

Landscape and Ecology Study of Greenfield Sites in Worthing Borough
November 2015

Appendix B: West Sussex Landscape Character Assessment sheets

Overall Character

This long narrow Character Area extends between West Wittering and Shoreham and comprises the majority of the West Sussex coastline. It is a distinctive low, open and exposed landscape which has an overriding visual and physical association with the sea. Its wide and gently curved bays are further defined by the protruding shingle headland of Selsey Bill, and the chalk headland of Beachy Head in neighbouring East Sussex. This is a dynamic character area whose key characteristics are linked by coastal evolution, weather and tides. The character varies considerably according to weather condition and seasons.

Key Characteristics

- To the east of Selsey Bill, mainly shingle banks with bands of sand and mud exposed at low tide.
- To the west of Selsey Bill, mainly sandy beaches, dry sand dunes and grassland habitats.
- Influence of extensive linear urban coastal resort development. To the east, almost continuous conurbation of Bognor Regis, Littlehampton, Worthing and Shoreham. To the west, notably villages of West Wittering, East Wittering and Bracklesham. Separated by distinctive village of Selsey at Selsey Bill.
- Low sweeping coastline. Open, exposed foreshore.
- Dominance of the sea. Noise of waves, wind and birds.
- Dynamic seascape of constantly changing weather, light and tidal conditions.
- Movement of shingle and sand along the coast, linked to coastal evolution and geomorphology.
- Relatively narrow undeveloped sections of coastline behind beaches. Bounded by low growing scant vegetation and small areas of wind-sculpted scrub and trees. Often providing separation of urban areas. Areas of both high ecological and landscape importance.
- Shingle and sand dune habitats of national importance, notably at West Wittering, Shoreham and Climping.
- Reed beds, streams and deep drainage ditches known as rifles.
- Frequent wooden and rock groynes and breakwaters.
- Distinctive historic piers at Littlehampton, Bognor Regis and Worthing.
- Fleets of small fishing boats beached along the shoreline.
- Caravan parks and other built holiday accommodation facilities.
- Yachting, surfing, windsurfing and commercial boat traffic are frequent in seaward views.
- Diving areas off Bracklesham Bay



South Coast Shoreline

South Coast Plain

The area covered by the Sheet is derived from:

West Wittering to Shoreham Coast (Area A1) Landscape Character Area as defined in the unpublished **West Sussex Landscape Character Assessment** (November 2003). It also includes Wittering Coast (Area F2) of the **Chichester Harbour AONB Landscape Character Assessment** (June 2005).



Historic Features

- Cakeham Tower, Church Norton Mound and St. Wilfrid's Chapel.
- Remains of Atherington deserted medieval village are visible at very low tide.
- Selsey windmill.
- Timber groynes and beach huts.
- Traditional inshore fishing boats.
- Piers at Bognor Regis and Worthing point to the former grandeur of seaside resorts and their 19th century architecture.
- Wartime pillboxes, barracks, anti-aircraft batteries and anti-tank blocks dot the area.

Biodiversity

- A few undisturbed sand dune and shingle habitats remain. Most of the surviving examples are designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI), such as at West Wittering beach, Climping and Shoreham beach.
- Dry sand dunes and grassland habitats.
- Tidal lagoons such as Widewater lagoon – a distinctive saline lagoon near Lancing.
- Small areas of unimproved coastal grazing marsh, including saltmarsh, acid grassland and rushy pasture.
- Reed beds and deep drainage ditches (rifes).
- Coastal scrub including large areas of Tamarisk and limited groups of trees.
- Areas of undeveloped coastline are of high ecological importance.

Change - Key Issues

- High levels of formal and informal coastal recreational pressure with large seasonal crowds.
- Highly visible intrusion from urban, industrial and caravan development.
- Likely longer term rise in sea level and increased storm frequency threatening the stability and permanency of the coastline and leading to the loss of coastal habitats.
- Managed re-alignment of the coastline may be particularly influential in the future, providing opportunities for creation of new coastal habitats.
- Loss of distinctive coastal habitats through reclamation and dredging, development, coastal defences and recreation.
- Coastal habitats are fragmented, however, there is good survival of some characteristic coastal habitats particularly at Shoreham.
- Coastal geomorphology linked to weather, seasons, coastal processes and tides.
- Replacement of timber groynes with rock groynes and rock islands.

Landscape and Visual Sensitivities

Coastal development disrupts visual unity and fragments habitats. The landscape has a high sensitivity to change due to its openness and high intervisibility created by the wide curving bays. *Key sensitivities are to:*

- Erosion of coastal habitats due to visitor pressure and natural processes.
- Unsympathetic urban development.
- Loss of open views.
- Rise in sea level.
- Recreational development such as car parks and caravan sites.
- Car borne summer holiday traffic reducing tranquillity.
- Potential for dramatic landscape and ecological change due to dynamic movement along the coast, which also affect harbour entrances of both Pagham and Chichester.



