East Hampshire

Landscape Character Assessment Update

East Hampshire District Council

Final report

Prepared by LUC

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East Hampshire

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Chapter 1
Introduction

East Hampshire District and the study area

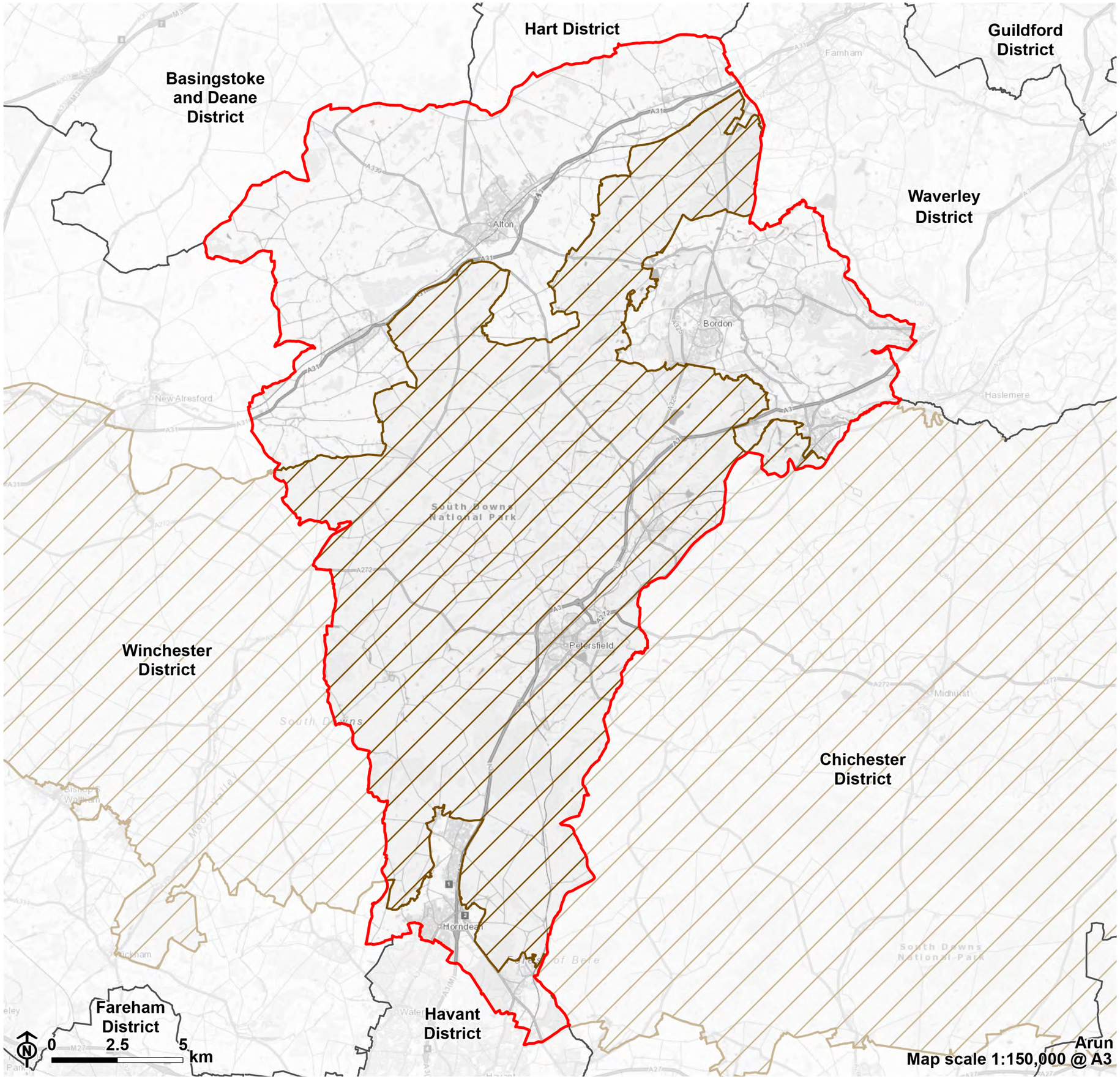
1.1 East Hampshire District lies on the eastern edge of Hampshire County, bordering the Districts of Hart; Basingstoke and Deane; Winchester; Havant; Chichester in West Sussex and Waverley in Surrey. It is characterised by a wide diversity and contrast within its landscape with rolling chalk downs, often capped with clay to create a wooded character, and steep chalk slopes contrasting strongly with the Western Weald heaths and the wooded greensand escarpments. It is a relatively lightly populated area containing the market towns of Alton and Petersfield, both within the South Downs National Park (SDNP) and a scattering of villages and hamlets of varying character.

1.2 A significant proportion of the central part of the District lies within the SDNP, and the surrounding landscape forms part of the setting for the National Park. The total area covered by East Hampshire District is 514 square kilometres, of which 56.7% lies within the South Downs National Park. The National Park designation reflects the special qualities and value of the landscape. The South Downs National Park Authority is responsible for keeping the South Downs a special place and is also the planning authority for the National Park. This report focuses on the landscape character of East Hampshire District which lies outside the National Park boundary and for which Each Hampshire District Council is the planning authority. The study area is shown on **Figure 1.1** with wider landscape context shown in **Figure 1.2**.

Updated LCA - East Hants Local Plan
East Hampshire District Council

LUC

Figure 1.1: Study area



Updated LCA - East Hants Local Plan
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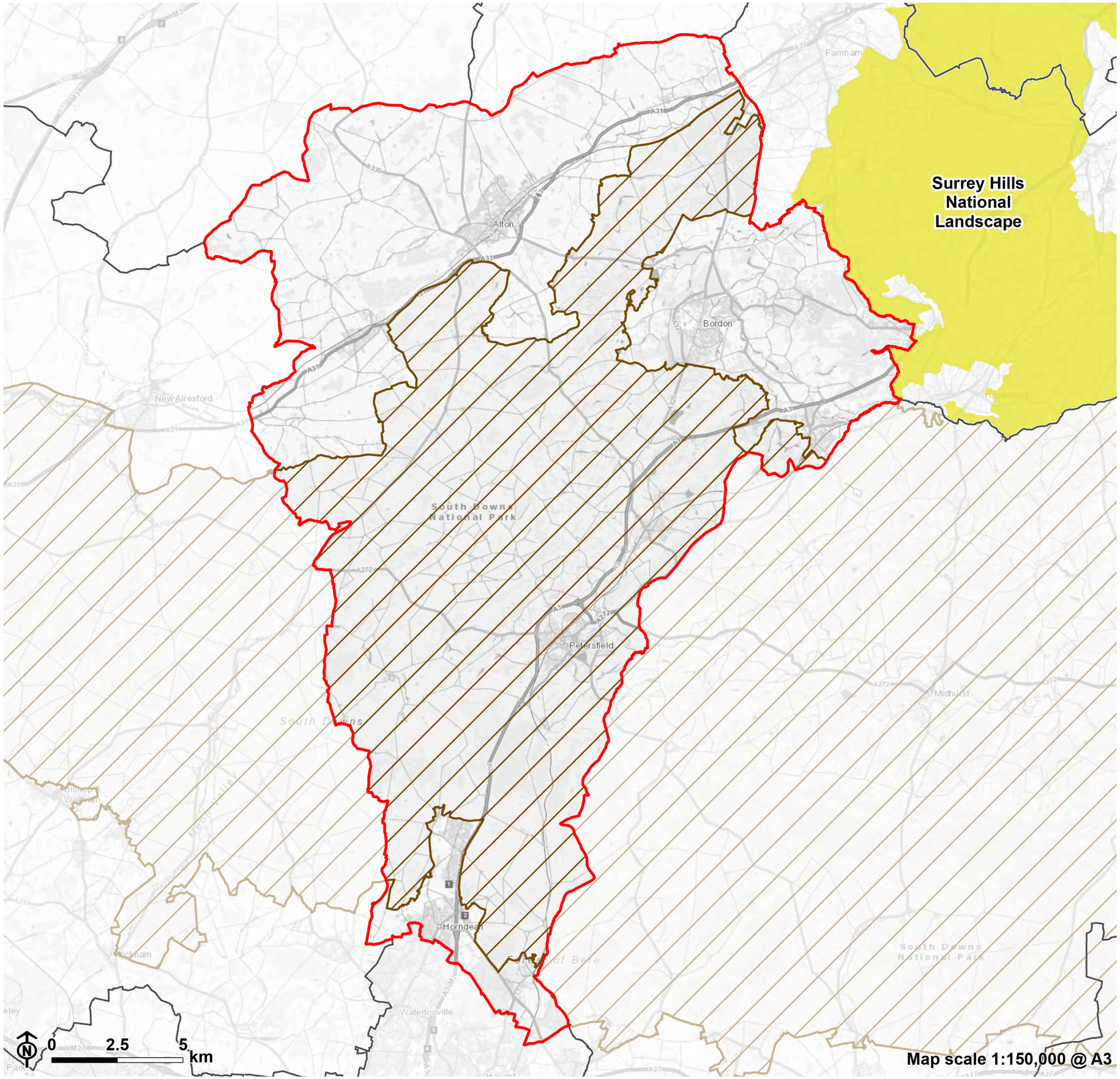
Figure 1.2: Landscape context



1.3 This assessment has been integrated with the assessment for the SDNP to provide an assessment of the landscape of East Hampshire. It sits within the national hierarchy of Natural England's National Character Areas Profiles (refer to **Figure 1.3**) and the Hampshire Integrated Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) **[See reference** 1**]**.

Purpose of the updated report

1.4 This report provides an update to the original East Hampshire LCA produced by LUC in 2006 **[See reference** 2**]**. The SDNP designation was officially confirmed in March 2010 after the original East Hampshire LCA was produced. The SDNP has its own LCA originally produced in 2005, updated in 2011 and most recently in 2020 **[See reference** 3**]**.

1.5 This updated report covers the areas of East Hampshire which lie outside the SDNP only. These areas lie within in the north, north-east, north-west and extreme south of the District, wrapping around the SDNP boundary (refer to **Figure 1.1**).

1.6 The purpose of this report is to:

- Refresh the 2006 LCA to reflect latest LCA guidance from Natural England (produced in 2014) **[See reference** 4**]**.
- Review and update written and mapped information and data sets to ensure changes in the landscape since 2006 are captured and current forces for change are recognised and responded to.
- Provide a comprehensive, up to date and fully integrated assessment of all aspects of the landscape character of East Hampshire District outside the SDNP which can be used as a robust evidence base for the East Hampshire Local Plan 2021-2040. This evidence can be used to influence and inform policy and planning management actions from the outset, for example in providing 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG).

Updated LCA - East Hants Local Plan
East Hampshire District Council

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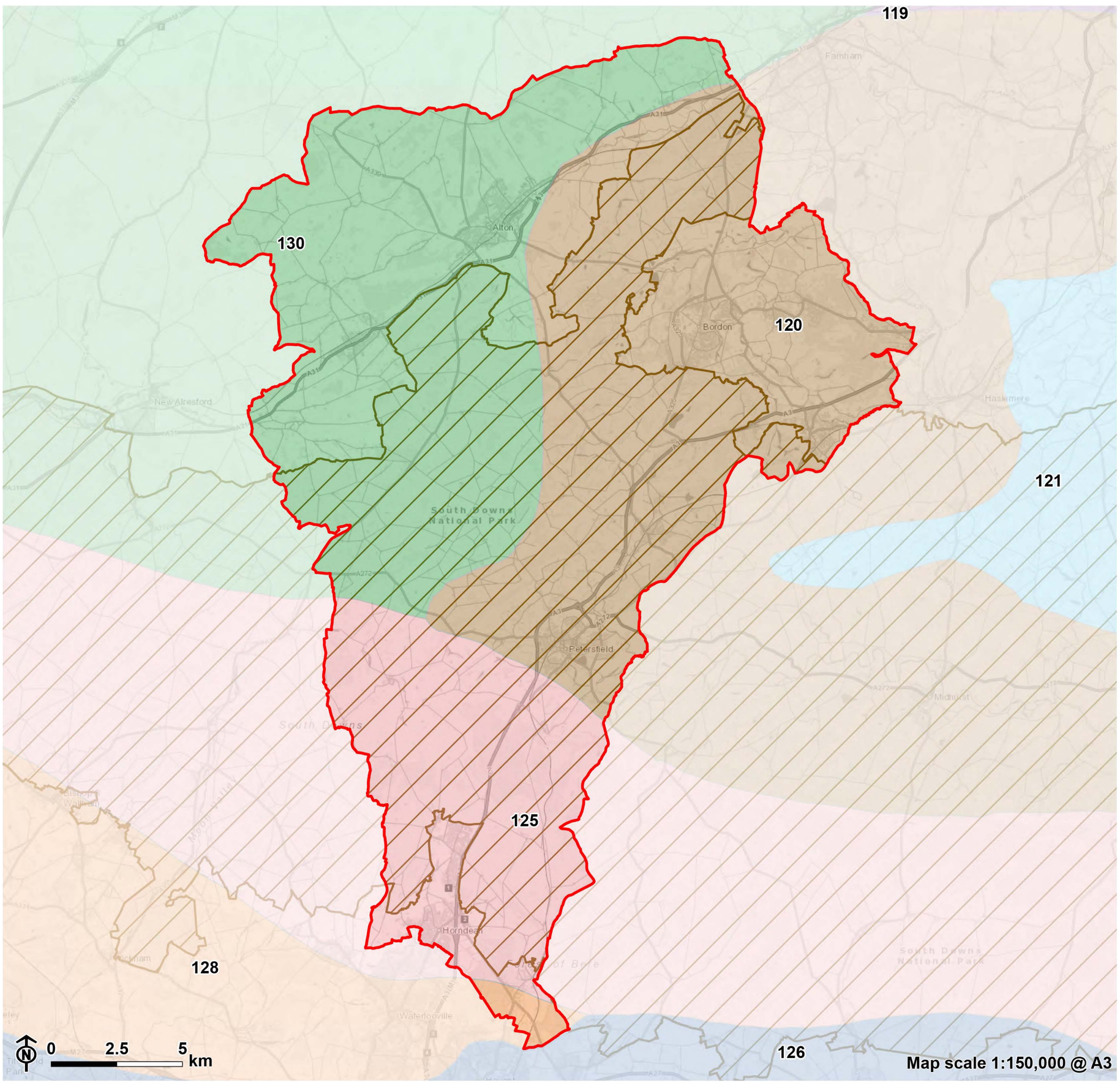
Figure 1.3: National Character Areas



Summary of updates

1.7 The 2006 LCA still succeeds in providing a robust landscape evidence base, following a clear hierarchy of Landscape Character Types (LCTs) and Landscape Character Areas (LCAs). This is in line with the updated 2020 SDNP LCA. However the following aspects have been refreshed to reflect the current situation:

- The existing classification has been updated to include only areas of East Hampshire District which lie outside the SDNP. This results in a total of 10 LCAs nested within 8 broader LCTs. The boundaries of these areas have been sense-checked particularly where the landscape has been subject to significant development or land use change since 2006.
- The formative influences chapters of the LCA (natural influences and cultural influences) have been updated, refining the description to tailor the description to the study area where appropriate.
- The forces for change have been revised to reflect current pressures on the landscape.
- The LCT/LCA profiles have been updated to capture landscape change since 2006, particularly in terms of recent development/land use change. As in the 2006 LCA, the information is concentrated at LCA level. LCAs experiencing high development pressure, for example around Alton (LCA 3a), Four Marks (LCA 1a), Whitehill/Bordon (LCA 6a) and Horndean (LCA 2c/8a) were most in need of update, whereas a light touch update was appropriate for more rural LCAs.
- The LCA has been updated in line with the current policy position of East Hampshire District Council (EHDC), providing links to emerging policies, environmental enhancement strategies and delivery plans, such as the GI Strategy (2019) and biodiversity enhancement projects.

Structure of the report

1.8 The structure of this report is as follows:

- Chapter 1: Introduction
- Chapter 2: Assessment Methodology
- Chapter 3: Formative Influences
- Chapter 4: Forces for Change
- Chapter 5: LCT and LCA Profiles

1.9 A glossary is included in **Appendix A**.

Policy context

The European Landscape Convention

1.10 The European Landscape Convention (ELC) came into force in the UK in March 2007. It established the need to recognise landscape in law; to develop landscape policies dedicated to the protection, management and planning of landscapes; and to establish procedures for the participation of the general public and other stakeholders in the creation and implementation of landscape policies. The ELC definition of 'landscape' recognises that all landscapes matter, be they ordinary, degraded, or outstanding:

> "Landscape means an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/ or human factors"

1.11 The ELC puts emphasis on the whole landscape and its values and is forward looking in its approach, recognising the dynamic and changing character of landscape. Specific measures promoted by the ELC of direct relevance to this study include:

- The identification and assessment of landscape; and

- Improved consideration of landscape through putting landscape policies into effect aimed at protecting, managing and/or planning the landscape.

1.12 The situation regarding the departure of the United Kingdom from the European Union (EU), or 'Brexit', is unrelated to the ELC. The ELC is a convention of the Council of Europe, not the EU. Therefore, Brexit does not affect the status of this convention, and as of 31st January 2020, the UK remains a signatory.

1.13 This updated LCA will continue to make a key contribution to the implementation of the ELC in East Hampshire. It helps to reaffirm the importance of landscape, coordinate existing work and guide future work to protect, manage and plan the landscape.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

1.14 The National Planning Policy Framework **[See reference 5]** was revised in December 2023 in response to the Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill: reforms to national planning policy consultation. It sets out the government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied

1.15 Paragraph 180 of the NPPF states (with no change in wording from the 2021 NPPF):

> "Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:
>
> a)…protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);

b)… recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;"

1.16 The NPPF is supported by Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) **[See reference** 6**]** which recognises the role that LCA plays in helping to understand the character and local distinctiveness of the landscape. This assessment for East Hampshire provides evidence to help protect valued landscapes and recognise the intrinsic value and beauty of the countryside.

Local policy context: East Hampshire's adopted and emerging Local Plans

Relevant local polices and plans

1.17 East Hampshire District Council's Emerging Local Plan covers areas in East Hampshire outside of the SDNP. This includes Alton and the surrounding area as well as Whitehill & Bordon, Liphook and the southern parishes of Horndean, Clanfield and Rowlands Castle. Consultation on the Draft Local Plan (2021-2040) was undertaken between January 2024 and March 2024. Policy NBE10: Landscape is of particular relevance making reference to the updated East Hampshire LCA.

1.18 This updated LCA will form part of a suite of documents providing and environmental evidence base and guidance documents to support the emerging local plan. These studies include:

- Green Infrastructure Strategy 2019 **[See reference** 7**]** which identifies key issues and opportunities related to Green Infrastructure in East Hampshire District (outside of the SDNP).

- The Landscape Capacity Study (2018) **[See reference** 8**]** which provides an assessment of landscape capacity, an understanding of where landscape and visual impacts would be greatest and identifies areas which may have capacity to accommodate change. In addition, the Addendum (2022) **[See reference** 9**]** sets out how 'valued' landscapes are considered in the Landscape Capacity Study.
- East Hampshire District Council Biodiversity and Planning Guidance (2021) **[See reference** 10**]** which aims to offer clear guidance that will help protect and enhance biodiversity through planning.

Chapter 2

Assessment Methodology

2.1 The method for undertaking the LCA follows the current accepted method promoted by Natural England as set out in An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment 2014 **[See reference** 11**].**

2.2 This LCA for the areas of East Hampshire District outside the SDNP has been prepared within the framework of Natural England's National Character Area Profiles **[See reference** 12**]**, the Hampshire Integrated Character Assessment **[See reference** 13**]** and the SDNP LCA **[See reference** 14**]**.

2.3 The process for undertaking the study involved six main stages, described below, namely:

- GIS data and information gathering
- Review of existing 2006 LCA
- Stakeholder consultation
- Field survey/verification and photography
- LCT and LCA profiles.

2.4 Geographic Information Systems (GIS) was used throughout the study as the tool for collating, manipulating and presenting data.

GIS data and information gathering

2.5 This stage involved the collation and mapping of GIS data which informs the landscape character of East Hampshire. The data included OS base mapping (1:25K and 1:50K) and mapping of landform and contours; geology; soils;

hydrology; landcover/habitats; settlement; field patterns; natural and cultural features/designations; access and open space; and dark skies and tranquillity.

2.6 Mapped data collated into the ArcGIS online workspace is viewed to inform the LCA/LCT descriptions.

2.7 Written documents which contribute to the understanding of the landscape were also collated and used to develop the LCA descriptions. These include:

- Village Design Statements
- Neighbourhood Plans
- Documents supplied through the consultation process, as set out in para 2.20.

Review of existing 2006 Landscape Character Assessment

2.8 A critical review of the 2006 LCA was undertaken to ascertain the aspects necessary for update. These are set out in para 1.6 above.

Characterisation process and boundaries

2.9 The characterisation process was undertaken in 2006. It involved drawing together all the information outlined in para 2.5 above to develop a draft classification of the landscape character. The approach continues to follow best practice as promoted by Natural England **[See reference 11]** and maintains a distinction between LCTs and LCAs, using a hierarchical approach as follows:

- LCTs – are generic and share common combinations of geology, topography, vegetation and human influences, e.g. ‘Mixed Farmland and Woodland’ or ‘Greensand Hills.’

- LCAs – are single and unique, discrete geographical areas of the LCT, e.g. ‘Ludshott and Bramshott Commons’.

2.10 For the purposes of this District-wide assessment emphasis was placed upon the definition and subdivision of the landscape at a scale of 1:25 000.

2.11 The 2024 characterisation remains largely unchanged from the 2006 LCA with some amendments to boundaries and names to account for exclusion of the landscape within the SDNP. These include:

- Amending boundaries to remove parts of LCTs within the SDNP for LCA 1a, and LCA 6a (2024).
- Incorporation of the north-eastern part of LCA 7c (2006) within LCA 3a (2024).
- Incorporation of the south-western part of LCA 3a (2006) at Blendworth within LCA 2c (2024), and south-eastern part at Rowlands Castle into LCA 8a (2024)
- Minor boundary changes to account for development on the edge of Alton applicable to LCAs 1a, 2a and 3a (2024).

2.12 A table showing the relationship between the 2006 LCA and 2024 classification in terms of changes to naming and numbering of LCAs and LCTs is provided in **Appendix B**.

2.13 The 2006 classification was informed by specialist studies, including an outline appraisal of the historic character of the landscape undertaken by South East Archaeology, the full Hampshire Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) and tailored ecological studies. This information has been updated with current data and integrated within the LCA.

Notes on the characterisation

2.14 A note on boundary lines: The precision of boundaries drawn around LCAs and LCTs 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.

2.15 In reality landscape character rarely changes abruptly, and the boundaries indicated in the East Hampshire LCA therefore sometimes represent zones of transition in character relating to changes in topography, geology soils, cultural patterns, land use etc. rather than marked changes on the ground. In practice boundaries of this nature have frequently been drawn to follow physical or mappable features such as roads, lanes or field boundaries which provide 'best fit'.

2.16 A note on LCAs: The LCAs share generic characteristics with other LCAs of the same LCT but have a particular 'sense of place'. Therefore, LCAs defined and described in this report have distinct patterns of geology, landform, soils, vegetation, land use, settlement and field pattern etc. which contribute to their particular character. However, it is important to be aware that LCAs are not homogeneous and that there is variation within them.

2.17 A note on built areas: This is an assessment of the rural landscape. The land within the development limits of villages and settlements was not studied in detail as part of the LCA. The smaller villages have been considered and form part of the description on landscape character, with a particular emphasis on understanding settlement pattern and the relationship of settlements to their landscape setting. However, no specific townscape or urban character assessments were undertaken of the more built-up areas such as Alton, Bordon and Four Marks. Where these occur within the boundaries of LCAs it is the undeveloped area surrounding the settlement to which the description refers.

Stakeholder consultation

2.18 An online consultation hub was set up which key stakeholders including the CPRE / parish councillors were invited to access. The consultation hub was open for 3 weeks from 30 October 2023.

2.19 The consultation hub included:

- An introductory webinar providing information about the update to the East Hampshire LCA, what it is trying to achieve, and why stakeholder input is needed.
- A short survey to understand how the East Hampshire LCA is used.
- Opportunity to explore the 2006 LCA documents and map for more information.
- Opportunity to leave comments on the interactive map.
- Questions about landscape value and landscape change in East Hampshire, asking stakeholders:
    - 1) To highlight what they feel is most important about the LCAs they know (relating to natural environment; historic interest; local views/landmarks; tranquillity and rural character; and associations with events/people.
    - 2) How they think the landscape in East Hampshire is changing in positive and negative ways (for example relating to development, climate, recreation, agricultural and land use).

2.20 All consultation responses were collated and integrated into the updated into the relevant LCA descriptions and evaluations. A number of documents were highlighted by stakeholders, and these have also been used to inform the LCA update:

- TerraFirma (2006) Beech Landscape Character Assessment **[See reference** 15**]** .

- Rowlands Castle Parish Council (2023) Rowlands Castle Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan **[See reference** 16**]**.
- TerraFirma (2020) Rowlands Castle Settlement Character Assessment **[See reference** 17**]**.
- Rowlands Castle Parish Council (2012) Rowlands Castle Landscape Character Assessment **[See reference** 18**]**.
- Rowlands Castle Parish Council (2000 – revised in 2019) Rowlands Castle Village Design Statement **[See reference** 19**]**.
- Medstead & Four Marks Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (2023) Settlement Appraisal. **[See reference** 20**]**

Field survey/ verification and photography

2.21 A field survey was undertaken in October and November 2023 to verify any updates to the 2006 assessment (including boundaries). It was used to gather information on experiential and perceptual characteristics, as well as visual signs of change/condition to inform the LCA guidance.

2.22 Tablets were used to record up to date, geo-located photographs to represent the LCAs. The photographs appear as a layer in the ArcGIS online workspace where all GIS data for the project is viewed.

Landscape Character Area and Landscape Character Type profiles

2.23 The 2006 LCT and LCA profiles have been updated to take account of the updated data and findings of the fieldwork.

Landscape Character Types

2.24 Each LCT is accompanied by a thumbnail location map in relation to East Hampshire District as a whole, and a map of the LCT on an OS base identifying constituent LCAs. Each LCT is summarised by a short description and bullet points setting out key generic characteristics.

2.25 Most LCTs have only one constituent LCA (e.g. LCT 1 Clay Plateau). In these cases, further LCAs within this LCT are found within the part of the District which lies within the SDNP.

Landscape Character Areas

2.26 Most of the information is provided at the LCA level. Each LCA is illustrated with two illustrative photos. A detailed LCA description and evaluation is then provided.

2.27 The LCA profiles follow a set format, largely aligned with the 2006 LCA:

Location and Boundaries

2.28 A brief description of where the character area lies within East Hampshire District. It includes information about how the boundaries were defined and its relationship with adjacent areas and the SDNP.

Key Characteristics

2.29 A summary of key characteristics of the character area.

Natural influences

Physical Landscape

- Background information on geology, landform, hydrology and land cover elements that contribute to character.

Biodiversity

- A summary of the key biodiversity features and their relative importance using information from priority habitat mapping, distribution of nationally and locally designated sites, and information contained in the designated site citations.

Cultural influences

Historic landscape character

- A summary of the key historic processes and features and their contribution to landscape character using the historic landscape classification analysis from the 2006 LCA, and distribution of sites designated for their cultural heritage.

Settlement form and built character

- Using field work observations, this section updates information in the 2006 LCA on settlement types and patterns, building styles and local materials.

Perceptual influences

- Informed by fieldwork, this section updates the perceptual characteristics including sense of tranquillity/remoteness, countryside access, and artistic and literary perceptions as defined in **Appendix A**.

Evaluation

Key sensitivities and values

- The key positive attributes that, if lost or changed, would change the character of the landscape. Information on threats and vulnerabilities are noted where appropriate. The study considers both landscape character and visual sensitivities.

Guidance

- Landscape Strategy - the overall landscape strategy may also be interpreted as a ‘vision’ for the landscape type.
- Landscape Management and Development Management - bulleted guidelines separated into ‘Landscape Management’ and ‘Development Management’. This guidance should be referred to by developers in delivering at least 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG).

2.30 The draft report was reviewed by East Hampshire District Council and comments incorporated to produce this final version of the report.

Chapter 3

Formative Influences

3.1 The text in this chapter remains largely unchanged from the 2006 LCA. Occasionally text has been tailored to the study area but references to the District as a whole have been left in to provide context. For further information see the East Hampshire District Council Online Interactive Map **[See reference** 21**]**.

Natural Influences

Geology and topography

3.2 The East Hampshire District is of particular geological interest as it lies at the boundary of two units of geological structure, with the Hampshire Basin to the west and the Weald to the east. The geological range is confined to sedimentary rocks of the Cretaceous period, with the majority of the area being underlain by Upper, Middle and Lower Chalk of the Hampshire Basin. The outcrop limit of the chalk is represented by a steep escarpment which cuts north-south across the landscape. To the east of the scarp is a sequence of progressively older rocks of Upper and Lower Cretaceous ages. These comprise the Upper Greensand, followed by Gault Clay and then the Lower Greensand Series. This sequence is represented in the northern part of the District which lies outside the SDNP.

3.3 London Clay Formation within the Thames Group, and clay silts and sands of the Lambeth Group occur in the extreme south of the District (south of Horndean and around Durrants respectively)

3.4 The bedrock geology is shown in **Figure 3.1**.

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Figure 3.1: Bedrock Geology

East Hampshire District boundary
South Downs National Park

Bedrock Geology (BGS 50k)

Chalk Group
Lambeth Group
Lower Greensand Group
Thames Group
Gault Formation
Upper Greensand Formation

0 2.5 5 km

Map scale 1:150,000 @ A3

3.5 The different rock formations are considered below. The description includes the development of each rock formation, its composition, and its influence on the topography and character of the East Hampshire District tailored to the study area.

3.6 A topographical map is presented in **Figure 3.2**.

Bedrock Geology

Lower Greensand Group

3.7 Towards the end of the Weald Clay deposition, the salinity of the Weald Lake increased, and the lake became a shallow marine bay in which sands were deposited. The sandy rocks also contain chert, ironstone and calcareous deposits.

3.8 Three lithological divisions of Lower Greensand are exposed within the study area – the Hythe Beds (greenish grey sandstone with beds of chert located between Headley Down and Liphook) Sandgate and Bargate Beds (yellow sandstones around Lindford and Passfield) and the Folkestone Beds (quartzose sands with seams of pebbles and clay west of Bordon).

3.9 The resistant cherts and sandy limestones of the Hythe beds form the higher hills at Ludshott and Bramshott Commons. The Sandgate, Bargate and Folkestone Beds are composed of less resistant lithologies and create lower landforms.

3.10 The Sandgate Beds form rolling relief with well-drained, easily eroded soils which are almost exclusively used for arable farmland. The Folkestone Beds form a slightly elevated, flat-topped plateau which is associated with poor soils and tracts of heathland.

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Figure 3.2: Topography

East Hampshire District boundary
South Downs National Park

Topography (m AOD)

300

0

0 2.5 5 km

Map scale 1:150,000 @ A3

Gault Formation

3.11 The Gault was probably deposited in quiet water of the shallow seas and is composed of soft mudstones and silty mudstones which have weathered to yellow and brown clays. These rocks are exposed at the foot of the Chalk where they create a smooth ‘vale’ like landform exhibited in the Wey Valley near Bentley.

