

Tunbridge Wells Borough Landscape Character Assessment

Supplementary Planning Document

Prepared by LUC
Adopted December 2017



Project Title: Tunbridge Wells Borough Landscape Character Assessment

Client: Tunbridge Wells Borough Council

Planning & EIA
Design
Landscape Planning
Landscape Management
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Mapping & Visualisation

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Preface

LUC was commissioned in August 2016 to update the Tunbridge Borough Landscape Character Assessment (2011). The previous character assessment was published in 2002 and given a 'light touch' update in 2011 in order to ensure its consistency since changes in guidance and policy. The 2011 review updated policy and contextual information but the landscape assessment and objectives sections remained unchanged.

This 2016 revision of the Landscape Character Assessment is based on desk study of new evidence, consultation and field survey. It includes the following changes and additions:

- Updates the content of the document to reflect changes in the area since 2002;
- Updates the content of the document with information from recently produced studies;
- Reviews the character area boundaries to ensure that boundaries remain appropriate in the light of landscape change and follow defined features on the ground;
- Updates the section on policy to reflect the changes brought about by the introduction of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF);
- Updates the content and structure to reflect Natural England's 2014 'Approach to Landscape Character Assessment';
- Includes an additional box in each character description on 'Valued Features and Qualities' which takes account of public perceptions and attitudes to the landscape. This section also incorporates information from the previous Special Landscape Area (SLA) descriptions and relevant information from the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) to ensure that the value of the landscape and its role in setting of the AONB is reflected in each character area descriptions;
- Is informed by public and stakeholder consultation via workshops and social media app;
- Includes an additional box on 'Landscape Strategy' for each character description; and
- Updates all maps and photographs.

PART 1 LANDSCAPE CHARACTER



1 Borough Landscape Character Overview

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

Topography and Geology

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

Land Use and Historical Influences¹

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

Woodland

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

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

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

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

Ghyll woodland³

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

Medieval Land Use: Transhumance

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

Transhumance: dens and droves in the early medieval period⁴

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

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

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

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

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

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

better soils in the High Weald.

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

Iron industry

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

Agricultural enclosure

- 1.14 Assarting of woodlands to create small fields separated by broad bands of woodland (ghylls, shaws and hedges) occurred primarily in the 12th and 13th centuries building on earlier Saxon enclosures around settlements and was associated with the areas of poorer land. The result of assarting was that the pattern of the landscape resulting from the older agrarian landscape of transhumance and former dens, remained consistent. The fields were small in size and formed part of small-scale holdings. In essence, the landscape was enclosed before the post-medieval period of Enclosure, and therefore the pattern of the landscape today has a strong medieval character overlain in places by more modern changes.
- 1.15 The increasing importance of agriculture led to further woodland clearance and established a pattern of arable land on flatter areas with pasture fields found on the steeper, marginally productive valley slopes.
- 1.16 The incised landscape of the High Weald, along with the acidic and slowly permeable nature of the most extensive soils, has favoured livestock grazing over arable production and led to the development of an agricultural landscape of small fields bounded by hedges and shaws. The landscape and soils have constrained the development of more intensive agriculture with the result that non-profitable holdings have gone out of production. The relatively level landscape of the Low Weald, underlain by Weald Clay, has been more suited to the development of intensive agriculture than the High Weald and fruit and arable production are important. The Agricultural Land Classification across the borough is illustrated in **Figure 10**.

Orchards and hops

- 1.17 Further agricultural developments included the introduction of fruit orchards and hop gardens in the 16th century. By the late 19th century these were the dominant land uses over much of the area. Although now in decline, orchards continue to be an important accent within the landscape and are one of the defining features within the borough. Where they do occur, intensively managed commercial orchards of fruit trees on dwarf root stock have replaced many of the traditional sheep grazed orchards. However, the delicate pink blossom which cloaks the landscape in spring time remains a memorable feature. Hop fields, once widespread, have seen a drastic decline in the last two decades and are now few and far between. Oasts and hopper huts remain as a reminder of this once widespread and locally important crop.

- 1.18 The landscape of the borough today combines many elements of its past history and use. The poor soils and low agricultural productivity have resulted in extensive semi-natural woodland cover being retained in a variety of forms providing a highly characteristic wooded framework to the landscape. They include the lush, linear ghyll woodlands that fill the deeply incised valleys of the uplands, and the network of thick shaw boundaries around fields that have been gradually cleared from original woodland. Much of the upland area has also remained wooded, but re-planted in some locations. The large-scale plantations at Bedgebury and Hemsted introduce an element of remoteness and isolation into an otherwise small-scale and intimate landscape. Elsewhere, the sandy uplands, following removal of the original forest cover, have formed extensive tracts of heath which have been restored and managed in a number of locations.

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

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

Settlement and Building Character

- 1.19 The general settlement pattern is of small nucleated and linear villages dispersed throughout the borough, with a scattering of outlying farmsteads, hamlets and isolated rural dwellings which has arisen out of the underlying historical dispersed pattern of farmsteads, hamlets and late medieval villages founded on trade and non-agricultural rural industries. Many of the village settlements are located on the ridge tops and have a commanding view over the landscape. Consequently, they too can frequently be viewed from afar. Dispersed farmsteads are located within discrete, or enclosed, holdings. The small-scale of the holdings owed its origins to dens and, later, assarts, and ensured that the density of farmsteads was high.
- 1.20 Settlements are connected by a dense network of rural lanes, which dip into the intersecting ghylls and cross the plateaux. The dense and sub-radial pattern of narrow lanes and rights of way represents a visible survival of ancient transhumant routes – the droves, providing a visible legacy of the value ancient communities placed on the resources of the forest. The droves are distinctive in their radiating pattern, as well as their narrowness and frequently deeply sunken form (a result of age-old wear into soft geologies). Along with prehistoric ridge-top ways, these

were one of the most distinctive characteristics of the High Weald in the 14th century, and remain so today. The ancient lanes, with their flowery verges, woodland banks, and overhanging tree tunnels, are one of the most attractive and readily appreciated features of the borough. It also contains a multiplicity of public rights of way which enable hidden features to be seen.

- 1.21 The abundance of raw materials, including woodland to provide timber, and the presence of clays which make good quality bricks and tiles, has resulted in a highly picturesque vernacular. A variety of traditional materials and styles occur. White painted weather-boarding, often with the windows picked out in dark shades, is common, for example, at Cranbrook. Elsewhere, the warm, rich orange/red of the brick and tile-hung buildings predominate, for example, at Goudhurst. Sandstone also occurs, predominantly associated with more prestigious buildings such as churches. Many villages are a jumble of different styles whereas in some settlements one particular form dominates. This variation introduces a sense of diversity within a unified whole, with the vernacular buildings greatly contributing to the strong sense of place found within the borough.
- 1.22 Certain types of individual buildings are also characteristic within the landscape. Scattered medieval half-timbered houses, and Wealden Hall Houses, where the upper storey overhangs the lower, remain throughout the wider countryside. There are a number of historic estates such as Finchcocks, Scotney and Sissinghurst Castles, and Bayham Abbey. Perhaps of all the buildings, oast houses are the most evocative. Clusters of their white-cowled roofs can be picked out across the agricultural landscape. Oast houses, together with hopper huts, are relics of the historic links of the area with hop picking. In spring, when the apple trees are blossoming, the scene is undeniably quintessentially Kent!
- 1.23 The document intends to describe distinguishable character areas rather than individual hamlets or groups of buildings. Local descriptions are often covered by other documents, e.g. Conservation Area Appraisals, listed building descriptions, Historic Parks and Gardens Registers. Light pollution as shown on CPRE's 'Night Lights' data is shown in **Figure 7**.

Valued Features and Qualities in Tunbridge Wells Borough

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

Table 1-2 Valued Features and Qualities in Tunbridge Wells

Type of Value	Valued Features and Qualities across Tunbridge Wells Borough	Evidence
<i>Values associated with the High Weald AONB and its setting</i>		
Geology, landform, water systems and climate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deeply incised and ridged landform including ghyll streams which are of high scenic quality and are representative of the High Weald AONB. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maps, field survey. Stakeholder consultation.
Settlement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dispersed historic settlement pattern of farmsteads, hamlets and late medieval villages founded on trade and non-agricultural rural industries. The survival rate and density of medieval buildings in the Weald is probably the highest in the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maps, historic farmsteads data, Conservation Area appraisals. Stakeholder consultation.

	country.	
Routeways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presence of ancient routeways in the form of ridge-top roads and a dense system of radiating droeways which are often narrow and deeply sunken. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field survey, ancient routeways AONB data. • Stakeholder consultation.
Woodland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ancient woodland, ghylls, shaws. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maps, ancient woodland data. • Stakeholder consultation.
Field and heath	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small irregularly shaped fields often bounded by (and forming a mosaic with) hedgerows and small woodlands, typically used for livestock grazing. • Presence of heathland – representative of the AONB and a nationally rare feature. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maps, field survey, HLC. • Heaths AONB data. • Stakeholder consultation.
Views	Views into or out of the AONB.	
Values of all landscapes		
Perceptual qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Particularly high scenic quality indicated by harmonious pattern of features or scenic contrasts. • Sense of tranquillity or 'remoteness'. • Important, distinctive or memorable views. • Dark skies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maps, field survey. • Stakeholder consultation. • CPRE dark skies mapping.
Historic character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heritage designations (Conservation Areas, listed buildings, Scheduled Monuments). • Historic Parks and Gardens – both from the National Register compiled by Historic England, and from the Kent Compendium. • Intact historic (medieval) landscape character indicated by a prevalence of medieval historic landscape types. • Relics of the iron brick and tile industries – including ponds, pits and archaeological features. • Scattered man made ponds relics of industry, and agricultural activities such as marling. • Routeways. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kent Compendium of Historic Parks and Gardens. • Register of Parks and Gardens by Historic England. • Stakeholder consultation. • HLC. • HERS.
Natural character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ecological or wildlife designations (e.g. Local Wildlife Sites, SSSI). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data from Natural England, TWBC, stakeholder consultation. • Kent Wildlife Trust and Kent Nature Partnership.
Built character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locally distinctive buildings (including castles, windmills, abbeys, oast houses, parish churches). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field survey, historic farmsteads data, listed buildings • Stakeholder consultation.
Recreational value, where experience of the landscape is important	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recreational routes. • Outdoor visitor attractions. • Quiet rural lanes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shown on OS 1:25,000 scale map. • Stakeholder consultation.
Functional value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special function as a setting to designated landscapes or towns, as a visual backdrop or 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field survey. • Stakeholder

	open gap.	consultation.
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Summary

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

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

The landscape is peppered with small medieval and post medieval excavations for marl or iron ore, many of which are now ponds, and other earthworks associated with early industries. There are also in sandstone areas localised quarries for building stone and in clay areas excavations associated with brick and tile works all now disused.

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

Tunbridge Wells - Borough Landscape Character Assessment

Figure 1

Landscape Character Areas and Landscape Character Types

 District Boundary

Fruit Belt

- 1 - Matfield/Brenchley
- 2 - Horsmonden
- 3 - Goudhurst
- 4 - Cranbrook

Wooded Farmland

- 5 - Speldhurst
- 6 - Benenden
- 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/Capel
- 15 - Bedgebury

River Valleys

- 16 - Rother Valley
- 17 - Medway Valley
- 18 - Teise Valley

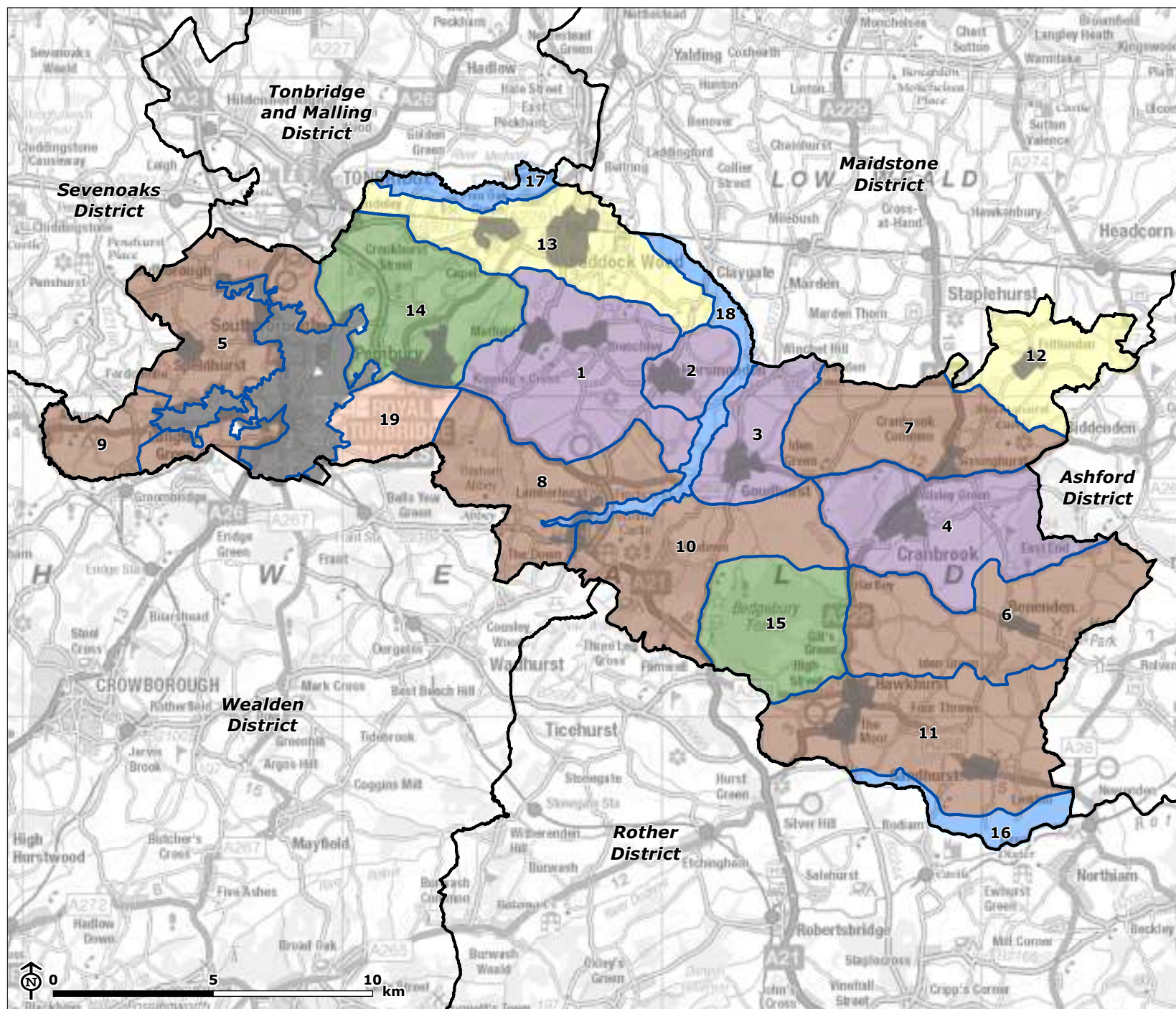
Open Farmland

- 19 - Bayhall

Key Settlement

Source: TWBC

Map Scale @ A4: 1:170,000



Tunbridge Wells - Borough Landscape Character Assessment

Figure 2

Landscape Character Context

□ District Boundary

Ashford LCA

High Weald

24. Clapper Hill Wooded Farmlands

Low Weald

13. Biddenden and High Halden Farmlands

16. Haffenden Quarter Farmlands

17. Hareplain Farmlands

22. Smarden Bell Farmlands

Valleys

6. Beult Valley Farmlands

Sevenoaks LCA

Charts

10b. Sevenoaks Western Chart

10c. Sevenoaks Eastern Chart

High Weald

13a. Cowden to Chiddingstone High Weald

13b. Chiddingstone Hoath Plateau
13c. Penshurst and Leigh High Weald

13d. Fordcombe High Weald

Low Weald

11a. Sevenoaks Low Weald

11b. Leigh Low Weald

Wealden River Valleys

12a. Eden Valley

12b. Upper Medway Valley

Please refer to Figure 1 for the Tunbridge Wells LCAs

Source: TWBC

Map Scale @ A4: 1:170,000

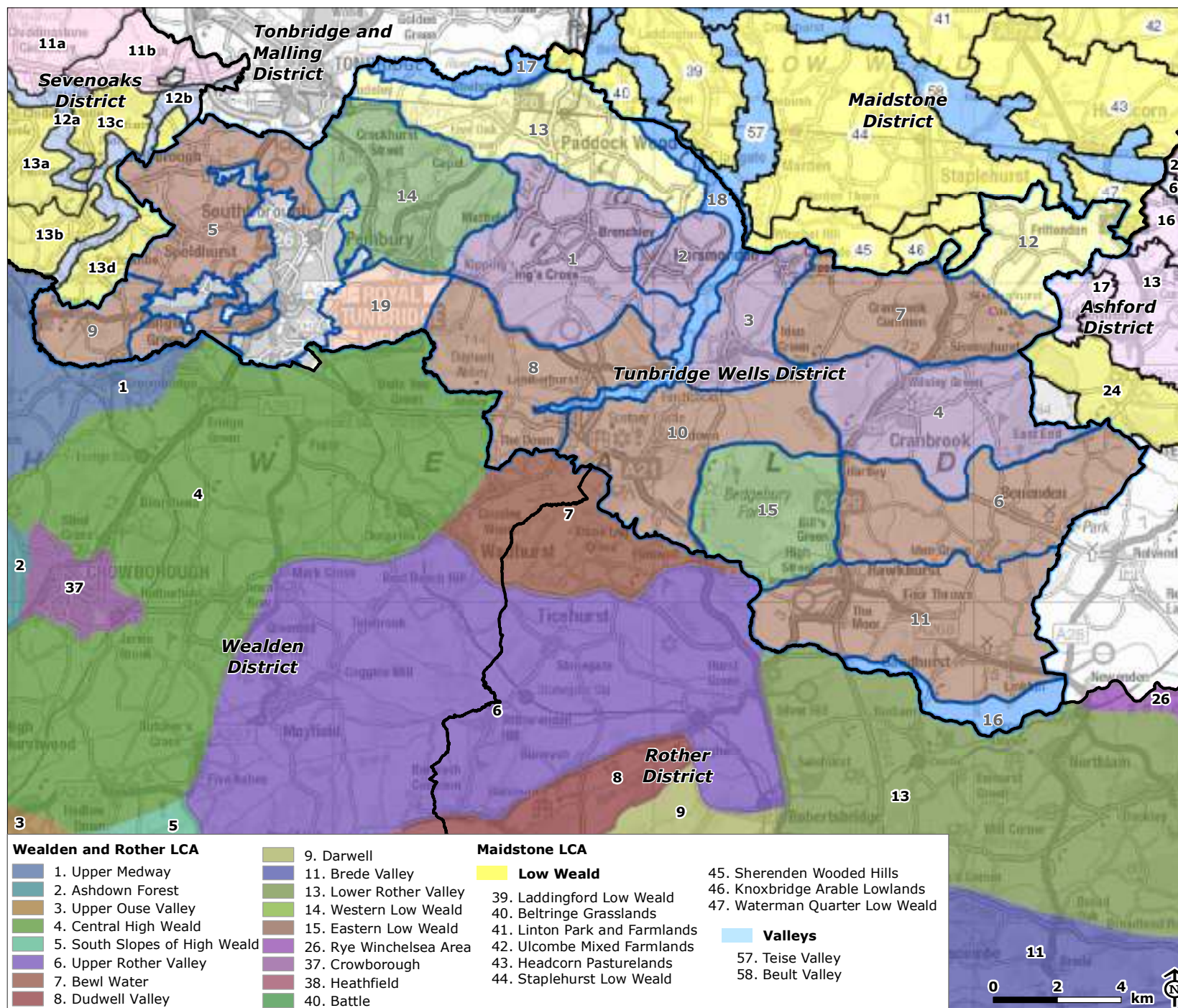







Figure 3

**Landscape Character Areas
in Relation to the High
Weald AONB**

-  District Boundary
-  High Weald AONB
-  Key Settlement
-  National Character Area
-  Landscape Character Area

