

# TETSWORTH PARISH CHARACTER ASSESSMENT (Part 3)



Evidence Report for Tetsworth Neighbourhood Plan  
January 2025

## Landscape Character Assessment

Landscape provides a framework for people to think about what gives their area its 'sense of place'. This section of the Character Assessment includes a general description of the landscape of the countryside surrounding the Tetsworth village settlement and the individual features of the sectors which radiate from the village to and beyond the Parish boundary.

The general scope of attractive views of Tetsworth from the surrounding countryside are shown in each of the countryside sectors. However, detailed assessment of views into and out of the village which merit being protected as key views has been undertaken by a landscape specialist, Michelle Bolger Consultancy, and their value reported separately in its '15 Key Views' publication.

### Overview

The setting, character and history of Tetsworth village and the major outlying farm developments stem from the geographical intersection of the local historical waterways and transport links. The M40 is a significant landscape feature of the parish splitting it in two along the north-west south-east axis and cutting through the green patchwork of open countryside on the southern edge of the village. It has replaced the earlier dominance of A40 which can be traced back through the centuries as a major trade and transport route linking London and the cities beyond Gloucester as far as Fishguard on the Welsh coast. The A40 still passes through the village carrying all the motorway traffic on accession when the motorway is backed up or closed.



*Major Transport Routes Through Tetsworth Parish*

The agricultural significance of Tetsworth and its surrounding countryside goes back many centuries. From its origins as a self-supporting hamlet with a good fresh water supply, it later became an important focus for horticultural trading. During the stagecoach era, the community was well-known for supplying a variety of fresh foods to local towns and to travellers passing through the village en-route between London and the west.

Today, the countryside is still dominated by agricultural activity. Nevertheless, farming has, in some areas, given way to leisure activities while maintaining an open, attractive landscape enjoyed by residents and visitors alike. The extensive network of bridleways and footpaths around Tetsworth is a much-valued amenity giving access to the village's rural hinterland.

## Overall Parish Countryside Description

The rural setting of Tetsworth is emphasised by the aerial view of the Parish. Development of its nucleated built environment is confined almost exclusively to the village settlement and this development accounts for just a low percentage of land use in the Parish.

Tetsworth lies in that part of South Oxfordshire known as the Clay Vale. This area is bounded in the east by the edge of the Chiltern Hills, by the River Thames to the north and west and by the River Thames corridor to the south. The geology and topography of the area is best described as a gently undulating landscape dominated by blue-grey clay soils.



*Green Patchwork of Tetsworth's Rural Setting*

Two minor watercourses affect Tetsworth. Latchford Brook runs from a point just north of the village crossing the Parish in a broadly south-westerly direction to join Haseley Brook which forms much of the southern boundary of the Parish. This joint waterway feeds the SSSI at Spartum Fen a short distance further downstream. These two brooks provide the natural surface drainage for the whole of the Parish.



The Clay Vale supports mixed agricultural use with arable farming being more prominent in the better drained areas and pasture dominating the lower lying areas. The land within Tetsworth Parish reflects this balance. The traditional pattern of a patchwork of small fields enclosed by mature hedgerows has largely been maintained, although some consolidation of holdings has occurred over the years reflecting greater mechanisation of farming methods. There are no major woodlands in the Parish, but there are a number of smaller stands and individual trees which enhance the landscape and provide wildlife habitats which encourage biodiversity. Of particular note, the open countryside round Tetsworth has become home to large numbers of red kites, a species which was close to extinction in England just 30 years ago.



*Red Kite*

Individual farming businesses are supported by isolated farmhouses and agricultural buildings, some of which have a detrimental visual impact on the landscape value of the area. There are also a handful of dwellings which were built many years ago in rural settings mainly along established roadways.



*The Rural Vista and Agricultural Structures Looking Towards Chiltern Hills*

While arable farming and livestock grazing of sheep and cattle both flourish and dominate land use in the Parish, smaller proportions of the countryside are dedicated to recreational and leisure purposes which are also important to the area. Modern farming methods and diversification to alternative uses have had little impact on Tetsworth's historic setting.

A picturesque golf course was laid out to the north of the Parish about 30 years ago, but retains the open feeling of the countryside. Two equestrian business enterprises have been established just to the east of the Tetsworth village settlement and grazing horses are a familiar sight across the Parish.

As noted earlier, the key infrastructure features of the parish are the two parallel, major highways which cross the Parish from south-east to north-west. The dominant road in terms of strategic significance, traffic volume and environmental impact is the M40 motorway which was constructed adjacent to the south-western edge of the village in the mid-1970s and was extended to become the preferred motorway route between London and Birmingham by 1991. The parallel A40 passes through the village and is now a feature of the local road network rather than being a national strategic route.

Also having visual impact on the environment, a National Grid high-voltage electricity network line supported by metal pylons stretches across the Parish from north-east to south-west crossing the M40 motorway close to the eastern end of the village settlement. Two national gas mains cross the western area of the Parish, but as they are buried, they have no environmental impact. Although having lesser environmental impact than the electricity power line, there are also three telecommunications masts sited on high ground within the Parish. Two are close to Judd's Lane, north of the Greyhound Kennels, and the other is the west of the village adjacent to the M40 bridge giving access to Oxhouse Farm.

