

Section 4

4.0 Visual Assessment

4.1 Landscape Setting

The site at Caenwood and Whitegates, off Reynolds Lane has an agrarian character and comprises a mosaic of grassed fields, of varying sizes, which are defined by tall, mature hedgerows and mature woodland compartments.

The site's external boundary is predominantly defined by a tall and mature native hedgerow, which restricts intervisibility both into and out of the site.

4.2 Proposed Development

The quantum of development is, as yet, unknown. The site is currently being promoted as suitable for housing and economic development, as a part of the Tunbridge Wells Borough Local Plan - Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment 'Call for Sites'.

4.3 Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)

The extent of the study area has been confirmed through production of Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) map. The ZTV illustrates locations within the study area where there would not be any views of the development and has enabled the field assessment to concentrate on the locations in the study area where views may be possible. These locations were subsequently verified on site.

The bare earth ZTV illustrates the maximum theoretical visibility of the site and development, but does not however, take into consideration visual buffers such as vegetation and buildings within the surrounding landscape. Consequently, the actual visibility on the ground is likely to be substantially less than shown on the ZTV map. See Figure 4.1 *Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)*.

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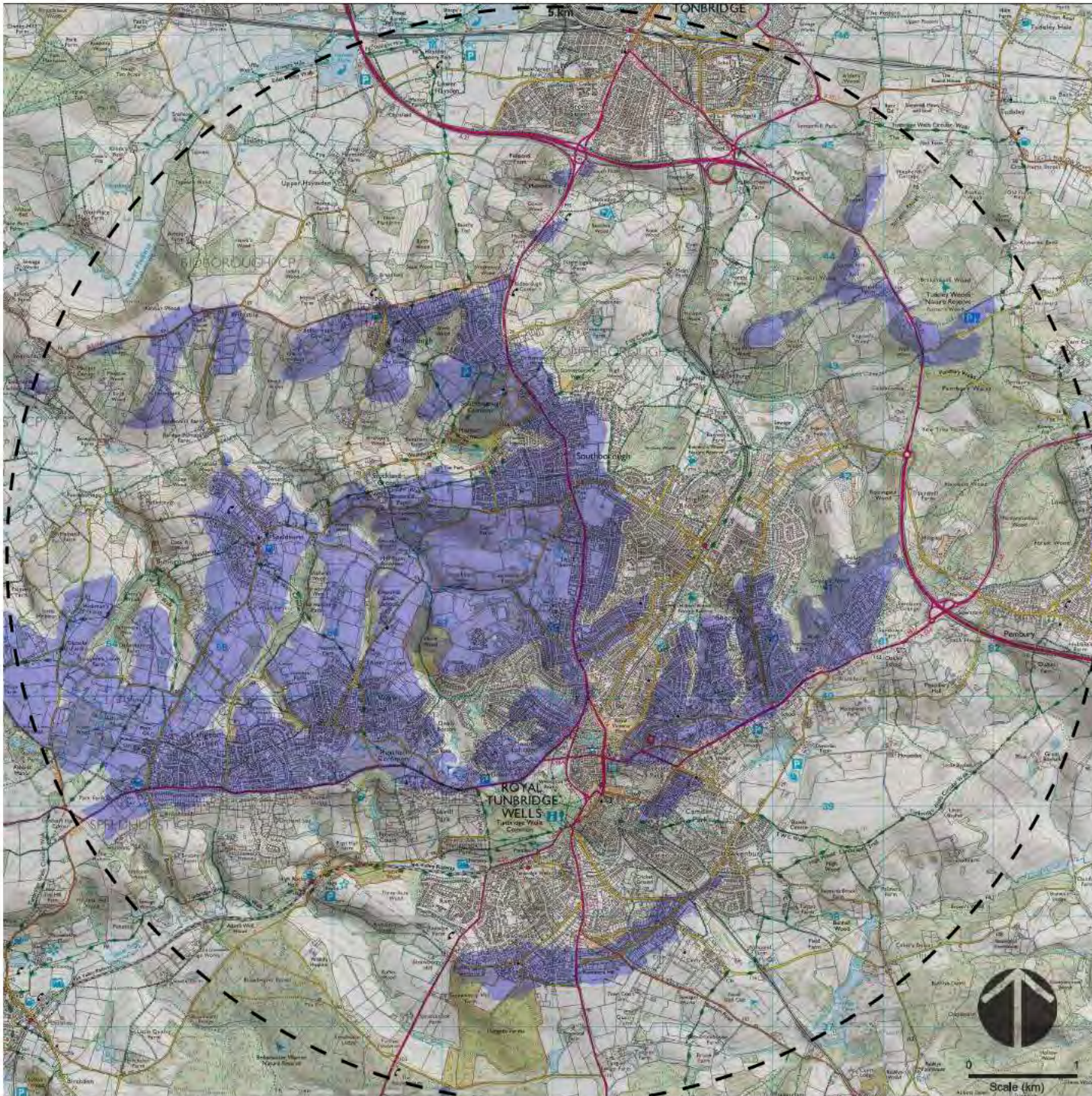


Figure 4.1: Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV).

Layout Information

Layout as supplied by Caenwood Estate.


The terrain data used is Terrain 5 DTM (vertical accuracy +/- 2m RMSE). Viewer height used 1.6m above ground level. Forty target points have been used located across the proposed site set at a height of 8 metres.

The visibility mapping is a bare earth ZTV on a 5m grid and does not include the screening effects of buildings or vegetation in the study area.

Calculations have been adjusted to account for earth's curvature and the effects of light refraction.

The calculation has been made with RESOFT 4.2.5.2 software that does not use mathematically approximate methods.

 Site Location

 Extent of Theoretical Visibility

Sensitivity	Visual Receptors	Landscape Character
High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residential properties with predominantly open views from windows, garden or curtilage. Views will normally be from principal living rooms and from windows of rooms in use during the day. Users of Public Rights of Way with predominantly open views and of recreational use. Non-motorised users of minor or unclassified roads in the countryside. Visitors to recognised viewpoints or beauty spots. Users of outdoor recreational facilities with predominantly open views where the purpose of that recreation is enjoyment of the countryside - e.g. Country Parks, National Trust sites etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong landscape structure. Strong positive character. Good condition. Strong sense of place. Visually distinctive. Aesthetically pleasing/occasional detracting features. Distinct features of worthy conservation.
Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residential properties with views from windows, garden or curtilage. Views from ground floor windows will be oblique or partially obscured by garden and/or other intervening vegetation. Users of Public Rights of Way with restricted views, in less sensitive areas or where there are significant existing intrusive features. Schools and other institutional buildings, and their outdoor areas. Motorised users of minor or unclassified roads in the countryside. Where alteration is focussed upon often narrow and winding routes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognisable landscape structure. Positive character. Moderate condition. Reasonable sense of place. Visually notable. Aesthetically satisfactory or uninspiring/ some detracting features. Some features of worthy conservation.
Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> People in their place of work. Users of main roads or passengers on public transport on main routes. Users of outdoor recreational facilities with restricted views and where the activity is focussed within the area. Occupants of industrial premises. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weak or degraded landscape structure. Weak or negative character. Poor condition. Poor sense of place. Visually notable. Aesthetically unsatisfactory or unpleasant. Few or no features of worthy conservation. Scope for positive enhancement.

Table 4.1: The General Criteria for Establishing the Sensitivity of Visual Receptors and Landscape Character.

4.4 Assessment Context

The visual assessment aims to establish the potential visibility of the site from the surrounding public receptors and the nature of any potential views and visual amenity at those locations.

To gain an understanding of the visual context of the area and within which the development will be located, a field assessment has been conducted, from public receptors within 4km of the site. Viewpoints 1 - 9, which illustrate this potential visibility, are set out on pages 27 - 35.

All public footpaths within this 4km of the site (which have the potential for visibility as identified on the ZTV map) were walked to assess potential visibility. Any potential views of the site were recorded by photograph. A photograph was not taken for footpaths where no view was observed. Whilst views from private properties and land may be considered, this is only speculative for the scope of this assessment. This landscape and visual assessment does not provide an assessment of the nature of the likely effects.

Similarly, listed buildings and structures within the 1km radius were visited and any potential views of the site verified. In particular, the site survey confirmed that there is **intervisibility** with:

- Caenwood Farmhouse
- Smockham Farmhouse
- the listed buildings and structures at David Salomon's House

The site survey concluded that, due to the rolling topography and extensive woodland cover which surrounds Tunbridge Wells, intervisibility with listed buildings or structures within 4km of the site is likely to be limited to partial and

glimpsed views.

