

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

AN INTEGRATED LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY APPROACH TO SETTLEMENT EXPANSION WITHIN WEST BERKSHIRE

SUMMARY REPORT: HUNGERFORD

Introduction

The following report summarises the integrated landscape sensitivity of the landscape character areas which form the LDF study area. Appendix 1 to the report explains the method of approach used to identify landscape sensitivity and we would recommend that this be read first.

The key landscape sensitivity factors are set out under the 'key elements' and 'other interests' all of which should be taken into account in considering any settlement expansion. Full details can be found in the database and spreadsheets held at West Berkshire Council.

The report does not identify any landscape mitigation or the new landscape features which would be a prerequisite of any settlement expansion within part of an LLCA (such as, for example, re-establishment of hedgerows, new woodland planting, chalk downland recreation).

Figure 1D: Plan of Hungerford LLCAs
Figure 2D: Sensitivity mapping for Hungerford

HUNGERFORD

The hinterland of Hungerford has been divided into seven local landscape character areas (LLCAs):

LLCA2A: Strongrove Dipslopes
LLCA2B: Leverton and Eddington Dipslopes
LLCA2C: Hungerford Common and Park
LLCA2D: Standon Chalk Lowlands
LLCA8A: River Dun Valley
LLCA8B: Upper Kennet Valley
LLCA18G: Leverton and Chilton Estates

The sensitivity of the local landscape character areas around Hungerford to urban expansion is summarised below. It should be noted that the AONB designation which covers all of these LLCAs has not been factored in at this stage.

LLCA2A: Strongrove Dipslopes



From the A4 looking east



Fruit farm north of A4



From B4192 up to Furze Hill

Strongrove Dipslopes is characterised by its topography and open exposed landscape with few landscape elements and little settlement. It forms a visually prominent bluff overlooking the town between the two river Kennet and Dun corridors.

Overall sensitivity: Medium

Key elements of landscape sensitivity

- Good landscape relationship with the adjacent open landscape
- Important woodland on the hill top
- Open and exposed area with a lack of internal sub-division
- No settlement within the area
- Medium density of walks with promoted rights of way
- Visually exposed to adjacent open countryside
- Land separating the area from the town is narrow but includes LLCA 8A which has a high landscape sensitivity

Other landscape sensitivity interests

- Lower sense of tranquillity and seclusion from urban influences
- Close physical and visual link to Charnham Park Industrial estate
- Good transport links which influence the character of the area
- Few historic features with a generally medium to low level of historic landscape character sensitivity
- Grade 3 agricultural land with pockets of grade 2
- Valued by the local community

Wider landscape

LLCA2A Strongrove Dipslopes forms the eastern end of the rounded ridgeline which extends westwards and has a strong continuity with that landscape. It contrasts with the landscape character of the river corridors but forms an important setting to both the rivers Dun and Kennet.

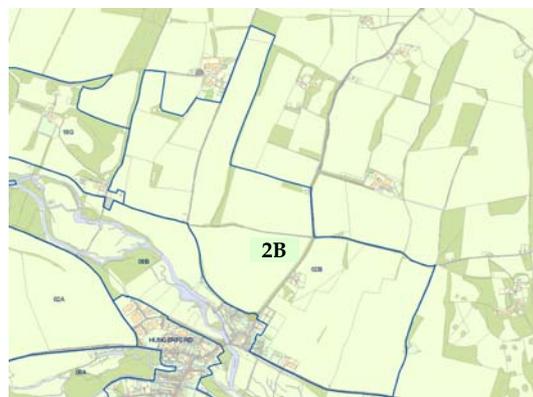
Setting to the urban form

LLCA2A Strongrove Dipslopes is separated from the town by the narrow Dun valley but forms an important setting to the west of the town. The area is also separated from the Charnham Park industrial area by a hedge but, together with the Kennet valley *LLCA8B*, provides the setting to this urban extension.