Fruit Belt

- 1 - Matfield/Brenchley
- 2 - Horsmonden
- 3 - Goudhurst
- 4 - Cranbrook

Wooded Farmland

- 5 - Speldhurst
- 6 - Benenden
- 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/Capel
- 15 - Bedgebury

River Valleys

- 16 - Rother Valley
- 17 - Medway Valley
- 18 - Teise Valley

Open Farmland

- 19 - Bayham

Source: TWBC

Map Scale @ A4: 1:170,000

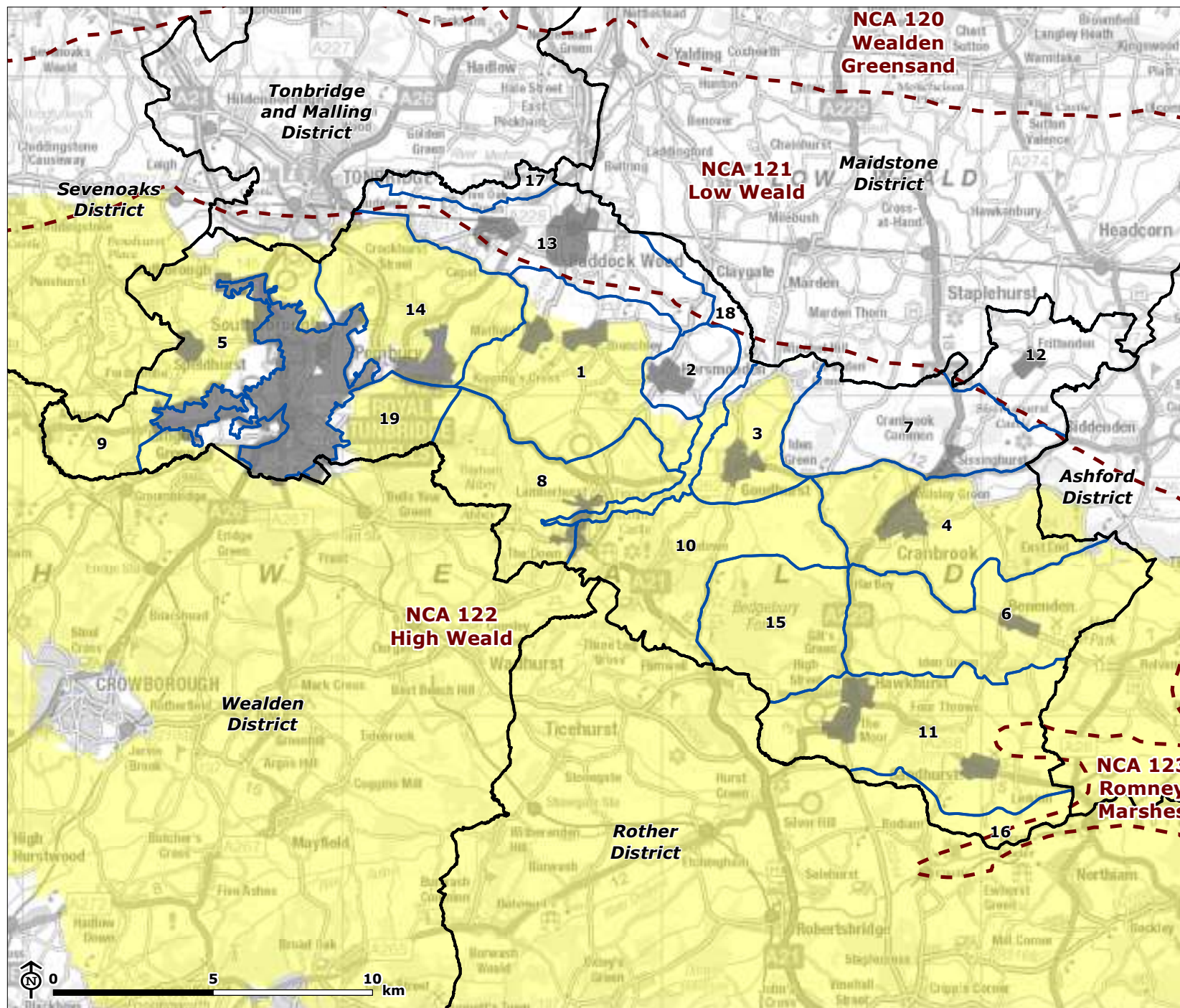



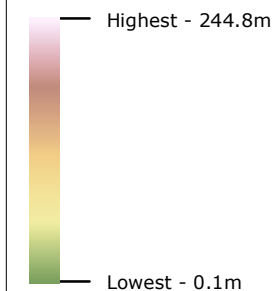


Figure 4

Topography

-  District Boundary
-  Landscape Character Area
-  Key Settlement

Elevation



Source: TWBC

Map Scale @ A4: 1:170,000

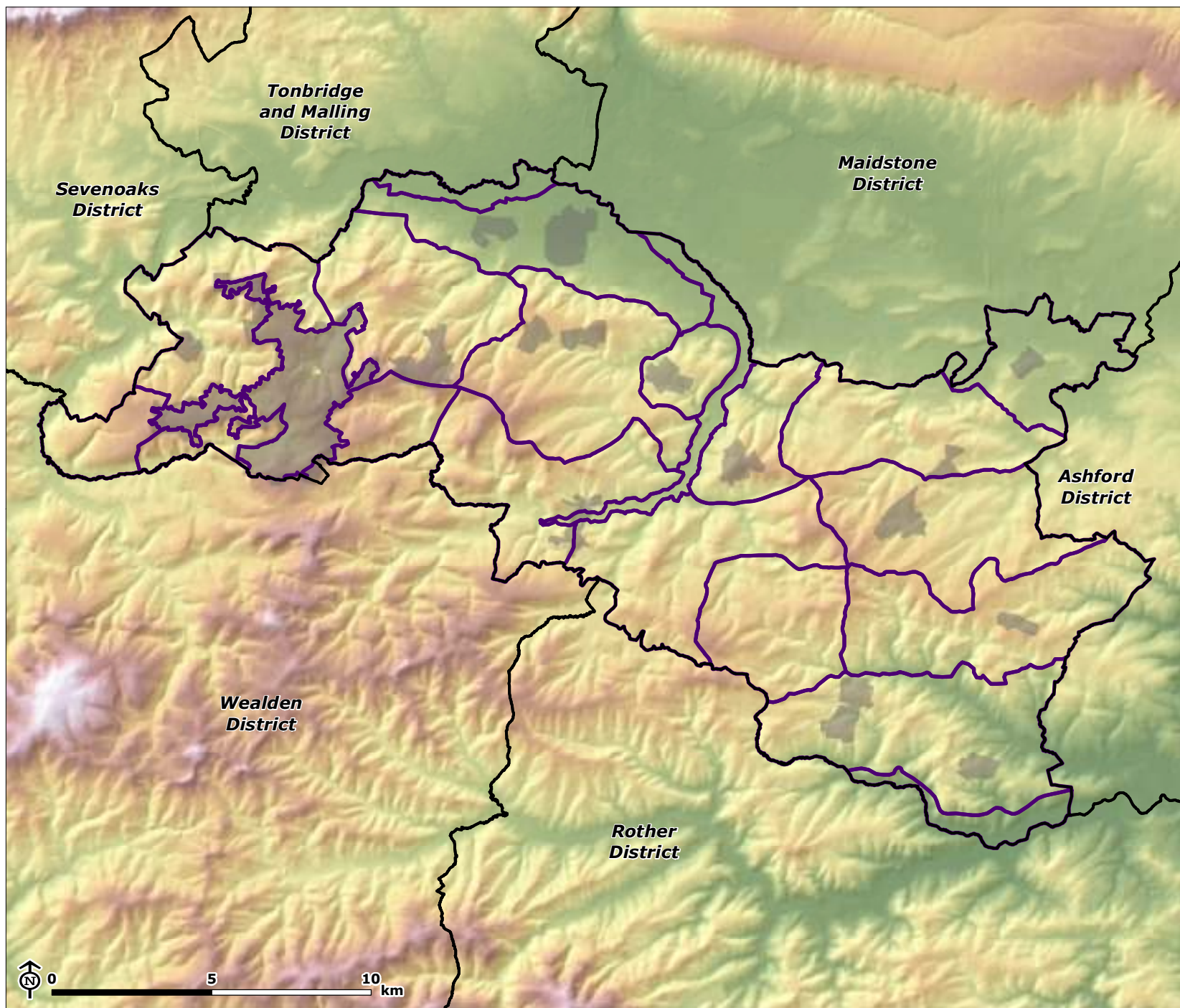










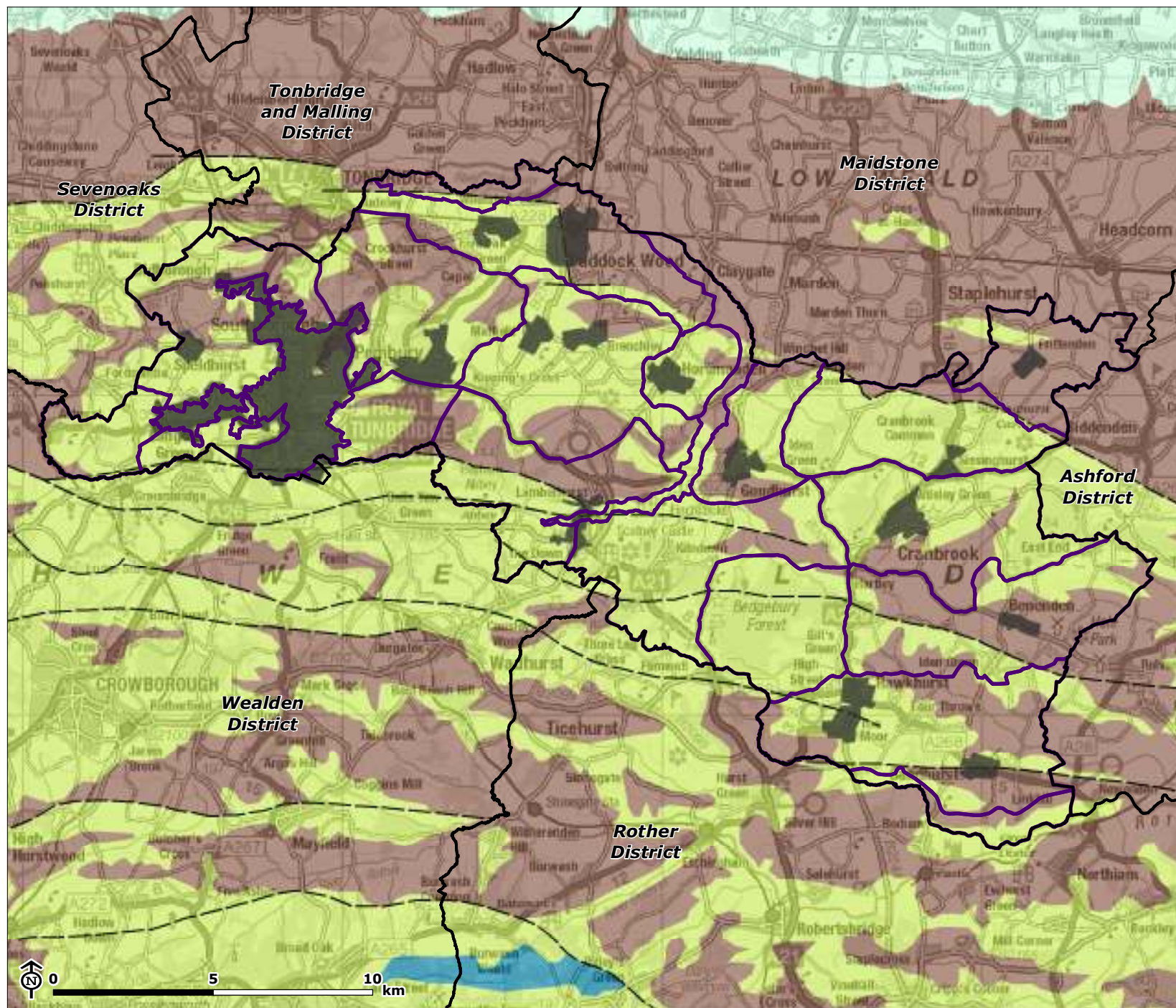
Figure 5

Geology

-  District Boundary
-  Landscape Character Area
-  Key Settlement
-  Fault at rockhead

Bedrock Geology

-  Lower Greensand Group - Sandstone and Mudstone
-  Wealden Group - Mudstone, Siltstone and Sandstone
-  Wealden Group - Sandstone and Siltstone, Interbedded
-  Purbeck Limestone Group - Limestone and Mudstone, Interbedded










Source: TWBC, BGS

Map Scale @ A4: 1:170,000



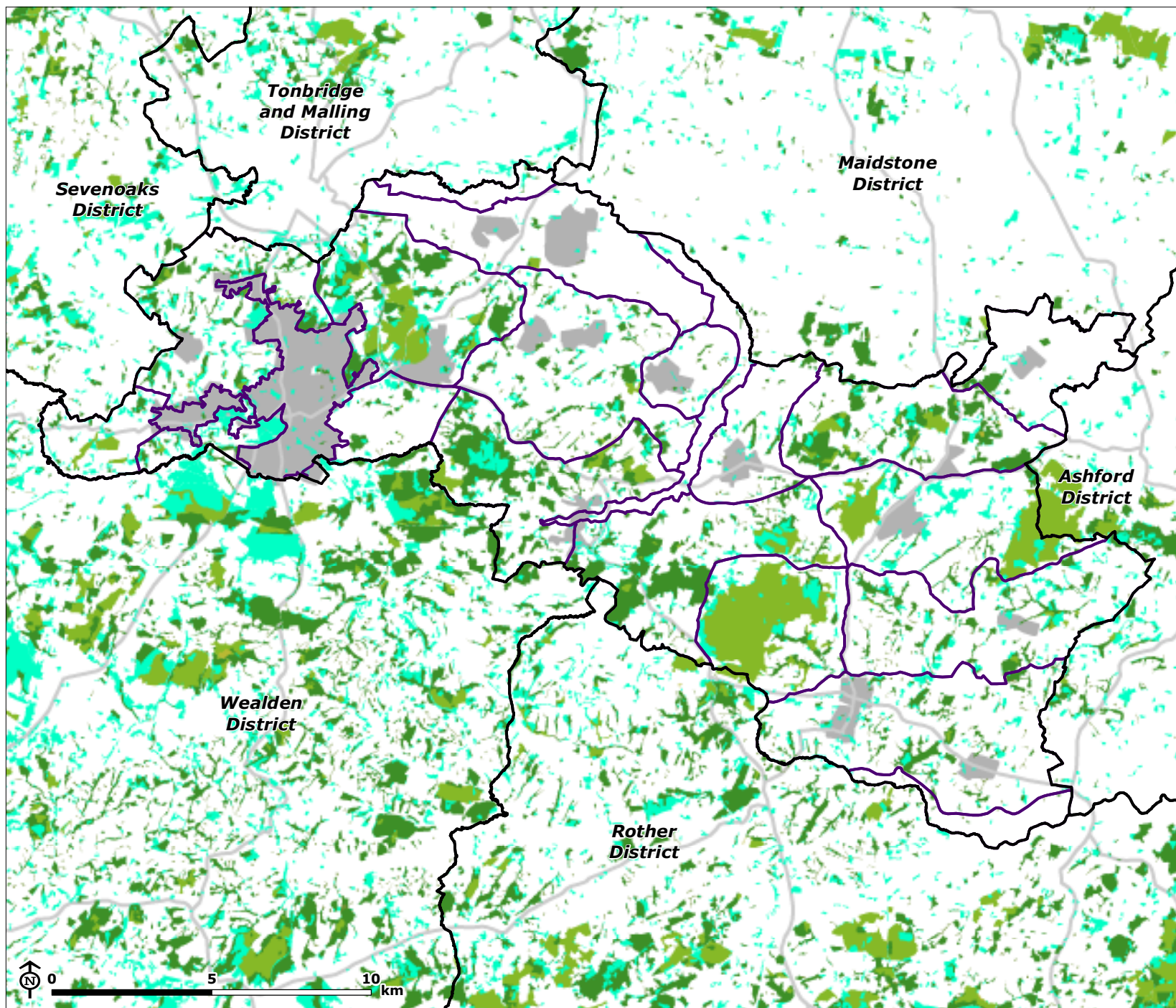
Figure 6

Woodland

-  District Boundary
-  Landscape Character Area
-  Key Settlement
-  Primary roads
-  Ancient Woodland
-  Ancient Replanted Woodland (PAWS)
-  Other Woodland

Source: TWBC, BGS

Map Scale @ A4: 1:170,000

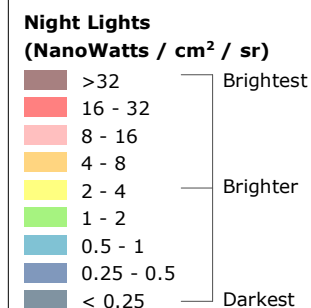


Tunbridge Wells - Borough Landscape Character Assessment

Figure 7

Light Pollution

- District Boundary
- Landscape Character Area



Each pixel shows the level of radiance (night light) shining up into the night sky. These have been categorised into colour bands to distinguish between different light levels.

