

Introduction

A Strategy for Sustainable Management of Change.

Landscape Character Assessment is a way of describing and recording what makes a place distinctive or different, what is special about it. This is concerned primarily with landscape character, rather than with quality or value. These factors are nevertheless relevant when a landscape character assessment is used to inform decisions. It is vital that we understand the character of our landscape in order to manage change. Landscape character is an aid to decision making and not a process designed to resist change. We need to understand what the landscape is like today to ensure that change and development do not undermine local distinctiveness and sense of place. Character assessment is also used to determine what measures can be taken to enhance the landscape.

The National Landscape Character Assessment

This 2016 update is to bring the County Landscape Assessment in line with updates to the National Landscape Character Assessment.

NCA's in south east England and London

National Character Areas (NCAs) divide England into 159 distinct natural areas. Character area boundaries at national and county level follow natural lines in the landscape rather than administrative boundaries, making them a good decision making framework for the natural environment.

East Sussex County incorporates all or parts of five of the NCAs:

The High Weald

The Low Weald

The South Downs

The Pevensey Levels

Romney Marsh

The National Ecosystem Assessment

A key feature of this update is the inclusion of the benefits and services that the landscape can provide as identified in the *National Ecosystem Assessment*.

National Ecosystem Assessment

The National Ecosystem Assessment has identified and evaluated the key services which the natural environment provides and these are broadly categorised as follows:

- Provisioning services (food, fibre and water supply)
- Regulating services (water purification, air quality maintenance and climate regulation)
- Cultural services (inspiration, education and wellbeing)

The European Landscape Convention

The European Landscape Convention (ELC) is an international agreement which has been endorsed by 38 out of 47 Council of Europe Members including Britain in 2007. The ELC gives strength to recognition of landscapes in law and to integrate into all relevant policies. *“Landscape means an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors.”* (Council of Europe 2000)

A key message in the convention is that *‘All Landscapes Matter’*.

Using Landscape Character Assessment to inform local policymaking and development management decisions is an established method of putting the principles set out in the ELC into practice. This approach encourages community engagement and should be used to inform Local and Neighbourhood plans.

Introduction

Objectives of the East Sussex Landscape Character Assessment (LCA)

- To identify the unique combination of landscape, biodiversity, geological, cultural and economic activity that defines each county landscape character area.
- To provide a county-wide consistent landscape character assessment framework as a background for more detailed assessments.
- To identify problems and pressures for each character area, formulate a vision and provide landscape action priorities

Aims of 2016 review

The aim is to review each landscape character area in the county in the context of the social and economic benefits (ecosystem services) that the landscape provides. The strategy also identifies specific pressures for development and change for each area. The key ecosystem services are described for each character area and an evaluation of the current condition of the landscape and ecosystems. Suggestions for how these key services can be enhanced are outlined for each character area. This in turn informs the Landscape Management Guidance and suggestions for Managing Change into the future.

Note: The East Sussex landscape character areas which fall within the South Downs National Park Authority boundary have not been updated in this review. This is to avoid duplication with the South Downs Integrated Landscape Assessment. The East Sussex LCA character area descriptions for the downs are retained as these are still relevant.

South Downs Integrated Landscape Character Assessment

Guidelines for Managing Landscape Change

These guidelines set out how the vision and strategy for each character area could be achieved. The section outlines which of the areas' key positive attributes would need to be taken into account in planning for new development. The guidelines provide a link back to the landscape character assessment and are intended to inform development planning decisions.

The concluding table 'Landscape Management Guidelines' summarises the management guidelines for each landscape character area taking into account the key attributes. Alongside this the multiple benefits (ecosystem services) that each character area can offer are set out. Opportunities to enhance

these through changes to landscape management are outlined.

Where relevant cross reference is made to other landscape management plans. Where areas overlap with the boundaries for the South Downs National Park or the High Weald AONB cross reference is made to the statutory management plans for these designated landscapes.

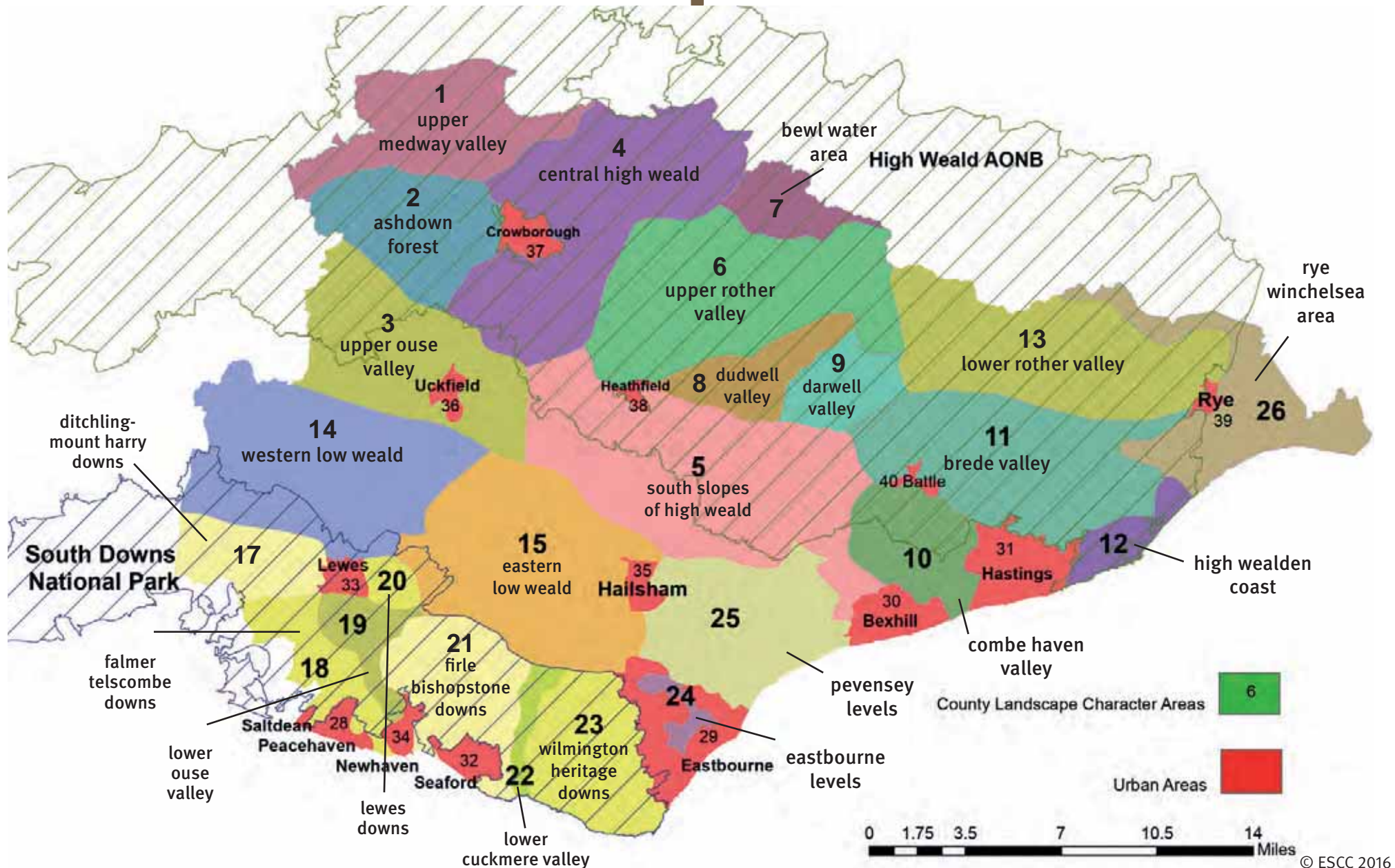
HWAONB: <http://www.highweald.org/downloads/publications/high-weald-aonb-management-plan-documents/1475-high-weald-management-plan-3rd-edition-2014-2019/file.html>