The site survey also confirmed that, due to a rolling topography and extensive woodland, tree and hedgerow cover, there are no clear and direct views of the site from any public rights of way within 4km of the site, with the exception of:

- views from footpath WB1, which runs across the north eastern corner of the site.
- a limited view from footpath WB5, looking north into the site.

4.5 Visual Assessment

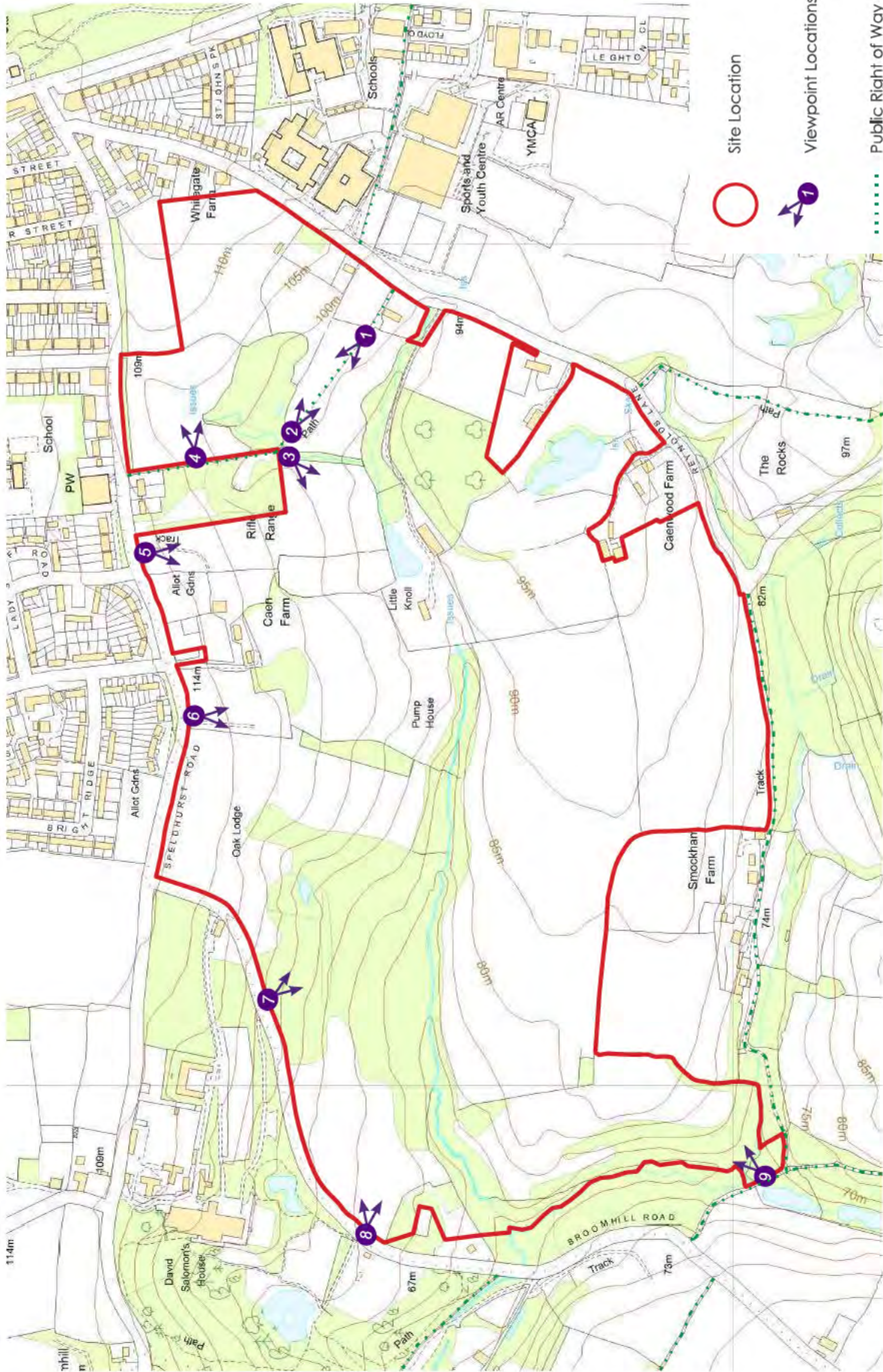
The following visual assessment has been carried out according to the methodology set out in Section 1 and the criteria set out in Table 4.1.

Sensitivity of Existing Landscape Character & Visual Receptors (Table 4.1)

The sensitivity of the landscape to change is the degree to which a particular landscape can accommodate changes, or new features, without significant detrimental effects to its essential characteristics. The sensitivity of visual receptors will depend on three key factors:

- The receptor's activity whilst exposed to the view (work, recreational activities, resident);
- Degree of exposure to view; and,
- Period of exposure to view.

The sensitivity of landscape character or a visual receptor is defined as being high/medium/low, where high is the most sensitive.



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Figure 4.2: Viewpoint Locations.

Site Appraisal Interim Conclusions

Landscape Effects

The landscape which surrounds Tunbridge Wells is one of rolling, pastoral topography, combined with heavily wooded appearance.

The landscape character of the district is defined by land use:

- An agrarian landscape, with a mosaic of fields defined by hedgerows.
- Mature woodland compartments and individual trees are abundant;
- The landscape is locally distinctive and there is a strong sense of place;
- Built form is predominantly located in small, dispersed linear settlements with scattered small hamlets, with individual farm houses and agricultural buildings, constructed from local materials, visually blend into the landscape and contribute to the strong sense of place. Settlement are predominantly located on ridge tops;

The site at Caenwood and Whitegates, off Reynolds Lane is characteristic of the wider landscape within which it sits.

Visual Effects

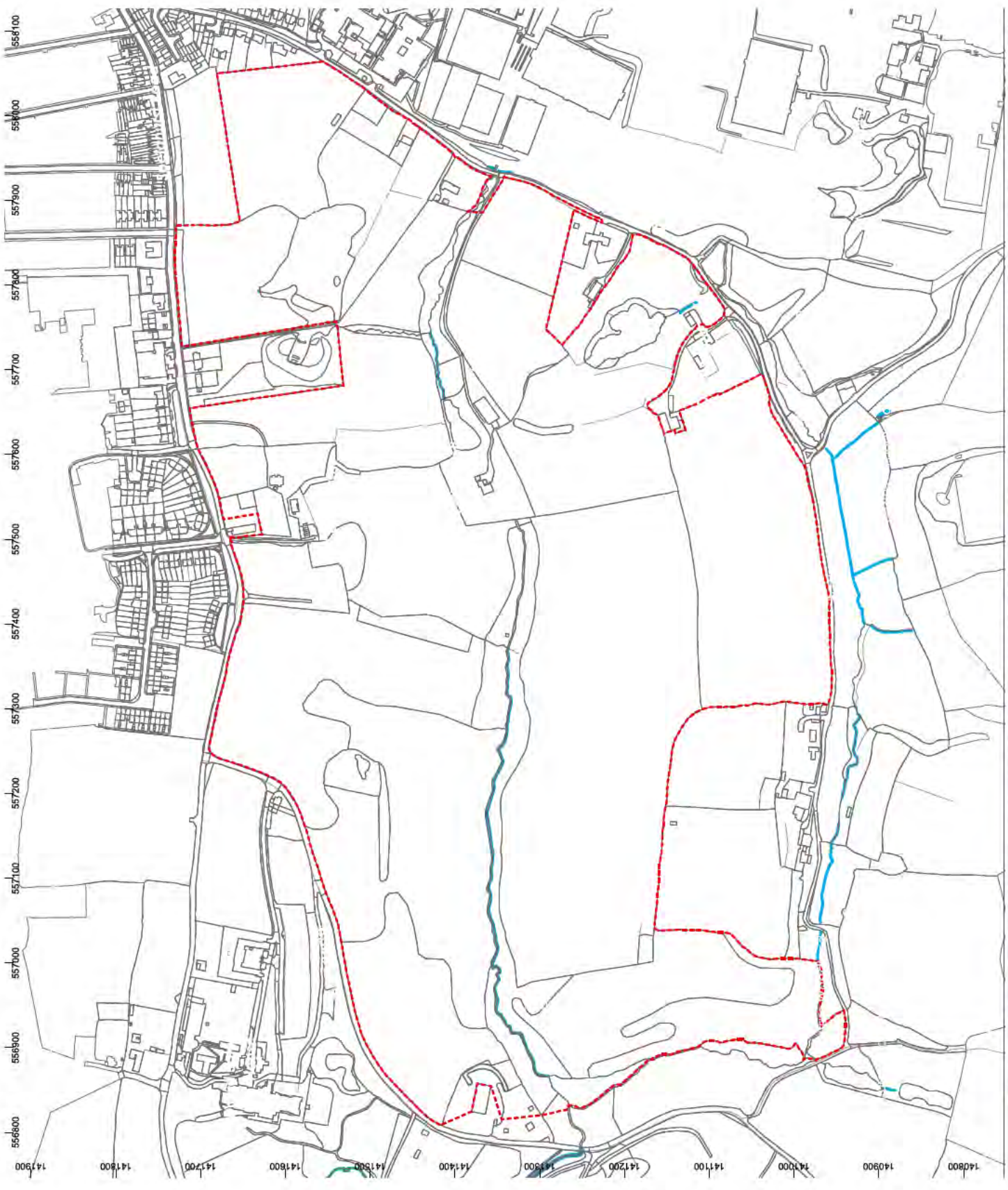
An appraisal of views from PRoW was made to ascertain the likely visual impact of any future development, upon the landscape setting and the visual amenity experienced and enjoyed by people.

