT9 but has distinct geological characteristics and a more enclosed wooded landscape pattern.

- LCA8A Tangley and Doles Wood

Physical Influences

Geology and Soils: The character type lies on Upper Chalk except in the high areas where the Chalk is capped with a deposit of Clay and Flints.

Landform: A broad and gently domed, sloping and undulating landform with shallow valleys on clays and flints. Over the chalk the landform is more dramatic with steeper ridges and pronounced 'V' shaped dry valleys

Drainage: A well drained landscape with an absence of water features.

Biodiversity and Vegetation Pattern

This area is principally arable farmland and improved grassland, divided by hedgerows. There are important patches of ancient semi-natural woodland and the hedgerow structure provides some linkages between areas of woodland. The woodlands range from small copses, shelter belts and larger woodlands.

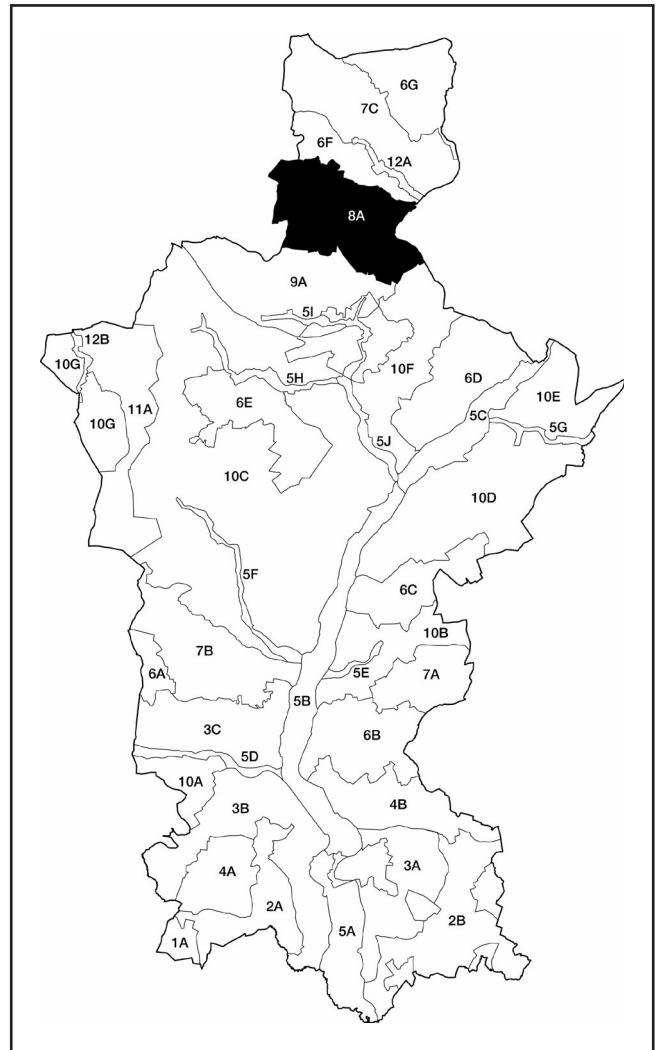
Historical Influences

Enclosed Clay Plateau Farmland is dominated predominantly by evidence of 17th and 18th century informal enclosure as indicated by the presence of large areas of regular fields with wavy boundaries and regular ladder fields. The presence of such field types suggests pre-parliamentary enclosure of earlier field systems or of an open landscape through a process of ad hoc and largely unsurveyed field demarcation. Only limited parliamentary enclosure is present within this Landscape Character Type.

Some post-1810 parkland development and post-1810 woodland plantations are present within this Landscape Character Type.

Settlement Pattern

Settlements are small and sparse in this location and are of the Clay Upland and Plateau Settlement Type. In



this landscape character type settlements are located upon the clay-capped plateaus upon the chalk upland of the northern Test Valley. They also tend to be situated either on or above the 100m contour mark and tend to be nucleated at the juncture of two or more roads, often well-developed with a historic core.

Individual farms are relatively closely spaced across this area.

Communication Network

Few main roads cross this Landscape Character Type and those that do are generally aligned northwest southeast or north south. These main roads tend to be reasonably straight despite the presence within a largely unsurveyed agricultural landscape. It may be that they have instead been either cut through this earlier landscape or earlier main roads have been substantially remodelled at some time during the later post-medieval period.

Key Issues

- Intensification of farming, in particular conversion of

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permanent pasture to arable

- Lack of appropriate management of woodlands
- Loss and fragmentation of hedgerow boundaries, mature hedgerow trees and adjacent grass verges
- Localized intrusion of roads on adjacent quiet areas with increased traffic on the road network and road improvements creating a more sub-urban character
- Communication masts and transmitters, and wind turbines, which, if not carefully sited, will be particularly visually intrusive on the predominantly open skyline and have an adverse impact on the sense of remoteness
- Intensification of farming and extensive fertiliser applications, resulting in large fields and the loss of

archaeological features and biodiversity in particular the loss of unimproved mesotrophic grassland

- Amalgamation of farms resulting in large areas managed as single units with greater requirement for large buildings
- Conversions of farm building
- Loss of chalk downland to arable or scrub encroachment
- Lack of coppice management leading to a reduction of specialised species such as butterflies
- Isolation of small patches of habitat
- Declining farmland bird populations.