Upper Greensand Formation

3.12 The Upper Greensand formation was deposited near the shorelines of the shallow Wealden sea during the Cretaceous period over 100 million years ago. The rock is composed of a series of sandy beds with small amounts of clay and silt which is more resistant to erosion than the neighbouring Gault.

3.13 The Upper Greensand is thickest at the western end of the Weald, for example east of Alton, where it is exposed as a `shelf’ or `terrace’ at the foot of the chalk. Outcrops of solid rock are revealed in the sunken roads and lanes which cross the terrace.

Chalk

3.14 The East Hampshire District is dominated by Chalk which is prevalent in the north western portion of the study area. The Chalk beds were laid down during the latter part of the Cretaceous period, some 100 million years ago, as a white calcareous mud when much of southern Britain lay under water. The Chalk is a soft, white limestone of organic origin containing microscopic calcareous bodies. Embedded within the Chalk are hard flints which are formed from silica. These flints remain long after the softer chalk has eroded and have been exploited by man as tools and used as building material for walls and buildings which are distinctive features in the villages and landscape.

3.15 Within the study area the chalk gives rise to areas of gently undulating downland and occurs at the bottom of the Wey Valley.

Lambeth Group

3.16 The Lambeth Group was deposited in fluvial environments during the Late Paleocene to Early Eocene, between 55 and 57 million years ago. It comprises vertically and laterally variable sequences mainly of clay, some silty or sandy, with some sands and gravels, minor limestones and lignites and occasional sandstone and conglomerate.

3.17 Extending throughout the Hampshire Basin, a narrow band crosses the southern part of the study area between Horndean and Rowland's Castle, resulting in a gently undulating landscape of pasture, deciduous woodland with some bracken and gorse.

Thames Group

3.18 The London Clay within the Thames Group mainly comprises poorly laminated, blue-grey or grey-brown, slightly calcareous, silty to very silty clay, clayey silt and sometimes silt, with some layers of sandy clay. It commonly contains thin courses of carbonate concretions ('cementstone nodules') and disseminated pyrite. It also includes a few thin beds of shells and fine sand partings or pockets of sand, which commonly increase towards the base and towards the top of the formation.

3.19 It is located in the very south of the study area, around Staunton Country Park, where it gives rise to less fertile soils characterised by gently undulating seasonally wet grassland and woodland.

Superficial geology

3.20 The principal types of superficial geology deposits in the study area are illustrated in **Figure 3.3** and summarised below.

Clay-with-flints

3.21 Clay-with-flints are accumulations of clay and embedded flints that reach up to 10m depth on the surface of the Chalk. This deposit is found on the higher elevations. The presence of clay with flint capping creates considerable variation in the chalk landscape with heavier soils frequently supporting areas of woodland, following a distinctive pattern on ridges and summits.

River Terrace Deposits

3.22 Three major glaciations are recognised in Britain, separated by periods of interglacial warming. During the interglacial periods, the sea level rose and the valleys were flooded. When glaciation caused the sea level to fall again, material transported by the water was deposited on the valley sides. The remnant deposits of these glacial/interglacial fluctuations are still found in terraces along river valleys. River terrace deposits line the valley sides up to 15m from the present valley floors.

Alluvium

3.23 Alluvium is the modern deposit of rivers, spread by the river during flooding, and occupies the low-lying marshy ground alongside rivers.

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Figure 3.3: Superficial Geology

East Hampshire District boundary
South Downs National Park

Superficial Geology (BGS 50k)

Alluvium
Clay with flints formation
Head
River terrace deposits

0 2.5 5 km

Map scale 1:150,000 @ A3

Head

3.24 Head is weathered, broken-up material that has moved downhill by solifluction. It may also refer to downwash deposits that are still forming and is found on plateaux, hill slopes, and valley bottoms, for example in the coombes and valleys within the Chalk and Greensand.

Hydrology

3.25 Within the Study Area, the River Wey is the principal river with an influence on the landform of East Hampshire District outside the SDNP. The northern branch, north-west of Alton, creates a distinctive valley form carved through the varied geology of Chalk (to the north) and Upper Greensand and Gault (to the south). The southern section, within the Lower Greensand, has several small stream tributaries, including Cooper's Stream, which lie within shallow river valleys.

Soils and agricultural capability

3.26 **Figure 3.4** illustrates the distribution of agricultural land quality throughout the study area. This indicates that, in common with most of lowland England and the South East Region, the majority of the study area is Grade 3 ("good to moderate quality agricultural land" which is capable of growing a range of arable crops with relatively few restrictions). There are occasional areas of Grade 2 land ("very good quality agricultural land") which occur in river valleys (e.g. River Wey) where there is a depth of alluvial soil. Grade 4 land is found mostly on the steeper land with thin chalk soils or heavy clay with flints.

Figure 3.4: Agricultural Land Classification

East Hampshire District boundary
South Downs National Park

Provisional Agricultural Land Classification

Grade 1
Grade 2
Grade 3
Grade 4
Grade 5
Non Agricultural
Urban

0 2.5 5 km

Map scale 1:150,000 @ A3

3.27 The soil types represent the variability of the underlying bedrock and superficial geology. The cretaceous chalk underlying the areas of downland developed mainly during the latter part of the Ice Age when overlying younger Tertiary sediments were stripped off to reveal the chalk surface. The resultant soils are shallow, lime-rich soils. Due to the clay with flint drift geology, there are also significant blocks of freely draining slightly acid loamy soils. Slowly permeable seasonally wet slightly acid but base-rich loamy and clayey soils are found to the east of the study area for example around Bentley and Rowland's Castle.

Biodiversity

3.28 The ecological character of the Study Area has been considered with reference to sites with nature conservation designations and priority habitats.

Sites with nature conservation designation

3.29 Digital data for all statutory and non-statutory nature conservation designations within the study area has been obtained and the location of the sites are shown in **Figure 3.5**. The study area contains:

- Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), most of which are also designated with Special Protection Area (SPA) status – concentrated in the north east of the study area at Broxhead and Kingsley Commons, Bramshott and Ludshott Commons, part of Woolmer Forest.
- Numerous areas of ancient woodland including large tracts, small patches and narrow strips on steeper slopes.
- Local Nature Reserves including Broxhead Common and Deadwater Valley in the north east of the study area and Yeoll's Copse, Dell Piece West and Catherington Lith in the south of the study area.
- Numerous non-statutory Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC).

Figure 3.5: Nature conservation designations

East Hampshire District boundary
South Downs National Park
Special Area of Conservation
Special Protection Area
Site of Special Scientific Interest
National Nature Reserve
Local Nature Reserve

0 2.5 5 km

Map scale 1:150,000 @ A3

Priority habitats

3.30 Arable farmland with some pasture dominates the western and northern part of the study area and contributes to the overall character and ecological value of this area. Further east and in the south of the study area pasture is more dominant. With reference to the 2006 LCA and up to date information from the Priority Habitat Inventory (**Figure 3.6**) **[See reference** 22**]**, the most characteristic and valuable habitats within the study area are:

Deciduous Woodland

3.31 Figure 3.7 shows that the study area is well wooded and supports a range of woodland types that vary according to local geology, climate and management history. Many of the woodland areas are of ancient origin and have been traditionally managed. These ancient woodlands are of significant ecological interest providing important refuges for a range of characteristic woodland plant species, invertebrates and protected mammals such as bats and badgers.

3.32 Of particular importance are hanging woodlands, found in association with the steep slopes and deeply incised valleys (mainly within the SDNP outside the study area) but do occur, for example around Upper Froyle in the north of the study area. A range of woodland types are represented, including beech, ash, yew, wych elm, field maple and mixed lime woods. The sheltered conditions also make these woodland important areas for mosses and liverworts.

3.33 Areas of coniferous plantation are more typical in the east on more acidic soils.

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Figure 3.6: Priority habitats

East Hampshire District boundary
South Downs National Park

Priority Habitat Inventory

- Coastal and floodplain grazing marsh
- Coastal and floodplain grazing marsh, Lowland meadows
- Deciduous woodland
- Good quality semi improved grassland
- Lakes
- Lakes, Lowland fens
- Lowland calcareous grassland
- Lowland dry acid grassland
- Lowland dry acid grassland, Lowland heathland
- Lowland fens
- Lowland heathland
- Lowland meadows
- No main habitat but additional habitats present
- Ponds
- Purple moor grass and rush pastures
- Traditional orchard

0 2.5 5 km

Map scale 1:150,000 @ A3

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Figure 3.7: Woodland

East Hampshire District boundary
South Downs National Park
National Forest Inventory

Ancient Woodland

Ancient & Semi-Natural Woodland
Ancient Replanted Woodland
Ancient Wood Pasture

0 2.5 5 km

Map scale 1:150,000 @ A3

Lowland calcareous grassland

3.34 Occasional areas of chalk grassland occur in the north of the study area on steep slopes which have escaped agricultural improvement.

Lowland heathland and lowland dry acid grassland

3.35 The sandy soils of the Wealden Greensand support important areas of heathland, including areas of dry and wet heath, acid grassland, mire and scrub. As a whole these heathland sites support an interesting flora, as well as being important for specialist invertebrates and for breeding birds such as woodlark, nightjar and Dartford warbler. Areas of dry heath are relatively plant species-poor, although they do support an interesting lichen flora and important populations of reptiles and specialist invertebrates. Areas of wet heath and valley mire also occur locally, and are of greater ecological interest. These habitats are more species rich, and support a number of locally notable plant species, for example marsh clubrush, oblong-leaved sundew and white beak sedge, and are rich in bryophytes, including Sphagnum bog mosses.

3.36 Significant heathland sites within the study area include Bramshott and Ludshott Common SSSI, Broxhead and Kingsley Common SSSI and parts of Woolmer Forest SSSI, with the most significant sites also falling within the Wealden Heaths Phase II SPA.

Floodplain Grazing Marsh

3.37 To the north and east of the Study Area are the northern and southern headwaters (including the River Slea tributary) of the River Wey. The northern section of the River Wey receives its water from chalk springs near Alton, and flows through a largely agricultural landscape of low ecological interest. In contrast, the southern Wey arises mainly from the acid lower greensands around Woolmer Forest SSSI and its associated heathlands. The floodplain and valley sides of this southern tributary support ecological rich wetland habitats

including wet heath and valley mire, for example Broxhead & Kingsley Commons SSSI (part of the Wealden Heaths Phase II SPA). A third, smaller tributary of the Wey, known as the Oakhanger Stream flows from springs at the base of the upper greensand near Selborne.

Cultural

3.38 The landscape of East Hampshire District as we see it today is the product of an interaction between natural and human processes. The landscape bears the imprint of successive periods of human inhabitation and land use. **Figure 3.8** shows cultural heritage designations which are indicative of the long history of settlement within the Study Area. These include part of Leigh Park (Staunton Country Park) Registered Park and Gardens and numerous conservation areas (such as Isington, River Wey and Rowlands Castle) scheduled monuments (such as Cuckoo's Corner Roman site, Neatham, and the Castle in Rowlands Castle) Alice Holt Forest, Romano-British kiln sites, and listed buildings (notably the Grade I listed Parish Church of St Lawrence, Alton).

3.39 This chapter provides a narrative overview of the human history of East Hampshire District, examining the main trends that can be recognised in the development of the modern landscape from earliest prehistory up to the present day, and a broad overview of historical settlement patterns.

Figure 3.8: Cultural Heritage Designations

East Hampshire District boundary
South Downs National Park
Conservation area
Scheduled monument
Registered Parks and Gardens

Listed building

Grade I
Grade II
Grade II*

0 2.5 5 km

Map scale 1:150,000 @ A3

Overview of the human history of East Hampshire District

Palaeolithic (c.500,000BC-c.10,000BC)

3.40 The Palaeolithic period was the earliest and longest phase of human history. A scatter of isolated finds of handaxes of Lower and Middle Palaeolithic date have been made from the chalk downs in the northern part of the District, around Alton (e.g. Holybourne Down) and the gravels of the Wey Valley. These mostly represent secondary material, but they do suggest the presence of human groups exploiting the wider downland plateau.

3.41 It is possible that deposits of Palaeolithic date may well survive within the pockets of Clay-with-Flint that survive in hollows across the chalk downland that forms the northern part of the District. These deposits have been shown elsewhere (the East Kent Downs) to contain in situ Palaeolithic material. Most of the known Palaeolithic material relates to the blade traditions of the Upper Palaeolithic, prior to the last glaciation.

Mesolithic (c.10,000BC-c.4300BC)

3.42 The Mesolithic saw the return of human communities to the area in response to improving post-glacial climatic conditions. The warming climate led to the spread of a succession of woodland types, culminating in a mixed broad-leaved forest dominated by oak but including elm, ash, alder, lime and hazel. Human communities exploited this woodland and the rich resources of the river valleys. Settlements comprised semi-permanent base camps occupied during the winter months and a series of seasonal hunting camps, although evidence for such settlements is scarce and tends to be restricted to the Greensand (e.g. Oakhanger - within the SDNP and outside the Study Area) and heathlands. The bulk of the evidence for this period comprises flint scatters. Evidence for the later Mesolithic period is less forthcoming, although it is likely that small-scale

clearance of the woodland, together with a certain level of manipulation of animal populations as part of an increasingly efficient hunting strategy laid the foundations for the adoption of agriculture.

Neolithic (c.4300BC-c.3000BC)

3.43 The Neolithic saw the development of agriculture and the first evidence for large-scale communal activity. New ideas relating to the domestication of animals and probably later, the cultivation of cereals, were adopted by indigenous human communities, together with new technologies such as pottery. Environmental evidence indicates a major phase of woodland clearance taking place at this time, as land was opened up to provide fields and sacred spaces. Evidence for Neolithic settlements is sparse. A much more extensive impression of Neolithic activity is gained from the numerous flint scatters and also the distribution of polished stone axes, both of which are concentrated on the chalk downlands, particularly in the northern part of the District around Alton. The absence of Neolithic material from the Greensand is surprising given the fertility of the soils, but this is likely to be the result of Neolithic sites being buried under deep colluvial (head) deposits. Ironically, the soil erosion that caused this process was initiated by large-scale tree clearance during this period.

3.44 The most striking evidence for the period exists in the form of ceremonial monuments. The earliest examples comprise earthen long barrows, with an example known from Salt Hill near East Meon (within the SDNP and outside the study area). These were both communal burial places and foci for social and ritual gatherings, serving to anchor the community in the landscape. Other early ceremonial sites from the period such as causewayed enclosures, flint mines and henges have not yet been found within the District, and are rare within the county as a whole.

Bronze Age (c.3000BC-c.600BC)

3.45 The Bronze Age is characterized by the introduction of metals, firstly gold and copper and later bronze. The earliest metals are generally associated with a new type of pottery, Beaker Ware, as well as the construction of a new type of ceremonial site, the round barrow. These monuments heralded a new way of thinking about society as they represented the burial of individuals rather than the communal burials of the preceding period. This is probably linked with the emergence of social elites. The barrows are found across the chalk downland, and also on the Greensand, often forming linear cemeteries on ridges.

3.46 The Middle Bronze Age (from c.1500BC) saw a dramatic change in emphasis away from the ceremonial and monumental landscape. Large-scale evidence for farming appeared with the creation of field systems defined by earthwork banks and ditches (and probably hedges). Small settlements of round houses representing farmsteads set within groups of paddocks are found across the chalk downs (e.g. Gravel Hill, Clanfield - within the SDNP and outside the study area), although usually not surviving as upstanding landscape features (unlike the numerous contemporary stone settlements that survive in upland areas such as Wales).

3.47 The Late Bronze Age (from c.1000BC) saw further changes with the disappearance of the round barrow burial tradition, the development of a settlement pattern characterised by unenclosed settlements, the creation of major linear earthworks carving the landscape into territories (especially evident in the cross-ridge dykes found on the downland) and the appearance of large defended enclosures (hillforts). More evidence of settlement in the lowland areas, particularly the Coastal Plain, is evident, together with hoards of metalwork indicative of burgeoning trade networks. Environmental evidence indicates that tree cover remained more extensive on the downland parts of the District due to the prevalence of poorer clay soils capping the chalk.

Iron Age (c.600BC-AD43)

3.48 The Early and Middle Iron Age (up to c.100BC) saw a continuation of trends developed in the Late Bronze Age, with increasing numbers of open settlements and defended enclosures evident, the latter perhaps representing focal points for a number of different activities rather than purely acting as military citadels or refuges.

3.49 The Late Iron Age saw the abandonment of many of the hillforts, with a handful of major sites dominating the landscape, none of which lie within the study area or District. Increasing numbers of settlements are known from this period, including increasingly complex ditched enclosures and the distinctive 'banjo enclosures', many of which survive as cropmarks on aerial photographs. Increasing levels of trade with the Continent, both with native communities and with the expanding Roman Empire, brought a range of fine imports into the area, and the period saw the first evidence for centralized pottery production, including wheel-turned vessels based on the Greensand.

Romano-British Period (AD43-c.AD410)

3.50 The Roman invasion of AD43 saw little immediate change to the landscape of the study area and District. The area was occupied by the Atrebates tribe, whose largely pro-Roman sympathies spared them the ferocious assault suffered by the tribes further west at the hands of Vespasian's legions. In fact, ordinary life appears to have changed little for the bulk of the population, with the field systems, roundhouses and farmsteads continuing in use.

3.51 The process of Romanisation is largely evident further up the social scale, where people acquired those elements of the Roman lifestyle 'package' they felt most comfortable with, merging them with elements of their own culture to produce a Romano-British hybrid. This is manifested in the landscape in the appearance of rectangular stone or timber multi-roomed buildings, generally known as villas, and often developing on pre-existing settlement sites. A scatter

of these sites is known, clustering along the Greensand (e.g. Wyck – within the SNDP and outside the study area) and also in the fertile river valleys of the chalk, although the wider landscape setting is as yet poorly researched. Many of the villa estates appear to have been deliberately located where they could exploit several resource zones (i.e. river valley and downland). The villa estates lay within extensive arable field systems, many surviving as terraced earthworks, interspersed with sheepwalk, and further pressure was put on woodland resources by the increased need for fuel, both for domestic use and to supply an increasing number of industrial concerns such as the Alice Holt pottery kilns, an industry of national significance. The estates subsequently formed the basis of the later landscape, informing the boundaries and internal layouts of the Saxon and Medieval manorial and parochial landscapes.

3.52 Although much of the landscape history of the District in the Romano-British period is concerned with continuity, there were also a number of new elements. No major towns were established within the District, the nearest being at Winchester, Silchester and Chichester. However, a small, nucleated settlement of unclear status was established at Neatham near Alton. This settlement lay on the major road linking Chichester with Silchester. This major routeway has largely disappeared from the landscape within the District, and is ignored by existing trackways, roads and hedgerow alignments.

Anglo-Saxon Period (ADc.410-AD1066)

3.53 The decline of Roman authority created a power vacuum in which the local Romanised elites competed for power. The chaotic situation coincided with movements of people from the Germanic lands to the east (modern Germany and Denmark), who were able to settle in increasing numbers along the eastern and southern seaboards of England. Hampshire was targeted by the Jutes, penetrating via river valleys such as the Meon (within the SDNP and outside the study area). Early Saxon settlements are rare, with most evidence for this period derived from cemeteries (e.g. Alton) although work at Chalton, in the southern part of the District (within the SDNP and outside the study area), suggests that the earliest settlements were established on the upper reaches of the chalk dipslope. By the 9th century, the original settlements had been

abandoned, or had shrunk to individual farmsteads, and new daughter settlements were established both in the valleys along the dip slope and as a string of villages along the Greensand, exploiting the spring line at the foot of the scarp slope. These villages were associated with an expanding system of common fields, and had become identified as manorial centres by the time of the Domesday Survey in the late 11th century. Their equidistant spacing possibly reflects an underlying pattern of Romano-British villa estates. From the late 10th century, these estates began to be formalised into a developing system of ecclesiastical parishes, many of which comprised long strips of territory extending from the chalk ridge down into the Weald.

3.54 Many of these manors exploited both the downland and the Weald. The downland portions were characterised by their complex and fragmented nature, resulting from competition for this vital resource. Numerous dependent hamlets were dispersed around areas of waste, including wood pasture as well as sheepwalk. Many manors also had outlying parcels of land in the wooded Weald, exploited mainly as summer pasture (pannage) for pigs (reflected in the numerous place-names ending in –fold). A network of parallel trackways developed linking the parent settlements on the Greensand with the Wealden outliers. These early settlements were established in the valleys (in contrast to the downland), with the ridges settled later. Charter evidence suggests permanent settlement by the 8th-9th centuries.

3.55 The later Saxon period also saw the return of urban life to Hampshire, although this is not reflected within the District. A late Saxon manorial centre replaced the small Roman town at Neatham. The District lacked urban foci until after the Norman Conquest.

Medieval Period (AD1066-1485)

3.56 The Norman Conquest saw the imposition of a foreign nobility on England. Hampshire lay astride the strategic route linking London and Normandy and was subjected to tight royal control, with up to half the county covered by royal forests. Many of the major manors were retained in royal or ecclesiastical hands, particularly strategic locations like Winchester and Portchester.

Winchester was already the effective capital of England. Smaller market towns such as Alton (established by St. Peter's Abbey of Hyde, Winchester) and outside the study area, Petersfield (a royal manor granted urban status by the Earl of Gloucester in the late 12th century) were the only urban centres within the District. These centres grew wealthy on the proceeds of agriculture, particularly the wool trade, and were soon transformed by the construction of well-appointed houses for merchants. The medieval street patterns of both towns still dominate the present-day urban landscape.

3.57 Medieval settlement in the District comprised in essence nucleated settlements set within common arable, and situated on the fertile Greensand shelf and the dip slope of the chalk. The manors were divided into tithings or townships, and each subsidiary holding had its own field systems, some of which contained strip cultivation characterised by long narrow unenclosed strips. The system was based around sheep and corn husbandry, with communal sheep flocks grazing up on the downland sheepwalk (tenantry down) by day and brought down on to arable land at night for safety and, more importantly, to provide manure. The arable lands of the western Downs, on poorer soils derived from the Clay-with-Flints, comprised small irregular hedged fields, very different from the extensive open landscape of eastern Sussex. Sheep pastures in the District were of lesser quality, and the land saw a greater degree of multiple use, including hunting parks and wood pasture, the boundary banks of some of which survive in some woodland areas. Attempts were made to reclaim and enclose the floors of the major river valleys such as the Meon (outside the study area) and the Wey. Some cattle were also reared in the river valleys.

3.58 Parts of the dipslope of the downs within the District lay within the Forest of Bere, while the north-eastern part fell within Woolmer Forest. These were areas of varied land-use (including settlements and agricultural land) over which the Crown had hunting rights.

3.59 Both downland and Weald experienced a contraction in settlement in the 14th century, the result of a complex series of factors derived from deteriorating climatic conditions. The result was a series of crop failures and increased rates of stock disease (e.g. cattle murrain) that left a weakened and impoverished

population vulnerable to threats such as the plague. Many of the downland settlements suffered desertion or shrinkage, surviving only as isolated farms or as archaeological earthwork sites (deserted medieval villages). Much farmland became derelict, and the period saw the beginnings of the enclosure movement as abandoned arable land was bought up by wealthier peasants and enclosed with hedges. The impoverishment of the area at this time is reflected in the absence of any local equivalent to the finely-decorated churches seen in other wool-producing areas (e.g. the Cotswolds). By comparison, the medieval churches of the District are small and archaic in nature, reminiscent of those found in other marginal areas.

Post-Medieval Period (AD1485-present)

3.60 The post-medieval period saw the emergence of a modern market economy. Major changes took place as a result of an increasing population and a more flexible land market, including the sale of former monastic land as a result of the Dissolution. The communal aspects of medieval agriculture began to be replaced by farms run by individuals. From 1650 onwards, the sheepwalks began to be ploughed up for arable cultivation, represented by extensive surviving areas of early enclosure. The increasingly wealthy occupiers of the Greensand began to enclose the common waste. The downland within the District saw more diversification from an earlier date, with common fields enclosed from as early as the 15th century. The 16th and 17th centuries saw the enclosure of large expanses of common woodland, denying the local communities their traditional rights of exploitation. Much of the stimulus of this was the increasing demand for fuel for Wealden industries, notably ironworking. Improved techniques of water management in the valley bottoms led to the development of water meadows. Most of the arable land had been enclosed piecemeal by the end of the 17th century, resulting in a distinctive landscape of small irregular fields enclosed by planted hedgerows, similar to, but usually thinner than, those of the Weald (the ‘shaws’). Many of the smaller farmsteads began to be amalgamated as landowners built up larger estates.

3.61 The later 18th century saw the development of ‘New Farming’. This saw the heyday of the sheep-corn husbandry system, boosted by the buoyant

economy resulting from the Napoleonic Wars, although the system was less prevalent than in eastern Sussex and occupied patches of downland set within a wider mosaic of arable land. The sheep were partly fed on new fodder crops, resulting in arable encroachment on the remaining downland, and producing regular grid-pattern field systems, often enclosed under Acts of Parliament (parliamentary enclosure) bounded by linear straight hedgerows comprising one or two species, usually hawthorn. A further period of prosperity followed in the 1840s, lasting for thirty years and often referred to as the period of High Farming. More downland disappeared under the plough, particularly on the areas of Clay-with-Flint.

3.62 The 18th and 19th centuries also saw the development of large landscape parks, although there are no major examples within the District. However, smaller parks such as Leigh Park (part of which lies within the far south of the study area) contain many of the elements associated with grander examples outside the District at Stansted and Goodwood, including large expanses of grassland interspersed with extensive tree planting. The initial schemes, dating from the early 18th century, were usually of a formal nature reflecting French, Italian and Dutch influences brought back from the Grand Tour of Europe. These were replaced from the middle of the 18th century by more naturalistic landscapes.

3.63 The onset of the agricultural depression in the 1870s saw a decline in the importance of sheep on the downland. More downland was again lost to the plough, and some small farms on marginal land were abandoned or downgraded to a cluster of farm buildings. Fortunes rose during the First World War, when home-grown food was required to replace foreign imports, but the inter-war period saw the onset of another period of depression. Much of this land was again reclaimed and converted to arable during the Second World War, but by 1942 the demands of military training became paramount and the arable was abandoned. Occasional military relics of this period are still visible in the landscape (e.g. Lasham Airfield). The years following the First World War also saw the planting of large coniferous forestry plantations by the Forestry Commission and private landowners, particularly in the Woolmer Forest/Weaver's Down area (within the SDNP and outside the Study Area).

3.64 The post-war period has seen fewer significant changes affecting the landscape of the District than the downland areas of Sussex to the east. Most of the downland was ploughed and fenced-off to create arable fields by the end of the 19th century. The wholesale removal of field boundaries to create vast prairie-fields, such a feature of the eastern Sussex Downs, and to a lesser extent the western Sussex Downs, is not a feature of the East Hampshire landscape, which retains an organic patchwork of field systems, representing irregular early enclosures of 15th-17th century date and regular recent enclosures of 18th-19th century date, with a broadly equal coverage across the District. However, modern farming methods have still impacted, with extensive areas of archaeological features surviving as earthworks, destroyed by the plough.

3.65 This situation is now partly in reverse, with environmental and heritage-based grant schemes preserving surviving downland and restoring or sympathetically cultivating arable areas. The designation the SDNP in 2010 and the preparation of an overarching Management Plan **[See reference** 23**]** recognises the importance of the landscape and sets the scene for a further period of positive landscape change in the 21st century. Whilst outside the SDNP, in places the landscape within the Study Area forms the setting for the National Park.

3.66 East Hampshire's Green Infrastructure Strategy 2018 **[See reference** 24**]** informs spatial planning and development management within East Hampshire, excluding the area covering the SDNP. It identifies ways in which existing Green Infrastructure (GI) can be protected and enhanced and how new GI can be delivered. The GI Strategy is referenced where applicable within the Guidance section for each LCA.

Settlement and buildings

Rural Settlement Character

3.67 The English Heritage Atlas of Rural Settlement in England, records East Hampshire District falling within the South-Eastern Province, and is covered by the East Wessex Sub-Province. This covers the chalk downland and is described as exhibiting a low density of dispersion, with lines of nucleations evident on the fertile soils at the foot of the scarp and dip slopes, where they coincide with the spring-line, and in the river valleys. The nucleated settlements are predominantly large villages and market towns of medieval origin.

Dispersed Settlement

3.68 The predominant settlement type within the infertile Lower Greensand area of the study area is dispersed in nature. The core of this settlement pattern, situated along the tributary valleys of the Wey, comprises farmsteads of medieval origin, set within a mosaic of irregular fields enclosed in a piecemeal fashion from the woodland (assarts). Around this core, the establishment of settlements around the fringes of communal waste (i.e. commons) led to the development of irregular semi-nucleated agglomerations of common-edge settlement. A degree of later infill has modified the pattern with the creation of dormitory settlements such as Headley Down and Lindford.

Downland Villages

3.69 Nucleated settlement on the Downs is rare, and where present tends to be small, largely post-medieval in nature and forms linear bands in the shelter of valleys (e.g. settlements in the Wey valley).

Medieval Market Towns

3.70 Alton is the only market town of medieval origin which lies within the study area. The other in the District is Petersfield which is within the SDNP. Both towns are largely new foundations of the 12th-13th century, representing planned settlements established in locations perceived as economically advantageous. The towns were incorporated as boroughs, held markets and fairs and were, and continue to be important centres for the surrounding countryside.

Dispersed Farmsteads

3.71 Dispersed farmsteads are the dominant settlement pattern across the chalk downland. Some of the sites are of medieval origin, sometimes representing shrunken hamlets, while others are of later date. Although forming a low-density settlement pattern, the farmsteads tend to be very prominent in the landscape, often due to the large threshing barns necessary to deal with the grain harvests and the presence of shelterbelts of trees. They can also appear quite bleak, as most buildings face into the yard.

Vernacular Building Styles

3.72 The geologically diverse nature of both the District and the study area is reflected in the variety of building materials utilised. The chalk downland area is characterised by the use of flint as a building medium. Often, the flint walling was dressed at the corners and around openings with stone or brick. In the north eastern corner of the District, the Greensand areas were dependent on timber for construction, usually infilled with daub (a mix of mud, dung, animal hair and chopped straw) and later brick (nogging). The local Malmstone is a further distinctive material. Use was also made of the local Wealden sandstone, often cut into large regular blocks, and a hard type of chalk called clunch.

3.73 Timber buildings were also present on the chalklands and in the river valleys. The timber-framing was mainly box-frame in style (roof trusses carried on a frame composed of posts, tie-beams and wall-plates), although a few cruck-framed buildings (roof carried on long curved timbers stretching from the ridge down to the ground) are known (at the eastern extremity of their range).

3.74 Brick was used for building from the 16th century onwards, but only became widespread from the 18th century, and mainly in the towns where it became fashionable. Where building in brick was not possible, for reasons of expense or practicality, a type of clay tile was developed which could be hung on to timber-framed buildings to resemble brickwork. These ‘mathematical tiles’ are less common than in Sussex but are found occasionally on late 17th-18th century buildings within the District.

