

Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB
Historic Landscape Characterisation Project

**HISTORIC LANDSCAPE TYPE
DESCRIPTION:
TYPE 1 ENCLOSED LAND**



ENGLISH HERITAGE

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Enclosed Land in the AONB: An Introduction

“But 'tis more remarkable still; how a great part of these downs comes by a new method of husbandry, to be not only made arable, which they never were in former days, but to bear excellent wheat, and great crops too, tho' otherwise poor barren land, and never known to our ancestors to be capable of any such thing; nay, they would perhaps have laugh'd at any one that would have gone about to plough up the wild downs and hills, where the sheep were wont to go: But experience has made the present age wiser, and more skilful in husbandry; for by only folding the sheep upon the plow'd lands, those lands, which otherwise are barren, and where the plow goes within three or four inches of the solid rock of chalk, are made fruitful, and bear very good wheat, as well as rye and barley”

(From Defoe. (1725) A tour thro' the whole island of Great Britain, divided into circuits or journies. G Strahan: London

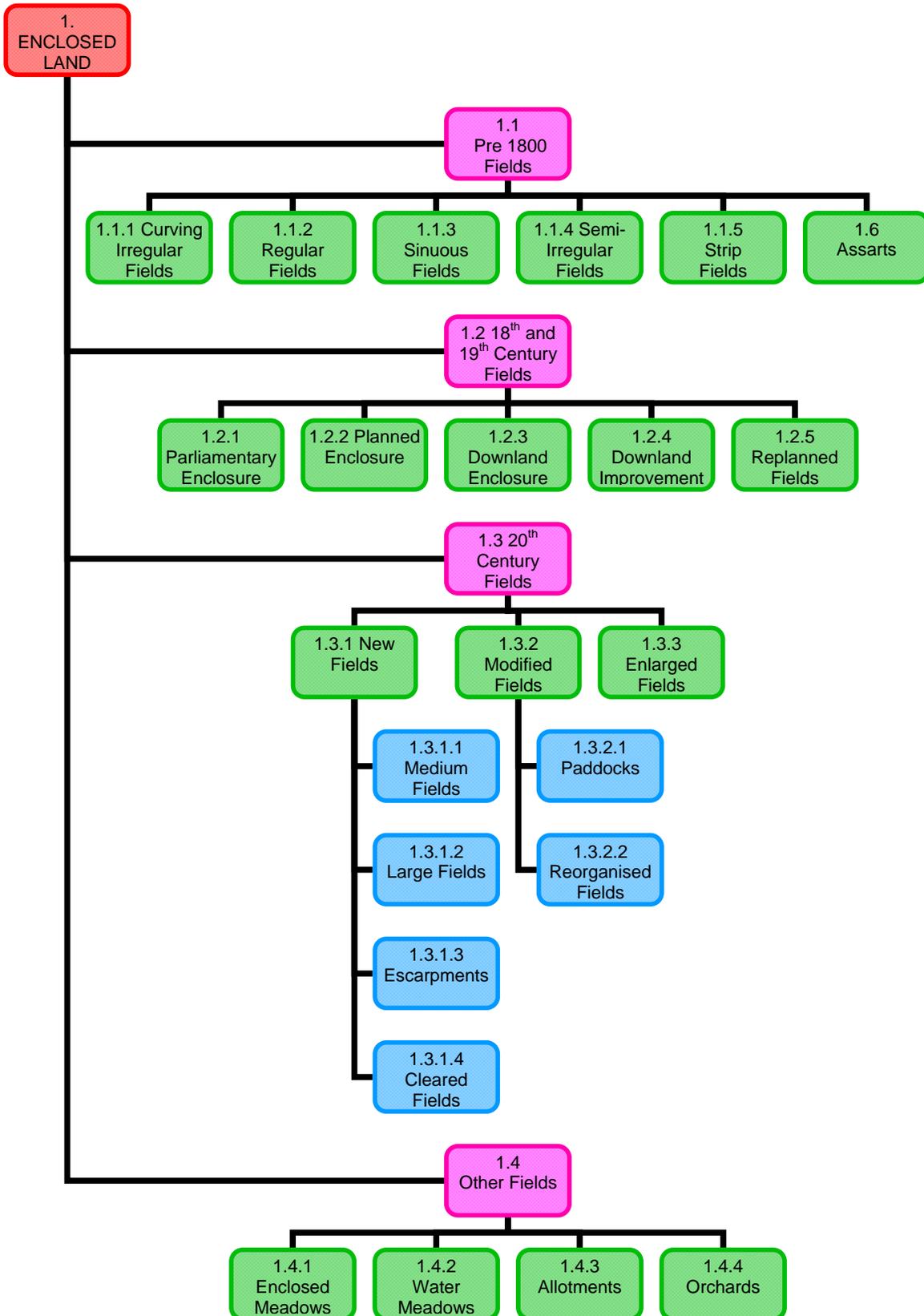
When at the start of the 18th century Defoe surveyed the downs around Salisbury he was amazed at the new fields that were being created, and the new technological expertise that made this possible. Defoe was witnessing the acceleration of a process that would transform the landscape that is now the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB.



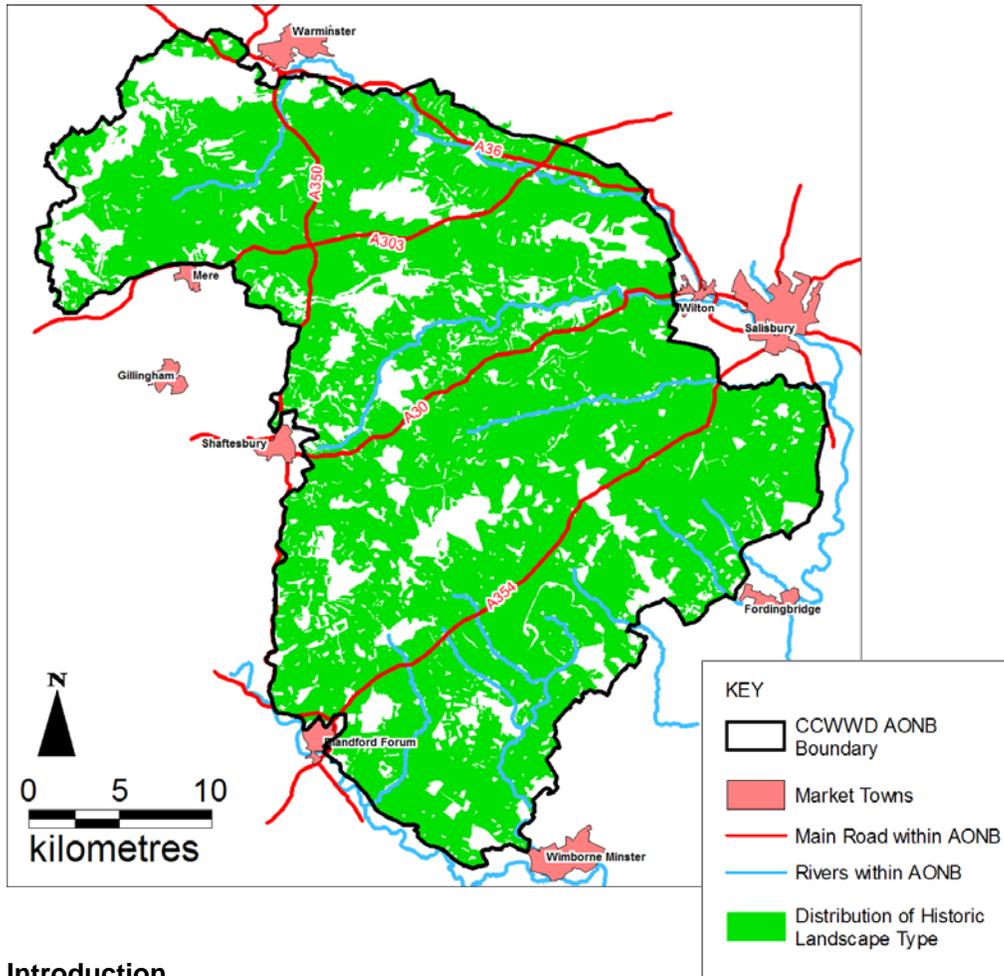
The process of the creation of the modern fieldscapes in the AONB has its origins with the medieval open strip fields, some of which remain fossilised in the landscape today, through the creation of enclosed piecemeal irregular fields. At the same time new irregular piecemeal fields were created from open land and the assarting of ancient forest became increasingly common.

The first formally arranged and larger scale attempts at enclosure occurred from the 16th century onwards and became politically formalised with the Parliamentary Enclosure Acts of the 18th and 19th centuries. In the 20th century period the enclosure process accelerated with the creation of large prairie fields and the reorganisation of existing field systems. These processes all combine to create the fieldscapes with which we are so familiar today, and the evidence for all these processes is still written in the landscape.

Organisation Chart illustrating nested Historic Landscape Types



Type 1 Enclosed Land



Introduction

Enclosed Land primarily consisting of fields in the AONB.

Distribution

Enclosed Land is widely distributed across the AONB. There are notable voids in its distributions, especially where large blocks of woodland occur on the Wooded Chalk Downland of Cranborne Chase, through the Vale of Wardour, the West Wiltshire Downs and the Penselwood-Longleat greensand hills. In addition the distribution of Enclosed Land is broken by the surviving open land on Martin Down in Hampshire.

Principal Historical Processes

The history of the enclosed land, which still exists in the modern day landscape, dates back to the medieval period and the remnants of fossilised open strip fields. The process of enclosure started in the early post medieval period and accelerated markedly in the 18th and 19th centuries, with the parliamentary enclosure movement. The 20th century led to marked changes in field form and morphology. 40% of the fields present in the AONB have 20th century characteristics.

Typical Historical/ Archaeological Components

Fields with a range of morphologies and sizes. Their boundaries tend to be hedged and fenced, and they exist over the whole range of morphologies present in the AONB.



© Countryside Agency Photo: Nick Smith 02-4841

Rarity

Fields are abundant in the AONB and form the most dominant land use present.

Survival

Over the last 100 years approximately 2,500 field boundaries have been gained in the AONB as opposed to the 800 which have been lost. The trend, therefore, is towards the increasing subdivision of existing fields and the creation of new smaller fields.

Degree of surviving coherence of the historic landscape components

A field is recognisable to all, however, the nuances in their individual morphologies and history is less easily accessible.

Past interaction with other types

Fields are linked with the settlements and farms which they surround.

Evidence for time-depth

Over half of all fields preserve traces of previous land uses. The majority of these traces provide evidence for previous episodes of enclosure and also traces of the open land from which the majority of the fields were created.

Contribution to the present landscape character

The rural nature of the AONB means that enclosed land has a dominant impact on landscape character.

Key Statistics

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Total Area: | 78,082 hectares, 79.2% of the AONB |
| No. of Polygons: | This Subtype is comprised of 2,343 polygons, 52% of the total number of polygons digitised. |
| Av. Polygon Size: | Each polygon averages 33.3 hectares in size. |

Occurrence: Abundant

Previous Coverage: 78082 hectares, 79% of AONB was Enclosed Land at the point when this type was at its most prevalent

Total Recorded Coverage: The total recorded coverage of this type is 78874 hectares, 80% of the AONB

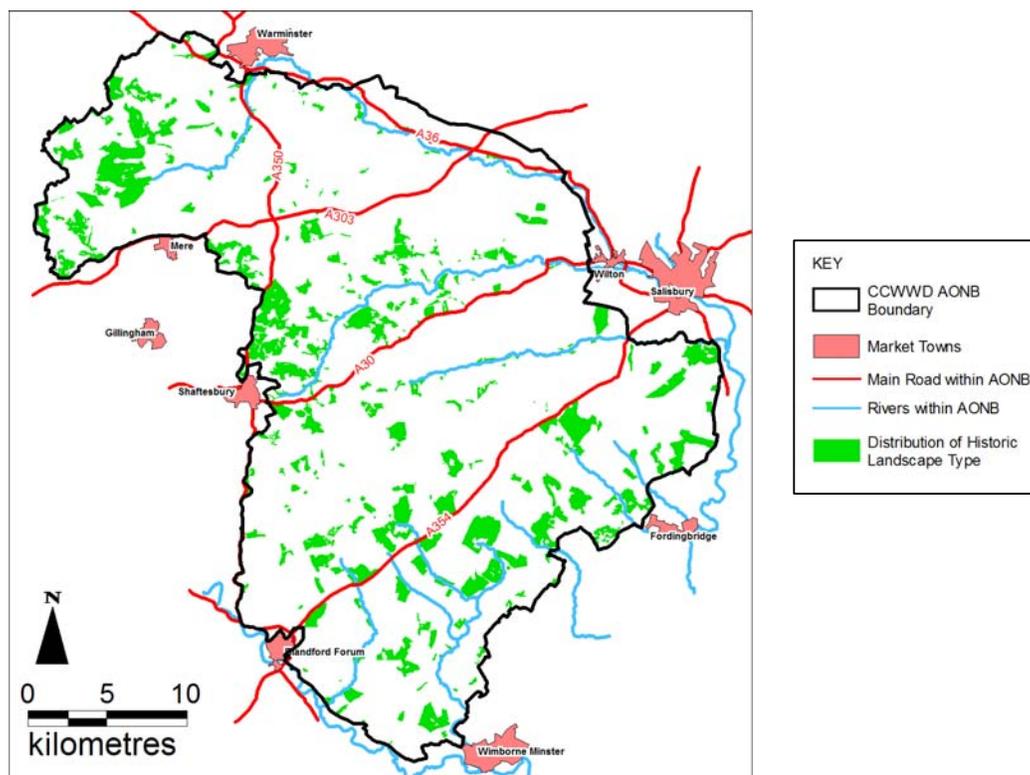
Constituent Types

- [1.1 Pre 1800 Fields](#)
- [1.2 18th and 19th Century Fields](#)
- [1.3 20th Century Fields](#)
- [1.4 Other Fields](#)

Parent Type

None

Type 1.1 Pre 1800 Fields



Introduction

Fields and anciently enclosed land in the AONB that dates to before 1800 AD. These are documented on the modern day Ordnance Survey and identified through comparison with historic Ordnance Survey maps. In the present day they account for 11,716 hectares or 11.9% of the AONB. They demonstrate a range of different morphologies being regular, sinuous, semi-irregular and irregular. One example, medieval strip fields, exists only as a previous type.

Distribution

This type has a wide spread distribution with notable concentrations along the greensand terraces and hills between Mere and Warminster, in the Vale of Wardour and to the south of the A354. They are largely absent from the Ebble and Wylde Valleys and the West Wiltshire Downs. They tend to be found in dense groupings consisting of large blocks. The blocks of field are smaller towards the eastern side of the Vale of Wardour and across the wooded chalk downland of Cranborne Chase.

Principal Historical Processes

The earliest traces of pre 1800 fields exist only as a fossilised type. These traces have probably been created through the fossilisation of medieval open strip fields which would have originally been characterised by features such as ridge and furrow, headlands, and furlongs. These open fields then appear to be enclosed through a piecemeal process of enclosure to form pre 1800 fields. Many of the examples in the southern half of the AONB, especially around Martin, recorded as pre 1800 regular

fields may be examples of the same process. Similarly, the sinuous fields that tend to occur on the sloping sides of valleys may be created by the enclosure of formerly open medieval strips, thus explaining the slight curve in some of their boundaries.

Earlier traces of enclosure has also been documented in two discrete concentrations of small curving irregular fields, found just to the south of Penselwood and in the parish of Semley in the western half of the Vale of Wardour. They are associated with thick hedges with mature trees, small areas of woodland between the fields and ancient and semi-natural woodland, which suggests that these fields may have originated as ancient assarts of medieval or post medieval date. Further research may indicate that they are of even greater antiquity.

Many of the other regular, semi-irregular and irregular fields recorded as pre 1800 fields may have been created through informal or formal agreement. This occurred prior to the formalised Parliamentary Enclosure Acts of the late 18th and 19th centuries. The exact mechanisms through which this enclosure occurred will not be known without more detailed archaeological and documentary research.

Typical Historical/Archaeological Components

Small fields with a range of morphologies (shape, boundary, form etc.) but which tend to be associated with thick wooded hedgerows. The curving regular fields have a limited distribution occurring primarily in the Vale of Wardour, while other field morphologies, such as semi-irregular fields, are much more widely distributed



across the AONB. These fields tend to be associated with areas of ancient woodland, settlement, and old trackways. The mature hedgerows are likely to be of ecological significance.

Rarity

Pre 1800 fields occur frequently in the AONB, though they are locally scarce across the West Wiltshire Downs and Ebble Valley. It is comprised of approximately 3,000 individual fields.

Survival

Since the 1880s over 200 field boundaries have been lost from this type, while over 150 have added within field patterns of this type, showing that the historical cohesion of this type is slowly being eroded and distorted. In addition, over 3,000 hectares of pre 1800 fields have become a previous type fossilised or overlain by others in the landscape since the 19th century. This suggests that this type is fairly fragile.

Degree of surviving coherence of the historic landscape components

This type is easily recognisable in the landscape to an expert. It is currently a fairly coherent and ancient type in the landscape associated with other ancient elements.

Past interaction with other types

The type is associated with other pre 1800 types including ancient woodland, common land, open unimproved grass and ancient settlement. These all represent surviving remnants of older medieval and early post-medieval landscapes.

Evidence for time-depth

A very small proportion of these fields preserve landscape-scale traces of previous land uses, demonstrating not only the antiquity of these fields but the radical departure in land use terms that they represent. This evidence for time depth consists of enclosed land types where the pre 1800 fields appear to have undergone an evolution in morphology, for example, from open strip fields to regular enclosed fields. Further research is required to establish the extent to which there are buried or earthwork remains of prehistoric fields beneath this medieval derived type.

Contribution to the present landscape character

This type has a considerable influence on the landscape character of the AONB, and demonstrates the antiquity of the AONB in general.

Key Statistics

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| Total Area: | 12,560 hectares, 12.8% of the AONB |
| No. of Polygons: | This Subtype is comprised of 581 polygons, 13.9% of the total number of polygons digitised. |
| Av. Polygon Size: | Each polygon averages 21.69 hectares in size. |
| Occurrence: | Frequent. |
| Previous Coverage: | 16,975 hectares, 17.2% of AONB was Pre 1800 fields at the point when this type was at its most prevalent. |
| Total Recorded Coverage: | The total recorded coverage of this type is 17,987 hectares, 18.3% of the AONB. |

Constituent Types

[1.1.1 Pre 1800 Curving Irregular Fields](#)

[1.1.2 Pre 1800 Regular Fields](#)

[1.1.3 Pre 1800 Sinuous Fields](#)

[1.1.4 Pre 1800 Semi-Irregular Fields](#)

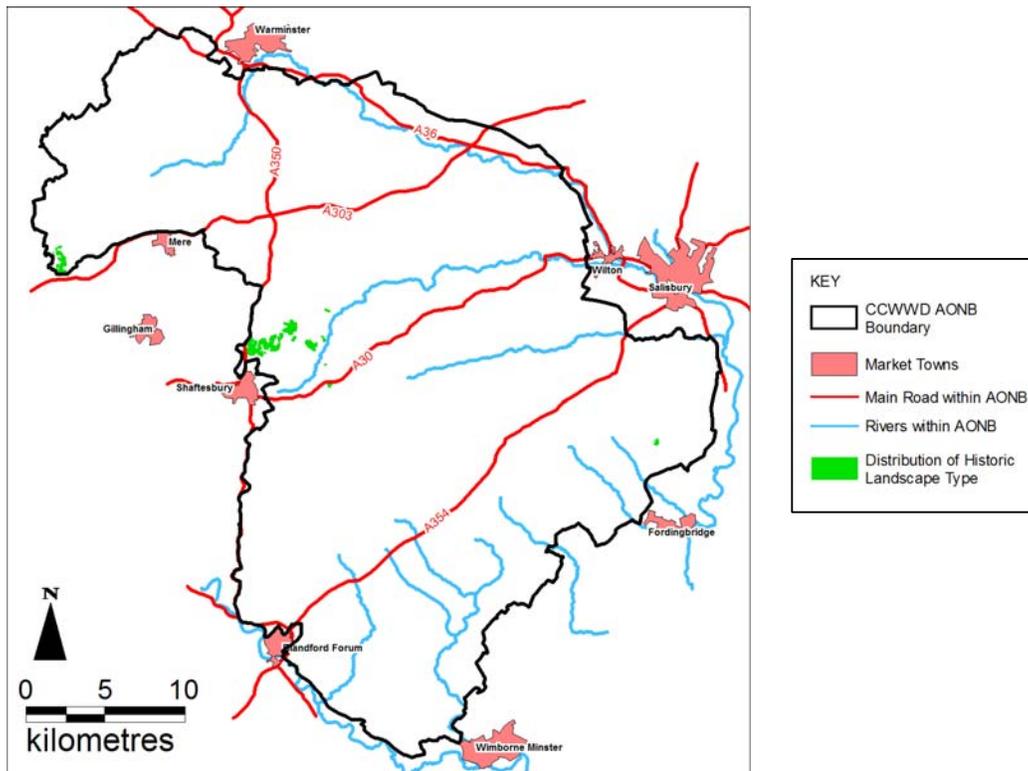
[1.1.5 Strip Fields \(Previous type only\)](#)

[1.1.6 Assarts](#)

Parent Type

[1. Enclosed Land](#)

Type 1.1.1 Pre 1800 Irregular Curving Fields



Introduction

Small irregular fields with curving boundaries which date to before 1800 AD. They are documented on the modern day Ordnance Survey, and on the 1820s Ordnance Survey surveyor's maps. The areas in which they are found are identified as enclosed on the relevant 18th Century County Map.

Distribution

They have a very restricted distribution occurring just to the south of Penselwood and in the parish of Semley in the western half of the Vale of Wardour. The spread of the fields is in dense groupings. They are confined to the greensands in the east of the Penselwood distribution and the Kimmeridge clay in the Vale of Wardour. They all occur at an elevation between 120-160m. Despite these similarities the two distributions are geographically discrete.

Principal Historical Processes

These fields are earlier in date than 1800 as they appear on the 1820's surveyor's maps and the area is indicated as being enclosed on the earliest county maps. They are associated with extremely thick wooded hedges, and have small areas of old woodland between the fields which suggests that these fields may have originated as ancient assarts, that is fields taken in from woodland, probably from the late medieval period onwards if other southern English patterns are a guide. In this AONB this form

of fields appears to be a localised phenomenon and contrasts greatly with the more ubiquitous semi-irregular pre 1800 fields which occur to the north of the Semley distribution. The topography where the curving fields occur is more steep and undulating. The occurrence of the fields to the south of Penselwood seems to suggest that the assarting there is from ancient forest. If so, this might suggest that in the area between Motcombe and Semley there may also have once been a belt of ancient woodland, which was subject to gradual assarting. Both of these distributions occur on ancient borderlands and so may have been considered marginal land in which colonising clearance of woodland was more easily tolerated, or even encouraged, by lords.

Typical Historical/Archaeological Components

This type consists of very small size fields with rounded irregular shapes and curving boundaries, that are all mature woodland hedgerows and are associated with small copses and areas of ancient woodland that are bounded both to the south and north by ancient common land. The SMR data for the area indicated a concentration of undated enclosures, ancient farmhouses and buildings and ancient trackways.



Rarity

This type is scarce in the AONB; it is comprised of approximately 150 fields; however the type is locally common around Semley and to the south of Penselwood.

Survival

The coherency of this type could be easily eroded because it is so few in number and there has been a trend towards boundary loss over the last 100 years.

Degree of surviving coherence of the historic landscape components

This type is very recognisable in the landscape, but due to the nature of the terrain and the tree cover on the higher ground is often hidden from view.

Past interaction with other types

The type is associated with other pre 1800 types including ancient woodland, rough common land to the south, and open unimproved grass common land. These all represent surviving remnants of older medieval and early post-medieval landscapes.

