

**Rother District Council**

**Development and Site Allocations Local Plan**

**Landscape Assessment of Wakeham's Farm, Fairlight Cove**

**May 2018**

**Environmental Team**

**Communities, Economy and Transport**

**East Sussex County Council**

**St Anne's Crescent**

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**East Sussex**

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## **1.0 Introduction**

### **1.1 Study Aims**

**1.1.1** The Landscape Group of East Sussex County Council was commissioned in May 2018 by Rother District Council to carry out a landscape assessment of Wakeham's Farm, as specified in the project brief (Appendix 1).

**1.1.2** The aim of the study is to define the relative capacity of the landscape of the site area to accommodate varying scales of development. The assessment will have regard to the scope for mitigation of potential development without detracting from the existing intrinsic character of the landscape.

**1.1.3** The outcome will be an analysis of the baseline characteristics of the site in the context of the East Sussex County Council Landscape Assessment (2016). As the site is within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty the assessment will have regard to the High Weald AONB Management Plan 2014 -19.

**1.1.4** The assessment set out in this report identifies the indicative capacity of the site area to accommodate housing development. No assessment of the landscape impacts of specific development proposals has been undertaken as part of this study.

**1.1.5** To inform the assessment the study includes:

- a) Detailed analysis of the landscape character and visual baseline of the site and surrounding area.
- b) An assessment of the landscape sensitivity and capacity of the area to accommodate change.
- c) Opportunities will be identified for mitigation which would provide landscape enhancement.

### **1.2 Landscape Policy Context**

**1.2.1** Paragraph 17, Core Planning Principles of the NPPF states that planning should take account of the different roles and character of different areas, promoting the vitality of our main urban areas, protecting the Green Belts around them, recognising the intrinsic beauty and character of the countryside and supporting thriving rural communities.

**1.2.2** Section 11 of the NPPF addresses the conservation and enhancement of the natural environment. The policies in this section require development to be sustainable as well as contribute to and enhance the natural environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes (paragraph 109).

**1.2.3** Section 7 of the NPPF addresses the issue of good design. Paragraphs 56- 68 require that planning policies and decisions should aim to ensure that developments create **a strong sense of place and add to the quality of an area**. Developments are required to respect local character and materials in both built form and open space detailing.

**1.2.4** The Rother District Council Core Strategy (adopted 2014) sets out the Council's long-term spatial vision and policies to deliver that vision. Chapter 5 presents a "Vision

for Rother in 2028” which is translated into 12 Strategic Objectives in Chapter 6. One of the Strategic Objectives relates specifically to the environment of the District:

*“To maintain the high quality and improve the long term stewardship, of the natural and built environment, with full regard to potential future consequences of climate change.”*

1.2.5 Chapter 7 of the Core Strategy sets out the overall spatial strategy for the District. Policy OSS3 lists the factors which sites and/ or proposals for development will be considered in the context of. These include: *(i) the spatial strategy for the particular settlement or area and its distinct character; and (vi) the character and qualities of the landscape.*

1.2.6 Chapter 12 of the Core Strategy relates to the rural areas, i.e. those parts of the district that lie beyond the three main towns of Bexhill, Battle and Rye. 12 rural areas objectives are identified which relate to matters including: *(ii) the need to recognise the individual distinctiveness of villages; (viii) to protect the open countryside and retain its intrinsic rural character; and (ix) to respect and conserve the historic landscape mosaic, particularly in the High Weald AONB.* These are translated into policies including RA1 (Villages) and RA2 (General Strategy for the Countryside).

1.2.7 The specific “environment” strategic objective is amplified in chapter 17 of the Core Strategy, which sets out more detailed environment objectives including: *(i) To conserve, manage and, where appropriate enhance, the high quality landscape resources, including the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the historic built environment; and (iii) to place strong emphasis on design quality in all development.* The resulting policies are EN1, which seeks the protection, and wherever possible enhancement, of the district’s nationally designated and locally distinctive landscapes and landscape features (setting out 8 such landscapes/ features, including the HWAONB, the visual character of settlements, settlement edges and their rural fringes); and Policy EN3, which requires development to be of a high design quality, contribute positively to the character of the site and surroundings and demonstrate robust design solutions tested against identified key design principles.

## **2.0 Methodology for Assessment**

### **2.1 Existing Guidance**

2.1.1 The methodology in this report has used guidance provided by *Guidance for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment* (GLVIA) published by the Institute of Environmental Assessment and the Landscape Institute (Third Edition 2013). Detailed guidance for undertaking landscape character assessments to inform planning policy and decisions is also provided in the *Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland* published jointly by the Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage (2002). This assessment will make particular reference to: *Topic Paper 6 : Techniques and Criteria for Judging Sensitivity and Capacity* (Natural England 2002).

### **2.2 Methodology for Landscape Character Assessment**

2.2.1 The Assessment involves an appraisal of the landscape character of the site area in relation to the character of the surrounding area.

2.2.2 Desktop and field surveys have been undertaken to identify the character of the defined study areas.

2.2.3 The landscape character of the area has been assessed according to existing guidance for character assessment. Published assessments are available for Rother District at the regional and county levels. The assessment has taken in to consideration the existing assessments and identifies the character of the site area at the local level.

2.2.4 The following strategies have been considered in defining the landscape character of the various study areas:

- National Character Area Profiles (Natural England 2014)
- East Sussex County Council Landscape Character Assessment, (*East Sussex County Council 2016*).
- High Weald AONB Management Plan 2014-2019, *The High Weald Joint Area Committee*.

2.2.5 The landscape character of the site and surrounding area has been divided into local character areas based on the site assessment findings.

### 2.3 Definition of Key Terms

2.3.1 The landscape is a combination of both cultural and physical characteristics and components, which give rise to patterns that are distinctive to particular localities and help to define a sense of place. The landscape is not therefore simply a visual phenomenon but relies upon other influences including topography, land use, land management, ecology, and cultural associations. The key terms which are used to describe these different elements of the landscape assessment are listed and defined in Appendix 5: Glossary of Key Terms and Acronyms.

### 2.4 The Study Area

2.4.1 The baseline Map 1, indicates the boundaries of the area of study which is based on the extent of the area from which the site under consideration could potentially be seen allowing a radius of up to 2km distance. This map includes the broader landscape, heritage and habitat designations for the area.

### 2.5 Desk top Study

2.5.1 The information obtained from the field survey exercise has been supplemented by a desk top study to map existing designations relating to historical, archaeological, biodiversity or other cultural interest.

2.5.2 Other factors which have been considered as part of the landscape character assessment are local cultural considerations and sense of place.

### 2.6 Field Survey

2.6.1 Field surveys have been carried out to identify the landscape character of the site and surrounding area. The distinct local character areas which have been identified are indicated on Map3.

2.6.2 The individual character of these areas is described using the survey sheets contained within Appendix 4.

2.6.3 Representative photographs were taken from key public viewpoints around the site boundaries and from more distant public viewpoints in the local landscape. These are reproduced as Figures 1-9.

## 2.7 Criteria Based Sensitivity Assessment

2.7.3 The landscape character and visual sensitivity of the site and surrounding area is assessed with reference to the following six evaluation criteria, which are set out in Appendix 3, Table 1: Landscape and Visual Sensitivity Assessment Criteria.

- Physical character
- Settlement setting form and edge
- Natural character
- Visual character
- Perceptual experience and qualities
- Historic character

2.7.4 The assessment of landscape and visual sensitivity makes reference to environmental designations and constraints. These may not directly affect landscape character and visual amenity but they do often contribute to the sensitivity and intrinsic value of the landscape.

2.7.5 The site and study area lie within High Weald AONB. The HW AONB Management Plan identifies key components of 'natural beauty' which define the unique character of the AONB (Appendix 6). The criteria assessment takes into account the key components which may be found within or adjacent to the site.

## 2.8 Landscape and Visual Sensitivity Judgements

2.8.1 The sensitivity of the study area and the scope for mitigation measures has been assessed in accordance with *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment*, Third Edition, 2013 and *Landscape Assessment Guidance – Countryside Agency (Topic Paper 6, Techniques and Criteria for Judging Capacity and Sensitivity)*.

2.8.2 Landscape character sensitivity is based on judgements about sensitivity of the identified criteria most likely to be affected. This identifies the capacity of the landscape to accommodate a specific type of change.

2.8.3 Other factors which have been taken in to account in assessing the sensitivity of the landscape resource are existing trends for change in the landscape which may be due to natural process or human activities. It should be noted that strong landscape character could tend to be more able to accept change as it is more robust. An area of weak landscape character could tend to be more vulnerable to change.

2.8.4 The visual sensitivity of the landscape has been recorded for the site and surrounding area. Key views and viewpoints have been identified and focal features

which enhance or detract from the view are noted. The intervisibility of the area with surrounding areas has been recorded as have distant views into and out of the area. Key visual receptors with views across the area are recorded.

**Table 2: Criteria for Landscape and Visual Sensitivity Rating.**

Sensitivity	Definition
High	The landscape area has many unique/ rare characteristics that are distinctive with considerable time depth (the site is of ancient origin with many features of historic interest) with notable features. Distinct and unique sense of place. The area is visible from a wide area due to elevated or sloping topography on site or intervisibility from surrounding areas and limited enclosure.
Medium - high	The area would be highly sensitive to change from the type of development being considered.
Medium	The landscape area has some distinctive characteristics and valued qualities with some historic features that provide evidence of time /depth. The area has some characteristics which engender a sense of place. The area has moderate visibility with some views in from surrounding areas and intermittent enclosure by topography or vegetation.
Medium - low	Some sensitivity to the type of development being considered.
Low	The landscape area has few distinctive characteristics or features. There is little evidence of features that provide time/depth. The area has few characteristics to engender sense of place. The area has low visibility due to enclosure by landscape, buildings or vegetation. The site is of low sensitivity to the type of development being considered.

## 2.9 Landscape Value

2.9.1 East Sussex has a rich resource of valued landscapes. The importance of the landscape is recognized in national terms in that the northern and much of the eastern part of the county is designated as the High Weald AONB. Most of the land area of Rother District is within the High Weald AONB. Rother District consists almost entirely of varied, attractive and valued landscape and many areas are the subject of nature conservation and historic designations.

2.9.2 A landscape may be valued by different users for a variety of reasons recognizing perceptual aspects such as scenic beauty, tranquility, remoteness, special cultural associations, other conservation or specialist interest.

2.9.3 Table 3 below sets out the criteria for assessing the relative value of different areas of landscape. Observation of these criteria allows a score to be made ranging between Very High through High, Medium and Low value.

**Table 3: Landscape Value Evaluation Criteria**

Value	Typical Criteria	Scale of Significance	Typical Examples/Features
<b>Very High</b>	Very attractive and rare Exceptional landscape quality	International or National	World Heritage Site, National Park, AONB or key elements/features within them. Relatively most tranquil area (CPRE) Accessible wildlife areas of international or national value. Providing setting for internationally valued buildings or cultural features.
<b>High</b>	Very attractive or attractive scenic quality and in part rare High / good landscape quality.	National, Regional, District or Local	National Park, AONB, Areas of Great / Special Landscape Value, Greenbelt (or similar designation) or key elements within them. Accessible wildlife areas of national value. Providing setting for Listed Buildings or nationally important cultural features.
<b>Medium</b>	Typical and commonplace or in part unusual Good / Ordinary landscape quality	Regional, District or Local	Generally undesignated but value expressed through local cultural associations or through demonstrable use. Accessible wildlife areas of local value.
<b>Low</b>	Monotonous, degraded or damaged; Ordinary/ Poor landscape quality.	District or Local	Certain individual landscape elements or features may be worthy of conservation and landscape would benefit from restoration or enhancement.

## 2.10 Landscape Capacity

2.10.1 The following is a definition of landscape capacity taken from the Countryside Agency Guidance:

“Landscape capacity refers to the degree to which a particular landscape type or area is able to accommodate change without significant effects on its character, or overall change of landscape character type. Capacity is likely to vary according to the type and

nature of change being proposed." Further to this: "Capacity is all a question of the interaction between the sensitivity of the landscape, the type and amount of change, and the way that the landscape is valued."

2.10.2 The above quotes are taken from *Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland, Topic Paper 6: Techniques and Criteria for Judging Capacity and Sensitivity*, Countryside Agency (2002).

**In summary, Landscape Character Sensitivity + Visual Sensitivity + Landscape Value = Landscape Capacity**

**Table 4: Combining Landscape Character and Visual Sensitivity to give overall Landscape Sensitivity**

Landscape Character Sensitivity	High	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH
	Medium	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	HIGH
	Low	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
		Low	Medium	High
Visual Sensitivity				

**Table 5: Combining Landscape Sensitivity and Landscape Value to give Capacity.**

Landscape Sensitivity	High	MEDIUM	LOW	NONE
	Medium	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	LOW - NONE
	Low	HIGH	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
		Low	Medium	High
Landscape Value				

2.10.3 As advised in Topic Paper 6, the combined assessments of landscape value and sensitivity have been used to make an informed judgement about the overall capacity of the landscape to accept change. These assessments are arranged in a table or matrix to provide a profile of each identified landscape character area (Table 6).

2.10.4 For the purposes of this study a gradation of capacity for identified character areas is based on high, moderate, low or no capacity. This represents the capacity of a particular area to absorb the proposed type of development without significant adverse effects.

2.10.5 Using the above formulas an overall assessment has been made for each individual character sub area with regard to the capacity to accept the type of change being considered. This judgement is made according to the combination of criteria that contribute to a particular area of landscape. The capacity of an area to accept change is related to the potential of the area to accommodate development in a particular location without detracting from the overall character and visual amenity of that landscape. The capacity evaluation for each character area does not assume that this is the capacity across the entire character sub area.

2.10.6 In this context the capacity score is not a reflection of the scale of potential development in each area, but an indication whether or not any would be acceptable.

## 2.11 Mitigation and Management

2.11.1 The potential to mitigate change in a particular landscape will depend on the factors which determine the character of the landscape.

2.11.2 This assessment of potential for landscape mitigation is based on the following set of factors as follows:

- The need to enhance the key landscape features at a local scale.
- The need to restore lost landscape features such as hedges and woods.
- The need to restore degraded landscape.
- The need to reduce the impact of urban development on the countryside.
- Whether mitigation would detract from the sense of place.
- Whether the site is already well contained and not visible in the wider landscape.

2.11.3 Outline mitigation should include:

- Retention and management of existing significant landscape features.
- New woodland planting to link with existing
- New tree belts to link with existing
- Creation of multifunctional green networks as planting, open space or recreational corridors.

