



APPENDIX I

BRIEF TO CONSULTANTS

View over the Foxcote / Shoscombe Valley from the A366 / Park Lane Cross Roads

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1. Introduction / Background

Mendip District Council is developing an ambitious 2050 growth strategy to drive long-term housing and economic development and support sustainable development in its market towns and rural communities.

To understand the growth potential across the District, the Council is commissioning a range of technical studies to examine both the capacity for growth and to identify the infrastructure investment necessary to unlock opportunities and support smart growth. Technical studies are also required as evidence to update the Mendip Local Development Plan from 2020-2036 and develop effective policies to manage future development.

This brief sets out a specification for specialist advice to produce an up-to-date and objective Landscape Character Assessment for the District.

2. Reasons for the LCA Commission

There are a number of reasons that this study is being commissioned.

- a) The existing evidence base is drawn from local assessments undertaken in 1996/7 and 2006. While inherent landscape characteristics may not change, these studies are considered out of date. They do not refer to the 2014 National Character Area profiles or reflect current approaches to Character Assessment. The Council also wishes to understand how it should be seeking to define 'valued landscapes' in its development plan as set out in NPPF para 170 and how best to integrate/retain its special landscape features policy.
- b) Significant additional development has taken place over the last 20 years affecting the edges of Mendip towns, some villages and employment sites in the countryside.
- c) There is a need for a study to take a comprehensive approach which reflects the diversity and high quality of the District's landscapes. The adopted plan policy rightly focuses on the AONB areas and specific landscape features. However, this means that the quality of other landscapes areas are potentially being under-valued in plan and decision making.
- d) The study will provide evidence to the assessment of broad locations and 'opportunity areas' in the district for longer-term housing and employment development. The 2050 growth work (which is being commissioned separately) is likely to explore a range of options including extensions to market towns, locations associated with major road proposals/rail stations, extensions to villages or forms of rural new settlements. The output of the study in terms of characteristics, landscape sensitivity and quality will be used to assess these areas, initially at a strategic level and then to undertake more detailed testing of landscape impact as specific options and locations or masterplans are refined.

- e) The 2050 growth work also includes technical and route studies to bid for highway road bypasses around Glastonbury and Walton/Ashcott. The character study will provide input into the testing of options.
- f) The study will also be used to support the development of preferred and final options for specific development allocations and policies in the updated Local Plan 2020 – 2036. It will also feed into the formal sustainability appraisal of the Plan and production of other strategies and documents such as Green Infrastructure Plans. The Council will also use this study to review and redraft the landscape policy in the adopted Plan.
- g) The Council does not have an in-house landscape officer. The study outputs will provide a comprehensive baseline to support specialist expertise where required on particular proposals, appeals or projects. It will also support in-house skills and capacity building in this area.
- h) The Council may also, in due course, seek to develop more specific landscape assessment tools or bolt-on studies based on this work to assist in the assessment of individual planning applications, appeal sites or particular types of development (such as wind/solar). Any such further work will be the subject of a separate tender exercise.

3. Development Plan and Policy Context

Mendip is a largely rural district within the County of Somerset covering an area of 738 km² (258 square miles) with four market towns of Glastonbury, Frome, Shepton Mallet, Street and the city of Wells.

The Mendip District Local Plan (Part 1) was adopted in December 2014 and will be more than five years from adoption in 2020. The Council intends to undertake a major review and update of the Local Plan Part I, updating its evidence base in 2019 and publishing initial/preferred options for consultation during 2020. It may also need to address the challenge of speculative housing applications submitted contrary to the adopted plan from 2020.

The impact of development on Mendip's landscapes is assessed through adopted policies DP1 (Local Identity and distinctiveness) and DP4 (Mendip's Landscapes) Policy DP4 and supporting text is appended to this brief for information.

There is a very limited area of the district which falls within the Bath and Bristol Green Belt which means that nearly all Mendip is covered by 'countryside' policies.

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4. Landscape Designations and Previous Assessment

The district contains significant areas of the Mendip Hills AONB. The Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB also fringes the eastern side of the Mendip boundary. The adopted Plan also identifies a series of 'Special Landscape Features (or SLF)', specific to the district. The extent and characteristics of the SLF were reviewed in 2012.

A district wide landscape character assessment was last produced in 1997 and identified 8 principal character areas:

- The Central Mendip Hills
- The East Mendip Hills
- The Frome Valley
- The Cotswold Edge
- The Batcombe Down & Valleys
- The Lias Lowlands & Ridges
- The Moors
- The Wookey Islands

Consideration of the project being an up-date of the previous work or an entirely new study was given during the process of tender, consultant appointment and in the project initiation meeting. A review of the status of the previous work with regard to the guidance from Natural England [2014] on this subject was provided in the consultant tender submission. From this while aspects of the 1997 approach are seen to predate the standard best practice, the work is thought to form a good foundation for the new assessment project. The essential point being that the previous broad mapping of the individual character areas seems well considered and robust. With the distribution of character areas broadly accepted as a suitable starting point, this allows resources to be focused on gathering updated information and field assessments to add more layers of detail to the individual areas. The review against the NE 2014 [ref 1-Tudor 2014] guidance is set out in Table 1 below.

5. Project Brief

The character assessment will be undertaken following the best practice guidelines for LCA produced by Natural England and Scottish Natural Heritage. The study is intended to provide an update of the 1997 district wide character assessment reflecting both changes in assessment approaches and the landscape over the previous two decades.

In respect of specific coverage the character study will cover the whole of the Mendip District area and have regard to a number of locations beyond the district boundary; in particular to the south of Midsomer Norton/Radstock and land to the west of Walton around Ashcott. These are shown on Figure 1. These locations have particular development pressures or need to be

included to test future infrastructure options. In these areas, the study will need to align with landscape assessment undertaken in Sedgemoor District and Bath NE Somerset. The study will also draw in the potential overlap of the similar assessments of the neighbouring local authorities in other locations.

The study will focus on the rural areas and urban fringes around the five main settlements within the District. The landscape/townscape features within the main settlements are excluded to allow focussed study of the surrounding rural or semi-rural landscapes. Character assessments of the urban areas may be subject to a separate project in due course. Given the existence of more up to date assessment of the AONB the study will not need to make a detailed assessment of features within the AONB boundaries.

External Stakeholders

As an update of a long-standing assessment it is considered that the basic framework of the assessment is well established; but the work will involve considerable research and field work to provide a comprehensive update. While stakeholder input and public consultation is essential to the final publication; for the most efficient use of time and resource it is envisaged the initial study will produce a draft for wider consultation. For this draft some focused information gathering discussion with key external agencies is included to ensure pertinent detail is captured at the outset.

This includes contact with planning officers in the two AONBs and with officers familiar with the respective LCA Studies in the relevant neighbouring authorities. The other sources anticipated for the initial support to the study include the following organisations; -

Somerset County Council
Mendip ANOB Partnership
Somerset Wildlife Trust

Key Stages

The project approach is set out as a series of key stages, these follow the best practice recommendations and are to be reviewed and agreed as the project progresses.

Stage 1 – Brief, Purpose and Scope.

At the commencement of the project the brief and reasons for commissioning the study as set down by MDC were reviewed and the intended project approach combined into an agreed working brief.

As set out in the introduction the requirement for an updated LCA was triggered primarily by the need for an evidence base to inform the future long term growth strategy and local plan process. Other objectives raised by the initial council brief included a review of how valued landscapes may be defined in relation to national planning guidance and how the existing Local Plan policy

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designation of Special Landscape Features may be integrated into the future iterations of the plan. Reference was also made to the study providing the baseline to assist with application proposals or appeals and the desire for the council to develop more specific assessment tools.