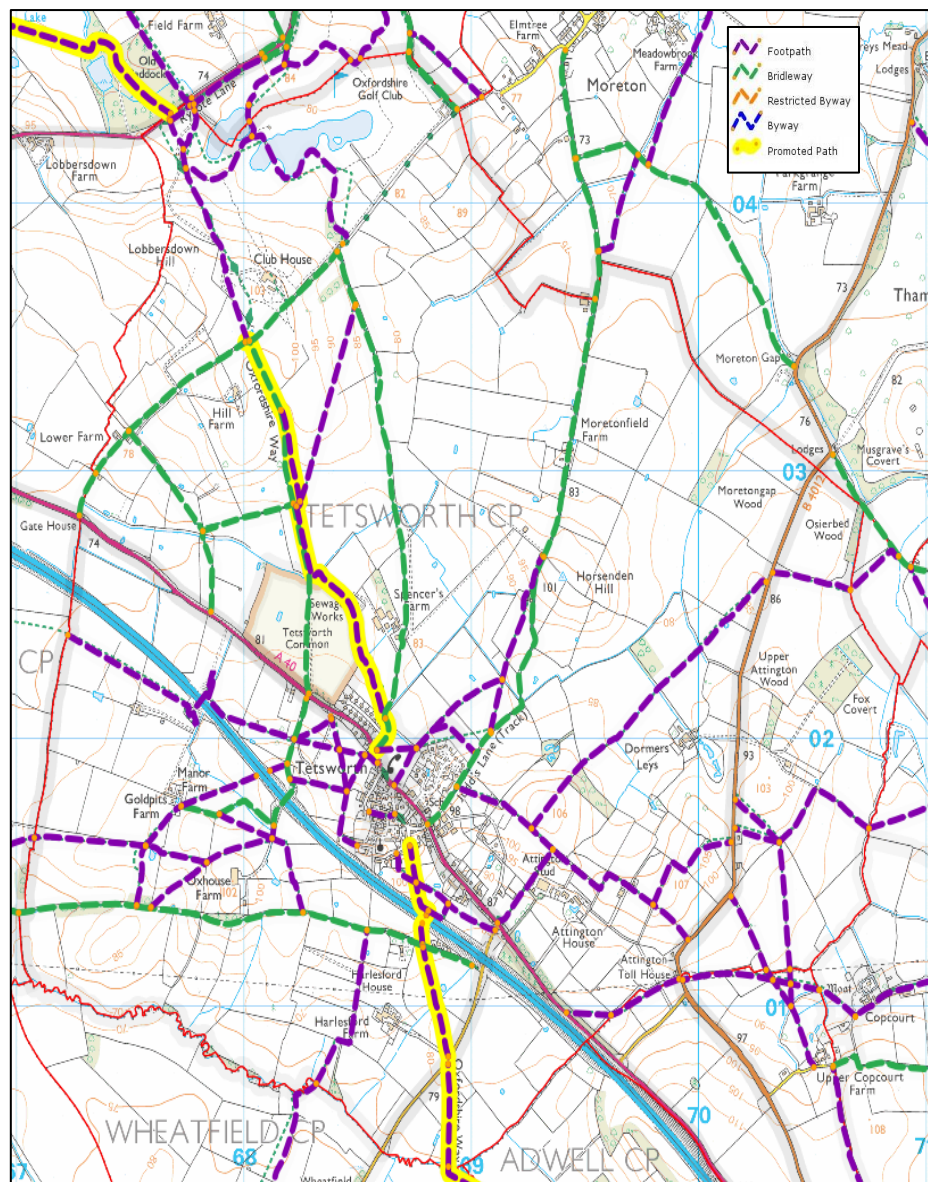
## Views of Tetsworth

The views towards Tetsworth from its surrounding countryside, all show it as a small, compact settlement nestled into the open countryside, and relate to the whole of the village settlement, not just the core. The viewpoints considered by the Michelle Bolger Consultancy in its '15 Key Views' report include those listed below and represent a clockwise rotation from a north-westerly viewpoint adjacent to the Oxfordshire Golf Club through to a viewpoint west of the village adjacent to the M40.

- The Oxfordshire Golf Club north-west of the village beyond Tetsworth Common looking south-east.
- Judd's Lane summit on Horsenden Hill to the north of the village looking south.
- The entrance to Mellon Stud to the east of the village looking west
- The Stoke Talmage road just north of the M40 bridge looking north-east
- The Oxfordshire Way exit to the Stoke Talmage road at the entrance to Harlesford Farm.
- The M40 Oxhouse Farm access bridge and top of car-boot sale field west of the village looking east and north-east.

## Public Rights of Way

The richness of the network public rights of way which surround and converge on Tetsworth is clearly apparent in the local section of the SODC Definitive Map<sup>1</sup>. Individually and collectively, these routes represent a well-used and attractive amenity asset for Tetsworth residents and visitors alike.



*Public Rights of Way Network Around Tetsworth*

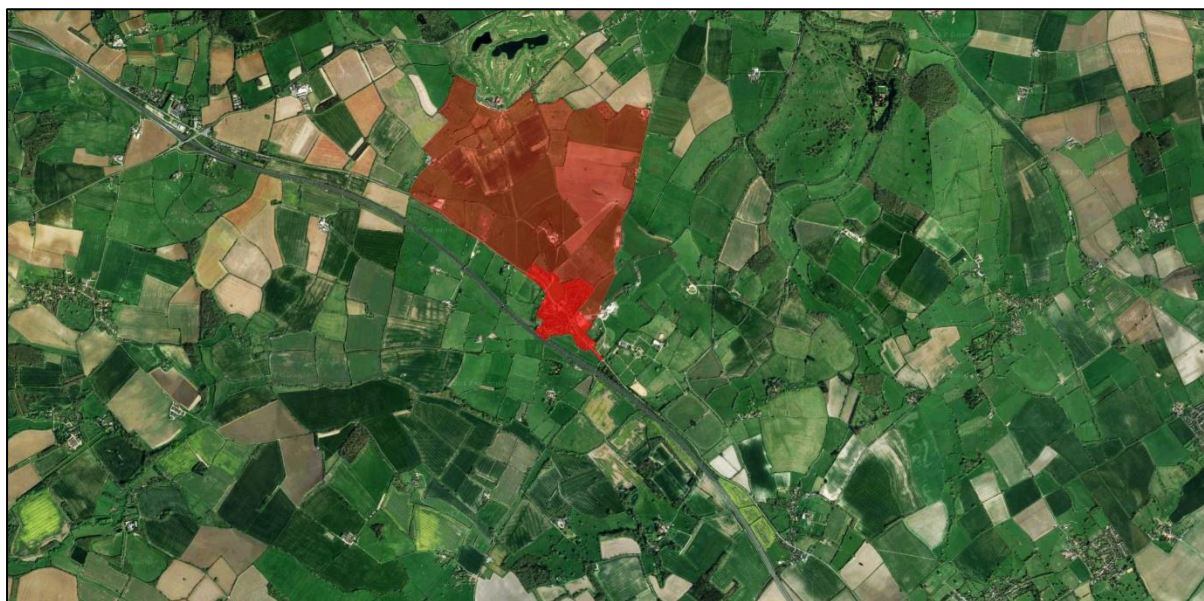
<sup>1</sup> <https://publicrightsofway.oxfordshire.gov.uk/Web/standardmap.aspx>



## Countryside Character Sector 1 – Land North of Tetsworth

### General Overview of Character

This countryside sector is defined by all the land to the north of Tetsworth village bounded by the A40 to the north-west and Judd's Lane to the north-east extending as far as the Tetsworth Parish boundary. Its overarching feature is the pattern of the fields defined by a network of mature hedgerows.