2.11.4 The comprehensive landscape mitigation would need to be specified in detailed development briefs.

2.11.5 The condition of the landscape will be determined by the degree to which it is soundly managed according to the land use.

### **3.0 General Character Context**

#### **3.1 Regional Landscape Character Context**

3.1.1 Natural England, National Character Area Profiles: The study area falls within the regional landscape character area 122 High Weald.

3.1.2 A summary of the key characteristics for the High Weald, which are relevant to the study area are as follows:

- Small and medium-sized irregularly shaped fields enclosed by network of hedgerows and wooded shaws, predominantly of medieval origin and managed historically as a mosaic of small agricultural holdings typically used for livestock grazing.
- A predominantly grassland agricultural landscape grazed mainly with sheep and some cattle.
- a well wooded landscape rising above the Low Weald;
- distinctive and scattered sandstone outcrops;
- main roads and settlements are sited along prominent ridges-lines with a dense network of small winding lanes linking scattered villages, hamlets and farms;
- the legacy of the early iron industry has left extensive areas of coppice woodland and hammer ponds;
- high forest, small woods and copses, and a network of hedges, shaws link small irregular fields created from cleared woodland.
- flower rich meadows bordered by species rich hedgerows;
- heavy clay soils have reduced the impact of agricultural change in the area and it is still, in the main a quiet pastoral landscape with mixed farming predominating;
- the cultivation of fruit and hops, together with the associated distinctive oast houses; and
- distinctive red tile, brick, local stone and timber building materials, often including hung tiles and white weatherboarding are characteristic.
- recent ‘suburbanization’ of farmstead buildings is eroding the distinctive local style in many places.

#### **3.2 County Landscape Character Area Context**

##### **3.2.1 High Wealden Coast (Appendix 2)**

This stretch of coast lies between the eastern edge of Hastings and Pett Levels. The Heathfield-Battle-Hastings ridge reaches the sea to form an invigorating coastline of highly distinctive character. Terraced, crumbling cliffs of soft sandstone are separated by deep ghylls (here called ‘glens’) which fall steeply to the sea, ending in cliffs and waterfalls. The glens contain wind-sculpted woods. Otherwise scrubby heathland is typical, grading inland to a patchwork of small fields, woodland and wind-bent trees. The farmland behind the Country Park has been fragmented by piecemeal removal and decay of structural elements in the landscape such as hedgerows. A specific action priority which could have an influence on the type and design of potential development

is to increase tree cover within and on the edges of Fairlight Cove and other developed areas. To mitigate potential further development consideration should be given to the need to conserve and strengthen the pattern of hedges, copses and shaws in the inland areas. Further development in the area would impact on the need to consider traffic management and calming measures on the lanes, to reduce conflict with walkers, cyclists and riders and enhance remoteness.

### 3.2.2 Key Landscape Characteristics relevant to the study area:

- The Hastings to Battle Ridge reaches the sea to form a distinctly unique coastline.
- Terraced, crumbling cliffs of soft pink sandstone where the geology of the High Weald meets the sea.
- Hastings Country Park with internationally important wildlife designations.
- Scrubby heathland and wind sculpted trees growing on the coastal terraces of slumped cliffs.
- Wind swept cliff top fields bounded by wind sculpted hedges and tree belts.
- On the sheltered north side of the main ridge the patchwork of fields and woods is typical of the High Weald landscape.
- The urban fringes of Hastings, including the dominating masts at North Seat, form the western boundary to the area.
- The main ridge running inland between Batchelor's Bump and Cliff End offers long views across the Brede Valley to the north and Winchelsea, Rye, Dungeness, and on a clear day the coast of France.
- The A259 between Hastings and Rye follows the ridge and forms the boundary on the North West side of the area. Pett Road follows the continuation of the ridge to Cliff End.
- The windy and often narrow Fairlight Road crosses the area on the central ridge.
- Winding and very narrow sunken country lanes with steep gradients run between the ridge top roads.
- Virtually continuous ribbon development along Pett Road from Hastings to Cliff End.
- The historic ridge top villages of Pett and Fairlight, the latter with a prominent church tower.
- The relatively modern suburban settlement at Fairlight Cove where properties close to the cliff edge have subsided into the sea.
- Fairlight church, a landmark for miles around.

### 3.3 Character of the Study Area

3.3.1 The coastal settlements at Fairlight Cove, Cliff End and Winchelsea Beach have expanded in more recent years because of their desirable coastal locations. The growth of larger villages, particularly sizeable growth, needs to be carefully assessed to ensure it does not detract from the essentially rural character of the High Weald. The potential impact of expansion in villages close to the edges of or straddling the designated area should also be carefully considered for potential impacts this could have on the High Weald countryside.

3.3.2 The village of Fairlight Cove and its surroundings are identified on Map 2, the landscape constraints and character map for Fairlight Cove. This is taken from the Rother DC LDF Core Strategy Market Towns and Villages Landscape Assessment (2009).

3.3.3 The site sits within the local character area F1 which is described as follows:

*'This is countryside which falls away from the cliff top development (of Fairlight Cove). There are some larger fields where hedgerows have been removed. The area is mainly pasture with some arable farming. There are scattered hedgerows and tree belts. The woodlands and shaws provide enclosure. The area has a strong sense of place. The settlement is of modern development spreading form the main coastal historic route ways towards the cliff top.'*

3.3.4 In the assessment area F1 was considered to be of **Good** quality, of **High** landscape value with **High** landscape character and visual sensitivity. In this context the character area was considered to have a **low** capacity for development. The potential for mitigation of development was considered to be low to moderate. This was based on the fact that there would be some scope to strengthen landscape structure with new tree belts and hedges. For the purpose of this study a more detailed analysis of the character and capacity of the landscape of the eastern part of F1 has been undertaken. The findings of this study are outlined below.

## **4.0 Landscape and Visual Assessment**

### **4.1 Landscape sensitivity assessment**

4.1.1 The site and immediate surrounding area can be subdivided into 5 local character areas based on landscape character and visual characteristics; these are identified on Map 3. The detailed descriptions of these are provided in the site assessment sheets in Appendix 4. The landscape and visual sensitivity of these distinct areas is assessed against the 6 criteria identified in Table 1 (Appendix 3).

### **4.2 Landscape Value assessment**

4.2.1 The entire site area should be considered valued landscape as it is within the AONB designation. Within this different degrees of value can be identified according to factors which influence the area, for example:

- Heritage and wildlife designations (Ancient monuments, Local Wildlife Sites).
- The presence of key components of the AONB landscape such as ancient field patterns, ghyll streams or rock outcrops.
- Local Green Space, as designated in a made Neighbourhood Plan.
- Public open space and access areas e.g. Millennium Green, Pocket Park, Local Nature Reserve, SANGS.

4.2.2 Negative factors can detract from the intrinsic value and in particular the presence of suburban influences. This may be in the form of back garden fences, overhead lines and phone masts, road associated influences including traffic.

### 4.3 Landscape Capacity Assessment

**Table 6: Landscape Capacity Assessment by character area**

Character Area	Value	Character Sensitivity	Visual Sensitivity	Capacity
<b>A</b>	High	Medium -High	Medium -High	Low - None
<b>B1</b>	Medium - High	Low to Medium	Low to Medium	Medium
<b>B2</b>	High	Medium -High	High	Low - None
<b>C</b>	Medium - High	Medium -High	Medium	Low
<b>D</b>	Medium	Low - Medium	Medium - High	Medium
<b>E</b>	High	High	High	None

4.3.1 With reference to the site area of Wakehams Farm under consideration Sub Area B1 is assessed as having **low to medium** landscape and visual sensitivity and **medium to high** value. This sub area is identified as having a weak landscape framework where the quality and value of the AONB landscape is affected by the proximity and nature of the urban area.

4.3.2 The above analysis would imply that there would be capacity for some well-designed, high quality development of an appropriate density and scale within the character sub area B1. This sub area does not have strong evidence of the key components of natural beauty identified in the High Weald AONB Management Plan. The fieldscape is relatively modern and there would be scope to strengthen this with a new tree belt on the eastern field boundary.

4.3.3 The sub area B2 is assessed as having **medium to high landscape** sensitivity and **high** visual sensitivity. The distinctive topography and open character of the site would make it more sensitive to development than sub area B1. The area has **high** value as AONB landscape with only minor negative influences due to the proximity of the built up area of Fairlight Cove. This area has been affected by some loss of landscape structure due to intensification of agriculture. As this landscape is historically open in character it would not be appropriate to introduce large scale woodland to screen or mitigate any proposed development. Proposals for landscape mitigation would not be effective in screening potential development from the very sensitive elevated viewpoints in the surrounding AONB.

4.3.4 Area B2 would be more sensitive to the introduction of housing development than the area of B1. Area B2 is visually and physically contiguous with sensitive parts of the surrounding AONB countryside. There would be little scope to provide suitable mitigation for development in this area due to the intrinsic landscape character and

visual setting. The historic character is of an open landscape with large fields and this is evident on the First Edition OS mapping, Map 4. Sub area B2 does have a more obvious relationship with the wider High Weald AONB than area B1 as there is a strong visual relationship with this area and the surrounding AONB countryside. The wooded ghyll stream to the south of the site is a key component the character of which could be affected if this part of the site were to be developed.

4.3.5 The access to the area would need to arise from Pett Level Road and pass through sub area B2. This could be integrated with the existing landscape by tree planting on both sides as an avenue. This would also provide a screen to the properties along Pett Level Road which are currently visible from the key viewpoints as a hard edge to the countryside. The proposed tree belt along the access road would merge with the existing trees on the eastern boundary of area B1 to provide a continuous green corridor.

## 5.0 Mitigation

5.1 The character of the sub area B1 landscape would have potential for landscape enhancement. Any proposed development would need to achieve an enhancement to the AONB landscape in order to comply with national and local planning policies. The following mitigation measures would ensure a successfully integrated development could be achieved:

- a) The treed hedgerow which clearly defines and separates Area B1 from Area B2 could be reinforced with native woodland planting of trees and understory shrubs. This would clearly define the new village edge and create a defensible built up area boundary. This would not detract from the character of the local area and it would reinforce the transition from built up area to countryside.
- b) A landscape buffer should be provided between the ghyll stream on the southern boundary of the site and any potential development. This should be open in character and could incorporate public open space in association with SUDS features
- c) A density of development which is in keeping with the existing built up areas and similar sized gardens. High quality design for buildings, access roads and open spaces which would reflect the High Weald local vernacular.
- d) An access arising from Pett Level Road which would not detract from the quality or character of the High Weald Landscape. This would need to be as short as possible depending on highway safety requirements for the junction with Pett Level Road.
- e) An avenue of tree planting along both sides of the site access road.
- f) Tree planting in public areas within the development to break up the overall mass of the development.

## 6.0 Conclusions

6.1 The entire character area B should be considered to be valued landscape in the context of the NPPF as it is within the High Weald AONB designation. The site area can however be subdivided into two distinct character areas. The area adjacent to the built up area of Fairlight Cove

(sub area B 1) is visually enclosed and the character and tranquility of this area is influenced by the surrounding houses. There would be scope to enhance the relationship of the built up area with the AONB countryside in this location with some sensitively designed development.

6.2 The wider part of the sub area B2 is historically open in character and has a strong visual and physical relationship with the surrounding AONB countryside. The views across this area from sensitive cliff top areas of National Trust land and the Hastings Country Park are of particular significance. There would be little scope for development within this area and required mitigation would not protect and enhance the AONB landscape as extensive woodland planting would not be in character.

# Appendix 1

## Consultancy Brief – April 2018

### ROOTHER DISTRICT COUNCIL DEVELOPMENT & SITE ALLOCATIONS LOCAL PLAN

#### LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT OF WAKEHAM'S FARM, FAIRLIGHT COVE

##### Purpose of the Assessment

1. Specialist advice is sought on the landscape character and quality, and capacity to absorb development, of an identified tract of land, at Wakeham's Farm, between Battery Hill and Fairlight Cove, as shown on the attached plan.
2. A focused Landscape Character Assessment should advise on the potential for development within this area, in landscape terms. This will contribute significantly to an overall planning assessment of the potential to meet the housing target for Fairlight Cove set by the Local Plan Core Strategy and of the potential identification of residential site allocation(s) in the forthcoming Submission version of the Development and Site Allocations Local Plan (the DaSA).

##### Background

3. The Rother Local Plan Core Strategy (adopted September 2014) sets out the overarching development strategy and strategic policies for the District. It covers the period 2011-2028 and may be regarded as "Part 1" of the Council's Local Plan. It sets targets for the numbers of additional homes and business floorspace over the plan period but does not allocate sites for development.
4. The function of the Development and Site Allocations Local Plan (the "DaSA") is to set out development policies and site allocations; it will form "Part 2" of the Local Plan. The Options and Preferred Options version of the DaSA was published for public consultation in December 2016. It covers Bexhill and those villages that are not covered by on-going Neighbourhood Plans. Site allocations proposed in the DaSA, together with those within Neighbourhood Plans, should meet the development requirements of the Core Strategy.
5. At the time the draft DaSA was published, a Neighbourhood Plan was in preparation for Fairlight. However, in February 2018 the Parish Council decided to abandon it. As a result of this, it is now necessary for the District Council to consider the identification of site allocation(s) within Fairlight. It is noted that the Core Strategy requirement from large sites (6+ dwellings) is 37 dwellings<sup>1</sup>. A recent planning permission for 16 dwellings has reduced this requirement to 21 dwellings.
6. Fairlight Cove is situated on the coast approximately 5 miles north-east of Hastings. It is characterised by mostly 20<sup>th</sup> Century bungalow developments. The surrounding countryside is generally wooded and undulating, lying within the High Weald AONB, although most of the developed areas of Fairlight and Fairlight Cove are excluded. Elevated land to the north of Fairlight Cove offers panoramic views. At the coast, wooded valleys and gorse heath tumble down to sandstone cliffs.

