Chapter 3: The Occurrence and Distribution of Individual Broad and Historic Landscape Character Types

For each kind of polygon she gave a colour, or a shade of a colour with or without stipple or hatching so each kind of polygon could be easily identified and she created one hundred and nine different kinds of polygons.

From ‘The Legend of Polygonia’ by Dr Romola Parish, Poet in Residence.

This chapter describes the occurrence and distribution of individual Broad Types and the narrower Historic Landscape Character Types identified across Oxfordshire.

3.1 Broad Types
3.2 Historic Landscape Character Types
3.1 Broad Types

3.1.1 Introduction

This chapter is to be used alongside the geospatial data which maps Broad Types within Oxfordshire. It gives an overview of the county’s character and indicates patterns of landscape use. It should be used to assess the significance of landscape character types in any given part of the county and should inform decision making by providing the background against which individuals can better understand the landscapes they are researching and considering.

This section covers each of the 15 Broad Types identified within Oxfordshire: Civic Amenities, Civil Provision, Commercial, Communication, Enclosure, Industry, Military, Orchards and Horticulture, Ornamental, Recreation, Rural Settlement, Unenclosed, Urban Settlement, Water and Valley Floor, and Woodland.

For each Broad Type, the following is recorded:

- Type
- Map Legend
- Map of Distribution
- Photograph
- Total Area of Oxfordshire covered by Type (and %)
- Number of Polygons (units of land) identified as this Type (and %)
- Average Polygon Size
- Occurrence
- Definition of the Broad Type
- Period of Origin
- HLC Types associated with this Broad Type
- Hectares covered by each associated HLC Type
- Description of the occurrence and distribution
- Historic Processes which have affected the development of this type
- Trajectory of Change
- Factors Influencing Change

This chapter opens with a summary of terminology and categories used.
### 3.1.2 Terminology and Categories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Area</th>
<th>The total area that this type covers in hectares, with the percentage of the total project area it covers in parentheses.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of Polygons</td>
<td>The number of polygons that make up this type, with the percentage of all the polygons in the project area in parentheses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Av. Polygon Size</td>
<td>Calculation based on the total area divided by the number of polygons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occurrence</td>
<td>Occurrence is assessed relative to other HLC types using the higher of the total area covered or the number of polygons. It is intended to show whether this is a commonplace or unusual element of the landscape: &lt;0.5% = Very rare, 0.5 - 2% = Rare, 2-5% = Occasional; 5-20% = Common, 20-50% = Abundant, &gt;50% = Dominant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Period</td>
<td>The broad landscape period(s) that extant examples of this type originate from: Prehistoric (pre 42 AD); Medieval (1066 – 1539); Post Medieval (1540 – 1900); Modern (1901 – 2016)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trajectory of Change</td>
<td>Graph: Frequency of Foundation. This shows how the frequency of the foundation of each type varies over time, using specific ‘snapshot’ dates of 1539, 1797, 1870, 1910, 1960, 2001. It will only return a record where the date span includes one of these dates. For example a record with a date range of 1914-1945 will not be captured. This uses current and previous types.</td>
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</tbody>
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3.1.3 Broad Type Map

The Distribution of Broad Types in Oxfordshire
3.1.4 Report on each Broad Type

What follows are individual reports for each Broad Type identified in Oxfordshire.
**Broad Type:** Civic Amenities

**Legend:**

- Reservoir
- Utilities
- Sewerage Treatment Works
- Waste Disposal

**Total Area:** 746.226 ha (0.3%)

**No. of Polygons:** 109 (0.68%)

**Av. Polygon Size:** 6.8 hectares

**Occurrence:** Rare

**Definition:** Areas of land which predominantly provide services relating to water capture, utilities (but not nuclear energy research), and waste management.

**Period:** Modern

**HLC Types:**
- Reservoir
- Utilities
- Sewerage Treatment Works
- Waste Disposal

*Didcot Power Station (Courtesy of Richard Oram)*
Description: Civic Amenities include facilities for water and waste capture, treatment and disposal, as well as infrastructure for the distribution of utilities. Given the size and the nature of these sites, they tend to be located in rural areas or on the edge of settlements. They are found across the county, with their distribution primarily linked to the position of settlements. Unlike elsewhere in the country, the reservoirs utilise manmade concrete foundations, such as Farmoor. This is likely to be due to the nature of the landscape, with few valleys and watercourses suitable for damming for the creation of reservoirs.

Historic Processes: These sites tend to date to the 20th century, although there are some examples from the later 19th century and Clattercote Reservoir which dates to 1778. As a type they usually relate to settlement and population growth in the 20th century.

Trajectory of Change: Freq. of Foundation (graph)

Factors Influencing Change: Increase in population and settlement size throughout the 20th century led to the foundation of a number of new facilities to provide water and manage utilities and waste. It appears that the foundation of these facilities has either slowed in the 21st century or is no longer affecting visible landscape character in the same way.
**Broad Type:** Civil Provision

- **Total Area:** 1862.34 ha (0.7%)
- **No. of Polygons:** 951 (5.91%)
- **Av. Polygon Size:** 2.0 hectares
- **Occurrence:** Common

**Definition:** Areas of land which predominantly relate to government or local authority services – education, health, legal, and government – religious and funerary facilities, and the University of Oxford.

**Period:** Medieval, Post Medieval, and Modern

**HLC Types:**
- Educational Facility
- Oxford College
- Health Care Facility
- Religious and Funerary
- Government Office and Civic Centre
- Immigration Detention Centre
- Police Station
- Prison
- Park and Ride
**Description:** Civil Provision includes health, religious and educational facilities, as well as those associated with law and governance. They are, therefore, usually associated with settlements and, whilst they are found across Oxfordshire, they are most common in the county towns and the city of Oxford. Exceptions to this include the Harwell Science and Innovation Centre in a rural location on the southern edge of the county. Educational facilities are far more common than other HLC Types within this category; in part this will reflect the dominance of sites associated with the University of Oxford within Oxford.

**Historic Processes:** This Broad Type originates in Oxfordshire with the founding of the oldest colleges of the University of Oxford and various religious communities from the 11th – 13th centuries. There is steady growth throughout the post-medieval period linked to population and settlement expansion. This accelerates in the 20th century with the establishment of modern health care, education, and judiciary facilities to service the increasing population.

**Trajectory of Change:** Frequency of Foundation (graph)

**Factors Influencing Change:** Population and settlement growth has been the main driving factor behind change. To some extent the expansion of the University of Oxford and the world-class hospitals has also played a role. Foundations of this type have slowed since the 20th century, but new sites are still being created.
Broad Type: Commercial

Legend:

Total Area: 821.90 ha (0.3%)

No. of Polygons: 372 (2.31%)

Av. Polygon Size: 2.2 hectares

Occurrence: Occasional

Definition: Areas of land which are predominantly used for retail or as offices.

Period: Modern

HLC Types:
Bank
Business Park
Fish Farm
Office/Commercial
Offices
Shops
Retail park
Shopping Centre
Road Side Service Centre

Lloyds Bank, Cornmarket, Oxford
**Description:** This type includes sites engaged in various activities such as Banks, Shops, large Retail Parks, and Business Parks. These sites are found across Oxfordshire, but tend to focus in or around settlements. There is a lack of these sites identified in the rural parts of the south-east and north-west of the county. Outside of Oxford only those sites larger than one hectare within settlements or two hectares within in rural areas have been digitised, so the apparent lack of these sites in these areas may reflect only the smaller size of these sites in this part of the county, not their absence. Business Parks are the most common type by area, reflecting their generally larger size and possibly the desirability of Oxfordshire to companies.

**Historic Processes:** Commercial sites tend to date to the 20th century onwards, relating to the expansion of settlement and population in this century and the development of out-of-town Retail Parks and Business Parks in the late 20th and early 21st century.

**Trajectory of Change:** Freq. of Foundation (graph)

**Factors Influencing Change:** The dramatic increase in the 20th century relates to rapid settlement expansion. This appears to continue into the 21st century as population and settlement continues to grow and the desire for out-of-town facilities increases. Levels of disposable income will also affect growth of retail in the county.
**Broad Type:** Communication

**Legend:**

**Total Area:** 3474.87 ha (1.3%)

**No. of Polygons:** 978 (6.07%)

**Av. Polygon Size:** 3.6 hectares

**Occurrence:** Common

**Definition:** An area of land which facilitates movement of people or information.

**Period:** Medieval, Post Medieval, Modern

**HLC Types:**
- Road
- Main Road
- Major Road Junction
- Bridge
- Motorways
- Bike Path/ bridleway
- Ridgeway
- Car Park (not Park and Ride)
- Rail transport sites
- Canals and Locks
- Airfield (Commercial)
- Telecommunications
Description: Communication includes areas which facilitate either the movement of people and goods or the transfer of data and information, such as the road, rail, air, and canal network, and sites used for telecommunications. Whilst these types are found in both rural and urban environments, there is a bias in this dataset towards Oxford as smaller roads were digitised by the Oxford HLC project than in the wider county, where only major A-roads and motorways were recorded. The absence of major communication sites in the south-east of the county coincides broadly with the Chilterns AONB, reflecting the rural nature of this part of Oxfordshire.

Historic Processes: In the city of Oxford the medieval and post-medieval network of streets and lanes which supported the growth of the settlement has been captured. Elsewhere in Oxfordshire the recorded communication routes tend to relate to the development of the railways and canals in the late 18th and the 19th century and the large-scale road building programmes of the later 20th century. Late 20th century and 21st century communication and telecommunication sites reflect expansion of digital services and the continued development of transport links.

Trajectory of Change: Freq. of Foundation (graph)

Factors Influencing Change: Initial development was led by the growth of Oxford in the medieval and post-medieval periods. These sites increased in the 19th century with the arrival of the railways and canals linked to industry. Throughout the 20th century these sites expanded rapidly due to population increase. Advancements in digital technology and increased mobility mean that these sites are still being created with some frequency, although their rate of foundation has slowed.
**Broad Type:** Enclosure

- **Total Area:** 191913 ha (73.8%)
- **No. of Polygons:** 6335 (39.4%)
- **Av. Polygon Size:** 30.3 hectares
- **Occurrence:** Dominant
- **Definition:** Areas of land that are identified as being used primarily for some form of agriculture.

**Period:** Medieval, Post-Medieval, Modern

**HLC Types:**
- Open Field System
- Ancient Enclosure
- Closes
- Crofts
- Ladder Field System
- Squatter Enclosure
- Assarted Enclosure
- Piecemeal Enclosure
- Planned Enclosure
- Prairie / Amalgamated Enclosure
- Reclaimed land
- Reorganised Enclosures
- Paddocks and Stables

[Image of map and prairie field]
**Description:** This is the predominant type in Oxfordshire, covering around 74% of the total area. Given the nature of this type, Enclosures are most commonly found in rural areas, but some have been recorded within the district of Oxford, on the rural-urban fringe. See discussion of the individual HLC Types for further information.

**Historic Processes:** Enclosure has taken place within Oxfordshire since the medieval period onwards, first as informal Piecemeal Enclosure of Open Fields, heath, and woodland. This process created frequently irregular fields, often with reverse s-shaped boundaries which followed the line of earlier medieval strips. In the 18th and 19th century a more formal process of enclosure took place, often directed by an Act of Parliament. This created more rectilinear fields which enclosed most of the remaining land and reorganised some of the earlier fields. In the mid-20th century, fields were reorganised again by the removal of boundaries to create large Amalgamated Enclosures suitable for modern farming requirements and techniques.

**Trajectory of Change:** Freq. of Foundation (graph)

![Graph showing frequency of foundation over time]

**Factors Influencing Change:** The development of fields relates to the intensification of farming to meet the requirements of expanding populations in the medieval through to the modern period. There is likely to have been some loss of enclosure due to settlement and industrial expansion and the creation of Woodland Plantations during the 20th and 21st centuries.
**Broad Type: Industry**

- **Total Area:** 3964.72 ha (1.5%)
- **No. of Polygons:** 324 (2%)
- **Av. Polygon Size:** 12.2 hectares
- **Occurrence:** Rare
- **Definition:** Areas of land identified as having a role in the extraction, processing, or manufacturing of materials and goods.
- **Period:** Post-Medieval, Modern
- **HLC Types:**
  - Processing Industry
  - Manufacturing
  - Mill / Mill Complex
  - Energy Industry
  - Extractive Works
  - Flooded Extractive pits
  - Depot
  - Industrial Estate
  - Scrap Yard
  - Timber Yard

**Legend:**

**Dry Sandford disused quarry**
**Description:** Industry includes sites involved in processing and production, extraction, and storage. The distribution of this type depends on the various HLC types, with manufacturing and storage tending to be found in and around settlements and extractive sites and processing often occurring in more rural environments. These sites are found across Oxfordshire but there is a focus of extractive sites on the gravel terraces associated with the rivers Thames and Windrush in West Oxfordshire. There is also a concentration of manufacturing sites in and around Oxford where there are some historic businesses – for example, Oxford University Press which produces the Oxford English Dictionary – and ready access to a large labour force.

**Historic Processes:** Industrial sites captured by this project commence with the medieval mills found on watercourses across the county. These are a minority and most of the industrial sites date to 19th and 20th centuries. Prominent 19th century industries include the blanket factories of Witney and the car factory, now the BMW Mini plant, in Oxford.

**Trajectory of Change:** Freq. of Foundation (graph)

**Factors Influencing Change:** Expansion of industry in the 19th century likely related to the Industrial Revolution and accounts for a steady rise in these sites. Rapid growth in the 20th century reflects expanding manufacturing and processing activity in the county and a need for aggregates to support development. This has slowed in the 21st century, but sites continue to be founded.
**Broad Type:** Military

**Legend:**

- Total Area: 1658.89 ha (0.6%)
- No. of Polygons: 28 (0.17%)
- Av. Polygon Size: 59.2 hectares
- Occurrence: Rare
- Definition: Areas of land which are primarily used by the armed forces or which were constructed with some form of defensive function.

**Period:** Prehistoric, Medieval, Modern

**HLC Types:**
- Castle
- Hillfort
- Defence Site
- Base
- Airfield
- Barracks
- Shooting Range
- Communications

**Oxford City Walls, New College** (Courtesy of Paul Booth)
Description: Military sites include those currently used by the armed forces and those sites which have, historically, had a defensive function – for example, Castles or town walls. Despite their rarity in Oxfordshire, the size and nature of sites characterised as Military means that they can have a high impact on the landscape. In particular, Military Airfields and their associated Bases, the dominant military type in the county, strongly affect landscape character and the communities surrounding them. These sites are found in various locations across the county, usually in rural areas – Castles and town walls, such as those in Oxford, being the exception.

Historic Processes: When considering historic processes, the Military Broad Type needs to be split into sites currently associated with the armed forces and sites which historically had a defensive function. The latter includes Hillforts, Castles, and town walls and these have some antiquity within the county, developing in the Iron Age and the medieval periods in relation to local and regional defensive requirements. Examples include Blewburton hillfort and the castle at Wallingford, which played a role in both the Anarchy of the 12th century and the English Civil War. The former group relate to the 20th century and the establishment of large Bases and Airfields for the armed forces during the World Wars and later during the Cold War. Some of these sites continue to be occupied and are of national importance to British military capabilities – particularly Brize Norton airfield.

Trajectory of Change: Freq. of Foundation (graph)

Factors Influencing Change: The development of these sites relates to changing military or defensive requirements. The modern sites are intrinsically linked to Britain’s military strategy and engagement with conflict and global peace-keeping missions. As they have in the past, these sites will depend on global stability. The 21st century has seen a drop in the foundation of these sites, with activity instead continuing on sites established in the 20th century.
**Broad Type:** Orchards and Horticulture

**Legend:**

- Total Area: 593.64 ha (0.2%)
- No. of Polygons: 182 (1.13%)
- Av. Polygon Size: 3.3 hectares
- Occurrence: Rare

**Definition:** Areas of land identified as some form of small-scale horticulture.

**Period:** Post-Medieval, Modern

**HLC Types:**
- Allotment
- Orchard
- Vineyard
- Nursery/Garden Centre
- Urban Garden

Private orchard in Great Milton
**Description:** Orchards and horticultural sites include Allotments, Orchards, Vineyards, Garden Centres, and Urban Gardens growing produce for market. Sites tend to be small, but occur with some frequency throughout Oxfordshire, with slightly fewer identified in the north of the county than elsewhere. There is a concentration of these sites, particularly Allotments, within the district of Oxford. These types tend to be associated with settlements and are usually found both within and on the edge of built-up areas.

**Historic Processes:** Most of these sites date to the 19th and 20th century and relate to small-scale horticulture by individuals or communities. Earlier examples of this type did exist in Oxfordshire, but have rarely been recorded by this project due to the nature of the 18th century maps used, which often did not record such small units of land. Allotments increased in popularity in the early-mid twentieth century in relation to the World Wars and have since seen a decline. Similarly, Orchards were a more common feature historically, and a number of the Oxfordshire examples date to the late 18th or 19th century. At this time most villages had their own Orchard. Some of these community Orchards survive, such as those at Wolvercote and Great Milton. Nurseries/Garden Centres and Vineyards tend to be 20th century phenomena.

**Trajectory of Change:** Freq. of Foundation (graph)

**Factors Influencing Change:** Popularity of these sites in the main relates to the need or desire of individuals and communities to grow their own food. Increases in the 20th century relate to the World Wars, but continued use throughout the 20th century and into the 21st century relates to increased concerns for sustainability, local produce, and environmental impact. Garden Centres are also increasing, reflecting desire for garden spaces and increased residential development.
**Broad Type:** Ornamental

**Legend:**

- **Total Area:** 7114.2 ha (2.7%)
- **No. of Polygons:** 208 (1.29%)
- **Av. Polygon Size:** 34.2 hectares
- **Occurrence:** Occasional

**Definition:** Areas of land identified as having a predominantly designed or landscaped aspect to them. Not including Country and Public Parks which are characterised as Recreational.

**Period:** Medieval, Post-Medieval, Modern

**HLC Types:**
- Parkland/Designed Landscape
- Deer Park
- Ornamental water body
- Domestic Garden

Ashdown House within its Park
Description: Ornamental landscapes are spread throughout Oxfordshire with a slight focus of large sites to the north-west of Oxford. There are relatively few sites within the district of Oxford itself. Predominantly made up of the HLC Type Parkland/Designed Landscape, these are the large areas visible on the distribution map. Sites of this type include Blenheim Park, Cornbury Park, and Middleton Park. These sites are often some of the oldest parts of the current landscape.

Historic Processes: The earliest evidence of ornamental landscapes in Oxfordshire comes from the medieval Deer Parks and hunting estates, some of which survive as the parks and gardens associated with later 16th – 18th century manor houses. Consequently, some of these parks have been extensively redesigned in the post-medieval period. Woodstock Park, for example was gifted to Lord Marlborough in the early 18th century and became part of the engineered and elaborate landscape of Blenheim Park. Modern contributions to ornamental landscapes comes in the form of land associated with new County Houses and hotels, designed landscapes associated with housing developments, and large Domestic Gardens.

Trajectory of Change: Freq. of Foundation (graph)

Factors Influencing Change: Historically this type has been dominated by the land of the country’s nobility and elite. It is now going into decline with land being appropriated for development or recreational purposes. Increased population and settlement may put pressure on parkland, but may also positively affect the creation of smaller-scale gardens and designed landscapes.
**Broad Type:** Recreation

**Legend:**

- Total Area: 4634.67 ha (1.8%)
- No. of Polygons: 480 (2.98%)
- Av. Polygon Size: 9.7 hectares
- Occurrence: Rare
- Definition: Areas identified as predominantly used for leisure or sporting activities.

**Period:** Modern

**HLC Types:**
- Sports
- Racing Sports
- Other Leisure
- Community Centre
- Country Park
- Public Park
- Golf Course
- Hunting Site
- Nature Reserve
- Managed Archaeological Site
**Description:** Recreation types include land used for sports, leisure, community activities, and land managed for its natural habitat or archaeological features. These types are found across Oxfordshire in both rural and urban locations. Playing fields and cricket or football grounds tend to be found in most small settlements, but large stadia, such as the Kassam in Oxford, are most frequently found on the edge of towns. Golf Courses, like Wychwood Golf Club near Lyneham, and the large equestrian facilities in the south of the county dominate land characterised as this type due to their size. Whilst land used for recreation is found throughout Oxfordshire, there does appear to a focus of this type in the city of Oxford. This may be due to the high number of Education Facilities with associated sports grounds, but may also reflect the provision of recreational facilities for the large urban population.

**Historic Processes:** The types of landscapes characterised as Recreation by this project tend to date to the 20th century. The exception being archaeological sites which will be much older, but which have often only been managed since the 19th or 20th century. For example the villa at North Leigh dates to the Roman period, but was only rediscovered by excavation in the 19th and 20th century and is now managed by English Heritage.

**Trajectory of Change:** Freq. of Foundation (graph)

**Factors Influencing Change:** The growth of this type appears to relate to 20th century population and settlement increase along with a rise in interest for these facilities, particularly in urban communities.
**Broad Type:** Rural Settlement

- **Total Area:** 15991.1 ha (6.1%)
- **No. of Polygons:** 2702 (16.8%)
- **Av. Polygon Size:** 5.9 hectares
- **Occurrence:** Common

**Definition:** An area of land identified as part of a village or hamlet, a country house, or a farmstead.

**Period:** Medieval, Post-Medieval, Modern

**HLC Types:**
- Village
- Hamlet
- Dwelling
- Hotel
- Caravan/Chalet/Camping
- Country House
- Farmstead

*Castle Farm, Denton*
**Description:** Rural settlement includes land within Villages and Hamlets along with isolated Farmsteads, Country Houses, and Dwellings larger than one hectare. This type is found throughout Oxfordshire and is characteristic of this largely rural county. There is a concentration of larger Villages in the area surrounding Oxford, including Kidlington and the joined villages of Cumnor and Botley. Conversely small Villages and Hamlets dot the rural landscapes such as those along the River Thames in the west of the valley – Radcot, Chimney, and Shifford, for example – and on the Cotswolds Plateau to the north – Epwell, Balscote, and Shutford being good examples.

