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Sevenoaks Landscape Character Assessment

Final Report
Prepared by LUC
January 2017



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Planning & EIA
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Part 1: Overview



1 Introduction

Background & Purpose of the Landscape Character Assessment

- 1.1 Sevenoaks District Council commissioned LUC in August 2016 to review and update the existing landscape character evidence base, and produce an updated landscape character assessment. It is intended to provide context for policies and proposals within the emerging Local Plan, inform the determination of planning applications, and inform the management of future change. This character assessment updates the District's previous Landscape Character Assessment¹. Some sections of text have therefore been imported from the previous report (written by Jacobs Babbie) where they are still relevant.
- 1.2 As acknowledged in the previous published assessment, the landscape is the result of the interaction between people and the environment that gives an area a local identity. Landscape Character is defined as "*a distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse*"².
- 1.3 Landscape Character Assessment is a tool to identify what makes a place unique, and can serve as a framework for decision making that respects local distinctiveness. It emerged in the 1980s as a process by which to define the character of the landscape - i.e. what makes one area distinct or different from another. It sought to separate the classification and description of the landscape from the evaluation process, the latter being more concerned with what makes one landscape 'better' than others. During recent years, the techniques and methodology have been refined, culminating in the publication of "An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment" (Natural England, October 2014).
- 1.4 Understanding the character of place and evaluating an area's defining characteristics is a key component in managing growth sustainably and ensuring that the inherent quality of Sevenoaks' landscape can continue to be celebrated, creating places that people can be proud of. Understanding of character can be used to ensure that any change or development does not undermine whatever is valued or characteristic in a particular landscape.
- 1.5 The location of the District is shown in **Figure 1.1**. Note that 61% of the District is part of an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

How to use the Report

- 1.1 This report can be used to consider landscape character when planning any type of change. The flow chart over the page aims to assist in using the report and is arranged around a number of key stages, setting out a series of questions as prompts to assist in using available information to shape proposals / assist in planning decisions.

¹ Sevenoaks Countryside Assessment, Supplementary Planning Document Adopted October 2011, Jacobs Babbie for Sevenoaks District Council (based on an assessment undertaken in 2004).

² "An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment" (Natural England, October 2014)

What type of change is proposed?



Which **Landscape Character Area (LCA)** is the proposal in [*refer to Figure 5.1 or large scale map*]? *NB if a proposal is close to the edge of two or more LCAs all relevant profiles will need to be consulted*



How will the proposal contribute to the **vision** for the landscape character area [*the vision is set out in the relevant LCA profile in Section 6*]?



Will any of the **key characteristics** be affected by the proposal [*key characteristics are set out in the relevant LCA profile in Section 6*]?

If so, which ones and how?



Will any of the **key sensitivities/ valued attributes** be affected by the proposal [*key sensitivities/ valued attributes are set out in the relevant LCA profile in Section 6*]?

If so, which ones and how?



Will the proposal conflict with any of the **landscape guidance** [*guidance is set out in the relevant LCA profile in Section 6*]?

If so, which ones and how?



If the answer is yes to any of the **last three questions** can the proposal be altered in any way to avoid adverse effects on key characteristics, sensitivities or valued attributes, or landscape objectives?

If not, can adverse effects be reduced or offset? How?

Structure of this report

- 1.6 This report is set out in two parts. **Part 1** provides an overview, comprising:
- Section 1** presents an introduction, background and policy context.
 - Section 2** presents the methodology and approach to the landscape character assessment.
 - Section 3** presents the formative influences on the landscape.
 - Section 4** presents a summary of the issues facing the landscape today.
- 1.7 **Part 2** presents the landscape character of Sevenoaks comprising:
- Section 5** presents the landscape classification.
 - Section 6** presents the landscape character of the landscape character types and areas through a series of 'profiles'.
- 1.8 The report is supported by the following appendices:
- Appendix 1** provides a glossary of terms.
 - Appendix 2** lists the contributors to the assessment (as a result of the stakeholder consultation).
 - Appendix 3** presents the comments made by stakeholders and how these have been taken on board in the final report.
 - Appendix 4** presents the classification of Sevenoaks on a large fold-out 1:25,000 OS base map.

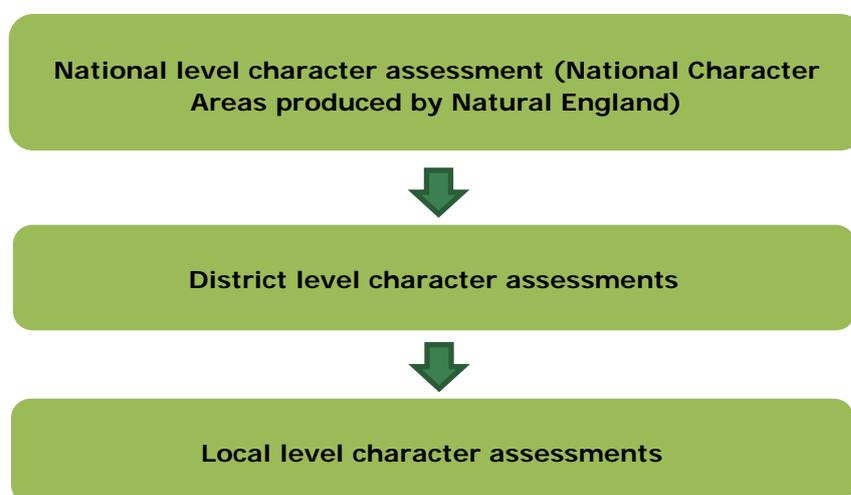
Policy Context

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), 2012

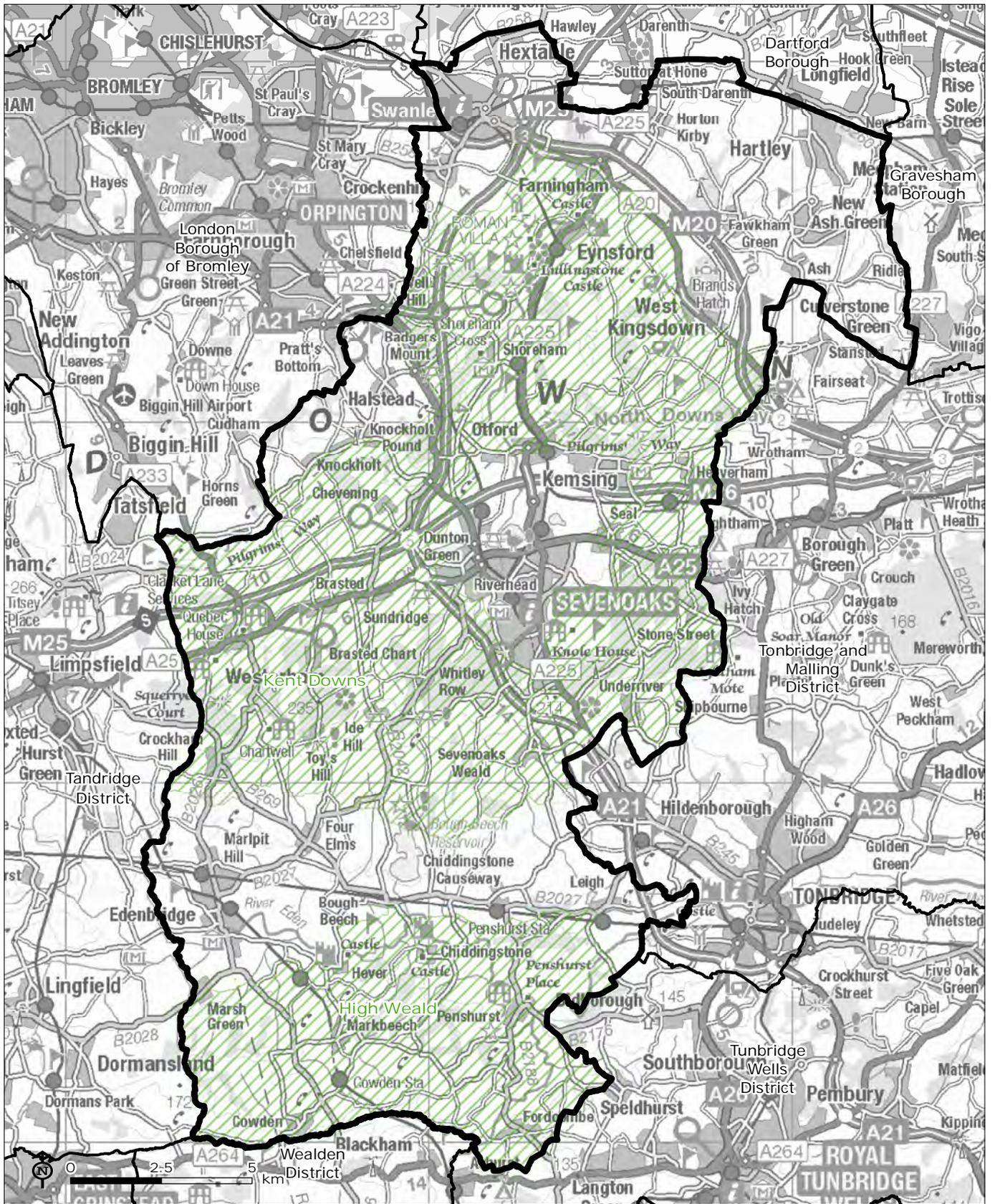
- 1.9 The NPPF refers to landscape character a number of times, in relation to recognising the different character of different areas; conserving landscapes as an important part of the natural environment; protecting valued landscapes (including – but not limited to - designated landscapes such as AONBs and National Parks); and encouraging landscape character studies as part of preparing Local Plans.
- 1.10 The following extracts from the NPPF are those most relevant to landscape and character. Words in bold are emphasised for the purposes of this report.
- Key NPPF policies in relation to landscape character:*
- 1.11 Paragraph 17 (Core planning principles):
- “**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...”*
- “...**contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment** and reducing pollution. Allocations of land for development should prefer land of lesser environmental value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework”.*
- 1.12 Paragraph 109 (Conserving and enhancing the natural environment):
- “**The planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:***
- *...**protecting and enhancing valued landscapes...**”*

Relationship to other Landscape Character Assessments

- 1.2 Landscape does not stop at administrative boundaries but continues seamlessly into surrounding administrative areas. Therefore, an aim of this assessment was to join up with the Landscape Character Assessments of adjacent authorities, and sit within the existing national assessment (the National Character Areas published by Natural England³). This is shown in the diagram beneath Paragraph 1.4. Existing national character areas shown on **Figure 1.2 –Landscape Character Context**.
- 1.3 The classifications for neighbouring authorities are illustrated on **Figure 1.3 – Neighbouring Character Areas**.
- 1.4 This assessment can also provide a framework in which more detailed assessments sit, such as local landscape character assessments produced to inform Neighbourhood Plans or assessments that focus on a particular local area. An example is the 'The Austin Lodge Valley, Eynsford: An Appreciation' produced by the Friends of Austin Lodge Valley in November 2016 which provides more detail about one of the valleys that forms part of LCA 2b: Eynsford and Horton Kirby Downs.



³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-character-area-profiles-data-for-local-decision-making/national-character-area-profiles>



-  Sevenoaks district boundary
-  Adjacent district boundary
-  Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

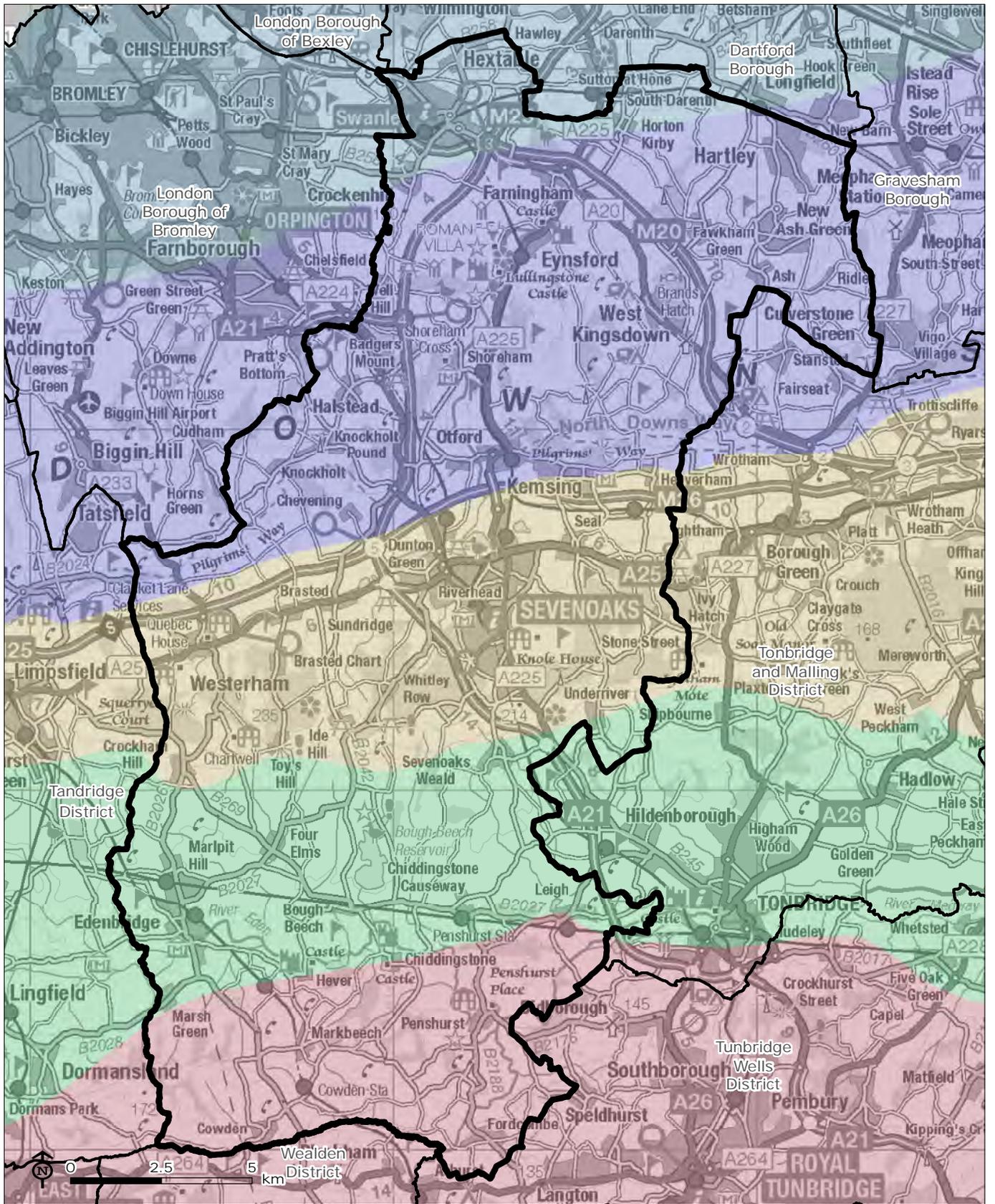
Sevenoaks Landscape Character Assessment

Figure 1.1: Location Plan

Source: SDC, Natural England, OS



Map Scale @ A4: 1:150,000



- | | | | |
|---|-----------------------------|---|-------------------|
|  | Sevenoaks district boundary | National character areas | |
|  | Adjacent district boundary |  | High Weald |
| | |  | Low Weald |
| | |  | North Downs |
| | |  | North Kent Plain |
| | |  | Wealden Greensand |

Sevenoaks Landscape Character Assessment

Figure 1.2: Landscape Character Context

Source: Nature England, SDC, OS



Map Scale @ A4: 1:150,000

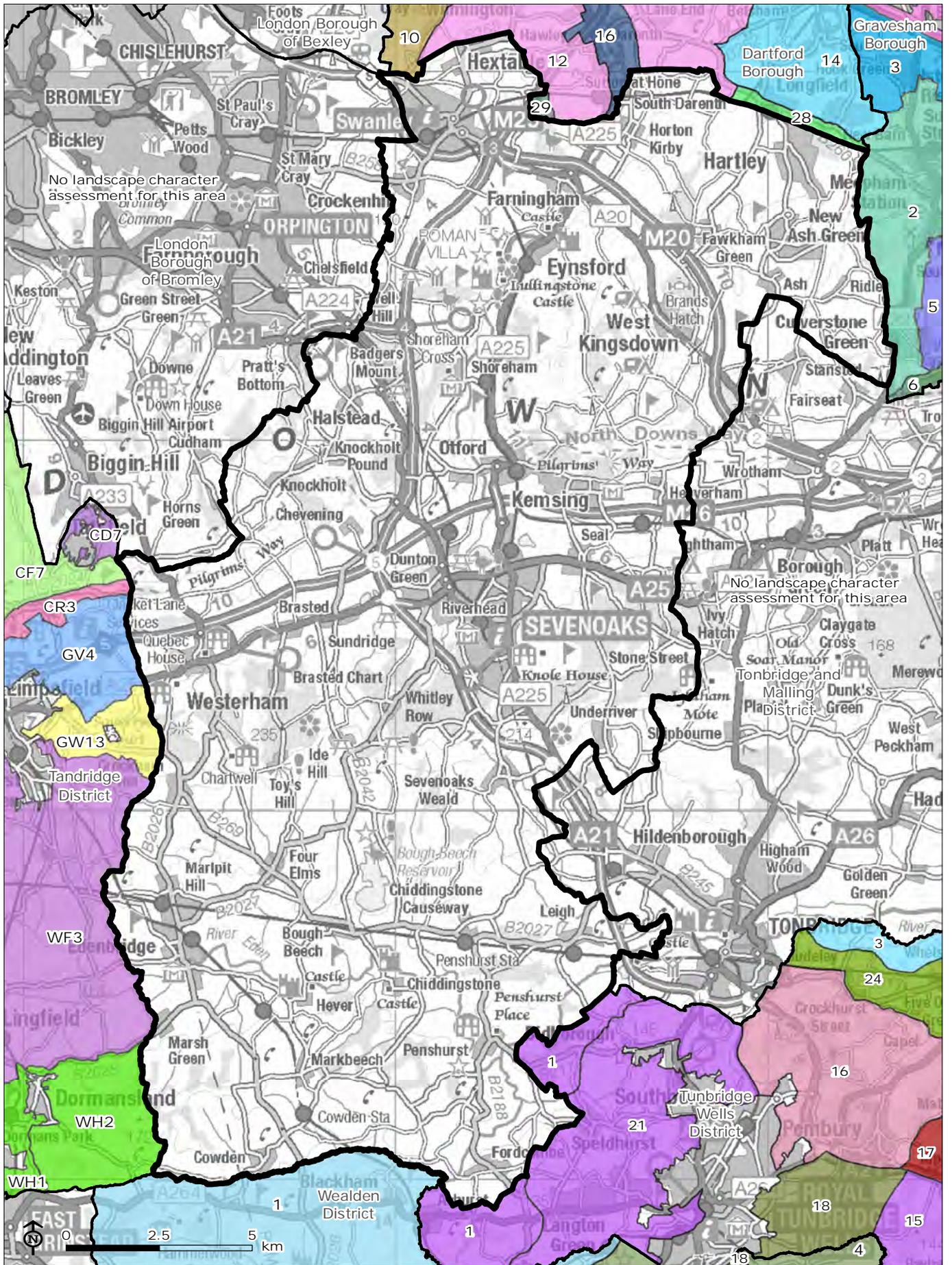


Figure 1.3: Neighbouring Character Areas

Sevenoaks Landscape Character Assessment

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Map Scale @ A4: 1:140,000

 Sevenoaks district boundary

 Adjacent district boundary

Landscape Character Area

Dartford LCA

 10: Swanley Fringe

 12: Darenth Downs

 14: Southfleet Arable Lands

 16: Lower Darent Valley

 28: Ash Downs

 29: Swanley Fringe

Gravesham LCA

 2: Meopham Down

 3: Istead Arable Farmland

 5: Harvel Wooded Down

 6: Vigo Scarptop Woodland

 7: Gravesend Southern Fringe

Wealden LCA

 1: Upper Medway

 4: Central High Weald

Tanbridge LCA

 CD7: Tatsfield Chalk Down with Woodland

 CF7: Woldingham to New Addington Open Chalk Farmland

 CR3: Box Hill to Tatsfield Chalk Ridge

 GV4: Merstham to Clacket Lane Greensand Valley

 GW13: The Chart Wooded Greensand Hills

 WF3: Horley to Swaynesland Low Weald Farmland

 WH1: Domewood to Dormansland Wooded High Weald

 WH2: Dormanslands East Wooded High Weald

Tunbridge Wells LCA

 1: Ashurst-Penshurst Wooded Farmland

 3: Medway River River Valleys

 15: Bayham Wooded Farmland

 16: Pembury Woodlands and Heathland Forested Plateau

 17: Matfield-Brenchley Fruit Belt

 18: Bayhall Urban Fringe Farmland

 21: Speldhurst Wooded Farmland

 24: Paddock Wood - Five Oak Green Low Weald Farmland

Figure 1.3: Neighbouring Character Areas - Legend

Source: SDC, OS

Sevenoaks Landscape
Character Assessment

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Sevenoaks
DISTRICT COUNCIL

2 Methodology for the Landscape Character Assessment

Approach

- 2.1 The method for undertaking this Landscape Character Assessment follows the method promoted by Natural England through 'An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment' (2014)⁴, which embeds the principles of the European Landscape Convention (ELC) within it. This 2014 guidance updates the previous 'Landscape Character Assessment: Guidance for England and Scotland', published by the Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage in 2002, though the methodology is broadly the same as the previous guidance.
- 2.2 The 2014 guidance lists the five key principles for landscape character assessment as follows:
- Landscape is everywhere and all landscape has character;
 - Landscape occurs at all scales and the process of Landscape Character Assessment can be undertaken at any scale;
 - The process of Landscape Character Assessment should involve an understanding of how the landscape is perceived and experienced by people;
 - A Landscape Character Assessment can provide a landscape evidence base to inform a range of decisions and applications;
 - A Landscape Character Assessment can provide an integrating spatial framework- a multitude of variables come together to give us our distinctive landscapes.
- 2.3 The assessment has been prepared within the framework set by Natural England's Natural Character Areas, and aims to join up with surrounding authorities' LCAs. It supersedes the previous Sevenoaks Countryside Character Assessment (2011) and the Landscape Assessment of Kent (2004), but draws on information from the Sevenoaks 20011 assessment where this remains relevant.
- 2.4 The process for undertaking the study involved four main stages, described below, namely:
- Desk study and classification;
 - Field survey;
 - Description;
 - Evaluation.
- 2.5 GIS was used throughout the study as the tool for collating, manipulating and presenting data.

Process of Assessment

Desk Study and Classification

- 2.6 This stage involved the collation of a wide range of mapped information to 'sense-check' the existing landscape classification.
- 2.7 Data used within the report, including data collated in the GIS database, is shown in **Table 2.1**.

⁴ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/396192/landscape-character-assessment.pdf [accessed February 2015]

Table 2.1: GIS Data

Name	Source
Base OS mapping at 1:50K and 1:25K	Ordnance Survey
Terrain 50 Contour data	Ordnance Survey
Solid & drift geology 1:50K	SDC
Public rights of Way	SDC
River features & floodzones	SDC
Agricultural Land Classification	Natural England
Nature conservation designations	Natural England (national datasets) and SDC Council (local datasets)
Biodiversity Opportunity Areas	SDC
Historic Landscape Character Types	SDC (from Kent CC)
Historic map (OS 1868-1895)	SDC
Heritage designations	English Heritage (national datasets) and SDC (local datasets)
Dark skies	CPRE

Field Survey

- 2.8 A field survey was undertaken to check the classification. This specifically focussed on:
- verifying and fine-tuning the classification of the landscape types and areas identified;
 - recording information on landscape character and characteristics and noting local variations in character;
 - identifying key sensitivities and valued attributes; and
 - assessing landscape quality (condition) i.e. the physical state of the landscape and its intactness.

Description

- 2.9 For each **landscape character type** a map, a representative photo and key characteristics are provided, along with information about which national character area the type falls within and brief information on geology⁵, soils⁶, landform⁷ and component historic landscape types⁸.
- 2.10 For each **landscape character area** a map and representative photo is provided and landscape character is described in terms of:
- Key characteristics (taken from the existing LCA but with any inconsistencies corrected and expanded where necessary to paint a picture of the area);
 - Fuller landscape description (taken from the existing LCA but with any inconsistencies corrected or changes included).

Evaluation

- 2.11 The “Approach to Landscape Character Assessment” document does not provide guidance on what should form part of an evaluation. Therefore we have proposed something that we feel will be useful for a number of different future applications. The evaluation covers:

⁵ Taken from solid and drift geology maps (1:50K scale)

⁶ Taken from the previous Sevenoaks Countryside Character Assessment 2011.

⁷ Taken from the previous Sevenoaks Countryside Character Assessment 2011

⁸ Taken from the Kent Historic Landscape Characterisation 2001, by Oxford Archaeological Unit (OAU) on behalf of Kent County Council (KCC) and English Heritage (EH)

- landscape condition i.e. the physical state of the landscape and its intactness, as well as the presence of any detractors;
- key sensitivities and valued attributes i.e. the features and characteristics that are particularly valued for their contribution to character and for the ecosystem services they provide (i.e. those things that if lost would change the character to the detriment of the landscape);
- a vision for the landscape;
- guidance to conserve and enhance character and achieve the vision. This section notes when the LCA is located within an AONB.

Consultation

- 2.12 A workshop was held on 29th September 2016 to present the work being undertaken and to gather views on the draft area boundaries and names, what is valued in the landscape, cultural associations (people, events, art, literature, myths or music that relate to the area), and pressures affecting the landscape. A follow up email was sent to all invitees to invite further information on values and cultural associations or comments on boundaries (and provide the opportunity for those who could not attend the workshop to contribute information). It is acknowledged that gaining a comprehensive picture of what residents value about their landscape could be a project within itself, but the purpose of this consultation was to back up the consultants' professional judgement about what is of value and why. The list of contributors is provided at **Appendix 2** and comments made are included in **Appendix 3**.

3 Formative Influences

- 3.1 The landscape of Sevenoaks District has evolved over many hundreds and thousands of years. It has been created by the interaction of the natural environment and human activities, in particular the combination of physical and cultural influences. Physical influences such as geology and landform, together with the overlying pattern of settlement and land use are key determinants of landscape character.

Physical Influences

- 3.2 The basic structure of the landscape is fundamentally influenced by its underlying rocks and relief. Geology and the processes of weathering, erosion and deposition influence the shape and form of the landscape and its drainage and soils. In turn, these influence patterns of vegetation and land use.
- 3.3 **Figure 3.1** illustrates the solid (or bedrock) geology that underlies the district. This shows that there is a clear pattern of underlying geology that runs in horizontal bands.
- 3.4 The northern part of the District is underlain by White Chalk, formed approximately 66 to 100 million years ago in the Cretaceous Period. This gives rise to an area of undulating chalk with dry valleys and with a steep scarp slope to the south. Below this steep scarp is a band of Lower Chalk (Grey Chalk sub-group) underlying the scarp footslopes.
- 3.5 Below the chalk is a band of mudstone, sandstone and limestone associated with the Gault Formation, formed approximately 94 to 112 million years ago in the Cretaceous Period, and which forms a gentle valley landform (the upper Darent).
- 3.6 Below this is a band of Lower Greensand that forms another ridge of scarp-and-dip slope topography with a steep scarp to the south. The Greensand typically gives rise to nutrient-poor, acid, sandy soils often associated with tracts of heaths and commons. Greensand soils have not been as extensively cleared for agriculture as some other areas, and many ancient woodlands have survived although often in fragmented patches and on steeper slopes. See **Figure 3.4** for the agricultural land classification and **Figure 3.5** for the distribution of ancient woodland.
- 3.7 Below the Greensand is an area of Wealden Beds that underlie the Low and High Weald. The Weald is a geologically complex anticline, a dome of rocks folded after their deposition with the oldest strata exposed at the centre in the High Weald. The Low Weald is dominated by the Lower Cretaceous Weald Clay formation (consisting of clays, silts and localised sands and limestones) giving rise to heavy clay soils.
- 3.8 The older rocks of the High Weald comprise fissured sandrock deeply incised and intersected with numerous gill streams which give rise to the headwaters and upper reaches of rivers.
- 3.9 **Figure 3.2** shows the drift (or superficial) geology. The main features are the alluvium along the river courses, the river terrace deposits beside these, and areas of clay-with-flints on some of the higher downs (formed from the rock debris left behind by weathering processes), and which give rise to thicker soils and typically support woodland areas.
- 3.10 The underlying geology has been weathered to create the distinctive landform seen across the District today. **Figure 3.3** shows the landform and drainage, showing the key river valleys and the great variety of topography across the District.
- 3.11 The presence and distribution of the natural habitats found in the District are strongly influenced by geology and landform. Kent Wildlife Trust has mapped habitats and species across Kent which can be found here: <http://www.kentbap.org.uk/habitats-and-species/>. The important ecological habitats are recognised through designations (SSSIs, Local Wildlife Sites and Local Nature Reserves) and can be seen on **Figure 3.6 Biodiversity Designations**. Kent Wildlife Trust has identified areas to target action for biodiversity, in order to restore and reconnect wildlife and

produce a network of habitats that will give wildlife the opportunity to adapt to climate change. This network of Biodiversity Opportunity Areas (BOAs) not only stretches across Kent but links to that of other counties and forms the spatial expression of the South East England Biodiversity Strategy. In Sevenoaks District the key Biodiversity Opportunity Areas are:

- Central North Downs;
- Greensand Heaths and Commons;
- Medway & Low Weald Greensand & Gault; and
- High Weald.

3.12 **Figure 3.6** shows the locations of these Biodiversity Opportunity Areas. More information about each can be found here: <http://www.kentbap.org.uk/kent-boas/>



The basic structure of the landscape is influenced by its underlying rocks and relief, giving rise to steep scarps and dramatic views such as this view from Ide Hill across the Low Weald.

Cultural Influences

- 3.13 The landscapes and settlement of the District have developed over time, and have been greatly influenced by man's use of the land and successive cycles of reclamation and abandonment of woodland, pasture and arable as population and agricultural pressures have ebbed and flowed. Historic landscape character has been mapped through the Kent Historic Landscape Characterisation (2001). **Figure 3.7 Key Historic Landscape Types** provides a simplified map of these historic landscape types by amalgamating the detailed historic types into the key historic types that influence character across the District. The important historic features that remain in the landscape today are recognised through designations (Scheduled Monuments, registered Historic Parks and Gardens and Kent's local historic parks and gardens) and can be seen on **Figure 3.8 Heritage Assets**.
- 3.14 Evidence of early occupation includes Roman sites along the Darent valley. However, the origins of the modern-day settlement pattern of villages, hamlets and associated field patterns on the

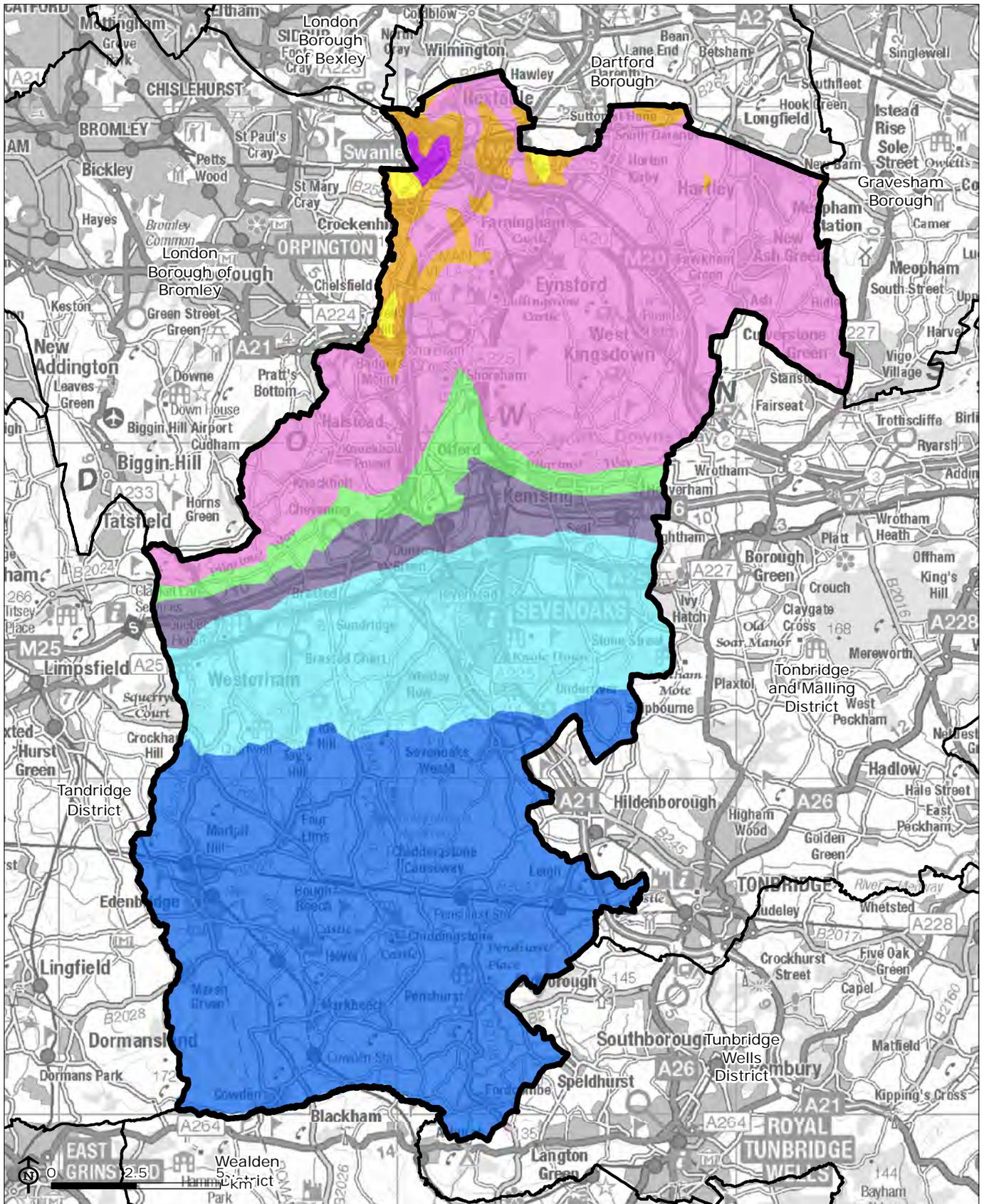
chalk downs can be traced to the Anglo-Saxon period when piecemeal clearance of woodland took place. In the medieval period and during the agricultural revolution in the 18th and 19th centuries areas of pasture and woodland have been progressively converted to arable land use. The underlying chalk has been quarried to improve clay soils and small quarries, pits and shafts (deneholes) are a feature of the chalk landscapes in the north today.

- 3.15 The generally nutrient-poor Greensand soils have not been as extensively cleared for agriculture as some other areas, but the woodlands have been an important component – coppicing hazel, hornbeam, sessile oak and sweet chestnut has been an important part of the rural economy in this area over the years. Field patterns typically reflect the irregularity of ancient enclosure or enclosure by agreement, with regular Parliamentary-type enclosure generally restricted to late enclosure of heathland. Heathland developed on the sandy and acidic soils but a high proportion of the original Greensand heaths were converted to agricultural land or forestry plantations, or became covered with secondary woodland. The system of ‘common land’ (where groups of people had collective grazing or harvesting rights over an area of land) is typical of this central area of Sevenoaks District, and wooded commons in this area are known as charts. The woodland provides a backdrop to the many landscaped parks of the area, and has been used by designers to frame 18th- and 19th-century parkland landscapes. Settlement in this area was typically a mixture of dispersed farmsteads and hamlets, and some nucleated villages, often linked by small, deeply sunken lanes, but 20th century development has altered this in places.
- 3.16 Mesolithic hunter-gatherer communities existed in the Low Weald and these were followed by Bronze Age farmers who started to clear woodlands. From at least Saxon times, livestock were driven to the Wealden forests to feast on acorns and beech masts or to the downland to graze on the higher pasture and north–south roads are a legacy of this. By the medieval period much of the Low Weald was a patchwork of assart fields and woodlands with dispersed manorial farms and market settlements. There is evidence of iron working in the Weald for over 2,000 years and large numbers of people were employed in digging ore, cutting wood, charcoal making and transporting raw materials and products. Hammer and furnace ponds, grand houses built by wealthy foundry owners and the remains of the coppiced woodland which was managed for the production of charcoal remain today. The area was also important for ship-building. As the iron industry moved to the coal fields during the Industrial Revolution, and ship-building declined, woodland was left unmanaged or cut down for pasture or building. Agriculture dominated and Oast houses were built.



Oast houses are typical across Sevenoaks District.

- 3.17 In the High Weald some woodland clearance was under way in the Neolithic Period but Medieval farmers shaped the present-day landscape of small fields and scattered farmsteads, with woodland, shaws and gill woodlands on steep valleys. The High Weald lies within one of the largest tracts of woodland in early medieval England. The medieval pattern of dispersed farms, small hamlets and villages later evolved into the characteristic High Weald ridgetop villages. Along with the Low Weald, this area produced iron. Leats, dams and hammer ponds were constructed to provide water for the forges. The area was also important for ship building. In the 17th and 18th centuries hop growing expanded and in the 19th century the arrival of the railways brought the growth of country houses and estates. More recently many farmsteads have been converted to residential uses.
- 3.18 The Kent Historic Environment Record (formerly the Sites and Monuments Record) is a database of archaeological sites, finds and buildings, Scheduled monuments, Conservation Areas, Historic Parks and Gardens and the Historic Landscape Classification. It is available here: <http://webapps.kent.gov.uk/KCC.ExploringKentsPast.Web.Sites.Public/>.
- 3.19 The area is associated with a number of notable people, including Henry VIII who had a palace at Otford (Henry VIII forced Archbishop Thomas Cranmer to surrender the palace in 1537), Churchill whose home was Chartwell, Jane Austin who came from a Wealden family, the painter Samuel Palmer who painted in the Darent Valley, General James Wolfe whose childhood home was in Westerham, Octavia Hill who founded the National Trust (and is associated with the Ide Hill area), and the poet John Donne who was a clergyman at St Nicholas in Sevenoaks from 1616 until 1631. The area also includes the Pilgrims Way which is thought to be the road taken by pilgrims to the shrine of Thomas Becket at Canterbury.



- Sevenoaks district boundary
- Adjacent district boundary
- Solid geology formation**
- Gault Formation And Upper Greensand Formation (Undifferentiated)
- Grey Chalk Subgroup
- Lambeth Group
- Lower Greensand Group
- Thames Group
- Thanet Sand Formation
- Wealden Group
- White Chalk Subgroup

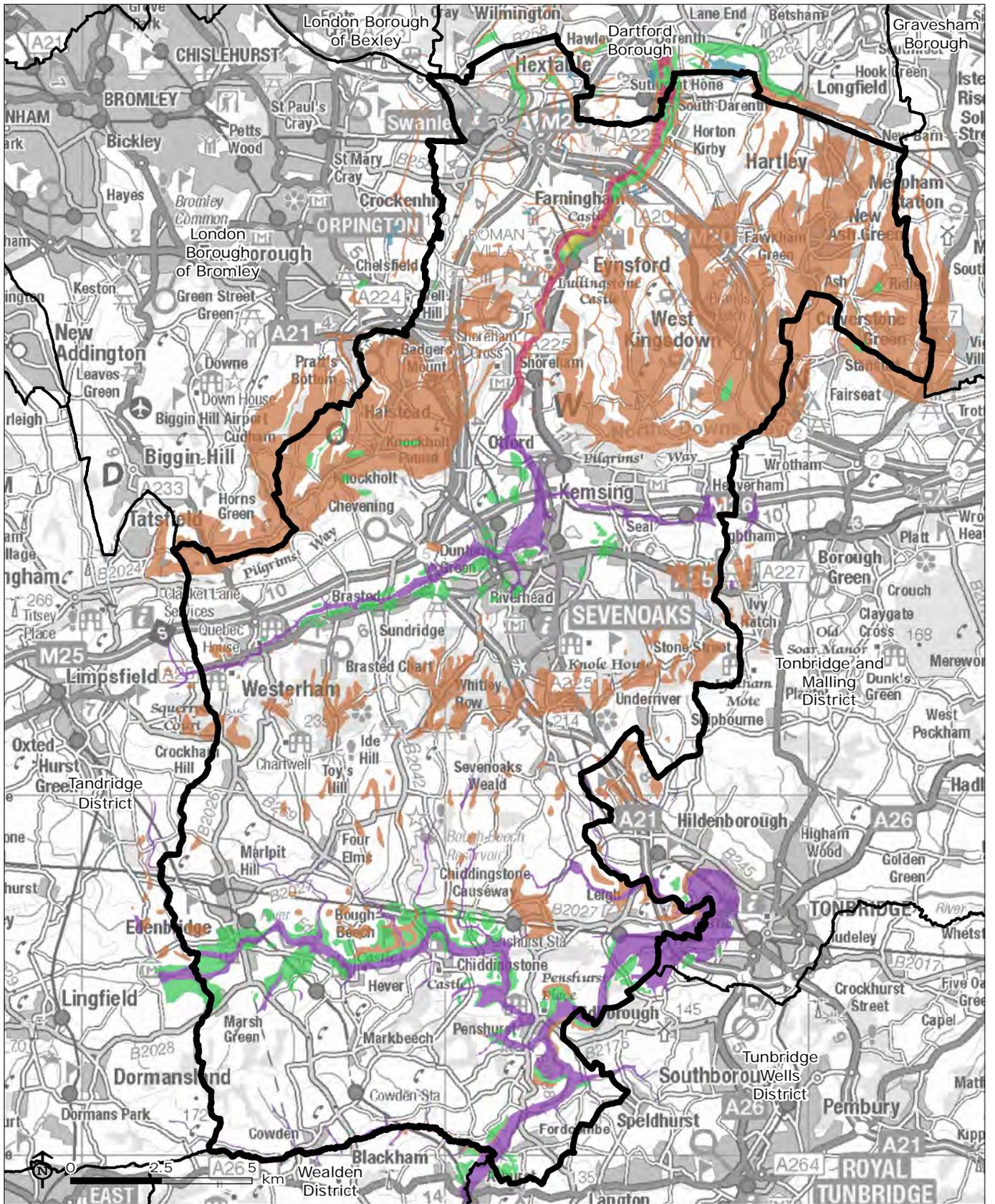
Sevenoaks Landscape Character Assessment

Figure 3.1: Solid Geology

Source: BGS, OS



Map Scale @ A4: 1:160,000



- | | |
|---|---|
|  Sevenoaks district boundary | Drift geology description |
|  Adjacent district boundary |  Alluvium |
| |  Clay, Alluvium And Sand |
| |  Gravel |
| |  Head |
| |  Sand And Gravel |
| |  Sand, Alluvium And Clay |

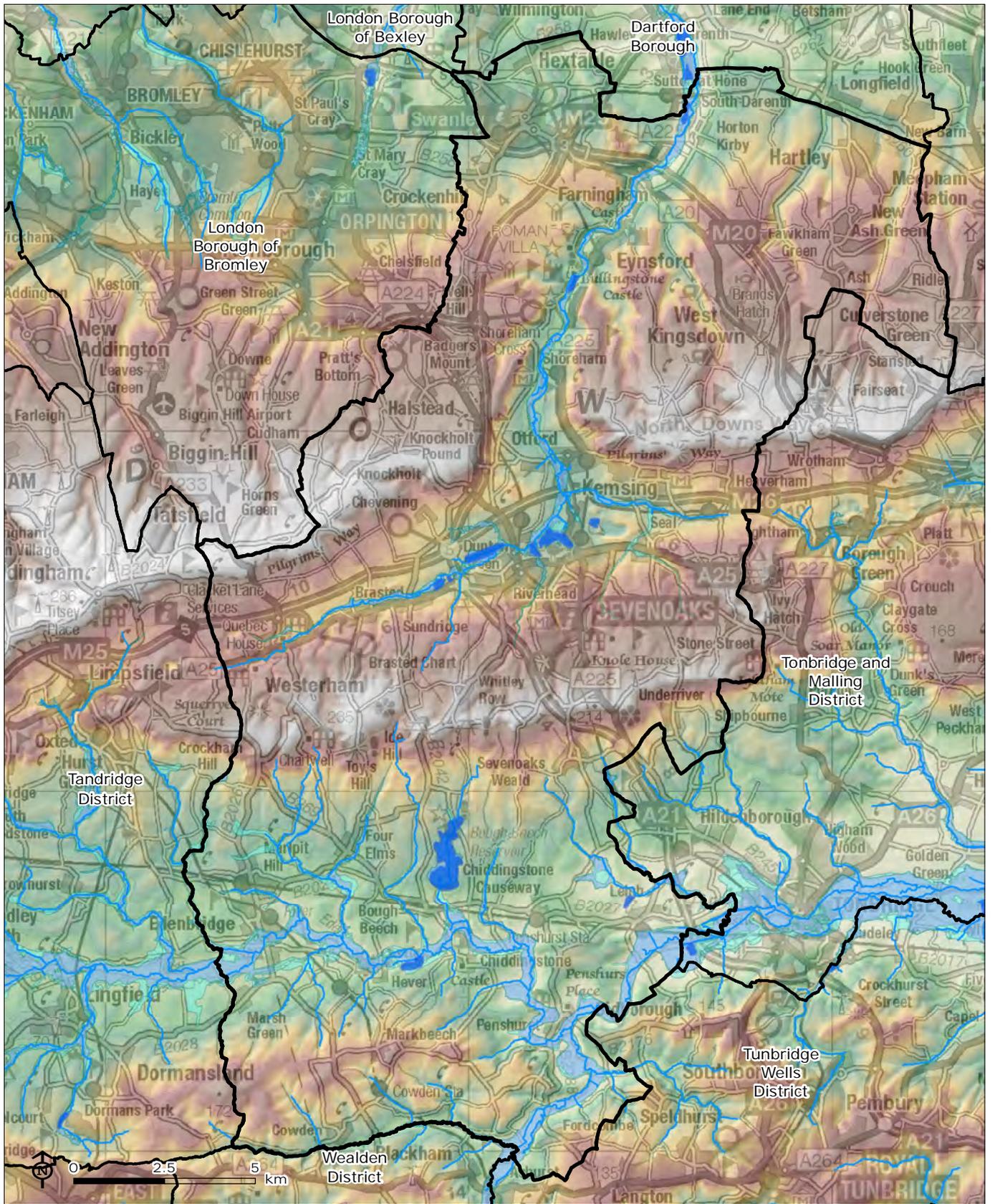
Sevenoaks Landscape Character Assessment

Figure 3.2: Drift Geology

Source: SDC, OS



Map Scale @ A4: 1:150,000



- Sevenoaks district boundary
- Adjacent district boundary
- Flood zone 2
- Flood zone 3
- River network
- Waterbody

Elevation (metres AOD)

High : 267.7
 Low : -9.3

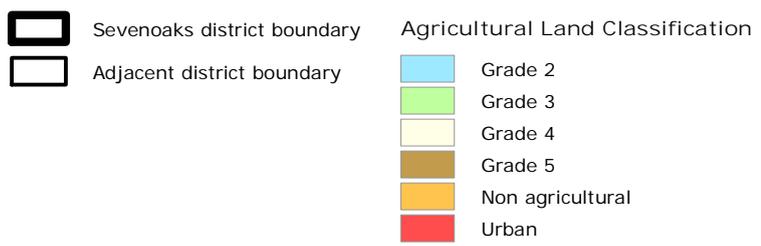
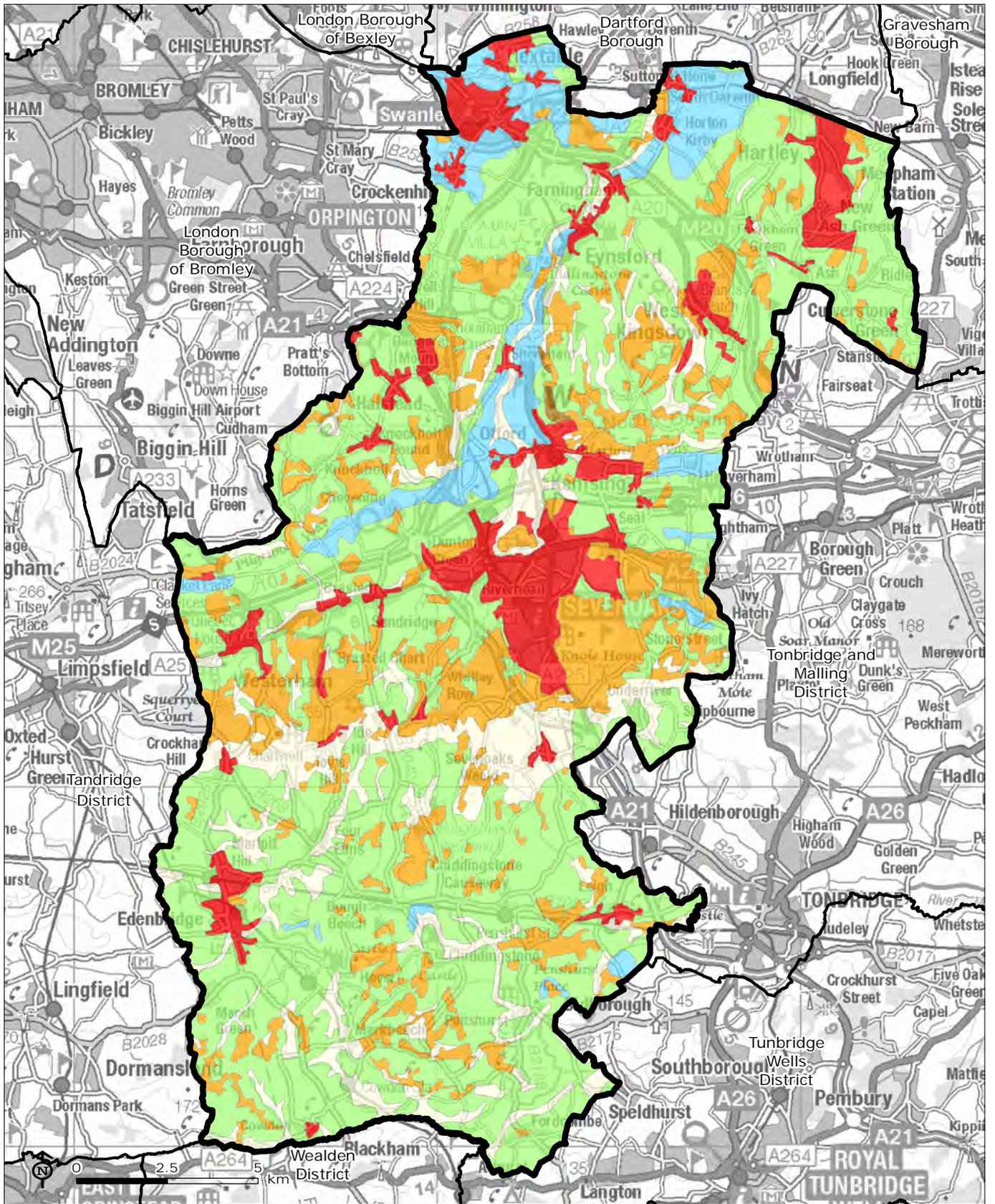
Sevenoaks Landscape Character Assessment