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<sup>1</sup> DaSA page 124

7. The current Local Plan development boundary follows the cliff edge and Hastings Cliffs to Pett Beach Site of Special Scientific Interest to the south and is also well contained to the north-west by Battery Hill. To the west, outward growth is constrained by undulating countryside and the Strategic Gap between Fairlight and Hastings. It should be noted that the development boundary excludes the smaller, linked, village of Fairlight, to the north-west of Fairlight Cove, which has a much more limited range of services than Fairlight Cove. The DaSA proposes to extend the existing Strategic Gap to incorporate the village of Fairlight.<sup>2</sup>

### **Existing Landscape Assessments**

8. The landscape character of the whole of the District is assessed within the „East Sussex Landscape Character Assessment“ (East Sussex County Council, updated 2016), as part of which 14 local landscape character areas are identified as wholly or partly in Rother district. Fairlight falls within the High Wealden Coast Landscape Character Area.
9. A Market Towns and Villages Landscape Assessment was completed by East Sussex County Council's Environmental Advice Team on behalf of the District Council in August 2009. This assessed the landscape character and quality, and capacity to absorb development, of areas around the market towns of Battle and Rye together with a broad range of villages in Rother District, including Fairlight Cove. The main objectives of this assessment were:
- To provide a comparative landscape assessment of areas adjacent to built-up areas of settlement to form a sound basis for considering the landscape setting and landscape capacity for potential scales of development at rural settlements to be put forward in the Core Strategy.
  - To provide a landscape critique of the Core Strategy's overall development strategy distribution options (excluding Bexhill and the Hastings fringes).
  - To provide contextual landscape appraisals for settlements that would assist in the consideration of potential site allocations.
10. In relation to Fairlight Cove, the Market Towns and Villages Landscape Assessment found that the countryside to the north and east of Fairlight would offer little capacity for future development as the open slopes of AONB countryside are subject to long views from the ridge to the north. There are some more enclosed areas of somewhat degraded countryside to the west of Fairlight and plots enclosed by gardens which may offer some capacity for infill development. These areas are constrained by the presence of ancient woodland and the Hastings Country Park. The Assessment found that the allocation for up to 35 dwellings, as was then proposed in the Draft Rural Settlements Study, could probably be accommodated without intrusion in to the AONB countryside.
11. It is expected that the site-specific Landscape Character Assessment for Fairlight Cove now requested will build on the work undertaken through the Market Towns and Villages Landscape Assessment, looking at the identified tract of land in a greater level of detail.

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<sup>2</sup> DaSA Policy DEN3, DaSA Figure 8.

## Potential Development Sites for Assessment

12. The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) 2013 Review considered 7 potential development sites in Fairlight Cove. Only one of these, Fairlight Gardens, was classified as “green”<sup>3</sup> and, as noted above, has since been subject to a planning application for 16 dwellings which has been delegated to approve<sup>4</sup>. Rejected sites include some a considerable distance from the village centre (FA1, FA2), some within the (extended) Strategic Gap (FC5, FC6 and FC7) and 2 infill/ redevelopment sites, both with access and tree constraints (FC3, FC4). One further site, FC2, was classified as “amber”, meaning it was considered suitable and developable, subject to more detailed investigations, including of some key factors.
13. Fairlight Parish Council undertook its own “call for sites” as part of its Neighbourhood Plan preparatory work in 2015. This resulted in the identification of only two additional sites, neither of which was considered worthy of further consideration. The Parish Council’s work also confirmed that a number of the sites previously considered in the SHLAA are not available for development.
14. The focus will therefore be on “amber” SHLAA site FC2 (Land east of Waites Lane, or “Wakehams Farm”), together with adjoining land in the same ownership (“the site”). The location and extent of the site is identified on the plan attached at Appendix 1. As it does not appear, at this stage, that there are any other developable and achievable sites within the village that offer a reasonable alternative to accommodating the necessary scale of housing development, the study is limited to this area.

## Scope and Methodology

15. The Assessment should be carried out in a rigorous manner, utilising a methodical approach in order to provide a comprehensive and consistent evidence base, in accordance with latest best practice guidance.
16. Landscape advice is sought on the ability of the site to accommodate varying scales of development. While the remaining housing target for the village is 21 dwellings, the landscape assessment should not necessarily be limited to considering the capacity of the site to accommodate a development of this scale. Rather, the study should objectively identify the landscape capacity for change. In this context, it is noted that the site is currently the subject of a pre-application proposal put forward by a developer for a significantly higher number of dwellings. (Please note that details of this are confidential at present).
17. To the extent that there are assessed to be discrete “landscape units” within the site, these should be identified and the landscape capacity of each unit assessed, as appropriate. The assessment should:
  - a) indicate the key defining characteristics - landform, topography, features, condition, views, boundaries
  - b) assess the landscape capacity and key sensitivities, including contribution to the character and setting of Fairlight Cove, with specific reference to the AONB
  - c) where appropriate, identify opportunities for both effective mitigation of landscape impacts and the potential to bring about landscape enhancements

<sup>3</sup> Suitable and developable, subject to more detailed investigations

<sup>4</sup> Planning application reference RR/2017/457/P, see RDC Planning Committee minutes 15<sup>th</sup> March 2018.

18. Subject to the findings of the Landscape Character Assessment and the planning appraisal, the Council may seek further advice in relation to a specific proposed allocation within the site (details yet to be determined). This second stage of work will be discussed after the initial work is complete and should not be included in a quotation for the work outlined in this Brief.

## **Output**

19. Two hard copies of the report that fulfils the requirements of the Brief are required, as well as one electronic version. The report should be suitably illustrated and include clear OS-based maps of each site. Maps should also be provided electronically in a GIS format that is compatible with the Council's GIS system (GGP). The District Council does have the facility to produce Maps in the correct format and if it is proposed to use this facility this should be noted in the fee proposal.

## **Programme**

20. The project should be carried out as soon as possible over Spring 2018. Key stages/dates for the work will be agreed between the consultant and the Council.
21. The completed report, data collected and analysis undertaken as part of the study will be the property of Rother District Council.

## **Submission**

22. A submission is invited for the above work. This should be received by 8<sup>th</sup> May 2018 by letter or email setting out:
  - A fixed fee for the work as set out in this brief
  - The name(s), qualifications and experience of the person(s) undertaking the work
  - Proposed programme of work and time allocated
23. Allowance should be made for a meeting to discuss the draft Report. The fixed fee will be inclusive of travel, subsistence and other overheads but exclusive of VAT.
24. It may be necessary for the Council to call upon the consultant to defend the assessment and its methodology at public examination. An hourly rate should be quoted for such services.

## **Working arrangements**

25. The work will be overseen by:

David Marlow  
Planning Policy Manager  
Rother District Council  
Town Hall  
Bexhill-on-Sea  
East Sussex  
TN39 3JX

Telephone: (01424) 787635  
Email: [david.marlow@rother.gov.uk](mailto:david.marlow@rother.gov.uk)

26. It is envisaged that much of the field work can be undertaken from publicly accessible land. In the unlikely event that the consultant needs to gain access to private land, the Council will exercise their powers under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning legislation. The consultant will obtain written consent from the council prior to entering the private land and will keep this ready for production upon demand. The consultant will be expected to give the occupier of the occupied land a minimum of 24 hours notice prior to entering.
27. The Consultant shall not subcontract the works or part of the works without prior written approval from the Contract Administrator.
28. The Consultant shall comply with all relevant statutory obligations, Health and Safety legislation and codes of conduct. Failure to do so will normally result in immediate termination of the contract.
29. The Consultant should acknowledge that the Council is the subject of the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR) and will be expected to pass any requests for information to the Council immediately they are received. Under no circumstances should the contractor respond directly to a request for Information unless expressly authorised to do so by the Council.
30. The Consultant shall maintain at his own cost a comprehensive or specific policy of insurance to cover professional indemnity and public liability.
31. In the unlikely event of intended termination of the contract, any notices of termination shall be in writing.

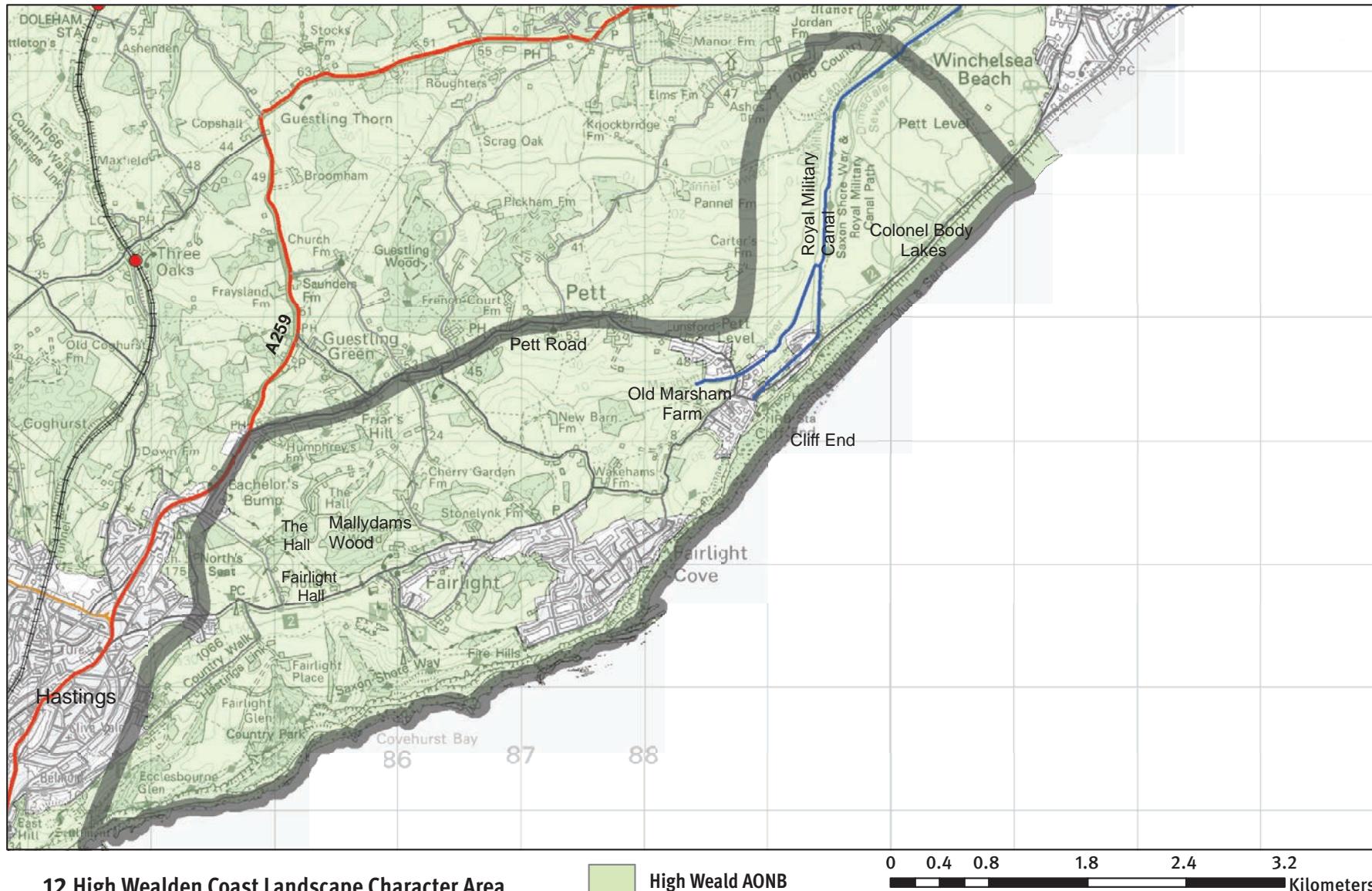
Termination by Employer: If the Consultant without reasonable cause makes default by failing to proceed diligently and in accordance with the agreed timetable with the work required, the Project Manager may give notice to the Consultant which specifies the default and requires it to be ended. If the default is not ended within 7 days of the receipt of the notice, the Employer may by further notice to the Consultant determine the employment of the Consultant under this Agreement.

Termination by Consultant: If the Employer makes default by failing to pay the due amount by the final date, interferes with the carrying out of the works or fails to comply with the requirements of any relevant Health and Safety regulations, then the Consultant may give notice to the Employer specifying the default. If the default is not ended in 7 days the Consultant may by further notice to the Employer, determine the employment of the Consultant under this Agreement.

Upon termination of the employment of the Consultant, they shall prepare an account setting out the value of work properly carried out and the costs of withdrawing from the study. Work carried out up until the termination shall be the property of Rother District Council and shall be handed over to the Council.

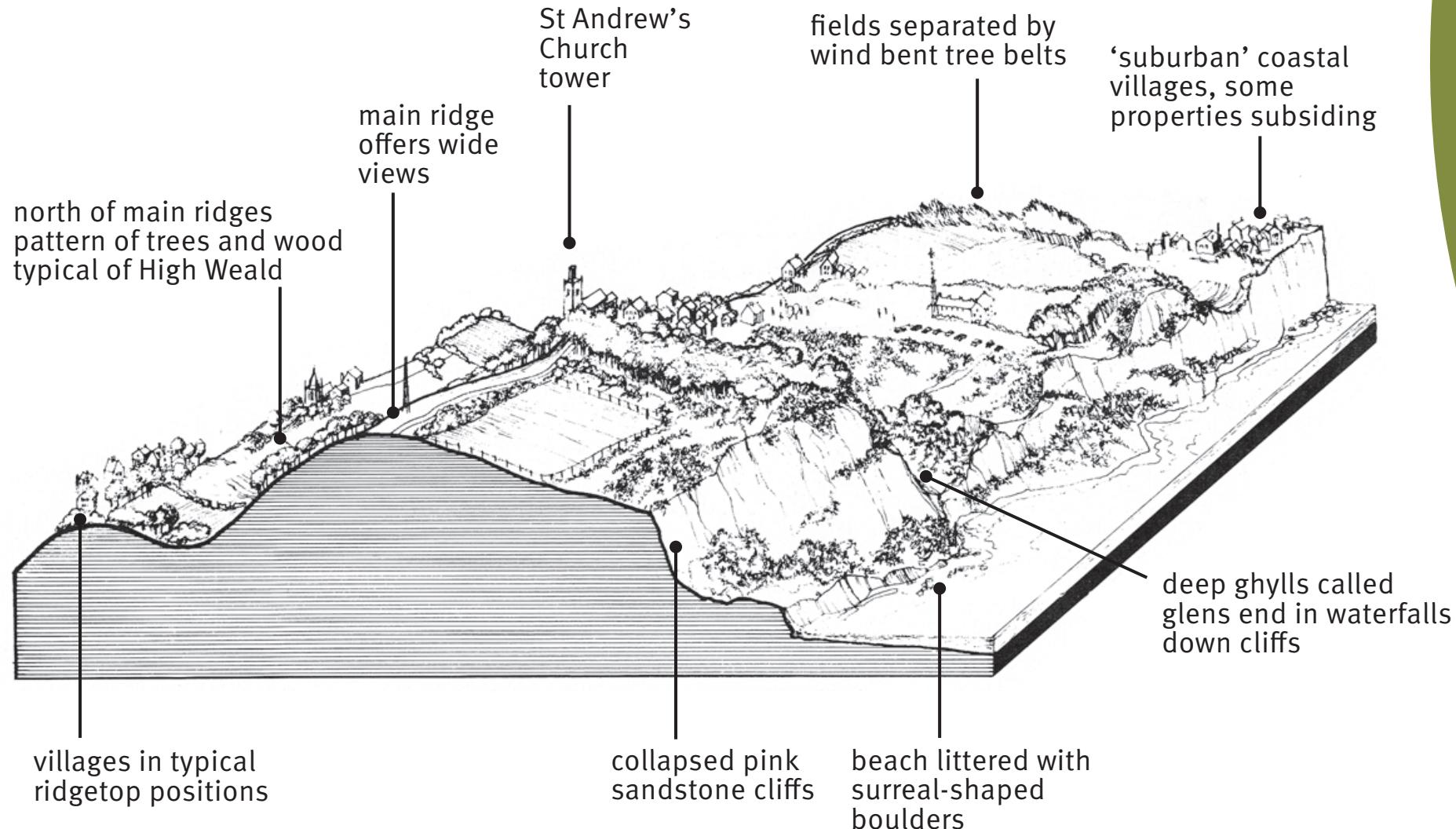
# High Wealden Coast

## Appendix 2



# High Wealden Coast

## Appendix 2



# High Wealden Coast

## Appendix 2

### Contents

- A. Landscape Description
- B. Landscape Evaluation
- C. Vision and Strategy
- D. Guidelines for Managing Change

