

# South Gloucestershire Landscape Character Assessment

## Annex I: Visually Important Hillside

### South Gloucestershire Council

**Final Draft Report for Adoption Chapter 6**

Prepared by LUC

September 2024



Version	Status	Prepared	Checked	Approved	Date
1	Draft Method and Pilot	E White	K Davies	K Davies	24.02.2023
2	Draft Report	J Ashton Davies E White	E White	K Davies	28.04.2023
3	Draft Report	E White	E White	K Davies	05.07.2023
4	Final Draft	E White	E White	K Davies	01.11.2023
5	Final Draft (updated following New Local Plan Phase 3 consultation)	E White	E White	K Davies	20.06.2024
6	Final Draft Report for Adoption	E White	E White	K Davies	11.09.2024



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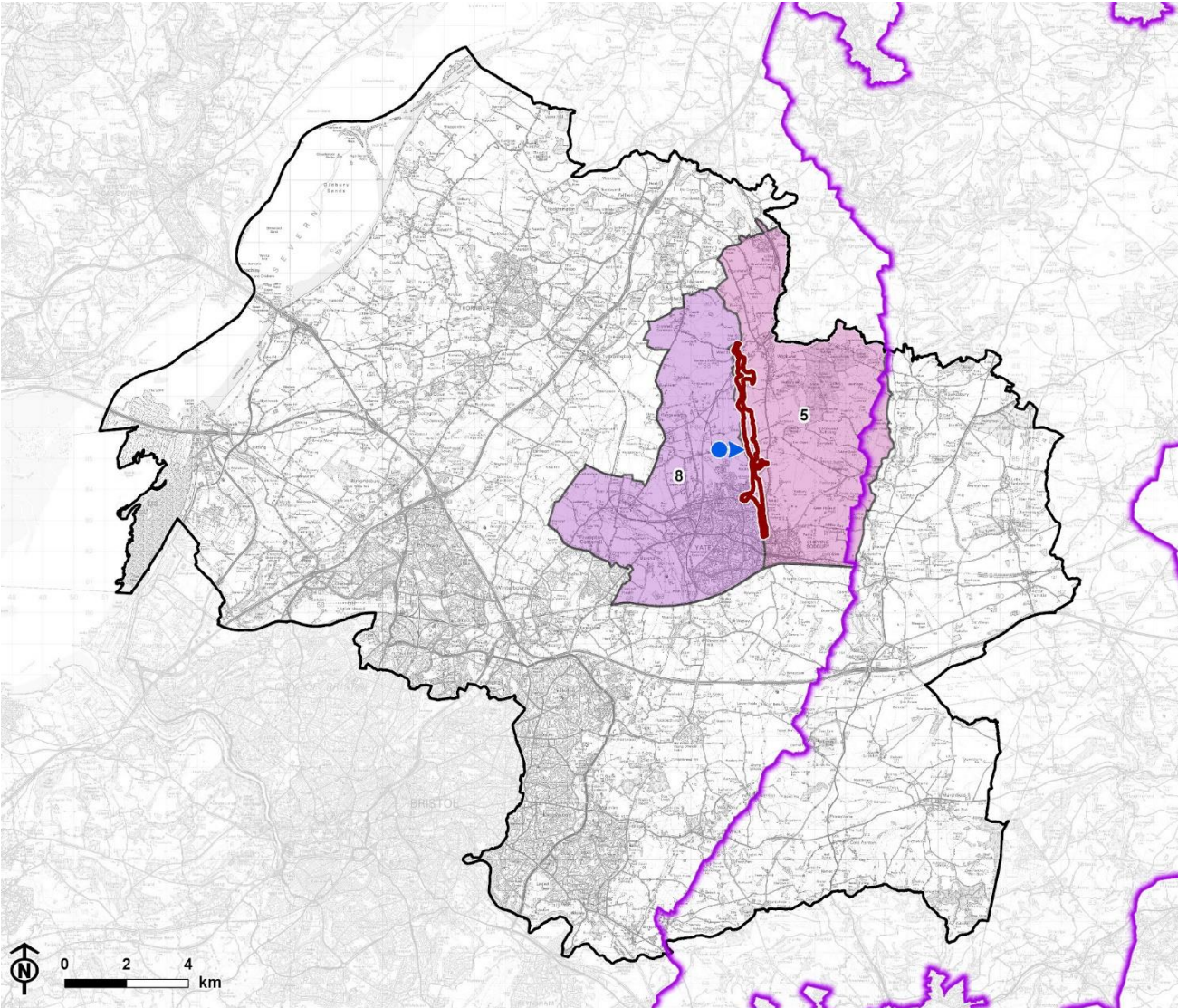
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## Chapter 6