**Historic Processes:** Rural settlements are often some of the oldest parts of the Oxfordshire landscape, with the cores of some Villages, like Standlake and Crawley, dating back to the 11th and 12th centuries and, in some cases even earlier. Some of these earlier settlements, like Chimney, have shrunk in size since the 18th century and now survive as only a cluster of houses and a farm. Farmsteads within these settlements, on the whole, tend to predate those in isolated positions. These farms located away from settlement, such as Lower Dornford Farm, are often associated with enclosure of common ground and open fields in the 18th and 19th century. Country Houses in Oxfordshire generally date to the post-medieval period, but some reuse older sites or older buildings such as Eynsham Mill House. The 20th century has seen expansion of Villages through housing developments and the creation of new education, health, and commercial sites.

**Trajectory of Change:** Freq. of Foundation (graph)

**Factors Influencing Change:** The growth (or decline) of the rural settlement type is closely linked to population change and agricultural regimes. Peaks in foundations of this type in the 20th century closely reflect population increase. This rate of growth appears to have slowed into the 21st century, but with the population still growing, pressure for more homes will continue. With settlement expansion there is the possibility that adjacent settlements will merge with each other and with towns.
**Broad Type:** Unenclosed Land

**Definition:** Areas of land which have remained largely unimproved or unenclosed over a period of time, including downland, riverine landscapes, common and meadows, and greens.

**Period:** Prehistoric, Medieval, Post Medieval

**Total Area:** 1927.64 ha (0.7%)

**No. of Polygons:** 161 (1%)

**Av. Polygon Size:** 12 hectares

**Occurrence:** Rare

**HLC Types:**
- Green
- Rough ground

Rough ground on White Horse Hill, near Uffington (Courtesy of Richard Oram)
**Description:** Unenclosed land includes Greens and Rough Ground – which comprises downland, commons, riverine landscapes, and meadows. In Oxfordshire, Rough Ground, unsurprisingly, covers more land than Greens. In part this reflects a bias towards these larger sites and a lack of greens captured by the project due to their small size. Across the county there are discrete concentrations of Unenclosed land: on the chalk of the North Wessex Downs and Chilterns scarp, beside the River Cherwell and the River Thames, and in the city of Oxford. These distributions are discussed in more detail in the case study which compares the occurrence of Unenclosed land in the county and in the city of Oxford.

**Historic Processes:** Downland in Oxfordshire, such as that surrounding the White Horse at Uffington, has predominantly been created by clearance of woodland in the prehistoric period. Whilst it may have been used for pastoral farming, its character remains open and little improved. Rights to common grazing in the county date back to at least Domesday, with the Freemen of Oxford and Wolvercote recorded as possessing rights on Port Meadow, which survives to the present day. The meadows recorded in Oxford may also date to the medieval period as they are owned and managed by some of the oldest Oxford Colleges, for example Christ Church Meadow which still grazes long-horned cattle in the centre of Oxford. Open riverine landscapes in their current form are likely to have been created as the surrounding land was enclosed for agricultural purposes in the medieval and post-medieval period. Greens are also likely to date to this period and relate to the development of rural settlements.

**Trajectory of Change:** Freq. of Foundation (graph)

**Factors Influencing Change:** The loss of unenclosed land to agriculture has had the biggest impact on this character type. As population and settlement pressure continues to grow, it is likely to increasingly affect this type. The designation of a number of these landscapes as SSSIs and AONBs, however, may protect them to some extent for future generations.
**Broad Type:** Urban Settlement

**Legend:**

**Total Area:** 6402.5 ha (2.5%)

**No. of Polygons:** 1254 (7.8%)

**Av. Polygon Size:** 5.1 hectares

**Occurrence:** Common

**Definition:** Areas of land with a predominantly populated or settled character found within towns and cities.

**Period:** Medieval, Post-Medieval, Modern

**HLC Types:**
- Historic Urban Core
- City
- Town
- Dwelling
- Hotel
- Public House
- Market
- Caravan/Camp/Chalet site

**Terraces around Wellington Square, Oxford**
Description: Urban settlement incorporates the historic core, residential buildings, and some commercial properties found within towns and cities. Towns are scattered across the county, with some gaps in their distribution in the south-east and north-west, and a concentration of small towns to the west. Towns include the market towns of Burford and Wallingford, the large regional towns of Banbury, Witney, and Abingdon, and the railway town of Didcot which grew from a village in the 19th century. The only city in Oxfordshire is Oxford, which represents the largest concentration of Urban Settlement types in the county.

Historic Processes: This project has focussed on the development of settlements from the medieval period, however, the origins of Oxford as a Saxon burh are relatively well known and the walls of this early settlement have affected the character of the later town. Oxford grew from its Saxon foundations and increased rapidly in the medieval period due to the foundation of a number of religious institutions and the University of Oxford. In the medieval and post-medieval period market towns developed across the county, often linked to the burgeoning wool trade. The coming of the railways in the 19th century also had an impact, with towns like Didcot developing from much smaller settlements. Oxford and a number of the historic towns have remained the focus of modern development, particularly where they are on advantageous communication routes – Banbury and the M40, for example – or can act as a base for commuters to Oxford.

Trajectory of Change: Freq. of Foundation (graph)

Factors Influencing Change: Rapid urban expansion in the 20th century reflects population growth, which is set to continue in the 21st century. Demand for more housing and associated facilities will lead to further settlement expansion and it is likely that some rural settlements will also be affected. Settlement infill will slow this process, but is likely to come at the expense of green spaces and historic cores.
**Broad Type:** Water and Valley Floor

**Legend:**

- **Total Area:** 1570.21 ha (0.6%)
- **No. of Polygons:** 225 (1.4%)
- **Av. Polygon Size:** 7 hectares
- **Occurrence:** Rare
- **Definition:** Areas of land which are either dominated by water or by agricultural features which use large quantities of water for their management (not including reservoirs or canals)
- **Period:** Prehistoric, Post-Medieval, Modern

**HLC Types:**
- River
- Fresh Water Body
- Water Meadow
- Watercress Beds

River Thames near Clifton Hampden
**Description:** Water and Valley Floor includes main Rivers and other Fresh Water Bodies, and Water Meadows and Watercress Beds. The main rivers of Oxfordshire form part of the catchment of the River Thames and include the Windrush, Evenlode, Cherwell, Glyme, Ock, and Thame. Fresh Water Bodies include the large medieval fish ponds at Shelswell and modern ponds created by the management of streams, like that near Epwell. Water Meadows are found beside the main rivers and tend to have been abandoned by the modern period, but their channels can often still be observed, such as those near Minster Lovell. Watercress Beds, like those at Letcombe Bassett, are the rarest form of this type.

**Historic Processes:** The river system in Oxfordshire has long influenced the development of the landscape; for example, the main towns generally developed at fording points on the main rivers. There are relatively few other Water or Valley Floor sites in the county. Of those identified, the earliest are medieval fish ponds and post-medieval Water Meadows. In the 20th century, increased water management has led to the creation of small ponds and drainage streams and Watercress Beds have developed for commercial purposes. There has also been some growth related to leisure.

**Trajectory of Change:**

![Graph showing frequency of foundation over time](image)

**Factors Influencing Change:** To some extent this type will remain stable as the main rivers continue to influence the landscape. However, management of these rivers and other fresh water bodies may change due to population increase or settlement expansion. The creation of ponds for aesthetic, leisure, or environmental reasons is likely to also continue, particularly in settlements.
**Broad Type:** Woodland

**Legend:**

**Total Area:** 17429.3 ha (6.7%)

**No. of Polygons:** 1793 (11.14%)

**Av. Polygon Size:** 9.7 hectares

**Occurrence:** Common

**Definition:** Areas of land which are predominantly covered with trees

**Period:** Prehistoric, Medieval, Post-Medieval, Modern

**HLC Types:**
- Ancient Woodland
- Secondary Woodland
- Plantation
- Woodland Pasture

The Grove, Ancient Woodland near Hardwick House
**Description:** Woodland is the second most common Broad Type in Oxfordshire and forms a major component of the county’s character. Woodland includes Ancient and Secondary Woodland, Plantations, and Woodland Pasture. The latter is quite rare within the county. Woodland is found across Oxfordshire, with clear concentrations in the Chiltern Hills and to the north-west of Oxford. Particularly large woods include the remnants of Wychwood Forest to the south-west of Charlbury, Wytham Wood to the north-west of Oxford, and Abbots Wood east of Woodcote.

**Historic Processes:** In the prehistoric period, as with most of Britain, Oxfordshire would have been extensively wooded. Into the medieval period and the start of the post-medieval period large swathes of woodland survived across Oxfordshire, particularly Wychwood Forest, which covered large parts of the north-western part of the county. This forest and the woods on the Chiltern Hills affected the development of fields and settlements in their respective regions and many place-names preserve the element –ley, indicating a woodland clearing – for example, Henley and Fawley to the south and Langley and Leafield in the west. Throughout the post-medieval and modern period, Ancient and Secondary Woodland has been cleared for agricultural use and settlement, for example, The Thrift at Freeland which was cleared in the 20th century for farming. In the 20th and 21st century there has been a surge in woodland as Plantations for commercial timber use have been established on agricultural land.

**Trajectory of Change:** Freq. of Foundation (graph)

**Factors Influencing Change:** Woodland types have been and continue to be negatively affected by agricultural and settlement expansion. However, some woodland types, namely Plantations, are increasing to fulfil demands for timber.
3.2 Historic Landscape Character Types

3.2.1 Introduction

This part of the chapter is to be used alongside the geospatial data which maps HLC Types within Oxfordshire. It gives a more detailed overview than the previous section on the county’s character and indicates patterns of landscape use. It should be used to assess the significance of landscape character types in any given part of the county and should inform decision making by providing the background against which individuals can better understand the landscapes they are researching and considering.

This section covers each of the 109 HLC Types identified within Oxfordshire.

For each HLC Type, the following is recorded:
- Type
- Map Legend
- Map of Distribution
- Photograph
- Total Area of Oxfordshire covered by Type (and %)
- Number of Polygons (units of land) identified as this Type (and %)
- Average Polygon Size
- Occurrence
- Definition of the HLC Type
- Period of Origin
- Description of the occurrence and distribution
- Trajectory of Change
- Factors Influencing Change
- Biodiversity Potential
- Archaeological Potential

This section opens with a summary of terminology and categories used.
### 3.2.2 Terminology and Categories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Area</strong></td>
<td>The total area that this type covers in hectares, with the percentage of the total project area it covers in parentheses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>No. of Polygons</strong></td>
<td>The number of polygons that make up this type, with the percentage of all the polygons in the project area in parentheses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Av. Polygon Size</strong></td>
<td>Calculation based on the total area divided by the number of polygons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Occurrence</strong></td>
<td>Occurrence is assessed relative to other HLC types using the higher of the total area covered or the number of polygons. It is intended to show whether this is a commonplace or unusual element of historic landscape: &lt;0.5% = Very rare, 0.5 - 2% = Rare, 2-5% = Occasional; 5-20% = Common, 20-50% = Abundant, &gt;50% = Dominant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Period</strong></td>
<td>The broad landscape period(s) that extant examples of this type originate from: Prehistoric (pre 42 AD); Medieval (1066 – 1539); Post Medieval (1540 – 1900); Modern (1901 – 2016)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Trajectory of Change** | A very general comparison of the change in the area of the county covered by the HLC Type between 1881 and 2010. This uses current and previous types. The trajectory and rate of change is indicated as: Increasing Rapidly (>50% or, where only recorded post 1881, ∞); Increasing Moderately (20-50%); Increasing Slowly (5-20%); Stable (<5% change); Declining slowly (-5 - -20%); Declining rapidly (-20 - -50%); Declining critically (> -50%)

**Graph:** Frequency of Foundation. This shows how the frequency of the foundation of each type varies over time, using specific ‘snapshot’ dates of 1539, 1797, 1870, 1910, 1960, 2001. It will only return a record where the date span includes one of these dates. For example a record with a date range of 1914-1945 will not be captured. This uses current and previous types.

| **Biodiversity Potential** | A simple indicator of the general biodiversity interest or potential of this HLC Type. Individual sites will vary and require specific assessment: High = typically species rich and varied; Medium = Moderate amount of species; Low = species poor |
| **Archaeological Potential** | A simple indicator of the general correlation of archaeological sites and historic buildings with this HLC Type. This indicator is more relevant for historic periods where buildings and monuments may be contemporary with the HLC Type; for earlier periods less correlation can be expected. Individual sites will vary and require specific assessment: High = unlikely for there to have been wholesale truncation or destruction of features; significant archaeological deposits or historic buildings may still survive; Medium = likely that archaeological deposits and historic buildings have been truncated or damaged, but some features may survive in isolated areas; Low = Likely that all potential for archaeological deposits and historic buildings has been removed within the area of disturbance. |
3.2.3 Historic Landscape Character Type Map

The Distribution of HLC Types in Oxfordshire
3.2.4 Report on each HLC Type

What follows are reports for each HLC Type identified in Oxfordshire. Some HLC Types have been considered alongside other similar types, for example Main Road and Major Junction.
HLC Type: Reservoir

Broad Type: Civic Amenities

Definition: A body of water which is recognisable as wholly or partly artificial. Used to collect and supply water for industrial and public use.

Period: Post-Medieval, Modern

Legend:

Total Area: 223.3 ha (0.09%)
No. of Polygons: 22 (0.14%)
Av. Polygon Size: 10.15 hectares
Occurrence: Very Rare

Farmoor Reservoir (©Google Maps)
Description: Reservoirs in Oxfordshire are artificially created, using man-made basins rather than natural landscape features, like narrow valley bottoms, to capture and store water. These tend to date to the 20th century, although Clattercote Reservoir was created in the late 18th century as part of the newly constructed canal network. Reservoirs are found sparsely across Oxfordshire. The largest is Farmoor Reservoir to the west of Oxford, which is filled by the River Thames and was completed in the 1970s. The reservoir is also used for sailing, windsurfing, and fishing.

Trajectory of Change: 715.29% Increasing Rapidly, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

Factors Influencing Change: Reservoirs in Oxfordshire were created to feed the canal system and to supply water to growing populations. The latter expanded rapidly in the 20th century and led to the creation of large sites like Farmoor. Reservoirs are affected by population size and also an increased interest in water sports and recreational fishing.

Biodiversity Potential: High
There is a high potential for biodiversity with a variety of water life, aquatic birds, and plants found at these sites. Biodiversity is reduced by the man-made basins used in some instances, which reduce vegetation running down to the water’s edge.

Archaeological Potential: Low
Likely that all potential for archaeological deposits and historic buildings has been removed within the area of disturbance.
HLC Type: Utilities

Broad Type: Civic Amenities

Legend:

Total Area: 180 ha (0.07%)
No. of Polygons: 20 (0.12%)
Av. Polygon Size: 9 hectares
Occurrence: Very Rare

Definition: Buildings, sites and structures associated with energy and water production, storage and use. This type does not include the nuclear fusion site at Culham which is characterised as Industry – Energy.

Period: Modern

Didcot Power Station (Courtesy of Richard Oram)
Description: Utilities are found in sparse numbers across Oxfordshire, with a focus on the area in and around Oxford. Electrical substations are the most common type, but tend to be the smallest sites. There are also a number of water treatments sites, such as that at Swinford. Energy generation sites are the most rare, but given their size and height are usually the most visually dominant. The largest of this type in the county is Didcot power station, featuring a chimney which is one of the tallest buildings in England. The site includes a closed coal and oil power plant and an operational natural gas power plant. Other energy generation sites include a small number of windfarms, such as Westmill Farm near Watchfield. These sites are often found on the urban-rural fringe or within settlements.

Trajectory of Change: 8870.8% Increasing Rapidly, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

Factors Influencing Change: The rapid increase in these types in the 20th century relates to population growth and increasing demands for energy. The reduced frequency of foundations in the 21st century may reflect the development of technology which has a lower impact on the landscape, but also reflects the continued use of older sites.

Biodiversity Potential: Low
Some sites may include areas of rough ground which will encourage biodiversity, but in general, the built and industrial nature of these sites will lead to a low potential for biodiversity.

Archaeological Potential: Low
Likely that all potential for archaeological deposits and historic buildings has been removed within the area of disturbance.
**HLC Type:** Sewerage Treatment Works

**Broad Type:** Civic Amenities

**Legend:**

- **Total Area:** 213.49 ha (0.08%)
- **No. of Polygons:** 57 (0.35%)
- **Av. Polygon Size:** 3.75 hectares
- **Occurrence:** Very Rare

**Definition:** An area in which local sewage is filtered and purified in large rectangular or circular tanks.

**Period:** Modern

Sewerage Treatment Works, north of Woodstock

(© Google Maps)
**Description:** Sewage Treatment Works are widespread, often on the edge of towns and villages. By their nature, most also tend to be located close to a natural water source. In Oxfordshire, the majority of these sites date from the mid-20th century, although there are a few earlier examples, such as the works on the eastern edge of Thame which were established in the first decades of the 20th century.

**Trajectory of Change:** Increasing Rapidly, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

**Factors Influencing Change:** Sewage Works saw a dramatic increase in the 20th century relating to population growth and a resultant need for modern utilities. The number of foundations has decreased in the 21st century due to the continuity of older sites and, possibly, the development of new sites which are smaller and which have less of an impact on the landscape and would, therefore, not have been captured by this project.

**Biodiversity Potential:** Low-Medium
Sewage works are often sited within a small parcel of rough ground which may encourage biodiversity. The tanks themselves will offer only low potential.

**Archaeological Potential:** Low
Likely that all potential for archaeological deposits and historic buildings has been removed within the area of disturbance.
HLC Type: Waste Disposal

Broad Type: Civic Amenities

Legend:

Total Area: 129.41 ha (0.05%)
No. of Polygons: 10 (0.06%)
Av. Polygon Size: 12.9 hectares
Occurrence: Very Rare

Definition: Buildings, sites, and structures associated with the disposal or recycling of domestic and industrial waste. This type includes landfill sites and large domestic rubbish dumps.

Period: Modern

Landfill Site, north of Didcot (© Google Maps)
Description: This type is very rare in Oxfordshire, but sites are found across the county. Sites comprise landfill sites, recycling centres, and digestion plants. They are usually found in rural locations and often infill old gravel extraction sites, such as the landfills south of Stanton Harcourt, or reuse old industrial working sites, such as the recycling centre near Oakley Wood Farm, east of Crowmarsh Gifford. The landfill sites tend to be the largest of this type, but once closed these have a relatively low impact on the landscape, often being turned to pasture.

Trajectory of Change: \(\infty\) Increasing Rapidly, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

Factors Influencing Change: The rapid increase of this type in the 20\(^{th}\) century relates to population growth. In the later 20\(^{th}\) century and 21\(^{st}\) century, increasing interest in recycling and energy-from-waste schemes has also led to the development of new sites.

Biodiversity Potential: Low
Biodiversity will depend on the type of site. Large plants related to recycling and anaerobic digestion, along with active landfill sites, are likely to have low potential – although some wildlife may be attracted to the latter to scavenge. Closed landfill sites may be put to grass which will increase biodiversity.

Archaeological Potential: Low
Likely that all potential for archaeological deposits and historic buildings has been removed within the area of disturbance.
**HLC Type:** Educational Facility

**Broad Type:** Civil Provision

**Definition:** A building or area associated with teaching or learning. Includes: Schools, University sites, Art Galleries, Libraries, and Museums. This type does not include Oxford Colleges.

**Period:** Medieval, Post-Medieval, Modern

**Legend:**

- Total Area: 1388.1 ha (0.53%)
- No. of Polygons: 332 (2.06%)
- Av. Polygon Size: 4.18 hectares
- Occurrence: Occasional

18th Century Radcliffe Camera, Bodleian Library, Oxford
**Description:** There are a fairly large number of sites of this type found throughout Oxfordshire. They are mostly found within or on the edge of settlements and concentrate in the county’s towns and in Oxford. Harwell Science and Innovation Centre in the south of the county is an exception, lying on a large site in a predominantly rural location. The oldest sites of this type relate to the University of Oxford and include the Bodleian Library and the Divinity School, elements of which date back to the 15th century. Post-Medieval foundations include buildings relating to the university and a number of the county’s older schools, such as The Henry Box School in Witney and Radley College. The majority of Educational Facilities, however, date to the 20th century and primarily relate to the primary and/or secondary schools found in most settlements.

**Trajectory of Change:** 1768.1% Increasing Rapidly, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

**Factors Influencing Change:** This type is closely linked to rapid population increase in the 20th century and the demand for more student places. It is also likely to be related to investment in library and museum services in the 20th century. The frequency of new foundations has slowed in the late 20th century and into the 21st century.

**Biodiversity Potential:** Low
Generally, there is low potential for biodiversity in these predominantly urban sites. However, green areas associated with schools will promote some diversity of wildlife.

**Archaeological Potential:** Medium
Likely that archaeological deposits and historic buildings have been truncated or damaged, but some features may survive in isolated areas.
HLC Type: Oxford College

Broad Type: Civil Provision

Definition: Used in Oxford City only. Buildings and gardens associated with the colleges and permanent private halls of the University of Oxford.

Period: Medieval, Post-Medieval, Modern

Legend:

Total Area: 92.86 ha (0.04%)
No. of Polygons: 396 (2.46%)
Av. Polygon Size: 0.23 hectares
Occurrence: Occasional

Magdalen College, High Street, Oxford
**Description:** This type is only found within the city of Oxford as it relates to those buildings and gardens currently used for the education and housing of students by the colleges and permanent private halls of the University of Oxford. It does not include the land or other non-educational properties owned by the various colleges – such as Bagley Wood, primarily owned by St John’s College – which are found across the county. This type concentrates in the historic core of Oxford and makes up some of the city’s oldest extant buildings. All Souls, Balliol, and St Edmund Hall are just a few of the institutions which date to the 13th – 16th century and which survive today. The buildings and their often extensive grounds form part of the iconic image of Oxford city.

**Trajectory of Change:** Freq. of Foundation (graph)

![Graph showing frequency of foundation over time]

**Factors Influencing Change:** The development of the University of Oxford has led to the increase of this type since the Medieval period. The 20th and 21st centuries have seen renewed expansion, linked partly to the increasing number of people attending higher education institutions across the country.

**Biodiversity Potential:** Low-Medium
The potential for biodiversity associated with the built environments within this type is low; however, the extensive grounds associated with many of these sites will encourage wildlife within these urban spaces.

