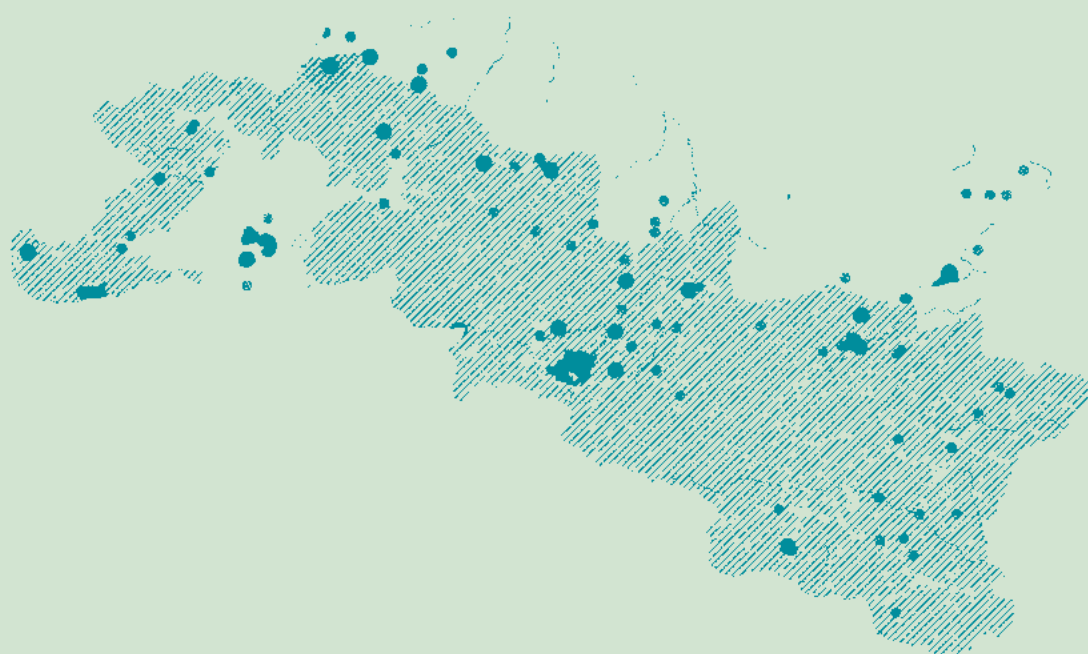


HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT REVIEW

PART ONE
TUNBRIDGE WELLS BOROUGH COUNCIL

January 2018

Allies and Morrison
Urban Practitioners



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PART 1

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Fig 1 Heritage assets in the Borough (Source: Allies and Morrison Urban Practitioners, 2017)

SECTION A:

SETTING THE

SCENE

1

INTRODUCTION







Fig2 Photos of a number of heritage assets across the Borough

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 OVERVIEW AND PURPOSE

- 1.1.1 The purpose of this document is to set out a comprehensive and integrated Historic Environment Review for Tunbridge Wells Borough Council to form the basis for conservation and heritage activities in the Borough and to provide guidance to be followed in the future.
- 1.1.2 The study is in two parts and this document sets out Part 1 of the study. Part 1 draws together the existing information and guidance regarding the Borough's historic environment, identifies heritage themes and assesses the significance of heritage assets. Part 2 is policy focused and makes recommendations for draft policies to be included in the emerging Local Plan. It also sets a framework for the positive conservation and enjoyment of the Borough's heritage assets.
- 1.1.3 The historic environment is a valuable asset which can contribute to wider strategic objectives such as economic development, urban regeneration, high quality urban design and planning, tourism, leisure, education and sustainability. This review aims to assess the heritage assets in the Borough to better inform these diverse objectives.
- 1.1.4 The principal focus of this review is on physical heritage, for example archaeology, landscape, settlements, buildings, monuments, parks and open spaces. It also makes aware more hidden characteristics which help to form the Borough's local distinctiveness and which make a significant contribution to its heritage.
- 1.1.5 The historic environment review has been commissioned in parallel by Tunbridge Wells Borough Council and Sevenoaks District Council. The research phase and stage 1 report have been prepared in tandem. It is important to note that in some cases, there is a significant overlap in the historic themes (see chapter 3) which reinforces the merits of a joint study, albeit with separate Tunbridge Wells / Sevenoaks specific outputs.

1.2 OBJECTIVES

- 1.2.1 The objectives of Part 1 are:
 - To draw together sources of information and data from the existing evidence base to provide a holistic overview of the Borough's historic environment;
 - To assess the significance of heritage assets and the contribution they make to their environment;
 - To identify the factors and local historic environment themes which have influenced the heritage of the Borough;
 - To make recommendations regarding any areas where the evidence base could be strengthened and would benefit from further research;
 - To identify opportunities for raising awareness of the role of the historic environment in social, economic and environmental well-being;
 - To assess the contribution made by the settings of heritage assets and their scope for enhancement; and
 - To predict the likelihood that currently unidentified heritage assets may be discovered in the future.

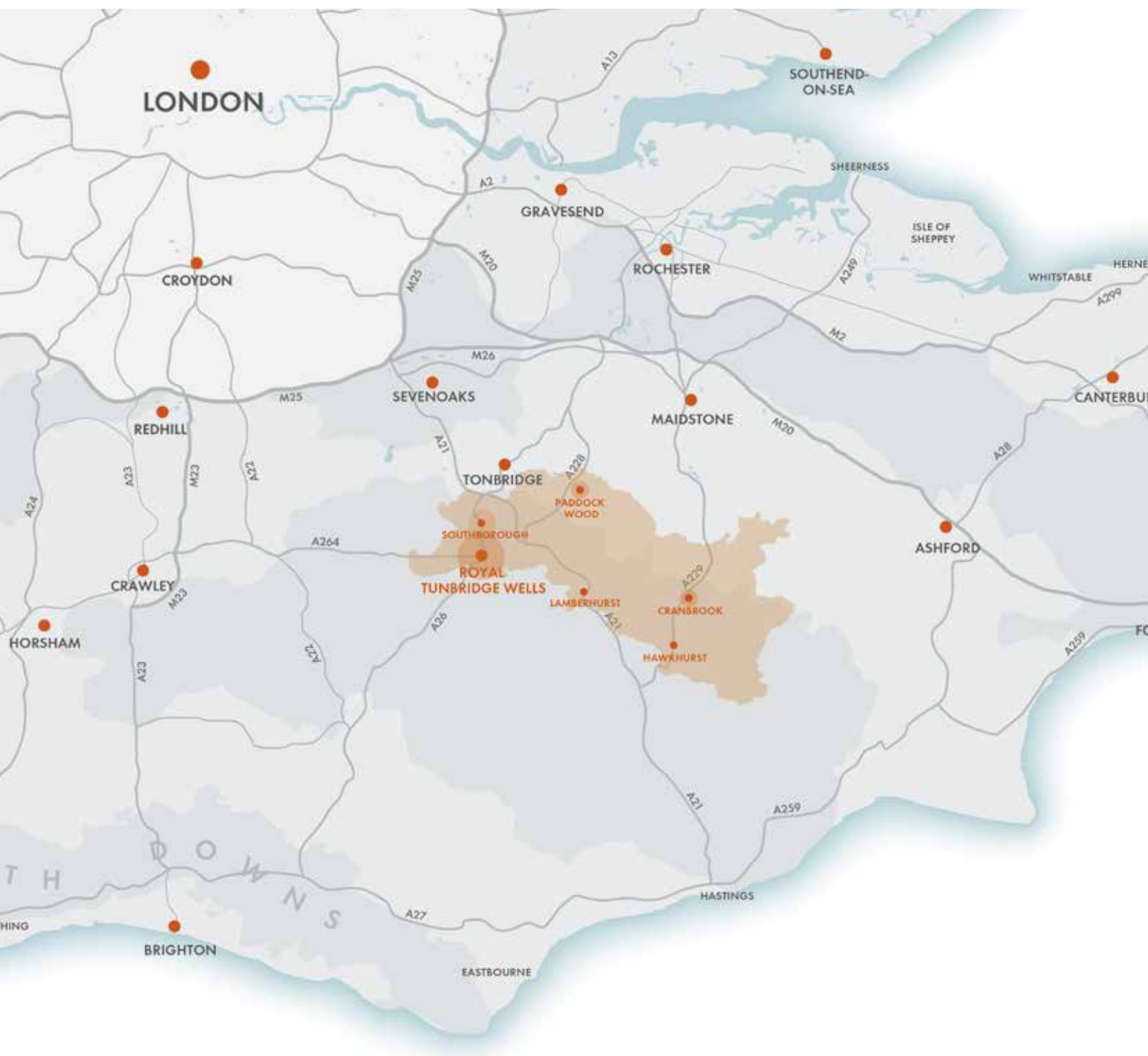


Fig 3 Tunbridge Wells in context

1.3 BACKGROUND TO THE BOROUGH

- 1.3.1 Tunbridge Wells Borough is located within Kent County in South East England, bordering Greater London to the north west, Surrey to the west and East Sussex to the south west. The Borough remains surprisingly rural considering its relative proximity to London. It is well-connected by road and rail to London and the coast.
- 1.3.2 The Borough comprises towns, villages, hamlets and countryside. The principal town is Royal Tunbridge Wells to the west of the Borough. Rural industries grew out of, and supported the prosperity of smaller towns, such as Cranbrook, which was the centre for the Wealden cloth industry.
- 1.3.3 Tunbridge Wells is home to a wealth of heritage assets; Scotney (House and Castle) and Sissinghurst Castle and Gardens stand out from a tally of 2,250 listed buildings and registered gardens. Undiscovered hidden gems include Woodbury Park Cemetery, as well as the numerous historic villages, some, but not all of which are designated as Conservation Areas.
- 1.3.4 This rich and diverse built heritage is set within a stunning medieval landscape of ancient woodland, farmland and farmsteads. Tunbridge Wells Borough encompasses Low Weald and High Weald landscapes with around 70% falling within the designated High Weald AONB. The myriad of historic parks and gardens encompass aesthetic, botanic, scientific and social heritage and form an important part of the areas' landscape heritage character.
- 1.3.5 Royal Tunbridge Wells is a town of exceptional interest, both architecturally and historically, with a verdant setting. It was the first town since the Roman period to develop purely as a resort, a role it sustained up to the late 18th century when the popularity of the spa was eclipsed by the new fashion for sea bathing. The Pantiles area showcases a Georgian colonnaded walkway and is the town's unique feature, but there is also a rich inheritance of Jacobean, Georgian, Edwardian / Arts and Crafts and Victorian buildings.

1.4 NATIONAL PLANNING CONTEXT

National Planning Policy Framework (2012)

- 1.4.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in 2012 and sets out recommendations for inclusion of the historic environment in local plan making. The study assists in meeting these recommendations to sustain and enhance heritage assets, to put them to viable uses, and to consider the wider social, cultural and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring. The NPPF also states the importance of recognising the potential for heritage assets to inform new development and contribute to better places.

Good Practice Advice in Planning 1: The Historic Environment in Local Plans (2015)

- 1.4.2 The document sets out guidance for local authorities where the evidence base for historic environment is weak. Local authorities are encouraged to undertake detailed characterisation work, visual impact assessments, to seek the views of the local community about what they value about the historic environment, and to carry out archaeological assessment, where appropriate.



Fig 4 Front cover of the NPPF report



Fig 5 Historic Environment in Local Plans cover (2015)

1.5 LOCAL POLICY CONTEXT

Core Strategy DPD (2010)

- 1.5.1 The adopted Core Strategy sets out guidance for the period to 2026 and was adopted in 2010 in response to the guidance in the 2004 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act. Para 2.12 and 2.14 of the document identify the significance of landscape and heritage / archaeology in setting opportunities and constraints on development, and highlight the need to balance the preservation and enhancement of character and distinctiveness with the competing pressures for retail, employment and residential space.
- 1.5.2 The Core Strategy establishes a broad vision and spatial strategy for the Borough. Box 3 sets out a clear hierarchy with the focus of growth on existing urban areas, primarily at Royal Tunbridge Wells and Southborough, with a view to protecting character of the villages and rural environment by maintaining the existing limits to development. There is a target of 6,000 net new dwellings in the Borough during the plan period.
- 1.5.3 Core Policy 4 highlights the role of heritage assets and landscape in contributing to local character and sense of place. Specific reference is made to the High Weald AONB, the Borough Landscape Character Assessment and the Borough's designated assets and their setting. Positive management through partnership and Conservation Area Management Plans is identified.
- 1.5.4 The Core Strategy then sets out specific development principles and criteria about the hierarchy of existing urban settlements which typically include reference to landscape and heritage sensitivity / opportunities where appropriate. Core Policy 14 provides guidance regarding development in the villages and rural areas which, alongside the supporting text, references historic landscape and buildings to conserve and enhance special character. Tourism and the vitality of the rural economy are also promoted in this context.

- 1.5.5 Elements of the 2006 Local Plan are also retained alongside the adopted Core Strategy and Site Allocations documents.

Site Allocations Local Plan (2016)

- 1.5.6 The Site Allocations Local Plan identifies a series of allocated sites in response to the spatial strategy and development quanta set out for each settlement in the Core Strategy. In selecting sites, the Council has assessed a range of criteria including suitability, sustainability, availability, viability and consultation comments. Heritage and landscape value are specific considerations in relation to suitability.
- 1.5.7 A number of factors have been particularly instrumental in defining the allocations. These include maintaining the defined Limits to Built Development (Policy AL/STR 1), protection of important landscape areas (Policy AL/STR 2), safeguarding of former railway lines (Policy AL/STR 3).
- 1.5.8 Positive reference is made to character and historic character in the supporting text for each settlement (including cross-reference to relevant supplementary guidance such as the Urban Design Framework) and requirements for site specific conservation statements in sensitive locations.

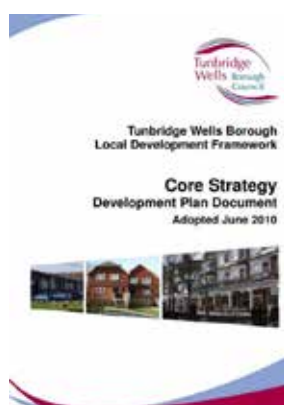


Fig 6 Core Strategy DPD (2010)

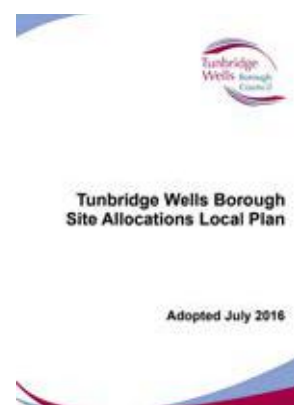


Fig 7 Sites Allocations Local Plan (2016)

Supplementary documents

1.5.9 A number of supplementary documents have been prepared which incorporate relevant information and guidance. A number are explicitly relevant to the Historic Environment Review including the following:

- Conservation Area Appraisals
- Borough Landscape Character Area Assessment
- Farmsteads Assessment Guidance
- Kent Design Guide
- Local Heritage Assets
- Rural Lanes SPD

New local plan

1.5.10 Tunbridge Wells Borough Council has commenced work on the preparation of a new Local Plan that will guide future development in the borough up to 2033 and replace the 2006 Local Plan, Core Strategy (2010) and Site Allocations (2016). A number of evidence base documents (including the Historic Environment Review) are being progressed in parallel.

1.5.11 Consultation on the Issues and Options stage of the Local Plan was completed in June 2017. Heritage is identified within the draft vision and draft strategic objectives in the Issues and Options report. The document identifies a series of thematic issues including the “Natural and Built Environment” which explicitly references the rich diversity of historic features and assets in the Borough. Key planning issues include:

- Pressure for new built development which could impact on landscape assets and their settings. The document identifies an objectively assessed need as 12,960 dwellings for the 20 year period.

- Consideration of landscape setting and sensitivities is required, particularly within the High Weald AONB, but also on other non-designated land.
- The potential for small scale development to have a cumulative impact on the natural environment (and sensitive built environments), including rural lanes, and on the character and settlement pattern within and adjacent to the High Weald AONB is acknowledged.

1.5.12 In terms of strategic options, the document identifies the potential to retain a similar hierarchy of development quantum which reflects the size and role of existing urban settlements. In parallel, there is potential to maintain the current “Limits to Built Development” (LBD) approach, as outlined in para 5.13 of the Issues and Options Consultation Document (2017). LBD marks the line between where development has previously been supported and development resisted in order to “restrict the encroachment of built form into the surrounding countryside.” (p. 53).

1.5.13 Specific options which could have varying degrees of impact on the Greenbelt include:

- Focused Growth primarily around Royal Tunbridge Wells / Southborough
- Semi-dispersed growth
- Dispersed Growth
- Growth corridor led around the A21 corridor.
- New settlement growth.

1.6 DEFINING TERMS

Heritage Assets

- 1.6.1 Heritage Assets are defined in the Glossary to the National Planning Policy Framework (2012) as:

*"A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing)."*¹

- 1.6.2 Designated heritage assets are:

"A World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation."

- 1.6.3 Designated assets only include a proportion of the total heritage assets in Tunbridge Wells. In order to deliver the objectives of the Heritage Strategy it is necessary to fully incorporate the non-designated assets into the life of the Borough. The online National Planning Practice Guidance defines non-designated assets as follows:

"Local planning authorities may identify non-designated heritage assets. These are buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions but which are not formally designated heritage assets. In some areas, local authorities identify some non-designated heritage assets as 'locally listed'.

A substantial majority of buildings have little or no heritage significance and thus do not

constitute heritage assets. Only a minority have enough heritage interest for their significance to be a material consideration in the planning process."

- 1.6.4 For sites of archaeological interest, non-designated assets includes those site that are "demonstrably of equivalent significance" to scheduled monuments, and therefore considered subject to the same policies (NPPF paragraph 139). They also include a much larger category of lesser heritage significance, although still subject to the same conservation objective (NPPF paragraph 040).
- 1.6.5 The Local Heritage Assets SPD, adopted in 2012, sets out the criteria and process by which local heritage assets can be nominated for inclusion on the Borough's List of Local Heritage Assets. The document reiterates that heritage assets are not limited to buildings but could be "...anything within the environment, such as archaeological sites, street furniture or even distinctive natural landscape features, iconic vistas, as well as designed parks or gardens."² For consideration for inclusion on the Local List, the asset must

² Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, Local Heritage Assets SPD, 2012, <https://goo.gl/dMXsyT>, (accessed August 18, 2017).

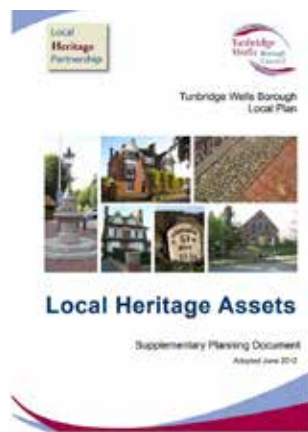


Fig 8 Local Heritage Assets SPD (2012)



Fig 9 Conservation Principles: Policies and Guidance

¹ Department for Communities and Local Government, National Planning Policy Framework: Annex 2 Glossary, 2012.

comply with at least one of the criteria listed below:

- Demonstrate significant architectural and artistic interest;
- Demonstrate significant historic interest;
- Social and economic significance; or
- Contribute positively to townscape character.

Significance

1.6.6 The significance of identified assets has been assessed drawing on advice from Historic England, set out in the Conservation Principles (2005) publication which gives guidance for the sustainable management of the historic environment. The report includes four value groups that can contribute to significance:

- Evidential value - yielding primary evidence of the past including archaeological potential.
- Historical value - showing connections between places and past people, events or aspects of life.
- Aesthetic value - the way people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place.
- Communal value - the meanings of a place for people and their collective memories of it.

Vulnerability

1.6.7 Historic England's annual Heritage at Risk Register identifies sites considered to be at greater risk of being lost as a result of decay, neglect, obsolescence or inappropriate development.

1.6.8 Heritage assets may be vulnerable because their significance is hidden from view, for example buildings in remote locations or concealed behind layers of later development. The resulting lack of knowledge or lack of understanding may lead to harmful change or neglect.

1.6.9 **Decay** - heritage assets may be at risk where the cost of upkeep (or repair) approaches or outweighs the end value of the site – the “conservation deficit”. Vacancy, especially long-term vacancy, poses risk of security (theft, vandalism, arson). Unnoticed deterioration may be caused by leaking roofs, blocked gutters, wet or dry rot, hastened by inadequate ventilation. Decay may result in the loss of historic fabric: doors and windows, roof timbers or floors, internal or external features.

1.6.10 **Neglect** - heritage assets may be vulnerable where owners do not take responsibility for the condition of their sites. Field monuments (such as prehistoric burial barrows) are often fragile earthworks that are particularly vulnerable to animal and ploughing damage.

1.6.11 **Obsolescence** - the loss of ability of a building to fulfil its original function, for example the capacity for traditional farm buildings to accommodate modern agricultural machinery. Another example is the redundancy of military sites or railway infrastructure.

1.6.12 **Inappropriate development** - heritage significance may be eroded or lost altogether through the removal of architectural features, removal of fabric, loss of floor plan or associated structures. Development may harm the setting of a heritage asset, reducing the ability to appreciate its significance. It could also harm the economic viability, by subdivision of a site (such as the loss of farmland) or reducing its amenity. The impact of new development is a general area of vulnerability across the historic environment in the Borough.

1.6.13 Vulnerability can be tackled through a variety of methods, for example compiling a buildings at risk register (perhaps with the help of parish councils), developing strategies for action, providing expertise and contacts to support willing owners, monitoring changes and championing success stories.

1.7 APPROACH AND METHOD

Guidance

- 1.6.14 For the purpose of this report, the term “guidance” is used to denote any policy statements in statutory publications, or non-statutory documents which communicate principles, objectives or criteria in relation to historic environment or town planning. These documents have varying degrees of status, with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) forming the primary position with which local policies should accord. The Historic Environment Review forms part of the evidence base for the preparation of the emerging Local Plan. In that context, findings and recommendations in this report will be used to inform and refine guidance in the Local Plan.

Opportunities

- 1.6.15 The term opportunities refers to initiatives, interventions or guidance which could raise awareness of the role of the historic environment, strengthen the evidence base or establish a more effective policy position from a heritage perspective. Opportunities and associated recommendations are a key outcome for the Historic Environment Review project.

Overview

- 1.7.1 A primary objective of the study is to evaluate the existing sources of information to provide a comprehensive overview of the state of the historic environment in Tunbridge Wells. The team has undertaken an assessment of the following documents:

National

- National Planning Policy Framework and Guidance
- Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 1: The Historic Environment in Local Plans (Historic England, 2015)
- Statutory list, Historic England
- Heritage at Risk Register, Historic England
- Heritage Counts (Historic England, 2016)

Sub-regional

- A Review of the Kent Compendium’s List of Historic Parks and Gardens for Tunbridge Wells Borough (2010)
- Kent Design SPD, Landscape Design Handbook
- High Weald AONB Management Plan
- Kent Historic Towns Survey (2003)
- Historic Landscape Characterisation studies and heritage strategies from adjacent Boroughs
- Archaeology SPG3: Archaeology in Historic Towns
- Strategic Stone Study: A Building Stone Atlas of Kent (English Heritage, 2003)
- South East Farmsteads Character Statement (Historic England)

Local

- Conservation areas appraisals
- Farmstead Assessment Guidance for Tunbridge Wells Borough SPD
- Local Heritage Asset Review SPD
- Rural Lanes SPD
- Historic Landscape Characterisation study (High Weald AONB)
- Borough of Tunbridge Wells Landscape Characterisation Study 2017

1.7.2 Examples of heritage assets are sourced using the Historic Environment Record (HER) held by Kent County Council. The HER is a database of all aspects of the county's heritage and therefore constitutes an important source of information for this review. In addition, information has been gathered from a wide range of secondary sources, including books and architectural guides, Ordnance Survey mapping available from the National Library of Scotland, and online specialist websites e.g. the Wealden Iron Research Group.

1.7.3 The desktop study has helped inform a historic overview of the Borough and its currently identified heritage assets. These assets, along with their associated condition, significance and vulnerability, are presented within thematic groupings in Section B. The study also identifies opportunities relating to each heritage theme for the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment.

Unidentified heritage assets

1.7.4 Heritage assets are still being discovered and their significance re-evaluated. Some assets have been hidden behind more recent development. Seemingly ordinary buildings may encase much older, and historically significant, interiors. Below-ground archaeological remains are by definition an unexplored heritage asset. Furthermore, new information or survey work may inform understanding about the significance of asset types and periods, including the rarity (national or local) of surviving assets. Examples would be investigations on elements of industrial archaeology, building technologies or modern architecture.

1.7.5 The likelihood of discovering additional heritage assets is probably greatest in remote or publicly inaccessible locations, where the significance of the asset is not evident from the public domain.

1.7.6 The Borough's Farmstead Assessment Guidance 2016 used historic Ordnance Survey maps to identify significant survival rates of pre-20th century farm buildings, suggesting high potential for further study. Vernacular buildings in general and properties in private ownership are also likely to benefit from more research.

A systematic programme of research and documentation is recommended. Historic England has provided guidance for local authorities and communities on how to identify and record local heritage assets. Priority should be given to areas that are poorly documented such as rural parishes, conservation areas without up-to-date appraisals or places under pressure for change.

Structure

1.7.7 The report is divided into three sections. Section A summarises the historic development of the Borough and provides the historic and landscape context for the state of the historic environment today.

1.7.8 Section B presents heritage themes that tell the story of the Borough in greater detail. The heritage themes are divided between overall geographical themes and cultural, economic and social activities. For each theme, the following aspects are covered:

- Historic overview;
- Heritage assets;
- Current condition;
- Significance;
- Vulnerability;
- Existing guidance; and
- Opportunities.

1.7.9 Section C concludes outlining recommendations and next steps which will be covered in greater detail in Part 2 of the review.



2

CONTEXT



HISTORIC EVOLUTION

2.1 OVERVIEW OF DEVELOPMENT

- 2.1.1

Kent is celebrated as the Garden of England, famous for its orchards, hopfields, soft fruit and more recently its vineyards. Much of the landscape is of exceptional visual quality and the county is rich in historic buildings and settlements. Kent also has a diverse cultural and literary inheritance.
- 2.1.2

The Kent weald and western part of the County is of particular scenic interest, much of it falling within nationally designated Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. 70% of Tunbridge Wells is in the High Weald AONB. The area is also characterised by tracts of ancient woodland, hedgerows, historic droveways and long distance footpaths.
- 2.1.3

Across the Borough, as at neighbouring Sevenoaks, the historic environment is the equal of this landscape and the two are often interrelated. Oast houses, for example, are an emblem of the countryside. The long history of habitation has also ensured a considerable archaeological legacy. The Borough has ancient origins and is home to a number of pre-medieval settlements, as well as its woodland providing an important resource for iron production during Roman occupation.
- 2.1.4

Royal Tunbridge Wells is a town of exceptional interest, both architecturally and historically, enhanced by its verdant setting. Established in

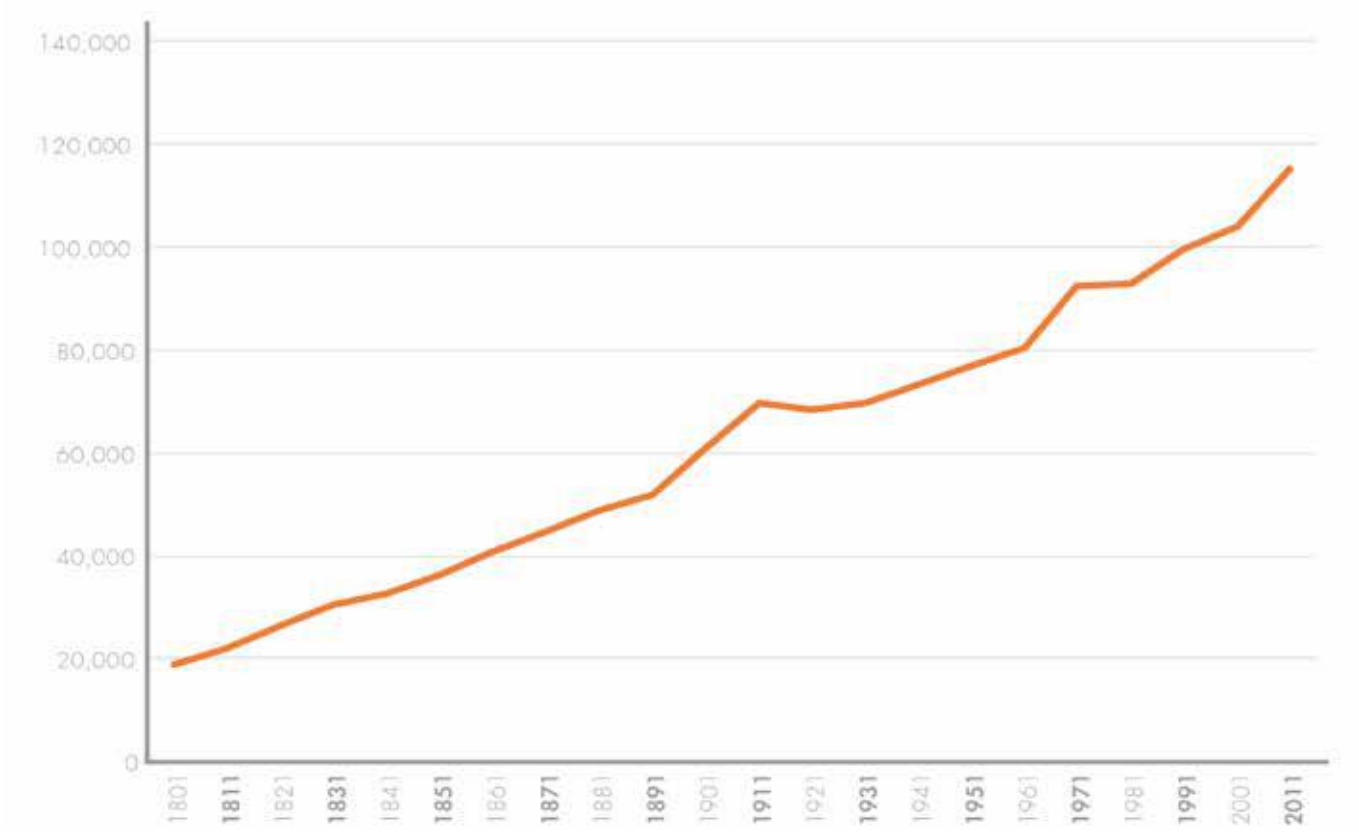


Fig 10 Graph showing population change over time in Tunbridge Wells Borough
Data source: A Vision of Britain

the early 17th century, Tunbridge Wells was the first town in Britain since the Roman period to develop purely as a resort. It sustained this role up to the late 18th century, when the popularity of the spa was eclipsed by the new fashion for sea bathing. The Pantiles area is the town's unique feature which reached its zenith in the 18th century, but more widely there is also a rich inheritance of Georgian and Victorian buildings, including celebrated planned development by Decimus Burton. Elsewhere in the Borough, from a tally of around 3000 listed buildings and registered gardens, Scotney (House and Castle)

and Sissinghurst Castle and Gardens stand out as heritage assets of national importance. Sissinghurst is of historical and literary interest though its associations with Vita Sackville-West and Harold Nicholson.

- 2.1.5 Cranbrook is the principal town of the Weald and first became important in the Middle Ages for its cloth making, after Edward III broke the Flemish weavers' monopoly in the 14th century. It benefitted from a local supply of fullers earth, used for cleaning cloth and the many streams that powered fulling mills.

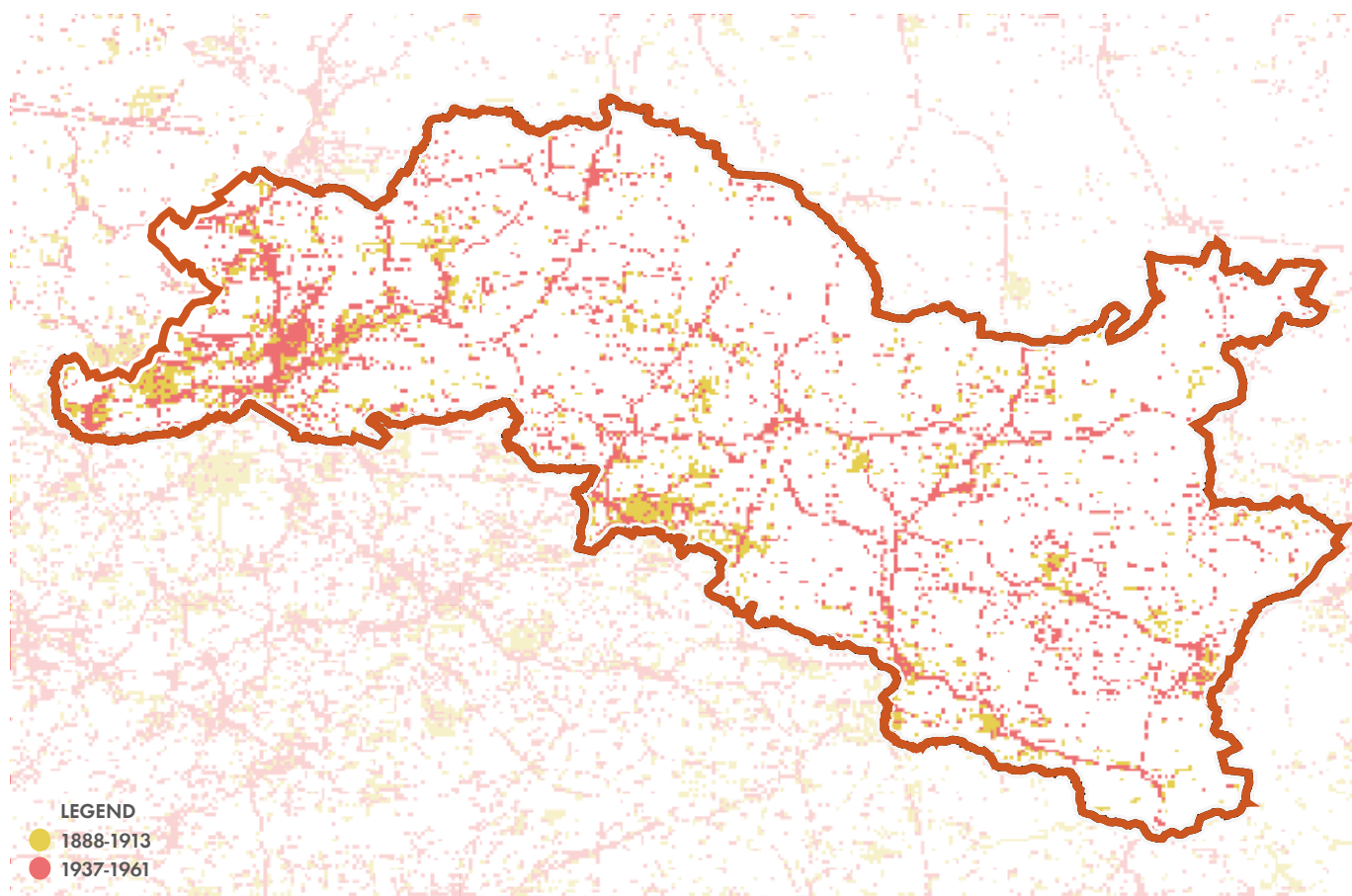


Fig 11 Map of historic evolution in the Borough

- 2.1.6 Amongst several other historic villages, Goudhurst is perhaps most celebrated, situated on a spur of land above the Teise with extensive views over the Weald.