*Countryside North of Tetsworth*

This area is overwhelmingly dedicated to agriculture with very few historic farmsteads and dwellings. There are no public roads and access is limited to agricultural service tracks to farms. The many rights of way running through the area generally follow the hedgerows.

The land in the immediate vicinity of the village is Tetsworth Common while the northern area on higher ground hosts the Oxfordshire Golf Club and Spa with the golf course itself extending beyond the skyline into Thame Parish.

### Layout

Tetsworth Common is an extensive flat grassland area immediately adjacent to the Tetsworth village settlement behind Marsh End and is bounded by mature, protected hedgerows. This sector is crossed by the Oxfordshire Way running from north to south from the Oxfordshire Golf Club. A bridleway also crosses this sector and is unfenced as it crosses the Common.

Beyond Tetsworth Common, the land is in mixed agricultural use supporting both livestock grazing and arable cropping in a patchwork of fields defined by mature hedgerows and occasional hardwood trees.

This sector is made up of the three elements noted above. The closest to the village is Tetsworth Common, an extensive flat grassland area at the boundary of the village settlement along the west side of Marsh End. The mature, protected hedgerows form the clear separation from the village and continue around the whole of the green. The sector is crossed by the Oxfordshire Way running from north to south from the Oxfordshire Golf Club. A bridleway also crosses this sector and is unfenced as it crosses the Common.

Beyond Tetsworth Common, the land is in mixed agricultural use supporting both livestock grazing and arable cropping in a patchwork of fields defined by mature hedgerows and occasional hardwood trees. The area has many bridleways which provide important amenity to the local residents and people from further afield. Where this sector abuts the village boundary there are clear demarcations, the main one being that the land is in full agricultural use. This is very evident on the junction between the Village Green and the wooded area around the Swan Gardens development. Judd's Lane, described in detail earlier, is the dominant eastern boundary to the sector as a notably straight, potentially Roman route.

The northernmost area of this sector is occupied by the Oxfordshire Golf Club. The upper parts of its clubhouse, spa and hotel buildings are a feature of the northern skyline. The golf course itself, most of which is situated in Thame Parish, and the club's access road lie beyond this sightline.

## Topography

From its lowest point on Tetsworth Common, this countryside sector rises to the north of the area up Lobbersdown Hill.



*Tetsworth Common Looking Towards Golf Club*



*Tetsworth Common Looking West*

## Spaces

This countryside sector is one large open space in its own right.

## Roads, Byways and Footpaths

There are no roads in this sector other than the A40 which forms its southern boundary. The eastern side of sector is bounded by Judd's Lane which is a narrow unmetalled byway solely



used for the purposes of access. Within the sector, there is a minor private farm track leading from the A40 to Lower Lobbersdown and Hill Farms. The earlier map of rights of way indicates the other footpaths which criss-cross the open landscape and generally lead to or from the centre of the village. As already mentioned, this area is traversed by the Oxfordshire Way.

## Green and Natural Features

Tetsworth Common, agricultural holdings and the golf club represent the three green character types of this area: community open space, private farming land, and the slightly altered but still open countryside of a major golf course. Beyond the boundaries to other parishes, the openness continues creating a clear green gap.

## Landmarks

Tetsworth Common is a natural landmark, but the Oxfordshire Golf Club and Spa is the most prominent feature of this area of countryside and is a major employer in the Parish.



*Oxfordshire Golf Club Entrance and Clubhouse/Hotel*



*The Oxfordshire Golf Course*

## Buildings Character

Other than the modern structure of the Oxfordshire's clubhouse virtually all of the handful of other buildings in the area are directly or indirectly linked to agricultural enterprises and are widely dispersed across the sector. There are exceptions to this characterisation. There is the relatively modern residence which replaced the period toll-house at the eastern edge of the area on the north side of the A40. Also, the Greyhound Kennels on the western side of Judd's Lane is being developed for domestic accommodation and there are two further long established domestic dwellings further north along Judd's Lane, normally accessed from Moreton. All of these have the common feature of their isolation.



*Farmland and Greyhound Kennels Development*

## Streetscape Features

There is no streetscape in this rural area.

## Inappropriate Development

The establishment of stable buildings and a ménage alongside the A40 close to the toll-house replacement dwelling does not, nearly 5 years since planning approval, appear to be progressing in accordance with the permission and is currently an incongruous intrusion into the attractive and open countryside.



*Approved Site for Stables and Menage*

## Views

The view from the hill-top southern edge of the Oxfordshire Golf Club site to the north-west of Tetworth looks down on the nestled village settlement in the middle ground. The church and school buildings are notable and attractive landmark features of this village scene which is complemented by the mature tree-scape in and surrounding the settlement. Closer to the viewpoint, the view include farmed fields and the expanse of Tetworth Common on the nearside edge of the settlement. This view is experienced by many hikers journeying along the Oxfordshire Way which passes adjacent to the Common and continues through the village itself. Again, the line of the Chiltern Hills and their beech woods form a memorable backdrop to the village.





*View from Golf Club Edge*



*Tetsworth Village from Golf Club Edge*

## Value Judgements

**Historical Value:** High.

The network of hedgerows and bridleways record an unchanged, beautiful landscape. The views towards the village and out of the village are highly important amenity giving the whole area a familiar historical context.

**Aesthetic Value:** High.

Echoing the historical value, the green pattern of enclosed fields provides an attractive ambiance to the area.

**Architectural Interest:** Not relevant.

**Community Value:** High.

Accessibility to this sector via the rich network of public rights of way is a much appreciated amenity offering wonderful views towards and away from the village.

**Susceptibility to Development Harms:** High.

This sector is highly susceptible to development harms. It is highly important that the character of the village and the views into and out from the key public spaces are protected. The views on the approach to the village on the Oxfordshire Way are extremely important. Some areas have already been harmed and the extent of harm has been limited, mainly due to avoiding unrequired development. Those areas which have been allowed to be

developed need to be careful managed to prevent slow, small alterations which, over a period of time, would have a significant detrimental effect on the views.

While potential for development of historical farm buildings which have fallen out of use exists, no development should be permitted on any building built since 1950 without full public consultation.