Figure 3.3: Landform and Drainage

Source: Environmental Agency, OS



Map Scale @ A4: 1:150,000



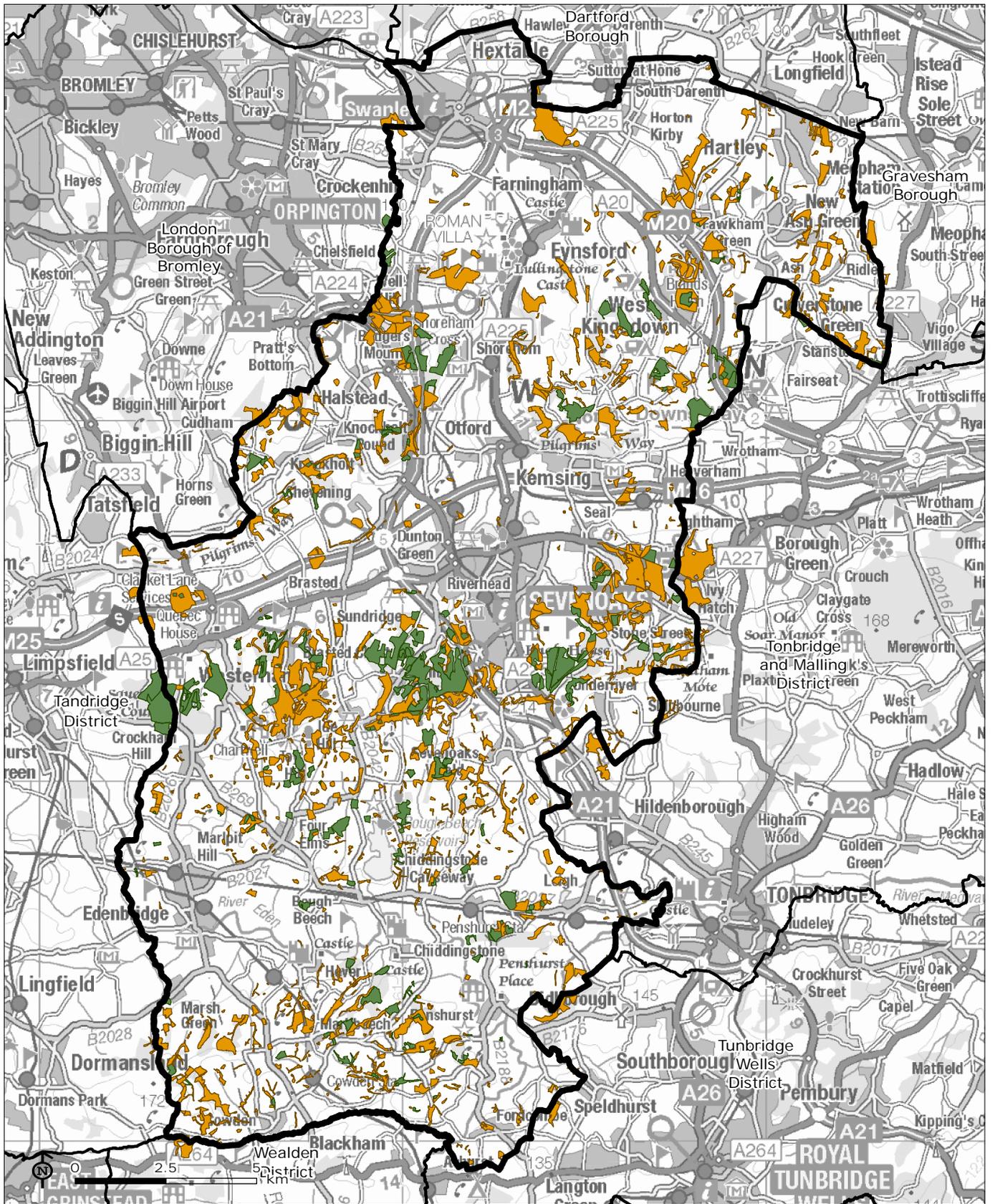
Sevenoaks Landscape Character Assessment

Figure 3.4: Agricultural Land Classification

Source: SDC, Natural England



Map Scale @ A4: 1:150,000



-  Sevenoaks district boundary
-  Adjacent district boundary
-  Ancient & semi-natural woodland
-  Ancient replanted woodland

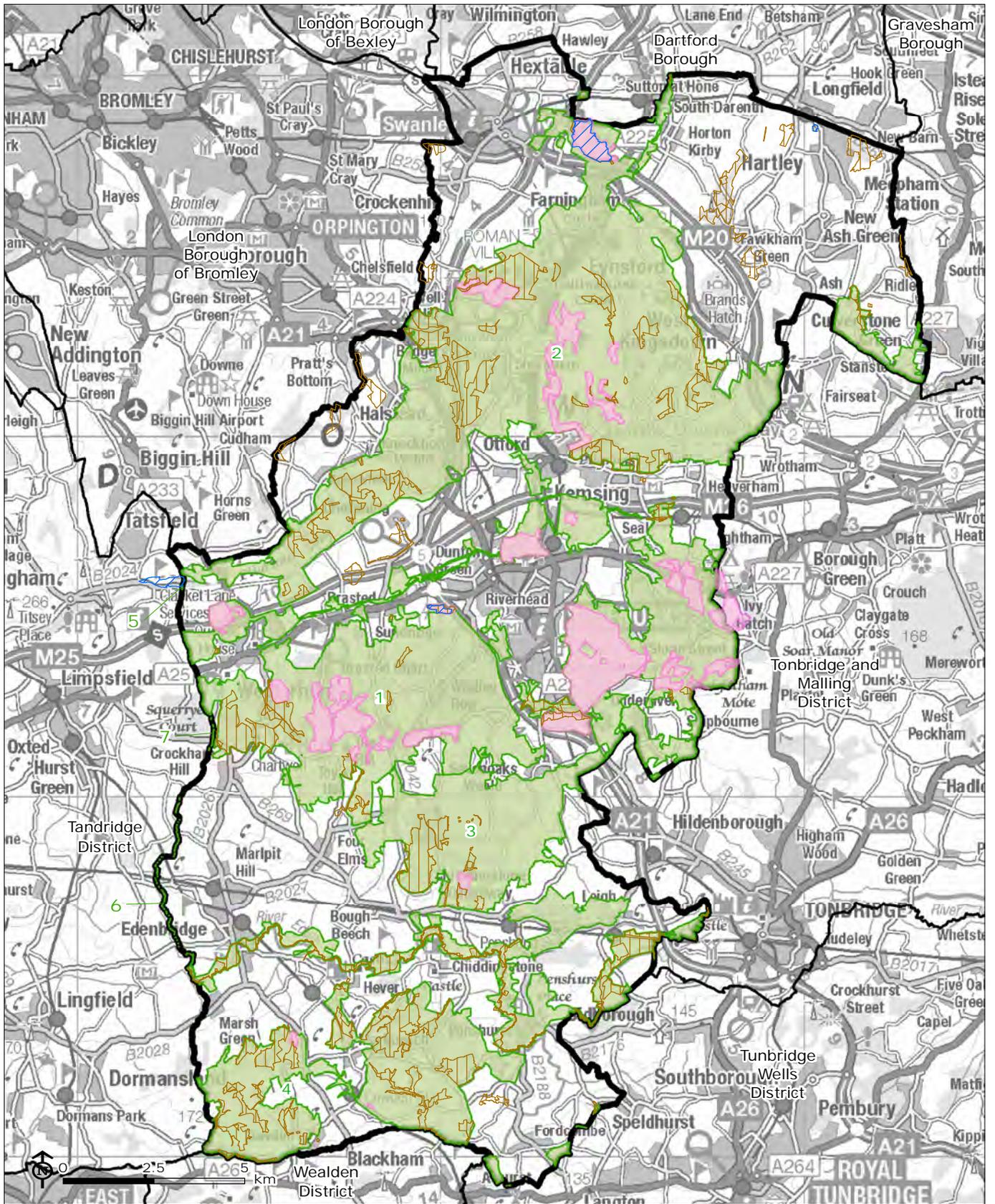
Sevenoaks Landscape Character Assessment

Figure 3.5: Ancient Woodland

Source: SDC, Natural England, OS



Map Scale @ A4: 1:150,000



- Sevenoaks district boundary
- Biodiversity Opportunity Area
- Site of Special Scientific Interest
- Local Wildlife Site
- Local Nature Reserve
- 1. Greensand Heaths & Commons
- 2. Central North Downs
- 3. Medway & Low Weald Greensand & Gault
- 4. High Weald
- 5. North Downs Scarp; Woldingham
- 6. Eden (plus tributaries)
- 7. Limspsfield Heaths

Sevenoaks Landscape Character Assessment

Figure 3.6: Biodiversity Designations

Source: NE, KWT, SDC, OS

LUC

Map Scale @ A4: 1:150,000

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 CB:VT:EB:Tzampoura_V LUCEDI 6897_Fig3-6_Biodiversity_A4P 16/12/2016

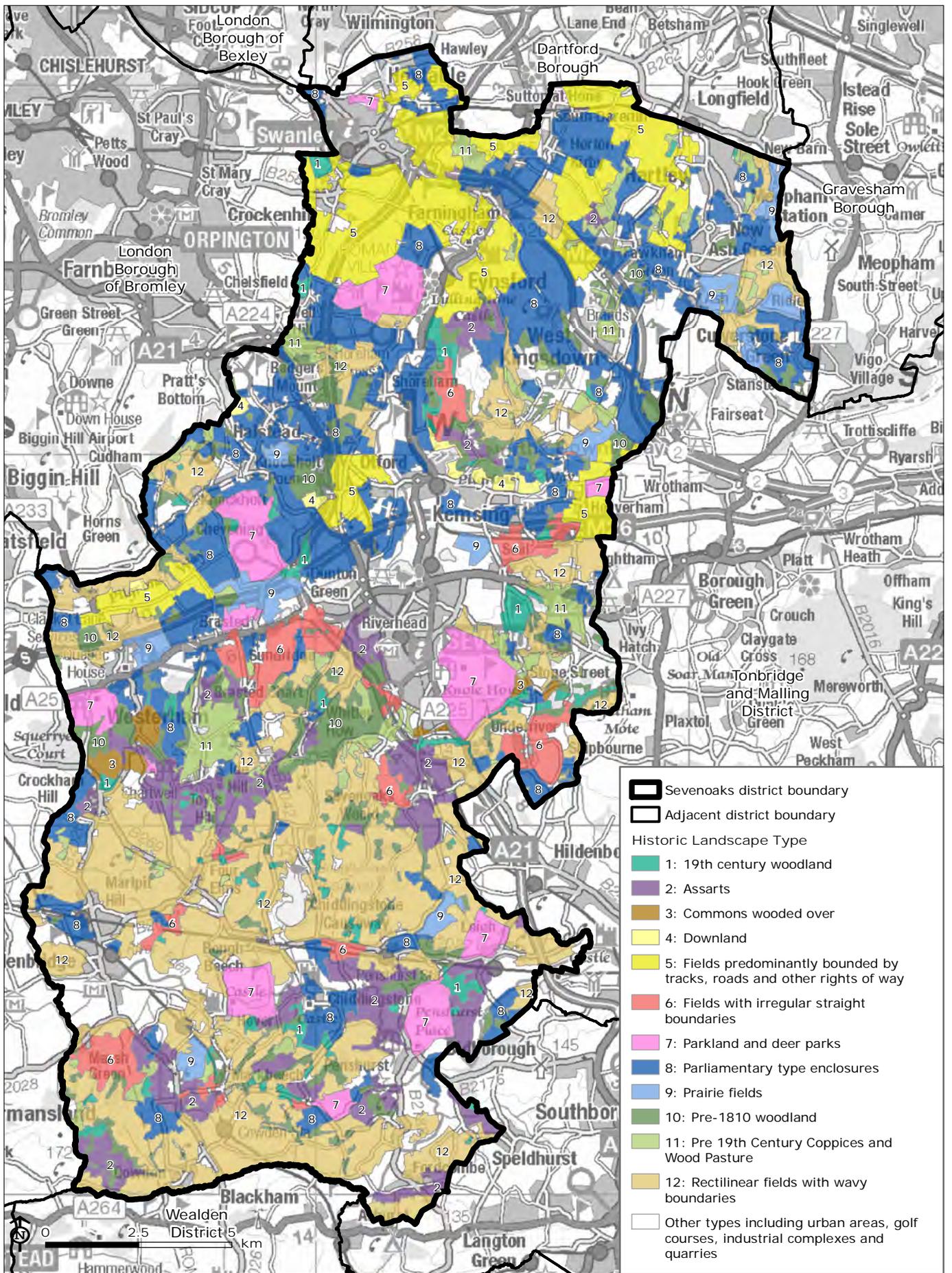


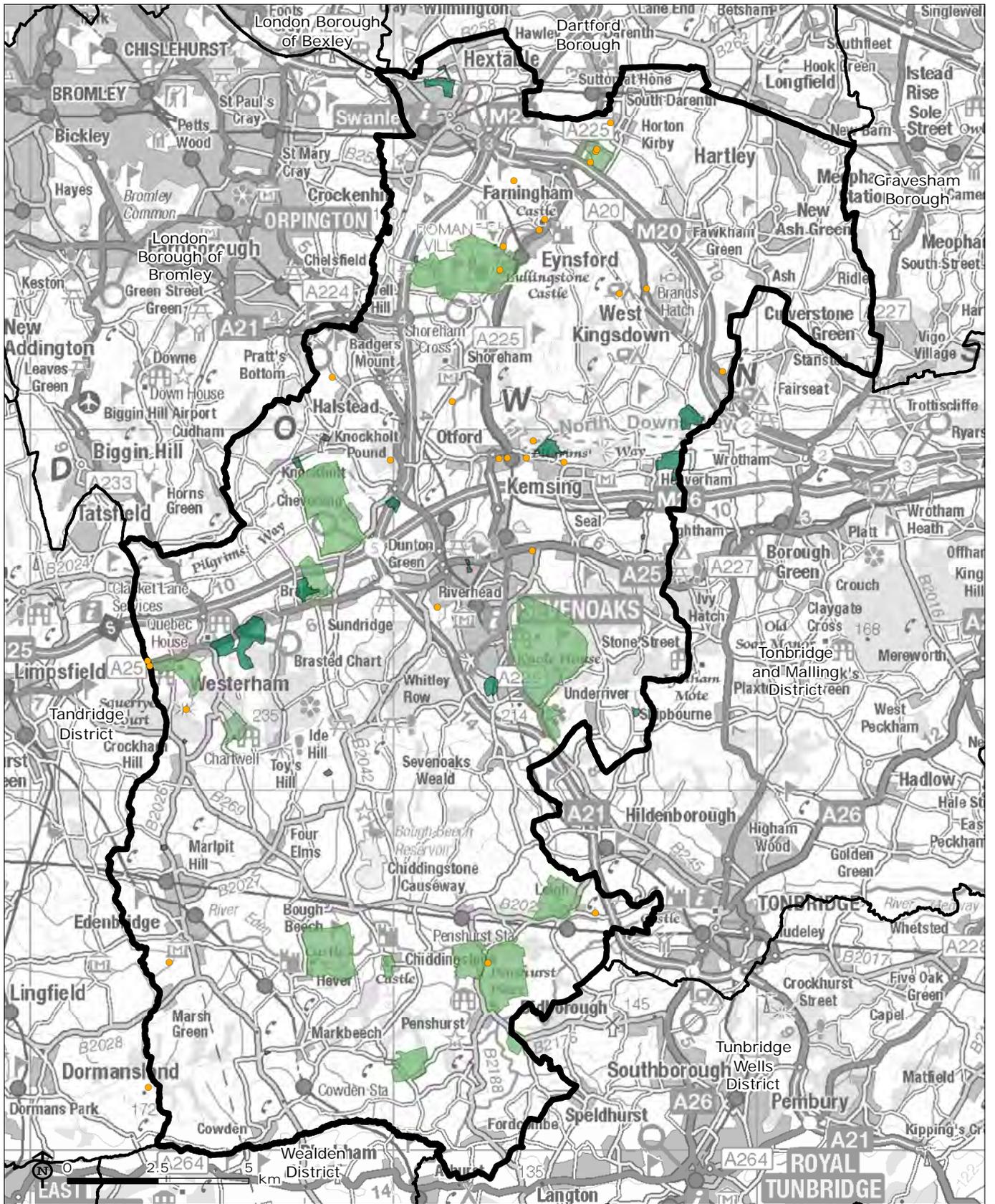
Figure 3.7: Key historic landscape types (interpreted from the Kent Historic Landscape Characterisation)

Sevenoaks Landscape Character Assessment



Source: SDC, Kent County Council

Map Scale @ A4: 1:140,000



-  Sevenoaks district boundary
-  Adjacent district boundary
-  Scheduled Monument
-  Registered Park and Garden
-  Local Historic Park and Garden

Sevenoaks Landscape Character Assessment

Figure 3.8: Heritage Assets

Source: SDC



Map Scale @ A4: 1:150,000

4 Summary of Landscape Issues

- 4.1 Sevenoaks District has a high proportion of designated areas which include the Kent Downs and High Weald Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (see **Figure 1.1**). Notably, there are areas of ancient woodland and grass downland. The area enjoys some areas of high visibility, where the long views are particularly important, and also a small-scale historic landscape pattern in which distinctive buildings and local vernacular are significant. Some areas are influenced by historic parkland and estate farmlands such as at Knole, or on the Chevening Scarp, dark night sky is a feature, particularly in the south of the District (see **Figure 4.1**).
- 4.2 In some areas of the Sevenoaks landscape, the condition of the landscape has deteriorated or is considered to be at risk due to factors as summarised below. It is recognised that some of the causes of poor landscape condition are outside the remit of the Planning Authority, however, some may be addressed by policy and development control.

Fringe landscapes

- 4.3 Pressure for new development is the most obvious challenge to existing landscape character. A particular problem is the growth of development which has no local distinction or relevance to the site or to the local settlement pattern, and this may include post 1801 linear built development which is frequently cited as a detracting feature within the landscape. New development on the fringe of an existing urban area often introduces an incongruous or harsh urban edge into the adjacent landscape and can introduce suburban features (such as suburban style boundaries to the rural landscape), introduce lighting into previously unlit areas, or affect the settings of historic settlements or buildings/ loss of historic features. In addition, the spread of suburban elements, such as coniferous planting, often constitute detracting elements in the view. Pressures on fringe landscapes also include recreational uses such as golf courses and littering/ fly tipping.
- 4.4 The growth of 'horsiculture' has had a marked influence on the condition of the landscape around many settlements, leading to the addition of inappropriate fencing and stabling and the deterioration of the small-scale historic enclosed landscape.

Agricultural landscapes

- 4.5 In the farmed landscape, the network of hedgerows is often vulnerable. Due to current agricultural practice, hedgerows lose their function in arable landscapes, and are often replaced by post and wire fences. Although Countryside Stewardship agreements have bought about a positive change in hedgerow management a frequent problem is the over-mature hedgerow being supplemented or replaced with post and wire fencing. Where hedgerows are characteristic but in poor condition, the integrity of these field boundaries and roadside hedges should be restored by replanting and active management.
- 4.6 Loss of traditional orchards and hop gardens and associated wind-break features has occurred over many years and remaining features continue to be vulnerable.
- 4.7 The form of modern agricultural buildings is often a detractor in agricultural landscapes, most of these buildings being of large scale and having no local distinction. Farms are generally decreasing in number and their agricultural buildings are steadily being converted to residential use with accompanying change in lighting requirements in these rural areas.
- 4.8 The Sevenoaks area has experienced an extensive loss of riparian landscape both in the Eden and Darent Valleys. In general, there is a lack of sensitive management of trees, and little replacement planting. Small areas of water meadows persist, but this type of landscape is generally in decline. Mineral extraction is also a pressure in these river valley landscapes. Water abstraction for domestic and industrial uses can alter water tables and landcover, but climate change is also likely to affect these valleys through water shortages on the one hand and flooding on the other.

- 4.9 The characteristic pattern of rural settlement, which often includes small dwellings and farmsteads located in direct relationship to the landform (such as isolated farmsteads on ridges in the Eynsford Downs) is greatly at risk from zoned or opportunist development. One general problem of the more remote parts of the Downs is the development of small buildings and small holdings – many probably having achieved deemed planning permission over time, but in the majority of cases incorporating unsympathetic land-uses and poor quality building (such as corrugated iron stabling, storage of waste goods etc).
- 4.10 Climate change is another major pressure on agricultural landscapes and is likely to result in increasingly unpredictable weather patterns with hotter drier summers, more intense rainfall and longer dry periods resulting in the need for agriculture and forestry industries to adapt to grow different crops and develop more flexible and responsive land management practices. Climate change may make some crops unviable and allow others, such as vines, to be grown. Hotter summers and increases in temperatures could result in increased demands for irrigation and domestic uses. Responses to climate change may also result in pressure for development of renewable energy.
- 4.11 The need for recreational use and access is likely to increase including demand for activity-based recreation, such as off-road cycling.

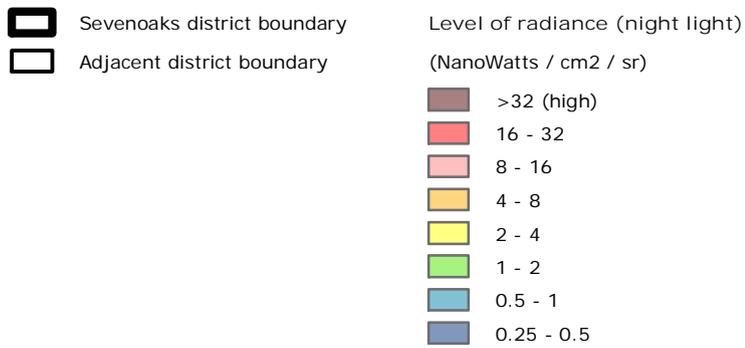
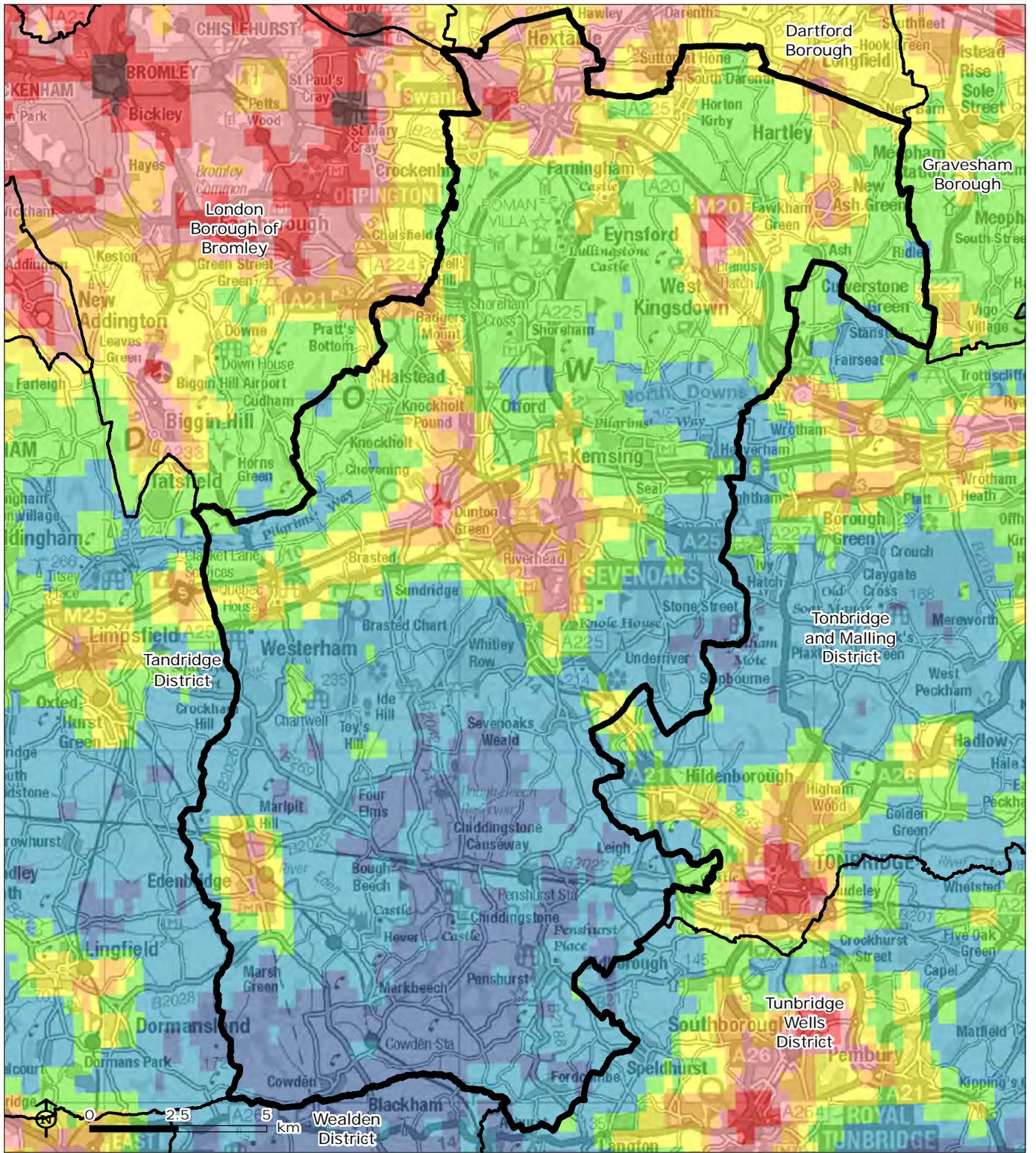
Traffic and transport

- 4.12 Motorway corridors, local highways and major communication routes have a large-scale impact on landform, including landscapes near Eynsford and Shoreham, Badger's Mount, Otford etc. The integration of transport and rail corridors into the wider landscape is needed; most major roads do not currently contribute to local distinctiveness. In particular, junctions and pockets of road-associated open space are treated as part of the linear corridor, but have no association with the landscape into which they lead.
- 4.13 The loss of distinctive features along rural roads is also an issue. Narrow verge-less roads, such as those which are characteristic in the Downs, are vulnerable to widening or experiencing an excessive number of vehicles, causing damage to chalk banks, and hedgerows. On other country lanes verges are vulnerable to erosion.
- 4.14 As roads approach urban edges, they often lose distinctive qualities and suffer abrupt transitions from the rural to the urban landscape. These areas need to embrace both highway standards while maintaining distinctive features appropriate to the area.
- 4.15 Airport expansion and increases in air traffic could also affect the area, eroding the sense of tranquillity.

Trees & woodland

- 4.16 One of the main factors in the historic deterioration of the landscape is the former loss of elm trees and hedgerow from Dutch elm disease, from which the countryside has not yet recovered. Newer diseases are now a threat, including Ash die back which could have a more profound effect than Dutch elm disease, and has been identified in the area. However, since the advent of Dutch elm disease biological understanding and techniques have advanced significantly and Biologists from John Innes Centre in Norfolk have made progress in identifying trees which could be genetically resistant to ash dieback, which it is hoped can be propagated. In addition to decline in ash, oak trees are declining in both number and condition. This could be further threatened by pests and disease, including Acute Oak Decline, as well as drought stress resulting from reduced water levels within clay soils.
- 4.17 Climate change is likely to result in increasingly unpredictable weather patterns with hotter drier summers, more intense rainfall and longer dry periods resulting in the need for forestry industries to adapt to grow different crops and develop more flexible and responsive land management practices. Changes in temperature resulting in warmer winters could alter the species composition of existing species-rich woodlands, shaws and hedgerows, favouring species with lower water demand. There are likely to be increasing incidences of pathogens disrupting timber crops and changing the species mix of woodlands, and higher temperatures and prolonged drought are likely to put woodlands under stress and increasing the risk of wildfires.

- 4.18 Some ancient woodland continues to suffer incremental damage from trampling and disturbance by livestock, machinery and recreational use. There is pressure on ancient woodland in all areas from lack of management, although recently there has been an increased interest in wood fuel initiatives which have the potential to help unmanaged woodlands back into management.



Sevenoaks Landscape Character Assessment

Figure 4.1: Dark Skies (2016)

More information: nightblight.cpre.org.uk

Source: OS, CPRE



Map Scale @ A4: 1:160,000

Part 2: The Landscape Character of Sevenoaks District



5 Classification

- 5.1 Classification is concerned with dividing the landscape into areas of distinct, recognisable and consistent common character and grouping areas of similar character together.

Landscape Types and Character Areas

- 5.2 Landscape types have been identified that have broadly similar patterns of geology, landform, soils, vegetation, land use, settlement and field pattern in each area in which they occur. This does not mean that they will be identical, but that they have a common pattern of elements.
- 5.3 Each landscape type is subdivided into a number of geographically specific character areas. They share generic characteristics with other areas of the same type, but have their own particular identity or 'sense of place'.
- 5.4 13 landscape types and 31 landscape character areas have been identified as listed in **Table 5.1** below. The classification is shown on a 1:250,000 scale base map at **Figure 5.1** and in more detail on a fold-out 1:25,000 OS base map at **Appendix 4**.
- 5.5 Note that this new classification is based on the old classification, but some landscape character areas have been amalgamated to reduce the overall number of landscape character areas. Some boundaries have also been adjusted to follow more suitable features, for example the southern boundary of the Chevening Scarp has been altered to follow a contour line rather than field boundaries (as landform is what defines this landscape type). The boundary of the Low Weald has also been drawn further down slope. The part of the Darent Valley just north of Sevenoaks has been moved from the former "Downs River Valleys" landscape type into the new "Clay Valleys" landscape type as this more accurately reflects its underlying geological influences. The extent of the "Wealden River Valleys" has also been reviewed and altered. The main settlements have been omitted from this rural assessment – these equate to the areas inset from the Green Belt, provided by SDC.

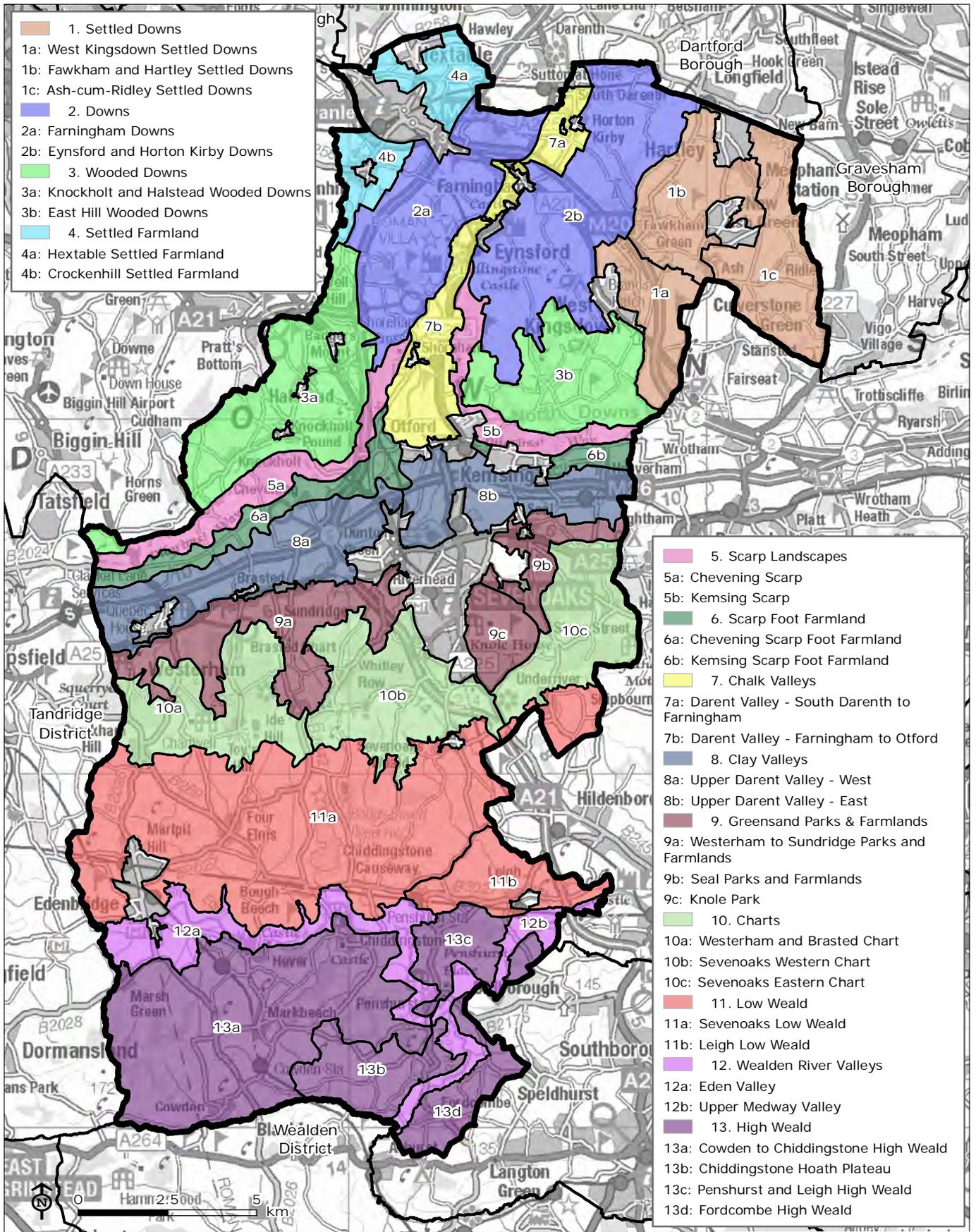
Table 5.1: Landscape Character Types and Areas in Sevenoaks District

Number	Type		Area
1	Settled Downs	a	West Kingsdown Settled Downs
		b	Fawkham and Hartley Settled Downs
		c	Ash-cum-Ridley Settled Downs
2	Downs	a	Farningham Downs
		b	Eynsford and Horton Kirby Downs
3	Wooded Downs	a	Knockholt and Halstead Wooded Downs
		b	East Hill Wooded Downs
4	Settled Farmland	a	Hextable Settled Farmland
		b	Crockenhill Settled Farmland
5	Scarp Landscapes	a	Chevening Scarp

Number	Type		Area
		b	Kemsing Scarp
6	Scarp Foot Farmland	a	Chevening Scarp Foot Farmland
		b	Kemsing Scarp Foot Farmland
7	Chalk Valleys	a	Darent Valley – South Darent to Farningham
		b	Darent Valley - Farningham to Otford
8	Clay Valleys	a	Upper Darent Valley - West
		b	Upper Darent Valley - East
9	Greensand Parks & Farmlands	a	Westerham to Sundridge Parks and Farmlands
		b	Seal Parks and Farmlands
		c	Knole Park
10	Charts	a	Westerham and Brasted Chart
		b	Sevenoaks Western Chart
		c	Sevenoaks Eastern Chart
11	Low Weald	a	Sevenoaks Low Weald
		b	Leigh Low Weald
12	Wealden River Valleys	a	Eden Valley
		b	Upper Medway Valley
13	High Weald	a	Cowden to Chiddingstone High Weald
		b	Chiddingstone Hoath Plateau
		c	Penshurst and Leigh High Weald
		d	Fordcombe High Weald / Medway High Weald

The Status, Meaning and Limitations of Boundary Lines

- 5.1 The precision of boundaries drawn around landscape character areas and types varies with the scale and level of detail of the assessment. This assessment has been mapped at a scale of 1:25,000 which means that it is suitable for use at this scale. The scale of this classification will need to be taken into account whenever the assessment is used to ensure that the level of detail is compatible with the intended application.
- 5.2 In reality landscape character does not change abruptly at the boundaries. Boundaries therefore often represent transitions rather than marked changes on the ground.



Sevenoaks Landscape Character Assessment

Figure 5.1: Classification For Sevenoaks



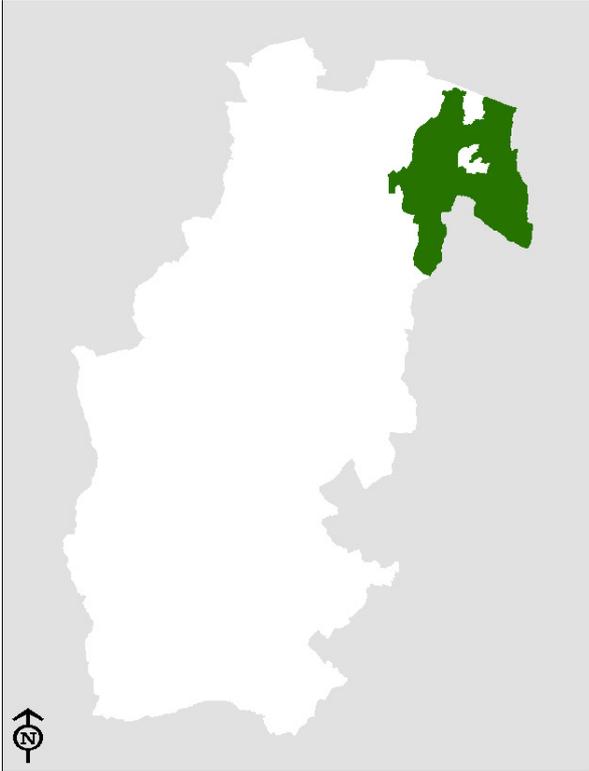
Sevenoaks district boundary
 Adjacent district boundary

Map Scale @ A4: 1:150,000

6 Landscape Character Type and Area Profiles

- 6.1 This section contains the landscape character type and area profiles including descriptive and evaluative information packaged by Local Landscape Type.

TYPE 1: SETTLED DOWNS



Key Characteristics

- Undulating chalk downland with plateaux, valleys and some dramatic steep slopes.
- Mixture of large scale open prairie fields and smaller scale enclosures, most derived from parliamentary enclosure.
- Mixture of arable and pasture farmland with woodland on hilltops.
- Thick hedgerows and coppice woodlands including beech and oak standards.
- Historic settlement pattern of scattered farmsteads and hamlets, with modern houses scattered along roadsides.
- Urban influences from adjacent residential development of Hartley and New Ash Green.
- Characteristic narrow rural lanes follow contours and the valley floors, linking existing settlements.
- Large areas of recreational space including golf courses and a racing circuit.
- Views mostly well contained by woodland and topography with occasional views out from higher ground.



National landscape character

North Downs

Geology

Upper Chalk valleys with Clay-with Flints capped ridges

Soils

Loamy: rich wet neutral soils in valleys with poor wet acid soils on ridges

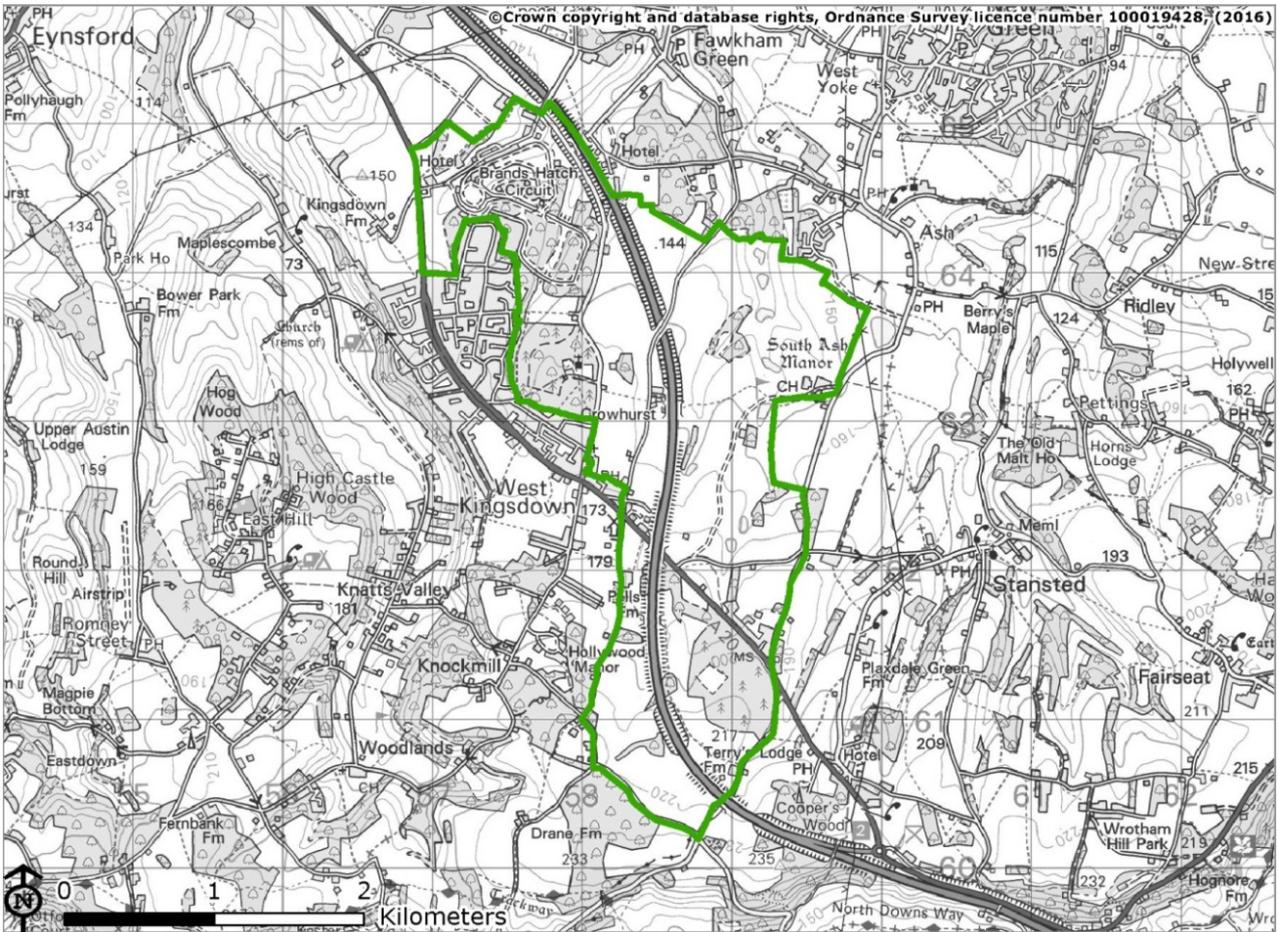
Landform

Undulating folded ridges and valleys aligned north to south

Historic landscape

Small and medium rectilinear fields of parliamentary enclosure. Medieval informal enclosure. Large 19th century enclosures with extensive boundary loss.

1a West Kingsdown Settled Downs



Key Characteristics

- Undulating chalk plateau overlain with clay and flints. The heads of dry valleys carve the plateau.
- Blocks of broad-leaved native woodland give a well wooded appearance.
- Historic isolated manor and commons which contrast with modern adjacent development.
- Narrow rural lanes, but also affected by major routes of A20 and M20, partly in cutting.
- Major recreational uses, including London Golf Club and Brands Hatch racing circuit.
- A strong sense of enclosure is provided by the woodland. There are long views out from elevated parts of Stansted Lane.

Landscape Character Description

An elevated, gently undulating chalk plateau overlain with clay and flints. A small chalk valley leads to the northern edge of the area. Land use is predominantly residential and recreational, but was formerly commons and woodland. Large blocks of both mixed woodland and ancient woodland give the landscape a well-wooded feel.

The West Kingsdown area encompasses the village of West Kingsdown, Brands Hatch racing circuit, a golf course and long stretches of the A20 and M20 highways. Historic field patterns have largely been lost. Evidence of historic settlement is limited to the site of South Ash Manor and the Church of St Edmund. The routes of historic highways crossed the plateau in a north-south direction but these have been changed to accommodate motorway approaches and bridges, fencing, highway planting and signs and embankments. Motorway planting is a significant feature of the area.

Brands Hatch is located at the head of a chalky valley whilst the golf course is found on more undulating land. The adjacent residential area of West Kingsdown has developed along the A20 trunk road and is spreading into the woodland. Bungalows are a common form of residential style.

There are many medium range views, but these are extended near the motorway and golf course, where the landscape has been opened up. The area south of the A20 is within Kent Downs AONB.

Landscape evaluation

Condition

The loss of historic landscape pattern to alternative land uses and extensive modern development, infrastructure and suburban land uses have interrupted the integrity of this landscape, adversely affecting its landscape condition. The variable management of the remaining woodland and agricultural land also affect condition. However, there are remaining intact aspects such as remaining copses (eg Church Wood, Grove Wood and Peckham Wood - also ancient woodland), shaws and 18th and 19th-century field patterns.

Key sensitivities / valued attributes

The following features and characteristics are particularly valued for their contribution to character and for the ecosystem services they provide:

- Semi-natural habitats on the rough ground to the east of Fawkham Road, including rough grassland and scrub which contributes to the landscape's biodiversity resource.
- Continuous thick hedgerow boundaries and shaws that create a strong landscape pattern and contribute to green infrastructure/biodiversity value.

- Areas of ancient woodland which provide backdrop to settlement and a sense of enclosure including Church Wood and Grove Wood which contain pollarded oaks.
- Historic features which have survived the rapid change of the landscape including the Grade I listed Church of St Edmund.
- Ancient twisting lanes running north-south through the area.
- Occasional long views from the elevated and open areas of the landscape.
- Sense of enclosure created by the dense woodland, shaws and hedgerows.
- Strong rural character and feeling of solitude away from development.

Vision

A rural landscape of actively managed farmland, grassland and woodland with ancient twisting lanes, a strong hedgerow network and well integrated infrastructure and built development. A landscape highly valued for recreation opportunities and good levels of ecological connectivity.

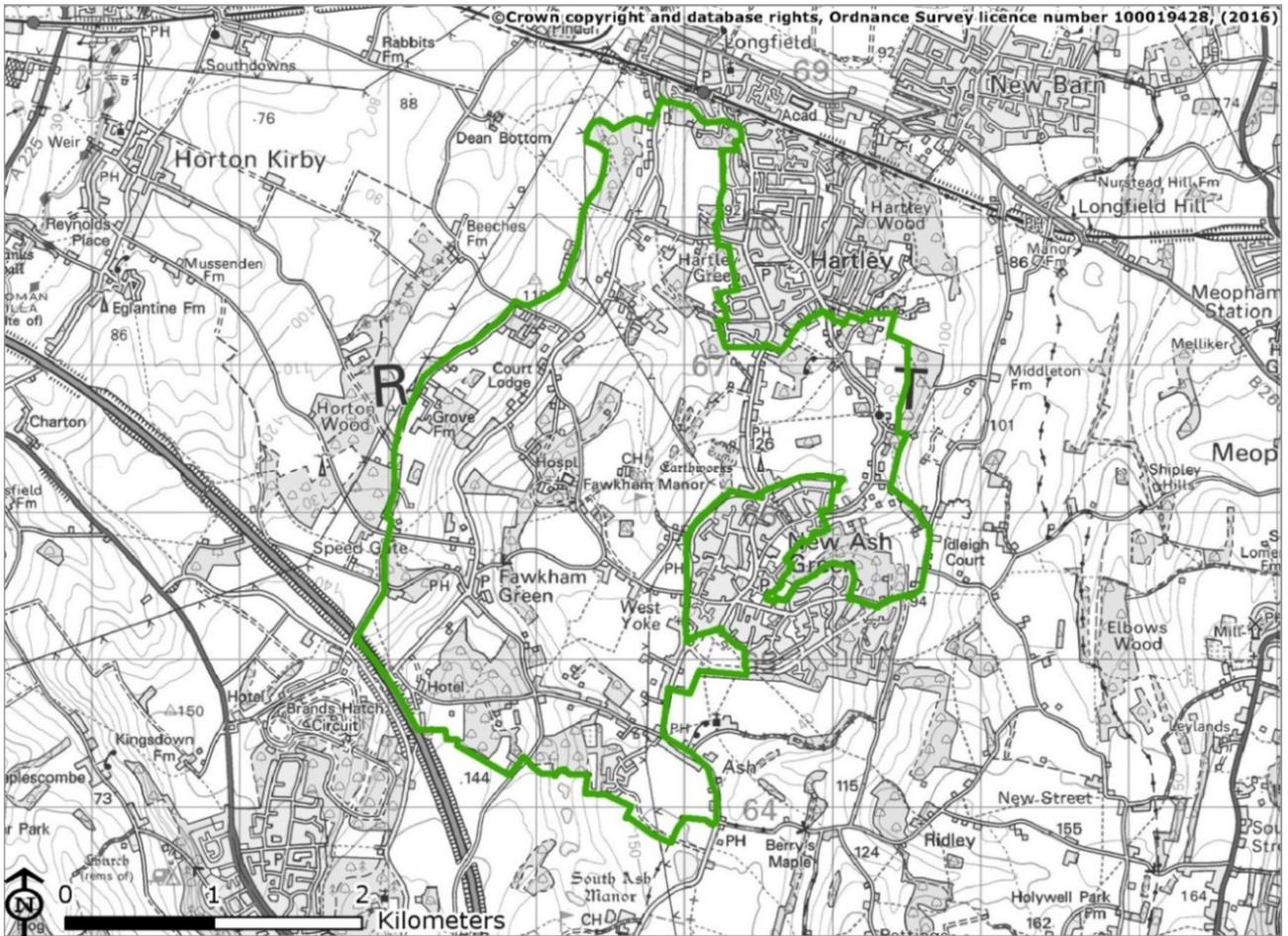
Landscape Guidance

The southern part of the Landscape Character Area is within the **Kent Downs AONB**, a nationally important designation which offers a high level of development constraint. Refer to the AONB Management Plan for further guidance within the AONB.

Local objectives to conserve and enhance landscape character are outlined below:

- All areas of unimproved grassland to be retained, managed, restored or recreated where feasible. Retain and enhance habitats on the area of rough ground to the east of Fawkham Lane.
- Conserve and enhance the valued areas of ancient woodland and supplement these habitats with areas of scrub.
- Enhance biodiversity of farmland habitats by including copses, hedges and unsprayed strips within crops.
- Encourage the sensitive management of open grassland in recreational areas to enhance biodiversity.
- Conserve valued historic features and their settings.
- Retain the character of the remaining narrow rural lanes. Create more sensitive boundary treatments to highways to screen roads and increase biodiversity value of road corridors.
- Ensure any new development is integrated into the landscape and reflects the rural vernacular to minimise impact on the rural landscape.
- Retain the rural character of the landscape away from existing development.