For more information about the Night Lights data and the methods behind its creation, and an interactive national map, visit nightlight.cpre.org.uk/

Source: TWBC, CPRE, LUC

Map Scale @ A4: 1:170,000

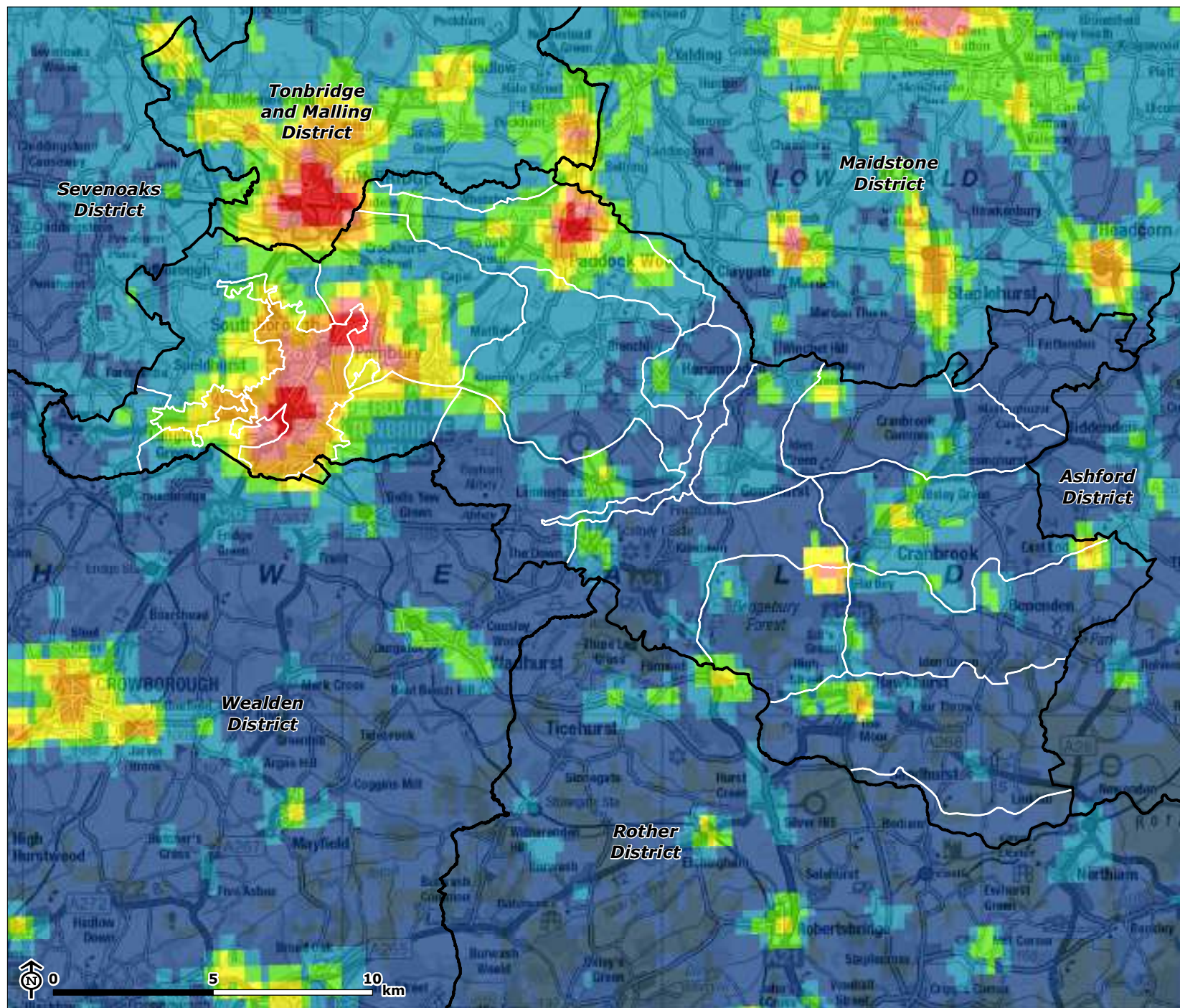














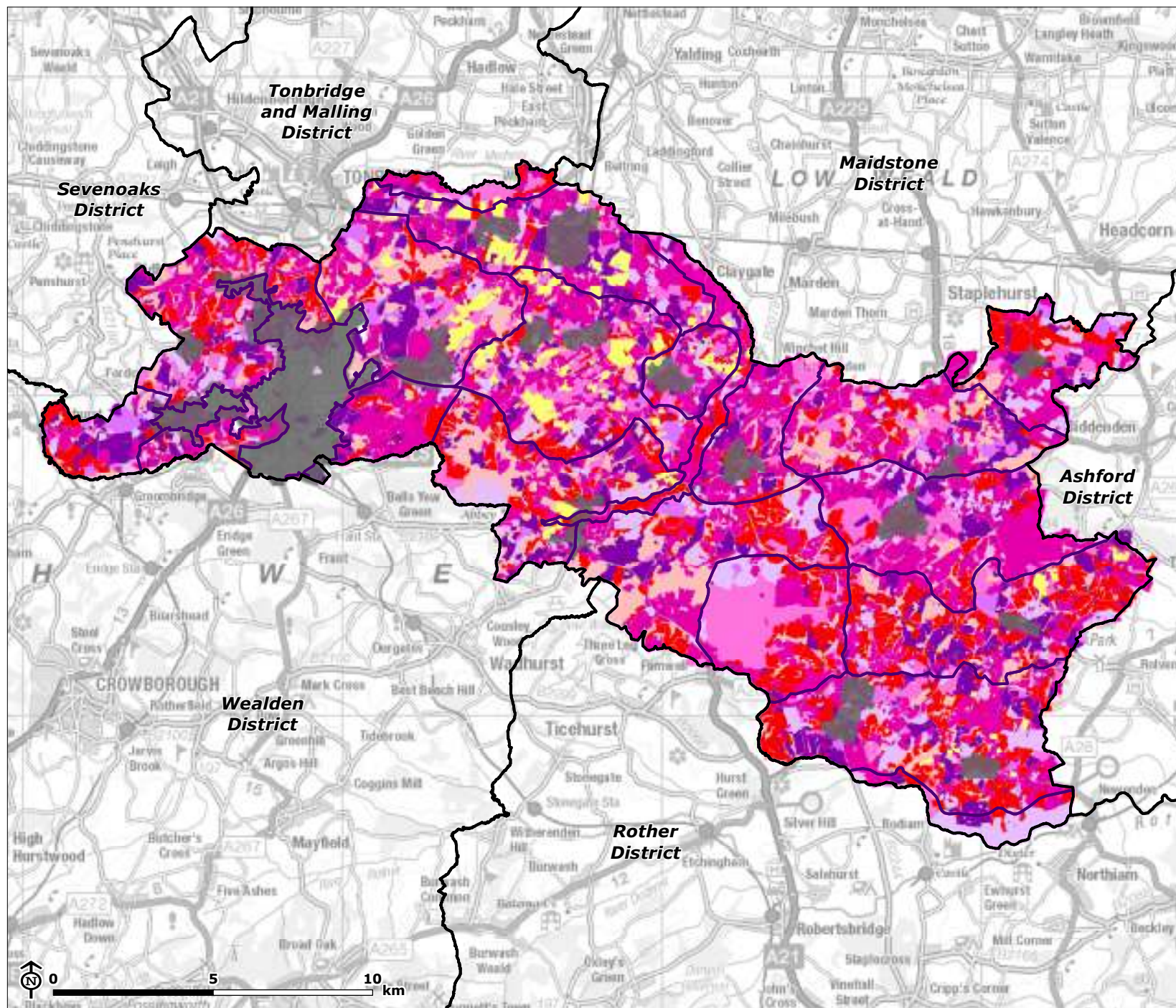
Figure 8

**Historic Landscape
Character**

-  District Boundary
-  Landscape Character Area
-  Key Settlement

Period of Origin

-  Prehistoric
-  Early medieval
-  Medieval
-  Early post-medieval
-  Late post-medieval
-  Early modern
-  Early 20th century
-  Late 20th century
-  Early 21st century





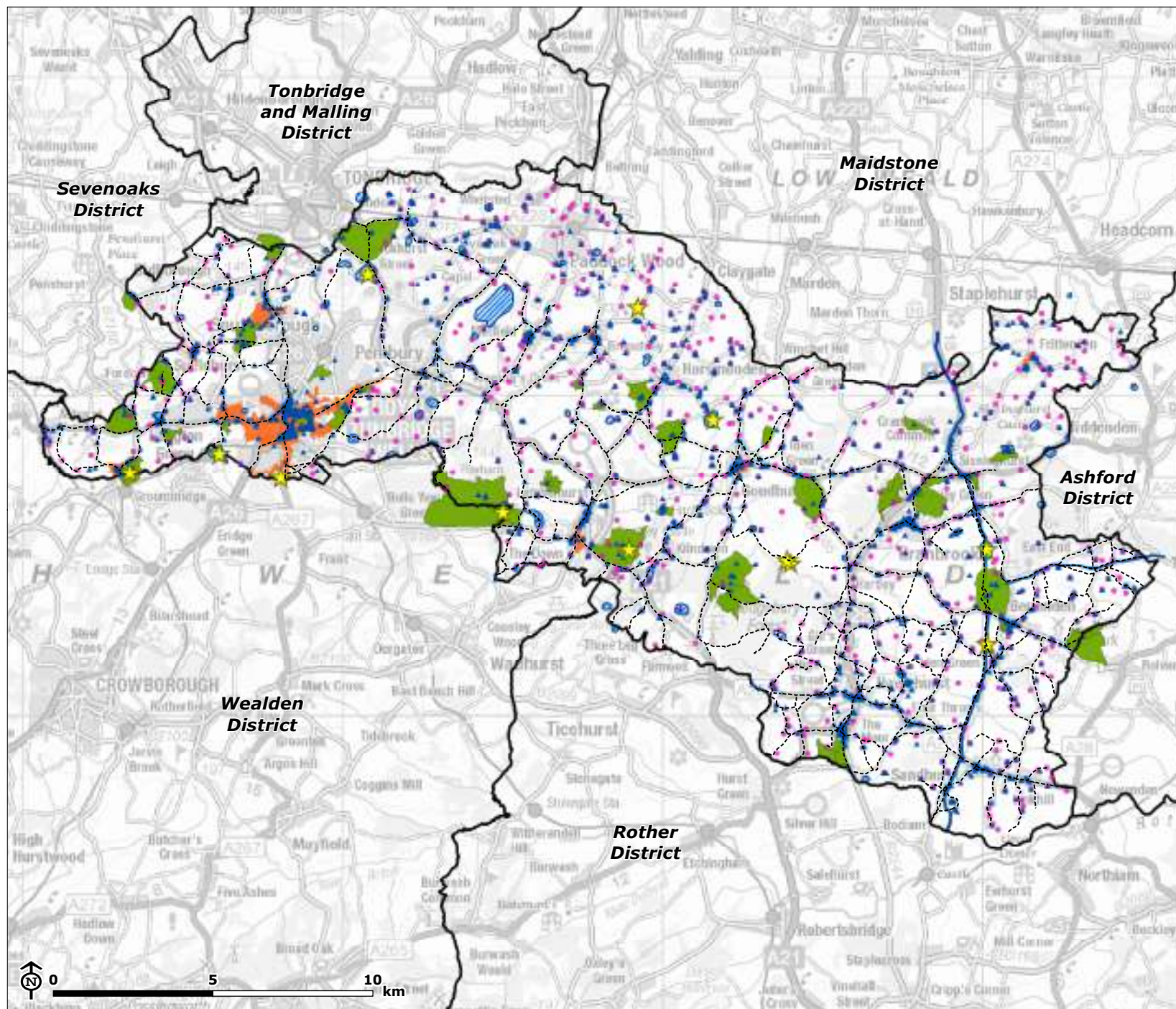
Source: TWBC

Map Scale @ A4: 1:170,000



**Figure 9: Historic
Landscape Features**

-  District Boundary
-  Historic routeways (High Weald AONB unit)
-  Areas of Archaeological Potential
-  Historic Parks and Gardens
-  Conservation Areas
-  Listed Building
-  Historic farmstead
-  Scheduled Monument











Source: TWBC, Historic England

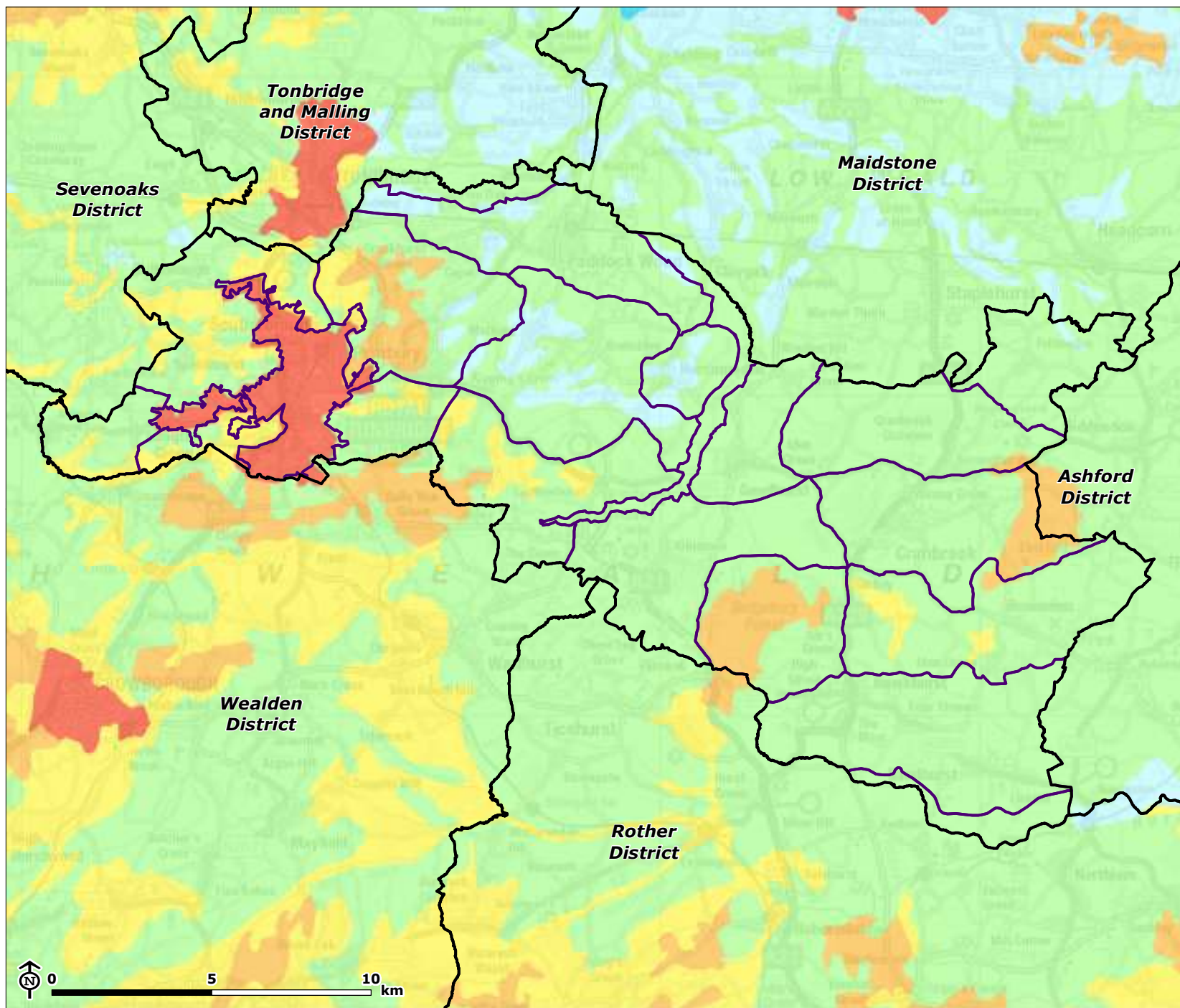
Map Scale @ A4: 1:170,000



Figure 10

**Agricultural Land
Classification**

-  District Boundary
 Landscape Character Area
Agricultural Land Classification
 Grade 1
 Grade 2
 Grade 3
 Grade 4
 Non Agricultural
 Urban



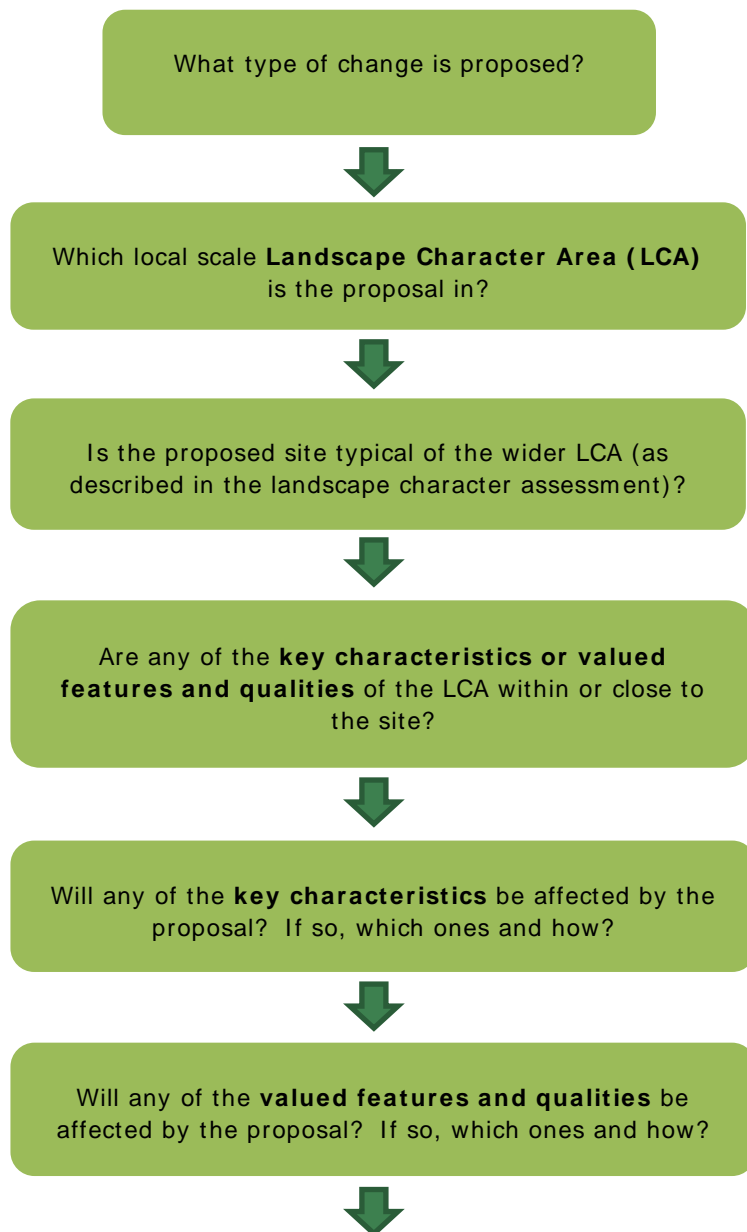
Source: TWBC

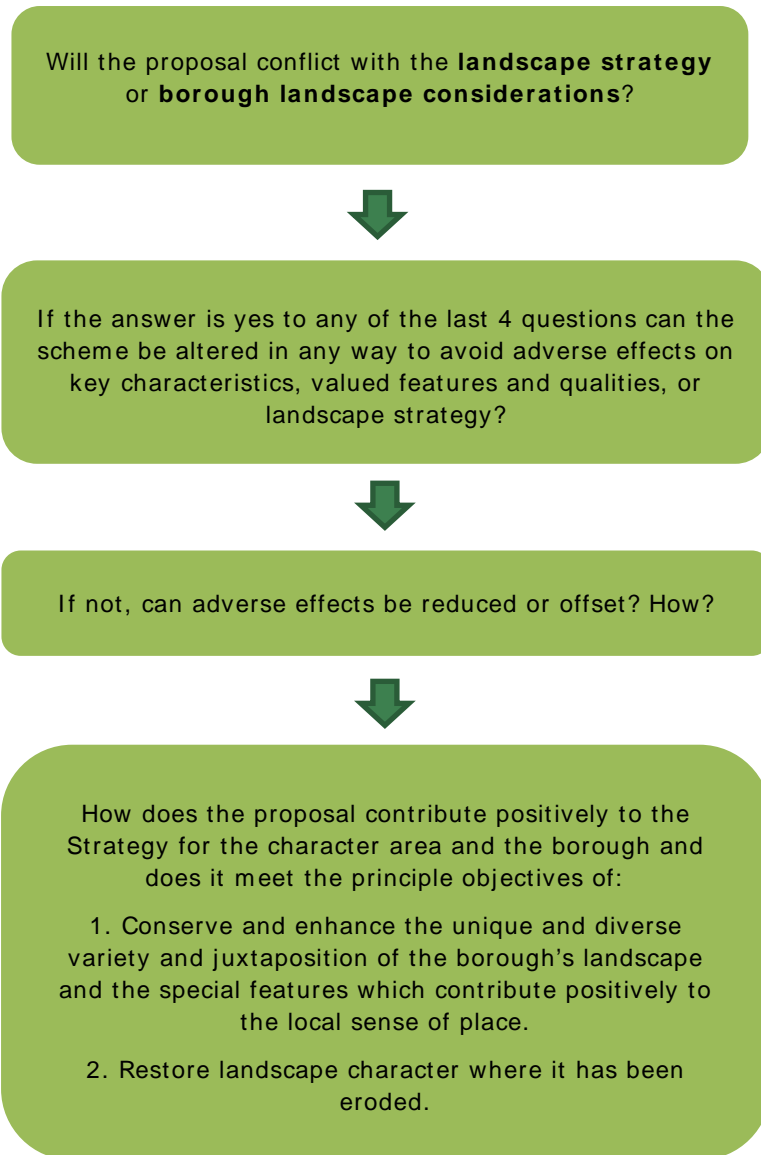
Map Scale @ A4: 1:170,000



2 User Guide

This User Guide is designed for both developers and decision-makers* to help them consider landscape character when planning any type of change. The guide is arranged around a number of key stages, setting out a series of questions as prompts to assist in using available information to shape proposals / assist in planning decisions.





