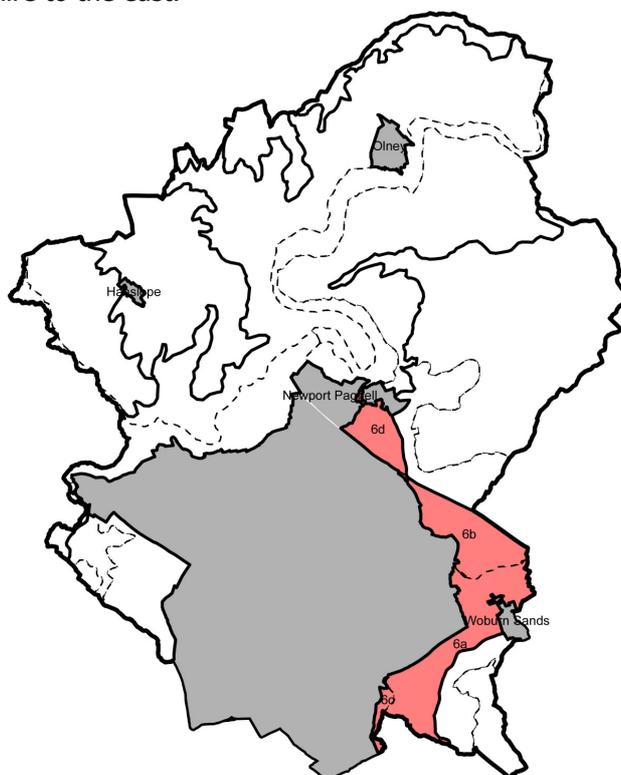


6. Milton Keynes Clayland Fringe

Summary Page

Location

The area is located to the south east and eastern perimeter of Milton Keynes City from Bletchley to Newport Pagnell. The authority boundary with Aylesbury Vale District lies to the south and Bedfordshire to the east.



Character Summary

The character area comprises a sweep of relatively low lying land that wraps around the south east and east of Milton Keynes. It contains a number of distinct sub areas as follows:

- Southern Clayland Fringe – an area of largely open arable land lying below the Brickhills Greensand Ridge, but also containing a mix of urban fringe uses and a more historically intact area around Wavendon
- Broughton Flat Claylands – an area between Milton Keynes to the west and the M1 to the east. The area is generally in poor condition and contains a number of urban fringe and industrial uses. The area is largely included as either an allocated expansion area or a strategic reserve for Milton Keynes
- Ouzel Valley South – a narrow corridor that runs adjacent to the edge of Bletchley comprising a linear park and a mix of recreational uses
- Ouzel Valley North – a triangle of land between the A509, M1 and Newport Pagnell centred on the River Ouzel floodplain.

Key Characteristics

6a Southern Clayland Fringe

- Low lying and gently undulating area of clayland
- Extensive and open views up to the wooded Brickhills Greensand Ridge
- Mixed arable, pasture and recreational land uses

Milton Keynes Landscape Character Assessment – Area 6 Clayland Fringes

- Smaller areas of pasture for horses and stabling
- Extensive views towards Milton Keynes City
- Mix of villages characters
- Wide range of urban fringe activities and uses including garden centres, allotments individual industrial premises, theatre, horsiculture etc.
- Limited woodland cover
- Few field trees except in the vicinity of Wavendon House
- Locally more intact historic landscape to east of Wavendon

6 b Broughton Flat Claylands

- Low lying flat and gently undulating claylands
- Large scale open arable fields
- Strong visual influences from industrial areas to the edge of Milton Keynes
- Visual and audible impact of the M1
- Poor condition of boundary hedges, vegetation and structure
- Number of industrial and storage sites with associated infrastructure

6c Ouzel Valley South

- Narrow floodplain in shallow valley bottom
- Grand Union canal
- Meandering river Ouzel
- Small scale landscape with mature trees and hedges
- Mixed urban fringe land uses including recreation, allotments
- Views to urban edge of Milton Keynes – Bletchley and extensive and open views up to the wooded Brickhills Greensand Ridge

6d Ouzel Valley North

- Meandering river corridor
- Shallow and flat valley landscape
- Medium to large open arable fields
- Areas of pasture closer to the river
- Riparain trees to river
- Limited settlement
- Fragmented access despite proximity to urban areas
- Recreational uses near Newport Pagnell