Traditional building materials

- 2.1.7 Calverley sandstone is local to Tunbridge Wells and used for many churches in the Borough. Flint and chalk are also found in places. Kentish ragstone from the band of Lower Greensand is the most familiar limestone and has been used for many higher status buildings in the area. Much more widespread than these materials however are brick and tiles, a defining characteristic of the area. Some of the finest brickwork in England is manifest in the red brick from the clays of the Weald. Kentish tilework is used on both wall and roof, and Kent peg tiles are a common type which are unique to the south east. These complement the earlier tradition of timber framed construction, with the Wealden farmhouse being a distinctive building type. Timber frames were often protected by lime render, weatherboarding or tile hanging. The railway era saw the importation of more distant materials, especially blue slate from Wales and a plethora of stone for prestige buildings. The Pantiles takes its name from the warm red clay blocks that formed the pavements which have now been replaced with brick pavers.

Tunbridge Wells today

- 2.1.8 The many and diverse designated heritage assets in the Borough are generally in sound condition. However the wider historic environment is under pressure, as buildings are enlarged or converted to new uses, as towns and villages cope with changing demographics, as traffic increases and as new patterns of agriculture take shape. There is a need for further research on the extent and condition of non-designated heritage assets. The opportunity is there to back up the regulatory mechanisms with positive strategies for understanding, promoting and managing the Borough's exceptional legacy.

Fig 12 Historic photographs from across the Borough (Source: Kent Photo Archive)



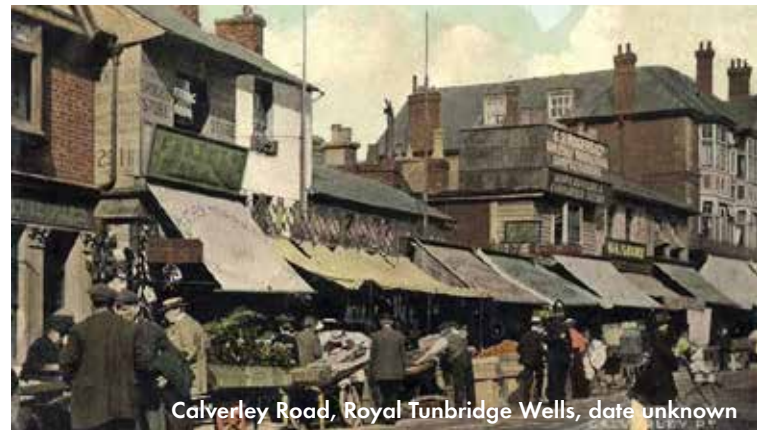
Weighing wool for the forces, Matfield in 1941



Calverley Grounds, date unknown



Paddock Wood Station, hop picking, c.1945



Calverley Road, Royal Tunbridge Wells, date unknown



View from the west towards Royal Tunbridge Wells, 1926



Field Kitchen WWII Calverley Grounds



Measuring the hops



Goudhurst, date unknown



Hop picking hut



Harsmonden hopper Sunday



Cranbrook High St, date unknown

LANDSCAPE CONTEXT

2.2 GEOLOGY AND NATIONAL CHARACTER AREAS

Geology

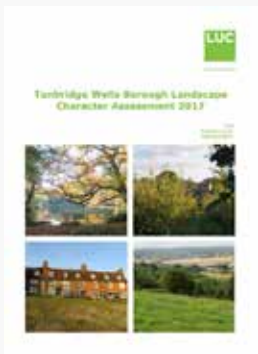
- 2.2.1 The combination of geology, topography and land use has had a direct influence on the landscape character of the Borough. The Landscape Character Assessment (2017) describes the influence of geology on the landform. Superficial deposits are from the Quaternary age and may include floodplain and stream channel deposits. Bedrock includes all pre-quaternary deposits.
- 2.2.2 Tunbridge Wells is mainly underlain by Wadhurst Clay and Tunbridge Wells Sand Formation, both of which are hard sandstone strata. The High Weald was formed when part of the area was lifted and elevated above the land over sixty five million years ago. Whereas the High Weald reaches heights of over 160 metres above sea-level, the Low Weald falls below 20 metres, its strata predominantly comprising soft Weald Clay.
- 2.2.3 The geology of the area has been further influenced by a period of faulting that resulted in exposure of softer beds at elevations above the hard sandstone strata.

- 2.2.4 Watercourses drain the upland areas and cut into the rock sequences, often revealing belts of Wadhurst Clay below the sandstone. Watercourses vary in size and type, from moderate sized rivers such as the Teise, to small streams.
- 2.2.5 These processes have resulted in a smooth, rolling upland plateau with ridgelines. Deep ghyll valleys cut through the landscape and open out to broad valley lowlands with wide, flat floodplains.

National Character Areas

- 2.2.6 The borough-level landscape character areas broadly correlate with the National Character Areas (NCAs) as defined by Natural England. These are areas that share similar landscape characteristics, and which follow natural lines in the landscape rather than administrative boundaries.
- 2.2.7 The High Weald NCA covers the majority of the Tunbridge Wells Borough. The area is also designated as an AONB, and is covered in more detail on the following pages. A small area to the north of the Borough is within the Low Weald NCA, which is characterised by broad low-lying clay vale which is predominantly agricultural.
- 2.2.8 The NCAs are used to characterise the landscape theme, set out in more detail in Chapter 3.

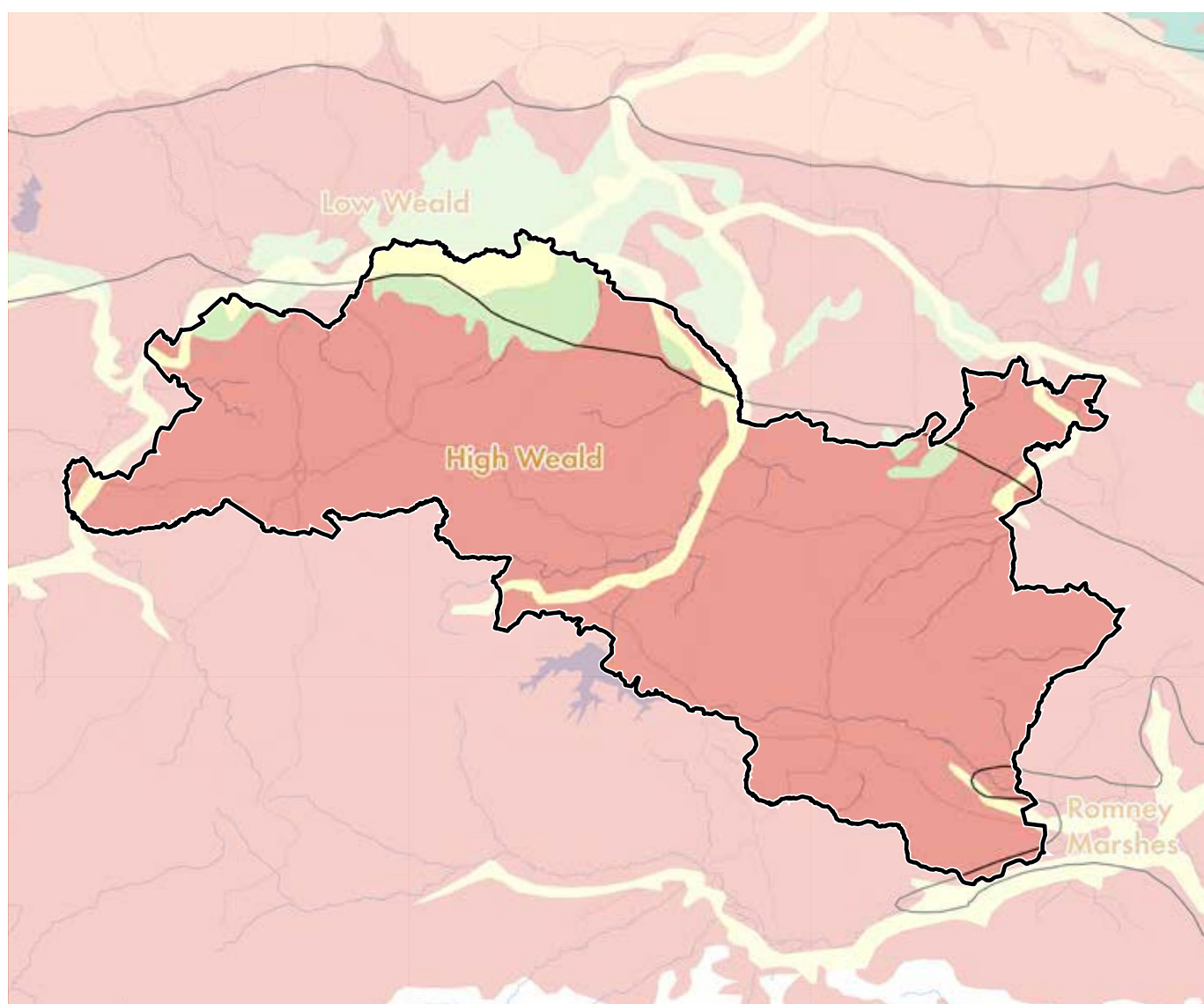
Relevant documents



Landscape Character Assessment (2017)



National Character Area Profiles (Low and High Weald)



Superficial

ALLUVIUM

RIVER TERRACE DEPOSITS (UNDIFFERENTIATED)

Bedrock

WEALDEN GROUP

Fig 13 *Geology and National Character Areas*

LANDSCAPE CONTEXT

2.3 HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

- 2.3.1 The historic landscape character has been mapped through the Kent Historic Landscape Characterisation (2017) and is shown opposite. The term 'historic landscapes' refers to all landscapes that have been shaped by human interaction. The full reports for each parish can be found here: <http://www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/residents/planning/planning-policy/new-local-plan/historic-landscape-characterisation-2014-to-2017>
- 2.3.2 An overview of the evolution of the historic landscape character is set out in the Landscape Character Assessment (2017) and is summarised below.

Prehistoric and Roman

- 2.3.3 The Borough has a rich prehistoric past. Forests covered much of the Borough and were mainly used by hunter-gatherers, demonstrated by the numerous Mesolithic scatters across Tunbridge Wells. At least three iron age hillforts existed in the Borough which is a significant concentration, demonstrating the woodland was an important resource during this period. The woodland was termed *Anderida silva* by the Romans and *Andredsweald* in Saxon charters, shortened to *Weald*. As a result of the dense woodland cover, and the difficulty in working the soils, agricultural progression and the growth of settlements was slow. During Roman occupation, the woodland was managed for the iron industry and the *Weald* was one of the most significant areas for iron-related activities. The bloomeries, minepits and slag heaps have left a legacy of archaeological ponds and roads. It is likely that as part of their settlement Romano-British communities cleared woodland, cultivated land and raised a range of crops and animals, greatly influencing the landscape.

Early Medieval

- 2.3.4 By the 11th century, the High *Weald* was the most densely wooded part of the country. Transhumance, wood-pasture dens and drove roads were key human influences on the

landscape at this time, the woodland being a vital resource for seasonal pannage and rural industries since at least the Iron Age.

- 2.3.5 Transhumance was the seasonal movement of people and animals between the settlements on the borders of the *Weald* and its centre, and it is one of the main elements which transformed the *Weald* into the settled landscape seen today. Jutish settlers from north Kent formed a series of drove routes to move their animals from the Downs into the *Wealdan* woodland, to exploit the autumn forest grazing or 'pannage'. Pigs would feed on acorns and fallen nuts in the forest. This early-medieval seasonal movement helped ensure the survival of woodland in the *Weald* while other areas were cleared of trees.

- 2.3.6 The industrial and transhumant economy has played a pivotal role in defining the nature and extent of the woodland. Today, 16.27% of the Borough is ancient woodland.

Medieval

- 2.3.7 Early settlement in the area is evidenced by place names like -den or -fold meaning woodland pastures. Dens were created partly through transhumance and became permanent settlements. They were often isolated which explains the *Weald's* dispersed settlement pattern that is evident today.
- 2.3.8 In the mid-late medieval period, it was common to assart woodlands to create small fields, and it was at this time that trade and non-agricultural rural industries spurred the development of villages and towns. Assarting meant that the historic landscape pattern remained consistent. The landscape was enclosed before the post-medieval period of Enclosure, and therefore meant the pattern of the landscape today retains a strong medieval character.

Post-medieval

- 2.3.9 During the Tudor times the resurgent iron industry was a key characteristic. Fruit orchards

Relevant documents



Historic Landscape Characterisation (2017)

and hop gardens were introduced in the late post-medieval period. They can still be found in parts of the Low Weald and along the Fruit Belt although they have now almost disappeared.

- 2.3.10 The iron industry grew in the late Roman times, when trees were cleared to smelt the iron deposits of the Wadhurst clay. The Weald became a major centre of the industry in the 14th and 15th century following the introduction of water power. The ponds are a visible reminder of the iron-related activities of the past. Fruit orchards and hop gardens were a dominant

land use by the late 19th century, and although in decline, continue to be a defining landscape characteristic to the north of the Borough.

19th century

- 2.3.11 The arrival of the railways in the mid-19th century brought further building and the growth of country houses and estates. The railways also opened up the London market for hops, fruit and poultry. However, the wooded landscape character of the Borough and the difficulty of building transport infrastructure through the High Weald limited development.

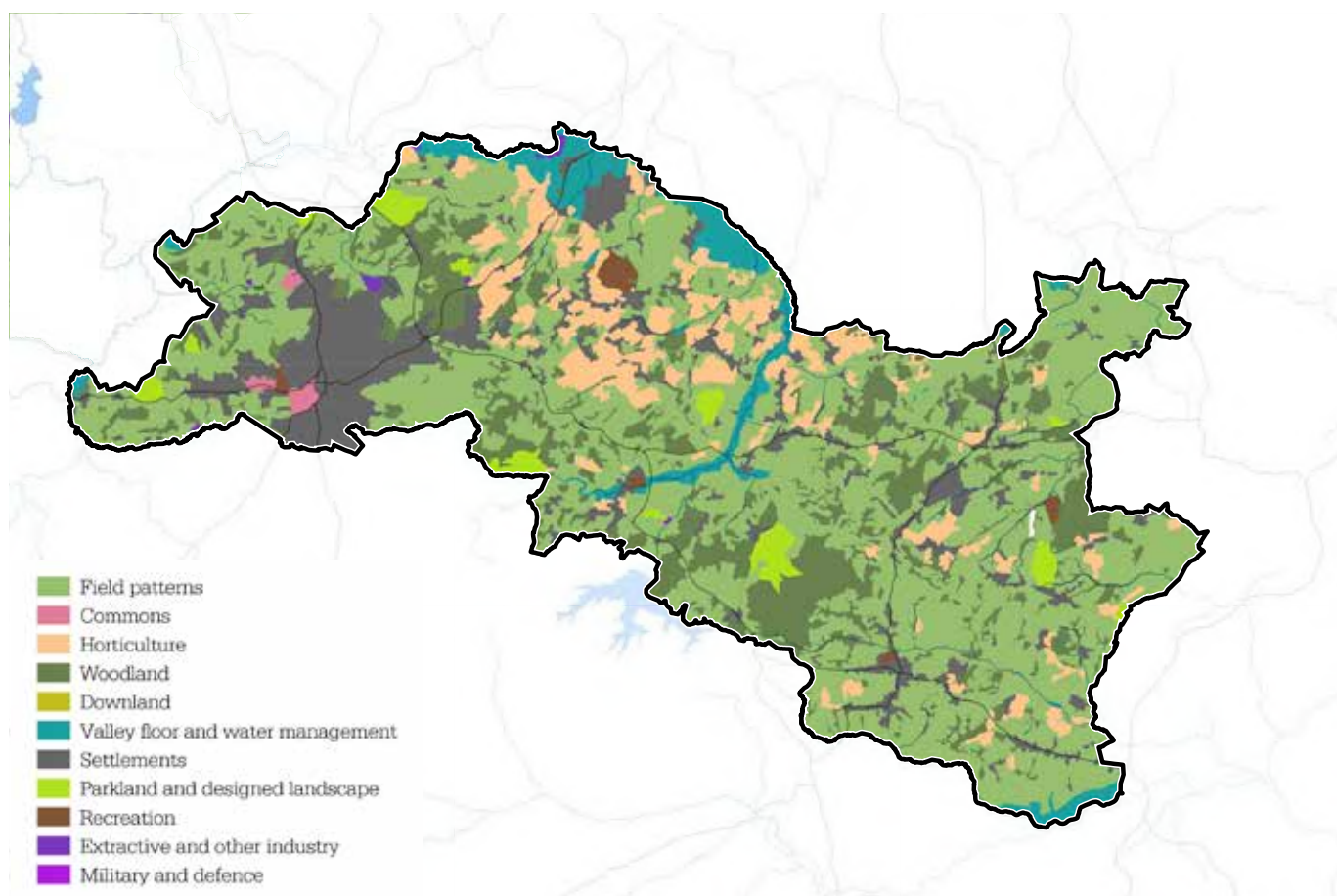


Fig 14 Summary of historic landscape character

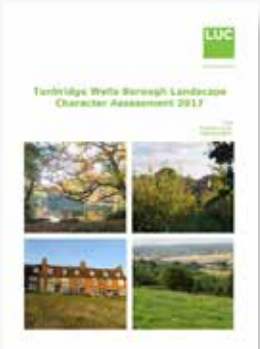
LANDSCAPE CONTEXT

2.4 LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISATION

Landscape Character Areas

- 2.4.1 The Borough's historic landscape attributes have contributed to the landscape character evident today. This is set out in more detail in the Landscape Character Assessment (2017), which identifies a number of borough-level character areas that convey the diversity of the landscape.
- 2.4.2 The broad landscape character types are:
- Fruit Belt;
 - Wooded Farmland;
 - Low Weald Farmland;
 - Forested Plateau;
 - River Valleys; and
 - Open Farmland.

Relevant documents



Landscape Character Assessment (2017)



High Weald AONB Management Plan 2014-2019

- Fruit Belt**
 - 1: Matfield / Brenchley
 - 2: Horsmonden
 - 3: Goudhurst
 - 4: Cranbrook
- Wooded Farmland**
 - 5: Speldhurst
 - 6: Beneden
 - 7: Sissinghurst
 - 8: Bayham
 - 9: Ashurst
 - 10: Kilndown
 - 11: Hawkhurst
- Low Weald Farmland**
 - 12: Frittenden Pastures
 - 13: Paddock Wood / Five Oak Green
- Forested Plateau**
 - 14: Pembury
 - 15: Bedgebury
- River Valleys**
 - 16: Rother Valley
 - 17: Medway River
 - 18: Teise Valley
- Open Farmland**
 - 19: Bayhill
- Key Settlement**

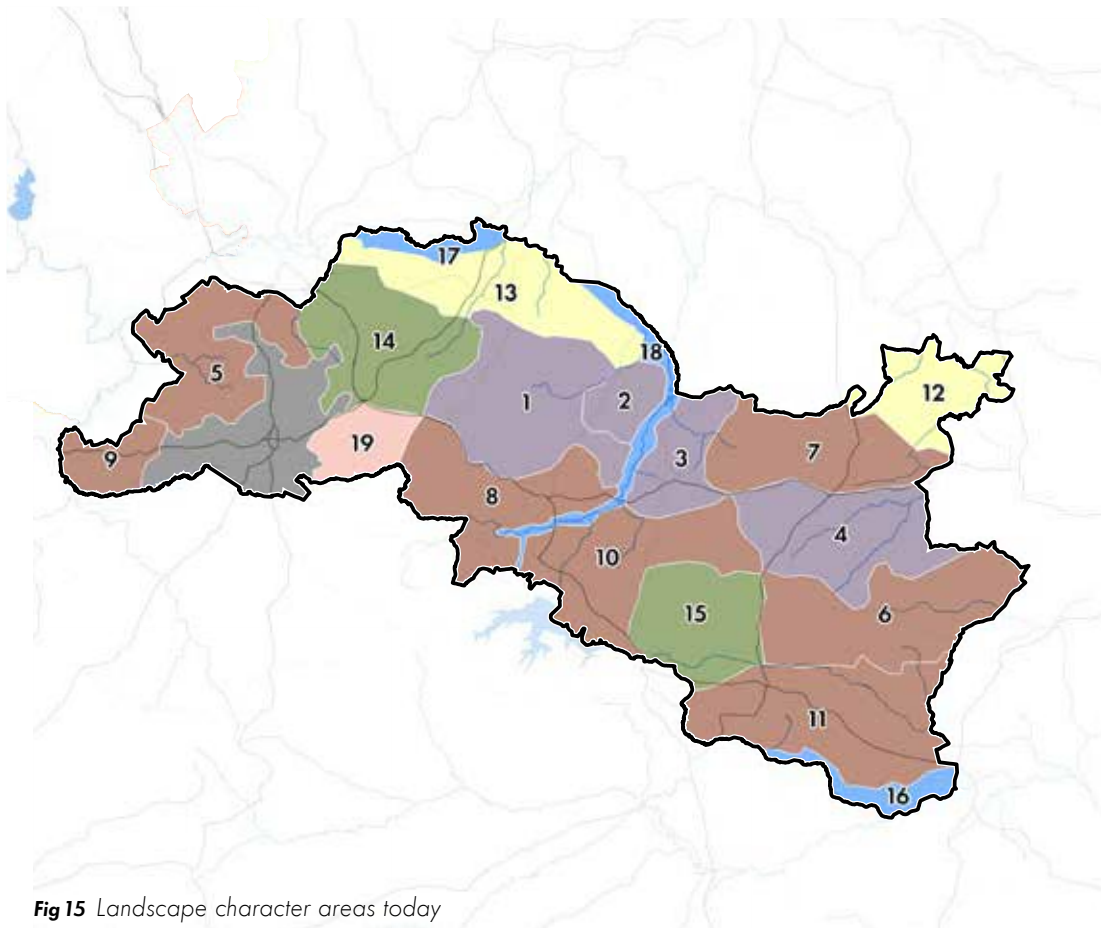


Fig 15 Landscape character areas today

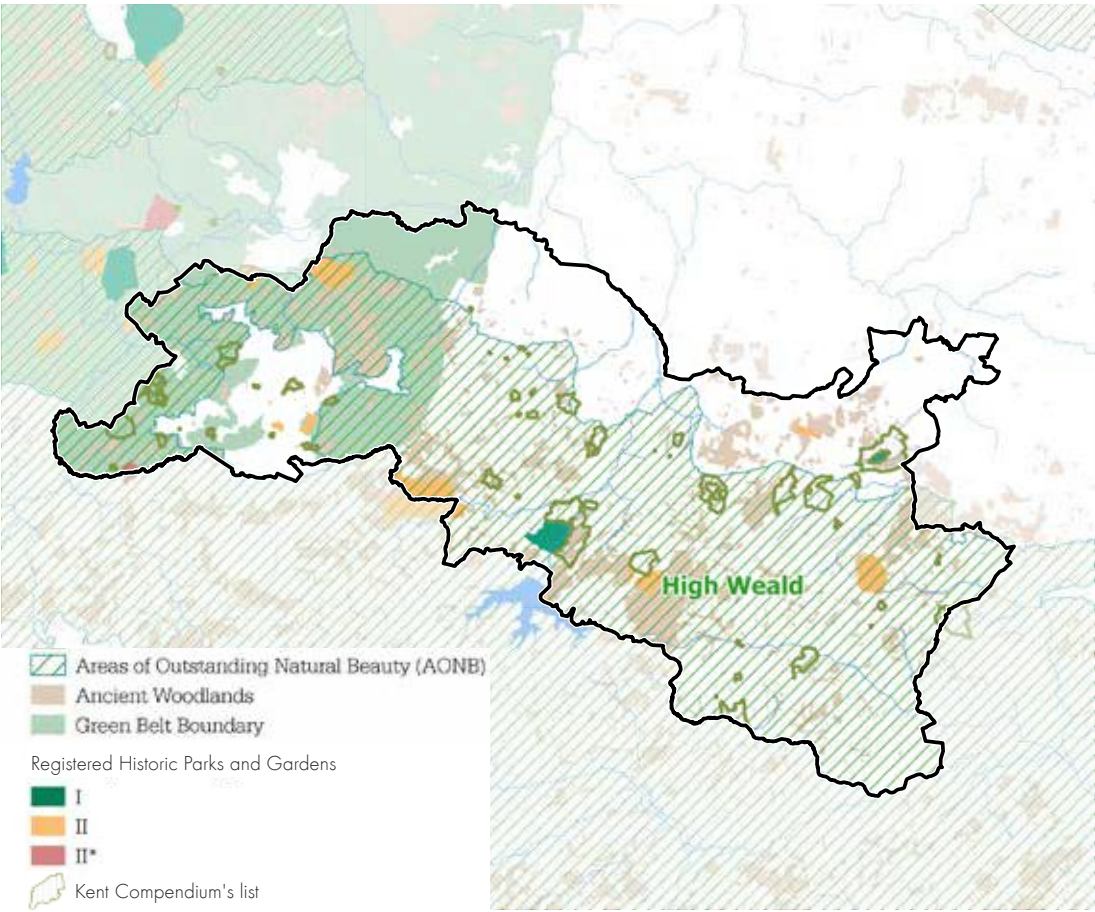


Fig 16 Landscape context

HERITAGE ASSETS

2.5 HISTORIC PARKS AND GARDENS

Registered Historic Parks and Gardens

2.5.1 Within the landscape there are many parks and gardens which are heritage assets in their own right. Tunbridge Wells Borough is home to 14 Registered Historic Parks and Gardens, significantly more than other adjacent boroughs. This is largely because of the woodland which has provided a stunning backdrop for medieval and designed parklands.

Local historic parks and gardens

2.5.2 In addition, the Review of The Kent Compendium's list of Historic Parks and Gardens for the Borough identifies a further 58 sites of local interest and value. Examples are Angley Park, Primrose Hill at Hawkhurst and St. Johns Recreation Ground in Royal Tunbridge Wells.

Registered Historic Parks and Gardens

1. Bedgebury National Pinetum
2. Scotney Castle
3. Groombridge Place
4. Sissinghurst Castle Garden
5. Hemsted Park (Beneden School)
6. Sissinghurst Court
7. Bayham Abbey
8. Sissinghurst Park (Hartridge House)
9. Mabledon Park
10. Calverley Park and Calverley Grounds
11. Dunorlan Park
12. Woodbury Park Cemetery
13. Somerhill Park
14. Swaylands

Relevant documents



A Review of Kent Compendium's list of Historic Parks and Gardens for TWB (2010)



Fig 18 Bayham Abbey



Fig 19 Sissinghurst Castle Garden



Fig 20 Scotney Castle

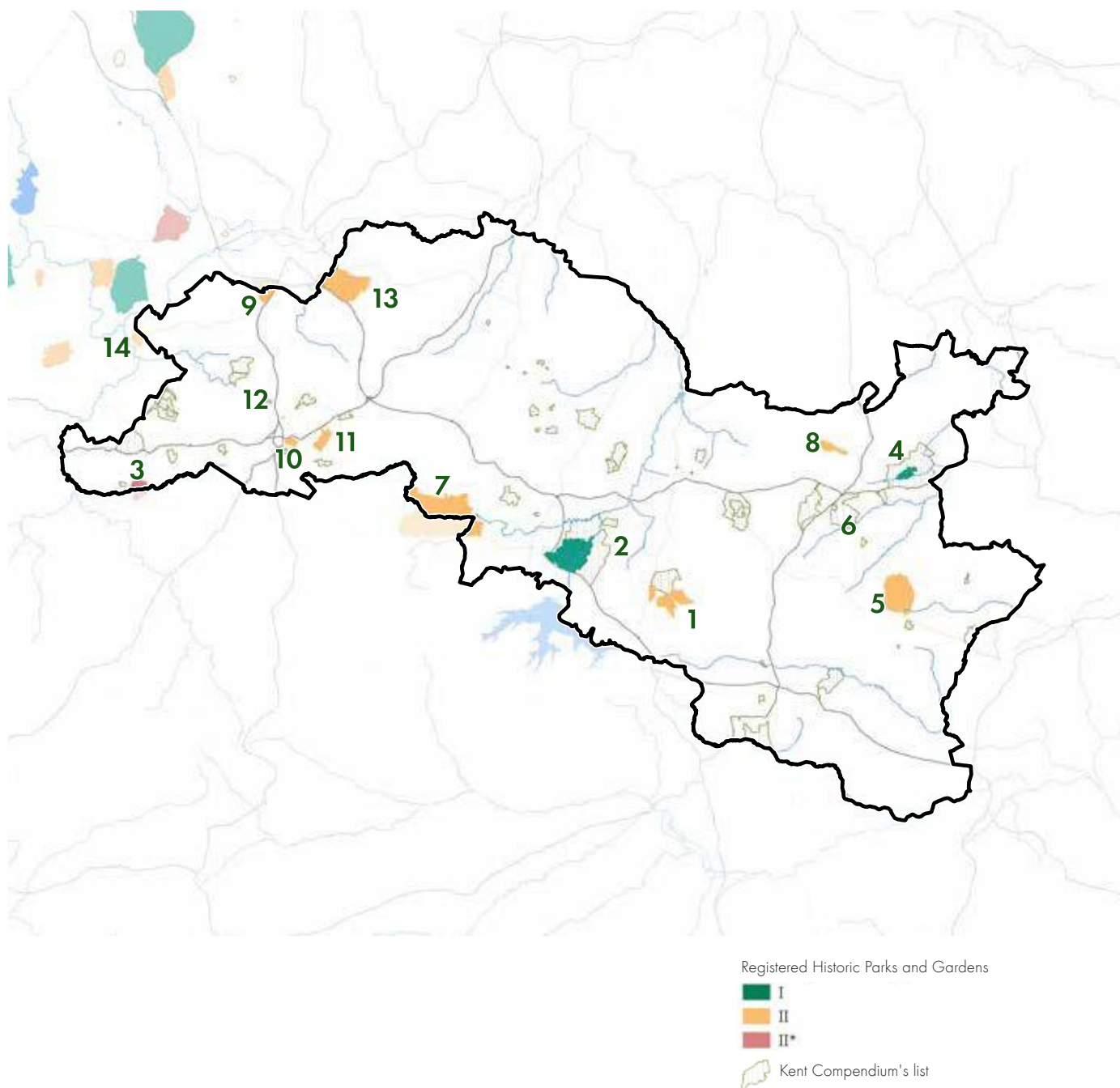


Fig 17 Historic Parks and Gardens

HERITAGE ASSETS

2.6 ARCHAEOLOGY

Non-designated archaeological assets

- 2.6.1 Tunbridge Wells Borough contains archaeological sites and discoveries dating back to the Palaeolithic period, covering all periods since that time. These contribute greatly to the character and sense of place for the Borough and are important components of the historic environment. Archaeological hertiage assets may include standing remains and built structures as well as buried remains.
- 2.6.2 Archaeological sites and finds are documented within Kent County Council's Historic Environment Record. The record gives information on the number and type of archaeological heritage assets for each parish in the Borough. The database is continually growing and new records are added from various sources, including archaeological work as part of the planning and development control process, original research by local societies and accidental discoveries.

