

PART 1 LANDSCAPE CHARACTER



1 Borough Landscape Character Overview

- 1.1 The distinctive landscape character of the borough arises from the varying combination of natural and cultural elements, particularly topography, geology and land use.

Topography and Geology

- 1.2 Topographically, the borough varies from the flat clay vale of the Low Weald in the north to the rolling plateau uplands of the High Weald in the south (see Figure 4). Geologically, it is predominantly underlain by hard sandstone strata: the Tunbridge Wells Sand Formation, and Wadhurst Clay (illustrated in Figure 5). Part of the area was lifted and elevated above the surrounding land over sixty five million years ago to form the High Weald, which reaches elevations of over 160 metres altitude over datum (AOD). In contrast in the north, the Low Weald falls to below 20 metres AOD. Here the strata predominantly comprise soft Weald Clay with occasional limestone sequences.
- 1.3 The geology of the area has been further influenced by a period of faulting that has disrupted the straightforward sequencing of the strata and resulted in exposures of softer beds at elevations above the hard sandstone strata.
- 1.4 Watercourses drain the upland areas and cut into the rock sequences, often revealing belts of Wadhurst Clay below the sandstone. There is a strong drainage hierarchy varying from small streams to moderate sized rivers, such as the Teise.
- 1.5 Collectively these influences have resulted in a smooth, rolling upland plateau landscape with ridgelines, strongly incised by deep ghyll valleys that cut through the landscape and, ultimately, open out to wide valley lowlands with broad, flat floodplains.

Land Use and Historical Influences¹

- 1.6 Superimposed upon, and relating to, these topographical and geological differences, a distinct pattern of land use has arisen which relates to the attributes of the land and the way these have been exploited historically. An understanding of the past history of the landscape is useful in providing a context for its present day appearance. The Historic Landscape Character in the context of the key historic periods is illustrated in Figure 8 which uses the HLC data for Tunbridge Wells borough; and key historic features across the borough are illustrated in Figure 9.

Woodland

- 1.7 Woodland across the borough is illustrated in Figure 6. Following the last Ice Age a dense forest covered much of the Weald, termed *Anderida silva* by the Romans; and later *Andredsweald*, shortened to *Weald* in Saxon charters. Agricultural development and settlement was slow because of the dense woodland cover and the difficulty in working the soils (the clay soils forming from the Wadhurst and Weald Clay strata are heavy and sticky whereas the sandstone strata create poor, acidic soils). Consequently the borough, and the High Weald in general has remained, and by Domesday (1086) the High Weald was the most densely wooded part of the country.
- 1.8 The woodland has been a valued and managed resource from at least the Iron Age, serving the iron industry, seasonal pannage and lesser rural industries. The industrial and transhumant

¹ Much of this information has been based on the High Weald AONB Management Plan (*The High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2014-2019* Published by the High Weald Joint Advisory Committee, March 2014).

economy and society played a pivotal role in defining the nature and extent of the woodland. More particularly, the nature of small landholdings and the deeply incised and ridged landform, created woodland characterised by small-scale woods (often sinuous or linear) concentrated in damp ghylls. Although sweet chestnut appears to have expanded later, the dominance of oak, with hornbeam, ash and other understorey tree species was established through ironworking and pannage. The alternative demands on woodland after the transhumant economy disappeared (including with coppice management, construction timber, timber for ships, chestnut coppice for hop poles and to fuel other rural industries including the iron and cloth industry), ensured a similar pattern, size and quantity of woodlands remaining into the 14th century and into the 20th century.

- 1.9 There remains extensive woodland cover across the borough amounting to 6,246 ha or 18.85% of land use. Of this 5,391 ha or 16.27% of the borough is ancient woodland and whilst this includes large blocks such as Bedgebury Forest and Marshley Harbour Wood there are more than 200 woodland blocks of ancient woodland that are less than 0.5ha. Management of woodland as coppice has been practiced since Roman times and still continues in many areas today although poor economic viability of coppicing has led to many areas being neglected in modern times or replaced with coniferous plantations².

Ghyll woodland³

A ghyll (or gill) woodland is generally understood as a steep-sided valley or ravine with a particularly humid and relatively stable microclimate resulting from the combination of long continuity of shade and near constant moisture. Such woods characteristically support ancient semi-natural woodland vegetation often with high biodiversity value. In the High Weald, ghylls may also refer to other streams which may be less wooded and more shallow, although they generally traverse areas of relatively high, heathy 'forest' land.

Medieval Land Use: Transhumance

- 1.10 The medieval practice of transhumance: the seasonal movement of people and animals between the settlements on the borders of the Weald and its interior, was one of the key elements which transformed the Weald into the settled landscape we see today. Early Jutish settlers from northern Kent created a series of drove routes to move livestock across the North Downs and into the forest of the Weald, to take advantage of the autumn forest grazing or 'pannage'.
- 1.11 Early settlement in the area is indicated by place names like *-den* or *-fold* meaning woodland pastures; distinctive curved boundaries aligned in a similar direction to roads and track; and the relationship between manors and their Wealden outliers suggesting the creation of dens partly through transhumance.

Transhumance: dens and droves in the early medieval period⁴

Transhumance: the seasonal movement of people and animals for summer and winter feeding. Men came from the North Downs and the North Kent Plain into the High Weald in the late summer. It is the key to the history of most of the High Weald and its legacy dominates the landscape.

Pannage: the practice of feeding pigs on acorns and fallen nuts in a forest. Pigs were brought to the High Weald to feed on acorns and mast during a short season in the autumn. Pannage from possibly as early as the prehistoric period to the Middle Ages helped ensure the survival of woodland in the Weald while other areas were cleared of trees.

Den: a woodland pasture, used for pannage. Originally they were seasonal; but men returned to the same wood-pastures and dens became permanent settlements. Dens were isolated, giving the High Weald its characteristic dispersed settlement pattern. Dens can be attributed to the

² A revision of the Ancient woodland Inventory for Tunbridge Wells Borough (October 2007).

³ Based on information in A revision of the Ancient woodland Inventory for Tunbridge Wells Borough (October 2007).

⁴ Based on information in Section 3 of *The Making of the High Weald*, Roland B. Harris (2004).

better soils in the High Weald.

Droves: the lanes used for transhumance, connecting the parent settlements to the dens. They survive in a sub-parallel pattern of roads and tracks today.

Iron industry

- 1.12 It was not until relatively late in Roman times, when trees were cleared to smelt the iron deposits of the Wadhurst clay, that the area started to be opened up. Iron working continued on a small and sporadic basis up until the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries when, with the introduction of water power, the High Weald became a centre of heavy industry. In the 16th century iron production became important again based on the blast furnace and led to the construction of leats, dams and hammer ponds to provide sufficient head of water for the forges. The decline of the iron industry in the area corresponded with the arrival of Flemish weavers who introduced the cloth trade and sheep-raising.
- 1.13 It has left a legacy of landscape features which are visible today, including ponds originating from iron ore barrow pits and hammer ponds. In addition, the need for charcoal led to the management of woodland for coppice, which remains one of the characteristic features of the area. Sweet Chestnut (*Castanea sativa*) is not a native tree but was introduced, probably by the Romans, for its timber and fruit and has been widely planted as coppice across the borough. Small pockets of chestnut coppice occur throughout the borough, but in some areas it is a strong characteristic feature.

Agricultural enclosure

- 1.14 Assarting of woodlands to create small fields separated by broad bands of woodland (ghylls, shaws and hedges) occurred primarily in the 12th and 13th centuries and was associated with the areas of poorer land. The result of assarting was that the pattern of the landscape resulting from the older agrarian landscape of transhumance and former dens, remained consistent. The fields were small in size and formed part of small-scale holdings. In essence, the landscape was enclosed before the post-medieval period of Enclosure, and therefore the pattern of the landscape today has a strong medieval character overlain in places by more modern changes.
- 1.15 The increasing importance of agriculture led to further woodland clearance and established a pattern of arable land on flatter areas with pasture fields found on the steeper, marginally productive valley slopes.
- 1.16 The incised landscape of the High Weald, along with the acidic and slowly permeable nature of the most extensive soils, has favoured livestock grazing over arable production and led to the development of an agricultural landscape of small fields bounded by hedges and shaws. The landscape and soils have constrained the development of more intensive agriculture with the result that non-profitable holdings have gone out of production. The relatively level landscape of the Low Weald, underlain by Weald Clay, has been more suited to the development of intensive agriculture than the High Weald and fruit and arable production are important.

Orchards and hops

- 1.17 Further agricultural developments included the introduction of fruit orchards and hop gardens in the 16th century. By the late 19th century these were the dominant land uses over much of the area. Although now in decline, orchards continue to be an important accent within the landscape and are one of the defining features within the borough. Where they do occur, intensively managed commercial orchards of fruit trees on dwarf root stock have replaced many of the traditional sheep grazed orchards. However, the delicate pink blossom which cloaks the landscape in spring time remains a memorable feature. Hop fields, once widespread, have seen a drastic decline in the last two decades and are now few and far between. Oasts and hopper huts remain as a reminder of this once widespread and locally important crop.
- 1.18 The landscape of the borough today combines many elements of its past history and use. The poor soils and low agricultural productivity have resulted in extensive semi-natural woodland cover being retained in a variety of forms providing a highly characteristic wooded framework to the landscape. They include the lush, linear ghyll woodlands that fill the deeply incised valleys of

the uplands, and the network of thick shaw boundaries around fields that have been gradually cleared from original woodland. Much of the upland area has also remained wooded, but re-planted in some locations. The large-scale plantations at Bedgebury and Hemsted introduce an element of remoteness and isolation into an otherwise small-scale and intimate landscape. Elsewhere, the sandy uplands, following removal of the original forest cover, have formed extensive tracts of heath which have been restored and managed in a number of locations.

Table 1-1 Summary of key historic periods and human influences

Category	Sub-category	Characteristics	Date
Prehistoric	Neolithic and Bronze Age (4000 BC – 700 BC)	First agriculturalists. Periodic woodland clearance and active communities indicated by Bronze Age barrows and iron age hill forts in Ashdown Forest.	500,000 BC – AD42
	Iron Age (700 BC – 42AD)	Establishment of early iron-working and pottery manufacturing sites. Possible introduction of drove routes.	
Roman	Roman	Wealden iron industry (ironworking sites and possible 'iron ways' used to bring out iron). Bloomeries (iron smelting furnaces), minepits and slag heaps leave a legacy of archaeological ponds and roads. Possible industrial links to the navy, with export to Dover. Management of woodland for the iron industry.	43 – 409 AD
Medieval	Early-medieval (Anglo-Saxons and Jutish settlers in the early 8 th century).	Transhumance, wood-pasture dens and drove roads.	410-1065
	Medieval	Assarting of woodlands to create fields. Emergence of late medieval villages founded on trade and non-agricultural rural industries, in the late 13 th and early 14 th centuries.	1066 – 1499 AD
Post-medieval	Early post-medieval (Tudor)	Resurgent iron industry – based on the blast furnace. Leats, dams and hammer ponds.	1500-1599 AD
	Late post-medieval	Introduction of fruit orchards and hop gardens.	1600-1799 AD
19 th century	Early modern	Arrival of railways in mid-19 th century brought further building and the growth of country houses and estates. Railways opened up the London market for hops, fruit and poultry.	1800-1913

Settlement and Building Character

- 1.19 The general settlement pattern is of small nucleated and linear villages dispersed throughout the borough, with a scattering of outlying farmsteads, hamlets and isolated rural dwellings. Many of the village settlements are located on the ridge tops and have a commanding view over the landscape. Consequently, they too can frequently be viewed from afar. Dispersed farmsteads are located within discrete, or enclosed, holdings. The small-scale of the holdings owed its origins to dens and, later, assarts, and ensured that the density of farmsteads was high.
- 1.20 Settlements are connected by a dense network of rural lanes, which dip into the intersecting ghylls and cross the plateaux. The dense and sub-radial pattern of narrow lanes and Rights of Way represents a visible survival of ancient transhumant routes – the droves, providing a visible legacy of the value ancient communities placed on the resources of the forest. The droves are distinctive in their radiating pattern, as well as their narrowness and frequently deeply sunken form (a result of age-old wear into soft geologies). Along with prehistoric ridge-top ways, these were one of the most distinctive characteristics of the High Weald in the 14th century, and remain so. The ancient lanes, with their flowery verges, woodland banks, and overhanging tree tunnels, are one of the most attractive and readily appreciated features of the borough. It also contains a multiplicity of public rights of way which enable hidden features to be seen.
- 1.21 The abundance of raw materials, including woodland to provide timber, and the presence of clays which make good quality bricks and tiles, has resulted in a highly picturesque vernacular. A

variety of traditional materials and styles occur. White painted weather-boarding, often with the windows picked out in dark shades, is common, for example, at Cranbrook. Elsewhere, the warm, rich orange/red of the brick and tile-hung buildings predominate, for example, at Goudhurst. Sandstone also occurs, predominantly associated with more prestigious buildings such as churches. Many villages are a jumble of different styles whereas in some settlements one particular form dominates. This variation introduces a sense of diversity within a unified whole, with the vernacular buildings greatly contributing to the strong sense of place found within the borough.

- 1.22 Certain types of individual buildings are also characteristic within the landscape. Scattered medieval half-timbered houses, and Wealden Hall Houses, where the upper storey overhangs the lower, remain throughout the wider countryside. There are a number of historic estates such as Finchcocks, Scotney and Sissinghurst Castles, and Bayham Abbey. Perhaps of all the buildings, oast houses are the most evocative. Clusters of their white-cowled roofs can be picked out across the agricultural landscape. Oast houses, together with hopper huts, are relics of the historic links of the area with hop picking. In spring, when the apple trees are blossoming, the scene is undeniably quintessentially Kent!
- 1.23 The document intends to describe distinguishable character areas rather than individual hamlets or groups of buildings. Local descriptions are often covered by other documents, e.g. Conservation Area Appraisals, listed building descriptions, Historic Parks and Gardens Registers. Light pollution as shown on CPRE's 'Night Lights' data is shown in Figure 7.

Valued Features and Qualities in Tunbridge Wells Borough

- 1.24 Features and qualities of particular value in certain areas are drawn out in each of the local landscape character area assessments. The features and qualities identified for each individual character area do not comprise an exhaustive list. There will be many other elements which are of varying value across the borough. Some features and qualities may be protected by other designations such as Conservation Areas or Local Wildlife Sites. However, some features and qualities may not have any statutory protection.
- 1.25 Table 1-2 shows a list of the valued features and qualities which are particularly valued generally across Tunbridge Wells Borough. This includes values associated with the High Weald AONB, since where such features are present they contribute to the special quality of the AONB or its setting.

Table 1-2 Valued Features and Qualities in Tunbridge Wells

Type of Value	Valued Features and Qualities across Tunbridge Wells Borough	Evidence
<i>Values associated with the High Weald AONB and its setting</i>		
Geology, landform, water systems and climate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deeply incised and ridged landform including ghyll streams which are of high scenic quality and are representative of the High Weald AONB. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maps, field survey, stakeholder consultation.
Settlement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dispersed historic settlement pattern of farmsteads, hamlets and late medieval villages founded on trade and non-agricultural rural industries. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maps, Historic farmsteads data, Conservation Area appraisals, stakeholder consultation.
Routeways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presence of ancient routeways in the form of ridge-top roads and a dense system of radiating droveways which are often narrow and deeply sunken. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Field survey, Ancient routeways AONB data, stakeholder consultation.
Woodland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ancient woodland, ghylls, shaws. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maps, Ancient woodland data, stakeholder consultation.

Type of Value	Valued Features and Qualities across Tunbridge Wells Borough	Evidence
<i>Field and heath</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small irregularly shaped fields often bounded by (and forming a mosaic with) hedgerows and small woodlands, typically used for livestock grazing. • Presence of heathland – representative of the AONB and a nationally rare feature. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maps, field survey, HLC • Heaths AONB data. • Stakeholder consultation.
<i>Views</i>	Views into or out of the AONB.	

Values of all landscapes

<i>Perceptual qualities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Particularly high scenic quality indicated by harmonious pattern of features or scenic contrasts. • Sense of tranquillity or 'remoteness'. • Important, distinctive or memorable views. • Dark skies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field survey, stakeholder consultation. • CPRE dark skies mapping. • Maps, field survey, stakeholder consultation.
<i>Historic character</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heritage designations (Conservation Areas, listed buildings, Scheduled Monuments). • Historic Parks and Gardens – both from the National Register compiled by Historic England, and from the Kent Compendium. • Intact historic (medieval) landscape character indicated by a prevalence of medieval historic landscape types. • Relics of the iron industry – including ponds, pits and archaeological features. • Routeways. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kent Compendium of Historic Parks and Gardens. • Register of Parks and Gardens by Historic England. • Stakeholder consultation. • HLC • HERS
<i>Natural character</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ecological or wildlife designations (e.g. Local Wildlife Sites, SSSI). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data from Natural England, TWBC, stakeholder consultation. • Kent Wildlife Trust and Kent Nature Partnership.
<i>Built character</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locally distinctive buildings (including castles, windmills, abbeys, oast houses, parish churches). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field survey, historic farmsteads data, listed buildings, stakeholder consultation.
<i>Recreational value, where experience of the landscape is important</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recreational routes. • Outdoor visitor attractions. • Quiet rural lanes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shown on OS 1:25,000 scale map, stakeholder consultation.
<i>Functional value</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special function as a setting to designated landscapes or towns, as a visual backdrop or open gap. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field survey, stakeholder consultation.