Evidence for time-depth

Only two of the polygons are associated with previous historic landscape types. One of these is ancient woodland, and the other is an Iron Age Hillfort which has affected the morphology of the later field. It is likely that there are other prehistoric and earlier medieval features surviving either buried or as earthworks within this type.

Contribution to the present landscape character

This type has a considerable influence on the landscape character in the two areas in which it occurs. It, therefore, has important local significance.

Key Statistics

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| Total Area: | 433 hectares, 0.44% of the AONB. |
| No. of Polygons: | This Subtype is comprised of 24 polygons, 0.5% of the total number of polygons digitised. |
| Av. Polygon Size: | Each polygon averages 18 hectares in size. |
| Occurrence: | Scarce. |
| Previous Coverage: | 433 hectares, 0.4% of AONB was Pre 1800 irregular curving fields at the point when this type was at its most prevalent. |
| Total Recorded Coverage: | The total recorded coverage of this type is 666.9 hectares, 0.6% of the AONB |

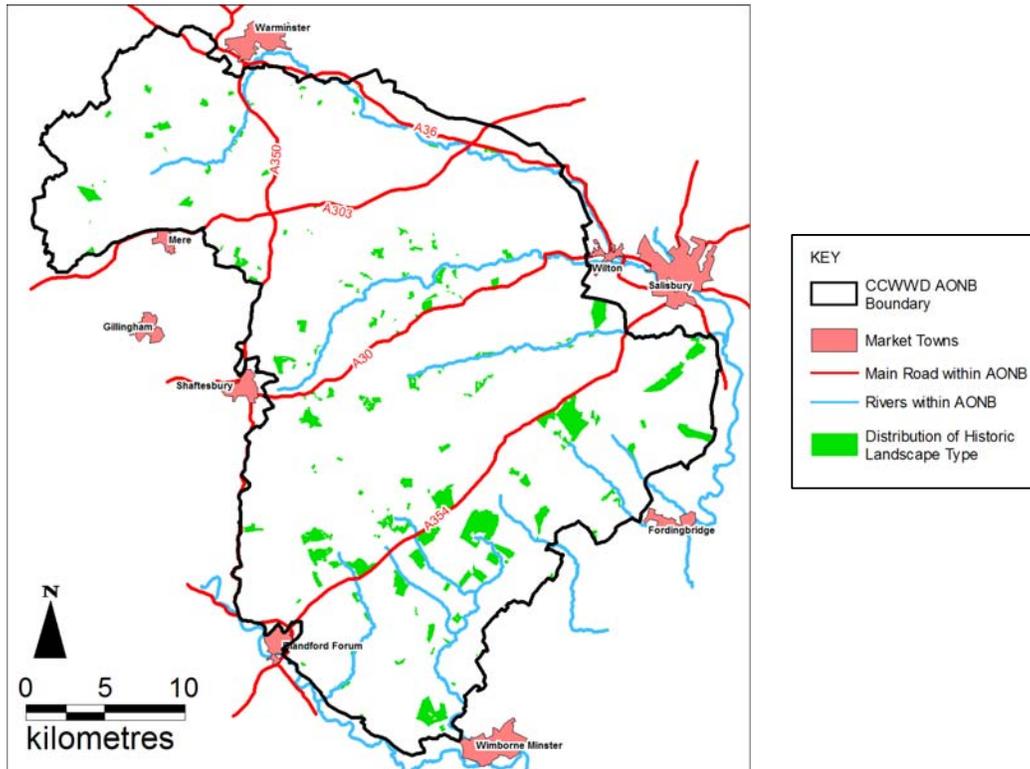
Constituent Types

None

Parent Type

[1.1 Pre 1800 Fields](#)

Type 1.1.2 Pre 1800 Regular Fields



Introduction

Small regular fields that date to before 1800 documented both on the modern day Ordnance Survey, historic Ordnance Survey maps and 18th century county maps.

Distribution

These fields are widespread throughout the AONB but there are voids on the West Wiltshire Downs, the Wylve Valley and the greensand hills in the far west of the AONB. They occur more frequently in the southern half of the AONB and appear as denser groupings. In the north of the AONB they occur as smaller clusters. They show no particular distribution with regards to geology or topography.

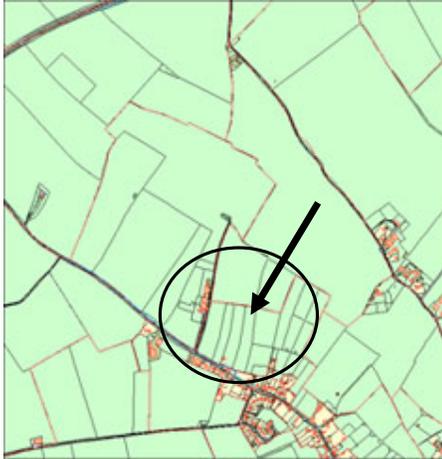
Principal Historical Processes

These fields date to before 1800 as they appear on the 1820's surveyor's maps and the area is indicated as being enclosed on the earliest county maps. They could have been created via a range of different historical processes, and further research is needed.

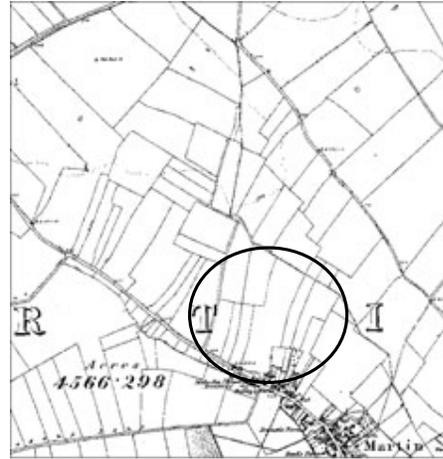
As a starting point, many of the examples in the southern half of the AONB, especially around Martin, may be examples where medieval open fields in the form of strips have been grouped together and enclosed following agreement between respective holders of land to produce elongated fields, whose slightly curving edges preserved parts of the outlines of medieval strip fields, a phenomenon that has been

recorded in many parts of Britain, including at Middleton Carr in Yorkshire (Muir 2000: 209)

An example of this can be seen in the maps below.



Area around Martin Today



Area around Martin in the 1880s

The left hand map shows the regular fields that survive in today's landscape which have a slight curve to some of their boundaries, marked by the arrow, while the map to the right shows how these strips were elements of a much more extensive pattern of strips in the 1880's.

Many of the other regular fields recorded may have been created through process of informal or formal agreement that happened before the 18th and 19th century parliamentary enclosure. The mechanisms through which this enclosure occurred will not be known without more research; the enclosure of open fields for Tudor sheep pastures, for example, is not easily recognisable without documentary support.

Typical Historical/Archaeological Components

This type consists of small sized fields with regular or semi-irregular boundaries. They can occur in blocks as rectangular strips or as square enclosures. They often have mature wooded hedgerows. In the northern half of the AONB they tend to be smaller and clustered around villages, while in the south they are larger and tend to be more strip-like in form.



Rarity

This type is uncommon in the AONB; and is comprised of approximately 1,060 fields, of which 40% have been subject to boundary alteration and loss since 1880. The historic significance of this type can not be determined without further work, but it may be that some of the fields are of considerable antiquity.

Survival

This is potentially a very fragile type. There are nearly 6,000 hectares of land with some trace of the key components that define this type, of which, only 4,458 hectares are sufficiently intact to be identified as this type. The rest of the evidence for this type only survives as traces in later 19th and 20th century fields. This means that over 1,500 hectares has been eroded since the 1800's, mostly in the late 20th century with the amalgamation and reorganisation of fields (see types 1.3.2, and 1.3.3). This suggests that this type could be subject to further erosion in the future.

Degree of surviving coherence of the historic landscape components

This type could be easily confused with fields which are 19th and 20th century in date especially those that are more regular in form. However, this type occurs in medium sized blocks, especially in the southern half of the AONB, so their coherence could be recognised in the landscape, if not necessarily their age.

Past interaction with other types

The type is associated with previous landscape types, including strip fields and is associated especially in the northern half of the AONB with other pre 1800 types including the pattern of pre 1800 settlement.

Evidence for time-depth

Only a small percentage of this type has evidence of previous historic landscape types. This is due to the antiquity of this type. These previous types include open downland and unimproved grassland and possible medieval strip fields, as discussed above.

Contribution to the present landscape character

This type contributes to the sense of antiquity of the current day landscape character immensely, representing the fossilisation of medieval strips and the very early enclosure of land in the post medieval period. The detail of this can only be fully understood through further study.

Key Statistics

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| Total Area: | 4,459 hectares, 4.53% of the AONB |
| No. of Polygons: | This Subtype is comprised of 225 polygons, 5.1% of the total number of polygons digitised. |
| Av. Polygon Size: | Each polygon averages 19.82 hectares in size. |
| Occurrence: | Uncommon. |

Previous Coverage: 5,942 hectares, 6.03% of AONB was Pre 1800 Regular Fields at the point when this type was at its most prevalent

Total Recorded Coverage: The total recorded coverage of this type is 5,900 hectares, 6% of the AONB

Constituent Types

None

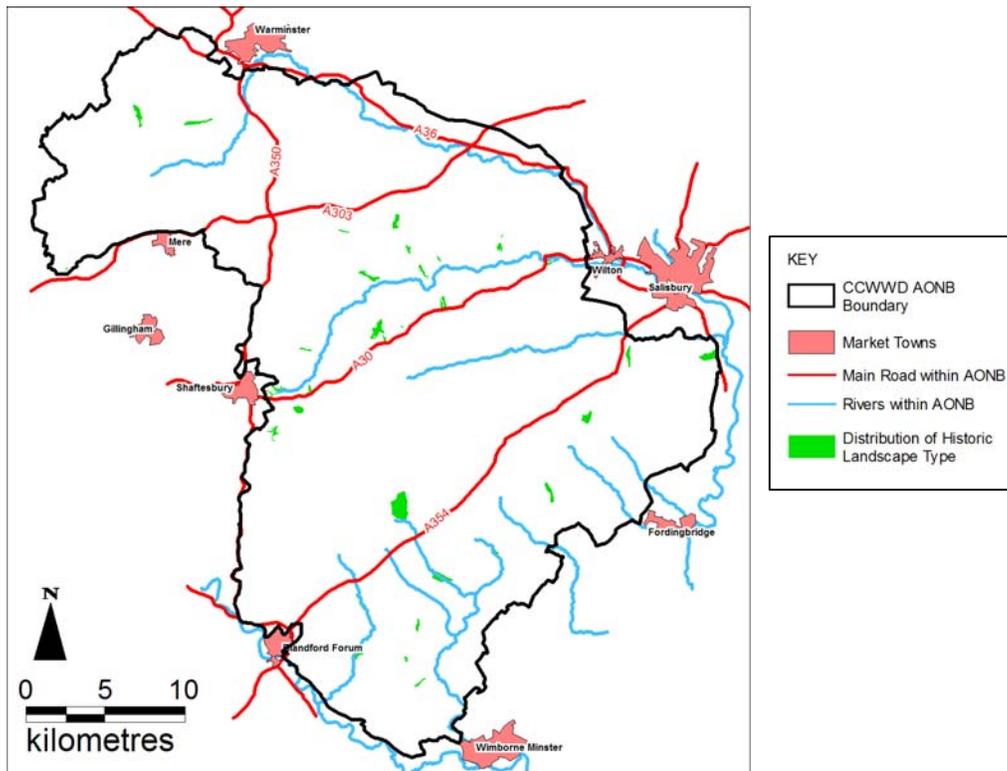
Parent Type

[1.1 Pre 1800 Fields](#)

Suggested Sources

Muir, R. (2000) The NEW Reading the Landscape. University of Exeter Press: Exeter.

Type 1.1.3 Pre 1800 Sinuous Fields



Introduction

Small sinuous fields often with curving S-shaped boundaries, that date to before 1800 AD. These fields have been documented both on the modern day Ordnance Survey, historic Ordnance Survey maps and 18th century county maps.

Distribution

These fields have a restricted distribution in the AONB. There is a concentration on the far edges of the Nadder Valley, and a block at the head of the Allen River. They are often found on steeper slopes on valley sides and tend to follow the curve of the topography. They show no particular distribution with regards to geology. In the southern half of the AONB they tend to be found in denser groupings, while they occur in more dispersed groupings through the Nadder Valley.

Principal Historical Processes

These fields date to before 1800 AD as they appear on the 1820's surveyor's maps and the area is indicated as being enclosed on the earliest county maps. The historical processes which created fields with this morphology needs further research. Some of them may be created by the enclosure of formerly open medieval strips thus explaining the slight curve in some of their boundaries, which may be the result of the 'aratra' curve created as plough-teams of oxen began to make their turn at the end of medieval strips. Some of the curving boundaries may also be a response to the contours of the topography on which these fields are found. Further

research may reveal that the field boundaries may be associated with relic lynchet, which is a terraced field usually found on hillsides.

**Typical
Historical/Archaeological
Components**

This type consists of small fields which are sinuous and irregular in shape and tend to occur in thin blocks. They are often associated with hedgerows and tend towards greater regularity in size and shape towards the east of the AONB.



Rarity

This type is scarce in the AONB and is comprised of only 210 fields. These, however, are very intact and have undergone little boundary loss or gain since the 1880's.

Survival

This is potentially a very fragile type, at least 100 hectares of this type has been lost since the 18th century. Their marginal position, often on valley sides, means that they have largely escaped the reorganisation and amalgamation of fields that occurred in the 20th century. However, their sinuous nature means that the removal of just one boundary could have a catastrophic effect on the cohesion of this type.

Degree of surviving coherence of the historic landscape components

The flowing nature of these fields and their position on small valley sides means that they are distinctive and easily recognisable in the landscape.

Past interaction with other types

The type is associated with other historic landscape types, especially enclosed meadows.

Evidence for time-depth

None of the examples of this type contains evidence of previous land use, indicating the possible antiquity of this type, i.e. at least medieval in origin, with some perhaps having prehistoric elements.

Contribution to the present landscape character

This type has the potential to contribute to current day landscape character, representing the possible fossilisation of medieval strips and the very early enclosure of land. The historical meaning of this contribution can only be fully understood through further study.

Key Statistics

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Total Area: | 750 hectares, 0.76% of the AONB |
| No. of Polygons: | This Subtype is comprised of 47 polygons, 1.06% of the total number of polygons digitised. |
| Av. Polygon Size: | Each polygon averages 15.97 hectares in size. |
| Occurrence: | Rare. |
| Previous Coverage: | 898 hectares, 0.91% of AONB was Pre 1800 Sinuous Fields at the point when this type was at its most prevalent. |
| Total Recorded Coverage: | The total recorded coverage of this type is 910.73 hectares, 0.92% of the AONB. |

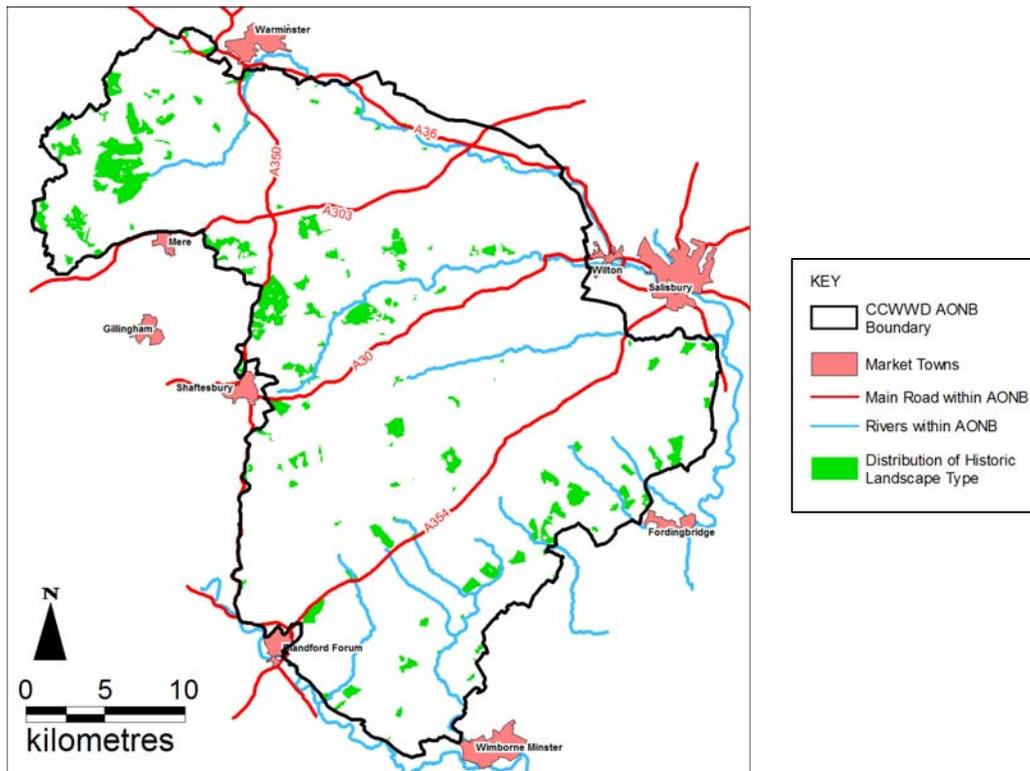
Constituent Types

None

Parent Type

[1.1 Pre 1800 Fields](#)

Type 1.1.4 Pre 1800 Semi-Irregular Fields



Introduction

Small sized irregular and semi-irregular shaped fields with curving and semi-straight boundaries. These date to before 1800 AD. These fields have been documented both on the modern day Ordnance Survey, historic Ordnance Survey maps and 18th century county maps.

Distribution

These fields have a widespread distribution. There are concentrations of this type along the south east edge of the AONB; in the Vale of Wardour; and on along the greensand terrace, and greensand hills between Penselwood and Longleat. In this last area there is a large block between the villages of Maiden Bradley and Stourton. Their distribution also continues to the west beyond the Penselwood woods and outside of the boundary of the AONB into Somerset. They are largely absent from the West Wiltshire Downs and Ebble Valley. They are less common across the wooded open downland of Cranborne Chase, where they occur in smaller blocks. They show no particular distribution with regards to geology and topography.

Principal Historical Processes

These fields date to before 1800 AD as they appear on the 1820's surveyor's maps and the area is indicated as being enclosed on the earliest county maps. They are widely distributed across the AONB and are probably derived from the piecemeal and ad hoc enclosure of formerly open land. In general, they fossilise few traces of

previous land uses suggesting their possible antiquity. They are also associated with a concentration of pre 1800 settlement, and old routeways.

Typical Historical/Archaeological Components

This type consists of irregular and semi irregular fields with jointed boundaries and these are often associated with mature wooded hedgerows. The fields are medium sized. They occur in very large blocks of fields, in some cases greater than 500 hectares, especially in the north of the AONB. Although they are widely distributed there are three key areas in which they are located (see page 93 distribution). They are associated with curving routeways and a concentration of rights of way.



Rarity

This type is comprised of over 1,252 fields. As mentioned above the distribution of this type of field extends into Somerset and may be regionally more common than it appears within the AONB itself. This type occurs occasionally in the AONB, it is locally common along the south east edge of the AONB, in the Vale of Wardour, and on the greensand terrace, and greensand hills, between Penselwood and Longleat.

Survival

These fields have experienced only minimal boundary loss and gain since the 1880s and are fairly intact. They also remain in large blocks in the AONB, and therefore retain their original characteristics on a landscape scale.

Degree of surviving coherence of the historic landscape components

These fields survive in a very coherent form. The number of rights of way that runs through this type means that it can be viewed and experienced from a number of different vantage points. The fields themselves would be highly recognisable, although their true antiquity may not be appreciated.

Past interaction with other types

This type is associated with a concentration of Pre 1800 settlements, and ancient woodland, and with other types of Pre 1800 fields, especially in the Vale of Wardour, all of which indicates the possible antiquity of this type.

Evidence for time-depth

Only 3% of this type contains evidence for previous land uses. The majority of this being part of a former medieval deer park.

Contribution to the present landscape character

This type contributes greatly to the current present landscape character as it is of some antiquity and occurs as blocks within the landscape.

Key Statistics

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| Total Area: | 6,074 hectares, 6.17% of the AONB. |
| No. of Polygons: | This Subtype is comprised of 214 polygons, 4.8% of the total number of polygons digitised. |
| Av. Polygon Size: | Each polygon averages 28.38 hectares in size. |
| Occurrence: | Occasional. |
| Previous Coverage: | 7894 hectares, 8% of AONB was Pre 1800 Semi-Irregular Fields at the point when this type was at its most prevalent. |
| Total Recorded Coverage: | The total recorded coverage of this type is 8089 hectares, 8.2% of the AONB. |

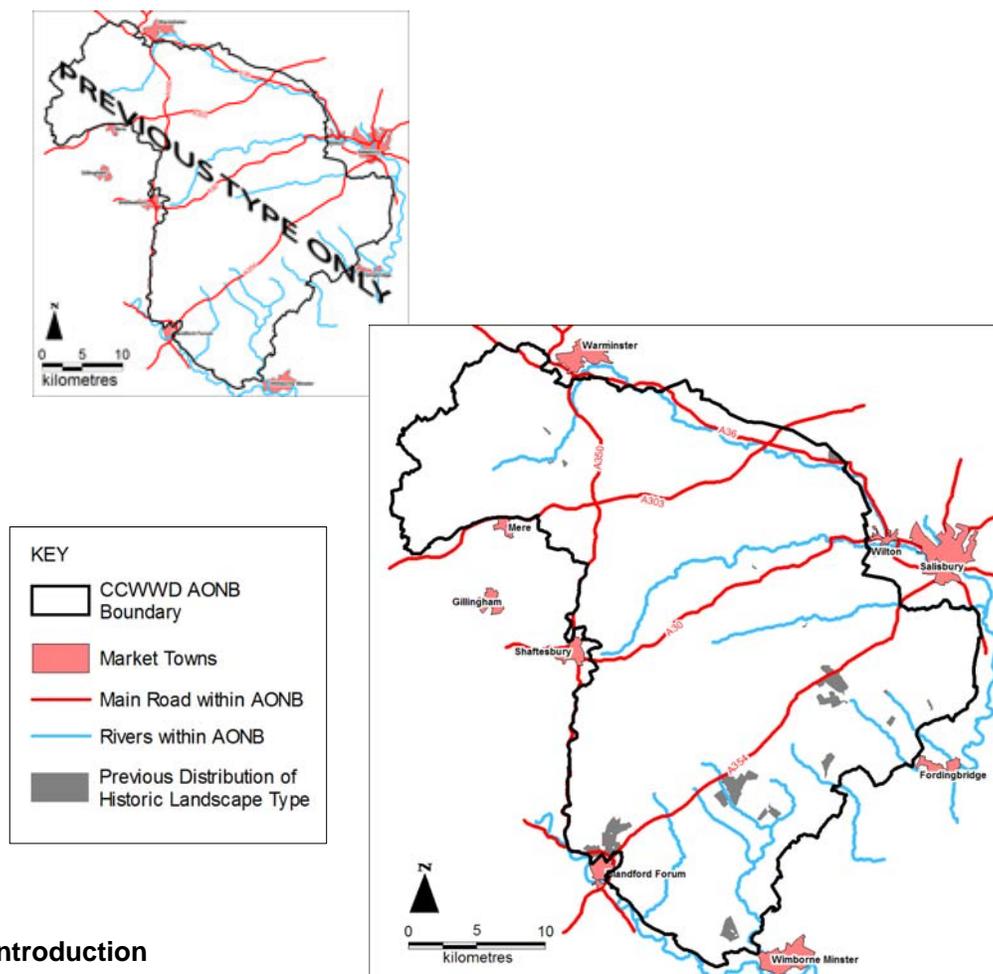
Constituent Types

None

Parent Type

[1.1 Pre 1800 Fields](#)

Type 1.1.5 Strip Fields (Previous type only)



Introduction

This type occurs only as previous type, meaning that it does not survive intact in the present day landscape. Rather, the edges of the open strips have been incorporated into later enclosed fields; therefore it represents areas of land which in today's landscape retain evidence for open medieval strip fields. They have been identified through analysis of the morphology of Pre 1800 fields which survive in the modern landscape, and analysis primarily of Epoch 1 1880's historic Ordnance Survey maps.