SDNP: [Partnership Management Plan](#)

The Woodland Trust manages some woodland in the County and can provide advice, guidance and grants for planting new woodlands and managing existing woods at woodlandtrust.org.uk. The Woodland Trust also has an initiative for the creation of hedges with trees.

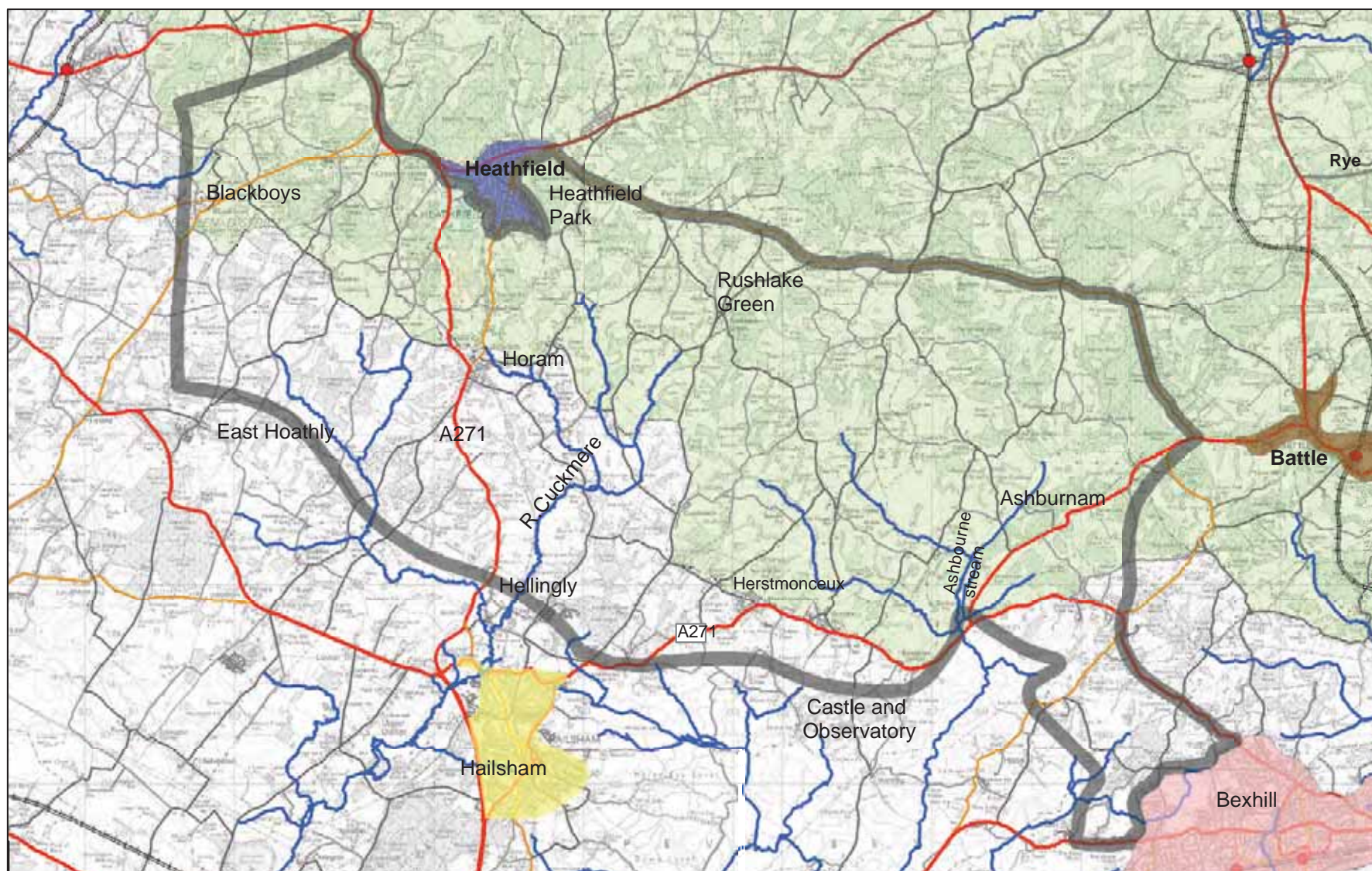
The Forestry Commission manages areas of woodland and can provide grants for woodland planting, improvement and management at www.forestry.gov.uk/