**Archaeological Potential:** High
Unlikely for there to have been wholesale truncation or destruction of features; significant archaeological deposits or historic buildings may still survive.
**HLC Type:** Health Care Facility

**Broad Type:** Civil Provision

**Definition:** Buildings or complexes which provide assistance to help individuals maintain a satisfactory condition of mind and body, freedom from sickness, injury, and pain. Includes: hospitals and doctors' surgeries.

**Period:** Post-Medieval, Modern

**Legend:**

**Total Area:** 148.09 ha (0.06%)

**No. of Polygons:** 36 (0.22%)

**Av. Polygon Size:** 4.11 hectares

**Occurrence:** Very Rare

John Radcliffe Hospital, Oxford (© Google Maps)
**Description:** With the exception of the medieval leper hospital of St Leonard’s on the southern edge of Banbury, now a depot and sewage treatment works, the Health Care Facilities in Oxfordshire date to the Post-Medieval and Modern periods. Those sites large enough to be included in this project tend to be found in the towns and in Oxford, with those older foundations tending to be located in the latter. Hospitals tend to cover the largest area, including the John Radcliffe in Oxford and the Horton General Infirmary in Banbury. Smaller sites include the Sue Rider Care Home in Nettlebed and Cherwood House Nursing Home in Caversfield. These care and nursing facilities are often on the edge of smaller settlements and in more rural settings than other sites characterised by this type.

**Trajectory of Change:** 182% Increasing Rapidly, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1539</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1797</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1870</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Factors Influencing Change:** This type has been increasing rapidly due to population increase and an ageing population in the 20th and 21st century. The number of foundations has slowed in the later 20th and early 21st century, possibly due to expansion and reuse of existing sites.

**Biodiversity Potential:** Low - Medium

Biodiversity will be dependent on the type of Health Care Facility and its context. Large urban hospitals will have relatively low potential whereas more rural nursing and care homes can have substantial gardens to promote wellbeing of patients which will encourage greater biodiversity.

**Archaeological Potential:** Medium

Likely that archaeological deposits and historic buildings have been truncated or damaged, but some features may survive in isolated areas.
HLC Type: Religious and Funerary

Broad Type: Civil Provision

Definition: Buildings and grounds where devotees of a religion live or worship along with places where the dead are carefully and respectfully buried or cremated.

Period: Medieval, Post-Medieval, Modern

Legend:

Total Area: 120.6 ha (0.05%)

No. of Polygons: 84 (0.52%)

Av. Polygon Size: 1.44 hectares

Occurrence: Rare

Church of St Mary, Great Milton
**Description:** In general, across the county Religious buildings are under-represented by this project due to their small size. The exception to this is in the city of Oxford where a smaller digitisation size was used. In the rest of the county, parish churches, in particular, tend to have been characterised along with the historic core of the settlement in question. Those sites that have been captured are found across the county, with a slight lack identified in the north-west and a slight concentration in Oxford (for reasons already mentioned). The oldest extant sites recorded include the 11th century St Michael at the Northgate in Oxford, and the 12th century Studley Priory and Bruern Abbey (although some of the parish churches in the county are considerably older, e.g. St Matthew’s, Langford, built in the Saxon style in the 11th Century). Religious buildings tend to be found within or on the edge of settlements. The Funerary sites tend to be the largest of this type and are usually associated with the towns and Oxford. Examples include the mid-19th century Holywell Cemetery, Oxford and Southam Road Cemetery, Banbury.

**Trajectory of Change:** 18.4% Increasing Slowly, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

**Factors Influencing Change:** These are some of the oldest extant sites in Oxfordshire. Their development relates to increasing population and settlement as well as diversification in religious groups.

**Biodiversity Potential:** Low-Medium
The built aspects of these types are likely to have low biodiversity potential; whereas open spaces associated with these buildings and with funerary sites are likely to include a variety of planted species which may encourage different forms of wildlife.

**Archaeological Potential:** High
Unlikely for there to have been wholesale truncation or destruction of features; significant archaeological deposits or historic buildings may still survive.
**HLC Type:** Government Office and Civil Centre

**Broad Type:** Civil Provision

**Legend:**

**Total Area:** 36.38 ha (0.01%)  
**No. of Polygons:** 88 (0.55%)  
**Av. Polygon Size:** 0.41 hectares  
**Occurrence:** Rare  

**Definition:** A building or building complex where municipal offices and other public buildings are situated or the offices of a Government Department.

**Period:** Modern

Crown and County Court, Oxford
Description: With the exception of the Town Hall in Oxford, identified sites date to the 20th century. They are found within settlements, particularly the main towns of the county – Witney, Didcot, Wallingford, Abingdon, Bicester, Banbury – and there is a concentration in Oxford.

Trajectory of Change: \(\infty\) Increasing Rapidly, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

Factors Influencing Change: The rapid increase of these sites relates to the increase in population and the related rise in services required. There may also be a relationship between the observed increase and the expanding role of local government in the provision of various services during the 20th century.

Biodiversity Potential: Low
The built nature of these sites and their predominantly urban locations will result in a relatively low potential for biodiversity.

Archaeological Potential: Medium
Likely that archaeological deposits and historic buildings have been truncated or damaged, but some features may survive in isolated areas.
**HLC Type:** Immigration Detention Centre

**Broad Type:** Civil Provision

**Legend:**

- Total Area: 10.26 ha (0.004%)
- No. of Polygons: 1 (0.006%)
- Av. Polygon Size: 10.26 hectares
- Occurrence: Very Rare

**Definition:** A site where a period of detention is imposed on immigrants.

**Period:** Modern
**Description:** Only one Immigration Detention Centre has been identified by this project in Oxfordshire – Campsfield House, Kidlington. The centre originally developed as a youth detention centre, but was reopened as an Immigration Detention Centre in 1993.

**Trajectory of Change:** \( \infty \) Increasing Rapidly, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

**Factors Influencing Change:** This type depends entirely on immigration and asylum seeker rates.

**Biodiversity Potential:** Low
Details regarding biodiversity are uncertain as conditions on the site are not known. The predominantly built environment is likely to lead to relatively low biodiversity.

**Archaeological Potential:** Low
Likely that all potential for archaeological deposits and historic buildings has been removed within the area of disturbance.
**HLC Type:** Police Station

**Broad Type:** Civil Provision

**Legend:**

- Total Area: 5.47 ha (0.002%)
- No. of Polygons: 7 (0.04%)
- Av. Polygon Size: 0.78 hectares
- Occurrence: Very Rare

**Definition:** Building or buildings which make up a police station.

**Period:** Modern

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Faringdon Police Station (Courtesy of Richard Oram)
**Description:** Police Stations in Oxfordshire are very rare and are found within the main settlements across the county. Not all police stations have been captured by this report due to their small size. The oldest site identified is that in Chipping Norton which dates to the late 19th or early 20th century; the rest date to the 20th or 21st century.

**Trajectory of Change:** Increasing Rapidly, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

**Factors Influencing Change:** The increase in this type in the 20th century is linked to population and settlement expansion along with a focus on services provided for communities.

**Biodiversity Potential:** Low
The urban contexts and predominantly built environment of this type results in a low potential for biodiversity.

**Archaeological Potential:** Low
Likely that all potential for archaeological deposits and historic buildings has been removed within the area of disturbance.
**HLC Type:** Prison

**Broad Type:** Civil Provision

**Legend:**

- **Total Area:** 27.68 ha (0.01%)
- **No. of Polygons:** 2 (0.01%)
- **Av. Polygon Size:** 13.84 hectares
- **Occurrence:** Very Rare
- **Definition:** A facility where offenders are confined.
- **Period:** Modern

No Image
**Description:** Only two Prisons have been identified by this project in Oxfordshire – HMP Bullingdon and HMP Huntercombe. Both sites date to the 20th century, with Huntercombe being the older and originally founded as a World War II internment camp. Both sites lie in semi-rural locations, close to the edge of villages.

**Trajectory of Change:** Increasing Rapidly, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

**Factors Influencing Change:** The increase in these sites in the 20th century relates to population growth, crime rates, and sentencing practices.

**Biodiversity Potential:** Low
By its nature, this type consists almost entirely of buildings, with very little outdoor space. The potential for biodiversity is, therefore, low.

**Archaeological Potential:** Medium
Likely that archaeological deposits and historic buildings have been truncated or damaged, but some features may survive in isolated areas.
**HLC Type:** Park and Ride

**Broad Type:** Civil Provision

Legend:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Area:</th>
<th>32.95 ha (0.013%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of Polygons:</td>
<td>5 (0.03%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Av. Polygon Size:</td>
<td>6.59 hectares</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occurrence:</td>
<td>Very Rare</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Definition:** Car parks with connections to public transport that allow people wishing to travel into busy areas to leave their vehicles and transfer to public transport.

**Period:** Modern

Park and Ride bus, Queen Street, Oxford
Description: Park and Ride sites are very rare in Oxfordshire, with only 5 identified by this project. All of those identified lie on the edge of Oxford and provide public transport into the city centre. These date to the late 20th and early 21st century.

Trajectory of Change: Increasing Rapidly, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

Factors Influencing Change: This type is affected by 20th and 21st century growth in population and car ownership and the increasing desire by local governments to reduce congestion and pollution within urban areas.

Biodiversity Potential: Low
The large car parks at these sites do not support many varieties of wildlife. Whilst some landscaping may exist, this will have little effect on the low potential for biodiversity.

Archaeological Potential: Low
Likely that all potential for archaeological deposits and historic buildings has been removed within the area of disturbance.
**HLC Type:** Bank

**Broad Type:** Commercial

**Legend:**

- **Total Area:** 0.2 ha (<0.01%)
- **No. of Polygons:** 10 (0.06%)
- **Av. Polygon Size:** 0.02 hectares
- **Occurrence:** Very Rare

**Definition:** Used for Oxford City only. Buildings associated with the provision of financial services.

**Period:** Post-Medieval, Modern

Lloyd’s Bank, Cornmarket, Oxford
**Description:** This type has only been recorded in Oxford due to the different digitisation size used in the rest of the county. Only three Banks were identified – Lloyds, Barclays, and Natwest – all of which lie in the centre of Oxford, in the heart of its central business district. Parts of the Natwest site have been a bank since the 17th century, but in the main these sites date to the late 19th and early 20th century.

**Trajectory of Change:** Freq. of Foundation (graph)

![Graph showing frequency of foundation dates](image)

**Factors Influencing Change:** The expansion of settlement and the provision of services for an increasing population led to the growth of these sites in both the post-medieval and modern periods. New sites have developed in the later 20th century, but have not been captured by this project.

**Biodiversity Potential:** Low  
The urban context and built nature of these sites do not support a range of wildlife and the potential for biodiversity is, therefore, low.

**Archaeological Potential:** Low  
Likely that all potential for archaeological deposits and historic buildings has been removed within the area of disturbance.
**HLC Type:** Business Park

**Broad Type:** Commercial

**Legend:**

- **Total Area:** 540.93 ha (0.21%)
- **No. of Polygons:** 65 (0.40%)
- **Av. Polygon Size:** 8.32 hectares
- **Occurrence:** Very Rare

**Definition:** Area designed to accommodate several businesses, usually non-industrial, but normally not exclusively retail.

**Period:** Modern

---

Hardwick Farm Business Park between Banbury and the M40 Motorway (© Google Maps)
Description: Business Parks, whilst rare, are distributed across the county, with concentrations in and around the towns of Bicester, Banbury, and Abingdon, and towards the southern edge of Oxford. This type is usually found on the urban-rural fringe or in rural locations with good communications links. There is a lack of this type in the south-east of the county. This type dates to the 20th and 21st century, with Bampton Business Park being one of the earliest and South Hill Business Park, near Charlbury, being one of the latest. The parks are usually developed on green field sites.

Trajectory of Change: \(\infty\) Increasing Rapidly, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

Factors Influencing Change: The rapid increase of this type in the 20th century relates to population increase and the expansion and diversification of business, in part facilitated by improved telecommunications and transport links.

Biodiversity Potential: Low
The built nature of these large sites does not encourage biodiversity.

Archaeological Potential: Low
Likely that all potential for archaeological deposits and historic buildings has been removed within the area of disturbance.
**HLC Type:** Fish Farm

**Broad Type:** Commercial

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Legend:</strong></th>
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</table>
| ![Legend Image](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Total Area:</strong></th>
<th>7.3 ha (0.002%)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>No. of Polygons:</strong></td>
<td>1 (0.006%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Av. Polygon Size:</strong></td>
<td>7.3 hectares</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Occurrence:</strong></td>
<td>Very Rare</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Definition:** Areas characterised by the commercial cultivation of fish populations under controlled conditions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Period:</strong></th>
<th>Modern</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Fish Farm, Little Faringdon Mill (© Google Maps)
**Description:** Only one site of this type has been identified by this project within Oxfordshire – Lechlade Trout Farm. This site lies on the border with Gloucestershire, in the far west of the county and was established in the mid-late 20th century.

**Trajectory of Change:** Increasing Rapidly, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

**Factors Influencing Change:** Increased demands on food production and, particularly, local produce, has led to the growth of this type in the 20th century.

**Biodiversity Potential:** Medium
Fisheries promote a range of aquatic and other wildlife. Biodiversity is reduced when man-made tanks instead of ponds are used.

**Archaeological Potential:** Medium
Likely that archaeological deposits and historic buildings have been truncated or damaged, but some features may survive in isolated areas.
**HLC Type:** Office/Commercial

**Broad Type:** Commercial

Legend:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Area: 9.99 ha (0.004%)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of Polygons: 53 (0.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Av. Polygon Size: 0.19 hectares</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occurrence: Very Rare</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Definition:** Used for Oxford City only. Mixed use office and commercial space within the city of Oxford.

**Period:** Modern

Shops with Offices above on George Street, Oxford
Description: This type has only been recorded in the city of Oxford. With rare exception this type dates to the 20\textsuperscript{th} and 21\textsuperscript{st} century and combines commercial and office space within the same building. In Oxford this type tends to concentrate immediately to the west of the city centre, with the sites redeveloping brownfield sites or reusing older buildings. For example, the sites around Gloucester Green reuse land previously occupied first by the City Gaol and then by a cattle market.

Trajectory of Change: Freq. of Foundation (graph)

Factors Influencing Change: This type has expanded rapidly along with population expansion in the 20\textsuperscript{th} century and increased consumer demands. This type continues to grow in the 21\textsuperscript{st} century as older buildings and sites within urban areas are redeveloped.

Biodiversity Potential: Low
The generally urban context of these sites and their built nature results in low potential for biodiversity.

Archaeological Potential: Low
Likely that all potential for archaeological deposits and historic buildings has been removed within the area of disturbance.
Oxfordshire Historic Landscape Characterisation

**HLC Type:** Offices

**Broad Type:** Commercial

- **Total Area:** 51.17 ha (0.02%)
- **No. of Polygons:** 51 (0.32%)
- **Av. Polygon Size:** 1.0 hectare
- **Occurrence:** Very Rare

**Definition:** Used for Oxford City only. Groups of office units within the city of Oxford.

**Period:** Modern

Offices on Hythe Bridge Street, Oxford
**Description:** This type was only recorded in the city of Oxford due to the smaller digitisation size used by the Oxford HLC project. Within the city there are distinct clusters of Offices within the city centre and on the southern edge of the city, next to the ring road. These Offices tend to date to the 20th century, being built either on brownfield sites in the city centre or in fields on the city’s edge.

**Factors Influencing Change:** Population increase and rising demand for services and a range of businesses has led to a rise in this type in the 20th century. Settlement expansion has also played a role, but inner city sites exist and reuse older buildings or brownfield sites.

**Biodiversity Potential:** Low
The urban context and built environment of sites of this type does not support a range of biodiversity.

**Archaeological Potential:** Low
Likely that all potential for archaeological deposits and historic buildings has been removed within the area of disturbance.
**HLC Type:** Shops

**Broad Type:** Commercial

**Legend:**

- Total Area: 7.61 ha (0.003%)
- No. of Polygons: 168 (1.04%)
- Av. Polygon Size: 0.05 hectares
- Occurrence: Rare

**Definition:** Used in Oxford City only. This includes both modern purpose built retail units and those within existing medieval and post-medieval buildings.

**Period:** Post-Medieval, Modern

Shops on Cornmarket, Oxford
Description: Due to the smaller digitisation size required, this type has only been recorded in the city of Oxford. There is a large cluster of this type in the city centre, along Queen Street, Cornmarket Street, and High Street. These three streets form the main shopping district of Oxford. Other shops are recorded along the arterial roads leading out of the city centre – Woodstock Road, Walton Street, and Cowley Road, for example. A number of the shops in the city centre cluster date to the post-medieval period, but the majority have been created in the 20th and 21st century.

Trajectory of Change: Freq. of Foundation (graph)

Factors Influencing Change: Increases in this type relate to population expansion and increased disposable income and a desire for material goods.

Biodiversity Potential: Low
The urban context and built nature of sites of this type means that there is a low potential for biodiversity.

Archaeological Potential: Low
Likely that all potential for archaeological deposits and historic buildings has been removed within the area of disturbance.
**HLC Type:** Retail Park

**Broad Type:** Commercial

**Legend:**

- Total Area: 108.1 ha (0.04%)
- No. of Polygons: 3 (0.02%)
- Av. Polygon Size: 36.03 hectares
- Occurrence: Very Rare

**Definition:** Area used by a cluster of businesses primarily involved in the sale of goods, often at the edge of an urban area convenient for private transport.

**Period:** Modern

*Bicester Village Retail Park (© Google Maps)*
**Description:** This type is very rare in Oxfordshire and only three sites have been recorded by this project – one in Banbury, one in Bicester, and a small centre near Cassington selling commercial vehicles. These sites are found on the edge of settlements and close to major road junctions. Those in Banbury and Bicester incorporate large car parks, shops, restaurants, and some industrial facilities. This type dates to the 20th century.

**Trajectory of Change:** Increasing Rapidly, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

**Factors Influencing Change:** The development of this type relates to population increase and higher levels of disposable income, these lead to a greater demand for goods. Increased car ownership is also key as these sites are found outside of settlements and are accessible, in the main, by the major road network.

**Biodiversity Potential:** Low
Whilst there may be some green space on these sites, generally their built environment will encourage only a small range of biodiversity.

**Archaeological Potential:** Low
Likely that all potential for archaeological deposits and historic buildings has been removed within the area of disturbance.
**HLC Type:** Shopping Centre

**Broad Type:** Commercial

**Legend:**

- Total Area: 55.59 ha (0.02%)
- No. of Polygons: 17 (0.11%)
- Av. Polygon Size: 3.27 hectares
- Occurrence: Very Rare

**Definition:** Cluster of businesses primarily involved in the selling of goods; typically at a hub within a town or city and often within one building.

**Period:** Modern

![Castle Quay Shopping Centre, Banbury (© Google Maps)](image-url)
**Description:** This type is found across Oxfordshire within the towns of the county – Witney, Banbury, Abingdon, Charlbury, and Didcot – and on the edge of Oxford at Botley. It is not a type identified by Oxford City HLC which recorded sites of this type as individual shops. For example, the Westgate Shopping Centre and the Clarendon Centre are both recorded as the Shop HLC type. The largest indoor complex recorded is Castle Quay at Banbury. This type dates exclusively to the 20th century and is often found on brownfield sites within settlements, although this is not always the case – the supermarkets at Witney for example, lie within fields on the edge of the post-medieval town.

**Trajectory of Change:** Increasing Rapidly, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

**Factors Influencing Change:** The development of this type relates to population increase and higher levels of disposable income which leads to greater demand for goods.

**Biodiversity Potential:** Low
Whilst there may be some green space on these sites, generally their built environment and urban context will encourage only a small range of biodiversity.

**Archaeological Potential:** Low
Likely that all potential for archaeological deposits and historic buildings has been removed within the area of disturbance.
**HLC Type:** Roadside Service Centre

**Broad Type:** Commercial

**Legend:**

- **Total Area:** 41.01 ha (0.02%)
- **No. of Polygons:** 4 (0.02%)
- **Av. Polygon Size:** 10.25 hectares
- **Occurrence:** Very Rare

**Definition:** A commercial complex, usually sited along motorways or trunk roads, providing facilities such as car parking, restaurants, shops and fuel stations.

**Period:** Modern

Cherwell Valley Services on the M40 Motorway (© Google Maps)
Description: This is a very rare type in Oxfordshire and only 4 sites have been recorded by this project. The distribution of this type is dictated by the major road and motorway network, with sites at Junctions 8 and 10 on the M40, and two sites on the A40 at Witney. As with the roads they lie on, this type dates to the 20th century.

Trajectory of Change: Increasing Rapidly, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

Factors Influencing Change: This type developed in the 20th century in relation to new main road schemes – particularly motorways. It is also linked to increased car ownership.

Biodiversity Potential: Low
There may be some landscaped areas on sites of this type, but, in general, the nature of this type will result in low potential for biodiversity.

Archaeological Potential: Medium
Likely that archaeological deposits and historic buildings have been truncated or damaged, but some features may survive in isolated areas.
**HLC Type(s):** Road & Bridge

**Broad Type:** Communication

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| **Total Area:** | 25.93 ha (0.01%) |
| **No. of Polygons:** | 528 (3.28%) |
| **Av. Polygon Size:** | 0.05 hectares |
| **Occurrence:** | Occasional |

**Definition:** Used in Oxford City Only. A way suitable for wheeled transport. Includes roads, lanes, back lanes, and alleys; Medieval medium and long distance routes, such as St Aldates and St Giles; City squares, such as Oriel Square; and Bridges.

| **Period:** | Medieval, Post-Medieval, Modern |

**Medieval Longwall Street, Oxford**
Description: This type has only been recorded in the city centre of Oxford. The distribution identified here, therefore, is not representative of the distribution of roads or bridges in Oxfordshire or in Oxford. What this type does capture, however, are the medieval roads, lanes, and squares that serve the historic core of Oxford and which connected the Saxon town to the wider landscape – for example, the major route of St Aldates whose ford on the Thames south of the town may have given the town its names. This ford may lie in the area of the Grand Pont medieval bridge, now marked by Folly Bridge which carries St Aldates over the Thames today. This type also shows modern reorganisation and expansion within the city centre, with a large number of sites dating to the 20th and 21st century.

Factors Influencing Change: Initially driven by the development of the original town, settlement expansion, reorganisation, and infill has led to the rapid increase of this type in the 20th and 21st century.

Biodiversity Potential: Low
The nature and context of this type is likely to result in a low potential for biodiversity.

