Local Distinctiveness and Landscape Change

Cotswolds
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk

Please note:
This report was originally published by the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Partnership in 2004.

In December 2004 the Cotswolds Conservation Board was established, superseding the Partnership.

The report was originally published by the Board in May 2005. However, text within the report has been retained as 'Partnership'.

It is the duty of the Conservation Board to pursue two purposes:
- to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the AONB
- to increase the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the AONB.

In fulfilling these roles, the Board seeks to foster the economic and social well-being of people living in the AONB.

Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
Local Distinctiveness and Landscape Change

Produced for the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Partnership
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Photographs on pages 5,9,87,97,101 and 109

Contents

Executive Summary

This report was commissioned by the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Partnership in 2002. Its aim is to assist a wide range of persons broaden their understanding what it is that makes the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty different from other parts of the country (e.g. the Chilterns or the Shropshire Hills), with particular reference to the built environment. It is also seen as providing a link between the highly technical content of a Landscape Character Assessment and the more accessible guidance that exists to supplement local planning policy, particularly the growing number of community-based Village Design Statements.

A brief introduction to the report describes the area, defines what is meant by an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and sets out the purpose of the project, its methodology, scope and limitations.

Landscape Character

This chapter introduces the idea of landscape characterisation, placing the area within the context of national guidance and presenting a synopsis of a recent assessment of the landscape of the AONB that has been undertaken in parallel with this project.

The Evolution of the Cotswolds AONB Landscape

Having presented an over view of the landscape of the AONB, its historical dimension ('time depth') is described with reference those social, cultural and economic forces that have shaped what is seen today. The histories of farming, forestry and woodland, quarrying and delving, transportation, and settlement and built form are all explored, before being summarised by way of an illustrated 'timeline'.

The Built Environment

Key themes that contribute to the local distinctiveness of the built environment (and hence to the area of the AONB) are identified and discussed in terms of their typology, form, location and details:

- **Settlement:** The importance of the internal and external form of the various types of settlement found within the area (market towns, compact villages, etc.) is examined in relation to where they are located in the landscape (e.g. valley bottom, hillside), the results being tabulated in terms of the nineteen landscape character types that have been identified as being present within the bounds of the AONB.
- **Boundaries:** Walls, hedges and other types of boundary are looked at in terms of whether they occur within settlements, parkland or farmland. Maps showing the distribution of dry stone walls and hedges in the landscape are presented.
- **Roofs and Walls:** The use and treatment of materials forms the main thrust of this part of the report. Maps showing the distribution over the AONB of different types of roof covering and various types of walling are included, emphasising the historical importance of quarrying in defining the character of the area.

Elements at Risk and Strategies for Recovery

This chapter looks briefly at built elements that play a crucial part in maintaining local distinctiveness but are at risk of being lost (or have already been lost). Strategies that could mitigate loss are outlined, and the issues arising summarised.

Interpretation of Tradition

Simple examples of how change and local distinctiveness are not incompatible are presented in the form of some possible designs for unequivocally modern elements in the rural and urban landscape - a metal gate and a bus shelter.

The Changing Countryside

The report ends with a series of 'what if' scenarios, illustrating the potential impact of an assortment of changes on the countryside of the AONB.
Research has revealed that:

1. Distinctiveness is essentially about the nature of the landscape, as defined and understood in its broadest sense. The built environment and its elements are a part of the landscape and cannot be considered in isolation from its characterisation. Their contribution to local distinctiveness must be understood in the context of the landscape character types set out in Chapter 02.

2. History shows us that the countryside of the AONB is not a static, fossilised museum of a bygone age, but a dynamic environment where people live and work, and which is as subject as any city to the social, cultural and economic pressures that force change.

3. Local distinctiveness at a regional level cannot be defined by reference to a simple lexicon of built or constructed features. Many variations in character occur across the area of the AONB, which embraces places as different as Bredon Hill and the slopes around the city centre of Bath. This diversity should be recognised and celebrated.

4. The part played by the built environment in defining local distinctiveness can be categorised in terms of settlement, boundaries, and roofs and walls. Each of these themes are best understood in terms of typology, form, location and detail.

5. The contribution of detail to local distinctiveness cannot be defined at a regional level, and hence must be the preserve of Village Design Statements, Conservation Area Appraisals, Parish Maps and other documents that can be used to record information and provide micro-level guidance.

6. Economics and redundancy of use or function mean that a number of the key features that contribute to local distinctiveness are at risk of loss. Form of settlement, details within settlements, dry stone walls in the landscape, gates and stiles, stone slates, and thatch have all been identified as at risk. Strategies in mitigation must recognise the need for rural diversification, education and fiscal support.

7. The consideration of the potential impact of change on the countryside shows that, although change cannot be prevented, it can be steered in certain directions. It is up to all those that value the character of the AONB to work in partnership with those that administer all aspects of its landscape, the common aim being to ensure that change can take place without eroding the special qualities of the area.

The report concludes that one must understand the past and the present, before being able to point to ways in which change can occur without loss of distinctiveness.

Introduction

1 Introduction

1.01
The Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

The Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) covers the most prominent and well known section of the outcrop of oolitic limestone that runs north and north-eastwards from Lyme Bay in Dorset to the North Yorkshire Coast. Its most dramatic aspect is along the prominent scarp that faces north-west over the Vales of Berkeley, Gloucester and Evesham, its south-eastern part dipping gently into the rolling wolds and river valleys of the Upper Thames and the Avon. Though devoid of any settlement larger than market towns, the deeply incised nature of the scarp provides the dramatic setting for 'fringe' towns such as Bath and Stroud. Other towns are in close proximity and good roads mean that the area is easily accessible to the populations of Bristol, London and the West Midlands. Although most often associated with the county of Gloucestershire, the AONB actually falls within the administrative boundaries of a further four counties, two unitary authorities and ten district-level authorities. Numerous parish councils and a variety of other organisations also have a stake in the area.

1.02
Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty

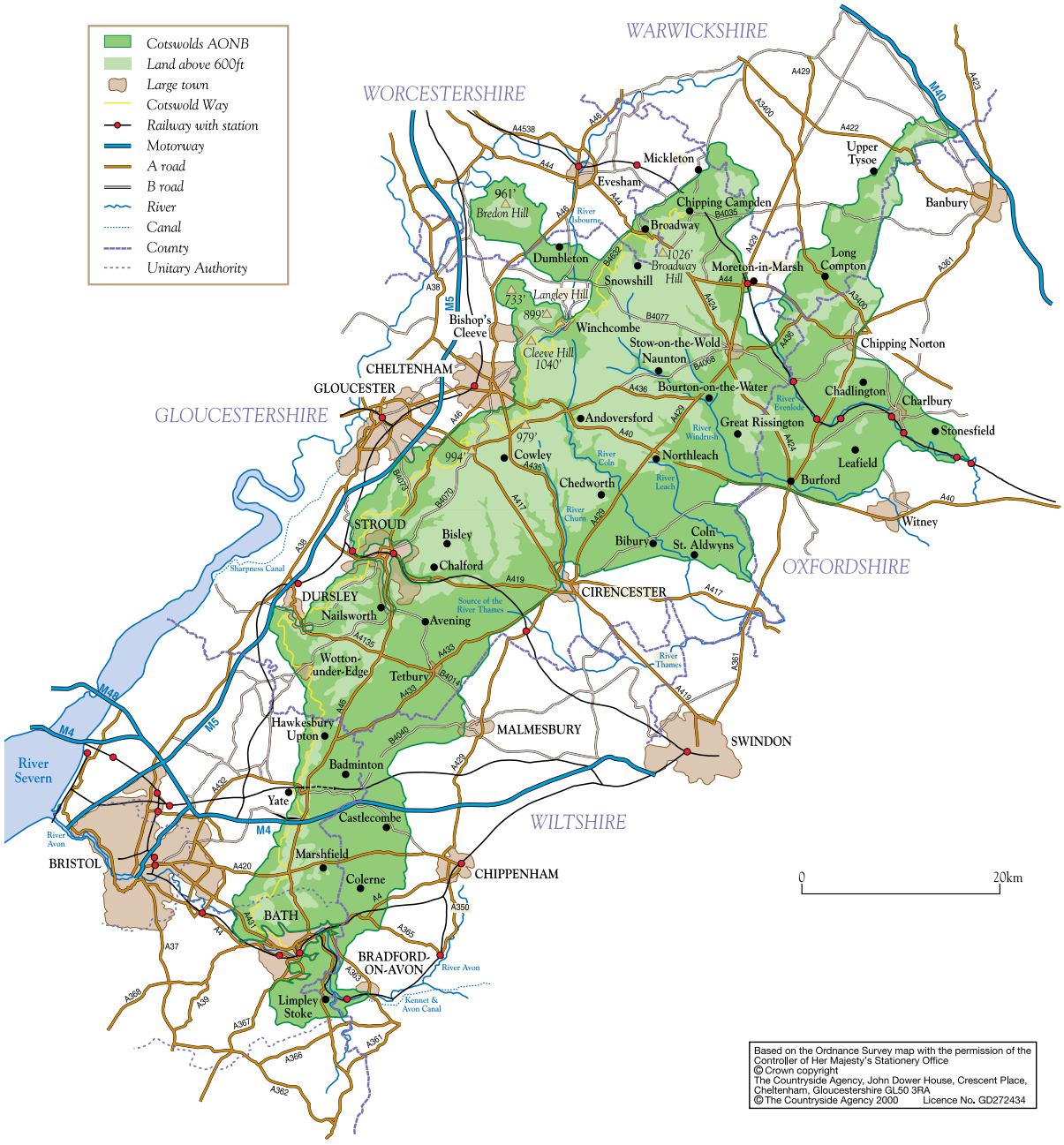
The primary purpose of AONB designation is the conservation of natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage, an idea enshrined in the *National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act of 1949*. This distinguishes them from the wilder, more dramatic landscapes of the National Parks where the objectives of outdoor recreation, and the understanding and enjoyment of the public are as equally important. 41 tracts of nationally significant countryside have AONB status. The Cotswolds area was designated in 1966 with revisions to its boundary confirmed in 1990.

1.03
Purpose of Project

The project was commissioned by the Cotswold AONB Partnership in September 2002, its purpose being to assist a wide range of persons in broadening their understanding what it is that makes the area 'special', and distinguishes it from (say) the Chilterns or the Shropshire Hills. Its output - this report - is seen as providing a link between the highly technical content of a Landscape Character Assessment (refer Chapter 2.00) and the detailed guidance that is published by local authorities to supplement local planning policy, exemplified by documents such as design codes and Conservation Area Appraisals. The report can therefore be seen as having an affinity with the idea of a Countryside Design Summary, a document that outlines important general features that contribute to the character of the countryside and settlements within a particular area: in this case, a region spread over 2,038 square kilometres of western England. More specifically, the report provides a framework and a set of pointers that can be used to inform the preparation of a Village Design Statement, a community-rooted document that describes the character of an individual village, and which can be used to guide change. This is not to say that it provides a detailed account of all parts of the AONB. It is simply a source of information for all those who live, work in or visit the area, and who have an interest in the character and development of its landscape.

1.04
Methodology

Research for the project commenced with a desk-study of available literature on the history and topography of the Cotswolds AONB, out of which emerged a series of 'themes' that started to suggest how the built environment played a part in defining local distinctiveness. The results of this work were distilled into a questionnaire that was circulated to all local authority conservation officers, landscape officers and other interested parties, and which formed the basis of interviews that 'teased out' local knowledge that could be used to re-evaluate and refine the outcome of the desk study. A parallel programme of research and inquiry explored the evolution



MAP 01: THE COTSWOLDS AONB AND ITS ENVIRONS (COURTESY OF THE COUNTRYSIDE AGENCY)

of the landscape of the AONB and how it might change. Finally, the results of the research were tested and supplemented by an extensive programme of fieldwork, the results of which provided the basis for the maps in Chapter 4.00.

1.05
Scope and Limitations

An area as large as the Cotswolds AONB contains a wide array of built and constructed features, reflecting the minutiae of its topography and historic development. To research and document every one of these features (or even a large proportion) would be a monumental task, and is beyond the scope of this report. Indeed, one of the key ideas that underpins its structure is that local distinctiveness at a regional level cannot be defined by a simple lexicon of 'features'. Only at the level of a settlement or a locality do things such as the style of a window, the shape of a gable, or a particular pattern of a gate play a major part in what makes a place special. Nor can this report deal with topics such as elements at risk and the changing countryside in anything other than the most cursory detail. Hence the need for Village Design Statements, Conservation Area Appraisals and Parish Maps to pick up its threads.

1 Introduction

Landscape Character 2

2.01 Introduction

Landscape is about the relationship between people and place. It is the result of the way that different components of the environment - natural and cultural - interact and are perceived.

Every landscape has its own character, a distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape (i.e. trees, hedges, field systems, buildings, etc.) that makes one landscape different from another. This is why the Fens are different from the Derbyshire Dales which in turn are different from the Sussex Downs. The appearance of each of these areas represents the interplay between natural forces and human activity, that has resulted in the elements or combinations of elements which make a particular contribution to local distinctiveness.

This is not to say that the character of a landscape is in any way fixed and immutable. Human activity (and human default) mean that, to some degree, the landscape is always in a state of flux. Change has occurred in the past, is happening now and will invariably take place in the future. The recognition of this fact by society and the attendant desire to maintain those qualities that make a place 'special', are what makes the understanding of the English landscape so important. It is this need to 'understand' that provides the impetus for this report and the wider project of which it forms a part.

2.02 Characterisation of the Landscape

The determination of what makes one landscape different from another is known as 'characterisation'. It involves the identification of:

- **Landscape character types:** Distinct types of landscape that share broadly similar combinations of geology, topography, drainage patterns, vegetation, and historical land use and settlement patterns. Character types are generic, in that they may occur in different areas in different parts of the country, a fact which is reflected in their non specific identification with terms like moorland, river valley or plateau.

- **Landscape character areas:** Single unique areas that are geographic examples of a particular type. For instance, the Upper Churn and Coln Valleys in Gloucestershire are both separate landscape character areas of the High Wold Valley type (refer 2.04).

Characterisation can be undertaken at a variety of levels, from national down to local, depending on the level of detail required. The result will be the classification and description of the landscape in terms of the factors - natural, social and cultural - that define its character (Swanwick & Land Use Consultants, 2002). Natural factors include geology, landform, river and drainage systems, soils and land cover. Social and cultural factors include land use, settlements patterns, patterns of field enclosure and what is termed 'time depth' (i.e. the historic dimension of the landscape).

The power of characterisation is that it provides a framework in which planning policy and guidance can focus on key principles rather than on prescriptive formulae.

One of the key aims of this project is to record, document and - in the context of the character and evolution of the landscape as a whole - *explain and understand* a number of the key social and cultural factors that play a part in what makes the landscape of the AONB special, specifically those elements that comprise the built environment.

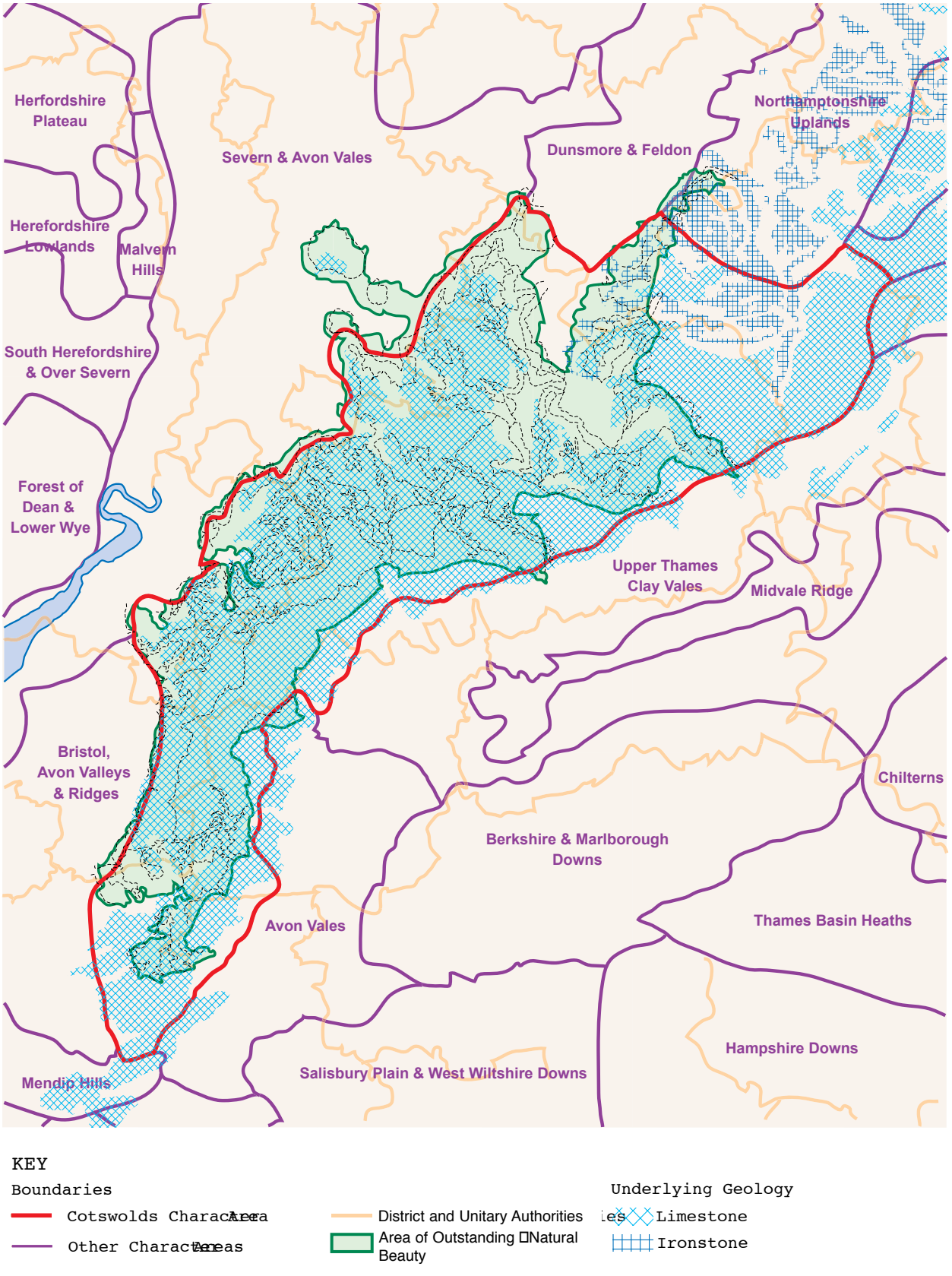
2.03 The Character of the Landscape of the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

The key characteristics of the Cotswolds region - as defined by the Countryside Agency - can be summarised as:

- Its underlying geology: a dramatic scarp rising above adjacent lowlands with steep combes, scarp foot villages and beech woodlands.

- Rolling, open high wold plateaux moulded by physical and human influences, with arable farming and areas of woodland, divided up by small, narrow valleys.

- Areas of incised landscape with deep wide valleys, and of flat, open dip slope landscape (i.e. a landscape that follows the underlying geology) with extensive arable farmland.



MAP 02: THE COTSWOLDS AONB IN RELATION TO THE COUNTRYSIDE AGENCY LANDSCAPE CHARACTER MAP OF ENGLAND

- Prominent outliers within the lowlands, vales to the west of the escarpment.
- Honey-coloured Cotswold stone in walls, houses and churches.
- Attractive stone villages with a unity of design and materials.

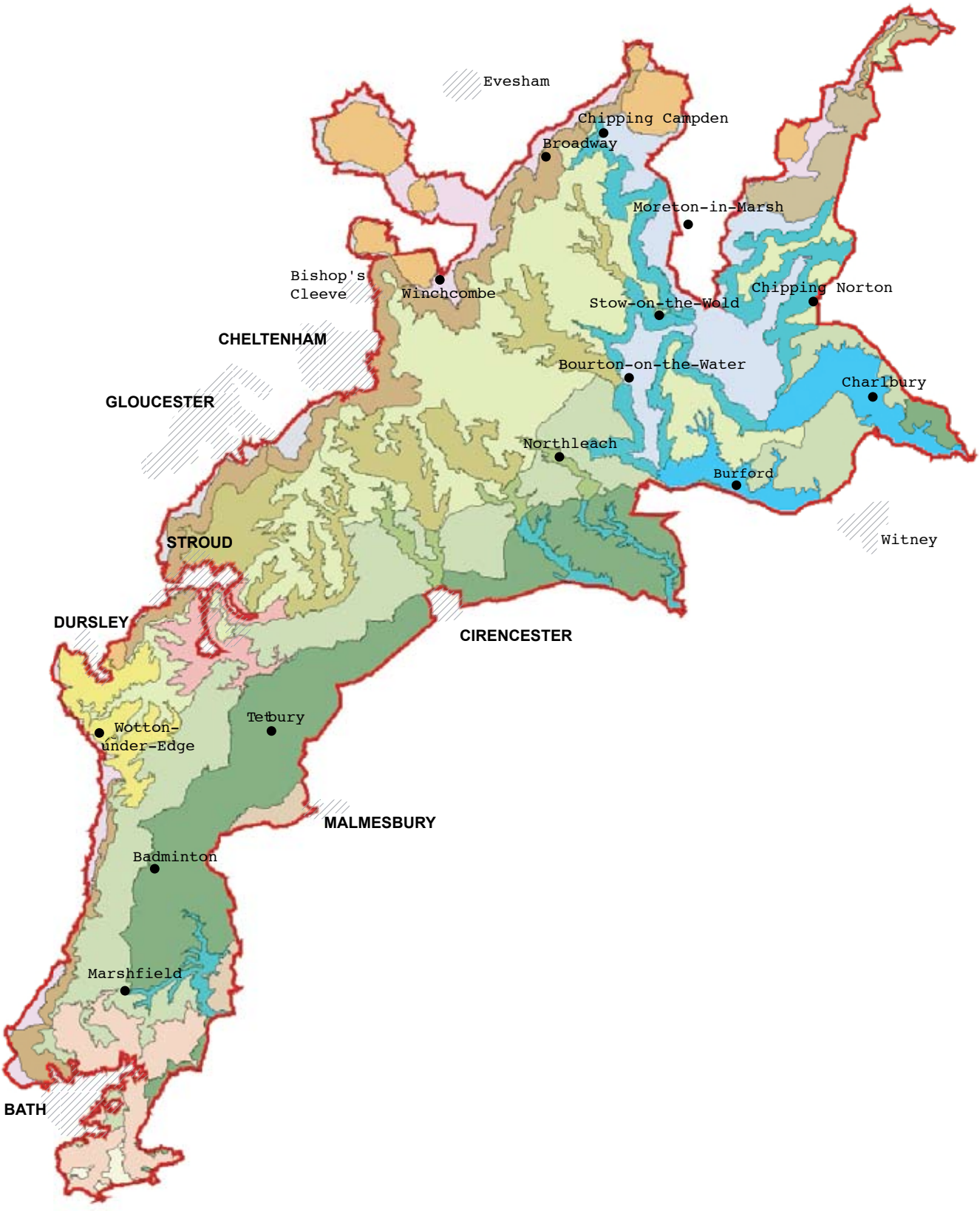
This is the definition of the region at a national level (Map 02), the definition that sets the boundaries of the Cotswolds as one of the 159 regions that make up the Countryside Agency's Character of England map (Countryside Agency, 1999, p.7 & pp.41-45). Although accurate within the context of the country as a whole, this characterisation of the Cotswolds is too generalised to be of much use in understanding local distinctiveness at the level of the built environment, not least since the boundary of the area at a national level differs significantly from that of the AONB. The character of the landscape needs to be defined in more detail if, - for example - one is to appreciate why a particular type of boundary (e.g. a stone wall) or roof covering 'belongs' where it is and nowhere else, or a certain pattern of settlement exists in a certain area and not another.

2.04
Landscape Character Types

An assessment of the Cotswolds AONB (Landscape Design Associates, 2003: Map 03) has revealed that, at a regional level, the AONB contains nineteen distinct types of landscape:

- 01 Escarpment Outlier
- 02 Escarpment
- 03 Rolling Hills and Valley
- 04 Enclosed Limestone Valley
- 05 Settled Valley
- 06 Ironstone Hills and Valleys
- 07 High Wold
- 08 High Wold Valley
- 09 High Wold Dip-Slope
- 10 High Wold Dip-Slope Valley
- 11 Dip-Slope Lowland
- 12 Dip-Slope Lowland Valley
- 13 Low Limestone Plateau
- 14 Cornbrash Lowlands
- 15 Farmed Slopes
- 16 Broad Floodplain Valley
- 17 Pastoral Lowland Vale
- 18 Settled Unwooded Vale
- 19 Unwooded Vale

The key features of each of these character types are summarised over the following pages. Specific character areas are also identified, through it must be understood that many of these extend beyond the confines of the AONB: Landscape character rarely relates to arbitrary administrative boundaries, a point clearly illustrated by Map 02, and which should be borne in mind throughout this report.



MAP 03: LANDSCAPE CHARACTER MAP OF THE COTSWOLDS AONB, SHOWING CHARACTER TYPES AND AREAS (COURTESY OF LANDSCAPE DESIGN ASSOCIATES)

01 Escarpment Outlier

Cam Long Down, Peaked Down & Downham Hills
Langley Hill
Oxenton & Dixton Hills
Dumbleton & Alderton Hills
Bredon Hill
Meon & Ebrington Hills
Brailes Hill & Castle Hill

The varied, sometimes steeply sloping topography of these distinctive hills sits detached to the west of the main Cotswold escarpment, rising above the neighbouring vale and offering dramatic, panoramic views away from and into the AONB.

Rough grassland and scrub occur on some sections of their upper slopes, and other steep areas, along with woodland belts and trees. Woodland and hedgerows form interlocking patterns. A network of hedgerows and occasional walls divide the improved pasture and arable farmland of the lower slopes.

Although the outliers themselves are sparsely settled, their hilltops, which are often the site of prehistoric hill forts or other defensive enclosures, are criss-crossed by footpaths that link to the vale villages below.

02 Escarpment

Bath to Beach Farm
Beach Farm to Hillesley
Uley to Coopers Hill
Coopers Hill to Winchcombe
Winchcombe to Dover's Hill
Dover's Hill to Mickleton
Edge Hill

Stretching 52 miles in an almost unbroken line and often cloaked in semi-natural broadleaved woodland, the Escarpment comprises an exposed west-facing slope with a distinct sense of elevation and dramatic views to the west. The continuity of the scarp is interrupted by a series of major valleys and embayments, and rock outcrops often marking the sites of former quarries.

A mosaic of woodland, hedgerows, scrub and isolated trees, and particularly the dramatic beech hangers, give the impression of a well wooded landscape, although the area is also well-suited to pasture and grassland.

Settlements are generally confined to the gentler slopes and in sheltered locations adjacent to spring lines. Roads and tracks rise up the slope, often surrounded by dense vegetation and occupying hollow ways. Numerous prehistoric sites, and follies such as Broadway Tower, sit on promontories and other elevated sections.