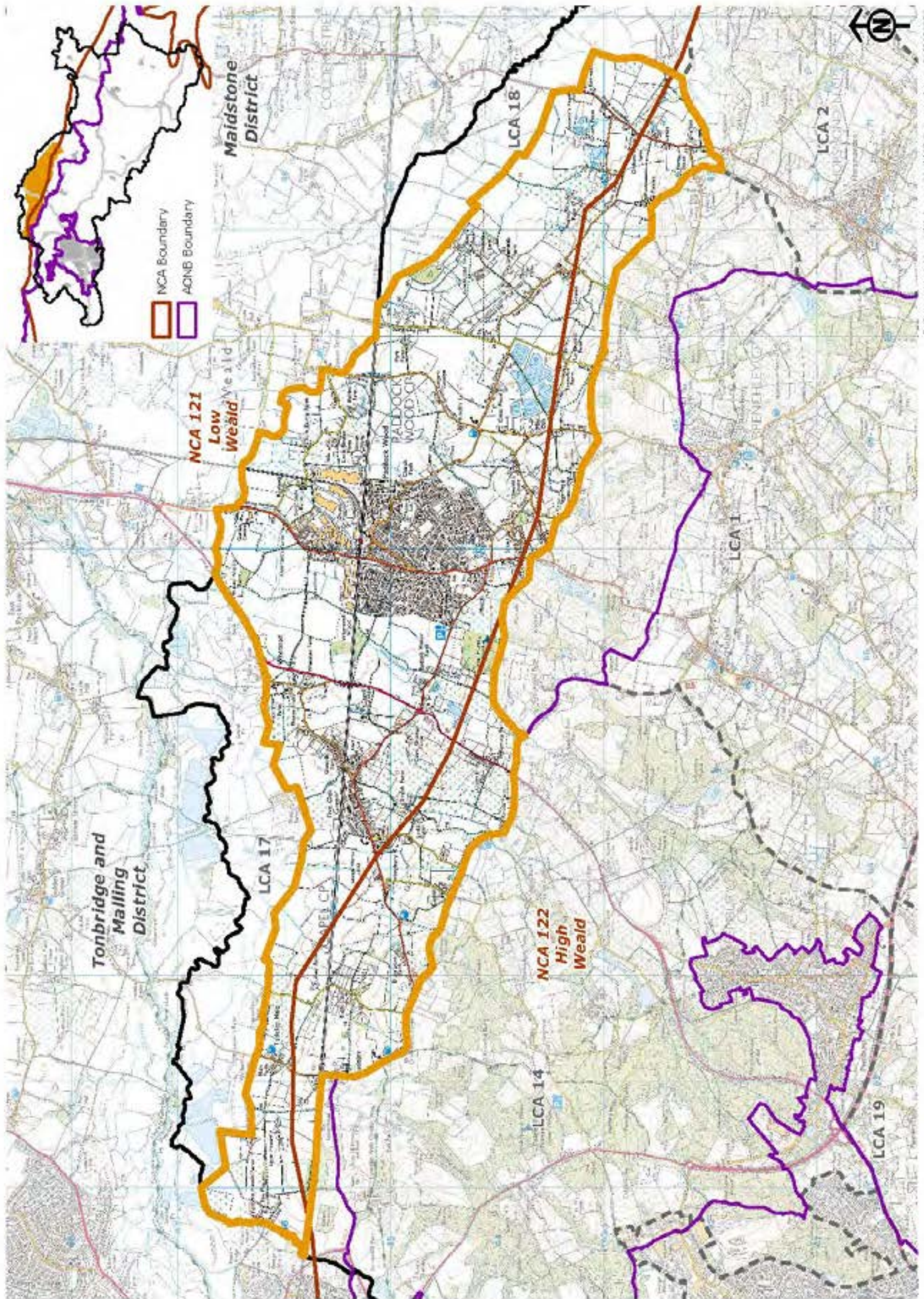
Summary

The borough has a distinctive and diverse landscape formed by a patchwork of agriculture, woodland, heathland and rural settlement superimposed upon a landform of rolling plateaux incised by thin ghyll valleys and wide river valley floodplains.

It is predominantly a rural, agricultural landscape of grazed pastures and arable fields highlighted with broad belts of orchards and occasional hop gardens, all set within a framework of woodland. The landscape presents a peaceful and tranquil character, often with a sense of rural remoteness, which belies its location in the populous South East of England. The strong wooded framework is provided by the upland blankets of coniferous plantation, irregular blocks of ancient woodland, thin ghyll woodlands nestled in the valleys and woodland shaw boundaries that harmoniously knit the various agricultural landscapes together.

Historic settlement pattern and built character provide a further layer of interest. Settlement is characterised by a dispersed pattern of historic farmsteads, hamlets and medieval villages associated with historic routeways, enriched with a locally characteristic vernacular style of brick, tiled, weather-boarded, half-timbered and sandstone buildings. Villages are often distinguished by their ridge top location and the historic farmsteads and clusters of oasts are distinctive elements in the rural landscape.

LCA 13 - Paddock Wood/Five Oak Green Low Weald Farmland



SUMMARY

This area occupies the gentle footslopes of the High Weald and is an important transition between the Fruit Belt and the flat arable and pasture land of the Low Weald and the Medway valley from which it derives much of its character. It is an agricultural landscape with extensive arable fields and local areas of fruit orchards and includes the urban area of Paddock Wood, which has grown up around the rail station.



Key Characteristics

- 1) Flat or gently undulating land at the footslopes, backed by the adjacent ridge of the High Weald plateau.

The area is geologically and topographically distinct, with the boundary broadly following the 40m AOD contour line at the junction of the clay vale with the sandstone dominated upland plateau. It is also visually distinctive, with a clear and sudden transition experienced when travelling on the lanes which lead down from the High Weald (e.g. from Castle Hill), or from the Millennium Viewing Point near Brenchley, where the landscape abruptly opens out revealing immense panoramas of the Low Weald. The ridgeline of the High Weald to the south provides enclosure to this otherwise fairly open, flat landscape.

- 2) A mixed farmed landscape with extensive open arable fields, dwarf fruit orchards and pockets of pasture.

Land cover is distinctly different from that of the High Weald. On the well-drained soils and gentler slopes there is intensive arable cultivation with large open fields of crops replacing the haphazard pattern of orchards dissected by thin ghyll woodlands. Current agricultural land use includes arable crops, top fruit, and grass, with agricultural production restricted by waterlogging and summer drought. Horticultural and arable crops have replaced many areas previously dedicated to orchards and hops.

Around the town of Paddock Wood the soils are subject to varying degrees of waterlogging due to a combination of high water tables and slowly permeable subsoils. In some areas the installation of field drains can help to overcome this but this characteristic limits the use for these areas.

Orchards of dwarf apple trees are present but on the flatter land of the Low Weald the orchards do not create the same patterns and visual interest as on the undulating slopes of the High Weald and in places present a rather flat and open landscape.

A richer more diverse landscape pattern occurs on the undulating slopes around Capel and Tudeley where a historic field pattern of fields with wavy and irregular boundaries are separated by thicker hedges of locally distinctive hornbeam. Elsewhere, land may not still be actively farmed and is used for hobby farming or horse grazing, particularly in the area surrounding Paddock Wood, where there is a characteristic range of post and rail and barbed wire fencing.

It is evident that many hedgerows have been removed and their position remains marked by low ridges. Elsewhere, hawthorn hedges form long, low oblong 'boxes'. Mature hedgerow oak trees often remain at irregular intervals along the former hedgeline and now impart an almost parkland quality to the arable landscapes. However, they are declining as indicated by a number of stag-headed trees, with cultivation occurring right up to the hedge base, although the stag-headed trees themselves remain an ecologically valuable feature of the landscape. Where extensive, large arable fields occur, a simple unity is re-established but at the cost of local variety, colour and features in the landscape.

- 3) Remnant alder or poplar windbreaks, as well as individual trees and hedges provide vertical elements in this open flat landscape.

The tall shelter hedges were planted to protect orchards and frequently remain along the roadsides after the orchards have been removed. Individual trees including mature oaks and willows as well as hedgerows lining roads or field boundaries, create visual interest and a landscape structure, providing framed views to the landscape beyond – both distant views (to the wooded ridge to the south) and near views to orchards and farms.

- 4) Crossed by a connecting network of rural lanes characterised by broad grass verges and ditches, hedges or trees.

A network of rural lanes crosses the area. These often make abrupt right angled turns as they skirt the edges of fields or where they intersect with the north-south ancient routeways

descending from the High Weald. These ancient droveways were historically used for transhumance, connecting the larger settlements of the North Downs and the North Kent Plain to the wood pasture, or 'dens' of the High Weald. Some, such as Church Lane, Capel, retain wooded banks at either side. Other lanes are lined by deciduous hedges and remnant hedgerow trees.

The railway line slices through the character area, the moving trains providing an identifiable feature within the sometimes homogenous landscape.

- 5) Large, arable fields drained by a network of ditches.

A network of ditches has been created because of the location of the area near to the floodplain of the River Medway. On the valley floor, this drainage has provided better quality soils, although the large, semi-regular field patterns produce a flat and open, intensively farmed appearance in places.

- 6) Very mixed settlement pattern with extensive suburban development at Paddock Wood and on a smaller scale at Five Oak Green, with the remainder of settlement characterised by dispersed farmsteads and small hamlets.

This is one of the few parts of the Borough that is not covered by an AONB designation. The area has consequently accommodated a substantial amount of new development in the 20th century, including single rural dwellings alongside roads and lanes in the wider countryside and large centres of development at Paddock Wood and Five Oak Green. The settlement pattern essentially comprises large-scale arable farm complexes which are highly visible elements in the landscape, small hamlets with a handful of dwellings such as Tudeley Hale and Capel and scattered dwellings alongside the lanes.

Paddock Wood is a town which has grown up mainly since the 1950s around the rail station. Initially it was an agricultural centre, with buildings including the grain drying store and hops marketing board warehouse adjacent to the railway. Extensive red brick suburban development now extends to the south of the station, with large-scale warehouse and industrial development to the north abutting the orchard landscapes.

Whetsted is a small, quiet dispersed linear hamlet of scattered houses and farms, vernacular oasts and brick and tile infilled by more modern 20th century development.

Five Oak Green is a modern linear development, which sprawls along the busy B2017 road. There is extensive suburban development backing the road and an abrupt transition with the farmland beyond. The village green provides a focal point and local character.

Capel and Tudeley, by comparison, are small hamlets, with traditional buildings clustered around the Grade I Listed sandstone churches. The stained glass windows at Tudeley's All Saints Church were designed by the early modernist artist Marc Chagall. The hamlets have strong vernacular character and focal points with frequent glimpsed views to the surrounding agricultural landscape.

- 7) A variety of building styles ranging from groups of oasts, which are highly visible, to more modern suburban houses and bungalows.

There are a large number of historic oast houses which are frequently visible throughout the landscape. Many are associated with small hamlet groupings, with many surviving from the medieval period, 17th and 18th centuries. They are very distinctive features within this open landscape. Many are now converted for residential use.

There are also numerous traditional historic buildings typical of the Weald, including timber framed houses and farmsteads. Vernacular materials include red brick, weatherboard, tiled roofs, hanging tile elevations, gable ends hipped or half-hipped roofs.

- 8) Open views across this intensively farmed landscape are frequently punctuated by the cowls of clustered groups of oast houses and extensive farm building complexes. The Greensand Ridge to the north provides a distinctive skyline, whilst the High Weald to the south provides wooded enclosure.

A variety of building styles ranging from groups of oasts, which are highly visible, to more modern suburban houses and bungalows. Large-scale farm units, incorporating silos and extensive storage sheds located intermittently but prominently throughout the flat open landscape.

Views out across the agricultural landscape provide a sense of rural calm, with the Greensand Ridge providing a distinctive skyline in views towards the north. Throughout the area the enclosing ridgeline of the High Weald to the south is an important feature, creating a wooded backdrop to this otherwise fairly open, flat landscape.

Evidence of Past Use and Cultural Evolution

- 1) Historically this was an agricultural landscape consisting of fields with occasional copses of trees and field boundaries. Former extraction pits and field ponds are common features in the landscape possibly indicating the medieval practice of 'marling' which involved digging pits and using marl for improving the soil. This was typical in the clay soils of the Weald and tends to leave a landscape of fairly irregular fields with wavy boundaries with ponds in the middle.
- 2) Historic drove roads and ironways ran in straight lines in a north-south direction. These lines are today followed by main roads which cross the area.
- 3) The old Hawkhurst Branch Railway Line cuts through the area. Known locally as 'the hop-pickers line', it operated between Paddock Wood and Hawkhurst, opened in 1892 until the line was closed in 1961. It was known for bringing hop-pickers each season from London's East End. A number of features from the Hawkhurst Branch have been retained such as the valances along the platform canopies, the main platform and some short sections of track remain to the east of the station. Paddock Wood station predates the Hawkhurst Branch line, originally built as a station along the Redhill to Ashford South Eastern Railways line in 1842 and is now operational as part of the Paddock Wood – Tonbridge line. The village of Paddock Wood quickly developed around the station.
- 4) Hop Pickers Huts at Hardlots, north of Pearson's Green – these were huts providing accommodation for hop pickers. Built sometime between 1843 and 1875. Their survival is relatively rare as they are being lost to redevelopment.

Natural Landscape and Priority Habitats

- 1) Foal Hurst Wood is an area of replanted ancient woodland and a Local Nature Reserve. It also contains meadowland at its northern border. A network of footpaths enables public access. Whetsted Wood is also an area of ancient woodland.
- 2) There are a small number of semi-natural woodland copses, including ash and hazel coppices and, on the lower land, some areas of damp, alder woodland. Small oak copses occur towards the High Weald, as at Foal Hurst Wood. These are important features and contribute to the wooded character of the ridgeline.
- 3) Much of the land is used for intensive arable farming or fruit production and only very small isolated fragments of woodland and patches of semi-improved pasture remain.
- 4) There are several areas of traditional orchards –such as at Colts Hill Place. Such areas are managed in a low intensity way and therefore identified as a BAP priority habitat for the wide range of wildlife they support. The mosaic of habitats may encompass fruit trees, scrub, hedgerows, hedgerow trees, orchard floor habitats and fallen dead wood.
- 5) Drainage ditches and channels, which run alongside some field boundaries and lanes, provide important bankside habitats, and can provide foraging corridors for animals such as water voles and bats.

Valued Features and Qualities

In addition to the valued features and qualities which apply to the whole of the Borough noted in Chapter 1, features and qualities considered to be of particular value in the landscape character area are identified below.

This area lies adjacent to the High Weald AONB. There are strong associations between this area and the AONB and the area enhances the character of the AONB landscape. The following key qualities related to the AONB are particularly valued in this character area:

- 1) The slopes in the south of the area which rise up to the High Weald and provide an important transition between the High Weald to the south and the Low Weald. The extensive, panoramic views from within the AONB from the scarp slope at the public Millennium Viewing Point in Brenchley which look across the whole of the character area, and across the Low Weald.
- 2) A network of ancient routeways through the area which continue into the AONB, are remnants of the historic practices of transhumance and exploitation of the resources of the forest.
- 3) Frequent historic farmsteads and oasts are conspicuous features in the landscape. These add local vernacular character typical of the Weald and the AONB, including oast houses, timber-framed farm buildings and details such as clay tiles and hipped roofs.

Other features and qualities considered to be of particular landscape and visual value to the character area include:

- 4) Areas which retain a sense of the historic landscape, where the irregular and sinuous field boundaries are overlaid on more undulating slopes, divided by hedgerows and trees – particularly around the small hamlets of Tudeley and Capel.
- 5) The hamlets of Tudeley and Capel which retain strong vernacular character as well as views to the surrounding countryside.
- 6) The old Hawkhurst Branch Railway Line which cuts through the area and provides a local ecological and potential recreational resource, as well as serving as a reminder of the culture of ‘the hop- pickers line’ and the local hop industry in the area.
- 7) Areas of woodland, trees and hedgerows – particularly the small remaining fragments of ancient woodland, which are particularly important for visual character as they are relatively fragmented in places, as well as being important for recreation and biodiversity.
- 8) Traditional orchards which are managed in a low intensity way provide habitat mosaics along with a network of hedgerows, mature oak trees, wide grass verges and occasional woodlands.

Detractors and Opportunities

In addition to the detractors noted in Chapter 3, features which detract from the character area are identified below.

Detractors and Opportunities

- 1) Extensive suburban residential development at Paddock Wood and, to a lesser extent, at Five Oak Green, often with a flat and open urban/rural interface. The settlements are

frequently ringed by poorly managed urban fringe countryside. Large buildings on the edge of Paddock Wood are visually conspicuous due to their white or light colour which contrasts with the surrounding green/ brown landscape.

*New development around the edge of existing settlements **should** be unobtrusive and tie in with the local landscape character through appropriate planting treatments. It would be beneficial to target landscape enhancements **anywhere but most importantly** along the transport corridors and settlement margins.*

- 2) A proliferation of urban fringe land uses including machinery storage/haulage, particularly on the flatter land around Paddock Wood.
- 3) Pockets of degraded farmland where post and barbed wire fencing has replaced hedgerows and buildings associated with paddocks or hobby farming occur.

Enhancements should aim to promote sympathetic management of this land to retain its countryside character, particularly in association with development proposals.

- 4) Conifer hedges are also a locally dominant feature and occur in association with the rural residential development scattered along the roads and lanes. **More appropriate species of hedges should be sought as appropriate.**
- 5) The pylons which cut across the foot of the slope can be a significant visual detractor.

Landscape Strategy

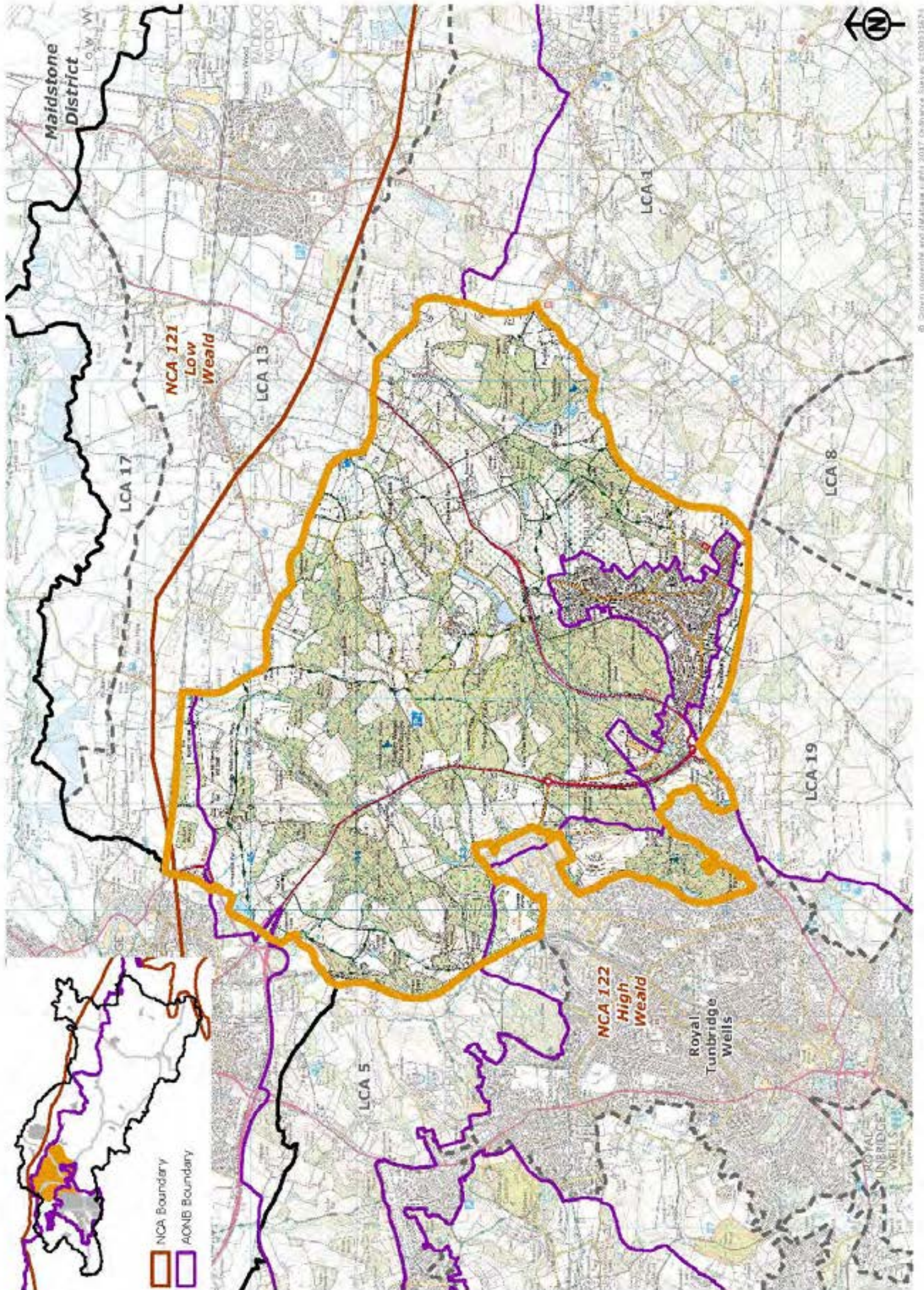
Borough landscape considerations are detailed in Chapter 3, and local objectives are outlined below.