Areas of Archaeological Potential (AAPs)

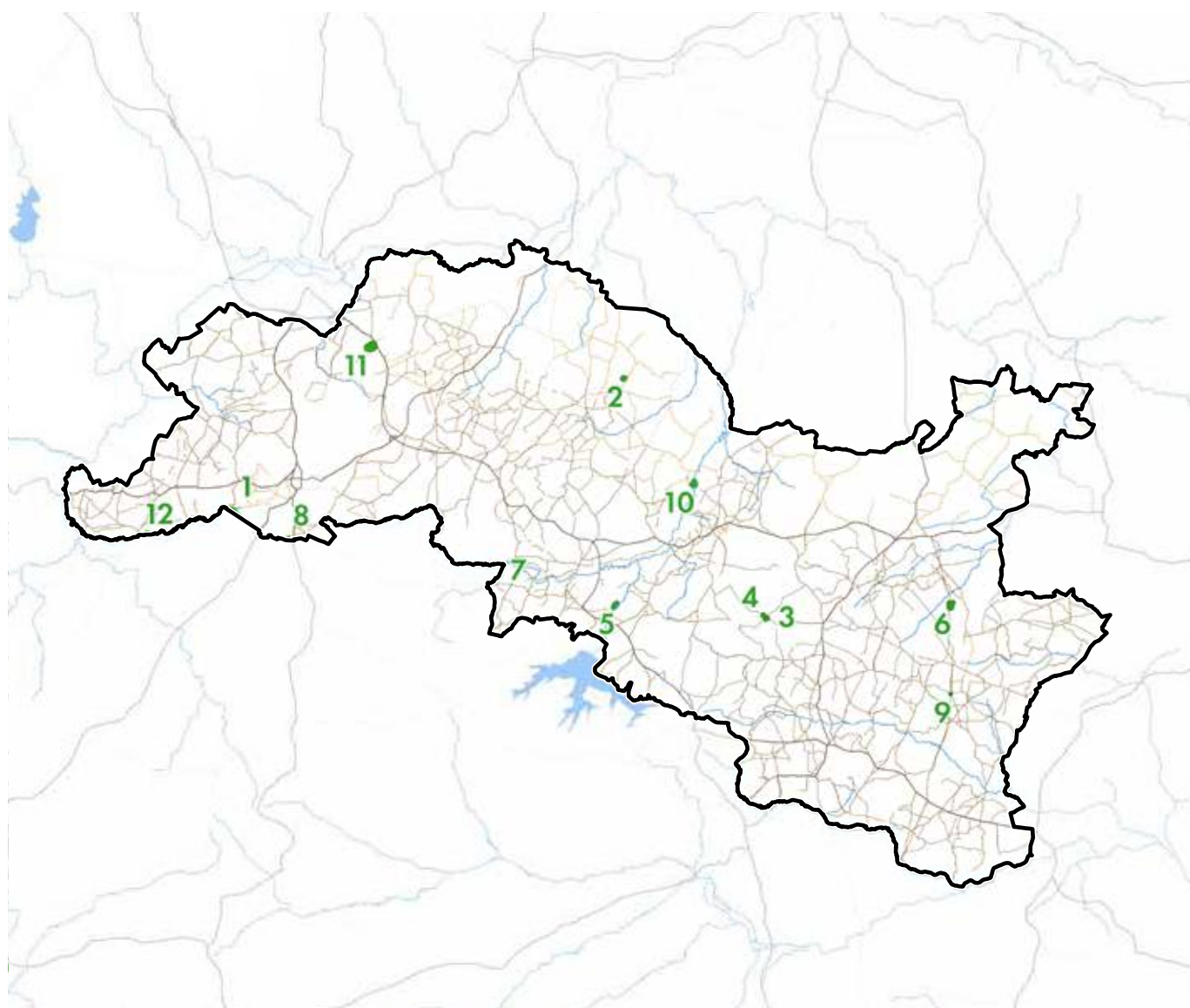
- 2.6.3 Sites of Archaeological Potential represent areas where there is a reasonable probability for the survival of archaeological remains. They are intended as an easy flagging mechanism to guide the Borough Council but do not offer a comprehensive picture of archaeological heritage assets in the Borough. Within the AAPs are areas with no real potential due to past development. Similarly, outside the AAPs there may be areas that do still have potential. Kent County Council is currently undergoing a review of AAPs in the Borough.

Scheduled Monuments

- 2.6.4 These are archaeological sites which are considered to be nationally significant. Scheduling is the legal protection specifically of archaeological sites, which derives authority from the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act of 1979. There are 12 scheduled monuments that lie partially or wholly in the Borough. These are listed and mapped opposite.

List of Scheduled Monuments

1. Prehistoric rock shelters and a multivallate hillfort at High Rocks, 309m east of High Rocks Inn
2. Ringwork in Castle Wood, immediately south west of Little Knowle
3. The site of Bedgebury Furnace, 100m south east of Furnace Farm
4. Moated site immediately west of Furnace Farm
5. Uninhabited parts of Scotney Castle
6. Roman site on western edge of Little Farningham Wood
7. Bayham Abbey
8. Medieval moated site and post-medieval ice-house, Moat Farm
9. Paved ford crossing the line of the Roman Road at Iden Green
10. Medieval moated site at Share Farm
11. Castle Hill Earthworks, Tonbridge
12. Medieval moated site, Groombridge Place



- Scheduled Monuments
- Historic routeways
- Rural lanes

Fig21 *Scheduled Monuments and ancient routes*

HERITAGE ASSETS

2.7 CONSERVATION AREAS

- Conservation Areas**
- 2.7.1 Tunbridge Wells Borough has 25 designated Conservation Areas, defined as areas of special architectural or historic character. They vary in size and type, from special character areas within Royal Tunbridge Wells, to the historic core of villages and hamlets which are often focused around a cluster of listed buildings. Other features that contribute to the special character of Conservation Areas include open green space, trees, historic street patterns and the strength of relationship between the historic settlement and its rural landscape. Royal Tunbridge Wells, Cranbrook and Rutshall were the first areas to be designated in 1969.
- 2.7.2 Figure 22 shows the year of the latest Conservation Area Appraisal for each Conservation Area. Six areas do not have appraisals. Further information can be found in Section 4.4.

1. Bidborough
2. Royal Tunbridge Wells
3. Rutshall
4. Matfield
5. Brenchley
6. Horsmondon
7. Kilndown
8. Langton Green
9. Hawkhurst - Highgate and All Saints Church
10. Pembury
11. Lamberhurst
12. Wilsley
13. Iden Green (Beneden)
14. Cranbrook
15. Hawkhurst - Iddenden Green (Sawyers Green)
16. Sissinghurst
17. Lamberhurst, the Down
18. Beneden
19. Frittenden
20. Groombridge
21. Sandhurst
22. Southborough, the Common
23. Speldhurst
24. Hawkhurst - the Moor
25. Goudhurst

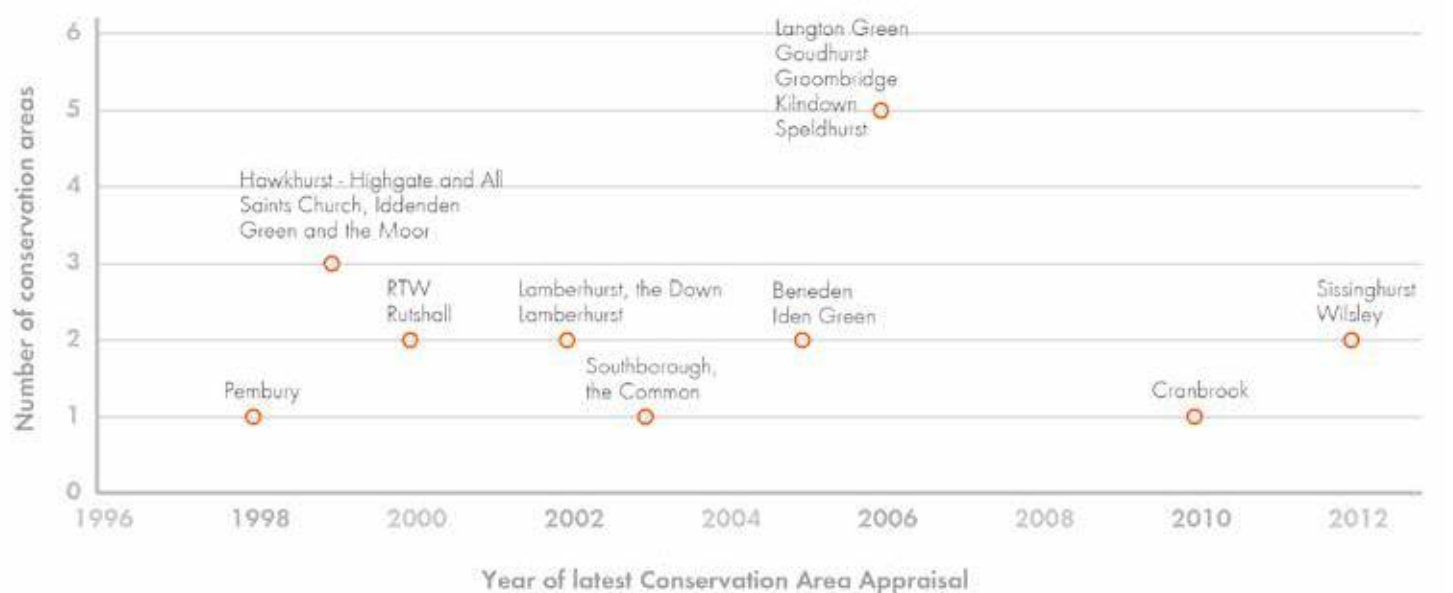


Fig22 Conservation Area Appraisals graph



Fig 23 Brenchley High Street



Fig 24 Stone Street, Cranbrook

Relevant documents



Conservation Area Appraisals

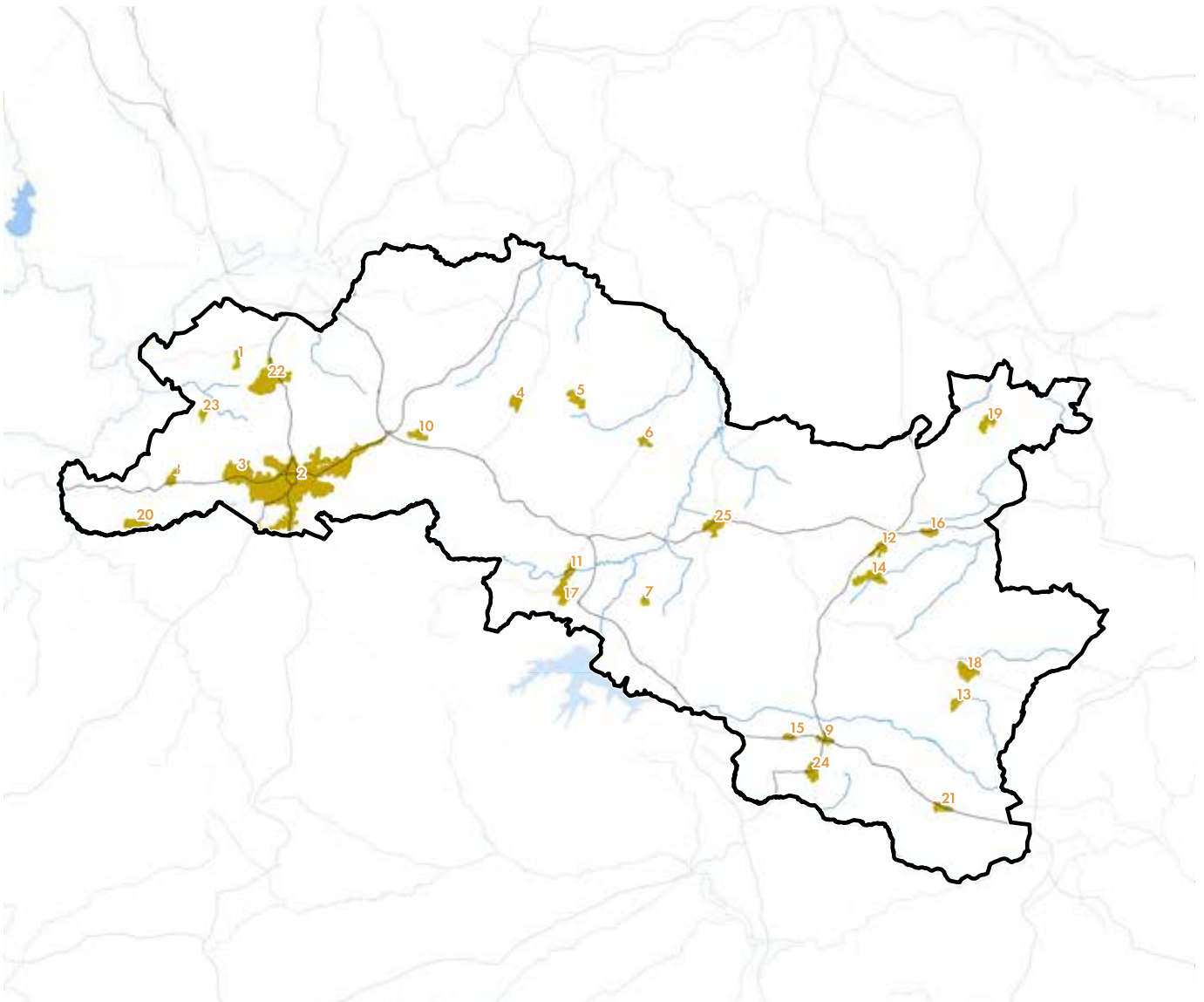


Fig 25 Conservation Areas

HERITAGE ASSETS

2.8 BUILDINGS

Statutory Listed buildings

- 2.8.1 There are 2,251 nationally listed buildings in Tunbridge Wells which are of special architectural or historic interest. Historic England hold the statutory list which can be viewed online. They are also catalogued within Kent County Council's Historic Environment Record.
- 2.8.2 A breakdown of listed buildings in the Borough is as follows:
- 28 Grade I listed buildings;
 - 133 Grade II* listed buildings; and
 - 2089 Grade II listed buildings.

Local Listing

- 2.8.3 The Borough is also compiling a database of non-designated buildings, structures and areas across Tunbridge Wells that should be considered for local listing using the adopted SPD. There are a number of buildings that will not qualify for local listing but still play a key role in contributing to local character.



Fig 26 Old barn near Sandhurst



Fig 27 Grade II* Listed Watermill House, Mill Street near Iden Green



Fig 28 Oast house in Brenchley

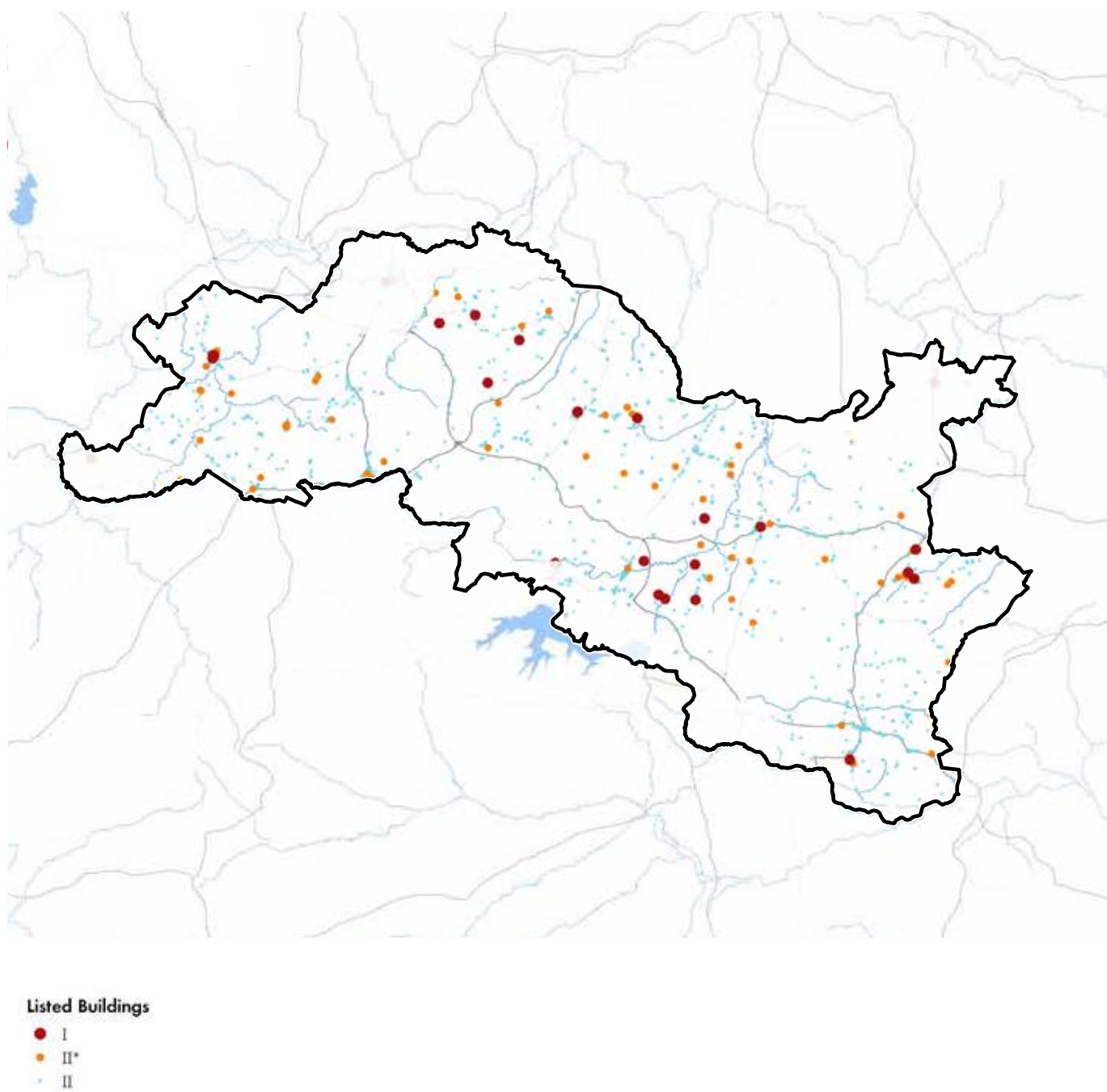


Fig 29 Statutory Listed buildings

HERITAGE ASSETS

2.9 VULNERABILITY / RISKS

Heritage at Risk

- 2.9.1 Historic England provide a yearly list of heritage sites most at risk and in need of rescuing from vacancy, neglect, decay and inappropriate development. It includes listed buildings, conservation areas, designated parks and gardens and ancient monuments. There are five that wholly or partly sit within Tunbridge Wells Borough.
- 2.9.2 Fragmentation of ownership has significantly compromised the landscape at Bayham Abbey, which lies both in East Sussex and Kent. Its condition is assessed as 'generally unsatisfactory with major localised problems'. The heritage site is a Grade II Registered Park and Garden.¹
- 2.9.3 Providence Chapel on Stone Street in Cranbrook is a former baptist chapel built in 1795. Its condition has been assessed as 'very bad'². Another religious building at risk is the Grade II* listed St Mary's Church in Frittenden. The building requires substantial repair work.
- 2.9.4 High Rocks Camp is a Scheduled Monument, showing evidence of prehistoric rock shelters and a hillfort.³ It is particularly vulnerable to arable ploughing. Close-by is the Royal Tunbridge Wells Conservation Area which has been assessed as at risk but improving.⁴



Fig 30 Bayham Abbey



Fig 31 Providence Chapel at Cranbrook (Source: Wikimedia Commons)

1 Historic England, *Bayham Abbey, Lamberhurst / Frant - Tunbridge Wells / Wealden*, <https://goo.gl/CU9Bxf> (Accessed 8 August 2017).

2 Historic England, *Providence Chapel, Stone Street, Cranbrook - Tunbridge Wells*, <https://goo.gl/xLsEr7> (Accessed 8 August 2017).

3 Historic England, *High Rocks Camp, Frant - Tunbridge Wells*, <https://goo.gl/FuBRjZ> (Accessed 8 August 2017).

4 Historic England, *Royal Tunbridge Wells - Tunbridge Wells*, <https://goo.gl/pCWbtK> (Accessed 8 August 2017).

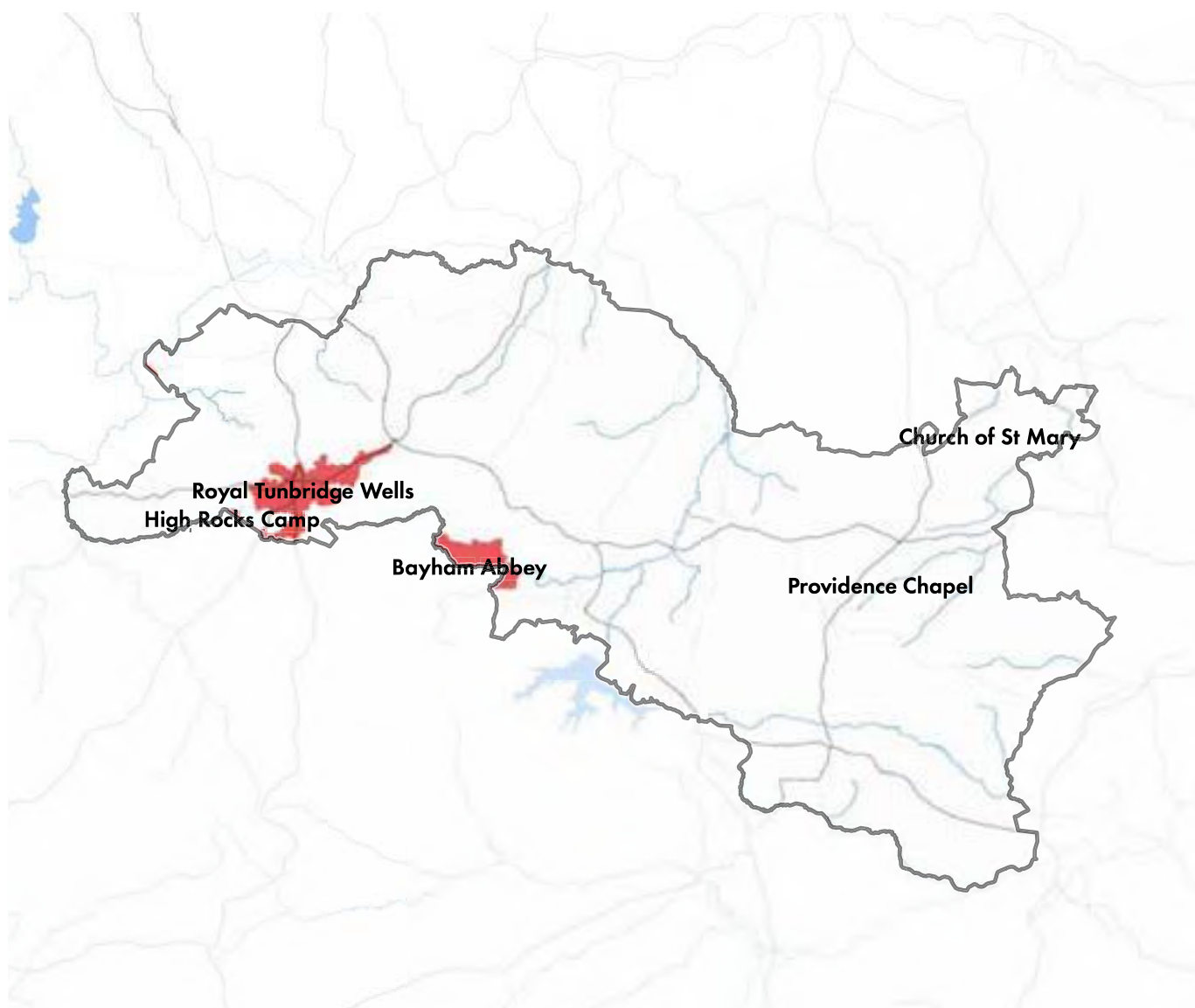


Fig32 *Heritage at Risk sites*

SECTION B:

**HERITAGE
THEMES**



3

THEME OVERVIEW



HERITAGE THEMES OVERVIEW

3.1 INTRODUCTION TO HERITAGE THEMES

Overview

- 3.1.1 A key objective of the historic environment review is the identification of the local historic environment themes which have informed the growth of the Borough and the legacy of heritage assets, features and characteristics.
- 3.1.2 This chapter establishes a thematic framework and diagrammatic matrix as a structure for the main body of the report. The framework helps to define a narrative which conveys the complexities of the area's evolution in a clear and accessible way.

Structuring the historical themes

- 3.1.3 The project team has considered different ways of structuring the report. One approach would be the presentation of a linear historical evolution highlighting specific drivers of growth. Although logical, there is a risk that a linear approach would be too descriptive which risks an over-simplification of the heritage context and interrelationships.
- 3.1.4 An alternative would be to define a more geographical approach in which the historic character and evolution of the Borough is communicated under spatial or location-specific headings. A geographical structure allows findings to be related more specifically to the existing spatial character of the area. However, it is likely that this would generate repetition where particular historical activities took place in multiple locations.
- 3.1.5 Following discussion and review, the preferred approach is to encourage a hybrid structure which combines the overarching geographical themes with the specific social, economic and cultural activities which have influenced growth. The two sets of themes draw on information gathered from the existing evidence base and are organised as two intertwined components:

- An overarching set of primary “geographical” themes which articulate the basic structure of the Borough in terms of landscape and settlement patterns.
 - A finer grain of secondary social, economic and cultural activities.
- 3.1.6 The following matrix attempts to represent these elements diagrammatically. The horizontal “geographical” themes categorise a significant proportion of the Borough. Broadly, these themes and sub-themes divide into “Landscape” or “Settlement”.
- 3.1.7 The vertical themes and sub-themes are the main historic activities which have driven the interaction with, and evolution of, the landscape and settlements. Conversely, landscape and settlement characteristics have also informed the nature of activities in the Borough. In some cases, a particular activity has had a very dominant influence on the location. However, many places are a more complex product of several overlapping influences which define their distinctive and multi-faceted historic character and assets.
- 3.1.8 The purpose of the matrix is to offer a simple graphic explanation of the report structure. It has potential to be used informally in the future as a checklist for any site or area which is considered to have heritage potential or historical character. Although the “warp and weft” of the individual themes varies significantly across the Borough, the matrix forms a useful conceptual framework and means of distilling of the special identity, significance, vulnerability and opportunities associated with each component heritage theme.
- 3.1.9 The matrix is not intended to be used as a toolkit to capture the specific interrelationships

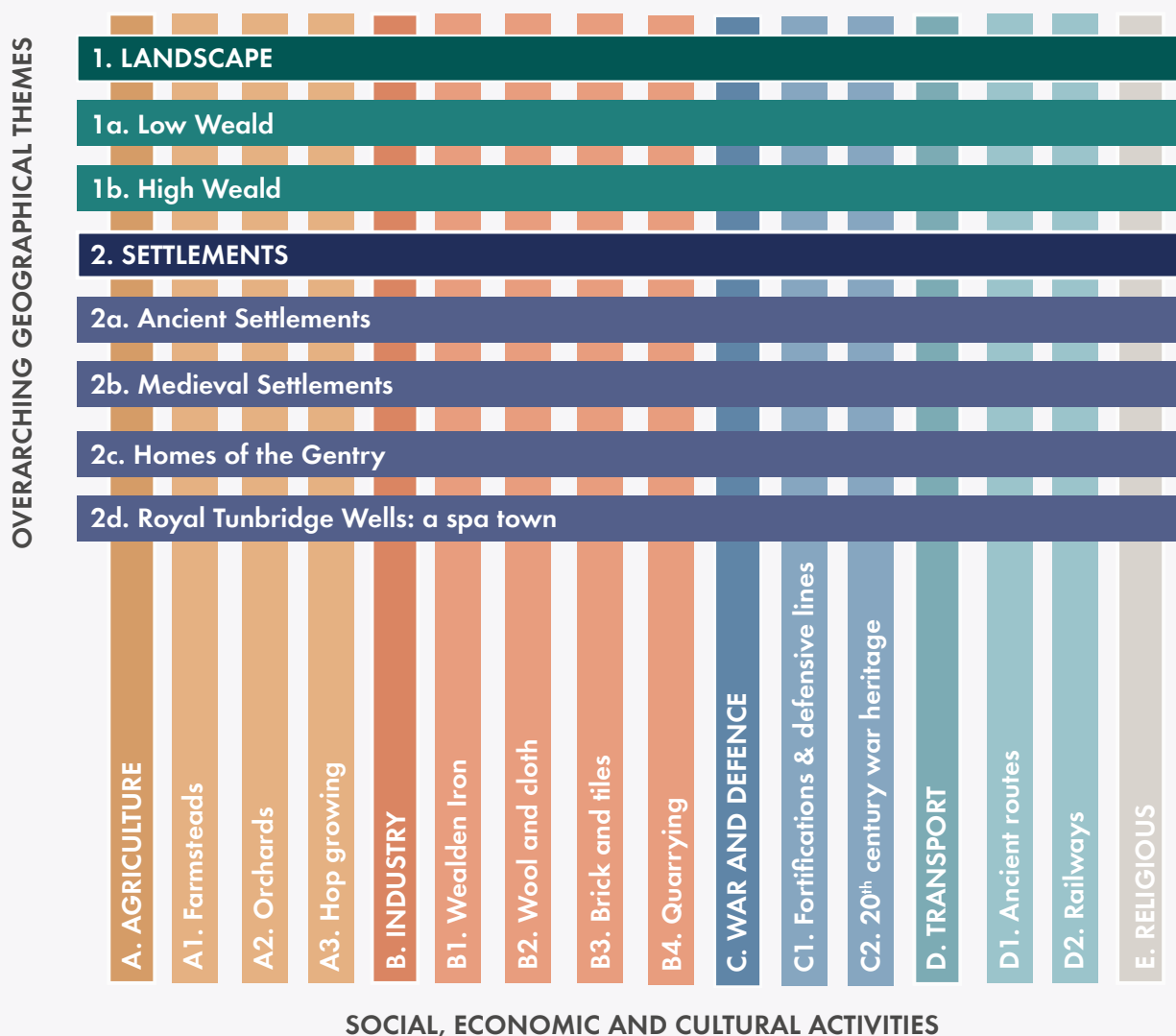


Fig 33 Themes matrix

between individual geographical themes and social / economic / cultural activities in a comprehensive way. Where clear overlap exists between themes, this is identified as appropriate in the body of the report.

- 3.1.10 Section 3.2 and 3.3 provide a brief introduction to each theme alongside their principal heritage assets.
- 3.1.11 It is recognised that there are significant heritage assets within the Borough that do not necessarily fall in to the above themes and arguments could be made for additional themes

which are important to the Borough for example woodland archaeology, post-medieval domestic buildings, and the character of the historic landscape. It is envisaged that future studies could add to the theme list above as set out in the recommendations.

- 3.1.12 In some cases, arguments could be made for themes to be grouped in different ways. For example, the farmstead category could also be considered as a “settlement” sub-theme, although the project team has concluded it is more appropriately identified as a social, economic and cultural activity.

3.2 SUMMARY OF OVERARCHING GEOGRAPHICAL THEMES

THEME	OVERVIEW OF THEME	HERITAGE ASSETS
LANDSCAPE		
1a. Low Weald	- Comprises an open, flat and pastoral landscape with small blocks of ancient woodland and small to medium-sized pastures. - Arable farming is a dominant land use and the light soils supported fruit and hop growing which was on an industrial scale by the 19th century. - Ancient routeways and dispersed settlement are a special feature. - The Low Weald is not protected by AONB designation.	Listed and non-listed buildings Scheduled Monuments Conservation Areas Historic parks and gardens Archaeological sites and artefacts Ancient woodland Routeways Historic landscape features
1b. High Weald	- Characterised by ancient woodland, the fruit belt, open farmland, historic routeways and a dispersed settlement pattern. - The east benefits from some of the darkest skies in the Borough. - Its significance derives from its sense of place / inspiration, tranquillity and history: Parks and Gardens are mostly in the High Weald. - Significant historical associations with the iron industry.	Listed and non-listed buildings Scheduled Monuments Conservation Areas Historic parks and gardens Archaeological sites and artefacts Ancient woodland Routeways Historic landscape features
SETTLEMENTS		
2a. Ancient settlements	- There is evidence of prehistoric activity across the Borough, especially in the Weald, which was one of the main concentrations of metal working in Romano-Britain. - Ancient settlements are significant for their age and rarity and are of high evidential value.	Archaeological artefacts and features - Palaeolithic, Mesolithic and Neolithic, Bronze Age, Iron Age and Roman assets, ancient routes
2b. Medieval settlements	- Transhumance played an important role in shaping medieval settlement in Tunbridge Wells, as well as the medieval gavelkind system. - The timber-framed vernacular buildings are a distinctive heritage asset and an emblem of Kent. - Most medieval settlements are designated as Conservation Areas and have strong historic and aesthetic significance.	Archaeological features, castles and manors, vernacular buildings, medieval settlement patterns, routes and tracks
2c. Homes of the Gentry	- Gentry were attracted to the Borough because of its space and clean air, and so purchased land and built houses. - The style of homes changed substantially over time, influenced by changing fashions, from timber-framed manors to small Palladian rural houses. - The finest are designated as Registered Parks and Gardens. They have high architectural, historic and communal significance.	Manors, Elizabeth and Jacobean mansions, country houses, villas, Victorian houses and Parks and Gardens
2d. Royal Tunbridge Wells: a spa town	- The discovery of the chalybeate springs in 1606 led to the growth of the town, as wealthy residents were attracted to the area and built estates. - The town is designated as a Conservation Area and has 11 character areas. - It has high historic and architectural significance because of the quality of its buildings and spaces, combined with its history as a spa.	Historic parks and open spaces, vernacular buildings (pre 19 th C), neo-classical buildings (late 18 th C - early 20 th C), English Revival (late 19 th C - early 20 th C), distinctive assets for example The Pantiles.