Distribution

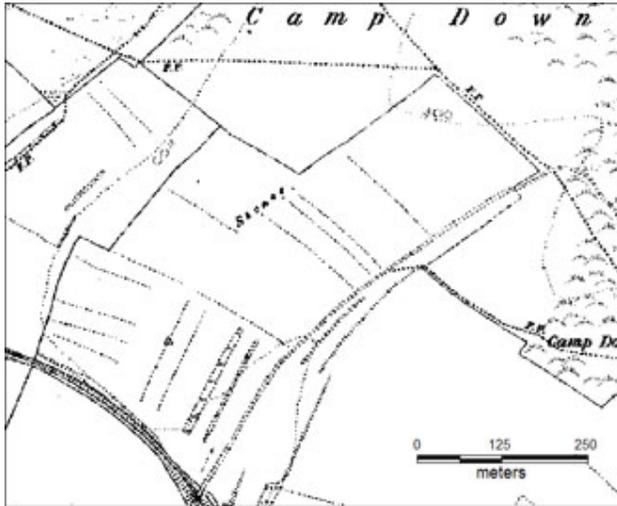
The traces of this previous type have a restricted distribution, only occurring in a few locations in the northern half of the AONB. In the southern half of the AONB they occur in dense clusters. These can be found in the area around Martin; the area around Camp Down to the North of Blandford; west of Cranborne; and finally around Gussage St Michael and Gussage All Saints. They are primarily found on the chalk and at relatively low elevations.

Principal Historical Processes

These traces have probably been created through the fossilisation of medieval open strip fields which would have originally been characterised by features such as ridge

and furrow, headlands, and furlongs. These open fields then appear to have been enclosed through a piecemeal process of enclosure to form pre 1800 fields (see particularly discussion of Types 1.1.2 Pre 18th Century Regular Fields, and 1.1.3 Pre 18th Century Sinuous Fields), and also in a few cases to form fields in the 19th and early 20th century.

Typical Historical/Archaeological Components



The traces left of this type are sinuous reverse-S shaped and curving boundaries, narrow strip fields and indicative place names. In some case there are indications that these fields were still open during the 1880s (see figure), though mostly they are identified through interpretation of morphology of fields in today's landscape.

The figure is a snapshot from the 1880s Ordnance Survey map which shows the possible remnants of strip fields, these became fossilised in the 20th century as part of new regular fields.

Rarity

It appears to be rare for fragments of open medieval fields to be preserved within the boundaries of later fields within the AONB. It must be remembered that this does not represent the only evidence for medieval farming systems in the AONB. It only reflects where this system has affected the morphology of fields in the modern day landscape. This evidence must be viewed along with other surviving evidence, such as ridge and furrow or strip lynchets to obtain a clearer view of former extents of open fields. In particular, it is at least possible that there were extensive areas of former strip fields in the substantial areas of later enclosure, including Parliamentary Enclosure (see [Type 1.2.1](#)).

Survival

This type survives as traces of single boundaries in the landscape which have been subsequently enclosed, rather than complete fields.

Degree of surviving coherence of the historic landscape components

N/A

Past interaction with other types

This type is intrinsically linked with the more recent types which have led to its preservation. It is also linked in time with other fossilised medieval types, including deer parks, and earthworks such as strip lynchets. There should also be a correlation

with nucleated settlement, the open fields having been worked in common by the several members of a small agricultural community.

Evidence for time-depth

In the areas where they have been identified this past historic landscape type marks the earliest land use traces which exist in today's landscape.

Contribution to the present landscape character

N/A

Key Statistics

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| Total Area: | N/A |
| No. of Polygons: | N/A |
| Av. Polygon Size: | N/A |
| Occurrence: | N/A |
| Previous Coverage: | 1231 hectares, 1.25% of AONB preserves traces of this type at the point when this type was at its most prevalent. |
| Total Recorded Coverage: | The total previous recorded coverage of this type is 1606 hectares, 1.6% of the AONB |

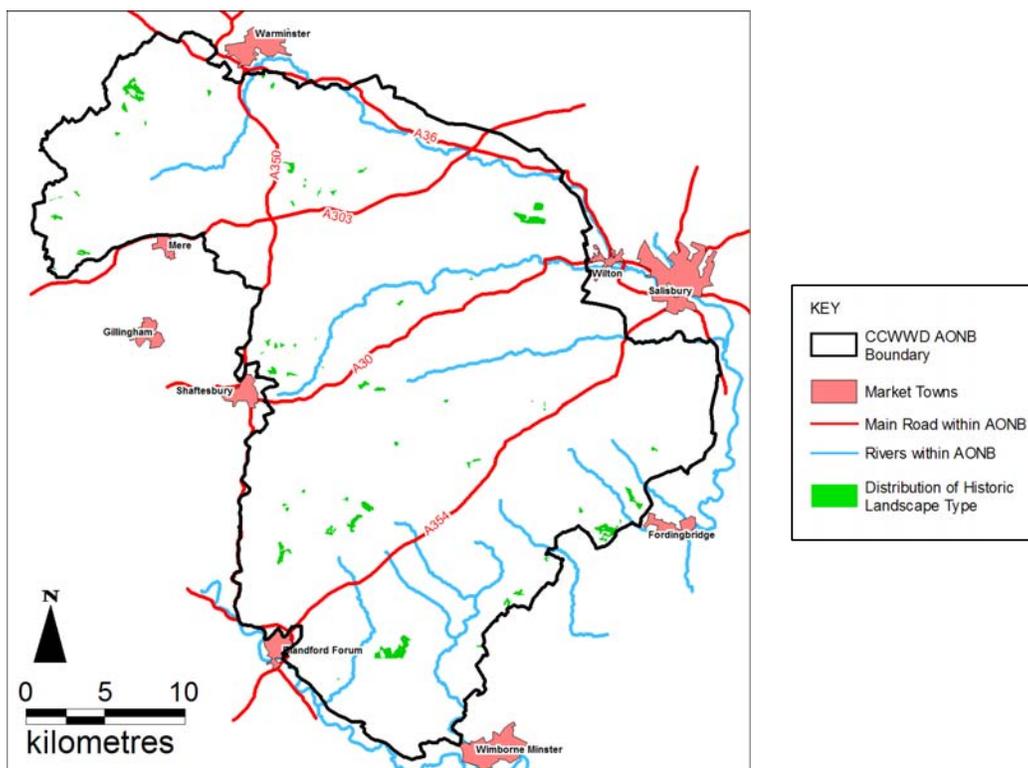
Constituent Types

None

Parent Type

[1.1 Pre 18th Century Fields](#)

Type 1.1.6 Assarts



Introduction: Defining/distinguishing Criteria

Medium fields with a range of morphologies which have been assarted (cleared) from pre 1800 woodland. In the present day they account for 883 hectares or 0.9% of the AONB. These fields have been documented both on the modern day Ordnance Survey, historic Ordnance Survey maps and the Ordnance Survey 1820s Surveyors Map.

Distribution

Assarts have a widespread distribution in the landscape of the AONB but tend to be concentrated on the western side of the AONB. Notable concentrations are to be found to the north of Blandford Forum, along the north western edge of the AONB, across the wooded chalk downland of the Cranborne Chase and along the south eastern edge of the AONB. They are found in dispersed groupings which become larger in size towards the south of the AONB.

Principal Historical Processes

These assarts date mostly to the post medieval period but could also be medieval in date. These fields have only been identified as assarts where their previous wooded land use can be assumed with some level of confidence. This means that some of the field's categorised as pre 1800 regular, semi-irregular and curving irregular fields may therefore be assarts; this type may therefore be under represented in the dataset. The process of assarting from the medieval period onwards is seen as a result of population pressure and the need for more agricultural land, and accelerated

from the early medieval period onwards (Muir 2000: 22). This is linked to the occurrence of place names referencing the former common status of these older assarts. These assarts were previously more frequent, but some have been reorganised and amalgamated in the 20th century. Across the centre of the AONB the assarts exist only as previous types, especially in the parishes of Donhead St Mary, Bowerchalke and Grovely Wood. In these parishes they have been obscured by modern land uses including 19th and 20th century field types and recent woodland. They also have a tendency to cluster on ancient parish boundaries, especially in the neighbouring parishes of Tarrant Gunville, Chettle and Iwerne Minister.

Typical Historical/Archaeological Components

This type consists of medium fields which exhibit a range of morphologies. The fields are regular, semi-irregular or irregular. There is a tendency for the assarts to be more regular in the southern half of the AONB but the morphology does not appear to be linked to any particular process. The fields have mature wooded hedgerows, and areas associated with copses.



Rarity

This type is scarce throughout the AONB; it is only comprised of 156 fields.

Survival

Over the last 200 years over 400 hectares of assarts have become fossilised types in the landscape incorporated into new 19th and 20th century fields. However the assarts that have survived have been subject to minimal boundary loss or change.

Degree of surviving coherence of the historic landscape components

This type is only fairly recognisable in the landscape. It could easily be confused with pre 1800 fields.

Past interaction with other types

The type is associated primarily with woodland. The smaller older medieval and post medieval assarts are associated with other pre 1800 types, including ancient woodland, common land, and pre 1800 fields. These all represent surviving remnants of older medieval and early post-medieval landscapes.

Evidence for time-depth

Over 30% of the polygons demonstrate time depth the majority of this being the past woodland land use from which the assarts were created.

Contribution to the present landscape character

This type has had influence on the landscape character especially in areas adjacent to surviving ancient woodland.

Key Statistics

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Total Area: | 884 hectares, 0.9% of the AONB |
| No. of Polygons: | This Subtype is comprised of 12.45 polygons, 1.6% of the total number of polygons digitised. |
| Av. Polygon Size: | Each polygon averages 33.3 hectares in size. |
| Occurrence: | Scarce |
| Previous Coverage: | 1,238 hectares, 1.2% of AONB was Assarts at the point when this type was at its most prevalent |
| Total Recorded Coverage: | The total recorded coverage of this type is 1,419 hectares, 1.4% of the AONB |

Constituent Types

None

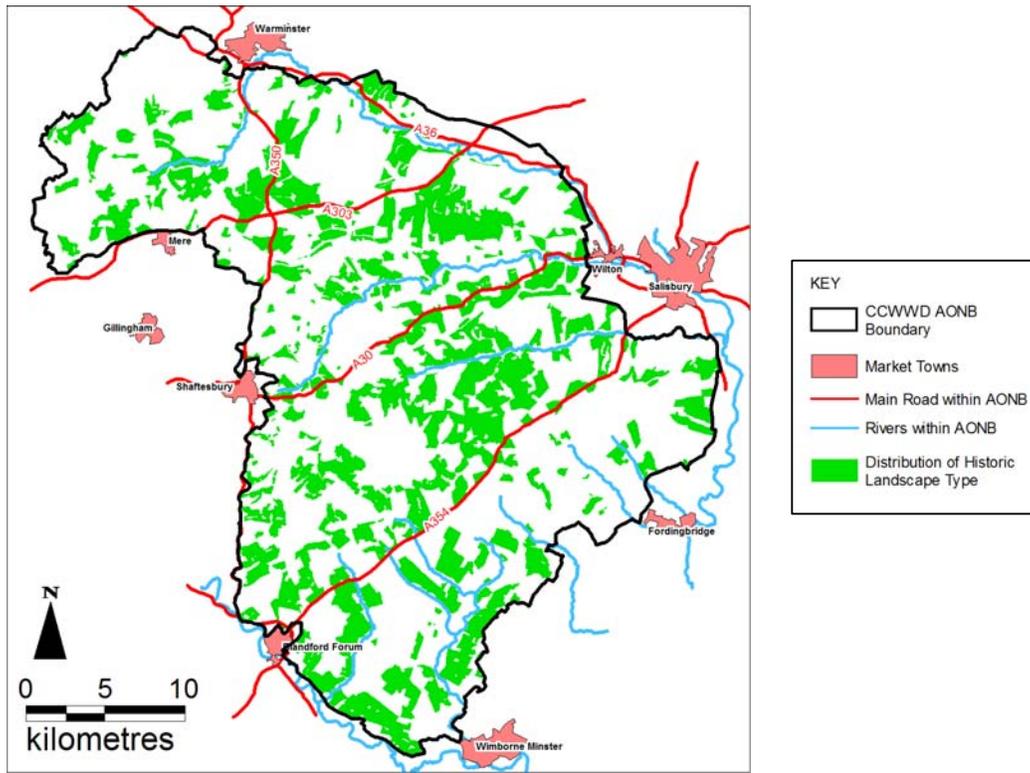
Parent Type

[1.1 Pre 1800 Fields](#)

Suggested Sources

Muir, R. (2000) *The NEW Reading the Landscape*. University of Exeter Press: Exeter.

Type 1.2 18th and 19th Century Fields



Introduction

Large formally planned fields primarily created in the 18th and 19th centuries. These have been documented by comparison of the modern day Ordnance Survey, historic Ordnance Survey maps and enclosure award maps. In the present day they account for 2,8519 hectares of the AONB or 29% of the AONB. These fields take a range of forms and have been created by a range of processes and include replanned, formal, parliamentary, and downland fields. In some instances they overlap chronologically with examples of pre 1800 fields, but have been created through a separate set of historical processes.

Distributions

They are widely distributed throughout the AONB with slightly higher concentration occurring in the area around the Ebble Valley and on the West Wiltshire Downs. They are found in dense clusters. There are voids in the distribution, notably in the far north of the AONB, along the West Wiltshire Downs and in the area to the north of Fordingbridge.

Principal Historical Processes

Over 30% of these fields have been created through the process of Parliamentary Enclosure. Land in the AONB has been identified as the type "parliamentary enclosure" where the pattern of fields indicated on the enclosure map can still be seen in today's landscape either in its original form or as a fossilised type. This process could transform landscapes at a stroke by imposing a new angular geometry

where previously there had been winding lanes and sinuous fields. The scale of the impact, however, varies quite considerably between areas.

The majority of fields, 63%, however, could not be linked to a Parliamentary Act suggesting that they were created through more informal methods for which there is no easily traceable documentary evidence. These fields share the same impact and the same regular, evenly spaced morphology that is seen with parliamentary fields.

In a few cases in the AONB the enclosure of much larger blocks of land can be identified which, unlike the types just discussed, can be defined as enclosure through consensus and exchange, and appears to be the result of a single landowner or group of neighbours enclosing large areas of formerly open downland. This type is primarily found on the West Wiltshire Downs

There is also fossilised evidence in the landscape on the West Wiltshire Downs and in the Ebbles Valley of an initial stage to the creation of these new fields when their boundaries were not formalised and they were left as open fields for some time, before being formally enclosed.

Alternatively some fields created in the 19th century involved the reorganisation of earlier pre 1800 enclosed fields, as is seen in four locations in the Nadder Valley.

Typical Historical/Archaeological Components

This type is dominated by fields which are regular in size and shape with straight boundaries, and which are often hedged. These boundaries can follow the line of newly created straight linear boundaries. These boundaries have been imposed across the landscape regardless of topography and can extend for several kilometres. However the morphology of these fields can also vary with response to local topography, pre-existing route ways, or boundaries.



Rarity

This type can be characterised as occurring commonly in the landscape of the AONB. It comprises nearly 30% of the landscape of the AONB and, as such, contributes greatly to the character of the fieldscapes of the AONB.

Survival

Although a very robust type, 40,342 hectares of the AONB or 40.97 % of the AONB could at some point have been characterised as 18th and 19th century fields. This means that since the 19th century over 12,000 hectares has been modified, reorganised or enlarged into new 20th century fieldscapes.

Degree of surviving coherence of the historic landscape components

The 18th and 19th century fields which survive in the landscape are still very recognisable in the landscape due to their angular form. However, half of the fields in this type have been subject to some form of boundary alteration since their creation, with over 1,000 boundaries being created since the 1880s and 324 boundaries being lost. This means that this type is being diluted by the subdivision of the existing fields.

Past interaction with other types

19th century fields imposed a new symmetry on the landscape often creating radical upheavals in existing land use patterns.

Evidence for time-depth

A third of the land identified as 18th and 19th century enclosure preserves evidence for previous land uses. The vast majority of these are earlier enclosure patterns which have been fossilised within the new enclosure pattern. The imposition of these new enclosures does, therefore, demonstrate some flexibility in its implementation, often incorporating existing boundaries or mirroring older boundaries, and therefore implicitly incorporating older enclosure patterns.

Contribution to the present landscape character

This type has had a large impact on the landscape of the AONB, and would be apparent to most observers.

Key Statistics

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| Total Area: | 28519 Hectares, 29% of the AONB. |
| No. of Polygons: | This Subtype is comprised of 667 polygons, 15% of the total number of polygons digitised. |
| Av. Polygon Size: | Each polygon averages 42 hectares in size. |
| Occurrence: | Common. |
| Previous Coverage: | 40,342 hectares, 41% of AONB was 18 th and 19 th Century enclosure at the point in time when this type was at its most prevalent. |
| Total Recorded Coverage: | The total recorded coverage of this type is 40,534 hectares, 41% of the AONB. |

Constituent Types

[1.2.1 Parliamentary Enclosure](#)

[1.2.2 Planned Enclosure](#)

[1.2.3 Large Scale Enclosure of Downland](#)

[1.2.4 Downland Improvement \(previous type only\)](#)

[1.2.5 Replanned Fields](#)

Parent Type

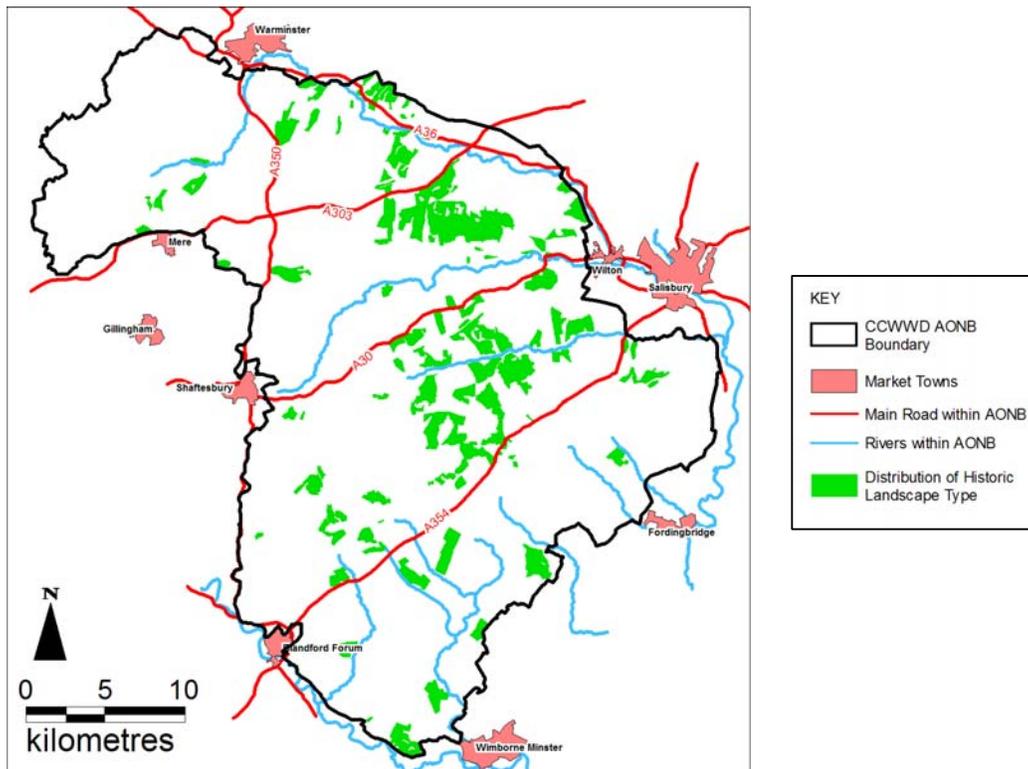
[1. Enclosed Fields](#)

Suggested Sources

Chapman, J. and Seeliger S. (1997) A Guide to Enclosure in Hampshire 1700-1900. Hampshire County Council: Winchester

Sandell, R. E. (1971) Abstracts of Wiltshire Inclosure Awards. Wiltshire Record Society: Devizes

Type 1.2.1 Parliamentary Enclosure



Introduction

Fields created by, or subject to, Parliamentary Enclosure documented on the relevant Enclosure Awards and Maps dating between the mid 18th and mid 19th Century. In the present day they account for 9602 hectares or 9.75 % of the AONB. They tend to be on higher ground and be formed by very regular shaped fields with straight edges.

Distributions

These fields are widely distributed across the AONB. There are distinct concentrations of this type on the sides of the Ebbles Valley, on the West Wiltshire Downs to the north of Chilmark, on the wooded chalk downland between Bowerchalke and Sixpenny Handley and finally a more scattered distribution along the sides and the upper reaches of the River Tarrant and the River Allen. This type is found in dense groupings and clusters and those on the West Wiltshire Downs have a linear form. This type is absent from the north-west and south-east corners of the AONB. It tends to be distributed on the eastern side of the AONB. There is no clear distribution in respect of underlying geology.

Principal Historical Processes

These fields have been created through a process of Parliamentary Enclosure (often referred to as Inclosure in older documents) which occurred in England mostly in the period between 1750 and 1850. Enclosure is the process "by which land that has formerly been owned and exploited collectively is divided into separate parcels, each owner exchanging rights in part of it" (Sandell 1971: 1). The process of enclosure

could transform landscapes at a stroke by imposing a new angular geometry where previously there had been winding lanes and sinuous fields. The scale of the impact, however, varies quite considerably between areas. The methods of enclosure can be divided into four main types (Chapman & Seeliger 1997: xiv): -

1. Piecemeal
2. Formal Agreement
3. Imposition by the Lord of the Manor
4. Formal agreement and by Act of Parliament

It is this fourth method that relates to the type under discussion. Until 1836 it was normal to obtain a separate Act for each individual manor or parish subject to enclosure, but after this date blanket authorisation for enclosure by agreement was introduced, which allowed enclosure to occur automatically if certain conditions were met (notably, that just two-thirds of the interested parties agreed to the enclosure).

The records for the individual Enclosure Awards are held by the individual County Archives and in some cases the National Archives. For this project the Enclosure Awards relating to more than 60 parishes in the AONB have been consulted, the earliest dating to 1783 for Warminster and Corsley and the latest from 1867 for Donhead St Mary. In most cases the records consist of an award document and a supporting map. The award gives details of the date of the Act, the name of the Lord of the Manor, the area of enclosure, the allotments, provision of fencing, enumeration of roads and paths, details of herbage allotted and finally details of the accompanying awards. These Award Documents have been transcribed for Wiltshire and Hampshire (Chapman & Seeliger 1997; Sandell 1971).

The maps themselves indicate the size and shape of fields subject to the Enclosure Act, the names of the allottees and acreages.

Land in the AONB has been identified as the type “parliamentary enclosure” where the pattern of fields indicated on the enclosure map can still be seen in today’s landscape, either in its original form or as a fossilised type. In some cases there is no evidence that the pattern of enclosure indicated on the map became a reality, perhaps due to subsequent changes in land use. The maps also often indicate areas of “old inclosure”, meaning fields which were known to have been in existence for at least 30 years before the date of the award. These have been used in the identification of other types such as Pre 1800 Fields. The maps also indicate areas to which rights were formerly held in common, and in some cases these rights are reinforced by the Parliamentary Enclosure Act.

One major exception from this general historical pattern is the case of the 1829 Cranborne Chase Award. Although grouped in the literature with the Enclosure Awards, this was a private disenfranchising act formally enrolled in 1831 through which Lord Rivers agreed to accept £1800 per annum as compensation for extinguishing his right to allow deer to roam on the Chase. The numbers of deer were estimated at between 12,000 and 20,000. The amount of £1800 per annum was made up of individual proportions so, for example, in Berwick St John and Donhead St Andrew, the Rev. Richard Downs paid £11.11s. for 42 acres (Chapman & Seeliger 1997: 57). The maps accompanying this award still provide a useful source for the fields which existed at this date, many of which appear to have been subject of piecemeal or informal enclosure, and have been characterised as such.

