



WINDRUSH IN WITNEY PROJECT: RECOMMENDATIONS

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STATUS

This document is published to give guidance to the Council, statutory bodies, landowners, developers and the public generally as to the environmental resources of value which lie within the Study Area, and ways in which they can be protected and enhanced in accordance with Local Plan policy. It sets out management objectives which seek to achieve the aims.

For the avoidance of doubt, the Council wishes to make it clear that the document does not constitute Supplementary Planning Guidance. Planning policy and proposals for the area are contained within the statutory local plan, the West Oxfordshire Local Plan (adopted 1997), and in the Revised Deposit Draft West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 (February 2003). This document will be reviewed in the light of any relevant changes to the draft West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 which may be made.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report is based on a draft report which was prepared by BHWB Environmental Design and Planning in 2002, on behalf of West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC), as part of the preparation of a landscape management strategy for the Windrush Valley within Witney. The final document was endorsed by Council in 2005, following minor amendments in response to public consultation and factual up dates.
- 1.2 A considerable amount of background research has been undertaken for this project, in particular:
- a compilation of the Biological Records and Habitats for the Project Area¹;
 - a more detailed Botanical Survey of part of the Project Area²;
 - a study of the land use history and assessment of the landscape character of the Project Area³;
 - a Public Survey Report⁴;
 - and raising awareness amongst stakeholders, including a number of Stakeholder Interviews/Meetings held by WODC over the course of 2001.
- 1.3 The report first sets out the project brief, then describes the site and summarises the previous research. An overview of the management objectives/recommendations follows, and then a detailed breakdown of the objectives, presented in tabular form.

2 THE BRIEF

- 2.1 The main elements of the project brief contained in this report are:
- To produce an analysis of the information already collected.
 - To set objectives for the future management of the study area.
 - To make recommendations on how the objectives can be achieved.

¹ Graham Hawker, *Windrush in Witney Project Area: Biological Records and Habitats* (November 2000), for West Oxfordshire District Council

² Graham Hawker, *Windrush in Witney Project Area: Botanical Survey* (August 2001), for West Oxfordshire District Council

³ BHWB, *Windrush in Witney Project* (April 2001), for West Oxfordshire District Council

⁴ Jane Corbett, The Living Landscapes Project, *Windrush in Witney Project: Public Survey Report* (December 2001), for West Oxfordshire District Council

3 SITE DESCRIPTION

3.1 Location and Extent

3.1.1 The study area covers the largely undeveloped land along the River Windrush corridor as it flows through Witney. The study area is in two parts (See Figures bound into the end of this report). The northern part covers the Windrush Valley to the west of Bridge Street, extending to just west of Springfield Oval (south of the river) and Willow Farm (north of the river). The southern part covers the Windrush Valley to the south east of Bridge Street. It includes Langel Common, the Cogges Farm area, the tongue of open space between the housing of Wadards Meadow and Manor Road, Farm Mill, and part of Witney Town Council's country park and other undeveloped land as far south as the A40 Witney bypass.

3.2 Summary of Area's Status

3.2.1 The land in the study area falls under a number of different ownerships. Some areas are in public ownership, almost all being in the southern part of the study area⁵, in particular:

- Langel Common, registered with Oxfordshire County Council as common land or village green (number VG55) under the protection of the Local Authority, under Section 9 of the 1965 Commons Registration Act. WODC take the owner's role of management for the protection of the Common.
- Land around the Windrush Leisure Centre, and the riverside walk alongside Witan Way, are owned by the District Council.
- Cogges Manor Farm Museum and the surrounding land are owned by Oxfordshire County Council, and managed by the District Council.
- Witney Town Council owns and manages the Country Park land south of Farm Mill, as far as and beyond the A40 Witney bypass.

3.2.2 Several parts of the study area are covered by various planning and environmental designations⁶:

- Much of the western part of the site is designated as an Ecologically Important Landscape (EIL) by the County Council.
- Mill Street, Bridge Street and West End lie within a Conservation Area. Southeast of Bridge Street, the Conservation Area extends over the whole valley between Witney, Newland and part of Cogges, in recognition of the importance of the valley setting to both settlements, and to the setting of Cogges Manor Farm and its surroundings.
- Cogges Manor Farm and its surroundings are designated as a Scheduled Ancient Monument.
- There are also numerous listed buildings and structures within the study area.
- The study area lies within the Upper Thames Tributaries Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA) designated by MAFF. The scheme aims to encourage farmers to manage their land in a way which respects the historic and ecological interest of the river valleys. It is particularly aimed at increasing the area of grassland and wet grassland, seen as a characteristic feature of the valleys. Fields in several parts of the study area have been entered into the scheme by landowners, all into Tier 1B, Extensive permanent grassland.

⁵ These are shown on plans in BHWB, *Windrush in Witney Project* (April 2001)

⁶ These are shown on plans in BHWB, *Windrush in Witney Project* (April 2001)

- 3.2.3 Several rights of way run through the study area. In the northern part of the site, two public footpaths enter the study area from the west, join, and exit along the lane just east of Springfield Oval. In the southern part of the site, a major footpath and cycle link joins the centre of Witney and Cogges, running across Langel Common. A public footpath also runs south from Langel Common, between the two main arms of the Windrush, past Farm Mill and through the Town Council's Country Park, and in a subway beneath the A40.

3.3 Planning Policy and Proposals

- 3.3.1 The main planning policies and proposals are set out in the West Oxfordshire Local Plan (adopted November 1997) and the Revised Deposit Draft of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 (February 2003). These plans contain general policies (such as protecting and enhancing conservation areas and priority habitats and species and protecting floodplains) which are of relevance to the Project Area but there are also specific policies and proposals directly affecting the area, for example: Policy WIT2, preventing urban sprawl and protecting existing character; the proposed Cogges Link Road and West End Link Road; and improved routes for pedestrians and cyclists. These are shown on the map in Appendix 1.
- 3.3.2 The Cogges Link Road will provide a second crossing of the River Windrush, enabling traffic to be removed from Bridge Street and the central areas of the town. It passes across the southern-most part of the Study Area between Stanton Harcourt Road and the roundabout adjacent to Sainsbury's superstore. Detailed planning permission for the road was granted by Oxfordshire County Council in January 1997. This consent expired in January 2002. An Environmental Impact Assessment of the road scheme has been undertaken and a planning application submitted. This has yet to be considered by the County Council.
- 3.3.3 Policy WIT3 in the Revised Deposit Draft Local Plan gives protection and encourages enhancement of the Windrush Valley through Witney.

Policy WIT3

Development on land within or where it would be visible from the Windrush in Witney Policy Area, defined on the Witney Inset Maps, should protect and enhance the intrinsic landscape, character, ecology and cultural value of the valley.

3.4 Topography/Geology

- 3.4.1 The river valley is, naturally, low lying. The valley slopes gradually from about 83m AOD in the north west to just below 80m in the south. Between Witney and Crawley, the valley is deeply incised, with the ridges to north and south giving long views across and along the valley. From Witney southwards, the valley is much broader, with only occasional ridges such as Cogges Hill, and the ridge which runs south west of Ducklington between Curbridge and Cokethorpe, rising above the valley floor. In this flat landscape, the river meanders in several channels, often modified by people over the centuries. The most important tributary of the Windrush within the study area is the Madley Brook, which joins the river just north of the Cogges Manor complex.
- 3.4.2 The majority of the study area is noted by the Environment Agency as within the flood plain on their indicative flood plain maps.

4 SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS RESEARCH

4.1 Summary of Historical Development and Character

- 4.1.1 The study area covers the land of two historic estates: Witney to the west of the river, and Cogges to the east⁷.
- 4.1.2 Topography is the key to the development of the settlements of Witney and Cogges: both developed on slightly higher ground, just outside the flood plain. Witney is situated on what was, in effect, an island of Cornbrash, with Queen Emma's Dyke, now a lost meander of the Windrush, enclosing the western side of the town, and the River Windrush to the east. The -ey ending to the town's name means 'island'. Cogges also developed on an area of higher ground, just to the east of the Windrush. The name Cogges is likely to mean 'hill'⁸.
- 4.1.3 The character of the river valley through Witney has always been strongly pastoral, with the land being used as meadow. These meadows would have been mown for hay, and also grazed.
- 4.1.4 Mills and fisheries punctuated the valley in places, but the landscape character was essentially pastoral and rural.
- 4.1.5 In the north of the study area, the character would have remained rural until well into the 20th century. Built development was generally kept low in the landscape. The steep valley sides would have given a strong feeling of enclosure to the valley floor, but there would also have been a sense of openness, with long views along the valley, especially in the western part, which was Hailey Parish's common meadow land. The linear nature of the valley would have been emphasised by the tree lined watercourses, and the trees and walls along the roads and plots running parallel to the valley. In the east of this area, between West End and Mill Lane (now Mill Street), the meadows were smaller and enclosed by ditches and willow trees, so there would have been a strong sense of enclosure.
- 4.1.6 In the south of the study area, built development at Cogges was minimal, and closely related to the group of buildings near the church. Cogges Hill and ridge would have strongly enclosed the valley to the east. To the west, Witney was extremely compact, and strongly focussed on the market square and High Street, with the treed burgage plots, established in the medieval period, running down to the river preserving the rural character of the valley despite its proximity to the town centre. The meadows around Langel Common would have given a feeling of openness, enclosed by the topography and vegetation, as shown in early 20th century photographs⁹.
- 4.1.7 Further south, the valley widens and broadens. Again, the character would have been strongly pastoral and rural, but much more expansive than further north, with a feeling of enclosure only from the tree lined watercourses. Between the two arms of the river, the landscape was very open, and there would have been long views along the valley. The spire of St Mary's church would have dominated the landscape, and been even more of a focal point than in the present day.

⁷ For further information on the history of the study area, in particular historic maps, see BHWB, *Windrush in Witney Project* (April 2001)

⁸ Place-name evidence from Margaret Gelling, *The Place-Names of Oxfordshire Part II*, Cambridge University Press (1971), p333

⁹ For historic photographs see BHWB, *Windrush in Witney Project* (April 2001)

- 4.1.8 It was not until the 1970s and '80s that both Witney and Cogges expanded dramatically both into and away from their valley settings. In Witney, housing development has spread onto the ridge of land west of the town, away from the historic centre of the town. Industrial/office development has spread onto the valley land south of Station Lane, and onto land to the rear of Bridge Street, both historically open meadow land.
- 4.1.9 At Cogges, housing has filled the gap at Newland between Witney and Cogges, and also comes close to the historic settlement to the south.
- 4.1.10 Other features of historic and social interest are:
- The three remaining concrete pillboxes set up during the Second World War, as part of the defences of Witney. Two are in the Langel Common area, and one further south, now in the Town Council's country park.
 - The former bathing place in the north of the study area, in the area known as 'Hills and Mountains' because of the steep valley side at this point. The bathing place was closed, and the buildings removed, when the Windrush Leisure Centre was opened in the 1970s.

4.2 Summary of Landscape and Visual Character

- 4.2.1 There are eight main landscape character types in the study area, strongly related to the area's historic land use and character (See Figures 1 and 2):

- 1: Semi-enclosed valley floor.
- 2: Enclosed valley floor.
- 3: Steeply sloping valley side.
- 4: Scrubby urban fringe.
- 5: Wooded former burgage plots
- 6: Historic settlement
- 7: Amenity land/Public Open Space
- 8: Open valley floor

Landscape type 1: Semi-enclosed valley floor

- 4.2.2 The main characteristics and positive points are:
- Enclosed by valley sides in north of study area, and by vegetation in south of study area, but with long views along the valley and up the smooth farmed valley sides (north of study area).
 - Extensive views along the valley give a feeling of expansiveness in strong contrast to the more enclosed landscape types.
 - Vegetation mostly restricted to river/ditchside willows.
 - Formerly open meadow land ('lot meadows').
 - Fields traditionally divided by ditches, sometimes lined with willows.
 - Essentially rural, tranquil character, part of setting of Witney and Scheduled Ancient Monument of Cogges
- 4.2.3 The main detractors and points of vulnerability are:
- Views marred where modern development in the valley floor and on the valley sides presents a hard urban edge and breaks the skyline.
 - Inappropriate planting, particularly of conifers and ornamental species, is particularly intrusive in this open landscape type.
 - Fencing is an uncharacteristic feature in this area, giving a cluttered feeling to the open view.
 - Intensive grazing causes damage to river banks, and discourages development of varied grassland species.

- Loss of earlier ditch and watercourse systems.
- Due to the open nature of the landscape, which it is important to maintain, development both within the valley and on the valley sides is generally intrusive.
- Further poorly screened development would seriously erode rural, tranquil character, which is already under threat.
- In southern part of study area, maintenance of riverside willows, and vegetation in adjacent landscape type 5 (wooded former burgage plots), essential in maintaining rural character.

Landscape type 2: Enclosed valley floor

- 4.2.4 The main characteristics and positive points are:
- Former small scale water meadows ('closes') enclosed by valley sides and by tree lined ditches dividing the meadows.
 - Strong sense of enclosure.
 - Urban views generally filtered by vegetation (but see below).
 - Meadow character remains, and the area is essentially tranquil.
- 4.2.5 The main detractors and points of vulnerability are:
- The new housing nearby is generally small scale and low lying, and so not out of scale or character with the landscape. Any further encroachment into these meadows would, however, dilute the landscape character.
 - Small scale character dependent on maintenance of trees lining ditches.
 - Unscreened views to Millers Mews housing detract from tranquil character.

