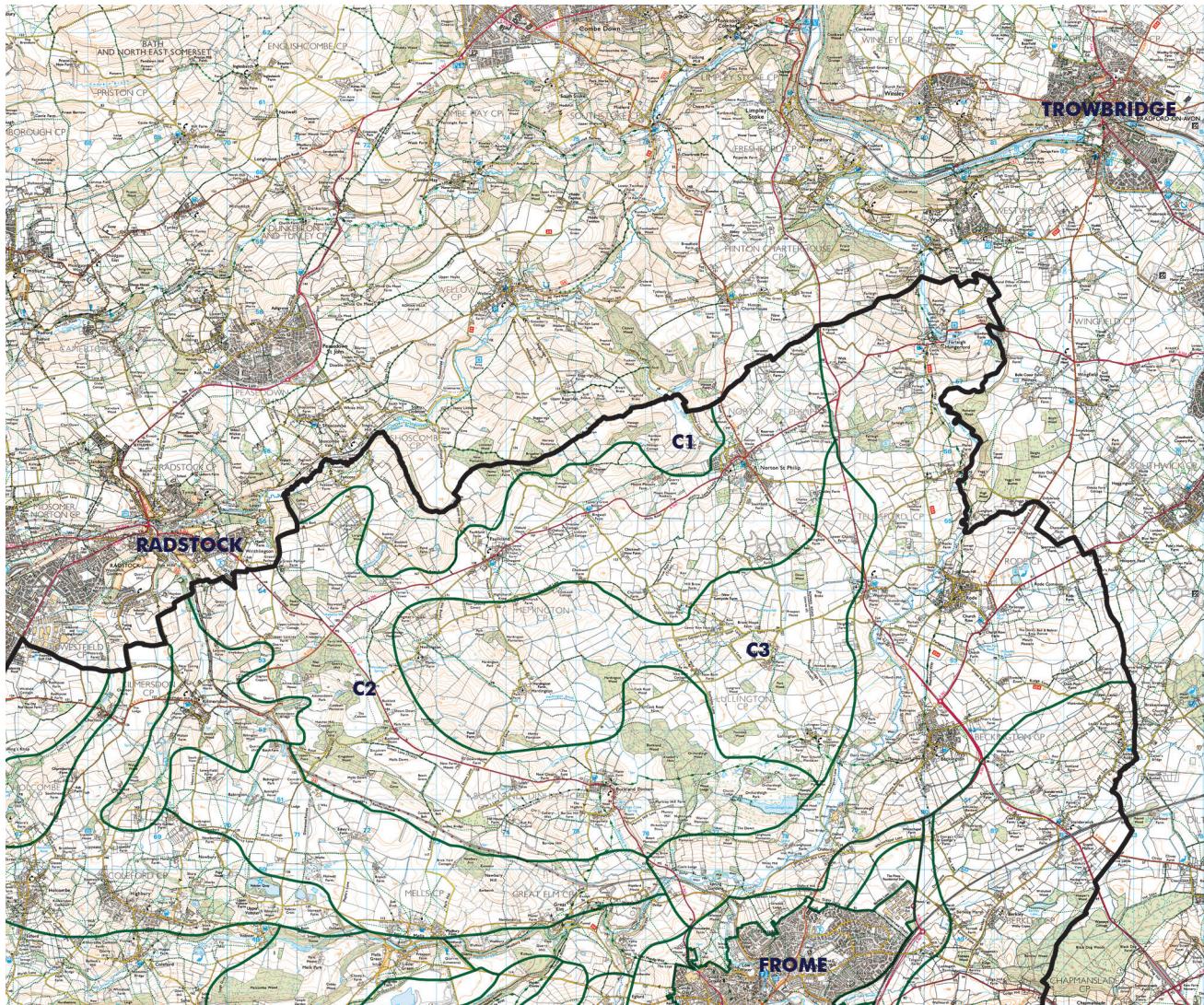


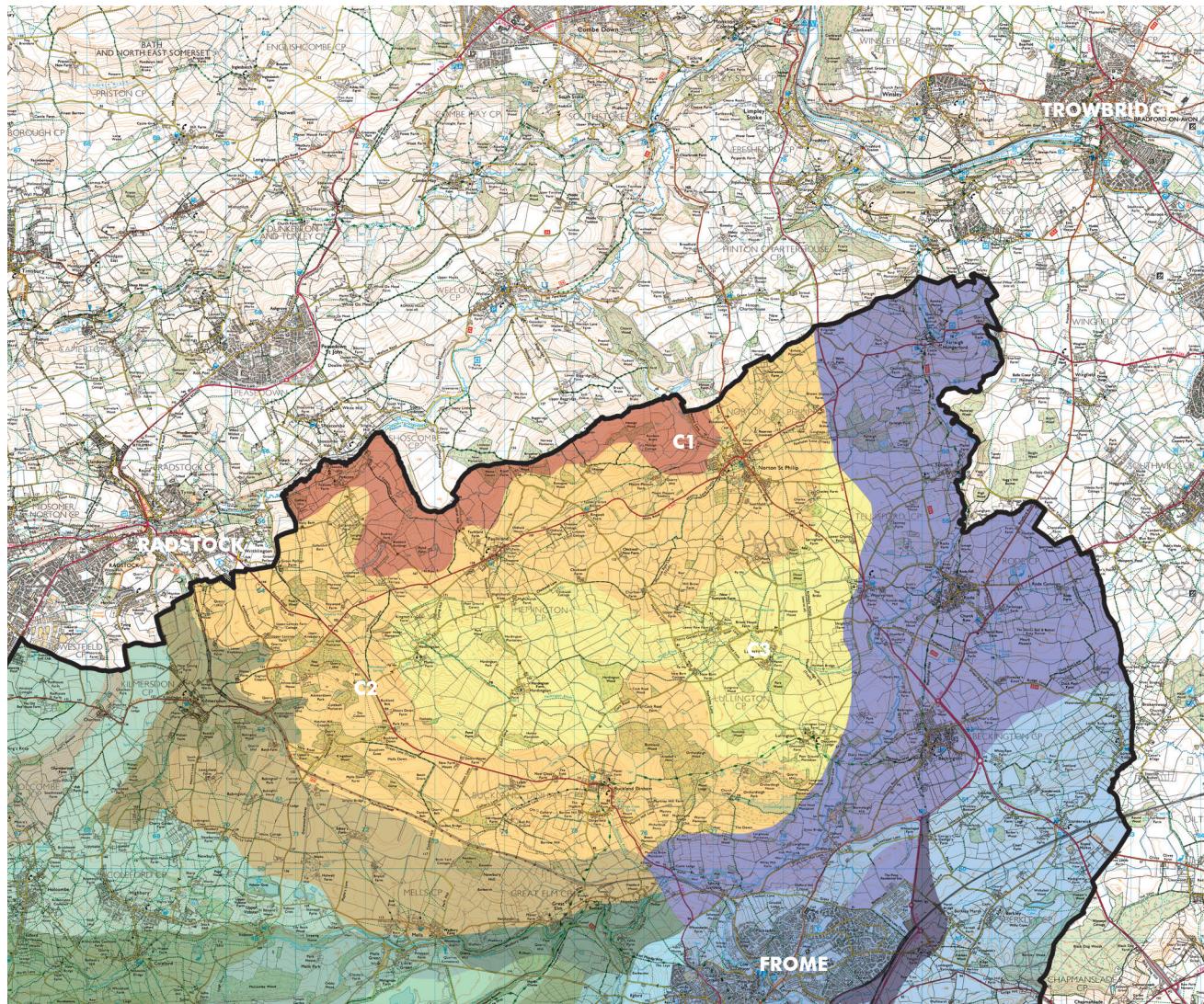
## 6.4 COTSWOLD EDGE



### MENDIP CHARACTER AREAS

**C1** Foxcote Slopes  
**C2** Buckland / Norton St Philip / Orchardleigh Ridges  
**C3** Wheel Brook / Buckland Brook Valleys