The Local Landscape Character Areas



South Slopes of the High Weald

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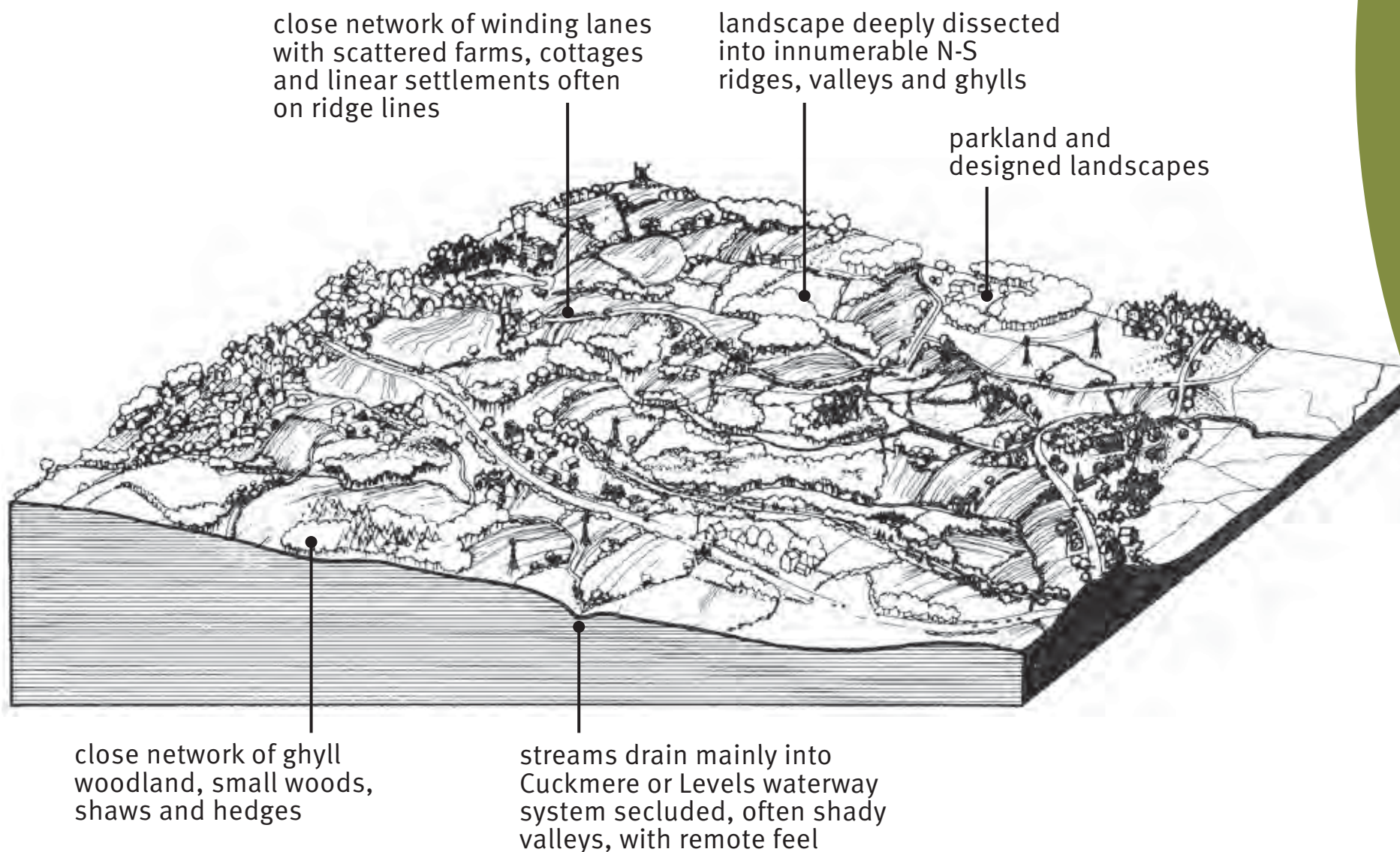
5 South Slopes of the High Weald Landscape Character Area

High Weald AONB

0 1 2 4 6 8 Kilometers

South Slopes of the High Weald

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South Slopes of the High Weald

5

Contents

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

A Landscape Description

Key Landscape Characteristics

- An intricate small scale landscape with a strong pattern of hedgerows.
- The area falls gently southwards from the Heathfield Battle ridge to the Low Weald and Pevensey Levels.
- Wide views to the Downs from many areas.
- An area deeply dissected into innumerable north-south ridges, valleys and ghylls.
- The source of the River Cuckmere into which most streams in the western part of the area drain and the Ashbourne stream catchment in the east.
- Many scattered small farm ponds and hammer ponds as relics of the iron industry which thrived in this area.
- A sense of tranquillity and relative remoteness away from the main settlements and roads.
- Frequent scattered small woods and shaws, many of which are Semi-Natural Ancient deciduous woodland.
- Ghyll woodlands in the many steep sided valleys which are a key characteristic of the High Weald.
- Larger areas of continuous woodland in the Great Wood complex to the east of Rushlake Green and the largest woodland block in the area to the east of Penhurst at Creep Wood.
- There is an abundance of hornbeam or 'horbeech' which is a clue to the local place names such as Cowbeech and Horam. Other indigenous characteristic tree species are Oak, ash and wild cherry. Sweet chestnut is a feature tree in villages and as notable ancient trees and avenues in the parklands of Ashburnum and Herstmonceux Castle. Beech and pine also feature locally and other exotic specimens are found in gardens and villages.
- Many scattered small historic villages and hamlets centred around a church or a pub.
- Scattered and often isolated large farmsteads.
- A close network of winding lanes with scattered settlements and individual dwellings often strung out along them, particularly on the ridges.
- The extensive park and woodland estate at Ashburnum with lakes and vistas designed by Capability Brown.
- Heathfield Park in Old Heathfield, a Repton designed landscape.
- The significant historic moated manor house of Herstmonceux Castle with the associated museum of the old National Observatory which has distinctive domes visible from a wide area to the south.

