

Cranborne Chase National Landscape

Nature Recovery Plan 2025-2030

cranbornechase.org.uk



A collaborative strategy to reverse biodiversity decline and restore ecological resilience across one of England's most ecologically and culturally significant protected landscapes.

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DIGITAL VERSION

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The Burnt-tip orchid (*Neotinea ustulata*), the County flower of Wiltshire. An IUCN Red List species and confined to a few sites in southern England ©David Blake



Executive Summary

The **Cranborne Chase National Landscape (CCNL) Nature Recovery Plan 2025** sets out a collaborative strategy to reverse biodiversity decline and restore ecological resilience across one of England's most ecologically and culturally significant protected landscapes.

Developed in alignment with national and international frameworks, the plan complements the CCNL Management Plan 2025–2030 and supports the UK's commitment to protect 30% of land and sea for nature by 2030.

Vision and Objectives

CCNL envisions a landscape where **new and existing wildlife-rich habitats** are interconnected, resilient and celebrated by communities and land managers and includes

- A landscape-scale approach to nature recovery based on the **Lawton Principles** and supporting the delivery of **Local Nature Recovery Strategies**
- **Sustainable farming** across every landholding
- Creation of **species-rich grasslands, field margins and woodlands**
- Long-term habitat management supported through **statutory and voluntary finance**

Environment Improvement Plan Targets and Outcomes

The plan sets ambitious targets tailored to CCNL's landscape and ecological context, which include

- Creation of **10,000 ha of new wildlife-rich habitat** by 2042.
- Supporting **nature-friendly farming** on a minimum of 41% of landholdings by 2030
- Increase the number or **SSSI** and **Priority Habitats** in favourable condition
- **Champion species recovery** through the development of **Species Action Plans**

Strategic Priorities

- Restore **chalk streams, ancient woodlands, and calcareous grasslands**
- Enable landscape scale **habitat connection**
- Promote **sustainable farming** practices and regenerative farming
- Enable **community-led conservation** and citizen science
- Support the use of **green finance** and develop public-private partnerships

Next Steps

Following consultation, a detailed **Nature Recovery Delivery Plan** will be developed with stakeholders to guide implementation through to 2030 which will include specific actions, funding mechanisms and monitoring frameworks to ensure measurable progress.





Identifying freshwater species as part of the Chase and Chalke Landscape Partnership project ©CCNL



1. Introduction & Purpose

At the time of writing, we continue to witness the catastrophic decline of England's nature. Many of us will be familiar with the vast loss in habitats such as the 97% reduction since the 1930's of traditional **hay meadows** and a 95% reduction of actively **coppiced woodland** between 1905 and 2020.

Plenty of us will also have heard about the population crashes in some of our most charismatic species, such as the turtle dove (97% fall between 1994 & 2023) and the high brown fritillary butterfly (77% reduction between 1982 & 2001). Now, even species considered commonplace 20 years ago, are seeing spiralling populations. Nature is in dire need and we must act fast.

However, in Cranborne Chase, where our landscape is predominantly rural, nature is a part of our daily lives. It is an intrinsic part of what makes this place special and what supports many of our rural land-based businesses.

As a society, we rely on nature for our existence, from cleaning our water to pollinating our crops, preventing our homes from flooding to building soil fertility. And the myriad of other interconnected functions that nature creates that we have yet to fully comprehend.

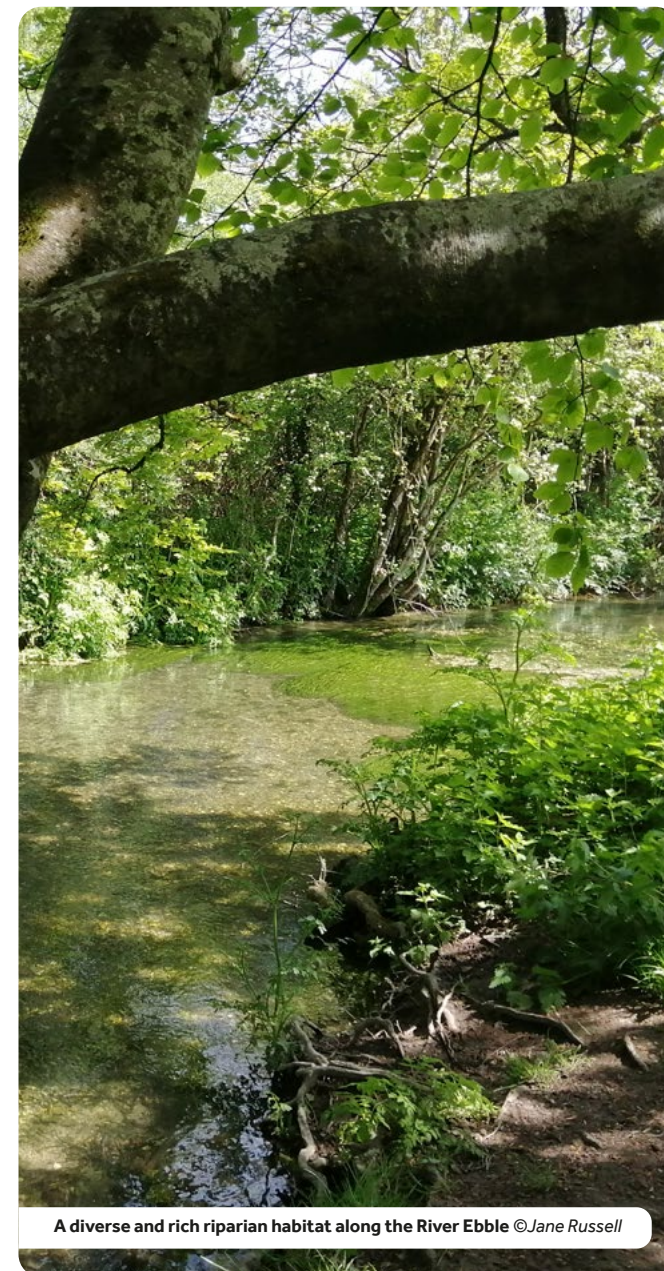
It is time for us to stop asking simply "What can nature do for us?" and to commit ourselves to considering what we can do for nature. A viewpoint reinforced by the UK government signing up to the **UN Convention of Biological Diversity 2022** (UNCBD) agreement to protect 30% of the planet's land and oceans by 2030 ('30by30').

Acknowledging that habitat and species recovery must be addressed at a landscape-scale and in line with our commitment to '30by30', this Nature Recovery Plan for Cranborne Chase National Landscape (CCNL) is intended to provide an in-depth complement to the new Cranborne Chase National Landscape Partnership Management Plan 2025 - 2030.

It represents our shared vision for a beautiful, abundant and resilient landscape. One that is rich in wildlife and provides for the needs of our communities, rural businesses and visitors.

We support our Host Authorities that have declared both **Nature** and **Climate** Emergencies, recognising that both threats are tightly interwoven, and where future Nature Recovery actions should also overtly deliver climate management and mitigation outcomes.

Our targets are ambitious but entirely necessary. As a partnership working on your behalf, we will do our utmost to pursue and argue for sufficient resources to be allocated from central government to allow us together to turn these goals into reality.



A diverse and rich riparian habitat along the River Ebble ©Jane Russell



2. Context

2.1 Cranborne Chase National Landscape

Cranborne Chase National Landscape (CCNL) is not just a designation – it's so much more. For many of us it is the basis of our livelihoods and holds deep family and cultural connections. It's where our forefathers farmed, where smugglers navigated the landscape under cover of darkness, where ancestors rest in ancient barrows and where our children will forge their future paths. It's also a place that many people visit to escape the pressures of urban living and reconnect with the rest of life. It is a protected landscape, but it's also our home. One that has been shaped by human hands for thousands of years and means many different things to as many different people.

Cranborne Chase is a **National Landscape (NL)** (legally designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) in 1981 under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, and reinforced by the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000, for conservation and enhancement of landscape natural beauty. NLs are cultural living landscapes and as such, natural beauty is a dynamic and intrinsic quality that arises from the rich blend of natural, historic and cultural heritage.

CCNL is the 6th largest NL in England and Wales at 981 km² area. Five Local Authorities intersect with CCNL: Wiltshire Council; Dorset Council; Somerset Council; Hampshire County Council; and New Forest District Council.

2.2 CCNL Management Plan

Purpose

Preparation and review of a **National Landscape Management Plan** every 5 years is a statutory duty placed on the relevant Local Authorities and produced on their behalf by the CCNL Partnership. The objectives and policies laid out for conservation and enhancement of natural beauty that we lay out within our NL Management Plan must be considered by all public bodies and persons in public office making decisions that affect the land.

The Natural Environment

The natural environment is recognised as a Special Quality of the designated landscape in the latest iteration of the 'CCNL Management Plan: 2025-30'.

Varied geology (including chalk, clay and flint), a rich ecological character, emblematic wildlife, clear rivers and streams, tracts of arable land supporting arable plants and the six most nationally threatened farmland bird species and ancient woodland in a chalk landscape are characteristic of this NL's natural heritage.

The quality and diversity of the natural environment is intrinsic to the community, sense of place, individual well-being and economic opportunity.

A key priority of CCNL is to sustain and enhance wildlife in an active agricultural landscape, recognising that human activities over centuries have and continue to shape this landscape.



Diverse wildflower species associated with chalk streams and meadows ©David Blake



2.3 Nature Recovery Plan Production

Timeline

The CCNL team along with a range of partners and local communities, has been leading and facilitating on many Nature Recovery initiatives since the AONB was first designated in 1981 and work on this formal NRP commenced in January 2022 and has been authored by Michelle Bowe, Gemma Worswick, Pete Etheridge and Craig Daters.

Whilst this plan seeks to formalise a strategy for the coming years, we acknowledge and recognise the hard work that has already been undertaken to get us to this stage.

Consultation

This document will be subject to a formal consultation exercise that recognises the breadth of stakeholder support and collaboration required to delivery all Nature Recovery ambitions.

The consultation process will utilise multiple forms of engagement which will include opportunities for stakeholders to attend workshops and information events.

Feedback from the consultation process will be used to inform a finalised version of the Plan before it is shared with key stakeholders for formal endorsement.

Nature Recovery Delivery Plan

Following the finalisation and endorsement of the Nature Recovery Plan by the CCNL Partnership Board, a Delivery Plan (in collaboration with key stakeholders) will be developed that sets out a series of very specific actions and targets that will form the backbone of the CCNL teams prioritised Nature Recovery efforts leading up to 2030, that support, compliment and enable partner organisations to take action.



Corn bunting (*Emberiza calandra*). A bird of lowland farms and a UK Red List species ©CCNL



3. A Vision for Nature Recovery

3.1 Vision statement

We aim for long-term, landscape-scale, Nature Recovery, guided by the Lawton Principles of creating bigger, better, more and connected habitats across CCNL, contributing to the Global Biodiversity 30by30 target.

Our goal is to sustain species-rich habitats and sustainable farming through resilient networks, healthy soils, and strong ecosystems.

We want Nature Recovery to be celebrated by communities and land managers, enhancing CCNL's special qualities and our connection to the landscape.



Children enjoying the afternoon sun on a 'clapper bridge' over the River Wylfe. Early connection, wonder and enjoyment of the natural world supports the growth of a lifetimes bond. ©Carolyn White

"In 2030, the Cranborne Chase National Landscape will be an inspirational example of sustainable management in action where:

- its distinctive local landscapes and wildlife are conserved and enhanced by those who manage the land, nurturing countryside for future generations its healthy soils, clean air and water are appreciated, prized and respected by all the breadth and depth of historic land use offers up its stories in the landscape the aesthetic qualities of the landscape and environment, along with the sense of wonder and enjoyment, are appreciated by all."

'Cranborne Chase National Landscape Partnership Plan: 2025-2030'



3.2 Key Priorities

1. **Nationally and Locally Designated nature rich habitats** are managed effectively to maintain good ecological condition and provide high quality opportunities to connect and act as stepping stones for extensive areas of newly created wildlife rich habitat
2. The management of **existing woodland and wooded habitats** supports resilience and adaptability to the impacts of pests and diseases and climate change.
3. **Agricultural land use** is sensitive to delivering beneficial ecosystem services that enhance the biological function of the land, water quality and quantity, landscape character and business resilience
4. **Chalk streams** and their catchments are managed as an entire ecosystem, where abstraction and waste water inputs are minimised, and land use and river corridor restoration actions enhance the quality, flow and use of the water
5. Habitat management and creation is enabled and facilitated to create **climate resilient landscapes and communities**
6. **International Dark Sky Reserve** status is celebrated and utilised to support and champion a reduction in light pollution, limiting the detrimental impact on biodiversity
7. The creation of extensive areas of **new nature rich habitats** connects with existing habitats and supports the enhancement of riparian zone management
8. Communities are empowered to adopt **champion species** and work towards enhancing and creating suitable habitat
9. Enable the use and flow of **statutory and voluntary finance** to support long term land management
10. Consider **Species reintroductions** that support the re-establishment of functioning and resilient ecosystems.



Grazing species rich chalk grassland with White Park cattle at Win Green Down SSSI ©Jamie Randall



3.3 Key outcomes

New and re-created nature rich habitats

compliment and add value to the existing network of habitats through enhancing quality, size, connectivity and permeability.

Nature Recovery successes to date have been achieved by supporting farmers in creating space for wildlife within the agricultural landscape. Species that are closely associated with traditional **agricultural habitats such as farmland birds, arable plants and pollinating insects** have benefitted from targeted habitat intervention within productive farmland.

Future opportunities to support farm cluster groups and their facilitators, farm advisors and agricultural land managers will be pursued

Additional benefits that flow from Nature Recovery (such as flood amelioration, carbon sequestration and soil health) will be integral to **quality of life and economic opportunities** experienced by communities within and influenced by the CCNL landscape.

A blend of public and private finance through agri-environmental schemes (AES), payments for ecosystem services, **Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)**, **Nutrient Neutrality and Mitigation** and voluntary/philanthropic markets will provide vital tools for delivering new wildlife habitat and a transition to sustainable farming practices that can secure a healthy and resilient landscape for all.



The agriculturally productive valley floor near to Compton Abbas, rising up to the species rich chalk grassland on the escarpment of Compton Down. Field boundary trees, hedgerows and wooded 'ivers' running along the base of the slope, add ecological and visual complexity, knitting the visual landscape together ©CCNL

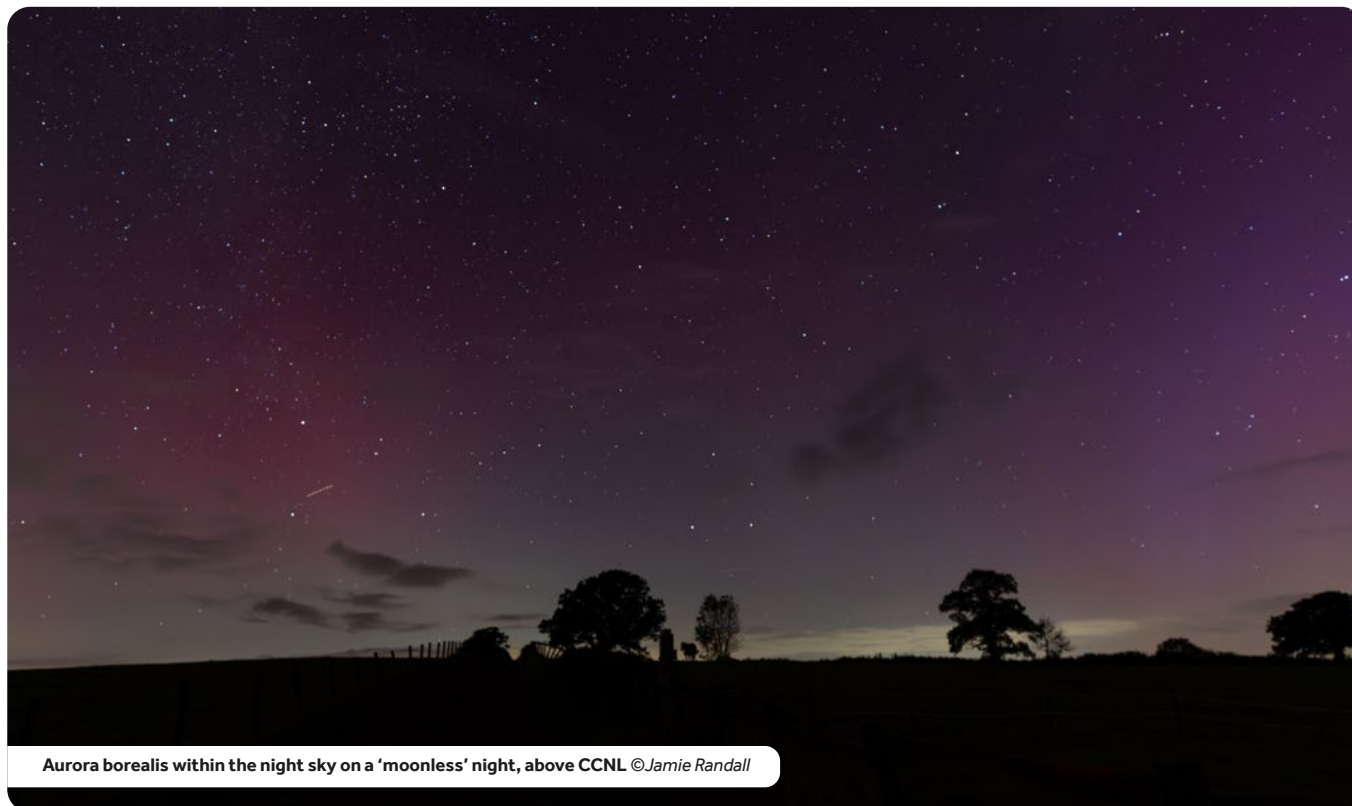


4. Policy Framework for Nature Recovery – Overview

Nature recovery within Cranborne Chase National Landscape is underpinned by a robust policy framework that aligns local action with national and international commitments. These policies provide the legal, strategic, and financial foundations for delivering biodiversity targets and climate resilience.

Key drivers include

- **Global and National Commitments:**
The UK's adoption of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and the Environmental Improvement Plan (EIP) set ambitious goals such as halting biodiversity decline and achieving "30 by 30" – protecting 30% of land and sea for nature by 2030
- **Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS):**
Statutory strategies under the Environment Act 2021 guide habitat mapping and prioritisation, ensuring local actions contribute to a coherent Nature Recovery Network
- **Agricultural Transition:** The shift from EU-style subsidies to Environmental Land Management (ELM) schemes incentivises sustainable farming and landscape-scale recovery



Aurora borealis within the night sky on a 'moonless' night, above CCNL ©Jamie Randall

- **Supporting Frameworks:** Additional policies such as the Land Use Framework, Making Space for Nature (Lawton Review), the Landscape Review, and the Colchester Declaration reinforce the need for bigger, better, and more connected habitats
- **Special Designations:** CCNL's International Dark Sky Reserve status and water industry legislation highlight the integration of biodiversity with cultural heritage and ecosystem services

Together, these frameworks shape CCNL's vision for nature recovery, ensuring actions are legally compliant, strategically aligned, and financially supported.

[For full details, see Appendix 1: Policy for Nature Recovery.](#)



5. Targets for Nature Recovery

Delivering nature recovery at scale requires clear, measurable targets that align local action with national and international commitments.

This section sets out the ambitions for Cranborne Chase National Landscape (CCNL) within the framework of the UK's Environmental Improvement Plan (EIP), the Protected Landscapes Targets and Outcomes Framework, and the Colchester Declaration.

These targets are designed to

- **Reverse biodiversity decline** by creating and restoring wildlife-rich habitats across CCNL
- **Improve the condition of designated sites** and priority habitats, ensuring they are managed for long-term ecological health
- **Support sustainable farming** practices that enhance soil health, water quality, and ecosystem resilience
- **Enable climate adaptation** through actions such as tree planting, hedgerow restoration, and chalk stream recovery
- **Empower communities and partnerships** to champion species recovery and deliver nature-based solutions

The targets are ambitious but essential to meet the UK's commitment to protect **30% of land for nature by 2030** and to build a coherent **Nature Recovery Network**.

They provide a roadmap for action through to 2030 and beyond, supported by statutory mechanisms, agri-environment schemes, and innovative green finance.



Species rich chalk grassland on Barrow Hill SSSI, managed through sympathetic and dynamic grazing as part of an agricultural system ©Tracy Adams

5.1 Environment Improvement Plan 2023

The **UN Biodiversity Conference** in 2022 committed to protect 30% of land and sea for nature by 2030, enshrined within the Environmental Improvement Plan 2023.

Areas contributing towards **30by30** should include significant areas of Protected Landscapes which contain around half of England's priority habitats and will provide the backbone to 30by30 in England.

Land contributing towards the UK's 30by30 target should be conserved and managed for nature, making progress towards in-situ conservation outcomes and sustained over the long-term. These outcomes may be taking place alongside and supporting the delivery of wider objectives such as food production.

The total area in England that can be counted towards these 30by30 targets is currently approximately 7.1% of the total area.

In order for land to meet the 30by30 commitment, there are 3 criteria.

1. Purpose

The area's purposes should include in-situ conservation, but this may not be its primary or sole purpose. Any wider purposes must be appropriately managed so as not to prevent or significantly limit the delivery of in-situ conservation outcomes.

Protected Sites and nature reserves are designated for the purpose of in-situ conservation, although they may have additional purposes.

Protected Sites on land include the following designations such as

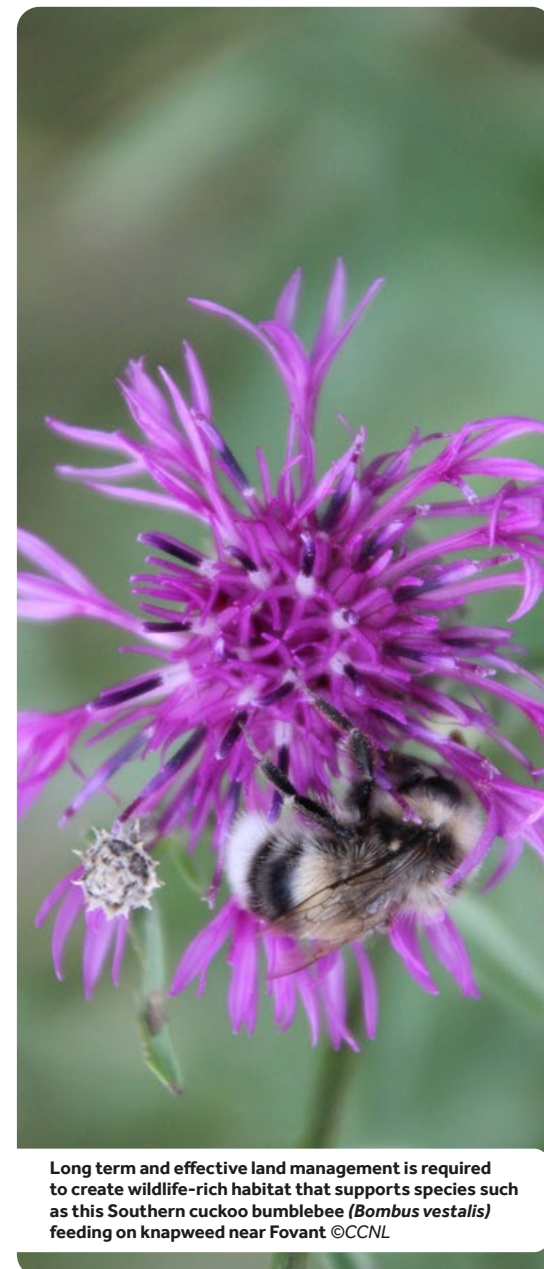
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)
- Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)
- Special Protection Areas (SPAs)
- National Nature Reserves (NNRs)
- Ramsar sites
- Ancient, deciduous and PAWS woodland

2. Protection

30by30 areas should be able to demonstrate that in-situ conservation will be sustained over the long term (at least 20 years) and that the area will be protected against loss or damage to important biodiversity values through legal or other effective means.

3. Management

Management should provide confidence that governance or ownership of the area has the mandate and capacity to achieve and sustain such outcomes. Management mechanisms should identify, implement and prioritise the delivery of in-situ conservation. Monitoring should be in place to identify baselines and assess progress.



Long term and effective land management is required to create wildlife-rich habitat that supports species such as this Southern cuckoo bumblebee (*Bombus vestalis*) feeding on knapweed near Fovant ©CCNL



5.2 Protected Landscapes Targets and Outcomes Framework

To support Protected Landscapes in meeting their huge potential for nature, climate, people and place there are ambitious targets set by Defra for National Parks and National Landscapes within England, within the **Protected Landscapes Targets and Outcomes Framework**.

These targets will stimulate the actions that are most needed to achieve positive change and will set the ambition to achieve outcomes from the EIP 2023.

Target	Focus Area	Target Measurement	By When	Primary delivery mechanism
1	Create new wildlife rich habitat	250,000 ha.	2042	AES, statutory and voluntary financing
2	SSSIs in favourable condition	80%	2042	AES
3	SSSIs having 'actions on track' to achieve favourable condition	60%	2028	AES
4	Priority habitat in favourable condition	100%	2042	AES
5	Adopt nature friendly farming	10-15 % on 65-80% of land holdings	2030	AES, statutory and voluntary financing
7	Peatland restoration	130,000 ha.	2050	Statutory and voluntary financing
8	Increase tree canopy and woodland cover from 2022 baseline	3% total land area increase	2050	AES, EWCO, eNGO's

Protected Landscapes Targets and Outcomes

It is clear that financial support from agri-environment schemes (AES) will need to provide the base level financial mechanism to support short and long term ecologically beneficial land management that underpins many of these targets.

A CCNL perspective

To achieve longer adoption of sensitive and beneficial land management practices that have the potential to maximise outcomes for biodiversity, the uptake of **Countryside Stewardship**, especially Higher Tier (CSHT) agreements, should feature as a key ambition for CCNL.

Updates from Defra on the planned re-opening of CSHT and the 'reformed' Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI) will therefore influence the development of the Nature Recovery Delivery Plan.

It will be essential to leverage in additional resources and finance to develop geographically wider and longer-term change, where opportunities such as Landscape Recovery schemes, **The National Lottery Heritage Fund Landscape Connections**, **Big Chalk**, nutrient neutrality, BNG, private financing and other 'nature finance' initiatives will all have a role to play.

Both the **National Parks Partnerships** and the **National Landscapes Association** are investing in exploration of 'green finance' opportunities to support wide scale and impactful Nature Recovery projects and work streams. We will utilise these networks to capitalise on securing inward investment to develop and expand project work.



5.2.1 Target 1 - Create new wildlife rich habitat

Restore or create more than 250,000 hectares of a range of wildlife-rich habitats* within Protected Landscapes, outside protected sites by 2042 (from a 2022 baseline).

	Target (ha.)	By when
EIP	140,000	2028
EIP	250,000	2030
Colchester Declaration	100,000	2030
Proportional PLTOF target for CCNL (total)**	7,787	2042

* See Appendix 3 for Potential habitat types for CCNL

** Proportional targets based on overall area of all PL's

- a) The actions included as restoration or creation are those that establish wildlife-rich habitat on land or water where such habitat is currently absent. Actions should result in an increased extent of wildlife-rich habitat, not improved condition of existing habitat.
- b) Actions to restore or create wildlife-rich habitat undertaken through established or future schemes, such as AES or government grants, will count towards the target.

- c) Those actions under schemes which are reasonably expected to lead to the longer term restoration or creation of wildlife-rich habitat will count towards the target.
- d) BNG will count towards the habitat target where an excess of wildlife-rich habitat has been created or restored beyond the direct replacement of existing habitat. The direct replacement of habitat by BNG does not count as only the 10% gain from BNG can be counted towards the habitat target.

Barn owl (*Tyto alba*), a bird associated with mixed farming systems, hunting for small mammals across farmland
©Jamie Randall

! CCNL action

Support creation of 7,787 ha. new Wildlife Rich Habitat by 2042

Explore and support the mechanisms that enable the sale of ecosystem services and biodiversity credits, enabling the creation and long term management of new habitat.



5.2.2 Target 2 - SSSIs in favourable condition

Bring 80% of SSSIs within Protected Landscapes into favourable condition by 2042.

	Target	By when
EIP	50%	2042
Colchester Declaration	200,000 ha.	2030
Proportional PLTOF of additional % into favourable condition for CCNL	36%	2042

NE undertake **SSSI Monitoring and Reporting** where they have an overall objective to achieve favourable condition on all SSSI's.

By guiding and supporting land managers, NE plays a crucial role in influencing the long term management and conditions of SSSI's.

Financial support through existing AES is likely to play a significant role, but through collaborative support of NE and land managers, there are opportunities to enable quicker, more impactful and longer lasting positive change across SSSI's through other support schemes such as the Defra funded **Farming in Protected Landscapes** (FiPL) programme which is a temporary scheme to support the **Agricultural Transition Plan**.



CCNL action

Support long term management of SSSI's to bring an additional 36% into Favourable Condition by 2042.



Species rich Calcareous Grassland Priority Habitat at Fontmell & Melbury Downs SSSI, owned and managed by the National Trust ©Jamie Randall



5.2.3 Target 3 - SSSIs having 'actions on track' to achieve favourable

60% of SSSIs within Protected Landscapes assessed as having 'actions on track' to achieve favourable condition by 31 January 2028, which will include all sites that have a SSSI Condition Assessment of Favourable and Unfavourable Recovering and actions on track could include relevant AES options.

For a unit* to be counted as 'on track', the unit is either

- In favourable condition with no actions 'Underway – behind' where the planned start year has passed; or
- In unfavourable condition and at least one action is 'Underway – on track' and no actions are behind schedule

Condition	Number of Sites	% of total number
Favourable	114	44
Unfavourable Recovering	130	50
Declining	5	3
No change	3	2
Destroyed	1	0.5

Current SSSI condition in CCNL

** Sites of Special Scientific Interest Site Units are divisions of SSSIs based on habitat, tenure and management, and are the basis for recording all information on SSSI Condition and management.*



CCNL action

Support long term management to ensure all SSSI's have 'actions on track' to retain or enhance overall condition.



Young pyramidal orchid (*Anacamptis pyramidalis*), part of the rich species mix on Martin Down NNR
©Jamie Randall



5.2.4 Target 4 - Priority habitat in favourable condition

Continuing favourable management of all existing PH already in favourable condition outside of SSSIs (from a 2022 baseline) and increasing to include all newly restored or created habitat through AES by 2042.

There are 27 main terrestrial and marine habitat types recognised as being of **Habitats and species of principal importance in England** for the conservation of biological diversity in England under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, covering 1.86 million ha. - around 14% of the total land area of the country - see appendix 3.

In 2021 across England, 66.15% of PH within SSSI's were in favourable or unfavourable recovering condition outside of SSSI's.

'Appropriate management' means land that is either

- within SSSIs and in a favourable condition
- within SSSIs and in an unfavourable but recovering condition, or
- outside of SSSIs but under favourable management (Environmental Stewardship Scheme 'Higher level' or Countryside Stewardship Scheme, or within FC 'Managed woodland'.

Across CCNL, recorded and mapped PH comprises 14.9% (14,723 ha.) of the landscape area with deciduous woodland comprising 10.6%, calcareous grassland 3.9%, additional 'matrix' habitat 1.3% and coastal and floodplain grazing marsh 1%.

European turtle dove (*Streptopelia turtur*), a UK Red List species having suffered a 99% decline since the 1960's. Once a common breeding bird on Martin Down NNR, NE, HCC and farm cluster groups are working hard to create and maintain diverse, complex and species rich habitat in an attempt to reverse the decline locally.
©David Blake



A priority within CCNL will be to support landowners to effectively and appropriately manage PH through AES, FiPL and support from partner organisations and projects such as **Wiltshire Wildlife Trust** and **Wessex Rivers Trust**.

! CCNL action

Support land managers to identify and effectively manage and enhance PH condition, and support development of long term monitoring programme.



5.2.5 Target 5 - Adopt nature friendly farming

Ensuring that 41% of land managers adopt nature friendly farming (NFF) on at least 7% of their land by 2030.

	Target	By when
EIP 2025	7% across 41%	2030

There are currently 540 registered businesses in CCNL within the 'agriculture, forestry and fishing' category and 46% of CCNL's farmed landscape is under an active AES agreement which is likely to be the most important tool for initially enabling action.

For the rest of this plan, we will use the term 'sustainable farming' to describe Nature Friendly Farm and/or 'agro-ecological' farming/land management practices.

Sustainable farming means farming systems that maintain or improve long term soil, water and biodiversity health while producing food profitably.

Sustainable farming is supported by some **Environmental Land Management (ELMs)** options, which pay for practical actions that improve farm productivity and resilience alongside environmental outcomes, where the use and uptake of AES may serve as the primary and in some cases, 'entry level' opportunity, for many land managers to undertake sustainable farming activities, that may enable and facilitate longer term management actions.