3.3 SUMMARY OF SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

THEME	OVERVIEW OF THEME	HERITAGE ASSETS
AGRICULTURE		
A1. Farmsteads	Farmsteads have historic links with agricultural processes and industry in the Weald, as well as influencing later settlement pattern. There is a great variety of plan types and building types within the theme, with varying levels of significance.	Assets grouped by plan type and building type. Buildings include barns, granaries, pigsties and oasts.
A2. Orchards	Fruit orchards are found across the 'fruit belt' in places such as Matfield and Horsmonden. Traditional orchards have strong historical value, keeping alive traditional techniques, customs and folklore.	Traditional fruit orchards
A3. Hop growing	Hop growing is an important part of the Borough's heritage and has strong historical and communal significance. The decline of the hop industry led to the conversion of oast houses to residential. The former railway line and Hop Pickers Line public right of way is a principal asset.	Oast houses, hop picker huts, breweries and brewhouses, malthouses and hop fields
INDUSTRY		
B1. Wealden Iron	The Weald was an important iron-producing region in Roman and Tudor Britain and has strong evidential and historical significance.	Archaeological features and artefacts, forges, grand houses, landscape features (ponds, leats, small craters)
B2. Wool and cloth	Cranbrook was the centre of the cloth industry in the 13 th century, when Flemish weavers from Ghent settled there. The industry thrived into the 17 th century but declined shortly after. The industry brought prosperity to the town and nearby villages.	Cloth halls, clothiers' houses, weavers cottages, fulling mills
B3. Brick and tiles	Brick and tiles were commonly produced in the Borough, the red brick of the Wealden clay being made to an outstanding quality. Kentish tilework is used on both wall and roof, and Kent peg tiles are a common type which are unique to the south east.	Archaeological features, brick kilns, workers cottages and houses
B4. Quarrying	Quarrying for the production of materials such as sandstone, ragstone and chalk was an extensive industrial activity up to the late 19 th century. Langton Green was an important sandstone quarrying area.	Archaeological features and artefacts, landscape features
WAR AND DEFENCE		
C1. Fortifications and defensive lines	The Borough has had fortifications and defensive lines dating to prehistoric times e.g. Iron Age hillforts. Castles were later used for defence, but over time, defences reduced in height from large structures to near invisibility, influencing the appearance of landscapes, by adapting, modifying or preserving them.	Archaeological features and artefacts, castles, other pre-20 th century military installations
C2. 20th century war heritage	The wars of the 20 th century left a lasting legacy on the Borough, impacting the landscape, halting the development of villages and towns, and deeply affecting the people who lived through them. Many war heritage assets are in the Borough, from air raid shelters to redoubts and pillboxes. Evidence of possible slit trenches have been discovered near Goudhurst.	Civil defence sites (e.g. air raid shelters, ARP posts) and other military installations, for example pillboxes, barracks and redoubts.
TRANSPORT		
D1. Ancient Routes	The Borough has a network of ancient routeways and tracks that have strong historical significance, giving a sense of the way in which people travelled through the landscape. The routes today are used as public rights of way and opportunities should be sought to create new rights of way.	Drove roads, sunken routes, Roman roads and turnpike features
D2. Railways	The arrival of the railways transformed parts of the Borough, especially around Paddock Wood and Royal Tunbridge Wells. The former railway line used by hop-pickers connected Paddock Wood with Wealden villages, supporting local industry. The line closed in 1961 but the route is relatively well preserved and heritage assets remain. Parts of the line are used as a public right of way.	Stations and platform canopies, railway cottages and taverns, assets associated with the Hawkhurst railway line
RELIGIOUS	The Borough has a large number of religious assets, a hugely important component of the historical built framework. Churches formed an important role within settlements and were often a focal point of a village or town. The rise of non-conformism in both rural and urban areas is an important part of the Borough's history and has strong social significance. Many churches have been altered since their construction and some are no longer used as places of worship.	Medieval remains, Early Parish Churches, Mid 16 th century churches, non-conformist chapels, churches (1830-1914) and other faith buildings

4

OVERARCHING GEOGRAPHICAL THEMES



Landscape



Settlements

GEOGRAPHICAL THEMES

LANDSCAPE

4.1 INTRODUCTION TO LANDSCAPE THEME

- 4.1.1 The historic landscape character of Tunbridge Wells Borough has played an essential role in evidencing the way in which humans have interacted with their natural environment. The evolution of the landscape in broader terms has been characterised by successive cycles of reclamation and abandonment of woodland, pasture and arable as population and agricultural pressures have ebbed and flowed over the centuries.
- 4.1.2 The theme has been divided into two sub-themes, which correspond to the National Character Areas (NCAs). These are areas that share similar landscape characteristics, and which follow natural lines in the landscape rather than administrative boundaries. The NCA's that are within Tunbridge Wells Borough are the Low Weald and High Weald, shown on the map opposite.
- 4.1.3 The following section brings together the National Character Area profiles, Landscape Character Assessments and AONB guidance to summarise each landscape theme with regards to the historic environment.



Fig 34 *National Character Areas*

GEOGRAPHICAL THEMES

LANDSCAPE



Low Weald



High Weald

4.2 LOW WEALD

Historic Development

- 4.2.1 Human occupation of the Low Weald dates to prehistoric Mesolithic times when hunter-gatherer communities cleared woodland for temporary camps and inroads into the Low Weald. This increased during the Iron Age and Roman period with the construction of roads linking the area to London and the coast. Livestock were driven to the Wealden forests to feast on acorns and beech masts and numerous north-south roads are still visible today. During the medieval period, the Low Weald was generally characterised by assart fields and woodlands, which explains the dispersed settlement pattern of ancient farmsteads and hamlets.¹ Isolated farmsteads, commonly occupying ancient sites, are the predominant settlement pattern in the Low Weald.²
- 4.2.2 The geology of the Low Weald provided raw materials for brick and tile making which still continues. In addition, the Low Weald woodland provided materials for shipbuilding, charcoal, forest glass and brickmaking industries and centuries of deforestation has left the Low Weald with only remnants of that woodland cover.³
- 4.2.3 Arable farming continues to be a dominant land use in the Borough, and as a result, fields tend to be larger and more regular with fewer hedgerows and trees. This is contrast to the well-wooded pastoral appearance of most of the Low Weald.⁴
- 4.2.4 The light soils supported fruit and hop growing which was on an industrial scale by the 19th century. Oast houses remain characteristic of this landscape, although most have been converted to residential. Hop growing died out commercially in the Low Weald in the late 20th century.

- 4.2.5 The Low Weald also contains notable areas of designed landscapes such as Sissinghurst Castle and Gardens and Mabledon House and Park.

Summary of assets

- 4.2.6 Within the landscape character areas are a variety of heritage assets which relate to the social, economic and cultural activities, covered in greater detail in Chapter 5. Heritage assets include Listed and non-listed buildings, Scheduled Monuments, Conservation Areas, historic parks and gardens, archaeological sites and artefacts, ancient woodland, routeways and historic landscape features.

Current condition

- 4.2.7 The Landscape Character Assessment (2017) identifies 'Frittenden Pastures Low Weald Farmland' and 'Paddock Wood / Five Oak Green Low Weald Farmland' as borough-level character areas. Frittenden Pastures has a flat lowland clay landscape of pasture, larger arable fields, small field ponds as a result of iron ore extraction, and mature remnant hedgerows. Hedgerows along rural roads are generally intact, particularly leading up to Frittenden village. The area has a strong rural landscape character with lack of intrusion by modern development.
- 4.2.8 The 'Paddock Wood / Five Oak Green' area is an important transition between the flat and arable Low Weald and the Fruit Belt to the south. Its character is greatly defined by the Medway valley. It is a mixed farmed landscape with arable fields, fruit orchards and pasture. Hedgerows have been removed in places and replaced with fencing, and pylons can detract from the historic landscape.

Significance

- 4.2.9 Key qualities contributing to the area's significance are the views of the wooded ridge of the High Weald, rural lanes which are indicative of ancient routeways, its dispersed settlement

¹ Natural England, *NCA Profile: 121 Low Weald*, 2013, <https://goo.gl/zP5NH> (accessed August 18, 2017).

² *ibid.*

³ *ibid.*

⁴ *ibid.*



pattern and strong natural character, with ancient woodland and semi-improved grassland. There are several areas of traditional orchards around Paddock Wood.

Vulnerability

- 4.2.10 The majority of the Low Weald is not protected by AONB status.
- 4.2.11 The historic character of the Low Weald is particularly vulnerable to poorly managed development at the urban fringe, especially around Paddock Wood and Five Oak Green.

Existing Guidance

- 4.2.12 **National Character Area profile 121: Low Weald** – the profile includes Statements of Environmental Opportunity. SEO 2 places an emphasis on the conservation and enhancement of the distinctive historical aspects of the Low Weald landscape, including its important

geological features and sites of heritage interest, particularly those associated with the Wealden iron industry. This is to enable access, continued research, interpretation, understanding and enjoyment of the extensive and nationally significant resources.

- 4.2.13 The 2017 revision of Kent's Historic Landscape Characterisation (2000) for Tunbridge Wells Borough provides a GIS dataset recording the historic landscape of the Borough across different time periods, as well as summary reports for every parish in the Borough.

Opportunities

- 4.2.14 The Local Plan should seek to define guidance which addresses concerns regarding the vulnerability of the Low Weald as set out above, and which recognises the opportunities set out in the National Character Area profile.
- 4.2.15 Opportunities for improved visitor management should be considered alongside better access for walking and cycling.



Fig35 Map showing the Low Weald area within Tunbridge Wells Borough

GEOGRAPHICAL THEMES

LANDSCAPE



4.3 HIGH WEALD

Historic Development

- 4.3.1 In pre-historic times, the natural woodland established in warmer post-glacial periods was modified and cleared by hunter-gatherers of the Mesolithic people. Bronze-age barrows indicate active communities in Ashdown Forest and the Roman interest in iron smelting contributed to woodland clearance. Transhumance, the seasonal movement of people and animals between the settlements on the borders of the Weald and its interior, greatly shaped the High Weald character area. A dense network of droveways connected the Downs and the Weald, providing social and economic links to the more habitable fringes where farming was easier. These linear routes, together with the wooded gills, provide a high degree of interconnectivity to ancient woodland habitats across the High Weald and today they are used as public rights of way.¹
- 4.3.2 The High Weald has a rich industrial past which is still evident in its landscape character and built heritage today. The Weald was the main iron-producing region in Britain during the Roman occupation, and was later revived in the Tudor era. The geology of sands and clay were well suited for iron ore and stone and brick to build furnaces. The woodland provided charcoal fuel, and the streams supplied water power for the forges and furnaces. Many ponds were created in the clay to store additional water, and many people were employed in digging ore, cutting wood, charcoal making and transporting raw materials and products. As coal replaced wood as fuel for furnaces during the Industrial Revolution, the iron industry moved north to the coalfields, and agriculture became the most common industry.²
- 4.3.3 Ancient woodland provided the backdrop for a wealth of landscaped historic parks and

gardens.³ The success of the cloth-industry also left its mark on the landscape, including the creation of ponds as a result of extracting marl for fulling cloth.⁴

- 4.3.4 Agriculture has been a dominant land use over the centuries. A feature of this is hop-growing which expanded in the 17th and 18th centuries and the arrival of the railways opened up the London market for hops, fruit and poultry in the 19th century.

Summary of assets

- 4.3.5 Within the landscape character areas are a variety of heritage assets which relate to the social, economic and cultural activities, covered in greater detail in Chapter 5. Heritage assets include Listed and non-listed buildings, Scheduled Monuments, Conservation Areas, historic parks and gardens, archaeological sites and artefacts, ancient woodland, routeways and historic landscape features.

Current condition

- 4.3.6 The High Weald NCA incorporates the Fruit Belt, Wooded Farmland, Forested Plateau, River Valleys and Open Farmland borough-level character areas, outlined in the Landscape Character Assessment (2017). The assessment gives indication of the condition of the sub-areas. There has been a decline of ghyll woodland across the fruit belt, partly due to poor management, as well as signs of intensive farming which has resulted in hedgerow loss. Busy roads create noise and traffic and harm the historic environment.
- 4.3.7 There has been a loss of enclosure within the Horsmonden fruit belt area.
- 4.3.8 Although modern intrusions in the landscape are limited, there have been some newer developments that are not in keeping with local vernacular.

1 Natural England, *NCA Profile: 122 High Weald*, 2013, <https://goo.gl/k38k31> (accessed August 18, 2017).

2 J. Hodgkinson, *Iron - A Once Great Wealden Industry*, [website], 2002, <http://www.wealdeniron.org.uk/hist.htm>, (accessed 18 August 2017).

3 Natural England, *NCA Profile: 122 High Weald*, 2013, <https://goo.gl/k38k31> (accessed August 18, 2017).

4 High Weald Forum, *Along & Around the High Weald Landscape Trail*, 1999, <https://goo.gl/ujujda>.

Significance

- 4.3.9 **Sense of place/inspiration:** A harmonious mosaic of small mixed farms and woodland make up the High Weald, considered to be a quintessentially English landscape. The beautiful, small-scale landscape shaped has inspired many people such as the architect Norman Shaw, the artist William Hunt, William Robinson, who pioneered the English natural garden style, and writers such as Rudyard Kipling, AA Milne and Siegfried Sassoon.
- 4.3.10 **Sense of history:** As one of the best preserved medieval landscapes in north-west Europe, the High Weald has a strong sense of history, and this is enhanced by numerous churches and chapels, an abundance of traditional buildings and the remains of the former iron industry. The

High Weald is extraordinarily well documented through old maps but these, and the great extent of undisturbed ancient woodland which has preserved features from many different time periods, still remain relatively unstudied.

- 4.3.11 **Tranquillity:** Buildings, tracks and the remains of industrial activities concealed by the High Weald's extensive woodland cover and overgrown hedgerows make the experience of this landscape today feel relatively tranquil, especially considering its close proximity to London and the busy coastal towns. The east of the area benefits from some of the darkest skies in the Borough, creating a sense of tranquillity and remoteness.
- 4.3.12 Recreation, biodiversity and geodiversity also contribute to the Weald's historic significance.



Fig 36 Map showing the High Weald area within Tunbridge Wells Borough

Vulnerability

- 4.3.13 The majority of the High Weald NCA is also designated as an AONB, but not all. Areas that fall outside of the AONB designation (for example, the Sissinghurst landscape character area, are more vulnerable to change.
- 4.3.14 Continuing high demand for housing in south-east England and rural areas in particular resulting in strong pressure for development on the edge of or adjacent to the High Weald AONB boundary and pressure to bring forward land for housing in and around larger villages threatening the dispersed settlement character of the landscape and could possibly affect the sustainable development of smaller settlements.
- 4.3.15 Damage to historic buildings, historic routeways, boundaries and archaeological monuments through lack of awareness, plough damage, poor maintenance or management.
- 4.3.16 Archaeological remains may be discovered, particularly in woodlands and care should be taken not to damage or disturb buried heritage assets.
- 4.3.17 Plough and cultivation damage in a predominantly pastoral landscape, may be less of an issue than poaching and animal damage. Woodland archaeology is susceptible to damage from forestry operations or wind-thrown trees in unmanaged woods.
- 4.3.18 Good management practices need to be maintained to ensure that historic parks and gardens continue to be key representative features of the High Weald landscape.
- 4.3.19 Emphasis should be placed on the need to protect and interpret the wealth of heritage present.
- 4.3.20 Until the 1950s the Weald was one of the slowest-changing regions in Britain. For 700 years prior to this time agriculture, the field

shapes and sizes and the pattern of surrounding woodland and hedgerows hardly changed. Since then farming and forestry, always difficult on the poor soils, have been pushed further to the economic margins by soaring land values with significant areas of land now devoid of productive agriculture. The majority of farmsteads are now residential hamlets and the decline in grazing animals and the industry associated with them is a major threat to the long-term management of species-rich grassland and heathland. Commercial coppicing has declined drastically although the Weald's woodmanship has been kept alive and may enjoy a period of revival with the increasing demand for wood fuel and renewable timber supplies.

- 4.3.21 An increase in road traffic on the characteristically small roads, winding lanes and historic routeways has been an issue, leading to conflicts between motorised traffic, pedestrians, horse-riders and cyclists and insensitive highway 'improvements'.
- 4.3.22 Development around built-up areas throughout south-east England has impacted on rural character. New land uses such as pony paddocks and associated domestic features such as tennis courts, street lighting and golf courses have impacted on character.

Existing Guidance

- 4.3.23 National Character Area profile 122: High Weald – the profile includes Statements of Environmental Opportunity. SEO 4 places an emphasis on maintaining and enhancing the dispersed settlement pattern, parkland and historic pattern and features of the routes of the High Weald. It encourages the use of locally characteristic materials and practices to ensure future development retains its distinctiveness and reaffirm sense of place. The emphasis is on:

- Appropriate approach to repair, restoration and conversion;
- Local vernacular and AONB design guidance;
- Traditional land management;



Fig37 View towards the High Weald from Goudhurst

- Public access;
- Community involvement and economic partnerships;
- Traditional approach including literary and artistic;
- Information including historic mapping;
- Core component of natural beauty; and
- Ecology.

4.3.24 The majority of the High Weald NCA is incorporated within the High Weald AONB area, although not all. The High Weald AONB Management Plan sets out guidance.

4.3.25 The 2017 revision of Kent's Historic Landscape Characterisation (2000) for Tunbridge Wells

Borough provides a GIS dataset recording the historic landscape of the Borough across different time periods, as well as summary reports for every parish in the Borough.

Opportunities

4.3.26 The Local Plan should seek to define guidance which addresses concerns regarding the vulnerability of the High Weald as set out above.

4.3.27 The National Character Area profile lists opportunities for conserving and enhancing the historic character of the High Weald as set out above.

4.3.28 Opportunities for improved visitor management should be considered alongside better access for walking and cycling.

GEOGRAPHICAL THEMES

SETTLEMENTS

4.4 INTRODUCTION TO SETTLEMENTS

4.4.1 Most heritage assets in the Borough are found in existing settlements, many of which date to the medieval period. The geography of the Borough has significantly influenced settlement location; the wooded areas of the High Weald resulted in the seasonal movement of livestock and over time, the creation of dispersed settlement forms. Their location was often influenced by old ironways and drove roads, as well as the River Teise and Medway which were important transport corridors. Settlements on the edge of the Weald were possibly much earlier in origin than those deeper into the Weald. Dispersed settlements were also a consequence of peculiarities in Anglo-Saxon inheritance traditions e.g. the gavelkind system.

4.4.2 Social, economic and cultural activities, for example the arrival of the railways and the growth of the iron industry, has spurred development of many of the Borough's towns and villages. In Cranbrook, the cloth industry led greatly to its prosperity and influenced the type of development there. The role of religion has also been important in the formation of ancient settlements, the parish church often being the centre of the historic village. In turn, settlements have had a bearing on the historic landscape, and have influenced the positioning of transport routes and certain industries.

4.4.3 The settlement theme has been divided into four sub-themes, which correspond broadly to types of settlement that have most significantly shaped the historic environment today. These are:

- Ancient settlements;
- Medieval settlements;
- Homes of the Gentry; and
- Royal Tunbridge Wells - a spa town.

4.4.4 The following section draws together historical research from secondary sources with information collated from Conservation Area Appraisals, the Historic Environment Record, Kent Historic Towns survey and the AONB management plan.

Fig 38 Lamberhurst





GEOGRAPHICAL THEMES

SETTLEMENTS

4.4 INTRODUCTION TO SETTLEMENTS

Conservation Area Appraisals (CAAs)

- 4.4.5 Appraisals of Conservation Areas are undertaken to ensure a positive management of change to the historic environment which is sustainable and which protects the special character and local distinctiveness of the Borough's conservation areas. This graph shows when the last appraisal was undertaken for each conservation area in the Borough.
- 4.4.6 The graph shows that the most recent CAA was completed five years ago. Most CAAs are at least 10 years old. The out-of-date appraisals increase the vulnerability for settlement around and development within the Conservation Areas.
- 4.4.7 No conservation area appraisals have been produced for six of the areas - Bidborough, Brenchley, Frittenden, Horsmonden, Matfield Green and Sandhurst. The lack of management plans, as well as Article 4s and changing Permitted Development rights make the Conservation Areas more vulnerable to change.

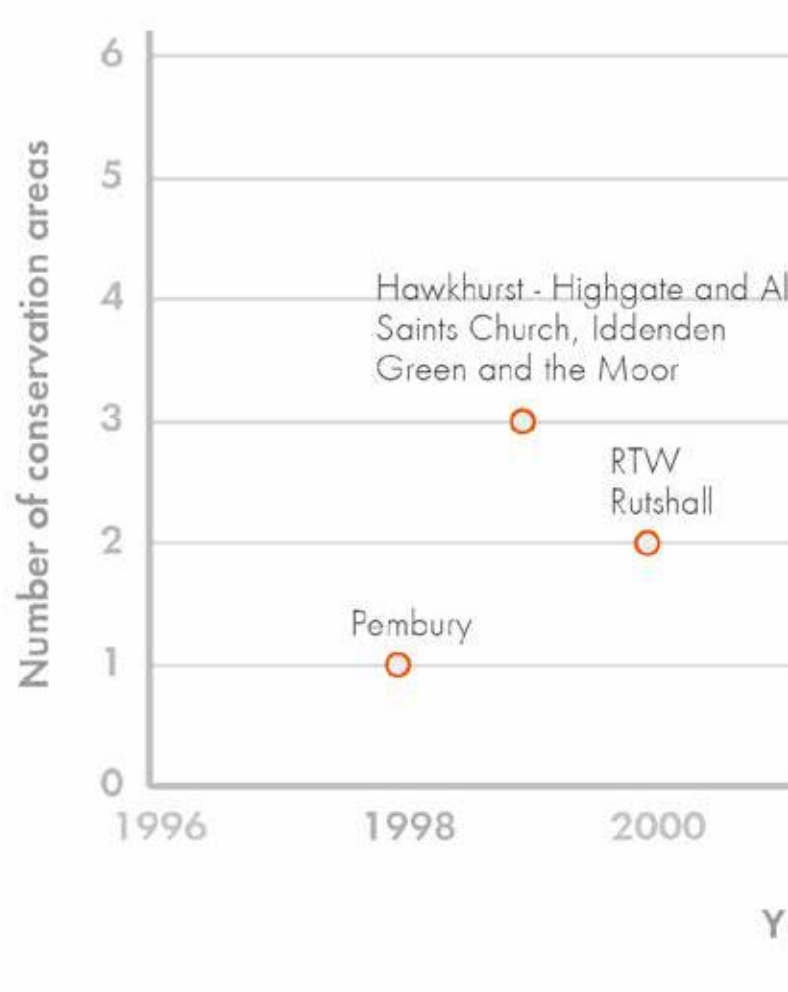




Fig 39 Graph showing year of latest Conservation Area Appraisal for Conservation Areas

GEOGRAPHICAL THEMES

SETTLEMENTS

 Ancient settlements

 Medieval settlements

 Homes of the Gentlemen

 Royal Tunbridge Wells - a spa town

4.5 ANCIENT SETTLEMENTS

Historic Development

4.5.1 Tunbridge Wells Borough has prehistoric origins dating to the Paleolithic period, evidenced by the discovery of several handaxes in the Borough. Compelling evidence of temporary settlement during the Mesolithic period is discovered south-west of Tunbridge Wells at natural rock-shelters, used by hunter-gatherers as seasonal shelters when away from their home camps on the Lower Greensand¹ Flint implements, a Neolithic arrowhead and mid-Neolithic pottery at High Rocks are indicative of hunting activity at this time. It was during the Neolithic period that woodlands began to be cleared and farmsteads were commonly established in cleared areas of woodland. This trend peaked and retreated, perhaps due to soil exhaustion².

4.5.2 The Neolithic period was one of the most important in human history with major and sophisticated developments in technology and society. The first farmers settled in Kent around 4000 BC, many as migrants from mainland Europe. They cleared woodland for fields and pasture, cultivated crops and crafted pottery. Woodland clearance greatly extended during the Bronze Age, farming became more widespread and settlement evidence becomes more common.³ During the Iron Age, the bulk of the population worked the land, but small-scale industries developed that took advantage of the iron-rich deposits of the Weald. The iron industry peaked during Roman occupation and again in Tudor times. The High Weald was one of the main concentrations of metal working in Romano-Britain. Cleere and Crossley (2011) identified 76 iron-working sites of the Roman period, of which 68 fall within the High Weald AONB.

4.5.3 The arrival and settling of Saxons in the Weald after AD 450 led to the division of land into large commons attached to large agricultural estates and used for seasonal grazing. These were divided into dens or swine pastures attached to the manors. Over time, temporary settlements in the dens became permanent farmsteads.⁴

Summary of assets

4.5.4 Early archaeological artefacts and features:

- **Palaeolithic** - several Palaeolithic handaxes have been found in the Borough.
- **Mesolithic (10,000 BC - 4,000BC) and Neolithic (4,000 BC - 2,100 BC)** – remains are often found together, indicating no immediate change in type of settlement between the two periods. A Neolithic arrowhead, pottery and evidence of temporary rock shelters around Royal Tunbridge Wells are significant finds.
- **Bronze Age (2,100BC - 600BC)** – archaeological remains from the Bronze Age are found all over the Borough and include eight well-preserved bronze palstaves discovered at Goudhurst.
- **Iron Age (600BC - AD43)** – activity and evidence of settlement survives in the form of prominent enclosures, or hillforts. The Wealden hillforts may have been linked to the iron industry, or were associated with defence, livestock farming, trade, and the exploitation of woodlands.
- **Roman (43 – 410 AD)** – examples include evidence of Roman farmsteads at Horsmonden and Cranbrook. There is also evidence of a Roman road that ran north via Cranbrook and Frittenden, enabling iron transportation southwards to the ports and north to Rochester. Another road spurred eastwards, linking Canterbury and Lyme with the Weald.

1 R. Harris, *Settlement: Summary of historic development in the High Weald*, 2011, <https://goo.gl/HpLuYr> (accessed August 18, 2017).

2 *ibid*.

3 Kent County Council, *Simple Timeline* [online] Available at: <http://webapps.kent.gov.uk/KCC.ExploringKentsPast.Web.Sites.Public/SingleResult.aspx?uid=TKE1048>

4 Bannister, N., *Historic Landscape Characterisation: Summary of the parish of Southborough*, 2017, http://www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/157906/5C46044EB8E97188E0531401A8COAA14-TWB_HLC_Southborough_parish_Summary.pdf

- **Early Medieval (410-1066)** - the Borough was home to a number of pre-medieval settlements and this period is likely to have had a significant impact on the local landscape.

Current condition

- 4.5.5 Further information is required on the condition of field monuments and other archaeological remains, particularly for non-designated heritage assets.

Significance

- 4.5.6 The prehistoric age of archaeological features mean that they are of high evidential value; physical remains of past human activity are the primary source of evidence about the substance and evolution of places, and of the people and cultures that made them. In the absence of written records, archaeological deposits provide the only source of evidence about ancient settlements.
- 4.5.7 The ancient routes have historical value as they give a sense of past aspects of life and are an important reminder of the different ways in which people for centuries have travelled through the landscape.

Vulnerability

- 4.5.8 Archaeological remains in settlements are perhaps most vulnerable to redevelopment. Any development proposal in areas likely to contain archaeology needs to contain an assessment of the likely impact of the proposal. This impact needs to be avoided if possible or mitigated through recording where this is not possible.
- 4.5.9 Ancient settlements are vulnerable to the threat of through traffic, which creates noise, pollution and (for heavy vehicles) vibration. This could result in an increased risk of accidental physical damage. Heavy traffic may also inhibit the ability of pedestrians to appreciate or enjoy old buildings. In extreme cases, it will blight the use (or re-use) of properties fronting busy roads.

- 4.5.10 Ancient settlements are particularly vulnerable to neglect through ignorance e.g. lack of knowledge about the existence or significance of sites.

- 4.5.11 The theme-related heritage assets are especially vulnerable to climate change, for example flooding and pollution.

- 4.5.12 The prehistoric rock shelters and hillfort at High Rocks Camp near Royal Tunbridge Wells is on Historic England's Heritage at Risk register and is particularly vulnerable to arable ploughing.

Existing guidance

- 4.5.13 Between 1998 and 2004 Kent County Council undertook a survey of 46 small towns, including Tunbridge Wells, Goudhurst and Cranbrook, as part of English Heritage's Extensive Urban Survey. In each of the three towns, the team identified the need for further research on structures, artefacts and possibly large scale excavation of adjacent properties. Elsewhere, little research has been undertaken on the origins of other settlements in the Borough.
- 4.5.14 The 2017 revision of Kent's Historic Landscape Characterisation (2000) for Tunbridge Wells Borough provides a GIS dataset recording the historic landscape of the Borough across different time periods, as well as summary reports for every parish in the Borough.
- 4.5.15 The Historic Environment Record (HER) provides a database of heritage assets in the Borough.

Opportunities

- 4.5.16 Seek opportunities to extend the knowledge base, including academic research. This could be through collaboration with stakeholder groups and the public.
- 4.5.17 There is an opportunity to map all known early settlements and document their attributes to better understand their heritage significance.
- 4.5.18 Investigate the potential for revealing or interpreting evidence of early habitation.

GEOGRAPHICAL THEMES

SETTLEMENTS

 Ancient settlements

 Medieval settlements

 Homes of the Gentlemen

 Royal Tunbridge Wells - a spa town

4.6 MEDIEVAL SETTLEMENTS

Historic Development

4.6.1 Transhumance played an important role in shaping medieval settlement in Tunbridge Wells - the seasonal movement of livestock from one location to another along drove ways from the North Downs to the Weald. It was the combination of transhumance and the medieval gavelkind system, which meant a man's property was divided equally amongst his sons, that led to a much more dispersed settlement pattern of small hamlets and isolated farms, unique to Kent and particularly characteristic of the Weald.¹

4.6.2 The Weald has a high density of isolated farmsteads dating to medieval origin, the most common type having a 'loose courtyard' where detached buildings are grouped on one or more sides of a yard, sometimes with the farmhouse also facing into the yard. Figure 41 shows medieval farmsteads in the Borough by plan type.² Clusters of farmsteads are unusual, and so hamlets describe a range of small settlements that typically comprise a group of houses, sometimes, but not always, associated with a farm.³ Some hamlets may have evolved from the splitting of an original farm holding through gavelkind. Dispersed farmsteads and hamlets were often connected with their neighbours by roads and shared common land. Bakehouses, pinfolds and ponds were communal features.

4.6.3 Most of Kent's larger towns and villages in the Middle Ages were found in the east of the county while the west had more scattered settlement. However, rural industries such as the wool trade, led to the growth of places like Cranbrook and Goudhurst. Alongside industry, large numbers of water mills, bridges and roads spurred the development of hamlets and villages. Churches were paramount to medieval life (see section 5.10 below).

4.6.4 Some medieval settlements have survived to become modern day hamlets and villages, however some settlements no longer survive, and it is archaeological evidence which is vital for understanding aspects of medieval society. The timber-framed vernacular buildings from the medieval period are perhaps the most distinctive type of Kentish building but are often concealed by later alterations.

Summary of assets

- **Archaeological features** – shows evidence of medieval fabric and construction and also evidence the origins and development of settlements.
- **Medieval farmsteads** - there is a high density of isolated farmsteads in the Weald of medieval origin. The 'farmsteads' theme gives more detailed information in Section 5.1.
- **Medieval settlement patterns** - street and plot pattern characteristic of medieval tenure.
- **Vernacular buildings** – large number of surviving timber-framed buildings, in particular open halls, aisled halls and Wealden hall houses – arguably the most important medieval inheritance.
- **Castles and manors** – these are more rare and includes Scotney Castle.
- **Medieval routes and tracks** - early roads and paths are still traceable in many places, even where the buildings are more recent (see 'Ancient Routes' sub-theme in section 5.7).

Current condition

4.6.5 Most medieval settlements in the Borough have Conservation Area status, recognising the survival of many early buildings. Many are also within the High Weald AONB, and the management plan outlines guidance to protect their character and limit encroachment and growth of these settlements.

¹ J. Weekes, *The Medieval Period, South East Research Framework: Resource Assessment and Research Agenda for the Medieval Period*, 2012, <https://goo.gl/Zgt5mE> (accessed August 18, 2017).

² Source of map: *Section III Atlas of Maps from HLC* (2017)

³ R. Harris, *Settlement: Summary of historic development in the High Weald*, 2011, <https://goo.gl/HpLuYr> (accessed December, 2017).



Fig 40 *Medieval assets in the Borough*

Significance

- 4.6.6 Archaeological features offer evidential value: the potential of a place to yield evidence of past human activity.
- 4.6.7 Medieval settlements in the Borough are of high aesthetic value, providing visual delight and intellectual stimulation. The continuity of habitation through to the present may give the towns, villages and hamlets strong historic value.
- 4.6.8 The oldest settlements in the Borough have high communal significance, representing collective experience or shared memories.

Vulnerability

- 4.6.9 Medieval settlements are perhaps most vulnerable to unsympathetic development that can reduce the significance of heritage assets and the quality of heritage asset groups e.g. conservation areas.
- 4.6.10 Medieval settlements are vulnerable to the threat of through traffic, which creates noise, pollution and (for heavy vehicles) vibration. This could result in an increased risk of accidental physical damage.
- 4.6.11 Heavy traffic may also inhibit the ability of pedestrians to appreciate or enjoy old buildings. In extreme cases, it will blight the use (or re-use) of properties fronting busy roads.
- 4.6.12 Most medieval settlements lie within conservation areas. Not all conservation areas have a Conservation Area Appraisal or Management Plan and many which do are out-of-date. In addition to this, the absence of strong development management policy and lack of development briefs heighten the vulnerability of medieval heritage assets.

Existing guidance

- 4.6.13 Conservation Area Appraisals provide guidance to protect the medieval character of the historic core of many of these settlements. Appraisals give guidance regarding how to manage change positively.

Opportunities

- 4.6.14 While dispersed settlements are particularly difficult to investigate archaeologically, a scheme of interdisciplinary village based projects, including field walking, might begin to characterise the medieval rural landscape around current villages more clearly.⁴
- 4.6.15 Historic Landscape Characterisation studies of parishes within Tunbridge Wells Borough (2000) identify opportunities for further research. A priority is to better understand the processes of enclosure in the Weald of Kent, especially medieval settlement and expansion. Specifically, the division of land with their farmsteads into yokes, yardlands, sulungs, virgates etc., and interpreting medieval manorial surveys. The latest revision of the HLC (2017) addresses this to some extent.
- 4.6.16 An opportunity exists to extend the knowledge base, including academic research.
- 4.6.17 In conjunction with the Kent Historic Environment Record, identify gaps in knowledge and areas for further investigation (including studies of key buildings).
- 4.6.18 There is scope for investment in infrastructure to support rural services and community life.