Archaeological Potential: Low – Medium
Road: Likely that archaeological deposits and historic buildings have been truncated or damaged, but some features may survive in isolated areas.
Bridge: Likely that all potential for archaeological deposits and historic buildings has been removed within the area of disturbance.
HLC Type(s): Main Road & Major Junction

Broad Type: Communication

Legend:

Total Area: 867.26 ha (0.33%)

No. of Polygons: 160 (0.99%)

Av. Polygon Size: 5.42 hectares

Occurrence: Rare

Definition: An A-road over 1 ha in size, often including dual carriageways, and major road junctions, such as roundabouts.

Period: Modern

The A40, A34, and A44 converging north of Oxford (© Google Maps)
**Description:** This type records those Main Roads and their associated Major Junctions, which traverse the county, linking Oxford and its ring road to the wider landscape. The roads spread out from Oxford, like spokes on a wheel, running to each corner of the county. The routes of some or parts of these roads may pre-date the modern period, but the majority of the roads date to the 20th century. The A40 between Burford and Asthall Barrow, for example follows the line of a road shown on the 1st Edition OS and possibly on Davis’ Map, but at the barrow the modern A40 diverts south-east and heads across 19th century planned enclosures which had enclosed the medieval open fields.

**Trajectory of Change:** 898.1% Increasing Rapidly, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

**Factors Influencing Change:** The rapid development of this type in the 20th century reflects population and settlement expansion, increased car ownership, and a desire to reduce travel times.

**Biodiversity Potential:** Low
The nature of these types will result in a relatively low potential for biodiversity. Large grass verges at the side of these roads will, however, encourage a greater range of wildlife.

**Archaeological Potential:** Low
Likely that all potential for archaeological deposits and historic buildings has been removed within the area of disturbance.
**HLC Type:** Motorway

**Broad Type:** Communication

![Map of Oxfordshire with Motorway highlighted]

**Legend:**

- Total Area: 380.53 ha (0.15%)
- No. of Polygons: 34 (0.21%)
- Av. Polygon Size: 11.2 hectares
- Occurrence: Very Rare
- **Definition:** Large multiple carriage-ways for fast moving motor traffic continuing for long distances without traffic controls or intersections.

- **Period:** Modern

- **M40 Motorway, near Murcott (Courtesy of Paul Booth)**
**Description:** The M40 is the only Motorway to traverse Oxfordshire, linking Birmingham and London. Whilst a rare type in the county, this Motorway has a large impact on the landscape – reorganising earlier field systems, boundaries, and roads, and creating noise pollution which can be heard for many miles. The section of the road from London to Oxford opened in the late 1960s and 1970s whilst the section from Oxford to Birmingham did not open until the late 1980s and 1990s.

**Trajectory of Change:** Increasing Rapidly, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

**Factors Influencing Change:** The rapid development of this type in the mid-late 20th century relates to population increase, increased car ownership, and increased desire for mobility and fast transport links.

**Biodiversity Potential:** Low
The nature of this type does not encourage a high level of biodiversity. Large grass verges will support some wildlife.

**Archaeological Potential:** Low
Likely that all potential for archaeological deposits and historic buildings has been removed within the area of disturbance.
HLC Type(s): Bike Path/Bridle Way & the Ridgeway

**Broad Type:** Communication

---

**Legend:**

- **Total Area:** 49.08 ha (0.02%)
- **No. of Polygons:** 4 (0.02%)
- **Av. Polygon Size:** 12.3 hectares
- **Occurrence:** Very Rare

**Definition:** Routeway over 1 ha in size used as Bike Path or Bridleway. Also the Ridgeway - an ancient trackway running along the chalk ridge of the Berkshire Downs – which is also used by walkers, cyclists, and horse riders.

**Period:** Prehistoric, Post Medieval, Modern

---

The Ridgeway beneath Uffington Castle
**Description:** This project has only captured a few examples of Bike and Bridleways, all of which are in the south of the county, and does not represent all sites of this type in Oxfordshire. This type includes The Ridgeway, an ancient trackway which extends along the chalk downs which form part of the North Wessex Downs AONB, and is now a designated footpath, cycle, and bridleway. A post-medieval Bridleway has also been recorded – Cow Lane, near Wantage.

---

**Trajectory of Change:** 13.6% Increasing Slowly, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

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**Factors Influencing Change:** Initially developed to facilitate the movement of animals or travel by horse, this type is now related to recreational activities and growing interests in sports and leisure facilities.

---

**Biodiversity Potential:** Medium

This type is usually found in rural landscapes, often in areas where there is high potential for biodiversity – for example on the North Wessex Downs. The routes themselves will reduce biodiversity, but the flanking verges and hedgerows will remain havens for wildlife.

---

**Archaeological Potential:** Medium - High

Bike Path and Bridle Way: Likely that archaeological deposits and historic buildings have been truncated or damaged, but some features may survive in isolated areas.

Ridgeway: Unlikely for there to have been wholesale truncation or destruction of features; significant archaeological deposits or historic buildings may still survive.
HLC Type: Car Park

Legend:

Total Area: 16.13 ha (0.01%)

No. of Polygons: 70 (0.43%)

Av. Polygon Size: 0.23 hectares

Occurrence: Very Rare

Definition: Used in Oxford City only. An area for parking motor vehicles, usually with permanent surfacing and sometimes in purpose-built multi-storey buildings. This type does not include Park and Ride schemes.

Period: Modern
**Description:** This type has only been recorded in Oxford and does not, therefore, represent the distribution of sites of this type across the whole of the county. The Car Parks identified are in urban areas, with a cluster near the town centre and on the southern edge of the town. The latter represents parking close to Redbridge Park and Ride. Parking in the city centre focuses on the railway station and Gloucester Green bus station. In the city centre many sites of this type have been built on brownfield sites – previously used for housing, industrial wharves and railway sidings, and the city gaol. On the edge of town Car Parks have been built on fields.

**Trajectory of Change:** Freq. of Foundation (graph)

**Factors Influencing Change:** The rapid increase of this type in the 20th century reflects growing populations and growing levels of car ownership. The rate of increase has slowed slightly in the 21st century as out-of-town Car Parks and Park and Rides become more common.

**Biodiversity Potential:** Low
The urban context and built nature of this type results in a low potential for biodiversity.

**Archaeological Potential:** Medium
Likely that archaeological deposits and historic buildings have been truncated or damaged, but some features may survive in isolated areas.
**HLC Type:** Rail Transport Site

**Broad Type:** Communication

**Legend:**

**Total Area:** 995.17 ha (0.38%)

**No. of Polygons:** 145 (0.9%)

**Av. Polygon Size:** 6.9 hectares

**Occurrence:** Rare

**Definition:** Areas developed for the use, maintenance and storage of railway trains. Includes: railway stations, tracks, sidings, and depots.

**Period:** Post-Medieval, Modern

---

Didcot Railway Centre and Station (© Google Maps)
Description: Oxfordshire is traversed by a number of active and recently abandoned railway lines. Some of these go via the Oxford hub whilst others pass through the county on their way to London, using Didcot and Banbury as their major stations. The railways arrived in Oxfordshire in the 1840s with the Great Western Railway and its station at Western Road, Oxford, which opened in 1845. In 1850 Oxford was linked to Banbury by the Birmingham and Oxford Junction Railway. The Worcester to Oxford Line opened between 1852 and 1853. A branch from this line led from Kingham westwards to Cheltenham and eastwards to Banbury, with the Banbury – Cheltenham line opening in stages between 1855 and 1881. Services on this line were withdrawn between 1951 and 1964. Also closed in 1964 was the branch from the GWR line to Faringdon, opened in 1864. The line connecting Witney and Eynsham to the Birmingham-Oxford Line at Yarnton and Fairford and Lechlade in Gloucestershire was opened between 1861 and 1873, but closed in 1970. The remains of this abandoned railway and others in the county are still clearly visible and are often used as footpaths.

Trajectory of Change: 22.8% Increasing Moderately, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

Factors Influencing Change: The rapid increase of railways in the mid-19th century reflects a desire to link the major urban markets and ports across the country. This has continued into the modern period with the rail network expanding to meet the demands of a growing population and the rise of long-distance commuters.

Biodiversity Potential: Low-Medium
Active railway lines, stations, and depots are likely to have low potential for biodiversity. In contrast, disused tracks are likely to support a range of species, with plants gradually encroaching upon the line.

Archaeological Potential: Low
Likely that all potential for archaeological deposits and historic buildings has been removed within the area of disturbance.
**HLC Type:** Canals and Locks

**Broad Type:** Communication

**Legend:**

- **Total Area:** 163.08 ha (0.06%)
- **No. of Polygons:** 28 (0.17%)
- **Av. Polygon Size:** 5.82 hectares
- **Occurrence:** Very Rare

**Definition:** Artificial watercourses and associated infrastructure, usually connecting existing watercourses or bodies. Constructed for the purpose of inland navigation and transportation. Nowadays also used for recreation. Includes: canals, canal arms, locks, basins and wharfs.

**Period:** Post-Medieval, Modern

Osney Lock, Oxford Canal, Oxford (Courtesy of Richard Oram)
Description: Only one active canal passes through Oxfordshire – the Oxford Canal. Opened in sections between 1778 and 1789, this canal linked Oxford and the River Thames to Coventry and provided an important commercial route for the transportation of coal and other goods from the Midlands to London. In the 1960s, the canal effectively ceased to be used commercially and is used today primarily for recreational purposes. A second canal joined the Thames at Abingdon, linking the Kennet and Avon Canal and the river. This opened in 1810, but was closed in 1914. Some short sections have been re-watered and large parts of the disused canal remain visible in the landscape. Narrow boats also use the River Thames and their passage is facilitated by a series of locks, including King’s Lock which links to the Oxford Canal.

Trajectory of Change: -2.3% Stable, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

Factors Influencing Change: The peak of this type was the late 18th and 19th century, when canals developed to facilitate trade. With the creation of railways and motorways, the commercial function of these sites has declined and they are now primarily linked to recreational activities.

Biodiversity Potential: High
This type has high potential for biodiversity, both on active and disused sites. Aquatic animals and plants, in particular, can thrive in these environments. Some pollution from boats and from fly-tipping will, however, affect the range and health of species present.

Archaeological Potential: Low
Likely that all potential for archaeological deposits and historic buildings has been removed within the area of disturbance.
**HLC Type:** Airfield (commercial)

**Broad Type:** Communication

Legend: 

- Total Area: 965.45 ha (0.37%)
- No. of Polygons: 8 (0.05%)
- Av. Polygon Size: 120.7 hectares
- Occurrence: Very Rare

**Definition:** Small scale commercial bases for air transportation.

**Period:** Modern

Enstone Aerodrome (© Google Maps)
**Description:** Whilst this type is not common within the county, sites can be very large and have a high impact on the surrounding landscape. Chalgrove Airfield, opened in 1943 by the Ministry of Defence, but now used commercially, is in excess of 250 hectares in size. London-Oxford Airport is almost as large. Opened in 1935 as a municipal airport, it was also used by the military in the Second World War before being returned to private use. Currently it is the home of Oxford Aviation Training, one of the largest air training schools in Europe. Smaller sites include various gliding clubs and private airfields scattered throughout the county.

**Trajectory of Change:** Increasing Rapidly, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

**Factors Influencing Change:** The rapid development of this type in the mid-20th century relates to decreasing costs in air transport and subsequent rises in demand for this type of travel/recreation.

**Biodiversity Potential:** Low-Medium
There will be low potential for biodiversity associated with runways, areas of hardstanding, and buildings. However, large green areas on these sites will support a range of species.

**Archaeological Potential:** Medium
Likely that archaeological deposits and historic buildings have been truncated or damaged, but some features may survive in isolated areas.
**HLC Type:** Telecommunication

**Broad Type:** Communication

- **Total Area:** 12.23 ha (<0.01%)
- **No. of Polygons:** 1 (<0.01%)
- **Av. Polygon Size:** 12.23 hectares
- **Occurrence:** Very Rare

**Definition:** Large sites associated with the communication of information by wire, radio, electrical, and digital means.

**Period:** Modern

Whitehill Satellite Centre (© Google Maps)
Description: A single site of this type has been identified by this project in Oxfordshire – Whitehill Satellite Centre, near Enslow. The site was developed in the 1980s and operates as a satellite ground station engaged in extra-planetary telecommunications (non-Earth based communications). Although a single site, the hilltop location and the size of the structures means that this type has a wider impact on the landscape.

Factors Influencing Change: The growth of this type relates to scientific and technological innovation and exploration.

Biodiversity Potential: Medium
Whilst the satellite dishes and associated infrastructure will have low potential for biodiversity, the large areas of grass surrounding these will support a range of species.

Archaeological Potential: Low
Likely that all potential for archaeological deposits and historic buildings has been removed within the area of disturbance.
**HLC Type:** Open Field System

**Broad Type:** Enclosure

**Legend:**

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<th>Total Area:</th>
<th>9.92 ha (&lt;0.01%)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of Polygons:</td>
<td>1 (&lt;0.01%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Av. Polygon Size:</td>
<td>9.92 hectares</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occurrence:</td>
<td>Very Rare</td>
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**Definition:** System of fields in which several farmers held land in common, intermixed in narrow strips and assessed via length and width, with low or no separating boundaries.

**Period:** Medieval, Post-Medieval

Ridge and Furrow – the remains of open fields near Binsey (Courtesy of Paul Booth)
Description: A single site of this type has been identified by this project surviving in Oxfordshire’s current landscape – near Chimney in West Oxfordshire. This type once covered large swathes of the county, but gradually, since the 15th century, this type has, primarily, been lost to enclosure and settlement. This small area survives under unusual conditions, whereby trees have been planted on the top of the ridge and furrow ridges, shaping and dividing the landscape in a way similar to the original medieval plots would have.

Trajectory of Change: -99% Declining Critically, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

Factors Influencing Change: Agricultural enclosure and settlement expansion since the later medieval period has dramatically reduced sites of this type. This relates to population and settlement growth and changing patterns of land ownership and agricultural regimes.

Biodiversity Potential: Medium
The age of the hedgerows and tree lines associated with this ancient type may encourage a variety of species.

Archaeological Potential: High
Unlikely for there to have been wholesale truncation or destruction of features; significant archaeological deposits or historic buildings may still survive.
**HLC Type:** Ancient Enclosure

**Broad Type:** Enclosure

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<tr>
<th>Total Area: 2893.6 ha (1.11%)</th>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>No. of Polygons: 151 (0.94%)</th>
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<tr>
<th>Av. Polygon Size: 19.16 hectares</th>
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<th>Occurrence: Rare</th>
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**Definition:** Areas of land enclosed prior to the 18th century. These fields can be co-axial or irregular. Co-axial field systems have a sinuous pattern of small, elongated fields. Irregular field systems consist of piecemeal enclosures of various sizes and shapes. N.B. This HLC type has been used variously throughout the project. It is described as pre-18th century fields, but, at times, it has also been used to indicate fields shown on the mid-late 18th century Roque and Davis Maps. It is possible, therefore, that earlier 18th century fields have been characterised as Ancient.

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Period: Medieval, Post-Medieval</th>
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**Description:** The most common type of enclosure dating to the medieval or earlier post-medieval period surviving in Oxfordshire’s current landscape, this type is found in distinct parts of the county. Its greatest concentration is in the south-eastern corner of the county, in an area corresponding with the Chiltern Hills and AONB. This type is also scattered across the district of West Oxfordshire, but this does not tie in with the Cotswold AONB. Comparatively few sites have been identified in the districts of the Vale of the White Horse and South Oxfordshire, outside of the Chiltns AONB, and no sites are recorded in Cherwell District. The distinct distribution of this type will reflect different degrees to which the various parts of the county have been subjected to agricultural reorganisation and change. It is also likely to relate to settlement expansion, with those parts of the county characterised by concentrations of small 17th and 18th century villages being the same parts of the county where Ancient Enclosures survive.

**Trajectory of Change:** -63.4% Declining Critically, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

**Factors Influencing Change:** Reorganisation of fields in the later post-medieval and modern periods has led to a reduction in this type. Settlement expansion and associated infrastructure schemes will also have had an effect on this type.

**Biodiversity Potential:** Medium
By their nature these fields and their hedgerows tend to be more established and can potentially support a range of species. The size and irregularity of some of these fields reduces the likelihood that they will have been intensively used by modern farming.

**Archaeological Potential:** High
Unlikely for there to have been wholesale truncation or destruction of features; significant archaeological deposits or historic buildings may still survive.
**HLC Type:** Closes

**Broad Type:** Enclosure

**Legend:**

- **Total Area:** 87.29 ha (0.03%)
- **No. of Polygons:** 4 (0.03%)
- **Av. Polygon Size:** 21.8 hectares
- **Occurrence:** Very Rare

**Definition:** Medieval and Post-Medieval small and elongated rectilinear enclosures. N.B. This type was only recorded in the later stages of this project. As such, South Oxfordshire and the Vale of the White Horse have not been interrogated for evidence of this type.

**Period:** Medieval, Post-Medieval

Mansmoor Closes, Charlton-on-Otmoor (© Google Maps)
Description: The distribution of this type is likely to be biased towards the districts of West Oxfordshire and Cherwell as the distinct nature of this type was not realised until part way through the project and was not, therefore, recorded in those districts analysed during the earlier phases. These fields are often well preserved medieval or early post-medieval landscapes, with the narrow nature of the plots perhaps deterring modern farming. They are often found beyond the fields immediately associated with villages, but still in close proximity to the settlement. Some of these date to the early 17th century, for example Mansmoor Closes, Charlton-on-Otmoor and others, such as those near Launton, may be 16th century. These early fields appear to have enclosed both rough ground and open fields.

Trajectory of Change: -75.8% Declining Critically, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

Factors Influencing Change: Reorganisation of fields, particularly the removal of internal boundaries, in the later post-medieval and modern periods has led to a reduction in this type. The proximity to settlements means that this type is vulnerable to population increase and settlement expansion.

Biodiversity Potential: Medium
By their nature these fields and their hedgerows tend to be more established and can potentially support a range of species. The small size of these fields reduces the likelihood that they will have been intensively used by modern farming.

Archaeological Potential: High
Unlikely for there to have been wholesale truncation or destruction of features; significant archaeological deposits or historic buildings may still survive.
**HLC Type:** Crofts

**Broad Type:** Enclosure

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**Total Area:** 77.9 ha (0.03%)

**No. of Polygons:** 12 (0.08%)

**Av. Polygon Size:** 6.49 hectares

**Occurrence:** Very Rare

**Definition:** A strip of enclosed land associated with medieval or post-medieval properties.

**Period:** Medieval, Post-Medieval

Crofts on the northern edge of Blackthorn (© Google Maps)
**Description:** This type is very rare in Oxfordshire, but its distribution shows how it occurs across the county. Few examples have been recorded in the north of the county, but sites have been identified in all other parts of the county. By its nature, this type is found on the edge of settlements, for example on the eastern edge of the town of Wantage, the southern edge of the village of Highmoor Cross, and flanking the village of Blackthorn. Given their location, this type is particularly sensitive to settlement expansion.

**Trajectory of Change:** -61.1% Declining Critically, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

**Factors Influencing Change:** The position of this type on the edge of settlements, particularly on the edge of the historic core of settlements, mean that they are affected by population increase and settlement expansion. The removal of field boundaries to accommodate modern farming regimes will also have an impact.

**Biodiversity Potential:** Medium
By their nature these fields and their hedgerows tend to be more established and can potentially support a range of species. The small size and narrow shape of these fields reduces the likelihood that they will have been intensively used by modern farming.

**Archaeological Potential:** High
Unlikely for there to have been wholesale truncation or destruction of features; significant archaeological deposits or historic buildings may still survive.
**HLC Type:** Ladder Field System

**Broad Type:** Enclosure

**Legend:**

- **Total Area:** 205.11 ha (0.08%)
- **No. of Polygons:** 4 (0.03%)
- **Av. Polygon Size:** 51.28 hectares
- **Occurrence:** Very Rare

**Definition:** A series of fields following a linear/straight pattern. Often extending outwards from a farm, they may be found near roads of tracks. The legs of the ladder may represent much older boundaries, whilst the rungs are often re-ordered.

**Period:** Post-Medieval

Ladder Field System south of Black Bourton (© Google Maps)
**Description:** Very rare in Oxfordshire, sites of this type have only been identified in the south and west of the county, with a small concentration between the villages of Clanfield, Black Bourton, and Langford. The types identified lie close to villages and adjacent to roads. They are, therefore, sensitive to housing and road development schemes. The sites identified in the county are post-medieval and date to the 18th and 19th century, although some may be earlier. Two of these sites enclosed open fields whilst the remaining two reorganised older enclosures.

**Trajectory of Change:** -22% Declining Rapidly, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

**Factors Influencing Change:** The position of this type of site means that they are sensitive to settlement expansion and road reorganisation. The removal of internal field boundaries to accommodate new farming regimes will also have an effect.

**Biodiversity Potential:** Medium
By their nature these fields and their hedgerows tend to be more established and can potentially support a range of species.

**Archaeological Potential:** High
Unlikely for there to have been wholesale truncation or destruction of features; significant archaeological deposits or historic buildings may still survive.
HLC Type: Squatter Enclosure

Broad Type: Enclosure

Legend:

Total Area: 13.86 ha (<0.01?%)

No. of Polygons: 3 (0.02%)

Av. Polygon Size: 4.62 hectares

Occurrence: Very Rare

Definition: Small and often irregular fields which enclosed common land. Sometimes associated with networks of lanes, access tracks or small cottages and quarries, mining or other industrial activity. Often indicative of illicit encroachment onto common land in the post-medieval period.

Period: Post-Medieval

A Squatter Enclosure on the north-western edge of Clanfield (© Google Maps)
Description: A very rare post-medieval type of field surviving to the modern day only in the west of Oxfordshire, in a small area around Clanfield. Elsewhere in the county, Squatter Enclosures have been identified as a previous type. Unsurprisingly, both those current and previous Squatter Enclosures coincide with areas which were formerly common Open Fields or heathland. For example, Eynsham Heath at Freeland.

Trajectory of Change: -47.7% Declining Rapidly, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

Factors Influencing Change: This type relates to the enclosure of open or common land and its decrease in the post-medieval and modern period will reflect the reduction in this type of land. This type survives close to settlements and they will, therefore, be affected by settlement expansion. As with other small fields, this type is also likely to have decreased, and will continue to decrease, due to the removal of internal boundaries for modern farming practices.