All public rights of way within a 4km radius of the site (which were shown to have the potential for visibility on the ZTV map), were checked to verify likely visual impact.

- It is concluded that, at the time of survey, visibility is largely limited by mature

trees, woodlands and hedgerow species, planted along the boundaries of the site and within the wider landscape of the borough;

- Views of the site from Speldhurst Road, Broomhill Road and Reynolds Lane are restricted to partial and glimpsed views only, afforded where the vehicular users attention is focused upon a narrow and winding road and are seen within a fast moving, passing and transient context.



Site Location

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Viewpoint 1 - Looking north west into the site on Footpath WB1. Grid Reference TQ 57895 41437

Users of footpath WB1 have a clear and open view of a small area of the site when walking north west, through a gateway, off Reynolds Lane. At the time of survey, only a small area of the site is visible. This small field is visually enclosed by mature woodland cover, which has a good age structure. There are no long distance views and no intervisibility with the other parts of the site.

Development of this area would introduce new and dominant built form into an otherwise rural scene, however development of other areas of the wider site would not be visible from this viewpoint. The summer time sensitivity of the visual receptor is considered to be **medium** due to it being from a users of public right of way with restricted views. At the time of survey there was **no intervisibility** with the wider site.



Viewpoint 2 - Looking south east into the site from Footpath WB1. Grid Reference TQ 57782 41516

Users of footpath WB1, walking south east, have a clear and open view of a limited section of the site. The wider site to the right of the view is obscured by mature woodland compartments. At the time of survey, only a small area of the site is visible. This small field is visually enclosed by mature woodland cover, which has a good age structure. There are no long distance views and no intervisibility with the other parts of the site.

Development of this area would introduce new and dominant built form into an otherwise rural scene, however development of other areas of the wider site would not be visible from this viewpoint. The summer time sensitivity of the visual receptor is considered to be **medium** due to it being from a users of public right of way with restricted views. At the time of survey there was **no intervisibility** with the wider site.



Viewpoint 3 - Looking south west into the site from Footpath WB1. Grid Reference TQ 57742 41529

Users of footpath WB1 have a partially obscured view to the south west, into a small portion of the site, afforded through a gap in the hedgerow created where grazing animals have worn a path to a small stream. A mature tree is partially visible on the horizon, with further woodland cover behind.

Development of this area would introduce new built form into an otherwise rural scene, however development of other areas of the wider site would not be visible from this viewpoint. As the view of the built form would be restricted by vegetation, it would not be considered to be a dominant feature of this view. The summer time sensitivity of the visual receptor is considered to be **medium to low** due to it being from a users of public right of way with a restricted view. At the time of survey there was **no intervisibility** with the wider site.



Viewpoint 4 - Looking east into the site, through a gap in the hedge, from Footpath WB1. Grid Reference TQ 57745 41640

Users of footpath WB1 have a partially obscured view of a small portion of the north eastern corner of the site, afforded through a gap in the hedgerow. The houses which are located along Reynolds Lane are visible as a minor element in the landscape, in the background, beyond a mature hedgerow.

Development of this area would introduce additional built form into this view, however development of other areas of the wider site would not be visible from this viewpoint. As the view of the built form would be restricted by vegetation and partial views of other built form will provide a settlement context for the development, it would not be considered to be a dominant feature of this view. The summer time sensitivity of the visual receptor is considered to be **medium** due to it being from a users of public right of way with restricted views. At the time of survey there was **no intervisibility** with the wider site.



Viewpoint 5 - Looking south into the site from Speldhurst Road. Grid Reference TQ 57639 41711

Views of the site, off Speldhurst Road, are limited by a high, mature hedgerow which defines the northern boundary of the site. A gap in the hedgerow, where a dilapidated iron gate marks the position of an access point, affords a south facing view. The pedestrian footpath is located to the north side of Speldhurst Road, beyond a wide grassed verge. The view is clear and open however only a limited area of the site is visible, due to mature woodland which frames the view. The skyline is dominated by woodland cover, which extends to the south from the site. Vehicular users of Speldhurst Road will have a partial, glimpsed view of a small area of the site at this viewpoint, however the view will have a fast moving, passing and transient context. This view is representative of that afforded from the principal living rooms of adjacent residential properties on Speldhurst Road, only where a gap in the hedgerow occurs.

Development of this area would introduce new built form into an otherwise rural scene, which would be a dominant element within the view, however development of other areas of the wider site would not be visible from this viewpoint. The summer time sensitivity of the visual receptor to this small section of the site is considered to be **high to medium** due to it being from non-motorised users of minor or unclassified roads in the countryside and from motorised users of minor or unclassified roads in the countryside, where alteration is focused upon often narrow and winding routes. At the time of survey there was **no intervisibility** with the wider site.



Viewpoint 6 - Looking south into the site from Speldhurst Road. Grid Reference TQ 57437 41650.

Views of the site, off Speldhurst Road, are limited by a high, mature hedgerow which defines the northern boundary of the site. A gap in the hedgerow, beyond a small parking area, affords a south facing view across a section of the site. The entire site is not visible. The pedestrian footpath is located to the north side of Speldhurst Road, beyond a wide grassed verge. The view is clear and open however only a limited area of the site is visible, due to mature woodland which frames the view. The skyline is dominated by woodland cover and a long distance view of the undulating landscape to the south. Vehicular users of Speldhurst Road will have a partial, glimpsed view of a small area of the site at this viewpoint, however the view will have a fast moving, passing and transient context. This view is representative of that afforded from the principal living rooms of adjacent residential properties on Speldhurst Road, only where a gap in the hedgerow occurs.

Development of this area would introduce new built form into an otherwise rural scene, and development of the southern area of the wider site may be visible from this viewpoint. New built form would dominate the view, however it could be accommodated within the mature woodland cover, if retained. The summer time sensitivity of the visual receptor is considered to be **high to medium** due to it being from non-motorised users of minor or unclassified roads in the countryside and from motorised users of minor or unclassified roads in the countryside, where alteration is focused upon often narrow and winding routes. At the time of survey there was **limited and partial intervisibility** with the wider site.



Viewpoint 7 - Looking south east into the site from Broomhill Road. Grid Reference TQ 57102 41557

Users of Broomhill Road, travelling south, have a partial and glimpsed view of the site, afforded within a small gap in the hedgerow. The site is visible but not easily discernible within the context of a heavily wooded, rolling landscape and is seen within a fast moving, passing and transient context. This view is representative of that afforded from the adjacent, unlisted, Lodge at David Salomon's House.

Development of the site would introduce new built form into an otherwise rural scene. New built form would dominate the view, however it could be accommodated within the mature woodland cover, if retained. The summer time sensitivity of the visual receptor is considered to be **medium to low** due to it being from users of a minor road in the countryside, where alteration is focussed upon often narrow and winding routes. At the time of survey there was **limited and partial intervisibility** with the wider site.



Viewpoint 8 - Looking north east into the site from Broomhill Road. Grid Reference TQ 56816 41430

Users of Broomhill Road, travelling north, have a partial and glimpsed view of the site, afforded within a small gap in the hedgerow. The site is visible within the context of a heavily wooded, rolling landscape and is seen within a fast moving, passing and transient context.