## 6.4 COTSWOLD EDGE

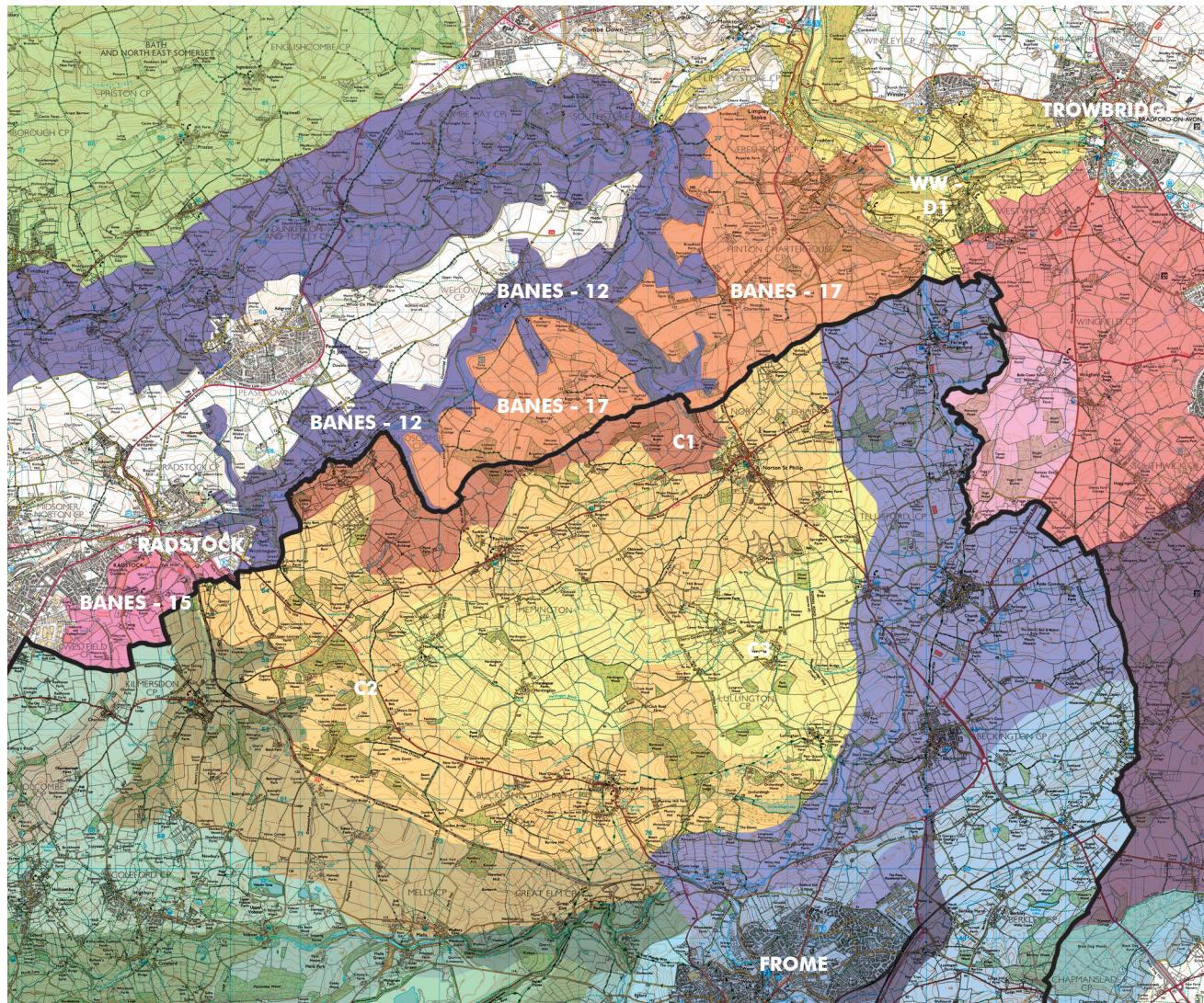


### MENDIP CHARACTER AREAS

C1  
C2  
C3

**Foxcote Slopes**  
**Buckland / Norton St Philip / Orchardleigh Park Ridges**  
**Wheel Brook / Buckland Brook Valleys**

## 6.4 COTSWOLD EDGE



## MENDIP CHARACTER AREAS

C1	Foxcote Slopes
C2	Buckland / Norton St Philip / Orchardleigh Park Ridges
C3	Wheel Brook / Buckland Brook Valleys

