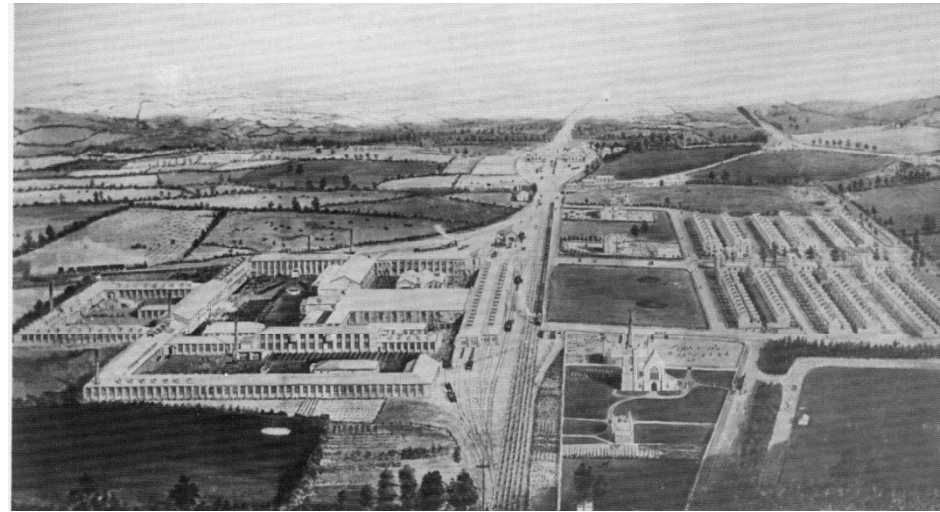


The Wiltshire and Swindon Historic Landscape Characterisation Project



Presentation for Wiltshire Conservation
Officers Group
By Tom Sunley

What is historic landscape characterisation (HLC)?

“An examination of the historic and archaeological processes which have influenced the form and use of the modern landscape”





Why is HLC important?

- It is a holistic study of the landscape which does not focus only on sites, finds and structures
- It allows an understanding of the evolution of the landscape to be built up
- HLC identifies the characteristics that make each place special and distinct
- By interpreting the current landscape, HLC allows us to make informed decisions regarding the landscape of the future

Why do we need HLC for Wiltshire and Swindon?

- Currently only partial HLC data for Wiltshire – need total, unified and consistent coverage
- Development pressures are current and on large scale so need strategic overview
- Absence of HLC is a weakness when shaping future landscape
- Emphasis on localism and character in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) makes HLC worthwhile
- HLC dataset can be created in a relatively short time span – quickly available!

National Planning Policy Framework

Core Planning Principles:

Planning should: 'take account of the different roles and **character of different areas**, promoting the vitality of our main urban areas, protecting the Green Belts around them, recognising the **intrinsic character** and beauty **of the countryside** and supporting thriving rural communities within it.'

Section 7: Requiring Good Design

Local and neighbourhood plans should develop robust and comprehensive policies that set out the quality of development that will be expected for the area. Such policies should be based on stated objectives for the future of the area **and an understanding and evaluation of its defining characteristics**.

Section 12: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment

Local planning authorities should take into account:

- the desirability of new development making **a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness**; and
- opportunities to draw on **the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place**.

What can the HLC data be used for?

The Wiltshire and Swindon HLC can play a key role in:

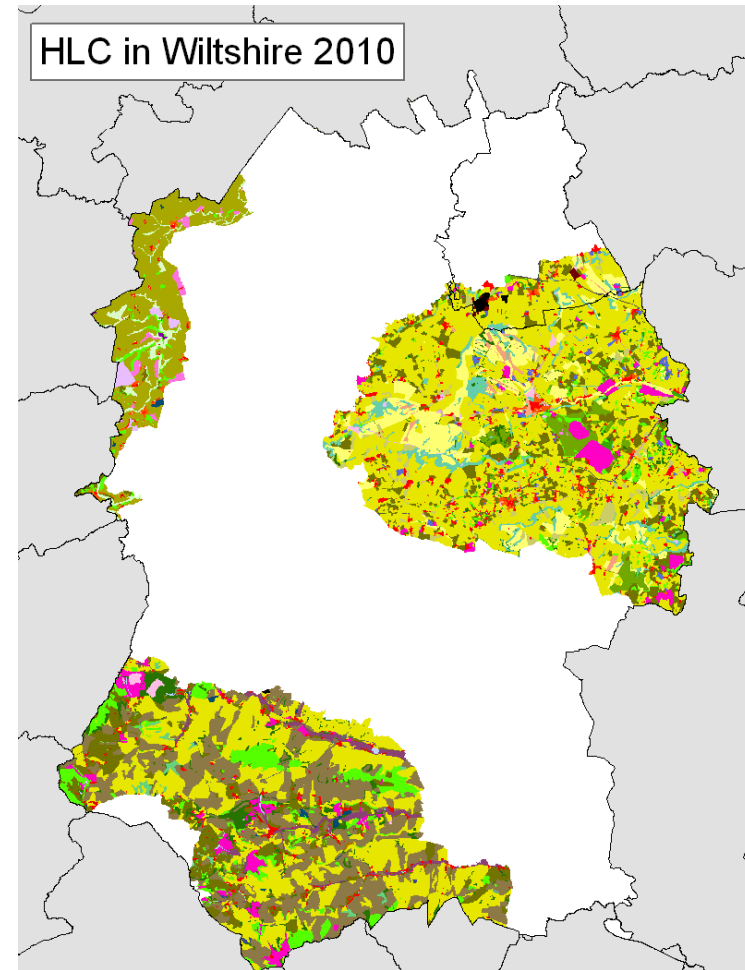
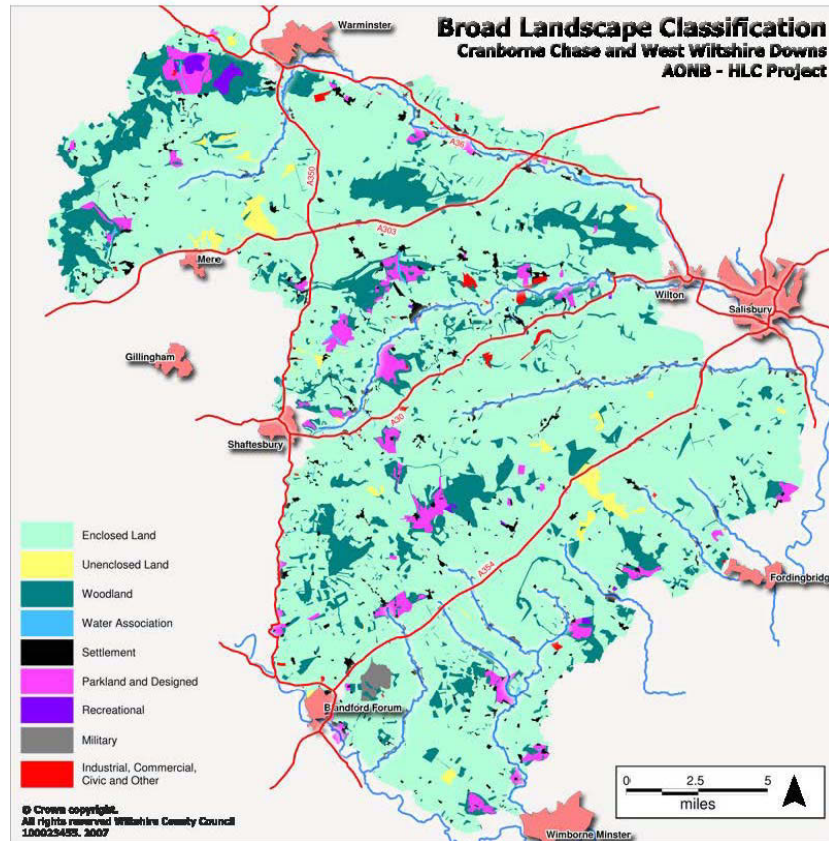
- Strategic planning and development
- Shaping the regional and local archaeology research frameworks
- The conservation and management of heritage sites and landscapes
- Academic research and local study
- Community engagement



