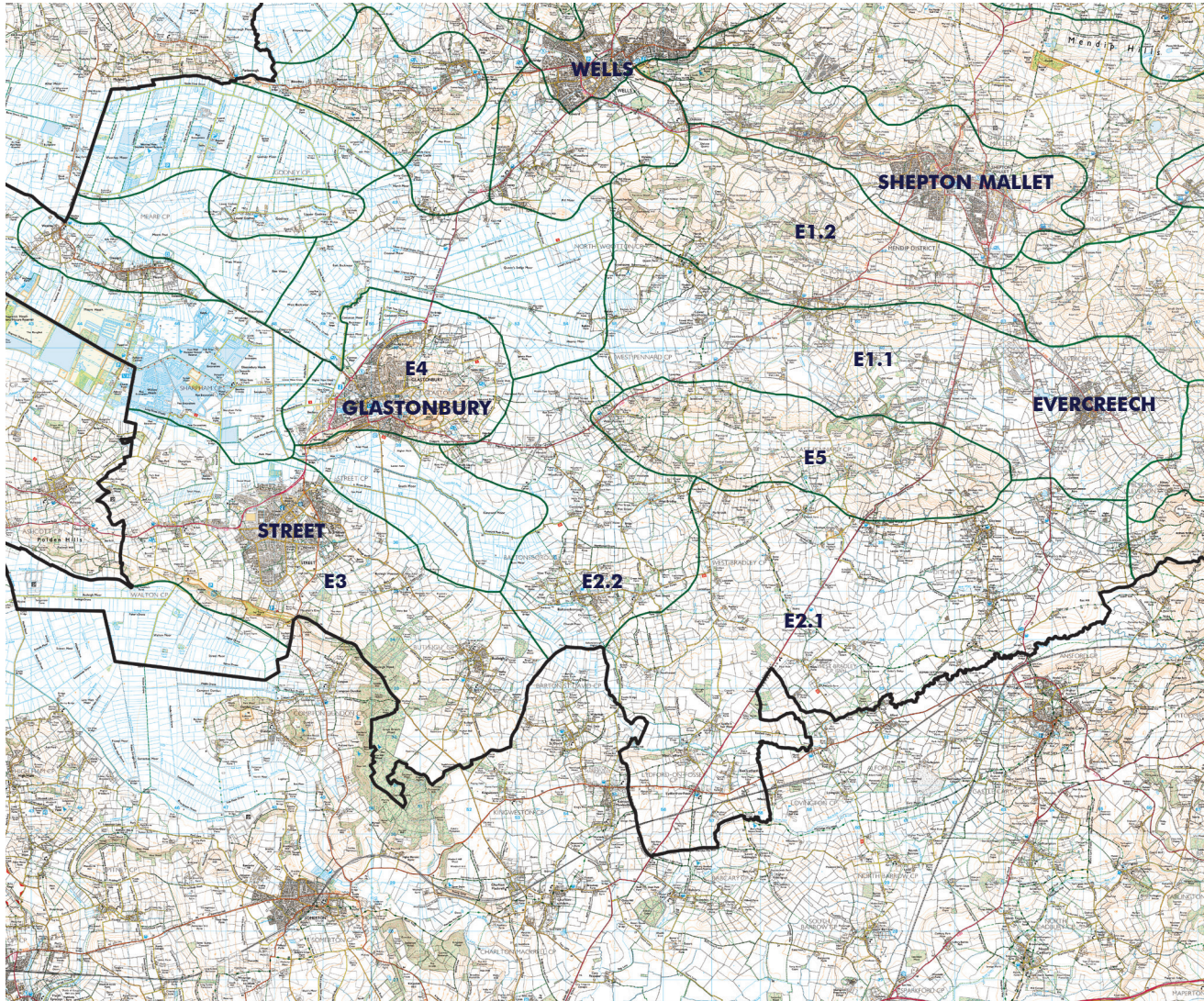


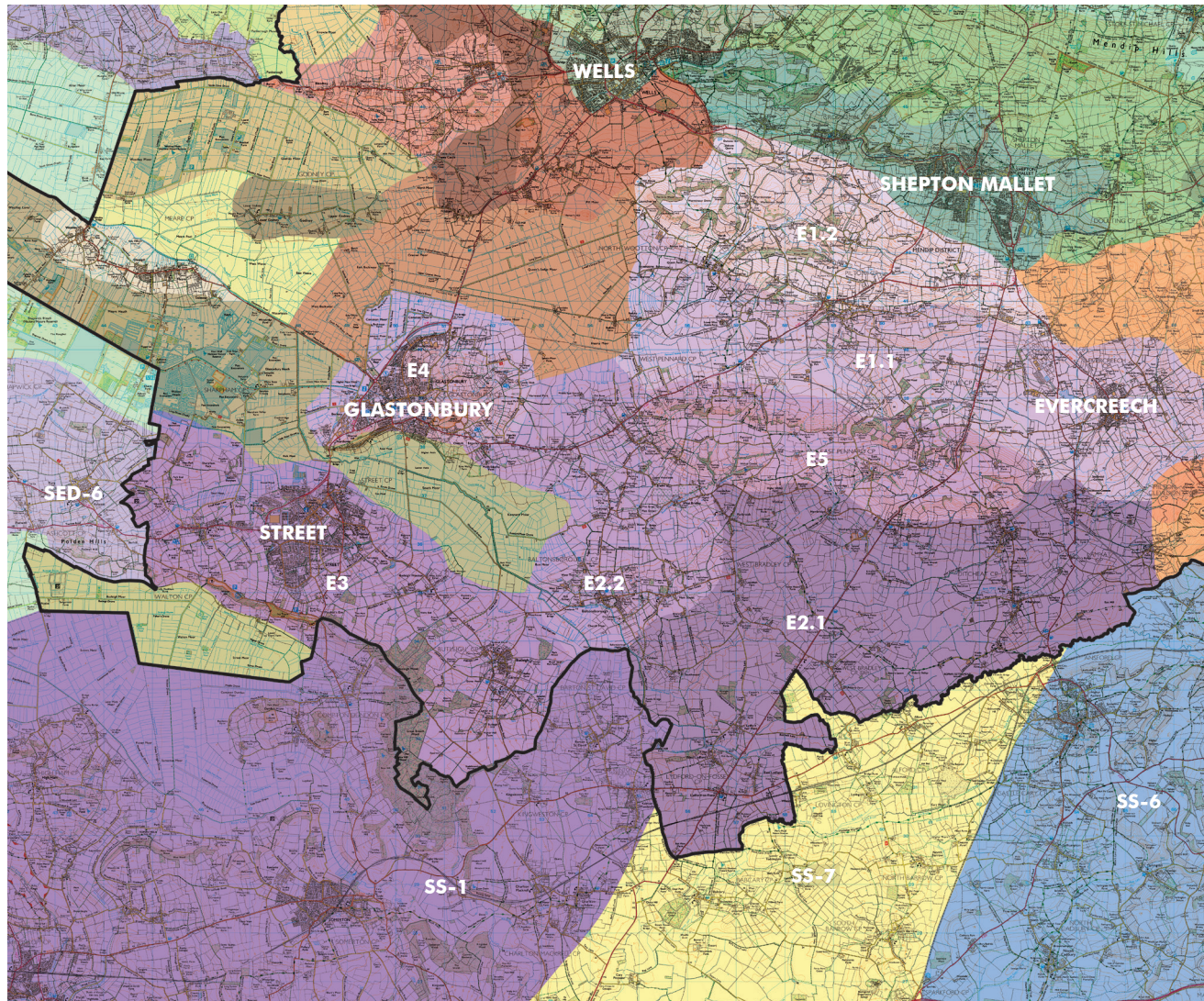
6.6 LIAS LOWLANDS & RIDGES



MENDIP CHARACTER AREAS

- E1** **Whitelake Valley**
 - E1.1** The Whitelake Valley
 - E1.2** The Pilton - Worminster Ridge
- E2** **Brue Valley**
 - E2.1** Brue Lowlands
 - E2.2** Baltonsborough Farmlands and Orchards
- E3** **Polden Ridge**
- E4** **Isle of Avalon**
- E5** **Pennard Ridge**