* The landscape character assessment has a wide range of applications and forms a spatial framework and baseline for example for monitoring landscape change including climate change and a place based approach for understanding ecosystem goods and services. These are all potential applications of the baseline LCA produced in this document.

3 Landscape Objectives, Detractors, Changes and Opportunities

Overall Borough Landscape Character Objectives

- 3.1 The following objectives will be applied to the landscape of the borough:
- 1. Conserve and enhance the unique and diverse variety and juxtaposition of the borough's landscape and the special features which contribute positively to the local sense of place.**
 - 2. Restore landscape character where it has been eroded.**

Detractors and Changes in the Landscape

- 3.2 It is important to identify the past, current and potential future changes in the landscape which result in changes that detract from its character, as well as possible enhancement opportunities, in order to be able to achieve the landscape character objectives. The main detracting elements and enhancement opportunities which can be applied to the whole borough are described below. Where development is acceptable, opportunities for landscape enhancements to overcome identified detracting elements should be explored. Planning permissions should be tied to the management of land and landscape features where feasible, for example through the use of a planning agreement.
- 3.3 Main elements that detract from the landscape character of the borough and opportunities for enhancement:

New development out of character with local context

- 1) **Increasing suburbanisation of the wider rural landscape with the introduction of inappropriate features and details such as coniferous hedge boundaries, tennis courts, close boarded fencing, encroachment into or loss of farmland to garden and other amenity uses, inappropriate advertisements, security lighting, inappropriate ornamentation of traditional buildings, conversions of traditional buildings and poorly designed/ over-engineered stables and sand schools.**

The Local Planning Authority will resist these changes through the application of policy but where these issues do arise they will seek to control such features by ensuring that the design of new development in the rural area is sympathetic to the character of the landscape and by giving consideration to the use of planning conditions or a Section 106 Legal Agreement restricting permitted development rights. Proposals for new development should incorporate locally sensitive boundary treatments and planting schedules to allow integration into the wider landscape. Opportunities for native woodland and tree planting in association with new development should be considered at an early stage. The Local Planning Authority encourages people to seek pre-application advice prior to submissions of planning applications.

- 2) **The presence of large scale, modern rural buildings can have a considerable visual impact. In addition, the conversion of buildings in keeping with the locality to other uses can introduce new intrusive elements.**

For all new development the impact of the building and ancillary uses such as car parks, storage areas which change the character of the spaces surrounding the building, and an increase in local traffic will need to be carefully assessed. Proposals for new development should ensure sensitive siting and design of buildings using the notification procedure. The Borough Council will consider

the use of planning conditions to require removal of buildings once the use has ceased. The nature and scale of diversification activities needs to be carefully assessed within the context of local landscape character and the rural economy.

3) Dilution of the strong local vernacular with sometimes poor interpretation of traditional building styles and layouts.

New development and building restoration should incorporate locally sensitive materials and techniques and traditional layout patterns. The Borough Council will seek to minimise the visual impact of buildings, boundary treatments and where possible temporary features appropriate to rural pursuits through careful siting and design.

4) Loss of landscape features due to development. Existing landscape features should be conserved within development schemes.

Conservation of retained features and their long term management will be secured by legal agreement and or condition. The Borough Council will expect developers to raise awareness of the importance of the features to new users and will encourage public engagement and participation in conservation through bodies such as the Kent High Weald partnership and High Weald AONB Unit. The Borough Council will also seek appropriate mitigation/ compensation where necessary.

5) Intensification of modest rural properties through extensions and the addition of large ancillary buildings and/ or redevelopment resulting in a disproportionate number of larger country houses, with the consequence of pressure for commensurate amenity facilities, resulting in a loss of smaller and mid-sized properties and increased suburbanisation undermining a balance in the historic settlement pattern and rural character.

The Local Planning Authority will seek to limit extensions and ancillary buildings to modest proportions and to retain tight residential curtilages. Redevelopment of rural properties will need to be properly justified and be subject to the same constraints and expected to be respectful of the local vernacular architecture.

Pressures on valued and sensitive landscape features and qualities

6) Vulnerability of the ridge tops and open valley floors to insensitive development or potentially intrusive infrastructure such as tall telecommunications masts, wind turbines and pylons.

Where development is acceptable ensure sensitive siting and design in terms of local landscape character. Siting should be below the crest of the ridge or hilltop utilising existing or new native planting as a screen.

7) Loss of sense of remoteness and the special perceptual qualities of peacefulness and tranquillity.

Uses which are visually intrusive, noisy, require high levels of lighting or attract substantial new activity and damage the peaceful and tranquil character of a remote area should be carefully controlled and, in remote areas, strongly resisted.

8) Increasing artificial light pollution which results in the loss of dark skies, the loss of the sense of remoteness and adverse effects on wildlife.

Uses which introduce artificial light pollution should be carefully controlled and, in remote areas, strongly resisted.

Intrusion of transport and infrastructure

9) Traffic pressures leading to a decline in the quality of many vulnerable rural lanes resulting in the erosion of delicate verges and sandstone banks, and the introduction of inappropriate management including widening, kerbing, urban signage and roadside furniture.

Reference should be made to the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance on Rural Lanes which identifies a number of enhancement opportunities.

- 10) The construction of telecommunications masts and towers in many locations, including wide valleys, ridgelines, and upland plateaux, can have a potentially high landscape impact and effect on rural character.**

Where such structures fall within planning control the sensitive siting of such telecommunications infrastructure is essential in protecting the landscape character of the borough and planning conditions will usually be applied to ensure that telecommunications infrastructure is removed and the land reinstated if the use has ceased.

Changes in agriculture

- 3.4 The agricultural landscape remains in a state of change, with increasing field sizes and some deterioration of boundary hedgerows threatening the intimate patchwork of pastures and orchards. Whilst grazing for livestock farming remains common, grazing land is increasingly being used for recreational purposes, particularly around settlements. There has also been an increase in land used for set-aside, resulting in a less managed landscape that conversely has benefits for wildlife. Current provision for set aside ends in 2020 and the prospect of Brexit is likely to bring further change during the lifetime of this document.
- 3.5 Until the 1950s the Weald was one of the slowest changing regions in Britain. The decline in mixed farming and woodland management puts increasing pressure on the long term survival of the distinctive landscape character of the High Weald.
- 11) A larger-scale arable landscape in some areas replacing the intimate patchwork of pastures, leading to the loss of landscape detail and variety in the form of ponds, copses, hedged and treed field boundaries and shaw woodlands, orchards and hop gardens.**

Increase in the size of farm holdings threatens to break down the traditional small scale approach to farming – particularly in the High Weald.

- 12) Loss of unimproved and semi-improved grassland.**

There is a lack of recognition for the management of this important and vulnerable habitat which occurs in many areas. Unmanaged old grassland soon loses its botanical interest as coarse grasses swamp delicate species. Any enhancements should pursue opportunities for re-creation of species rich grasslands, using seed of local provenance and following the example of the Weald Meadows Initiative, promoted by the High Weald Unit. Loss of important grassland should be resisted.

- 13) Loss and decline of traditional orchards and hop gardens resulting in the disappearance of detailed landscape pattern, colour and texture.**

Orchards and hop gardens also provide an important setting for many of the settlements within the borough. In Tunbridge Wells borough there was a decline of 5.5% in the area of orchard and hops between 1990 and 2008. However, there is anecdotal evidence that hop farming is seeing resurgence as a result of the growing craft beer industry, resulting in the replanting of some hop fields in Kent. There has also been an increase in vineyards.

Any enhancements should focus on opportunities for replanting, restoration and management including maximising wildlife habitat value in conjunction with development proposals or utilising grant aid where available.

- 14) Reduction in the number of agricultural land holdings (particularly in the Low Weald⁵), most notably in small holdings less than 5ha in size due to conversion to pony paddocks, hobby farming and domestic use, or developed for housing.**

Sufficient traditional farm buildings need to be retained in agricultural and rural business use to help both maintain the viability of holdings and limit the construction of modern replacements. Reference should be made to the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance on the Re-Use of Rural Buildings.

⁵ Agricultural Lane Use in Tunbridge Wells, Vaughan Redfern.

- 15) **Increase in hobby farming is a threat to the integrity of holdings and the traditional structure of agriculture, leading to a break down in land use, management and biodiversity/ habitat maintenance.**

Poor land management

- 16) **Problems of poor land management resulting in fragmentation of land, lack of maintenance of hedgerows and boundary features, changes in sward structure and the construction of modern outbuildings for livestock, plant and horses.**

Opportunities to ensure the retention of traditional field boundaries and sympathetic management of pastures should be explored through the development process.

- 17) **Decline in woodland cover and woodland management, particularly coppice woodland management, resulting in a reduction in both the landscape and ecological value of woodlands.**

Any enhancements should promote woodland management opportunities in association with development or where grants are available. This could be allied with the woodland marketing and management measures developed through the Woodland Enterprise Centre - and the High Weald Unit. Distinctive ghyll woodlands, many within valleys, and strips of shaw woodland around fields are important landscape features in many parts of the borough and should be protected, managed and, where necessary, reinforced.

- 18) **Decline of hedges and hedgerow shelter belts resulting in a much more open, large-scale landscape without small-scale patterned texture which is characteristic of many locations.**

Some are unmanaged, with gaps evident, or heavily flailed. Others have been lost or removed.

Any enhancements should pursue opportunities for restoration, management and gapping up of hedgerows through the development process or where grants can be obtained. For the older hedgerows, management on longer rotation cycles of trimming, laying or coppicing is recommended. Alternatively, better trimming techniques to create an 'A' shape hedge with a thick base can be used to revive neglected hedges. More recently planted hedges should be restored through laying and gapping up. Sapling hedge trees should be protected by tagging. Opportunities for replanting hedges along former boundary lines, using locally native species, should also be considered. Guidance developed by the Weald Hedgerows Initiative and the landscape and nature conservation advice notes should be followed when proposals for development come forward.

- 19) **Loss of ponds through development and poor management, including planting and invasion of ornamental species, and silting up through neglect.**

Any enhancements should ensure sensitive conservation and management of existing ponds, and the creation of new suitably located and designed ponds, as part of landscaping proposals as promoted by the Weald Pond Initiative. Ponds are an important small-scale landscape feature and habitat. Fishing lakes tend to have engineered forms which together with requirements to minimise waterside tree planting can often have a negative effect on landscape character and where intensively managed can have a detrimental effect on wildlife.

- 20) **Neglect of the landscape, particularly small parcels, as a possible prelude to development.**

Rural Pursuits

- 21) **Changes to character and landscape degradation as a result of poorly designed or over intensive use of equestrian facilities and associated pressure for 24hr staffing, security and lighting.**

Facilities should be located close to and ideally linked to adjacent residential properties where infrastructure already exists and not placed in isolated locations. Sand schools should be permitted only where they are part of an established facility where minimal ground works are required and landscape character and important features will not be adversely effected. Stabling

should be provided only for the number of horses that that adjacent landownership can support when suitably managed.

22) Noise and degradation of land from intensive activities such as paintballing and motor sports.

Such activities can cause significant and irreparable harm to important landscape features, habitats and soils. The noise generated by such activities can significantly effect perceptual qualities and enjoyment of the countryside over a wide area and owing to its sporadic nature disturb wildlife. The location, duration and timing of such activities should be carefully controlled and are unlikely to be acceptable in sensitive locations.

Development Pressures

- 3.6 There is continued development pressure across the borough and conversions of rural buildings to commercial and residential use account for a small number of permissions each year but steadily continue year on year. These can have considerable impact in rural areas and need to be carefully considered, particularly in the context of incremental changes of small individual developments which can combine to form a significant change. Changes to permitted development planning legislation in recent years have allowed the conversion of rural buildings into residential use in some parts of the borough without the need for planning permission. This assessment can be used as a guide for developers even if planning permission is not required.
- 3.7 Changes in agricultural practises and the need for modern efficient buildings makes many older buildings redundant and consequently gives rise to a number of more obtrusive and larger agricultural developments where siting, design and landscaping are more important factors. Encouraging the re-use of redundant farm buildings may help to retain important elements of character as well as provide employment in the rural areas.
- 3.8 Renewable technologies are being strongly promoted for all areas but pose their own problems. While bringing significant environmental benefits they can be visually intrusive (e.g. wind turbines, solar panels) or involve significant landscape changes (e.g. ground source heat pumps). Biomass energy in the form of woodchips is generally viewed as having a positive impact on the landscape as it supports the local forestry industry and encourages good woodland management. Any benefits that renewable technologies bring must be carefully weighed against any harm to the landscape.
- 3.9 Intensification of modest rural properties through extensions and the addition of large ancillary buildings and/or redevelopment resulting in a disproportionate number of larger country houses, with the consequence of pressure for commensurate amenity facilities, resulting in a loss of smaller and mid-sized properties and increased suburbanisation undermining a balance in the historic settlement pattern and rural character.
- 3.10 The Local Planning Authority encourages people to seek pre-application advice prior to submissions of planning applications.

Opportunities for Enhancement

- 3.11 Further local enhancement opportunities are described separately for each of the 19 Local Character Areas in **Chapter 4**. Where appropriate, reference should also be made to the following Supplementary Planning Documents and guidance which have been published by the Council:
 - Rural Lanes SPD, January 1998 and any subsequent replacement.
 - Guidance Notes for Applicants: Landscape and Nature Conservation, 2002.
 - Farmstead Assessment Guidance SPD, February 2016.

4 Landscape Character Area Assessments

- 4.1 The 19 Character Areas are described in detail on the following pages and shown below and in **Figure 1**. Each are grouped within six broader character types as shown in **Table 4-1**.

Table 4-1 Character Types and Areas

<p>Fruit Belt: An intensively managed and cultivated series of landscapes comprising orchard plantations extending across sandstone plateaux, rolling slopes and ridges which in turn are intersected in parts by intricate wooded ghyll valleys and sunken lanes. The undulating ridge around Goudhurst has a more intricate, rural landscape comprising smaller orchards, occasional hop fields and open to long views.</p>	<p>1) Matfield/ Brenchley</p> <p>2) Horsmonden</p> <p>3) Goudhurst</p> <p>4) Cranbrook</p>
<p>Wooded Farmland: Extremely varied and complex landscape. Distinct, high ridges with weathered sandstone outcrops intersected by ravine woodland, beech and holly hedges and sunken lanes. These contrast with unimproved pasture and common land. Other characteristics include rolling upland areas, incised by valleys, with small settlements and pastures hidden within a framework of deciduous, ghyll and shaw woodlands.</p>	<p>5) Speldhurst</p> <p>6) Benenden</p> <p>7) Sissinghurst</p> <p>8) Bayham</p> <p>9) Ashurst</p> <p>10) Kilndown</p> <p>11) Hawkhurst</p>
<p>Low Weald Farmland: Flat or gently undulating small-scale lowland clay vale landscape. Mixture of permanent pasture with some larger arable fields studded with small ponds and water ditches set within a framework of mature trees and derelict hedgerows. Around Paddock Wood the agricultural landscape opens with extensive arable fields, local areas of hops and dwarf orchards.</p>	<p>12) Frittenden Pastures</p> <p>13) Paddock Wood/ Five Oak Green</p>
<p>Forested Plateaux: Comprehensive forest cover comprising a mosaic of semi-natural woodlands, coniferous plantation and managed coppice and heath.</p>	<p>14) Pembury/ Capel</p> <p>15) Bedgebury</p>
<p>River Valleys: Medway and Rother are wide, flat, open, lowland river valleys supporting arable fields crossed by a network of reed filled drainage ditches. Teise is narrower and comprises an arable landscape with occasional hop fields set against a backdrop of tall hedges and copses.</p>	<p>16) Rother Valley</p> <p>17) Medway Valley</p> <p>18) Teise Valley</p>
<p>Open Farmland: Intensively managed open arable land east of Royal Tunbridge Wells.</p>	<p>19) Bayhall</p>

The Status, Meaning and Limitations of Boundary Lines

- 4.2 The precision of boundaries drawn around landscape character areas and types varies with the scale and level of detail of the assessment. This assessment has been mapped at a scale of 1:25,000 which means that it is suitable for use at this scale. The scale of this classification will need to be taken into account whenever the assessment is used to ensure that the level of detail is compatible with the intended application. In reality landscape character does not change abruptly at the boundaries. Boundaries therefore often represent transitions rather than marked changes on the ground.

Changes to Character Area Boundaries

- 4.3 Minor amendments were made to the character area boundaries in order that the boundaries follow landscape or physical features on the ground wherever possible, and following consultation. The alterations are summarised in the following table.

Character Area	Changes to boundaries and reason
LCA 1/ 13	Boundary between LCAs 1 and 13 amended to more closely follow the landform.
LCA 2/ 13	Boundary between LCAs 2 and 13 changed to follow the stream valley and floodplain.
LCA 9	Northern part of LCA 9 removed as it did not follow a defined boundary feature and for consistency of the area. Eastern boundary amended to align with landform.
LCA 11	Northern boundary amended to more closely follow landform.
LCA 13/ 17	Boundary between LCAs 13 and 17 amended to more closely follow the floodplain of the Medway.
LCA 18	River valley area refined to more closely follow the contours along the valley.
LCA 19	The small isolated parts of the character area were removed as they are considered to be part of the built-up area.

Structure of the Character Area Assessments

- 4.4 Each character area is presented separately for ease of use. Each one includes:
- A map showing the location of the character area in the Borough, and its boundaries overlaid on an Ordnance Survey base;
 - Summary description of the landscape and photos;
 - Key Characteristics: supported with descriptive text;
 - Information on features of past use and cultural evolution and how the historic landscape contributes to and influences our understanding of the present landscape, with reference to relevant heritage designations, Historic Environment Record Survey (HERS), Historic Parks and Gardens, Historic Landscape Characterisation Study (HLC), historic farmsteads, ancient routeways, fruit and hops and the former Paddock Wood to Hawkhurst Railway Line;
 - Information on features of natural landscape and priority habitats showing how these natural features and habitats contribute to landscape character and quality, with reference to ecological designations, BAP priority habitats, land owned by the Woodland Trust, RSPB and Kent Wildlife Trust;
 - Valued Features and Qualities: including information gathered during stakeholder consultation, values in relation to former SLAs and values associated with the High Weald AONB;
 - Detractors; and
 - Landscape Strategy: a succinct statement on the desired direction of change plus bullet points for management and enhancement.

Please note: due to the large size of this document, the Character Area Assessments numbers 1 to 19 have been uploaded individually alongside the main part of the document so that they can be viewed separately.



