



East Hampshire Landscape Character Assessment

Landscape Character Type 4: Greensand
Terrace

East Hampshire District Council

Draft report

Prepared by LUC

June 2024

Version	Status	Prepared	Checked	Approved	Date
1	Draft	L Bushby	K Milner	M Grant	22.02.2024
2	Final	L Bushby	M Grant	K Davies	17.06.2024



Land Use Consultants Limited

Registered in England. Registered number 2549296. Registered office: 250 Waterloo Road, London SE1 8RD. Printed on 100% recycled paper

East Hampshire Landscape Character Assessment

Contents

Chapter 1	4
Introduction	

Landscape Character Type 4: Greensand Terrace	5
---	---

Table of Tables

No table of figures entries found.

Table of Figures

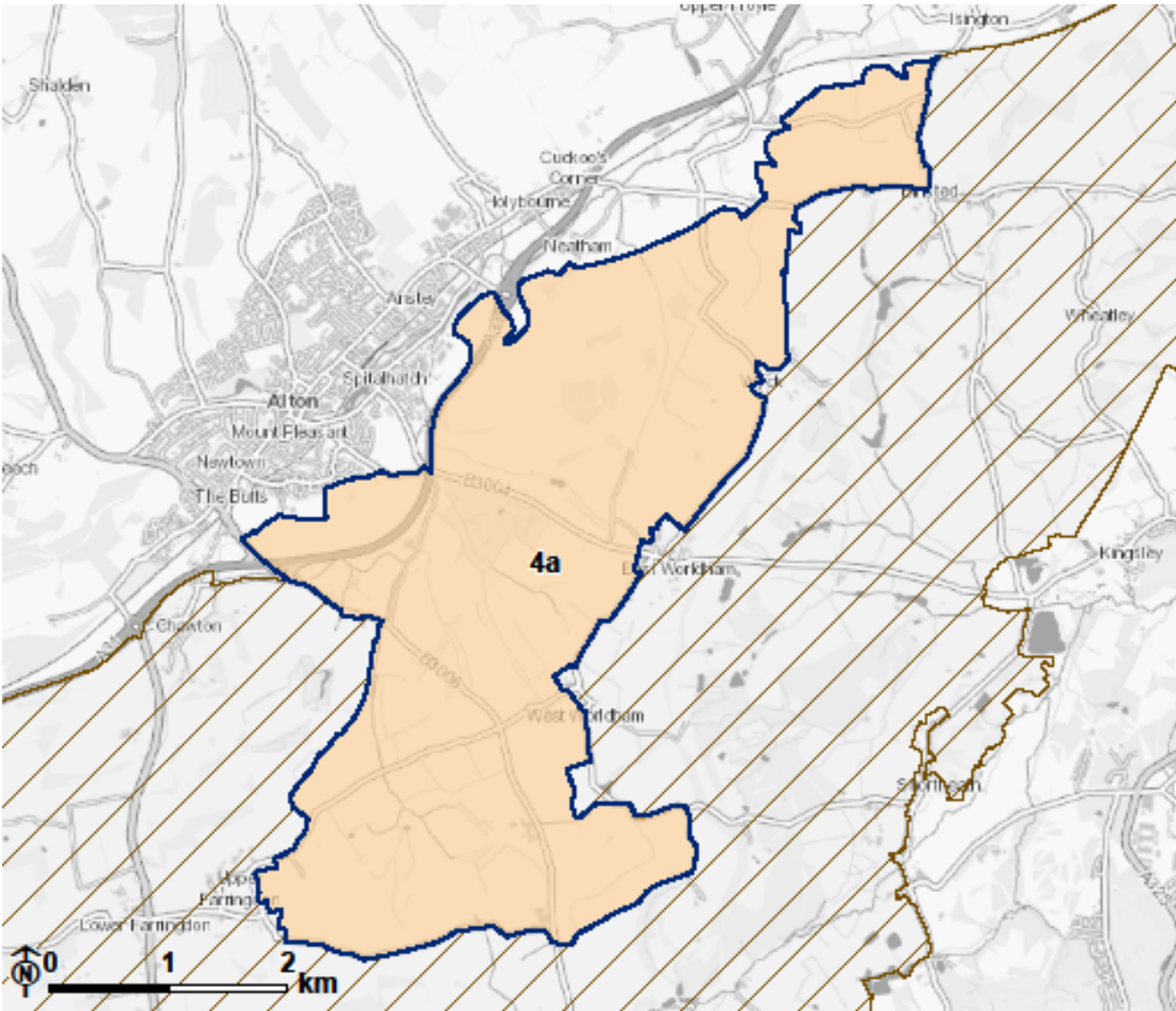
Figure 1.1: Location of the Greensand Terrace LCT	5
Figure 1.2: Gently sloping large arable field bound by hedgerows and trees with prominent pylons	10
Figure 1.3: Sunken rural lane enclosed by mature trees	11

Chapter 1




Introduction

Landscape Character Type 4: Greensand Terrace

Figure 1.1: Location of the Greensand Terrace LCT



Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2024.
© Natural England 2024.

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



Description

1.1 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

1.2 The Greensand Terrace LCT contains one LCA:

- LCA 4a: Worldham

Landscape Character Area 4a: Worldham

Description

Location and Boundaries

1.3 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 1.2: Gently sloping large arable field bound by hedgerows and trees with prominent pylons



Figure 1.3: Sunken rural lane enclosed by mature trees



Natural Influences

Physical Landscape

1.4 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.

1.5 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.

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

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

Biodiversity

1.8 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.

1.9 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

1.10 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.

1.11 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

1.12 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.

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

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

Perceptual Influences

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

1.16 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.

1.17 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

1.18 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 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 Green Infrastructure Strategy 2019 [See reference 2]. 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 3].
- 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 4].

Report produced by LUC

Report produced by LUC

Bristol

12th Floor, Colston Tower, Colston Street, Bristol BS1 4XE
0117 929 1997
bristol@landuse.co.uk

Cardiff

16A, 15th Floor, Brunel House, 2 Fitzalan Rd, Cardiff CF24 0EB
0292 032 9006
cardiff@landuse.co.uk

Edinburgh

Atholl Exchange, 6 Canning Street, Edinburgh EH3 8EG
0131 202 1616
edinburgh@landuse.co.uk

Glasgow

37 Otago Street, Glasgow G12 8JJ
0141 334 9595
glasgow@landuse.co.uk

London

250 Waterloo Road, London SE1 8RD
020 7383 5784
london@landuse.co.uk

Manchester

6th Floor, 55 King Street, Manchester M2 4LQ
0161 537 5960
manchester@landuse.co.uk

landuse.co.uk

Landscape Design / Strategic Planning & Assessment
Development Planning / Urban Design & Masterplanning
Environmental Impact Assessment / Landscape Planning & Assessment
Landscape Management / Ecology / Historic Environment / GIS & Visualisation

Report produced by LUC

- 1** Forestry Commission (2010) Guidance: Managing ancient and native woodland in England. Available online: [Managing ancient and native woodland in England - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/managing-ancient-and-native-woodland-in-england) (Accessed 05.06.2024)
- 2** 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>
- 3** East Hampshire District Council (2021) Biodiversity and Planning Guidance. Available online: <https://www.easthants.gov.uk/media/6296/download?inline> (Accessed 22.03.2024)
- 4** South Downs National Park Authority (2021) Dark Skies Technical Advice Note (TAN) Version 2. Available online: [DNS-TAN-2021-Main-Document-External-Lighting.pdf \(southdowns.gov.uk\)](https://www.southdowns.gov.uk/media/6296/download?inline) (Accessed 22.03.2024)