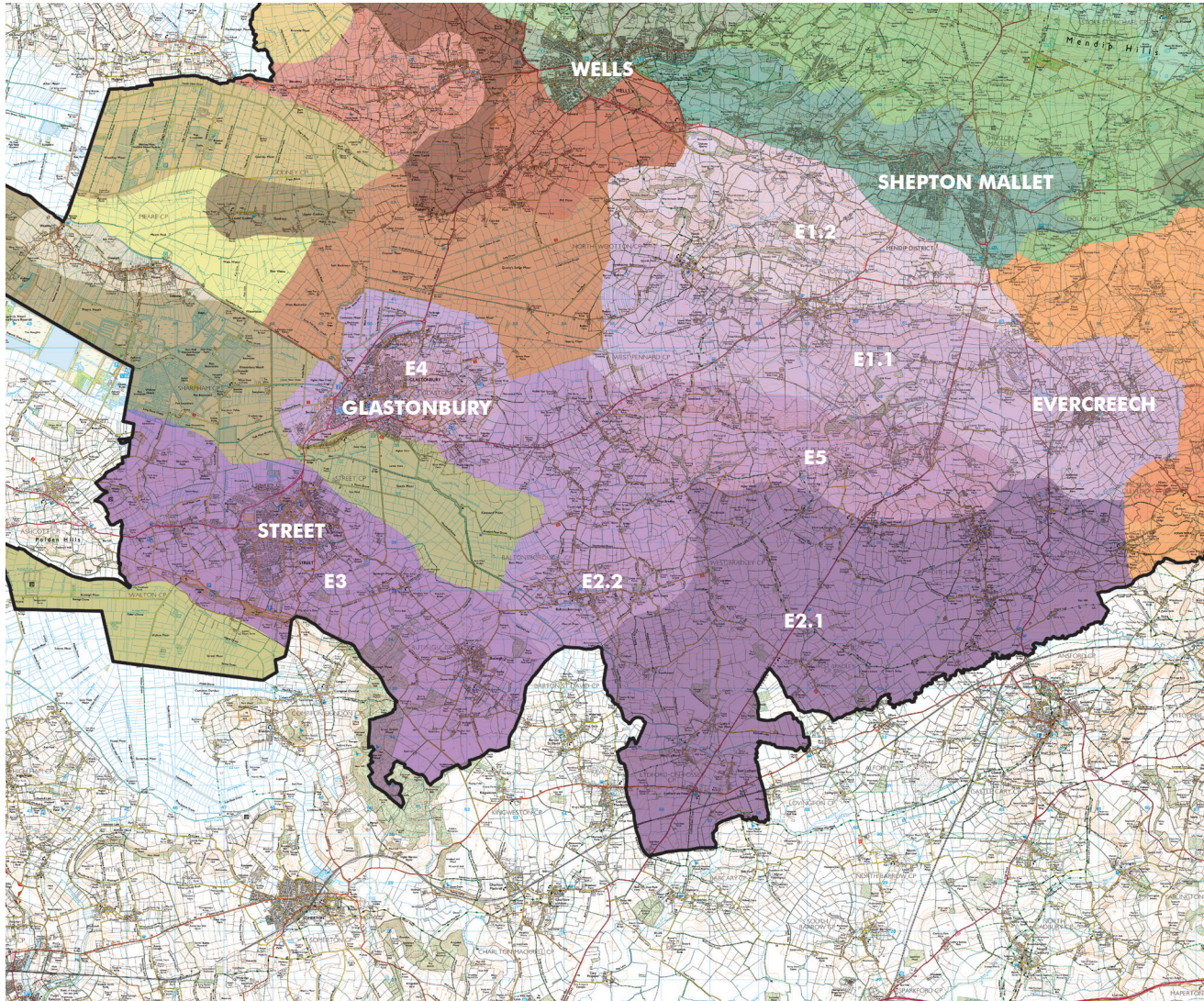
6.6 LIAS LOWLANDS & RIDGES



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 - E1.1** The Whitelake Valley
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6.6 LIAS LOWLANDS & RIDGES



MENDIP CHARACTER AREAS

- E1 Whitelake Valley**
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- E3** Polden Ridge
- E4** Isle of Avalon
- E5** Pennard Ridge