For the working brief the more straightforward functions of a landscape assessment as a standard part of the planning, design and management of the local landscapes is noted. The best practice guidance sources [1] and [2] set out the history and rationale behind the accepted approaches to Landscape Character Assessment and provide a range of examples of how LCA are used. In summary and in terms of the MDC work the potential uses of the completed study are noted as;

1. To provide a comprehensive description of the landscape with reference to the characteristics that make the area distinctive and the factors which may be seen to be of particular value or sensitivity to change. This may be valuable at a general level in helping people to develop greater appreciation and engagement with the local environment. At a more specific level understanding the local distinctiveness, interest and value of the local landscape may be of assistance to the promotion of the Mendip landscapes as a tourism and recreational resource.
2. Provide a resource of accessible spatial information on the district environment that can relate the mapped landscape character to underlying aspects of physical geography, biodiversity and human influence. With this the LCA can be integrated into other environmental study work as part of a coordinated approach to environmental mapping, decision making and management. In particular the appreciation of the potential interrelationships of various environmental sensitivities may assist with the process of screening environmental assessments. (The agreed brief does not propose an 'Integrated' landscape assessment but there is scope for the work to be integrated with other studies in the future).
3. Provide greater understanding of the key landscape considerations that will underpin the necessary judgments at all levels of the planning process from strategic decision making on local plans, site allocations, development master planning, siting, scale or massing of development or infrastructure, major land use changes, or smaller development/land-use changes, forestry or woodland design and renewable energy projects. As such the LCA should not only be used by the LPA in development of allocations and policy but also form a key reference point for developers in the preparation of application proposals, Design and Access Statements and LVIA / EIA studies.
4. Provide a framework of distinct landscape areas and baseline information on the character, condition and potential influences which would inform any future coordinated landscape management programme. Within the AONB the landscape management is coordinated with reference to the AONB Landscape Management Plan; outside of the AONB the district

council currently has more limited remit for landscape management but the study may facilitate future initiatives in this respect.

5. Provide a baseline of the current condition for the monitoring of change. As an update of the previous assessment the study provides the opportunity to log the key changes and extent or pace of change that has occurred in the previous 20 or so years since the original LCA study. In some regards the previous study was not set up to provide a clear baseline for monitoring against but in the structure of the current work this can be remedied. By identifying some of the main areas/types of development that have been undertaken in recent years within the district the LCA update provides an opportunity to note the cumulative impact of recent development. The use of GIS and the inclusion of all field work will also assist this function in the future.

The MCD objectives set out above highlight a number of points which need to be integrated into the study approach. These are identified as follows;

To provide a comprehensive baseline to inform options for future growth and for assessing landscape effects for future applications or appeals; the work needs to address the distinction between Landscape and Visual Impacts that would normally be drawn in any (LVIA) impact assessment. For both of these uses it would assist if the baseline can include some appreciation of the general visual sensitivity across the district and how existing urban areas and other major development is seen. An appreciation of the distinction between landscape character and visual sensitivity would also be a key element in any future tool box for assessment of applications.

The council have specifically included the need to clarify how 'valued landscapes' are defined and how to integrate or retain its Special Landscape Features Policy in future iterations of the local plan. The council also notes a need to consider how the landscapes outside of the AONB are valued in the plan and decision making process. This requires consideration of the landscape in terms of quality and relative value which go beyond the characterisation of the landscape. Landscape quality includes consideration of the physical state of characteristic landscape, the condition or intactness of existing features, the visual condition, and other overlapping aspects of interest such as cultural heritage or wildlife interest. Relative value may be attached to perceptual aspects which may require judgements on aspects such as scenic beauty, tranquillity or wildness and may also be linked to public access and/or appreciation. The assessment will therefore need to include reference to these factors and map the various forms of landscape access that exists within the district.

As aspects of value are inherently subjective it is considered a degree of consensus in any final value judgements would be important; this is an area where the study may need to set out the rationale and seek wider consultation input to finalise a robust position. The future stages of stakeholder and public consultation engagement are seen as an important aspect in this regard. Consideration of various ways to make the final assessment report accessible to the public and to engage public interest in the topic are also noted as important aspects of the study.

[1] Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland 2002 by Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage

[2] An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment October 2014 by Christine Tudor, Natural England

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To assist the Authority in the use of the landscape character assessment in future development control situations transparency in the process approach and accessibility to supporting field work are noted as important. The relevance of the character assessment in LVIA and planning application preparation should be noted and consideration will be given to how the document can be more easily accessed by other professionals.

Stage 2 – Desk Study

The assessment process will start with a comprehensive desk top study undertaken in advance of the main detailed field work. Time is allowed in the project programme for there to be some iteration between the stages. The study will encompass the review of existing landscape assessments including the English National Character Areas work, any county assessment and cross boundary neighbouring assessments.

For the consideration of landscape value relative to the AONB the setting of the Mendip District in the wider context of regional designations, major settlements and broad landscape types may well be relevant. Mapping of broad landscape attributes such as tranquillity and dark skies is available and also relevant at this contextual level.

The identified character areas output from the 1997 study can be transferred into GIS format to allow overlay on larger scale up to date mapping. Likewise the simple topographic, geology, drainage and other physical mapping information can be drawn together into a set of comprehensive base maps.

The distribution of all the various planning, natural and cultural heritage interests of the district will be drawn together through the available open source GIS data sets and the council local plan data sets. Alongside the mapping the desk top work will also involve the background review of available reference material on the history and ecological interest of the district.

The cultural associations of the district landscape would be built up via the background research. As part of this contact with the county artworks organisation (Somerset Art Works) is proposed as a means to highlight some of the current work inspired by the landscapes of the district.

Stage 3 Field Survey

The field survey stage will in itself be staged. After an initial review of the desktop work in stage 2 some sample visits to selected character areas would be undertaken. This will allow review of the data already gathered and the accuracy of the existing LCA boundaries. The data gathered during the desk top stage would be part of the survey pack for each area. A project specific Field Survey Proforma has been prepared for this stage, a blank copy of which is provided below.

The initial sample visits will allow the proforma to be tested and modified if necessary before being applied to the whole district. In planning the resourcing for this stage the initial sampling is to be undertaken in pairs to allow discussion and consistency in how the proforma is used record and respond to different areas. Following this initial testing the bulk of the assessments will be made individually. In the subsequent classification and description stage these will be reviewed and discussed as a team.

To cover the district in manageable zones a series of eight main field work zones are identified along with two focus areas relating to the cross boundary locations highlighted by MDC. As illustrated on Figure 1 these all encompass a number of character areas and are sized relative to the complexity and scale of the areas involved.

In planning out the intended approach it was noted the network of strategic long-distance trails actually cut through the majority of all the LCA areas. Figure 1 illustrates the key routes of the Mendip Way, Macmillan Way and Monarch's Way combine with the Sustrans routes 3, 24 and 254. While it is recognised there may be some degree of these trails tending to be routed through better quality landscape it is intended these routes would be included as a key part of the assessment routes. These would be used along with other footpaths and minor lanes, not least because there will be a need for some circular routes for the practical purpose of a day visits.

The majority of the field work would be done on foot or via cycle access as this is a more immersive experience in the landscape and allows much more concentration on the assessment. It is noted that within the centre of the district there is a gap between most of the long distance path network, this corresponds with the Fosse Way / A37 corridor (where tranquillity may be less evident).