3.75 Roofing materials were mainly thatch and clay tiles. Wooden shingles were sometimes used, often on church belfries.

3.76 The vernacular architecture of East Hampshire District is not distinctive. Rather it exhibits the characteristics of a border area, incorporating elements common to Sussex and Surrey to the east (e.g. Wealden hall-houses) and central Hampshire to the west (e.g. cruck-built houses). The earliest building types comprised simple small cottages constructed of whatever materials were to hand. The earliest farmsteads were not architecturally distinctive, and the people, livestock and harvested crops occupied buildings largely identical in nature. Often people shared buildings with the livestock, usually (but not always) with a partition in between. These early buildings are reminiscent of the longhouse tradition of the upland regions of Wales and northern England. By the later medieval period, houses had become more sophisticated, with open halls flanked by two-storey private wings. Farm buildings were separate structures, and usually comprised barns and animal stalls. The post medieval period saw the open halls roofed over to give more private accommodation. By the 18th century, the use of timber and stone for domestic building had been replaced by brick.

Historic Farmsteads

3.77 The 2005 Hampshire Historic Farmstead and Landscape Characterisation project **[See reference** 25**]** was intended to establish the feasibility of historic farmstead characterisation as a planning and research tool. The project concentrated on examining a number of pilot areas, including one that fell within the bounds of East Hampshire District. The following comments are derived from the project results.

3.78 Downland farmsteads are scattered across the landscape, with most concentrated in the villages on the Greensand, but with a low-density pattern of examples dotted around the chalk. Nevertheless, they tend to be large and prominent in the landscape, usually identifiable by their large barns and shelter belts of trees. The village farmsteads are usually of medieval date, and lie on the edge of the settlements, while those on the chalk date from after 1750, apart from a few medieval examples resulting from settlement shrinkage. The farmsteads usually form a loose courtyard plan, with one or more threshing barns, raised granaries and sometimes open fronted cattle sheds. Regular planned farmsteads are evident from the 19th century. Building materials comprise timber-framing with thatched and tiled roofs, with brick, flint and slate used from the 19th century, and concrete from the late 19th century.

3.79 The dipslope of the Downs (outside the study area) comprises isolated farmsteads set in a traditional wood pasture landscape (the Forest of Bere). Farmsteads are set in a landscape of small early enclosed fields and winding lanes and are mainly of medieval origin. They usually form L- and U-shaped complexes, with larger farmsteads forming regular courtyard plans, with large barns, granaries, cattle sheds and pigsties. Building materials comprise timber-framing with thatched and tiled roofs, with brick, flint and slate used from the 19th century, and concrete from the late 19th century.

3.80 The Western Weald (Woolmer Forest – outside the study area) comprises a dense scatter of isolated farmsteads of varying sizes, largely of medieval origin, set in a complex landscape of assarted fields and woodland. The farmsteads exhibit a wide variety of forms, often with no discernible pattern or

planning, and consist of small barns, granaries and stables. Some later cattle sheds are found on some farmsteads, and a variety of distinctive buildings such as hop kilns. Building materials comprised timber-framing set on Malmstone footings, with Malmstone used extensively for smaller structures. Brick and some flint were used later. Roofing comprised thatch and tiles.

Historic landscape character

3.81 As part of the background research for the 2006 assessment, Archaeology South East undertook a summarisation of the Hampshire Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) map within East Hampshire District, to create a broad-brush tool providing a clear visual impression of the development of the historic landscape. This was used in conjunction with the full HLC during the historical analysis work. A map showing the historic land classification is shown in **Figure 3.9**. The HLC was an important baseline layer contributing to the definition of a robust landscape classification and developing detailed historic environment information to assist the description and evaluation.

3.82 Many of the historic processes examined in this chapter are clearly expressed in the present landscape and, by extension, within the classification. Some of the more significant patterns visible on the map are discussed below.

Updated LCA - East Hants Local Plan
East Hampshire District Council

LUC

Figure 3.9: East Hampshire Historic Landscape Classification

East Hampshire District boundary
South Downs National Park

East Hampshire Historic Landscape Classification

- 19th century plantations/other recent woodlands
- Assarted fields
- Assarted woodlands
- Commons
- Communications
- Defence
- Downland
- Fields bounded by roads, tracks and paths
- Fields with wavy boundaries
- Hangers
- Heathland
- Heathland plantations
- Horticulture
- Industry
- Irregular fields - straight boundaries
- Old settlements
- Other old woodlands
- Parkland
- Parliamentary fields
- Prairie fields
- Recent settlements
- Recreation
- Valley floor

0 2.5 5 km

Map scale 1:150,000 @ A3

Enclosures

3.83 The pattern of field systems visible on the map reflects the complex and varied history of enclosure within the District. A number of striking patterns are evident, notably the equal dominance of early and recent enclosure across the downland, reflecting a land-use history within which early piecemeal enclosure was a significant element, and the absence of any large-scale modern modifications of this pattern. The two systems are differentiated by the irregular, wavy field boundaries of the early enclosures, forming an organic landscape contrasting with the regular rectilinearity of the recent enclosures, dominated by straight lines and stamped with the imprint of the professional surveyor. Parts of the Wey Valley are dominated by early enclosures of medieval date, often bounded by thick sinuous hedgerows and retaining a medieval character to this day.

Woodland

3.84 Woodland is scattered across the District, with concentrations of pre-1800 woodland evident in Alice Holt Forest (within the SDNP and outside the study area), the downlands north and west of Alton, the hangers following the Greensand and the remnants of the Forest of Bere to the north of the Portsdown Ridge.

3.85 This surviving woodland contrasts with both the wooded downland of West Sussex and the treeless downland of East Sussex. It illustrates that the apparently fruitful arable nature of the present landscape is to some extent an artefact of modern farming practices, and that in the past the downland within the District was peppered with surviving stretches of woodland situated on acidic clay and used as common pasture.

3.86 Large post-1800 plantations are generally absent from the downland portion of the District, with the exception of the Queen Elizabeth Forest near Petersfield (within the SDNP and outside the study area) but cover large expanses of the poor-quality Lower Greensand soils in the north-eastern corner

of the District around Liss (within the SDNP) and Bordon. This land was utilised as common pasture for much of recorded history, but was subsequently recolonised by secondary woodland, much of it now in military ownership.

Chapter 4

Forces for change

4.1 Key forces for change within the study area are summarised below. Of key importance is the climate emergency. Increased temperatures, storms, drought, pest and disease are likely to result in large scale changes to landscape character. Concerns around the climate emergency are also leading to changes to agricultural practice and increased pressure for renewable development.

Climate emergency

- Changes in woodland, hedgerow and remnant heathland habitat extent and species composition which could adversely alter overall landscape character, particularly affecting ancient woodlands and ancient hangar woodlands.
- Wind damage due to increases in severe gales, particularly in elevated landscapes and for hangar woodlands on steep slopes.
- An increase in pathogens which could result in woodland being unable to regenerate and the loss of mature/significant trees.
- Reduction in wet woodland, water meadows, grazing marsh and unimproved river valley grassland as a result of drier, warmer summers reducing damp conditions needed for the survival of these habitats.
- Replacement of floodplain grazing marsh with dry grassland species as a result of drying of the floodplains in summer, or changes in land use including a reduction in grazing land to free up land for other uses such as bioenergy crop planting.
- High water flows and increased rates of soil erosion, resulting in a potential adverse change to the streams and their associated habitats, contrasting with periods of drought and low flows.

- Increased water temperatures and increased drought conditions leading to the poor chemical and ecological status of chalk rivers and streams.
- More prolific vegetation growth within rivers and on banks, including invasive non-native species, as well as increase in pests and diseases resulting in loss of native habitats.
- Changes to chalk grassland habitats. Sustainable grazing is critical to the success of chalk grassland management. However, global agricultural competition and land changes due to the implementation of Net Zero commitment is likely to continue to hamper efforts to reinstate sheep grazing, particularly on more marginal areas, notably the steeper slopes and dry valleys.
- Veteran parkland trees and historic-lined avenues in designed landscapes may be particularly vulnerable to pest and diseases, storms and drought.
- Higher temperatures could result in the potential to grow different crop types such as maize, soya and viticulture which could change the visual quality and character of the landscape. On the other hand, drought could also result in withdrawal of arable land from cropping and reversion to grassland.
- Increased risk of wildfires as summers become hotter and drier. This is of particular concern on open access sites that are at higher risk at times of dry weather due to recreational use.

Changes to agricultural practice

- Changes to land use associated with Net Zero commitments, including a major programme of afforestation including woodlands, on-farm woods and shelterbelts, alongside a reduction in grazing land linked to plant-based diets, to free up land for other uses such as bioenergy crop planting and low-grade biomass production.
- Chalk rivers are particularly sensitive to diffuse pollution from agriculture, affecting water quality and wetland habitats. The correct implementation of existing and future legislation will have a major role in ensuring good water quality.

- Intensive farming methods which are reducing life at the base of the food chain through the use of insecticides and herbicides.
- Positive landscape change through ELMS and local initiatives at a landscape scale such as Landscape Partnerships could result from regimes to promote enhanced environmental management of heathland, hedgerows, hedgerow trees, woodland and wet pastures alongside streams. Future management of woodlands for fuel or for timber in construction may be a positive benefit.
- On less fertile soils, it is possible that some farms may cease active agricultural production with potential for diversification into other land uses. Land is likely to continue to be sold separately from buildings creating pressure for new development.

Development

- Demand for wind energy development in elevated open plateau areas which could be visually intrusive on undeveloped skylines and alter the sense of tranquillity and remoteness associated with this landscape.
- Pressure for solar development on arable land which could be visually intrusive and alter the sense of tranquillity and remoteness associated with this landscape.
- Pressure for development including housing and associated infrastructure including roads (especially around Whitehill, Bordon and Alton), much of which is car dependent and not always in keeping with local character may result in visual impacts and affect general perceptual qualities including tranquillity and dark skies.
- The valleys contain many small village settlements, and their character could be eroded by incremental small-scale changes.
- Extensions and alterations to individual properties (such as lighting or introduction of suburban style fencing and boundaries), plus increased demand for recreational land uses such as horse riding may cumulatively start to erode the perceived rural, remote character of the area.

- Small scale change including diversification of redundant farm buildings and the gentrification of individual properties could erode the tranquil rural character of the area, which is an especially characteristic and vulnerable characteristic.
- Pressure for development outside the SDNP may result in visual impacts from within the SDNP and affect general perceptual qualities including tranquillity and dark skies.
- Additional horse paddocks and associated stables, mirrors and lights, may affect the open rural character of the chalk valleys and dark skies.
- The rivers are a major source of water abstractions for domestic and commercial uses. Over abstraction can cause low flows in the summer which can result in pressures on water supply and quality. This threatens the natural resources of the river and their associated wetlands.
- Nutrient neutrality offsetting related to new development, leading to changes in land use from arable to pasture, woodland and biomass crops which may have an effect on landscape character.
- Highway improvements which detract from the remote and rural character, particularly on minor roads, and increasing vehicle numbers which are leading to erosion of passing places on single track lanes.
- The valleys are likely to be under pressure from increasing traffic volumes and increased numbers of visitors seeking recreational opportunities within and around the SDNP.
- Development of further Suitable Alternative Green Space (SANGs) such as Hogmoor Inclosure, aiming to reduce pressure on internationally important heathland habitats designated as SPAs.
- Public Rights of Way (PRoW) may be lost or negatively impacted by development.

Chapter 5

Landscape Character Type and Area Profiles

The character of the East Hampshire landscape outside the SDNP

5.1 The character of East Hampshire outside the SDNP has been created by a combination of the processes (physical, historic, natural, social and economic) described in the **Chapter 3**.

5.2 The landscape classification for East Hampshire District outside of the SDNP is set out in **Table 5.1** and illustrated on **Figure 5.1**. The classification and boundary mapping has been undertaken using GIS, with mapping at a scale of 1:25,000.

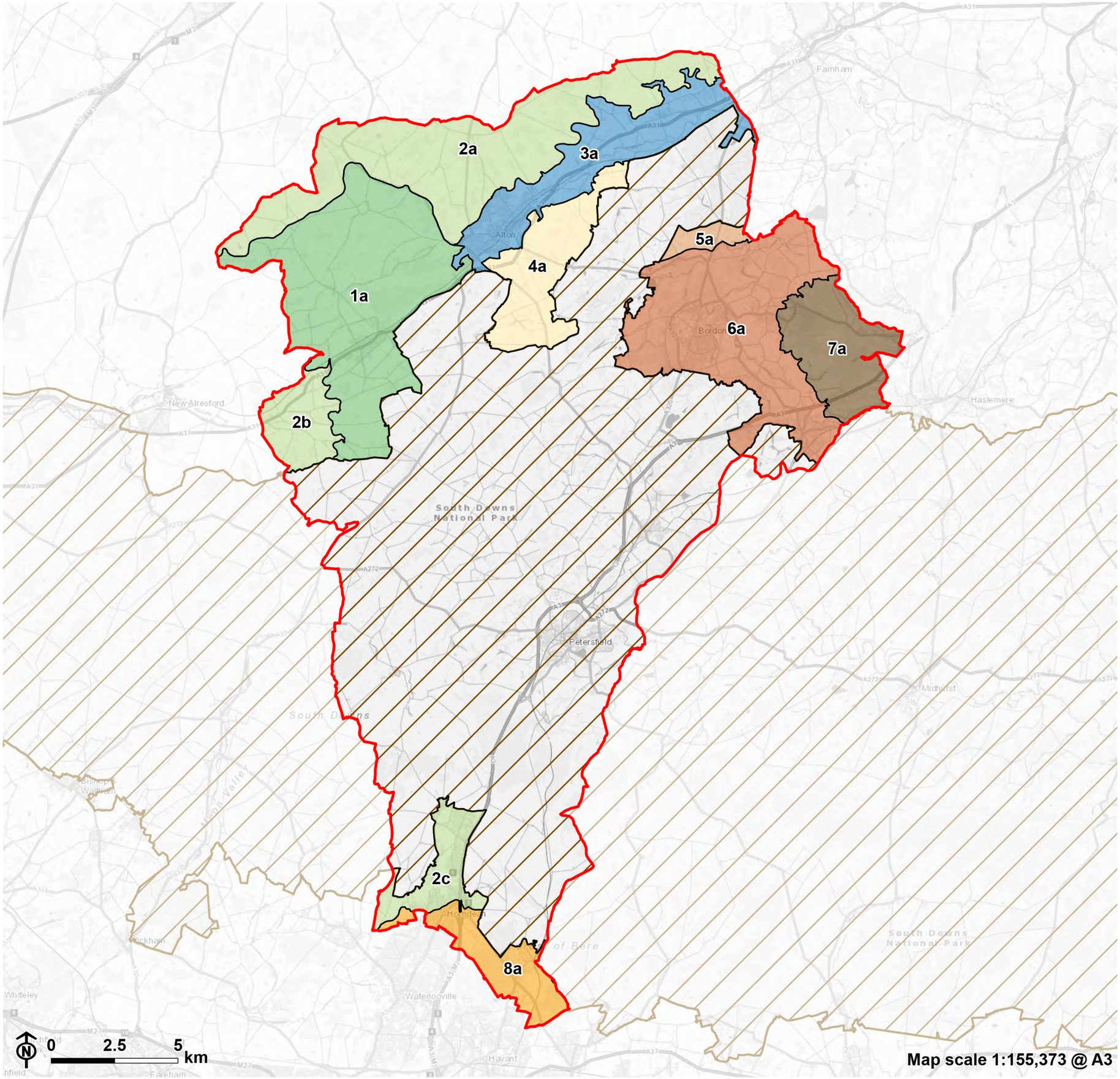
Table 5.1: Landscape Classification for East Hampshire (outside the SDNP)

Landscape Character Type (LCT)	Landscape Character Area (LCA)
1 Clay Plateau	1a Four Marks
2 Downland Mosaic	2a Lasham
2 Downland Mosaic	2b Ropley
2 Downland Mosaic	2c Horndean – Clanfield Edge
3 Chalk Valley Systems	3a Northern Wey Valley
4 Greensand Terrace	4a Worldham

Landscape Character Type (LCT)	Landscape Character Area (LCA)
5 Mixed Farmland and Woodland	5a Kingsley
6 Wealden Farmland and Heath Mosaic	6a Whitehill to Liphook
7 Greensand Hills	7a Ludshott and Bramshott Commons
8 Wooded Claylands	8a Havant Thicket and Southleigh Forest

LUC

Figure 5.1: Landscape Character Types and Areas



East Hampshire District boundary
Neighbouring local authority
South Downs National Park

Landscape character type and area

1 Clay Plateau
1a Four Marks

2 Downland Mosaic
2a Lasham
2b Ropley
2c Horndean-Clanfield Edge

3 Chalk Valley Systems
3a Northern Wey Valley

4 Greensand Terrace
4a Worldham

5 Mixed Farmland and Woodland
5a Kingsley

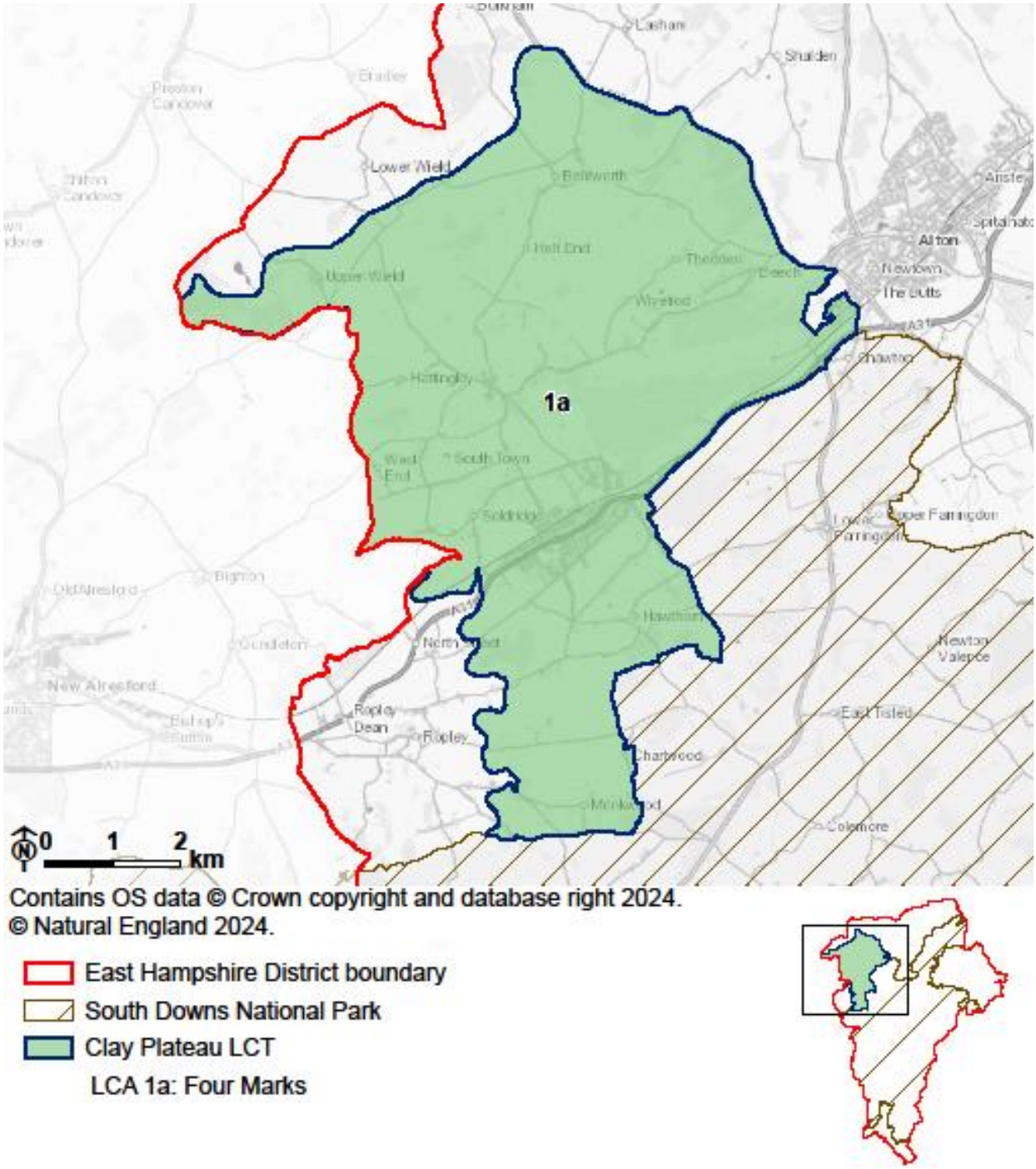
6 Wealden Farmland and Heath Mosaic
6a Whitehill to Liphook

7 Greensand Hills
7a Ludshott and Bramshott Commons

8 Wooded Claylands
8a Havant Thicket and Southleigh Forest

Landscape Character Type 1: Clay Plateau

Figure 5.2: Location of the Clay Plateau LCT



Description

5.3 The Clay Plateau comprises an elevated block of clay-capped chalk in the western part of East Hampshire, continuing to the south into the SDNP. The boundaries of this LCT are defined by the extent of the virtually continuous drift deposit of clay with flints that cap the chalk. Although part of a larger type (which occurs across East Hampshire) the LCT key characteristics are specific to the study area (i.e. the area of East Hampshire outside the South Downs National Park).

Key Characteristics

- Chalk overlain by shallow continuous clay capping resulting in heavier and poorer quality soils.
- Elevated and gently undulating landform.
- A mixed farmland landscape.
- Varying enclosure – open and exposed in higher plateau areas with occasional long views, with a more enclosed character in relation to woodland cover.
- Survival of original pre 1800 woodland including at Chawton Park Wood and Bushy Leaze Wood, and presence of Oak as a key species in hedgerows and woodland.
- Varied field pattern including irregular blocks of fields are evidence of 15th –17th century enclosure and a more regular field system represents 18th and 19th century enclosure.
- A settled rural landscape comprising dispersed farmsteads and occasional linear villages/hamlets, such as Beech and Dry Hill, with church spires forming distinctive features in the landscape.
- Presence of round barrows, notably around Medstead, indicative of a Bronze Age ritual landscape.

- Narrow, rural lanes bordered by wide verges and ditches are little used.
- A public rights of way (PRoW) network around villages which includes long distance routes such as the Pilgrim's Way, becoming sparser in the wider countryside.
- Small scale historic parkland landscapes such as at Bentworth, some relating to a history of hunting.
- A generally peaceful and tranquil landscape away from the A31.

Landscape Character Areas

5.4 The Clay Plateau LCT contains one LCA:

- LCA 1a: Four Marks

Landscape Character Area 1a: Four Marks

Description

Location and Boundaries

5.5 The Four Marks LCA is defined by the extent of a shallow but virtually continuous deposit of clay with flint which caps the chalk bedrock geology west of Alton. This geology extends to the south-east and continues into the South Downs National Park.

Key Characteristics

- Elevated undulating plateau with an almost continuous clay cap overlying the chalk bedrock. A more rolling landform with occasional winterbourne valleys is evident to the north around Bentworth indicating the transition to the chalk downland.
- A mixed farmed landscape, reflecting variations in soil type and including considerable areas of pasture managed by horse grazing.
- Fields of late medieval origin in the north and south of the area with the central part of the character area comprising distinctive planned enclosure of the late 19th century (at Four Marks, Dry Hill and Medstead).
- Ancient woodlands have been replanted, and often comprise a mix of broadleaved and coniferous tree species. The majority are relatively small, although occasional large blocks such as Chawton Park Wood and Bushy Leaze Wood occur.
- Occasional areas of neutral grassland, orchard, ponds and a relatively intact hedgerow network contribute to the ecological value of the landscape.

- Tree cover creates a secluded and enclosed landscape contrasting with the openness of the mixed farmland.
- Small parklands at Bentworth, Medstead and Thedden are of local importance.
- Settlement includes isolated farmsteads of 18-19th century and of medieval origin and villages of varying size which are generally linear, following the road pattern. Four Marks is notable as a large village with a distinctive pattern of former small-holder plots to the north-west.
- Cut by the A31 and a railway but otherwise a network of rural roads cross the area.
- A good PRoW network, including parts of the historic route of the Pilgrim's Way (linking Winchester and Canterbury – much of it now formed by the A31), the Writers' Way and St. Swithun's Way.
- Away from the density of settlement around the A31 at Four Marks and noise and movement associated with the transport corridors, this is a peaceful and in places a tranquil and rural landscape.

Figure 5.3: Open views across undulating arable fields with intact hedgerows and distant wooded horizons

Figure 5.4: Tree cover creates a sense of enclosure surrounding pasture managed by horse grazing

Natural Influences

Physical Landscape

5.6 An elevated undulating plateau landscape formed by extensive superficial deposits of clay with flint overlying the chalk bedrock geology. Clayey and fine silty soils that are often very flinty support a mix of arable farmland and pasture as well as retaining significant areas of woodland. In some areas the landform, for example to the north around Bentworth has a rolling ‘downland’ character with occasional winterbourne valleys. Occasionally, the edge of the clay at its junction with the underlying chalk forms a minor but steep scarp, as at seen around Ropley.

5.7 The most elevated land lies in the centre and to the north-east of the character area, around the settlement at Four Marks. Four Marks village is the third highest point in the county. From here there are extensive views to the south/south-east as far as Butser Hill and the South Downs scarp. The higher land also corresponds with the occurrence of significant areas of ancient woodland, e.g. at Old Down Wood, Chawton Park Wood, Bushy Leaze Wood. Field boundaries are varied with some tall hedges, post and wire fence, well-trimmed and unmaintained, fragmented hedgerows. Water is not a particular feature of the landscape however a number of ponds occur throughout the area. A recently established vineyard west of Medstead is an example of changing land use in the area.

Biodiversity

5.8 As well as mixed agriculture, this LCA supports numerous woodland blocks, many of which are of ancient origin, particularly on higher and sloping ground. Many of the ancient woodlands have been replanted, and often comprise a mix of broadleaved and coniferous tree species. The majority are relatively small, although large blocks such as Chawton Park Woods and Bushy Leaze Wood also occur. A number of woodland sites are identified as SINCs.

5.9 Other features of ecological note include occasional areas of orchard, road verges of ecological importance - which support fragments of the type of flower-rich grassland once widespread in lowland Britain - neutral grassland and ponds. A relatively intact hedgerow network provides additional wildlife habitat and enhances habitat connectivity within the agricultural landscape.

Cultural Influences

Historic Landscape Character

5.10 Archaeological monuments (Scheduled Monuments consisting of several barrows, Medstead Camp and an unclassified earthwork occur close to

Medstead. The presence of these monuments suggests that that the area was valued, at least for ritual purposes, during the Bronze Age.

5.11 Blocks of fields of late medieval origin generally occur in the north of the LCA, these represent enclosure of the open fields around medieval settlements during late medieval and post-medieval periods. The central and southern part of the LCA comprises distinctive late 19th century planned enclosure, mostly smallholdings associated with post-medieval settlements at Four Marks, Dry Hill and Medstead. These comprise small rectilinear plots associated with linear roadside settlement and reflect the influx of smallholders in the years before and after the First World War, attracted by the railway. Areas of 18th-19th century enclosure also occur around Bentworth. A distinctive block of smallholdings around Dry Hill dates to the late 19th-early 20th centuries.

5.12 The pre-existing landscape was of early enclosure around 16th-17th century farmsteads, with scattered blocks of 18th-19th century enclosure on areas of former common land. The skeleton of this distinctive landscape survives in the winding network of lanes and tracks, into which the later rectangular field patterns have been fitted.

5.13 The survival of ancient woodland in the north-eastern part of the character area may be associated with the presence of several parks in the vicinity. Chawton Park still exists as parkland within the South Downs National Park, east of this LCA, and is likely to have extended further west (into this LCA) in the past. There is an absence of historic parkland in the rest of the character area reflecting the agricultural emphasis of the landscape.

5.14 Key historic characteristics include:

- Survival of Bronze Age Barrows, including to the north of Medstead, indicative of a prehistoric ritual landscape.
- Historic parkland landscapes in the north-east part of the character area.
- Survival of significant blocks of ancient woodland provides evidence of medieval and early post-medieval woodland exploitation, e.g. coppicing and charcoal burning.

- Distinctive planned late 19th century enclosure and small holdings associated with post-medieval settlements at Four Marks, Dry Hill and Medstead.
- Alton Abbey (a Benedictine Monastery in the Church of England) and Bentworth Hall, associated with Bentworth Park are further features.

Settlement Form and Built Character

5.15 This is a settled rural landscape, with varying size and age of settlements, however a large proportion is 20th and 21st century development. Four Marks is the largest settlement, located alongside the A32 and railway. Veterans of the Crimean War, who were allocated plots for their smallholdings, originally settled the village of Four Marks. Low density small holdings located along roadsides at Dry Hill and Soldridge have distinctive long, narrow gardens to the north-west of Four Marks. Beech comprises a wide variety of detached dwellings of varying form with generally large, linear plots set within a wooded valley.

5.16 Elsewhere, the area is characterised by a low settlement density with isolated 18th-19th century farmsteads set within areas of 18th-19th century enclosure, and isolated farmsteads of late medieval origin set within areas of mainly early enclosure. Some of the isolated farmsteads may represent shrunken medieval hamlets.

5.17 Occasional small, nucleated villages of medieval origin are surrounded by earlier enclosures e.g. Medstead, which has a wider distinctive ‘stellate’ pattern extending from the village with bungalows with large gardens. Most villages are linear, of varying size, and surrounded by 18th-19th century enclosures e.g. Bentworth.

5.18 Although much of the central part of the character area is settled, the density appears low due to large gardens and tree cover. The scattered nature of development and presence of trees and boundary vegetation softens and integrates development into the landscape. More recently, many of these smallholder plots have been redeveloped with houses of greater size and

massing and in some cases loss of screening vegetation and construction of hard boundaries along the frontages of properties. Cumulatively, these small-scale changes have altered the local landscape character, creating the impression of a more 'built-up' landscape in parts.

5.19 Characteristic building materials include flint, red brick and clay tiles.

Perceptual Influences

5.20 This is largely a landscape open farmland scattered with woodland which provides a localised sense of enclosure and seclusion. The northern parts of the character area are more open, providing a contrasting perceptual experience. Tree cover often restricts views, however on higher land there are long views across the character area and beyond (including towards Alton, Basingstoke and the South Downs National Park from Medstead and Four Marks), as well as some local views. Views to the south of Medstead now incorporate new development in Four Marks.

5.21 There is no open access land although a generally good PRoW network links the settlements. The route of the Pilgrim's Way linking Winchester and Canterbury passed through this area (much of the historic route now represented by the A31). Long distance footpaths include the St. Swithun's Way and the Writers' Way. National Cycle Network Routes 23 and 224 pass through this landscape area, converging together in Medstead.

5.22 The Watercress Line railway also runs through this area in a corridor parallel to the A31. The heritage steam railway's name reflects the historic use of the railway in transporting locally grown watercress. Whilst parts of this LCA are characterised with a sense of tranquillity and strong rural character, this is eroded in proximity to the transport corridors.

5.23 East End Farm (near Bentworth) was leased by George Wither Senior, in 1580 and as such is the likely birthplace of the poet George Wither, in 1588.