ADJACENT CHARACTER AREAS

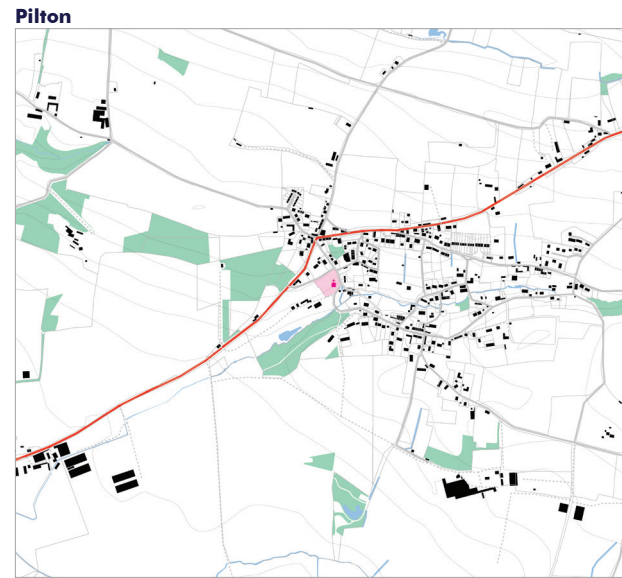
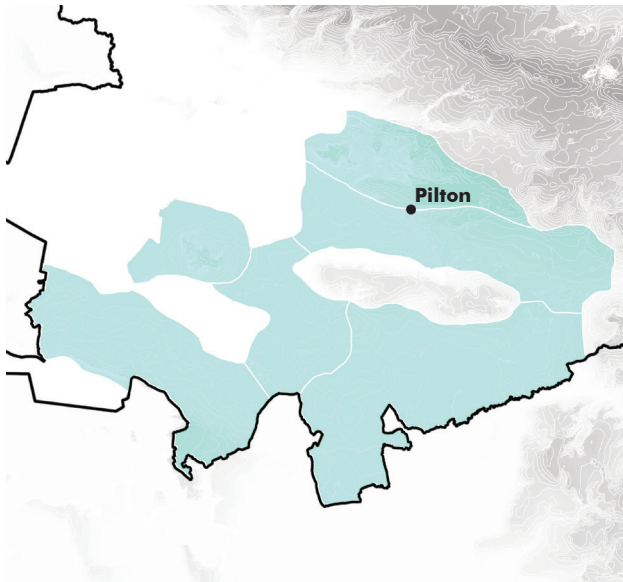
South Somerset

- SS-1** Five Head & High Ham Escarpments Valleys and Moors
- SS-6** Escarpments Ridges & Vales East of Yeovil
- SS-7** Central Plain, Moors & River Basins

Sedgemoor

- SED-6** Lowland Hills: Polden Hills

SETTLEMENTS IN LIAS LOWLAND & RIDGES



6.6 LIAS LOWLANDS AND RIDGES

6.6.1 Located between the upper headwater areas of the Batcombe Downs and the very low-lying moors these character areas form the middle section of the Whitelake and River Brue catchments. The northern side of this tract of landscape is defined by the high ground that separates these areas from the more enclosed Sheppey Valley (LCA A6). Much of the remaining landscape is gently rolling lowland with the two main valleys separated by the Pennard Ridge (LCA E5). The southern edges of these areas are defined for this study by the MDC boundary but there are frequent overlaps between areas extending beyond the district.

6.6.2 It is noted that the A37 Fosse Way and the and A361 cut right across this collection of landscapes providing transects of each LCA (generally heading north south). At the same time more winding routes of minor lanes and paths cross east west and provide a different slower appreciation of how the areas link together.

6.6.3 The area subdivides into seven distinct character areas:

The Whitelake Valley (E1)

- E1.1 - The Whitelake Valley - including Evercreech Setting
- E1.2 - The Pilton - Worminster Ridge

The Brue Valley (E2)

- E2.1 The Brue Lowlands
- E2.2 The Baltonsborough Farm

The Polden Ridge (E3)

Isle of Avalon (E4)

Pennard Ridge (E5)

E1.1 THE WHITELAKE VALLEY - INCLUDING EVERCREECH SETTING

6.6.4 The Whitelake Stream is contained within a wide valley for most of the length of this character area. The valley sides are formed by ridges of high ground rising by around 75 – 100 m above the level of the stream. To the north the Pilton - Worminster Ridge (LCA E.1.2) forms a continuous flank merging with the higher hills within the Downs and Combes landscape to the east (LCA D1). Most of the southern side of the valley is defined by the Pennard Ridge (LCA E5). This ridge extends east (up the valley) from West Pennard to Easton Hill where it drops down towards Evercreech. Where the ridge drops at the upper end of the valley this valley starts to merge with the next valley to the south (the upper section of the Brue Valley LCAE 2.1). Topographically Evercreech is at the top the Whitelake Valley but the village sits at a water shed with some streams draining away to the east to form the Whitelake Stream and others heading south to join the Alham. The valleys illustrate an example of stream or river capture (where the headwaters of one water course become diverted into another).

6.6.5 Around the watershed and in the lower valley cross section the landform is comprised of mainly shallow slopes; but some areas of steeper hillside do occur. The main Whitelake stream is a small water course fed by the side slopes and smaller side ditches.

6.6.6 This is a relatively open landscape of larger sized fields with a mix of dairy and arable production. Small areas of woodland exist low in the valley and along the line of the former railway (link between Glastonbury and Evercreech). The field boundaries include many close cut low hedges with

only occasional hedgerow trees. Some hedgerow removal has occurred to create larger arable field areas.

6.6.7 The area includes several main roads and other elements of infrastructure. The A37 is part of the Roman Fosse Way and is now a straight, fast, busy road (links Shepton and areas to the north to the A303). The A371 spurs off the A37 providing a link to Castle Cary/Wincanton and the A303. The B3081 links through Evercreech to Bruton. The A361 links Shepton to Glastonbury. The valley also includes an east west power transmission line with pylons and solar farm developments close to the showground.

6.6.8 The village of Evercreech once stood at the junction of two railways and the settlement developed with the links these provided. The village has expanded since the closure of the railway and includes areas of commercial development around the former railway yards (two sites; one in the village and a further commercial development is located at Evercreech Junction in LCA E2.1). The settlement pattern includes the smaller village hamlet areas of Stoney Stratton and Prestleigh.



View from Easton Hill near Evercreech

6.6.9 In addition the area includes the extensive permanent Bath and West show ground that lies between the A37 and A371. The site has accesses off both main roads but is generally well concealed from the external views. The lower part of the valley close to Pilton also includes the Glastonbury Festival site. This section of the valley includes some smaller field areas and more tree cover. The festival site includes some permanent infrastructure such as tracks and a section of the disused railway (Evercreech to Glastonbury Line).

6.6.10 In this area the presence of the main roads, showground and larger commercial developments near the village reduce the sense of tranquillity. Coupled with this in some areas the greater proportion of arable and heavily managed improved grasslands feel more intensely farmed and less interesting than other less heavily managed landscapes. Further west the lower parts of the valley include more varied landform and pockets of woodlands and smaller scale field pattern; providing greater interest. Subject to the festival activity these lower areas can be more tranquil and varied.

6.6.11 The network of PROW's varies across the LCA. Around village of Evercreech there is a pattern of connecting paths albeit these are in the less tranquil portion of the area. Further west in the lower valley there are a few minor interconnecting lanes but thinner pattern of footpaths. The Monarchs Way crosses the area to the west of Steanbow.

KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF :- LCA E1.1- THE WHITELAKE VALLEY INCLUDING EVERCREECH SETTING	
PHYSICAL/NATURAL CHARACTERISTICS	SETTLEMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE
• Wide open valley landform • Larger scale field patterns • Small farm woodlands	• Extensive village • Busy main roads • Employment sites • Showground & festival sites
LAND USE/MANAGEMENT/HUMAN INFLUENCES	PERCEIVED CHARACTERISTICS
• Intensive improved grassland & arable management • Former railway	• More heavily managed landscape • Busy road generating background
SPECIAL FEATURES – NOTE NOT ALL FEATURES DESIGNATED	
• Former railway • Showground & festival sites	
LANDMARKS, VIEWS AND VIEWPOINTS	
• Views from festival site towards Glastonbury Tor	

E1.2 - THE PILTON - WORMINSTER RIDGE

6.6.12 As the northern flank of the Whitelake Valley this LCA is formed of the high ground that separates this valley from the Sheppey Valley to the north (LCA A6). The land rises steeply from the gentle lower slopes up into a more complex rolling landform. This starts as an open undulating plateau close to Shepton Mallet and extends towards Dulcote. To the west the landform is subdivided by small valleys that also head west cutting down into the landform as short deep narrow valleys. Two of these contain tributaries of the Redlake stream which drop from East Compton joining together at the end of a small ridge and then flow down through North Wootton. A third stream again starts close to East Compton but on the south side of the main A361 road and flows down through the village of Pilton.

6.6.13 The high landform extends north to form a more continuous ridge from the outskirts of Shepton to above Croscombe. Two roads the Ridge Road and Old Wells Road take advantage of the high ground along the northern edge of the LCA. The area of Worminster Down and Laucherley Hill form one large hilltop at the western end of the ridgeline; the Down area is designated as a Special Landscape Feature Area. Beyond this to the west the land drops down into the bowl of landscape that contains the City of Wells (LCA A4.4 and G1).

6.6.14 With the rolling topography this is a varied landscape of hills and valleys which have in turn limited the scope for extensive agricultural improvement or intensive management. The landscape includes small areas of woodland cover and small irregular pasture fields. On the higher parts of the area on shallower

slopes or where the ridgelines level out into small plateaus some areas of arable production occur.

6.6.15 The plateau of Worminster Down is encircled by a fringe of woodland on the steep slopes below the hilltop. Another area of woodland occupies the steep slopes of Dulcote Hill providing a backdrop to the Dinder/Dulcote section of the Sheppey Valley (LCA A6)

6.6.16 Within the valleys the field areas are hedged and include a good coverage of hedgerow trees. On the larger scale arable farmland areas the field pattern is regular and larger, with fewer trees.

6.6.17 The small stream valleys include some areas of very steep slopes which preclude intensive grass management. These often appear as rougher less intently managed unimproved grassland. Some areas are identified as wildlife sites within the local plan. A few small orchards also exist within the valley areas. Reference to historic mapping from around the late 1800's indicates the extent of orchards around villages was previously much more extensive.

6.6.18 With the sheltered valleys and running streams the area includes a few settlements. The village of Pilton is the largest. A number of dwellings, a pub, what was the village store and the war memorial are clustered around a sharp bend in the A361 main road that extends through the village. These and other properties which front on to the road suffer from the heavy traffic flows. Away from the main road the village radiates out along a series of small side roads. Many of these are steep and winding and reveal many cottages tucked away between different areas of green space. The green spaces comprise of a mix of gardens, orchards, small paddocks and fields. Many sections of the lanes are hedged and the village is well treed.

6.6.19 North Wootton is very similar in character but much smaller than Pilton and is set well away from the main roads. A series of other smaller again hamlets and clusters of properties and farmsteads are located on the southern side of the ridge.

6.6.20 The A361 and a short section of the A37 cut across the area; these are busy strategic routes. A spur off the A361 at the top of the Pilton Hill forms a busy back road route into Shepton. On the high section of the ridge the A361 is a relatively straight and fast road. Within Pilton Village the steep gradient and lack of pavements on long sections create a hostile environment for non-vehicular road users.



Cockmill Lane, East Pennard

6.6.21 Aside the roads the area is relatively free from other elements of modern infrastructure. The disused Wells to Shepton Railway follows the north side of the ridge and the Dulcote Quarry falls within this area.

6.6.22 Away from the main roads and in particular within the side valley areas there are good opportunities to explore unspoilt and tranquil landscape. The area is well served by a network of minor lanes and PROW's. With the elevated routes of both roads and paths there are occasional long distance views across to the Pennard Ridge (LCA E5), down towards the Glastonbury Tor and Mendip scarp and Pen Hill mast.



Footpath near Wellesley Farm below Worminster Down

KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF :- LCA E1.2 THE PILTON - WORMINSTER RIDGE	
PHYSICAL/NATURAL CHARACTERISTICS	SETTLEMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE
- Varied landform and land cover ranging from open ridgetops to small deep valleys. - Mix of arable and dairy farming with varied intensity of management. - Areas of small orchards (reflecting much greater historic extent)	- Village of Pilton varies between heavily trafficked main road frontage & dispersed historic development in more secluded valley - Main roads
LAND USE/MANAGEMENT/HUMAN INFLUENCES	PERCEIVED CHARACTERISTICS
Varied levels of management	Varies between areas close to main roads with limited tranquility & intensely managed farmland into areas of more unspoilt tranquil & isolated character
SPECIAL FEATURES – NOTE NOT ALL FEATURES DESIGNATED	
- Worminster Down & Launcherley Hill (SLF) - Dulcote Hill Woodland (SLF) - Orchards	
LANDMARKS, VIEWS AND VIEWPOINTS	
Extensive views from elevated ridge areas	

E2 THE BRUE VALLEY

E2.1 THE BRUE LOWLANDS

6.6.23 The Brue Valley is a shallow wide vale of landscape extending south from the Pennard Ridge (LCA E5). The River Brue forms the district boundary from close to Bruton (in South Somerset DC area) down to East Lydford. The River Alham flows through Batcombe (in LCA D2) and is fed by other small streams from Stoney Stratton and near Evercreech (in LCA E1.1). The Alham and Brue join at Alford but at West Lydford the water course is divided again by a large weir and mill stream. The water courses re-join together again at Tootle Bridge. Downstream of Tootle Bridge the river becomes contained by flood banks and the landscape is lower lying (as described in LCA E2.2).