03 Rolling Hills and Valleys

Ozleworth Bottom & Lower Kilcott
Stinchcombe & North Nibley

Although unified by continuity of form, the relatively enclosed and secluded character of the upper sections of these valleys and their narrow bottoms contrasts strongly with the broader and more open nature of the developed areas that meet the Vale beyond. Valleys sides are steep and concave, the upper slopes often dominated by woodland.

Most of the area is under pastoral use, although there are also scattered patches of arable land. Rough, scrubby pasture is often evident on the upper slopes. Fields are generally small in scale, mainly enclosed with hedgerows although post and wire fencing is also evident.

Larger settlements with pronounced urban influences sit at the valley mouths, with smaller and deeply rural settlements in the valley bottoms and on the upper valley slopes. Roads run along the valley bottoms and sides, although some do cut across the slopes, sometimes sunken between high banks.

04 Enclosed Limestone Valley

Cam & Wellow Brook Valleys
Bathampton & Limpley Stoke
Lam Brook & St Catherine's Brook Valleys
Lower By Brook Valley
Perrymead Slopes

These areas are located to the south, east and north of Bath, and are characterised by enclosed river valleys with steep sides separated by areas of Low Limestone Plateaux and High Wold Dip-Slope. The strong physical enclosure of the valleys results in a secluded character, the sense of which is heightened by significant areas of woodland, some of which is ancient and semi-natural. Areas of pastoral and arable use are interspersed with pasture and scrub. Fields vary in size, and are mainly enclosed with hedgerows with frequent hedgerow trees.

Roads connecting settlements generally follow valley bottoms, with others serving isolated dwellings ascending the valley sides. The presence of canals, railways and mills, a number of which are abandoned, attest to the industrial heritage of the landscape.

05 Settled Valley

Nailsworth
Frome Golden Valley & Stroud

The Settled Valleys comprise areas of relatively narrow, high-sided valleys with steep upper slopes forming an abrupt break of slope with the High Wold and High Wold Dip-Slope.

Land use is predominantly pastoral with scattered areas of arable, mainly enclosed by a network of hedgerow boundaries. Stone walls are confined mainly to the valley bottoms, particularly surrounding settlements. Significant areas of development dominate the valley floors and extend up the valley sides in terraces, lending these areas a particularly urban character. Evidence of a strong industrial past, including communications, infrastructure and mill development, is confined to the valley floors. An extensive road network within the majority of the valleys connect the settlements with the High Wold above.

06 Ironstone Hills and Valleys

Whichford Hills & Valleys
Ratley Hills & Valleys

These two small areas of Ironstone Hills and Valleys are located in the north eastern section of the AONB, forming part of a broader area that extends further east. They comprise an upland area of rolling hills and valleys, with rounded ridgelines and intermittent isolated hills.

Both areas are principally under arable cultivation, although with some improved and permanent pasture, mainly within the valley slopes and bottoms. Fields are medium to large in scale, regular and rectilinear and mainly enclosed by hedgerows with frequent trees.

A settlement pattern of intermittent, nucleated villages and isolated farmsteads gains much of its character from the distinctive iron-bearing stone that make up the underlying geology of the area. Linear networks of local roads follow ridgelines, dropping down into valleys to connect rural settlements. Telecommunication masts are occasionally prominent.

07 High Wold

Nympsfield & Kingscote Plateau, & Minchinhampton Common
Bisley Plateau
Cotswolds High Wold Plateau
Rissington Plateau & Milton Downs
Rollright & Chastleton Plateau
Over Norton Plateau
Edge Hill Ironstone Plateau

The High Wold comprises a broad, elevated, gently undulating plateau dissected by a network of dry valleys with distinctive convex profiles. It is an expansive, large-scale landscape with long views and an impression of cohesion that belies its fragmentation.

Land use is predominantly arable, with a limited amount of permanent and improved pasture. Fields are large and regular. Dry stone walls dominate the landscape with occasional hedgerows, some of which have propagated along the lines of walls. Small plantations and shelterbelts form a part of this geometric pattern.

Although there is much evidence of occupation since ancient times, settlement is sparse and generally limited to small villages, hamlets and isolated farmsteads, linked by roads following the ridge tops. Active and disused limestone quarries occasionally interrupt the landscape.

08 High Wold Valley

Toadsmoor, Holy Brook & Upper Frome Valleys
Painswick & Slad Valleys
Upper Churn Valley
Upper Coln Valley
Upper Windrush Valley
Upper Dikler Valley

Two types of valley dissect the High Wold. Broad, shallow headwater valleys carry some rivers south-east towards the Thames, with some sections forming interlocking meanders.

Extensive areas of predominantly broadleaved woodland cloak the valley sides, between which, are areas of open land of mainly grassland pasture with pockets of arable that also extend along the valley floors. The valleys are sheltered and visually contained, giving a general impression of intimacy.

Villages occupy secluded locations in the valley bottoms or sides. Farmsteads can be found in the more open section, often linked to farms in the High Wold. Communication routes are generally confined to a single road that runs along the bottom of each valley, with other routes cutting across. The richly pastoral Painswick and Slad valleys are wider and more complex, with intermediate ridges intercepting the main valley form.

09 High Wold Dip-Slope

Sulis Manor Plateau
Bathampton & Claverton Down
Lansdown
Cotswolds High Wold Dip-Slope
Wychwood Forest
West Enstone Uplands

The High Wold Dip-Slope is a transitional landscape, with many of the characteristics of the High Wold and the Dip-Slope Lowland. It is a gentle, rolling landscape dissected by predominantly south-east flowing rivers and punctuated by numerous dry valley formations.

Widespread arable farming lends it a well maintained, productive character, with a strong framework of hedges and woodland defining a complex mosaic of small scale arable and pasture land.

Settlement is sparse, and is generally confined to intermittent, isolated farmsteads and hamlets. There is much evidence of small scale quarrying in 'delves', which are often overgrown, although stone walls are less prevalent than on the High Wold. Where present, the course of old Roman roads has influenced the grain of landscape patterns. The impact of airfields is also notable, as is the influence of large designed parklands.

10 High Wold Dip-Slope Valley

Middle Churn Valley
Middle Coln Valley
Upper/Middle Leach Valley

These valleys, like the High Wold Dip-Slope through which they cut, form a transitional zone between the High Wold Valleys and the Dip-Slope Lowland Valleys. Their well defined concave form is intermittently punctuated by very steep and indented valley sides, dissected by minor watercourses with areas of mainly broadleaved and mixed woodland.

Between the wooded slopes and along the valley bottoms is a predominance of pastoral farmland, with pockets of arable land on the lower slopes.

Villages occupy sheltered locations in valley bottoms, often associated with bridging points. Farmsteads within the more open valley sections link to those in the adjacent High Wold Dip-Slope. Occasional areas of parkland also play a part in defining landscape character. The road network is similar to that of the adjacent High Wold Valleys.

11 Dip-Slope Lowland

South & Mid Cotswolds Lowlands
Stonesfield Lowlands

The Dip-Slope Lowland forms a broad area of gently sloping, undulating lowland with a predominantly south-easterly fall, and provides the final transition between the high Cotswold country and the Thames Valley.

The lowland form is gently, although infrequently, dissected by small watercourses, with the overall impression of a well managed, productive landscape of mixed arable and improved pasture. Medium to large scale regular fields enclosed by hedgerows predominate, although fences and stone walls are not entirely absent.

Intermittent small villages and isolated farmsteads define the pattern of settlement, although there are some larger settlements present. There is also a distinctive pattern of large estates and their associated parks and woodland, some of which are of national importance. Otherwise, woodland is limited to isolated copses and shelter belts.

12 Dip-Slope Lowland Valley

Upper By Brook Valley
Lower Coln Valley
Lower Leach Valley

The distinctive valleys within the Dip-Slope landscape comprise the shallow, open lower reaches of tributaries that drain to the Thames, and the deeply-incised valleys that drain into the Bristol Avon. Both areas present a small scale, intimate and settled character, with long views restricted by topography and woodland.

A mainly pastoral farmland of improved pasture with pockets of arable land extends between intermittently wooded slopes, mainly broadleaved, and along the valley bottoms.

Sequences of villages also occur in the valley bottoms, often associated with bridging points. Farms are occasionally present in the more open sections of the valleys. A limited network of roads either cut across or run along the valley bottoms. Some areas are only accessible on foot, and hence retain a remote, rural character.

13 Low Limestone Plateau

Paulton & Peasedown
St John Ridge
Hinton Charterhouse Plateau

Located immediately to the south of Bath on the southern fringe of the AONB, these small areas of undulating plateau landscape are fragments of a broader area of Low Limestone Plateau that extends south and west towards the Mendips. The plateaux are open in character, with expansive views to distant hills and into the surrounding valleys.

Pastoral and arable fields exist in equal measure. Fields are generally medium-sized and mainly enclosed by hedgerows with mature hedgerow trees. A sparse woodland cover contributes to the overall sense of openness.

Small settlements, scattered farmsteads and individual dwellings are connected by a network of minor roads. The dominance of the sky means that elements such as masts and pylons are highly visible. Likewise some large modern farm buildings that look out of place due to their size, materials and design.

14 Cornbrash Lowlands

Biddestone Lowland Farmland
West Malmesbury Lowland Farmland

The Cornbrash Lowlands provide the transition from the Dip-Slope Lowland of the south Cotswolds to the flatter, more open landscapes to the south-east, though only two small areas of this character type occur within the AONB.

It is a very gently undulating, rural landscape that offers wide views over productive farmland with vertical elements such as pylons having a strong presence. A network of tributary streams in shallow valleys run south-east to the River Avon. Rich, fertile soils derived from the underlying cornbrash geology support a predominance of arable farming, with some pastoral land bordering water courses. Fields are medium to large in size, bounded by intermittent hedgerows and the occasional stone wall. Woodland is infrequent and mainly confined to geometric plantations.

Nucleated villages, hamlets and farms make up the dispersed pattern of settlement.

15 Farmed Slopes

Vale of Bourton Farmed Slopes
Vale of Moreton Farmed Slopes

Despite sharing many geological features with the Escarpment, the Farmed Slopes have a more subtle profile, although their smooth, gentle landform gives way to a sense of exposure in some areas. It is a transitional landscape, linking the large-scale openness of the High Wold with the lushness of the Pastoral Lowland Vales of Bourton and Moreton. The slopes have a generally consistent north-south orientation, following the lines of the rivers Evenlode and Windrush.

Small, semi-natural woodlands and tree belts can be found along watercourses. Farmland comprises a mixture of pastoral and arable, interspersed by a significant number of historic parks, sited to take advantage of the dramatic landform and extensive views, and often bordered by deciduous woodland. The whole area is unified by a strong network of hedgerows.

16 Broad Floodplain Valley

Lower Windrush Valley
Lower Evenlode Valley

The lower valleys and broad floodplains of the Windrush and Evenlode rivers form a marked contrast with the valleys within the High Wold and High Wold Dip-Slope above. Small in scale and relatively 'busy', the valleys have a well defined profile that limits distant views and creates an impression of intimacy.

Floodplain landscape of valley floors is distinguished by lush wet pasture and meadow, bordered by a patchwork of improved pasture and arable fields. Woodland, rough grassland, copses and shelterbelts add texture. Large fields on the valley plain give way to medium to large fields on the valley sides. Fields are generally defined by a strong framework of hedges with some stone walls, although fencing has begun to encroach. Riverside and floodplain trees fringe the meandering watercourses that support a rich diversity of flora and fauna.

17 Pastoral Lowland Vale

Vale of Bourton
Vale of Moreton

The Pastoral Lowland Vale landscape borders the upper reaches of the rivers Windrush and Evenlode, and their many tributary streams. Whilst the Vale of Bourton is entirely within the bounds of the AONB, the Vale of Moreton extends northward into the Vale of Evesham beyond. It is a soft, flat or gently undulating landscape fringed by the distinctive shallow form of the Farmed Slopes.

Unimproved grassland and wet meadows border the streams, the small fields being bounded by a network of hedgerows. Woodland cover is limited and settlement is sparse.

A network of narrow, winding lanes links a dispersed pattern of historic towns and small villages sited above the flood plain. Although there is evidence of an older landscape, e.g. ridge and furrow field systems, much of the landscape displays the neat pattern of 18th and 19th century enclosure.

18 Settled Unwooded Vale

Vale of Gloucester fringe

Fragments of this character type, which extends westwards to the vale landscape of the River Severn, occur along the central western fringe of the AONB below the escarpment, and the southern edges of the Bredon and Oxenton Outliers.

Mixed arable and pasture dominate the soft, rolling landform enclosed by well maintained hawthorn hedges There are limited area of deciduous woodland, although field and hedgerow trees give the overall impression of a wooded area.

The landscape is influenced by neighbouring large settlements such as Gloucester and Cheltenham, which has lead to a noticeable amount of 'suburbanisation'. Industry and major transport routes also exert a strong influence on the character of the area, although no such development occurs within the bounds of the AONB. Villages, hamlets and farms within the Vale at the foot of the Escarpment are linked by a network of quiet, winding lanes.

19 Unwooded Vale

Avon Valley
Boyd Valley
Wickwar Vale
Vale of Evesham fringe
Vale of Feldon fringe

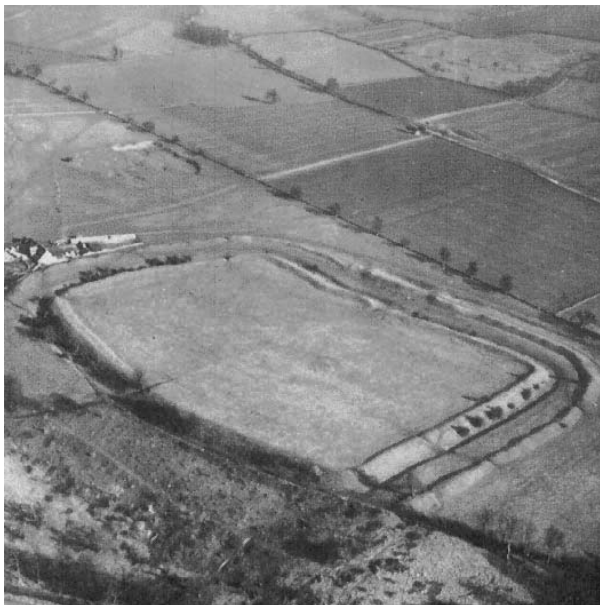
An extensive area of Unwooded Vale extends along the western and northern perimeter of the AONB, from Bath to below Stinchcombe Hill then re-commencing in the broad northern and eastern sweep of the Vales of Evesham and Feldon. Narrow strips of the Vale occur along the edges of the AONB, and an area linking the Bredon and Dumbleton Outliers with the Escarpment. Although limited within the AONB, these landscapes form a part of a wider landscape that stretches westwards.

The soft agrarian landscape is wide, open and rolling, although sparsely settled. Areas of wet meadow and narrow floodplain border the many streams and rivers. Hedgerows, some of great antiquity, are well maintained. Mature field trees and hedgerow oaks, riverside trees and small farm woodlands break up what is generally a highly managed agricultural landscape. Remnants of the open field system and of moated sites also occur within the landscape type.

This chapter explores the historical dimension of the character of landscape of the Cotswolds AONB, tracing its evolution in terms of social, cultural, and economic events that shaped the countryside we see today. After an historical introduction, the development of the landscape is described under the headings of:

- Farming, forestry and woodland
- Quarrying and delving
- Transportation
- Settlement and built form

Each heading is explored in terms of its history, and how this history impacted on the appearance of landscape in a discernible, tangible way. The chapter ends with an illustrated time-line summary.



HILL FORT AT LITTLE SODBURY

3.01 Historical Background

Although hunter-gatherers are known to have been in the area during the interglacial periods, it is only after the retreat of the glaciers and the establishment of the 'wildwood' (self-sown, uncultivated woodland) that settlers arrived. These peoples were succeeded by later immigrants who brought with them techniques of agriculture and animal husbandry, as well as the idea of communal living in small groups, and the production of cloth-making and pottery. The use of metals appeared around 1800BC, mainly bronze traded from the west. Iron-working was introduced by the Celtic peoples who drifted-in from the continent. A rising population, worsening climatic conditions and social unrest encouraged a greater degree of communal living, and the establishment of defensible village sites. The final wave of Iron Age peoples to settle in the area were the Dobunni, a Belgic tribe who established a capital (oppidum) at Bagendon.

The Roman invasion of the area met with little resistance and a frontier was quickly established along the hills on the line of the Fosse Way. An advance auxiliary camp was established at Kingsholm near Gloucester, though Roman routes focused on a spot near the Dobunni oppidum, which soon developed into Corinium (Cirencester). Stability and prosperity came to the Cotswolds area, which became a place favoured by wealthy Roman settlers for the establishment of their estates. Large flocks of sheep were reared for their wool; the origins of the wool-trade that in later years was to make the Cotswolds famous. Gloucester developed from a simple army camp into a town, Cirencester grew into one of the great cities of Europe, and Bath became a Spa of national importance.

With the withdrawal of the legions at the end of the fourth century, the slow break-down of the Roman province began. Life went on, but without a strong administrative structure, society reverted to a more tribal organisation, probably based on the old Roman estates. It was not long before the area attracted the attention of the Anglo-Saxons who, after some minor incursions and the Battle of Dyrham in 577, seized control and replaced the native tribal chiefs with their own aristocracy. Many of the

REMNANTS OF HAILES ABBEY

profound social changes that date from this time remain with us in some form today.

The new masters probably settled those Romano-British estates that had survived relatively intact and hence could be readily turned to production, though it was not long before most of the area was brought into use - it is believed that some 133 local parishes are Saxon in origin. Estates were organised around a manor with land apportioned to the population in 'hides' (the area of a hide was enough to support a family: 30 to 120 acres depending on nature of the ground). There were normally 20 to 50 hides to an estate, though some were much bigger and later sub-divided into two manors (e.g. Upper and Lower Slaughter). Manor boundaries were described in charters; it is these boundaries that later defined the ecclesiastical parishes, some of which survive as modern civil parishes.

In return for the use of the land, the inhabitants of the manor had duties to perform for the benefit of the Lord, and through him, the King in whose name the land was held. The inhabitants themselves resided in a 'vill' a group of dwellings that might today be described as a village - many modern place names have their origins in the names of Saxon vills. Each manor was answerable to a royal manor which collected and handled produce due to the King. A royal manor comprised about a hundred families; the Hundred became the next tier of administrative organisation. Another level was added in response to the Viking incursions of the 9th century: the 'burhs', fortified areas that could act as bases to repel attack. Gloucester, Bath, Malmesbury, Cricklade and Oxford were all Burhs. The area was reorganised into Shires (the Wessex model) early in the 10th century.

By the end of the 7th century, land was being granted for the foundations of monasteries. Religious communities in the Cotswolds area built-up large estates, exerting a strong influence for centuries to come. Minster churches were also founded and later still, parish churches. The Norman invaders replaced the Saxon aristocracy with their own, the old ruling class being killed or dispossessed. Order was established and enforced via the many castles that were raised. Churches were rebuilt on a more impressive scale. However, close contacts with the European continent were maintained (many overlords held land on both sides of the Channel), leading to a growth in the importance of exports, wool and woollen cloth being especially valuable. Some lords set up new markets in key locations, encouraging traders to setup businesses in 'burgage' plots along the road. These traders were Freemen who paid rent to the lord and did not owe service like the Villeins (villagers). Stow-on-the-Wold and other market towns date from this period.

In 1348-9 came the Black Death. This had a profound effect, reducing the pool of labour available for cultivation and leading to land being turned-over to sheep grazing. Some villages were deserted or destroyed by the landlords (e.g. Pinnock, Caslett and Lower Harford). Wool and cloth production became the mainstay of the Cotswolds economy, though by the 1400s cloth exports were dominant (raw wool exported to the Continent carried a heavy duty, finished cloth did not). Many folk were employed in spinning and weaving, with the mechanically-aided finishing of the cloth being carried out in fulling mills built on local streams, or converted from corn mills. This was a time of great prosperity, especially in the west where the fast-flowing streams of clear water favoured the establishment of mills: Wickwar, Dursley, Wotton-under-Edge and Stroud all grew and prospered.

STANWAY HOUSE

While the dissolution of the mon-asteries in 1536 and 1539 destabilised much of the rural economy, it also brought new opportunities within the Cotswolds, with steady inflation (the result of an influx of Spanish gold and silver from the Americas) making many of those who traded with the Continent very wealthy. Many landowners and wealthy wool merchants made vast fortunes and set themselves up as Gentry, building great mansions surrounded by parkland (e.g Stanway, Nympsfield and Dyrham).

The Thirty Years War (1618-48) had a disastrous effect on the wool trade, with much unemployment amongst the spinners and weavers. It was not until new products, colours and techniques imported from the continent were assimilated that trade revived. The other conflicts to have an impact on the area were the English Civil Wars (1642-46 and 1648-51), the area that is now the AONB being of vital strategic importance (the first full-scale engagement was at Edge Hill). Farmers saw their livestock plundered as both armies crossed and re-crossed the area and the decline of the cloth trade in areas such as Painswick, Pitchcombe and the Slad Valley.

The 'age of enclosure' came at the same time as a rapid growth in the population of England, especially in the towns, increasing the demand for food. Improvements in farming methods therefore offered greater profits for the landowner, though often at the price of the farm worker who - outside of the industrial area around Stroud - now had little opportunity for employment other than as a farm labourer. Wages dropped to starvation levels. The Napoleonic Wars (1800-15) boosted agriculture for a short time, encouraging most of the 'waste' land to be put to the plough, though corn prices slumped as soon as the wars were over. The remainder of the nineteenth century was a period of serious rural decline, the result of which was a semi-deserted landscape by-passed by the industrial revolution. It was this landscape that so enchanted artist and designers such as William Morris and Ernest Gimson, who were the forerunners of the Arts and Crafts movement that was eventually to enrich the area with new skills and sensibilities.

Agriculture was again revived by the First World War (1914-18), as the nation - no longer able to import foodstuffs - turned to its own resources. Mills that had once produced cloth were turned into engineering works manufacturing agricultural and similar equipment, industries that continued to thrive post-war as mechanisation came to farming. Roads were surfaced and with the coming of the motor coach came the tourists, and by the 1930s places like Bourton-on-the-Water were inundated with visitors, bringing much needed income to the area. The Second World War (1939-45) saw another awakening of the lands as agriculture was again asked to fill the national larder.

Unlike the situation after the First World War, agriculture did not decline after the cessation of hostilities in 1945. The austerity years of an effectively bankrupt nation meant that home-produced meat and cereals continued to be in demand and, with new techniques and a heavy investment in mechanisation, farms continued to prosper. Since then however, there have been many changes in the area, a reflection of national trends in population growth, further increases in mechanisation, greater personal affluence, and increased mobility and leisure time. The Cotswolds AONB is no longer the rural backwater that it has been for the greater part of its history.

3.02
Farming, Forestry and Woodland

The efficient and sustainable management of the land has been the concern of landholders for millennia and, until quite recently, there were three essential elements to a thriving estate: Arable land to grow crops, pasture and grazing land to feed stock and woodland. Changing

BEECHWOODS NEAR BIRDLIP

economic and social circumstances over time may have altered the balance between these elements, but without access to all three an estate could not survive.

The area of the AONB has been farmed since Neolithic times. Archaeological evidence indicates that in a remarkably short space of time the majority of land on the Wolds had been cleared of the wildwood and, even before the introduction of metal tools, the thin soils were being cultivated by ox-drawn 'ard' ploughs and animals were being grazed in cleared pastures. Woodland (i.e. the wildwood managed via woodmanship) remained on the steeper slopes and the heavier clay soils of the valleys, an essential resource for the local inhabitants: Houses were made from wood and essentials such as baskets, hurdles, fences, tools and fuel were all the product of woodland. Cattle, sheep, goats and pigs are all known to have been grazed. Crops provided food and - via the cultivation of flax and hemp - enabled the production of cord and ropes. Sheep provided both food and wool for processing into cloth. Agriculture was as much concerned with raw materials as it was with food.

Although little is known of the Celtic agricultural system it appears that, by the time of the Iron Age, some fields were being enclosed. Fields close to settlements ('in fields') were small and irregular in shape, and were planted with crops. Those further away ('out fields') were used for grazing and only brought into cultivation as and when needed, and after the fertility of the soil had been raised by concentrations of animal dung. Remnants of Celtic field systems survive around Aldsworth, Badminton, Bibury, Eastleach and Todmorton.

Villa estates were established by the Romans, who increased the area of arable land at the expense of woodland. Romano-British farming aimed for great surpluses of grain and wool; necessary supplies for the army and the urban populations of Cirencester, Bath and Gloucester. The sites of many of these estates are scattered all over the area, Woodchester and Chedworth being just two examples. Corn was the principal crop, especially in the north of the area. Estates also included livestock, fruit and vegetables for home consumption - pigs, poultry and geese were kept, and vines and figs grown. Nut trees would be planted near farm buildings. Vegetables for the kitchen would have included cabbage, carrots, parsnips and celery. The Romans introduced the quick-growing Sycamore tree, perhaps in response to the heavy demands placed on woodland by their love of heated rooms and baths.

After the end of the Roman occupation and the decline of the urban centres, the great surpluses of the villa estates were no longer necessary, though it is likely that family or tribal groups kept farms in some form of productive use. Less arable land was needed and to some extent there would have been a regeneration of woodland, especially on distant or less-favoured fields.

The Saxons brought with them a new heavy-weight agricultural system, designed to cope with the deep clay soils of northern Europe. They transformed the landscape to such an extent that, by the time of the Domesday survey in 1086, virtually all potentially productive land had been brought into use.

Small agricultural communities based on mixed farming practice worked together under the control of a Lord. A 'two field' system was employed, where arable land was cropped every other year, the fallow year being used to fold animals whose droppings would fertilize the soil for the coming year. Each field was divided into strips, allocated individually amongst the villagers and other landholders. The strips were distributed so that no one holder would have an exclusive holding of the best land, each having a share of the differing types of land available. The Lord would too have a holding (either among the strips or separated out in a 'home farm'), farmed by the villagers as 'rent' for their own holdings. Livestock was grazed on 'waste' ground, usually open rough pasture where the soil was too thin for cultivation. Meadow land would lie along the banks of rivers and streams. This would be cropped for hay to feed the animals in winter, then grazed. Villagers would keep ploughs and teams of oxen in co-operation with other members of the community (the Domesday Book indicated the potential output of an estate in terms of the number of ploughs it possessed).

RIDGE-AND-FURROW ADJACENT BOURTON-ON-THE-HILL

The heavy Saxon plough was fifteen foot (4.5 metres) long and required a team of eight oxen, and as a such was not easy to turn - the ploughman had to swing off to one side as he proceeded down the furrow to 'set up' the turn, which was performed in a deep 'headland' at the end of each run; these headlands were ploughed last. Ploughing of a strip would start at the centre and work outwards, the action of the mould board throwing soil over to one side, which in time produced a 'humped' look of the ridge-and-furrow that is still visible in fields across the whole of the AONB (the 'S' shape of the strips came from the mechanics of the turn). Barley, oats, wheat and rye were the main crops, which provided the staple food - bread - and supplemented the feed of animals during the winter. Livestock included cows, oxen, sheep, pigs and poultry with the pig providing the bulk of the meat eaten by the villagers. But by far the most useful animal was the sheep, which produced not only wool but also cheese and - in the end - meat. Even its skin could be used for parchment.