LLCA2B: Leverton and Eddington Dipslopes



Denford Road



From Gipsy Lane



South of Haywards Farm towards Eddington

Leverton and Eddington Dipslopes is characterised by open fairly exposed arable fields with woodland and shelter belts on undulating chalk dip slopes which drop down to the Kennet Valley in the south. The area is sparsely settled, except for the expanding village of Eddington, and has few defining landmark or historic features, although there are surviving historic landscape features.

Overall sensitivity: Medium

Key elements of landscape sensitivity

- Good landscape relationship with the adjacent open landscape
- Good roadside trees and hedgerows
- Open landscape
- Narrow rural road network
- Sparse scattered settlement of farm clusters away from Eddington
- Exposed to views from sensitive landscapes
- Good sense of tranquillity above valley bottom

- Medium to high historic landscape character sensitivity
- Woodland cover

Other landscape sensitivity interests

- Large field pattern
- Shelter belts
- A few historic features
- Well connected to Eddington and contains modern development
- Good visual and physical links with the town
- Grade 3 agricultural land with pockets of grade 2
- Valued by the local community

Wider landscape

LLCA2B Leverton and Eddington Dipslopes forms part of the wider landscape which extends northwards and eastwards into the hills. It contrasts with the Kennet valley to the south, providing enclosure and the setting to the valley.

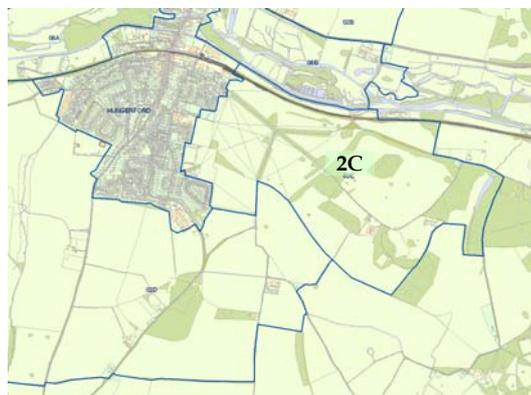
Setting to the urban form

LLCA2B Leverton and Eddington Dipslopes forms the setting to Eddington village which although separated from the town by the river Kennet, is an important historic extension to the town. Eddington village extends up into the area, reinforcing the close relationship between the south east of the LLCA and the urban form.

LLCA2C: Hungerford Common and Park



From Street Road to the Common



To Down Gate



Across the Common towards Inkpen

Hungerford Common and Park is characterised by the strong landscape and historic influences which form its parkland and common land. It sits on a plateau with steeply dropping sides down to the Kenney Valley which give rise to panoramic views to the north and south.

Overall sensitivity: High

Key elements of landscape sensitivity

- Exposed plateau
- Grade 2 and 3 agricultural land outside of the common
- High level of public accessibility and important common land with open access
- Designed historic parkland at Hungerford Park
- Mature trees with a balance of woodland, pasture and parkland
- Open aspect with panoramic views
- Many distinctive landscape and built form landmarks and historic features
- Good sense of tranquillity

- Clear boundary definition internally and to Hungerford
- Little built form
- Significant historic landscape and common
- Highly valued by local community
- Rural highway network

Other landscape sensitivity interests

- Flood plain constraint within Hungerford Park
- Closely related to the town
- Existing visual intrusion from new development and floodlighting
- Medium to low ecological sensitivity

Wider landscape

LLCA2C *Hungerford Common and Park* is an important part of the landscape extending east to Templeton estate, Inglewood House estate and sweeping south of Hungerford. This landscape is dominated by large parkland areas, with the commonland contained within LLCA2C. The area is highly visible from both the hills to the north and from the elevated ridgeline to the south.

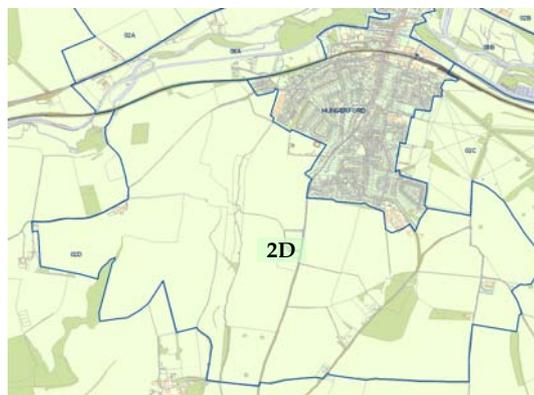
Setting to the urban form

LLCA2C *Hungerford Common and Park* closely abuts the western edge of the town. The commonland is an integral part of townscape of Down Gate area of the pub and adjoining houses and a landscape setting to the historic gateway to Hungerford. LLCA2C is separated from the town by dense hedgerow so that town is not visible except at the Down Gate pub.