Worthing Pier



West Wittering Beach Huts

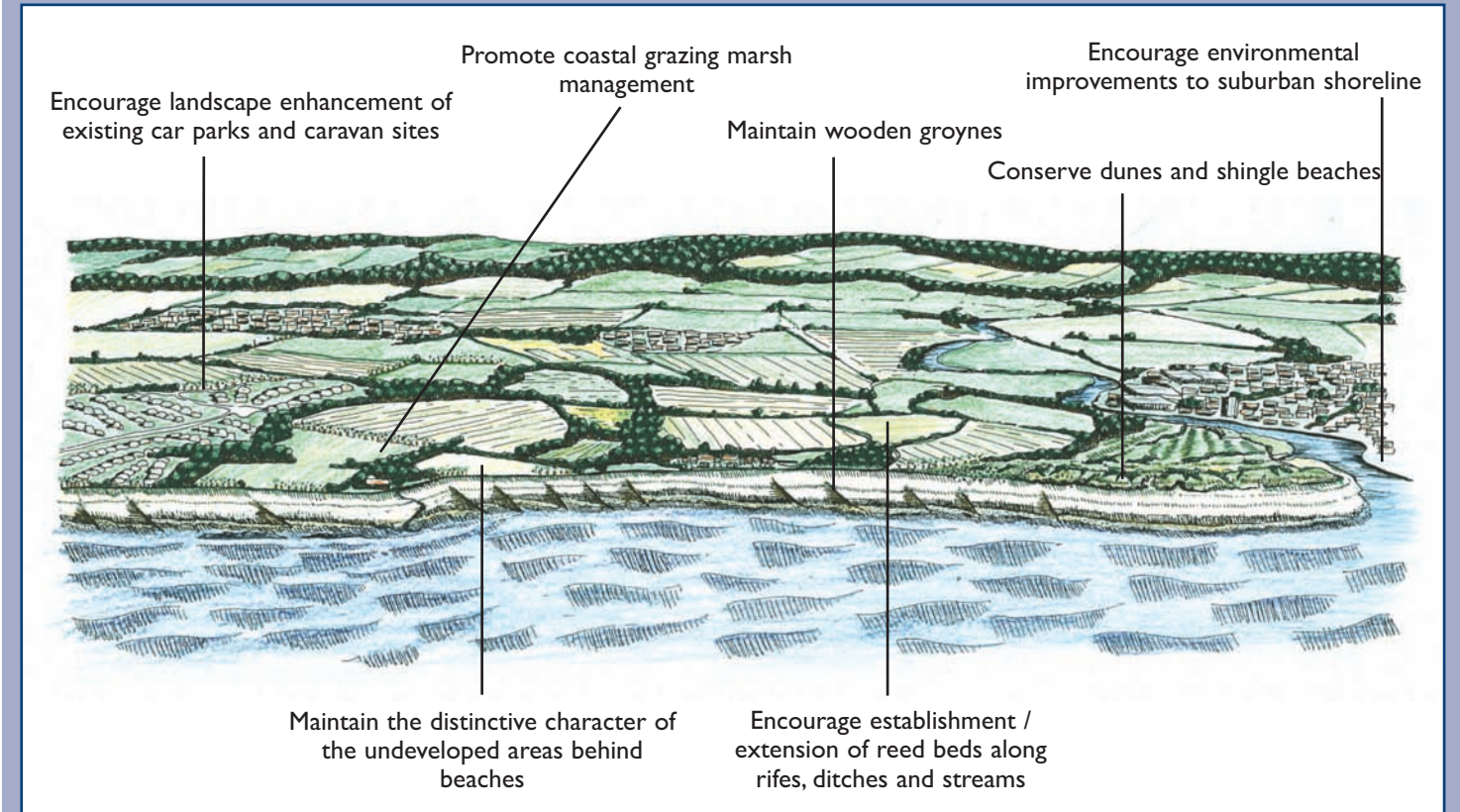


Fishing Boats - Worthing



Sand dunes - West Wittering

Land Management Guidelines



Conserve the open, distinctive coastal character of the area and maintain tranquillity.

- Ensure any new development does not result in adverse impact on open character and characteristic views.
- Maintain the distinctive character and identity of the undeveloped coastal grazing marsh and other open green areas behind beaches.
- Maintain the historic character of the shoreline including the fishing boats, beach huts, wooden groynes and piers, and other sea defences including those from wartime.
- Conserve and enhance the natural landscape features of the coast including shingle beaches and banks, saline lagoons, dunes, coastal scrub and trees, rifes and ditches through sympathetic management.
- Conserve and enhance the vegetated shingle habitat.
- Promote coastal grazing marsh management.
- Assess options for coastal management in a comprehensive way, reflecting the dynamic and interdependent processes of erosion and deposition. Where practical, favour "softer" coastal management solutions such as coastal re-alignment, or ensure sympathetic design of any engineered defences.
- Encourage environmental improvements to the suburban shoreline.
- Encourage landscape enhancements of existing car parks and caravan sites especially with the use of small copses, hedgerows and coastal scrub planting.
- All new planting to be of coastal tolerant plants which are adapted to the maritime winds and seaside conditions. Particular care needs to be taken in species selection in sensitive coastal habitats.
- Establish new areas of dense scrub and tree groups through the creation of sheltered areas using sympathetic measures such as low stone walls and earth mounds and nurse species for wind protection.
- Protect the remaining open spaces behind beaches by implementation of strategic gap policies supported by landscape character assessment.
- Promote and extend conservation of sand dunes by protecting and managing existing vegetation and where necessary planting marram grass to encourage stabilisation, using brushwood fences to reduce wind erosion, and controlling visitors especially on areas with special ecological interest.

The Guidelines should be read in conjunction with:

- County-wide Landscape Guidelines set out in *A Strategy for the West Sussex Landscape* (November 2005) published by West Sussex County Council.
- Selsey Bill to Beachy Head Shoreline Management Plan, (under review).

Overall Character

The urban fringes associated with sprawling coastal resorts are particularly obvious to the east of the County with sporadic urban development in many areas. Rows of large light reflective glass houses, equestrian facilities, horse paddocks and industrial buildings are strong suburban elements. Littlehampton and Worthing Fringes and Worthing and Adur Fringes form two groups to the east and west of Worthing, separating the coastal resorts of Littlehampton, Worthing, Lancing and Shoreham.