The introduction of any new road, lanes, or access openings should also be carefully managed to avoid the disruption of the historic network.

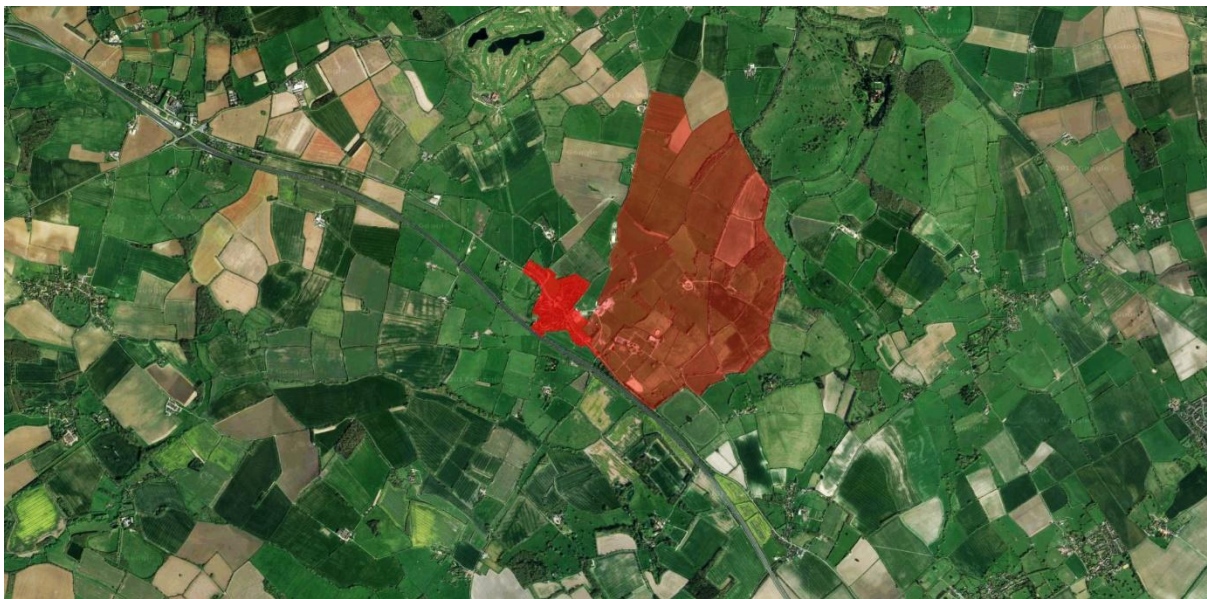
## Countryside Character Sector 2 – Land East of Tetsworth

### General Overview of Character

This countryside sector is defined by all of the land to the north-east and east of Tetsworth village bounded by the A40 to the south-east and east of Judd's Lane extending as far as the Tetsworth Parish boundary.

This area is overwhelmingly dedicated to agricultural with some recreational use. There are few dwellings or roads other than tracks for access to farms and fields, the pattern of which are generally defined by mature hedgerows. The area enjoys a network of rural footpaths offering amenity access to the countryside. The land in the immediate vicinity of the village is occupied by the Attington Equestrian Centre and Mellon Stud while more distant areas have a purely agricultural ambience. Recently-erected barns in open land on Mount Hill Farm are an obvious development intrusion in the rural landscape east of Judd's Lane.

The eastern portion of this countryside sector is crossed from south to north by the B4012 road which runs from the A40 to Thame.



*Countryside Sector East of Tetsworth*

### Layout

The southern part of this sector is dedicated to equestrian enterprises with some man-made facilities for show jumping and cross-country riding as well as attractive paddocks associated with the stud farm. The rest of the area both sides of the B4012 supports both livestock and arable farming in attractive hedgerow-defined fields. Although lying outside the Parish boundary, the more manicured meadows of the Thame Park estate and land to the east of Fox Covert extend the open countryside and green space.





*Attington and Mellon Estates*



*Pasture East of Judd's Lane*

## Topography

This sector has attractively undulating area with the eastern edge of the Tetsworth settlement at its lowest point. The northern part of this sector towards Thame Park and Thame itself is predominantly flat and the steeple of St Giles' church can be seen on the south-western skyline.

## Spaces

This sector is open countryside given over to agriculture in the main.

## Roads, Byways and Footpaths

The only significant road across this countryside sector is the B4012 to Thame. Judd's Lane which forms the western boundary of this sector is a bridleway only allowing vehicular access to isolated dwellings and farms. Public footpaths cross the sector from the Attington area northwards towards Thame Park and eastwards towards Copcourt and Sydenham.



*B4012 Thame Road Looking South*

## Green and Natural Features

This sector, other than the facilities at the Attington Equestrian Centre, several agricultural structures and the handful of isolated dwellings in the area, is overwhelmingly rural in character and is dedicated to farming and nature.



*Horsenden Hill Looking West from Dormer Leys Access*

There are a handful of small wooded areas, the largest of which is Fox Covert to the east of the B4012.

## Landmarks

Attington House is a modern property constructed at the beginning of this decade replacing a country residence on the same site and still fits in well with the estate.



*Attington Equestrian facilities*



*Attington House*

## Buildings Character

There are few dwellings in this countryside sector not associated with agricultural or recreational enterprises. The handful of domestic residences that are within the area are all individual in their design and appearance. There are five residential houses along the southern part of the B4012 together with the recently restored farmhouse and farm buildings at Dormer Leys

## Streetscape Features

There is no streetscape as such in this area, although the unique character of the Grade II-listed Toll-house alongside the B4012 is noteworthy.



*The Toll-house, Thame Road*

## Land Use

Land in this countryside sector is dedicated exclusively to agricultural and recreational use. A field to the western side of the B4012 has occasionally been used as a microlight launch and landing site during summer weekends.

## Views

The viewpoint from the north of the village is at the summit of Judd's Lane as it crosses Horsenden Hill, north of the Greyhound Kennels. This clearly shows how the village was established on a small hill within an open agricultural field pattern. The village settlement in the middle-ground, is sheltered behind the woodland surrounding the edge of Swan Gardens. St Giles' steeple is a prominent feature of the southern horizon, and again this view of Tetsworth clearly shows it is nestled into its landscape. The only remaining pub is a distinct landmark on the right with the openness of the village green in front of it.