Evaluation

Key Sensitivities and Values

- The agricultural mosaic, especially areas of grazed pasture, neutral grassland, ponds and orchards, and need to ensure good management of areas used for horse grazing.
- Fields of both late medieval origin and distinctive 18th-19th century enclosure.
- Areas of ancient woodland which provide enclosure, time-depth, biodiversity interest and textural contrast.
- Woodland and hedgerow tree cover, including fragments of orchard, which creates seclusion and enclosure and helps integrate built development.
- Occasional winterbourne river valleys, which are vulnerable to the increasing number of extreme rainfall events.
- Small-scale piecemeal character of settlement around Four Marks, Dry Hill, Beech and Medstead and the need to avoid over-development of plots and retain enclosing vegetation and boundaries.
- The generally low-density character of settlements with strong linear patterns and a sense of separation between villages which is under pressure for development and vulnerable to coalescence, particularly between Alton and Four Marks.
- Historic landscape features including small historic parklands which have cultural and natural heritage value, and occasional archaeological monuments including round barrows.
- Long, occasionally long-distance views across the undulating landform from high ground, including towards the South Downs National Park.
- The character of the quiet rural lanes linking settlements particularly the hedgerows and grass verges are especially sensitive to loss as a result

of redevelopment of former small-holder plots and to traffic eroding verges.

- Overall strong rural character of the landscape which is under pressure for development.

Guidance

Landscape Strategy

5.24 The overall management objective should be to conserve the rural character of the Four Marks Clay Plateau, maintaining the strong sense of enclosure and perception of low-density settlement created by the unifying woodland/tree cover and farmland mosaic.

Landscape Management

- Ensure a joined-up, landscape scale approach towards changes to agricultural practice through ELMS and local initiatives at a landscape scale such as Landscape Partnerships.
- Promote appropriate management of farmland, including restoring buffer strips along field margins to minimise run off, maintain the biodiversity of wetland features including ponds and wetlands and to create a wildlife-rich habitat supporting farmland birds.
- Conserve and manage woodland, including ancient woodland and orchards in line with Guidance on Managing ancient and native woodland in England **[See reference** 26**]**. Ensure a diverse species and age structure by thinning, coppicing, promoting natural regeneration and replanting as necessary, in line with District Wide Project 7: Enhance access and increase active management of existing woodland in the East Hampshire Green Infrastructure Strategy 2019. This will contribute

to landscape resilience and also minimise the risk of damage as a result of increased storms and high winds.

- Conserve and enhance hedgerows and hedgerow trees and consider opportunities for re-planting, gapping up and connecting.
- Conserve and enhance historic parkland, including estate railing boundaries, and support local initiatives for the restoration of traditional orchards, using and promoting local fruit varieties where viable.
- Ensure new trees and woodlands are planted in line with relevant guidance, including District Wide Project 6: Increase woodland cover in the East Hampshire Green Infrastructure Strategy 2019, and have suitable management and maintenance plans to ensure their successful establishment. Manage and monitor the threats posed by tree diseases and pests, and plan for climate change by researching appropriate species mixes to create robust and resilient woodlands.
- Conserve and enhance areas of pasture and seek to ensure good management of horse grazing, including retention of hedgerow boundaries, management of the sward and avoiding proliferation of buildings/sheds etc.
- Encourage sensitive integration of fencing, tracks, hardstanding, jumps and other paraphernalia that are associated with horse keeping.
- Maintain and enhance rights of way and improve links to the long distance footpaths within the LCA, as well as improving links with the South Downs National Park, in line with District Wide Projects 3: Connect with the South Downs and 4: Identify and enhance strategically important rights of way in the East Hampshire Green Infrastructure Strategy 2019.

Development Management

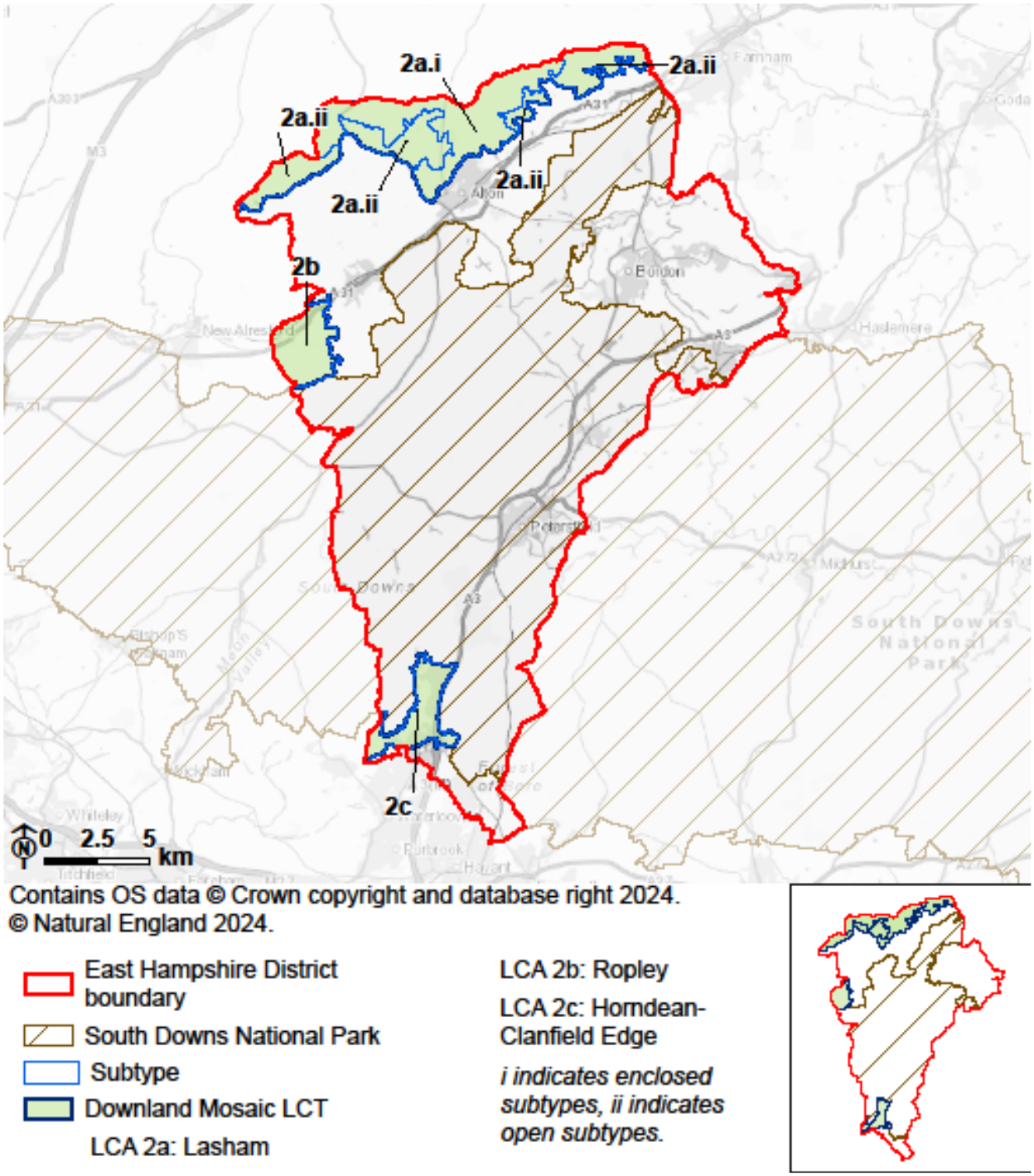
- Conserve the current density of settlement, quiet roads, sense of relative tranquillity and strong rural character of the landscape.

- Where development does occur, there should be landscape led and considerate incorporation of green infrastructure into the site in line with District Wide Project 9 from East Hampshire's GI Strategy 2019 **[See reference** 27**]**. Development should be carefully planned, and biodiversity considered from the outset in line with East Hampshire District Council's Biodiversity and Planning Guidance **[See reference** 28**]**.
- Integrate any new development sensitively with including through the use of native hedgerows and trees.
- The form of settlements should be perpetuated by limiting backland development, emphasising the existing linear street pattern and retaining the loose dispersed pattern. Seek to avoid redevelopment of smallholder plots with buildings of greater size/massing and incongruous (sub)urban style.
- Where development does occur, there should be tactical and considerate incorporation of green infrastructure into the site in line with the District Wide Project 9: Incorporate Green Infrastructure into development sites from East Hampshire's Green Infrastructure Strategy 2019.
- Conserve and enhance the soft boundaries and verges of the small plots (Four Marks, Dry Hill and Medstead) particularly frontages along rural lanes. Ensure retention of existing native hedges as well as beech/laurel hedges and associated grass verges. Seek to limit construction of hard or ornamental boundaries fencing which create a more urban character.
- Maintain individual settlement identity and limit linear expansion and infilling between existing settlements e.g. Beech and Medstead, and Medstead to Four Marks. Retain an undeveloped rural road corridor along the A31 and important open gaps, for example between Alton and Four Marks.
- Ensure that new farm buildings and associated storage structures and working areas are sensitively sited and screened to reduce their impact in the landscape.

- Conserve the character of sunken lanes and verges – seek to reduce traffic pressures and road improvements which would alter the character of these sunken lanes.
- Use sustainable and locally sourced materials, vernacular building techniques and styles, responding to the existing landscape character, to inform design and ensure integration with the surrounding landscape.
- Ensure that new development is integrated into the existing network of PRoW.
- Avoid a negative impact on the South Downs National Park's Dark Skies Policy by preventing and positively reducing artificial light pollution in line with the South Downs National Park Technical Advice Note Version 2 **[See reference** 29**]**.

Landscape Character Type 2: Downland Mosaic

Figure 5.5: Location of the Downland Mosaic LCA



Description

5.25 The Downland Mosaic Landscape Character Type comprises an area of chalk downland which spans the western half of East Hampshire District, including those parts of the district within the South Downs National Park. The downland is composed of an intricate mosaic of different field sizes, soil types (and hence land use), and extent of tree cover, which lead to variations in the degree of enclosure across the landscape type. Although part of a larger type (which occurs across East Hampshire) the LCT key characteristics are specific to the study area (i.e. the area of East Hampshire outside the South Downs National Park).

Key Characteristics

- Large scale rolling landform characteristic of the chalk dipslope, dissected by dry valleys, with localised secondary escarpments marking the division between different formations of chalk.
- Varying extents of surface clay capping resulting in varying soils, woodland cover, and sense of enclosure. Views are constantly changing from panoramas at high points, to enclosed views along hedged lanes.
- A mixture of 18th and 19th century arable fields and early post medieval pasture fields, with pockets of older medieval assarts surrounded by woodland. This mosaic of habitats supports native arable wildflowers and farmland birds.
- A strong pattern of woodland cover, such as at Shaldon Park Wood and Bowers Grove Wood, many of which are of ancient origin, and hedgerows providing enclosure which contrasts with the open farmland.
- A sporting landscape with woodland managed for country sports resulting in the retention of small woodlands, spinneys, copses and wooded strips creating local diversity in the land cover pattern.
- Occasional areas of unimproved chalk grassland and associated woody scrub, including juniper scrub which is of particular biodiversity interest.

- Occasional monuments including long barrows, round barrows and linear boundary earthworks, such as the earthwork at The Beeches are evidence that the land was valued as a ritual landscape.
- A low density of dispersed settlement across the downland with a scattering of nucleated settlement in preferred lower lying areas. Distinctive churches are often landmarks.
- A number of minor designed landscapes which indicates the importance of agriculture in this landscape and historically a lack of major wealthy landowners.
- The downs contain a well-established network of public rights of way (PRoW), and a strong hierarchical network of roads.
- A landscape with a generally strong rural, secluded character, although with varying levels of movement across its extent.

Landscape Character Areas

5.26 The Downland Mosaic LCT contains three LCAs:

- LCA 2a: Lasham
- LCA 2b: Ropley
- LCA 2c: Horndean – Clanfield Edge

Landscape Character Area 2a: Lasham

Description

Location and Boundaries

5.27 Lasham Downland Mosaic LCA comprises a band of chalk downland in the northern part of East Hampshire; its northern extent defined by the district boundary. The undulating landform slopes in the south-westerly direction towards the River Wey. To the south-west the character area is bordered by the more continuously clay capped plateau (LCA 1a). There are some long views from the downland slopes across the wide floodplain of the Wey Valley to the rising land to the south.

5.28 The area comprises a mosaic of both open and enclosed sub types. With the more enclosed area (2ai) corresponding with the clay capped wooded areas, and the more open subtype (2aii) relating to the open downland landform.

Key Characteristics

- Large-scale rolling landform characteristic of chalk, incised by linear dry valleys and forming strong bluffs above, and a dramatic contrast with, the Wey valley.
- Varying extents of clay capping resulting in varying soils and land cover, including areas of open arable fields revealing the distinctive curves and undulations of the chalk landform, as well as more enclosed wooded areas on the clay capped summits.
- A mosaic of arable fields interlocked with woodland to create a unified landscape of both openness and enclosure.

- Long views across open fields to a wooded or open skyline, with some important views across the Wey valley. In more enclosed areas views are short and contained by woodland.
- Ancient woodland corresponds to areas of clay capping (Lasham Wood) and steeper slopes (Row Wood).
- Sparsely populated with a small number of villages nucleated around rural lane crossroads as at Shalden and Lasham. Some settlements have extended along roads and have a more linear form, notably the extension of Alton along the lane towards Golden Pot. Dispersed farmsteads occur throughout the area.
- Several post 1810 parklands at Burkham Park, Shalden Park Farm, Lasham Hill Farm, and Shalden Manor.
- Church spires are key landmarks. Pylons, transmitters and telecommunication masts are more recent additions – often prominent in long views.
- Occasional spring fed ponds occur and form important landscape and ecological features.
- A number of recreational facilities including Alton Golf Course, plus a relatively limited footpath network.
- Away from major roads, a generally peaceful and rural landscape.

Figure 5.6: Views featuring prominent pylons are contained by trees and woodland within the enclosed subtype

Figure 5.7: Open arable downland landform with fragmented hedgerows within the open subtype

Natural Influences

Physical Landscape

5.29 The underlying chalk geology creates a rolling landscape which is characteristic of the Downland Mosaic LCT. The area is characterised by typical downland features such as coombe valleys and internal dry valleys and the chalk forms strong bold bluffs, rising above the Wey Valley. Most hamlets have a village pond, fed by local springs.

5.30 Clay capping is concentrated on the higher areas, extending down slopes. Where the clay capping is absent soils are well drained, fine silty soils over

chalk. Fields are varied in size and shape but predominantly arable, edged by well-trimmed but often fragmented hedgerows. Frequently, there are no boundaries between field and road accentuating the openness of the landscape. On steeper slopes some rough grazing is apparent.

5.31 Woodland interlocks with fields creating a mosaic landscape with woodland sometimes creating sinuous field edges. Ancient woodland is retained, corresponding to the clay capping e.g. Lasham Wood but also on the steeper slopes of the coombe valleys at Amery Wood and Spollycombe Copse Wood. There is also some hanging woodland, for example to the west of Brockham Hill Lane. Woodland is complemented by occasional hedgerow trees and trees along lanes, as well as small copses and game coverts.

Biodiversity

5.32 Although arable agriculture is the dominant land use, a number of woodland sites occur and represent the main ecological component of the character area. Many woodland sites have been designated as Sites of Interest for Nature Conservation (SINC), including numerous small sites and more extensive areas such as Lasham Wood.

5.33 Ancient woodlands are particularly associated with sloping and elevated ground. These sites have a history of coppice with standards management, although this traditional management has often ceased for economic reasons. Woodlands such as Shalden Park Wood and Gregory's Wood support ancient woodland flora and are locally valued for their displays of bluebells in spring. A relatively intact network of hedgerows provides additional wildlife habitat and enhances habitat connectivity within the wider landscape. The network of copses and game coverts complement the woodland cover.

5.34 Occasional spring fed ponds also occur throughout the LCA and form important ecological features, often supporting a range of wetland and emergent plant species and providing habitat for a range of common waterfowl.

Cultural Influences

Historic Landscape Character

5.35 A landscape of predominantly arable fields, some of late medieval origin representing early enclosure of the open fields around medieval settlements during late medieval and post-medieval periods, e.g. Lower Wield and Lasham. Other parts of the LCA are characterised by 18th-19th century planned enclosure. Small, isolated blocks of medieval assarts survive around Lasham Wood, Ham Wood and High Wood.

5.36 Key historic characteristics include:

- Significant blocks of ancient woodland concentrated in central part of character area. Post-1800 woodland rarer, including plantations and windbreaks.
- Occasional archaeological monuments – unclassified earthwork north-west of Bentley (Scheduled Monument).
- Absence of major historic parkland reflecting the agricultural emphasis of the landscape. Several post 1810 parklands are located at Burkham Park, Shalden Park Farm, Lasham Hill Farm, and Shalden Manor.
- Lasham Airfield – RAF fighter base 1942-48, civilian airfield 1948-present (most distinctive wartime buildings are demolished).

Settlement Form and Built Character

5.37 The area is characterised by a low settlement density with isolated 18th-19th century farmsteads of set within areas of 18th-19th century enclosure, and small villages of medieval origin as at Lasham and Shalden surrounded by earlier enclosures. Some of the isolated farmsteads may represent shrunken medieval hamlets. The large estate farms often include a large number of

buildings including distinctive flint barns. A number of barns have been converted for residential use.

5.38 Lasham and Shalden are both small villages that have developed along rural lanes, each with a distinctive dispersed informal character. More recent linear settlement has extended the rural lanes north of Alton towards Golden Pot – creating the impression of a more continuously developed area along this route. Red brick, flint and white render, with clay tiles and thatch are the dominant building materials.

5.39 Recent development includes solar PV development in the east of the LCA.

Perceptual Influences

5.40 This is essentially a large-scale, open rolling landscape with varying degrees of openness and enclosure due to the extent of woodland cover. The smooth open arable fields are sometimes amplified in size by fragmented field boundaries. In contrast to this, woodland blocks are dispersed through the landscape providing texture and enclosure. Repetition of farmland and woodland creates unity across the LCA. Views are across open fields often to a wooded or open skyline or contained by woodland.

5.41 No major roads cross the area with quiet rural lanes winding up the slope from the Wey Valley. The density of settlement is very low with few villages (Lower Wield, Lasham and Golden Pot) and dispersed farmsteads. Despite the presence of solar PV development, Lasham Airfield and associated transmitters, there is little overt human impact. Pylons, overhead lines and masts are present, partially concealed at close quarters by woodland cover – but becoming prominent features in long views. This is essentially a still, quiet landscape with a generally strong rural character and strong sense of tranquillity.

5.42 The airfield at Lasham established during the Second World War provides time depth. Although the runways remain in place, the airfield now serves as a museum and gliding centre; the gliding club has an active interest in the natural history of the area. Other recreational opportunities are found at Alton Golf Club and a limited PRoW network. National Cyle Network Route 23 passed through the western part of the LCA.

Evaluation

Key Sensitivities and Values

- Distinctive, rolling chalk landform comprising a mosaic of woodland and arable farmland.
- Ancient woodlands and associated flora and fauna need to be protected from intensive recreational use (e.g. paintball games).
- Open views within the area and from the area across the Wey Valley. Views within and to the areas of clear, uninterrupted ridges and skylines which are especially sensitive to large scale vertical structures.
- Spring fed ponds and associated wetland habitat which are sensitive to change from climate change leading to increased seasonal flooding, increased temperatures and periods of drought.
- The hedgerow network which provides visual unity and a wildlife corridor, linking woodlands.
- Historic landscape features including historic parklands which have cultural and natural heritage value.
- The function of the chalk slopes and bluffs as the backdrop to the Wey Valley are particularly sensitive given that any change has the potential to be highly visible.
- The small-scale dispersed character of settlement – and vulnerabilities to further linear expansion along lanes (especially in relation to development pressures from Alton).

- The character of rural lanes linking settlement which are sensitive to pressure from increased traffic that can erode verges.
- The peaceful rural character and strong sense of tranquillity arising from the low density, dispersed settlement and lack of major roads.

Guidance

Landscape Strategy

5.43 The overall management strategy for the Lasham Downland Mosaic LCA is to conserve the mosaic of arable farmland and ancient woodland and maintain the overall rural character and strong sense of tranquillity of the downland.

Landscape Management

- Conserve and enhance the rolling chalk downs.
- Ensure a joined-up, landscape scale approach towards changes to agricultural practice through ELMS and local initiatives at a landscape scale such as Landscape Partnerships.
- Conserve and manage woodland, including ancient woodland in line with Guidance on Managing ancient and native woodland in England **[See reference** 30**]**. Ensure a diverse species and age structure by thinning, coppicing, promoting natural regeneration and replanting as necessary, in line with District Wide Project 7: Enhance access and increase active management of existing woodland in the East Hampshire GI Strategy 2019. This will contribute to landscape resilience and also minimise the risk of damage as a result of increased storms and high winds.
- Conserve and manage the intact hedgerow network with hedgerow trees which are of biodiversity interest. Create buffer strips along hedgerows

and monitor regeneration of hedgerow trees, re-planting where necessary.

- Promote appropriate management of farmland, including restoring buffer strips along field margins to minimise run off, maintain the biodiversity of wetland features including ponds and to create a wildlife-rich habitat supporting farmland birds.
- Conserve and enhance historic parkland which have cultural and natural heritage value.
- Ensure new trees and woodlands are planted in line with relevant guidance, including District Wide Project 6: Increase woodland cover in the East Hampshire GI Strategy 2019, and have suitable management and maintenance plans to ensure their successful establishment. Manage and monitor the threats posed by tree diseases and pests, and plan for climate change by researching appropriate species mixes to create robust and resilient woodlands.
- Enhance the Northern Valley Wey through the delivery of green infrastructure and improvement in access and engagement, in line with Site Specific Project 1 of the East Hampshire GI Strategy 2019.
- Maintain and enhance rights of way and improve links to the long-distance footpaths within the LCA, as well as improving links with the South Downs National Park, in line with District Wide Projects 3: Connect with the South Downs and 4: Identify and enhance strategically important rights of way in the East Hampshire GI Strategy 2019.
- Conserve and enhance ponds and associated wetland habitats. Consider opportunities for extending these habitats.

Development Management

- Conserve the low density of dispersed settlement, which gives this landscape its strong rural character.
- Integrate any new development sensitively using a landscape- led approach including through the use native hedgerows and trees.

Development should be carefully planned, and biodiversity considered from the outset in line with East Hampshire District Council's Biodiversity and Planning Guidance **[See reference** 31**]**.

- Conserve the character, fabric and appearance of traditional farm buildings.
- Conserve the informal character of the villages of Lasham and Shalden and seek to avoid infilling which would create a more consolidated settlement form.
- Monitor the edge of Alton and prevent further development encroaching up into the downland.
- Where development does occur, there should be landscape led and considerate incorporation of green infrastructure into the site in line with District Wide Project 9 from East Hampshire's GI Strategy 2019 **[See reference** 32**]**.
- Monitor redevelopment of former small properties (e.g. south of Golden Pot). Consider the effects of greater size and suburban style on rural character and on views within the area.
- Maintain open skylines, especially along the hilltops to the south of the area. Monitor the effects of incremental additions of masts/telecom infrastructure/solar PV developments and consider effects on views within and to the area.
- Conserve the character of sunken lanes and verges – seek to reduce traffic pressures and road improvements which would alter the character of these sunken lanes.
- Use sustainable and locally sourced materials, vernacular building techniques and styles, responding to the existing landscape character, to inform design and ensure integration with the surrounding landscape.
- Ensure that new development is integrated into the existing network of PRoW.
- Avoid a negative impact on the South Downs National Park's Dark Skies Policy by preventing and positively reducing artificial light pollution in line

with the South Downs National Park Technical Advice Note Version 2 **[See reference** 33**]**.

Landscape Character Area 2b: Ropley

Description

Location and Boundaries

5.44 Ropley Downland Mosaic is a small, and relatively low-lying downland character area, located in the west of East Hampshire. Defined by the district boundary to the west, the eastern boundary of the character area has been drawn along the 150m contour distinguishing it from the adjacent more elevated clay capped plateau. The area is approached from the clay plateau by steeply sloping wooded lanes.

Key Characteristics

- Undulating, low-lying landscape gently sloping to the west.
- Shallow well drained calcareous silty soils support mainly arable farmland mixed with some areas of pasture and horse paddocks.
- Small to medium sized fields of early enclosure are bound by beech and elm sucker hedgerows. There are in addition areas of large more open fields, particularly to the north of Ropley.
- Assarted fields carved from woodland form a mosaic with ancient woodland in the south of the area.
- Ancient woodland blocks survive on the higher land e.g. Ropley Wood.
- Small scale enclosed character is accentuated by the wooded lanes which dip down into the LCA from the adjacent clay plateau.
- Relatively densely settled with a dispersed pattern of linear settlement along the rural lanes.

- Woodland and hedgerows form strong edges and enclosure along the rural lanes and settlement is not evident when travelling across the area.
- Narrow rural roads cut through the landscape and form the structure of the linear settlements.
- The A31 and railway cross the LCA in the north, locally detracting from the strong rural character experienced elsewhere.

Figure 5.8: Undulating small arable field enclosed by mature hedgerows

Figure 5.9: Large undulating arable fields adjacent to the A31 north of Ropley enclosed by trees and woodland

Natural Influences

Physical Landscape

5.45 The undulating Ropley Downland Mosaic landscape is informed by its chalk bedrock geology. The east of the character area is marked by a mini scarp which represents the edge of the clay capping at its junction with the underlying chalk of this landscape. Linear deposits of head clay, silt, sand and gravel cross contours, following the westerly incline of the land, representing former winterbournes and small streams which help shape this landform.

5.46 The chalk bedrock geology creates shallow well drained calcareous soils which support predominantly pastoral fields with some arable and areas of horse paddocks. Fields are of early enclosure with some assarted fields which form a mosaic with small blocks of ancient woodland on higher ground such as at Old Down Wood, Westfield Copse and Long's Wood. Fields are generally small and bound by hedgerows with hedgerow trees, with some larger fields in the north.

Biodiversity

5.47 This predominantly agricultural landscape comprises a mix of improved pasture grassland, together with arable fields and occasional small woodlands. Ancient woodland occurs predominantly in the south of the character area including a cluster of small woodlands, designated as SINCs to the south of Ropley. These woodlands including Long's Wood, Park Wood and Lyeland Wood, together with the hedgerow network provide an important ecological resource.

Cultural Influences

Historic Landscape Character

5.48 This is a mixed agricultural landscape with fields mainly of late medieval origin representing early enclosure of the open fields around medieval settlements during late medieval and post-medieval periods, e.g. Ropley. Small, isolated blocks of recent 18th-19th century enclosure occur around the edges of the LCA. There is, in addition, a considerable area of medieval assarts south of Ropley. There are post 1810 parklands at Ropley House, Ropley Grove and Ropley Manor.

5.49 Key historic characteristics include:

- Ancient woodland including at Old Down Wood, Westfield Copse and Long's Wood.
- Four post 1810 historic parks at Ropley Lodge, Ropley House, Ropley Grove and Ropley Manor listed on the Hampshire Register.
- A conservation area covers two parts of Ropley village, as well as a scattering of Grade II and II* listed buildings, particularly focused around the centre of Ropley and its St Peters Church.

Settlement Form and Built Character

5.50 The well-settled rural area is characterised by isolated 18th-19th century farmsteads of origin within areas of 18th-19th century enclosure, and low-density small villages of medieval origin (e.g. Ropley) surrounded by earlier enclosures. Some of the isolated farmsteads may represent shrunken medieval hamlets.

5.51 The original part of Ropley developed around the church in the 12th century, with a number of outlying hamlets. Subsequent development along the interconnecting lanes has resulted in a larger village characterised by a dispersed informal pattern of development along the roadside. Boundary hedges, walls and mature trees create a strong sense of enclosure and in many cases provide screening and development is not evident. Between the roads are areas of open agricultural land and paddocks.

5.52 Buildings are predominantly brick, with some flint, tile hanging and weatherboarding. Roofs include thatch, tile and slate.

Perceptual Influences

5.53 This LCA is a small-scale landscape, lower lying than other downland mosaic areas, with a generally enclosed and contained character. This is exemplified when approaching the LCA from the east along wooded lanes

which dip down the mini scarp from the clay plateau towards Ropley. Tree cover, hedgerows and the linked rural lane network provide continuity and unity. This landscape, contained by landform and tree cover, has limited long or wide views.

5.54 The villages of Ropley and Ropley Dean have a dispersed character, along the rural roads. Residential development is set within large garden plots and contained by trees and is frequently not visible from rural roads so that the area retains a strong rural quality. The A31 crosses the north of the area, locally eroding the strong rural character. The route of the Watercress Line railway is also in the north, the heritage steam railway's name reflects the historic use of the railway in transporting locally grown watercress.

5.55 An extensive network of rural roads connects the settlement of Ropley with dispersed scattered farmsteads. PRoW provide linkages between settlements in the area, with the St. Swithun's Way Long Distance Footpath (representing the former line of the Pilgrim's Way linking Winchester to Canterbury) passing through the area. There is little other evidence of the area being used for recreational purposes, much of it having a largely settled, domestic character.

5.56 Ropley is home of the Hampshire Hunt and according to tradition Ropley supplied the honey for William the Conqueror's Mead. Ropley Lodge, Ropley Manor and Ropley House are of local importance.

Evaluation

Key Sensitivities and Values

- The intact small early enclosed predominantly pastoral fields bound by hedgerows.
- The mosaic of early assarted enclosures and small blocks of ancient woodland.

- Woodland, including ancient woodland, and hedgerow tree cover, which creates the secluded and contained character of the landscape and helps integrate built development.
- The hedgerows and mature trees and vernacular boundaries particularly within Ropley village which provide enclosure and contribute to the rural character.
- Historic parkland which has cultural and natural heritage value.
- Views into the landscape from adjacent higher land increases sensitivity.
- The strong rural character of the area, including the rural character of the lanes enclosed by woodland and hedgerows, which has been retained despite the extent of settlement.

Guidance

Landscape Strategy

5.57 The overall management objective should be to conserve the small scale, rural character of the landscape of pasture, woodland and hedgerows and to conserve the dispersed, rural character of Ropley village.

Landscape Management

- Conserve and enhance the rolling chalk downs.
- Promote appropriate management of farmland, including restoring buffer strips along field margins to minimise run off, maintain the biodiversity of wetland features including ponds and to create a wildlife-rich habitat supporting farmland birds.
- Ensure a joined-up, landscape scale approach towards changes to agricultural practice through ELMS and local initiatives at a landscape scale such as Landscape Partnerships.

- Conserve the mosaic of early assarted enclosures and small blocks of ancient woodland in the southern part of the area.
- Conserve and manage woodland, including ancient woodland in line with Guidance on Managing ancient and native woodland in England **[See reference** 34**]**. Ensure a diverse species and age structure by thinning, coppicing and replanting as necessary, in line with District Wide Project 7: Enhance access and increase active management of existing woodland in the East Hampshire GI Strategy 2019. This contributes to landscape resilience and will also minimise the risk of damage as a result of increased storms and high winds. Restore and create broadleaved woodlands surrounding the A31 and railway to help reduce noise, light and air pollution, and to maintain and enhance the pockets of tranquillity.
- Ensure new trees and woodlands are planted in line with relevant guidance, including District Wide Project 6: Increase woodland cover in the East Hampshire GI Strategy 2019, and have suitable management and maintenance plans to ensure their successful establishment. Manage and monitor the threats posed by tree diseases and pests, and plan for climate change by researching appropriate species mixes to create robust and resilient woodlands.
- Conserve and manage the hedgerow network and promote growth of hedgerow trees.
- Maintain the rural character of the roads and maintain the roadside hedgerows.
- Ensure good management of paddocks avoiding proliferation of infrastructure and hard boundaries and maintaining good sward cover. Encourage sensitive integration of fencing, tracks, hardstanding, jumps and other paraphernalia that are associated with horse keeping.
- Maintain and enhance rights of way and improve links to the long-distance footpaths within the LCA, as well as improving links with the South Downs National Park, in line with District Wide Projects 3: Connect with the South Downs and 4: Identify and enhance strategically important rights of way in the East Hampshire GI Strategy 2019.