6.6.24 The gentle shallow slope of the lower valley within this LCA is contained by the contrasting steeper slopes of the Pennard Ridge. To the east the landform rises more sharply into the ridge and downland landscape around Lamyatt and Milton Clevedon. The water courses fall with a modest gradient from around 50 m AOD down to around 15 m AOD at Tootle Bridge (over around 12.5 km). (Although a shallow gradient this is much steeper than the downstream section within the Moors landscape where the River Brue falls from 15 m to sea level at the coast some 30 km away.) The rivers have a gently meandering course across the low-lying farmland. Within this area the Brue has a noticeable flood plain. At West Lydford the evidence of the how the river is prone to flooding is provided by the High Street road bridge which incorporates a line of small flood arches in the upper section of the bridge to allow water to flow over the road in high water conditions (the bridge

is Grade II Listed). Nearby river drops via the weir into a much deeper channel (the weir is understood to be a medieval structure).

6.6.25 The area contains occasional small blocks of woodland and areas of commercial orchards. The orchards include a mix of small scale blocks of older trees and some much larger areas of more recently planted young stock trees.

6.6.26 The farmed landscape is a mix of pasture, hay and silage and some arable production. The fields are laid out as modest to large scale regular pattern with low close cut hedges. There is a limited cover of hedgerow trees often concentrated along the watercourses. There are also areas with good groups of free standing field trees (such as at Hornblotton - reference back to historic mapping does not suggest these as parkland estates).

6.6.27 The area includes a few small settlements such as Ditcheat, Alhampton, Lydford-on-Fosse and East and West Lydford, Lottisham and Parbrook. The majority of these are historic small villages or hamlets with small scale cottages most focused around a parish church. Elsewhere there are occasional farmsteads or clusters of individual properties. Hornblotton is another very small group of farms and houses; clustered around a village hall; the village church is located separately well away from the main grouping (the building is grade I listed).

6.6.28 The area includes the A37 Fosse Way and the A371 link to Castle Cary. A large scale commercial development area sits within the LCA at Evercreech Junction (the former junction and sidings of the two rail lines between Shepton and Glastonbury).

6.6.29 With open virtually flat topography, the local main roads and managed agriculture there are few areas where a deep level of tranquillity can be found. The area is strongly rural but also an extensively managed landscape. With this and some areas of long views, interest of the river and tree cover the landscape condition is variable.

6.6.30 The local network of PROW's provides some access across the landscape but with the main roads this is to a degree compartmentalised into individual blocks of landscape. The area includes a section of the Monarch's Way Long Distance footpath and the Sustrans Route (No. 26).



River Brue, Dunstan's Dyke near Tootle Bridge



Footpath view near West Lydford

KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF :- LCA E2.1 THE BRUE LOWLANDS	
PHYSICAL/NATURAL CHARACTERISTICS	SETTLEMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE
• Wide vale landform • Shallow gradient river with weirs & flood plain • Orchards • Mixed farmland & mixed field patterns • Occasional parkland trees	• Small farming settlements
LAND USE/MANAGEMENT/HUMAN INFLUENCES	PERCEIVED CHARACTERISTICS
• Busy main road - Fosse Way	• Open shallow landform allows road noise to extend across area limiting tranquility. • Intense management creates areas of bland landscapes
SPECIAL FEATURES – NOTE NOT ALL FEATURES DESIGNATED	
• Alford Park Special Landscape Feature	
LANDMARKS, VIEWS AND VIEWPOINTS	
• Occasional long views – including distant views to the Tor	

E2.2 THE BALTONSBOROUGH FARMLANDS AND ORCHARDS

- 6.6.31 The River Brue flows out into the low-lying moors area close to Baltonsborough. The village is positioned on a low rise of land on the edge of the Kennard / Butt Moor area (LCA F3). The area of very slightly higher ground extends around to the north of the village and up to East Street and the edge of the Queens Sedge Moor to the north of the A361. This then includes the higher ground followed by the main road between West Pennard and the outskirts of Glastonbury.
- 6.6.32 The area is gently undulating and contrasts with the flatter landscape of the moors and the steeper slopes of the Pennard Ridge (LCA E5) and Glastonbury Tor (LCA E4). The land level generally varies between 10m and 40m AOD although Windmill Hill on the north east side of the village rises to 58m.
- 6.6.33 The River Brue is split with a weir at Baltonsborough Flights into the natural river and a mill stream. The mill stream flowing close to the village.
- 6.6.34 The area has very minimal woodland cover; limited to a few small copse features. The tree cover is predominantly orchards concentrated around the village of Baltonsborough and the Hamlets of West Bradley and Coxbridge. The wider landscape is mainly dairy with some maize production. The field areas are improved managed grasslands with few areas of low input or unimproved grazing. The field pattern is regular modest scale with a occasional hedgerow and free standing trees. Hedges are maintained as generally low cut stock proof boundaries.

6.6.35 The area includes elements of a settled landscape as the high ground above the moors. Baltonsborough is a very dispersed low-density village covering a sizeable area. Areas of orchards and fields exist within the overall outline of the village. Other small clusters of houses and farmsteads exist through the area. These are linked by small winding lanes and minor main roads.

6.6.36 Some development stretches along the A361 between West Pennard and the edge of Glastonbury with a mix of houses, farm buildings and small commercial premises. The large campus of Millfield School marks

the outer edge of Glastonbury. These elements are seen in the context of the approach to the town and with extensive scenic views to the Tor and out across the open landscapes to the north and south.

6.6.37 The area includes minimal large scale modern infrastructure. The A361 is a busy main road route and a large electricity substation sits next to the carriageway.

6.6.38 The area includes a scheduled ancient monument earthwork feature the Pointers Ball. The feature is a large rampart standing some 4m higher than



Backlane Drove Track near Baltonsborough

the surrounding landscape split by the A361. It is suggested the main road cuts through what may have at one time been a gateway in the feature.

6.6.39 The area includes a good selection of PROW routes. In particular these provide access along the river Brue and between parts of Baltonsborough. The paths thin out in places and those close to the A361 and are affected by traffic noise.

6.6.40 As a relatively flat landscape there are not always open long views over the landscape itself, but with the nearby Tor there are views to the landmark and the backdrop of adjoining higher ground.