4 J. Weekes, *The Medieval Period, South East Research Framework: Resource Assessment and Research Agenda for the Medieval Period*, 2012, <https://goo.gl/Zgt5mE> (accessed August 18, 2017).

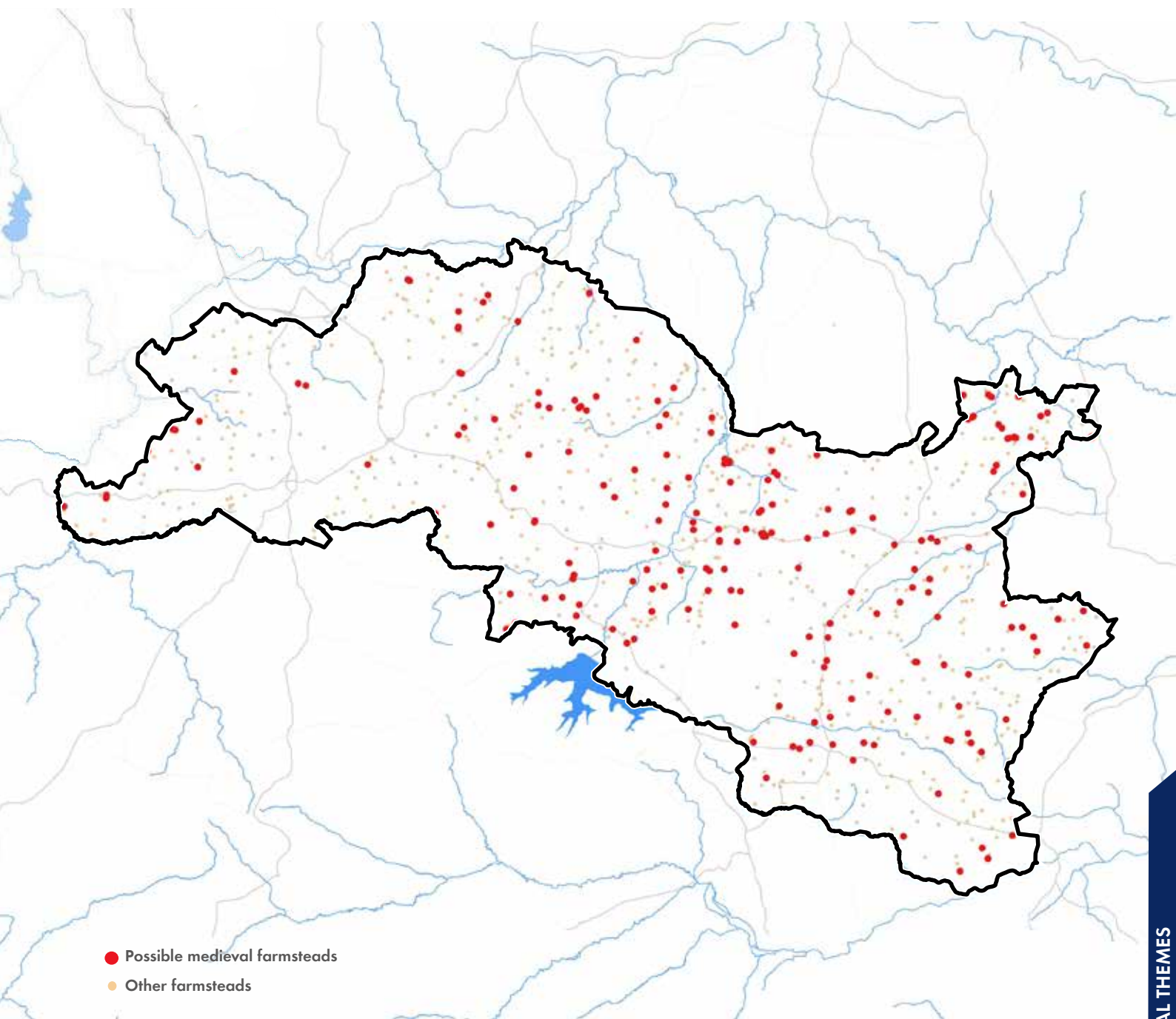


Fig41 Possible medieval farmsteads in the Borough - buildings and listed buildings of medieval date that are within 50 metres of a farmsread have been extracted from the farmsteads record. Please note there will be some medieval farmsteads that have been missed out of this narrower dataset because they do not have surviving buildings, and equally there will be some false positives. See the 'Farmsteads' theme in Section 5.1 for more information (Souce: Kent County Council)

GEOGRAPHICAL THEMES

SETTLEMENTS



Ancient settlements



Medieval settlements



Homes of the Gentry



Royal Tunbridge Wells - a spa town

4.7 HOMES OF THE GENTRY

Historic Development

- 4.7.1 Tunbridge Wells Borough has been the home of wealthy landowners since at least the Early Medieval period. One of the earliest "gentry houses" was the Wealden Hall house, a distinctive vernacular medieval timber-framed hall house occupied by the very early landed gentry who were associated with the cloth trade.
- 4.7.2 After the Norman Conquest, manors were established on cleared land in areas of the Weald, and by the 13th century, the estates controlled vast extents of land. The unique gavelkind system meant that manorial lands are rarer than in other areas. The area's position close to London later attracted gentry and prosperous Londoners, including lawyers and merchants, who moved out of the city to the space and clean air of the country. They purchased land and built there, typical of development in West Kent and the Weald at this time.¹
- 4.7.3 In the 15th and 16th centuries, properties were characterised by buildings and houses with the focus on extant features, for example moats, bastions or garden walls like at Glassenbury Park near Cranbrook. From the 1600s, new architectural features of the country house emerged, drawing on the Renaissance. This can be seen at Matfield House which was built in 1725. In the Regency period and mid 19th century, smaller country houses and suburban villas multiplied.²
- 4.7.4 The two large parks of Bayham Abbey and Scotney reflect the 18th and 19th century reshaping of estate landscapes through the influence of the Picturesque movement. Bayham Abbey, a secluded religious house, and Scotney, a 14th century moated castle are notable examples.³

Summary of assets

- 4.7.5 **Wealden Hall houses** - fine Wealdens can be found in many parishes across the Weald, with many in Beneden parish.
- 4.7.6 **Manors** – fortified manor houses, Wealden timber-framed buildings of 15th, 16th and 17th century, for example Marle Place, Brenchley. Medieval moated manor houses are a particularly distinctive feature of the Borough.
- 4.7.7 **Elizabethan and Jacobean mansions** – for example Somerhill built in 1612 and Goddard's Green near Cranbrook. Sissinghurst originated as a Tudor courtyard house of 1550.
- 4.7.8 **Country houses** – developed after the 16th century, for example Matfield House in 1728, and Finchcocks, an early 18th century Baroque mansion. Bentham Hill House (Decimus Burton 1832-3) is another distinguished example.
- 4.7.9 **Villas** are small Palladian rural houses built during the 18th century, the term later extending to large neoclassical and Italianate houses in urban areas. Decimus Burton's Calverley Park (1828), Tunbridge Wells, is the best example.
- 4.7.10 **Victorian houses**, for example estate buildings at Beneden. The dominant architect for Victorian country houses and estates in the Weald was George Devey.⁴
- 4.7.11 **Parks and Gardens** are an important part of the Borough's heritage. More than 25% of Kent Compendium's list of Historic Parks and Gardens lie wholly or partly within Tunbridge Wells Borough⁵. Some are of national significance, for example the gardens at Scotney Castle and the Repton landscape at Bayham Abbey. Tunbridge

1 J. Newman, *Kent: West and the Weald*, London, Yale University Press, 2012.

2 *ibid.*

3 Borough of Royal Tunbridge Wells, *The Parish of Lamberhurst: Historic Landscape Characterisation, Revision of Kent HLC 2000*, 2017.

4 J. Newman, *Kent: West and the Weald*, London, Yale University Press, 2012, p. 61.

5 Tunbridge Wells Borough, *A Review of the Kent Compendium's list of Historic Parks and Gardens for Tunbridge Wells Borough*, 2010, p. 4.

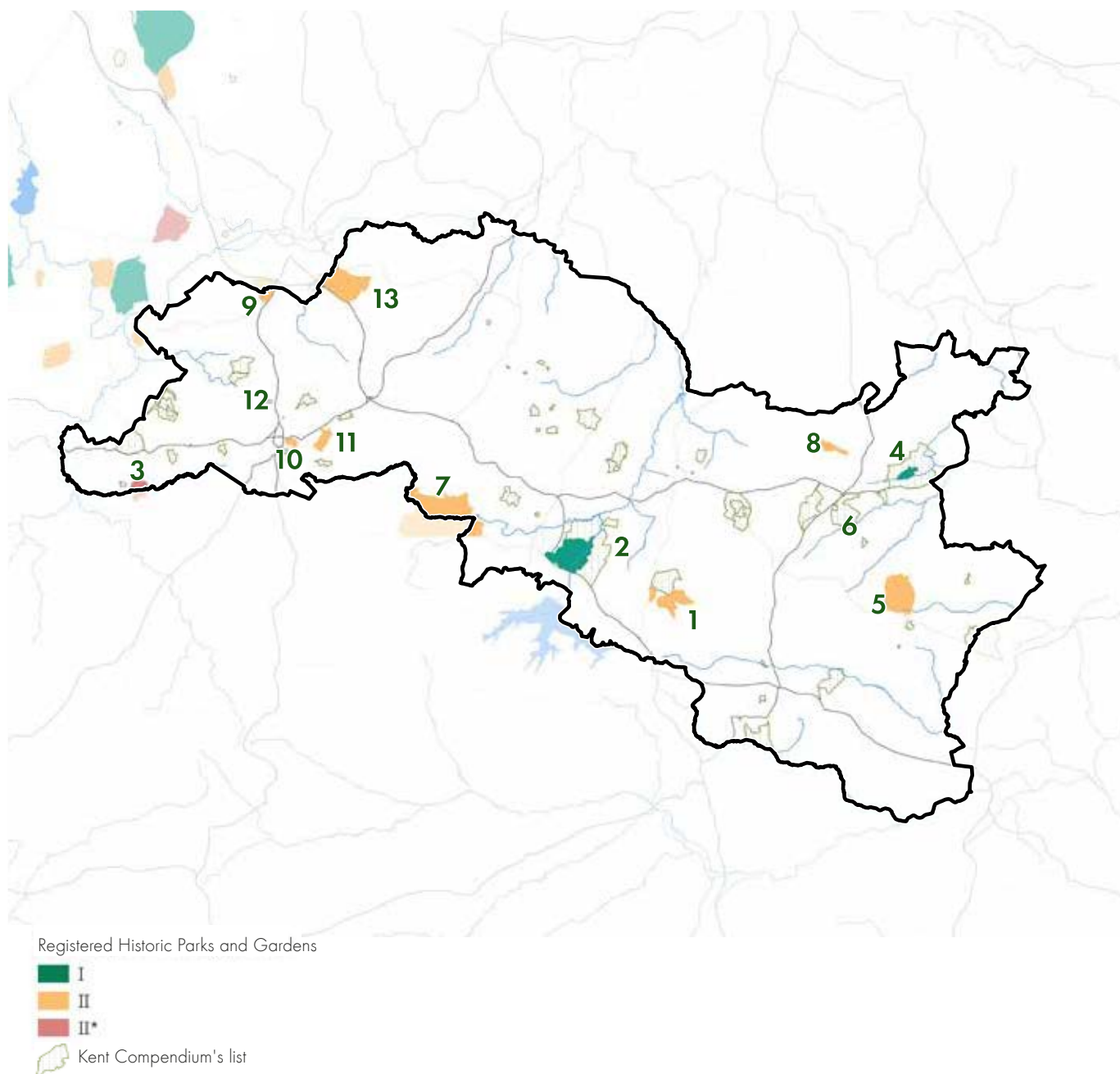


Fig42 Parks and Gardens in the Borough

Wells has 14 Registered Parks and Gardens in total. These are:

- Bayham Abbey;
- Bedgebury National Pinetum;
- Beneden School;
- Calverley Park and Calverley Grounds;
- Dunorlan Park;
- Groombridge Place;
- Hartridge House;
- Mabledon;
- Scotney Castle;
- Sissinghurst Castle;
- Sissinghurst Court;
- Somerhill;
- Swaylands; and
- Woodbury Park Cemetery.

4.7.12 In addition, there are more than 50 non-Registered properties in the Kent Compendium's list of Historic Parks and Gardens.

Notable architects

4.7.13 Notable architects include:

- Decimus Burton;
- Ewan Christian;
- John Oldrid Scott;
- A. W. Blomfield;
- Ernest Newton;
- Norman Shaw;
- Anthony Salvin
- Sir T. G. Jackson; and
- George Devey.

Current condition

4.7.14 Many houses have been extended and remodelled over the centuries, creating complex forms. Possibly some outbuildings may be vacant or underused and therefore at risk.

4.7.15 Most houses are in full occupation and appropriately maintained.

Significance

4.7.16 The architectural and historic significance of the Borough's many country houses and mansions is recognised by listed status and often high grading.

4.7.17 Stately homes and historic parks and gardens as of particular importance to Kent⁶. The south-east has more Registered Parks and Gardens than any other English region, and Kent has almost twice as many as any other county in the region.⁷

4.7.18 The principal assets relating to this theme are significant for their aesthetic value, historical associations and evidential value of changing fashions. The buildings often have a strong relationship with their setting, and some are associated with influential architects or famous persons.

Vulnerability

4.7.19 Many large houses have successfully been split into flats, but too many small units can jeopardise the integrity of the interior or create parking problems. Partitioning estates into small parcels can erode the appreciation of the historic relationship between buildings and landscape.

4.7.20 Encroachment on the original parkland can reduce the integrity of the site, as can changing-land use or planting which can affect the coherence of the original design.

4.7.21 Development can affect the setting of both the landscape and any individual heritage assets.

⁶ Tunbridge Wells Borough, *A Review of the Kent Compendium's list of Historic Parks and Gardens for Tunbridge Wells Borough*, 2010, p. 4.

⁷ *ibid*.

Tourism pressures

- 4.7.22 Overcrowding at peak periods can put a strain on the fabric of old buildings, for example at Sissinghurst and Scotney Castle. Floors, surfaces, textiles, gardens can be eroded or prone to accidental damage.

Existing guidance

- 4.7.23 The Review of the Kent Compendium's list of Historic Parks and Gardens for Tunbridge Wells Borough (2010) is part of the evidence base of historic, designed parks, and open spaces specific to Tunbridge Wells Borough. It also provides information for use in development management decisions. An objective of the Review was to raise the standards for surveying and describing sites whilst encouraging active public participation.⁸

Opportunities

- 4.7.24 There is an opportunity to develop a greater understanding of the operational needs of major houses, including their roles within larger agricultural estates.
- 4.7.25 For houses open to the public, there are opportunities for marketing and information exchange.



⁸ Tunbridge Wells Borough, *A Review of the Kent Compendium's list of Historic Parks and Gardens for Tunbridge Wells Borough*, 2010, p. 4.

Fig 43 Homes of the Gentry around the Borough

GEOGRAPHICAL THEMES

SETTLEMENTS

 Ancient settlements

 Medieval settlements

 Homes of the Gentlemen

 Royal Tunbridge Wells - a spa town

4.8 ROYAL TUNBRIDGE WELLS - A SPA TOWN

Historic Development

4.8.1 Tunbridge Wells town is located in the centre of the Kent Weald geological region between the North and South Downs. Comprised of clays and sandstone, a series of ridges and folds run south-easterly formed by sedimentation about 100 million years ago. Over time these have been gradually eroded, exposing the sandstone rocks to give the town its distinctive natural landmarks.¹

4.8.2 Tunbridge Wells traces its origins to 1606 and the discovery of the chalybeate springs, at the Pantiles area. The healing powers of the spring waters spread, particularly among the gentry, and the town became a popular spa resort, less than a day's travel from London. The town grew northwards rapidly in the 18th and early 19th century as wealthy residents were attracted to the area, some of whom played an important role for building estates around the town.² One of the town's most important new development areas was instigated by local landowner John Ward, who acquired the 1000-acre Calverley Estate and employed Decimus Burton to construct a new town for Tunbridge Wells, the centrepiece being Calverley Park.³ Small cottage industries flourished and the town became especially famous for Tunbridge ware, a form of decoratively inlaid woodwork.

4.8.3 Tunbridge Wells had become a haven of respectability and expanded in the mid 19th century with a number of fashionable genteel estates of stone or stucco villas. The opening of the railway in 1845 saw rapid further expansion and prestigious developments such as Camden Park. Nevill and Hungershall Park



Fig44 1868 Ordnance Survey



Fig45 Historic photos, from top left to right - soldiers and families in 1943, Mount Pleasant avenue (date unknown), The Pantiles (date unknown) and WWII field kitchen at Calverley Grounds.

¹ Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, *Royal Tunbridge Wells and Rusthall Conservation Areas Appraisal*, 2000, <https://goo.gl/NgKW26>, (accessed 18 August 2017).

² D. W. Lloyd, *Historic Towns of South-East England*, London, Victor Gollancz Ltd., 1987.

³ Historic England, *Calverley Park and Calverley Grounds*, [website], 2017, <https://goo.gl/pDHjIG>, (accessed 18 August 2017).

developed at this time, followed by later Victorian developments with a similar theme of substantial homes in parkland settings.⁴ The development of planned estates contrasted with the more organic growth of lodging houses around the Pantiles and the more working class areas.

- 4.8.4 In 1909, the town received its Royal appellation from Edward VII and in the 1930s the town hall and civic development was constructed. The town grew as a series of enclaves –its residential areas were built close to the centre with no major road scheme despoiling its character.⁵ Its built environment today is characterised by domestic-scale and self-effacing architecture which is a consequence of its unique origins as a residential spa town. A consistency of building heights, a strong local palette of materials, and a topography providing variety of views and vistas also distinguish Royal Tunbridge Wells from other towns.⁶

Summary of assets

- 4.8.5 **Historic parks and open spaces**, for example, Calverley Grounds, Dunorlan Park and Tunbridge Wells Common.
- 4.8.6 **Distinctive assets**, for example The Pantiles, one of England's earliest spas, The Village, and early town planning initiatives of Decimus Burton at Calverley Park. The incomplete Camden Park is another example.
- 4.8.7 **Vernacular buildings (pre 19th century)** - Kentish features and materials often include timber frames or local red brick, white painted weatherboarding, plain clay tile-hanging, steep pitched tile roofs. Examples include 7 The Pantiles (1660) and Rock Villa (18th century).

4 D. W. Lloyd, *Historic Towns of South-East England*, London, Victor Gollancz Ltd., 1987.

5 Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, *Royal Tunbridge Wells and Rusthall Conservation Areas Appraisal*, 2000, <https://goo.gl/NgKW26>, (accessed 18 August 2017).

6 Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, *Royal Tunbridge Wells Urban Design Framework: Supplementary Planning Document*, 2015.



Fig 46 Historic map showing Tunbridge Wells and the countryside in 1945 (Source: Tunbridge wells by Tunbridge Wells Civic Association, 1945)

- 4.8.8 **Neo-classical (late 18th century – early 20th century)** - features and materials include Italianate and Grecian features, low pitched slate roofs, stone, Roman cement or stucco wall surfaces. A wider range of brick colours and textures was introduced.
- 4.8.9 **English Revival (late 19th – early 20th)** - Features include red brick, stone dressings, decorative timber, plain clay tile hangings, gables, dormers, turrets, timber barge boards, sash and casement windows referencing local materials through the Arts and Crafts movement. This was often combined with the revival of early Georgian (Queen Anne) style.
- 4.8.10 **Historic suburbs** - for example Mount Ephraim, Camden Park and Pembury Road. A characteristic is the interplay between built forms and green elements, including open spaces, trees and hedges. This was begun by Decimus Burton and continued with later developments.

Current condition

- 4.8.11 The centre of Tunbridge Wells is designated as a conservation area with 11 character areas. The conservation area is on Historic England's Heritage at Risk register.

Significance

- 4.8.12 The town is of high historic and architectural significance because of the quality of its buildings and spaces, combined with its history as a 17th and 18th century spa.

Vulnerability

- 4.8.13 Traffic through the town centre creates noise, pollution and (for heavy vehicles) vibration. There is an increased risk of accidental physical damage.
- 4.8.14 Heavy traffic may also inhibit the ability of pedestrians to appreciate or enjoy old buildings. In extreme cases, it will blight the use (or re-use) of properties fronting busy roads.
- 4.8.15 Inappropriate subdivision of houses or gardens.
- 4.8.16 The town is vulnerable to inappropriate infill development / pressure, particularly as the conservation area is very large and so component parts are more vulnerable. There is currently no management plan either.

Existing guidance

- 4.8.17 The Conservation Area Appraisal for Royal Tunbridge Wells provides guidance for the preservation and enhancement of the town's heritage assets.
- 4.8.18 The Urban Design Framework for Royal Tunbridge Wells Supplementary Planning Document (2015) sets out the attributes of Royal Tunbridge Wells and is intended "to provide

an overall blueprint for all development activity in Tunbridge Wells town centre, based on its distinctive form and character"⁷.

Opportunities

- 4.8.19 The last Conservation Area Appraisal was undertaken in 2000, and so it would be beneficial to review and update this. As part of the review, there is an opportunity to identify eye-sores, outworn areas and opportunities for renewal. Changes should be monitored that have taken place since the last Appraisal and losses identified.
- 4.8.20 Increase an understanding of the hidden or under-appreciated heritage assets, particularly 20th century buildings.
- 4.8.21 There are opportunities for investment and improvements in the town centre, for example environmental improvements in the High Street and around the station.
- 4.8.22 New tourism and marketing opportunities could be explored in collaboration with local stakeholder groups.

⁷ Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, *Royal Tunbridge Wells Urban Design Framework: Supplementary Planning Document*, 2015.



Fig47 Photos of Royal Tunbridge Wells

5

SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES



Agriculture



Industry



War and defence



Transport



Religion

SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES: AGRICULTURE



Farmsteads



Orchards



Hop growing

5.1 FARMSTEADS

Historic Development

- 5.1.1 Traditional farmsteads date from before 1900 and many have medieval origins, whilst some farmstead sites have origins in the Anglo-Saxon period or earlier. They display a strong degree of local variation in their layout, scale and building form, which reflect deep-rooted local tradition and national influences. Between 1900 and 1950, there was little new building due to a long farming depression that had begun in the 1870s. After this period, most new builds comprised Dutch barns, hygienic dairies, milking parlours and architectural showpieces. Wide-span multi-purpose sheds became commonplace, often with associated hardstandings for vehicles and moving stock. The sheds were built on-site or adjacent to older farmsteads.¹
- 5.1.2 Farmsteads have historic links with agricultural processes and industry in the Weald. Kent has long supported a mix of farming, including pasture, cereals and other arables. Sheep rearing was especially important to support wool production, and cattle rearing and fattening has been a principal feature of the Weald from the medieval period. Fruit growing, market gardening and the hop industry peaked in the mid 19th century around stations such as Paddock Wood. Farming historically worked alongside rural industries such as the iron industry, quarrying and the export of woodland produce.²

Settlement patterns

- 5.1.3 Farmsteads sited among small-medium scale and irregular fields are often associated with ancient woodland, with the smallest fields located in parts of High and Low Weald. In the Low Weald today there are larger farms, fields and estates than in the past, changing the appearance of the landscape.

¹ English Heritage et al., *Kent Farmsteads Guidance: Part 1 Farmsteads Assessment Framework*, 2014, <https://goo.gl/xXKGnW> (Accessed 21 August 2017).

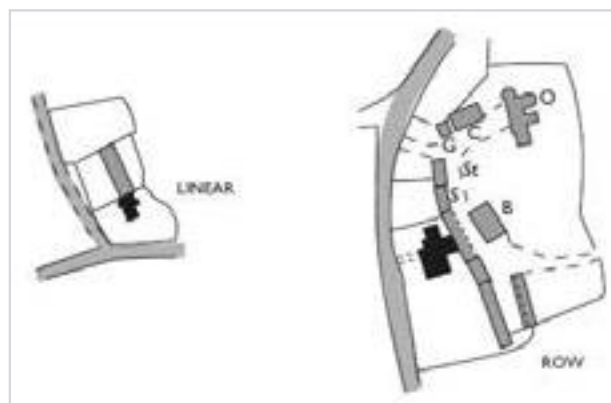
² *ibid.*

- 5.1.4 Farmsteads can be sited amongst irregular patterns of enclosure often with a mix of straight and pre-18th century wavy boundaries, a predominant fieldscape across Kent.
- 5.1.5 Farmsteads are more rarely sited amongst straight-sided enclosures, such as the enclosure of uncultivated land (for example, Heathland).

Summary of assets

- 5.1.6 Farmsteads may be categorised by condition, significance and vulnerability. Assets can be grouped by plan type and building type. The table opposite summarises the assets.
- 5.1.7 Courtyard plan farmsteads are the basic form of farmstead around one or more yard and comprise 72% of recorded sites.³ Dispersed plans are where the buildings and yard are scattered within the outer boundary, a distinctive feature of the Weald. Other farmstead types, where working buildings are laid out in a row or are attached to the farmhouse, are rare in Kent. Diagrams of plan types are shown in Figure 48.

³ English Heritage et al., *Kent Farmsteads Guidance: Part 3 Character Statements*, 2014, <https://goo.gl/dfzU9W> (Accessed 21 August 2017), p. 8.



Other plan types

Concentrated on small plots. Types include linear farmsteads, parallel plans (where working buildings are opposite and parallel to the house and attached working buildings) and row plans (where the working buildings are attached in-line).

5.1.8 Within farmsteads, the following building types are found:

- Barns for threshing and processing the grain crop, including a high proportion of 17th century and earlier examples.
- Buildings for cattle most commonly in the form of open-fronted shelter sheds facing into a yard.
- Granaries commonly sited above stables and/or cart sheds, typically 18th or 19th century date and concentrated in arable vales and chalklands.
- Pigsties most commonly found in dairying areas, notably in parts of the Weald and Thames Basin Heaths.
- Oasts for storing and drying hops. Most are 19th century and concentrated in the Weald.

Plan type

Loose courtyard
Regular courtyard
Dispersed courtyard
Other plan types

Building types

Barns
Cartshed
Cattle housing

Aisled barns

Cow house
Shelter shed

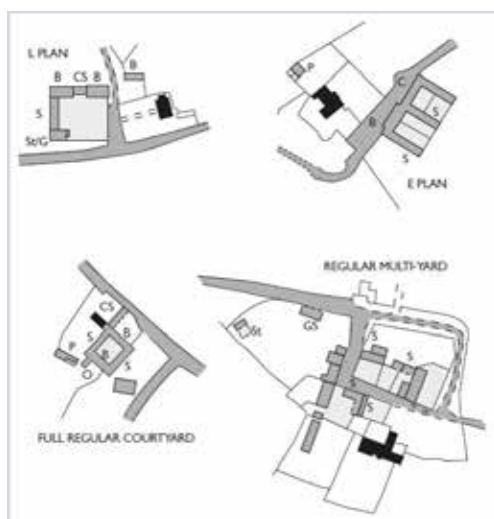
Granary
Pigsty
Stable
Hop industry

Oasts
Hop pickers huts
Tar banks

Outlying barns/companies
Other buildings

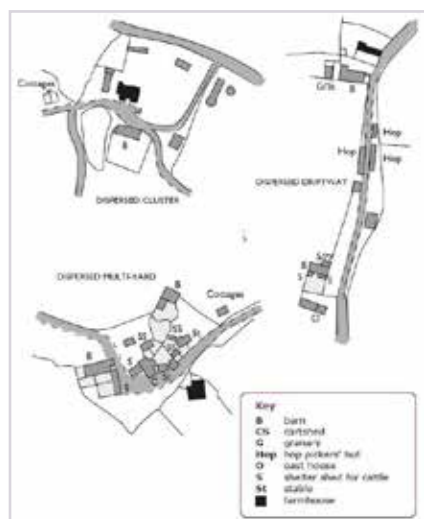
Back kitchens and dairies
Dovecoats

Fig 48 Diagrams of plan types
(Source: Kent Downs AONB farmstead guidance)



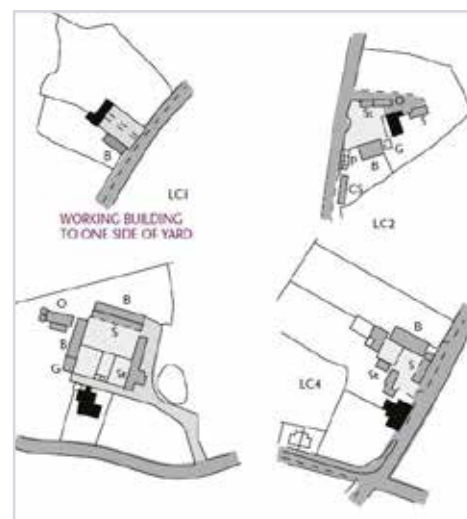
Regular courtyards

Consist of linked ranges formally arranged around one or more yards.



Dispersed plans

A seemingly random arrangement of buildings within a single farmstead boundary, usually irregular in shape.



Loose courtyards

Buildings are loosely arranged around one, two, three, or more rarely four sides of a yard.

Materials

5.1.9 Common features and materials include:

- Stone – ragstone from Lower Greensand outcrops widely used.
- Timber-framing – dominant building technique from medieval period until early 19th century.
- Thatch – wide availability of wheat straw.
- Tiles and slates – replaced thatch in some areas after late 18th century.

Current condition

5.1.10 Outfarms and field barns that are often remote without road access have been subjected to high rates of change. Only 18% have retained some or all of their historic form.⁴

5.1.11 Since the 1970s, many barns have been demolished or converted to other uses, especially residential.

Significance

5.1.12 84% of traditional farmsteads have retained some or all of their historic form and are thus of likely heritage significance.⁵

5.1.13 Barns in Kent are mostly of 17th or 18th century date but there is a high concentration, by national standards, of earlier examples. Many pre-1750 examples remain unidentified and unlisted.

5.1.14 Significant traditional farm buildings or farmsteads will have retained one or both of the following:

- One or more traditional farm buildings.
- Their historic plan form of the farmstead, where the farm buildings, houses and spaces relate to each other.

4 English Heritage et al., *Kent Farmsteads Guidance: Part 1 Farmsteads Assessment Framework*, 2014, <https://goo.gl/xXKGnW> [Accessed 21 August 2017], p. 3.

5 *ibid.*

5.1.15 Many farmstead buildings may make a positive contribution to the landscape but are not heritage assets and will not fulfil the criteria for designation through listing.

5.1.16 Some farmsteads and their buildings have very high levels of significance in a county or national context, such as medieval barns, groups of buildings associated with the hop industry and farmsteads with two or more 18th century or earlier working buildings.

5.1.17 The greater the survival of the historic plan form, buildings and fabric, the greater will be its significance as a traditional farmstead.

Significance by type

5.1.18 The significance of each type of building asset is as follows:

- **Aisled barns** concentrated in the arable vales and the chalk downs, the largest in the corn-growing areas of east Kent and include many high status medieval examples.
- **Cart shed** - Pre-19th century examples – especially with historic grain bins and other features associated with granaries – are rare. Some very rare surviving evidence for granaries in the floored ends of barns in corn-producing areas.
- Free-standing **granaries** are rare in Kent, and are more common in East Anglia and in other corn-growing areas of southern England.
- **Pigsty** - any pre-19th century examples are very rare and significant if part of coherent farmstead groups
- **Stable** - After the barn, the stable is often the oldest building on the farmstead. A few stables dating to before 1700 have been identified in local surveys, while many more date from the 18th and 19th centuries.
- **Hop industry** - farmsteads that retain a range of buildings associated with hop growing and

“Some buildings or farmsteads have the potential for special significance when compared to farmsteads and their landscapes in other parts of England. The absence of statutory designation does not imply lack of special significance in this respect. The protection afforded to historic farm buildings through listing is uneven, because some areas have not been surveyed since the 1970s and there are many buildings of 18th century or earlier date that are unlisted. In theory, all buildings of pre-1700 date which survive in anything like their original condition will be listed and most buildings of about 1700 to 1840 are listed but there are acknowledged concerns about the quality of the Lists in parts of the South East.”