Development Management

- Conserve the distinctive pattern of development in Ropley, centred at the church but extending along the interconnecting lanes. Maintain the single plot development along lanes and avoid infilling which would create a more consolidated settlement form.
- Where development does occur, there should be tactical and considerate incorporation of green infrastructure into the site in line with the District Wide Project 9: Incorporate GI into development sites from East Hampshire's GI Strategy 2019 **[See reference** 35**]**. Existing woodland and planting should be used to integrate any changes into the landscape. Maintain the roadside boundaries, hedgerows and trees which conceal development and seek to discourage creation of more suburban boundaries (including, walls closeboard fencing and hardstanding) to roadside properties.
- Development should be carefully planned, and biodiversity considered from the outset in line with East Hampshire District Council's Biodiversity and Planning Guidance **[See reference** 36**]**.
- Conserve the character of sunken lanes and verges – seek to reduce traffic pressures and prevent road improvements which would alter the character of these sunken lanes.
- Use sustainable and locally sourced materials, vernacular building techniques and styles, responding to the existing landscape character, to inform design and ensure integration with the surrounding landscape.
- Ensure that new development is integrated into the existing network of PRoW.
- Avoid a negative impact on the South Downs National Park's Dark Skies Policy by preventing and positively reducing artificial light pollution in line with the South Downs National Park Technical Advice Note Version 2 **[See reference** 37**]**.

Landscape Character Area 2c: Horndean – Clanfield Edge

Description

Location and Boundaries

5.58 The LCA comprises a small area of downland located on the lowest elevations of the south facing chalk dipslope to the west of Horndean and south of Clanfield. The northern boundary coincides with the edge of the South Downs National Park. The southern boundary is marked by the band of clay – a flatter more wooded landscape around Lovedean which forms part of LCT 10: Wooded Claylands.

Key Characteristics

- Gently sloping landform and occasional steeper slopes with some undulations in the chalk created by dry valleys.
- Chalk bedrock geology overlain with clay with flints at higher elevations and head clay, silt, sand and gravel deposits along the dry valleys. A greater depth of clay has also accumulated on the lower dip slope resulting in a subtle transition to the Wooded Claylands to the south – this area was formerly part of the Forest of Bere.
- Some fields in arable cultivation remain around the built edge of Horndean and Clanfield. Much of the land is now used as paddocks for horse/pony grazing with a range of boundary treatments, including barbed wire in places.
- Relatively little woodland, but that which remains, e.g Yoells Copse, is an important local feature.

- Views are open, typically towards rooftops, treed skylines or blocks of residential development superimposed on the chalk landform.
- Extensive area of medieval assarted fields west of Horndean typified by small-medium irregular enclosures, with a smaller area of 18th-19th century enclosures to the north.
- Settlement has developed in a linear form along the A3 linking Horndean and Clanfield. These settlements have subsequently expanded to form larger blocks of built development.
- Electricity pylons cut across the landscape north of Horndean and are a highly visible and prominent feature.
- The A3 effectively severs the area from the downs to the east. Smaller rural roads link settlement. There are a number of ancient lanes through the area.
- The extent of development and roads fragments the landscape into a series of smaller blocks. There is a good ProW network extending from the urban edge, for example linking to Catherington Down SSSI.

Figure 5.10: Footpath route across gently sloping rough grassland enclosed by hedgerows and maturetrees pylons on the horizon

Figure 5.11: Paddock with linear settlement in front of a treed skyline broken by distant pylons

Natural Influences

Physical Landscape

5.59 The LCA lies on the lowest elevations of the south facing chalk dipslope. The chalk bedrock geology informs the landform which slopes gently in a southerly direction. Dry valleys have been cut into the chalk creating an undulating character in places. The drift geology, particularly the clay and flint deposits have influenced the soils which are of good to moderate quality.

5.60 The land use is predominantly housing and infrastructure, although arable fields remain on the edges of the built development, with pasture and horse paddocks also common. Fields are medium/large in size and are separated by fragmented hedgerows. Paddock boundaries vary, and are often not harmonious within views, occasionally barbed wire is used.

Biodiversity

5.61 The main areas of ecological interest are the small, scattered woodlands, including some ancient woodlands. A number have SINC status and Yoells Copse is locally designated as a nature reserve. Elsewhere the area is characterised by arable fields and horse paddocks, bound by a fragmented hedgerow network. The boundaries and verges of the ancient lanes that pass through the area are likely to be of biodiversity interest retaining woodland cover and unimproved grassland.

Cultural Influences

Historic Landscape Character

5.62 The landscape is dominated by post-1800 settlement, representing dormitory settlements originating from a scattered core of common-edge settlement (Horndean and Clanfield). The most distinctive feature is the extensive area of medieval assarted fields to the north of Horndean.

5.63 Key historic characteristics include:

- Central area of medieval assarted fields typified by small-medium irregular enclosures.
- Block of medium 18th-19th century enclosures of in the south-western corner, and small 18th-19th century enclosure in the south-eastern corner.
- A small area of historic parkland east of Horndean.
- Conservation area at Catherington is indicative of historic value relating to views from the village, the open rural character of the village, nine listed buildings and others of local historic interest and distinctive building materials including clay tiles and slate roofs alongside orange or creamy yellow brick.

- Formerly part of the ancient Forest of Bere, although only small fragments of ancient woodland remain of the forest.

Settlement Form and Built Character

5.64 Settlement is largely 20th century suburban development representing the growth of dormitory settlements, originating around a 19th century core of scattered settlement.

5.65 Horndean developed and expanded along the Portsmouth – London Road as Portsmouth became an important naval port in the 1500s. The village expanded more rapidly in the 19th century with the establishment of a brewery – which remains a dominant landmark, recently been converted into apartments.

5.66 The historic buildings in Horndean are consistently local red brick giving a strong uniform character. Later housing is for the most part generic, modern and suburban in style and materials.

5.67 More recent development includes Lovedean Electricity Substation, and a solar PV development in the south-west of this character area. Although large developments, both are generally well screened from close views by hedgerows, but may be visible in long, distant views from higher ground.

5.68 Some of the buildings in this character area, notable in Catherington, contain traditional and vernacular use of the flint and red brick in their construction, giving a very unique character and appearance to the villages.

5.69 It is common for settlements to have access, along PRoW, to open countryside, for example Stubbins Down, provides a quick chance to step away into green space for recreation.

Perceptual Influences

5.70 Although built form only accounts for just over half of the land use, the visual influence of the built edge impacts upon the character of the area more widely. In the instance of Horndean, this can be attributed to the light-coloured modern building materials. Views of the movement and activity of the urban areas are visible from rural roads which cut through the surrounding arable fields.

5.71 This is a highly varied landscape. This contrast between built development, ancient lanes and arable farmland creates a landscape which is lacking in unity, a feature which is accentuated by the electricity pylons and roads which transect the landscape. An electricity sub-station in the west and solar PV development add further to the disparate range of development within the countryside.

5.72 The sense of tranquillity is limited due to the presence of built form and a high level of movement and noise associated by vehicles and other forms of human activity. Traffic on the A3 is a significant audible influence. Views are frequently towards a built edge. An exception is towards the elevated scarp at Catherington Down, just outside the LCA west of Catherington, which provides expansive and panoramic views across to the coast, the Solent and the Isles of Wight. There is very little woodland cover to provide screening or integration of built development, although that which remains such as at Yoells Copse is an important local feature.

5.73 Despite the urban nature of much of the landscape, it is well served by PRoW, including the Monarch's Way Long Distance Footpath linking it to the wider landscape, including the South Downs. The National Cycle Network Route 222 follows much of the eastern boundary of the LCA.

Evaluation

Guidance

Landscape Strategy

5.74 The overall management strategy for the Horndean – Clanfield Downland Mosaic is to conserve remaining elements of the chalk downland landscape and enhance the setting of built development.

Key Sensitivities and Values

- Arable fields and chalkland landform surrounding the built edge.
- Fragmented hedgerow boundaries and remnant areas of woodland, including ancient woodland such as at Yoells Copse.
- The absence of woodland and the relatively open views accentuates the visual sensitivity of the landscape, making it vulnerable to further development including solar PV development and battery storage (for example at Lovedean Electricity Substation) and horse grazing in the urban fringe, resulting in a more urbanised character.
- Locally important fragments of woodland, including ancient woodland.
- Small, historic parkland east of Horndean.
- The character of rural roads and ancient lanes which cross the area and may be under pressure to expand and be widened due to the spread of built form.
- The local PRoW network linking the urban area to the downland landscape.

Landscape Management

- Conserve and enhance the rolling chalk downs.
- Ensure a joined-up, landscape scale approach towards changes to agricultural practice through ELMS and local initiatives at a landscape scale such as Landscape Partnerships.
- Conserve the pattern of small, assarted fields and seek to conserve/reinstate hedgerow boundaries.
- Promote appropriate management of farmland, including restoring buffer strips along field margins to minimise run off, maintain the biodiversity of wetland features including ponds and to create a wildlife-rich habitat supporting farmland birds.
- Conserve and manage woodland, including ancient woodland in line with Guidance on Managing ancient and native woodland in England **[See reference** 38**]**. Ensure a diverse species and age structure by thinning, coppicing, promoting natural regeneration and replanting as necessary, in line with District Wide Project 7: Enhance access and increase active management of existing woodland in the East Hampshire GI Strategy 2019. This will contribute to landscape resilience and also minimise the risk of damage as a result of increased storms and high winds. Conserve and enhance hedgerows and hedgerow trees and consider opportunities for re-planting.
- Ensure new trees and woodlands are planted in line with relevant guidance, including District Wide Project 6: Increase woodland cover in the East Hampshire GI Strategy 2019, and have suitable management and maintenance plans to ensure their successful establishment. Manage and monitor the threats posed by tree diseases and pests, and plan for climate change by researching appropriate species mixes to create robust and resilient woodlands.
- Consider opportunities for further tree and woodland planting to contain and reduce the visual impact of the built edge.
- Conserve and enhance historic parkland.

- Seek to ensure good management of horse paddocks to conserve the rural setting. Encourage sensitive integration of fencing, tracks, hardstanding, jumps and other paraphernalia that are associated with horse keeping.
- Maintain and enhance rights of way (including from settlements into the coutryside) and improve links to the long-distance footpaths within the LCA, as well as improving links with the South Downs National Park, in line with District Wide Projects 3: Connect with the South Downs and 4: Identify and enhance strategically important rights of way in the East Hampshire GI Strategy 2019.

Development Management

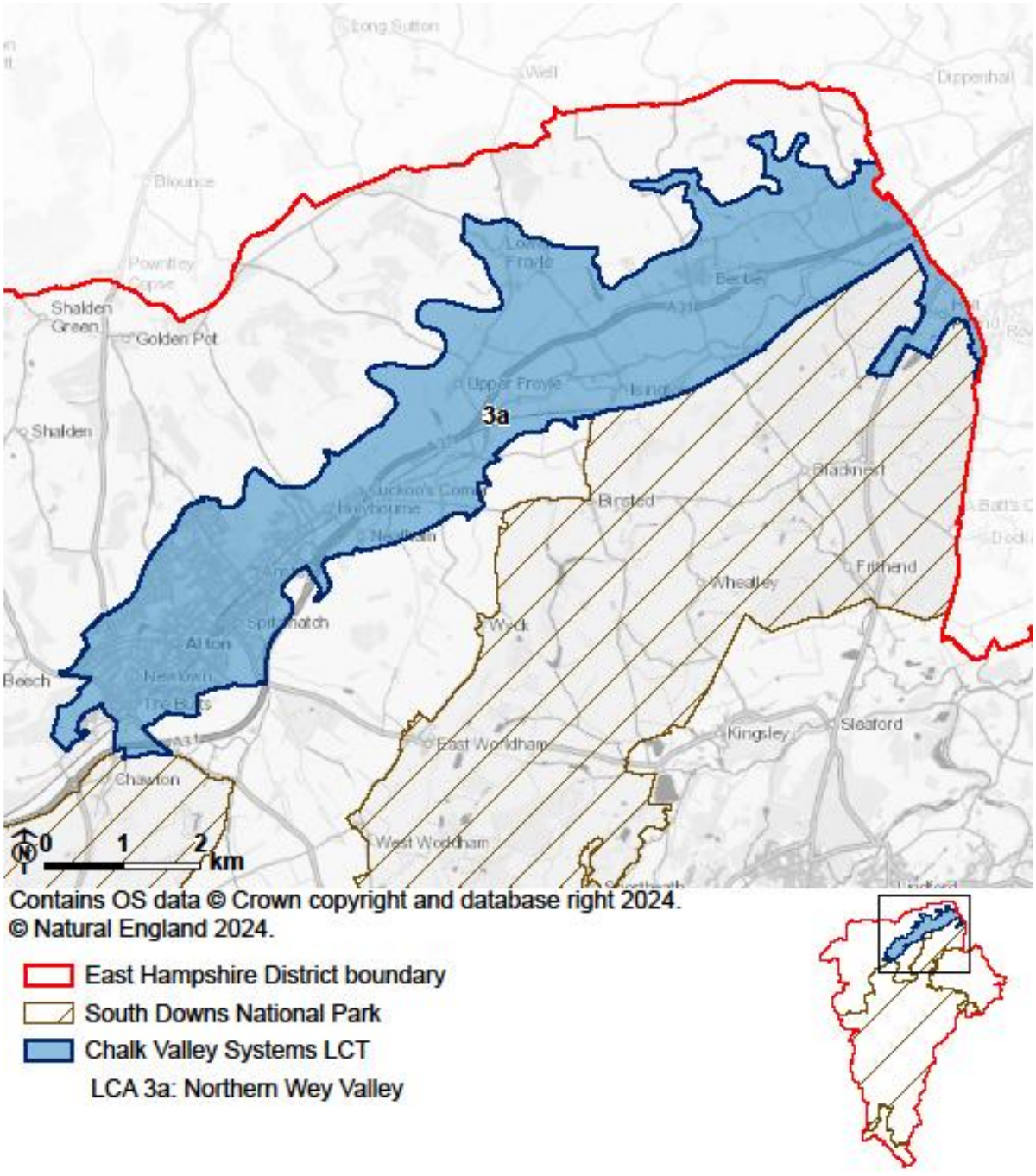
- Monitor the expansion of the urban edge of Horndean and Clanfield to ensure that it does not expand further onto areas of open rolling chalk downland.
- Where development does occur, there should be landscape led and considerate incorporation of green infrastructure into the site in line with District Wide Project 9 from East Hampshire's GI Strategy 2019 **[See reference** 39**]**. Development should be carefully planned, and biodiversity considered from the outset in line with East Hampshire District Council's Biodiversity and Planning Guidance **[See reference** 40**]**.
- Make green infrastructure integral to any new development and promote opportunities to enhance links to the surrounding countryside and public rights of way network in line with East Hampshire GI Strategy 2019 - District Wide Project 9: Incorporate GI into development sites to soften, screen and contain any new built development.
- Conserve the character of sunken lanes and verges – seek to reduce traffic pressures and prevent road improvements which would alter the character of these sunken lanes.
- Use sustainable and locally sourced materials, vernacular building techniques and styles, responding to the existing landscape character,

to inform design and ensure integration with the surrounding landscape. Ensure that new development is integrated into the existing network of PRoW.

- Avoid a negative impact on the South Downs National Park's Dark Skies Policy by preventing and positively reducing artificial light pollution in line with the South Downs National Park Technical Advice Note Version 2 **[See reference** 41**]**.

Landscape Character Type 3: Chalk Valley Systems

Figure 5.12: Location of the Chalk Valley Systems LCT



Description

5.75 The Chalk Valley Systems are the branching valley systems of East Hampshire that drain the dipslope of the chalk downs and contain a river along at least part of their length. They often follow the lines of faults in the chalk and are winterbournes in their upper reaches. Although part of a larger type (which occurs across East Hampshire) the LCT key characteristics are specific to the study area (i.e. the area of East Hampshire outside the South Downs National Park).

Key Characteristics

- Broad, branching valley of the River Wey carved from the chalk downs and indented by dry valleys and coombes to produce smoothly rounded valley sides.
- On the valley sides the chalk soils support intensive arable cultivation on shallower slopes, with pasture and woodland on steeper slopes.
- Upper reaches of the valley is a winterbourne – wells and springs are features.
- Lower Valley floor contains clear, chalk river that flows within a flat, narrow floodplain dominated by improved and semi-improved grassland, divided by occasional hedgerows and frequent trees including lines of willow.
- The valleys have provided important routeways from prehistory – today, containing roads or winding lanes connecting a string of regularly spaced nucleated flint villages. Other notable routes include the Pilgrim's Way walking route, linking Winchester to the North Downs.
- Predominantly a landscape of planned 18th-19th century enclosure.
- Rivers were used to power watermills in the past – weirs, mill ponds and mills, as well as watercress beds are distinctive features of the landscape.

- Away from the A31 transport corridor and the development surrounding Birdworld, the valley retains an unspoilt and tranquil pastoral character.

Landscape Character Areas

5.76 The Chalk Valley Systems LCT contains one LCA:

- LCA 3a: Northern Wey Valley

Landscape Character Area 3a: Northern Wey Valley

Description

Location and Boundaries

5.77 The broad Northern Wey Valley LCA (landscape character area) is located to the north-east of East Hampshire District, extending from the River Wey's source to the south-west of Alton. From this point the river flows in a north-easterly direction towards Farnham in the adjacent district of Waverley. The northern and southern boundaries are defined roughly along the 110m contour line, following the apparent skyline of the valley as seen from the valley floor. The valley forms a main linear communication corridor linking Hampshire and Surrey containing the route of the A31 and the main rail line.

Key Characteristics

- A broad, shallow valley, cutting through and enclosed by the Chalk, Upper Greensand and Gault Mudstone geology.
- The River Wey, a 'chalk stream', arises as springs around which the market town of Alton has grown. The upper part of the river is a winterbourne, flowing seasonally.
- The northern chalk valley sides are indented by short coombe valleys and form bold bluffs overlooking the valley. To the south the valley sides are more varied and include the wooded backdrop of Alice Holt, as well as the lower land of the Greensand Terrace.
- The valley floodplain is predominantly pastoral with arable cultivation on the valley sides.

- Willows are features of the valley floor forming a distinct pattern alongside channels and ditches. Hanging woodland is occasionally present on the steeper slopes of the valley sides.
- Flood meadows with wet grasslands (e.g. around Froyle Mill) are of particular ecological interest for the range of wetland plant species they support, and their associated wildlife interest.
- Historic features associated with the river are apparent today. Remnant features relating to water management and agricultural/industrial use of the river, include weirs, mills, millponds and watercress beds.
- A string of nucleated settlements of medieval origin exist on the gravel terrace forming the lower valley slopes (e.g. Bentley and Upper Froyle).
- Villages are surrounded by a mix of early and recent field enclosures. The upper part of the valley is centred around the market town of Alton.
- St Swithun's Way represents an important route way since prehistory, formerly part of the Pilgrim's Way linking Winchester to the North Downs.
- Main transport routes (A31 and railway) form a contrast with the narrow lanes as they cut across the flat open valley floor, interrupting the otherwise tranquil character.

Figure 5.13: Grazing on the edge of Lower Froyle with woodland on the distant valley slopes

Figure 5.14: Open, pastoral character of the wider floodplain

Natural Influences

Physical Landscape

5.78 The River Wey flows within a narrow river channel and is visually quite insignificant in contrast to the other linear features (road and rail line) which cut along the valley bottom. The river has, however created a distinctive valley form carved through the varied geology of Chalk (to the north) and Upper Greensand and Gault (to the south) and has a wide flat floodplain. The differing geological conditions result in a valley with a distinct profile with strong chalk bluffs to the north and a more varied profile to the south. The northern valley side is also incised by coombes created by the erosional force of water flow over the chalk. On the flatter valley floor, the overlying fertile alluvial drift material gives rise to predominantly loamy soils. The immediate floodplain is dominated by pasture, including some paddocks. Arable farming is the dominant land use on the

gravel terraces; land between Alton and Bentley has an Agricultural Land Classification of Grade 2 (very good quality).

5.79 Although not extensively wooded, with the exception of the small area around Holt Pound which is set within Alice Holt Forest, there are significant areas of hanging woodland and copses on the valley sides, for example at Mill Court south of Upper Froyle and Wallfield Copse north-east of Bentley. Willow trees are characteristic of the valley floor. To the south-east the dark rising slopes of conifer woodland at Alice Holt form a dominant backdrop.

Biodiversity

5.80 The immediate floodplain of the River Wey, an internationally rare chalk stream habitat, is dominated by improved and semi-improved grassland, divided by occasional hedgerows and frequent trees including lines of willow. Pockets of marshy grassland also occur, for example around Froyle Mill, which includes an area SINC status. These wet grasslands are of particular ecological interest for their range of wetland plant species, and their associated wildlife interest. Occasional former watercress beds are also of note supporting aquatic plants. Ponds such as Kings Ponds east of the railway in Alton are further examples of valuable local habitats.

5.81 Away from the immediate river floodplain, rising ground is typically dominated by arable agriculture, together with occasional woodland blocks, particularly to the east of Bentley, and fragments of orchard. The majority of this woodland is of ancient origin, although much has been replanted. Many woodlands have SINC status.

Cultural Influences

Historic Landscape Character

5.82 This character area was a significant transit corridor during prehistoric and later periods, allowing access between the south coast, via the Solent River systems (Meon and Itchen) and the Thames valley.

5.83 Today, it is predominantly a landscape of planned 18th-19th century enclosure, particularly on the northern and higher slopes of the valley. These enclosures probably represent modifications of earlier enclosed landscape of later medieval date on the lower fertile slopes to take advantage of improved farming techniques. Southern slopes rise onto the Greensand Terrace, forming early enclosures of late medieval/post-medieval date.

5.84 Historic features associated with the river are apparent. Remnant features relating to water management and agricultural/industrial use of the river, include weirs, mills, and millponds.

5.85 Key historic characteristics include:

- Limited woodland apart from localised blocks of pre-1800 woodland east of Bentley.
- Occasional archaeological monuments, notably the Roman settlement site at Cuckoo's Corner east of Alton at point where Chichester-Silchester Roman road crosses the valley (Scheduled Monument).
- Absence of major historic parkland reflecting the agricultural emphasis of the landscape, however the avenue between Bentley Church and Bury Court is a distinctive feature.

Settlement Form and Built Character

5.86 A series of nucleated settlements of medieval origin along the lower valley slopes (e.g. Bentley and Upper Froyle) are located on the slightly raised gravel terrace above the flood level. There are also a number of villages with a more dispersed, linear pattern (e.g. Lower Froyle and Isington), and the market town of Alton which has become contiguous with the once linear village of Holybourne. Eight Conservation Areas, including at Alton, Holybourne, Isington, Froyle (Upper) and Foyle (Lower) are indicative of historic value. The settlements are surrounded by a mix of early and 18th-19th century enclosure and are generally well integrated into the surrounding landscape. Bentley was well integrated into the landscape and Alton is fairly hidden on the approach from the north. Further upslope to the north lies a scatter of 18th-19th century farmsteads of largely set within regular enclosures.

5.87 Large, agriculturally related buildings/sheds are a prominent feature in the west of this landscape area, and there are large scale edge of town style developments including Birdworld and a garden centre south-west of Holt Pound

5.88 The valley has a strong linear communication pattern, now dominated by the A31 and A325, with a parallel earlier trackway traversing the length of the valley upslope linking the medieval settlements (fossilised as the St. Swithun's Way footpath). Away from the A31 and A325 roads are generally narrow and enclosed by dense hedgerows and hedgerow trees, creating a strong rural character. The main London-Winchester railway line (1852) is a further influence within the valley. The railway west of Alton is part of the Watercress Line heritage steam railway with the name reflecting the historic use of the railway in transporting locally grown watercress.

5.89 Traditional building materials include flint, red brick and clay tiles. The villages of Bentley and Upper Froyle have churches that provide a focus and are key features in views up from the valley floor.

5.90 New developments, such as those to the north of Alton, are not as well integrated into the landscape. These new builds can be seen rising up the valley side without appropriate integration or screening.

Perceptual Influences

5.91 The scale of the landscape is varied along the course of the valley as a result of the variety of land uses. On the valley bottom the flat landform and hedged fields create a medium scale landscape. The well-maintained hedgerows, which mark the field boundaries and lines of willows along ditches, combine to provide some enclosure. Open views are afforded from the valley bottom up the valley sides and from one side of the valley to the other, for example when approaching Bentley from the south. On the higher valley the arable land use creates a more open landscape with some long views across the valley.

5.92 The A31 dual carriageway and A325 impact greatly on the tranquillity of this landscape. In the valley bottom, the hedgerows and trees reduce the visible and audible impact of A31 and railway. The strong sense of enclosure associated with Alice Holt Forest around the A325 mean that development such as Birdworld and the garden centre is prominent in the foreground of local views. The watercourses and associated vegetation result in a high level of perceived naturalness and tranquillity. However, when viewed from the higher elevations of the valley sides the busy A31 and the railway, including the Watercress Line, are dominant features.

5.93 The Northern Wey Valley forms a major transport corridor linking Alton and Guildford. This has resulted in a degree of fragmentation and detracts from the visual unity of the landscape. There are a number of public rights of way (PRoW) linking the nucleated settlements of the valley sides, notably St. Swithun's Way long distance footpath along the line of the former Pilgrim's Lane. The Hangers Way long distance footpath begins at Alton railway station and the Writers Way long distance footpath passes through the town. Route 224 of the National Cycle Network starts in the centre of Alton. There is a sense

that whilst accessible, the landscape is used for passing through, rather than for recreational purposes.

5.94 Lord Baden Powell lived in the village of Bentley, which also featured in the 90s/early 00s radio and TV programme 'The Village' which looked at the rural village and profiled its inhabitants. The 'Bentley Book' on the Alton Road, was designed by Lord Baden Powell for the Daily Mail competition for village signs 1923. A further distinctive local feature is Upper Froyle village with its 19 Italian 'saints' adorning houses and cottages belonging to the estate.

Evaluation

Key Sensitivities and Values

- The course of the internationally rare chalk river system including springs, ponds and streams are especially sensitive to change from climate change, rural diffuse pollution, urban runoff and habitat degradation, with the water quality and water flow within the river and ponds in particular vulnerable to degradation.
- Wetland habitats, ponds, flowing open water and wet grassland, particularly around the River Wey, are sensitive to change from climate change leading to increased seasonal flooding, increased temperatures and periods of drought.
- Areas of pasture and unimproved grassland of the valley floor are of considerable biodiversity interest.
- The network of hedges and waterside willows which create enclosure and visual unity across the valley floor are vulnerable to loss/lack of management. Creation of hard, abrupt and unintegrated boundaries such as paddock fencing has caused further fragmentation of the landscape.

- The individual identity of the settlements located on the gravel terrace away from the floodplain could be vulnerable to incremental change and loss of strong nucleated/linear character.
- The mills, weirs, mill ponds and watercress beds which provide evidence for past use of the river are important features worthy of conservation.
- The archaeological monuments – Roman settlement site at Cuckoo's Corner east of Alton at point where Chichester-Silchester Roman road crosses the valley (Scheduled Monument).
- The skyline and slopes of the adjacent downland (LCA 2a), where changes through development and loss of tree cover are very visible from the valley floor.
- The presence of the larger settlements of Alton and Farnham at either end of the valley create strong pressure for further change along the main transport corridors.
- The open character of this landscape with limited woodland cover amplifies its visual sensitivity with views afforded from one side of the valley to the other. Any new development or large-scale change, including solar energy development, would therefore be highly visible, however its impacts could be mitigated through appropriate planting. Establishment of additional woodland as part of Hampshire's Nature Recovery Strategy – to achieve their commitment to plant 1 million trees by 2050 – may change the character of views within the valley.
- The undeveloped rural roads linking the settlements are especially important and are under pressure from increasing traffic that can erode verges. In addition, safety improvements can result in the loss of characteristic landscape features.

Guidance

Landscape Strategy

5.95 The overall management objective should be to conserve the tranquil, natural character of the Northern Wey Valley, and the individual identity of the small villages set on the gravel terrace above the floodplain. The valley should provide an open rural landscape between the towns of Alton and Farnham. The character of the enclosing valley sides, particularly the downland to the north of the Wey, which form the backdrop to the valley, should also be conserved.

Landscape Management

- Conserve, enhance and reconnect areas of notable wetland habitats relating to the River Wey in line with Site Specific Project 1 in the East Hampshire Green Infrastructure Strategy 2019. Consider opportunities for extending these habitats.
- Address potential for flooding issues with the implementation of natural flood management schemes, including enhancement of floodplain grazing marsh priority habitats and creation and enhancement of riparian woodland along the River Wey corridor. Safeguard water flows to maintain the pastoral quality of the valley floor and floodplain habitats.
- Monitor water quality in the rivers and seek to ensure high water quality and minimise water pollution.
- Ensure a joined-up, landscape scale approach towards changes to agricultural practice through ELMS and local initiatives at a landscape scale such as Landscape Partnerships.
- Promote appropriate management of farmland, including restoring buffer strips along field margins to minimise run off, maintain the biodiversity of wetland features including ponds and to create a wildlife-rich habitat supporting farmland birds.

- Manage small valley side and valley bottom woodlands in line with Guidance on Managing ancient and native woodland in England **[See reference** 42**]**. Ensure a diverse species and age structure by thinning, coppicing, promoting natural regeneration and replanting as necessary, in line with District Wide Project 7: Enhance access and increase active management of existing woodland in the East Hampshire Green Infrastructure Strategy 2019. This will contribute to landscape resilience and also minimise the risk of damage as a result of increased storms and high winds.
- Restore and create broadleaved woodlands surrounding the A31 and Alton/Holybourne to help reduce noise, light and air pollution, and to maintain and enhance the pockets of tranquillity.
- Support local initiatives for the restoration of traditional orchards and hop gardens, using and promoting local fruit varieties where viable.
- Ensure proposals for new trees and woodland creation are carefully considered in relation to the open landscape character and visual context and are in line with relevant guidance, including District Wide Project 6: Increase woodland cover in the East Hampshire Green Infrastructure Strategy 2019. Ensure newly planted trees and woodland have suitable management and maintenance plans to ensure their successful establishment. Manage and monitor the threats posed by tree diseases and pests, and plan for climate change by researching appropriate species mixes to create robust and resilient woodlands.
- Conserve and manage areas of pasture and unimproved grassland on the valley floor to improve biodiversity value.
- Conserve and manage the network of hedgerows and waterside trees along the valley floor promoting connectivity.
- Conserve historic elements such as mills, weirs and mill ponds and watercress beds which provide evidence for past use of the river.
- Maintain and enhance rights of way and improve links to the long-distance footpaths within the LCA, as well as improving links with the South Downs National Park, in line with District Wide Projects 3: Connect with the South Downs and 4: Identify and enhance strategically

important rights of way in the East Hampshire Green Infrastructure Strategy 2019.