Landscape Strategy

The Local Character Area should be considered in the context of the High Weald AONB, particularly the role the character area plays in the setting of the AONB. The valued features and qualities of the landscape should be conserved and enhanced.

- 1) Respect the vulnerability of the slopes rising up to the south to new developments/land use change. New developments can be highly visible over a wide area on these slopes and detract from the essential countryside character.
- 2) Consider the vulnerability of this open lowland landscape to built development which is likely to be very visible in views. Pylons which cross east to west, at the foot of the High Weald slope, are a significant visual detractor within this flat, open landscape.
- 3) Ensure that any urban/suburban edges are tied into the local landscape through planting (e.g. hedges, shelter belts, small woodland copses and orchards) as well as ensuring an appropriate graduation in scale of built development to create an appropriate setting and sympathetic transition from urban to rural.

LCA 14 - Pembury Forested Plateau



SUMMARY

A contained area comprising large-scale forest cover with a large proportion of ancient woodland. The wooded mosaic surrounds an extensive area of lowland heathland, which has been recreated from plantation and arable farmland.



Key Characteristics

- 1) Sandstone forming a high plateau rising to rounded hill tops in the centre of the forest, cut by long valleys of streams flowing northwards to the Medway, creating the locally characteristic topography of deep valleys and ghylls.

The sandstone forms undulating slopes towards Southborough, around Amhurst Bank and the land immediately surrounding Pembury village. Castle Hill, at 132m AOD, with its prominent mast, is an example of a rounded hill top in the centre of the forest.

- 2) Extensive woodland and forest cover dominates and tends to conceal local topographic variations and limits views both within the area and beyond.

The character area is defined by its land cover comprising an extensive wooded mosaic, including extensive areas of ancient and semi-natural woodland and ancient replanted woodland as at Snipe Wood, Brakey Bank Wood, The Plants, Marshley Harbour Wood, Brenchley Wood and Cinderhill Wood. There are huge swathes of managed sweet chestnut coppice plantation, derelict mixed coppice and a large area of coniferous pine and larch forest.

The extensive forest cover tends to disguise local topographic variations. The nature of the land cover with its large-scale blocks of woodland means that the area is very contained, lacking the extensive views out across successive ridges that are common in many other parts of the High Weald. However, there are occasional 'surprise' views from clearings in the woodland, which, due to their relative elevation are long-reaching and offer a sense of vastness across wooded ridges and slopes, such as views northwards to the Greensand Ridge past Tonbridge.

- 3) Wooded slopes form a backdrop to views from the surrounding areas including from Royal Tunbridge Wells.

The wooded hills and slopes of the character area form a dark, dense wooded backdrop in many views, including views from the north such as the approach to Tunbridge Wells along the A21 and the wooded backdrop it provides to views from within the north-eastern part of Royal Tunbridge Wells and Southborough. Recent upgrading of the A21 to dual carriageway has opened up the highway to new views and although mitigation planting has been carried out it will be some time before the full effects will be appreciated.

- 4) Within the woodland, grassland pastures bounded by thick shaws and sweeps of parkland provide an important contrast.

The wooded areas are interspersed by open areas of traditional grazing pasture, surrounded by thick shaws which provide a welcome contrast with the dense tree cover. This results in a rich landscape pattern with historic origins – much of the landscape retains a historic field pattern of medieval assarts cut out of the surrounding woodland, of medium to large fields with wavy and irregular boundaries.

Although much of the grassland which permeates the woodlands has been improved, small pockets of permanent or semi-improved acidic pasture remain on some slopes such as the Alder stream valley, Amhurst Bank and at Badsell Farm. Swathes of sheep grazed acidic pastures, studded with mature parkland trees, are also a distinctive landscape feature at Somerhill Park, Pembury Hall and Home Farm.

Further diversity is provided by the gentle sweeps of parkland, in the small valley at Pembury Hall at the heart of the forest area and in the north of the area at Somerhill Park, where there is also quite an extensive area of wildflower grassland. Other areas of wildflower grassland at Pembury Walks and in the area of orchard to the east of Pembury village, add visual interest and natural character.

Along the clay valley north of Pembury, and along the ridge to the north-east of Pembury, there is a belt of orchards and fruit farms. Hops, which were formerly an important component of the land cover in this area, are now scarce.

- 5) Areas of relict heathland on the light soils of the sandstone ridges with two extensive areas of heathland restoration at Pembury Heath and Brenchley/Cinderhill Wood.

Throughout the area, the high sandstone ridges, with their light sandy soils, were formerly covered by heathland, in comparison with the heavily wooded clay valleys. There are areas of restored heathland at the Tudeley Woods RSPB Reserve – in Newbars Wood and Marshley Harbour Wood, and at Cinderhill Wood and at Horse Pasture. These heathlands form an attractive landscape and rich natural resource to which rare heathland plants and animals are returning. The whole of the Pembury area represents a biodiversity resource of very great potential with its mix of semi-natural woodland and lowland heathland.

- 6) A relative sense of remoteness despite its proximity to Royal Tunbridge Wells, Tonbridge and two main roads slicing through the area. Well served with recreational routes allowing good access on foot.

The large-scale forest cover and visual enclosure by landform, combined with little sense of modern intrusions in the heart of the area (such as main roads) provides a remote 'secretive' quality, despite the two main roads through the area and its proximity to the towns of Royal Tunbridge Wells and Tonbridge.

The scale of the landscape, with its extensive woodland cover, allows it to absorb considerable numbers of people for recreation (walking or cycling) without detracting from its sense of peacefulness. The many leisure opportunities include the Pembury Walks, part of the Tunbridge Wells Circular Walk (which joins with the High Weald Landscape Trail in the east of the area), footpath routes around Nature Reserves such as Tudeley Woods and Barnett's Wood.

- 7) A self-contained landscape with a 'remote' secretive character with comparatively little settlement apart from Pembury village.

The area is distinctive for the relative absence of settlement and despite the proximity of Royal Tunbridge Wells and Tonbridge there are surprisingly few houses (although some houses are located along the eastern boundary). The only significant settlement is the village of Pembury. Settlement is particularly sparse in the densely forested area to the west of the Maidstone Road (A228), which has an 'empty' almost remote feel. Much of the land in this area remains part of large estates (Hadlow and Bayham) and is largely unsettled, although several vernacular estate cottages survive.

In addition, the area supports a number of institutions, including Pembury Hospital and Kent College and the Somerhill schools. Despite being relatively large scale buildings they generally integrate well into the landscape as a result of sensitive siting and generously proportioned landscaping and planting surrounding them, with the tree canopy generally remaining the prominent visual element. The principal building of note is the reddish coloured sandstone Jacobean mansion at Somerhill Park on the northern edge of the character area.

- 8) Occasional rural lanes, vernacular buildings and small scale irregular fields provide an intricate pattern and human scale as well as a sense of history.

A few small rural lanes cross through the area, generally following a north-east/ south-west orientation along the ridges. Many roads, including the A21 and Maidstone Road, follow the line of ancient routeways. Other rural lanes are sunken and winding, lined by wooded banks or grass verges and provide a sense of enclosure and seclusion.

A relatively strong survival of isolated, dispersed historic farmsteads dating from the medieval period to the late 19th century provides a rich historic character. Vernacular buildings include tile hung and weatherboarded farmhouses, as well as formal stone buildings such as the Church of St Peter and vernacular estate cottages. Vernacular details include red and orange brick on building facades and low boundary walls, and hipped roofs. A small number of oasts remain as a testimony to the importance of 19th century hop farming in the area.

Pembury Village: This is a ridgetop settlement, although the still dense surrounding forest cover means that it is not a visually dominant feature in the landscape. The self-contained character of the village is accentuated by physical severance from its surroundings by the road bypasses, which

run to the south and to the west. Pembury, nevertheless, retains its character as a 'forest village' with tree cover extending up to the settlement edge.

It has an individual character and sense of separateness from Royal Tunbridge Wells. Distinctive features of Pembury village include its 'forest' setting and wealth of tree cover, including both specimen evergreen and ancient forest trees. The village green serves as the main focal point of the village, overlooked by a pub (a former coaching inn) and detached houses of formal/ grand character which provide aesthetic interest. The village retains a sense of time depth, particularly in features such as the ancient routeways, church and some listed buildings.

Evidence of Past Use and Cultural Evolution

- 1) The densely forested area around Pembury formed one of the heartlands of the medieval iron industry.
- 2) Many remains of iron working (bloomeries), including charcoal hearths and furnace ponds, can be found within the woods.
- 3) The more open ridges provide important strategic sites and communication routes including ironways that connected into the industrial centres.
- 4) The earthwork ramparts visible on the high ridge of Castle Hill mark the site of an Iron Age contour hill fort, which is a Scheduled Monument. The site may be linked to an early pre-Roman iron industry.
- 5) Ancient routeways serve as a reminder to past routes used as old droveways. Some ancient routeways have been developed into major roads (e.g. the A21 and A228 Maidstone Road) but others have not (for example part of the Tunbridge Wells Circular Walk and the road that crosses through Somerhill Park). Routes converge at Pembury Conservation Area.
- 6) Somerhill Park (Grade II listed) is an early 19th century formal, terraced garden probably laid out by William Sawrey Gilpin and further developed in the later 19th century, set within a late 18th to early 19th century park. The Grade I listed Jacobean mansion, Somerhill is now home to The Schools at Somerhill. JMW Turner painted a view of the west front in 1810 which is now housed in the National Gallery of Scotland. Historically, Somerhill was a hunting chase in the 13th century which formed part of the demesne land of the Clares as part of Tonbridge.
- 7) The main road between Pembury and Royal Tunbridge Wells was historically called 'Wood gate' and may have been one of the medieval droveways into the wooded pastures to the west and south of Royal Tunbridge Wells. Greggs Wood is a remnant of assart woodland of this former forested chase.

Natural Landscape and Priority Habitats

- 1) The semi-natural woodlands are an extremely important biodiversity resource with large areas designated as a LWS. There are particularly rich and diverse areas on ghylls and flushes at the base of the sands, with sessile oaks, ash and hazel.
- 2) There is an extensive area of woodland around the Knights Wood development which is being brought into positive management with public access, after years of neglect.
- 3) Tudeley Woods RSPB Reserve contains recently restored heathland and habitat improvements including coppiced woodland which has opened up the woodland floor and created habitats for woodland flowers and butterflies. There are more than 1,000 species of fungi in the woods as well as orchids, bluebells and primroses.
- 4) Cinderhill heathlands are managed and protected. The combination of woodland and heaths make this an important area for reptiles and birds with all four species of common

reptile being found in woodland close to Pembury village.

- 5) Loud birdsong and the extensive spring carpet of woodland wildflowers are a testament to the success of active management to restore the working coppice woodland habitat.
- 6) Small remnant pockets of permanent or semi-improved acid grassland pasture remain on steeper slopes such as the Alder stream valley and Amhurst Bank. Swathes of sheep grazed acidic pastures, studded with mature parkland trees, are also a distinctive landscape feature at Somerhill Park, Pembury Hall and Home Farm.

Valued Features and Qualities

In addition to the valued features and qualities which apply to the whole of the Borough noted in Chapter 1, features and qualities considered to be of particular value in the landscape character area are identified below.

The majority of the area lies within the High Weald AONB, except for a small area north of the B2017 in the north of the area, areas adjacent to the north-eastern part of Royal Tunbridge Wells, Pembury village and the area between Pembury and Royal Tunbridge Wells.

The following key qualities related to the AONB are particularly valued in this character area:

- 1) Historic farmsteads, which are dispersed across the character area, provide local distinctiveness, historic interest from their local materials and distinctive steep, clay tile and hipped roofs.
- 2) Ancient routeways, valued for their history and sense of place, particularly where they are narrow, deeply sunken and edged with trees, hedges and boundary banks.
- 3) Ancient woodland, ghylls and shaws. Woodland managed as coppice is valued for its sense of local distinctiveness in its cultural links to historic management in the past. Woodland is also of particular value where it is publicly accessible – for recreation for local communities – including the population of nearby Royal Tunbridge Wells, and for biodiversity.
- 4) The small, irregularly shaped historic fields, bounded by hedgerows and small woodlands, valued for the human-scale pattern they create in contrast with the larger scale woodlands, and the sense of history they hold with past farming activities.
- 5) Heathland, valued for its relative rarity in the national context, as well as the rare species it supports, its value as a reminder of the past state of the landscape and for its scenic qualities.

Other features and qualities considered to be of particular landscape and visual value to the character area include:

- 6) A strong natural character which is readily and extensively accessible on foot, including Council owned woodland (Marshley Harbour Wood), and land owned by public bodies such as the RSPB and woodlands around the Knights Park development.
- 7) The woodlands, wooded ghylls and mosaic of pasture, heathland, wildflower meadows provide a rich perceptual experience for the local population to experience wildlife from footpaths and recreational routes.
- 8) The sense of relative remoteness and a 'secret' quality provided by the enclosure of woodland and ridges, with occasional glimpsed views from high points. The relative lack of modern intrusions such as main roads and views of modern development, particularly in the core of the character area, provides a valued sense of 'escape'.

- 9) The sense of history provided by features including estates, parklands, historic farmsteads, the historic landscape pattern of assarts and fields, wooded ghylls, ancient woodland and rural lanes.

Detractors and Opportunities

In addition to the detractors noted in Chapter 3, features which detract from the character area are identified below.

Detractors and Opportunities

- 1) Impact of busy main roads cutting through the landscape introducing background noise, visual intrusion and movement, including the A21 – especially the new flyover at Longfield Road.

Ensure locally sensitive screen planting (as appropriate), in association with development proposals along main road corridors, to reduce visual impact and the wider infiltration of traffic noise.

- 2) Vulnerability to visual effects of the development beyond the AONB boundary, including the industrial estates and warehouse developments on the north east edge of the town of Royal Tunbridge Wells and in the area between Pembury and Royal Tunbridge Wells.

Opportunities for woodland planting around Royal Tunbridge Wells should be considered to help integrate this urban edge into the forested landscape and provide a measure of screening from the AONB. The former tip site represents an important opportunity for woodland planting. Species mixes and design should reflect the existing woodland character of the area.

- 3) Severance of Pembury village from its forest setting by the A21 and vulnerability of severed land to development.

Seek further opportunities to re-integrate Pembury village visually into its forest setting, particularly as part of the landscaping of infrastructure and other development proposals. The existing Pembury Walks, providing pedestrian access out from the village, are a good example. The retention and management of areas of woodland and pasture severed by the bypass is a priority.

- 4) The communications masts at Castle Hill introduce a sense of modern intrusion in the landscape and are widely visible.

Proposals for tall structures should be carefully considered in terms of potential landscape and visual impacts.

Landscape Strategy

Borough landscape considerations are detailed in Chapter 3, and local objectives are outlined below.