### A Landscape Description

#### Key Landscape Characteristics

- The Hastings to Battle Ridge reaches the sea to form a distinctly unique coastline.
- Terraced, crumbling cliffs of soft pink sandstone where the geology of the High Weald meets the sea. Varying ages of cliff falls, some of which are still bare earth and others with established woodland.
- Hastings Country Park with internationally important wildlife designations.
- Deep ghylls, locally known as ‘glens’, which fall steeply to the sea and where the associated streams and springs form frequent muddy waterfalls.
- Scrubby heathland and wind sculpted trees growing on the coastal terraces of slumped cliffs.
- Two distinct glens in the cliffs:
  - o Fairlight Glen is deep and sheltered and supports woodland with oak trees up to 30 metres tall
  - o Ecclesbourne Glen has more scrubby vegetation and trees stunted by the prevailing wind.
- Wind swept cliff top fields bounded by wind sculpted hedges and tree belts.
- On the sheltered north side of the main ridge the patchwork of fields and woods is typical of the High Weald landscape.
- The urban fringes of Hastings, including the dominating masts at North Seat, form the western boundary to the area.
- The main ridge running inland between Batchelor’s Bump and Cliff End offers long views across the Brede Valley to the north and Winchelsea, Rye, Dungeness, and on a clear day the coast of France.
- The A259 between Hastings and Rye follows the ridge and forms the boundary on the North West side of the area. Pett Road follows the continuation of the ridge to Cliff End.
- The windy and often narrow Fairlight Road crosses the area on the central ridge.
- Winding and very narrow sunken country lanes with steep gradients run between the ridge top roads.
- Virtually continuous ribbon development along Pett Road from Hastings to Cliff End.
- The Royal Military Canal and associated Pett Levels.
- Colonel Body Memorial Lakes popular with wildfowl and bird watchers.
- The historic ridge top villages of Pett and Fairlight, the latter with a prominent church tower.
- The relatively modern suburban settlement at Fairlight Cove where properties close to the cliff edge have subsided into the sea.

# High Wealden Coast

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- The beach at the base of the cliffs which is difficult and hazardous to access due to continuing subsidence.
- Scattered historic farmsteads and interesting older country house estates at Fairlight Hall and The Hall.
- Scattered areas of semi-natural ancient woodland, the largest being Mallydams Wood.
- Traditional building materials are, as for most of the High Weald, red brick and tiles and, in this area, sandstone in conjunction with brick. White weatherboarding is also characteristic of the eastern High Weald and oak timber frames.
- The main amenity tree species in the area are oak, sweet chestnut, ash and sycamore. Coastal influences restrict species variety with much sycamore in coastal woods and some oak woods with sweet chestnut coppice inland.

### Cultural Interests

The cliff exposures are of international significance as the best place to examine the geology of the Weald.

Hastings Country Park is a Local Nature Reserve, Special Area of Conservation and Site of Special Scientific Interest. Access to the Country Park from Hastings is via East Hill, the site of an historic vanished settlement.

The RSPCA rescue centre at Mallydams Wood is a well-known rescue and training centre for wildlife and in particular sea birds and seals.

Smuggling originated in the area due to taxes and restrictions on the export of wool and other goods. The Sussex coast was ideally placed as drop off point for contraband and the Fairlight coast was known for this. Smugglers met at 'The Whippings', the high cliff near Ecclesbourne and 'The Marrow-bone Gap' near Fairlight and Dripping Well in Fairlight. Hastings Museum and Art Gallery hold a variety of prints illustrating these meeting places.

Fairlight Hall is a Victorian Gothic mansion designed by the architect of Hyde Park Gardens, John Crake. The mansion was once owned by wealthy philanthropic mill owner James Roberts and was the location for the 1949 film Fall of the House of Usher directed by George Ivan Barnett.

St Andrew's Church (built 1845) has a tall tower and beacon turret, and can be seen for some distance around. The church is one of three in the United Benefice of Fairlight, Guestling and Pett. Richard D'Oyly Carte, founder of the [Savoy Theatre](#), [Savoy Hotel](#), and [D'Oyly Carte Opera Company](#), which produced the [Gilbert and Sullivan](#) light operas, is buried in the churchyard. So also are Sir James Roberts of [Saltaire](#) and his wife.

# High Wealden Coast

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**Table 1 Key positive Landscape Attributes**

- The Hastings to Battle Ridge reaches the sea to form a distinctly unique coastline.
- Terraced, crumbling cliffs of soft pink sandstone where the geology of the High Weald meets the sea.
- Deep ghylls, locally known as ‘glens’, which fall steeply to the sea where the associated streams and springs form frequent muddy waterfalls.
- Two distinct glens in the cliffs:
  - Fairlight Glen is deep and sheltered and supports woodland with oak trees up to 30 metres tall
  - Ecclesbourne Glen has more scrubby vegetation and trees stunted by the prevailing wind.
- Wind swept cliff top fields bounded by wind sculpted hedges and tree belts.
- On the sheltered north side of the main ridge the patchwork of fields and woods is typical of the High Weald landscape.
- The main ridge running inland between Batchelor’s Bump and Cliff End offers long views across the Brede Valley to the north and Winchelsea, Rye, Dungeness, and the coast of France on a clear day.
- Winding and very narrow sunken country lanes with steep gradients run between the ridge top roads.
- The historic ridge top villages of Pett and Fairlight, the latter with a prominent church tower.
- Scattered historic farmsteads and interesting older country house estates at Fairlight Hall and The Hall.
- Scattered areas of semi-natural ancient woodland, the largest being Mallydams Wood.
- The Royal Military Canal and associated Pett Levels.
- Colonel Body Memorial Lakes popular with wildfowl and bird watchers.

### B Landscape Evaluation

**Table 2 Current Condition**

This is a largely unspoilt and tranquil rural landscape with few intrusive features. The landscape is in generally good condition and well managed as farmland with a strong historic structure. As with most of the High Weald landscape the historic field patterns of small fields and significant hedgerows remain intact. There has been some fragmentation of this by removal and decay of hedges around the urban fringes of Hastings and Fairlight Cove. The coastal areas are subject to natural change due to marine erosion.

### Forces for Change impacting on positive attributes

#### Past / Current forces for change

- Recreational pressure at Hastings Country Park is causing erosion of footpaths.
- Creeping suburbanisation and cumulative changes in the rural landscape which are not in sympathy with local distinctiveness or vernacular architecture.
- Ribbon development creeping along the country lanes and expanding into larger developments around the village of Pett and at Cliff End.
- Erosion at Fairlight Cove causing the dereliction of built features down the cliff terraces which cannot be recovered and create eyesores when viewed from the beach.
- Expansion of the settlement at Fairlight Cove onto green field sites.
- Expansion of caravan and mobile home parks in Hastings Country Park at Ecclesbourne Glen and Rocklands Lane.
- A Nitrate Vulnerable Zone covers much of the area and a Catchment Sensitive Farming Initiative extends across the eastern part of the area.
- Some loss of hedgerows to more intensive arable farming in parts of the area, particularly to the south of Pett Road.
- Changes in the types and frequency of grazing animals in the countryside impacts on character as they are a characteristic feature. Lack of grazing can give an unmanaged appearance to the landscape and reduce the biodiversity value.

# High Wealden Coast

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- Loss of traditional woodland management and cessation of coppicing.
- About 70% of the area is covered by Agricultural Environment Schemes including the Country Park, National Trust owned land at Old Marsham/Fairlight Farms and farmland to the south of Pett village.
- Woodland grant schemes cover the ghyll woodlands in the country park and woodland at Old Marsham Farm.
- Intrusive modern farm buildings.
- Increasing traffic on the B roads which cross the area and rat running on rural lanes.

### Future Forces for Change

- The need to provide local housing in the villages, especially around Fairlight Cove.
- Demands for traffic calming and road improvements which could introduce increasing urban clutter to rural roads, villages and lanes.
- Continued agricultural change due to changing markets, economic pressures and response to climate change.
- Redevelopment pressures for existing farmsteads for residential or business uses and particularly tourism.
- The spread of small agricultural holdings, hobby farming, paddocks, farm shops and allotments for local food production.
- Pressure for locating renewable energy facilities for solar, wind and bio energy, including off shore wind facilities.
- Pests and diseases of trees which could impact significantly on the mature tree stock. E.g. phytophora of alder and Ash dieback.
- Pressure for the expansion of existing and provision of new caravan and camping facilities.
- Continuing coastal erosion damaging recreational facilities, houses and coastal access.

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**Table 3 Potential Impacts of Climate Change**

- Potential changes in woodland / tree species composition and accelerated growth of species such as birch.
- Changes in native ground flora and other native vegetation which produce distinctive seasonal displays.
- Increased prevalence of pests and diseases due to warmer weather e.g. Ash Dieback and Oak Processionary Moth.
- Changes in precipitation and temperatures will change the types of crops that farmers grow.
- Potential impact on the viability of grazing sheep, dairy and beef.
- Increased temperatures and a decline in precipitation levels may dry out wetland habitats and ponds and alter stream flows.
- Accelerated coastal erosion due to high rainfall and storm events.

# High Wealden Coast

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### C Vision and Strategy

**Table 4 Vision**

A dramatic and varied coastline with a hinterland of rich and intricate unspoilt High Wealden Countryside. Locally remote and tranquil areas combined with high quality visitor and recreational opportunities. A thriving rural economy which maximises the opportunities offered by the unique surrounding landscape.

As noted in the current Landscape Character Guidance – A Landscape Strategy identifies “*what change if any is desirable for any landscape character area as a whole?*”

#### Landscape change and adaptation to meet the strategy requires:

1. Planning for the enhancement of the Romney Marsh Area Biodiversity Opportunity Area, which encompasses Wealden Coast, improving habitat continuity.
2. Protect and manage existing habitats and in particular the woodland, heath and grassland of the glens and Country Park, to restore habitat linkages and continuity.
3. Encourage positive management through coppicing of the ancient woodlands.
4. Conserve and strengthen the pattern of hedges, copses and shaws in the inland areas.
5. Plan for the creation of multifunctional green infrastructure to maximise the opportunities for biodiversity and recreation offered by the cliffs, coast, hedges and woodland.
6. Consider the potential to plan for recreational access in this character area identifying areas where public access can be encouraged whilst protecting other areas where wildlife conservation is the priority.
7. Integrate proposed and existing development into the landscape through planting of tree features and woodland to define the boundaries with the countryside. With particular emphasis on edges of development in Fairlight Cove, the Hastings fringes and mobile home parks.
8. Ensure that the design and layout of new development respects the character and form of the landscape and existing settlements.
9. Control the spread of suburbanisation by minimising clutter of signage and other urban features in lanes and villages.
10. Consider traffic management measures on the lanes, together with off road recreational routes to reduce the conflict with walkers, cyclists and horses.
11. Conserve the setting of historic buildings and landscape features.
12. Consider appropriate species for new plantings to maintain landscape character and biodiversity but also adaptation to climate change influences.

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### D Guidelines for Managing Change

#### Development considerations for housing and other development

Proposals need to have regard for the current High Weald Management Plan:

<http://www.highweald.org/downloads/publications/high-weald-aonb-management-plan-documents/1475-high-weald-management-plan-3rd-edition-2014-2019/file.html>

The main pressures for development in this character area will be to accommodate housing for the rural populations in the rural settlements of Pett and Fairlight. Pressures for the expansion of Hastings may impact on the part of the character area which borders the town. The priority will be to identify opportunities to enhance the degraded and poorly managed parts of the character area on the Hastings urban fringes.

Tourism is an important source of income to this area and there is likely to be increasing demand for accommodation in bed and breakfast, caravan and camp sites. The modern trend for luxury and exotic camping (glamping) could put pressure on the woodlands. There will be demand for new facilities and to improve or expand existing, some of these putting pressure on the local landscape. Any new development should respect the key positive attributes in the landscape outlined in Table 1 above.

Proposed development should consider opportunities for proactively meeting the Landscape Change Strategy aims for this Landscape Character Area as set out in 1-12 above.