- Encourage sensitive integration of fencing, tracks, hardstanding, jumps and other paraphernalia that are associated with horse keeping.

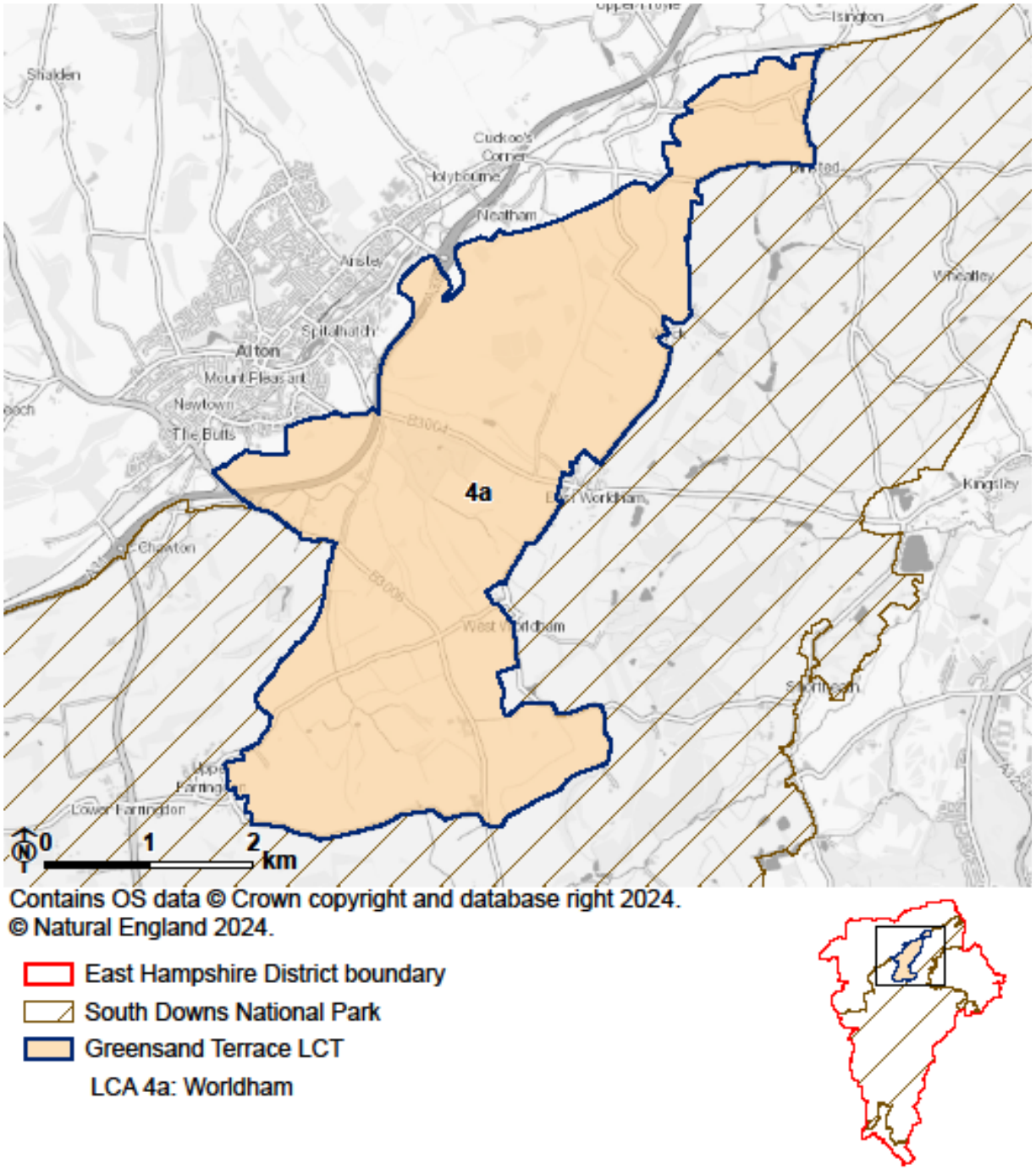
Development Management

- Promote a landscape-led approach to integrating any new development in the valley, particularly around Alton and Holybourne, including through the use native hedgerows and trees, and to minimise impacts on views from higher land to the north and south. This should include considerate incorporation of green infrastructure into the site in line with District Wide Project 9 from East Hampshire's GI Strategy 2019.
- Development should be carefully planned, and biodiversity considered from the outset in line with East Hampshire District Council's Biodiversity and Planning Guidance **[See reference** 43**]**.
- Conserve the small-scale nucleated/linear character of the gravel terrace settlements and conserve the rural character of the roads linking settlements.
- Conserve the setting of villages and key views towards and from them, including landmark features such as church towers/spires.
- Monitor further incremental linear development from Alton along the A31 and seek to conserve a rural landscape along the valley between Alton and Farnham.
- Conserve the local distinctiveness of historic buildings and their rural setting whilst promoting opportunities for access, education and sensitive interpretation at historic sites.
- Use sustainable and locally sourced materials, vernacular building techniques and styles, responding to the existing landscape character, to inform design and ensure integration with the surrounding landscape.

- Develop a network of integrated, well managed green spaces in Alton, reinforcing landscape character and local distinctiveness. This should build on Site Specific Project 3: Provide a new strategic semi-natural greenspace in the north-west of the District and District Wide Project 9: Incorporate Green Infrastructure into development sites within the East Hampshire Green Infrastructure Strategy 2019 **[See reference** 44**]**..
- Ensure that new development is integrated into the existing network of PRoW.
- Avoid a negative impact on the South Downs National Park's Dark Skies Policy by preventing and positively reducing artificial light pollution in line with the South Downs National Park Technical Advice Note Version 2 **[See reference** 45**]**.

Landscape Character Type 4: Greensand Terrace

Figure 5.15: Location of the Greensand Terrace LCT



East Hampshire District boundary
South Downs National Park
Greensand Terrace LCT
LCA 4a: Worldham

Description

5.96 The Greensand Terrace landscape comprises the bench of Upper Greensand which outcrops at the foot of the steep chalk scarps running down the spine of, and across the southern part of East Hampshire. There are views over adjacent lowland landscapes from the edge of the Greensand Terrace, as well as panoramic views over the Greensand Terrace and the adjacent chalk scarp. Although part of a larger type (which occurs across East Hampshire) the LCT key characteristics are specific to the study area (i.e. the area of East Hampshire outside the South Downs National Park).

Key Characteristics

- A distinct terrace formed from Upper Greensand with a locally prominent escarpment defining its outer edge.
- Cut by a series of small streams that rise from springs near the foot of the chalk escarpment, and have eroded narrow, deep valleys as they cross the Greensand terrace.
- Deeply sunken lanes have eroded downwards to reveal exposures of the Greensand geology and gnarled tree roots.
- Fertile soils supporting large fields of arable, interspersed with pasture and woodland.
- Sparse woodland cover with some pockets of ancient woodland including at Monk Wood and Wild Duck Copse.
- Settlement is sparse, largely comprising isolated farms, however the LCT is bound by the town of Alton to the north and villages located at regular intervals along the spring line to the south including Binsted, Wyck and West Worldham.
- The chalk scarp often forms a dramatic backdrop.
- Buildings constructed from local ‘Malmstone’, with red and yellow brick detailing, and clay tile roofs.

- A generally strong sense of rural tranquillity resulting from the absence of overt human impact and a low density of settlement.
- Dominated by the adjacent steep chalk escarpment, with views over the adjacent lowlands from the edge of the Greensand scarp.

Landscape Character Areas

5.97 The Greensand Terrace LCT contains one LCA:

- LCA 4a: Worldham

Landscape Character Area 4a: Worldham

Description

Location and Boundaries

5.98 The Worldham LCA lies in the north of the district on the flatter land of the Upper Greensand belt to the south of the Wey Valley. It is defined to the west by the 110m contour line representing the transition to chalk. The eastern edge is defined by the boundary of the South Downs National Park. The Wey Valley is located to the north of the LCA. The area includes a small chalk outlier at Neatham Down.

Key Characteristics

- A flat to gently sloping landform of Upper Greensand contained to the east and south by chalk hills.
- An open landscape dominated by medium to large fields of pasture and arable agriculture.
- Drained by a number of small tributaries of the Wey (e.g. Caker Stream).
- Oak hedgerow trees are distinctive landscape features, plus willow pollards alongside the stream and ditches.
- Ditches as well as hedgerows are a common boundary feature.
- Generally sparse woodland cover with fragments of ancient woodland to the west of West Worldham and large single block of ancient woodland at Monk Wood.
- A landscape of early enclosure with a small block of 18th-19th century planned enclosure between East Worldham and Alton (now partly occupied by Worldham Golf Course).

- Absence of settlement with no villages and only a scattering of isolated farmsteads set within early enclosures. The villages of East and West Worldham are located on the boundary of the character area on the edge of the Rother Valley, and the town of Alton forms some of the northern boundary, with some urban fringe development (Solar PV and a golf course) present in this area.
- The area is crossed by a number of PRoW including the Hangers Way and Writers' Way Long Distance Paths. Windmill Hill on the edge of Alton is local open space. Worldham Golf Course is another recreational feature.
- From the chalk hills to the north, at Neatham there are views across the Wey Valley. Otherwise, there are open views across arable farmland. The wooded escarpment at Selborne is a prominent backdrop feature to the south.
- Crossed by a number of rural lanes some of which are sunken.
- A generally peaceful landscape, locally interrupted by visually prominent pylon lines and audible traffic noise from the A3, A339, B3006 and B3004.

Figure 5.16: Genty sloping large arable field bound by hedgerows and trees with prominent pylons

Figure 5.17: Sunken rural lane enclosed by mature trees

Natural Influences

Physical Landscape

5.99 Lying predominantly on Upper Greensand, the landform appears almost flat but gently slopes westward towards the River Wey. The transition to chalk on the western edge of the character area produces some variation in landform represented by hills on the edge of Alton such as Neatham Down and Lynch Hill, which form small chalk outliers prominent within this otherwise flat, open landscape. The character area is drained by a number of small tributaries to the Wey, which flow within shallow valleys.

5.100 The well-drained loamy soils support landscape of early enclosed medium to large sized fields in both pasture and arable cultivation. Field boundaries are varied - sometimes defined by intact, well-maintained hedgerows and sometimes no boundary exists between field and road. Ditches also divide fields and occur alongside roads. Lines of trees are characteristic with poplars acting as windbreaks, willow pollard and oak hedgerow trees are important features.

5.101 Woodland is scarce with infrequent copses and one relatively large area of ancient woodland at Monk Wood.

5.102 Along the eastern edge of the character area, deeply sunken lanes have eroded into and exposed the sandstone geology.

Biodiversity

5.103 The character area is dominated by fields in active agricultural use with ecological value largely limited to small amounts of deciduous woodland and floodplain grazing marsh. The landscape is sparsely wooded, with only occasional small blocks of planted woodland. A block of ancient woodland, Monk Wood SINC, occurs on the slopes of Neatham Down. Remnant areas of neutral grassland occur infrequently, together with very local areas of calcareous grassland associated with the chalk.

5.104 Hedgerows boundaries are present throughout and are characterised by occasional mature standard oak trees. Ditches are also a common boundary feature.

Cultural Influences

Historic Landscape Character

5.105 This landscape is dominated by early enclosure (late medieval – post-medieval) apart from small block of 18th-19th century planned enclosure of a spur of land between East Worldham and Alton (now partly occupied by Worldham Golf Course). A large area of enclosed valley floor along a tributary of the Wey (Caker Stream) is represented by small enclosures of various shapes, probably of post-medieval date.

5.106 Key historic characteristics include:

- Absence of woodland apart from localised block of ancient woodland at Monk Wood.
- A series of un-designated earthwork enclosures within Monk Wood.
- The deserted medieval settlement at Hartley Mauditt, a Scheduled Monument, just outside the boundary of the LCA.
- Occasional scattered listed buildings.

Settlement Form and Built Character

5.107 There is a very low density of settlement with no villages and only a scattering of small, isolated farmsteads set within early enclosures. Farmsteads may be of medieval origin. Characteristic building materials include Malmstone, red brick and clay tiles. Farm buildings are often corrugated iron.

5.108 There are two solar farms located in this character area, to the west and the south-west.

5.109 There is a limited network of public rights of way (PRoW)

Perceptual Influences

5.110 This is a smooth, simple and open landscape allowing long views across arable fields.

5.111 It is a generally peaceful landscape, albeit interrupted in proximity to the A31, B3004 and B3006, with a virtual absence of settlement. The sense of tranquillity is reduced by the pylons which are visually prominent in the open landscape and by the presence of prominent farm buildings, some of which have been converted to industrial uses.

5.112 There are no areas of open access or National Cycle Network routes, but a number of PRoW cross the area including the Hangers Way. Worldham Golf course is a recreational facility, and Windmill Hill is designated as local open space.

Evaluation

Key Sensitivities and Values

- The small tributaries and ditches which drain the landscape are vulnerable to increased seasonal flooding, increased temperatures and periods of drought associated with climate change.
- The network of hedgerows, oak hedgerow trees and ditches which are vulnerable to loss and lack of appropriate management.
- Fragments of ancient woodland to the west of West Worldham and large block of ancient woodland at Monk Wood.
- Fragments of chalk grassland associated with the chalk outlier.
- Sunken lanes which reveal the bedrock geology are under pressure from increasing traffic that can erode verges and safety improvements which can result in the loss of characteristic landscape features.

- Broad, open views across farmland and the Wey Valley.
- The unsettled, generally peaceful character of the landscape.
- Proximity to the southern edge of Alton, which creates pressure for development into this LCA.

Guidance

Landscape Strategy

5.113 The overall management objective should be to conserve the open, unsettled character of the landscape which allows broad views across predominantly fields bound by hedgerows and ditches.

Landscape Management

- Ensure a joined-up, landscape scale approach towards changes to agricultural practice through ELMS and local initiatives at a landscape scale such as Landscape Partnerships.
- Promote appropriate management of farmland, including restoring buffer strips along field margins to minimise run off, maintain the biodiversity of wetland features including ponds and to create a wildlife-rich habitat supporting farmland birds.
- Address potential for flooding issues with the implementation of natural flood management schemes along the Caker Stream corridor. Safeguard water flows to maintain the pastoral quality of the valley floor and floodplain habitats.
- Monitor water quality in the streams and seek to ensure high water quality and minimise water pollution.

- Conserve, enhance and connect hedgerows and monitor regeneration of hedgerow trees, planting new trees where necessary. Conserve and manage ditches where these form field boundaries.
- Maintain distinctive tree lines of poplars and shelterbelts.
- Manage isolated blocks of woodland in line with Guidance on Managing ancient and native woodland in England **[See reference** 46**]**. Ensure a diverse species and age structure by thinning, coppicing, promoting natural regeneration and replanting as necessary, in line with District Wide Project 7: Enhance access and increase active management of existing woodland in the East Hampshire Green Infrastructure Strategy 2019 **[See reference** 47**]**. This will contribute to landscape resilience and also minimise the risk of damage as a result of increased storms and high winds. Consider linking woodland and hedgerows to improve visual unity and to create wildlife corridors.
- Ensure new trees and woodlands are planted in line with relevant guidance, including District Wide Project 6: Increase woodland cover in the East Hampshire Green Infrastructure Strategy 2019, and have suitable management and maintenance plans to ensure their successful establishment. Manage and monitor the threats posed by tree diseases and pests, and plan for climate change by researching appropriate species mixes to create robust and resilient woodlands.
- Consider opportunities to enhance the land use of the chalk outlier including options for chalk grassland restoration.
- Maintain and enhance rights of way and improve links to the long-distance footpaths within the LCA, as well as improving links with the South Downs National Park, in line with District Wide Projects 3: Connect with the South Downs and 4: Identify and enhance strategically important rights of way in the East Hampshire Green Infrastructure Strategy 2019.
- Consideration should be given to Site-Specific Project 1 of the East Hampshire Green Infrastructure Strategy (2019) – Enhance the Northern Wey Valley. Since this character area borders the approximate

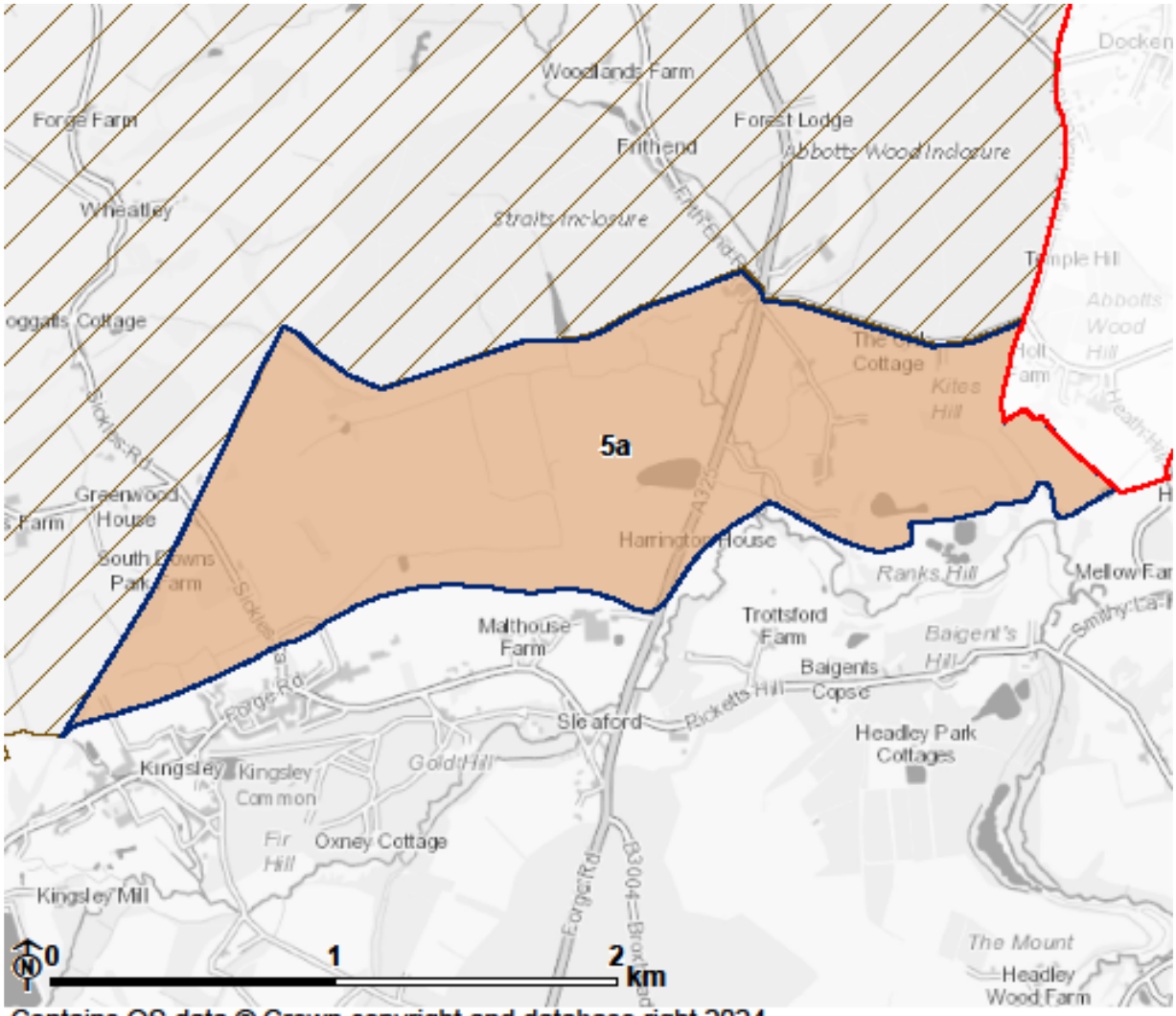
location of this project, access to the valley and potential tributaries should be acknowledged.

Development Management

- Maintain the unsettled character. Monitor incremental development associated with the edge of Alton.
- Development should be carefully planned, and biodiversity considered from the outset in line with East Hampshire District Council's Biodiversity and Planning Guidance **[See reference** 48**]**.
- Ensure sympathetic conversion of farm buildings, which are often highly prominent in this open landscape.
- Conserve the character of sunken lanes and verges – seek to reduce traffic pressures and road improvements which would alter the character of these sunken lanes.
- Where development is appropriate, use sustainable and locally sourced materials, vernacular building techniques and styles, responding to the existing landscape character, to inform design and ensure integration with the surrounding landscape.
- Avoid a negative impact on the South Downs National Park's Dark Skies Policy by preventing and positively reducing artificial light pollution in line with the South Downs National Park Technical Advice Note Version 2 **[See reference** 49**]**.

Landscape Character Type 5: Mixed Farmland and Woodland

Figure 5.18: Location of the Mixed Farmland and Woodland LCT



East Hampshire District boundary
South Downs National Park
Mixed Farmland and Woodland LCT
LCA 5a: Kingsley

Description

5.114 The Mixed Farmland and Woodland Landscape Character Type is found on the mudstones of the Gault Formation which are exposed to the north of the Greensand Terrace. It comprises a gently undulating lowland vale supporting fields of arable, pasture and woodland. Although part of a larger type (which occurs across East Hampshire) the LCT key characteristics are specific to the study area (i.e. the area of East Hampshire outside the South Downs National Park).

Key Characteristics

- Gently undulating landform underlain by mudstones of the Gault Formation.
- Slowly permeable seasonally waterlogged clay soils support mixed farmland and deciduous woodland copses dominated by oak, hazel and ash woodland.
- Drained by water courses, some of which are tributary streams of the River Slea.
- The wet and unproductive soils have given rise to a remote and marginal character.
- Thick hedgerows with spreading hedgerow oaks, or strips of woodland, provide a sense of enclosure.
- Ponds and meadows on the fringes of tributary streams provide biodiversity interest.
- Farmsteads of 18th-19th century date are situated within areas of later enclosure of marshland and parkland.
- The A325 locally affects the sense of tranquillity.

Landscape Character Areas

5.115 The Mixed Farmland and Woodland LCT contains one LCA:

- LCA 5a: Kingsley

Landscape Character Area 5a: Kingsley

Description

Location and Boundaries

5.116 This LCA occurs on the lower lying clays and sandstones that separate the Greensand Hills from the chalk downs of Hampshire and West Sussex. It extends west into the South Downs National Park where it forms an extension to the north of the Upper Rother Valley. The northern boundary is well defined by Alice Holt Forest, and the southern boundary coincides with a change in geology to the sandy landscapes of LCT 6: Wealden Farmland and Heath Mosaic.

Key Characteristics

- Open, low-lying clay 'vale' drained by several streams including tributaries to the River Slea and a number of ponds.
- Slowly permeable seasonally waterlogged clay soils support mixed farmland, floodplain grazing meadows and fragments of woodland in which thick hedgerows and spreading hedgerow oaks create a lush, wooded character.
- Thick, high hedgerows, occasional small blocks of scattered woodland and wooded field boundaries contribute to a sense of intimacy and enclosure.
- 18th-19th century enclosure generally comprising regular, medium sized fields overlay the medieval field pattern.
- Sparse settlement largely comprising farms and associated farm buildings.

- Generally, a strong sense of tranquillity and strong rural character away from the A325. There is some background noise but overall, it is a peaceful landscape.
- Recreational value of PRoW providing connectivity to Alice Holt Forest and the South Downs National Park.

Figure 5.19: Low lying clay vale with the wooded back drop of Alice Holt Forest

Figure 5.20: PRoW within pastoral farmland enclosed by thick mature hedgerows and mature trees bordering a stream

Natural Influences

Physical Landscape

5.117 The gently undulating landform is underlain by mudstones of the Gault Formation. The area is characterised by a mix of permanent pasture on heavy clay soils and arable cultivation, together with occasional small pockets of woodland The LCA is drained by several unnamed streams, which flow south, towards the River Slea. As well as the streams, the vale contains a number of small ponds, some of which are former clay pits.

Biodiversity

5.118 Features of biodiversity interest include fragments of deciduous woodland, floodplain grazing meadow in the east, and dense mature hedgerows. A small part of Grooms Farm Sand Pit SINC is within the LCA, but there are no further biodiversity designations.

Cultural Influences

Historic Landscape Character

5.119 This character area occupies the Gault Clay vale as it sweeps northwards at the western edge of the Weald, between Alice Holt Forest and Kingsley.

5.120 The area is characterised by 18th-19th century late enclosures comprising medium scale regular arable fields bound by dense mature hedgerows. Historic clay extraction is evidenced by small pits (now ponds).

5.121 The character area is relatively lightly wooded. Today woodland of pre-1800 (and probably medieval) origin survives as small blocks scattered across the character area but combines with the wooded field boundaries to give the landscape a much more wooded visual appearance.

5.122 Key historic characteristics are limited to:

- A small number of listed buildings; and
- Away from the A325, the absence of modern development provides a continuing sense of remoteness.

Settlement Form and Built Character

5.123 The area is characterised by the sparse settlement, which is limited to 18th and 19th century farmsteads, generally in the east, and occasional isolated houses.

5.124 There are views of the edge of the settlement in Kingsley to the south.

5.125 Building materials include sandstone extracted from the local Greensands, red brick formed from local clays, and clay tiles.

Perceptual Influences

5.126 The character area has a generally strong sense of enclosure with fields bound by thick, high hedgerows and small scattered woodlands, as well as the large expanse of woodland at Alice Holt Forest to the north which form a backdrop to views.

5.127 Away from the A325, there is generally a strong sense of tranquillity and a remote in character due to the low density of settlement.

5.128 A network of public rights of way (PRoW) provides opportunities for countryside access, including connectivity with Alice Holt Forest to the north and the South Downs National Park to the west. National Cycle Network Route 22 passes through the east of the LCA.

Evaluation

Key Sensitivities and Values

- Small watercourses and wetland habitats (including floodplain grazing meadow and ponds) are sensitive to increased seasonal flooding, increased temperatures and periods of drought associated with climate change.
- The network of mature hedgerows, hedgerow trees and small woodlands which create a strong sense of enclosure, a wooded character and provide visual unity across the and are vulnerable to loss/fragmentation and lack of appropriate management.
- The relatively high sense of tranquillity which persists in parts of this area due to sparse settlement but is under threat from increasing traffic on the rural roads and development.
- The network of PRoW connecting this LCA to Alice Holt Forest and the South Downs National Park which is sensitive due to recreational pressure.

Guidance

Landscape Strategy

5.129 The overall management objective should be to conserve this LCA as a peaceful, intimate landscape of farmland and woodland.

Landscape Management

- Conserve and enhance areas of wetland habitat.
- Address potential for flooding issues with the implementation of natural flood management schemes along streams.
- Monitor water quality in the streams and seek to ensure high water quality and minimise water pollution.
- Ensure a joined-up, landscape scale approach towards changes to agricultural practice through ELMS and local initiatives at a landscape scale such as Landscape Partnerships.
- Promote appropriate management of farmland, including restoring buffer strips along field margins to minimise run off, maintain the biodiversity of wetland features including ponds and to create a wildlife-rich habitat supporting farmland birds.
- Conserve and manage small areas of woodland in line with Guidance on Managing ancient and native woodland in England **[See reference** 50**]**. Ensure a diverse species and age structure by thinning, coppicing, promoting natural regeneration and replanting as necessary, in line with District Wide Project 7: Enhance access and increase active management of existing woodland in the East Hampshire Green Infrastructure Strategy 2019 **[See reference** 51**]**. This will contribute to landscape resilience and also minimise the risk of damage as a result of increased storms and high winds.
- Conserve, connect and manage the network of hedgerows and hedgerow trees.
- Restore and create broadleaved woodlands surrounding the A325 to help reduce noise, light and air pollution, and to maintain and enhance the tranquillity experienced elsewhere in the LCA.
- Ensure new trees and woodlands are planted in line with relevant guidance, including District Wide Project 6: Increase woodland cover in the East Hampshire Green Infrastructure Strategy 2019, and have suitable management and maintenance plans to ensure their successful

establishment. Manage and monitor the threats posed by tree diseases and pests, and plan for climate change by researching appropriate species mixes to create robust and resilient woodlands.

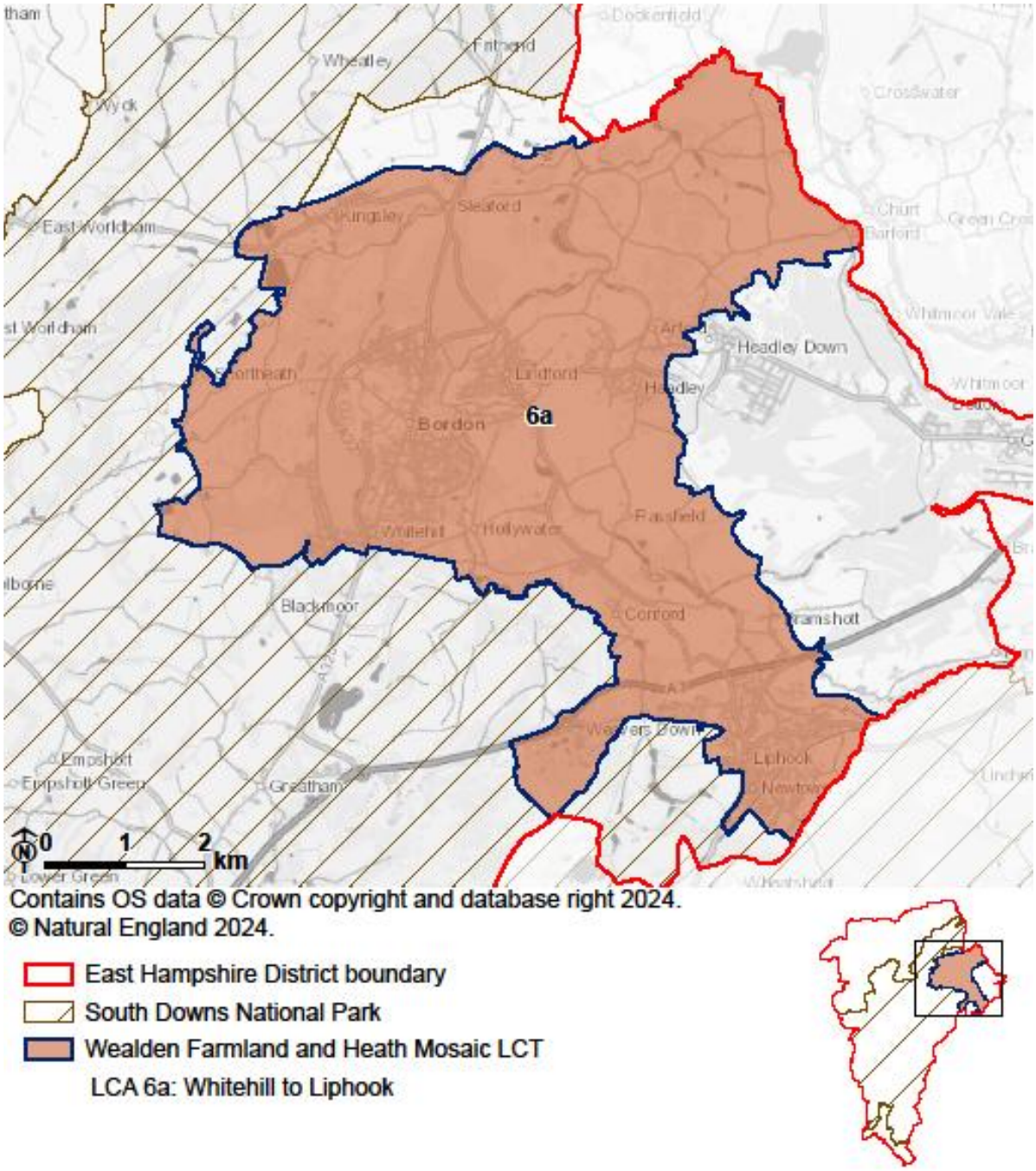
- Maintain and enhance PRoW and improve links to the long-distance footpaths within the LCA, as well as improving links with the South Downs National Park, in line with District Wide Projects 3: Connect with the South Downs and 4: Identify and enhance strategically important PRoW in the East Hampshire Green Infrastructure Strategy 2019.