1b Fawkham and Hartley Settled Downs



Key Characteristics

- Small scale and enclosed landscape with dramatic chalk valleys with steep slopes rising to chalk plateaux.
- Varied land cover includes ancient coppice woodland, open field systems, enclosed pastures, golf courses, parkland and estate woodland.
- Fields are enclosed by mature hedgerows with mature oak and beech and dead and regenerative elm.
- Narrow rural lanes follow contours. On the plateau are wide sweeping roads with infill development.
- Older farmsteads on higher ground with newer residential buildings in sheltered areas.
- Well-contained views limited by tall hedges and areas of tree cover.
- High levels of tranquillity.

Landscape Character Description

A small-scale and enclosed landscape which has developed around a steeply incised chalk valley, overlain with clay with flints on the higher ridges and flood plain gravels, following the bottom of the valley. The plateaux rise to 140m AOD, edged by the dry chalk valleys.

Varied field patterns reflect the differences in landform and historic landscape pattern. Small pasture fields are associated with development and steep slopes whilst on the plateaux the fields open up to larger scale arable cultivation, reflecting the gentler contours and richer soils. Woodland is frequent and encloses the valley-side pastures and covers the clay-capped ridges. Woodland is often ancient in origin. There is more recent parkland and estate woodland around the Fawkham Manor Estate. Two golf courses are found on the more gently undulating land.

Settlement follows a general pattern of older farmsteads on the higher ground and more recent linear development at the base of the valley. Traditional weatherboarded buildings and oast houses are distinctive features. New settlement at Hartley is based around an original hamlet. New Ash Green is a new village built in the early 1960's. Narrow rural roads generally follow contours but are widened and suburbanised on the plateau top.

Views along the valley are limited by tall roadside hedges and mature standard trees. Away from dense development, there are high levels of tranquillity.

Landscape evaluation

Condition

The unified pattern of the landscape (small-scale fields on the valley sides and hilltop woodlands which reflect the underlying landform), the distinctive rural lanes, traditional settlement character and the intact ecological network of woodlands and hedgerows contribute positively to landscape condition. However, golf courses, horsiculture development, inappropriate modern buildings and suburbanised roads with associated road furniture detract from the condition of the landscape.

Key sensitivities / valued attributes

The following features and characteristics are particularly valued for their contribution to character and for the ecosystem services they provide:

- Dramatic valley/plateaux landform, reflected in the small-scale field pattern, particularly on the valley sides.
- Existing hilltop woodland habitat, including semi-natural ancient woodland comprised of oak, ash and beech of varying ages and historic coppice and pollard woodland.

- The distinctive character of the ancient rural lanes which follow the contours of the valley.
- Traditional settlement pattern of scattered farm houses with a remote character and narrow rural lanes.
- Strong sense of time-depth and sense of place. Valued heritage features including the Grade I listed Church of All Saints.
- A sense of enclosure and isolation despite close proximity to dense urban development.
- High levels of tranquillity, feeling of solitude and sense of escape from adjacent urban areas.
- The mostly visually enclosed nature of the landscape, with the residential development screened from the surrounding rural areas by woodland.

Vision

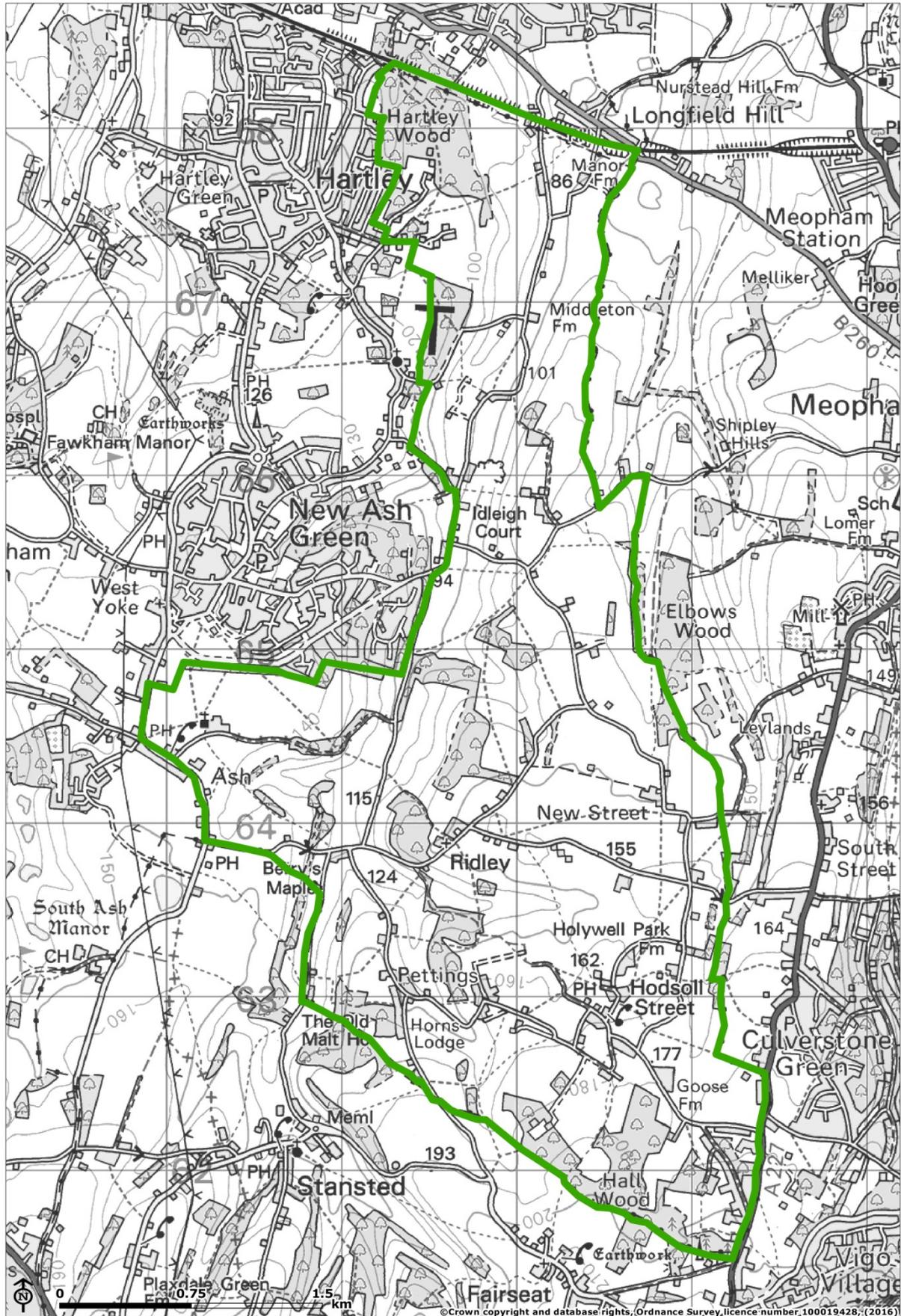
A well-managed rural landscape with a strong sense of time depth and sense of place and valued semi-natural habitats, including historic areas of coppice woodland. A landscape in which land uses are well integrated into the landscape.

Landscape Guidance

Local objectives to conserve and enhance landscape character are outlined below:

- All areas of unimproved grassland to be retained, managed, restored or recreated where feasible.
- Areas of scrub to be encouraged and maintained especially on chalk soils both in association with grassland and woodland on its own.
- Enhance biodiversity of farmland habitats by including copses, hedges and unsprayed strips within crops.
- Conserve ancient woodland, the range of species including oak, ash and beech, and the range of age structure. Manage woodland cover on the higher ridges, and cross contour shaws which link these to the base of the valleys.
- Conserve the small-scale of the field pattern and historic features/buildings within the landscape.
- Conserve the isolation and remote character of settlements.
- Create a defined edge to existing residential areas and suburban land uses such as golf courses and pony paddocks.
- Conserve and manage existing highway works, maintaining tall hedgerows with standard oaks and ash. Manage traffic levels to reduce erosion to the rural roads.
- Retain the high levels of tranquillity and sense of escapism provided by the landscape.

1c Ash-Cum-Ridley Settled Downs





Key Characteristics

- Undulating chalk downs with clay and flints capping to ridges.
- Small-medium arable and grassland fields on the slopes with large scale prairie fields on higher ground.
- Copses of ancient woodland are frequent, along with mature in-field trees.
- Acid clay soils on hilltops support woodland and some farms.
- Small, compact farmsteads and hamlets on higher ground. Mostly brick but some flint used as a building material.
- Narrow, winding lanes with high hedges.
- Smaller scale and enclosed on steeper ground, more open and larger scale on ridge tops.
- Tranquil, rural landscape.

Landscape Character Description

This is an undulating landscape of chalk slopes and clay ridges, with a notable outcrop of Woolwich Beds around Ridley. The relief is accentuated by frequent hill-top woodlands which mark the upper edge of the chalk slopes. Field sizes are generally small-medium and bounded by hedges and woodlands which follow contours of the land, although fields are increasingly larger and more open towards Longfield Hill and north of Ridley. Land is mostly used for arable growing, with some pasture and horsiculture.

The frequency of small woodlands and shaws is an important characteristic as it contributes to the small-scale of the landscape. Avenues along lanes and mature in-field trees are a frequent feature. Much of the woodland is ancient in origin.

Lanes are narrow and hedged, with frequent passing places and standard trees such as oak and ash. Settlements consist of small hamlets and isolated farmsteads, and there is evidence of ancient settlement and civilisation in earthworks and trackways. Traditional built farm is compact using brick and tile and includes some oast houses. The use of flint is also evident. There are also larger houses of modern origin.

Attractive rural views are enclosed within the LCA, but there are occasional longer views from higher ground or along the valleys where the woodland allows. Levels of tranquillity in the landscape are high.

Landscape evaluation

Condition

The unified landscape character which retains its historic land use patterns and the strong ecological network formed by the frequent woodlands connected by shaws and hedgerows contribute positively to landscape condition. However, small areas of neglected and untidy farmyards, horse paddocks with pony tape and gates/ fencing are detractors.

Key sensitivities / valued attributes

The following features and characteristics are particularly valued for their contribution to character and for the ecosystem services they provide:

- Small-scale of the landscape owing to the field cover pattern and the frequent woodlands and hedgerows.
- Frequent broadleaved ancient woodlands with a diverse range of native species, including some which are locally designated for wildlife value. Pollarded oaks are a characteristic feature.
- The historic settlement pattern with distinctive farms, some oast houses and cottages of traditional brick and flint vernacular, including Hodsoll Street Conservation Area.
- Distinct ancient rural lanes with holly and beech banks, which reflect the historic settlement pattern and give great time-depth to the landscape.
- The attractive rural landscape with wooded skylines.
- The highly tranquil and rural perceptual qualities of the landscape, with enclosed views and a feeling of solitude.

Vision

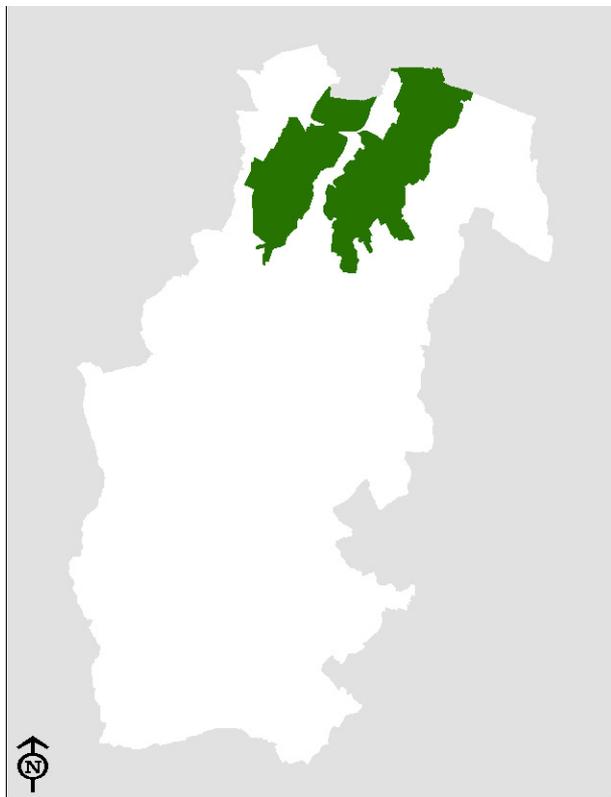
A strongly rural and tranquil landscape with historic field patterns and traditional historic settlement and road pattern, with well managed areas of native woodland which form a strong ecological network along with the shaws and hedgerows.

Landscape Guidance

Local objectives to conserve and enhance landscape character are outlined below:

- Retain, manage, and restore areas of unimproved grassland where possible.
- Maintain areas of scrub on chalk soils both in association with grassland and woodland on its own to encourage a diversity of habitats.
- Conserve the broadleaved, ancient woodland, and the historic field pattern. Encourage the management of hill-top woodlands and shaws to ensure their long term survival.
- Enhance biodiversity of farmland habitats by including copses, hedges and unsprayed strips within crops.
- Conserve the sparse settlement pattern and ensure that distinctive characteristics of traditional buildings are adapted and encouraged.
- Conserve the character of the historic rural lanes with distinctive holly and beech banks.
- Retain high levels of tranquillity and feeling of solitude within the landscape.

TYPE 2: DOWNS



Key Characteristics

- Rolling chalk downland overlain by a medium scale field pattern of regular parliamentary fields as well as some older fields, and occasional assarts.
- A mixture of arable and pastoral farmland (with a high incidence of arable cultivation on the plateau) bounded by fragmented hedgerows and shaws.
- Blocks of woodland are found on the ridges - including species mixes characteristic of ancient woodland; including yew and beech.
- Sparse settlement pattern comprising scattered farms and limited linear development in sheltered locations.
- Many historic features including Roman remains and a medieval deer-park.
- Recreational usage including golf courses and parklands.
- Narrow rural lanes with passing places, lined by hedgerows often with standard oaks.
- Dense woodland and steep topography tend to restrict views, but there are long views from open areas.



National landscape character

North Downs

Geology

Upper chalk

Soils

Loamy: Base rich calcareous and wet neutral soils

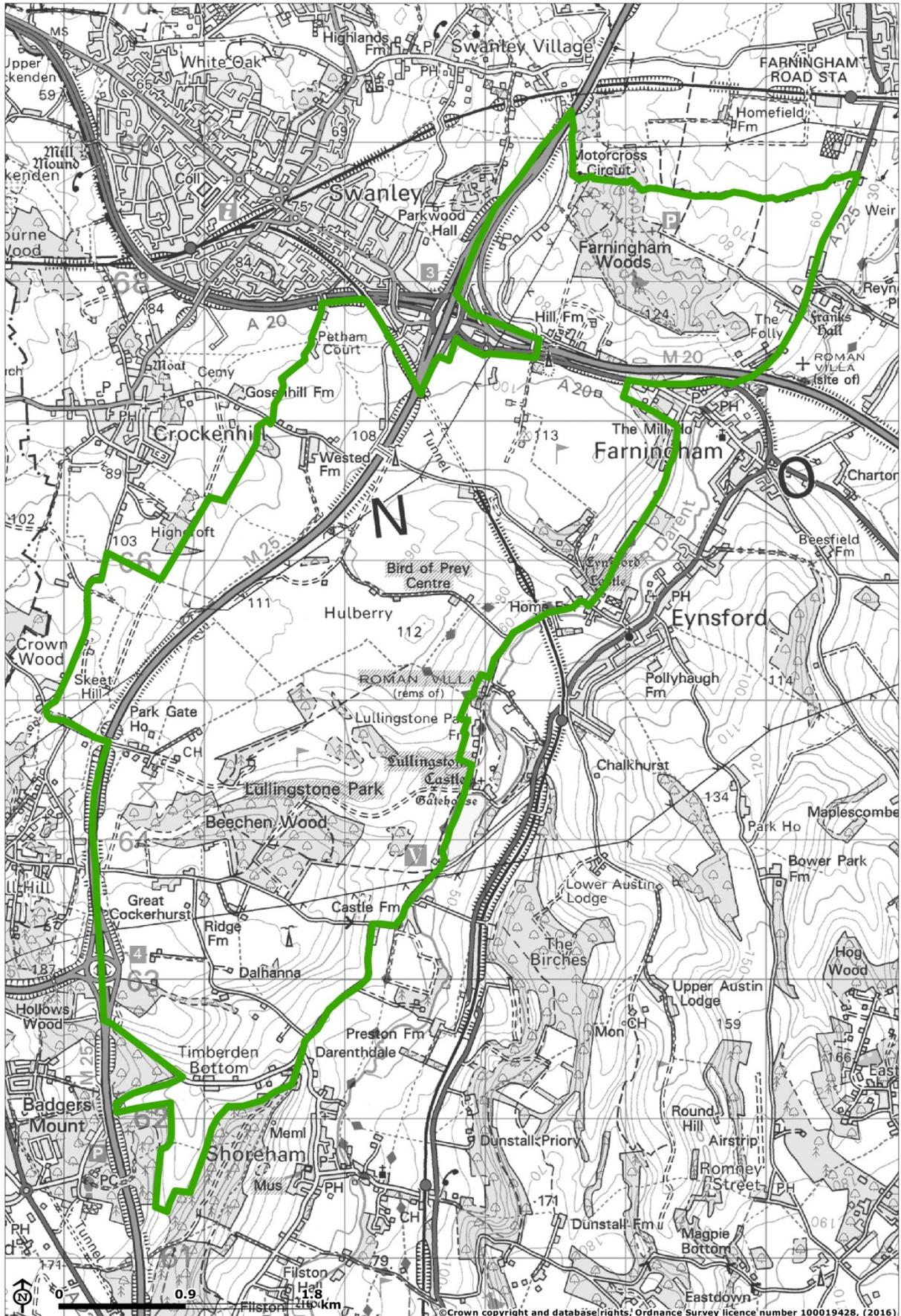
Landform

Gently undulating dip slope descending towards the Darent Valley

Historic landscape

Post-medieval informal enclosure defined by old drove roads. Medium to large scale rectilinear parliamentary enclosure.

2a Farningham Downs





Key Characteristics

- Rolling chalk downland including ridges, dry valleys and a steep slope adjacent to the Darent Valley.
- Regular shaped large and medium scale parliamentary fields, mainly in arable use, enclosed by a mixture of hedges with trees and fencing.
- Older, smaller and more irregular pastures on steeper land or in the valleys.
- Distinctive areas of ancient woodland atop the ridges.
- Specimen trees and chalk grassland are features of the historic parkland at Lullingstone Park.
- Settlement is typically scattered, isolated cottages and farms with small linear settlements in sheltered areas.
- Mixed 20th century residential properties are found along roads including converted barns and horse paddocks.
- The Country Park and golf courses are popular for recreation.
- Long, open views across the Darent Valley from higher ground.
- Pylons and motorway infrastructure are intrusive features.

Landscape Character Description

An area of gently rolling chalk downland, which slopes steeply towards the Darent Valley. Medium-large scale regular shaped (parliamentary) arable fields dominate, with older fields and pastoral uses on steeper slopes. Fragmented hedgerows with trees along lanes are supplemented by various styles of fencing. Areas of mixed woodland are found within Lullingstone and Preston Hill Country Park and ancient woodland is located at Farningham Woods. Fine specimen oaks and wood pasture are found at Lullingstone Park golf course, a historic deer park of Lullingstone Castle.

Signs of historic settlement, including Roman occupation and medieval parkland, are evident within the landscape. Settlement is limited to isolated cottages and farms and small linear settlements scattered along narrow winding, tree lined lanes with occasional passing places. Building styles include traditional flint and brick cottages, gentrified oasts, mixed style 20th century residential properties and large modern barns. Small fields of rough pasture used for horiculture are associated with settlement. Recreational usage is extensive, with two golf courses and a Country Park.

Sloping steeply to the east, there are spectacular long views from the higher areas, across the Darent Valley, and to the Greensand Ridge around Sevenoaks. Much of the southern part of character area is within the Kent Downs AONB. The M25 cuts north - south through the area, is visually intrusive and very noisy. Large pylons are visually prominent, positioned

alongside the M25 corridor.

Fort Farningham is a structure constructed during the 1890s as part of the London Defence Positions to protect the capital in the event of enemy invasion. The area also had a Second World War bombing decoy located at Lullingstone to deflect enemy bombing from Royal Air Force Biggin Hill airfield.

Landscape evaluation

Condition

The coherent landscape pattern, intact corridors of semi-natural habitats including the woodlands on the ridges, mature hedgerows and the isolated farmsteads and cottages of traditional vernacular contribute to an intact landscape condition and sense of place. However, hedgerow loss is evident, and modern linear development, the motorway and rows of pylons are visual detractors.

Key sensitivities / valued attributes

The following features and characteristics are particularly valued for their contribution to character and for the ecosystem services they provide:

- Mature trees and hedgerows provide valued habitats within the intensively farmed landscape, as well as providing a strong landscape pattern.
- Mixed woodland at Lullingstone Park and ancient woodland at Farningham Woods which are designated as SSSI and Local Wildlife Sites for their ecological importance and provide a wooded backdrop to views.
- Areas of older fields on steeper slopes and in valleys which contribute to a more intimate character.
- The generally low density of settlement and rural settlement pattern of scattered farmsteads.
- Historic buildings including the Grade II listed Barn and Cowshed at Frank's Farm. Traditional farmsteads and cottages of brick and flint vernacular.
- Historic designed parkland landscape of Lullingstone Castle which is a Grade II Registered Park and Garden, and its ancient trees.
- Remnant chalk grassland, including for example at Lullingstone Park and on steeper slopes.
- Recreational sites including two golf courses and Lullingstone Country Park which allow public access to, and appreciation of, the landscape.
- Long views across the Darent Valley to the Greensand Ridge around Sevenoaks from the Darent Valley Path. Views along the valley include the Eynsford viaduct.

Vision

A rural landscape with a strong field pattern marked by well managed mature hedgerows, a well wooded character comprising deciduous woodlands and historic estate parkland, and a rural settlement pattern of scattered farmsteads and scattered dwellings in well screened and sheltered locations. A landscape valued for its recreational functions and the long, picturesque and unspoilt views across the Darent Valley.

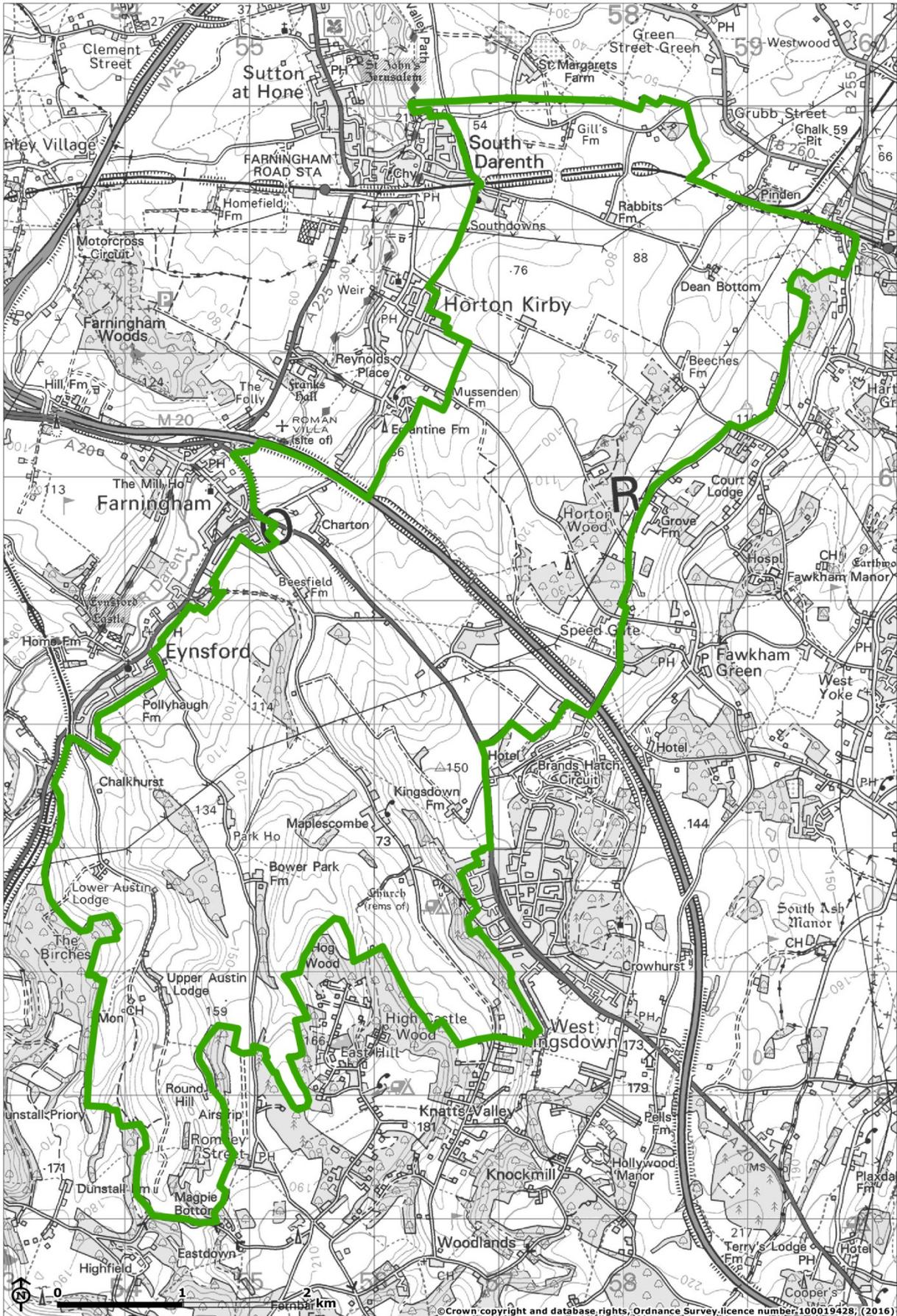
Landscape Guidance

Much of the landscape character area is within the **Kent Downs AONB**, a nationally important designation which offers a high level of development constraint. Refer to the AONB Management Plan for further guidance within the AONB.

Local objectives to conserve and enhance landscape character are outlined below:

- Protect and enhance the valued semi-natural habitats including unimproved chalk grassland, scrub, deciduous woodland and hedgerows. Accentuate the rolling landscape by planting woodland which follows the landform and aim to reconnect chalk grassland sites.
- Restore lost hedgerow field boundaries by replanting hedgerows along fields and lanes, including standard trees.
- Conserve the generally low density rural settlement pattern, historic buildings and their settings – ensure any new development respects the local vernacular.
- Retain the historic estate and parkland character of Lullingstone Park, including its parkland trees – plan for the next generation of trees.
- Manage the golf courses to improve their ecological and landscape benefit.
- Explore opportunities to better integrate the M25 into the landscape whilst retaining key views from the road.
- Conserve the dramatic views across the Darent Valley and consider the impact of any development or land use change on these views, including views from the Darent Valley Path.

2b Eynsford and Horton Kirby Downs





Key Characteristics

- Gently undulating chalk landscape with deep dry valleys, broad plateau tops and a steep slope adjacent to the Darent Valley.
- Medium-large scale parliamentary field pattern used for arable crops and pasture, enclosed by mature hedgerows or post and wire.
- Small paddocks are associated with farmsteads and chalk grassland survives on some steeper slopes.
- Mixed woodland on valley ridgelines and on valley slopes, including areas of coppice.
- Scattered, isolated farmsteads often with traditional flint and weatherboard buildings.
- Small isolated hamlets with some vernacular flint and weatherboard houses.
- Narrow winding lanes, contained by banks juxtapose with the busy roads of A20/M20.
- Mostly rural and tranquil, although there is urban development adjacent to South Darent and at Horton Kirby.
- Strong feeling of enclosure in the woodlands contrasts with long views along the Darent Valley from the

Landscape Character Description

The Eynsford and Horton Kirby Downs is a gently undulating chalk landscape with deep, dry valleys and broad plateau tops. The land is intensively farmed for cereals within a medium-large scale field pattern. To the north, the field pattern is smaller with some lavender and hop gardens and associated poplar shelterbelts. Adjacent to settlement and farmsteads are smaller scale paddocks. Field boundaries are generally made up of mature hedgerows with some hedgerow trees with post and wire in some areas. The woodlands are predominantly coppiced sweet chestnut with oak standards, with silver birch and beech evident. Much of the woodland is within Horton Wood and Hartnips Woods which are Local Wildlife Sites. Woodland is sparse in the north of the area.

Settlement is limited to a scattering of isolated farmsteads and small hamlets of a traditional flint and weatherboard vernacular. There are also some large modern farm buildings and barns. Narrow winding lanes generally follow the ridgelines. These lanes are contained by banks, often surmounted with hedgerows. A large golf course is tucked unobtrusively within the hills to the rear of southern Eynsford.

The landscape is open and exposed with good views to the north due to the lack of tree cover. There are significant views along the valley floor and views extending up the valley sides to the wooded ridgelines. Elsewhere, there is a strong feeling of enclosure created by the topography and mature woodland growing along the ridgelines, with intermittent long views along the Eynsford Downs.

The landscape is generally rural and tranquil although encroaching urban development from Eynsford and West Kingsdown and a pylon line detract from this.

valley sides and across the Eynsford Downs.

The M20 crosses the area, introducing noise and movement and has bisected some of the rural routes.

- Views towards London from high ground.

Landscape evaluation

Condition

The strong field pattern, traditional rural settlement pattern of locally distinctive flint farmsteads, and remnant ancient woodland and chalk grassland contribute to the intactness of the landscape. However, there has been field boundary reorganisation and hedgerow loss in the past, and urban fringe development, areas of unmanaged woodland, declining hedgerows and large uncharacteristic modern farm buildings adversely affect condition.

Key sensitivities / valued attributes

The following features and characteristics are particularly valued for their contribution to character and for the ecosystem services they provide:

- Small copses of broadleaved woodland which provide valued semi-natural habitat and contribute to visual interest, including ancient woodland at Ryecrofts Wood, Magpie Bottom SSSI and Horton Woods which is designated as a Local Wildlife Site.
- Areas of remnant chalk grassland, such as at Magpie Bottom SSSI.
- Remnant historic settlement pattern, with isolated farm buildings of a traditional flint, weatherboard and brick vernacular accessed by narrow, winding lanes lined with hedged banks such as Maplescombe Lane.
- The historic landscape pattern, with frequent woodlands on the ridgelines and areas of intact hedgerows which provide a sense of history and ecological connectivity.
- Areas which retain traditional land uses including lavender farms and hop gardens.
- Long, open views over adjacent Downs to the north which include south London and views funnelled along the valley floors between the wooded ridgelines which contrast with the sense of enclosure afforded by the topography and the woodland cover.
- The dramatic landform of the ridges and deep dry valleys which are typical of a chalk landscape and the sense of tranquillity within them.

Vision

An attractive rolling chalk landscape of farmland, woodland and chalk grassland with a strong and intact field pattern. Areas of well-managed woodland and hedgerows emphasise the underlying topography and provide a sense of enclosure, as well as contributing to the ecological diversity of the landscape.

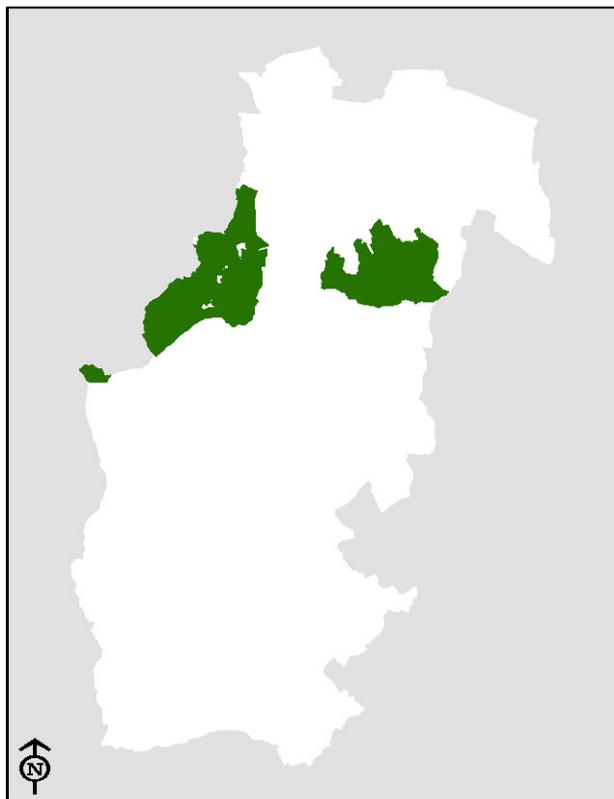
Landscape Guidance

Approximately half the landscape character area is within the **Kent Downs AONB**, a nationally important designation which offers a high level of development constraint. Refer to the AONB Management Plan for further guidance within the AONB.

Local objectives to conserve and enhance landscape character are outlined below:

- Restore and enhance hedgerows, shelterbelts and broadleaved/ancient woodlands to maintain the historic land cover pattern.
- Unimproved chalk grassland and scrub should be retained and managed, as well as restored, to link up and extend remnant habitats.
- Conserve the rural settlement pattern of isolated, small dwellings and farmsteads linked by rural lanes.
- Restore the integrity of field boundaries through replanting, especially along historic boundary lines that have been lost.
- Preserve traditional land uses including lavender farms and hop gardens.
- Manage the golf course to improve its ecological and landscape benefit.
- Retain traditional rural lanes and avoid erosion or road widening to accommodate more traffic.
- Ensure any new development contributes to local vernacular and has sense of place.
- Explore opportunities to better integrate the M20 into the landscape.
- Conserve the dramatic views across the adjacent Downs, the Darent Valley and towards London – seek opportunities to enhance public access to these views.

TYPE 3: WOODED DOWNS



Key Characteristics

- A gently undulating chalk landscape giving rise to plateaux carved by steep valleys.
- The plateaux are mostly covered by clay-with-flints supporting frequent broadleaved woodlands which are often ancient in origin. Sweet Chestnut coppice is a local feature.
- Small to medium scale field pattern (mostly parliamentary enclosure) with larger arable fields on flatter ground and paddocks on the steeper ground.
- Hedgerows enclose fields and run along narrow, winding lanes.
- Mature in-field trees give the landscape an estate character.
- Historic farmsteads are scattered throughout the landscape and contrast with modern linear development along roads.
- Suburban land uses occur close to the settlements, including plant nurseries and distribution centres.
- Rough grasslands adjacent to settlements are used for recreation.
- Sense of enclosure afforded by the dray valleys and dense woodland, with occasional long views out from higher ground.

National landscape character

North Downs

Geology

Clay-with-Flints

Soils

Loamy free draining mineral soils

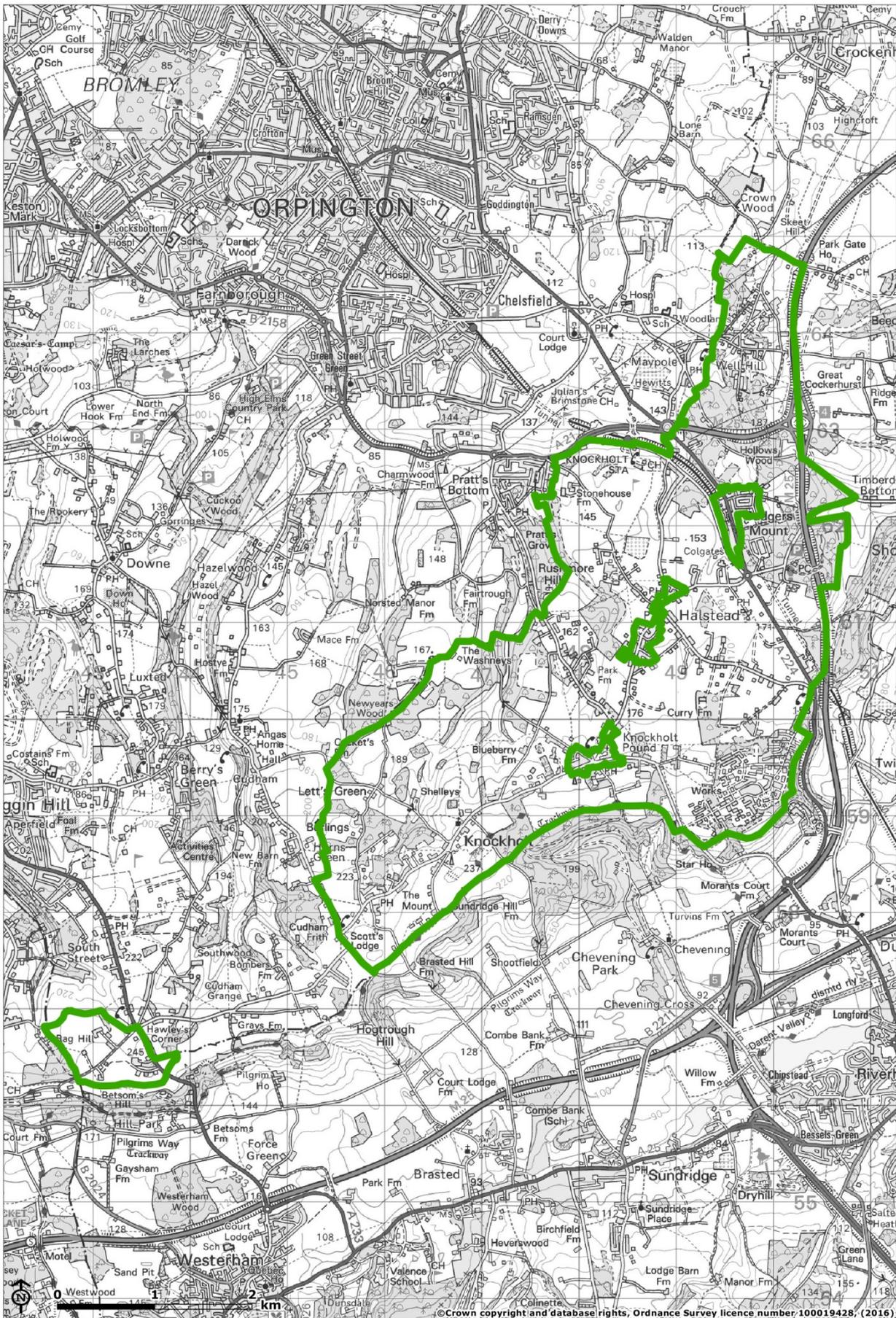
Landform

Folded

Historic landscape

Small-medium scale parliamentary enclosures. Some medieval informal enclosure.

3a Knockholt and Halstead Wooded Downs





Key Characteristics

- Generally gently undulating, but with some steep valley slopes.
- Mainly agricultural land use (arable and pasture), with plant nurseries, horsiculture, residential, commercial and recreational (including a golf course).
- During the Second World War, Ivy Farm House in Kent was an outpost to the Bletchley Park decoding centre.
- Varied field pattern comprising some small and medium regular parliamentary enclosures as well as some earlier more irregular fields.
- Large areas of woodland, including ancient coppice woods. Mature in-field oaks are frequent. Fields are bounded by hedgerows with mature beech trees.
- Small historic flint and brick vernacular properties at core of settlements, large C20th housing to the outskirts.
- Suburban development including golf courses, glass houses and distribution depots.
- Narrow rural lanes contrast with the M25 corridor and other main roads which introduce noise and movement.
- Mostly enclosed due to the extensive tree cover and high hedgerows.
- Ivy House Farm was an outpost to the Bletchley Park decoding station in the Second

Landscape Character Description

A chalk downland landscape based on a gently undulating landform with some steeper slopes associated with valleys and ridges. The field pattern is varied; with some small and medium regular parliamentary enclosures as well as some earlier more irregular fields and small paddocks on steep valley slopes. Fields are enclosed by a mixture of hedges and post and wire fencing. The main land use is agricultural (arable and pasture), but also involves areas of plant nurseries, horsiculture, residential, commercial and recreational (including a golf course). The landscape has strong wooded character with many areas of woodland which are often ancient in origin, including extensive areas of managed Sweet Chestnut coppice. Mature oaks near Blueberry Farm result in an estate character.

Small historic properties can be found at the core of the settlements, with relatively large C20th housing developments to the outskirts of the villages. Residential properties have increasingly been built within existing woodland and along main roads. There is a distinct use of flint and brick in the small buildings in local vernacular style with weatherboarding and hanging tile. Settlements are linked by suburban roads which contrast with the narrow lanes on the steeper ground. During the Second World War, Ivy Farm House in Kent was an outpost to the Bletchley Park decoding centre. The golf course and woodlands are used for recreational activity.

The landscape is mostly enclosed due to the

World War.

extensive tree cover and topography. Trees create tunnels along rural lanes. Views are varied depending on topography and woodland. There are views funnelled down the valley and some longer views from higher ground. The M25 and A224 cross the landscape by Badgers Mount, reducing the tranquillity in the surrounding area.

Landscape evaluation

Condition

Intrusive new residential development, extensive horticulture, urban recreation, and hedgerow loss have adversely affected the condition of this area. Nevertheless, historic field patterns, areas of woodland and rough grassland provide a sense of intactness and ecological connectivity.

Key sensitivities / valued attributes

The following features and characteristics are particularly valued for their contribution to character and for the ecosystem services they provide:

- Small-scale fields which reflect past land uses including medieval and parliamentary enclosures.
- Distinctive areas of unimproved grassland and woodland, including ancient woodland, parkland trees, mature in-field and hedgerow trees. Many are locally designated for wildlife value including Pascalls Wood.
- Valued indicators of cultural heritage including estate woodland, historic village cores such as Halstead (which is designated as a Conservation Area) and other features including the Fort Halstead Scheduled Monument.
- Narrow winding lanes enclosed by high hedges and mature trees, creating a strong sense of enclosure.
- Important for recreation purposes, including open access land at Hollows Wood and more formal facilities at Broke Hill Golf Club.
- Sense of enclosure and setting afforded by the woodland, with occasional glimpses out over the lower valley from higher ground around Lockholt/Halstead and the North Downs Way National Trail.

Vision

A strongly wooded, rural landscape with historic landscape patterns and features including village cores, narrow lanes and ancient woodland. A landscape with well integrated settlement and newer suburban land uses, which is highly valued for recreation.

Landscape Guidance

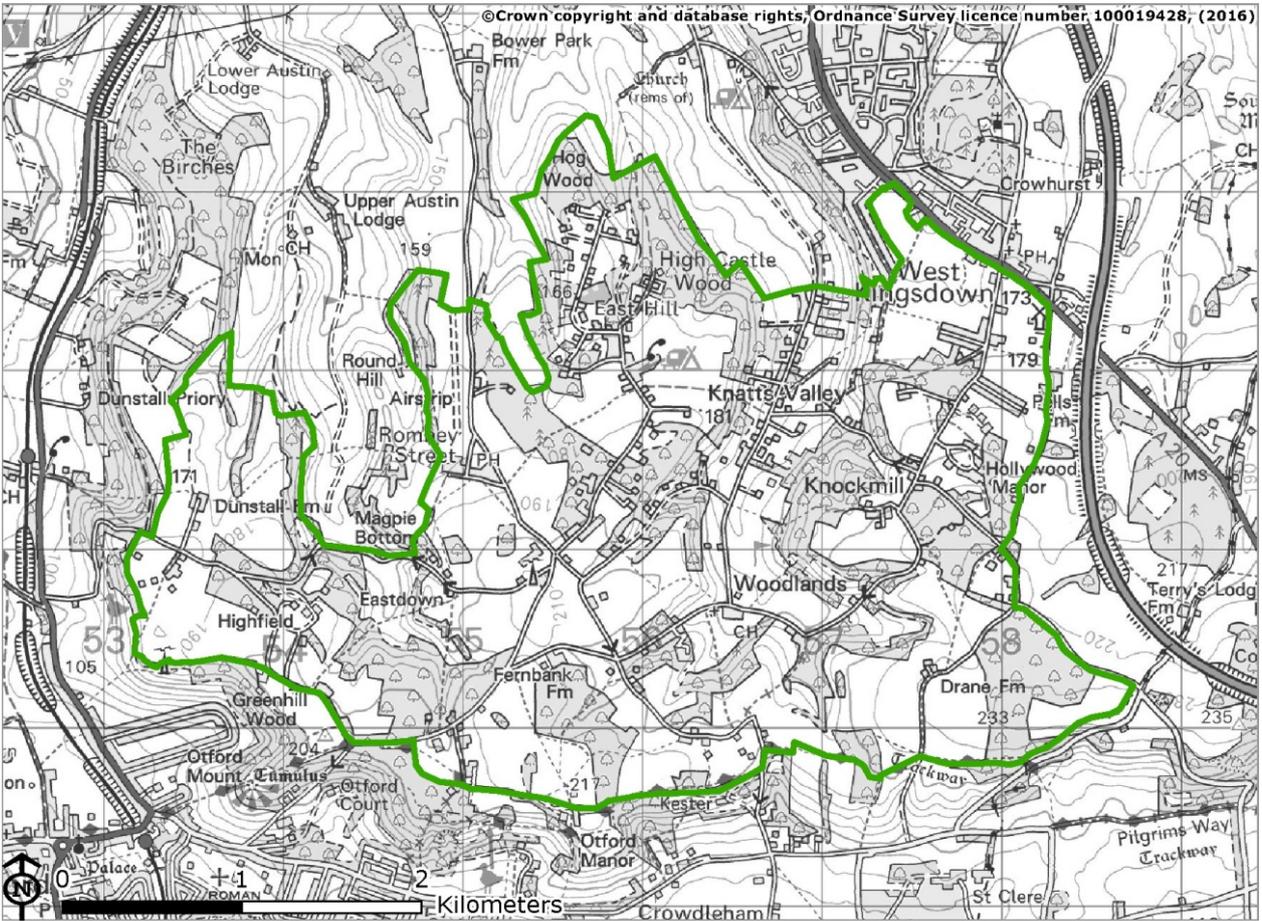
Part of this landscape character area is within the **Kent Downs AONB**, a nationally important designation which offers a high level of development constraint. Refer to the AONB Management Plan for further guidance within the AONB.

Local objectives to conserve and enhance landscape character are outlined below:

- Retain the small scale parliamentary field patterns where they remain and reinstate hedgerows where they have been lost to further enhance the field structure.

- Protect and enhance valued semi-natural habitats including ancient woodland, unimproved chalk grassland and scrub. Promote ongoing management of coppice woodland.
- Protect the valued heritage features within the landscape including the historic village cores and Fort Halstead Scheduled Monument and ensure that their setting is respected.
- New features introduced into the landscape should reflect both the historic and natural characteristics of the area.
- In the farmed landscape the rural heritage features should be reinforced, such as woodlands, community orchards and hedged boundaries to roads.
- Conserve the character of the remaining narrow rural lanes and ensure traffic improvements do not degrade their distinctive enclosed character.
- Retain the important views across the landscape from higher ground including the North Downs Way National Trail.

3b East Hill Wooded Downs



Key Characteristics

- Chalk plateau landscape folding into steep valleys, with high areas capped in clay-with-flints.
- Small to medium scale irregular field pattern comprising some small and medium regular parliamentary enclosures as well as some earlier more irregular fields, bounded by woodland and hedgerows.
- Wooded plateaux including managed coppiced woodland.
- Historic farmsteads and hamlets, with extensive C20th linear residential settlements such as Knatts Valley and East Hill.
- Recreational land uses including a golf course at Woodlands Manor.
- Mostly enclosed due to high hedgerows and woodland, but with some views out from plateaux/ ridges.

Landscape Character Description

A level chalk plateau carved by steeply undulating and folding valleys. The field pattern is small to medium scale with irregular shaped fields, enclosed by woodland and hedgerows of mixed native species. Woodland is mixed coniferous and deciduous, with large blocks of mature coppiced Sweet Chestnut on the plateau giving an overall well-wooded character. Much of the woodland is ancient in origin. The valley slopes are used for agriculture and recreation. Land use includes unimproved pasture, horsiculture, arable fields and a golf course.

Settlement includes isolated farmsteads, a large caravan site and residential properties, scattered along narrow lanes. These lanes undulate across the valleys and are enclosed by dense woodland that forms vegetative tunnels over the road. Agricultural properties are generally in vernacular style and date from the 19th century. Elsewhere linear residential settlements are of mixed style 20th century housing, sited on large plots. The landscape is extensively used for recreation with many footpaths and bridleways including the North Downs Way and Woodlands Manor Golf Club.

From points on the plateau boundary, there are long views over Dartford and of Eynsford Downs. Elsewhere, views are restricted by topography and vegetation. There is a strong sense of enclosure created by the topography and large areas of mixed woodland.

Landscape evaluation

Condition

This area retains a coherent landscape pattern of small-medium scale fields, woodlands and unimproved grassland. However, urban fringe development to the north, scattered 20th century houses, hedgerow loss and suburban land uses including horse paddocks detract from the condition of the rural landscape.

Key sensitivities / valued attributes

The following features and characteristics are particularly valued for their contribution to character and for the ecosystem services they provide:

- The coherent small-medium scale historic landscape pattern which reflects historic usage and enclosure of the landscape.
- Extensive areas of valued semi-natural habitat, including woodlands and unimproved grassland, some of which are designated for wildlife including Magpie Bottom SSSI and Knatts Valley Local Wildlife Site.
- Historic areas of coppice woodland, some of which is ancient in origin.
- Farm properties of traditional vernacular located along trackways, some of which are listed.
- Narrow winding lanes which follow the ridges, reinforcing the underlying topography.

- The North Downs Way National Trail which includes some views south towards the Greensand Ridge.
- Sense of enclosure afforded by the topography and frequent woodland.
- The special qualities of the Kent Downs AONB found within the landscape, including the frequent areas of coppice woodland and strong sense of time-depth.

Vision

An attractive, well-wooded, rural landscape with a strong historic landscape pattern and settlement (comprising historic farmsteads and hamlets). A landscape highly valued for its semi-natural habitat resource and recreation opportunities.