Project aims

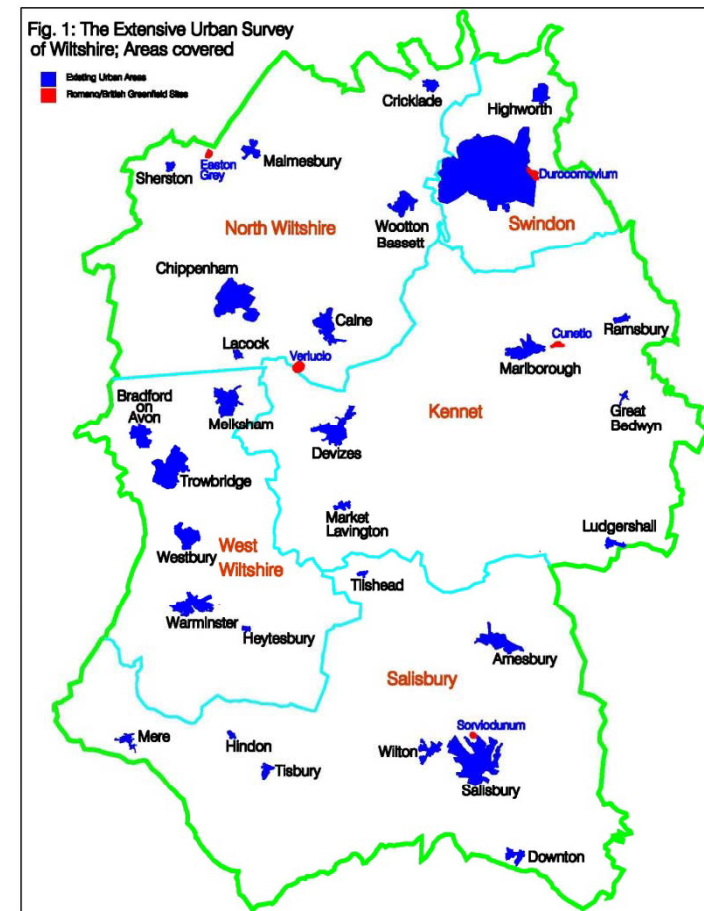
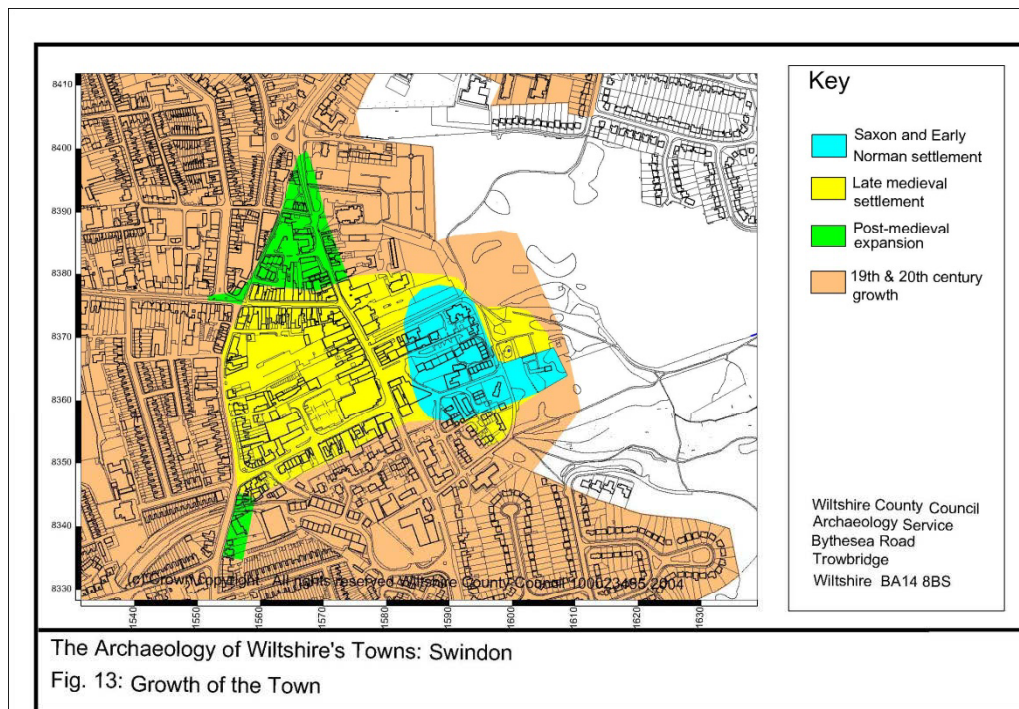
- To characterise and analyse the entire landscape of Wiltshire and Swindon (c.350,000ha)
- To integrate with existing HLC data for the Cranborne Chase/West Wiltshire Downs and North Wessex Downs AONBs
- To create:
 - GIS dataset.
 - Hardcopy/electronic report.
 - Project website.
 - Outreach materials/events.