Development of the site would introduce new built form into an otherwise rural scene. New built form would dominate the view. The summer time sensitivity of the visual receptor is considered to be **medium to low** due to it being from users of a minor road in the countryside, where alteration is focussed upon often narrow and winding routes. At the time of survey there was **limited and partial intervisibility** with the wider site.



Viewpoint 9 - Looking north into the site from Footpath WB5. Grid Reference TQ 56923 40949

Users of footpath WB5 have a partially obscured view of a small portion of the south western corner of the site, afforded through a gap in the mature hedgerow. The view is limited by woodland cover.

Development of the wider site would not be visible from this viewpoint. The summer time sensitivity of the visual receptor is considered to be **medium to low** due to it being from a users of public right of way with restricted views. At the time of survey there was **no intervisibility** with the wider site.

Section

5

5.0 Conclusions

The landscape and visual assessment of the site off at Caenwood and Whitegates, off Reynolds Lane, concludes the following in respect of landscape character and visual issues:

5.1 Conclusions of the Landscape Baseline

The site lies to the north west of Tunbridge Wells in the County of Kent. The **sense of place is strong**, with a distinct and recognisable landscape and a local vernacular, characteristic of the underlying geology.

The site is defined by Speldhurst Road, Broomhill Road and Reynolds Lane to the north, west and south/south east respectively. The boundaries of the site are defined by a dense and mature hedgerow which visually screens the site.

The site's landscape character is dominated by a rolling landform with abundant mature woodland compartments and a mosaic of grassed fields which are defined by mature hedgerows.

The site lies within National Character Area 122: High Weald, and has a landscape characteristic consistent with this area.

Similarly, the borough Landscape Character Assessment places the site within Area 5: Speldhurst Wooded Farmland, with the site displaying many characteristics of this local character area.

The National Character Area 122: High Weald, profile describes one of the key characteristics of the area to be an "intimate, hidden and small-scale

landscape", a key characteristic which is echoed at the site. Long distance intervisibility is strictly limited by intervening vegetation and woodland cover compartmentalises fields into small-scale, intimate spaces.

It is considered that the character of the landscape which surrounds the site will be able to accommodate the development with little negative impact. The sensitivity of the landscape character of the site to change from development is therefore considered to be **low**, if future development is sensitively located, making use of and retaining woodland cover.

The wider landscape setting, with its undulating and heavily wooded landform restricts summer time intervisibility with the Scheduled Monuments, Registered Common/CROW land, Conservations Areas and Registered Parks, identified within a 4km radius of the site. Development of the site will have **no direct effect** upon the character and setting of these landscape receptors.

There is **limited intervisibility** with the High Weald AONB which is located to the west of the site, beyond Broomhill Roads, however as the site has characteristics in common with the wider landscape character, it is considered that any development, if sensitively located within a largely retained landscape structures, will have **no direct effect** upon the character and setting of the AONB.

It is therefore considered that the development of the site, with retention of existing elements within the landscape, a sensitive landscape scheme which respects the character of the site wide and borough landscape character and a building design, which respects the character and qualities of local vernacular, will ensure that the development contributes positively to the existing landscape character of the area. The development of the site for

future residential and economic development **will not** therefore, result in an unacceptable loss of landscape character.

5.2 Conclusions of the Visual Baseline

The site occupies a rolling and wooded landform to the north west of Tunbridge Wells. The mature hedgerows along the boundary, combined with the mature woodland compartments within the site and rolling wider landscape, visually encloses the site and **restricts views** from public receptors, to the site.

Any development of the site could make use of the existing elements within the landscape, with woodland compartments and mature hedgerows retained to maintain the intimate, small-scale character of the site. The retention of these elements will reduce the likelihood of intervisibility and therefore reduce local sensitivities.

Public rights of way, as visual receptors, are considered to be of high sensitivity, given the public nature and use of the routes. The potential visibility of the site from these receptors, within 4km of the site, is considered to be **low**, with only footpath WB1 crossing the site, with an open, yet partial view of the site, within the context of its landscape character.

A partial and restricted view into the south west corner of the site is afforded from footpath WB5. This view is however restricted by intervening vegetation and the wider site is concealed from view.

Views afforded by vehicular users of Speldhurst Road, Reynolds Lane and Broomhill Road are partial and glimpsed in nature and are afforded only of small areas of the site. An new built form introduced as part of the development into these smaller areas, will be considered to be a **major** element within a

small scale landscape scene, seen within a fast moving, passing and transient context. Therefore the potential visual effects of the development from the surrounding roads is considered to be relatively **minor**.

It is therefore considered that the future development of the site for residential and economic growth, **will not** therefore, result in an unacceptable loss of visual amenity.

5.3 Conclusions

Following a review of baseline information, together with consideration of likely landscape and visual effects, it is therefore recommended that prior to the development of the site, a **landscape strategy** is developed, to reinforce and enhance the boundary planting and create new strategically placed landscape buffers, to naturally filter views of the development, to ensure that any negative visual effects are minimised.

Given the **strong sense of place** and local **distinctiveness** arising from a combination of natural and man-made elements within the landscape of the Speldhurst Wooded Farmland, this LVA recommends that:

- Consideration is given to the orientation, massing, number and position of the proposed development within the site, to ensure that the development **respects** and takes **inspiration** from the existing character of the surrounding landscape and responds to the **uniqueness** and **inherent qualities of place**.
- Use should be made of high quality hard and soft landscape treatments to ensure a clearly identifiable **hierarchy of space** is created which reinforces local distinctiveness.

- Design of any development should respond to the **intrinsic character** and **appearance** of the Tunbridge Wells area, to ensure that any effects upon landscape character are minimised.

- The character and appearance of the boundary hedgerows could be **strengthened** and maintained by ensuring that appropriate native species are encouraged wherever possible, any gaps are closed and hedgerows are managed appropriately, to secure their health, visual qualities and longevity.

- Existing TPO trees on site should be **protected** and managed effectively to promote their health and longevity, so that the visual qualities they provide are **conserved**. The recruitment of the next generation of trees should be encouraged so that the existing qualities and character of the landscape setting are maintained, enhanced and conserved.

- It should be noted that the site survey was conducted during the summer months, with the trees in full leaf. Prior to any development of the site, it is recommended that a wintertime LVA is carried out to verify the extent of visibility and significance of any resulting effects.

The development of any un-developed fields, beyond the development limits of a settlement, will always be considered to bring about an objectionable reduction of visual amenity and landscape character. However, given that the existing elements within the landscape combine to create a **visually intimate** and **enclosed** landscape setting, it is considered that a high quality development, which respects the character and distinctive attributes of the local and borough landscapes and strong sense of place, **will be** accommodated within the existing landscape setting and **will be** appropriate in landscape and visual terms.

Appendices

Introduction & Summary

Description

Opportunities

Key facts
and data

Landscape
change

Analysis



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Introduction

As part of Natural England's responsibilities as set out in the Natural Environment White Paper¹, Biodiversity 2020² and the European Landscape Convention³, we are revising profiles for England's 159 National Character Areas (NCAs). These are areas that share similar landscape characteristics, and which follow natural lines in the landscape rather than administrative boundaries, making them a good decision-making framework for the natural environment.

NCA profiles are guidance documents which can help communities to inform their decision-making about the places that they live in and care for. The information they contain will support the planning of conservation initiatives at a landscape scale, inform the delivery of Nature Improvement Areas and encourage broader partnership working through Local Nature Partnerships. The profiles will also help to inform choices about how land is managed and can change.

Each profile includes a description of the natural and cultural features that shape our landscapes, how the landscape has changed over time, the current key drivers for ongoing change, and a broad analysis of each area's characteristics and ecosystem services. Statements of Environmental Opportunity (SEOs) are suggested, which draw on this integrated information. The SEOs offer guidance on the critical issues, which could help to achieve sustainable growth and a more secure environmental future.

NCAs profiles are working documents which draw on current evidence and knowledge. We will aim to refresh and update them periodically as new information becomes available to us.