Key Characteristics

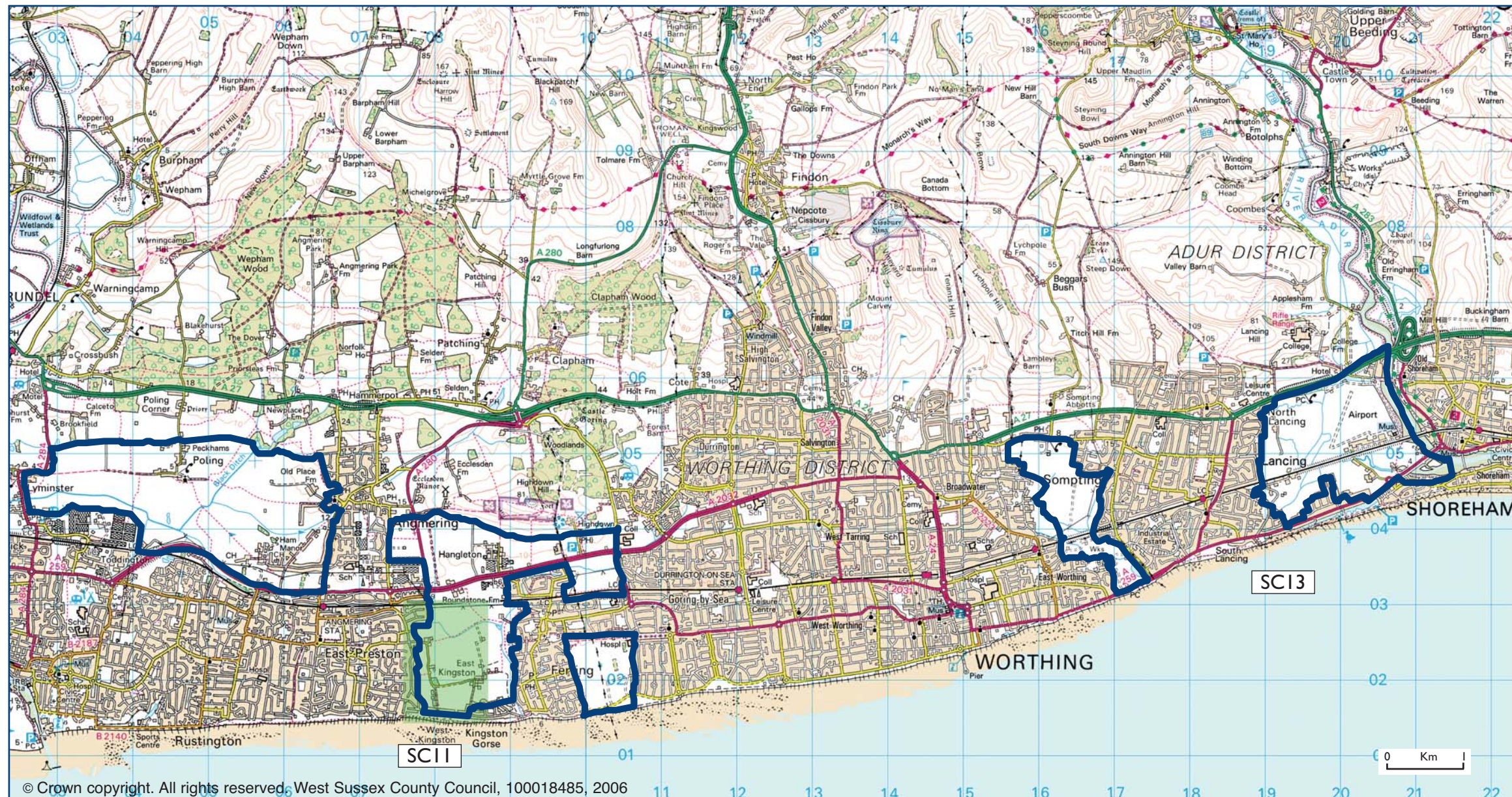
- Low lying flat open landscape.
- Dominant urban fringe with major conurbations of Littlehampton, Worthing, Lancing and Shoreham. Settlement edges often sharply contrast with adjacent open countryside.
- Frequent urban fringe influences of horse paddocks, light industry, airport, and recreational open space.
- Narrow gaps of open land at Kingston, Ferring, Sompting, and Lancing provide views to the sea and separation between the urban areas.
- Medium scale arable farming and market gardening, with clusters of greenhouses.
- River estuary at Shoreham with numerous houseboats moored along its reaches.
- Meandering rifes and straight drainage ditches.
- A low density of native hedgerows and hedgerow trees, interspersed with shelterbelts, single species hedges or individual standards planted using tall trees such as Poplar, Monterey Pine and Tulip trees.
- Clusters of windblown trees.
- Nucleated villages such as at Poling and Sompting Abbots scattered across the area. Mixed building materials of flint, brick, half timber and stone.
- Occasional farmsteads along roads, and on dead-end tracks.
- Long views to the Downs.
- Busy minor and major roads.
- Industry in the countryside.
- South Coast railway line links the areas.

Littlehampton and Worthing Fringes/Worthing and Adur Fringes

South Coast Plain

The area covered by the Sheet is derived from:

Chichester to Shoreham Coastal Plain (C1) Landscape Character Area as defined in the unpublished **West Sussex Landscape Character Assessment** (November 2003).



Historic Features

- Few visible prehistoric monuments apart from crop marks, some Roman/Prehistoric remains around Sompting.
- Flint working at Goring by Sea.
- Medieval church at Poling.
- Site of a Roman-British Villa at Angmering, Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM).
- The Black Ditch, a significant former waterway.
- Large regular fields, mostly the product of Parliamentary enclosure.
- Adur Floodplain was used for salt production in medieval times.
- Shoreham Airport has a collection of historic features, including World War II installations and Shoreham airfield Dome Trainer which is a SAM. The airport is Britain's oldest licensed airport with 1930's Art Deco Terminal Building, Visitor Centre and Archive.

Biodiversity

- Semi-natural habitats are scarce due to intensive arable agriculture and market gardening.
- Small area of unimproved grassland at Sompting Meadows.
- Hedgerow pattern is fragmented with the occasional isolated small wood or copse, such as The Plantation at Ferring.
- Occasional species-rich meadows along rifes, e.g. Kingston Manor meadows, Runcton and Ferring Rife, Site of Nature Conservation Importance, (SNCI).
- Wetland reed bed and tall fen habitat at Lower Cokeham, near Lancing (SNCI).
- Occasional village ponds and greens provide local havens for wildlife.
- Salt marsh and mud flats of estuary at Shoreham, Site of Special Scientific Interest, (SSSI).
- Ditch systems.

Change - Key Issues

- Extension of coastal conurbation.
- Recreational pressures from urban population.
- Loss of mature elm trees in the 1970's and 1980's due to Dutch elm disease.
- Loss of tree and hedgerow cover from agricultural intensification since World War II.
- Conversion of agricultural buildings to light industrial uses.
- Farm diversification and garden centres leading to introduction of signs and fencing.
- Introduction of large scale glasshouses with distribution sheds.

Landscape and Visual Sensitivities

Key sensitivities are:

- Urban development pressures, especially in the gaps between settlements.
- Closing of open views between settlements.
- Industrialisation of agricultural areas due to changes in farm practices.
- Major existing road improvements and the possibility of new ones.
- Derelict glasshouses and farmland.
- New field divisions and changes to field boundary types from farm diversification and horseculture.
- Loss of tree and hedgerow cover due to wind, salt desiccation and drought.
- Planting of hedge and tree boundaries with unsympathetic exotic species such as Leyland Cypress.



Arable and market gardening with views to the sea - Ecclesden



Horse paddocks - Hangleton



Valley floor - Shoreham

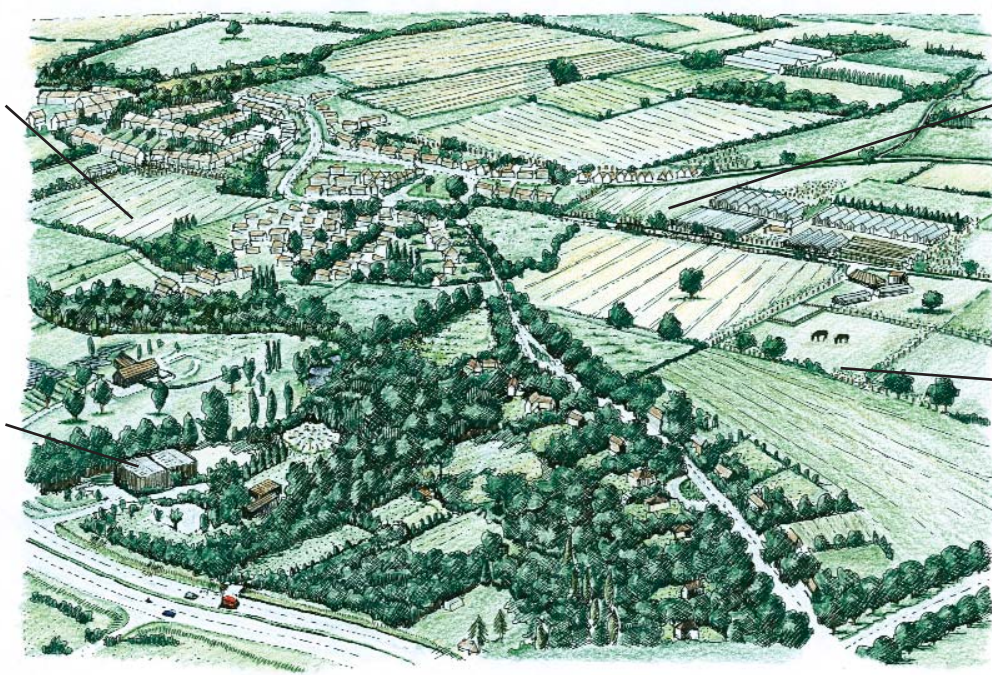


Mudflats and houseboats at Shoreham

Land Management Guidelines

Filter views of urban edges through planting of woodland, tree and shrub belts and groups