Typical Historical/Archaeological Components

This type is dominated by fields which are regular in size and shape with straight boundaries, and are often hedged. These boundaries can follow the line of newly created straight linear boundaries which have been imposed across the landscape, regardless of topography and can extend for several kilometres. These often occur in the same direction as existing parish boundaries, as occurs in the parishes of Dinton and Teffont Magna. However, the morphology of these fields can also vary in response to local topography, pre-existing route ways or boundaries.



This type, therefore, has had a striking impact of the landscape; only a third of the land subject to parliamentary enclosure preserves traces of previous land uses. The change wrought by parliamentary enclosure is not, however, as striking as seen in other regions of the country (see for example the Buckinghamshire HLC) partly due to the fact that much of the landscape had already been enclosed by ancient enclosure, piecemeal enclosure and informal enclosure.

Rarity

This type can be characterised as occurring “occasionally” in the landscape of the AONB. It comprises nearly 10% of the landscape of the AONB and as such contributes to the character of the fieldscapes of the AONB, especially in areas where this type clusters, such as the Ebble Valley. It is locally scarce, however, in some areas on the western side of the AONB. It is not as prevalent as in other areas of the Central province of England (Roberts and Wrathmell 2000).

Survival

12,352 hectares of the AONB or 12.5% of the AONB could at some point have been characterised as “parliamentary enclosure”, meaning that since the 19th Century over 2,500 hectares has been modified, reorganised or enlarged by new 20th Century fields.

Degree of surviving coherence of the historic landscape components

The parliamentary enclosure that survives is still very recognisable in the landscape due to its angular form. However, half of the fields in this type have been subject to some form of boundary alteration since their creation, with 219 boundaries being created since the 1880s and only 25 boundaries being lost. This means that the coherency of this type is being diluted by the subdivision of the existing field.

Past interaction with other types

Parliamentary enclosures are often associated with other types of 19th Century enclosure including formal enclosure and 19th century large scale enclosure of downland.

Evidence for time-depth

A third of the land identified as “parliamentary enclosure” preserves evidence for previous land uses. The majority of these being earlier enclosure patterns which have been fossilised within the 19th century enclosure pattern. In addition, as discussed above, the imposition of enclosures does demonstrate some flexibility in its implementation, often incorporating existing or mirroring older boundaries and, therefore, implicitly incorporating older enclosure patterns.

Contribution to the present landscape character

Where this type clusters it has had a large impact on the landscape of the AONB; it would be apparent to most observers.

Key Statistics

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| Total Area: | 9,602 Hectares, 9.75% of the AONB. |
| No. of Polygons: | This Subtype is comprised of 195 polygons, 4% of the total number of polygons digitised. |
| Av. Polygon Size: | Each polygon averages 50 hectares in size. |
| Occurrence: | Occasional |
| Previous Coverage: | 11,710 hectares, 12% of AONB was Parliamentary Enclosure the point when this type was at its most prevalent |
| Total Recorded Coverage: | The total recorded coverage of Enclosed Land is 12,352 hectares, 12.5% of the AONB |

Constituent Types

None

Parent Type

[1.2 18th and 19th Century Fields](#)

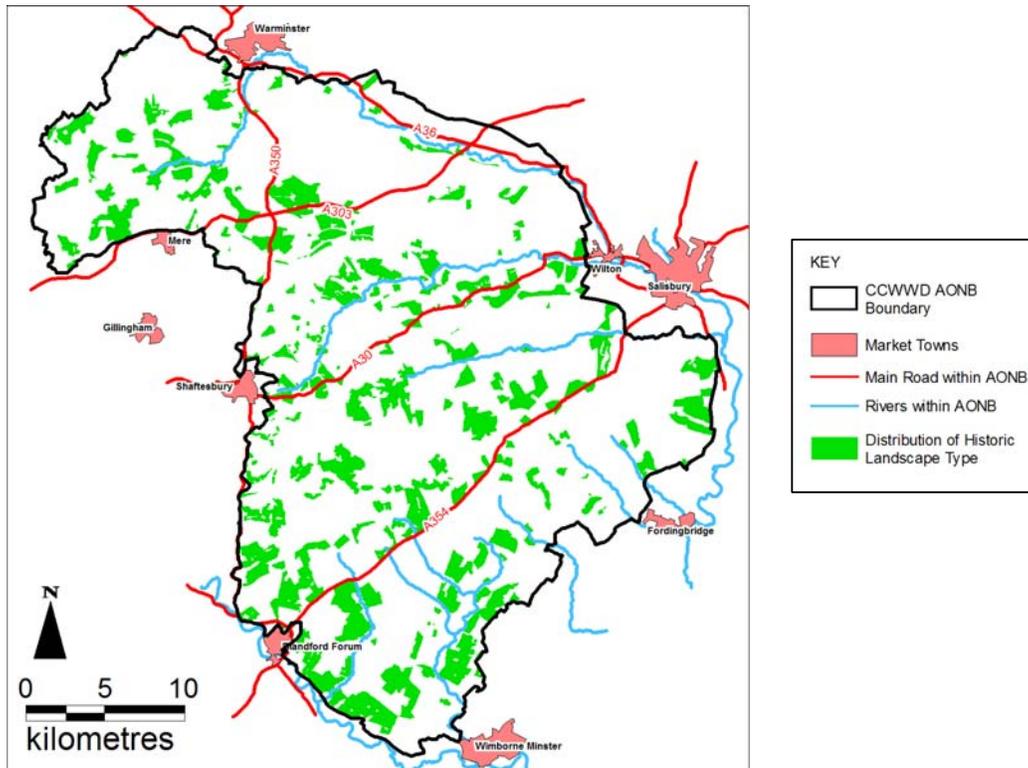
Suggested Sources

Chapman, J. and Seeliger S. (1997) A Guide to Enclosure in Hampshire 1700-1900. Hampshire County Council: Winchester

Roberts, B.K and Wrathmell, S. (2000) An atlas of Rural Settlement in England. English: Heritage: London.

Sandell, R. E. (1971) Abstracts of Wiltshire Inclosure Awards. Wiltshire Record Society: Devizes

Type 1.2.2 Planned Enclosure



Introduction

Fields created mostly in the 19th Century which appear to have been created in a planned manner but are not recorded within the relevant Enclosure Award and Map. In the present day they account for 17,736 hectares or 18% of the AONB.

Distribution

They are present across most of the AONB but are largely absent from the West Wiltshire Downs and the Wylde Valley. They are distributed across a range of topographies and geologies. They tend to occur in very large blocks but their distribution is fragmentary through the Vale of Wardour.

Principal Historical Processes

These fields have been created through the process of Planned Enclosure which occurred in England mostly in the period between 1750 and 1850. Enclosure is the process “by which land that has formerly been owned and exploited collectively is divided into separate parcels, each owner exchanging rights in part of it” (Sandell 1971: 1). The process of enclosure could transform landscapes at a stroke, imposing a new angular geometry where previously there had been winding lanes and sinuous fields. The scale of the impact however varies quite considerably between areas. The methods of enclosure can be divided into four main types (Chapman & Seeliger 1997: xiv): -

1. Piecemeal
2. Formal Agreement
3. Imposition by the Lord of the Manor
4. Formal agreement by Act of Parliament

The type under discussion is not formed by Act of Parliament and therefore their creation appears to be through more informal methods for which there is no easily traceable documentary evidence, such as formal agreement, or imposition. This form of enclosure covers twice the area of that covered by formal Parliamentary Enclosure, suggesting not only that this was the preferred method of enclosure in the area but also that large areas of the AONB were enclosed before the main reliance on Parliamentary Enclosure took place, i.e. before 1800. Its morphological similarities to fields created by Parliamentary Enclosure suggests that these fields were also created through consensus and exchange

Typical Historical/Archaeological Components

This type is dominated by fields which are regular or semi irregular in size and shape with straight boundaries, and are often hedged. These boundaries can follow the line of newly created straight linear boundaries which have been imposed across the landscape regardless of topography and can extend for several kilometres. The fields themselves form large regular angular blocks that can cover



more than 400 hectares which demonstrates the planned nature of these components. They do, however, respect older boundaries. For example, the planned fields follow the edge of the old Roman Road which runs between Badbury Rings and Salisbury. As mentioned above the pattern of fields is much more dispersed through the Vale of Wardour suggesting that much of the lands here had already been enclosed at an earlier date. This is supported by the predominance of pre 1800 semi-irregular fields, ancient assarts and wooded common land. Conversely, its absence from the West Wiltshire Downs is due to the fact that much of this landscape was not enclosed until the 20th century. The morphology of these fields is very similar to those created through an identified Parliamentary Act. The main differences, therefore, between this type and type 1.2.1 Parliamentary Enclosure is the historical process which led to their creation.

Rarity

This type is widely distributed and occurs frequently across the AONB, excluding the Wylve Valley and the West Wiltshire Downs where it is locally rare.

Survival

Previously 24,058 hectares of the AONB, or 24%, could have been characterised as “planned enclosure”. This means that since the 19th century over 6,000 hectares has been modified, reorganised or enlarged through the creation of 20th century fields.

Degree of surviving coherence of the historic landscape components

The examples of this type that survive are still very recognisable in the landscape due to its angular form and the large blocks in which it is found. However, half of the fields in this type have been subject to some form of boundary alteration since their creation, with 262 boundaries being created since the 1880s and only 85 boundaries are lost. This means that the coherency of this type is being diluted by the subdivision of the existing fields, although the original boundaries are maintained. This is similar to the process occurring in parliamentary enclosure.

Past interaction with other types

Planned enclosures are often associated with other types of 19th Century enclosure including parliamentary enclosure and 19th century large scale enclosure of downland.

Evidence for time-depth

Under a third of the land identified as planned enclosure preserves evidence for previous land uses, the majority of these being open land. This demonstrates that this enclosure often marked a radical departure from earlier land uses.

Contribution to the present landscape character

It comprises 18% of the AONB and, therefore, contributes greatly to the character of the AONB, especially in areas where it forms large blocks in the landscape, such as the southern half of the AONB.

Key Statistics

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| Total Area: | 17,736 Hectares, 18.1% of the AONB |
| No. of Polygons: | This Subtype is comprised of 458 polygons, 10.3% of the total number of polygons digitised. |
| Av. Polygon Size: | Each polygon averages 38.7 hectares in size. |
| Occurrence: | Frequent, |
| Previous Coverage: | 24,038 hectares, 24% of AONB was Formal 19 th Century Enclosure at the point when this type was at its most prevalent, |
| Total Recorded Coverage: | The total recorded coverage of Enclosed Land is 24,158 hectares, 24.5% of the AONB, |

Constituent Types

None

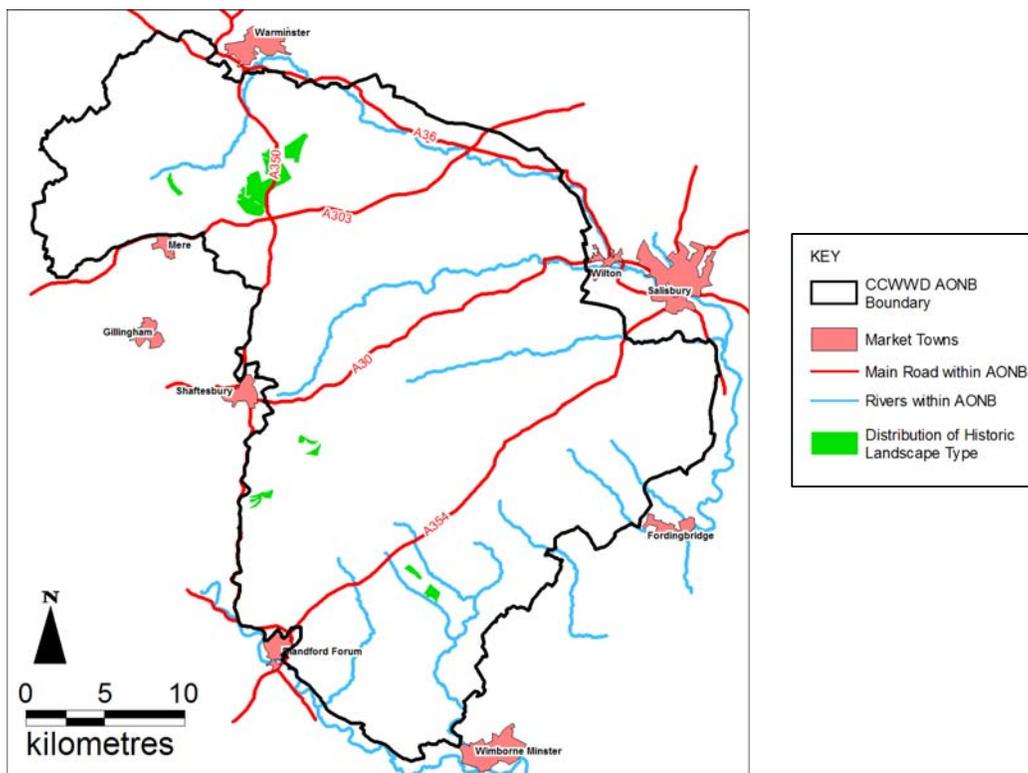
Parent Type

[1.2 18th and 19th Century Fields](#)

Suggested Sources

Chapman. J. and Seeliger S. (1997) A Guide to Enclosure in Hampshire 1700-1900. Hampshire County Council: Winchester

Type 1.2.3 Large Scale Enclosure of Downland



Introduction

Fields created in the 19th century which involved the large scale enclosure of downland. These are related to other 19th century enclosure types, such as parliamentary or planned enclosure, but appear to have been created on a much larger scale. They consist of much larger fields with long boundaries which are shared across the landscape. They are also much more irregular in form. In the present day they account for 1,045 hectares or 1% of the AONB.

Distribution

These fields have a restricted distribution and are most evident to the south of Longbridge Deverill at the western edge of the West Wiltshire Downs. There are smaller concentrations around the village of Compton Abbas and in the Tarrant Valley. They tend to occur on higher ground, and have all been created from land that was formerly open downland and unimproved grassland.

Principal Historical Processes

These fields have been created in the 19th century and their planned nature suggests that they are related to the same historical processes which created Parliamentary Enclosure and other planned fields. However, unlike these other types, which can be defined as enclosure through consensus and exchange, these fields appear to be the result of a single landowner or group enclosing large areas of formerly open downland. The result is the enclosure of much larger blocks of land, the creation of

long boundaries which are imposed across the landscape regardless of topography and much larger irregular fields. However, this is a much rarer type of enclosure suggesting that it was uncommon for a single individual or group to have control over such a large area of land at this date. In addition, much of the downland would have been common land, preventing much of the land being enclosed in this way at an early date. This type can be seen as marking the beginnings of the large scale enclosure of open downland which can be seen in the 20th century with the creation of large prairie fields across the remaining open land.

Typical Historical/Archaeological Components

This type is dominated by fields which are very large, and irregular in shape with curving boundaries. Some of these are imposed across the landscape while others follow the topography of the land. It appears that the main emphasis was placed on enclosing large blocks of land in the most expedient way possible with little regard for order or plan. Many of these fields preserve names which relate to their former existence as open grass downland.



Rarity

This type is uncommon and only mainly occurs in three discrete locations. It is locally common in the area centred on Keysley Down.

Survival

300 hectares has been lost since the 19th century when this type was at its most prominent, but there has been only minimal boundary loss and gain since the 19th century.

Degree of surviving coherence of the historic landscape components

Where this enclosure type is found it is very recognisable as it forms large blocks in the landscape. However, the irregular nature of its boundaries means that it could be easily confused with more recent enclosure of open downland in the 20th century, when large prairie fields were created.

Past interaction with other types

Large scale enclosure of downland is often associated with other types of 19th Century enclosure, including parliamentary enclosure and formal enclosure.

Evidence for time-depth

Over 85% of these fields preserve traces of the origins of this land as unenclosed open downland.

Contribution to the present landscape character

This type has a small contribution due to the infrequency of its occurrence. However, where this type is found it has had a large impact on the landscape of the AONB, and would be apparent to most observers. In the case of its occurrence on Keysley Down, in this location it contributes greatly to landscape character.

Key Statistics

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Total Area: | 1,045 Hectares, 1.06% of the AONB. |
| No. of Polygons: | This Subtype is comprised of 10 polygons, 0.23% of the total number of polygons digitised. |
| Av. Polygon Size: | Each polygon averages 104.51 hectares in size. |
| Occurrence: | Uncommon. |
| Previous Coverage: | 1,703 hectares, 1.79% of AONB was Large Scale Enclosure of Downland at the point in time when this type was at its most prevalent. |
| Total Recorded Coverage: | The total recorded coverage of Enclosed Land is 1,762 hectares, 1% of the AONB |

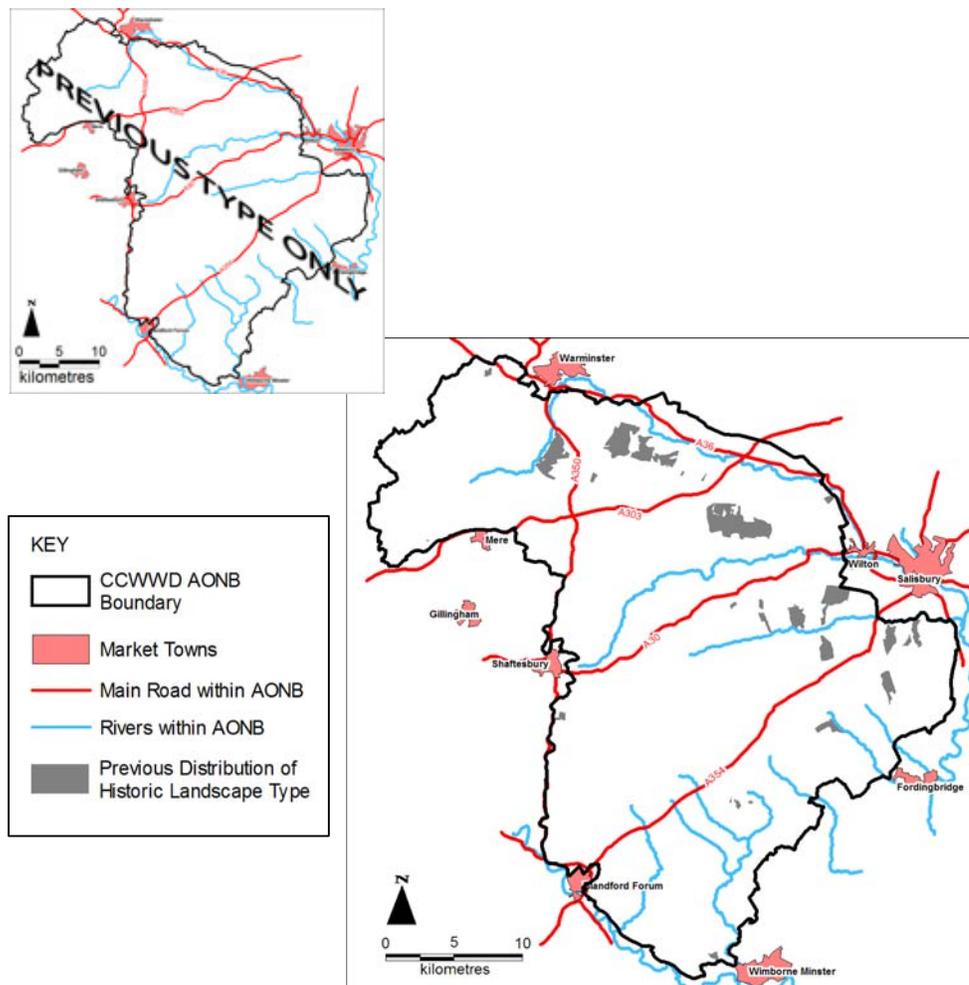
Constituent Types

None

Parent Type

[1.2 18th and 19th Century Fields](#)

Type 1.2.4 Downland Improvement (Previous type only)



Introduction

This type occurs only as a previous type, meaning that it does not survive intact in the present day landscape. It represents areas which seem to represent the improvement of downland in the 19th century before this land was formally enclosed. The exact nature of this activity is unknown, it is represented as unenclosed delineated, but open fields on the 1880's Ordnance Survey which then become the boundaries of later formal fields. They have been identified through analysis of the morphology of 19th and 20th century fields which survive in the modern landscape, and analysis primarily of Epoch 1 1880's historic Ordnance Survey maps.

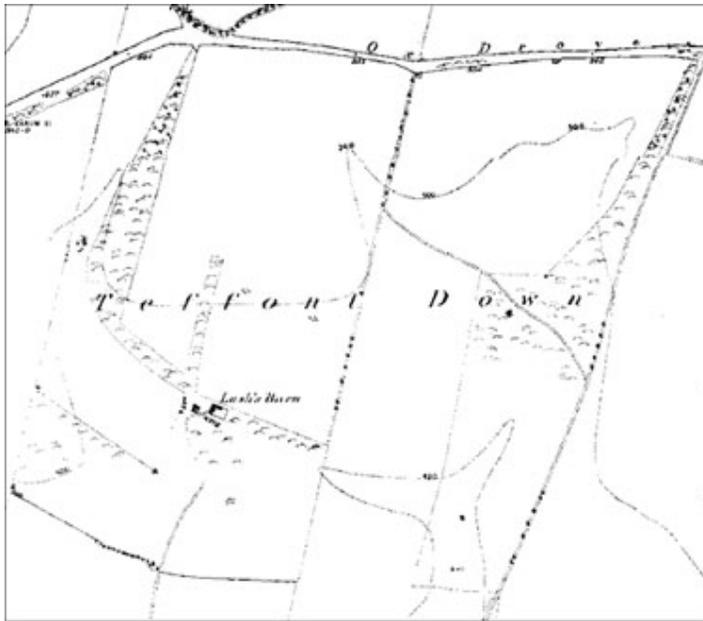
Distribution

The evidence for this type has a restricted distribution. It can mainly be found along the edges of the West Wiltshire Downs and in the Ebble Valley, where they exist as large coherent blocks. They are primarily found on the chalk and at higher elevations.

Principal Historical Processes

These open fields have the same morphology as formally enclosed 19th century fields, as they are very regular, with straight boundaries and are imposed across large areas of downland. They probably represent the dividing up of the open downland in the 19th century, often following the same area of enclosure award maps from the 1820's but for which physical boundaries, such as fences or hedges, had not as yet been created. This suggests that these fields may have been under cultivation so it was not necessarily to enclose them straight away. It also indicates the expense that enclosure could entail, suggesting that fields were not physically enclosed until it was absolutely necessary. These fields were probably created through the same processes as other 19th century fields (see particularly discussions of Types 1.2.1 Parliamentary Enclosure, and type 1.2.2 Planned Enclosure).

Typical Historical/Archaeological Components



The traces left of this type are straight regular open fields. The boundaries of which are indicated as dotted lines on the 1880's historic Ordnance Survey maps. These then become fossilised in the boundaries of enclosed 19th century fields. There is no indication of these fields on the 1820's surveyor's maps and the 18th century county maps.

The adjacent figure shows a snapshot from the 1880's Ordnance

Survey map at Teffont Down which shows the possible outline of these 19th century open fields,; these later became fossilised in the boundaries of enclosed fields

Rarity

Across the edges of the West Wiltshire Downs and in the Ebbel Valley it appears to be fairly common for these fields to occur as a precursor to 19th century enclosed fields. The maximum extent of their recorded distribution in the 19th century was only 3% of the AONB, however, so they are a locally common phenomenon.

Survival

This type only survives as previous fossilised type.

Degree of surviving coherence of the historic landscape components

This type cannot be readily recognised in the landscape without reference to historic maps.

Past interaction with other types

This previous type is intrinsically linked with the more recent types which have led to its preservation. These include 19th century Parliamentary Enclosure, 19th century planned enclosure and fields created at the beginning of the 20th century.