PART 2 CONTEXT & METHOD

5 Introduction

- 5.1 This document describes the character of the landscape in the borough of Tunbridge Wells. It updates the borough's previous landscape character assessment (2002, updated 2011). It has been prepared following the approach advocated by Natural England (An approach to landscape character assessment Ref NE579) involving a process of desk review, field survey and consultation.
- 5.2 The landscape of the borough has been assessed and divided into nineteen character areas (see **Figure 1**), based on their natural and perceptual characteristics and historical influences. It is important to note that the boundaries between the character areas are defined by lines drawn at a scale of 1:25,000 but in reality there are often areas of transition in between. The character areas cover the rural landscape of the borough which includes small rural towns and villages.
- 5.3 The aim of this document is to help ensure the retention and, where possible, the enhancement of the character of the borough's landscape for current and future generations.
- 5.4 The quality of the landscape across the whole borough is high with much of it very high, and has been identified by residents as one of its main assets: in a recent survey 'protecting the quality of the local environment' was identified by residents as the second highest priority for the Borough.⁶ The national importance of the borough's landscape is recognised by around 70% of it designated as part of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The landscape qualities of AONBs and National Parks are equal and therefore share the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. The unique and varied landscape is a result of historic land use in turn arising from natural characteristics such as soil, topography, climate and natural vegetation. It supports a wide range of natural habitats resulting in a richly varied diversity of flora and fauna.
- 5.5 The description of the landscape character areas within the borough will assist in assessing whether development is acceptable in a particular location and, if so, the appropriate design which would be in sympathy with the surroundings and perpetuate the valued landscape characteristics. All development should be designed to integrate into the character of its surroundings. This is important because modern land use and patterns of development are often very different from those which gave rise to the current landscape. The exact means of doing so will depend on its location, both in the wider context as well as its immediate locality. In many cases the long-term protection of the landscape character will necessitate active improvements to a particular locality, not just preservation of its existing state.
- 5.6 The document also has a range of other uses in landscape planning including acting as a baseline for monitoring change, such as climate change and a spatial framework based on landscape character to help understand and value ecosystem good and services.

Information and Data

- 5.7 The following key documents published since the 2002 assessment have been used to inform this update (a full list of references is provided in **Appendix 6**):
- Tunbridge Wells Borough Agricultural Land Classification Study 2014, Vaughan Redfern;
 - Farmsteads Assessment Guidance for Tunbridge Wells Borough. SPD, Adopted February 2016, English Heritage and High Weald AONB;

⁶ Borough Council Residents Survey Report 2015

- The High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2014-2019. High Weald Joint Advisory Committee, March 2014;
- A Review of the Kent Compendium's list of Historic Parks and Gardens for Tunbridge Wells Borough, April 2010. English Heritage, Kent County Council, Kent Gardens Trust, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council;
- A revision of the Ancient Woodland Inventory for Tunbridge Wells Borough, Kent, October 2007. Project carried out by the Weald and Downs Ancient Woodland Survey;
- Tunbridge Wells Borough Draft Revised Historic Landscape Characterisation (Revision of Kent HLC 2000). 2016, Dr Nicola R. Bannister;
- England's Light Pollution and Dark Skies, CPRE
(http://nightblight.cpre.org.uk/maps/?_ga=1.261577797.991296810.1473860004);
- Data sets on components of natural beauty provided by the High Weald AONB Unit.

5.8 A list of all the data used in GIS is provided in **Appendix 3**.

Public Consultation

5.9 Three workshops were held at different locations across the borough. The sessions were open to members of the public as well as local special interest groups and other stakeholders and included an interactive drop-in session followed by a short presentation and workshop. A summary of the format of the workshops and the comments and input from participants is provided in **Appendix 5**.

Your View app

5.10 'Your View' is a mobile app developed for the project to engage a public audience in identifying and sharing their opinions on the landscape in their area. The app included an option to upload a photograph of a particular view alongside descriptions of what people see as 'special' about the particular view. The app was advertised by the Council and was available from September 2016-November 2016.

6 Policy Background

- 6.1 It is intended that this document will be a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) following consultation in January 2016. The purpose of the SPD is to assist and offer best practice advice to all those involved in the development process, where such development may have an impact on the rural landscape. It will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications and will be a material consideration for planning appeals.
- 6.2 The SPD will be consistent with the strategies and policies contained in the Tunbridge Wells Local Plan (due to be adopted in 2018) which will replace the Borough Core Strategy Development Plan Document (2010) and the Tunbridge Wells Borough Local Plan (2006). In particular, it is intended to supplement planning policies by describing the landscape character to which these policies apply. Any new Development Plan Documents (DPDs) that supplement or replace the Local Plan or Core Strategy will take account of and where necessary refer to the Borough Landscape Character Area Assessment and any subsequent review. The document supports all applicable planning policies, the most relevant of which are listed below.

National Policy Guidance

- 6.3 **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), 2012.** The NPPF refers to landscape character in relation to recognising the different character of different areas; conserving landscapes as an important part of the natural environment; protecting valued landscapes (including – but not limited to - designated landscapes such as AONBs and National Parks); and encouraging landscape character studies as part of preparing Local Plans. The following extracts from the NPPF are those most relevant to landscape and character. Words in bold are emphasised for the purposes of this report.
- 6.4 Paragraph 17 (Core planning principles):
- “**take account of the different roles and character of different areas**, promoting the vitality of our main urban areas, protecting the Green Belts around them, **recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside** and supporting thriving rural communities within it...”*
- “**...contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment** and reducing pollution. Allocations of land for development should prefer land of lesser environmental value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework”.*
- 6.5 Paragraph 109 (Conserving and enhancing the natural environment):
- “**The planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:***
- **...protecting and enhancing valued landscapes...**”*
- 6.6 Designated landscapes in Paragraph 115 (Conserving and enhancing the natural environment):
- “Great weight should be given to **conserving landscape and scenic beauty** in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty.”*
- “Planning permission should be refused for major developments in these designated areas except in exceptional circumstances and where it can be demonstrated they are in the public interest. Consideration of such applications should include an assessment of:”*

- “...any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated” ([Paragraph 116](#)).

6.7 Other parts of the NPPF relevant to landscape character are:

[Paragraph 55](#) (Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes): “*To promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities... Local planning authorities should avoid new isolated homes in the countryside unless there are special circumstances... **design should... be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area.***”

[Paragraph 58](#) (Requiring good design): “*Planning policies and decisions should aim to ensure that developments... optimise the potential of the site to accommodate development...; **respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials.***”

“*...Local and neighbourhood plans should develop robust and comprehensive policies that set out the quality of development that will be expected for the area. Such policies should be based on stated objectives for the future of the area and **an understanding and evaluation of its defining characteristics.***”

[Paragraph 125](#) (Conserving and enhancing the natural environment): “*By encouraging good design, planning policies and decisions should **limit the impact of light pollution** from artificial light on local amenity, **intrinsically dark landscapes** and nature conservation.*”

[Paragraph 97](#) (Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change): Local planning authorities should “*... design their policies to maximise renewable and low carbon energy development while ensuring that adverse impacts are addressed satisfactorily, **including cumulative landscape and visual impacts.***”

[Paragraph 113](#) (Conserving and enhancing the natural environment): “*Local planning authorities should set **criteria based policies against which proposals for any development on or affecting protected wildlife or geodiversity sites or landscape areas will be judged.***”

[Paragraph 156](#) (Plan Making: Local Plans): Local planning authorities should set out strategic policies to deliver “*... **conservation and enhancement of the natural and historic environment, including landscape.***”

[Paragraph 170](#) (Using a proportionate evidence base: Historic environment): “*Where appropriate, **landscape character assessments** should also be prepared, integrated with assessment of historic landscape character, and for areas where there are major expansion options **assessments of landscape sensitivity.***”

The European Landscape Convention (ELC)

- 6.8 The European Landscape Convention (ELC) came into effect in the UK in March 2007. It establishes the need to recognise landscape in law; to develop landscape policies dedicated to the protection, management and planning of landscapes; and to establish procedures for the participation of the general public and other stakeholders in the creation and implementation of landscape policies.
- 6.9 The ELC definition of ‘landscape’ recognises that all landscapes matter, be they ordinary, degraded or outstanding:
- “Landscape means an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/ or human factors”.**
- 6.10 The Convention puts emphasis on the whole landscape and all its values and is forward looking in its approach, recognising the dynamic and changing character of landscape. Specific measures promoted by the Convention, of direct relevance to this study include:
- the identification and assessment of landscape; and

- improved consideration of landscape in existing and future sectoral and spatial policy and regulation.

6.11 This updated Landscape Character Assessment, which has involved extensive stakeholder participation, will contribute to the implementation of the ELC in Tunbridge Wells Borough. It helps to establish the importance of landscape and guide its future protection, management and planning.

7 Relationship with other Character Assessments and Landscape Designations

Character Area Context

- 7.1 Landscape does not stop at administrative boundaries but continues seamlessly into surrounding boroughs. An aim of this assessment was to join up with the Landscape Character Assessments of adjacent authorities, and sit within the hierarchy of existing national assessments.
- 7.2 The National Character Areas (NCAs) published by Natural England⁷ are the national character context for landscape character assessment. The borough includes part of three National Character Areas: *The Low Weald (NCA 121)*, *The High Weald (NCA 122)* and *Romney Marshes (NCA 123)*. A Kent regional character assessment was produced in 2004 (*The Landscape Assessment of Kent* (Babtie, 2004)). However, the more recent Tunbridge Wells Borough assessment and other local character assessments are now considered to supersede the Kent assessment. For landscape assessment work carried out as part of a planning application or other proposal, specialists are expected to refer to the National Character Area and the Borough Landscape Character assessment only and are not required to refer to the County Landscape Assessment.
- 7.3 The relationship between the Tunbridge Wells Borough character areas, national character areas and the character areas identified by surrounding local authorities is illustrated in **Figure 2**.

The High Weald AONB

- 7.4 The high value of much of the borough's landscapes is recognised by the fact that around 70% of the borough is designated as part of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), a national landscape designation. The High Weald AONB in relation to the borough is shown in **Figure 3**. The landscape qualities of AONBs and National Parks are equal and therefore share the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty.
- 7.5 The High Weald AONB Management Plan 2014-2019 (<http://www.highweald.org/high-weald-aonb-management-plan.html>) is an important resource to be used alongside this document for areas within the AONB and where land forms part of the setting of the AONB.

The Former 'Special Landscape Areas'

- 7.6 Special Landscape Areas (SLAs) were a former landscape designation. Tunbridge Wells Borough contained two SLAs: the High Weald and the Low Weald. SLAs were first identified by Kent County Council in the 1977 Kent Structure Plan but in 2010, the Planning Inspector who conducted the Core Strategy examination concluded that local designations such as the SLA were contrary to national guidance and policy and that there were other ways of protecting the areas covered by the SLA. As a result, the SLA policy in the Tunbridge Wells Borough Local Plan 2006 (Policy EN27) was superseded by CP4 in the Core Strategy. CP4 seeks to conserve and enhance the locally distinctive sense of place and character of the borough's built and natural

⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-character-area-profiles-data-for-local-decision-making/national-character-area-profiles>

environments as a whole; the Borough Landscape Character Assessment is the evidence base for this.

- 7.7 The methods and criteria for designation of County level landscape designations are often poorly documented, but in general the areas were identified on the basis of field survey by the county's landscape or countryside staff. The original criteria used by the Council (as stated in a review by Cobham Resource Consultants (CRC) in 1993) was:
- Contrast and diversity in relief and land cover;
 - Scarcity or rarity;
 - A sense of remoteness;
 - Historical, traditional or cultural associations; and
 - Visual attractiveness.
- 7.8 The SLAs were further rationalised as a result of a study by Babbie⁸ prepared to inform the Kent and Medway Structure Plan (2006) to remove overlaps with the AONB designation to avoid confusion.

Descriptions of the former High Weald and Low Weald SLAs

- 7.9 The SLAs were described as “largely unspoilt areas of countryside which, because of their high scenic quality and distinctive local character, have county wide importance.” Policy EN27 stated that development proposals would only be permitted where they would cause no significant harm to the important landscape character of the area. The original descriptions of the areas as stated in the CRC report (1993) for the High Weald and Low Weald are shown below:

High Weald

- 7.10 “Most of the High Weald is AONB, and hence has been formally recognised as a landscape of national importance. The single most important characteristic is the very extensive, often ancient deciduous woodland much of which has remained under traditional management, and is of considerable wildlife value. Also important are the area's deeply incised valleys or 'ghylls'. In addition, there are many distinctive 'Kentish' landscape features, including orchards and hop gardens. SLA protection extends beyond the northern fringe of the AONB, bringing in additional areas of High Weald character, and several important country houses and gardens such as Sissinghurst. This northern fringe is also valuable for its long views across the Low Weald to the Greensand ridge and the Downs. The area readily meets all the criteria for SLA designation.”

Low Weald

- 7.11 The Low Weald was not identified as an SLA at the time of CRC's review. However, their review also included 'areas of search' for new SLA designations, including the Low Weald. The conclusion of their review was that the 'Eastern Low Weald' should be an additional SLA designation. An extract from the 'reasons for inclusion' is provided below:
- 7.12 “At one time, the whole Low Weald was probably of high scenic quality. Unfortunately though, substantial areas, especially in the west, are now marred by unsympathetic development.
- 7.13 *The best area, visually, is the Eastern Low Weald between Headcorn and Bethersden, which is an intimate landscape, with a wealth of detailed visual interest. The area is largely unspoilt. It has a very distinctive wooded character, and many Kentish landscape features such as orchards and oasts. The generally high scenic quality is reinforced by a fascinating landscape history, which has led to a special concentration of wildlife and conservation features. These include neutral grassland, farm ponds, ancient hedgerow habitats, and a nationally rare concentration of medieval timber-framed buildings. There are many important cultural associations with the area, and the principle of designation has strong local support. In short, the Eastern Low Weald meets the SLA criteria very fully, and is clearly a landscape of county importance.*

⁸ Working Paper 9 Special Landscape Areas: Designations Review, Babbie Group Ltd for Kent County Council, 2003.

- 7.14 *...The main reason for excluding other parts of the Low Weald from SLA designation is the widespread visual intrusion caused by industrial development, post-war housing, urban fringe land uses, and major trunk roads. These inharmonious influences particularly affect the area between Tonbridge and Staplehurst and the southern outskirts of Ashford. They tend to fragment the landscape, destroying its visual quality, although many fine Kentish features and small pockets of good landscape do survive. Some of these may be suitable for designation by district councils as areas of local landscape importance. We would draw attention, particularly, to the central Low Weald, where the small area between Collier Street and Marden is still dominated by traditional fruit growing and market gardening uses, with a strong pattern of orchards, shelterbelts, hop gardens and oast houses."*
- 7.15 The Kent and Medway Structure Plan Working Paper 9 reviewed the SLAs in 2003. Probably as part of this review, a wider area for the 'Eastern Low Weald' was drawn to include the area around Frittenden. The Low Weald SLA was described in Working Paper 9:
- "The Eastern Low Weald SLA is an intimate small-scale landscape of flat to gently sloping contours with a pleasant sense of enclosure, a strong sense of an historical farmed landscape and many Kentish landscape features such as orchards, oasts and Wealden timber-framed buildings. Distinctive features include some strong woodland blocks, field ponds, broad verged lanes and slow-flowing streams of high ecological value."*
- 7.16 This 2016 revision of the Borough Landscape Character Assessment has integrated the information from the previous assessment and added new evidence from desk study, field survey and public consultation so that the valued attributes and qualities of the landscape are recorded. This includes information from the National Character Area descriptions, the High Weald AONB Management Plan and the former SLA special qualities. This document therefore supersedes the former SLAs and has encompassed all the previous information within each of the character area descriptions.

8 Methodology

Guidance

- 8.1 The method for undertaking this consolidated Landscape Character Assessment follows the method promoted by Natural England through '*An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment*' (2014)⁹, which embeds the principles of the European Landscape Convention (ELC) within it. It updates the previous '*Landscape Character Assessment: Guidance for England and Scotland*', published by the Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage in 2002, though the methodology is broadly the same as the previous guidance.
- 8.2 The 2014 guidance lists the five key principles for landscape character assessment as follows:
- Landscape is everywhere and all landscape and seascape has character;
 - Landscape occurs at all scales and the process of Landscape Character Assessment can be undertaken at any scale;
 - The process of Landscape Character Assessment should involve an understanding of how the landscape is perceived and experienced by people;
 - A Landscape Character Assessment can provide a landscape evidence base to inform a range of decisions and applications; and
 - A Landscape Character Assessment can provide an integrating spatial framework- a multitude of variables come together to give us our distinctive landscapes.
- 8.3 The assessment is a strategic one based on a scale of 1:25,000 which naturally limits the level of detail that can be covered.

Process

- 8.4 The methodology for the previous assessment carried out in 2002 involved the following tasks:
- Desk Study of existing published map information and other studies generating overlays of landform, geology, hydrology, soils, cultural sites, biodiversity and analysis to determine broad patterns in the local landscape character.
 - Field Surveys to record details of each character area, features of local distinction and the effects of land management changes and development and the subjective response to the landscape.
 - Analysis and Evaluation of the information arising from the desk study, consultations and field survey to define detailed local landscape character area boundaries and analysis of landscape pressures, changes and trends. Nineteen separate local landscape character areas were identified.
 - Formulation of an overall approach for the conservation or enhancement of the landscape and identifying development constraints.
- 8.5 The methodology for this 2016 assessment involved the following tasks:
- Review of the existing (2002) assessment against the current guidance. The output of this stage was a report to Tunbridge Wells Borough Council outlining the key changes in policy and guidance since 2002. The report concluded that the previous assessment remained sound in its

⁹ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/396192/landscape-character-assessment.pdf
[accessed February 2015]

methodology and outputs but made a number of recommendations which are summarised as follows:

- Update the content of the assessment to integrate new information (including the updated Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC);
 - Review against character areas in adjacent districts and boroughs;
 - Strengthen the assessment by including stakeholder considerations;
 - Be clear in consideration of values and landscape value (designation), including additional information on what is valued in the landscape and why (including aspects of designated landscapes and their setting);
 - Set out a broad landscape strategy; and
 - Consider providing a user guide to accompany the report to assist development management decisions and developers.
- Desk study: of new information since the 2002 assessment including documents and GIS data, notably the information on ancient woodland, historic farmsteads, historic parks and gardens and agricultural land use change;
 - Analysis of value associations and formulation of a Landscape Strategy: using a combination of desk study (designations and documents), public consultation and updated following field survey (see below);
 - Review of the classification and description: including desk-based review of character area boundaries and descriptions and updated following field survey;
 - Field survey: to gather details on each of the character areas and to collect perceptual information on character. Field survey sheets were prepared for each area (the survey sheet template is included as **Appendix 4**); and
 - Stakeholder engagement: facilitated by three workshops across the borough and a bespoke 'Your View' mobile app. A summary note of the workshops and consultation is provided in **Appendix 5**.

Evaluation of Valued Features and Qualities

- 8.6 The inclusion of additional information on what is valued about the landscape and why, was prepared to ensure that valued landscapes are appropriately described and evaluated in line with Paragraph 109 of the NPPF and in the context of the removal of the SLA policy designation. This incorporates valued attributes, values elucidated through the engagement and consultation process and any particular role or function in relation to the setting of the AONB (special qualities) and setting of settlement etc. The NPPF also states that *"the duty to have regard to the purpose of nationally designated areas also applies when considering applications for projects outside the boundaries of these areas which may have impacts within them"*.
- 8.7 **Table 8-1** presents the criteria used to gather information on landscape values. The High Weald AONB Management Plan was consulted to inform the identification of key features in the local area fundamental to its special character. These components were used to assess the extent to which each character area represented the special qualities of the AONB and whether the character area was important in relation to the setting of the AONB or views to or from it.
- 8.8 An evaluation of landscape value aside from those aspects relating to the special qualities of the AONB, was informed by criteria adapted from Box 5.1 of *'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment'*, Landscape Institute and IEMA, 2013.