LLCA2D: Standon Chalk Lowlands



Inkpen Road



North Standen Road towards Hungerford



View south-east from near Sanham Green

Standon Chalk Lowlands is characterised by its rolling open agricultural landscape with few landscape boundaries. It has strong character links with the adjacent areas of farmed downland and visual links with the town.

Overall sensitivity: Medium

Key elements of landscape sensitivity

- Rolling and folding landscape closely linked to adjacent farmed landscapes
- Grade 2 and 3 agricultural
- Sparse settlement pattern
- Long views and intervisibility with adjacent more sensitive areas
- Fairly tranquil
- Complex and sensitive historic landscape
- Good potential ecological links with Kennet Valley
- River Shalbourne floodplain

Other landscape sensitivity interests

- Mixed land use
- Good relationship to, and open boundary with, the town
- Sparse hedgerows and weak internal boundaries
- Lack of seclusion with some visual intrusion from housing and floodlighting in Hungerford
- Few distinctive landscape and historic features or landmarks
- Valued by the local community
- Accessible landscape with some recreational value

Wider landscape

LLCA2D Standon Chalk Lowlands forms part of the open farmed landscape which extends southwards and westwards up to a belt of scattered woodlands around the town. The area subtly differs from *LLCA2C* and the landscape to the east which are characterised by the more designed parkland landscapes.

Setting to the urban form

LLCA2D Standon Chalk Lowlands closely abuts the south western edge of town which is clearly visible on the hill top. There is very little vegetation to separate the area from the town edge, resulting in a rather raw urban edge.

LLCA8A: River Dun Valley



View east from Freeman's Marsh



Kennet and Avon Canal lock



Canalside vegetation

River Dun Valley is characterised by its flat bottom river valley set within rising downland. The area is divided up into small parcels of land by its complex riparian and wetland vegetation and contains a number of highly distinctive landscape, historic and ecological features. At the same time it is highly accessible and of high cultural value.

Overall sensitivity: *High*

Key elements of landscape sensitivity

- Important chalk stream river habitats of riparian woodland, pasture and wetlands
- River Dun floodplain
- Distinctive flat valley bottom enclosed by rising rounded hills
- Grade 2 and 3 agricultural land
- Complex vegetation pattern of small parcels of land
- Secluded, intimate and tranquil landscape

- Significant water features
- Distinctive built form and historic features
- Sparse settlement except on upper terraces
- High intervisibility with adjacent hillsides and important visual landmarks
- Significant historic landscape with historic features
- Good accessibility and recreational value
- Strong cultural associations
- High ecological value and strong habitat links with adjacent river landscapes

Other landscape sensitivity interests

- Important transport corridor and good links with town
- Semi-enclosed landscape with good internal boundaries
- Valued by the local community

Wider landscape

LLCA8A River Dun Valley is an important part of river valley landscape extending westwards, and from Hungerford eastwards. There is high level of visibility with the adjoining hillsides.

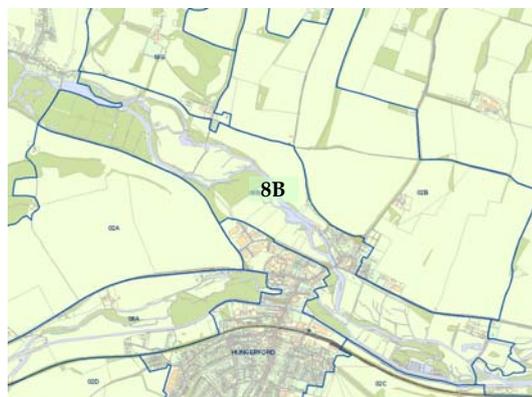
Setting to the urban form

LLCA8A River Dun Valley is an important gateway to the urban fabric of the river valley as it passes through Hungerford. It closely abuts south western edge of town and includes development on edge of town at Marsh Lane. Marsh Lane merges with the town, with the remaining area clearly distinct and separated by hedgerows. *LLCA8A* contributes a key open space to the older part of town.