South East Farmsteads Character Statement (2014 p.6)

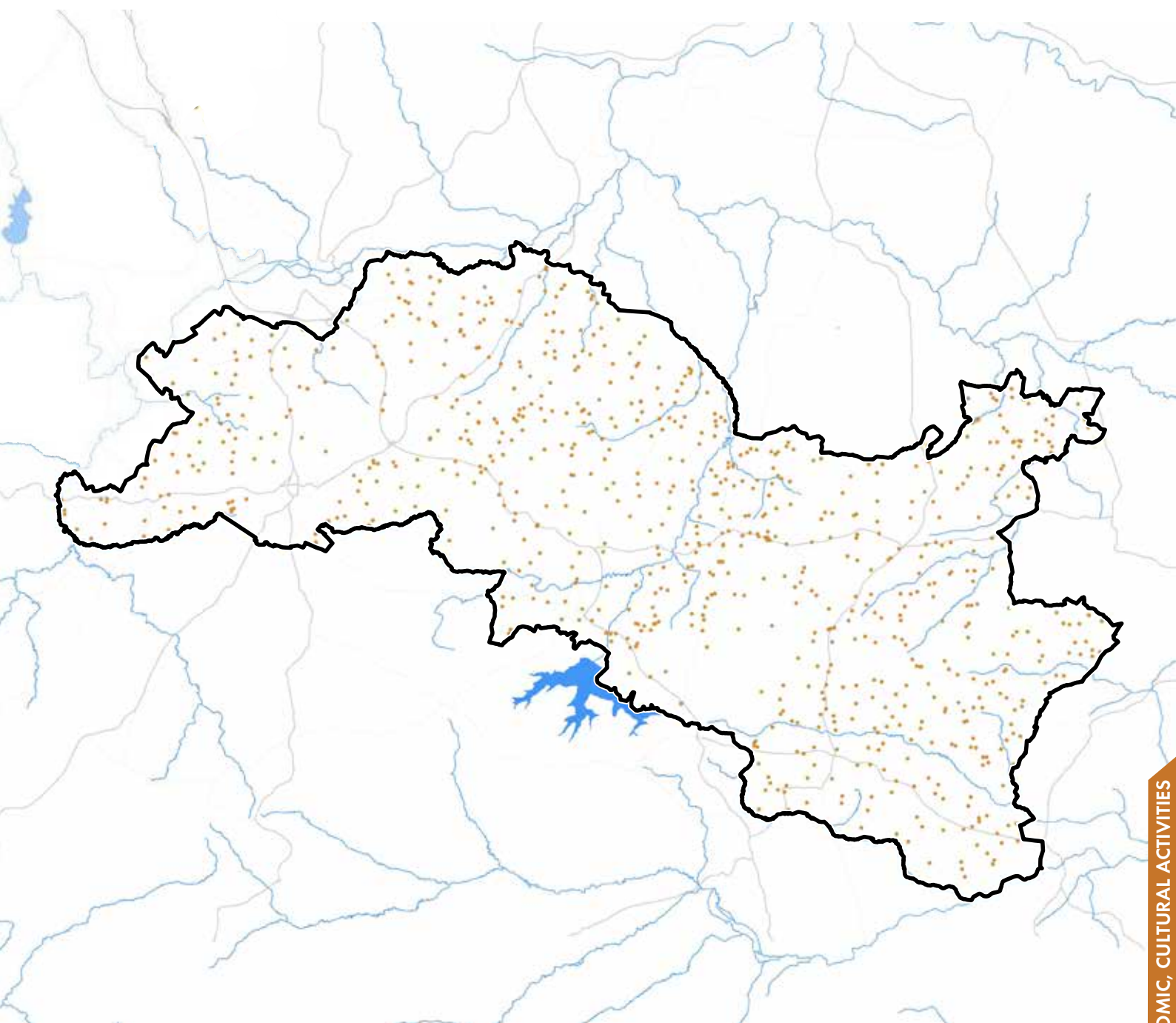


Fig 49 All farmsteads recorded in the Borough (Source: Kent County Council)

drying are highly significant. Early purpose-built oasts, small buildings which included a kiln, hop pickers' huts are rare. Only a small number of unconverted oast houses survive and thus take on a high degree of significance.

Fittings and details

- 5.1.19 Historic floors, doors and windows of pre-19th century and buildings with internal machinery (for example, threshing machines and internal kilns), are of particular significance.

Vulnerability

- 5.1.20 Outfarms and field barns have been subject to very high levels of loss, only 25% retaining any of their historic form.⁶ These have lower likelihood of being listed and many have become redundant and neglected.
- 5.1.21 Farmsteads, their buildings and the landscapes around them present different sensitivities to change, depending on their individual characteristics and the scale and nature of the change predicted for areas or proposed for individual sites.
- 5.1.22 Key factors influencing the vulnerability of farmsteads are:
- Type and density of settlement in the area;
 - Amount of land cover provided by trees, hedgerows and woodland;
 - Provision of vehicular rights of way;
 - How buildings are arranged in relationship to each other and areas of public and private space around them;
 - Scale and layout of individual buildings;
 - Structural condition and the robustness of the fabric;
 - Habitats for wildlife;
 - Increase in domestic curtilage;

- PD conversions;
- Lack of detailed research and identification of assets on the ground; and
- Redundancy (size, condition, use, advances in farming practices).

- 5.1.23 The caselaw R (Egerton) v Taunton Deane Borough Council in 2008 made unlisted farm buildings within the curtilage of a listed building more vulnerable as there is now greater potential to conclude that they are not considered curtilage listed.

Existing guidance - national

- 5.1.24 Residential conversion of agricultural buildings under Class Q of the General Permitted Development Order:
- Government now allows the owners and tenants of agricultural units to change the use of an agricultural building and any land within its curtilage to residential use.
 - The order applies to the works necessary for the creation of up to three dwelling houses, and a cumulative floor area of 450 square metres.
 - Prior approval from the local planning authority is required to ensure that the change of use and any associated works do not create unacceptable impacts.
 - This is not applicable for listed buildings and those that are within AONBs or conservation areas.

Existing guidance - regional

- 5.1.25 The South-east Farmsteads Character Statement (2014) is a comprehensive overview of farmstead buildings and types in the south-east. It focuses on level of survival and significance alongside categorisation. Guidance is established for 15 specific types of farmstead and page 7 sets out five key options and issues to consider. These are:

⁶ Historic England, *South East Farmsteads Character Statement*, 2014, <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/south-east-farmsteads-character-statement/> (accessed 18 August 2017), p. 6.

- Collapse and/or loss through dereliction or demolition and salvage because of redundancy.
- Maintenance through investment and the use of traditional or nontraditional materials.
- Conservation repair - as features in the landscape or as significant historic buildings, with minimal or no alteration.
- Adapt - to new agricultural or non-agricultural uses; and
- New build - to support continued on-farm operations or to provide residential or non-agricultural business accommodation.

5.1.26 Kent Farmsteads Guidance (2014) aims to inform and achieve sustainable development of farmsteads, including their conservation and enhancement.

5.1.27 Guidance will assist in identifying the need and potential change at the earliest stage of considering change for a farmstead or farm building.

5.1.28 This will help to prepare a scheme that complies with national and local planning policy, and save time and resources in the planning process.

Existing guidance - local

5.1.29 The Farmsteads Assessment Guidance for Tunbridge Wells Borough SPD (2016) provides a greater understanding of the character, significance and sensitivity to change of farmstead buildings.

Opportunities

5.1.30 According to Kent Farmsteads Guidance (2014), 74% of recorded farmsteads in the county have heritage potential and 53% have high heritage potential because they have retained more than 50% of their historic form. The Farmsteads Assessment Guidance for TWB SPD (2016) states that farmsteads that have experienced minimal

change or have had some loss but retained more than 50% of their historic plan form since the late 19th century have the greatest potential to be the most locally significant. This comprises 61.8% of farmsteads recorded from historic OS mapping around 1897-8 and therefore there is a higher likelihood of heritage asset identification.

5.1.31 There is an opportunity for Borough-level guidance that provides a greater understanding of the character, significance and sensitivity to change of farmstead buildings with Tunbridge Wells.

5.1.32 Consider the listing and local listing of additional farmstead buildings using the local heritage asset process.

5.1.33 Support farmstead guidance in a new policy.

5.1.34 The separation of agricultural buildings from the land they served may threaten their long-term economic viability. Development in the landscape, particularly when close to urban centres, may dilute the contrast between town and country and harm the setting of heritage assets.

5.1.35 Recording the history of traditional farm buildings and features of interest is encouraged, especially buildings that would be lost where planning permission is granted permitting changes to farm buildings.

5.1.36 Where planning permission is required, a recording condition may be appropriate.

5.1.37 Opportunities exist to promote the heritage of farmsteads within wider rural tourism strategies.

5.1.38 Consider themed farmstead trails between groups of farmsteads.

- 5.1.39 There is an opportunity for training and information exchange for owners regarding repair, adaptation or conversion of historic farm buildings. There could be scope for traditional building skills and building conservation courses similar to those offered by Essex County Council. The Weald & Downland Living Museum also offer courses in historic building conservation.

Essex County Council building conservation courses: <https://www.essex.gov.uk/Activities/Heritage/Pages/Traditional-Building-Courses.aspx>.

The Weald & Downland Living Museum historic building conservation courses: <http://www.wealddown.co.uk/adult-learning/historic-building-conservation/>



Fig 50 Old barn near Sandhurst



SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES: AGRICULTURE



Farmsteads



Orchards



Hop growing

5.2 ORCHARDS

Historic Development

- 5.2.1 Fruit orchards were introduced in the 16th century and by the late 19th century was a dominant land-use across much of the Borough, along with hop-gardens. Orchard plantations were particularly prevalent in the Low Weald and in the High Weald along the 'fruit belt', around areas such as Matfield, Brenchley, Horsmonden, Goudhurst and Cranbrook. There are now dwarf orchards around Paddock Wood in the Low Weald Farmland.¹
- 5.2.2 The High Weald traditionally produced a rich variety of fruits, especially apples, pears, cherries and plums, and a large proportion of remnant orchards are found around Brenchley and Matfield.² The railways opened up the market for fruits in the mid-19th century.³ Most orchards are now intensively managed commercial orchards of fruit trees and have replaced the traditional sheep grazed orchards.⁴

Summary of assets

- 5.2.3 **Traditional fruit orchards** - these are orchards that are managed at a low intensity with no chemical pesticides. Remnant orchards are found to the north of Matfield/Brenchley, and around Horsmonden and Cranbrook.⁵

Current condition

- 5.2.4 Orchards remain a defining characteristic of the Borough. Commercial orchard plantations with rows of apples and pear trees predominate around Matfield and Brenchley, however there are also isolated remnant old orchards. Apples and soft fruits are commonly grown around Horsmonden.⁶

¹ IUC, *Tunbridge Wells Borough Landscape Character Assessment*, 2017.

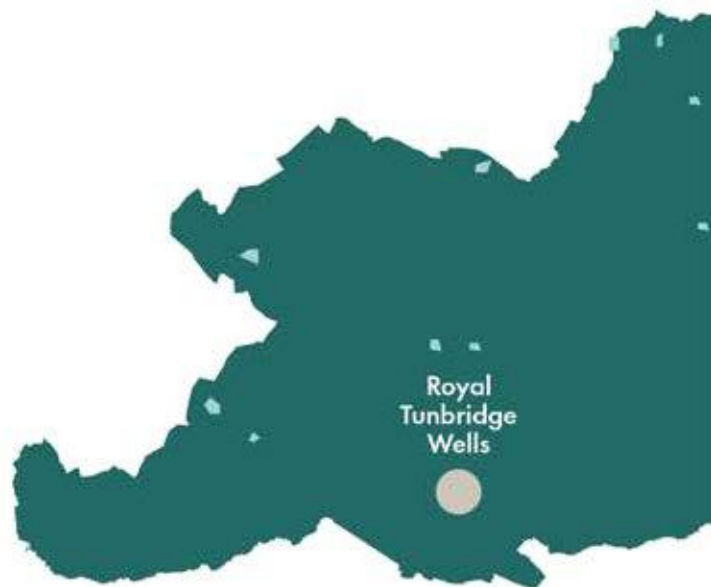
² High Weald AONB Unit, *Orchards in the High Weald Landscape*, date unknown, <https://goo.gl/VoyQmP>, (accessed 18 August 2017).

³ D. Harvey, *Fruit Growing in Kent in the Nineteenth Century*, 1964, <https://goo.gl/vej8Xm> (accessed 18 August 2017), p. 103.

⁴ IUC, *Tunbridge Wells Borough Landscape Character Assessment*, 2017.

⁵ *ibid.*

⁶ *ibid.*



Significance

- 5.2.5 Traditional orchards are of historical value, keeping alive traditional techniques, customs and folklore. They contribute to the identity and character of Kent as the 'Garden of England'.
- 5.2.6 They also have aesthetic value, particularly in the High Weald where the undulating slopes provide visual interest and seasonal variety. The old orchard trees with their gnarled, mossy bark and pink delicate flowers are an attractive feature of the landscape.

Vulnerability

- 5.2.7 The Landscape Character Assessment (2017) notes that increasing field sizes and deterioration of boundary hedgerows are threatening the intimate patchwork of orchards and the traditional small scale approach to farming.
- 5.2.8 There has been a decline of the traditional orchard landscape, particularly around Goudhurst and Cranbrook where there are some derelict orchards with fruit trees



Fig 51 Remnant traditional orchards in Tunbridge Wells
(Source: Traditional Orchard Survey, People's Trust for Endangered Species)

recently removed. The loss of orchards has been documented in the Historic Landscape Characterisation studies of parishes in Tunbridge Wells, in places like Horsmonden, where there is evidence of extensive areas of orchards having been converted to arable land.

- 5.2.9 Traditional orchards are identified as a UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) habitat since 2007. The remaining commercial orchards are often associated with modern field amalgamation type, where older orchards (and their internal boundaries) have been removed.⁷

Existing guidance

- 5.2.10 The Landscape Character Assessment (2017) provides a detailed assessment of the distinctive landscape character of the Borough. It identifies areas where orchards are prevalent and comments on their condition. The report also sets out recommendations for their conservation and enhancement.

Opportunities

- 5.2.11 Encourage the reinstatement and expansion of traditional orchards, particularly apple and pear orchards, seeking opportunities to replant, restore and better manage traditional orchards.
- 5.2.12 Opportunity to promote the orchards and their products as part of a broader tourism strategy that celebrates the identity of Kent as 'the Garden of England'. This could be coupled with promoting the hop industry, both of which thrive in the Borough's 'Fruit Belt'.
- 5.2.13 Encourage community orchard initiatives. They not only help to reinforce the rural heritage features of the landscape but play a wider role for their environmental and social benefits.

⁷ Borough of Royal Tunbridge Wells, *The Parishes of Hawkhurst, Cranbrook, Goudhurst & Beneden: Historic Landscape Characterisation, Revision of Kent HLC 2000*, 2015.



Fig52 Orchard plantation near Horsmonden

SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES:

AGRICULTURE



Farmsteads



Orchards



Hop growing

5.3 HOP GROWING

Historic Development

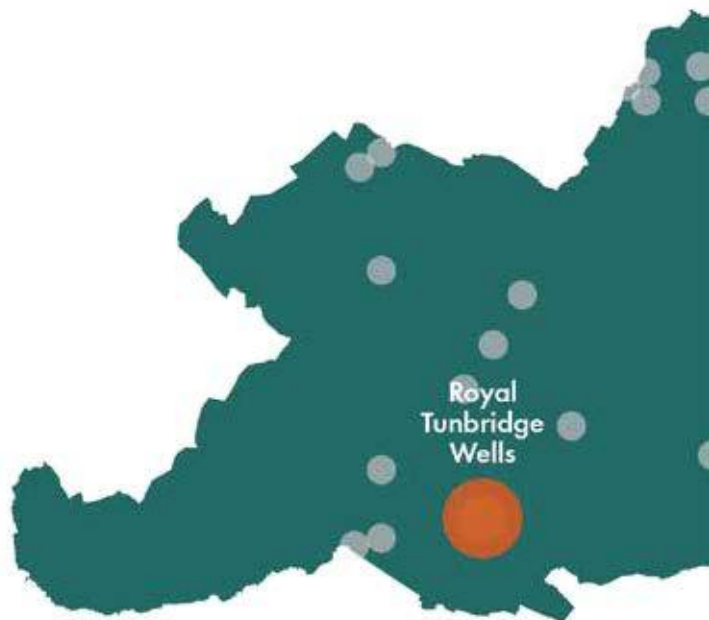
5.3.1 Hops were used in the brewing of beer grown on a commercial scale since at least the 16th century. The arrival of the railway in 19th century expanded hop production, particularly around Paddock Wood, which led to an increase in warehousing for the storage of hops and fruits.¹ Locals from the Wealden villages worked in the hop-fields every summer, as well as working class families from East London who travelled to Kent annually for hop-picking holidays. This tradition peaked in the 1880s. In WWII, there were no shortages in the number of hop pickers as people desired to get away from the war damaged streets of East London.²

5.3.2 The mechanization of hop-picking led to a gradual decline of the industry. This was also spurred by the restrictive licensing on pubs which meant that local breweries could no longer supply to local pubs. By the 1990s, Kent's once thriving industry reduced to just one substantial brewer - Shepherd Neame of Faversham. The decline was compounded by the switch from English ale to continental lager, reducing the demand for English hops.³

5.3.3 More recently, the Borough has seen the conversion of many of its oast houses to residential. However, there is some evidence to suggest that hop farming is seeing a resurgence as a result of the growing craft beer industry, resulting in the replanting of some hop fields in Kent.⁴

Summary of assets

5.3.4 **Oast houses** - used for drying hops and an emblem of Kent. A typical oast house consisted the 'oast', a kiln characterised by a steep pitched



roof which channelled hot air through the hops to the top, and a 'stowage', the bar section with a cooling floor, press and storage area. They vary in date, from 17th century timber-framed oast to 20th century hop processing buildings. Examples include the octagonal kiln oast house in Hawkhurst and Little Scotney Farm oast house near Lamberhurst.

5.3.5 **Hop Pickers Huts** – huts which provided seasonal accommodation for hop pickers, many from London. They were once a typical feature of the agricultural landscape, but are becoming scarcer as they are not often suited to change or alteration to make them livable in the 21st century. An example is the Hop Pickers Huts at Hardlots on Pearsons Green Road, built between 1843 and 1875.

5.3.6 **Breweries and brewhouses** – large commercial breweries, for example the Moor Brewery in Hawkhurst. Brewhouses were outbuildings containing brewing equipment, often associated with public houses and country houses.

¹ AOC Archaeology, *Paddock Wood to Hawkhurst Branch Line, Tunbridge Wells, Kent: Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment*, 2016.

² *Have a Hopping Holiday in the High Weald of Kent and Sussex!* [website] 2014, <https://goo.gl/dQVbYn> (accessed 18 August 2017).

³ Brewery History Society, *The Brewing Industry*, 2010, <https://goo.gl/hnoFpD> (accessed 18 August 2017).

⁴ LUC, *Tunbridge Wells Borough Landscape Character Assessment*, 2017.



- 5.3.7 **Malthouses and malting** were less common in the Borough but can still be found in places like Cranbrook.
- 5.3.8 **Hop fields** were once widespread but now are scarce.
- 5.3.9 **Assets associated with the Paddock Wood to Hawkhurst Branch line** - these include railway workers cottages, good sheds and engine sheds at Cranbrook and Hawkhurst, station platform and buildings, station masterhouse at Hawkhurst, and

KEY

- Oast houses identified from historic mapping
- Paddock Wood to Hawkhurst Branch line
- Villages / towns

Fig 53 Oast houses in Tunbridge Wells (source: Farmsteads Assessment Guidance for TWB, February 2016, p. 37)

tunnels and bridges, for example Swigs Hole Bridge and Badger Oak Tunnel. The railway line was used by hop-pickers to travel down to Kent for their annual hop-picking holiday. Journeys started from London Bridge and New Cross.

Current condition

- 5.3.10 There is a high concentration of oast houses in the Low Weald around Paddock Wood, and clusters are also found along the line of the Teise valley in the High Weald and within the Fruit Belt. There are occasional oasts scattered across the south-eastern part of the Borough, with very few oasts found to the west of Royal Tunbridge Wells.
- 5.3.11 Farmsteads in the Low Weald experienced greater levels of change in the mid to late 19th century, in association with the hop industry, which explains why oast houses in the Low Weald can often be at a larger industrial scale, than those in the High Weald.
- 5.3.12 The stations along the hop-picking line have been fairly well preserved despite the closure of the line, although Hawkhurst and Goudhurst stations have been demolished.

Significance

- 5.3.13 The hop growing industry thrived in the Borough and is has historical significance. The hop picker huts retain evidential and historical value, as well as communal value.
- 5.3.14 The assets relating to the hop-picking line are significant as most of the buildings and infrastructure that supported the line have been demolished and only a few remain. The assets have historical value.

Vulnerability

- 5.3.15 The few remaining oast houses are at risk of redundancy and irreversible conversion to other uses, especially residential, including extensions and domestic alterations.

- 5.3.16 Other hop related buildings such as hop pickers huts are at risk and often lack any statutory protection. In addition to the lack of statutory protection they may have been unrecognised or too fragile or small to be adapted for reuse.

Existing Guidance

- 5.3.17 The Landscape Character Assessment (2017) provides a detailed assessment of the distinctive landscape character of the Borough. It identifies areas where hop growing is prevalent and comments on their condition. The report also sets out recommendations for their conservation and enhancement.
- 5.3.18 The Paddock Wood to Hawkhurst Branch Line Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment (January, 2016) provides a historic assessment to facilitate the promotion of the heritage of the line in relation to hop-picking.
- 5.3.19 The Tunbridge Wells Site Allocation DPD (2015) policy AL/ATR3 promotes the safeguarding of the former railway line. This is also referred to in the Tunbridge Wells Local Development Framework Green Infrastructure Plan (2014): Proposal 7 for redundant railways.

Opportunities

- 5.3.20 Baseline mapping of hop-growing to include remaining oast houses, hop-picker huts, malthouses, brewhouses and hop fields.
- 5.3.21 Within the planning system there is an opportunity for the formal identification of heritage assets associated with the hop industry, with the best designated for further protection at a local level.
- 5.3.22 Encourage the reinstatement of hop farms, seeking opportunities to replant, restore and better manage them.

- 5.3.23 Promote opportunities to document the social history of the hop industry through local events and social media.
- 5.3.24 Opportunity to identify associated heritage assets for local listing.
- 5.3.25 Seek opportunities for further research projects to better understand the social and economic history of hop growing.
- 5.3.26 Opportunity for policies to promote the improvement of residential conversion.
- 5.3.27 There are indications that hop fields are being replanted in response to growing demand from the craft beer industry. This could be promoted and incentivised, for example through 'Grow Beer' community schemes. Deal Hop Farm is a good example of this.⁵
- 5.3.28 The Paddock Wood to Hawkhurst Branch Line Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment (January, 2016) outlines opportunities for heritage conservation, enhancement and engagement. These are summarised below:
- Consider local listing of buildings related to the line, as set out in the assessment;
 - Opportunity to engage with the general public, walkers, railway enthusiasts, former hop pickers and their descendants and ale drinkers;
 - Improved way finding strategy including sign/trail markers, information boards at important structures and establishing a main hub where the route begins;
 - Dialogue with private owners to seek agreements on access to route for walkers and enthusiasts; and
 - Creation of a hop trail / beer trail to improve links between railway line and hop industry.

⁵ Deal Hop Farm, [website], <http://transitiondeal.blogspot.co.uk/p/deal-hop-farm.html> (accessed 18 August 2017).



Fig 54 Oast houses from across the Borough

SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES:

INDUSTRY



Wealden Iron



Cloth-making and wool



Brick and tiles



Quarrying

5.4 WEALDEN IRON

Historic Development

5.4.1 The iron industry developed during the late Roman period in areas of the Weald. The Weald was well suited for the industry as it provided water and wood, as well as iron ore from the Hastings beds (sand) and Wealden clay.¹ The Roman Channel Fleet (Classis Britannica) was in charge of production at an iron-working site on the western edge of Little Farningham Wood.² The site is a Scheduled Monument and is perhaps the best example of an iron-working site operating at this time. In the 14th and 15th centuries, the High Weald area became the centre of heavy industry following the introduction of water power. The invention of the blast furnace in the 16th century led to the construction of leats, dams and hammer ponds, furthering its expansion. The industry flourished in the late 16th century, and the main products at this time were ordnance, cannon and iron shot. Charcoal was used for the production of iron which necessitated the cutting down of coppiced woodland.³

5.4.2 The demand for iron in Elizabethan wars created much wealth for founders, for example John Browne who was master of the furnace at Horsmonden. He employed 200 men and resided at Shirrenden, close to Furnace Pond. Horsmonden's famous iron foundry was making guns for the Dutch Navy and for both sides in the English Civil War. The aptly named old Gun Inn in Horsmonden, a timber-framed early 16th century building, was once the heart of the iron foundry.⁴ At the Manor of Bedgebury, a famous foundry was owned by the Culpeper family, which cast guns for the fleet that fought the Spanish Armada in 1588⁵.

5.4.3 The industry was a main factor influencing growth of settlements, for example Goudhurst and Kilndown. In the 17th century, the traditional iron industry declined due to newer production methods and improved transport allowed areas further afield to compete for London markets.⁶

Summary of assets

5.4.4 **Archaeological features and artefacts** – there is evidence of the early iron industry from pre-Roman, Romano-British, Anglo-Saxon to early medieval periods found in the High Weald. Features include iron bloomery slag, minepits and charcoal hearths, for example at Oakenden Farm in Chiddingstone. Forges used hammers to remove carbon and impurities to produce wrought iron. There were at least 14 forges in the Kentish Weald, many of which had ceased production by mid-17th century. None remain above ground. Examples include the 16th century forge at Hammer Mill Farm at Biddenden and Breecher's Forge on the River Teise. There are 14 furnaces in the Kentish Weald which ceased production by the mid-17th century. A small number of furnaces, including Cowden survived into 18th century but all had closed by 1760s. None remain above ground. Examples: Scarlet Furnace, Cowden excavated, Bough Beech Furnace near Hever.

5.4.5 **Grand houses** formerly owned by wealthy ironworks owners and landlords, for example Shirrenden, close to Furnace Pond near Horsmonden.

5.4.6 Evidence of iron-related activities include **ponds and leats** still remain visible today, including hammer, furnace and forge ponds. Furnace Pond near Horsmonden is an example. **Small craters** indicate the former presence of ore minepits, which were often located in woodland on narrow steep sided gills. Place names such as 'Minepit Wood' are indicative of iron-related activities.

1 J. Hodgkinson, *Iron - A Once Great Wealden Industry*, [website], 2002, <http://www.wealdeniron.org.uk/hist.htm>, (accessed 18 August 2017).

2 A history of Cranbrook and Sissinghurst, [website]. 2015, <https://u3asites.org.uk/cranbrook/page/48779> (accessed 7 December 2017).

3 High Weald Forum, *Along & Around the High Weald Landscape Trail*, 1999, <https://goo.gl/MaA4Un>, (accessed 18 August 2017).

4 D. Gore, *Soldiers, Saints and Scallywags*, 2009, <https://goo.gl/QMuFpj>, (accessed 18 August 2017), p. 99.

5 TWBC, *Goudhurst and Kilndown Conservation Areas Appraisal Sup-*

plementary Planning Document, 2006, p. 8.

6 Sevenoaks District Council, *Edenbridge Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan*, 2012.

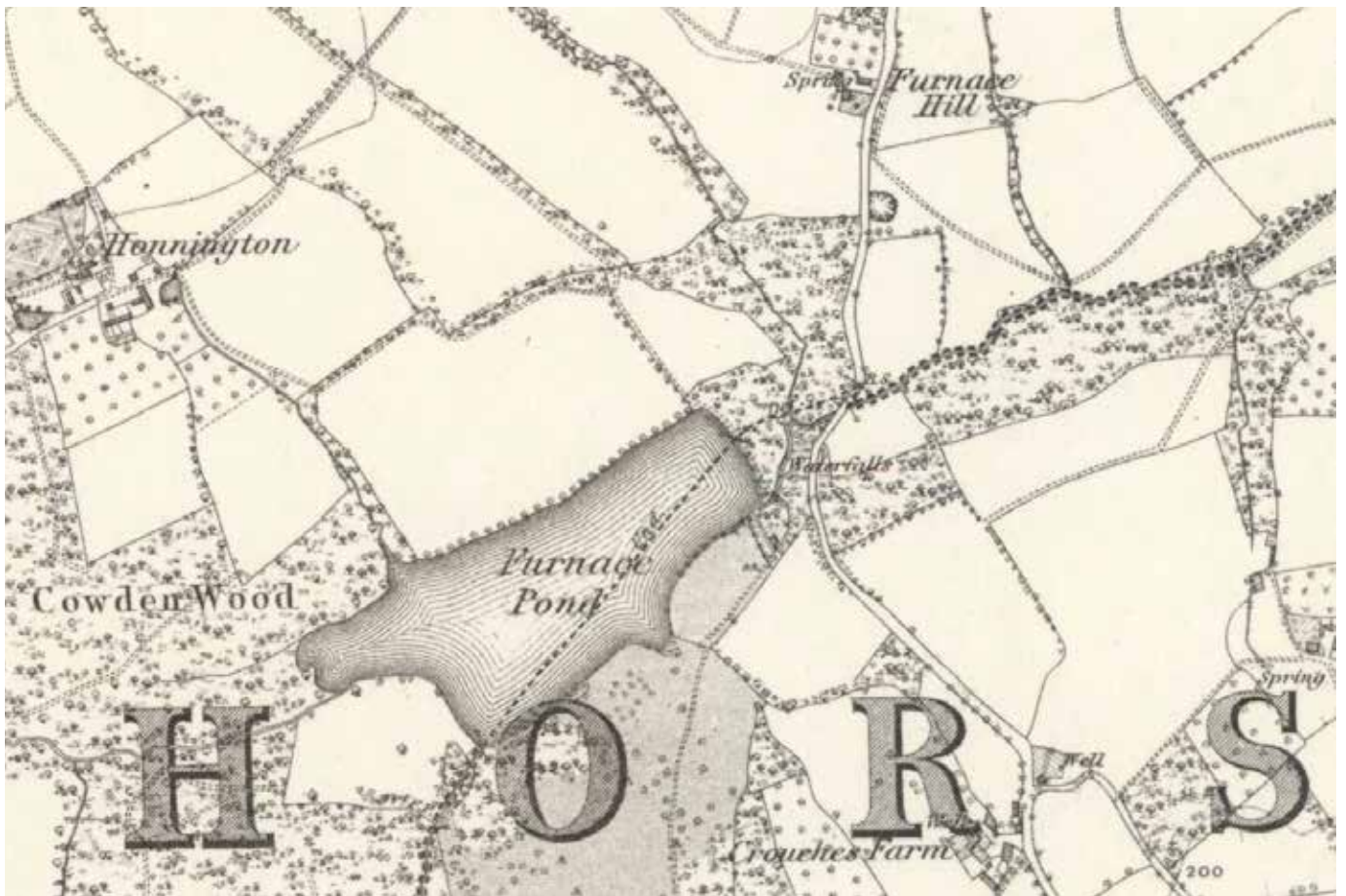


Fig55 Ordnance Survey showing Furnace Pond at Horsmonden in 1868
(Source: National Library of Scotland)

Current condition

- 5.4.7 The condition of landscape heritage assets and archaeological remains are harder to assess than the built environment however by their nature, the surviving elements of the iron industry are likely to have been eroded by vegetation, agriculture and vehicle impact.

Significance

- 5.4.8 The iron industry in the Weald was an important industry, producing a large proportion of the bar iron made in England in the 16th century and most British cannon until about 1770. It was also one of the most important iron-producing regions in Roman Britain, and excavations at a few sites have produced tiles of the Classis Britannica, suggesting that they were actually run by, or were supplying iron to this Roman fleet.
- 5.4.9 The industry employed large numbers of local people and led to the growth of towns and villages. It therefore has high communal and historical significance.

Vulnerability

- 5.4.10 Most sites are non-designated heritage assets with no statutory protection. Information about the industry is incomplete and some sites may be lost before their significance can be recognised or recorded.

Existing guidance

- 5.4.11 Assets associated with the iron industry may be protected by designations but the theme itself is not dealt with explicitly by existing guidance.

Opportunities

- 5.4.12 Baseline mapping of the iron industry to include archaeological features, grand houses and other evidence of iron-related activities e.g. ponds and craters.
- 5.4.13 Within the planning system there is an opportunity for the formal identification of heritage assets associated with the iron industry, with the best designated for further protection at a local level.
- 5.4.14 Opportunities for collaboration between groups could be sought to strengthen the evidence base of the iron industry and other past rural industries, for example the cloth industry. This could include working together to identify related heritage assets or to improve the documentation and increase awareness of their social and economic history. There is scope for schools and volunteers to assist with research and recording.



Fig56 *Furnace Pond at Horsmonden*

SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES: INDUSTRY



Wealden Iron



Cloth-making and wool



Brick and tiles



Quarrying

5.5 CLOTH-MAKING AND WOOL

Historic Development

- 5.5.1 The wool industry in Tunbridge Wells began at Cranbrook in 1331, when Flemish weavers from around the Ghent settled there. The migrant craftsmen brought new ideas that spurred the growth of the industry. By the late 15th century, manufacturing of cloth in the Weald was at a large-scale. Wool was spun, woven and finished within the village in Clothier's Halls and then 'fulled' using fuller's earth from the Maidstone area. It was stored in cloth halls before being sold on.¹
- 5.5.2 By early 17th century, 64% of the wool industry in Kent concentrated in Cranbrook and nearby villages including Beneden, Sissinghurst and Hawkhurst, bringing the towns great wealth and prosperity.² At least nine cloth-halls survive in Cranbrook alone such as the building now occupied by the George Hotel.³ Heavy broadcloths were the main type of cloth produced, and production was concentrated in central Weald. Horsmonden was a hub for the manufacturing of Kentish broadcloth. Grovehurst on Grovehurst Lane was an old Clothiermaster's Hall which was used as a residence, office and warehouse when Kentish Broadcloth Link was being made there. The original house was adapted to the making of cloth.⁴
- 5.5.3 The wool industry declined rapidly in the 18th century in face of competition from Gloucestershire and West Riding of Yorkshire, where new technology was adopted and old guild restrictive practices did not exist. The impact of the industry's decline was most apparent in Cranbrook, which suffered great poverty, population decline and reverted to a small rural market town until its fortunes resumed with the coming of the railways.⁵

Summary of assets

- 5.5.4 **Sheep farms** providing wool for the local cloth industry. The number of sheep in the Borough decreased by 10% between 2007 and 2010.⁶
- 5.5.5 **Cloth halls and clothiers' houses** were often timber framed buildings from the 14th-16th century and many have a characteristic tunnel through the yard where dying could take place. Cloth halls and hall houses were built with their long sides facing the street, whereas cottages were generally located in narrow, elongated plots.⁷ At least nine cloth halls survive in Cranbrook alone. Examples include the Old Wilsley in Cranbrook (Grade I Listed), Church Cottage in Goudhurst (Grade II* Listed), and Friezley and Weavers on Friezley Lane in Cranbrook (Grade II*). The Weaver's Cottage at Capel Cross, Grovehurst and Broadford near Horsmonden are also examples of cloth halls and cottages associated with the wool industry.
- 5.5.6 **Fulling mills** for pressing or kneading cloth were one of the earliest examples of use of water power. Only a small number of mills were needed to process the cloth production of the Weald.⁸ Fulling mills were mainly located around Maidstone but some were around Cranbrook and Hawkhurst, on the Stour and on the Darent. It is suggested that there were probably two fulling mills in Cranbrook before 1550, and two at Horsmonden.⁹ They were later used as corn and paper mills. Calverley Mill was a smock mill in Tunbridge Wells, demolished in 1861 but remembered in place names, for example Windmill Street and the Windmill Tavern, now converted to residential.¹⁰

6 TWBC, *Agricultural Land Classification Study*, 2014 p. 17.

7 TWBC, *Cranbrook Conservation Area Appraisal*, 2010, p. 10.

8 M. Zell, *Industry in the Countryside: Wealden Society in the Sixteenth Century*, 1994, <https://goo.gl/AtWUjP> (accessed 18 August 2017), p. 180.