Table 8-1 Evaluation of Valued Features and Qualities¹⁰

<i>In the AONB?</i>	<i>Adjacent to the AONB? If so –</i> a) Does it contribute to the landscape and scenic beauty of the High Weald? b) Does it add to, enhance or buffer the AONB			
High Weald Special Characteristics and Qualities – how are they represented?				
Key Components:				
Geology, landform, water systems and climate: deeply incised, ridged and faulted landform of clays and sandstone. The ridges tend east-west, and from them spring numerous gill streams that form the headwaters of rivers. Wide river valleys dominate the eastern part of the AONB. The landform and water systems are subject to, and influence, a local variant of the British sub-oceanic climate.				
Settlement: dispersed historic settlements of farmsteads and hamlets, and late medieval villages founded on trade and non-agricultural rural industries.				
Routeways: ancient routeways (now roads, tracks and paths) in the form of ridge-top roads and a dense system of radiating droveways. These routeways are often narrow, deeply sunken, and edged with trees, hedges, wildflower-rich verges and boundary banks.				
Woodland: the great extent of ancient woods, gills, and shaws in small holdings, the value of which is inextricably linked to long-term management.				
Field and heath: small, irregularly shaped and productive fields often bounded by (and forming a mosaic with) hedgerows and small woodlands, and typically used for livestock grazing; small holdings; and a non-dominant agriculture; within which can be found distinctive zones of heaths and incised river valleys.				
Locally distinctive and nationally important details:				
Castles	Abbeys	Historic parks and gardens	Hop gardens and orchards	Oast houses
Parish churches	Veteran trees	Rich and varied biodiversity	Local populations of key threatened species	
Scenic beauty:				
Ancientness	Sense of history	Appealing historic buildings	Wonderful views	Dark skies
Relative sense of tranquillity	Intimacy	Human scale	Myriad public rights of way	Opportunities to get close to nature
Visual relationship with High Weald AONB				
Views into the AONB				
Views from the AONB				
Transition between High and Low Weald				

¹⁰ Text in italics indicates information primarily gathered from desk study.

<p>Landscape Condition</p> <p><i>The physical state of the landscape and condition of individual elements (Buildings, hedgerows, boundaries etc.)</i></p>	<p>Well-managed, Intact, Characteristic elements in good condition, High landscape quality.</p> <p>Under-managed, Poor state of repair, Disturbed, Signs of decay, Degraded.</p>
<p>Scenic Quality</p> <p><i>Particular scenic and aesthetic qualities. Special pattern of landscape elements that create high aesthetic quality or sense of place. Views, visual unity.</i></p> <p><i>Balance, Proportion, Rhythm, Emphasis, Unity, Variety.</i></p>	<p>Harmonious, Unified, Dramatic features, Visual contrasts, Special pattern of landscape elements, High aesthetic quality, Important features in views, Distinctive skyline, Vertical, Horizontal.</p> <p>Discordant, Visual detractors, Incongruous elements, Unremarkable, Fragmented, Conflicting elements, Out of proportion.</p> <p>Views: Panoramic/ framed views, Memorable views, Distinctive views.</p>
<p>Distinctiveness</p> <p><i>Important examples of landscape features and characteristics that contribute to a strong sense of place and recognisable local distinctiveness. Representativeness. Typically recognisable of Kent or Tunbridge Wells.</i></p>	<p>Rare features/ characteristics in the landscape, Coherent/ Strong landscape character – strong pattern of features, Distinct landform or topography, Important or recognisable features or characteristics.</p> <p>Indistinct character, Unremarkable.</p>
<p>Natural/ Historic Interest</p> <p><i>Presence of features of wildlife, earth science or archaeological or historical and cultural interest.</i></p>	<p>Natural character, Features of natural interest Strong degree of naturalness – may be indicated by ecological designations, Historic character – e.g. indicated through listed buildings, Conservation Areas, Scheduled Monuments, features of historic interest.</p>
<p>Landscape Function</p> <p><i>Particular or special role of the area in the local landscape context.</i></p>	<p>Special function as a setting to valued landscape features, Visual backdrop, Open gap, Recreation value - where experience of the landscape is important – e.g. indicated through presence of outdoor visitor attractions/ country parks.</p>
<p>Perceptual aspects</p> <p><i>Experiential qualities such as sense of tranquillity</i></p>	<p>Wild, Sense of tranquillity, Remoteness, Lack of intrusion, Quiet, Calm, Colourful, Texture, Intimate, Vast, Enclosed, Open, Diverse Interesting, Inspiring, Exhilarating, Vibrant, Formal.</p> <p>Intrusion, Busy, Chaotic, Bland, Monotonous, Juxtapositions, Unsettling, Loud, Garish.</p> <p>Dark skies and tranquillity mapping.</p>
<p>Associations</p> <p><i>Some landscapes are associated with particular people, such as artists or writers, or events in history that contribute to perceptions of the natural beauty of the area.</i></p>	<p>Art, Literature, Battlefield, Film, Music, Myth/ Legend/ Folklore, People, Events.</p>

APPENDICES



Appendix 1 Glossary of Terms

Term	Definition
AOD	Above Ordnance Datum (sea level).
AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty – a statutory national landscape designation.
Agricultural Land Classification	The classification of agricultural land in England in Wales.
Ancient woodland	Woods that are believed to have been continuous woodland cover since at least 1600 AD.
Assart	The informal inclosure of private farmland by encroachment into woodland or heath.
BAP Priority Habitat	UK Biodiversity Action Plan priority species and habitats were identified as being the most threatened and requiring conservation action under the UK BAP. The original lists of UK BAP priority habitats were created between 1995 and 1999 and were subsequently updated in 2007. See http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-5155 for further information.
Condition	A judgement on the intactness and condition of the elements of the landscape.
Coppice	A traditional form of woodland management where trees (commonly hazel) are cut regularly on a cycle to promote growth from their bases.
Dark Skies	Places where the darkness of the night sky is relatively free of interference from artificial light
Deerpark	Enclosed private hunting ground.
Ecosystem services	Ecosystem services are the many and varied benefits that humans freely gain from the natural environment and from properly-functioning ecosystems.
Forces for change	These are both positive and negative factors that are known to or have potential to act on the landscape, including agricultural management issues, policy and development pressures.
Heathland	A shrubland habitat found mainly on free-draining infertile, acidic soils, characterised by open, low-growing woody vegetation.
HLC	Historic Landscape Characterisation.
Horsiculture	Development of farmland for horses and equestrianism

Landscape character	The distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements that occurs consistently in a particular landscape and how these are perceived. It reflects particular combinations of geology, landform, soils, vegetation, land use and human settlement.
Landscape character areas (LCA)	Single unique areas that are the discrete geographical area of a particular landscape type.
Landscape character types (LCT)	Distinct types of landscape that is relatively homogenous in character. They are generic in nature in that they may occur in different areas in different parts of the country, but share broadly similar combinations of geology, topography, drainage patterns, vegetation, historic land use and settlement pattern.
Landmark	An object or feature of a landscape or town that is easily seen and recognized from a distance, especially one that enables someone to establish their location.
Landscape Strategy	Principles to manage and direct landscape change for a particular landscape type or character area including identification of any particular management needs for specific elements.
LWS	Local Wildlife Site.
Natural Character	Character as a result of natural or semi-natural features such as woodland, grassland, hedgerows etc.
NCA	National Character Area – defined within the <i>National Character Area Study, Natural England (2013)</i> - NCAs divide England into 159 distinct natural areas. Each is defined by a unique combination of landscape, biodiversity, geodiversity, history, and cultural and economic activity.
Nucleated Settlements	A settlement that is clustered around a centre, in comparison to a linear or dispersed settlement.
OS	Ordnance Survey.
Perceptual	The ability to interpret or become aware of something through the senses.
Sensitivity	A judgement of how sensitive or vulnerable a landscape component is to change.
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest.

Appendix 2 Data

Data used within the report, including data collated in the GIS database, is shown in **Table 8-2**. Other sources that were consulted can be seen at **Appendix 6**.

Table 8-2: GIS Data

Administrative Boundaries:	
Tunbridge Wells	Tunbridge Wells Borough Council.
Kent County	Tunbridge Wells Borough Council.
Surrounding district boundaries	Tunbridge Wells Borough Council.
Surrounding Landscape Character Areas:	
Sevenoaks	Sevenoaks District Council.
Wealden	Awaiting data from Wealden District Council.
Rother	Awaiting data from East Sussex District Council.
Ashford	Ashford District Council.
Maidstone	Raster information from pdf landscape character assessment document: http://www.maidstone.gov.uk/residents/planning/landscape-heritage-and-design/landscape
National Character Areas	Natural England.
Kent Landscape Character Areas	Kent County Council.
Tunbridge Wells Borough Character and Capacity Areas (2009 study)	Tunbridge Wells Borough Council.
High Weald AONB	
AONB Components:	
Ancient woodland Field and Heath Geology, Landform, Water Systems and Climate Routeways Settlement	High Weald AONB Unit.
Former Special Landscape Areas	Tunbridge Wells Borough Council.
Cultural Information:	
Registered Parks and Gardens (national)	Historic England, Kent County Council/ Tunbridge Wells Borough Council.
Proposed Historic Parks and Gardens (KCC)	Kent County Council.
Scheduled Monument	Historic England.
Listed Buildings	Historic England.
Conservation Areas	Tunbridge Wells Borough Council.
Historic farmsteads	High Weald AONB Unit.
Areas of Archaeological potential	Tunbridge Wells Borough Council.
HERS	Tunbridge Wells Borough Council.
HLC - Kent	Kent County Council.

Revised Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) DRAFT. (Revision of Kent HLC 2000)	Tunbridge Wells Borough Council. (Data from Dr Nicola R. Bannister)
Natural information:	
SSSI	Natural England.
Nature Reserves - KWT	Kent Wildlife Trust.
Local Wildlife Site (LWS) - KWT	Kent Wildlife Trust.
Local Nature Reserves - TWBC	Tunbridge Wells Borough Council.
Roadside Nature Reserves (RNRs)	Tunbridge Wells Borough Council.
Ancient Woodland	Tunbridge Wells Borough Council.
Biodiversity Opportunity Areas	Tunbridge Wells Borough Council.
RSPB Reserves	Natural England.
Priority Habitats	Tunbridge Wells Borough Council.
Limits to Built Development	Tunbridge Wells Borough Council.
Night Lights	CPRE.
Agricultural Land Classification (ALC)	Natural England.
Geology:	
Bedrock geology 1:50K	BGS.
Superficial geology	BGS.
Hydrology:	
Flood Zones	Environment Agency.
Base mapping:	
OS 1:50k	Ordnance Survey.
OS 1:25k	Ordnance Survey.
OS 1:10k	Ordnance Survey.
Terrain 50 Contour data	Ordnance Survey.

Appendix 3 Sample Field Survey Sheet

FIELD SURVEY RECORD: LCA ...1... Matfield/ Brenchley Fruit Belt

Surveyors	
Date/ Time	
Weather	
Photo no's:	
Other relevant LCAs e.g. HW AONB	
Adjacent LCA	<i>Note cross boundary classifications</i>

Boundaries

Note any changes to boundaries and reasons why, + mark on OS base

Summary

A broad plateau, with an intensively managed, orchard-dominated landscape on the plateau top and rows of dwarf fruit trees on the rolling slopes and ridges. The plateau is cut by more intricate and intimate wooded ghyll valleys, which are crossed themselves by sunken lanes with characteristic woodland verges. It is a relatively densely settled rural area with prominent farm buildings reflecting a working, cultivated landscape. Large arable fields in the north west. Note any additional information to the above description

Key Characteristics Review and Update

KC	Y/N
<p>1) A plateau landscape, consisting of a series of low undulating ridges and intersecting valleys, forming an introverted and inward looking area.</p> <p>Notes:</p>	
<p>2) An intensively managed, orchard-dominated plateau top, with regimented ranks of orchard trees and hop poles characteristic around Speldmonden, creating a 'gardenesque' quality.</p> <p>Notes:</p>	
<p>3) Rows of dwarf apple trees predominate, with some soft fruit, forming a complicated patchwork pattern of regular lines on the undulating slopes. Isolated remnant old orchards provide a particularly attractive feature.</p> <p>Notes:</p>	
<p>4) The narrow, wooded ghyll valleys which cut the plateau top create a more intimate, enclosed and ecologically rich landscape.</p> <p>Notes:</p>	
<p>5) Rural lanes dip down from the open plateau top and into the wooded valleys, winding beneath a network of green, woodland tunnels. These are bound by diverse and colourful hedge banks, important for their ecological diversity.</p> <p>Notes:</p>	
<p>6) Signs of intensive farming such as large-scale buildings, including fruit packing stations.</p> <p>Notes:</p>	
<p>7) A pattern of large arable fields in the north west</p> <p>Notes:</p>	
<p>8) A concentration of settlement occurring along the ridgeline in the north west, with the individually distinctive villages of Matfield, Brenchley and the hamlet of Castle Hill.</p> <p>Notes:</p>	
<p>Add additional revised KC</p>	

Valued Features and Qualities

Values associated with the High Weald AONB				
In the AONB?	Adjacent to the AONB? If so – a) Does it contribute to the landscape and scenic beauty of the High Weald? b) Does it add to, enhance or buffer the AONB			
High Weald Special Characteristics and Qualities – how are they represented?				
Key Components:				
Geology, landform, water systems and climate: deeply incised, ridged and faulted landform of clays and sandstone. The ridges tend east-west, and from them spring numerous gill streams that form the headwaters of rivers. Wide river valleys dominate the eastern part of the AONB. The landform and water systems are subject to, and influence, a local variant of the British sub-oceanic climate.				
Settlement: dispersed historic settlements of farmsteads and hamlets, and late medieval villages founded on trade and non-agricultural rural industries.				
Routeways: ancient routeways (now roads, tracks and paths) in the form of ridge-top roads and a dense system of radiating droveways. These routeways are often narrow, deeply sunken, and edged with trees, hedges, wildflower-rich verges and boundary banks.				
Woodland: the great extent of ancient woods, gills, and shaws in small holdings, the value of which is inextricably linked to long-term management				
Field and heath: small, irregularly shaped and productive fields often bounded by (and forming a mosaic with) hedgerows and small woodlands, and typically used for livestock grazing; small holdings; and a non-dominant agriculture; within which can be found distinctive zones of heaths and incised river valleys.				
Locally distinctive and nationally important details:				
Castles	Abbeys	Historic parks and gardens	Hop gardens and orchards	Oast houses
Parish churches	Veteran trees	Rich and varied biodiversity	Local populations of key threatened species	
Scenic beauty:				
Ancientness	Sense of history	Appealing historic buildings	Wonderful views	Dark skies
Relative sense of tranquillity	Intimacy	Human scale	Myriad public rights of way	Opportunities to get close to nature
Visual relationship with High Weald AONB				
Views into the AONB				
Views from the AONB				

Transition between High and Low Weald?	
All landscapes – valued features and qualities¹¹ - (circle)	
Landscape Condition <i>The physical state of the landscape and condition of individual elements (Buildings, hedgerows, boundaries etc.)</i>	<p>Well-managed, Intact, Characteristic elements in good condition, High landscape quality.</p> <p>Under-managed, Poor state of repair, Disturbed, Signs of decay, Degraded.</p>
Scenic Quality <i>Particular scenic and aesthetic qualities. Special pattern of landscape elements that create high aesthetic quality or sense of place. Views, visual unity. Balance, Proportion, Rhythm, Emphasis, Unity, Variety.</i>	<p>Harmonious, Unified, Dramatic features, Visual contrasts, Special pattern of landscape elements, High aesthetic quality, Important features in views, Distinctive skyline, Vertical, Horizontal.</p> <p>Discordant, Visual detractors, Incongruous elements, Unremarkable, Fragmented, Conflicting elements, Out of proportion.</p> <p>Views: Panoramic/ framed views, Memorable views, Distinctive views.</p>
Distinctiveness <i>Important examples of landscape features and characteristics that contribute to a strong sense of place and recognisable local distinctiveness. Representativeness. Typically recognisable of Kent or Tunbridge Wells.</i>	<p>Rare features/ characteristics in the landscape, Coherent/ Strong landscape character – strong pattern of features, Distinct landform or topography, Important or recognisable features or characteristics.</p> <p>Indistinct character, Unremarkable.</p>
Natural/ Historic Interest <i>Presence of features of wildlife, earth science or archaeological or historical and cultural interest.</i>	<p>Natural character, Features of natural interest, Strong degree of naturalness – may be indicated by <i>ecological designations</i>, Historic character – e.g. indicated through listed buildings, Conservation Areas, Scheduled Monuments, Historic character, features of historic interest e.g. indicated through listed buildings, Conservation Areas, Scheduled Monuments.</p>
Landscape Function <i>Particular or special role of the area in the local landscape context.</i>	<p>Special function as a setting to valued landscape features, Visual backdrop, Open gap, Recreation value - where experience of the landscape is important – e.g. indicated through presence of outdoor visitor attractions/ country parks.</p>
Perceptual aspects <i>Experiential qualities such as sense of tranquillity</i>	<p>Wild, Sense of tranquillity, Remoteness, Lack of intrusion, Quiet, Calm, Colourful, Texture, Intimate, Vast, Enclosed, Open, Diverse Interesting, Inspiring, Exhilarating, Vibrant, Formal.</p> <p>Intrusion, Busy, Chaotic, Bland, Monotonous, Juxtapositions, Unsettling, Loud, Garish.</p> <p>Dark skies and tranquillity mapping.</p>
Associations <i>Some landscapes are associated with particular people, such as artists or</i>	<p>Art, Literature, Battlefield, Film, Music, Myth/ Legend/ Folklore, People, Events.</p>

¹¹ Adapted from Box 5.1 'Range of factors that can help in the identification of valued landscapes' in Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Landscape Institute and IEMA, 2013.

writers, or events in history.	
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Detractors

- Visual intrusions
- Land management decline/change (horsiculture, hobby farms, incremental garden development)
- Development – including settlement, roads and agricultural buildings which may be unsympathetic to existing character

Landscape Strategy

Strategy : *short succinct statement to encapsulate the main desired direction of change (circle)*

Protection	Planning	Management
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Additional Notes

Appendix 4 Public Consultation

This note summarises the approach to public consultation as part of the process of updating the Borough Landscape Character Assessment. Effective stakeholder consultation is key to the process and success of landscape character assessment, ensuring a wide range of views and values are represented.

Three consultation events were held by Tunbridge Wells Borough Council (TWBC) and facilitated by LUC at different locations across the borough. The sessions were open to members of the public as well as local special interest groups and other stakeholders and included an interactive drop-in session followed by a short presentation and workshop.

A mobile app was also developed and made live during the course of the project. The app, called 'Share Your View' aimed to engage a public audience in identifying and sharing their opinions on the landscape in their area. The app included an option to upload a photograph of a particular view alongside descriptions of what people see as 'special' about the particular view.

1) Consultation Events

The details of the consultation events are provided in **Table 8-3**. The consultation technique aimed to achieve active participation and to generate information appropriate to inform the landscape character assessment. The overall aim was to allow people who live and work in the district to understand and contribute to the process of LCA, rather than simply being consulted on the final report.

8-3 Locations and Dates of the Stakeholder Consultation Events

Eastern part of the Borough Goudhurst Parish Hall, Balcombes Hill, Goudhurst TN17 1AJ	Wednesday 28 September 2016 5.00 till 6.00pm Drop in session 6.00 till 7.00pm Workshop Attendance: 27	Drop in session	G
		Group 1 (Scribe: K. Ah) LCAs 14, 7t, 12, 3, 10, 18.	G-1
		Group 2 (Scribe: K. An) LCAs 6, 11, 16, 15.	G-2
		Group 3 (Scribe: DS) LCAs 18, 2, 8, 1, 13.	G-3
Central part of the Borough Branchley Memorial Hall, Branchley Road, Branchley TN12 7NX	Wednesday 5 October 2016 4.30 till 6.00pm Drop in session 6.00 till 7.00pm Workshop Attendance: 19	Drop in session	B
		Drop in Group (group feedback during drop in session – K. Ah scribe).	B-D
		Group 1 (Scribe: K. An)	B-1
		Group 2 (Scribe: DS)	B-2
Western part of the	Tuesday 11 October	Drop in session	L

Borough Langton Green Village Hall, Speldhurst Road, Langton Green, TN3 0JJ	2016 4.30 till 6.00pm Drop in session 6.00 till 7.00pm Workshop Attendance: 13	Group 1 (Scribe: K. An)	L-1
		Group 2 (Scribe RS)	L-2

Objectives of the Consultation Events

The objectives of the consultation events were to:

- 1) Inform people about the landscape character assessment.
- 2) Understand what people value about the landscape in Tunbridge Wells Borough and why.
- 3) Gather local perspectives on perceptual aspects.
- 4) Gather information on cultural associations.
- 5) Gain information on what has changed in the landscape since 2000.
- 6) Gain information on priorities for enhancement.