It is difficult to over-emphasise the influence of the Saxons on the landscape of the AONB. Remove the dividing walls and hedges, fill in the woods a little and remove buildings that stand in isolated groups and you have a Saxon landscape. The network of lanes though the fields are mostly Saxon too, and in the north-east where soil was overlaid with poor-draining clay, woodland cover was preserved as forest hunting by the kings.

The Norman conquest did not generally change the organisation and style of agriculture in England. It simply put in place a new set of masters. However, there were changes on or near the royal manors, the result of the way that the king and his retinue governed the country 'on the move', relying on the local Lord for hospitality, entertainment and - above all - hunting. This was not unusual; the Saxons had also loved hunting. What was new was that the Norman aristocracy reserved the hunting for itself alone, establishing Forest Law to protect the 'venison' (creature that were hunted) and the 'vert' (the environment in which these creatures lived). The areas of countryside subject to Forest Law embraced fields, villages and even whole towns, and not only woodland; the term 'forest' was a legal definition that differs from the modern meaning of the word. Protection of the venison and vert meant that ordinary folk were no longer able to supplement their diet with hunted meat, a pressure that was compounded by the enlargement of woodland to accommodate the 'Kings sport' and the discouragement of 'assarting' (the clearing of woodland to provide new agricultural land).

Continued contact with the Continent and a thriving export trade meant that, under the Normans, the economic importance of wool as a commodity was paramount, and as time went by the hold on the Forest was relaxed. Land begun to be seen as an asset rather than the preserve of the King. Assarting again took place and rights to hunt were sold or rented out to landholders. Once more the woodland began to shrink in favour of agricultural land, as an ever-growing population forced the expansion of arable fields onto marginal land of low fertility.

The Black Death struck a farming population that was already weakened and impoverished by poor weather, bad harvests and widespread disease in livestock. The resultant shortage of labour meant that even traditionally fertile arable land was turned over to sheep pasture, and that farm workers - who were now in demand - became far more mobile, often choosing to rent their land rather than render service. Peasants begun to prosper and take on labour, rising in time to become farmers holding their land in lease from the Lord. Other workers gave up the land and turned to trades such as spinning and weaving. The Saxon ridge-and-furrow pattern became 'fossilised' in the higher fields and the openness of common land began to succumb to enclosure - some estates were consolidated into blocks rather than being held in strips. Sheep farming on the Wolds was now a major occupation, especially on the ecclesiastical estates, prompting a large influx of tenants and labourers into the area. Great barns were built to store the wool, such as can be seen at Frocester and Stanway.

As important as wool was to the economy of the AONB, estates still had to produce food, not only to support themselves and pay tithes, but also to support the growing number of people who were becoming urban dwellers.

SHEEP BY THE CHURCH, GUITING POWER C 1930

The growing of grain on the cornbrash soils to the east of the area was still important, as was the rearing of cattle, especially in the Ironstone country to the north. Crops were also grown to support the cloth trade including teasels (a prickly plant used for raising a fine 'nap' on the cloth), woad and other dyestuff plants. It was against the background of sheep and crops that woodland again suffered, the only extensive stands remaining being those along the face of the scarp.

The dissolution of the monasteries came at the height of prosperity for wool merchants and other major landowners, many of whom built great houses and surrounded themselves with country parks. This had negative consequences for agriculture. Enclosure and new crops such as sainfoin enabled the intensification of sheep-rearing, allied to which were increasing rents and the transformation of long-established traditions of land management into 'economic' activity. The Thirty Years War also closed outlets for most of the local output of cloth; the industry in places like Cirencester and Malmesbury never recovered. It was a time of great distress for farming and the ordinary folk of the countryside within the area of the AONB. There were however gains in the area of woodland as the new parks were planted with trees; for shelter, to line drives, provide fuel and to give cover for game, and sometimes just to create a 'pleasing vista'.

At the time of the plundering of farm stocks during the English Civil Wars, much of the land within the AONB was held by 'copyholders', villagers who were the successors to the medieval villains and whose right to hold land was recorded on the 'copy rolls' held in the manor court. The trend from this time was to move landholding to 'lifeholds', meaning that farmers now leased their land from the Lord of the Manor for named period of time (three lives was a common length) and for a set rent. This gradually lead to fewer tenants farming larger portions of land, employing labourers who would have formerly held land in their own rights - in essence, the modern farming system of today.

It had long been recognised that farming by the dictates of custom was an obstacle to innovation and change in agricultural practice. Drainage of wet areas was impossible on open fields, and the choice of crops, methods of cultivation and the control of stock were all influenced by tradition. Landholders were frustrated in their ambitions to improve the output of their land and saw enclosure as a way of consolidating their holdings into a single unit.

THE LANDSCAPE OF ENCLOSURE AT FARMCOTE

Although the enclosure had been happening for some time, some three-quarters of parishes in the area were still unenclosed at the start of the 18th century. The next 100 years was to see vast changes in the appearance of the countryside as lands were enclosed by acts of parliament, causing the construction of hundreds of miles of hedges and - most importantly for the landscape of the AONB - stone walls. New farms complete with barns, animal shelters and other buildings appeared in the landscape, as people moved out of village farmhouses and onto their land. Streams were diverted and the new farms connected by new 'enclosure' roads, whose wide verges encouraged trees and shrubs to take root, softening what must have at first appeared a very barren landscape. Trees were also planted to shelter the new farms and to line their driveways. The newly enclosed fields of the AONB became famous for the quality of their barley, both for malting and as a feed for livestock. Dairy farming and cheese making also gained in importance.

STEAM-DRIVEN THRESHING MACHINE IN ACTION

The down-side of enclosure within the AONB was that enclosed and improved grassland coarsened the fleece of the sheep, reducing the demand for wool and woollen products (the effects of this decline were to an extent mitigated by the increasing demand for mutton by the large cities). Also, there was now an absence of employment in any area other than agriculture, leaving many now landless labourers in grinding poverty, a situation that was not alleviated by the prosperity enjoyed by the landowners during the Napoleonic Wars. Soldiers and sailors returning from the wars made the employment situation even worse and there was much discontent in the countryside, wages in the Cotswolds being as low as anywhere in England. All of which served to reinforce the view that only with efficient farming practices could agriculture survive - 'scientific farming' became the watchword (the Royal Agricultural College at Cirencester was set up in 1846, the aim being to give a 'sound scientific education' to the sons of tenant farmers). However, the greater efficiency of the enclosed farms meant that fewer labourers were needed and the introduction of the threshing machine eliminated perhaps a quarter of all the labour requirements of the farm.

Poor weather and harvests, along with price slumps and the increasing availability of imported food from America pressed down on the farmer, who was left no option to cut-back on the outlay of capital on anything but essentials. Many families left the land, some choosing to settle overseas. It was a time of poverty and dereliction within the area of the AONB - arable land shrank by a quarter, walls fell into disrepair, cottages were abandoned and fields left to run to waste. The outbreak of the First World War brought temporary respite, with some improvement following the introduction of traction engines and the surfacing of roads. These did not last and the area once again fell into decline, so much so that some farms and cottages were totally abandoned. Pastures were put to the plough during the Second World War, the Ministry directing that as much agricultural land as could be managed should be revived (35,000 additional acres were cropped for the 1940 harvest).

Since 1945 both agriculture and woodland management have become much more controlled and rationalised. Increasing mechanisation and the introduction of machines such as the combine harvester prompted the construction of large sheds in the landscape, the widening of field entrances and - in some instances - the removal of field boundaries altogether.

A massive conversion of permanent pasture for sheep grazing to arable cultivation has changed the appearance of the landscape significantly, particularly in the High Wold and the Dip Slope (in 1983 only 2% of the land in the AONB was given over to pasture, compared to 40% prior to World War II). What were once open pastures are now arable fields with seasonal variations reflected in the changing pattern of ploughed fields and cereal crops. Sheep have also been supplanted by the intensive rearing of beef and dairy cattle, manifest in the landscape as large-scale milking parlours and feeding sheds close to traditional farmsteads. Financial incentive and subsidies have also encouraged farmers to plant crops such as oilseed rape and linseed, the arresting colours of these crops having a noticeable, albeit seasonable impact on the landscape. There has also been much neglect of dry stone walls and a loss of hedgerows due to field amalgamation and the decline in traditional methods of hedgerow management.

Intensive agricultural and forestry production has also lead to a loss of ancient woodland, notably during the 1960s and 70s. Planting of geometric coniferous woodland and shelterbelts has also continued, particularly in the large-scale landscapes of the High Wold and the Dip Slope. The loss of English Elms due to the outbreak of Dutch Elm disease in the 1970s and early 80s has also had a profound effect on the appearance of the landscape. A deterioration of some of the beechwoods on the escarpment has also occurred. On a more positive note, the maturation of many post-enclosure beech and conifer copses, shelterbelts and roadside trees has created important new elements in the landscape; their loss would have a significant impact on landscape character. Incentive schemes have resulted in the planting of much new woodland which, while welcome in some ways, has lead to the use of species of tree and forms of plantation that are inappropriate to their landscape setting.

3.03 Quarrying and Delving

The limestones that underlie the AONB area have been used throughout history, the visual unity of the landscape being in part a product of the wide and easy availability of a building material of exceptional quality. The rocks were deposited between 100 and 170 million years ago in a shallow sub-tropical sea that covered the centre of what is now England. Sediments of limestone formed on the bottom of the warm waters, producing the great thickness of Middle Jurassic rocks that appear at Cleeve Hill before thinning out to the north-east and south-west. The limestone rests on another layer of rock, the Lias. The limestone is generally of a type known as 'oolite' or egg-stone (though a significant area of 'ironstone' underlies the northernmost part of the AONB), so called because a snapped piece has the surface appearance of fish roe.

BUILDING STONE QUARRIES IN AND AROUND THE AONB (NAMES IN ITALICS NO LONGER WORKING). IPR/46-24C BRITISH GEOLOGICAL SURVEY. © NERC. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

When the stone is first quarried it has a water content that the quarrymen call 'sap' and while fresh is easy to carve, taking crisp detail without crumbling.

Ordnance Survey maps indicate a small quarry (now mostly disused) near virtually every village or farm. Not shown on the maps however, are the thousands of small 'delves', shallow pits from which stone has been taken for walls, infilling, tiles, sheds and other small-scale operations (the stone at this depth has been shattered by the sub-arctic conditions that prevailed during the Ice Ages). Though much is made of the 'freestone' (stone that can be easily cut and dressed in all directions) quarries of the area, it should be remembered that the products of the delves have historically been far more important. Until the 18th century all but the grandest buildings would be built of stone available only two or three feet beneath the surface, with dressed stone being only used at the corners of buildings and around doors and windows.

Although it is known that Iron Age dwellings such as those at Crickley Hill were floored using 'flags' of stone, it was the Romans that first used stone as a material for buildings, firstly for the grand civic centres of Bath and Cirencester then, as the wealth of the region grew, private villas. Roman quarries were probably on convenient outcrops, though the source of much of the stone they used is not known for sure. The Saxons used the ruins of the Roman buildings as a source of stone, but also worked quarries for themselves. Taynton Quarry near Burford is listed as an asset in the Domesday book, so it must have been a significant producer at that time.

The great churches and castles of the Normans did need freestone, their technically sophisticated structures not being suited to simple rubble and mortar. A consequent need for large quantities of stone and the cost of transportation (over 12 miles and the cost of transportation equalled the cost of the stone itself), meant that sources of freestone had to be near to hand. This often meant working the Scarp, where the rock was exposed and hence easier to extract by following 'seams' into the hillside.

One of the longest worked group of medieval quarries stretched from Painswick to Nailsworth, the source of a stone that is white in colour, fine grained and hard enough to take a polish. To the north of this area the stone -

EAST PORTAL OF BOX TUNNEL SHOWING RAIL HEAD SERVING MINE

SLABS OF COTSWOLD STONE LAID OUT TO BE SPLIT BY FROST

known as 'Cheltenham Stone' - becomes softer and yellower, the most famous source being the quarry at Leckhampton; the underground quarries of Whittington are also of note. Further to the north are the Guiting stones that are still being extracted today. All of the stone extracted from along the scarp is from the inferior oolite (inferior meaning lower, not lesser quality), the tilting of the land mass having raised the hills so that degradation took place along the scarp side of the Cotswolds. Right in the north of the AONB is the centuries-old Horton quarry, from which is extracted the greenish-blue or brown ironstone that is used in Ratley and the surrounding area. The quarries of the south around Bradford-on-Avon and Bath, and in the north east around Burford, are from the 'superior' oolite. Their importance to the area is illustrated by the fact that in 1893, one of the biggest quarries - Corsham Down - employed 1,025 quarrymen and 350 masons (the mines even had their own underground rail head). The quarries around Burford - especially Taynton - have a well-documented history due to the records kept at Oxford Colleges, major consumers since the 14th century. Underground working was used at Barrington and Windrush quarries, mainly to avoid an overburden of sticky clay. The freestones here are creamy white.

The use of oolitic stone slates for roof covering can be traced back to Roman times, though for most of the history of the area roofs are more likely to have been thatched with various forms of wheat straw (including stubble for poorer buildings). Slates are found in two forms, 'presents' and 'pendles'.

Presents are used just as they come from the ground - they are dug, shaped a little, pierced with a fixing hole, graded and used. Pendles are a little more labour intensive. The stone is thicker but has a grain running through it so that on exposure to frost the water in the stone freezes, splitting it into thin sheets which can then be prepared for use. It is important that water is preserved in the stone until a hard frost is expected, at which time the whole stock is spread-out in a field. Such labour intensive and weather-dependant operations make these tiles expensive and hence discourage their use (recent experiments with mechanical deep-freezers may provide a solution for the future).

The history of quarrying in the Cotswolds AONB is a long one with evidence of quarries near just about every village or hamlet in the area. Most of these village quarries are now buried among trees and bushes, a haven for wildlife and lime-loving plants. A few are used as dumps for rusting refrigerators and other rubbish. Less obvious - until the eye is tuned to find them - are old delves: scoops and

QUARRY FACE NEAR FORD (TEMPLE GUITING)

basins in the corner of fields, or shallow trenches alongside walls (all since filled with turf) attest to where the stone was lifted.

Quarries in the Cotswolds are generally cut into hillsides to avoid the removal of too much overburden, rendering them almost invisible in places. In other situations, where the valleys are more broad of where stone has been taken directly from the Scarp, they can appear as a massive scar on the landscape, especially when viewed with their associated sheds and mechanical equipment.

As recently as the 1930s quarries were still worked by hand, though in the post-war period a number of large-scale mechanical quarries have been established in response to an increasing demand for crushed aggregates, as well as the continuing demand for 'dimensioned' (i.e. sawn and worked) stone for building. The number of quarries now working is small, and delving as a means of extraction has disappeared, a victim of both economics and minerals planning policy. Most large, working quarries are situated away from centres of population, near main roads (to avoid the overuse of narrow lanes by heavy lorries). However, quarrying is still an environmentally sensitive issue and the conflict between the desire for the continued use of stone as a building material and a strong resistance to quarrying has yet to be resolved.

3.04 Transportation

Right up until the 18th century, transportation within the Cotswolds AONB was by old roads that were notorious for their poor condition, especially in winter. River transportation was all but non-existent, access to and from both the Severn and the Thames being difficult. This explains why, to a large extent, the area remained

very much as it was at the time of its zenith in the 15th century. It was only with the coming of an improved road, network supplemented by canals and - later - railways - that the area began to lose its isolation, and the pace of change in the landscape started to quicken.

The earliest routes through the area were the ancient tracks that followed the easiest routes across the higher ground, fording rivers and streams and using gentle inclines wherever possible, most notably the Jurrassic Way which continued on to present-day Lincolnshire. Planned roads were introduced by the Roman invaders whose military roads also kept to the high ground, and which established the alignment of many routes that are still in use today. The Fosse Way linking Morton-in-Marsh through Stow-on-the-Wold past Northleach to Cirencester, and the Ermine Street which links Cirencester to Gloucester are but two of the more well-known examples. Other, less engineered roads linked these great military highways to the many villas and farms scattered about the countryside.

In the post-Roman period, the Roman road system was supplemented by the 'salt ways', packhorse tracks that lead from the salt-producing area at Droitwich across the High Wold to Cirencester and Bath. These routes existed to distribute the salt that was necessary for preserving meat for the winter, and their memory still survives in names like Salt Way and Salter's Lane. The establishment of Saxon estates with their open field system and vill settlement pattern, resulted in another set of lanes and tracks which can be traced around the edges of the great fields. Roads were also constructed to connect the land to fortified burhs such as Cricklade and Winchcombe.

The growth of more nucleated villages and the rise of market towns ruring the Medieval period necessitated roads that would encourage trade, which lead to the building of stone bridges in lieu of many existing fords. Medieval bridges usually have sharp pointed cutwaters on the supporting piers and narrow, triangular spaces for pedestrians to escape the passage of wagons. Packhorse bridges were also erected, narrower in width and of single span with a low parapet (to prevent damage to the packs on the animals).

SALT WAY RISING UP FROM THE SCARP NEAR HAILES

KENNET AND AVON CANAL NEAR LIMPLEY STOKE

Maintenance of the roads was the responsibility of the local parish, and was often neglected. Also, land-hungry peasants were not above encroaching on a road in order to enlarge their fields, leaving a strip so narrow that it soon reduced to quagmire by the passage of livestock and wagons. This lead to an act of Parliament in 1663 which allowed Justices to levy tolls for the upkeep of roads, which in turn lead to the formation of Turnpike Trusts in the 18th century. The first roads to be turnpiked during the 1740s and 50s were the main roads over the High Wold plateau, probably at the same time as enclosure. Road alignment was often altered, generally to the advantage of landowners that were financing the upgrade. Some Trusts were set up to provide entirely new routes rather than just upgrade existing ones e.g. the Nailsworth - Dudbridge Turnpike (1780) that was proposed and administered by people connected with the cloth trade. Other new roads were gradually built to serve the concentration of mills in the Stroud and other valleys where milling and manufacturing were of economic importance.

By the end of the 18th century coach and wagon services had been established to transport goods and travellers throughout the area, with a growing number of inns to

service the dozens of coaches, wagons and fly vans that passed each day through the towns and villages. However, such travel was still slow and relatively expensive, particularly for freight - clothiers might spend £10 a ton to send their cloth to London by wagon or £15 a ton by stage. It was this situation that in part inspired the enthusiasms for canals and, later, railways.

Early plans to make the River Frome navigable from the Severn to Stroud were thwarted by mill owners who were opposed to anything that might interrupt the flow of water on which their enterprises relied. Not until 1776-79 was the Stroudwater Canal built, linking the Severn to Wallbridge, a suburb of Stroud. It was a great success, especially for bringing coal and other heavy goods into the area, and inspired a plan to link across to the Thames and hence London. The Thames and Severn Canal came into use in 1789, though traffic never lived up to the hoped-for levels. In the very south of the area, the Kennet and Avon Canal created a link between Bristol and London, the western part opening in 1796 and the remainder in 1810, at the time of the completion of the connecting Wiltshire and Berkshire Canal. These canals facilitated the export of stone from the quarries and mines surrounding Bath, boosting the fortunes of the area that sits within the southernmost tip of the AONB. Another canal that featured in this area was the Somerset Coal Canal, built to carry coal from the north Somerset coal fields to the Kennet and Avon and thence to Bath and beyond.

The Somerset Coal Canal was brought-up by a railway company and closed in 1898, a similar fate befalling both the Kennet and Avon Canal and the Wiltshire and Berkshire Canal - both had essentially ceased in use by the turn of the twentieth century. The Stroudwater Canal outlived its commercial use and technical difficulties with the Thames and Severn, including a leaking bed and a poor water supply at the head of its route, led to its final abandonment in 1933.

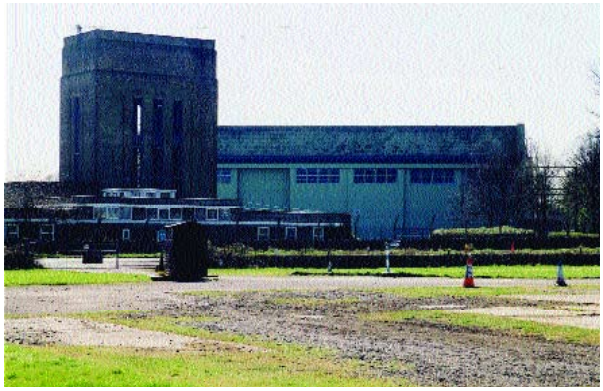
RAILWAY NEAR FRAMPTON MARSHALL

Railways in the vicinity of the Cotswolds AONB have their origin in the tramways that were constructed to carry stone down from the hills to the urban centres below. For example, tramways took stone from the Leckhampton quarry to Cheltenham and from the mines on Combe Down to the Kennet and Avon Canal near Bathampton; they were an essential component in a system that was then heavily reliant on transportation by water.

In terms of the steam era, the Cotswolds area itself had little attraction for the railwaymen. It was thinly populated, poor, and the opportunities for carrying freight in or out of the area were limited. The only reason to build railways in the area was to cross it to somewhere more profitable. Brunel's Great Western Railway of 1841 cuts-across the southern part of the AONB, with a branch line from Swindon serving Cirencester and eventually Kemble. Another line along the foot of the Scarp was opened in 1844, linking Gloucester to Bristol, and in 1847 the Cheltenham and Western Union joined the line from Kemble down to Cheltenham via Stroud. The line between Oxford and Worcester was completed in 1853 and, in time, other routes that penetrated deeper into the area were constructed. However, many of these routes proved to be uneconomic and one - the line linking Cheltenham to Swindon via places like Cricklade and Chedworth was in the hands of the receiver before it even opened! Few of these later lines survived the Beeching cuts of the 1960s.

Overall, the influence of the canals and railways on the landscape of the AONB was limited, other than in one important respect: the importation into the area of goods, service and materials of a type and on a scale that would have been unthinkable in the past. Bricks, Welsh slate, corrugated iron, clay tiles, post and wire fencing and other products that are alien to the area were all imported, changing radically the age-old appearance of many elements in the landscape. This was the start of a process that continued with the coming of mechanised road transport and the surfacing of roads which, as well as bringing materials such as concrete blocks and tiles, extended the area of influence of other materials beyond the immediate vicinity of canals or railway stations.

Mechanised road traffic and the improvement of the road system - including the driving of the M4 through the south of the AONB and the construction of the M5 and M40 along its perimeters - has also had the effect of opening-up the area to tourism and commuting, both welcome from an economic point of view but also the source of great pressure on the landscape. Roads have



SECOND WORLD WAR AIRCRAFT HANGER AT ASTON DOWN

been widened, bends straightened and, in some places, abandoned as unsuitable for motor traffic. The pressure on the road system has also been exacerbated by the closure of most of the network of railway lines in the 1960s, though remnants of the system are still visible in the landscape, and the railway perimeters have often become rich in wildlife.

Roads were also improved (and removed from the landscape) to permit the construction during World War II of military airfields on the Cotswolds plateau, about 18 in all. Some airfields are still in use, many have reverted to agricultural use and a few such as Aston Down and Staveton have been transferred to civilian use. Nonetheless, there are still some very large areas of the landscape devoted to airfields with their high-visibility structures and perimeter fences. From a leisure perspective, the digging of gravel for the airfield runways has provided the only large areas of open water within the AONB, encouraging the development of water parks and other recreational facilities. Even the old canals have found a future in leisure. The Stroudwater has been renovated in part and a scheme is in hand to resurrect the Thames and Severn. Extensive restoration has saved the Kennet and Avon and even a short stretch of the connecting Somerset Coal Canal had been re-dug to provide mooring facilities.

3.05
Settlement and Built Form

It is ironic that, although designated an area of outstanding *natural* beauty, much of what makes the landscape of the Cotswolds AONB so distinctive is the product of human endeavour, the prime example being settlement and built form (discussed in detail in Chapter 04).

The early settlement on the AONB was dictated by the ease with which the scrub could be cleared and the availability of water. Prehistoric settlers therefore favoured spring-line sites along the face of the Scarp, though archaeological evidence shows that the iron age population was spread fairly evenly over the area. The most favoured sites were in the more sheltered valleys - the spring line between the Oolite and the Lias clay meant a plentiful supply of fresh water, and the silt carried by the streams gave fertile meadows. The Romans also chose to site their villas in the same location, though they also established the first truly urban centres at Cirencester (*Corinium*) and Gloucester (*Glevum*).

Roman towns developed as circumstances changed. At first, the settlement would be no more than a strong defensive position. Then it would become a centre for organising further conquest and administration. Cirencester developed from the camp at Chesterton and Gloucester from the military camp at Kingsholm. By the second century AD, Cirencester was the capital of *Britannia Prima*, one of the four sub-provinces of Britain under Diocletian. Contained within stone-faced earthen banks, the town was divided into fifteen blocks and, in addition to the public buildings, there were shops and houses built of timber, stone or brick. Gloucester was to develop from a fortress of turf and clay to a colony for retired veterans, surrounded by defensive stone walls. Bath (*Aquae Sulis*) was the other great urban centre that grew up within the vicinity of the AONB, a placed dedicated to Minerva and with a sumptuous array of hot and cold baths.

The large populations of the urban centres were supported by the agricultural produce of the villa estates in the countryside, sites of which have been discovered across the whole of the area. Many of these sported splendid houses for the landowner, built from stone, brick and tiles,

REMAINS OF THE ROMAN VILLA AT CHEDWORTH

and complete with baths, outbuildings, barns and stores. Humbler dwellings would invariably have been of wood. Following the withdrawal of the legions, the grand villas became derelict, but the sites continued to be occupied perhaps by the descendants of the villa owners in kinship groups, still farming the land of their ancestors. There is also evidence of iron age fort sites being re-occupied (e.g. Kemerton on Bredon Hill). The Anglo-Saxons then took over the existing settlements and reorganized them into their vills.

By the end of the 7th century, Minster churches were being built at Bath, Gloucester, Tetbury and Withington, and around them grew collections of dwellings. Monasteries were founded at Malmsbury, Bibury, Hawkesbury and Winchcombe during the 8th century; these too attracted settlement. Smaller parish churches were built to serve the vills (parish churches were often founded as private chapels by the Lord of the manor, and hence sited adjacent to the home farm which, being on the spring line, explains the uniform elevation of many churches across the AONB). Royal manors were settled at Cirencester, Bradford, Winchcombe, Shipton-under-Wychwood, Charlbury, Wootton, Bloxam and Deddington. The establishment of the burhs lead to the expansion of a number of towns, all of which developed into important trading centres with regular market days and the occasional fair.

The Normans expanded the market towns, and established more where the possibility of trade existed, often at the crossing point of important highways, or where rivers were navigable. Burgage plots within these towns were generally long, narrow strips some 5-6 yards wide and running-back from the roadside. Shops would sit beside the road, with workshops, stables and vegetable plots behind. To rear of the plots would be narrow lanes giving

WILLIAM GREVEL'S HOUSE, CHIPPING CAMPDEN

ALMS HOUSES, NORTHLEACH

access to yards - these 'back lanes' can still be found in many market towns. Houses were generally of wood with thatched roofs, though stone buildings began to appear in the 14th century (the first 'modern' stone houses are actually recorded as having been constructed in Winchcombe in 1221). The export of wool reached its peak during the middle of the century, and the fortunes of the great wool merchants were invested in the first of the grand stone houses, such as Grevel's house in Chipping Campden. Wealth was also directed towards the great re-building of many parish churches, Fairford and Northleach being just two examples.