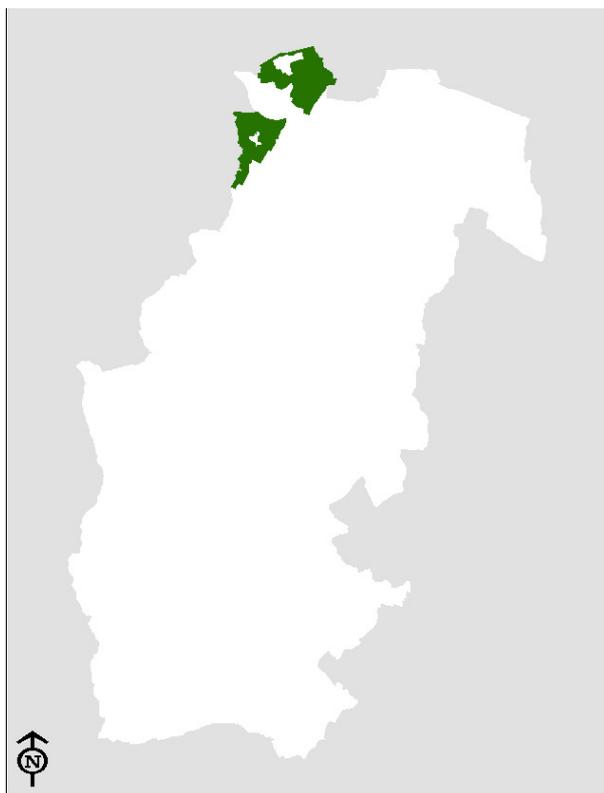
Landscape Guidance

The Landscape character area is almost entirely within the **Kent Downs AONB** (except for a small area on the edge of West Kingsdown). It is a nationally important designation which offers a high level of development constraint. Refer to the AONB Management Plan for further guidance within the AONB.

Local objectives to conserve and enhance landscape character are outlined below:

- Conserve the coherent historic landscape pattern which reflects historic usage and enclosure of the landscape.
- Reinforce broad-leaf woodland cover by managing and maintaining the woodland network with appropriate species, and restoring woodland cover to steeper slopes. Promote coppice management where existing, and consider restoring areas of Sweet Chestnut coppice that is characteristic of the Kent Downs.
- Maintain hedgerows and reinstate those that have been lost.
- Retain and manage existing unimproved grasslands. Establish scrub to be managed adjacent to chalk grassland or woodland.
- Conserve historic farmsteads as features of the landscape.
- Conserve the rural character of the lanes, including their high hedges and tree tunnels.
- Enhance local vernacular built form and maintain the character of roads/trackways leading to historic buildings. Create a design guide for new residential and agricultural buildings.
- Respect the special qualities of the Kent Downs AONB, including the frequent areas of coppice woodland and strong sense of time-depth.

TYPE 4: SETTLED FARMLAND



Key Characteristics

- Gently undulating chalk and sandstone slopes overlain by mixed small to medium scale fields.
- Arable cultivation on fertile soils includes small-scale horticulture. Rough unimproved grassland used for paddocks.
- Fields are bounded by mature hedgerows with trees and supplemented with post and wire fencing.
- Areas of broadleaved woodland including small pockets of ancient woodland.
- Nucleated villages and scattered farmsteads with 20th century residential expansion.
- Suburban land uses including plant nurseries with glass houses.
- Recreation facilities including parkland and golf courses.
- Varied sense of enclosure, with larger-scale open areas with long views contrasting with wooded areas enclosed by trees.



National landscape character

North Downs

Geology

Tertiary deposits

Soils

Base rich loamy non calcareous soils

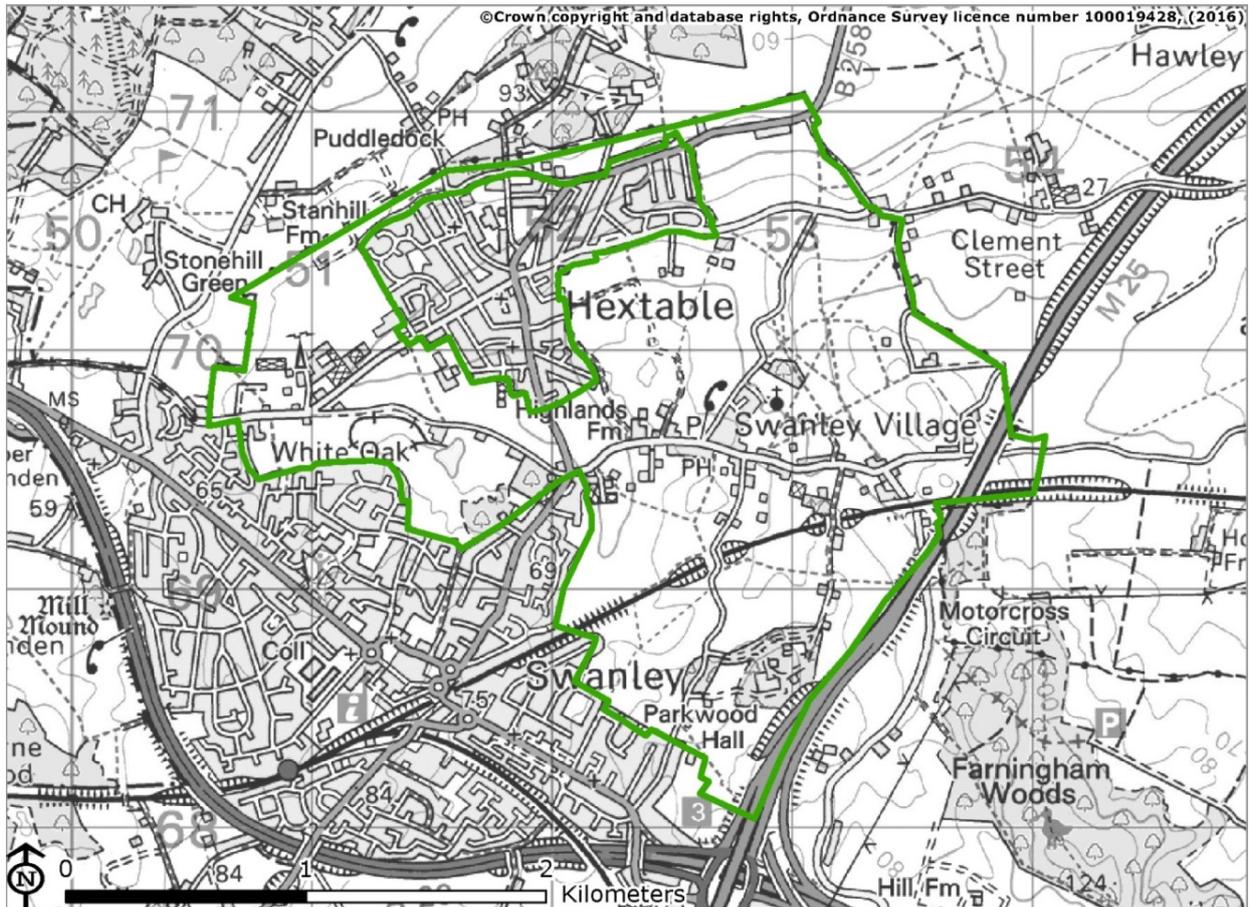
Landform

Undulating

Historic landscape

Predominantly post-medieval informal enclosure defined by old drove roads. Some small-scale rectilinear fields of parliamentary enclosure.

4a Hextable Settled Farmland



Key Characteristics

- Gently undulating chalk and sandstone slopes with varied sized fields separated by hedgerows and fences.
- Land used for arable crops and horticulture, mixed in with suburban land uses including horse paddocks and plant nurseries.
- Trees are found within parklands and hedges.
- Scattered urban fringe development, historic nucleated village and isolated farms. Busy roads link the urban areas, whilst narrow lanes are found in more rural areas.
- Strong sense of enclosure afforded by the hedges and topography, particularly in the east.
- Clear views to dense adjacent urban development at Swanley and Hextable.

Landscape Character Description

This is a gently undulating chalk and sandstone area punctuated by hills and overlain by a varied field pattern. Elevation ranges from 30 to 93 metres AOD. Small-scale parliamentary enclosures are located around Swanley Village. Land use is divided between arable crops, horticulture, pasture, and horsiculture. Hedgerows are mature, and in some areas are supplemented by post and wire fencing. Tree cover is found within Swanley Park, along roads and in hedgerows, where hawthorn and field maple are the dominant species. Ancient woodland is found at Parkwood Hall and semi-natural scrub is located east of Hextable.

Settlements include a nucleated village with historic core including some traditional flint and weather boarded properties, occasional Victorian housing and 20th century infill. Within more rural parts there are isolated cottages, farmsteads and linear development scattered along lanes. Many recently built properties are located on the undulating ridge-lines. On the urban fringe there are several glass houses and some fields have become amenity facilities such as playing fields and golf ranges. Urban highways turn into narrow winding lanes with steep banks and hedges, as they leave urban fringe areas and enter the adjacent countryside.

Enclosure is varied throughout the landscape, with areas enclosed by hedges, trees and topography contrasting with exposure and long views from within larger scale open fields. The character of the landscape is influenced by views to the hard urban edges of Swanley and Hextable.

Landscape evaluation

Condition

The intactness of the area has been affected by widespread suburban encroachment (including incongruous metal fences and gates in the rural landscape), large-scale transportation routes and hedgerow loss which adversely affect condition. However, there are areas of remaining intact landscape where field boundaries, rural lanes and historic villages survive. Some extensive areas of horsiculture exist in this LCA.

Key sensitivities / valued attributes

The following features and characteristics are particularly valued for their contribution to character and for the ecosystem services they provide:

- The remnant small-scale field pattern (parliamentary enclosures) located around the edges of the Swanley Village.
- Small copses of ancient woodland, areas of scrub and mature hedgerows which are important for the ecological value of the landscape.
- Historic settlement patterns including Swanley Village Conservation Area, which contains numerous listed buildings of a traditional vernacular.

- Important recreational facilities including the Green Flag Award winning 60-acre Swanley Park which is valued for community events.
- Narrow rural lanes, with steep banks and high hedges.
- The sense of enclosure afforded by the topography and small-scale of the landscape, particularly to the east of Swanley Village.
- Long views across the landscape from the hill summits and more open areas.

Vision

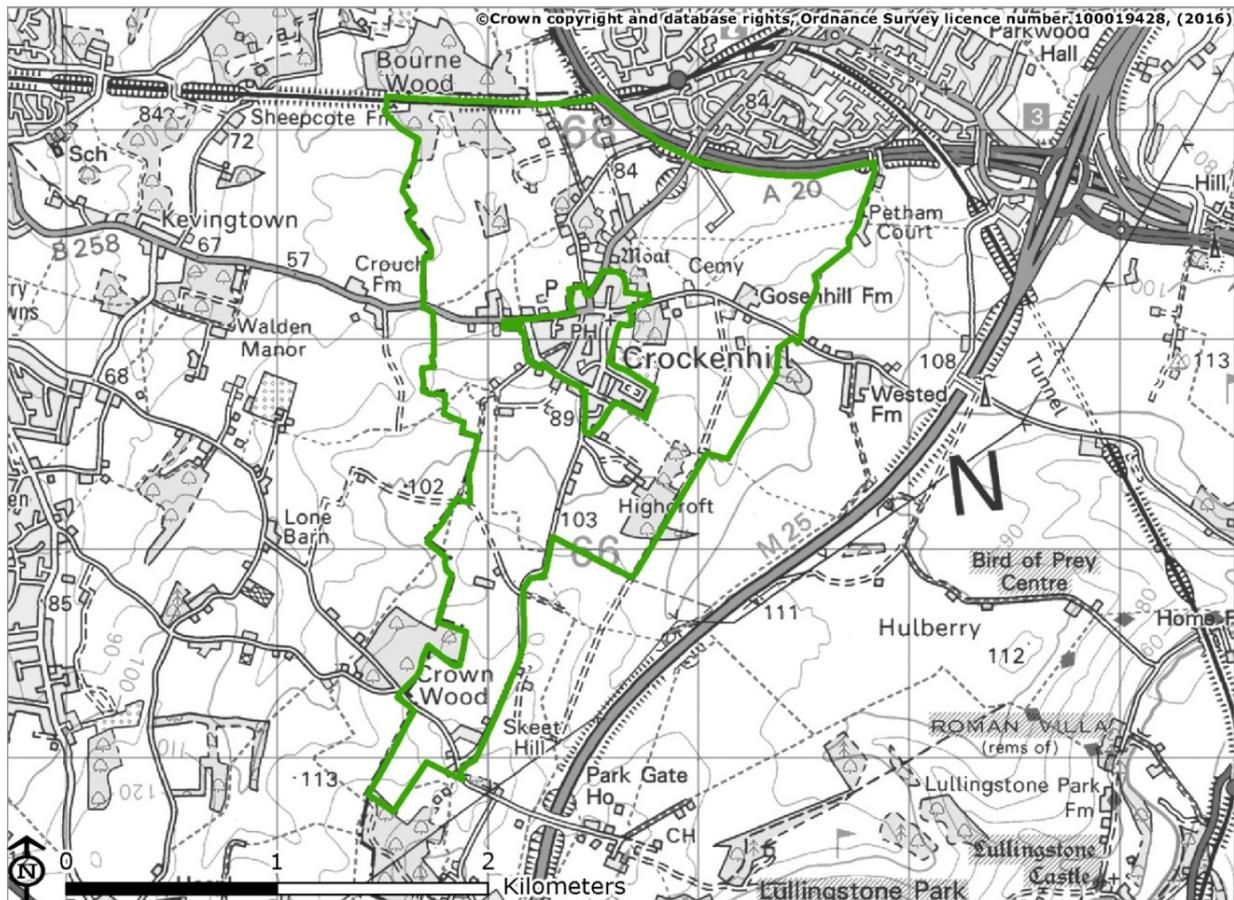
A well-managed, visually coherent landscape, where modern development and infrastructure are well integrated into the rural landscape with the historic village, frequent hedgerows and narrow rural lanes. A landscape highly valued for recreation opportunities.

Landscape Guidance

Local objectives to conserve and enhance landscape character are outlined below:

- All native broad-leaved woodland and areas of scrub to be appropriately managed and enhanced where possible.
- Management of habitats within farmland should be encouraged including hedges, copses, road verges and unsprayed strips within crops to encourage wildlife.
- Respect the historic elements of the landscape including areas of small-scale historic field pattern and the setting to the Swanley Village Conservation Area.
- Continue to maintain Swanley Park to a high standard, including the wildflower meadows.
- Soften the urban edges with woodland which could also contribute to the landscape's ecological value.
- Seek to use building styles and materials in keeping with the local character on any new development, particularly in the rural areas.
- Retain and enhance historic characteristics of the narrow, rural lanes.

4b Crockenhill Settled Farmland



Key Characteristics

- Undulating chalk and sandstone landscape overlain by irregular medium scale pattern of arable, pasture and horticulture.
- Horsiculture on rough grass paddocks.
- Fields divided by a mix of mature hedgerows and post and wire fencing.
- Well-wooded character including copses of ancient woodland and mature hedgerow trees.
- Nucleated historic village of Crockenhill, with isolated farms along narrow rural lanes.
- Long views to south London. A localised sense of enclosure is afforded by woodland and hedgerows.

Landscape Character Description

A gently undulating chalk and sandstone landscape overlain by an irregular, medium to small scale field pattern. Elevation ranges from 70 metres to 134 metres in the south of the area. Fields are enclosed by hedgerows and post and wire fencing. Land use includes arable cultivation, horticulture and sheep grazing and pony paddocks on rough grassland. Frequent copses of broadleaved woodland (including some of ancient origin) and mature trees give the landscape a well wooded character. Remnant orchards are found adjacent to settlement. There is a prominent poplar shelterbelt south of Crockenhill.

Settlement includes the nucleated village of Crockenhill with numerous Victorian brick properties at the core, occasional flint buildings and many mixed style 20th century houses. Elsewhere residential properties and isolated farmsteads are scattered across the rural landscape. Highways vary from wide urban roads with kerbs and pavements around Crockenhill to narrow, winding, hedge lined lanes.

Where hedges have been lost, views are open with long views north towards Swanley and the south London suburbs. Areas with woodland and hedgerows with many mature trees provide a localised sense of enclosure along the lanes.

Landscape evaluation

Condition

The condition of the area is adversely affected by modern incongruous residential and farm buildings, hedgerow loss, horsiculture and a lack of general maintenance. Positive elements of the landscape include the areas of broadleaved woodland, hedge-lined roads and small-medium scale field pattern, although these are becoming fragmented or have been lost in places. Historic land uses including orchards remain but are often derelict.

Key sensitivities / valued attributes

The following features and characteristics are particularly valued for their contribution to character and for the ecosystem services they provide:

- The small-scale field pattern, which includes some areas of parliamentary enclosure.
- Remnant historic land uses including derelict orchards.
- Areas of ancient woodland and hedges along field boundaries and lanes which provide valued ecological resource and wildlife corridors.
- The historic core of Crockenhill, with many buildings of a traditional vernacular.
- Historic narrow winding lanes, lined by thick, mature hedgerows.
- The localised sense of enclosure afforded by the woodland and the topography, particularly to

the north west of Crockenhill.

- Long views north from Dalton Lane which include the south London suburbs.

Vision

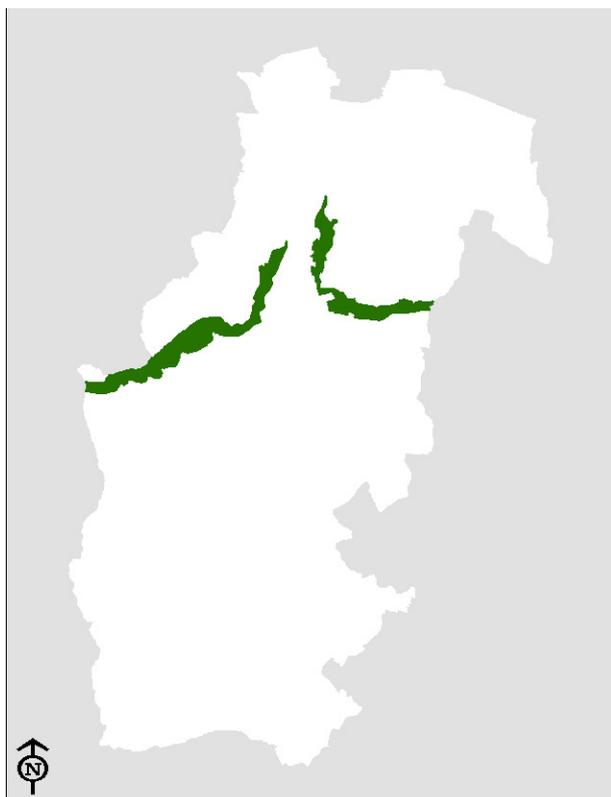
A productive, landscape with a strong wooded character and intact network of hedgerows. An area of rural farmland which provides a setting to the historic nucleated village of Crockenhill, with well-integrated development and restored orchards.

Landscape Guidance

Local objectives to conserve and enhance landscape character are outlined below:

- Retain and enhance areas of small-scale field pattern and historic uses such as orchards.
- Protect and strengthen the wooded element of the landscape, increasing connectivity between existing habitats. Conserve any areas of ancient woodland.
- Management of habitats within farmland should be encouraged including hedges, copses, road verges and unsprayed strips within crops to encourage wildlife.
- Respect the setting of the historic core of Crockenhill which contains numerous listed buildings.
- Seek to use building styles and materials in keeping with the local character on any new development.
- Retain the existing characteristics of rural lanes including tall hedgerows and small spinneys.
- Ensure that new suburban land uses including pony paddocks and urban roads respect the existing rural landscape character.

TYPE 5: SCARP LANDSCAPES



Key Characteristics

- Rolling chalk downland and distinctive steep scarp slope of the North Downs.
- Mosaic of mixed woodlands, much of which is ancient, species-rich chalk grassland and enclosed pasture.
- Regular parliamentary fields and older irregular fields enclosed by well-maintained high hedgerows.
- Network of narrow hedged lanes, including historic droveways, that run down the scarp slope.
- Ancient trackways follow contours along the ridge top and at the foot of the scarp.
- Rural settlement pattern of scattered farmsteads and linear groups of large houses along narrow lanes at the foot of the scarp.
- Working and redundant chalk quarries.
- Occasional panoramic views but generally enclosed by tree cover.



National landscape character

North Downs

Geology

Lower Chalk Formation (Clayey chalk without flint). Occasional drift deposits of clay with flints.

Soils

Base rich shallow rendzinas

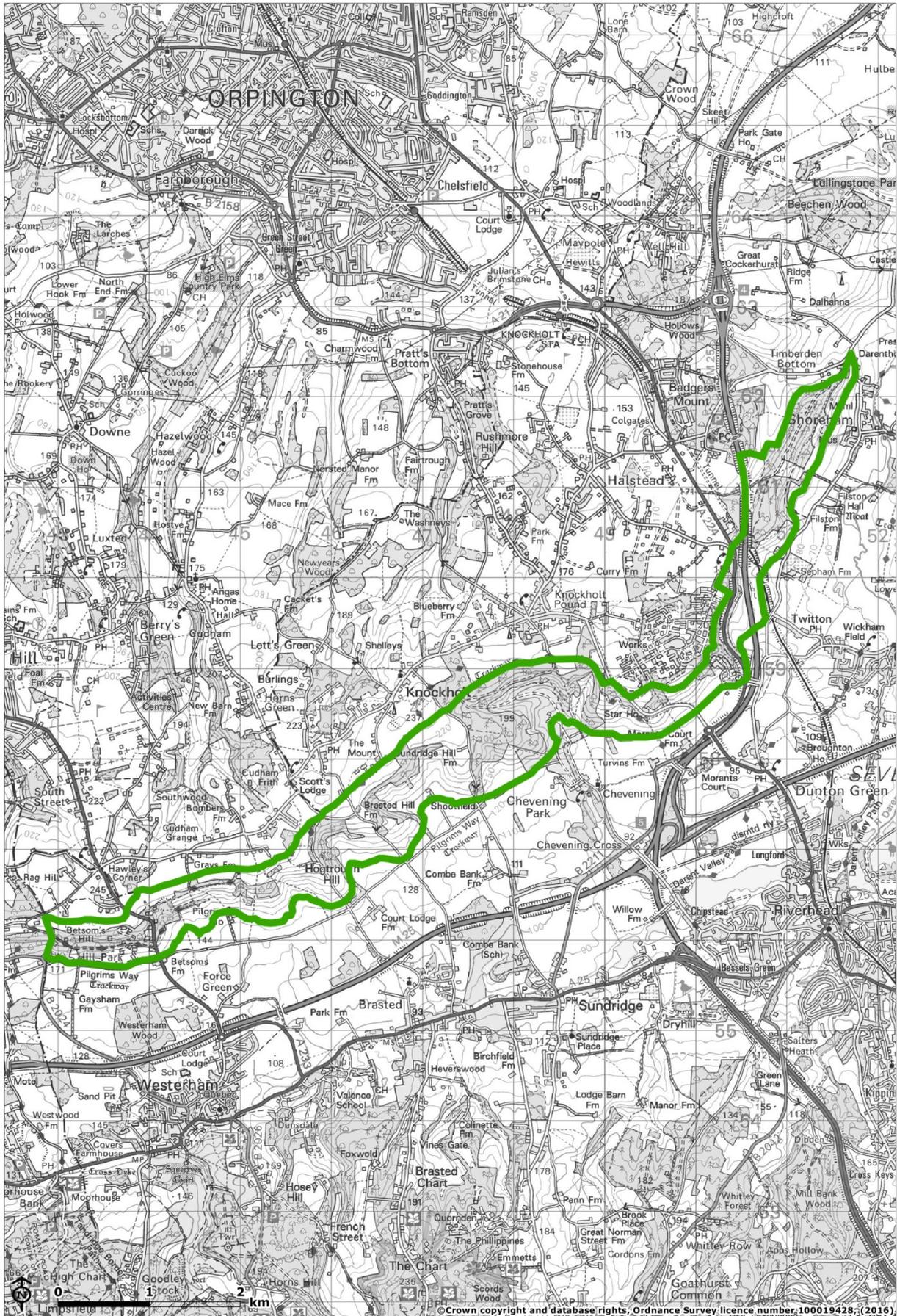
Landform

Steep, undulating scarp slope, near to vertical in some localised areas

Historic landscape

Medieval informal enclosure. Medium scale rectilinear parliamentary enclosure. Unimproved chalkland historically grazed as sheep pasture. Designed landscape typically associated with a historic house.

5a Chevening Scarp





Key Characteristics

- Steep wooded scarp supporting a mosaic of woodland and scrub, pasture and pockets of chalk grassland.
- Ancient trackways follow contours along the ridge top and base of the scarp.
- Steep enclosed lanes with no verges and high hedged banks climb up the scarp slopes.
- Areas of native broadleaf woodland, irregular pastures and chalk grassland.
- Settlement limited to large detached houses and scattered farmsteads.
- Long-distance panoramic views across the Darent Valley from the scarp.
- Working and redundant chalk quarries.

Landscape Character Description

A wooded chalk scarp slope rising above the river valley to the south. Areas of native broadleaf woodland, with remnant areas of ancient woodland, and regenerative scrub vegetation on the steeper slopes with gills and copses on lower slopes are characteristic.

Small steep irregular pastures enclosed by shaws characterise the higher slopes. The field pattern on the lower scarp is regular and larger and originates from later 19th century parliamentary enclosure. Small pockets of unimproved chalk grassland (Polhill Bank) survive on the scarp slope, an important downland habitat which supports rare orchids, and downland butterflies.

Ancient trackways follow contours along the ridge top and base of the scarp. Enclosed lanes with no verges and high hedged banks climb up the steep scarp slopes linking the valley floor to the higher pasture along historic droveways.

Settlement is limited to a small number of large detached houses at the foot of the scarp and scattered farmsteads at the top and base of the scarp. There is a well-hidden industrial estate on Lime Pit Lane. Historic parkland associated with Chevening covers a portion of the scarp.

The scarp slope provides long views over the Darent Valley and beyond, which is significantly affected by the M25 corridor. The scarp is occasionally scarred by the legacy of white chalk quarry faces.

Landscape evaluation

Condition

The landscape has an intact and coherent pattern of pastures, chalk grassland and frequent blocks of ancient woodland. There are relatively few visual detractors although unsympathetic farm buildings and the presence of the M25 in the valley below are detractors. The decline of the heritage shaws and hedgerows (sometimes replaced with post and wire fencing) has also had an adverse effect on the condition of the landscape.

Key sensitivities / valued attributes

The following features and characteristics are particularly valued for their contribution to character and for the ecosystem services they provide:

- The distinctive landform of the steep scarp slopes which is largely free of development.
- Areas of native broad-leaved woodland, particularly remnant areas of ancient woodland on steeper slopes as well as gills and copses on lower slopes that provide visual interest and valuable habitats.
- The pastoral scenery and historic field pattern of small enclosed fields on the steep slope contributes to local distinctiveness.
- Remnant pockets of chalk grassland and scrub that provide valuable habitats supporting rare species.
- Ancient trackways at the top and base of the scarp that provide links to the past and high recreational value today.
- Historic droving routes along narrow lanes from the North Downs to the Greensand Ridge which give a strong sense of time-depth to the area.
- The rural settlement character comprising scattered farmsteads characteristically at the top and base of the scarp.
- The long views and sense of tranquillity on the elevated slopes which provides an escape from more developed areas in the valley below.

Vision

A prominent landform feature comprising a steep intact scarp supporting chalk grassland, deciduous woodland and fields of pasture divided by well-maintained hedgerow boundaries. An area that is accessible for recreation and with opportunities for panoramic views south over the Darent Valley and beyond.

Landscape Guidance

The Landscape character area is entirely within the **Kent Downs AONB**, a nationally important designation which offers a high level of development constraint. Refer to the AONB Management Plan for further guidance within the AONB.

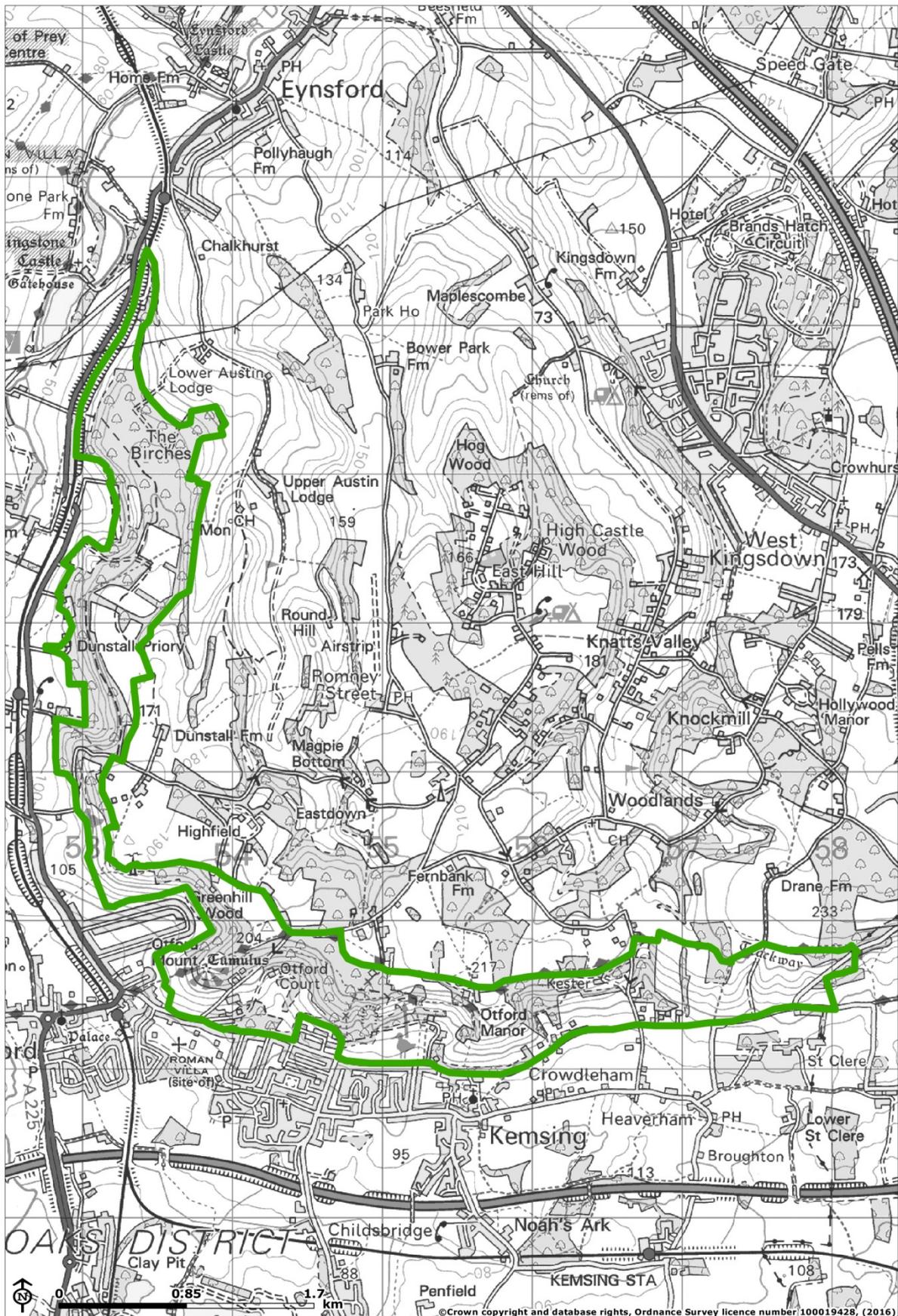
Local objectives to conserve and enhance landscape character are outlined below:

- Conserve the dominant features of broad-leaf woodland and pasture. Reinforce the diversity of species in the woodlands and encourage active management.
- Retain, manage and create new areas of scrub and copses where possible.
- Retain, manage, restore and link up areas of unimproved chalk grassland to maximise their

conservation value.

- Conserve the irregular pattern of historic fields.
- Reinstate hedgerow enclosure of lanes and field boundaries where these have declined.
- Maintain good access to the countryside, including the ancient trackways and consider providing additional opportunities for enjoyment of the landscape which does not conflict with nature conservation objectives.
- Conserve the character of the narrow enclosed lanes with high banks – ensure road ‘improvements’ do not erode these features.
- Maintain the typical low density settlement pattern and conserve the characteristics of infrequent rural buildings and farms along the base and top of the scarp. Ensure any new built development is set back from the ridgeline and scarp and is well integrated into the landscape.
- Ensure that redundant quarries are appropriately managed in order to realise the potential of these diverse habitats.
- Keep scarp horizons clear to conserve the long views from elevated areas and maintain public access to these.

5b Kemsing Scarp





Key Characteristics

- Steep chalk scarp slope.
- Large areas of mature mixed woodlands.
- Species rich chalk grassland and scrub.
- Pastoral fields enclosed by woodland, shaws and mature hedgerows.
- Narrow winding lanes with high grassy banks.
- Ancient trackways cross the scarp.
- Rural settlement pattern of scattered farmsteads and large individual properties.
- Historic parkland at Otford Court.
- Tranquil area with long views from upper slopes to the south and west.

Landscape Character Description

A steep chalk scarp slope with large areas of mature mixed coniferous and deciduous woodland including areas of 19th century plantation and ancient woodland. The scarp slope woods are mainly beech, with ash-field maple at the foot of the scarp.

Areas of species rich chalk grassland and chalk scrub (Kemsing Downs and Fackenden Down) are an important downland habitat which supports rare orchids and downland butterflies. A limited number of pastoral fields are enclosed by woodland, shaws and mature well-wooded hedgerows.

Narrow winding lanes, with no verges and high grassy banks, climb up the wooded scarp slopes. Ancient trackways cross the scarp, including the Pilgrim's Way at the foot of the scarp slope. The bowl barrow at Otford Mount is sited at the crest of the ridge facing south west.

Settlement is limited to scattered farmsteads and large residential properties set back from the ridge including the Victorian house and parkland at Otford Court. Kemsing is located along the base of the scarp and expansion of the village northwards has generally been constrained by the topography of the scarp.

Where the trees open to clearings there are panoramic views across the Darent Valley. (including panoramic views from Otford Mount barrow). The noise of the M26 dominates an otherwise tranquil area.

Landscape evaluation

Condition

The unified pattern of landscape elements (the woodlands, the chalk grassland and ridge-top assarts), and the extensive network of mature mixed woodland and hedgerows contribute positively to landscape condition. The residential ridgeline development and lack of vernacular styles have an adverse influence on landscape condition.

Key sensitivities / valued attributes

The following features and characteristics are particularly valued for their contribution to character and for the ecosystem services they provide:

- The distinctive landform of the steep scarp slopes which is largely free of development.
- Extensive areas of native broad-leaved woodland, particularly areas of ancient woodland which provide valuable habitats and visual interest.
- Areas of chalk grassland and scrub which provide valuable habitats supporting rare species and providing panoramic views over the Darent valley.
- Ancient trackways at the top and base of the scarp that provide links to the past and high recreational value today.
- The intact network of hedges and copses enclosing pastoral fields.
- Narrow winding lanes with high grassy banks, and road verges that support wild flowers
- The rural settlement character comprising scattered farmsteads and large residential properties, characteristically set back from the ridge
- The long views and sense of tranquillity on the elevated slopes which provides an escape from more developed areas in the valley below

Vision

A prominent landform feature comprising a steep intact scarp supporting chalk grassland, large areas of deciduous woodland and fields of pasture divided by well-maintained hedgerow boundaries with hedgerow trees. An area that is accessible for recreation and with opportunities for panoramic views south over the Darent valley and beyond.

Landscape Guidance

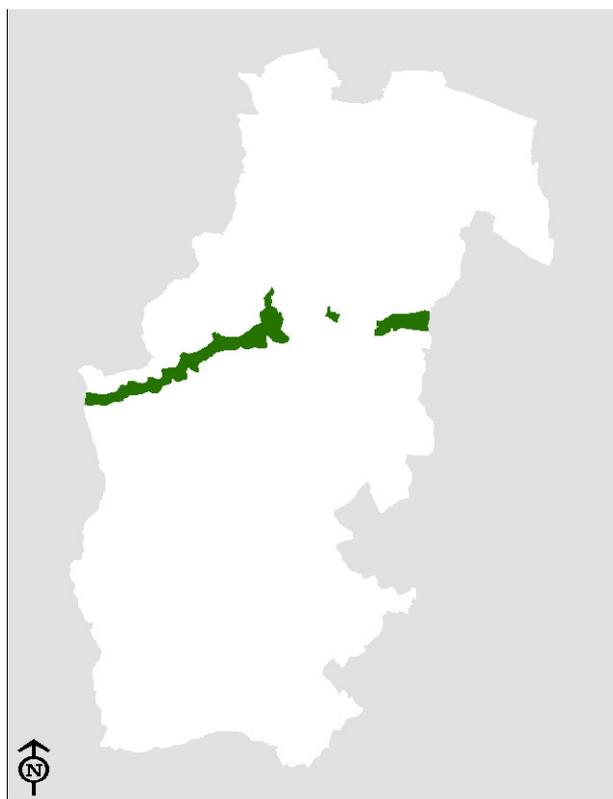
The Landscape character area is entirely within the **Kent Downs AONB**, a nationally important designation which offers a high level of development constraint. Refer to the AONB Management Plan for further guidance within the AONB.

Local objectives to conserve and enhance landscape character are outlined below:

- Retain, manage, restore and link up areas of unimproved chalk grassland.
- Retain, manage and create new areas of scrub and copses where possible.
- Conserve and reinforce the characteristic species mix of woodlands and encourage active management.
- Reinforce hedgerow enclosure of lanes and field boundaries where these are vulnerable.

- Maintain good access to the countryside, including the route of the 'Pilgrims Way', and consider providing additional opportunities for enjoyment of the landscape which does not conflict with nature conservation objectives.
- Conserve the character of the narrow winding lanes with high grassy banks – ensure road 'improvements' do not erode these features.
- Conserve the scattered settlement pattern and its locational characteristics. Maintain the infrequent settlement pattern and ensure any new built development is well integrated into the landscape and set back from the ridge to keep the scarp horizons clear.
- Conserve the long views from elevated areas and maintain public access to these.

TYPE 6: SCARP FOOT FARMLAND



Key Characteristics

- An undulating shelf that lies at the foot of the steep scarp of the North Downs.
- Underlain by Lower Chalk, the foot slopes form a transition between the chalk scarp to the north and the Gault Clay Valley to the south.
- Regular parliamentary fields and older informal post medieval enclosures bounded by narrow hedged lanes and tracks which follow the route of the old drove roads to and from the downlands.
- Arable and pastoral fields rise up the scarp bounded by a network of hedgerows and shaws.
- Historic parkland landscapes are an important feature at the foot of the scarp with mature parkland trees and woodland.
- Streams, arising from springs at the foot of the chalk, flow southward.
- Rural settlement pattern of isolated farmsteads and small historic villages with some 20th century sprawl to the periphery of Dunton Green.
- Many examples of vernacular building materials consisting of brick, flint and ragstone.
- The hedge lined Pilgrim's Way, and ancient trackway and iron-age trading route, marks the base of the scarp slope.
- Long views to the adjacent scarps.
- Major transport infrastructure erodes the sense of tranquillity and has fragmented the area, leaving small isolated pockets of land to revert to scrub.



National landscape character

North Downs

Geology

Lower Chalk

Soils

Base rich loamy calcareous soils

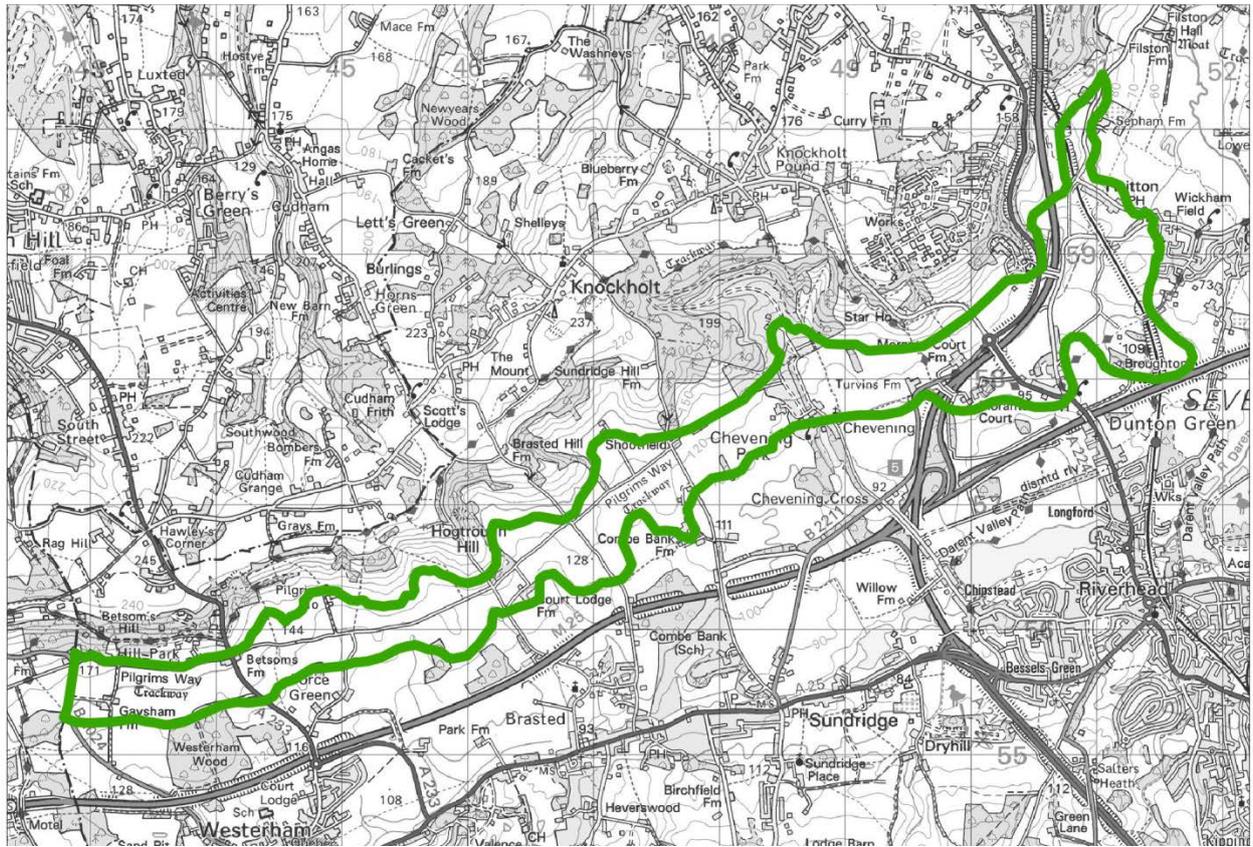
Landform

Undulating landform at the foot of the scarp

Historic landscape

Post medieval informal enclosures bounded by old drove roads. Small and medium parliamentary enclosure.

6a Chevening Scarp Foot Farmland



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Key Characteristics

- Undulating chalk slopes at the foot of the North Downs scarp.
- Arable fields bounded by mature hedgerows and shaws.
- Historic field pattern of parliamentary and older fields bounded by winding lanes.
- Ancient trackway at the foot of the scarp.
- Historic parkland at Chevening and Morant's Court.
- Settlement limited to isolated farmsteads and Chevening House.
- Long views to the North Downs and Greensand Ridge.
- Sense of tranquillity eroded by the presence of M25

Landscape Character Description

Undulating slopes at the foot of the North Downs scarp underlain by Lower Chalk. Regular parliamentary fields and older field pattern resulting from post-medieval informal enclosure bounded by narrow hedged lanes and tracks which follow the route of the old drove roads to and from the downlands. The Pilgrim's Way, an ancient trackway, dated to 500–450 BC, cuts west-east across the LCA at the foot of the scarp.

Medium scale arable fields bounded by a network of mature hedgerows and shaws. Some internal field boundaries have been removed due to agricultural intensification. Woodland is limited to small copses at field boundaries.

Historic estates with woodland and parkland trees are an important feature at the foot of the scarp and include the early 20th century park at Morant's Court and early 17th century estate at Chevening (the official residence of the British Foreign Secretary). The parkland landscape rises up the scarp slope from the house and hamlet at Chevening with a formal garden around a long canal and a triple avenue along the Pilgrim's Way.

Settlement is limited to isolated farmsteads, large villas located at the foot of the scarp, and Chevening House and its small 17th and 18th century estate cottages. There is some 20th century sprawl to the periphery of Sevenoaks at Dunton Green. Vernacular building materials in Chevening include brick and half tile hung facades. The farmsteads are late 19th century with modern barns and are built in various styles and materials.

There are long views from this area across the fields and up to the Greensand Ridge and the North Downs. Traffic noise from the M25 rebounds off the valley sides and can affect the sense of tranquillity.

Landscape evaluation

Condition

This area has an intact and well-defined pattern of fields either side of the Pilgrim's Way and intact areas of historic parkland, including Chevening Park, which contribute positively to landscape condition. The motorway is a detracting feature and intensive agriculture has resulted in loss of hedgerows and copses, fragmenting linkages between woodland habitats. Traffic is also a detractor and tends to drive fast, resulting in erosion of country lanes including the Pilgrim's Way.

Key sensitivities / valued attributes

The following features and characteristics are particularly valued for their contribution to character and for the ecosystem services they provide:

- Estate parkland, woodland, avenues and estate buildings are a key part of the character of the area and provide a sense of history.
- Historic field pattern of regular parliamentary fields and older informal post medieval enclosures contributes to local distinctiveness.
- Narrow winding lanes and tracks which follow the route of the historic drove roads to and from the downlands give a strong sense of time-depth to the area.
- Ancient trackway of the Pilgrim's Way is valued for recreation and as a local cultural icon.
- The hedgerow network and shaws which contribute to the local landscape pattern and provides ecological links.
- The rural settlement pattern of isolated farms and Chevening (the official residence of the British Foreign Secretary) with its estate cottages contributes to local distinctiveness.
- Open views across the fields and to the scarps are locally distinctive.

Vision

A scarp foot landscape comprising areas of historic estate parkland and farmland divided by narrow lanes with well-maintained hedgerow boundaries connected to diverse broadleaf copses. A rural landscape with a low density settlement pattern of farmsteads and cottages and a built vernacular that retains its local distinctiveness. A landscape that is accessible for recreation through a network of traffic-free routes linking the valley floor villages to the scarp slopes of the North Downs.

Landscape Guidance

The Landscape character area is almost entirely within the **Kent Downs AONB** except for a small area to the east of the LCA beyond the Tonbridge to London railway line. It is a nationally important designation which offers a high level of development constraint. Refer to the AONB Management Plan for further guidance within the AONB.

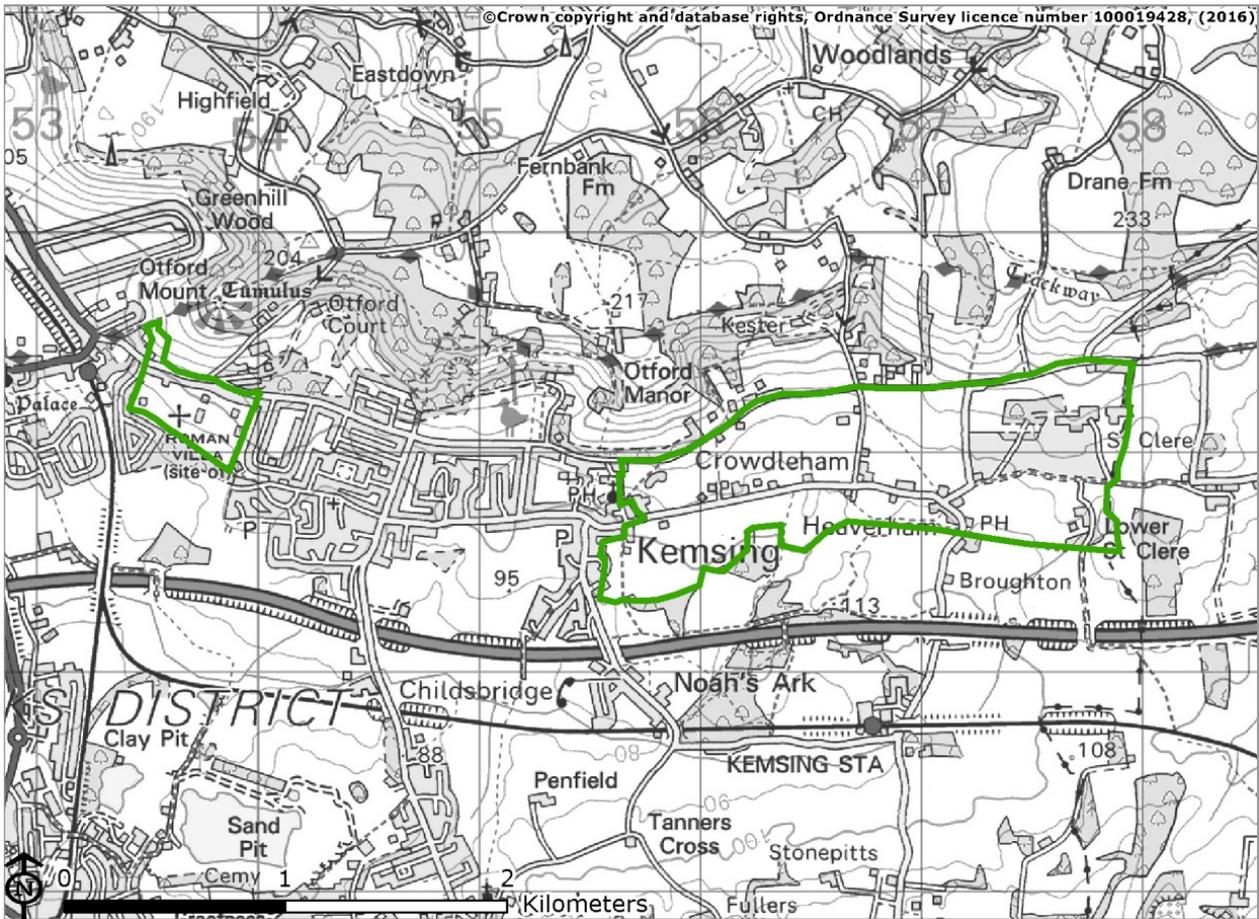
Local objectives to conserve and enhance landscape character are outlined below:

- Reinforce north-south physical and ecological links by maintaining and enhancing hedgerow and wooded links from the scarp foot to the scarps. Maintain the historic droveways and improve physical access.
- Conserve the character of historic lanes by reducing traffic impacts
- Extend and reconnect fragmented woodland by maintaining and reinstating hedgerows, copses and shaws.
- Manage historic parkland including the planting of replacement parkland trees and avenues, to ensure their continued presence in the landscape.
- Retain the sparse rural settlement pattern of scattered farmsteads and cottages.
- Retain distinctive building styles of estate buildings, gates and entrances. Ensure that vernacular styles are interpreted for use in new building to retain sense of place.
- Maintain or restore stock grazing in parks and wood pastures and restore traditional tree and

woodland management including pollarding.