9 *ibid.*

10 *Tunbridge Wells windmills*, [website], 2017, <http://www.kenthistoryforum.co.uk/index.php?topic=19743.0> (accessed 18 August 2017).

1 TWBC, *Cranbrook Conservation Area Appraisal*, 2010, p. 9.

2 *ibid.*

3 Kent County Council, *Exploring Kent's Past: Medieval Kent*, [website], date unknown, <https://goo.gl/YkhCEv> (accessed 18 August 2017).

4 Horsmonden Village Kent, *Grovehurst*, [website], date unknown, <http://www.horsmonden.co.uk/places/grovehurst/> (accessed 18 August 2017).

5 TWBC, *Cranbrook Conservation Area Appraisal*, 2010, p. 10.

Current condition

- 5.5.7 Many wool halls and cloth halls were re-fronted in the 18th and 19th century and converted for residential and commercial use.

Significance

- 5.5.8 The growth of the cloth industry in Cranbrook transformed the town and nearby hamlets from one of the poorest parts of Kent into one of the richest between the 14th and 17th century. Its impact on growth can clearly be seen in the enlargements to St Dunstan's Church, due to financial and material contributions by affluent clothiers.¹¹

Vulnerability

- 5.5.9 Risk of loss of evidence of the industry's influence through cumulative change to buildings and places.
- 5.5.10 The cloth-making and wool industries are particularly vulnerable to neglect through lack of recognition e.g. insufficient knowledge about the existence or significance of sites.

Existing guidance

- 5.5.11 Some assets associated with cloth-making and wool are protected by designations but the theme itself is not dealt with explicitly by existing guidance.

Opportunities

- 5.5.12 Baseline mapping of the cloth-making and wool industry that includes its associated assets, for example cloth halls, clothiers' houses and fulling mills.
- 5.5.13 There is an opportunity to identify additional cloth halls, clothiers' houses and weaver's cottages for consideration for local and statutory listing.

¹¹ TWBC, *Cranbrook Conservation Area Appraisal*, 2010, p. 9.



Fig 57 Grovehurst near Horsmonden (Source: Wikimedia Commons)

- 5.5.14 Opportunities for collaboration between the general public, enthusiasts and stakeholder groups could be sought to strengthen the evidence base of the cloth industry and other past rural industries, for example the iron industry. This could include working together to identify related heritage assets or to improve the documentation of their social and economic history.
- 5.5.15 Opportunities for educating the general public about the importance of the cloth-industry for the historic development of towns and hamlets in Tunbridge Wells. A Textile Heritage Trail, or the placing of geocaches at principal assets could be a way of achieving this.

SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES: INDUSTRY

 Wealden Iron

 Cloth-making and wool

 Brick and tiles

 Quarrying

5.6 BRICK AND TILES

Historic Development

- 5.6.1 The nearby deposits of gault clay, common in the Vale of Holmesdale, were used for making bricks and tiles, a common building material from the 16th century onwards. The red brick of Wealden clay was made to an outstanding quality, equalled by tile manufacture and the production of plain tiles for roofs and tile hanging.¹
- 5.6.2 Local demand stimulated an increase in house building after the 1860s and the construction of the railways in the 19th century required vast numbers of bricks. The Victorians extracted the Wadhurst clay to assist with their mass-building efforts. Often builders would seek deposits of clay near the building site from which to make bricks to reduce transport costs.² The Highbrooms Brick and Tile Company (HBBC) is a famous example of a brickworks, located just north of Royal Tunbridge Wells. The works was operating from 1855 and accelerated development in the area. According to the Census, the population of Highbrooms rose dramatically from 28 people in 1871 to 1038 in 1891.³ Houses were built on the surrounding roads with unique features such as finials, plaques and colourful ornate brickwork, often constructed for HBBC employees. A number of brickworks were also located along St Johns Road.⁴
- 5.6.3 A related industry was the quarrying of various materials for building and road making. Stone quarrying was an important element in the medieval economy for the building of higher status buildings such as manor houses, cathedrals and churches.
- 5.6.4 Place names give indication of past brick and tile related activities, for example Brick Kiln Farm on

the outskirts of Cranbrook was named after the local brick-making industry, and Brick Kiln Lane connects Spelmonden Road with Goudhurst Road.

Summary of assets

- 5.6.5 **Archaeological features** - remains of kilns, wooden railway sleepers and quarry pits, pub mills, drying floors / structures, wetting ponds, clay quarries.
- 5.6.6 **Brick kilns**, for example at Beneden (Grade II Listed) and remains of a scotch kiln and brickworks at Forge Farm, Southborough.
- 5.6.7 **Workers cottages and houses** built in the area, for example around Highbrooms, and office buildings.

Current condition

- 5.6.8 The condition of landscape heritage assets and archaeological remains are harder to assess than the built environment.
- 5.6.9 The standing structures are at risk of deterioration through lack of use, resulting in water ingress and frost damage.



Fig 58 Aerial photograph showing the Highbrooms brickworks in 1935 (Source: Britain from Above)

1 D. Killingray, *Influences shaping the human landscape of Sevenoaks area since c. 1600*, 2010, <https://goo.gl/3vVlmG> (accessed 18 August 2017).

2 High Brooms Society, *The Highbrooms Brickworks - an overview*, [website], 2013, <https://goo.gl/t8CTDK> (accessed 18 August 2017).

3 *ibid.*

4 *ibid.*

Significance

- 5.6.10 The Borough's historic buildings relied heavily on locally-sourced materials. Many of the older buildings are built using red brick and plain tiles.

Vulnerability

- 5.6.11 There is a threat of loss from cumulative change or insufficient knowledge of significance of the brickworks and associated assets.
- 5.6.12 Insufficient knowledge of history, location or significance may make heritage assets vulnerable to unintentional damage.

Existing guidance

- 5.6.13 Some assets associated with brick and tile making are protected by designations but the theme itself is not dealt with explicitly by existing guidance.

Opportunities

- 5.6.14 Baseline mapping of the brick and tile industry to include heritage asset types, for example archaeological features, brick kilns and workers housing.
- 5.6.15 There is an opportunity for the formal identification of heritage assets associated with the brick and tile industry within the planning system with the best designated for further protection at a local level.
- 5.6.16 Opportunities for collaboration between the general public, enthusiasts and stakeholder groups could be sought to strengthen the evidence base of the brick and tile industry. This could include working together to identify related heritage assets or to improve the documentation of their social and economic history.

SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES:

INDUSTRY

 Wealden Iron

 Cloth-making and wool

 Brick and tiles

 Quarrying

5.7 QUARRYING

Historic Development

5.7.1 The geology of the Borough has led to extensive quarrying for the production of building materials, including sandstone and chalk. Archaeological features show evidence of prehistoric quarrying. Quarrying peaked in the 19th century but many had become abandoned by the early 20th century. The 1897 Ordnance Survey shows a number of old quarries, for example around Langton Green, Horsmonden, Wents Wood, Hawkhurst, Little Cowden and Mile Oak. In Horsmonden for example, the numerous quarries evidences the exploitation of bedded sandstone in the Ashdown Beds.

5.7.2 Langton Green in the west of the Borough was an important sandstone quarrying area. The village is located on a sandstone ridge which has periodically been quarried to provide building stone which was used in Tunbridge Wells. Demand was highest in the 19th century and these quarries would have provided an important source of employment. There were three operating in the village at this time but they had largely ceased by 1870, evidenced by Ordnance Survey maps which show the quarries marked as rough ground.¹

5.7.3 At Langton Green, the quarries are now abandoned but are significant for their social history and as a haven for wildlife. The mature trees on the sites form an important backdrop to buildings and are a valued 'green lung' to the more intensive development further east. Reminders of its industrial past is seen in the sandstone, used as a predominant building material in the village and a common boundary treatment.²

5.7.4 Today, most quarries are no longer used for their original purpose but support mature trees which contribute to the overall character of the Weald. The Old Quarry at Horsmonden for example provides a unique backdrop for the Horsmonden Tennis Club.

Summary of assets

5.7.5 Archaeological features and artefacts show evidence of prehistoric quarrying.

5.7.6 Visible landscape features which show evidence of previous quarrying activities.

Current condition

5.7.7 The condition of landscape heritage assets and archaeological remains are harder to assess than the built environment.

5.7.8 The standing structures are at risk of deterioration through lack of use, resulting in water ingress and frost damage.

Significance

5.7.9 The Borough's historic buildings relied heavily on locally-sourced materials. Many of the older buildings are built using sandstone and Kent ragstone. Flint and chalk are also used.

5.7.10 Assets relating to this theme have archaeological significance and have evidential value of former human activity.

Vulnerability

5.7.11 There is a threat of loss from cumulative change or insufficient knowledge of significance of the quarries and associated assets.

5.7.12 Insufficient knowledge of history, location or significance may make heritage assets vulnerable to unintentional damage.

¹ Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, *Langton Green: Conservation Area Appraisal Supplementary Planning Document* (2006)

² *ibid.*

Existing guidance

- 5.7.13 Some assets associated with quarrying are protected by designations but the theme itself is not dealt with explicitly by existing guidance.

Opportunities

- 5.7.14 Baseline mapping of the quarrying industry to include heritage asset types, for example archaeological features.
- 5.7.15 There is an opportunity for the formal identification of heritage assets associated with quarrying within the planning system with the best designated for further protection at a local level.
- 5.7.16 Opportunities for collaboration between the general public, enthusiasts and stakeholder groups could be sought to strengthen the evidence base of quarrying activities. This could include working together to identify related heritage assets or to improve the documentation of their social and economic history.



Fig 59 1899 Ordnance Survey showing the quarries at Langton Green were already disused at this time.

SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES:

WAR AND DEFENCE



Fortifications and
defensive lines



20th century
war heritage

5.8 FORTIFICATIONS AND DEFENSIVE LINES

Historic Development

- 5.8.1 Kent's position close to the mainland continent via a short sea crossing made it vulnerable to conquest and the region held an important defence position between the mainland and London. Although Kent's coastal areas featured most prominently in the defence effort, Tunbridge Wells had its own fortifications and defensive lines, a symbol of England's commitment to safeguard its freedom against foreign aggression, and a necessary act of protection against potential invaders.¹
- 5.8.2 Prehistoric examples of fortifications include the Castle Hill at Capel, an example of a hillfort and associated earthworks dating to the early Iron Age or earlier.² Fortified hillforts provided protection of individual communities against clan or tribal threats.³ The Iron Age hillfort at High Rocks south-west of Tunbridge Wells is another compelling example of a prehistoric defence system in the Borough.⁴
- 5.8.3 Castles were also used for defence. Scotney Castle was first built about 1378 and may have been used as a defence against the French who had attacked nearby Rye, Winchelsea and Hastings in 1377.⁵ Castles as defences gradually declined up to the 16th century because their military function faded and high walls were becoming vulnerable to more powerful gunpowder artillery.⁶

- 5.8.4 Later examples of defence include a barracks at Wilsley Pound, used by the soldiers guarding the French prisoners of war at Sissinghurst Castle during the Seven Years War from 1756-1763.⁷ There were also barracks at Church House in Goudhurst, used by the Goudhurst Band of Militia in 1747, notorious for its defeat of the Hawkhurst Gang. The barracks were used again during the Peninsular War (1808-1814).⁸
- 5.8.5 Defences evolved to respond to innovations in attack and there was a gradual reduction in height from large visible structures to near invisibility by the end of the 19th century. Fortifications and other defences influenced the appearance of landscapes, by adapting, modifying or preserving them. Defences are closely linked to transport, which was an all-important dimension for field forces, including use of roads, water routes, and later, the railways.⁹

Summary of assets

- 5.8.6 **Archaeological features and artefacts**, including Iron Age hillforts.
- 5.8.7 **Castles** - for example Scotney Castle.
- 5.8.8 **Other pre-20th century military installations** including barracks, like at Goudhurst and Wilsley Pound.

Current condition

- 5.8.9 The condition of landscape heritage assets and archaeological remains are harder to assess than the built environment.
- 5.8.10 The standing structures are at risk of deterioration through lack of use, resulting in water ingress and frost damage.

1 Smith, V. *Defence since the application of gunpowder: 1380-2000*, [website], 2012, <https://goo.gl/tD2TWb> [Accessed December 2017].

2 Historic England, *Castle Hill earthworks, Tonbridge* [website] <https://goo.gl/XhDYHt> [Accessed December 2017].

3 Kent County Council, *The Defence of Kent*, [website], <https://goo.gl/6QoZoF> [Accessed December 2017].

4 Historic England, *Prehistoric rock shelters and a multivallate hillfort at High Rocks* [website] <https://goo.gl/H8DpQU> [Accessed December 2017].

5 Historic England, *A quadrangular castle and 16th/17th century manor house known as Old Scotney Castle* [website] <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1003816> [Accessed December 2017].

6 Smith, V. *Defence since the application of gunpowder: 1380-2000*, [website], 2012, <https://goo.gl/tD2TWb> [Accessed December 2017].

7 TBWC, *Wilsley Green Conservation Area Appraisal*, 2012.

8 The Goudhurst & Kilndown Local History Society, *High Street - North Side* [website] <http://www.goudhurstlocalhistorysociety.org/high-street-north-side/> [Accessed December 2017].

9 Smith, V. *Defence since the application of gunpowder: 1380-2000*, [website], 2012, <https://goo.gl/tD2TWb> [Accessed December 2017].

Significance

- 5.8.11 Military sites will often have a strong collective value with historic remains forming part of a system of defences such as those at military encampments.
- 5.8.12 Castles often provide an emotive and evocative link to the past, particularly in relation to medieval warfare and defence.

Vulnerability

- 5.8.13 Insufficient knowledge of history, location or significance may make heritage assets vulnerable to unintentional damage.
- 5.8.14 Field monuments are particularly vulnerable to ploughing and grazing, especially non-designated or unidentified sites.

Existing guidance

- 5.8.15 Some assets associated with defensive lines and fortifications are protected by designations but the theme itself is not dealt with explicitly by existing guidance.

Opportunities

- 5.8.16 Baseline mapping of fortifications and defensive lines to include heritage asset types, for example archaeological features, castles and other types of defence installations.
- 5.8.17 There is an opportunity for defence sites to offer an important heritage tourism and educational resource. Examples of this include the county wide 'Front-Line Kent' project. A knowledge and appreciation of our defence past is part of our sense of national identity.
- 5.8.18 There is an opportunity for the formal identification of heritage assets associated with defensive lines and fortifications within the planning system with the best designated for further protection at a local level.

SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES: WAR AND DEFENCE



Fortifications and
defensive lines



20th century
war heritage

5.9 20TH CENTURY WAR HERITAGE

Historic Development

- 5.9.1 The wars of the 20th century left a lasting legacy on the Borough. Communities gathered together to play their part in the war effort, from welcoming Belgian refugees into their towns and villages during World War One, to setting up auxiliary hospitals and places of convalescence for wounded servicemen in local stately homes.
- 5.9.2 Between 1914 and 1917, 200,000 Belgian refugees fled to the UK to escape war in their country. Arriving in Folkestone, many were sent on special trains to towns and villages in the Borough, including Cranbrook and Royal Tunbridge Wells. Residents opened up their homes to care for them, and many were encouraged to find work within the towns.¹ Alongside supporting the Belgian wounded, hospitals were set up to support their own wounded military, and Red Cross Voluntary Aid Detachments were established at Brenchley, Matfield, Pembury and Speldhurst, to name a few. The Rose & Crown in Capel became a recruiting station.² World War One also had a bearing on the landscape with a network of trenches and defensive fortifications built across Kent. These have mostly been erased, although evidence of former slit trenches has been discovered at Old Park Wood near Goudhurst.³
- 5.9.3 The Second World War brought development to a halt in many towns and villages in the Borough. The Battle of Britain was underway in July 1940 and took place in the skies over Kent with small scale bombing raids, causing damage and destruction. John Corscaden's memory as

an eight year old boy growing up in Hawkhurst during the war captures the proximity and immediacy of the action:

The Battle of Britain was being fought in the skies above: watching the dog fights when our Hurricanes and Spitfires engaged the German bombers and their escorting fighters as they flew in wave after wave was exciting. I saw many aircraft from both sides being shot down and often, but not always the pilots parachuting from their planes. I remember on a number of occasions in the early days the Germans shot at our pilots as they parachuted down after baling out. Later our own boys used to circle the parachute to protect them from these attacks. On one occasion the body of a German airman was found without a parachute in the garden of a house in the village. The story goes he was killed in a bomber fleeing back home and was jettisoned to reduce weight. Possible? maybe!"⁴

- 5.9.4 In the war-time account, Corscaden mentions the arrival of evacuees into Hawkhurst from Woolwich. Children escaping the London Blitz arrived in towns and villages across Tunbridge Wells, sharing classrooms and homes with locals.⁵
- 5.9.5 Civil defence installations and other forms of defence were set up and became embedded in the landscape and part of normal daily life. These included private and communal air raid shelters, pillboxes and a regional 'War Room' bunker at Tunbridge Wells. Calverley Grounds was taken over by the military and a Civil Defence Training Centre was built near the entrance of Mount Pleasant Avenue. Prisoner of War camps were set up at Somerhill and Mabledon Park.

1 Watts, J. *Wounded Soldiers in Tunbridge Wells, 1914-1918* [website], 2017, <https://blogs.kent.ac.uk/rtwbelgians/> [accessed December 2017].

2 *First World War - Kent & Medway timeline* [website], <https://www.tiki-toki.com/timeline/entry/208714/First-World-War-Kent-Medway/> [accessed December 2017].

3 Kent County Council, *Historic Environment Record no. TQ 73 NE 310* [website], 2017, <http://webapps.kent.gov.uk/KCC.ExploringKent.sPast.Web.Sites.Public/SingleResult.aspx?uid=MKE43045> [accessed December 2017].

4 Corscaden, J. *Boyhood in the Weald during WWII* [website], 2004, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ww2peopleswar/stories/51/a2916551.shtml> (accessed December 2017).

5 Balkham, R. *A Schoolboy's War in Tunbridge Wells* [website], 2004, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ww2peopleswar/stories/52/a2546552.shtml/> [accessed December 2017]

- 5.9.6 During the Cold War, Royal Observer Corps (ROC) Monitoring Posts were installed underground and were operated by volunteers between 1955 and 1991. There were ROC posts at Cranbrook and Horsmonden but both have been demolished.
- 5.9.7 The World Wars had a lasting and significant impact on the landscape, halted the development of villages and towns and deeply affected the people who lived through them. Communities in the Borough suffered a deep sense of grief and heartache as many of their young men lost their lives defending the country. War memorials today are important focal points in the centre of villages that commemorate those who lost their lives during the wars.

Summary of assets

- 5.9.8 **Civil defence sites** - these include domestic and communal air raid shelters, for example at St. Matthew's School in Southborough and a brick-built surface shelter at the rear of a school in Frittenden; precaution and civil defence control centres; ARP posts; fire watcher posts; gas decontamination centres and cleansing stations; air raid sirens; buffer depots; and signage and graffiti.
- 5.9.9 **Other military installations** - for example the Tunbridge Wells 'War Room' Region 12, tunnels, pillboxes (e.g. at Hawkhurst and Pembury), barracks, Prisoner of War camps (e.g. at Somerhill and Mabledon Park), anti-aircraft batteries and redoubts. A World War One redoubt is shown on the 1919 Chatham Land Front map positioned between Cranbrook and Cromas Woods.
- 5.9.10 **War memorials** - these are numerous and are often focal points in villages and towns.



Fig 60 Soldiers and their families, Chapel Place, Tunbridge Wells c. 1943 | Source: War and Peace Collection



Fig 61 Lamberhurst during the war | Source: War and Peace Collection

Significance

- 5.9.11 Military sites will often have a strong collective value with historic remains forming part of a system of defences such as those at airfields or military encampments.

Vulnerability

- 5.9.12 Insufficient knowledge of history, location or significance may make heritage assets vulnerable to unintentional damage.
- 5.9.13 By their nature, wartime remains are obsolescent in peace time and do not lend themselves to reuse or repurposing. Redundant military sites no longer fulfil their original function and so are particularly vulnerable to change.
- 5.9.14 Field monuments are particularly vulnerable to ploughing and grazing, especially non-designated or unidentified sites.

Existing guidance

- 5.9.15 Some assets associated with 20th century war heritage may be protected by designations but the theme itself is not dealt with explicitly by existing guidance.

Opportunities

- 5.9.16 Baseline mapping of 20th century war heritage to include heritage asset types, for example archaeological features, civil defence sites and other military installations.
- 5.9.17 There is an opportunity for 20th century war heritage to offer an important heritage tourism and educational resource. Heritage trails, for example the Battle of Britain Trail which takes people to various sites and monuments across south-eastern Kent, helps improve knowledge and grow appreciation of our war heritage.

More information about the trail can be found here: <https://shareweb.kent.gov.uk/Documents/leisure-and-culture/heritage/accessible-heritage-trails/battle-of-britain-heritage-trail.pdf>

- 5.9.18 There is an opportunity for the formal identification of heritage assets associated with 20th century war heritage within the planning system with the best designated for further protection at a local level.
- 5.9.19 Opportunities for collaboration between the general public, enthusiasts and stakeholder groups could be sought to strengthen the evidence base of 20th century war heritage. This could include working together to identify related heritage assets or to improve the documentation of their social and economic history.



Fig62 War memorial at Goudhurst

SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES:

TRANSPORT



Ancient routes



Railways

5.10 ANCIENT ROUTES

Historic Development

- 5.10.1 The Borough has a network of ancient routeways and tracks that were first created when ancient woodland was foraged to feed livestock. This can be traced to Neolithic pannage, when farmers would drive their pigs into the woods each year to feed on acorns. The geology influenced the character of these ancient routes, and their narrowness and frequently deeply sunken form are a result of age-old wear into soft rock. Woodland pastures were called dens, evident in the place names of many hamlets and villages today. In 1086, Domesday records suggest 150,000 pigs were moved to and from the woods of the High and Low Weald. The tracks connecting dens with their villages were known as drove roads, which often followed even older trackways and form a distinct north to south pattern in the landscape today.¹
- 5.10.2 With the Roman occupation came the construction of new roads, sometimes built on prehistoric tracks, such as that between Hastings and Rochester via Cranbrook and Maidstone, thereby connecting the towns with the iron smelting in the Weald.² The river system, including the Teise, was exploited during this period for transport, as well as resources.
- 5.10.3 The beginnings of industrial growth in the 17th century meant that a good transport system was needed, and in 1663, Parliament passed the Turnpike Act. Private Turnpike Trusts were established in the early 18th century, and road users paid a toll to provide for their upkeep. Toll gates were established through which people and carriages had to pass before continuing with their journey. This benefited those working in manufacturing, as improved roads meant shorter journey times. However, the system hit the poor

the hardest, as turnpikes increased the cost of getting livestock to markets.³

- 5.10.4 Some of the ancient routeways became part of the modern road network, whereas others were ploughed up. Those that survive form a network of lanes, bridleways and footpaths that span the Borough. Extant roads mark the alignment of drove ways into the Weald as well as ancient field boundaries.⁴

Summary of assets

- 5.10.5 **Drove roads and sunken routes** - transhumance and the exploitation of forest resources created a north-south pattern of ancient routeways, many which still exist today.
- 5.10.6 **Roman road** - from Hastings to Rochester via Cranbrook.
- 5.10.7 **Turnpike features** -including toll houses, milestones, finger posts and boundary stones - for example a toll house at the junction of Horsmonden Road and Fairman's lane.

Current condition

- 5.10.8 The condition of road verges and hedges along routes is poor in places, damaged by inappropriate management and lack of maintenance.
- 5.10.9 Even in urban areas, old paths and tracks have sometimes been survived within later development and are a record of earlier habitation. An example is Rope Walk, Cranbrook.

Significance

- 5.10.10 The High Weald Management Plan 2014-2019 describes the historic pattern and features of the ancient routeways as "a rare UK survival of an essentially medieval landscape"⁵.

¹ High Weald Unit, *The Routeways Story*, [website], date unknown, <https://goo.gl/QDXZtr> (accessed 18 August 2017).

² S. M., *Rochester to Maidstone to Hastings*, [website], 2017, <https://goo.gl/n4vBRJ> (accessed 18 August 2017).

³ C. N. Trueman, *Roads 1750 to 1900*, [website], 2017, <https://goo.gl/vi9Epb> (accessed 18 August 2017).

⁴ A. Everitt, *Continuity and colonisation: the evolution of Kentish settlement*, 1986, Leicester University Press.

⁵ High Weald AONB Unit, *The High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2014-2019*, 2014, p. 34.

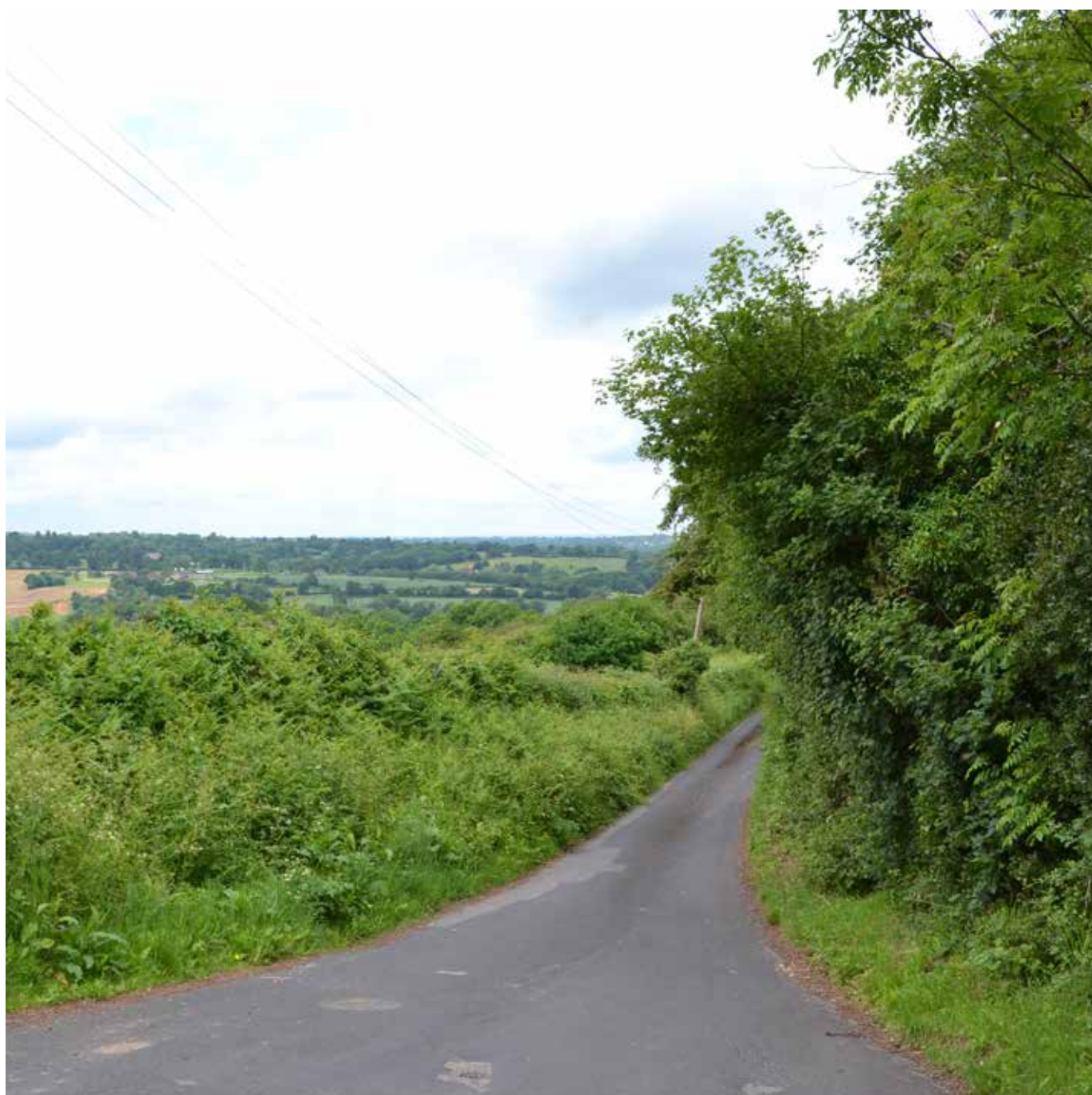


Fig63 *Sunken lane near Goudhurst*

5.10.11 The ancient routes have historical value as they give a sense of past aspects of life and are an important reminder of the different ways in which people for centuries have travelled through the landscape.

Vulnerability

5.10.12 The archaeology and history of ancient routes remain under-researched which may make them vulnerable to unintentional damage.

5.10.13 Ancient routeways are vulnerable to damage from large vehicles / agricultural machinery, as well as increased congestion on rural roads due to suburbanising effects of highway improvement schemes and development on urban / village edges.

5.10.14 Toll houses are vulnerable to demolition, as well as milestones which are lost through decay.

5.10.15 Ancient routes and their associated heritage assets are vulnerable to neglect through ignorance e.g. lack of knowledge about the existence or significance of sites.

Existing guidance

5.10.16 Under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, local authorities with land in an AONB must prepare a plan which sets out their policy and implementation strategy for the management of the area. Objective R1 of the High Weald Management Plan 2014-2019 is to 'maintain the historic pattern and features of routeways' which are a key component of the historic landscape.

Opportunities

5.10.17 The High Weald Management Plan 2014-2019 identifies targets for 2019 related to ancient routeways. These are:

- Baseline mapping of the ancient routeway network extended to cover public rights of way, private tracks and abandoned paths, utilising community initiatives;
- Formal identification of ancient routeways as a heritage asset within the planning system with the best designated for further protection at a local level;
- Partnership working with Highways Authorities, parish councils and others to develop a design code for rural lanes promoting the use of characteristic boundaries and minimising the impact of intrusive highway engineering and signage;
- A Weald initiative to support the retention and restoration of turnpike features (e.g. milestones, toll houses); finger posts and boundary stones;
- An understanding of ancient routeways and their associated settlements informing rights of way planning and management including footpath diversions;
- Archaeological research to better understand the origin and function of ancient routeways and their associated features;
- An awareness campaign targeted at all users of the network, motorised and non-motorised, to raise awareness of the sensitive character of ancient routeways; and
- Parish councils and community groups increasingly engaged in conserving and protecting ancient routeways.⁶

5.10.18 There is an opportunity to enhance understanding of the ancient routeway network of the Low Weald. These routes are under-studied in comparison to the AONB area and therefore necessitates further research.

⁶ High Weald AONB Unit, *The High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2014-2019*, 2014, p. 39.

SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES: TRANSPORT



Ancient routes



Railways

5.11 RAILWAYS

Historic Development

- 5.11.1 The arrival of the railways to Kent spurred development of villages and towns, however the heavily wooded area of the Kentish Weald left much of the Borough devoid of rail communication.¹ The South Eastern line was constructed in 1842 and runs through the north of the Borough, connecting Paddock Wood with Redhill in Surrey and Ashford to the east. The Hastings line was constructed in the early 1850s, linking Royal Tunbridge Wells to London via Tonbridge.² Electrification in the 1930s hastened the spread of the London commuter belt, which extended as far as Royal Tunbridge Wells.
- 5.11.2 The Spa Valley Heritage railway is the legacy of a former passenger service that connected Tunbridge Wells West with London, Brighton and Eastbourne. As motor cars became more popular, train services declined and the Tunbridge Wells to Eridge section of the line closed in 1985. The Tunbridge Wells and Eridge Railway Preservation Society was set up to fight for the reopening of the line and in 1994, the society bought the line. It reopened through to Groombridge in 1997 and a station was built at High Rocks, halfway between Royal Tunbridge Wells and Groombridge in 1998. The line was extended to Eridge which opened to the public in 2011. The railway is now promoted as a local tourist attraction and holds a number of special events throughout the year.³ The former Tunbridge Wells West Railway Station is now the headquarters for the Spa Valley Railway and is Grade II Listed.
- 5.11.3 The Hawkhurst line was a short railway branch connecting Paddock Wood with the villages of Hawkhurst, Cranbrook, Goudhurst and

Horsmonden. It was in operation between 1892 and 1961 and supported local industry.⁴ It is often associated with the hop industry, and during the early 1950s, over 4,000 hop pickers and 23,000 visitors travelled in “hopper specials” – extra services laid on during the late August – early October hop season, starting at London Bridge or New Cross.⁵ Hop-picking holidays became less popular as living standards increased and mechanical pickers gradually replaced the human workforce. The line also served the timber industry, and a siding at Horsmonden end served a brickworks. Fruit, hops and timber were sent out towards London and coal was received.⁶

- 5.11.4 Special services were also introduced for students who attended Beneden and Cranbrook boarding schools in the 1950s and utility vans were located at Hawkhurst and Cranbrook at the end of each term to transport boarders' trunks to Paddock Wood.⁷ The line closed in 1961 due to a declining number of passengers using the services. This was partly a result of the decline in hop-picking and the inconvenient siting of the stations. It has since been dismantled and many of its associated buildings demolished. However, there are a small number of assets that remain.⁸

Summary of assets

- 5.11.5 **Stations and platform canopies** - stations include Royal Tunbridge Wells, Paddock Wood and High Brooms.
- 5.11.6 **Railway cottages and taverns**

1 R. Harris, Settlement: Summary of historic development in the High Weald, 2011, <https://goo.gl/HpluYr> (accessed August 18, 2017).