## ADJACENT CHARACTER AREAS

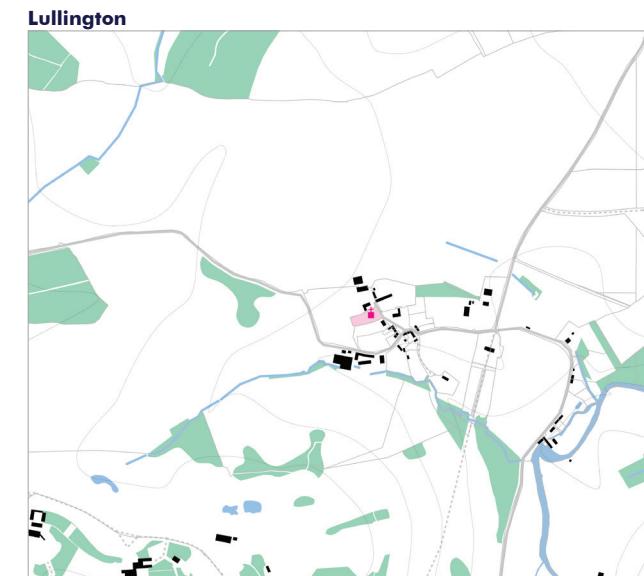
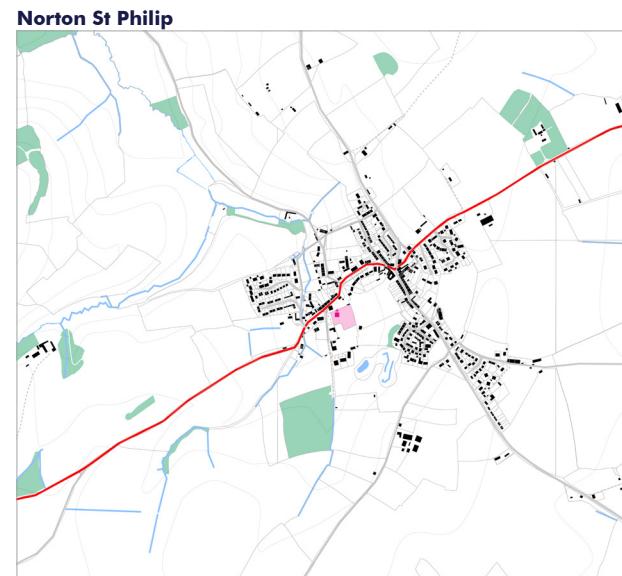
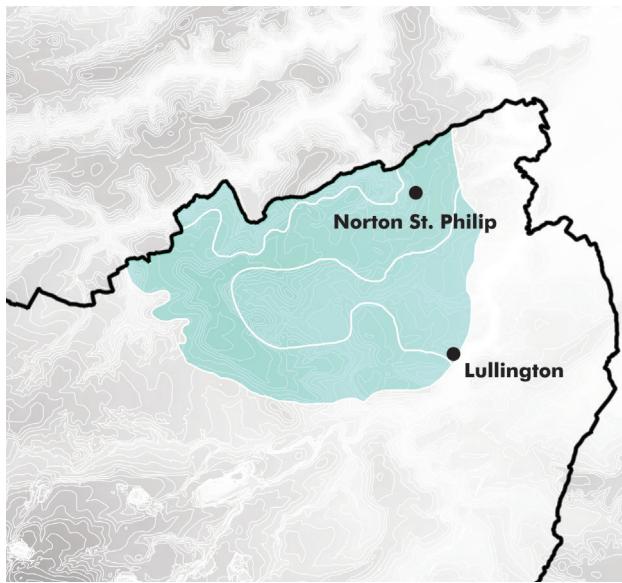
Bath & North East Somerset

BANES-12	Cam & Wellow Brook Valleys
BANES-15	Norton Radstock Southern Farmlands
BANES-17	Hinton Charterhouse and Bagridge Plateaux

West Wiltshire

WW-D1 Limpley Stock & Westwood Limestone River Valley

**SETTLEMENTS IN COTSWOLD EDGE**



## 6.4 COTSWOLD EDGE

6.4.1 As noted within the introductory sections the north east corner of the Mendip district sits close to the southern edge of the designated Cotswold AONB. The outline of the designation adjoins the district boundary at Farleigh Hungerford and lies around 2 km to the north of the MDC / BANES boundary north of Faulkland. However, the characteristic Cotswold geology and topography also extend south into this study area; and many of the characteristics noted within these character areas are shared between the district areas.