The viewpoint from the east of the village is at the entrance to the Mellon Stud just short of the B4012 road to Thame. It gives a view across the Attington Equestrian Centre and, as other views, includes the St Giles' steeple landmark. The view of the village from further north along the B4012 closer to Thame also pinpoints St Giles' steeple on the southern horizon.



Although lying just beyond the Tetsworth Parish Boundary, two important heritage areas have attractive open countryside settings. Thame Park, a Grade II\* listed estate, has a gatehouse on the B4012, and the historic buildings at Copcourt lie just to the east of the Parish.



*Viewpoints from Judd's Lane Summit and at Mellon Stud Entrance*



*View from Judd's Lane Summit Looking South*



*View Towards Tetsworth Across Attington Estate*

## Value Judgements

**Historical Value:** High.

The network of hedgerows and bridleways record an unchanged, beautiful landscape. The views towards the village and out of the village are highly important amenity giving the whole area a familiar historical context. The listed Toll House on the B4012 is a prominent reminder of the area's heritage.

**Aesthetic Value:** High.

Echoing the historical value, the green pattern of enclosed fields provides an attractive ambiance to the area. The distant views of St Giles' church steeple from the Thame Park entrance on the B4012 provides an attractive and memorable setting of the village settlement.

**Architectural Interest:** Not relevant.

**Community Value:** High.

Accessibility to this sector via the rich network of public rights of way is a much appreciated amenity offering wonderful views towards and away from the village. Although a private enterprise, the Attington Equitation Centre attracts an enthusiastic clientele from near and far.

**Susceptibility to Development Harms:** High.

This sector is highly susceptible to development harms. It is highly important that the character of the village and the views into and out from the key public spaces are protected. The views on the approach to the village on the Oxfordshire Way are extremely important. Some areas have already been harmed and the extent of harm has been limited, mainly due to avoiding unrequired development. Those areas which have been allowed to be developed need to be carefully managed to prevent slow, small alterations which, over a period of time, would have a significant detrimental effect on the views.

While potential for development of historical farm buildings which have fallen out of use exists, no development should be permitted on any building built since 1950 without full public consultation.

The introduction of any new road, lanes, or access openings should also be carefully managed to avoid the disruption of the historic network.

The Judd's Lane corridor merits consideration as an area of special interest as an Important Open Space and Local Green Space. It is publicly accessible, historically important, has high value as a local amenity and safe recreational area, and has a richness of wildlife



## Countryside Character Sector 3 – Land South-East of Tetsworth between M40 and A40

### General Overview of Character

This slender sector is the land to the south-east of the Tetsworth settlement bounded by the A40 and M40 highways and is barely 200 metres wide at its widest point.

The sector has two distinct characters. To the north of the Stoke Talmage road, the area is open pasture, while to the south there is an ever-narrowing tongue of woodland between the bounding roads. If the area has one consistent characteristic it is the constant intrusion of motorway traffic noise.



*Between Roads Sector to East of Tetsworth*

### Layout

The open pasture north-west of the Stoke Talmage road is the foreground view of residents occupying houses on the southern edge of the Tetsworth village settlement. The woodland to the south-east of the road lies beyond the speed de-restriction sign on the A40 and provides secluded natural habitats for badgers and muntjac deer as well as a variety of smaller animals and birds. This wooded ribbon offers contrasting relief from the more open agricultural landscape.

### Topography

The pasture area slopes downward from the back of Chiltern View and the eastern end of High Street to a low point at Stoke Talmage road. The eastern woodland section starts on flat land opposite the Attington equestrian facilities before rising towards Postcombe.

### Spaces

Both the open pasture and the woodland sections can be considered as spaces, although there is no access to the woodland at least some of which may be defined as Highways land.

## Roads, Byways and Footpaths

This sector is defined by its bounding highways – the M40 and A40. It is also crossed by the Stoke Talmage road. The motorway is very obviously the highway with the greatest impact on the landscape and broader environment.



*M40 Looking East*



*A40 East of Tetworth Looking West*

The Stoke Talmage Road is, by comparison, just a lightly-used local road leading in the directions of Chalgrove and Watlington. Its undulating route south of the Parish and picturesque views of the Chiltern Hills and Vale of Oxford make this minor route a favourite of weekend cyclists. The meadow south of the Tetworth settlement is crossed by a rural footpath.



*Stoke Talmage Road Looking South to M40*

## Green and Natural Features

This area is entirely dedicated to open countryside and woodland, although its bounding roads clearly define its overall character. The Oxfordshire Way crosses the pasture area before running in a pedestrian underpass below the M40 carriageway.



*Pasture behind Chiltern View Looking Towards M40*

## Landmarks

The M40 motorway is the dominant feature of this area.

## Buildings Character

There are no buildings in this area.

## Streetscape Features

There is no streetscape in this area other than the attractive woodland that lines the A40 east of Tetsworth