AONB HLC Data

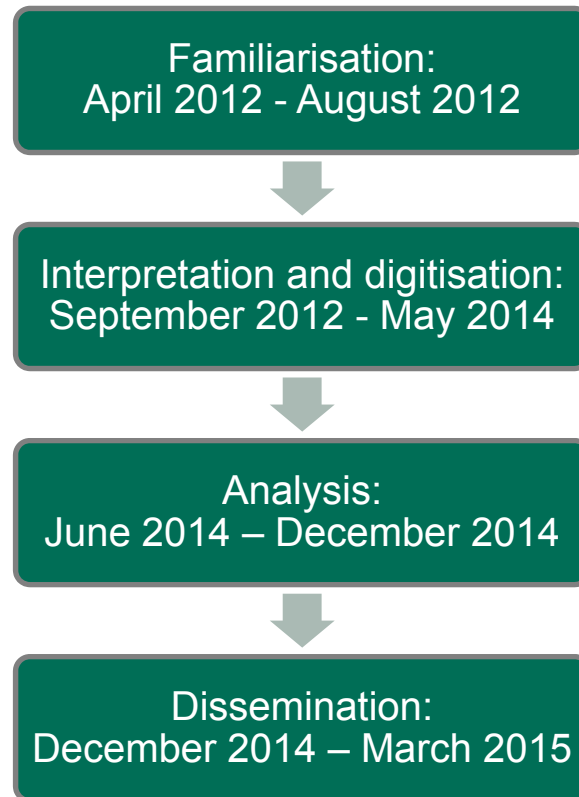


Wiltshire EUS Data

- Useful information and interpretation
- Plan forms showing urban development



Project timescale



Also including:

- Stakeholder meetings
- Meetings with English Heritage

Principal sources

- Modern OS Master Map
- Modern OS 1:25,000 map
- Google Maps
- 2001 & 2005/06 aerial photographs
- OS 1st edition 6" maps (1868-99)
- OS 1st edition 1" map (c.1818)
- Natural England ancient woodland map
- Wiltshire enclosure award map
- Victoria County History



HLC Data

NATIONAL LEVEL

- **14 Broad HLC Types**

E.g. Fields and enclosed land

LOCAL LEVEL

- **135 HLC Types**

E.g. Parliamentary enclosures

- **15 Attribute categories**

E.g. Internal morphology and boundary morphology



HLC Database

The screenshot shows the 'exeGesIS SDM HBSMR v3' software interface. The title bar reads 'exeGesIS SDM HBSMR v3'. The main window is titled 'Historic Landscape Character' with a sub-tab 'HXG9'. The interface includes several input fields and buttons:

- Broad Type:** Fieldscapes
- HLC Type:** Planned clearance/ assartment
- Name:** Fields west of Park Wood
- Full Type Code:** F-39
- Confidence:** Probable

Below these fields are tabs for 'Configuration', 'Broad Types / HLC Types', 'Attributes', and 'HLC Rules'. The 'Description' tab is active, showing a 'Summary' and a 'Description' field. The 'Period of Origin of Current HLC Type' section contains a table with columns: Unknown, From, Conf, To, Conf, From Period, To Period, and User defined.

Unknown	From	Conf	To	Conf	From Period	To Period	User defined
<input type="checkbox"/>	1066 AD	<input type="checkbox"/>	1900 AD	<input type="checkbox"/>	Medieval	Victorian	<input type="checkbox"/>

The 'Period' field is set to 'Medieval to Victorian - 1066 AD to 1900 AD'. The 'Description' field contains the text: 'Field pattern comprises small and large rectilinear fields that appear to have been created through woodland clearance. Park Wood borders to the east.'