LLCA8B: Upper Kennet Valley



Eddington village



Chilton Marsh



South of Chilton Lodge

Upper Kennet Valley has strong similarities with the *River Dun Valley*. It is also characterised by its flat bottom river valley set within rising downland. The area is divided up into small parcels of land by its complex riparian and wetland vegetation and contains a number of highly distinctive landscape, historic and ecological features. At the same time it is highly accessible and of high cultural value. The two areas differ in subtle ways with the *Upper Kennet Valley* more heavily influenced by modern development and of slightly less sensitive cultural and historic significance.

Overall sensitivity: Medium to High

Key elements of landscape sensitivity

- Important chalk stream river habitats of riparian woodland, pasture and wetlands
- River Kennet floodplain
- Distinctive flat valley bottom enclosed by rising rounded hills
- Grade 2 and 3 agricultural land

- Complex vegetation pattern of small parcels of land
- Secluded, intimate and tranquil landscape
- Significant water features
- Sparse settlement except on upper terraces and distinctive built form
- High intervisibility with adjacent hillsides and important visual landmarks
- Significant historic landscape with historic features
- Good accessibility
- Strong cultural associations
- High ecological value and strong habitat links with adjacent landscapes, particularly with *River Dun Valley*
- Narrow cross valley roads
- Parkland and designed landscape

Other landscape sensitivity interests

- Areas of grade 4 agricultural land
- Modern development at Eddington village and on the A4
- Arable fields
- Good relationship with the town and Eddington
- Internal views contained by vegetation
- Valued by the local community

Wider landscape

LLCA8B Upper Kennet Valley has strong links with the continuing river valley landscapes to the west and east and down the River Dun and a close relationship with the historic character of LLCAs 18H and 02B. There is however a strong contrast with the adjacent open arable hillsides.

Setting to the urban form

LLCA8B Upper Kennet Valley passes through Hungerford to the north of the town, separating the town from the village of Eddington. It also closely abuts Charnham Park industrial estate, separated by thin belt of riverside vegetation. The river corridor, together with *LLCA8A*, is a very important defining feature of the character of the town.

LLCA18G: Leverton and Chilton Estates



Avenue to Chilton Lodge



Chilton Park



Leverton

Leverton and Chilton Estates is characterised by its historic landscape and built form features in Chilton Lodge Park and Leverton village. The landscape is predominantly parkland with a strong sense of tranquillity and seclusion. It is however largely inaccessible. It does not contain any significant ecological habitats, although it has a high ecological potential.

Overall sensitivity: *Medium to high*

Key elements of landscape sensitivity

- Designed parkland landscape with significant landscape features
- Rural pasture with parkland trees, clumps and tree belts
- Strong sense of remoteness and seclusion
- Tranquil landscape with weak relationship to the town
- Compartmented landscape
- Distinctive historic built form with little modern development
- Good intervisibility with adjacent landscapes

- Contrast with adjacent landscapes
- Narrow windy road network
- Significant historic landscape
- Good ecological potential

Other landscape sensitivity interests

- Grade 3 agricultural land and some areas of grade 4 agricultural land
- Valued by the local community