6.4.2 Area sub divides down into three primarily on basis of topography, these are described under the subheadings of; -

Foxcote Slopes	C1
Norton St Phillip, Buckland & Orchardleigh Ridge	C2
Wheel Brook / Buckland Brook Valleys	C3



View from A366 near Faulkland

## LCA - C1 - FOXCOTE SLOPES

6.4.3 This area of steep north facing slope sits above the Wellow Brook Valley forming almost the top edge of the catchment and skyline to views from the lower areas. The landform is subdivided into two areas of small 're-entrant' valleys. To the west small streams, including the 'Bladdock Gutter' have cut back into the slope below and between Turners Terrace and Faulkland. To the east the Norton Brook drains down a larger valley towards Wellow.

6.4.4 These areas are characterised by the steeper slopes of the top edge of the overall Wellow Brook valley. The area above (within the Norton St Phillip / Buckland Ridge - LCA C2) area is notably shallower gradient. Below the district boundary the landform generally drops dramatically down to the stream (around 30 m or more below).

6.4.5 As steep complex north facing slopes with thin soils the area is predominantly grazing pasture. Occasional flatter fields support some arable cultivation, generally maize. The field pattern is of small scale irregular shapes and includes areas of early enclosure. The area also includes a few small blocks of ancient woodland.

6.4.6 A few small lanes and tracks cross the LCA providing links between the main road (the A366 located outside of the LCA) and the main valley area below (outside of the MCD area). These are generally hedged, but as they drop down the hillsides there are views down the routes across the valleys.

6.4.7 The area includes a few sporadic individual farmsteads and small groups of cottages. Foxcote forms a small hamlet with a small church and former

tithe barn tucked into the shelter of the lower hillside. There are distant views to the edge of Peasedown St John. The villages and hamlets in the valley below include Shoscombe Vale and Wellow these are quite well hidden from the upper slope areas.

**6.4.8** The areas present dramatic views down into and across the wide Wellow Brook Valley. The irregular pattern of fields, woodland blocks and occasional hedgerow trees creates an interesting constantly changing view as the area is explored. The area includes few visual intrusions and the general outlook is of the unspoilt landscape beyond the district boundary. For the most part the main road on the top of the ridge (within LCA C2) is out of sight; although audible as a background intrusion.

**6.4.9** The area is sheltered and although north facing is often looking out over the south and south west facing slopes opposite; these can be dramatically lit in late afternoon / evening sun.

#### **BOUNDARY ADJUSTMENTS FROM '97 ASSESSMENT**

Minor adjustment to include steeper slopes and hamlet of Foxcote and Bladdock Gutter and Pond Farm areas

KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF :- LCA C1 THE FOXCOTE SLOPES	
PHYSICAL/NATURAL CHARACTERISTICS	SETTLEMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Steep complex slopes</li> <li>• Small scale re-entrant valley streams</li> <li>• Hedged landscape with hedgerow and occasional free standing field trees</li> <li>• Small blocks of woodland including some ancient woodland cover</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited settlement and minor road connections</li> </ul>
LAND USE/MANAGEMENT/HUMAN INFLUENCES	PERCEIVED CHARACTERISTICS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mix of field shapes and sizes with mainly irregular formed pattern</li> <li>• Predominantly hillside grazing with limited arable on flatter areas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wide and long distant views</li> </ul>
SPECIAL FEATURES – NOTE NOT ALL FEATURES DESIGNATED	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Views across the Wellow Valley (includes occasional views to edge of Peasedown St John)</li> </ul>	
LANDMARKS, VIEWS AND VIEWPOINTS	

## LCA - C2 - NORTON ST PHILIP, BUCKLAND & ORCHARDLEIGH RIDGE

6.4.10 A continuous ridge of high ground extends in an arc from Norton St Phillip around to Buckland Dinham. This encircles a deep valley landscape (LCA C3) and forms the upper edge of the Foxcote Slopes (LCA C1). At Buckland Dinham the ridge is cut through with a small valley where the Buckland Brook emerges from the valley to the north. To the east of this, the ridge landscape extends around to the Orchardleigh estate.