Landscape type 3: Steeply sloping valley side

- 4.2.6 This landscape type is only found in a small part of the north of the study area. The main characteristics and positive points are:
- Strong sense of enclosure from steep scarp slope.
 - Scrub encroachment onto the grass slope adds to character and biodiversity.
 - Grassland character important component of valley side.
- 4.2.7 The main detractors and points of vulnerability are:
- Ongoing management required to maintain habitat diversity.

Landscape type 4: Scrubby urban fringe

- 4.2.8 The main characteristics and positive points are:
- Sense of enclosure from scrubby vegetation.
 - Scrub and trees valuable in screening views of nearby development and traffic.
 - Occasional oppressive character as path runs through dense scrub, contrasting with openness of valley floor nearby.
 - Underlying character landscape type 1, characteristics lost through changes in and lack of management, and scrub encroachment.
- 4.2.9 The main detractors and points of vulnerability are:
- Vegetation important in screening views of nearby development from valley.
 - Poor urban characteristics: dumped rubbish, abandoned vehicles, chainlink fencing, hard edge to river and crumbling concrete at former bathing place.
 - Balancing pond in south of study area: serious erosion of open valley character, with deep 'pond', surrounding fencing, concrete drainage channel and mounded mown grassland.

Landscape type 5: Wooded former burgage plots

4.2.10 The main characteristics and positive points are:

- Enclosed, wooded character.
- Occasional important views from riverside walk across Langel Common to Cogges.
- Veteran trees formerly within burgage plots give distinctive character to area.
- Important visual buffer between Witan Way and open valley land, including Langel Common.
- Southern part of area contains former fishponds/watercourses relating to Farm Mill, an important reminder of historic landscape uses.

4.2.11 The main detractors and points of vulnerability are:

- Essential to maintain planting to avoid opening up tranquil valley to noise and visual intrusion of the town centre traffic: one vulnerable point already on northern part of Witan Way.
- Some veteran trees in poor condition, in need of maintenance.
- Amenity planting around Windrush Leisure Centre intrudes into character area.

Landscape type 6: Historic Settlement

4.2.12 The main characteristics and positive points are:

- Stone buildings and walls around Cogges church and Manor Farm form a strong landscape unit.
- Strong historical relationship between the settlement and its valley landscape: landscape and buildings form coherent group.
- Rural, tranquil character remains despite new building nearby.
- Views to group of buildings from surrounding open and semi-enclosed valley land, and vice versa: important to retain as part of setting of Scheduled Ancient Monument.
- Moated sites to southwest of buildings, now wooded, form backdrop to views of buildings, and help to maintain rural character.

4.2.13 The main detractors and points of vulnerability are:

- Nearby housing with little screening threatens rural character of Cogges. Further development would be likely to cause severe damage to setting of SAM.
- Urban characteristics creeping in: details of lighting, surfacing, fencing/walls and building materials can all undermine or reinforce landscape character.
- Overhead power lines mar views.
- Narrow gap between Leisure Centre and Cogges: wooded moated sites form important screen.
- Appropriate management of nearby landscape essential to maintaining character of SAM.

Landscape type 7: Amenity land/Public Open Space

4.2.14 This landscape type is found in Cogges, in the green wedge between the Manor Road and Wadards Meadow housing, around the Museum car park, and around the Leisure Centre. In all these cases the amenity character is dominant, but the areas have differing underlying landscape characters. In the housing area this would probably be 'open valley side' (not found elsewhere within the study area); the Museum car park would fall within the 'semi-enclosed valley floor' type; while

the Leisure Centre would have fallen into the 'wooded former burgage plots' landscape type. However, their amenity landscape is now visually dominant, and they are closely associated with built development.

4.2.15 The main characteristics and positive points are:

- Small blocks of ornamental and semi-ornamental shrub planting.
- Generally large expanses of closely mown grass.
- Important green wedge at Cogges, maintaining visual connection between Cogges and its higher land.
- Scrub around edges of Museum car park is useful visual screen.

4.2.16 The main detractors and points of vulnerability are:

- Tree and shrub planting along river frontage of Leisure Centre is sparse in places, and views of buildings detract from the otherwise rural character of valley.
- Housing facing onto green wedge at Cogges has harsh urban edge, which dominates in views when the eye should be drawn to the historic buildings.
- Small blocks of semi-ornamental shrub planting within Museum car park are poorly maintained and contribute little to screening, and introduce semi-urban character into rural scene around Cogges.

Landscape type 8: Open valley floor

4.2.17 The main characteristics and positive points are:

- Open and expansive, unenclosed by topography.
- Long views both along and across the valley.
- Little vegetation apart from tree lined watercourses.
- Former meadow land.
- Strong connection of this landscape type to Lower Windrush Valley, south of A40.
- Important part of setting of Witney, church spire visible in many views both within study area and further south.
- Semi-mature planting alongside part of A40 is starting to form good visual screen.
- Open corridor between Manor Road housing and wide hedgerow forms important buffer between the housing and the wider valley.

4.2.18 The main detractors and points of vulnerability are:

- A40 on embankment forms barrier to views, and is intrusive visually where there is little roadside planting.
- Traffic noise can be heard everywhere in this part of study area.
- Semi-mature planting alongside part of A40 contains inappropriate species for rural location.
- Manor Road housing to east is intrusive, with little planting along boundary.
- Wide hedgerow to west of open corridor, important for screening, is in poor condition.
- Some buildings on Station Lane Industrial Estate are extremely intrusive from open valley.
- Overhead power lines add visual clutter to otherwise open landscape.

Summary

- 4.2.19 Overall, the character of the Windrush Valley as it runs through Witney is still surprisingly rural, and much of it remains as grassland, as it would have been historically. It therefore has the potential for rich ecological interest and diversity, which could be achieved through appropriate management, and which would also enhance and strengthen the valley character.
- 4.2.20 The rural, tranquil character of the valley is an important part of the setting of Witney and of the Scheduled Ancient Monument at Cogges and the Conservation Area, and it should be maintained and enhanced wherever possible.
- 4.2.21 However, in places development on the edges of the study area intrudes visually into the valley. Where built development is too dominant a visual element, the valley landscape is in danger of losing its intrinsic rural quality, and simply becoming a setting for buildings rather than a landscape element in its own right. The valley would then change to being an amenity landscape, which would radically alter its character. It is important for the setting of both Witney and Cogges, and to maintain a healthy ecological balance, to maintain this rural landscape flowing through the town.

4.3 Summary of Biological and Botanical Research

- 4.3.1 There is a variety of different habitat types in the study area¹⁰, as detailed below.
- 4.3.2 **Grassland** of various types is particularly common and characteristic of the study area. All the grassland is neutral in character as is typical of riverside meadows. There are some banks where the species are typical of the more calcareous types of neutral grassland.

- **Improved grassland** is the most abundant habitat, especially in the northwest of the study area, north of the river, where it is very heavily grazed. It also occurs in some fields around Cogges, including those used by the Museum. It falls within Landscape Type 1, semi-enclosed valley floor.

Improved grassland supports a more limited range of species than unimproved and semi-improved grassland, and is thus of less nature conservation interest. However, with changes in management, such as those promoted by the Upper Thames Tributaries ESA, the nature conservation interest of these areas could be improved.

- **Rough grassland** is found in numerous unmanaged and irregularly managed fields, disused allotments and fringing disused developed land. It falls within Landscape Types 1, 2 and 8, semi-enclosed, enclosed and open valley floors, and also Landscape Type 4, scrubby urban fringe, often in association with scrub and tall herb habitat. It includes an area of wet rough grassland between Langel Common and Grimes Mead, north of Cogges.

The majority of the rough grassland in the study area is on old former meadow land, and is likely to have supported a wider range of species typical of unimproved meadows in the past. While the vegetation tends to be species-poor, these areas can be important wildlife refuges, in particular for

¹⁰ For more detail, see Graham Hawker, *Windrush in Witney Project Area: Biological Records and Habitats* (November 2000)

small mammals, where surrounding areas are intensively managed.

- **Unimproved and semi-improved grassland** is particularly valuable for its biodiversity. There is one unimproved wet grassland field in the study area, Grimes Mead north of Cogges. A small area within the Cogges Museum land has been restored to unimproved grassland. There are a number of semi-improved sites which retain some elements of unimproved grassland communities, including Langel Common and part of the Town Council's country park. All these fall within Landscape Types 1 and 8, semi-enclosed and open valley floors, and many of the sites support great burnet and pepper saxifrage, indicator species for old, unimproved, neutral pastures.

Langel Common at one time supported the internationally rare creeping marshwort, whose only other UK location is Port Meadow at Oxford. There is a Local Species Action Plan for creeping marshwort, the main objectives of which are to maintain the existing population of the plant, and restore or re-introduce at suitable sites. As part of this Action Plan a small scrape has been carried out on the Common, which is being monitored to see if the plant will re-establish.

Plants typical of drier semi-improved calcareous grassland, such as cowslip, salad burnet and lady's bedstraw, are found on the bank in the north of the study area, in Landscape Type 3, steeply sloping valley side.

The maintenance and restoration of unimproved and semi-improved grassland is one of the key objectives in the County Council's *Habitat Action Plan for Grazing Marsh and Neutral Grasslands*.

- **Poor semi-improved grassland** is found in a number of riverside fields, including in the northwest of the study area, south of the river, where the fields are less heavily grazed than north of the river, and north of Cogges. It falls within Landscape Type 1, semi-enclosed valley floor.

As noted above for improved grassland, the nature conservation interest of these areas could be improved through management.

- **Recreational and mown grassland** is found in regularly mown public open space and verges. The majority of this falls within Landscape Type 7, amenity land/public open space.

This type of grassland has very little nature conservation interest.

4.3.3 **Tall herb habitat** is found in areas dominated by nettles and willowherb, often in association with scrub and unmanaged rough grassland, as already described. Its nature conservation interest is similar to that of rough grassland.

4.3.4 **Tall wetland habitat** includes marginal vegetation along watercourses, and also wet areas in grassland sites, in particular in some riverside fields. The main area is in the north of the study area, between the two arms of the River Windrush, in Landscape Type 1. As with the rough grassland, most of this is likely to have developed on former meadow land which formerly supported a wider range of species typical of unimproved meadows. Areas of taller vegetation close to the river are of potential value for otters, a UK Biodiversity Action Plan priority species.

4.3.5 **Woodland** is found mainly alongside the River Windrush, including part of Landscape Type 4, scrubby urban fringe, in the north of the study area. It

includes the riverside walk (Landscape Type 5, wooded former burgage plots); the wooded moats at Cogges (part of Landscape Type 6, historic settlement); the recent plantations in the south of the study area and at the southern end of Langel Common (within Landscape Types 1 and 8); and woodland strips forming field boundaries.

- 4.3.6 **Scrub**, mainly consisting of hawthorn and willow, is found in association with woodland and in small patches on the river banks, in Landscape Types 1 and 8, semi-enclosed and open valley floors; Landscape Type 4, scrubby urban fringe; and Landscape Type 3, steeply sloping valley side.
- 4.3.7 **Hedgerows**: as already discussed in the section on landscape character, hedges are not particularly characteristic of this landscape, but there are a few scattered throughout the study area.
- 4.3.8 **Arable** fields, including set aside and fallow fields, are found in the south of the study area, within Landscape Type 8.
- 4.3.9 **Developed land** includes houses and other buildings, gardens, car parks and surfaced tracks.
- 4.3.10 **Aquatic habitat** includes the River Windrush, Madley Brook, main ditches and ponds.
- 4.3.11 There is one small **orchard** at Cogges.
- 4.3.12 The Oxfordshire County Museum Service has been recording species at Cogges Farm for many years, including extensive invertebrate records. These confirm the importance of the variety of habitats in this area (Landscape Type 6, historic settlement), including the stone walls. The species list includes 25 species recorded nationally as rare¹¹, including 9 which are noted in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan as high priorities for nature conservation action. The list includes invertebrates, two lichens, water vole, and 6 birds.
- 4.3.13 There are also some records for the country park area, mainly of birds. The species list includes 5 birds of particular conservation interest: water rail, redshank, snipe, kingfisher and reed bunting; and water vole.
- 4.3.14 Further botanical survey work was carried out on a number of the sites in the south of the study area in the summer of 2001¹². This confirmed the importance of Grimes Mead (referred to as Witney Marsh in Graham Hawker's report), which has now been declared a County Wildlife Site. The area consists of marshy grassland, two areas of grazing marsh dominated by great pond sedge and lesser pond sedge, and a strip of wet improved pasture alongside the river. Grazing marsh is a rare habitat both nationally and locally. It is recognised in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan and the Oxfordshire Local Biodiversity Action Plan¹³ as a priority for conservation action.