Evidence for time-depth

In the areas where they have been identified this past historic landscape type marks the earliest evidence of the formal enclosure of land which would have previously been open downland and unimproved grassland.

Contribution to the present landscape character

N/A

Key Statistics

Total Area: N/A

No. of Polygons: N/A

Av. Polygon Size: N/A

Occurrence: N/A

Previous Coverage: 3,160 hectares, 3% of AONB preserves traces of this type at the point when this type was at its most prevalent.

Total Recorded Coverage: The total previous recorded coverage of this type is 3,213 hectares, 3% of the AONB.

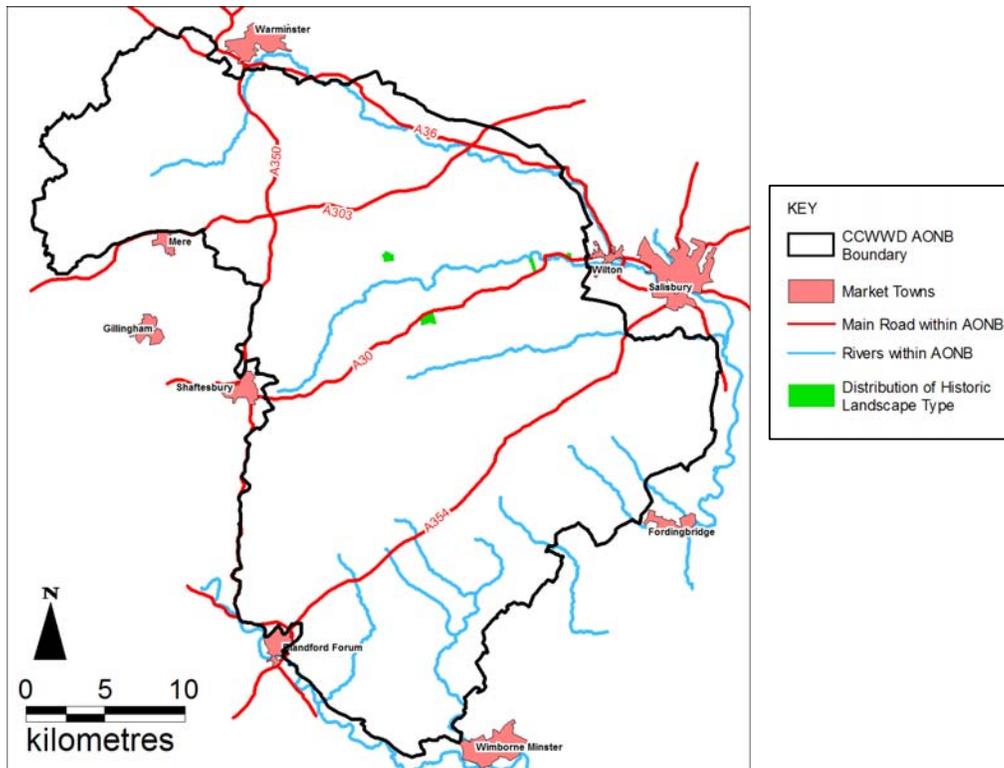
Constituent Types

None

Parent Type

[1.2 18th and 19th Century Fields](#)

Type 1.2.5 Replanned Fields



Introduction

Fields whose boundaries were reorganised in the 19th century. These are related to other 19th century enclosure types such as parliamentary or planned enclosure but appear to involve the reorganisation of fields which had already been enclosed at an earlier date. They are extremely rare in the present day and account for just 0.14% of the AONB. They have been identified through the morphology of the fields as indicated by the 1820s surveyor's maps and their morphology on the later 1880s Ordnance Survey map. They tend to occur on the valley sides.

Distribution

This type has an extremely restricted distribution and occurs in just four locations in the Nadder Valley.

Principal Historical Processes

These fields have been created in the 19th century and involve the reorganisation of earlier pre 1800 enclosed fields. The new fields are more regular in size and shape and have the same morphology as newly created 19th century fields in the form of parliamentary and planned enclosure. Unlike these they contain traces of the early field boundaries within their overall form. They form part of the major reorganisation of the landscape which occurred from the 18th century and can be linked to the intensification of agricultural practice which occurred with the industrial revolution.

This led to an increasing regularity in field shape and form which could transform the appearance of the landscape.

Typical Historical/Archaeological Components

This type is dominated by fields which are medium sized and are regular shaped with straight boundaries. A third of the boundaries are curving, representing the remnants of early 18th century enclosure within their form.

Rarity

This type is scarce within the AONB as a whole and occurs in only four discrete locations.

Survival

Since the late 19th century over 100 hectares of this type has been lost, becoming part of 20th century fieldscapes. This is nearly half the extent of this type of field, suggesting this type is fairly fragile.

Degree of surviving coherence of the historic landscape components

This type could be easily confused with other types of 19th century field. Its most distinguishing feature is the preservation of earlier field boundaries within its form. These could consist of mature hedgerows in some instances.

Past interaction with other types

Replanned 19th century fields are often associated with other types of 19th century enclosure including parliamentary enclosure and planned enclosure.

Evidence for time-depth

All of these fields preserve traces of earlier pre 1800 field boundaries which were reorganised. These date from the early post medieval period onwards.

Contribution to the present landscape character

Small contribution due to the rarity of this type. However, where this type is found it has had a large impact on the landscape of the AONB, and would be apparent to most observers.



Key Statistics

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Total Area: | 135 Hectares, 0.14% of the AONB. |
| No. of Polygons: | This Subtype is comprised of 4 polygons, 0.09% of the total number of polygons digitised. |
| Av. Polygon Size: | Each polygon averages 33.87 hectares in size. |
| Occurrence: | Scarce. |
| Previous Coverage: | 225 hectares, 0.23% of AONB was large scale enclosure of downland at the point when this type was at its most prevalent. |
| Total Recorded Coverage: | The total recorded coverage of Enclosed Land is 360 hectares, 0.33% of the AONB. |

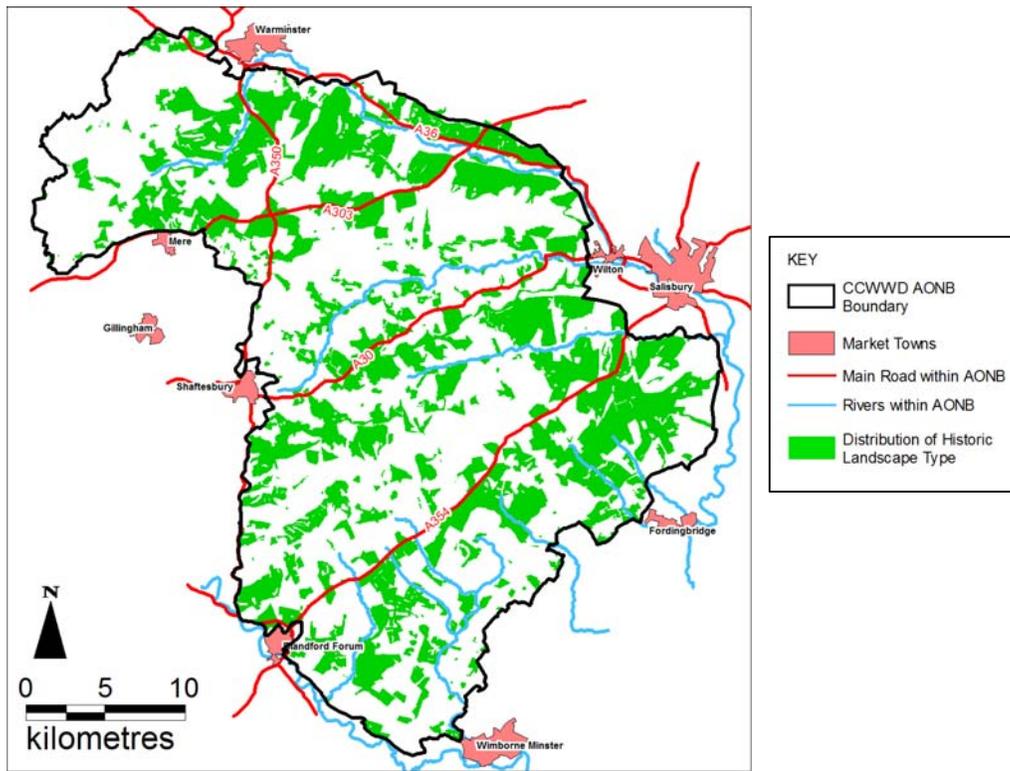
Constituent Types

None

Parent Type

[1.2 18th and 19th Century Fields](#)

Type 1.3 20th Century Fields



Introduction

Fields created in the 20th Century documented on the modern day Ordnance Survey maps. In the present day they account for 33,610 hectares or 34% of the AONB.

Distribution

They are widely distributed across the AONB but are largely absent from the far north-western edge of the AONB. They are found in dense groupings which become more dispersed through the Nadder Valley, across the wooded chalk downland of Cranborne Chase and along the south western edge of the AONB.

Principal Historical Processes

20th Century Fields are created through a number of mechanisms.

Firstly, they have arisen through the creation of new fields. Secondly, they have been created through modifying existing field layouts. Thirdly, they have been created through amalgamation, where existing field boundaries are removed to create new larger fields.

In general terms these processes have resulted in the addition of over 2000 field boundaries since the 1880's as opposed to the approximate 350 which have been removed.

The most common process has been the creation of new fields which comprise 65% of this type. Modified fields account for 20% of the type which are probably linked to changes in agricultural practice and the intensification of farming. Far less common is the amalgamation of existing fields. In general terms there has been a trend over the last 100 years for an increase in the number of fields present in the AONB.

Typical Historical/ Archaeological Components

In general these fields show a whole range of morphologies and sizes. This reflects the different processes which have led to their creation and the number of fields under discussion (nearly 4000).



Rarity

This type can be characterised as common in the landscape of the AONB, as such it can be characterised as having a major contributory role to the character of the fieldscapes of the AONB.

Survival

This type represents the most recent phase of enclosure in the landscape.

Degree of surviving coherence of the historic landscape components

This type is less recognisable in the landscape as a whole, due to its varied morphology. Its individual elements are much more recognisable, such as the creation of new paddocks or large prairie fields. It reflects one of the most recent historical processes to have occurred in the landscape and as such it demonstrates a high level of coherence and intactness.

Past interaction with other types

These fields either mark a radical departure from older types or, in some instances, can be characterised as representing a final stage in the history of the enclosure of the AONB which was first accelerated in the 18th and 19th centuries.

Evidence for time-depth

Over 90% of 20th Century Fields preserve evidence for previous land uses. This wealth of history is demonstrated from the 18 different groups of place names which have been recorded. In general these fields preserve evidence of previous phases of enclosed land or evidence that the land was previously unenclosed.

Contribution to the present landscape character

Where this type occurs it has had a large impact on the landscape of the AONB.

Key Statistics

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Total Area: | 34,381 hectares, 34.9% of the AONB |
| No. of Polygons: | This Subtype is comprised of 928 polygons, 20.9% of the total number of polygons digitised. |
| Av. Polygon Size: | Each polygon averages 37 hectares in size. |
| Occurrence: | Common. |
| Previous Coverage: | 34,380 hectares, 34% of AONB was 20 th Century Fields at the point when this type was at its most prevalent |
| Total Recorded Coverage: | The total recorded coverage of this type is 34,466 hectares, 35% of the AONB |

Constituent Types

[1.3.1 New Fields](#)

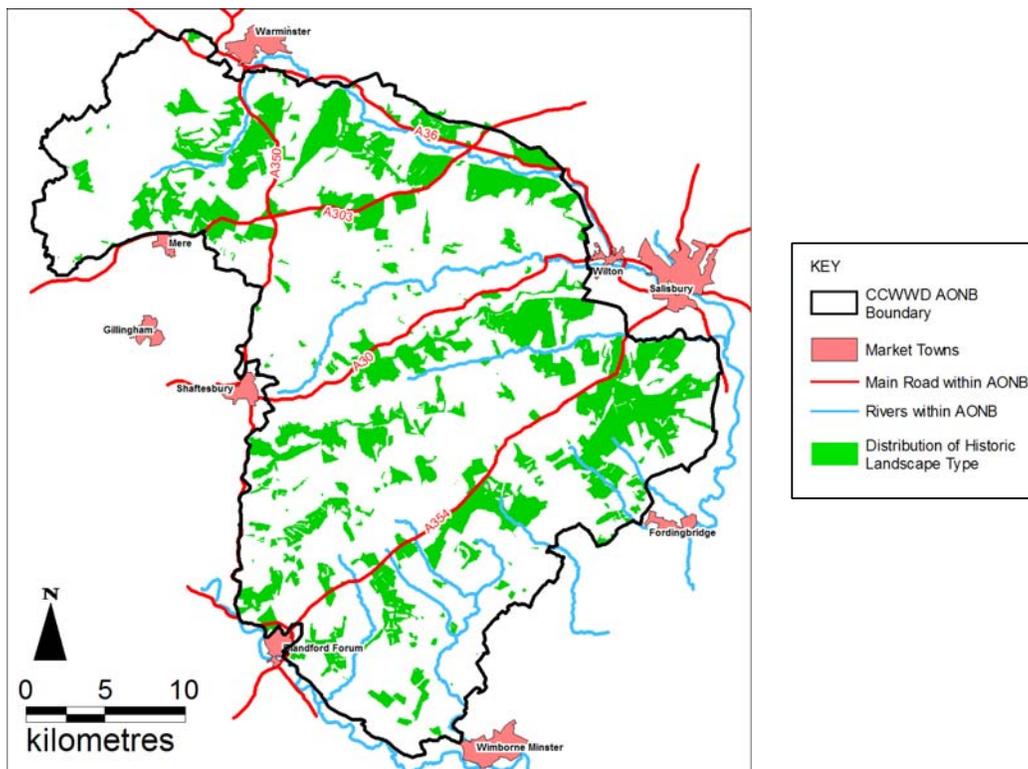
[1.3.2 Modified Fields](#)

[1.3.3 Enlarged Fields](#)

Parent Type

[1. Enclosed Land](#)

Type 1.3.1 New Fields



Introduction

New Fields created in the 20th century documented on the modern day Ordnance Survey maps. In the present day they account for 22,063 hectares or 22.41% of the AONB. They tend to form discrete blocks of land and have been created across a range of topographies, geologies and landscape types.

Distribution

They are distributed widely across the AONB, but are largely absent from the Vale of Wardour and the greensand hills between Penselwood and Longleat. They are formed of larger blocks in the eastern and northern halves of the AONB. They are much more dispersed through the Vale of Wardour and the southern tip of the AONB.

Principal Historical Processes

The large fields are by far the most common comprising over 40% of the type. In the vast majority of cases (over 82%) these fields have been created by enclosing previously open land, and the vast majority of this was open grassland and downland. Similarly the medium sized new fields have been created by imposing a new, often radical, layout and form of fields upon the landscape. However in this instance these tend to have been imposed upon existing enclosed land created in the Post Medieval period. The process of creating both these types of fields started in first half of the 20th century and accelerated markedly in the later 20th century with over 80% of these fields being created at this point. They are probably linked to

changes in agricultural practice and increases in arable farming. The fact that these fields occur often in quite large blocks, greater than 250 hectares in size, points to the planned nature of these fields and the possible consolidation and replacement of smaller land holdings.

At the same time the open escarpments were also being enclosed, but here the topography of the escarpments has very much dominated the form that the newly created fields have taken. The top and bottom of these escarpments were often enclosed by default and they were then subdivided horizontally across the break of slope. In some respects these fields also maintain their former open characteristics.

Typical Historical/Archaeological Components

This type is dominated by either large fields with a range of different morphologies or medium fields which are regular in size and shape, with straight boundaries. These fields have been imposed across the landscape; their boundaries can respect local topography, meaning that their form can, in these instances, deviate from the normal regular pattern,



becoming more sinuous and irregular in nature. The imposition of these fields has had a fairly striking impact on the landscape.

Rarity

This type occurs commonly in the landscape of the AONB, and as such it has a major contributory role to the character of the fieldscapes of the AONB. They are locally scarce in the north western edge of the AONB.

Survival

This type represents the most recent phase of enclosure in the landscape. The regular size and shape of the fields could be eroded in the future by future amalgamation, or subdivision, of the field boundaries.

Degree of surviving coherence of the historic landscape components

This type is fairly recognisable in the landscape, due to the fact that it occurs in discrete blocks and the often regular size and shape of its constituent fields or the large size of the fields themselves. Despite this, it is comprised of several different sizes and forms of fields which would only be recognised through comparison with map based sources. It reflects one of the most recent historical processes to have occurred in the landscape and as such it demonstrates a high level of coherence and intactness.

Past interaction with other types

These fields can mark a radical departure from older types. The creation of these new fields can also be characterised as representing a final stage in the history of the enclosure of the open downland, and the creation of new fields and as such it is connected with the 19th century enclosure types such as “Parliamentary Enclosure” which began the acceleration of this process.

Evidence for time-depth

Over 85% of the land identified as “New Fields” preserves evidence for previous land uses, the majority of these being unenclosed land. This is reflected by the regular association between the place name “downland” and this type. However, 25% of the fields which contain evidence of previous land uses were created from previously enclosed land, and these earlier enclosure patterns have been fossilised within the enclosure pattern. There are traces of previous land uses dating back to prehistory, though the vast majority of traces are for the post-medieval period.

Contribution to the present landscape character

High, where this type occurs it has had a large impact on the landscape of the AONB, it would be apparent to most observers.

Key Statistics

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| Total Area: | 22,883 hectares, 23.2% of the AONB. |
| No. of Polygons: | This Subtype is comprised of 240 polygons, 5.4% of the total number of polygons digitised. |
| Av. Polygon Size: | Each polygon averages 25 hectares in size. |
| Occurrence: | Common. |
| Previous Coverage: | 22,883 hectares, 23.2% of AONB was covered at the point when this type was at its most prevalent. |
| Total Recorded Coverage: | The total recorded coverage of this type is 24,032 hectares, 24.4% of the AONB. |

Constituent Types

[1.3.1.1 Medium New Fields](#)

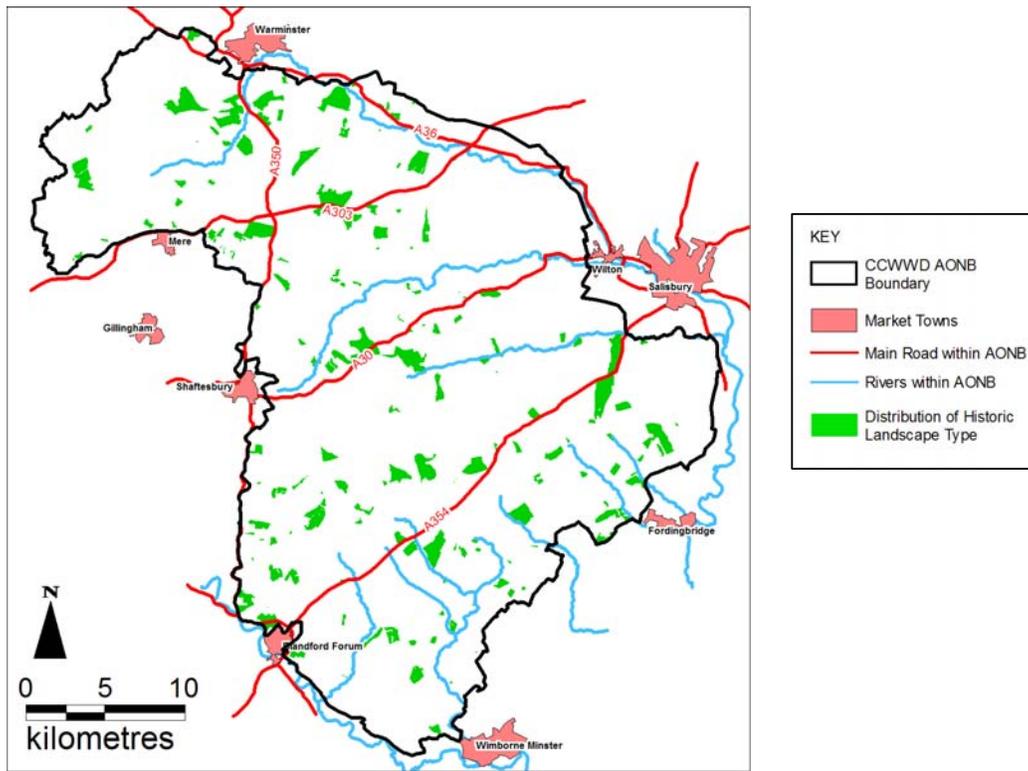
[1.3.1.2 Large New Fields](#)

[1.3.1.3 Reorganised Fields](#)

Parent Type

[1.3 20th Century Fields](#)

Type 1.3.1.1 Medium New Fields



Introduction

New Fields created in the 20th century documented on the modern day Ordnance Survey maps. In the present day they account for 6,013 hectares or 6% of the AONB. They tend to form discrete blocks of land in the landscape and have been created across a range of topographies, geologies and landscape types. They tend to be very square or rectangular in shape, of a regular size and often have very straight boundaries.

Distribution

They are distributed widely across the AONB. They are fairly dispersed and consist of medium sized blocks, interspersed with more widely scattered groupings. They tend to have more regular layouts in the northern half of the AONB. They are absent from the greensand terrace in the north western edge of the AONB and the lower reaches of the Wylde and Nadder Valleys.

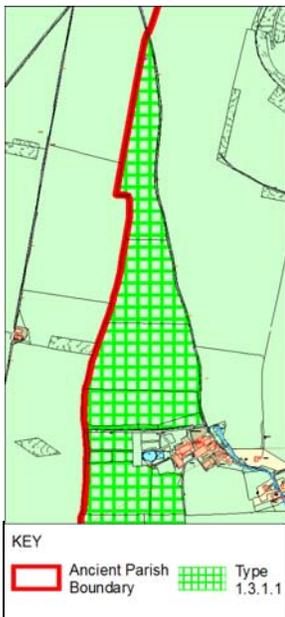
Principal Historical Processes

This type has been created by imposing a new, often radical layout and form of fields upon the landscape. This process started in the first half of the 20th century and accelerated markedly in the second half of the 20th century, with 85% of this field type being created at this point. They are probably linked to changes in agricultural practice and the intensification of farming. The fact that these fields occur often in quite large blocks, greater than 250 hectares in size, points to the planned nature of these fields and the possible consolidation and replacement of smaller land holdings.

Over 50% of these fields have been imposed upon existing enclosed land created in the post medieval period. However, due to the imposition of these new fields on the landscape only some elements of these earlier fields, their boundaries and layout, survive. This is testified by the 578 new boundaries which have been created since the 1880's.

Typical Historical/Archaeological Components

This type is dominated by fields which are regular in size and with straight boundaries. The fields on average are 6.22 hectares in size. Although these fields have been created across a range of topographies, their boundaries do respect local topography, meaning that their form can, in these instances, deviate from the normal regular pattern, becoming more sinuous and irregular in nature. In addition, they also tend to respect existing historic boundaries such as those of ancient parishes.



A good example of this can be found in the parish of Teffont Magna [see adjacent figure], where the regularity of the fields is bounded by the sinuous ancient parish boundary to the west and an ancient route way to the east, which forms a block of regular fields within the bounds of an irregular triangle of land. The imposition of these fields has had a fairly striking impact on the landscape; this is especially the case for 30% of the area where these fields replaced open land.

Rarity

This type can be characterised as occurring “occasionally” in the landscape, and comprises 6% of the landscape, as such it can be characterised as having a contributory role to the character of the fieldscapes of the AONB. However it is locally scarce through parts of the Vale of Wardour.

Survival

This type represents the most recent phase of enclosure in the landscape. The regular size and shape of the fields could be eroded in the future by future amalgamation, or subdivision, of the field boundaries.