Distinctive features

6a Southern Clayland Fringe

- Smallholdings surrounded by leylandii hedges on Bow Brickhill Road.
- Wavendon House and parkland including Wavendon Golf Course
- Artificial lakes associates with former ceramic tile site
- Bletchley to Bedford railway line and level crossings
- Wavendon parish church
- Cross End Wavendon

6b Broughton Flat Claylands

- Earth bunds to transport storage site
- Site Equipment Demonstration (SED) showground
- Influence of Cranfield Technology Park on the skyline to the east
- M1 corridor

6c Ouzel Valley South

- Canal bridges
- Lombardy poplars following the canal
- Mills

6d Ouzel Valley North

- Caldecote Mill
- Deserted Medieval village and moated site at Caldecote Farm
- Iron Bridge Newport Pagnell

Assessment

Geology and Soils

The geology to the south west of Milton Keynes, within the Clayland Fringes, is predominantly clay based. The majority of the area can be slowly permeable and seasonally waterlogged, with loamy soils over clay and overlying river terrace drift or clay shale (Bishampton 2 and Oxpasture Association). To the east of the city, between Milton Keynes and the M1, soils can also be slowly permeable and seasonally waterlogged, but tend to be calcareous clayey soils over chalky till (Hanslope Association) or Jurassic and Cretaceous clay (Evesham 2). Along the rivers or streams running through the area, the geology has been formed on river alluvium with the overlying soils being stoneless clays and in places calcareous in nature with seasonally high groundwater (Fladbury 1 Association).

Topography

The character area generally slopes gently towards Milton Keynes but there are localised slopes that fall towards the River Ouzel. To the south east of Milton Keynes the slopes form the setting to the adjacent Brickhills Greensand Ridge and become more gradual toward the River Ouzel and the built up area of Milton Keynes. To the east of Milton Keynes, particularly in the Ouzel Valley North sub area, the floodplain of the Ouzel is almost flat.

Degree of Slope

The slopes at the base of the Greensand Ridge have an average fall of approximately 1 in 40. This becomes less noticeable toward the River Ouzel, with falls of as little as 1 in 100. In the Ouzel Valley North sub area the falls can even be less than 1 in 200.

Altitude Range

At the interface of the Clayland Fringes and the Brickhills Greensand Ridge, a maximum height of 100m AOD is obtained. The landform then drops to approximately 59m AOD close to junction 14 of the M1. The River Ouzel falls from just under 70m AOD south east of Milton Keynes city to approximately 53m AOD where it enters Newport Pagnell.

Hydrology

The River Ouzel, or the Lovat as it was formerly known, flows from the south west of the area adjacent to the Grand Union Canal. It meanders partly along the eastern boundary of Milton Keynes and then passes north through the urban landscapes of Milton Keynes in a corridor of open space associated with the river and the man made lakes at Caldecote and Willen, before passing under the M1 just to the north west of junction 14. It then passes through the flood meadows of the Ouzel Valley North sub area before joining the River Great Ouse at Newport Pagnell. The Ouzel is particularly prone to flooding at Newport Pagnell and in the vicinity of Fenny Stratford/south east Milton Keynes. Kingston Brook (often referred to incorrectly as Broughton Brook) drains the majority of the Broughton Claylands sub area and flows in a north westerly direction from upstream of Salford to join the Ouzel near Junction 14 of the M1.

Land cover and land use

The Milton Keynes Clayland Fringe contains a range of land uses in addition to agriculture reflecting its urban fringe location. The Southern Fringe sub area is predominantly an open agricultural landscape but also includes horsiculture, garden centres and allotments in proximity to Bow Brickhill, Wavendon and Woburn Sands. Broughton Claylands is also predominantly arable, with occasional horse paddocks but there are number of substantial industrial storage uses along with a few poplar plantations close to the M1 corridor. Most of this sub area is designated as an expansion area for Milton Keynes and will be subject to substantial change in the next decade. Land uses in the Ouzel Valley South include formal sports pitches, allotments, semi natural areas and the Grand Union Canal. The Ouzel Valley North contains areas of flood meadow, arable land and urban fringe uses including playing fields, allotments, mineral extraction and a traveller residential site near the M1.

Biodiversity

Much of the floodplain of the River Ouzel has been unimproved for at least 20 years and provides a valuable wildlife habitat. Environmental stewardship is helping to restore hedgerows and ponds in the area. Important wildlife species in the Ouzel Valley include heron, crayfish, Great Crested Newts and Barn Owls and there are a number of riparian willows and poplars. Hedgerow cover is variable being weaker in the Broughton Claylands and stronger in the other areas, however there are few hedgerow trees throughout apart from around Wavendon.