Development Management

- Maintain the essentially undeveloped character with limited settlement and regular farmland of 18th-19th century enclosure.
- Development should be carefully planned, and biodiversity considered from the outset in line with East Hampshire District Council's Biodiversity and Planning Guidance **[See reference** 52**]**.
- Conserve the relatively strong sense of tranquillity and remoteness within this area.
- Avoid introducing large scale elements (such as pylons and masts) which are highly visible and disruptive within the more open areas of the vale.
- Avoid incremental linear development along the A325.
- Maintain the rural character of the roads and avoid use of excessive lighting, signage and 'suburban' features.
- Avoid a negative impact on the South Downs National Park's Dark Skies Policy by preventing and positively reducing artificial light pollution in line with the South Downs National Park Technical Advice Note Version 2 **[See reference** 53**]**.

Landscape Character Type 6: Wealden Farmland and Heath Mosaic

Figure 5.21: Location of the Wealden Farmland and Heath Mosaic LCT



Description

5.130 The Wealden Farmland and Heath Mosaic lies in the east of the district on the sandstones of the Folkestone and Sandgate Formations. The geology gives rise to a well-drained, sandy lowland landscape supporting a mosaic of oak-birch woodland, conifer plantations, open sandy heaths, and rough grazed pasture interspersed with large villages. Although part of a larger type (which occurs across East Hampshire) the LCT key characteristics are specific to the study area (i.e. the area of East Hampshire outside the South Downs National Park).

Key Characteristics

- Flat or gently undulating lowland 'plateau' landscape on outcrops of sandstones of the Folkestone and Sandgate Formations
- Cut by a network of shallow river valleys (including the River Wey) and their tributary streams.
- Ponds, mires and wet grassland in low lying areas.
- Well-drained sandy, acidic soils support a mix of nationally and internationally important heathland habitats (e.g. Broxhead and Kingsley Commons SSSI, and Woolmer Forest SSSI, both part of Wealden Heaths Phase II Special Protection Area) including open heather heathland, acid grassland, bracken, gorse, woody scrub, and oak-birch woodland.
- Small to medium sized fields of rough grazed pasture and horse paddocks bound by hedgerows with gorse and bracken and hedgerow oaks. Clusters of oak trees and Scots pine trees form visual accents.
- An irregular and intimate mix of semi-natural habitats and agriculture creating valuable foraging and over-wintering sites for a range of bird species.

- Commons (traditionally used for rough grazing or heath-cutting) often covered by woodland plantations such as Bramshott Common, but some remnant unenclosed commons providing open access such as Ludshott Common.
- Settlement is relatively late, typically comprising isolated farmsteads of 18th-19th century origin set within areas of 18th-19th century enclosure, and 'squatter' settlement on the edges of the common land. Building materials include local sandstones.
- Several large and expanding villages. There is evidence of ongoing development throughout the LCT, particularly around the larger villages of Bordon, Lindford, Headley and Liphook.
- Generally straight or gently curving lanes and tracks provide access to heathland and heath edge settlements.
- Occasional Bronze Age barrow cemeteries are signs of a prehistoric ritual landscape, particularly in the west and occasional historic parkland including Little Boarhunt south of Liphook.
- A busy rural landscape with high recreational value containing several areas of Open Access, a relatively good network of public rights of way (PRoW), National Cycle Network Route 22, several areas designated as Local Open Space and golf courses.
- Views limited by dense woodland cover.

Landscape Character Areas

5.131 The Wealden Farmland and Heath Mosaic LCT contains one LCA:

- LCA 6a: Whitehill to Liphook

Landscape Character Area 6a: Whitehill to Liphook

Description

Location and Boundaries

5.132 Located on Lower Greensand in the east of the district, the eastern boundary of the character area is defined by the 120m contour and a change in geology represented by the more resistant sandstone of the Greensand Hills (LCT 7). The western edge of the character area is defined by the transition to the lower lying clay vale of mixed farmland and woodland at the edge of the South Downs National Park.

Key Characteristics

- Gently undulating landform formed on sandstone and cut by a number of watercourses (River Slea, Southern River Wey and Deadwater).
- Scattered waterbodies comprise ponds, former mineral extraction sites, reservoirs and occasional designed lakes associated with historic parkland.
- Well-drained acidic sandy soils support tracts of woodland (e.g. west of Bordon) and heathland commons of international importance (Broxhead and Kingsley Commons).
- Small to medium fields of pasture, pockets of arable, horse paddocks and rough grazing, with a framework of ancient woodlands and wood pasture.
- Areas of expanding settlement (Whitehill, Bordon, Lindford, Liphook and Headley) contained by woodland with smaller villages and farms found in the sheltered valleys.

- Parts of this LCA have been dissected by the A325 and A3, otherwise winding rural lanes and deep sunken lanes with high hedgerows are important features found throughout.
- Recreational land uses include golf courses, sports pitches on settlement edges, Open Access land and land designated as local open space, such as Hogmoor Inclosure west of Bordon.
- Remnant features relating to water management and agricultural/industrial use of the river, including mills and aqueducts (e.g. Radford Bridge and Bramshott Court – both Scheduled Monuments), the latter probably associated with medieval water meadows.
- There is a well-developed footpath network particularly in the north of the area along Oxney Stream and Oakhanger Stream with access to Kingsley and Broxhead Commons.
- A landscape of contrasts, with large, expanding villages, major roads and background noise from air traffic interspersed with winding and sunken rural lanes, woodland and common land which retail a sense of relative tranquillity and remoteness.
- Strong sense of time depth associated with archaeological features including Bronze Age barrow cemeteries and Civil War fortifications at Walldown, Bordon and military history at Bordon.

Figure 5.22: Open dry heathland enclosed by distant woodland at Broxhead Common

Figure 5.23: Horse paddocks enclosed by trees and woodland in the wider, gently sloping landscape

Natural Influences

Physical Landscape

5.133 The undulating landform of the Whitehill to Liphook Farmland and Heath Mosaic is informed by an east to west transition in the Lower Greensand geology from the Bargate to Sandgate to Folkestone formation. The Bargate sandstone represents the gentle slope down from the more resistant Hythe Beds of the Greensand Hills to the less resistant and lower landform of the Sandgate and Folkestone formations.

5.134 The narrow watercourses of the River Slea and River Wey drain the landscape along with their tributary streams including Oakhanger Stream, Kingsley Stream and Coopers Stream. A varied drift geology is associated with the water courses with head, alluvium and river terrace deposits. Ponds are a reoccurring feature in the landscape, including Spring Pond and Oxney Pool. There are also lakes associated with designed landscapes in the north-east, and with former mineral extraction in the west.

5.135 The sandstone geology gives rise to freely draining sandy soils with small to medium sized fields predominantly pasture. Small paddocks are common throughout the area and there is some rough grazing. The western part of the area encompassing Bordon lies on more acidic sandy and loamy soils supporting woodland and heathy commons.

5.136 Broxhead and Kingsley Commons are areas of SSSI heathland supporting heather, bracken and birch. Passfield Common, part of Woolmer Forest SSSI comprises wood pasture, wet grassland and dry heaths. A large area of common land also occurs to the west of Bordon incorporating The Warren, Slab and Blackmoor Golf Course. Some hanging woodland occurs on valley sides.

Biodiversity

5.137 This area supports extensive tracts of woodland and heathland habitat, including nationally and internationally important sites, such as Broxhead and Kingsley Commons SSSI, and Woolmer Forest SSSI, both part of Wealden Heaths Phase II Special Protection Area. Broxhead Common is also designated as a Local Nature Reserve. The majority of the woodland comprises secondary or plantation origin, with occasional small areas of ancient woodland. As a whole the combination of woodland and heathland, together with areas of permanent grassland and pasture, provide a landscape of high ecological value.

5.138 The LCA is dissected by a number of linear water courses and lakes, which add further to the ecological diversity. A large number of woodland,

heathland, grassland and wetland sites have been designated as Sites of Interest for Nature Conservation. Road verges along the A325 have been designated as Road Verges of Ecological Importance - supporting fragments of the type of flower-rich grassland once widespread in lowland Britain.

Cultural Influences

Historic Landscape Character

5.139 The generally low fertility and marginal character of the sandy soils is evident in a historic land-use dominated by woodland and heathy unenclosed commons. The presence of a number of Bronze Age barrow cemeteries designated as Scheduled Monuments indicates that the marginality of this landscape is largely the result of human activity. The original hazel 'wildwood' was cleared for farming, but the soils quickly became impoverished, leading to the creation of heathland.

5.140 The landscape is characterised by areas of common land, originally cleared in the prehistoric period, and utilised for centuries by communities based on more favoured soils as pasture (particularly for sheep), wood pasture and as a source of fuel. Most of the commons have, since 1800, been appropriated for plantations, many of them coniferous. These, together with a scatter of earlier blocks of ancient woodland, produce the wooded character of this large LCA. Relatively small areas of unenclosed common still survive.

5.141 This is essentially a landscape of early enclosures in the valleys of the Wey and Oakhanger Stream, with 18th-19th century planned enclosure of in the northern part of the character area and around Bramshott, Lindford and Bordon.

5.142 Historic features associated with the rivers are apparent today. The River Wey Conservation Area is indicative of the historic value of the river, its valley setting and the 18th century system of water meadows which combine to create an historic landscape. A separate Conservation Area immediately to the north at

Headley Mill also emphasises the historic value of the mill and its setting by the mill pond. Remnant features relate to water management and agricultural/industrial use of the river, including mills and aqueducts, such as Bramshott Court Scheduled Monuments, the latter probably associated with post-medieval water meadows.

5.143 Conservation areas in Headley, Headley (Arford) and Liphook, are indicative of the historic nature of these villages. There are a high number of listed buildings throughout this LCA, with noticeable concentrations around the Conservation Areas.

5.144 Little Boarhunt, a Registered Park and Garden south of Liphook, is an example of a small, designed landscape. There are also several areas of parkland such as Wishanger Manor in the north-east.

5.145 Key historic characteristics include:

- Blocks of post-1800 woodland west of Bordon, mainly 19th century heathland plantations.
- Variety of archaeological monuments – Bronze Age barrow cemeteries; Civil War fortifications at Walldown, Bordon, forming part of Royalist defence line opposing Parliamentary garrison at Farnham; undated aqueducts at Headley and Bramshott, probably part of post-medieval water meadow system (all Scheduled Monuments).
- Historic military occupation at Bordon – established as a training ground in the 1860s, with barracks built c.1900 to accommodate troops returning from the Boer War. Recently redeveloped as a residential area north of Woolmer Industrial Estate.

Settlement Form and Built Character

5.146 The area includes a concentration of settlement from modern suburban development to small villages of great charm set within the river valleys. There

are in addition isolated farmsteads in the rural part of the character area, some possibly of medieval origin within areas of early enclosure.

5.147 The west of the area is dominated by the expanded settlement of Whitehill and Bordon which is contained by woodland, extending north-eastwards along the A325 to join Lindford on a site which historically accommodated Bordon Camp. Large warehouses at Woolmer Industrial Estate are set low in the landscape, which combined with the surrounding woodland means they are only occasionally glimpsed in long views.

5.148 New developments are commonplace in this character area, notably to the west and north of Liphook and north of Bordon. These new developments are generally well integrated into the landscape by woodland. These settlements are characterised by modern dwellings, with sandstone, red brick and clay tiles being the most frequent building materials.

5.149 The smaller villages of Passfield, Hollywater, Conford, Kingsley are located in the river valleys. They are generally well integrated into the landscape.

5.150 The highway network including the A3, A325 and numerous B roads and other minor roads, provides a high level of connectivity, increasing the human presence in the surrounding landscapes.

Perceptual Influences

5.151 This mosaic landscape provides varying levels of enclosure ranging from the small open pastoral fields and heathy commons, intimate river corridors and large tracts of woodland. Heather, bracken, gorse and the woodland mosaic of coniferous and deciduous trees provide rich seasonally changing texture and colour.

5.152 The busy A3 and A325 roads create local noise and visual intrusion. However, the heathland/woodland mosaic provides rural character, and a

strong sense of relative tranquillity is retained along the small river and stream corridors, particularly where they are wooded, with deep sunken lanes being a distinctive feature of these areas.

5.153 In addition to the widespread areas of common land, there are a range of spaces enabling access to the countryside for recreation. There is a well-developed footpath network particularly in the north of the area along Oxney Stream and Oakhanger Stream with access to Kingsley and Broxhead Commons. National Cycle Route 22 passes through the LCA. Passfield Common is owned by the National Trust. There are golf courses at Blackmoor Golf Club (on registered common land) and Weavers Down.

5.154 Hogmoor Inclosure, developed as a Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG), is a popular and well-maintained recreation site, creating a sense of escape and opportunities to experience nature close to nearby settlements.

Evaluation

Key Sensitivities and Values

- Watercourses (River Slea, Southern River Wey and Deadwater), ponds and their associated habitats (including water meadows) and cultural value, notably within the River Wey Conservation Area.
- Mosaic of woodland and nationally and internationally important heathland commons provide a sense of time depth, a high perceived naturalness and opportunities for access.
- Rich biodiversity provided by the extensive mosaic of woodland, lowland heath, hedgerows and grassland.
- Pockets of registered and non-registered historic parkland and associated natural and cultural heritage.

- The varied field pattern including the small early enclosures which characterise the stream valleys. Use of pasture for horse paddocks and associated boundary changes can impact on the character of these areas.
- The individual character of the settlements and their rural setting which are vulnerable to further infill and expansion resulting in the linking up of settlements and perception of a much more urbanised areas (e.g. Lindford – Headley and Lindford – Bordon).
- High recreational access associated with the extensive areas of common land, open access land and PRoW network.
- The winding rural lanes and sunken lanes that cut through the valleys, characterised by steep sandstone banks with exposed tree roots and distinctive vegetation, which are vulnerable to increased traffic pressures.
- Strong sense of time depth associated with military history at Bordon, scattered Scheduled Monuments including the Bronze Age barrow cemeteries and other historical features such as aqueducts associated with rivers.

Guidance

Landscape Strategy

5.155 The overall strategy should be to conserve the mosaic of woodland, heathland and pasture land cover and ensure that this area provides a strong rural setting for existing areas of development. The distinctive landscape of the incised stream valleys should be conserved.

Landscape Management

- Conserve the intimate stream corridors including the River Wey and associated habitats and historic features.
- Enhance the Southern Wey Valley in line with Site Specific Project 4: Enhance the Southern Wey Valley, in the East Hampshire Green Infrastructure Strategy 2019 **[See reference** 54**]**.. Conserve and enhance areas of wetland habitat relating to Cooper's Stream, the River Wey and associated ponds.
- Address potential for flooding issues with the implementation of natural flood management schemes along the River Slea and the River Wey.
- Monitor water quality in the streams and seek to ensure high water quality and minimise water pollution.
- Ensure a joined-up, landscape scale approach towards changes to agricultural practice through ELMS and local initiatives at a landscape scale such as Landscape Partnerships.
- Conserve and manage woodland, including ancient woodland in line with Guidance on Managing ancient and native woodland in England **[See reference** 55**]**. Ensure a diverse species and age structure by thinning, coppicing, promoting natural regeneration and replanting as necessary, in line with District Wide Project 7: Enhance access and increase active management of existing woodland in the East Hampshire Green Infrastructure Strategy 2019. This will contribute to landscape resilience and also minimise the risk of damage as a result of increased storms and high winds. Where appropriate, consider reversion of areas of coniferous plantation to heathland to create a suite of interconnected sites.
- Conserve and manage areas of unenclosed heathland commons to prevent encroachment of scrub and bracken and consider opportunities for further heathland creation on former commons to create a network of linked sites. Consider opportunities to reinstate common grazing to restore the historic and cultural character of the landscape and secure the ongoing management and conservation of the commons.

- Enhancement and management focus on the heathland habitats found within this character area would be in accordance with Site-Specific Project 2: Connect and restore heathland habitats within the East Hampshire Green Infrastructure Strategy (2019).
- Promote an informal and irregular mosaic of oak-birch woodland, lowland heath, gorse and bracken scrub, and acid grassland.
- Manage, restore and connect hedgerow boundaries.
- Conserve and enhance areas of historic parkland.
- Promote appropriate management of farmland, including restoring buffer strips along field margins to minimise run off and to create a wildlife-rich habitat supporting farmland birds.
- Conserve the small pastoral field pattern.
- Conserve areas of pasture and seek to ensure good management of horse grazing, including retention of hedgerow boundaries, management of the sward and avoiding proliferation of buildings/sheds etc.
- Encourage sensitive integration of fencing, tracks, hardstanding, jumps and other paraphernalia that are associated with horse keeping.
- Manage recreational access to avoid damage to sensitive habitats and features. Maintain and enhance rights of way and improve links to the long-distance footpaths within the LCA, as well as improving links with the South Downs National Park, in line with District Wide Projects 3: Connect with the South Downs and 4: Identify and enhance strategically important PRoW in the East Hampshire Green Infrastructure Strategy 2019.
- Conserve scheduled monuments including the historic Bronze Age barrow cemeteries which provide a sense of time depth and evidence of a prehistoric ritual landscape. Maintain these sites free of trees and enhance their settings. Carry out restoration and repair as necessary.

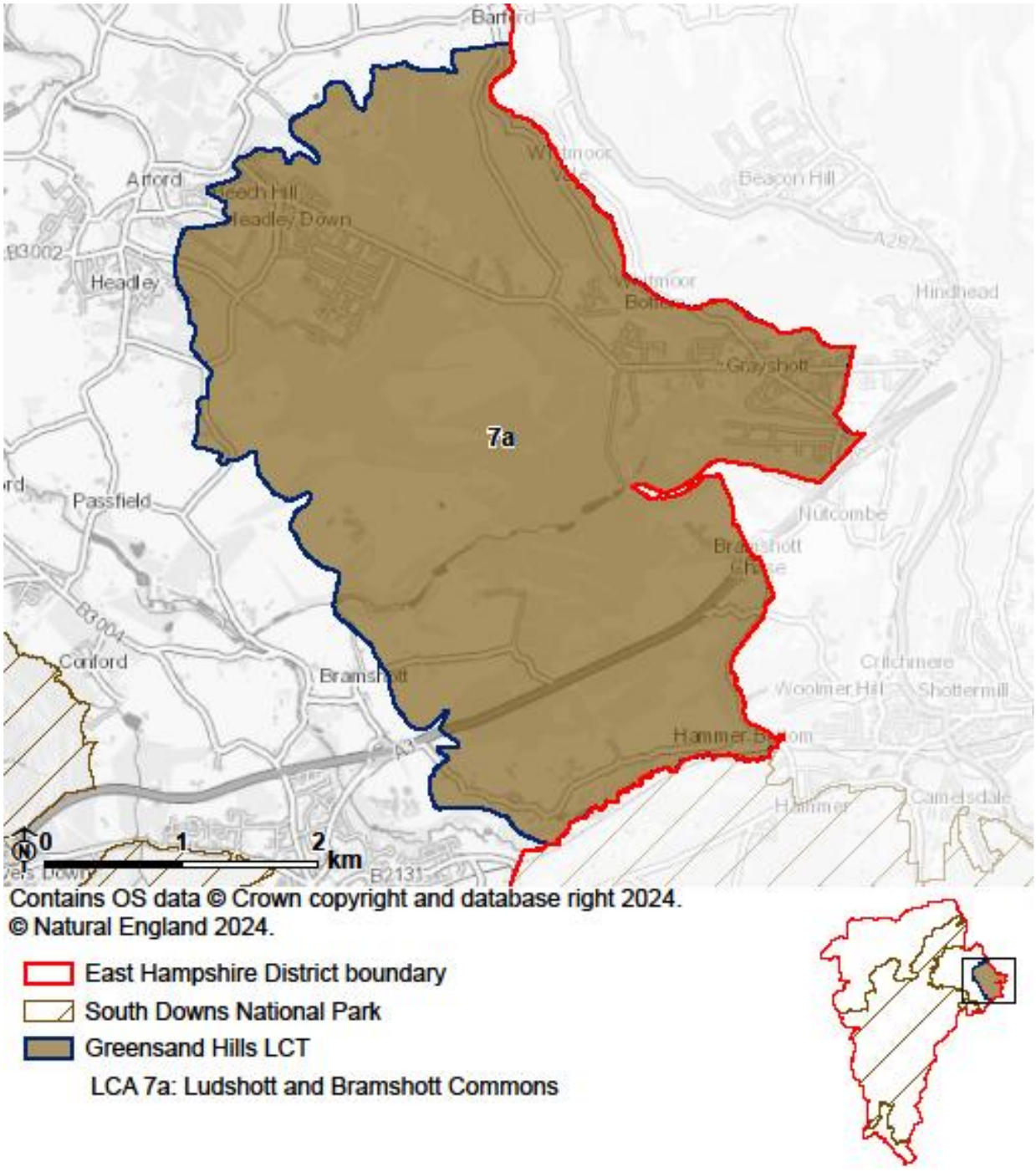
Development Management

- Avoid development in proximity to the River Wey Conservation Area.
- Consider views from the elevated Greensand Terrace to the east in relation to any change in this area.
- Where development does occur, there should be landscape led and considerate incorporation of green infrastructure into the site in line with District Wide Project 9 from East Hampshire's GI Strategy 2019. Development should be carefully planned, and biodiversity considered from the outset in line with East Hampshire District Council's Biodiversity and Planning Guidance **[See reference** 56**]**.
- Ensure heathland restoration programmes consider possible adverse visual impact resulting from the exposure of existing buildings, particularly industrial buildings.
- Ensure that developments do not impact on the relative sense of tranquillity and strong rural character of this area. This can be done by sensitively incorporating green infrastructure elements into the development (District-Wide Project 9).
- Conserve the landscape setting of settlements, particularly woodland and hedgerow which provide enclosure and containment.
- Conserve the rural setting of settlements and control development along roads and avoid the 'joining up' of settlements.
- Use sustainable and locally sourced materials, vernacular building techniques and styles, responding to the existing landscape character, to inform design and ensure integration with the surrounding landscape.
- Ensure recreational facilities do not erode the rural character of the landscape.
- Conserve the sunken lanes which characterise the stream valleys. Monitor traffic impacts and seek to protect banks and verges from damage.

- Monitor incremental development and change along the main road corridors (A325) and seek to conserve a woodland/heath setting to the road.
- Ensure any future changes in association with the A3 and A325 respect the rural character of the area and avoids use of excessive lighting, signage and ‘suburban’ features.
- Ensure that new development is integrated into the existing network of PRoW to provide access to the countryside.
- Avoid a negative impact on the South Downs National Park’s Dark Skies Policy by preventing and positively reducing artificial light pollution in line with the South Downs National Park Technical Advice Note Version 2 **[See reference** 57**]**.

Landscape Character Type 7: Greensand Hills

Figure 5.24: Location of the Greensand Hills LCT



Description

5.156 The Greensand Hills are steep, prominent hills formed by the resistant sandstones of the Hythe Formation. This landscape type forms part of a horseshoe-shaped escarpment which extents outside East Hampshire and into Waverley District, enclosing the Milland Basin. Although part of a larger type (which occurs across East Hampshire and into Waverley) the LCT key characteristics are specific to the study area (i.e. the area of East Hampshire outside the South Downs National Park).

Key Characteristics

- Prominent hills formed from sandstones and cherts of the Lower Greensand group with a steep escarpment at their inner edge.
- Streams, such as Cooper's Stream, drain the hills in deep ravine-like valleys.
- Significant woodland cover including at Gentle's Copse, Bull Copse and Hogmoor Inclosure, comprising an interlocking mosaic of different woodland types and structures – oak-birch woodland, beechwoods, mixed woodland and coniferous plantations on former common land.
- Woodland clearings support heathy unenclosed commons including ecologically rich habitats – open heather heath, acid grassland, bracken, gorse, woody scrub, and oak-birch woodland.
- The irregular pattern of fields within clearings and woodland edges supports rough grazing.
- Narrow, deeply sunken lanes wind up hillsides linking isolated farmsteads.
- 20th century suburban development arranged in a distinctive grid layout at Headley, Headley Down and Grayshott.
- Presence of historic farmsteads and several former parklands such as Headley Park.

- Extensive network of public rights of way (PRoW) and unenclosed common land open to public access.
- Hammer ponds along the foot of the hills associated with the former Wealden iron industry.
- Characterised by a sense of enclosure, mystery and remoteness.

Landscape Character Areas

5.157 The Greensand Hills LCT contains one LCA:

- LCA 7a: Ludshott and Bramshott Commons

Landscape Character Area 7a: Ludshott and Bramshott Commons

Description

Location and Boundaries

5.158 The Ludshott and Bramshott Commons Landscape Character Area (LCA) lies in the east of the district. Its western boundary has been drawn along the 120m contour line; corresponding approximately with the extent of the Hythe beds of the Lower Greensand and the woodland edge. Its eastern edge is delineated by the district boundary. Steep slopes which form the valley sides of small streams define the north-eastern and southern edges of the character area. The slopes of the western edge of the LCA are gentler.

Key Characteristics

- Part of a series of hills formed from the sandstones of the Lower Greensand group.
- Elevated and undulating landform informed by the resistant sandstone of the Hythe beds. Incised by Cooper's Stream which creates more pronounced undulations.
- A mosaic of woodland supporting variation in type and structure (including sessile oak and beech woodland, coppice and mixed and coniferous plantation) with some ancient woodland on the steeper valley sides.
- Internationally important areas of unenclosed heathland common (Bramshott and Ludshott Commons SSSI), part of the Wealden Heaths Phase II SPA within clearings in the woodland.

- Small regular pastoral fields occur in woodland clearings sometimes containing paddocks.
- Quiet rural lanes enclosed by woodland and in places sunk deeply into the sandstone.
- Distinctive, regular settlements of Grayshott and Headley Down are contained by woodland and well-integrated into the landscape. Strong sense of separation between Headley Down and Grayshott
- Historic parkland with pre-1800 park at Downlands House, post-1800 parkland at Ludshott Manor and Grayshott Hall.
- A large area of National Trust land (Ludshott Common, Bramshott Chase and Waggoners' or Wakeners' Wells) with occasional long views, a comprehensive footpath network, and access rights.
- A rural landscape with a sense of tranquillity, intimacy and secrecy. The corridor of the A3 in the southern part of the area is a local source of noise and disruption.

Figure 5.25: PRoW through a mosaic of mixed and plantation woodland with heathland

Figure 5.26: Undulating pastoral field enclosed by dense mature tree boundaries

Natural Influences

Physical Landscape

5.159 This character area lies on the eastern edge of the Lower Greensand and is part of a series of hills which form an elliptical belt around the Wealden Clay. The resistant sandstone of the Hythe Beds, which form part of the Lower Greensand group, create the elevated and undulating topography. Cooper's Stream and the River Wey incise the landform creating pronounced undulations.

5.160 The sandstone geology gives rise to a well-drained sandy soil which is often very acidic supporting a predominantly woodland and heathland land cover. Woodland varies in both type and structure (sessile oak, beech, coniferous plantation) with some ancient and semi-natural woodland on the steeper slopes alongside Cooper's Stream, Whitmoor Bottom and Gentle's Copse. Bramshott and Ludshott Common (incorporating Bramshott Chase) form a significant extent of heathy common land. Clearings in woodland contain small regular fields of 18th-19th century enclosure supporting pasture and paddocks.

Biodiversity

5.161 This character area is of high ecological interest, supporting extensive areas of open lowland heathland, acid/neutral grassland and woodland. A range of woodland types occur, including sessile oak and beech woodland, and mixed and coniferous plantation. Woodland of ancient origin is largely restricted to the steep slopes of Whitmoor Vale and the valley sides of Cooper's Stream however there are further pockets of ancient woodland in the north and west of the LCA.

5.162 The central part of the character area is dominated by Bramshott and Ludshott Commons SSSI, an area which is also designated as part of the

Wealden Heaths Phase II SPA. This area is dominated by dry and moderately dry heath communities, together with mosaics of acid grassland, bracken, gorse and birch and pine woodland. It is particularly notable for supporting an important population of smooth snake, and its diverse breeding bird assemblage that includes notable species such as Dartford warbler, woodlark, nightjar and hobby.

5.163 A number of additional woodland, heathland and grassland areas carry non-statutory SINC designation.

Cultural Influences

Historic Landscape Character

5.164 The generally low fertility and marginal character of the sandy soils is evident in a historic land-use which, for several millennia, has been dominated by woodland and heathy unenclosed commons, with earlier activity restricted to prehistoric exploitation of the woodland resources.

5.165 Extensive blocks of pre-1800 woodland are still evident within the landscape. Much of this woodland is likely to be of medieval origin involving areas of coppicing, a practice that would have continued into the modern period.

5.166 Most of the commons have, since 1800, been appropriated for plantations. These, together with the earlier blocks of ancient woodland, produce the overwhelmingly wooded character. Small islands of 18th-19th century enclosure, typified by very small fields and smallholdings, are scattered across the character area, together with blocks of post-1900 settlement at Headley Down and Grayshott.

5.167 In the south of the LCA and extending to the north-west, The River Wey Conservation Area is indicative of the historic value of the river, its valley setting

and the 18th century system of water meadows which combine to create an historic landscape.

5.168 Key historic characteristics include:

- Absence of archaeological monuments – Bronze Age barrow cemeteries may survive within the wooded commons.
- Historic parkland – pre-1800 park at Downlands House, post-1800 parkland at Ludshott Manor and Grayshott Hall.
- Conservation areas at Grayshott (which has distinctive formal and informal public open space at its heart) and along the River Wey.
- A Canadian Memorial at Bramshott Common and associated distinctive maple planting on the A3 to the north, commemorating Canadian soldiers in the area during WWI and WWII.

Settlement Form and Built Character

5.169 Settlement is largely 20th century suburban development organised in a distinctive grid layout, (Grayshott and Headley Down) representing the growth of dormitory settlements. There are several clusters of low-density development between Headley Down and Grayshott, generally replicating the grid layout with large gardens. Woodland contains these settlements, softening and integrating their geometric edges. Isolated farmsteads are found in the rural part of the character area, mainly of 18th century or later date. These are located on the edge of woodland as at Woolmer Farm and in woodland clearings as at Bewleswood Farm. Ludshott Manor, a Tudor manor house set in parkland has been converted to flats.

5.170 Building materials include sandstone, red brick and clay tiles.

Perceptual Influences

5.171 This is a landscape of contrasting enclosure and openness associated with the respective areas of woodland and heathland. Heather, gorse, beech and birch provide a rich texture and seasonal colour. Views within and out of the character area are generally restricted by woodland and this brings an element of secrecy and intimacy to the landscape. However far-reaching channelled views are afforded from Ludshott Common towards adjacent wooded hillsides.