### Wickwar Ridge – including Bury Hill

The Wickwar Ridge VIH comprises a north-south linear steep ridge, comparatively narrow in width, with the notable inclusion of Bury Hill in its centre and interspersed with small-scale stream valleys. The VIH is located within the centre of South Gloucestershire, where it defines part of the western and eastern boundaries of the Wickwar Ridge and Vale (LCA 5) and Yate Vale (LCA 8) landscape character areas respectively. The southern extent of the VIH spans along the urban edge of Yate. It forms a distinctive landscape feature in views and is emphasised by the surrounding lower-lying vale landscape to the west.

Figure 6.1: Location of the Wickwar Ridge 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







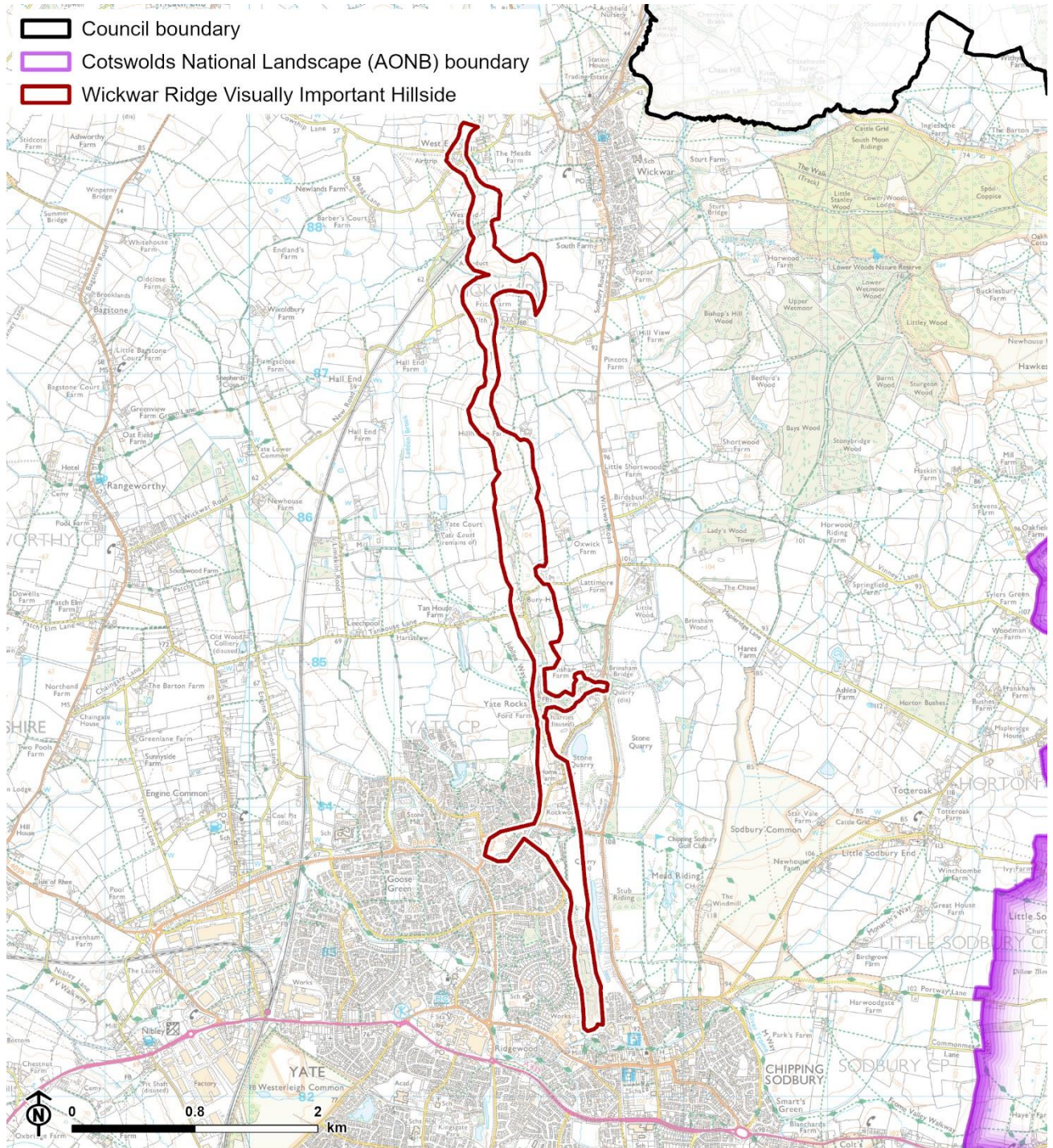
- |                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                               |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  Council boundary                             | <b>Shallow Ridge LCT</b>                                                                                      |
|  Cotswolds National Landscape (AONB) boundary |  5. Wickwar Ridge and Vale |
|  Wickwar Ridge Visually Important Hillside    | <b>Shallow Vale LCT</b>                                                                                       |
|  Photograph location                          |  8. Yate Vale              |

