

## **Overarching Topic B – Designated Heritage Assets in the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB**

More information on designated heritage assets can be found at the English Heritage Website at [www.english-heritage.org.uk](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk) . More information on designated heritage within the AONB can be found by consulting the individual Historic Landscape Character Area descriptions.

### **NATIONALLY DESIGNATED HERITAGE**

Buildings, monuments or landscapes which have a historic interest in a national context are often designated. National Designation allows for the protection of nationally important historic buildings, monuments, parks, gardens, battlefields and wreck sites. Under the current heritage protection system, different types of heritage are protected under different regimes. The English Heritage Register of Battlefields and Designated Wreck Sites are not dealt with below as these are not of relevance to the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB.

### **Scheduled Ancient Monuments**

#### *About Scheduled Ancient Monuments*

Scheduling is the only legal protection specifically for archaeological sites. Nationally important sites and monuments are given legal protection by being placed on a list, or 'schedule'. English Heritage takes the lead in identifying sites in England which should be placed on the schedule by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport. The current legislation, the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979, supports a formal system of Scheduled Monument Consent for any work to a designated monument. Scheduled monuments are not always ancient or visible above ground, they range from Prehistoric burial mounds, Medieval settlements, to evidence of more recent human activity such as wartime pillboxes or milestones. The criteria by which scheduled ancient monuments are identified include rarity, connection to other monuments, fragility, and extent of survival.

#### *Scheduled Ancient Monuments in the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB*

The 556 Scheduled Ancient Monuments in the AONB are dominated by Prehistoric sites and in particular Bronze Age round barrows. The downland areas have high concentrations of Prehistoric sites which are scheduled and these tend to focus on known centres of activity for example, Knowlton Henge or the Dorset Cursus. There are also Prehistoric and Roman settlements and field systems in this area which are designated. The chalk escarpments are notable for the density of Prehistoric hillforts, field systems and linear ditches and medieval strip lynchets. In contrast, the chalk river valleys and the Vale of Wardour designated sites tend to date from later periods and include deserted medieval settlements, former abbey precincts, moated manors, and motte and

bailey castles. The military cap badges at Fovant are a rare example of a twentieth century monument protected as a Scheduled Ancient Monument.

## **Listed Buildings**

### *About Listed Buildings*

All buildings built before 1700 which survive in anything like their original condition are listed, as are most of those built between 1700 and 1840. The criteria become tighter with time, so that post-1945 buildings have to be exceptionally important to be listed. A building has normally to be over 30 years old to be eligible for listing. Listing identifies only those which are of national 'special interest'. The main criteria used are age and rarity; architectural interest; historic interest; association with nationally important people or events and group value. English Heritage examine the case and make a recommendation, but the decision on whether to list is taken by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport. Local Authorities are the decision-makers on listed building and planning consents but they must formally consult English Heritage for advice if a building is highly listed at Grade I or II\*, or if substantial demolition is planned.

### *Listed Buildings in the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB*

There are 2015 Listed Buildings in the AONB, 77 of which are Grade I and 106 Grade II\*. Many of the Grade I buildings in the AONB are large country houses and the features associated with their parks and gardens, such as grottos. There are also a smaller number of churches with surviving Early Medieval and Saxon fabric. Large numbers of the Grade II\* buildings are also churches, while the remaining secular buildings comprise a greater range of types including almshouses, barns and farmhouses. The Grade II buildings are dominated by vernacular buildings such as cottages and farm houses.

## **Register of Parks and Gardens of special historic interest**

### *About the Register of Parks and Gardens*

Since the 1980s, there has been a Register of Parks and Gardens of special historic interest in England. This was established, and is maintained by, English Heritage. The majority of the sites identified through the Register as being of a sufficiently high level of interest to merit a national designation, are designated Grade II. Around 30% of the 1450 are considered to be of exceptional historic interest and are awarded a star giving them Grade II\* status. A further 10% are of international importance, and are classified as Grade I. Inclusion of an historic park or garden on the Register in itself brings no additional statutory controls. Local Authorities are required to make provision for the protection of the historic environment in their policies. Registration is also a material consideration in planning terms. The criteria for inclusion on the register are based on the assumption that the older the surviving features of a site, the rarer that type of site is likely to be, although

added to this premise are other factors for consideration, such as association with significant persons or historical events.

### *Registered Parks and Gardens in the AONB*

There are 16 Registered Parks and Gardens in the AONB. These are all associated with a large country house and estate but range in date and style from 18<sup>th</sup> century English landscaped parks, to 19<sup>th</sup> century pleasure grounds and 20<sup>th</sup> century arts and crafts gardens. They also range in scale from large areas of parkland to smaller intimate gardens. Several are open to the public and provide major tourist attractions in the area.

## **LOCALLY DESIGNATED HERITAGE**

Local designation allows for the management of local heritage through the planning system and provides an opportunity to engage with local communities. It encompasses both individual assets identified by local listing right through to areas of local character represented by Conservation Areas.

### **Conservation Areas**

#### *About Conservation Areas*

Conservation areas are places which have been identified as being of special architectural or historic interest. They give broader protection than listing individual buildings: all the features listed or otherwise, within the area, are recognised as part of its character. This applies to an area (usually settlement) considered worthy of preservation or enhancement because of its special architectural or historic interest. This 'specialness' is judged against local and regional criteria, rather than national importance as is the case with listing. Conservation areas are designated under national legislation but it is individual local authorities who have the power to designate them.

#### *Conservation Areas in the AONB*

There are 63 conservation areas in the AONB all of which are villages. These range from planned Medieval settlements to nucleated settlement and common edge settlement. In the case of smaller villages the conservation area boundary can encompass the majority of the settlement. In the case of larger villages, such as Dinton and Tisbury it reflects the historic core of the settlement. Sixteen Conservation Areas in the AONB have Conservation Area Appraisals.

### **Local Lists**

#### *About Local Lists*

Planning Policy Statement 5 highlights the contribution of local listing to the development of the evidence base used to support local plan making.

*Local listing and the AONB*

Currently one local Planning Authority in the AONB maintains a list of locally important buildings. Several Local Planning Authorities also reference the local lists of historic parks and gardens maintained by the county Gardens Trusts in their Local Development Framework. Several current local plans also identify areas of archaeological interest.