Carry out colour and design studies for industrial and large farm buildings



Conserve and link existing hedgerows and trees with new planting

Restore field boundaries through shelterbelt planting, especially around horse paddocks

Restore and strengthen the landscape of the gaps between settlements.

- Strengthen the landscape framework and filter views of the urban edge through planting of woodland, tree and shrub belts and groups. Use these to screen and unify disparate suburban elements especially along roadside verges, village edges and around glasshouses.
- Establish landscape management plans for urban edges.
- Maintain and strengthen existing field boundaries such as hedgerows and shelterbelts. Conserve and link existing hedgerows and trees with new planting.
- All new planting to be of coastal tolerant plants which are adapted to the maritime winds.
- Establish new areas of planting through the creation of sheltered areas using sympathetic measures, such as low stone walls and earth mounds, and nurse species for wind protection.
- Create a new large scale tree and hedgerow framework to complement the open, intensively farmed landscape, whilst maintaining important views.
- Restore field boundaries through shelterbelt planting, especially around horse paddocks.
- Maintain and enhance the landscape and biodiversity of rifes and other existing wetland habitats such as salt marsh, mud flats and water meadows.
- Encourage and promote land management schemes to increase species rich grassland areas.
- Carry out colour and design studies for industrial and large farm buildings.
- Encourage landscape enhancements around villages and on their approaches.
- Conserve, manage and enhance existing village ponds.
- Encourage the creation of new suburban woodlands, preferably with community involvement, for recreation and to link up with existing woodlands.
- Encourage bold tree planting adjacent to roads to enhance both the visual and wildlife value of these areas.
- Encourage conservation and community involvement in urban spaces and village greens.

The Guidelines should be read in conjunction with:

- County-wide Landscape Guidelines set out in *A Strategy for the West Sussex Landscape* (November 2005) published by West Sussex County Council.

Overall Character

This Character Area lies in the south of the County between Crossbush to the west and Highdown Hill in the east. It forms a transition between the open lower Coastal Plain to the south and the wooded downs to the north. Whilst the busy A27 trunk road cuts through the middle, there are few urban influences in much of the area. As a result it retains a mostly undeveloped, rural character.

Key Characteristics

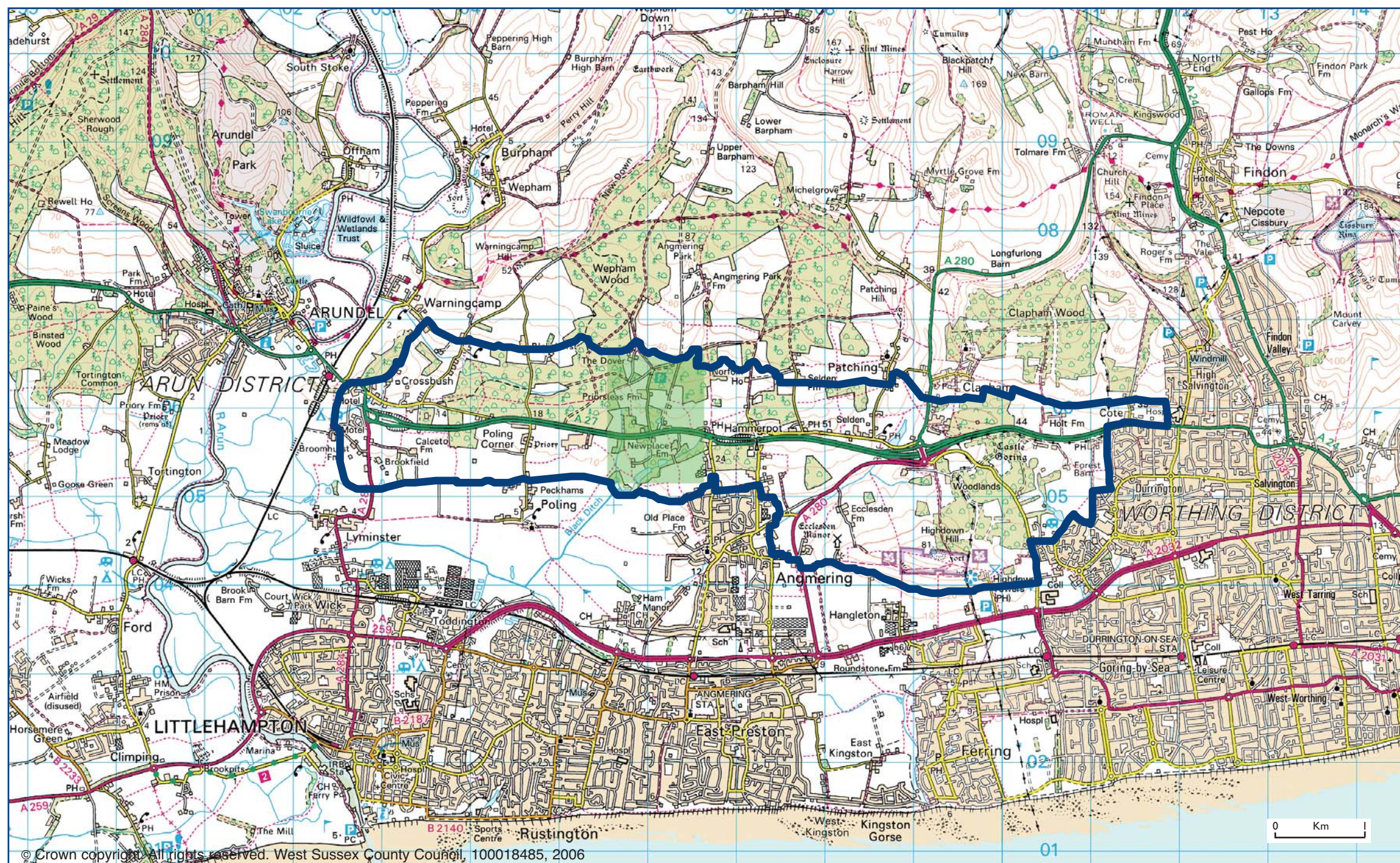
- Very gently undulating landform more intricate in the east, encompassing the distinctive landscape of Highdown Hill (an isolated chalk hill).
- Mainly gently undulating farmland enclosed by woods with frequent hedgerows.
- Strong network of hedgerows, hedgerow trees and medium to large blocks of woodlands.
- Pattern of small to medium-sized pastures and arable fields.
- Intimate hidden wooded valleys containing narrow water bodies, notably at Hammerpot and Patching.
- Wealth of historic landscape features including historic parklands, many ancient woodlands and earthworks.
- A scattering of historic nucleated flint villages, hamlets and farmsteads dot the area accessed by rural lanes mostly linked by the A27 crossing the area east to west.
- Apart from the busy A27, roads are mostly winding hedged or wooded lanes.
- Criss-crossed by numerous rural tracks, byways and rights of way.

