

South Gloucestershire Landscape Character Assessment

Annex II: Strategic Viewpoints

South Gloucestershire Council

Final Draft Report for Adoption Chapter 33

Prepared by LUC

September 2024



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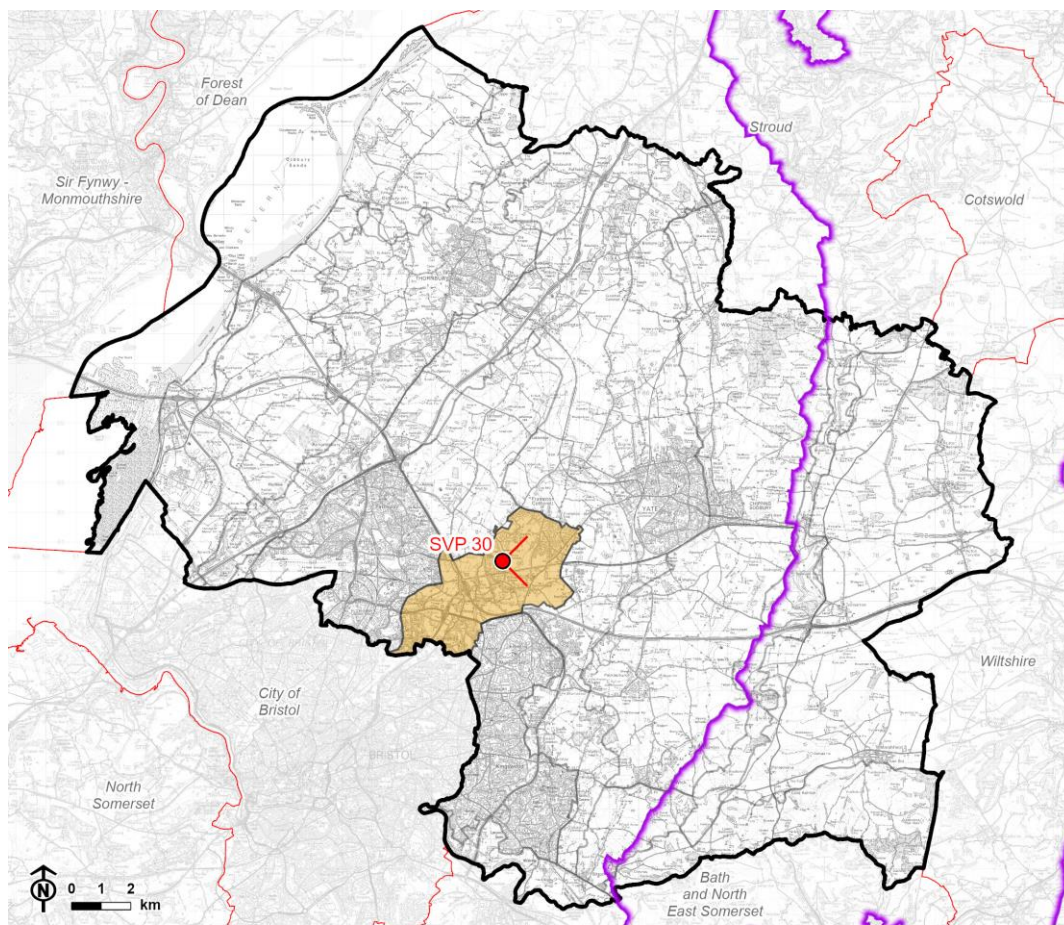
Contents

Chapter 33	247
Strategic Viewpoint 30: Flax Pits Pond, Hicks Common Road	
Characteristics	252
Summary	254

Chapter 33

Strategic Viewpoint 30: Flax Pits Pond, Hicks Common Road

Figure 33.1: Location of Strategic Viewpoint 30 and landscape character context



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CB:HS, EB:shayler, h LUC 12274_FiguresUpdates_MayJune2024 07/06/2024
Source: LUC, SGDC, NE, OS

-  Council boundary
-  Neighbouring local authority
-  Cotswolds National Landscape (AONB) boundary
-  LCA 13: Frome Valley
-  Strategic viewpoint and angle

Figure 33.2: Detailed map of the location of Strategic Viewpoint 30



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-  Council boundary
-  Cotswolds National Landscape (AONB) boundary
-  Conservation area
-  Scheduled monument
-  Strategic viewpoint and angle