These actions include precision nutrient management, herbal leys, multi species cover crops, no/minimum tillage approaches, buffer strips, hedgerow management and agroforestry.

Regenerative agriculture is a whole farm approach that restores natural processes, especially soil function, through principles such as minimising soil disturbance, maintaining living roots, maximising plant diversity, integrating livestock where appropriate, and keeping soil covered. Increases in soil organic matter and infiltration rates, and a reduction in inputs can support enhanced ecological health and economic business resilience.

Across CCNL the following sustainable farming actions may be suitable to enhance ecological health, economic viability and landscape character

- **Soil health planning:** annual soil assessment, organic matter testing and a practical soil management plan for each block
- **Reduced or no till on suitable arable:** direct drilling or shallow cultivation to minimise disturbance and protect soil structure
- **Multi species cover crops and herbal leys:** build organic matter, fix nitrogen, improve rooting depth and support pollinators; graze where appropriate
- **Precision nutrient management:** variable rate nutrient application based on zonal testing; split applications synchronised to crop demand
- **Integrated Pest Management (IPM):** threshold based interventions, non chemical controls and beneficial habitat (flower rich margins) to reduce pesticide load



A favourite of the field margins and tracksides on the free draining chalk. Common knapweed (*Centaurea nigra*) provides a rich nectar source attracting many insects, including these 6 spot Burnet moths ©Tracy Adams

- **Riparian buffers and wet features:** 6–12 m grass/flower strips next to watercourses; ponds/scrapes to slow the flow and trap sediment in the Nadder, Wylfe, Ebble and Allen catchments
- **Hedgerow and tree management:** longer rotation cutting, gapping up with native species, hedgerow trees; small scale agroforestry where it complements Landscape Character
- **Seed rich and flower rich habitats for farmland birds:** unharvested headlands and mixes on the greensand terrace and open chalk downland to support corn bunting, skylark and tree sparrow
- **Pasture based, rotational or adaptive grazing:** match stocking to carrying capacity, use mixed swards and protect riverbanks from poaching.



Potential benefits include

- **Soils:** higher organic matter, better structure and infiltration; reduced runoff and erosion; improved nutrient use efficiency
- **Water:** buffers, cover crops and good nutrient planning reduce nitrate, phosphate and sediment losses to chalk streams
- **Wildlife:** more diverse margins, hedges and wet features increase pollinators, farmland birds and natural enemies—supporting resilient production
- **Climate resilience:** healthier soils hold more water in droughts and slow overland flow in storms; diverse rotations reduce risk
- **Lower input costs:** over time through better nutrient targeting, fewer passes, reduced pesticide reliance and improved livestock performance on herbal leys
- **Blended finance:** opportunities to combine public payments with high integrity private nature markets (e.g., carbon, biodiversity net gain) where additionality and no double funding can be demonstrated
- Opportunity to adopt **certification standards** for regenerative or sustainable farming (such as **Pasture for Life**, **LEAF Marque** or **Wildfarmed**) which may provide a useful assurance mechanism for some food producers to enhance 'value added' consumer messaging

! CCNL action

Champion and promote awareness and use of sustainable farming techniques, practices and benefits, to build ecosystem service delivery that helps to underpin economic business resilience

Collaborate with stakeholder networks and partner organisations to support land managers to access guidance, support and funding and develop a series of multi-year on-farm tests and trials.

5.2.6 Target 7 - Peatland restoration

Restore approximately 130,000 hectares of peat in England's Protected Landscapes by 2050.

CCNL has 186 ha. of '**peaty soils**', primarily within the R. Wylfe and R. Allen valleys, a small area within the R. Tarrant valley and wooded areas south of Warminster and Longleat Forest.

Whilst promotion and information sharing of these areas will feature within land management decisions, and sensitive management and restoration of floodplains and wetland will positively influence, there is limited opportunity to enable any meaningful impact towards this target, so will not feature as a specific priority within CCNL.

! CCNL action

Ensure reference to protection of peaty soils features within land management and habitat enhancement/creation actions and projects, such as riverine restoration projects and riparian tree planting.



'Min-till' activity to reduce depth of soil tillage in seed bed preparation ©Tracy Adams



5.2.7 Target 8 - Increase tree canopy and woodland cover from 2022 baseline

Increase tree canopy and woodland cover (combined) by 3% of total land area in Protected Landscapes by 2050 (from 2022 baseline).

	Target (ha.)	By when
EIP	34,000	2028
Colchester Declaration	36,000	2030
Proportion PLTOF targets for CCNL	2,957	2050

Woodland type	Area (ha.)	% of CCNL
All woodland	12,753	13
Deciduous woodland (total)	9,255	10.6
ASNW and PAWS	7,052	7.2
Softwood plantations	2,943	3.3
Wood pasture and parkland	2,210	2

Existing woodland types and cover within CCNL



Natural flood management in the form of riparian tree planting on The Tarrant at Launceston Farm, to reduce soil loss and flow rates during periods of heavy flow. Tree guards in place to reduce impact of deer browsing

An increase in tree planting and canopy cover within CCNL has the potential to connect and expand existing wooded habitats, enhance biodiversity, increase rainwater infiltration, improve riparian habitats, enhance/improve agricultural systems, increase carbon sequestration and enhance some landscape characteristics.

Biodiversity outcomes can be maximised by following the 'nature network' principles that capitalise on the restoration, expansion, connectivity and permeability of existing habitat, aiding species migration and enhancing ecosystem resilience.

The spectrum of tree planting opportunities should be considered in each scenario to ensure that positive outcomes, which includes Landscape Character, are maximised.

CCNL's **Right Tree, Right Place** and **Trees In The Landscape** guidance should be consulted to support landscape enhancement objectives.

Tree planting may include

- Expansion and connectivity of existing deciduous woodland
- Woodland, copses, coverts, shelterbelts, riparian buffers
- Agroforestry – arable and pastoral. Living barns, forage plots, alley cropping
- Trees outside of woodlands – in-field, hedgerow trees, parkland
- Natural regeneration
- Orchards
- Community and amenity planting



Mature hedgerows trees create a 'wooded' appearance within a pastoral landscape. The Nadder Valley near Donhead St Andrew ©Tracy Adams





The newly commissioned **Western Forest (WF)** had 5 defined 'priority areas' for the period 2025-2030, where priority area 3 extends south into the north-west corner of CCNL, covering areas within the Greensand Hills, Greensand Terrace and Chalk Escarpment LCT's.

The ambition is to plant 2,500 ha. of new woodland across the WF area by 2030 and 20m trees by 2050, as well as restoring 1,500ha of existing woodland.

There is clearly potential for WF to support CCNL tree planting targets within this area, but it is imperative that any planting proposal considers the guidance with 'Right Tree, Right Place', particularly when concentrated on the 'Best and Most Versatile' ALC 2 soils within LCT 6B Greensand Terrace.

AES, EWCO, the **Woodland Trust MOREwoods** and many additional tree planting support schemes will all have a role to play in enabling increased tree planting rates within appropriate areas of CCNL, that delivers multi-faceted outcomes for nature, climate, people and place.



CCNL action

Develop delivery partnerships that support and enable 3,000ha. of tree planting opportunities, that also enhance and connect existing wooded habitats, support land use sustainability and enhance Landscape Character

Create Landscape Vision Plans for Landscape Character Areas where tree planting is likely to be most effective in delivering positive nature, climate and landscape outcomes



5.2.7.1 Right Tree, Right Place

In recognition of the role of tree planting to support national targets for Nature Recovery and climate adaptation, through an iterative process since 2021, CCNL have developed several guides and resources to support landscape sensitive tree planting and woodland management **Right Tree, Right Place 2021** and **Trees in the Landscape 2025**

This guidance primarily applies to tree planting schemes that are below the threshold of a Woodland EIA (less than 2 ha) which nevertheless should have regard to the impact of increasing tree cover on

- The natural beauty of CCNL
- The special qualities of distinct landscape character types, and
- Priority habitats/species

In the open landscapes such as LCT 6 'Greensand Terrace' and LCT 2 'Open Chalk Downland' for example, sensitive planting can enhance and connect existing features such as copses and boundary hedges and where the removal of conifer plantations and adoption of selective felling/Irregular silviculture could also have positive benefits for both Nature Recovery and landscape character.

The planting of larger and unconnected woodland areas within these areas however could negatively impact the landscape qualities, so a precautionary approach should be adopted and advice sought from the CCNL team.



5.3 Additional EIP targets

5.3.1 Hedgerow restoration and planting

Support farmers to create or restore 30,000 miles of hedgerows a year by 2037 and 45,000 miles of hedgerows a year by 2050, returning hedgerow lengths in England to 10% above the 1984 peak (360,000 miles).

The extent, diversity, age, condition, length, location, orientation and management are all relevant factors in determining the ecological value of existing hedgerows.

With careful, timely and ongoing management, the vast majority of existing hedgerows can support a functioning ecosystem, improve connectivity and enhance land management practices, including many types of agricultural activity.

The restoration of existing, for example through laying, and planting of new hedgerows within CCNL aligns largely with potential benefits and landscape considerations to that of tree planting, where there may exist good opportunities for new planting within LCT 3 Wooded Chalk Downland, LCT 5 Chalk River Valleys and restoration within LCT 8 Rolling Clay Vales for example, and where the siting of new hedgerows does not impact the visual enjoyment of open landscapes, especially alongside major roads.

Sympathetic management is the key to create and maintain healthy, diverse and resilient hedgerows and the **People's Trust for Endangered Species** amongst other organisations provides lots of useful information as well as a really useful **Healthy Hedgerows** app.



CCNL action

Promote awareness of and directly support and enable delivery of appropriate management of existing hedgerows

Support and enable planting of 100 miles of new species rich hedgerow that provides connectivity to and enhance existing habitats by 2030

Champion and support an increase in additional complimentary adjacent habitat



Channel impoundment on the River Ebbles at Stowford Bridge, which can impact flow regimes and increase sedimentation ©Sue Law

5.3.2 Chalk streams

Chalk streams recognised as a priority habitat and commitment to their restoration as part of national water quality and biodiversity goals.

The plan reinforces statutory targets set within **The Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) Regulations 2017**, to achieve 75% of water bodies in good ecological status by 2027 and sets a measurable objective to reduce harmful storm overflow discharges into chalk streams by 75% by 2035.

It promotes nature-based solutions such as floodplain reconnection, riparian tree planting, wetland creation, and removal of physical barriers to restore natural flow regimes.

Delivery will be supported through Local Nature Recovery Strategies, water company investment programmes under **Water Industry National Environment Programme**, and direct funding from Defra to support chalk stream restoration projects.



CCNL action

Utilising capital funding opportunities such as FiPL and through working in partnership, promote and support catchment-based approach actions that reduce agricultural, rural and urban inputs and run-off, and support removal of physical barriers and naturalising of water courses



5.4 Additional 'Colchester Declaration' targets

Species Action Plan

Each AONB to adopt a species on the IUCN Red List and by preparing and delivering a Species Action Plan at least thirty species relevant to AONBs will be taken off the list by 2030. See S6.4 Champion Species.

The choice of species within CCNL has primarily been determined by the ability to engage a wide spectrum of stakeholders, partners, community groups and individuals, where the ability to engage at a community level will provide an essential opportunity for residents and community groups to support and champion Nature Recovery plans and ambitions whilst taking meaningful action at a local level.

CCNL action

Working in partnership, develop three Species Action Plans by 2027

Engage and support land managers, stakeholders and community groups to monitor species populations and habitat availability and condition

Enable and support enhancement, creation and ongoing management of habitat



Volunteer undertaking wildflower identification training at Martin Down NNR, part of the Greater Grazing project supported by Chase and Chalke Landscape Partnership ©CCNL

5.5 Community action

Community action should form one of the key ambitions of this Nature Recovery Plan, supporting and adding value to the vast volume of activity currently being undertaken by a very wide range of groups and individuals.

Potential opportunities may include

- Creation or support of a **'community nature network'** that provides resource, guidance and support to grass roots level activity
- Local **'nature positive' food production**, such as that developed in Devon - **People, Planet, and Pollinators**
- **Species champions** that promote individual and community action to enhance and create habitat at a local level. Tree sparrows, hedgehogs and pollinating insects are all viable options, as is a focus on invasive and non-native species management and control.

- **Freshwater habitat** enhancement through the management and creation of ponds
- **Veteran and ancient tree** monitoring and recording
- Development of **'Wild about Cranborne Chase'** community engagement and volunteering programme, led by the CCNL team

CCNL action

Working in partnership, develop opportunities that support direct and indirect delivery and management of community engagement actions

Champion and support community action



Community engagement and education as part of the Crystal Clear Ebble project ©CCNL

5.6 CCNL Actions Summary

Action	Description
Create new wildlife-rich habitat	Support creation of 7,787 ha and explore mechanisms for ecosystem services and biodiversity credits
SSSIs having actions on track	Ensure all SSSIs have actions on track to retain or enhance overall condition
Priority habitat in favourable condition	Support land managers to identify, manage and enhance PH condition and develop monitoring
Adopt nature-friendly farming	Champion and promote NFF techniques and collaborate with stakeholders for guidance and funding
Increase tree canopy and woodland cover	Develop delivery partnerships for 3,000 ha tree planting and create Landscape Vision Plans
Hedgerow restoration and planting	Promote awareness and enable delivery of management and planting of 100 miles of species-rich hedgerow
Chalk streams	Promote and support catchment-based actions to reduce inputs and restore natural flow regimes
Species Action Plans	Develop three Species Action Plans by 2027 and engage communities in monitoring and habitat enhancement
Community action	Develop opportunities for community engagement and champion local action initiatives



Species rich Chalk Grassland Priority Habitat on Barrow Hill, interwoven into a mixed farming landscape ©CCNL



6. State of Nature within CCNL

Cranborne Chase National Landscape is a living tapestry of chalk downs, ancient woodlands, winding river valleys, and historic parklands – a landscape shaped by millennia of human interaction and home to some of England’s most precious wildlife.

It is a place where globally rare chalk streams meander through wide valleys, where species rich grassland spread across dramatic downland slopes, and where ancient woodland provides a tangible connection to ancient and recent history.

A Landscape of Rarity and Richness

CCNL contains **14,723 ha of Priority Habitat**, including internationally important lowland calcareous grasslands, ancient semi-natural woodlands, and wood pasture that supports some of Europe’s finest veteran trees.

These habitats are irreplaceable, forming the backbone of ecological networks and cultural heritage.

The chalk grasslands here are among the richest in Europe, supporting species such as Adonis blue, marsh fritillary, and pasque flower, alongside rare arable plants like pheasant’s eye.



The River Allen near Wimborne St Giles ©CCNL

Nearly **200km of chalk streams** and rich riparian corridors thread through the valleys, supporting some of the rarest freshwater ecosystems on Earth.

These crystal-clear waters provide habitat for iconic species including Atlantic salmon, wild brown trout, water vole, and the endangered white-clawed crayfish.

Riparian zones, lined with willow, alder, and wet woodland act as wildlife highways, connecting fragmented habitats and delivering vital ecosystem services such as flood mitigation, water purification, and carbon storage.

CCNL is home to species that define its character and ecological value. From farmland birds like corn bunting, turtle dove, and yellowhammer, to woodland specialists such as hazel dormouse and Bechstein’s bat, these species are indicators of a healthy landscape.

However, many are in steep decline—corn bunting numbers have fallen by 86% since 1967, and turtle doves by 99%—making their recovery a central ambition of this plan.

Champion species will act as flagships for community engagement and habitat restoration, inspiring action across farms, villages, and river valleys.



Over **12,700 ha of woodland**, including 7,000 ha of ancient woodland, CCNL holds irreplaceable habitats that underpin biodiversity and cultural identity.

Veteran trees and wood pasture support specialist saproxylic invertebrates and birds such as woodlark and goshawk, while over 3,600km of hedgerows weave through the farmed landscape, offering corridors for wildlife and preserving historic field patterns.

Cranborne Chase is not just a protected landscape, it's a **cultural and ecological treasure**.

Its chalk grasslands are among the richest in Europe, its chalk rivers among the rarest on Earth. The survival of these habitats and species depends on bold, collaborative action to restore connectivity, enhance resilience, and celebrate the natural heritage that defines this place.

For full habitat inventories, designation maps, and species data, see:
[Appendix 2: State of Nature Evidence Base.](#)



Careful management of this veteran sweet chestnut (*Castanea sativa*) near Wardour through controlled grazing and field management, creates a rich and diverse suite of habitats ©Tracy Adams



7. A Landscape for Nature Recovery

Cranborne Chase is more than a collection of habitats. It is a **National Landscape**, legally designated for its outstanding natural beauty.

This means that every Nature Recovery action should do more than restore biodiversity; it should also **celebrate and enhance the character of this remarkable landscape**. From sweeping chalk escarpments to intimate wooded valleys, CCNL's sense of place is shaped by centuries of human interaction and natural processes.

Under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, the CRow Act 2000, and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (Section 85 Duty), public bodies and partners have a responsibility to **conserve and enhance** natural beauty.

The National Planning Policy Framework reinforces this by giving great weight to landscape character in decision-making. These duties sit alongside commitments under the Environment Act 2021 and Local Nature Recovery Strategies, ensuring that ecological restoration and landscape enhancement go hand in hand.

As we plan habitat creation, woodland expansion, and chalk stream restoration, we must ask: How will this action strengthen the qualities that make this National Landscape special?

By integrating nature recovery with landscape character objectives, we can create a future where wildlife thrives and the beauty of this historic landscape is safeguarded for generations to come.

Cranborne Chase is a large and diverse landscape comprising eight separate Landscape Character Types. While we need to address Nature Recovery across the entire landscape, the following section is broken down by each LCT, including targeted and appropriate measures that could be implemented locally to support Nature Recovery within CCNL.

Descriptions and maps of each LCT are reproduced from the updated Landscape Character Assessment 2024 and can found in [Appendix 5: Landscape Character Types](#)



Traditional hedge laying at Alvediston, funded through the Farming in Protected Landscapes programme, enhances ecological value and supports Landscape Character.



7.1 Landscape Character

Cranborne Chase is designated for its landscape character. The latest iteration of the CCNL Landscape Character Assessment study identifies the key characteristics and sense of place that define distinct landscapes within CCNL. Key issues and priorities for enhancing the special qualities of the Protected Landscape are informed by the Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) 2004.

7.1.1 Landscape Character Type

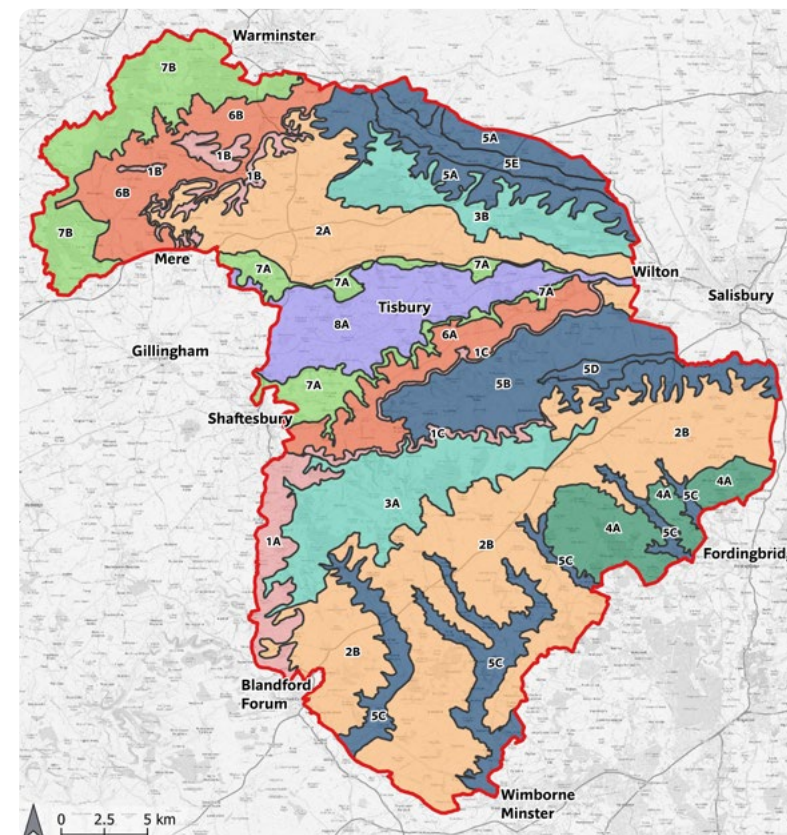
The LCA identifies eight broad LCT's that are underlain by variations in topography, soils, geology and hydrology, together define the distinct natural beauty of CCNL. Issues and challenges facing each LCT are detailed in the **National Landscape Management Plan**.

[See appendix 5](#) for a full list of LCT's and appropriate Nature Recovery actions.

7.1.2 Landscape Character Area

The eight LCTs have been further subdivided into 18 discrete Landscape Character Areas (LCAs). Each LCA offers a distinct sense of place and heritage within CCNL and each faces its own unique pressures.

- LCT 1:** Chalk Escarpments
- LCT 2:** Open Chalk Downland
- LCT 3:** Wooded Chalk Downland
- LCT 4:** Downland Hills
- LCT 5:** Chalk River Valleys
- LCT 6:** Greensand Terrace
- LCT 7:** Greensand Hills
- LCT 8:** Rolling Clay Vales



7.2 National Character Areas

CCNL intersects with five **National Character Areas (NCAs)** each representing a broad area of recognisable landscape character at a national scale. NCA boundaries follow natural lines in the landscape (as do LCAs), not political boundaries. NCAs are intended to provide a framework for decision-making around land use to ensure consideration of landscape character.

NCAs are likely to provide the units for **Land Use Frameworks** that will guide future national-scale decision making around spatial prioritisation of competing land use pressures.

NCAs intersecting with CCNL are **Salisbury Plain (NCA 132)**, **Blackmore Vale and Vale of Wardour (NCA 133)**, **Dorset Downs (NE 143)**, **Dorset Heaths (NCA 135)** and **Avon Vales (NCA 117)**.

7.3 Land Use

7.3.1 CCNL Land Use Summary

Agriculture is the dominant land use across CCNL.

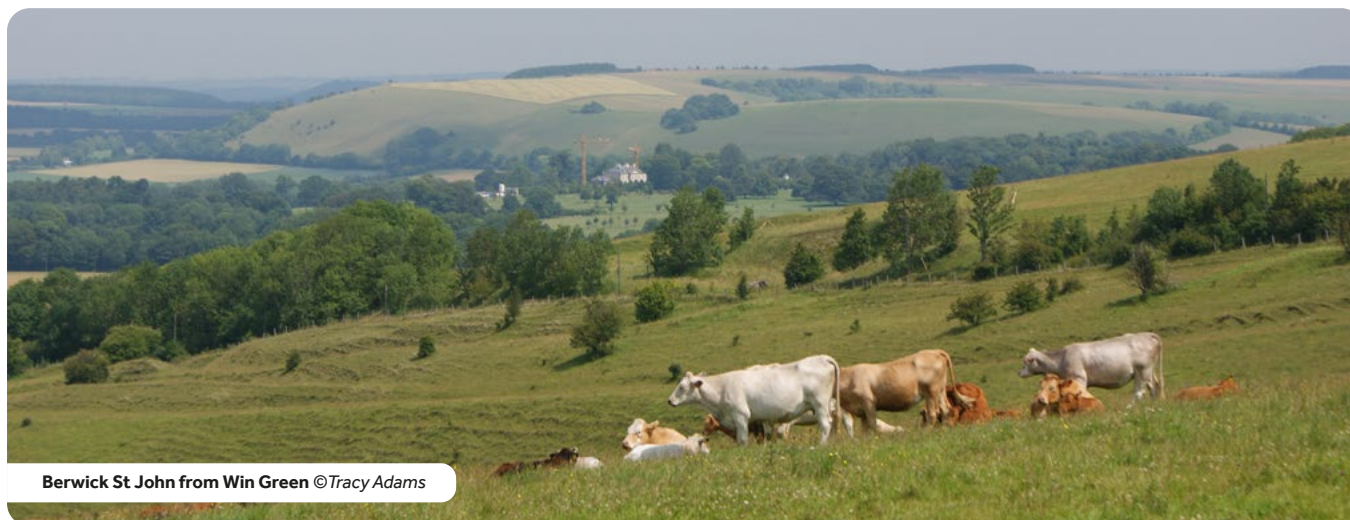
Since the designation in 1981, there has been a marked shift away from dairy farming activity towards arable farming, particularly within the Nadder valley and on the greensand terrace, where arable now occupies almost half of the landscape.

Combined with other heavily modified habitats (including coniferous forestry and improved/modified grassland), they occupy close to three quarters of this NL.

Land Use Type	Activity	Total Area (%)
Agriculture	Arable	49
	Modified/improved grassland	22
Forestry	Softwood plantations	3
Semi-natural habitat	Deciduous woodland	12
	Open (eg. rough grassland, meadows, ponds and rivers)	11
Built	Residential, commercial, transport	2

Land use proportions across CCNL

Semi-natural habitat occupies much of the remaining landscape with a slight bias towards woodland over open habitat. Only a very small proportion of CCNL is occupied by the built environment, although several large conurbations are located on the outskirts of CCNL and a significant volume of commuter traffic passes through this NL as a consequence.



Berwick St John from Win Green ©Tracy Adams



Map 1 - Land Use Types



7.3.2 Land Use within Landscape Character Types

There is considerable variation in land use across the eight LCT's, where both geology and landform influence land use distinctions.

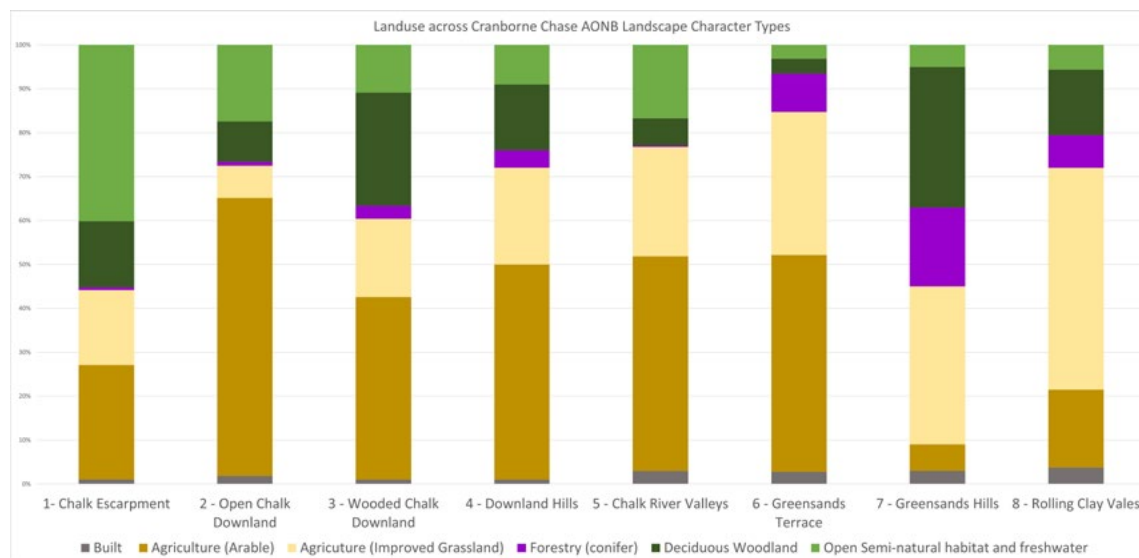
For example

LCT 1 'Chalk Escarpments' is the only Landscape Character Type with a greater proportion of semi-natural than modified (built/conifer/agriculture) habitat

LCT 7 'Greensand Hills' and LCT 8 'Rolling Clay Vales' are the only Landscape Character Types where improved grassland is more frequent than arable as the main farmed habitat

Arable is most dominant in LCT 2 'Open Chalk Downland' and also occupies over half the land area in LCT 5 'Chalk River Valleys' and LCT 6 'Greensand Terrace'

The greatest woodland and forestry cover and lowest agricultural land use can be found in LCT 7 'Greensand Hills' whilst the lowest woodland and forestry cover and greatest agricultural land use is found in LCT 6 'Greensand Terrace'



LCT's and land use



Harvesting wheat on the light and chalky ALC grade 2 soils, within LCT 6 Greensand Terrace near Ludwell ©Jamie Randall



8. Issues and Opportunities for Nature Recovery

8.1 Climate Change

Evidence suggests that England will become hotter and drier in summer and warmer and wetter in winter, with a greater frequency and severity of extreme weather events.

The impact on biodiversity of climate extremes and less predictable weather patterns is likely to exert a devastating impact on native wildlife, particularly where there is an accompanying lack of opportunity for 'migration' through a permeable landscape and ability to adapt to a changing environment.

The increased risk of drought and high rainfall events will affect residents and land managers where there is a lack of measures to provide natural solutions that can increase landscape resilience.

Soil carbon and **soil health** has a critical role to play in climate change mitigation by regulating atmospheric greenhouse gases (GHGs). Global soils are the dominant natural land-based carbon sink, holding more carbon than all terrestrial habitats combined (soil carbon stock). There are opportunities to increase soil carbon stocks and reduce GHG emissions from many **agricultural soils** by changing management practices and how land is used.



Deep soil erosion gully within an arable field ©Tracy Adams

OPPORTUNITIES FOR RESILIENCE

The restoration of natural ecosystem processes such as reconnecting rivers with floodplains, creation of new woodland and wooded habitats (and effective management of existing) and 'nature-friendly farming' activities will all support the enhancement of resilient and adaptable ecosystems and carbon sequestration rates within soils, increase water holding capacity within the wider catchment and reduce the potential for flooding and 'low flow' scenarios within stream and rivers.

Much of the soils in the National Landscape hold the equivalent of 100-150 tonnes of carbon per hectare, but there are a few areas holding considerably more, mainly in the river valleys which equate to the areas of Priority Habitat – see map 2, and data show a 3% increase in carbon stored within CCNL in the soils and vegetation between 2012 and 2022.



Map 2 - Location of soil carbon storage within CCNL



8.2 Nitrogen deposition and eutrophication

Excess atmospheric nitrogen (N) is a major pressure on biodiversity in the UK and globally.

There is a wealth of evidence showing that nitrogen deposition is changing sensitive ecosystems, ranging from direct damage to plants, to changes in species composition and richness of entire ecosystems.

In England, 95.1% of sensitive habitats had background nitrogen deposition loading above the level considered to cause significant harmful effects.

Excess nitrogen results from human activity from both long distance and local sources such as agricultural activities (creating ammonia emissions), and road traffic.



Continuous cover forestry within ancient woodland can enhance biodiversity, woodland condition and resilience, whilst supporting commercial forestry operations ©Jamie Randall

8.3 Land Management

Important wildlife habitat in CCNL is typically fragmented and isolated, where modern agricultural practice has been a significant causal factor in the loss of semi-natural habitat through conversion to intensively managed productive land, and the decline in availability of marginal habitats (such as uncultivated field margins and bushy hedgerows).

The British Trust for Ornithology **UK breeding bird farmland indicator** shows a 65% decline between 1970-2022, with species such as the corn bunting declining by 86% since 1967, and turtle dove numbers declining by 99% and at a global level are at risk of extinction.

Hedgehogs have declined by up to 75% since 2000 and **water voles** ranges have declined by 39% between 2006-2022. Such significant loss is a key indicator of ecosystems breaking down.

The decline in traditional countryside management skills, such as coppicing since the mid-20thC, has impacted on species such as hazel dormice, which can utilise the dynamic habitat mosaic that arises from the cyclical nature of hazel coppicing.

Much of the habitat in CCNL that is designated as internationally important for biodiversity is lowland calcareous grassland, which is best maintained by low intensity and mixed grazing. Current trends of decline in livestock grazing (possibly exacerbated by recent declines in rabbit numbers) and historic conversion of chalk grassland to arable, has resulted in significant losses of the extent and quality of this globally rare and botanically rich habitat.



OPPORTUNITIES TO BUILD RESILIENCE

The 'Lawton Review' advocates for **bigger, better, more and joined up** sites for nature as a necessary measure to reverse continued and accelerating biodiversity decline.

In CCNL, the majority of land that would be needed to achieve functioning ecological networks is currently under some form of agriculture, forestry, or commercial game management. It is therefore vital that opportunities are taken to integrate sustainable farming actions into productive land management systems.

For example, the **South Wiltshire Farmland Bird Initiative** demonstrated how targeted and coordinated action can have positive wildlife impacts at farm and landscape scale.

Transformational change in land management practices supported by a mechanism to pay landowners fairly for the long term delivery of ecosystem services, will be required to achieve nature recovery at a depth and scale that can restore natural ecological processes that are fundamental to achieving climate resilient landscapes, whilst supporting landowners to develop financially and socially resilient enterprises.