We would like to hear how useful the NCA profiles are to you. You can contact the NCA team by emailing ncaprofiles@naturalengland.org.uk

National Character Areas map



¹ The Natural Choice: Securing the Value of Nature, Defra (2011); URL: www.official-documents.gov.uk/document/cm80/8082/8082.pdf

² Biodiversity 2020: A Strategy for England's Wildlife and Ecosystem Services, Defra (2011); URL: www.defra.gov.uk/publications/files/pb13583-biodiversity-strategy-2020-111111.pdf

³ European Landscape Convention, Council of Europe (2000); URL: <http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/en/Treaties/Html/176.htm>

Summary

The High Weald National Character Area (NCA) encompasses the ridged and faulted sandstone core of the Kent and Sussex Weald. It is an area of ancient countryside and one of the best surviving medieval landscapes in northern Europe. The High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) covers 78 per cent of the NCA. The High Weald consists of a mixture of fields, small woodlands and farmsteads connected by historic routeways, tracks and paths. Wild flower meadows are now rare but prominent medieval patterns of small pasture fields enclosed by thick hedgerows and shaws (narrow woodlands) remain fundamental to the character of the landscape.

Some 26 per cent of the NCA is covered by woodland, comprising wooded shaws, pits and gills, farm woods and larger woods; of this 26 per cent, 17 per cent is ancient semi-natural woodland and 5 per cent is ancient replanted woodland. The majority of the woodland cover is ancient, managed in the past as coppice with standards surrounded with native woodland flora such as bluebells and wood anemones in the Spring. Evidence of the area's industrial past is prominent, from the large iron-master houses to iron industry charcoal hearths, pits and hammer ponds found throughout the ancient woodlands.

The small scale and historical patterning of the landscape, interwoven woodland, wetland and open habitats, with many hedgerows and historic routeways supporting semi-natural vegetation, provide a flourishing, accessible landscape for wildlife. Exposed sandstone outcrops along the wooded gills provide nationally rare habitat and support an array of ferns, bryophytes and lichens. The Weald meets the sea at Hastings Cliffs which are a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and an area of undeveloped coastline consisting of actively

eroding soft cliffs of sands and clays. A small section (35 ha) of the Pevensey Levels Ramsar site also falls within the NCA. The numerous gill streams of the High Weald give rise to the headwaters and upper reaches of rivers which were previously important trade routes for timber, iron and wool out to the coastal ports around Walland Marsh.

Today the High Weald, and particularly Ashdown Forest, is internationally known as the home of the character Winnie-the-Pooh. Ashdown Forest is both a Special Protection Area (SPA) due to its populations of Dartford warbler and nightjar and an SAC

as it is one of the largest single continuous blocks of lowland heath in England. The forest also inspired William Robinson who pioneered the English natural garden movement and writers such as Rudyard Kipling. The NCA is also home to 56 historic parks and gardens covering 4,599 ha. The High Weald provides an example of one of the best preserved medieval landscapes in north-west Europe and



Click map to enlarge; click again to reduce.

has a strong sense of history. This is enhanced by many features such as Battle Abbey, numerous churches and chapels and an abundance of locally distinctive traditional buildings. The eroding sea cliffs at Hastings provide one of the finest exposures of Lower Cretaceous, Wealden sediments in Britain, containing a range of internationally important fossil plant material and non-marine animal fossils.

The High Weald provides many services to communities living within the area's towns and villages and adjacent urban populations through the supply of drinking water, flood mitigation and carbon storage and a range of open-air recreational activities based around its distinctive character, from walking its ancient routeways to off-road cycling in Bedgebury Forest, water sports at Bewl Water and soft rock climbing at Harrison's Rocks. Future challenges include continuing high demands for housing in south-east England, and rural areas in particular, resulting in strong pressure for development within the NCA, and pressure to bring forward land for housing in and around larger villages, threatening the dispersed settlement character of the landscape and the sustainable development of smaller settlements.



Ashdown Forest consists of open rolling heathland and birch woodland on the sandstone ridge of the High Weald. The forest forms the literary landscape of the children's classic, 'Winnie the Pooh'.

Statements of Environmental Opportunity

SEO 1: Maintain and enhance the existing woodland and pasture components of the landscape, including the historic field pattern bounded by shaws, hedgerows and farm woods, to improve ecological function at a landscape scale for the benefit of biodiversity, soils and water, sense of place and climate regulation, safeguard ancient woodlands and encourage sustainably produced timber to support local markets and contribute to biomass production.

SEO 2: Maintain and restore the natural function of river catchments at a landscape scale, promoting benefits for water quality and water flow within all Wealden rivers, streams and flood plains by encouraging sustainable land management and best agricultural practices to maintain good soil quality, reduce soil erosion, increase biodiversity and enhance sense of place. Maintain and enhance the geodiversity and especially the exposed sandrock.

SEO 3: Maintain and enhance the distinctive dispersed settlement pattern, parkland and historic pattern and features of the routeways of the High Weald, encouraging the use of locally characteristic materials and Wealden practices to ensure that any development recognises and retains the distinctiveness, biodiversity, geodiversity and heritage assets present, reaffirm sense of place and enhance the ecological function of routeways to improve the connectivity of habitats and provide wildlife corridors.

SEO 4: Manage and enhance recreational opportunities, public understanding and enjoyment integrated with the conservation and enhancement of the natural and historic environment, a productive landscape and tranquillity, in accordance with the purpose of the High Weald AONB designation.



Small and medium-sized irregularly shaped fields enclosed by a network of hedgerows and wooded shaws, predominantly of medieval origin.

Description

Physical and functional links to other National Character Areas

The High and Low Weald National Character Areas (NCAs) together form an area known from Saxon times as the Weald whose landscape is the product of transhumance (the seasonal movement of people and animals between the settlements on the borders of the Weald and its interior) and a traditional system of integrated farming and forestry. Early in its history the Weald was linked economically and socially with its more habitable fringes where farming was easier. A dense network of droveways connects the Downs and the Weald, a visible legacy of the seasonal movement of people and animals into the woodland to take advantage of acorns and mast (fruit of forest trees). Today these routes can still be travelled as roads and public rights of way. The wooded nature of these linear routes together with the wooded gills provides a high degree of interconnectivity to ancient woodland habitats across the High and Low Weald.

From vantage points in the surrounding North and South Downs NCAs sweeping views extend across the densely wooded countryside of the Weald, an area of heavy soils and the natural habitat of the oak. Views from vantage points within the High Weald extend along the low-lying clay vale of the Low Weald NCA which largely wraps around the northern, western and southern edges of the High Weald NCA in a rough horseshoe shape. To the south-west pocket of the NCA, there are views towards the low-lying wetlands of the Pevensey Levels, and to the south-east corner there are long ranging views across the flat topography of the Romney Marshes NCA.



Rock climbing at Harrison's Rocks is managed carefully to protect the friable sandstone rocks from erosion.

The sandrock geology of the High Weald, notably on the ridge top settlements, is shared with only the northern part of the Isle of Wight NCA and parts of Boulonnais and Pays de Bray in France. It comprises fissured sandrock and ridges running east–west, deeply incised and intersected with numerous gill streams which give rise to the headwaters and upper reaches of rivers, with those to the east of the area also providing historical trade routes for timber, iron and wool out to the coastal ports on Romney Marsh.

In the High Weald, where the rivers Rother, Brede and Tillingham originate, the impermeable clay and silt layers of the Hastings Beds give rise to rapid run-off and quickly responding watercourses following heavy rainfall. Maintaining flows in the Rother catchment is important due to the dependency of the Walland Marsh on water transferred into the Royal Military Canal from the Rother, and hence the High Weald and Romney Marsh are inextricably linked in terms of water resources.

The catchments of the rivers Cuckmere, Ouse, Adur and Arun drain south through deep valleys in the eastern chalk ridge from the High Weald via the Low Weald NCA, and the later via the Wealden Greensand NCA, into the sea along the south coast, passing through major coastal settlements.

The High Weald provides many services to adjacent populations, not only through the supply of drinking water, flood mitigation and carbon storage but also through extensive opportunities for a range of open-air recreational activities based around its distinctive character. Activities including walking the ancient routeways, off-road cycling in Bedgebury Forest and soft rock climbing at Harrison's Rocks provide benefits to the various towns that straddle the border between the High and Low Wealds, namely Crawley, East Grinstead, Horsham, Haywards Heath and Uckfield.



The High Weald has a wealth of ancient woodland.