In the mid 15th century, when the importance of cloth overtook that of raw wool, there was a rise in number of families making their living using their home as a workshop. Mother and daughters would spin the raw wool, and father would weave the broadcloth at his own loom. As broadcloth was 60 inches wide and 26-28 yards long, the room to operate these machines needed to be larger than normal, and to be relatively well lit. Often it would be on the first floor with larger than normal windows for extra light. This was a key factor in the development of the 'Cotswold Style', with its steeply pitched roofs and large, windowed gables and dormers.

After the dissolution of the monasteries some clothiers moved their weavers into church buildings. For example, William Stumpe at Malmesbury filled the abbey halls with looms and tenements for his workers, demolished the chancel and transepts to provide stone for his own house, and sold or gave the six remaining bays of the abbey church to the town for use a parish church. It was also at this time that the wealthy merchants commenced the building of great mansions, buildings that utilised a number of late-Tudor features were to be adapted and reproduced in humbler form along the whole of the limestone belt (e.g. stone mullioned windows, label moulds, coped gables and decorative finials).

Wool merchants continued to make money during the 16th and 17th centuries, though they now chose to spend their money establishing almshouses and schools; examples can be seen in Wooton-under-Edge and Chipping Campden. Between 1790 and 1825 over two hundred new mills were opened in the South Cotswold area and dozens of small settlements sprung up to house cloth workers (e.g. around Minchinhampton Common). These new settlements were generally on land unsuited to agriculture use, and often utilised the steep valley sides or waste ground. Settlements in the valleys were often cut-into the hillside, enabling lengths of cloth to be stretched out on 'tenter' frames. Chalford, with its mix of mills, terraces of workers cottages and big houses for the wealthy, is a good example. Cottages also begun to be built by speculators, for rent to clothing workers, quarrymen and other artisans, though these were often of poor construction, using bricks which could now be imported by canal.

Bath, had a somewhat separate history. Neglected after its abandonment by the Romans and never sharing in the wool-generated wealth of the northern part of the AONB, it remained a backwater until its 'discovery' in the 18th century and transformation into one of the great classical cities of the world. Wealth came to the area and, the southern part of the AONB was subject to serious development.

The industrial revolution did not bring great wealth to the area, the woollen industry being left behind in the age of rapid mechanisation. Even where power looms were introduced, transport was still a problem and the number of workers engaged in the clothing industry dropped to 6,700 by 1861 and to 3,900 by 1890. This, coupled with the collapse of the rural economy, put an end to virtually all development within the area, the fabric of which was now in serious decline.

Despite some revival of building activity towards the end of the 19th century, partially a result of the interest shown in the area by the Arts and Crafts Movement, the impetus to build within the bounds of the Cotswolds AONB did not return until after the World War II. Leisure, tourism and a desire to live in the country and commute to the cities (and to own second homes) has meant that there has probably been more development over the last sixty years than for centuries. This has lead to the rapid expansion of many towns and villages, masking the direct relationship between geology, landform and land use and - in some instances - compromising the unity and charm of the area. Large scale modern farm buildings, the importation of 'outside' building materials, and the creeping 'suburbanisation' of the landscape have all impacted on its unique appearance.

ARTS AND CRAFTS ARCHITECTURE: NETHER SWELL MANOR BY GUY DAWBER

3.06 Summary

The landscape of the Cotswolds AONB has evolved over millennia, and is the product of a wide array of social, cultural and economic forces. Poverty and depression have often been rife, the peak of 'Cotswold' prosperity having been reached in the sixteenth century. Hence the predominantly late medieval and Tudor character of places such as Northleach, Tetbury and Chipping Campden, all exemplars in the use of the stone that lays below the surface of the ground. That said, one cannot discount the accretive - and often subtle - impact on the landscape of what came before and after. Roman roads, Saxon farming, enclosure, Georgian Bath, industrialisation, canals, railways and the motor car have all played their part in determining the appearance of landscape as it is seen today. Spread over the following pages is a table that summarises this evolutionary process in the form of a 'timeline'.

Pre-Norman

Period	Event	Impact	Evidence and examples	
100,000 BC	Hunter gatherers move into the south of the area.		Hand axes found near Bourton-on-the-Water and Gloucester.	
10,000 - 6,000 BC	Forest Folk (Maglemosians) from northern Europe drift across swampy area that was to become the North sea and settle.	Clearings in wildwood, the felling of trees and fire used to clear the undergrowth.	Tools found in the southern valleys and many microliths (small flint tools) found on high wolds.	
3000 BC	Immigrants from the continent introduce the cultivation of cereals and the husbandry of animals - especially pigs.	Creation of trackways and the construction of long barrows. First evidence of building using dry stone walling.	The Jurrasic Way, Belas Knap, Hetty Peglar's Tump etc.	PORTAL OF BELAS KNAP LONG BARROW
1600 BC	Introduction of metalworking for tools and weapons - Bronze Age.	Round barrows.	Many examples of round barrows throughout the area.	
700 BC	Settled farming - Iron Age.	The erection of hill forts, establishment of villages, clearing scrub on the Wolds, and small enclosed arable fields.	Forts at Uley, Salmonsbury, Bredon, Cleeve etc. Field system at Aldsworth. Village at Crickley Hill.	
47 AD	Roman Invasion - Stabilised administration continues as Romano - British until Legions withdrawn.	Roads, towns, villa estates. Further clearance of the woodland. Sheep raising. Corn produced on a bigger than self sufficient scale.	Ermin Street, Fosse Way, Bath.Cirencester, Chedworth and Woodchester villas.	ROMAN VILLA REMAINS AT NORTH LEIGH
577 AD	Development of the 'Midland' open field system of agriculture. 'Strip fields'. Introduction of the heavy plough. Manor estates established. Settlement in 'Vills' Woollen cloth exported to Europe. Small fortified towns - Boroughs established.	Churches, monasteries, monastic & royal estates. Villages, lanes, open field system, Woollen cloth production, Parishes, Hundreds, Shires. Boroughs, Place names, More woodland clearance. Mills built.	Many churches with fragments but best complete church at Bradford-on-Avon. Monastries at Malmesbury, Bath, Gloucester. Estates at Colesbourne, Compton Abdale, Whittington. Most villages. Most lanes. Field strips in many locations - e.g. Wood Stanway, Hailes. Parishes - as estates above. Hundreds - Tibblestone Hundred. Shires: Gloucestershire, Winchcombeshire. Boroughs at Winchcombe, Gloucester, Bath, Malmesbury, Cricklade. Names like Whittington = 'Widia's Dun' = 'the hill pasture belonging to Widia'. Mills known from Domesday at Stonehouse and Lower Slaughter.	 SITE OF CASTLE AT ELMLEY CASTLE

Medieval

Period	Event	Impact	Evidence and examples
1066	Estates taken over by Norman Lords, Many grants of land to ecclesiastic bodies.	Castles built in strategic places. Forest Law established Markets set up in towns, fairs granted. Churches and Monasteries built or enlarged.	Beverstone Castle built. Relics at Elmley Castle, Castle Combe, Ascot-under-Wychwood. Forest Law established at Wychwood, Kingswood, Michaelwood, Oakley wood. Markets set up at Bradford, Cirencester, Malmesbury, Winchcombe, Bloxham, Deddington, Burford, Stow-on-the-Wold, Northleach etc. Fairs held at, Burford, Cirencester, Chipping Norton, Banbury etc. Churches built at Gloucester, Cirencester, Kingswood and many more - good example at Elkstone 1160.
1200's	~~Increasing population.~~	Pressure on agricultural land. Villages established in cleared woodland.	Villages settled at Cranham, Stockwell, etc.
1221	~~Fire at Winchcombe Abbey~~ - many wooden buildings destroyed.	First stone built domestic buildings recorded.	Documentary evidence, Winchcombe.
1247 - on	~~Expansion of wool exports~~ to Europe - especially by Abbeys etc.	Great Barns built near manors or monasteries.	Barns at Farmcote, Siddington, Stanway, Calcot, etc.
before 1400	~~Rise of Wool Merchants~~ - intermediaries in export of wool to Europe.	Houses being built of stone for wealthy merchants.	Six houses built at Burford. William Grevel's house and Woolstaplers Hall at Chipping Campden.
1348 - 49	~~Poor harvests and bad~~ weather - failure of crops on high wolds arable fields. Plague breaks out.	Black Death kills a third of the population - Some villages deserted, others cleared for converting to sheep pasture. Some piecemeal enclosure of open fields to consolidate holdings.	Deserted villages of Pinnock, Caslett, Hawling, Lower Harford, Aylworth, Upton and many more on OS maps.
	~~Contraction of arable~~ farming expansion of sheep rearing. Export of cloth rather than raw wool.	Mills for fulling cloth built or converted from grain mills.	Growth of cloth mills at Wickwar, Dursley, Stroud, Wotton-under-Edge.
	Prosperity especially in western Cotswolds.	New Churches being built and additions to existing Churches - towers etc.	New and altered Churches at Gloucester, Northleach, Chipping Campden, Cirencester, Winchcombe etc.

ELKSTONE CHURCH

TITHE BARN, STANWAY

CIRENCESTER CHURCH

	Period	Event	Impact	Evidence and examples	
Tudor and Stuart	1517	Commission of enquiry into agrarian distress. Found recent enclosure of 3,843 acres and the process is continuing.	Some landowners buying out freeholders and enclosing land for sheep runs.	Sezincote, Stowell, Earl of Bathurst at Cirencester.	
	1536 - 1539	Dissolution of the Monastries - Monastic land coming into private hands.	More than a quarter of the land in the Cotswolds changes hands from Church to lay ownership,	'Newark' built nr Ozleworth with stone from Kingswood Abbey.	
	1600s	Rise of the Country Gentry - wealthy men not of aristocratic descent.	Building of mansions and parks - Boom years for clothiers.	Mansions built at - Southam, Horton, Stanway, The Hall, Bradford, Parks at - Nympsfield (1690) Deer parks - Dyrham, Berkeley.	
	1618 - 48	Thirty Years' War in Low Countries	Collapse of cloth exports.		
	1642 - 46 & 1648 - 51	English Civil Wars.	Hardship in country - deprecations from passing armies.		
	1660	Restoration of the Monarchy - Stability reestablished.	Recovery in cloth trade, building of larger cloth mills. Decline of smaller mills in some areas.	Decline of mills at Painswick, Pitchcombe, Slad valleys.	 CHASTLETON HOUSE
	1670	Recognised that road transport hampered by very poor road system.	Badminton Park developed.		
Georgian and Regency	1726	Causeway and bridge built at Swinford over swampy area.	East Cotswolds road connection to London improved.	Swinford Bridge and Causeway.	
	1746 - 56	Turnpike Trust roads established.	Great improvement in transport - rise of coach and wagon services for passengers and freight both within and passengers and freight both within and Burford, Cheltenham, Cirencester, Stow, Stroud, Moreton etc.	A40, A429, A419, A433 and many more local roads.	 BADMINTON PARK

Georgian and Regency

Period	Event	Impact	Evidence and examples
1760 onwards	Enclosure of open fields and later common land. Big landholders move out of village farmhouses and build new houses on the farmland. Many trees planted.	Building of boundary drystone walls, hedges, new roads, streams realigned. Building of farm houses on the wolds. Cottages built, barns and other farm buildings. Development of 'Cotswold Style'. Market towns rebuilt in stone - some older mansions refashioned to 'Classical' style.	All over region. Most market towns. Mansions - Eygpt Mill House, Cassey Compton, Withington.
	Industrial Villages appear, Mills built or enlarged to cope with larger scale cloth processing.	Growth of industrial scale development in Stroudwater area.	Stroud valleys, Chalford, etc.
	Drive to make farming more profitable -agriculture as an economic activity. Pace of enclosure increases.	Water meadows established to improve grazing. Field drainage.	Water meadows in Windrush valley and along stream at Burford.
	More grain crops planted - especially barley for brewing.	Breweries established for malting and brewing. Demand from towns.	Breweries at Burford, Cirencester, Stroud, Donnington, Banbury.
1776 - 79	Stroudwater Canal built.	Transport of coal and alien building materials into Stroud area.	Canal partially restored.
1786 - 89	Thames and Severn Canal built.	Link from Severn to Thames. Transport of coal and outside materials cheaply deep into heart of Cotswold. Sapperton Tunnel built.	Route and fragments exist - restoration plan exists.
1796	Kennet and Avon Canal (part) built	Link from South West area to Thames. Especially important for stone quarries around Bath.	Restored canal.
1798	Tramway built from Leckhampton Quarry to Cheltenham.	Transporting of stone for the development of Cheltenham.	Quarry and part of route still exist.
1803	Napoleonic Wars. Urban Population growth.	Expansion of arable farming - growth of 'scientific' farming, experiment and changes in traditional practices. Use of fertilisers. Demand for food from urban centres drives need for more productive farming.	Many of the high open wold pastures ploughed up at this time.

THE BREWERY, DONNINGTON

THAMES AND SEVERN CANAL: SAPPERTON TUNNEL

	Period	Event	Impact	Evidence and examples	
Georgian and Regency	1800 - 40	Virtual completion of enclosures, including 'wastes' and commons. Growth of agricultural machine manufacturing in the Stroud valleys. Some building of cottages for agricultural workers. More farmhouses built on open fields.	Arable (grain) farming on wastes and commons.		 ROEL: HIGH WOLD PUT TO THE PLOUGH
	1815	First steam powered wool mills.	Playnes of Minchinghampton.	Longford Mill near Michinghampton	
	1826	Tramroad developed.	Commuting in north of area.	Moreton to Stratford-on-Avon.	
	1830's	Cloth industry in decline due to competition from more mechanised north.	Change of use of some mills to engineering.		
	1833	Great Western Railway formed.	Start of railway building in area.		ROYAL AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE, CIRENCESTER
Victorian	1841	Swindon - to Kemble line opened with a branch to Cirencester. (broad guage) continued through Stroud to Gloucester and Cheltenham.	Severe blow to canal trade - spelled end of Thames and Severn Canal.	Lines still in operation.	
	1842	Royal Agricultural College opened at Cirencester.	Agriculture seen as a business - scientific approach needed.	Flourishes today.	
	1843	Oxford to Worcester/ Wolverhampton line opened. (mix of broad and narrow gauge).	North Wolds connected to Midlands and London (via Oxford).		
	1846 - 53	Broad gauge abandoned.			
	Late 1850 - 1870	Improvements in transport lead to import of cheap grain from USA to Britain. Land settlement Act.	Depression develops in agriculture unable to compete with price of 'hard' wheat from prairies of USA. Farms eventually deserted, cottages left to crumble, small farmers in particular affected. Small towns affected. Corn mills close down. Some young people leave area and emigrate to colonies.		 GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY: BOX TUNNEL

	Period	Event	Impact	Evidence and examples	
Victorian	1871	William Morris buys Kelmscott Manor.	Artists of Arts and Crafts Movement become interested in Cotswolds - influx of artists, craftsmen, architects into area, Restoration of some houses, builing of some new houses. Influx of middle classes - area becomes fashionable with intelligentsia.	Restorations at Pinbury Park, Sapperton - Daneway House, Parish Hall, Kelmscott - Campden, Broadway, Painswick. New houses at Rodmarton Manor, Hilles nr. Harescombe. John Burtt establishes a socialist self supporting community at Whiteway above Stroud - still in existence though changed aims.	 KELMSCOTT MANOR
Twentieth Century	1914 - 18	World War I.	Rapid clearing of land for crops. More cloth mills close and change to engineering. Mechanisation of agriculture. Threshing machines, reapers. Traction engines.		
	1930's	Depression.	Depression in farming. Growth of tourism and day trippers. Minor roads surfaced.	Growth of Bourton-on-the-Water.	 BOURTON-ON-THE-WATER
	1939 - 45	World War II.	Agriculture expanded again. Downs ploughed again, trees felled - Building of Airfields. Engineering in Stroud area expands.	Airfields at Brize Norton, Faiford, Kemble, Moreton-in-the-Marsh etc.	
	1949	National Parks and access to the Countryside Act.		Cotswold way National Trail (designated 1998).	 COUNCIL HOUSES, CHIPPING CAMPDEN
	1950s	Post War Austerity.	Agriculture mechanises and expands, softwood trees planted by Forestry Commission, Productivity raised. Some stark utilitarian buildings raised. Some airfields continue in use. Open commons come into protection as recreational or environmentally important.	Cleeve Common, Charlton Hill Common, Minchinghampton, Rodborough etc.	

Twentieth Century

Period	Event	Impact	Evidence and examples
1960s - 70s 1966	National recovery. Designation of Cotswolds AONB.	Building of private and council housing. Especially round towns and larger villages.	Various - Winchcombe, Cirencester etc.
1973	EEC Membership.	EEC Grants for agriculture. Extensive grain fields, smaller fields enlarged.	
1980s-date	Improved motorway and major road links.	Cottages and barns being bought for renovation and adapting to residential use. Villages become 'smart' places to live with use of motor car to commute.	Extension of M40; A40 bypass Northleach. Suburban expansion of Stow, Moreton, etc.
1990	Extension of area of Cotswolds AONB. Internet access and the IT revolution.	Cotswolds AONB Partnership established (1999). 'Home' working becomes possible.	Preparation of management plan and landscape character assessment (2003). ~~Greater public enjoyment~~
2002	Countryside and Rights of Way Act.	Cotswolds AONB Partnership agrees to become a Conservation Board (2004)	of the countryside?

CONVERTED BARN, EPWELL

TRAFFIC IN CHIPPING CAMPDEN

The Built Environment 4

This chapter explores in detail how the built environment contributes to the distinctive character of the landscape of the AONB the evolution of which has been described in the preceding chapter. It discusses how elements in the landscape can be classified and described, and explores in details how four aspects of the built environment - settlement, boundaries, roofs and walls - contribute to local distinctiveness at a number of levels. The aim is to assist in defining what it is that makes the Cotswolds AONB special at the regional level, while providing a starting point for its further exploration at the truly local (e.g. Village Design Statement) level.

4.01 Elements in the Landscape

Generally

The importance of the part played by the built environment in defining the character of the Cotswolds AONB cannot be stressed too highly. There is perhaps no other part of rural England where social and cultural factors - as manifest in built and constructed elements - are so central to the whole notion of local distinctiveness.

Understanding local distinctiveness at the level of a region such as the AONB requires a considerably different approach to its understating at the micro-level of (say) a village. Whereas the special qualities of the latter can often be reduced to a list of discrete - and often idiosyncratic - 'features' (e.g. a particular style of doorway or a unique architectural detail), it is rarely possible to adopt such a normative position when trying to encapsulate the characteristics of the wider landscape. A far more subtle line of enquiry is required if one is to grasp the general link between such (apparently) disparate landscapes as the Escarpment Outliers and the High Wold Valleys.

Crucial to the definition of local distinctiveness at a *regional* level is the interrelationship between the elements that make up the built environment and their landscape setting. The physical aspects of the landscape - geology, topography and climate - all play a part in shaping the built environment which in turn influences our perception of the landscape. Which is why the framework provided by Landscape Character Assessment is so important in understanding local distinctiveness - it is the first stage in deciding 'where' a specific built or constructed element belongs and 'why' it might not belong anywhere else.

Scope

It is essential to appreciate that, in the context of this study, the term 'the built environment' covers any object in the landscape that is a product of human activity or endeavour, regardless of scale. This means everything from a town or village, down to a gatepost or stepping stone. It is not just about buildings per se.

Also, it is important to be aware of the fact that the study only deals with those built and constructed elements that can be described as 'vernacular', and not those that can be termed 'polite' architecture. This means that, in general terms, it concerns those elements that:

- are designed by an amateur (e.g. the building owner) rather than a trained professional,
- guided by local tradition, as opposed to national or international fashion, style or convention,
- first and foremost, are concerned with function rather than visual impression,
- are of traditional (i.e. tried and tested) rather than innovative construction or appearance,
- use readily available local materials, not ones that have been sourced from afar.

These criteria set the threshold between those elements of the built environment that are 'unique' to a certain locality and those that are not. They also explain why this study is not concerned with buildings such as the great 'wool' churches of the 15th Century (e.g. Northleach or Chipping Campden), or mansions such as Dyrham or Seizincote. Despite the use of local materials and the 'traditional' nature of their construction, these high-status structures are the product of informed, professional designers working within the Europe-wide cannons of Gothic and Classical architecture.

Themes

Research has revealed that local distinctiveness in the built environment of the Cotswolds AONB can be categorised in terms of:

- **Settlement:** the towns, village, hamlets, farmsteads and buildings that 'sit' within the landscape.
- **Boundaries:** those elements that sub-divide the landscape between or within settlements, creating the mosaic of gardens, fields, pasture and parkland.
- **Roofs and Walls:** the built elements that play the greatest part in defining the distinctive appearance of buildings within the AONB.

These themes - taken in combination - embrace those elements of the built environment that contribute to the regional identity (i.e. distinctiveness) of the AONB.

Attributes

Elements in the built environment - and the contribution they make to local distinctiveness - are best understood in terms of their attributes i.e. the physical traits and features by which they can be described. The following attributes are used to explore the themes identified above:

- **Typology:** the kinds of element that can be found within the built environment of the Cotswolds AONB i.e. what type of settlement (e.g. a town or a hamlet), what type of boundary (e.g. a wall or a hedge), and what type of roof or wall (e.g. stone tile or thatch, ashlar or brick).
- **Form:** the shape, size, massing, etc. of an element within the built environment (e.g. the shape of a village, the height or plan-form of a wall, or the pitch or a roof).
- **Location:** where specific elements of the built environment can be found (e.g. where in the landscape would one expect to find a compact hamlet or a hedge or a thatched roof).
- **Details:** those particulars that add richness to the built environment, but which only add distinctiveness at a local level i.e. features which contribute to the distinctiveness of (say) a village or a locality, but not to the AONB as a whole (e.g. a village 'object' such as a pond or a cross, a certain type of gate or stile, or the individual treatment of a window or a gable).

This hierarchical approach to the understanding of local distinctiveness links - via the key attribute of location - the generalities of typology and form to the particulars of detail, and thereby the 'macro' scale of Landscape Character Assessment to the 'micro' scale of the Village Design Statements, Conservation Area Appraisals and other forms of supplementary planning guidance.

4.02
Settlement

The form and location of the towns, villages, hamlets, farmsteads and individual buildings is the overarching link between the fabric and features of individual buildings, and the distinctive qualities of their landscape setting. Many built features that are often (and without question) considered to be quintessentially 'Cotswold', only contribute to local distinctiveness in the context of their setting. For example, mullioned windows with label moulds set in tall gables can be found in many parts of England. It is only when they occur in a certain way in a particular place that they reinforce local distinctiveness, a point that is well illustrated by the recently 'suburbanised' edges of many settlements within the AONB - a new building might have the 'correct' features but still look sorely out of place due to the inappropriate form and location and of its setting.

CLASSIC 'COTSWOLD' DETAILS (GABLES, MULLIONS ETC)

CLASSIC 'COTSWOLD' DETAILS IN DERBYSHIRE

TRADITIONAL FORM OF SETTLEMENT

SUB-URBANISATION OF SETTLEMENT

Typology of Settlement

Settlements can be categorised according to their size and the facilities they contain.

Market Town
There are very few large market towns within the AONB. Those that there are tend to be local administrative centres with a good range of shopping, services and a large church. A small market town can be distinguished from a large village by the urban feel of its centre. It will usually have a range of shops and basic services.

Compact Village
A compact village will often have an urban feel, with buildings opening directly onto a central street. Otherwise, buildings will generally have front yards or gardens, interspersed with orchards or the churchyard. The settlement will have a church and possibly a public house. The circulation structure of a compact village, and the way in which buildings relate to each other is crucial in maintaining its distinctiveness.

Dispersed Village
A dispersed village has the same facilities and contents as a compact village, but with the settlement being spread-out. Buildings interweave with fields, commons or large greens, often with intermittent development along the roads into the village. There is rarely a defined centre. It is important to maintain the density of building in a dispersed village; the spaces between buildings are as important as the buildings themselves.

Compact Hamlet
A compact hamlet is a collection of properties or farms with no church, shops, public houses or other facilities. As in a compact village, understanding the circulation structure and way in which buildings relate to each other is the key to maintaining distinctiveness.

Dispersed Hamlet
A dispersed hamlet comprises a collection of loosely-associated properties connected by a series of tracks and roads. There is no centre. As in the case of a dispersed village, it is important to understand and maintain the density of building in a dispersed village, and not to allow its character to be eroded by an accretion of new infill.

Ribbon Development
Areas of ribbon development are characterised by housing that extends along the main roads leading to and from the larger towns and cities that border the AONB e.g. Cheltenham, Stroud and Bath.

Farmstead
A farmstead is a closely-knit groups of buildings dedicated to agricultural activity, and almost always including a house, barn and various shelters for animals and crops. The buildings will often be arranged around a yard, with a functional hierarchy that must be understood and respected if the distinctive character of such groupings is not to be lost.

Individual Building
Barns, lonely inns and one-off houses can contribute much to the distinctive character of the landscape. It is important that any new examples respect the density of building within a given area.

Form of Settlement

The distinctive form of a settlement can be a product of its topography or it can stem from the reason for its establishment or both. Settlements can be looked at in terms of both their 'internal' and 'external' form. Internal form concerns how the shape of a settlement relates to its inner pattern of circulation. External form is about how a settlement presents itself to the surrounding landscape. Internal form can be described as linear, radial, organic or planned:

- **Linear** settlements have naturally developed along a single main route with secondary short routes leading to farms or farmland to each side. The form of such settlements is often emphasised by the topography, with the settlement squeezed into a narrow valley or along a hill terrace.

- **Radial** settlements are those that have sprung up as the junction of two or more main routes that are linked by secondary routes. The shape of the settlement is often asymmetric, the result of one route dominating the others, or by topography restricting opportunities for development in one or more direction.

- **Organic** settlements are generally those that were historically self-sufficient and - not relying on passing trade - are often distant from main routes. Topography and local need are the drivers behind this form of settlement.

- **Planned settlements** - new and old - do not fit any of the above forms, being driven by plan-based design governed by the desire to build (for instance) avenues or cul-de-sacs. This form of settlement is generally alien to the rural origins of most of the AONB.

External form is the product of:
- Skyline, and
- Edges

Skyline is formed as much by topography as buildings, with settlements sitting either on a gentle slope, in a dip, stretched-out along a contour, rising up a slope, resting on a hill top, or by a combination of these. The tallest building in a settlement is usually (but not always) the church, followed by halls, manor houses or built-up urban centres with multiple floor levels. In smaller settlements, the church is often located on the edge, creating an asymmetric skyline that relates to and accentuates the topography of the site.

Edges of settlements can be made up of soft or hard elements (i.e. trees, gardens, orchards or fields as opposed to walls, roads or buildings):

- Soft edges often display contrasting boundary treatments, with refined garden walls set against rural field walls; garden trees may also help to differentiate the edge of settlement, perhaps by way of evergreens such as yew and holly that are rarely seen in the wider landscape.