¹¹ For exact definitions, see Graham Hawker, *Windrush in Witney Project Area: Biological Records and Habitats* (November 2000)

¹² For more detail, see Graham Hawker, *Windrush in Witney Project Area: Botanical Survey* (August 2001)

¹³ Oxfordshire Nature Conservation Forum, *Habitat Action Plan for Grazing Marsh and Neutral Grasslands* (Issue 1, November 2000)

4.3.15 Overall, the nature conservation interest of the study area is strongly related to its main historic land use, meadow land. Historic land management practices, including seasonal flooding, the cutting of hay, and non-intensive grazing, have all contributed to the diversity of species found in unimproved grassland. The UK and Oxfordshire Biodiversity Action Plans, and the Upper Thames Tributaries ESA, all recognise its importance and seek to maintain and restore it.

4.4 Summary of Public Survey

4.4.1 A public survey was carried out in the autumn of 2001, to establish the responses of 50 randomly selected number of members of the public visiting the study area to its landscape and management¹⁴. The responses indicate a high level of public interest and concern for the Windrush Valley in Witney.

4.4.2 The study area was valued highly by almost all the interviewees. The commonest reasons for this high value were:

- Rural character of the area.
- Sense of tranquillity.
- Sense of countryside in close proximity to the town.

4.4.3 Landscape perceptions of the study area emphasised qualities such as beauty, tranquillity and naturalness, but many interviewees also commented on the area's ecology, management as a farmed landscape, and its land use history.

4.4.4 For the study area as a whole, the main desires were:

- Connect paths between north and south of study area, and beyond.
- Keep the whole area intact, not eroded into small parcels.
- Keep the valley as natural as possible and free from development.

4.4.5 Overall, the responses show that, within the context of this public survey, there is widespread support for:

- Keeping the rural character.
- Maintaining the area for wildlife.
- Ensuring that any new development is sensitive to the existing character.

4.4.6 Besides this public survey, the District Council held meetings/interviews with a number of stakeholders over the course of 2001. These included statutory bodies such as the Environment Agency, Upper Thames Tributaries ESA representatives, and Oxfordshire County Council.

4.4.7 The project has also been publicised in the local press, and in January 2002 an introductory leaflet about the project was circulated to groups and organisations which may have an interest in the area, and comments invited. Many helpful comments were received, and these have been taken into account in the formulation of the recommendations which follow. The full list of those consulted is set out in Appendix 2.

4.4.8 In May 2002 a Draft Management Plan for Langel Common was published for consultation. The Plan covers the main area of land within the Windrush in Witney Project Area managed by the District Council and sets out specific measures on how the objectives identified in this document can be implemented in this area. Key stakeholders were consulted. A public exhibition was also held

¹⁴ For more detail, see Jane Corbett, The Living Landscapes Project, *Windrush in Witney Project: Public Survey Report* (December 2001)

in the town centre in July, followed by a postal survey of 1000 households closest to the study area on both sides of the River Windrush (363 responses were received). The overall response was one of support of the District Council's management proposals.

- 4.4.9 The Langel Common Management Plan was approved by the Council in December 2002 and £50,000 was included in the Capital Programme for 2003/2004 for the implementation of the Year 1 objectives of the Plan.

5 MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

5.1 Analysis of previous research

- 5.1.1 Overall, there is a strong correlation between the features of most landscape and historic interest, those of most nature conservation interest, and features of most concern to the participants in the public survey.
- 5.1.2 The rural lowland meadow character valued by the public has come about through historic land use, and is of particular nature conservation interest. The overriding management objective is therefore to **encourage the protection, restoration and enhancement of unimproved neutral grassland (NCO1)**. This is one of the most characteristic habitats and landscape features in the study area. It is valuable for many different species, and its maintenance and enhancement is one of the aims of the *Habitat Action Plan for Grazing Marsh and Neutral Grasslands*. One of the key mechanisms for maintaining, enhancing and creating unimproved neutral grassland is through the Upper Thames Tributaries ESA. (The Nature Conservation and Ecology section of the Adopted Local Plan and Section 11 of the Review Plan, including Policy N12 Biodiversity Conservation, are particularly relevant to this.)
- 5.1.3 The rural character of the area is seen as under threat both in the landscape character assessment, and in the public survey. A further central management objective is therefore to **ensure that any new development integrates with the landscape character of the study area (LO1)**. (See Policy CO7, Adopted Local Plan, and Policy NE3, Revised Deposit Draft Local Plan). For example, appropriate mitigation or compensation measures may overcome potential harm to the landscape character of an area from proposed changes within or adjoining the Project Area. This Project Report helps to inform what may be appropriate.
- 5.1.4 Improvements in the footpath connections through the study area were also mentioned in the public survey, and have a relationship with public access objectives further south, in the Lower Windrush Valley¹⁵. An additional important objective is therefore, where possible, and where it can be done without detriment to existing uses and wildlife interests, to **improve the quality of existing public access to the study area, while respecting the area's landscape character (PA1)**. (Policies CO7, R10, T2 and T3 of the Adopted Local Plan and Policies NE3, T2 and TLC8 of the Revised Local Plan).

¹⁵ Objective PA1 in BHWB, *Lower Windrush Valley Project*, for Oxfordshire County Council/Smiths Bletchington (October 1999)

5.2 Objectives

5.2.1 The full list of objectives is set out below, cross-referenced to Local Plan policies, where appropriate (both from the adopted West Oxfordshire Local Plan, 1997, and the Revised Draft Local Plan, 2003):

- NCO1: Encourage the protection, restoration and enhancement of unimproved neutral grassland. (*Adopted Policies BE8, CO14 -16. Revised Policies BE4, NE6, 12 &13, WIT3.*)
- NCO2: Encourage the protection, restoration and enhancement of the river corridor with its associated wetland habitats. (*Adopted Policies CO13, 16 & 21. Revised Policies NE 7 & WIT3.*)
- NCO3: Encourage continuing and further survey work in study area.
- NCO4: Safeguard priority habitats and species in accordance with the relevant BAPs, HAPs and SAPs. (*Adopted Policies CO14 – 17. Revised Policies NE12 – 14 & WIT3.*)
- NCO5: Encourage management of scarp slope scrub.
- NCO6: Encourage the restoration of creeping marshwort in accordance with the Local Species Action Plan. (*Adopted Policies CO14 & 17. Revised Policies NE12, 14 & WIT3.*)
- NCO7: Improve habitats for otters and water voles. (*Adopted Policy CO14. Revised Policies NE7, 12, 14 & WIT3.*)
- LO1: Ensure that any new development integrates with the landscape character of the study area. (*Adopted Policies BE1, 3, 8, 10, 12, 13 & 16, CO7, 8 & 12. Revised Policies BE1, 2, 4, 5 & 12, NE3 & 7, WIT3.*)
- LO2: Encourage land management practices that are in keeping with the landscape character of the study area.
- LO3: Ensure new planting is in character with landscape type. (*Adopted Policies BE3 & 13, CO13. Revised Policies BE2 & NE6.*)
- LO4: Encourage the appropriate screening of poor views/features.
- LO5: Encourage management of existing riverside willows and planting of new willows where appropriate. (*Adopted Policies BE 13, CO13 & 21. Revised Policies NE6 & 7.*)
- LO6: Encourage management of tree screen, and especially veteran trees. (*Adopted Policy CO16. Revised Policy NE12.*)
- LO7: Encourage protection, awareness and management of historic features. (*Adopted Policies BE3, 10 - 17. Revised Policies BE2, 5 - 10, 12 & 13, WIT3.*)
- LO8: Encourage removal of inappropriate urban detractors from character area.
- LO9: Take measures to improve rubbish clearance within study area.

- PA1: Improve the quality of existing public access provision within the study area, while respecting the area's landscape character. (*Adopted Policies BE3 & 4, T1, 2 & 3, R1 & 10. Revised Policies BE2 & 3, T2 & 6, TLC1 & 8.*)
- PA2: Seek to establish a new public footpath route along the valley between Witan Way and the old bathing place.
- PA3: Ensure that new public access provision does not conflict with sites of high nature conservation interest.
- PA4: Take measures to control recreational motor bike use within the study area.

- 5.2.2 The above objectives are detailed further in the following sections, which relate to geographical and landscape character areas within the study area, working from north to south. These are laid out in table form, for easy reference and use, and include a summary of the issues for each area. The location and extent of the areas are shown on Figures 3 and 4 at the end of this report. NB Appendix 1 shows specific policies and proposals from the Revised Draft Local Plan which directly affect the study area.

WINDRUSH IN WITNEY PROJECT: RECOMMENDATIONS

SUMMARY OF ISSUES: AREA 1 (See Fig 3)				
Location	Landscape type	Landscape/visual issues	Habitats	Public survey issues
North of study area: western section, mostly north of river	1: Semi-enclosed valley floor	<p>Key characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enclosure from valley sides. • Long views along valley. • River/ditchside willows. • Open meadows. <p>Negative characteristics/ threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hard urban edge to north (Crawley Road housing), and to south if scrubby screening in landscape type 4 removed. • Inappropriate planting and fencing in places. • Intensive grazing causes damage to river banks, and discourages development of varied grassland species. • Loss of earlier ditch and watercourse systems. 	<p>North of river: Improved grassland, very heavily grazed.</p> <p>South of river: Poor semi-improved grassland.</p>	<p>Positive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain rural character. • Maintain/improve wildlife interest <p>Negative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motor bikes a nuisance. • Winter flooding reduces access.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES: AREA 1				
Objectives	Comment	Mechanism	Priority	
NCO1: Encourage the protection, restoration and enhancement of unimproved neutral grassland.	Central to character of study area, links with LWVP objectives, furthers County and national biodiversity aims. Increase public awareness: winter flooding part of character of lowland meadows; encourage provision of alternative routes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of conservation grazing project for study area. • Use of WiW Landscape Assessment in planning decisions. • Through S106 Agreements (management plans or land acquisition). • Promotion of development briefs. • Through ESA and Whole Farm Plans (FWAG). 	High	
NCO2: Encourage the protection, restoration and enhancement of the river corridor with its associated wetland habitats	Central to character of study area, links with LWVP objectives, furthers County and national biodiversity aims. Could include features such as encouragement of wildlife buffer zones along watercourses, restoration of watercourses, encouragement of seasonal flooding of meadow land.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC Planning. • Partnerships with EA and conservation bodies. • Through ESA. • Through S106 Agreements (management plans). 	High	
NCO3: Encourage continuing and further survey work in study area.	To improve base-line information and monitor change. Botanical surveys especially required in this area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC Planning: ecological surveys should be required as integral part of planning applications. • Liaison with EA, ESA and conservation bodies. • WODC grants available. 	High/moderate	
NCO4: Safeguard priority habitats and species in accordance with the relevant BAPs, HAPs and SAPs.	Furthers County and national biodiversity aims. Relevant HAPs: Grazing Marsh and Neutral grassland; Wetlands: Rivers and Ditches.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC Planning: ecological assessment should be required as integral part of planning applications. • Liaison with conservation bodies. 	High	
NCO7: Improve habitats for otters and water voles.	Both UK Biodiversity Group priority species. Rough grass/scrubby river margins beneficial both as havens and corridors: increase public awareness, as may restrict access to river bank in places.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaison with BBOWT Otter Project and EA. • WODC Planning. 	High/moderate	
LO1: Ensure that any new development integrates with the landscape character of the study area.	New development within Area 1 is extremely unlikely to be possible without affecting character. Development on valley sides is also likely to affect character of Area 1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC Planning. • Promote preparation and use of planning/development briefs. 	High	
LO2: Encourage land management practices that are in keeping with the landscape character of the study area.	Key characteristics as noted above: maintenance/management of open meadow land and pollarded willows particularly important.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide guidance based on WiW research and landscape assessment. • Promote the concept through public meetings and individual discussions with landowners. • WODC to act as point of co-ordination for further advice and information about the availability of grants etc. 	High	
LO3: Ensure new planting is in character with landscape type.	Inappropriate planting, eg of conifers, increases rather than reduces intrusiveness. Removal of conifers, for instance around caravan area, would be beneficial, to be replaced with native species. Native planting only should be used in this area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC Planning. • Provide guidance on suitable species. 	High	
LO4: Encourage the appropriate screening of poor views/features.	Housing along Crawley Road, and large agricultural buildings, intrusive. Important to ensure any planting is of native species.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC Planning. • Provide guidance on suitable species. • Grants for planting. • Through Whole Farm Plans (FWAG) 	High/moderate	

AREA 1

WINDRUSH IN WITNEY PROJECT: RECOMMENDATIONS

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES: AREA 1 (continued)			
Objectives	Comment	Mechanism	Priority
LO5: Encourage management of existing riverside willows and planting of new willows where appropriate.	Pollarded willows characteristic of area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC: through grants and increasing public awareness. • ESA/EA grants may also be available. 	High/moderate
LO8: Encourage removal of inappropriate urban detractors from character area.	Extremely important to maintain rural character of valley. It is easily damaged by features such as post and rail fencing and conifer planting, which introduce urban/suburban elements into the rural landscape.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC Planning. • Provide guidance on suitable species for study area. • Develop design guide for study area to cover path surfacing, street furniture etc. • Grants for appropriate planting. • Through Whole Farm Plans (FWAG) 	High/moderate
PA1: Improve the quality of existing public access provision within the study area, while respecting the area's landscape character.	In line with public survey issues and similar objectives in Lower Windrush Valley.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare public access plan to co-ordinate maintenance responsibilities, funding arrangements and design code for furniture. • Plan to be drawn up with WODC Planning, OCC, Lower Windrush Valley Project, WODC Recreation & Arts Service, Healthy Walks Project etc. 	High/moderate
PA4: Take measures to ban or severely restrict recreational motor bike use within the study area.	Seen as nuisance by some members of public, and reduces quiet enjoyment and tranquillity of area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaison with WODC Community Safety Officer, Highway Authority and Police. 	Moderate
AREA 1 (continued)			