8.4 Agricultural land management

All land has competing land use requirements which can appear particularly acute within agricultural landholdings, where economic viability and sustainability are crucial drivers.

Financial support through AES and FiPL for example, can be useful and may act as an enabler for additional nature-based actions within landholdings. It is however essential that this support can be relied upon to enable effective business planning and forecasting.

Farm Cluster Group facilitators, alongside effective farming and wildlife advisors, are an essential resource to bridge the gap between policy, good practice and effective action on agricultural land holdings.

The **Facilitation Fund** has now finished, with no new funds being offered. It will be essential for existing Cluster Groups to establish alternative funding options to maintain these roles.

Farm clusters are a cornerstone of landscape-scale nature recovery within CCNL. By fostering collaboration between neighbouring land managers, clusters enable coordinated habitat creation, sustainable farming practices, and knowledge exchange that individual holdings cannot achieve alone.

They can act as strategic delivery vehicles to support delivery of targets, as well as improving ecological connectivity across the farmed landscape.

Clusters also provide a platform to access and combine funding streams, including AES, FiPL, Landscape Recovery, and emerging green finance opportunities.

Maintaining and strengthening cluster facilitation roles is critical to ensure continuity and scale of action.

Importantly, not all landholdings are members of farm clusters, and this plan recognises the need to support and engage those outside clusters to ensure inclusive delivery of nature recovery across the entire landscape.



Knowledge sharing and collaboration is at the heart of farm cluster groups ©CCNL



Map 20 - Indicative Areas of Farm Clusters intersecting with CCNL



8.5 Pests, Diseases and Invasive Species

The rate of non-native and novel species establishing within the UK is increasing and many are having a devastating effect on the environment and land-based livelihoods.

The particular dangers to woodland from pests and diseases is growing, where for example the 'pest', oak processionary moth and the 'disease', ash dieback are having a very serious effect within CCNL leading to a substantive loss of landscape and heritage character.

Invasive and non-native species (INNS) such as rhododendron, Himalayan balsam, American mink and signal crayfish degrade habitat quality for native species by dominating and outcompeting floral and faunal communities, and offering little refuge or forage for native wildlife.

The American grey squirrel is widely observed to be causing a high volume of damage to young trees and new tree growth, economically impacting forestry and woodland creation, as well as in some cases leading to early mortality.

Additionally, deer populations within the UK are at unprecedented levels, despite widespread efforts by statutory agencies and some landowners to reduce population sizes.

Both squirrel and multiple deer species across southern England are present in large numbers across CCNL, negatively impacting agriculture, woodland creation and management, forestry, and establishment and maintenance of other priority habitats.

Restoring habitats impacted by pests and disease and/or INNS, requires long term management in coordination with neighbouring landowners in order to manage the risk, and recover a diverse and well-functioning native ecosystem.

8.6 Deer

Contrary to the decline experienced by many species, deer populations in the UK have been increasing, where all **six species** (red, roe, fallow, sika, muntjac and Chinese water deer) have expanded their ranges, aided by milder winters, lack of predators, and changes in land use

However, this growth brings its own set of challenges that requires effective deer management and understanding of the ecological context to balance human needs with wildlife conservation.

Overgrazing by deer can **impact** economic viability of growing agricultural crops, affect the ecological condition of species rich habitats such as chalk grassland, hedgerows and woodland, as well as impact woodland regeneration and planting efforts.

MANAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The development of a **Deer Management Plan** that integrates biodiversity, agricultural and forestry objectives within a landscape and regional context is an essential foundation, and should include monitoring objectives, habitat restoration priorities and cull targets.

It will be necessary to undertake landscape-scale monitoring using thermal imaging and transect counts to establish baseline densities and trends, where data sharing amongst landowners, farm clusters and other stakeholders is essential to collate a realistic and reliable data set.

Whilst regulated and humane culling based on population data and evidence will likely feature as an effective management tool, other habitat protection measures such as fencing, the planting of thorn scrub species around trees, and the creation of sacrificial crops may all reduce unwanted impacts of excessive browsing.



Small herd of fallow deer (*Dama dama*) does, browsing on grassland ©Jamie Randall



8.7 Recreational Disturbance

Recreational access and activities provide meaningful opportunities for people to connect with nature and the landscape, but they can also exert significant pressures on sensitive habitats and species.

Impacts such as wildlife disturbance, particularly to ground-nesting birds and mammals, erosion and soil compaction on chalk grasslands and riverbanks, and spread of invasive species through foot traffic and dogs can be significant, especially upon sites that are easily accessible such as Badbury Rings owned and managed by the National Trust, and Martin Down NNR co-owned and managed by NE and Hampshire County Council.

Increased visitor numbers can also fragment habitats through physical erosion and reduce the tranquillity that underpins CCNL's special qualities.

MANAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

On popular sites, focussed engagement activities, signage and well designed infrastructure can help to alter values and perceptions, leading to pro-nature actions and behaviours by visitors.

It is often necessary for direct and indirect engagement to take place over the longer term in order to enable long term change.



8.8 Community Engagement

The long term benefits of engaging local and wider populations within land management and species protection efforts is well documented and the provision of opportunities to engage with and take action on Nature Recovery for individuals, community groups, businesses and visitors should form an essential element of future plans.

CCNL is home to 34,600 people (2021), with an additional 146,000 people living within 30 minutes travel in the surrounding towns such as Salisbury, Shaftesbury and Warminster.

Public consultation in 2010 indicated that communities within CCNL felt that there was a lack

of opportunity to actively engage with the natural heritage of CCNL, for example to gain skills and experience in traditional countryside skills.

The Stepping Stones project and the Chase and Chalke Landscape Partnership Project have both provided opportunities for individuals to gain training in a variety of heritage, artistic and countryside skills, with the opportunity to contribute their time and skill to projects that celebrate and enhance CCNL's natural heritage.

Part of the Chase and Chalke's legacy planning is to support the development of volunteer coordinators who will maintain volunteer programmes and ongoing skills training opportunities following the end of the NLHF Partnership Project in 2025.





Plug planting native calcareous grassland species as part of the Stepping Stones project ©CCNL

The development of a CCNL Ranger Service is a long-held ambition as it is recognised that this could enable and support a wide range of Nature Recovery related projects and work streams.

External funding would be essential to enable this, which may include 'developer contributions' associated with development within and bordering this National Landscape, where high-level support from Local Planning Authorities' would be required.

8.9 Species Translocations and Reintroductions

The opportunity, ambition and notoriety of species translocations and reintroductions has increased significantly over the past decade, with some very high-profile cases such as the legal and illegal release of Eurasian beaver (*Castor fiber*) and extensive discussion and consultation around the reintroduction of Eurasian lynx (*Lynx lynx*).

The **25 YEP** explicitly encourages reintroducing former native species and reinforcing species restricted to just a few sites within their former range, supported by the **Code for reintroduction and conservation translocation** advising projects how to carry out a successful translocation.

The 2023 EIP also commits to working with the **England Species Reintroductions Taskforce** to provide opportunities for conservation translocations and reintroductions of native species where benefits to the environment, people and the economy are clear.

While charismatic species such as beaver and pine marten often dominate headlines, there is equal importance in considering less conspicuous but ecologically significant species.

For example, the white-clawed crayfish (*Austropotamobius pallipes*), a UKBAP priority species, has suffered catastrophic declines due to invasive signal crayfish and crayfish plague.



Reintroduction or reinforcement of this species in suitable chalk stream habitats could help restore natural trophic interactions and improve freshwater ecosystem health.

Similarly, chalk grassland plant species such as Juniper (*Juniperus communis*) and pheasant's eye (*Adonis annua*), are emblematic of the Cranborne Chase landscape and have seen significant declines due to habitat fragmentation and agricultural intensification.

Targeted reintroduction of these species, alongside habitat restoration, can accelerate the recovery of species-rich calcareous grasslands and enhance pollinator networks.

Guidance for such interventions is provided under the **UK BAP** and **Species Recovery Programme**. NE may prioritise a conservation translocation where

- The species creates or restores habitats that serve many other species as well as ecosystem functions (e.g. beavers)
- The species is threatened nationally or globally (e.g. large blue butterfly)
- The geographic distribution of a species population is extended
- The species is iconic and engages the public and stakeholders in support of packages of wider objectives (e.g. red-backed shrike, white-tailed eagle)



Juniper, a UKBAP species, has severely contracted in range and distribution in southern England, and by an estimated 44% within Wiltshire in the last 50 years

All translocation projects should

- Align with **Local Nature Recovery Strategies** and the **Environment Act 2021**
- Demonstrate clear ecological benefits, such as restoring ecosystem engineers or keystone species
- Include long-term monitoring and adaptive management to ensure success and mitigate unintended consequences



9. Nature Recovery Actions

9.1 Key Ecological Principles

Nature Networks and Sites

Building on the 'Lawton Review' key recommendation for a model of Nature Recovery and landscape resilience that focuses on building coherent ecological networks, NE published a guidance document on **Nature Networks** that outlines a hierarchy of importance for managing, establishing and linking sites into an ecological network.



One of a collection of freshwater ponds within the Martin Down Farmer Cluster area, enhancing habitat complexity and wider ecosystem function ©CCNL

The Nature Network Hierarchy is built on the evidence that 'stepping stones' across a landscape, e.g. frequent occurrence of high-quality wildlife habitat, is more important in allowing species to move, adapt and thrive outside Protected Sites than physical corridors of entirely contiguous habitat.

Natural Ecosystem Function

For sites to be managed effectively in support of Nature Recovery they need to be **big enough** to support ecological function and resilient landscapes, for example natural hydrological processes connecting rivers and floodplains.

Sites will most likely be beneficial for nature recovery when they have areas that provide a mosaic of habitats, and a diversity of structure and ecological niches.

Complex areas supporting complete ecosystems including predators (for example pine marten and birds of prey), habitat engineers (for example native cattle, ponies, beaver) and a diversity of plant and invertebrate life, will achieve the richest biodiversity.

Ecologically functional sites and landscapes will be spatially and temporally **dynamic** with natural cycles of change in species population sizes and in habitat extent and succession. Measuring success of sites and networks in supporting Nature Recovery should focus on indicators of ecological function and resilience.



Priority/Species-rich Habitat

Within the 'Bigger, Better, More and Joined Up Sites' principle of building nature networks, all existing priority and any other species-rich habitat should be considered part of the existing Nature Network.

Right Place

New and re-created habitat that is sited to improve connections between existing areas protected or managed for wildlife will offer the most beneficial outcomes for Nature Recovery. Species associated with different habitats will vary in their landscape permeability requirements, where the size, quality and distance of core and stepping stone habitat will influence species' abilities to colonise new areas.

Barriers to species dispersal from existing areas to new habitat, such as hostile habitat or predatory pressures may be reduced through the creation of messier, more complex, dynamic and functional habitats across the wider landscape.

Right Habitat

Protection and enhancement of existing high-quality habitat for nature must be prioritised over creation of new habitat at the same location, even where specific priorities (such as carbon sequestration in support of net zero) may be better served. For example tree planting and/or woodland creation at a site of existing protected or species-rich grassland habitat would not contribute to building a **Nature Recovery Network** and risks degrading the condition of the existing habitat, impacting species and limiting ecosystem function.



'South of England style' hedgelaying adjacent to a beech tree avenue near to Badbury Rings, adding structural diversity and maintaining views across the landscape.

Landscape Resilience

Certain habitats and species will be more or less resistant to the impacts of climate change.

Natural England has produced a **Climate Change Adaptation Manual** as guidance for approaches to identifying high, medium and low risk sites and appropriate measures to increase climate resilience.

When planning habitat restoration and creation to build a functioning Nature Recovery Network, climate vulnerabilities of different habitats should be considered.

Habitat type	Relative sensitivity to climate change
Rivers and streams	High
Floodplain grazing marsh	Medium
Lowland meadows (wet)	Medium
Purple moor grass and rush pasture	Medium
Lowland beech and yew woodland	Medium
Deciduous woodland	Low
Traditional orchards	Low
Lowland calcareous grassland	Low
Lowland dry acid grassland	Low
Lowland meadows (dry)	Low
Arable field margins	Low
Ancient/species rich hedgerows	Low
Lowland wood pasture and parkland	Low

CCNL habitats and relative climate resilience

9.2 Actions for Nature Recovery

The following actions are largely applicable across CCNL area and have been split into actions that can be taken by individual sectors.

There are of course however many opportunities that are suitable across multiple land use and management types, so the distinctions may be considered arbitrary.

9.2.1 Agricultural land management

GOAL

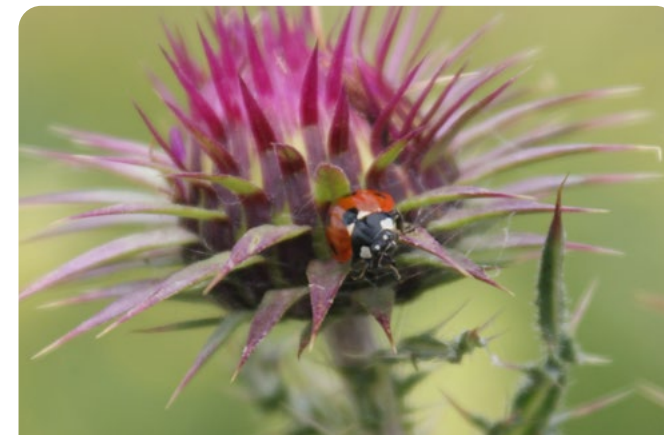
Integrate sustainable farming practices to reduce fertiliser and pesticide use, enhance soil health, and create wildlife-rich habitats across productive farmland.



Planting mixed species shelterbelt alongside cropland in Chettle, to create permanent and beneficial landscape and ecological feature ©Peter Cockburn

KEY ACTIONS

- **Reduce chemical inputs:** lower fertiliser and pesticide use; increase organic matter to improve soil structure and carbon content
- **Protect watercourses:** create wide (10m+) uncultivated, no-input margins along rivers and streams; reduce sediment and nutrient runoff through soil conservation and winter cover crops
- **Support farmland biodiversity:** provide seed-rich mixes, uncultivated field margins, wildlife ponds, and beetle banks; retain permanent pasture and apply low-input grassland management options
- **Restore traditional features:** reinstate hedgerow networks and hedgerow trees; create or restore traditional standard orchards with local fruit varieties and semi-natural grassland
- **Diversify land use:** establish new wood pasture and agroforestry systems where appropriate; encourage successional habitats on marginal land to deliver ecosystem services
- **Enable collaboration:** support landowner cooperation for long-term management change that delivers nature recovery and climate-adapted food production
- **Infrastructure improvements:** ensure slurry, silage, fuel, chemical, and fertiliser stores are fit for purpose and of adequate capacity



A natural pest controller, some species of ladybird consume great numbers of aphids and scale insects on agricultural crops such as cereals and sugar beet. The provision of species rich margins and hedgerows provides the perfect habitat for a wide range of beneficial insects ©CCNL

WHY IT MATTERS

- **Soil health:** higher organic matter improves structure, infiltration, and nutrient uptake efficiency
- **Water quality:** buffers and cover crops reduce nitrate, phosphate, and sediment losses to chalk streams
- **Wildlife:** diverse margins, hedges, and wet features increase pollinators, farmland birds, and natural predators
- **Climate resilience:** healthier soils store more water during droughts and slow runoff during storms
- **Economic benefits:** lower input costs over time through better nutrient targeting and improved livestock performance



PRACTICAL EXAMPLES

- **Soil health planning:** annual soil assessment, organic matter testing, and soil management plans
- **Reduced or no-till:** direct drilling or shallow cultivation to protect soil structure
- **Cover crops and herbal leys:** build organic matter, fix nitrogen, improve rooting depth, and support pollinators
- **Precision nutrient management:** variable-rate application based on zonal testing
- **Integrated Pest Management (IPM):** non-chemical controls and beneficial habitats (flower-rich margins)
- **Riparian buffers:** 6–12 m grass/flower strips next to watercourses; ponds and scrapes to slow flow
- **Hedgerow and tree management:** longer rotation cutting, gapping-up with native species, hedgerow trees, and small-scale agroforestry
- **Seed-rich habitats:** unharvested headlands and mixes to support corn bunting, skylark, and tree sparrow
- **Adaptive grazing:** match stocking rates to carrying capacity and protect riverbanks from poaching

AGRICULTURE AND HORTICULTURE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Principles of Soil Health

Biological

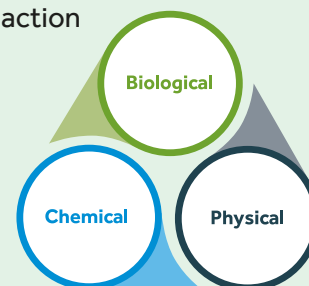
- Feed the soil regularly, through plants and organic inputs
- Move soil only when necessary
- Diversify plants in space and time

Chemical

- Maintain optimum pH
- Apply nutrients (right amounts, in the right place, at the right time)
- Know soil textures and minerals (buffer capacity)

Physical

- Know soil textures and understand limits to workability and trafficability
- Optimise water balance, through drainage (if necessary)
- Minimise compaction and improve soil structure



ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

- Combine public payments with private nature markets (e.g. carbon credits, biodiversity net gain) where additionality can be demonstrated
- Adopt certification standards for regenerative or sustainable farming (e.g., Pasture for Life, LEAF Marque, Wildfarmed) to enhance consumer messaging
- Work towards Dark Sky Friendly status by complying with CCNL's Dark Night Sky Charter



Conservation grazing with native breed cattle on Badbury Rings Scheduled Monument, Calcareous Grassland Priority Habitat and Local Wildlife Site ©Matt Hughes



9.2.2 Woodland and Forestry Management

GOAL

Manage and restore woodlands to UK Forestry Standard, strengthen resilience to pests/diseases and climate change, and integrate woodland with cultural heritage.

KEY ACTIONS

- Apply UK Forestry Standard principles across soil, water, biodiversity, and climate adaptation
- Restore PAWS to native broadleaf woodland via phased non-native removal and natural regeneration
- Increase structural diversity using continuous cover forestry and irregular silviculture principles, and mixed-age planting
- Expand native woodland in appropriate locations following Right Tree, Right Place guidance
- Create riparian woodland buffers to improve water quality and shade aquatic ecosystems
- Increase deadwood habitat by retaining standing and fallen deadwood, and veteranising trees
- Promote natural regeneration where feasible
- Integrate cultural heritage: conserve historic parkland, wood pasture, and traditional coppice systems
- Manage ancient/veteran trees as irreplaceable habitats
- Retain/plant hedgerow and in-field trees to enhance connectivity and landscape character
- Control invasive species and manage deer/grey squirrel populations
- Plan for climate adaptation using species diversification and drought-tolerant natives
- Engage landowners and communities through advice, training, and citizen science

A magnificent ancient oak tree within an ancient woodland, providing valuable and complex habitats that can benefit many hundreds of species ©David Blake



PRACTICAL EXAMPLES

- Implement continuous cover forestry in ancient woodland
- Establish riparian buffers on chalk streams
- Veteranise selected trees and retain deadwood

ADDITIONAL ACTIONS

- Protect/manage veteran trees linked to Medieval chase boundaries
- Maintain/manage historic woodland clumps and coverts
- Conserve historic boulevards and parkland tree lines
- Identify archaeological earthworks to inform restoration
- Develop guidance for managing woodland for biodiversity and cultural legacy
- Promote community involvement in conserving historic woodland features



9.2.3 Conservation Land Management

GOAL

Restore priority habitats and designated sites to favourable condition, enhance chalk streams and riparian ecosystems, control invasives, and consider species reintroductions.

KEY ACTIONS

- Restore/create lowland calcareous grassland, floodplain grassland, and deciduous woodland
- Protect/restore chalk streams through sustainable abstraction and pollution minimisation
- Create riparian/catchment woodland for habitat and water quality
- Maintain designated sites and monitor Local Wildlife Sites
- Conserve ancient woodland habitats and historic parkland
- Restore PAWS and transition conifer forestry to mixed systems
- Increase deadwood habitat and reinstate sustainable woodland management
- Eradicate invasive species such as laurel, rhododendron, Himalayan balsam, mink, and signal crayfish
- Consider species reintroductions where ecologically beneficial



Meadow brown butterfly feeding on nectar rich thistle ©CCNL

WHY IT MATTERS

- Builds ecological resilience and restores ecosystem function
- Improves water quality, carbon storage, and biodiversity

PRACTICAL EXAMPLES

- Reconnect rivers to floodplains and remove barriers
- Establish riparian buffers and wet features
- Implement invasive species eradication plans

9.2.4 Community Land Management

GOAL

Enable inclusive access, citizen science, and community-led habitat actions using champion species and pledges.

KEY ACTIONS

- Increase opportunities for access to nature
- Enable citizen science for monitoring
- Establish champion species programmes (e.g. house sparrow villages)
- Launch a Pledge for Nature campaign

WHY IT MATTERS

- Builds local stewardship and amplifies monitoring capacity

PRACTICAL EXAMPLES

- Create and manage nature-rich community spaces
- Provide citizen science training for species ID and habitat scoring



9.2.5 Local Authorities

GOAL

Fulfil statutory duties, align Nature Recovery actions with LNRS, manage public assets for biodiversity, and showcase climate-adapted landholding.

KEY ACTIONS

- Comply with Section 85 duty to conserve and enhance natural beauty
- Align CCNL actions with LNRS priorities
- Develop Supplementary Planning Documents to guide BNG decisions and target LNRS habitats
- Manage public assets (greenspace, verges, schools) for biodiversity
- Showcase County Farms as climate-resilient holdings
- Support Parish/Town Councils to manage local natural assets

WHY IT MATTERS

- Embeds nature recovery in planning and asset management

PRACTICAL EXAMPLES

- Require BNG to target LNRS priorities
- 'Rewild' highway verges and school grounds

9.2.6 Actions for Businesses

GOAL

Reduce pollution risk, manage natural assets for biodiversity, support environmental actions through CSR, and champion dark-sky compliance.

KEY ACTIONS

- Ensure septic/fuel tanks and chemical stores are fit for purpose
- Reduce runoff and sediment inputs using bunds and SUDS
- Manage natural assets such as verges and ponds for biodiversity
- Provide financial support for environmental actions
- Initiate a Pledge for Nature campaign
- Work towards Dark Sky Friendly status

WHY IT MATTERS

- Protects water quality, boosts biodiversity, and scales impact through CSR

PRACTICAL EXAMPLES

- Fit secondary containment for tanks and improve yard drainage
- Create pollinator-friendly verges and ponds
- Offer mini-grants for hedgerow restoration
- Retrofit lighting to meet dark-sky standards



Marshwood Farm Camping, a Dark Sky Friendly Business, where accreditation is used to underpin Corporate and Social Responsibility values.



10. Legacy and Lessons Learned

Past projects across CCNL have delivered significant outcomes for nature recovery and provide a strong foundation for future action. These initiatives demonstrate that collaboration, targeted funding, and landscape-scale thinking are essential to reversing biodiversity decline and building climate resilience.

KEY LESSONS LEARNED

- **Collaboration works:** Farm clusters and partnership projects achieved outcomes beyond individual holdings
- **Funding enables change:** Dedicated funding streams such as NLHF and FiPL were critical, but continuity is essential
- **Landscape-scale approach is vital:** Projects like Stepping Stones and Chase and Chalke show the need for connected ecological networks
- **Community engagement adds value:** Volunteer involvement amplified impact and built local stewardship
- **Integration of nature and farming is possible:** Initiatives proved that productive farming and biodiversity enhancement can coexist

STRATEGIC VALUE FOR THE FUTURE

- Provides tested delivery models for habitat restoration and sustainable farming
- Highlights farm clusters as strategic delivery vehicles while ensuring inclusion of non-cluster landholdings
- Offers evidence of success to secure future funding and green finance
- Reinforces integration of nature recovery and climate adaptation for multiple benefits

Detailed case studies of legacy projects are provided in

[Appendix 4: Legacy Projects and Case Studies](#)



Reflecting upon and celebrating the value and diversity of the Chase and Chalke Landscape Partnership ©Jamie Randall



11. Next Steps

August 2025

- Nature Recovery Plan shared for consultation with key stakeholders

February 2026

- Adoption of Nature Recovery Plan by CCNL Board and embedded into Partnership Management Plan 2025-2030
- Delivery Plan Development – agree key projects and outcomes with partner organisations and key stakeholders, and set out mechanisms for delivery, funding and timelines



The dawn sun reveals cloud inversion across an ancient landscape. Fontmell Down SSSI © Jamie Randall



12. Glossary

AESAgri-environment Scheme

AONBArea of Outstanding Natural Beauty

ASNWAncient semi-natural woodland

BPSBasic Payment Scheme

BNGBiodiversity Net Gain

CaBACatchment Based Approach

CCNLCranborne Chase National Landscape

CICCommunity Interest Company

CPREThe Countryside Charity

CRoWCountryside and Rights of Way Act

CSHTCountryside Stewardship Higher Tier

DERCDorset Environmental Records Centre

EIPEnvironment Improvement Plan

ELMEnvironmental Land Management

EWCOEnglish Woodland Creation Offer

FCForestry Commission

FiPLFarming in Protected Landscapes
Programme

INNSInvasive and non-native species

IUCNInternational Union
for the Conservation of Nature

LALocal Authority

LCALandscape Character Assessment

LCTLandscape Character Type

LERCLocal Environmental Records Centre

LNRLocal Nature Reserve

LNRSLocal Nature Recovery Strategy

LPALocal Planning Authority

LWSLocal Wildlife Site

NENatural England

NERCNatural Environment Research Council

NFFNature Friendly Farming

NLANational Landscapes Association

NNRNational Nature Reserve

NPPFNational Planning Policy Framework

NTNational Trust

NWDNLNorth Wessex Downs
National Landscape

PAWSPlantation on Ancient Woodland Site

PHPriority Habitat

PHIPriority Habitat Inventory

PLProtected Landscapes

PLTOFProtected Landscapes Targets
and Outcomes Framework

RSPBRoyal Society for the Protection of Birds

SACSpecial Area of Conservation

SFISustainable Farming Incentive

SPASpecial Protection Areas

SWFBISouth West Farmland Birds Initiative

UKBAPUK Biodiversity Action Plan

UNCBDUnited Nations Convention
of Biological Diversity

UKCEHUK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology

WCPWiltshire Chalk Partnership

WFWestern Forest

WWFWorld Wide Fund for Nature

25YEP25 Year Environment Plan



Appendix 1 – Policy for Nature Recovery

App. 1.1 Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework

In December 2022 at Montreal COP15, the UK signed up to the **Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework** agreement to protect 30% of the planet's land and oceans by 2030 (30 by 30). The Global Biodiversity Framework which sets out the global goals to address ongoing biodiversity loss, was adopted at COP15.

The UK Wildlife and Countryside Link, a coalition of 72 environment and wildlife organisations in the UK, published a response to the UK Government's '30by30' commitment which included recommendations for supporting the role of Protected Landscapes in Nature Recovery

- Protected Landscape Management Plans must include Nature Recovery priorities, backed by resources and a legal framework to implement and monitor nature recovery
- For the Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) network to contribute to '30by30', greater resources are needed

for monitoring and effective conservation management

- Novel designations such as 'Wildbelt', could identify and protect areas presenting significant opportunities for nature recovery and ecological network building
- '30by30' should be seen as the minimum requirement for nature recovery
- Local Nature Recovery Strategies must provide a framework for ambitious targets to restore nature everywhere, underpinned by effective planning regulation
- Nature Recovery efforts towards '30by30' should build towards a wider Nature Recovery Network, beyond Protected Sites and Protected Landscapes

App 1.2 Environmental Improvement Plan

The governments **Environmental Improvement Plan 2025 (EIP)** is the second five-year review of the 25 Year Environment Plan (25YEP).

The apex goal of the 25YEP is to halt decline in biodiversity and achieve thriving plants and wildlife, to help the natural world regain and retain good health.

Ten goals that were set out in the 25YEP were reviewed in the EIP with an update on progress, new interim targets and commitments made towards supporting the land management community to work towards those targets.

Commitments for Thriving Plants and Wildlife within the UK (EIP)

ACTIVITY

- **Pay farmers and managers** to take care of the natural environment
- **Evolve Countryside Stewardship Scheme** to pay for a wider range of actions and reward those who join up across local areas to increase biodiversity
- Expand **Sustainable Farming Incentive** to pay farmers to adopt more sustainable farming
- Launch a second round of **Landscape Recovery Scheme projects**
- Implement mandatory 10% **Biodiversity Net Gain** through the Planning System
- Roll out **Local Nature Recovery Strategies** to identify areas to create, enhance and restore habitat, and deliver environmental benefits
- Implement proposals set out in the government's response to the Landscapes Review and fund projects through the **Farming in Protected Landscapes programme**
- Continue to support the creation of high-quality **native broadleaf and mixed woodlands**
- Launch a multi-million pound **Species Survival Fund** to create and restore habitat
- Update the **Green Finance Strategy** to support a step-change in private investment
- Establish a **UK wetland inventory** in support of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, mapping wetlands and underpinning future actions to protect these vital habitats



Targets for Thriving Plants and Wildlife (EIP) (2025)

Activity	Target	By when
Halt decline in species abundance		2030
Increase species abundance	10% above 2022 baseline	2030
Red List Index for England for species extinction	Improve compared to 2022 baseline	2042
SSSI features have actions on track	50%	2030
Farms with year-round resources for wildlife	Double the number compared with 2025	2030
Reduce establishment of INNS	At least 50% reduction compared with 2000 baseline	2030
Restore or create wildlife rich habitat outside protected sites	250,000 ha.	2030
	500,000 ha.	2042
Protect land and ocean	30%	2030
	49% Marine Protection Area features in favourable condition and 46% recovering	2030
Increase tree and woodland canopy cover	43,000 ha.	2030
	14.5% to 16.5% canopy cover (England)	2050

App 1.3 Water Industry Legislation

App 1.3.1 National Framework for Water Resources 2025

Sets out a vision for sustainable water management, prioritising

- **catchment resilience and nature-based solutions**, including floodplain reconnection, riparian tree planting, wetland creation, and restoration of natural river processes
- **biodiversity and habitat enhancement** beyond statutory requirements, supporting chalk stream restoration and wider ecological health
- **collaborative partnerships and co-funding**, encouraging joint action between water companies, landowners, and conservation bodies
- **Integration with Local Nature Recovery Strategies**, ensuring water resource planning contributes to habitat connectivity and climate-resilient landscapes



App 1.3.2 Water Industry National Environment Programme 2022

Provides the delivery mechanism for water companies to implement environmental improvements under the Price Review process

The methodology enhances the options that can be proposed by water companies to address environmental challenges and increase flexibility.

It is designed to

- focus delivery on wider environmental outcomes
- have a longer-term focus
- aid adoption of a more systems and catchment-oriented approach that furthers more innovation and company collaboration, including facilitating a greater use of nature-based solutions
- support co-design, co-delivery, and co-funding of solutions
- make the best use of, and improve available data

App 1.4 Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS)

The **Environment Act 2021** placed a statutory duty on responsible authorities to produce a LNRS to include a statement of biodiversity priorities, local habitat map (to identify areas of existing importance for biodiversity), and an opportunity map (to identify areas suitable for implementation of potential measures for species and habitats).

LNRS guidance was published in April 2023, with further guidance and secondary legislation published in July 2023. In summary, each strategy must

- Agree priorities for nature recovery
- Map the most valuable existing areas for nature
- Map opportunities for creating or improving habitat for nature and wider environmental goals

CCNL has been involved in consultation around the LNRS's that are being produced for **Somerset, Dorset, Hampshire and Wiltshire** and this Nature Recovery Plan helps to provide some of the detail on the vision, priorities and targets, which will help to deliver the LNRS's in each county.

App 1.5 Agricultural Transition

The agricultural transition began in 2021, with the **Farming and Countryside Programme** (FCP) moving England away from the EU's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and phasing out subsidies for land ownership and tenure.

The **Basic Payment Scheme** has been replaced with delinked payments that will continue until 2027, with the amount paid being decreasing each year. Existing AES will transition to new approaches that will include

- The **Environmental Land Management** (ELM) scheme as a new way to pay farmers and land managers to produce public goods, for example through nature-friendly farming
- Grants and other help to improve farm productivity and prosperity
- A new approach to farming regulation and enforcement

Three new schemes will reward land managers delivering environmental benefits

- **Sustainable Farming Incentive** (SFI) - (currently paused)
- **Countryside Stewardship** - payment for delivering nature recovery priorities (not linked to local and/or landscape priorities) (invitation to adopt CS Higher Tier due to take place from July 2025)
- **Landscape Recovery** - payment for wider landscapes and large-scale nature recovery.



There are two active projects within CCNL

- o **Wylfe Valley Landscape Recovery** to restore and re-connect in-stream and floodplain habitats along a 20km stretch of the chalk river
- o **River Allen Landscape Recovery** to restore 21km of chalk stream habitat

The 5 year Farming Roadmap is a strategic framework that will guide reforms to agricultural policy and support mechanisms between now and 2030.