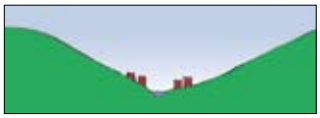
- The character of hard edges depends on whether the settlement is inward or outward looking. Inward looking settlements will have the grander buildings sited with a good prospect across a green, stream or junction, which often means an edge of small ancillary buildings and rear gables. Outward looking settlements will have the grander buildings facing the wider landscape, and hence a stronger edge.

Isolated properties sit on the approaches to even the most compact villages and hamlets, increasing the apparent depth of the settlement. The balance between detached and terraced dwellings (e.g. farm workers cottages) is another important factor in edge character. It is essential that an assessment of the edges of settlements are included within the preparation of Village Design Statements.

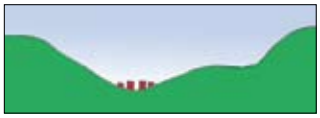
Location of Settlement

Generically, settlements are located in one of eight positions within the landscape of the AONB:

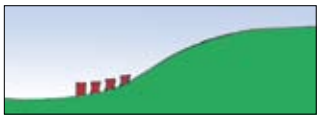
Valley Bottom: Riverside
These sit on the gently-sloping terraces at the lower elevations of the wider valleys, extending along the lines of rivers or stepping back at right angles, depending on the direction of the main route through.



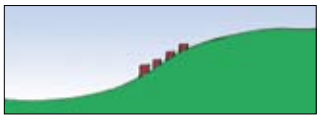
Valley Bottom: Streamside
These are generally smaller and more organic, often with the gentle stream forming a central feature, filling ponds or skirting village greens.



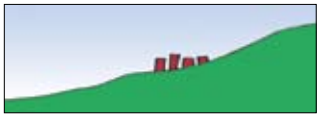
Valley Bottom: Dry
These occur in the hollows within the upper parts of valleys, adjacent to springs or wells. They usually fill the whole of the valley bottom, rising only where a main route extends the settlement upwards.



Hill Foot
These usually run along the base of a hill, with secondary routes rising up the hillside above. Many are long and linear with an enclosed, intimate feel, albeit that long rear gardens that may contain ancillary buildings.



Hillside
These can take two forms. Where gradients are steep they run along contours. Otherwise, they rise up along a main route with secondary routes running out along the hillside.



Hill Terrace
These sit on the gentler slopes of hillsides, generally taking advantage of a main route that traverses the slackened slope before turning straight upwards. Secondary growth tends to extend downwards off the terrace.

Hill Crest
These are a fairly recent phenomenon, with properties sited along contours to take advantage of the view.

Hill (Ridge) Top
These primarily extend along ridge lines and across plateaux, with secondary routes extending downward. They generally present an outward form to the landscape, though some look inward.

These generic locations can be specifically related to Landscape Character Types, giving a clear indication of what type and form of settlement can be expected in a certain location, and hence how the pattern of settlement contributes to distinctiveness across the AONB. Understanding the interaction between pattern of settlement and local distinctiveness means that it becomes possible to appreciate that maintaining the character of the area is as much about ensuring that (for example) a valley bottom development does not stretch too far up the valley side, or that a hillside settlement should not be allowed to extend above or below certain elevations. This subtle interrelationship between Landscape Character, typology, form and location is tabulated over the following pages.

Incidence of settlement type

Unique examples	■
Some examples	▲
Predominant types	●

		01 Escarpment Outliers								02 Escarpment							
		LOCATION								LOCATION							
		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Market Town	Linear																
	Radial												■				
	Organic																
	Planned																
Compact Village	Linear				▲								■	■			
	Radial				■								▲		■	■	
	Organic				■										■		
	Planned																
Dispersed Village	Linear		■	■									■	▲	■		
	Radial				▲	■								■	▲		■ ■
	Organic						■										
	Planned													▲		■	
Compact Hamlet	Linear				■	▲											
	Radial																
	Organic				■												
	Planned										▲	■		●	▲	▲	
Dispersed Hamlet	Linear				■	●	●	■	■					▲			
	Radial				■	■							■	▲		■	
	Organic					▲							■	▲			
	Planned												●		▲		
Ribbon Development												■	▲	●	■	▲	
Farmstead			■	■	■	●	▲	▲			▲		▲	●	▲	▲	
Individual Building			▲		▲	●	▲	▲	■								

Incidence of settlement type

Unique examples	■
Some examples	▲
Predominant types	●

		03 Rolling Hills and Valleys								04 Enclosed Limestone Valley							
		LOCATION								LOCATION							
		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Market Town	Linear									■							
	Radial						■										
	Organic																
	Planned						■										
Compact Village	Linear									▲				■			
	Radial					▲								■			
	Organic													■			
	Planned																
Dispersed Village	Linear	■								▲	▲			▲			
	Radial		■		■					▲						■	■
	Organic													▲			
	Planned																
Compact Hamlet	Linear																
	Radial					■											
	Organic					■											
	Planned													■	■		
Dispersed Hamlet	Linear		●	■	■	●		▲		■	▲			●	■	▲	
	Radial													▲			
	Organic					▲		▲	▲					■			
	Planned																■
Ribbon Development						■					■						■
Farmstead					■	■	■	■		■	■	■		●		▲	
Individual Building			▲			▲		■	■	▲	▲			●		▲	

Incidence of settlement type

Unique examples	■
Some examples	▲
Predominant types	●

		05 Settled Valley								06 Ironstone Hills and Valleys							
																	
		LOCATION								LOCATION							
		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Market Town	Linear																
	Radial																
	Organic																
	Planned																
Compact Village	Linear					■					■						
	Radial					■						■					
	Organic															■	
	Planned																
Dispersed Village	Linear					■		■									
	Radial		▲								■						
	Organic					▲		■			■						
	Planned																
Compact Hamlet	Linear															■	■
	Radial		■									■					
	Organic																
	Planned					■											
Dispersed Hamlet	Linear		▲			●		▲						▲			■
	Radial		■			▲											
	Organic					▲											
	Planned																
Ribbon Development																	
Farmstead			■			■		■				■		▲		■	■
Individual Building			■			▲					■	■		●	■	▲	▲

Incidence of settlement type

Unique examples	■
Some examples	▲
Predominant types	●

		07 High Wold								08 High Wold Valleys							
		LOCATION								LOCATION							
		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Market Town	Linear																
	Radial								■								■
	Organic																
	Planned																
Compact Village	Linear							■			▲						■
	Radial		▲					■	■					■			
	Organic							■									
	Planned								■								
Dispersed Village	Linear		▲					▲	■		▲			■		▲	■
	Radial		■			▲		▲	▲		▲	■		▲		▲	■
	Organic		▲	▲					▲		■			■		■	■
	Planned								▲								
Compact Hamlet	Linear							▲	▲		▲	■		●	■	■	▲
	Radial								■		▲			▲		■	
	Organic			▲												■	
	Planned			■					■								
Dispersed Hamlet	Linear		▲	▲		▲		▲	▲		▲	■		●	■	■	▲
	Radial		■	■		■			▲		▲			▲		■	
	Organic							▲	▲							■	
	Planned																
Ribbon Development						■		■	■		■			■			■
Farmstead			■	▲		▲		●	▲		▲	▲		●	■	▲	■
Individual Building			■	▲	■	▲		●	●		●	▲		●		▲	▲

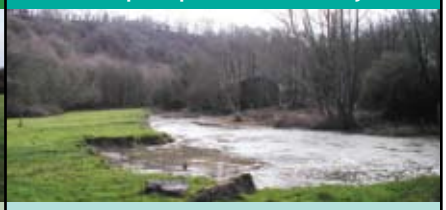
Incidence of settlement type

Unique examples	■
Some examples	▲
Predominant types	●

		09 High Wold Dip-Slope								10 High Wold Dip-Slope Valleys							
		LOCATION								LOCATION							
		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Market Town	Linear																
	Radial																
	Organic																
	Planned																
Compact Village	Linear			■													
	Radial		■					▲									
	Organic																
	Planned								■								
Dispersed Village	Linear		▲					▲									
	Radial			▲		■		▲	■		●						
	Organic					▲					■						
	Planned								▲								
Compact Hamlet	Linear			■													
	Radial				■						■						
	Organic		■					■									
	Planned								■								
Dispersed Hamlet	Linear		▲	▲		▲			●		▲			▲			
	Radial		■	■		●		■	▲								
	Organic			■				▲									
	Planned							■									
Ribbon Development									▲		■						
Farmstead			■	▲		▲		▲	●							▲	
Individual Building			▲	▲		●		▲	●		▲			▲			

Incidence of settlement type

Unique examples	■
Some examples	▲
Predominant types	●



		11 Dip-Slope Lowland								12 Dip-Slope Lowland Valleys							
		LOCATION								LOCATION							
		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Market Town	Linear																
	Radial		■														
	Organic																
	Planned																
Compact Village	Linear			▲													
	Radial	■				▲		■									
	Organic		▲														
	Planned					■											
Dispersed Village	Linear					■		■			▲						
	Radial	▲	▲	▲		●				■	▲			▲			
	Organic	■				▲				▲							
	Planned		■	■													
Compact Hamlet	Linear																
	Radial																
	Organic			■		▲											
	Planned					■											
Dispersed Hamlet	Linear		■	▲		●											
	Radial	■	■			▲		▲	▲		▲						
	Organic		■			■					■						
	Planned		■			▲											
Ribbon Development						■											
Farmstead			▲	▲		●					■			■			
Individual Building			▲	■		●		▲			▲	▲		▲			

Incidence of settlement type

Unique examples	■
Some examples	▲
Predominant types	●

		13 Low Limestone Plateau								14 Cornbrash Lowlands							
		LOCATION								LOCATION							
		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Market Town	Linear																
	Radial																
	Organic																
	Planned																
Compact Village	Linear																
	Radial																
	Organic																
	Planned																
Dispersed Village	Linear																
	Radial								■	■							
	Organic																
	Planned																■
Compact Hamlet	Linear																
	Radial											■					▲
	Organic																
	Planned																
Dispersed Hamlet	Linear								▲	■							■
	Radial										■						
	Organic																
	Planned																
Ribbon Development										▲							
Farmstead								●		▲	■					■	■
Individual Building									▲	■	▲						●

Incidence of settlement type

Unique examples	■
Some examples	▲
Predominant types	●

		15 Farmed Slopes								16 Broad Floodplain Valley							
		LOCATION								LOCATION							
		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Market Town	Linear																
	Radial					■				▲							
	Organic																
	Planned																
Compact Village	Linear	■				■		■									
	Radial																
	Organic					■											
	Planned																
Dispersed Village	Linear	■	■		■	▲					■				■		
	Radial		▲			▲			■	▲	■			▲			
	Organic		▲			▲				■	■						
	Planned					▲											
Compact Hamlet	Linear		▲														
	Radial																
	Organic																
	Planned					▲											
Dispersed Hamlet	Linear		▲		■	▲				▲				●	■		
	Radial		■														
	Organic					■		■									
	Planned						▲	■									
Ribbon Development						■											
Farmstead		■	▲	▲	▲	●	▲			▲	■		■	▲			
Individual Building			▲	▲	▲	●	▲	■	▲	▲	▲	▲		●			

Incidence of settlement type

Unique examples	■
Some examples	▲
Predominant types	●

		17 Pastoral Lowland Vale								18 Settled Unwooded Vale							
		LOCATION								LOCATION							
		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Market Town	Linear																
	Radial		●														
	Organic																
	Planned		■														
Compact Village	Linear																
	Radial												▲		▲		
	Organic												▲				
	Planned																
Dispersed Village	Linear	■	▲		■								■				
	Radial		▲			■	■		▲				▲		■		
	Organic	■	▲		■												
	Planned								■								
Compact Hamlet	Linear		▲								■			■			
	Radial																
	Organic													■			
	Planned																
Dispersed Hamlet	Linear	▲	▲			■			▲				▲	■	▲		
	Radial		▲		▲						▲						
	Organic		■														
	Planned						■										
Ribbon Development			▲												▲		
Farmstead			●	■	▲	■	■		▲		■		▲		▲		
Individual Building		▲	▲	■	●	▲	▲		▲		▲		▲		●		

Incidence of settlement type

Unique examples	■
Some examples	▲
Predominant types	●

19 Unwooded Vale

		LOCATION							
		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Market Town	Linear								
	Radial		■		■				
	Organic								
	Planned								
Compact Village	Linear		▲		▲				
	Radial				▲		▲		
	Organic								
	Planned								
Dispersed Village	Linear				▲		■		
	Radial		▲		▲		▲		
	Organic						■		
	Planned								
Compact Hamlet	Linear		■		■				
	Radial								
	Organic								
	Planned		■				■		
Dispersed Hamlet	Linear	■	▲		▲	■	●		
	Radial		▲				■		
	Organic	■			▲				
	Planned								
Ribbon Development					▲		■		
Farmstead			▲		■		●		
Individual Building		■	▲		▲		●		

Settlement Details

The 'details' which add the final layer of local distinctiveness to a settlement are many and varied. Village crosses, war memorials, mounting blocks, churn stands, ponds, sheep washes, bridges (pedestrian and vehicular), pumps, kerbstones, signposts, boundary stones and garden walls are just some of the features that can be found in and around settlements, and which create distinctiveness at a truly local level - the sort of details, along with less tangible features such as open spaces and views out, that must be covered by the Village Design Statements and Conservation Area Appraisals that it is hoped will pick-up the threads of this study.












4.03 Boundaries

The 'Cotswolds' have long been celebrated for their distinctive dry stone walls. However, as regards the AONB as a whole, this is only part of the story. There are many localities where dry stone walls are entirely absent from the landscape, and where hedges - and sometimes fences - are the dominant boundary feature. In fact, hedges are much more common within the AONB than is often perceived, even accounting for the loss of dry stone walls over the years. From the point of view of local distinctiveness, this is a very important point, since the popular image of the Cotswolds tends to over-emphasise the importance of dry stone walls in the landscape, a consequence of the dominance in terms of tourism and marketing of the 'Gloucestershire Cotswolds' (i.e. the large northern tracts of High Wold landscape and associated settlements such as Stow-on-the-Wold). This has sometimes lead to dry stone walls being constructed in inappropriate locations (e.g. the countryside in the north of the AONB, where the Ironstone geology means that there is no dry stone walling outside of settlements), and a general neglect of the role played by hedges in defining local distinctiveness.

Typology of Boundaries

Boundaries within the AONB can be broadly categorised as:

- **Dry stone walls:** Walls built of stones laid without mortar or cement.
- **Hedges:** Trees and shrubs, carefully laid and intertwined to form 'living' walls.
- **Other:** Railings, wooden and metal fences, pales, earthworks, ha-has and other boundary types.

DRY STONE WALL

ENCLOSURE HEDGE

TIMBER FENCING

DECORATIVE IRON ESTATE FENCING

SIMPLE IRON ESTATE FENCING

Note: the designation of a boundary under the category 'other' does not in any way imply it contributes less to local distinctiveness than dry stone walls or hedges.

Form of Boundaries

When considering the various forms of boundary that occur within the Cotswolds AONB, it is important to distinguish between those boundaries that occur within settlements (i.e. bounding gardens and churchyards) and those that sub-divide the wider landscape. Account also needs to be taken of the peculiarities of the walls, fences and (sometimes) hedges that surround the gardens and parks of mansions and other high-status buildings, though - like the buildings themselves - the design of these boundaries can be within the realms of the 'polite' rather than the vernacular.

Boundaries within settlements tend to be higher and of a more formal design than simple field boundaries, reflecting the fact that they are as much about status as the practicalities of enclosure. Dry stone walls often give way to walls of coursed rubble or, in certain circumstances, walls built from squared and dressed blocks of stone. Hedges will tend to be single-species (e.g. laurel or yew), reflecting their relatively recent date, and of a far more manicured appearance than field hedges. Iron railings of various designs may also be found, along with various patterns of timber fencing.

HIGH, COPED GARDEN WALL

TIMBER PICKET FENCING

WELL MANICURED HEDGES

The form of farmland (field) boundaries greatly influences our perception of the landscape. Dry stone walls and hedges (and sometimes other types of boundary) are major contributors to landscape character, so much so that they are amongst the most important factors in determining the distinction between one type of landscape and another. Two factors need to be considered when assessing the role played by field boundaries in creating local distinctiveness: plan form and construction techniques.

How a field boundary appears in plan is very much related to age. Older boundaries - pre-eighteenth century back to prehistoric times - are generally of irregular plan, often following contours or other natural features; the resultant field pattern is small-scale and intimate. More recent 'enclosure' boundaries will be straight and true, running across the landscape with little regard for topography; fields are large and expansive. Despite the fact that relatively few field boundaries have been created since the nineteenth century, it is very important that the boundary pattern of a locality is understood and respected if local distinctiveness is to be maintained. Sub-division of fields and - more ominously - the merging of fields can erode the special qualities of almost any landscape.

SMALL-SCALE, IRREGULAR FIELDS

ENCLOSURE BOUNDARIES

MERGED FIELDS (I.E. BOUNDARIES LOST)

The way in which a dry stone wall, hedge or a fence is 'built' will characterise its appearance in the landscape, and hence its contribution to local distinctiveness.

Dry Stone Walls

The 'classic' Cotswold dry stone wall is constructed of fairly regular sheets of oolitic limestone, laid in relatively even courses. Stones will be laid 'double' (i.e. the wall is formed from two faces of stones with 'through' stones at regular intervals and small stones - 'hearting' - packed between) and tilted slightly outwards to help keep the wall dry. Less regular stones laid 'on edge' will be used as top stones (copings), creating an irregular profile that - supposedly - will deter sheep from jumping over the wall. Variations occur across the whole of the AONB, and even in the High Wold there are departures in walling technique, the result of differences in the quality or size of the available stone, or the skills of a particular waller. Copings are particularly subject to variation, with walls in some areas simply capped in large, flat 'three-quarter throughs' or - more recently - a thick application of mortar formed to a 'hogsback'. Dressed copings are sometimes found in more formal situations (e.g. parkland walls). Walls in areas where little more than rough boulders are available (primarily in the north and the south of the AONB) are rarely laid to courses.

CLASSIC DRY STONE WALL

DRESSED, ROUNDED COPING

STONE SLATE COPING

A MODERN FIELD HEDGE

PICKET FENCING IN A VILLAGE

Hedges

Stylistic variation also exist in hedges, partly the result of laying and management techniques, but mainly as a result of age. Older hedges will tend to be thicker and species rich, whereas newer hedges will contain only a few species, if not a single species (e.g. the regular hawthorn hedge that typifies enclosure). In certain instances, a hedge may sit on top of an earthen bank.

Other

Fenced and railed field boundaries will also have their own particular style, the most notable example being the simple iron fences that typify the enclosure of some estates and commons.

Local distinctiveness in the landscape is as much about appreciating the innumerable subtleties of construction technique that exist in different parts of the AONB as it is about the 'correct' type of boundary.

Location of Boundaries

Generically, boundaries of all types are located in one of three positions within the landscape of the AONB: Settlement, parkland or farmland.

Settlement

The form (style) of all types of boundary within settlements are very localised, and hence it is essential that Village Design Statements explicitly deal with walls, hedges, railings, fences and any other type of locally distinctive boundary treatment (e.g. the stone plank fences that can be found in the vicinity of the village of Filkins in West Oxfordshire,) - there are no 'rules' that can be simply applied across the whole of the AONB. All that can be said with certainty is that styles of walling and hedging that are associated with field boundaries are not generally appropriate for use within settlements, a common mistake in new developments.

SRONE PLANK FENCING

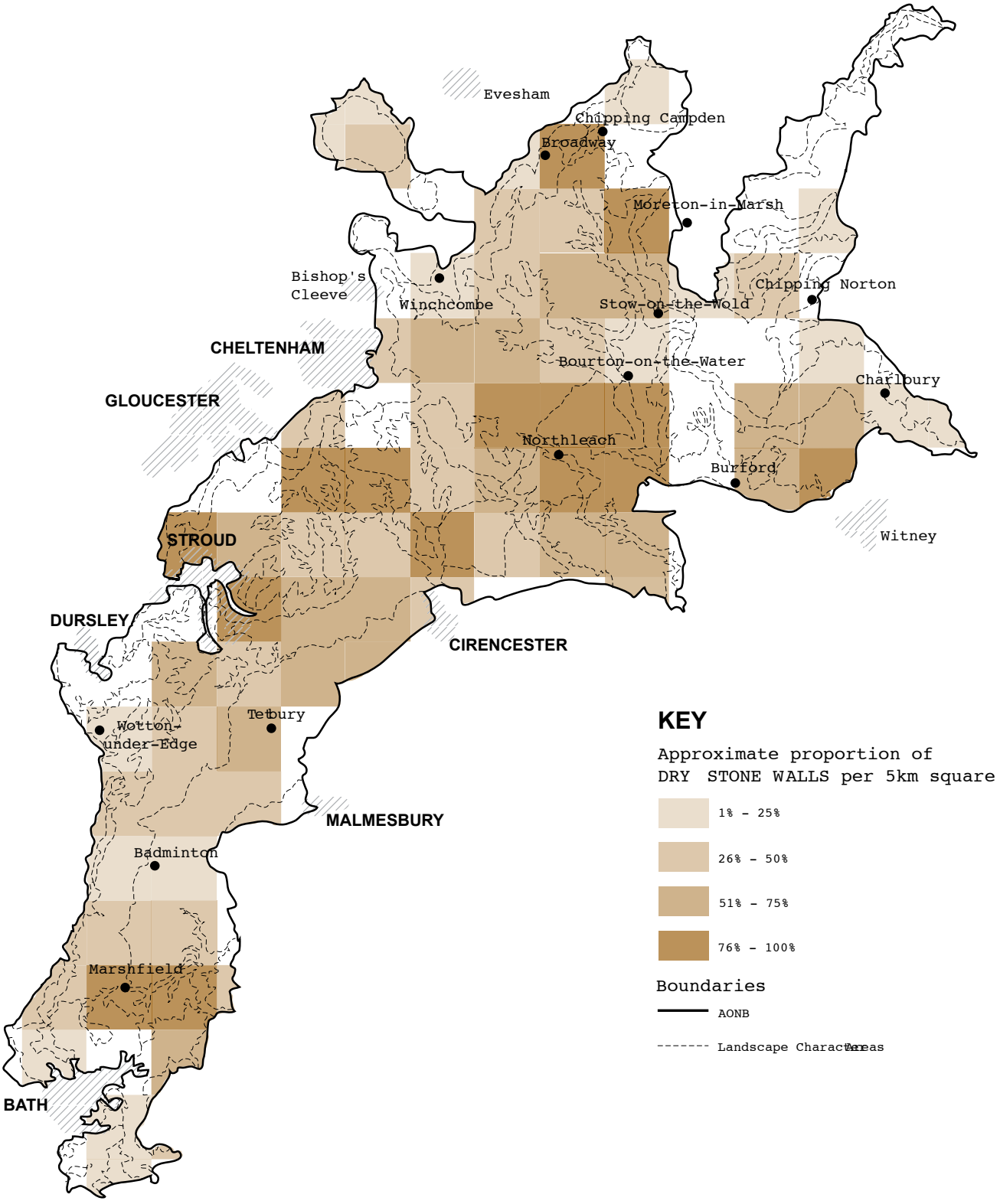
ORNATE PARKLAND WALLING

Parkland

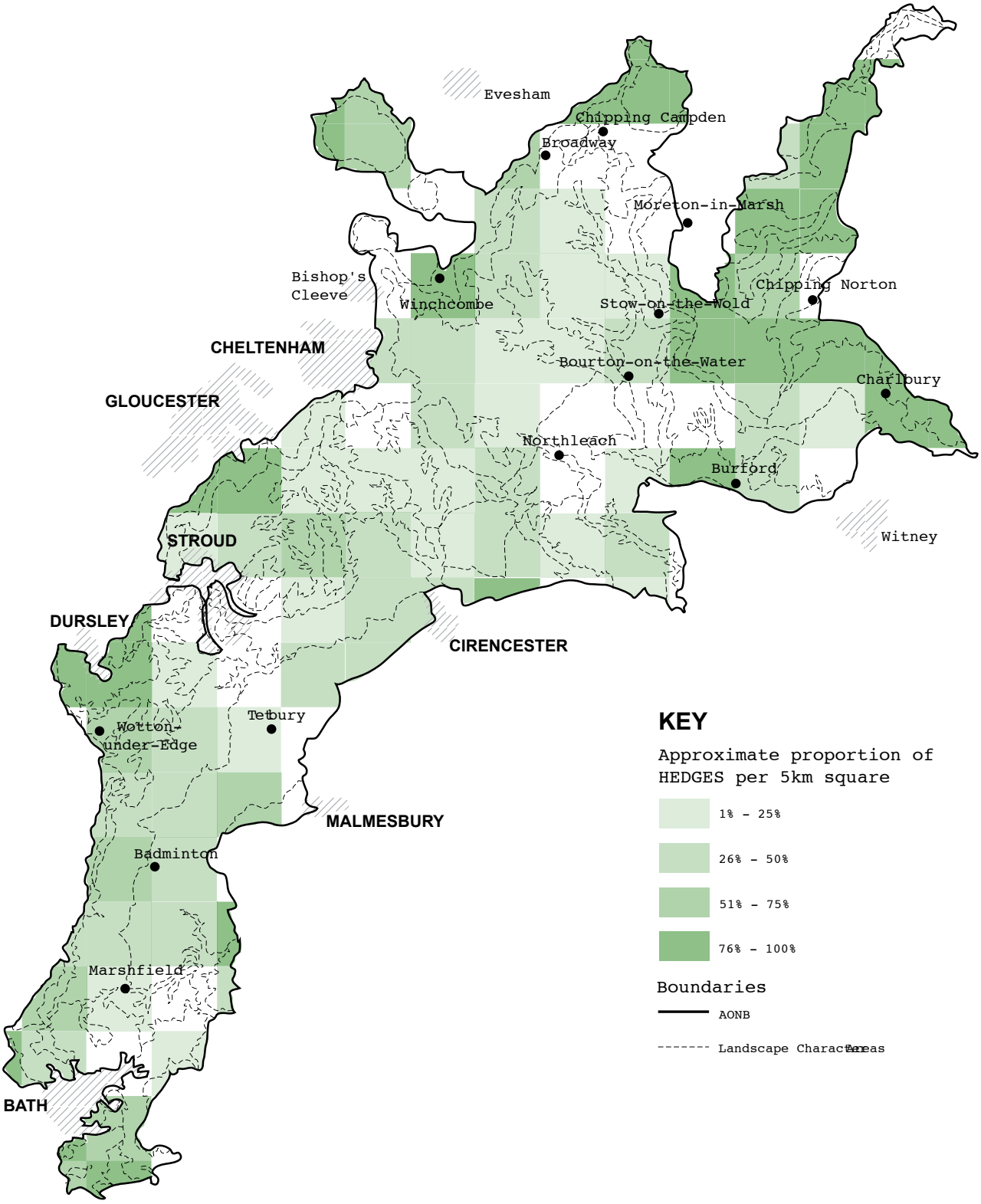
Boundaries surrounding parkland (and commons) may also exhibit uniquely local characteristics, reflecting the practice (or whims) of an individual landowner. As in the case of towns, villages and hamlets, the peculiarities of each estate need to be understood, particularly as regards the extent to which park and field boundaries can be considered as synonymous (i.e. some parkland may well be bounded by simple field walls or hedges whereas, in other instances, fields may be enclosed within the formality of a park, perhaps by iron railings or a finely-constructed wall).