WINDRUSH IN WITNEY PROJECT: RECOMMENDATIONS

SUMMARY OF ISSUES: AREA 2 (See Fig 3)				
Location	Landscape type	Landscape/visual issues	Habitats	Public survey issues
North of study area: eastern section, north of river	2: Enclosed valley floor	<p>Key characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small scale water meadows. • Strong sense of enclosure. • River/ditchside willows. • Urban views generally filtered by trees (but see below). <p>Negative characteristics/threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further development would erode landscape character. • Character dependent on maintenance of river/ditchside trees. • Unscreened views to Millers Mews housing detract from tranquil character. 	<p>Western meadow: Improved grassland.</p> <p>Eastern meadow: Rough grassland.</p> <p>Tree margin to river and ditches.</p>	<p>Positive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain rural character. • Maintain/improve wildlife interest <p>Negative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Winter flooding reduces access.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES: AREA 2			
Objectives	Comment	Mechanism	Priority
NCO1: Encourage the protection, restoration and enhancement of unimproved neutral grassland.	Central to character of study area, links with LWVP objectives, furthers County and national biodiversity aims. Increase public awareness: winter flooding part of character of lowland meadows; encourage provision of alternative routes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of conservation grazing project for study area. • Use of WiW Landscape Assessment in planning decisions. • Through S106 Agreements (management plans or land acquisition). • Promotion of development briefs. • Through ESA and Whole Farm Plans (FWAG). • Prepare management plan for WODC land. 	High
NCO2: Encourage the protection, restoration and enhancement of the river corridor with its associated wetland habitats	Central to character of study area, links with LWVP objectives, furthers County and national biodiversity aims. Could include features such as encouragement of wildlife buffer zones along watercourses, restoration of watercourses, encouragement of seasonal flooding of meadow land.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC Planning. • Partnerships with EA and conservation bodies. • Through ESA. • Through S106 Agreements (management plans). • Prepare management plan for WODC land. 	High
NCO3: Encourage continuing and further survey work in study area.	To improve base-line information and monitor change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC Planning: ecological surveys should be required as integral part of planning applications. • Liaison with EA, ESA and conservation bodies. • WODC grants available. • Management plan for WODC land should include surveys and monitoring. 	High/moderate
NCO4: Safeguard priority habitats and species in accordance with the relevant BAPs, HAPs and SAPs.	Furthers County and national biodiversity aims. Relevant HAPs: Grazing Marsh and Neutral grassland; Wetlands: Rivers and Ditches.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC Planning: ecological assessment should be required as integral part of planning applications. • Liaison with conservation bodies. • Prepare management plan for WODC land. 	High
NCO7: Improve habitats for otters and water voles.	Both UK Biodiversity Group priority species. Rough grass/scrubby river margins beneficial both as havens and corridors: increase public awareness, as may restrict access to river bank in places.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaison with BBOWT Otter Project and EA. • WODC Planning. 	High/moderate
LO1: Ensure that any new development integrates with the landscape character of the study area.	New development within Area 2 is unlikely to be possible without affecting character: few enclosed water meadows remain in Witney. Development on sites nearby may also affect character of Area 2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC Planning. • Promote preparation and use of planning/development briefs. 	High
LO2: Encourage land management practices that are in keeping with the landscape character of the study area.	Key characteristics as noted above: maintenance/management of small scale meadow land and pollarded willows particularly important.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide guidance based on WiW research and landscape assessment. • Promote the concept through public meetings and individual discussions with landowners. • WODC to act as point of co-ordination for further advice and information about the availability of grants etc. • Prepare management plan for WODC land. 	High
LO3: Ensure new planting is in character with landscape type.	Inappropriate planting increases rather than reduces intrusiveness. Native planting only should be used in this area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC Planning. • Provide guidance on suitable species. 	High

AREA 2

WINDRUSH IN WITNEY PROJECT: RECOMMENDATIONS

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES: AREA 2 (continued)			
Objectives	Comment	Mechanism	Priority
LO4: Encourage the appropriate screening of poor views/features.	Millers Mews housing dominant in some views. Important to ensure that any screen planting is of native species.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC Planning. • Provide guidance on suitable species. • Grants for planting. • S106 Agreements. • Prepare management plan for WODC land. 	High/moderate
LO5: Encourage management of existing riverside willows and planting of new willows where appropriate.	Pollarded willows characteristic of area, but pollarding should be carried out in phases so as not to dilute effectiveness of visual screen.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC: through grants and increasing public awareness. • ESA/EA grants may also be available. • S106 Agreements. • Prepare management plan for WODC land. 	High/moderate
LO8: Encourage removal of inappropriate urban detractors from character area.	Extremely important to maintain rural character of valley. Any street furniture and path surfacing should be very low key and unobtrusive.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop design guide for study area to cover path surfacing, street furniture etc. • WODC Planning. • Provide guidance on suitable species. 	High/moderate
PA1: Improve the quality of existing public access provision within the study area, while respecting the area's landscape character.	In line with public survey issues and similar objectives in Lower Windrush Valley. New footpath/cycleway to be provided in this area: important to ensure that this does not introduce urban characteristics (eg lighting) into this area (see LO8). Design of new or refurbished bridges should reflect rural character.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare public access plan to co-ordinate maintenance responsibilities, funding arrangements and design code for furniture. • Plan to be drawn up with WODC Planning, OCC, Lower Windrush Valley Project, WODC Recreation & Arts Service, Healthy Walks Project etc. 	High/moderate
PA2: Seek to establish a new public footpath route along the valley between Witan Way and the old bathing place.	In line with public survey issues and similar objectives in Lower Windrush Valley.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC Planning including Section 106 Agreements. • Encourage preparation of development briefs for the affected sites. 	High/moderate
PA3: Ensure that new public access provision does not conflict with sites of high nature conservation interest.	Public access and nature conservation may conflict in places, especially where access to river bank is concerned: public awareness campaign required.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC Planning. 	High/moderate

AREA 2 (continued)

WINDRUSH IN WITNEY PROJECT: RECOMMENDATIONS

SUMMARY OF ISSUES: AREA 3 (See Fig 3)				
Location	Landscape type	Landscape/visual issues	Habitats	Public survey issues
North of study area, western section, southern valley side.	3: Steeply sloping valley side	Key characteristics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steep scarp slope. • Strong sense of enclosure. • Scrub encroachment. • Grassland. Negative characteristics/threats <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing management required to maintain habitat diversity. 	Semi-improved grassland and scrub. Supports plants typical of drier semi-improved grassland.	Positive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain rural character. • Maintain/improve wildlife interest

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES: AREA 3			
Objectives	Comment	Mechanism	Priority
NCO1: Encourage the protection, restoration and enhancement of unimproved neutral grassland.	Central to character of study area, links with LWVP objectives, furthers County and national biodiversity aims. Drier grassland is unusual habitat in study area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of conservation grazing project for study area. • Use of WiW Landscape Assessment in planning decisions. • Through S106 Agreements (management plans or land acquisition). • Through ESA and Whole Farm Plans (FWAG). 	High
NCO3: Encourage continuing and further survey work in study area.	To improve base-line information and monitor change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC Planning: ecological surveys should be required as integral part of planning applications. • Liaison with EA, ESA and conservation bodies. • WODC grants available. 	High/moderate
NCO4: Safeguard priority habitats and species in accordance with the relevant BAPs, HAPs and SAPs.	Furthers County and national biodiversity aims. Relevant HAPs: Grazing Marsh and Neutral grassland; Chalk and Limestone grassland.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC Planning: ecological assessment should be required as integral part of planning applications. • Liaison with conservation bodies. 	High
NCO5: Encourage management of scarp slope scrub.	Combination of scrub/grassland typical of Cotswolds. Scrub important for range of wildlife. Scrub in this location is also important in screening views of development to south, so care needed in management.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through ESA and Whole Farm Plans (FWAG). • Consider designation as County Wildlife Site. 	High/moderate
LO2: Encourage land management practices that are in keeping with the landscape character of the study area.	Key characteristics as noted above: maintenance of grassland and scrub a priority.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide guidance based on WiW research and landscape assessment. • Promote the concept through public meetings and individual discussions with landowners. • WODC to act as point of co-ordination for further advice and information about the availability of grants etc. 	High
LO4: Encourage the appropriate screening of poor views/features.	Ensure that management of scrub does not open up views of development to south.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC Planning. • Through ESA and Whole Farm Plans (FWAG). 	High/moderate
PA1: Improve the quality of existing public access provision within the study area, while respecting the area's landscape character.	In line with public survey issues and similar objectives in Lower Windrush Valley.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare public access plan to co-ordinate maintenance responsibilities, funding arrangements and design code for furniture. • Plan to be drawn up with WODC Planning, OCC, Lower Windrush Valley Project, WODC Recreation & Arts Service, Healthy Walks Project etc. 	High/moderate
PA3: Ensure that new public access provision does not conflict with sites of high nature conservation interest.	Public access and nature conservation may conflict in places, especially where access to river bank is concerned: public awareness campaign required.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC Planning 	High/moderate
PA4: Take measures to ban or severely restrict recreational motor bike use within the study area.	Seen as nuisance by some members of public, and reduces quiet enjoyment and tranquillity of area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaison with WODC Community Safety Officer, Highway Authority and Police. 	Moderate

AREA 3

WINDRUSH IN WITNEY PROJECT: RECOMMENDATIONS

SUMMARY OF ISSUES: AREA 4 (See Fig 3)				
Location	Landscape type	Landscape/visual issues	Habitats	Public survey issues
North of study area, western section, south of river	4: Scrubby urban fringe	<p>Key characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enclosure from scrubby vegetation. • Underlying landscape character: Type 1, open meadow. <p>Negative characteristics/threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vegetation important in screening views of nearby development from valley. • Air of dereliction: rubbish, abandoned vehicles etc. • Abandoned bathing place: crumbling concrete, hard edge to river. 	Mix of scrub, woodland, rough grassland and tall herb.	<p>Positive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain rural character. • Maintain/improve wildlife interest. <p>Negative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Winter flooding reduces access. • Concerns about bathing place

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES: AREA 4				
Objectives	Comment	Mechanism	Priority	
NCO1: Encourage the protection, restoration and enhancement of unimproved neutral grassland.	Central to character of study area, and furthers County and national biodiversity aims; however, scrub and trees are important visual screen here, and have wildlife value: maintain where possible, suggest only small areas of grassland, on 'island' area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of conservation grazing project for study area. • Use of WiW Landscape Assessment in planning decisions. • Through S106 Agreements (management plans or land acquisition). • Promotion of development briefs. • Through ESA and Whole Farm Plans (FWAG). 	High	
NCO2: Encourage the protection, restoration and enhancement of the river corridor with its associated wetland habitats	Central to character of study area, links with LWVP objectives, furthers County and national biodiversity aims. Could include features such as encouragement of wildlife buffer zones along watercourses, restoration of watercourses, encouragement of seasonal flooding of meadow land. Investigate feasibility of SUDS scheme as part of New Mills redevelopment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC Planning. • Through S106 Agreements (management plans). • Partnerships with EA and conservation bodies. • Through ESA. 	High	
NCO3: Encourage continuing and further survey work in study area.	To improve base-line information and monitor change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC Planning: ecological surveys should be required as integral part of planning applications. Management plans should include for continuing monitoring. • Liaison with EA, ESA and conservation bodies. • WODC grants available. 	High/moderate	
NCO4: Safeguard priority habitats and species in accordance with the relevant BAPs, HAPs and SAPs.	Furthers County and national biodiversity aims. Relevant HAPs: Grazing Marsh and Neutral grassland; Wetlands: Rivers and Ditches. Investigate feasibility of SUDS scheme as part of New Mills redevelopment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC Planning: ecological assessment should be required as integral part of planning applications. • Liaison with conservation bodies. 	High	
NCO7: Improve habitats for otters and water voles.	Both UK Biodiversity Group priority species. Rough grass/scrubby river margins beneficial both as havens and corridors: increase public awareness, as may restrict access to river bank in places. This area, with scrub/rough grass already and limited public access, is potential haven and corridor for wildlife, in particular 'island' area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaison with BBOWT Otter Project and EA. • WODC Planning. 	High/moderate	
LO1: Ensure that any new development integrates with the landscape character of the study area.	Underlying character of Area 4 is Landscape Type 1, semi-enclosed valley floor, with meadow character. However, screening value of scrub/trees also very important. Development on valley floor itself would not be in keeping with landscape character: any development should be on upper valley side, with very strong planting screen (native species only) to protect tranquillity of valley/river corridor.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC Planning. • Promote preparation and use of planning/development briefs. 	High	
LO2: Encourage land management practices that are in keeping with the landscape character of the study area.	Key characteristics as noted above and in Area 1: re-establishment of open meadow land and pollarded willows particularly important, but must be balanced against need for screening of existing and proposed development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide guidance based on WiW research and landscape assessment. • WODC Planning: S106 Agreements. • Promote the concept through public meetings and individual discussions with landowners. • WODC to act as point of co-ordination for further advice and information about the availability of grants etc. 	High	
LO3: Ensure new planting is in character with landscape type.	Inappropriate planting, eg of conifers, increases rather than reduces intrusiveness. Native planting only should be used in this area, unless well within developed area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC Planning. • Provide guidance on suitable species. 	High	
LO4: Encourage the appropriate screening of poor views/features.	Ensure that scrub/tree removal does not open up views. Important to ensure any new planting is of native species.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC Planning. • Provide guidance on suitable species. • Grants for planting. 	High/moderate	

