

South Gloucestershire Landscape Character Assessment

Annex I: Visually Important Hillside

South Gloucestershire Council

Final Draft Report for Adoption Chapter 12

Prepared by LUC

September 2024



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Contents

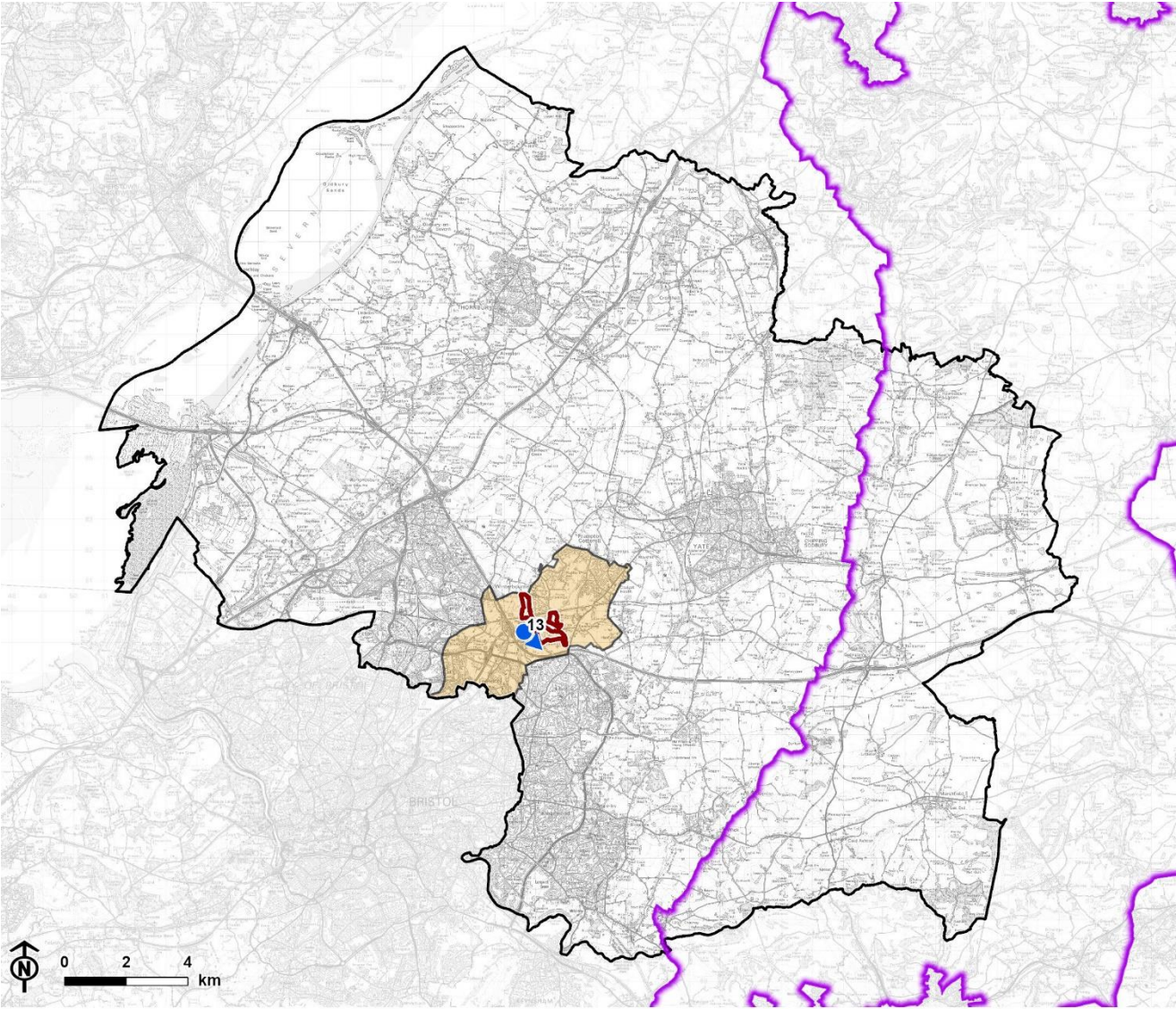
Chapter 12	84
Bury Hill and Winterbourne Hill	
Characteristics	88
Summary	89