Angmering Upper Coastal Plain

South Coast Plain

The area covered by the Sheet is derived from:

Funtington to Highdown Coastal Plain Farmlands (D1) Landscape Character Area defined in the unpublished **West Sussex Landscape Character Assessment** (November 2003).



Historic Features

- Highdown Hill has a late Bronze Age enclosure with an Anglo Saxon cemetery - Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM) - in the middle.
- Mix of small, medium and large-sized fields with mainly straight Parliamentary enclosure boundaries. Some earlier, irregular assarts.
- Historic parkscapes at Batworth, Brookfield, Castle Goring and Highdown House as well as the edge of Angmering Park.
- Ecclesden Mill and Ecclesden Manor and Dovecote.
- Remains of St John's Priory at Poling Corner.
- Scattered Iron Age and Roman earthworks.
- Ancient tracks and byways.

Biodiversity

- Remnant semi-rural broadleaved woodlands, interconnecting hedgerows and track ways provide important habitats for wildlife.
- Small area of chalk grassland at Highdown Hill which is a Site of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI).
- A matrix of semi-natural and replanted ancient woodlands at Titnore (SNCI) and Goring Woods, Poling Copse (SNCI), Hammerpot Copse, Highdown Copse, Grooms Copse, Westlands Copse and Sailors Copse.
- A few significant patches of unimproved or semi-improved neutral grassland and meadows.
- Steep-sided stream valleys with narrow interlinking ponds such as at Hammerpot and Patching.

Change - Key Issues

- Extension of coastal conurbation.
- Potential development pressure from the extension of existing settlements to the south and east.
- Decline in traditional woodland management.
- Increased recreational activities, for example associated with horse-riding and golf courses.
- Major existing road improvements along the A27 trunk road and the possibility of new ones.
- Changes in farming practices.

Landscape and Visual Sensitivities

Key sensitivities are:

- Loss of undeveloped rural character of the area.
- Loss of extent and diversity of woodland cover, much of which is ancient woodland.
- Changes in farming practices leading to changes in field size, loss of hedgerows, and loss of chalk grassland.
- Loss of historic landscape features due to changes in land management practices and estate fragmentation.
- Changes to the scattered low key settlement pattern. Cumulative impact of small scale development either through inappropriate scale or unsympathetic design.
- Inappropriate design and scale of road improvements. Apart from the main A27, roads are rural in character, often leading on to historic trackways and byways.
- Loss of rural quality of rights of way network of tracks and byways, through inappropriate development.



Winding hedged lane - Hammerpot



Flint Buildings - Hammerpot



Medium sized pastures - Crossbush



Gently undulating farmland - Poling

Land Management Guidelines

Maintain and enhance the historic character of the area including earthworks, historic field patterns and historic parks

Encourage strong design principles in felling and replanting woodlands and copses to ensure they are integrated into the landscape

Ensure new large agricultural buildings are not obtrusive in the landscape

Plant and link hedgerow trees where areas have been cleared

Conserve and manage existing chalk grassland, clearing and managing scrub where necessary

Conserve and enhance the character and setting of small villages and hamlets

Conserve and enhance the quiet rural qualities and environment of the small villages and rural road and lane network, encourage landscape restoration and woodland management and ensure that new development is well integrated within the landscape.

- Maintain and enhance the historic character of the area including earthworks, historic field patterns and historic parks.
- Conserve and manage distinctive habitats including chalk grassland, stream sides, lakes, ponds and woodland especially those which are under pressure from development on the edges of settlements.
- Conserve and enhance the character and setting of small villages and hamlets. Consider the cumulative impact on landscape character of small developments and land use change. Avoid the introduction of suburban styles and materials.
- Ensure any new development, including any associated with the A27 trunk road, is well integrated into the wider landscape. Pay particular attention to edge of development. Use new woodland and hedgerow planting as appropriate.
- Ensure that new large agricultural buildings are not obtrusive in the landscape. Avoid placing them on slopes from which they would be highly visible from long range views.
- Retain small scale low key road networks. Conserve hedgerows, banks and road verges associated with existing track and byways to retain their significance in the landscape and their nature conservation importance.
- Carry out a full assessment of existing woodland and tree cover. Encourage strong design principles in felling and replanting woodlands and copses to ensure they are integrated into the landscape.
- Encourage sympathetic woodland management, and prioritise the restoration of neglected or damaged woodland, except where there is a nature conservation interest in managing the present created habitat.
- Conserve, manage and enhance hedgerows. Plant and link hedgerow trees where areas have been cleared.
- Plant and replant single tree features and copses throughout arable areas wherever they will create significant landscape features and can be accommodated.
- Extend existing areas of woodland, reflecting the existing scale and structure of the landscape in their design, except where this conflicts with archaeological or nature conservation interests.
- Conserve and manage chalk grassland, clearing and managing scrub where necessary in irregular shaped patches to avoid hard edges, and to provide habitat edges and shelter. Target Environmental Stewardship schemes to ensure retention of existing chalk downland and reversion of arable land.

The Guidelines should be read in conjunction with:

- County-wide Landscape Guidelines set out in *A Strategy for the West Sussex Landscape* (November 2005) published by West Sussex County Council.

Overall Character

This large character area in the south of the county extends from the Arun Valley in the west to the Adur valley in the east. It is a distinctive landscape of exposed rolling chalk hills with a steep north facing escarpment and softer dip slope to the south.

Key Characteristics

- Elevated chalk hills.
- Smooth, gently rolling landform, cut by trough-shaped dry valleys, sometimes branching.
- Dramatic, steep, mostly open escarpment, deeply indented by rounded coombes.
- Open, expansive landscape mostly with few trees and hedgerows.
- Areas of woodland mostly limited to narrow belts along the edge of the scarp slope.
- Spectacular panoramic views over the Low Weald to the north.
- Arable farming predominates in large, rectilinear fields.
- Surviving fragmented and isolated blocks of species-rich chalk grassland on steeper slopes and on the escarpment.
- Distinctive historic landscape features including hill forts, barrows, cross dykes, ancient chalk tracks, field systems, windmills and dew ponds.
- Isolated yet prominent farmsteads and barns.
- Strong sense of remoteness and solitude in some areas.