It is intended to provide clarity and certainty for farmers during the agricultural transition away from EU-style subsidies toward ELM schemes and other nature-based solutions.

It will align farming policy with Net Zero targets, biodiversity recovery goals (including 30x30), and commitments under the Environment Act 2021.

App 1.6 Land Use Framework

The **Land Use Framework** will set out a vision for land use in England, and act as a tool to drive better decision making on how land is used and managed, by farmers, landowners, local authorities and developers.

It aims to bring together the best and most relevant information to inform decisions about how land is used, including land use change where appropriate, in order to maximise win-wins and avoid/mitigate competing demands on land in certain areas.

App 1.7 Making Space for Nature

The Making Space for Nature review (Lawton Review) assessed the state of England's Wildlife Sites and Ecological Networks, concluding that to turn around declining fortunes for wildlife, we need networks for nature built by large scale habitat restoration and creation that enhances, expands and connects our existing protected sites.

The **Bigger, Better, More** and **Joined up** model for nature conservation will support the restoration of ecological processes and ecosystem services that offer wide environmental and social benefits such as access to nature for all, natural flood management, soil conservation, carbon sequestration and improved water quality.

"The concept for the Nature Recovery Network is simple.

Our existing protected sites constitute our best areas for wildlife and provide many other economic and social benefits.

They should form the core of any future network, however for nature to recover we have to also look beyond protected sites and take action to extend and link our existing sites, both to support wildlife and to recover the range of economic and social benefits that nature provides."

25 Year Environment Plan

App 1.8 Landscapes Review

The **Landscapes Review 2019** (Glover Review), was commissioned to assess the statutory purposes and protections for National Parks and AONB's with a view to understanding how the roles of Protected Landscapes (PL) could be strengthened and updated.

National Park Purposes and Duty

- **Purpose 1:** To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area.
- **Purpose 2:** To promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the National Park by the public.
- **Duty:** To seek to foster the social and economic wellbeing of the local communities within the National Park in pursuit of our purposes.

National Landscapes Purpose

- Conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area of outstanding natural beauty

Four key proposals emerged from the Review

- **Proposal 1:** National Landscapes should have a renewed mission to recover and enhance nature, supported by and accountable to a NL Service
- **Proposal 2:** State of Nature and Natural Capital in AONBs should be regularly and robustly assessed, informing action priorities



- **Proposal 3:** Strengthened PL Management Plans should set clear priorities and actions for nature recovery, including wilder areas and carbon sequestering habitat, and implementation should be backed by law
- **Proposal 4:** AONBs should form the backbone of Nature Recovery Networks, joining things up within and beyond their boundaries.

App 1.9 The Colchester Declaration

In 2019 the National Association of AONBs (now the National Landscapes Association (NLA)) held the 'Landscapes for Life' conference in Colchester where a collective Declaration on Nature in AONBs was agreed, setting out a strategy and a series of targets for change known as **The Colchester Declaration**.

The 'Colchester Declaration' is a response to the 'Glover Review', calling for a strengthened role for AONBs in Nature Recovery, and the 'Lawton Review' calling for an ecological/habitat network approach to nature recovery.

"Set against a backdrop of unprecedented concern for the future of the natural world and intergovernmental reports that the current global response to the effects of human impact on nature is insufficient – the National Association for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty believes that now is the time to significantly increase the scale and pace of nature conservation activity in AONB's.

Using our unique network and partnership model, we are making a collective Declaration on Nature in AONBs, setting out our strategy for change."

National Landscapes – The Colchester Declaration

By when	Activity
July 2020	Enable an approach that creates opportunities within AONBs for people to make an emotional connection with nature
	Prepare a Nature Recovery Plan for each AONB*
2024	Embed an ecosystems services approach into all AONB Management Plans
	Ensure all AONB management plans include meaningful measures around climate change mitigation and adaptation, including clear, measurable targets to support Net Zero
2030	At least 200,000 ha of SSSIs in AONBs will be in favourable condition
	At least 100,000 ha of wildlife-rich habitat outside of protected sites will have been created/restored in AONBs to further support the natural movement of plants and animals
	At least 36,000 ha of new woodland will have been planted or allowed to regenerate in AONBs following the principle of the right tree in the right place
	By each AONB immediately adopting a species on the threatened list and by preparing and delivering a Species Action Plan, at least thirty species relevant to AONBs will be taken off the list by 2030

Collective Nature Recovery Targets for AONB's

**The development of a Nature Recovery Plan for CCNL has taken longer than anticipated due to a range of external factors and changes in government and policy.*



App 1.10 International Dark Sky Reserve

CCNL is the only English NL to hold **International Dark Sky Reserve** status across the entirety of the landscape (from 2019).

International Dark Sky Reserve status is dependent on compliance with **DarkSky International criteria** and CCNL must continue to demonstrate maintenance and enhancement of dark skies, with an obligation to reduce artificial light at night (ALAN) year on year.

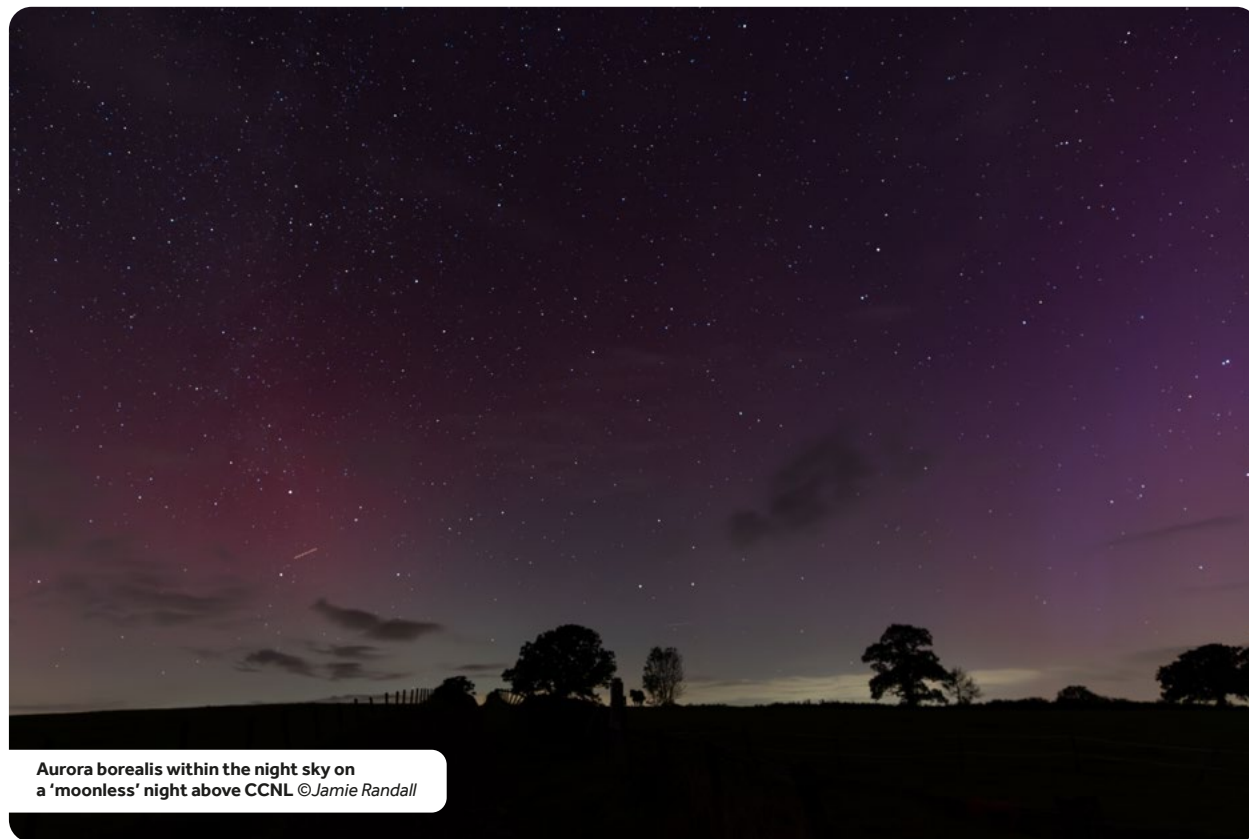
"Some people are lucky enough to recognise 'the Plough'; but for others, seeing stars and their constellations is often impossible because of light pollution."

"Here in Cranborne Chase we can see the Milky Way and the Andromeda galaxy, if the clouds allow!"

Linda Nunn, Director of Cranborne Chase National Landscape

Many birds and animals are affected by stray light at night affecting their breeding cycles and feeding habits, where limiting and controlling stray light can help bats, birds, moths and other nocturnal creatures to go about their business and thrive.

And human health may also be affected where circadian rhythms can be altered, impacting sleeping and waking patterns, which may also lead to or exacerbate more serious health issues.



Aurora borealis within the night sky on a 'moonless' night above CCNL ©Jamie Randall

Businesses can be awarded '**Dark Sky Friendly**' status through compliance with CCNL's **Dark Night Sky Charter** and householders can be supported to install or retrofit compliant lighting. Dark sky friendly lighting measures include

- Active control (e.g. timers, motion sensors) so the light is only on when it's needed
- No brighter than necessary for the lighting task
- Shielding to prevent upward light spill if greater than 500 lumens
- Not exceeding 2700 Kelvin colour temperature

There are many proven benefits for dark skies for people and nature as well as allowing greater enjoyment of the tranquil rural landscapes and opportunities for education and 'astro-tourism'.



Appendix 2 – State of Nature Evidence Base

App 2.1 Wildlife Rich Habitats

For this Plan, wildlife rich habitats within CCNL are divided into the following categories

Protected Areas which include Designated Sites protected under national or international law (SSSI, SAC, NNR and LNR), LWS and designated Ancient Woodland that are both considered 'irreplaceable habitat' within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Priority Habitat (PH) represents areas defined under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 as being of 'principal importance for nature conservation'.

River catchments are some of the most important ecosystem units in any landscape, where the ultimate aim would be to restore their functionality, allowing species to have sufficient space to move, adapt and thrive in a landscape resilient to the impacts of climate change.

Within CCNL, some of these catchments support globally rare and precious chalk stream habitats, representing a defining feature of the chalk landscape and are therefore worthy of specific focus.

Riparian corridors provide essential connectivity between fragmented habitats, deliver critical ecosystem services, including filtering pollutants, reducing flood risk, stabilising banks and improving water quality, and act as wildlife highways for species such as otters, water voles, bats, and pollinators.

Land within AES agreements cover 46% of CCNL, and where agriculture is the dominant land use and farming is central to community and sense of place, AES plays a fundamental role in supporting nature recovery and climate resilient landscapes.

Hedgerows represent important and distinctive habitats within the CCNL where their condition and connectivity has an important role in determining capacity for Nature Recovery in the CCNL landscapes.

Designation/habitat type	Total % area within CCNL	Total area within CCNL (ha.)
SSSI	3.5	3,409
SAC	<0.5	423
NNR & LNR	<0.5	429
Priority habitat (total) *	14.9	14,723
Deciduous woodland (total)	10.6	9,255
Ancient woodland**	7.2	7,052
Wood pasture and parkland	2.2	2,210
Surface water	<0.5	196
Hedgerows		3,613km
Chalk rivers and streams		197km
Other semi-natural habitat	6.0	5,887

CCNL habitats designation summary

**Priority habitat includes all woodland types, calcareous grassland, coastal floodplain & grazing marsh, LWS and some surface water types*

*** ASNW and PAWS*

App 2.2 Designated Sites and Protected Areas

In summary, Protected Areas comprise a total of 14.9% (14,723 ha) of CCNL, of which 3.5% is protected under an international and/or national statutory designation requiring conservation management of natural features (biodiversity, landform, or geology), such as SSSI and SAC.



Other Protected Areas such as Local Wildlife Sites and Priority Habitat are recognised as requiring protection or compensation in Town and Country Planning processes, although they lack a legal framework requiring effective conservation management.

App 2.2.1 Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)

Designated under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), these sites are protected from activities within and outside the site that are likely to have a significant negative effect on the qualifying features (habitats and/or species) for which the site is designated.



Map 3 - SAC locations within CCNL

Five SACs are located within CCNL, occupying <0.5% of the NL area (423 ha)

- **Chilmark Quarries** - horseshoe, barbastelle and Bechstein's bats
- **Fontmell & Melbury Down**- early gentian, orchid rich calcareous grassland and scrub mosaic
- **Prescombe Down** - marsh fritillary butterfly
- **Great Yews** - yew woodland
- **River Avon (and catchment)** - sea and brook lamprey, Atlantic salmon, Desmoulin's whorl snail, bullhead, and river water-crowfoot

App 2.2.2 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

Protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), SSSI's should be managed to conserve designated features (habitats and/or species).

There are 57 SSSI sites within CCNL that comprise 156 individual units and cover 3.5% of the National Landscape (3,413 ha).

There is significant overlap with both NNR and SAC designations.

There is a national target in the Environmental Improvement Plan for 50% of SSSI's to be on track to achieve favourable condition by 2028. Currently 94% of SSSI's within CCNL are in favourable or recovering condition.

SSSI Condition	Number of SSSI units
Favourable	114
Unfavourable recovering	130
Unfavourable no change	5
Unfavourable declining	3
Destroyed	1

SSSI condition within CCNL



Map 4 - SSSI locations within CCNL

App 2.2.3 National Nature Reserves (NNR)

NNRs were established to protect some of our most important habitats, species and geology, and to provide 'outdoor laboratories' for research. Most NNRs offer great opportunities to schools, specialist interest groups and the public to experience wildlife at first hand and to learn more about nature conservation.

Three NNRs are located across the NL, occupying < 0.5% of the landscape (429 ha).

- **Martin Down NNR** is an extensive area of chalk grassland and scrub supporting a wealth of downland wildlife (including eight species of orchid). as well as being of national importance for archaeology
- **Prescombe Down NNR** is a botanically rich downland site set in a deep valley system and is especially important for rare butterflies such as marsh fritillary, grizzled skipper and Adonis blue
- **Wylve Down NNR** is a relatively small and isolated site occupying a shallow valley in chalk downland supporting nationally rare plants such as frog and burnt-tip orchids



Map 5 - NNR locations within CCNL



App 2.2.4 Local Nature Reserves (LNR)

LNR's are designated under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 as sites of local importance for communities to access wildlife.

One LNR is located within CCNL, occupying 3 hectares.

- **Moldrams Ground** is a mosaic of wetland, bog, ponds, dry woodland and grassland located near Penselwood



Map 6 - LNR locations within CCNL

App 2.2.5 Ancient Woodland

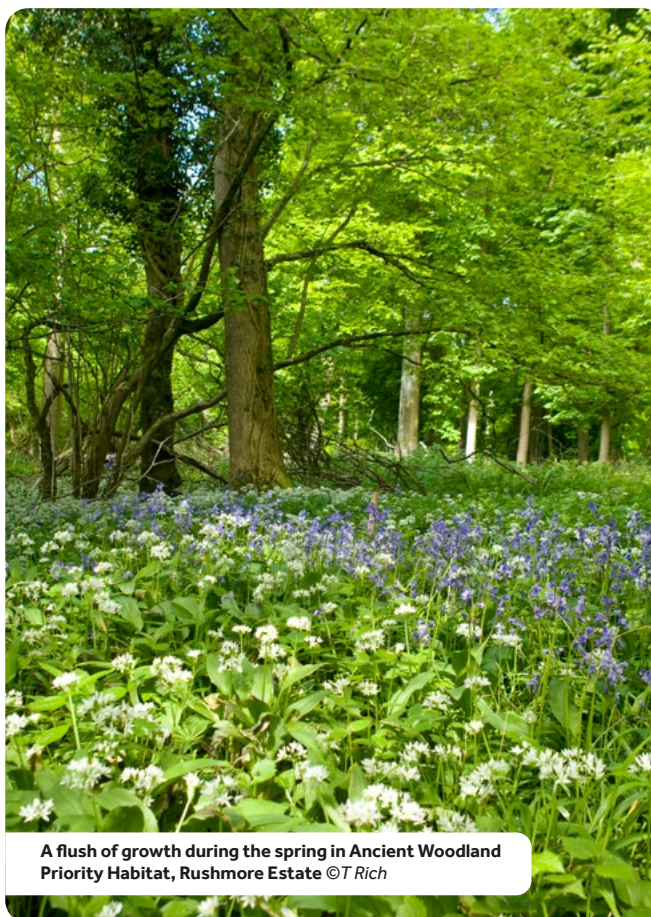
Ancient Woodland includes both ancient semi-natural woodlands (ASNW) and plantations on ancient woodland sites (PAWS), as both are recognised as **irreplaceable habitat** within the **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**, which is described as a habitat too complex, diverse, rare and/or fragile to be adequately compensated for where losses or damage occur.

Ancient woodland (and veteran trees) must therefore not be lost or damaged through the Development Management process.

An inventory of ancient woodland is maintained by Natural England of sites that have been continuously wooded since 1600 CE and greater than two hectares.

Ancient woodlands are complex habitats that have evolved in close association with people, where active management is typically required to maintain the habitat diversity and complexity.

It is estimated that only 2.5% of England's ancient woodland remains and most sites do not benefit from any additional legal designation such as SSSI status.



A flush of growth during the spring in Ancient Woodland Priority Habitat, Rushmore Estate ©T Rich

Within CCNL, ancient woodland occupies 7.2% of the total area (3,016 ha. ASNW and 3,990 ha. PAWS), of which almost one third is additionally protected by a SSSI designation.



Map 7 - Ancient woodland locations within CCNL

App 2.2.6 Wood Pasture and Parkland

Defined under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan as mosaic habitat valued for trees (especially veteran and ancient trees) and the plants and animals that they support, and is included within the 'wildlife rich habitat' criteria as a proxy for important veteran tree sites.

It is recognised that the national dataset lacks detail at the local scale, so mapping and identifying separate local areas of 'wood pasture and parkland' should be a priority.

Viewing the distribution of Wood Pasture and Parkland alongside Ancient Woodland provides an insight into the locations in CCNL where there is a history of trees and woodland being a continuous presence in the landscape, notably LCT 3 'Wooded Chalk Downland', LCT 4 'Downland Hills', LCT 7 'Greensand Hills' and LCT 8 'Rolling Clay Vales'.

Across this NL, Wood Pasture and Parkland occupies 2,210ha, only 2% of which falls within Protected Areas.



Map 8 - AW & WP&P PHI locations within CCNL



App 2.2.7 Local Wildlife Sites (LWS)

Local Wildlife Sites data is held by Local Environmental Records Centres (LERCs) and can only be shared with a commercial data agreement in place.

There are four records centres for CCNL that cover different geographical regions

- Wiltshire & Swindon Biological Records Centre (WSBRC)
- Dorset Environmental Records Centre (DERC)
- Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre (HBIC)
- Somerset Environmental Records Centre (SERC)

Criteria for listing LWS varies between localities but often aligns with Section 41 definitions of 'Habitats of Principal Importance' (NERC Act 2006) with some local adaptations.

LWS must be mapped into Local Plans and must be given due consideration in planning decisions under the NPPF and may also be protected from agricultural improvement under the **EIA (Agriculture) Regulations**.

Across CCNL, LWS cover 9.5% of the landscape area with other local sites (such as wildflower rich road verges and private/charity owned nature reserves) comprising an additional 1%.

LWS are often considered vital wildlife stepping stones across the landscape where nationally designated sites tend to be isolated habitat exemplars and LWS providing the biodiversity fabric that connects, buffers and expands designated sites to allow wildlife to move, adapt and thrive in the wider countryside.

"Local Wildlife Sites are areas of land that are especially important for their wildlife and are identified and selected locally.

The Wildlife Trusts have worked with Local Authorities, statutory agencies, landowners and other local partners to establish effective systems for identifying, managing and monitoring them.

As a result, these special and often secret spaces have a huge part to play in the natural green fabric of our towns and countryside."

Local Wildlife Sites | The Wildlife Trusts

App 2.2.8 Priority Habitat Inventory

The Priority Habitats Inventory (PHI) is maintained by Natural England and is under continuous review. PH supports distinctive vegetation communities that indicate a long history of continuous sympathetic management such as low intensity grazing of Calcareous Grassland.



Map 9 - Priority habitat locations within CCNL

UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UKBAP) priority habitats cover a wide range of semi-natural habitat types and were those that were identified as being the most threatened and requiring conservation action under the UKBAP.

Priority Habitats have subsequently been defined as **'Habitats of Principal Importance'** in Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006.

Modern agricultural practices, such as field drainage, ploughing/reseeding grassland, cultivation and nutrient inputs, have resulted in significant loss of PH and subsequent decline of associated wildlife. AES can support landowners in maintenance or restoration of PH.

Much of the PH found across this NL is of national or international importance and is integral to the landscape's special qualities.

Increasing the area and connectivity of high-quality wildlife habitat across CCNL through effective conservation management will form a key target of this Nature Recovery Plan.



"The chalk grasslands and rivers of this National Landscape are of international importance. A significant proportion of the woodland is of ancient origin and the area contains some of the best stands of ancient trees in Europe. The extensive tracts of arable land support rare arable plants and can be a stronghold for farmland birds.

However, the areas of habitat favouring these important species are often fragmented and isolated. Wildlife habitats need to be big enough and sufficiently well connected for wildlife to thrive. Species need corridors to move through the landscape in response to a changing environment."

'Cranborne Chase National Landscape Management Plan: 2025-2030'

Across CCNL, recorded and mapped PH covers 16,645ha. (14.9 %) of the landscape area and comprises – [see map 9](#).

Priority habitat	Area (ha)
Wood Pasture and Parkland	2,210
Deciduous Woodland	9,255
Calcareous Grassland	3,855
Additional 'matrix' habitat*	1,246
Coastal and Floodplain Grazing Marsh**	1,042
Lowland meadows	496
Arable field margins	undetermined
Hedgerows	3,613 km
Rivers, streams and ponds	<200km

*Additional 'matrix' habitat is an 'honorary' Priority Habitat, representing areas that contain fragmented priority habitat. In the absence of ground-truthing, these areas are predicted to contain priority habitat or are in an area of complex (mosaic) habitats that are wildlife rich and/or increase landscape permeability for threatened species.

**The term 'Coastal and Floodplain Grazing Marsh' includes wet meadows and grazing land that is seasonally inundated by freshwater flooding.



Non-priority, semi-natural, field margin habitat on land within the Nadder Valley, providing additional species and structural diversity within an agricultural system ©Tracy Adams

App 2.3 Wildlife Rich Habitat Outside of Protected Areas

App 2.3.1 Other Semi-natural Habitat

Semi-natural habitat that does not meet the quality criteria of PH (i.e. vegetation community lacks sufficient diversity or distinctiveness) occupies an additional 6% (5,887 ha) of CCNL outside of Protected Areas.

Calcareous Grassland (2,427 ha) and Deciduous Woodland (3,428 ha) are the most frequent non-priority semi-natural habitats outside Protected Areas.

Non-priority semi-natural habitat represents an opportunity to restore wildlife rich distinctive habitat through AES options.



Map 10 - Non PH Semi-natural habitat within CCNL



App 2.4 Freshwater and Riparian Habitats

App 2.4.1 River Catchments

CCNL intersects with four operational catchments and the health and function of rivers and tributaries in these catchments is linked to land management, development and other anthropogenic activities that impact hydrology and water quality



Map 21 - Environment Agency Operational River Catchments

- Stour Dorset Operational Catchment
- Avon Hampshire Operational Catchment
- Avon Bristol Rural Operational Catchment
- Brue and Axe Operational Catchment
- Environment Agency Operational River Catchments

The Water Environment England and Wales Regulations 2017 (derived from EU legislation to improve and protect the water environment) set out requirements for the development of **River Basin Management Plans** legally binding environmental objectives.

Catchment Partnerships provide the framework to deliver River Basin Management Plan objectives bringing together local knowledge and expertise to direct and monitor local action that improves river and catchment health (**Catchment Based Approach (CaBA)**).

The Catchment Partnerships may be an effective mechanism to support development of catchment scale restoration projects.

Dorset Catchment Partnerships

Hampshire Avon Catchment Partnership

Bristol Avon Catchment Partnership

Somerset Catchment Partnership

Across CCNL nutrient reduction schemes are in operation that take a CaBA approach to pay farmers for interventions that provide natural solutions to water quality issues, such as reducing diffuse pollution, improving and creating riverine habitats and restoring natural flows.

As part of the EIP 2023 commitment towards clean and plentiful water, the **Catchment Sensitive Farming** programme has received additional funding to widen the support available to landowners for nutrient and air quality management on farms.

New AES schemes will pay farmers to protect and enhance water courses supported by a Nutrient Management Standard, and the **England Woodland Creation Offer** (EWCO) offers landowners additional payments for creating new woodland designed and located to buffer rivers from nutrient runoff, or to strengthen wider catchment processes for slowing water runoff (reducing flood risk and ameliorating drought), and reducing soil erosion.

All future efforts across CCNL that attempt to improve and enhance freshwater quality should utilise a CaBA, working across landownership and habitat type boundaries.



Native brown trout (*Salmo trutta*), a UKBAP species, in the River Ebble
©David Blake



App 2.4.2 Chalk Rivers and Streams

Across England, the chemical and ecological health of our rivers is below the standards set to achieve 'good' status (**Water Framework Directive**), with no complete section of river being in 'good' overall health.

In both rural and urban environments, our rivers suffer from pollution, unnatural flow regimes and physical degradation. Forever chemicals that remain in ecosystems for hundreds of years pollute nearly every stretch of English river.

CCNL contains 197km of chalk stream habitat – see table 1 and map 9. The majority of CCNL's chalk streams (75%) occur within LCT 5 'Chalk River Valleys' where they make a distinct contribution to sense of place, natural beauty and biodiversity.

Chalk streams can be exceptionally biodiverse but are very sensitive to a range of anthropogenic pressures such as over abstraction, habitat modification, and pollution. Some of the nation's most iconic species are found within CCNL's chalk rivers, including the genetically unique chalk stream Atlantic salmon, water vole, otter, and wild brown trout.

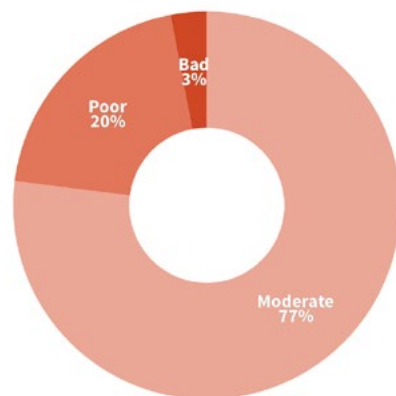
In 2021 the **Catchment Based Approach** (CaBA) published the Chalk Stream Restoration Strategy calling for enhanced environmental status and setting out pragmatic recommendations to bring the nation's chalk streams back to good health.

An Implementation Plan for the Strategy was published by CaBA in 2022 and the EIP 2023 commits to supporting the Chalk Stream Strategy as part the key 25 YEP goal to secure clean and plentiful water, through restoring 75% of waterbodies to good ecological status.

We support the **Manifesto for Chalk Streams** set out in the WWF Chalk Stream Report to

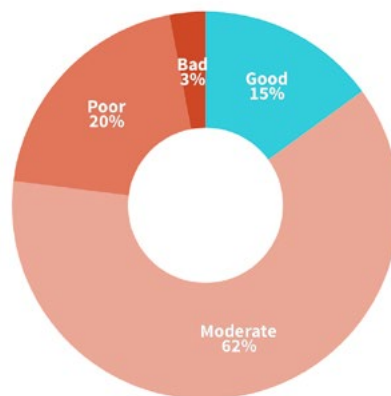
- Reduce abstraction
- Reduce Pollution
- Promote better river management
- Revive natural river processes
- Improve habitat

Overall health status



■ High ■ Good ■ Moderate ■ Poor ■ Bad

Ecological health status



The Health of England's rivers in 2022, State of Our Rivers, The Rivers Trust

"Chalk streams are among the most biodiverse of the UK's rivers."

Nearly all the world's chalk streams are in England and they represent one of the UK's most important contributions to global biodiversity."

These clear-watered streams are a valuable habitat for Atlantic salmon, sea trout, grayling and lamprey, for otters, water voles and kingfishers, for rare invertebrates such as the winterbourne stonefly and plants like water crowfoot."

Chalk Stream Strategy - CaBA



Primary river	1st tributary	2nd tributary	Type/index*	Length within CCNL (m)	Ecological status**
Dorset Stour	Tarrant	-	Type A	13,103	Poor
	Iwerne	-	Type C	786	Moderate
	Middle and Pimperne Brook	-	Type A	2,064	Moderate
	Allen	Headwaters	Type A	16,329	Good
		Lower	Type A	9,369	Good
		Crichel	Type A	7,847	Good
		Gussage	Type A	6,088	Good
	Crane	-	Type A	5,329	Good
Hampshire Avon	Nadder	Headwaters	Type B	6,149	Moderate / Good
		Upper	Type B	4,683	Moderate / Good
		Middle / lower	Type B	21,612	Moderate / Good
		Fonthill Stream	Type C	5,494	Moderate
		Teffont	Type C	2,605	Moderate
		Fovant Brook	Type C	3,569	Moderate
		Chilmark Stream	Type C	2,746	Not assessed
		Ansty Stream	Type C	651	Not assessed
	Wylde	Swallowcliffe Stream	Type C	2,526	Poor
		Upper	Type A	16,329	Poor
		Middle	Type A	32,337	Moderate
		Lower	Type A	691	Good
		Chitterne Brook	Type A	2,460	Moderate
	Ebble	Till	Type A	70	Moderate
		Main	Type A	15,784	Good
		Upper	Type A	5,861	Good
		Chalke Valley Stream	Type A	1,642	Moderate
	Sweatfords Water	-	Type A	3,761	Good
	Ashford Water (Allen River)	-	Type A	7,570	Good

Table 1 – Chalk rivers and streams within CCNL



Map 11 - Chalk river and stream locations within CCNL

*Chalk streams can be classified dependent upon their unique geological characteristics that influences the physical and chemical properties of the river at different points from the source to their termination. Charles Rangeley-Wilson and Dr. Haydon Bailey have developed an index to categorise England's chalk streams which helps to understand their individual characteristics. Improved index of English chalk streams – Chalk-Streams

** England | Catchment Data Explorer



App 2.4.2.1 Chalk river projects

- The **Wider Wylfe Project** 2020-2025 represents a partnership between Wessex Rivers Trust, Wiltshire Wildlife Trust, Wessex Water and wider members of the Hampshire Avon Catchment Partnership, to bring together a series of projects and programmes of work for delivery over five years and into the future to improve the health and resilience of the River Wylfe and tributaries.
- River habitat and water quality projects were delivered through the catchment and over 500 local school children received education sessions.
- The legacy of the project is now focusing on working with stakeholders in the headwaters, including community volunteer groups to address issues affecting the health of the river.
- The **Crystal Clear Ebble**, part of Chase and Chalke NLHF Landscape Partnership (2019-2025) led by the CCNL team, aimed to protect and enhance the health of the River Ebble by monitoring environmental condition, identifying opportunities for improvements and working with landowners and the local community to deliver physical improvements to the river.
- 38 volunteers took part in over 600 hours of monitoring, recording 490 species records that were shared with Biological Records Centres. In addition, a grant scheme supported 4 landowner led projects to improve water quality and chalk stream habitats over 0.5km of the river.

The data and information captured by the Crystal Clear Ebble project is currently informing the design and future delivery (2027+) of a multi-million-pound water resource mitigation project to deliver river and floodplain restoration work.

- The **River Allen Landscape Recovery Project** is led by the River Allen CIC and brings together a network of 19 land managers & farmers. Currently within the project development phase (2024-2026), the aim is to develop a long term plan and secure funding for a 20-year project to restore



Invertebrate 'kick sampling' on the River Ebble, undertaken by volunteers as part of the Crystal Clear Ebble project ©Jamie Randall

habitats, enhance biodiversity, enable more naturalised geo and hydro-morphological processes, improve water quality and create community engagement opportunities.

- The **Wylfe Valley Landscape Recovery project** is led by Wiltshire Wildlife Trust, Wessex Rivers Trust, and the Wylfe Valley Farmers group. Currently within the project development phase (2024-2026), the project aims to undertake an ambitious restoration project that will secure robust, long term outcomes for nature and the local community.

App 2.4.3 Riparian corridor and habitats

Historically, valley bottoms were often managed as water meadows, with sluices, carriers, and bed works creating species-rich wetland systems.

Riparian zones also featured pollarded willows and alders, fishponds, mill ponds, and withy beds for basketry and fencing, which supported biodiversity and rural economies, forming a distinctive cultural landscape that linked ecological function with human activity.