# High Wealden Coast

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**Table 5**

<b>Current issues offering opportunities for protection and enhancement</b>	<b>Landscape Management Guidelines</b>	<b>Benefits delivered by Ecosystem Services for each area of interest</b>
<p><b>Countryside and Farmland</b> Farm environment plans relating to much of the farm lands including organic farming.</p> <p>Pressure for farm diversification and development of hobby farms, solar arrays, wind farms, waste recycling operations etc.</p> <p>Recreational activities in Hastings Country Park and on the coastal footpath routes conflicting with agricultural land management.</p> <p>Expansion of camping and caravan sites as well as other holiday related development such as 'Glamping'.</p> <p>Land falling out of positive management and dereliction of farm buildings.</p> <p>Loss of traditional pasture and heathland.</p> <p>A Nitrate Vulnerable Zone designated across most of the area.</p> <p>Deterioration of by ways and lanes due to erosion of un-surfaced routes by horses, bikes and 4 wheel drives.</p> <p>Damage to verges on narrow country lanes caused by increasing size of farm vehicles and passing traffic.</p>	<p><b>Countryside and Farmland</b> Encourage establishment of more farm conservation schemes to conserve the landscape structure of hedges, shaws and woodland.</p> <p>Conserve hedges, trees and small woods. Maintain the mixed farmed character of the area.</p> <p>Protect and manage historic field patterns and conserve boundary features.</p> <p>Conserve and enhance byways and rural lanes.</p> <p>Use tree and woodland planting to screen intrusive farm buildings and caravan sites.</p> <p>Enhance the biodiversity value of pasture and arable field edges.</p> <p>Plan for and manage changes which may occur in the landscape due to changes in farm management brought about by economic influences and climate change.</p> <p>Reduce the risk and incidence of soil erosion by encouraging the restoration of arable land to pasture.</p> <p>Apply best land management practices to prevent soil and fertiliser run off, thereby protecting surface and ground water.</p>	<p><b>Provisioning services</b> Water availability Food production</p> <p><b>Regulating services</b> (water purification, air quality maintenance and climate regulation) Water quality and protected aquifers. Regulating water flow and preventing flooding Soil conservation and erosion control Habitat and species resilience to climate change Carbon sequestration. Areas of peat in the stream valleys, hedges, trees and grassland regulate air quality by absorbing and retaining CO<sub>2</sub>.</p> <p><b>Cultural Services</b> Sense of Place and local distinctiveness. Source of Inspiration Sense of History Tranquillity Biodiversity</p>

# High Wealden Coast

## Appendix 2

<b>Current issues offering opportunities for protection and enhancement</b>	<b>Landscape Management Guidelines</b>	<b>Benefits delivered by Ecosystem Services for each area of interest</b>
<p>Overstocking and arable production on some soils can result in soil erosion and reduce soil quality.</p> <p>Loss of farmed land due to continuing coastal erosion.</p>	<p>Reduce the risk and incidence of soil erosion by encouraging the restoration of arable land to pasture.</p> <p>Apply best land management practices to prevent soil and fertiliser run off, thereby protecting surface and ground water.</p>	
<p><b>Trees and Woodland</b></p> <p>Woods and tree belts are not in positive management.</p> <p>Traditional management has stopped as it is not commercially viable e.g. coppicing of sweet chestnut in oak woodlands.</p> <p>Tree diseases</p> <p>Invasive species competing with native flora and fauna e.g. Spanish Bluebell, Rhododendron, Japanese knotweed.</p> <p>Extensive areas of woodland are already in woodland grant schemes.</p> <p>Pressure for inappropriate recreational use in woodland such as 'glamping' and trials bikes.</p>	<p><b>Trees and Woodland</b></p> <p>Actively manage trees and woodland through coppicing of sweet chestnut and replanting to create a diverse age structure.</p> <p>Plant new small woods and tree belts to screen urban edges and caravan sites and where this is appropriate habitat creation.</p> <p>Consider the need to adapt to changes enforced by climate change, such as specific tree diseases and possible adaptation in species selection.</p> <p>Plant trees and woodland to contain existing and new built development.</p>	<p><b>Provisioning</b> Fuel (woodfuel for local communities from woodland management)</p> <p><b>Regulating</b> Carbon sequestration, woodland absorbs and holds CO<sub>2</sub>.</p> <p>Habitat and species resilience to climate change</p> <p><b>Cultural</b> Tranquillity</p> <p>Sense of Place and local distinctiveness</p> <p>Cultural heritage (traditional woodland management)</p> <p>Biodiversity</p>

# High Wealden Coast

## Appendix 2

<b>Current issues offering opportunities for protection and enhancement</b>	<b>Landscape Management Guidelines</b>	<b>Benefits delivered by Ecosystem Services for each area of interest</b>
<p><b>Other Key Habitats</b> Deterioration and loss of habitats :</p> <p><b>Water and wet meadows</b> Loss of streamside vegetation. Deterioration of water quality in streams, ditches and ponds.</p> <p>Invasive species of plants and animals which compete with native flora and fauna.</p> <p>A Nitrate Vulnerable Zone designated across most of the area.</p> <p><b>Meadows</b> Financial and viable farming constraints affecting the continued management of meadows reducing the biodiversity value. Improvements to Grassland and meadows reducing species richness. Loss of meadows to arable farming.</p> <p><b>Glens and ghylls</b> The unique and fragile habitats in these areas are particularly vulnerable to climate change and accelerated coastal/cliff erosion. Recreational access can exacerbate erosion and habitat damage.</p>	<p><b>Other key Habitats</b> Encourage management of river and stream channels. Conservation and re-creation of meadow/pasture habitats. Agri-environment schemes to maximise biodiversity and encourage the retention of grazing. Encourage measures to improve water quality. Continue schemes to encourage farmers to minimise the use of chemicals and fertilizers.</p> <p>Monitoring and management of these habitats to facilitate adaptation to coastal change through managed retreat.</p> <p>Continued education and management of public access to protect sensitive areas and habitats.</p>	<p><b>Provisioning</b> Nature's larder of free berries and herbs. Conservation of insect pollinators for pollination of crops.</p> <p><b>Regulating</b> Habitat and species resilience to climate change. Water quality and protected aquifers.</p> <p><b>Cultural</b> Appreciation of nature Educational value Biodiversity</p>

# High Wealden Coast

## Appendix 2

<b>Current issues offering opportunities for protection and enhancement</b>	<b>Landscape Management Guidelines</b>	<b>Benefits delivered by Ecosystem Services for each area of interest</b>
<p><b>Recreation, Green Infrastructure (GI) and ANGS (glossary)</b> Pressure on bridleways and byways as multi use, including cycling and 4 wheel drives increasing erosion.</p> <p>Pressure on sensitive ghyll woodland habitats.</p> <p>Lack of funding to manage and enhance GI for improved access.</p> <p>Need for better recreational linkages and improved sustainable transport corridors.</p> <p>Extensive footpath network including the Country Park and Coastal Access route.</p> <p>Need for improved access to natural green space for all users both close to homes and in the wider countryside.</p> <p>Existing access to extensive areas of woodland, notably Mallydams.</p> <p>Gentrification</p> <p>Loss of tranquillity due to more cars and access.</p>	<p><b>Recreation, Green Infrastructure and ANGS</b> Where appropriate develop Green Infrastructure Strategies based on the county wide GI mapping.</p> <p>Plan for and manage recreational pressure on the countryside which could be affected by the increase in population in surrounding town of Hastings as well as the seasonal holiday makers.</p> <p>Maximise opportunities for access away from sensitive habitats.</p> <p>Maximise opportunities provided by the coast for access and recreation.</p> <p>Consider opportunities to create new green corridors and improve existing as safe ideally motorised traffic free recreational routes.</p> <p>Consider the opportunities and constraints for recreational use of the beaches due to cliff erosion and poor access.</p>	<p><b>Provisioning</b> Protected farmland</p> <p><b>Regulating</b> Habitat and species resilience to climate change Water quality and protected aquifers. Regulating water flow and preventing flooding Carbon sequestration</p> <p><b>Cultural</b> Recreation Heritage assets and cultural heritage</p> <p>Inspirational</p> <p>Tranquility</p> <p>Biodiversity</p>

# High Wealden Coast

## Appendix 2

<b>Current issues offering opportunities for protection and enhancement</b>	<b>Landscape Management Guidelines</b>	<b>Benefits delivered by Ecosystem Services for each area of interest</b>
<p><b>Horse Keeping ('horsiculture') and small holdings</b> This tends to be an issue around the villages and urban fringe.  Deterioration of the character and quality of the landscape and loss of local distinctiveness.  Can detract from historic field pattern where fences replace hedges.  Can cause soil erosion.</p>	<p><b>Horse Keeping ('horsiculture') and small holdings</b> Enhance the condition of areas of horsiculture and small holdings through the restoration of an intact, well managed hedgerow or ditch network and retaining a diverse grass sward by preventing overgrazing.  Encourage local food production and allotment provision in areas where this will not detract from local landscape character.</p>	<p><b>Provisioning</b> Grazing Food production</p> <p><b>Regulating</b> Habitat and species resilience to climate change</p> <p><b>Cultural</b> Recreation Heritage assets Sense of Place and local distinctiveness Biodiversity</p>
<p><b>The character of the villages</b> Gentrification Urbanisation Development pressures Gradual loss and deterioration of Heritage features. Fast traffic on rural lanes  Visitor pressure and cars detracting from local character and distinctiveness of the area in general.</p>	<p><b>Protect and Enhance the character of the villages</b> Encourage the production of Neighbourhood Plans which incorporate village design guides.  Plan for new development in the villages to ensure it is designed to a high standard to reflect local character and sense of place.  Establish defined development edges to villages with new tree planting.  Prepare village design guides and tree conservation plans.  Consider traffic management on rural lanes.</p>	<p><b>Provisioning</b> Local amenities and facilities.</p> <p><b>Regulating</b> Use of sustainable materials Habitat and species resilience to climate change Water quality and protected aquifers. Regulating water flow and preventing flooding</p> <p><b>Cultural</b> Sense of Place and local distinctiveness Heritage assets Biodiversity</p>

# High Wealden Coast

## Appendix 2

<b>Current issues offering opportunities for protection and enhancement</b>	<b>Landscape Management Guidelines</b>	<b>Benefits delivered by Ecosystem Services for each area of interest</b>
<p><b>Flood management and SUDS schemes?</b> Flash floods and run off. Flooding of properties in low lying areas by river and ground water.</p>	<p><b>Flood management and SUDS schemes?</b> Plan for flood management by conserving and enhancing the flood plains and managing water levels in ditches and drains.  Encourage the design of sensitive flood defence schemes which conserve and enhance the landscape and habitats  Conserve and enhance existing man made and natural drainage features.  Maximise opportunities for the creation of SUDs schemes which contribute to local amenity and habitat creation.</p>	<p><b>Provisioning</b> Water conservation</p> <p><b>Regulating</b> Flood control</p> <p><b>Cultural</b> Heritage assets Sense of Place and local distinctiveness</p> <p>Tranquillity Amenity and recreation Biodiversity</p>

### Glossary

(also refer to the full version in the County Landscape Assessment).

**ANGS:** Accessible Natural Green Space [Natural England – Accessible Natural Greenspace Standard \(ANGSt\)](#)

**Assart:** Field created from the clearance of woodland

**Enclosure:** The separation of land from the common by fence or private use.

**GI or Green Infrastructure:** Multifunctional green areas which provide areas for recreation, wildlife, water supply catchment, flood relief, food or timber production.

**Glamping:** New types of camp sites with permanent tent features in yurts, teepees, vintage caravans, timber pods etc. Woodlands are popular locations for these.

**Local Nature Reserve:** Local Nature Reserve (or LNR) is a statutory designation made under Section 21 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, and amended by Schedule 11 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, by principal local authorities.

**Ramsar** sites are wetlands of international importance for biodiversity designated under the Ramsar Convention.

**SNCI or Local Site:** a Site of Nature Conservation Importance.

**SSSI:** A national designation for Site of Special Scientific Interest, these may be of biodiversity or geological significance or both.

## APPENDIX 3

**Table 1 : Landscape and Visual Sensitivity Assessment Criteria**

<b>Physical character</b>				
Lower sensitivity	→			Higher sensitivity
The physical landscape is simple with few distinctive features which contribute to the intrinsic character of an area.  HW –No key components.		The physical landscape has some natural or semi-natural features that contribute to, but are not key to the identification of local character, elements of commonplace everyday value.  HWAONB – Some key components.		The physical landscape makes a strong contribution to local landscape character. E.g. a distinctive landform, intact, natural landscape with mature hedgerows, trees and other features such as ponds or streams.  HWAONB – More than one key component e.g. Ghyll streams, sandstone outcrops.

### ***Settlement setting, form and edge***

The extent to which the site area relates to the form and pattern of the existing adjacent settlement, and the character of the settlement edge, including the role of key landscape elements which define the edge. The degree to which potential development could be designed to be in keeping with the edge and appear to be a natural extension or not.

To include consideration of High Weald Key Components of Natural Beauty : Settlement, Routeways

Lower sensitivity	→	Higher sensitivity
<p>The landscape is strongly associated with an existing settlement. Where an extension would be unlikely to be an intrusion into the countryside. The existing settlement edge could easily be improved by further development.</p> <p>HWAONB –No key components.</p>		<p>Development may be perceived as settlement advancement into the countryside, but would not represent a complete diversion from settlement form. It would not breach a distinctive boundary feature.</p> <p>HWAONB – Some key components.</p> <p>Development would have a poor relationship with existing settlement form. A boundary feature would be breached and development would extend into an area with a distinctly different and more rural landscape .e .g. breaking a ridge crest or skyline, extending onto steep slopes or valley sides.</p> <p>HWAONB -More than one key component e.g. historic settlement pattern and routeways.</p>

### **Natural character**

Considers the ‘naturalistic qualities’ of the landscape including coverage of semi-natural habitats and valued features such as native trees and hedgerows and designated habitats.

To include consideration of High Weald Key Components of Natural Beauty : Woodland, Field and Heath

Lower sensitivity				Higher sensitivity
Much of the landscape is intensively farmed or developed with little semi-natural habitat coverage. Few valued natural features such as trees and hedges.  HWAONB –No key components.		Some areas of valued semi-natural habitats and features found in parts of the landscape. Some areas of intensive agricultural or other non-natural land cover.  HWAONB – Some key components.		Large areas of semi-natural habitats and designated areas, Locally or nationally designated for wildlife. Local Nature Sites or SSSI.  Frequent occurrence of valued natural features across the landscape.  HWAONB -More than one key component e.g. Woodland, Field and Heath

### **Visual character**

The visual prominence of the site whether the site is open and enclosed due to topography and surrounding vegetation. The degree of intervisibility with the surrounding landscape and whether the site is on a skyline in these views. Views to the site from the surrounding public access areas, scenic views, rights of way, roads and residential areas.

To include consideration of High Weald Key Components of Natural Beauty: Settlement, Routeways.

Lower sensitivity		Higher sensitivity
<p>An enclosed landscape with limited views in from public areas or residential property. A site which is not prominent in the landscape.</p> <p>HWAONB- There are no or very limited views into the area from routeways or historic settlement areas.</p>	<p>There is some degree of visibility and intervisibility with surrounding areas. The area is not prominent on sloping land or a skyline.</p> <p>HWAONB- There are limited views into the area from routeways or historic settlement areas.</p>	<p>The site area is prominent in local views as it is on high or sloping ground which is overlooked from a wide area.</p> <p>The site sits on a prominent skyline.</p> <p>The area plays a key role in contributing to valued views from promoted scenic spots, recreational areas or national trails.</p> <p>The site has prominent skylines or features in the landscape.</p> <p>HWAONB- There are open views into the area from a wide area of the AONB landscape.</p>

### ***Perceptual experience and Qualities***

Consideration of the sense of tranquillity and/or remoteness of the site area away from human influences such as development and roads. The rurality of the site, scenic value, perceived naturalness due to lack of evidence of human activity. The presence or not of 'dark night skies' would be a consideration.

