

South Gloucestershire Landscape Character Assessment

Annex I: Visually Important Hillside

South Gloucestershire Council

Final Draft Report for Adoption Chapter 15

Prepared by LUC

September 2024



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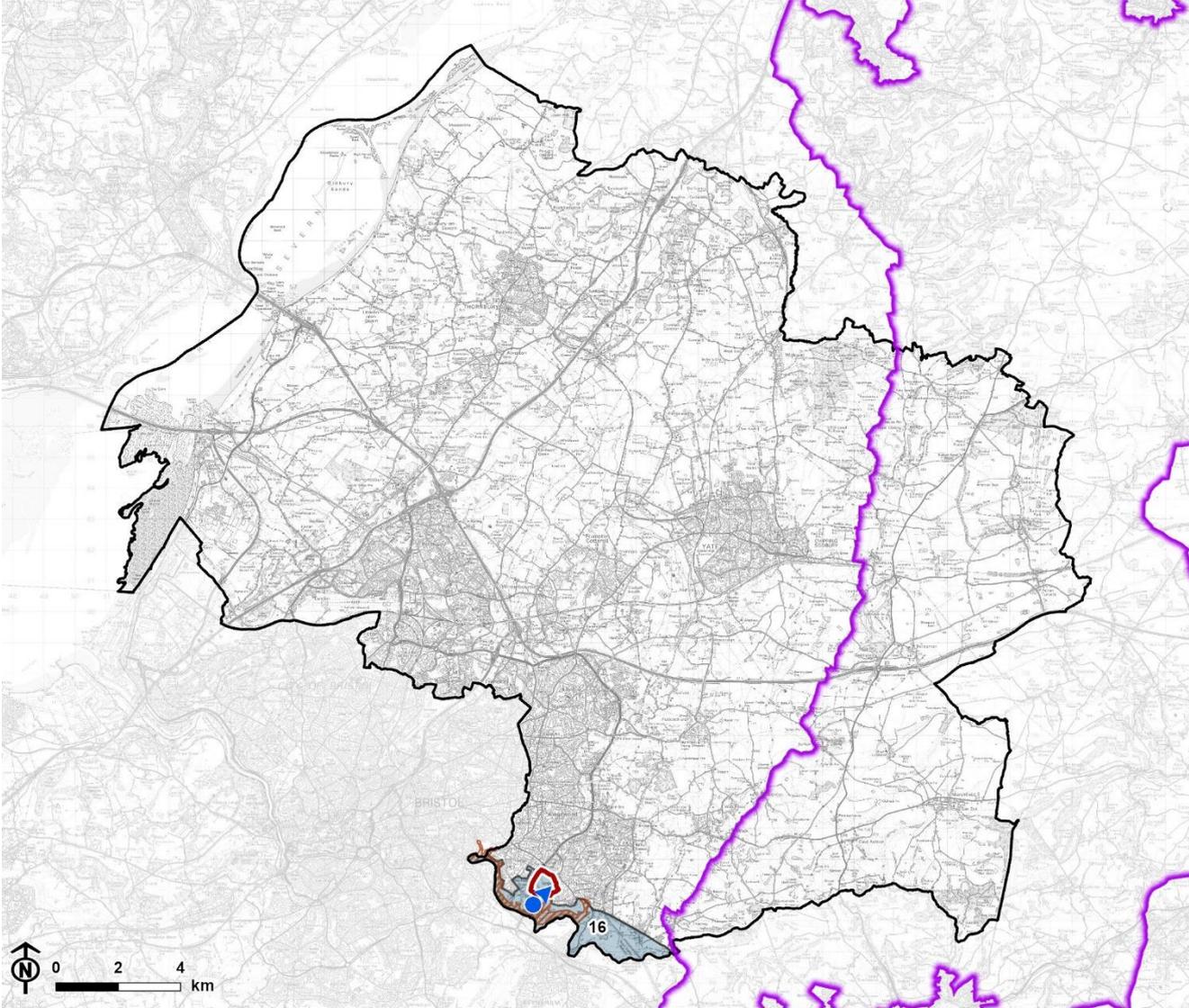
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Chapter 15

Hanham Hills

The Hanham Hills VIH encompasses a steep sided singular hill. It is located along the southern edge of South Gloucestershire and is situated entirely within the Avon Valley (LCA 16) landscape character area, with the northern extent of the LCA defining its boundaries. It adjoins the Avon Valley VIH in the south. The prominent convex landform of the Hanham Hills VIH extends above the River Avon valley, forming a distinctive landform feature in both views towards the urban edge of Hanham and from within the settlement area itself, as well as providing a green backdrop to Hanham Court Conservation Area.