Over time, many riparian habitats including wet woodland and hedgerows, have been degraded by agricultural intensification, drainage, and channel modification, and through the loss of traditional management practices such as coppicing and pollarding, have reduced structural diversity and physical barriers have disrupted natural flow regimes.

Actions to improve riparian corridors include

- Reinstating natural processes by reconnecting rivers with floodplains, removing redundant structures, and restoring meanders to improve habitat complexity
- Enhancing riparian vegetation through planting native species such as willow (*Salix* spp.), alder (*Alnus glutinosa*), and aspen (*Populus tremula*) to provide shade, reduce erosion, and create habitat
- Reducing pollution by implementing buffer strips, cover crops, and nutrient management plans to minimise agricultural runoff
- Creating wetland features such as scrapes, ponds, and wet grassland to increase biodiversity and water storage capacity
- Collaborating at catchment scale with farm clusters and Catchment Partnerships to deliver integrated solutions for water quality and habitat connectivity
- Supporting community engagement through citizen science monitoring and volunteer-led restoration projects such as tree planting and invasive species removal

Restoring riparian corridors will support an increase in biodiversity and water quality, enhance climate resilience and flood management, and conserve historic landscape character, reconnecting cultural heritage with ecological function.

App 2.5 Hedgerows

Hedgerows can be of significant value for wildlife in the farmed landscape offering shelter, landscape permeability and foraging habitat, and where managed appropriately, can contribute to landscape character marking historic field patterns and influencing sense of place.

There are 3,613 km of hedgerow currently within CCNL.

The EIP 2023 commits to supporting farmers in creation or restoration through appropriate and sympathetic management, of 45,000 miles of hedgerow by 2050, with an interim target of 30,000 miles by 2037, bringing hedgerow lengths to 10% above their 1984 baseline.

In addition, research commissioned by **CPRE** proposes a target for a 40% increase in hedgerows across the country which aims to increase hedgerows at a scale that can contribute to the rural economy and to natural solutions for climate change, nature recovery, and sustainable agriculture.

AES may provide opportunities for landowners to improve structural diversity and integrity of hedgerow habitat by providing payment rates for hedgerow trees, buffer strips and leaving more of the hedgerow uncut in each management cycle.



The Great Big Dorset Hedge provides a valuable opportunity for landowners to assess the condition of hedgerows under their management, supported with good practice guidance to improve their health and biodiversity value.

CCNL's Right Tree, Right Place and Trees in the Landscape guidance documents support opportunities for beneficial tree planting within four characteristic landscapes and identifies important considerations when making decisions about the suitability of different planting options.

In open chalk downland for example, hedgerow planting to restore field boundaries will be most sympathetic when planted along contours and the base of slopes and where dense roadside hedge planting can be perceived to diminish landscape character where far-reaching views are lost.

The greensand hills and the rolling clay vales however may be able to support the addition of hedgerows if carefully considered.

The ongoing care and management of hedgerows is essential to create and maintain nature-rich habitats.

App 2.6 Land within Agri-environment Schemes

Land currently within active agri-environment schemes (AES) agreements covers 46% (45,767 ha.) of CCNL, of which 36% (35,297 ha.) is on land outside of designated wildlife-rich habitat (Designated Sites, Priority Habitat and 'Wood Pasture and Parkland').

Across CCNL where agriculture is the dominant land use and farming is central to community and sense of place, uptake of AES, transition to sustainable farming and use of 'nature based finance' such as BNG, nutrient mitigation and other payments for ecosystem services, will be key to nature recovery and climate resilient landscapes.

Whilst the use of AES has the potential to deliver for Nature Recovery, strategic and long term use and placement of habitat management and creation can be limited.

It is essential that additional support and guidance is offered to all land managers when considering the uptake of AES options, to support the creation of strategic habitat management and creation.

Farm clusters occupy nearly two thirds of the National Landscape and are supported through membership subscriptions or funding through the AES Countryside Stewardship Facilitation Fund. They are well placed to develop habitat creation and enhancement schemes that span multiple landholdings using AES options and external funding opportunities.

Land within AES (unless intersecting with wildlife-rich habitat) is not currently considered to be contributing to '30 by 30' targets as agricultural productivity is assumed to be the primary objective of land management.



Sympathetic management of species rich grassland can be supported through AES ©CCNL



App 2.7 Champion Species

Champion species for Cranborne Chase NL have been proposed through a process of drawing up a list of species based on the following criteria

- Species of 'Conservation Concern' (**ICUN Red List**, and **Species of Principal Importance** listed in Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006)
- Keystone species (managing habitats for these species has the potential to deliver wide biodiversity benefit)
- Charismatic species (engage people and communities in actions for nature recovery)
- Known solutions for species (responsive to positive management)

Refinement of the 'champion species list' took place through consultation with experts and key stakeholders and via a CCNL nature recovery workshop held in 2022. The following 'Champion Species' were agreed:

Landscape-wide	
Lesser horseshoe bat (<i>Rhinolophus hipposideros</i>)	Greater horseshoe bat (<i>Rhinolophus ferrumequinum</i>)
Barbastelle bat (<i>Barbastella barbastellus</i>)	Hazel dormouse (<i>Muscardinus avellanarius</i>)
Bechstein's bat (<i>Myotis bechsteinii</i>)	
Woodland/Wooded Landscape	
European nightjar (<i>Caprimulgus europaeus</i>)	Goshawk (<i>Accipiter gentilis</i>)
Eurasian woodcock (<i>Scolopax rusticola</i>)	Veteran trees – <i>Saproxyllic invertebrate assemblages</i>
Woodlark (<i>Lullula arborea</i>)	
Arable Landscape	
Harvest mouse (<i>Micromys minutus</i>)	Corn bunting (<i>Emberiza calandra</i>)
Arable plants including pheasant's eye (<i>Adonis annua</i>)	Skylark (<i>Alauda arvensis</i>)
Turtle dove (<i>Streptopelia turtur</i>)	Yellowhammer (<i>Emberiza citronella</i>)
Brown hare (<i>Lepus europeus</i>)	Linnet (<i>Linaria cannabina</i>)
Lowland Calcareous Grassland	
Juniper (<i>Juniperus communis</i>)	Adonis blue (<i>Polyommatus bellargus</i>)
Pasque flower (<i>Pulsatilla vulgaris</i>)	Dingy skipper (<i>Erynnis tages</i>)
Marsh fritillary (<i>Euphydryas aurinia</i>)	Grizzled skipper (<i>Pyrgus malvae</i>)
Duke of Burgundy (<i>Hamearis lucina</i>)	
Chalk Streams	
Native brown trout (<i>Salmo trutta</i>)	White-clawed crayfish (<i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i>)

CCNL Champion Species

The development of Species Action Plans (S5.4) will support focussed activity for some of these species, where they will be selected according to strategic values, such as habitat/landscape relevance, geographic threat and opportunity, ability to influence, or ability to engage wide/specific audiences.



Appendix 3 – CCNL Relevant Habitat Types

Potential habitat types for CCNL and desired outcomes/assessment criteria, taken from **Environment Act Habitat Target – Definitions and Descriptions**

Broad habitat type	Wildlife rich habitat name	Desired outcomes
Arable and horticulture	Arable field margins	Aim to meet agreed habitat definition for arable field margins Recorded simply as the area of selected AES options
Acid grassland	Lowland dry acid grassland	Aim to meet 'good condition' for 'other lowland acid grassland' as outlined in the BNG Condition Assessments
Calcareous grassland	Lowland calcareous grassland	Aim to meet priority habitat definition for lowland calcareous grassland also see PHI Guidance and 'good condition' as outlined in the BNG Condition Assessments
Neutral grassland	Lowland meadows	Aim to meet priority habitat definition for lowland meadows also see PHI Guidance and 'good condition' as outlined in the BNG condition Assessments
Improved grassland	Coastal and floodplain grazing marsh / floodplain wetland mosaic	Aim to improve natural function wherever possible as part of future restoration within the floodplain. A brief definition of floodplain wetland mosaic habitat can be found in UK Habitat Classification. The locations of modified floodplain areas providing highly important refuges for wetland wildlife of high biodiversity value within the existing inventory form part of this new habitat definition. Aim to meet 'good condition' as outlined in the BNG Condition Assessments
Standing open waters	Ponds	Aim to meet priority habitat definition for ponds and 'good condition' as outlined in the BNG Condition Assessments
Rivers and streams	Rivers and streams	Aim for naturally functioning habitat as described in B6 and the River-naturalness-assessment-guidance-document. Note that entirely pristine habitat is not required for this target, class 2 in the above assessments will be acceptable. Actions to reach Good Ecological Status will have a considerable role in restoring these habitats but additional actions may also be required.
Broadleaved, Mixed and Yew Woodland	Lowland beech and yew woodland;	Aim to meet priority habitat definition for lowland beech and yew woodland and 'good condition' in the BNG Condition Assessments. All new woodlands should follow the FC woodland establishment guidance, delivery of the woodland habitats may best be achieved through natural woodland colonisation
	Lowland mixed deciduous woodland;	
	Wet woodland	



Broadleaved, Mixed and Yew Woodland	Native woodland: broadleaved	Aim for 'good condition' in the BNG Condition Assessments or more than 35 points within the woodland Condition survey forms. The Woodland Wildlife Toolkit states that Native woodland is defined as woodland that is composed of at least 80% native tree species. Up to 20% of this can comprise "naturalised species" if they are already present in the wood. This will still meet the favourable condition threshold for 'nativeness'. On ancient woodland sites which have been converted to plantations dominated by non-native species (known as "plantations on ancient woodland sites" or PAWS), the preferred long-term outcome is gradual restoration, eventually resulting in a stand with over 80% of the canopy containing native species. All new woodlands should follow the FC woodland establishment guidance, delivery of the woodland habitats may best be achieved through natural woodland colonisation
Broadleaved, Mixed and Yew Woodland	Mixed woodland:	Mixed woodland: mainly native broadleaved (with a minimum requirement of 70% native broadleaved species). Aim to meet 'good condition' in the BNG Condition Assessments. All new woodlands should follow the FC woodland establishment guidance, delivery of the woodland habitats may best be achieved through natural woodland colonisation.
Broadleaved, Mixed and Yew Woodland	Wood-pasture and parkland	Aim to meet priority habitat definition for Wood-pasture and parkland. The long term aim, for creating or restoring, would be to meet BNG 'good condition' in the BNG Condition Assessments 'Wood-pasture and parkland' but as an interim, for the creation of new habitat within the first 30years (or restoration of an historic site where the veteran trees are no longer present), we suggest an aim to meet 'moderate' condition.
Broadleaved, Mixed and Yew Woodland	Traditional orchards	Aim to meet priority habitat definition for Traditional orchards and 'good condition' in the BNG Condition Assessments
Broadleaved, Mixed and Yew Woodland	Blackthorn; bramble; gorse; hawthorn; hazel; mixed	Aim to meet 'good condition' in the BNG Condition Assessments
Boundary and Linear Features	Hedgerows	Aim to meet priority habitat definition for Hedgerows in favourable condition as outlined in Annex 9 of the Hedgerow survey handbook



Boundary and Linear Features

Native Species Rich Hedgerow with trees; Native Species Rich Hedgerow - Associated with bank or ditch; Native Hedgerow with trees - Associated with bank or ditch;

Aim to meet 'good condition' in the BNG Condition Assessments sheets

Boundary and Linear Features

Line of Trees (Ecologically Valuable); Line of Trees (Ecologically Valuable) - with Bank or Ditch

Aim to meet 'good condition' as outlined the BNG Condition Assessments sheets



Appendix 4 – Legacy Projects and Case Studies

App 4.1 Nature Recovery in the Farmed Environment

Nature Recovery Projects have been taking place within the CCNL farmed environment for many years. These are summarised below:

App 4.1.1 South Wiltshire Farmland Bird Initiative (2009–2015)

PURPOSE

This initiative aimed to reverse declines in farmland bird populations by working with arable farmers to provide year-round habitat for six iconic and threatened species

- Grey partridge
- Yellow wagtail
- Lapwing
- Turtle dove
- Corn bunting
- Tree sparrow

KEY ACTIONS DELIVERED

- Dedicated AONB officer support for landowners
- Capital works funded by Wessex Water and CCNL
- Agri-environment scheme (AES) options for nesting habitat, insect food for chicks, and winter seed

ACHIEVEMENTS

- 42% population increase in target species
- Winner of the National Association of AONBs Bowland Award (2015) for most successful conservation project



App 4.1.2 Farm Conservation Project

PURPOSE

This project built on the success of the Farmland Bird Initiative by creating farm clusters that enabled coordinated, landscape-scale action.

LEGACY IMPACT

- Farm clusters became a cornerstone of nature recovery across CCNL
- Facilitated joint funding bids (e.g., Landscape Recovery Schemes)
- Delivered multi-landowner projects that achieved outcomes beyond individual holdings

WHY CLUSTERS MATTERED

- Strengthened ecological connectivity across farmed landscapes
- Enabled strategic habitat creation and restoration
- Supported peer-to-peer learning and innovation
- Provided a mechanism to combine public and private finance for nature recovery





App 4.1.3 ELMS Test and Trials

PURPOSE

CCNL participated in Defra's Test and Trials project "Farming for the Nation" to help shape the development of new Environmental Land Management (ELM) schemes during the agricultural transition.

KEY ACTIONS DELIVERED

- Co-design of ELM scheme to replace Countryside Stewardship and Basic Payment Scheme
- Provided a collective voice for farmers to influence policy development

LEGACY IMPACT

- Supported farmers to adopt nature-friendly practices that deliver ecosystem services
- Helped ensure payments and incentives were fair, equitable, and integrated into farm business planning

App 4.1.4 Farming in Protected Landscapes Programme (FiPL)

PURPOSE

FiPL is an ongoing Defra-funded programme for all Protected Landscapes in England. It provides farmer-led or co-designed projects that deliver land management outcomes aligned with CCNL's Management Plan.

THEMES

- Nature
- Climate
- People
- Place

ACHIEVEMENTS WITHIN CCNL

- Over 171 projects delivered since 2021
- More than £2.1 million invested in biodiversity and landscape enhancement
- Projects include chalk grassland restoration, hedgerow planting, woodland management, and water quality improvements

FUTURE CONSIDERATION

- Continued funding for FiPL is not guaranteed beyond March 2029.
- CCNL and partners will advocate for FiPL's continuation and explore complementary funding streams

App 4.1.5 Rare Arable Plants

PURPOSE

A study funded by Wessex Water and undertaken by Blacksheep Countryside Management and GWCT (2010) identified and mapped rare arable plant communities across CCNL.

KEY FINDINGS

- 39% of CCNL mapped as "Arable Flora Target Areas"
- Identified AES options to support conservation management, including
 - Cultivated fallow plots
 - Low-input spring cereal
 - Unfertilised/unharvested headlands or margins



App 4.2 Nature Recovery in Semi-natural Habitats

A range of projects have successfully conserved and enhanced semi-natural habitats within CCNL. These initiatives demonstrate the value of collaborative action and targeted funding in restoring ecological resilience.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- Restoration and creation of chalk grassland habitats across fragmented landscapes
- Recording and monitoring of ancient and veteran trees to inform conservation priorities
- Establishment of CCNL as an Ancient Woodland Priority Area by the Forestry Commission
- Delivery of multiple habitat enhancement projects under the Chase and Chalke Landscape Partnership



Volunteer training for the Ancient Tree Project, in Vernditch Chase near Kitts Grave ©CCNL

App 4.3 Stepping Stones and Wiltshire Chalk Partnership

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Stepping Stones Project (2013) aimed to restore and create high-quality chalk grassland habitat in the undesignated landscape between Cranborne Chase and North Wessex Downs National Landscapes.

KEY ACTIONS DELIVERED

- Created 344 ha of species-rich calcareous grassland through interventions such as chalk scrapes, arable reversion, and plug planting
- Improved landscape permeability for chalk grassland species, enabling movement and adaptation across fragmented habitats

LEGACY IMPACT

- Led to the establishment of the Wiltshire Chalk Partnership (WCP)
- WCP continues to build on this work, aiming to create or restore 2,000 ha of high-quality habitat across the chalk landscape
- Partners include CCNL, North Wessex Downs NL, RSPB, and the National Trust

App 4.4 Chase and Chalke Landscape Partnership Project

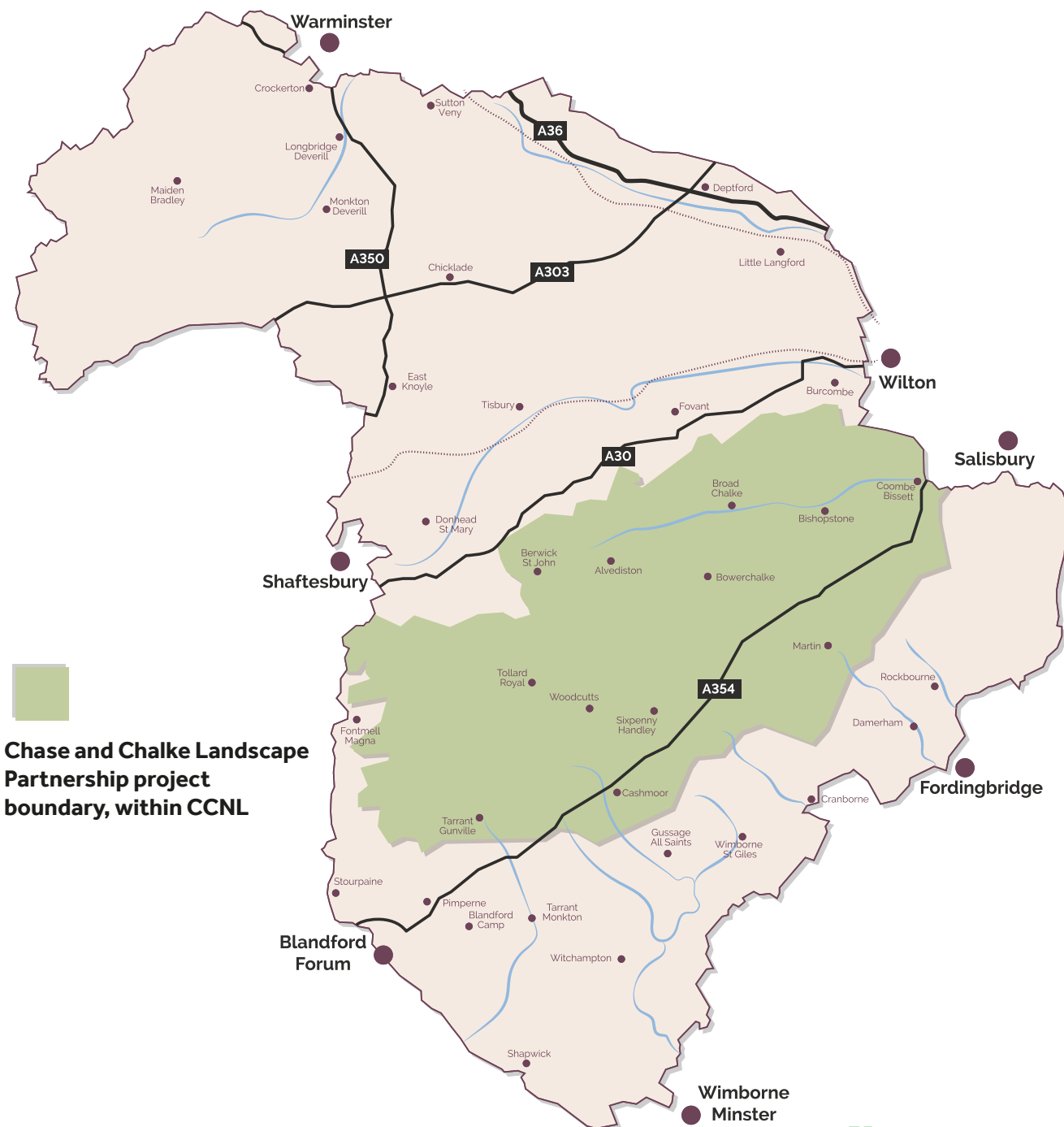
PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Chase and Chalke Landscape Partnership (2019–2025), funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund and delivered by the CCNL team, demonstrated what can be achieved within National Landscapes with sufficient resources and collaboration.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- Delivered 19 projects across natural, historical and cultural landscape themes
- Engaged land managers, specialists and communities in practical conservation, education and heritage activities
- Nature-focused projects included
- Crystal Clear Ebble – protected and restored the River Ebble through monitoring, landowner engagement, and physical improvements
- Nurturing Nature – enhanced biodiversity through habitat creation and management
- Wonderful Woodlands – brought woodlands back into active management
- Greater Grazing – improved biodiversity at Martin Down National Nature Reserve





LEGACY IMPACT

- Facilitated direct engagement, supporting emotional nature connections
- Extended to June 2025 to embed long-term benefits and maintain momentum
- Provided a foundation for future collaborative projects and funding bids

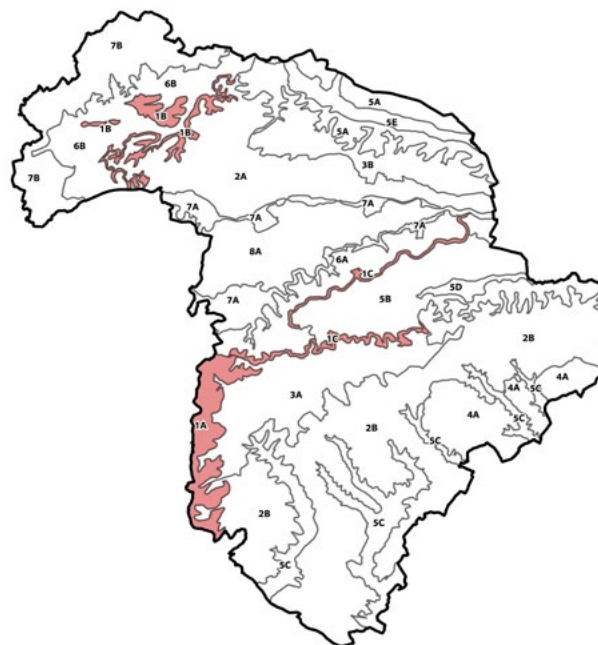


Appendix 5 - Landscape Character Types

Cranborne Chase is a large and diverse landscape designated for its Landscape Character and qualities, comprising eight separate Landscape Character Types. While we need to address Nature Recovery across the entire landscape, the following section is broken down by each LCT, including targeted and appropriate measures that could be implemented locally to support Landscape Character and Nature Recovery within CCNL.

The 'Right Tree, Right Place' and 'Trees in the Landscape' guidance provide some useful information relating to tree and hedgerow planting with each LCT.

Descriptions and maps of each LCT are reproduced from the updated Landscape Character Assessment (2024).



Landscape Character Areas:

- 1A** Melbury to Blandford Chalk Escarpment
- 1B** West Wiltshire Downs Chalk Escarpment
- 1C** Fovant and Chalke Escarpment

LCT 1 – Chalk Escarpments

The escarpments which often mark the transition between chalk and adjoining rock are amongst the most dramatic elements of the chalk landscape.

Such escarpments are often formed where the layers of chalk have been compressed to form a fold or where the chalk has been faulted, resulting in accelerated erosion along the line of weakness.

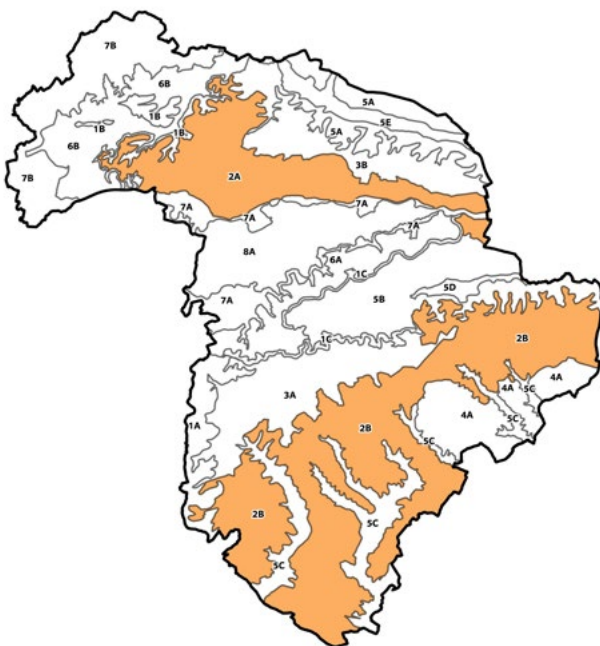
The retreating chalk strata stand as steep escarpments, often towering over the older rocks which are exposed at the base. The old chalk 'surface' remains behind the escarpment as a gently sloping, often highly eroded dip slope.

These are large scale landscapes where repeating patterns of rounded spurs and deep coombes cast strong shadows in sunlight. The scarps frequently support internationally important nature conservation sites and ancient field systems, some which remain as dramatic features of the landscape today.

APPROPRIATE NATURE RECOVERY ACTIONS

- Restoration and re-connection of chalk grassland through an appropriate and site-specific grazing regime. Monitor and control continued encroachment of scrub on the steepest slopes
- Conserve the distinct pattern of woodland cover (copses, hanging woodland and 'ivers' at the base of the escarpment) and broad hedges that create a distinction and contrast with the adjacent Greensand terrace, and managed through a combination of coppicing and 'continuous cover forestry'
- Consider the removal of recent game coverts and opening up the landscape, providing more opportunities for grassland habitats
- Further woodland and hedgerow planting is not a key objective for this area, with the aim being to maintain the balance of open land and woodland





Landscape Character Areas:

2A West Wiltshire Downs Open Chalk Downland

2B Southern Downland Belt Open Chalk Downland

LCT 2 – Open Chalk Downland

Two large tracts of open chalk downland, account for a large proportion and most significant landscape type in terms of area covered within this National Landscape.

Unlike the dramatic escarpments which are found along several of the boundaries of the chalk, the chalk downs have a much more subdued landform of gently rolling spurs and dry valleys. Only where these valleys come close to an escarpment do they deepen to create convoluted, dividing valley systems.

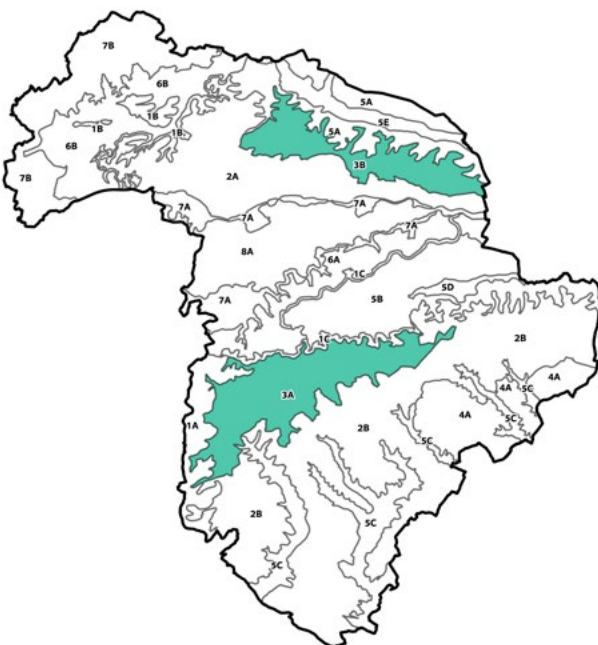
In geological terms, the open downs comprise the dip-slope of the chalk; a gently inclined landform representing the original chalk 'surface'. These uninterrupted rolling hills and gentle slopes give a real sense of openness.

The land is now predominantly under arable fields but with areas of chalk grassland surviving.

APPROPRIATE NATURE RECOVERY ACTIONS

- Encourage restoration of chalk grassland particularly in areas connected to existing SSSI sites
- Promote appropriate management of arable farmland to create a wildlife-rich habitat supporting farmland birds. This could include retaining areas of permanent fallow land, maintaining wide field margins, installation of 'skylark plots', creating 'beetle banks' and implementing a hedgerow management plan
- Manage the distinctive deciduous woodland clumps and consider a programme of replanting to enhance species diversity
- Consider opportunities for extending and linking native habitats such as chalk grassland, ancient broadleaved oak woodland, yew woodland and neutral meadows
- Consider opportunities for removing blocks of coniferous plantation and replacing with native species or reversion to grassland habitats
- Further woodland and hedgerow planting is not a key objective for this area, with the aim being to maintain the balance of open land and high quality grassland habitat.
- Consider cyclical laying of hedges to improve habitat value and visibility of the landscape.





Landscape Character Areas:

3A Cranborne Chase Wooded Chalk Downland

3B West Wiltshire Downs Wooded Chalk Downland

LCT 3 – Wooded Chalk Downland

The wooded chalk downland landscape type is similar to the open chalk downland landscape type in terms of its underlying geology, elevation, hydrology and early history.

The most distinguishing feature however is its woodland cover which is present in the form of large woods, shelter belts, copses, and clumps creating a series of enclosed spaces or 'rooms' surrounded by trees. This creates a downland mosaic of woodland, grassland and arable land that wraps around the steeply undulating landscape of upstanding chalk ridges and deeply incised combes.

There are two areas of wooded chalk downland in the National Landscape – Cranborne Chase (3A) and West Wiltshire Downs (3B).

APPROPRIATE NATURE RECOVERY ACTIONS

- Encourage planting of native species to restore deciduous character and ecological diversity of re-planted woodlands
- Beech may also be an appropriate species in this area, particularly planted as hedgerows and clumps
- Manage the distinctive deciduous woodland clumps and consider a programme of successional planting to increase species and age diversity.

- Improve connectivity between woodlands (where appropriate) and maintenance of enclosures
- Improve management of coppice to prevent growing out to high forest and encourage traditional management techniques and marketing of local wood products to restore the character of coppice woodland and wood pasture
- Conserve the parkland character by promoting a programme of successional tree planting to replace individual and parkland trees
- Consider opportunities for reversion from arable to species rich grassland on hills and bluffs where highly visible and encourage restoration of chalk grassland particularly in areas that are connected to SSSI land
- Promote appropriate management of arable farmland to create a wildlife-rich habitat supporting farmland birds, including the retention of areas of fallow land, unploughed margins around fields and management of hedgerows





Landscape Character Areas:

4A Martin – Whitsbury Downland Hills

LCT 4 – Downland Hills

The Downland Hills are formed from the dissected remnants of an older chalk escarpment.

Over millennia, the rivers which once drained the chalk dip slope of the National Landscape have cut through eroding the remnants of the escarpment into a series of rounded bluffs. These appear as a series of low 'whale-backed' ridges that stand out from the surrounding downland.

The highest hill tops tend to be capped with clay with flints and small areas of Reading Beds.

Ploughed slopes and enlarged fields create a patchwork of arable land with isolated remnants of chalk grassland and ancient semi-natural woodland that provide significant ecological interest.

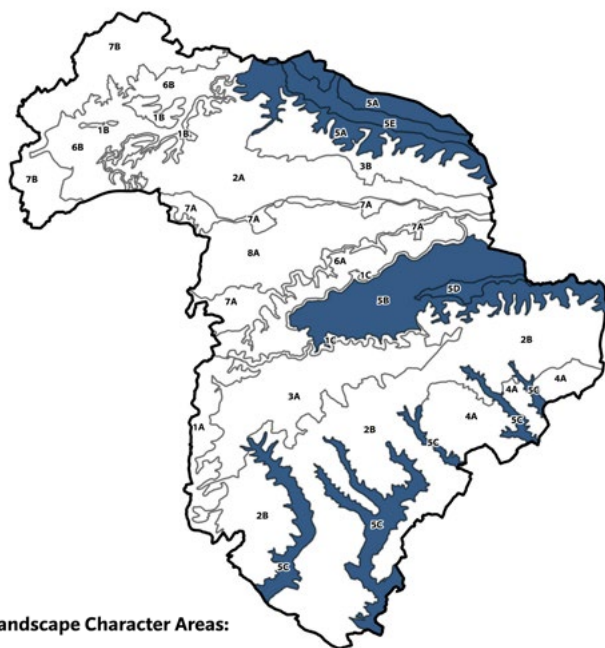
The range of archaeological remains in this landscape type reflects that of the wider chalk downs and imparts a similar historic character to the landscape.

There is just one area of this landscape type in the National Landscape, the Martin-Whitsbury Downland Hills (4A).

APPROPRIATE NATURE RECOVERY ACTIONS

- Promote a consistent and character appropriate approach to hedgerow restoration and field boundary management. This will include the use of more visually unobtrusive field boundaries on the more elevated open slopes so as not to fragment the smooth rolling landform and hills
- Increase deciduous tree planting to complement the undulating landform, following the existing distinct pattern of woodland cover and consider the removal or conversion of coniferous plantations
- Promote traditional woodland management and consider opportunities for the marketing of woodland products
- Consider restoration of chalk grassland to extend area coverage and connect with existing SSSI sites
- Promote appropriate management of arable farmland to create a wildlife-rich habitat supporting farmland birds including the retention of areas of fallow land, unploughed margins around fields and management of hedgerows





Landscape Character Areas:

5A Wylde Chalk River Valley Sides

5B Ebble Chalk River Valley Sides

5C Stour and Avon Tributary Valleys

5D Ebble Chalk River Valley Floor

5E Wylde Chalk River Valley Floor

LCT 5 – Chalk River Valleys

The river valleys which drain the chalk downs of this National Landscape are a key element of the landscape.