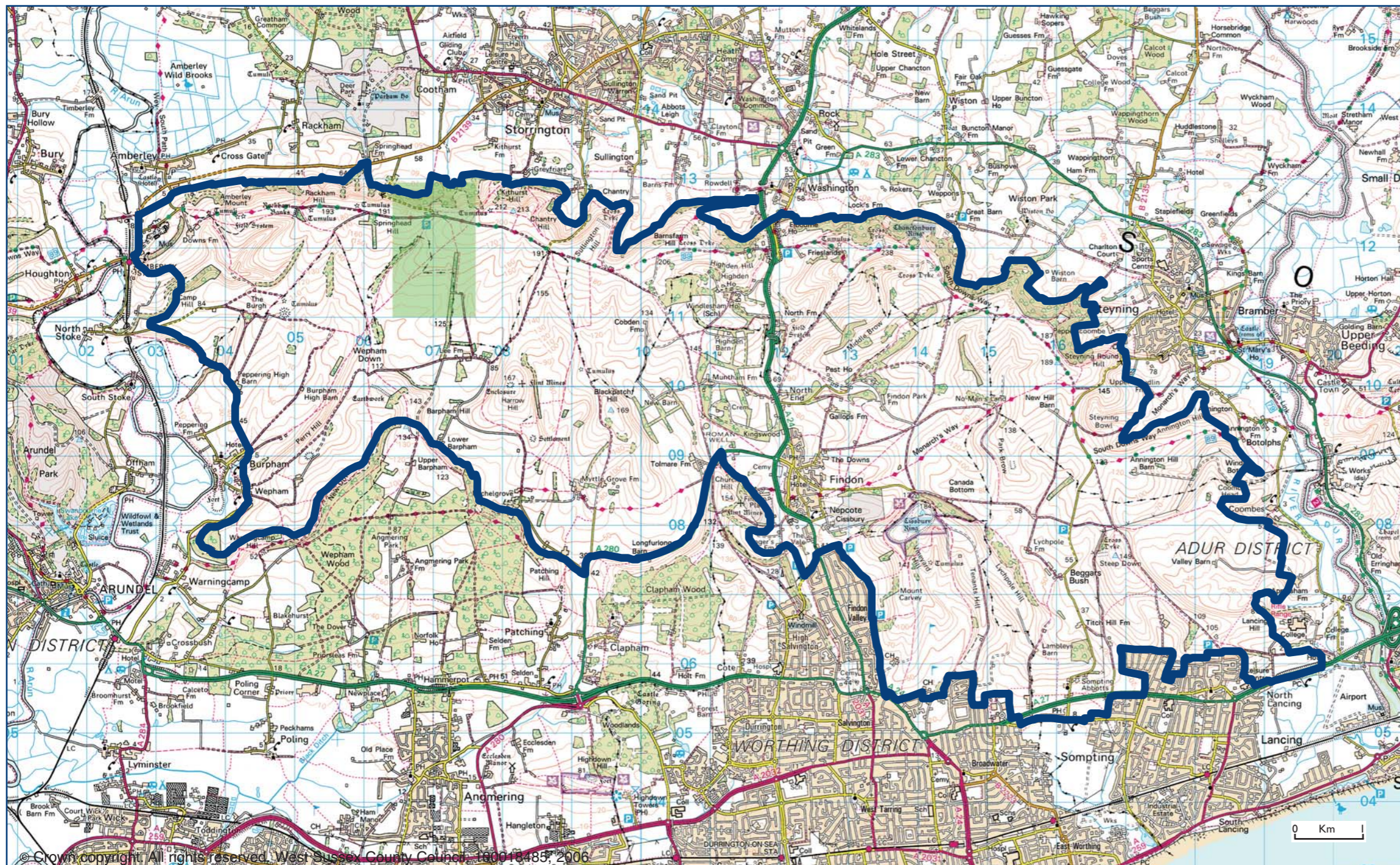
Sheet SD3

Central Downs

South Downs

The area covered by the Sheet is derived from:

Eastern Downs (F1) Landscape Character Area as defined in the unpublished **West Sussex Landscape Character Assessment** (November 2003).



Historic Features

- Bronze Age burial mounds.
- Hill forts at Cissbury and Chanctonbury Ring.
- Field systems, cultivation terraces and earthworks.
- Cross ridge dykes.
- Ancient routes and track ways e.g. South Downs Way.
- Flint mines such as at Harrow Hill.
- Deserted medieval village sites at Upper and Lower Barpham.
- Parliamentary enclosure fields.

Biodiversity

- Remnant species-rich chalk grassland and scattered scrub. The more significant sites are designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) or Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI).
- Large areas of intensive arable fields with reduced biodiversity.
- Narrow belts of deciduous woodland along the scarp slope with some blocks of ancient woodland.
- Unimproved grassland.
- Chalk pits and quarries at Washington and Amberley.

Change - Key Issues

- Continuing loss of biodiversity as a result of intensive arable agriculture.
- Introduction of new crops.
- Expansion of scrub on chalk grassland associated with the decline of sheep grazing.
- Soil erosion from increased autumn ploughing on steep slopes.
- Expansion of horse grazing with associated overgrazed paddocks, post and wire field boundaries, jumps, ménages etc.
- Increasing traffic noise impacts from major road routes across the Downs, eroding tranquillity.
- Recreational pressures near the urban edge, e.g. golf courses, four wheel driving, busy recreational sites or “honey pots.”
- Large agricultural buildings.
- Impact on the landscape of exposed pylons and telecommunications masts.

Landscape and Visual Sensitivities

Condition is good, although chalk grassland has become fragmented. The landscape has a high sensitivity to change due to its open and elevated form. It is particularly sensitive to development along the skyline. *Key sensitivities are:*

- Development on chalk causing chalk scars.
- High sensitivity to impact of encroaching urban development both on the urban edge of Worthing and Lancing to the south and in the Low Weald to the north.
- Views from the Downs both north and south are highly sensitive to visually prominent development.
- High sensitivity to development on skyline, for example, masts and pylons.
- Species rich downland grassland becoming fragmented and reduced to remnants.
- Archaeological remains which are vulnerable to damage and loss.
- Road improvements.