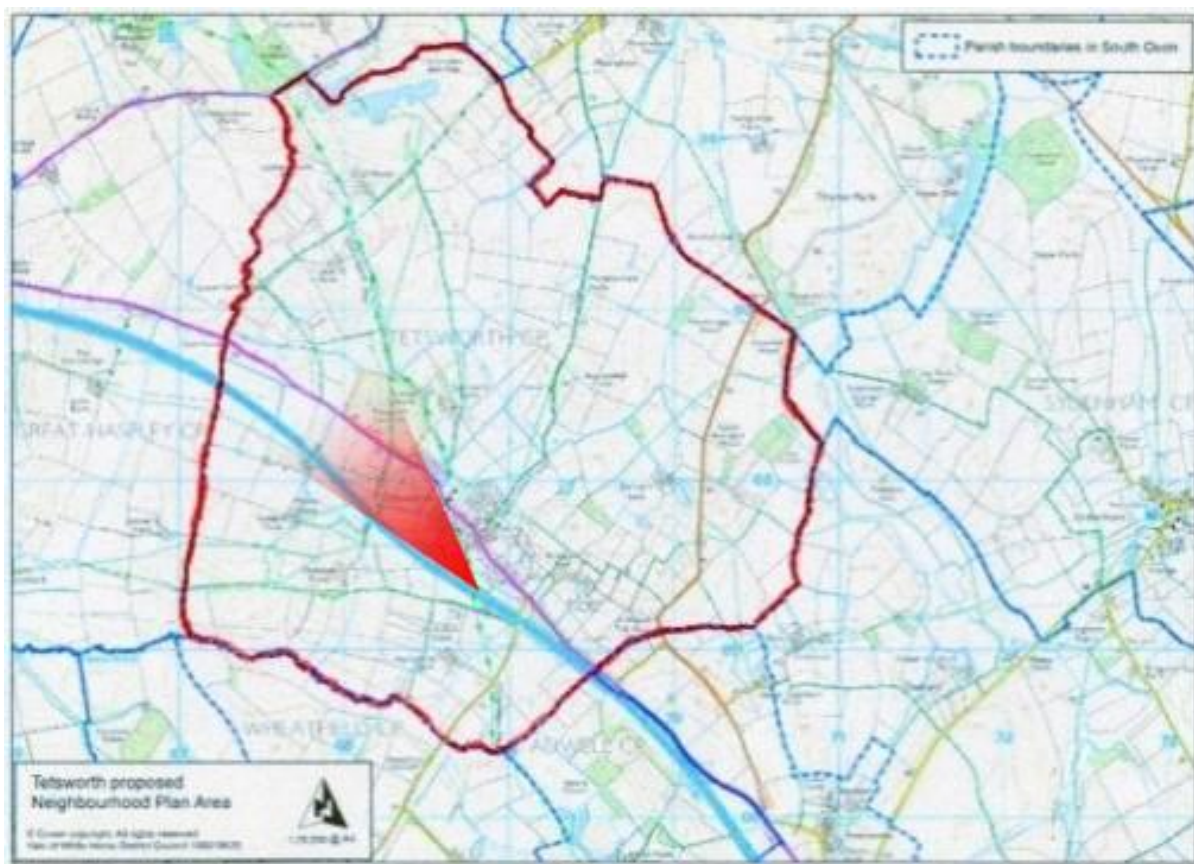
## Land Use

Agricultural grazing or cropping and woodland given over to natural habitats.

## View

The viewpoint from the Stoke Talmage road is much closer to the village settlement and takes in a view of the south-eastern edge of Tetsworth across the meadow located between the M40 and the rear of houses along the southern side of the east end of High Street. The meadow is crossed by the Oxfordshire Way as it exits Tetsworth and leads to a pedestrian under-pass below the M40 carriageways.





*Viewpoint on Stoke Talmage Road Looking Towards Tetsworth*

The view emphasises the abrupt transition from the village settlement behind Chiltern View and Oak Farm Close to its agricultural hinterland. The new settlement expansion highlights the absence of landscape softening planting or hedgerow and tree retention on the edge of the development.



*View of Tetsworth from Stoke Talmage Road*

## Value Judgements

### **Historical Value:** High.

While the historic networks of footpaths, hedgerows and fields in this sector have been disturbed by the creation of the M40 motorway, they remain dominant features and the woodland and open field characterise this area reflecting the timeless image of an attractive rural landscape.

### **Aesthetic Value:** High.

The woodland between the M40 and A40 carriageways provide a welcome screen from the intrusion of traffic. The open field to the south of Chiltern View, Oak Farm Close and the High Street is a highly valued green gap between the edge of the village settlement and the M40 motorway.

### **Architectural Interest:** Not relevant.

### **Community Value:** High.

The open field crossed by the Oxfordshire Way offers walkers a welcome recreational amenity close to the Tetsworth settlement, offering attractive view to and from the village.

### **Susceptibility to Development Harms:** High.

This sector is highly susceptible to development harms. It is highly important that the character of the village and the views into and out from the key public spaces are protected. The views on the approach to the village on the Oxfordshire Way are extremely important.

The green gap between the southern edge of Tetsworth and the M40 motorway should be protected from any development. The green gap has a value in its own right for residents even though the open field area is subject to unacceptable traffic noise from the motorway.

The introduction of any new road, lanes, or access openings should also be carefully managed to avoid the disruption of the historic network.

## Countryside Character Sector 4 – Land to the South of the M40

### General Overview of Character

Approximately one quarter of the land area of Tetsworth Parish lies to the south of the M40 motorway. This sector, like the other countryside sectors, is totally rural in character and overwhelmingly dedicated to farming activities.

It is bounded on its north-eastern side by the motorway which runs both above and below the natural ground level on embankments and cuttings as it passes through Tetsworth Parish.

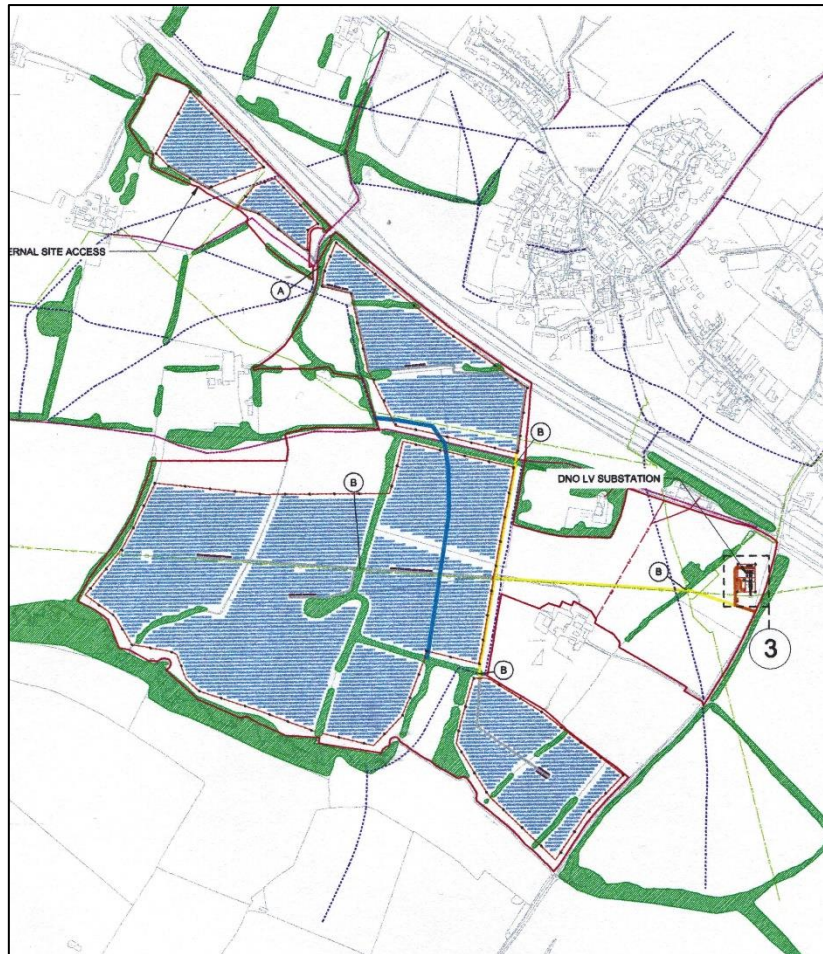


*Countryside Sector South of M40 Motorway*

### Layout

Other than a handful of domestic dwellings adjacent to the motorway, the land is entirely given over to agriculture. Livestock grazing is more apparent than arable cultivation in attractive fields bounded by mature hedgerows and trees. To the west of the Stoke Talmage road, the recently developed large-scale Harlesford Solar Farm has transformed the rural landscape.