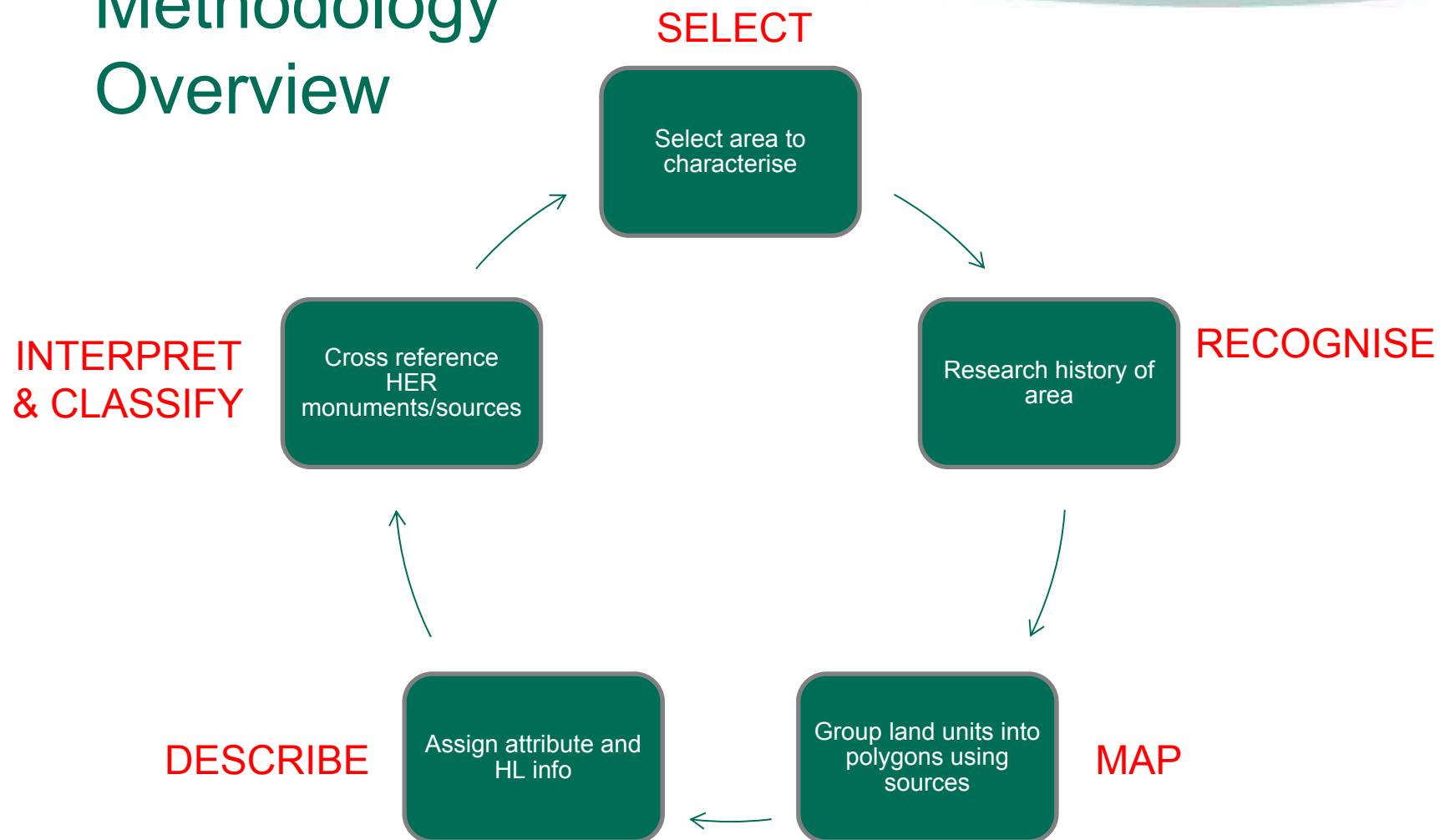
At the bottom, the 'Centroid NGR' is 'Centroid SO 1618 3409 (MBR: 1081m by 1658m)', the 'Map' is 'SO135E', and the 'Area (Ha)' is '103.52'. The interface also includes a 'Photo Library' and 'Associated Files' section.

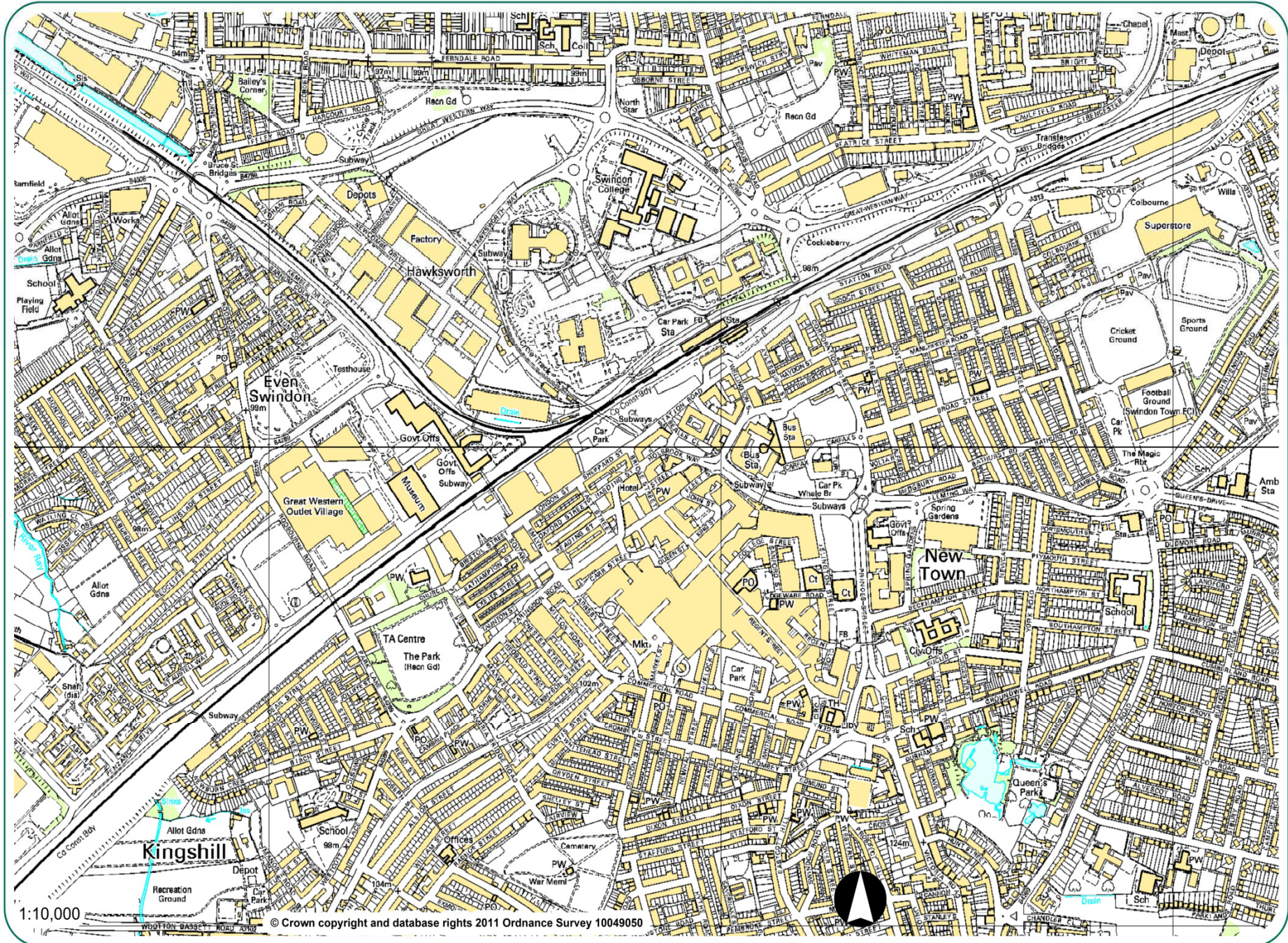
- Same software as used by Wiltshire HER