To include consideration of High Weald Key Components of Natural Beauty: Settlement, Routeways. Dark night skies are a feature of the HWAONB which are promoted for protection in the Management Plan.

Lower sensitivity				Higher sensitivity
<p>An area which is heavily influenced by development and human activity. There are detracting features present in the landscape in the form of built development. Hard urban edges to the countryside, overhead lines and masts.</p> <p>HWAONB- Evidence of suburbanisation and lighting interrupts dark night sky.</p>		<p>An area with some evidence of human activity and a sense of rurality retained. Some evidence of development and a few detracting features. Soft urban edges broken by vegetation. Some rural character retained.</p> <p>HWAONB- Development is in sympathy with the HW vernacular and is historic in character. Slight detraction from dark night sky low light impact.</p>		<p>A relatively tranquil landscape. Remote from human influences of development and roads. A high degree of perceived naturalness and rurality. No detracting features and high scenic value.</p> <p>HWAONB- An area remote from settlement and roads with high degree of naturalness. Dark night skies.</p>

### **Historic Character**

The extent to which the landscape retains historic character and sense of place. The presence of designated or non-designated heritage assets that contribute to landscape character.

Reference is made to the Sussex Historic Landscape Characterisation data and historic maps.

To include consideration of High Weald Key Components of Natural Beauty: Settlement, Routeways, Field and Heath. Where relevant reference will be made to the HER and Historic Farmstead datasets.

Lower sensitivity				Higher sensitivity
A landscape with few historic landscape features. No designated or non-designated heritage assets. A disturbed landscape which has been much altered or disturbed by recent activity. Lacks sense of place.  HWAONB- Little evidence of time depth or medieval landscape features. Modern 20 <sup>th</sup> century fieldscapes.		A landscape with some historic features. No designated heritage assets. Some non-designated heritage assets. No historic features which are rare or of key significance in the landscape. Some sense of place but commonplace.  HWAONB- Some evidence of time depth and remnants of the medieval landscape. Remnant or weak evidence of fieldscapes.		A landscape with many valued historic features and designated heritage assets. A strong sense of place.  HWAONB- Strong evidence of intact medieval landscape and time depth of human influence. Strong field patterns with assarts and commons. Presence of historic components of settlement such as farmsteads or routeways.

## Appendix 4 Character Area Sensitivity Assessment (refer to Map 3 for areas). Date of survey 14th May 2018

Character Area A	
Description	
Farmland to the north of Pett Level Road	
Assessment Criterion	Sensitivity description
Physical Character	This area has an intricate topography of ridges and valleys which is typical of the High Weald landscape. The area is enclosed by dense tree belts to the south between the farmland and Pett Level Road. The area does have components of High Weald character with distinct field boundaries mature tree belts, hedges and wooded stream valleys.
Settlement setting, form and edge.	The area is clearly separated from the village edge and is rural in character. There are scattered farmsteads including Marsham, Wakehams and Stonelyns Farms. The historic farmsteads are key components of settlement in the High Weald.
Natural character	The area supports many mature tree belts and an area of ancient woodland. Hedges form boundaries to many of the fields particularly to the west of Rosemary Lane. The woodland, field and heath are HWAONB key components.
Visual Character	There are long views across the area from elevated locations on National Trust land to the southeast and from Hastings Country Park. Public footpaths cross the area which affords views across the local countryside. There are open views to this area from a wide area of the AONB and Pett village.
Perceptual Experience and qualities	The area feels remote from the village as it is enclosed by tree belts and has a sense of rurality. The presence of traffic on Pett Level Road detracts from tranquillity in the southern part of the area. The area has many of the qualities typically experienced in the HWAONB.
Historic character	The area has distinct field patterns which are medieval to the west of Rosemary Lane and early post medieval (East Sussex Historic Landscape Characterisation Study). Marsham, Stonelynk and Wakehams Farms are historic farmsteads with some listed farm houses. The footpath up to Marsham Farm would have been an ancient trackway as are Pett Level Road and Rosemary Lane. The farmstead, field patterns and ancient routeways are key components of the HWAONB.
Sensitivity Conclusions	
The area does have a degree of perceived naturalness as it is a pastoral farmed landscape. The tranquillity and naturalness is slightly influenced by the presence of cars on Pett Level Road and some views to the built up area of Fairlight Cove. The open nature of the area and sloping topography do make it sensitive to change. Historically the field pattern would not appear to have changed much since the 1800s. The character of the area is of medium to high landscape character sensitivity. The area is of medium to high visual sensitivity due to the long views across the area from very sensitive key viewpoints in recreational areas of the AONB. The overall sensitivity of this sub area is therefore <b>Medium to High</b> .	

<b>Sub- Character Area B1 Wakehams Farm west field</b>	
<b>Description</b>	<b>Area (Ha) 120</b>
A pocket of agricultural land to the east of Fairlight Cove	
<b>Assessment Criterion</b>	<b>Sensitivity description</b>
Physical Character	The area slopes gently from the north west towards the south east. The land falls towards a valley with a stream bed on the southern boundary. The stream emerges from the built up area under which it is mainly culverted. The area is intensively farmed and was under a grass crop at the time of survey. The area is bounded by a gappy hedge to the east, which separates it from area B2. It is bounded by the built up edge of the village on the other three sides. The physical landscape has few natural features that contribute to local character. The area has no key components of the HW AONB apart from the ghyll stream which is just outside the area on the southern boundary.
Settlement setting, form and edge.	The ribbon development which extends out of the village along Battery Hill forms the northern boundary to the area. The back gardens of houses along Waites Lane form the western boundary to the area. The back gardens of Broadway form the southern boundary. The garden boundaries to the north and west are open and form a hard built up edge to the open field. The southern boundary is more wooded with trees following the stream valley. Unlike many villages in the AONB the built up area of Fairlight Cove is excluded from the designation.
Natural character	The field was laid to grass at the time of survey. The air photo evidence suggests that the field has been ploughed in recent years and the arable use is intensive. The gappy hedge which separates the area from B2 has some mature trees and belts of shelter trees. The southern boundary is formed of a more natural tree boundary along the stream valley. The ghyll stream is a key AONB component of natural beauty. The field scape is modern 20 century and field boundaries have been lost.
Visual Character	Local views into the sub area from publicly accessible areas are restricted by the topography, vegetation and buildings. There are glimpses into the area between the houses from Waites Lane and Broadway. There are views through the gaps in the hedge to the area and the houses beyond from Pett Level Road. From the more elevated views on the National Trust land and Saxon Shoreway to the east the built up edge can be seen with the B1 field in the foreground. In views from the Hastings Country Park to the west this area is largely obscured by intervening woodland. Sensitivity is low to medium.
Perceptual Experience and qualities	The tranquillity of the area is heavily influenced by the presence of the surrounding built up edge. This detracts from the rural character of the area and the AONB landscape. The field does provide an open and green outlook for these properties and their gardens. The experience of dark night skies is affected by lighting from the houses.
Historic character	The historic OS map of 1863 indicates that area B would have been divided into three relatively large field parcels. The sub area B1 being one large field. This does not resemble the more intimate Medieval assart field pattern which is characteristic of the more historic parts of the AONB. The fieldscapes are considered to be 20 <sup>th</sup> century according to the East Sussex

	Historic Landscape Characterisation Study. The built up area of Fairlight Cove which backs on to the area is more recent and has been developed from the 1950s onwards. There is little historic character remaining in this area.
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## Sensitivity Conclusions

The area does not have a high degree of perceived naturalness as it is under intensive arable use. The tranquillity and naturalness are also influenced by the presence of adjacent residential properties and views to the built up area of Fairlight Cove. The open nature of the area and gently sloping topography does make it more sensitive to change. Historically the area has been open in nature and the field pattern would not appear to have changed much since the 1800s. The existing treed field boundary with area B2 could be enhanced and increased in depth. This would not detract from the open character of the area as this land parcel is distinct from the adjacent countryside in topography and character. The character of the area is of Low to Medium landscape character sensitivity. The area is of moderate visual sensitivity as long views across the area are limited. The overall sensitivity of this sub area is therefore **Low to Medium**.

<b>Sub- Character Area B2 Wakehams Farm east fields</b>	
<b>Description</b>	<b>Area (Ha) 357</b>
Agricultural land to the north of the eastern extension of Fairlight Cove. The area is in the High Weald AONB.	
<b>Assessment Criterion</b>	<b>Sensitivity description</b>
Physical Character	The area slopes gently away from Pett Level Road and slightly undulates from east to west. The land falls towards a wooded ghyll stream which forms the southern boundary. The northern boundary is a well treed hedge adjacent to Pett Level Road. The area is farmed intensively and had been newly seeded with a grass crop at the time of survey. There is little evidence of field boundaries apart from a section of hedgerow in the northern part of the area. The area is very open due to lack of hedged boundaries. The physical landscape has few natural features that contribute to local character. The area has little evidence of key components of the HW AONB, apart from the ghyll stream on the southern boundary of the area.
Settlement setting, form and edge.	The settlement edge of Fairlight Cove lies to the south of the area. This edge is characterised by a wooded ghyll which appears to be the extended gardens of houses in Fairlight Cove. This part of the village is distinctive as these properties are set in large wooded plots which are very variable in size and are accessed by an informal layout of cul de sacs and tracks. The wooded edge forms a very well defined and soft transition from the built up area to the wider AONB countryside. Unlike many villages in the AONB the built up area of Fairlight Cove is excluded from the designation. Pett Level Road would have been an ancient routeway joining the coastal settlements.
Natural character	The area has no designated habitat areas. The remnant hedgerow is an important natural feature. The woodland edge and ghyll stream immediately to the south of the area are sensitive natural features. The hedged roadside boundary is an important natural feature. The ghyll stream is a key AONB component of natural beauty. The field scape is modern 20 century and some field boundaries have been lost.

Visual Character	<p>The area is very open due to the sloping topography and lack of vegetation to break up views across the area. There are long views across the settlement from Hastings Country Park open access areas and public rights of way. These afford views into the entire area B2. There are also views from the National Trust owned cliff top land which lies to the east of the settlement and at least three public footpaths including the Saxon Shore Way long distance path. There are extensive views across the area from Pett Level Road which is part of the National Cycle Network. All of these viewpoints are within the High Weald AONB. The area is of high visual sensitivity.</p>
Perceptual Experience and qualities	<p>The tranquillity of this sub character area is influenced by the presence of traffic on Pett Level Road. There are views across the area to the suburban settlement of Fairlight Cove on the higher land to the south west. The eastern corner of this large open arable area is more tranquil as is the southern edge which is bounded by the wooded ghyll. The built up area here is softened and heavily enclosed by woodland. The open nature of this area appears contiguous with the surrounding farmland. Pett Level Road is not lit and the eastern part of this area would be dark at night. There would be a glow of lights from the houses of Fairlight Cove on the distant ridge to the east. The woodland would reduce the impact of lighting from the built up area to the south.</p>
Historic character	<p>The historic OS map of 1863 indicates that this area would have been divided into three relatively large field parcels. This does not resemble the more intimate Medieval assart field pattern which is characteristic of the more historic parts of the AONB. The garden plots on the edge of the village to the south closely resemble the field boundary parcels on the 1863 map and it would appear that these land parcels have not changed much since that time. The fieldscapes are considered to be 20<sup>th</sup> century according to the East Sussex Historic Landscape Characterisation Study. The houses have been built within these large plots with wooded gardens spilling down towards the edge of the site area and the ghyll stream.</p>
<b>Sensitivity Conclusions</b>	
<p>The area does not have a high degree of perceived naturalness as it is under intensive arable use. The tranquillity and naturalness are also influenced by the presence of Pett Level Road and views to the built up area of Fairlight Cove. The open nature of the area and sloping topography does make it more sensitive to change. Historically the area has been open in nature and the field pattern would not appear to have changed much since the 1800s. It would not be appropriate to introduce extensive areas of woodland or tree planting to mitigate proposed development in this open area of landscape. The character of the area is of medium to high landscape character sensitivity. The area is of high visual sensitivity due to the long views across the area from very sensitive key viewpoints in recreational areas of the AONB. The overall sensitivity of this sub area is therefore <b>Medium to High</b>.</p>	

<b>Character Area C</b>	
<b>Description</b>	
Wooded ghyll stream	
<b>Assessment Criterion</b>	<b>Sensitivity description</b>
Physical Character	This is a narrow valley which lies on the southern boundary of the character areas B1 and B2. The area is densely wooded. Private garden boundaries have extended into this wooded area. As a ghyll stream it is a key component of the High Weald AONB landscape and as such it is sensitive.
Settlement setting, form and edge.	The character of this part of the settlement is of plotlands which have grown up along un-adopted cul de sacs. The plots are of random size and the architecture very variable. The gardens of these properties extend down the slope into the ghyll valley. The built up edge is probably defined by the topography and the flood plain for the stream. The well treed large gardens form a soft edge to the countryside.
Natural character	The area is semi-natural as the ghyll stream is still wooded with natural vegetation. Garden vegetation, fences and other paraphernalia detract from the natural ghyll.
Visual Character	There are wide views to the area from surrounding higher ground in the AONB. Views within and out of the area are restricted by tree cover. The area is of medium to high visual sensitivity.
Perceptual Experience and qualities	There is limited public access to the area so it is mainly appreciated by the owners of the gardens which extend onto it. The wooded ghyll character gives a sense of peacefulness and tranquillity.
Historic character	The historic character is one of an ancient stream with associated woodland which would not have changed for many hundreds of years. That is part from the encroachment and localised clearance for garden use.
<b>Sensitivity Conclusions</b>	
The sensitivity of this wooded corridor would be <b>Medium to High</b> as a natural feature and a key component of the HWAONB.	

<b>Character Area D</b>	
<b>Description</b>	
Fairlight Cove Plotlands	
<b>Assessment Criterion</b>	<b>Sensitivity description</b>
Physical Character	The topography climbs up from the ghyll stream to the north onto a developed ridge.
Settlement setting, form and edge.	This area is entirely within the built up area of Fairlight Cove. The plotlands have developed with infill development of field plots accessed via informal cul de sacs since the early 1900s.
Natural character	There are trees within the built up area and large gardens which help to retain some of the natural character.
Visual Character	There are views out of the area from the higher ground. The lower parts are enclosed by topography and trees. There are wide views across the

	area from Hastings Country Park open access areas and public rights of way. The area is of medium visual sensitivity.
Perceptual Experience and qualities	The area is part of the built up settlement of Fairlight Cove.
Historic character	The historic character has been masked by the infill housing development. The plots do resemble historic field boundaries to some extent.
<b>Sensitivity Conclusions</b>	
The area is of <b>Low to Medium</b> sensitivity as it is part of the built up area.	