- Develop uncropped field margins for biodiversity.
- Conserve and create opportunities for open views across the fields, particularly from the Pilgrim's Way and to the backdrop of the scarps to the north and south.

6b Kemsing Scarp Foot Farmland



Key Characteristics

- Undulating lower chalk slopes at foot of North Downs scarp.
- Pasture and arable fields bounded by mature hedgerows.
- Historic field pattern of parliamentary and older irregular fields bounded by narrow lanes.
- Ancient trackway at the foot of the scarp.
- Remnants of former parkland landscapes with tree avenues and mature parkland trees.
- Rural settlement pattern of farms and historic hamlets and scattered residential properties.
- Typical Kentish vernacular styles.
- Long views to the North Downs and Greensand Ridge.
- Sense of tranquillity eroded by the presence of the M26

Landscape Character Description

Undulating slopes at the foot of the North Downs underlain by lower chalk.

Mixed land use of arable and some pasture contained within mature hedgerows.

Regular parliamentary fields and older informal post medieval enclosures bounded by narrow hedged lanes and tracks which follow the route of the old drove roads to and from the downlands.

The Pilgrim's Way, an ancient trackway dated to 500–450 BC, runs east-west along the northern boundary of the LCA at the foot of the scarp.

Small country estates (St Clere, Lower St Clere and Crowdleham) were established along the base of the scarp. The mansions, parkland and farmland associated with these estates remain important features in the landscape. Roadside tree avenues, scattered mature parkland trees and small blocks of woodland are indicative of the parkland estates found in the area.

Otherwise, a rural settlement pattern of isolated farms, small historic hamlets with converted oasts and scattered residential properties, some dating from the Georgian period.

The buildings include some typical Kentish vernacular styles, particularly flint, ragstone and red brick.

There are long views from this area across the fields and up to the Greensand Ridge and the North Downs.

Traffic noise from the M26 which runs east-west to the south of the area is quite intrusive and erodes the sense of tranquillity.

Landscape evaluation

Condition

This area is generally intact with a clear pattern of elements and a well-defined pattern of fields and narrow hedged lanes. The historic villages, estate houses and buildings are in good condition and contribute to sense of place. Large modern agricultural buildings, intensive farmland management, loss of hedgerows, and the motorway are detractors.

Key sensitivities / valued attributes

The following features and characteristics are particularly valued for their contribution to character and for the ecosystem services they provide:

- Estate farmland and parkland are a key part of the character of the area and give a strong sense of time-depth.
- Historic field pattern of regular parliamentary fields and older informal post medieval enclosures

contributes to local distinctiveness.

- Narrow winding lanes and tracks which follow the route of the historic drove roads to and from the downlands give a strong sense of time-depth to the area.
- Ancient trackway of the Pilgrim's Way is valued for recreation and as a local cultural icon.
- Historic settlement pattern of isolated farms, hamlets and small country houses contribute to the sense of place.
- Typical Kentish vernacular styles of the local buildings provide a sense of place.
- Open views across the fields and to the scarps are locally distinctive.

Vision

A scarp foot landscape comprising areas of historic estate parkland and farmland divided narrow lanes with well-maintained hedgerow boundaries connected to diverse broadleaf copses. A rural landscape with a low density settlement pattern of farmsteads, small hamlets and estate houses with a built vernacular that retains its local distinctiveness. A landscape that is accessible for recreation through a network of traffic-free routes linking the valley floor villages to the scarp slopes of the North Downs.

Landscape Guidance

The Landscape character area is within the **Kent Downs AONB** except for a small area around the Roman Villa in Otford. It is a nationally important designation which offers a high level of development constraint. Refer to the AONB Management Plan for further guidance within the AONB.

Local objectives to conserve and enhance landscape character are outlined below:

- Reinforce north-south physical and ecological links by maintaining and enhancing hedgerow and wooded links from the scarp foot to the scarps. Maintain the historic droveways and improve physical access.
- Conserve the character of historic lanes by reducing traffic impacts.
- Extend and reconnect fragmented woodland by maintaining and reinstating hedgerows, copses and shaws.
- Manage historic parkland and estates including the planting of replacement parkland trees, avenues and small plantations, to ensure their continued presence in the landscape.
- Retain the sparse rural settlement pattern of hamlets, scattered farmsteads and large estate houses.
- Retain the distinctive character of villages and respect local vernacular building techniques.
- Maintain or restore stock grazing in parks and wood pastures and restore traditional tree and woodland management including pollarding.
- Develop uncropped field margins for biodiversity.
- Conserve and create opportunities for open views across the fields and to the backdrop of the scarps to the north and south.

TYPE 7: CHALK VALLEYS



Key Characteristics

- Chalk river valley containing the course of the River Darent as it passes through the North Downs.
- The field pattern is small to medium scale and mostly regular in form. Field boundaries are supplemented or replaced by post and wire fencing, some are ditches.
- A mix of land uses with wet pasture fields on the valley floor and arable growing on the slopes. Traditional hop growing and lavender farms are a distinct feature.
- Enclosure is provided by small woodlands, riparian vegetation and embankments of major transport routes.
- Narrow, winding, hedge-lined lanes as well as main roads following the valley.
- Two Victorian arched railway viaducts crossing over the valley.
- Historic settlement pattern of dispersed farmsteads and mill villages along the valley floor with features and buildings of industrial heritage. Use of flint.
- Numerous historic features including nationally important castles and Roman remains.
- High levels of tranquillity, although some major transport routes detract from this.

National landscape character

North Downs

Geology

Alluvium and Gault Clay

Soils

Alluvial and heavy clay soils

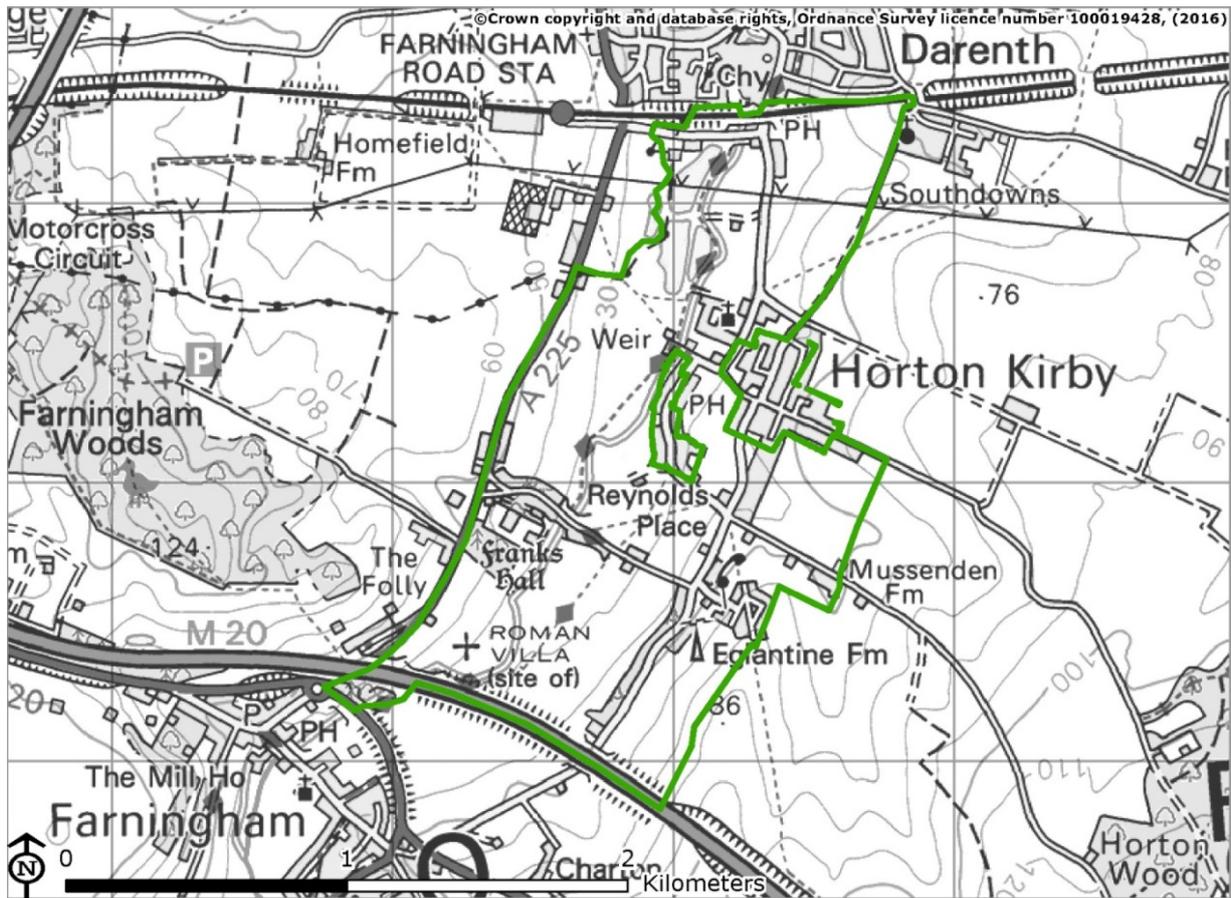
Landform

Flat or very gently undulating

Historic landscape

Medium scale rectilinear parliamentary enclosure. Enclosure of meadows and other pasture along the valley floor.

7a Darent Valley – South Darenth to Farningham



Key Characteristics

- Gentle chalk river valley containing the vegetated meandering course of the River Darent.
- A mixture of arable fields and fields of pasture, including some paddocks, enclosed by gappy hedgerows supplemented by post and wire fencing
- Significant wetland habitat to the north enclosed by dense riparian vegetation.
- Valued cultural heritage features including Franks Hall and parkland and a Roman Villa.
- Historic villages with distinct core character incorporating flint, weather board and hanging tile vernacular, and modern residential infill.
- Narrow winding lanes run parallel to, and across, the river valley.
- Dramatic landmarks of the railway viaduct (which marks the northern edge of the area) and the Paper Mill chimney (listed).
- Views often limited by topography and vegetation. Longer views across the valley from higher ground.

Landscape Character Description

A gently sloping river valley carved through chalk by the River Darent, with clay alluvium and sand deposits from the watercourse. Small-medium scale fields, used for arable cultivation, hop and lavender growing and horsiculture, are surrounded by hedgerows and post and wire fencing. These include parliamentary enclosures. Areas are used for recreational purposes, including playing fields and small scale paddocks adjacent to settlement which sometimes contain stable blocks.

Dense tracts of mature tree and scrub vegetation follow the river and the narrow lanes. To the north of the area, former gravel workings now provide wetland habitat and are enclosed by dense riparian vegetation.

There are two villages within or adjacent to the area; Horton Kirby and South Darent, with historic cores of distinct character predating 1801 and expanded thereafter. Many examples of traditional vernacular architecture include hanging tile, an ancient flint church and a large weather boarded barn. Industrial structures sited along the river include a large Victorian paper mill and railway viaduct which is prominent in views. 20th century residential development surrounds the village. Isolated modern residential clusters are found scattered along roads leading into the villages. Franks Hall is a Grade I listed building of historic interest, and a Roman Villa and granary are located adjacent to the river.

Views from the centre of the valley are limited by riparian vegetation, but there are long views across the valley from the upper slopes. Noise from the M20 is intrusive.

Landscape evaluation

Condition

The intact field pattern on the valley slopes, historic settlement cores and the strong ecological network provided by the river corridor and the riparian vegetation contribute positively to landscape condition. Detracting features include suburban and industrial land uses, incongruous stable blocks and gappy hedgerows (or complete hedgerow loss).

Key sensitivities / valued attributes

The following features and characteristics are particularly valued for their contribution to character and for the ecosystem services they provide:

- The historic field pattern including parliamentary type enclosures.
- Valued semi-natural riparian woodland and freshwater wetland habitats along the river corridor.

- Distinctive and locally traditional land uses such as hop and lavender growing.
- Extensive archaeology and heritage features including Grade I listed Frank's Hall which is contained within a Registered Park and Garden and the Roman Villa and granary which are designated as Scheduled Monuments.
- Distinctive heritage features including the railway viaduct and Paper Mill chimney in South Darent.
- Historic settlement cores with numerous buildings of traditional, flint, weather board and hanging tile vernacular, including the designated Conservation Area at Horton Kirby and South Darent.
- High recreational value; the Darent Valley Path follows the river to Dartford.
- Attractive, scenic views from adjacent landscapes across the Darent Valley.

Vision

A distinctive river valley landscape with an intact historic field pattern, strong ecological network of hedgerows and riparian vegetation and historic mill villages and buildings. A landscape valued for recreation and its attractive views, and which retains a sense of tranquillity despite the close proximity of major transport routes.

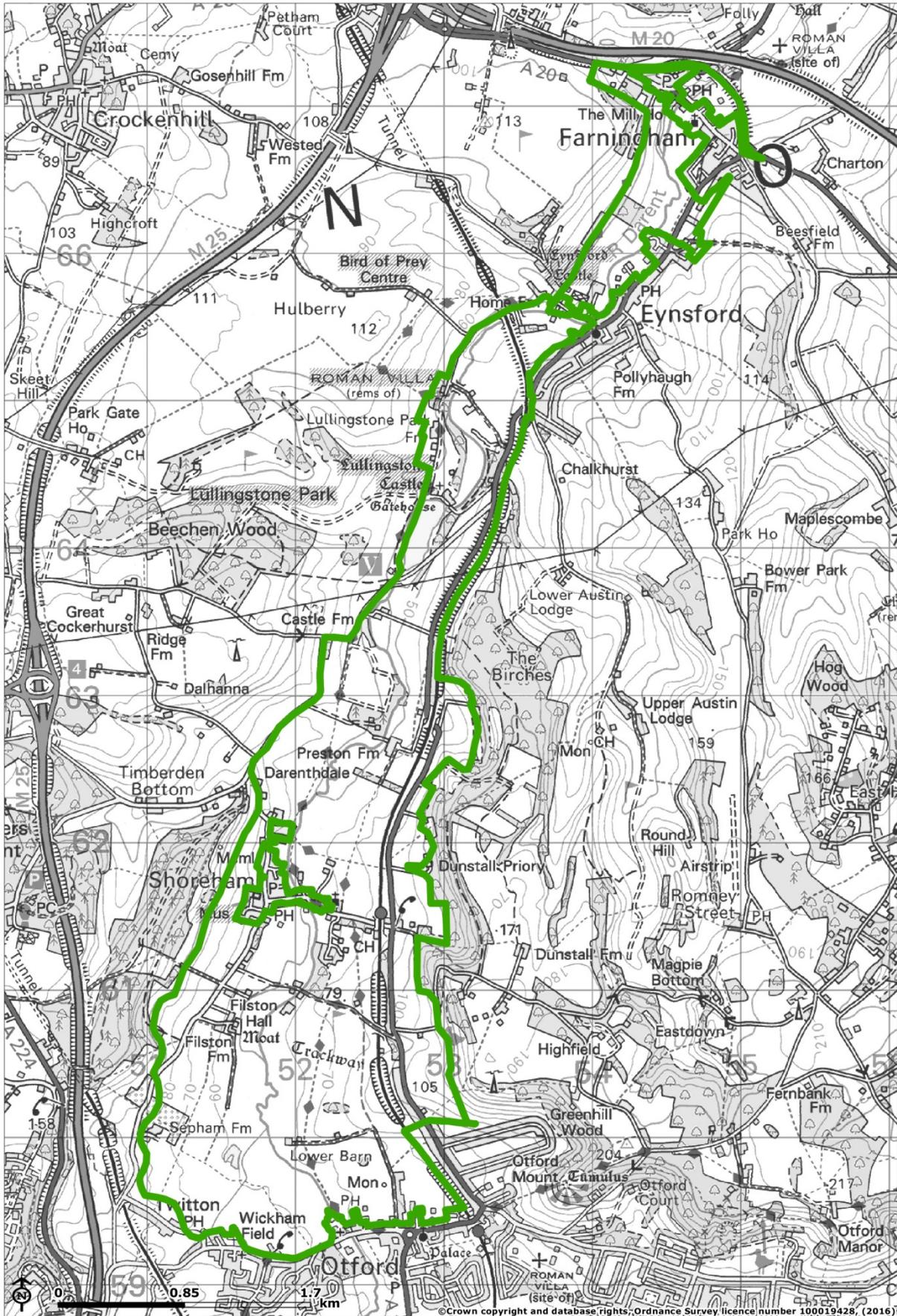
Landscape Guidance

The landscape character lies entirely within the **Kent Downs AONB**, a nationally important designation which offers a high level of development constraint. Refer to the AONB Management Plan for further guidance within the AONB.

Local objectives to conserve and enhance landscape character are outlined below:

- Retain the small-scale of the field pattern and restore hedgerows where possible to strengthen field boundaries.
- Conserve and restore linked habitats within the farmland, up the valley sides, and enhance wetland habitats around the river. Riparian vegetation should be restored around settlements along the river.
- Encourage the retention of traditional land uses within the landscape including hop growing.
- Restore and enhance historic designed landscapes to retain the sense of time-depth, including the parkland surrounding Frank's Hall and the Roman Villa as well as remaining buildings from the Industrial Revolution.
- The emphasis and the setting of historic cores to settlements should be restored a new buildings should contribute to the vernacular character of the landscape.
- Use planting to integrate major roads and hard urban edges into the landscape.
- Promote the recreational value of the landscape which includes the Darent Valley Path. Enhance access routes where possible to encourage visitors.
- Ensure that key views from higher ground across the valley are maintained.

7b Darent Valley – Farningham to Otford





Key Characteristics

- Chalk river valley containing the vegetated meandering course of the River Darent.
- Small scale irregular fields adjacent to the river become larger and more rectangular on slopes bound by hedges and post and wire fences.
- Wet pasture on the valley floor with arable fields on slopes. Lavender fields are distinctive.
- Small scale copses of broadleaved woodland between fields, with riparian trees and vegetation along the river.
- Important heritage features including Lullingstone and Eynsford Castles and a Roman Villa.
- Historic, vernacular mill villages along the river and isolated farmsteads with some modern linear development along roads.
- Narrow winding hedge-lined lanes contrast with the wide A-road and railway following the valley floor.
- Enclosure is provided by small isolated woodlands and riparian vegetation with

Landscape Character Description

This is a gently undulating rural chalk river valley with alluvial deposits, overlain by a small to medium scale agricultural landscape with many fields of parliamentary enclosure. Overall, the field pattern becomes less regular and smaller in scale adjacent to the river. The low lying areas adjacent to the river have large areas of wet pasture used for grazing, with the higher chalky ground used for arable production. There are areas of horticulture including locally distinctive lavender fields. Small scale copses are found around field boundaries and mature riparian vegetation along the river corridor. A mix of hedgerows, ditches and post and wire fencing separates the fields. The woodlands are predominantly oak and many standard oaks are found scattered across open fields.

Important historic features are found throughout the valley, including Lullingstone Roman Villa and Castle and Eynsford Castle. Historic mill villages, built on managed stretches of the river, are dominated by charming buildings in vernacular styles of oast houses, flint and brick and weather boarding, many dated pre-1801. Isolated historic farms and cottages are scattered throughout the area. Darent Valley Golf Club is located in the southern part of the character area.

Narrow lanes wind across the valley and through the villages. Away from settlements these are

- some long views funnelled down the valley.
 - Strong artistic associations with early 19th century painter Samuel Palmer.
- enclosed by dense mature hedgerows. The railway and A225 follow the valley floor. Views are mostly restricted by mature isolated woodlands and the network of well-screened transport routes that cross the valley. There are, however, some long views along the river valley to dominant features such as the railway viaduct at Eynsford and to downland scarp slopes including Kemsing and Chevening. The area has strong associations with the 19th century artist Samuel Palmer, with many of his paintings based in Shoreham.

Landscape evaluation

Condition

The intact field pattern on the valley slopes, extensive archaeological resource, coherent historic settlement pattern and extensive semi-natural and wetland habitats along the valley contribute positively to landscape condition. However, there are some detracting features including major transport routes, large modern agricultural buildings, and field boundary loss.

Key sensitivities / valued attributes

The following features and characteristics are particularly valued for their contribution to character and for the ecosystem services they provide:

- Small-medium scale field pattern with some parliamentary enclosures and area of wet pasture on the valley floor.
- Valued semi-natural riparian woodland and freshwater wetland habitats along the river corridor.
- Distinctive and locally traditional land uses such as hop and lavender growing which introduce additional colour and texture into the landscape.
- Historic settlement pattern of mill villages along the valley floor with traditional vernacular building styles including oast houses and the use of weatherboarding and flint.
- The ford at Eynsford which is used for recreation and is noted for its attractive views.
- Extensive archaeological features and resource including Lullingstone Roman Villa and Castle, and Otford Palace (in the village) – these are valued for their sense of history and are popular with visitors.
- Narrow rural lanes, with a strong sense of enclosure afforded by dense hedgerows.
- Highly valued for recreation; Darent Valley Golf Club is located in the south of the area and the Darent Valley Path follows the river to Dartford.
- Attractive and highly regarded views from adjacent landscapes across the Darent Valley.

Vision

A scenic, riparian landscape with a strong sense of time-depth, well-connected semi-natural habitats and traditional land uses including wet pasture and lavender growing. A landscape highly valued for its nationally important heritage features and recreational significance, providing visitors with a sense of history and escape from modern life.

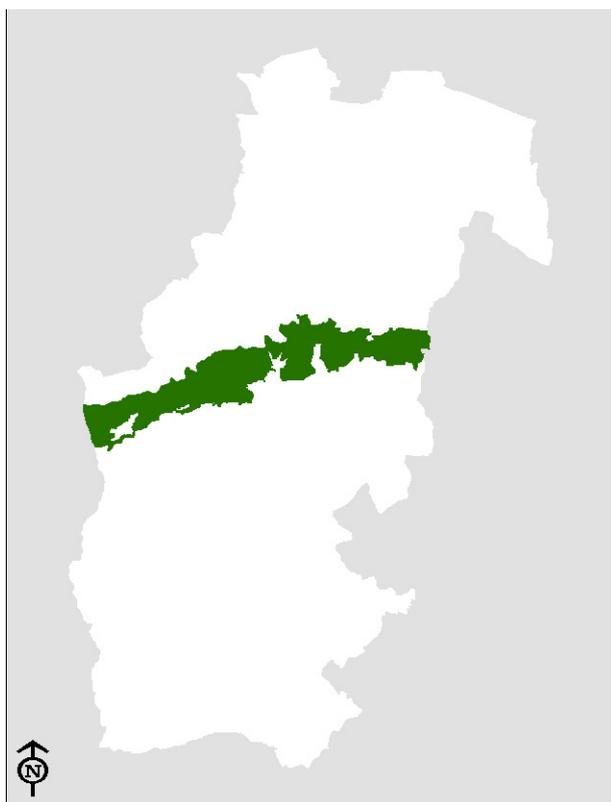
Landscape Guidance

The landscape character lies entirely within the **Kent Downs AONB**, a nationally important designation which offers a high level of development constraint. Refer to the AONB Management Plan for further guidance within the AONB.

Local objectives to conserve and enhance landscape character are outlined below:

- Conserve the parliamentary enclosure field pattern and locally distinctive land uses including wet pasture and lavender growing.
- Conserve, restore and enhance the ecological resource of the river valley including wetlands, streams, ditches and woodlands.
- Conserve the distinctive historic settlement pattern of mill villages and create small riparian woodlands as an urban edge.
- Distinctive heritage features in the area including the Roman villa, the Eynsford viaduct, Lullingstone and Eynsford Castles are protected and enhanced where appropriate.
- Integrate the transport corridors into the wider landscape, linking the linear features of the river, rail and road routes.
- Hedgerow enclosure to fields and the local road network should be conserved and reinstated where it is lost.
- Increase the recreational value of the landscape by promoting access to the Darent Valley Path and introducing circular routes.
- Manage the golf course to improve its ecological and landscape benefit.

TYPE 8: CLAY VALLEYS



Key Characteristics

- Gently undulating valley with flat alluvial floodplains on clay and mudstone with drift deposits of alluvium along the river courses.
- Enclosed between the steep scarp slopes of the North Downs to the north and the Greensand Ridge to the south.
- Major transport routes running east-west through the valley contrast with the historic road pattern characterised by winding hedge-lined lanes linking the North Downs and the Greensand Ridge.
- Mixed land use of arable and pasture contained within small fields. Boundary loss has resulted in larger prairie fields in some areas.
- Mature oaks and horse chestnut are typical in the field boundaries and scattered across fields.
- Small blocks of mixed broadleaf woodland and isolated shaws provide structure and enclosure.
- Poorly drained farmland with ponds, water filled channels and associated riparian vegetation.
- Large, open water bodies resulting from mineral workings in the alluvial floodplain.
- Rural settlement pattern of scattered farms and occasional hamlets with historic villages located along the River Darent.
- Long views across the valley to the North Downs and Greensand Ridge.



National landscape character

North Downs

Geology

Gault Formation (mudstone) predominates with Folkestone Formation (sandstone & mudstone) to the south. Alluvium along river course.

Soils

Alluvial and heavy clay soils

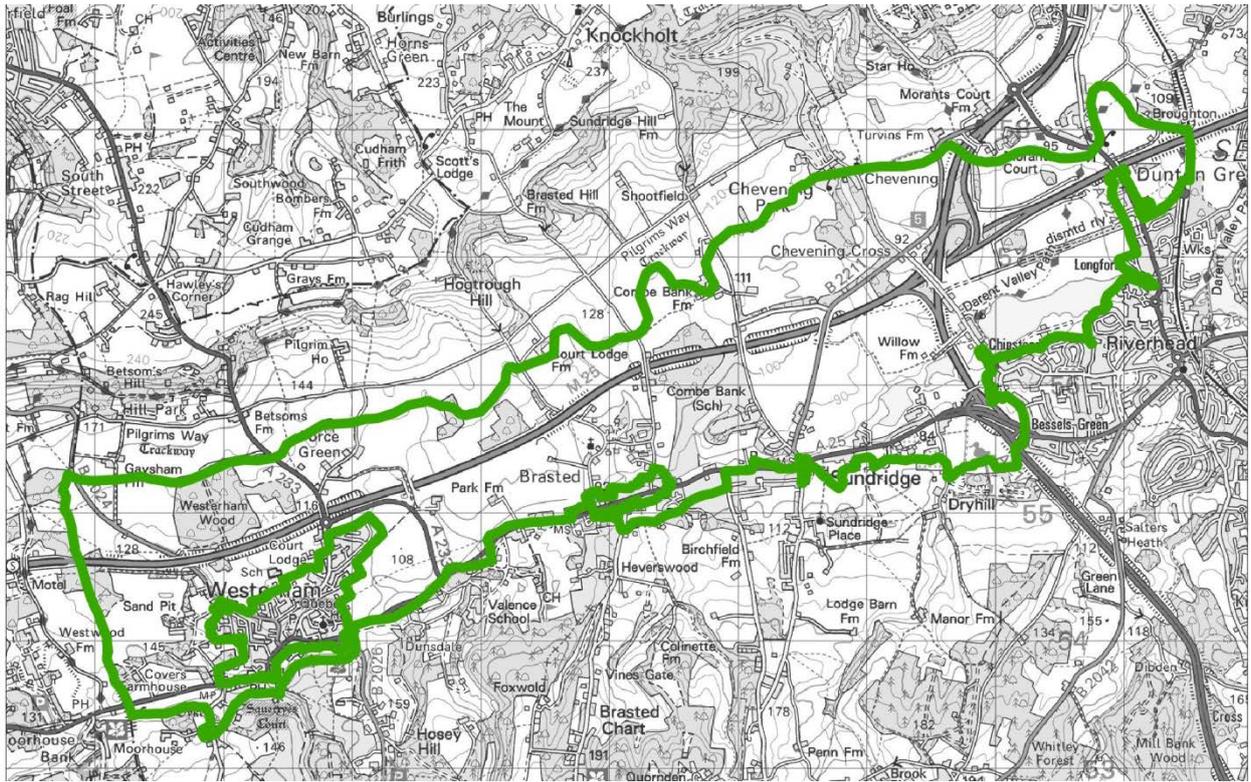
Landform

Flat or very gently undulating

Historic landscape

Small scale rectilinear parliamentary enclosure, large 19th century enclosures with boundary loss and 20th century sand and gravel works.

8a Upper Darent Valley - West



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Key Characteristics

- A gently undulating valley predominantly underlain by clay and mudstone (Gault Formation).
- Enclosed by the North Downs and the Greensand Ridge.
- Narrow tree-lined river corridor flows eastwards along the foot of the Greensand Ridge.
- Restored sand and gravel workings at Chipstead Lake create an ecological and recreational resource.
- Mixed land use of arable and pastoral fields. Horse paddocks on urban fringes of Sevenoaks.
- Mature hedgerows with isolated standard oaks.
- Blocks of mixed broadleaf woodlands and shaws including areas of ancient woodland.
- Historic field pattern of regular parliamentary and older irregular fields disrupted locally.
- Historic droeways from the North Downs to the Greensand Ridge.
- Rural settlement pattern of scattered farmsteads with scattered 20th century residential and industrial development on settlement edges.
- Historic riverside settlements.
- Characteristic vernacular architecture.
- Historic parkland at Combe Bank and Chevening.
- Long views across the valley towards the North Downs and Greensand Ridge.
- Generally a peaceful rural landscape disrupted locally by transport corridors.

Landscape Character Description

A gently undulating valley underlain by gault clay and mudstone with drift deposits of alluvium. Enclosed by the steep slopes of the chalk downs to the north and Greensand Ridge to the south. The River Darent flows eastwards from its source near Westerham, along the foot of the Greensand Ridge. Largely hidden, its path is indicated by riparian vegetation dominated by alder trees and small pockets of scrub. The river widens into artificial lakes at Chipstead created by flooding the former gravel works.

Mixed land use of arable and pasture contained by mature hedgerows with small fields on the urban fringe of Sevenoaks used for horseculture. Isolated standard oaks scattered across open fields mark former field boundaries or historic parkland. Mixed broadleaf woodland, including ancient woodland, and woodland shaws (including oak, beech, alder, willow, ash, horse chestnut and silver birch) create a sense of enclosure.

The historic field pattern is a mixture of small regular fields from C19 parliamentary enclosure and older irregular fields, disturbed along major transport routes and by quarrying. Boundary loss has resulted in some larger prairie fields. Narrow hedged lanes (including historic droeways with names such as 'Hogtrough Lane') pass over and under the motorway linking the valley floor with the higher pastures.

A rural settlement pattern of scattered farmsteads located slightly up-slope, small hamlets and attractive historic mill villages along the River Darent. Westerham, Brasted and Sundridge functioned as coaching stops and several coaching inns survive and a toll house at Brasted. Unremarkable C20 residential and industrial buildings are located on the outskirts of the settlements. Historic buildings include some distinctive vernacular styles, particularly local red brick, ragstone, weather boarding and half tile hung facades. Surviving historic landscapes include an early C20 garden designed by Sir Harold Hillier at Tanners, a C18 park at Coombe Bank and Chevening Park.

There are long views across the valley to the wooded slopes of the North Downs and Greensand Ridge. Primary transport routes cut across the LCA and disrupt what is otherwise a peaceful landscape, particularly to the east where the landscape is enclosed by the M25/M26 motorway embankments.

Landscape evaluation

Condition

This is an intact river-valley and floodplain, with small-scale fields bounded by hedgerows, remnant woodland, distinctive lines of riparian alders, farmsteads and well preserved historic mill villages on the

river itself. However, the landscape pattern becomes increasingly fragmented to the east of the area where urban fringe features, transport routes and wet gravel pits are detractors. Hedgerows are generally fragmented and supplemented by post and wire fences. The M25 is a major detractor, bisecting the valley into north and south halves and forming a physical barrier to movement. 20th century development outside the established settlement areas does not reflect the local vernacular and also has an adverse effect on the condition of the landscape.

They are lined by well-maintained mature hedgerows, supplemented in parts with post and rail fencing.

Key sensitivities / valued attributes

The following features and characteristics are particularly valued for their contribution to character and for the ecosystem services they provide:

- The historic field pattern running down to the river floodplain contributes to local distinctiveness.
- The hedgerow network which contributes to landscape pattern and provides ecological links.
- Mixed deciduous woodlands and shaws that provide valuable a semi-natural habitat for wildlife and a sense of history including Westerham Wood, one of the few remaining ancient woodlands on Gault Clay in Kent.
- Historic droving routes along narrow lanes from the North Downs to the Greensand Ridge which give a strong sense of time-depth to the area.
- The rural settlement pattern of historic riverside mill settlements and large isolated farms located slightly up-slope.
- The local vernacular including cottages and historic houses built from ragstone, half tile hung facades and weatherboarding, and warm red brick which provide sense of place.
- Farley Common is both historic commonland and valuable semi-natural habitat for wildlife (designated as a Local Nature Reserve and Biodiversity Opportunity Area).
- Wetlands and wet pasture on the valley floor and around large water bodies that are a valuable semi-natural habitat for wildlife (several sites are designated SSSI).
- The distinctive lines of riparian alders that are vulnerable as long-term features due to their maturity.
- The historic parkland at Combe Bank and Chevening which provides a sense of history and contributes to scenic quality.
- Long open views across the river valley and to the backdrop of the scarps which are locally distinctive.

Vision

A valley landscape comprising areas of woodland and farmland divided by well-maintained hedgerow boundaries and with watercourses marked by riparian alders. A rural landscape with a low density settlement pattern of farmsteads and hamlets, and a built vernacular that retains its local distinctiveness. A landscape that is accessible for recreation through a network of traffic-free routes which link the villages with the wider landscape either side of the M25 transport corridor.

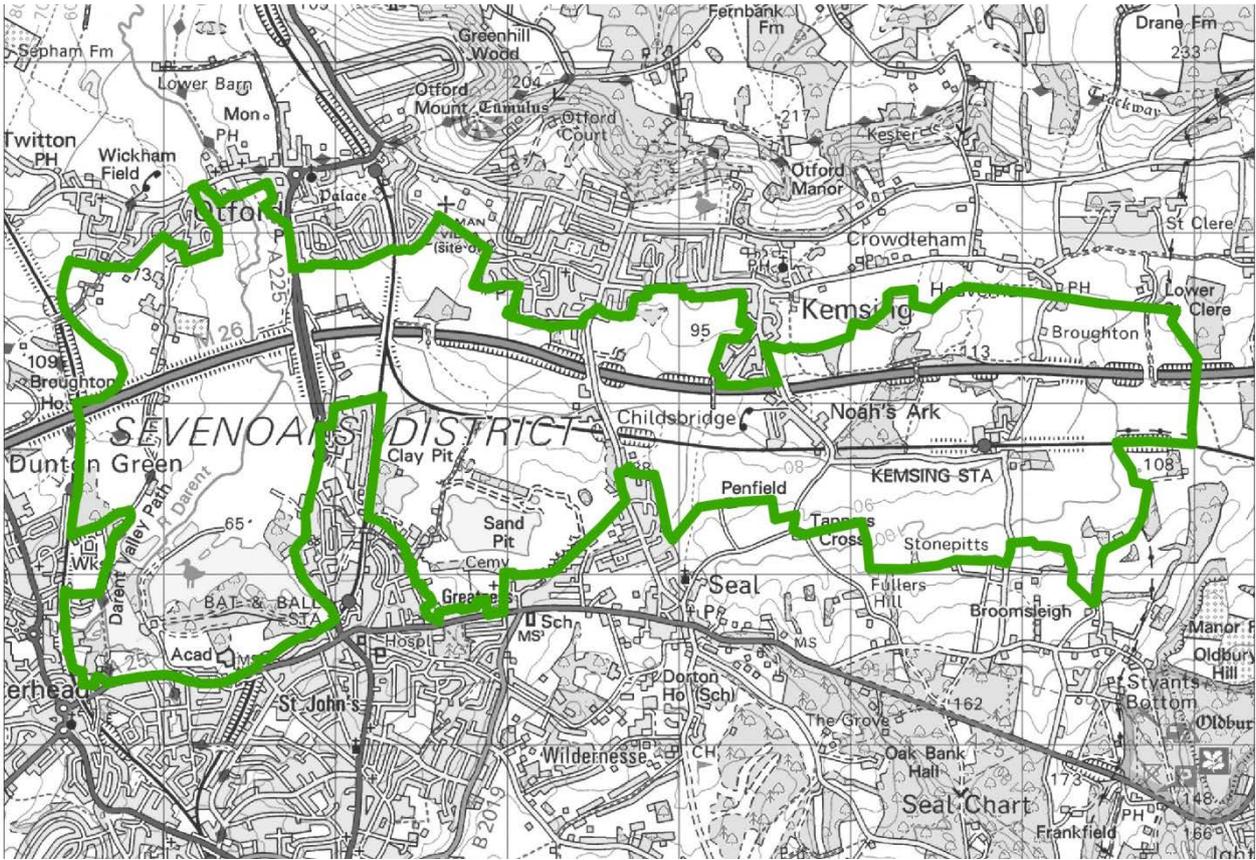
Landscape Guidance

The Landscape character area is largely within the **Kent Downs AONB** except for a small area to the east of the Darent Valley path to the north of Chipstead. It is a nationally important designation which offers a high level of development constraint. Refer to the AONB Management Plan for further guidance within the AONB.

Local objectives to conserve and enhance landscape character are outlined below:

- Retain the sparse rural settlement pattern of scattered farmsteads and hamlets, and traditional building styles. Ensure that vernacular styles are interpreted for use in new building to retain sense of place.
- Consider improving the existing edge of residential developments on the urban edge of Sevenoaks (Dunton Green) with planting to provide an appropriate interface with adjacent rural and natural areas.
- Enhance the River Darent as a feature of the landscape through a replanting and management programme of alder and other characteristic vegetation.
- Reinforce north-south physical and ecological links by maintaining and enhancing hedgerow and wooded links from the valley to the scarps, maintaining the historic droveways and improving physical access.
- Improve or reinstate management of woodland, copses and shaws. Maintain or restore stock grazing in parks and wood pastures and restore traditional tree and woodland management including pollarding.
- Improve the integration of the A25 and motorway into the landscape, for example through the planting of woodland belts on the valley sides.
- Increase areas under grassland management in flood plains for low intensity stock grazing and hay production.
- Develop uncropped field margins for biodiversity aims. Restore farm ponds.
- Create opportunities for long views across the river valley and to the backdrop of the scarps to the north and south.

8b Upper Darent Valley - East



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Key Characteristics

- Very gently undulating valley predominantly underlain by clay (Gault Formation).
- Enclosed by the North Downs and the Greensand Ridge.
- River Darent and its tributary runs through the area opening into a wide floodplain with riparian vegetation.
- Active and former mineral extraction, some restored to accessible wetland.
- Mixed land use with wet pasture on the valley floor.
- Mature trees scattered across fields and along field boundaries.
- Small broadleaf woodland blocks.
- Contrast between urban-fringe dominated areas and more tranquil farmland which retains a strong sense of place.
- Scarp forms a backdrop to views.
- Despite its proximity, Sevenoaks is not dominant in views from the valley.
- Disrupted by major transport routes.

Landscape Character Description

A very gently undulating clay valley enclosed by the steep chalk escarpment of the North Downs and the southern valley side rising up to the Greensand Ridge.

A tributary of the River Darent, the Honeypot Stream, flows westwards joining the Darent north of Sevenoaks which runs northwards across a wide floodplain between Sevenoaks and Otford. Low-lying areas are subject to seasonal flooding. Ponds and fragmented water channels are characteristic of the Darent floodplain south of Otford with sedges in areas of permanently damp ground. Active and former mineral extraction dominates the valley floor north of Sevenoaks, some restored as accessible wetland such as Sevenoaks Wildlife Reserve.

The land use is mixed, with arable and pasture fields contained by hedgerows with mature oaks and horse chestnuts and small blocks of mixed broadleaf woodland and copses. The valley floor is more open with horse paddocks and sheep pasture which have resulted from the enclosure of meadows. Elsewhere the field pattern is characterised by both irregular and small regular field formed by C19 and C20 enclosure.

The western part of the LCA is more settled due to its proximity to Sevenoaks with C20 sprawl extending between Sevenoaks and Otford. Further east, settlement is limited to isolated farmsteads, a well-screened industrial estate and groups of suburban residential properties which have expanded from the original centres of Kemsing and Seal including small Victorian brick cottages with mixed style 20th century housing. Historic buildings include traditional oasts and some vernacular rag and flint agricultural buildings.

The North Downs forms a distinctive backdrop in views from the valley floor with areas of housing on the scarp slope visually prominent.

Well-maintained hedges enclose busy narrow winding lanes which cross over and under the major transport routes which cross the LCA. The M26 and a railway line run east-west through the area and split the north and south part of the LCA. The M26 can be audible but for much of its length its visual impact is mitigated by screen planting and earthworks. It is most visually dominant where it crosses the valley on an embankment, blocking views across the valley. In the west of the LCA two railway lines and the A225 run north-south.

Landscape evaluation

Condition

The simplicity of the clay valley retains an influence over the landscape. Wet pastures, the ditch network, water courses and open water contribute to a very strong ecological interest and blocks of woodland and hedgerows with standard oaks, provide localised semi-natural habitats and have a positive effect on the condition of the landscape.

However the general pattern of the landscape has been fragmented by former mineral extraction, landfill and transport routes which split the LCA. Other detractors include some large industrial buildings in the rural area, views of the urban edge and increasing number of suburban features in the rural landscape particularly in the western part of the LCA. There is some intensive agricultural use of the land on the valley floor and hedgerow boundaries are over-mature and fragmented often supplemented with post and wire fencing which have an adverse effect on the condition of the landscape.

Key sensitivities / valued attributes

The following features and characteristics are particularly valued for their contribution to character and for the ecosystem services they provide:

- Tranquil farmland retains a strong sense of place despite the proximity of Sevenoaks.
- Historic narrow winding lanes add a strong sense of time-depth to the area.
- The local vernacular including historic farm buildings and oasts built from Kentish ragstone and flint provide a sense of place.
- Wetland, wet pasture and ditch network along the river valley are valuable semi-natural habitat for wildlife and offer accessible open spaces for the local community.
- Large water bodies enclosed with riparian scrub are valuable semi-natural habitat and offer recreational opportunities for the local community.
- The hedgerow network which contributes to landscape pattern and provides ecological links.
- Small block of broadleaf woodland and copses which provide visual interest are valuable semi-natural habitat for wildlife
- Long open views to the scarp are locally distinctive.

Vision

A river valley landscape comprising areas of wetland, farmland and small block of wet woodland divided by well-maintained hedgerow boundaries with pastoral floodplain and watercourses. A landscape where historic and modern settlements are integrated into their surrounding with a built vernacular that retains its local distinctiveness. A landscape that is accessible for recreation through a network of traffic-free routes which link settlements to the wider landscape either side of the transport corridors.

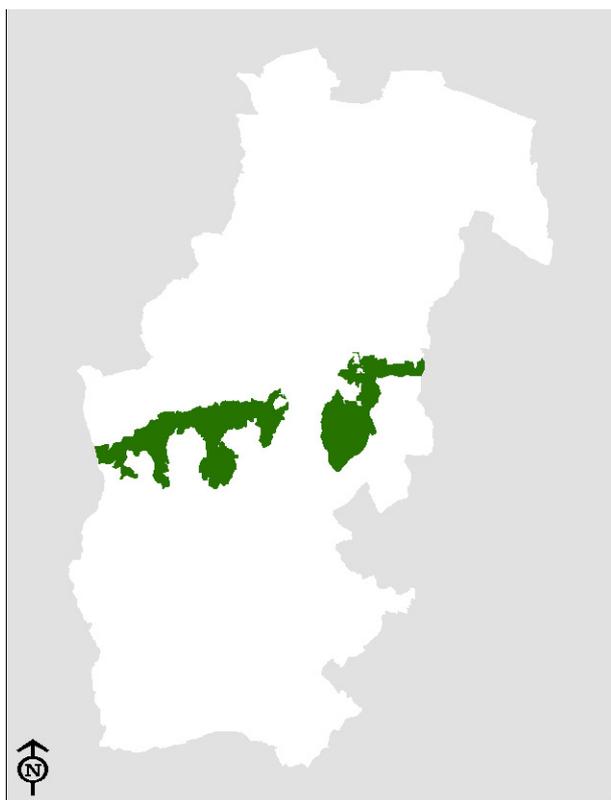
Landscape Guidance

The eastern half of this landscape character area is within the **Kent Downs AONB**. It is a nationally important designation which offers a high level of development constraint. Refer to the AONB Management Plan for further guidance within the AONB.

Local objectives to conserve and enhance landscape character are outlined below:

- Consider improving the integration between urban settlements and the countryside by reinstating hedgerows and characteristic woodland blocks to provide an appropriate interface with adjacent rural and natural areas.
- Enhance the River Darent and its tributary as a feature of the landscape through replanting and management of characteristic vegetation.
- Encourage non-intensive agricultural use of the floodplain to maintain the typical pastoral, meadow and wet woodland character. Maintain water levels in the floodplain to support these habitats.
- Enhance and extend wetland habitats around former quarries and ensure future restoration of active sites as positive features in the landscape.
- Reinforce north-south physical and ecological links by maintaining and enhancing hedgerow and wooded links from the valley to the scarps, maintaining the historic lanes and improving physical access.
- Maintain and reinforce hedgerow and ditch field boundaries. Encourage rotational ditch clearance and ditch restoration.
- Increase areas under extensive grassland management in flood plains to include low intensity stock grazing and hay production.
- Protect and improve the condition of woodland habitat. Create small riparian woodland on settlement edge of Otford and Sevenoaks.
- Reinforce historic field pattern by developing and protecting hedgerow boundaries. Reinforce the incidence of mature trees on field boundaries through appropriate management and replanting.
- Improve the integration of the major transport corridors into the landscape, for example through the planting of characteristic woodland blocks and create more extensive wetlands between the motorway and railway.
- Create opportunities for long views across the river valley and to the backdrop of the scarps to the north and south.

TYPE 9: GREENSAND PARKS & FARMLANDS



Key Characteristics

- Undulating north facing farmed slopes of the Greensand ridge between about 100 and 200m AOD.
- Drained by streams that flow north into the Darent Valley.
- Strong field pattern defined by a hedgerow network, copses and shaws.
- Variable sized irregular fields in mixed arable and pastoral use.
- Large country houses and extensive parkland with mature specimen trees scattered throughout.
- Narrow, sunken and hedge-lined lanes and droving roads.
- Rural low density settlement pattern of scattered farms and hamlets.
- Traditional vernacular building styles including Oasts and timber framed barns.
- Views north across the Darent Valley to the North Downs scarp.



National landscape character

Wealden Greensand

Geology

Lower Greensand, predominantly Hythe Beds with occasional outcrops of Folkestone and Sandgate Beds

Soils

Free draining, base poor sandy brown acid soils

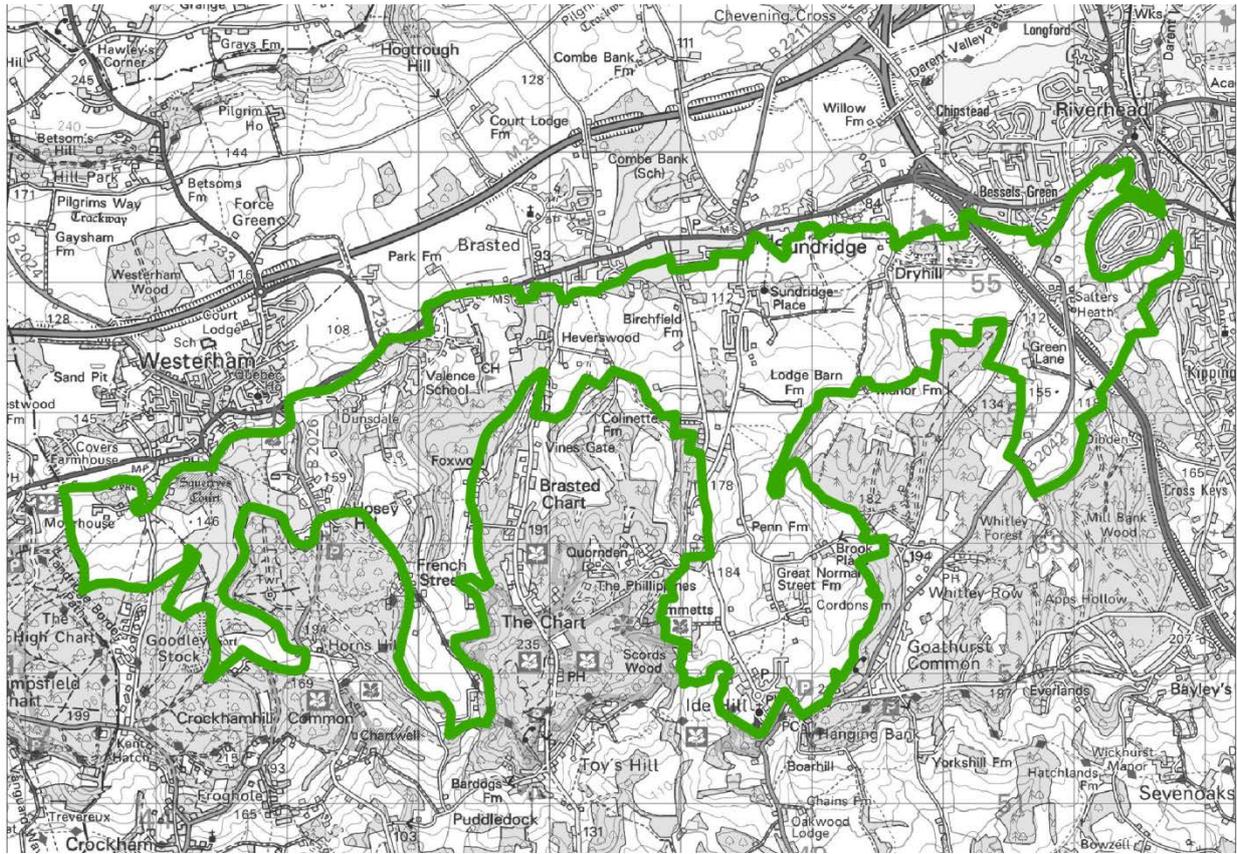
Landform

Undulating north facing slope

Historic landscape

Deer parks within 12th to 14th century hunting grounds. Small to medium fields of unknown origin. Small scale rectilinear parliamentary enclosure. Medieval informal enclosure.