Farmland

Although some field boundaries are fenced (mainly with post and wire), where fencing does occur it tends to be of recent date and alien to the landscape; local distinctiveness is primarily the result of the presence of dry stone walls or hedges. Dry stone walls will invariably be found where stone was available on or close to the surface of the ground (i.e. where the soil is thin), there being little practical sense in moving heavy materials that are to be used for building a purely functional boundary more than a few hundred yards from source. Where a suitable supply of stone was not readily accessible, hedges prevail.
The following maps (numbered 04 and 05) show the approximate distribution - in terms of 5km squares - of dry stone walls and hedges across the whole of the AONB, illustrating that the distinctiveness of the landscape often stems from a subtle balance between walling and hedging, not the dominance of one or the other (the maps do not account for walls or hedges that have been lost). Squares without walls or hedges are those where fences or estate railings predominate, or where the land is mainly unenclosed (e.g. Cleeve Common) or given over to settlement.



MAP 04: DISTRIBUTION OF **DRY STONE WALLS** IN THE LANDSCAPE (I.E. OUTSIDE OF SETTLEMENTS)



MAP 05: DISTRIBUTION OF **HEDGES** IN THE LANDSCAPE (I.E. OUTSIDE OF SETTLEMENTS)

Boundary Details

The 'details' that add the final layer of local distinctiveness to a wall or hedge concern not only the practicalities of construction or laying (an area where the distinction between form and detail is blurred), but also the crucial issue of 'gaps' i.e. the treatment of those places where people, animals or vehicles can cross a boundary. It is these details - primarily stiles and gates, but also idiosyncrasies such as boles (recesses within walls, sometimes to house bees) - that lend a wall, hedge or fence its specific character. It is therefore essential that they are accounted for in the preparation of Village Design Statements, Conservation Area Appraisals or Parish Maps.












4.04
Roofs and Walls

The external appearance of any vernacular building is principally determined by the nature of its roof and walls, a point that has not been missed by many commentators on what has often been referred to as the 'Cotswold Style' of building. However, one cannot generalise about gables, mullions, label moulds, finials, etc. since - as has already been noted - understanding the distinctiveness of a region like the AONB is not about assembling a simple lexicon of universally applicable 'features', however important such architectural details may be at the level of a town or village. There is much variety in the buildings of the AONB, a reflection of factors such as age of settlement and proximity to wealth or resources. Only in the materials used for roofing and walling can one discern a common thread across the whole of the area though, paradoxically, this is as much about an appreciation of the limits of what is typically 'Cotswold' as it is about regional identity.

Typology of roofs and walls

Roofs within the AONB can be categorised in terms of their covering material:

- **Stone Slates:** Thin pieces of stone dressed (cut) to random widths and fixed to cover roofs in diminishing courses (i.e. large slates are used at the eaves, with each succeeding course of slates smaller than the one below, and the smallest slates used at the head of the roof). Also known as stone tiles and tilestones. Stone slating is a highly localised form of roof covering, even within an area as restricted as the AONB. The generic description 'stone slate' covers a wider variety of types, some the product of identifiable quarries or mines (e.g. Stonesfield Slate), others that have simply been taken from the surface or dug from small, local delves.

- **Thatch:** Wheat straw fixed in bundles secured with hazel 'rods'. The traditional style of thatching across the AONB is 'long straw' (also known as 'crushed' straw), a by-product of the threshing process which is 'drawn' into bundles ('yealms') that are then bedded onto the roof (as opposed to being dressed with a tool) - the hazel rodding is visible along the eaves and gables. Visible lengths of straw are longer than in the case of other types of thatch and, overall, the roof has a rougher texture than the 'clipped' appearance of water reed or combed wheat 'reed'. As with stone slates, thatching is a highly localised - and personalised - form of roofing that requires the careful selection of materials if it is to be in harmony with the landscape of the AONB. The use of reed-thatching methods are rarely appropriate, despite the (erroneous) perception that long straw is less durable.

STONE SLATE ROOFING

LONG STRAW THATCH ROOFING

Metamorphic (e.g. Welsh) slate, clay tile, corrugated iron roof and other coverings that do not generally contribute to local distinctiveness and which have been 'imported' into the area can also be found within the bounds of the AONB.

Walls (to buildings) within the AONB can be categorised in terms of their material and facing:

- **Ashlar Stone:** Carefully sawn or dressed blocks of stone laid with worked arises that produce tight, thin joints. The face of the stone will generally be 'rubbed' plain, sometimes with a visible margin (draft).
- **Chiselled Stone:** Sawn or dressed blocks of stone that are less 'worked' than ashlar and have not been 'rubbed', the marks of the stonemasons chisel being distinctly visible.
- **Rubble Stone:** Blocks or lumps of stone that may or may not have been dressed or sawn square, and which are laid with thick mortar joints, sometimes brought to courses and sometimes random.
- **Walling ('Buttered') Stone:** Thin sheets of stone that would generally be used for dry stone walls laid in thick beds of mortar which is often 'buttered' over the rounded arises.
- **Rendered:** An applied finish of mortar or plaster built-up in layers, and which hides entirely the backing material (generally poor quality stone).
- **Brick:** Regular units of fired clay, generally a shade of red.
- **Timber Frame:** Visible post and beam construction, with infill panels in a variety of materials.

ASHLAR STONE WALLING

CHISELLED STONE WALLING

RUBBLE STONE WALLING (SQUARED AND COURSED)

WALLING ('BUTTERED' STONE WALLING)

RENDERED WALLING

BRICK WALLING

TIMBER FRAMED WALLING

It should be noted that the use of stone for walls is, like stone slates or thatch, a highly localised material, and that within the generic descriptions given above will be many variations - some of them very subtle - in colour and quality. The ill-considered use of stone can be as harmful to local distinctiveness as the inappropriate introduction of materials such as concrete or artificial stone (sometimes used if finances are lacking). As always, the micro-level of the Village Design Statement or Conservation Area Appraisal must be the ultimate guide.

Form of Roofs

There is little standardisation of roof form across the AONB, other than the fact that roofs are invariably pitched. However, roofs do reflect the limitations of timber as a structural material, the technical requirements of their covering, and - sometimes - the functional demands of the building.

Span

The distance between roof supports (e.g. walls or purlins) which, with the limitations of traditional carpentry, generally results in shallow buildings and hence limited areas of roof pitch being visible from afar (the technically advanced roofs of barns, halls, etc. are the exception). Modern construction techniques can produce roofs of far greater span, often resulting in large areas of visible roof that are entirely out of scale with their setting.

STEEP PITCHED (55°) ROOFS AND GABLES

COMMON PITCHED (47.5°) GABLE END

SHALLOW PITCHED (37°) ROOFS

Pitch

Until the advent of the modern carpenters square in the eighteenth century, could only be practically set-out in terms of the *length* of the rafter relative to the span of the roof (not the rise of the ridge relative to the span, as today). This meant that simple arithmetic formulae had to be, with the rafters typically being five-eights, three-quarters of seven-eighths the span between walls, resulting in *rafter* pitches of approximately 37°, 47.5° ('common' pitch) and 55° respectively; the pitch of the covering will be 2-3° lower. All of these pitches and others (of later date) can be found throughout the AONB.

Roofs of the 'Cotswold' style are often cited as having pitches of in excess of 50° because of the technical demands of limestone slates. However, stone slates are often laid at lower pitches, including in areas that are considerably more exposed than the High Wold. Steep pitches within the AONB are more likely to be the result of:

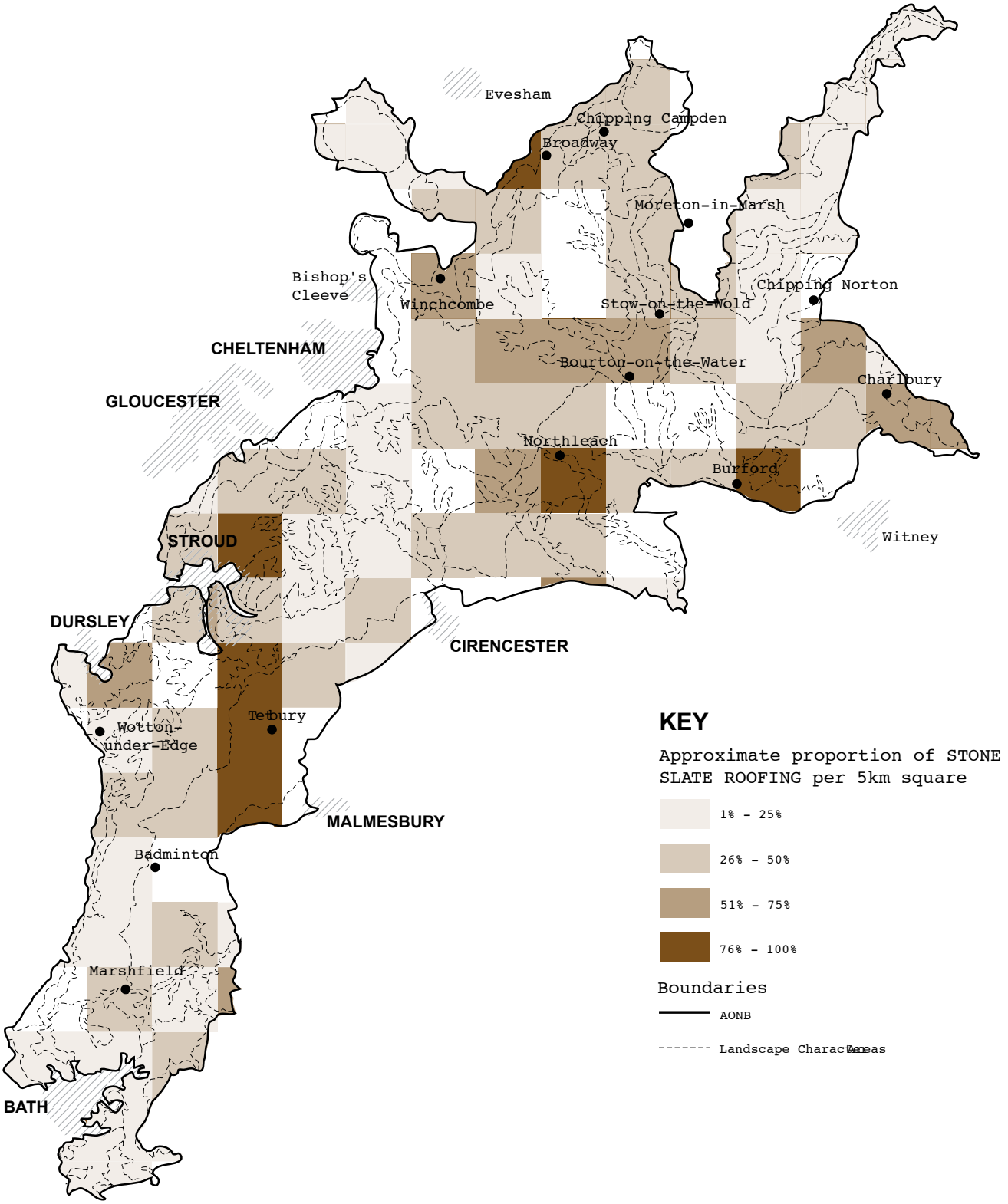
1. A need for attic storeys that could be used by weavers (i.e. increased head height and improved lighting), though this only applies to areas where wool played a part in the local economy (hence the generally shal-lower pitches of roofs in the southern part of the AONB).

2. The influence (and legacy) of *thatching* practice. It is suspected that thatched roofs - which do benefit steeper pitches - have in the past been recovered in stone slates and that, traditionally, thatch and stone tiles were effectively interchangeable.

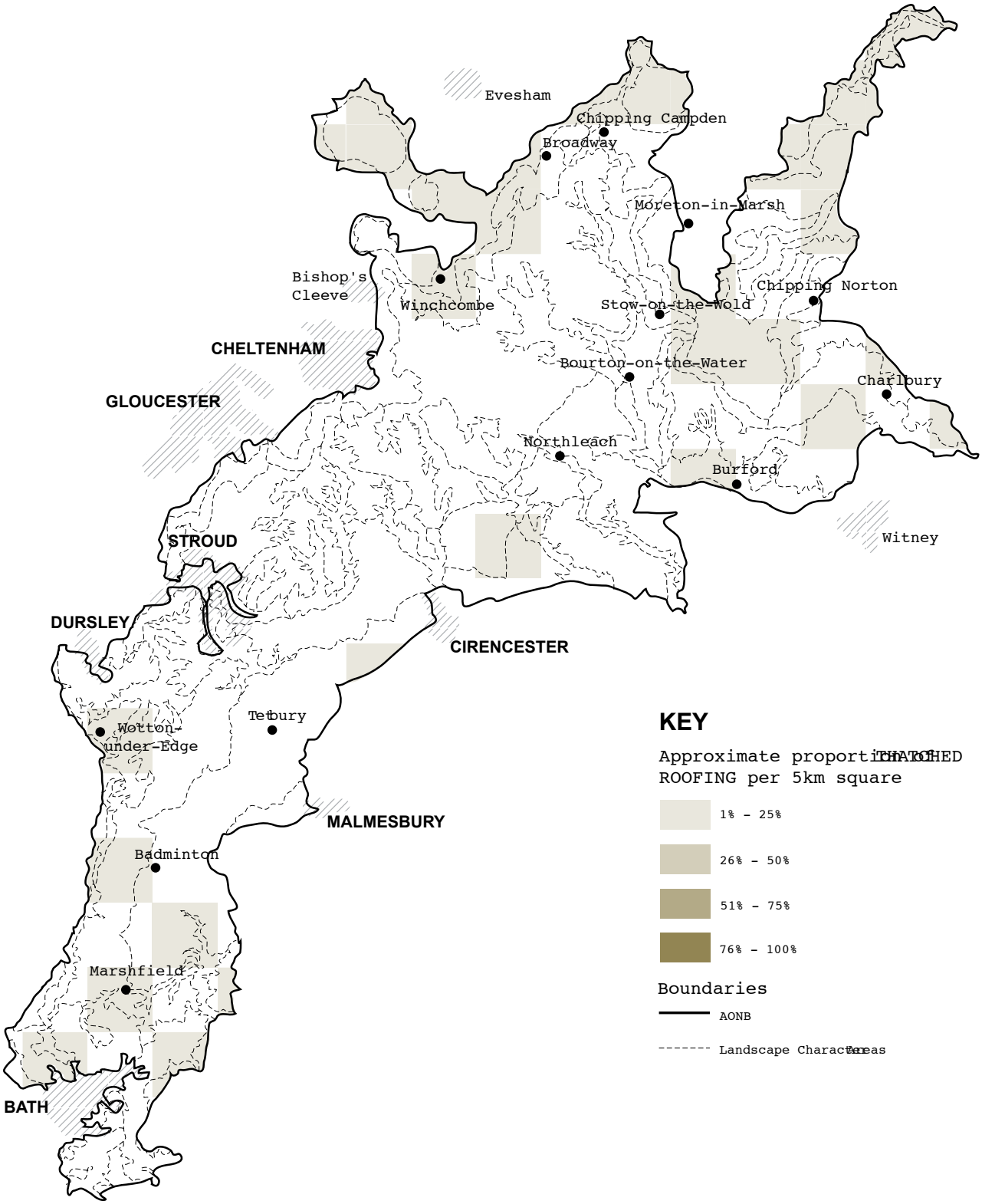
All roofs need to be understood within the context of the historic and topographic limitations of their immediate environment, if local distinctiveness is to be maintained.

Location of Roofs

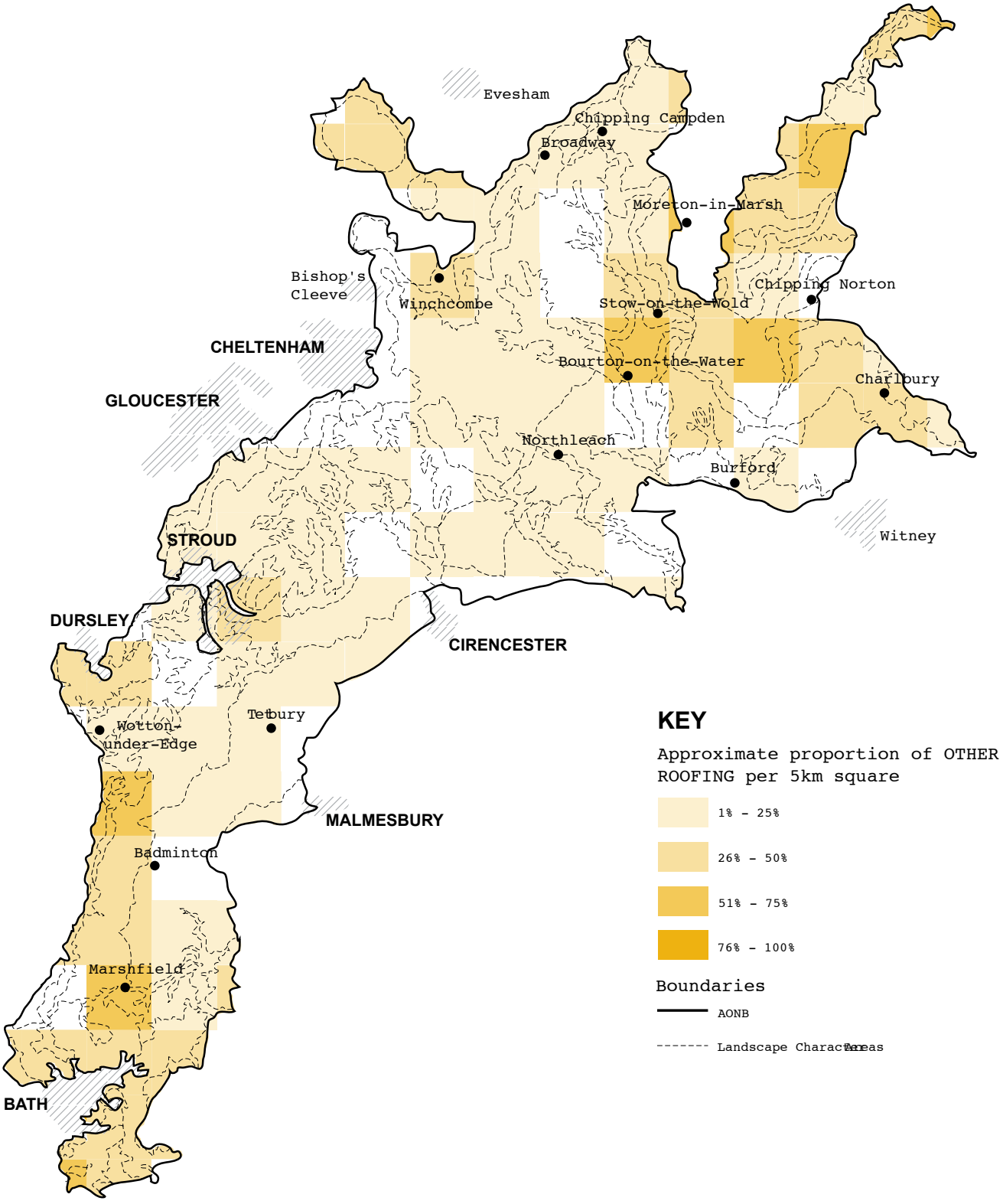
The following maps (numbered 06, 07 and 08) show the distribution - in terms of 5km squares - of roof coverings within towns, villages and hamlets across the whole of the AONB (individual farms and buildings have not been counted). Squares where no roof coverings are shown are those in which there is no settlement of any size, and where individual assessment is required. These illustrate the massive encroachment of non-local roofing materials and the loss of both stone slates and - less obviously - thatch, especially in areas where canals and railways encouraged the introduction of materials such as clay tiles and metamorphic (Welsh) slates.



MAP 06: DISTRIBUTION OF **STONE SLATE ROOFING** IN THE LANDSCAPE



MAP 07: DISTRIBUTION OF **THATCHED ROOFING** IN THE LANDSCAPE



MAP 08: DISTRIBUTION OF **OTHER ROOFING** (I.E. SLATE, TILES, CORRUGATED IRON, ETC) IN THE LANDSCAPE

Form of Walls

Houses and cottages within the AONB are generally of one or two stories, sometimes with the walls rising to form prominent gables or gabled-dormers. Otherwise, walls tend to be straightforward in form with little articulation in plan or section, and with groups of buildings and terraces following contour or street lines. Variety is achieved through subtle variations in the colour and treatment of materials, and the diverse range of inventive details that can be found in all parts of the AONB.

SMOOTH 'CLASSICAL' WALLING

COURSED RUBBLE STONE WALLING

CONTRASTING STONEWORK

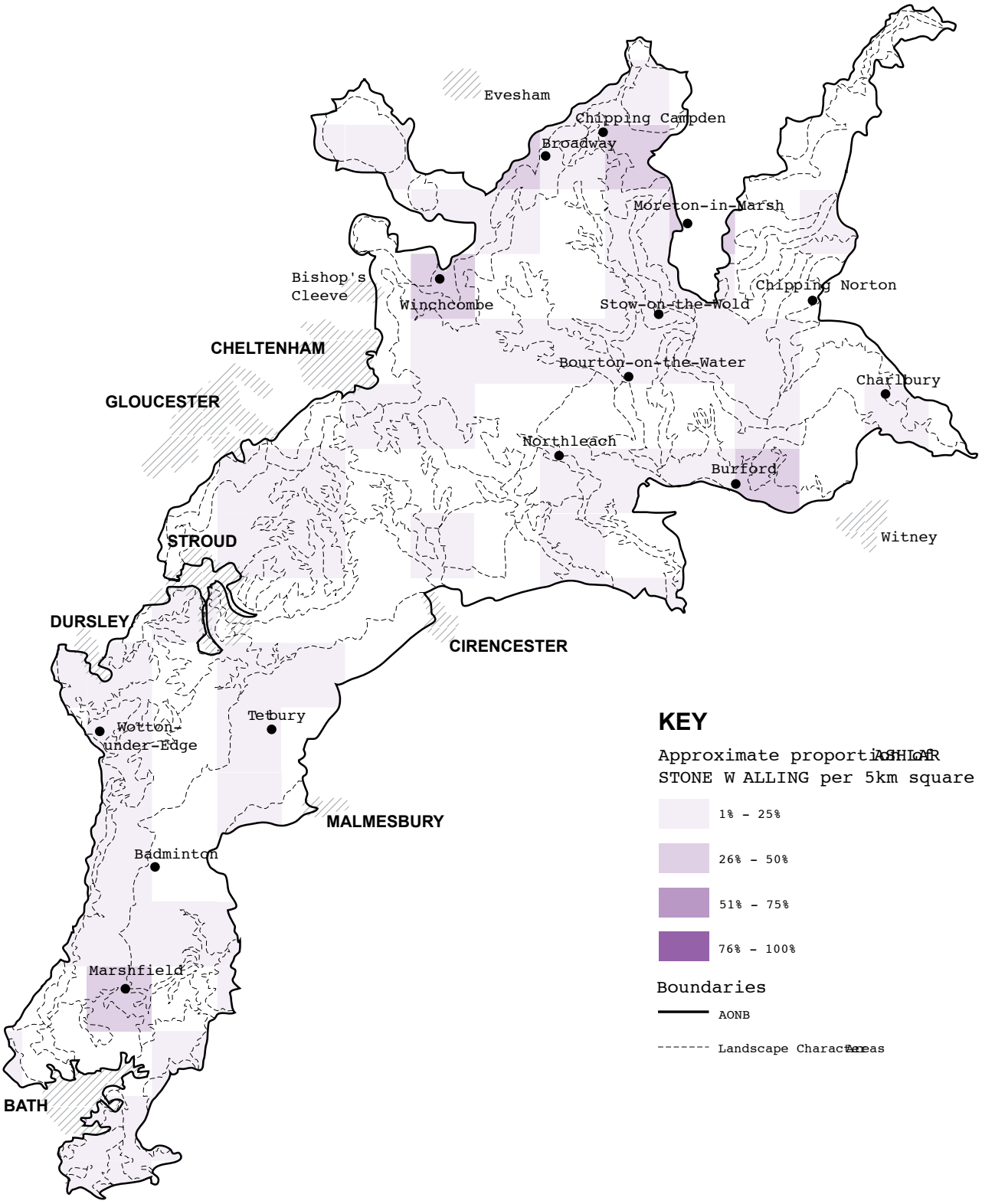
Location of Walls

The following maps (numbered 09 to 15) show the distribution - in terms of 5km squares - of walling materials and their facings within towns, villages and hamlets across the whole of the AONB (individual farms and buildings have not been counted). Squares where no walls are shown are those in where there is no settlement of any size and where individual assessment is required. These illustrate that, while stone is the dominant walling material throughout the area, there is much variety in the way its surface is treated, even within the same 5km square. Render, brick and timber framing are of conspicuous importance in a number of areas, especially those on the fringes of the AONB (e.g. Bredon Hill and the valleys around Stroud).