Biodiversity Potential: Medium
These fields and their hedgerows are often well established and can potentially support a range of species.

Archaeological Potential: High
Unlikely for there to have been wholesale truncation or destruction of features; significant archaeological deposits or historic buildings may still survive.
**HLC Type:** Assarted Enclosure

**Broad Type:** Enclosure

**Total Area:** 834.85 ha (0.32%)

**No. of Polygons:** 45 (0.28%)

**Av. Polygon Size:** 18.55 hectares

**Occurrence:** Very Rare

**Definition:** Areas of former woodland that have gradually been cleared and enclosed to create farmland. These types of enclosure are frequently irregular in shape, but can be rectilinear. They are often adjacent to or interspersed by woodland. Field boundaries are often thick and contain woodland species.

**Period:** Medieval, Post-Medieval, Modern

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The Thrift, an assarted woodland south of Freeland

(© Google Maps)
**Description:** This type concentrates in two parts of Oxfordshire – the Chiltern Hills and a swathe running across the central northern part of the county. These concentrations, unsurprisingly, correspond with areas which were historically wooded, with the latter being the location of Wychwood Forest. Most woodland clearance appears to have occurred prior to the 1st Edition OS, such as that around Leafield which was cleared for agricultural purposes in the mid-19th century, and the scale of medieval assarting might be indicated by the number of place names containing the element ‘ley’. However, assarts continued to be created into the 20th century, with woods like Taylor’s Copse at New Yatt being halved in size, and others like Churchill Heath Wood being almost completely removed. This process appears to have slowed in the later 20th century and early 21st century.

**Trajectory of Change:** -28.56% Declining Rapidly, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

**Factors Influencing Change:** The amalgamation of assarts has reduced the number of this type which, combined with the lower frequency of new foundations, has resulted in a sharp decline of this type.

**Biodiversity Potential:** High
The hedgerows associated with this type are very likely to be remnants of woodland and to be species rich.

**Archaeological Potential:** High
Unlikely for there to have been wholesale truncation or destruction of features; significant archaeological deposits or historic buildings may still survive.
**HLC Type:** Piecemeal Enclosure

**Broad Type:** Enclosure

**Legend:**

- **Total Area:** 24833.6 ha (9.55%)
- **No. of Polygons:** 891 (5.53%)
- **Av. Polygon Size:** 27.8 hectares
- **Occurrence:** Common

**Definition:** Field systems that have been created out of the medieval open fields by informal agreement. They appear to have been established on a field by field basis and often are small and irregular fields with at least two boundaries of a reverse 'S' curve or 'dog-leg'. Includes: enclosed furlongs and enclosed strips.

**Period:** Post-Medieval, Modern
**Description:** This is one of the more abundant types in the county and represents some of the older enclosures created from the post-medieval period onwards. This type is frequently used in this project where it is not possible to say with any certainty that an enclosure is pre-18th century and, therefore, cannot be characterised as Ancient Enclosure. There is a distinct lack of this type identified in the area around Bicester. Elsewhere in Oxfordshire, this type is well represented and a slight concentration might be observed in the north-west on the Cotswolds Plateau. Some of this corresponds with the Cotswolds AONB, but this type is not restricted to this area and these fields spill over to the east of the AONB. There is also a slight concentration on the land in the west of the county which lies close to the River Thames. This is a pattern which appears to be repeated elsewhere – along the tributaries of the River Ock and the River Cherwell. The implication of this might be that early enclosure tended to be on pastoral rather than arable land.

**Trajectory of Change:** -51.3% Declining Critically, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

**Factors Influencing Change:** The frequency of this type decreased across the post-medieval and modern periods as planned and prairie enclosures became more common and older fields were reorganised. Some modern piecemeal fields have been created on a small-scale by landowners and this is likely to continue as agricultural practices and land use continues to diversify.

**Biodiversity Potential:** Medium
These fields and associated hedgerows can have long histories which will encourage a diverse range of wildlife. The irregularity of some fields may also have discouraged intensive modern farming.

**Archaeological Potential:** High
Unlikely for there to have been wholesale truncation or destruction of features; significant archaeological deposits or historic buildings may still survive.
**HLC Type:** Planned Enclosure

**Broad Type:** Enclosure

**Legend:**

- **Total Area:** 37106.8 ha (14.3%)
- **No. of Polygons:** 1032 (6.41%)
- **Av. Polygon Size:** 35.96 hectares
- **Occurrence:** Common

**Definition:** Fields with a predominantly straight boundary morphology giving a geometric and regular appearance. Normally laid out by surveyors these field patterns are often the result of enclosure during the 18th and 19th centuries. This type of field system often overrides earlier systems.

**Period:** Post-Medieval, Modern

Planned Enclosures around Leys Farm, north of Hook Norton (© Google Maps)
**Description:** Planned Enclosures are amongst the most common landscape type identified in Oxfordshire. Whilst found throughout, there are broadly four concentrations in the county – in the north around Banbury, in the north-east around Bicester, in the south-east along the Chilterns escarpment, and in the west in the rural landscape beyond Witney. The creation of regular, often very regular, fields over large areas was a feature primarily of the later 18th and 19th centuries in Oxfordshire. These fields enclosed the remaining Open Fields and heaths and reorganised many earlier fields. Whilst they brought extensive change to the landscape they have since also been subject to change and reorganisation. For example, one of the most regular areas was removed in the late 19th and early 20th century by the construction of Brize Norton airfield and the town of Carterton.

**Trajectory of Change:** -52.44% Declining Critically, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

**Factors Influencing Change:** Settlement expansion and the amalgamation of fields of this type to create very large fields in the 20th century have contributed to a decline of this type. Some 20th century planned enclosures have been created, such as on Ot Moor, where unenclosed land had survived into the modern period.

**Biodiversity Potential:** Low - Medium
Potential will vary depending on location, the quality of boundaries, and intensity of modern farming. This type is often intensively farmed in the modern period and boundaries can be quite recent, both factors which will reduce biodiversity.

**Archaeological Potential:** High
Unlikely for there to have been wholesale truncation or destruction of features; significant archaeological deposits or historic buildings may still survive.
**HLC Type:** Prairie/Amalgamated Enclosure

**Broad Type:** Enclosure

**Legend:**

**Total Area:** 52856.4 ha (20.3%)

**No. of Polygons:** 1253 (7.78%)

**Av. Polygon Size:** 42.18 hectares

**Occurrence:** Abundant

**Definition:** Patterns of large fields (in excess of 10 hectares), some with boundaries over 1km long. Often resulting from post WW2 combination of holdings and the removal of earlier boundaries creating land units convenient for highly mechanised arable, or for extensive livestock raising.

**Period:** Post-Medieval, Modern

Prairie Field near Dorchester-on-Thames
**Description:** This is one of the most frequently found types in Oxfordshire’s 21st century landscape. It is widespread and most parts of the county have sites of this type. Two areas have slightly fewer examples – the western edge and the south-eastern corner of the county – but the distinction is slight. These two areas overlap with, but are not wholly confined to, parts of the Cotswolds and Chilterns AONBs. This type predominantly dates to the 20th century and post-war agricultural changes, but there are a significant number of examples from the late 19th century where older fields were amalgamated to allow more intensive farming or where the last remnants of the open field system and commons were enclosed as large fields. This type affected both earlier irregular (Ancient and Piecemeal) and regular (Planned) fields.

**Trajectory of Change:** 116.1% Increasing Rapidly, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

**Factors Influencing Change:** The development of this type relates to the intensification of farming and is, therefore, linked to population increase. Fields of this type will be affected by schemes to reintroduce old hedgerows.

**Biodiversity Potential:** Low - Medium
These fields are frequently the most intensively managed and have the fewest hedgerows and trees. They are, therefore, often species poor.

**Archaeological Potential:** High
Unlikely for there to have been wholesale truncation or destruction of features; significant archaeological deposits or historic buildings may still survive.
### HLC Type: Reclaimed Land

**Broad Type:** Enclosure

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<th>Total Area:</th>
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<td>No. of Polygons:</td>
<td>17 (0.11%)</td>
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<td>Av. Polygon Size:</td>
<td>7.3 hectares</td>
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<td>Occurrence:</td>
<td>Very Rare</td>
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**Definition:** Low lying land reclaimed through drainage and construction of dykes or land reclaimed after quarrying.

**Period:** Post-Medieval, Modern

Reclaimed land on the site of Culham Brickworks (© Google Maps)
Description: This type is rare in Oxfordshire, being found in two main areas – the valley of the River Ock in the south of the county and in the north-west of the county on the Cotswold Plateau. The latter type is frequently associated with disused stone quarries along the top of the Cotswold scarp, such as those near Horton, turned to agricultural use in the 20th century. Conversely, those in the lowlands are associated with old industrial sites – such as the Brickworks at Culham- and land drainage schemes – such as those near Steventon. This type is affected by the geology of the land and human use of that geology. It tends to be a feature of the modern landscape, although that is not to say that small-scale land reclamation did not occur in the medieval and post-medieval period – the drainage ditches south of Chimney, near the River Thames, for example, may be of some antiquity.

Trajectory of Change: 1249.2% Increasing Rapidly, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

Factors Influencing Change: This type is affected both by a need to expand agricultural land to fulfil demands from growing populations and by the decline in industrial sites. The latter is a consequence of exhausting local supplies and competition from non-local suppliers.

Biodiversity Potential: Medium - High
The potential for biodiversity will depend on the type of site. Land with drainage ditches and dykes is likely to support a range of aquatic species. Reclaimed industrial land, however, may be more limited, with modern field boundaries, few trees, and disused machinery.

Archaeological Potential: Low
Likely that all potential for archaeological deposits and historic buildings has been removed within the area of disturbance.
**HLC Type:** Reorganised Enclosure

**Broad Type:** Enclosure

Legend:

- Total Area: 71063.1ha (27.3%)
- No. of Polygons: 2729 (16.95%)
- Av. Polygon Size: 26.04 hectares
- Occurrence: Abundant

**Definition:** Fields showing signs of modern adaptation through large scale re-organisation of earlier field boundaries. Frequently occurring next to railways and modern infrastructure developments such as motorways, roadways and bypasses where older field patterns have been disrupted. Often characterised by significant boundary loss since the 1st Edition OS map. N.B. This HLC Type has been used variously throughout the project. It is described as a modern (i.e. post 1900) phenomena, but, at times, it has been used to describe 19th century reorganisation of earlier fields. Some of these are likely to be the result of Enclosure Acts.

**Period:** Post-Medieval, Modern

Partial boundary removal in a field near Great Milton
**Description:** This is the most common type in Oxfordshire, covering more than 27% of the landscape. In part this will be due to the way in which it has been characterised, with some Planned Enclosure being recorded as this type. However, regardless of this, this type shows the extent of change the agricultural landscape has experienced since originally being enclosed. Most parts of the county have been affected, leaving few surviving medieval and 17th – 18th century landscapes. Particularly dense concentrations can be found in the Vale of the White Horse and in South Oxfordshire, between the Chilterns scarp and Oxford. Less affected areas include those around Banbury, in the north of the county, and west of Oxford around the villages of Buckland and Hinton Waldrist.

**Trajectory of Change:** 44.9% Increasing Moderately, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

**Factors Influencing Change:** This type is dependent on the alteration of fieldscapes to meet the demands of growing populations and changing agricultural regimes. It is also affected by settlement expansion and the development of rail and road networks.

**Biodiversity Potential:** Low - Medium
By their nature these fields often have few established hedgerows and have been intensively farmed. These factors will reduce potential for biodiversity.

**Archaeological Potential:** High
Unlikely for there to have been wholesale truncation or destruction of features; significant archaeological deposits or historic buildings may still survive.
**HLC Type:** Paddocks and Stables

**Broad Type:** Enclosure

**Legend:**

- **Total Area:** 1806.92 ha (0.7%)
- **No. of Polygons:** 193 (1.2%)
- **Av. Polygon Size:** 9.36 hectares
- **Occurrence:** Rare

**Definition:** Small and generally regular fields used for horses and associated structures.

**Period:** Modern

**Paddocks near Whitchurch-on-Thames**
Description: One of the more uncommon enclosure types, Paddocks are found in two very distinct parts of Oxfordshire – the south and the west. A large part of the areas featuring paddocks coincide with the Cotswolds and North Wessex Downs AONBs. In the latter, large equestrian complexes utilise the rolling chalk landscape for gallops and stud farms – such as Aston Upton Stud Farm. In the west of the county sites tend to be smaller. In both areas, paddocks are usually found either on the edge of villages - for example, Alvescot - or next to isolated farms – like Hill Farm, near Fifield. This type has developed in the 20th century as part of increased recreational use of horses.

Trajectory of Change: 3750.1% Increasing Rapidly, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

Factors Influencing Change: This type developed in the 20th century in relation to the increased use of horses for recreational activities.

Biodiversity Potential: Low-Medium
This type is often the newest form of field in an area. They are frequently created from reorganised fields and, whilst no longer intensively farmed, they are likely to support only a limited range of species.

Archaeological Potential: High
Unlikely for there to have been wholesale truncation or destruction of features; significant archaeological deposits or historic buildings may still survive.
HLC Type(s): Processing and Manufacturing

**Broad Type:** Industry

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**Total Area:** 146.37 ha (0.06%)

**No. of Polygons:** 33 (0.21%)

**Av. Polygon Size:** 4.44 hectares

**Occurrence:** Very Rare

**Definition:** Covers industries applying various processes to primary materials along with land used for the creation of goods.

**Period:** Post-Medieval, Modern

Oxford University Press
Description: These types are rare in Oxfordshire and tend to be found either within the city of Oxford or to the west of the city, broadly along the line of the A40. Sites used for manufacturing and processing are usually found on the edge of settlements or, if they are in urban areas, on the edge of the post-medieval settlement. Oxford University Press, for example, now lies within the city limits, but was founded on the eastern edge of the centre of Oxford in the early 18th century. Plant Oxford on the eastern edge of the suburb of Cowley now produces BMW’s Mini, but started life as the Morris factory in 1912, where William Morris pioneered mass production in the UK. Historically, some sites of this type were founded within urban areas – Frank Cooper’s Marmalade being a notable example – but these sites tend to have gone out of use in the 20th century and modern sites prefer urban fringe locations where there is space and access to communication routes.

Trajectory of Change: 15.6% Increasing Slowly, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

Factors Influencing Change: The development of these types reflects the expansion of industry in the UK since the Industrial Revolution. As pressure within settlements continues to rise with population increases, historic sites associated with these types will come under pressure. Globalisation and increased competition from overseas has, and will continue to have, an impact on these sites.

Biodiversity Potential: Low
In general, the nature and of these types supports little in the way of biodiversity.

Archaeological Potential: Low
Likely that all potential for archaeological deposits and historic buildings has been removed within the area of disturbance.
**HLC Type:** Mill/Mill Complex

**Broad Type:** Industry

**Legend:**

- **Total Area:** 52.59 ha (0.02%)
- **No. of Polygons:** 22 (0.14%)
- **Av. Polygon Size:** 2.4 hectares
- **Occurrence:** Very Rare

**Definition:** A building or complex used to process raw materials e.g. flour or paper

**Period:** Post-Medieval, Modern

Cuddesdon Mill
**Description:** A rare type in Oxfordshire that was once more common. By their nature, the Mills that do survive tend to be found next to water courses which would have powered their processing of various raw materials in the past. Clusters can be found along the Sor Brook and its tributaries west of Banbury, and the River Ock and Ginge Brook south-west and west of Abingdon. Some Mills are still active, such as the Blenheim Saw Mill near Combe, whilst many have been converted into residential properties. Often the buildings, much of the machinery, and the mill streams are preserved and the mill character retained, for example at Taynton Mill near Burford. At other sites, like Crawley Mill, modern conversion has removed more of the mill’s original character. Active and converted mills are often of some antiquity in Oxfordshire, with sites like Osney Mill dating to the 17th century.

**Trajectory of Change:** -57.4% Declining Rapidly, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

**Factors Influencing Change:** Changes in power generation has led to the decrease in mills which used water power. Access to cheaper materials from non-local sources has also led to a decline in this type. With increases in population, many of these historic sites have been converted for residential use.

**Biodiversity Potential:** Low - Medium
The potential for biodiversity will vary depending on the survival of water features. Many of these sites incorporate gardens and small fields which will also encourage diversity of wildlife. The age of these sites also leads to the presence of established field and property boundaries which can support a range of species. The buildings themselves, however, will have relatively low potential.

**Archaeological Potential:** Medium
Likely that archaeological deposits and historic buildings have been truncated or damaged, but some features may survive in isolated areas.
**HLC Type:** Energy

**Broad Type:** Industry

Legend:

Total Area: 67.26 ha (0.03%)

No. of Polygons: 2 (0.01%)

Av. Polygon Size: 33.6 hectares

Occurrence: Very Rare

**Definition:** A building or complex associated with the generation of energy not currently distributed for commercial use. This type relates directly to the nuclear fusion site at Culham.

**Period:** Modern
**Description:** This type is used only for Culham Centre for Fusion Energy where two nuclear fusion experiments are ongoing, researching the potential of nuclear electricity. The site is located south of Oxford, near Abingdon, on the site of the former Royal Naval Aviation Station, HMS Hornbill. The Airfield opened in 1944 and was transferred to the UK Atomic Energy Authority in 1960.

**Trajectory of Change:** ∞ Increasing Rapidly, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

**Factors Influencing Change:** This type is dependent on the UK’s energy strategy. As alternatives to fossil fuels continue to be researched, sites such as Culham will continue to form an important part of the energy industry.

**Biodiversity Potential:** Low
The largely built nature of this site and sites of this type will result in a low potential for biodiversity.

**Archaeological Potential:** Low
Likely that all potential for archaeological deposits and historic buildings has been removed within the area of disturbance.
**HLC Type:** Extractive Works

**Broad Type:** Industry

**Legend:**

- **Total Area:** 945.03 ha (0.36%)
- **No. of Polygons:** 59 (0.37%)
- **Av. Polygon Size:** 16.02 hectares
- **Occurrence:** Very Rare
- **Definition:** Surface workings including shallow shafts, lode workings, open-pit methods, and quarrying.
- **Period:** Medieval, Post-Medieval, Modern
Description: The extraction of raw materials, particularly stone and gravel, has and continues to be an important industry in Oxfordshire. The distribution of sites of this type relates to bedrock geology and superficial deposits. Many of these sites are found on the river terraces which can be utilised for gravel extraction and a concentration of gravel quarries can be seen to the west of Eynsham, on the terraces of the River Windrush. Many of the buildings in Oxfordshire use local stone and the yellow and orange limestone buildings are characteristic of the county, for example Chastleton House built of Great Tew Ironstone and the New Bodleian Library built of Taynton Limestone. A number of quarries are still active – such as that at Great Tew – but many more have gone out of use – such as the quarry outside Enslow or the disused site, now landfill, outside Neat Enstone. Extensive stone quarrying for building material has been a feature of Oxfordshire’s landscape since at least the Roman period and there are an abundance of place-names which indicate the presence of stone – Stonesfield, Enstone, Taston being a few examples.

Trajectory of Change: 205.5% Increasing Rapidly, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

Factors Influencing Change: The development of this type depends on settlement and infrastructure expansion. Historically, many of Oxfordshire’s settlements have used locally sourced materials. Whilst more material is now imported, the desirable nature of Oxfordshire’s stone has insured the survival of this industry.

Biodiversity Potential: Low - Medium
Biodiversity is dependent on whether the site is active or not. Active sites are unlikely to support a range of species. However, recently abandoned sites may see some flooding or encroachment by plant life which will encourage diversity.

Archaeological Potential: Low
Likely that all potential for archaeological deposits and historic buildings has been removed within the area of disturbance.
**HLC Type:** Flooded Extractive Pits

**Broad Type:** Industry

**Legend:**

| Total Area | 1255.9 ha (0.48%) |
| No. of Polygons | 44 (0.27%) |
| Av. Polygon Size | 28.54 hectares |
| Occurrence | Very Rare |

**Definition:** An area of disused mineral extraction which has been flooded to create a lake or pond.

**Period:** Modern

Flooded Extractive Pits near Stanton Harcourt (Courtesy of Paul Booth)
**Description:** As with the Extractive HLC Type, the distribution of this type reflects bedrock geology and superficial deposits of gravel. In the main it is the large 20th century gravel pits, as opposed to the stone quarries, which are flooded and converted into lakes or ponds. This is likely to be due to their position close to rivers. The largest area of lakes created in this manner is to the west of Oxford, on the River Windrush, where a number of pits have been flooded to create sailing and fishing lakes, such as Hardwick Leisure Park. A second large area can be found close to Thrupp, south of Oxford.

**Trajectory of Change:** \(\infty\) Increasing Rapidly, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

**Factors Influencing Change:** This type is closely linked to the exhaustion of resources by gravel extraction and, therefore, relates to the industrial sector and the quarrying of resources for settlement and infrastructure expansion. The use of these lakes for leisure, however, relates to the growth of recreational activities in the county.

**Biodiversity Potential:** Medium - High
This type encourages aquatic species. A number of sites of this type have been turned into nature reserves which will have particularly high potential for biodiversity.

**Archaeological Potential:** Low
Likely that all potential for archaeological deposits and historic buildings has been removed within the area of disturbance.
HLC Type: Depot

Broad Type: Industry

Legend:

Total Area: 16.55 ha (<0.01%)

No. of Polygons: 7 (0.04%)

Av. Polygon Size: 2.36 hectares

Occurrence: Very Rare

Definition: A space or complex where goods/vehicles are stored, repaired, and distributed.

Period: Modern

A vehicle depot near Cassington Mill (© Google Maps)
**Description:** This character type is rare in Oxfordshire. Where it does occur, sites tend to be found near to main roads. There is a concentration of these sites to the west of Oxford, including two close to the A40 in Witney.

**Trajectory of Change:** Increasing Rapidly, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

![Graph showing increasing trajectory]

**Factors Influencing Change:** The development of this type relates to modern commercialism and the transportation of goods.

**Biodiversity Potential:** Low
The built nature of these sites is unlikely to support a range of species.

**Archaeological Potential:** Low
Likely that all potential for archaeological deposits and historic buildings has been removed within the area of disturbance.
HLC Type: Industrial Estate

Broad Type: Industry

Legend:

Total Area: 1449.7 ha (0.56%)

No. of Polygons: 150 (0.93%)

Av. Polygon Size: 9.67 hectares

Occurrence: Rare

Definition: A site consisting of multiple companies associated with manufacturing and commerce, often sharing some common services.