AREA 4

WINDRUSH IN WITNEY PROJECT: RECOMMENDATIONS

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES: AREA 4 (continued)			
Objectives	Comment	Mechanism	Priority
LO5: Encourage management of existing riverside willows and planting of new willows where appropriate.	Pollarded willows characteristic of area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC: through grants and increasing public awareness. • ESA/EA grants may also be available. • S106 Agreements. 	High/moderate
LO7: Encourage protection, awareness and management of historic features.	Mill races and old bathing place both of historic interest. Suggest further historic survey.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC Planning. • Raise public awareness. • Further survey to establish significance. 	Moderate
LO8: Encourage removal of inappropriate urban detractors from character area.	Extremely important to maintain rural character of valley. This applies in particular to the old bathing place: the crumbling concrete is potentially dangerous, and the hard edge to the river inappropriate in this rural setting (see also LO7). Fencing and path surfacing should be very low key and unobtrusive, and any development should be kept out of valley floor, and very well screened (see also LO1).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC Planning. • Promote preparation and use of planning/development briefs. • Develop design guide for study area to cover path surfacing, street furniture etc. 	High/moderate
LO9: Take measures to improve rubbish clearance within study area.	Ensure eg abandoned cars are quickly removed. This problem should be reduced when area redeveloped.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise with WODC Environmental Health. 	High/moderate
PA1: Improve the quality of existing public access provision within the study area, while respecting the area's landscape character.	In line with public survey issues and similar objectives in Lower Windrush Valley. Development may offer key opportunity to link parts of study area, but wildlife havens/corridors also important. Ensure that new paths do not add to urbanisation of study area (see LO8), and avoid areas sensitive to wildlife: suggest avoid 'island' area. Design of new or refurbished bridges should reflect rural character.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare public access plan to co-ordinate maintenance responsibilities, funding arrangements and design code for furniture. • Plan to be drawn up with WODC Planning, OCC, Lower Windrush Valley Project, WODC Recreation & Arts Service, Healthy Walks Project etc. • WODC Planning: S106 Agreements. 	High/moderate
PA2: Seek to establish a new public footpath route along the valley between Witan Way and the old bathing place.	In line with public survey issues and similar objectives in Lower Windrush Valley. Development may offer key opportunity to link parts of study area, but wildlife havens/corridors also important. Ensure that new paths do not add to urbanisation of study area, and avoid areas sensitive to wildlife: suggest avoid 'island' area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC Planning including Section 106 Agreements. • Encourage preparation of development briefs for the affected sites. 	High/moderate
PA3: Ensure that new public access provision does not conflict with sites of high nature conservation interest.	Public access and nature conservation may conflict in places, especially where access to river bank is concerned: public awareness campaign required. Ensure that new paths do not add to urbanisation of study area, and avoid areas sensitive to wildlife: suggest avoid 'island' area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare public access plan to co-ordinate maintenance responsibilities, funding arrangements and design code for furniture. • Plan to be drawn up with WODC Planning, OCC, Lower Windrush Valley Project, WODC Recreation & Arts Service, Healthy Walks Project etc. • WODC Planning: S106 Agreements. 	High/moderate
PA4: Take measures to ban or severely restrict recreational motor bike use within the study area.	Seen as nuisance by some members of public, and reduces quiet enjoyment and tranquillity of area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaison with WODC Community Safety Officer, Highway Authority and Police. 	Moderate

AREA 4 (continued)

WINDRUSH IN WITNEY PROJECT: RECOMMENDATIONS

SUMMARY OF ISSUES: AREA 5 (See Fig 4)				
Location	Landscape type	Landscape/visual issues	Habitats	Public survey issues
South of study area, Riverside walk, both north and south of Leisure Centre.	5: Wooded former burgage plots	<p>Key characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enclosed, wooded character; veteran trees. • Occasional important views from riverside walk across Langel Common to Cogges. • Important buffer between Witan Way and open valley land, including Langel Common and Cogges. • Southern part of area contains former fishponds/watercourses relating to Farm Mill, important reminder of historic landscape uses. <p>Negative characteristics/threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Essential to maintain planting to avoid opening up tranquil valley to noise and visual intrusion of town centre traffic: one vulnerable point already on northern part of Witan Way. • Housing at Newland intrusive in some views, especially at vulnerable point on Witan Way. • Vulnerable to light pollution: planting in this area essential to protect tranquil valley. • Some veteran trees in poor condition, in need of maintenance. • CCTV camera prominently located on footpath. 	Mainly woodland, with small amount of amenity grass, especially at northern end (vulnerable visual point). Small amount of tall herb beside river in southern part.	<p>Positive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain rural character. • Maintain/improve wildlife interest. • Traffic-free route between parts of town. <p>Negative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rubbish in river.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES: AREA 5			
Objectives	Comment	Mechanism	Priority
NCO2: Encourage the protection, restoration and enhancement of the river corridor with its associated wetland habitats	Central to character of study area, links with LWVP objectives, furthers County and national biodiversity aims. Could include features such as encouragement of wildlife buffer zones along river and restoration of fish ponds.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC Planning. • Partnerships with EA and conservation bodies. • Prepare management plan for WODC owned land. • Liaise with WTC. 	High
NCO3: Encourage continuing and further survey work in study area.	To improve base-line information and monitor change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management plan for WODC owned land should include continued monitoring. • Liaise with WTC. • WODC grants available. 	High/moderate
NCO4: Safeguard priority habitats and species in accordance with the relevant BAPs, HAPs and SAPs.	Furthers County and national biodiversity aims. Relevant HAPs: Wetlands: Rivers and Ditches; Broadleaved woodland; Wood pasture, Parkland and Veteran trees.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare management plan for WODC owned land to include consideration of priority habitats. • Liaise with WTC. 	High
NCO7: Improve habitats for otters and water voles.	Both UK Biodiversity Group priority species. Rough grass/scrubby river margins beneficial both as havens and corridors: increase public awareness, as may restrict access to river bank in places	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaison with BBOWT Otter Project and EA. • WODC Planning. • Prepare management plan for WODC owned land. • Liaise with WTC. 	High/moderate
LO1: Ensure that any new development integrates with the landscape character of the study area.	New development within Area 5 would not be possible without affecting character, and affecting setting of Cogges.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC Planning. 	High
LO2: Encourage land management practices that are in keeping with the landscape character of the study area.	Key characteristics as noted above: maintenance/management of veteran trees and pollarded willows particularly important.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide guidance based on WiW research and landscape assessment. • Prepare management plan for WODC owned land. • Liaise with WTC. 	High
LO3: Ensure new planting is in character with landscape type.	Native planting only should be used in this area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC Planning. • Provide guidance on suitable species. • Prepare management plan for WODC owned land, to include species list. • Liaise with WTC. 	High
			AREA 5

WINDRUSH IN WITNEY PROJECT: RECOMMENDATIONS

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES: AREA 5 (continued)			
Objectives	Comment	Mechanism	Priority
LO4: Encourage the appropriate screening of poor views/features.	Maintain tree and shrub screen especially at vulnerable point at northern end; there is young planting here, but consider additional planting. Northern tip of this land is in private ownership. When coppicing, prune alternate plants rather than block to ensure visual screen maintained. Sub station is major intrusive feature: seek screening through planting if possible, and seek possible reduction in size of compound.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC Planning: liaise with Electricity company. • Provide guidance on suitable species. • Prepare management plan for WODC owned land. • Grants for planting. • Liaise with WTC. 	High/moderate
LO5: Encourage management of existing riverside willows and planting of new willows where appropriate.	Pollarded willows characteristic of area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC: through grants and increasing public awareness. • ESA/EA grants may also be available. 	High/moderate
LO6: Encourage management of tree screen, and especially veteran trees.	Important to maintain visual screen. Some veteran trees in poor state, and need management to ensure their continuing existence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare management plan for WODC owned land. • Liaise with WTC. 	High
LO7: Encourage awareness and management of historic features.	Former fishponds/watercourses in southern part of area and veteran trees are of historic interest.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare management plan for WODC owned land. • Liaise with WTC: suggest seek specialist historical/ archaeological advice/survey on interest and management of ponds/watercourses. 	High/moderate
LO8: Encourage removal of inappropriate urban detractors from character area.	Extremely important to maintain rural character of valley. Reduce amount of close-mown grass and amenity planting, especially at northern end. Any street furniture and path surfacings should be very low key and unobtrusive. Improved screening of sub station should be a priority. Consider re-siting CCTV camera, or reducing size of pole, if possible, as very intrusive looking east along footpath.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare management plan for WODC owned land. • Liaise with WTC. • Develop design guide for study area to cover path surfacing, street furniture etc. 	High/moderate
LO9: Take measures to improve rubbish clearance within study area.	Ensure eg abandoned supermarket trolleys are quickly removed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise with WODC Environmental Health. • Liaise with supermarkets and local community. 	High/moderate
PA1: Improve the quality of existing public access provision within the study area, while respecting the area's landscape character.	Ensure paths are not overgrown. Seek to continue footpath north to Bridge Street to connect with northern part of study area. Design of new or refurbished bridges should reflect rural character.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare public access plan to co-ordinate maintenance responsibilities, funding arrangements and design code for furniture. • Plan to be drawn up with WODC Planning, OCC, Lower Windrush Valley Project, WODC Recreation & Arts Service, Healthy Walks Project etc. • WODC Planning: S106 Agreements/use of development briefs. 	High/moderate
PA2: Seek to establish a new public footpath route along the valley between Witan Way and the old bathing place.	In line with public survey issues and similar objectives in Lower Windrush Valley. Development may offer key opportunity to link parts of study area, but wildlife havens/corridors also important. Ensure that new paths do not add to urbanisation of study area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC Planning including Section 106 Agreements. • Encourage preparation of development briefs for the affected sites. 	High/moderate
AREA 5 (continued)			

WINDRUSH IN WITNEY PROJECT: RECOMMENDATIONS

SUMMARY OF ISSUES: AREA 6 (See Fig 4)				
Location	Landscape type	Landscape/visual issues	Habitats	Public survey issues
South of study area, Windrush Leisure Centre	7: Amenity land/Public Open Space	<p>Key characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small blocks of ornamental and semi-ornamental shrub planting. • Forms part of important visual buffer between Witan Way and open valley land, including Cogges. • Formerly part of Area 5. <p>Negative characteristics/threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tree and shrub planting along river frontage of Leisure Centre is sparse in places, and views of Leisure Centre buildings from east of river detract from rural character of valley. • Expansion of Leisure Centre/Youth Centre activities could lead to further urbanisation of area and further impact on rural character of valley. 	Mix of woodland and amenity grass.	<p>Positive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain rural character. • Maintain/improve wildlife interest.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES: AREA 6			
Objectives	Comment	Mechanism	Priority
NCO2: Encourage the protection, restoration and enhancement of the river corridor with its associated wetland habitats	Central to character of study area, links with LWVP objectives, furthers County and national biodiversity aims. Could include creation of wildlife buffer zone along river; this would also help in achieving LO4.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC Planning. • Prepare management plan for WODC owned land. • Partnerships with EA and conservation bodies. • Liaise with Youth Centre. 	High
NCO4: Safeguard priority habitats and species in accordance with the relevant BAPs, HAPs and SAPs.	Furthers County and national biodiversity aims. Relevant HAP: Wetlands: Rivers and Ditches.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare management plan for WODC owned land to include consideration of priority habitats. • Liaise with Youth Centre. 	High
NCO7: Improve habitats for otters and water voles.	Both UK Biodiversity Group priority species. Rough grass/scrubby river margins beneficial both as havens and corridors: increase public awareness, as may restrict access to river bank in places.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaison with BBOWT Otter Project and EA. • WODC Planning. • Prepare management plan for WODC owned land. • Liaise with Youth Centre. 	High/ moderate
LO1: Ensure that any new development integrates with the landscape character of the study area.	Maintain and improve tree and shrub screen to east (river side) of Leisure Centre. Important to ensure any new planting is of native species.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare management plan for WODC owned land. • Liaise with Youth Centre. 	High
LO2: Encourage land management practices that are in keeping with the landscape character of the study area.	Key characteristics as noted above: maintenance/management of trees and pollarded willows particularly important.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare management plan for WODC owned land. • Liaise with Youth Centre. 	High
LO3: Ensure new planting is in character with landscape type.	As far as possible, native planting only should be used in this area, especially on river side of buildings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare management plan for WODC owned land. • Liaise with Youth Centre. 	High
LO4: Encourage the appropriate screening of poor views/features.	Maintain and improve tree and shrub screen to east (river side) of Leisure Centre. Important to ensure any new planting is of native species. Consider removal of poorly pruned conifers on Youth Centre land.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare management plan for WODC owned land. • Provide guidance on suitable species. • Liaise with Youth Centre. 	High/ moderate
LO5: Encourage management of existing riverside willows and planting of new willows where appropriate.	Pollarded willows characteristic of area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare management plan for WODC owned land. • ESA/EA grants may also be available. • Liaise with Youth Centre. 	High/ moderate
LO8: Encourage removal of inappropriate urban detractors from character area.	Extremely important to maintain rural character of valley. Reduce amount of close-mown grass and amenity planting, especially on river side of buildings. Any street furniture and path surfacings should be very low key and unobtrusive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare management plan for WODC owned land. • Liaise with Youth Centre. • Develop design guide for study area to cover path surfacing, street furniture etc. 	High/ moderate
PA3: Ensure that new public access provision does not conflict with sites of high nature conservation interest.	River banks form important wildlife corridor, so public access should be minimised (See NCO2). In addition, due to importance and proximity of Cogges, visual screening should take priority over public access to river bank in this area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare management plan for WODC owned land. • Liaise with Youth Centre. 	High/ moderate