Landscape Strategy

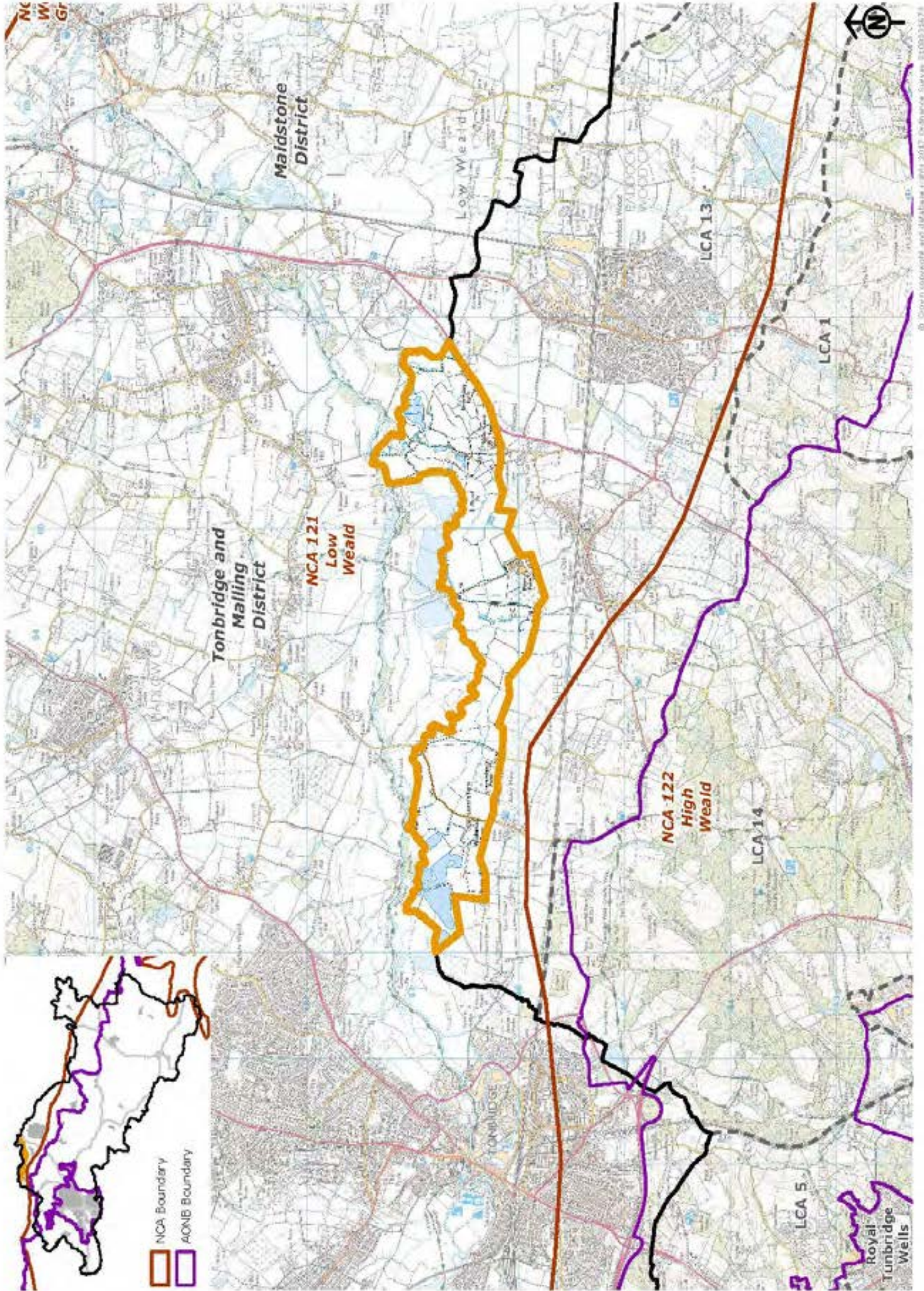
The Local Character Area should be considered in the context of the High Weald AONB, and the potential role of certain parts of the character in the setting of the AONB. The valued features and qualities of the landscape should be conserved and enhanced.

- 1) Ensure development proposals will not impact on the 'remote', 'secretive' and 'empty'

forested and heathland character of this area.

- 2) Conserve the forested character of Pembury village and its setting. In this respect the areas of forest that lie within the A21 such as Forest Wood and Marshley Harbour Wood are particularly important to the character and setting of the village.
- 3) Conserve the 'village' character of Pembury, ensuring that new development has character, and appropriately designed landscaping to ensure it respects its surrounding context. New development should have a strong relationship to Pembury rather than looking 'outwards' (i.e. potential sprawl). Pembury village has potential for enhancement in relation to the sense of place at the high street, and enforcement of its focal centre, such as increasing vibrancy of local services and public realm.
- 4) The extensive industrial estates and associated development on the north east edge of Royal Tunbridge Wells significantly impinges on the rural character but benefits from some containment by woodland and topography. Any new development should not exacerbate this effect and will need a firm boundary of robust tree and woodland planting.

LCA 17 - Medway River



SUMMARY

A wide corridor of low lying arable land relating to the much larger linear character area of the River Medway that extends beyond the Borough boundary. It is large-scale, even featureless landscape, virtually uninhabited but with a network of drainage channels and ditches providing pattern and diversity at the micro-scale.



Key Characteristics

- 1) A flat open and large-scale mainly arable valley landscape.

This area relates to a much larger linear character area of the River Medway that continues beyond the Borough boundary. Although the actual river course lies wholly outside the Borough, it has a major influence on the local landscape character.

The wide clay vale is almost entirely overlain by river gravel and brickearth with an extensive band of alluvium alongside the river channel and extending into the character area towards Whetsted. The land lies mainly below 20m AOD and the flat low land with wide horizons and long views is the dominant characteristic. To the south the rising wooded slopes of the High Weald are an important visual boundary.

The land is predominantly classed as Grade 3 agricultural land with some areas of Grade 2. Generally the land cover comprises large, open, arable fields. Many hedges have been removed to create the large fields, although occasional stag-headed oaks and hawthorn remain standing, marking the location of former field boundaries. The functional unity of the landscape has been changed from that of traditional wet meadows hedged and grazed to open cultivated fields. The former visual harmony has also been disrupted and it now consists of large areas of monochromatic blue-greens of vegetable crops with incomplete or lost hedges often creating a neglected air.

- 2) Few settlements or roads in the floodplain due to seasonal flooding, with built development limited to the higher ground at the boundaries of the area. Very open character lacking in prominent features with a feeling of isolation.

The risk of flooding means that the valley is virtually unsettled with few built elements located on the valley floor and only occasional large farmsteads, such as Latter's Farm, Sherenden Farm and Moat Farm, located at the higher ground at the edge of the character area. Typical vernacular materials include red brick, gable roofs and red tiles. Many buildings are simple in form, creating simple lines with the simple landscape.

- 3) Large-scale arable farm units including extensive outbuildings and grain stores occur at the lip of the valley floor.

These farmsteads, which include extensive out buildings and grain stores, are often highly visible, although not necessarily discordant within the large-scale open landscape. Simple built forms and natural materials such as black painted timber help to integrate these larger developments into the landscape.

- 4) Large artificial lakes, probably associated with previous gravel extraction, and localised areas of woodland planting.

Large, angular lakes in the places closet to the river – in the west of the area north-west of Tudeley Hale and in the east of the area north of Whetsted Road, possibly associated with previous gravel extraction sites. An area of broadleaved woodland links up some smaller areas of ancient woodland north of Stone Castle Farm.

- 5) A network of slow moving water channels and tributaries including the Alder Stream and Hammer Dyke introduce pattern and diversity into the landscape at the micro-scale.

A closer view of the smooth, flat, blue-green floodplain reveals a network of sunken water channels and tributaries including the Alder Stream and Hammer Dyke, creating local pattern and diversity in the landscape. These slow moving linear water bodies are frequently over-deepened with arable farming extending right up to the bank, and can only be discerned by a line of rougher textured vegetation on the immediate water's edge; in early summer white cow parsley signifies their presence.

- 6) Isolated, due to severance to the south by the rail line running east-west and the River Medway to the north, with a limited road and lane network. However, there is a high concentration of footpaths which cross the area enabling walkers to experience this sense of isolation.

Outside the character area, the Tonbridge-Paddock Wood railway line exerts a strong influence. This runs in an east-west direction on slightly higher ground at the lip of the valley, severing the valley from the inhabited lower slopes of the High Weald plateau and further increasing the sense of isolation.

The absence of settlement means that very few roads cross the character area, with the exception of the north to south running roads between Tudely Hale and Golden Green and a part of the A228 Whetsted Road along the eastern boundary. These road corridors introduce noise and movement into this otherwise quite featureless, uninhabited valley landscape. The absence of settlement in general results in very dark skies across the area.

Although the road and lane network are limited, there are a number of footpaths which extend across the valley floor and link into the Medway Valley Walk on the river's edge (outside the Borough boundary).

Evidence of Past Use and Cultural Evolution

- 1) There is little historical evidence of human occupation in this area. However, listed farmhouses such as Moat Farmhouse (previously a moated site) date from the 16th / 17th century (possibly earlier origins), indicating the floodplain was farmed since then. Historic farmhouses display typical Wealden vernacular including timber-framed buildings with tile hanging and red brick and add a layer of attractive historic interest to the landscape.

Natural Landscape and Priority Habitats

- 1) Drainage ditches tend to be regularly cleared and generally contain few species, although occasional patches of bur-reed, bulrush and flag iris within the channels are an important feature.
- 2) The pattern of copses, ditches and tributaries has considerable biodiversity potential, under appropriate management.

Valued Features and Qualities

In addition to the valued features and qualities which apply to the whole of the Borough noted in Chapter 1, features and qualities considered to be of particular value in the landscape character area are identified below.

This area does not lie within the High Weald AONB. However, the following key qualities related to the AONB are particularly valued in this character area:

- 1) Views to the rising wooded slopes of the High Weald to the south provide an important visual feature in the area.

Other features and qualities considered to be of particular landscape and visual value to the character area include:

- 2) Sense of isolation, relative remoteness and dark skies across the whole area is particularly valued in the context of the proximity of the area to larger settlements including Tonbridge to the west and Paddock Wood to the east.

- 3) The small remaining fragments of ancient woodland, which together with more recent woodland, water channels and drainage ditches, creates an important landscape structure and biodiversity value.

Detractors and Opportunities

In addition to the detractors noted in Chapter 3, features which detract from the character area are identified below.

Detractors and Opportunities

- 1) The loss of riparian vegetation, particularly a decrease in bankside and in river vegetation as a result of 'improvements' to the tributaries and vigorous management/clearance of the drainage channels.

Reinstate riparian vegetation and encourage re-naturalisation of watercourses where appropriate.

Landscape Strategy

Borough landscape considerations are detailed in Chapter 3, and local objectives are outlined below.

Landscape Strategy

The valued features and qualities of the landscape should be conserved and enhanced.

- 1) Riparian and bankside enhancements should encourage wildlife-sensitive management of the interlinked drainage ditches and watercourses, to include a reduction in the frequency of dredging operations and removal or control of invasive species.
- 2) Development on the edge of the floodplain has the potential to be highly visible from the flat valley floor. Ensure new development is located and designed sensitively and that potential impacts on views and local character are considered during the design of new development. .
- 3) Built development is unlikely to be able to be hidden within the landscape, therefore any new development should pay particular attention to built form, materials and scale to ensure it integrates well with the surrounding landscape.
- 4) Maintain the essentially open landscape character. In this respect extensive woodland and tree screen planting (except as part of the hedgerow structure) to 'hide' development will, generally, not be appropriate.
- 5) Conserve and restore permanent pasture adjacent to the Medway, its tributaries (the Alder Stream and Hammer Dyke) and the interconnecting network of ditches as a buffer zone and to conserve visual and ecological continuity within the floodplain. Consider opportunities for re-creation of species-rich valley meadows and pastures using seed of local provenance. Encourage creation of a network of unploughed field margins and environmentally sensitive arable land management to enhance the landscape and habitat diversity of these extensive fields.
- 6) Enhance the ecological potential of the river valley as a wetland habitat. Future potential enhancements include evaluation of the long-term management of the River Medway and its floodplain. Consider short and longer-term initiatives. The restoration of a natural river

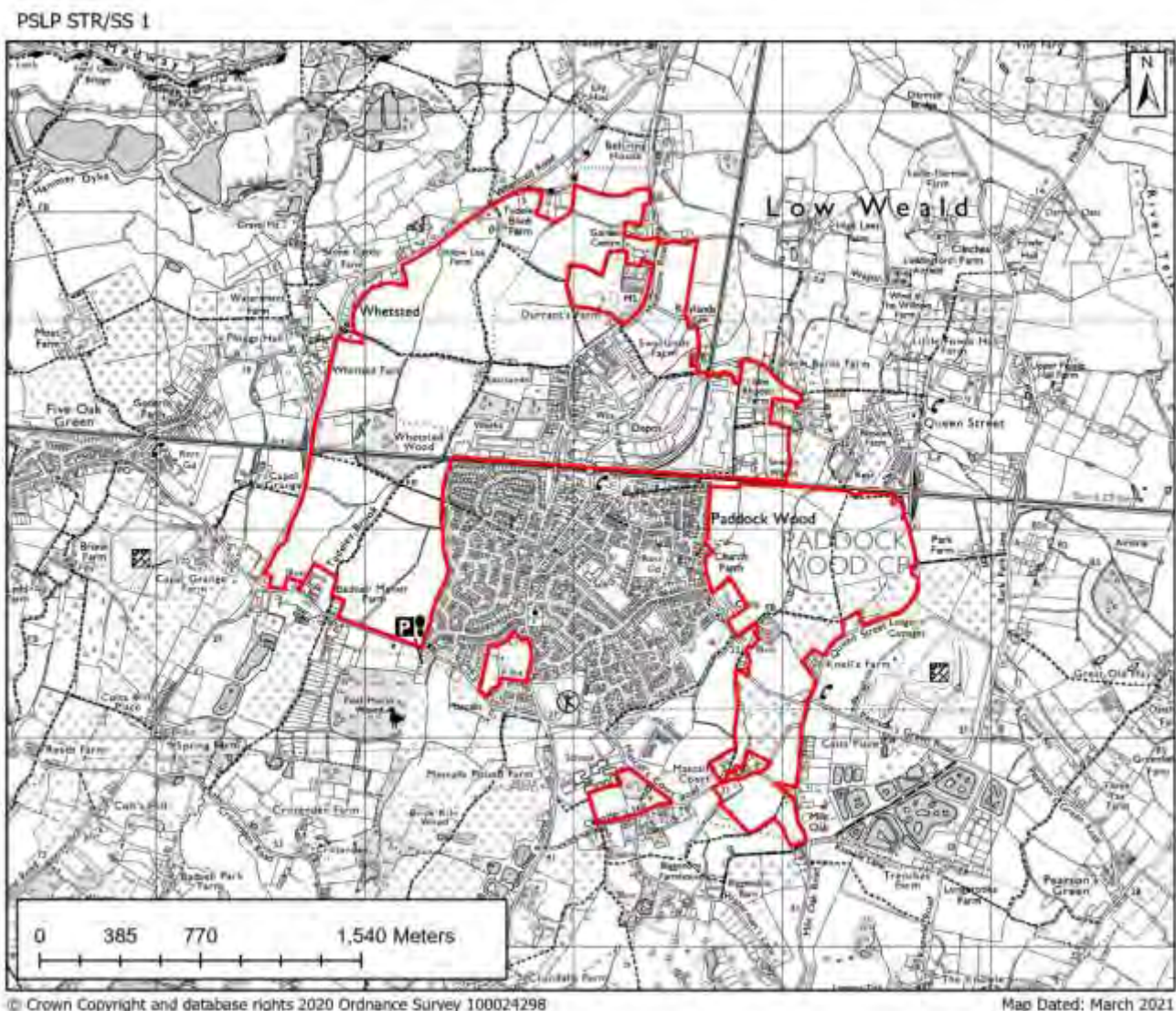
profile and natural vegetation to the heavily engineered sections and allowing natural flooding should be the ultimate long-term objective. Short-term regeneration of bankside vegetation, removal of invasive alien species and restoration of former habitats such as wet meadow and sensitive restoration of pits used for mineral extraction should be continued and encouraged. Other possible habitat enhancements include the creation of otter refuges.

**APPENDIX A.2:
RELATED EVIDENCE BASE EXTRACTS**

**STRATEGIC HOUSING AND ECONOMIC LAND AVAILABILITY
ASSESSMENT FOR PRE-SUBMISSION LOCAL PLAN
(SHELAA) (JANUARY 2021)**

Site Reference: Local Plan Allocation STR/SS 1 includes sites 20, 47, 51, 79,142, 212, 218, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 340, 342, 344, 347, 371, 374, 376, 402, late site 48, and DPC19 (Sustainability Appraisal: Paddock Wood Reasonable Alternative Option 2)

Site Address: Land at Capel and Paddock Wood



Parish:	Capel/Paddock Wood
Settlement:	Paddock Wood
Gross area (ha):	360.58
Developable area (ha):	Subject to Masterplanning

Site type:	Predominantly Greenfield land, with some areas of PDL
Potential site use:	Mixed use (significant extension/expansion of existing settlement) of residential, employment and associated land uses
Potential yield if residential:	Approximately c. 3600. See Strategic Sites Masterplanning and Infrastructure Study 2021. In addition, c. 300 units have been granted planning permission on land at Church Farm.
Issues to consider:	<p>AONB (1 component part); Heritage - Listed Building; Ecological interest; notable feature/designation; Land Contamination (Recycling / Metal Waste, Sewage Treatment Works, Unknown Filled Ground (medium risk), Railway Land, Cemetery (modern), Works Unspecified Use, Depot); SFRA Flood Zone 2, 3a, and 3b; ALC: Grade 2, Grade 3 Cross boundary issues.</p> <p>As at 01 April 2020, site includes extant planning permission 14/504140/HYBRID for 300 dwellings</p>
Site Description:	<p>The site comprises predominantly agricultural land including crop and some top fruit, together with areas of woodland (some ancient woodland) and horse paddocks within the site. The site includes some buildings and areas of PDL. One site (Church Farm) has planning permission for residential development.</p> <p>The site is surrounded on its outer edges by further agricultural or paddock land, plus residences, recreational fishing lakes and solar farms (in some instances with roads forming the immediate boundaries with this land beyond). Within the inner boundaries of the site is predominantly residential, employment and educational uses comprising the existing settlement of Paddock Wood. Site boundaries comprise a mix of trees, hedging and fencing. There are a series of PROWs which run through the site, and in the land surrounding it.</p> <p>See also SHEELA Sheets for sites 20, 47, 51, 79,142, 212, 218, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 340, 342, 344, 347, 371, 374, 376, 402, late site 48, and DPC19.</p>
Suitability:	<p>This site is considered suitable for the allocation of land at Paddock Wood and east Capel to provide a strategic urban extension to the existing settlement at Paddock Wood. A strategic development of this size will be comprehensively masterplanned, and whilst it is acknowledged that there are flooding constraints across the site (particularly to the west) these will be considered through the masterplanning. There is potential for the existing town to benefit from the substantial investment that new development would bring, including resolution of existing flooding problems.</p> <p>Land to the west is Green Belt. There is national policy protection</p>

	<p>for the Green Belt, but the NPPF also recognises that Green Belt boundaries can be altered where there are exceptional circumstances, and these are fully evidenced and justified. The Green Belt Study Stage Three Assessment (2020) identifies that the release of the land from the Green Belt in this location will cause moderate to high levels of harm. Potential mitigation measures are set out to reduce the potential visual influence of development on the Green Belt land. The masterplanning work can have regard to this. There is also scope for compensatory improvements such as hedgerow planting, enhanced pedestrian routes or conversion of fields from arable to grassland.</p> <p>It is noted there are heritage assets in the vicinity of the site, and any development would need assess their significance and take into consideration the impact of the proposal . The masterplanning approach would enable these assets to be properly considered, and opportunities created to enhance their setting.</p> <p>The site is outside the AONB: the policy constraints of this national designation do not apply</p> <p>Subject to the demonstration that there are exceptional circumstances to release this land from the Green Belt, and that matters such as the provision of appropriate infrastructure (including transport) and mitigation of flooding impacts can be addressed through a masterplanned approach, the site is considered suitable.</p>
Availability:	Available Multiple Ownership
Achievability:	The site is suitable for allocation and is available. It comprises individual sites that are promoted as one strategic allocation. All those who control the land are part of the Strategic Sites Working Group which has been formed to help deliver this allocation in the event it is allocated. It is considered that the site could come forward during the plan period.
Sustainability Assessment:	<p>Air quality is given a mixed score. There is a high risk to deterioration of local air quality, with traffic increasing substantially and improvements to the road network at Colts Hill being important. Conversely, active and shared transport options would be given large investments and significant betterment could be seen. However, the improvements would always be working within the confines of Paddock Wood town so can never be given the maximum scores. Travel scores are applied following a similar logic.</p> <p>Generally, biodiversity constraints are limited. There is no risk to the Ashdown Forest and there are 5km SSSI risk zones to the south and north east of the town.</p>

Business score is positive reflecting the number of new customers that could support existing businesses and the likely significant provision of new business space. However, this is offset by losses to the rural economy from developing upon agricultural fields. For this reason, positive scores do not reach the maximum.