South Slopes of the High Weald

- Traditional building materials for the area are red brick, often laid as Flemish bond with blued brick ends, red tiled roofs and tile hung upper stories are typical. Oak timber framed and sandstone houses reflect the abundance of locally sourced timber and quarried stone. Flint is found in the south of the area, closer to the downs where it was sourced. Houses built of non-local materials are found close to the railway.
- Much of the area is free of main roads and traffic; the A271 forms the southern boundary of much of the area before it turns north to Old Heathfield.

Cultural Associations

The area was the centre of a thriving Wealden iron industry due to the locally mined ore, abundance of wood and streams to form ponds. Ashburnum Forge was the last furnace to close in Sussex.

As London night skies became too brightly lit for star gazing in 1957 the Royal Greenwich Observatory was moved to a rural site at Herstmonceux Castle. Several of the telescopes remain but the largest telescope, the 100 inch (254 cm) aperture Isaac Newton Telescope was moved to La Palma, Canary Islands in the 1970s. The estate provides housing to the Equatorial Telescope Buildings, which have been converted to an interactive science centre for schoolchildren. The empty dome for the Newton Telescope remains on this site and is a landmark being visible from afar.

Herstmonceux and the surrounding area were the home of traditional Sussex trug making and there are still some businesses in the area continuing the tradition. Trugs are baskets made from willow boards and oak or ash frames.

The actor Harry H. Corbett is buried in Penhurst Churchyard.

South Slopes of the High Weald

Table 1 Key positive Landscape Attributes

- An intricate small scale landscape with a strong pattern of hedgerows.
- Wide views to the Downs from many areas.
- The source of the River Cuckmere into which most streams in the western part of the area drain.
- Many scattered small farm ponds and hammer ponds as relics of the iron industry which thrived in this area.
- A sense of tranquillity and relative remoteness away from the main settlements and roads.
- Frequent scattered small woods and shaws, many of which are Semi-Natural Ancient deciduous woodland.
- Ghyll woodlands in the many steep sided valleys which are a key characteristic of the High Weald.
- Larger areas of continuous woodland in the Great Wood complex to the east of Rushlake Green and the largest woodland block in the area to the east of Penhurst at Creep Wood.
- Many scattered small historic villages, hamlets and large farmsteads centred around a church or a pub.
- The extensive park and woodland estate at Ashburnum with lakes and vistas designed by Capability Brown.
- Heathfield Park in Old Heathfield, a Repton designed landscape.
- The significant historic moated manor house of Herstmonceux Castle with the associated museum of the old National Observatory which has distinctive domes visible from a wide area to the south.

South Slopes of the High Weald

B Landscape Evaluation

Table 2 Current Condition

This is a largely unspoilt and tranquil rural landscape with few intrusive features. The landscape is in generally good condition and well managed as farmland with a strong historic structure. Agricultural change has led to some gentrification of the rural landscape and loss of landscape features. Ribbon development and roadside clutter has added to suburbanisation on the edges of villages. As with most of the High Weald landscape the historic field patterns of small fields and significant hedgerows remain intact.

Forces for Change impacting on positive attributes

Past / Current forces for change

- Creeping suburbanisation and cumulative changes in the rural landscape. Increasing roadside clutter and village developments which are not in sympathy with local distinctiveness or vernacular architecture.
- Urban fringe influences around Heathfield and Bexhill and widespread encroachment of 'horsiculture'.
- Extensive golf course development which are not in character with the rural landscape, especially around Horam.
- Clay extraction for bricks leaving unrestored quarries.
- Intrusive utility developments in the form of power lines, National Grid complexes and the Southern Water Complex near Ninfield.
- The spread of arable prairie areas causing the loss of historic field boundaries and landscape structure, especially around Ashburnum.
- Changes in the types and frequency of grazing animals in the countryside impacts on character as they are a characteristic feature. Lack of grazing can give an unmanaged appearance to the landscape and reduce the biodiversity value.
- Farm Environment Plans, much of the land is under Higher Level Stewardship Agreements and several farms in the valley are farmed organically.
- Intrusive modern farm buildings which are especially prominent on the ridges.

South Slopes of the High Weald

- Loss of traditional coppicing in woodlands and increase in game shooting.
- Woodland Grant schemes are scattered across the area, notably at Ashburnum, Ponts Green, Tickerage Wood and Summertree Farm, reversing the trend of poor woodland management.
- Increasing traffic on the A roads which cross the area and the main roads along the ridges and rat running on rural lanes.

Future Forces for Change

- The need to provide local housing in the villages, especially the larger service centres.
- The associated infrastructure required for new development such as waste water treatment works.
- Demands for traffic calming and road improvements which could introduce increasing urban clutter to rural roads, villages and lanes.
- Continued agricultural change due to changing markets, economic pressures and response to climate change.
- The spread of small agricultural holdings, hobby farming, paddocks, farm shops and allotments for local food production.
- Pressure for locating renewable energy facilities for solar, wind and bio energy.
- Pests and diseases of trees which could impact significantly on the mature tree stock. E.g. phytophthora of alder and Ash dieback.
- Failure to control invasive species of plants and animals in water courses, such as New Zealand Pigmy Weed (*Crassula helmsii*), Parrots Feather (*Myriophyllum aquaticum*), Mink and European Marsh Frog (*Pelophylax ridibundus*). All of these impact on the native flora and fauna which are characteristic of the area.
- Water quality in the Cuckmere and Ashbourne catchments.