Figure 15.1: Location of the Hanham Hills Visually Important Hillside and landscape character context



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- Council boundary
- Cotswolds National Landscape (AONB) boundary
- Hanham Hills Visually Important Hillside
- Adjoining Visually Important Hillside
- ▶ Photograph location
- Enclosed Valleys LCT**
- 16. Avon Valley

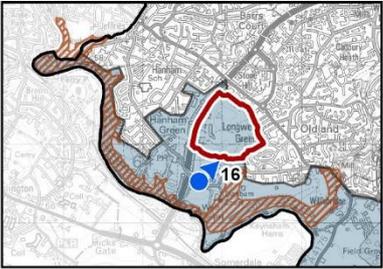
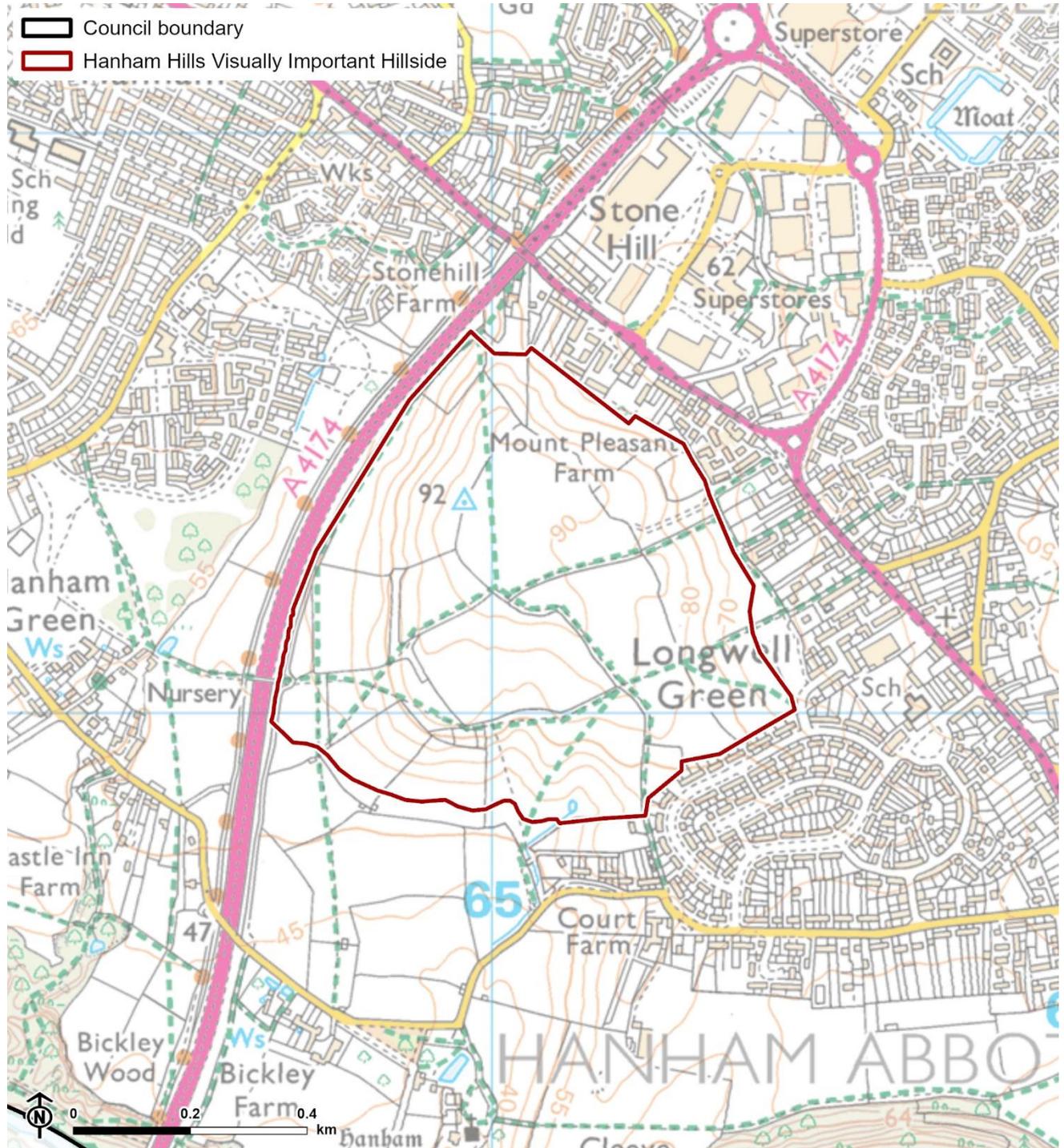


