

Wiltshire and Swindon Historic Landscape Characterisation: Narrow Types Glossary

A

Airfield

Small-scale commercial or private field used for air travel, mainly fixed-wing.

Allotments

Land, often public, let out to individuals or an individual for the purposes of cultivation or other land use. Often in numerous small parcels, sometimes individually fenced.

Amalgamated fields

Enlarged fields, created by the amalgamation by boundary removal of smaller fields, mainly since the 19th century and usually since the Second World War. Usually done to ease mechanised working and increase productivity.

Ancient semi-natural woodland

Woodland believed to have existed since at least 1600 in England and in England defined as such by Natural England. Usually managed for timber, coppice etc and often contains dividing banks, trackways, charcoal burning platforms etc.

Ancient semi-natural woodland re-planted

Ancient woodland where original natural tree coverage has been clear-felled (often during the 20th century world wars) and the area replanted with other trees, often coniferous.

Apartments/maisonettes/flats

Residential area dominated by purpose-built tenement buildings, each containing several flats or apartments.

Assarts

Land enclosed from woodland. Required licence in medieval period. Term applied more generally in landscape history. Can include planned and regular enclosures and piecemeal irregular ones too. Often still with numerous trees on boundaries.

B

Brick shaped fields

Patterns of early fields, often prehistoric in origin, that are roughly rectilinear with sinuous sides and that share a common general orientation without having the dominant lines of coaxial fields. Sometimes called Celtic Fields.

Brickworks

An industrial manufacturing complex producing bricks.

Bus depot

A yard and facilities used for the storage, maintenance and repair of buses and coaches.

Business park

Area designed to accommodate several businesses, usually non-industrial, but normally not exclusively retail.

C

Camping/caravan/mobile home site

An area providing space for those with caravans, mobile homes or tents to setup accommodation and stay. Sometimes with associated facilities such as power points, toilets and shower blocks. Some are permanent sites, others temporary.

Canals

Artificial watercourse, usually connecting existing watercourses or bodies, constructed for the purpose of inland navigation and transportation. Nowadays also used for recreation.

Car parks

Area for parking motor vehicles; usually with permanent surfacing, sometimes in purpose built multi-storey buildings.

Ceremonial/ritual landscape

Areas within the landscape used for ritual or ceremonial purposes in the past, often during the prehistoric period. Such landscapes may have surviving structures, buildings, routeways, earthworks or cropmarks.

Civic centre

A building or complex often with several buildings where municipal offices and other public buildings are situated.

Coaxial fields

Field system with prevailing orientation. Most boundaries are straight and closely align with main axis or run perpendicular to it. Suggestive of early planned land allotment.

Common edge settlement

Agricultural village with farmsteads and cottages wholly or mainly arranged along the edge of a common.

Coppice

Area of managed woodland, usually oak, ash, hornbeam, hazel, alder, willow or beech, periodically cut to encourage new growth providing a source of smaller timber; for rods, fuel, charcoal etc. Larger coppices often divided into cropping areas or coups.

Cottages

Scatters of rural dwellings separate to formalised hamlets or settlements. Sometimes set along the roadside, other times distributed within the landscape.

Country houses and palaces

Grand house in a rural setting, normally within a landscape park, and usually accompanied by a range of attached buildings. Often a residence for royal or aristocratic individuals.

D

Deer park

A large, enclosed park, often containing some woodland and divided to provide a variety of habitats for shelter, grazing etc for deer, usually fallow, for hunting and for aesthetic appreciation.

Defence research establishment

A complex of buildings and areas in which a range of weaponry and techniques are developed and trialled.

Defences

Areas, sites and linked systems of such involved in the passive or active defence of the country against hostile forces on land, sea and in the air.

Depot/yard

A space or complex where goods/vehicles are stored, repaired and distributed. In this instance, the site has an industrial purpose – such as a builder's yard.

Detached Housing

Residential area dominated by free-standing houses that are not joined to others on any side.

Downland

An area of rolling upland terrain characterised by chalk escarpments separated by vales of softer earth.

E

Electricity generation/supply

A building or set of buildings and structures associated with the generation or distribution of electrical power.

Emergency services

Building, or complex of buildings, associated with the provision of the emergency services to the local area; be this the fire service, ambulance service or police.

Engine sheds

Long sheds, into which railway lines run, used to house railway engines.

Equestrian centre

A complex, including buildings, providing accommodation and activity areas for those involved in equestrian sports/activities and their horses.

F

Farmstead

A farmhouse/ancillary buildings forming the operational centre for the surrounding farmland.

Fishponds and hatcheries

Areas characterised by the creation of controlled ponds, artificial lakes or reservoirs for cultivation of fish for domestic, ornamental or commercial purposes. Sometimes sited inland and at other times they make use of rivers and natural watercourses.

Freight handling or warehousing

Facilities (buildings and directly associated grounds) for the storage of goods.

G

Gallops

A track or area where horses are exercised at a gallop.

Garden

An enclosed piece of ground devoted to the cultivation of flowers, fruit or vegetables for domestic use.