Period: Modern

Osney Mead Industrial Estate, Oxford (Courtesy of Richard Oram)
**Description:** Industrial Estates are found across Oxfordshire, usually on the edge of settlements. These settlements are predominantly Towns – for example Didcot, Witney, Banbury – but smaller settlements have also seen the development of sites of this type in the 20th century. These smaller settlements often have a military association – Carterton and Gravenhill, for example. As with the Depot type, this type is usually found close to main roads.

**Trajectory of Change:** 56370.7% Increasing Rapidly, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

**Factors Influencing Change:** This type relates to the expansion of industry in the 20th century and the development of extensive road networks, which allow the positioning of this type of site on the rural-urban fringe with access to the main roads and motorways.

**Biodiversity Potential:** Low
The predominantly built nature of these sites will support little in the way of biodiversity. Some large sites may include landscaped green areas, but their impact on biodiversity potential will be minimal.

**Archaeological Potential:** Low
 Likely that all potential for archaeological deposits and historic buildings has been removed within the area of disturbance.
HLC Type(s): Timber Yard & Scrap Yard

Broad Type: Industry

Legend:

Total Area: 31.37 ha (0.01%)
No. of Polygons: 7 (0.04%)
Av. Polygon Size: 4.48 hectares
Occurrence: Very Rare

Definition: Buildings, sites and structures associated with the processing of timber, along with land used to store and sell reclaimed scrap material.

Period: Modern
Description: These types are rare in Oxfordshire, but are found across the county. They are found both on the edge of settlements, such as Banbury, and in more rural settings, such as the site west of Carterton. As with other industrial sites there is some correlation between the location of this type and main roads and also railways. The Timber Yard south of Goosey, for example, lies between farms adjacent to the Didcot to Swindon Great Western Railway line.

Trajectory of Change: \( \infty \) Increasing Rapidly, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

Factors Influencing Change: These types relate to increased modern demand for resources and increased recycling of materials. They are associated with both population increase and the growth of consumerism.

Biodiversity Potential: Low
The industrial nature of these sites is unlikely to support a variety of wildlife. The rural setting of some sites may encourage some biodiversity, however.

Archaeological Potential: Low
Likely that all potential for archaeological deposits and historic buildings has been removed within the area of disturbance.
**HLC Type(s):** Castle, Hillfort, Defence Site

**Broad Type:** Military

**Legend:**

- Castle
- Hillfort
- Defence Site

**Total Area:** 12.47 ha (<0.01%)

**No. of Polygons:** 9 (0.06%)

**Av. Polygon Size:** 1.39 hectares

**Occurrence:** Very Rare

**Definition:** Castle - private fortified residences, usually medieval in origin; Hillfort - prehistoric defensive enclosures bounded by one or more substantial banks and ditches; Defence Site - historic sites, buildings and structures with a defensive role – used only in Oxford City to characterise the city walls.

**Period:** Prehistoric, Medieval

**Castle Hill Hillfort, Long Wittenham**
**Description:** Once more common in Oxfordshire, these types are now very rare. The Defence Site type has only been used in Oxford to characterise the city’s medieval walls. Surviving Castles have only been recorded by this project in Oxford and Chipping Norton, with other Castles and ruins either too small to digitise, included within Historic Urban Cores, or characterised as a Managed Archaeological Site if there is active management of the land for recreation purposes. The same is the case with the type Hill Fort, where only one in the county – Castle Hill, Long Wittenham – has been characterised as this type. Many more examples exist but they often do not form the dominant current type; for example, many are used as agricultural fields.

**Trajectory of Change:** -73.4% Declining Critically, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

**Factors Influencing Change:** These types are often of considerable age and form some of the oldest parts of the landscape. Many, such as Oxford Castle, are preserved by their Scheduled Ancient Monument status. However, a number have been lost prior to the modern period. This type is sensitive to the intensification of farming and the expansion of settlement.

**Biodiversity Potential:** Low - High
The potential for biodiversity will vary depending on the context and nature of the site. The Hill Forts and Castles in rural locations are often protected from intensive farming and may, therefore, have a range of species present. City Walls, however, given their built nature and urban context, are likely to be much more limited.

**Archaeological Potential:** High
Unlikely for there to have been wholesale truncation or destruction of features; significant archaeological deposits or historic buildings may still survive.
**HLC Type(s):** Base, Airfield, Barracks
**Range and Communication**

**Broad Type:** Military

**Legend:**

- Total Area: 1646.42 ha (0.63%)
- No. of Polygons: 19 (0.12%)
- Av. Polygon Size: 86.65 hectares
- Occurrence: Rare

**Definition:** Land and buildings associated with: housing, training, and management of military personnel; runways and ancillary buildings for military aircraft; domestic facilities for military personnel; rifle and shooting ranges; and signal stations for military communiques.

**Period:** Modern

*Disused buildings at Upper Heyford Airfield (Courtesy of Richard Oram)*
**Description:** Whilst these types are rare within the county, they have a large impact on the landscape. The average site is very large, with Airfields like Brize Norton – the RAF’s largest station in the country – and RAF Benson dominating their surrounds. Whilst accommodation is found on Bases and in Barracks, a large proportion of the military population live within adjacent settlements. At Carterton, for example, development has been intrinsically linked to the growth of the military community. A number of these sites are now disused, including Upper Heyford. Whilst no longer in use, Upper Heyford retains its character, with the numerous hangers preserved and used for logistics and storage. Part of this site has been scheduled as a monument in recognition of the role the site played in the Cold War as a Quick Response Area with nuclear capabilities. A number of the military sites developed during the 1st World War – such as RAF Weston-on-the-Green and Vauxhall Barracks, Didcot – others, like RAF Benson and RAF Broadwell date to the 2nd World War.

**Trajectory of Change:** 3230.5% Increasing Rapidly, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

**Factors Influencing Change:** The development of these types is related to national military activity and security. There has been a decrease in these sites in the late 20th and early 21st century as the Ministry of Defence has sold or converted sites for alternative use.

**Biodiversity Potential:** Low - Medium
The potential for biodiversity is dependent on the use of the site. Some large sites have large green areas, particularly beside runways, which will support a range of species. Large hangers, barrack blocks, signal stations etc., however, will be more limited in the wildlife they can support.

**Archaeological Potential:** Low – High
Barracks & Communications: Likely that all potential for archaeological deposits and historic buildings has been removed within the area of disturbance.
Airfield: Likely that archaeological deposits and historic buildings have been truncated or damaged, but some features may survive in isolated areas.
Base & Range: Unlikely for there to have been wholesale truncation or destruction of features; significant archaeological deposits or historic buildings may still survive.
**HLC Type:** Allotment

**Broad Type:** Orchard and Horticulture

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**Legend:**

- **Total Area:** 271.23 ha (0.1%)
- **No. of Polygons:** 104 (0.65%)
- **Av. Polygon Size:** 2.61 hectares
- **Occurrence:** Rare

**Definition:** Land, often public, let out to individuals or an individual for the purposes of cultivation or other land use. Often in numerous small parcels, sometimes individually fenced.

**Period:** Post Medieval, Modern

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Cripley Meadow Allotments, Oxford
**Description:** This type is distributed across Oxfordshire, with noticeable ‘gaps’ in the north of the county and to the south-west of Oxford in the area of Stanford-in-the-Vale and Pusey. There is a slight concentration of this type in and around the city of Oxford. In general, Allotments are found within or on the edge of settlements of all sizes. This type was more common and has declined in frequency throughout the latter half of the 20th century; this is despite a resurgence in popularity in more recent years. Some of the oldest surviving sites may date to the 18th or earlier 19th century, such as those in Dorchester-on-Thames, but the foundation of new allotments peaked in the early 20th century and likely relates to the First World War.

**Trajectory of Change:** -42.5% Declining Rapidly, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

**Factors Influencing Change:** In the 20th century this type saw a dramatic increase in relation to the two world wars, this has since declined. Despite a reduction in number of sites, allotments remain in high demand and waiting lists across the county can be long. Due to their location, allotments are often under threat from settlement expansion and infill.

**Biodiversity Potential:** High
The wide variety of fruit and vegetables combined with grassy areas, hedges, and landscaped borders mean that biodiversity can be high on these sites.

**Archaeological Potential:** High
Unlikely for there to have been wholesale truncation or destruction of features; significant archaeological deposits or historic buildings may still survive.
**HLC Type:** Orchard

**Broad Type:** Orchard and Horticulture

**Legend:**

- Total Area: 154.52 ha (0.06%)
- No. of Polygons: 30 (0.19%)
- Av. Polygon Size: 5.15 hectares
- Occurrence: Very Rare

**Definition:** An enclosed area of land or garden for the growing of fruit-bearing trees.

**Period:** Post-Medieval, Modern

**Orchard, Great Milton**
**Description:** This type is now rare within Oxfordshire, but was, in the 19th century, more common. Surviving Orchards tend to be found in the south of the county, but examples are known from the north and north-west, like those at Great Tew and Ramsden which both date to the 19th century. Clusters in the south, like those west of Didcot, date to both the 19th and 20th century. This type is found both in rural locations, often associated with farms – e.g. Woodhouse Fruit Farm near Kingston Bagpuize – and on the edge of settlements – e.g. the Orchard on the northern edge of Shepherd’s Green. A number of Orchards will have been omitted from this project due to the absence of many from map sources. The pictured Orchard at Great Milton, for example, owned by Le Manoir Aux Quat Saisons, does not appear on OS Maps.

**Trajectory of Change:** -69% Declining Critically, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

**Factors Influencing Change:** The decline in Orchards is related to increased competition from international fruit producers and a desire for year-round produce. As the industry declines sites become vulnerable for redevelopment, particularly those on the edge of settlements.

**Biodiversity Potential:** Medium - High
Orchards contain a wide range of fruit trees and plant life, these can support a high variety of species.

**Archaeological Potential:** High
Unlikely for there to have been wholesale truncation or destruction of features; significant archaeological deposits or historic buildings may still survive.
**HLC Type:** Vineyard

**Broad Type:** Orchards and Horticulture

**Legend:**

- Total Area: 9.5 ha (<0.01%)
- No. of Polygons: 2 (0.01%)
- Av. Polygon Size: 4.75 hectares
- Occurrence: Very Rare
- Definition: An area of land and associated buildings where grapevines are cultivated.
- Period: Modern

Vineyard near Cane End (Courtesy of Charlotte Malone)
Description: As with Orchards, a number of Vineyards are likely to have been omitted by this project. In part, this is due to the absence of some Vineyards from the map bases used, for example Bothy Vineyard, near Tubney, possibly due to their recent date. Other sites have been included with the properties they are associated with, for example, Brightwell Vineyard at Rush Court, Shillingford. The two Vineyards identified – Castle Vineyard, near Black Bourton, and Cane End House, Cane End – are in the west and south of the county, respectively. Both Vineyards are found on the edge of rural settlements. They are both late 20th century creations. There is an unusual example of a 19th century Vineyard which was redeveloped as Nursery Close, Banbury in the 20th century.

Trajectory of Change: 78.1% Increasing Rapidly, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

Factors Influencing Change: There has been a resurgence in this type in Oxfordshire, not captured by this project. This reflects a growing market for English wine. Historic sites are likely to have declined due to cheaper international imports.

Biodiversity Potential: Medium
Vines and other plant life at these sites will likely encourage a range of species of wildlife.

Archaeological Potential: High
Unlikely for there to have been wholesale truncation or destruction of features; significant archaeological deposits or historic buildings may still survive.
**HLC Type:** Nursery/Garden Centre

**Broad Type:** Orchard and Horticulture

**Legend:**

- Total Area: 155.13 ha (0.06%)
- No. of Polygons: 30 (0.19%)
- Av. Polygon Size: 5.17 hectares
- Occurrence: Very Rare

**Definition:** Areas of land, buildings, and glass houses used for the cultivation and sale of plants and gardening equipment.

**Period:** Post-Medieval, Modern

*Notcutts Garden Centre on the A4074 south of Oxford (© Google Maps)*
**Description:** This type is rare in Oxfordshire and tends to concentrate in the west and south-west of the county. The modern Garden Centres tend to be on the edge of rural settlements on main roads, for example, Eynsham Nursery Garden Centre on the A40, or in more remote locations near main roads, for example Notcutts Garden Centre between Clifton Hampden and Nuneham Courtenay. This type of Garden Centre tends to date to the 20th century. There are examples, however, of older sites in the county. The Nursery at Freeland seems to date to the 19th century and a site near Chandlings Manor School dated to the 19th or early 20th century before being planted with trees in the later 20th century.

**Trajectory of Change:** 437.5% Increasing Rapidly, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

**Factors Influencing Change:** This type depends on the garden and nursery industry and seems to have rapidly grown in popularity in the 20th century. Their rate of foundation has dropped in the 21st century, but a number of older, large sites continue to be used.

**Biodiversity Potential:** Medium
Most sites of this type are strictly controlled environments which will not have a very high potential for biodiversity. However, the wide variety of plants grown at these sites may attract a range of wildlife.

**Archaeological Potential:** High
Unlikely for there to have been wholesale truncation or destruction of features; significant archaeological deposits or historic buildings may still survive.
**HLC Type:** Urban Garden

**Broad Type:** Orchard and Horticulture

**Legend:**

- [ ]

**Total Area:** 3.26 ha (<0.01%)

**No. of Polygons:** 16 (0.01%)

**Av. Polygon Size:** 0.2 hectares

**Occurrence:** Very Rare

**Definition:** Used in Oxford City only. Community gardens created in urban spaces. This includes the University of Oxford Botanic Gardens.

**Period:** Post-Medieval, Modern

The Urban Garden in front of Christ Church College, Oxford
Description: This type has only been recorded in Oxford City and its distribution is not representative of the county as a whole. This type is found close to the historic core of the city. The botanic gardens on the banks of the River Cherwell are amongst the oldest in Britain and date to the 17th century. It is one of the most diverse collections of plants in the world.

Factors Influencing Change: This type appears to have increased as Oxford expanded and the desire for open space in the city grew. It is also linked to scientific research and botanical studies at the University of Oxford.

Biodiversity Potential: Medium - High
The Botanic Gardens will support a very diverse range for species, far more than the other gardens in the city. These other gardens include a range of plant species which will encourage a range of wildlife.

Archaeological Potential: Medium
Likely that archaeological deposits and historic buildings have been truncated or damaged, but some features may survive in isolated areas.
**HLC Type(s):** Parkland/Designed Landscape & Deer Park

**Broad Type:** Ornamental

**Legend:**

- **Total Area:** 6703.35 ha (2.58%)
- **No. of Polygons:** 157 (0.98%)
- **Av. Polygon Size:** 42.7 hectares
- **Occurrence:** Occasional

**Definition:** Areas of land designated as Parkland or part of a Designed Landscape associated with a 'great house', and deer parks for the keeping of deer. Identified using English Heritage's Historic Parks and Gardens Register and from OS mapping.

**Period:** Medieval, Post-Medieval, Modern

_Blenheim Park (Courtesy of Paul Booth)_
Description: These types form a significant area in Oxfordshire and are widely distributed across the county. There is a concentration of large sites to the north and north-west of Oxford which includes Blenheim Park – the largest in the county at approximately 750 hectares – Ditchley, Eynsham, Cornbury, Middleton, and Kirtlington Park. There is also a line of parks on the watershed between the rivers Thames and Ock in the west of the county. In this cluster there is Buckland House, Pusey House, Hinton Manor, and Kingston Bagpuize House. Most of the sites date to the 17th and 18th centuries, but some sites may be earlier like the grounds and gardens associated with Studley Priory founded in the 12th century. A number of sites of this type have been lost, being converted to agricultural use or even, in some cases, educational purposes, for example Cokethorpe School.

Trajectory of Change: -8.6% Declining Slowly, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

Factors Influencing Change: The foundation of these types was a feature of the medieval and post-medieval aristocratic landscape. Some sites have been extended in the 20th century, but many have been denuded as land is turned to other uses. Some sites are protected but many others are vulnerable to conversion for agricultural, recreational, or other purposes.

Biodiversity Potential: High
These sites often contain a wide range of species and can include both native and non-native varieties.

Archaeological Potential: High
Unlikely for there to have been wholesale truncation or destruction of features; significant archaeological deposits or historic buildings may still survive.
**HLC Type:** Ornamental Water Body

**Broad Type:** Ornamental

Legend:

**Total Area:** 109.48 ha (0.04%)

**No. of Polygons:** 15 (0.09%)

**Av. Polygon Size:** 7.3 hectares

**Occurrence:** Very Rare

**Definition:** An artificial lake or pond, often made by damming a stream, and found within designed landscapes or parks.

**Period:** Medieval, Post-Medieval

Ornamental Lake, Cornbury Park (Courtesy of Paul Booth)
Description: Ornamental Water Bodies large enough to be recorded by this project correspond with those large parks lying to the north and north-west of Oxford. The largest is the lake at Blenheim Park, the largest area of Parkland in the county. This lake was formed by damming the River Glyme where it flows through the estate. As with the parks in which they lie, many of these features date to the 17th and 18th century.

Trajectory of Change: 3.4% Stable, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

Factors Influencing Change: As with Parkland and Deer Parks, this type is usually a feature of the post-medieval landscape and is vulnerable to the conversion of this type of land for other purposes, such as recreational or agricultural use.

Biodiversity Potential: High
Often created by damming natural watercourses and frequently within landscaped gardens, this type has a high potential for supporting a range of species.

Archaeological Potential: High
Unlikely for there to have been wholesale truncation or destruction of features; significant archaeological deposits or historic buildings may still survive.
**HLC Type:** Domestic Garden

**Broad Type:** Ornamental

**Legend:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Area: 301.37 ha (0.12%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of Polygons: 36 (0.22%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Av. Polygon Size: 8.37 hectares</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occurrence: Very Rare</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Definition:** An enclosed piece of ground devoted to the cultivation of flowers, fruit or vegetables for domestic use. Larger than two hectares. Frequently open to the public at certain times of the year.

**Period:** Post-Medieval, Modern

*Domestic Garden, Rousham (Courtesy of Paul Booth)*
**Description:** This type is uncommon within Oxfordshire, but is found scattered throughout the county. There is an absence of these sites in West Oxfordshire, but this is likely to reflect the digitisation of this area by a different project officer. In this area, sites are more likely to have been characterised as Designed Landscapes. With this taken into account, there is no lack of sites in the west of the county. Given their nature, this type is usually associated with large rural houses and tends to be found in a rural or semi-rural setting. Most sites date to the 19th and 20th century, but there are some notable exceptions. Chiselhampton House walled garden, for example, dates to the 16th and 17th century and those at Woodperry House likely date to the 18th century.

**Trajectory of Change:** 23.6% Increasing Moderately, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

**Factors Influencing Change:** This type is often associated with Post-Medieval country houses and is, therefore, affected by the same influences – namely conversion of use. The increase in this type in the 20th century reflects growing interest in gardens and horticulture.

**Biodiversity Potential:** High
This type is often characterised by diversity of plant life and has the potential to support a wide range of species.

**Archaeological Potential:** Medium
Likely that archaeological deposits and historic buildings have been truncated or damaged, but some features may survive in isolated areas.
**HLC Type:** Sports Facilities

**Broad Type:** Recreation

**Legend:**

- **Total Area:** 806.95 ha (0.31%)
- **No. of Polygons:** 183 (1.14%)
- **Av. Polygon Size:** 4.4 hectares
- **Occurrence:** Rare

**Definition:** Areas whose dominant character is provision for sporting activities, whether or not commercially provided, and whether or not in areas of purpose-built structures. This includes recreation grounds, playing fields, and swimming pools.

**Period:** Modern

Hornton Sports Field (Courtesy of Chris Tompkins)
**Description:** Whilst rare, this type is found throughout the county with a particular concentration in the City of Oxford. In general, sites of this type tend to be found within or on the edge of settlements, for example Didcot Football Ground, and most settlements have a site of this type – usually a recreation ground or sports field. Most date to the 20th century.

**Trajectory of Change:** 5827.5% Increasing Rapidly, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

**Factors Influencing Change:** This type increased rapidly in the 20th century due to the growth in population, interest in sport, and leisure time. The urban context of many of these sites may mean they are vulnerable to settlement expansion and infill. Conversely, sports and leisure facilities are often a requirement for new developments.

**Biodiversity Potential:** Low – Medium
Biodiversity will depend on site type. Swimming pools, for example, will have low potential whereas sports fields, with their grassy areas, hedgerows, and trees, will support a range of species.

**Archaeological Potential:** Medium
Likely that archaeological deposits and historic buildings have been truncated or damaged, but some features may survive in isolated areas.
**HLC Type:** Racing Sports Site

**Broad Type:** Recreation

**Legend:**

**Total Area:** 526.75 ha (0.2%)

**No. of Polygons:** 19 (0.12%)

**Av. Polygon Size:** 27.7 hectares

**Occurrence:** Very Rare

**Definition:** Facilities for racing motor vehicles or horses which may also include grandstands or concourses.

**Period:** Modern

**Gallops on Woolstone Down**
**Description:** This is a very rare type in Oxfordshire with a very distinct concentration in the south of the county. The sites here are mainly associated with horse racing. South of Wantage there is an excellent example of gallops extending over large tracts of the landscape in the area of Pewit Farm. Although rare in the county as whole, this type has a significant presence here in the south. Those examples elsewhere in the county include motorcycle tracks near Hornton and Standlake and a point-to-point racecourse near Kingston Blount. Sites of this type usually date to the 20th and 21st century.

**Trajectory of Change:** 194.6% Increasing Rapidly, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

**Factors Influencing Change:** The rapid increase in this type in the 20th century relates to the increased demand for recreational facilities and the development of the horse racing industry in South Oxfordshire.

**Biodiversity Potential:** Medium
Tracks and made surfaces for racing will have a low potential for biodiversity. However, the rural setting, hedges, verges, and large grassy areas associated with this type will likely support a range of wildlife.