Climate change scores reflect the increase in energy and fuel demands created by the scale of new development with consideration of the fact that a master planning approach is more likely to implement adaptation measures and support alternative fuels.

Deprivation scores positively to reflect the substantial regeneration benefit to Paddock Wood town which contains areas of high-income deprivation. However, the maximum score cannot be applied as the development is unlikely to address existing problems of fuel poverty.

New educational pressures are expected to be met by provision of new or extended schools. Adult education facilities are not considered, and it is expected that Royal Tunbridge Wells would continue to meet this demand.

Paddock Wood does not currently have low employment levels so is not a key ward for a focus on employment. However, the development would provide the benefit of new employment space and job creation, which would offset the loss of agricultural jobs from development on agricultural fields.

Equality score is positive with significant regeneration expected to benefit the existing areas of income deprivation, and access to facilities for those with impairments felt to be possible with a strong master planning approach.

The health objective scores positively due to the provision of sports facilities that would help improve physical activity rates and the locality meeting 4 out of 5 Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards. It was also felt likely the proposals would include provision for elderly care services and improvements in ANG.

A negative heritage scores reflects the land take required and thus negative impacts that would occur largely upon the setting of heritage assets, with assets in the south being most sensitive. However, it was felt that the master planning approach could help ensure a strategy for enhancements was realised.

The maximum positive scores is applied to the housing objective for provision of substantial numbers of new dwellings including affordable and accessible.

Loss of greenfield land with Best and Most Versatile soils causes

	<p>land use to be scored negatively. The score also reflects the release of Green Belt land with overall harm rating of High. The landscape score follows a similar logic to heritage reflecting encroachment into the High Weald Character Area in the south. The negative noise scores reflects the scale of development and the location of development adjacent to the railway line.</p> <p>Minimal demolition would be necessary to facilitate development. Choice of materials would be determined at Development Management stage. Master-planning approach for a large development and strong sustainability credentials expected as part of policy wording makes responsible sourcing of materials more likely. Impact on Superficial Sub-Alluvial River Terrace deposits would require investigation.</p> <p>Services and Facilities scores positively reflecting the reasonable range of services in Paddock Wood and fact that some services would be outside of desirable walking distances for some new residents (e.g. health centre).</p> <p>A mixed water scores is applied as the development would represent a substantial demand for water and wastewater treatment, and would provide significant benefits to Paddock Wood and Capel in the form of reductions in existing flood risk. An improvement to flooding issues for existing residents is one of the key justifications for the proposed release of this Green Belt land on the west side of the settlement.</p>
Conclusion:	Site is suitable as a potential Local Plan allocation.
Reason:	<p>The site has been considered on the basis of mixed use (significant extension/expansion of existing settlement) of residential, employment and associated land uses.</p> <p>Key considerations for planning for new settlements/significant extensions to existing settlements are set out at para 72 of the NPPF.</p> <p>The delivery of this allocation would require comprehensive masterplanning, which is considered to ensure the key constraints including flooding could be properly assessed.</p> <p>If exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated to release this land from the Green Belt, and the appropriate infrastructure provided to support an allocation of this strategic nature, it is considered that this site is a suitable allocation.</p>

**TUNBRIDGE WELLS SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL OF
THE PRE-SUBMISSION LOCAL PLAN (FEBRUARY 2019)**

Sustainability Objective	1	2	3	Commentary
				substantial demand for water and wastewater treatment whilst also providing significant benefits to Five Oak Green in the form of reductions in existing flood risk. The presence of the total catchment of a Groundwater Source Protection Zone north of the railway line also creates a risk that must be carefully managed in options 2 and 3. Option 3 would put additional strain on resources without any further improvement to flooding and thus is scores as mixed overall.

6.2.35 In summary, when objectives are divided into the three pillars of sustainable development the following observations can be made:

- All options score positively for the economic objectives (with Business Growth in Option 3 scoring slightly better to reflect the scale of the development). Option 3 scores slightly less positively for services as development would be more piecemeal in the south and thus some residents may be outside of desirable walking distances to the more central facilities.
- the environmental objectives scores are more variable with the majority scoring negative (6 objectives). A further two objectives score as mixed and there is 1 neutral objective and one positive objective. Negative scores are a factor of the large scale of development and thus generally score more poorly for Option 3.
- the social objectives are scored positively and the same across all

6.2.36 For all options, environmental protection conflicts with economic and social growth, and negative impacts are lessened by developing a garden settlement that is at a smaller scale. The very severe environmental impacts identified for Option 3, call into question the suitability of this Option. It is also noted that the downside of Option 1 is that smaller contributions would be available for improvements in flood risk elsewhere.

Urban Extension Development Scale

6.2.37 In Paddock Wood and east Capel, five scales of development were identified (see Figure 7) which all included the existing allocations for sites identified in the 2015 Site Allocations Local Plan (SALP). In order to assess cumulative impacts, the sustainability appraisal has also assessed dwellings being built as part of the SALP.

6.2.38 It is noted that the options have been decreased by 500 dwellings across all

options since the Draft Local Plan stage to reflect the findings of the master-planning process which is now underway.

- 6.2.39 Option 1 was for the development of approximately 1,500 new dwellings (plus the 1,000 dwellings from the existing SALP sites) without any land take within the Green Belt. Growth here is limited by the borough boundary and the extensive areas of flood zone 3.
- 6.2.40 Option 2 was for development of approximately 3,500 (plus the 1,000 dwellings from the existing SALP sites) dwellings following the same pattern as Option 1 with an additional extension of development westwards into the Capel parish Green Belt and allowing for flood relief work to the town.
- 6.2.41 Option 3 was for approximately 2,500 dwellings (plus the 1,000 dwellings from the existing SALP sites) following the same pattern as Option 1 but extending southwards instead of westwards into land that is not ruled out by constraints such as AONB, Green Belt, flood risk and ancient woodland.
- 6.2.42 Option 4 was for approximately 4,500 dwellings (plus the 1,000 dwellings from the existing SALP sites) following the same pattern as Option 1 but extending both westwards and southwards more than doubling the size of Paddock Wood.
- 6.2.43 Option 5 was for approximately 2,500 dwellings (plus the 1,000 dwellings from the existing SALP sites) following the same pattern as Option 1 but extending eastwards instead of westwards into land that is not ruled out by constraints such as AONB, Green Belt, flood risk and ancient woodland.
- 6.2.44 No further larger options were assessed as it was felt that anything larger would be too distant from the town centre and unlikely to be delivered in the plan period.
- 6.2.45 The sustainability appraisals for these five options are shown below in Table 29.



Figure 7. Map of urban extension options for Paddock Wood including land in east Capel (part 1 of 2).

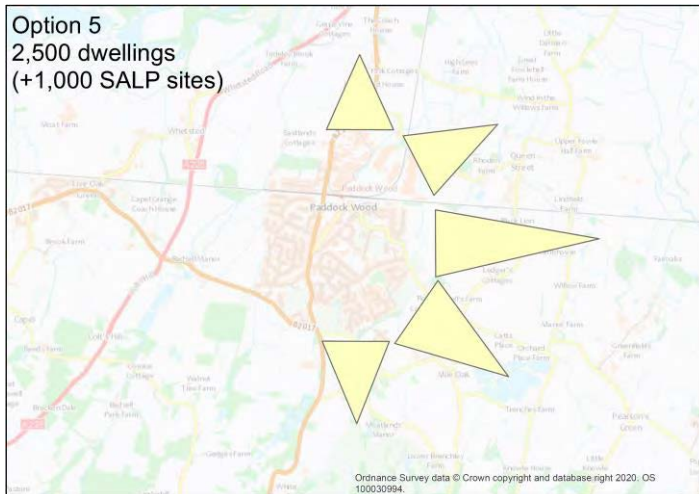


Figure 8. Map of urban extension options for Paddock Wood including land in east Capel (part 2 of 2).

Table 29. SA scores for the four urban extension growth options at Paddock Wood including land in east Capel.

See paragraphs 6.2.39 to 6.2.42 for descriptions.

Sustainability Objective	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5	Commentary
Air	?	?	?	?	?	Air quality is given a mixed score. All options pose a high risk to deterioration of local air quality, with impacts worsening as the scale of the development option increases. Traffic would increase substantially with all options and improvements to the road network at Colts Hill would be important for Option 2 and critical for Option 4. Conversely, active and shared transport options would be given large investments and significant betterment could be seen. However, the improvements would always be working within the confines of Paddock Wood town so can never be given the maximum scores.
Biodiversity	0 / -	0 / -	-	0 / -	0 / -	Generally, biodiversity constraints are limited. There is no risk to the Ashdown Forest and there are 5km SSSI risk zones to the south and north east of the town. Scores are applied to reflect the scale of development, the slight potential for enhancements in the west (existing fields are very large with intensive arable uses and hedgerows are currently more depleted than those on other sides of PW) and the constraints in the south (LNR, woodland, ponds etc.).
Business Growth	+	+ / ++	+	+ / ++	+	Business scores are all positive and vary to reflect the number of new customers that could support existing businesses. Provision of new business space is likely to be significant. However, this is offset by losses to the rural economy from developing upon agricultural fields. For this reason, positive scores do not reach the maximum.
Climate Change	-	- / --	- / --	--	- / --	Climate change scores reflect the increase in energy and fuel demands created by the scale of each new development with consideration of the fact that a master planning approach is more likely to implement adaptation measures and support alternative fuels.
Deprivation	+ / ++	+ / ++	+ / ++	+ / ++	+ / ++	Deprivation scores positively to reflect the substantial regeneration benefit to Paddock Wood town which contains areas of high-income deprivation. However, maximum scores cannot be applied as the proposals are unlikely to address existing problems of fuel poverty.

Sustainability Objective	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5	Commentary
Education	+ / ++	+ / ++	+ / ++	+ / ++	+ / ++	All new educational pressures created are expected to be met by provision of new or extended schools. Adult education facilities are not considered, and it is expected that Royal Tunbridge Wells would continue to meet this demand.
Employment	++	++	++	++	++	Paddock Wood does not currently have low employment levels so is not a key ward for a focus on employment. However, all options would provide the benefit of new employment space and job creation, which would offset the loss of agricultural jobs from development on agricultural fields.
Equality	++	++	+ / ++	+ / ++	+ / ++	Equality scores are generally positive across the options with significant regeneration expected to benefit the areas of income deprivation, and access to facilities for those with impairments felt to be possible with a strong master planning approach. Variations across the options reflect the varying distance that those with impairments would have to travel to reach the central facilities of Paddock Wood. It was felt that the 2-3km distance to the town centre for new residents in the south of development options 3, 4 and 5 could be off-putting.
Health	++	++	++	++	++	All options score equally well on the health objective due to the provision of sports facilities that would help improve physical activity rates and the locality meeting 4 out of 5 Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards. It was also felt likely the proposals for all options would include provision for elderly care services and improvements in ANG.
Heritage	0 / -	-	- / --	--	-	Variation in heritage scores reflect the increasing land take required across the four options and thus negative impacts that would occur largely upon the setting of heritage assets, with assets in the south being most sensitive. However, for all options it was felt that the master planning approach could help ensure a strategy for enhancements was realised.
Housing	++ +	++ +	++ +	++ +	++ +	All options score the maximum positive on the housing objective for provision of substantial numbers of new dwellings including affordable and accessible. Despite offering varying quantities of new dwellings, the 4 options are not differentiated

Sustainability Objective	Opt ion 1	Opt ion 2	Opt ion 3	Opt ion 4	Opt ion 5	Commentary
						on this objective because, even the option with the lowest numbers would still make a significant difference.
Land use	--	-- / -- -	--	-- / -- -	--	Loss of greenfield land with Best and Most Versatile soils causes all options to be scored negatively for land use. However, options 2 and 4 are slightly worse as also include the release of Green Belt land with overall harm rating of High.
Landscape	-	- / -- --	--	--	- / -- --	Landscape scores follow a similar pattern to heritage reflecting encroachment into the High Weald Character Area in the south. 2020 AONB setting report reinforces the more negative scores for Options 3 and 4 which have potential to adversely affect the AONB by extended development further south, and to a slightly lesser extent Option 5 through extensions to the east which would be visible from the 'Millennium Viewing Point' to the north of Matfield. Option 2 score has been worsened slightly since Draft Local Plans as a result of consultation exercise and to better reflect the scale of development.
Noise	-	- / -- --	- / -- --	--	- / -- --	Noise scores reflect the varying scale of development across the four options and the location of development adjacent to the railway line.
Resources	0 / +	0 / +	0 / +	0 / +	0 / +	Minimal demolition would be necessary to facilitate any of the options. Choice of materials would be determined at Development Management stage. Master-planning approach for a large development and strong sustainability credentials expected as part of policy wording makes responsible sourcing of materials more likely. Impact on Superficial Sub-Alluvial River Terrace deposits would require investigation.
Services & Facilities	++	++	+	+	+	Services and Facilities score positively for all options reflecting the reasonable range of services in Paddock Wood and fact that some services would be outside of desirable walking distances for some new residents (e.g. health centre). However, options 3, 4 and 5 are given lower scores to reflect the piecemeal development in the south and east (around ancient woodland and flood zone 3) rendering new residents quite distant from Paddock Wood town.
Travel	+	+	+	+	+	Travel scores are applied following a similar logic to air quality.

Sustainability Objective	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5	Commentary
Waste	0	0	0	0	0	Waste reduction is generally felt to be outside of the scope of the development proposed for all options.
Water	?	++ / ?	?	++ / ?	?	A mixed water scores is applied equally across the options as all would represent a substantial demand for water and wastewater treatment, and all would provide significant benefits to Paddock Wood and Capel in the form of reductions in existing flood risk. The benefits could be slightly greater in options 2 and 4 where development is directed to the areas of flood zone 2 and 3 west of Paddock Wood (in east Capel). An improvement to flooding issues for existing residents is one of the key justifications for the proposed release of this Green Belt land on the west side of the settlement.

6.2.46 In summary, when objectives are divided into the three pillars of sustainable development the following observations can be made:

- the economic objectives mostly score positively for all options with Business Growth in Options 2 and 4 scoring slightly better to reflect the scale of the development (offset with losses to the rural economy). The one exception to this pattern is the services objective which reduces in positivity to reflect the increasing scale of development across the five options with more piecemeal in the south and east meaning some residents may be outside of desirable walking distances to the central facilities.
- most of the environmental objectives score as mixed, negative or neutral with the exception of resources (to reflect insignificant or no requirement for demolition) and water (to reflect the flood betterment possible for Paddock Wood). Negative scores are mostly a factor of the large scale of development and thus score most poorly for Option 4. However, land use and biodiversity are an exception to this rule with scores across the options varying to reflect the position of development around Paddock Wood (including land in Capel parish) and the opportunities or constraints the development positions provide.
- the social objectives are scored positively and the same across all objectives except equality which reduces in positivity to reflect the increasing scale of development across the five options with more piecemeal development in the south and east meaning some residents may be outside of desirable walking distances to the central facilities.

6.2.47 As for Tudeley Village, environmental protection conflicts with economic and

social growth in all options and adverse impacts are reduced by developing an urban extension that is at a similar scale to Options 1 or 2. Between these, Option 2 has three objectives that score more positively than Option 1 (including the mixed benefits from the water objective), and 5 objectives that score more negatively than Option 1 (reflecting development scales and locations).

6.2.48 Ultimately, the scale of development at Paddock Wood and east Capel was not differentiated for the housing objective across the four options in the SA as all options would make substantial contributions. It is noted that housing is of great importance in meeting targets and options that not only meet targets but also improve the flood risk for existing residents will be highly weighted. The channel realignment needed to improve flood risk is on land in the west and thus cannot be implemented in Option 1.

6.2.49 Drawing on the above draft findings and other, more detailed assessments, which point towards Option 2 being favoured, further consideration is given to related transport infrastructure below.

Strategic Transport Options

6.2.50 In order to successfully deliver the strategic sites, highways and infrastructure assessments demonstrate that improvements to the transport network would be required. This included consideration of:

- The A228 between B2017 and Maidstone Road Pembury junctions
- Links from Tudeley Village east to the A228
- Links from Tudeley Village west to Tonbridge
- Links from Paddock Wood and east Capel Urban Extension west onto the adjacent A228

6.2.51 The options to deliver these are listed below in Table 30. The accompanying SA scores are shown in Table 31 to Table 34.

Table 30. Transport network improvement options serving the strategic sites considered by the SA.

Options are considered for the A228 alone (1), east of the garden settlement (2), west of the garden settlement (3) and west of the urban extension (4).