The Field Survey Proforma is based on best practice guidance and previous project experience. The format aims to cover the normal range of aspects to be recorded but in greater detail than the previous assessment. The form includes aspects of particular relevance to the wider understanding of visual amenity/sensitivity that may be important in the future consideration of local landscape capacity. It also includes a section to make note of the types of recreational access and the influences of leisure and tourism; the accessibility of landscape is one aspect of interest but there is also the point that in some locations the presence or pressure of recreational uses may have an effect on the landscape people have come to enjoy.

In order to capture value judgements on the landscape, which is key to understanding the valued and special landscapes within the district, there are sections to record judgements on the condition and quality of the area. As these value judgements are by definition complex and subjective the final page includes a section to record on site observations on why an area may be of low or high value.

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Within each area the expectation is to gather a good selection of photographs to illustrate the points observed. The proforma includes space to note specific points / view captions that will be added at the post site visit review stage. It is anticipated on average three or four proformas would be provided per LCA. With each field work zone taking at least 2 days to survey and allowing for some sample areas and general visits around 20 – 25 days of field work are anticipated.

The field work proformas will be retained in a format that allows easy retrieval as part of the final output report (for clarity the forms will be in a typed up format).

Stage 4 Classification and Description

In the field and as a first step on the output of the LCA the boundaries of the various LCA's will be reviewed and adjusted as appropriate. Where changes are more than simply minor adjustment to deal with the increase in scale or updating of the base mapping the changes would be recorded on a separate map overlay.

Following this the area names and basic physical descriptions would be updated from the previous text. For each area the physical geography, landscape vegetation and habitat types, human land-use and settlement patterns would be set down in text. The physical character would then be described in objective terms followed by the more subjective aesthetic and perceptual responses. These combined would be identified as the key characteristics and observed character.

Where relevant the additional interest arising from natural, historical, cultural or societal layers of landscape appreciation would be set down as aspects that may be seen to either add directly to the landscape character or as added interest/attraction to a locality. Key settlements and historic landscape features would be highlighted as part of the landscape; although the internal townscapes and detailed settlement analysis is beyond the study scope, the presence and broad nature of the settlements (or settlement edges) is seen as part of the landscape character.

The landscape condition and senses of unspoilt tranquillity or visual/audible intrusion would be noted either as a general observation across each area or how this may be seen to change as the area is passed through. For each area the nature of the visual interest/condition and sensitivity would be noted and any key viewpoints, panoramas, vistas, landmarks, intrusions noted. The overview of the general extent of unspoilt or good condition landscape across the district and the cumulative impact of change over the last two decades (the first two of the 21st century) is a potential output from the study.

Specific recreational access features and influences would be noted within the character areas where these provide major focus of access activity or have a direct bearing on the perceived character. The recreational access/activity is expected to be relevant to how the landscapes may be perceived at a district level.

Within each landscape character area description consideration of any emerging trends, threats, or particular sensitivities would be included. The risks of climate change and the influx of non-native pest and diseases may have implications across the district; where this is the case the issues may be addressed in summary form at the end of the study to avoid extensive duplication.

It is noted that in the period since the original report there has been significant development of renewable energy installations across the district; with the expectation that there may be more to come. The study will include confirmation of the extent of these across the district and comment on any evident cumulative impact provided.

The local areas of identified Special Landscape Features would be referred to where they occur within each character area. The ways in which these areas may be seen as valued landscape will be identified within the text as appropriate. The consideration of the relevance of these in relation to the general landscape, other potential areas of valued landscape, the AONB and other forms of designation will be considered at a district wide level. On completion of the character assessment work the existing landscape related planning policy guidance and local plan policies will be set out along with any suggested adjustments to the policy protection. Subject to further development of the planned departure of the UK from the EU, discussion on the implications for the district's landscape will be included.

Commentary on how the LCA may be used to assist with the development of project proposals and decision making will also be provided.

The landscape character areas along with other key elements of the study findings would be illustrated and digitally mapped. The updated LCA's would be issued in a GIS format compatible with the council's MapInfo system.

The field work proforma data would be typed/captured digitally and provided in a searchable appendix format. The collection of area photographs would be likewise organised in sets and geo-located.

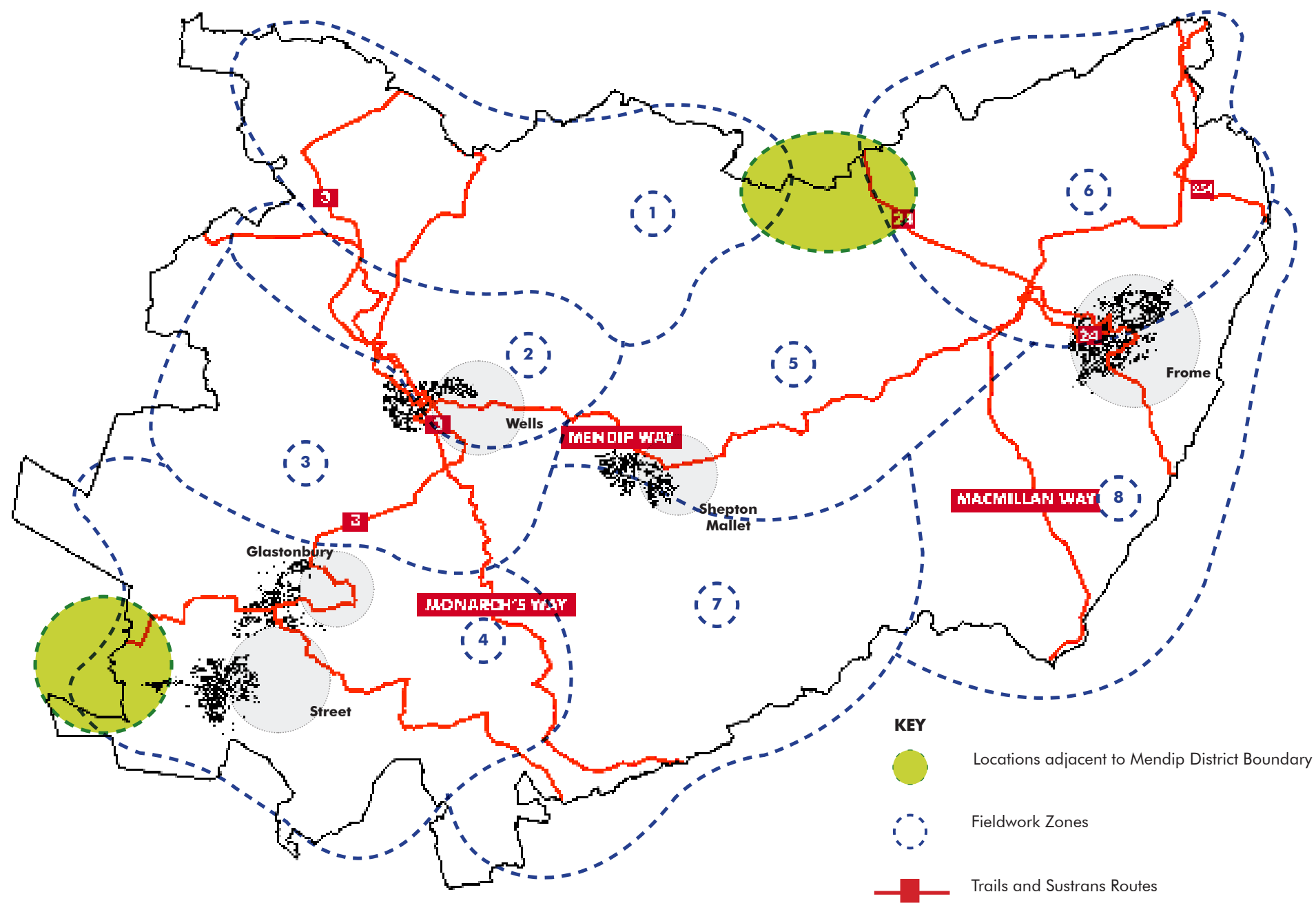
In anticipation of future public engagement with the landscape character assessment and to make the final report output as useful to external agencies as possible, the study graphics will be presented in digital format that may allow presentation either as slides or web enabled content. Graphics which allow comparison between factors and to overlay LCA areas on clear base mapping are considered to be of greatest assistance to others viewing the report.