6.4.11 Viewed from the south west these ridges form the Great Oolite Scarp described previously in the geological overview (section 5.1.24 Area 4). The high ground appears as almost continuous from Orchardleigh around to the main road crossroads at Ammerdown near the district boundary close to Radstock. Buckland Dinham sits within a dip where the brook valley cuts the ridge. A steep hill forming the main high street. Outside the village the land rises gently along the spine of higher ground up to Ammerdown.

6.4.12 The northern section of ridge links from Ammerdown to Norton St Phillip as a continuous belt of elevated landscape albeit gently undulating and falling back down to the east. The villages of Faulkland and Norton St Phillip sit within sheltered low points in the landform.

6.4.13 Two main road routes take advantage of the topography following the continuous gentle climb up to the crossroads at the high point at Ammerdown. In places the routes sit on the northern side of the ridge sheltered from the prevailing south west weather. This position also often provides long panoramic views

to the east from the A362 Frome/Radstock road taking in views of Cley Hill, Westbury White Horse and Salisbury Plain in the far distance. Views north from the A366 Ammerdown / Norton St Phillip route look out over the Wellow Brook Valley.

6.4.14 The former Radstock to Frome railway line also adapted to the topography with a gentle climb across the landform to reach a highpoint near Buckland Dinham.

6.4.15 The landscape is again predominantly open farmland with fairly regular formal enclosure pattern. Small areas of early smaller scale fields remain closer to the two larger villages. The fields are predominantly larger sized hedged with occasional drystone walls (oolitic limestone). There are few hedgerow trees in the open farmland on the higher points of the ridge.

6.4.16 The area includes some areas of ancient woodland. These include Buckland Wood and parts of the Ammerdown estate woodlands. The woodlands form significant features in the views from the adjoining roads and shelter sections of the ridgeline roads. These woodlands also form part of the two major historic parkland landscapes of Orchardleigh and Ammerdown Park. The woodlands at Orchardleigh form part of the backdrop to the wider parkland. The estate originally enclosed as a medieval deer-park includes extensive areas with numerous parkland trees, which include many veteran specimens.

6.4.17 Ammerdown is more enclosed by shelter belts and blocks of woodland around the perimeter of the park. Both sites make use of the combination of the woodlands and topography to create their respective settings. The Park includes the Jolliffe Column (or Ammerdown Tower); the feature is Grade II\* listed

and as noted in section 5.10 is visible as a landmark (one of three inter-visible towers) from other points within the MDC district.

6.4.18 Another smaller local landmark is a chimney standing on its own in a field close to Buckland Dinham. This is the only remaining visible feature of the former Oxleys Colliery. Although incongruous set within an area of open farmland the structure highlights the extent of the North Somerset Coal Fields.

6.4.19 As noted the villages also exploit the topography and position alongside the strategic routes. Both Buckland Dinham and Norton St Phillip are seen in views from outside the settlements with collections of buildings climbing up areas of hillside and with key buildings as focal points. With the long open sections of ridge this area does not include many earlier more defensive settlement traces; a single Iron Age site Kingsdown Camp remains next to Ammerdown Estate. A small group of standing stones is protected on the edge of Orchardleigh. Both sites are Scheduled Ancient Monuments.



View from Mackley Lane to Norton St Philip

6.4.20 Most of the landscape is accessible via public rights of way. The Orchardleigh Estate includes rights of way, a lake, island church and golf course which provide public access to the designated parkland landscape. The Buckland woodland and northern portion of the park are also on the route of the Macmillan Way long distance footpath. These areas are relatively close to Frome and can be accessed from the town by other footpaths.

6.4.21 The disused railway line on the southern side of the LCA has been converted into a shared pedestrian and cycle route as part of the Sustrans National Cycleway Network. The path is very well used and links most of the route between the towns of Radstock and Frome (continues within LCA A8.3 & A9.3)

