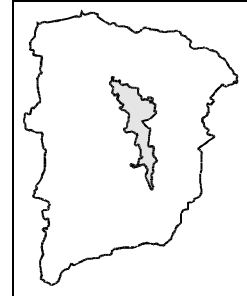


## 5 Character Area 11: Hart Valley

### *Description*

- 5.24 This character area embraces the landscape which runs along the valley of the River Hart through the centre of the district between Bramshill Park and the edge of the chalklands to the south. Although the valley form is subtle and its landscape character is mixed, it essentially forms a broad morphological unit and the river provides a unifying thread, forming the focus for the landscapes that run along its length. Its boundaries are defined roughly as the limit of land associated with, or providing a setting for, the river valley. On its eastern side, the boundary has been drawn slightly wider to include the thin strip of land along the fringes of Fleet.

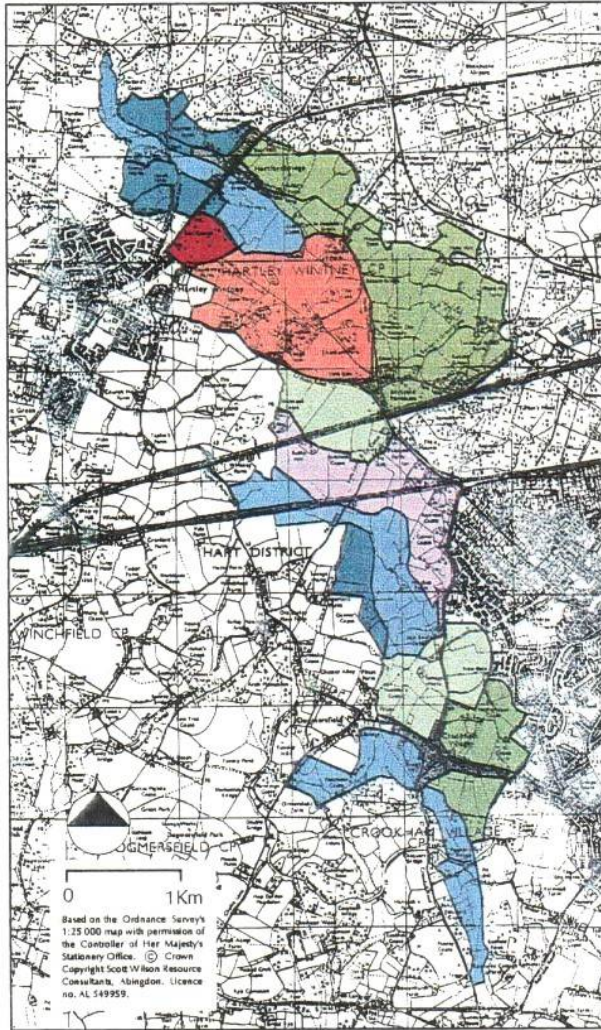


### *Main distinguishing features*

- *a mixed landscape character which lacks overall cohesion but which has common, unifying elements, notably the river and its immediate floodplain and a general pattern of mixed farmland and woodland;*
- *the distinctively riparian character of the broad, flat, low-lying valley floor with its riverside pastures, willow-lined watercourses and well-treed character;*
- *an indistinct valley landform, with valley side landscapes recognisable only above Hartford Bridge and to the north of Dogmersfield;*
- *the parkland of Elvetham Hall which dominates the character of the river valley above its central section.*

### *Enhancement priorities*

- 5.25 The Hart Valley contains attractive countryside which is generally of good quality. However, in places this quality is affected by the intrusion of built development on the urban fringes, by overhead power lines and by the loss of woodland cover, hedgerows and trees resulting from agricultural intensification. The main enhancement priorities are to restore landscape structure along these denuded valley sides, through planting of new woods, trees and hedgerows, and to encourage the



*Hart Valley landscape types (see Figure 4 for key)*



*Parkland and floodplain farmland around Elvetham Hall*

restoration of more diverse wetland habitats within the valley floor. A stronger landscape structure may also help to reduce the impact of power lines, roads and other localised intrusive features.

***Main enhancement priorities***

- *management of existing woodlands, hedgerows and trees to secure their long-term presence within the landscape and maximise their landscape and ecological value*
- *management and restoration of parkland and landscape features associated with country estates*
- *new planting of woods, hedgerows and trees to form a stronger landscape structure in denuded valley side areas, around the urban fringes and where roads or power lines cross the valley, to minimise their intrusion on the valley landscape*
- *planting of willows and other appropriate species alongside watercourses within the valley floor where the typically intimate, riparian character of the floodplain has been weakened*
- *where possible, creation of a more diverse range of wetland habitats within the valley floor, including wet grasslands, seasonally flooded areas, marshes and wet woodland.*



*Floodplain farmland near  
Winchfield Hurst*



*Mixed farmland and  
woodland near Hartley  
Wintney*



*Open arable farmland near  
Elvetham Hall*



*Remnant parkland at  
Elvetham Hall*