- Database links to GIS mapping

- Wealth of information recorded for each HLC 'polygon'

Methodology Overview

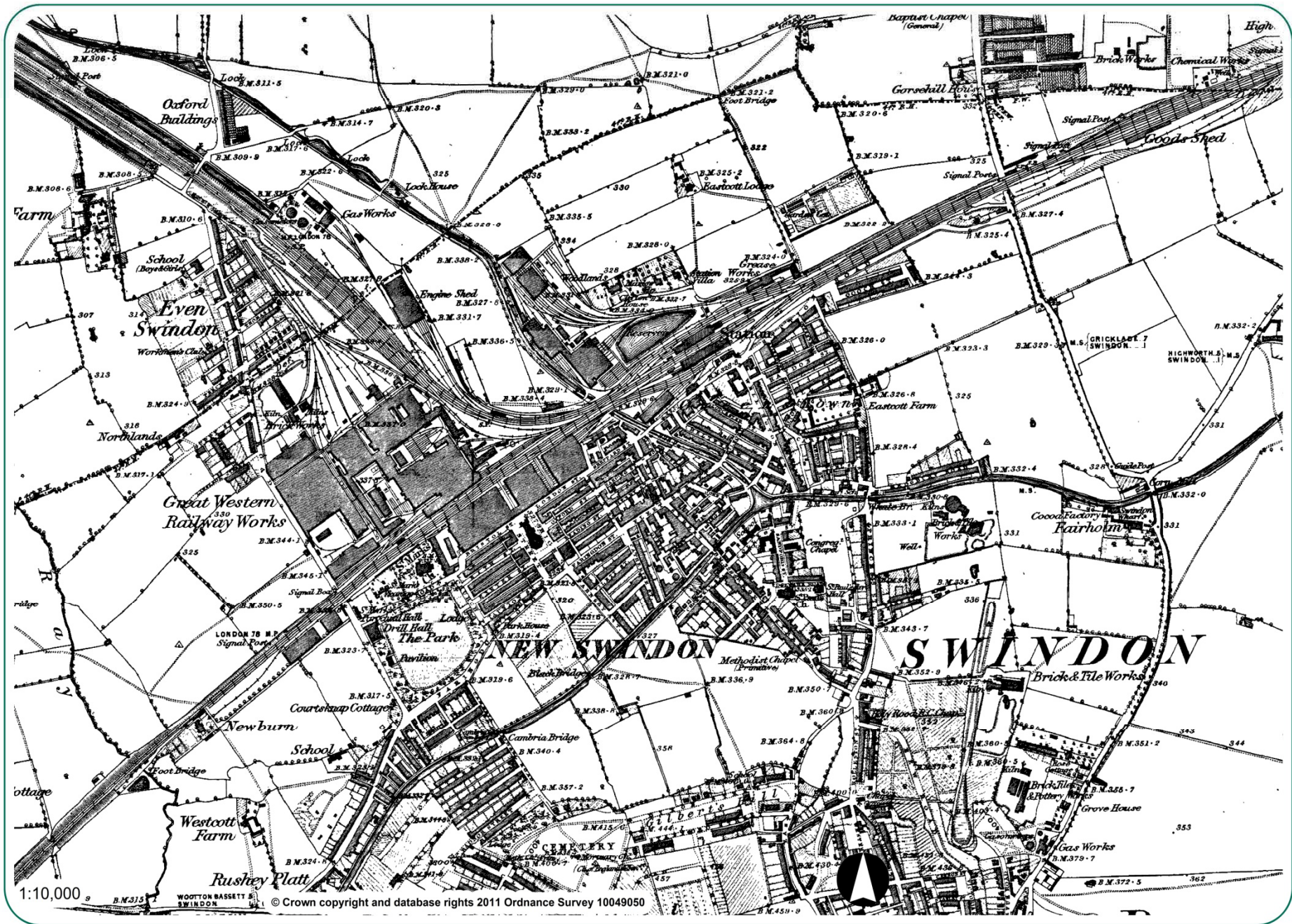