Key characteristics

- A faulted landform of clays, sand and soft sandstones with outcrops of fissured sandrock and ridges running east–west, deeply incised and intersected with numerous gill streams forming the headwaters of a number of the major rivers – the Rother, Brede, Ouse and Medway – which flow in broad valleys.
- High density of extraction pits, quarries and ponds, in part a consequence of diverse geology and highly variable soils over short distances.
- A dispersed settlement pattern of hamlets and scattered farmsteads and medieval ridgetop villages founded on trade and non-agricultural rural industries, with a dominance of timber- framed buildings with steep roofs often hipped or half-hipped, and an extremely high survival rate of farm buildings dating from the 17th century or earlier.
- Ancient routeways in the form of ridgetop roads and a dense system of radiating droveways, often narrow, deeply sunken and edged with trees and wild flower-rich verges and boundary banks. Church towers and spires on the ridges are an important local landmark. There is a dense network of small, narrow and winding lanes, often sunken and enclosed by high hedgerows or woodland strips. The area includes several large towns such as Tunbridge Wells, Crowborough, Battle and Heathfield and is closely bordered by others such as Crawley, East Grinstead, Hastings and Horsham.
- An intimate, hidden and small-scale landscape with glimpses of far-reaching views, giving a sense of remoteness and tranquillity yet concealing the highest density of timber-framed buildings anywhere in

Europe amidst lanes and paths.

- Strong feeling of remoteness due to very rural, wooded character. A great extent of interconnected ancient woods, steep-sided gill woodlands, wooded heaths and shaws in generally small holdings with extensive archaeology and evidence of long-term management.
- Extensive broadleaved woodland cover with a very high proportion of ancient woodland with high forest, small woods and shaws, plus steep valleys with gill woodland.
- Small and medium-sized irregularly shaped fields enclosed by a network of hedgerows and wooded shaws, predominantly of medieval origin and managed historically as a mosaic of small agricultural holdings typically used for livestock grazing.
- A predominantly grassland agricultural landscape grazed mainly with sheep and some cattle.
- There is a strong influence of the Wealden iron industry which started in Roman times, until coke fuel replaced wood and charcoal. There are features such as a notably high number of small hammer ponds surviving today.
- Ashdown Forest, in contrast to the more intimate green woods and pastures elsewhere, is a high, rolling and open heathland lying on the sandstone ridges to the west of the area.
- An essentially medieval landscape reflected in the patterns of settlement, fields and woodland.
- High-quality vernacular architecture with distinct local variation using local materials. Horsham Slate is used on mainly timber structures and timber-framed barns are a particularly notable Wealden characteristic feature of the High Weald.

The High Weald today

The High Weald is an area of ancient countryside and one of the best surviving medieval landscapes in northern Europe. The High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty covers 78 per cent of the NCA, reflecting the outstanding natural and scenic beauty of the landscape.

From a distance the appearance of the High Weald is one of a densely wooded landscape, although closer inspection reveals a patchwork of irregularly shaped fields and woods forming both open and enclosed landscapes along rolling ridges and within valleys. Along the ridgetop roads briefly glimpsed extensive views open up, stretching away over rolling ridges, punctuated by church spires far into the horizon, providing a contrast to the intimacy of the lush green valleys. Everything in the High Weald landscape is of human scale and its rich detail is best explored on foot, cycle or horseback along the myriad interconnecting paths and tracks.

Along the English Channel coast the High Weald gives way to eroded sandstone and clay sea cliffs around Fairlight and disappears under the urban areas of Bexhill and Hastings to the south-east. The eastern end of the High Weald is characterised by a series of broad, often flat-bottomed river valleys opening out towards the coastal levels of Romney Marsh between Tenterden and Fairlight.

Sandstone exposed as outcrops or along the wooded gills provides a nationally rare habitat and supports a rich community of ferns, bryophytes and lichens. The moist microclimate in these sites is vulnerable to climate change. Potential physical damage comes from the popularity of rock climbing although this is mitigated by guidance and support from the climbing community.



Traditional farmsteads are often glimpsed through a densely-wooded landscape.

The drained landscape of the eastern High Weald river valleys is the result of a thousand years of modifications and exhibits few of the features associated with healthy natural river valleys. It is grazed by high numbers of sheep. Upriver the gill streams and upper reaches function better but remain vulnerable to pollution from agriculture and domestic waste treatment.

The ancient routeway network in the High Weald is substantially intact but the archaeology associated with it, such as multiple ditches and banks, is vulnerable to physical damage and the ancient, laid coppice stools edging many sunken routeways present a challenge for highway maintenance.

Flower-rich grassland persists along road verges and what was common land represents a substantial refuge for populations of rare species, but both are vulnerable to insensitive management.

Loosely arranged traditional farm buildings are extremely prominent in the NCA with their distinctive steep, clay-tiled hipped roofs. The numerous footpaths, as they have done for centuries, take walkers straight through the middle of historic farmsteads with the characteristic timber-framed and weatherboard buildings either side.

The distinctive pattern of dispersed historic settlement survives although the character of farmsteads has changed with the widespread conversion of traditional farm buildings to dwellings and the associated disappearance of agriculture and industry from farmsteads. The changing character of the farmsteads and surrounding landscape through gentrification ultimately also leads to a changing character of wildlife in terms of the assemblage of species present.

Typically, towns such as Tunbridge Wells and villages such as Goudhurst are sited on the ridges, with a dispersed pattern of historic farmsteads and hamlets covering the wooded valleys and field systems. Vernacular buildings have a strong local character influenced by a variation in locally available building materials, resulting in an abundance of weatherboard, brick, tile, and stone or rendered buildings. Local distinctiveness is marked by traditional vernacular building enhanced by stone church towers and spires located on ridges standing as major local landmarks. Within the forested ridges and ancient countryside, remnant hammer ponds constitute significant local features. These reservoirs have a distinctive branching or winding character as a result of their creation from small Wealden river valleys.

Woodland is extensive, covering 26 per cent of the area in a wide range of small wooded pits, linear gill woodland, farm woods and much larger wooded estates. Most of the woodland is ancient with carpets of bluebells and wood anemone in spring. Many of the woods were managed in the past as coppice with standard trees. The drier sandy soils were found suitable for pine plantations which persist within a patchwork of lowland heath and birch woodland. Wild flower meadows are now rare but the medieval pattern of small fields with sinuous edges surrounded by thick hedgerows and shaws (the narrow remains of woodlands cleared to form fields) survives and many fields



Ancient woodland gill with carpets of bluebells and wood anemones in Spring.

retain some permanent or semi-improved grassland, which in turn supports common invertebrates and small mammals. Local initiatives have increased the area of restored and created species-rich grassland but the decline of grazing threatens their long-term management. Buzzards and sparrow hawks are sighted frequently, but the loss of field barns and conversion of farmstead buildings have led to a decline in once-common barn owls.

The mosaic of small hedged fields and sunken lanes, together with the wooded relief and comparative inaccessibility, provides a sense of remoteness which is rare within lowland English landscapes. Despite it being relatively tranquil today, indications of the area's busy industrial past are everywhere, from the abundant timber-framed traditional buildings to the wharfs and harbours along the now-straightened rivers, and the charcoal hearths, pits and ponds of the iron industry are still visible in almost every ancient woodland. The High Weald is well known internationally as the location of the Winnie-the-Pooh stories set in Ashdown Forest, but many other artists and writers have been inspired by the landscape, including Rudyard Kipling and the Cranbrook Colony of painters. Visitors come from across the country and from abroad to experience the Battle of Hastings site, visit beautiful historic houses and gardens, and experience a unique mix of local cultural celebrations ranging from Sussex bonfire processions to Kent apple fairs.



River Brede flood plain.

The presence of the underlying sandstone geology is notable throughout the area. Isolated sandstone crags and rocky outcrops are a very distinct feature and include The High Rocks, on the Tunbridge Wells/East Sussex border, Wellington Rocks on Royal Tunbridge Wells Common, and Toad Rock on Rústhall Common. Weathering of the softer, surrounding earth has sculpted these rocks into unusual, often spectacular forms. In addition, massive blocks of bedrock are often exposed along sunken lanes and the soft, warm glow of sandstone is a feature of many of the area's fine buildings.

2) Conspicuous outcrops and crags of sandstone which have been weathered into unusual, distinctive forms.

The whole area is underlain by hard, Tunbridge Wells sandstone which radiates out in high ridges, dropping to the Medway valley, to the west and north, and the Groombridge fault to the south. The distinct topography comprises smooth, open ridges which have been cut and dissected at the base by tributary streams merging from springs at the junction of the sandstone and softer Wadhurst clays. 'Chalybeate' springs are found throughout the area which have a high iron content and distinct rust colour. Below the open ridges, a network of tributary valleys create a complex, intricate landform of narrow and steep-sided ghylls.