Historical and Cultural significance

The Roman Watling Street is a focus for archaeological interest which includes the Roman settlement of Magiovinium near the current Doobies Garden Centre. There is also evidence of Roman activity around Wavendon. The local area around Cross End and Wavendon House has a more intact historic character including parkland, mature tree lined hedges and sinuous narrow lanes. The most distinctive part of the Ouzel Valley North is directly along the river corridor near Caldecote Mill, where there are a number of ditches and braided channels. In this location there are a number of historic features including a deserted medieval village and moated site.

Field Pattern

The main historic field pattern in the Southern Clayland Fringe sub area is late 18th century parliamentary enclosures, Bow Brickhill being enclosed in 1790, with some localised 20th century prairie fields. Areas of ridge and furrow from a prior medieval field system survive on the pastures between the railway and Bow Brickhill village. Around Wavendon there are remnant areas of pre 18th century organic and regular enclosures. The Broughton Claylands sub area contrast comprises predominantly 20th century prairie fields which reflects the more open and degraded condition of the landscape and hedgerow structure. The Ouzel Valley South is strongly influenced by the watercourses of the meandering Ouzel and the Grand Union Canal. Historically there would have been more riverside pasture however the area is now predominantly a mosaic of recreational activities. The Ouzel Valley North contains a mix of pre 18th century regular enclosure and later parliamentary enclosure.

Transport Pattern

The Bedford the Bletchley railway, formerly the Oxford to Cambridge route which opened in 1846, runs through the area and creates a natural barrier to the south of Milton Keynes. The original alignment of Roman Watling Street and later A5 turnpike has now been diverted along a modern dual carriageway. The M1 to the east is a major national road corridor. Junction 14 which provides the central access point to Milton Keynes is subject to change incorporating an upgraded coachway facility. The character contains a number of other routes including the A509, A422 and A5130 along with other minor routes linking the city to the adjacent villages creating a busy character. IN contrast the Grand Union canal runs through the Ouzel Valley South sub area.

Settlement and Built form

The development of Woburn Sands as a spa resort in the 19th century was assisted by the opening of the railway and the settlement contains a number of fine Victorian and Edwardian villas. The main settlements in the character area, Wavendon and Bow Brickhill, are located within the Southern Clayland Fringe sub area. The historic pattern to the east of Wavendon is of a smaller scale and more intact, including Wavendon House with its parkland and Cross End. Elsewhere the settlement is mainly confined to isolated properties including mills and farms some of which have been converted to a range of uses e.g. offices, schools and hotel. A number of other buildings are in poor condition or derelict.

Useful Links

Woburn Sands <http://www.mkheritage.co.uk/wsc/docs/main-general.html>

Evaluation Page

Visual and Sensory perception

Being located around the fringe of the existing urban area of Milton Keynes there are a number of direct visual impacts from the adjacent urban areas including a number of large commercial buildings e.g. Kingston, Tilbrook and Newport Pagnell and areas of residential development e.g. Broughton, Browns Wood, Newport Pagnell and Water Eaton. The M1 corridor creates a major impact degrading the local landscape to the east mainly through the perpetual movement and noise of traffic and night time lighting. These factors, together with the open character of much of the agricultural land, create a visually poor image to the east of the city most notably around the Broughton Claylands. A significant but lesser impact is also caused by the A5 corridor to the west. There is considerable scope to enhance this landscape with the planned development of the city.

The presence of the elevated Brickhills Greensand Ridge to the south is a particularly important feature as seen from the Southern Clayland Fringe and the Ouzel Valley South but also from within the city and further a field e.g. from the Chicheley/Crawley Claylands. The open agricultural landscape of the Southern Clayland Fringe below the Brickhills Greensand Ridge provides an important foreground across which the strongly contrasting densely wooded slopes of the ridge can be clearly viewed and appreciated.

The Ouzel Valley North is separated from the main urban area by the M1 which forms a strong physical barrier. Other major roads including the A422 dual carriageway and A509 also make the area seem relatively fragmented and isolated. The area is proposed as an extension of the linear park network.

Recreational Opportunities

A number of recreational activities take place within the area. Some noisy activities e.g. the mini motorbikes are located close to the M1 at Pineham. Within the Southern Fringe Claylands there are a number of equestrian centres and stables along with Wavendon golf course which is largely set within the parkland of Wavendon House. The Linear Park associated within the Little Ouzel North provides major recreation concentration including a mix of canal boats, cycling, walking and associated allotments and playing fields with footpath links to Caldecotte Lake. The section of the Ouzel Valley North near Newport Pagnell includes e.g. Newport Pagnell Football club which has a number of pitches.