View from Cissbury Ring towards Findon



Arable farming

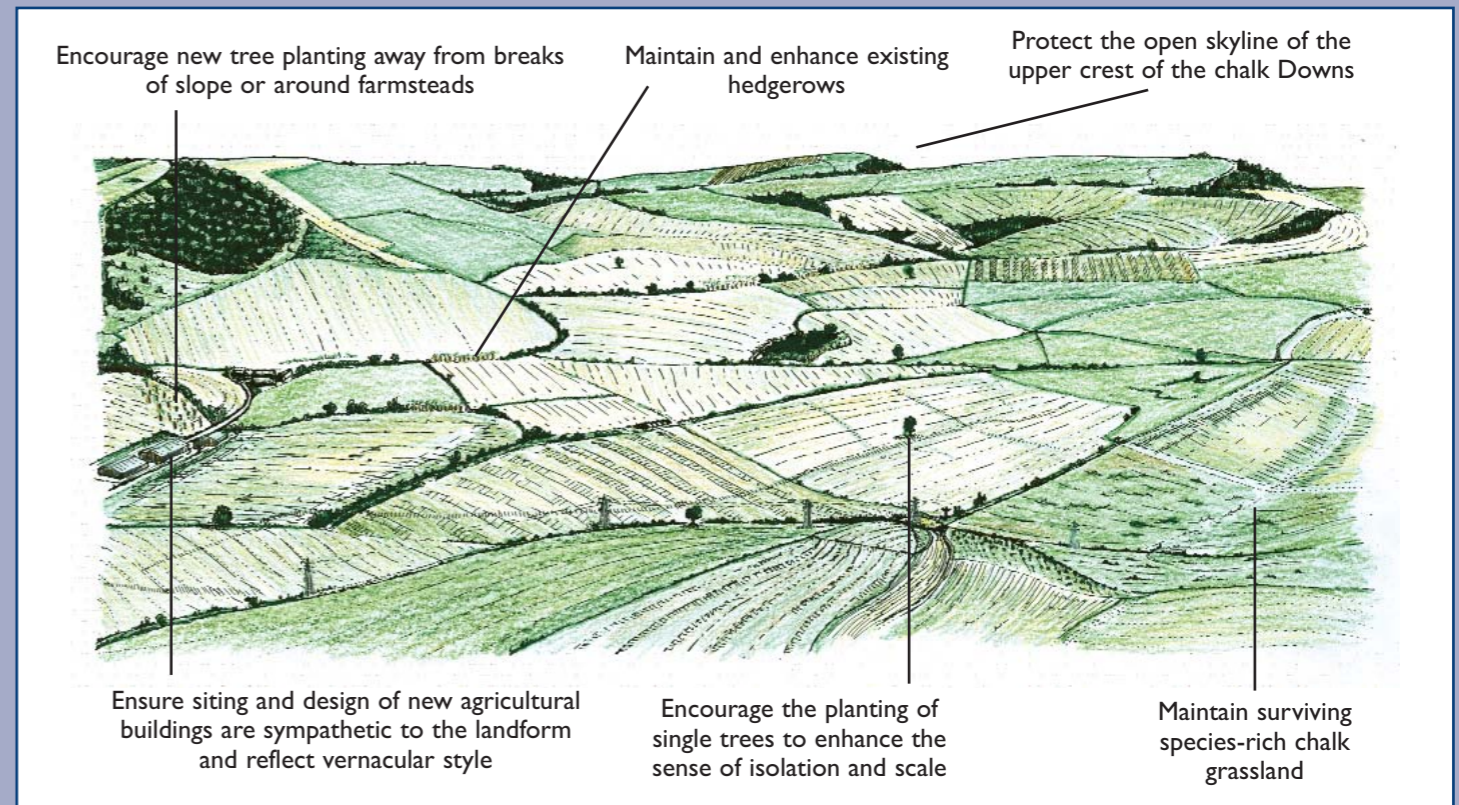


Isolated farmsteads



Open landscape with narrow belts of woodland

Land Management Guidelines



Conserve and enhance the predominantly open and largely tranquil character of the area and its wide views.

- Maintain the strong historic character of the area, including typical features such as archaeological monuments and their settings, ancient chalk tracks, windmills and dew ponds.
- Maintain surviving species-rich chalk grassland and target restoration of chalk grassland on the upper slopes of the downs and around recreation sites, using the Environmental Sensitive Stewardship Scheme where appropriate.
- Encourage landscape enhancements of the existing urban edge between Worthing and Shoreham.
- Protect the open skyline of the upper crest of the Chalk Downs.
- Maintain and enhance existing hedgerows. The planting of new ones should be limited to the more sheltered minor valleys and restoration of the historic hedgerow pattern.
- Restore and manage visually important tree clumps and belts where this does not conflict with historic and nature conservation features.
- Encourage the planting of single trees to enhance a sense of isolation and scale.
- Encourage new tree planting away from breaks of slope forming special hilltop features or around farmsteads following contours.
- Encourage landscape enhancement schemes for existing car park, “honey pot” recreation sites.
- Conserve and enhance the setting of historic farmsteads and barns.
- Ensure the siting and design of new agricultural buildings is sympathetic to the landform and reflects the vernacular style.
- Conserve and enhance the experience of the South Downs Way long distance path and other rights of way.
- Conserve existing narrow chalkland roads.

The Guidelines should be read in conjunction with:

- County-wide Landscape Guidelines set out in *A Strategy for the West Sussex Landscape* (November 2005) published by West Sussex County Council.
- Objectives and actions contained in the *Interim South Downs Management Plan* (March 2004) published by the Sussex Downs Conservation Board.

Overall Character

This Character Area extends from Warningcamp in the west to Clapham in the east. With its enclosed valleys, wooded chalk uplands and a densely wooded escarpment, the landscape in many places conveys a strong sense of enclosure, seclusion and remoteness. Prominent beech and mixed woodlands, together with swathes of conifer forest are interwoven with large sweeping arable fields, chalk grassland, country houses and parkland in the rolling plateau and ridges.