9a Westerham to Sundridge Parks and Farmlands



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Key Characteristics

- Northern undulating slopes of the Greensand Ridge to the west of Sevenoaks, supporting small to medium scale fields.
- Small to medium scale enclosed agricultural landscape with strong hedgerows and scattered dense woodland.
- Rural low density settlement pattern of scattered farms and hamlets.
- Traditional vernacular building styles including Oasts, timber framed barns and properties in ragstone and/or brick, some half tile hung, and with clay tile roofs.
- Some newer residential properties, well sited within vegetative screening.
- Large country manor houses sited in areas of parkland at Squerrys Court, Dunsdale and Valence.
- Narrow sunken hedge lined lanes and droving roads.
- Glimpsed views out northwards to the North Downs scarp.

Landscape Character Description

This area is part of the parkland and estate farmland belt which runs along the gentle north-facing slopes of the Darent Valley. This section, located west of Sevenoaks, lies on a geology of Lower Greensand and includes infrequent patches of river terrace gravel around Sundridge and Dryhill.

It is a small-medium scale agricultural landscape with a near-intact hedgerow pattern to internal field boundaries, which includes hedgerow trees. Small, mixed woodlands are scattered throughout the farmland supporting a wide range of species including Birch, Beech, Oak, Pine, Cherry and Alder. Roads follow the general N-S route to the top of the Greensand Ridge from the edge of the Darent Valley (the A25). They are characteristically narrow, vergeless, with hedgerows on either side. Isolated farmsteads, linked by trackways, are the main type of settlement but there are also small hamlets and villages such as Sundridge and Ide Hill. Noise from the A21 and M25 affects the perceptual character of the area.

This undulating pastoral and woodland landscape, and its proximity to London, has led to the creation 17th and 18th century estates and parklands including Squerrys Court (a Jacobean house and park near Westerham), and a Capability Brown landscape which survives in part as a golf course between Valence School and Brasted. Follies and parkland features such as towers, temples and bridges, lodge houses, estate cottages and farmsteads are features.

Landscape evaluation

Condition

The shaws, intact field boundaries and historic parkland contribute positively to landscape condition, while detractors include the A21 crossing the landscape, traffic noise from the A21 and M25, loss of parkland to arable and golf course (e.g. at Valence), and modern housing development.

Key sensitivities / valued attributes

The following features and characteristics are particularly valued for their contribution to character and for the ecosystem services they provide:

- Ancient woodland and historic parklands that provide a sense of history and contribute to biodiversity, as well as scenic interest.
- The intact field pattern that provides sense of history and the network of hedgerows, shaws and copses that provide an intact biodiversity network.
- The rural settlement pattern of farmsteads, historic houses and rural hamlets that contribute to the sense of history and scenic quality of the landscape.
- The narrow sunken lanes, climbing the northern slopes of the Greensand, enclosed by woodland or hedgerows and with a distinctive north to south pattern that contribute to the sense of place and history of the land uses.
- The areas of historic parklands, especially where they are still intact and historic features

survive, which provide a sense of history and contribute to scenic quality.

- The traditional vernacular building styles including Oasts, timber framed barns and properties in ragstone, brick and with tile hanging and clay tile roofs.
- The views of the North Downs scarp.

Vision

A rural landscape with a strong field pattern of small to medium fields bounded by intact and well managed hedgerows, shaws and interspersed with deciduous copses, and buildings in the local vernacular well integrated into the landscape. A landscape in which country houses, parkland narrow sunken hedge lined lanes and droving roads are features.

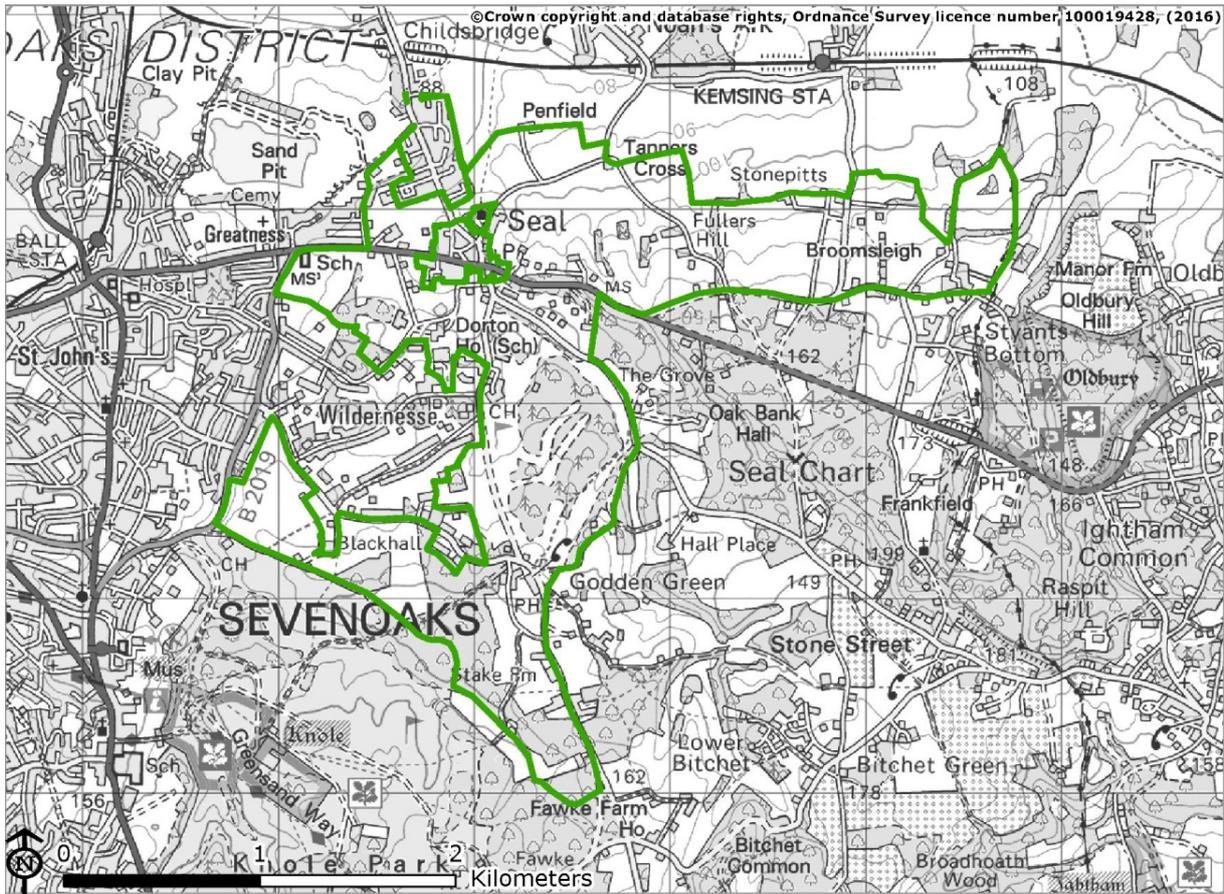
Landscape Guidance

The majority of this Landscape character area is within the **Kent Downs AONB** (a small area beside Sevenoaks is not in the AONB. It is a nationally important designation which offers a high level of development constraint. Refer to the AONB Management Plan for further guidance within the AONB.

Local objectives to conserve and enhance landscape character are outlined below:

- Conserve the well wooded character of the landscape through conservation and active management of ancient woodland, shaws and hedgerows (including wood pasture management where appropriate) – plan for the next generation of hedgerow trees.
- Maintain the historic field pattern and consider restoring lost field boundaries where possible to strengthen the field pattern.
- Conserve the rural settlement pattern comprising farmsteads, historic houses and rural hamlets – ensure that any new development is well integrated into the landscape and reflects the rural vernacular including timber framed barns, ragstone, brick, tile hanging and clay tile roofs.
- Maintain the character of the narrow sunken lanes, resisting road improvements what would result in erosion or loss of these lanes, their verges and tree tunnels.
- Retain and enhance areas of historic parklands and their features – maintain the mature parkland trees, planning for the next generation, and consider restoring areas of arable back to pasture or parkland including species rich grassland.
- Provide opportunities to enjoy views of the North Downs scarp.
- Seek opportunities to reduce visual and noise intrusion from the A21 and M25, for example through woodland planting.

9b Seal Parks and Farmlands



Key Characteristics

- Northern undulating slopes of the Greensand Ridge to the east of Sevenoaks, supporting small to medium scale fields.
- Small to medium scale fields enclosed by hedgerows and shaws, interspersed with areas of woodland and parkland.
- Rural settlement pattern of scattered farms and historic hamlets with some more recent 20th century houses eg on the edges of Seal and Sevenoaks.
- Traditional vernacular building styles including Oasts, timber framed barns and properties in ragstone and/or brick, some tile hung and with clay tile roofs.
- Large country manor house sited in an area of parkland at Dorton House (formerly known as Wildernesse), plus other historic manor houses such as Stonepitts.
- Orchards, often associated with the historic houses and hamlets.
- Narrow country lanes, including sunken lanes.
- Glimpsed views out northwards to the North Downs scarp.

Landscape Character Description

This area is part of the parkland and estate farmland belt which runs along the gentle north-facing slopes of the Darent Valley. This section is located east of Sevenoaks and is underlain by the sandstones and mudstones of the Folkestone, Sandgate and Hythe Formations.

It comprises a mosaic of variable sized fields small-medium scale fields with large areas of woodland and former parkland. There are areas of intact field patterns north of the A25, enclosed by hedgerows and shaws. To the south of the A25 is a large scale landscape of former parkland and woodland associated with the Wildernesse Estate and other adjacent Estates. A large golf course now occupies the area around Chance Wood.

Roads are characteristically narrow and rural and bounded by hedgerows or trees. Settlement includes small hamlets and nucleated villages with many vernacular properties, including flint, brick and rag stone. Elsewhere large detached, 20th century properties of mixed style, are scattered along lanes. These are set within large gardens and well set back from the road.

There are views north to the North Downs and this includes glimpses of Kemsing and the M26. Acid woodlands on the hill-tops are predominantly Oak, Birch and Beech, with other species including Rowan, Broom, Bracken and Heather. On the lower slopes are coppice Sweet Chestnut & Hazel.

Landscape evaluation

Condition

The shaws, intact field boundaries and historic hamlets (north of the A25) and the historic parkland and woodland (south of the A25) contribute to a good landscape condition. However, detractors include the A25 crossing the landscape including traffic noise, loss of parkland to agriculture, golf course and housing, and modern housing development on the outskirts of Sevenoaks and Seal.

Key sensitivities / valued attributes

The following features and characteristics are particularly valued for their contribution to character and for the ecosystem services they provide:

- Ancient woodland and historic parklands that provide a sense of history and contribute to biodiversity, as well as scenic interest.
- The intact field pattern that provides sense of history and the network of hedgerows, shaws and copses that provide an intact biodiversity network.
- The rural settlement pattern of farmsteads, historic houses and rural hamlets that contribute to the sense of history and scenic quality of the landscape.

- The rural lanes and their adjacent banks, hedges and tree tunnels that contribute to the sense of place and history of the land uses.
- The areas of historic parklands, especially where they are still intact and historic features survive, which provide a sense of history and contribute to scenic quality.
- The traditional vernacular building styles including Oasts, timber framed barns and properties in ragstone, brick and with tile hanging and clay tile roofs.
- Orchards which provide a sense of history and sense of place.
- The views of the North Downs scarp.

Vision

A rural landscape with a strong field pattern of small to medium fields bounded by intact and well managed hedgerows and shaws, and interspersed with areas of well managed deciduous woodland and intact parkland which provide a sense of history. A rural settlement pattern revealing the local vernacular architecture, and modern buildings well integrated into the landscape.

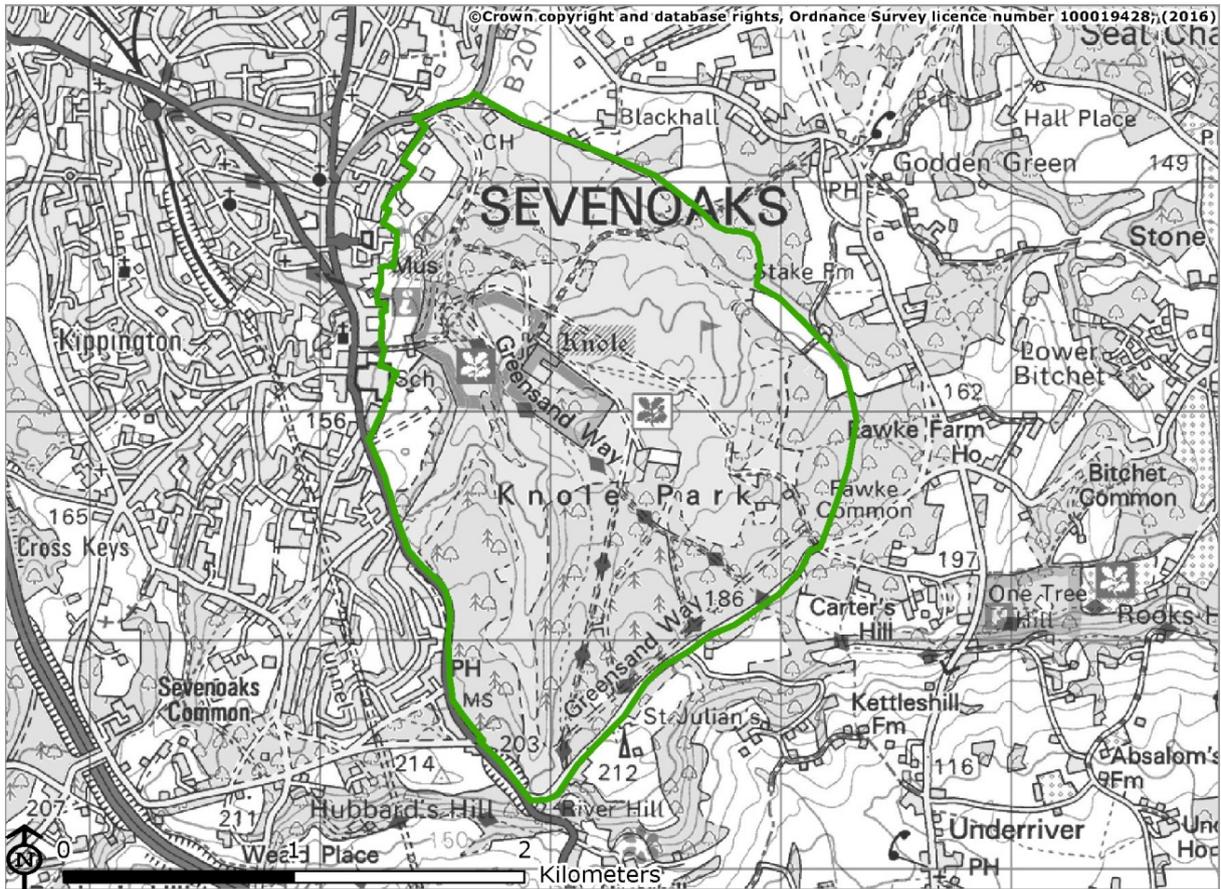
Landscape Guidance

The majority of the landscape character area is within the **Kent Downs AONB**. It is a nationally important designation which offers a high level of development constraint. Refer to the AONB Management Plan for further guidance within the AONB.

Local objectives to conserve and enhance landscape character are outlined below:

- Conserve the well wooded character of the landscape through conservation and active management of ancient woodland, shaws and hedgerows (including wood pasture management where appropriate) – plan for the next generation of hedgerow trees.
- Maintain the historic field pattern and consider restoring lost field boundaries where possible to strengthen the field pattern.
- Conserve the rural settlement pattern comprising farmsteads, historic houses and rural hamlets – ensure that any new development is well integrated into the landscape and reflects the rural vernacular including timber framed barns, ragstone, brick, tile hanging and clay tile roofs.
- Maintain the character of the rural lanes, resisting road improvements what would result in erosion or loss of these lanes, their verges and adjacent features such as hedges and trees.
- Retain and enhance areas of historic parklands and their features – maintain the mature parkland trees, planning for the next generation, and consider restoring areas of arable land back to pasture or parkland including species rich grassland.
- Provide opportunities to enjoy views of the North Downs scarp.
- Conserve remaining orchards which provide a sense of history and sense of place, and plan for new orchards to preserve this characteristic of the landscape.
- Seek opportunities to reduce visual and noise intrusion from the A25, for example through woodland planting.

9c Knole Park



Key Characteristics

- Steeply undulating part of the Greensand Ridge to the east of Sevenoaks, distinguished from its adjacent areas because of its strong parkland character.
- The only remaining medieval deer park in Kent, supporting a herd of Sika and Fallow deer which are direct descendants of those which inhabited it in Tudor times.
- An early Jacobean remodelling of a medieval archiepiscopal palace at its centre, built of local ragstone.
- A steeply undulating landscape of ancient woodland, dry heathland, acid grassland, wood pasture, scattered parkland trees and isolated patches of scrub and gorse on ridges.
- Other land uses within the park involve a golf course and school playing field on the edge of Sevenoaks.
- Long views from the tops of ridges across the Darent Valley towards the North Downs scarp.
- Important recreational space accessible by many footpaths.

Landscape Character Description

This area is part of the parkland and estate farmland belt on Lower Greensand. However, it is distinguished from its adjacent areas because of its strong parkland character with mature, standard trees and clear peripheral boundaries – the character area's boundaries almost exactly coincide with the registered park boundary.

Knole Park is an ancient deer park with a remarkably preserved and complete early Jacobean remodelling of a medieval archiepiscopal palace at its centre, built of local ragstone. It was built and extended by the Archbishops of Canterbury after 1456 and became a royal possession during the Tudor dynasty when Henry VIII hunted here and Elizabeth I visited. From 1603, Thomas Sackville made it the aristocratic treasure house for the Sackville family, who were prominent and influential in court circles.

The park is an undulating landscape of ancient woodland, dry heathland, acid grassland, wood pasture, scattered parkland trees and isolated patches of scrub and gorse on ridges. It is the only remaining medieval deer park in Kent and it supports a herd of Sika and Fallow deer which are direct descendants of those which inhabited it in Tudor times.

Specimen trees include cedar and sweet chestnut, oak, beech, pine, hornbeam and blackthorn are also characteristic. Grazing deer keep the grassland close-cropped, and there are also areas of bracken, and isolated ponds. Other land uses within the park involve a golf course.

There is peripheral residential development at the boundary with Sevenoaks, and some of the parkland is used as school playing fields.

The steeply undulating landform enables some long views from the tops of ridges across the Darent Valley towards the North Downs scarp.

Landscape evaluation

Condition

The preservation of this ancient deer park and its features including the Jacobean mansion, ancient woodland, dry heathland, acid grassland, wood pasture, and scattered parkland trees mean that landscape condition is good. However, there are some detractors including the golf course and playing fields.

Key sensitivities / valued attributes

The following features and characteristics are particularly valued for their contribution to character and for the ecosystem services they provide:

- The medieval deer park character, including the herd of deer which are direct descendants of those which inhabited it in Tudor times, which provides a great sense of history and high scenic quality.
- The early Jacobean remodelling of the medieval archiepiscopal palace which provides a great sense of history as well as sense of place, being constructed from local ragstone.
- The rich variety of valued habitats including ancient woodland, dry heathland, acid grassland, wood pasture, scattered parkland trees and isolated patches of scrub and gorse on ridges.
- The opportunity for long views from the tops of ridges across the Darent Valley towards the North Downs scarp.
- The many footpaths which enable people to enjoy the landscape.

Vision

A medieval deer park supporting well managed ancient woodland, dry heathland, acid grassland, wood pasture, scattered parkland trees and scrub, supporting a herd of deer, and with intact and well preserved historic parkland features (and mansion). A rural landscape from where there are long views across the Darent Valley towards the North Downs scarp and which can be accessed and enjoyed.

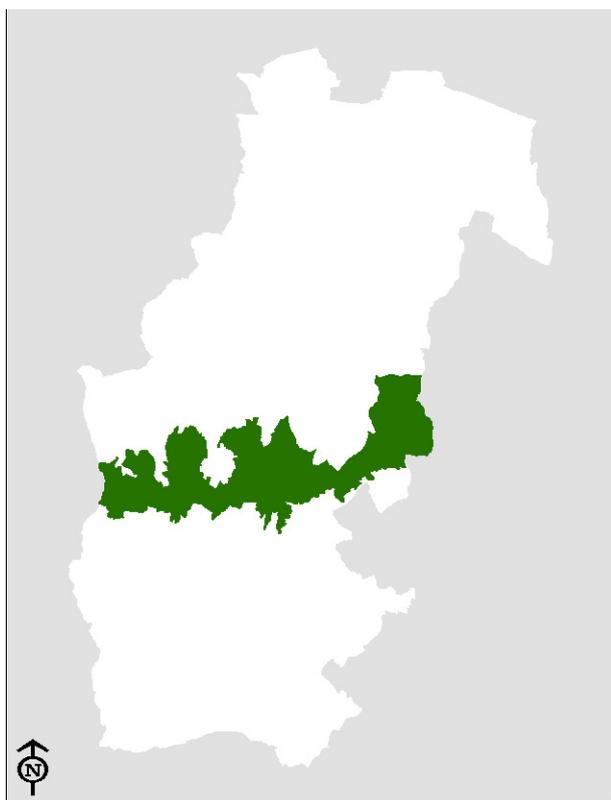
Landscape Guidance

The majority of the landscape character area is within the **Kent Downs AONB**. It is a nationally important designation which offers a high level of development constraint. Refer to the AONB Management Plan for further guidance within the AONB.

Local objectives to conserve and enhance landscape character are outlined below:

- Preserve the medieval deer park character and actively manage to ensure retention of diverse habitats including the ancient woodland, dry heathland, acid grassland, wood pasture, scattered parkland trees and scrub.
- Preserve the mansion as a feature at the centre of the park, and views to it.
- Maintain opportunities to experience long views from the tops of ridges across the Darent Valley towards the North Downs scarp – maintain views while screening modern built development from view.
- Maintain public access to ensure people can continue to enjoy the landscape and views.
- Ensure that any new building within or outside the area is well screened, particularly in historic designed views.

TYPE 10: CHARTS



Key Characteristics

- Elevated, steeply undulating pastoral and wooded landscape on a Greensand ridge.
- Dense, mature broadleaf woodlands covering the higher land with unimproved pastures and heath.
- Frequent commons and charts (an old English term for rough ground) traditionally managed as wood-pasture until the mid-nineteenth century.
- Areas of coppice traditionally managed for charcoal burning.
- Small to medium scale irregular fields of pasture defined by mature hedgerows, including assarts and planned enclosures.
- Narrow lanes lined by mature hedgerows and occasional hedgerow trees.
- Rural landscape with settlements limited to hamlets and housing scattered along lanes.
- Church spires punctuate mostly wooded skylines.
- Well used for recreation.
- Occasional dramatic views south over the Weald from scarp slopes.

National landscape character

Greensand

Geology

Lower Greensand and Hythe Beds overlain with Head deposits

Soils

Free draining, base poor sandy brown acid soils

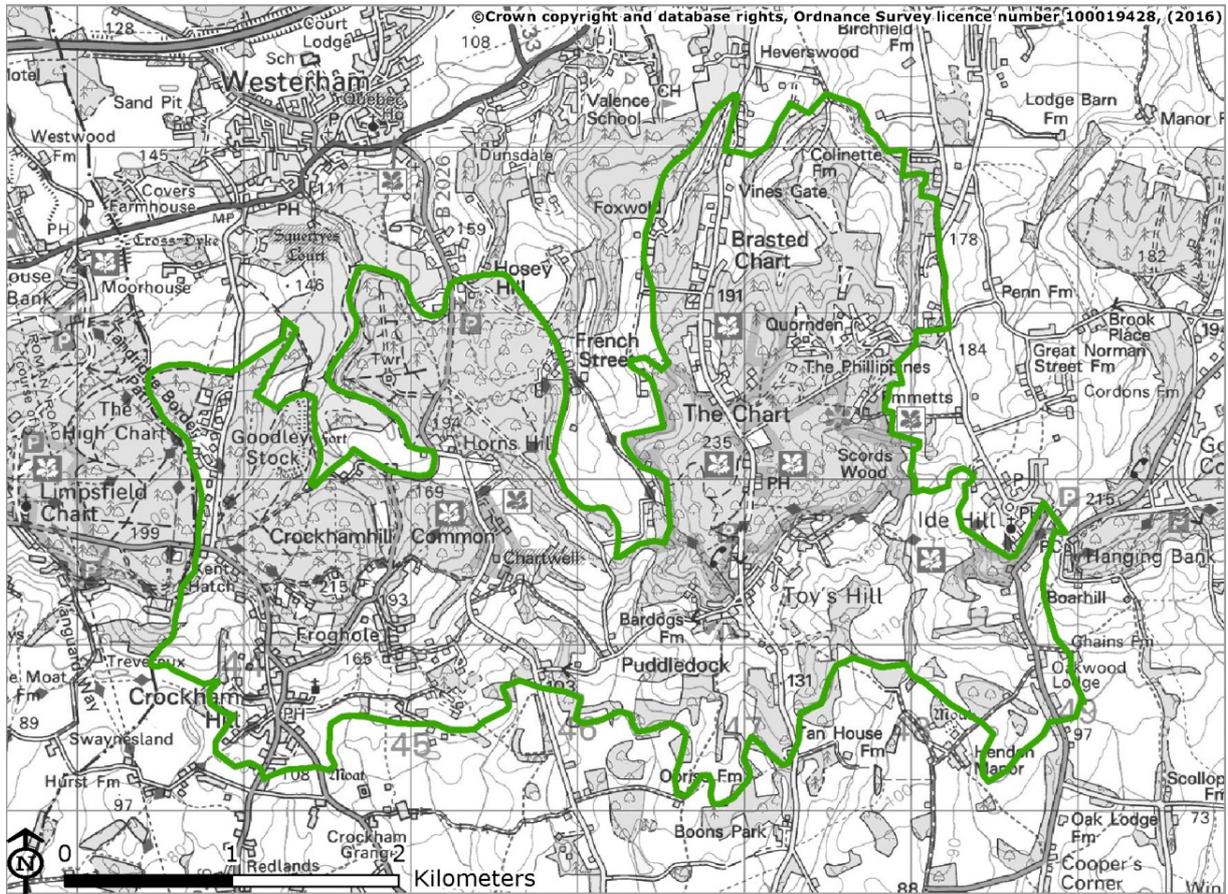
Landform

Folded, occasionally steep and intricate

Historic landscape

Pre 19th century coppices. Medieval informal enclosure. Pre 19th century replanted woodland.

10a Westerham and Brasted Chart



Key Characteristics

- Undulating woodland and agricultural landscape, steeply climbing to central hills reaching over 200m AOD.
- Extensive wooded commons previously managed as wood-pasture.
- Mosaics of dense, mixed broadleaf, acid woodland, unimproved pastures and heath.
- Areas of coppice previously used for charcoal burning.
- Rural villages set around greens or linear settlement along common edges.
- Narrow rural tree lined rural lanes.
- Large country houses and villas including Chartwell House and gardens are tucked into the folding landform and surrounded by woodland.
- Abandoned ragstone mines.
- Generally enclosed landscape but with long views over the Weald from points along the southern scarp slope eg Toy's Hill and Ide Hill.
- The area around Ide Hill is associated with Octavia Hill, the founder of the National Trust.

Landscape Character Description

This character area is defined by steeply undulating landform predominantly situated on the Hythe sandstone formation with Wealden mudstones exposed on lower slopes at the transition to the Low Weald.

Woodland characterises the area, much of it ancient and comprising Oak and Beech with extensive Chestnut coppice and occasional Scots Pine. Wooded shaws are a feature of the steeper topography. Occasional irregular small scale agricultural fields are also interspersed within the woodland. To the south there is a higher proportion of grazing on the lower areas where the slope gradient is less. These are defined by strong hedgerow boundaries, which typically comprise Holly, Hazel and Hawthorn.

Spring line villages and farmsteads are located to the south of the area for example at Crockham Hill. Nestled within the wooded scarp, these settlements originally took advantage of the shelter and dry land above the Low Weald and more recently properties have been built to take advantage of the extensive views. Ragstone cottages, barns and oasthouses are mixed with more recent housing. Within the woodland there are linear residential settlements of usually detached houses set within large woodland plots such as at Goodley Stock and Brasted Chart.

Views out are generally limited by the woodland enclosure however extensive views are available from the edge of the Greensand Ridge where it drops steeply down to the Low Weald, for example at Toy's Hill.

Landscape evaluation

Condition

The area has a unified and intact pattern of landscape elements including pastoral fields and extensive areas of mature woodland and coppice which are in variable condition but provide a strong ecological network. There are few detractors, although there is some hedgerow loss and some modern built development.

Key sensitivities / valued attributes

The following features and characteristics are particularly valued for their contribution to character and for the ecosystem services they provide:

- Large areas of common land and remnant wood pasture that provide a strong sense of place and historic time depth.
- The mosaic of heath, unimproved pasture and woodland that provides a distinct sense of place and important habitats.
- Extensive mature woodlands and coppice that provide a strong sense of containment and sense of place as well as tranquillity and recreational opportunities.
- Rural settlement character comprising villages set around greens or scattered in a linear form along the edge of commons.
- Large houses/ villas amongst the charts, for example Chartwell House and associated gardens (once the home of Churchill), which provides a sense of history.
- Oast houses which provide a sense of history and distinctive sense of place.
- Narrow wooded lanes that cross over the Greensand Ridge.
- The long distance views from clearings on the southern scarp slope that provide a strong sense of elevation and contribute to scenic quality.
- The Iron Age Hillfort north of Crockhamhill Common which provides an even deeper sense of history in the landscape.

Vision

An actively managed landscape comprising large areas of deciduous acid woodland fringed by small pastures defined by maintained hedgerow boundaries and areas of heath and wood pasture. A rural area with a distinctive local vernacular and a legible network of public footpaths and bridleways that provide opportunities for long distance views across the Low Weald between woodland.

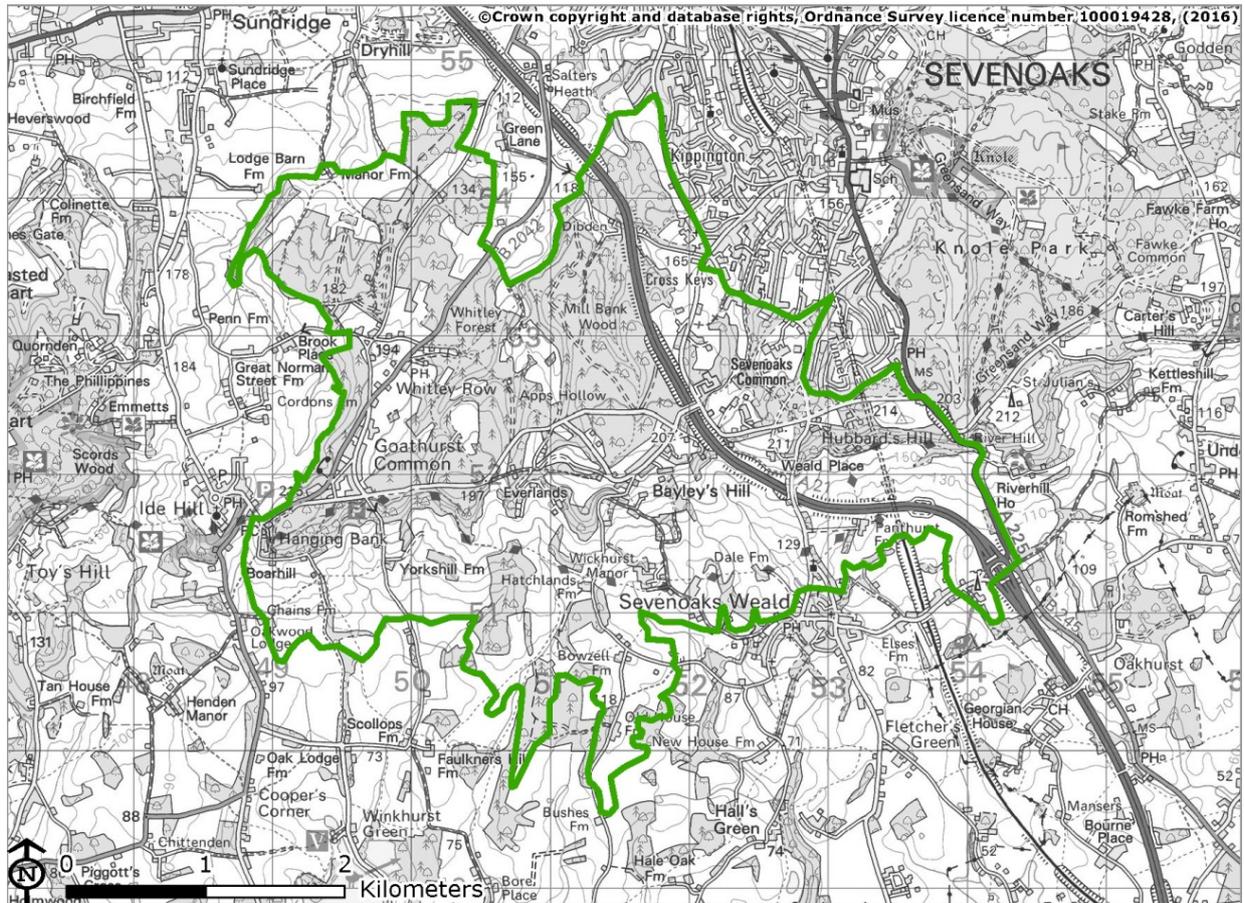
Landscape Guidance

This Landscape character area is entirely within the **Kent Downs AONB**, a nationally important designation which offers a high level of development constraint. Refer to the AONB Management Plan for further guidance within the AONB.

Local objectives to conserve and enhance landscape character are outlined below:

- Conserve and manage woodland cover of stands of oak and beech, sweet chestnut and thickets of birch and consider diversifying woodland age and structure.
- Conserve the extent of woodland, ensure that it retains irregular shapes which relate to landform and restore wooded edges.
- Conserve the small scale pastoral landscape, retaining and maintaining thick hedgerows and shaws.
- Restore and manage heaths and acid grassland.
- Conserve, manage and restore wide shaws in the farmland.
- Conserve the wooded setting of existing small settlements and the isolation of existing large properties.
- Conserve the scale and extent of linear built development and avoid ridgeline development to conserve the wooded scarp.
- Integrate any new development on edge of villages with small woodlands and hedgerow trees.
- Seek the use of sympathetic building materials such as ragstone, brick and tile.
- Maintain the rural character of the narrow lanes including distinctive oblique angle junctions.
- Conserve dramatic views south and seek to encourage more viewing opportunities.

10b Sevenoaks Western Chart



Key Characteristics

- Undulating woodland and agricultural landscape, steeply climbing to central hills reaching over 200m AOD.
- Extensive wooded commons of dense, mixed broadleaf, acid woodland with irregular pasture clearings and heath.
- Historic land uses such as wood pasture, coppice used for charcoal burning.
- Rural settlement set around greens or in a linear pattern fringing commons.
- Large mansion houses set in woodland on the ridge, for example West Heath School.
- Generally enclosed landscape with occasional glimpsed views over the Low Weald from the steep south facing scarp.

Landscape Character Description

This area is characterised mostly by sandstone of the Hythe formation but with Weald Clay mudstone underlying the slower slopes at the transition to the Low Weald.

The undulating landform includes the steep Greensand scarp and some small, high plateau areas reaching over 200m. The land folds into valleys and ridges.

The land is almost entirely wooded, but where there are agricultural clearings, the fields are irregular, small-scale pastures with strong wooded edges. Wood pasture, historic assarts and plantations are common features.

The enclosed dense Oak and Beech woodland includes extensive areas of Sweet Chestnut coppice and some coniferous plantation. There are also pasture fields inset within the woodland.

Commons are typical features of the scarp-top plateau and Goathurst Common is an ancient and notable feature. It is also the primary location of historic linear and common-edge settlement. More recent settlement has developed on the edge of the scarp, where the views across the Low Weald are dramatic. These houses are highly visible from the south. Farmsteads and oast houses are common.

Narrow rural wooded lanes cross the ridge, although the A21 also crosses the area in cutting on the edge of Sevenoaks.

Occasional views of the Low Weald can be experienced from the scarp. There is a general perception of the landscape being elevated which is reinforced by the effect of the steep cross-contour roads which lead into the area.

Landscape evaluation

Condition

This area has a unified and intact pattern of woodland and pasture which is in variable, but generally good, condition. There is some evidence of decline/ loss in places. The A21 and some modern large properties (particularly those visible on the skyline) detract from the rural character of the area. There is also evidence of 'horsiculture' on the edge of Sevenoaks.

Key sensitivities / valued attributes

The following features and characteristics are particularly valued for their contribution to character and for the ecosystem services they provide:

- Large areas of common land and remnant wood pasture that provide a strong sense of place and historic time depth.
- The mosaic of heath, unimproved pasture and woodland that provides a distinct sense of place and important habitats.
- Extensive mature woodlands and coppice that provide a strong sense of containment and sense of place as well as tranquillity and recreational opportunities.
- Historic assarts representing fields converted from woodland from the Medieval period.
- Rural settlement character comprising villages set around greens or scattered in a linear form along the edge of commons which reflect an historic form of settlement.
- Large mansions amongst the charts and associated gardens which provide a sense of history.
- Narrow wooded lanes that cross over the Greensand Ridge.
- The long distance views from clearings on the southern scarp slope that provide a strong sense of elevation and contribute to scenic quality.

Vision

An actively managed landscape comprising large areas of deciduous acid woodland fringed by small pastures defined by maintained hedgerow boundaries and areas of heath and wood pasture. A rural area with a distinctive local vernacular and a legible network of public footpaths and bridleways that provide opportunities for long distance views across the Low Weald between woodland.

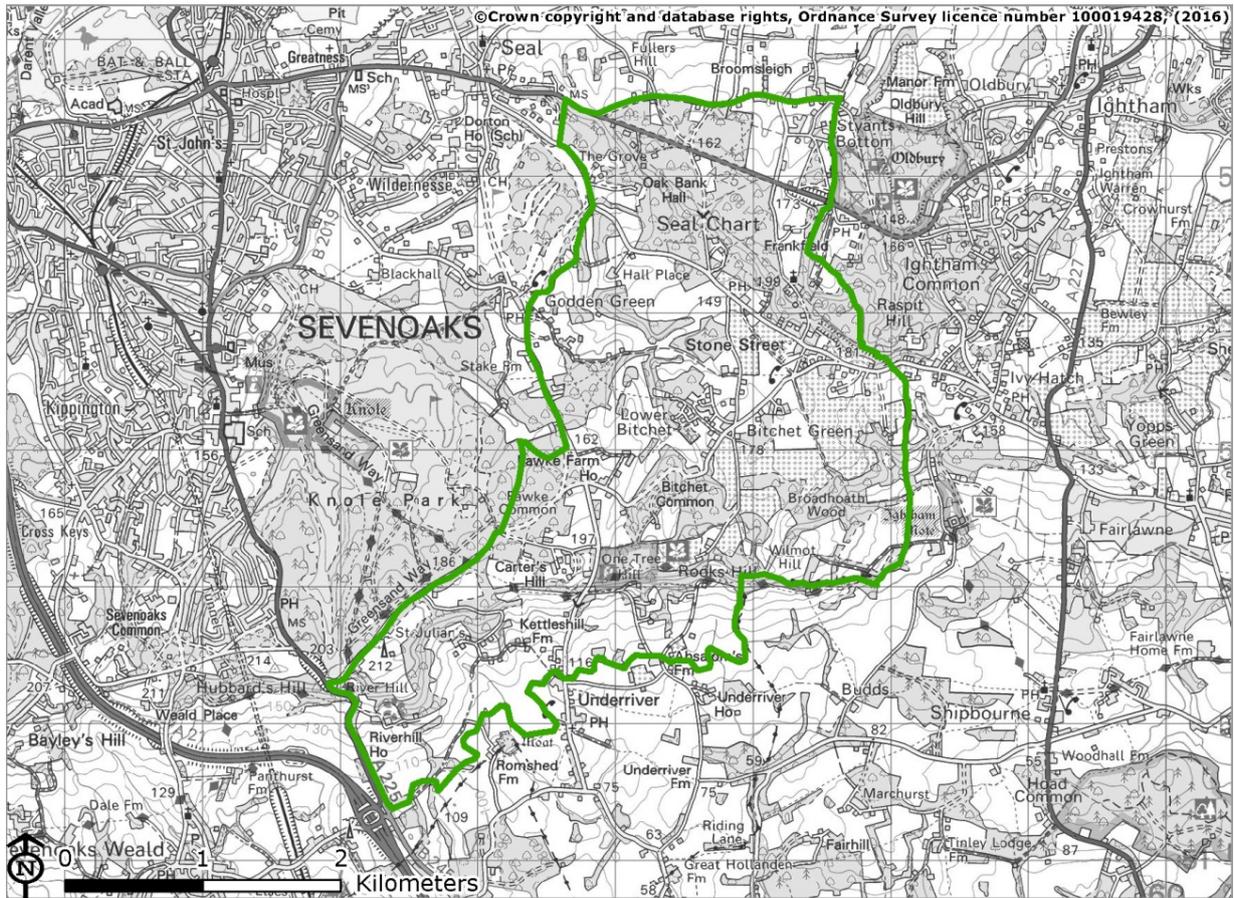
Landscape Guidance

This landscape character area is entirely within the **Kent Downs AONB**, a nationally important designation which offers a high level of development constraint. Refer to the AONB Management Plan for further guidance within the AONB.

Local objectives to conserve and enhance landscape character are outlined below:

- Conserve the extent and characteristic species of woodland with an emphasis on mixed broadleaf acid woodland.
- Reinforce the strong pattern of hedgerows, shaws, and conserve isolated field and hedgerow oak trees.
- Conserve the enclosed, narrow lanes and plan for the next generation of hedgerow trees along roads.
- Maintain pastoral uses amongst woodland and restore habitats such as wood pasture and heathland.
- Conserve the tranquillity and rural character of the landscape.
- Maintain the scale and pattern of linear settlement around commons, isolated farmsteads and hamlets – ensure any new development respects this historic pattern.
- Ensure any new development respects the existing rural setting of small settlements, conserving distinctive greens and commons and avoid ridgeline development.
- Seek the use of sympathetic local building materials such as brick, ragstone and tile hanging.
- Conserve dramatic views south and seek to encourage more viewing opportunities.

10c Sevenoaks Eastern Chart



Key Characteristics

- Undulating landform, steep in places with a distinctive south facing wooded scarp at the edge of the Greensand Ridge.
- Wooded commons comprising mature acid woodlands with Sweet Chestnut coppice in lower areas.
- Small to medium scale fields of arable and pasture situated on the lower slopes and amongst woodland (some assarts), defined by mature hedgerows and woodland edges.
- A large area of orchards south of Stone Street.
- A rural settlement pattern of small villages set around a green, farmsteads, or linear development along edges of commons
- Some large 20th century detached properties with extensive grounds.
- Distinctive Oast houses and use of ragstone and local brick with clay tile roofs and tile-hung facades.
- Narrow winding lanes enclosed by mature hedgerows, including former drove roads.
- Strong sense of enclosure with some long distance views for example from One Tree Hill.

Landscape Character Description

The Seal Chart is situated partly on sandstone relating to the Hythe formation (to the south) and partly on sandstone and mudstone of the Folkestone formation (to the north around Seal Chart). It is an undulating area where slopes occasionally dip steeply into valleys. There is a steep greensand scarp to the south.

Land use is divided between woodland and agriculture, with areas of orchard, arable and pasture set amongst extensive woodlands.

Acid woodlands on the hill-tops are predominantly Oak, Birch and Beech, with other species including Rowan, Broom, Bracken and Heather. On the lower slopes are coppice Sweet Chestnut and Hazel. There is a large area of orchards south of Stone Street.

The irregular field pattern is small to medium scale and is enclosed by woodland and mature hedgerows. Arable field boundaries have largely been replaced by post and wire fencing, but along the narrow winding lanes hedgerows are strong and intact.

Settlement includes isolated farmsteads, small nucleated hamlets and scattered large houses, with many properties built in local materials including brick, ragstone with weather-boarded and half tile-hung facades. The A25 (Maidstone Road) cuts across the north of the area.

Extensive mature woodlands and hedgerows contribute to the sense of enclosure and restrict views out of the area. Views north from the upper slopes do, however, include glimpses of Kemsing and the Chevening scarp to the north, and over the Low Weald to the south, for example from One Tree Hill.

Landscape evaluation

Condition

This is generally a well-managed and intact rural landscape of woodland cover, orchards and pasture. However, there is some hedgerow loss evident and the A25 is a detractor, carving a straight line through the landscape.

Key sensitivities / valued attributes

The following features and characteristics are particularly valued for their contribution to character and for the ecosystem services they provide:

- Acid woodland that provides extensive semi-natural habitat with high ecological value and a distinct sense of place.
- The orchards that provide a sense of place and sense of history.
- Assarts, wooded commons, ancient broadleaf and plantation woodlands that provide a sense of time depth and sense of place.
- The network of public rights of way crossing the Chart that are important for recreation.
- The sparsely settled landscape comprising small villages set around greens, linear development alongside commons and scattered farmsteads/ large houses.
- The distinctive built vernacular that creates visual interest including Oast houses, and local materials including brick, ragstone with weather-boarded and half tile-hung facades which create a distinct sense of place.
- The narrow winding lanes enclosed by mature hedgerows, including former drove roads, that contribute to the strong sense of place.
- Dense tree cover and natural folds in the landform that create a range of visual experiences – but of particular value are the dramatic views south from the scarp, for example from One Tree Hill.

Vision

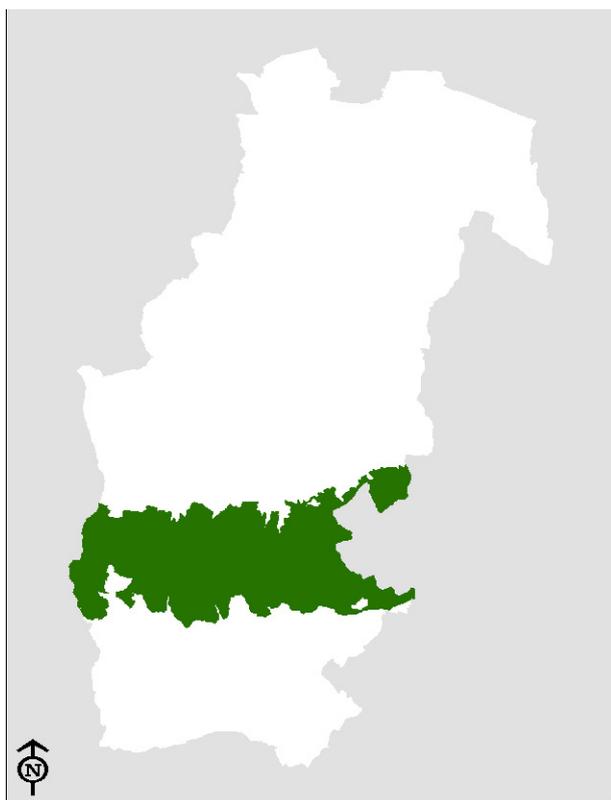
An actively managed landscape comprising large areas of deciduous acid woodland fringed by small pastures defined by maintained hedgerow boundaries and areas of heath, wood pasture and orchards. A rural area with a distinctive local vernacular and accessible via a legible network of public footpaths and bridleways providing a variety of visual experiences.

Landscape Guidance

This landscape character area is entirely within the **Kent Downs AONB**, a nationally important designation which offers a high level of development constraint. Refer to the AONB Management Plan for further guidance within the AONB.

- Local objectives to conserve and enhance landscape character are outlined below:
- Conserve the extent and unique characteristics of the acid woodlands, ensuring that species diversity is retained.
- Support the retention, and expansion, of apple/pear orchards, and consider the reintroduction of cobnut plots (cobnut orchards) which were once typical of this area.
- Conserve the pattern of assarts and commons which provide a sense of history, and consider the reintroduction of wood pasture where appropriate.
- Restore and manage heath and acid grasslands.
- Maintain the network of public rights of way crossing the Chart that are important for recreation.
- Maintain the sparsely settled character, and respect the pattern of settlement comprising small villages set around greens, linear development alongside commons and scattered farmsteads and Oast houses.
- Seek the use of distinctive building materials such as local brick, ragstone, weather-board and half tile-hung facades which create a distinct sense of place.
- Maintain the rural and wooded character of the narrow winding vergeless lanes and Greensand drove roads.
- Conserve dramatic views south and seek to encourage more viewing opportunities.

TYPE 11: LOW WEALD



Key Characteristics

- Low-lying gently undulating and agricultural clay vale landscape.
- Distinctive field pattern of irregular fields enclosed by hedgerows, shaws and small woodlands.
- Many small rivers, tree-lined streams and ponds resulting from brick making, quarrying and the Wealden iron industry.
- Scattered farmsteads and large houses interspersed throughout arable and pasture fields.
- Essentially rural character with scattered settlement around greens or commons – local brick, weatherboard and tile-hung facades typical.
- Historic houses in parklands and oast houses and typical features.
- Long range views with intervening vegetation providing some areas of enclosure.