Degree of surviving coherence of the historic landscape components

This type is very recognisable in the landscape, due to the fact that it occurs in discrete blocks and the regular size and shape of its constituent fields. It reflects one of the most recent historical processes to have occurred in the landscape and, as such, it demonstrates a high level of coherence and intactness.

Past interaction with other types

The type Medium New Fields is often associated with other types of new 20th century fieldscapes, including Prairie Fields, Paddocks and Reorganised Fields. These are all linked to the same historical processes but have different morphologies reflecting nuances in the reasons for their creation.

Evidence for time-depth

Over 80% of the land identified as “Medium New Fields” preserves evidence for previous land uses, the majority of these being earlier enclosure patterns which have been fossilised within the enclosure pattern. As discussed, however, these traces will be more fragmented due to the imposition of these new fields onto the landscape. There are, however, traces of previous land uses dating back to prehistory, though the vast majority of traces are for the Post Medieval period.

Contribution to the present landscape character

Where this type occurs it has had a fairly large impact on the landscape of the AONB, it would be apparent to most observers.

Key Statistics

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| Total Area: | 6,013 hectares, 6.11% of the AONB |
| No. of Polygons: | This Subtype is comprised of 240 polygons, 5% of the total number of polygons digitised. |
| Av. Polygon Size: | Each polygon averages 25 hectares in size. |
| Occurrence: | Occasional. |
| Previous Coverage: | 6,013 hectares, 6% of AONB was covered at the point when this type was at its most prevalent. |
| Total Recorded Coverage: | The total recorded coverage of Medium New Fields is 6,463 hectares, 6.5% of the AONB. |

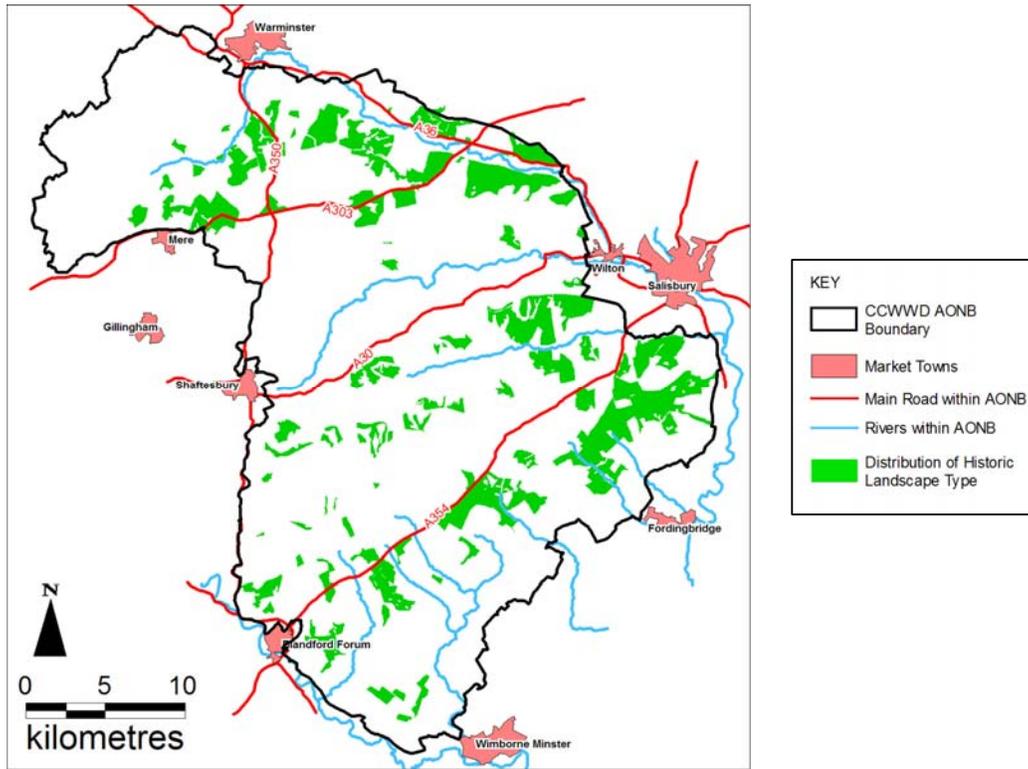
Constituent Types

None

Parent Type

[1.3.1 New Fields](#)

Type 1.3.1.2 Large New Fields



Introduction

Large New Fields created in the 20th century documented on the modern day Ordnance Survey. In the present day they account for 13,759 hectares, or 14%, of the AONB. They are characterised by large fields with straight or curving boundaries.

Distribution

They are widely distributed across the AONB. This type is absent from the Vale of Wardour and the north western corner of the AONB between Longleat and Penselwood. They tend to form large contiguous blocks in the landscape, though they are more dispersed through the area of the Cranborne Chase. This type occurs frequently on the sides of the Wylye and Ebbel Valley, along the edges of the West Wiltshire Downs and in the eastern corner of the AONB in Hampshire. They tend to occur on the middle and upper chalk, and also on higher ground on the sloping valley sides.

Principal Historical Processes

This type has involved the creation of blocks of large new fields in the landscape. This process started in the first half of the 20th century and accelerated markedly in the second half of the 20th century, with 85% of this field type being created at this point. In the majority of cases (over 80%) these fields have been created by enclosing previously open land, and the vast majority of this is open grassland and downland. These fields are created to increase the amount of land which can be put to the plough and cultivated. However, this process tends to have occurred at the

edge of the former open downland areas or on river valley sides such as the Wylde. In this respect, it can be seen as a final stage in the enclosure of the open grassland and downland of the AONB, which started in the post medieval period and was greatly accelerated in the 19th century with the parliamentary enclosure movement. The fact that these fields occur in very large blocks, some being greater than 700 hectares in size, points to the planned nature of these fields. However, the semi regular nature of the fields and the irregular nature of the field boundaries suggest that rather than being created as part of an imposed grid system, as is often seen with parliamentary enclosure, they were created in an organic fashion, respecting topography and pre-existing features such as track ways. This means they have preserved the character of the previous open land use. The large scale of the fields, their respect for local topography and the more frequent occurrence of fences, mean that these fields can feel very open and can maintain wide vistas across the landscape.

Typical Historical/Archaeological Components

This type is dominated by fields which are very large in size, 17 hectares on average. The fields show a range of morphologies, being regular, semi-irregular and irregular, though they are rarely sinuous in form. They have either curving and/or semi-irregular boundaries, which often reflect local topography or incorporate older boundaries, such as ancient parish boundaries. The fields have greater regularity in their morphology in the southern half of the AONB. The vast majority of this type has been created from formerly open land which is reflected in their semi-irregular morphology.



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Rarity

This type can be characterised as occurring frequently in the landscape of the AONB, and comprises 14% of the landscape of the AONB.

Survival

This type represents one of the most recent phases of enclosure in the landscape.

Degree of surviving coherence of the historic landscape components

This type is fairly recognisable in the landscape, due to the fact that it occurs in large discrete blocks and due to the large size of its constituent fields. It reflects one of the most recent historical processes to have occurred in the landscape and, as such, it demonstrates a high level of coherence and intactness.

Past interaction with other types

The type is often associated with other types of new 20th century fieldscapes including Medium New Fields, Paddocks and Reorganised Fields. These are all linked to the same historical processes, but have different morphologies reflecting nuances in the reasons for their creation. As discussed, it can also be characterised as representing a final stage in the history of the enclosure of the open downland and, as such, it is connected with the 19th century enclosure types such as “Parliamentary Enclosure”, which began the acceleration of this process.

Evidence for time-depth

Over 94% of the land identified as Large New Fields preserves evidence for previous land uses, the majority of this, 82%, being unenclosed land. This is reflected by the regular association between the place name “downland” and this type. However, 14% was created from previously enclosed land, the vast majority of these are 19th century enclosures which have been incorporated into these large scale fields. This has tended to occur in the north of the AONB in the upper reaches of the Wyllye Valley.

Contribution to the present landscape character

This type has had a fairly large impact on the landscape of the AONB. Its wide open form would be apparent to most observers, but probably not the overall coherence of the type.

Key Statistics

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Total Area: | 13,758 hectares, 14% of the AONB |
| No. of Polygons: | This Subtype is comprised of 189 polygons, 4.2% of the total number of polygons digitised. |
| Av. Polygon Size: | Each polygon averages 73 hectares in size. |
| Occurrence: | Frequent. |
| Previous Coverage: | 13,759 hectares, 14% of AONB was Large New Fields at the point when this type was at its most prevalent. |
| Total Recorded Coverage: | The total recorded coverage of Large New Fields is 14,489 hectares, 16% of the AONB. |

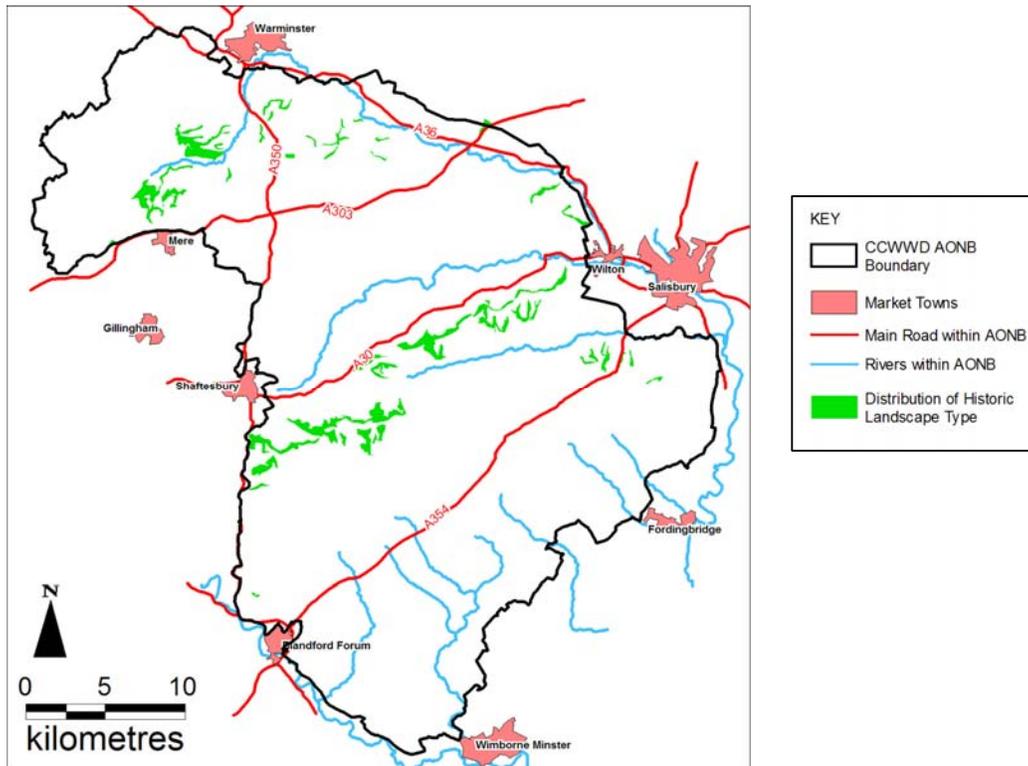
Constituent Types

None

Parent Type

[1.3.1 New Fields](#)

Type 1.3.1.3 Semi-enclosed Escarpments



Introduction

Semi-enclosed Escarpments created primarily in the 20th century and documented on the modern day Ordnance Survey. In the present day they account for 2,460 hectares, or 2.5%, of the AONB. They form a series of linear bands through the landscape on the edge of the chalk escarpments and are semi-irregular in form, with wavy and semi straight boundaries. Their occurrence on the chalk escarpment means that the fields have extremely steep gradients.

Distribution

This type has a restricted distribution. It occurs running from southwest to northeast along the Melbury Abbas Escarpment and the Fovant Escarpment. It also occurs in the north of the AONB, along the escarpments to the north of Mere and to the west of Brixton Deverill. It forms a series of linear bands running across the landscape.

Principal Historical Processes

The creation of these fields has involved the enclosure of the previously open chalk downland escarpments. This process began in the 18th and 19th century when 6% of this type was created, and escalated during the 20th century. The topography of the escarpments has very much dominated the form that the newly created fields have taken. They are very steep and sinuous in nature, with curving and semi-irregular boundaries at the top and bottom of the slope. In contrast, the boundaries which divide the escarpments into discrete parcels and run up the slopes tend to be completely straight and spaced evenly apart.

This suggests that while the top and bottom of these escarpments has been enclosed by default of the land either side being enclosed, an organised effort has been made to further subdivide this land into a series of individual regular land parcels.

This form of enclosure can be characterised as forming the final stage of the enclosure of the open chalk grassland and downland which was once a dominating component of this landscape. Given the steepness of the escarpments in question it is not surprising that these areas were not enclosed until recently. In general the boundaries are formed of fences and the escarpments are still composed of rough grazing and scrub and thus maintain much of their previous open nature. Indeed, from a distance the dividing straight boundaries make little impact on the appearance of the escarpment. This feeling of openness is often emphasised by the fact that they are sandwiched between the intensively enclosed valley bottom below and the ploughed downland above.

Typical Historical/Archaeological Components

This type is dominated by fields which are large in size. The fields themselves tend to be long and thin, with curving and or semi-irregular boundaries along the top and bottom of the escarpments, and straight boundaries cutting down the escarpments subdivide it into a series of individual regularly sized blocks. The late enclosure of these areas means that they preserve many older features, including strip lynchets and cross dykes.



Rarity

This type can be characterised as occurring uncommonly in the landscape of the AONB. However, the escarpments themselves are a highly visible feature in the landscape.

Survival

This is a very robust type, representing one of the most recent phases of enclosure in the landscape.

Degree of surviving coherence of the historic landscape components

This type is very recognisable in the landscape, due to the fact that it occurs in large discrete blocks and the large size of its constituent fields. It reflects one of the most recent historical processes to have occurred in the landscape and, as such, it demonstrates a high level of coherence and intactness. In addition, it represents enclosure of previously open land and it still retains an open appearance and character.

Past interaction with other types

The type is often associated with other types of 18th, 19th and 20th century fieldscapes, including Formal Enclosure, Parliamentary Enclosure and Prairie Fields, which have involved the enclosure of the open downland landscape. It is also linked spatially with the features which occur upon the escarpments, such as the Fovant Badges or Mere strip lynchets.

Evidence for time-depth

Over 99% of the Semi-enclosed Escarpments preserve evidence for previous land uses in its current day morphology. The majority of this, 90%, is evidence for the unenclosed land which the enclosures replaced. A small percentage, 7%, preserves traces for a previous form of enclosure, this occurs primarily in the escarpment to the west of Brixton Deverill. Here 18th and 19th century enclosure boundaries have been incorporated into the edges of the regularly spaced subdivision of the escarpment. The fact that these escarpments were only enclosed relatively recently means that they preserve traces of older land use. These include chalk pits, medieval strip lynchets, most notably just north of Mere, and prehistoric earthworks such as cross dykes.

Contribution to the present landscape character

This type has had a fairly large impact on the landscape of the AONB. The historic landscape type adds greatly to the character of the area. Its wide open form would be apparent to most observers.

Key Statistics

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Total Area: | 2460 hectares, 2.5% of the AONB. |
| No. of Polygons: | This Subtype is comprised of 62 polygons, 1.4% of the total number of polygons digitised. |
| Av. Polygon Size: | Each polygon averages 39.69 hectares in size. |
| Occurrence: | Uncommon. |
| Previous Coverage: | 2460 hectares, 2.5% of AONB was Semi-enclosed Escarpments at the point when this type was at its most prevalent. |
| Total Recorded Coverage: | The total recorded coverage of this type is 2572 hectares, 2.6% of the AONB. |

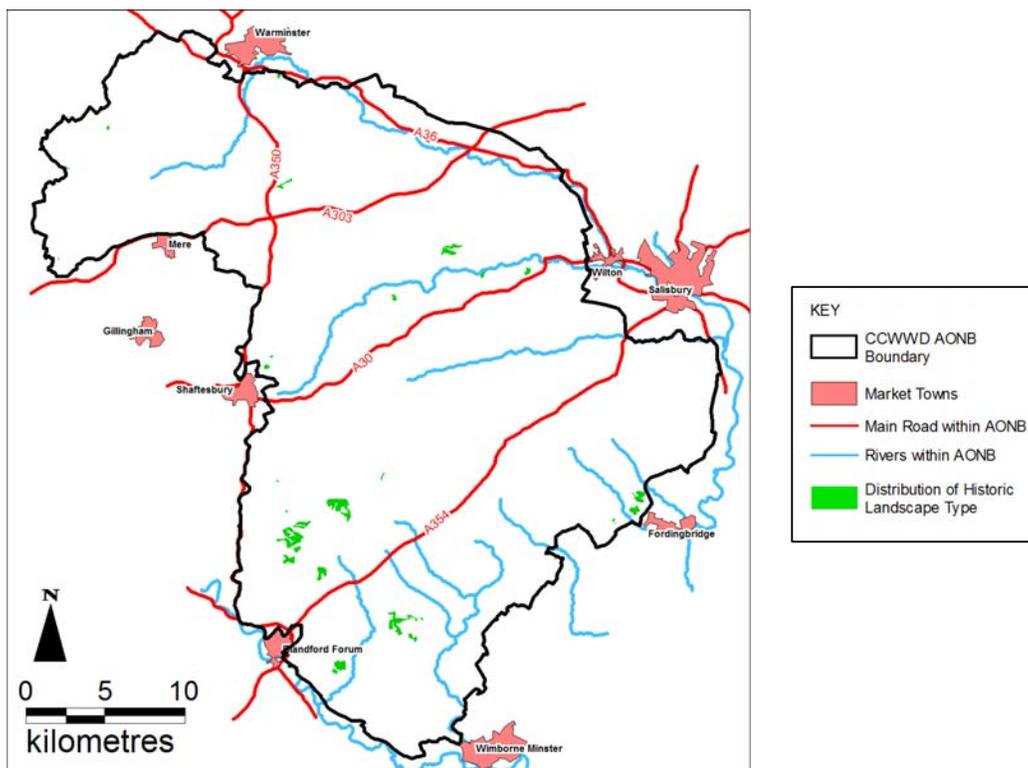
Constituent Types

None

Parent Type

[1.3.1 New Fields](#)

Type 1.3.1.4 Cleared Fields



Introduction

Fields created by clearing woodland in the 20th century documented on the modern day Ordnance Survey. In the present day they account for 601 hectares or 0.61%, of the AONB.

Distribution

This type has a restricted distribution. It occurs in dense clumps to the north and West of Blandford Forum and in a few more dispersed locations in the Nadder Valley.

Principal Historical Processes

These fields were created in the 20th century through the clearance of a mixture of both pre 1800 and post 1800 woodland. This could be linked to an increasing need for cultivable land in the 20th century and agricultural improvements which make it possible to farm less desirable land.

Typical Historical/Archaeological Components

This type is formed of fields which are medium in size. The fields themselves tend to be semi-irregular or irregular, with straight or kinked boundaries.

Rarity

This type is very scarce in the landscape of the AONB.

Survival

This type represents one of the most recent phases of enclosure in the landscape.

Degree of surviving coherence of the historic landscape components

This type is not very recognisable in the landscape due to the irregular morphologies of the fields. It reflects one of the most recent historical processes to have occurred in the landscape and, as such, it demonstrates a high level of intactness.



Past interaction with other types

The type is associated with the woodland which was created to make these fields. It is also associated with other forms of 20th century enclosure.

Evidence for time-depth

Over 80% of type preserves evidence for previous land uses in its current day morphology. The majority of this is evidence for the woodland which the enclosures replaced.

Contribution to the present landscape character

This type has had a very small impact on the landscape of the AONB.

Key Statistics

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| Total Area: | 601 hectares, 0.6% of the AONB. |
| No. of Polygons: | This Subtype is comprised of 37 polygons, 0.8% of the total number of polygons digitised. |
| Av. Polygon Size: | Each polygon averages 16.24 hectares in size. |
| Occurrence: | Uncommon. |
| Previous Coverage: | 601 hectares, 0.6% of AONB was Cleared Fields at the point when this type was at its most prevalent. |

Total Recorded
Coverage:

The total recorded coverage of this type is 601
hectares, 0.6% of the AONB.

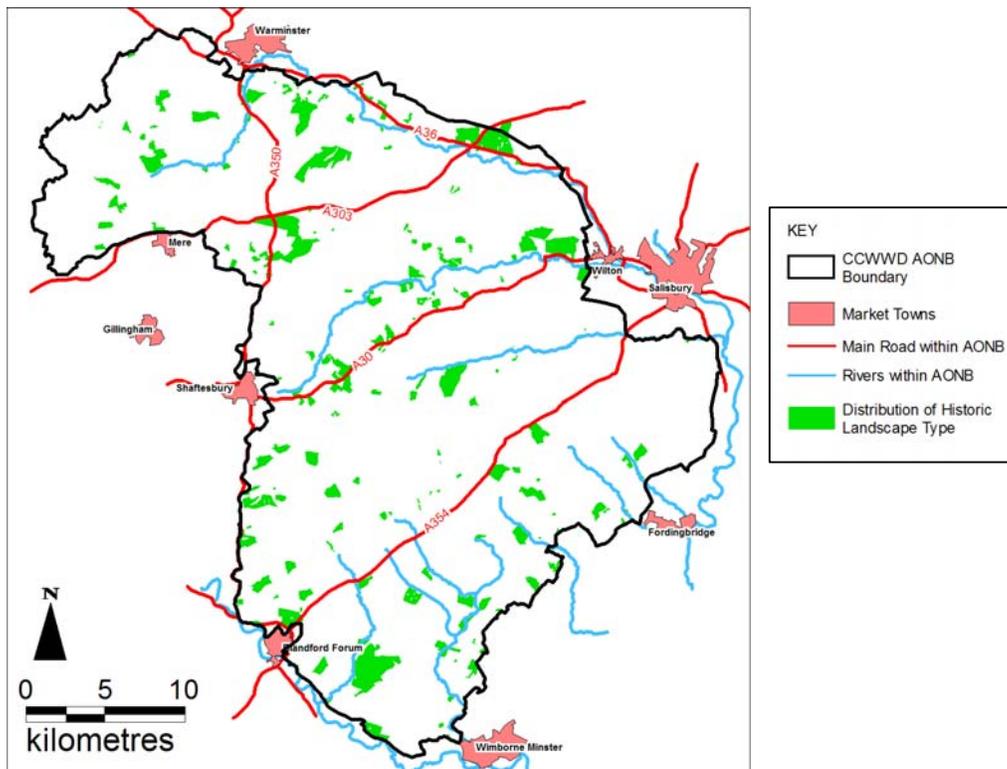
Constituent Types

None

Parent Type

[1.3.1 New Fields](#)

Type 1.3.2 Modified Fields



Introduction

Fields created in the 20th century from pre-existing fields through the reorganisation of boundaries, or the creation of paddocks within larger fields. They have been documented on the modern day Ordnance Survey. In the present day they account for 6,609 hectares or 6.7% of the AONB.

Distribution

This type is widely spread through the AONB, but is absent from the far east of the AONB, the north-western greensand hills and the lower reaches of the Ebbles Valley. The paddocks tend to cluster at the edge of settlements, while the reorganised fields tend to form large blocks in the landscape and are more widely distributed through the AONB.

Principal Historical Processes

The paddocks are created in the late 20th century via the subdivision of larger fields to create small paddocks. These could have been created for a variety of purposes, but part of the explanation may very well be equestrian.

The reorganised fields are probably linked to changes in agricultural practice and the intensification of farming. The fact that these fields occur often in very large blocks, and can be greater than 400 hectares in size, suggests that the layout of these fields

may have been pre-planned. In general, this reorganisation has led to smaller fields, with 768 boundaries being gained since the 1880s as opposed to only 83 being lost.

85% of this type preserves traces of previous land uses. This suggests that though the fields themselves mark a radical departure and reorganisation of form and size, a large number retain traces of older boundaries, or alternatively traces of the layout of older field systems.