AREA 6

WINDRUSH IN WITNEY PROJECT: RECOMMENDATIONS

SUMMARY OF ISSUES: AREA 7 (See Fig 4)				
Location	Landscape type	Landscape/visual issues	Habitats	Public survey issues
South of study area, Langel Common	1: Semi-enclosed valley floor	<p>Key characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enclosed to some extent by vegetation, but with views across valley. Important part of setting of Cogges. Open meadow. Vegetation mostly restricted to river/ditchside willows. Rural, tranquil character. <p>Negative characteristics/threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing at Newland intrusive in some views. Further poorly screened development would seriously erode rural, tranquil character, which is already under threat. Maintenance of riverside willows, and vegetation in adjacent landscape type 5, essential in maintaining rural character. Intrusive power lines. 	Semi-improved grassland. Previously supported internationally rare creeping marshwort Local Species Action Plan in place.	<p>Positive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain rural character. Maintain/improve wildlife interest. <p>Negative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rubbish in river. Footpaths overgrown. Vegetation on river banks reduces access. Winter flooding reduces access.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES: AREA 7			
Objectives	Comment	Mechanism	Priority
NCO1: Encourage the protection, restoration and enhancement of unimproved neutral grassland.	Central to character of study area, and furthers County and national biodiversity aims.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishment of conservation grazing project for study area. Use of WiW Landscape Assessment in planning decisions. Prepare management plan. 	High
NCO2: Encourage the protection, restoration and enhancement of the river corridor with its associated wetland habitats	Central to character of study area, links with LWVP objectives, furthers County and national biodiversity aims. Could include features such as encouragement of wildlife buffer zones along watercourses and encouragement of seasonal flooding of meadow land.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare management plan. Partnerships with EA and conservation bodies. 	High
NCO3: Encourage continuing and further survey work in study area.	To improve base-line information and monitor change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management plan for Common should include continued monitoring. 	High/moderate
NCO4: Safeguard priority habitats and species in accordance with the relevant BAPs, HAPs and SAPs.	Furthers County and national biodiversity aims. Relevant HAPs: Grazing Marsh and Neutral grassland; Wetlands: Rivers and Ditches.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management plan for Common to include consideration of priority habitats. 	High
NCO6: Encourage the restoration of creeping marshwort in accordance with the Local Species Action Plan	LSAP currently being implemented.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management plan for Common to include support LSAP. Continue liaison with Ashmolean Natural History Society/EN. 	High
NCO7: Improve habitats for otters and water voles.	Both UK Biodiversity Group priority species. Rough grass/scrubby river margins beneficial both as havens and corridors: increase public awareness, as may restrict access to river bank in places.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liaison with BBOWT Otter Project and EA. Prepare management plan for Common. 	High/moderate
LO1: Ensure that any new development integrates with the landscape character of the study area.	Development in this area would be extremely damaging to landscape character and setting to Cogges, and should be strongly resisted.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WODC Planning. 	High
LO2: Encourage land management practices that are in keeping with the landscape character of the study area.	Key characteristics as noted above: maintenance/management of meadow land and pollarded willows particularly important.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management plan for Common to include consideration of landscape character. 	High
LO3: Ensure new planting is in character with landscape type.	Inappropriate planting of semi-ornamental species has been done in the past. Suggest programme of removal. Native planting only should be used in this area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management plan for Common to include removal of inappropriate species. 	High
LO4: Encourage the appropriate screening of poor views/features.	Consider limited new riverside planting, for instance along northern boundary of Langel Common.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management plan for Common to include consideration of views. 	High/moderate
LO5: Encourage management of existing riverside willows and planting of new willows where appropriate.	Pollarded willows characteristic of area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management plan for Common to include management/planting of willows. 	High/moderate

AREA 7

WINDRUSH IN WITNEY PROJECT: RECOMMENDATIONS

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES: AREA 7 (continued)			
Objectives	Comment	Mechanism	Priority
LO8: Encourage removal of inappropriate urban detractors from character area.	Extremely important to maintain rural character of valley. Features such as overhead powerlines, street lighting, unattractive bridges detract from character, though this must be balanced with public safety and access. Close-mown grass would also detract from rural character. Any proposed street furniture and path surfacing should be very low key and unobtrusive. Agricultural fencing/feed containers can also be visually intrusive: design and location should be carefully considered.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management plan for Common to include proposals for reduction in impact of urban features, and design code. • Liaison with OCC. • Discussions with Electricity company. 	High
LO9: Take measures to improve rubbish clearance within study area.	Ensure eg abandoned supermarket trolleys are quickly removed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise with WODC Environmental Health. • Liaise with supermarkets and local community. 	High/moderate
PA1: Improve the quality of existing public access provision within the study area, while respecting the area's landscape character.	Common land, is open to public. Poor links at present from southern end of Langel to Farm Mill. Further surfaced paths would be contrary to the area's rural character, but mown grass paths would be an option (see LO8). Design of new or refurbished bridges should reflect rural character.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management plan to consider access issues. • Prepare public access plan to co-ordinate maintenance responsibilities, funding arrangements and design code for furniture. • Plan to be drawn up with WODC Planning, OCC, Lower Windrush Valley Project, WODC Recreation & Arts Service, Healthy Walks Project etc. 	High/moderate
PA3: Ensure that new public access provision does not conflict with sites of high nature conservation interest.	Public access and nature conservation may conflict in places, especially where access to river bank is concerned: public awareness campaign required. Ensure that paths do not add to urbanisation of study area, and avoid areas sensitive to wildlife.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management plan to consider access/wildlife issues. 	High/moderate
AREA 7 (continued)			

WINDRUSH IN WITNEY PROJECT: RECOMMENDATIONS

SUMMARY OF ISSUES: AREA 8 (See Fig 4)				
Location	Landscape type	Landscape/visual issues	Habitats	Public survey issues
South of study area, Grimes Mead and fields to north west and south east.	1: Semi-enclosed valley floor	<p>Key characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enclosed to some extent by vegetation, but with views across valley. Important part of setting of Cogges. Vegetation mostly restricted to river/ditchside willows. Open meadow land. <p>Negative characteristics/threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing at Newland intrusive in many views. Bridge Street industrial area also intrusive, partially screened by willows in poor condition. Further poorly screened development would seriously erode rural, tranquil character, which is already under threat. Intrusive power lines. Maintenance of riverside willows essential in maintaining rural character. 	<p>Grimes Mead: marshy grassland and grazing marsh, rare nationally and locally. County Wildlife Site.</p> <p>Field west of Grimes mead: wet rough grassland.</p> <p>Fields east and south of Grimes Mead: improved and poor semi-improved grassland, often heavily grazed.</p> <p>Field north of Grimes Mead: mix of scrub, rough grassland and tall herb.</p>	<p>Positive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain rural character. Maintain/improve wildlife interest. <p>Negative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rubbish in river. Vegetation on river banks reduces access. Winter flooding reduces access.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES: AREA 8			
Objectives	Comment	Mechanism	Priority
NCO1: Encourage the protection, restoration and enhancement of unimproved neutral grassland.	Central to character of study area, links with LWVP objectives, furthers County and national biodiversity aims. Grazing marsh on Grimes Mead particularly valuable. Increase public awareness: winter flooding part of character of lowland meadows; encourage provision of alternative routes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishment of conservation grazing project for study area. Use of WiW Landscape Assessment in planning decisions. Through S106 Agreements (management plans or land acquisition). Promotion of development briefs. Through ESA and Whole Farm Plans (FWAG). 	High
NCO2: Encourage the protection, restoration and enhancement of the river corridor with its associated wetland habitats	Central to character of study area, links with LWVP objectives, furthers County and national biodiversity aims. Could include features such as encouragement of wildlife buffer zones along watercourses, restoration of watercourses, encouragement of seasonal flooding of meadow land. Improvement of wildlife value/planting along Madley Brook corridor would be beneficial.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WODC Planning Partnerships with EA and conservation bodies. Through ESA. Through S106 Agreements (management plans). 	High
NCO3: Encourage continuing and further survey work in study area.	To improve base-line information and monitor change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WODC Planning: ecological surveys should be required as integral part of planning applications. Liaison with EA, ESA and conservation bodies. WODC grants available. 	High/moderate
NCO4: Safeguard priority habitats and species in accordance with the relevant BAPs, HAPs and SAPs.	Furthers County and national biodiversity aims. Relevant HAPs: Grazing Marsh and Neutral grassland; Wetlands: Rivers and Ditches. Grimes Mead is County Wildlife Site.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WODC Planning: ecological assessment should be required as integral part of planning applications. Liaison with conservation bodies. 	High
NCO7: Improve habitats for otters and water voles.	Both UK Biodiversity Group priority species. Rough grass/scrubby river margins beneficial both as havens and corridors: increase public awareness, as may restrict access to river bank in places.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liaison with BBOWT Otter Project and EA. WODC Planning. 	High/moderate
LO1: Ensure that any new development integrates with the landscape character of the study area.	Development on neighbouring land will affect character of area unless heavily screened, with appropriate species. North west boundary very vulnerable.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WODC Planning. Promote preparation and use of planning/development briefs 	High
LO2: Encourage land management practices that are in keeping with the landscape character of the study area.	Key characteristics as noted above: maintenance/management of open meadow land, in particular Grimes Mead, and pollarded willows particularly important. Hard surfaced playground/car park out of character with area: suggest revert to pasture if possible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide guidance based on WiW research and landscape assessment. Promote the concept through public meetings and individual discussions with landowners. WODC to act as point of co-ordination for further advice and information about the availability of grants etc. 	High
LO3: Ensure new planting is in character with landscape type.	Inappropriate planting, eg of conifers, increases rather than reduces intrusiveness. Native planting only should be used in this area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WODC Planning. Provide guidance on suitable species. 	High