Figure 15.2: Detailed map of the Hanham Hills Visually Important Hillside



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CB:HS, EB:HS, LUC 12274_2024_r2_VIHSVPUpdates 18/07/2024
Source: LUC, SGDC, NE, OS

Figure 15.3: View of the Hanham Hills from Hanham Abbots



Characteristics

Distinctiveness and identity

- The Hanham Hills VIH is readily identifiable as a natural landform feature on OS mapping with contour lines forming concentric circles (or ovals). The contour lines are close together indicating steep hillsides in all directions from the top of the hill (descending from around 92m to 55m including towards the River Avon to the south and west, and towards the Siston Brook in the east). The distance between consecutive contour lines start to gradually increase to the south and east; however, these lower slopes are integral to the landform of the hill, and clearly visible from the surrounding landscape.
- A triangulation pillar indicates the top of the hills and is marked on OS mapping.
- The VIH is a distinctive feature with a strong sense of identity as noted in the following publications:
 - LCA 16: Avon Valley description in South Gloucestershire Landscape Character Assessment SPD notes that the “*Distinct hilltop of the Hanham Hills rises above the urban edge, enabling panoramic views over Bristol and to the Cotswold Scarp*”.
 - The Hanham Abbots Conservation Area appraisal [\[See reference 1\]](#) states that the north and centre of the area is “*characterised by the rolling Hanham hills*”.

Visual prominence

- The VIH is a prominent feature in the landscape as noted in LCA 16: Avon Valley which states that “*the Hanham Hills form a prominent rounded landform extending into the urban edge and rising some 30 metres above the adjacent area.*” It also describes the VIH as a “*prominent convex landform, which extends above the River Avon valley and into the surrounding urban edge to the north.*”

- The VIH is visible from several public vantage points and forms a key feature in views, including from extensive areas of Bristol.

Character and value

- The rolling landform of the VIH contributes to the rural setting of the Hanham Abbots Conservation Area, which is located at the foot of the VIH to the south, providing a backdrop in views from the area.
- The character and appearance of the VIH is unspoilt by visual detractors, as landcover across the VIH comprises entirely of agricultural fields and thick hedgerows.
- The VIH provides opportunities for views across the landscape of South Gloucestershire and Bristol, including from the strategic viewpoints at Hanham Hills (SVP 19a and 19b). LCA 16: Avon Valley notes that "*Extensive views are available towards the Oldland Ridge and Pucklechurch Ridge, the Avon Valley towards the Ashwicke Ridges and the Cotswold Scarp to the east*" and west "*towards the Severn Ridge and Welsh Hills beyond Bristol.*" Dundry Hill is seen in views south-west.
- The VIH has a role in the landscape by forming a prominent backdrop to the surrounding lower-lying landscape and providing separation between the settlements of Hanham and Longwell Green, which lie to either side of the A4174 road corridor.

Summary

The Hanham Hills 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; contributes to the setting of a Conservation Area; its character and appearance is unspoilt by visual detractors; it provides the opportunity for

views across the landscape; and has a role in the landscape by providing separation between settlements and forming a visual backdrop.

References

- 1 Hanham Abbots Conservation Area Advice Note. Available at:
[https://beta.southglos.gov.uk/static/f1df8b3b9bc116872bd4482264680a3f/
Hanham-Abbots-Conservation-Area.pdf](https://beta.southglos.gov.uk/static/f1df8b3b9bc116872bd4482264680a3f/Hanham-Abbots-Conservation-Area.pdf)

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