Typical Historical/Archaeological Components

This type demonstrates a great variety in morphology. The paddocks tend to be small fields with regular shapes and straight boundaries. The reorganised fields have also tended towards great uniformity with over half of the fields having regular shaped fields and regular boundaries. The rest have tended towards irregular shaped fields with kinked and curving boundaries. These fields tend to be fenced, but include hedgerows where they incorporate older boundaries.



Rarity

This type occurs occasionally in the AONB.

Survival

This type represents one of the most recent phases of enclosure in the landscape, and represents a process which is probably still ongoing.

Degree of surviving coherence of the historic landscape components

This type would be fairly unrecognisable in the landscape, due to the range of morphologies it embodies and the fact that it is identified through comparison with historical Ordnance Survey mapping. Its coherence is weakened by the fact that this type is scattered across the AONB. The creation of these fields also leads to a weakening of the coherence of previous historic landscape types, these older fields remaining only as fragments in these new fieldscapes.

Past interaction with other types

This type by its very nature marks a departure from previous land use forms and therefore can be seen as a new stage in the history of enclosure in the AONB.

Evidence for time-depth

Over 85% of this type contains traces of previous land uses; the majority of this is enclosed land. The fields represent the reorganisation of pre-existing fields, which are either 18th/19th century formal and parliamentary enclosure, or early 20th century new fields and some of the boundaries of these fields remain. The type also retains traces of earlier open land uses in the form of open unimproved grassland and downland.

Contribution to the present landscape character

This type as it becomes more numerous will have an increasing effect on the landscape. The paddocks especially will have a noticeable impact around the villages of the AONB. This may lead to a weakening in the morphological distinctiveness of the fields in the landscape and an erosion of older fieldscapes.

Key Statistics

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| Total Area: | 6,609 hectares, 6.71 % of the AONB. |
| No. of Polygons: | This Subtype is comprised of 244 polygons, 5.5% of the total number of polygons digitised. |
| Av. Polygon Size: | Each polygon averages 27.09 hectares in size. |
| Occurrence: | Occasional. |
| Previous Coverage: | 6,609 hectares, 6.71 % of AONB was Modified Fields at the point when this type was at its most prevalent. |
| Total Recorded Coverage: | The total recorded coverage of this type is 6,671 hectares, 6.7% of the AONB. |

Constituent Types

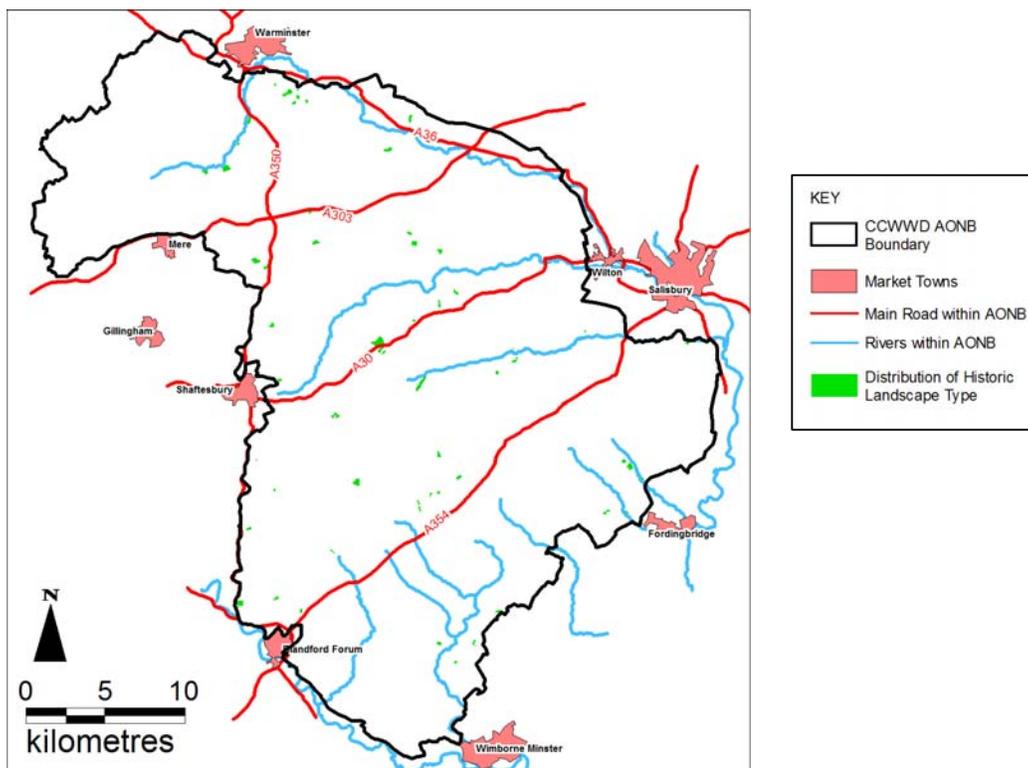
[1.3.2.1 Paddocks](#)

[1.3.2.2 Reorganised Fields](#)

Parent Type

[1.3.2. Modified Fields](#)

Type 1.3.2.1 Paddocks



Introduction

Small Paddocks created from larger fields in the late 20th century documented on the modern day Ordnance Survey. In the present day they account for 387 hectares or 0.4% of the AONB.

Distribution

This type is distributed across the AONB, but are absent from the far eastern and western sides of the AONB. They tend to cluster at the edge of settlements, and are very regular in form, size and shape. They occur as dispersed groupings.

Principal Historical Processes

These fields are created in the late 20th century via the subdivision of larger fields to create small paddocks, fields and enclosures at the edges of villages. These could have been created for a variety of purposes, but part of the explanation may very well be equestrian. The process appears to be happening on an ad hoc and piecemeal basis. This is leading to gradual erosion of older enclosure forms, including 18th and 19th century enclosure patterns and older pre 1800 fields, so that 258 boundaries have been added to these areas of enclosure since 1880.

Typical Historical/Archaeological Components

This type is dominated by small fields which are 1 hectare on average in size. The fields are very regular in size and shape with predominantly straight boundaries; this

can vary where they are incorporating existing boundaries into their form. These fields tend to be fenced, but include hedgerows where they are incorporating older boundaries.

Rarity

This type is scarce in the AONB, but is increasing. It is locally common on the edge of the villages where it is being created.

Survival

This type represents one of the most recent phases of enclosure in the landscape, and represents a process which is still ongoing.



Degree of surviving coherence of the historic landscape components

This type would be recognisable in the landscape only on a local scale on the outskirts of villages. It reflects one of the most recent historical processes to have occurred in the landscape and, as such, it demonstrates a high level of intactness, but its coherence is weakened by the fact that this type is scattered across the AONB.

Past interaction with other types

The type is associated with the settlements around which it is being created

Evidence for time-depth

Only 50% of this type maintains traces of previous land uses, the majority of this is enclosed land, but a small percentage is also parkland. The majority of this previous land use relates to 19th century enclosure patterns which the paddocks are subdividing.

Contribution to the present landscape character

This type as it becomes more numerous will have an increasing effect on the landscape around the villages of the AONB, but it has less contribution to the character of the AONB as a whole.

Key Statistics

Total Area: 387 hectares, 0.4% of the AONB

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| No. of Polygons: | This Subtype is comprised of 68 polygons, 1.5% of the total number of polygons digitised. |
| Av. Polygon Size: | Each polygon averages 5.70 hectares in size. |
| Occurrence: | Scarce |
| Previous Coverage: | 387 hectares, 0.4% of AONB was Paddocks at the point when this type was at its most prevalent |
| Total Recorded Coverage: | The total recorded coverage of this type is 387 hectares, 0.4% of the AONB |

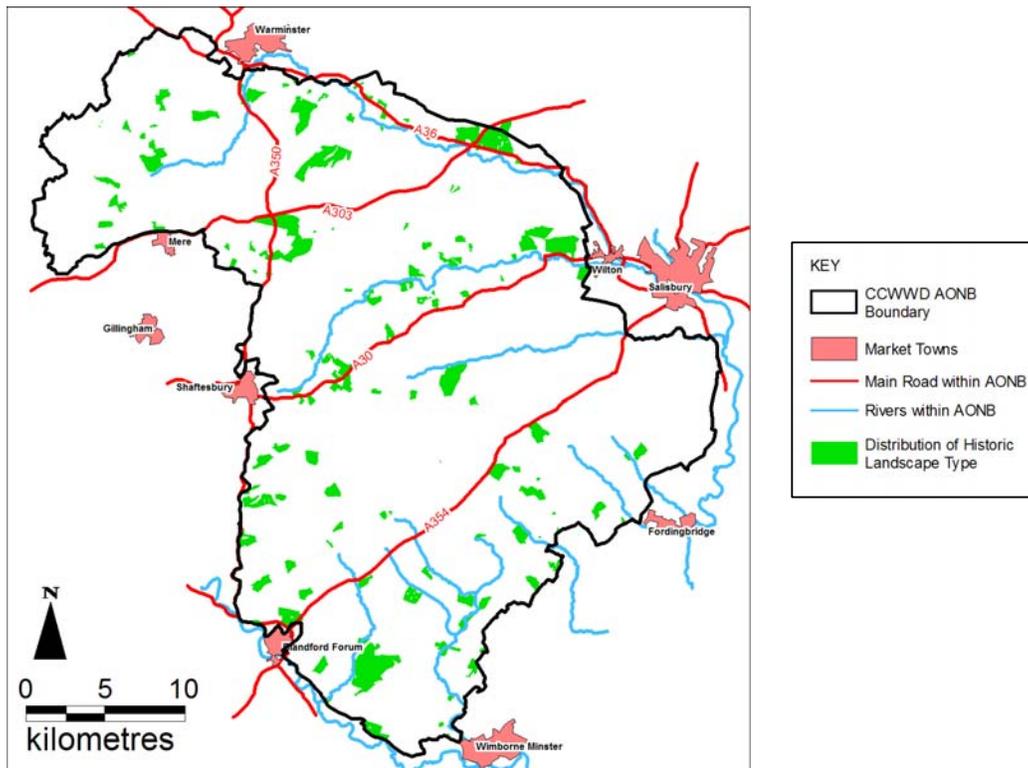
Constituent Types

None

Parent Type

[1.3.2 Modified Fields](#)

Type 1.3.2.2 Reorganised Fields



Introduction

Fields which have been created through the reorganisation of existing enclosed land primarily in the late 20th century, documented on the modern day Ordnance Survey, and representing a marked change from the fields shown on the historical Ordnance Survey maps. In the present day they account for 6,609 hectares or 6.7% of the AONB.

Distribution

This type is widely distributed across the landscape of the AONB. There are distinct concentrations along the Wylde and Nadder Valleys, to the south of the A354 on the edges of the Tarrant, Allen and Crane Valleys, to the west of Hindon and along the western edge of the AONB between Shaftesbury and Blandford. This type is absent from the upper reaches of the Ebbel Valley, the far east and west of the AONB. There are also voids in its distribution on the open chalk downland of Cranborne Chase and the Vale of Wardour. They tend to form large blocks in the landscape which are not interspersed with other types. They tend to be found on slightly higher ground but occur across a range of geologies. They have a mixed morphology.

Principal Historical Processes

These fields were created in the late 20th century through the mass reorganisation of pre-existing fields. They are probably linked to changes in agricultural practice and the intensification of farming. The fact that these fields occur often in large blocks, and can be greater than 400 hectares in size, points to the planned nature of these

fields. This reorganisation often led to the division of existing fields, indicated by the 342 boundaries which have been gained since the 1880's as opposed to just 83 lost. The variable morphologies of these fields suggests that though overall these fields represents a planned element in the landscape, the fields were created in an ad hoc way paying respect to local topography and, in some cases, incorporate existing boundaries where convenient. Over 90% of this type preserves traces of previous land uses. This suggests that though the fields themselves mark a radical departure and reorganisation of form and size, a large number of these fields retain traces of older boundaries.

Typical Historical/Archaeological Components

This type demonstrates a great variety in morphology. In approximately half the cases the reorganisation has tended towards great uniformity, with regular shaped fields and regular boundaries. The other half has tended towards irregular shaped fields with kinked and curved boundaries. There appears to be no spatial patterning in the differences in morphology. Both kinds of morphology also display a range of previous historic landscape types, suggesting that there is no correlation between previous land use and the form of fields created.



Rarity

This type occurs occasionally in the AONB, and may be increasing.

Survival

This type represents one of the most recent phases of enclosure in the landscape, and represents a process which is probably still ongoing.

Degree of surviving coherence of the historic landscape components

This type would be fairly unrecognisable in the landscape due to the range of morphologies it embodies and the fact that it is identified through comparison with historical Ordnance Survey mapping. Its coherence is weakened by the fact that the examples of this type are scattered across the AONB. The creation of these fields also leads to a weakening of the coherence of previous historic landscape types, these older fields remain only as fragments in these new fieldscapes.

Past interaction with other types

The type is associated with other types of new 20th century fieldscapes, including new fields, and amalgamated fields. These are all linked to the same historical processes but have different morphologies reflecting nuances in the reasons for their creation. This type, by its very nature, marks a departure from previous land use forms and, therefore, can be seen as a new stage in the history of enclosure in the AONB.

Evidence for time-depth

Over 90% of this type preserves evidence for previous land uses, and in over a third cases multiple layers of land use history. This type represents the reorganisation of pre-existing fields. These older fields were either 18th/19th century planned and parliamentary enclosure or early 20th century new fields. The type also retains traces of earlier open land uses.

Contribution to the present landscape character

This type leads to a weakening in the morphological distinctiveness of the fields in the landscape of the AONB and a corrosion of older fieldscapes.

Key Statistics

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| Total Area: | 6,609 hectares, 6.7 % of the AONB. |
| No. of Polygons: | This Subtype is comprised of 244 polygons, 5.5% of the total number of polygons digitised. |
| Av. Polygon Size: | Each polygon averages 27 hectares in size. |
| Occurrence: | Occasional. |
| Previous Coverage: | 6,609 hectares, 6.7 % of AONB was Reorganised Fields at the point when this type was at its most prevalent. |
| Total Recorded Coverage: | The total recorded coverage of this type is 6,671 hectares, 6.7% of the AONB. |

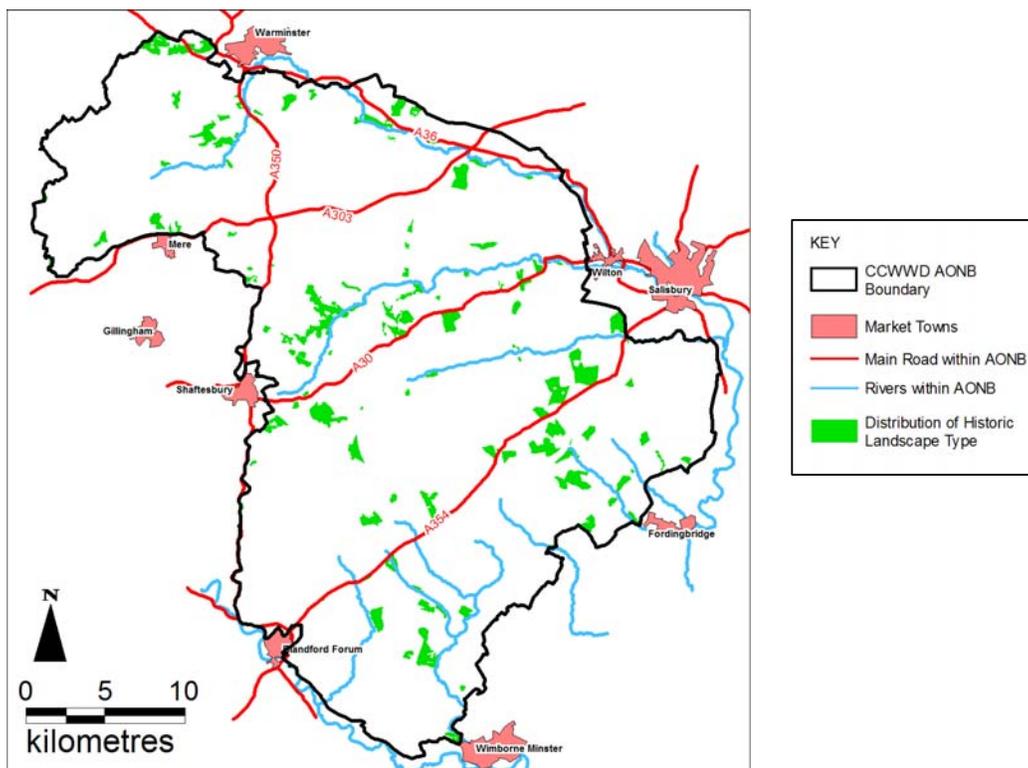
Constituent Types

None

Parent Type

[1.3.2 Modified Fields](#)

Type 1.3.3 Enlarged Fields



Introduction

Fields that have been created through the amalgamation of existing enclosed land in the second half of the 20th century, documented on the modern day Ordnance Survey, and representing substantial boundary loss from older historic fields. In the present day they account for 4,938 hectares or 5% of the AONB. In order to be identified as this type, the fields in question must have undergone considerable boundary loss between the 1880's historic Ordnance Survey and the modern MasterMap.

Distribution

This type is widely distributed throughout the landscape of the AONB. It consists of large blocks, except through the Vale of Wardour where the type is more widely dispersed and interspersed with other types. It is absent from the core of the West Wiltshire Downs, the western greensand hills and the western edge of the AONB between Shaftesbury and Blandford Forum. Concentrations are present in the area between Martin, Rockborne, and Damerham in the southwest of the AONB, along the Tarrant, Allen and Wylde Valleys and the western half of the Vale of Wardour. There is a distinct concentration in the far north of the AONB to the west of Warminster. The type is distributed across a range of topographies and geologies. The type shows a greater regularity in morphology towards the north of the AONB.

Principal Historical Processes

These fields were created in the second half of the 20th century through the amalgamation of pre-existing fields; this is demonstrated by the 371 boundaries lost

since the 1880s. This reorganisation has also involved the shifting and relocation of boundaries, as well as their amalgamation, thus 156 boundaries have also been added. This process is probably linked to changes in agricultural practice and the intensification of farming. These fields tend to have a regular or semi-regular form and a mixture of boundary form. This suggests that the boundaries that have been removed create not just larger fields but more regular ones, and the boundaries that remain, or have been added, follow the morphology of the older fields. Over 98% of this type preserves traces of previous land uses.

Typical Historical/Archaeological Components

These fields are large and demonstrate variety in morphology. The fields are grouped together in small or medium size blocks. Over 60% are regular or semi regular in shape with either straight or curving boundaries, while 30% are irregular in shape with curving or semi straight boundaries. The fields in the north of the AONB tend to demonstrate greater regularity than in the south.



Rarity

This type occurs occasionally in the AONB, but may be increasing.

Survival

This type represents one of the most recent phases of enclosure in the landscape, and represents a process which is probably still ongoing.

Degree of surviving coherence of the historic landscape components

This type would be fairly unrecognisable in the landscape due to the fact that it is identified through comparison with historical Ordnance Survey mapping. Its coherence is weakened by the fact that this type is scattered across the AONB. The creation of these fields also leads to a weakening of the coherence of previous historic landscape types, and the removal of ancient hedged field boundaries. Older fields remain only as fragments in these new fieldscapes.

Past interaction with other types

The type is associated with other types of new 20th century fieldscapes, including New Fields, Reorganised Fields and Paddocks. These are all linked to the same historical processes but have different morphologies reflecting nuances in the

reasons for their creation. This type, by its very nature, marks a weakening of previous land use patterns.

Evidence for time-depth

Over 98% of this type preserves evidence for previous land uses, and a third of cases multiple layers of land use history. This type represents the enlargement and amalgamation of pre-existing fields. These pre-existing fields were either pre 1800 or 19th century fields. The type also retains traces of earlier open land uses in the form of open unimproved grassland and downland, and in a few cases of parkland and designed landscape.

Contribution to the present landscape character

This type, if it becomes more numerous, will have an increasing effect on the landscape. It has already led to a weakening in the morphological distinctiveness of the fields in the landscape and an erosion of older fieldscapes.

Key Statistics

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| Total Area: | 4,938 hectares, 5% of the AONB. |
| No. of Polygons: | This Subtype is comprised of 156 polygons, 3.5% of the total number of polygons digitised. |
| Av. Polygon Size: | Each polygon averages 31.7 hectares in size. |
| Occurrence: | Occasional. |
| Previous Coverage: | 4,937 hectares, 5% of AONB was Enlarged Fields at the point when this type was at its most prevalent. |
| Total Recorded Coverage: | The total recorded coverage of this type is 5,021 hectares, 5% of the AONB. |

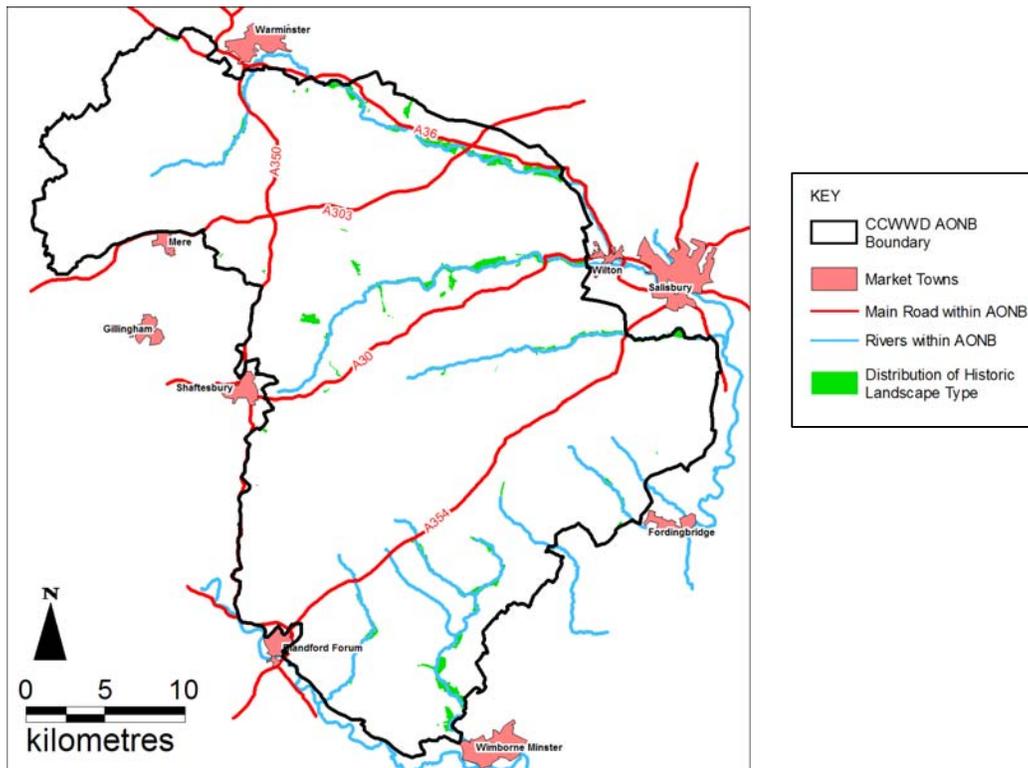
Constituent Types

None

Parent Type

[1.3. 20th Century Fields](#)

Type 1.4 Other Fields



Introduction

Other Field types which it is not easy to attribute to a single time period or historical process. These include orchards, allotments, enclosed meadows, and relic water meadows. The first three are very rare in the AONB and it is the relic water meadows which make the biggest contribution to this type. In total, this type in the present day accounts for 2,581 hectares, or 2.62%, of the AONB. They have been identified by the comparison of historic maps and modern Ordnance Survey and aerial photographs.

Distribution

This type has a restricted distribution and is found primarily in the Wylde, Ebbel, Nadder, Allen and Tarrant Valleys. This type is found adjacent to river courses and settlements.

Principal Historical Processes

The sinuous enclosed meadows were probably used for the cultivation of hay and for grazing. The majority have been dated to the 19th century.

Water Meadows played a vital role in Britain's farming economy between 1600 and 1900. The early grass that could be produced by watered meadows was a crucial element to the farming regimes of the chalklands of Dorset, Hampshire and Wiltshire.