Figure 6.2: Detailed map of the Wickwar Ridge Visually Important Hillside



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CB:HS. EB:HS. LUC 12274\_2024\_r2\_VIHSVPUpdates 18/07/2024  
Source: LUC, SGDC, NE, OS

Figure 6.3: View of the Wickwar Ridge from Tanhouse Lane



## Characteristics

### Distinctiveness and identity

- The Wickwar Ridge VIH is readily identifiable as a natural landform feature on OS mapping as close contours indicate sloping hillsides with a westerly aspect (descending from around 105m to 80m). This is clear when seen in context to the adjacent vale landscape to the west (where contours are at much larger intervals). Small stream valley insertions are evident in the north and centre of the VIH, indicated on OS mapping by steep contours that elongate along an east-west axis (perpendicular to the VIH) with streams marked along the lowest point of elevation. The slope of the VIH delineates the western edge of the broad ridge of land upon which Wickwar is located.
- The VIH is a distinctive feature with a strong sense of identity as noted in the following publications:
  - LCA 5: Wickwar Ridge and Vale description within South Gloucestershire Landscape Character assessment SPD states that the *“The Wickwar Ridge forms a low ridgeline backdrop in views from the adjacent Yate Vale (LCA 8) and that “panoramic views of the Yate Vale, the Tytherington Ridge, the Severn Ridges and the hills of South Wales are afforded from the Wickwar Ridge”.*
  - LCA 8: Yate Vale notes that the area is *“contained by the prominent Wickwar Ridge which rises above the Ladden valley floor”,* and its southern end forms a *“shallow escarpment at Yate Rocks and Bury Hill, before the gradient slackens to provide the slightly elevated shallow bowl within which Chipping Sodbury is located”.*

### Visual prominence

- The Wickwar Ridge VIH is prominent in views as noted in LCA 5: Wickwar Ridge and Vale which states that *“the Wickwar Ridge in the west forms a*



*distinctive landscape feature particularly in views from LCA 8: Yate Vale" and "provides expansive westward views across the landscape north of Yate", such as from the strategic viewpoint at Wickwar Ridge (SVP 21). It also notes that "the rising slopes and crest of Wickwar Ridge also form an important visual backdrop to the lower-lying Yate Vale (LCA 8) to the west" and that it "makes an important visual contribution to views from the edge of Yate".*

- The VIH is visible from several public vantage points and forms a key feature in views across the vale.

## Character and value

- The character and appearance of the VIH is partly unspoilt by visual detractors within its northern and central parts, with some small, fragmented blocks of woodland around the central area. However, an existing turbine at Oxwick Farm (46m tip height) is relatively prominent as it lies at the top of the ridge (just outside of the VIH). The southern part of the VIH largely abuts the built-up edge of Yate, but also contains some existing houses, and with substantial housing development likely to increase housing numbers in the future. Additionally, several active and disused quarries are present along the south-easterly boundary.
- The VIH provides the opportunity for expansive westward views with Bristol, Purdown ridge and South Wales, forming distant features.
- The VIH has a role in the landscape by providing containment to the eastern edge of LCA 8: Yate Vale, and providing visual separation between the settlements of Chipping Sodbury and Yate. It also forms a prominent backdrop to the surrounding lower-lying landscape.

## Summary

The Wickwar Ridge is categorised as a VIH as it meets all 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; prominent in

views across the landscape; visible from several public vantage points; its character and appearance is partly unspoilt by visual detractors (although its southern part is influenced by the edge of Yate and future development pressure); it provides the opportunity for views across the landscape; and has a role in the landscape by containing a character area, providing separation between settlements and forming a visual backdrop.

Report produced by LUC

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