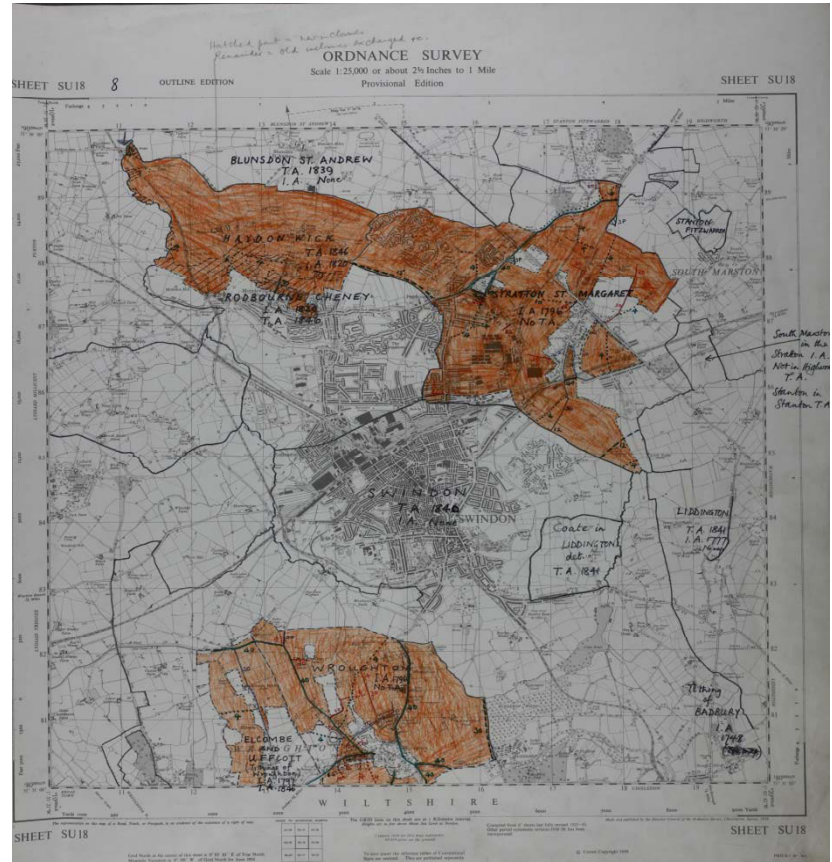
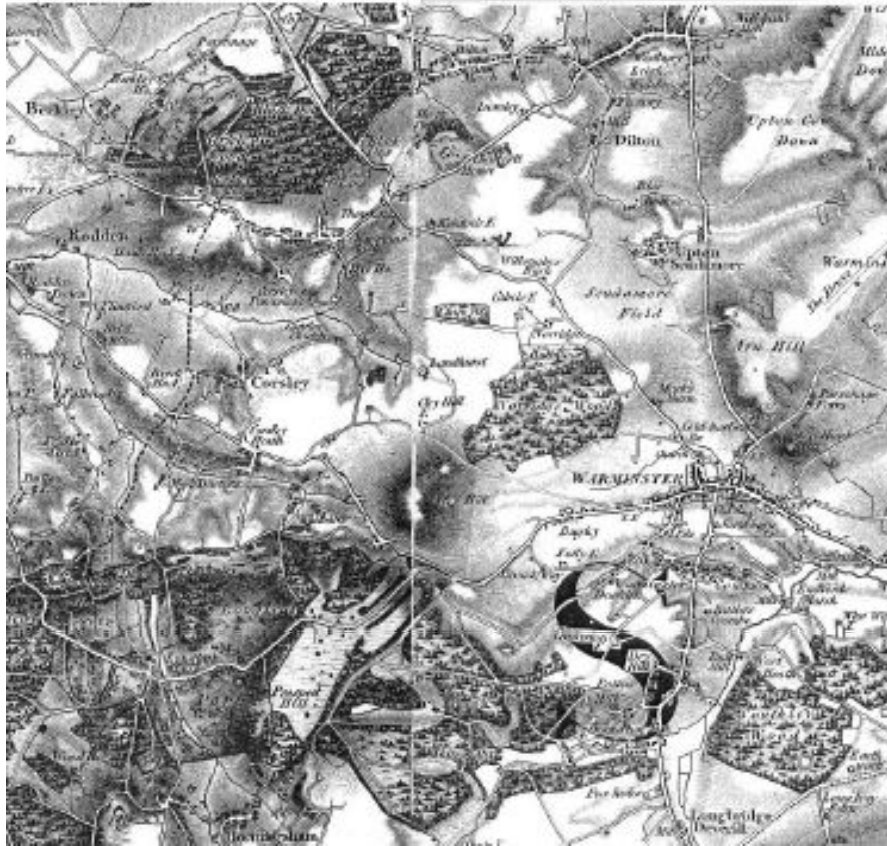


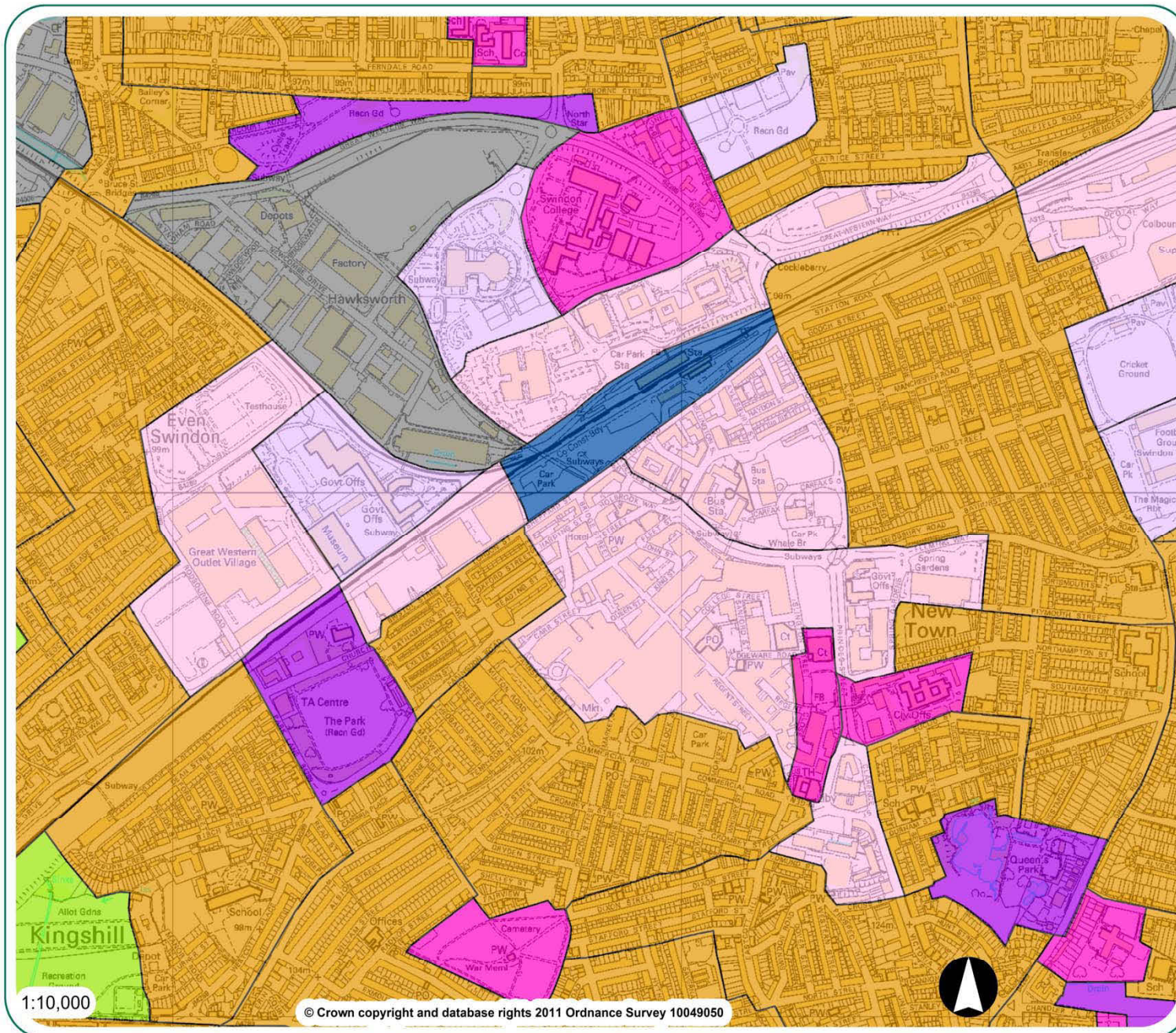
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Legend