South Slopes of the High Weald

Table 3 Potential Impacts of Climate Change

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

South Slopes of the High Weald

C Vision and Strategy

Table 4 Vision

A tranquil landscape retaining the strong rural High Wealden historic character. The secluded ghyll valleys and associated woodland conserved and enhanced. The unspoilt character of settlements and farmsteads retained and the distinct sense of place protected. The characteristic medieval field pattern with associated shaws and hedges conserved. Areas of semi-natural ancient woodland brought into positive management to ensure long term health and security.

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

Landscape change and adaptation to meet the strategy requires:

1. Planning for the enhancement of the Rother, Brede and Tillingham Woods and the Pevensy, Rother and Cuckmere Watershed Biodiversity Opportunity Areas, which extend into the area.
2. Protect and manage existing woodland habitats and in particular the characteristic ghyll woodlands.
3. Protect and manage existing wetland habitats and plan for restoration of ditches and riverside vegetation to restore habitat linkages and continuity.
4. Plan for the creation of multifunctional green infrastructure to maximise the opportunities for biodiversity and recreation offered by the rural lanes, rights of way network and extensive woodland.

5. Consider the potential to plan for recreational access in this character area identifying areas where public access can be encouraged whilst protecting other areas where wildlife conservation is the priority.
6. Integrate proposed and existing development into the landscape through planting of tree features and woodland to define the village boundaries with the countryside.
7. Ensure that the design and layout of new developments respect the character and form of the landscape and existing settlements.
8. Control the spread of suburbanisation by minimising clutter of signage and other urban features in lanes and villages.
9. Conserve the setting of historic buildings and landscape features and notably the registered parklands of Ashburnum, Herstmonceux and Heathfield Park.
10. Consider appropriate species for new plantings to maintain landscape character and biodiversity but also adaptation to climate change influences.

South Slopes of the High Weald

D Guidelines for Managing Change

Development considerations for housing and other development

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

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

The main pressures for development in this character area will be to accommodate housing for the rural populations in the rural settlements of Herstmonceux, Rushlake Green and East Hoathly.

There will also be a demand for local housing in the smaller villages. Pressures for expansion of Heathfield may impact on the part of the character area which borders the town. Tourism is an important source of income to this area and there is likely to be increasing demand for accommodation in hotels, bed and breakfast, caravan and camp sites. The modern trend for luxury and exotic camping (glamping) is already appearing in the guise of teepees, tree houses and the like. There will be demand for new facilities and to improve or expand existing, some of these putting pressure on ancient woodland. Any new development should respect the key positive attributes in the landscape outlined in Table 1 above.

Proposed development should consider opportunities for proactively meeting the Landscape Change Strategy aims for this Landscape Character Area as set out in 1-10 above.

South Slopes of the High Weald

5

Table 5

Current issues offering opportunities for protection and enhancement	Landscape Management Guidelines	Benefits delivered by Ecosystem Services for each area of interest
<p>Countryside and Farmland</p> <p>Farm environment plans relating to much of the farm lands including organic farming.</p> <p>Pressure for farm diversification and development of hobby farms, solar arrays, wind farms, waste recycling operations etc.</p> <p>Expansion of camping and caravan sites as well as other holiday related development such as 'Glamping'.</p> <p>Land falling out of positive management and dereliction of farm buildings.</p> <p>Loss of hedgerows and other traditional field boundaries.</p> <p>Loss of traditional orchards, pasture and traditional meadows.</p> <p>Clearance of natural vegetation from drainage channels and ditches.</p> <p>Low water levels and poor water quality in some drains and streams.</p> <p>Deterioration of by ways and lanes due to erosion of un-surfaced routes by horses, bikes and 4 wheel drives.</p>	<p>Countryside and Farmland</p> <p>Encourage establishment of more farm conservation schemes to conserve the landscape structure of hedges, shaws, ponds and streams.</p> <p>Conserve hedges, trees and ghyll woods. Maintain the mixed farmed character of the area.</p> <p>Protect and manage historic field patterns and conserve boundary features.</p> <p>Maintain water levels in drains and ditches.</p> <p>Conserve and enhance byways and rural lanes. Use tree and woodland planting to screen intrusive farm buildings and caravan sites.</p> <p>Enhance the biodiversity value of wet meadows, drainage and stream channels.</p> <p>Plan for and manage changes which may occur in the landscape due to changes in farm management brought about by economic influences and climate change.</p> <p>Address existing flooding issues of farmland and properties through flood management and by identifying areas which can provide flood alleviation.</p>	<p>Provisioning services</p> <p>Water availability</p> <p>Food production</p> <p>Regulating services (water purification, air quality maintenance and climate regulation)</p> <p>Water quality and protected aquifers.</p> <p>Regulating water flow and preventing flooding</p> <p>Soil conservation and erosion control</p> <p>Habitat and species resilience to climate change</p> <p>Carbon sequestration. Areas of peat in the river valleys, hedges, trees, reed beds and grassland regulate air quality by absorbing and retaining CO₂.</p>