Gasworks

A gasworks is an industrial plant for the production of flammable gas. Many of these have are now redundant in the developed world by the use of natural gas.

Golf course

A landscaped area of ground, encompassing different types of terrain and features, such as ponds, sand-filled bunkers etc, on which the game of golf is played.

Greens

Area of often grassy ground, usually common, normally situated at the centre of a village or hamlet, sometimes within or near a town. Usually maintained by grazing.

H

Hamlet

Small settlement with no ecclesiastical or lay administrative function and usually with no other amenities.

Heath and scrub

Unimproved, but grazed area of low-growing woody shrubby vegetation, including heathers and gorses, sometimes in a mosaic with grassland and damp areas. Sometimes including groups of small trees.

Historic urban core

The long-established historic centre of a town or city, typically delineated in historic characterisation as extent shown on an early epoch of OS mapping.

Hotel

A building and its directly associated grounds, used for the accommodation of paying travellers and guests.

Housing estate

A planned residential area, usually with its own self-contained street system including cul-de-sacs, sometimes with its own amenities, such as shops, a public house etc.

I

Industrial estate

An area of land owned by a developer, whether a private entrepreneur or a public authority, and divided into plots for leasing or sale to manufacturing or commercial concerns which may share some common services.

J

K

L

Leisure or cultural facilities

This category includes a wide variety of leisure attractions and facilities, usually modern in date, and often in purpose built facilities or buildings. Visited for recreational purposes.

M

Manufacturing

Industrial sites where the production of secondary materials occurs through various processes. In this instance, primarily at factory sites.

Market gardens

An area of land used to grow vegetables, fruit and flowers to be sold at markets.

Marsh and bog

Low-lying land often covered by water and usually with peaty vegetation. Used seasonally for grazing. Historically, peat was sometimes cut as domestic fuel and the area also used for trapping wildfowl.

Meadows

Permanent grassland, usually enclosed with stock-proof boundaries. Low-lying and damp or hard by farmstead, receiving yard dung. Ideally lush, and mown for hay. Also secure convenient grazing for young or sickly livestock. Common or individually held.

Medical facility

Buildings or complexes which provide assistance to help individuals maintain a satisfactory condition of mind and body, and freedom from sickness, injury and pain.

Military airfield

A landing and taking-off area for military aircraft. Often includes ancillary structures and buildings for the maintenance and storage of aircraft, defence of the site, accommodation of staff, controlling airspace etc.

Military installation

A site and associated buildings used by the military for various purposes, usually defensive.

Military residence

Houses or accommodation blocks (billets) used as places of residence by military personnel. Typically associated with nearby military bases or installations.

Mills

A factory used for processing raw materials. Usually wind, water or steam powered and typically focused on production of goods like flour, silk, cotton, wool, paper and iron/steel.

Motorsport track

A purpose-built facility for racing motor cars and/or motor cycles which may also include grandstands or concourses.

Municipal cemeteries and graveyards

Place, usually defined, where the dead are carefully and respectfully placed, usually via interment.

N

O

Offices and retail

Buildings or complexes of buildings, sometimes with associated car parking and ancillary facilities that are used for professional work or the sale of goods.

Open field system

System of fields in which several farmers held land in common, intermixed in narrow strips assessable via length and width, with low or no separating boundaries. Mostly medieval. Few survive. Lost to piecemeal or planned enclosure, from the 13th to 20th century.

Orchards and vineyards

An enclosed area of land or garden for the growing of fruit-bearing trees or land and associated buildings where grapevines are cultivated.

Ornamental lake

An artificial lake or pond, often made by damming a stream, whose main function is to catch the eye and to contribute to ornamentally designed landscapes. As such a common feature of landscape parks.

Osier beds

An area where osiers (types of willows, producing long straight stems) are cultivated for use in basketry.

P

Paddocks

Enclosed fields for horses. Usually a modern adaptation of part of an earlier field system.

Parkland

An enclosed piece of land, generally large in area, usually either surrounding or adjacent to a country house or castle. Used for hunting, the tree cultivation, pasture and enjoyment.

Parliamentary enclosure

Field patterns usually rectilinear and regular with straight boundaries and access lanes, fixed by surveyors, resulting from Parliamentary Enclosure of large areas of common arable (open fields) and rough ground. Mainly occurred during the 18th and 19th centuries.

Piecemeal enclosure

Field systems derived from gradual enclosure of open fields, usually from C13 to C17 & C18 when Parliamentary Enclosure dominated. Individual strips or groups enclosed by landholders, leaving elements of the former open field pattern visible.

Planned estate (social housing)

A planned residential area, where properties are often owned by the local authority or council. Usually self contained urban areas, but with associated amenities and recreational space.

Plantation

Woodland planted deliberately, either for landscaping or to produce a crop of timber. Mid 20th century plantations usually single species conifers often planted in rows. Earlier plantations and those of the late 20th century onwards are often more mixed.

Plant nursery/garden centre

An area such as a commercial garden where plants and trees are grown and nurtured for the purpose of transportation or sale or a place/buildings where gardening tools and plants are sold.