5.172 The character area is crossed by the A3 which introduces localised noise and movement, although views towards it are restricted by dense woodland. Otherwise, there are a number of quiet rural roads, often enclosed by woodland and in places sunk into the sandstone. Combined with the extent of heathland and woodland cover these factors contribute to a generally strong sense of tranquillity and rural character within the LCA.

5.173 The LCA includes large areas of National Trust owned land at Ludshott Common and Bramshott Chase. A comprehensive PRoW network and a number of car parks ensure good access to the landscape. Waggoners' or Wakeners' Wells consist of a series of stream-fed man-made ponds which may have originally been constructed as hammer ponds for the local iron industry in the 17th-century. The ponds are an important habitat for wildlife today.

5.174 Alfred Tennyson and his family rented Grayshott Hall, the site of the old Grayshott Farm, for several months in 1867 while their own house near Haslemere was built. It is said that he wrote his short ode 'Flower in the crannied wall' while he was here. This landscape also provided inspiration to the writer Flora Thompson who lived in Grayshott in the late 1800s.

Evaluation

Key Sensitivities and Values

- Sandstone hills, part of a series of hills forming an elliptical belt which are valued for their distinctive landform and occasional long views from higher ground.
- The course of Cooper's Stream and the River Wey and associated ponds including hammer ponds which are especially sensitive to change from climate change and habitat degradation.
- Wetland habitats, ponds, flowing open water and wet woodland, particularly around Cooper's Stream and the River Wey, are sensitive to change from climate change leading to increased seasonal flooding, increased temperatures and periods of drought.
- The diversity of woodland types including ancient woodland which require active management and small areas of enclosed pasture within woodland.
- Small areas of enclosed pasture within the woodland which are increasingly used as horse paddocks with changes to boundaries and pattern.
- The areas of heathy common land (which have SSSI/SPA status) support a rich biodiversity, provide a sense of time depth and offer opportunities for recreation access.
- Historic parkland at Downlands House, Ludshott Manor and Grayshott Hall which has cultural and natural heritage value.
- Sunken lanes which contribute to the experience of travelling through this landscape and are vulnerable to traffic pressures and erosion of verges and banks.
- Distinctive 20th century development which has been well integrated into the landscape but vulnerable to further development.

- The sense of separation between Headley Down and Grayshott, which could be eroded by further infill development or removal of vegetation.
- Accessible landscape with large amounts of National Trust land and a good network of PRoW.
- Long views from Ludshott Common which contrast with the prevalent enclosed, intimate character of the LCA.
- The enclosure and sense of tranquillity provided by woodland cover which creates a strong, intimate rural character.

Guidance

Landscape Strategy

5.175 The overall management objective should be to conserve the rich woodland and heathland mosaic and the diversity of habitats, and the sense of tranquillity. The landscape should continue to provide a strong rural setting for the settlements of Grayshott and Headley Down.

Landscape Management

- Conserve and enhance the character of the sandstone hills, including occasional long views experienced from them.
- Ensure a joined-up, landscape scale approach towards changes to agricultural practice through ELMS and local initiatives at a landscape scale such as Landscape Partnerships.
- Conserve and enhance areas of wetland habitat relating to Cooper's Stream, the River Wey and associated ponds including hammer ponds Enhance the Southern Wey Valley in line with Site Specific Project 4: Enhance the Southern Wey Valley, in the East Hampshire Green Infrastructure Strategy 2019 **[See reference** 58**]**.

- Address potential for flooding issues with the implementation of natural flood management schemes along Cooper's Stream and the River Wey.
- Monitor water quality in the streams and seek to ensure high water quality and minimise water pollution.
- Promote appropriate management of farmland, including restoring buffer strips along field margins to minimise run off, maintain the biodiversity of wetland features including ponds and to create a wildlife-rich habitat supporting farmland birds.
- Conserve and manage woodland, including ancient woodland on steeper slopes in line with Guidance on Managing ancient and native woodland in England **[See reference** 59**]**. Ensure a diverse species and age structure by thinning, coppicing, promoting natural regeneration and replanting as necessary, in line with District Wide Project 7: Enhance access and increase active management of existing woodland in the East Hampshire Green Infrastructure Strategy 2019. This will contribute to landscape resilience and also minimise the risk of damage as a result of increased storms and high winds.
- Ensure new trees and woodlands are planted in line with relevant guidance, including District Wide Project 6: Increase woodland cover in the East Hampshire Green Infrastructure Strategy 2019, and have suitable management and maintenance plans to ensure their successful establishment. Manage and monitor the threats posed by tree diseases and pests, and plan for climate change by researching appropriate species mixes to create robust and resilient woodlands.
- Conserve open clearings within woodland.
- Conserve, protect and expand area of pasture within woodland.
- Manage existing heathland commons to prevent encroachment of scrub and bracken and consider opportunities for further heathland creation on former commons within areas of plantation to create a suite of linked heathland sites. Consider reintroducing grazing as a traditional form of management on heathland sites.
- Conserve, restore and enhance historic parkland.

- Maintain and enhance rights of way and improve links to footpaths from settlements, as well as improving links with the South Downs National Park, in line with District Wide Projects 3: Connect with the South Downs and 4: Identify and enhance strategically important rights of way in the East Hampshire Green Infrastructure Strategy 2019.
- Conserve the sense of tranquillity and strong rural character.
- Encourage sensitive integration of fencing, tracks, hardstanding, jumps and other paraphernalia that are associated with horse keeping.

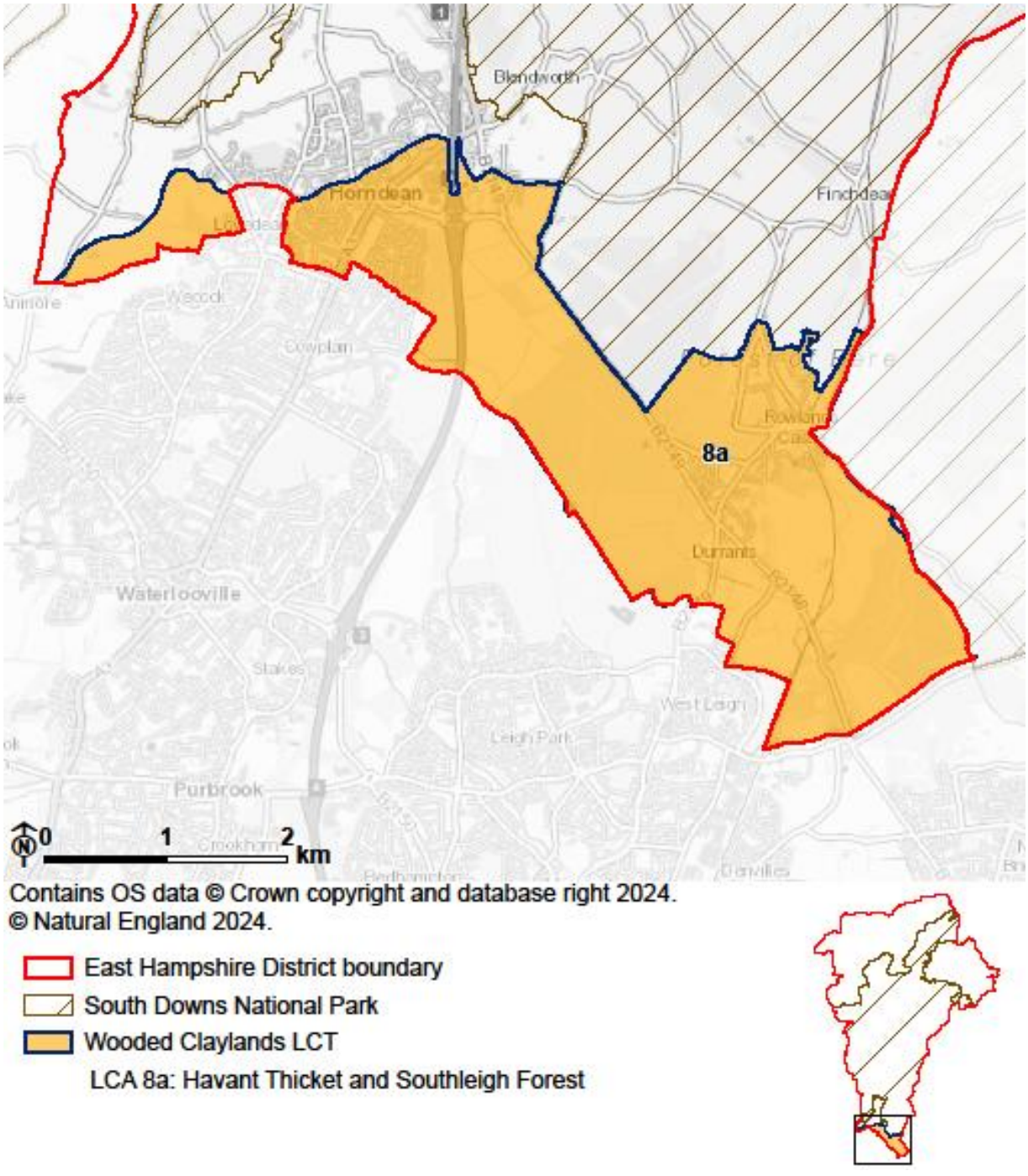
Development Management

- Conserve the distinctive and individual identity of settlements and retain the important sense of separation along the B3002 which links Grayshott and Headley Down. Conserve the rural setting of the road.
- Development should be carefully planned, and biodiversity considered from the outset in line with East Hampshire District Council's Biodiversity and Planning Guidance **[See reference** 60**]**.
- Conserve the character of sunken and enclosed lanes, manage traffic pressures and resist pressure for road improvements which would alter the experience of travelling through the landscape.
- Conserve the tree and woodland cover which contains and softens the edges of settlements.
- Use sustainable and locally sourced materials, vernacular building techniques and styles, responding to the existing landscape character, to inform design and ensure integration with the surrounding landscape.
- Ensure any future changes in association with the A3 respects the rural character of the area and avoids use of excessive lighting, signage and 'suburban' features.
- Ensure that new development is integrated into and connected to the existing network of PRoW.

- Avoid a negative impact on the South Downs National Park's Dark Skies Policy by preventing and positively reducing artificial light pollution in line with the South Downs National Park Technical Advice Note Version 2 **[See reference** 61**]**.

Landscape Character Type 8: Wooded Claylands

Figure 5.27: Location of the Wooded Claylands LCT



Description

5.176 The Wooded Claylands Landscape Character Type comprises densely wooded landscapes that occupy the clay vale between the dipslope of the chalk downland and the Portsdown chalk ridge. The Wooded Claylands identified in this study area form part of a wider clay lowland landscape containing the Forest of Bere, a medieval royal hunting forest. Although part of a larger type (extending south into Havant District) the LCT key characteristics are specific to the study area.

Key Characteristics

- Low lying, undulating, clay vale between the dipslope of the Chalk downland and the Portsdown chalk ridge.
- Underlying London Clay and Lambeth Group Formation produce a mixture of sandy and clayey soils which give rise to relatively unproductive agricultural land.
- Dominated by woodland, including Havant Thicket and Southleigh Forest, including semi-natural copses and mixed plantations, which creates a strong sense of enclosure.
- Woodland forms part of a relic fragment of the Forest of Bere, a royal hunting preserve during the Medieval period.
- Presence of lowland acid grassland (including at Blendworth Common and Hazleton Common Nature Reserve) and small remnants of lowland heath survives in woodland clearings.
- Woodland surrounded by regular 18th-19th century enclosures, many of which produce straight edges and sharp corners on the edges of the woodland.
- Encroachment onto the edge of common land is evident in common edge settlements, often with narrow parallel back garden plots e.g. at Rowland's Castle.

- Drained by a series of streams that flow south into the Langstone Channel.
- Extensive opportunities for outdoor recreation including common land, forest walks, cycling, golf and horse riding.

Landscape Character Areas

5.177 The Wooded Claylands LCT contains one LCA:

- LCA 8a: Havant Thicket and Southleigh Forest

Landscape Character Area 8a: Havant Thicket and Southleigh Forest

Description

Location and Boundaries

5.178 This Landscape Character Area (LCA) lies in the south of the district at the foot of the chalk downland dipslope. It incorporates part of the lower clay with flint covered chalk landscape around Horndean and Rowlands Castle and the clay vale to the south of this.

Key Characteristics

- Transitional area incorporating the low-lying clay vale and the edge of the chalk downland dipslope.
- A varied landcover dominated by woodland and including pasture, paddocks and common land. Pockets of heathland within widespread lowland dry acid grassland are present (e.g. at Blendworth Common).
- Dominated by woodland, all of it pre-1800 but subsequently replanted (Havant Thicket and Southleigh Forest) and smaller copses which provide enclosure and a strong backdrop to views. Veteran trees are often found within hedgerows along field boundaries.
- The remnant woodland and common land represent fragments of the once extensive Forest of Bere – a medieval royal hunting preserve.
- Small geometric fields predominantly of recent enclosure with pasture, some managed as horse paddocks.

- Blendworth Common, Forestry Commission managed woodland at Havant Thicket and Staunton Country Park offer recreational opportunities and are grazed by livestock.
- Leigh Park (Grade II* Registered Park and Garden) lies partly within this LCA within Staunton Country Park.
- Settlement comprises post-1800 expansion (Rowlands Castle and Horndean), possibly originating as common-edge settlements.
- Flint is a common and distinctive building material.
- Close proximity to Havant and Horndean allows good recreational access to this landscape and despite being adjacent to the urban edges there are opportunities to find places where there is a sense of relative tranquillity, for example, Havant Thicket near Staunton Country Park.
- The western part of the area (close to Horndean) is severed by the A3 motorway.
- Overall, this is a dynamic and visually busy landscape with pockets of relative tranquillity and strong rural character away from settlement.
- Currently, the first new UK reservoir in 30 years is being constructed in Staunton Country Park, with groundworks visible.

Figure 5.28: Public footpath through dense woodland within Havant Thicket

Figure 5.29: Pasture used for horse grazing with wooded backdrop including some settlement

Natural Influences

Physical Landscape

5.179 This character area represents the transition from the chalk dipslope to the clay vale.

5.180 Clays, silts, sands and gravels of the Lambeth Group and clays of the London Clay Formation underlie the character area. This bedrock geology creates a flat to gently sloping landform and gives rise to slowly permeable, seasonally wet soils which support a varied landcover of woodland, pasture, paddock, settlement and common land. The heavy, difficult to work clay soils mean the area has retained extensive woodland cover. To the north of the clay, around Rowlands Castle, the bedrock geology is chalk, comprising the edge of the dipslope with a flatter topography not typical of the adjacent chalk downland

within the South Downs National Park to the north. Much of this LCA is covered by woodland bordered by geometric arable fields bounded by hedgerows with hedgerow trees.

5.181 The LCA includes the source of a small number of streams, flowing south towards the Langstone Channel and there are occasional small ponds within woodland. A swallow hole occurs at Rowlands Castle, this is a natural geological feature in direct contact with the chalk aquifer/underground streams. At times of heavy rainfall water entering the swallow hole is heavily polluted with clay particles which eventually reaches Bedhampton Springs, a major water supply source for Portsmouth Water.

5.182 Woodland, most of which is ancient, is significant in the landscape with larger blocks (e.g. Havant Thicket and Southleigh Forest) and smaller copses. Havant Thicket had examples of riparian woodland species in waterlogged ditches.

5.183 Blendworth Common, also part of the historic Forest of Bere, includes areas managed by grazing where the former heathland cover is re-emerging. A restored landfill site lies in the south of the area enclosed by Southleigh Forest.

5.184 Currently, the first new UK reservoir in 30 years is being constructed in Staunton Country Park, the groundworks of which are creating temporary visual obstruction.

Biodiversity

5.185 This character area is dominated by woodland, lowland dry acid grassland and floodplain grazing meadow. In general, the vegetation ranges from neutral to acid in character with areas of damp acid grassland, bracken and gorse, together with occasional patches of heather characteristic of open semi-natural vegetation areas.

5.186 Large blocks of woodland, such as Havant Thicket and Southleigh Forest, together with a number of smaller copses are of ancient origin and carry SINC designation. Hazleton Common Local Nature Reserve is another notable site within the LCA that comprises a mix of heathland, grassland, mixed gorse and woody scrub, ponds and wetland.

5.187 Veteran trees found within hedgerows are ecologically important often supporting niche habitats.

Cultural Influences

Historic Landscape Character

5.188 The intractable clay soils are likely to have limited early settlement and use of this area and the marginal character of the area is reflected in its historic use as a hunting park. The landscape today reflects its history as part of the more extensive medieval Forest of Bere, a royal hunting preserve.

5.189 The area is dominated by woodland, all of it pre-1800 but much subsequently replanted. Woodland is surrounded by 18th-19th century enclosures of indicating enclosure of common land (such as at Blendworth Common). The presence of regular 19th century assarts to the south of Havant Thicket, soon to become Havant Thicket Reservoir, indicates that the woodland was previously more extensive. A small, isolated patch of early enclosure is located west of Lovedean.

5.190 Key historic characteristics include:

- Settlement comprising post-1800 expansion (Rowlands Castle and Horndean), possibly originating as common-edge settlements.
- Historic parkland includes Leigh Park, a registered park and garden (RPG) at Staunton Country Park, and a small fragment of parkland at Rowlands Castle.

- 'The Castle' Scheduled Monument south of Rowlands Castle, which remains visible, albeit not accessible, as earthworks.
- Conservation areas at Rowlands Castle, including the large triangular village green and distinctive flint walls, and Sir George Staunton Park (overlapping with Leigh Park RPG), comprising parkland extending south into Havant, are indicative of historic landscape value in these areas.

Settlement Form and Built Character

5.191 The settlement pattern comprises nineteenth and later agglomerations originating as common edge settlement. There are few isolated farms.

5.192 The LCA lies on the edge of Havant and incorporates part of Horndean. Settlements within the area include Rowlands Castle. The historic village of Rowland's Castle is based at the foot of the downs, around a triangular green, surrounded by more recent development extending southwards towards the edge of Havant. Locally important views across the village green towards Rowland's Castle URC Church also include railway arches and the flint wall surrounding Deerleap. Today, the area is characterised by modern suburban development. Typical building materials include flint, red brick and clay tiles.

Perceptual Influences

5.193 Woodland blocks provide a sense of enclosure contrasting with the more open areas of pasture, paddock, common land and parkland. This variety in landcover creates a visually 'busy' landscape which is intensified by the M3 and built-up edge of Horndean which divide the LCA, although the repetition of woodland and pasture do provide some unity.

5.194 Visual intrusion and noise disruption from roads, settlement edges, and pylon lines has eroded the rural character in places. However, the woodland provides a degree of containment and screening, often restricting views to pastoral fields and wooded skylines. Veteran trees in hedgerows along field

boundaries aid screening. There are opportunities to find areas where there is a sense of relative tranquillity.

5.195 Whilst the PRoW network is relatively sparse, this is an accessible and permeable landscape due to its proximity to Havant and Horndean and its comprehensive road network. The Havant to London railway line cuts through this area, as do National Cycle Network Routes 22 and 222 (albeit both fragmented). The Forestry Commission manages Havant Thicket with numerous permissive tracks providing good access and recreational opportunities, and there is open access land at Hazleton Common. Staunton Way long distance footpath crosses the area. It is named after Sir George Staunton, an MP for Portsmouth in the early 19th century who created the country estate which now forms the country park that bears his name. The area is also served by the Monarchs's Way and Shipwrights Way.

Evaluation

Key Sensitivities and Values

- Mosaic of woodland, heath and pasture, including areas of remnant ancient woodland (e.g. Havant Thicket) that form part of the Forest of Bere, provide a sense of enclosure, time depth and rich biodiversity.
- Veteran trees and their associated aesthetic, historic and ecological value.
- Lowland dry acid grassland and areas of heath and heathland regeneration including at Blendworth Common, which is a common land of the Forest of Bere
- Small watercourses, ponds and wetland habitats that are sensitive to change from climate change and habitat degradation, including from increased seasonal flooding, increased temperatures, and periods of drought.

- The pattern of early enclosures and assarts and pastoral fields which are vulnerable to loss/neglect of boundaries or changes to boundaries associated with use for horse grazing.
- The intact historic core of Rowlands Castle, including locally important views across the village green towards Rowland's Castle URC Church.
- The distinctive pattern and setting of common edge settlements including the open rural gap and sense of separation between Havant and Rowlands Castle.
- Strong sense of separation between Rowlands Castle and Havant, which could be eroded by future development in this area.
- The use of flint as a distinctive building material.
- Historic parkland at Staunton Park (which falls partly in this LCA), Leigh Park and its associated cultural and natural heritage value.
- High recreational value of Havant Thicket, Staunton Country Park, and the public rights of way (PRoW) network, including several long-distance footpaths.
- Pockets of relative tranquillity associated with woodland and areas with strong rural character in an otherwise busy landscape are threatened by traffic and future large-scale development.

Guidance

Landscape Strategy

5.196 The overall management objective should be to conserve the landscape mosaic of woodland, common land/heath and pasture, and enhance the sense of history and connections with the Forest of Bere.

Landscape Management

- Conserve the mosaic of woodland, heath, dry acid grassland and pasture which forms the relic fragment of the former Royal Forest of Bere. Increase awareness of the Forest of Bere through provision of appropriate interpretation.
- Conserve and manage woodland and ancient woodland in line with Guidance on Managing ancient and native woodland in England **[See reference** 62**]**. Ensure a diverse species and age structure by thinning, coppicing, promoting natural regeneration and replanting as necessary, in line with District Wide Project 7: Enhance access and increase active management of existing woodland in the East Hampshire Green Infrastructure Strategy 2019 **[See reference** 63**]**.. This will contribute to landscape resilience and also minimise the risk of damage as a result of increased storms and high winds.
- Ensure new trees and woodlands are planted in line with relevant guidance, including District Wide Project 6: Increase woodland cover in the East Hampshire Green Infrastructure Strategy 2019, and have suitable management and maintenance plans to ensure their successful establishment. Manage and monitor the threats posed by tree diseases and pests, and plan for climate change by researching appropriate species mixes to create robust and resilient woodlands. Conserve and enhance streams, ponds and areas of wetland habitat.
- Monitor water quality in streams and seek to ensure high water quality and minimise water pollution.
- Manage veteran trees appropriately to enhance longevity and maximise biodiversity value.
- Ensure appropriate management of Blendworth Common through grazing regimes to prevent scrub encroachment and promote heathland regeneration, and consider opportunities for further heathland creation on former commons within areas of plantation to create a suite of linked heathland sites. Seek to expand conservation grazing as a traditional form of land management.

- Ensure a joined-up, landscape scale approach towards changes to agricultural practice through ELMS and local initiatives at a landscape scale such as Landscape Partnerships.
- Promote appropriate management of farmland, including restoring buffer strips along field margins to minimise run off, maintain the biodiversity of wetland features including ponds and to create a wildlife-rich habitat supporting farmland birds.
- Conserve fields of grazed pasture and resist change to paddock.
- Encourage sensitive integration of existing paddock fencing and encourage replanting of hedgerows to conserve and connect the field pattern.
- Conserve and enhance the historic parklands at Staunton Park through replacement tree planting and the restoration of parkland pasture.
- Consider management of the grass on the village green in Rowlands Castle to provide habitat for wildlife through relaxing mowing regimes and/ or meadow creation, including the verges.
- Maintain and enhance rights of way and improve links to the long-distance footpaths from settlements within the LCA, as well as improving links with the South Downs National Park, in line with District Wide Projects 3: Connect with the South Downs and 4: Identify and enhance strategically important rights of way in the East Hampshire Green Infrastructure Strategy 2019.
- In line with Site Specific Project 5 in the East Hampshire Green Infrastructure Strategy 2019, support the delivery of Havant Thicket Reservoir, enhancing accessibility to and from the site from surrounding open spaces and settlement.
- Encourage sensitive integration of fencing, tracks, hardstanding, jumps and other paraphernalia that are associated with horse keeping.

Development Management

- Consider further opportunities for woodland planting within and around settlements and the urban edge to provide integration and screening.
- Development should be carefully planned, and biodiversity considered from the outset in line with East Hampshire District Council's Biodiversity and Planning Guidance **[See reference** 64**]**.
- Respect the distinctive pattern and setting of common edge settlements and conserve the intact historic core at Rowlands Castle.
- Maintain the open rural gap and sense of separation between Havant and Rowlands Castle. Limit linear expansion and incremental development along roads.
- Conserve the character of the rural lanes that cross through the area. Monitor traffic pressures and avoid upgrading and creation of a more urban character.
- Where development does occur, there should be landscape led and considerate incorporation of green infrastructure into the site in line with District Wide Project 9 from East Hampshire's GI Strategy 2019.
- Use sustainable and locally sourced materials, vernacular building techniques and styles, responding to the existing landscape character to inform design and ensure integration with the surrounding landscape. Design should adhere to the guidance in Rowlands Castle Village Design Statement 2000 (1st Revision 2019).
- Consider potential to maximise opportunities for this area to provide a recreational gateway to the South Downs, and to Staunton Country Park.
- Ensure that new development is integrated into the existing network of PRoW.
- Ensure any future changes in association with the A3 motorway respects the character of the area and avoids use of excessive lighting, signage and 'suburban' features.

- Avoid a negative impact on the South Downs National Park's Dark Skies Policy by preventing and positively reducing artificial light pollution in line with the South Downs National Park Technical Advice Note Version 2 **[See reference** 65**]**.

Appendix A

Glossary

Table A.1: Glossary of Terms

Term	Definition
Access	The presence of publicly accessible landscapes, the extent of such landscapes, and the level of public access (as well as proximity to people) e.g. presence of open access land, density of public rights of way network, land managed for access.
AOD	AOD Above Ordnance Datum (sea level).
AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty – a statutory national landscape designation.
Ancient woodland	Woods that are believed to have been continuous woodland cover since at least 1600 AD.
Assart	The informal enclosure of private farmland by encroachment into woodland or heath.
Character of England Map	A map developed by English Heritage, English Nature and the then Countryside Commission that divides England into Joint Character Areas.
Characteristic	A distinctive element of the landscape that contributes to landscape character for instance a particular hedgerow pattern or sense of tranquillity.
Condition	A judgement on the intactness and condition of the elements of the landscape.
Conserve	Strategy where the emphasis is conservation of existing character and of particular features that contribute to this character.
Coppice	A traditional form of woodland management where trees (commonly hazel) are cut regularly on a cycle to promote growth from their bases.

Term	Definition
Create	A strategy that provides the opportunity to create or accelerate change towards a new positive landscape character.
Deerpark	Enclosed private hunting ground.
Enhance	Strategy where the emphasis is on restoring elements that have been lost or declined and on enhancing character. This may include improvements to landscape management practices and the introduction of positive new elements or features.
Forces for change	These are both positive and negative factors that are known to or have potential to act on the landscape, including agricultural management issues, policy and development pressures.
Ghyll	Steep sided valley woodland (generally ancient woodland).
Guidelines	Guidelines outline the actions required to ensure that distinctive character is maintained.
Inclosure/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.
Joint Character Areas (national/regional)	Areas defined by broadly similar cultural, historical, wildlife, landscape and natural characteristics.
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 (LCAs)	Single unique areas that are the discrete geographical area of a particular landscape type.
Landscape Character Types (LCTs)	Distinct types of landscape that are 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.

Term	Definition
Literary perceptions and cultural associations are	Perceptions recorded through descriptive writings, visual arts and music which can indicate how the landscape has changed over time and communicate the special perceptual qualities of the landscape. For the purposes of this LCA these are largely drawn from the 2006 assessment.
Perceptual characteristics	As defined in the 2014 Natural England Guidance **[See reference** 4**]**i.e. scale, enclosure, diversity texture, form, line colour, balance, movement, pattern, etc. focussing on how specific elements contribute to the aesthetic characteristics.
Restore	A strategy which focuses upon restoration or renewal of landscape features or characteristics that have been or are currently being lost or degraded, alongside active management of the remaining resource.
SDNP	South Downs National Park
Sensitivity	A judgement of how sensitive or vulnerable a landscape component is to change.
Shaw	A strip of woodland forming the border of a field.
Significant landscape attributes	Positive features and characteristics that are important to landscape character.
Skyline	The outline of a range of hills, ridge or group of buildings seen against the sky.
Strategy	Principles to manage and direct landscape change for a particular landscape type or character area including identification of any particular management needs for specific elements.
Strength of character	A judgement on how distinctive and recognisable the pattern is that defines the character of the landscape. This includes the combination of physical and cultural attributes and the sense of place that they evoke.
Strengthen	A strategy which focuses upon strengthening the existing characteristics of the landscape character

Term	Definition
	through improvements to landscape management practices.
Tranquillity	Defined by analysis of noise levels, perceived naturalness, visible overt human impact, density of settlement/diffusion of people and artificial lighting in each LCA.

Appendix B

Changes between the 2006 LCA and 2024 LCA relating to naming and numbering of LCAs/LCTs

Table B.1: Relationship between 2007 LCA and 2024 LCA in terms of LCT/LCT names and numbers

East Hampshire District Landscape Character Assessment 2006 - Landscape Character Type (LCT)	East Hampshire District Landscape Character Assessment 2006 - Landscape Character Area (LCA)	East Hampshire Landscape Character Assessment 2024 - Landscape Character Type (LCT)	East Hampshire Landscape Character Assessment 2024 - Landscape Character Area (LCA)
2. Clay Plateau	2b Four Marks	1. Clay Plateau	1a Four Marks
3. Downland Mosaic	3a Clanfield	2. Downland Mosaic	2c Horndean - Clanfield Edge
3. Downland Mosaic	None	8 Wooded Claylands	8a Havant Thicket and Southleigh Forest
3. Downland Mosaic	3d Lasham	2. Downland Mosaic	2a Lasham
3. Downland Mosaic	3e Ropley	None	2b Ropley
3. Downland Mosaic	3f Horndean - Clanfield Edge	None	2c Horndean - Clanfield Edge
4. Chalk Valley Systems	4b Northern Wey Valley	3. Chalk Valley Systems	3a Northern Wey Valley
6. Greensand Terrace	6c Worldham	4. Greensand Terrace	4a Worldham
7. Mixed Farmland and Woodland	7b Kingsley / Blackmoor	5. Mixed Farmland and Woodland	5a Kingsley
7. Mixed Farmland and Woodland	7c Alice Holt	3. Chalk Valley Systems	3a Northern Wey Valley

Appendix B Changes between the 2006 LCA and 2024 LCA relating to naming and numbering of LCAs/LCTs

East Hampshire District Landscape Character Assessment 2006 - Landscape Character Type (LCT)	East Hampshire District Landscape Character Assessment 2006 - Landscape Character Area (LCA)	East Hampshire Landscape Character Assessment 2024 - Landscape Character Type (LCT)	East Hampshire Landscape Character Assessment 2024 - Landscape Character Area (LCA)
8. Wealden Farmland and Heath Mosaic	8c Whitehill to Liphook	6 Wealden Farmland and Heath Mosaic	6a Whitehill to Liphook
9. Greensand Hills	9b Ludshott and Bramshott Commons	7 Greensand Hills	7a Ludshott and Bramshott Commons
10. Wooded Claylands	10a Havant Thicket and Southleigh Forest	8 Wooded Claylands	8a Havant Thicket and Southleigh Forest"

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