Ref	Improvement Considered	Explanation of approach taken by SA	Progress to second stage?
1a	A228 Strategic Link which by-passes Colts Hill.	<p>This route has been through detailed optioneering work by Kent Highways and has been safeguarded since 2006 to address existing problems with highway safety and peak congestion and formed a draft policy in the Draft Local Plan.</p> <p>The route would be located west of the existing carriageway on old orchard. It would involve substantial land take and avoids negative impacts on heritage assets along the existing carriageway.</p> <p>The route allows for a minimum 30m buffer for pockets of ancient woodland. Approximately 2/3rd of the route is within the AONB and the route is on grade 2 and 3 agricultural soils.</p> <p>There are far reaching views to the west and the route is within the Green Belt.</p>	Yes
1b	Colts Hill online improvements including offline loop and new roundabout	<p>This option includes widening of the existing carriageway in problem areas and an offline loop around an existing cluster of dwellings north of Alders Road.</p> <p>Demolition of an existing derelict building would be necessary. The offline loop allows for a minimum 30m buffer for pockets of ancient woodland, is on grade 3 agricultural soils and adjacent to the AONB border to the south. There would be some loss of roadside trees.</p> <p>There are far reaching views to the west and the improvements and offline loop are within the Green Belt.</p>	Yes
1c	Colts Hill online improvements	<p>This option includes widening of the existing carriageway in problem areas.</p> <p>There are far reaching views to the west and the improvements are within the Green Belt.</p>	Yes

Ref	Improvement Considered	Explanation of approach taken by SA	Progress to second stage?
2a	Online improvements to existing road network	This option would involve widening Alders Road which is a single carriageway rural lane. It would require substantial loss of trees and hedgerows which currently act as the border to the AONB. The road is within the Green Belt and crosses a section of flood zone 2 and 3.	Yes
2b	New carriageway from Five Oak Green to the A228 via an offline A228 loop around the hamlet north of the Alders Rd junction	<p>This option involves the creation of approximately 2.2km carriageway (including the hamlet loop).</p> <p>The route is likely to require a new bridge to be built to traverse Alders Stream and an existing area of flood zone 2 and 3 and is unlikely to be a risk to any sites designated for biodiversity interest but does represent non designated habitat severance. The majority of the new carriageway would be on grade 2 agricultural soils.</p> <p>The AONB is approximately 500m south and setting/boundary issues may be present.</p> <p>There are far reaching views to the west and the route is within the Green Belt.</p>	Yes
2c	New carriageway from Five Oak Green which connects directly to the A228	<p>This option involves the creation of approximately 1.8km carriageway.</p> <p>The route is likely to require a new bridge to be built to traverse Alders Stream and an existing area of flood zone 2 and 3 and is unlikely to be a risk to any sites designated for biodiversity interest but does represent non designated habitat severance. The majority of the new carriageway would be on grade 2 agricultural soils.</p> <p>The AONB is approximately 500m south and setting/boundary issues may be present.</p> <p>There are far reaching views to the west and the route is within the Green Belt. There is a grade II listed building in the hamlet north of the Alders Road Junction (Colts Hill Farmhouse).</p>	Yes

Ref	Improvement Considered	Explanation of approach taken by SA	Progress to second stage?
2d	New carriageway from A228 to north of Tudeley Village	<p>This option would involve the creation of a carriageway of approximately 2.7km that travels north of the railway to reach the northern portion of the garden settlement. The route is within the Green Belt.</p> <p>The majority of this route would be in flood zone 3.</p>	Yes
3	Online improvements to B2017	<p>This option involves widening to allow for buses and upgrading the junction with Hartlake Road and the A26.</p> <p>The route is reasonably direct and avoids existing constraints, although there may be some loss of roadside hedgerows and trees. No further reasonable alternatives were identified that could avoid existing constraints (ancient woodland).</p>	Yes
4	Online improvements to existing highway network	<p>This option involves upgrading the junction of the A228 with the B2160, upgrading the single lane links around the urban extension, upgrading the junction between the B2017 and the B2160.</p> <p>No further reasonable alternatives were identified.</p>	Yes

**TUNBRIDGE WELLS LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT
AND CAPACITY STUDY (2009)**

which respects the historic character of the surrounding landscape. The visual sensitivity of these areas as the approach and setting to Royal Tunbridge Wells needs to be considered in any future development proposals.

5.3 Paddock Wood, refer to Volume 2, Table 6 and Figure 8

Tunbridge Wells Borough Landscape Character Assessment: Local Character Area 13: Paddock Wood / Five Oak Green Low Weald Farmland.

5.3.1 The town of Paddock Wood has grown around the railway. Most of the residential and town centre uses, including retail development, have spread to the south of the railway. To the north of the railway there is a concentration of industrial estates and large warehouse buildings. The flat open character of the town and the surrounding landscape would make it sensitive to the potential impacts of uncontrolled expanding development. Much of the area is characterised by large flat and open arable fields where the landscape structure has been lost due to removal of traditional field boundaries, particularly to the west and east of the town. The landscape to the south of the town gently rises up to the edge of the High Weald AONB. Proposals for development would need to be designed in the context of a substantial green infrastructure. This infrastructure would in turn need to be designed to be sensitive to local landscape character and distinctiveness. The existing recent expansion to the south along Green Lane is sensitively designed in this way and does not intrude unacceptably into the rural landscape.

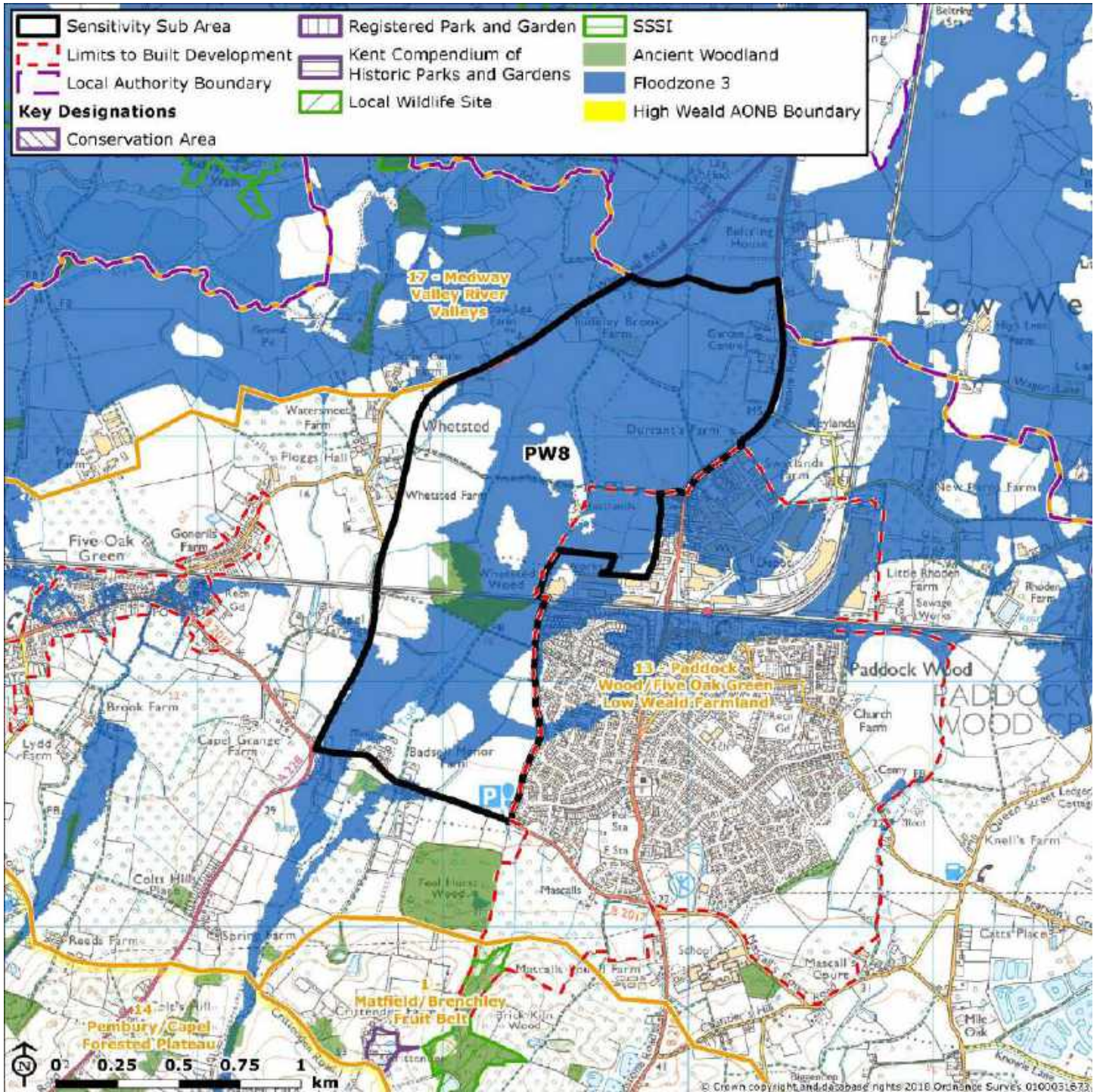
5.3.2 To the north of the town the hard urban edges of the industrial estates intrude into the agricultural landscape, notably in area PW1. There could be scope to soften these edges with sensitively designed development in a new landscape infrastructure. This is notwithstanding the fact that the presence of the Medway flood plain would be a major constraint to development north and west of the town. The countryside to the north east is characterised by an intricate network of country lanes and remnant orchards. These fields are frequently bounded with willow fringed drainage ditches. The small scale rural character of this area would be sensitive to major change. Where development may be considered to be acceptable in landscape terms this would only be the case close to the existing urban edges and where there is scope to redefine the urban – rural landscape interface. This could apply to parts of Areas PW2, PW4, PW5 and PW8.

5.4 Cranbrook, refer to Table 7 and Figure 9

Tunbridge Wells Borough Landscape Character Assessment: Local Character Area 4: Cranbrook Fruit Belt.

5.4.1 The context of the historic town of Cranbrook is in a distinctive rural setting which needs to be protected against inappropriate development. Proposed development would need to retain the tight knit character of the existing town. There are limited areas where proposed development could be accommodated without detracting from this rural setting. These are particularly the more enclosed locations which do not afford long views from the surrounding AONB countryside. There are

**LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY ASSESSMENT OF ADDITIONAL
SETTLEMENTS IN TUNBRIDGE WELLS: PADDOCK WOOD,
HORSMONDEN, HAWKHURST, CRANBROOK (JULY 2018)**



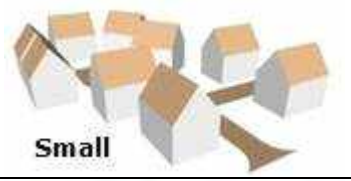


Representative views



Looking south-east toward the urban edge on the B2160 Maidstone Road, from footpath alongside Tudeley Brook

Paddock Wood		Sub-Area PW8
Description		Area (Ha) - 199.8
<p>Fields between the western edge of Paddock Wood (extending north to include a stretch of the B2160) and the A228 Maidstone Road. This is primarily an open, large-scale arable landscape, but there are also several woodland blocks: to either side of the South East Main Line, which crosses east-west through the sub-area, and on the urban edge to the north of Eldon Way.</p> <p>The sub-area is largely uninhabited, reflecting that fact that it is largely in the floodplain of Tudeley Brook which runs north-south through it, but there are several farmsteads and isolated dwellings around the margins, such as Badsell Manor Farm on the B2017 (the southern edge of the sub-area) which forms part of a larger cluster of dwellings extending across the road. There is an area of commercial development together with a small group of park homes alongside the A227 to the north of Paddock Wood.</p>		
Assessment criterion	Sensitivity description	
Physical character	<p>The area has a very flat, open and expansive character, in particular to the north of the railway line, reflecting the extent of the floodplain. Large-scale arable fields are not characteristic of the wider Medway Valley or Low Weald area, and reflect localised change, principally the removal of orchards. Tudeley Brook lacks any significant vegetation to the north of the railway line, reflecting its role as a drainage channel. Whetsted Wood, bisected by the railway line, is valued as an Ancient Woodland and the fields to the south of it, which retain well-treed boundaries, are medieval or early modern in form. A small area of traditional orchard remains to the west of Paddock Wood Garden Centre and Newbridge Park (a park homes site) off the B2160.</p>	
Settlement form and edge	<p>To the south of the railway line, a mature well-treed hedgerow forms the residential western edge of Paddock Wood, but there are similar field boundaries within the parcel and there is no landform distinction between settlement and countryside.</p> <p>Immediately to the north of the railway line there are stronger settlement edges: commercial/industrial development on Eldon Way abuts Tudeley Brook, and woodland and rough grassland that has developed since the 1990's encloses the northern side of Eldon Way.</p> <p>The B2160 forms the north-western edge of the Paddock Wood, adjoining arable fields from which the urban edge, which includes some large commercial buildings, is very visible. Hedgerows offer alternative boundaries in the vicinity of farmsteads at Eastlands and Durrants Farm.</p>	
Settlement setting	<p>To the north of the railway line the sub-area provides separation between Paddock Wood and the small village of Whetsted, which in turn has only a narrow belt of farmland separating it from the larger, more urban village of Five Oak Green. The visual openness of the arable farmland increases sensitivity to significant settlement expansion, but more limited development would have less impact in this respect, given the existing intervisibility between the sub-area and the urban edge. There is not a significant level of sensitivity associated with proximity to Eastlands or Durrants Farm: in the former case development would not significantly affect the rural setting of the farmstead, which is screened from the settlement edge by conifers, and in the latter case commercial/industrial uses have already significantly reduced rural character.</p> <p>In the vicinity of the B2017, the sub-area represents the gap between Paddock Wood and the farmstead-focused development at Badsell Manor, which in turn, as a result of sporadic 20th Century roadside development, lacks a strong sense of separation from Five Oak Green.</p>	
Visual character	<p>Tree cover has a strong screening impact in this flat landscape, even from higher ground to the south, so strong views are limited to rights of way in the immediate locality.</p>	
Perceptual qualities	<p>Busy main roads and the visible urban edge minimise any sense of tranquillity, but the large scale, homogeneous, agricultural character of the landscape means that in places there is a strong sense of landscape form – the broad valley contained to the north and south by largely undeveloped hillsides – which strengthens rural character and gives some sense of isolation from the urban edge.</p>	
Historic character	<p>The post-medieval historic landscape pattern is relatively intact to the south of Whetsted Wood and the railway line, with Badsell Manor contributing to historic character. Elsewhere historic character is limited: the field pattern is mostly modern and none of the other historic farmsteads around the sub-area fringes have any listed buildings.</p>	
Sensitivity conclusions		
<p>Large-scale arable farmland is not a valued landscape in the context of the wider Low Weald, but lack of settlement across most of this area, and expansive views towards higher ground from the more open locations, mean that it retains a functional rural character and relationship with the wider landscape</p>		

despite its visible proximity to Paddock Wood. The area as a whole also plays an important role in preserving separation from Five Oak Green and linear development extending out eastwards from it. Sensitivity across most of the sub-area is therefore 'medium-high'. The breadth of the sub-area means that sensitivity to small or medium-scale development scenarios is 'medium' in close proximity to the north-western edge of Paddock Wood, and 'medium-low' where existing tree lines would provide a degree of containment around an extended settlement edge. Sensitivity to more visible, larger scale development scenarios in these areas would be 'medium-high'. Around Eldon Way, where woodland forms a visual screen, and to the south of the railway line, where the historic field pattern is retained and the gap to Five Oak Green is more fragile, there is greater sensitivity, especially to larger scale development scenarios.

Development scenario	Sensitivity assessment				
 Small	H	MH	M	ML	L
 Medium	H	MH	M	ML	L
 Large	H	MH	M	ML	L

Guidance on potential mitigation/enhancement measures

Hedgerow and woodland block planting would help to soften any extended settlement edge in the larger arable field next to the B2160.

TUNBRIDGE WELLS GREEN BELT STUDY STAGE 1

5 Assessment of Contribution

- 5.1 The following paragraphs consider the contribution to Green Belt purposes made by land in and around Tunbridge Wells Borough.

Openness

What built development has taken place within the Green Belt since its designation?

- 5.2 The principal built developments within the Green Belt since its designation are:
- Tunbridge Wells Hospital at Pembury - an isolated site, set in woodland. It is recognised through its MDS status as affecting Green Belt openness, but its contained setting limits its impact;
 - A Notcutts garden centre on the south-western edge of Pembury;
 - The extension of Penns Yard, Pembury (27 dwellings) - clearly an extension of the settlement into the Green Belt; the 'very special circumstances' accepted by TWBC as justifying the development were associated with its provision of affordable housing;
 - A solar farm has been developed at Hadlow Place Farm just to the west of Five Oak Green, and another, at Capel Grange to the south-east of Five Oak Green, was approved in 2015. Both were considered to represent inappropriate development in the Green Belt but also to demonstrate the 'very special circumstances' required by the NPPF to outweigh the loss of openness. Permission for solar farms is always granted for a limited period (usually 25 years) so, whilst it is accepted that they are inappropriate development in the Green Belt, their existence does not warrant removal of Green belt status. The association of this form of development with rural sites and the degree of separation that both of these sites have from the settlement of Five Oak Green means that they cannot be characterised as 'urban sprawl'.
- 5.3 The A21 improvements currently taking place are substantial works which could potentially have some impact on the Green Belt in terms of the road's role as a barrier feature, although the fact that this is already a busy road is likely to limit any such effect. Roads are not considered to affect openness as it is defined in Green Belt terms, in that they are not specifically an urban feature.

Does any pre-existing development compromise openness?

- 5.4 Of the washed-over villages and hamlets listed in Chapter 4 above, none are considered to contain any development that has a significant impact on Green Belt openness:
- Stone Cross, Poundsbridge, Modest Corner and Whetsted are all small farm or mill-centred hamlets. Capel is also a small hamlet but has a slightly detached close of modern dwellings on the site of a former isolation hospital.
 - Bullingstone, Stockland Green and Romford all have a more dispersed character in wooded settings.
 - Tudeley and Crockhurst Street, on the B2017, have a dispersed, linear character.
 - Ashurst combines a small core area, adjacent to a railway station, with a scattering of dispersed dwellings to the east.
- 5.5 The three Major Developed Sites (MDS) referenced in the Core Strategy – Tunbridge Wells Hospital at Pembury, Kent College (Pembury) and Holmewood School (Langton Green) – represent clusters of development that are large enough to compromise openness.