Playing fields

Playing fields created for recreational purposes and used by a wide section of the local community, including schools.

Practice area

Areas used by armed forces on land or at sea for training and military exercises.

Prairie fields

Patterns of very large fields, some with boundaries over 1km long. Usually resulting from post WWII combination of holdings and the removal of earlier boundaries creating land units convenient for highly mechanised arable, or for extensive livestock raising.

Q

Quarries and gravel pits

An excavation on land from which stone or aggregates are extracted for use primarily building and civil engineering.

R

Rail yard

Complex, often attached to a railway station where engines, coaches and wagons are laid up and maintained.

Railway line

System of rail tracks along which passenger carriages or goods wagons are moved, usually by locomotive engines. Usually includes beds, cuttings, embankments, tunnels etc.

Railway station

Where railway trains stop to load and unload passengers or freight. Includes buildings and directly related grounds.

Religious buildings and compounds

A place (buildings and directly associated grounds) where appropriate acts, rites and ceremonies are performed to honour or revere a supernatural being, power or holy entity.

Reorganised fields

Field pattern of any type or date that has been subject to revision, through either insertion or removal of boundaries, but where the original form is still legible.

Reservoirs and water bodies

A body of water or other liquid, wholly or partly artificial and sometimes covered, used to collect and store water, or other liquid for a particular function. Most often for the collection and supply of water for public and industrial use.

Restored fields

Fields created on the surface of restored land, such as that landscaped from the former dumps of coal mines. Modern and often regular.

Race course

A purpose-built facility for the racing of horses or bicycles; may also include grandstands or concourses.

Routeways

A well established and substantial path, trackway or route that has been used to traverse the wider landscape. Often with substantial engineering, in the form of banks, ditches or made surfaces, and usually of medieval or earlier origins.

Row

Linear arrangement of farmsteads and dwellings, usually built along a road.

S

School/college

Primary, secondary or tertiary educational establishments, buildings and directly associated and usually defined grounds, including car parking etc.

Secondary woodland

Woodland that has developed, usually by natural colonization, on land formerly used for other purposes (agriculture, settlement, industry etc). If this process pre-dated 1600, secondary woodland can be classified as ancient woodland.

Service station

A commercial complex, usually sited along motorways or trunk roads, providing facilities such as car parking, restaurants, shop and fuel stations.

Semi detached housing

Residential area dominated by houses joined to just one other to form one building.

Sewage or water works

An area in which local sewage is filtered and purified in large rectangular or circular tanks. Alternatively, buildings, engineering constructions and machinery, used for the purpose of supplying a town, or region with water distributed through pipes.

Sports pitch

An area of ground, often publically owned, where outdoor sports are played, usually with the necessary marking out and structures (goal posts etc). Distinguished from sports grounds or stadiums where spectators pay to watch.

Stadiums and show grounds

A large area, usually open-air, used for permanent, seasonal or regular shows/events/exhibitions or a large sports ground surrounded by spectator seating arranged in tiers or terraces.

Strip fields

Long narrow plots of land within an open field. Also used for those plots once enclosed and held in severalty, the form in which most now survive. Some Saxon ones but most medieval.

Strip lynchets

A lynchet is a bank of earth that builds up on the downslope of land ploughed over a long period of time. The disturbed soil slips down the hillside to create a positive lynchet while the area reduced in level becomes a negative lynchet. The ridged landform can be cultivated and this practice was common in upland areas from the prehistoric to medieval era.

T

Terraced housing

Residential area dominated by lines of attached houses, usually planned and built as one unit. Often associated with industrial towns. Sometimes follow earlier patterns, such as those of the fields they overlay.

U

Unimproved grassland

Open areas of grazing or grassland which have not been formally managed.

Unimproved land

For areas of open, unenclosed and unimproved land where the type of coverage (i.e. grass,

heath/scrub etc.) cannot be readily determined.

V

Village

Collection of farmsteads, dwellings, yards, gardens etc. Larger than hamlet, smaller than town. Often includes church, inn, shops, workshops, manor house. Main rural settlement form in central province; rarer elsewhere. Also industrial villages.

W

Water meadows

Controlled irrigation to draw nutrient-rich silts and material onto valley-bottom grassland to increase hay yields and enable earlier mowing. Early modern agricultural improvement; normally now no longer operated though earthworks may survive.

Watercress beds

An area set aside for growing watercress. As the watercress requires large quantities of slightly alkaline water the beds are usually sited around the headwaters of chalk streams.

Wood pasture

Scattered trees within grassland, the trees providing shelter for forage as well as being harvested for timber and fuel. Now most often found within deer parks, but more widespread, especially on steep slopes, in the medieval period.

Works/workshops

Workshops and ancillary buildings typically used by local or small scale industries or businesses for the production or repair of goods or vehicles. Not on the same scale as large factories or production centres.

Waste disposal site

Buildings, sites and structures associated with the disposal or recycling of domestic and industrial waste.

X

Y

Z