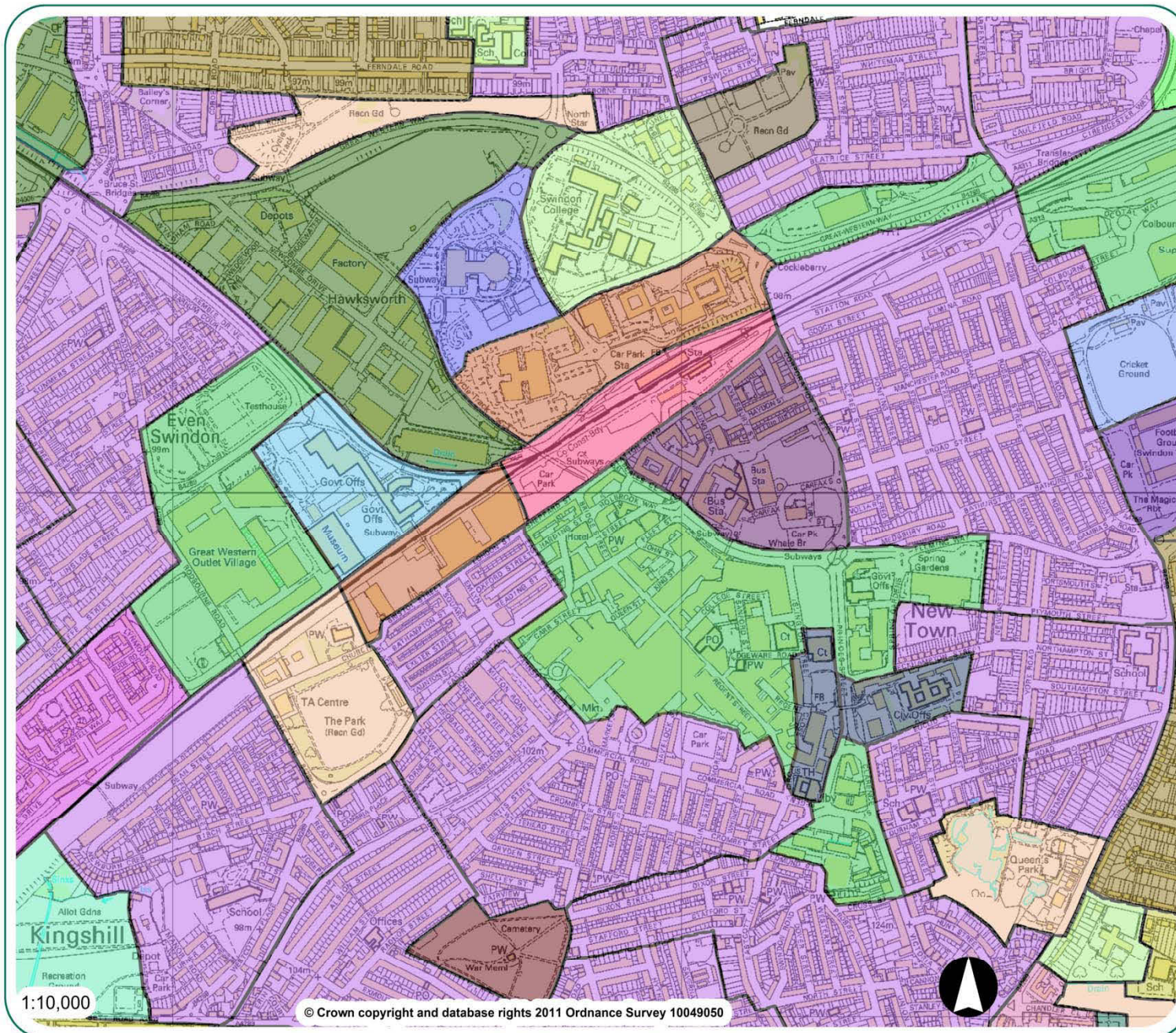
HLC (poly)

BroadType

- Civic
- Commercial
- Communications
- Fields and enclosed land
- Industrial and extractive
- Military
- Orchards and horticulture
- Ornamental
- Recreation
- Rural settlement
- Unimproved land
- Urban settlement
- Water and valley floor
- Woodland