- 5.6 The settlements within Tunbridge Wells Borough beyond the eastern extent of the Green Belt largely retain their historic form. Matfield consists principally of linear settlement along several roads but there is a small concentration of post-1960 development on Chestnut Lane and two adjacent closes. Dispersed development links through eastward to the similarly-sized village of Brenchley. Land uses at Kippings Cross, on the A21, create some urbanising influence, but the hamlet is still a small one, with no significant expansion or infill.
- 5.7 In Sevenoaks District, Fordcombe and Penshurst have some post-1960 infill development set on short side roads off from the principal lanes, and in the case of Penshurst some nearby park home development at Hedge Barton, but neither have a significant impact on openness. Fordcombe is essentially linear in form, whilst Penshurst overall has a fairly dispersed character, with a loop of the River Medway dictating the development pattern.
- 5.8 To the south of Tunbridge Wells, in Wealden District:
- Bells Yew Green is a small village but with post-war growth, and the recent Ambermead development, adjacent to Frant Station, is a significant development (although not a greenfield one, as the site was formerly a garage).
 - Frant is a larger, nucleated village with some post-Green Belt designation infill. It is not much smaller than Speldhurst, and were the Green Belt to extend into Wealden District it is likely that it would be considered appropriate to inset Frant within it.
 - Groombridge is also a nucleated village, similar in size to Speldhurst, with significant infill in the central area since 1960. This settlement too would be likely to be inset, were the Green Belt to extend this far south.
- 5.9 With regard to the smaller development locations noted in Paragraph 4.12:
- The houses between Tunbridge Wells and Tonbridge, at Brampton Bank on the B2017 and at Colts Hill Place on the A228 are isolated rows in which most dwellings pre-date the Green Belt designation.
 - Some of the built development between Five Oak Green and Paddock Wood, to either side of the A228, is historic, but there has been residential and commercial development post-1960. The pattern of development is still open, and linear along the B2017, but it has an impact on the perception of a settlement gap between Five Oak Green and Paddock Wood.
 - The hotel & nursery at Pembury are large buildings but are set in well-treed surrounds, limiting their impact on perceived openness.
 - There is no difference in character between the row of houses at Hungershall Park and those at Nevill Park facing it across the valley, but physical separation from other development has resulted in the former being washed over by the Green Belt. Urbanising influence is limited by the strongly treed landscape surrounds.

What development is impending?

- 5.10 The three former Rural Fringe sites around Tunbridge Wells allocated for development in the SALP (see Paragraph 4.8) will deliver residential development over the coming years. These sites are now defined as lying within the LBD and so are excluded from this assessment.
- 5.11 Land at Woodsgate Corner, adjacent to Tesco at Pembury, has been allocated in the SALP (policy AL/VRA 2) for development of a park and ride scheme. There is no specific mention of park and ride in the NPPF, but the Planning Policy Guidance that preceded it considered such development to not be inappropriate as long as it did not “*seriously compromise the purposes of including land in Green Belts*”²¹

²¹ PPG2 (ODPM), paragraph 3.17.

Does any consented development have the potential to compromise openness?

- 5.12 There is no consented development that is likely to have the potential, at a strategic scale, to compromise openness in the Green Belt.
- 5.13 A planning submission for a 76-bed 'health and wellbeing' facility and 22 'extra care lodges' at Owsnest Wood, on the south-western edge of Pembury, is awaiting determination. Development of this scale, close to the edge of the urban area, could potentially reduce Green Belt openness.

Do any settlements inset within the Green Belt have sufficient openness to warrant being washed-over by the designation?

- 5.14 Looking at the Borough's inset settlements (Tunbridge Wells, Southborough, Rusthall, Langton Green, Bidborough, Speldhurst and Five Oak Green - with Paddock Wood on the Green Belt edge) in their entirety, none have sufficient openness to warrant re-classification as 'washed-over' Green Belt.
- 5.15 There are some areas within some of these settlements that have housing of a more open character, in a form that is consistent with smaller washed-over hamlets, but their connectivity with development that is more urban in character has resulted in their exclusion from the Green Belt.
- 5.16 The only situations where this might possibly be considered are where inset development of an open character has some distinction from the rest of a settlement, and where denser/more urbanising future development in that location might represent significant sprawl, or intrusion on the countryside. Potential examples of this are the two 'tongues' of development that extend downhill south from Holmewood Ridge (Langton Green) and Nevil Park (Tunbridge Wells): Hither Chantlers and The Midway.

Boundary Permanence

Do any boundaries lack physical definition or likely permanence?

- 5.17 The physical form of Tunbridge Wells and neighbouring settlements is quite irregular in plan view, but this generally reflects the strong role of topography, and associated land cover, in constraining the pre-Green Belt evolution of settlement in the High Weald. Thus breaks in slope, sometime with strong associated vegetation, are consistent defining features of the Green Belt's inner edge. There is no Green Belt to the south of Tunbridge Wells in Wealden District, but landform marks a consistent settlement edge.
- 5.18 There are some stretches of boundary where landform does not create a strong distinction between Green Belt and settlement, and the areas beyond these typically have more likelihood of not making a strong contribution to Green Belt purposes, and therefore would warrant more specific assessment.
- 5.19 The southern side of the outer Green Belt boundary, and the eastern side other than in the vicinity of Paddock Wood, follows no distinct landscape features. It was, according to the 1983 Kent Countryside Plan, drawn to demarcate sufficient Green Belt land to "... *provide additional protection against development where such areas abut settlements and to maintain open country not subject to such policies*", rather than to reflect any physical landscape features considered to mark any distinction in contribution to Green Belt purposes. It was noted that use could be made of administrative boundaries to achieve this, hence to the south it follows the County boundary, but to the east it typically seems to run close to but not precisely along parish boundaries on the eastern edge.
- 5.20 In practice, in all likelihood because of the overlap between Green Belt protection and the High Weald AONB designation, there has been no significant development in the outer vicinity of the Green Belt boundary, so Green Belt to the east of Tunbridge Wells and Pembury does not play any role in settlement separation, but it nonetheless represents a buffer that reflects the desire to constrain the eastward development of the large urban area of which they form part. A narrower

buffer zone might potentially also achieve this purpose, but the AONB designation negates this consideration. To the south there is no Green Belt buffer but again the AONB designation provides a constraint.

- 5.21 The Green Belt outer edge abuts the western side of Paddock Wood, but immediately to the south of the town there is an area of land, north of Crittenden Road and east of the A228, which is not protected by either Green Belt or AONB designation, and where the Green Belt edge in part follows a parish boundary that has no clear definition on the ground.

Are there stronger alternative boundary features?

- 5.22 The eastern Green Belt outer edge could be amended to follow nearby physical features, such as woodland edges and hedgerows, where it does not already do so, or could be adjusted more extensively to follow roads.
- 5.23 If a case was to be made for some southward expansion of Tunbridge Wells, the extensive woodlands south of the ridge marked by Broadwater Forest Lane and Bunny Lane could form a strong alternative Green Belt edge. However the current boundary, following a high ridge, is not lacking in strength, so enhancement of boundary strength would not form part of any justification for boundary change.

Purpose 1: to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Which settlements constitute 'large built-up areas'?

- 5.24 The Green Belt in Tunbridge Wells Borough forms part of the Metropolitan Green Belt, the primary purpose of which is to control the spread of London. This is reflected in the text supporting the definition of the Green Belt in the 1983 Kent Countryside Plan (quoted in Paragraph 2.14 above). Policy MGB1 from this plan refers to the general extent of the Green Belt as being to about 15 miles from the edge of Greater London, and notes its extension to Tunbridge Wells and Paddock Wood as being exceptional.
- 5.25 The extension of the Green Belt to Tunbridge Wells reflects the significant growth of the town from the 1930's, and its resulting proximity to the similarly-sized town of Tonbridge to the north. Over this period Tunbridge Wells and the adjacent smaller settlements of Southborough, Bidborough, Rusthall, Langton Green, Hawkenbury, Pembury and Lower Green have expanded to the extent that they are, other than Green Belt gaps of c.50m between Tunbridge Wells and Rusthall and 500m between Tunbridge Wells and Pembury, a contiguous urban area. These gaps are too small for development around Rusthall, Langton Green or Pembury not to be associated with Tunbridge Wells and its connected settlement areas so, whilst they retain distinctions in terms of settlement character, these places are as a whole considered to constitute a large built-up area.
- 5.26 Tonbridge is also considered a large built-up area, being significantly larger than any other settlement in the area. Its proximity to Tunbridge Wells (see Purpose 2 discussion below) means that consideration of the effects of sprawl on its southern side are relevant to this study.
- 5.27 Paddock Wood, adjacent to the western edge of the Green Belt, is administratively a town but is significantly smaller than Tunbridge Wells and Tonbridge. The fact that the Green Belt does not surround Paddock Wood suggests that preventing its expansion was not a consideration when the Green Belt was designated, other than to limit its westward spread towards Tonbridge or Tunbridge Wells, and whilst the town has expanded since then, principally to the south-west, it is still much smaller than its neighbours to the west. It is not therefore considered in Green Belt terms to be a large built-up area.

Does any land have a strong enough relationship with the large built-up area to be regarded more as infill than expansion?

- 5.28 Expansion of Tunbridge Wells and the smaller settlements that also form part of the large built-up area has historically been focused on the ridge lines that carry the major routes in to the town, so

further outward expansion from the urban edge along these routes, such as north on the A26 from Bidborough Corner, east from Sandown Park on the A264 or west from Langton Green on the same road, would very visibly be outwards expansion of the large built-up area.

- 5.29 Topography is a significant containing element around much of Tunbridge Wells, with the industrial area in the north of the town being the only significant valley floor development other than the town centre. Expansion down from higher ground into areas that are currently open would constitute a step-change in the form of the town that would also clearly constitute outward expansion of the large built-up area. This would be the case with settlement expansion down into the broad valley of the River Medway to the north of Bidborough, southwards into the valley of Sprat's Brook or towards Frant Lakes, or into the narrow, wooded valleys that characterise the landscape both east and west of the town.
- 5.30 The only area so enclosed by urban areas that new development could potentially be considered infill is to the south of Hawkenbury between Forest Road and Benhall Mill Road (within Wealden District). There is a degree of enclosure around Tunbridge Wells Common, and to a lesser extent the valley further west between Nevill Park and Hungershall Park, but even in these areas topography, major roads and an absence of development combine to create some sense of being outside of the town.
- 5.31 Where open land occupies a similar terrain to the adjacent urban area but has some distinction from the surrounding countryside and does not coincide with significant routes out of town, development would still constitute expansion but would not constitute a step-change in settlement form. There are several locations around Tunbridge Wells that fall into this category, such as high ground to the north and east of Hawkenbury, to the east of Southborough and on the fringes of Langton Green.
- 5.32 The same factors that give land north of Bidborough and along the A26 a strong role in preventing sprawl mean that land to the south of Tonbridge plays the same role. The Green Belt and built-up area boundary coincides with the A21, so any development to the south of this would mark a clear expansion of the town.

Where would development not be considered to relate to a large built-up area?

- 5.33 For development to relate to a settlement other than Tunbridge Wells or Tonbridge it would need to be located adjacent to one of the inset settlements of Paddock Wood, Five Oak Green or Speldhurst, associated with smaller washed-over settlements that have some degree of separation from the towns, such as Ashurst or Crockhurst Street, or be a new settlement. Development on the borough fringes adjacent to Groombridge or Penshurst would be associated with those settlements rather than Tunbridge Wells.

Purpose 2: to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Which settlements constitute 'towns'?

- 5.34 Tunbridge Wells, Tonbridge and Paddock Wood are towns.
- 5.35 The loss of gaps between Tunbridge Wells and adjacent settlements is cited above (Paragraph 5.29) as a reason to consider them as a whole to constitute a large built-up area. This does not mean that satellite settlement areas do not retain distinct characteristics, to which Green Belt land may make some contribution, but in most cases they are not of a size where they could realistically be considered to constitute towns.
- 5.36 Southborough is an exception to this, having its own central services, schooling and shopping facilities and being treated as a town in local planning policy. Although contiguous with Tunbridge Wells it does, to a large extent, have its own landscape setting, with valleys creating separation to the west of the A26 and to the north of High Brooms at Brokes Wood.

- 5.37 Pembury is a large village rather than a town, but is not much smaller than Paddock Wood. Although close enough to be considered to constitute part of the same large built-up area as Tunbridge Wells it retains, due to the intervening presence of the A21, physical separation from it, so the gap between the two should be considered in relation to Purpose 2.

How much of a gap is required to avert perceived coalescence, taking into consideration the role of landscape features in creating either separation or connectivity?

- 5.38 The inclusion of Tunbridge Wells in the Green Belt suggests the attachment of some importance to the preservation of a gap between it and Tonbridge. The two towns are separated by undulating north-facing slopes, cut by narrow stream valleys and characterised by numerous woodland blocks, the majority of which are ancient, but linked by the A26 which follows a ridge line across a gap of 1.4km. Roadside housing along one side of about a third of the gap, detached from both settlements, predates the Green Belt.
- 5.39 Although the A21 forms a strong edge to Tonbridge, any expansion along the A26 would reduce a fragile gap so the road corridor makes a strong contribution to settlement separation. Away from the main road, woodlands are important in maintaining separation across what would otherwise, due to elevation differences, be a largely intervisible landscape, and their retention limits the scope for any development. Land to the south of the ridge on which Beeches Wood is located, north of the east-west valley between Bidborough Corner and Moat Farm, can be considered to make a weaker contribution to this purpose, due to its visual separation and greater gap.
- 5.40 The extension of the Green Belt out to Paddock Wood suggests that importance is attached to the preservation of a gap between it and Tonbridge and also potentially Tunbridge Wells and associated settlements.
- 5.41 In terms of distance Tonbridge and Paddock Wood are over 6km apart, as the crow flies. Terrain and land cover do not create strong separation in this lower-lying, mostly arable landscape, and the inset village of Five Oak Green situated en route on the B2017 reduces the perceived openness of the gap, but the distance is still such that there is significant scope for development to the west of Five Oak Green without causing a step-change in the settlement gap. The gap between Five Oak Green and Paddock Wood represents a fairly small proportion of the overall gap between towns, but coalescence or near-coalescence of these separate settlements would have a disproportionate impact in this respect, being more likely to be perceived as sprawl.
- 5.42 Between Paddock Wood and Tunbridge Wells the wooded hills and valleys north of Pembury represent a significant physical and visual separator, and the straight-line gap is almost 6km, but the gap between Paddock Wood and Pembury is just over 4km. The A228 provides the main road link, but both towns are slightly offset from this route. The A228 corridor, on higher ground than the surrounding landscape along the southern part of the gap, makes a greater contribution to settlement separation but the gap is large enough for development adjacent to the towns not to compromise it significantly.
- 5.43 Tunbridge Wells and Southborough have already undergone a considerable degree of coalescence, but the valley landform in the vicinity of Caen Farm and Caenwood Farm constitutes a significant gap to the west of connecting development close to the A26. Likewise Brokes Wood and the valley to the east of it form a strong separation between Southborough and the industrial northern tip of Tunbridge Wells around Longfield Road.
- 5.44 Where small gaps separate inset areas that are not both considered to be towns, such as between Rusthall and Langton Green, their principal value in terms of the purposes of Green Belt is considered to relate to the extent to which they can be considered to form part of the countryside, which is assessed as Purpose 3.
- 5.45 The gap between Tunbridge Wells and Pembury is narrow, and also contributes to the larger gap between Tunbridge Wells and Paddock Wood. The A21 is a strong barrier preventing physical coalescence of the two settlements, which to an extent reduces the importance of the remaining open land between Sandown Park and the A21 as a settlement gap, but the A264 Pembury Road connects the two settlements so retention of openness in its vicinity is important.

Purpose 3: to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Disregarding the condition of land, are there urbanising influences within or adjacent which reduce the sense of it being countryside?

- 5.46 Typically the topography and woodlands that characterise the High Weald landscape around Tunbridge Wells mean that urban landscapes are rarely a dominating feature other than from within the towns or neighbouring inset settlements.
- 5.47 Even in the few locations where narrow areas of Green Belt land are closely fringed by development on more than one side, as at Denny Bottom between Rusthall and Langton Green, the distinct landform and tree cover - a ghyll in the case of Denny Bottom - create a strong distinction from the surrounding urban areas, and a relationship with the landform that extends out into the wider countryside.
- 5.48 Farmsteads are a frequent occurrence in the Green Belt but individual clusters of dwellings such as these are not at a strategic level considered to have an urbanising influence (i.e. discounting individual dwellings which may have some urban characteristics).
- 5.49 The three Major Developed Sites (MDS) referenced in the Core Strategy - Tunbridge Wells Hospital at Pembury, Kent College (Pembury) and Holmewood School (Langton Green) - have little impact on the wider countryside:
- Tunbridge Wells Hospital at Pembury is set within woodland so its urbanising influence is limited to the immediate MDS and the passing Tonbridge Road.
 - Kent College (a girls' school) has a well treed setting which, combined with the well hedged and wooded character of much of the surrounding countryside, creates strong visual containment and restricts urbanising influence on the surrounding area. There are adjacent open fields, but the college is a mixture of modern and older buildings which does not present a strongly urbanising influence, and both the built up area and the adjacent fields benefit from an elevated setting that has a strongly rural character.
 - Holmewood House, another complex containing both modern and older buildings (a 19th century mansion), is also set on elevated ground but with strong woodland surroundings, so its influence is very localised. An estate of houses within the LBD, called Hither Chantlers, lies just to the east on similar terrain but is separated by a tree line. In this contained setting the distinction between the MDS and the housing on Hither Chantlers is limited, with only a c.100m open gap between the two, but Hither Chantlers itself represents encroachment from an urban area which otherwise stops at Holmewood Ridge to the north, so the general setting is a countryside one.
- 5.50 Other land outside the LBD and potentially subject to urbanising influence is the area occupied by Rose Hill School and the Bennett Memorial Diocesan School on the western edge of Tunbridge Wells, and the playing fields adjacent to the nearby Girls' Grammar School and Sports Centre. These areas are all designated as the Culverden Down Rural Fringe, safeguarded land for potential future development, rather than Green Belt.
- 5.51 Reflecting their open character, as noted under the Openness heading above, none of the washed-over villages or hamlets within Tunbridge Wells Borough noted in Chapter 4 is considered to represent a significant urbanising influence.
- 5.52 The main built area of Groombridge is outside of the Borough but has relationship (facing it across valley) and may potentially have some urbanising influence on surrounding countryside.
- 5.53 Of the smaller areas of built development, none represent a significant urbanising influence, but the buildings along the B2017 to the east of the inset village of Five Oak Green do reduce the perception of a gap between the village and Paddock Wood.

Does land relate more strongly to settlements or to the wider countryside with regard to the role of landscape features in creating either separation or connectivity?