The final report will be issued to MDC in word, PDF and digital formats to allow distribution and up loading to the internet as an open source document. All copyright on graphic material will be attributed to MDC but with the presumption that as environmental information third parties may be allowed to download and make use of the material without undue restriction. Where OS mapping is included in supporting graphics this may be subject to the normal licence restrictions for copying and reuse.

TABLE 1 : 'Reviewing and Updating and Existing Landscape Character Assessment'**Review and Updating an Existing Landscape Character Assessment
based on Section 1.6 NE/Tudor 2014**

CONSIDERATIONS	SITUATION FOR MDC LCA	
Date carried out	1997 – pre-2002 methodology – based on 1993 guidance approach	X
Date and provenance of data	Project drew on previous work from 1996 by same consultancy, parallel work by County Council and 1995 MAFF work.	✓
Original purpose of the existing LCA	Prepared specifically as a district wide / level Landscape Character Assessment	✓
Scale of the assessment and its appropriateness for the proposed use	1997 Mapping bases at 1:50,000 scale – diagrams do not show field boundaries or definitive PROW's.	X
Whether or not and if so to what extent stakeholders engaged in the assessment process	No reference to consultation in methodology or text.	X
Age of the assessment and amount of landscape change since its compilation	As an essentially rural area the degree of change across broad areas of the district the landscape has been limited. Some subtle changes can be identified which would be relevant to map and consider. Extent of urbanisation since 1997, extent of mineral extraction (limited geographic increase – maturing mitigation), highway traffic growth (may be modest but common perceptions of growth) Frome bypass (only recently completed in 97 – subsequent maturing of mitigation landscape). Growth in solar / sustainable power generation. Countryside and Recreation Act 2000 – creation of access areas (limited extent in east Mendip). Creation of popular Sustrans cycle routes and promotion of long distance walking routes – potential changes in perception of the landscape through improved and increased public access.	-
Extent of cross-boundary join up at the edges of the study area	N/A -now highlighted in project brief.	X
Whether the original field survey work is available and can be updated	Assumed not available	X
Location – relevance of coastal assessment (2012 publication of seascape methodology)	N/A	N/A
Will particular aspects of landscape character require more scrutiny or emphasis	Capacity for change / development noted as aspect of future work for Local Planning Authority	X
Note Guidance note at end of 1.6:- 'if a LCA pre-dates Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland (2002), and / or it does not pay regard to significant stakeholder engagement then it might be necessary to carry out a new Landscape Character Assessment'		X

FIGURE 1



FIELD SURVEY PROFORMA

Mendip District Council Landscape Character Assessment Field Survey Proforma					
Assessment Location No.		Assessor (Initials)	Date	Office Ref	
Location GR		Direction of View(s) –			
Nature/Setting Viewpoint, Location & Experience – (road/path/village/open access – experience of getting to location / being there)					
Elevation	Aspect	Weather			
Landscape Type(s)		1997 LCA Ref(s)			
Intervisibility with other LCA areas / significant boundaries (physical or admin)					
Extent of view/Landscape assessed					
Topography & hydrology/surface water features/exposed geology					
Level / Moor	Steep Hills	Dry/Wet Generally	Exposed rock features		
Plain / Plateau	Ridge	Wetland	Natural Cliffs		
Undulating	Wide Vale	Dry valley/sink holes	Quarry		
Gentle Slope	Valley -Wide Flat Bottom	Resurgence	Other mineral workings		
Rolling Lowland	- Narrow w flood plains	Ditches			
Low hills	- Narrow no flood plains	Drainage Channels	Local stone		
Scarp/cliffs	- Gorge/Ravine	Stream/River	- Walls		
		Ponds/Lakes	- buildings		
Dominant Landcover/Landscape Present at Location [P] /in view [M]					
Landcover	Veg. Type	Management	Settlement	Built/Design ed Env.	Boundary Treatments
Woodland	Conifer	Un-managed	Sporadic Houses/	Conservation Area	Hedges - informal / managed
<u>Grassland</u>	Broadleaved Plantation	Semi Natural	Farmsteads	Parkland/	Walls
Ley / Permanent pasture/meadow	Coppice	Low input	Hamlet	Designed	Fences
Rough Grassland	Copse/Farm	Hill grazing	Estate Farmstead	Landscape	(parks/garde ns)
<u>Arable</u>	Woodland	Species rich	Village SML		Boundaries Ditches
Maize/Cereals	Hedgerow trees	Extensive managed	Pre-war dev		Parish
Moor/Heath	Game Cover	Intensive managed	Post-war dev		Domestic : - Walls
Scrub	Biomass/Oiser	Other Intensive	Urban Edge		- Fencing
Marsh/wetland	pollards		Urban		- Hedges
Bog	Orchard				
	Parkland Trees				
	Arboretum				
	Non-Native				
Other	Planting				
	Other				

Infrastructure/development - Present or Nearby				Natural & Cultural Heritage	
Historic Infrastructure				Wildlife Interest	
Mineral Workings/Processing/Waste				Distinctive Habitat	
Highways / Railways				Historic Settlement	
- Minor Roads - Main Roads - Trunk dual carriageway - Major Highway features				Industrial Heritage	
Power Lines				Notable Houses/Folly's	
Solar				Tourist Attractions	
Wind				Cultural Locations/Associations	
Other					
Aesthetic & Perceptual					
Scale -	Intimate	Small	Medium	Large	Vast
Enclosure -	Tight	Enclosed	Medium	Open	Exposed
Diversity -	Uniform	Simple	Varied	Diverse	Complex
Texture -	Smooth	Textured	Varied/Mid	Rough	Very rough
Form -	Vertical	Very Steep	Sloping	Rolling	Horizontal
Line -	Straight	Angular	Curved	Sinuous	Erratic
Colour -	Monochrome	Muted	Nat. Blend	Colourful	Garish
Balance -	Harmonious	Balanced	Discordant	Chaotic	
Movement -	Dead	Still	Neutral	Calm	Busy
Pattern -	Random	Organised	Varied	Regular	Formal
Visual & Audible Tranquillity				Noise	Natural
Visual Intrusions			High Mod/High		
Modern Infrastructure			Moderate Mod/Low		
Dereliction			Low None		
Unsympathetic Development			Other tranquillity influences		