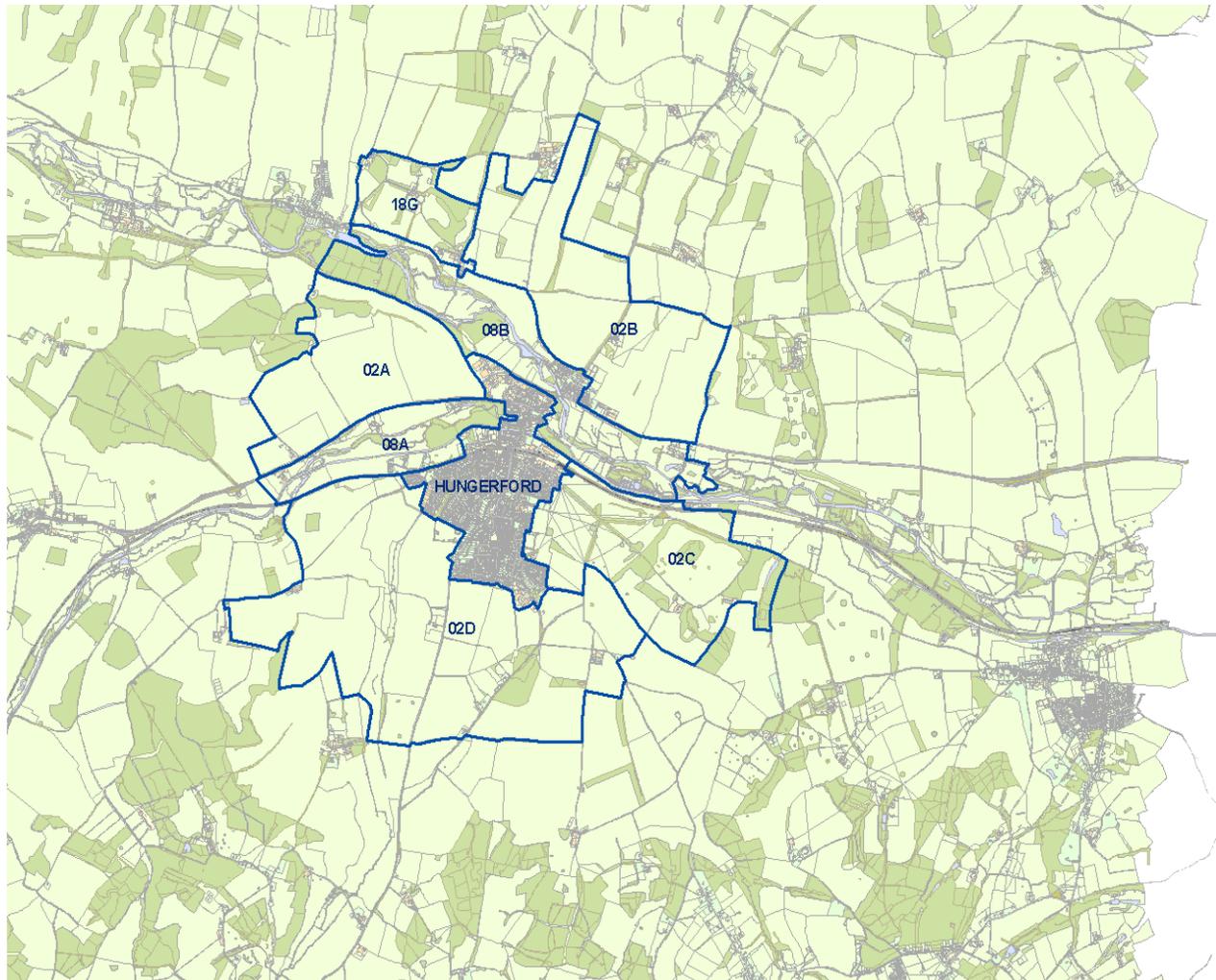
Wider landscape

LLCA18G Leverton and Chilton Estates is a part of wider landscape extending east along the slopes north of the Kennet Valley but the area has a distinct character arising from historic laying out of the park and its close relationship with the Kennet Valley.

Setting to the urban form

LLCA18G Leverton and Chilton Estates is separated from the town by the river valley and does not contribute to the urban setting. Hungerford is well screened from the area by the landform and vegetation along the river Kennet.