#### BOUNDARY ADJUSTMENTS FROM '97 ASSESSMENT

Adjustment to boundary with LCA C3 around Hemington

KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF :- LCA C2 NORTON ST PHILIP, BUCKLAND & ORCHARDLEIGH RIDGE	
PHYSICAL/NATURAL CHARACTERISTICS	SETTLEMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Elevated ridge landform</li> <li>Areas of ancient woodland &amp; related parkland Landscapes</li> <li>Medium sized regular fields</li> <li>Cotswold stone drystone walls &amp; hedges</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Settlements nestled into sheltered spots on ridge</li> <li>Local stone buildings</li> </ul>
LANDSCAPE PATTERNS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ridge roads located in the lea of the ridge</li> <li>Managed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Open unspoilt landscapes</li> <li>Occasional expansive views</li> <li>Busy main roads</li> </ul>
SPECIAL FEATURES – NOTE NOT ALL FEATURES DESIGNATED	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Orchardleigh Park</li> <li>Ammerdown Parkland and Jolliffe Column Grade II*</li> <li>Oxleys Colliery Chimney – Grade II listed.</li> </ul>	
LANDMARKS, VIEWS AND VIEWPOINTS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jolliffe Column Grade II*</li> <li>Oxleys Colliery Chimney - Grade II Listed</li> <li>Views from A362 and A366</li> </ul>	

## LCA - C3 - WHEEL BROOK / BUCKLAND BROOK VALLEYS

6.4.22 The Wheel Brook and Buckland Brook Valleys comprise the area encircled by the high ridges of LCA C2. The valleys are deep, often steep sided relatively narrow cross sections. Both valleys contain numerous small streams that arise from springs around the middle valley sides. The two valleys are unusual in that the two watercourses are interconnected with the head of one being connected to the other by a ditch close to the watershed between the catchments. The two streams and both valleys link in the same area with a low spot between Hardington Wood and Hardington Plantation. The stream within the southern valley is identified as the Hardington Brook (this becomes the Buckland Brook downstream within LCA C2).

6.4.23 With the nearby main roads located up on the ridgelines above the only access is via winding small lanes that drop steeply into the base of the valleys; creating the sense of a secluded landscape. These lanes serve the small villages and hamlets of Hemington and Hardington and Lullington and Laverton. Each settlement appears to have a church and manor house or main farm complex. Lullington includes the main castellated gatehouse lodge for Orchardleigh Park and other glimpsed views into the parkland landscape of the Estate.

6.4.24 The farmland within the valley is managed as predominantly a mix of grazing and fodder crops of maize and silage. Within the narrower and steeper sections of the upper valleys the field sizes are quite small and irregular shaped. Closer to Laverton some larger field sizes have been created for arable production. Most of the field boundaries are hedge rows with some occasional fencing.

6.4.25 The area includes a number of small farm or estate woodlands several of these being ancient woodland. Part of the Orchardleigh Parkland containing a few of the parkland trees falls within this LCA. In other areas there are hedgerow and free standing trees.

6.4.26 With the secluded character of the sunken valley with no major roads or other infrastructure the area has a relatively tranquil character (some road noise from the ridgelines is noted within areas). With the ever changing nature and often dramatic views moving through the valley areas this is a visually interesting landscape.

6.4.27 The area includes a number of rights of way; including a short section of the Macmillan Way long distance path.



View to Cley Hill from Chickwell Lane - near Faulkland

KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF :- LCA C3 WHEEL BROOK/BUCKLAND BROOK VALLEYS	
PHYSICAL/NATURAL CHARACTERISTICS	SETTLEMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deep steep sided narrow valleys</li> <li>• Rolling landform with rounded hilltops and side slopes.</li> <li>• Numerous small spring fed streams</li> <li>• Small areas of ancient woodland</li> <li>• Areas of small scale parkland (generally in decline) and free standing trees.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Four similar small scale villages/hamlets</li> </ul>
LAND USE/MANAGEMENT/HUMAN INFLUENCES	PERCEIVED CHARACTERISTICS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Managed farmland with predominantly higher levels of intensive grassland management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quiet sheltered landscape remote from main road network. Secluded from long distance views out to other areas or larger settlements</li> </ul>
SPECIAL FEATURES – NOTE NOT ALL FEATURES DESIGNATED	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ancient woodland areas</li> <li>• Small village churches for each settlement</li> </ul>	
LANDMARKS, VIEWS AND VIEWPOINTS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Occasional glimpsed views of Ammerdown Tower – mainly from lanes entering LCA on upper slopes.</li> <li>• Village church towers (including Buckland Dinham church on sky line from valley below</li> </ul>	

#### BOUNDARY ADJUSTMENTS FROM '97 ASSESSMENT

Area extended to encompass Hemington and steep slopes around hamlet