1) Complex topography with open, smooth ridges of sandstone radiating out from Royal Tunbridge Wells, cut by deep tributary valleys.

KEY CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES



A topographically distinct landscape of high ridges intersected by a complex network of valleys and steep sided ghylls extending west from Royal Tunbridge Wells. The landscape is distinguished by weathered outcrops of sandstone, lush, deep ravine woodlands, sunken lanes running between high banks of sandstone, beech and holly hedgerows, clumps of Scots Pine, areas of common land and an important swathe of remnant unimproved pasture.

SUMMARY

Local Character Area 5: Speldhurst Wooded Farmland

3) Hedgerows dominated by holly and beech with areas of gorse common in boundaries and verges.

Gorse on verges and within field boundaries is indicative of the underlying, acidic bedrock.

4) Varying field sizes from large-scale open pasture and arable on the ridge tops to small, irregular fields within the valleys.

The light, free-draining sandy soils on the ridges make this a largely pastoral, farmed landscape. The higher land within the area, for example around Speldhurst, is open and includes extensive fields of improved pasture as well as some areas of arable land. Here, beech and holly hedges tend to be narrow and vulnerable to removal through field enlargement. Large farm buildings and barn complexes can also be prominent within the landscape.



5) Predominantly ridgetop settlements, with church spires and towers at Bidborough, Southborough, Speldhurst and Rusthall, are prominent skyline features.

The main settlements within the area are nucleated ridgetop villages. There are also more informal settlements around areas of common land. These were built by commoners who enjoyed rights for activities such as grazing and turf cutting. Modest Corner, on Southborough Common, Lower Green at Rusthall, and Langton Green are good examples. Dispersed rural dwellings, farm buildings and occasional oasts are prevalent across the whole area. There are several large, mid-nineteenth century houses with small areas of ornamental parkland, such as David Salomon's house designed by Decimus Burton. Building styles and materials are varied with fine-grained sandstone being a defining feature of many houses and churches.

6) Extensive, panoramic views available out across surrounding countryside and open hill tops. The high ground provides long and panoramic views out over the surrounding countryside. Views across successive open ridgetops are often deceptive, concealing the complicated landscape of twisting valleys and steep ghylls below.

7) Long, narrow ghyll woodlands, hidden within deep clefts of the valleys, support a particularly rich, lush vegetation cover.

Within the valleys, long, narrow ghyll woodlands such as Shadwell Wood, Sprouds Wood and Avery Wood are hidden in deep clefts, almost invisible in the views across the landscape. A rich assemblage of ferns, mosses and liverworts thrive in the shady, humid conditions of these deep, damp ravines.



farmed character.

This is a local difference in landscape character, which is an important strategic gap between Royal Tunbridge Wells and Tonbridge. Despite its proximity to the towns, this area retains a pleasant, rural,

12) Haysden surrounded by open, pasture valley.

An especially valuable feature of the area is the large swathe of unimproved and semi-improved pasture which occupies the slopes below the ridge tops. These fields are distinguished from improved grassland by their rougher texture, floral diversity and subtle green tones. They are especially prominent on the slopes either side of the Langton Green ridge and east of Speldhurst. They include neutral, damp pastures on the lower slopes with drier acidic grassland on the upper slopes and support a rich and varied flora. The pastures are frequently separated by narrow bands of shaw woodland comprising sessile oak, birch and holly, as illustrated, for example, in the valley at Bullingstone.

11) Broad swathes of permanent and semi-improved pasture on the hill slopes represent an internationally important reserve of acidic and neutral grassland.

10) Conifers, especially Scots Pine and specimen trees, are prominent features within the landscape around the western fringe of Royal Tunbridge Wells.

Where the lanes cut down the middle slopes, massive sandstone banks, bound by the gnarled roots of beech trees, are an especially attractive feature. Ferns flourish in the shady, damp crevices between the rocks. Along some lanes, dark tunnels are formed by overarching holly hedges.

9) Networks of narrow lanes descend and climb the valleys and ridges. Dark tunnels of holly and steep banks of sandstone are distinctive features.

The heathland character evident on parts of the commons at Rusthall, Southborough and Royal Tunbridge Wells reflects the fact that, historically, these areas were not enclosed for agriculture purposes other than grazing. Many of the commons have today scrubbed over with beech, oak, birch and holly, although pockets of heather and bilberry give a clue to their former open heathland character. On Southborough Common, an area of wood pasture with old oak pollards over acid grassland is an important indicator of historic land use. The commons contribute greatly to the local landscape character of the area.

8) Commons, permeating the built up areas of Royal Tunbridge Wells and Southborough, retain remnants of their former heathland character.

Evidence of Past Use and Cultural Evolution

- Drove roads and ironways were located on the high ridges, one of the first areas to be cleared of forest.
- The earth works of an Iron Age hill fort (designated as a Scheduled Ancient Monument) are located at High Rocks.
- Occasional ponds and workings provide evidence of the iron industry.

Nature Conservation Interest

- The sandstone outcrops at High Rocks and Toad Rock support bryophytes (moss, lichen and liverworts) of national importance. Both are designated Sites of Special Scientific Interest.
- Large swathes of important unimproved and semi-improved pasture occupy the slopes below the ridge tops.
- Shaw and ghyll woodlands are remnants of ancient woodland cover and represent an important biodiversity resource.
- The gravestones, boundary walls and steps of Speldhurst churchyard provide a habitat for a rich assemblage of ferns, lichen, liverworts and moss.
- The commons are an important reservoir of biodiversity and their nature conservation interest is currently being enhanced through active management.

DEVELOPMENT CONSTRAINTS AND LOCAL LANDSCAPE CHARACTER OBJECTIVES

The Landscape Character Area is within both the Metropolitan Green Belt and the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It is a nationally important designation which offers a high level of development constraint. Borough landscape considerations are detailed in Section 5, and local objectives are outlined below.

- Maintain the distinctive character of the individual settlements including the clustered ridgetop villages and informal common-edge settlements.
- The excellent rural-urban interface along the western edge of Royal Tunbridge Wells town centre, with open common land and woodland infiltrating the heart of the town, should be retained and enhanced.
- Maintain the comparative tranquillity and seclusion of the intervening valleys. Development in these narrow valleys and ghylls can have a significant impact on their local character.

SUMMARY OF ELEMENTS THAT DETRACT FROM LOCAL CHARACTER AREA 5 AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENHANCEMENT

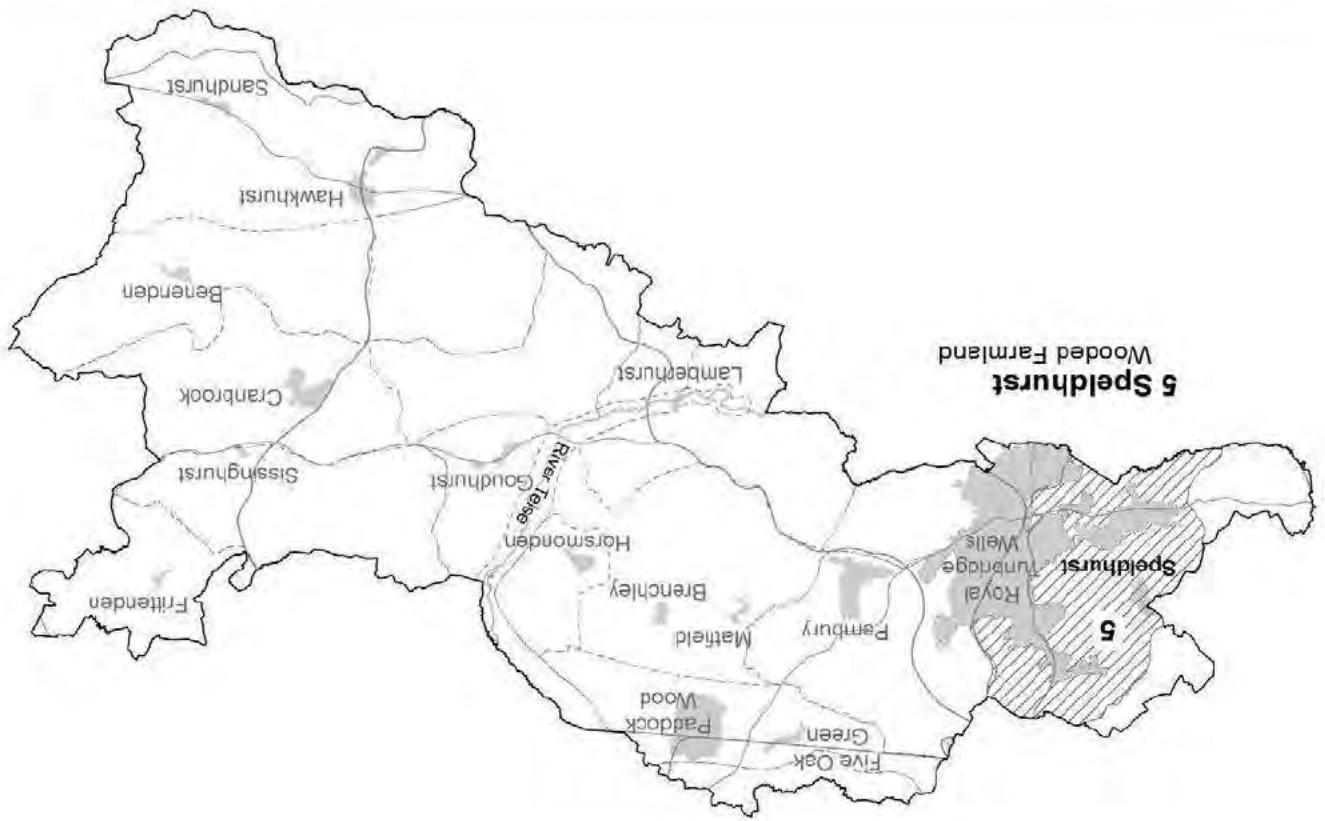
In addition to the detractors noted in paragraph 5.17, the following are identified as features which detract from Character Area 5:

1) Rhododendron invasion of natural woodlands and general deterioration of woodland cover through lack of management. Any enhancements should promote woodland management through the development process or where grants are available, including the removal of non-native invasive species. New woodland planting can help integrate development into the landscape, but future maintenance requirements must be considered.

2) Erosion damage of sandstone rock outcrops. Enhancements should focus on the protection and management of these important features.

2011 UPDATE

There are some pockets of land around Royal Tunbridge Wells that have been excluded from the High Weald AONB but are well within the High Weald National Character Area and were covered by the former High Weald SLA. Consideration should be given to these areas in terms of providing the setting or a buffer for the High Weald AONB and the role they play in the setting of the town.



RELATIONSHIP WITH EXISTING LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENTS

High Weald AONB Assessment:
 Broad Character Area: Central High Weald.
 Local Character Area: Penshurst.





Annex 5 - Transport Technical Note



Land at Caenwood Farm, Southborough

PL/EG/14947

4th November 2020

Land East of Kingstanding Way, Tunbridge Wells - Transport Planning Review

Introduction

DHA has been commissioned by City Link Group to review the transport planning elements of the outline planning application for Land East of Kingstanding Way, Tunbridge Wells (Planning Application Reference: 19/02267/OUT), which proposes the development of up to 74,000sqm of floorspace within Use Classes B1 and B8.

The Note reviews relevant documents submitted with the planning application to understand the extent of any implications for the proposed residential development at Land at Caenwood Farm, off Speldhurst Road, Tunbridge Wells.

There has been a considerable and extensive amount of engagement between the applicant and the Highway Authorities (Kent County Council and Highways England) since the application was submitted in August 2019. This Note considers the latest position between these parties, based on the public documents available.

Site Location and Development Proposals

The site is located on greenfield land to the north of the existing North Farm industrial estate on the north eastern edge of Tunbridge Wells. The most recent proposal is to access the development from a new left in / left out arrangement on Longfield Road. The junction of Longfield Road with the A21 Trunk Road is situated approximately 250 metres to the east of the site.

The proposals comprise up to 74,000 sqm of employment floorspace. According to the Transport Assessment Revision A, this is broken down between 47,250 sqm of B1 business park floorspace and 27,750 sqm of B8 warehousing floorspace, with 1,419 car parking spaces. It is predicted that the proposals would generate 4,500 jobs.

The site does not have an allocation within the adopted Tunbridge Wells Local Plan.

Trip Attraction and Distribution

Table 6.4 of the Transport Assessment Revision A shows that the development is predicted to attract 710 vehicle trips during the weekday AM peak hour and 509 during the PM peak hour.

The Travel Plan submitted with the application aims to reduce car-based trips by 15% over a 10-year period. This would reduce the predicted trip attraction to 614 trips during the weekday AM peak hour and 440 trips during the PM peak hour.

The applicant has submitted a Technical Note titled '*Trip assignment by use of gravity model principle, effects on development traffic flows.*' This Note considers the trips which would be transferred and diverted from other employment areas, rather than being entirely new to the highway network.

Even taking into account the potential reductions in vehicle trips from the Travel Plan measures and the Gravity Model (which have not yet been accepted by the Highway Authorities), the proposed development would attract a significant number of new vehicle trips during the weekday peak hours.

Table 6.7 of the Transport Assessment Revision A shows the following trip distribution:-

- A21 North: 27.7%;
- Tonbridge Road: 8.8%;
- A21 South: 42.2%;
- Longfield Road / Lamberts Road: 9.5%;
- Dowding Way: 11.7%.

It is noted that the majority of trips are predicted to arrive/depart via the A21. This assumption appears logical given the scale of the proposals and the site's close proximity to the A21.

A small proportion of the total traffic is distributed via Dowding Way to the west of the site in the direction of the A26 corridor and Caenwood Farm. However, this traffic would continue to disperse further across the urban road network and hence it is anticipated that only a fraction of the 11.7% of development traffic would impact the highway network in the vicinity of Caenwood Farm.

Impact on the Highway Network

Most of the outstanding issues to be resolved between the applicant and the Highway Authorities are related to traffic modelling to determine the likely impact of the development on the highway network and the mitigation measures required.

The applicant has assessed the impact on the Longfield Road and A264 Pembury Road corridors, as well as the A21 / Longfield Road, A21 / A264 Pembury Road / A228 and A21 / A2014 / A26 Vauxhall Interchange junctions. This is where the proposed development is predicted to have the greatest impact.

Traffic modelling has identified where mitigation measures (and accompanying Road Safety Audits) may be required. According to correspondence from Kent County Council, the junctions identified as requiring further work are:-

- Site access left-in / left-out junction from Longfield Road;
- A21 / Longfield Road;
- A21 / A2014 / A26 (Vauxhall Interchange);

- A21 / A228 / A264 Pembury Road;
- Longfield Road / Lamberts Road / Dowding Way;
- A228 / A264 / Pembury Road / High Street (Woodsgate Corner); and
- A264 Pembury Road / Blackhurst Lane / Halls Hole Road.

Implications for Caenwood Farm

Caenwood Farm is located approximately 3 km from the proposal site and the proposed residential development there would have the greatest impact on the north-south A26 corridor. This has not been assessed in relation to Land East of Kingstanding Way, which would have a much greater impact on the east-west Longfield Road and A264 Pembury Road corridors.

With regard to the local highway network, initial calculations suggest that a proportion of vehicle trips generated by development at Caenwood Farm would arrive and depart from the eastern side of Tunbridge Wells via Yew Tree Road in the direction of North Farm. Under the maximum 1,000 dwelling scenario, Yew Tree Road would experience approximately 84 trips during the weekday AM peak hour and 80 trips during the PM peak hour. This equates to just over one additional trip per minute at these times and is a relatively small proportion of the 458 total development trips generated during the AM peak hour and 461 in the PM peak hour. Moreover, not all of these trips would reach the North Farm area.

Based on the evidence presented to date therefore, it is not considered that there would be a significant overlap between the two proposals in transport planning terms.

Summary and Conclusion

Land East of Kingstanding Way is located in the North Farm area of Tunbridge Wells, approximately 3km to the north-east of Caenwood Farm.

The greatest traffic impact arising from the proposed commercial development at Kingstanding Way would be experienced on the strategic and primary routes to the east of the town, rather than those in the vicinity of Caenwood Farm. As such, there should be no adverse implications for the proposed residential development at Caenwood Farm should planning permission be granted for the former.

The updated traffic modelling and mitigation measures requested by Kent County Council and Highways England should nevertheless be reviewed to re-confirm this conclusion in due course.