South Slopes of the High Weald

Current issues offering opportunities for protection and enhancement	Landscape Management Guidelines	Benefits delivered by Ecosystem Services for each area of interest
<p>Damage to verges on narrow country lanes caused by increasing size of farm vehicles and passing traffic.</p> <p>Overstocking and arable production on some soils can result in soil erosion and reduce soil quality.</p>	<p>Reduce the risk and incidence of soil erosion by encouraging the restoration of arable land to pasture.</p> <p>Apply best land management practices to prevent soil and fertiliser run off, thereby protecting surface and ground water.</p>	<p>Cultural Services</p> <p>Sense of Place and local distinctiveness.</p> <p>Source of Inspiration</p> <p>Sense of History</p> <p>Tranquillity</p> <p>Biodiversity</p>
<p>Trees and Woodland</p> <p>Ancient woodland and tree belts are not in positive management.</p> <p>Ghyll woodland not in positive management and are difficult to manage due to the steep and inaccessible nature of these woods.</p> <p>Traditional management has stopped as it is not commercially viable e.g. pollarding of stream side willows.</p> <p>Tree diseases.</p> <p>Ancient parkland trees dying off and not being replaced.</p> <p>Extensive areas of woodland are already in woodland grant schemes.</p> <p>Pressure for glamping sites in woodland.</p> <p>Invasive species competing with native flora and fauna e.g. Spanish Bluebell, Himalayan balsam, Japanese knotweed.</p>	<p>Trees and Woodland</p> <p>Actively manage trees and woodland through coppicing, pollarding of willows and replanting to create a diverse age structure.</p> <p>Plant new small woods, wet woodland and tree belts to strengthen the landscape character and where this is appropriate habitat creation.</p> <p>Consider the need to adapt to changes enforced by climate change, such as specific tree diseases and possible adaptation in species selection.</p> <p>Plant trees and woodland to contain existing and new built development.</p> <p>Encourage planting of trees along streams and ditches where appropriate for the habitat.</p>	<p>Provisioning</p> <p>Fuel (woodfuel for local communities from woodland management)</p> <p>Regulating</p> <p>Carbon sequestration, woodland absorbs and holds CO₂.</p> <p>Habitat and species resilience to climate change</p> <p>Cultural</p> <p>Tranquillity</p> <p>Sense of Place and local distinctiveness</p> <p>Cultural heritage (traditional woodland management)</p> <p>Biodiversity</p>

South Slopes of the High Weald

5

The High Weald

Current issues offering opportunities for protection and enhancement	Landscape Management Guidelines	Benefits delivered by Ecosystem Services for each area of interest
<p>Other Key Habitats Deterioration and loss of habitats :</p> <p>Water Loss of river and streamside vegetation. Deterioration of water quality in streams, ditches and ponds Invasive species of plants and animals which compete with native flora and fauna.</p> <p>Wet Meadows Financial and viable farming constraints affecting the continued management of wet meadows reducing the biodiversity value. Improvements to Grassland and meadows reducing species richness. Loss of wetland meadows to arable farming.</p>	<p>Other key Habitats Encourage management of river and stream channels, especially conservation of riverside trees and vegetation. Conservation and re-creation of wet meadow/pasture habitats. Agri-environment schemes to maximise biodiversity and encourage the retention of grazing. Opportunities to maximise reed bed creation. Encourage measures to improve water quality. Continue schemes to encourage farmers to minimise the use of chemicals and fertilizers.</p>	<p>Provisioning Nature's larder of free berries and herbs. Conservation of insect pollinators for pollination of crops.</p> <p>Regulating Habitat and species resilience to climate change.</p> <p>Cultural Appreciation of nature Educational value Biodiversity</p>

South Slopes of the High Weald

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

South Slopes of the High Weald

5

The High Weald

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

South Slopes of the High Weald

5

The High Weald

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

South Slopes of the High Weald

Glossary

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

ANGS: Accessible Natural Green Space Natural England – Accessible Natural Greenspace Standard (ANGSt)

Assart: Field created from the clearance of woodland

Clunch Barn: constructed of a building material composed of hardened clay or chalk marl.

Ecosystem Services: The services provided by nature which support living systems and can be evaluated.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Saltdean - Peacehaven

Both Telscombe Cliffs and Peacehaven were pioneer settlements in the early twentieth century. Peacehaven was built in the 1920s by an entrepreneur named Charles William Neville, who tailored its home designs to suit the means of the people who bought the plots.

A settlement has existed at Telscombe village since Roman times, but late in the 19th century the land along the coast, was gradually developed and called Telscombe Cliffs. In the first decade of the early 1900s a number of houses were built, but it was to be the development at Peacehaven that brought life to the new village of Telscombe Cliffs.

Characteristics

- The gently undulating cliff-top setting for this town and village, together with the scarcity of large trees give an open, exposed character to the area.
- These planned settlements retain their loose knit, low density urban form today.
- Peacehaven is mainly bungalows, semi-detached and terraced houses.
- There still exists a pioneer feel to the area.
- Green spaces, such as the Dell give important links between the town and the coast, and places for informal recreation.
- There is a fine cliff top walk, and where the fencing along the edge of the cliff protects the grass from trampling and mowing, maritime flowers such as thrift, sea campion, sea kale are thriving.
- Telscombe Tye is a wedge of Chalk downland that pushes down to the cliff edge, giving the townspeople a valuable recreational resource.

BRIGHTON &
HOVE



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Saltdean - Peacehaven

Special features

- Peacehaven straddles the zero degree longitude, or Meridian, line and a monument on the promenade marks the spot where the line leaves England.
- The structure was built in 1936 to commemorate the reign of King George V and is one of only two in the country.
- To the north, plotlands still exists, where the pioneer settlers bought their 100 ft deep plots. It has a unique character.

Problems, pressures, detracting features

- Generally exposed, bleak, suburban structure.
- Lacking in coastal character or significant tree cover.
- The straight, featureless main high street of Peacehaven.
- Traffic on the coast road, which severs residential areas and village centres from the coast.
- Suburban development lacking open space and tree cover.

Vision

A stimulating coastal-urban environment, with a sense of place and focal town centres, strengthened neighbourhood character and enhanced relationship of the whole area to its coastline.

Landscape action priorities

- Major environmental improvements to South Coast Road area, including building facelifts, co-ordinated signage and street furniture, and traffic calming.
- Strengthened visual and pedestrian links to the parallel cliff top area.
- Within the limits imposed by the coastal location, prepare and implement a tree strategy for the whole area, including street trees and treebelts, to create enclosure.
- Develop distinctive signs, colour schemes, street furniture etc to strengthen individual town and local character generally.
- Define and strengthen the urban edge against the Downs, particularly with bold tree planting in strategic positions.