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Legend

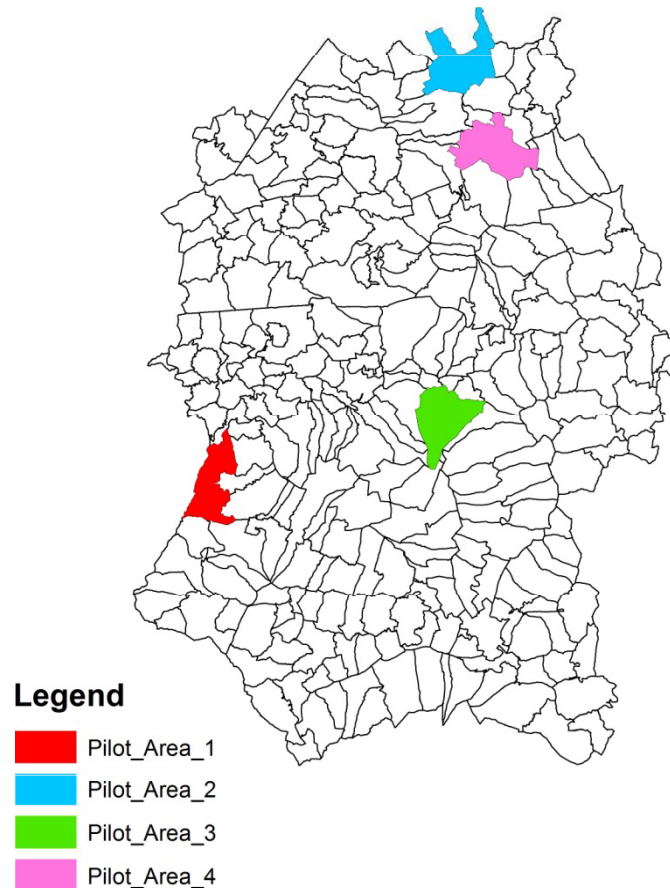
HLC_Data

HLCType

- Allotments
- Apartments/maisonettes/flats
- Business park
- Civic centre
- Detached housing
- Gas works
- Historic urban core
- Industrial estate
- Leisure complex
- Managed cultural asset
- Municipal cemeteries and graveyards
- Offices
- Parkland
- Playing fields
- Railway station
- Religious buildings and compounds
- Retail
- School/college
- Semi detached housing
- Sports pitch
- Stadium
- Terraced housing

HLC Pilot areas

1. Corsley, Chapmanslade and Dilton Marsh
2. Cricklade, Latton and Marston Maisey
3. Chirton, Marden, Wilsford, Charlton and Rushall
4. Swindon Old Town and New Town

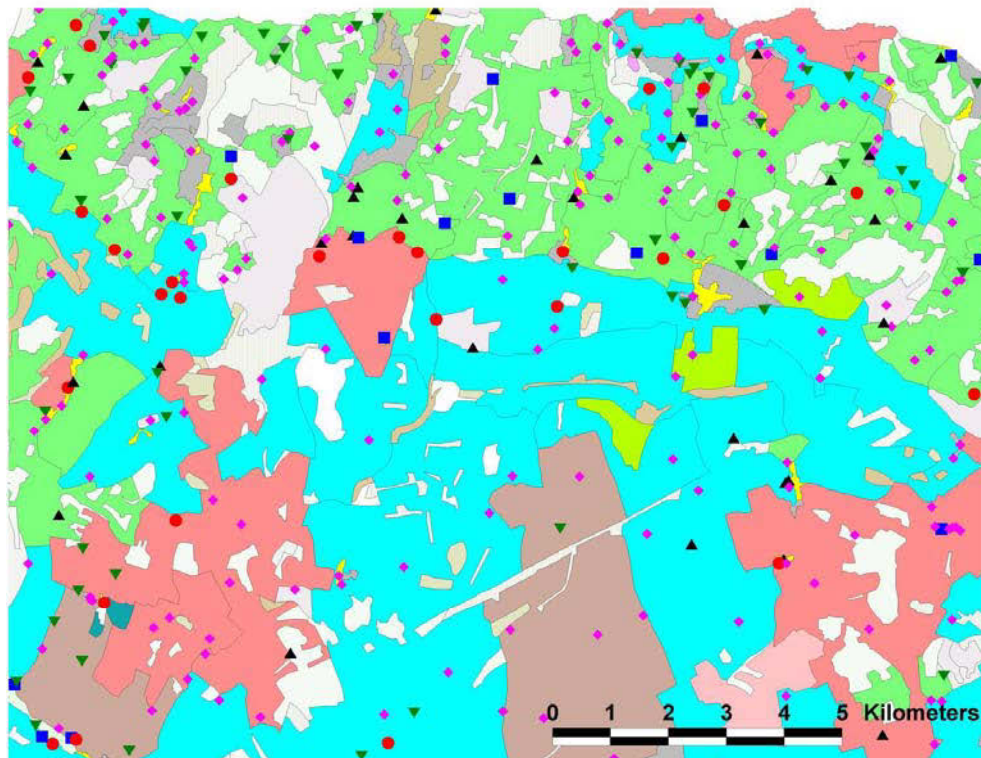


Analysis of HLC Data

Pilot area demonstrates potential of HLC data, which can produce:

- **‘Time slices’** – showing evolution of modern landscape
- **Statistics** – break down of landscape types, rarity, survival, characteristics
- **Narrative** – descriptions of landscape types, significance, threats & potential
- **New interpretations** – challenge the known and preconceptions
- **Relationships** – overlay archaeology, farmstead data, ecology, geology etc.

Using HLC Data



Relating farmstead types to HLC in Hampshire



- Showing patterning of farmstead type, survival and HLC
- Giving better understanding of pressures for change on the resource and better targetted responses by prioritisation and resourcing

Any questions?