In contrast to the predominantly un-settled downland, villages tend to be concentrated in these valleys, sited at the spring line just above the water meadows and floodplain.

In physical terms these valleys can be divided into two groups.

First there are the river valleys of the Wylde, Nadder and Ebble which follow lines of weakness in the underlying chalk, often associated with retreating escarpments to the south. Such valleys tend to flow 'across' the chalk landform, from west to east.

The second group of river valleys consists of those which drain the dip slope of the chalk, tending to flow 'down' the landform from north to south. Along the southern dip slope a series of active rivers flow, which include the Tarrant and Allen.

APPROPRIATE NATURE RECOVERY ACTIONS (VALLEY FLOORS)

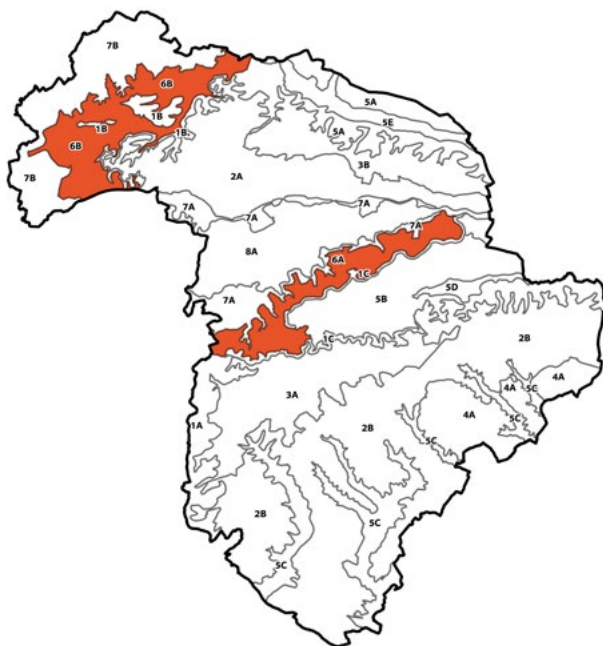
- Retain the structure of traditional pollards of willows, alders, aspen and other trees along field boundaries and the course of the river and consider extending wet woodland on the valley floors
- Consider reversion from arable back to water meadows and identify, conserve and restore remnant water meadow systems and encourage restoration of floodplain habitats
- Encourage traditional management techniques such as submerging the water-meadows each year encouraging improved hay crops, richer grazing and the deposition of rich silt as well as increasing soil temperature, initiating earlier grass growth

- Where appropriate to local character, consider opportunities for re-planting hedgerow trees where these have been lost
- Consider a tree management and planting strategy within villages and floodplains to ensure effective management

APPROPRIATE NATURE RECOVERY ACTIONS (VALLEY SIDES)

- Consider reinstatement of chalk grassland on sites adjacent to existing chalk grassland sites and ensure grazing to create a mosaic of species rich grass and scrub habitats
- Encourage use of native planting in landscaping schemes associated with development and consider removal of unsympathetic species such as Leylandii screening hedges that do not enhance biodiversity and can negatively impact the visual landscape
- Where appropriate to local landscape character, consider opportunities for replanting hedgerows particularly where fencing is in decline and where hedgerow lengths are gappy, whilst retaining a visually 'porous' character
- Encourage areas of fallow arable land within the arable matrix and conserve farmland features such as hedgerows, ponds, and wide field margins and headlands to encourage arable weeds and farmland birds





Landscape Character Areas:

6A Fovant Greensand Terrace

6B Kilminster Greensand Terrace

LCT 6 – Greensand Terrace

The Greensand Terrace landscape type corresponds to the level terraces that lie between the greensand hills and chalk escarpments where the geology has given rise to rich brown earths and these ALC2 soils support arable crop production on the highest-grade farmland in this NL.

The large rectangular arable fields which dominate the terrace landscapes are characteristic of Parliamentary enclosure and low density, scattered farmsteads characterise settlement.

Calcareous subsoils tend to be found on the edge of this landscape type, closer to the foot of the chalk escarpment and it is here that mixed woodland typically marks the transition and edge of the terrace.

The wooded copses provide valuable nesting and feeding habitat for a range of typical farmland bird species.

There are two Greensand Terraces within this National Landscape, the Fovant Terrace (6A) and the Kilminster Terrace (6B).

APPROPRIATE NATURE RECOVERY ACTIONS

- Promote appropriate management of arable farmland to create a wildlife-rich habitat, especially supporting farmland birds.
- Create/retain areas of permanent fallow land, maintaining wide field margins, installation of 'skylark plots', creating 'beetle banks', introduction of alley cropping and implementing a hedgerow management plan
- Seek to restore hedgerows through sensitive management and replant woodland at the break of the scarp to enhance the transition between the scarp and terrace and provide valuable nesting and feeding habitat for farmland bird species





Landscape Character Areas:

7A Donhead – Fovant Hills

7B Penselwood – Longleat Hills

LCT 7 – Greensand Hills

The transition from the clay lowlands to the elevated chalk beyond is marked by a series of greensand hills. These run along the north and south sides of the Vale of Wardour (8A) and along the north-western boundary of the National Landscape between Penselwood and Warminster (7B).

Although composed of Upper Greensand, tributaries of the major rivers have eroded the Greensand to expose underlying older deposits.

These hills are characterised by tight valleys, sunken lanes and are typically wooded.

The patterns of settlement are also distinctive where villages are tucked into the valley and hidden among the hills, focused on the spring line at the junction of the Chalk and Greensand.

APPROPRIATE NATURE RECOVERY ACTIONS (7A DONHEAD – FOVANT HILLS)

- Conserve, protect and explore opportunities to extend and restore the remnant semi-natural habitats including the wetland habitats on the valley floor such as fen meadow, unimproved grassland, wet woodland, hedgerows, meadows and flushes, whilst conserving landscape structure

APPROPRIATE NATURE RECOVERY ACTIONS (7B PENSELWOOD – LONGLEAT HILLS)

- Consider removal of conifers where they are particularly visible and replace with typical woodland types in this area such as field maple (*Acer campestre*) woodland or acid oak (*Quercus robur*), hazel (*Corylus avellana*) and ash woodland
- Encourage sensitive forestry practices to enhance wildlife value, for example irregular silviculture and consider restoring traditional management techniques such as coppicing to encourage a diverse age structure, a rich ground flora and marketing of local wood products
- Encourage woodland management of the remaining deciduous woodlands to check invasion of non-native species and encourage a healthy natural regeneration





Landscape Character Areas:

8A The Vale of Wardour

LCT 8 - Rolling Clay Vales

Geomorphological processes created a series of east-west faults where the Chalk beds were vertically sheared from one another, resulting in wide open vales exhibiting a number of different geological exposures.

These vales provide a contrast to the adjacent upland chalk downland and are characterised by a pastoral valley of small-scale fields divided by lush hedgerows and scattered with woods and copses - both mixed and deciduous.

The layout of fields, farms and villages illustrate the pattern of medieval settlement, clearance, farming and the post-medieval process of agricultural improvement and estate development.

Within the National Landscape there is only one Rolling Clay Vale, known as the Vale of Wardour (8A).

APPROPRIATE NATURE RECOVERY ACTIONS

- Protect and explore opportunities to extend and restore the remnant semi-natural habitats including the wetland habitats and areas of hay meadow and permanent pasture
- Consider a tree management and planting strategy within villages to ensure effective management such as coppicing and pollarding, succession planting and connectivity of existing woodland
- Replant hedgerow sections where gappy and discontinuous and apply consistent cutting and management regimes
- Promote traditional woodland management and consider opportunities for the marketing of woodland products
- Restore/replant localised areas of riparian woodland and rough field margins to reduce river edge erosion and sediment flow into the river



Appendix 6 – Opportunity Mapping

App. 6.1 Semi-natural Habitat

Habitat restoration and creation opportunity mapping is a process that allows the evaluation of a range of physical and other landscape features, that supports the understanding of the location and volume of opportunity, commissioned for CCNL in 2017 from Land Use Consultants (LUC) Ltd.



Map 12 - Semi-natural habitat creation/restoration opportunity map

Restoration of non-priority, semi-natural habitat to Priority Habitat (primarily calcareous grassland and deciduous woodland) could achieve in excess of 50% of CCNL's proportional Colchester Declaration targets, providing a significant opportunity for targeted action.

Habitat type	Activity	Area of opportunity (ha.)
Deciduous woodland	Restoration	608
	Creation	906
Calcareous grassland	Restoration	482
	Creation	1,873
TOTAL		3,869

App. 6.2 Landscape Permeability

Landscape permeability mapping was commissioned for CCNL in 2017 from LUC to make an assessment of the most suitable locations for restoration and creation of broadleaved woodland and calcareous grassland based on the likelihood of species colonising new habitats from existing sites - landscape permeability.



Map 13 - Landscape permeability to support habitat creation/restoration

Permeability mapping aims to support planning for landscape scale restoration of coherent ecological networks through which species can move, adapt and thrive through natural colonisation so that populations are more resilient to change.

The LUC study considers that a permeable landscape is one where

- existing woodland habitat blocks are at least 5 ha in size and no more than 750 m apart
- calcareous grassland is at least 1 ha in size and no more than 500 m apart

Some locations may be suitable for both broadleaved woodland and calcareous grassland creation/restoration or a mosaic of habitat types.

Woodland creation sites should be compatible with corresponding LCTs to ensure landscapes are enhanced and not negatively affected.

App. 6.3 Buglife B-Lines

B-Lines are a vision for how a joined-up approach can support national conservation objectives developed by Buglife.

Landowners, communities and local authorities can collaborate to deliver a connected network of pollen rich habitats across a landscape by considering B-line maps in environmental policy, spatial strategies and management plans.

B-lines provide an opportunity to bring people together around a common nature recovery cause, provide a focus for funding and decision making and provide multi-functional habitat supporting biodiversity and ecosystem services.



Map 14 - Buglife B-Lines map

In support of the English National Pollinator Strategy (2014), B-Lines aims to provide at least

100,000 ha of flower-rich habitat across the UK through creation of flower rich grassland habitat in the best locations by farmers, land owners, wildlife organisations, businesses, local authorities and the general public.

"B-Lines are an imaginative and beautiful solution to the problem of the loss of flowers and pollinators.



"The B-Lines are a series of 'insect pathways' running through our countryside and towns, along which we are restoring and creating a series of wildflower-rich habitat stepping stones.

They link existing wildlife areas together, creating a network, like a railway, that will weave across the UK landscape which will provide large areas of new habitat benefiting bees and butterflies and a host of other wildlife"

B-Lines - Buglife

App. 6.4 Natural England Habitat Networks

Habitat Networks have been identified by Natural England as a starting point to stimulate local engagement with partners and agree local priorities, identifying where action might help build more ecologically resilient ecosystems across landscapes, where the primary Habitat represents existing areas of importance for biodiversity.



Map 15 - Natural England Habitat Networks map

Habitat Network Enhancement and Expansion Zones represent locations where habitat creation and restoration can be expected to be most beneficial in building coherent ecological networks to expand and connect existing sites:

- **Enhancement Zone 1** - Land connecting existing patches of primary and associated

habitats which is likely to be suitable for creation of the primary habitat

- **(19% of CCNL, 18,356 ha)**
- **Enhancement Zone 2** - Action in this zone that improves the biodiversity value through land management changes and/or green infrastructure provision can be targeted here (15% of CCNL, 14,430 ha)
- **Fragmentation Action Zone** - Land within Enhancement Zone 1 that connects existing patches of primary and associated habitats which are currently highly fragmented and where fragmentation could be reduced by habitat creation. (5% of CCNL, 4,705 ha).

App. 6.5 Working with Natural Processes

Working with Natural Processes (WWNP) was developed by the Environment Agency in 2017 (updated in 2024) and aims to protect, restore and emulate the natural functions of catchments, floodplains, rivers and the coast to reduce flood risk. It is also referred to as natural flood management (NFM).



Map 16 – WWNP Opportunity Map

A set of map layers produced as a tool for land managers and strategic decision makers to identify where different types of river and catchment measures for nature recovery, particularly tree planting and sensitive tree management (such as pollarding), can reduce flood risk by working with nature.

Wide social and environmental benefits can flow from restoring catchment function including water quality, soil conservation, biodiversity, carbon sequestration, cohesive ecological networks, and enhanced enjoyment of the landscape.

WWNP and NFM are fundamental principles to restore ecosystem complexity at a catchment level and ought to influence and feature within all future river restoration projects and work streams.

App. 6.6 UKCEH 'E-planner'

E-Planner is a free tool developed by UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (UKCEH) to help farmers and other land managers identify the most suitable locations for different environmental management options via interactive maps.

Five nature friendly farming opportunities mapped in e-planner are

- Water resource protection - buffer strips and cover crops
- Woodland creation - tree planting and natural colonisation
- Seed-rich bird habitat - wild bird seed margins and overwinter stubbles
- Flower-rich pollinator habitats - flower margins and grassland restoration
- Wet grassland restoration - restoring wet grassland and floodplain meadows



Suitability is based on factors such as topography, soils, nearby habitats, landscape features for example and opportunity maps are presented as 'heat maps' for each intervention, making it straightforward to compare their relative suitability for a particular location.

The e-planner can be applied at an early stage in the land management decision making process, and will be further informed by constraints checks, grant/finance availability and business planning.

App. 6.7 Wiltshire Chalk Partnership

The Wiltshire Chalk Partnership (WCP) aims to work collaboratively with a range of partners to develop a road map for nature recovery across the chalk landscape connecting Cranborne Chase and North Wessex Downs NL's and is a response to the significant loss of chalk grassland habitat as a result of modern farming practices.

Through creation of 2,000 ha of new high-quality habitat and uptake of sustainable farming and land management, WCP's vision is to recover healthy chalk habitats across the partnership area as a key contribution to nature recovery in Wiltshire and as a key component in reconnecting England's wider chalk landscape.



Map 17 - Wiltshire Chalk Partnership Project Area

App. 6.8 Heart of Wessex

Heart of Wessex is a partnership initiative with a geographical focus around the headwaters of a number of rivers where multiple issues affect water quality, hydrology and aquatic biodiversity. Led by the Environment Agency and with a number of local delivery partners, Heart of Wessex aims to develop a pipeline of environmental projects that can attract a blend of public and private finance to deliver improved river health and wider catchment functioning, contributing to more climate resilient communities and a nature rich landscape.



Map 18 - Heart of Wessex Project Boundary

"Heart of Wessex offers an opportunity to come together to create a catalyst for large landscape scale investment to meet our shared challenges."

App. 6.9 Big Chalk

Initially powered by a partnership of Protected Landscapes supported by Natural England and flowing directly from CCNL's 'Stepping Stones' idea, the Big Chalk project aims to restore a mosaic of habitat across the calcareous (chalk and limestone) landscapes of Southern England. These landscapes are particularly species-rich and provide a significant opportunity for wildlife to thrive and adapt across England.

Big Chalk has the primary objective of building a robust nature recovery network on a geographical scale greater than the usual local authority or regional boundaries.



Map 19 - Big Chalk Boundary

The Partnership has been successful in securing funding from Defra to develop a delivery team and has launched a Nature Recovery Fund to support projects that help to restore and reconnect chalk and limestone landscapes.

"Southern England has some of the most iconic scenery on Earth, with its distinctive chalk and limestone vistas inspiring wonder for centuries."

The globally rare interplay of geology, soils and water creates special landscapes formed of streams, meadows, grasslands and woodlands."

These landscapes are as crucial to people as they are to our planet. They contribute to water supplies, healthy soils, carbon storage, sustainable food production and flood management, all while improving our health and wellbeing through access to historic heritage and the beautiful outdoors."

But the climate and nature crises threaten these precious places and the nature they support."

That's why Big Chalk exists."

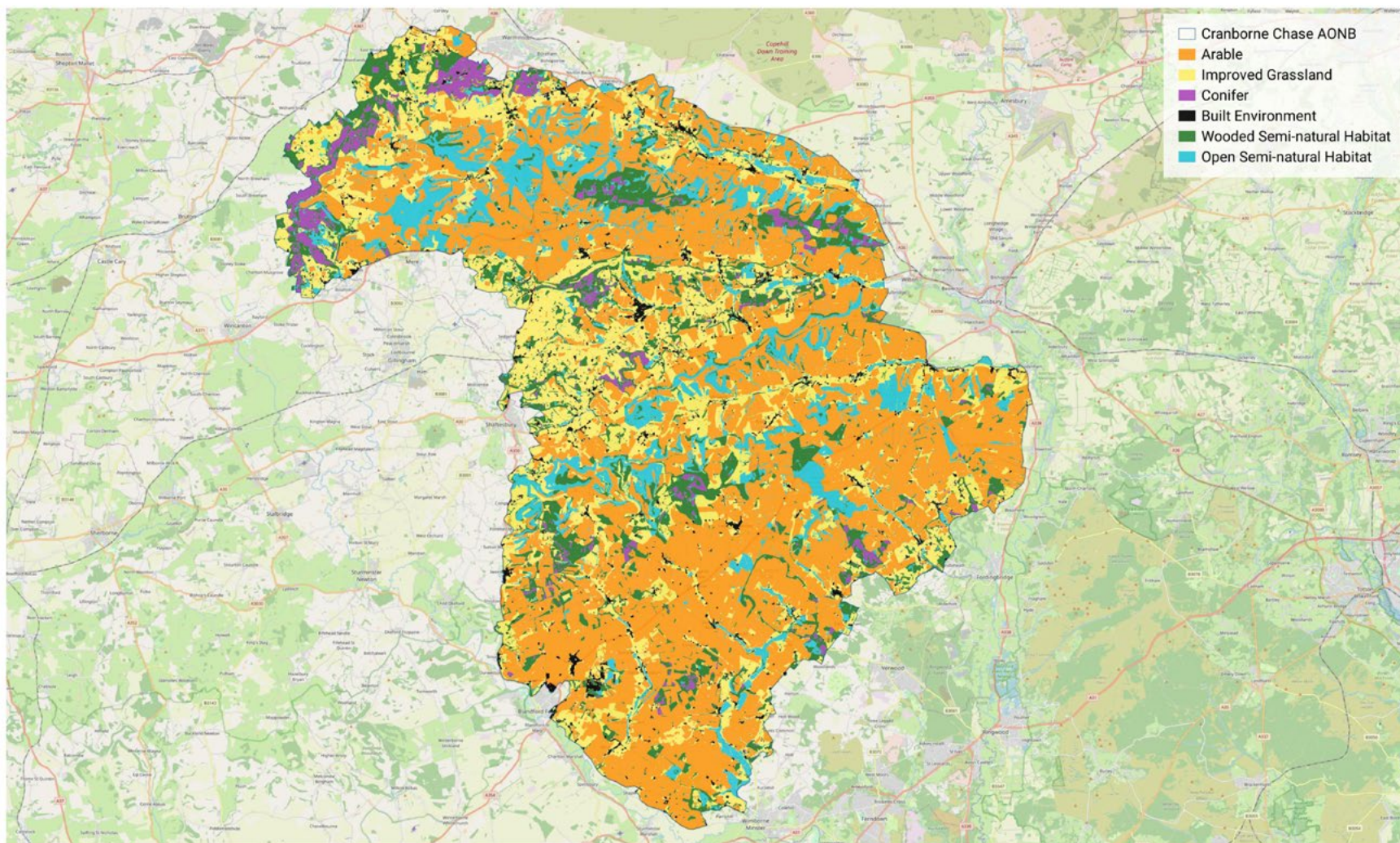
Big Chalk



1



Map 1 - Land Use

[← Return to: 7.3 Land Use](#)


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CCAONB - Context

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Scale 1:200000 (at A3)

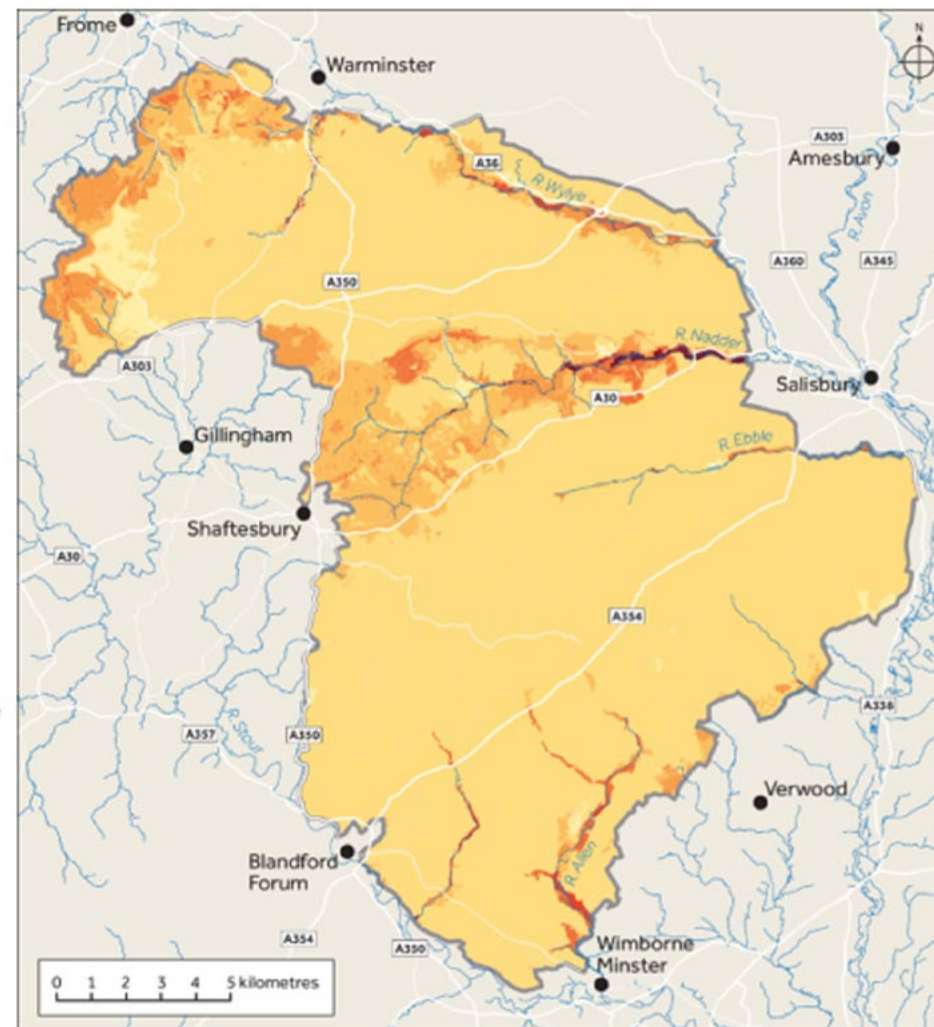
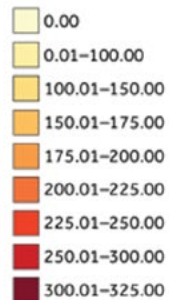


2

Map 2 – Location of soil carbon storage within CCNL

[← Return to: 8.1 Climate Change](#)

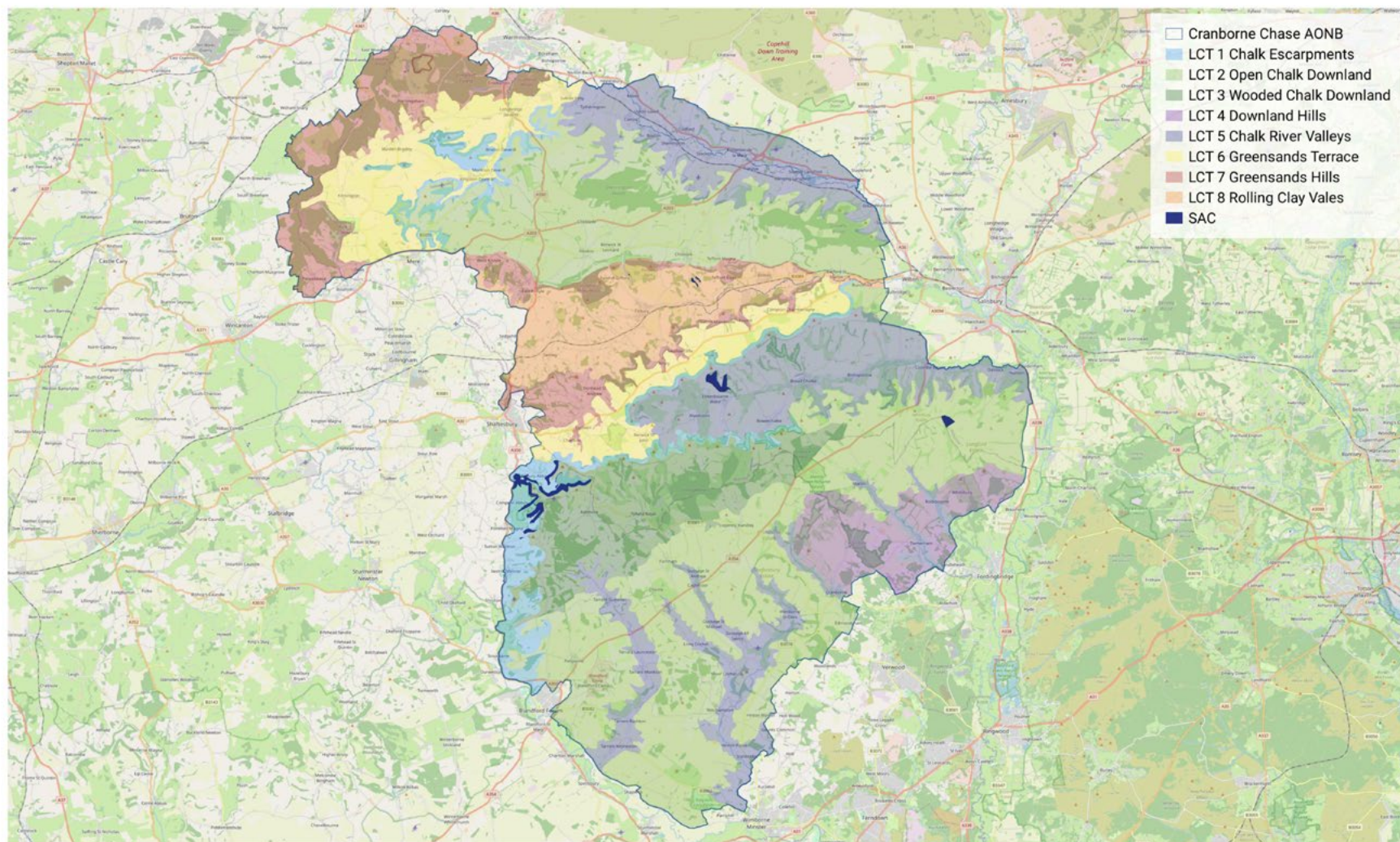
Legend
Soil C stock – tonnes per hectare
Soil organic carbon stock at
0–150cm depth – tonnes per hectare
average estimate





Map 3 – SAC locations within CCNL

[← Return to: App 2.2.1 Special Areas of Conservation \(SAC\)](#)



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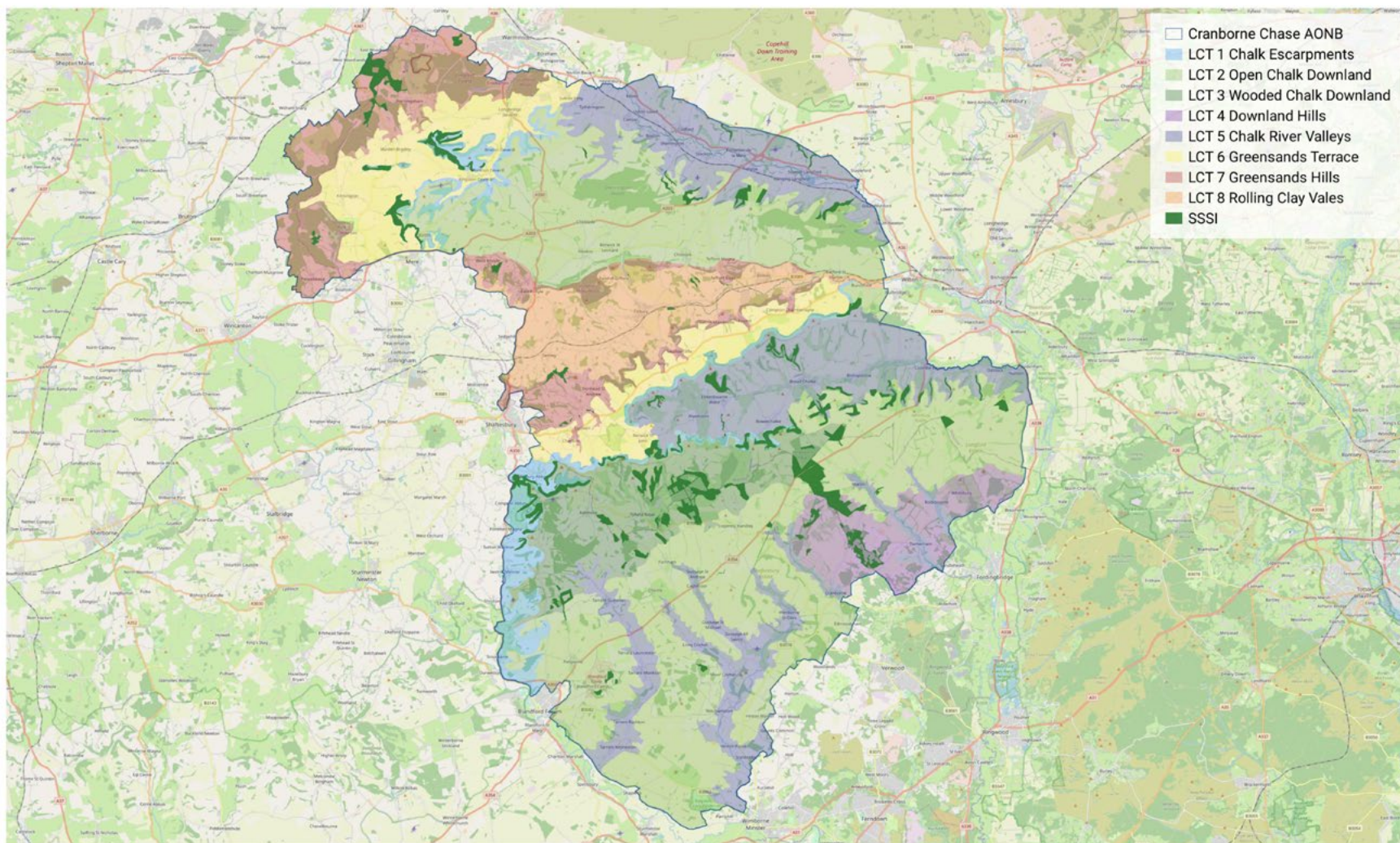
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Scale 1:200000 (at A3)



4



Map 4 – SSSI locations within CCNL

[← Return to: App 2.2.2 Sites of Special Scientific Interest \(SSSI\)](#)