Eastbourne

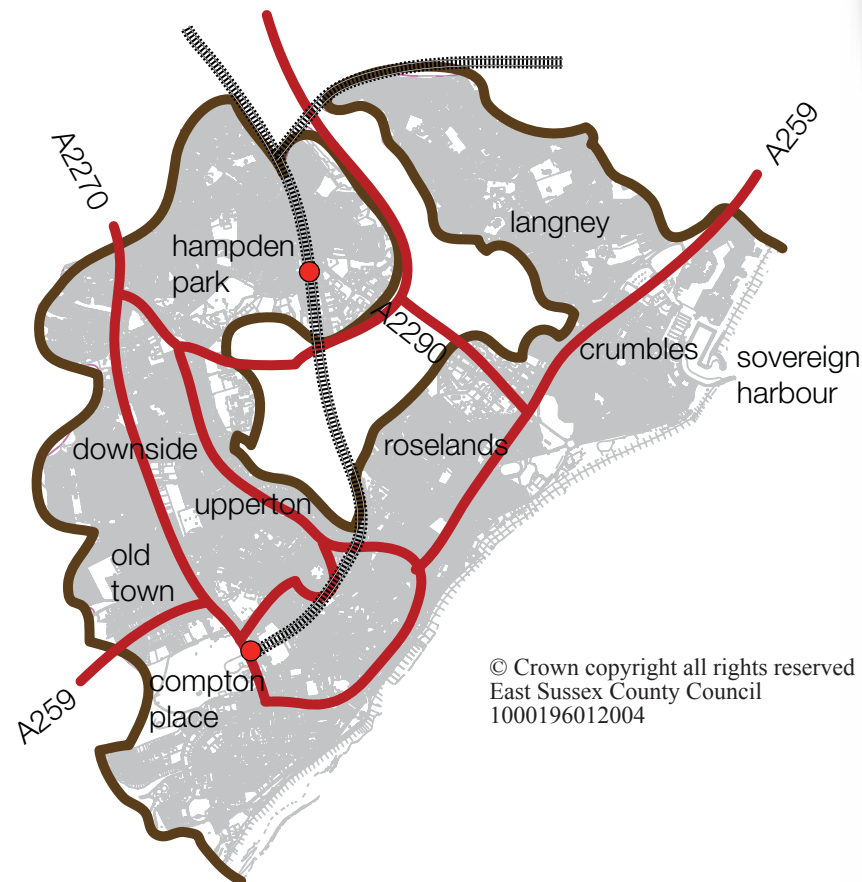
Eastbourne sits on the coast, where the downland is cut by the sea into the huge cliffs at Beachy Head. Sitting with its back against the easternmost end of the Downs, the town overlooks the sea, and the Levels to the east. It has retained its elegant Victorian character, seen in the pier, seafront parades and tree-lined avenues. The Old Town is bedded into the foot of the Downs, and has a superb wooded urban fringe. Lying at the heart of the town, the Eastbourne Levels almost bisect it. The Langney suburbs extend eastwards across the Levels towards Pevensey.

Characteristics

- This elegant seaside town, nestling between the Downland, the sea and the Levels has impressive views to the downland to the west.
- Planned in the 1850s by William Cavendish and John Davies Gilbert, the central part of the town is coherent and spacious.
- The Meads area, and the villages of Old Town, Ratton and Willingdon have a leafy 19th Century character.
- The quiet, unified seafront is the main character focus, with its pier, lawns, winter gardens and grand facades of white buildings.

Special features

- The Sovereign Harbour.
- The parks and designed landscapes of Hampden Park, Devonshire Park, Princes Park, Manor Park, and the Compton Estate.
- Prince William Avenue, with the retained original shingle landscape known as the Crumbles.



Eastbourne

Problems, pressures, detracting features

- The twentieth century terraces and housing estates to the east lack local distinctiveness.
- There are harsh unscreened urban edges and industrial estates bordering the Levels.
- The multi-story shopping centre lacks local character, contrasting with the rest of the town centre.
- Tall 1960s blocks of flats are discordant with the rest of the Victorian and Edwardian seafront.
- Traffic pressure erodes the peaceful character of the town.
- The important street trees are threatened by underground cabling development and Dutch Elm Disease.

Vision

An elegant seaside town with a fine setting, spacious, unspoiled seafront, intact Victorian - Edwardian layout and architecture, with a light, leafy character, enhanced and unified by the new focus of Eastbourne Park on its eastern side.

Landscape action priorities

- Continue development of Eastbourne Park.
- Enhance environment of the eastern part of the town, linked with Eastbourne Park, including more tree cover within, and on the edges of, the built-up area and in the industrial estates.
- Protect and replace street and existing parkland trees.
- Develop or strengthen local and neighbourhood character in modern residential areas, including Polegate.
- Protect and enhance parks and open spaces.
- Ensure that future planned urban expansion is of the highest quality design with a strong sense of place.

Bexhill

Bexhill on Sea arose as a medieval trading port, built on gently sloping ground. It was transformed in the 19th century by the seventh Earl De La Warr into an exclusive seaside resort. By the mid 20th century, the resort began to lose its appeal, and became more residential in nature, while retaining much of its quiet Edwardian character.

The town is now comprised of several merged villages. It is marginally separated from Hastings by Glyne Gap and Coombe Haven valley, an important green gap between the built up areas. At the eastern end of the town the railway severs the town from the Seafront.

Characteristics

- A quiet, residential seaside town with small-scale but ornate early Victorian and Edwardian seafront facades, facing spacious seafront lawns.
- Strong 1930's Modern influence, centred on the De La Warr pavilion on the seafront, constructed under the instruction of the ninth Earl De La Warr in 1935.

Special features

- Seafront properties have ornate 'Colonial' wooden verandas and Mogul influences.
- Located in Bexhill-on-Sea's picturesque Old Town are many fine examples of Georgian architecture.
- Egerton Park
- 'The Down' is a unique and well treed open space in the centre of the urban area.
- Marine archaeology.



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Bexhill

30

Problems, pressures, detracting features

- Clutter and lack of unity marring seafront lawns as a recreational space.
- Extensive suburban areas lacking features and focal points.
- Absence of any strong pedestrian and cycle linkage between seafront/town centre and Old Town.
- Signage clutter and lack of spatial focus in the town centre.

Vision

A coastal town of relatively quiet, leafy character, centred on three strengthened and more strongly related foci: an integrated seafront/De la Warr pavilion space, enhanced town centre and Old Town.