- 5.54 The topography and woodlands that restrict urbanising influences around Tunbridge Wells also generally create a distinction between settlement and countryside, with the LBD commonly marking a distinct break in slope, usually down into a valley with a strong woodland component. Where such a distinction exists, land can be considered to make a strong contribution to preventing encroachment on the countryside.
- 5.55 There are however some locations where development has a stronger influence, either where it contains open land to some extent, or where there is no strong landscape element to create separation from an inset settlement but where terrain and land cover do to an extent separate that land from the wider countryside. In these instances there is some potential for land to be judged to not make a strong contribution, even though it may retain a rural character.
- 5.56 Situations where both the above circumstances apply, and land can consequently be considered to make no significant contribution to protecting countryside, are likely to be very limited, or too small in scale to be considered of strategic value, but potential cases are the land to the south of Hawkenbury between Forest Road and Benhall Mill Road (within Wealden District), and the western part of Hawkenbury Recreation Ground.
- 5.57 Examples of land that may not make a strong contribution are where there is high ground above the steeper slopes of a valley – e.g. land to the north of Southborough Common or to the west of Speldhurst – where there is containment by major roads – e.g. land north of the A264 between Tunbridge Wells and the A21 at Pembury – or where there is containment by woodland – e.g. land to the east of Hawkenbury. The Culverden Down Rural Fringe land to the west of Tunbridge Wells also has some separation from the wider countryside.
- 5.58 Land to the south of Tonbridge is separated from the urban area by the A21, and so relates more strongly to the wider countryside, and to the south-east the Registered Parkland at Somerhill forms a strong countryside buffer to the town. To the east of Tonbridge an area under fruit tree cultivation, within Tonbridge and Malling District, has a stronger relationship with the urban area but floodplain provides a buffer between this and land to the east within Tunbridge Wells District which, falling northwards towards the Medway Valley, has a strong relationship with almost uninhabited floodplain landscape.
- 5.59 Landform and land cover provide less variation in the low-lying, visually open area around Five Oak Green and Paddock Wood so, whilst land is typically well-related to the wider landscape it also strengthens the relationship between inset settlement and countryside, meaning that loss of open land is more likely to represent a gradual encroachment than a step-change in impact.
- 5.60 To the south of Paddock Wood, outside of the Green Belt, the B2017 marks the southern edge of the existing settlement, but land to the south of the road, Mascalls Farm, has been allocated for residential development in the SALP. To the east of the B2160 Maidstone Road is contained to the south by Mascalls Academy, reducing the extent to which it relates to the wider countryside. There is some distinction in terms of landform between this belt of flatter ground to the south of the B2017 and higher ground to the south of Mascalls Pound Farm and Mascalls Academy.
- 5.61 The landscape east of Paddock Wood is similar to that to the west, with no significant barriers between existing settlement and the wider countryside. Two recent SALP housing allocations take the LBD up to a watercourse, which will provide a consistent edge between the railway line and Mascall's Court, but Queens Road provides an alternative boundary to the east across this flat landscape.

Purpose 4: to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Which settlements constitute historic towns?

- 5.62 Tunbridge Wells is recognised as a settlement which, although only developing as a town from the mid-17th century, has a special character which is significantly dependent on its landscape setting. There are many other settlements in and around the borough's Green Belt that have a longer history than Tunbridge Wells. Of these only Tonbridge, Paddock Wood and Southborough can realistically be considered to be towns.
- 5.63 The historic focus of Tonbridge is a spur of higher ground alongside which the River Medway could be crossed, a strategically important location reflected in the construction of a castle in the 11th century. The town has subsequently spread outward, but the river and its floodplain have constrained development to the east and west of the town centre and are important to its historic setting. Elsewhere the low-lying, relatively flat landscape does not provide for any distinctive setting characteristics, and in general development has stayed on lower ground, but to the south there has been some encroachment upslope, which could be seen as expansion beyond the natural river valley setting of Tonbridge into the fringes of the High Weald hills that form part of the town's setting.
- 5.64 Paddock Wood and Southborough have only developed into towns in the 20th century, the latter part of the century in the case of Paddock Wood. Paddock Wood's evolution relates primarily to the development of a rail hub serving the Weald and its surrounding landscape provides no particular setting characteristics that contribute to its form or character but, as with Tonbridge, it is a Low Weald town and any expansion southward into the High Weald would represent a distinct change in setting.
- 5.65 The strong topographical variation that characterises the High Weald has resulted in a distinctive pattern of settlement in which towns and villages are, with the particular exception of Tunbridge Wells in its original form, focused on hill tops and ridges, with only smaller hamlets and farmsteads on lower slopes and valley floors. Development that runs counter to this pattern could be considered to affect the traditional, historic form of settlements, but with regard to Green Belt purposes only Tunbridge Wells can be considered to possess a special character that is largely dependent on its relationship with landscape. Southborough, whilst not a historic town in terms of its modern evolution, does by virtue of its proximity to Tunbridge Wells form part of the latter's setting, as do the other smaller settlements that spread out along ridgelines from the fringes of Tunbridge Wells. However, the distinctions in topography that determine historic settlement form also represent a significant distinction between settlement and countryside, and therefore are an important consideration when assessing contribution to Green Belt purpose 3.

What landscape elements/areas are important to the setting and special character of historic towns?

- 5.66 Tunbridge Wells developed as a spa town from the mid-17th century, initially centred on the valley-floor Pantiles then expanding up the surrounding hillsides but leaving the Common as an open space that developed an important recreational functional as the resort evolved. Tunbridge Wells Common, although it has become more wooded over the centuries, is therefore very significant to the special character of the town: the Conservation Areas Appraisal²² states that "*The juxtaposition of landscape to built development within the town is a key part of its most distinctive character*".
- 5.67 Essentially the historic core of the town is inward-looking, with the key historic areas of settlement, including the 'Arcadian' suburbs such as Calverley Park, on slopes facing the Common. The Conservation Areas Appraisal notes that "*Tunbridge Wells derives much of its character from the hills, upon and between which the town is sited*". The ridge crests mark the outer edge of the town's historic areas, and reflect the natural containment of settlement to

²² Royal Tunbridge Wells and Rusthall Conservation Areas Appraisal – TWBC (2000)

higher ground, so the openness of the undeveloped slopes beyond these areas also makes a contribution to setting and special character. This relationship between topography and development has been lost in the north-eastern part of the town, where the Ferndale and Sherwood estates suburbs, and the town's main industrial area, occupy lower ground.

- 5.68 Tunbridge Wells has evolved principally out along the ridge lines that carry the major connecting routes but, as the Urban Design Framework²³ notes, "*... the main approaches to the town are often adjacent to green spaces or tree lined, tying the town centre to its Wealden countryside*". Thus locations such as Rusthall Common and Southborough Common also contribute to historic setting.
- 5.69 Of the suburbs that were developed in the mid to late 19th century, the Pembury Road area in particular had an association with open rural views to the south-east. A number of large houses remain (some in institutional use) within this conservation area, and Dunorlan Park (a Registered Park and Garden) offers strong public views of the countryside towards High Wood and the ridge between this and Pembury.

²³ Royal Tunbridge Wells Urban Design Framework SPD (2015)

6 Conclusions and Recommendations

6.1 The following paragraphs summarise the findings of the spatial assessment and analysis of settlements and their surroundings, and make recommendations for the parcelling and analysis at Stage Two.

Areas Making a Strong Contribution

6.2 It is clear from the planning policies referenced in Chapter 2 that the expansion of Tunbridge Wells and maintaining the separate identity of neighbouring settlements were key considerations in the drawing up of Green Belt boundaries.

6.3 Those parts of the borough and adjacent districts defined as 'broad areas' on the maps in Figures 6.1A-F, and listed in Table 6.1, are considered to clearly make a strong contribution to one or more Green Belt purposes. These include land within neighbouring districts that is closely associated with Tunbridge Wells Borough.

6.4 In all cases these areas represent countryside that is distinct from urban development, in which development would represent encroachment (i.e. Purpose 3). Topography and land use, in particular tree cover, are key factors in limiting the influence of urban areas. A number of these broad areas, or parts of them, are additionally considered likely to make a strong contribution to other Green Belt purposes:

- Locations adjacent to the edges of Tunbridge Wells in BA6, BA7, BA8 and BA10, and adjacent to both Tunbridge Wells and Tonbridge in BA1 and BA2 contribute strongly to preventing the sprawl of a large built-up area (Purpose 1);
- The area north of the settlements that form the Tunbridge Wells large built-up area and south of Tonbridge (BA1 and BA2) plays an important role in preventing the coalescence of towns (Purpose 2);
- BA8, encompassing Tunbridge Wells Common and land to the west of it, and BA6, to the south-east of Pembury Road, make a strong contribution to preserving the special character of the town (Purpose 4).

Table 6.1: Potential Stage Two broad areas

Settlement/area	Parcel/ broad area	Strong contribution to Green Belt Purposes			
		Purpose 1	Purpose 2	Purpose 3	Purpose 4
South west of Tonbridge	BA1	✓	✓	✓	
South east of Tonbridge	BA2	✓	✓	✓	
Between Tonbridge and Paddock Wood – south of railway	BA3			✓	
Between Tonbridge and Paddock Wood – north of railway	BA4			✓	
Between Paddock Wood and Pembury	BA5			✓	
Between Pembury and Hawkenbury	BA6	✓		✓	✓
South of Tunbridge Wells	BA7	✓		✓	

Settlement/area	Parcel/ broad area	Strong contribution to Green Belt Purposes			
		Purpose 1	Purpose 2	Purpose 3	Purpose 4
Spa Valley	BA8	✓		✓	✓
South west of Langton Green	BA9			✓	
West of Tunbridge Wells	BA10	✓		✓	

Changes to Inset/Washed-Over Status

- 6.5 With regard to the status of existing development within Tunbridge Wells Borough, there is unlikely to be justification for the 'exceptional circumstances' required to alter Green Belt boundaries.

Changes to Outer Boundary

- 6.6 The NPPF identifies (at Paragraph 85) a need for new Green Belt boundaries to follow "*readily recognisable*" physical features, but also requires the demonstration of "*exceptional circumstances*" to justify alterations. In the absence of any evidence of significant development pressures along the eastern outer Green Belt edge there is unlikely to be any need to redefine the boundary to follow strong physical features; however many local planning authorities have made small-scale alterations to specific sections of Green Belt boundary to better reflect physical landscape features and a case could potentially be made to do this in Tunbridge Wells Borough.
- 6.7 With regard to the AONB there is precedent in the case of the New Forest National Park for removal of Green Belt designation where there was felt to be adequate protection against urbanising development through other designation (i.e. the creation of National Park status), although this step was not considered prior to that when the Forest formed part of the South Hampshire Coast AONB. The overlap of designations could be considered least warranted in locations where Green Belt only makes a strong contribution in terms of Purpose 3 (encroachment on countryside), but as the removal of the designation would be unlikely to facilitate any strategic development in these circumstances there are unlikely to be any exceptional circumstances to justify alterations.
- 6.8 In the vicinity of Paddock Wood, where in the absence of Green Belt and AONB designation there has been greater development pressure, there is potentially a stronger case to consider creating an outer boundary that follows physical landscape features.
- 6.9 If a more detailed assessment of land parcels is to take place it could include land to the south and east of Paddock Wood, to establish whether there would be any significant variations in terms of Green Belt contribution were the designated area to be extended. However, in the absence of any sizeable settlements to the east or south of Paddock Wood, and any historic setting/special character considerations, the land here would be likely to contribute principally to preventing countryside encroachment (Purpose 3). This alone would not be justification for extending the Green Belt, unless the potential growth of Paddock Wood beyond a certain size would be a concern justifying the imposition of a Green Belt buffer (in the same way that there is a buffer to the east of Tunbridge Wells and Pembury), and the implications – positive or negative – that this might have for sustainable development.

Changes to Inner Boundary

- 6.10 Where there is some potential for areas of land not to make a strong contribution to Green Belt purposes, parcels are proposed for further assessment.

Green Belt in Neighbouring Districts

- 6.11 It is suggested that land in Wealden District immediately to the south of Tunbridge Wells should, in light of potential development pressures from the large built-up area, be included in any further assessment, to understand how it would contribute to Green Belt purposes were it included within the designated area. Strong containment by woodland to the south marks an obvious outer edge for this area.
- 6.12 The 'broad areas' identified on the western and northern sides of the Borough have been defined using strong outer boundary features, namely the River Medway and the A21, which means that they extend in places into the neighbouring Sevenoaks District and Tonbridge and Malling Borough.

Potential next steps

Stage Two assessment

- 6.13 33 parcels and 10 broad areas have been suggested for assessment at Stage Two, should this be required, using boundary features which are considered to potentially reflect a change in relationship between settlement and countryside. Where possible strong, defensible features have been used.
- 6.14 Figures 6.1A-F illustrate the defined broad areas and parcels, which are also listed in Table 6.2.
- 6.15 The parcels represent the areas in which there is a possibility that land may not be found to make a strong contribution to Green belt purposes.
- 6.16 Although the existence of Rural Fringe designation (i.e. safeguarded land) was not a consideration in this assessment, all of the designated Rural Fringe sites do fall within proposed Stage Two parcels.
- 6.17 Two parcels, TW6 and TW7, include land within Wealden District that abuts Tunbridge Wells. As noted in 6.9 above, land beyond the Green Belt edge around Paddock Wood could also be included in the parcelling.

Further assessment

- 6.18 In making judgements on relative contribution to Green Belt purposes, no consideration is given to the potential effects of development beyond the five stated purposes, but when reviewing boundaries, local authorities are required to "... consider the consequences for sustainable development of channelling development towards urban areas inside the Green Belt boundary, towards towns and villages inset within the Green Belt or towards locations beyond the outer Green Belt boundary" (NPPF Paragraph 84). This judgement will require an analysis of factors such as highway capacity, location of amenities and services, and effects on landscape and ecological resources, with all of these factors considered against the need-case for development, so a review of Green Belt contribution is only one aspect of the review process.

Table 6.2: Potential Stage Two parcels and broad areas

Settlement/area	Parcel/ broad area	Key Stage Two considerations
South west of Tonbridge	BA1	Contribution to preventing countryside encroachment, and as gap between Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells
South east of Tonbridge	BA2	Contribution to preventing countryside encroachment, and as gap between Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells; extent of woodland constraint
Between Tonbridge and Paddock Wood – south of railway	BA3	Contribution to gap between Tonbridge and Paddock Wood; extent of openness; distinction between Low and High Weald landscapes
Between Tonbridge and Paddock Wood – north of railway	BA4	Contribution to preventing countryside encroachment; floodplain constraint and extent of openness
Between Paddock Wood and Pembury	BA5	Contribution to preventing countryside encroachment and as gap between Paddock Wood and Pembury
Between Pembury and Hawkenbury	BA6	Contribution to preventing countryside encroachment and role in historic setting of Tunbridge Wells
South of Tunbridge Wells	BA7	Contribution to preventing countryside encroachment and role of woodland in limiting potential urban sprawl
Spa Valley	BA8	Contribution to preventing countryside encroachment and role in historic setting of Tunbridge Wells
South west of Langton Green	BA9	Contribution to preventing countryside encroachment
West of Tunbridge Wells	BA10	Contribution to preventing countryside encroachment
Southborough	SO1	Relationship between settlement and countryside, role in preventing sprawl of large built-up area and role in separation between Tunbridge Wells and Southborough
	SO2	Relationship between settlement and countryside and role in preventing sprawl of large built-up area
	SO3	Relationship between settlement and countryside role in preventing sprawl of large built-up area
	SO4	Relationship between settlement and countryside, with reference to extent of containment by woodland
Five Oak Green	FG1	Relationship between settlement and countryside and role in settlement gap between Tonbridge and Paddock Wood
	FG2	Relationship between settlement and countryside and role in settlement gap between Tonbridge and Paddock Wood
	FG3	Relationship between settlement and countryside and role in settlement gap between Tonbridge and Paddock Wood
	FG4	Relationship between settlement and countryside and role in settlement gap between Tonbridge and Paddock Wood
Paddock Wood	PW1	Relationship between settlement and countryside and role in settlement gap between Tonbridge and Paddock Wood; floodplain constraint
	PW2	Relationship between settlement and countryside and connectivity with existing Green Belt (parcel is outside of Green Belt)
	PW3	Relationship between settlement and countryside, considering extent of containment by built development, and connectivity with existing Green Belt (parcel is within LBD)
	PW4	Relationship between settlement and countryside and connectivity with existing Green Belt (parcel is outside of Green Belt)

Settlement/area	Parcel/ broad area	Key Stage Two considerations
	PW5	Relationship between settlement and countryside and connectivity with existing Green Belt (parcel is outside of Green Belt)
Pembury	PE1	Relationship between settlement and countryside, with reference to role of A21 in forming barrier to encroachment/sprawl
	PE2	Relationship between settlement and countryside and role in preventing sprawl of large built-up area
	PE3	Relationship between settlement and countryside, with reference to extent of containment by settlement and woodland
	PE4	Relationship between settlement and countryside and role in preventing sprawl of large built-up area, with reference to barrier role of ancient woodlands
	PE5	Relationship between settlement and countryside, with reference to role of A264 in forming barrier to encroachment/sprawl
	PE6	Relationship between settlement and countryside, and gap between Pembury and Tunbridge Wells, with reference to relationship with existing urban area and role of A21 in forming barrier to encroachment/sprawl
Tunbridge Wells	TW1	Relationship between settlement and countryside, role in preventing sprawl of large built-up area and role in separation between Tunbridge Wells and Southborough (parcel is safeguarded Rural Fringe land)
	TW2	Relationship between settlement and countryside, role in preventing sprawl of large built-up area and role in separation between Tunbridge Wells and Southborough (parcel is safeguarded Rural Fringe land)
	TW3	Relationship between settlement and countryside (parcel is safeguarded Rural Fringe land)
	TW4	Relationship between settlement and countryside, with reference to barrier role of A21
	TW5	Relationship between settlement and countryside and role in gap between Tunbridge Wells and Pembury, with reference to barrier role of A21
	TW6	Relationship between settlement and countryside, with reference to role of High Wood in forming barrier to encroachment/sprawl
	TW7	Relationship between settlement and countryside, with reference to extent of containment by settlement, railway and woodland (land is allocated for development by Wealden District)
	TW8	Relationship between settlement and countryside (most of the parcel is in Wealden District)
	TW9	Relationship between settlement and countryside, and potential role in historic setting of Tunbridge Wells (part of the parcel is in Wealden District)
Rusthall	RU1	Relationship between settlement and countryside and role in gap between Rusthall, Speldhurst and Tunbridge Wells
	RU2	Relationship between settlement and countryside and role in gap between Rusthall, Speldhurst and Tunbridge Wells
	RU3	Relationship between settlement and countryside, role in gap between Rusthall and Tunbridge Wells and

Settlement/area	Parcel/ broad area	Key Stage Two considerations
		contribution to historic setting of the latter
Langton Green	LG1	Relationship between settlement and countryside and role in preventing sprawl of large built-up area
	LG2	Relationship between settlement and countryside and role in preventing sprawl of large built-up area
Speldhurst	SP1	Relationship between settlement and countryside, with reference to impact of development on west side of hill and gap to Bullingstone
	SP2	Relationship between settlement and countryside; role of wooded ghyll in forming barrier to encroachment/sprawl