AREA 8

WINDRUSH IN WITNEY PROJECT: RECOMMENDATIONS

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES: AREA 8 (continued)			
Objectives	Comment	Mechanism	Priority
LO4: Encourage the appropriate screening of poor views/features.	Ensure that scrub/tree removal does not open up views. Important to ensure any new planting is of native species. Willows in poor condition north west of Grimes Mead very important in screening views of nearby industrial buildings: any new development in Bridge Street Mills area should include strong screening belt. Encourage improved screening of Newland Mill housing, and resist removal of existing vegetation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC Planning. • Provide guidance on suitable species. • Grants for planting. 	High/moderate
LO5: Encourage management of existing riverside willows and planting of new willows where appropriate.	Pollarded willows characteristic of area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC: through grants and increasing public awareness. • ESA/EA grants may also be available. 	High/moderate
LO7: Encourage protection, awareness and management of historic features.	Historic features in this area include pill boxes, park railings and stone walls. Mill associated with Cogges may also have been in this area, on 'island' between Langel Common and Cogges. Suggest discuss pill boxes with OCC cultural heritage, to establish significance. Encourage replacement of park railings, which are in poor condition.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC Planning. • Raise public awareness. • Further survey to establish significance. 	High/moderate
LO8: Encourage removal of inappropriate urban detractors from character area.	Extremely important to maintain rural character of valley. Features such as overhead powerlines and street lighting detract from character, though this must be balanced with public safety and access. Close-mown grass would also detract from rural character. Street furniture and path surfacing should be very low key and unobtrusive. Fencing around hard surfaced playground/car park intrusive: suggest removal if possible. Agricultural fencing/feed containers can also be visually intrusive: design and location should be carefully considered. Seek undergrounding of power lines if possible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC Planning: design guides/ liaison with developers and landowners. • Liaison and discussion with OCC. • Discussion with Electricity company. • Develop design guide for study area to cover path surfacing, street furniture etc. 	High/moderate
LO9: Take measures to improve rubbish clearance within study area.	Ensure eg abandoned supermarket trolleys are quickly removed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise with WODC Environmental Health. • Liaison with supermarkets and local community. 	High/moderate
PA1: Improve the quality of existing public access provision within the study area, while respecting the area's landscape character.	In line with public survey issues and similar objectives in Lower Windrush Valley. Development may offer key opportunity to link parts of study area, but wildlife havens/corridors also important. Seek to continue footpath north to Bridge Street to connect with northern part of study area. Design of new or refurbished bridges should reflect rural character (see LO8).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management plan to consider access issues. • Prepare public access plan to co-ordinate maintenance responsibilities, funding arrangements and design code for furniture. • Plan to be drawn up with WODC Planning, OCC, Lower Windrush Valley Project, WODC Recreation & Arts Service, Healthy Walks Project etc. 	High/moderate
PA2: Seek to establish a new public footpath route along the valley between Witan Way and the old bathing place.	In line with public survey issues and similar objectives in Lower Windrush Valley. Development may offer key opportunity to link parts of study area, but wildlife havens/corridors also important. Ensure that new paths do not add to urbanisation of study area,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC Planning including Section 106 Agreements. • Encourage preparation of development briefs for the affected sites. 	High/moderate
PA3: Ensure that new public access provision does not conflict with sites of high nature conservation interest.	Public access and nature conservation may conflict in places, especially where access to river bank is concerned: public awareness campaign required. Ensure that paths do not add to urbanisation of study area, and avoid areas sensitive to wildlife.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC Planning. 	High/moderate

AREA 8 (continued)

WINDRUSH IN WITNEY PROJECT: RECOMMENDATIONS

SUMMARY OF ISSUES: AREA 9 (See Fig 4)				
Location	Landscape type	Landscape/visual issues	Habitats	Public survey issues
South of study area, Cogges Farm Museum, moats and associated fields, car park.	6: Historic settlement 1: Semi-enclosed valley floor. 7: Amenity land/public open space (museum car park)	<p>Key characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stone buildings and walls around Cogges church and Manor Farm form strong landscape unit. Strong historical and visual relationship between the settlement (Scheduled Ancient Monument) and its valley landscape (type 1): landscape and buildings form coherent group. Small scale meadow land around settlement, enclosed in places by hedges. Moated sites to southwest, now wooded, form backdrop to views of buildings, and help to maintain rural character. Trees and scrub around edges of Museum car park are essential visual screen. Occasional views to St Mary's Church: important visual link between historic cores of Witney and Cogges. <p>Negative characteristics/threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nearby housing with little screening threatens rural character of Cogges. Further development would be likely to cause severe damage to setting of SAM. Urban characteristics creeping in: details of lighting, surfacing, fencing/walls and building materials can all undermine or reinforce landscape character. Overhead power lines mar views. Small blocks of semi-ornamental shrub planting within Museum car park are poorly maintained and contribute little to screening, and introduce semi-urban character into rural scene. Narrow gap between Leisure Centre and Cogges: wooded moated sites form important screen. Appropriate management of nearby landscape essential to maintaining character of SAM. 	Improved grassland, poor semi-improved and rough grassland, tall herb/scrub, woodland, orchard. Museum fields overgrazed due to lack of space.	<p>Positive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain rural character. Maintain/improve wildlife interest. <p>Negative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rubbish in river. Vegetation on river banks reduces access. Winter flooding reduces access.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES: AREA 9			
Objectives	Comment	Mechanism	Priority
NCO1: Encourage the protection, restoration and enhancement of unimproved neutral grassland.	Central to character of study area, links with LWVP objectives, furthers County and national biodiversity aims. However, pressure on grazing land associated with museum may make this difficult to achieve. Increase public awareness: winter flooding part of character of lowland meadows; encourage provision of alternative routes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishment of conservation grazing project for study area. Use of WiW Landscape Assessment in planning decisions. Through S106 Agreements (management plans or land acquisition). Promotion of development briefs. WODC: develop management plan for museum, taking into account historic and ecological factors. 	High
NCO2: Encourage the protection, restoration and enhancement of the river corridor with its associated wetland habitats	Central to character of study area, links with LWVP objectives, furthers County and national biodiversity aims. Could include features such as encouragement of wildlife buffer zones along watercourses, restoration of watercourses, encouragement of seasonal flooding of meadow land.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WODC Planning. Partnerships with EA and conservation bodies. Through ESA. Develop management plan for museum, taking into account importance of river, moats and ponds. 	High
NCO3: Encourage continuing and further survey work in study area.	To improve base-line information and monitor change. Recording at Cogges already good.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WODC Planning: ecological surveys should be required as integral part of planning applications. Liaison with EA, ESA and conservation bodies. WODC grants available. Management plan for WODC museum should include surveys and monitoring. Encourage continuing recording by OCC Museum Service. 	High/moderate
NCO4: Safeguard priority habitats and species in accordance with the relevant BAPs, HAPs and SAPs.	Furthers County and national biodiversity aims. Relevant HAPs: Grazing Marsh and Neutral grassland; Wetlands: Rivers and Ditches.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WODC Planning: ecological assessment should be required as integral part of planning applications. Liaison with conservation bodies. Prepare management plan for museum. 	High

AREA 9

WINDRUSH IN WITNEY PROJECT: RECOMMENDATIONS

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES: AREA 9 (continued)			
Objectives	Comment	Mechanism	Priority
NCO7: Improve habitats for otters and water voles.	Both UK Biodiversity Group priority species. Rough grass/scrubby river margins beneficial both as havens and corridors: increase public awareness, as may restrict access to river bank in places.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liaison with BBOWT Otter Project and EA. WODC: develop management plan for museum, taking ecological factors into account. 	High/moderate
LO1: Ensure that any new development integrates with the landscape character of the study area.	Any new development within SAM would inevitably be extremely limited. Any proposals associated with improvements to visitor access to the museum would need to be very sensitively designed. Note that one of best views to St Mary's Church is from road to east of museum, across small field between museum and car park.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WODC Planning. 	High
LO2: Encourage land management practices that are in keeping with the landscape character of the study area.	Key characteristics as noted above: maintenance/management of small scale meadow land and pollarded willows particularly important.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide guidance based on WiW research and landscape assessment. Promote the concept through public meetings and individual discussions with landowners. WODC to act as point of co-ordination for further advice and information about the availability of grants etc. Prepare management plan for museum taking landscape character into account. 	High
LO3: Ensure new planting is in character with landscape type.	Inappropriate planting increases rather than reduces intrusiveness. Semi-ornamental planting within car park inappropriate. Native planting only should be used in this area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WODC Planning. Provide guidance on suitable species. Management plan should include car park area. 	High
LO4: Encourage the appropriate screening of poor views/features.	Ensure that scrub/tree removal in both this area and neighbouring areas does not open up views. Important to ensure any new planting is of native species.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WODC Planning. Provide guidance on suitable species. Grants for planting. S106 Agreements. Prepare management plan for museum. 	High/moderate
LO5: Encourage management of existing riverside willows and planting of new willows where appropriate.	Pollarded willows characteristic of area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WODC: through grants and increasing public awareness. ESA/EA grants may also be available. Prepare management plan for museum. 	High/moderate
LO7: Encourage awareness and management of historic features.	Maintenance of stone walls essential to character of Cogges.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WODC Planning. Raise public awareness. Prepare management plan for museum. 	High
LO8: Encourage removal of inappropriate urban detractors from character area.	Extremely important to maintain rural character of valley. Fencing and path surfacing should be very low key and unobtrusive. Mown paths already in place are ideal, but fencing of them a little intrusive. Post and rail fencing very intrusive in this landscape. Look at alternatives for paddock enclosure: eg hedges/ditches, hurdles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of management plan, close discussion with farm manager. Develop design guide for study area to cover path surfacing, street furniture etc. 	High/moderate
PA1: Improve the quality of existing public access provision within the study area, while respecting the area's landscape character.	Public access already good. Ensure that any enclosure of paths does not conflict with landscape character (see LO8).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of management plan, close discussion with farm manager. 	Moderate
PA3: Ensure that new public access provision does not conflict with sites of high nature conservation interest.	Public access already good, but ensure that routes of paths do not conflict with nature conservation interest.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare management plan. 	High/moderate

AREA 9 (continued)

WINDRUSH IN WITNEY PROJECT: RECOMMENDATIONS

SUMMARY OF ISSUES: AREA 10 (See Fig 4)				
Location	Landscape type	Landscape/visual issues	Habitats	Public survey issues
South of study area, Cogges 'green wedge'	7: Amenity land/Public Open Space	<p>Key characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small blocks of ornamental and semi-ornamental shrub planting. • Large expanse of closely mown grass. • Important green wedge, maintaining visual connection between Cogges and its higher land. <p>Negative characteristics/threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing facing onto green wedge has harsh urban edge, which dominates in views when the eye should be drawn to the historic buildings. 	Amenity grassland. Hedgerows.	None specifically relating to this area.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES: AREA 10				
Objectives	Comment	Mechanism	Priority	
NCO1: Encourage the protection, restoration and enhancement of unimproved neutral grassland.	Central to character of study area, links with LWVP objectives, furthers County and national biodiversity aims. However, the area is heavily used as amenity space. Development of some less closely mown areas would be beneficial, or even grazing on parts of area for part of year: this would reinforce importance of relationship of 'wedge' with Cogges.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC liaison with Witney TC. 	High/moderate	
NCO2: Encourage the protection, restoration and enhancement of the river corridor with its associated wetland habitats	Central to character of study area, links with LWVP objectives, furthers County and national biodiversity aims. No watercourses in this area, but the pond at the western end of the 'wedge' could be managed to enhance its wildlife value.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC liaison with Witney TC. • Advice may be available from Pond Action. 	High/moderate	
LO1: Ensure that any new development integrates with the landscape character of the study area.	Any further impact on Cogges historic settlement must be resisted. Expansion of play area beyond its present corner would be damaging to setting of Cogges.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC Planning and liaison with Witney TC. 	High	
LO2: Encourage land management practices that are in keeping with the landscape character of the study area.	See NCO1: areas of less closely mown grass or grazing would be more in keeping with setting of Cogges.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC liaison with Witney TC. 	High/moderate	
LO3: Ensure new planting is in character with landscape type.	Inappropriate planting increases rather than reduces intrusiveness. Use native planting wherever possible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC Planning. • Provide guidance on suitable species. 	High	
LO4: Encourage the appropriate screening of poor views/features.	Improved screening of housing in key views from higher ground would be beneficial. Underplanting of some stands of trees, with native shrubs, may be beneficial, especially at southwestern corner of 'wedge'. When coppicing, prune alternate plants rather than whole block to ensure visual screen maintained.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC Planning: liaise with West Oxfordshire Housing to review Wadards Meadow planting and landscape maintenance. • Provide guidance on suitable species. • Grants for planting. • WODC liaison with Witney TC 	High/moderate	
LO8: Encourage removal of inappropriate urban detractors from character area.	Extremely important to maintain rural character of valley as far as possible, as part of setting of Cogges. Reduce amount of amenity planting and, where practical, close-mown grass. Any street furniture, including street lighting, and path surfacings should be as low key and unobtrusive as possible. Improve screening of housing if possible. Public survey issues reveal lack of play areas a concern: play equipment should be sensitively sited and screened. Expansion of play area beyond its present corner would be damaging to setting of Cogges. If grazing of part of area is considered, suggest defining area with park railings, as used north of Cogges alongside footpath/cycleway.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC Planning: liaise with West Oxfordshire Housing to review landscape maintenance procedures. • WODC liaison with Witney TC and OCC. • Develop design guide for study area to cover path surfacing, street furniture etc. • Provide guidance on suitable species for study area. 	High/moderate	
PA1: Improve the quality of existing public access provision within the study area, while respecting the area's landscape character.	Public survey issue. Old Stanton Harcourt Road remains as a footpath/cycleway: hedges in need of management, suggest laying rather than flailing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC liaison with OCC. 	Moderate/low	