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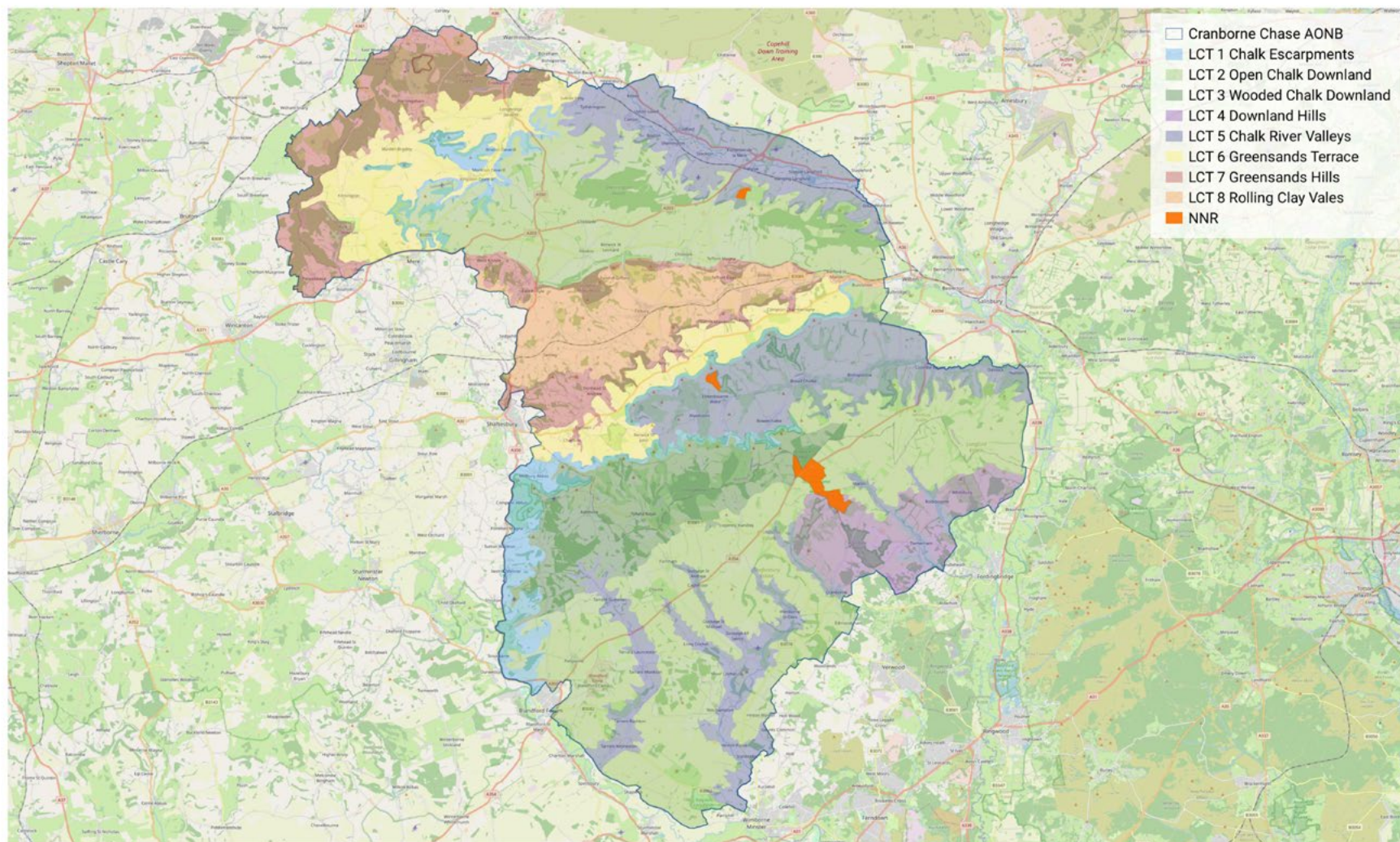
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Scale 1:200000 (at A3)



5



Map 5 – NNR locations within CCNL

[← Return to: App 2.2.3 National Nature Reserves \(NNR\)](#)


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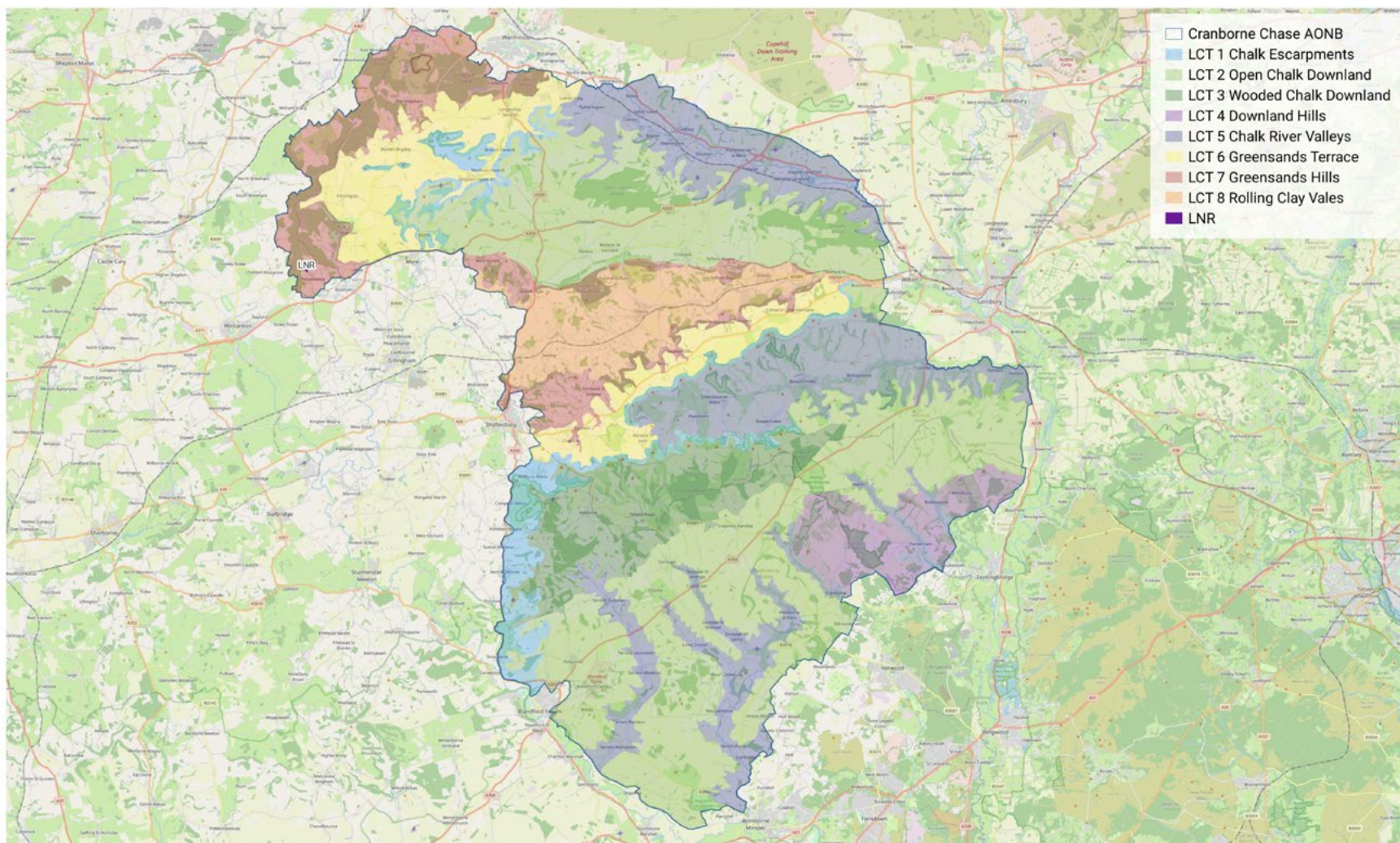
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Scale 1:200000 (at A3)



6



Map 6 – LNR location within CCNL

[← Return to: App 2.2.4 Local Nature Reserves \(LNR\)](#)


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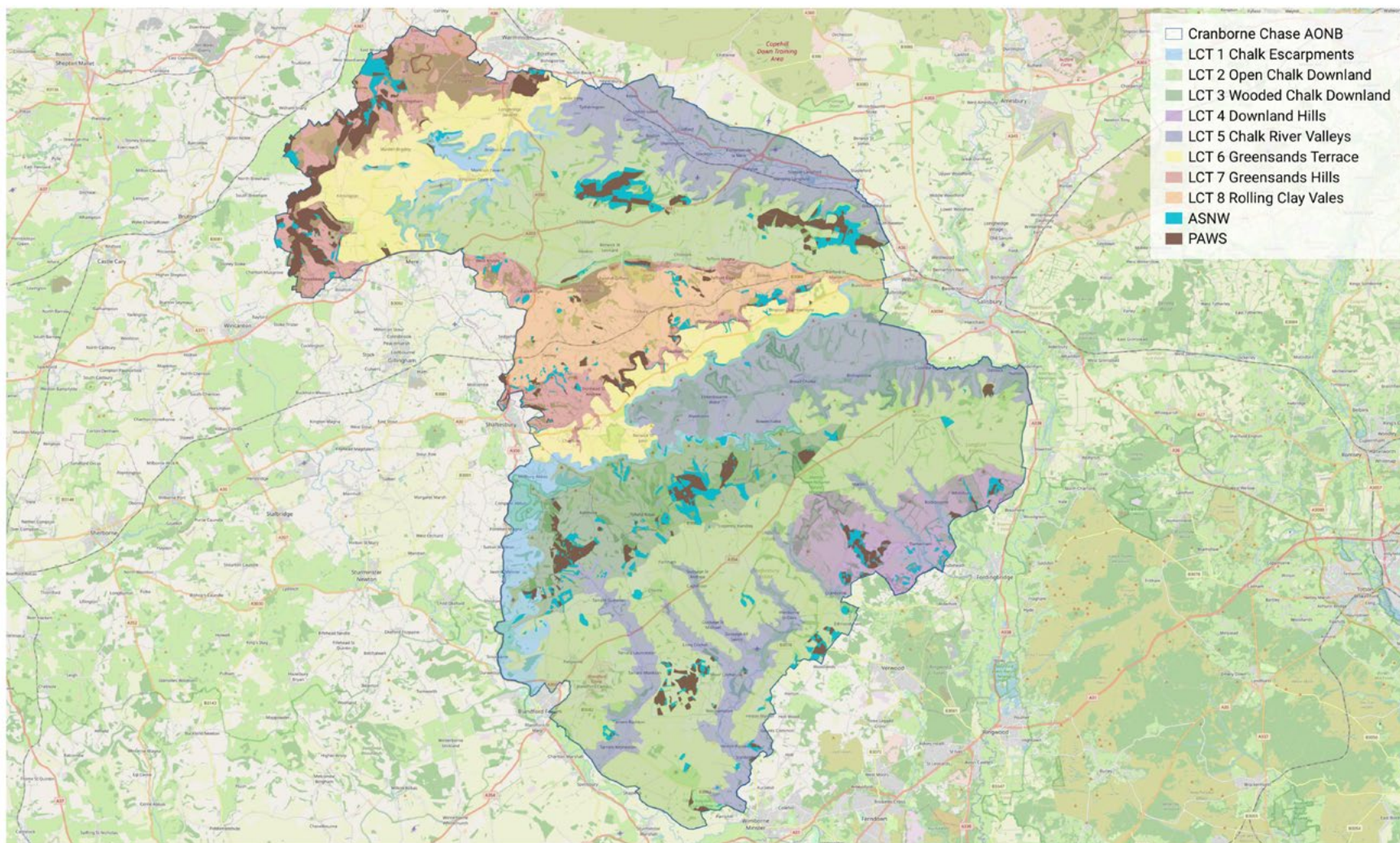
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Scale 1:200000 (at A3)





Map 7 – Ancient woodland locations within CCNL

[← Return to: App 2.2.5 Ancient Woodland](#)



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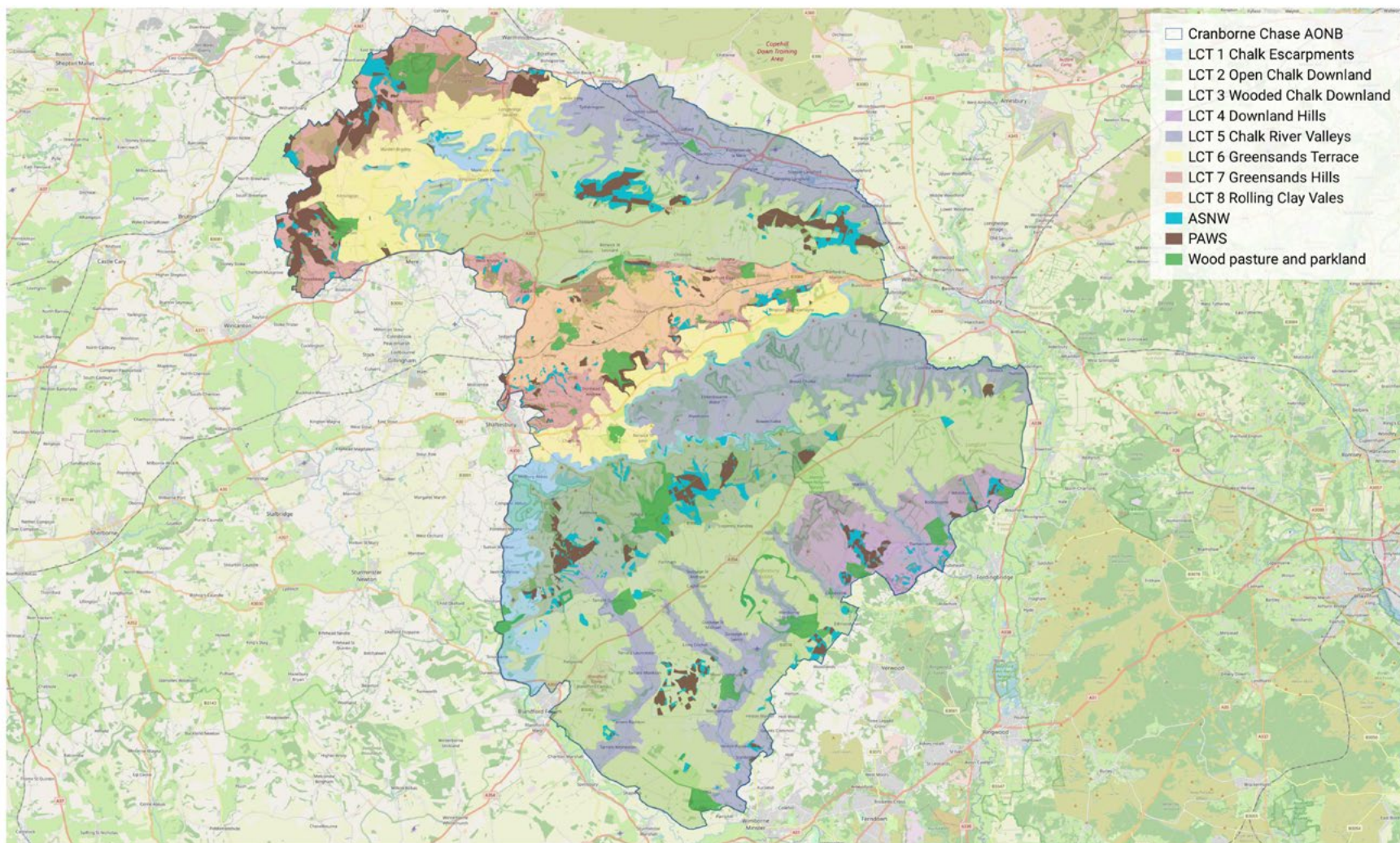
CCAONB - State of Nature

5 km
Scale 1:200000 (at A3)



8

Map 8 – AW & WP&P PHI locations within CCNL

[← Return to: App 2.2.6 Wood Pasture and Parkland](#)


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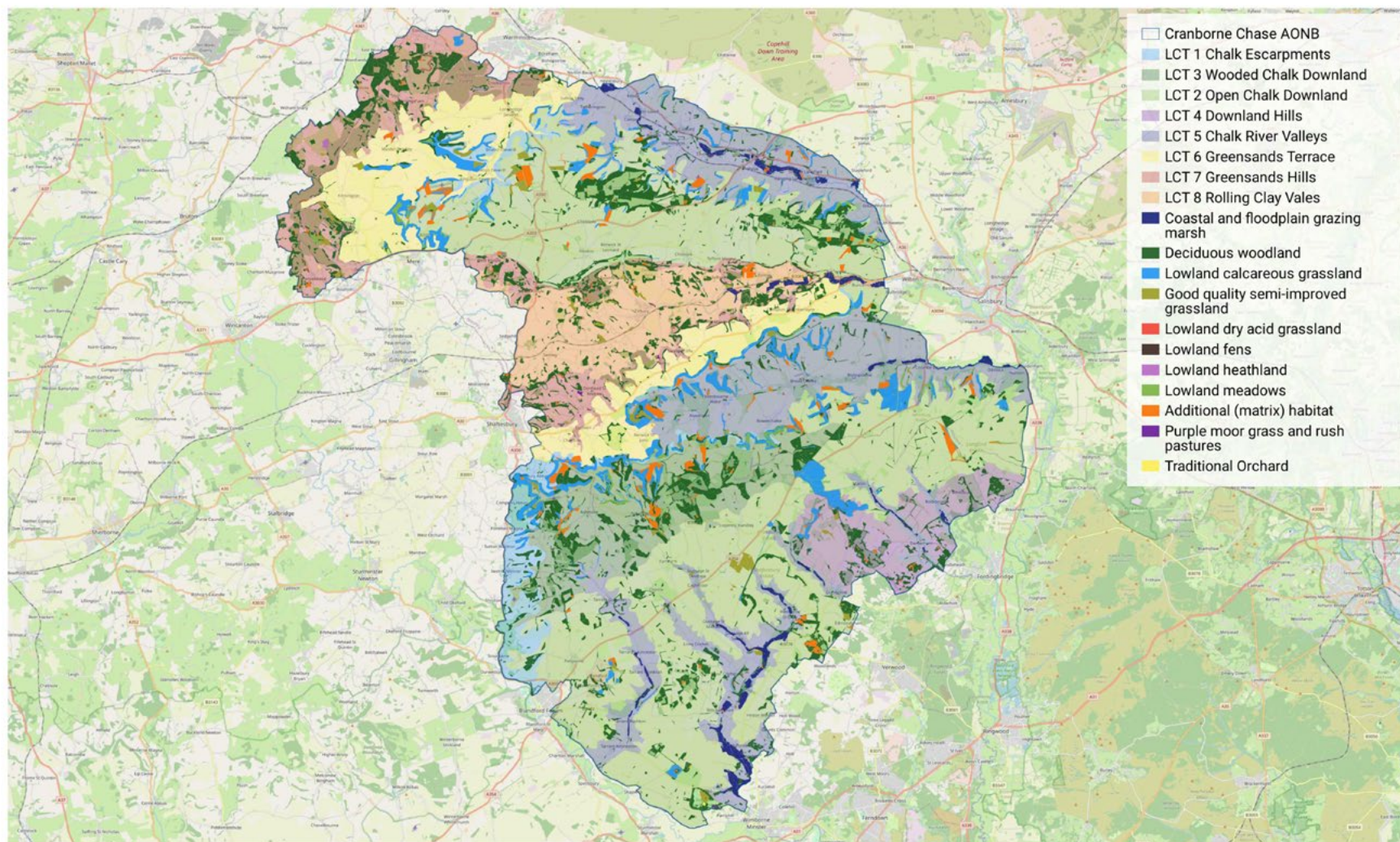
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Scale 1:200000 (at A3)



9



Map 9 – Priority habitat locations within CCNL

[← Return to: App 2.2.8 Priority Habitat Inventory](#)


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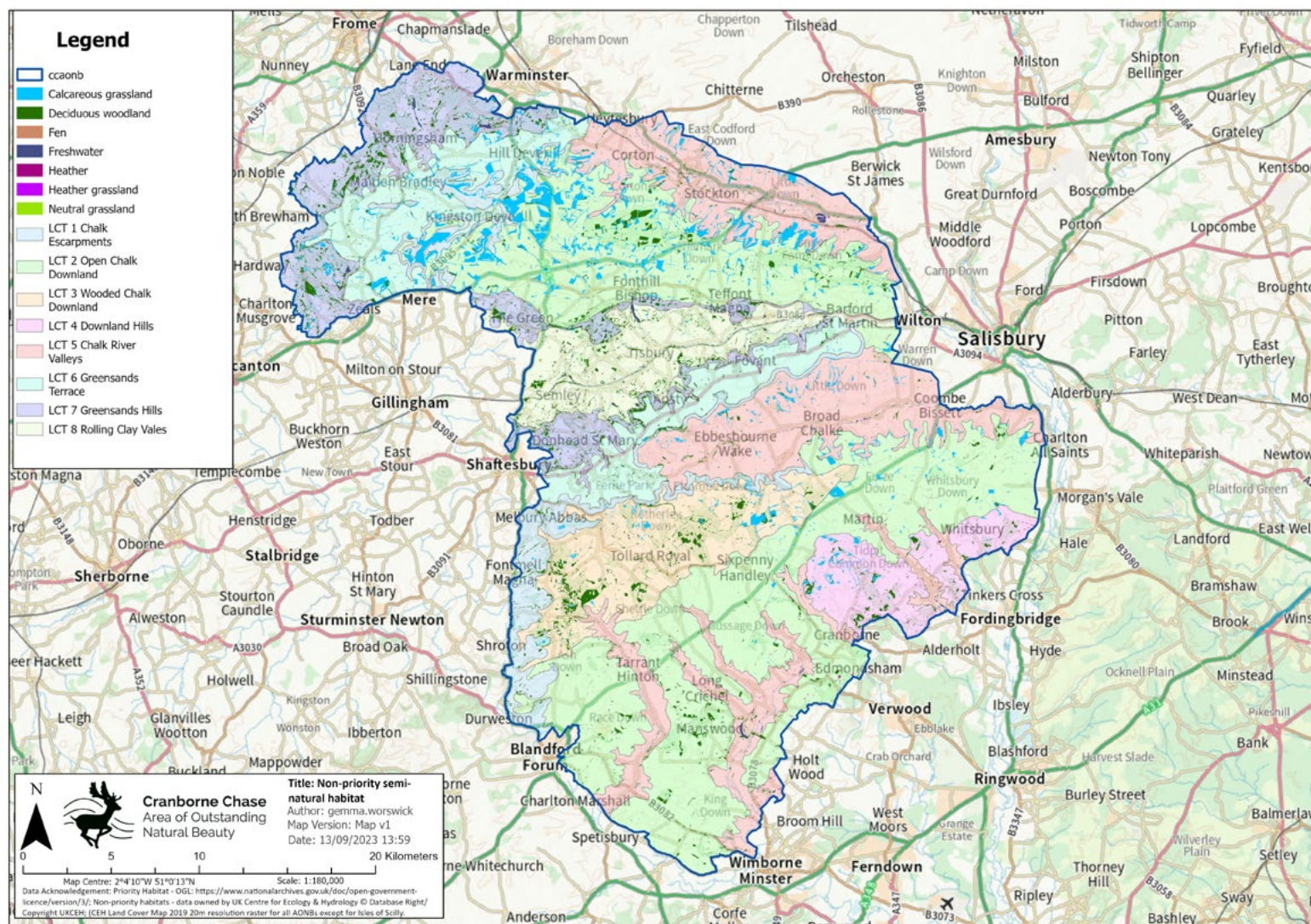
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Map 10 – Non PH Semi-natural habitat within CCNL

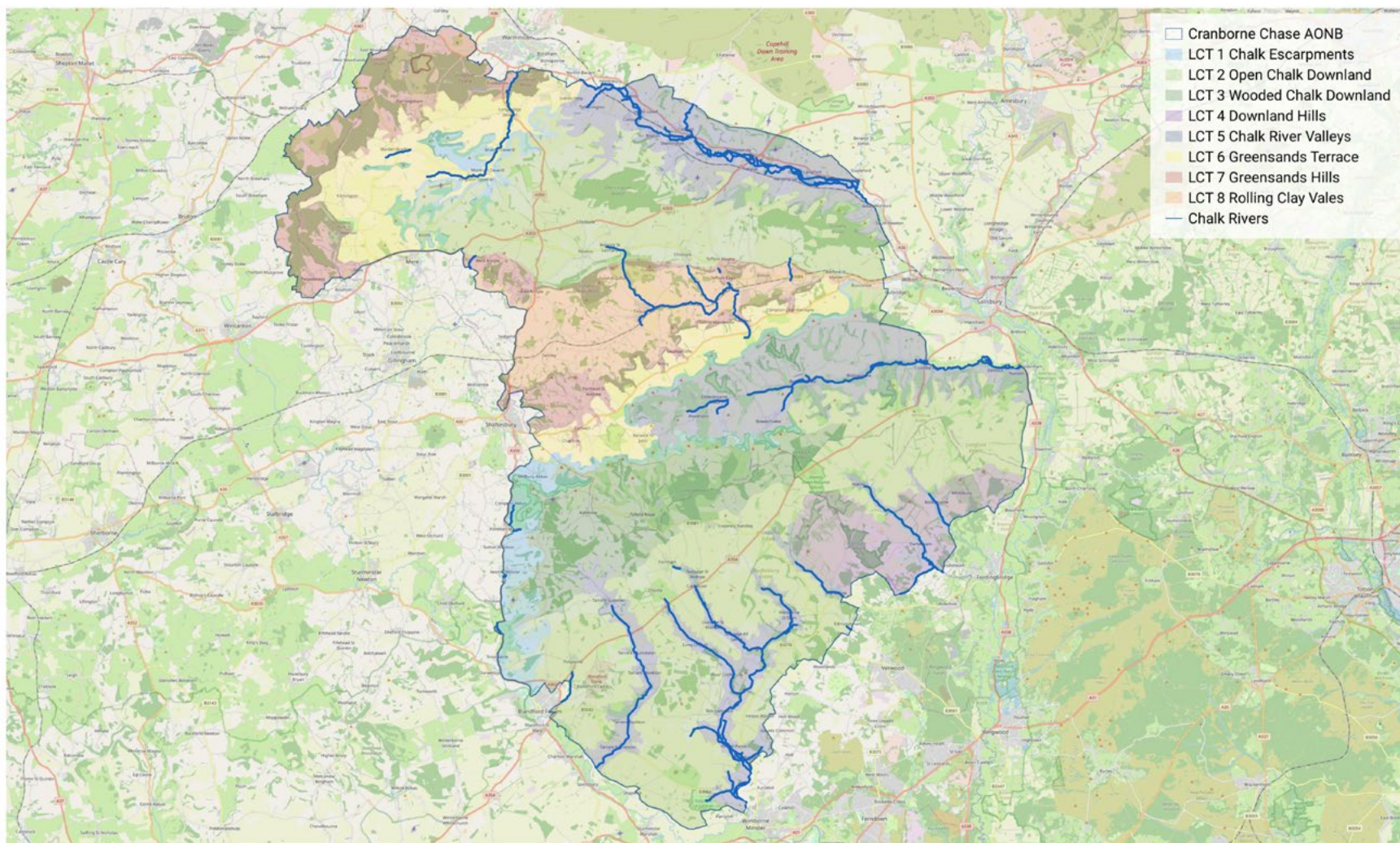
[← Return to: App 2.3.1 Other Semi-natural Habitat](#)



11



Map 11 – Chalk river and stream locations within CCNL

[← Return to: App 2.4.2 Chalk Rivers and Streams](#)


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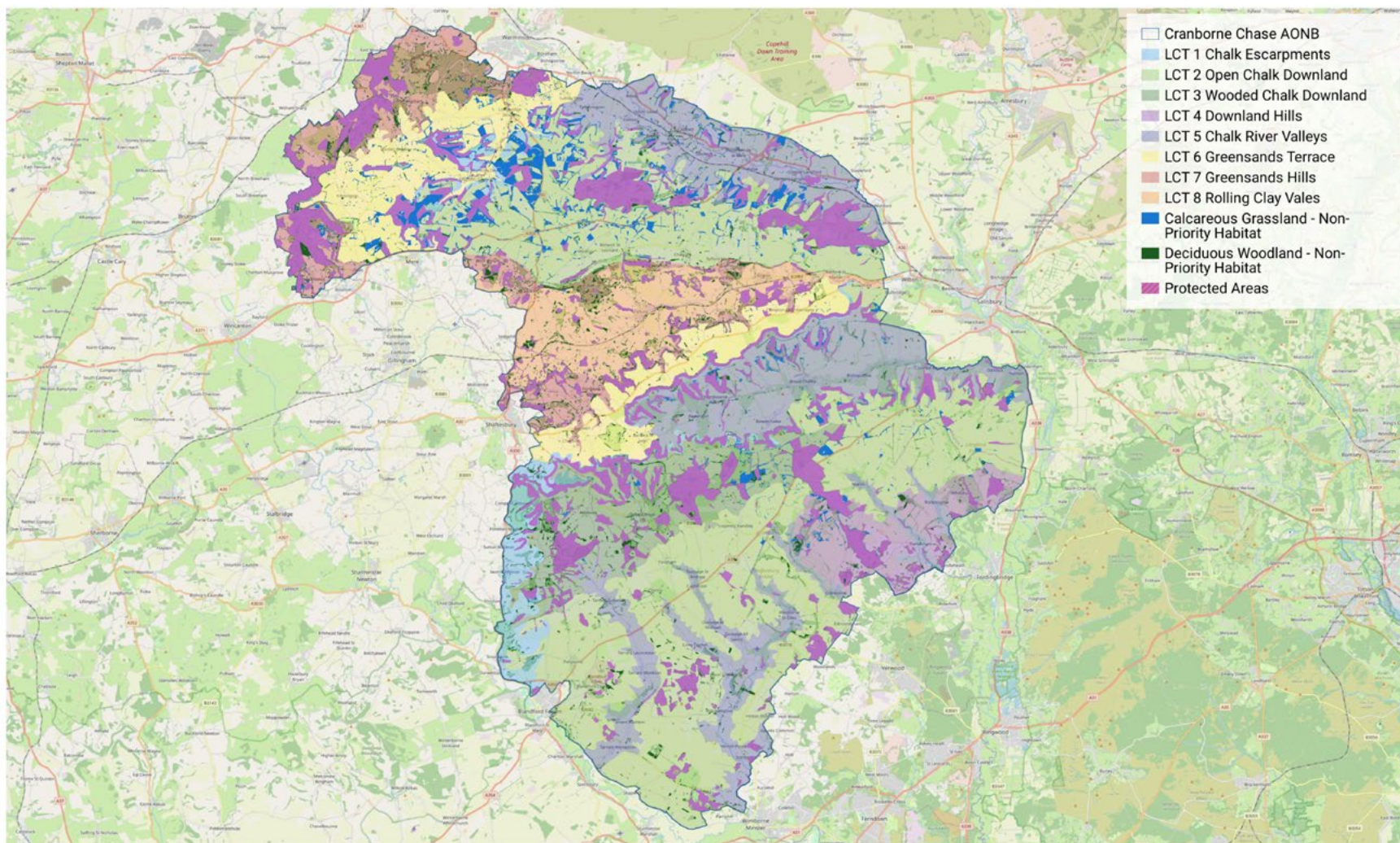


12



Map 12 – Semi-natural habitat creation/restoration opportunity map

← Return to: App. 6.1
Semi-natural Habitat



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CCAONB - Opportunity Mapping

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Scale 1:200000 (at A3)
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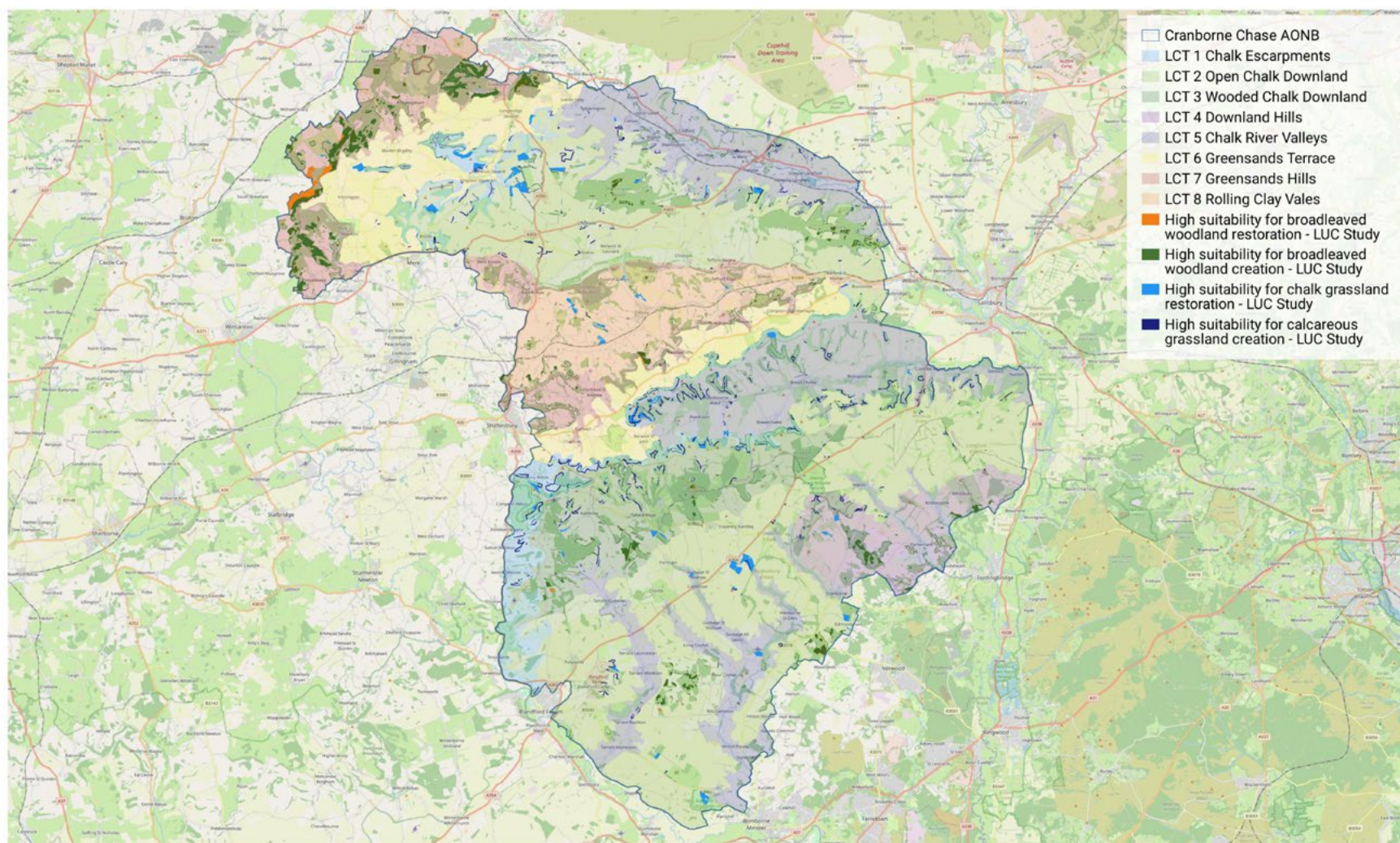