Visual Amenity/Sensitivity				
Open Panoramic Views	Immediate/Middle Distance			
Distant Landmarks/Reference Points	Intrusions/Clutter			
Distant Visual Intrusions	Harmonious Development			
Framed Views / Vistas	Inharmonious Development			
Rare Views / Secluded Landscapes	Mitigation Landscape			
	Popular Viewpoints			
	Recreational Access Views			
	Busy/High Volume Views			
Recreational Access/Activity				
Types & Ease of Access	+ _	Leisure & Tourism Influence		
Open Access Land		Traffic & Parking		
Multi-use Access Sustrans Routes		Visitor Numbers		
Long Distance Trails		Signage		
PROW Network		Noticeable Tourism Development		
Adventure Sports		Spectator Gatherings		
Recreational use of Land		Event Locations		
Condition & Initial Value Judgements				
	High	Medium	Low	Impoverished
Condition / Quality				
Unspoilt Semi natural				
Isolation / Remote character				
Scenic quality – Natural Interest/factors				
- Human Patterns/settled				
Heritage/Natural interest settings				
- Nature Reserves/Distinct habitat				
- Recognised Landscape type/character				
- Designed Landscapes – Parklands/Gardens				
- Conservation Areas/settings				
Condition Comments				

Valued Landscapes – General Observations			
Photo Collection – notes in field – scope to add photos / captions at review stage			

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- d) The study will provide evidence to the assessment of broad locations and 'opportunity areas' in the district for longer-term housing and employment development. The 2050 growth work (which is being commissioned separately) is likely to explore a range of options including extensions to market towns, locations associated with major road proposals/rail stations, extensions to villages or forms of rural new settlements. The output of the study in terms of characteristics, landscape sensitivity and quality will be used to assess these areas, initially at a strategic level and then to undertake more detailed testing of landscape impact as specific options and locations or masterplans are refined.

- e) The 2050 growth work also includes technical and route studies to bid for highway road bypasses around Glastonbury and Walton/Ashcott. The character study will provide input into the testing of options.
- f) The study will also be used to support the development of preferred and final options for specific development allocations and policies in the updated Local Plan 2020 – 2036. It will also feed into the formal sustainability appraisal of the Plan and production of other strategies and documents such as Green Infrastructure Plans. The Council will also use this study to review and redraft the landscape policy in the adopted Plan.
- g) The Council does not have an in-house landscape officer. The study outputs will provide a comprehensive baseline to support specialist expertise where required on particular proposals, appeals or projects. It will also support in-house skills and capacity building in this area.
- h) The Council may also, in due course, seek to develop more specific landscape assessment tools or bolt-on studies based on this work to assist in the assessment of individual planning applications, appeal sites or particular types of development (such as wind/solar). Any such further work will be the subject of a separate tender exercise.

3. Development Plan and Policy Context

Mendip is a largely rural district within the County of Somerset covering an area of 738 km² (258 square miles) with four market towns of Glastonbury, Frome, Shepton Mallet, Street and the city of Wells.

The Mendip District Local Plan (Part 1) was adopted in December 2014 and will be more than five years from adoption in 2020. The Council intends to undertake a major review and update of the Local Plan Part I, updating its evidence base in 2019 and publishing initial/preferred options for consultation during 2020. It may also need to address the challenge of speculative housing applications submitted contrary to the adopted plan from 2020.

The impact of development on Mendip's landscapes is assessed through adopted policies DP1 (Local Identity and distinctiveness) and DP4 (Mendip's Landscapes) Policy DP4 and supporting text is appended to this brief for information.

There is a very limited area of the district which falls within the Bath and Bristol Green Belt which means that nearly all Mendip is covered by 'countryside' policies.

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4. Landscape Designations and Previous Assessment

The district contains significant areas of the Mendip Hills AONB. The Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB also fringes the eastern side of the Mendip boundary. The adopted Plan also identifies a series of 'Special Landscape Features (or SLF)', specific to the district. The extent and characteristics of the SLF were reviewed in 2012.

A district wide landscape character assessment was last produced in 1997 and identified 8 principal character areas:

- The Central Mendip Hills
- The East Mendip Hills
- The Frome Valley
- The Cotswold Edge
- The Batcombe Down & Valleys
- The Lias Lowlands & Ridges
- The Moors
- The Wookey Islands

Consideration of the project being an up-date of the previous work or an entirely new study was given during the process of tender, consultant appointment and in the project initiation meeting. A review of the status of the previous work with regard to the guidance from Natural England [2014] on this subject was provided in the consultant tender submission. From this while aspects of the 1997 approach are seen to predate the standard best practice, the work is thought to form a good foundation for the new assessment project. The essential point being that the previous broad mapping of the individual character areas seems well considered and robust. With the distribution of character areas broadly accepted as a suitable starting point, this allows resources to be focused on gathering updated information and field assessments to add more layers of detail to the individual areas. The review against the NE 2014 [ref 1-Tudor 2014] guidance is set out in Table 1 below.

5. Project Brief

The character assessment will be undertaken following the best practice guidelines for LCA produced by Natural England and Scottish Natural Heritage. The study is intended to provide an update of the 1997 district wide character assessment reflecting both changes in assessment approaches and the landscape over the previous two decades.

In respect of specific coverage the character study will cover the whole of the Mendip District area and have regard to a number of locations beyond the district boundary; in particular to the south of Midsomer Norton/Radstock and land to the west of Walton around Ashcott. These are shown on Figure 1. These locations have particular development pressures or need to be

included to test future infrastructure options. In these areas, the study will need to align with landscape assessment undertaken in Sedgemoor District and Bath NE Somerset. The study will also draw in the potential overlap of the similar assessments of the neighbouring local authorities in other locations.

The study will focus on the rural areas and urban fringes around the five main settlements within the District. The landscape/townscape features within the main settlements are excluded to allow focussed study of the surrounding rural or semi-rural landscapes. Character assessments of the urban areas may be subject to a separate project in due course. Given the existence of more up to date assessment of the AONB the study will not need to make a detailed assessment of features within the AONB boundaries.

External Stakeholders

As an update of a long-standing assessment it is considered that the basic framework of the assessment is well established; but the work will involve considerable research and field work to provide a comprehensive update. While stakeholder input and public consultation is essential to the final publication; for the most efficient use of time and resource it is envisaged the initial study will produce a draft for wider consultation. For this draft some focused information gathering discussion with key external agencies is included to ensure pertinent detail is captured at the outset.

This includes contact with planning officers in the two AONBs and with officers familiar with the respective LCA Studies in the relevant neighbouring authorities. The other sources anticipated for the initial support to the study include the following organisations; -

Somerset County Council
Mendip ANOB Partnership
Somerset Wildlife Trust

Key Stages

The project approach is set out as a series of key stages, these follow the best practice recommendations and are to be reviewed and agreed as the project progresses.

Stage 1 – Brief, Purpose and Scope.

At the commencement of the project the brief and reasons for commissioning the study as set down by MDC were reviewed and the intended project approach combined into an agreed working brief.

As set out in the introduction the requirement for an updated LCA was triggered primarily by the need for an evidence base to inform the future long term growth strategy and local plan process. Other objectives raised by the initial council brief included a review of how valued landscapes may be defined in relation to national planning guidance and how the existing Local Plan policy

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designation of Special Landscape Features may be integrated into the future iterations of the plan. Reference was also made to the study providing the baseline to assist with application proposals or appeals and the desire for the council to develop more specific assessment tools.