View to the Tor from the Ponter's Ball Earthwork, Havyatt

KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF :- LCA E2.2 THE BALTONSBOROUGH FARMLANDS AND ORCHARDS	
PHYSICAL/NATURAL CHARACTERISTICS	SETTLEMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE
- Gently undulating - Sections of poldered river with occasional weirs & mill streams - Open farmland - Orchards	Villages on higher ground dispersed development pattern
LAND USE/MANAGEMENT/HUMAN INFLUENCES	PERCEIVED CHARACTERISTICS
Mixed intensely managed farmland	- Quiet landscape - Some large open expanses
SPECIAL FEATURES – NOTE NOT ALL FEATURES DESIGNATED	
- River Brue Polders, weirs and channels - Orchards	
LANDMARKS, VIEWS AND VIEWPOINTS	
Occasional views to the Tor	

E3 THE POLDEN RIDGE

- 6.6.41 The Polden Ridge or Hills is a narrow band of low hill tops that extend across the south western corner of the MDC district area. The feature extends beyond the administrative boundary in several places (at both ends and in places the ridge is spilt along it's highpoint between districts).
- 6.6.42 The ridge forms the southern side of the Brue Valley and forms a backdrop to the town of Street. From a low point close to the river near Baltonsborough at around 20m AOD the valley side rises initially as shallow slopes up through the village of Butleigh. To the south of this village the gradient becomes a little steeper up to the top ridge road at around 100m AOD. For a short distance the ridge road tracks the district boundary. The southern side of the ridge facing into South Somerset District is steeper. This asymmetric profile continues along to Walton Hill where the MDC boundary extends south to include the full cross section of the ridge (and an area of Butleigh Moor – LCA F4).
- 6.6.43 The northern slope drops down to the village of Walton and another small area of Moor (appropriately named Small Moor). Before the land rises again into a low hill to the east of Ashcott. Along the length of the north facing side of the ridge there are a few streams with small re-entrant valleys cut back into the ridge flank. This creates a gently undulating series of hillside slopes.
- 6.6.44 The area includes areas of woodland cover on the upper sections of the ridge. In places this is a narrow band on the steeper sections of slope. At Butleigh the woodland area expands out into a large continuous block that straddles the district boundary.

The areas include mixed plantations and a good proportion of ancient woodland. An ornamental Cedar avenue extends out from the woodland as part of the parkland landscape of Butleigh Court (the trees appear to be storm damaged and remain as veteran specimens with some replacement trees planted alongside).

- 6.6.45 In between the woodland areas on the ridgetop there are various areas of open grassland. These include the Ivy Thorne and Walton Hill areas which are National Trust land. At Ivy Thorne the ridge road runs alongside an area of open grazing common enclosed with trees. At Walton Hill an area of unimproved grassland surrounds a hilltop viewpoint (the field is full of large anthill mounds which are a particularly striking indication of low input management). On

the lower slopes the fields are generally more regular square shaped medium sized contained by hedges. The land use is predominantly dairy production with large areas of silage / hay-cropping and occasional areas of arable including maize.

- 6.6.46 On the high ground of the ridge a few traces of historic settlement are identified as scheduled ancient monuments. These include a Roman villa site near Marshalls Elm and medieval farmstead on the edge of Butleigh Wood. An earthwork is also protected within the woodland. A windmill tower on Walton dating from 1793 also stands out as an historic landmark feature on the hill (Grade II Listed). Another column feature the Admiral Hood Monument (Grade II* Listed), is located just outside the district boundary at the top of Collard Hill.



Walton Hill, view point off Cockrod Lane

- 6.6.47 Marshalls Elm is noted as the location of a civil war skirmish between a small Royalist patrol and 500 – 600 Parliamentary recruits. The steep rising ground of the route up from the Moors was used for a successful Royalist ambush.
- 6.6.48 Another notable listed building is Butleigh Court described as a country house in a landscaped park [EH Citation]. The landscaped parkland is not a registered historic landscape but is partially covered by a MDC Special Landscape Feature Area designation and in part a local wildlife designation. The SLF area includes the Cedar Walk avenue.
- 6.6.49 Much of the adjoining village area is also protected by Conservation Area status. The village is comprised of a series of minor lanes with a small quiet high street. A number of small green spaces including orchards and paddocks exist between groups of housing. The older cottages are built of the local lias limestone.
- 6.6.50 A second small village of Walton is laid out as a more linear settlement along the route of the A39. The main village street is dominated by the busy road that forms a link between Glastonbury and Street and the M5. Side streets on both sides of the main road lead into quieter lanes with some areas of housing in behind the main road frontage. The village also contains a few small orchard areas. The village sits on a shelf of level ground slightly above Small Moor with areas of playing fields on the plateau of flat ground to the north.
- 6.6.51 The village is separated from the nearby town of Street by a short distance of the A39 and open fields (protected local plan settlement gap policy). The character of the townscape and village development visible from the road are distinctly different although the physical separation is limited.
- 6.6.52 The town of Street is set in the middle of this character area. The settlement appears as predominantly low rise development with the rising high ground of the ridge to the south. On the eastern side rolling landform, tree cover and several school campus areas provide an irregular edge to the built up area. To the north the land falls away into the low-lying moor restricting views to the town. On the north western side of the town the very substantial shoe factory building is well contained from passing traffic running through the town and from views in from the nearest landscape to the north. In more distant views from Walton Hill the scale of the building is more evident. On the western and southern sides of the town varied ages and densities of development provide a degree of integration between the town and rural edge.
- 6.6.53 Outside of the built up area of Street the character area contains minimal infrastructure development. Two solar farms are located here; one near Butleigh is well contained by landform, woodland and roadside hedges; a second near Ashcott is visible from the A39 near Walton. The A39 while an important strategic route still retains the character of a rural main road for most of its length; there is a short section of dual carriageway with a signalised illuminated junction just on the edge of the town in the Walton gap. The local roads along and across the ridge provide local back road route to bypass street and connection to Somerton (in SSDC to the south).
- 6.6.54 The noise from the A39 is very evident within the landscape around Walton and background noise is noticeable in rural access the locations such as the trust land on the ridgetop. As such the area is not particularly tranquil although there are areas of attractive unspoilt countryside with significant views.
- 6.6.55 The area is served by a good network of rights of way and some small areas of open access National Trust land on the ridge. The trust land includes small visitor car parks and interpretive signage. The Walton Hill car park provides spectacular views from the ridge over the moors to the south and over Street to the Mendips to the north. These areas also include the windmill tower and the Hood Monument as landmarks and focal points for visits.
- 6.6.56 Unusually the Butleigh village war memorial is located outside of the village. As a poignant tribute to those from the village lost in the two world wars, the memorial is positioned in a spot where there are far reaching views over the Somerset landscape towards the Pennard Ridge and beyond. The memorial is Grade II Listed and has an extensive landscape setting.

KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF :- LCA E3 THE POLDEN RIDGE	
PHYSICAL/NATURAL CHARACTERISTICS	SETTLEMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE
- Narrow undulating ridge rising sharply out of surrounding lowland - Varied slopes generally steeper on south side - Extensive woodland blocks & other areas of smaller coverage - Mixed farming with varied field patterns	- Rural villages well related to topography - Historic buildings including Butleigh House with Parkland
LAND USE/MANAGEMENT/HUMAN INFLUENCES	PERCEIVED CHARACTERISTICS
- Areas of intensive improved grassland & arable production - Parkland elements – in decline	- Unspoilt quiet corner - Areas of tranquillity away from roads - Areas of expansive spaces
SPECIAL FEATURES – NOTE NOT ALL FEATURES DESIGNATED	
- Parkland including cedar avenue (SLF) - Ivythorne Hill extensive area of mixed woodland & unimproved grassland open access land managed by National Trust (SLF) - Landmarks (Walton Windmill & Admiral Hood Monument, & Butleigh War Memorial	
LANDMARKS, VIEWS AND VIEWPOINTS	
- View points at Walton Hill & landmarks above - Views back towards Mendip scarp with the Tor, Pen Hill & distant views to Cranmore and Alfred's Tower	

E4 ISLE OF AVALON

- 6.6.57 Glastonbury Tor hill is similar geologically and topography to the nearby Wookey Island hills (LCA G 1-3) and the Pennard Ridge (LCA E5). The landform reads as a distinct 'island' of high ground rising out of the low-lying levels, the feature rises to just under 160m AOD (from levels in the moors on the edge of the town at around 7m AOD). With the remains of the St Michael's Church perched on the very top the Tor stands out as an iconic landmark for the district (the Church remains as the tower only it set within a SAM and is Grade I listed).
- 6.6.58 The town is concentrated on the lower side slopes of the hill and wraps around nearly three sides of the hill. The built-up area extends around a lower section of Wearyall Hill and out to a modern section of bypass that links around the north west side of the town.
- 6.6.59 The Tor landform is more than the single conical hill. The slopes start on the north side of the town near the A39 bypass and Brindham Lane and the areas rise up to form a series of small plateaus or high spots at around 80 – 90m AOD. A residential estate lies over one of these and other spots lie outside to the east of the built-up area. Chalice Hill forms a small rise close to the historic town centre. The actual Tor Hill then stands as a single pointed peak; this part of the topography rises very steeply out of the lower sections of hill.
- 6.6.60 A few small stream/ditches sit in small valleys on the northern lower slopes these create a series of minor ridges and gullies. Within these hollows there are small pockets of woodland and orchards providing most of the tree cover on the lower slopes. On the southside areas of tree cover occur as orchards, hedge line and garden trees.

- 6.6.61 On the upper slopes the field areas are irregular small-scale pastures with additional grazing within the orchards. On the lower areas the fields are generally larger with hay and silage cropping and grazing. The field boundaries are hedged with a good coverage of hedgerow trees.
- 6.6.62 As noted above some areas of post war housing development exist on the lower hilltop to the north of the Tor but generally the edge of the built-up area adjoining the hill is well contained. In most instances the town edge presents as a gentle transition between open countryside and lanes fronted by more historic character buildings. The A361 passes through the edge of the town with significant impact on the relatively narrow streetscape. On the approach from the east the build-up into the town is subtle with the road climbing and winding between hedges and a few buildings. More continuous frontage of development starts close to the Chalice Well; where the road narrows between cottages and terraces of historic buildings and a high pavement.
- 6.6.63 The development on the lower slopes below the A361 and extending around to the Wearyall Hill is more predominantly post-war estates. With steep slopes in places the housing layouts have been built along the contours. The hillside location provides many of the properties with good views out over the low-lying moors to the south of the town. In reverse this area of development is prominent in views back from the landscape below (LCA F3).
- 6.6.64 More areas of modern housing extend out from the historic core to the north and north west sides of the town. These are generally contained by the line of the A39 Glastonbury bypass. The modern road follows the line of a former railway and is itself contained by

extensive maturing tree planting. Some elements of infrastructure and a mix of developments spans across the bypass onto the moors landscape below the town. More large scale commercial developments lie outside the line of the bypass to the north of Wearyall Hill with some historic mill and factory buildings from the former Moorlands Tannery.

- 6.6.65 The hill and Tor provide a dramatic landscape feature as a backdrop to the town. The combination of special landscape and the other aspects of Glastonbury's historic, ecclesiastical and spiritual interests make the town a major visitor destination. This is still maintained with the elements of modern development expanding out from the centre to the north and west. The setting of the Tor is enhanced by the open expanse of countryside on the gentle lower slopes and then the expanse of the surrounding moors landscapes (LCA F 2/3). The views out from the hill top overlook the town and range right across the district landscapes to the Mendip, Pennard and Polden Ridges and points beyond. The lack of significant visual intrusions into these views across such an expanse is notable. The experience of the Tor also importantly includes views from the lower slopes up the hill to see the Tower on the skyline from within the character area. The Tor is clearly a landmark for the wider district the significance of this is set out within section 5.10.
- 6.6.66 Wearyall Hill is also a popular viewpoint and designated Special Landscape Feature. Views are gained over the commercial developments next to the bypass across the moors to the Mendip Scarp to the north; and the Polden Hill Ridge to the south.
- 6.6.67 The Tor attracts a constant stream of visitors on a daily basis. There is no general visitor parking close

to the hilltop a shuttle bus operates out from the town through the lanes at peak times. The paths, lanes and hilltop can become quite busy at times. While the Tor provides an exceptional experience and expansive views it is not a particularly tranquil or remote setting.

6.6.68 On the lower slopes some lanes and footpaths link to provide circular walks out from the town but beyond the base of the hill the network thins out. Sustrans Route 3 linking Wells to Glastonbury follows the lanes around the north eastern side of the hill before entering the town. Much of the land around the Tor is owned by the National Trust, areas of the open fields although grazed are identified as open access land. The area also includes a traditional orchard in which the Trust promote Wassailing community events.

6.6.69 Much of the open landscape around the Tor extending down the hillside slopes is designated as a Special Landscape Feature Area within the MDC Local Plan.