FIGURE 1D: HUNGERFORD LOCAL LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREAS



2A: Strongrove Dipslopes

**2B: Leverton and Eddington
Dipslopes**

**2C: Hungerford Common and
Park**

2D: Standon Chalk Lowlands

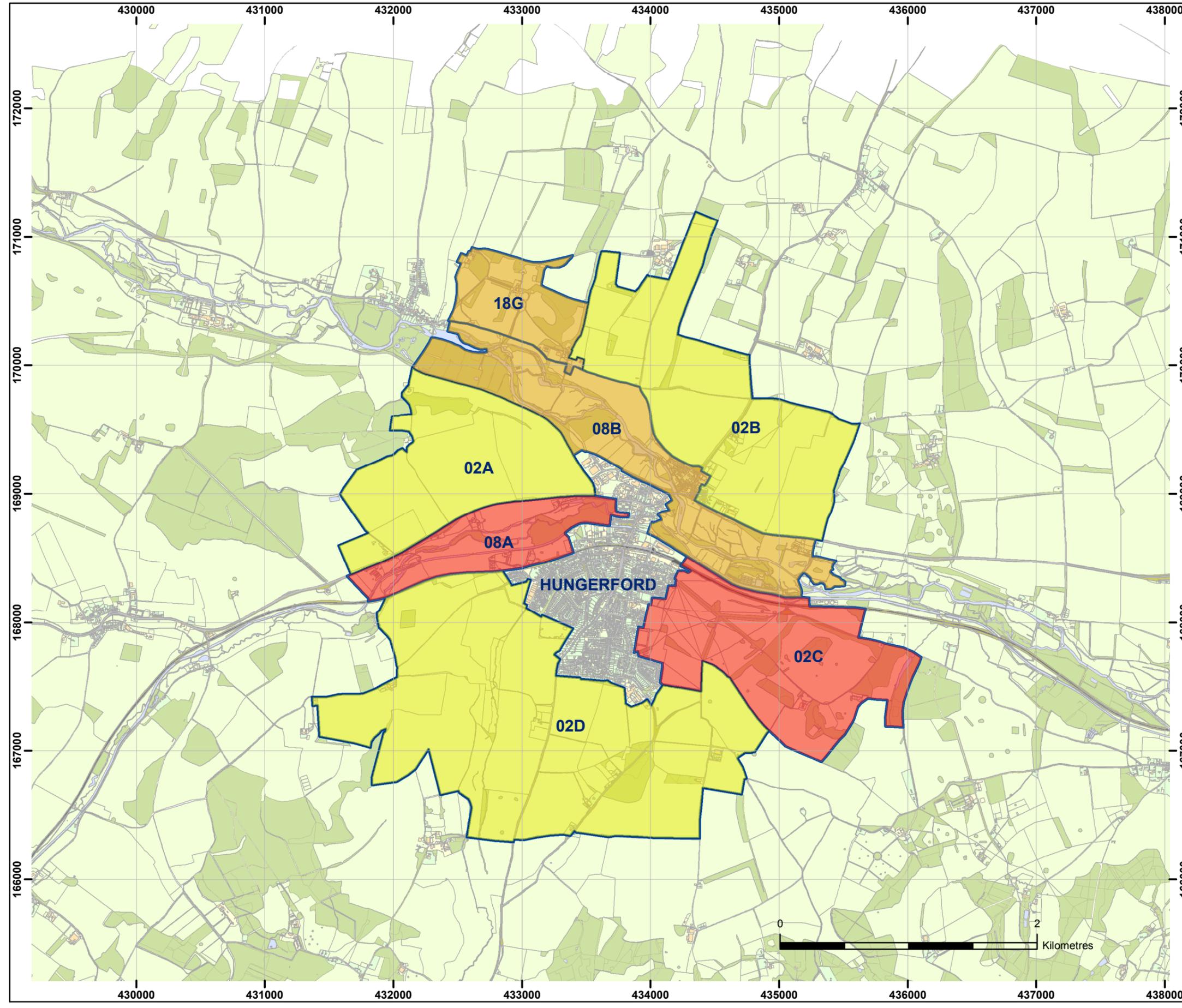
8A: River Dun Valley

8B: Upper Kennet Valley

**18H: Leverton and Chilton
Estates**

West Berkshire Landscape Sensitivity Study

- low sensitivity
- low to medium sensitivity
- medium sensitivity
- medium to high sensitivity
- high sensitivity



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