*Harlesford Solar Farm Layout*

## Topography

The eastern part of this area is largely flat and bounded on its southern edge by Haseley Brook. Further west, the land has a more undulated nature. To the east, the beautiful scarp edge of the Chilterns AONB is clearly visible.

## Spaces

Previously, this sector could be considered as a single rural space largely managed by the Manor, Oxhouse and Harlesford farming enterprises. However, almost 80 Hectares to the west of the Stoke Talmage road are dominated by the solar arrays of Harlesford Solar Farm.

## Roads, Byways and Footpaths

The M40 motorway is the dominant highway bounding this area. Access tracks to Manor and Oxhouse Farms run from the A40 north of the M40 and cross the motorway on bridges.

Access to the Harlesford farm buildings is on a track off the Stoke Talmage road which runs north to south through the sector. The handful of residential properties alongside the motorway are also accessed via a byway track off the Stoke Talmage road.



*Access Track to Domestic Dwellings*

The Oxfordshire Way enters this sector via a pedestrian underpass below the M40 and exits via the junction of the Harlesford Farm track and the Stoke Talmage road. Although not accessible to the public, Harlesford Solar Farm features a number of access tracks inside its boundary fencing.

## Green and Natural Features

The whole sector is dedicated to farming. The establishment of Harlesford Solar Farm restricts the agricultural opportunities across its 79Ha site.



*Sheep Grazing on Manor Farm and Harlesford Farm*



*Arable Land East of Stoke Talmage Road*

## Landmarks

The M40 motorway is the principal defining landmark in this area. However, the extensive spread of solar arrays and network connectivity plant now dominate the western part of this sector.

## Buildings Character

The development of Harlesford Solar Farm has undoubtedly transformed the character of this area. However, the otherwise rural character of this area has not been disturbed by the incongruous intrusion of large shed-like agricultural structures. This landscape tranquillity should be preserved.

The farm buildings in this sector have all been built many years ago and do not generally have any particular architectural merit. However, the exceptions are Harlesford farmhouse which is a Grade II listed building and Harlesford House which is a substantial period residence located in secluded surroundings along the previously noted access track alongside the M40 to the small pocket of domestic and business properties.



*Harlesford House*



## Streetscape Features

There is no streetscape as such in this countryside sector.

## Land Use

This area was exclusively dedicated to mixed livestock and arable farming until the implementation of Harlesford Solar Farm. The licence for this site lasts for 40 years.

## View

The M40 motorway separates this countryside sector from the Tetsworth village settlement. The scope for views towards the village are therefore limited. However, the view northwards from the Oxfordshire Way as it crosses the Stoke Talmage road is typical of the continuing rural character of the east of this sector.



*Viewpoint from Entrance to Harlesford Farm on Stoke Talmage Road*



*View Towards Tetworth and M40 from Oxfordshire Way at Stoke Talmage Road*

## Value Judgements

**Historical Value:** High.

The network of hedgerows and bridleways record an unchanged, attractive landscape. The views to the east, south and west are a highly important amenity giving the whole area a familiar historical context.

**Aesthetic Value:** High.

Echoing the historical value, the green pattern of enclosed fields provides an attractive ambiance to the area.

**Architectural Interest:** Not relevant.

**Community Value:** Medium.

Accessibility to this sector via the rich network of public rights of way is a much appreciated amenity offering wonderful rural views.

**Susceptibility to Development Harms:** High.

This sector is highly susceptible to development harms. The development of Harlesford Solar Farm has already transformed the rural landscape to the west of the Stoke Talmage road and its clustering with Cornwell Solar Farm to the south of the parish boundary. Further clustering of renewable energy developments in the area would constitute unacceptable harms to its countryside character. Otherwise, there are just a few dwellings adjacent to the M40 and there is no other development or supporting infrastructure in this sector that is not dedicated to farming activities.

As this area is separated from the Tetsworth village settlement by the M40 motorway, it is not suitable for supporting any further development.

While potential for development of historical farm buildings which have fallen out of use exists, no development should be permitted on any building built since 1950 without full public consultation.

The introduction of any new road, lanes, or access openings should also be carefully managed to avoid the disruption of the historic network.



## Countryside Character Sector 5 – Land North-West of Tetsworth between M40 and A40

### General Overview of Character

This countryside sector mirrors that to the south-east of the Tetsworth settlement and is the relatively narrow strip of land to the north-west of the village bounded by the A40 and M40 roads, extending out to the Tetsworth Parish boundary. It has a width of approximately 300 metres at its southern end adjacent to the village settlement, narrowing to about 200 metres at the Parish boundary.

Almost all of the land is laid to pasture, broken into attractive fields bounded by mature hedgerows. One of the fields close to the village settlement is used by the local landowner to run car-boot sales on occasional summer Sundays, but otherwise the sector is overwhelmingly dedicated to livestock grazing, including horses.



*Land Between A40 and M40 Roads West of Tetsworth*

### Layout

This sector comprises open countryside between two major roads broken into enclosed fields and crossed by two farm access tracks over the M40 motorway to Oxhouse and Manor Farms.

### Topography

The sector is undulating rising from the edge of the Tetsworth settlement but eventually becoming level below the carriageway level of the M40. The land immediately to the south of the A40 is level throughout the sector.

### Spaces

The sector is overwhelmingly a single open space dedicated to farming and livestock grazing. It is a well-used and attractive rural amenity space with a number of access points to the network of footpaths from the edge of the village and criss-crossing the sector.



*Grazing and Pasture West of the Tetsworth Village Settlement*

Until 2023, one of the fields close to the edge of the village settlement alongside the A40 hosted occasional, locally-operated car-boot sales on summer Sunday mornings.