Environmental enhancements in the town centre and Old Town achieved through cohesive design and traffic management.

Landscape action priorities

- A tree strategy for the whole town to strengthen its character and create local/neighbourhood distinctiveness, including suburban areas.
- A green network study of open space and recreational corridors
- A comprehensive re-design/landscape strategy for the seafront lawns area to create a stronger character focus and setting for De la Warr Pavilion.
- Consider a new focal space/feature in town centre, perhaps combined with traffic management and continuing enhancement of streetscape. Recent initiatives have made a significant difference, i.e. improvements to building facades and the environmental improvements in Devonshire Square.
- A landscape improvement plan for Egerton Park, including an improved tree structure.
- In the longer term, consider the creation of a major new park in the Broadoak area.
- Create an 'amenity route' - visual and functional link - between the seafront, town centre and Old Town.
- Improved pedestrian and cycle access.
- Development of Pebsham Countryside Park in conjunction with other regeneration initiatives.
- Reduce and control traffic on the main roads through the town.

Hastings

Hastings grew from a small fishing port, in the medieval period. With the advent of the railway and the development of seaside tourism, elegant Georgian and Victorian terraces and crescents were built beside the well preserved Tudor old town.

The town is situated to the west of a series of sandstone headlands.

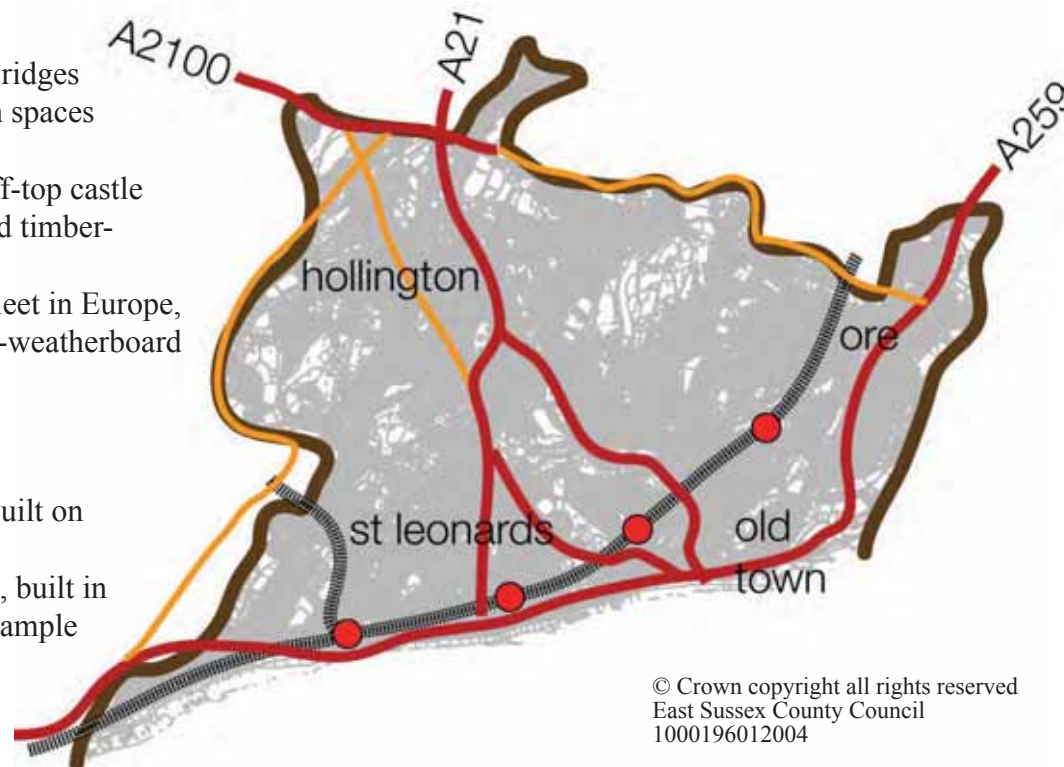
The seaside town's ability to expand has been determined by surrounding environmental designations, the coastline and poor transport infrastructure.

Characteristics

- The town sits on sandstone, which is eroded into ridges and wooded ghylls, giving a series of parks, open spaces and sheltered woodland within the town.
- The medieval Old Town is overlooked by the cliff-top castle ruins, and has narrow winding lanes, twittens, and timber-framed Tudor cottages.
- Hastings has the largest beach-launched fishing fleet in Europe, and the fishing boats, with the tall, ancient, black-weatherboard net huts give the Old Town its unique character.

Special features

- The large shopping centre, Priory Meadow was built on the site of the old cricket ground.
- Fine Regency buildings such as Pelham Crescent, built in the 1820s, and Burton's St Leonards, a unique example of a Regency new town with many buildings still standing from 1828.
- Views across historic roof tops to the sea.
- Marine archaeology.



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Hastings

Problems, pressures, detracting features

- The somewhat run-down appearance of some areas, such as parts of Bohemia, Bulverhythe and Ore.
- The western approach to the town via Glyne Gap and Bulverhythe lacks character and is dominated by traffic.
- Some rather bleak and treeless housing estates.
- Severance of the town from the beach by the busy coastal road.
- The derelict Hastings pier.

Vision

A town of strong, highly distinctive character with equally strong and distinctive local communities. A town with good links to the countryside via a network of ghylls, linear open spaces and well designed transport networks worthy of the town.

Landscape action priorities

- Produce an environmental design strategy for the town centre.
- A tree strategy, encouraging the use of trees to develop and strengthen local character.
- A green network strategy of open spaces and pedestrian links, connecting the town centre with other areas of the town, and with the countryside.
- Conserve and restore parks in their historical context as part of a green infrastructure strategy.
- Continue the regeneration and improvement programme to the seafront.
- Improve suburban housing estates, including distinctive tree planting, signs, street furniture and traffic calming measures.
- Improve connections to the seafront, beach and town.
- Resolve the restoration of the pier.