Evaluation Matrix

6a Southern Clayland Fringe

STRENGTH OF CHARACTER	WEAK	MODERATE	STRONG
Impact of landform* Impact of landcover* Historic pattern* Visibility from outside Sense of enclosure Tranquillity Distinctiveness/rarity	Insignificant Insignificant Insignificant Widely visible Open /exposed Discordant Frequent	Apparent Apparent Apparent Locally visible Partial Moderate Unusual	Dominant/Prominent Dominant/Prominent Dominant/Prominent Concealed Contained/confined Tranquil Unique/rare
Totals * Prime condition categories if tie	3	4	0
CONDITION	POOR	MODERATE	GOOD
Landcover Change Age Structure of Tree Cover* Extent of semi-natural habitat survival* Management of semi-natural habitats Survival of cultural pattern (fields and hedges) Impact of built development* Visual unity <i>* Prime condition categories if tie</i>	Widespread Overmature Relic Poor Declining/Relic High Incoherent	Localised Mature/Young Scattered Not obvious Interrupted Moderate Coherent	Insignificant Mixed Widespread/Linked Good Intact Low Unified
Totals * Prime robustness categories if tie	4	3	0
MATRIX			
	Good	Strengthen and reinforce	Conserve and strengthen
	Moderate	Improve and reinforce	Improve and conserve
	Poor	Reconstruct	Improve and restore
Condition			Restore condition to maintain character
	Weak	Moderate	Strong
	Strength of Character		

Landscape Strategy = Improve and Restore

Sensitivity

Ecological – Very Low

Cultural – Moderate

Visual – Moderate

Tranquillity – Very Low

Evaluation Matrix

6b Broughton Flat Claylands

STRENGTH OF CHARACTER	WEAK	MODERATE	STRONG
Impact of landform* Impact of landcover* Historic pattern* Visibility from outside Sense of enclosure Tranquillity Distinctiveness/rarity	Insignificant Insignificant Insignificant Widely visible Open/exposed Discordant Frequent	Apparent Apparent Apparent Locally visible Partial Moderate Unusual	Dominant/Prominent Dominant/ Prominent Dominant/Prominent Concealed Contained/confined Tranquil Unique/rare
Totals * Prime condition categories if tie	5	1	1
CONDITION	POOR	MODERATE	GOOD
Landcover Change Age Structure of Tree Cover* Extent of semi-natural habitat survival* Management of semi-natural habitats Survival of cultural pattern (fields and hedges) Impact of built development* Visual unity <i>* Prime condition categories if tie</i>	Widespread Overmature Relic Poor Declining/ Relic High Incoherent	Localised Mature/Young Scattered Not obvious Interrupted Moderate Coherent	Insignificant Mixed Widespread/Linked Good Intact Low Unified
Totals * Prime robustness categories if tie	4	3	0
MATRIX			
	Good	Strengthen and reinforce	Conserve and strengthen
	Moderate	Improve and reinforce	Improve and conserve
	Poor	Reconstruct	Improve and restore
			Safeguard and manage
			Conserve and restore
			Restore condition to maintain character
	Weak	Moderate	Strong
	Strength of Character		

Landscape Strategy = Reconstruct

Sensitivity

Ecological – Very Low

Cultural – Moderate

Visual – Low

Tranquillity – Very Low

Evaluation Matrix

6c Ouzel Valley South

STRENGTH OF CHARACTER	WEAK	MODERATE	STRONG	
Impact of landform* Impact of landcover* Historic pattern* Visibility from outside Sense of enclosure Tranquillity Distinctiveness/rarity	Insignificant Insignificant Insignificant Widely visible Open/exposed Discordant Frequent	Apparent Apparent Apparent Locally visible Partial Moderate Unusual	Dominant/Prominent Dominant/Prominent Dominant/Prominent Concealed Contained/confined Tranquil Unique/rare	
Totals * Prime condition categories if tie	2	5	0	
CONDITION	POOR	MODERATE	GOOD	
Landcover Change Age Structure of Tree Cover* Extent of semi-natural habitat survival* Management of semi-natural habitats Survival of cultural pattern (fields and hedges) Impact of built development* Visual unity <i>* Prime condition categories if tie</i>	Widespread Overmature Relic Poor Declining /Relic High Incoherent	Localised Mature/Young Scattered Not obvious Interrupted Moderate Coherent	Insignificant Mixed Widespread/Linked Good Intact Low Unified	
Totals * Prime robustness categories if tie	3	4	0	
MATRIX	Good	Strengthen and reinforce	Conserve and strengthen	Safeguard and manage
Condition	Moderate	Improve and reinforce	Improve and conserve	Conserve and restore
	Poor	Reconstruct	Improve and restore	Restore condition to maintain character
	Weak	Moderate	Strong	
	Strength of Character			