13



Map 13 – Landscape permeability to support habitat creation/restoration

← Return to: App. 6.2
Landscape Permeability



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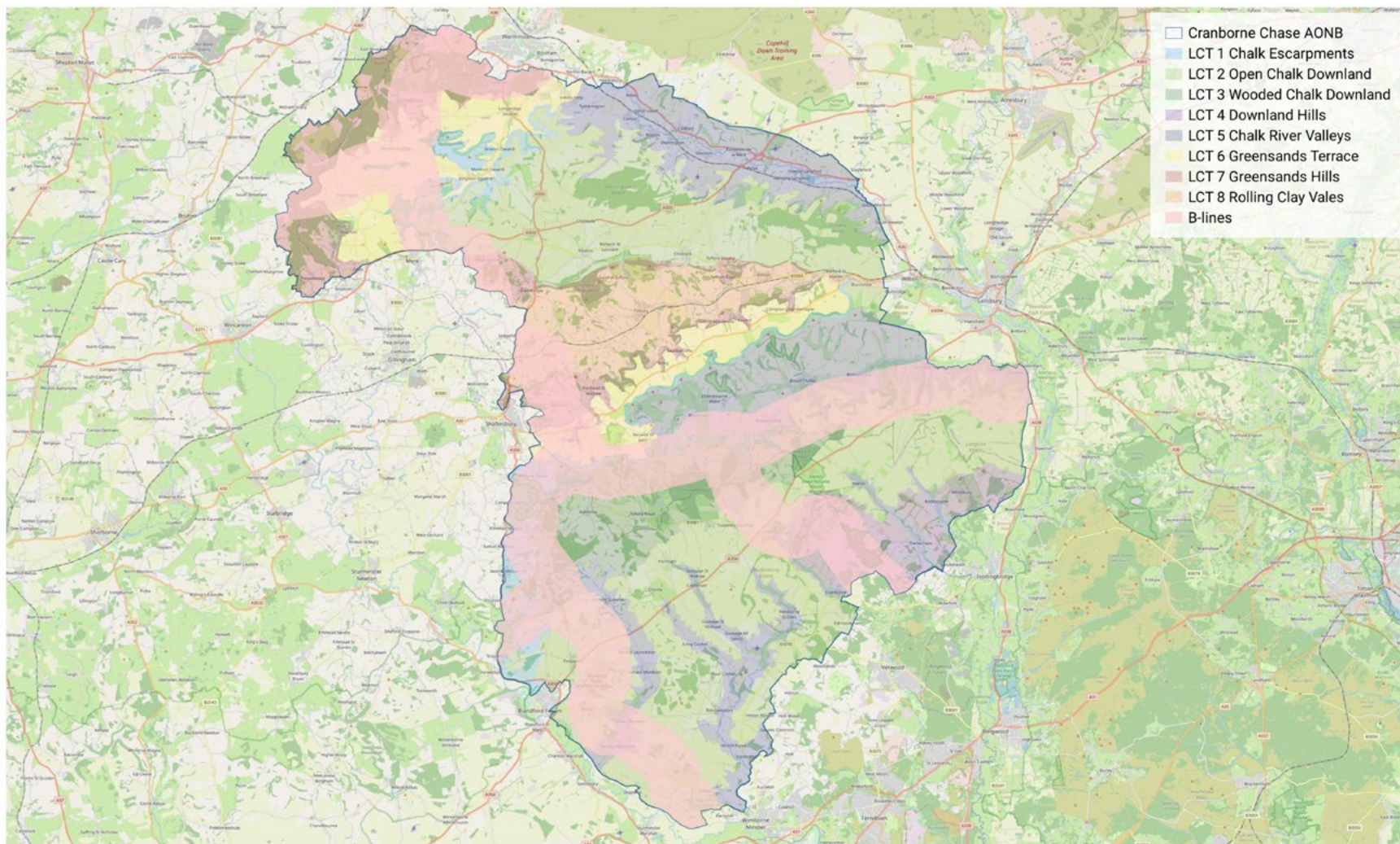
5 km
Scale 1:200000 (at A3)



14



Map 14 – Buglife B-Lines map

[← Return to: App. 6.3 Buglife B-Lines](#)


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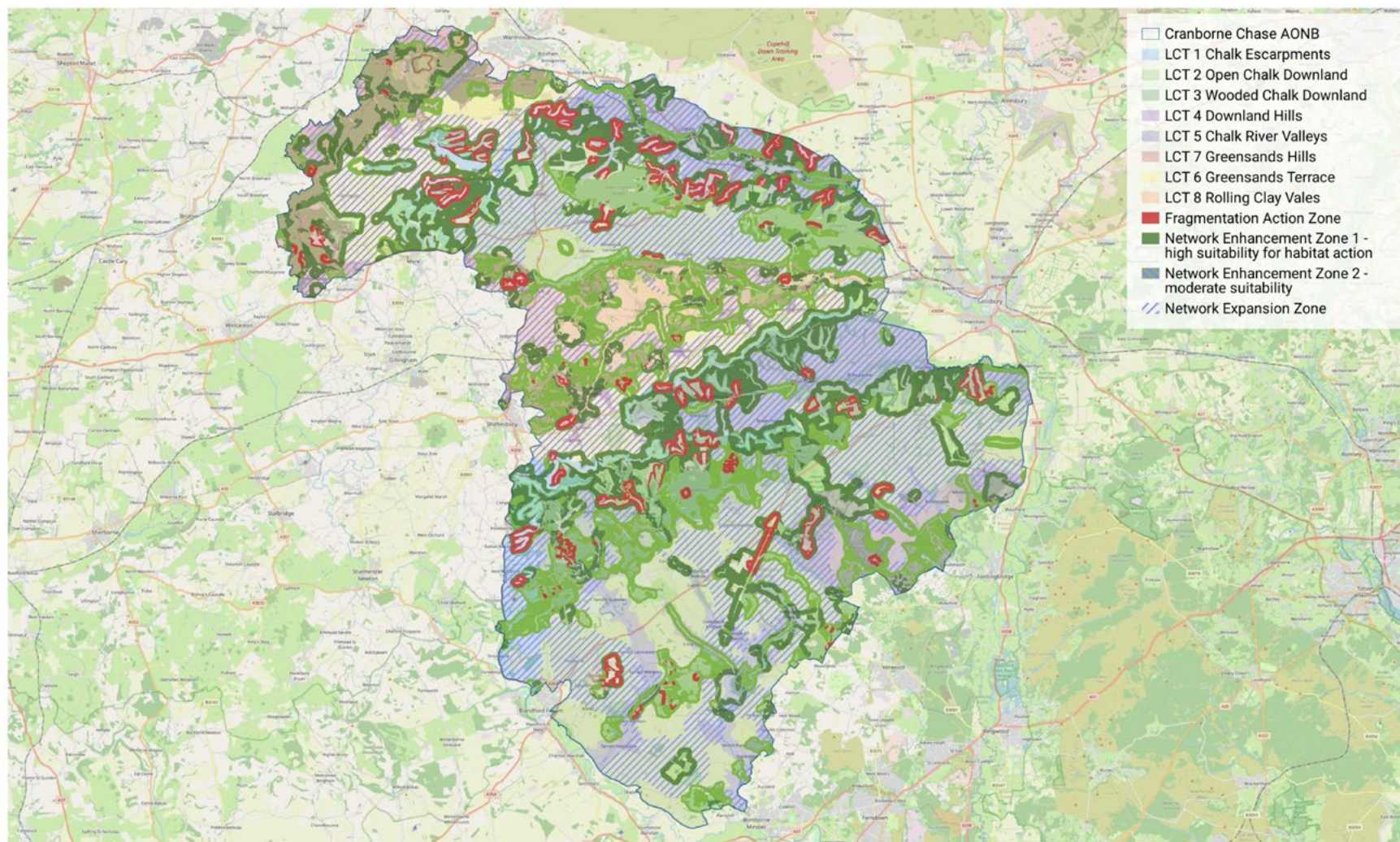
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15



Map 15 – Natural England Habitat Networks map

[← Return to: App. 6.4 Natural England Habitat Networks](#)


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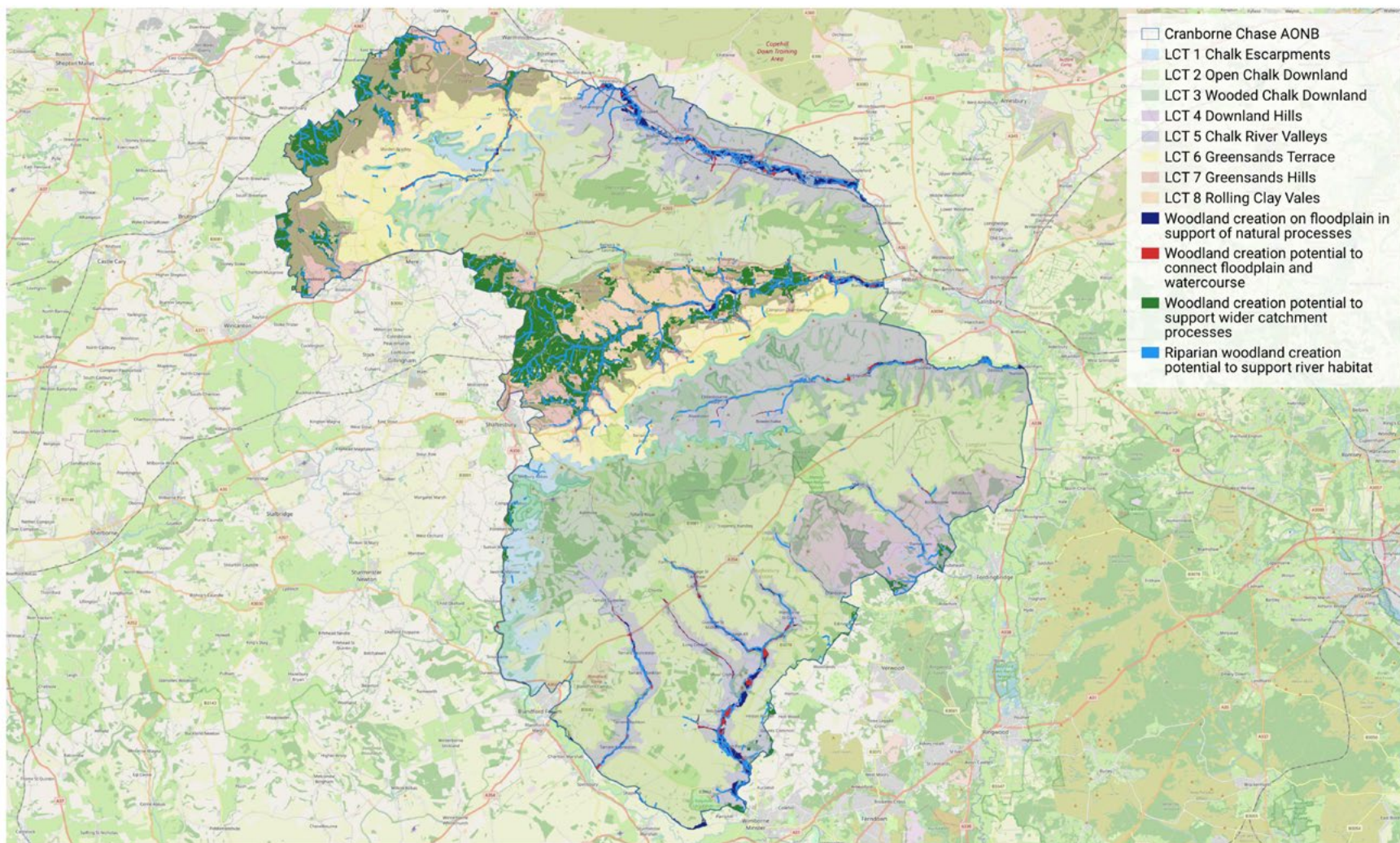
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16



Map 16 – WWNP Opportunity Map

[← Return to: App. 6.5 Working with Natural Processes](#)


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CCAONB - Opportunity Mapping

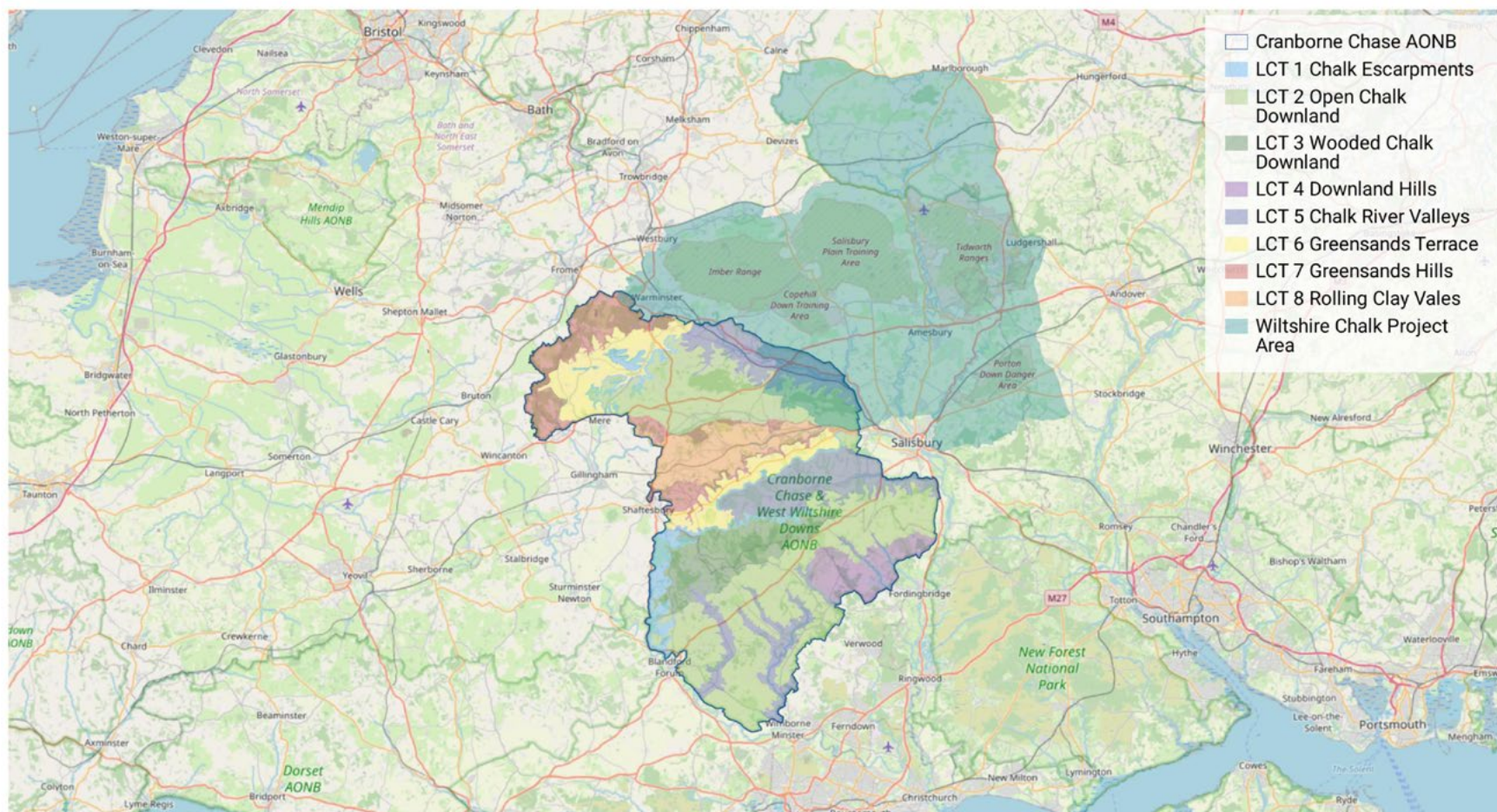
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Scale 1:200000 (at A3)



17



Map 17 – Wiltshire Chalk Partnership Project Area

[← Return to: App. 6.7 Wiltshire Chalk Partnership](#)


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Beyond AONB Boundaries

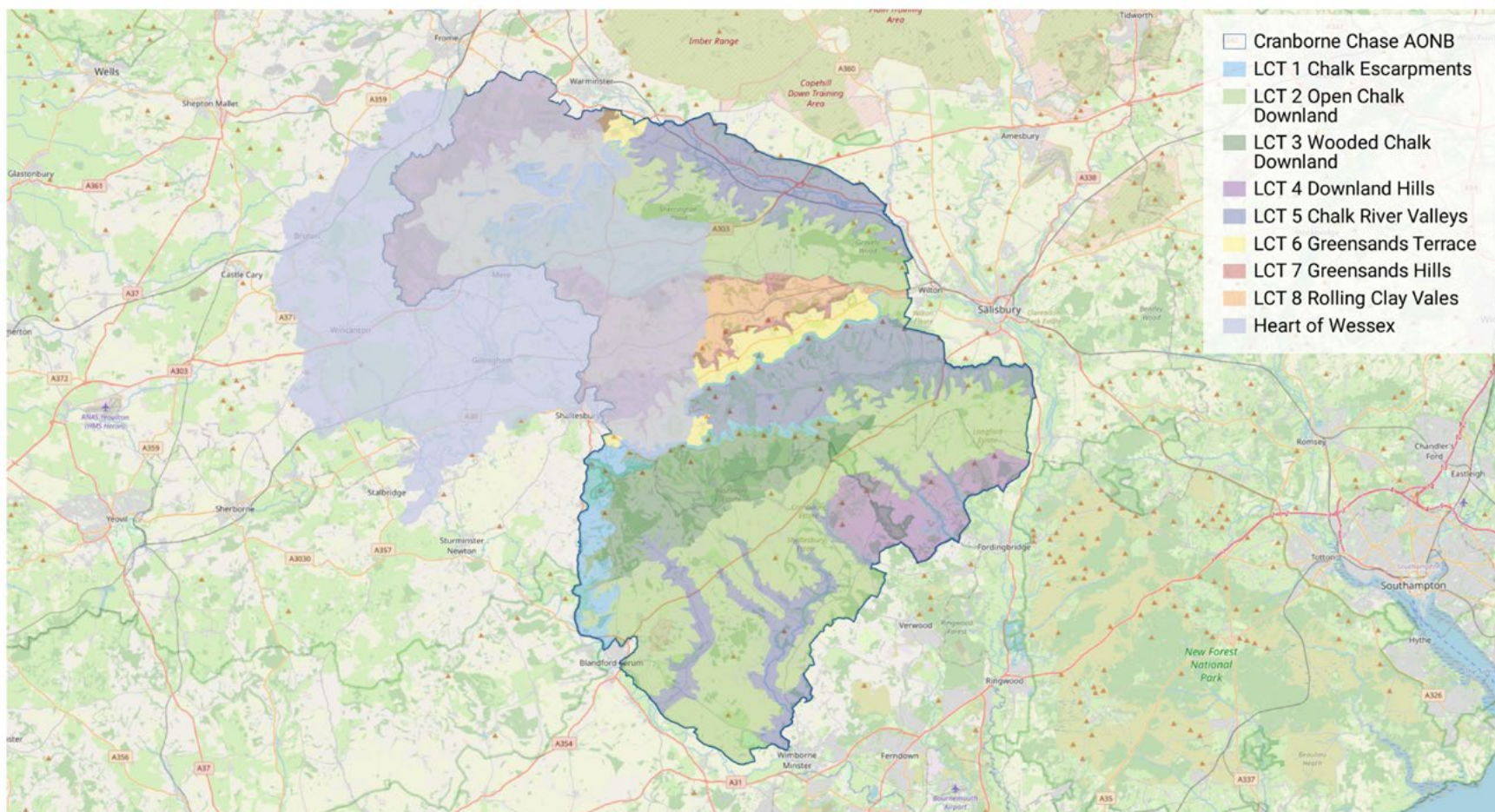
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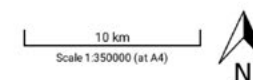
Map 18 – Heart of Wessex Project Boundary

[← Return to: App. 6.8 Heart of Wessex](#)



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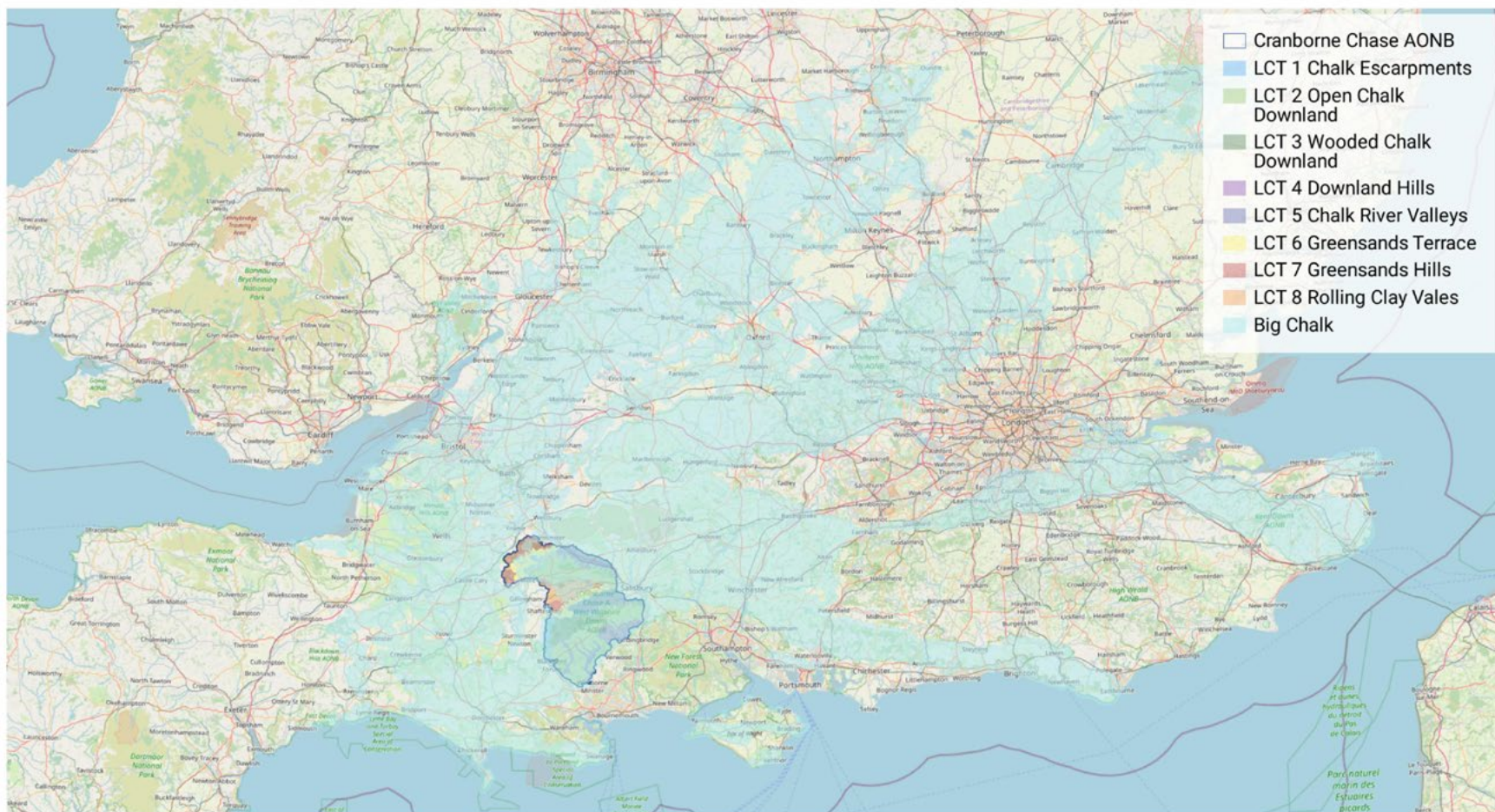
Beyond AONB Boundaries



19



Map19 – Big Chalk Boundary

[← Return to: App. 6.9 Big Chalk](#)


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Beyond AONB Boundaries

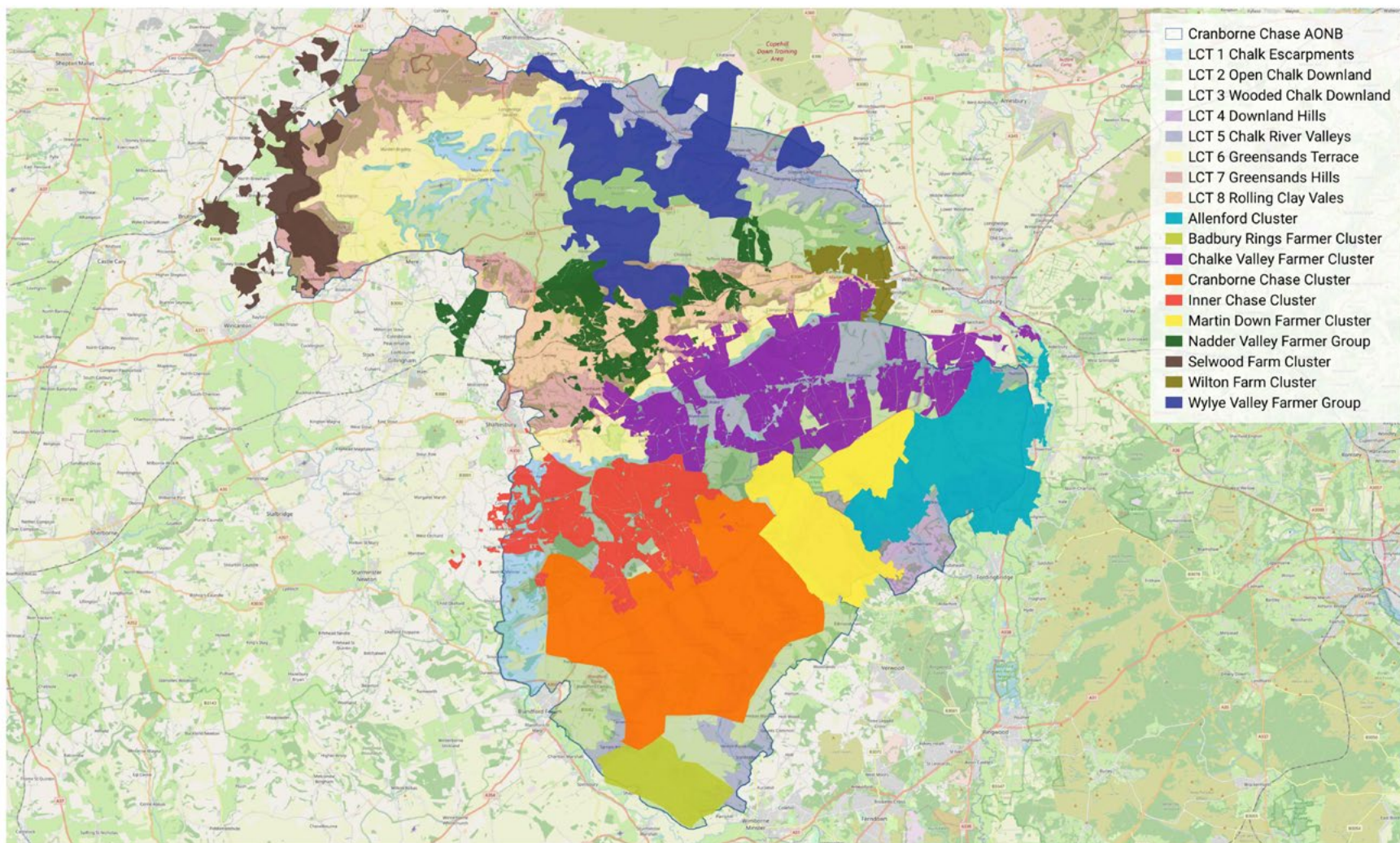
50 km
Scale 1:1600000 (at A4)





Map 20 - Indicative Areas of Farm Clusters intersecting with CCNL

← Return to: 8.4 Agricultural land management



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CCAONB - Context

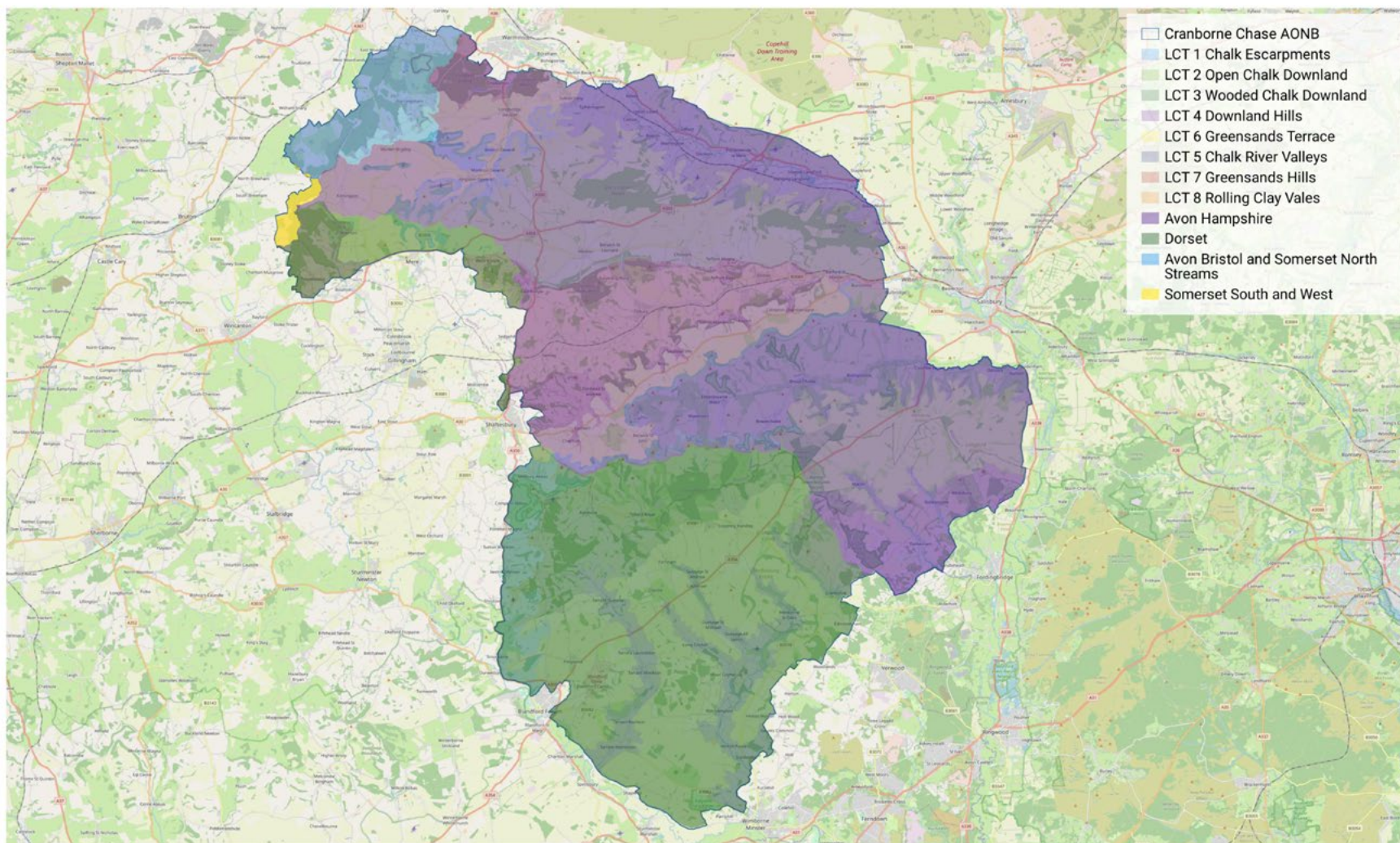
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Scale 1:200000 (at A3)





Map 21 – Environment Agency Operational River Catchments

← Return to: App 2.4.1
River Catchments



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5 km
Scale 1:200000 (at A3)





**Cranborne
Chase**
National
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Rushmore Farm, Tinkley Bottom,
Tollard Royal, Wiltshire SP5 5QA