National landscape character

Low Weald

Geology

Weald Clay Formation with occasional head deposits

Soils

Poor draining, base rich, loamy soils

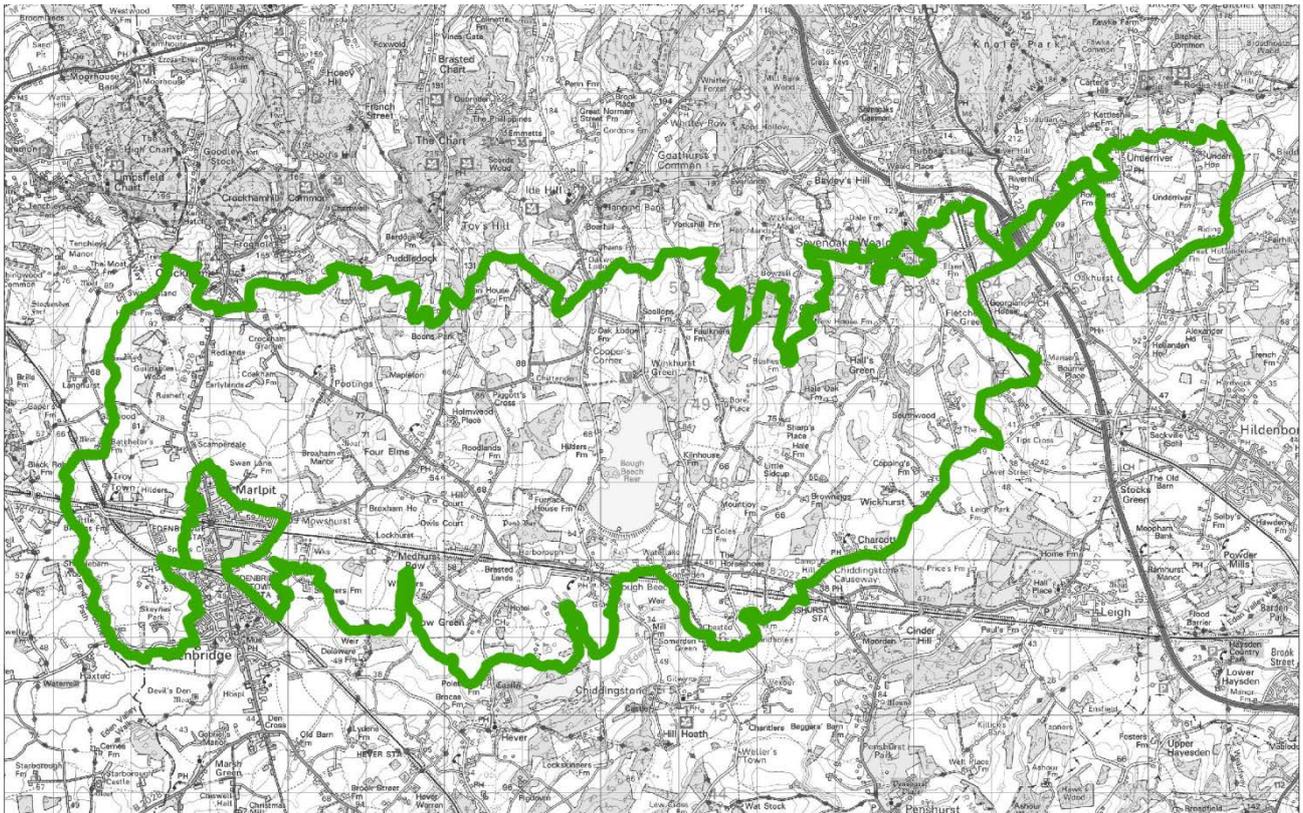
Landform

Very gently undulating

Historic landscape

Medieval informal enclosure. Medium to large medieval informal enclosure. Post medieval enclosure with ponds formed from historic marl pits.

11a Sevenoaks Low Weald



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Key Characteristics

- Low-lying gently undulating and agricultural landscape on Wealden Clay.
- Many streams and ponds as well as Bough Beach Reservoir.
- Mixture of arable and pasture land use within small to medium scale irregular fields.
- The field pattern is well-defined by hedgerows, shaws and small woodlands.
- Old and traditional orchards and remnants of the hop-growing industry including oast houses.
- Isolated farmsteads, large houses and small hamlets scattered throughout the landscape.
- Narrow, hedge-lined rural lanes with wide verges.
- Long views to higher ground: the Greensand scarp to the north and the High Weald to the south.

Landscape Character Description

This area is a low-lying gently undulating agricultural landscape on the Wealden Clay Formation. The land gently slopes from 40m AOD adjacent to the Eden river valley up to 100m AOD on the slopes of the charts.

Lakes, ponds and streams are frequent elements within the area and Bough Beach Reservoir, a flooded valley, provides recreational opportunities.

The majority of the landscape is made up of arable and pasture farmland defined by hedgerows, shaws and woodland edges. Fields are typically small to medium scale, irregular in form, and are connected by irregular woodland (much of it ancient) and a network of mature hedgerows and hedgerow trees. Some arable fields are more open and larger in scale where post and wire fencing has replaced hedgerows. Mature oaks are a feature of this landscape in hedgerows, or in open fields where boundary loss or woodland clearance has occurred.

The settlement pattern is formed by scattered farmsteads, isolated houses and hamlets with traditional buildings comprising red brick, weatherboarding, tile-hung facades and timber frame. Oast Houses are also a feature (buildings designed for drying hops as part of the brewing process).

Highways are traditionally narrow and hedge-lined, but lanes with wide verges also cross the landscape.

The well-treed context provides a strong degree of enclosure although there are some long views to the Greensand scarp and over the Weald where small undulations in topography and open field boundaries allow.

Landscape evaluation

Condition

The intact historic field pattern, and the strong network of features including woodland, tree belts, hedgerows and watercourses contribute to the intact nature of landscape, contributing positively to landscape condition. There has been some hedgerow loss resulting in a decline in condition in places, and there are some urbanising influences around Edenbridge. However, overall there are relatively few detracting features.

Key sensitivities / valued attributes

The following features and characteristics are particularly valued for their contribution to character and for the ecosystem services they provide:

- The well wooded character comprising woodland and mature Oaks which provide a sense of

enclosure, biodiversity and time depth.

- The historic field pattern and accompanying shaws (remnant strips of cleared woodland) that provide an intimate and historic landscape.
- The rural and low density settlement pattern with small villages/ hamlets set around greens or commons and featuring local brick, weatherboard and tile-hung facades which give the area a unique identity.
- The narrow rural lanes, ancient highways and former Roman roads that provide a sense of history and contribute to the scenic quality.
- The ponds and leats that provide wetland habitats and a sense of history relating to quarrying and the Wealden Iron industry.
- Remnant orchards and oast houses that represent the remnants of the hop-growing industry, both of which provide a sense of history and local distinctiveness.
- Historic houses in designed parklands that contribute to visual interest as well as provide a sense of history.
- Views to the Greensand scarp to the north and the High Weald to the south.

Vision

An actively managed lowland rural landscape of small historic fields, well-defined by an intact network of thick hedgerows with mature oaks and shaws. A strong network of woodland that provides a sense of enclosure and texture, with winding country lanes and scattered rural farmsteads and hamlets.

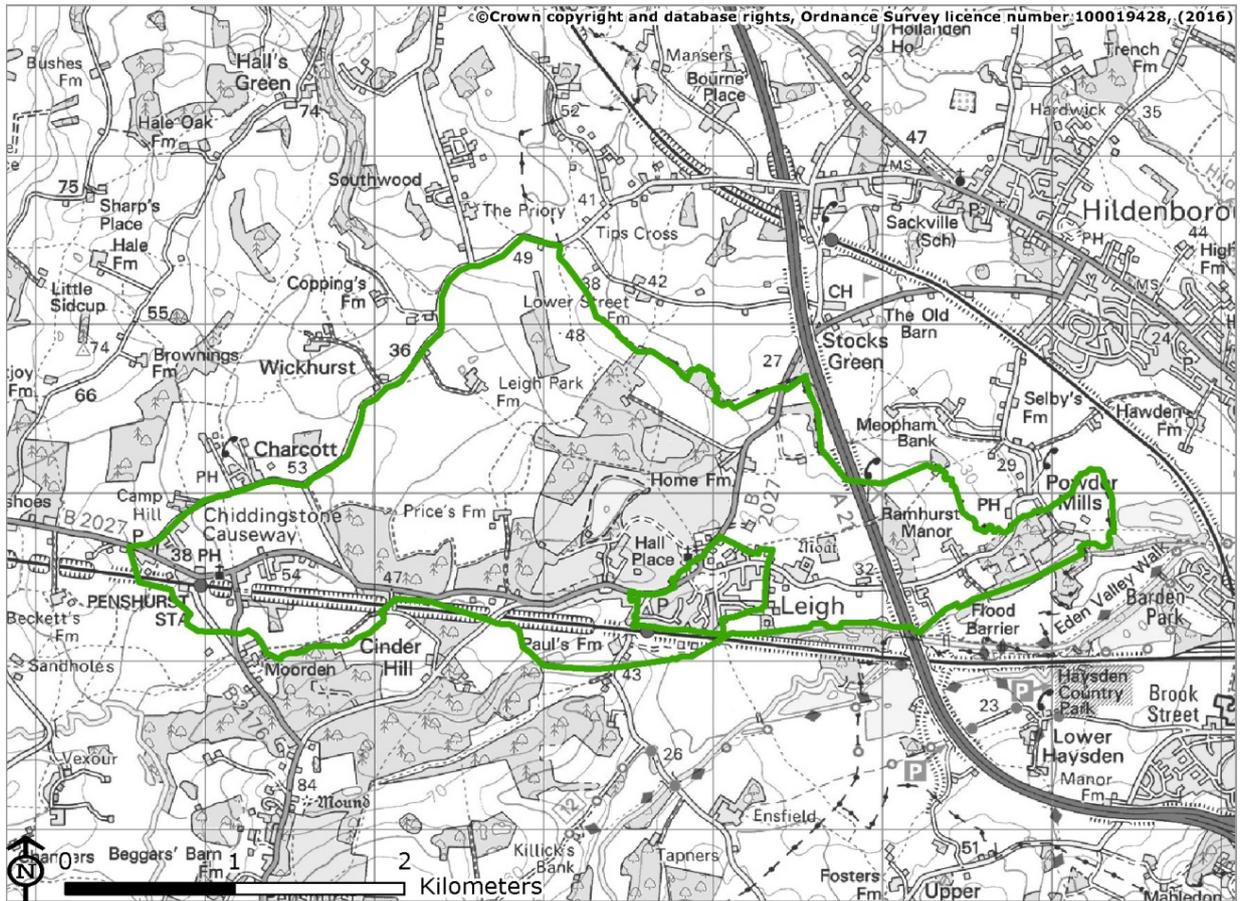
Landscape Guidance

The northern part of this landscape character area falls within the **Kent Downs AONB**, a nationally important designation which offers a high level of development constraint. Refer to the AONB Management Plan for further guidance within the AONB.

Local objectives to conserve and enhance landscape character are outlined below:

- Conserve the small scale, historic enclosure pattern and associated hedgerows and shaws – consider opportunities to reinstate field boundaries where these have been lost. Promote planting to hedgerow oaks.
- Conserve the areas of woodland and encourage appropriate management programmes to ensure their long term survival. Promote the use of wood products linked to management of woodlands.
- Maintain the diversity of tree cover in woodland, tree belts, hedgerows and standard trees and use planting to screen urbanising influences such as the A12.
- Conserve the ponds which provide a sense of history, particularly those linked to the Wealden Iron Industry.
- Manage water courses and features for their biodiversity interest.
- Conserve the character of the narrow rural tree lined lanes – resist sub-urbanisation or urbanisation of these routes.
- Maintain the rural character of the area and the sparse, well integrated settlement – ensure that any new development respects existing built character and responds to sense of place.
- Seek the use of sympathetic local building materials in any new development such as local brick, weatherboard and tile-hung facades.
- Conserve the remnants of the orchard and hop-growing industry, including oast houses. Consider replanting orchards.
- Conserve views to the Greensand scarp to the north and the High Weald to the south.

11b Leigh Low Weald



Key Characteristics

- Low lying gently sloping landscape underlain by Wealden Clay and Upper Tunbridge Wells Sand Formation.
- A transitional area between the High and Low Weald comprising rural farmland.
- Tree-lined streams draining into the River Medway.
- Agricultural landscape comprising a variety of field sizes, defined by hedgerows and wooded edges.
- Irregular blocks of woodland and plantations are features.
- Settlement typically rural farmsteads, hamlets and the village of Leigh.
- Historic halls and estates at Knotley House and Hall Place with parkland features and estate walls.
- Generally contained area with intervening vegetation limiting long views out.

Landscape Character Description

This area is partly on Wealden Clay and partly on the Upper Tunbridge Wells Sand Formation. It is an area of low lying and gently sloping landform, rising from 30m AOD around the small streams that flow through the area up to just over 50m AOD at Chiddingstone Causeway. It is generally less undulating than the adjacent Area 11A.

Streams drain east into the River Medway. Other water features in this relatively lowland landscape include a number of small ponds around isolated farmsteads and the lake at Hall Place.

Land use comprises a mix of arable and pasture fields which vary in size with smaller older fields around hamlets and larger fields (where field amalgamation/hedgerow loss has occurred) on higher ground. Fields are mostly defined by hedgerows and woodland edges as well as tree-lined streams following field boundaries. Irregular blocks of woodland (much of it ancient or ancient replanted woodland) and rectilinear plantations are key features of the landscape, particularly around the estate parkland at Hall Place. Parkland trees are also a feature of this area.

Historically, the settlement pattern has been a rural pattern of scattered farms, Halls, hamlets (eg Chiddingstone Causeway) and the small village of Leigh serving the agricultural community. Leigh is an extended village, inset within the character area, with a village green at one end surrounded by older buildings, Victorian Gothic buildings scattered along the High Street and around the boundaries of Hall Place, and modern buildings to the south. Trees are abundant throughout and tree belts also characterise the urban edge. Buildings include materials such as hung-tiles and weatherboarding. Main roads are infrequent although the A21 cuts across the eastern area from north to south.

Landscape evaluation

Condition

Ancient woodland, plantations and historic parkland contribute to an intact landscape and contribute positively to landscape condition. However, the amalgamation of fields and decline in hedgerows have eroded condition in some parts of the LCA. The A21 and modern residential development are detractors.

Key sensitivities / valued attributes

The following features and characteristics are particularly valued for their contribution to character and for the ecosystem services they provide:

- The rural character of the landscape that provides a sense of peace and tranquillity.
- The network of hedgerows and remnant areas of historic field patterns that provide a sense of history and contribute to biodiversity.
- The designed landscapes/ estates of Knotley House and Hall Place which provide a sense of history and contribute to scenic quality.

- Buildings that reflect the local vernacular including ragstone, tile-hung facades and weatherboarding.
- The remnant ancient woodlands and other plantations which provide biodiversity value, a backdrop to views.
- The field ponds and naturalistic watercourses that provide visual and biodiversity interest.

Vision

An actively managed rural landscape with a well-defined network of mature hedgerows marking historic field patterns, ancient woodland and historic parkland with historic buildings. An area rural farmland and woodland that provides an essentially rural setting to small villages and hamlets with minimal urbanising influences.

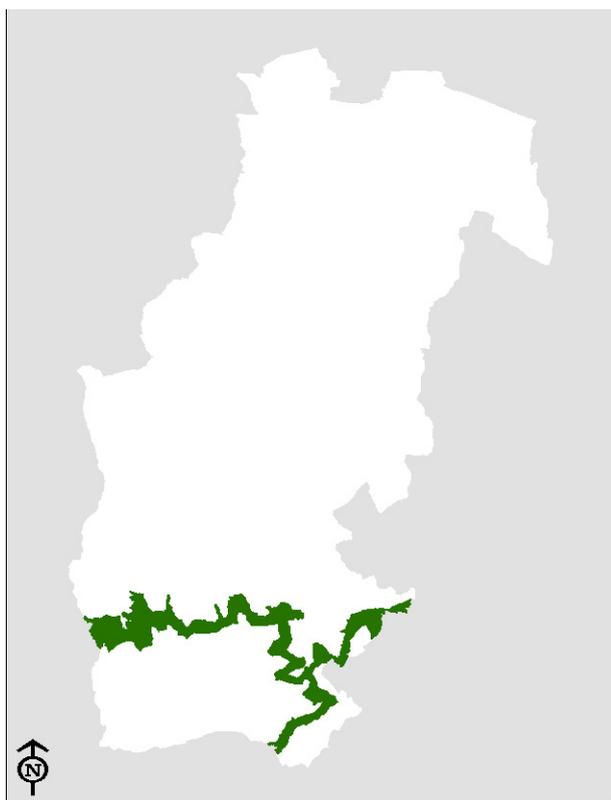
Landscape Guidance

Only a very small part of this LCA lies within the **High Weald AONB**, a nationally important designation which offers a high level of development constraint. The majority lies outside the AONB designation. Refer to the AONB Management Plan for further guidance within the AONB.

Local objectives to conserve and enhance landscape character are outlined below:

- Conserve the essentially rural character of the landscape, resisting suburbanising or urbanising features.
- Create and reinforce the hedgerow network through replanting lost boundaries and ensuring ongoing management and replanting, including planting of hedgerow trees.
- Ensure ongoing management of woodlands to ensure their long term survival. Consider extending to enhance the green infrastructure network.
- Conserve the historic character of the parkland landscapes, their historic buildings, and estate walls.
- Seek the use of sympathetic local building materials in any new development such as brick, ragstone and tile hanging.
- Ensure any new development respects the rural character of settlements, conserving distinctive greens and commons – refer to the Leigh Conservation Areas Appraisal for any proposals in that area.

TYPE 12: WEALDEN RIVER VALLEYS



Key Characteristics

- Low-lying, wide valleys containing the meandering courses of the River Eden and the River Medway.
- Mixture of irregular fields of pasture and some larger arable fields above the floodplain.
- Tree cover is limited to watercourses, field boundaries and small scattered shaws.
- Some mature hedgerows are intact along lanes elsewhere fragmented and over mature and supplemented with post and wire fencing.
- River courses are marked by trees.
- Many streams cross the landscape and drain into the river.
- Rural qualities with low density of settlement comprising isolated farmsteads and dwellings as well as some small villages and hamlets.



National landscape character

Low Weald / High Weald

Geology

Alluvium with river gravels and head deposits

Soils

Heavy soils affected by groundwater

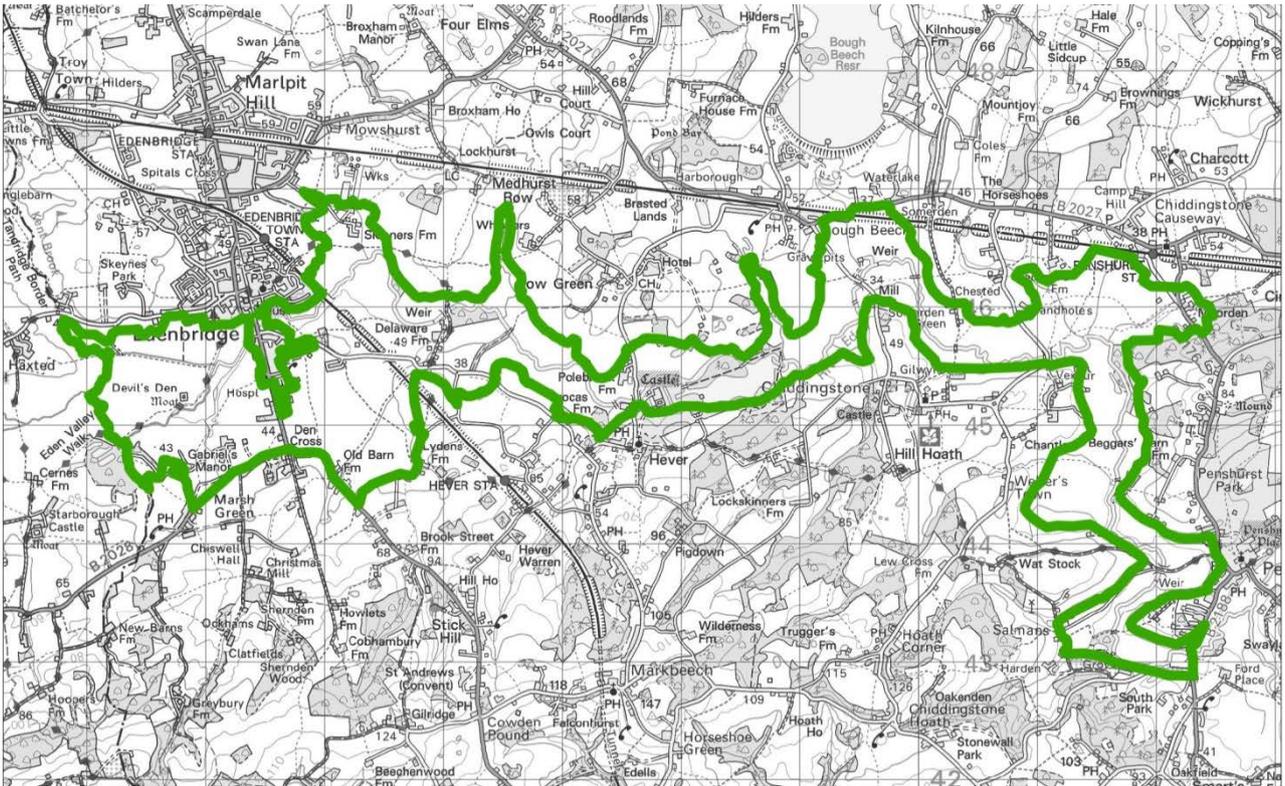
Landform

Flat to gently undulating river valleys

Historic landscape

Predominately enclosure of meadows and other pastures along the valley floor.

12a Eden Valley



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Key Characteristics

- Low lying flat to gently undulating valley bottom located on Wealden group bedrock, but influenced by superficial river deposits.
- The River Eden meanders through the area.
- Seasonally flooded with many small ponds and crossed by small streams.
- Tree cover limited to field boundaries
- Rough grassland and sheep pasture are features.
- Development typically limited to scattered farmsteads on the edges.
- Hever Castle with its historic ornamental gardens is a feature (also the childhood home of Anne Boleyn).
- Long views to the Greensand Ridge to the north.

Landscape Character Description

This low-lying area is characterised by flat to gently undulating landform ranging from between 30m and 45m AOD. The landscape is influenced by underlying river terrace sand and gravels, and silty alluvium deposits, underlain by Wealden Group bedrock. The River Eden meanders through the landscape passing close to the settlement edge of Edenbridge in the west and Penshurst in the east, and is well-defined by tree belts. Some smaller ponds are situated close to farmsteads scattered throughout the area and other smaller streams run along field boundaries connecting with the main river.

Irregular fields, both arable and pasture, make up much of the landscape with tree belts, hedgerows and small watercourses delineating the field pattern. Post and wire fencing is also present around arable fields. Tree cover is generally limited to field boundaries although there are small areas of woodland around the settlement edge of Edenbridge including a traditional orchard. Concentrations of woodland are also located around Hever Castle and there is an area of assarts east of Chiddingstone.

Development is typically limited to scattered farmsteads and is crossed by a number of roads including the B2026 which follows the old route of a roman road. There are some long views to the Greensand ridge to the north, and wide views generally over the farmland.

Landscape evaluation

Condition

The intact field pattern and intact ecological network of hedgerows and semi-natural habitats contribute to condition. However, intensive farming practices have compromised the integrity of this in places and development at Edenbridge and on the fringes of the valley as well as the roads and railway that cross the area are detracting features.

Key sensitivities / valued attributes

The following features and characteristics are particularly valued for their contribution to character and for the ecosystem services they provide:

- The river, associated drainage ditches and wetland habitats including wet woodland and shaws which provide a network of habitats of strong ecological value.
- The historic pattern of small pastoral fields (including medieval fields and assarts) defined by ditches and species rich hedgerows that provide a sense of history.
- Lowland meadows and fen which are typical of the river valley floodplain and are of interest for their history and biodiversity, as well as providing scenic interest.
- The rural character of the lanes that cross the river and historic river crossing points including the survival of the Roman road at Edenbridge.
- The rural character of the area and low density rural settlement pattern of scattered

farmsteads.

- Hever Castle and its associated grounds and woodland which create a strong sense of place and contribute to the sense of history (Hever Castle was the childhood home of Anne Boleyn).
- The medieval moated site at Devil's Den which provides a sense of history (designated as a scheduled monument).
- The network of public rights of way including the Eden Valley Walk which provide public access and enjoyment of the valley landscape.

Vision

A habitat-rich floodplain landscape in which the course of the River Eden is prominent and accessible to the public. A landscape with historic field patterns defined by species rich hedgerows with mature trees and remnant shaws, and a rural low density settlement pattern of scattered isolated rural properties, enclosed by tree planting.

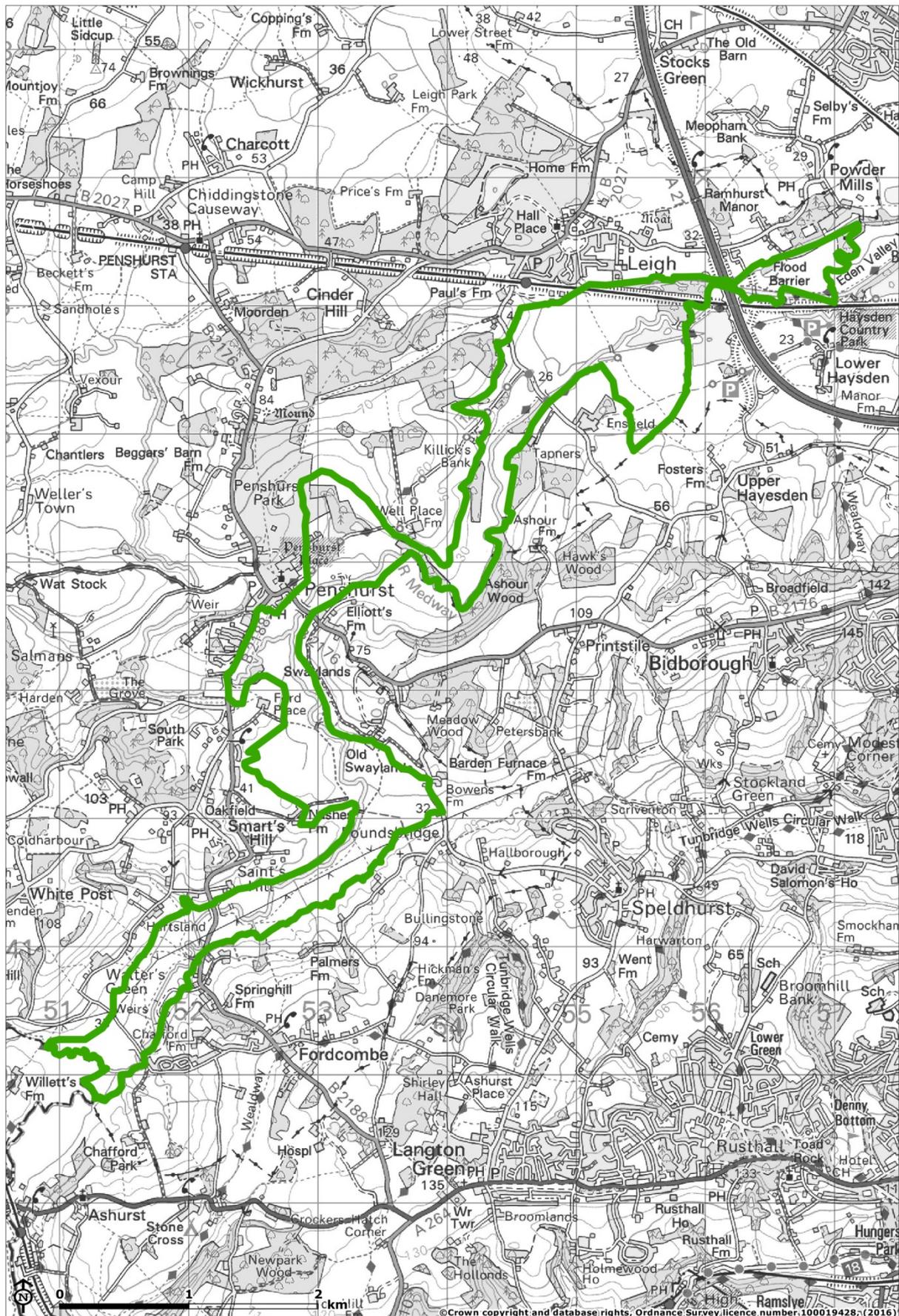
Landscape Guidance

The eastern part of this landscape character area is partially within the **High Weald AONB**, a nationally important designation which offers a high level of development constraint. Refer to the AONB Management Plan for further guidance within the AONB.

Local objectives to conserve and enhance landscape character are outlined below:

- Conserve and manage the river, associated drainage ditches and wetland habitats for biodiversity interest and aim to restore and create fen, wet woodland, reedbed and wet grassland habitats.
- Maintain the low density rural settlement character and use trees to screen modern development in views from the valley. Avoid developing in the floodplain.
- Conserve and restore the historic field pattern and consider the reestablishment of hedgerows and reintroduction of standard trees where they were historically present. Aim to connect fragmented woodland.
- Conserve historic features such as Hever Castle, the medieval moated site at Devil's Den and the Roman road, and encourage the appreciation of these assets.
- Aim to restore and create lowland meadows and fen adjacent to the river.
- Conserve views to the Greensand ridge to the north.

12b Upper Medway Valley





Key Characteristics

- Low lying flat to gently undulating valley bottom located on Wealden group bedrock, but influenced by superficial river deposits.
- River Medway meanders through the flood plain with many adjoining streams and drainage ditches.
- Mostly pasture land use with fields defined by hedgerows and hedgerow trees, with some arable on the higher land.
- Trees mark the river banks with small shaws in field corners.
- Several lanes cut across the valley and bridges are a feature.
- Rural character with low density of settlement of scattered isolated properties mainly confined to higher ground on valley edges and at river crossings.
- Pylons visually prominent across the river valley.

Landscape Character Description

This valley landscape is characterised by flat, low-lying topography ranging from 25m to 30m AOD, underlain by alluvium drift deposits and bedrock geology of the Wealden Group. The River Medway meanders through the valley with small tributaries flowing into the river from the valley sides. Drainage ditches defining field boundaries are also common particularly in the north.

The area predominantly comprises irregular pasture fields defined by hedgerows and tree belts (including remnant shaws). Trees mark the river banks. In other areas, the land is under arable use, particularly around Penshurst and these areas have been subject to some boundary loss.

A number of narrow lanes cross the valley and ornamental bridges in different styles are a feature. Built form is sparse and limited to a few isolated properties (including farmsteads) at the outer edges of the floodplain and at river crossings.

The landscape is relatively open allowing some relatively long views across the flat floodplain farmland. Woodland and tree belts are features in these views. Pylons are noticeable features as they cross the valley.

Landscape evaluation

Condition

The intactness of this floodplain landscape (including the vegetated watercourse, intact field patterns with mature hedgerows and wetland habitats) contribute positively to landscape condition and provide a relatively strong ecological network. However detractors include hedgerow loss, pylons that are prominent in this flat landscape and the A21 which crosses the valley on embankment.

Key sensitivities / valued attributes

The following features and characteristics are particularly valued for their contribution to character and for the ecosystem services they provide:

- The river, associated drainage ditches and wetland habitats including wet woodland and shaws which provide a network of habitats of strong ecological value.
- The historic pattern of pastoral fields defined by ditches and species rich hedgerows that provide a sense of history.
- Lowland meadows and fen which are typical of the river valley floodplain and are of interest for their history and biodiversity, as well as providing scenic interest.
- The rural character of the lanes that cross the river which contribute to the sense of rurality and scenic quality of the valley.
- Distinctive bridges across the River which add to the sense of history and contribute to scenic quality (as well as allowing access to the river).
- The low density rural settlement pattern of scattered isolated rural properties which provides a sense of rurality.
- The network of public rights of way which provide public access and enjoyment of the valley landscape.
- Views across and along the valley.

Vision

A habitat-rich floodplain landscape in which the course of the River Medway is prominent and accessible to the public. A landscape with historic field patterns defined by species rich hedgerows with mature trees and remnant shaws, and a rural low density settlement pattern of scattered isolated rural properties, set within tree planting.

Landscape Guidance

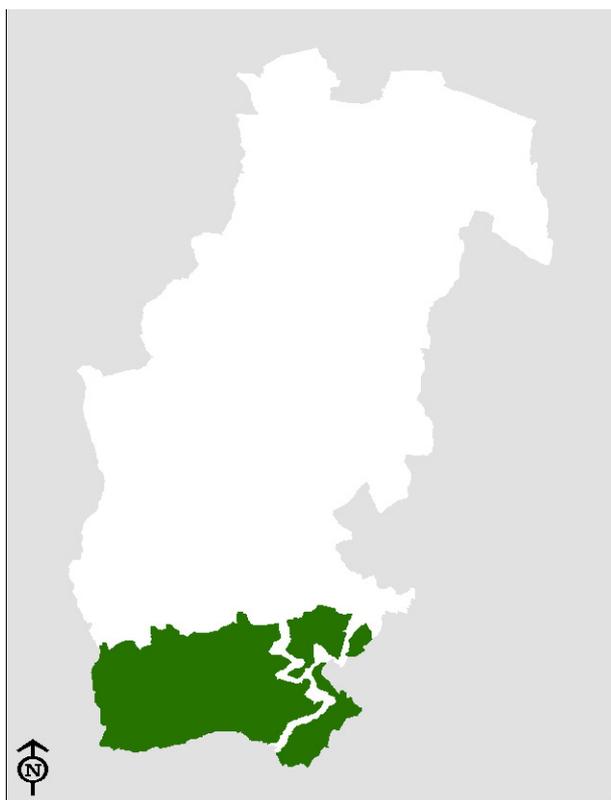
The Landscape character area is almost entirely within the **High Weald AONB**, a nationally important designation which offers a high level of development constraint. Refer to the AONB Management Plan for further guidance within the AONB.

Local objectives to conserve and enhance landscape character are outlined below:

- Conserve and manage the river, associated drainage ditches and wetland habitats for biodiversity interest and aim to restore and create fen, wet woodland, reedbed and wet grassland habitats.
- Maintain the low density rural settlement character and use trees to screen modern development in views from the valley. Avoid developing in the floodplain.
- Conserve and restore the historic field pattern and consider the reestablishment of hedgerows and reintroduction of standard trees where they were historically present.
- Aim to connect fragmented woodland and restore and create lowland meadows and fen adjacent to the river.
- Restore the visual prominence of bridging points across the river.

- Conserve historic features such as the landscape features within Peshurst Park and Peshurst Conservation Area.
- Conserve views along and across the valley and consider providing opportunities to stop and enjoy the views.

TYPE 13: HIGH WEALD



Key Characteristics

- Well-wooded, undulating farmland with steep wooded gills and elevation varying between 35m and almost 150m AOD.
- A strong field pattern of small to medium-scale irregular fields of Medieval assarts of other informal enclosures dating to the medieval or 17th/18th-centuries.
- A large number of mature broadleaf woodlands and shaws, many ancient.
- Sweet chestnut plantations are a feature on the lower slopes.
- Fields are mostly in pastoral use with some arable fields. Orchards are a locally distinctive feature.
- Narrow rural lanes are lined by mature hedgerows and hedgerow trees or enclosed by woodland creating tree tunnels.
- Rural settlement pattern of historic farmsteads and hamlets with some more modern ribbon residential development along lanes.
- Numerous parklands, Medieval manor houses and Oast houses.
- Remnant ponds along gills (eg Furnace Pond) are remnants of the Wealden Iron Industry.
- A generally enclosed landscape, but with occasional long views north over the Low Weald towards the Charts, and over the adjacent Wealden River Valleys.
- Dark night skies.

National landscape character

High Weald

Geology

Ashdown Beds overlain with Wadhurst Clay and Tunbridge Wells Sand

Soils

Poorly draining, sandy and silty clays

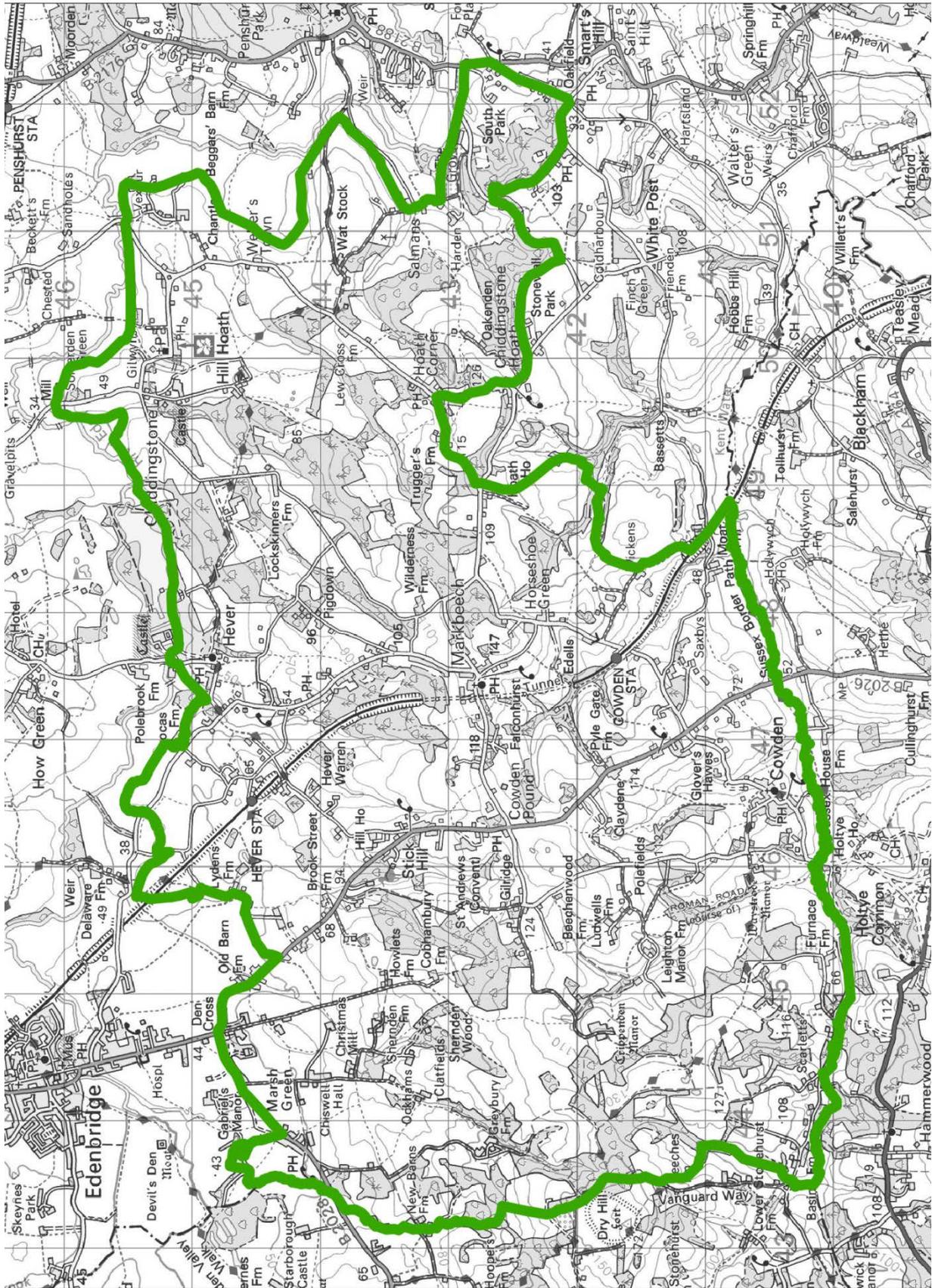
Landform

Steeply undulating

Historic landscape

Post medieval enclosure with ponds formed from historic marl pits. Medieval informal enclosure.

13a Cowden to Chiddingstone High Weald



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Key Characteristics

- Elevated and undulating topography underlain by Wadhurst clays and Ashdown sandstones with rocky deposits.
- Steep wooded gills cutting through the landscape, containing ponds linked to the former Iron Industry. Many infield ponds are also present.
- Small to medium scale pastoral landscape enclosed by woodlands, shaws and dense hedgerows.
- Large irregular areas of coppice and mixed broadleaf woodland.
- Narrow and wide country lanes, many with grass verges, some enclosed entirely by woodland – these include ancient routeways or droveways which are often sunken.
- Rural settlement pattern of historic farmsteads, Medieval manors houses and hamlets.
- Traditional Kentish style properties including local brick and steep clay tile roofs, weatherboarding and tile hanging.
- Distinctive Oast houses with links to the former hop industry, and orchards.
- Designed landscapes including the grounds of Hever Castle, Chiddingstone Castle country house and historic estate parklands, and

Landscape Character Description

This area is situated predominantly on mudstones associated with the Wadhurst Clay formation with Ashdown silty sandstone outcrops. The topography is characterised by elevated and undulating land ranging from between about 40m and 147m AOD at Markbeece. Natural ponds within fields are common and gills are incised into the landscape, containing ponds linked to the former Wealden Iron Industry.

There is a strong field pattern of historic fields and a high density of woodland comprising coppice, mixed broadleaf (some ancient) and coniferous woodland. Shaws and thick hedgerows are also typical and enclose fields. Pasture predominates, although there are some areas of arable. Oak and ash trees within fields are also common singularly and as small groups and small paddocks delineated by post and rail fencing are common close to settlements.

The settlement pattern is of historic farmsteads, small hamlets and Medieval manor houses. These are linked by both narrow and wide country lanes, many of the latter with grass verges. There are many traditional Kentish style properties with a range of building styles that include timber-framed, weatherboarded, local brick and hung tile with steep local clay tile roofs. There are also occasional Oasts and thatched

Stonewall Park.

- Generally enclosed but with some long views north over the Low Weald and over the adjacent Eden Valley.

cottages around small areas of hops and soft fruit growing.

This area includes parkland associated with Hever Castle, Chiddingstone Castle country house and estate and Stonewall Park. Distinctive features such as metal park fencing and wattle hurdles have been introduced around field and property boundaries.

Views within the area are generally enclosed by woodland, but there are some long range views out to the Greensand Ridge to the north, as well as across the High Weald and into the adjacent Eden Valley.

Landscape evaluation

Condition

The unified pattern of historic field patterns and intact woodlands connected by a network of mature hedgerows and shaws and historic buildings results in a rural landscape in good condition. However, some field boundary loss has resulted in an adverse effect on landscape condition in places.

Key sensitivities / valued attributes

The following features and characteristics are particularly valued for their contribution to character and for the ecosystem services they provide:

- The ancient field pattern of Medieval assarts and other informal enclosures which provide a distinctive sense of place and sense of history.
- The steep wooded gills that are distinctive features, and the ponds linked to the former Iron Industry that provide a sense of history.
- The woodlands (many ancient), shaws and dense hedgerows with trees that provide the well wooded character and distinct sense of place.
- Remnant orchards which indicate the historic importance of the landscape for fruit growing.
- The country lanes and adjacent verges, thick hedges and tree tunnels that provide sense of place and contribute to the rural character of the area, including ancient routeways or droveways which are often sunken.
- The low density and rural settlement pattern including the historic farmsteads, Medieval manors houses and hamlets which provide a sense of history.
- The traditional Kentish architecture including local brick and steep clay tile roofs, weatherboarding and tile hanging that provides a distinct sense of place.
- The distinctive Oast houses which provide a recognition of the former hop industry and provide distinctive sense of place.
- The designed parkland landscapes which provide a sense of history and contribute to scenic quality.
- The long views north over the Low Weald and over the adjacent Eden Valley.

Vision

A rural and historic landscape with a distinctive High Weald character comprising a strong field pattern defined by a network of woodlands, shaws and thick well managed hedgerows and rural settlement with a distinctive vernacular. A naturalistic area with a good network of footpaths which enable enjoyment of the landscape, and opportunities to enjoy the views across adjacent river valleys and to the Cherts to the north.

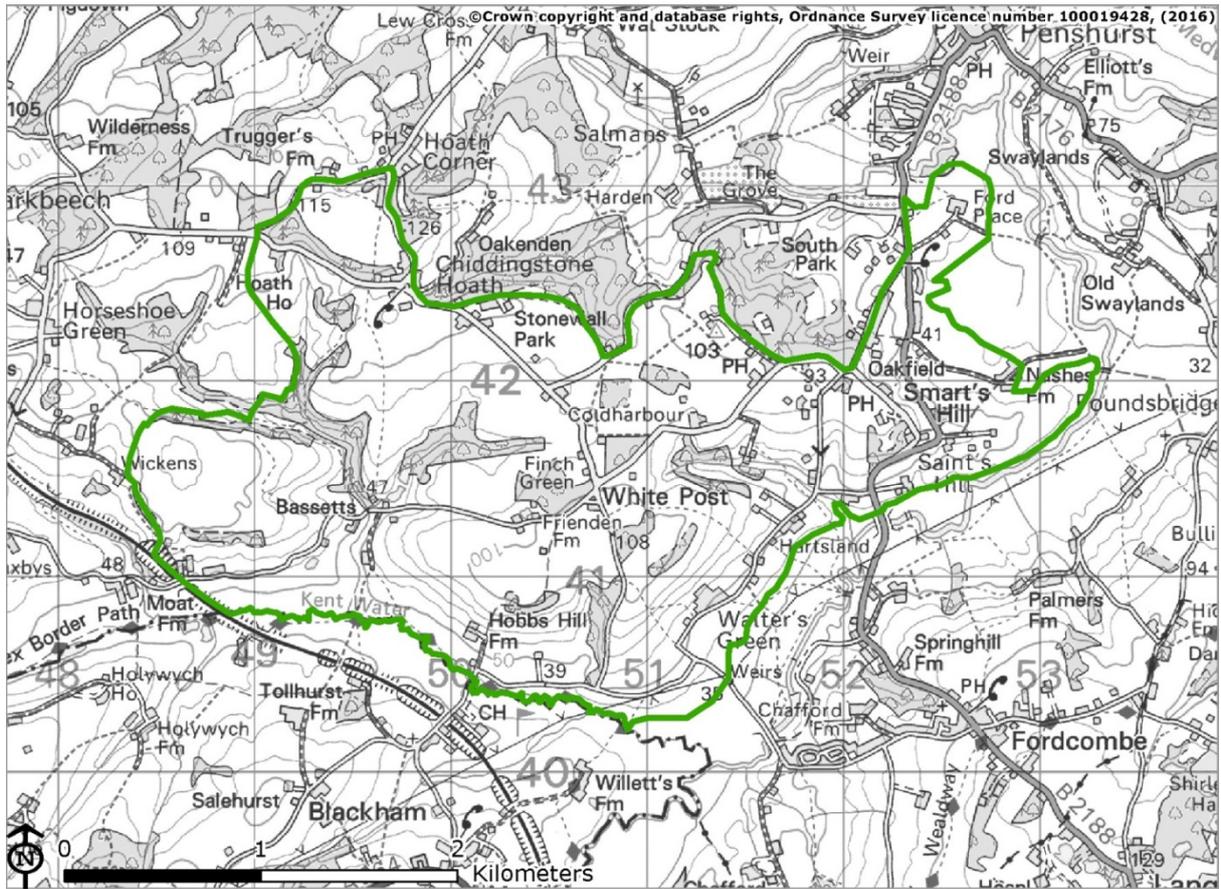
Landscape Guidance

This landscape character area is almost entirely within the **High Weald AONB**, a nationally important designation which offers a high level of development constraint. Refer to the AONB Management Plan for further guidance within the AONB.

Local objectives to conserve and enhance landscape character are outlined below:

- Maintain the strong field pattern of Medieval assarts and other informal enclosures and their boundary features including shaws and dense hedgerows. Consider replanting field boundaries where they have been lost.
- Respect the steep wooded gills, ensuring management for their long term survival, and preservation of the ponds linked to the former Iron Industry.
- Conserve and manage the woodlands to ensure their long term survival, including planning for the next generation of hedgerow trees. Promote the use of wood products linked to management of woodlands.
- Conserve historic orchards and consider reinstating where they have been lost to preserve this historic land use.
- Manage water courses and features for their biodiversity interest.
- Maintain the character of the country lanes, maintaining their adjacent verges, thick hedges and tree tunnels and resisting erosion or road improvements that would change their character – this is particularly important for the ancient routeways or droveways.
- Maintain a low density and rural settlement pattern, preserving the historic buildings (including farmsteads, Medieval manors and Oast houses), and ensuring any new development is well integrated into the landscape, respects existing built character and responds to sense of place.
- Preserve the traditional Kentish architecture including local brick and steep clay tile roofs, weatherboarding and tile hanging that provides a distinct sense of place.
- Conserve the designed parkland landscapes and their settings.
- Provide opportunities to enjoy the landscape, and the long views north over the Low Weald and over the adjacent Eden Valley.

13b Chiddingstone Hoath Plateau



Key Characteristics

- Complex geology of sandstone formations with rocky outcrops on the high ground.
- Steeply undulating slopes leading to an elevated plateau with wooded gills containing ponds linked to the former Iron Industry.
- A mixed arable and pasture farmland landscape with a strong field pattern enclosed by woodlands, shaws and hedgerows.
- Holm oaks and field ponds are notable features.
- Narrow and wide country lanes, many with grass verges, some enclosed entirely by woodland.
- Tranquil landscape with a rural settlement pattern of historic farmsteads and hamlets including locally distinctive oast houses.
- Grand manor houses of historic interest including Stonewall Park.
- Relatively open aspect with topography and small wooded shaws framing long distance views over the Medway Valley.

Landscape Character Description

This area is characterised by a complex geology of different sandstones situated within a larger of Wadhurst clays. Large rocky outcrops occur on high ground and the acidity of the soils particularly around these outcrops is indicated by the surrounding vegetation of Rhododendron, Broom, Gorse and Bracken.

The landform is undulating and ranges from between 110m AOD on the plateau and 35m AOD where it meets the adjacent river valleys. The steep folds in landform are lined with extensive wooded gills which run into the valley floors and are characteristic elements of the landscape. There are also some ponds within the fields and in the gills, with links to the former Wealden Iron Industry.

Irregular, medium scale fields of Medieval assarts of other informal enclosures dating to the medieval or 17th/18th-centuries supporting a mixture of arable and pasture make up much of the landscape. Small scale woodlands and shaws can be seen scattered over the steep slopes and contain a characteristic mix of Beech, Holly and Oak. Holm Oaks within in fields are a notable feature and Hazel hedgerows are characteristic of the winding rural lanes.

Settlement is generally low density and rural in character, comprising historic farmsteads (some with Oasts) and small hamlets e.g. Chiddingstone Hoath. The area also has grand manor houses of historic interest including Stonewall Park which comprises a large Georgian house, first built by the Woodgate family in the 16th century. Part of the associated parkland is located in this LCA.

This area is not as enclosed as other parts of the high Weald and there are some relatively long distance views from the plateau tops, as well as over the adjacent Medway Valley.

Landscape evaluation

Condition

The intact field patterns, woodland, hedgerows, steep wooded gills and historic settlement pattern contribute positively to landscape condition. However, there has been some hedgerow loss which has had an adverse effect on condition.

Key sensitivities / valued attributes

The following features and characteristics are particularly valued for their contribution to character and for the ecosystem services they provide:

- Rocky outcrops on high ground surrounded by distinctive acid loving vegetation of

Rhododendron, Broom, Gorse and Bracken which provides an indication of the underlying geology.

- The deep wooded gills containing ponds linked to the former Iron Industry which provide a distinct sense of place and time depth.
- The strong field pattern of irregular, medium scale fields of Medieval assarts of other informal enclosures dating to the medieval or 17th/18th-centuries which provide a sense of history.
- The deciduous woodlands and shaws which contribute to the wooded character of the landscape, and many of which have great time depth.
- The hedgerows with hedgerow trees that define the field patten, as well as the holm oaks and field ponds that are locally distinctive.
- The rural lanes, their grass verges and bordering hedges/ trees.
- The rural settlement pattern and particularly the historic farmsteads and hamlets including oast houses that are locally distinctive and a local vernacular including brick, weatherboarding, tile hung facades and steeply pitched clay tile roofs.
- Grand manor houses of historic interest including Stonewall and its adjacent park.
- The long distance views over adjacent Medway Valley.