AREA 10

WINDRUSH IN WITNEY PROJECT: RECOMMENDATIONS

SUMMARY OF ISSUES: AREA 11 (See Fig 4)				
Location	Landscape type	Landscape/visual issues	Habitats	Public survey issues
South of study area, west of river, Langel Common to Farm Mill. Includes small former meadow known as Goose Ham.	1: Semi-enclosed valley floor.	<p>Key characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enclosed by vegetation to west (wooded burgage plots), but with views along valley, and to Cogges and its fields. Essentially rural, tranquil character, part of setting of Witney and Scheduled Ancient Monument of Cogges. Former meadow land: hams (Goose Ham) and meads. <p>Negative characteristics/threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generally unmanaged area, but forms important part of valley. Maintenance of riverside willows, and vegetation in adjacent landscape type 5 (wooded former burgage plots), essential in maintaining rural character: screen to Witan Way is thin in places. Disused Farm Mill adds to air of lack of management. Overhead power lines intrusive. 	Rough grassland/tall herb.	<p>Positive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain rural character. Maintain/improve wildlife interest. <p>Negative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Winter flooding reduces access. Paths overgrown. Farm Mill neglected.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES: AREA 11			
Objectives	Comment	Mechanism	Priority
NCO1: Encourage the protection, restoration and enhancement of unimproved neutral grassland.	Central to character of study area, links with LWVP objectives, furthers County and national biodiversity aims. Increase public awareness: winter flooding part of character of lowland meadows; encourage provision of alternative routes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishment of conservation grazing project for study area. Use of WiW Landscape Assessment in planning decisions. Through S106 Agreements (management plans or land acquisition). Promotion of development briefs. Through ESA and Whole Farm Plans (FWAG). 	High
NCO2: Encourage the protection, restoration and enhancement of the river corridor with its associated wetland habitats	Central to character of study area, links with LWVP objectives, furthers County and national biodiversity aims. Could include features such as encouragement of wildlife buffer zones along watercourses and encouragement of seasonal flooding of meadow land.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WODC Planning. Partnerships with EA and conservation bodies. Through ESA. Through S106 Agreements (management plans). 	High
NCO3: Encourage continuing and further survey work in study area.	To improve base-line information and monitor change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WODC Planning: ecological surveys should be required as integral part of planning applications. Liaison with EA, ESA and conservation bodies. WODC grants available. 	High/moderate
NCO4: Safeguard priority habitats and species in accordance with the relevant BAPs, HAPs and SAPs.	Furthers County and national biodiversity aims. Relevant HAPs: Grazing Marsh and Neutral grassland; Wetlands: Rivers and Ditches.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WODC Planning: ecological assessment should be required as integral part of planning applications. Liaison with conservation bodies. 	High
NCO7: Improve habitats for otters and water voles.	Both UK Biodiversity Group priority species. Rough grass/scrubby river margins beneficial both as havens and corridors: increase public awareness, as may restrict access to river bank in places.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liaison with BBOWT Otter Project and EA. WODC Planning. 	High/moderate
LO1: Ensure that any new development integrates with the landscape character of the study area.	While re-use of Farm Mill would be desirable, low key use would have less impact on surrounding area. Any new development (including elements such as car parking or ornamental gardens) to east of mill would have adverse impact on rural character of valley.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WODC Planning. Promote preparation and use of planning/ development briefs. 	High
LO2: Encourage land management practices that are in keeping with the landscape character of the study area.	Re-use of meadows for grazing should be priority.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide guidance based on WiW research and landscape assessment. Promote the concept through public meetings and individual discussions with landowners. WODC to act as point of co-ordination for further advice and information about the availability of grants etc. 	High
LO3: Ensure new planting is in character with landscape type.	Inappropriate planting increases rather than reduces intrusiveness. Native planting only should be used in this area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WODC Planning. Provide guidance on suitable species. 	High
LO4: Encourage the appropriate screening of poor views/features.	Encourage undergrounding of overhead powerlines. Ensure that scrub/tree removal does not open up views. Important to ensure any new planting is of native species.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WODC Planning. Provide guidance on suitable species. Liaison with Electricity company. 	High/moderate

AREA 11

WINDRUSH IN WITNEY PROJECT: RECOMMENDATIONS

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES: AREA 11 (continued)			
Objectives	Comment	Mechanism	Priority
LO5: Encourage management of existing riverside willows and planting of new willows where appropriate.	Pollarded willows characteristic of area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC: through grants and increasing public awareness. • ESA/EA grants may also be available. • S106 Agreements. 	High/moderate
LO7: Encourage awareness and management of historic features.	Farm Mill is on one of the old mill sites of the town.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC Planning 	Moderate
LO8: Encourage removal of inappropriate urban detractors from character area.	Extremely important to maintain rural character of valley. Encourage undergrounding of overhead powerlines. Any street furniture and path surfacing should be very low key and unobtrusive.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC liaison with OCC. • Develop design guide for study area to cover path surfacing, street furniture etc. • Provide guidance on suitable species for study area. 	High/moderate
LO9: Take measures to improve rubbish clearance within study area.	Ensure eg supermarket trolleys are quickly removed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise with WODC Environmental Health. • Liaison with supermarkets and local community. 	High/moderate
PA1: Improve the quality of existing public access provision within the study area, while respecting the area's landscape character.	In line with public survey issues and similar objectives in Lower Windrush Valley. Good connection between Langel Common and Country Park is key objective. See also LO8.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare public access plan to co-ordinate maintenance responsibilities, funding arrangements and design code for furniture. • Plan to be drawn up with WODC Planning, OCC, Lower Windrush Valley Project, WODC Recreation & Arts Service, Healthy Walks Project etc. • WODC Planning: S106 Agreements. 	High
PA3: Ensure that new public access provision does not conflict with sites of high nature conservation interest.	Public access and nature conservation may conflict in places, especially where access to river bank is concerned: public awareness campaign required. Ensure that new paths do not add to urbanisation of study area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC liaison with landowners and OCC. 	High/moderate

AREA 11 (continued)

WINDRUSH IN WITNEY PROJECT: RECOMMENDATIONS

SUMMARY OF ISSUES: AREA 12 (See Fig 4)				
Location	Landscape type	Landscape/visual issues	Habitats	Public survey issues
South of study area, country park and land to west and east.	8: Open valley floor. 4: Scrubby urban fringe, at edges.	<p>Key characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open and expansive, unenclosed by topography, long views both along and across the valley. • Little vegetation apart from tree lined watercourses. • Important part of setting of Witney, church spire visible in many views both within study area and further south. • Semi-mature planting alongside part of A40 is starting to form good visual screen. • Open corridor west of Manor Road housing forms important buffer between the housing and the wider valley. • Former open meadow land. <p>Negative characteristics/threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A40 on embankment forms barrier to views, and is intrusive visually where there is little roadside planting. • Traffic noise can be heard everywhere in this part of study area. • Semi-mature planting alongside part of A40 contains inappropriate species for rural location. • Manor Road housing to east is intrusive, with little planting along boundary. • Wide hedgerow to west of open corridor, important for screening, is in poor condition. • Some buildings on Station Lane Industrial Estate extremely intrusive from open valley; scrubby vegetation important in screening views. • Overhead power lines add visual clutter to otherwise open landscape. • Balancing pond in south of study area: serious erosion of open valley character, with deep 'pond', surrounding fencing, concrete drainage channel and mounded mown grassland. 	<p>Country park: semi-improved and rough grassland, young woodland buffer to A40.</p> <p>Western edges: rough grassland, scrub and woodland.</p> <p>Eastern fields: arable.</p> <p>Eastern open corridor: rough grassland and mown grassland.</p>	<p>Positive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain rural character. • Maintain/improve wildlife interest. <p>Negative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact of A40 and neighbouring development. • Access road to country park needs improving. • Path between Langel Common and country park overgrown.

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES: AREA 12				
Objectives	Comment	Mechanism	Priority	
NCO1: Encourage the protection, restoration and enhancement of unimproved neutral grassland.	Central to character of study area, links with LWVP objectives, furthers County and national biodiversity aims. WTC Country Park already managed under ESA agreement, encourage other landowners to follow suit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of conservation grazing project for study area. • Use of WiW Landscape Assessment in planning decisions. • Through S106 Agreements (management plans or land acquisition). • Promotion of development briefs. • WODC liaison with Witney TC. 	High	
NCO2: Encourage the protection, restoration and enhancement of the river corridor with its associated wetland habitats	Central to character of study area, links with LWVP objectives, furthers County and national biodiversity aims. Could include features such as encouragement of wildlife buffer zones along watercourses, restoration of watercourses, encouragement of seasonal flooding of meadow land. Scrape area in country park good feature.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC Planning. • Partnerships with EA and conservation bodies. • Through ESA. • Through S106 Agreements (management plans). • WODC liaison with Witney TC. 	High	
NCO3: Encourage continuing and further survey work in study area.	To improve base-line information and monitor change. Bird recording already being undertaken in Country Park.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC Planning: ecological surveys should be required as integral part of planning applications. • Liaison with EA, ESA and conservation bodies. • WODC grants available. 	High/moderate	
NCO4: Safeguard priority habitats and species in accordance with the relevant BAPs, HAPs and SAPs.	Furthers County and national biodiversity aims. Relevant HAPs: Grazing Marsh and Neutral grassland; Wetlands: Rivers and Ditches.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC Planning: ecological assessment should be required as integral part of planning applications. • Liaison with conservation bodies. • WODC liaison with Witney TC. 	High	
NCO7: Improve habitats for otters and water voles.	Both UK Biodiversity Group priority species. Rough grass/scrubby river margins beneficial both as havens and corridors: increase public awareness, as may restrict access to river bank in places.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaison with BBOWT Otter Project and EA. • WODC Planning. 	High/moderate	

AREA 12

WINDRUSH IN WITNEY PROJECT: RECOMMENDATIONS

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES: AREA 12 (continued)			
Objectives	Comment	Mechanism	Priority
LO1: Ensure that any new development integrates with the landscape character of the study area.	Development on both sides of this area already intrudes into valley floor. Any new development, both within this area and in adjoining areas, is likely to be conspicuous in the open landscape. Strong planted screens would be required.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC Planning. • Promote preparation and use of planning/ development briefs. 	High
LO2: Encourage land management practices that are in keeping with the landscape character of the study area.	Key characteristics as noted above: reversion to grassland, maintenance/management of open meadow land and pollarded willows particularly important. WTC Country Park already grazed, encourage others to follow suit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide guidance based on WiW research and landscape assessment. • Promote the concept through public meetings and individual discussions with landowners. • WODC to act as point of co-ordination for further advice and information about the availability of grants etc. 	High
LO3: Ensure new planting is in character with landscape type.	Inappropriate planting increases rather than reduces intrusiveness. Some inappropriate species used on A40 embankment and sewage works: suggest discuss with landowners to seek more appropriate replacements. Native planting only should be used in this area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC Planning. • Provide guidance on suitable species. • Liaison with Witney TC. 	High
LO4: Encourage the appropriate screening of poor views/features.	Encourage improved screening of adjoining development. Important to ensure any new planting is of native species appropriate to valley floor. Screening belt along western arm of river in country park would be very beneficial. Encourage undergrounding of overhead powerlines. Encourage management and thickening of important hedgerow along open eastern corridor.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC Planning. • Provide guidance on suitable species. • Grants for planting. • Liaison with Witney TC and Electricity company. 	High/moderate
LO5: Encourage management of existing riverside willows and planting of new willows where appropriate.	Pollarded willows characteristic of area. On western side of country park, suggest pollarding in phases, to maintain some screening to industrial site.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC: through grants and increasing public awareness. • ESA/EA grants may also be available. • S106 Agreements. • WODC liaison with Witney TC 	High/moderate
LO7: Encourage awareness and management of historic features.	WW2 pillboxes are historic feature. If management and public awareness not increased, then the one surviving is under threat: it is already damaged, and may have been moved from its original position, so that its historical value is diminished. Railway features, in particular northern bridge over river, also of historic interest. Bridges could serve as pedestrian link to industrial area, and increase awareness of former railway as part of history of town.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC liaison with Witney TC. • Suggest further survey to establish significance. • Raise public awareness. • Investigate possibility of LHI bid to restore railway bridges. 	Moderate
LO8: Encourage removal of inappropriate urban detractors from character area.	Extremely important to maintain rural character of valley. Encourage undergrounding of overhead powerlines. Any street furniture and path surfacing should be very low key and unobtrusive. Encourage more sympathetic management of balancing pond, to improve its wildlife value and visual appearance, and removal of intrusive fencing where possible. Encourage very low key treatment within Country Park, especially at entrance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC liaison with OCC. • Discussions with Electricity company and Thames Water. • Develop design guide for study area to cover path surfacing, street furniture etc. • Provide guidance on suitable species for study area. • WODC Planning: planning briefs/ liaison with developers and landowners. • WODC liaison with Witney TC. 	High/moderate
LO9: Take measures to improve rubbish clearance within study area.	Occasional burnt-out cars in south east of area: ensure these and other rubbish are quickly removed. Pressure from nearby housing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise with WODC Environmental Health. 	High/moderate
PA1: Improve the quality of existing public access provision within the study area, while respecting the area's landscape character.	In line with public survey issues and similar objectives in Lower Windrush Valley. Public access already good to country park, but desire for circular route mentioned. Open eastern corridor well used already: encourage provision of recognised low key footpath. See also LO8.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare public access plan to co-ordinate maintenance responsibilities, funding arrangements and design code for furniture. • Plan to be drawn up with WODC Planning, OCC, Lower Windrush Valley Project, WODC Recreation & Arts Service, Healthy Walks Project etc. • WODC Planning: S106 Agreements. • Liaison with Witney TC. 	High/moderate
PA3: Ensure that new public access provision does not conflict with sites of high nature conservation interest.	Public access and nature conservation may conflict in places, especially where access to river bank is concerned: public awareness campaign required.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WODC liaison with Witney TC, landowners and OCC. 	High/moderate

AREA 12 (continued)