Chapter 12

Bury Hill and Winterbourne Hill

The Bury Hill and Winterbourne Hill VIH comprises three distinctive landform features close to the southern boundary of South Gloucestershire, located fully within the Frome Valley (LCA 13) landscape character area. It includes the north/ east/ west facing slopes of Bury Hill (including the Bury Hill Camp scheduled monument), and the east facing slope extending from the south-east of Winterbourne (containing the Huckford Quarry nature reserve), with the meandering River Frome and Folly Brook prescribing the bottom of these slopes. It also contains the west facing slope of Winterbourne Hill that descends from the western edge of the village towards the Bradley Brook. The relatively steep sides of the VIH combined with the densely wooded areas at Huckford Quarry nature reserve and on the top of Bury Hill, as well as the Huckford Viaduct that forms the north-eastern edge of the VIH, contribute to it being a relatively prominent local landscape feature.

Figure 12.1: Location of the Bury Hill and Winterbourne Hill Visually Important Hillside and landscape character context



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CB:HS. EB:shayler_h LUC 12274_2024_r1_VIHSVPUUpdates 17/07/2024
Source: LUC, SGDC, NE, OS


-  Council boundary
 -  Cotswolds National Landscape (AONB) boundary
 -  Bury Hill and Winterbourne Hill Visually Important Hillside
 -  Photograph location
- Broad Valleys LCT**
-  13. Frome Valley

Figure 12.2: Detailed map of the Bury Hill and Winterbourne Hill Visually Important Hillside



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Figure 12.3: View of Winterbourne Hill and Bury Hill from Whiteshill Common



Characteristics

Distinctiveness and identity

- The Bury Hill and Winterbourne Hill VIH is readily identifiable as a natural landform feature on OS mapping, as close contours indicate steeply sloping hillsides (with Winterbourne Hill descending from 75m to 45m, Bury Hill descending from 63m to 40m, and the east facing slope extending from the south-east of Winterbourne descending from 70m to 40m). The rounded landform of Bury Hill is also represented by a concentric oval, representing the hilltop. Valley insertions from the River Frome between the landforms, and the Folly Brook in the south-east are evident, where the contours are particularly steep (and narrow).
- Evidence of an Iron Age fort (Bury Hill Camp) covers part of the VIH in the south and is marked on OS mapping, indicating a high point, where it is positioned on the top of Bury Hill.
- The VIH is a distinctive feature with a strong sense of identity as noted in the publication for LCA 13: Frome Valley, which notes that “*the River Frome is contained within a small narrow gorge and the steep sided slopes of Bury Hill.*”

Visual prominence

- The sides of the VIH are pronounced and visible from local public vantage points. The South Gloucestershire Landscape Character Assessment SPD description for LCA 13: Frome Valley notes that “*the valley slopes rise...to a broader, flatter, and higher ridge to the west, occupied by Winterbourne*”.
- The Huckford Viaduct is prominent within the Frome valley and a notable local landmark that runs along the edge of the VIH in the east, emphasising the VIH and contributing towards its conspicuousness.

Character and value

- LCA 13: Frome Valley mentions that *“around Bury Hill Camp...the combination of diverse landform, woodland and complex mix of small settlements, creates a distinctive, small-scale and intimate landscape that helps to reduce the impact of the motorway infrastructure.”*
- The character and appearance of the VIH is partly unspoilt by modern development, as the hillsides are mostly undeveloped. There is some modern development associated with the edge of Winterbourne towards the top of Winterbourne Hill, and on Bury Hill there are a few scattered houses and a farmstead on the top of the hill.
- The VIH has a role in the landscape by providing a wooded backdrop to the surrounding area.

Summary

Bury Hill and Winterbourne Hill is categorised as a VIH as it meets most of the criteria to some extent. It is readily identifiable as a natural landform feature on OS mapping; a distinctive feature with a strong sense of identity; visible from local public vantage points; its character and appearance are largely unspoilt by visual detractors; and has a role in the landscape by forming a visual backdrop.

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