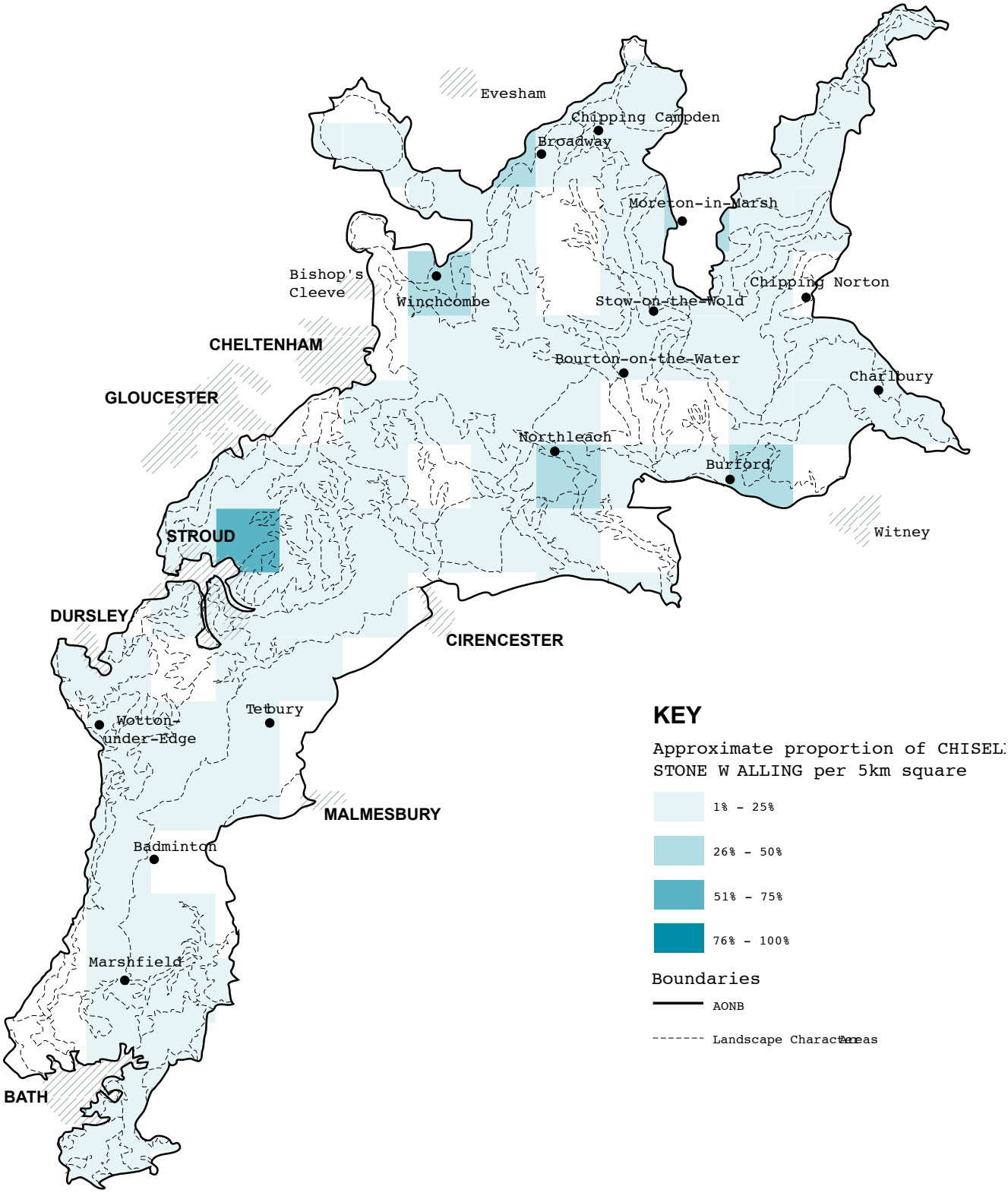
TIMBER FRAMED COTTAGE

BRICK AND STONE VILLAGE HOUSING

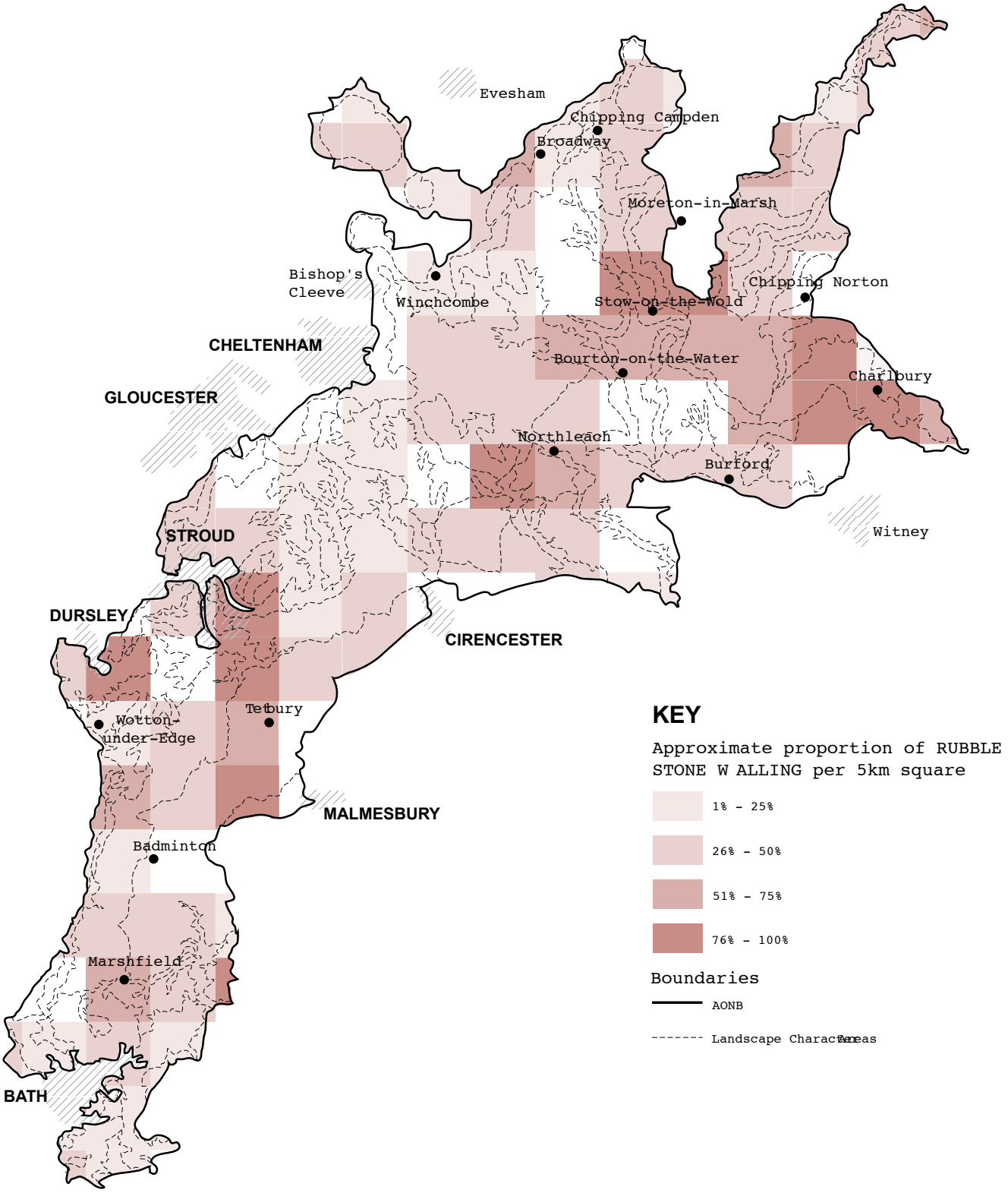
It must also be appreciated that - at the truly local level - there is a clear hierarchy in the way walling materials and finishes are used, with the finer quality finishes being used for the more important buildings, and the poorest quality finishes for the sheds, privies and other low-status buildings. Quality of walling is also related to age, the more recent a building the more likely it is to use 'quality' materials. These subtleties must be considered if local distinctiveness is to be preserved.



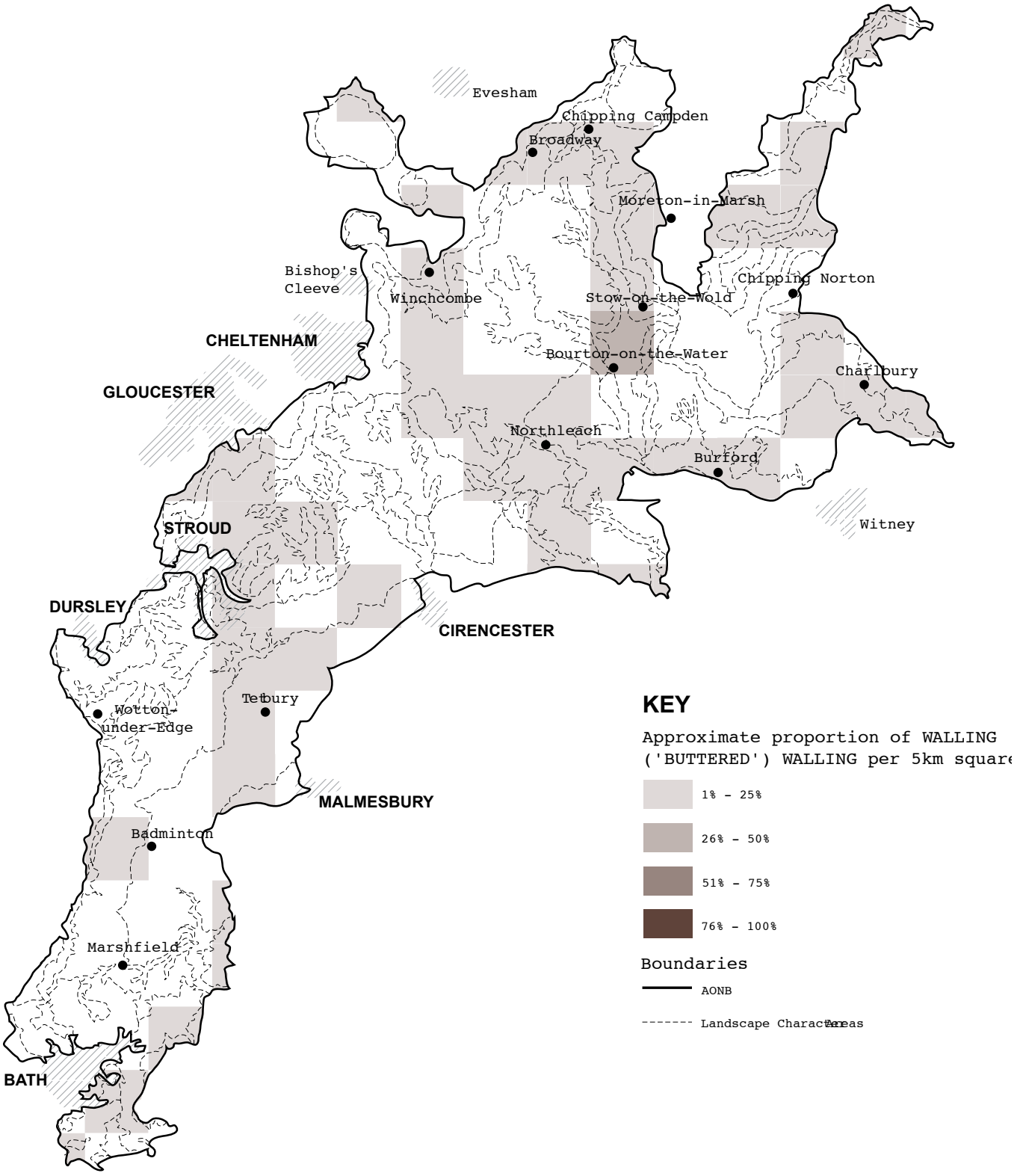
MAP 09: DISTRIBUTION OF **ASHLAR STONE WALLING** IN THE LANDSCAPE



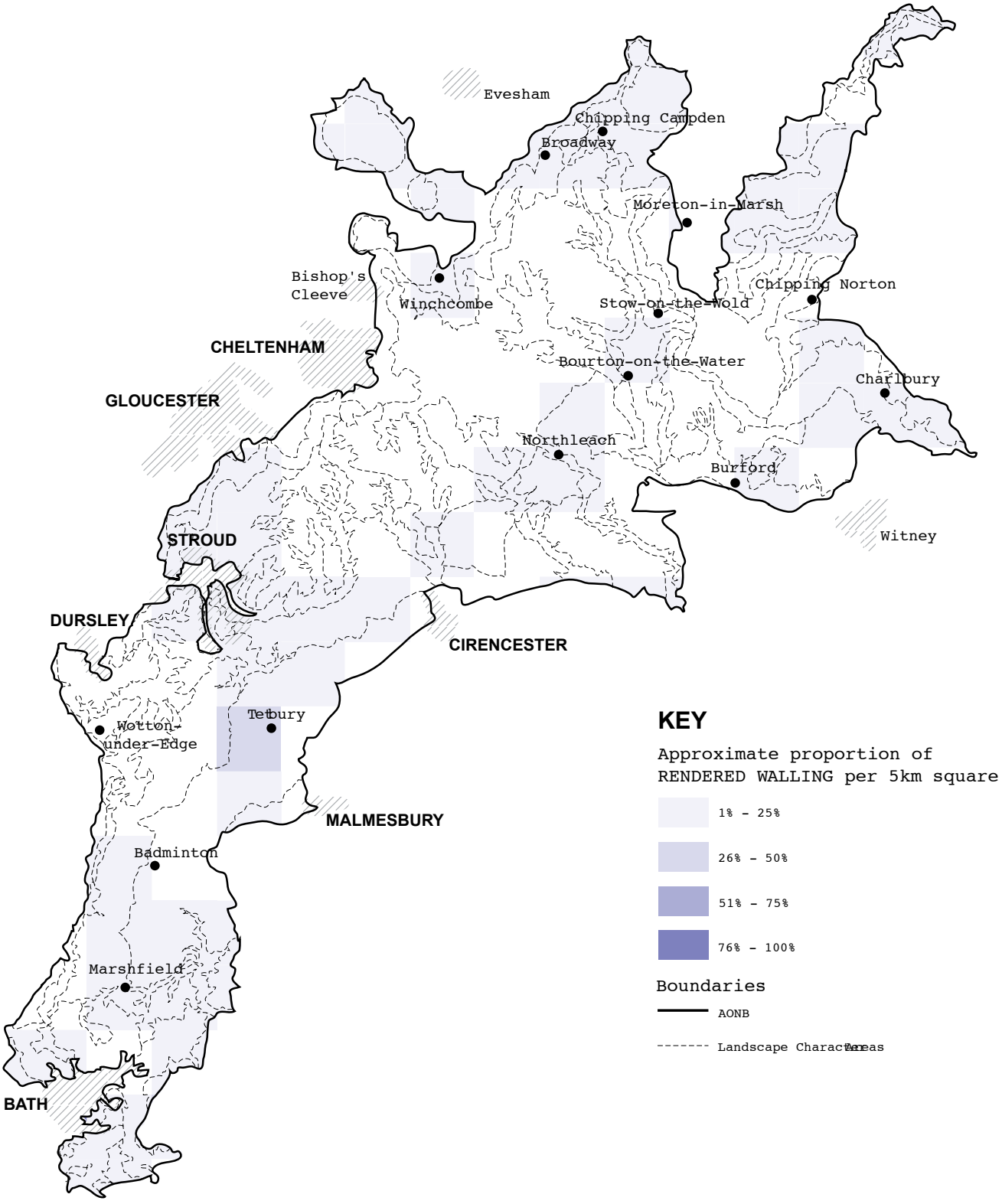
MAP 10: DISTRIBUTION OF **CHISELLED STONE WALLING** IN THE LANDSCAPE



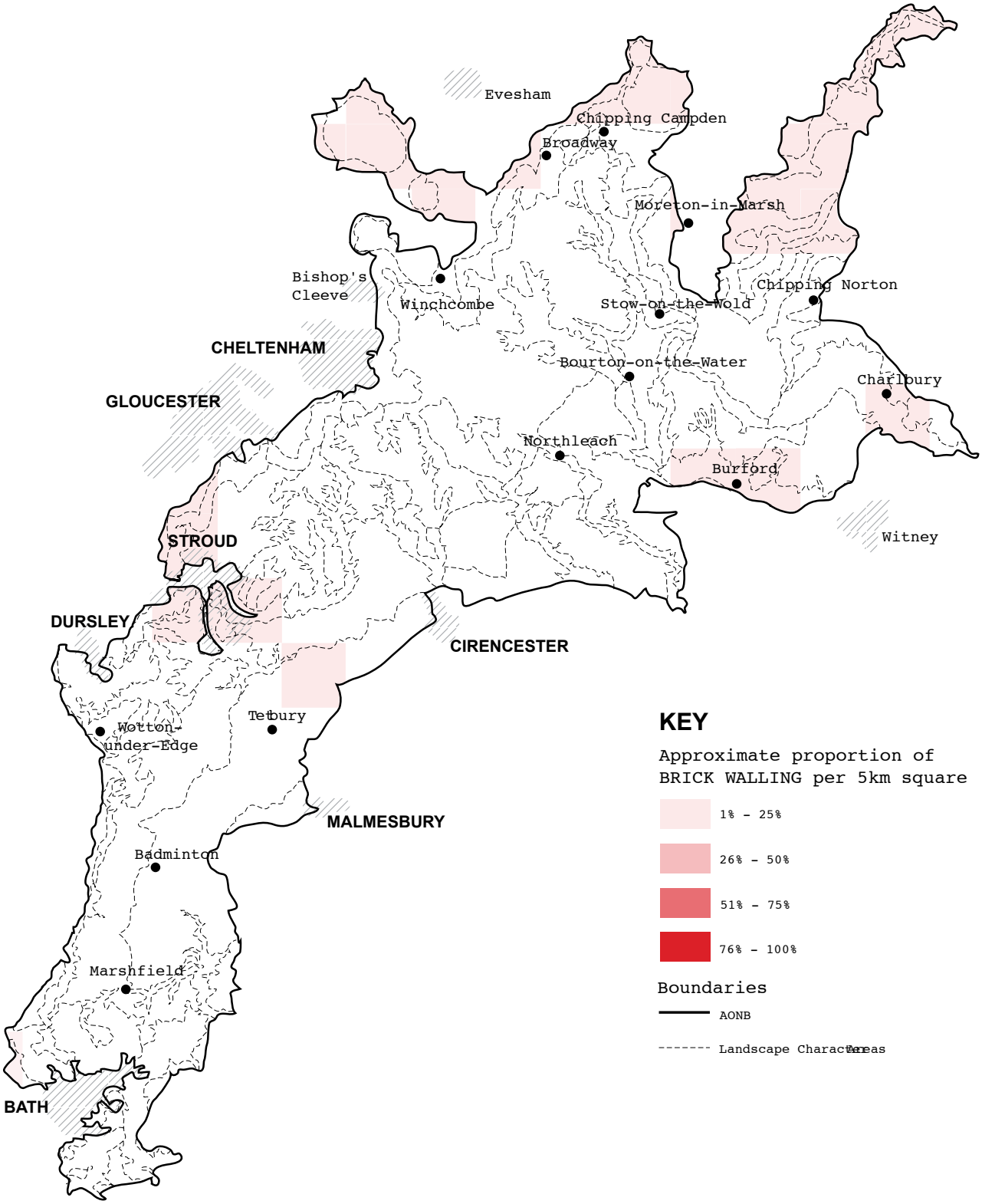
MAP 11: DISTRIBUTION OF **RUBBLE STONE WALLING** IN THE LANDSCAPE



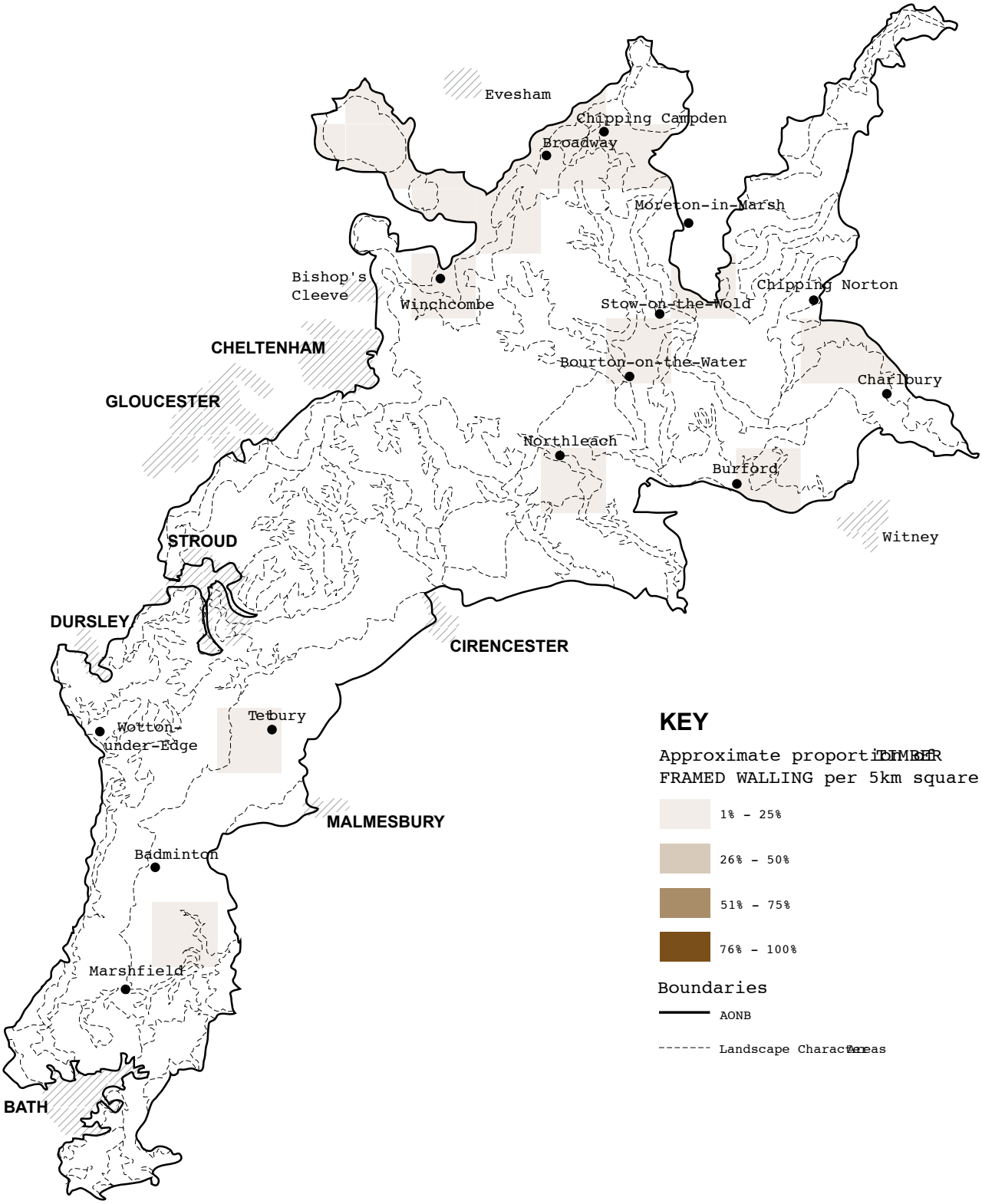
MAP 12: DISTRIBUTION OF **WALLING ('BUTTERED') STONE** IN THE LANDSCAPE



MAP 13: DISTRIBUTION OF **RENDERED WALLING** IN THE LANDSCAPE



MAP 14: DISTRIBUTION OF **BRICK WALLING** (MAINLY RED) IN THE LANDSCAPE



MAP 15: DISTRIBUTION OF **TIMBERED FRAME WALLING** IN THE LANDSCAPE

Wall and Roof Details

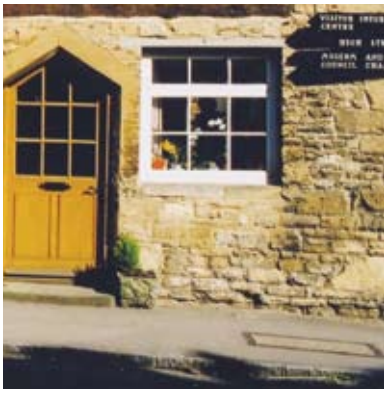
The 'details' that add the final layer of local distinctiveness to a roof or wall concern the articulation of the whole myriad of junctions (eaves, verges, corners, etc.) and openings - doors, windows, vents, flues - that are essential to the 'workings' of vernacular architecture. Chimney stacks, copings, dormers, quoined corners, string courses and mouldings, mullions, door hoods, fanlights, date stones are amongst the many details that add finesse to any roof or wall, thereby creating a real sense of place. Hence the need for their inclusion in Village Design Statements, Conservation Area Appraisals, or similar guidance.












The previous chapter explored in detail how the built environment plays a major role in defining the character of the landscape of the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. A wide range of factors concerning form, materials and details have been identified as essential to the local distinctiveness of the region, and information provided on where they are located and how they are used. This chapter picks up a number of these threads, with specific reference to how particular elements of the built environment (and hence local distinctiveness) are at risk from loss (or already lost).

UNFORTUNATE MODERN PASTICHE

FARM CHARACTER LOST TO CONVERSION

INCONGRUOUS MODERN FARM BUILDING

FUN, BUT NOT THE COTSWOLDS AONB

Each elements is discussed in terms of a problem (i.e. why it is at risk or already lost) and then a strategy as to how it might be maintained or recovered. The following elements are dealt with:

- Form of settlement
- Details within settlement
- Dry stone walls in the landscape
- Gates and stiles
- Stone slates
- Thatch

The key points that emerge from this chapter are then summerised.

SUBURBAN SPRAWL - LOSS OF EDGE CHARACTER

SUBURBAN SPREAD OF A VILLAGE

5.01
Form of Settlement

The Problem

Pressure for residential development within the Cotswolds AONB is immense, reflecting the desires of the many people who wish to settle in an area of readily-accessible countryside which represents *par excellence* the epitome of rural tranquillity. This desire for new houses has already compromised the internal and external form of many settlements, despite the fact that buildings are constructed in a 'traditional' style utilising many 'Cotswold' features. Erosion of the special character of the edges of settlements is a particular problem, as towns and villages have become 'suburbanised' by development that is entirely inappropriate in its density (generally too low) and formal relationship with the surrounding landscape. Internal form has also been eroded by the proliferation of 'infill', the uniformity of streetscape resulting from the loss of the distinctive gaps between buildings being anathema to the ordered yet varied character of settlements within the AONB.

Strategy

The key to ensuring development maintains the distinctive form of a settlements is the preparation of non-prescriptive Village Design Statements or Conservation Area Appraisals that can then be adopted by the local authorities as Supplementary Planning Guidance, and hence used as a tool to assist development control. Design Statements and Appraisals should include a comprehensive analysis of the edge-character of the settlement along with an 'audit' of all spaces between and around buildings. Edges and spaces can then be graded in terms of their capacity to absorb development, prior to the preparation of site-specific design briefs for all sites where development is deemed appropriate. The possibility of grant-aid to encourage local communities to set-about preparing their own Village Design Statements should be explored (grant-aid could contribute towards the cost of employing the guidance of a professional advisor and the cost of producing documents).

STADDLE STONES (AT RISK FROM THEFT)

OVERGROWN VILLAGE SPRING

REMAINS OF OLD MARKET CROSS VULNERABLE TO TRAFFIC

NEGLECTED WELL IN NEED OF REPAIR

5.02
Details within Settlements

The Problem

Many of the 'details' that provide the final layer of local distinctiveness within a settlement - village crosses, pumps, ponds, staddle stones, signposts, etc. - sit in exposed, public locations and hence are vulnerable to accidental damage, vandalism and (sadly) theft. Also, since they are not generally 'owned' by anyone, there is little incentive for their maintenance, other than perhaps where issues of health and safety are concerned. Yet many of these features are unique and hence crucial to local distinctiveness - and many are irreplaceable; when lost they are gone for good.

Strategy

The recording of the location and condition of all features within and immediately around a settlement should be an integral part of the preparation of a Village Design Statement or similar document. Beyond that, those objects that are not the responsibility of a local authority (e.g. bridges) should be offered for 'adoption' by interested groups or individuals who would be prepared to 'keep and eye on them' and to ensure their continued maintenance.

DRY STONE WALL BEING COLONISED BY A HEDGE

COLLAPSE AND DERILICTION OF A DRY STONE WALL

HEDGE REPLACING DRY STONE WALL

POST AND WIRE FENCING - THE ALTERNATIVE?

5.03
Dry Stone Walls in the Landscape

The Problem

Dry stone walls are central to the distinctiveness of the landscape in many parts of the AONB, yet are often seen to be ill-maintained and in a state of advanced dilapidation, a consequence of the relative susceptibility of oolitic limestone to decay and the radical changes in farming that have occurred over the twentieth century (a greatly reduced agricultural workforce, decreased margins and the post-war emphasis on efficient food production mean that there has for a long time been little incentive to maintain field boundaries at anything above the most functional level).