<b>Character Area E</b>	
<b>Description</b>	
Open cliff top	
<b>Assessment Criterion</b>	<b>Sensitivity description</b>
Physical Character	This land rises from Pett Level Road and the ghyll valley up to the open cliff tops of the coast. It is a dramatic sandstone hill with emerging springs and distinctive boggy areas. The sandstone cliffs and outcrops and the ghyll stream are key components of the HWAONB.
Settlement setting, form and edge.	This area is clearly separated from the built up edge by a well treed historic routeway and ghyll stream. The historic routeway is a key component of the HWAONB.
Natural character	The area is open in character and unimproved pasture with low intensity agriculture. There are areas of scrub and gorse along fencelines.
Visual Character	The area has open too long views both in and out. There are long views both into and out of the area from Hastings Country Park and the wider HWAONB countryside to the north and east. The area is of high visual sensitivity.
Perceptual Experience and qualities	The area has a sense of naturalness away from the built up edge and quickly becomes tranquil away from Pett Level Road.
Historic character	Historically the area would have been open with little evidence of settlement, probably due to the open windswept nature of the area. The historic maps indicate few field boundaries and the area may well have been open common land.
<b>Sensitivity Conclusions</b>	
This area would be very sensitive to change as it is an important area of undeveloped cliff top coast and is of <b>High</b> Sensitivity.	

## **Appendix 5    Glossary of Key Terms**

**Agricultural Diversification.** This refers to the pressure for change of use for farm buildings and agricultural land as alternative development such as offices, riding stables and other recreational uses.

**Analysis (landscape)** The process of breaking the landscape down into its component parts to understand how it is made up.

**Ancient Woodland** (or semi- natural ancient woodland). Land continuously wooded since AD1600.

**Arable** Land used for growing crops other than grass or woody species.

**Assessment (landscape)** An umbrella term for description, classification and analysis of landscape.

**Characteristics** Elements, features and qualities which make a particular contribution to distinctive character.

**Characterisation** The process of identifying areas of similar character, classifying and mapping them and describing their character.

**CLA** County Landscape Assessment, refers to East Sussex County Council Landscape Assessment  
**CPRE** Council for the Protection of Rural England

**Element** A component part of the landscape such as woods, hedges, structures, roads and rock outcrops.

**Field Pattern** The pattern of hedges or walls that define fields in farmed landscapes.

**HLC Historic Landscape Characterisation**, strategic assessment of the extent to which the historic development of landscape can still be seen in the modern landscape.

**Green Infrastructure** is a network of multifunctional green space, both new and existing, both rural and urban, which supports the natural and ecological processes and is integral to the health and quality of life of sustainable communities.

**Intensive Agriculture** is where the use of increasingly bigger agricultural machinery has led to the removal of hedges and other field boundary features to create homogenous and featureless areas for arable farming.

**Landscape capacity** is the indicative ability of the landscape to accommodate different amounts of change or development of a specific type without adverse impacts. In the context of this study this will be a relative comparison for each settlement.

**Landscape character** is the recognisable and consistent pattern of elements that make a place different or distinct. Character is influenced by particular combinations of physical elements such as settlement, land use and built features, and other perceived aspects such as views, tranquillity and sense of place

**Landscape character areas** are single unique areas in the landscape, which have a particular sense of place. These are discrete areas of an identifiable character reflected by differing

vegetation, settlement and field patterns, cultural associations and other landscape characteristics. They share general characteristics with other areas but have their own particular identity; these are distinct from landscape types.

**Landscape character types** are generic types which possess broadly similar patterns of geology, landform, soils, vegetation, land use, settlement and field pattern discernable in maps and field survey records. They can occur in different geographical locations.

**Landscape Framework**. A framework of landscape elements or features, which would be required as a setting for proposed or existing development. For example earthworks, tree belts, hedges and woodland, the framework may also include open areas of landscape where this would be in character with the setting.

**Landscape management** is concerned with the development of management actions which conserve, enhance and maintain landscapes for current and future generations. The discipline of landscape management ensures that the design intention of a landscape is realised in the long-term, be it a newly designed or an historic landscape, and that it fulfils its intended function as a component in the landscape, as an amenity resource for people and as a habitat for wildlife.

**Landscape Mitigation** is measures, including any process, activity, or design to avoid reduce, or compensate for adverse landscape and visual effects of a development project. The potential to mitigate change in a particular landscape will depend on the factors and features which determine the character of the landscape.

**Landscape Sensitivity** is the inherent sensitivity of the landscape resource, which includes the sensitivity of both its character as a whole and the individual elements contributing to the character. Sensitivity also includes the visual sensitivity of the landscape in terms of views, types of viewers and the scope to mitigate visual impact.

**Landscape Value** is the relative value or importance attached to a landscape. A landscape may be valued by different communities of interest for different reasons. These can include scenic beauty, tranquility, and special cultural / conservation interests. Some may be designated.

**Mitigation** Measures to avoid, reduce, remedy or compensate for adverse landscape and visual effects of a development project.

**Sense of Place** is the character of a place that makes it locally distinctive i.e. different from other places.

**Settlement** All dwellings/habitations whether single or clustered in cities, towns and village.

**Settlement Pattern** The predominant pattern of settlement in an area.

**Vernacular** Built in the local style, from local materials.

The **Statement of Significance** defines the natural beauty of the High Weald AONB, its character and the special qualities we associate with it. It provides the criteria against which impacts on this nationally designated landscape can be judged.



Time depth and objective analysis<sup>33</sup> has defined the High Weald AONB as characterised by dispersed historic settlement, ancient routeways, an abundance of ancient woodland, wooded heaths and shaws, and small irregularly shaped fields. These are all draped over a deeply incised and ridged landform of clays and sandstones with numerous gill streams, and are closely related to socio-economic characteristics that have roots extending deep into history.

The essential character of the High Weald was established by the 14th century and has survived major historical events, and social and technological changes. It is considered to be one of the best surviving coherent medieval landscapes in Northern Europe. This fundamental and largely immutable character is the essence of the natural beauty of the AONB and the AONB Management Plan is structured around the five key components of this character:

- **Geology, landform, water systems and climate:** deeply incised, ridged and faulted landform of clays and sandstone. The ridges tend east-west, and from them spring numerous gill streams that form the headwaters of rivers. Wide river valleys dominate the eastern part of the AONB. The landform and water systems are subject to, and influence, a local variant of the British sub-oceanic climate.
- **Settlement:** dispersed historic settlements of farmsteads and hamlets, and late medieval villages founded on trade and non-agricultural rural industries.
- **Routeways:** ancient routeways (now roads, tracks and paths) in the form of ridge-top roads and a dense system of radiating droveways. These routeways are often narrow, deeply sunken, and edged with trees, hedges, wildflower-rich verges and boundary banks.
- **Woodland:** the great extent of ancient woods, gills, and shaws in small holdings, the value of which is inextricably linked to long-term management.
- **Field and heath:** small, irregularly shaped and productive fields often bounded by (and forming a mosaic with) hedgerows and small woodlands, and typically used for livestock grazing; small holdings; and a non-dominant agriculture; within which can be found distinctive zones of heaths and inned river valleys.

These fundamental components of character of the High Weald AONB are enriched by locally distinctive and nationally important details. These include castles, abbeys, historic parks and gardens; hop gardens and orchards; oast houses and parish churches; veteran trees, a rich and varied biodiversity, and local populations of key threatened species.

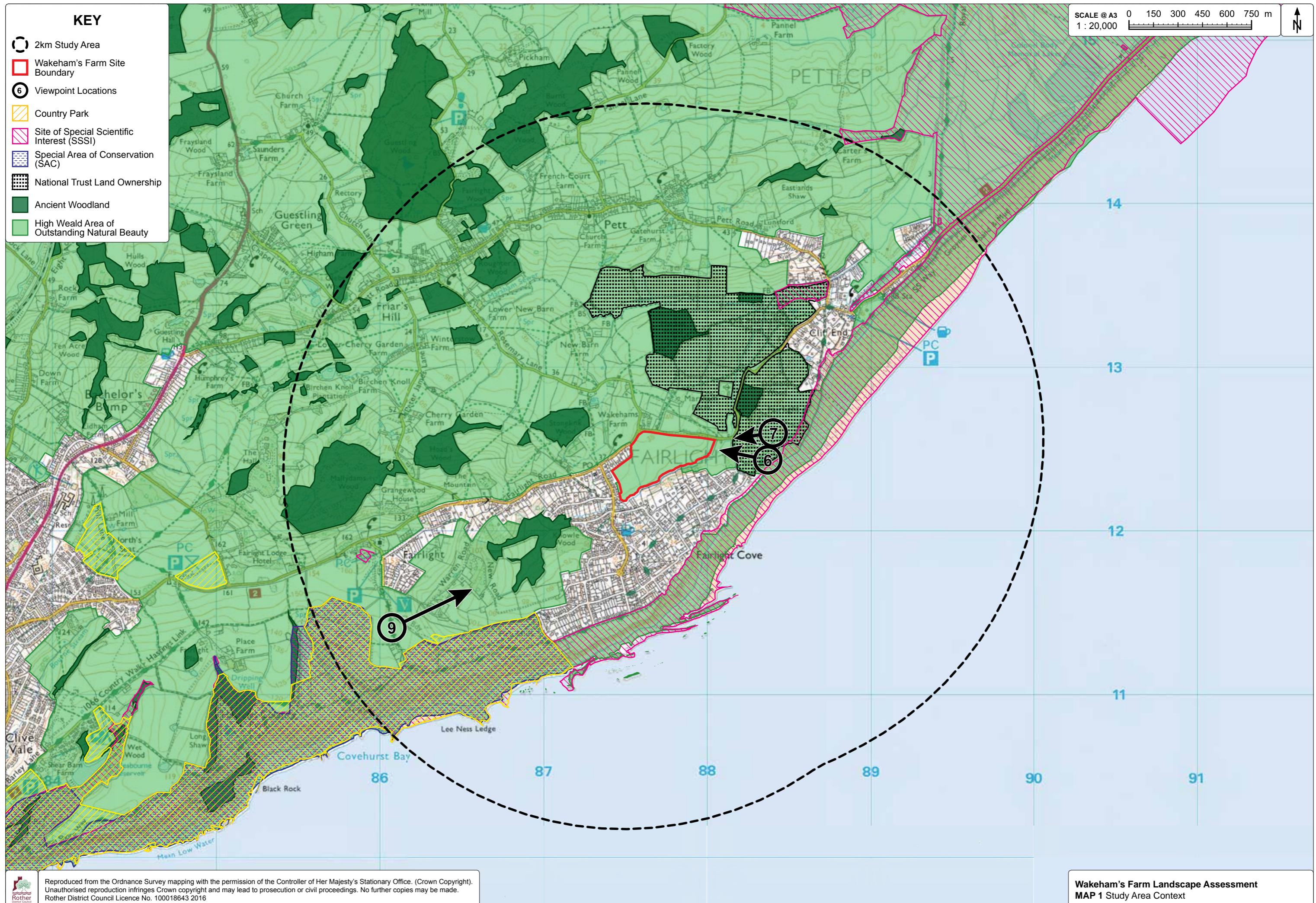
People value the scenic beauty of the landscape: its ancientness and sense of history around every corner enhanced by the rich array of appealing historic buildings and wonderful views. They appreciate the dark skies; enjoy the relative sense of tranquility and intimacy that this human scale landscape provides; the ability to get out and about through myriad public rights of ways and the opportunities to get close to nature.

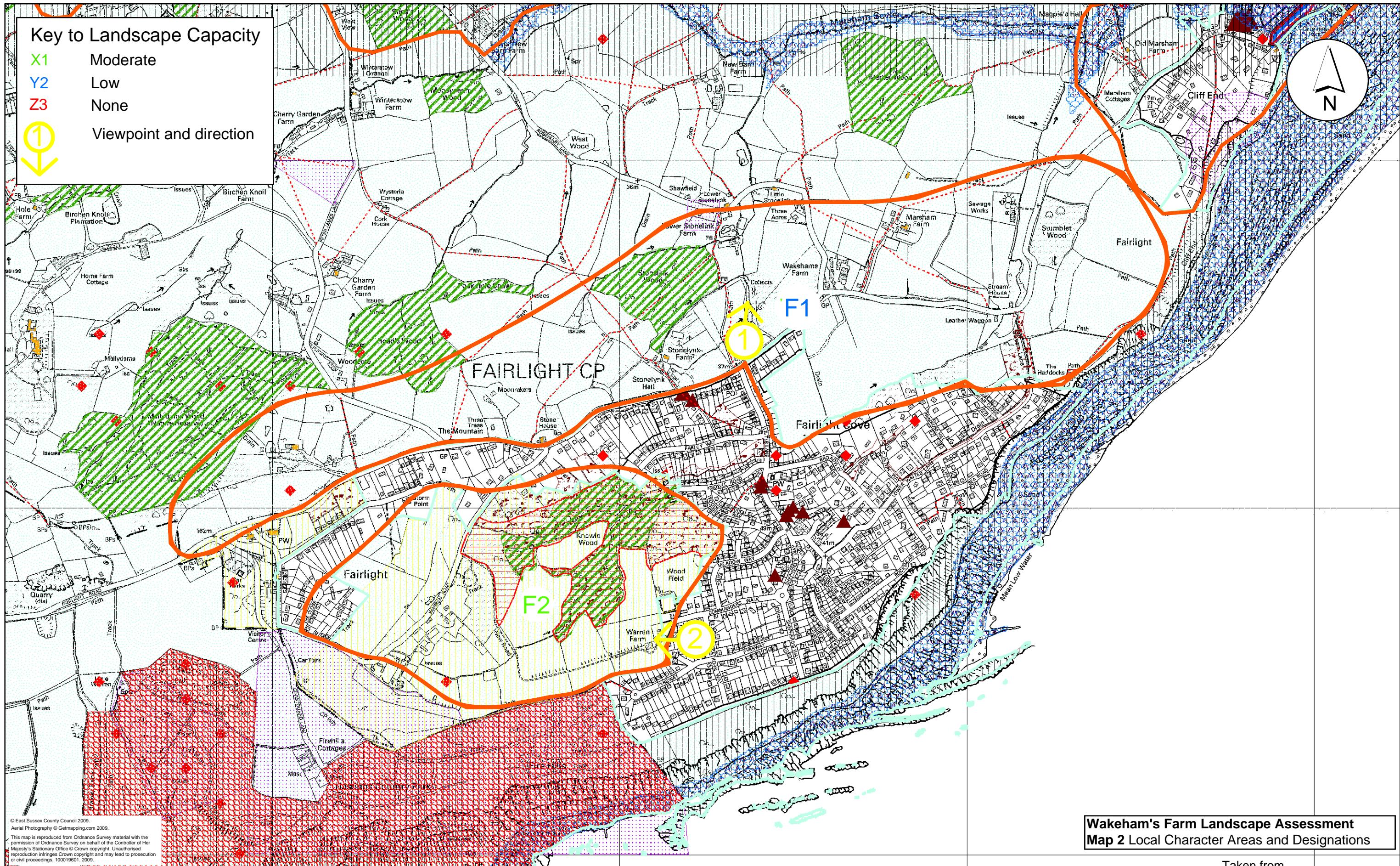
<sup>33</sup> Roland B. Harris, 'The Making of the High Weald' (2004)