View of the Tor from Brindham Lane

KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF :- LCA E4 ISLE OF AVALON	
PHYSICAL/NATURAL CHARACTERISTICS	SETTLEMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE
- Dramatic 'Island' topography of Tor hill rising up out of flat levels - Hill formed of series of high points with Tor standing as single much taller feature - Wearyall Hill forming second dramatic ridge - Small irregular paddocks & grazing fields - Orchards	- Historic town core tucked into lower slopes of Tor Hill - Areas of expanded post war housing filling out to bypass - Some other areas of post war developed as prominent hillside estates – intrusive in views back to built up area from Moors to the south.
LAND USE/MANAGEMENT/HUMAN INFLUENCES	PERCEIVED CHARACTERISTICS
- Land owned & managed as informal grasslands - Busy strategic roads pass through edges of built up area - Major focus of historic religious sites & buildings	Expansive exposed hilltop locations offering exhilarating experience even with popularity as busy tourism destination main Tor hill draws continuous activity – not tranquil or remote
SPECIAL FEATURES – NOTE NOT ALL FEATURES DESIGNATED	
- Iconic Tor (SAM & SLF) - Wearyall Hill (SLF) - Abbey ruins (SAM) - Community orchard	
LANDMARKS, VIEWS AND VIEWPOINTS	
- Views north to Mendip scarp inc Pen Hill 360 ° views from both Tor & Wearyall Hill	

E5 PENNARD RIDGE

- 6.6.70 The Pennard Ridge separates the Whitelake and Brue valley areas. The feature is not a continuous ridge as at the upper eastern end the valley areas merge with the Alham River/Brue valley taking some of the up stream catchment (refer to LCA E1.1). The ridge is aligned with the Glastonbury Tor hill as no doubt these were once joined as continuous plateau. The distinctive ridge rises at West Pennard and extends to Ditchat Hill (above Ditchat near Evercreech).
- 6.6.71 The land form rises from the base of the Whitelake valley at around 10m AOD up to the highpoints at around 110m – 120m AOD. The northern face of the ridge is characterised by steep wooded slopes extending as a reasonably continuous flank along most of the length. This is broken up with many small re-entrant valley slopes with streams occasionally contained in narrow gullies.
- 6.6.72 The southern ridge slopes are more gentle gradients which extend out as a more sinuous series of hillside slopes. Larger stream valleys cut back in on this side to form Withial Combe (north east of West Bradley) and other small gullies exist on this side. The combe includes a small waterfall on the course of the stream. The top of the ridge is a gently undulating plateau along most of its length.
- 6.6.73 The woodland cover is generally restricted to the upper northern slopes and the larger side valleys to the south. The pattern of tree cover follows the topography with most areas that can be cultivated being clear. Some of the northern woodland cover is identified as ancient woodland and/or as local plan wildlife sites. The two Withial Combe valleys are also Local Wildlife sites.
- 6.6.74 Several sections of the small single track lanes on the sides of the ridge drop into narrow gulley like cuttings (not clear if these are formed from centuries of use or were following natural cuts). These are steep and deeply enclosed with large banks of trees and ground flora.
- 6.6.75 The field pattern is a moderate scale with some larger (enlarged) fields on the plateau top and lower northern slopes. The fields are laid includes areas regular pattern but with the winding lanes and landform there are areas of more informal pattern. Many of the field hedges include hedgerow trees there are also occasional free standing trees within the fields.
- 6.6.76 The area is predominantly under dairy production with extensive areas of silage or hay cropping. Even areas of steeper slopes are managed as improved grassland with a consistent even monoculture grass sward. Many field areas appear to be reseeded pasture with rolled even ground surfaces. This includes a large part of the Glastonbury Festival site with several enlarged fields areas that have been reseeded after the intensive activity. At the eastern end of the ridge where landform provides a wider area of plateau there are larger areas of arable fields.
- 6.6.77 Around East Pennard the area includes an area of parkland landscape as the setting to Pennard House. The parkland areas lie on both sides of the lane through the hamlet with estate railing boundary to the road.
- 6.6.78 The character area also includes areas of orchards. Close to the East Pennard parkland these are laid out as an area extensive recent planting. At Pylle and West Pennard there are smaller more informal orchard areas.
- 6.6.79 The ridge is not extensively settled. The Village of West Pennard sits at the base of the slopes with some of the houses fronting onto the A361 main road. A main side road leads off the A361 to a larger cluster of houses and the school and church with a more quiet village street. The church (Grade I Listed) and school are located on a higher section of slope up from the village. The rest of the village is more dispersed along lanes to the north and south of the main road.
- 6.6.80 East Pennard, Little Pennard and Pylle are all smaller hamlets. Although both small settlements and not far apart both East Pennard and Pylle have significant church buildings (Grade I and II* respectively) set in amongst the local stone buildings.
- 6.6.81 The area is generally free from significant infrastructure. As mentioned above the A361 passes through West Pennard and has significant impact on the character of the village. To the east the A37 Fosse Way crosses over the ridge at Pye Hill. The ridge breaks the dead straight line of the Roman Road and modern day traffic has to climb sharply on the ascents and slow for the descents. The route generates background noise to the surrounding area.
- 6.6.82 The area is generally well served by an extensive network of PROW's that connect the village and hamlet areas and extend along and across the ridge. This thins out at the eastern end around the A37 where only a few paths and lanes cross the main road. The Monarch's Way long distance path crosses over the ridge north to south. The Withial Combe woodlands and deep valley are a wildlife trust nature reserve open to the public.

6.6.83 As noted part of the northern slopes fall within the festival site these areas provide some of the more dramatic unspoilt views out from the edges of the main events areas.

6.6.84 Aside from the festival periods the landscape is generally tranquil and offers a remote experience. Areas of the farmland are under higher degrees of productive management creating a more muted monoculture backdrop to the landscape. The area provides varying and changing views as its explored. At the eastern end the road noise and more intensive arable land management reduce the interest for recreational use but the area provides the roadscape setting and views for the busy A37. The climb and drop on the road is a notable break in the otherwise very straight fast route.



Down Lane

KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF :- LCA E5 PENNARD RIDGE	
PHYSICAL/NATURAL CHARACTERISTICS	SETTLEMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE
- Distinct ridge with asymmetric slopes - Steep northern slopes, shallower southern slopes - Areas of narrow plateau - Areas of small combe re-entrant valleys - Fringe of woodlands on north face including ancient - Smaller areas of woodland on southern side - Orchard areas - Deeply sunken steep hillside lanes	- Small village of West Pennard; dispersed settlement pattern disjointed due to heavy trafficked main road - Smaller hamlet settlements - Notable churches
LAND USE/MANAGEMENT/HUMAN INFLUENCES	PERCEIVED CHARACTERISTICS
- Intense areas of managed grassland & arable farming - Nature reserve areas within southern re-entrant valleys - Festival site – with regular reseeded grasslands & some permanent infrastructure - Parkland	- Outside of festival periods remote and tranquil areas - Elevated ridge feels isolated - Intimate sunken lanes - Areas of more intense managed landscape feel bland & uninviting
SPECIAL FEATURES – NOTE NOT ALL FEATURES DESIGNATED	
- Washing stones / waterfalls - Nature reserve area - Orchards - Listed churches	
LANDMARKS, VIEWS AND VIEWPOINTS	
Dramatic views open up occasionally from lanes views across	