For the working brief the more straightforward functions of a landscape assessment as a standard part of the planning, design and management of the local landscapes is noted. The best practice guidance sources [1] and [2] set out the history and rationale behind the accepted approaches to Landscape Character Assessment and provide a range of examples of how LCA are used. In summary and in terms of the MDC work the potential uses of the completed study are noted as;

1. To provide a comprehensive description of the landscape with reference to the characteristics that make the area distinctive and the factors which may be seen to be of particular value or sensitivity to change. This may be valuable at a general level in helping people to develop greater appreciation and engagement with the local environment. At a more specific level understanding the local distinctiveness, interest and value of the local landscape may be of assistance to the promotion of the Mendip landscapes as a tourism and recreational resource.
2. Provide a resource of accessible spatial information on the district environment that can relate the mapped landscape character to underlying aspects of physical geography, biodiversity and human influence. With this the LCA can be integrated into other environmental study work as part of a coordinated approach to environmental mapping, decision making and management. In particular the appreciation of the potential interrelationships of various environmental sensitivities may assist with the process of screening environmental assessments. (The agreed brief does not propose an 'Integrated' landscape assessment but there is scope for the work to be integrated with other studies in the future).
3. Provide greater understanding of the key landscape considerations that will underpin the necessary judgments at all levels of the planning process from strategic decision making on local plans, site allocations, development master planning, siting, scale or massing of development or infrastructure, major land use changes, or smaller development/land-use changes, forestry or woodland design and renewable energy projects. As such the LCA should not only be used by the LPA in development of allocations and policy but also form a key reference point for developers in the preparation of application proposals, Design and Access Statements and LVIA / EIA studies.
4. Provide a framework of distinct landscape areas and baseline information on the character, condition and potential influences which would inform any future coordinated landscape management programme. Within the AONB the landscape management is coordinated with reference to the AONB Landscape Management Plan; outside of the AONB the district

council currently has more limited remit for landscape management but the study may facilitate future initiatives in this respect.

5. Provide a baseline of the current condition for the monitoring of change. As an update of the previous assessment the study provides the opportunity to log the key changes and extent or pace of change that has occurred in the previous 20 or so years since the original LCA study. In some regards the previous study was not set up to provide a clear baseline for monitoring against but in the structure of the current work this can be remedied. By identifying some of the main areas/types of development that have been undertaken in recent years within the district the LCA update provides an opportunity to note the cumulative impact of recent development. The use of GIS and the inclusion of all field work will also assist this function in the future.

The MCD objectives set out above highlight a number of points which need to be integrated into the study approach. These are identified as follows;

To provide a comprehensive baseline to inform options for future growth and for assessing landscape effects for future applications or appeals; the work needs to address the distinction between Landscape and Visual Impacts that would normally be drawn in any (LVIA) impact assessment. For both of these uses it would assist if the baseline can include some appreciation of the general visual sensitivity across the district and how existing urban areas and other major development is seen. An appreciation of the distinction between landscape character and visual sensitivity would also be a key element in any future tool box for assessment of applications.

The council have specifically included the need to clarify how 'valued landscapes' are defined and how to integrate or retain its Special Landscape Features Policy in future iterations of the local plan. The council also notes a need to consider how the landscapes outside of the AONB are valued in the plan and decision making process. This requires consideration of the landscape in terms of quality and relative value which go beyond the characterisation of the landscape. Landscape quality includes consideration of the physical state of characteristic landscape, the condition or intactness of existing features, the visual condition, and other overlapping aspects of interest such as cultural heritage or wildlife interest. Relative value may be attached to perceptual aspects which may require judgements on aspects such as scenic beauty, tranquillity or wildness and may also be linked to public access and/or appreciation. The assessment will therefore need to include reference to these factors and map the various forms of landscape access that exists within the district.

As aspects of value are inherently subjective it is considered a degree of consensus in any final value judgements would be important; this is an area where the study may need to set out the rationale and seek wider consultation input to finalise a robust position. The future stages of stakeholder and public consultation engagement are seen as an important aspect in this regard. Consideration of various ways to make the final assessment report accessible to the public and to engage public interest in the topic are also noted as important aspects of the study.

[1] Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland 2002 by Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage

[2] An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment October 2014 by Christine Tudor, Natural England

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To assist the Authority in the use of the landscape character assessment in future development control situations transparency in the process approach and accessibility to supporting field work are noted as important. The relevance of the character assessment in LVIA and planning application preparation should be noted and consideration will be given to how the document can be more easily accessed by other professionals.

Stage 2 – Desk Study

The assessment process will start with a comprehensive desk top study undertaken in advance of the main detailed field work. Time is allowed in the project programme for there to be some iteration between the stages. The study will encompass the review of existing landscape assessments including the English National Character Areas work, any county assessment and cross boundary neighbouring assessments.

For the consideration of landscape value relative to the AONB the setting of the Mendip District in the wider context of regional designations, major settlements and broad landscape types may well be relevant. Mapping of broad landscape attributes such as tranquillity and dark skies is available and also relevant at this contextual level.

The identified character areas output from the 1997 study can be transferred into GIS format to allow overlay on larger scale up to date mapping. Likewise the simple topographic, geology, drainage and other physical mapping information can be drawn together into a set of comprehensive base maps.

The distribution of all the various planning, natural and cultural heritage interests of the district will be drawn together through the available open source GIS data sets and the council local plan data sets. Alongside the mapping the desk top work will also involve the background review of available reference material on the history and ecological interest of the district.

The cultural associations of the district landscape would be built up via the background research. As part of this contact with the county artworks organisation (Somerset Art Works) is proposed as a means to highlight some of the current work inspired by the landscapes of the district.

Stage 3 Field Survey

The field survey stage will in itself be staged. After an initial review of the desktop work in stage 2 some sample visits to selected character areas would be undertaken. This will allow review of the data already gathered and the accuracy of the existing LCA boundaries. The data gathered during the desk top stage would be part of the survey pack for each area. A project specific Field Survey Proforma has been prepared for this stage, a blank copy of which is provided below.

The initial sample visits will allow the proforma to be tested and modified if necessary before being applied to the whole district. In planning the resourcing for this stage the initial sampling is to be undertaken in pairs to allow discussion and consistency in how the proforma is used record and respond to different areas. Following this initial testing the bulk of the assessments will be made individually. In the subsequent classification and description stage these will be reviewed and discussed as a team.

To cover the district in manageable zones a series of eight main field work zones are identified along with two focus areas relating to the cross boundary locations highlighted by MDC. As illustrated on Figure 1 these all encompass a number of character areas and are sized relative to the complexity and scale of the areas involved.

In planning out the intended approach it was noted the network of strategic long-distance trails actually cut through the majority of all the LCA areas. Figure 1 illustrates the key routes of the Mendip Way, Macmillan Way and Monarch's Way combine with the Sustrans routes 3, 24 and 254. While it is recognised there may be some degree of these trails tending to be routed through better quality landscape it is intended these routes would be included as a key part of the assessment routes. These would be used along with other footpaths and minor lanes, not least because there will be a need for some circular routes for the practical purpose of a day visits.

The majority of the field work would be done on foot or via cycle access as this is a more immersive experience in the landscape and allows much more concentration on the assessment. It is noted that within the centre of the district there is a gap between most of the long distance path network, this corresponds with the Fosse Way / A37 corridor (where tranquillity may be less evident).

The Field Survey Proforma is based on best practice guidance and previous project experience. The format aims to cover the normal range of aspects to be recorded but in greater detail than the previous assessment. The form includes aspects of particular relevance to the wider understanding of visual amenity/sensitivity that may be important in the future consideration of local landscape capacity. It also includes a section to make note of the types of recreational access and the influences of leisure and tourism; the accessibility of landscape is one aspect of interest but there is also the point that in some locations the presence or pressure of recreational uses may have an effect on the landscape people have come to enjoy.

In order to capture value judgements on the landscape, which is key to understanding the valued and special landscapes within the district, there are sections to record judgements on the condition and quality of the area. As these value judgements are by definition complex and subjective the final page includes a section to record on site observations on why an area may be of low or high value.