**KEY**

-  2km Study Area
-  Wakeham's Farm Site Boundary
-  Viewpoint Locations
-  Country Park
-  Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
-  Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
-  National Trust Land Ownership
-  Ancient Woodland
-  High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

SCALE @ A3 0 150 300 450 600 750 m  
1 : 20,000





### Key

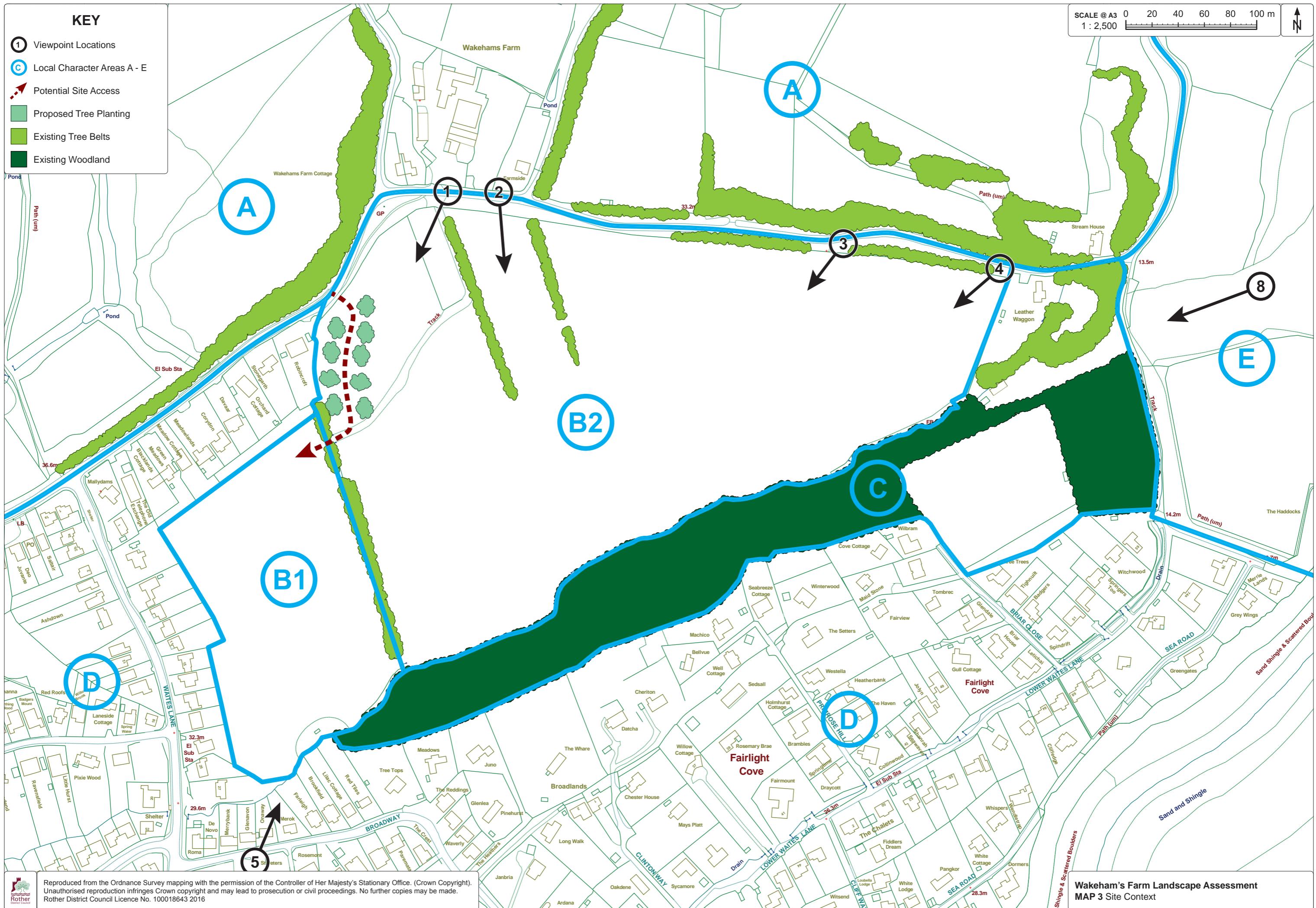
AONB (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty)	RAMSAR (Wetland of International Importance)	Main Rivers	Archaeologically Sensitive Areas
Strategic Gap	SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest)	Flood Zone 2 (2008)	Listed Buildings
Development Boundary	SNCI (Sites of Nature Conservation Importance)	Flood Zone 3 (2008)	Ancient Monuments
SPA (Proposed Special Protection Area)	Ancient Woodland (English Nature)	Groundwater Source Protection Zones (Source)	Protected Species (2005)
SAC (Special Areas of Conservation)	◆ Groundwater Source Protection Zones (SPZ)	■ Registered Parks and Gardens (RO)	◆ TPO (Tree Preservation Orders - Woodland)

— Rights of Way. Road Used as a Public Path
— Rights of Way. Footpath
— Rights of Way. Bridleway
— Rights of Way. Byway
◆ TPO (Tree Preservation Orders - Woodland)

Rother DC LDF Core Strategy  
Market Towns and Villages  
Landscape Assessment

Drawing: Fairlight Cove

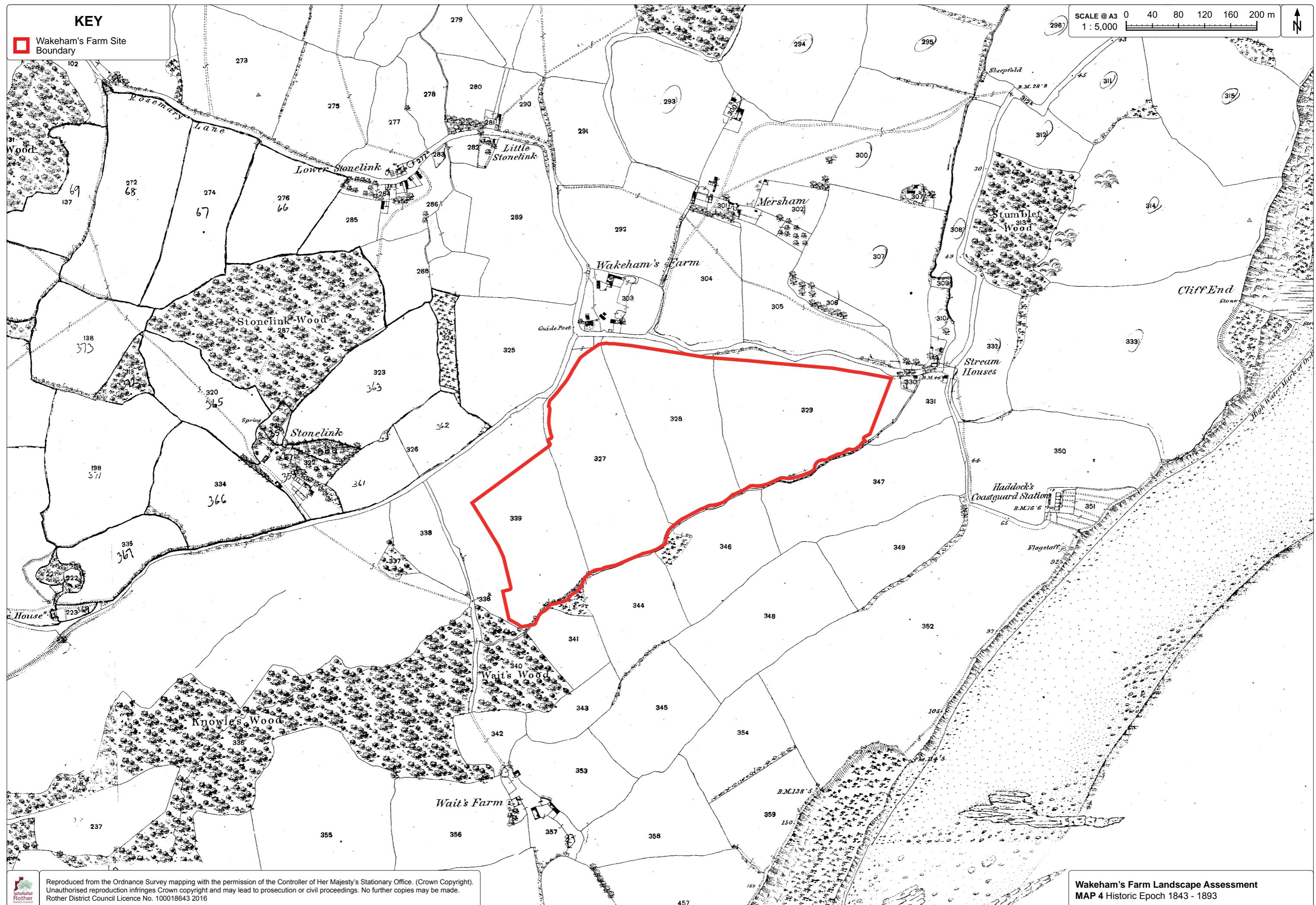
Scale: 1:10,000 Figure 27



**KEY**

Wakeham's Farm Site Boundary

SCALE @ A3 0 40 80 120 160 200 m  
1 : 5,000





Viewpoint 1. Taken from Pett Level Road (National Cycle Network) looking south west across AREA B2



**Viewpoint 2. Taken from Pett Level Road (National Cycle Network) looking south across area B2**



**Viewpoint 3:** Taken from the eastern end of the site area B2 on Pett Level Road (National Cycle Network) looking south west.



**Viewpoint 4. Taken from Pett Level Road (National Cycle Network) in the north east corner of the site Area B2**

**looking west**



**Viewpoint 5.** Taken from Fairlight Cove village hall car park looking in to Area B1.



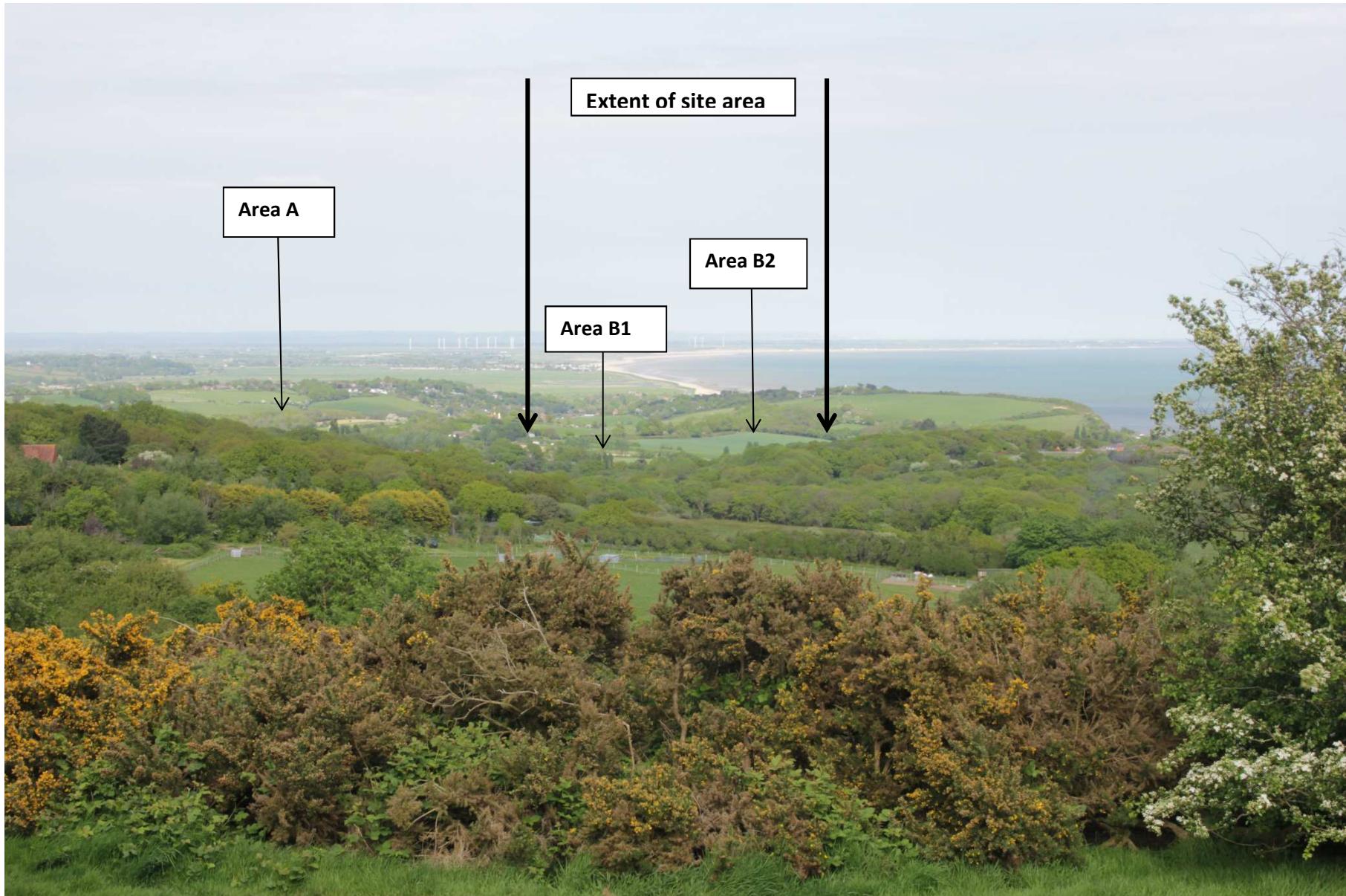
**Viewpoint 6.** Taken from the Saxon Shore Way coastal path footpath no. 27 taken from Area E.



**Viewpoint 7.** Taken from informal footpath on National Trust access land taken from Area E.



**Viewpoint 8.** Taken from informal footpath on National Trust access land, Area E.



**Viewpoint 9.** Taken from Hastings Country Park footpath no. 393