2 Kent Past, *History of South Eastern Railway*, 2010, <https://goo.gl/hpTGEb> (accessed 18 August 2017).

3 Spa Valley Railway, History & Line Closure, <https://www.spavalley-railway.co.uk/article.php/15/history-line-closure> (accessed November 7, 2017).

4 AOC Archaeology, *Paddock Wood to Hawkhurst Branch Line, Tunbridge Wells, Kent: Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment*, 2016.

5 L. Oppitz, *Lost Railways of Kent*, 2003, Newbury, Countryside Books.

6 Friends of the Hawkhurst Line, *Horsmonden Station and the remains of an embankment*, 2017, <http://friendsofthekawhurstline.blogspot.co.uk/> (accessed 18 August 2017).

7 P. A. Harding, *The Hawkhurst Branch Line*, 1998, Woking, Peter A. Harding.

8 AOC Archaeology, *Paddock Wood to Hawkhurst Branch Line, Tunbridge Wells, Kent: Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment*, 2016.



Fig 64 Paddock Wood Station, date unknown (Source: Kent Photo Archive)



Fig 65 Female maintenance staff at Tunbridge Wells station in 1939 (Source: Kent Photo Archive)



Fig 66 1910 Ordnance Survey showing the former Hawkurst branch to the far right (Source: National Library of Scotland)

5.11.7 **Assets associated with the Paddock Wood to Hawkhurst railway line (PWH BL)** - this includes bridges and tunnels, goods and engine sheds, station houses and workers cottages. The principal assets have been identified in the 'Paddock Wood to Hawkhurst Branch Line, Tunbridge Wells, Kent: Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment' (2016), listed under the 'Significance' heading.

Current condition

5.11.8 Almost the entire track of the Paddock Wood to Hawkhurst Railway line has been removed, with the only exception being a short length near Paddock Wood station.

5.11.9 Most former railway buildings relating to the Hawkhurst line have either gone, (Hawkhurst and Goudhurst), been turned into private dwellings (Cranbrook) or commercial properties (Horsmonden). Former railway cottages and level crossing cottages have almost all become private dwellings.

5.11.10 The route of the railway is relatively well preserved – the line is demarked by hedgerows, boundaries and earthworks. Particularly well preserved stretches are located to north of Horsmonden, near to Swigs Hole Farm and along stretch by Cranbrook Station, where parts of the platform survive. Tunnels at Badgers Oak and Horsmonden are well preserved.

5.11.11 The route of the line is now in multiple private ownership. Much of it is still visible and preserved within landscape – only the Paddock Wood solar farm has removed a large portion of the line. Between Horsmonden and former Goudhurst station, the line is very well preserved – the alignment is visible, with trees marking the route and surviving embankments. Parts of the route which cross fields survive as visible earthworks.

Significance

5.11.12 The assessment of the PWH BL found certain classes or groups of surviving structures. For example, the remaining keepers cottages and engine and goods sheds at Cranbrook and Hawkhurst, were of sufficient significance to be considered for more statutory protections. Associated structures worthy of greater protection are identified in the report as:

- Hop Pickers Huts at Hardlots – potentially of regional significance (page 51 of assessment)
- Swigs Hole Bridge – regional significance (page 53)
- Cranbrook Station House – local to regional – potentially worthy of local listing (page 59)
- Cranbrook Workers Cottages – locally listing as a group (page 60)
- Cranbrook Goods Shed (page 60)
- Badger Oak Tunnel – locally, possibly regional significance – locally listed status possible (page 60)
- Hawkhurst Workers Cottages – local significance, local listing as group – (page 61)
- Hawkhurst Engine Shed – local significance - potential for local listing (page 62)

Vulnerability

5.11.13 None of these heritage assets above are protected through either Scheduling or Listing. The Hawkhurst line passes through or close to a number of conservation areas, including Cranbrook, Horsmonden and Goudhurst but the line does not extend as far as the Hawkhurst Conservation Area.

5.11.14 The line is threatened by piecemeal loss through individual small-scale development and also through permitted development rights and agricultural activities. Individual development on a small scale is considered the most likely type of development along the route which will slowly erode the integrity of route and the cumulative impact could be large.



Fig 67 Horsmonden station on Goudhurst Road, date unknown



Fig 68 Goudhurst Road today (to the far left is the sign for Horsmonden garage which is the former station building)

5.11.15 Large scale development like the Paddock Wood Solar farm is likely to require careful design and management to avoid having significant adverse impact on PWH BL. Loss of field boundaries or agricultural ploughing may damage route of PWH BL.

5.11.16 Heritage assets are vulnerable to technological change in the operational railway, for example loss of signal boxes, semaphore signals and station waiting rooms.

Existing guidance

5.11.17 The Paddock Wood to Hawkhurst Branch Line Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment (January, 2016) identifies the assets relating to the line and their survival, quality and significance, and to identify modern disturbance which may have removed heritage assets. The aim is to inform and guide more detailed assessment and survey, identify threats and pressures, identify opportunities and provide recommendations for further studies.

5.11.18 The Tunbridge Wells Local Development Framework Green Infrastructure Plan (August 2014) sets out potential options for improvement of the Green Infrastructure within the Borough of Tunbridge Wells – specifically for the Paddock Wood to Hawkhurst line. Proposal 7 covers possibility of modifying route into trail for cyclists, walkers and horse riders. Policy states:

“The document states that the TWBC supports this ideal and will work with landowners, KCC, the Parish and Town Councils, as referred to above, and other stakeholders including Sustrans, to identify areas where access to the former railway lines can be improved, with associated promotion, upgrade of paths and route ways, and signage. Although it is recognised that parts of the line may no longer be available, some parts have already

been cleared with the help of landowners, and members of the community are working together on extending the project.”

Opportunities

5.11.19 The Paddock Wood to Hawkhurst Branch Line Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment (January, 2016) outlines opportunities for heritage conservation, enhancement and engagement. These are summarised below:

- Consider local listing of buildings related to the line, as set out in the assessment;
- Opportunity to engage with the general public, walkers, railway enthusiasts, former hop pickers and their descendants and ale drinkers;
- Improved way finding strategy including sign/trail markers, information boards at important structures and establishing a main hub where the route begins;
- Dialogue with private owners to seek agreements on access to route for walkers and enthusiasts; and
- Creation of a hop trail / beer trail to improve links between railway line and hop industry.

5.11.20 An opportunity exists to identify the PWH BL as a Local Heritage Asset – this would enable identification of small scale development threat to the integrity of the line during the planning process.

SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES: RELIGION

5.12 RELIGION

Historic Development

5.12.1 Tunbridge Wells Borough has around 130 current and former places of worship, ranging from ancient parish churches to Victorian chapels and 20th century meeting places for a wide range of Christian denominations.¹ Churches are a hugely important component of the historical built framework and are the most common and obvious evidence of the historical periods of growth within the area. They form an important role within settlements, often as the focal point within a village or town, surrounded by a cluster of common rural activities including the pub, village shop and primary school. The relationship between the church and the village green is often a critical part of the character.²

5.12.2 Within more urban areas such as in the town of Royal Tunbridge Wells, older churches are located on the key routes into the centre, on the junctions of more major thoroughfares. Churches were generally the most important buildings within the towns and villages and were therefore built from the most expensive traditional materials including sandstone, flints or ragstone.³

5.12.3 Churches are often the only remaining evidence of the medieval period for most inhabitants today, and were '... the focal point for ritual and social life in a medieval community. They were used as a place of worship and regular meeting, for religious and seasonal festivals, baptism of infants, marriages and burial of the dead'⁴. Churches were a stage for display and public munificence by local elites and an important network between parishes and the central diocesan organisations⁵.

5.12.4 The rise of nonconformism between the 17th and 19th century challenged traditional assumptions about the role of the Anglican parish church. During the 17th century, no Anglican churches were built in Kent until Royal Tunbridge Wells became a fashionable spa resort in the late 1600s and a new chapel was built near the springs. Instead, additional places of worship that were built in rural areas before the 19th century were nonconformist.⁶ According to Everitt, in 1676, 17% of people in urban parishes in Kent were nonconformists, compared to 11% in rural parishes.⁷ By 1851, 35% of the population were dissenters.⁸

5.12.5 60% of all rural nonconformists in Kent in 1676 were found in the Weald, though this area comprised only one quarter of the rural population as a whole.⁹ It is thought that the proliferation of dissent in the Weald at this time was due to a number of factors: the exceptional size of parishes in the Weald (5,000 acres on average compared to 1,600 acres elsewhere in Kent) made it more difficult for families to regularly attend services at their parish church; the scattered nature of Wealden settlement; weak manorial structure with little power to discourage clothiers and yeomen of the parishes; and the growing population in forest areas at this time which led to the emergence of two types of communities - older more stable communities, for example Cranbrook and Goudhurst, which encouraged traditional forms of Dissent, and newer, heathland communities of squatters encouraging the more extravagant and millenarian kinds of sect.¹⁰

1 List of places of worship in Tunbridge Wells (borough), 2017, <https://goo.gl/Np2dHW> (accessed 21 August 2017).

2 TWBC, Conservation Area Appraisals.

3 J. Newman, *Kent: West and the Weald*, London, Yale University Press, 2012.

4 R. Gilchrist, *Landscapes of the Middle Ages. Churches, castles and monasteries*. In J. Hunter and I. Ralston (eds), *The Archaeology of Britain: An introduction from the Upper Palaeolithic to the Industrial Revolution*, 1999, London.

5 J. Weekes, *The Medieval Period, South East Research Framework*:

Resource Assessment and Research Agenda for the Medieval Period, 2012, <https://goo.gl/Zgt5mE> (accessed August 18, 2017).

6 A. Everitt, *Nonconformity in country parishes*. In J. Thirsk (eds), *Land, church and people: essays presented to Professor H. P. R. Finberg*, 1970. Available online: http://www.bahs.org.uk/Supp_Finberg.html (accessed November 7, 2017).

7 *ibid*, p. 187

8 *ibid*, p. 181

9 *ibid*, p. 189

10 *ibid*.

5.12.6 Rural nonconformism was also more prevalent in frontier settlements, situated on the boundary between two parishes which fostered independence and new ways of thinking.¹¹

5.12.7 In Royal Tunbridge Wells, the growth of nonconformism was spearheaded by an aristocratic trend for the support of John Wesley, who visited and preached in the town in 1762. The first building for the Wesleyan Methodists was erected in 1812, replaced by its current structure in 1878.¹² In the mid 18th century, the Countess of Huntingdon, who hailed Wesley as her personal mentor, founded at least sixty churches and chapels at fashionable resorts such as Brighton, Bath and Tunbridge Wells: "wealthy people attended: they came to taste, some staying to savour".¹³

Summary of assets

5.12.8 **Medieval remains** - Surrey and Kent were mainly characterised by dispersed patterns of small hamlets and isolated farms in the medieval period,¹⁴ often with isolated churches developed between farms. The Reformation and Dissolution brought a clear change to an aspect of medieval culture and society as the ecclesiastical infrastructure was dismantled. The medieval period in the region was seminal in the development of a landscape template for the post-medieval period in terms of towns, villages, dispersed farms and hamlets, roads, field and park systems.

5.12.9 **Early Parish Churches** – examples include St. Lawrence's church in Bidborough, a small

¹¹ *ibid.*

¹² C. H. Strange, *The History of Tunbridge Wells*, date unknown, <http://www.tunbridgewellscitizens.org.uk/twyorkroad/tunbridgewellshistorybefore1946.html> (accessed November 7, 2017).

¹³ Blainey, G. *A Short History of Christianity* (2015)

¹⁴ A. Everitt, *Continuity and colonisation: the evolution of Kentish settlement*, 1986, Leicester University Press.



Fig 69 Religious buildings across the Borough

sandstone church of the Norman era, and All Saints Church at Brenchley, built in the 13th and 14th century. Many early parish churches have since been altered.

5.12.10 **Mid 16th century** – 1700 churches - For nearly a century after the reformation, no new churches were built. Examples such as St Marys in Goudhurst, built in 1638-40 by City of London, were crafted in a gothic and classical style.

5.12.11 **Non-conformist chapels/churches** – Often simple brick buildings – round headed windows with an entrance under a pedimental gable – an early example is the Hanover Chapel in Tunbridge Wells. Providence Chapel in Cranbrook was built in the early 1800s is part of Cranbrook's strong dissenting tradition and an early example of a pre-fabricated building. It features on Historic England's Heritage at Risk register. Methodists churches regularly built in Gothic style.

5.12.12 **Churches 1830-1914** – Population increase and the popularity of religion from the 1840s expanded the building of churches until the First World War, generally built in a gothic style. Examples such as St Barnabas in Tunbridge Wells rise up above the surrounding terraces of workers cottages. During the Victorian period many alterations to fixtures and fittings were made to churches across the borough. From the turn of the century architects strove harder for originality, exploring the possibility of unconventional materials, in an Arts and Crafts Spirit.

5.12.13 Temporary or modest chapels are now rare.

5.12.14 Quakers have long been established in Tunbridge Wells. The present Friends' Meeting House in Grosvenor Park dates from 1892.

5.12.15 **Vicarages / parsonages** - these were generally sited close to the church for resident clergymen and developed over the centuries in line with other houses. Many have been rebuilt over time and some were sold in the 20th century to be replaced with smaller ones.

5.12.16 **Other faiths** - Al Noor Mosque in Camden Road, Royal Tunbridge Wells, is a former Victorian public house, the Roebuck. There is no synagogue in the Borough. There are nine Roman Catholic churches including the Grade II listed All Saints at Horsmonden.

Current condition

5.12.17 Many older church buildings have been added to or their design altered, providing a record of the changing architectural styles of religious building.

5.12.18 Around 20-30 churches or places of worship within the Borough no longer hold religious services but survive in other forms, often occupied by alternative community uses.

Significance

5.12.19 Religious buildings are the most common and obvious evidence of historical periods of growth.

5.12.20 The role of the church within the settlement in terms of its structural focus point, influences the grain of streets and routes that have since developed.

5.12.21 Memorials remembering influential people, war memorials and markings on gravestones significantly contribute to the documentation of the social history of many of the villages and hamlets in Tunbridge Wells.

5.12.22 The structures are socially significant in that they represent the centre of communities in towns and villages across the borough. They have always been a place of social interaction and a source of identity. They often have communal value as important focal points of collective memory.

5.12.23 Religious assets are evidence of the growth and demise of some denominations.

Vulnerability

5.12.24 Within a context of a declining number of congregations in rural places, designated (e.g. All Saints Hawkhurst and Providence Chapel) and non-designated heritage assets are at risk from change of use or abandonment.

5.12.25 Three of the five heritage sites on Historic England's Heritage at Risk register are religious buildings - Providence Chapel in Cranbrook, St. Mary's Church Frittenden and Bayham Abbey, a Registered Historic Park and Garden.

Existing guidance

5.12.26 Some denominations, including the Church of England, have their own systems for inspection and control of works to the fabric.



Opportunities

5.12.27 The surroundings in which churches are experienced can make a negative or positive contribution to the significance of the heritage asset. There is an opportunity to review the setting of churches, for example opportunities for public realm enhancement, boundary improvements, wayfinding and interpretation.

5.12.28 An opportunity exists to record the social history and capture the communal significance of these religious spaces, for example famous events and life events of notable local people e.g. births, marriages and deaths.

5.12.29 Churches could also be identified specifically within policy guidance or supporting text where appropriate.



Fig 70 St Dunstan's Church, Cranbrook - The Cathedral of the Weald

SECTION C:

RECOMMENDATIONS

AND CONCLUSIONS

6 RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

6.1 OVERVIEW OF THEMATIC FRAMEWORK

- 6.1.1

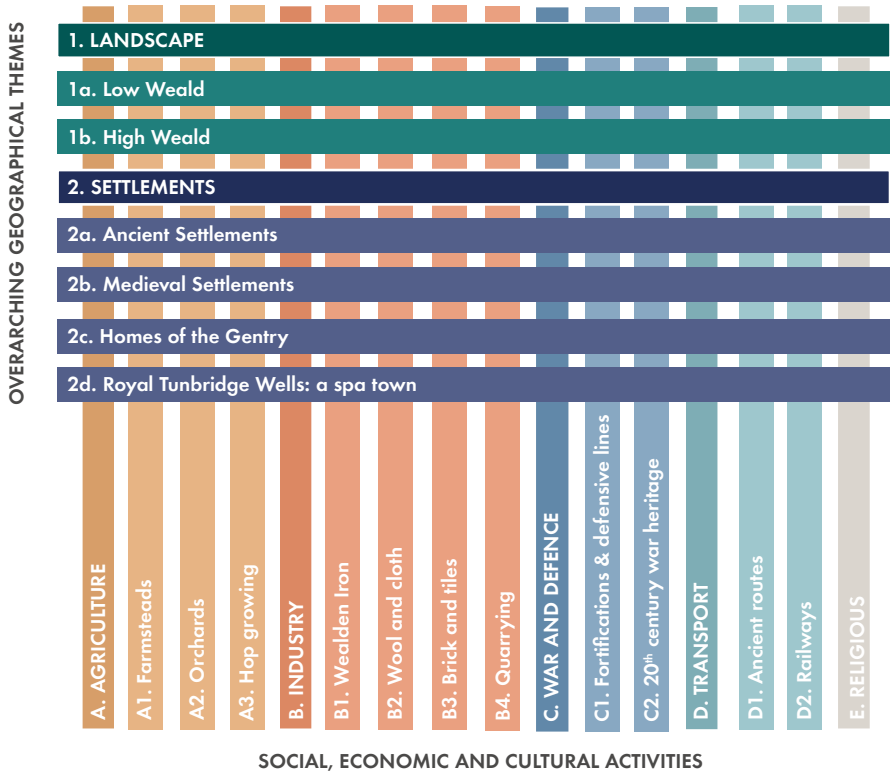
One of the Government’s twelve core planning principles is to conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations (NPPF, para 17).
- 6.1.2

Following a review of the historic development of the Borough, and a description of the historic landscape character and heritage assets, section B of the report articulates a framework of historic themes which form a comprehensive basis to understand the Borough’s historic context and assets.
- 6.1.3

As described in section B, these themes are organised as overarching geographical topics, and more intricate social, economic and cultural activities. These geographical themes and
- 6.1.4

Within each theme, there is a series of sub-themes, each of which has been discussed in relation to historic context, heritage assets, current condition, significance, vulnerability, existing guidance and opportunities.
- 6.1.5

It is recommended that the thematic framework and individual themes and sub-themes form a reference tool for policy purposes in the emerging Local Plan and other corporate strategies. Section 6.3 makes specific recommendations from a planning perspective, and it is clear that the Local Plan should make deeper, more nuanced reference to the historic environment. This will embed a more holistic and positive attitude to the value of the historic environment, and help to facilitate an earlier, more proactive incorporation of heritage in the planning process with respect to place-making, design work and planning decisions.



6.2 SUMMARY OF VULNERABILITIES

6.2.1 Each sub-theme in section B of the report includes a summary of the specific vulnerabilities which pose a threat to the historic environment in the Borough. The following list is a concise summary of the principal vulnerabilities which set a context for theme specific opportunities (also in section B).

- **Alignment of landscape character and AONB protection:** Parts of the Borough are well-protected by AONB status. However, areas which fall outside of the designation boundary but share common landscape characteristics experience elevated development pressure which is subject to far fewer guiding principles and development management criteria.
- **Pressure for development:** Tunbridge Wells, like many locations in the South-east, is experiencing major pressure for development and growth to keep pace with an increasing need for new homes. This pressure for development brings a whole host of challenges and pressures to the historic environment. Erosion or loss of character, setting, integrity, evidence and heritage assets are a significant concern. This could result from a broad spectrum of development proposals including settlement expansion, infill development, intensification and modernisation of activities, conversion and shifting patterns of transport and movement. This is set against a backdrop of climate change which also has potential to exacerbate the impact on the historic environment (e.g. increased risk of flooding).
- **Tourism:** Increasing intensity of use, conversions and levels of traffic can all have an impact on historic assets including landscapes, buildings and other attractions in the urban environment.
- **Road traffic:** Allied to the previous point, increasing levels of car ownership, travel patterns and commercial activities continue to have an impact on the historic environment including landscape edges, routes and verges which is particularly significant in relation to ancient routeways. Traffic also has an impact on historic settlements and centres where traffic passes through the historic core.
- **Poor management, maintenance and changing practices:** The shifting nature and scale of activities is paralleled by evolving practices in relation to the management and maintenance of historic assets and landscapes. Over time, this has resulted in a decline in traditional techniques, which can have an impact on assets, characteristics and evidence to varying degrees.
- **Archaeological understanding:** As noted in chapter 2, there are gaps in the archaeological evidence base –detailed information already exists in the HER, but interpretation and / or more focused research would be beneficial in a number of cases.
- **Depth of protection:** The report has highlighted that gaps exist in the scope of planning guidance in relation to undesignated assets. There are two strands to this – first, the absence of a comprehensive local list, and secondly, the need for more specific local guidance which defines a positive position in relation to broader historic character and non-designated assets including criteria where appropriate.

6.2.2 These vulnerabilities are set out in greater detail in Section B.

6.3 SUMMARY OF OPPORTUNITIES

6.3.1 The stage 1 report identifies a series of key opportunities and recommendations for development in stage 2. These are organised under four broad headings as follows:

- Overarching heritage strategy
- Development management and planning guidance
- Landscape management
- Tourism

1. Overarching heritage strategy

6.3.2 Tunbridge Wells has a distinctive historic character and a significant breadth of designated and non-designated assets. The historic environment is intertwined with the evolution of the landscape, in terms of the rural setting of both assets and settlements, and as a determinant of the historic pattern of economic and agricultural activities and uses.

6.3.3 The Borough's legacy has been handed down through the generations, but it cannot be taken for granted. Some of that inheritance is under greater threat than ever before, and its future cannot be taken for granted. There is an important story to tell, and it is strongly recommended that the Council prepare an overarching heritage strategy which articulates the historic character and evolution alongside reference to the spectrum of strategies and potential projects which would enable more effective protection, celebration and enhancement of the historic environment. The document would be a reference source for different teams within the Council, including economic development, tourism and planning.

6.3.4 **It is envisaged that the Heritage Strategy would play an important role in shaping corporate priorities, aspirations and delivery mechanisms** – some of which are subject to separate recommendations below.

6.3.5 In general terms, a more proactive heritage strategy should embrace the following outcomes:

- A richer sense of place;
- Catalytic benefits for regeneration;
- Reducing social exclusion;
- Increased access to heritage; and
- Improved public health.

6.3.6 These general outcomes have helped to inform the more specific opportunities and strategies below and will be developed in more detail in stage 2 of the project.

2. Development management and planning guidance

6.3.7 Para 126 of the NPPF states that "Local planning authorities should set out in their Local Plan a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. In doing so, they should recognise that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance.

6.3.8 Tunbridge Wells is currently preparing a new Local Plan for the Borough to 2033. As part of this review, it is recommended that the findings of the Historic Environment Review and subsequent Heritage Strategy are reviewed in the round. The following priorities have been identified.

Strategic objectives

6.3.9 Issues and opportunities relating to historic character, heritage assets and their settings require careful consideration at a strategic level. **Explicit reference to protection and enhancement of assets is important, but wider opportunities to convey place-making potential and to communicate wider**

narratives of historic growth, character and significance should be taken. Linkages to movement and visitor opportunities, economic opportunities and broader vitality and viability of existing centres and the rural economy should be identified. The importance of adaptive design and opportunities to achieve sensitive outcomes for the historic townscape environment should also be promoted.

Considering the strategic spatial approach

- 6.3.10 The Tunbridge Wells Issues and Options report identifies a series of different strategic spatial options which explore alternative approaches to the distribution of housing growth. As part of the next stage of work, it is vital that these spatial parameters are considered from a heritage perspective. It is likely that Green Belt designations and AONB status will preclude certain forms of development. However, as illustrated in chapter 3, other parts of the landscape are of historic interest, albeit outside of the AONB areas. **The potential impact on these fringe areas should be considered from a historic perspective in the round as part of the strategic planning process. Conversely, new development might also facilitate positive responses to historic characteristics, and opportunities to celebrate undesignated assets or characteristics. A positive attitude and approach should be embraced and encouraged through explicit reference and clear criteria in policy.**

Broadening the depth of policy guidance

- 6.3.11 It is important that the Local Plan considers opportunities to look beyond designated heritage assets in their forthcoming Local Plan. Although these are important these assets are already relatively well-protected in law. Non-designated assets are not protected in law, only by the NPPF.

They are also likely to be more numerous than designated assets and play a key role in defining local character.

- 6.3.12 **The Local Plan should establish clearer links to a more holistic range of supplementary guidance and evidence including the Historic Environment Review and other published guidance and character assessments. This could be achieved through a number of routes.**
- 6.3.13 **One option would be to define an additional heritage policy which is explicit in cross-referencing relevant elements of the evidence base, and acting as a sign-post to other documents, guidance and strategies. This might be structured around the historic themes identified in this document, identifying specific opportunities and sensitivities, particularly where these relate to non-designated assets.**
- 6.3.14 **An alternative approach is to translate these principles, guidance and additional evidence into a specific Historic Environment Supplementary Planning Document. This would enable a relatively concise position in the Local Plan, and a more expansive and comprehensive summary of key issues and opportunities as a natural companion to the "Heritage Strategy" document recommended above. The SPD could be conceived as a toolkit, encouraging a more sensitive criteria-based approach to heritage-led planning and design decisions. The SPD would permit a more integrated approach to the historic environment.**
- 6.3.15 **Specific assets such as historically significant routeways should be recorded as heritage asset within the planning system, with the**

best designated for further protection at a local level.

- 6.3.16 It is anticipated that the Local Plan would also include a sequence of historic environment policies relating to designated assets (Listed Buildings, Registered Parks and Gardens, Scheduled Monuments, Conservation Areas). Policies should also be defined with specific reference to landscape character, particularly the AONB areas. In addition to focusing on the core NPPF requirements in relation to heritage assets and their settings, broader considerations might be established through the plan as set out below.

Settlement policies and allocations

- 6.3.17 The historic environment review presents opportunities to refine and broaden settlement or allocation-specific guidance in the Local Plan, enabling more detailed reference to key considerations relating to setting, context and character, beyond the core heritage and landscape designations.

Local list

- 6.3.18 It is recommended that the ongoing commitment to the preparation of a local list continues with positive reference through specific planning policies, either in the Local Plan, or in supporting supplementary guidance. The thematic chapters of this document make reference to specific opportunities to identify local listings which relate to key historic themes.

Archaeology

- 6.3.19 Research is ongoing in relation to the potential for additional unidentified archaeological assets and will be incorporated in subsequent drafts. Further targeted research into archaeology is recommended and including assessment

of the contribution of standing buildings to archaeological knowledge. It is important to note that Areas of Archaeological Potential require careful review as they are not definitive in isolation. It is recommended that the Borough work closely with Kent County Council to establish priority areas for further archaeological research. Areas of greatest sensitivity to change should be agreed with a view to undertaking a focused desktop review of assets by number and by type with reference to the HER.

Conservation areas

- 6.3.20 Local authorities are legally obliged to review their conservation areas from time to time as set out in section 69(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Historic England Advice Note 1 (2016) underlines the importance of regular review of Conservation Area appraisals and Management Plans. Many Conservation Area appraisals in the Borough were prepared more than a decade ago and review is therefore overdue. The review should be prioritised to cover areas of particular vulnerability or development pressure.

Research, understanding and good practice

- 6.3.21 In addition to officer-led research, or specialist studies, the Council should be proactive in working with Kent County Council Heritage Conservation team and the voluntary sector – civic societies, archaeology groups and students. Such groups and individuals can provide a vital resource for fieldwork and documentary research, filling gaps in knowledge about such topics as vernacular buildings, industrial history and archaeology. Other areas of research could include recording of social history and baseline mapping. Specific topics which could be prioritised include early settlements, cloth-making, brick and tiles and war and defence. Opportunities to pursue

greater understanding of medieval and rural landscape evolution and assets could be organised as village-based projects utilising a range of research techniques.

Strategies for heritage at risk

- 6.3.22 **The Borough should consider producing a strategy for tackling heritage at risk, including resources for casework action and annual monitoring.** The National Planning Policy Guidance (para 3) notes that for historic buildings, generally the risks of neglect and decay are best addressed through ensuring that they remain in active use that is consistent with their conservation.

3. Landscape management

- 6.3.23 **Management strategies** should put an emphasis on holistic proposals to avoid damage to historic buildings, routeways, boundaries and archaeological monuments through lack of awareness, plough damage, poor maintenance or lack of management.
- 6.3.24 **Traditional “woodsmanship” techniques** – where possible, opportunities to protect or re-introduce knowledge of traditional techniques should be sought. Increasing demand for wood fuel and renewable timber supplies could play a role in this.
- 6.3.25 **Traffic management** – traffic impact on narrow roads, winding lanes and historic routeways is a key issue, leading to conflicts between vehicles, pedestrians, horse-riders and cyclists. Insensitive highway ‘improvements’ or signage clutter may harm the character and setting of historic places.
- 6.3.26 **Ancient routeways** - Further research (including archaeological studies) might be required to understand the origin and function of routeways and their features. Previous studies have suggested a partnership working approach with Highways Authorities, parish councils and others to develop a design code for rural lanes promoting the use of characteristic boundaries and minimising the impact of intrusive highway engineering and signage. Opportunities exist to retain and restore turnpike features (e.g. milestones, toll houses); finger posts and boundary stones. An campaign has been proposed, to raise awareness of the sensitive character of ancient routeways, targeting all users of the network, motorised and non-motorised.
- 6.3.27 **Operational needs of major houses** – country houses offer opportunities as educational and visitor attractions, but it is important to consider their economic roles within larger agricultural estates.
- 6.3.28 **Orchards** – Mechanisation and other commercial factors have led to bigger orchards and the loss of hedgerows, threatening the intimate patchwork of holdings and the traditional pattern to farming. Whilst the commercial realities must be recognised, orchards could form part of a broader tourism strategy to celebrate the identity of Kent as 'the Garden of England'. This could be coupled with promoting the hop industry, also prevalent in the Borough's 'Fruit Belt'.
- 6.3.29 **Hops** – proposals exist for the reinstatement of hop farms Paddock Wood to Hawkhurst Branch line. This could entail local listing of buildings, further engagement with the general public, walkers, railway enthusiasts, former hop pickers and their descendants and ale drinkers. It could also include an improved way finding strategy including sign/trail markers, information boards at important structures and establishing a main hub where the route begins. Proposals have also been set out for the creation of a hop and beer trail to improve links between railway line and hop industry.
- 6.3.30 **Churches** – opportunities exist to enhance the setting of churches, for example opportunities for public realm enhancement, boundary

6.4 NEXT STEPS

improvements, wayfinding and interpretation. Where possible, proposals should capture the communal significance of these religious spaces, for example famous events and life events of notable local people e.g. births, marriages and deaths.

4. Tourism

6.3.31 The opportunities heading for each sub-theme contains a number of proposals which relate to the review of existing arrangements, or, where appropriate, a more proactive approach to the management and stewardship of the Borough's historic assets which could tie into tourism or visitor opportunities.

6.3.32 **The historic environment should sit more clearly within a sustainable tourism strategy, focusing on the marketing of sites of heritage interest and geological / landscape features alongside proposals for improved access, research, interpretation, understanding and enjoyment.** A number of priorities have emerged through the work to date and it is strongly recommended that the Council progress the following programme of activities, incorporating more detailed feasibility and scoping as appropriate.

6.3.33 **A number of historic industries including Wealden iron, the cloth industry and brick and tile manufacture could benefit from a more focused approach to visitor strategies and educational opportunities.** This could be achieved through more research on individual industries and the relationships between them. There is scope for schools and volunteers to assist with research and recording. A Textile Heritage Trail or the placing of "geocaches" at principal assets could be a way of achieving this. In some cases, additional local listing of clothiers' houses, weaver's cottages and cloth halls should be considered through focused review by officers and specialists. Farmstead trails should also be reviewed as a potential project.

6.4.1 The consultant team is preparing a second stage report which will assess the strategies and emerging policies of the new Local Plans against the stage 1 findings and make recommendations for inclusion of the historic environment in strategic and targeted policies, and for raising awareness of the cross-cutting benefits of the historic environment for social, economic and environmental well being.

Fig 71 View from Goudhurst



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FIGURE SOURCES

Fig 13 - Geology and National Character Areas: British Geological Survey and Natural England
<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/natural-england>

Fig 14 - Historic Landscape Characterisation: Archaeology Data Service and Historic England

Fig 15 - Landscape character areas: TWBC

Fig 16 - Summary of landscape assets: Registered Parks and Gardens - Historic England; Kent Compendium's List of historic parks and gardens - KCC; Ancient woodland -<https://data.gov.uk/dataset/ancient-woodlands-england2>; Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty - <http://www.landscapesforlife.org.uk/>; Ancient woodland - TWBC; Green Belt: Department for Communities and Local Government

Fig 17 - Registered Parks and Gardens - Historic England; Kent Compendium's List of historic parks and gardens - KCC

Fig 21 - Scheduled Monuments - Historic England; Ancient Routes and Rural Lanes - TWBC

Fig 18 - Registered Parks and Gardens: Historic England

Fig 25 - Conservation areas: TW (some have been traced)

Fig 29 - Listed Buildings: Historic England (<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/data-downloads/>)

Fig 32 - Heritage at risk: Historic England

Fig 41 - Possible medieval farmsteads: KCC

Fig 49 - Farmsteads: KCC

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