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Within each area the expectation is to gather a good selection of photographs to illustrate the points observed. The proforma includes space to note specific points / view captions that will be added at the post site visit review stage. It is anticipated on average three or four proformas would be provided per LCA. With each field work zone taking at least 2 days to survey and allowing for some sample areas and general visits around 20 – 25 days of field work are anticipated.

The field work proformas will be retained in a format that allows easy retrieval as part of the final output report (for clarity the forms will be in a typed up format).

Stage 4 Classification and Description

In the field and as a first step on the output of the LCA the boundaries of the various LCA's will be reviewed and adjusted as appropriate. Where changes are more than simply minor adjustment to deal with the increase in scale or updating of the base mapping the changes would be recorded on a separate map overlay.

Following this the area names and basic physical descriptions would be updated from the previous text. For each area the physical geography, landscape vegetation and habitat types, human land-use and settlement patterns would be set down in text. The physical character would then be described in objective terms followed by the more subjective aesthetic and perceptual responses. These combined would be identified as the key characteristics and observed character.

Where relevant the additional interest arising from natural, historical, cultural or societal layers of landscape appreciation would be set down as aspects that may be seen to either add directly to the landscape character or as added interest/attraction to a locality. Key settlements and historic landscape features would be highlighted as part of the landscape; although the internal townscapes and detailed settlement analysis is beyond the study scope, the presence and broad nature of the settlements (or settlement edges) is seen as part of the landscape character.

The landscape condition and senses of unspoilt tranquillity or visual/audible intrusion would be noted either as a general observation across each area or how this may be seen to change as the area is passed through. For each area the nature of the visual interest/condition and sensitivity would be noted and any key viewpoints, panoramas, vistas, landmarks, intrusions noted. The overview of the general extent of unspoilt or good condition landscape across the district and the cumulative impact of change over the last two decades (the first two of the 21st century) is a potential output from the study.

Specific recreational access features and influences would be noted within the character areas where these provide major focus of access activity or have a direct bearing on the perceived character. The recreational access/activity is expected to be relevant to how the landscapes may be perceived at a district level.

Within each landscape character area description consideration of any emerging trends, threats, or particular sensitivities would be included. The risks of climate change and the influx of non-native pest and diseases may have implications across the district; where this is the case the issues may be addressed in summary form at the end of the study to avoid extensive duplication.

It is noted that in the period since the original report there has been significant development of renewable energy installations across the district; with the expectation that there may be more to come. The study will include confirmation of the extent of these across the district and comment on any evident cumulative impact provided.

The local areas of identified Special Landscape Features would be referred to where they occur within each character area. The ways in which these areas may be seen as valued landscape will be identified within the text as appropriate. The consideration of the relevance of these in relation to the general landscape, other potential areas of valued landscape, the AONB and other forms of designation will be considered at a district wide level. On completion of the character assessment work the existing landscape related planning policy guidance and local plan policies will be set out along with any suggested adjustments to the policy protection. Subject to further development of the planned departure of the UK from the EU, discussion on the implications for the district's landscape will be included.

Commentary on how the LCA may be used to assist with the development of project proposals and decision making will also be provided.

The landscape character areas along with other key elements of the study findings would be illustrated and digitally mapped. The updated LCA's would be issued in a GIS format compatible with the council's MapInfo system.

The field work proforma data would be typed/captured digitally and provided in a searchable appendix format. The collection of area photographs would be likewise organised in sets and geo-located.

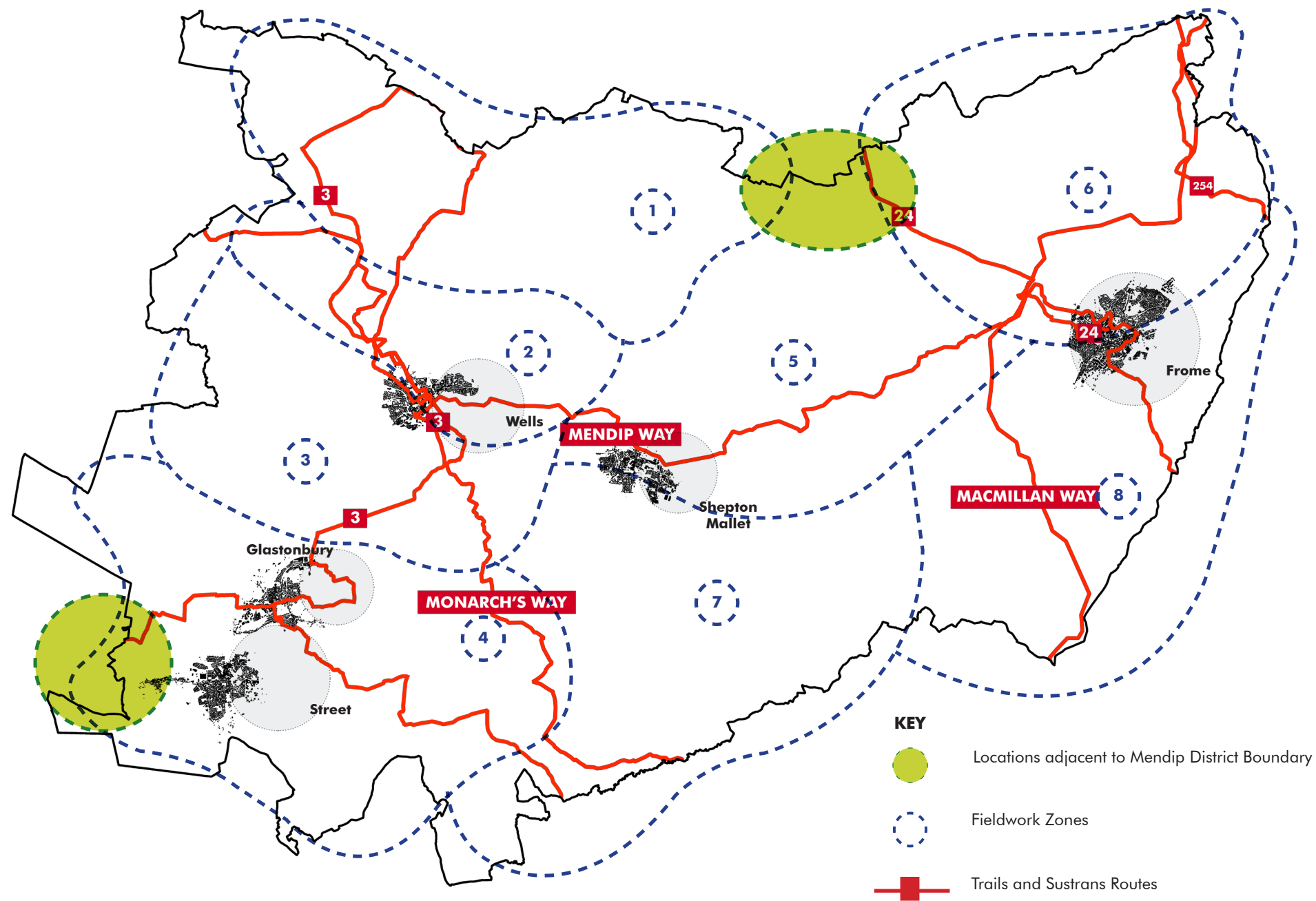
In anticipation of future public engagement with the landscape character assessment and to make the final report output as useful to external agencies as possible, the study graphics will be presented in digital format that may allow presentation either as slides or web enabled content. Graphics which allow comparison between factors and to overlay LCA areas on clear base mapping are considered to be of greatest assistance to others viewing the report.