**Archaeological Potential:** Medium
Likely that archaeological deposits and historic buildings have been truncated or damaged, but some features may survive in isolated areas.
**HLC Type(s):** Other Leisure, Community Centre and Hunting Site

**Legend:**
- [ ]
- [ ]
- [ ]

**Broad Type:** Recreation

**Total Area:** 421.78 ha (0.16%)

**No. of Polygons:** 138 (0.86%)

**Av. Polygon Size:** 3.06 hectares

**Occurrence:** Rare

**Definition:**
- Other Leisure - places used for other types of sporting and recreational activities;
- Community Centre - buildings which provide service to both rural and urban groups of people;
- Hunting Site - areas or structures associated with the hunting of animals.

**Period:** Modern

**Oxford Playhouse Theatre**
**Description:** Although not common, sites of these types are found throughout Oxfordshire. Only one Hunting Site has been identified as a current type – the hunt kennels west of Chipping Norton. The majority of sites are found within or on the edge of settlements – for example, Headington Community Centre and the (pictured) Play House on Beaumont Street, Oxford.

**Trajectory of Change:** **1778.8% Increasing Rapidly, and Freq. of Foundation** (graph)

**Factors Influencing Change:** Other Leisure and Community Centre sites increased rapidly in the 20th century due to the growth in population, interest in sport, and leisure time. The urban context of many of these sites may mean they are vulnerable to settlement expansion or redevelopment. Conversely, leisure and community facilities are often a requirement for new developments.

**Biodiversity Potential** Low – Medium
Biodiversity will depend on site type. Community Centres, for example, will have low potential whereas play grounds, with their grassy areas, hedgerows, and trees, will support a range of species.

**Archaeological Potential:** Low – Medium
Other Leisure & Community Centre: Likely that all potential for archaeological deposits and historic buildings has been removed within the area of disturbance. Hunting Site: Likely that archaeological deposits and historic buildings have been truncated or damaged, but some features may survive in isolated areas.
**HLC Type:** Country Park

**Broad Type:** Recreation

**Legend:**

- **Total Area:** 239.8 ha (0.09%)
- **No. of Polygons:** 18 (0.11%)
- **Av. Polygon Size:** 13.32 hectares
- **Occurrence:** Very Rare

**Definition:** An area of managed countryside designated for visitors to enjoy recreations such as walking. Often provides public facilities such as car parking, toilets, cafes and visitor information. Sometimes found on the rural-urban fringe.

**Period:** Modern

Cutteslowe Park (© Google Maps)
**Description:** This is an uncommon type in Oxfordshire, probably due to the large number of parks associated with private houses, but with public rights of access. Included in this type is Cotswold Wildlife Park, a safari type attraction with animals from various parts of the world. Sites of this type are generally found in rural locations, but can appear in more urban contexts – such as Spiceball Country Park, Banbury and Shotover Country Park and Cutteslowe Park which lie on the edge of Oxford.

**Trajectory of Change:** 2062.1% Increasing Rapidly, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

**Factors Influencing Change:** The increase in this type in the 20th century relates to growing desire for access to green and natural spaces for the public. It may also relate to the conversion of private parks to recreational sites. The location of some of these sites on the edge of settlements may make them vulnerable to settlement expansion.

**Biodiversity Potential:** High
This type often contains a range of species, some of which may be non-native.

**Archaeological Potential:** High
Unlikely for there to have been wholesale truncation or destruction of features; significant archaeological deposits or historic buildings may still survive.
**HLC Type:** Public Park

**Broad Type:** Recreation

**Legend:**
- Total Area: 134.49 ha (0.05%)
- No. of Polygons: 40 (0.25%)
- Av. Polygon Size: 3.36 hectares
- Occurrence: Very Rare

**Definition:** Land usually in urban areas dedicated to outdoor public recreation. Usually with ornamental planting of trees and shrubs, with some formal gardens, ornamental ponds, public conveniences & playgrounds. Primarily used in Oxford City.

**Period:** Post-Medieval, Modern

Cricket Pavilion in University Parks, Oxford
**Description:** This type was created to distinguish the urban parks from the larger, more rural Country Parks. It is used almost exclusively within the city of Oxford as it was added relatively late in the project. Edmunds Park in Didcot was also characterised using this type. The largest Public Park recorded is the approximately 28 hectare University Parks which lies in the centre of Oxford. South Park to the east of the city centre is almost as large and dates to the 17th century. The majority of sites however, are both smaller and more modern. 20th and 21st century parks include Blackbird Leys Park and Grandpont Park.

**Trajectory of Change:** \[ \infty \] Increasing Rapidly, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

**Factors Influencing Change:** This type continues to be created in the 21st century. This likely due to increased population size and growing interest in green, leisure spaces within urban areas. The provision of recreational spaces is now often a requirement of modern developments.

**Biodiversity Potential:** Medium

The urban context of these parks and their high visitor numbers will reduce the potential for biodiversity. Large grassed areas, stands of trees, and flower beds will, however, support some diversity of wildlife.

**Archaeological Potential:** High

Unlikely for there to have been wholesale truncation or destruction of features; significant archaeological deposits or historic buildings may still survive.
**HLC Type:** Golf Course

**Broad Type:** Recreation

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</table>

| **Total Area:** | 2001.1 ha (0.77%) |
| **No. of Polygons:** | 51 (0.32%) |
| **Av. Polygon Size:** | 39.24 hectares |
| **Occurrence:** | Rare |

**Definition:** A landscaped area of ground, encompassing different types of terrain and features, such as ponds, sand-filled bunkers etc., on which the game of golf is played. This also includes associated buildings, such as club houses.

**Period:** Modern

Southfields Golf Club, Oxford (© Google Maps)
Description: A large number of Golf Courses are scattered throughout Oxfordshire, covering in excess of 2000 hectares of land. There is an absence of this type from the areas immediately north-west and south-east of Oxford. Whilst rural locations predominate, sites are found within Oxford itself – Oxford Golf Course in Temple Cowley and Oxford Golf Centre off Botley Road. Some of these sites are very large: Tadmarton Heath Golf Club is in excess of 130 hectares in area and Tubney Golf course measures approximately 160 hectares. Most of the Golf Courses date to the 20th century and were developed within various types of enclosures. Some sites were previously parkland – for example Heythrop Park Hotel and Golf Course – but these are in the minority.

Trajectory of Change: Increasing Rapidly, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

Factors Influencing Change: Golf Courses developed rapidly in the 20th century as the sport became more popular. The type is dependent on the future popularity of the sport.

Biodiversity Potential: Medium
Golf courses often contain a variety of features which encourage biodiversity – for example woodland, hedges, and water features

Archaeological Potential: High
Unlikely for there to have been wholesale truncation or destruction of features; significant archaeological deposits or historic buildings may still survive.
HLC Type: Nature Reserve

Broad Type: Recreation

Legend:

Total Area: 446.02 ha (0.17%)

No. of Polygons: 21 (0.13%)

Av. Polygon Size: 21.24 hectares

Occurrence: Very Rare

Definition: Areas of the natural landscape which are managed to sustain or protect wildlife and plant populations. These include heath, scrub, wetland, and wooded environments and can involve some man-made landscape features such as irrigation channels or ponds.

Nature Reserve, Iffley Meadows (Courtesy of Paul Booth)

Period: Modern
**Description:** This type is very rare in Oxfordshire and is dispersed thinly across the county. Whilst covering only a small part of the area of the county, sites of this type are often important parts of the landscape and are frequently protected. The largest site is the RSPB site at Otmoor, an extensively drained former moor. Wet environments extensively drained by ditches and combining ponds, streams, and reed beds are the most frequent environments preserved as Nature Reserves – Chimney and Dry Sandford being two other examples.

**Trajectory of Change:** \( \infty \) Increasing Rapidly, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

**Factors Influencing Change:** This type developed in the 20th century as people became concerned with preservation of unique or unusual habitats for animals and plant life. In Oxfordshire this type can be found close to settlement and may come under threat from settlement growth.

**Biodiversity Potential:** High
By their nature there is a very high potential for biodiversity at sites of this type. Many reserves attract wildlife not commonly seen elsewhere in the countryside.

**Archaeological Potential:** High
Unlikely for there to have been wholesale truncation or destruction of features; significant archaeological deposits or historic buildings may still survive.
**HLC Type:** Managed Archaeological Site

**Broad Type:** Recreation

**Legend:**

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<td>No. of Polygons</td>
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<tr>
<td>Av. Polygon Size</td>
<td>5.78 hectares</td>
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<tr>
<td>Occurrence</td>
<td>Very Rare</td>
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**Definition** Archaeological sites managed and presented to the public.

**Period** Sites will be of various dates but management of the sites is a Modern practice.

*North Leigh Roman Villa (Courtesy of Richard Oram)*
Description: This type is only used where the archaeological character and the preservation of the site for the public is the dominant character of the site. Many other archaeological sites exist in the county, a number with upstanding remains, some of these may have been characterised as ‘Hillfort’ or ‘Castle’ and many more will have not been the predominant landscape type and will not, therefore, have been captured by this project. Sites of this type which have been identified are dispersed across the county, in both rural and more urban contexts. Sites date to a number of different periods – Uffington Iron Age Hill Fort, North Leigh Roman villa, and the Bronze Age site of the Devil’s Quoits, for example.

Trajectory of Change: 518.8% Increasing Rapidly, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

Factors Influencing Change: Despite the various ages of the sites, this type rapidly increased in the 20th century as public and government interest in the preservation and management of historic monuments developed. This type is now often protected by the Scheduled Monument Act, but may still be at risk from settlement expansion, minerals extraction, and infrastructure schemes.

Biodiversity Potential: Medium-High
Many sites of this type have not been intensively farmed and preserve natural habitats which can support a range of wildlife. Some sites are more managed, with paths and maintained grass areas which will reduce the potential for biodiversity.

Archaeological Potential: High
Unlikely for there to have been wholesale truncation or destruction of features; significant archaeological deposits or historic buildings may still survive.
**HLC Type:** Village

**Broad Type:** Rural Settlement

**Legend:**

- Orange

**Total Area:** 9281.9 ha (3.6%)

**No. of Polygons:** 1136 (7.1%)

**Av. Polygon Size:** 8.17 hectares

**Occurrence:** Common

**Definition:** Collection of farmsteads, dwellings, yards, gardens etc. Larger than a hamlet, but smaller than a town. Often includes church, inn, shops, workshops, manor house.

**Period:** Medieval, Post-Medieval, Modern

Great Milton
Description: This is one of the most significant types in Oxfordshire, covering over 9000 hectares of land and being found throughout the county. Whilst Villages are found throughout, there are small gaps: north of the town of Faringdon, in the surrounds of the town of Charlbury, and south of Ewelme. In the former two cases, these gaps seem to relate to the presence and influence of a town on settlement patterns. In the latter, the gap south of Ewelme contains a number of Hamlets which lie in the northern part of the Chilterns AONB. Villages in Oxfordshire often form some of the oldest surviving parts of the landscape, with some of their buildings and monuments – particularly churches – dating back to the 11th or 12th century. Some of the current Villages lie adjacent to the remains of deserted or shrunken medieval Villages. Churchill, for example, lies to the east of earthworks of the older Village and due to this the Old Church sits just beyond the western fringe of the current Village.

Trajectory of Change: 107.4% Increasing Rapidly, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

Factors Influencing Change: Initial population expansion in the medieval period led to the establishment of many of the county’s Villages. This declined in the Post-Medieval period, probably as Towns became more important. The 20th century has seen a rapid increase in this type as populations grow, commuting becomes more common, and more people are able to work from home.

Biodiversity Potential: Low – Medium
The built nature of much of the sites of this type will support only a small range of biodiversity. However, gardens, greens, hedgerows, and trees in and around the villages will encourage a range of species.

Archaeological Potential: High
Unlikely for there to have been wholesale truncation or destruction of features; significant archaeological deposits or historic buildings may still survive.
**HLC Type:** Hamlet

**Broad Type:** Rural Settlement

**Legend:**

- **Total Area:** 1410.6 ha (0.54%)
- **No. of Polygons:** 247 (1.53%)
- **Av. Polygon Size:** 5.71 hectares
- **Occurrence:** Occasional

**Definition:** Small settlements with no ecclesiastical or lay administrative function and usually with no other amenities.

**Period:** Medieval, Post-Medieval, Modern

Bessels Leigh
**Description:** Less common than Villages but still found throughout the county, Hamlets also make up an important part of Oxfordshire’s landscape. As with the Villages, they are often some of the oldest features in the landscape, dating to the medieval period. Some Hamlets have shrunk in the late post-medieval and modern periods – Chimney, for example, was once much larger than it is today. The gap in the distribution of Villages south of Ewelme is neatly filled by the distribution of Hamlets. Indeed there is a concentration of this type along the northern part of the Chilterns AONB, including places such as Oakley Court, Upper Maidensgrove, and Hammonds End. A second concentration strings out along and to the south of the River Thames in the west of the county and includes places such as Radcot, Thrupp, Eaton, Bablock Hythe, and Gozzards Ford.

**Trajectory of Change:** 60.9% Increasing Rapidly, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

**Factors Influencing Change:** The development of this type relates to population growth – first in the medieval period as agriculture intensified and then in the 20th century as commuting developed and more people were able to work from home.

**Biodiversity Potential:** Low – Medium
The built nature of much of the sites of this type will support only a small range of biodiversity. However, gardens, greens, hedgerows, and trees in and around the hamlets will encourage a range of species.

**Archaeological Potential:** High
Unlikely for there to have been wholesale truncation or destruction of features; significant archaeological deposits or historic buildings may still survive.
**HLC Type:** Rural Dwelling

**Broad Type:** Rural Settlement

**Legend:**
- **Total Area:** 122.78 ha (0.05%)
- **No. of Polygons:** 44 (0.27%)
- **Av. Polygon Size:** 2.79 hectares
- **Occurrence:** Very Rare

**Definition:** Isolated residential properties in rural settings. N.B. This type has been variously used within the project: in the south and eastern parts of the county this type has not been used and instead Country House has been favoured. However, it was deemed that this term was not appropriate for some smaller properties and so the type Dwelling was preferred in the west and north-west.

**Period:** Post-Medieval, Modern

Langley Mill Rural Dwelling, formerly a mill (© Google Maps)
**Description:** This type is rare within Oxfordshire. In part this is a result of the characterisation of many of these properties as the type Country House. The bias towards the west and north-west of the county is a product of recording only and will not reflect the true distribution of this type across Oxfordshire. Isolated dwellings are often converted agricultural buildings – farms or barns of Post-Medieval date – Gill Mill farm, for example. The conversion of older buildings in the 20th century has occurred alongside the building of new isolated properties, such as York Cottage south of Churchill, built on the site of post-medieval clay pits. By their nature, sites of this type are found in rural settings, away from settlements. Sites reuse older buildings, convert industrial sites to domestic use, or appropriate existing enclosures for the building of houses and gardens.

**Trajectory of Change:** 47.5% Increasing Moderately, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

**Factors Influencing Change:** The development of this type is related to population growth and the increasing desirability and ability to live in a rural setting. It is also linked to the decline of industrial and agricultural premises.

**Biodiversity Potential:** Low – Medium
The built aspect of this type is unlikely to support a range of species. However, reused properties may contain established hedgerows and stands of trees which will encourage a diversity of wildlife. Gardens, ponds, and trees associated with these properties will also support plants and wildlife.

**Archaeological Potential:** High
Unlikely for there to have been wholesale truncation or destruction of features; significant archaeological deposits or historic buildings may still survive.
**HLC Type:** Rural Hotel

**Broad Type:** Rural Settlement

**Legend:**

- **Total Area:** 41.16 ha (0.02%)
- **No. of Polygons:** 10 (0.06%)
- **Av. Polygon Size:** 4.12 hectares
- **Occurrence:** Very Rare

**Definition:** A building and its directly associated grounds within a rural settlement or setting used for the accommodation of paying travellers and guests.

**Period:** Post-Medieval, Modern

Sudbury House Hotel, Faringdon
**Description:** A very rare type recorded by this project. Hotels in rural settlements and settings are more frequent than the number recorded, but are often not large enough or readily identified using this project’s resources to be recorded. Those that have been identified tend to date to the 20th century, although there are earlier examples – Sturdy’s Castle Public House has functioned since the early 17th century. Some rural 20th century hotels redevelop earlier sites – Heythrop Park Hotel, for example, redeveloped a Country House and Park. Others are wholly new creations, like Oxford Witney Four Pillars Hotel on the A40 south of Witney, built on the post-medieval closes called “The Moors”.

**Trajectory of Change:** 135.8% Increasing Rapidly, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

**Factors Influencing Change:** The development of this type reflects a growing interest in recreational activities and increased disposable income in the 20th century. Older sites are likely to relate more to requiring accommodation whilst travelling and this is still certainly a factor.

**Biodiversity Potential:** Low - Medium
The built aspects of this type are unlikely to encourage biodiversity; however, sites of this type often include large and ornate gardens which will support a range of species.

**Archaeological Potential:** Low
Likely that all potential for archaeological deposits and historic buildings has been removed within the area of disturbance.
**HLC Type:** Rural Caravan/Chalet/Camping

**Broad Type:** Rural Settlement

**Legend:**

- **Total Area:** 189.33 ha (0.07%)
- **No. of Polygons:** 39 (0.24%)
- **Av. Polygon Size:** 4.86 hectares
- **Occurrence:** Very Rare

**Definition:** An area in a rural setting which provides space for those with tents, caravans or similar recreational vehicles to park. Occasionally includes permanent chalets or caravans. Sometimes with associated facilities such as power points, toilet blocks etc.

**Period:** Modern

Banbury Hill Farm Camping and Caravanning, north of Charlbury (© Google Maps)
**Description:** A rare type in the county, caravan and camping sites are found either on the edge of rural settlements or in more isolated rural settings. Examples of village-edge sites include Great Bourton and Tenacre Caravan Park at Sandford-on-Thames. More rural sites include Riverside Caravan Park on the Thames east of Stanton Harcourt and Merryweather Farm Caravan Park east of Chipping Norton. This type is found across the county, with concentrations along the River Thames in West Oxfordshire, around the southern edge of Oxford, in the Cotswolds near Chipping Norton, and along the Thames near Wallingford. The sites date to the 20th century.

**Trajectory of Change:** \( \infty \) Increasing Rapidly, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

**Factors Influencing Change:** The rapid increase in sites of this type relates to the growing recreation and leisure industry in the 20th century and the growth of Oxfordshire as a tourist destination.

**Biodiversity Potential:** Low-Medium
This type is often characterised by green open spaces, hedgerows, and gardens which will encourage biodiversity. However, these sites are often intensively managed which will reduce species supported.

**Archaeological Potential:** High
Unlikely for there to have been wholesale truncation or destruction of features; significant archaeological deposits or historic buildings may still survive.
**HLC Type:** Country House

**Legend:**

- **Total Area:** 550.59 ha (0.21%)
- **No. of Polygons:** 131 (0.81%)
- **Av. Polygon Size:** 4.2 hectares
- **Occurrence:** Rare

**Definition:** Gentry house in a rural setting, normally within a landscaped park and usually accompanied by a range of buildings, yards, gardens etc.

**Period:** Post-Medieval, Modern (although Medieval elements may also be present)

Chippinghurst Manor
**Description:** Country Houses are found across Oxfordshire with a concentration in the north of the county, in the countryside around Banbury. Houses are also scattered across the Cotswolds and Chilterns AONB, in the bottom of the Thames Valley, and to the immediate east of Oxford. There are notable absences of this type in the south-east, beneath the slopes of the Chilterns, and to the north of Oxford. The majority of the houses pre-date the 18th century and there has been a decline in the type throughout the 20th century. The 20th century sites tend to be smaller and such sites have been characterised as Rural Dwellings in the west of Oxfordshire – accounting for the ‘gap’ apparent here in the distribution of Country Houses.

**Trajectory of Change:** -0.8% Stable, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

**Factors Influencing Change:** Country Houses declined in the late 19th and 20th centuries as a result of changing socio-economic factors which made the sustainability of country estates more challenging. Many sites have been converted for recreational purposes. Smaller sites have since developed in the later 20th century as population and wealth have increased.

**Biodiversity Potential:** Medium
Often older and more established properties, the gardens and hedgerows associated with this type can support a range of species.

**Archaeological Potential:** High
Unlikely for there to have been wholesale truncation or destruction of features; significant archaeological deposits or historic buildings may still survive.
**HLC Type:** Farmstead

**Broad Type:** Rural Settlement

**Legend:**

**Total Area:** 4394.7 ha (1.7%)

**No. of Polygons:** 1095 (6.8%)

**Av. Polygon Size:** 4.01 hectares

**Occurrence:** Common

**Definition:** A farmhouse, ancillary farm buildings, yards, gardens, and small fields forming the operational centre for the surrounding farmland.

**Period:** Post-Medieval, Modern

*Castle Farm, Denton*
**Description:** This type is one of the most numerous in terms of polygons recorded in Oxfordshire. Most of the sites recorded date to the 19th century and probably relate to the reorganisation of the landscape by the Enclosure Acts of the late 18th and early 19th centuries. There is a second peak in the foundation of farms in the mid-20th century. Farms are found throughout the county, with no clear concentrations, but some voids. Many of these voids coincide with urban areas – Kidlington, Didcot, and Banbury etc. – but the lack of farms in other areas is less comprehensible. For example, the large area between Thame and the Chiltern Hills, the North Wessex Downs, particularly around Uffington, and the small area north-west of Burford. It is possible that the downs have been farmed in a different way, both in the past and today due to their different geology and associated agriculture. Near Thame and Burford an explanation relating to the age of farms may be more appropriate as the oldest farms tend to be within settlements and are often characterised with these; so a lack of farm types may reflect merely the presence of older farms rather than an absence of farms.

**Trajectory of Change:** 39.71% Increasing Moderately, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

**Factors Influencing Change:** The development of this type relates to changes in the agricultural industry and also population increases. Whilst a larger population puts more demands on agricultural production it also encroaches on to agricultural land, subsuming farms which previously lay on the edge of settlements.

**Biodiversity Potential:** Medium
Despite predominantly comprising buildings, many of these buildings often provide habitats for a range of species – particularly bats, birds, and owls. The historic and established nature of many of the sites will also encourage diversity of plant life and wildlife.

**Archaeological Potential:** High
Unlikely for there to have been wholesale truncation or destruction of features; significant archaeological deposits or historic buildings may still survive.
**HLC Type:** Green

**Broad Type:** Unenclosed Land

**Legend:**

- **Total Area:** 82.89 ha (0.03%)
- **No. of Polygons:** 15 (0.09%)
- **Av. Polygon Size:** 5.52 hectares
- **Occurrence:** Very Rare

**Definition:** Area of often grassy ground, usually common, normally situated at the centre of a Village or Hamlet, sometimes within a Town. Often maintained by grazing.