Format of the Consultation Events

Drop in Session (1- 1 ½ hours)

A drop in session was held from 4.30pm or 5pm to allow informal interactive feedback from participants. The session allowed members of the project team to inform and explain the background and process of landscape character assessment and to encourage comments on values and cultural associations of the landscape.

Three A0 maps of the borough supported by illustrated information boards were stationed around the room. A facilitator from the project team was present at each board to explain and encourage input from the participants. The stations showed the following:

- 1) **Map 1 Landscape Character of Tunbridge Wells Borough:** this map showed Character Types and Areas and was supported by illustrations and information explaining what landscape character assessment is.
- 2) **Map 2 Values:** this station was an exercise to determine what is valued about the landscape in Tunbridge Wells and why. The map was supported by a prompt sheet and a facilitator to encourage participation and explain the process. Numbered dots were provided for people to stick one dot onto the map and the other onto a post-it note. On the post-it alongside the dot participants were to write what they value about the landscape and why. Post-its were then added to flip charts under the relevant heading, either 'Views and Landmarks', 'Heritage/ Historic Places', 'Recreation', 'Natural Environment', or 'Experience and Feeling'.
- 3) **Map 3 Cultural Associations:** this station was also an exercise using numbered dots and post-its and was supported by an explanatory prompt sheet. The exercise aimed to gather local input on the cultural associations of the landscape in Tunbridge Wells. Participants were invited to write cultural associations of certain areas with people, artists, writers, events in history etc.

Workshop (1 hour)

The second part of the consultation event involved a workshop. Participants were invited to sit in roughly equal groups around three tables. The aim was for each table to focus on four or five landscape character areas each for the workshop exercises. One map of the relevant areas were placed on each table.

Workshop Programme

6pm	5 mins	Introduction and Welcome (TWBC)
6.05	15 mins	LCA Presentation (LUC)
6.20	5 mins	Q & A
6.25-6.45	20 mins	Exercise 1: Values and Cultural Associations Structured discussion based on prompts from screen: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you value about the landscape and why? • Do any of the areas have particular cultural associations (e.g. people, artists, events in history). Participants focus on the areas assigned to their group. Comments recorded onto maps and papers by facilitators.
6.45-6.55	10 mins	Exercise 2: Issues and Opportunities Structured discussion based on prompts from screen: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the issues/ changes in the area? (5 mins) • What are the opportunities for the landscape in the area? (5 mins) Comments recorded onto maps and papers by facilitators.
6.55 – 7pm	5 mins	Summary and Next Steps.

The following tables show the comments received from the consultation events. Comments were compiled and organised according to landscape character area.



Comments on Values and Cultural Associations

1: Matfield Fruit Belt

Area	Values	Cultural Associations	Changes	Opportunities	Group
1	<p>View from Brenchley.</p> <p>View from Brenchley to south – rolling wooded hills. And to north is the ridges of the High Weald.</p> <p>Views from Brenchley to the north and south – give a strong sense of this part of Kent.</p> <p>The view from The Crooke at Brenchley is one of the most breath-taking in the borough. [Brenchley viewpoint].</p>	Brenchley Witches	Brenchley- flood lighting of sports pitches		<p>G-3</p> <p>B</p> <p>B-D</p>
1	<p>Brenchley: the character of the village is defined by the landscape – fruit orchards, woodland, lakes, green areas. And the village centre with its historical architecture, and the Church (from the tower one can see most of the village). It is an area of farm land and farming families. All this creates an intangible atmosphere to which many are drawn for walks and to ‘drink in the atmosphere’! The trees are splendid – the views are marvellous throughout. Brenchley is like a treasured child.</p>				B-D
1	<p>Brenchley: A lovely village with village shops and old church. Brenchley has many farming families, a green pleasant land, with apples and pears grown – also corn and wheat is grown locally.</p> <p>A lovely view from viewpoint at Brenchley looking over the North Downs. Also good views around the village and an interesting vista. Let's keep it as it is in the lovely area.</p>				B-D
1		Tudeley – Chagall Window.		Could we enhance tourism? Sassoon book set here, and building on other associations e.g. Morgan; Weirleigh.	B-1
1			Fruit farms being sub divided – more people involved – poor management; lack of understanding.		B-2

Area	Values	Cultural Associations	Changes	Opportunities	Group
1	Brenchley – dark skies.		The merging of Matfield and Brenchley would lose the individual identity of the villages.		B
1	Brenchley memorial Hall – café and childcare supporting special needs. Brenchley – recreational value of the memorial hall, sport – open space – village resource/ community. Very popular.				B
1	Historic value of Brenchley and Matfield villages: listed church, Matfield House, Brenchley Manor, Portoobello. Workhouses – give essential character.				B
1	Historic value of the Furnace Pond in Brenchley – iron age.	Furnace pond in Brenchley – producing guns for warships – e.g. for Henry VIII. Pub in Horsmonden – Gun and Spitroast.			B
1	Value of Brenchley as a destination point – visitors come for walking and recreation and to enjoy the views.				B
1	Value of ancient woodland – natural and visual value. Visual interest in the fold of the landscape and as a backdrop to the orchards. Natural. Calm. [Area between Matfield and Brenchley]. Birchett Wood.				B
1	Brenchley/ Matfield – preserved historic cricket ground.				B
1	Value the connections – easy to access (road/ rail/ walking). E.g. Brenchley Manor – allows access across the land.				B
1		Strong association with Siegfried Sassoon			G-3; B
1		Marle Place, Horsmonden			G-3
1	High Weald Country Path – Matfield/ Brenchley				B

2: Horsmonden Fruit Belt

Area	Values	Cultural Associations	Changes	Opportunities	Group
2			Small farms are becoming less viable and now bereft of purpose - e.g. Crouches Farm. Due to increase in machinery, farms are now larger.		B-1
2	View from Horsmonden to Brenchley – including the church – silhouetted on the landscape. You can see the whole village; intimate scale. [From the west of Horsmonden].	Gibbet Lane in Horsmonden – medieval – there is a Gibbet post there.			B
2/1	Village Greens	Sprivers – woodland walks, Horsmonden			G-3

3: Goudhurst Fruit Belt

Area	Values	Cultural Associations	Changes	Opportunities	Group
3	Curtisden Green – Goudhurst is the hopping centre of the Weald (argument for extending bound)				G
5	Weaver's cottages at Goudhurst				G-1
3	Area is crisscrossed with old drovers lanes which must be maintained to retain the natural beauty of the area between Goudhurst and Curtisden Green.	Goudhurst film – hops.			G/ G-2
3	Interesting old buildings and extensive beautiful views to the south [Goudhurst].				G
3	Environment/ Nature combined with Tranquillity: Area of undisturbed bird and animal life combined with exceptional views and tranquillity. [Area to the south of Goudhurst - footpath].				G
3	Lots of beautiful, quiet routeways in this area but incremental gateway boundary changes etc. spoiling its feel. [Area to the south of Goudhurst- footpath].				G
3	Natural: The most wonderful and unspoilt valley probably in Kent therefore must be retained and enhanced. (Between Goudhurst/				G

Area	Values	Cultural Associations	Changes	Opportunities	Group
	Curtisden Green). [east-west valley south of Worms Hill].				
3	Exceptional animal and particularly bird life due to area of continuing tranquillity and undisturbed environment. [Area to the south of Goudhurst].				G
3	Views from the north of Goudhurst across the valley.				G
3	Networks of public footpaths and narrow lanes and drove ways (accessible landscape)	Smugglers tunnel from Goudhurst to 'Smugglers' [Smugley?] Farm – tunnel through the ridge			G-1
3	Long distance view to south from Star and Eagle Pub and Church. Panoramic; Rural; Ridges. [Goudhurst]..				B-D
3	Distinct views and alternating enclosed areas within ridges. [Area to north east of Goudhurst].				B-D
3		Film: Children's Film Foundation's film called 'Adventures in the Hop Fields' – filmed in and around Goudhurst in 1950s.			B
3	Skyline/ silhouette of churches/ village on hilltop. E.g. from Goudhurst west across to St Margaret's Church, Horsmonden and to the north, towards the eastern edge of Horsmonden [Grovehurst Farm]. Views up and down river valley from Goudhurst. Walkers around Goudhurst.				L-1
3/7	This calm and tranquil area allows people to really enjoy and benefit from the rural environment. As a consequence the community spirit is great and there is a true feeling of pride and commitment to preserving this great and unique area. [Curtisden Green].	The hopping industry once the cornerstone of farming in the community. This history still continues with a few isolated hop gardens. As such this history must be retained and celebrated. [Curtisden Green].			G
3/7	This valley between Goudhurst and Curtisden Green is an entity – beautiful as are the views either way. [Between Jarvis Lane and Ladham Road].				G
3/7	An area of outstanding Beauty crisscrossed with wonderful				G

Area	Values	Cultural Associations	Changes	Opportunities	Group
	footpaths views. This is supplemented with a truly mixed farming community which provides interest, employment and enjoyment for all. Given this, it is critical this is protected for generations to come. [Curtisden Green – boundary between 3 and 7].				
3/7	The large central green in Curtisden Green is unique and has been enjoyed by all for years. It is critical that this is continued and enjoyed by all whilst providing the Bethany School with a recreational area.		Bethany School redevelopment.		G
3/7	Fabulous Vista – 180 degree view south and towards Goudhurst. Unspoilt – oasts, farmhouses and hop gardens/ fields of apple trees. A traditional vista – no modern intrusions. Conveys calm and tranquillity. A unified landscape. [From Curtisden Green].				B-D

4: Cranbrook Fruit Belt

Area	Values	Cultural Associations	Changes	Opportunities	Group
4	Subtle east west valleys which cut through these areas – feel remote and unchanged				G
4	Cranbrook – historic market town with distinctive mill	Cranbrook – centre of the wooltrade in C15 and C16. St Dunstons = cathedral of the Weald Also note Dissenters in Cranbrook			G-1
4	Another breath-taking view from Coursehorn Lane at very end, looking south to Benenden. Again, an integrated landscape. [Road to south west of Golford].				B-D
4	Far reaching views into windmill – close views of conservation area and windmill. [From centre of Cranbrook, south of the high street by the car park].				B-D
4	Brick Kiln Farm – south of Cranbrook has very ancient, medieval field system which is threatened by development: yet this is a nationally important area of land – possibly early medieval – Anglo Saxon.				B-D
4		Temple Thurston – prolific writer of plays and novels,			B

Area	Values	Cultural Associations	Changes	Opportunities	Group
		some made into films in 1930s. Lived in Cranbrook.			

5: Speldhurst Wooded Farmland

Area	Values	Cultural Associations	Changes	Opportunities	Group
5	Honnington Farm and Honnington House – [north of Southborough].				L
5	Views: long distance, church spire on one side and rural views on the other; framed views; hidden places. Views from ridge tops – e.g. Barden Road, Speldhurst. Contrast, and Diversity of views – the mixture – church landmarks, villages – and a few paces further on it is different with long views and trees. Local details – small areas of rooftops.		Speldhurst area – loss of dairy – now sheep and arable.		L-1
5	View of church in Speldhurst.	Baden-Powell association with Speldhurst/ Shadwell Woods. Lived in Speldhurst Manor House.			L-1 L
5	Lack of development – no houses at all in some views.	Barden Furnace Farm – industrial archaeology?!?			L-1
5	Bullingstone Lane [south of Speldhurst]; Franks Hollow Road to Stockland Green [south of Bidborough]; Broom Lane [south of Langton Green].				L-1
5	Langton Green – village and open space – has village fete.				L-1
5	Views south and north from Bidborough Ridge. Long distance; rural. [At B2176 at bend in road].	Constable painting of Bidborough Church.			L
5	View towards Chartwell/ Pembury [from western edge of area – between Silcocks Farm and Hickman's Farm - Wealdway]. Views west across the valley [from Wealdway long distance footpath by Cock Pit Wood].	Gunpowder manufacturing in the valley [to the east of Southborough].			L L
5	St Mary's Speldhurst – landmark.	Artists associated with Southborough Common area – Southborough Society website – Fiona Woodhead.			L K

Area	Values	Cultural Associations	Changes	Opportunities	Group
5	Bullingstone Woods.	Bullingstone Woods – there is a carvings in a tree from the Second World War.			L
5	Poundsbridge (just outside borough in Sevenoaks) – rural views and views of High Weald.				L
5	View from Stockland Green towards Speldhurst village and from village to Stockland Green.	Historic hop picking – to west of Speldhurst (within Sevenoaks).			L
5	Views from Speldhurst Furcefield Avenue to Bidborough Saloman's.				L
5	View: Speldhurst Church gate – looking from Langton Road.				L
5		Speldhurst church windows designed by Burne-Jones			L-2
5	Langton Green – the Green Hare Pub – landmark. Church spires. Historic village centres.				L
5	Saloman's Park – historic interest.				L
5	Shadwell Woods – historic interest.				L
5	Finger of countryside that stretches all the way in to Tunbridge Wells – very rural feeling all the way.				L
5	Southborough Common and Bidborough Ridge – rural experience. Secluded; nature; take a breather; get away; woodland – nature.				L
5	Speldhurst Recreation Grounds and allotments.				L
5	Recreation – Speldhurst – local footpaths and bridleways. Toll rides. Accessibility and public access.				L L
5	Footpaths Lots of walks.				L L
5	Speldhurst Rec. Access to the countryside.				L
5	Absence of street lighting in Speldhurst – enhancing dark skies				L-2

Area	Values	Cultural Associations	Changes	Opportunities	Group
5	Barnett's Wood – natural value – wild flowers, cows and animals. [North of Southborough].				L
5	Tunbridge Wells Golf Course is an important element in maintaining separation between Tunbridge Wells and Rusthall.				L-2
5		The iron industry is an important aspect of cultural heritage which has left its mark on the landscape			L-2
5		David Lionel Salomons (of the Salomons Estate at Broomhill)			L-2
5			Aircraft noise (associated with Gatwick) reduces tranquillity		L-2
5	Historic farmsteads				L-2
5	Bullingstone House – Christine Harrison film [?].				
5		Drovers routes. Caves in Forge Green – smugglers hid loot e.g. – Barden Furnace Farm. Stockgreen Road. Smugglers – folklore	Increase in air traffic noise – Speldhurst.		L-1 L
5/9	Woods – e.g. Shadwell Wood, Avery's Wood Ancient forest Ghylls	Hawkhurst Gang			G-3 G-2
5/9	Views of rolling hills and ridgetops – across the valleys (cannot see into the valleys so just see the tops). Views to Ashdown Forest.	Chalybeate springs – spring up everywhere.			L
5/9	Perception – Separate identity of villages – Speldhurst, Groombridge, Ashurst. Rural character of Speldhurst PC. Villages.				L
5/9			Encroachment of Tunbridge Wells on surrounding villages		L-2

Area	Values	Cultural Associations	Changes	Opportunities	Group
5/9	Oast houses				L-2
5/9	Woods – e.g. Shadwell Wood, Avery's Wood Ancient forest Ghylls	Hawkhurst Gang Gangs/ Hawkhurst Gang – 9 people killed in Goudhurst.			G-3 G-2
Sp*	[* Speldhurst Parish]: Individual character of villages; Topography – glimpses, changing views, hidden valleys; Architecture – historic houses, materials; Tranquillity; Old settlements – hill top; Village greens – landscape/ amenity/ historic/ recreation; Valley woodlands/ streams. Avery/ Shadwell; Hedgerows; Churches/ spires; Pubs; Manor/ large houses – Speldhurst Manor, Salomans, Groombridge Place, White house to rear of Langton; Green Green, Burrswood; Rural character of roads/ lanes – increasing traffic; Access to countryside/ footpaths.		Merger of villages with each other/ Tunbridge Wells/ Southborough. Air traffic noise – loss of tranquillity. AONB/ Green Belt no longer offer same protection as in the past because of priority to housing development. Future of Saloman's estate. Future of rural farmsteads e.g. next to Saloman's up for residential development.		L-individual

6: Benenden Wooded Farmland

Area	Values	Cultural Associations	Changes	Opportunities	Group
6	Robins Wood/ Cranbrook Wood SSSI: wildness; tranquillity; hidden history; biodiversity. (Cranbrook Benenden – Hawkhurst boundary).				G
6	Long distance landscape to south from church. Village Green. Arcadian area. [Area just south of Benenden].	Sunken smugglers paths. Strawberry Culvert (Roman and Medieval). [Area north			G

Area	Values	Cultural Associations	Changes	Opportunities	Group
		east of Iden Green].			
6	Iden Green – Smelters				G-2
6		George Devey (architect) – designed buildings at Benenden.			G-2
		Kitty Fisher – buried in Benenden churchyard.			G-2
6		Benenden School.			G-2
6		Kilndown church – famous Victorian architecture			G-1
6	Far reaching unspoilt view across towards Sandhurst – lush green farmland. [From the south end of Iden Green, west of Moor Wood].				B-D

7: Sissinghurst Wooded Farmland

Area	Values	Cultural Associations	Changes	Opportunities	Group
7/3	Network of footpaths cross the agricultural land and provide opp to experience fantastic rural views				G-1
7	Subtle east west valleys which cut through these areas – feel remote and unchanged				G
7		Vita Sackville West and Nicholson's at Sissinghurst			G-1
7				Blantyre House – will be redeveloped.	G-2
7	Enclosed coppice woodland interspersed with longer range views of landscape. [Old Park Wood].				B-D
7	The area around Sissinghurst Castle always shimmers, when viewed from the tower. [Area to east of Old Park Wood].				
7	Curtisden Green – entirely fruit growing – apples, at present. The views from the surrounding lanes are spectacular, revealing fields that look as if corduroy fabric has been thrown over the land!				B-D
7	Sunken rural lanes, old droving routes and evidence of woodland management (historically) field separation – assarting etc.				B-D

Area	Values	Cultural Associations	Changes	Opportunities	Group
	[Footpath in south of area between Colliers Green and Hocker Edge].				
7		Charles Doughty who wrote 'Arabia Deserta' lived in Sissinghurst.			B

8: Bayham Wooded Farmland

Area	Values	Cultural Associations	Changes	Opportunities	Group
8		Bayham Abbey – existing venue			G-3

9: Ashurst Wooded Farmland

Area	Values	Cultural Associations	Changes	Opportunities	Group
9	Broad Lane.				L-1
9	View from the hill [in the west of the area] in all directions. View across the Medway Valley into Sevenoaks – to Top Hill Wood/ Walter's Green and from here towards Stone Cross and Ashurst Wood.	Nell Gwyn came to Ashurst.			L-1
9	Burrs Wood.	Groombridge Place – Pride and Prejudice filmed here.			L-1
9	Iron forges – e.g. woodland south of Stone Cross.				L-1
9	Ashurst farmland/ Penshurst ridge.				L-1
9	Dorothy Kerin and Burrswood.				L-1
9	Landmark - the Green Crown Pub [Groombridge].				L
9	Big oak trees create framed views.		Cycling – issue e.g. around Groombridge (cyclists zoom past).		L-1

10: Kilndown Wooded Farmland

Area	Values	Cultural Associations	Changes	Opportunities	Group
10	Natural Beauty: Little Scotney Farm. Finchcocks; Hopfields; Walk/ footpath/ bridal way; Horse riding.		Future upgrading of A21 between existing dual carriageways will have major impact.		G
10		Glassenbury – moated manor house formerly part of large estate			G-1