Strategy

The first stage in recovering and maintaining the distinctiveness afforded by dry-stone walls is to extend the concept of Village Design Statements to the preparation of parish 'maps', which must include surveys of the location and state of all dry stone walls. Reference might have to be made to historical documents to identify where dry stone walls have been lost completely, bearing in mind the importance of understanding their relationship to other types of field and park boundary (i.e. the identification of a missing wall must be based on fact not perception). Walls can then be graded in terms of their vulnerability, and hence works of repair or reinstatement prioritised. A campaign to raise the profile of the work being done on dry stone walls by the AONB Partnership and the Dry Stone Walling Association should aim to convince local and central government of the of the value of encouraging the management of the countryside of the AONB as a revenue-generating resource (i.e. tourism), possibly via the incentive of tax allowances for individual owners.

TRADITIONAL WOODEN GATES

MASS-PRODUCED METAL GATES

MEAL GATE POST AND WIRE FENCING

VULNERABLE TIMBER STILE

5.04
Gates and Stiles

The Problem

Gates within the predominantly agricultural landscape of the AONB play an important part in defining local distinctiveness. Traditionally of wood, their various designs speak of the history and traditions of farming within a particular area, particularly prior to mechanisation. However, the demands of modern methods of husbandry and food production mitigate against the retention of old wooden gates. They are less robust than metal gates, requiring more maintenance and a greater frequency of replacement, and - perhaps more importantly - often too narrow for modern farm vehicles and machinery. Stiles and pedestrian gates are also vulnerable to loss, with the ever-increasing pressure of leisure-access to the countryside meaning heavier use of footpaths and hence a greater need for the maintenance of the 'gaps' in hedges and walls.

Strategy

Village Design Statements and their associated parish maps should include a detailed survey of all gates and stiles within an area, noting their location and condition as a precursor to prioritising their maintenance and repair. The loss of traditional forms of timber gate could be allayed by the development of appropriate local stiles of metal gate, suited to the requirements of the modern farmer. Likewise where pedestrian gates and stiles need modification, such as might be necessary to permit disabled access. Consideration should be give to the cost of maintaining gates and stiles on footpaths, perhaps transferring the burden from landowner to local authority.

STONE SLATES IN NEED OF MAINTENANCE

WELSH SLATE REPLACES STONE SLATE

RED PANTILES AND WELSH SLATE

STONE SLATES REPLACED BY PANTILES

5.05 Stone Slates

The Problem

Stone slates were traditionally produced on a very small scale, the stones being taken from close to the surface leaving shallow pits and depressions known as 'delves'. Essentially, they were a by-product of 'working the land' and hence do not fit easily within the modern view of quarrying as an industry focused on aggregates or building stone. This means a shortage of stone slates for both repairs and new buildings, and consequent lack of persons skilled in their laying. This makes the use of stone slates often impractical or prohibitively expensive.

Strategy

The first factor in safeguarding the future of stone slates is to ensure the availability of adequate local supplies of suitable stone. Minerals planning policies already support small-scale working for the benefit of the built heritage, and the Stone Roofing Association are drafting guidance on planning permission for the extraction of stone for roofing. However, obtaining market economics for stone slates are still unbalanced, with demand outstripping supply, meaning high costs and long delivery times. Incentives to encourage the production of stone slates as part of a programme of farm-diversification and the continued encouragement of their use via the development control process would both help establish a sustainable future market. The public also needs to be informed of the historic link between stone slates and farming; the small-scale nature of delving must be widely understood, dispelling the perception of stone-extraction being the sole preserve of large-scale modern quarries.

THATCH IN NEED OF MAINTENANCE

WELSH SLATE REPLACES THATCH

INAPPROPRIATE REED THATCH

THATCH REPLACED BY PANTILES

5.06 Thatch

The Problem

Survey work carried out as a part of this project has revealed the massive loss of thatch across the whole of the AONB and its replacement with 'alien' materials that can be found throughout the whole of England (refer Chapter 4.05). The reasons for this loss are complex, reflecting to a large degree social and economic changes within the countryside, but also misconceptions over the durability of thatch as a roofing material. Many of the latter - especially those regarding the use of long straw - date from the well-intentioned post-war policies of the Rural Industries Bureau, which saw 'house' thatching re-defined as a building trade and separated from the 'agricultural' thatching of hay ricks, wood piles, root clamps and the like. The emphasis on efficient food production and changes in harvesting techniques have also created a severe shortage of suitable straw - thatching straw is now a specialist crop, rather than a by-product of grain production.

Strategy

While the wholesale re-introduction of long straw thatch across the whole of the AONB is perhaps neither practical or desirable, an increase in its use - and perhaps the reinstatement of roofs now covered in materials such as corrugated iron - should be encouraged. As in the case of stone slates, the answer may in part lie in rural diversification with farmers being encouraged to switch production to varieties of wheat that are primarily intended for building use, with grain as a by-product. Stronger links between thatchers and straw producers also need to be encouraged, with perhaps some blurring of the boundaries between the two (e.g. grants for thatchers to grow their own straw, of for farmers to diversify into thatching).

5.07
Summary

The examples cited in this chapter illustrate the inherent fragility of a number of key elements that contribute to the variety and distinctiveness of the Cotswolds AONB. Some, like dry stone walls or stone slates are obvious, yet often taken for granted. Others, like the form of settlement or the loss of long-straw thatch are more subtle, though the consequences of their loss in terms of the character of the area is just as great.

It is perhaps true to say that the main reasons why these elements are at risk are the time-old issues economics and redundancy of use or function, not simply the demands of the 'modern' world. Towns and villages are under pressure and their form at risk due to the affluence that creates a demand for new homes. Stone slates, though desirable to many, are simply too expensive to produce. Dry stone walls are expensive to maintain. Long straw for thatching is both difficult to obtain and expensive to lay. Details such as mounting blocks and sheep washes no longer serve their original function, and modern farming requires gates that are wider and more durable than in the past. The dictates of practicality force the pace of change, as has been the case throughout history.

Running some what counter to this historical trend is the relatively recent perception that local distinctiveness should be maintained, regardless of the fact that the traditional forces that moderated change no longer apply. It is therefore necessary to find contemporary solutions to modern-day issues, exemplified by the key points that emerge from the problems and strategies discussed in this chapter:

1. The starting point for the maintenance or recovery of local distinctiveness must be the preparation of Village Design Statements, Conservation Area Appraisals, Parish Maps or other documents that record what is there and how it fares at the moment. Local distinctiveness must be understood in terms of fact, not hearsay or idealistic misconception.

2. As was the case in the past, there needs to be a strong link between the built environment and agriculture, especially as regards the sourcing of materials for roofing and walling. The image of the countryside existing only for food production needs to be dispelled, and the sustainable diversification of the rural economy encouraged.

3. Education and information are essential if the general perception of issues such as the working of delves is not to be an obstacle to the maintenance of local distinctiveness.

4. Fiscal measures - in the form of grant-aid or tax incentives - may be necessary to 'kick start' rural diversification, to establish sustainable markets for craft skills and traditions, and to support educational programmes and training initiatives.

These are the core issues that need to be addressed, locally and nationally if the distinctiveness of the Cotswolds AONB is to survive long term.

RE-ROOFING IN STONE SLATES

DRY STONE WALLER AT WORK

5 Elements at Risk and Strategies for Recovery

Chapter 05 alluded to the issue of the need to develop appropriate styles of metal gate as a response to modern need for wider and more robust access to fields, farms, etc. This implies the need to understand how tradition can be adopted to meet the demands of the present, as exemplified by a wooden style of gate executed in metal and a modern bus shelter. Both examples illustrate that tradition and modernity are not incompatible.

6.01
Gates

Two examples demonstrate how metal might be used to provide durable contemporary version of traditional timber prototypes that are wide enough for modern usage yet easy to maintain. Extended, cantilevered cross-bars exploit the strength of steel to accommodate wider openings, with modern steel posts used in lieu of timber or stone.

TRADITIONAL STYLES OF TIMBER GATES

CORRESPONDING METAL GATES

6.02
Bus Shelter

The design combines masonry, steel and glass to create a structure that could be used throughout the Cotswolds AONB. A simple steel post supports one end of an unequivocally modern, functional canopy that does not relate to any specific place. Its other end is supported by a masonry plinth with integral seating, constructed of materials that respond to its local setting. One example shows the shelter in a purely rural setting, its masonry being of dry-stone wall construction. The other is of a bus shelter in an urban setting, its masonry picking-up on its surroundings, in this case rubble stone, brick and ashlar. Chiselled stone, 'buttered' stone and render could all be used, depending on context.

BUS SHELTER IN RURAL SETTING

BUS SHELTER IN URBAN SETTING

EXAMPLES OF POSSIBLE TYPES OF MASONRY

6 Interpretation of Tradition

A comparison between 'then' and 'now' photographs of scenes within the Cotswolds AONB shows that, over the last century, significant changes have occurred in the landscape. Roads - now busy with motorised traffic - have been surfaced, airfields have been constructed, food production has become more intensive, villages have expanded and become sub-urbanised, farm buildings have become larger and more industrialised (or been converted to dwellings) and thatched roofs have in many areas completely disappeared. Yet there is still the perception that 'the Cotswolds' appear now as they always have done and that, somehow, a now-vanished past lives on in the present. Earlier chapters have touched on aspects of why this is so; specifically how this apparent continuity stems in part from local distinctiveness in the built environment, and where this distinctiveness is threatened. This chapter looks at how change might affect the landscape of the AONB in the future, that is to say 'what if' certain trends continued or if major upheaval were to occur.

FARMING LANDSCAPE C. 1930

FARMING LANDSCAPE TODAY

HIGH WOLD ENCLOSURE LANDSCAPE

LANDSCAPE BROKEN-UP BY HEDGES

ENCLOSURE LANDSCAPE IN BEDFORDSHIRE

BOUNDARIES REMOVED FROM THE LANDSCAPE

7.01
Dry Stone Walls Replaced by Hedges or Fences

It has been shown in Chapter 04 that hedges are as prevalent across the AONB as dry stone walls. It is therefore quite easy to see the difference between areas of the landscape that are predominantly hedged and those which are not. That said, many hedged areas are of 'ancient' enclosure which means that, in terms of boundary pattern, they are very different from those areas where the dry-stone walls of enclosure prevail. Replacement of these walls with hedges - whether by colonisation (as can often be seen where a wall has fallen into disrepair) or grubbing-out and planting anew - will therefore produce a landscape that is very different from what can be seen today, something more akin to the enclosure landscape of Midland areas such as Bedfordshire, and Nottinghamshire. The identity of much of the AONB would be lost to a 'planned' landscape of large, regular fields bounded by neat, mono-species hedges or post and wire fences and the occasional hedgerow tree.

7.02
Walls and Hedges Lost from the Landscape Altogether

Chapter 03 described how modern (i.e. eighteenth and nineteenth century) 'enclosure' affected the landscape of many parts of the AONB and how that, before that time, the landscape of the 'open field' system would have defined the character of the much of the area. It might therefore be surmised that the loss of walls and hedges would be no more than a reversion to what, historically, was 'the Cotswolds Landscape'. However, this presumes that old methods of farming and husbandry such as large-scale sheep farming on open runs were revived which, given the economic dominance of arable crops, would be highly unlikely. The most likely outcome of the wholesale loss of defined boundaries would be a landscape that was either dominated by the sort of massive 'prairie' fields seen in parts of East Anglia or, quite simply abandonment of vast tracts of land that were no longer enclosed and hence no longer economically workable.

WALLS OBSCURED BY VEGETATION

PRODUCTIVE ARABLE LAND

GRAZING REVEALS WALLS IN DETAIL (PEAK DISTRICT)

LAND SET ASIDE (FOREGROUND)

7.03
Livestock Replaces Crops

It is in the High Wold and other areas where dry-stone walls predominate that the effect of livestock replacing crops would be most visible in the landscape of the AONB since, beyond the obvious difference in the appearance of grassland and crops, it is the perimeters of fields where the influence of livestock is most clearly seen. Fields that are used solely for crops will always retain a margin of growth at their edges, it being generally impractical to harvest tight-up to walls or hedges without damaging both machinery and boundary. This means that the visual impact of a boundary on the landscape is always softened by vegetation. Conversely, animals will chew grass right up to the edge of a field, leaving the boundary exposed and visually prominent - walls in the landscape then become very dominant, as can be seen in upland areas such as the Peak District or the Yorkshire Dales.

7.04
Set Aside Allowed to Dominate

Under current grant regimes, land which is 'set aside' has to be available for farming next season. This means that, although dereliction of land is unlikely, extensive weed killing is carried out to ensure no growth for the season, which results in brown fields, and a loss of soil organisms and wild flowers. A dominance of set aside across the whole of the AONB would result in a very barren landscape, far removed from the lushness of the farming scenery seen today.

WELL-WATERED (AND TENDERED) LANDSCAPE

FARMED LANDSCAPE

LANDSCAPE STARVED OF WATER (AND SPRAYED)

THICKLY WOODED LANDSCAPE

7.05
Rivers Dry Up

The porous nature of the rock underlying the Cotswolds AONB makes the area particularly sensitive to any development that affects the water table. An intensification of the numbers of roads, paved surfaces and roofs that drain direct to surface water sewers would speed up the process of water reaching streams, disrupting their continuous flow and increasing the likelihood of drought or flood. Lowering the water table would could result in springs and the upper sections of water courses drying-up, which would put acute pressure on natural features such as the distinctive Beech Hangers along the scarp. Small, sluggish streams would also be vulnerable to scour and loss of bank-side vegetation. The overall result would be a noticeable reduction in the strength and variety of the eco system, tending towards the blandness that can often be seen in poorly-watered municipal parks.

7.06
End to Farming and Reversion to Woodland

It is no understatement to say that much of the way the landscape of the AONB appears today is the result of successive generations of farming otherwise there would be no fields, no dry stone walls or hedges, no farmsteads and precious little reason for most towns, villages and hamlets. So what now if farming were for some reason to end across the whole of the Cotswolds AONB?
Other than where farmland could be re-used for leisure (e.g. golf courses), industry or house-building (all of which would be limited by the capacity of the area to support development), the ultimate state of abandoned farmland is its reversion to woodland. However, that is the long-term scenario. In the first instance, abandoned land would be invaded by brambles, docks, willowherb, etc. (arable land with its loosened soil would succumb earlier than grassland). Trees would begin to colonise the land after a few years, with the development of thickets of hawthorn interspersed with more open areas of ash and sycamore. Deer, grey squirrels and berry-eating birds would proliferate, and - in some areas - rabbits (hence areas of short turf). Tree cover and the beginnings of woodland would arrive within 20-30 years.

CLASSIC STONE SLATE ROOF

DISTINCTIVE EDGE OF TRADITIONAL SETTLEMENT

STONE SLATES REPLACED WITH WELSH SLATE

NEW HOUSE UNRELATED TO CONTEXT

7.07
No Further Production of Stone Slates

Although stone slates are an inherently durable roof covering that, properly selected and laid can be expected to last for many decades if not centuries, they are not indestructible and sooner or later will require replacement. The lack of availability of stone slates has been identified in Chapter 05 as one area where local distinctiveness within the AONB is at threat, meaning that there is much pressure to replace old stone slate roofs in cheaper, more readily obtainable materials such as concrete or clay tiles. One only has to look at the situation in the south of the AONB (north of Bath) to see a landscape where red clay pantiles are now the norm, local thatch having disappeared. Imagine if this situation were to be repeated throughout the area, and the impact of the landscape of the visually dominant roofscapes of places like Painswick or Snowshill - and hence what would happen if market forces and opposition to quarrying conspired to halt the production of stone slates.

7.08
Uncontrolled Expansion of Settlement

The towns, villages and hamlets of the Cotswolds AONB are amongst its most treasured features, their appearance in the landscape being a crucial component of local distinctiveness. Location and form both play a part in defining the special qualities of a settlement, skyline and edge detail being of particular importance. The latter is particularly vulnerable to thoughtless development which - if not controlled - may result in the erosion of subtle relationships between buildings and their spatial setting, leading to an irretrievable loss of distinctiveness, despite any well-meaning attempt to 'fit' the local vernacular.

THE GENERAL PERCEPTION OF QUARRING

MODERN 'SHORT STRAW' WHEAT

LOW IMPACT OF OLD DELVES

LONG STRAW WHEAT SHEAVES IN THE PAST

7.09
Delving as an Alternative to Quarrying

It has been suggested in Chapter 05 that the answer to the problem of the supply of stone suitable for splitting into slates (and also the provision of stone for field walling) might be to allow farmers to diversify and extract small quantities of stone from shallow pits known as delves, an alternative to relying on the stone industry *per se* for the full range of building products. But what of the impact on the landscape? Questions are increasingly asked about its environmental impact, locally and further a field, and many people have little desire to see an increase in the numbers of large open quarries such as Huntsman's Quarry to the west of Stow-on-the-Wold; but how many notice the many small depressions along the edges of the intervening fields, or the numerous hollows sitting hidden within small copses? These are what is meant by 'delves' - an almost forgotten method of extracting stone that has only a minimal (and short term) impact on the landscape.

7.10
Farmers Encouraged to Produce Straw for Thatching

Allied to the issue of delving is the notion of growing wheat to produce straw for thatching. The impact on the landscape would be slightly more marked than delving, since the taller varieties of wheat that are required for 'long straw' thatching are more likely to close-off views during the summer and to temporarily mask low stone walls and hedges. Thatching straw (e.g. hybrid varieties of wheat such as Maris Huntsman) also tends to exhibit green nodes (the points on the stems of wheat from which leaves arise) and a 'rainbow' of colours in its upper internodes (the lengths of stem between the nodes)

NON-ORGANIC MEADOW

ORGANIC MEADOW

7.11
Organic Farming More Widespread

The impact of widespread organic farming across the AONB would result in a number of subtle changes that, taken together, would mean a noticeably richer landscape that seen at present, especially on the High Wold. An absence of spraying may mean weeds being allowed to grow amongst crops such as wheat, as well as a need to machine-weed for some vegetable crops, which in turn would mean that headlands are more likely to be mown rather than ploughed. Livestock such as pigs would also have more access to arable fields, and a more mixed grassland would be encouraged for the grazing of cattle; the double-grazing of cows and sheep may also be used to encourage a denser layer of sward (grass cover). Organic milk production would mean increased levels of hay production, with traditional bails supplanting the now-common black or green silage bails, while crop and livestock rotation would produce more seasonal variation in the appearance of the landscape. An increase in the number of insects and the microbiological content of the soil would bring more worms and birds.

Conclusion 8

8 Conclusion

The purpose of this report is to assist a wide range of persons broaden their understanding of what it is that makes the Cotswolds AONB different from other parts of the country, with particular reference to the built environment. It is also seen as providing a link between the highly technical content of a Landscape Character Assessment and the more accessible guidance that exists to supplement local planning policy, particularly the growing number of community-based Village Design Statements.

Research has revealed that:

1. Distinctiveness is essentially about the nature of the landscape, as defined and understood in its broadest sense. The built environment and its elements are a part of the landscape and cannot be considered in isolation from its characterisation. Their contribution to local distinctiveness must be understood in the context of the landscape character types set out in Chapter 02.

2. History shows us that the countryside of the AONB is not a static, fossilised museum of a bygone age, but a dynamic environment where people live and work, and which is as subject as any city to the social, cultural and economic pressures that force change.

3. Local distinctiveness at a regional level cannot be defined by reference to a simple lexicon of built or constructed features. Many variations in character occur across the area of the AONB, which embraces places as different as Bredon Hill and the slopes around the city centre of Bath. This diversity should be recognised and celebrated.

4. The part played by the built environment in defining local distinctiveness can be categorised in terms of settlement, boundaries, and roofs and walls. Each of these themes are best understood in terms of typology, form, location and detail.

   - **Settlements** can be categorised according to their size and the facilities they contain, ranging from market towns to individual buildings. Their 'internal' form can be described as linear, radial, organic or planned: their 'external' form is a product of the skyline and edge detail. Generic locations for settlements in relation to typology and form can be defined in terms of landscape character type. Details include things like village crosses, mounting blocks, sheep washes, bridges and boundary stones.

   - **Boundaries** of many types exist within the AONB, though dry stone walls and hedges predominate. Formally, it is important to distinguish between boundaries within settlement and those that sub-divide the wider landscape, and to recognise the subtle stylistic variations that exist within types. It is also important to understand that boundary treatments associated with fields and farmland are not generally appropriate for use within settlements. Dry stone walls are only found where stone is close to the surface, and the distinctiveness of the landscape of the AONB stems from a subtle balance between walls and hedges, not the dominance of one or the other. gates, stiles and other details are crucial to the special character of a boundary.

   - **Roofs and Walls** are the elements that play the greatest part in defining the distinctive appearance of buildings within the AONB. Traditionally, roof coverings would have been stone slates or thatch, though other types of roofing material also occur, especially in areas that were accessible to the canals or railways. Stone is the predominant walling material, though it is important to appreciate the importance of its natural colour and texture, and the way in which its surface is finished. Render, brick and timber framing also make a noticeable contribution to local distinctiveness in certain well-defined areas, though it is quarrying that sets the tone. Traditional roof and walls tend to be of simple form, their nature determined by technical limitations and construction techniques. The details that 'finish' a wall and make it truly distinctive relate mainly to the junctions and openings that are an essential part of vernacular architecture.

5. The contribution of detail to local distinctiveness cannot be defined at a regional level, and hence must be the preserve of Village Design Statements, Conservation Area Appraisals, Parish Maps and other documents that can be used to record information and provide micro-level guidance.

6. Economics and redundancy of use or function mean that a number of the key features that contribute to local distinctiveness are at risk of loss. Form of settlement, details within settlements, dry stone walls in the landscape, gates and stiles, stone slates, and thatch have all been identified as at risk. Strategies in mitigation must recognise the need for rural diversification, education and fiscal support.

7. The consideration of the potential impact of change on the countryside shows that, although change cannot be prevented, it can be steered in certain directions. It is up to all those that value the character of the AONB to work in partnership with those that administer all aspects of its landscape, the common aim being to ensure that change can take place without eroding the special qualities of the area.

One often hears it stated that the countryside is today going through a period of rapid and painful change, the result of factors that range from the policies of the European Union and market forces, to the effects of BSE and Foot & Mouth. However, the countryside has always been a place of change, and the rural economy has always responded to change with foresight and vigour, and that this is the very reason why the landscapes we now cherish appear as they do. There is no reason why the future should be any different.

The Cotswolds AONB might be designated as an area of 'natural' beauty, but it is really the product of millennia of human endeavour, and will always be so. Hence the need to understand the landscape: The human pressure for development within those parts of England that are perceived to be 'special' presses harder than ever; it would be all too easy for thoughtless endeavour to destroy those very qualities that are considered by many to be so desirable. Hence the need to understand the past and the present, before being able to point to ways in which change can occur without loss of distinctiveness.

WHERE TO NOW?

8 Conclusion

Conclusion 8

8 Conclusion

The purpose of this report is to assist a wide range of persons broaden their understanding of what it is that makes the Cotswolds AONB different from other parts of the country, with particular reference to the built environment. It is also seen as providing a link between the highly technical content of a Landscape Character Assessment and the more accessible guidance that exists to supplement local planning policy, particularly the growing number of community-based Village Design Statements.

Research has revealed that:

1. Distinctiveness is essentially about the nature of the landscape, as defined and understood in its broadest sense. The built environment and its elements are a part of the landscape and cannot be considered in isolation from its characterisation. Their contribution to local distinctiveness must be understood in the context of the landscape character types set out in Chapter 02.

2. History shows us that the countryside of the AONB is not a static, fossilised museum of a bygone age, but a dynamic environment where people live and work, and which is as subject as any city to the social, cultural and economic pressures that force change.

3. Local distinctiveness at a regional level cannot be defined by reference to a simple lexicon of built or constructed features. Many variations in character occur across the area of the AONB, which embraces places as different as Bredon Hill and the slopes around the city centre of Bath. This diversity should be recognised and celebrated.

4. The part played by the built environment in defining local distinctiveness can be categorised in terms of settlement, boundaries, and roofs and walls. Each of these themes are best understood in terms of typology, form, location and detail.

   - **Settlements** can be categorised according to their size and the facilities they contain, ranging from market towns to individual buildings. Their 'internal' form can be described as linear, radial, organic or planned: their 'external' form is a product of the skyline and edge detail. Generic locations for settlements in relation to typology and form can be defined in terms of landscape character type. Details include things like village crosses, mounting blocks, sheep washes, bridges and boundary stones.

   - **Boundaries** of many types exist within the AONB, though dry stone walls and hedges predominate. Formally, it is important to distinguish between boundaries within settlement and those that sub-divide the wider landscape, and to recognise the subtle stylistic variations that exist within types. It is also important to understand that boundary treatments associated with fields and farmland are not generally appropriate for use within settlements. Dry stone walls are only found where stone is close to the surface, and the distinctiveness of the landscape of the AONB stems from a subtle balance between walls and hedges, not the dominance of one or the other. gates, stiles and other details are crucial to the special character of a boundary.

   - **Roofs and Walls** are the elements that play the greatest part in defining the distinctive appearance of buildings within the AONB. Traditionally, roof coverings would have been stone slates or thatch, though other types of roofing material also occur, especially in areas that were accessible to the canals or railways. Stone is the predominant walling material, though it is important to appreciate the importance of its natural colour and texture, and the way in which its surface is finished. Render, brick and timber framing also make a noticeable contribution to local distinctiveness in certain well-defined areas, though it is quarrying that sets the tone. Traditional roof and walls tend to be of simple form, their nature determined by technical limitations and construction techniques. The details that 'finish' a wall and make it truly distinctive relate mainly to the junctions and openings that are an essential part of vernacular architecture.

5. The contribution of detail to local distinctiveness cannot be defined at a regional level, and hence must be the preserve of Village Design Statements, Conservation Area Appraisals, Parish Maps and other documents that can be used to record information and provide micro-level guidance.

6. Economics and redundancy of use or function mean that a number of the key features that contribute to local distinctiveness are at risk of loss. Form of settlement, details within settlements, dry stone walls in the landscape, gates and stiles, stone slates, and thatch have all been identified as at risk. Strategies in mitigation must recognise the need for rural diversification, education and fiscal support.

7. The consideration of the potential impact of change on the countryside shows that, although change cannot be prevented, it can be steered in certain directions. It is up to all those that value the character of the AONB to work in partnership with those that administer all aspects of its landscape, the common aim being to ensure that change can take place without eroding the special qualities of the area.

One often hears it stated that the countryside is today going through a period of rapid and painful change, the result of factors that range from the policies of the European Union and market forces, to the effects of BSE and Foot & Mouth. However, the countryside has always been a place of change, and the rural economy has always responded to change with foresight and vigour, and that this is the very reason why the landscapes we now cherish appear as they do. There is no reason why the future should be any different.

The Cotswolds AONB might be designated as an area of 'natural' beauty, but it is really the product of millennia of human endeavour, and will always be so. Hence the need to understand the landscape: The human pressure for development within those parts of England that are perceived to be 'special' presses harder than ever; it would be all too easy for thoughtless endeavour to destroy those very qualities that are considered by many to be so desirable. Hence the need to understand the past and the present, before being able to point to ways in which change can occur without loss of distinctiveness.

WHERE TO NOW?

8 Conclusion

Cotswolds
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

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