Viewpoint Information

Grid reference: ST 65417 80347

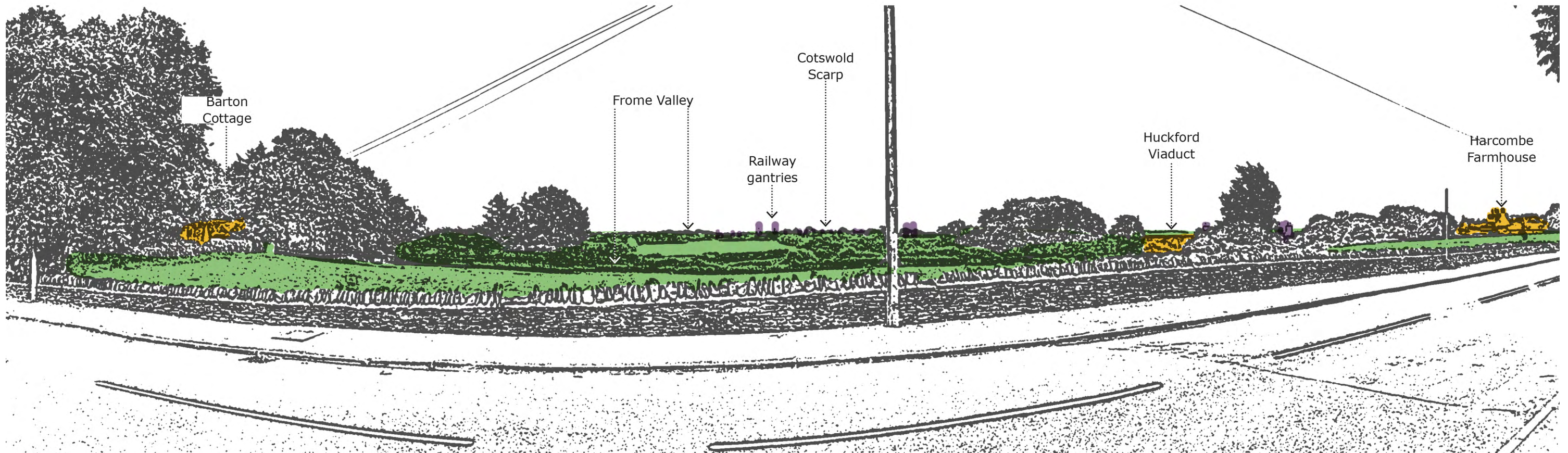
View location: Flax Pits Pond, Hicks Common Road, Winterbourne.

View direction: View east and south-east across LCA 13: Frome Valley.

Relationship with Visually Important Hillside (VIH): The viewpoint is not located along any VIH, however it is located at the top of the North of Huckford Viaduct Local Hillside (LH). There are also long distance views towards the Cotswold Scarp VIH on the skyline to the east.

Experienced by: Residents and pedestrians walking along Hicks Common Road, visitors to Flax Pits Pond, and transient views for motorists and cyclists travelling along Hicks Common Road.

Figure 33.3: View Composition of Strategic Viewpoint 30



 Key landscape feature

 Landmark / historic feature

 Detractive feature

Figure 33.4: Full Panoramic Photograph of Strategic Viewpoint 30



Strategic Viewpoint 30: Flax Pits Pond, Hicks Common Road



Strategic Viewpoint 30 (continued)

Characteristics

Popularity, access and facilities

- The viewpoint location is marked on Google Maps as 'Winterbourne Duck Pond' and is likely to attract visitors as a result.
- The viewpoint is noted in LCA 13: Frome Valley description in the SGC Landscape Character Assessment SPD, which states "*with views overlooking the Frome Valley, this area has a distinct rural character.*"
- The viewpoint is publicly accessible, located on the pavement adjacent to Flax Pits Pond, a locally important green space on Hicks Common Road, Winterbourne.
- Benches, bins, and bicycle stands are provided at Flax Pits Pond primarily for visitors to the pond, but also facilitates enjoyment of the view.

Relationship with the Cotswold National Landscape

- The viewpoint is not located within the CNL but provides distant glimpsed views to the Cotswold Scarp on the skyline to the east.
- Views of the Cotswold Scarp are considered to be a special quality of the designated landscape, as set out in the CNL Management Plan.

Quality, value and features of the view

- An elevated viewpoint that provides broad (180°) views east across the Frome Valley and enables appreciation of its landscape character, with clear expression of the characteristic valley landform and the pattern of rectilinear pastoral fields interspersed with hedgerows, hedgerow trees, and small woodlands.
- The Cotswold Scarp can be seen in glimpsed views on the skyline to the east but is a relatively minor element of the view, with the landscape of the Frome Valley being the main focus.

Chapter 33 Strategic Viewpoint 30: Flax Pits Pond, Hicks Common Road

- The Huckford Viaduct (located 0.7km to the south-east) forms a local landmark and is a key feature within the view.
- Two Grade II listed buildings, Barton Cottage (located 0.1km to the north) and Harcombe Farmhouse (located 0.3km to the south), contribute to the traditional, rural character of the view.
- Pylons and railway gantries visible on the skyline slightly detract from the overall composition of the view.

Summary

The Flax Pits Pond, Hicks Common Road viewpoint is categorised as a SVP as it meets most of the criteria to some extent. It is a popular and well known viewpoint, located on a public road adjacent to Flax Pits Pond, a popular local green space. Benches, bins and bicycle stands are provided to facilitate enjoyment of the landscape. It provides a panoramic view across the rural Frome Valley landscape, enabling appreciation of the valley landform with a clear expression of the characteristic pattern of pastoral fields interspersed with hedgerows, hedgerow trees, and small woodlands. Although the Cotswold escarpment is visible in long distance views, it forms a relatively minor element in the overall view and is less important than the principal feature of the Frome Valley. The view takes in the local landmark of the Huckford Viaduct, an important feature of the landscape, as well as Barton Cottage and Harcombe Farmhouse listed buildings which contribute to the traditional, rural character of the view.

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