11: Hawkhurst Wooded Farmland

Area	Values	Cultural Associations	Changes	Opportunities	Group
11	Like seeing the windmills and churches as ‘beacons’ at village locations. [Sandhurst].	Smugglers – Hawkhurst Gang and stories about their use of sunken routes and churches.			G
11		Smuggling – Hawkhurst Gang based at Four Wents			G-1
11		Rootes Group – car empire.			G-2
11	The Moor – Hawkhurst – sense of community.	Gilbert Scott – designed the church in Hawkhurst.			G-2
11		Saint Ronan's (School) – the home of the man who invented the Oxo cube. Gunther bought the Tongswood Estate in Hawkhurst in 1902. OXO can still be seen in darker brick, above the entrance. Also walled gardens.			G-2
11		Marlborough House School – near Hawkhurst.			G-2
11		Hawkhurst – associated with travellers (from the river to London); Hop huts (now derelict but still in the landscape); Holidays – from			G-2

Area	Values	Cultural Associations	Changes	Opportunities	Group
		East London.			
		Colonnade and Dunks Almshouses (after Sir Thomas Dunk, whose family had been wealthy clothiers) in the Highgate area of Hawkhurst.			
11	Enclosed landscapes at the bottom of the ridge, surrounding woodland. [Area north of Hinksden Bridge/ The Paper Mill wood].				B-D
11	Open views east of Sandhurst – looking towards Rother and views back in to Sandhurst windmill. [At Sandhurst – east end of the village].				B-D
11	Looking north in Hawkhurst ridge towards Cranbrook very impressive vista – largely unspoilt by modern intrusions. View across valley. [From east of Hawkhurst village].				B-D
11	Colonnade buildings and distinctive crossroads. [Hawkhurst – centre].				B-D

13: Paddock Wood/ Five Oak Green Low Weald Farmland

Area	Values	Cultural Associations	Changes	Opportunities	Group
13		The Hop Farm – just touching on the borough			G-3
13	Foal Hurst Wood and Whetsted Wood very important for views and walking. Also woodland beside Church Road and Green Lane in Paddock Wood.				B-D
13			Community orchard being created east of Paddock Wood as part of new development (not sure how it will be maintained).		B-1
13		Sir Frederick Morgan (D Day) – [born and raised in Paddock Wood]. Hop industry (Paddock Wood).			B

Area	Values	Cultural Associations	Changes	Opportunities	Group
		Hop Pickers Line.			
13	Church at Capel – historic, walks.				L

14: Pembury/ Capel Forested Plateau

Area	Values	Cultural Associations	Changes	Opportunities	Group
14	<p>Pembury Woodlands and Heathlands (comments provided on write up)</p> <p>Much of sweet chestnut coppice is unmanaged</p> <p>Coniferous woodland planted in 1940s and now past felling date</p> <p>The area is introspective but there are also areas with good views out to north</p> <p>Note large cover of ancient woodland</p> <p>No vineyards any more but some new areas of hops</p> <p>Re bullet 5- despite road inaccessibility there are areas with extensive footpath network and access to land owned by public bodies and Hadlow Estates</p> <p>Bayham Estate lies to the south</p> <p>A key value is the sense of separateness from RTW that should be conserved – need for firm boundary with appropriate tree planting and landscape treatment (note re Knights Park – consider as part of the landscape sensitivity)</p> <p>With the new A21 – was loss of many trees and views have opened up to the urban area (NE of TW)</p> <p>Comment re greenbelt around edge of TW and need to maintain</p>				G-separate
14	Cinderhill Woods/ Brenchley Woods/ Pembury Walks				G-3
14	Not keen on the new road but value the views of the landscape it has created!				G
14				Think of extending the RSPB Tudeley Woods reserve around the north and east of	B-D

Area	Values	Cultural Associations	Changes	Opportunities	Group
				Pembury – the area might be doubled or trebled to create a much more extensive and valuable reserve.	
14			Pembury – (new) orchards? Peppenbry, Scipps group – north of Five Oak Green/ Berry Fruits – south of Five Oak Green. Fruit growing with café and shop. Orchard to east of Tudeley		B-1
14	Pembury (village): Village green – gives a sense of community, and the history of how the place once was – e.g. the old coach road.				B
14	Pembury retains a separate identity despite its development, and proximity to Tunbridge Wells				L-2
14		Old brickworks – e.g. to the north of Pembury village.			B
14			Opportunities of underpasses under the A21 to improve connectivity – horses. Potential concentration of equestrian uses.		L-1
14	Greggs Wood – natural value. Wildlife, lake, tranquillity. [At edge of TW].		Industrial estate on edge of TW – view from A26 towards it – brightly lit at night.		L

15: Bedgebury Forested Plateau

Area	Values	Cultural Associations	Changes	Opportunities	Group
15	Berresford Hope Estate based at Bedgebury (bought by FC) – whole area still bears imprint of historic estate landscape.				G1
15	Bedgebury provides highly valued recreation area				G-1

Area	Values	Cultural Associations	Changes	Opportunities	Group
15	Bedgebury – public recreation and Go Ape; pinetum.			This contributes to a 'chain' of recreation spaces – Bewl Water – Scotney.	G-2

18: Teise Valley

Area	Values	Cultural Associations	Changes	Opportunities	Group
18	Far reaching views over the Teise and Horsmonden Church.	Fishing on the Teise			G-3
18	Farm animals grazing – traditional; keeps landscape working; traditions of wool industry.				G-3
18	Rolling views of historic farm buildings – oasts, Kentish barns. Interspersed between ridges and woodland. [Valley to west of Goudhurst].				B-D

19: Bayhall

Area	Values	Cultural Associations	Changes	Opportunities	Group
19	Robert Marnock – landscape architect. Designed Dunorlan Park. Lived in Rusthall.				L

Values and Cultural Associations for all areas

Area	Values	Cultural Associations	Group
1/14/13	Transition slopes between 1/ 14 and 13		G-3
All	Oast houses Half-timbered	Wooded landscape/ hedgerows/ shaws	G-3
All	Churches as landmarks Churches – sense of history – can piece together the landscape – e.g. history of families/ owners who built different places across the district.	Hoppers huts	G-3 L
All	Weather patterns – see the weather coming		G-3
All	Bluebells and orchids in woodland		G-3

Area	Values	Cultural Associations	Group
All	Smugglers Paths Old routeways		G-2 L
1/2/3/4 – all of fruit belt.	Evidence of farming – orchards fruit belts – now being grubbed but distinct field margins and shapes should be retained. (All of fruit belts 1-4).		B-D
All	Places that feel wild and have a sense of tranquillity (places can still get lost)	Large schools – St Ronans, Bethany, Marlborough House, Cranbrook, Benenden, TCPS – characteristic of this rural area and wider influence on landscape – people travelling along rural roads and house prices. Huge employers and attract wealthy population	G-1
All	Views and vistas – outstanding across the area e.g. long views from ridges (Hastings) contrasting with short distance enclosed views	Artists – Cranbrook colony C19 – see Cranbrook museum	G-1
All	Castles as at Sissinghurst and Scotney which lend character to entire area (+ tourism)	Scotney – imp cultural association with the Picturesque	G-1
All	Disused railway Hawkhurst to Paddock Wood now being bought back as recreational route Hop Pickers Line	History of the plague and impact on the landscape e.g. Horsemenden church	G-1 G-2
All	Medieval iron working (hammer ponds) distinctive features across the whole area – all over but particularly areas 3,4,7 In landscape recalled as Furnace Lane, Furnace Farm, old ponds		G-1
All	Two catchments split on the ridge, five streams and minor rivers (Teise, Crane and Beult) running to Medway north and south catchment running to the coast		G-1
All	Hops are characteristic of the whole area and are now making a come back e.g. Sandhurst		G-1
6/11/15	Traction engine ponds – close to roads.		G-2
All	Setting of settlements		
All		Holidays from East London	G-2
All	Biodiversity – value of hedges for nature.		
All	[Experience & Feeling]: the wooded ghylls are a magical element in our landscape. They lend enchantment to the countryside.		B
All	Biodiversity value of grass verges and ponds.		B
All	Accessibility for recreation. Connected ‘nuggets’ – e.g. Bedgebury.		L-1

Area	Values	Cultural Associations	Group
All	Chestnut woodlands and charcoal burning. Iron furnaces.		L-1 L
All	Railway lines are hidden in the landscape – sense of no intrusion from overhead lines/ infrastructure.		L
All	Sense of history – archaeological digs – ongoing – find historic artefacts and remind us of the people using the landscape before.		L
All	Enjoying peace and quiet, and views.		L
All	Beautiful countryside.		L
All	Woodland Streams Trees Green spaces Hedgerows		L
All	Open green spaces and villages broken up by green boundaries.		L
All	Network of footpaths cross the agricultural land and provide opp to experience fantastic rural views – VALUE applies to all		G-1

Comments on Issues and Opportunities

Changes/ Issues	Opportunities	Group
Neglect of landscape, especially small parcels – prelude to development?	Opportunities – planting woodland to prevent flooding.	G-3
Incremental change – gradual impact of small developments.		G-3
Orchards – loss		
Fly-tipping		G-3
Stones on verges		G-3
Widening of rural lanes		G-3
Increase in traffic in rural lanes		G-3
Noise in the quiet, sensitive areas		G-3
A21 – has opened up attractive views in this area		G-3

Changes/ Issues	Opportunities	Group
Security lighting – particularly on farms/ private properties		G-3
Street lighting on new development		G-3
Re-use of redundant farm buildings – provide employment in the rural areas – important rural stock		G-3
Extensions/ adaptations to residential properties – bungalows etc.		G-3
Scale is important and the detail can add to the character		G-3
Improved footpaths/ bridleways – destinations etc.		G-3
Vineyards – change and growing industry providing employment		G-3
Hop-pickers line from PW – Hawkhurst		G-3
Loss of pubs	Don't want large developments.	G-2
Loss of hop fields and orchards – now there are more modern intensively farmed trees, no sheep grazing. Some fields are arable and woodland.	Lack of railway stations.	G-2
Bigger fields and loss of hedgerows – previously, hedgerows gave an impression of the lie of the land.	Commuting more difficult – pressures in this area.	G-2
Stopped cutting verges – access is increasingly difficult.		G-2
Traffic on A262 to Ashford - major arterial road – changes character, noise, loss of rural character particularly in those character areas that it crosses, plus associated cut through on the narrow rural lanes around Goudhurst and Marden		G-1
Residential development both within the District (Goudhurst, Cranbrook extensions) as well as outside district (Marden) and resultant impacts on rural character and use of rural lanes		G-1
Land use change: Much greater intensity of fruit farming (dwarf stock) plus diversification and particularly horticulture paddocks around Cranbrook and Bedgebury. Note two large shoots exist at Glassenbury and Ludham House		G-1
Reopening of the Hop Pickers Line across the area as new access opportunity		G-1
Selling off of woodland in small lots is a trend – unmanaged and small scale uses		G-1
Fewer sheep/ animal grazing – since foot and mouth. Now there is more mechanisation, horse paddocks, solar farms (e.g. around Paddock Wood).	Agri-tourism	B-1
Possibly small scale increase in local ales and hops – Dovecote and Halfway House – local ales; small scale new hops and hobby breweries.	Farm shops – locally grown produce.	B-1
New vineyards – e.g. Chapelhurst, Tenterton, Biddenden.	Encourage improvements in biodiversity on farms (already happening	B-1

Changes/ Issues	Opportunities	Group
	to some extent) – e.g. the species rich hedges. Increase awareness of the value of this and encourage local communities – e.g. holes in garden fences for hedgehogs.	
Impact of A21 on increasing accessibility – results in increased pressures – e.g. will people still support facilities in Paddock Green?	Potential for allotments – to give sense of community.	B-1
Lack of understanding of controls.		B-2
Farmland going to solar farms – impact on landscape. Very rapid change.		B-2
Rural exception sites/ extensions to existing properties/ urbanisation; driveways etc. Small scale individual change has an accumulative effect. Individual large houses – too large.	Need guidance on rural extensions/ rural exception sites. Stronger policies on small scale incremental change.	B-2
Intensification – large scale houses – loss of gaps/ green spaces.	Can soften new development with landscaping and green roofs.	B-2
More road signs – there are too many!!!		B-2
The proliferation of wire fencing is one of the things that is damaging to the landscape.		B
Orchards – now much smaller (dwarf rather than traditional trees). Break up of farmsteads. Boundaries of residential properties – urbanising – black topping. Wire fencing.		B
Rural character of roads/ lanes – increasing traffic		L-2
Reduction in hops – used to be all around Goudhurst. Now mostly soft fruit (blackcurrants).	Advertise as a place for film making (Speldhurst area) – unique landscape.	L-1
Increase in hobby farming.	Create more bridleways – if there are more equestrian facilities it might encourage more tourism – potential to focus equestrian use in certain area (e.g. Pembury LCA).	L-1
Increase in chickens – modern; very large areas.	Increase promotion of footpaths	L-1
Fracking for shale gas would have a detrimental impact on landscape character		L-2
Increase in amount of disused farmland – at greater risk of development		L-2
Decline in management of former coppice woodland		L-2
More use of security lighting is harmful to dark skies	New/replacement tree planting	L-2
Threat of development in smaller villages – risk of settlement merger		L-2

Changes/ Issues	Opportunities	Group
'Backland' housing development		L-2
Safety of cyclists on rural lanes		L-2
Danger caused by increased number of cyclists on rural lanes!		L-2
Decline in hedgerow maintenance, in effect narrowing lanes		L-2
	Local food production – make more of this as a characteristic of Kent	L-2

Comments on Boundaries/ General Comments

Area	Comments on Boundaries	General Comments	Group	Response
3/ 7	Curtisden Green is the main orchard area of Goudhurst (not [Sissinghurst]) – should be part of Goudhurst. Curtisden Green is surrounded by the biggest Apple Orchard in the area. Biggest – Goudhurst! (Should not be in Sissinghurst quite different). Should be part of Fruit Belt [area south of Old Park Wood]. Ridges and fruit belt.		G G B-D	Altered boundary between LCA 3 and 7 – Curtisden Green now within LCA 3 Goudhurst area.
4		[Area in north east of 4]: No fruit.	G	
4/15/10/11	Should extend the south western corner of LCA 4.		G	
8/ 10		Lots of fruit in 8 and 10 too!	G	
11	Is this area at Hawkhurst consistent – is it too big? Can No. 16 boundary move into this area? Is it consistent. East of Sandhurst – much more open (does AONB boundary split this area?)		B-D	Altered northern boundary of LCA 11 slightly along topographical contour line.
11/16	Also a wide river valley in 11 – not sure why not part of 16.		G	
17	Check floodplain in area 13 – north of rail line – Sarah Lowe TWBC.		B-D	Altered boundary using floodplain and railway line.
18/8/10		Hops in area of LCA 18 between 8 and 10.	G	
19		Change from urban fringe farmland = Undulating Farmland.	B-D	
ALL		Areas need to reflect shared history where it has an impact on character e.g. Dens.	G	

Area	Comments on Boundaries	General Comments	Group	Response
General	Urban areas ought to be included in the assessment, to reflect the relationship between urban areas and their surroundings.		B-2	
Wooded Farmland		Change to Wooded/ Mixed Farmland	G	
All		Question about boundary lines – for example, one side of the line is within the AONB and the other is outside it (e.g. north of Brenchley at the viewpoint).	B	The character assessment will look at these areas in particular. And where there are qualities that reflect and enhance the AONB. Important to note that it is a gradual transition and not a complete change in character. For example the views from Brenchley enhance the AONB.
General		Area to the east of Tunbridge Wells at Knights Park is now designed to accommodate development whereas before it had many uses and undefined.	B	

Other Consultation

Source	Comments	Response
Terry Cload	<p>It's extraordinary that three of the Borough's most important landscape features the Commons are just passed over in one short paragraph and an additional sentence. Area 5 - (8) and (12). These are in urban areas but deserve the 'full treatment' as per the rest of the document, as they are of immense importance to the landscape of the urban environment.</p> <p>I strongly support the strict control of light pollution and especially resisting it altogether - not only in remote areas but throughout the Borough. Light pollution affects humans as well as flora and fauna and is also wasted energy. Our sense of humanity and place in the universe is greatly diminished if we cannot see the night sky above. Again only mentioned in passing. It should run like a powerful thread throughout the whole document. Chapter 5 - 17.</p> <p>Man-made noise could also be given more consideration. There are possible threats ahead from industrial uses such as windfarms and fracking enterprises as well as existing noise generators, e.g. traffic.</p> <p>Overall the Landscape Character Assessment is an excellent document but the nearly 100 pages are of little use if the Council only pays lip service to its contents and recommendations. Councillors need to embrace it and work daily to make ensure a tangible difference, benefiting the Borough, rather than saying 'jolly good' and putting it to one side until the next review. I regret to say I am not hopeful.</p>	<p>Added reference to Commons in Valued features box.</p> <p>Information on dark skies added.</p> <p>References to traffic added for areas as appropriate.</p>
Andrew Greater	I wish to comment on the consultation document referring to Speldhurst Wooded Farmland. This is an area of countryside with attractive views which one can enjoy whatever the time of year. It provides a much needed breathing space where one can walk safely and healthily away from the increasingly congested roads of Tunbridge Wells and needs to be preserved as it is for this and future generations. Along with this much needs to be done to calm the traffic usage of Reynolds Lane which has very much	Comments considered and incorporated.

Source	Comments	Response
	become a 'rat run' in recent years by those trying to avoid the congestion of St Johns Road. I understand that Reynolds Lane is a rare surviving ancient rural lane and it should be respected as such.	
Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Forum	<p>1. The strong sense of place associated with Royal Tunbridge Wells should be safeguarded by protecting the landscape setting of the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty surrounding the town and conserving the buffer areas of high quality Green Belt on its edge which feather imperceptibly into it, thus maintaining the high visual, amenity and cultural value of our landscapes. These contribute to the economic health of the town and help produce benefits of greater social cohesion through community activities, charitable events and outdoor sports in general.</p> <p>2. This safeguarding should be done through the planning system and also by further developing appropriate leisure and tourist activities related to our adjacent open countryside which allows walking, cycling, fishing, horse riding, rock climbing and outdoor pursuits in general.</p> <p>3. The resource represented by these green spaces is not only valuable for residents. It can also be of benefit to tourists, potentially extending the length of their stay in the town, with consequent economic benefits for the local economy.</p> <p>4. With open countryside or woodland within 15 minutes walk of nearly all inhabitants of the town, the health and amenity "green value per resident" of adjoining countryside acres may be considered much greater in the town of Royal Tunbridge Wells than in many other parts of the Borough and merits future safeguarding.</p> <p>5. Opportunities may arise for acquisition and safeguarding of green spaces by the Woodland Trust, National Trust or designation by landowners and by local subscription and such opportunities should be actively pursued whenever they arise.</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>n/a.</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>Access to nature noted as a valued quality where relevant.</p> <p>n/a.</p>

2) 'Your View' App

'Your View' is a mobile app developed and made live during the course of the project. The app aimed to engage a public audience in identifying and sharing their opinions on the landscape in their area. The app included an option to upload a photograph of a particular view alongside descriptions of what people see as 'special' about the particular view.

The app was advertised by the Council and was available from September 2016- November 2016.

Objective of App

The objective of the app was to:

- 1) Understand what people value about the landscapes in Tunbridge Wells Borough and why, including
 - a. What do they value about any of the features in the view and why?
 - b. How does the landscape or the experience of the view make them feel?
 - c. What do they think is special about the particular view?

The outputs from the app were compiled and used to augment the assessment. The outputs of the app are provided at the end of this document.



Appendix 5 Bibliography and References

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