Allotments represent the leasing of small plots of land to tenants for growing vegetables and in some instances for the rearing of livestock, and represents a process which dates back to the 18th century.

The orchards identified are at least 19th century in date.

Typical Historical/Archaeological Components

Enclosed meadows are dominated by small sinuous semi irregular fields with curving boundaries, found alongside streams and in valley bottoms.



The water meadows comprise a series of complex and sophisticated bedworks, which used a system of weirs, hatches, channels and drains to drown the meadows.

Allotments usually consist of a plot of land bounded by a hedge and fence, which is subdivided by unenclosed cultivation plots.

Orchards are dominated by small enclosures which are typically hedged containing a variety of fruit trees.

Rarity

These types can be characterised as being uncommon in the landscape, though there are locally common along the chalk river valleys.

Survival

These form a fairly fragile type as it exists in low densities.

Degree of surviving coherence of the historic landscape components

The overall cohesion of this group is not high as they span a range of land uses.

Past interaction with other types

Enclosed meadows are associated with other pre 1800 field types, and mark the beginning of the intensification of activity in the valley bottoms culminating in the creation of water meadows. The orchards and allotments are associated with various settlement types.

Evidence for time-depth

Less than 2% of these fields contain traces of previous land uses, highlighting the fact that they represented a transformation of land use.

Contribution to the present landscape character

Due to their uncommon occurrence this type has minimal impact on the landscape character of the AONB, compared to other enclosed land categories; although they can contribute greatly to the character of individual settlements and valleys.

Key Statistics

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| Total Area: | 2,582 Hectares, 2.62% of the AONB. |
| No. of Polygons: | This Subtype is comprised of 167 polygons, 1.37% of the total number of polygons digitised. |
| Av. Polygon Size: | Each polygon averages 15.46 hectares in size. |
| Occurrence: | Uncommon. |
| Previous Coverage: | 3,027 hectares, 3.07% of AONB was Other Fields at the point when this type was at its most prevalent. |
| Total Recorded Coverage: | The total recorded coverage of Other Fields is 2,626 hectares, 2.6% of the AONB. |

Constituent Types

[1.4.1 Enclosed Meadows](#)

[1.4.2 Water Meadows](#)

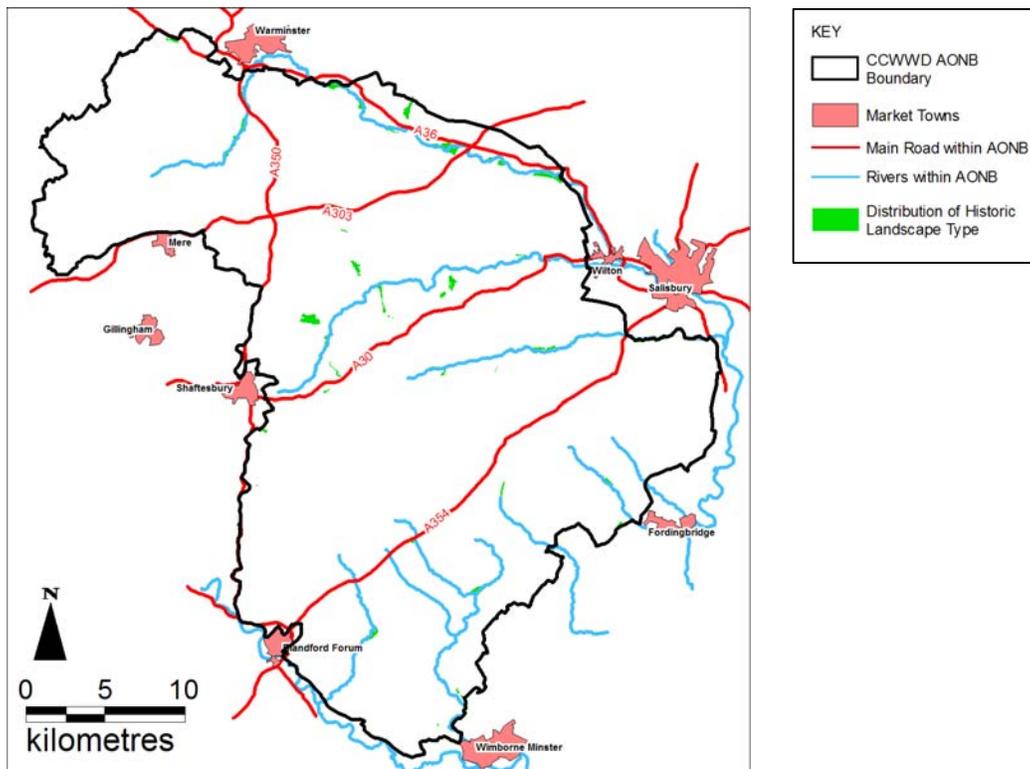
[1.4.3 Allotments](#)

[1.4.4 Orchards](#)

Parent Type

[1. Enclosed Land](#)

Type 1.4.1 Enclosed Meadows



Introduction

Enclosed hedged semi-irregular and curving meadows located on low lying valley bottoms or along stream tributaries. In the present day they account for 847 hectares, or 0.86%, of the AONB. They have been identified by comparison of historic maps and modern Ordnance Survey and aerial photographs.

Distribution

They have a restricted distribution along the Wylye, Ebble and Tarrant Valley, and on the tributaries of the Nadder Valley, where they cluster in dense groups.

Principal Historical Processes

These sinuous fields were probably used for the cultivation of hay and for grazing. The majority have been dated to the 19th century but it is likely that with further research and investigation they could be identified as being of greater antiquity, possibly post medieval or even medieval in origin. Some of the 19th century examples of this type may prove to be heavily eroded water meadows. Many more of this type may have previously existed than there is evidence for in today's landscape, but would have been transformed into water meadows and therefore all traces would have been removed.

Typical Historical/Archaeological Components

This type is dominated by small sinuous semi irregular fields with curving boundaries found alongside streams and in valley bottoms.

Rarity

This type can be characterised as being scarce in the landscape, though there are distinct concentrations in their distribution especially along the Wylie Valley.

Survival

This is a fairly fragile type, due to their location. The fact that they are stretched out along the valley bottom means that their cohesion can be easily eroded.

Degree of surviving coherence of the historic landscape components

Today the majority of this type is primarily used for grazing and it is their location, rather than their form, which now distinguishes them from pre 1800 field types, such as pre 1800 sinuous fields.

Past interaction with other types

These enclosed meadows are associated with other pre 1800 field types, and mark the beginning of the intensification of activity in the valley bottoms, culminating in the creation of water meadows.

Evidence for time-depth

Less than 4% of these fields contain traces of previous land uses, highlighting the potential antiquity of the fields and the fact that they represented a transformation of land use from previously unenclosed land. The 34 hectares that do demonstrate previous land use represent the late creation of enclosed meadows from parliamentary enclosed land and early water meadows, though this juxtaposition of land uses is the exception rather than the rule.

Contribution to the present landscape character

Due to its scarce occurrence and sparse distribution this type has had a minimal impact on the landscape character of the AONB, though it may contribute greatly to the character of individual valleys.

Key Statistics

Total Area: 847 Hectares, 0.86% of the AONB.



| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| No. of Polygons: | This Subtype is comprised of 84 polygons, 1.89% of the total number of polygons digitised. |
| Av. Polygon Size: | Each polygon averages 10.08 hectares in size. |
| Occurrence: | Scarce. |
| Previous Coverage: | 1,043 hectares, 1.06% of AONB was Enclosed Meadows at the point when this type was at its most prevalent. |
| Total Recorded Coverage: | The total recorded coverage of Enclosed Meadows is 1,043 hectares, 1% of the AONB. |

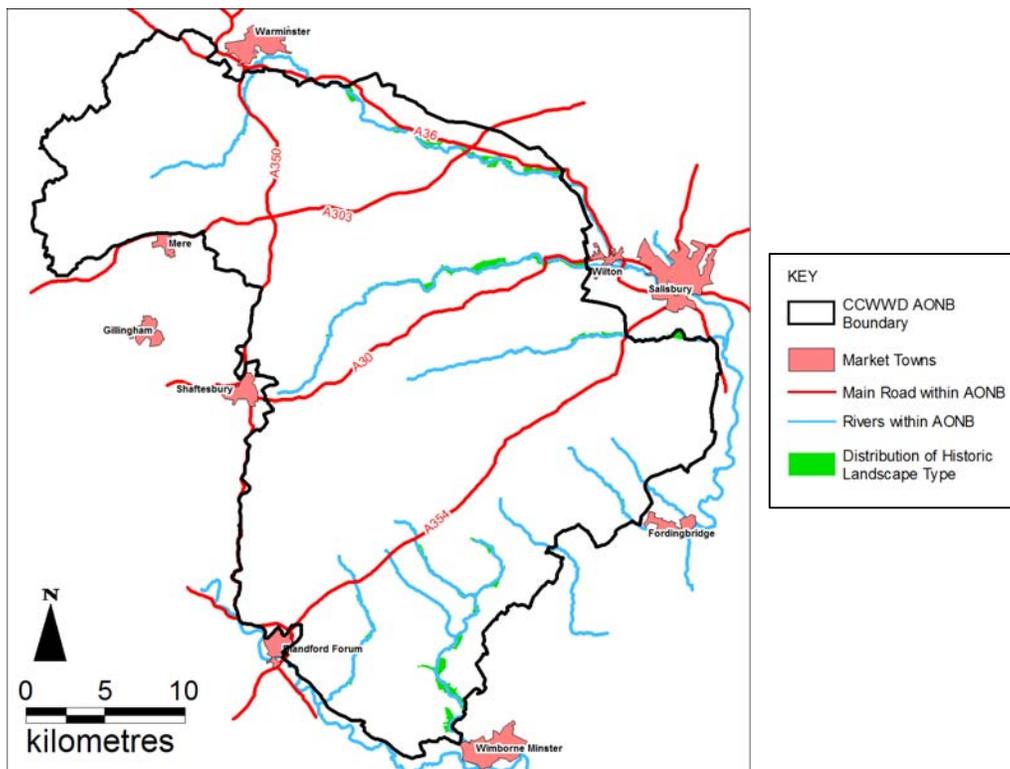
Constituent Types

None

Parent Type

[1.4 Other fields](#)

Type 1.4.2 Water Meadows



Introduction

Relic Water Meadows created between 1600 and 1900 AD documented on historic Ordnance Survey maps through the depiction of their associated channels, sluices and weirs. In the present day they account for 1,710 hectares, or 1.74%, of the AONB.

Land in the AONB has been identified as “water meadows” only where there is clear evidence on the modern Ordnance Survey or historic maps for the associated sluices, bedworks and channels. If these are not present then sinuous fields in valley bottoms have been identified as enclosed meadows, further ground truthing may identify these also as water meadows.

Distribution

They have a restricted distribution and they are found in the valley bottoms of all the river systems in the AONB including the Wylye, Nadder, Ebbles, Tarrant and Crane. There are, however, distinct concentrations in the Wylye, Nadder and Tarrant where this type forms large coherent blocks in the valley bottoms.

Principal Historical Processes

Water Meadows played a crucial role in Britain’s farming economy between 1600 and 1900. The early grass that could be produced by water meadows was a crucial element to the farming regimes of the chalklands of Dorset, Hampshire and Wiltshire.

The meadows formed a central feature of the local sheep/corn system of agriculture. They allowed for the artificial control of the watering of meadows using a sophisticated system of hatches, weirs, channels and drains. This allowed a lush crop of grass to grow several weeks before natural grazing became available and allowed for greater flocks of sheep to be maintained and thus more farmland to be enriched with manure.

Typical Historical/Archaeological Components

The Water Meadows comprise a series of complex and sophisticated bedworks, which used a system of weirs, hatches, channels and drains to drown the meadows. These were interspersed by culverts and bridges, which provided access to the meadows for carts when the hay was harvested. Water Meadows can vary greatly in their form,



extent and arrangement. The evidence for these is still visible in the landscape. The channels are especially noticeable in low light or when the meadows flood in winter. None of the Water Meadows within the AONB are still operational, although there are fine examples on the border of the AONB at West Harnham, and in the Woodford Valley.

Rarity

This type can be characterised as occurring uncommon in the landscape of the AONB. The amount of areas these relic meadows cover however belies the fact that they are an extremely characteristic feature of chalk river valley systems where they are locally common.

Survival

No water meadows survive in the AONB in working order; they are only present in relic form although their major features do survive. However, since the beginning of the 20th century 150 hectares of water meadows have been lost.

Degree of surviving coherence of the historic landscape components

The water meadows are very recognisable in the landscape due to their characteristic form, many of their features, such as the sluices, channels and bridges are much degraded.

Past interaction with other types

Water meadows are part of the farming economy which existed in the chalklands of Wessex from 1600 to the beginning of the 19th century. They are, therefore,

intrinsically linked with other changes which occurred at this time, such as the enclosure of open downland, fields and common land.

Evidence for time-depth

Less than 1% of water meadows preserve any trace of previous land uses, demonstrating the radical impact this system had in the valley bottoms.

Contribution to the present landscape character

Where this type exists it has had a large impact on the landscape of the AONB, it would be apparent to most observers especially in low light or when the meadows are flooded.

Key Statistics

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Total Area: | 1,710 Hectares, 1.74 % of the AONB. |
| No. of Polygons: | This Subtype is comprised of 72 polygons, 1.6 % of the total number of polygons digitised. |
| Av. Polygon Size: | Each polygon averages 23 hectares in size. |
| Occurrence: | Uncommon. |
| Previous Coverage: | 1,894 hectares, 1.92% of AONB was Water Meadows at the point when this type was at its most prevalent. |
| Total Recorded Coverage: | The total recorded coverage of Water Meadows is 1,916 hectares, 1.9% of the AONB. |

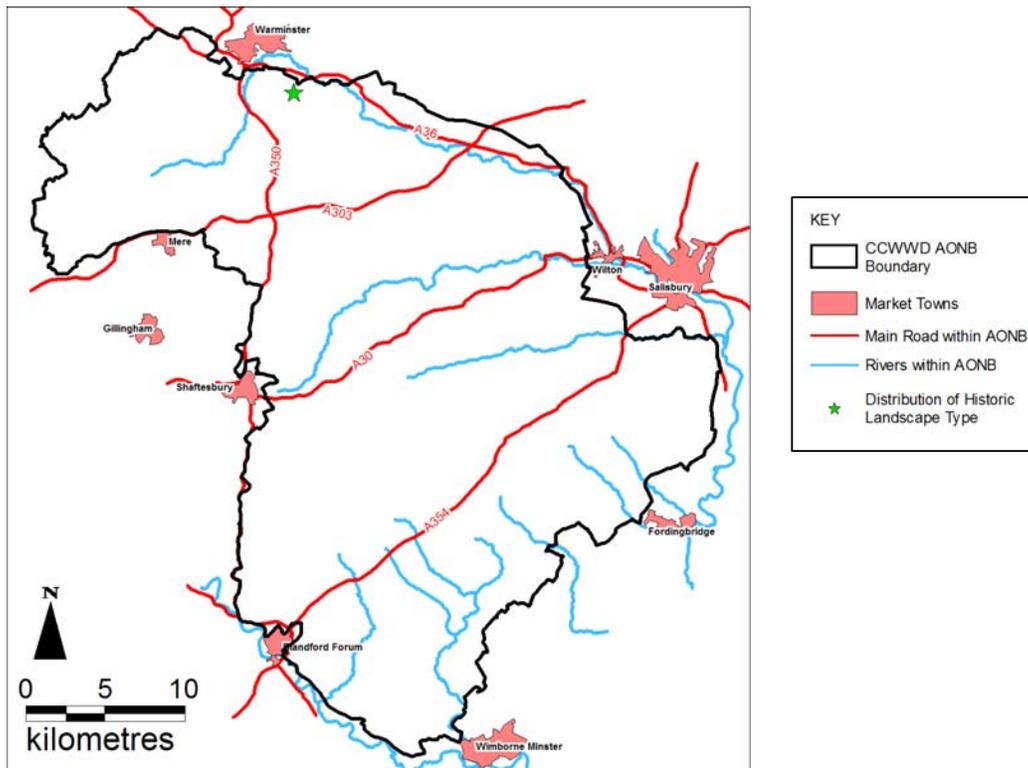
Constituent Types

None

Parent Type

[1.4 Other fields](#)

Type 1.4.3 Allotments



Introduction

Allotments created from the 19th century onwards. In the present day they account for 1.81 hectares, or 0.1%, of the AONB. However, this does not represent all the Allotments present only those of significant size to be identified as such.

Distribution

This dataset only identified one allotment at Sutton Veny from the modern day Ordnance Survey map. However, much smaller examples exist throughout the AONB but are too small to be recorded as such and would, therefore, be subsumed under various settlement types.

Principal Historical Processes

An Allotment is a small area of land, let out at a nominal yearly rent by local government or independent allotment associations, for individuals to grow their own food. Allotments represent the leasing of small plots of land to tenants for growing of vegetables and in some instances for the rearing of livestock, and represents a process which dates back to the 18th century. The one recorded allotment in this dataset dates to the 19th century and those recorded as previous types date to the 19th or early 20th century. As discussed above, there are many more Allotments in the AONB, but these are too small to be recorded, the majority of these are 20th century in date. The provision of Allotments is codified in law by, for example, the 1922 Allotments Act. Allotments tend to have great community value and are also increasingly valued today for their green credentials.

Typical Historical/Archaeological Components

Allotments usually consist of a plot of land bounded by a hedge and fence which is subdivided by unenclosed cultivated plots. These plots are often associated with garden sheds, water butts and stand pipes. The Allotments are always associated with villages or small settlements which have the rights to lease them.



Rarity

This type can be characterised as very rare in the AONB due perhaps to the rural nature of the AONB.

Survival

Only one allotment is of sufficient size to be recorded in the dataset. The dataset also suggests that this type has decreased in number during the second half of the 20th century.

Degree of surviving coherence of the historic landscape components

Allotments where they exist are very recognisable, and have a coherent form and function.

Past interaction with other types

Allotments are often associated with the expansion of settlement in the 19th and 20th centuries.

Evidence for time-depth

The one allotment which has been recorded does not have any evidence for previous land uses.

Contribution to the present landscape character

Allotments are a very localised phenomenon, which do not contribute greatly to landscape character. However, they may be a very valued community asset.

Key Statistics

Total Area: 1.81 Hectares, 0.01% of the AONB.

No. of Polygons: This Subtype is comprised of 1 polygon, 0.01 % of the total number of polygons digitised.

Av. Polygon Size: Each polygon averages 1.81 hectares in size.

Occurrence: Very Rare.

Previous Coverage: 22.11 hectares, 0.02% of AONB was Allotments at the point when this type was at its most prevalent.

Total Recorded Coverage: The total recorded coverage of Enclosed Land is 22.11 hectares, 0.02% of the AONB.

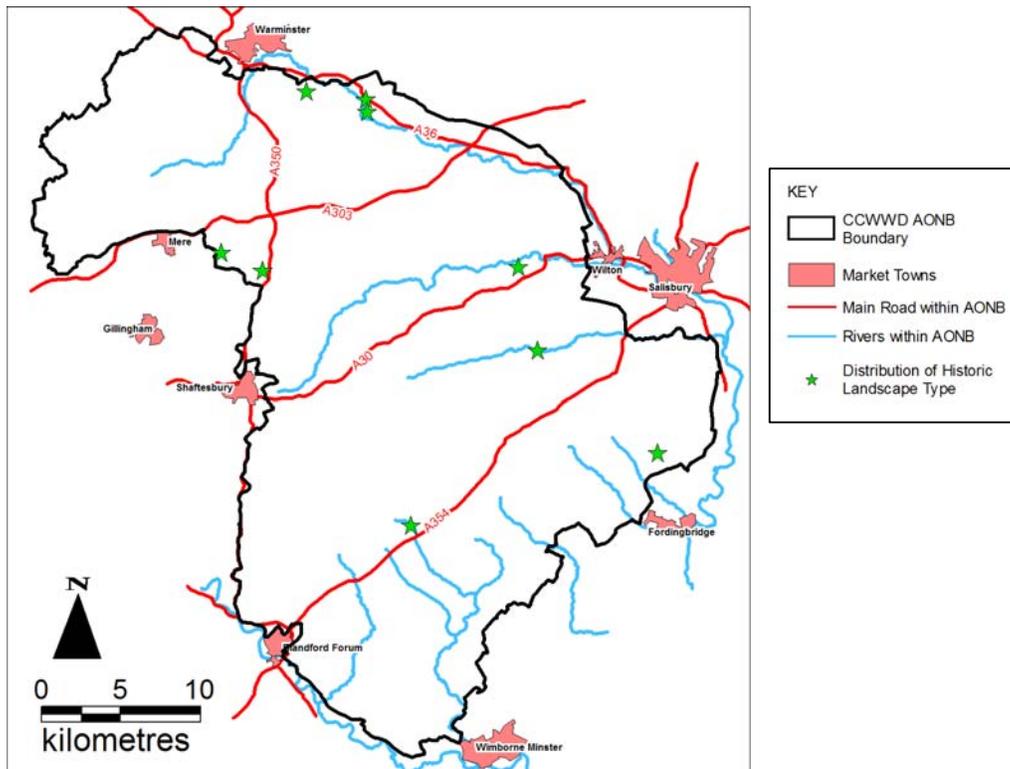
Constituent Types

None

Parent Type

[1.4 Other fields](#)

Type 1.4.4 Orchard



Introduction

Fields, paddocks and enclosures which contain plantations of fruit trees for both private and commercial use. In the present day they account for 22.63 hectares, or 0.02%, of the AONB.

Distribution

Orchards are sparsely distributed but there is a tendency for them to be located in or near to settlements and farms, especially along the Nadder and Wylde Valley. In order to be mapped the orchards need to be over 1 hectare so many smaller orchards forming parts of larger gardens or estates will not have been mapped.

Principal Historical Processes

The orchards in question are at least 19th century in date; these traditional orchards would have been planted at much lower densities than would be common today. The traces for orchards which survive in the modern day landscape reach their peak in the 19th century, but orchards have a long tradition in the area. The first written reference to cider in Dorset, for example, dates from 1291, where there is mention of cider 'ciseria' in an enrolled account of Shaftesbury Abbey. There was previously a much greater density of larger orchards spread throughout both the Wylde and Nadder Valley.

Typical Historical/Archaeological Components

This type is dominated by small enclosures which are typically hedged, containing a variety of fruit trees.

Rarity

This type can be characterised as rare in the landscape. The tradition of orchards in the AONB is not as strong as in some of the surrounding areas of Dorset and Somerset.



Survival

This is a fairly fragile type, since the 19th century over 50 hectares of orchards have been lost, especially in the Nadder and Wylve Valley.

Degree of surviving coherence of the historic landscape components

The orchards which survive are still very recognisable in the landscape due to the specific ways in which the trees were planted, grown and cultivated, and the varieties of tree which were chosen. The sparse distribution of the orchards means they are not a dominant feature of the landscape.

Past interaction with other types

The orchards form an integral part of the historic settlements and estates in which they are situated.

Evidence for time-depth

Only one of the orchards recorded contains traces of previous enclosure, the majority mark a departure from older land use patterns.

Contribution to the present landscape character

Due to its rare occurrence and sparse distribution this type has a minimal impact on the landscape character of the AONB, though it may contribute greatly to the character of individual settlements.

Key Statistics

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| Total Area: | 22.63 Hectares, 0.02% of the AONB. |
| No. of Polygons: | This Subtype is comprised of 10 polygons, 0.23% of the total number of polygons digitised. |
| Av. Polygon Size: | Each polygon averages 2.26 hectares in size. |

Occurrence: Rare.

Previous Coverage: 72.44 hectares, 0.07% of AONB was Orchards at the point when this type was at its most prevalent.

Total Recorded Coverage: The total recorded coverage of Orchards is 80.07 hectares, 0.08% of the AONB.

Constituent Types

None

Parent Type

[1.4 Other fields](#)