



East Hampshire Landscape Character Assessment

Landscape Character Type 2: Downland
Mosaic

East Hampshire District Council

Draft report

Prepared by LUC

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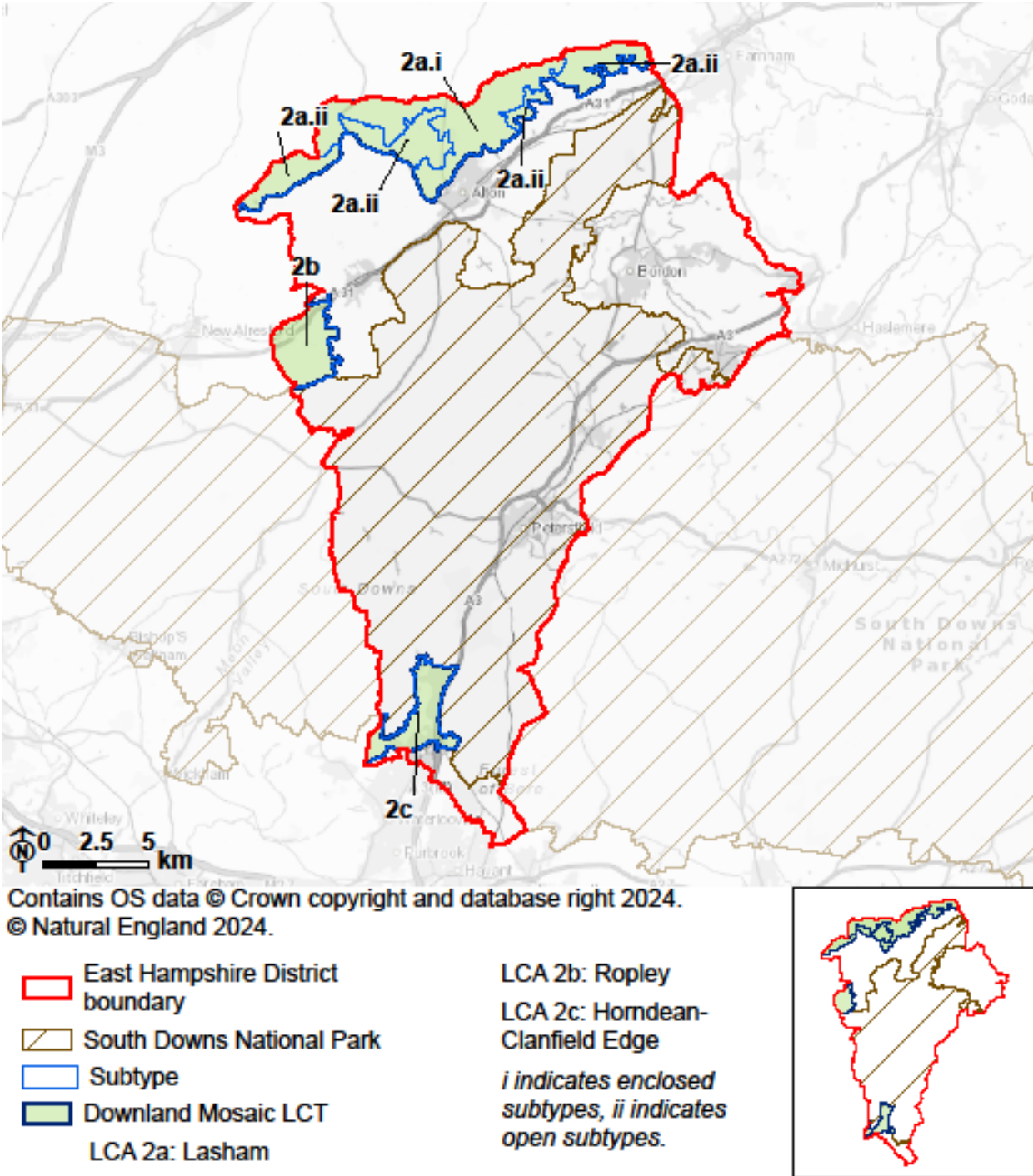
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Chapter 1

Introduction

Landscape Character Type 2: Downland Mosaic

Figure 1.1: Location of the Downland Mosaic LCA



Description

1.1 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 dip slope, 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

1.2 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

1.3 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.

1.4 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 1.2: Views featuring prominent pylons are contained by trees and woodland within the enclosed subtype



Figure 1.3: Open arable downland landform with fragmented hedgerows within the open subtype



Natural Influences

Physical Landscape

1.5 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.

1.6 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.

1.7 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

1.8 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.

1.9 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.

1.10 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

1.11 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.

1.12 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

1.13 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.

1.14 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.

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

Perceptual Influences

1.16 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.

1.17 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.

1.18 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 Cycle 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

1.19 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 1]**. 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 [\[See reference 2\]](#).

- 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 [\[See reference 3\]](#).
- 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 4].

Landscape Character Area 2b: Ropley

Description

Location and Boundaries

1.20 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 1.4: Undulating small arable field enclosed by mature hedgerows



Figure 1.5: Large undulating arable fields adjacent to the A31 north of Ropley enclosed by trees and woodland



Natural Influences

Physical Landscape

1.21 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.

1.22 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

1.23 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 SINC's 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

1.24 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.

1.25 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

1.26 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.

1.27 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.

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

Perceptual Influences

1.29 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.

1.30 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.

1.31 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.

1.32 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

1.33 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 5]. 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 6]. 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 7].
- 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 8].

Landscape Character Area 2c: Horndean – Clanfield Edge

Description

Location and Boundaries

1.34 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 1.6: Footpath route across gently sloping rough grassland enclosed by hedgerows and mature trees pylons on the horizon



Figure 1.7: Paddock with linear settlement in front of a treed skyline broken by distant pylons



Natural Influences

Physical Landscape

1.35 The LCA lies on the lowest elevations of the south facing chalk dip slope. 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.

1.36 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

1.37 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

1.38 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.

1.39 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

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

1.41 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.

1.42 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.

1.43 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.

1.44 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.

1.45 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

1.46 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.

1.47 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.

1.48 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.

1.49 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

1.50 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 9]**. 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 countryside) 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 10]. 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 11].
- 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 12]**.

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- 3 LUC (2019) East Hampshire Green Infrastructure Study. Available online: <https://www.easthants.gov.uk/planning-services/planning-policy/local-plan/emerging-local-plan/evidence-base/environment>
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