**Period:** Medieval, Post-Medieval, Modern

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Church Green, Stanford in the Vale
**Description:** Now a very rare type within Oxfordshire, greens were once more common, forming the core of many rural settlements. Many more sites will exist in the county, but they are often too small to record, having been encroached upon both in the Post-Medieval and Modern periods. At Leafield, for example, the historic Green has been built upon by the village school and what remains is smaller than a hectare and, therefore, has not been recorded by this project. Those Greens which have been recorded tend to be found in the south of the county. Peppard Common forms perhaps the largest example with a large area of common ground between the Villages of Rotherfield Peppard and Peppard Hill. Further west, good examples can be found in Goosey, Grove, and Steventon. In the main, this type pre-dates the late 18th century and is found in the historic core of settlements. The lack of Greens identified within Oxford is the product of characterisation, with sites recorded as Commons and not Greens, Wolvercote Common, for example. Consequently, they are included with the Rough Ground type.

**Trajectory of Change:** -9.41% Declining Slowly, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

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**Factors Influencing Change:** The location of these sites means that they are, and have been, vulnerable to development and population pressures.

**Biodiversity Potential:** Medium
Sites of this type can be quite well-established with older trees and shrubs which will support a variety of species. Wild meadows and ponds on some of these sites will also encourage biodiversity.

**Archaeological Potential:** High
Unlikely for there to have been wholesale truncation or destruction of features; significant archaeological deposits or historic buildings may still survive.
HLC Type: Rough Ground

Broad Type: Unenclosed Land

Legend:  

Total Area: 1844.8 ha (0.71%)

No. of Polygons: 146 (0.91%)

Av. Polygon Size: 12.6 hectares

Occurrence: Rare

Definition: Areas which show no visible evidence of recent agricultural improvements, which have evolved to their recent extent as a result of a process of woodland clearance, grazing, and episodes of agriculture and settlement since early prehistory. Includes: Upland, Downland, and unimproved common ground.

Period: Medieval, Post-Medieval

Flooded Port Meadow, Oxford
Description: Large areas of unenclosed land still survive in Oxfordshire’s modern landscape and form discrete clusters: on the chalk downlands in the south and south-east of the county, along the River Cherwell to the north of Oxford, and, surprisingly, within Oxford. The first concentration coincides with the North Wessex and Chilterns AONBs and includes open chalk landscapes such as Ardington Down and Swyncombe Down. The second two concentrations focus on riverine landscapes – along the Cherwell in the area of Shipton-on-Cherwell and along the Thames within the city of Oxford. The high frequency of Rough Ground in the city appears to be the consequence of two factors – the university and Port Meadow. Many of the colleges keep meadows in the town – Christ Church Meadow, Magdalen’s Long Meadow, and Merton’s Music Meadow, for example – and the college boathouses lie within an open riverine landscape by the Thames. However, it is the contribution of Port Meadow which is most significant. On the eastern edge of the city, this meadow covers in excess of 160 hectares and was first recorded in Domesday.

Trajectory of Change: -67.7% Declining Critically, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

Factors Influencing Change: This type developed prior to the 18th century and has since been in decline. This decline is mainly due to enclosure, but is also affected by settlement expansion. In Oxfordshire, much of this land is now used for recreational purposes – horse racing and walking on the downs, rowing along the Thames etc. – and this type may depend on the continued popularity of these activities.

Biodiversity Potential: High
Some of the least managed parts of the landscape and amongst the oldest, this type is likely to support a wide range of species and have high potential for biodiversity.

Archaeological Potential: High
Unlikely for there to have been wholesale truncation or destruction of features; significant archaeological deposits or historic buildings may still survive.
**HLC Type:** Historic Urban Core

**Broad Type:** Urban Settlement

**Legend:**

- **Total Area:** 513.42 ha (0.2%)
- **No. of Polygons:** 153 (0.95%)
- **Av. Polygon Size:** 3.36 hectares
- **Occurrence:** Rare

**Definition:** The long-established historic centre of a Town or City, typically delineated in historic characterisation as the extent shown on an early epoch of OS mapping.

**Period:** Medieval, Post-Medieval

**Broad Street, Oxford**
Description: This is a type which only relates to Urban Settlements and, as such, its distribution corresponds with the position of Towns in the county and with Oxford itself. These are: Banbury, Charlbury, Woodstock, Bicester, Witney, Eynsham, Bampton, Wantage, Didcot, Abingdon, Thame, Chipping Norton, Burford, Faringdon, Henley-on-Thames, and Wallingford, along with the historic centre of Oxford and what are now its suburbs. The majority of the cores tend to be Post-Medieval, but important Medieval elements still survive, such as the market building in Burford, The Bear Public House in Oxford, The Prebendal Manor in Thame, along with many of the urban churches.

Trajectory of Change: -1.7% Stable, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

Factors Influencing Change: By its nature, this type is historic and not currently being created. This type declined due to 20th century urban regeneration schemes. In the late 20th century and 21st century, the focus on preservation and restoration of historic cores has slowed this process.

Biodiversity Potential: Low
Biodiversity tends to be relatively low in urban environments.

Archaeological Potential: High
Unlikely for there to have been wholesale truncation or destruction of features; significant archaeological deposits or historic buildings may still survive.
### HLC Type(s): City, Town, Urban Dwelling

**Broad Type:** Urban Settlement

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- **Total Area:** 5859.1 ha (2.25%)
- **No. of Polygons:** 1041 (6.47%)
- **Av. Polygon Size:** 5.63 hectares
- **Occurrence:** Common

**Definition:**
- **Town:** Centres of business and population with an area in excess of 2.5 square kilometres (although some smaller places are also historically considered towns, for example, where they are market or former county towns);
- **City:** Large urban settlements, including residential, industrial, civic, commercial and business areas. Usually having a cathedral within its bounds. Often a central place within a region, with subsidiary towns etc;
- **Urban Dwelling:** Individual residential properties within urban areas which are larger than 1 hectare.

**Period:** Post-Medieval, Modern

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**Iffley Road Terraces, Oxford**
**Description:** Towns are found throughout Oxfordshire, but only one city is located within the county – Oxford. Towns are most common in West Oxfordshire and least common in Cherwell District. However, the Towns in Cherwell – Banbury and Bicester – are significantly larger than many of the towns in the west – for example, Burford and Bampton. The position of the Towns, most of which date to the Post-Medieval period and many of which have Medieval foundations, has influenced the development of many other HLC types – for example, road networks and commercial sites. Oxford is significantly larger than any of the other urban areas and is central to the economic prosperity of the county, with industries like Oxford University Press and BMW’s Mini Factory being found here and the city being a major tourist attraction. Both the towns and the city have seen major expansion in the 20th century.

**Trajectory of Change:** 3065% Increasing Rapidly, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

**Factors Influencing Change:** The development of these types is intrinsically linked to population increase and subsequent settlement expansion on to surrounding land.

**Biodiversity Potential:** Low
The built nature and context of most sites of this type results in a low potential for biodiversity.

**Archaeological Potential:** Medium – High
Urban Dwelling: Likely that archaeological deposits and historic buildings have been truncated or damaged, but some features may survive in isolated areas.
Town & City: Unlikely for there to have been wholesale truncation or destruction of features; significant archaeological deposits or historic buildings may still survive.
**HLC Type(s):** Urban Hotel, Public House, Market

**Broad Type:** Urban Settlement

**Legend:**

- Red: Urban Hotel
- Orange: Public House
- Brown: Market

**Total Area:** 11.34 ha (<0.01%)

**No. of Polygons:** 52 (0.32%)

**Av. Polygon Size:** 0.22 hectares

**Occurrence:** Very Rare

**Definition:** Urban Hotel – a building and its directly associated grounds, used for the accommodation of paying travellers and guests; Public House - Public Houses and Inns along with their gardens in an urban setting; Market - An open space or covered building(s) to which livestock, goods, etc. are brought and displayed for sale.

**Period:** Post-Medieval, Modern

*Gloucester Green Market, Oxford*
**Description:** Due to their small size, with rare exception, these types have only been identified in Oxford City Centre. They do not, therefore, represent all sites of this type in the county. Those identified include the many Medieval and Post-Medieval pubs like the 17th century King’s Arms and The Mitre. One of the most interesting sites is the Covered Market between High Street and Market Street, a permanent market which first opened in 1774.

**Trajectory of Change:** Increasing Rapidly, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

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**Factors Influencing Change:** Relating to commerce and recreation, these types depend upon population and settlement size. Their increase in the Post-Medieval period coincides with the expansion of Oxford and growing population. These types continue to develop in the later 20th and 21st century as population and interest in these types grow.

**Biodiversity Potential:** Low
The built nature and urban context of these sites result in a relatively low potential for biodiversity.

**Archaeological Potential:** Low – Medium
Hotel: Likely that all potential for archaeological deposits and historic buildings has been removed within the area of disturbance.
Public House & Market: Likely that archaeological deposits and historic buildings have been truncated or damaged, but some features may survive in isolated areas.
**HLC Type:** Urban Caravan/Chalet/Camping

**Broad Type:** Urban Settlement

Legend: 🏕️

- **Total Area:** 18.65 ha (<0.01%)
- **No. of Polygons:** 8 (0.05%)
- **Av. Polygon Size:** 2.33 hectares
- **Occurrence:** Very Rare

**Definition:** An area within or on the edge of a town or city providing space for those with tents, caravans or similar recreational vehicles to park. Occasionally includes permanent chalets or caravans. Often with associated facilities such as power points, toilet blocks etc.

**Period:** Modern

Oxford Camping and Caravanning Club Site (© Google Maps)
Description: A very rare type in Oxfordshire and only recorded in Didcot and on the outskirts of Oxford. Sites of this type are all 20th century in date. They are found both within and on the edge of urban areas.

Trajectory of Change: Increasing Rapidly, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

Factors Influencing Change: The rapid increase in sites of this type relates to the growing recreation and leisure industry in the 20th century and the growth of Oxfordshire as a tourist destination.

Biodiversity Potential: Low-Medium
This type is often characterised by green open spaces, hedgerows, and gardens which will encourage biodiversity. However, these sites are often intensively managed which, combined with their urban setting, will reduce species supported.

Archaeological Potential: Medium
Likely that archaeological deposits and historic buildings have been truncated or damaged, but some features may survive in isolated areas.
**HLC Type:** River

**Broad Type:** Water and Valley Floor

- **Total Area:** 822.14 ha (0.32%)
- **No. of Polygons:** 146 (0.91%)
- **Av. Polygon Size:** 5.63 hectares
- **Occurrence:** Rare

**Definition:** A significant watercourse largely following the natural drainage pattern and flowing towards another river, a lake, or the sea.

**Period:** Prehistoric, Post-Medieval, Modern

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The River Thames passing through the Goring Gap
**Description:** Oxfordshire forms the northern part of the catchment of the River Thames which flows from the west of the county, via Oxford, then southwards through Goring Gap. The county is drained by four major tributaries of the Thames – the Windrush, Evenlode, Cherwell, and Thame. These tributaries, broadly, take more north-south courses.

**Trajectory of Change:** -0.8% Stable, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

**Factors Influencing Change:** The Rivers of Oxfordshire have evolved since the Prehistoric period. In the 20th century, management of some of these has led to the creation of new water courses, drains, and ditches. Some canalization and the creation of locks also occurred on the Thames in the Post-Medieval period.

**Biodiversity Potential:** High
Aquatic species and associated wildlife will proliferate on sites of this type. The use of the Rivers for recreational purposes may have a negative affect through noise and pollution.

**Archaeological Potential:** Low
Likely that all potential for archaeological deposits and historic buildings has been removed within the area of disturbance.
**HLC Type:** Fresh Water Body

**Broad Type:** Water and Valley Floor

**Legend:**

- **Total Area:** 200.49 ha (0.08%)
- **No. of Polygons:** 44 (0.27%)
- **Av. Polygon Size:** 4.56 hectares
- **Occurrence:** Very Rare

**Definition:** An area of naturally occurring fresh water. Includes: natural lakes and ponds, but not rivers.

**Period:** Medieval, Post-Medieval, Modern

_Ponds near Hornton (Courtesy of Chris Tompkins)_
Description: A rare type in Oxfordshire, there is a distinct concentration in the north of the county, between Chipping Norton and Banbury and north of Bicester. A number of these date to the Medieval or Post-Medieval period and are likely to have originally been fishponds, like those at Horley and Heythrop. The 20th century also saw a peak in this type, with sites like that south of Rousham possibly created as part of water management schemes and others, like the lake north of Salford, probably having an additional function as a recreational fishing site. Sites of this type are found both close to settlements and in the countryside, sometimes in quite remote locations with purpose built access routes.

Trajectory of Change: 19.6% Increasing Slowly, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

Factors Influencing Change: A relict of the Medieval and Post-Medieval landscape, the older sites of this type can be vulnerable to settlement expansion and redevelopment. More modern sites relate to water management and recreational activities and will be dependent on schemes associated with these or the popularity of the recreational activities present.

Biodiversity Potential: High
Some of these sites can be quite old and will support a range of aquatic life. They are often surrounded by established trees and hedgerows which will also encourage biodiversity. Modern sites are often landscaped which will increase the variety of species present.

Archaeological Potential: Low
Likely that all potential for archaeological deposits and historic buildings has been removed within the area of disturbance.
HLC Type: Water Meadow

Broad Type: Water and Valley Floor

Legend:

- Total Area: 541.86 ha (0.21%)
- No. of Polygons: 33 (0.21%)
- Av. Polygon Size: 16.42 hectares
- Occurrence: Very Rare

Definition: Controlled irrigation to draw nutrient-rich silts and material onto valley-bottom grassland to increase hay yields and enable earlier mowing. Early modern agricultural improvement; normally now no longer operated though earthworks may survive.

Period: Post-Medieval, Modern

Hurst Water Meadow, Dorchester-on-Thames (Courtesy of Paul Booth)
Description: Working Water Meadows have now largely disappeared from Oxfordshire’s landscape, but in places the irrigation ditches and features associated with these meadows survive as earthworks which still influence the character of the land. The majority of these sites are found in the north of Oxfordshire, along the River Cherwell, but there is a second concentration along the River Windrush near Burford. In Oxfordshire this type seems to date broadly to the 19th century. However, the resolution of the historic map used may mean that earlier examples existed, but were not recorded by the early cartographers.

Trajectory of Change: -38.9% Declining Rapidly, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

Factors Influencing Change: The development of this type related to the intensification of agriculture in the Post-Medieval period to provide for growing populations. This type has declined in the 20th century as new agricultural practices have been implemented to increase productivity and more food is imported from abroad.

Biodiversity Potential: Medium
The location of most of the sites close to rivers will encourage a range of species. Whilst once intensively managed, the riverine location of these sites means that they are now usually left to grass.

Archaeological Potential: High
Unlikely for there to have been wholesale truncation or destruction of features; significant archaeological deposits or historic buildings may still survive.
HLC Type: Watercress Beds

Broad Type: Water and Valley Floor

Legend: 

Total Area: 5.72 ha (<0.01%)

No. of Polygons: 2 (0.01%)

Av. Polygon Size: 2.86 hectares

Occurrence: Very Rare

Definition: An area set aside for growing watercress. As the water requires large quantities of slightly alkaline water the beds are usually sited around the headwaters of chalk streams.

Period: Post-Medieval, Modern

Watercress Beds west of Roke (© Google Maps)
Description: Only two Watercress Beds have been identified in Oxfordshire – one at Letcombe Basset which may date to the early-mid 19th century and one at Roke which is Modern. Both sites lie on the very edge of their respective settlements on well-irrigated land. The Ewelme Watercress Beds, established in the 19th century, are no longer used to cultivate commercial watercress, but have been conserved by the Chilterns Society and may be visited by the public.

Trajectory of Change: 185.8% Increasing Rapidly, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

Factors Influencing Change: This type produces a commercial product for sale and, therefore, its development relates to demand for this product – watercress.

Biodiversity Potential: Low-Medium
Whilst intensively cultivated to produce one crop, the environment of these cress beds may encourage other species.

Archaeological Potential: High
Unlikely for there to have been wholesale truncation or destruction of features; significant archaeological deposits or historic buildings may still survive.
HLC Type: Ancient Woodland

Legend:

Total Area: 7554.9 ha (2.91%)

No. of Polygons: 400 (2.48%)

Av. Polygon Size: 18.89 hectares

Occurrence: Occasional

Definition: Woodland believed to have existed since at least 1600 in England and defined as such by Natural England. Usually managed for timber, coppice etc. and often contains dividing banks, trackways, charcoal burning platforms etc.

Period: Pre-1600

Ancient Woodland, Shotover (Courtesy of Paul Booth)
Description: Ancient Woodland is one of the more common types found in Oxfordshire and is found in two main areas – a large swathe across the central part of the county north of Oxford and in a band across the south-eastern corner of the county. The first concentration represents the scattered remains of the ancient Wychwood Forest. The second coincides with the Chilterns AONB and the various ancient woods preserved there.

Factors Influencing Change: The ancient woods of Oxfordshire are in decline with gradual erosion through piecemeal assarting for agricultural purposes and settlement expansion. This decline has slowed in the later 20th and 21st centuries as this type is now often protected.

Biodiversity Potential: High
By its nature, this type supports a variety of plant and animal species and, as a habitat type, is important nationally.

Archaeological Potential: High
Unlikely for there to have been wholesale truncation or destruction of features; significant archaeological deposits or historic buildings may still survive.
**HLC Type:** Secondary Woodland

**Broad Type:** Woodland

**Legend:**
- [Image]

**Total Area:** 5340.42 ha (2.05%)

**No. of Polygons:** 762 (4.73%)

**Av. Polygon Size:** 7.01 hectares

**Occurrence:** Occasional

**Definition:** Woodland that has developed, usually by natural colonization, on land formerly used for other purposes (agriculture, settlement, industry etc.).

**Period:** Post-Medieval, Modern

- New Copse, Gallowstree Common
**Description:** Secondary Woodland is found throughout Oxfordshire and, in terms of individual polygons, is more common than Ancient Woodland. There are concentrations of this type in the surrounds of the ancient woods as these naturally expand. However, various parts of the county where ancient wood does not survive is characterised by this type – for example in the south-west of the county in the Vale of the White Horse. The lack of Secondary Woodland in West Oxfordshire is likely to be the result of characterisation in this part of the county which preferred the use of the type Plantation unless it was demonstrably natural woodland regeneration. However, there is no concentration of Plantations here and it seems that there is a real lack of woods in this part of the county.

**Trajectory of Change:** 60.3% Increasing Rapidly, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

**Factors Influencing Change:** This type has developed throughout the Post-Medieval and Modern periods on the edge of agricultural fields and Ancient Woodland. It relates to agricultural practices and will be affected by settlement expansion.

**Biodiversity Potential:** Medium-High

Biodiversity will depend on the species of plant which have established themselves, but may be quite diverse as some of these woods are well-established.

**Archaeological Potential:** High

Unlikely for there to have been wholesale truncation or destruction of features; significant archaeological deposits or historic buildings may still survive.
HLC Type: Plantation

Broad Type: Woodland

Legend:

Total Area: 4126.4 ha (1.59%)
No. of Polygons: 590 (3.66%)
Av. Polygon Size: 6.99 hectares
Occurrence: Occasional

Definition: An area of deliberately planted trees and shrubs usually of uniform age and species. Includes tree nurseries. Often modern, but not exclusively.

Period: Post-Medieval, Modern

Plantation of trees near Wayland’s Smithy Long Barrow
Description: Woodland Plantations are widespread throughout Oxfordshire, with concentrations along the southern county boundary, scattered amongst the older natural woods of the Chilterns, and in the area of Charlbury, Chipping Norton, and Tackley. Sites of this type tend to date to the 20th century, but there are a number of examples dating to the 19th century, such as Conygree Wood near Great Tew. The name of this Plantation suggests that it may have been created for the purposes of keeping rabbits in the 19th century. More modern sites like Middle Farm Plantation near Taston are more commonly used for producing timber and are generally managed by the Forestry Commission. Large Plantations have been created in the area of Brightwell-cum-Sotwell and Little Wittenham by the Earth’s Trust, for research, environmental, and recreational purposes.

Trajectory of Change: 156.7% Increasing Rapidly, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

Factors Influencing Change: Plantations have historically been created for the keeping of animals for hunting, timber, and recreational purposes. Whilst the former is rare in Modern times, the latter two uses of Plantations are still pertinent.

Biodiversity Potential: Medium
The potential for biodiversity will depend on the range of tree species planted and may, therefore, be quite limited.

Archaeological Potential: High
Unlikely for there to have been wholesale truncation or destruction of features; significant archaeological deposits or historic buildings may still survive.
**HLC Type:** Woodland Pasture

**Broad Type:** Woodland

**Legend:**

- **Total Area:** 407.55 ha (0.16%)
- **No. of Polygons:** 41 (0.26%)
- **Av. Polygon Size:** 9.94 hectares
- **Occurrence:** Very Rare

**Definition:** Scattered trees within grassland, the trees providing shelter for forage as well as being harvested for timber and fuel.

**Period:** Post-Medieval, Modern

Woodland Pasture within Ashdown House Park
**Description:** Woodland Pasture is the rarest Woodland type recorded in Oxfordshire. It is found in small numbers across the county, with a slight concentration of large sites in the south-east in the area of Nettlebed. It appears that the peak of the foundation of this type was in the 19th century, however, older sites are likely to have been omitted from earlier maps and will be under-represented. Woodland Pasture often forms a major component of Parkland landscapes and is characterised accordingly as Parkland/Designed Landscape.

**Trajectory of Change:** -21.3% Declining Rapidly, and Freq. of Foundation (graph)

**Factors Influencing Change:** Initial development of this type likely related to Post-Medieval woodland clearance and the establishment of country estates. Modern increases in this type relate to changing agricultural regimes and increasing environmental concerns.

**Biodiversity Potential:** Medium
Fields with a range of well-established trees are likely to support a greater range of species than normal fields.

**Archaeological Potential:** High
Unlikely for there to have been wholesale truncation or destruction of features; significant archaeological deposits or historic buildings may still survive.