The final report will be issued to MDC in word, PDF and digital formats to allow distribution and up loading to the internet as an open source document. All copyright on graphic material will be attributed to MDC but with the presumption that as environmental information third parties may be allowed to download and make use of the material without undue restriction. Where OS mapping is included in supporting graphics this may be subject to the normal licence restrictions for copying and reuse.

TABLE 1 : 'Reviewing and Updating and Existing Landscape Character Assessment'**Review and Updating an Existing Landscape Character Assessment
based on Section 1.6 NE/Tudor 2014**

CONSIDERATIONS	SITUATION FOR MDC LCA	
Date carried out	1997 – pre-2002 methodology – based on 1993 guidance approach	X
Date and provenance of data	Project drew on previous work from 1996 by same consultancy, parallel work by County Council and 1995 MAFF work.	✓
Original purpose of the existing LCA	Prepared specifically as a district wide / level Landscape Character Assessment	✓
Scale of the assessment and its appropriateness for the proposed use	1997 Mapping bases at 1:50,000 scale – diagrams do not show field boundaries or definitive PROW's.	X
Whether or not and if so to what extent stakeholders engaged in the assessment process	No reference to consultation in methodology or text.	X
Age of the assessment and amount of landscape change since its compilation	As an essentially rural area the degree of change across broad areas of the district the landscape has been limited. Some subtle changes can be identified which would be relevant to map and consider. Extent of urbanisation since 1997, extent of mineral extraction (limited geographic increase – maturing mitigation), highway traffic growth (may be modest but common perceptions of growth) Frome bypass (only recently completed in 97 – subsequent maturing of mitigation landscape). Growth in solar / sustainable power generation. Countryside and Recreation Act 2000 – creation of access areas (limited extent in east Mendip). Creation of popular Sustrans cycle routes and promotion of long distance walking routes – potential changes in perception of the landscape through improved and increased public access.	-
Extent of cross-boundary join up at the edges of the study area	N/A -now highlighted in project brief.	X
Whether the original field survey work is available and can be updated	Assumed not available	X
Location – relevance of coastal assessment (2012 publication of seascape methodology)	N/A	N/A
Will particular aspects of landscape character require more scrutiny or emphasis	Capacity for change / development noted as aspect of future work for Local Planning Authority	X
Note Guidance note at end of 1.6:- 'if a LCA pre-dates Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland (2002), and / or it does not pay regard to significant stakeholder engagement then it might be necessary to carry out a new Landscape Character Assessment'		X

FIGURE 1



FIELD SURVEY PROFORMA

Mendip District Council Landscape Character Assessment Field Survey Proforma					
Assessment Location No.		Assessor (Initials)	Date	Office Ref	
Location GR		Direction of View(s) –			
Nature/Setting Viewpoint, Location & Experience – (road/path/village/open access – experience of getting to location / being there)					
Elevation	Aspect	Weather			
Landscape Type(s)		1997 LCA Ref(s)			
Intervisibility with other LCA areas / significant boundaries (physical or admin)					
Extent of view/Landscape assessed					
Typography & hydrology/surface water features/exposed geology					
Level / Moor	Steep Hills	Dry/Wet Generally	Exposed rock features		
Plain / Plateau	Ridge	Wetland	Natural Cliffs		
Undulating	Wide Vale	Dry valley/sink holes	Quarry		
Gentle Slope	Valley -Wide Flat Bottom	Resurgence	Other mineral workings		
Rolling Lowland	- Narrow <u>w</u> flood plains	Ditches			
Low hills	- Narrow no flood plains	Drainage Channels	Local stone		
Scarp/cliffs	- Gorge/Ravine	Stream/River	- Walls		
		Ponds/Lakes	- buildings		
Dominant Landcover/Landscape Present at Location [P] /in view [M]					
Landcover	Veg. Type	Management	Settlement	Built/Design ed Env.	Boundary Treatments
Woodland	Conifer	Un-managed	Sporadic Houses/	Conservation Area	Hedges - informal /
<u>Grassland</u>	Broadleaved	Semi Natural	Farmsteads	Parkland/	managed
Ley / Permanent pasture/meadow	Coppice	Low input	Hamlet	Designed	Walls
Rough Grassland	Copse/Farm	Hill grazing	Estate Farmstead	Landscape	Fences
<u>Arable</u>	Woodland	Species rich	Village SML	(parks/garde ns)	Boundaries Ditches
Maize/Cereals	Hedgerow trees	Extensive managed	Pre-war dev		Parish
Moor/Heath	Game Cover	Intensive managed	Post-war dev		
Scrub	Biomass/Oiser	Other Intensive	Urban Edge		Domestic :
Marsh/wetland	pollards		Urban		- Walls
	Orchard				- Fencing
	Parkland Trees				- Hedges
Bog	Arboretum	Industrial			
	Non-Native	Urbanised			
Other	Planting				
	Other				

Infrastructure/development - Present or Nearby				Natural & Cultural Heritage	
Historic Infrastructure				Wildlife Interest	
Mineral Workings/Processing/Waste				Distinctive Habitat	
Highways / Railways				Historic Settlement	
- Minor Roads - Main Roads - Trunk dual carriageway - Major Highway features				Industrial Heritage	
Power Lines				Notable Houses/Folly's	
Solar				Tourist Attractions	
Wind				Cultural Locations/Associations	
Other					
Aesthetic & Perceptual					
Scale -	Intimate	Small	Medium	Large	Vast
Enclosure -	Tight	Enclosed	Medium	Open	Exposed
Diversity -	Uniform	Simple	Varied	Diverse	Complex
Texture -	Smooth	Textured	Varied/Mid	Rough	Very rough
Form -	Vertical	Very Steep	Sloping	Rolling	Horizontal
Line -	Straight	Angular	Curved	Sinuous	Erratic
Colour -	Monochrome	Muted	Nat. Blend	Colourful	Garish
Balance -	Harmonious	Balanced	Discordant	Chaotic	
Movement -	Dead	Still	Neutral	Calm	Busy
Pattern -	Random	Organised	Varied	Regular	Formal
Visual & Audible Tranquillity				Noise	Natural
Visual Intrusions			High Mod/High		
Modern Infrastructure			Moderate Mod/Low		
Dereliction			Low None		
Unsympathetic Development			Other tranquillity influences		

Visual Amenity/Sensitivity				
Open Panoramic Views	Immediate/Middle Distance			
Distant Landmarks/Reference Points	Intrusions/Clutter			
Distant Visual Intrusions	Harmonious Development			
Framed Views / Vistas	Inharmonious Development			
Rare Views / Secluded Landscapes	Mitigation Landscape			
	Popular Viewpoints			
	Recreational Access Views			
	Busy/High Volume Views			
Recreational Access/Activity				
Types & Ease of Access	+ _	Leisure & Tourism Influence		
Open Access Land		Traffic & Parking		
Multi-use Access Sustrans Routes		Visitor Numbers		
Long Distance Trails		Signage		
PROW Network		Noticeable Tourism Development		
Adventure Sports		Spectator Gatherings		
Recreational use of Land		Event Locations		
Condition & Initial Value Judgements				
	High	Medium	Low	Impoverished
Condition / Quality				
Unspoilt Semi natural				
Isolation / Remote character				
Scenic quality – Natural Interest/factors				
- Human Patterns/settled				
Heritage/Natural interest settings				
- Nature Reserves/Distinct habitat				
- Recognised Landscape type/character				
- Designed Landscapes – Parklands/Gardens				
- Conservation Areas/settings				
Condition Comments				

Valued Landscapes – General Observations			
Photo Collection – notes in field – scope to add photos / captions at review stage			