*Car-Boot Sale Field as Open Countryside*



*Car-Boot Sale in Action*

## Roads, Byways and Footpaths

The A40 and M40 roads define this area and intrusive motorway traffic noise detracts from its otherwise attractive ambiance. Farm tracks from the A40 cross the area giving access to farms south of the M40 and there is a well-used network of footpaths and rights of way across this sector.





*M40 Motorway Looking West*



*Rural setting of M40 Motorway*

## Green and Natural Features

The whole sector is a natural green area largely dedicated to horse, cattle and sheep grazing. Within this sector is a historically significant ridge and furrow field.



*Horses Grazing a Paddock Alongside the A40*



*Ridge and Furrow Field*

## Landmarks

This sector has no notable landmarks, although the M40 motorway dominates it.

## Buildings Character

There are only two domestic dwellings in this area, both alongside the south side of the A40 approximately 200 metres beyond the western edge of the village settlement footprint. The farther one used to be the village's police house and the nearer is linked to the adjacent touring caravan park business known as Little Acres.





*Little Acres Touring Caravan Park*

## Streetscape Features

This area does not have a streetscape and is a countryside area dedicated to farming and nature.

## Land Use

Except for the Little Acres touring caravan site, two domestic dwellings, occasional use of a field for car-boot sales, the land is entirely dedicated to agricultural use.

## Views

This sector of the rural setting of Tetsworth is blessed with a network of public footpaths and farm tracks offering attractive views of the village and its setting.



*Viewpoints from Oxhouse Farm Access Bridge and Top of Car-Boot Field*

The first view from the west is an attractive vista of the village from an elevated position across open countryside towards the Tetsworth settlement. In the foreground are fields grazed by horses. While the middle ground shows the village from its western edge to the high point of St Giles' steeple in the south. The view also brings out the village development on the rising ground to The Mount. In the background, the long chain of the Chiltern Hills is evident.



*Panoramic View of Tetsworth from the West*

The second view is from a nearby viewpoint at the top corner of the field which occasionally hosts car-boot sales looking towards the western end of the Tetsworth settlement along the High Street.



*Western End of Tetsworth High Street from Car-Boot Sale Field*

## Value Judgements

**Historical Value:** High.

The rich network of hedgerows and bridleways record an unchanged, attractive landscape. The views towards the village and out of the village are highly important amenity giving the whole area a familiar historical context. The ancient ridge and furrow field has obvious historical significance.

**Aesthetic Value:** High.

Echoing the historical value, the green pattern of enclosed fields provides an attractive ambiance to the area and the nearby views into the village emphasise its nestled, nucleated setting.

**Architectural Interest:** Not relevant.

**Community Value:** High.

Accessibility to this sector via the rich network of public rights of way is a much appreciated amenity offering wonderful views towards and away from the village. The occasional presence of car-boot sales clearly have community value and attract visitors to Tetsworth without unduly harming the character of the village.

**Susceptibility to Development Harms:** High.



This sector is highly susceptible to development harms. It is highly important that the character of the village and the views into and out from the key public spaces are protected. The views on the approach to the village on the Oxfordshire Way are extremely important. Some areas have already been harmed and the extent of harm has been limited, mainly due to avoiding unrequired development. Those areas which have been allowed to be developed need to be carefully managed to prevent slow, small alterations which, over a period of time, would have a significant detrimental effect on the views.

While potential for development of historical farm buildings which have fallen out of use exists, no development should be permitted on any building built since 1950 without full public consultation.

The introduction of any new road, lanes, or access openings should also be carefully managed to avoid the disruption of the historic network.

## Summary Environmental Value Assessment

While Value Judgements have been made for each Countryside Sector surrounding the Tetsworth village settlement, these do not specifically address the unique features of each area which emphasise their environmental value in terms of landscape, biodiversity and wildlife habitats. Table 3 provides this assessment

Countryside  Sector	Environmental Value
Sector 1: Land North of Tetsworth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long-established, hedgerow-defined field pattern</li> <li>• Green Space of Tetsworth Common on north-eastern doorstep of village</li> <li>• Mixed arable and livestock agricultural use</li> <li>• Attractive views towards and away from village from extensive public footpath network</li> <li>• Picturesque golf course landscape setting deliver community and economic benefit</li> <li>• Traversed by Oxfordshire Way national footpath</li> <li>• Drainage via by Latchford Brook</li> <li>• Rich bird and small mammal habitat</li> <li>• Known newt habitat</li> </ul>
Sector 2: Land East of Tetsworth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long-established, hedgerow-defined field pattern</li> <li>• Mixed arable and livestock agricultural use</li> <li>• Proximity to Thame Park Conservation Target Area</li> <li>• Horse stud and equitation sports specialist centre deliver community and economic benefit</li> <li>• Attractive long views towards village landmarks from north-east</li> <li>• Rich bird and small mammal habitat</li> </ul>
Sector 3: Land South-east of Tetsworth between M40 and A40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wooded wildlife refuge and corridor east of Stoke Talmage road</li> <li>• Pasture provides green gap between Tetsworth settlement and M40 motorway west of Stoke Talmage road</li> <li>• Livestock grazing on pasture</li> <li>• Traversed by Oxfordshire Way national footpath</li> <li>• Expanding red kite population</li> </ul>
Sector 4: Land South of the M40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long-established, hedgerow-defined field pattern</li> <li>• Mixed arable and livestock agricultural use</li> <li>• Traversed by Oxfordshire Way national footpath</li> <li>• Land drained by Haseley Brook forming southern Parish boundary</li> <li>• Attractive rolling landscape in west of sector</li> <li>• Clear views of Chilterns AONB from east of sector</li> <li>• Rich bird and small mammal habitat</li> </ul>

<p>Sector 5: Land North-west of Tetsworth between M40 and A40</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long-established, hedgerow-defined field pattern</li> <li>• Agricultural use dominated by farm livestock and horse grazing</li> <li>• Attractive views towards and away from village from extensive public footpath network</li> <li>• Attractive views towards and away from village from extensive public footpath network</li> <li>• Pasture provides green gap between Tetsworth settlement and M40 motorway south and west of the village</li> <li>• Historic ridge and furrow field merits preservation</li> <li>• Rich bird and small mammal habitat</li> <li>• Expanding red kite population</li> </ul>
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