Vision

A rural and historic landscape with a distinctive High Weald character comprising a strong field pattern defined by a network of woodlands, shaws and thick well managed hedgerows and rural settlement with a distinctive vernacular. A naturalistic area with a good network of footpaths which enable enjoyment of the landscape, and opportunities to enjoy the views across adjacent river valleys and across the high Weald.

Landscape Guidance

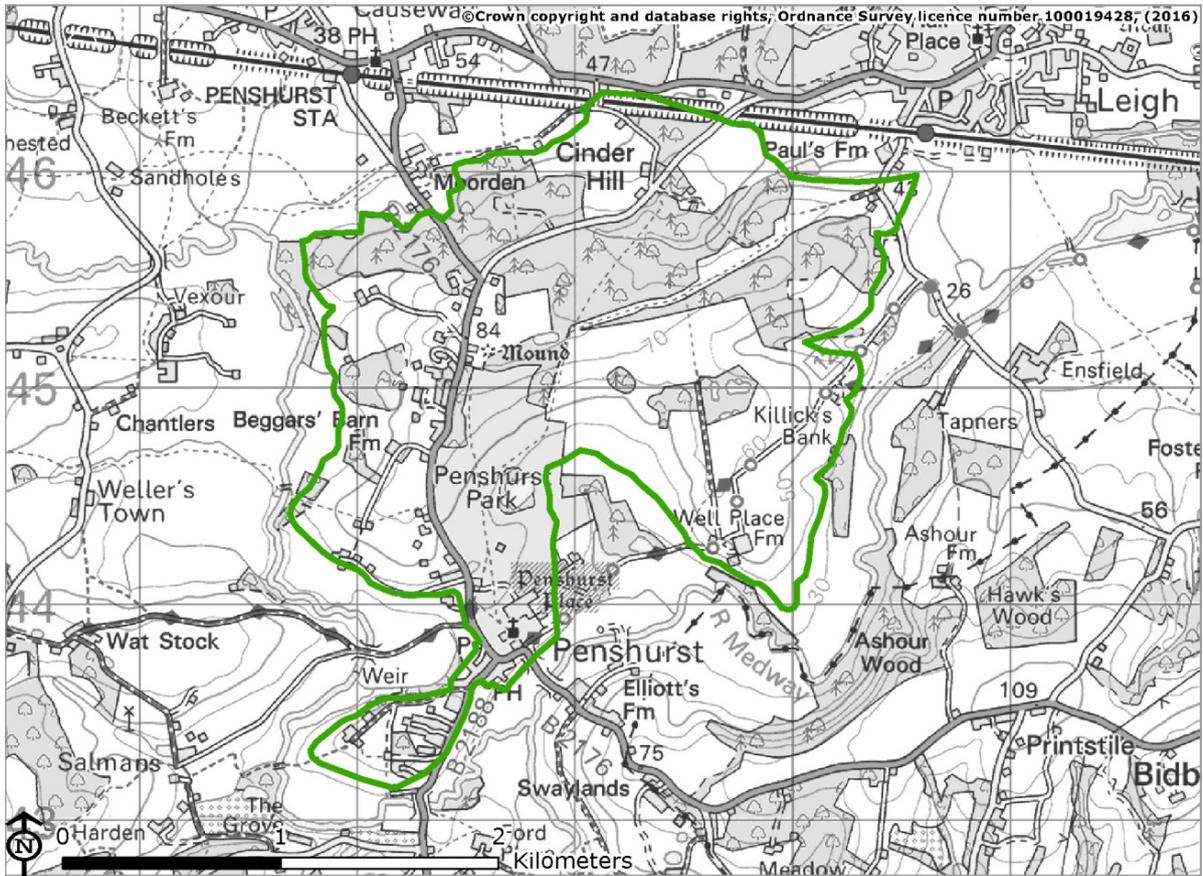
The whole of this landscape character area is within the **High Weald AONB**, a nationally important designation which offers a high level of development constraint. Refer to the AONB Management Plan for further guidance within the AONB.

Local objectives to conserve and enhance landscape character are outlined below:

- Protect the rocky outcrops on high ground surrounded and the associated acid loving vegetation of Rhododendron, Broom, Gorse, Bracken.
- Maintain the strong field pattern of Medieval assarts and other informal enclosures and their boundary features including shaws and hedgerows. Consider replanting field boundaries where they have been lost.
- Respect the steep wooded gills, ensuring management for their long term survival, and preservation of the ponds linked to the former Iron Industry. Manage water courses and features for their biodiversity interest.
- Conserve and manage the woodlands to ensure their long term survival, including planning for the next generation of hedgerow trees. Promote the use of wood products linked to management of woodlands.
- Maintain the character of the country lanes, maintaining their adjacent verges, hedges and trees and resisting erosion or road improvements that would change their character.
- Maintain a low density and rural settlement pattern, preserving the historic buildings (including farmsteads, Medieval manors and Oast houses), and ensuring any new development is well integrated into the landscape, respects existing built character and responds to sense of place.
- Preserve the traditional Kentish architecture including local brick and steep clay tile roofs, weatherboarding and tile hanging that provides a distinct sense of place.
- Conserve the designed parkland landscapes and their settings.

- Provide opportunities to enjoy the landscape, and the long views over the High Weald and over the Medway Valley.

13c Penshurst and Leigh High Weald



Key Characteristics

- Geology of clays and sandstone with Upper Tunbridge Well Sand formation underlying the higher land.
- Sloping landform rising out of the River Medway and the Eden floodplain. Many natural ponds occur throughout.
- Substantial areas of woodland, including areas of mixed age coppice.
- Small to medium scale pasture and arable fields, cut into woodland areas.
- Scattered farmstead and large isolated properties situated along roads and lanes
- Hedgerows along lanes breaking down and with fencing in places.
- Impressive historic parkland estate at Penshurst Place with estate walls and mature planting.
- Long distance views to the Greensand Ridge between intermittent tree planting.

Landscape Character Description

This part of the High Weald is bounded by the River Eden to the west and River Medway to the east, and dominated by the parkland associated with Penshurst Place.

It is located on complex bands of Ashdown and Wadhurst Clay formations with an outcrop of Upper Tunbridge Wells Sand formation situated on the higher land. The landform rises from 35m AOD along the Medway and the Eden river floodplains up to 88m AOD in Penshurst Park.

The parkland is surrounded by more typical High Weald landscape of Medieval assarts (irregular to the west of the parkland, and regular to the east). There are substantial areas of managed, mixed age coppice many mature standards remain within the hedgerows which contributes to a well treed landscape. There are also a number of gills and ponds typical of the High Weald.

Penshurst forms a nucleated village with a built vernacular consisting of timber frame, hung tile and red brick. The general settlement pattern of the wider character area is of scattered farmsteads and large isolated properties located along roads and lanes. Buildings of local sandstone are a highly distinctive feature. Hedgerows along lanes are breaking down and are being supplemented or replaced with post and wire, post and rail and temporary fencing in places.

There is an impressive historic parkland estate at Penshurst Place which is a 14th century manor house and gardens, once belonging to King Henry VIII. Pasture fields make up much of the landscape within the estate with avenue of trees providing noticeable features.

Tree cover provides a degree of enclosure to the landscape although gaps in vegetation frame long distance views towards the Charts to the north.

Landscape evaluation

Condition

The intact landscape pattern of historic fields, parkland and woodland contribute positively to landscape condition. There are few detractors present, although some hedgerow loss and areas of horsiculture are evident.

Key sensitivities / valued attributes

The following features and characteristics are particularly valued for their contribution to character and for the ecosystem services they provide:

- The strong field pattern of Medieval assarts (irregular to the west of the parkland, and regular to the east) which provide a sense of history.
- The areas of managed, mixed age coppice and mature standards in hedgerows which contribute to a well treed landscape.
- The steep gills with ponds typical of the High Weald.
- The impressive historic parkland estate at Penshurst Place which provides a sense of history.
- The rural settlement pattern of historic farmsteads and villages including Penshurst which includes a built vernacular consisting of timber frame, hung tile, red brick, weatherboarding and sandstone.
- The long distance views to the Greensand Ridge to the north.

Vision

A rural and historic landscape with a distinctive High Weald character comprising a strong field pattern defined by a network of woodlands, shaws and hedgerows, and with parkland associated with Penshurst Place. A good network of footpaths which enable enjoyment of the landscape, and opportunities to enjoy the views across adjacent river valleys and northwards to the Charts on the Greensand Ridge.

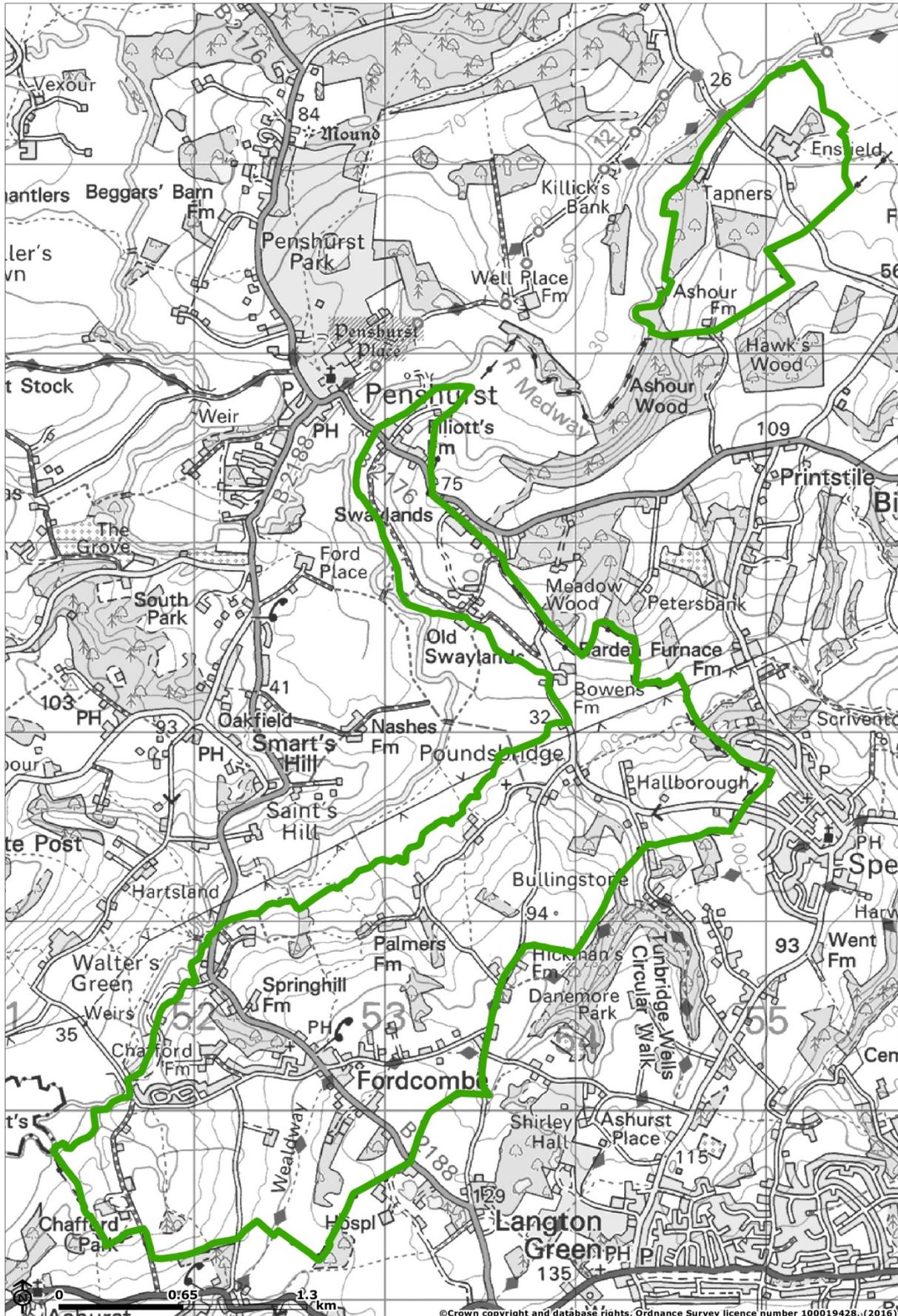
Landscape Guidance

The whole of this landscape character area lies within the **High Weald AONB**, a nationally important designation which offers a high level of development constraint. Refer to the AONB Management Plan for further guidance within the AONB.

Local objectives to conserve and enhance landscape character are outlined below:

- Conserve the strong field pattern of Medieval assarts (irregular to the west of the parkland, and regular to the east) which provide a sense of history.
- Ensure management of woodlands and coppice to ensure their long term survival, and plan for the next generation of hedgerow trees. Promote the use of wood products linked to management of woodlands.
- Conserve the steep gills, their woodlands and ponds. Manage water courses and features for their biodiversity interest.
- Conserve the parkland forming the setting around Penshurst Place including the historic buildings, estate walls, woodland and trees.
- Maintain the rural settlement pattern of historic farmsteads and villages, ensuring any new development is well integrated into the landscape, respects existing built character and responds to sense of place.
- Seek the use of sympathetic local building materials in any new development including those that reflect the distinctive local vernacular such as use of timber frame, tile hanging, local red brick, sandstone and weatherboarding.
- Maintain, and create, opportunities to experience the long distance views to the Greensand Ridge to the north.

13d Fordcombe High Weald





Key Characteristics

- Complex geology of sandstone and mudstone formations.
- Undulating slopes forming the eastern valleys sides of the Medway between 35m at the base of slope and reaching over 100m on the hill tops.
- A mixed arable and pasture farmland landscape with a strong field pattern formed by Medieval assarts and other informal enclosures.
- Woodlands, shaws and hedgerows create a sense of enclosure and backdrop to views.
- Orchards at Chafford Farm form a remnant of formerly more extensive orchards.
- Rural lanes cross the area, enclosed by hedgerows and woodland – some lead down to river crossing points.
- Rural settlement pattern of historic farmsteads including oast houses, manors, hamlets and mills within side valleys.
- Historic designed landscape at Swaylands (a mid-19th century country villa with terraced gardens and parkland).
- Views over the Medway Valley to other parts of the High Weald.

Landscape Character Description

This area lies on the east side of the Medway Valley – it continues across the administrative boundary into Tunbridge Wells.

The area is underlain by a complex geology of different sandstone and mudstone formations. The landform steeply slopes from about 35m AOD along the valley floor up to 120m AOD around the village of Fordcombe with streams flowing through incised side valleys (gills).

It is a medium scale landscape in which small woodlands and a patchwork of small-medium scale irregular Medieval assarts and other informal enclosures run down-slope. There are ditches alongside some lanes, and many ponds are located within fields. Narrow, hedge-lined roads fall steeply through the area down to fording and bridging points over the Medway valley, or turn sharply to follow the upper edge of the floodplain.

The settlement pattern is one of historic farmsteads and hamlets (including manor houses and Oasts). There are properties dating from C14th to modern day. This includes Swaylands which comprises a mid-19th century country villa with terraced gardens and parkland. The historic village of Fordcombe has expanded in a linear form, but is generally well-contained within woodland and tree belts.

Vegetation tends to restrict views, although there are occasional long views over the Medway Valley towards other parts of the High Weald.

Landscape evaluation

Condition

The intact landscape pattern of historic fields, parkland and woodland contribute positively to landscape condition. There are few detractors present, although some woodland and hedgerow loss is evident which makes this area less wooded than other parts of the High Weald, and there is some modern development on the edges of the villages.

Key sensitivities / valued attributes

The following features and characteristics are particularly valued for their contribution to character and for the ecosystem services they provide:

- The strong historic field pattern of Medieval assarts and other informal enclosures which provide a sense of history and sense of place.
- The deciduous woodlands, shaws and hedgerows that create a sense of enclosure and backdrop to views.
- The remaining orchards that provide a remnant of formerly more extensive orchards.
- The rural character of the lanes and historic routes leading down to river crossing points, providing a time depth to the landscape.
- The rural character of settlement and distinctive local vernacular including historic farmsteads, oast houses, manors, and mills – constructed from local materials including timber frame, hung tile, red brick, weatherboarding and sandstone.
- The historic designed landscape at Swaylands (a mid-19th century country villa with terraced gardens and parkland) which provides a sense of history and contributes to scenic quality.
- The opportunity for views over the Medway Valley to other parts of the High Weald.
- The network of public footpaths including the Wealdway that provide recreational value and enable enjoyment of the landscape.

Vision

A rural and historic landscape with a distinctive High Weald character comprising a strong historic pattern of fields bounded by a network of woodlands, shaws and thick well managed hedgerows. A distinct settlement pattern with buildings in the local vernacular (including historic farmsteads and Oast houses) and an opportunity to enjoy views over the Medway Valley.

Landscape Guidance

This landscape character area lies almost entirely within the **High Weald AONB**, a nationally important designation which offers a high level of development constraint. Refer to the AONB Management Plan for further guidance within the AONB.

Local objectives to conserve and enhance landscape character are outlined below:

- Maintain the strong field pattern of Medieval assarts and other informal enclosures and their boundary features including shaws and hedgerows. Consider replanting field boundaries where they have been lost and plan for the next generation of hedgerow trees.
- Ensure management of woodlands, shaws and coppice to ensure their long term survival. Consider replanting areas that have been lost and promote the use of wood products linked to management of woodlands.

- Conserve the remaining orchards and consider recreating these to preserve them as features of this part of Kent.
- Manage water courses and features for their biodiversity interest.
- Maintain the rural character of the lanes and historic routes leading down to river crossing points – avoid road improvements that result in suburbanisation of the roads, or loss of verges and adjacent hedgerows/ trees.
- Maintain the rural character of settlement and distinctive local vernacular – preserve features such as historic farmsteads, oast houses, manors, and mills and resist urbanisation of the area.
- Encourage use of local styles and materials including timber frame, tile hanging, red brick, weatherboarding and sandstone.
- Conserve the historic designed landscape at Swaylands (a mid-19th century country villa with terraced gardens and parkland) which provides a sense of history and contributes to scenic quality.
- Provide opportunity for appreciation of views over the Medway Valley and the High Weald beyond.
- Maintain the network of public footpaths including the Wealdway to ensure the landscape can be enjoyed.

Appendix 1: Glossary of Terms

Term	Definition
Aesthetic	Concerning the visual appeal of a feature or landscape
Amenity	The pleasantness or attractiveness of a place.
AOD	Above Ordnance Datum (sea level).
AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty – a statutory national landscape designation.
Agricultural Land Classification	The classification of agricultural land in England in Wales.
Ancient woodland	Woods that are believed to have been continuous woodland cover since at least 1600 AD.
Alluvium	Loose soil or sediments, which have been eroded, reshaped by water in some form, and redeposited in a non-marine setting.
Arable	The growing of crops.
Assart	A piece of land converted from forest to agricultural use. Most such piecemeal enclosures date to the medieval or early post-medieval period and are bounded by species rich hedgerows, an indicator of land assarted from woodland.
Assarting	The act of clearing forested lands for use in agriculture or other purposes (in English land law, it was illegal to assart any part of a Royal forest).
Biodiversity	The measure of the variety of organisms present in different ecosystems.
Built Form	The characteristic nature of built development.
Characteristic	A distinctive element of the landscape that contributes to landscape character for instance a particular hedgerow pattern or sense of tranquillity.
Charts	Wooded commons distinctive of east Surrey and west Kent.
Cobnut platts	Cobnut orchards producing a kind of cultivated hazelnut characteristic of the Kent Downs. There was once a thriving industry in Kent but there are few cobnut platts left today.
Condition	A judgement on the intactness and condition of the elements of the landscape.
Coniferous woodland	Woodland comprised of coniferous trees often having needle like leaves. They are usually evergreen.
Copse	A small group of trees

Deciduous woodland	Woodland where the majority of tree lose their leaves at the end of the growing season
Drift	The name for all material of glacial origin found anywhere on land or at sea, including sediment and large rocks.
Enclosure	The placing in private hands of land to which there was previously common rights; the merging of strip fields to form a block surrounded by hedges.
Floodplain	The area that would naturally be affected by flooding if a river rises above its banks, or high tides and stormy seas cause flooding in coastal areas.
Geodiversity	The variety of rocks, minerals, fossils, landforms, sediments and soils in an area, together with natural processes, such as erosion and landslips that may still be active.
Gill	A narrow steep-sided valley typical of the Weald.
GIS	Geographic Information System.
GPS	Global Positioning System.
Habitat	The natural home or environment of an animal, plant, or other organism.
Hammer pond	An artificial pond for maintaining a head of water, for example at a water mill
Head	A superficial geological deposit formed mostly by solifluction and/or hillwash and soil creep, typically comprising gravel, sand and clay depending on the upslope source.
Heathland	A shrubland habitat found mainly on free-draining infertile, acidic soils, characterised by open, low-growing woody vegetation.
HLC	Historic Landscape Characterisation.
HLT	Historic Landscape Type
Horsiculture	Development of farmland for horses and equestrianism
Hydrology	The science dealing with the occurrence, circulation, distribution, and properties of the waters of the earth and its atmosphere
Intact	Not changed or diminished
Land cover	The physical material at the surface of the earth.
Landscape character	The distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements that occurs consistently in a particular landscape and how these are perceived. It reflects particular combinations of geology, landform, soils, vegetation, land use and human settlement.
Landscape character areas (LCA)	Single unique areas that are the discrete geographical area of a particular landscape type.

Landscape character types (LCT)	Distinct types of landscape that is relatively homogenous in character. They are generic in nature in that they may occur in different areas in different parts of the country, but share broadly similar combinations of geology, topography, drainage patterns, vegetation, historic land use and settlement pattern.
Landmark	An object or feature of a landscape or town that is easily seen and recognized from a distance, especially one that enables someone to establish their location (from the Oxford Dictionaries online: http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/landmark)
Local Plan	A development plan prepared by local planning authorities.
Marl Pit	A pit from which marl, a mixture of clay and carbonate of lime, is excavated. Marl is used as a fertilizer.
Naturalness	The quality or state of being natural.
NCA	National Character Area – defined within the <i>National Character Area Study, Natural England (2013)</i> - NCAs divide England into 159 distinct natural areas. Each is defined by a unique combination of landscape, biodiversity, geodiversity, history, and cultural and economic activity.
Nucleated settlements	A settlement that is clustered around a centre, in comparison to a linear or dispersed settlement.
Oast house	A building containing an oast (a kiln used for drying hops), typically built of brick in a conical shape with a cowl on top.
OS	Ordnance Survey.
Perceptual	The ability to interpret or become aware of something through the senses.
Permeability	The degree to which an area has a variety of pleasant, convenient and safe routes through it
Remnant	A part or quantity left after the greater part has been used, removed, or destroyed.
Rural	Relating to or characteristic of the countryside
Scheduled Monument	Nationally important archaeological sites or historic buildings, given protection against unauthorised change
SDC	Sevenoaks District Council
Sense of Place	A person's perception of a location's indigenous characteristics, based on the mix of uses, appearance and context that makes a place memorable.
Sensitive	The response to change or influence.
Shaws	Remnant strips of cleared woodland
Skyline	The outline of a range of hills, ridge or group of buildings seen against the sky.

SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest.
Superficial deposits	Geological deposit from the Quaternary age may include stream channel and floodplain deposits. All pre quaternary deposits are known as bedrock.
Time depth	The time period expressed in the landscape, or the extent to which the landscape reflects a certain time period (a landscape with greater time depth will comprise older elements than a landscape with lesser time depth).
Topography	The arrangement of the natural and artificial physical features of an area.
Valued attributes	Positive features and characteristics that are important to landscape character and that, if lost, would result in adverse change to the landscape.

Appendix 2: List of contributors

The following people were invited to the workshop on 29th September 2016:

Invited	Attended/ comments provided
High Weald AONB	Yes
Kent Downs AONB	Yes
KCC	
Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council	
Tunbridge Wells Borough Council	Yes
Tandridge District Council	
Wealden District Council	
Dartford Borough Council	Yes
London Borough of Bexley	Comments provided
London Borough of Bromley	
Gravesham Borough Council	Yes
Natural England	
Kent Nature Partnership	
CPRE	Yes & comments provided
NWKCP	Yes
Kent Wildlife Trust	Yes
Darent Valley Landscape Partnership Scheme	Yes
Historic England	
Environment Agency	
KCC Archaeology	
Ash-cum-Ridley Parish Council	
Badgers Mount Parish Council	
Brasted Parish Council	Yes
Chevening Parish Council	

Chiddingstone Parish Council	
Cowden Parish Council	
Crockenhill Parish Council	
Dunton Green Parish Council	Comments provided
Edenbridge Town Council	Yes & comments provided
Eynsford Parish Council	Yes
Farningham Parish Council	Yes
Fawkham Parish Council	
Halstead Parish Council	
Hartley Parish Council	Yes
Hever Parish Council	Yes & comments provided
Hextable Parish Council	Yes
Horton Kirby & South Darenth Parish Council	Yes
Kemsing Parish Council	
Knockholt Parish Council	Yes
Leigh Parish Council	
Otford Parish Council	Yes
Penshurst Parish Council	
Riverhead Parish Council	Yes
Seal Parish Council	
Sevenoaks Town Council	Yes & comments provided
Sevenoaks Weald Parish Council	
Shoreham Parish Council	
Sundridge w/ Ide Hill Parish Council	Comments provided
Swanley Town Council	
Tunbridge Wells BC	Yes
Westerham Town Council	Yes & comments provided
West Kingsdown Parish Council	

Appendix 3: Consultation responses

A workshop was held on 29th September 2016 to present the work being undertaken and to gather views on area boundaries and names, what is valued in the landscape, cultural associations (people, events, art, literature, myths or music that relate to the area), and pressures affecting the landscape. A follow up email was sent to all invitees to invite further information on values and cultural associations or comments on boundaries (and provide the opportunity for those who could not attend the workshop to contribute information). It is acknowledged that gaining a comprehensive picture of what residents value about their landscape could be a project within itself, but the purpose of this consultation was to back up the consultants' professional judgement about what is of value and why. The tables below set out a summary of information provided in the Workshop as well as comments made subsequently, and LUC's responses. The values, cultural associations and issues set out in the initial tables have been fed into the reports where possible and relevant, at a scale appropriate to the District wide study.

VALUES	LCA
Rural character & feeling of solitude	All LCT 1s
Ancient twisting lanes	"
Pollarded oaks	"
Lullingstone Country Park which provides recreational opportunities	2A
Darent Valley Path and views over the valley from this path from adjacent high areas	2A/ 7B
View of viaduct and river	2A
Long distance views to the Thames and Epping Forest from Eynesford Rise footpath	2E
Rural drive along Maplescombe Lane	2E
Views from the high ground around Lockholt/Halstead	3A
Views from Fort Halstead	3A
North Downs Way National Trail and views south towards the Greensand Ridge	3A/ 3B
Drive along minor road in 4b (see map for name)	4B
Views from public footpath along valley	4B
Swanley recreational space valued for community events	4A
High recreation value – paths along chalk ridges (rare orchids/butterflies)	ALL 5s
Sevenoaks: view to chalk scarp from town centre, eg. High street	6a & 6c
Pilgrim's Way – links to Bishop's Palace	6a
Darent Valley villages eg. Otford: views east and west – gaps btw houses. Nestled in between hills	6c & 6b

Fort Halstead (MOD) landmark. Beacon where Darent valley turns north – views to and from	6b
Views from the M26 across the Darent Valley	7C
Views from M20 across the Darent valley	7a/7b
Wildlife Park	7C
Historic settlement pattern (all 7s) and historic buildings: Roman Villa, Lullington Castle & Eynesford Castle (7B)	All 7s and 7B
Flint buildings materials	All 7s
Fresh water	All 7s
Extensive archaeology	All 7s
Eynesford Ford for recreation and views	7B
Darent Valley: high recreation value – Darent Valley Path follows river to Dartford. Attempts to open up as far as source at Westerham	7c
Local landmarks/Views to St. John's Church, Closed churchyard at St. John's, Dunton Green War Memorial, Rose Garden, Longford Meadow, Crown Meadow Wood, Rye Wood, The Old Chapel (London Road), Dunton Green Village Hall, Dunton Green Primary School, Donnington Hall Recreational value: Dunton Green Recreation Ground, footpath network through the village, Longford Meadow, Crown Meadow Wood Valued for natural environment: Footpath network through the village, Crown Meadow Wood, Rye Wood, Longford Meadow Historic value: St. John's Church, Closed churchyard at St. John's, Dunton Green War Memorial, Rose Garden, The Old Chapel (London Road), Dunton Green Village Hall, Dunton Green Primary School, Donnington Hall	8b
Ex quarries/landfill north of Seal Road due to be restored. Debate on what's form of restoration – potential links to Sevenoaks Wildlife Reserve	8c
Ide Hill: views to the south from ridge, Greensand Way, Emmetts	9c & 11b/c
Knole Park: highly valued locally as open space nr Sevenoaks	9d
High recreation value –access for all / accessible from London but separate from London (tranquillity) e.g. bluebell woods e.g. Greensand Way Too many golf courses	All 9 & 10
Views to south from high charts	All 10
Views from One Tree Hill (NT)	10d
Views from Crockham Hill	11
Bough Beech Reservoir: cycling, natural environment etc	11

Edenbridge: seaffods Wood, View of Church; views of the open farmland to the North of Hilders Lane, which has spectacular views as far as Troy Town and the area to the west of the town; the views to Swan Lane Farm from the north east; views west from the Crouch House Road towards the river; views from the south towards the hills bordering the valley.	11
Bore Place	11
Oast houses	All 11 & 12 & 13
Eden valley: tourist route through valley: Eden Valley Path, cycling and walking routes, viewpoints,	12
Historic Houses & parkland legacy: e.g. Chiddingstone Castle, Penshurst	13
WW2 Features	11 & 13
Dark skies	13
Ancient woodland, historic trees (ancient, veteran trees)	13
Stick Hill	13
Powder mills	13

CULTURAL ASSOCIATIONS	LCA
London's '4 th ' airport (and dummy airfield during the war)	2A
Ivy Farm Decoding Station	3A
Chevening House, the official residence of the British Foreign Secretary	6a
Samuel Palmer painter throughout the Darent Valley	7s (partic 7B)
Henry VIII, Otford Palace	7c
Percy Pilcher – first test flight across Eynesford	7B/2E
General Wolfe – Quebec House , Westerham	8a
Jane Austin, Sevenoaks [<i>NB The urban area of Sevenoaks itself is not included in the assessment so this comment has been incorporated in Chapter 3</i>].	-
John Donne, Sevenoaks [<i>NB The urban area of Sevenoaks itself is not included in the assessment so this comment has been incorporated in Chapter 3</i>].	-
Octavia Hill, founder of National Trust, Ide Hill	9c
Churchill, Chartwell	10a
Oldbury Hill – iron age fort (one of oldest in UK) [<i>NB this is outside the District so not included in the LCA</i>]	10C

Edenbridge Cemetery – Arts and Crafts. [<i>NB The urban area of Edenbridge itself is not included in the assessment so this comment has been incorporated in Chapter 3</i>].	11a
Industrial heritage, Mill Leat	11
Childhood home of Anne Bolyne, Hever Castle	12

ISSUES AFFECTING THE LANDSCAPE

Northern area

Population growth and associated pressures such as need for water (increased water abstraction), suburbanisation including inappropriate garden boundary styles, and increase in lighting.

Pressures from tourism and recreation

More traffic on country lanes, and larger traffic, leading to erosion of verges.

Agricultural uncertainty and changes to use of agricultural land.

Noise pollution from vehicular and air traffic eroding tranquillity (eg Biggin airport expansion).

Infill/ extending outside the built envelope

Climate change – resulting in changes to crops, and effect on the sensitive River Darent

Ash dieback – as there area has high proportions of Ash.

Central area

Housing pressures, particularly in and around Westerham, Sevenoaks and Fort Halstead

Pressure for business parks around Otford and Sevenoaks, and associated traffic.

Air quality around the M25/M26.

Traffic pressures on country lanes and spillage onto A225 and A25 from the M25/M26.

Effects on tranquillity

Southern area

Flood management

Brexit and uncertainty in future countryside management

Housing/ employment

Lack of habitat connectivity

Farming industry

Littering, fly tipping

Changes in planning legislation
Travellers – unauthorised encampments
Noise – planes, drones?, helicopters – Gatwick expansion
Light pollution
Climate change
Renewable energy? Fracking?
Invasive species, disease, hornets?
Tourism mismanaged?
Festivals

Comments on boundaries and LCA names

NAMES AND BOUNDARIES	LCA	LUC RESPONSE
LCT 2 Downs Farmlands – consider amalgamating LCA 2c, d and e	2c 2d 2e	LCAs amalgamated into LCA 2b Eynsford and Horton Kirby Downs.
LCT 4 'Fringe Landscapes' – suggest changing name	4a-d	This LCT renamed LCT Settled Farmland.
LCA6b 'Otford Valley West' and LCA6c 'Otford Valley East' suggest changing to 'Darent Valley'	6b & 6c	LCA renamed Darent Valley Farningham to Otford.
LCA 6b & 6c and LCA 7c – suggest amalgamating as valley is open and shallow	LCA 6b & 6c and LCA 7c	LCAs amalgamated into LCA 7b Darent Valley Farningham to Otford.
LCA 10c Seal Chart and 10d Sevenoaks Eastern Chart have very similar character - suggest extending to include Seal Chart	LCA 10c & 10d	LCAs amalgamated into LCA 10c Sevenoaks Eastern Chart.
LCT 11 Low Weald – consider amalgamating 11a, 11b and 11c	11a-c	LCAs amalgamated into LCA 11a Sevenoaks Low Weald.
LCT 12 – Wealden River Valleys – retained boundary with LCT 11 as important change in character	12 a-c	LCT 12 Wealden River Valleys retained
LCT 13 –13a-d and 13f-g - suggest amalgamating as similar in character.	LCT 13	LCA 13 a-d amalgamated into LCA13a Cowden to Chiddingstone High Weald. LCA 13f-g amalgamated into LCA 13d Fordcombe High Weald.
Knockholt Scarp is misleading we suggest North Downs West Scarp	5a	Re-named 5a as 'Chevening Scarp' and 6a as 'Chevening Scarp foot

		farmland'.
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Other comments

COMMENT	LUC RESPONSE
Comments by Jillian Barr, CPRE (11/10/16)	
Please include the background evidence mapping in the document itself, since this helps understand and interpret the landscape information in the document. This should include the following: geology, soils, drainage, heritage designations, landform, biodiversity designations, land use, flood zones, agricultural land classification, ancient woodland, dark skies, tranquillity, and landscape designations	We will include mapping for data we hold. Note we do not have soils data in digital format (although the paper copy maps have informed the classification). We hold various data that indicates land use (such as woodland, urban areas), but an overall dataset called 'land use' does not exist.
The document should seek to understand 'living landscapes' conservation and identify Biodiversity Opportunity Networks. The strong relationship of biodiversity conservation to landscape, land use and the way the countryside is managed is obvious. The landscape character assessment can contribute guidance at the landscape scale to ensure key opportunities to link habitat networks are not lost, or alternatively changes to land use do not increase the fragmentation of a network... The landscape character assessment (for each character area) should include relevant parts of this information (mapping, description and key recommendations). In this way the document will assist the council to demonstrate they understand the contribution of landscapes to 'wider ecological networks' and plan for 'biodiversity at a landscape scale across local authority boundaries' in accordance with NPPF 113, 117. It is also possible (as was achieved by Swale Borough Council and Canterbury City Council) to use the 2012 Kent Habitat Survey to identify habitat networks for different habitat types	We are using Biodiversity Opportunity Maps and Statements to inform the assessment.
It is understood the previous assessment was adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document. We would, of course, like this to be the case again. As you know this would require further detailed consultation	Comment for Sevenoaks DC.
Guidance on using the document in planning application submissions would be helpful. We would hope that all relevant planning applications will be expected to identify Landscape Character Areas and demonstrate an understanding of the recommendations. Perhaps this should happen at the validation stage	We will be including a 'User Guide' as part of the report to assist in the use of the LCA by both developers and decision makers.
At the presentation it was suggested that the	We are continuing to use words such as 'restore',

<p>'matrix' method would not be repeated in the revised document. Please ensure there is a clear 'direction of travel' in the recommendations for each character area if that is the case. Restore, conserve etc, are still useful terms</p>	<p>'conserve' and 'enhance' in the guidance section.</p>
<p>Please include a suggested list of appropriate tree and hedgerow species in each character area</p>	<p>This is not part of our current contract and would be an additional piece of work – Sevenoaks DC to note this request.</p>
<p>Ensure the impact of climate change on land use, and countryside management and farming practices is recognised and the importance of habitat network as mitigation is understood</p>	<p>We will record this in Section 4 of the LCA Report "Summary of Landscape Issues".</p>
<p>Ensure the likely impact of ash dieback is understood</p>	<p>We will include this in Section 4 of the LCA Report "Summary of Landscape Issues".</p>
<p>The Kent Downs AONB unit have both a Management Plan and a Landscape Design Handbook, together with other land use advice. Please ensure you explore the assessment, and recommendations in detail with the Kent Downs AONB Unit. It is important that the landscape character assessment does not conflict with the statutory AONB Management Plan, which the Council has Adopted as SPD. Signposts to the statutory document should be clear. The format may need to be a little different for character areas that are also AONB.</p> <p>Much of the same may apply to the High Weald AONB</p>	<p>We are reviewing the AONB Management Plans (and Landscape Design Handbook) for relevant LCAs to ensure that the LCA does not conflict with the Management Plans.</p> <p>We are also providing signposts to the statutory documents where relevant.</p>
<p>Ensure the final document is accessible and easy to use. Ensure there is an easy way to identify sites or areas and match them to a character area. It is helpful if the file can be moved around electronically, and this might mean dividing the document into logical bits, such as character types. We notice that the High weald AONB hold mapping data at the Parish scale.</p>	<p>We are in discussions with the District Council to ensure the document is accessible and easy to use.</p>
<p>Make reference to the Kent Historic Environment Record and its value to understanding landscape</p>	<p>We will add reference to the Kent HER in Section 3 (Formative Influences).</p>
<p>Include an understanding of landscape as it relates to urban areas, as well as rural</p>	<p>This assessment is for the rural landscape – there are other studies covering urban areas, such as the Sevenoaks Residential Character Area Assessment http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/services/documents/housing/planning/planning-policy/supplementary-planning-documents/srcaa/srcaa-final-document</p>
<p>Comments by Tracy Godden , Dunton Green Parish Council (12/10/16)</p>	
<p>Request that the boundaries are assessed so that the village falls into fewer Landscape Character</p>	<p>This assessment is for the rural landscape and there are other studies covering urban areas.</p>

<p>areas (and that does not mean extend the Sevenoaks Urban area). We have identified that the parish (and we do understand that the boundaries are not along the parish boundaries, for obvious reasons) falls within four different areas. The concerning point for DGPC is that Dunton Green is not referenced in any of the names/descriptions.</p> <p>The parish lies within the following areas:</p> <p>8b Darent Valley - Sundridge and Chipstead</p> <p>6b Otford Valley - West</p> <p>7c Darent Valley - Otford</p> <p>5a Knockhot Scarp</p>	<p>The assessment divides the District into Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) which do not follow parish boundaries but divisions based on geology, topography, landuse etc. The landscape character of the Parish is complex and includes the river valley, scarpfoot and steep chalk scarp and as a result falls into more than one LCA. These areas have now been revised and as a result Dunton Green Parish falls into the Sevenoaks Urban area as well as:</p> <p>8a Upper Darent Valley - West</p> <p>6a Knockholt Scarpfoot Farmland [note this is now being changed to Chevening Scarpfoot Farmland in response to other comments]</p> <p>5a Knockholt Scarp [note this is now being changed to Chevening Scarp in response to other comments]</p> <p>Dunton Green is not referenced in any of the names used for the LCAs as the nomenclature is more generic for this area.</p>
<p>Part of the village also lies within the Sevenoaks Urban area (not strictly speaking identified on the map as a Landscape Character area). Dunton Green Parish Council has long voiced its objections to any part of the parish being categorised by SDC as being part of Sevenoaks Urban area.</p>	<p>Comment for Sevenoaks DC.</p>
<p>Alex Csicsek, London Borough of Bexley (12/10/16)</p>	
<p>London Borough of Bexley has no comments on the LCA boundaries and names proposed.</p> <p>I note that we are also undertaking work to identify Potential Areas of Special Landscape Character. One potential area is the Cray Valley, which includes the area where the London Borough of Bexley meets Sevenoaks District, as identified in the map below. The potential area is recognized for characteristics including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The meandering River Cray and important associated aquatic marginal habitats • The ornamental man-made lake in Foots Cray Meadows • Historic houses and farms (Hall Place, Loring Hall, The Dower House, Little Mascall Farm, Manor Farm) • A fine and varied collection of Statutory Listed and Local Listed buildings • Considerable amount of 'horsiculture' around Bunkers Hill/ Parsonage Lane i.e. fenced off fields, stables and shelters 	<p>This information is useful to note. The information in the Sevenoaks District LCA should support rather than detract from this work.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large detached properties on generous plots along Parsonage Lane. • Patchwork landscapes, with open fields and attractive rolling farmland • Rural lanes, including a “hollow way” (on Cocksure Lane); grass verges; tall boundary hedgerows; and large individual mature trees • The area contains remnants of unique designed landscapes at the site of the former Foots Cray Place; and North Cray Place (landscaped by ‘Capability’ Brown and later by Thomas Mawson) • Large areas of dense ancient woodland straddling the boundary between Kent and Bexley (Joyden’s Wood, Chalk Wood, Gattons Plantation). <p>I do not anticipate that the proposed LCA boundaries within your updated Landscape Character Assessment will have an impact on our potential area.</p>	
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Comments by Graham Hughes, Sundridge with Ide Hill Parish Council (04/10/16)

<p>Having studied the map, I find it rather surprising that the actual village of Sundridge has been placed in area 8a – Darent Valley – Westerham and Brasted, as opposed to the more relevant area 8b – Darent Valley – Sundridge and Chipstead! In fact, there is very little of Sundridge village in area 8b, despite its name. Surely this can be easily rectified without much inconvenience – the line simply needs re-drawing slightly to the left of its current path!!</p>	<p>The boundaries and names of the Landscape Character Areas have been revised and Sundridge falls into LCA 8a Upper Darent Valley – West.</p>
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Nicholas Cave, Sevenoaks Town Council (13/10/16)

<p>Firstly we are pleased to see the area North of Bradbourne Vale rd., included in 7c the Darent Valley Otford zone as this is predominantly river basin although it mainly consist of gravel pits.</p>	<p>The boundaries and names of the Landscape Character Areas have been revised and the area to the north of Bradbourne Vale Road is now in LCA 8b Upper Darent Valley East. This is distinguished from Area 7b Darent Valley Farningham to Otford due to the change in bedrock geology from chalk (Lower Chalk Formation) to mudstone (Gault Formation).</p>
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<p>In 8c Kemsing Clay farmlands you have included an area to the south of the railways line that runs west-east, this consist of Greatness Sand quarry and Greatness recreation ground, both areas are part of the greensand with soils and Geology very similar to Seal Chart, and certainly not clay until you travel north closer to the railway line. Unfortunately I think a geological map is needed to get the precise line where the sand meets the clay.</p>	<p>The area to the south of the railways around Greatness sand quarry is now part of LCA 8b Upper Darent Valley – East. The geology in the river valley is complex and includes areas of alluvium, sand and gravel, and as you mention sandstone & mudstone (Folkestone Formation) in the far south of the LCA around Greatness Quarry, however the LCA is principally characterised by mudstone (Gault Formation). The boundaries of the LCA are based on diverse factors including geology but also</p>
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	topography, landuse etc. This LCA now sits adjacent to LCA 9b Seal Farms and Farmland which has been separated from LCA 10c Sevenoaks Eastern Chart.
<p>In the south of the town you have correctly included the areas of Sevenoaks Common as 10b Sevenoaks Wooded Chart except for a small triangle coloured correctly but not outlined, this is the last section of Sevenoaks common it is bordered by Weald rd.; and on two sides Ashgrove rd. It lies alongside West Heath School.</p>	<p>This triangle of land has been included in LCA 10b Sevenoaks Wooded Chart.</p>
<p>Comments by Angela Howells, Westerham Town Council (27/10/16)</p>	
<p>Values:</p> <p><i>Views and landmarks</i></p> <p>The unique location of Westerham - a town on a hill in the centre of a valley with views both ways from and to the town and the uplands. Westerham has a very tight boundary around the town.</p> <p>Views across the Darent Valley of Westerham town. Betsoms Hill is the highest point in Kent at Fort Westerham showing the openness and open views to London. Views across The Weald.</p> <p>View to the church tower from top of hill.</p> <p>View to North Downs Way.</p> <p>View to folly across Squerryes – atop hill behind Squerryes house. View either side of A25 heading to Oxted. View from Westerham hill towards Westerham. View of Pilgrims Way. View from Hosey Common Lane above Chartwell looking as far as Ashdown Forest. View from North Downs Way towards Westerham</p> <p>The source of the River Darent. Round Pond and the brook. Long pond and area south – Park Lodge Field. Squerryes fields to the right of Goodley Stock Road. Crockham Hill – a compact little hamlet in beautiful surroundings. Tree line between fields on long walk. Woodlands – Westerham Chart</p> <p>Vineyards on Pilgrims Way. The openness of the farm land.</p> <p><i>Recreation</i></p> <p>The Greensand Way and Greensand Ridge.</p> <p>Squerryes land behind Mill Lane and Mill Street. Hosey Hill woods. Bridlepaths for horse riders. King George Park. Westerham Green. Westerham & Brasted Parklands. Pilgrims Way. Fields behind Madan Road. Toys Hill. Farley common. NGS gardens throughout the summer. Toboggan Hill.</p> <p><i>Natural Environment:</i></p>	<p>The landscape character around Westerham has been reviewed in light of these comments and values fed in where possible/ appropriate to the scale of the assessment. Some of the comments are too detailed for the scale of the Sevenoaks District Assessment and are recorded in a more generic way. Other comments relate to the urban rather than rural area and are therefore not necessarily all included in the LCA. The comments have also fed into the landscape sensitivity assessment (separate document).</p>

<p>Local bluebell woods in Westerham and Crockham Hill. Westerham & Brasted Chart. Westerham Wood. Squerryes Park. Hosey Hill woods. Hosey Common. French Street. Toys Hill. Farley common. Tower Wood. Crockham Hill Common</p> <p><i>Historic places:</i></p> <p>Squerryes Court – (Wardes were the Fathers of fox hunting). Sites of two former water mills used for the breweries. Quebec House - Home of Wolfe. St Mary's Church & Church Yard. Water Lane – historic significance for residents for access to the river. Knole Park. Chartwell. The Tower. Round Pond. Long Pond. Pilgrims Way. Emmetts gardens. Hever Castle. Down House. Titsey Place & Gardens. Charts Edge Gardens. Fort Westerham – highest point in Kent. French Street graveyard – one of very few private cemeteries.</p> <p><i>Experience of the landscape:</i></p> <p>Scenic beauty, ever changing wild flowers and fauna with the season, well used and well-kept footpaths and bridle paths.</p> <p>Wild deer, pheasants, badgers, bats, newts, birds, foxes etc. in abundance & enormous variety.</p> <p>The High Chart is used extensively by walkers, ramblers and cyclists. All of Westerham Parish including Crockham Hill is extensively valued by visitors, tourists and local people for its views, it has 186 listed buildings its historic features and National Trust land used for rambling.</p>	
<p>Cultural associations</p> <p>General Wolfe. Rowley Atterbury - Westerham Press. Audrey Atterbury – puppeteer (Andy Pandy, Bill & Ben, The Wooden Tops). The Hansards – printers, in particular for Houses of Parliament. Alice Hargreaves..... inspiration for Alice in Wonderland. Charles Darwin. William Pitt. John Frith. Colonel Sir Francis Younghusband – Explorer. Octavia Hill – co-founder of NT and credited with concept of Green Belt. Noel Streatfield – children's author. Freda Lingstrom & Maria Bird- produced popular puppet series for TV. Ruth Ellis. Westerham Amateur Dramatics. Westerham Ramblers. Westerham Town Council. Beating of the bounds. Fleapit cinema club. Westerham Brewery. Westerham Green events – summer, celebration of historic dates, Xmas shopping evening Westerham Town Partnership. Stone quarries at Hosey Hill – many houses locally built from these quarries but they are now protected home to bats. Mr Nissan – invented the Nissan Huts. U3A. WI. Film club.</p>	<p>These have been reviewed and fed in where appropriate to the scale of the assessment. Note that some of these associations are too specific for the scale of the assessment and may not therefore be included. Some are more relevant to a Westerham-specific assessment including the Conservation Area Appraisal.</p>
<p>Comments by Christine Lane, Edenbridge Town Council (25/11/16)</p>	

<p>Edenbridge Town Council supports the view that, due to its location within the Eden Valley, it believes that the views out from the town are important to maintain the character of the area. However, they specifically wished to highlight</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the open farmland to the North of Hilders Lane, which has spectacular views as far as Troy Town and the area to the west of the town • the views to Swan Lane Farm from the north east • views west from the Crouch House Road towards the river • Views from the south towards the hills bordering the valley 	<p>The value of views from the Greensand Ridge looking south over Edenbridge and towards the High Weald have been included in the LCA. The other views have been considered as part of the landscape sensitivity assessment work where relevant.</p>
<p>Comments by Friends of the Austin Lodge Valley, Eynsford (24/11/16)</p>	
<p>The Friends of the Austin Lodge Valley have produced a document called 'The Austin Lodge Valley, Eynsford: An Appreciation' which sets out why the valley is special. The covering letter suggests that more detail is added to a new Countryside Assessment "so that places like the Austin Valley are not overlooked".</p>	<p>'The Austin Lodge Valley, Eynsford: An Appreciation' is a detailed landscape assessment of a small part of Sevenoaks District. The area forms part of our LCA 2b Eynsford and Kirby Downs in the Sevenoaks Landscape Character Assessment. We have incorporated some of the local features into our character area description but it should be noted that the local character assessment is at a more detailed scale than the Sevenoaks District Assessment. The local assessment is consistent with the Sevenoaks District Assessment. We have included reference to 'The Austin Lodge Valley, Eynsford: An Appreciation' as an example of a detailed landscape assessment that fits beneath the Sevenoaks District Assessment.</p>

Appendix 4: A0 size map

This appendix presents the classification on a 1:25,000 scale OS base map. The map has been slightly reduced in scale to 1:30,000 so that it fits into an A0 page. If you are reading this in electronic form the map will be available to download as a separate document from the Council's website.