Landscape Strategy = Improve and Conserve

Sensitivity

Ecological – Moderate

Cultural – High

Visual – Low

Tranquillity – Very Low

Evaluation Matrix

6d Ouzel Valley North

STRENGTH OF CHARACTER	WEAK	MODERATE	STRONG
Impact of landform* Impact of landcover* Historic pattern* Visibility from outside Sense of enclosure Tranquillity Distinctiveness/rarity	Insignificant Insignificant Insignificant Widely visible Open /exposed Discordant Frequent	Apparent Apparent Apparent Locally visible Partial Moderate Unusual	Dominant/ Prominent Dominant/Prominent Dominant/Prominent Concealed Contained/confined Tranquil Unique/rare
Totals * Prime condition categories if tie	3	3	1
CONDITION	POOR	MODERATE	GOOD
Landcover Change Age Structure of Tree Cover* Extent of semi-natural habitat survival* Management of semi-natural habitats Survival of cultural pattern (fields and hedges) Impact of built development* Visual unity <i>* Prime condition categories if tie</i>	Widespread Overmature Relic Poor Declining/Relic High Incoherent	Localised Mature/Young Scattered Not obvious Interrupted Moderate Coherent	Insignificant Mixed Widespread/Linked Good Intact Low Unified
Totals * Prime robustness categories if tie	5	2	0
MATRIX			
	Good	Strengthen and reinforce	Conserve and strengthen
	Moderate	Improve and reinforce	Improve and conserve
	Poor	Reconstruct	Improve and restore
Condition			
	Weak	Moderate	Strong
	Strength of Character		

Landscape Strategy = Improve and Restore

Sensitivity

Ecological – Low

Cultural – Mainly Moderate with some High

Visual – Low

Tranquillity – Very Low

Guidelines

Countryside Management

Generally

- Promote the extended use of the area for informal recreation
- Promote indigenous plant species and use of local provenance wherever possible
- Ensure right of way access and signage from urban areas into the rural areas is clear and well maintained
- Encourage multi-functionality of rural land adjacent to urban areas through increased access arrangements and improved biodiversity
- Promote the creation of new woodland blocks and copses throughout the area to strengthen the character of the area providing visual relief from extensive arable fields and providing additional screening of existing and proposed development at Milton Keynes
- Promote hedgerow restoration and improvements throughout the area to provide visual and ecological links between existing and proposed woodland
- Promote traditional methods of hedgerow management including coppicing, laying and gapping up
- Encourage appropriate management of all drainage ditches to improve wildlife value, by improving water quality and establishing grass 'verges'
- Encourage the provision of uncropped or grass field margins to link areas of wildlife importance and /or existing and proposed rights of way

6 a Southern Clayland Fringe

- Promote use of former clay pits for informal recreation with increased access and biodiversity value
- Ensure that open views across the Southern Clayland Fringes to the Brickhills Greensand Ridge are retained
- Protect and enhance the historic areas of the area around Wavendon including Wavendon Park and Cross End

6 b Broughton Flat Claylands

- Develop a strategy to visually integrate the M1 into the landscape through additional woodland planting both offsite and through the management and use of additional onsite highway planting

6 c Ouzel Valley South

- Promote the continued management and enhancement of the River Ouzel corridor and access from the adjacent urban areas

6 d Ouzel Valley North

- Promote the development of the Ouzel Valley Linear Park between Willen and Newport Pagnell providing connectivity between existing populations and wider public access

Guidelines in relation to development

- Ensure that open views across the Southern Clayland Fringes to the Brickhills Greensand Ridge are retained
- Ensure the Kingston Brook corridor and proposed Bedford to Milton Keynes canal provide a new strategic Linear Park corridor providing access to, from and within the urban area
- Ensure earthworks adjacent to the M1 corridor is designed and planted to effectively screen residential properties but also so profiles are shaped and planted to harmonise with the local landscape character as seen from within city and from the rural areas east of the M1
- Prevent built development in the floodplain