Key Characteristics

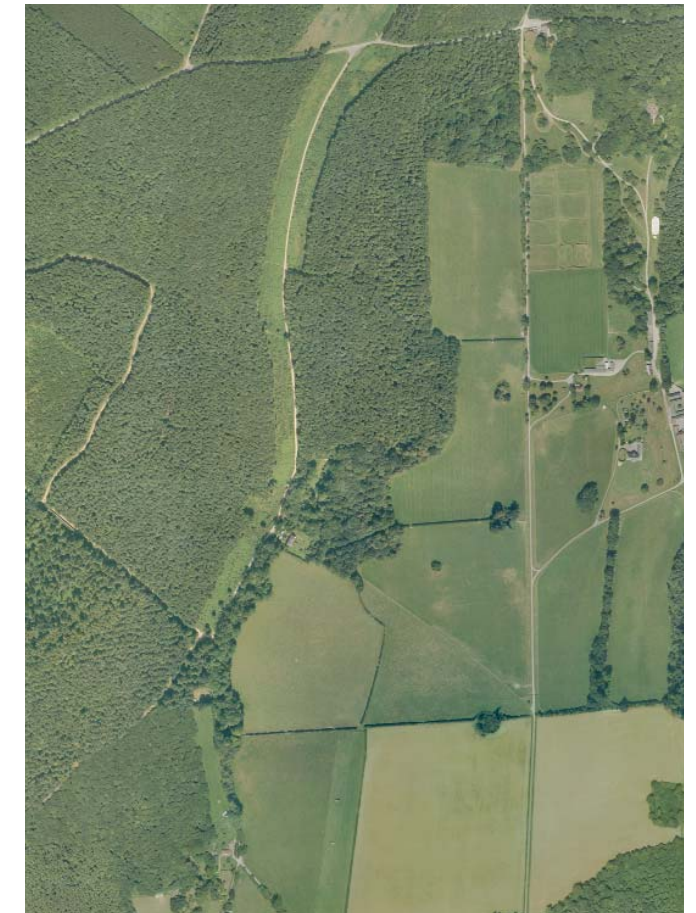
- Rolling chalk uplands with a bold combination of woodland, farmland and commercial plantations often connected by copses and dense hedgerows.
- Steep, wooded northern escarpment.
- Fairly evenly sloping dip slope with broad, branching dry valleys and ridges.
- Mixture of medium to large, predominantly beech forests and distinctive beech hangers.
- Larger fields and woodlands on the ridges, smaller in the valleys.
- Large area of estates and parklands, especially on the dip slope.
- Wealth of historic features including prehistoric earthworks, trackways, and ancient strip-lynchets.
- Light covering of scattered flint villages and country houses linked by spinal valley roads joined via the A27 further south.
- Concentrations of unimproved chalk grassland.
- Sense of remoteness.

Angmering Park

South Downs

The area covered by the Sheet is derived from:

The Western Downs (E1) Landscape Character Area as defined in the unpublished **West Sussex Landscape Character Assessment** (November 2003).



Historic Features

- Small, medium, and large irregular and rectilinear assarts, many subsequently incorporated into 18th and 19th century estate farmland.
- Many earthwork features from field systems of the Bronze Age. Iron Age Romano-British field systems in Clapham Wood.
- Deserted medieval settlement of Upper Barpham Farm which is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM).
- Strip-lynchets at Long Furlong.
- Flint Mine and Bowl Barrow on Church Hill.
- Trackways and steep winding tracks up the downland escarpments (borstals).
- Important historic parklands at Angmering and Michelgrove Park.
- Lime works at Parham Fields and Clapham.

Biodiversity

- Old and storm damaged woodland with dead and dying trees.
- Major areas of chalk grassland, notably at Warningcamp Hill and New Down, Long Furlong and Church Hill, The Sanctuary, The Gallops and No Mans Land which are designated Sites of Natural Conservation Importance (SNCI's).
- Many large ancient woodlands, most replanted, at Clapham Wood (SNCI), Parham Fields, Surgeons Fields, Wepham Wood and Michelgrove Park.
- Dry chalk valleys with winterbourne streams.
- Relatively good woodland connectivity through the area.

Change - Key Issues

- Decline in traditional woodland management.
- Increased recreational activities such as horse-riding.
- Major existing road improvements along the A27 trunk road further south leading to changes in the largely undeveloped character and rural road structure.
- Changes in farming practices, in particular the reduction in livestock. Stewardship schemes could be a potential positive force for change.
- Past hedgerow removal due to arable intensification and enlargement of fields.
- Development or fragmentation of large country estates.

Landscape and Visual Sensitivities

Key sensitivities are:

- Loss of extent and diversity of woodland cover, much of which is ancient woodland.
- Changes in farming practices leading to changes in field size and/or loss of hedgerows.
- Loss of chalk grassland due to reduction of grazing livestock.
- Changes to the scattered low key settlement pattern, or small scale incremental development in villages and hamlets bringing in urban and suburban features and materials.
- Loss of wider visual unity of historic parkland landscapes due to development or fragmentation of larger estates.
- Inappropriate design and scale of road improvements. Whilst linked by the main A27 further south, roads are rural in character, often leading on to historic trackways and byways.
- Loss of rural quality of rights of way network of tracks and byways, through inappropriate development.
- Decline in quality of historic landscape features due to changes in land management practices.



Plantation and isolated trees - Patching



Wooded scarp slope - Long Furlong



Beech hangers - Long Furlong



Flint houses in Patching

Land Management Guidelines

Conserve hedgerow banks and road verges associated with existing track and byways

Extend existing woodlands, reflecting the scale and structure of the landscape in their design

Ensure new large agricultural buildings are not obtrusive in the landscape

Maintain and restore hedgerows, tree clumps and single tree features

Maintain and enhance existing chalk grassland by grazing and scrub control

Conserve the character and setting of the historic villages, hamlets and farmlands

Conserve and enhance the quiet rural qualities and environment of the small villages and rural network, encourage landscape restoration and woodland management and ensure that new development is well integrated within the landscape.

- Maintain the rich historic character of the area, including archaeological monuments and their settings, distinctive historic field patterns and historic parkland. Restore historic parkland as appropriate.
- Conserve the pattern and character of winding lanes. Conserve hedgerow banks and road verges associated with existing track and byways to retain their significance in the landscape and their nature conservation importance.
- Conserve and enhance the predominantly wooded character of the area by management of woodlands and sympathetic restoration of damaged or neglected woodlands.
- Carry out a full assessment of existing woodland and tree cover. Promote good forestry design and encourage the visual integration of existing conifer woodland through the development of well-designed broadleaved fringes.
- Extend existing woodlands reflecting the existing scale and structure of the landscape in their design, except where this conflicts with historic and nature conservation interests. Aim to establish a complete link from east to west to overcome the gap at Patching.
- Maintain and restore hedgerows, tree clumps and single tree features. Plant and replant single tree features and copses throughout arable areas wherever they will create significant landscape features and can be accommodated.
- Conserve and enhance existing chalk grassland by grazing and scrub control. Target Stewardship schemes to ensure retention of existing chalk downland and reversion of arable land.
- Encourage the formation of chalk grass headlands around large arable fields and assess the potential for grass linkage corridors with other grassland areas.
- Ensure that new large agricultural buildings are not obtrusive in the landscape. Avoid placing them on slopes where they would be highly visible from long range views.
- Conserve and enhance the character and setting of the historic villages, hamlets and farmsteads. Consider the cumulative impact on landscape character of small developments and land use change. Avoid the introduction of suburban styles and materials.

The Guidelines should be read in conjunction with:

- County-wide Landscape Guidelines set out in *A Strategy for the West Sussex Landscape* (November 2005) published by West Sussex County Council.
- Objectives and actions contained in the *Interim South Downs Management Plan* (March 2004) published by the Sussex Downs Conservation Board.